PROBLEM OF TIME AND TEMPORALITY IN
SĀMKHYA-YOGA AND ĀBHIDHARMA BUDDHISM
PROBLEM OF TIME AND TEMPORALITY IN SAMKYA-YOGA AND ABHIDHARMA BUDDHISM

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: In this work, we have analysed the problem of temporality and its soteriological significance in the philosophico-religious traditions of the Sāmkhya-Yoga and Abhidharma Buddhism. The basic concern is to demonstrate the possibility of accounting for temporal determination without taking recourse to a reification of time category. An attempt is made to bring out the soteriological implications of such a perspective. The introductory section defines the problematic and methodological issues in the present study. This is followed by Part I, which is an expository section on Sāmkhya-Yoga. Here, the problem of temporality is investigated against the background of the basic ontological perspective of the Samkhya-Yoga. Part II is a critical exposition of the problem of temporality in the Abhidharma Buddhism. We have attempted to show how, according to the Abhidharma Buddhism, temporal determination is a feature of reality. The concluding section looks at the problem in comparative perspective.
In this section we have tried to show how the two philosophico-religious systems, despite certain basic differences, have some common structural and thematic congruity.
In the present work an attempt is made to study the problem of temporality in the religious philosophies of the Sāmkhya-Yoga and Ābhidharma Buddhism. The two systems are studied in comparative perspective to determine the degree of compatibility of the two on the specific issue of temporality and its significance for the world-transcendence.

The systems under investigation have been selected on the ground that both of them look at temporality as a characteristic built into the structure of things. Reification of time, as an abstract category independent of entities, is alien to both the systems. Temporality is conceived not in terms of time as a transcendent condition of our being and cognition. Rather it is conceived in terms of the changefulness and becomingness, characteristic of phenomena as such and its relationship to the cognizing consciousness. This indeed is the most important perspective that they share against other religious philosophies of India.

Our interest in the two systems' articulation of the problem emanates from the conviction that the systems under investigation, instead of being diametrically opposed to each other, complement each other and in some significant ways share certain basic perspectives. The fact of their complementarity has been ignored in the earlier studies. There are some occasional statements about the possibility of some similarities between
the two. But no study of significance, except that of Stcherbatsky, has been undertaken to see if there is any significant correlation between the two. Most of the time scholars have treated them as representing two diametrically opposed ontological perspectives, Murti being the most prominent proponent of this position. That there are certain important differences between the two cannot be denied. But it has been our concern to demonstrate that, despite important differences in their ontological perspectives, the two systems are in close company, specially in their articulation of the problem of temporality and its soteriological implications.

The body of the thesis is divided into three major parts. The first part is a critical exposition of the problem in the context of Sāṃkhya-Yoga. The second part deals with the problem with reference to Abhidharma Buddhism. And the third part is an attempt to bring out the correlation between the two systems with special reference to the soteriological implications of their conception of the problem under investigation.

The following are the major findings of the present work:

1. Both the Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Abhidharma Buddhism relativize the category of time. This relativization is part and parcel of their non-cosmological understanding of the temporal process.

2. Temporality is defined as a feature built into the structure of change and becomingness and its subjective experience.

3. For explaining temporal determinations of past, present and future implicit distinction between real and existent is admissible. The present alone is considered existent, while past and future are real.
4. The realm of the temporal is conceived in contradistinction with Eternity, the two being dialectically related. The temporality is seen in opposition to Eternity and yet providing a link with Eternity.

5. The transcendence of temporality is a function of consciousness. Reflection (contemplation) as an act of consciousness is a temporal act. But reflection is seen as having a built-in structure of transcendence. This transcendence of the temporal process takes place in the present. Accordingly, both the Śāmkhya-Yoga and Ābhidharma Buddhism are the soteriologies of the present.
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To

Ma and Babujee

with love and respect
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PART I

SĀṂKHYA-YOGA
CHAPTER I

AIMS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Introduction:

The subject matter of the present dissertation is the problem of time and temporality in the systems of Śāmkhya-Yoga and Ābhidharma Buddhism. For the purposes of this study, it is crucial that we make a conceptual distinction between the categories of time and temporality. The category of time is used for reification of time as an absolute category with independent ontological status. Time is conceived independent of entities and somehow influencing and conditioning the mode of being of all entities. Temporality, on the other hand, is the expression used to indicate the fact of change which characterises entities as their mode. It is not what stands independent of them claiming a co-ordinate status in relation to them, but is constituted of their very mode of existing.

Neither Śāmkhya-Yoga nor Ābhidharma Buddhism look at temporality as a feature or function of time conceived as reified category. Temporality is not the adjectival synonym of time understood as the transcendent condition of our being and cognition. More specifically, within the context of these two systems, temporality may be defined in terms of the changefulness and becomingness characteristic of phenomena as such and its relationship to the cognizing consciousness. Thus, in this study, the term temporality is used to connote both the fact of change and finitude of
phenomenal existence as well as its subjective experience.¹

In this work we have used the hyphenated expression of Sāmkhya-Yoga to bring out the close correlation in the basic ontological perspective of the two schools of thought. The Sāmkhya system under investigation includes the thought of Sāmkhya Kārikā and Sāmkhya Sūtra and various commentaries thereon. Yoga, in the present context, is used for the classical Yoga or Rāja Yoga as expounded in the Patanjali’s Yoga Sūtra and the various commentaries on it. In using this hyphenated expression we have tried to zero upon substantial agreement in the basic ontological perspectives of the two systems.²

The expression Abhidharmakone Buddhism is employed in this work to connote the 'school' of Buddhist thought whose ideas are systematically expounded in the Abhidharmakosa of Vasubandhu and commentaries thereon. The use of the expression is preferred for various reasons and in the absence of a more adequate label indicative of the scope of this study. Vasubandhu himself uses the term in Abhidharmakosa as a proper name to refer to the philosophical standpoint which is the subject matter of the Abhidharmakosa. Moreover, both Vasubandhu and his commentator Yasomitra seem to be in complete agreement in maintaining that the Abhidharmakosa presents in a concise and systematic manner the central ideas of the primary Abhidharma texts which are now lost to the Sanskrit tradition.³

¹See pp. 9-15.

²For further discussion see pp. 46-49.

³See pp. 150-152.
Setting of the Problem

The significance of time component in the religious symbolism of a cultural subsystem has been noted by scholars. The time element is an integral part, of no small consequence, of any developed system of meaning. The time component of the symbol system may be seen to provide an important clue to the pattern of meaning structures, their emergence and maintenance. A study of religion as a system of meaning cannot remain indifferent to this fact.

What is important, however, is not to look at symbol systems and meaning structures in unidimensional and unilinear terms. Ignoring the complex character and varieties of levels on which the symbol system operates will lead to oversimplification or undermining of the essential elements that go into the making of symbol system. This will also lead to neglecting the fact of intricate dialectical relationship between different elements and levels of meaning structures. Study of time symbolism in any meaning structure is no exception in this regard. A symbol system dealing with the temporal dimension of reality may, for analytical and heuristic purposes, be broken up and analysed on different levels. It may be analysed in terms of its function on mythic level, or as an element in the ritualistic participation in religious activities.\(^1\) It

may also as well be seen as a form of choice and commitment of faith.\footnote{Wieman, H., "Time and Man's Ultimate Commitment", The Journal of Religion, 34, 1954, pp. 173-186.}

And, it may likewise also be considered in the context of the reflective act of consciousness and its significance for world transcendence.\footnote{Coomaraswamy, Ananda, K., Time and Eternity, Switzerland: Artibus Asiae Publishers Ascona, 1942. This is the perspective that we intend to develop in the present work. Here we will try to show this perspective in the context of Sāmkhya-Yoga and Abhidharma Buddhism.}

It is important not to forget that these levels of meaning structure are not mutually independent; rather they interpenetrate. If we emphasise the level on which time symbolism is related to the reflective act of consciousness we do not intend to underestimate the value of the analysis which takes place on another level, nor do we tend to suggest that they do not have any bearing on each other. However, many studies of the problem of time in philosophico-religious thoughts of India have fallen prey to the temptation of underestimating the complexity of the meaning structure and the interpenetration of different levels. It may be profitable to analyse some of these tendencies to situate our own programme in a wider context.

Most studies of the problem of time in the specific context of Indian thought have concentrated on the fact of continual downplaying of the realm of the temporal.\footnote{Reyana, Ruth, "Metaphysics of Time in Indian Philosophy", in Zeman Jiri (ed.), Time in Science and Philosophy, New York: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1971.} Some scholars tend to
concentrate on the contrast between the Indian conception of time and the Judaean-Christain understanding of time. The contrast has been brought out in two specific ways. The first in terms of cyclic and linear conceptions of time, the former considered characteristic of Indian religions, including Buddhism and the latter of the Judaean-Christain tradition including that of Islam.¹ The other approach to the problem in comparative perspective emphasises the fact that while Christian evaluation of time places premium on its being the realm of divine creativity and beneficence, the Indian conception tends to zero on time being the realm of the operation of divine's destructive and world obliterating power.² Thus it is stated that the contrast of Indian conception of time "with the Christian evaluation of Time is virtually absolute. Instead of Time as the field in which God's beneficent purpose majestically reveals itself, Indian thought has here identified God with the obliterating force of Time."³

What these perspectives on the problem of time in Indian thought have missed is the fact that any system of meaning (and conceptualization about time is part and parcel of a system of meaning) involves intricate layers or levels of meaning. What may be obvious on one level of meaning structure may not be the case at another level and a generalization based


³Ibid., p. 3.
on one level may not be applicable to another level. For a comprehensive understanding of the significance of time component in the meaning structures under investigation one must isolate these levels or layers and see them in their intrinsic character. The different levels may be seen in dialectical relationship, each of them influencing and moulding the other, and in turn being influenced and moulded by them.

As an instance of these tendencies to undermine the significance of different layers of meaning structures we may cite again S.G.F. Brandon. Brandon, in his work overemphasised the transcendent character of time in Indian thought. This predisposition towards transcendent time led him to stress on the one hand the identity of time with the obliterating power of the divine and on the other of time being the receptum of all entities. The inevitable result of such predisposition is a complete underestimation of the religious significance attached by the Indian mind to the temporal process itself. While some Indian systems do emphasise the transcendent character of time, that constitutes only one element of the meaning structure and holds true only partially. The other element of the structure remains opaque and consequently Brandon can only see "the Indian fear of time".

On a different level of meaning structure, the level which seeks to exemplify the significance of the temporal process, the fear of time is counterbalanced by the hope of transcendence, the transcendence itself

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1 Ibid.
2 Ibid., p. 35.
seen as a temporal act pointing to freedom (Moksa or Nirvāna). The temporal process which is seen as coincident with pain and suffering is also seen as providing a clue to transcendence. For the generality of Indian philosophico-religious system, the present in which the individual is situated at a specific moment, is the moment of transcendence.¹

It is important to note that 'moment' (ksana or nimasa) refers both to the "brief moment" as to measure of time and also to the moment without duration, the ideal condition of freedom, or transcendence. It is in the latter sense that Nimisa ("Twinkling of an Eye") as a synonym for divinity, is implied by the term naimisiyah (people of the moment).² And it is in this sense that Vasubandhu's statement that the great awakening (abhisambodhi) is "single instantaneous" (eka-ksana) is to be taken.³ The notion of "instantaneous awakening" (ekasabhisambodhi) continues to catch the fancy of the sadhaka (aspirant). The Yogic emphasis on the contemplation of the moment (ksana) as the means of realising eternity within a single compass of a 'now' only reinforces our thesis that temporal structure is also conceived as the structure of transcendence.⁴ It is stated in Kālacakraṭantra: "The birthplace of the Royal Conquerors is in one constant moment (ekasminsamayeksare)".

¹Coomaraswamy, op. cit., p. 47.
²Chāndogya Upanisad, 1 2.13.
³Obermiller, E., "The Doctrine of Prajñā-pāramitā as exposed in the Abhisamayālāmkāra of Maitreya", Acta Orientalia, 11, 1933, pp. 81-82.
⁴Yoga Sūtra, 3.52.
The identification of time and eternity finds a prominent place in Upanisadic scheme of things.¹ A distinction between two forms (dvārape) of Brahman is made in terms of "Time and Without Time" (kālas-cakālas-cca): "What precedes the Sun is Without Time (akāla) and undivided (akāla); but what begins with Sun is Time which has parts (sakāla) and its form is the Year."² Mircea Eliade interpreting this passage observes:

The expression "what precedes the Sun" may be interpreted cosmologically as relating to the epoch which preceded the Creation.....but its application is above all metaphysical and soteriological: it refers to the paradoxical situation of him who obtains illumination, who becomes a jivan-mukta, who is "delivered in this life", and thereby transcends time in the sense that he no longer participates in it.³

Mircea Eliade has greatly enriched our understanding of the time symbolism in the Indian tradition. He attaches special significance to mythic symbolism and ritual re-enactment of a sacred temporal moment in the scheme of transcendence. In his thesis Eliade makes a distinction between two conceptions of Time, namely 'le temps sacré' (the sacred time) and 'le temps profane' (the profane time).⁴ Myths and rites according to him are the mechanisms of transcending the painful and evil experiences of the profane existence. The rites are, thus, conceived as the mechanisms of re-enactment or renewal of the original act of creation.

¹Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad 2.3.1.
²Maitri Upanisad 7.2.8.
⁴Ibid., p. 173.
and are supposed to possess the virtue of annulling history with all its misdeeds and misfortunes. Such a symbolic annulment of the past or history of the profane time synchronizes with the return to sacred time of the beginning.

Similarly, Myth too, according to Eliade is a structure of transcendence of the profane time. Through narration of myth, profane time is symbolically abolished. Thus:

mythical or sacred time is qualitatively different from profane time, from the continuous and irreversible time of our everyday, desacralized existence. In narrating a myth, we reactualize, as it were, the sacred time in which occurred the events of which we are speaking. In a word, myth is supposed to take place in an intemporal time, ..... in a moment without duration, as certain mystics and philosophers conceive of eternity.¹

The importance of the above perspective cannot be overemphasised. Of special merit in his treatment is the recognition of the soteriological significance of time symbolisms. However, we find his treatment deficient in one specific way. While he puts great emphasis on the role of myth and rituals in the process of sacralization, he ignores other elements which may equally be operative in this process.² Reflection or contemplation along with commitment can play equally significant role in the process. Just as the narration of a myth or ritual enactment of a sacred act enables the individual to transcend the realm of temporality so does contemplation or reflection enable the individual to realize eternity. The soteriological significance of reflection as an act of consciousness consists in its being the structure of both world involvement and world

¹Ibid.,

transcendence. Reflection is basically a temporal act. It is a function of consciousness which reflects upon itself as the structure of temporal becoming. But it is by the same act that the consciousness or the subject also comprehends eternity. Transcendence through contemplation or reflection, at least according to the generality of the Indian philosophical tradition, is the primary and authentic mode of transcendence. While the non-reflective avenues of transcendence are not denied, the contemplative approach is singled out as the true mode of realizing eternity in its limitless and accomplished character.  

The Problematic

The central issue for the present work is the possibility of interrogating temporality in terms of its givenness as an objective fact and its relationship to the cognizing consciousness. The term temporality is used to connote both the fact of change and finitude of phenomenal existence as well as its "subjective" experience. It is our assumption that neither of the two can be conceived in isolation from the other. Temporality is a feature of existence as a structure of world involvement. Thus articulated, the problem of temporality then turns out to be the problem of subjectivity as what is implied in the structure of world involvement. It may then be asked: is not temporality a feature of existence conceived in terms of the relation of subjectivity to time? What is the relationship of time to the cognizing subject? or,

1Further implications of this perspective for consciousness and the temporal process will be worked out in detail at a later stage. See infra, p. 256.
How is time related to the subject? But then, is time anything other than the relation itself, or to be more precise, the structure of relation of the things to things and things to subject. This aspect of time as the structure of relatedness of things and beings of the empirical world, is an undeniable fact. Neither Sāmkhya-Yogā nor Abhidharma Buddhism would deny the empirical reality of time conceived as the structure of temporal relatedness.

The basic issue, however, still eludes us. Granting that the empirical time is the structure of the relatedness of things and beings which are perceived as constantly changing and in a relationship of priority and posteriority, we still have to ask the question of the relation of this structure to the subject as world-involved. Denial of the substantive reality of time as transcendental principle in favour of a conception of structure of temporal relationship does not exonerate us from seeking the answer to the question of the relationship of this structure to the subject which is intrinsically enmeshed in the structure.

Now the question of the relationship of the subjectivity to temporal structure can be approached in a variety of ways: The structure itself may be conceived in terms of a receptum in which the subject is situated; or the structure may be conceived as a function of a synthetic activity of the subject which is transcendent to it and constitutes the structure; or finally, that the structure of temporality is identified with the structure of subjectivity. In other words the alternatives open to us are either that the subject is contained in the time, or that the time is in the subject, or that the subject is time, i.e.,
subjectivity is the temporal structure.\(^1\) Both Sāmkhya-Yogā and Abhidharma Buddhism would contribute to the third alternative on grounds which will become obvious in the sequel during the course of the treatment of the subject. But the following may be said by way of a critique of the other alternatives. Any attempt to grasp the essence of temporality as a phenomenologically given fact in terms of these two alternatives would lead to some inexorable difficulties and implications for the subject as the structure of world involvement. The first alternative has to be excluded as a philosophically viable alternative perhaps for the very reason that the position makes a philosophical questioning of the problem of temporality impossible. A subject which is essentially in time and is encased in it cannot, by the nature of case, reflect upon the structure of which it is an element. A subject which is contained in time, must of necessity be contained in the moment of present; while time is the structure of the relationship in which stand things and beings in the relationship of priority and posteriority, the subject which is exhausted in this relationship in the moment of present cannot comprehend past and future. If it necessarily and totally is contained in the moment of present, then it cannot contemplate on temporality as exemplifying the relationship of priority and posteriority of past and future. Subject, then, must not be conceived as that which is contained in time; it is necessary

\(^1\)For a detailed treatment of the three philosophical alternatives, see Sallis, John, "Time, Subjectivity, and the Phenomenology of Perception", The Modern Schoolman, 48, 1971, pp. 347-357. The treatment of the subject in this section draws up the conceptual apparatus proposed in this paper.
for the subject not to be himself situated in it, in order to be able to be present in intention to the past as to the future".\textsuperscript{1}

The other alternative looks at temporal structure as a function of synthetic activity of the a-temporal subject. This alternative suggests that temporality is a constitutive activity of the subject which somehow "unfolds or constitutes time."\textsuperscript{2} Now, the difficulty inherent in this position must be clear. A subject which is the transcendent condition of temporal constitution must of necessity remain external to the temporal structure. Total externality of the subject is an ideal condition of the subject that the Śāṃkhyā-Yoga proposes. The subject as transcendence must be free from all the vicissitudes of the temporal structure. But the subject which is totally external to the temporal structure cannot be the constitutive subject. In other words the constituting subject and the subject which is the transcendent condition of all constitution and reflection must be placed in two different realms.

However, the two subjects cannot be totally separated and be independent if the possibility of the transcendence of temporality as a function of reflective activity is to be retained. If the problem of transcendence is to be explained, instead of being explained away by declaring the realm of temporality as illusory, there is only one option open, namely to admit a dialectical contact between the two realms. The point of that

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\item Ibid.
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contact, both for Sāmkhya-Yogā and Ābhidharmika Buddhism, as we shall show, is the structure of reflection as an act of consciousness. This subject as the structure of temporal constitution must also retain a dialectical contact with the realm of transcendence, which in the case of Sāmkhya-Yogā is Puruṣa, and in Ābhidharmika-Buddhism is Nirvāṇa.

The problematic of the relationship of the subject and the temporal structure can only be resolved if and only if we can show that subject as the structure of world constitution must be identical with the structuring of temporality. This is the intermediary position, a philosophical alternative which seeks to avoid the two extremes of situating subject in time or placing subject totally transcendent to time. The two alternatives, in a sense exemplify the two approaches to time which may be described in conventional terms, that of realism and idealism respectively. The first position is prepared to grant temporal structure an independent reality of its own, with the capacity of complete subsumption of the subject. The second alternative makes temporal structure a mere synthetic act of consciousness, denying the objectivity of temporal becomingness any reality status. In either case, consciousness of temporality becomes a problematic: in the first case because time is transcendent to consciousness, and in the second case because consciousness is transcendent to time. The philosophical position that we argue for takes its point of departure, not merely from the failings of these two positions, but also from the more positive ground of the possibility of dialectical interplay between the two.

The intermediary position operates with the datum of the temporal process as the datum for a cognizing consciousness. In that sense, it
partakes the character both of realism and idealism. It seeks to retain the significant element of the first alternative which in effect situates the subject in the present. This situating of the world involved subject in the present is a necessary condition for the temporal experience that the subject will have. It seems to be in answer to specifically to the requirement underscored in the following statement:

The subject must in a genuine sense be in the present. Time exists for me because I have a present. If I am able to have access to a past or a future, such access must be gained not by abandoning my present but rather from out of my present.¹

However, this situating of the subject in the present must be combined with an insight into the possibility of the subject performing the synthetic activity in the present. Only then the present can become the meeting ground of past and future. Only then temporal structure can truly be grasped as the structure of the manifestation of the becomingness of being. If subject is unable to perform this synthetic activity in the present then the subject will remain encased in a block universe with no experience of change and becomingness. Thus the third alternative seeks to identify the structure of subjectivity with the structure of temporality.

This position is considered extremely significant from the point of view of the present study. It seeks to retain the autonomy of the subject as consciousness. Without this autonomy the possibility of reflection or contemplation as structure of world transcendence will have to be ruled out. On the other hand, temporal process itself is not

¹Sallis, John, op. cit., p. 351.
dismissed as a fictitious construction of consciousness. It is an objective fact. Reality of the 'moment' is an objective reality which cannot be reduced to mere projections of consciousness. However, the subject through its synthetic activity enters into an intricate relationship with the world of change and becomingness. In this act of relating the subject assumes the character of temporality. Since this relatedness is intrinsic to the structure of world participation the empiric subject is essentially and intrinsically temporal. At the same time, through this very character of relating to the object the subject also exemplifies transience.

A Note on the Method

The problem of method in investigating a theme pertaining to Indian philosophy is a subject of considerable obscurity. Without being unduly dogmatic one can formulate the requirement in this context as under: the method of approach or investigation must be adequate to the nature of the content. In the classical writings of Indian Philosophy this question has received a very careful consideration. The metaphysical differences between the rival philosophical points of view are foreshadowed in the context of a discussion of the problem of methods and criteria. Without going into these issues, and in the present case our task being interpreting Indian Philosophical themes in contemporary setting, we may conceptualize the method that is adopted in the present study as the method of critical reconstruction.
In stating that the method is primarily critical we do not intend to emphasise polemics or set an undue premium on arguments and counter arguments. The latter could by themselves be themes for investigation as part of the study of the logical structure of statements and their refutations as understood by the Indian thinkers. But this is not our concern. Critical method is employed with a view to locate, isolate and situate a particular concept or body of concepts or ideas in the context of the basic ontological perspective of the systems under investigation. As part of this enterprise surely it will be attempted to delineate the major argument of each system in an expository way by situating it against the major objections and challenges to which they are susceptible. Attention will be paid both to the structure and the language of the arguments but always in terms of its basic ontological orientation vis-a-vis their ontological positions pitted against it. Critical reconstruction is conceived to involve the imaginative task of letting the system speak for itself by weighing other positions at variance with it.

A critical investigation surely does not have to be an expression of ones own philosophical preferences or biases. But it is not also bias free and completely objective. In the present case it is intended expressly to bring out the bias of the systems under investigation. Our exposition of the problem in specific context will be an attempt to indicate the basic ontological "bias" of the systems that are taken up for consideration in terms or by means of an analysis of the directly relevant texts. It is our hope that it is only in that way that we will let the meaning of each system's argument emerge on its own.
To that extent the method of approach may be described as descriptive and non-judgemental, a method which has come to be identified in recent times as phenomenological. Nor are we confining ourselves to any specific form of the development of this method. We employ this method in its most generalized form whereby critical reflection, by enabling specific meaning structures to disclose themselves in the light of their intentionality, also enters into a specific kind of relationship with them. It becomes more acutely aware of the meaning structures which it intends to grasp, and by the same token, it becomes part and parcel of that. We can thus call our critical reflection phenomenological if we keep in mind that the phenomenological method is:

a method for changing our relation to the world, for becoming more acutely aware of it. But at the same time and by that very fact, it is already a certain attitude vis-a-vis the world, or more exactly a certain attitude vis-a-vis our relation to the world. Phenomenology combines the most radical break with out ordinary and natural attitudes vis-a-vis the world (in this sense it is an ascesis of the mind) with the deepening or the consecration of this original attitude (in this sense, it is respect for the real and engagement in the world). Consciousness takes its distance with regard to things: it gives itself complete freedom in respect to them, but one realizes at once that this is in order to be more faithful to our essential insertion in the world..... The phenomenological method thus permits pushing on simultaneously and with one movement towards the roots of subjectivity and the foundation of the objective world.1

What is attempted in the following sections may be described as exemplifying a phenomenological approach in a more limited sense of as reflection on the meaning structures with the express object of becoming more acutely aware of them.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL AND TEXTUAL SETTING OF ŚĀMKHYA-YOGA

Pre-Classical Śāmkhya-Yoga

The historical question is not the primary concern of this study. A precise historical investigation of the chronological relationship between the different stages of development of Śāmkhya-Yoga thought, in itself one of the most intriguing chapters in the history of Indian thought, is beyond the scope of this study. However, drawing heavily upon the findings of previous researchers in this field we will try to present a systematic and hopefully coherent picture of the doctrinal development of the system under investigation. The object of the study is to identify, and delimit the area of Śāmkhya-Yoga so that a proper perspective is gained for investigating the meaning of temporality within Śāmkhya-Yoga.

There have been several sincere and partly fruitful attempts to trace Śāmkhya to the earliest traditions of Indian philosophical speculations. True, any systematic exposition of Śāmkhya system is not to be found in the earlier texts of Vedas, Brāhmaṇas and Upaṇiṣads. But certain ideas and doctrines of these older philosophical literature might have

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been appropriated and transmuted in the later Śāmkhya philosophical tradition. Within Upanisadic tradition, earliest reference to Śāmkhya-Yoga concepts may be traced to *Katha Upanisad*.\(^1\) However, the ideas and thought, which may specifically be called to belong to the Śāmkhya-Yoga tradition, are reflected in rather more discernible way in the *Śvetasvātara Upaniṣad*.\(^2\) A more elaborate and distinctly Śāmkhya tradition with theistic tinge appears in the *Aṭṭarbuddhaya Śāṁhitā*\(^3\) and the *Caraka Śāṁhitā*.\(^4\) The most discernible presence of a pre-classical śāmkhya tradition is to be noted in the Mokṣadharma and the *Bhagavadgītā* which form parts of the great epic, *Mahābhārata*.\(^5\) Both the texts have been recognized by scholars as providing a basis for an understanding of the earlier phases of the development of the Śāmkhya thought. Though the later classical Śāmkhya tradition can be differentiated from the tradition of the epic in significant ways, their close affinity cannot be minimized. It is here for the first time in the history of Indian thought, that the Śāmkhya-Yoga concepts and ideas figure significantly and abundantly and one may even suggest that these constituted the

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\(^1\) Johnston, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82; also Keith, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-19.


immediate contexts for the formulation of classical Sāṃkhya-Yoga.

We have tried to spell out in briefest possible way, the pre-classical Sāṃkhya context of the later development. However, the classical Sāṃkhya tradition considers itself as growing out of the tradition of Śaṣṭītāṇtra, a text lost to the tradition long ago. The Sāṃkhya kārikā claims that it represents the ideas of the Śaṣṭītāṇtra and the Ahirbudhyāṇa śāhīta gives an account of Sāṃkhya based on the Śaṣṭītāṇtra. The Ahirbudhyāṇa samhita and the Yuktidipika assign the authorship to Kapila, the mythical sage, who is supposed to be the earliest teacher of the sāṃkhya school of thought. According to Jayamangala, Pāñcasaṅkha was the author of this work. Vācaspatimisra on the other hand, suggests that it is the work of Varsaganyā. Just as the tradition is divided on the question of the authorship of the text, it also offers varying versions of the content. Nothing definite can be said about the text on the basis of available evidences, except that probably Śaṣṭītāṇtra was an old Sāṃkhya-Yoga text which dealt with basic Sāṃkhya-Yoga thought and divided them under sixty categories or sub-headings.

For the purpose of this study, it is crucial to make a distinction


2 The Sāṃkhya Kārikā, Kārikā 72.

3 See Keith, op. cit., p. 74.

4 See infra, pp. 28-29.

5 See infra, p. 30.

6 See infra, pp. 29-30.
between the Classical and pre-Classical Sāmkhya-Yoga.¹ The line of demarcation consists of the systematic exposition of the Classical Sāmkhya thought in the Sāmkhya Kārikā of Īśvara-kṛṣṇa and of Classical Yoga in the Yoga Sūtra of Patanjali. The treatment of Sāmkhya-Yoga in the literature pre-dating Sāmkhya Kārikā and Yoga Sūtra is excluded from our purview.² On the other hand, later commentorial literature (Bhāṣyas and vyākhyaś) on Sāmkhya Kārikā and Yoga Sūtra are considered as representing a continuous tradition.

¹In this work we have followed the classification laid down by Mircea Eliade, Yoga: Immortality and Freedom, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969. There have been other attempts at classification; S. N. Dasgupta makes a threefold classification of Sāmkhya: 1. the first stage is a theistic one, details of which are lost, but is preserved in a modified form by the Patanjali School of Sāmkhya (Yoga); 2. the atheistic Sāmkhya as represented by Pañcasikha; and 3. finally the atheistic modification of Sāmkhya in the orthodox Sāmkhya System (see Dasgupta, S. N., A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951). S. Radhakrishnan tends to disagree with Dasgupta and maintains that both Asuri and Pañcasikha adhere to a theistic Sāmkhya and believe in the supremacy of Brahman. According to Radhakrishnan there are important differences between Pañcasikha and Sāmkhya (see Radhakrishnan, S., The Indian Philosophy, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927, p. 252). In a recent study, J. G. Larson makes a fourfold classification: 1. the earliest speculations as contained in the speculative Vedic hymns and oldest prose Upanişads; 2. proto-Sāmkhya speculations, including the middle Upanişads, Caraka Samhita, Buddha Carita, the Bhagavadgita, Nok sadhrama and Mahabharata; 3. Classical Sāmkhya consisting of Sāmkhya Kārikā, the Yoga Sūtra and the related commentaries; 4. and finally later Sāmkhya thought present in Sāmkhyapravacan Sūtra and the commentaries of Aniruddha, Mahādeva and Vijnanabhinibhøsa together with the Tattvasamāsasūtra. Larson, J. G., Classical Sāmkhya, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1969.

of the Classical Sāṁkhya-Yoga thought. As integral to this classical Sāṁkhya-Yoga tradition are considered other later texts and treatises following the first formulation of the basic tenets of the school of thought in the two primary texts mentioned, the justification being that they maintain allegiance to the basic ontological perspectives of the classical tradition.

The Sāṁkhya Kārikā and Commentaries

The Sāṁkhya Kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa is the earliest extent systematic formulation of the Samkhya thought. The Kārikā itself, however, does not claim to be the original work of the school. The text concludes by stating that the subject matter of the Kārikā is actually a concise statement of the thought of the Sāstitantra. The Kārikā does not provide much information on the identity of the author except that he belonged to the tradition of the Sāṁkhya expounded by Kapila and continued by Asūrī and Pañcaśikha. According to a Chinese tradition, Īśvarakṛṣṇa is supposed to have belonged to a brahmin family of Kauśika. Following the Chinese

1 All the references to the text are from the Sāṁkhya Kārika of Īśvarakṛṣṇa with Gaudpādhāsya, (ed. & trans.) Mainkar, T. G., Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1972. There are several excellent translations of this text.

2 There is controversy among scholars on this Karika. The tradition itself is divided on the authenticity of this Karika. According to Suvarnāsaṃpapti, a commentary of Sāṁkhya Kārikā (see infra p. 30) the kārikā is an interpolation by some intelligent person (iha medhāvī Kascidāha aryam Yuktī Dipikā (see Infra p. 28) too introduces the kārikā with 'āha ca' implying that the kārikā in question has been uttered by someone else. But all other commentators have accepted the kārikā to be the part of the original text.

3 Sāṁkhya Kārikā, 71.

tradition, based on Paramārtha—the Buddhist monk who translated the Kārikā in Chinese and also wrote a commentary on it during the 6th century A.D., Takakusu tends to identify Ṣvārkṛṣṇa with Vīndhyāvāsi.¹ Both A. B. Keith and Richard Garbe also identify the author of the Kārikā with Vīndhyāvāsi.² Though a little cautious in his approach to the problem of the authorship of the Kārikā, Radhakrishnan too does not seem to disagree with this identification.³ However, their contentions do not seem sustainable by the evidence from the Indian tradition. Günaratna in his Tarkabhāṣya considers Vīndhyāvāsi and Ṣvārkṛṣṇa as two different persons.⁴ The author of the Yuktidīpikā too mentions Ṣvārkṛṣṇa and Vīndhyāvāsi as two different Sāṃkhya teachers.⁵ Svapneśvara suggests that Ṣvārkṛṣṇa was none other than the great poet Kālidāsa.⁶ This contention of Svapneśvara also finds support in Ghanāśyāma who says that the name of the author of Raghuvamsa Śākuntala, and Kumārasambhava was Ṣvārkṛṣṇa Bhartṛmīdaḥ.⁷ Kumārila points out that the Sāṃkhya teacher named Vīndhyāvāsi did not accept the notion of

¹Ibid., pp. 47–51.
⁴Günaratna in Tarkarahsyadīpikā, pp. 102, 104 (vide Ibid., p. 254, n. 8)
⁶Ṣvārkṛṣṇanāma Kālidāśa Kṛtah kārikāḥ, vide Radhakrishnan, op. cit., n. 1, p. 255.
subtle body, a concept so clearly mentioned in Sāmkhya Kārikā. All these evidences from the Indian sources seem to run counter to the thesis of identification of Īśvākṛṣṇa with Vīndhyāvāśī. We do not, however, consider these evidences from the traditional Indian sources conclusive and incontrovertible. A final word on this matter will have to await further researches. Until a more thorough investigation of comparative nature of the writings of Īśvākṛṣṇa, Vīndhyāvāśī and Kālidāsa is undertaken we will have to remain in dark about the identity of the author of the Kārikā.

These conflicting claims about the identity of the author of the Sāmkhya Kārikā, however, does not disprove the antiquity of the work. It obviously belongs to a period prior to the 6th century when Paramārtha translated and wrote commentary on the Kārikā in Chinese. At the present stage of historical research any statement beyond that will be conjectural. But, while no positive statement can be made about the exact date of the Kārikā, the ideas as present in the Kārikā seem to have been well known and assimilated by the scholars of that period. One can legitimately hypothesize that the ideas of the Classical Sāmkhya were already systematized and well articulated by the third century A.D. Moreover, if we take the suggestions of

1 Radhakrishnan, S., op. cit., p. 225.

2 See Keith, op. cit., p. 69. He is of the opinion that the Kārikā belongs to the 4th century A.D. This, of course, is based on the assumption that Īśvākṛṣṇa and Vīndhyāvāśī were identical persons and that Vasubandhu is supposed to have written a refutation of the Kārikā authored by Vīndhyāvāśī. Radhakrishnan places the Kārikā in the third century A.D. He maintains that Īśvākṛṣṇa definitely preceded Vasubandhu, and date of Vasubandhu is now assigned by scholars to the 4th century A.D. Das Gupta also believes that the Kārikā was composed somewhere about 200 A.D. Suggestions of Belvalkar and others that the Kārikā belongs to an earlier period does not seem to carry much weight.
Keith and Dasgupta seriously then probably the date of the Śāmkhya Kārikā should be placed between 200-300 A.D. Both of them are of the opinion that the Śāmkhya Kārikā preceded the composition of the Yoga Sūtra which evidently presupposes the Śāmkhya metaphysics as articulated in the Śāmkhya Kārikā itself. Even on the strength of the Chinese tradition it is reasonable to assume that Īśvākṛṣṇa was a senior contemporary of Vasubandhu and Vindhyāvasi. Date of Vasubandhu is now almost certainly placed by the scholars in the 4th century A.D. The Śāmkhya Kārikā then cannot be a later text. Even though one cannot be very dogmatic on this point, but considering the significant similarities between the views of early Sarvāstivādin about the nature and structure of temporal determinations as recorded by Vasubandhu and the classical Śāmkhya-Yoga, one is tempted to suggest that the early Sarvāstivādins like Dharmatrātā, Ghoṣaka, Buddhadeva and and Vasumitra had before them the Śāmkhya-Yoga paradigm. Vasubandhu himself had indeed yielded to such a suggestion on the extreme congruity between their views and that of Śāmkhya-Yoga. If one accepts this argument then the date of the Classical Śāmkhya-Yoga will have to be placed during the 2nd century A.D. 

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1 Both Keith and Dasgupta maintain that the composition of the Yoga Sūtra seems to have followed the crystallization of classical Śāmkhya thought as found in the Śāmkhya Kārikā. The assumption seems to be well founded in as much the general ontological presuppositions of the Kārikā are clearly discernible in the Yoga Sūtra. See Keith, op. cit., pp. 54-59; also Dasgupta, op. cit., pp. 228-229.


Through all these confusions about the identity and the date of the author one fact remains unquestionable: the Śāmkhya Kārikā has continued as the principal work of the Śāmkhya school of thought in known history. Several commentaries were written on it at different times. These commentaries, despite certain differences in their outlook and at times varying theological allegiances, have remained by and large true to the basic ontological perspective of the Śāmkhya Kārikā.

Gaudapāda's Śāmkhya Kārikā Bhāṣya is the most important and probably the earliest commentary on the Śāmkhya Kārikā. For our own purposes we take his discussion of the role of antahkaranaś in the appropriation of temporal determinations as providing an important link with the later explicit rejection of the transcendental reality of one, unitary and single Time. His elaboration of the Īśvarakṛṣṇa's distinction between the mode of functioning of the internal and external organs in terms of their relationship to temporal conditioning merits special attention.

Regarding the identity of the author one need not take seriously the suggestion that he and the well-known Vedāntin Gaudapāda were one and the same person. Though there have been some attempts to find a connection

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1 There are several editions of this text. All the references are to the Śāmkhya Kārikā of Īśāvarakṛṣṇa with Gaudapāda's Bhāṣya, (ed. and trans.) Mainkar, T. G., Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1964.

2 Ibid., p. 136-138.

between this Gaudapāda and the Gaudapāda who wrote a Karikā on Māndukyopanisad, it is well established that the two were different individuals.

The latter shows definite Vedāntic leanings, while the former remains loyal to the classical Sāmkhya position. The date of this work can easily be placed in the 8th century since Vacaspati Miśra shows acquaintance with this work in his Sāmkhyatattvakaumudi which belongs to the 9th century.¹

The Yuktidipikā (authorship undecided)² is an extremely important work with special ramifications for this study. The commentator here has taken a specific stand on the problem of the nature and status of time and temporal relations. The text takes a decisive stand against Vaiśeṣikas by rejecting the theory assigning an independent ontological status to time as a transcendental principle. The authorship of the text remains clouded by vague claims from different editors of the text. P. B. Chakravartī thinks that it might have been written in response to Vasubandhu's Paramārthasaptasāti.³ R. C. Pandey assigns the authorship to one Rājā (Bhojarāja) and identifies the work as the lost commentary called Rājavārtika mentioned and quoted by Vacaspati Miśra.⁴ Both Chakravartī and Pandey are inclined to accept that Yuktidipikā predates Vacaspati Miśra's Tattvakaumudi and Gaudapada's Samkhya Karikā Bhasya. We do not have any positive evidence either to support or

¹Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 255.

²Yuktidipikā, (ed.) Pandey, R. C., Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1967; Also see Yuktidipikā, (ed.) Chakravartī, Pulinbehari, Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing and Publishing House, 1938. There are some differences in readings in the two editions.


⁴Pandey, R. C., op. cit., p. xv.
contradict these contentions. Value of the work cannot be over-emphasized specially as a source of informations on different schools and teachers of Śāmkhya system as well on certain intricate points of debate between Śāmkhya and Buddhist philosophies.  

The Śāmkhyatattvakaumudi by Vacaspati Mīśra 2 is a work of special significance for the present study. The author of the text takes specific stand against the Nyāya-Vaismaka's postulation of the reality of a single, undivided and unitary time as the transcendental reality independent of the act of cognition and experience. Against the Vaisesikas the text suggests that the temporal differentiation can be accounted for by reference to activities and events themselves. The category of Time is an unwanted reification to explain temporal determinations. 3 Modern scholarship is generally unanimous in holding Vacaspati Mīśra to be the author of this text. 4 He is supposed to be the disciple of Mārtandatilaka Svāmin. A well-known treatise on Śāmkhya philosophy Tattvakaumudi itself has been subject of several commentaries on it. 5 The date of the text is fixed beyond doubt to be the 9th century A.D. on the testimony of the author himself.

1Ibid., pp. 68, 73, 132.


3Ibid., pp. 112.

4Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 255; Dasgupta, op. cit., p. 212; and Keith, op. cit., p. 70.

5For different commentaries on Tattva-Kaumudi see Mainkar, T. G., op. cit., pp. 6-7.
There is another minor commentary on the Śāmkhya Kārikā called the Jayamangalā. This is supposed to have been written by Śāmkara. This Śāmkara is not to be confused with the great Vedantic thinker, Śāmkarācharya. The commentary in certain respects follows the Yuktidīpikā reading of the Kārikā and differs from both Gaṇḍapāda and Vacaspati Misra on certain points. It is one of the minor commentaries of lesser doctrinal and philosophical value.

The Suvarnasaptati is a commentary on Śāmkhya-Kārikā. It is not available in original Sanskrit. It has been recently restored to Sanskrit from its Chinese translation by Professor N. Aiyawami Sastrī. Belvalkar suggests that Suvarnasaptati is the same as the Māṭharavrtti. Professor Sastrī on the other hand is inclined to give it an independent status. But R. C. Pandey finds some striking similarity between the Suvarnaspatati and Māṭharavrtti and agrees with Belvelakar in holding that the two texts are identical. One important point to be noted in this commentary

2 Pandey, R. C., op. cit., p. xvi.
3 Eliade, op. cit., p. 369.
7 Pandey, op. cit., p. xvii.
is the absence of the karika 63 (rūpaiah Saptabhireva tu etc.) from the text. It also suggests that the karika 72, which says that the Sāṁkhyas Kārikā presents the basic doctrine of the Sastitantra, is interpolated by some intelligent person (iha medhāvi kaścidāha).

Māṭharavṛtti is yet another original commentary on Sāṁkhyas Kārikā on which scholars have made contradictory claims about the authorship of the work. According to Belvalkar this is probably the original sanskrit text of which the Paramārtha's commentary in Chinese is only a translation. It has been suggested that Gauḍapāda's bhāṣya is an abridgement of this text. But Radhakrishnan differs from this contention. He points out that Mathra's is a vṛtti which traditionally is preceded by a Bhāṣya. Moreover, it is important to note that Gauḍapādabhāṣya does not comment on the last three kārikās whereas Māṭharavṛtti does. It is conceivable that the Māṭharavṛtti is a later work.

The Sāṁkhyas Sūtra and Commentaries

Sāṁkhyas Sūtra by Kapila: Besides Sāṁkhyas Kārikā and commentaries on it enumerated above the Sāṁkhyas Sūtra or the Sāṁkhyas Pravacana Sūtra and

1. N. Aiyaswami Sastrī maintains that the Kārikā 63 is not genuine since it has not been translated by Paramārtha. See Sastrī, N. Aiyaswami, op. cit., p. xliii.


4. Māṭharavṛtti is a work of Sāṁkhyas philosophy of which Gauḍapāda Bhāṣya is reported to be an abridgement. But as a rule, vṛttis come later than the bhāsyas, and that the Māṭharavṛtti comments on the last three verses of the S.K., makes for its later date. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 255, n. 2.

commentaries on it are our chief sources of important philosophical issues that concern the Śāṁkhyā school of thought. Tradition attributes the authorship of Sūtra to Kapila which for reasons to be seen presently need not be taken seriously. Nor do we think that the claim of Svapnesvāra is well grounded when he assigns the Śāṁkhyā Pravacana Sūtra to Pančasikha and traces its attribution to Kapila to the fact that the latter initiated the tradition.\textsuperscript{1} The authorship of the Śāṁkhyā Sūtra remains a mystery and subject to educated guess only. The text has generally been assigned to 14th century A.D. Various considerations have weighed in dating the text during this period. Gunaratna, writing in 14th century, does not refer to the Śāṁkhyā Sūtra although he takes into consideration most of the existing Śāṁkhyā literature.\textsuperscript{2} Vācaspati Misra does not show any acquaintance with the Sūtra literature. Alberuni, who did most of his work in India during the second half of 11th century, shows familiarity with works of Īsvarakṛṣṇa and Gaudapāda but is totally unaware of Śāṁkhyā Sūtra. Madhava in his Sarvadarśanasamgraha does not make any reference to Śāṁkhyā Sūtra and bases his account of Śāṁkhyā thought exclusively on the Śāṁkhyā Kārika.\textsuperscript{3} Equally important is the fact that no bhāṣya (commentary) on the Sūtra appears before 16th century. Moreover the text shows unmistakable familiarity with most of the existing philosophical systems against which it also takes stand. This goes to show its lateness.

\textsuperscript{1}Svapnesvāra in Kaumudiprabhā, vide Radhakrishnan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 255, n. 3.

\textsuperscript{2}Vide Dasgupta, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 222, and Radhakrishnan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 255, n. 4.

\textsuperscript{3}Keith, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 90-91; also Radhakrishnan, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 255-256.
The work itself contains six chapters. The first three chapters are essentially expository and are concerned with articulating basic \S\m\k\h\y\a\n\ position. The fourth chapter contains some illustrative stories and parables, fifth chapter is basically polemical directed towards other schools of thought; and sixth chapter offers a summary of the basic position. On the basis of this structure of the text Dasgupta tends to suggest that the text may be based on a late edition of the \S\a\s\t\i\t\t\a\n\t\r\a\s\s\a\s\a\n\a\stra mentioned in the last but one verse of the \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ K\a\r\i\k\a\. Dasgupta writes:

It is said at the end of the \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ K\a\r\i\k\a\ of \I\s\v\a\r\a\k\r\s\n\a\ that the k\a\r\i\k\e\s give an exposition of the \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ doctrine excluding the refutations of the doctrines of other people and excluding the parables attached to the original \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ works - the \S\a\s\t\i\t\t\a\n\t\r\a\s\s\a\s\a\n\a\stra. The \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ S\u\t\r\a\s contain refutations of other doctrines and also a number of parables. It is not improbable that these were collected from some earlier \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ work which is now lost to us. It may be that it was done from some later edition of the \S\a\s\t\i\t\t\a\n\t\r\a\s\s\a\n\a\stra.....

The lateness of the text, however, does not minimise its value as an important sourcebook of the basic \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ position. It is true that this text does show some leanings towards Upanisadic thought, but in essential it has preserved the classical \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ ontological perspective. Even the glimpses of Upanisadic monism in \S\a\m\k\h\y\a\ S\u\t\r\a\ are only minimal and marginal and emanates from its concern to relate itself to earlier Brahm\n\nical scriptures. But still it does not accept the scriptural injunction uncritically and unequivocally. It is only in the commentarial literature on the S\u\t\r\a\ that these concerns are more conspicuously present. There too the commentators on the S\u\t\r\a\ face the uphill task of reconciling the

\footnote{Dasgupta, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 222.}
distinctly atheistic position of Sāmkhya with the theistic Vedānta. As Dasgupta points out about Vijñānabhikṣu, who wrote his commentary on the Sūtra, that he "could not avoid the distinctly atheistic arguments of the Sāmkhya Sūtras, but he remarked that these were used only with a view to showing that the Sāmkhya system gave such a rational explanation that even without the intervention of Isvāra it could explain all facts."\(^1\) We will have more to say on Vijñānabhikṣu when dealing with his Sāmkhya Pravacana Bhāṣya.

It is true that the cosmological interests of the pre-classical Sāmkhya find themselves reiterated in the Sūtra literature. But despite these concerns with the doctrine of the periodic creation and destruction of the universe the Sūtra does not look at the Sarga doctrine in cosmological terms alone as it has been suggested by some scholars who have based their arguments solely on the authority of Vijñānabhikṣu's commentary on the Sūtra.\(^2\) We will be adverting to this topic later on.

In the Sāmkhya Sūtra itself we can distinguish two distinct tendencies: a concern with the cosmological evolution and involution and a truthful allegiance to Sāmkhya Kārikā's conception of Buddhāsarga as non-cosmological understanding of man's world. Here again commentarial literature display significant differences. On many issues the two major commentators, Vijñānabhikṣu and Aniruddha, give quite different interpretations; and one is left in confusion as to whose words are to be taken to

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 223.

\(^2\) Keith is a case in point. His entire account of Sūtra literature is primarily based on Vijñānabhikṣu. See Keith, op. cit., p. 92 ff.
represent the classical Śāmkhya tradition. The only plausible norm by which to resolve the issue is by the extent of its compatibility or congruity with the Śāmkhya ontology as developed in the Kārīka. Using this criterion one can hope to see whether the commentator on the Śūtra is expounding a classical Śāmkhya position or whether he is succumbing to the temptation of providing a rationalization for some other metaphysical or theological tradition to which he may be predisposed. For the purposes of this study, we have considered Śūtra literature as constituting a continuum with the classical Śāmkhya of the Śāmkhya Kārīka. This is not to suggest that there are no important differences between the Śāmkhya Kārīka and the Śāmkhya Śūtra. We have already made allusions to some of the points of disagreements. However, the degree of agreement on the issues of fundamental importance weigh heavily against the points of divergences. Accordingly, in our evaluation of the philosophical and doctrinal value of the Śūtra literature we, therefore, tend to agree with Dasgupta when he observes: "there is no reason to suppose that the Śāmkhya doctrine found in the Śūtra differs in any important way from the Śāmkhya doctrine as found in the Śāmkhya Karīka."

It is equally reassuring to note that Keith too, despite his reservations about the claim of the Śūtra being a pure exposition of Śāmkhya concedes that "the Śūtra is a source of considerable importance and may contain a good deal of old matter."²

Coming to the commentatorial literature on the Śāmkhya Śūtra we have

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¹Dasgupta, op. cit., p. 223.

²Keith, op. cit., p. 92.
information about at least four commentaries on the Sāmkhya Sūtra:

1. Aniruddha's Sāmkhyasūtravṛtti belonging to the fifteenth century;

2. The Sāmkhya Vṛtti Sara of Mahadeva Saraswati also known as Vendānti Mahādeva of 1600 A.D. This is primarily an abridgement of Aniruddha's work and contains some original remarks by the author;

3. The Sāmkhya Pravacana Bhāṣya written by Vijnānabhikṣu sometime during the 16th century A.D.;

4. Laghusāmkhyasūtravṛtti by Nagesa Bhatta Upadhyaya. This is an abstract of Vijnānabhikṣu's work and is not of much philosophical value.

Aniruddha's commentary along with Vijnānabhikṣu's Sāmkhya Pravacana Bhāṣya are the two most important works on Sāmkhya Sūtra that we have taken into consideration in the present study. Vijnānabhikṣu, as it is well known, inclines with deliberation in his understanding of the doctrine toward a theistic Sāmkhya or Yoga. In the words of Radhakrishnan he tends to "minimize the distinction between the Sāmkhya and the theistic Vedānta, which he regards as the genuine Vedānta, while the Advaita Vedānta is its modern falsification". The theistic leaning of Vijnānabhikṣu accounts for some important differences between his interpretation of Sūtra and that of Aniruddha's.

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It may be instructive to refer to one significant example of the differences between their approach to the Sūtra. Sūtra 3.10 reads: "there is distinction of individuals, through the diversity of dessert (Vyaktibhedah karmvisēṣāt)." Commenting on this Sūtra from Vedanta position Viṣṇunabhiṣkū observes: "Although, at the beginning of the creation, there was but one Subtile Body in the shape of that investment Hiranyakarbhā, still subsequently, moreover, there becomes a division of it into individuals, a plurality, partitively in the shape of individuals...." Thus Viṣṇunabhiṣkū finds in Sūtra an occasion to legitimate his own Vedāntic leanings and his hope to reconcile the Śāmkhya-Yoga with the scriptural utterances. Anmi-rudha, however, does not find the Sūtra problematic at all; and he contents himself with simply reading in Sūtra what is in conformity with the classical śāmkhya position - that the differences among the individuals may be accounted for by the differences in the karma (actions) of each individual.

The point at issue is that in approaching the Sūtra literature one has to exercise a certain amount of discretion and has to be extra cautious in interpreting them. It is for these reasons that in the present study we have subjected the commentatorial literature on the Sūtra to a more rigorous analysis and have refused to accept the statements of the

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1 Śāmkhya Aphorism of Kapila, op. cit., p. 231.

2 Śāmkhya-Pravacana-Bhasya, op. cit., p. 90; "yady api sargā-dāu Hiranyakarbhā- pādhī-rupam ekam eke lingam, tathā 'pi tasya pascād vyakti-bheda vyakti-rūpenā 'nasto nānätvam bhavati...."

3 Śāmkhya Sūtra Vṛttih, op. cit., p. 112.
commentators simply at their face value. In each case, the operating criterion had been the reconciliability of the statement to the classical Samkhya ontological perspective as presented in Sāmkhya Kārikā.

The Yoga Sūtra and Related Literature

Coming to the Yoga literature we find ourselves, luckily, in a less controversial region. Both the tradition and the modern scholarship is unanimous in regarding Patanjali to be the author of the Yoga Sūtra. While the text is the earliest attempt to systematize the principle of Yoga, it would be wrong to assume that Patanjali was the initiator of this school of thought. Vācaspati and Vijnānabhaiku, who have extensively commented on the Vyāsabhāṣya on Yoga Sūtra, are in agreement in considering Patanjali to be the codifier of the Yoga Sūtra. According to Dasgupta, an analysis of the sūtras also brings the conviction that the sūtras do not show any original attempt, but a masterly and systematic compilation which was also supplemented by fitting contributions. The systematic manner also, in which the first three chapters are written by way of definition and clarification, shows that the materials were already in existence and that Patanjali only systematized them. It is important to note that Patanjali himself describes his work as "Anusāsana" implying that his work is not the earliest or the first formulation of the system. The text itself is divided into four sections or parts. The first


three sections are purely expository in nature, describing the doctrine of
the Yoga system with little polemical material. First section deals with
the nature and goal of concentration or contemplation (Samādhi); the se-
cond part discusses the ways of attaining this goal (sādhanā); and the
third section describes the supernatural powers (vibhūti) that the incum-
bent or the practitioner of Yoga may achieve. The fourth section deals with
the nature of liberation (kaivalya). It is here that we find the polemical
strands, an attempt to deal with other systems of Indian thought on the
terms of Yoga's own metaphysical position.

It is interesting to note that the word "iti", implying the end of
the work occurs at two places in the text; first at the end of the third
section and secondly at the end of the fourth section. On the basis of
this and the fact that most of the criticisms of other schools of thought
take place in the fourth section, Dasgupta suggests that the fourth section
on liberation is a later addition, and does not constitute an integral part
of the text. According to Dasgupta, "the most legitimate hypothesis seems to
be that the last chapter is a subsequent addition by a hand other than that
of Patanjali....."\(^1\)

Be as it may, we do not find any reason to dismiss the significance
of this section for the excellent reason that we find the general slant of
Śāmakhya-Yoga ontology is strictly maintained. Moreover, the discussion re-
latering to the problem of time in this section is in continuity with the po-
sition spelled out earlier. Sūtra 4.12 and 4.13 is in thematic continuity
with the sūtra 3.13; and sūtra 4.33 is a re-affirmation of the sūtra 3.52.

\(^1\)Dasgupta, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
The possibility of it's being a supplementary to the original work by the same author cannot be ruled out unless a very precise analysis of the style and the content proves to the contrary.

Date of the work as well as the identity of the author has been the centre of great controversy especially in view of the celebrated author of the grammatical work in *Mahābhāṣya* of *Pāṇini Sūtra* being also known by the same name. Woods is of the opinion that the two are not the same. He convincingly shows that there is no evidence to show any significant congruity between the language or the doctrinal position of the two Patanjalis.  

Keith too has expressed his reservations about the possibility of the two Patanjali's being identical persons. Radhakrishnan agreeing with Woods maintains that there is no incontrovertible evidence to prove the identity of the grammarian Patanjali with the author of the *Yoga Sūtra*. Dasgupta, however, is inclined to admit the possibility that the two Patanjalis were the same person. Thus he writes: "I have not been able to discover anything .... which can warrant us in holding that the two Patanjali's cannot be identified".

The following finding made in the course of our study could have some significant bearing on this issue. On the issue of the identity of two Patanjali's the present author would like to present an important

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2Keith, op. cit., p. 57.

3Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 341, n. 4.

4Dasgupta, op. cit., p. 232.
evidence against the possibility of the two Patanjalis being identical. While Dasgupta and others have based their case on claims made by some later Indian writers\(^1\) that the two Patanjalis are identical, we have found evidence going back probably to the 7th century where the tradition does not identify Patanjali the grammarian with the author of the Mahābhāṣya. We would like to distinguish this evidence from the already noted fact that the great grammarians like Bhartrhari, Kātyāyaṇa, Vāmanasūtra, and Nāgaiṣṭhāna do not refer to grammarian Patanjali as being also the author of the Yogasūtra.\(^2\)

While both Radhakrishnan and Dasgupta noted this they somehow overlooked a significant fact within the tradition of the Bhartrhari which tends to distinguish between the two Patanjalis. In Helaraja's commentary on the celebrated work of Bhartrhari, the Vākyapadīya, we find that he maintains a distinction between the traditions of Patanjali the grammarian and of Patanjali the expounder of Samkhya-Yoga thought. In his commentary on Kalasamudrāsa, which is the ninth section (sammudrāsa) of the third part (kānda) of the Vākyapadīya, Helaraja, while analysing and elaborating the Samkhya-Yoga view of time refers to the views expressed in the Yogasūtra-Bhāṣya as that of the tradition of Patanjali.\(^3\) But in the same work, when

\(^1\)Dasgupta, op. cit., pp. 230-231; Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 340; and Woods, op. cit., p. xii-xv.

\(^2\)Dasgupta, Ibid., p. 231; Radhakrishnan, Ibid., p. 341.

\(^3\)Vākyapadīyam Helarājajakṣprakāśākhyatikāyuktam, (ed.) Sastri, G.D., Varanasi: Krishna Das Gupta, 1928, pp. 361 and 365. It may also be noted that while introducing the karika 54 as presenting the view of Samkhya-Yoga, Helaraja uses the term "matāntare". This reading has been found in Varanasi edition. The Trivendra edition gives it as referring to the opinion of Mahābhāṣya. We tend to think that Varanasi edition gives a correct reading on this (p. 362), for nowhere else the commentator identifies Patanjali's tradition as that of Mahābhāṣya (on Pāṇini).
referring to Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini he desists from using the name of Patanjali altogether. He always refers to it as Bhāṣya or Mahābhāṣya,¹ almost as if taking special precaution not to confuse between the two Patanjalis. This may not be in itself very decisive but it clearly shows that the confusion between the two Patanjalis is perhaps only a creation of later period.

Regarding the controversy on the date of the work the findings of historical research seems to weigh heavily against Woods, who is inclined to place this work towards the close of 14th century.² Woods' main argument rests on the assumption that Vasubandhu's thought is criticised in the Yoga Sūtra and that Nāgarjuna does not make any reference to Yoga in his Kārika. Dasgupta opposes Woods on this point. He points out that:

.... the supposed Buddhist reference is found in the fourth chapter which .... is a later interpolation; even if they were written by Patanjali it cannot be inferred that because Vacaspati describes the opposite school as being of the Vījñānavāda type we are to infer that the sūtras refer to Vasubandhu or even to Nāgarjuna, for such ideas as have been refuted in the sūtras had been developing long before the time of Nāgarjuna.³

Concurring with Dāsgupta on this point Radhakrishnan has conclusively shown that the text definitely belongs a period earlier than 300 A.D.⁴ He points out that since Umāsvāti, who seems to have carried his work during third

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¹Ibid., p. 373, 375.

²Woods, op. cit., p. xix.

³Dasgupta, op. cit., p. 233.

⁴Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 341, n. 3.
century A.D., refers to Yoga Sūtra 3.22 the text in question must have been in existence before that. Moreover, on the question of Nagarjuna's unawareness of Yoga, Radhakrishnan points out that Woods' argument does not carry us very far in view "of the admitted fact the Chinese translation of Nagarjuna's Upāyakausalyahṛdayaśāstra mentions Yoga as one of the eight schools of Philosophy."¹ This argument is cogent, provided, of course, that the Nāgārjunas are the same. To all these evidences against Woods, we would again like to point out that Bharṭṛhari, who is generally assigned to 5th century A.D., is well aware of the Yoga theories of time and temporality determinations. He makes clear reference to the views of Yoga on time distinctions and seems to consider them as integral to the general slant of Sāmkhya thought.² Thus by the 5th century, views of Yoga Sūtra were well known and clearly assimilated by the philosophers of that period.

Vyāsa Bhāṣya on Yoga Sūtra³ is the earliest commentary on Yoga Sūtra and of inestimable value in providing an intelligible understanding of the thoughts of the author of the Sūtra. Vyāsa is unanimously accepted as the author of this work. His date has been assigned to fourth century A.D.⁴ Like the Sūtra itself the Bhāṣya too assumes the general metaphysical slant of the Sāmkhya Karika and interprets the Yoga Sūtra within this framework.

¹Ibid., p. 341.
²Vākyapadiyam, op. cit., Karikas 49-61.
³All references are to the Pātanjali Yogadarsanam, (ed), Bhattacharya, Ramasamkara, Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakasana, 1963.
⁴See Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 342.
Of course, there are important differences between *Yoga Sūtra* and *Sāmkhya Karikā*, and the *Bhāṣya* only accentuates those points on which they tend to differ. But in its presentation of the classical Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of the time and temporality we do not find evidence of their fundamental difference. It accepts the basic Samkhya position that the Buddhi has a significant role in the constitution of temporal order, and that the transcendental reality of time does not have any independent objective status. These and allied points shall be the subject matter of the following chapters. In our treatment of these problems we have chosen to rely on the *Bhāṣya* and the *Yoga Sūtra* as well as on the Sāmkhya texts, for the views expressed in the *bhasya* are both in congruity with and a continuation of the classical Sāmkhya Yoga tradition.

Vacaspati Misra's *Tattva Vaisāradī* is a commentary written by Vacaspati on *Vyāsa Bhāṣya*. We have already noted the significance of the contributions of this great commentator to the classical Samkhya-Yoga tradition. There is general consensus among scholars about his identity and the period to which he belonged.\(^1\) In essentials he tends to agree with Vyāsa’s understanding of the constitution of temporality or the subjective experience of the temporal order. He agrees with Vyāsa that "moment" alone is real and that a sequence of moments do not have an objective reality. It is a product of rational construction through abstraction. His interpretation of the "omniscience" resulting from concentration on the "moment" is of special significance. His distinction between omniscience implying a

\(^1\)See Supra, p. 29.
"knowledge of all without remainder" and omniscience as "the knowledge proceeding from discrimination" is particularly illuminating. It is in this qualitative distinction between omniscience and the knowledge resulting from contemplation on the "moment" consists the true import of the soteriological significance of Sāmkhya-Yoga conception of time and temporality.

Vijnānabhiksu's Yoga Śāra Samgraha is a very useful manual of Yoga thought. Both Radhakrishnan and Dasgupta have recognized Vijnānabhiksu's contribution to Sāmkhya-Yoga tradition in general and to Yoga thought in particular. As noted earlier he belongs to 16th century A.D. and displays an unmistakable leaning towards theistic Vedanta, especially as expressed in the Upaniṣads. He tends to disagree with Vācaspati on certain specific issues and makes heroic efforts to reconcile Sāmkhya-Yoga thought with the monistic theism of Upaniṣads.

On the specific question of time and temporality we find some contradictions between Vijnānabhiksu's Yoga Śāra Samgraha and his Sāmkhya Pravacana Bhāṣya. While in the later work he suggests that Sāmkhya admits a distinction between eternal and empirical time, in the former he clearly maintains that Sāmkhya expressly denies transcendental or eternal time. Moreover, in


2 Dasgupta, op. cit., pp. 223, 229; Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 342.

3 Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 342.

the *Yoga Sāra Samgraha* he also tends to make a distinction between Sāmkhya and Yoga conception of time and temporality. However, we tend to disagree with his interpretation on this point. In the present work we incline to accept, based on careful study of the relevant texts, the homogeneity of the Sāmkhya-Yoga tradition on the issue of time. On the fundamental ontological questions, it is a common place that they agree, and the question of time and temporality is no exception in this regard. We have advanced our arguments for not accepting Vijñānabhikṣu's interpretation at its face value at the appropriate place. This is, however, not to gainsay the important place that Vijñānabhikṣu occupies within the Sāmkhya-Yoga tradition. The specific brand of theological affiliation in particular must not be lost sight of in any interpretation drawing upon Vijñānabhikṣu.

Over the question of the homogeneity of Sāmkhya-Yoga tradition which is the presupposition of the present work, it may not be out of place to make some comments. True, the exact relationship between the pre-classical Sāmkhya and Yoga remains a matter of pure conjecture. While Sāmkhya itself contains the two trains of thought: theistic and non-theistic, Yoga always seems to retain the theistic slant. There is no such a thing as atheistic Yoga. However, it is our contention that despite its unmistakable theistic leaning the classical Yoga did not differ fundamentally on the basic question of the nature of Purusa and Prakṛti and their interrelationship. The present investigation concentrates primarily on this dimension of Sāmkhya and Yoga systems. The question of temporality, i.e. the determination

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of man's existence by the consciousness of the temporal distinctions and
its consequences for the reflecting self, falls within the realm of the
interrelationship between Purusa and Prakṛti. And in this respect the
differences between the two systems is inconsequential. Radhakrishnan,
after a careful analysis of the evolutionary scheme of the two schools
came to the conclusion that the "distinction between the Sāmkhya and the
Yoga account of evolution is not a serious one".  

Dasgupta finds the
congruity between the two schools extremely significant:

The affinity of the systems of Sāmkhya thought generally
ascribed to a mythical sage, Kapila, to that of Yoga of
Patanjali is so great on most important points of theoreti-
cal interest that they both may be regarded as two dif-
erent modifications of one common systematic ideas.

The internal evidence within Yoga Sūtra too weighs in favour of con-
sidering it as a continuum with the basic philosophical postulates of
classical Sāmkhya. The fact of fundamental convergence between the two
systems was accepted by Vyāsa who wrote his commentary on Yoga Sutra. He
concludes his commentary on the Yoga Sūtra by acknowledging at the end of
the Bhāṣya that Patanjali's Yoga system indeed is expressive of the words
of Sāmkhya. (iti śrī Pāñjale Yogāsāstre sāṁkhyaspravacane). The des-
cRIPTION OF THE Vyāsa Bhaṣya ON THE Yoga Sūtra AS Sāṁkhya Pravacana Bhaṣya
"brings out the intimate relation between the Sāmkhya and the Yoga."

Basing their conclusions on historical evidences available on the

1Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 342.

2Dasgupta, S.N., Yoga as Philosophy and Religion, Delhi: Motilal

3Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 342.
date of the compilation of Yoga Sūtra both Keith and Dāsgupta conclude that the probability of Patanjali having modelled his Yoga Sūtra on Sāmkhya Karika of Īśvarakṛṣṇa is extremely high. Keith writes:

> It is, however, not at all unlikely that the production of the Yoga Sūtra was more or less directly motivated by the revival of the Sāmkhya and its definite setting out in the Sāmkhya Kārikā of Īśvārakṛṣṇa who was an earlier contemporary...

Concurring with this statement of Keith, J. G. Larson maintains that "the final redaction (of Yoga Sūtra) is roughly contemporary with the composition of the Kārikā, and .... its final compilation may have been occasioned by the appearance of Īśvārakṛṣṇa's work." Dāsgupta goes even to the extent of suggesting that the Yoga as presented by Patanjali is basically Sāmkhyā in character. He even labels the Yoga as the "Patanjali school of Sāmkhya":

> Of the Pātanjala school of Sāmkhya, which forms the subject of the Yoga....Patanjali was probably the most notable person for he not only collected the different forms of Yoga practices, and gleaned the diverse ideas which were or could be associated with the Yoga but grafted them all on the Sāmkhya metaphysics, and gave them the forms in which they have been handed down to us.

For purposes of this study we have justifiably considered the systems of Sāmkhya and Yoga as integral and have not addressed ourselves to the question of the possibility of the differences which may be derived from terminological or nominal distinctions. The Sāmkhya system under investigation includes the thought of Sāmkhya Kārikā and Sāmkhya Sūtra and various commentaries thereon. This is what has generally been considered

1Keith, op. cit., p. 57.
3Dāsgupta, History of Indian Philosophy, op. cit., p. 229.
by scholars as representing the Classical Sāmkhya. Yoga, in the present
study, refers primarily to the classical yoga or Rāja-Yoga as developed
in the Patanjali's *Yoga Sūtra* and the various commentaries on it. Histor-
ically, the philosophy of Sāmkhya as a systematic exposition of the main
tenets of the school must have preceded the systematic exposition of Yoga.
While surely there is a general paucity of historical evidence in this
area the close connection in the classical period of their development is
transparent to keen and diligent students of Indian Philosophical thought.¹

¹The position or point of view that is here adopted is in confor-
mity with the vogue of modern expository writings on the subject, to treat
the two as embodying 'differentiations in what was originally a single
doctrine' (Hariyanna, *Outlines*, p. 268). The Gita advocates the idea of
oneness of Sāmkhya and Yoga as representing true insight (ekam sāmkhyam
cac yogam ca yah paśyati sa paśyati, V, 5) though it is true that the terms
do not so much refer to the scholastic versions of the two schools of
thought as to their respective stress on gnosis and action. However, for
a very detailed analysis of the difference between Sāmkhya and Yoga in spe-
cific terms, i.e. *inter alia* of will and its place in spiritual life, see
Bhattacharya, K. C., *Studies in Philosophy*, Calcutta, Progressive Publi-
shers, 1956, p. 221. The difference is carefully delineated starting from
the differential stress on buddhi and ahamkāra, through a difference in
the presentation to consciousness of becoming and in the understanding of
'becoming' itself as continuing of the cause into the effect in a finalised
form, and finally, how their difference about the understanding of cau-
sality is reflected in their views on the nature of time. The treatment is
at its best plausible and even illuminating but lacks in textual support.
So far as the Sāmkhya account goes, it is mostly an argument from silence
aside from the problematic posed by Yukti Dipikā in this regard through
suggesting that time is the causal process itself (karana parispandā) II,
8–9, and Vījñāna Bhiksu's very debatable reconstruction of one Sāmkhya
Sūtra: II, 12. As for the yoga account, the textual basis is the refer-
ence in the *Yoga Sūtras* and the Bhāṣya wherein there is a clear statement
of the two aspects of time *viz.* kṣaṇa and krama, *i.e.* constant and sequence
of instants: III, 52; IV, 32. All these textual materials are utilised
and explored at appropriate places in the body of our present study but we
have tended, in the absence of clear textual mandates against it, to imply
a homogeneous understanding of the issue of temporality in relation to
consciousness.
CHAPTER III

SĀṂKHYA-YOGA ONTOLOGY AND THE NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The present analysis is primarily concerned with articulating the basic ontological perspective of Sāṃkhya-Yoga, which is of crucial significance for developing an understanding of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga analysis of the structure and constitution of temporality. What we understand by the structure and constitution of temporality and how we are to relate it with the nature and structure of consciousness as such is a question that will constantly be present as part of our investigation. Indeed, this is by no means, conceivably, a settled question for the enterprise of philosophical thinking. Its elusiveness for conceptual clarity constitutes both the rationale for and the impetus of the present analysis.¹

However, it is our contention that a systematic articulation of Sāṃkhya-Yoga's exposition of this dimension of the problem will help to put certain basic concerns of the philosophical thinking in their proper perspective and will be of immense help in developing a philosophical understanding of this crucial problem. More specifically, Sāṃkhya-Yoga's

¹Problem of time has been one of the urgent concerns of philosophical investigation in both the western and eastern traditions. For a concise but comprehensive analysis of the problematic of time in the history of western thought refer to Fraser, J. T., "The Concept of Time in Western Thought", Main Currents, Vol. 25, Mr-Ap 72, pp. 115-124.

For an excellent and insightful approach to the problem of Time within India philosophical tradition see Pannikkar, Raymond, Philosophy: East and West, Vol. 24, No. 2, April 1974, pp.
contribution to the understanding of the problem of temporality and its relationship to the transcendental consciousness will constitute the subject matter of our discussion in the concluding section of this part.

Given this understanding of our task we have to spell out at the very outset what tends to be the distinguishing feature of Śāmkhya-Yoga ontology. It is only then that a methodologically valid and philosophically sound investigation of the problem of temporality can be undertaken. Such an attempt will inevitably involve delimiting the ontological problems that we consider to be significantly related to the problem of temporality.

Though in one sense the Śāmkhya-Yoga figures among the earliest of the 'metaphysical' endeavours of Hindu system-building, it is our assumption that Śāmkhya-Yoga, also transcends the limitations of the traditional Hindu metaphysics by focusing its investigation to that realm which may conveniently be described as the realm of immanent experiences.

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1 The present work does not look at philosophical investigation as an attempt at compartmentalization of issues. Rather, the metaphysical, epistemological and ontological problems are seen in an intricate and complex interrelationship. The ontological problems are seen to play an important role in articulating the basic issues which revolve around the Śāmkhya delimitation of the realm of consciousness and the world. See Larson, G. J., *Classical Samkhya*, Varanasi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1969, p. 230.

2 The Nyāya Sūtra of Gautama and the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra of Kaṇāda may be cited as examples of providing categorial schemes typifying 'Hindu' metaphysical traditions. The ontic approach characteristic of these traditions may be contrasted with the existential-ontological nature of the enquiry with which Śāmkhya-Kārikā commences its treatment.

Of course, in making this claim the present author asks for a critical understanding of Sāmkhya-Yoga's philosophical investigations demanding a radical departure from the commonly accepted interpretation of Sāmkhya-Yoga's analysis of the basic issues of human existence. It is the author's conviction that Sāmkhya-Yoga is primarily an attempt at a transcendental analysis of the facts of human experience:¹ As an analysis it steers clearly away from the issues which demand either an a priori decision about the nature of reality or alternately ask for a mere speculative understanding of the status of being. What is accepted as the point of departure is only the fact of human experience. From this is set out a programme leading to an understanding of the essence of being precisely in the context of the realm of consciousness. The concern here is with (what may be described in phenomenological idiom) the eidetic structures of being or its essences which are universally valid and are openly available to the reflecting consciousness which cares to reflect upon itself. The phenomenological overtones of this understanding of the basic task of Sāmkhya-Yoga is not entirely a superimposition of modern mind; they may be seen to emanate from the basic ontological concerns of the Sāmkhya-Yoga philosophers.

¹Here attention is drawn to the underlying supposition of the introductory kārikās. Proceeding from the fact of suffering as an integral part of the world of experience, the kārikās point to that which is beyond the givenness of experience. Experience presupposes the experiencer and the experienced. The experienced world is constantly undergoing change. This changing world of experience finds its ground in something which is of fundamental nature and is the transcendental basis of the experience of the world. It is not the existence of the world as such that is the concern of Sāmkhya-Yoga analysis. Rather it is the world given in our experience that is the point of departure. (drṣṭāvadānuśrāvīkāḥ sa bhavāsvadhiksātāṁ ayayuktaṁ tadvīparītaṁ śreyāṁ vyaktāvyaktajñavīdjānāt), The Sāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārikā 2.
With these observations regarding the basic assumptions and the direction that the present analysis will tend to follow, we may now embark upon the task of a comprehensive understanding of Sāṃkhya-Yoga ontology. However, we look upon our task not merely as an attempt at cataloguing these tenets of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga thought which seem to corroborate our understanding of the basic philosophical task. Our interpretation of Sāṃkhya-Yoga will seek to bring to the fore the meaning-structures and thought patterns of Sāṃkhya-Yoga literature in tune with the demands of the logic of the system itself. Such being our concern the enterprise will inevitably involve certain amount of conceptual clarification especially in view of the confusions and the mystique that seem to surround the meaning of Sāṃkhya-Yoga. This will also involve reconstructing Sāṃkhya-Yoga thought in the light of our findings by providing the missing links. We do not look upon philosophical analysis and investigation as an anatomical autopsy which is primarily interested in identifying the specific fissures or elements of the organism. Indeed, philosophical investigation is a living, ongoing process of creative understanding directed towards a better comprehension of the problems of human existence.

The Sāṃkhya-Yoga analysis of the problem of the existence and nature of being proceeds from a recognition of the contradictions involved in the natural or the phenomenal realm, i.e. that which is immediately perceived (dṛṣṭvad). Both the perceptible world (dṛṣṭvad) as well as the one grounded in testimony are equally inadequate in resolving the basic contradictions. To Sāṃkhya-Yoga way of thinking both belong to the realm of impurity, destruction and excesses (avisuddhiḥksayātisayaḥyuktah). The reflecting consciousness is required to renounce this mode of understanding and rise to
a more radical understanding or a discriminative awareness of the manifest (vyakta), the unmanifest (avyakta) and the knowing one or knower (i.e. purusa). 1

The revealed (testified means) are like the visible (i.e. inefficient), for they are connected with impurity, destruction and excess. A contrary method is better, and this consists in a discriminative knowledge of the Manifested (forms of world), the Unmanifested (prakriti), and the knowing (self).

This demand for a radical departure from the pre-conceived notions and prevalent conceptions of reality occurs on the level of cognitional analysis conceived as an analysis of the structure of experience. The Sāmkhya-Yoga prefers to shift the focus of philosophical investigation from the question of the status and being of the world as such (of the seen variety as well as of the one accepted on trust) to the question of the status and being of the world that is given to us in direct experience. The first datum for the self-reflecting self is nothing but the fact of consciousness which constitutes the ultimate point of departure and the basis, as well as the existential foundation, of our understanding of the real world. The real world is not denied but is accepted as existing side by side with consciousness. 2

The express concern of Sāmkhya-Yoga, therefore, is not to ascertain

1drṣṭavad ānuś-avikah sa hy aviśuddhiksayati śayayuktah tadviparītah śreyān vyaktavyaktajāvijñānāt. The Sāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārikā 2.

2mūlaprakṛti-savikṛtir maḥādādyah prakṛtivilkṛtayah sapta śoḍaśakas tu vikāro na prakṛtir na vikṛtiḥ purusah. Ibid., Kārikā 3.
the mode of being of the real world and its objects whose existence it does not question but takes for granted. Its primary concern is rather to conduct a transcendental inquiry into the domain of pure consciousness in order to determine (1) the mode of being of pure consciousness and (2) to discern the mode of the givenness of the world in immediate experience. This aspect of Śāmkhya-Yoga investigation we call transcendental. Now an enquiry is transcendental precisely in the sense that,

It does not resolve the question of the existence of the world through its being directed towards the characteristics of the world, but in that it takes the domain of pure experience as its point of departure, and attempts, as if by an indirect route, to find the cognitive foundation for the admission of the existence every object - of the real world in particular in the actual state and in the essence of the course of and activities of consciousness.1

It is important to note that it is by contrasting both the regions of being (world and consciousness), and discovering concurrently that one of them, the pure consciousness, is given in immanent perception, which guarantees its existence completely beyond doubt, Śāmkhya-Yoga also points to the method by which the whole question of ontology should be discovered. Ontological and epistemological problems are not two disparate problems. The problem of the existence and nature of being is not derivative in relation to the cognitional considerations; rather both constitute a continuum whereby one overlaps the other and cannot be considered in isolation from it. The Raison-de-être for Śāmkhya-Yoga's involvement with epistemological problems is to be found in its acceptance of both the existential and

operational priority of consciousness over the world. Sāmkhya-Yoga correctly looks at the ontological and epistemological questions in their intrinsic relationship. For the sake of methodological clarity the system attempts to delimit the two realms and discuss the epistemological question as a way back to the fundamental question of ontology which seem to have been obscured by the metaphysicians.

To our way of thinking, the Sāmkhya-Yoga, in and through a radical approach to the problem of being attempts to comprehend the essence of being in the immediate givenness on the level of consciousness. In interpreting the system in this way, we are not departing from the spirit and motivation underlying the basic formulation of the Sāmkhya-Yoga thought. The evidence on which we propose to base our understanding is so conspicuous that one may even say that it is the vogue of an excessive metaphysical tradition of long and reputed standing associated with its name that obscures the original motivation of the Sāmkhya-Yoga thought.

One striking evidence that readily suggests to our mind in this regard relates to the Sāmkhya-Yoga doctrine of Sarga. The Sāmkhya

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1The term Sarga is derived from the root sṛ (to create) which is also the root of Srsti the sanskrit term for world or universe as creation. The term carries with it the cosmic connotation. But within the Sāmkhya-Yoga scheme of things the meaning of Sarga loses its strict cosmic reference and the term is used in a rather specific sense.
philosophy admits 25 categories (tattva), which can be grouped into two broader categories: the Self (Puruṣa) and the not-Self (Prakṛti). It is through the Purusa's coming together (sannidhi) with the Prakṛti that the process of Sarga involving the emanation of the 23 categories originates. The Prakṛti along with that which is seen to be the modifications of the Prakṛti constitute the 24 categories:

Prakṛti (the primeval ground of manifestation);
Mahā or Buddhi (the principle of intelligence);
Ahaṅkāra (the principle of egoity or I-ness);
Five Tannātras (five subtle elements);
Manas (the mind);
Five Jñānendriyas (five organs of sense);
Five Karmendriyas (five organs of action);
Five Mahābhūtas (five gross elements).

The 23 categories (tattvās), which are also called modifications (vikṛti), are said to issue from the unmanifest ground (avyakta Prakṛti), when the Prakṛti comes in contact (sannidhi) with the Purusa, the principle of consciousness.

The Śāmkhya-Yoga explication of this process of Sarga has usually been referred to, both in the traditional and modern understanding of the system, as an account of the description of the process of evolution in cosmological terms. The doctrine of Sarga, according to the generality of such understanding, invariably refers to 'evolution' understood in strictly cosmological sense.¹ Thus, Sarga has been seen as a process of 'evolution',

leading through successive stages (emergence of 23 tattvas being a product of these stages), to the final emergence of the manifest world (Vyakta).

However, we submit that the understanding of Sarga doctrine in strict cosmological terms is susceptible to the charge of misinterpretation. The following considerations may be offered in support of the possibility of a non-cosmological interpretation of Sarga doctrine:

1. What is required is what may in contrast be termed as phenomenological understanding of the process. The emphasis should not be on the various stages in the evolution of the cosmos or the world but on the structure of the consciousness in and through which the world is manifested.  

Sāṁkhya-Yoga theory of Sarga acquires a new meaning and a somewhat different orientation if approached from this angle. It is a description of the structural arrangements of the field of the consciousness (ksetra) which the knower of the field (ksetrajña) discovers when it reflects upon itself. The world is perceived as world only as consciousness reflects as what is aware (ksetrajña) of the world.

2. If Sāṁkhya-Yoga theory of Sarga is to be interpreted as a theory of cosmological evolution then we run into the problem of explaining quantitative multiplicity of evolution. Since there is a plurality of Purusas and since evolution starts if and only if the Purusa comes into contact with the Prakṛti, 2 there must be a multiplicity of the world that so evolves because

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1 Larson, G. J., op. cit., p. 193.

there will be different evolution for each Purusa. But obviously this is not the case according to Sāmkhya-Yoga. While Sāmkhya-Yoga accepts the plurality of Purusas it does not subscribe to the view asserting a similar plurality of universes; instead it admits one common cosmos as the common referential point of all Purusas.

3. Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of the Vyakta-Avyakta appears somewhat baffling if seen in terms of the evolutionary interpretations of the Sarga doctrine. Prakṛti is the (unmanifest) Avyakta, the material ground of all manifestations of the world and its object (Vyakta). According to this interpretation the Avyakta-Prakṛti includes in itself the potentiality of all things in the manifest world, both mental and physical. Thus Avyakta-Prakṛti is not looked upon as the world but the ground of this manifest world. The 23 principles evolved from Prakṛti are considered as constituting the actual manifest world (Vyakta).¹ In this way of looking at Prakṛti in relation to the world one important circumstance which accounts for the precise difference between what is unmanifest and its manifestation seems to be overlooked. The distinction is one of not-being or being in relation to consciousness. Prakṛti as Avyakta refers to the world of objectivity which has not opened itself up to the presence of consciousness, (Purusa). And Vyakta is the manifest world precisely in the sense that it is the correlate of consciousness. Vyakta does not mean the world that is present out there as opposed to the witnessing consciousness but it is precisely the world of the witnessing consciousness. All the so-called evolutes

¹Mookerjee, op. cit., p. 244.
are not the product of the prakṛti in the usual sense of product. They are to be understood in a very special sense of being the structure of manifestation, the mechanisms through which the world unfolds itself in terms of increasing differentiation to the witnessing consciousness.

4. The first category in the Sāṁkhya-Yoga scheme is Mahat or Buddh which is the locus of I-ness or Ahaṁkāra. To conceive the Sāṁkhya-Yoga analysis of Sarga in cosmological terms will necessitate an assertion of a Cosmic Intelligence or Buddhi as the first principle of the manifest world of transcendent objectivities. To be sure such an assertion has been ascribed to Sāṁkhya-Yoga in certain sections of scholarship. But such assertions imply overlooking of Sāṁkhya-Yoga's basic concern with the individual nature of consciousness. Consciousness, for Sāṁkhya-Yoga, is always individual and not an abstract or Absolute principle transcending the individual consciousness. While pure consciousness or Purusa is individual but not personal, ego or I-consciousness is included in the Buddhi-Ahaṁkāra structure. Thus what is commonly considered to be self-consciousness or ego is understood in Sāṁkhya-Yoga to be other than the "purusa". Neither of the two, the pure consciousness and the Ego, need be conceived in mere cosmological terms as referring to some world-soul or an Absolute consciousness. The element of individuality is integral to the meaning of consciousness.  

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2Mahat tattva, the Great Principle, is intelligence in an individual sense which contains the possibility of the next evolute viz. Ahaṁkāra, the sense of personal individuality which in turn preceeds man's psychic-empiric (continued on bottom of next page)
The important question that arises in this context is: what is the exact nature of pure consciousness or Purusa and in what way is it related to empirical consciousness or the psycho-physical conglomeration in the conception of the I-principle. For Sāmkhya, Purusa or pure consciousness is what is precisely not characterized by the dispersions and the atomisms characteristic of the world and of the empirical consciousness in which the world is present. Instead of being the agent of action and volition, it is a mere witness or spectator of the drama involving willing and activity. It is in a condition of intrinsic isolation from all the manifestations of the world both mental and physical. The best way to comprehend the essence of Purusa is to look at it as a mere fact of consciousness.

It (Purusa) is the fact of man's experience which is apart from all of his feeling, inclinations, impulses, etc. It is the fact of man's experience which provides the basis for his freedom precisely because it is not a part of or determined by the world. By referring to Purusa as the simple fact of consciousness apart from all thought, feeling, etc., this also brings to mind such terms as transparent or translucent. It is only by the 'light' of Purusa that one sees the world, and it is only the fact of the world which renders Purusa aware of itself. The fact of

(continued from previous page)...

life consisting of the working of his senses and manas which is the precursor of the world of matter. The world of experience is the outcome of the 'Purusa' confronting himself with the 'Prakriti', i.e. the permanent possibility of pleasure, pain and dullness of knowledge, action and even inertness (contrary to the belief that the world issues from prakriti as effect does from cause and that purusa as a teleological factor comes into picture as an after thought).

\[1\text{tasmā ca viparyāsāt siddhām sāksitvam asya puruṣaśya kaivaṭyaṁ mādhyasthyyāṁ draṣṭṛtvam akartr-bhāvasī ca. The Sāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Karika 19.}\]
consciousness and the fact of the world are two irreducible realities.\footnote{Larson, J. G., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 185.} Buddhi along with \textit{Ahamkāra} and \textit{Manas} constitute the principle around which the whole personal world is centred.\footnote{\textit{Antahkaranaṁ tṛividhamīti buddhyahām karmaṇasāṁ grahaṇām/ etat trividhamāntaḥ karaṇasāṁjñitam. The Mādhārāvṛtti, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 49; \textit{sāntah-karanetyādi buddherupāttātsaccesamahākāro manasāhāntahkaranām/tābhyaṁ yuktā buddhiḥ. The Jayamangalā, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 41.}} This is the 'I'-principle in the proper sense of the term. And it is this 'I' or the empirical Ego that according to Śāmkhya-Yoga is the active willing subject of our conscious state.\footnote{\textit{Antahkaranaṁya tadujvalitavālohaśvādhiśhātṛtvam. The Śāmkhya Pravacana Sūtra, \textit{op. cit.}, I.99.}} It is this 'I' that posits an attitude and relates itself to the world around itself precisely because the emergence of this 'I'-principle coincides with the moment of the encounter of the world and pure consciousness. Apart from the active spontaneous willing dimension there is also the passive aspect, as may be seen in the circumstance that it is also the recipient of sense data to which it reacts.\footnote{\textit{The Śāmkhya Kārikā, \textit{op. cit.}, 35, 23 and 26.}} The personal or the empirical ego is then both 'spontaneous' and 'quiescent', but in both the aspects it retains the intentional dimension of consciousness since it remains the subject of reference or the subject of intentionality. In the last analysis this empirical subject is essentially the subject of all intentionality and is not to be confused with what is given within the field of its consciousness.
Thus the empirical consciousness is related in cognition to its surrounding world to things and beings which it experiences. The subject bears a necessary reference or relation to object, just as the object stands defined by being in relationship to the subject. The subject is in passive or active relation to object, which is present to the subject as the terminal point of reference. Thus in relation to the personal subject of intentionality, the object in the environment functions as "object" for it. This relation itself is, of course, not external, i.e. as between two terms in relationship, but one of intentionality. Viewed from the side of the object (prakṛti) it signifies that the intended object (pravojya) motivates the subject (pravojaka).

It may thus be seen that the personal subject, i.e. the ‘I’, is world-involved by definition. It is the subject and the agent in actual or potential relation with the "object", which is either the object of knowledge or ‘acquisitive’ of action. The question that arises here may be: how does the world-involved ‘I’ stand in relation to pure consciousness? What is the relation between consciousness which may be called the transcendental subject (Puruṣa) and the personal subject (Buddhi-Ahāmkrāra structure)?

We have seen that the empirical ego for Sāmkhya-Yoga constitutes the essence of the ‘I’-ness which is the centre of all positing of attitudes. What is significant about this dimension of existence, i.e. existence of empirical ego, the ‘I’-ness is that it serves as the pole which exercises specific acts of positing, and also what is posited, i.e. the object of such positing. So far as this personal Ego is the ‘I’ of the positing attitudes

1The Sāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārikā 23 and 24.
the world that is posited by the I also proves to be the result of the decision of the subject.

But then the question arises: are the empirical ego (Buddhi-Ahamkara structure) and the transcendental subject (Purusa) two mutually exclusive and distinct principles? The immediate answer seems to be "yes" for the two are supposed to belong to two different realms. But, on closer examination, it appears that the distinction is more of operational nature than one of the thematic. "I" as a person, and as such belonging to the world of fellow-being and having a world around is in point of essence, the same "I" as the transcendental subject. It is the point of view concerned that separates the two kinds of approaches to the self-same principle. On purely transcendental analysis, the ego sets itself as the "transcendental ego", as the final point of reference which on further analysis may be seen to be the absolute region of pure consciousness, the source of all meaning of being. But when the position of the same transcendental subject is sought to be determined from the point of view of fact or actuality - the position in terms of concrete man and his surrounding world - the same transcendental ego appears to assume the form of the personal, empirical ego. Seen from the perspective of the actual existing person, so far as the latter consciously posits itself in positing attitudes, it is the empirical ego considered in itself, without the perspective it is promoted to the level of transcendental subject. In the mode of discriminative awareness (viveka) the world involved person, i.e. the one who acts, motivates and refers to the world, himself is what may be called the transcendental ego (Purusa). It is not a case of transformation of the one into the other.
There are no two existentially distinct entities. The world-involved person in his unreflective attitude proves to be the centre of all positing of attitudes. But the same one in his reflection, i.e. when he reflects on his world involvement, instead of positing attitude towards the world, is the transcendental subject. Thus it may be seen that the personal empirical ego itself provides the key to the transcendental ego-hood of the subject. 'I', namely the person (Ahamkāra) is given as the object of reflective self apperception in the very wake of the development of the empirical perception of 'I'-ness (the Sarga being the process of this development). The stream of experience as pure consciousness is also at once the process by which the pure subject assumes the apperceptive form of the personal ego.

This way of looking at the relationship between the transcendental subject and the empirical ego may be questioned from the perspective of a purely cosmological approach to the meaning of Sāmkhya-Yoga. It may be asked: how the two subjects respectively referred to as pure consciousness and the one which is an evolute of Prakṛti, be in principle one and the same? The two belong to the two radically different and opposed realms of being¹ so that it is not conceivable that they are identical. The objection rests on the traditional understanding of the Sāmkhya-Yoga as embodying a doctrine of evolution. The empirical ego is a product of real evolutionary process in the course of which it emerges from the womb of undifferentiated mass called Prakṛti. What seems overlooked in this

¹Radhakrishnan, S., op. cit., pp. 287-291; also, Mukerjee, Sat-Kari, op. cit., p. 242-257.
interpretation is the emergence of empirical subject as a specific moment in the dialectical relationship between the fact of consciousness and the fact of the world. The so-called evolution or the Sarga is a figurative way of contemplating the fact of the givenness of the world in the immediate or original experience. Of course this fact remains dormant till consciousness stands in a reflective relationship to itself. It is only in and through objectification of consciousness that the true structure of the givenness of the pure consciousness can be grasped. The Sāmkhya-Yoga has made this point very clear.

The Sāmkhya Kārikā is quite specific on the question of the functional difference but substantive identity of the empirical subject and the transcendental ego. The fact of the substantive identity is clearly assumed in the passages enlisting the grounds for the existence and plurality of selves (Purusās). A careful reading of the text shows that the transcendental subject and the empirical ego are existentially determined by the same set of factors. It is on the same considerations that the existence of Purusa as the transcendental ground of all conscious willing and activity is established.

To explain the argument offered by the Sāmkhya in favour of the existence of the Purusa runs as follows:¹

1. Since the combinations (things existing as aggregation of three guṇas) must have another as the one whose purpose is served, and since

¹ śaṅgātapaśaṁ thastvaṁ trīguṇādhiśātvāno purusāsthī
bhoktrabhāvān kaivalyārthām pravṛtteṣa. The Sāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārikā 17.
there must be something different from the three guṇas, there exists Puruṣa as this other (samghāta - parārthatvāt - trigunādī - viparyayād).

2. Since, there must be control (of the world of things constituted of guṇas) there must be a presiding power or controlling being, that being is Puruṣa (adhisthānāt).

3. Because there must be someone to experience and enjoy, that experiencer is Puruṣa (bhoktṛ-bhāvāt).

4. Since there is the activity for the same of isolation or freedom there is Puruṣa who is free (kaivalyārtham).

The arguments adduced for the plurality of the Puruṣa must be read in conjunction with what has been stated earlier. There is plurality of Puruṣas;¹

1. because there is separate regulation of birth, death and faculties;

2. because activities or functions (of beings) do not occur simultaneously; and

3. because beings differ on account of varying guṇas (attributes).

Thus, the main argument for plurality is based on the fact of natural diversity inherent in three guṇas (attributes or aspects). Vācaspati Miśra puts it in these words:

The diversity or differentiation due to the distribution of the guṇas in the various entities, could not be explained

¹ jananamaranakaraṇānaṁ pratīṇiṣye mayugapratvṛtteṣu ca puruṣaḥ
hutvām siddhām traṅguṇayaviparyayāc caiva. Ibid., 18.
if the Purusās were one and the same in all. On the hypothesis of plurality, however, there is no difficulty.¹

It is interesting to note that in all these arguments offered for the existence and plurality of the Purusa, the transcendental subject, it is assumed as if it were existentially identical with the empirical ego.¹ Not only this, but Sāmkhya-Yoga also goes even to the extent of implying admission of Sukṣma Sarīra (subtle body) constituted of the empirical subject as the vehicle of the transcendental ego.² Moreover the existential equation of the transcendental ego and the empirical ego is further assumed in the Sāmkhya-Yoga postulation of dialectical understanding of their relationship. While empirical ego or Buddhi is regarded as mirroring the luminosity and the consciousness structure of the transcendental subject,³ the Purusa, it in its turn also may be said to depend on the self-reflection of the Buddhi to understand and comprehend the essential difference between itself and the world of Prakṛti.⁴ It seems to us that

¹Tattva Kaumudī by Vācaspatimitra, op. cit., p. 66.
²The Sāmkhya Kārikā distinguishes between three kinds of bodies: subtle (sūkṣama), born of parents (matapṛṭjaḥ) and the body of gross elements (prabhutais). Only sūkṣama body is constant or permanent, i.e. which passes from birth and acts as the vehicle of consciousness. Others are perishable. See The Sāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārikā 39; also the Sāmkhya Pravacana Sūtra, op. cit., 3.16; Jayamangalā on Kārikā 39, op. cit., p. 44; and Matharāvrtti on Kārikā 39, p. 53.
⁴sarvam pratyupabhgam yasmāt puruṣasya sādhayati buddhiḥ/sa itva ca viśīnaṣṭi punah pradhānapuruṣāntaram sūkṣmam. The Sāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit.; 37; kr̥tstnam puruṣasyārtham prakāśya buddhau prayacchanti. Ibid., 36.
this orientation of Sāṁkhya-Yoga understanding of reality with respect to the question of existence necessitates conceiving of the relationship between the transcendental and the empirical subject in dialectical terms.  

Sāṁkhya-Yoga does not concern itself with the absolute rupture between the world and the self; its point of departure is always the self in the world, the one that experiences the contradictions of the world, but at the same time is capable of transcending them by remaining neutral to it.

In viewing the personal ego (Buddhi) in the context of its development the other moment of the ego besides that of the higher stage of free transcendental subject, i.e., the subject of free act witnessing, has also to be considered. The character of this so-called "unfree ego" is grounded in the passivity of sensuousness, i.e., natural dispositions, etc. Thus the transcendental subject or the spiritual 'I' - in the specific sense of the subject of autonomous acts of witnessing - finds itself dependent on a dark background of natural dispositions.

Here we should take note of the fact that Sāṁkhya-Yoga makes a clear distinction between the neutrality of Puruṣa and the passivity of Mānas. Spirit or Purusa is the foundational ground of all conscious acts and Prakriti exists for the sake of Purusa, for it is to the transcendental subject that the world orients itself and for which the world exists.  

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1See commentaries on Karika 36. .... puruṣaśyārthamsukṣmamasthula viṣayalakṣanam prakāsyābhivyaktim nīta .... tasyām ca viṣayopādhāno-paraktāyam buddhau puruṣā upalabhate. tatredamucyate - buddhyadhyavasitam-artham puruṣaścetayata iti. Jayamāngala, op. cit., p. 42.

2Itya eṣa prakṛtkṛto mahādādiviśeṣabhūtparyantah pratipuruṣavimokṣārtham svārtham iva parārtha āraṃbhaḥ (continued on bottom of next page)
As such it stands ever against Manas (mind) at the lower stage of sensibility. It must however be noted that at the same time, for Sāmkhya-Yoga the Manas or mind of the lower sense level is one with the empirical subject of attitude, the Buddhi. Both form an unbroken empirical unity. And it is precisely at this level that the problem of temporality becomes enigmatic.

Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure, according to Sāmkhya-Yoga, is both created and creative. It is the structure of world-involvement as well as the possibility of world-transcendence.

It is temporal, both in the sense that it has a beginning and an end as well as that it is the basic condition for the cognition of things in their temporal mode of being. In and through cognition the Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure constitutes temporality as well as it is constituted as temporal. The temporal order on the phenomenal level is a conscious creation of the empiric subject (Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure). Time-order as the principle of continuity is constituted by the empiric subject (Buddhi parikalpita). Time is nothing but the relational mode of being (sambandhā-tropakāri); and as such is a function of Buddhi (the empiric subject). But in the constitution of the temporal structure the empiric subject does not act as a principle independent of the objective flow or the flux of events characteristic of the world of change. The empiric subject, in the world involvement, is out and out-temporal.

(continued from previous page)

What we see in the empiric subject as the principle of change and creativity (vikrtta) is an essential drive, a lived tension and a continuous turning to new events and activities. As temporal, the empiric subject does not merely observe the flow of temporal events, but it participates in it. Thus the empiric subject (Buddhi-Ahamkara structure) both constitutes and is constituted in and through temporal becoming. However, essentially temporal, the empiric subject is also the basic condition for the transcendence of temporality. Transcendence of temporality is a function of Viveka (discriminate knowledge). Viveka is the mode of cognitive awareness of the essential 'thisness' of Purusa (pure consciousness as unchanged and unmoved) and Prakrti (the permanent ground of all change and movement).

The transcendence of temporality is possible through viveka (the discriminative knowledge), a function of Buddhi. Viveka is the mode of cognitive awareness of the 'thisness' of Purusa (pure consciousness as unchanged and unmoved) and Prakrti (the permanent ground of all change and movement). Thus, Buddhi is both the structure of world involvement as temporal as well as the condition of world transcendence as eternity. More on this later.
CHAPTER IV

TIME AND TEMPORALITY IN SĀMKHYA-YOGA

The Category of Time: Grounds for its Rejection

The Sāmkhya-Yoga ontology can be best grasped in the context of the relationship of mutual otherness between the real world and the cognising subject. Real objects belonging to the real world are distinguished by the fact that they can be, at least in principle, given originally to the cognising subject. This subject knows them through a number of conscious acts of a determinate kind, namely through acts of direct "experiencing". Direct experiencing remains the touchstone of objective reality in Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of the world.¹ Time as a single, all-pervading

¹The whole analysis of Buddhisarpa in the Sāmkhya Kārikā bears testimony to Sāmkhya's preoccupation with the realm of human experience, as it is immediately and directly available to the reflecting self. The very point of departure for the Sāmkhya Kārikā is the fact of suffering or pain as an integral part of man's life experience. Yoga too is in total agreement with the basic Sāmkhya postulation on this specific question. Rather, in Yoga, the analysis of the realm of experience is even more rigorous than in Sāmkhya. For both of them the analysis of the cognitive experience is the basic modus operandi in approaching the ontological and metaphysical issues:

"A thorough analysis of human experience is also the starting point of the Sāmkhya Philosophy. Experience is the felt result of the operating of the subtle tattva which is ordinarily imperceptible.....Experience is not possible unless there are objects of experience, body, organs, ego-sense, mind, etc., which will constitute the instruments and objects of experience.....these are also not enough to bring about experience. Experience presupposes consciousness...the fundamental principles and categories of Sāmkhya were not dogmatically postulated, but they were discovered and accepted after proper analytical study of experience."

objective reality, if it were to be admitted, must be experienced directly. The question that Śāmkhya-Yoga asks is: where is the experiential basis for admitting a single, infinite all-pervasive time? What is given in direct experience is the fact of change. While admitting the reality of change in the real world, and also granting that the fact of change is universal, the Śāmkhya-Yoga philosophers do not find it necessary to admit the existence and independent reality of time as the ground of all change.\(^1\)

The postulation of Time as an independent reality is based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of change. According to Śāmkhya-Yoga the acceptance of time as an independent reality, providing the ground for continuity and succession accounting for the relation of priority and posteriority, is gratuitous. There is no such thing as an infinite all-pervasive time.\(^2\)

The notion of an infinite dimension extending through the phases of past, present and future, without beginning and end is a fictitious construction of Buddhi.\(^3\)

\(^1\)The Tattva Kaumudī of Vācaspati Mīśra, op. cit., p. 112.

\(^2\)Here it must be borne in mind that in Śāmkhya system there is no category called Time.....Time and space are only relations between events and events. There are only the events and not something external to them to relate them to one another. Raja, C. Kunhan, The Śāmkhya Kārikā of Iśvarakṛṣṇa: A Philosophical Exposition, Hoshiarpur: Vedic Research Institute Publications, 1963, p. 123.

\(^3\)sa khalavyam kālo vastusunyo buddhinirmānāh. Vyāsa Bhāṣya on the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali, op. cit., p. 151.

"The appearance of kāla as a separate entity is a creation of our Buddhi (buddhinirmāṇa) as it represents the order or mode in which Buddhi records its perceptions." Das Gupta, S. N., History of Indian Philosopohy, op. cit., p. 310.
According to Sāmkhya-Yoga, the idea of a transcendental or objective time is not the constitutive ground of all temporal determination in our cognition of an object. On the contrary, it is the very product of our experience or cognition of "limitedness" intrinsic to all the objects present within the field of the experiencing subject. Thus the idea of time must be conceived in the context of the 'finitude' or the 'limitedness' of actions or events. Whatever has a beginning and end, according to Sāmkhya-Yoga, is finite or limited. We find that various events that take place within the purview of the experiencing subject, are essentially limited in this specific sense. Thus according to Yuktidīpikā "time is the means of conceiving such limited existence or persistence of events" (kriyānāma viśiṣṭa-avadhi-svarūpa-pratyaya-nimitattvam).¹

The denial or non-acceptance of the so-called transcendental time as the eternal background of all temporal determinations remains the running theme throughout the deliberations of Sāmkhya-Yoga philosophers. The reality of an unitary time is only a thought construct whose essential unreality is disclosed to the reflective self only in the moment of self-reflection. Accordingly, then, the discriminative self comprehends the true essence of the moment, and in the process also knows what it is that the self in the natural setting tends to identify as the transcendental

¹na hi nā kālo nāma kāścidā (padārtho) asti, kīm' tarhi kriyamāna kriyānāmeva (ādityagatigodohaghatastanitadān) viśiṣṭa avadhisparūpa pratyaya nimitattvam; The Yuktidīpikā, op. cit., p. 73.
kalpyat iti kālah, viśaya eva iti nāgato vartamaṇaścocyate na tadyavatirekena kālo'sti; The Jayamangala, op. cit., p. 40.
background of all temporal determinations.

It comes to see that it is the sequence of the moments that gives rise to the notion of a continuous time, ubiquitous and one. As Vyāsa puts it:

The continuous flow of these (moments) is a sequence (karma). Moments and the sequence of these cannot be combined into a real (vastu). Thus time being of this nature does not correspond to any thing real, but is a product of mind, and follows as a result of (knowledge) by words; but the moment is objective and rests on the sequence. The sequence (karma) has for its essence an uninterrupted succession of moments which is called time (kāla) by experts.¹

To argue that pure time notions are ultimately dependent on our experience of finitude or limitedness is another way of saying that time does not have an independent status. It is not admitting the independent status of time. Without subscribing to the metaphysical position of accepting an independent reality of time Sāmkhya-Yoga remains confined to its original intention of clarifying basic epistemological or cognitional problems as a way of explicating an original ontological perspective. Without positing the reality of time as the explanatory factor, how do we explain our temporal concepts? What is the origin of our temporal concepts, and not positing reality of time, is the task to which it addresses itself:

For our knowledge of anything we must ultimately refer to our experience. In our experience we find events or actions but never time as such. Therefore, we may say that pure or empty time as such is nothing nor is non-existent.

¹tatpravāhāvicchedastu kramah. Kṣanatatkramayonāsti vastusamāhāra...
...sa khaṭvālīyam vastusūnyo buddhinirmanāh śabdājñānānūpātī...kṣanastu vastupatitah kramāvalambī. Kramaśca kṣanantaryātma tam kālavidah kala ityācakṣate yogīnāh: Vyāsa Bhāṣya on Yoga Sūtra, 3.52.
It is nothing apart from actions or events that are revealed in experience. If it is anything it is one with them.\footnote{Sen, Sanat Kumar, "Time in Sāmkhya-Yoga", Indian Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 8, September, 1968, p. 412.}

The position stands in radical contrast to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika's acceptance of time as an eternal substance existing by itself, extending from the past through the present to the endless future.\footnote{Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika are the realistic-pluralistic Hindu dārsānas, independent in their origin, but because of their common ontological outlook have come to be amalgamated in the course of history by their exponents. The formal synthesis of the two systems seems to have taken place around 10th century. See Hiryana, M., Outlines of Indian Philosophy, London: George Allen Unwin, 1956, p. 225.} True to their metaphysical realism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy accords independent status to time. Time is considered as essential to the concrete changes of nature, such as production, destruction and persistence of things. Arguing from the facts of motion and change in the perceptible world, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika concludes that since the discrete things are devoid of any power of self-improvement, the fact of change and motion requires positing an independent reality as the ground of the ordering of change and motion.\footnote{Kālakhātmadisām sarvagatatvām paramām mahat; The Kīranāvalbhāṣākara, Padmanabhā Mīśra, Varanasi: Saraswati Bhawan texts, 1920, p. 137.} Thus, time is posited by Nyāya Vaiśeṣika as the independent real, pervading

\footnote{Idānīṁ gacchatītyādipratītīṣṭu idānīṁ raviṁtyādipratītīvat kālipaśambahavacchinnaṁdaṁhāraṁdheyā bhāvamavagāhate nā tu samayasaṁbandha-vacchinnaṁ iti. The Vaiśeṣika Sūtra, 5.2.26.}
the whole universe and rendering ordered change and movement possible. The
relations of priority and posteriority, simultaneity and non-simultaneity,
as well as the notions of before and after have their basis in kāla.¹ For
there is only one time which is omnipresent as possesses the character of
individuation and the quality of conjunction and disjunction.²

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika looks at time as a substantive reality which is
the eternal basis of all our experiences. Though time is never given in our
perception it constitutes the objective ground of all our cognitions. Thus:

According to Vaiśeṣika, time is said to have as its characteristic sign (by which its existence can be proved) the relation 'prior', posterior', etc., (Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra 2.2.6), it is all-pervading, single, formless and for this reason, because it is not produced, eternal, different from activity, the dividing factor of things by means of activity such as creation, etc. (creation, existence, transformation, growth, decay, and destruction).³

It is in their understanding of the nature of change and its cognitions that the Sāṁkhya-Yoga and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems disagree fundamentally.⁴ While both of them agree that the distinguishing feature of time

¹Ibid., 2.2.6.

²Ibid., 7.1.25.

³The Kālasamuddeśa of Bhartṛhari’s Vākyapadīya, (ed. and trans.), Sharma, Peri Sarveswara, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972, p. 43.

determinations is the action or the activity that characterizes each moment of existence, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika regards association of activities with time as a limiting adjunct or a superimposition on the essentially unitary, indivisible reality of time. Against the Sāmkhya-Yoga conception of the temporal determinations the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika would maintain that the distinction in time such as moments, etc., depends on some adjuncts (kṣaṇādīthī syādūpādhitāh).

The Sāmkhya-Yoga point of view involving a rejection of the position of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is best maintained by Vyāsa. Vyāsa points out that the moment itself is conceivable as the absolute and irreducible unit and that

1Vaiśeṣikas postulate following as adjuncts that constitute temporal limitations.
1. Upādhibhedataksanādīvayahāraviṣayaḥ: The first adjunct consists of the moment of Time that characterizes the interval between the action or activity and the resulting appearance of disjunction in time. Contributing the theory of Aśatkāryvāda Vaiśeṣika maintains that the limiting action is the cause or the reason for the production of the previous non-existent disjunction in Time.
2. Upādhistu Svajanyavībhāgāprāgabhāvācchinnam Karma: The disjunction so produced by an activity becomes the cause of the destruction of the previous conjunction. The interval between the disjunction and the dissolution of the conjunction is the second moment of Time produced by the activity constituting the limiting adjunct on the unitary Time. In other words, the disjunction determined by the antecedent conjunction is the second limiting adjunct.
3. Purvamasamyojanāsavyacchinnottarasamyoja-prāgabhāvo-vā: As the conjunction so produced ceases, this cessation of the conjunction becomes the cause of the subsequent conjunction. As such there must be an interval between the two. Thus there is the previous non-existence of that conjunction, and this constitutes the third moment in the activity constituting the limiting adjunct of the one unitary Time.
4. Uttarasaṃyojavacchinnam Karma: Again, subsequent conjunction arises, and the time associated with the action in this moment is further limited in interval in terms of the limiting function of the activity in the question. Siddhāntamuktavālī, Visvanatha, Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1940, 46. Kalavastukopī upādhibhedatksanādīvayahāraviṣayaḥ upādhistu svajanyavībhāgāprāgabhāvācchinnam karma, purvasaṃyojanāsavyacchinnottarasamyoja-prāgabhāvo vā, uttavasaṃyojavacchinnam Karma. Ibid.
apart from the reality of those moments, there is no infinite time. True, these moments are always presented to us together with the activity, admits Vyāsa, but it does not follow from this that they are determinations of unitary time in conjunction with this or that activity. ¹

It would be wrong to argue that moments determined by activity’s association with time exists as parts existing in a whole. It is wrong because, as Vyāsa says, the two moments, by their very nature, cannot co-exist and hence a series of moments does not exist in reality. What constitutes the essence of order in time is not an unitary indivisible reality, nor is it the fact of antecedence and subsequence between the moment that is existent and the moment that has just ceased to be. Thus, a series of moments is an ideal construction. The intellect pieces together these discrete moments. There exists only one moment, the moment of present, which contains in it the moments of past and future, which are real but inexistent. ² Vyāsa says:

Just as atom is the smallest particle, similarly the moment (ksāṇa) is the smallest limit of time. (Moment) is the period of time taken by an atom to traverse the span between one point of space and the other. The continuous flow of these (moments) is a sequence (krama). However, there is no real (basis) for the combination of the moments and their sequence.....(Thus), time has no real (objective) existence, it is only a creation of buddhi, and follows on account of knowledge by words.....(However), the moment is objective (it has a basis in the real) and it is the basis (of ground)

¹Vyāsa Bhāṣya on the Yoga Sūtra of Patanjali, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

²Tasmādvartamānāh evaikāh ksāno na purvottarakṣanāh santīta tas-mānnāstī tatsamāhāraḥ. Ibid.
of sequence; the sequence (krama) consists in the continu-
ous (uninterrupted) succession of moments, and it is this
that is called time (kāla) by yogins who know time (its
real nature).

Now for Samkhya-Yoga, activity instead of being an external ad-
unct giving rise to our conceptions of temporal determinations, is the
very mode of temporal being. To be determined temporally, i.e., to be
given in momentary existence is a special kind of being that constitutes
the essence of autonomy of a temporal moment. The autonomy in this con-
text refers to the fact that the cognition of a temporally determined
being does not depend on the independent existence of unitary time as
the eternal background of all such cognitions. Rather the existential
autonomy of the moment consists in the very activity that constitute
each moment of existence. In other words, temporal determinations are
self-constituted in the process of cognition.

Objection may be raised that if temporal determination of moments
is constituted in and through our cognitive process then how can one

1 yathāpakarṣaparyaut davrayāṁ paramānukarṣaparyantah kālah
kṣaṇāḥ. yāvatā vā samayena calitah parmānūḥ purvadesāṁ jahyaduttaradesāmu-
pasāmpadyate sa kālah kṣaṇāḥ, tatpravāhā vicchedastu kramaḥ, ksañatakrama-
yornāsti vastusamāhāra.....sa khalvayaṁ kālo vastusunyo buddhiṇāṁirmanṅh
sadbajānamānupātī.....ksaṁṣtu vastupatitaḥ krama-valambi. kramaśca ksañā-
nantaryātmā. taṁ kalavidyah kāla ityācakṣate yoginah. Yoga Bhāṣya 3.52,
op. cit., pp. 150-151.

2 kim tarhi kriyamānākriyāyāyāvādityāyatigodahaghatāstanitādīnāṁ
viśistāvadhisaṟupapratyayanīmattatvam. We owe this clarification to
Yuktidipikā, The Yuktidipikā, op. cit., p. 73.
legitimately hold that the moment is the time taken by an atom to traverse its own unit of space as indeed Vyāsa clearly maintains. It is important to remember that in Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding space does not refer to the objective space existing independently and transcendent to consciousness. Indeed both Time and Space as transcendent realities are mere abstractions. Space, according to Sāmkhya-Yoga, is another name for the phenomenon manifesting itself in our immanent perceptions. The atom too, here, does not refer to physical atoms as such but to subtle elements (tanmātrās) as it were appearing to the consciousness.¹

The problem with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is that it sees activity as somehow externally related to existence, so that it appears as an external adjunct. On the contrary, activity for Sāmkhya-Yoga is the very mode of temporal existence. Existing temporally and being active are not two different modes of being, but are one and the same. If we accept the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika interpretation of activity as separate from existence and thereby standing in an independent relationship to existence then we are forced to postulate another category as the relational term that relates the activity with existence. This will inevitably lead us to an regressus-ad-infinitum. However, Sāmkhya-Yoga by insisting on the ultimate inseparability of existence and activity is able to underscore a sharp-edged polemic against a realistic reification of time as transcendent to change and activity.

¹
The Question of Eternal and Empirical Time: Some commentators on Sāṁkhya-Yoga literature seem to suggest that the Sāṁkhya's theoretical position admits a distinction between eternal and empirical time. That, in other words, (at least according to some interpretations) Sāṁkhya also reifies time. Vijñānabhaṅkṣu in his commentary on the Sāṁkhya Sūtra have suggested that the distinction between the eternal and empirical time has been accepted by Sāṁkhya-Yoga. Thus he writes:

Eternal space and time are of the form of prakṛti, or the root-cause of ākāśa, and are only the specific modification of prakṛti. Hence the universality of space and time is established. But these, space and time, which are limited, are produced from ākāśa through the conjunction of this or that limiting object (upādhi).¹

Thus, according to Vijñānabhaṅkṣu, there is a distinction between the eternal and omnipresent (all-pervading) Space and Time and the empirical space and time which appears to be limited and finite. The former appears to be of the nature of ākāśa, and are nothing but particular modifications of Prakṛti. On the other hand, the empirical Time which is limited and finite is produced from ākāśa and as such is an effect of ākāśa. The empirical Time is essentially ākāśa itself, but as particularized by this or that upādhi. Thus, the finite space and time are conceived as the qualities of Prakṛti and to be all-pervasive and eternal. The eternal time and space are conceived as the eternal background of our empirical notion of

¹ nityāu yau dik-kālau tāvākāśa prakṛti bhūtāu prakṛṣṭerguna viśegāveva. ato dikālayoryibhutopapātiḥ; (ākāśa vat sarva gataś ca nitya) ity ādi śrutiy uktaṁ vibhutvam ca 'kāsasya' papanam. Yau tu khandaḍadik kālau, tāu tutattadup-ādhi samyogād ākāśad utpadyete ity arthah. The Sāṁkhya Pravacanabhāṣya of Vijñānabhaṅkṣu, op. cit., p. 77.
space and time.¹

However, there is hardly any evidence in the classical Sāmkhya-
Yoga literature to lend support to this classification of Vijnānabhikṣu. 
Text does not offer any basis for introducing the category of eternal 
time and much less for an omnipresent, self-identical one to be contrasted 
from a limited and finite time due to the particularization of the former. 
We tend to agree with A. B. Keith when he maintains that any such distinc-
tion between the eternal and empirical time is inconsistent with the basic 
Sāmkhya position. Expressing his disapproval of this approach he writes,

"in the empiric world both (space and time) appear as 
limited, and are explained in a quite inconsistent way 
by origination from either (Ākāśa) through its qualifi-
cation by the masses of corporeal nature on the one 
hand, in the case of space, and by the movement of the 
heavenly bodies in the case of time."²

¹Concurring with this way of looking at the Classical Sāmkhya under-
standing of the problem of time Radhakrishnan maintains that the Sāmkhya 
assertion of the infinite eternal time as a thought construct is a mere 
attestation to the fact that we do not have any perception of the infinite 
time. He seems to suggest that there is no real denial of the eternal time 
by Sāmkhya-Yoga. All that Sāmkhya has to say that since we have no per-
ception of infinite time or infinite space, so they are said to be con-
structed by the understanding. Radhakrishnan, S., op. cit., p. 277.

²Keith, A. B., The Sāmkhya System, Calcutta: Association Press, 
1924, pp. 121-122; While concurring with Keith in disregarding the dis-
tinction between the eternal and empirical time one may have reservations 
regarding the explanation adduced. It is extremely doubtful of the Akasa 
of which time is taken to be differentiation by Vijnānabhikṣu refers to 
the bhūta. It is more likely that he means by it an aspect of Prakṛti 
by itself, in which case nitya kāla would be another name for eternal becoming 
of Prakṛti. However, on the basis of the text we are not quite sure about 
the exact import of his statement. For a philosophical estimation of Vijn-
ānabhikṣu's view on time refer to Bhattacharya, K. C., Studies in Philo-
It may be appropriate to look for the textual context in which the distinction between the Eternal and the Empirical time is proposed by Vijnānabhikṣu. It is in his commentary on the Śaṁkhya-sūtra 2,12 that Vijnānabhikṣu proposes the above distinction. The Sūtra states that the (notions of) "direction and time (arise) from Ākāśa" etc. (dikkālāu ākāśādibhyab). Aniruddha proposes a less radical interpretation of this Sūtra than Vijnānabhikṣu, when he explains it in the following way: "It is Ākāśa itself which, by different Upādhis or external conditions, is denoted by the term Space and Time. They are therefore included in Ākāśa."

The explanation lacks in conviction as it does not sound plausible. Aside from the obscurity of the notion of upādhi, it fails to explain what these upādhis are that constitute such limitations on the Ākāśa causing it to give rise to space and time.

It seems to us that both Vijnānabhikṣu and Aniruddha tend to look at Śaṁkhya-Yoga understanding of tattvas in cosmological terms. The notion of eternal time is invoked to account for the cosmological procession of tattvas from the Prakṛti. It is perhaps this pre-occupation, one which he shares with many of his predecessors, responsible for concluding that the sūtra in question is concerned with the origin of the transcendental or eternal space and time. What the Śaṁkhya-Yoga seems really concerned with, in our way of understanding, is explaining the origination of the sense of time. The Sūtra under consideration can be

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1 tattadupādhibhedādākāśameva dikkālāśabdavācyam tasmādākāśe'ntarbhūtau,
The Śaṁkhya Sūtra Vṛttiḥ by Aniruddha, op. cit., p. 94
understood as an attempt to explain at what specific moment in reflective consciousness the essence of the idea of space and time shows forth.\(^1\)

The reflective self, reflecting on the given structure of extension as what is implied in the idea of ākāśa, also recognizes that extension gives rise to the idea of space and time. The emergence of the idea of ākāśa is the specific moment in the reflective consciousness when the true essence of temporality as the finitude of moments and their sequence (krāma) is disclosed to the reflective self. The reflective self comes to see the structure of the sequence (krāma) of moments as they are, i.e. as mere sequence of moments without any extension or duration, which it sees as being the essential mode of the being of ākāśa. It is precisely in this sense that the Sūtra seems to refer to ākāśa giving rise to the idea of Time and direction.

This fact is disclosed to the discriminative self only when it has come to grips with the essential structure of ākāśa as extension. Discrimination (viveka) is as much a reflective activity as the arising of the notion of time and space as a function of the Buddhī. Thus emergence of Viveka in the Buddhī is the termination of the process of Sarga. We will return to this point later. One final exegetical comment in this

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\(^1\) This exegesis is in conformity with the general standpoint taken by us from which to approach the problematics of the Sāmkhya-Yoga. For arguments and defense see Supra, pp. 58 ff.

\(^2\) The term extension is used in the sense of 'Prakṛti' in its aspect of omnipervasiveness, the contention being the part of the basic Sāmkhya doctrine that the Prakṛti persists along with the tattvas.
connection should not be out of place. The expression, etc. (ādi) in the aphorism cited above, though insignificant, may be of some exegetical import. It refers to the fact that according to the author of the sūtra it is only when the discriminating self has reflected upon the nature of the phenomenal world in terms of its essential structure being constituted of other (ādi) tattvas along with the specific dimension of ākāśa that the true understanding of the essential nature of space and time can arise.

This way of looking at the sūtra in question seems to us to be more plausible and more consistent with the basic Sāmkhya-Yoga ontology. It goes without saying that to our way of understanding the problem of two times in Sāmkhya-Yoga as envisaged by Vijnānabhiṣku is a fictitious problem arising from a misinterpretation of sarga as cosmological evolution.

1 Aniruddha dismisses the term 'ādi' as occurring by accident in the Sūtra; ādiśabdaḥ sampatīyātāḥ, etc. The Sāmkhya Sūtra Vṛttih, op. cit., p. 98; Vijnāna Bhiṣku maintains that the expression 'ādi' in the sūtra means that from the apprehending of this or that limiting object (the notion of relative space and time arise): ādiśabdenopādhigrahanādīti, Sāmkhya Pravacana-Dhāśya, op. cit.; p. 77.

2 It is important to note that Vijnānabhiṣku himself in his Yoga-Śāra-Saṃgrahādmits that the Sāmkhya does not accept a separate entity as infinite time (Mahākāla) as the one all-pervading reality or the basis of temporal determinations of moments, etc. Moreover, Vijnānabhiṣku goes to a great length even to criticise the views of Sāmkhya expressed in the Sāmkhya Śūtra. We are also aware of his Vedantic leanings and his occasional attempts to reconcile Sāmkhya-Yoga with the mainstream of Vedantic thought. This leads us to approach cautiously his interpretation specially when it seems to go against the basic ontological perspectives of the system under investigation.

Our contention that the notion of transcendental time is inadmissible in the Sāmkhya-Yoga scheme of things is further substantiated by another important consideration. It is significant to note that within Sāmkhya-Yoga scheme of things the element of eternity in this sense of non-finitude or trans-temporality is applicable only to Puruṣa as the transcendental consciousness and to prakṛti as the transcendental ground of all phenomenalization.\(^1\) Apart from Puruṣa and prakṛti, no other tattva is accepted as infinite and trans-temporal.\(^2\)


Having established the reality of 'moment' and discerning it as the ground of all temporal determinations, Sāmkhya-Yoga is now faced with the problem of explicating the material and the formal structure of the moment in terms of which alone one can comprehend the temporal determinations of past, present and future. The problem that Sāmkhya-Yoga faces is: if the

\(^1\) In view of the above stipulation regarding the trans-temporality even to cosmological way of understanding the sarga doctrine, the problem of two times (eternal and empirical) in Sāmkhya-Yoga is inappropriate. Sen, who seems to accept a cosmological interpretation of sarga, also considers the anomalous character of the situation:

In fact, since the Sāmkhya admits the possibility of regression (pratisaṃcāra) of all the evolutes (the entire universe) into their ultimate ground, Prakṛti, nothing save Prakṛti and Puruṣa can be called eternal (in the accepted sense of being without beginning and end). Thus if even Ākāśa is not eternal, how can time, which is no distinct entity at all be so. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

\(^2\) On the Sāmkhya-Yoga conception of eternity, see infra, pp. 119-120.
moment alone is real and that an entity is always given only in the moment of existence then how do we distinguish between the moments of past, present and future? What is there in the moment that will distinguish it as present in relation to the moments of past and future? In other words, is there anything in the structure of moment which enables us to grasp the relationship between the moment determined as past and present or future? Does the moment depend on something external to itself for these temporal designations? Denying the reality of transcendental or cosmological time, Sāmkhya-Yoga is faced with the problem of accounting for temporal determinations.

To begin with, it must be acknowledged that Sāmkhya-Yoga does not deny the reality of the distinctions of past, present and future. Thus temporal distinctions indeed have an ontological basis. What grounds them or provides basis for them being the reality existing as moment?

Thus observesVyāsa on the reality of past, present and future:

The past and the future exist in reality since the qualities of things manifest themselves in these three ways. The future is the manifestation which is yet to be. The past is that form which has already been experienced. The present is that which is still active. If these three did not exist in reality, then knowledge would not have been possible. Knowledge is not possible in the absence of the object of knowledge.¹

It would be wrong to assume that Vyāsa here is endorsing the views

¹ atitānāgatāṁ svarūpato'styadhvabhedāddharmānāṁ, Yoga Sutra, op. cit., 4.12; Bhavīgyadvayaktikamanāgatam, anu bhuvyaktikamitam, svavyāparopā rudham vartamānam trayam caitadvastu jñānasya jñeyam. Yadi caitatsvarūpato nābhavīgyanendam nirviṣayam jñānamudapatsyata, tasmādatitānāgatam svarūpato 'stīti, Vyāsa Bhasya on Yoga Sutra, 4.12, op. cit.
of Nyāya-Vaiśesika who also grants that past, present and future possess objective reality. According to the latter these moments are characterized by an independent existence which is mutually exclusive. Past, present and future surely are different modes of being. But, as Sāṁkhya-Yoga would put, these modes do not exclude each other materially. They coincide and coming in the same being. Past, present and future are not three points of time in which things exist. They are the three ways in which things pass from unmanifest to manifest and vice-versa. Since being of a thing is not different from the moment in which things exist and since there is no coming of being from non-being it will be wrong to assume as the Vaiśesika does that the three moments of being imply their mutually exclusive existences. It is this existential inseparability and functional distinguishability of the three moments that is recognized and asserted by Vyāsa when he maintains that past, present and future exist in reality.

The fundamental difference between Sāṁkhya-Yoga and Nyāya-Vaiśesika lies in the latter’s acceptance of the reality of non-being (Abhāva) as a self-subsisting mode of existence. For Nyāya-Vaiśesika past and future

(continued from previous page)

Also see Samkhya Karika 33 and commentaries on it: trikālam-abhyantaram mano’hamkārabuddhirūpam karaṇam pravartate buddhiryartamānam ghatam buddhyate aitātaṃ bhaviṣyantam ca smaratī...yat evam tasmāducyate trikālamābhīyataram karaṇam iti; Mātharavṛttī, op. cit., p. 50.

trīṣvāpi kāleṣu vyavaśhitam viṣayamavagāhate grhṇāti yasmāt, tasmāt trividhamantaḥkaraṇam buddhyādi dvāri bhavati...eḥbhiṣvārabhūtaivaityantar karaṇam viṣayān grhṇāti. Jayamangalā, op. cit., p. 42.

1 tadeśkālatattvasya padārthāntaratātakhaṇḍanārthāmaḥ santu ta iti; Svaminarayan’s Kirnāvalī on the Tattva Kaumudi, op. cit., p. 321.
possess reality in the mode of non-being (abhāva). However, Sāṃkhya-Yoga convincingly argues that such existence in the mode of non-being is inconceivable precisely because there is no non-existence, in a literal sense, of an existing being. The present is nothing else but the manifested form of the unmanifest past. The future, which has not yet come to be manifested exists in the present in unmanifest form. Thus the past subsists in the body of the present and future also is contained there in the fullness of being. Supporting this existential comingling or the dialectic of past, present and future it is pointed out by Vacaspati Misra:

If the past and future (the existence of being in sublatent and unmanifest form) are non-existent because they are not in the present, then the present (existence of being in the manifest form) also would be non-existent, because it is not in the past or future. The existence is applicable or characteristic of all the three forms, for it is real irrespective of the characteristics of these.¹

A more comprehensive and clear understanding of Sāṃkhya-Yoga position on this important issue warrants a somewhat lengthy but extremely important citation in the same tenor as above from Vyāsa where he has tried to present the Sāṃkhya-Yoga position in a very clear way. Vyāsa puts his views in the following words:

...And the mutation of time-variation is the restriction having the three time-variations, (that is) connected with the three time forms (adhvan). This (restriction) one may say puts aside the first time-form whose variation is yet

¹ iyadi tu vartamānatvābhāvadātītā nāgatayorasattvām hanta bho vartamānasayāpyabhāvo bhāvotānāgatvābhāvāt, Vacaspati Misra, Tattva Vaisāradī, op. cit., p. 166.
to come, and passes into the present time-variation, without however passing out of its state as external aspect. But in this (condition) it becomes manifest as being what it is. This is its second time-form. And it is not completely severed from past or future time-variation. Likewise emergence has the three time variations; it is connected with the three time-forms. Having put aside the present time-variation it passes over into the past time-variation, without however passing out of its state as external aspect. This is the third time form. And it is not completely severed from the future and the present time-variations. In the same manner, emergence completing itself again (as a phenomenalized form) having put aside the the future time variation, and not having passed out of its state as external aspect, passes into the present time-variation. In which (time), since this (emergence) manifests itself as it is, it obtains its functional activity. This is the second time-form of this emergence. And it is not completely released from the past and future time-variations.¹ (emphasis added)

Thus, according to Vyāsa what distinguishes the present mode of being from the past and the future is not existence in the mode of being (bhāva) and non-being (abhāva) as the Vaisesika maintains, but the "functional activity" (vyāpāraḥ) that characterizes the present moment of existence. Now, we have seen that according to Sāmkhya–Yoga activity and existence are identical in the strictest sense of the term. If the two are identical, what is the justification for asserting that the functional activity belongs only to the present mode of existence? At this precise


Lakṣaṇaparīnāmaśca nirodhāḥ trilakṣanaḥ tribhiradhvabhīryuktah. Sa khalvanāgatalakṣanām amadhvānam prathānam hitvā dharmatvamanatikrānto vartamaṅlakṣanām pratipanno yatrasya svarupābhivyaktāḥ. Esoṣya dvitiyo dhīvā na cātītānagatābhyaḥ laksanābhṛyāḥ viyuktah.

point that a careful understanding of the two kinds of activity or change that the Sāṃkhya-Yoga speaks of seems in order.

The Sāṃkhya-Yoga distinguishes between two kinds of change that the being undergoes. (1) Svarupa Parināma (homogeneous change) and (2) Virupa Parināma (heterogeneous change). The being in its unmanifest stage (Prakṛti) undergoes the first kind of change. It is the stage where being has not entered the realm of consciousness, i.e. it remains unmanifest.

Changes or activity that characterizes this mode of existence does not involve encounter with the cognizing self. As such existence in this mode remains inoperative or functionally neutral. It is only when existence assumes the present form, i.e. enters into the field of consciousness (kṣetra) that it becomes functionally active.

An objection may be raised at this point with regard to the existence of being in the mode of past moment which is described as devoid of functional activity. The problem here, as it is stated by a classical commentator, is:

If only the being, which performs efficient activity alone is real, or ultimate, then how can (a being remaining in the past course) be real, for it (the efficient activity) is absent in the past course.\(^1\)

\(^1\) manu yadevārthakriyākārī tadeva paramārthasadityatīteadhvī tada-bhāvāt katham sattvam; The Vakyapadiyam by Bhartrhari with a Commentary by Helarāja, Varanasi: Benarasa Sanskrit Series, 1928, 3.9.55, p. 363.
Sāmkhya-Yoga answer of the dilemma consists in their assertion that the existence of thing is not contingent upon their performing a purposeful action or possessing the quality of functional activity. Sāmkhya-Yoga does not consider the existence of a thing on account of the purposeful action that it performs. Rather they understand activity in its purest form as characterizing the existence of a thing per se. It is the principle of activity discernible in a thing in its purest state (pralaya) that ultimately constitutes the ground for functional activity in the manifest world.

The existence of material objects according to Sāmkhya-Yoga possesses three strata namely sattva, rajas and tamas. Thus:

Just as the three gunas, characteristic of serenity (sattva) activity (rajas) and inertia (tamas), though existing simultaneously on account of their eternity, acquire the subordinate and principal relation and give rise to peculiar modifications in a way of their own splendour, same way, (the three) time divisions, by the magnificence of their own power, effect sequence in the difference (of beings).¹

Thus, Sattva, Raja and Tama are considered as the three powers constitutive of the very existence of being.² It is on account of these powers that a being is capable of maintaining itself as existent in both

¹This discerful understanding of the tri-gunasa relating it to the three divisions of time is attributed to Kapila by Ṣeṣarīja in his commentary on Vakya-padiya: Pāramarsanye satataparināmisu sattvarajastamāram śaktimātramātitadikālabhedasamākhyam, tathā ca sarvesām bhavanam gunatryanūpattvacchaktitrayayogitve yathāyatham śaktyuddhavānuḥbhāyām sadásattvena vyavahārah.

²'Being' here is used in the sense of objective being, i.e. Prakṛti. When we speak of existence being characterized by sattva, tamas and rajas, we, of course, refer to the existence of the being which is existentially grounded in Prakṛti. Puruṣa or the transcendental consciousness is in principle untouched or unaffected by these gunas.
the manifest and the non-manifest states. Past and future moments of being, on account of the preponderance of tamas are responsible for the enclosing of Enclosing is the nature of inertia precisely because it is discerned as the one which is heavy and obstructing (guru varaṇakam eva tamaḥ). The present moment is equal to illumination that shows or manifests being and as such is characterized by sattva, for sattva is considered to be the principle of illumination (sattvam laghu prakāṣakam iṣṭam). But it is activity which is characterized by rajas (upastambhakam ca rajaḥ) and as such belongs to all the three moments of existence. As Helarāja comments in this context: "It (rajas) is a peculiarity of time and it is connected with everything. Rajas, being the inciter through suspension and permission, conformable to function is indeed the soul of time." Further it is pointed out that the temporal status of the moment is determined by the predominance of the powers of the gunas. Thus:

Just like the three ingredients, having the characters of serenity (sattva), activity (rajas) and inertia (tamas), though existing simultaneously due to their eternity, acquire the subordinate and principal relation and effect

1 The Śāmkhya Kārikā, op. cit., 13.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

beings through their peculiar evolution, in a proper manner in the splendour of their own course of action, so also, these (three) time-divisions, by the magnificence of their own power, (become) capable of effecting sequence in external aspects (lit. in the difference of beings)."¹

However, Helaraja insists that this position of Sāmkhya-Yoga reflects inconsistency in as much as it tends to differentiate between the external aspects (Dharma) and the possessor of the external aspect (dharmi). Basing his argument on Patanjali's Yogasūtra stating that the "external aspects possess three courses (dharmas tryadhvānah)" Helarāja concurs with Bhartṛhari that Sāmkhya-Yoga too like Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is susceptible to the charge that temporal determinations have as their referent the external limiting adjuncts.² However, it seems to us that the charge is not quite fair and even tends to obscure Sāmkhya-Yoga's basic theoretical position.

It may be appropriate at this point to reproduce the passage on which the aforesaid charge of Bhartṛhari is based. The passage under consideration reads as follows:

The bearer of the external aspect (dharmi) does not possess the three courses, the external aspects (dharma) possesses the three courses; they (i.e. the external aspects) characterized by them (i.e. the three courses) and obtaining different states, are referred to as different. (And this reference is)

¹ Tadyathā trayāḥ sattvarajastamolakṣaṇā guṇo nityatvādyugapadavasthāna api......yathāyatham svavṛtṛtyuillāse vicitraparipānāṃ bhāvānāmuparacayanti, tathēme kālabhedaḥ svāsaktimāhātmyādbhāvabhedeṣu kramoparacanacaturā ityarthaḥ. Ibid., p. 361.

² Ibid.
due to the alien state (of external aspects) and not due to the alien substance. Likewise (an external aspect), having forgone its future character, obtains the present character. But (it is) not separated from (its) future and past (characters).

It is in the statement that "it is not separated from the (its) future and past (character)" that the clue to the basic position of Yoga-Sūtra lies. If Vyāsa were to agree that temporal determinations have as their referent the external limiting adjuncts then he would not be able to hold the position that the present moment is inseparable from the moment of past and future. The statement that the dharmas tryadhvānah must be read in the context of their discussion as to the origin and ground of sequence perceptible in the phenomenal world. It is true that the dharmas seem to pass through three courses and that as such they give rise to the notion of sequence in objectivities. But it is precisely this appearance of sequence in the phenomenal world that the Sāṁkhya-Yoga tradition tend to question. The point is made in the Bhāṣya 3.13 and is further clarified and illustrated in 3.52 where it is pointed out by Vācaśpati that the succession as such is only a conceptual product without any ground in reality.

In the present there is a single moment and there are no earlier or later moments. There is no combination of them. But those moments which are past and future are to be explained as inherent in the mutations. Accordingly, the whole world passes through a mutation in a single moment.2

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2 Tasmādyartmanā evākah kṣaṇo na purvottarakṣanāḥ santīti. tasman nasti tatśaṁhārāḥ. ye tu bhutabhāvina kṣaṇās te pariṇāmanvītā vyākhływāḥ. tenaikena kṣaṇena kṛtsno lokāḥ pariṇāmam anubhavati. Ibid., 3.52.
According to Sāmkhya-Yoga there is no togetherness of moments and there is no synthesis of them with succession either; a moment and its succession do not co-exist. It hardly makes any sense to speak of the succession of a single moment. Succession does not belong to any moment. It is rather the relation (of priority and posteriority) or order of moments. But the relation is here no part of the relata. Moments do not possess succession as their constituent. Succession, therefore, is conceptual rather than real. Each moment is real, which is neither a combination of moments nor their combination with succession. For combination is possible only of co-existing entities, and co-existence here, from the very nature of the case, is impossible.

Grounds of Temporal Determinations

A realistic philosophy, which Sāmkhya-Yoga is, denying the reality of one independent, transcendental unitary Time and accepting the reality of the Moment (kṣaṇa) alone is faced with the problem of explicating conceptually the ontological status of the moment as Now and its relationship to the moments which are described as the past and the future.

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika advocates the fundamental oneness and conditional

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1. "tasmān nāsti tatsamāhārāḥ..." Ibid.
2. "pī buddhinirmāṇaḥ sābdajñānanupati..." Ibid.
3. kṣaṇastu vastupātītaḥ kramāvalambi, kramaśca kṣaṇānandaryātmā... na ca dvau āsahabhavataḥ. Kramaśca na dvayoh asahabhuvoh asambhavāt, pūrvasmāduttarasya bhāvino yādānandaryā kṣaṇasya sa kramaḥ. "Ibid."
manyness of the Time.\(^1\) Time, according to them, is one, unitary and indivisible in its essence but it acquires temporal distinctions on account of its association with external limiting adjuncts. However, these temporal determinations far from being unreal possess a conditional or relative reality and are to be located within Time constituting its perceptible limitations from which alone the reality of a single unitary Time is to be inferred. Bhartṛhari and Helarāja, find it difficult to concede to their acceptance of the reality (even conditional or relative) of temporal determinations. According to them, these temporal determinations are not constitutive of time, even though they are consequent to Time's association with extraneous factors. Kāla by its own power by 'hindrance' (pratibandha) and 'let' (abhyanujña) produces the semblance of time-succession in action.\(^2\) Hence Time though essentially one appears as many. Kāla

\(^1\)There is only one time which is omnipresent in dimension, individual in character, and has the qualities of conjunction and disjunction. Conventional notions, as 'moment, minute, hour, etc. are derived by abstraction from concrete time. According to the Vaiśeṣika time is an eternal substance and the basis of all experience.....

Temporal relations are dependent on the terms related. There is no sooner or later, before or after, apart from events and actions. Time is perceived as a qualification of objects, and is therefore a substantive reality. Radhakrishnan, S., op. cit., p. 191.

\(^2\)tamasya lokayantrasya sutradhāram pracaksate pratibandhabhyanujñābhyām tena viśvam vibhajyate //4//
pratibandhāḥ ca yās tena citrā viśvasya vṛttayah tāh sa evānujñāti yathā tantuḥ śakuntināḥ //15//
pratibandhābhyanujñābhyāṃ vṛttir yātasya śāśvatī tayā vibhajyamāno 'sau bhajate kramarūpatām //30//
according to them is a power (Sakti)\textsuperscript{1} of Brahman. This Time (Kāla) as the power of Brahman is one, independent and indivisible, and all-pervasive. Bhartrhari declares unequivocally that all other generated, dependent subject forces are pervaded by Kāla, which alone is independent and follow the operation of this Sakti in their working.\textsuperscript{2} It is further maintained that "Kāla is the instrumental cause in the creation, persistence and destruction of all things that have an origin, etc. ... Kāla seems to be itself diversified by the diversity of limiting adjuncts, (but) things are diversified in conjunction with it."\textsuperscript{3}

Thus the fundamental difference between Bhartrhari and Nyāya Vaiśeṣika lies in their understanding of the nature and structure of temporal determinations. While Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika admits that it is because of the conjunction with the external adjuncts such as the solar motion, activity and change that the one, undifferentiated time becomes differentiated into mutually exclusive determinations. For Bhartrhari, Time though itself

\textsuperscript{1}Kalākhyā svātantryasaktirbrhaṃa itiḥ, tatra Bhartrharerabhprāya.... Helaraja, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 365.

\textsuperscript{2}Kalākhyena hi svātantryena sarvaḥ paratantra jamaṃtyaḥ śaktayaḥ samāviṣṭaḥ kālaśaktīvṛttimāṇupatanti. \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{3}Utpattau ca sthitau cāpi vinaśe cāpitadvatām nimittaṃ kālamevaḥur vibhaktenaṃ na sthitam //3//
Samsargiṇām tu vo bhedo viśeṣās taṣya te maṭaḥ saṃbhinnas tair-avasthānāṃ kālo bhedaya kalpate //8//
\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 343 and 344.
unchangeable is the cause of all change, motion and order. Thus he writes: "The division of the "Sun's" progress to the north and to the south (āyana), the fixed movement of the heavenly bodies and the destruction and creation of all beings are due to time." Commenting on this Karika Helarāja elucidates:

Why the sun rises and sets at regular hours, why the moon shines for the night and not for the day, why the sun moves for six months along the southern path (daksināyana) and for six months along the northern path (uttarāyana), why the planets and stars move in particular order—all these can be explained as being due to the all-pervasive and all-powerful nature of Kāla. The coming into existence and passing out of existence, the appearance and disappearance of all objects is caused by time alone.

Thus the solar motion, activity and change the so-called external adjuncts which are ascribed the function of limiting the infinite dimension and constituting the Time determinations as part and parcel of Time according to Vaiśeṣika are conceived by Bhartrhari as the very product of the power of Time. It is equally important to note that only after having established the nature of the adjuncts which in association with the unitary Time give rise to the semblance of multiplicity and further by articulating the status of these temporally distinct adjuncts that both Bhartrhari and Vaiśeṣika embark upon a conceptual clarification of the nature and status of temporal determinations comprehended as past, present and future.

1 Ayanapraśāgaśca gatiśca jyotiśam dhruvā nibṛttiprabhavāśaiva bhūtānām tannibandhanāh //43// Ibid., p. 357.

2 Daksināyanaomuttarāyanaṃmiti kālakṛtamaryadāyattāh pravībhagaḥ, nakṣatranāṃ ca niyaṭā gatirudayāstādīrūpā kālamanupatati, māḥbhūtānām ca sargapralayasaṃaye jammavinaśāvāvīrbaḥavatīrohbhāvalakṣaṇau kālayattāviti... Helaraja, Ibid., p. 357.
Sāmkhya-Yoga questions the validity of the assumption that temporal
determinations are the product of conjunction of Time with external ad-
juncts.¹ Activities, change or motion which are supposed to be the ex-
ternal limiting adjuncts by the Vaiśeṣikas giving rise to the notion of
temporal determinations themselves, Sāmkhya-Yoga would say, cannot be
conceived in any other way except in terms of their identity with the
moment in which that said activity or change takes place and is cognized.
What is given in our perception is the activity or the change as such
taking place in one specific moment. No activity or change can be con-
ceived in abstraction from activity or change.

Yuktidīpikā maintains that all activities or change is constituted
of a series of events or uninterrupted flow of events, each moment of the
series containing in itself the previous moment in its sublative form and
the forthcoming moment in its potential form.² These moments in the series
do not depend on any substantial reality of Time. The moments in them-
selves are the ultimate unit existing independently of any substantive
reality conceived either as an infinite ubiquitous substance or as an ubi-
quitous power. It does not have a secondary or derivative reality as the
Vaiśeṣikas maintain.

The Vaiśeṣikas are mistaken when they maintain that change cannot
be explained without the postulation of Time as the eternal background of

¹The Tattvakaumudi of Vacaspati Miśra and also Swaminarayan's Kirk-
ṇāvalī; op. cit., p. 351.

²The Yuktidīpikā, op. cit., p. 74.
change. For them the postulation of an eternal background of change is a necessity for accounting the continuity and succession for the reason that it is of the nature of the effect to arise anew. All events and actions, according to Vaiśeṣikas, have a totally fresh origination and are liable to total annihilation. As such they need the category of Time to account for continuity and succession. But, for Sāṃkhya, Time is not a factor which brings change in any entity. All entities are subject to change every moment; for the entity in itself contains the potentiality of the would-be state of itself. Change is only the manifesting of what is unmanifest. In and through change the thing is constituted in its diverse phases.¹

Thus, Sāṃkhya-Yoga rejects the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas acceptance of Time as the material cause which in conjunction with external adjuncts give rise to temporally determined or distinct entities, a sequence or succession which is regarded by them characterizing the process of change.

¹According to the Vaiśeṣika time is one and cannot account future (distinctions) etc. According to them division of future, etc., is caused or originate from the superimposition of the distinction of adjuncts. According to Sāṃkhya teachers, (these distinctions of adjuncts alone can be the cause of future, etc., (divisions) etc., in need for another

¹See Das Gupta, S. N., History of Indian Philosophy, op. cit., p. 310.
tattva in the form of time."¹ The author of Yuktidīpikā emphasises this point when he maintains that time is not a factor which brings any change in any entity. If at all it may only be conceived as a concept enabling or helping the intellect in comprehending the relation among the moments of change, but not as a reality or entity existing for the sake of change, i.e. causing change (kālastu sambandhamātropakāri na vikriyayahetuh).²

Up to this point, our analysis of Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of change has enabled us to see the theoretical inconsistencies inherent in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas postulation of the absolute reality of Time and limited or relative reality of the moment of change conceived as a product of the external limiting adjunct. But we have not succeeded in meeting the challenge posed by Bhartrhari and Helarāja who, instead of ascribing a relative status to the moment of change, totally deny any status of reality independent of time, whatsoever. Their challenge to Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of the reality of the moment is of a more serious order and has far reaching consequences. It is in their criticisms of Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of change and causation that Bhartrhari and Helarāja’s greatest merit lies and it is on Sāmkhya-Yoga’s success or

¹kālaśca vaiśeṣikābhimata eko na anāgatādīvavyavahārabhedān pravrtyitumahartī tasmādāyaḥ yairupādhibhedairanāgatādibhedam pratipadyate santu ta evopāyah, ye'nāgatādvavahārahetavaḥ, kṛtamatrantagadunā kālēneti sāmkhyācārvah. tasmān kālarupatāttvāntarabhyupagamaiti. Sāmkhya Tattvakaumudī of Vācaspati Miśra, op. cit., p. 112.

²Yuktidīpikā, op. cit., p. 74.
failure in defending its theory of change and the reality of the moment that the viability of the theoretical foundation of Sāmkhya-Yoga depends.

Bhartṛhari tends to agree with the Sāmkhya-Yoga criticisms of the Vaiśeṣika proposition that the ground of temporal determinations is to be located in the external conditioning factors. Bhartṛhari unequivocally declares that any attempt to explain the reality of temporal determinations on the basis of the conditioning factor is bound to land itself in self-contradiction.

However, despite this initial agreement as to the untenability of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika thesis of the conditioning factor being the ground of temporal differences, Bhartṛhari and Sāmkhya-Yoga part company on the further question of the ground of such temporal differentiations. While both of them agree that the locus or the source of temporal differentiations, change and activity must not be sought in the external conditioning factors, they radically differ in their discernment of the locus.

For Bhartṛhari, the locus of the temporal differentiation is Time itself. According to Bhartṛhari Time possesses the power of pratibandha and abhyanuja through which it gives rise to the semblance of temporal differentiations. But despite the fact that it is Kāla itself which is responsible for the temporal differentiations it also remains the eternal background of continuity and permanence. For Bhartṛhari this Kāla Śakti is identical with Brahman which alone is the transcendental ground of all phenomenalization.¹

¹Kālākhyā svātantryāsaktīr brahmaṇa itiḥ; tatra Bhartṛharerabhirpaṭāya... And also... brahmata tvaṁ vidyāmayaṁ kālakalitama vidyāvaśāt kramarūpopagraḥena... Helarāja, op. cit., pp. 365 and 366.
This interpretation of the ground of temporal determinations is in congruence with the Sādā Brahmanvadins understanding of the nature of causation and change. While agreeing with Sāmkhya's Satkāryavāda that it is the cause itself that undergoes change and the entity retains its essential identity through change, Bhartrhari modifies the Satkāryavāda to assert that the change as such can only be an appearance (vivarta), since the reality remains essentially identical in and through change. All the temporal differentiations then are nothing more than an appearance of it precisely because in and through these temporal differentiations it is the permanence of Time as the Kāla-Sakti of Brahman that is revealed. Moreover, since for Bhartrhari and Helarāja dharmi is not different from dharma, 1 Brahman is not different from his power and as such it is Brahman that constitutes the ground of all change and causation.

Now, Sāmkhya-Yoga philosophers would find this understanding of causation and change quite unacceptable. Starting from the datum presented to the cognizing self, Sāmkhya-Yoga thinkers conclude that the fact of change and causation becomes intelligible only in the context of the reality of the entities undergoing change. The permanence or the continuity

1 Bhartrhari, op. cit., 3.9.54, p. 362; Helarāja, Ibid., 362.
through the moments of change that Bhartṛhari and Helarāja seek to account for by postulating Time as the eternal background of change actually is inherent in the very nature of things, for nothing which is existent can cease to be and the non-existent can never come into being. That which provides the continuity and permanence through change is nothing but the being itself which is undergoing change, and which retains its identity in and through change.\(^1\) The entity which is constituted in and through its non-manifest and manifest phases itself is the ground of continuity and permanence. Temporal differentiations conceived by Sāmkhya-Yoga as moments of existence do not imply a transcendental reality of Time as the ground of this change and the basis of permanence and continuity.

Some Concluding Observations

There are fundamental points of disagreements between Sāmkhya, Nyāya-Vaisēśika and Bhartṛhari on the question of the reality of Time and the ground and nature of temporal sequence and change. There is, according to the Samkhya, no unitary, transcendental and single entity which is given to us in our cognitions as the ground of all temporal change and succession. There is no such thing as a transcendental time, which in conjunction with some external factors, creates change and sequence.

\(^1\) Vyāsa Bhāsya on Yoga Sūtra, 3.13.
Change is inherent in the very nature of things and the continuity or permanence through change is accounted for by the persistence of that which changes. Thing or the being itself is the ground of both the change and permanence.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, on the other hand, maintains that it is plausible to speak of transcendental time. Time is essentially indivisible and unitary. Temporal differentiations or multiplicity of the empirical time notions are product of some external factors or adjuncts that somehow limit the unitary, single and essentially indivisible time. These external factors are the facts of change and activities such as solar motion that operate as the limiting adjuncts on Time and therefore give rise to a temporal experience of change and continuity. According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, while the transcendental Time is essentially unitary and indivisible, temporal differentiations and succession are introduced into its structure on account of its conjunction with the external limiting adjuncts. These temporal determinations are accorded a limited but independent reality.

Bhartrihari is in agreement with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika in accepting the reality of one, unitary, indivisible and transcendental time. However, he disagrees with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika on one important point. Temporal differentiation according to Bhartrihari is not a product of external adjuncts which tend to constitute a limitation on one and essentially indivisible Time. Change or activities are not independent realities over against the reality of Time. They cannot constitute any limitation on Time. How then are we to account for the fact of change and continuity in the
manifest world? Bhartrihari’s answer is that Time has certain powers on account of which it gives rise to the appearance of change. Continuity is accounted for by the fact that through all the changes Time continues as the eternal and transcendental background of all activities.

The Sāṁkhya differs from both Nyāya-Vaisēṣika and Bhartrihari fundamentally. It does not accept the reality of one, unitary indivisible Time as the transcendental background of all change and continuity. Against both of them it maintains the reality only of the moment of change. The idea of change does not necessarily involve the notion of Time. Postulation of Time as the transcendental background of all change and motion is only a construction of intellect. More specifically, against Bhartrihari it would argue that we do not need the category of Time to account for continuity either. Ground for continuity and permanence through all changes and motion is present in the very structure of being or thing. The thing itself persists through all change and motion, and that explains the element of continuity.

Significantly, for Sāṁkhya-Yoga existence and activity are not two different things. Existence is invariably characterized by change, and even in the so-called Pralayavasthā Prakṛti (the world) is constantly undergoing change. Change is the very nature of objective being and as such temporal determinations as various moments of change are not adventitious to its being. It is wrong to look for continuity and permanence outside the structure of change. Our notions of one eternal unitary indivisible Time is a product of such misconceptions.
The confusion of permanence with the Time arises from one’s inability to see the possibility of change being inherent in the very structure of being. But Sāmkhya-Yoga proposes a strictly dynamic conception of reality where change is the very mode of objective being. In consonance with this conception it is quite feasible to conceive of 'timeless change' or change without Time. Sen in a recent article has successfully argued in favour of Sāmkhya-Yoga that time is not a necessary component in our notion of change and that the concept of 'timeless change' is not self-contradictory: He makes the following point:

We are interested to know whether the concept of change (which signifies a very common and well-known phenomenon) invariably or necessarily contains the idea of time. Change as such means any kind of alteration and transformation, which may be said to be one of the commonest facts of experience. It may be thought that the mere idea of alteration or transformation need not necessarily include the concept of time. Time may be thought to be necessary for the understanding or explanation of change, but that would be going beyond change to the intellectual comprehension of its possibility.¹

Our discussion of Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of the problem of time and temporality, thus far, attempted to comprehend the objective element in the experience of temporality. We tried to show that for Sāmkhya-Yoga temporality is intrinsic to the structure of change as exemplifying essential finitude of phenomenal existence. However, according to Sāmkhya-Yoga, finitude and change are only one aspect of reality, the other is infinitude or eternity of pure consciousness being the dialectical counterpart of the sphere of objectivity characterized by change and transformation. How is

this principle of pure consciousness or eternity related to the sphere of objectivity and change? What is the exact nature of their relationship? What are the implications of this relation for the subject or pure consciousness? These are the questions to which we will address ourselves in the following chapter.
CHAPTER V

TRANSCENDENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND TEMPORALITY

Subject and Subjectivity

We have reached a stage in our analysis where the question of the relationship of the transcendental subject (Puruṣa) and the subject as world-involved (Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure), which is the ground of all temporal constitutions, demands our immediate attention. Within Sāmkhya-Yoga frame of reference, Puruṣa may be described as the pure subject or the transcendental consciousness which is the formal, ontological ground of all conscious acts and experiencing.¹ This pure subject is not the experiencer or the agent of any activity or willing. However, in its embodiment (Śārīra)² as the subject which is at the same time world-

¹ It is important to note that according to Sāmkhya-Yoga agency does not belong to the Puruṣa. Agency and activity belongs to the antahkarana (the internal organs). But agency and activity, in as much as it involves conscious reflection, choice and decision, is contingent upon the antahkarana's reflection of the consciousness that is Puruṣa. Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure seems to involve the form of consciousness on account of its proximity to the transcendental subject. Equally important to remember that even though Puruṣa is not the agent or actor, it remains the bhoktā (enjoyer) of the results or effects ensuing from these acts. Thus it is said: Akarturapi phalopabhogonnādyavat, The Sāmkhya Sūtra, op. cit., 1.105; ahamkārah karta na puruṣah, Ibid., 6.54; also, buddhyādhyavasīt-amarthaṁ puruṣaścetayata, The Jayamahaṅgalā, op. cit., p. 42.

² The empiric subject, the subject which is the agent of all activity and willing is always associated with a body. The Sāmkhya-Yoga makes a distinction between three kinds of body. The empiric subject (Buddhi-Ahamkara) cannot be conceived in isolation from subtle body or the Sukṣma Sarīra.
involved, it is none other than the agent of all activity and willing. As such the world-involved subject is essentially 'subjectivity'\(^1\) (subject as activity). Subjectivity as embodiment is essentially the existent. Pure subject or transcendental consciousness is real, but is not exhausted by existence. The existent is that which is both real and active.\(^2\) Actuality (being existent and active) is the mark of subjectivity. Pure subject (Puruṣa) however transcends the mode of actuality. The mode of being of pure subject or transcendental consciousness (Puruṣa) is, thus, inherently to be distinguished from that of subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahaṃkāra structure).

The Empiric Subject and Temporality

To maintain this essential difference in the mode of being of subject as embodiment (Buddhi-Ahaṃkāra structure) and of being of pure subject (Puruṣa) is important within Sāmkhya-Yoga ontological frame of reference. For Sāmkhya-Yoga the former constitutes the core of our empiric

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\(^1\) The distinction between subject as subjectivity and the transcendental subject is an important distinction. Transcendental subject is that which essentially is not involved in the world. Subject as subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahaṃkāra structure) is, the subject that orients itself to the world. To be more precise, world is the project of this subject, for it is the principle of activity and agency. Pure subject (Puruṣa), on the other hand, transcends the realm of activity and agency. It is pure consciousness, without any subject-object distinction.

\(^2\) We consider this distinction between real and existent to be central for an intelligible articulation of the temporal mode of being. Temporality is constitutive of existent whereas it is not intrinsic to the real. Existent is always real, but real is not necessarily existent. The distinction, it may be noted, is not (contra Advaita Vedanta), as between real and what is not-real, but between different grades of reality. There is no ontology of counter reality in Sāmkhya-Yoga.
being as the manifold of world-experience (adhyasaya)\(^1\) and is what is pre-thematically aware of itself.\(^2\) It is in and through the mode of reflection that Buddha comes to be self-aware and constitutes as such the core of the I-ness (Ahamkara)\(^3\). It declares its essential I-ness (Ahamkara) as that which is possessed of thematizing capacity and is aware of itself as such (self-awareness). It is in this mode of reflection that it also discovers itself as that which is world-involved through its 'faculties' (Manas and Indriyas).\(^4\) Thus subjectivity as existent is the structure of world-involvement which has its material ontological basis in embodiment. The empiric subject (Buddhi-Ahamkara) is, definitionally, world-involved and includes both bodily acts or behaviour and different forms of acts of consciousness as modified by the structure of embodiment. Subjectivity, (subject as activity) then, is neither more nor less than these bodily acts and modes of consciousness as they are experienced by

1. adhyasaya
c  ni\'scayakhyastasyasadhara\'n\'i v\'rttirityarthah....
asya\'c\'a buddhermahattan\'a svetarasakalakāryavyapakatvan-mahaisvaryacca mantavyam; The S\'amkhya Pravacana Bhasya, Vij\'n\'anabhiksu, op. cit., 2.13

2. Buddhi is the structure of the emergence of consciousness without any self-awareness. It has innate possibility of all merits as well as the opposite. But it is not aware of its own possibilities nor does it identify itself as such. That is the function of Ahamkara.
dharmaj\'nanavairagya\'isvaryanyapi budhaup\'adana\'kah, nahamkara\'rady-up\'adana\'kah; budhereva niratisayasattvakaryatvadityarthah, Ibid., 2.14

3. abhim\'ano ahamkara\'h; The S\'amkhya Karika, op. cit., 24; aham karotityahamkara\'h....buddhy\'a ni\'scita ev\'arthe hamkaramamakara\'rau jayete; Vijn\'anabhiksu, The S\'amkhya Pravacana Bhasya, op. cit., 2.16.

4. In the use of the term there is no suggestion of a psycholgocial understanding involved. The use of the expression faculty is to indicate functional differences within one psyche. The S\'amkhya Karika, op. cit. 24-26; The S\'amkhya Sutra, op. cit., 2.16.
the "I" (Ahamkāra), as they are 'lived' concretely and immediately by the subject aware of itself as such (self-aware).

It is true that our bodily existence is not devoid of awareness. A certain amount of awareness is built into the very mode of our being as an embodiment. However this awareness in itself (being of Buddhi) is pre-thematic and pre-reflective, but constitutes the phenomenal condition of thematization and conscious reflection. An implicit, non-thematic awareness attends experiential behaviour and acts of reflective consciousness (self-awareness) belonging to subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahamkāra). A more explicit act of self-consciousness is conditioned by an experiential priority of the non-thematic awareness (the being of Buddhi).

However, it is precisely in the subject's act of reflection (the being of Buddhi) that the possibility of the recovery of the transcendental subject (subject transcending the act of self-consciousness and the realm of subjectivity) opens up. The mode of being of self as reflection (Buddhi) is also the mode of acquiring the discriminative awareness (Viveka) by the self-reflecting self.¹ In the mode of self-reflection, the self-reflective self makes the pre-thematic awareness of bodily acts and conscious acts thematically conscious, i.e. as object to the self-reflecting self. This is the mode of transcendence or objectification

¹ kṣaṇatatkramayoh samyamāvivekajñānam, The Yoga Sūtra, op. cit., 3.52; See Vyāsa's Bhāṣya and Vacaspati Miśra's Tattva Naiṣāḍhā on the aforesaid Sūtra; ".....when by true wisdom the gunas are perceived as they are both the illusory notions of time and space vanish." Dasgupta, S. N., Indian Philosophy, op. cit., 256-257, n.2.; For a comprehensive analysis of the mechanisms of reflection and the different planes on which it operates see Dasgupta, Yoga as Philosophy and Religion, op. cit., pp. 150-165.
(making other) of the realm of subjectivity. This structure of transcendence by reflection (being of Buddhi) has its phenomenological correlate in the discriminative awareness (viveka) which is the condition for the recovery of the transcendental consciousness. Reflection is the rational mode of otherness. The relationship of otherness of the pure subject to the realm of subjectivity (subject as embodiment) is also the primary mode of the being of pure consciousness or the transcendental subject (Puruṣa) as a 'relation' of no relation bereft of all contents.¹

Thus, the relationship of the transcendental consciousness (Puruṣa) to the things and being of the world (including the being of Buddhi and Ahamkāra as constitutive of subjectivity) is of a peculiar kind, i.e. it is a relation of no-relation or otherness (anyayoga) — it is precisely what things of the world are not.² The relationship is not external but dialectical.³ It is a relationship of mutual opposition and cooperation,

¹The paradoxical expression of relation of no-relation or otherness is employed to suggest that even total otherness is given to reflection as a species of relation, rather than as no relation at all. In the discriminative self-reflection pure subject is understood with the help of the notion of the inoperative presence (sannidhi) which constitutes the condition of the bondage and its absence which marks its freedom. Either way for reflection it is a mode of relation.


³See Jayamangala: etāni kimātmārtham svām svāṁ vṛttim pratipadyante, kimanyārthamitāyāḥ-puruṣārtha eva heturitī, puruṣasyārtho visayopabhogah kaivalyaṁ ca sa vṛttihetuḥ, Jayamangalā, op. cit., p. 38; Also see Māthārvṛtti: kim svārtha viśayam pratipadyante aḥosvit parārthamityat rocyate, pararthaṁgamyate yasmādāḥ-puruṣārtha eva hetuḥ purusārthāḥ kartavya eva iti guṇa nāṁ pravṛttih, p. 48.
of thematic exclusion but operational dependence. Transcendental consciousness or the pure subject is not internally and necessarily related to the world of subjectivity, rather it is a relation of no-relation (or otherness). It is this relationship of otherness that gives rise to the emergence of subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahāṃkāra structure) as a specific moment in the dialectical relation between the world and pure consciousness. This subjectivity, the principle of I-ness, also constitutes the core of temporality. It is a being which is essentially temporal. The actuality of our concrete experiential existence also provides the mode of the discernment of temporality. Herein we discover that the past is my past in my present. This synthesis of temporality as the mine-ness of subjectivity.

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1 The point emerges very clearly in the Sāṁkhya Kārikā itself. Kārika 55 expresses the contradiction and pain suffered by Puruṣa on account of its association with the body:

tatra jārāmaṇaḥ kṛtaṁ duḥkhāṁ prāṇoṣṭi cetanāḥ puruṣaḥ
liṅgasyāvinivṛtteḥ tasmād duḥkhāṁ svabhāvena, The Sāṁkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārikā 55.

Kārikā 56 brings out the element of cooperation by stating that it is on account of prakṛti that puruṣa can gain liberation:

ītyeṣa prakṛtikṛto mahaṅādiviśeṣbhuṭaparyantaḥ pratipuruṣa vimokṣārtham svārtha iṣva parārtha āraṃbhāḥ, Ibid., Kārikā 56.

The same idea of the thematic exclusion and operational dependence is continued in Kārikās 57, 58, 59, 60, 20 and 21.

2 Temporality is defined as a function of internal organs which are the structure of the manifestation of the unmanifest prakṛti. These are Buddhi, Ahāṃkāra and Manaś. Thus Sāṁkhya Kārikā says:

antahkaranam trividham....trikālāmābhyantram karaṇam,
The Sāṁkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārika 33.

Gaudapādabhāṣya on the Kārikā reads as follows:

trikālāmābhyantram karaṇam. Buddhyaḥahāṃkāramanaṁ trikāla-
vigayāṇi buddhivrtaṃbhāṇāṁ ghatam budhyate ațṭavatānāgatam
ceti. ahāmkāro vartamaṇe 'bhiṇānam karoti ațṭe nāgate ca.
tathā mano vartamaṇe saṁkalpam kurute ațṭe nāgate ca. evam
(Ahaṃkāra structure) is an ontological relation which unites the past to the present. The Sāṃkhya-Yoga ontology would not claim that the past and present are identical. Evidently past is not present, i.e. there is a radical distinction between the two dimensions of temporal existence. But despite this fact that they are not identical, they are internally related through my subjectivity as my past and my present, i.e. they manifest a lived unity.\(^1\)

The Transcendental Consciousness and the Temporal Structure

What then is the relationship of the transcendental subject (Purusa) which is, ontologically speaking, other than the world-involved subject (Buddhi-Ahaṃkāra structure), to the temporal structuring of this world-involved subject? Within the Sāṃkhya-Yoga framework time and temporal relations of past, present and future cannot, ontologically speaking, be grounded in pure-consciousness or the transcendental subject (Purusa) which is intrinsically non-temporal.\(^2\) Any attempt to locate the ontological ground of temporal relations in the transcendental subject (Purusa) which is essentially non-temporal will imply the reduction of the temporal dimensions of being to pure duration or, not-endurance which is not a case of endurance, but will be a thorough past, present and future, or trans-temporal unity. In such an event one will have to face the question of

\(^1\)The three internal organs of Buddhi, Ahaṃkāra, and Manas operate as unity. As such they constitute the internal relations of past, present, and future. Together these three constitute the empiric self, both in its impersonal and personal dimensions. However, it must be noted that Buddhi is primarily impersonal though individual. But this Buddhi is a necessary condition for the operation or functioning of Ahaṃkāra and Manas as the structure of temporal constitution.

\(^2\)Cataline, F. V., op. cit., p. 60.
how the temporal determinations can emerge from the unity (of pure consciousness) per se. It may be argued that a pre-supposed unity alone is the context in which the change or temporal determination can be grasped and understood. However, Sāṁkhya-Yoga points out that only an unity which has a built-in structure of differentiation can account for temporal performance and temporal change. Prakṛti is postulated as the realm of being which has such a structure.¹ This indeed is precisely the point that emerges in our analysis of Sāṁkhya-Yoga understanding of temporality. Within the Sāṁkhya-Yoga frame of reference the subjectivity as the principle of I-ness is the ground of the ontological distinction of past, present and future (as my past, my present and my future) precisely because this principle has its objective reference point in Prakṛti (the world) which is the ground of temporal permanence and change.²

The empiric subjectivity is not an a-temporal identity.³ Nor can it be described as a series of atomistic elements of consciousness which are contained in time. The best way to look at subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahaṅkāra structure) is to conceive it in its concreteness of the experiential order: it is the structural unity or an identity which holds

¹parināmīnityatā guṇānām, Vyāsa Bhaṣya on Yoga Sūtra, op. cit., Sūtra 4.33.

²See infra note 1, pp. 119-120.

³Only Purusa as the transcendental subject has an a-temporal identity. A-temporal identity refers to the intrinsic unchangeability characteristic of Purusa as the principle that transcends the realm of change and temporality. This may be described as permanence without change, i.e. kutatthanityatā (vide Vyāsa bhāṣya on Yoga-Sūtra, op. cit., Sūtra 4.33).
together the structural whole of temporal becoming. It must not be conceived in substantive terms. Subjectivity is not a substance underlying our experiences in different moments of existence. The substantive existence, the element of constancy and non-temporality belongs to the realm of pure subject or the transcendental consciousness (Puruṣa). Subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahāṃkāra structure), on the other hand, is continuously on the go. It is the structure of continual unfolding or manifestation of what is unmanifest.

Within the temporal structure, subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahāṃkāra structure) is not so much a subject present throughout any moment or a sort of substance. For according to Sāmkhya-Yoga it is a continuous unfolding or manifestation of that which has a relation of otherness with the transcendental subject as the constant witness of this unfolding. The subjectivity then, is a kind of structure of temporal experience—the structure of the disclosing of the fact of change and movement within the very being of subjectivity. Thus subjectivity is a self-constituting synthesis of the temporal dimensions, a unification or identity of experience within the flux of that experience, itself. It is the self-constituting unity of temporal experience itself.

Pure consciousness or the transcendental subject, however, is separated from this self-constituting unity of temporal experience in a radical way. Puruṣa is not temporal (either as change or as permanence)¹. It is

¹The Sāmkhya-Yoga makes a distinction between two types of permanence: the absolutely unchanging permanence (the principle of eternality which is essentially non-temporal in the sense that it is not subject to change) and (continued on bottom of next page)
immovable constant (kūtastha). It is not affected by past, present and future mode of being, for it is what it is: unaffected, self-identical, unchanged and unmoved.¹ There is a past for a being who is what he is not and is not what he is, i.e. for a being who is in a state of dialectical relation to something which is of the nature of an other to it. This being in dialectical relation of otherness with Puruṣa is the necessary condition for the possibility of the strange experience of lived time as both unity and disjunction.² Pure consciousness or the transcendental subject on the other hand is a unity unto itself, a unity in isolation of its own being.³

While this phenomenon of subjectivity in the sense in which it is distinguished from the transcendental subject may be described as a case of identity in difference, the latter, i.e. the transcendental subject may

(continued from bottom of previous page)

the permanence in mutation. Permanence of the Puruṣa falls in the first category. Whereas the permanence of the guṇa which constitutes the essence of Prakṛti falls in the second category:

Dvāyī ceyamñītyātā kūtasthañītyatā pariñāminyatā ca. Tatra
Kūtasthañītyatā puruṣasya, pariñāminyatā guṇānām, Vyāsa
Bhāṣya on The Yoga Sūtra, 4.33, op. cit.

¹Kūtasthañītyeṣu svarpuṣamātra pratiṣṭheṣu muktapuruṣeṣu svarupāst-ītā,, Ibid.

²Past, present and future as temporal determinations of empirical being apply only to Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure. This is the structure of the manifestation of Prakṛti (the unmanifest world) which has a character of permanence in mutation. Thus Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure is the realm of the experience of time as both unity (permanence) and disjunction (change).

³See Supra, note 1.
be described as pure identity. The former has a mode of being which contains at the very heart of it elements of dispersion and atomisms.

Subjectivity as the centre of egoity and individuality (Buddhi-Ahaṅkāra structure) is a self-constituting synthesis of the temporal dimensions. It is a no-structure of temporal experience itself. On the contrary, the pure subject or transcendental consciousness is given fully constituted from the very beginning. Puruṣa does not emerge with time; it, rather, exists without beginning beginninglessly as a fully constituted being. More concretely, there never was a moment when it was not there. Not less significant is the fact that it may be discerned as existing in the fullness of its being in every subsequent instants of its existence. Its being contains all the properties that pertain to it in particular instants. It exists with its nature fully determined as already constituted - not just being constituted, i.e. becoming with the passage of time.

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1 This is a particular kind of bhedābheda which must be distinguished from the Vedāntic conception of identity indifference. The concept is employed here to bring out the fact that this being is also the structure of becoming which accounts for a continued identity through the specificity (vaiśiṣṭya) and differentiation (bhedānām parīmāṇāt) that gives rise to the tattvas.

2 What is the language of Vedānta would be described as bhuta or parinīṣṭhita vastu - i.e. the accomplished being given in all its fullness. (Vide Śāṅkara's commentary on Brahma Sūtra 1.11).

3 The language employed here (fully constituted, existing in fullness, fully determined, etc. etc.) must be understood in respect of its negative emphasis - i.e. denying the opposite. It is analogous to descriptive statements about Brahma, like non-duality, etc., whose function as Śāṅkara rightly points out is to negate its opposite. (ananyatvam vyātiṣṭetā brahma abhāvam).
Subjectivity, on the other hand, refers to the aspect of being that is constituted in a manifold of phases. Thus in the realm of subjectivity one phase of actualization passes into another phase, the two phases not being disjunct and extends continually into further phases of actualization. This continuous passage from potentiality to actuality\(^1\) is an ongoing process in and through which the subjectivity as temporal is constituted.

Purusa as the transcendental subject, however, remains self-identical through the constantly arising new instants in which it exists. Subjectivity as being constituted on the basis of the developing phases that are pure activity, is transitory and passes into continual new phases. As such it requires to be grounded in some other being that remains identical despite the passage of time, and which, therefore, surmounts the diversity of constantly emerging new moments and by virtue of this is enduring and permanent. This being is Prakriti which has the temporal mode of permanence (parināmi nityatā).\(^2\)

Thus temporality of subjectivity implies a secondary mode of being, a fissuration and dispersion taking place at the very heart of it. This fissuration and dispersion can be overcome only in the mode of discriminative awareness (viveka jñāna). Ironically, however, the self-reflecting

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\(^1\)The expression here is used as rough translation of Vyakta and Avyakta in relation to Prakriti, Purusa being outside the point of this polar relation.

\(^2\)See Supra, note 1, p. 119-120.
mode of being leading to discriminative awareness intensifies the problem for the world-involved subject (Buddhi–Ahaṅkāra structure). In the very act of overcoming dispersion the mode of being of the subjectivity comes to be dissolved. To be in the mode of discrimination is also to regain the original ground of subject as principle of pure consciousness.¹

¹It is important to remember that Buddhi as the mode of being of reflection or as the reflecting mode of being is also the locus of discriminative awareness: saiva ca viśīnaṣṭi punaḥ pradhānapuruṣāntaram sūkṣmam, The Sāṃkhya Kārikā, op. cit., Kārika 37.
PART II

ABHIDHARMA BUDDHISM.
CHAPTER VI

ĀBHIDHARMIKA BUDDHISM: ITS HISTORICAL AND TEXTUAL SETTING

Schools of Buddhism and the Ābhidhamma Tradition

Traditional Buddhist sources give varying and, at times, conflicting accounts of the sects of Buddhism that emerged during the first phase of its development. Modern scholars have tried in vain to create a systematic and coherent picture of the internal development of Buddhist tradition in its early stages. It is extremely difficult to discern with any clarity the exact number of schools and their historical and doctrinal interrelationship. This study does not intend to investigate this larger and certainly historically significant question, which lies outside

the range and scope of the present work. However, leaving the larger historical question aside, we are obligated to define and delimit that area of Buddhism which may be described as Abhidharmika Buddhism, and to that extent it becomes imperative to address ourselves to the task of delineating the historical and textual context of Abhidharmika tradition.

According to the Buddhist tradition, three different Buddhist councils took place at different times to settle important questions pertaining to the basic tenets of the order. The primary factor responsible for the rise of different sects of Buddhism may be seen in the context of varying interpretations of the word of the Buddha. All these schools claimed to be true to the original teaching of the Master and claimed themselves to be the true representatives of the doctrine. The oldest Pāli accounts of schism within Buddhist order provide a

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1 The first Council is reported to have taken place at Rajagaha (modern Rajgrha) just after the demise of Buddha on the issue of Vinaya (the rules of discipline) as laid down by Buddha. The second Council was summoned by the monk Yasa, about a hundred years after Buddha’s death, at Vaisali in northern Bihar. This was probably the occasion for the great schism between the Sthaviras and Mahasanghikas, which was to later shape the growth of Mahayana Buddhism in India. The third Council is assigned to the period of Asoka’s reign, about two centuries after Buddha’s death, the basic issues of controversy being more of doctrinal nature, rather than rules of discipline which was the case in the first two Councils. It seems probable that the division between Theravādins and Sarvāstivādins may have originated at this Council. Scholars have widely differed both on the fact of the Council as well as what transpired there. Most of the evidences are quite late and sometimes very confusing. See Thomas, E., op. cit., pp. 27-41; also, Keith, op. cit., pp. 148-156.
list of at least eighteen schools. These sources tend to present conflicting accounts of the various doctrinal positions held by each of them. But it is difficult to construct any definite historical or chronological order out of this list. Pāli versions too differ among themselves on the question of the antiquity of one or the other of the schools as indeed they differ from the claims that is made by Sanskrit tradition.

The Pāli sources including Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the Katthāvatu, Dipvaṁsa and Mahāvaṁsa, though differing on details of the schisms, agree in maintaining that the first schism took place during the Council of Vaisāli, when the Mahāsanghikas seceded from the Therāvādins. From within Mahāsanghikas arose the schools of Gokulikas and Ekabbohārikas. The Gokulikas were further subdivided into Pannaṁdīvīdīna and Bāhulikas; and the Ekabbohārikas gave rise to the school of Cetiyaṁdīna. On the other hand, the Therāvāda itself is reported to be subdivided into Mahiṁ-sāsakas and Vajjīputtakas, as indeed it was on account of their differences

1 See The Debates Commentary (Kathāvatthuppakarna-Aṭṭhakatha), (trans.) Law, B. C., London: Oxford University Press, 1940, pp. 2 ff.

2 Keith, op. cit., p. 148.

3 The Debate Commentary, op. cit., pp. 2-4.
with the *Vajjiputtakas* on the important questions of discipline that *Mahāsāṅghikās* separated. The *Vajjiputtakasa* gave rise to four branches: *Dhammuttariyas, Bhadravānīkas, Channāparikās* and *Sammitiyas*. *Mahiṃsāskas* on the other hand were further divided into the *Sabbatthivādins* and *Dhammāguttikās*. From within *Sabbatthivādin* tradition arose the schools of *Kasapikas, Saṅkāntikas* and *Suttavādins*. This accounts for the original eighteen schools mentioned by Pali sources. Buddhaghosa, however, mentions six more schools.¹

A Sanskrit tradition also gives a list of eighteen schools. The list is given in *Mahāvyutpatti*.² The text belongs to *Sarvastivāda* and was probably composed in the fifth or sixth century A.D. But this does not minimise the value of the classifications, as it is quite obvious that it draws upon older materials extant at that time.³ The arrangement of schools here is not chronological; rather they are grouped under the original schools to which they belonged:


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¹Ibid.


³Ibid., p. 38.

4. **Sthaviras**: Mahāvihāravāsins, Jetavanīyas, Abhayagirivāsins.

It is extremely difficult to determine much from these names about the doctrinal positions of these schools. Names given are sometimes after the original teacher of the school; sometimes, it applies to the geographical location, and occasionally, to doctrinal allegiance.

It is important to note that, according to Pāli sources, the Sabbāthivādins (Sarvāstivādins) come within the broader group of Therāvādins as opposed to the schools which emerged from the original secession of Mahāsanghikas.¹ The Sanskrit sources also label Vibhājyavādins as a school of Sarvāstivādins,² while the Pāli sources consider the Vibhājyavādins to be the precursor of Therāvādins who later came to be known by that name. This shows that initially there was great affinity between Sarvāstivāda and Therāvāda. But there are important differences between the two. Therāvādins, as it is well known, preserved their canon in Pāli. Prof.

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¹ Dipavamsa, vide Keith, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

² Mahavyutpati, vide Thomas, E. J., op. cit., p. 38.
Kern and Rhys Davids among others, agree in maintaining that the Pāli canons contain the doctrines of the Sthaviras or Theravādins. The Theravādin tradition of Sri Lanka tends to identify them as Vibhajjyavādins. But it seems probable that the Vibhajjavāda was a more comprehensive term and was also applicable to Sarvāstivādins. The Sarvāstivādins later came to be called Vaibhāṣikas on account of their allegiance to Vibhāṣa, a commentary on Jñānaprasthāna, the earliest Abhidharma text. In the words of Yamakami Sogen:

In later times, the so-called Vaibhāṣikas came to be identified with the Sarvāstivādins; and the two names became mutually interchangeable, although, properly speaking, the Sarvāstivādins originally formed a section of the Vaibhāṣikas.

Both Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda acquired significant place in the early stages of development of Buddhism and their contribution to the propagation and development of Buddhism outside India cannot be underestimated. Though Theravāda later flourished in the south, there is no doubt that, for

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2 Keith, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

3 See infra, p. 133.

long, both Therāvāda and Sarvāstivāda developed in north India at the same time. The Sarvāstivāda was chiefly confined to the western centers of Mathurā, Kāshmir, and Gandhāra, while the Therāvādins operated from Magadha and Kosala, the two earliest centers of Buddhism.

The split between the Sarvāstivāda and Therāvāda (also called Vibhājyavāda) seem to have taken place during the reign of Asoka. "It appears that Asoka sided with the Vibhājyavādins, and that in consequence the Sarvāstivādins went North, and converted Kāshmir, which remained their centre for more than a thousand years." ¹ However, the basis of division in the present case was, instead of being the rules of discipline (vinaya), the philosophical or metaphysical stand taken by Sarvāstivādins. Thus Conze rightly observes:

the split between Sarvāstivādins and Vibhājyavādins was occasioned by the pan-realistic ontological doctrine of Katyāyaniputra, who taught that not only the present, but also past and future events (dharma) are real. ²

This indeed is a decisive issue on which the Therāvādins and Sarvāstivādins disagreed fundamentally. It is not surprising that the Abhidharma texts of both the schools containing their basic philosophical positions, take different stands on important philosophical issues. Conze therefore is probably correct in holding that:

the Abhidharma books were clearly composed after the third division of the schools. The contents of the

¹ Conze, Edward, A Short History of Buddhism, Bombay: Chetana Ltd., 1960, p. 20.

² Ibid., p. 20. For elucidation of the said ontological doctrine see section VIII, infra, p. 173 ff.
seven Ābhidharma books of Sarvāstivādins differ from
those of the seven books of the Therāvādins, who are
an offshoot of the Vibhajyavādins. ¹

The Two Ābhidharma Traditions

For long Buddhist scholarship was led to believe that the original
Buddhist canons existed only in Pāli. However, the evidence brought in
from Tibetan and Chinese sources, as well as the discovery of manuscript
fragments in Eastern Turkey, Nepal and Gilgit, confirmed the existence of
Buddhist canons in Sanskrit. It is now well established that Sarvāstivādins
used Sanskrit as the medium of their literary activity and that
their canon was entirely in Sanskrit. Sarvāstivādins too like Therāvādins
divided their canon into three Piṭakas (literally baskets): the Sūtras,²
the Vinayas, and the Ābhidharma. Despite some differences in the arrange-
ment and classification of treatment there is substantial similarity be-
tween the Pali and Sanskrit Vinaya and Sūtra literature. Scholars, who

¹Ibid., p. 21.

²In Sarvāstivāda tradition, Sūtras are called Āgamas whereas Pāli
tradition uses Nikāya for sūtra pitaka.
have made comparative study of the two sets of *Vinaya* and *Sutra* texts, have noted substantial agreement between the two traditions.\(^1\) However, special significance attaches to the *Abhidharma Pitaka* because it is precisely here that the differences between the Pali and Sanskrit traditions seem to be remarkable.\(^2\) This difference between the two sets of *Abhidharma* texts raises an important historical question regarding the relationship between the two traditions. One may legitimately surmise that the *Abhidharma* texts were composed and compiled at a time when both the traditions had been separated for long. It is quite probable that the two traditions developed their *Abhidharma* texts independently. However, any definitive statement on this issue will have to wait a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the *Abhidharma* literature of the two traditions. It will be interesting to investigate if the content or the structure of the texts provide any basis for a reasonable conclusion about the chronological order of the two sets of the *Abhidharma* texts. Though such an investigation is beyond the scope of this project we will bring in, wherever possible, evidences that may be useful in resolving

\(^{1}\)For an excellent discussion or summary of the findings of such comparisons, see, Banarje, A. C., *Sarvástivāda Literature*, Calcutta: Calcutta Oriental Press, 1957, pp. 18-50. Our own account of Sarvástivadin literature draws heavily upon this work.

this important historical question.

There are seven Abhidharma texts of Sarvāstivāda school which were originally composed in Sanskrit:

1. The Jñānapraṇastānasūtra of Ārya Kātyāyanīputra.
2. The Sangītiparāya of Mahākausthila.
3. The Prakaraṇpāda of Sthavira Vasumitra.
4. The Vijnānakāya of Sthavira Devsārma.
5. The Dhātukāya of Pūrṇa.
6. The Dharmaskandha of Ārya Sāriputra.
7. The Prajñāptisāstra of Ārya Maudgalyāyana.

While manuscript fragments of Sutra and Vinaya literature of Sarvāstivāda have been discovered in Sanskrit originals, no Sanskrit originals of these Abhidharma texts, except fragments of Sangītiparāya by Mahākausthila, is available. It is interesting to note that while the whole of Vinaya literature and some other later Abhidharma treatises are found in Tibetan, none of the Sanskrit Abhidharma texts, except the Prajñāptisāstra of Ārya Maudgalyāyana, is available in Tibetan translations.

During the reign of and at the instance of Kaniska of Kusana dynasty, a council of Buddhist monks was called in the first century B.C. At this council, the commentary on Jñānapraṇastānasūtra called Vībhāṣa was composed.¹ It is from this Vībhāṣa that the Vaibhāṣika derive their name.

¹Keith, op. cit., p. 155.
Since the *Vibhaṅga* belongs to this period it is quite safe to conclude that *Jñānāprasthāna* belonged to a period earlier than first century B.C. Though there is no conclusive evidence to settle the date of this text, there is no doubt that this is the oldest and most important of the seven Abhidharma texts. According to the Chinese sources it was first translated into Chinese by Saṅghdeva and Dharmapriya (Ku Fo-nien) who brought it to China from Kashmir during 4th Century A.D. ¹ Hiuen Tsang also translated it in the 7th century A.D. ² The tradition considers *Jñānāprasthāna* to be the principal text, while the other six are regarded as supplementary or ancillary. Yasōmitra in his *Sphutārthābhidharmakośavyākhyā* compares the *Jñānāprasthāna* with the body of a being and the other six to its legs or Padas. ³ It is this relationship between *Jñānāprasthāna* and other Abhidharma texts that led Takakusu to suggest that "it stands to the other treatises in such a relation as the Veda to the six Vedāṅgas". ⁴

Keith has expressed his doubt about the antiquity of the Abhidharma texts, and is inclined to believe that the entire body of Abhidharma texts belong to a period much later than what is suggested by the traditional

¹ Nanjio, *op. cit.*, No: 1273.

² Ibid., No 1275.


⁴ Takakusu, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
sources. According to Keith, we cannot form any "definite idea as to the date of Īnānapraṣṭhāna and its supplements, no faith can be placed on the alleged authors, the titles being manifestly intended to convey the impression of extreme antiquity".¹ The views expressed by Keith on the dates of the text in question contradict the claims of the tradition and echoes an attitude towards tradition best described in Conze's words as "superciliousness that belongs to a phase in the treatment of subject nations which has now passed".² We tend to agree with Frauwallener's observation that in the matter of historical research the importance of tradition should not be undermined unless the internal evidence completely contradicts it, or that we have overwhelmingly valid reasons against it.³ In our opinion, the antiquity of the primary sanskrit Abhidharma texts is beyond doubt and, as we shall show, they are in all probability older than the Pāli Abhidharma texts.

The Sangītiparyāya is the first of the six auxilllary texts (pañca). The Chinese sources assign the authorship to Śāriputra, but Indian and Tibetan tradition mention Mahākāusthila of Sarvāstivāda school as the author of the text.⁴ According to Takakusu, there are some points of

¹Keith, op. cit., p. 154.

²Conze, Edward, Buddhist Thought in India, op. cit., p. 10.


⁴Takakusu, op. cit.
similarities between the Puggalapaññatti, a Pāli Abhidharma text, and the Sangītiparayāya. He further suggests that the Sangītiparayāya is modelled on the Sangīti Sūtanta. The Prakaraṇapāda, the second of the ancillary Abhidharma texts, is attributed to Vasumitra. According to B.C. law, the Prakaraṇapāda is the counterpart of the Vibhangaprakaraṇa of the Pāli Abhidharmapīṭaka. Nyayantiloka, however, maintains that the Vibhanga bears a closer affinity with Dhammaskandha. The Vijnānakāya is attributed to Devasārma of Srāvāsti, and is supposed to have been composed during the second hundred years of Buddha's parinirvāna. Authorship of the Dhātukāya according to the Chinese source, is attributed to Vasumitra in the 2nd century A.D. Against this Chinese tradition we have the authority of Yasomitra and Bu-ston who regard Pūrṇa to be the author of this work. N. Dutt is inclined to give greater weight to the Chinese tradition.

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 Keith, op. cit., p. 154.
6 Banerjee, A. C., op. cit., p. 64.
7 Nanjio, op. cit., No. 1282.
specially "in view of the fact that this pada (Dhātukāya) is only an enlarged treatment of the topics contained in section 4 of the Prakarṇadīnapada of Vasumitra".¹ Poussin is prepared to accept the antiquity of this Abhidharma text and thinks that it, probably, is the source of Pāli Dhātukathā.² The Dharmaskandha is attributed to Maudgalyāyana by Chinese tradition, while Yasomitra and Buxton mention Sariputra as the author of this work.³ Takakusu attaches great importance to this text and considers this to be "the most important of the Abhidharma works and the fountainhead of the Sarvāstivāda system."⁴ The Prajñāpatisātra is attributed to Maudgalyāyana, and is the only Abhidharma text which seems to have been translated into Tibetan.⁵ It might be construed from this fact that the Prajñānpatisāstra is, probably, a late text which survived in its original form in Sanskrit, and was available to Buddhist scholars who worked in Tibet during the 7th century when Buddhism was introduced in Tibet.

The Pāli canons of the Therāvādins also contain seven Abhidharma texts. However, the relationship among the Pāli Abhidharma texts is not

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¹Dutt, N., op. cit., p. 293.

²Poussin, La Valee, vide Banerjee, A. C., op. cit., p. 65.

³Nanjio, op. cit., No. 1296.

⁴Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 3-12.

⁵Keith, op. cit., p. 154.
one of mutual complementariness, nor do they bear a relationship of primary and secondary texts like the Sanskrit Abhidharma texts.¹ The Pāli Abhidharma texts are:

1. Dhammasaṅgani
2. Vibhaṅga
3. Puggalapannatti
4. Yamaka
5. Kathāvatthu
6. Dhātukathā
7. Paṭṭhāna

In Pāli Sutta and Vinaya literature there is no reference to Abhidhammapitaka.² This has created some question about the authenticity of the tradition which considers the Abhidhammapitaka to be the original words of Buddha. Scholars have widely differed on the date of Abhidharma texts. Prof. Rhys Davids thinks that in terms of subject-matter and the style, the Kathāvatthu belongs to Asokan period.³ According to Mrs. Rhya Davids, the Dhammasaṅgani is

¹See Supra, p. 133 ff.

²The Sutta and Vinaya Pitakas do not mention Abhidhammapitaka as a separate pitaka. The division recognized by the Pāli Canons is that of Dhamma, i.e. Sutta, and Vinaya with Mātika. It is the Mātika (literally means lists) which probably later, was elaborated into Abhidhamma. According to Keith, the Abhidhamma Pitaka is a work of Vibhajyavadins of Theravāda tradition..."the Abhidhamma Pitaka, as we have it in the Pāli canon, is the definite work of this school, a systematic scholasticism based on the Suttas", Keith, op. cit., p. 153.

³Vide, Keith, op. cit., p. 22.
dated back to about 385 B.C. She bases her contention on a comparison of form and content of the Dhammasaṅgani and the Kattha vaṭṭhū which is dated back to 247 B.C. Keith however disagrees with this estimate of the date of Abhidhamma Pitaka.\(^1\) He thinks that the texts are quite late, and probably a late addition to the other two Pitikas which definitely are of older origin. We tend to agree with Keith when he observes:

> that the Abhidhamma has no claim to the antiquity asserted for it. This is supported by the undeniable fact that, while the Sutta and Vinaya Pitakas have parallels in other schools, based on a common tradition, the Abhidhamma of the Sarvastivadins, of which we now have information, utterly disagrees with the Pali Abhidhamma.\(^2\)

There is more than one reason to consider Pali Abhidhammas to be later than the Sanskrit Abhidharma texts. First, the earliest archeological evidence that we have about the existence of an Abhidharma text as the third Pitaka comes from Kausika inscriptions. It is in an inscription belonging to the period of Kusana king Kanishka, we come across the term Tripitaka. But there is no conclusive evidence that the Tripitaka referred to here

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\(^1\)Keith, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 23.

\(^2\)Ibid.
applies to the Pali Canon. On the other hand, we are certain that the Abhidharma texts of Sanskrit tradition belonging to the Sarvastivadin or the Vaibhavikas existed at the time of Kausika Council. It is, therefore, conceivable that the term under reference related to Sanskrit Abhidharma. The only available evidence about the existence of Pali Abhidamma only points to the vogue of the study of the Abhidhamma Pitaka in Sri Lanka during the third century A.D. It is also fairly certain that Abhidhamma Pitaka came to be considered authoritative about 5th century A.D. when Buddhaghosa wrote the Atthasalini, a commentary on the first book of Abhidhamma Pitaka, the Dhammasangani, and also the Kathavatthupakrama-Atthakatha, a commentary on the Kathavat. Beyond this, nothing certain can be said about the Pali Abhidhamma texts.

It is equally important to note that within the Pali tradition, the relationship between the Milindapañha and the Abhidhamma texts also point to the possibility of the latter being later in chronological order. It has been suggested by some scholars that Milindapañha was originally written in Sanskrit or Pārāśākrit dialect and was later rendered into Pāli. Even if we deny this possibility there is little doubt about its

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1 Keith, op. cit., p. 23.


northern origin and its possible affinity with the northern Sarvāstivāda tradition. One can take Keith's suggestion about the chronological order of Milinda-panha and Abhidhamma texts quite seriously. His contention that the reference in Milinda-panha to Abhidhamma Pitaka can be discerned only in the passages and sections which are definitely later interpolations or addition is confirmed by Winternitz's excellent analysis of the form and style of this text. T. W. Rhys Davids' contention that at the time of Milinda-panha, which can easily be dated between 100 to 200 B.C., all the three Pāli Pitakas were existent does not stand the test of historical research.

Conze has tried to date the texts of the Sarvāstivāda and the Therāvāda in terms of the traditional account of the separation of the school. According to the Buddhist tradition both the schools separated during Asoka's reign. Conze maintains that the passages in which the texts of Therāvādins and Sarvāstivādins agree almost word by word, we can assume that they were composed at a time preceding the separation of the two schools, which took place during Asoka's rule, i.e. about 250 B.C. Applying this criterion, it may be discerned that both Pāli and Sanskrit versions

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1 Keith, op. cit., p. 23.


3 Conze, Edward, Buddhist Thought in India, op. cit., pp. 31-32.
of Sūtra and Nikāya literature antedate the separation of the school. Continuing influence of the common tradition on the two schools is quite possible during the subsequent one hundred years. It is during this period that both the Sanskrit Abhidharma literature and the Pāli Milindapanha may have been composed. The discongruity between the two Abhidharma literature must have emerged with the passage of time. Employing Conze's criterion, one can see not only the post-Asokan origin of Pāli Abhidhamma literature, but also discern the fact that a time lag existed between it and the time of the separation of the two schools. If the Pāli Abhidharma texts were composed immediately after the separation of the two schools we would expect some similarity between Abhidharma texts of the two traditions. But this is not the case.¹ On the other hand, as it has been mentioned earlier, there is close affinity between the Pāli and Sanskrit Sūtra and Vinaya literature. No such affinity, however, exists in the case of Abhidharma literature.

Takakusu, on the basis of a comparative analysis of the two sets of Abhidharma texts, came to the conclusion that there is no real connection between the two.² Nyanatiloka, pursuing the lead provided by Takakusu, concluded that the Sarvāstivādin and Theravādin Abhidharma texts have considerable dissimilarity, a significant exception being the Dharmaskandha, which seems

¹Supra, pp. 143–144.
²Takakusu, op. cit.
to have closer affinity with the Pāli Vibhaṅga. N. Dutt too arrived at similar conclusions and suggested that the two schools worked out their Abhidharma texts independently. This contention of Dutt finds support in McGovern's statement that "there is no connection between two sets of works, that the Sarvāstivādin writing were composed by persons (who), it is scarcely possible to conceive, could have seen the Pāli works...." 

It is equally important to note that we rarely come across any early Sarvāstivādin work which shows any acquaintance with the Pāli works or takes a stand against Theravādins. On the other hand, we do have evidences within Pāli Abhidharma, specially Katthāvatu, where Sarvāstivādins are vehemently attacked. All this seems to corroborate our contention that Pāli Abhidhammas are later in origin. However, the present author will like to qualify this by adding that a more thorough comparative analysis of the content and the structure of the two sets of Abhidharma should be undertaken before the two Abhidharma can be placed in their proper mutual historical relationship. It is our belief that a more

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2Dutt, N., Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its Relation to Hinayāna, op. cit., pp. 5-6.


4Ibid.

5See Kathāvatavatthuppakarna-Atthakathā, op. cit., pp. 52-60.
comprehensive comparative account of the two Abhidharma traditions with special reference to the specific issues that concern them will greatly enrich our understanding of the historical and doctrinal developments of the two traditions on the Indian subcontinent. Till now, no such enterprise, at the scale demanded by the nature and scope of the study, has been undertaken and we anxiously await the results of any such study that might be under progress. ¹

Abhidharma Philosophical Literature and Their Place Within the Tradition

The Ābhidharmakośa² of Vasubandhu is the most important text where the basic doctrinal position of Sarvāstivāda is clearly brought out. This is basically a digest of the seven primary Abhidharma texts mentioned earlier. At the time of the composition of the text, the Vaibhāṣika or the

¹There have been some attempts at a comparative analysis of Theravādin and Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma thought. See Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma, Guenther, H. V., Lucknow: Buddha Vihara, 1957; and A Comparative Study of the Abhidharmakośa with Pali Abhidhammapitaka, Choudhary Sukom, Calcutta University (Ph.D. thesis in progress). Both these studies have concerned themselves primarily with comparing certain themes as expounded in the Ābhidharmakośa of Vasubandhu, on the one hand, and Atthasalini and Kathavatthu on the other. No intensive comparative work on the primary Abhidharmika texts seems to have been undertaken, and the Buddhist scholarship has not gone beyond Takakusu in this matter.

Sarvāstivādins seem to have a pre-eminent place within Buddhist tradition. In the Köśa itself Vasubandhu claims it to represent the views of the Kashmir Vaibhāṣika. According to Yasomitra the text is primarily based on the earlier works of Sarvāstivāda, the Jñānapraśthāna, etc., which provided the scriptural basis for its authenticity as a Vaibhāṣika text. The Köśa is primarily expository, and Vasubandhu never takes a partisan stand vis a vis the Vaibhāṣika position enunciated there. But Vasubandhu seems to have been influenced by the Sautrāntika school and in his Bhāṣya on the Köśa he occasionally takes his stand against the Vaibhāṣikas. Sarvāstivādins of the period expressed their unhappiness with Vasubandhu's Bhāṣya and offered rebuttals to Vasubandhu on certain points of controversy between Sarvāstivādins and the Sautrāntikas.

For long, the original Sanskrit version of the text was supposed to have been lost to the Sanskrit tradition. However, the text was recently discovered by Rahul Sankrityayana in Tibet. The text contains 600 Kārikās and has eight chapters or sections on: 1. Dhātus; 2. Indriyas; 3. Lokas; 4. Karmas; 5. Sanuśayas; 6. Āryapudgalas; 7. Jñānas; 8. Samādhīs, and a

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\text{1\,Kāśmīravaibhāṣikaniṣidhāḥ prāyo mayāyām kathito bhidharmah.} \hspace{1cm} \text{Ibid., 8.40.}
\]

\[
\text{2\,Yo' bhidharmo jñānapraśthānādīretasya madiyasya śāstrasyaśrayabhūtaḥ. Tato hyarsadabhidharmadetanmadiyam sastram nirakrastam.} \hspace{1cm} \text{Yasomitra's Sphūtārthā, (ed.) Lav, N. N., op. cit., p. 11.}
\]

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\text{3\,See infra, pp. 148-149.}
\]
refutation of ātmvāda. Two Chinese translations of the text are available, one by Hiuen Tsang and the other by Paramartha.

Vasubandhu's date has been a subject of great controversy. Takakusu on the basis of Chinese evidence, placed him during 420-500 A.D. But the suggestion has been challenged from many quarters. Frawallener has suggested that there were two Vasubandhus—the first the Stāhvira Vasubandhu, the younger brother of Asanga, the Yogacārin, who belonged to 320-380 A.D.; and the second, Ācārya Vasubandhu, who is supposed to have belonged to 400-480 A.D. According to Frawallener, the first Vasubandhu was originally a Hīnayānist Sarvāstivādin who later became converted to Mahāyāna under the influence of his brother Asanga. The second Vasubandhu, according to Frawallener, was Sautrāntika, and is the author of the Ābhīdharmaṁkośa. However, the suggestion of Frawallener, though quite ingenious, does not seem to carry much weight. His assertion that Vasubandhu, the author of Ābhīdharmaṁkośa, belonged to 400-480 A.D. is not corroborated by the strong evidence from Indian sources. Basing his observation on Indian sources Peri has convincingly demonstrated that Vasubandhu must have belonged to early


2Frawallener, E., On the Date of the Buddhist Master of the Law Vasubandhu, op. cit.
fourth century. ¹

In this connection, we will like to bring one important evidence from the Indian tradition which seems to have escaped the notice of many Buddhologists. The evidence comes from Bana Bhatta’s Harśācaritra belonging to the 7th century. Here we have reference to the fact that Dignāṅga was propagating and defending Vasubandhu’s Kosa in various Gastrārthas (debates). ² This shows that Bana Bhatta in 7th century was aware of the traditional legend about Vasubandhu and Dignāṅga. This confirms the traditional Indian belief that Vasubandhu was a predecessor of Dignāṅga. If we accept this evidence then Vasubandhu, the author of the Kosa, could not have belonged to 5th century, as Frauwallener suggests. We tend to agree with Prof. Nakamura’s suggestion that Dignāṅga’s date should be 400-480 A.D. ³ Vasubandhu, being an older contemporary of Dignāṅga could not have belonged to fifth century, as suggested by Frauwallener.

The whole confusion about the identity and the date of Vasubandhu seems to arise from varying doctrinal positions taken by this philosopher in different works. We can discern three distinct phases in the development


²Samarabhārṣasāmbhāvanābhisekamiva cakār diṁnāgakuṇābhakūravikataasya bāhuśikharakosasya vaiṁaḥ pāṇipallavah. Harśācaritra, quoted by Narendra Deva, Abhidharma Kosa (Hindi), Allahabad: Hindustan Academy, 1958, p. 10.

of Vasubandhu's own thought. In the first phase he subscribed to Sarvāstivāda-Sautrāntika thought; the Abhidharmakośa belongs to this period. Second phase is a transitional phase when, still Sautrāntika, he displays Yogācāra leanings. His Karmasiddhi prakāra belongs to this transitional period in his intellectual history. And to the final phase belongs the Vimsatikā and the Trimśikā, where the Mahāyāna influence is present in its full-blown form. Considering his close affiliation with his Yogācārin brother Asaṅga, this gradual movement towards Mahāyāna does not seem to be surprising. It is quite probable that he was an open-minded thinker and that the different works relate to different stages in the intellectual history of this great mind.

The Abhidharma Nyāyānusāra of Saṅghabhadra is another important work where the basic tenets of Sarvāstivāda has been enunciated. Saṅghabhadra was a contemporary of Vasubandhu who disagreed with him on some important points pertaining to his interpretation of the Sarvāstivāda. He noted Vasubandhu’s Sautrāntika leanings and attempted to offer a corrective to Vasubandhu wherever he felt that Vasubandhu had contravened the spirit of Vibhūṣaṇa. His Abhidharma Nyāyānusāra, also called Nyāyānusārarāstra, is purported to be a critique of Vasubandhu’s interpretation of Sarvāstivāda, and, for this very reason, within Buddhist tradition, it was also called the...

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1This work is not available in Sanskrit. All the citations are from fragmentary translations in Schayer, Stanislaw, Contributions to the Problem of Time in Indian Philosophy, Cracovie, 1938. We acknowledge our great indebtedness to this work for making available the relevant materials.
thunderbolt for the Kośa (Kośakarakā). He agreed with Vasubandhu's formulation of Sarvāstivāda in the Abhidharmakośa karika, but differed with Vasubandhu's Bhūṣya on it, where, according to Saṃghabhadra, Vasubandhu took partisan stand in the Sarvāstivāda-Sautrāntika debate on issues of fundamental import. The Chinese tradition informs us that Saṃghabhadra intended to discuss his work with Vasubandhu but was prevented by Saṃghabhadra's sudden demise. Vasubandhu, on learning about Saṃghabhadra's work, in recognition of its great merit and non-partisan orientation, called it the treatise in accordance with logical canons (Nyāyānusārasastra).

The text contains references to many old schools and works of early Buddhism and is an useful sourcebook for the study of doctrinal development of early Buddhism.

The Sphutārthā Abhidharmakośavyākhyā by Yaśomitra is another important commentary on Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa. Yaśomitra belonged to the 9th century A.D. His commentary is the only commentarial literature available to us in original Sanskrit. This commentary mentions other two commentaries by Guṇamati and Vasumitra which preceded it. Neither of the

1 See Upadhyaya, Baldeo, Bauddha Darsana, Varanasi, 1954, p. 178.


two is available to us now.\(^1\) This work is not available in Chinese, though
a Tibetan translation by Depal-brtsegs is extant. Being the only Sanskrit
commentary on Abhidharmakosā available to us, the importance of this text
for Abhidharmic studies cannot be gainsaid.

In the present work we have used Abhidharmik Buddhism to connotate
the school of Buddhist thought whose ideas were systematically expounded
in the Abhidharmakosā of Vasubandhu. The school of Buddhism under inves-
tigation has generally been described as Sarvāstivāda or Vaibhāsika. An
examination of certain philosophical postulates of this school constitutes
the subject matter of this work. However, we define it as Abhidharmika
Buddhism precisely to distinguish it from its diffusion discernible in
other schools of Buddhism. The appellation Abhidharmika Buddhism is indi-
cative of the fact in our treatment of the problem of time we depend on
the Vasubandhu's Abhidharmain connection with heavy dependence of the
present work on Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakosā and the commentaries thereupon
as distinguished from the earlier Sarvāstivāda literature which is lost
to the Sanskrit tradition and are mainly preserved only in Chinese transla-
tions. It is important to note that Vasubandhu himself mentions the views
of Vaibhaṣika and Sarvāstivādins as that of Abhidharmika's. It is for the

\(^1\) gunamati vasumitrādyāivyāryākhyakāraih padārtha-vivrtirya sukṛtā
sābhimata me likhita ca tathāyamartha iti. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 1.
first time in *Abhidharmakosa* that we find a systematic, concise and co-
herent exposition of Sarvastivada or Vaibhavika. Of course, *Abhidharm-
kos* itself is supposed to be based on the primary *Abhidharma* texts, which
as we noted earlier, are lost to the Sanskrit tradition.

Place of Vasubandhu, the author of *Abhidharmakosa*, within Buddhist
tradition is a controversial issue. However, it is now widely recognized
on account of the valuable researches of Poussin, Stcherbatsky, Takakusu
and Schayer that the *Abhidharmakosa* of Vasubandhu offers a reliable index
to the philosophical postulates of the Sarvastivada. In calling Sarvast-
tivada *Abhidharmika Buddhism* we are in the good company of Buddhist scholars
like Murti, Conze, and Keith. In the present work we have assumed the
validity of the historical researches in Buddhist study on this specific
issue.

Our articulation of Sarvastivada or *Abhidharmika Buddhism* zeroes upon
the account of the school as presented in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmako*
Bh*asya* on it, Sa"mkhahadra's commentary on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmako*
as well as Yasomitra's *Sphutartha* on *Abhidharmako*sa. In addition, we have

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1 The first attempt to synthesise the teachings of Buddha was the *Abhidharmika* system... Internal evidence of the Mahayana systems themselves and historical evidence unmistakably point to the Sarvastivada as the matrix from which the Buddhist systems developed as departures and deviations. Murti, T. R. V., *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1970, p. 56.

2 Conze, Edward, *Buddhist Thought in India*, op. cit., pp. 120, 130 and 131.

2 Keith, op. cit., pp. 154-155 and 165-166.
also stepped out of line of self-restriction and have referred to those
Buddhist texts which are not basically Ābhidharmika in orientation. The
justification for this departure is that in those texts a discussion of
Sarvāstivāda position, as articulated in Ābhidharmakosa, provides the
context of debate with Kamalaśīla's Panjika on it and the Mādhyamika-
karika of Nāgārjuna along with Chandrakirti's Vṛtti on it fall in this
category.
CHAPTER VII

ĀBHIDHARMA ONTOLOGY AND THE PROBLEM OF TEMPORALITY

The Ontology of Non-being (Anattā)

Anattā is the Alpha and Omega of Ābhidhamika Buddhism. Non-substantiality of being, and the essential impermanence and impersonality of the empirical ego constitute the cornerstone of Abhidharmika ontology. The radicality of this ontological perspective built upon what is empirical and is open to reflective verification consists of a concern with the dynamics of change. The phenomenal world, the world that we dwell in and deal with, the world which is the constant reference point for all our thought, actions and feeling is constantly changing. It is not only the world around us, but also the "I," the ego which belongs to the world is subject to incessant change. The ontology of non-being (anattā) is not a mere rejection of the existence of self,¹ as it has been understood by many students of Buddhism; it implies an all-embracing world perspective which tends to reject the substantiality of being in any form, material or immaterial. Thematically, it is an extension of the notion of impermanence or anicca which is seen not as a mark (laksana) of being but the very mode of being, an element of

its very structure.  

The significance for early Buddhism of the Anattā doctrine, in its twin aspects of non-substantiality and impermanence, can not be overemphasised. In its specific formulation the Anattā as the assertion of non-egoity remained the central concern of Ābhidhammika Buddhism. Ādhidhamnikas have constantly retained the idea of Anatta as enunciated in the other two pīṭakas recording basic insights of Buddha into the nature of phenomenal existence.

In the Saṃyukta Nikāya we have the words of Buddha to the effect that that which is embodied is not the self: "rupa is not the self. . . . whatever form there is—past, future or present, inner or outer gross or subtle, low or exalted, near or far away—all that form is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self."  

The same assertion is made with regard to four other aggregates (skandhas) considered constituting the essential core of human existence; the feeling (vedanā), perceptions (saṃjñā), impulses or dispositions (saṃskāra), and, intellect or consciousness (vijñāna). The analysis that is made is to the effect that none of these can be the self; that all these are in reality, not merely in appearance,

1See Murti, T.R.V., op. cit., pp. 69-76.

2Conze, op. cit, p. 39 "In its core the mark of not-self is a simple corollary of the impermanence of everything. There can be no lasting individuality because Skandhas have neither permanence or unity."

Anattā i.e. devoid of self-hood or ego-hood. ¹ The same insight underlies the systematic analysis of the idea of satkāyadrsti, the false view of individuality. The Satkāyadrsti or the false view of individuality consists in considering the five-skandhas as the self just as one tends to identify the flame of a lamp with the lamp. Satkāyadrsti consist in viewing self as what owns or possesses the five skandha's, just as one may say that the tree has (possesses) its shadow. The five skandhas may be looked upon as being or residing in the self just as the fragrance resides in the flower. Or alternately the self may be seen as being in the skandhas just as we may speak of a gem in the casket. All these ways of apprehending the self, according to the anattā doctrine, are essentially erroneous in as much as they tend to identify self with the five skandhas, one way or the another.²

While these insights into anatta constitute the basic ontological perspective present in the other two pitakas, Ádhidharma Pitaka makes special effort to work out the implications of the anattā doctrine in terms of their understanding of dharmas. The non-substantiality and the impermanence of the self, is only considered an instance of the lack of substance and permanence characterising all phenomena. This is the original sense of the word. Thus no phenomenon possesses any substantiality or permanence. Phenomena as such are reduced to a mere

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 3.66; 4.34.
conglomeration of independently existing distinct moments of existence called 'dharmas'. The dharmas are not some transcendent reality behind or beyond the appearance of phenomena; rather they are the only mode of reality, A dharma is 'a truly real event' constituting the irreducible, unique datum of the phenomenal world presented to the reflexive consciousness in the moment of critical awareness. Consciousness itself when objectified, i.e., when it turns to itself in the moment of critical reflexion, it finds itself as nothing but a conglomeration of momentarily existing distinct dharmas without any substantial continuity. Thus the Abhidharmika Buddhism may be described as:

a radical pluralism erected on the denial of substance the acceptance of discrete momentary entities. Dharma is the concrete conception in this, as it is in the other systems of Buddhism. Change, becoming, is the central problem here......The characteristic standpoint of the Abhidharmika system can be expounded as a polemic against substance, the permanent and the universal conceived as real in the systems of the ātma tradition. The real (dharma) is momentary; it is simple, unitary; it is particular, unique.2

The Abhidharmika conception of dharmas as the unique, ultimate and irreducible limit point of existence needs to be distinguished from normal understanding of reality in terms of idealism or realism.

1 We use this interpretation of dharma after Conze whose defence of it is extremely convincing. See Conze, op. cit., pp. 92-106. For other interpretations of dharma see Scherbatsky, the Central Conception of Buddhism, Calcutta: S. Gupta, 1961.

Realism takes commonsense things at their face value and is prepared to grant it a status independent of cognizing consciousness. Idealism, on the other hand, ultimately reduces the elements of existence to a mere ideal construction or manifestation of the cognizing consciousness. Dharma theory, however, transcends the inherent metaphysical constructions incident to a popular understanding of reality by viewing the dharmas as 'real events' perceived by the reflexive consciousness. The dharmas are perceived by the reflexive consciousness as constituting the reality of the common sense-world and also of itself; the specific combinations of these dharmas go into the making of the empirical consciousness or give rise to the variations of empirical consciousness. Thus, dharmas are not real in the sense that they are the objects confronting the subject nor are they ideal in the sense that they are constituted of or produced by the consciousness. Rather, they are the ultimate limit-points of existence which go into making of the phenomenal world that the subject encounters and to which it (the subject) belongs. Thus in Abhidhammika Buddhism:

1 The epistemological distinction of Realism-Idealism is not applicable with respect to our understanding of the philosophical schools under investigation. In sharp reaction to the ontologically oriented speculations of the Upanisads, Buddhism, as it is well known, inaugurates the critical phase of knowledge orientation, thus setting the stage for the later pramanavāda. The generality of Buddhist schools, though biased in favour of an idealistic theory of knowledge, include also a pronouncedly "realistic" predilection for understanding reality without reference to its mind-dependedness, as may be seen, for example, in the case of Sarvāstivāda which is under discussion in this chapter.
the common sense date are thus retraced to, transformed into or replaced by concepts which are both more intelligible and fundamental. The world therefore is perceived as composed of an unceasing flow of simple ultimates, called dharmas, which can be defined as (1) simple, (2) momentary, (3) impersonal, (4) mutually conditioned events.\footnote{Conze, \textit{Buddhist Thought in India}, op. cit., p. 97.}

Given this understanding of the phenomenal reality and its constitution, our enquiry must next direct itself to the Ābhidharmika understanding of the nature and constitution of consciousness. What are those dharmas, conglomeration of which, tend to give rise to a conception of Self or Person as embodiment of empiric consciousness? If empiric consciousness or person is nothing more than a conglomeration, i.e. only a name for what are momentary and exist only for a limited duration, then how are we to account for the phenomenal continuity in the world?

\textbf{The Structure of Empiric Consciousness}

Ābhidharmikas propose a threefold classification of dharmas which together go to constitute the phenomenon of empiric-consciousness.\footnote{The following presentation is primarily based on Conze. For detailed analysis of the dharma doctrine of Sarvastivādins see, Tacherbatsky, T., \textit{Central Conception of Buddhism}, Calcutta: S. Gupta, 1961.}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{A. Five Skandhas:} (1) Form, rūpa, is the material essence of the phenomena; (2) Feelings (vedanā) can be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral; (3) Perceptions (samjñā) are six corresponding to the six sense organs; (4) Dispositions or Impulses (saṃskāra) are all tendencies, impulses, volitions, strivings, emotions, etc.; (5) Consciousness (vijñāna) determines and superintends the other mental skandhas.
  \item \textbf{B. The Twelve Sense-Fields (Ayatanas):} These are: eye; sight-objects; ear; sounds; nose; smell; tongue; taste; body; touchables; mind; mind-objects. Ayatana is used in the sense of āya-dvāra, which literally means the 'door of coming into' or 'the door of arrival'. It can also mean gaining as opposed to vyaya (loosing).
  \item \textbf{C. The Eighteen Dhatu:} These are the six sense-organs, the six sense objects, and the corresponding six sense consciousness.
\end{itemize}
Person as the empiric consciousness or the subject of the world experience is constituted of five skandhas or constituents, which "define the limits of the basis of grasping after self".\(^1\) Whatever the individual comes to comprehend as constituting self, as the ultimate reference point of his world-experience, whatever he looks at as belonging to or somehow concerning the self, all the facts of experience of individuals and objects in relation to individuals are ultimately traceable to five skandhas. Similarly sense-field (āyatanas) is concerned with the origin of the mental dharmas of 'thought and its concomitants'. The reflective consciousness in its discriminative stance is able to see that thought and its concomitants are nothing but collocation or conjunction of sense-organs and sense-objects. Thus, as Edward Conze puts it: "The sense-field are the reason (kārana) why mental events originate or take place, and are their birthplace, as the Deccan is the locality where cattle are born."\(^2\) Further elaborating the role of Āyatanas Conze writes:

It is wrong for me to regard 'my' thoughts as free creations of 'my' self or 'consciousness'. Manifestly they are in bondage of organs and object, which must be in contact for any act of consciousness to arise, and both of which are alien to me, for I cannot claim to have made either my biological constitution, or the objects of my thought. Both are given and imposed upon me.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Ibid, p. 107.  
\(^2\)Ibid, p. 108.  
\(^3\)Ibid.
While these observations of Conze regarding the role and place of Āyatanaḥ in the Buddhist understanding of the constitution of the phenomenal world are quite perceptive and essentially correct, we tend to disagree with his further observation to the effect that "the subjective components have an overwhelming influence in shaping the appearance of an object, which, as a 'thing in itself', is quite inaccessible".¹ The Abhidharmikā ontology does not resort to the notion of subjective factors shaping the world of phenomena. And, likewise, it does not accept the idea of a 'thing in itself' or 'noumena' which remains inaccessible to us. The Abhidharmikā ontological framework steers clear of these approaches to the reality. Dharmas, which are real, are neither a product of or projection of our consciousness which has a free hand in the construction of reality, nor are they the 'things in themselves' of which the phenomenal world is a mere appearance. Rather, dharmas are the ultimate constituents that go into the making of the phenomenal reality and are disclosed to us as such only when we acquire a discriminative stance which sets out to see the reality in its 'functional' aspect rather than in substantive terms. Anattā is an attestation to the non-substantiality of the reality both as subject and object. Subject and object are essentially placed on the same ontological footing.

¹Ibid., p. 110.
This functional understanding of reality in terms of discrete momentary dharmas, without any substantive support raised some problems in certain areas of early Buddhism. In reaction to the theory of dharmas as proposed by Sarvāstivādins there arose the school of Vatsiputriyas who advocated the reality of Pudgala (person) over and against the reality of impersonal dharmas. Pudgalvādins, who may be described as personalist Buddhists, maintained that the Sarvastivadin explication of the empirical ego in terms of five skāndhas etc. suffered from the inexorable difficulty of explaining the continuity on the phenomenal level.\(^1\) If the self were a mere appearance and the phenomenal being a mere conglomeration of incessantly changing dharmas (skāndhas, etc.), how are we to account for those aspects of phenomenal existence which implies a continuity through the fleeting moments. The fact of memory, of karmic action and consequent retribution, the idea of agency and the realm of inter-subjective world exemplified in the friendly dispositions are some of the reasons proposed by Vatsiputriyas in support of their unequivocal

\(^1\)For detailed analysis of the Pudgalavāda, see Abhidharmakośaṃ op. cit., Vol. IV, 1973, p. 1189 ff.
assertion of individuality, called Pudgala, which according to Satkari Mukherjee "has the metaphysical virtue of explaining the continuity of the empirical ego to the avoidance of the fallacy of eternal self posited by the heretical thinkers."¹

Significantly, for the Pudgalvādins, Pudgala as the psycho-physical complex which maintains its identity through the changing moments of empirical existence did not imply positing a self over and against the five skandhas. They seem to be eager to maintain their allegiance to the Anatta doctrine and as such tried to define the relationship of Pudgala to skandhas in a way that would exclude an 'erroneous belief in a self'. Pudgala is neither identical with nor different from the five skandhas.² And yet the "Pudgala can be conceived in correlation with the skandhas which have been appropriated at any given time inwardly".³ According to Pudgalvādins just as fire is always found in correlation with the fuel it burns and on which it thrives, and is never apart from it, by itself, nevertheless, it is real, so does pudgala "manifests itself through the psycho-physical elements, and therefore co-exists with them, not as a separate thing, but as a kind of 'structural unity'."⁴

The position of Pudgalvādins has received favourable treatment

²Tattva Samgraha, verses 343-343.
⁴Conze, Edward, Buddhist Thought in India, op. cit., p. 128.
at the hands of some keen students of Buddhism, such as Edward Conze
and A.B. Keith. Not only have they considered the Pudgalvada as consisting
of great philosophical significance, but have also maintained
that the notion of Pudgala is in strict accord with the basic formula-
tions of Buddhism. Keith commends the theory of Pudgala in following
words:

Its merits, however, are obvious, it mediates in the
best Buddhist manner, between phenomena with a basis
and the permanent self of the Brahmanic tradition.
It accords also, though the point seems not to have
been noted, with the position asserted by Sariputta
in his discussions with Sati for there we find that
Tathagata is declared neither to be the five aggre-
gates nor to be different from them. In truth the
doctrine of the purely phenomenal self was one which
presented interminable difficulties.¹

Edward Conze too finds that the theory of Pudgala was a necessary
antidote to the damage caused by the Abhidarmika understanding of
self as a mere conglomeration of isolated momentary events or exis-
tences called dharmas. Conze maintains that Pudgalvādins corrected the
errors of Abhidharmaist in at least two significant ways:²

1. It was clearly a mistake of lesser minds to deny
categorically that the self exists. As the person-
alis pointed out, it had been said that to say
that the self does not exist, in truth and reality
(satyatah sthititah), is a wrong view. The Buddha,
as a matter of fact, in a famous dialogue with
Vatsagotra had refused to commit himself on the
question of the existence of the self.

¹Keith op. cit., pp. 83-84.
²Conze, Buddhist Thought in India, op. cit., p. 25.
2. In another respect also the one-sided philosophizing of the Abhidharmist was bound to produce its own opposite. The Abhidharmists by insisting that only isolated monitory events are real, held on to processes to the exclusion of all substance, and gloried in denying the relative permanence of objects as well as their relative unity.

Whether Abhidharmikas or Pudgalvādins remained true to Buddha's teaching is a purely historical question and lies beyond the scope of this investigation. However, the charge of onesidedness of the theory of Abhidharmikas and its inadequacy in explaining the facts of phenomenal existence is one that needs careful consideration. Whether the postulation of Pudgala is a necessary pre-requisite for explaining the elements of continuity in the realm of phenomenal existence and whether this postulation of Pudgala is compatible with the Anattā doctrine as indeed the Pudgalvādins claim, are the questions that require our immediate attention.

The irreconcilibility of Anattā doctrine with the postulate of Pudgala has been amply demonstrated by Vasubandhu.² Of course Vasubandhu's repudiation of Pudgala as proposed by Vātsīputriyas is basically from Sautrāntika position. It is in Sautrāntika that the notion of Ego as series of durationless monitory existences crystalizes in its clearest and maturest form. The idea is not consistently worked out in Sarvāstivāda

¹Ibid.

or Theravāda. But Sautrāntikas, while in general dissociating themselves from Abhidhammikas, did accept Anatta or non-substantiality of the Ego as the cornerstone of Buddhist thought and took a stand against the Vatsiputriyas notion of person. In a nutshell the argument against Pudgala takes the following form.

"...any self (pudgala) which really exists must be something over and above the impermanent factors of empiric individuality. But such a self, which must be uncaused, eternal, and without change, would be without activity or practical efficiency (arthakriyākārita) which is the essential characteristic of reality...there in the consciousness nothing more than the fact of a series of thought moments which are in causal relation...But there is continuity in the individual though not a self."

The urge to account for continuity in the phenomenal existence, despite a clear rejection of an abiding self as a substance or a structural unity as person is constantly present in the post-Sarvastivāda Buddhist literature. Thus the later Theravādins proposed a theory of a 'life-continuum' (bhāvānga) which is subconscious and subliminal.\(^1\) The continuity is accounted for by taking recourse to the notion of a subconscious region where the mind is unceasingly functioning as the source of all continuities. Mahāsanghikas too incorporated this idea in their theory of a basic (ṇīla) consciousness. Relegating the function of continuity to the realm of this basic consciousness they maintained that

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karma matures in the subconscious mind where thought has a definite object. 1 Mahisasika even proposed a distinction between three kinds of skāндhас: skandhas which are instantaneous, skāндhас which has a span of one life, and skāндhас enduring until the Sansāra i.e. realization of Nirvāṇa. 2 Noticing these tendencies in Ābhidharmika Buddhism, Conze observes:

"Concepts like these were designed to escape from the straight jacket of the Abhidharma, and try to establish the equivalent not only of an empirical but also of true self... All these theoretical constructions are attempts to combine the doctrine of 'not-self' with the almost instinctive belief in a 'self' empirical or true. 3"

One must pause here and consider if Conze is right in maintaining that these notions run counter to the Ābhidharmika anatta doctrine. Are not these tendencies conspicuous in the Ābhidharmika formulations as indeed in other canonical literature? It seems to us that while Conze is right in noting that these tendencies are efforts to bring Atma doctrine from the backdoor, he is wrong in maintaining that they run counter to the basic tenets of Ābhidharmikas. Our contention is that the tendencies are conspicuously present in the Ābhidharmikas too.

The Ābhidharmika Buddhism, far from being a simple and naive

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2 Conze, op. cit., p. 133.
3 Conze, Ibid., p. 133.
process philosophy, is dialectical in its approach to reality. If it is not strictly a vindication of a theory of reality as pure flux, it is not also correct to say that it affirms the reality of a true abiding self. True, elements of a self-theory are discernible in the Abhidharmika Buddhism, possibly under the impact of the Sāṃkhyan model or view. What, however, should not be overlooked is the prominent place given alongside these elements to the pre-Abhidharmika denial of the self in it. Both subject and object, as we already noted, are placed on the same ontological footing. In this respect the Abhidharmika formulations must be differentiated from the Sāṃkhya-yoga, where subject and object are distinguished in terms of Kutastha (unaffected by change) and Parināmi (the principle of change and movement). We will return to the problem of the relationship between Sāṃkhya-yoga and Abhidharmika Buddhism later. Suffice it to say at this point that the tension of the permanent and the changing, of continuity and discontinuity, of being and becoming is integral to the Abhidharmika Buddhism.

We have seen that dharmas are ultimate, irreducible units of existence, which can best be described as 'real events'. The term 'dharma' has been often rendered as elements of existence. Such renderings smack of atomism which may be true of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and other such realistic systems, but are alien to the basic ontological perspective of Buddhism. There are good reasons for rendering 'dharma' as 'real events'. While events can be instantaneous, elements cannot. And this instantaneousness or momentariness is constitutive of the very existence of dharmas. The occurrence of a certain state of affairs or
of a certain objective situation constitutes an event. The characteristic of event is that they have no duration. This point has already been made in the context of dharmas.

The question is; does the 'coming into being' and the 'passing away' of dharmas as real events imply that the existence of dharmas is 'punctual'? Is the existence of dharmas punctual? The existence of dharmas are called punctual only if it were the case that the instants (ksana) of their 'coming into being' and 'passing away' are but mere "positions" in a one-dimensional temporal continuum. If the instants in question are individual units of time which stand out distinctly in a time-sequence then charge of 'punctuality' of existence of dharma as an actual event does not extend beyond the span of a single concrete now. A dharma having come into being does not endure awaiting to be dislodged by other dharma from being 'actual'. After having occurred once, the said dharma as a real event does somehow belong to the world series (santana) in which it has occurred. But it can be detected exposed only by taking the actual present as our point of departure, because they are limited to one instant of effective existence. The essence of time is only partially revealed in the dharma's present mode of being, i.e. only in the actuality, which distinguishes the present.

The 'actuality' that events of dharmas are suffused with, permeates all events, but more specifically whatever is 'now', and in this respect what is actual for Abhidharmika transcends the autonomy of an object. Though self-existence is a necessary condition for actuality, it is not sufficient to make something present i.e. actual.
Thus, there are no events in the realm of Nirvāṇa and Ākāśa (the Asaṁskṛta dhāraṇā) precisely because they are non-actual and time-less.

It may be noted that within Ábhidharmic framework the actual is characterized by being directly active, or, expressed differently by action or being operational. The actual may be said to "exist" precisely on account of the fact that it is active i.e. efficient. And it is in terms of this efficiency or activity that it conditions the emergence of what is to follow into being. The ground for the occurrence of a causal connection within the compass of a present must be looked for in this function of what is actual.¹

But a dhāraṇā does not cease to be real or does not become un-real when it ceases to be actual by losing its operancy. The relegation of a dhāraṇā into the past mode of existence means that the dhāraṇā as a real event has ceased to be operative in its immediacy. In other words it is condemned to an 'absence' forever from every new 'present'. And no recollection, not even the most vivid and accurate, can succeed in extracting it from that absence and in making it present again. At the same time a past dhāraṇā, although it has ceased to be strictly actual, has not been completely annihilated. It does not break off with each new instant of time, but retains a special mode

¹Infra, pp. 197-198.
of being, extending into the continuation of the same process. Thus, according to Ābhidharmika thinkers it is actuality or being operative and not existence that distinguishes the present dharma from the past and the future ones.¹ Neither the past nor the future is an absolute void. That which is past is past by virtue of having been actual. But that dharma which is future has not yet been realized, i.e. lacks actuality.²

The transience as a mode of being thus may be seen to be contingent upon a dharma becoming actual and displacing a dharma which was just present, but is no longer present. Transience, above all consists in perpetual transformation of the actuality of something present into that enigmatic "no-longer-being-present-any-more". This perpetual transformation, in which consists the essence of temporality, is ontologically speaking, an imperfection (saṃskṛtātva) which is constitutive of the nature of dharmas. It must be kept in mind, that it is not an accidental feature of the dharmas, brought about by some extraneous considerations. The 'imperfection' relates to the impossibility of persisting in actuality without sliding into the past. This, to some degree, partially discloses the peculiar Ābhidharmika way of accounting for

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.
continuity and permanence in the phenomenal world. The logical and semantical difficulties involved in expounding the Buddhist theory of instantaneous reality can be illustrated by the following observations of Frauwallener that:

the becoming and arising of dhammas is not a real arising and disappearing, but a wandering of always existent entities from one period of time into another, Entities which seem to have newly arisen, in fact wander from the future into the present and when they perish, they are transferred into the past period. In the personal continuity also events do not arise and perish, but the continuity is a stream which flows from the future into the past.¹

Thus from Abhidharmika's point of view Persons or Pudgalas as a specific conglomeration of certain dhammas may undergo change, but the fact of this conglomeration 'once-having-been' and maintaining its 'once-having-been' mode of reality does not undergo complete annihilation. It acquires a somewhat different mode of reality which may provisionally be classified as, retrogressively, derivative mode of being. The pudgala, the existential base of one's having-been conglomeration of psycho-physical skandhas, being radically transcendent in relation to an 'actual' existent conglomeration of psycho-physical skandhas capable of acting in the present, remains in the realm of being because it conditioned and interalia caused the present reality. But the something past remains in existence only as--so to speak--a retrogressively derivative being--namely as secondarily derivative, proceeding,

"backwards" from a certain actuality subsequent to it. The present as actual and active is ultimately grounded in the past which has a being characterized by the mode of non-actuality.

We will have occasion to work out the implications of this position in detail in our discussion of Ābhidharmika notion of time and temporality. Suffice it to point out at this juncture that the problem of continuity and persistence is integral to Abhidharma ontology and any suggestion to the contrary stems from a lack of appreciation of the fuller import of Ābhidharmika notion of impermanence and from an underestimation of their concern with the problem of permanence and continuity in the phenomenal existence. A somewhat more detailed investigation of this aspect of Ābhidharmika thought and its relationship to the Ābhidharmika understanding of time and temporality will be the subject matter of the following section.
CHAPTER VIII

ĀBHIDHARMA CONCEPTION OF TIME AND TEMPORALITY

The Category of Time and the Theory of Dharma as Temporal

It is in early Ābhidharmika literature of Sarvāstivāda that we find the first attempt to understand temporality as a process. The Ābhidharmikas of Sarvāstivāda tradition disregarded the question of the substantive reality of time as a factor in temporal determination. The basic issue for them was not whether Time exists as an independent reality which in conjunction with other realities or events constitute temporal determinations. Their primary concern was to account for the knowledge of things as temporally determined and that they could do by acknowledging the reality of dharmas as past, present and future. Thus Mahāvibhāṣā on Jñānaprasthāna declared that everything is real, the past (atīta) and the future (anāgata) are as much real as the present (pratyutpanna). The theory proposed here does not make any distinction between things in themselves such as past and future matter, and the representations one has of them. It is here that we find the realism.

¹The reality of past, present and future has been accepted by some Pāli traditions also. Such a view is clearly propounded by Nāgṣena in Millindapannaha where he rejects the alternative offered by King Milinda who suggests that only present is real. This point may go in favour of views expressed by some scholars that Millindapannaha is a northern text (belonging to northern school of Buddhism). However, there is one important difference between Sarvāstivāda and the position of Nāgṣena. For the Sarvāstivāda the past, present and future cannot be conceived in separation from the entities (dharmas). They are not empty slices of time. Nāgṣena, however, is prepared to accord them independent status.
of Sarvastivada present in its most undeniably form. It is not the reality of past, present and future as three points of time that is posited by Mahāvibhāṣā; rather, it is the reality of things or dharmas as past, present and future that is admitted here. Time is no factor in the determination of things or dharmas as past, present or future. Rather it is the operation of the Sanskritalakṣanas of ṇaṭī, sthiti and jara that accounts for a dharma being past, present or future. In early Abhidharmic literature we come across an alternative to Kālavādins, when Sarvāstivādins point out that the temporal determinations of things are built into the very structure of the becomingness of a being. Thus Mahāvibhāṣā points out:

If all the three sanskritalakṣanas have not yet been active, the dharma is called future. If one of them has already finished its activity and thus are just active, then the dharma is called present. If they have already finished their activity, the dharma is called past.1

It is important to note that early Abhidharmic literature never considered the determination of dharmas temporal quality to be a function of transcendental eternal Time which somehow contains things in three receptacles of time and is responsible for temporal designations of past, present and future. Thus Mahāvibhāṣā clearly rejected the option which would seem to suggest that

the svabhāva of Time is nitya, but the svabhāva of the sanskritadharma is anitya. The sanskritadharma wander across the times just as a fruit from one pot to another or as man from one house into another. This is also the

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1Mahāvibhāṣā, 394a, cf. Schayer, op. cit., p. 20.
case with the sanskritadharmanas: going out of the future they enter into the present, and they go out of the present and enter into the past. ¹

"In this rejection of the receptum notion of Time is implicit the basic Buddhist denial of the substantiality and permanence, a model set by Mahāvibhāṣa which is consistently adhered to by Sarvāstivāda. All Sarvāstivādin statements about the reality of past, present and future must be interpreted in correspondence with this understanding of temporal determinations. It is true that in Ābhidharmic literature we come across Sarvāstivādin statements which state that "dharmanas wander across the three Times, that nirvāna lies beyond the three Times; that there exists a Future, a Past, etc..." But all these statements, as Schayer has already noted, are expressed in colloquial sense and must be interpreted as metaphorical statements, rather than literally. Thus in the statement "each dharma exists in the three Times as future, present and past" the term "three times" is "consequently only a synonymous denomination (adhitvacana) for Sanskritadharma."² Early Ābhidharmic literature clearly rejected any distinction between a dharma and its temporal determination. Temporal determinations, instead of being a function of an eternal transcendent Time, are built into the very structure of the becomingness of a dharma. Accordingly, they argued that there is no distinction between the temporality of a dharma and its conditionedness (sanskṛta). What is given as temporal

¹Mahāvibhāṣa, 393a, cf. Ibid., p. 15.
²Schayer, op. cit., p. 27.
flow is nothing but an incessant flow of conditioned dharmas, apart from which time does not have an independent reality. In other words, time consists of conditional dharmas and conditional dharmas are time, and that the time is that the growth of which consists of the manifestation of samskṛta dharmas. The theory, then, considers time as a mere modality of the conditioned dharmas, apart from which it does not have any reality.

Given this understanding of time and temporality in early Ābhidharmic thought one feels intrigued to discover in later Buddhist literature a tendency to describe Sarvāstivādins either as Kālavādin (upholder of the reality of time) or tr̥ṣṇākālyavādin (upholder of the reality of past, present and future). It is important to remember that for early Abhidharmikas or Sarvāstivādins, time can only be conceived in terms of the functionality of a dharma, apart from which they do not have any independent status. It is not surprising, then that, in their technical discussion of the temporal qualification or determination of dharma, the terms time (kāla) never occurs.

Pāli Abhidharma literature disagrees fundamentally with Sanskrit Ābhidharmic understanding of temporality. Herein we find an extensive refutation of the Sarvāstivādin view that everything exists, understood in the sense that past, present and future equally exist.¹ Their very starting point it seems, therefore, erroneous. However, this fact is immaterial in determining the true import of Theraṃvādins own exposition. They denied the reality of past and future and came to the conclusion that present alone exists.

The debate between Theravādins and Sarvāstivādins is presented in Katthāvatu as a debate on the reality status of things existing in past, present and future. The Sarvāstivādins are credited with accepting the existence of all dharma, but not always and everywhere in the same form. The Theravādins, however, take the Sarvāstivāda on its face value and confront them with the problems inherent in the proposition of sarvam asti. If everything exists then "does the right view (sammāditthi) which looks upon your wrong view (micchāditthi) as wrong exist?"¹ The acceptance of simultaneous existence of the views only points to the contradiction to which everything exists doctrine can lead.

The Theravādins attack Sarvāstivādins for accepting the existence of past and future dharmas. By equating past and future to present, the Theravādins propose that the existence of past and future should be predic- cated in the same way as of the present. This, however, is not admissible to Sarvāstivādins who propose a distinction in the mode of existence of past, present and future dharmas. Theravādins follow their argument by pointing out that if a rūpa-kandha (material-aggregate) becomes past by giving up its presentness (paccuppanbhāv), then it is also possible to con- ceive it as giving up its materiality (rūpa-bhāva).² Sarvāstivādins reply to this consist in their demonstration of the untenability of Theravādins argument as outlined above. They point out the lacunae in Theravādins argument in the following way: let a piece of white cloth be regarded as one

¹Ibid., p. 53.

²Ibid., p. 54.
inseparable object, when this piece of cloth is coloured, it abandons its whiteness, similarly past dharma gives up its paccupannabhava (its existence as present). Now can it be said of this piece of cloth that it also gives up its clothliness in abandoning its whiteness when coloured? Theravadin do not accept the alternative offered here. Accordingly, Sarvastivadin's position that a rupa-dharma is changing its temporal qualification does not abandon its materiality on the being of rupa-dharma. However, Theravadin is not prepared to give in, and follows his argument in a different way. He points out that if the material aggregate (rupa-dharma) does not give up its materiality (rupabhava), then the rupa-dharma becomes permanent, eternally existing like nibhama — a conclusion not acceptable to Sarvastivadins either, for they categorically deny that rupabha and nibhanbhava are identified. Only nibhanabhava can be eternal, not the rupa-bhava.

The debate is carried on in Kathavat and Kathavat-prakarma Atthakatha further. One specific problem that Theravadin raises is that whether past (ati) gives up its pastness (atiabhava)? The Sarvastivadins answer is negative. They point out that in asserting the existence of atiabha, they mean that anagatabhava (futurity) and paccupannabhava (presentness) do not exist in the same way as the atiabha. And similarly when they predicate existence of anagatabhava, they mean atiabha and paccupannabhava do not exist like anagatabhava. Thus Sarvastivadin specifically deny that a dharma passes from an state into another. This Theravadin

1 Ibid., p. 54.
2 Ibid., p. 55.
construes to mean that atītabhāva too (the being in the mode of past) acquires a permanence or eternity, and therefore, is subject to the earlier question about its likeness with the nibbanā or nibbānabhāva.

Theravādins come up with another problem which they think that Sarvāstivādins asserting the existence of everything will have to face. They point out the Sarvāstivādins will have to accept the existence of past (atīta) and of non-past (navaatīta) as well as future (anāgata) and non-future (navaṇāgata). They argue that:

1. if the existence of past and non-past as also future and non-future is denied then Sarvāstivādins should not assert that past and future exist; and, also

2. if they do not accept the identity of atīta, paccupana and anāgata, they cannot say that atīta and anāgata exist.

The second argument is considered more elaborately, whereby applying the dialectic of this being, that is, this not-being, that is not (hutvā hoti, hutvā hoti; na hutvā na hoti, na hutvā na hoti), Theravādins show the untenability of Sarvāstivādins acceptance of temporal distinctions. The Theravādins emphasise the inter-penetrability of past, present and future and conclude that both past and future can be cognized only as that which is present to the cognizer. ¹ This being so only present exists; past and future, if they exist at all, they can exist only as present.

¹Ibid., p. 57.
The following points emerge from this brief re-capitulation of Sarvāstivādin and Theravadin debate on the question of temporal qualifications:

1. According to Sarvāstivādin, the past or future, as usually understood, as the two slices of empty time in which dharma reside, do not exist; what we discern is the reality of a dharma which has already past (atīta) as well as that which has not yet come (anāgata);

2. It is wrong to assume that dharmas or Khandhas persist in the past, present and future. What persists may be the bhāva or the mode of being of a dharma which is constantly changing. However, according to Theravādins:

1. The mode of being of a thing is not separable from the thing itself, and as such if the bhāva of a dharma or skandha persists through past, present and future, then it is permanent or eternal and possesses same status of reality as the nibbānabhāva. This, of course, would be an heresy unacceptable to Sarvāstivādins;

2. Secondly, for Theravādins the time distinctions are only conventional without any basis in the reality itself. There is no ontological basis for temporal qualifications, and that past and future can exist only as given in the present. Therefore, present alone exists.
In view of the above articulation of the Sarvāstivāda understanding of temporality, it is surprising to note a tendency among some modern scholars to suggest that Sarvāstivāda contributed to a view of time which conceived time as an ontological reality containing change. Drawing upon Pāli sources, David J. Kalupahana maintains that "the Sarvāstivāda represented a school of realism and...they upheld the independent reality not only of things, but also of time."¹ John M. Koller agrees with Kalupahana's interpretation of the Sarvāstivāda and maintains that Nāgārjuna's critique of Time² is "directed primarily at the Sarvāstivādin, who took time to be an ontological container of change and divided the container into three segments: past, present and future."³

In the first place, both Koller and Kalupahana are mistaken in assuming that Nāgārjuna's critique of time is directed against the Sarvāstivāda. There is nothing in Nāgārjuna's kāla parīkṣa to substantiate their contention that the view of time criticised by Nāgārjuna is in fact the one held by the Sarvāstivādins.⁴ As a matter of fact, it may be gathered from the Candrakīrti's Vṛtti on Mulamādhyamakārikā that the target of Nāgārjuna's attack is a certain Kālavādin who does not subscribe to the

⁴See Nāgārjuna, op. cit., pp. 117-119.
views of Buddha. The Kalavadin (the upholder of the reality of time) under attack of Nāgarjuna's relentless dialectic refers to Buddha as the teacher of his opponents. It is equally interesting to note that while Nāgarjuna specifically rejects the reality of time, his critique never mentions the concept of dharma that is so central to Sarvāstivāda articulation of the problem.

In arguing that the Sarvāstivādin believed in the reality of time both Koller and Kalupahana seem to be victims of confusing between a view which takes the reality of things or dharmas as past, present and future as the ontological given and a view which accords time a primary ontological status as the container of things or dharmas. That the Sarvāstivāda position is not the latter will be set forth in the body of the

1 See Kanakura, Y., "The Question of Time in Connection of Milindapanhā, Abhidharma and Madhyamikakārika", Osaki Gakaho, Vol. 115, 1962, pp. 1-17. This is one of the most illuminating papers on the subject. Its special merit consists in its ability to see the question of time as integral to the ontological question. The relationship of Milindapannaha to the Abhidharmika tradition has been well brought out.

2 It is conceivable that Nāgarjuna would have opposed the Sarvāstivāda articulation of temporality in terms of the svabhāva of a dharma. (See infra, p. 208). But no explicit rejection of Sarvāstivāda can be discerned in the Kālaparikṣas nor is there any claim that Sarvāstivādins believed in the independent reality status of time. We tend to agree with Shoson Miyamoto when he observes: "Nāgarjuna agreed with the Sarvāstivādins' denial of the existence of time, but opposed their concept of entity-realism (svabhāvavāda). He drew the conclusion of the non-existence of time from the Madhyamika standpoint of non-substantiality (nihsvābāhavāvāda), which was a restatement of the original Buddhist teaching of non-self." Shoson Miyamoto, "Time and Eternity in Buddhism", Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies, Tokyo: Vol. 7, No. 2, 1959, p. 824.
thesis. It may be noted here that there is no evidence from the Abhidharma sources to support the contention that the Sarvāstivādins believed in the reality of time. Time as a category is conspicuously absent from the Sarvāstivāda scheme of things. Secondly, as we will show, they are primarily concerned with the reality status of dharmas or elements of existence which are either relegated to a non-actual mode of existence or which are still to achieve actuality. Accordingly, the doctrine is primarily concerned with postulating the reality of dharmas as past, present and future rather than the reality of dharmas in past, present and future as three distinct slices of time which somehow contain these dharmas.

The Sarvāstivāda is an attempt to provide a coherent picture of reality in terms of a whole conceived as a process, and at the same time retaining the uniqueness of the irreducible events which go into the making of the process. In asserting the reality of all (sarvam asti), Sarvāstivāda insisted that dharma is the ultimate constituent of all phenomena, meaning by dharma what is discerned to be existent and real in all the three temporal phases. The reality, as such, of the conglomeration of these dharmas is specifically denied. The basis of this denial is our experience which consists only of a succession of dharmas. There is no warrant from experience to believe that cognition reveals such a thing as a continuing 'being' or 'self', the ultimate reference point being only the discrete dharmas which constitute as such the nature (svabhāva) of reality. Our cognition reveals only the being of dharmas (svabhāva) in the three temporal phases. The existence of reality of dharmas as past, present and
future is present to cognitional experience without any mutual contradiction, experience being itself structured in terms of succession. It is significant that the Sarvāstivāda does not recognize the existence of dharmas in past, present and future moments of time, but recognizes their existence as past, present and future. There is no transcendental or empirical time in which real events may be conceived to take place or reside. Time is not an empty mould in which dharmas are deposited as they arise, stay and pass away. Time conceived as a transcendental background of our cognition or as an over-arching receptum of entities is totally unacceptable to any school of Buddhist thought, Sarvāstivāda being no exception in this regard. The Sarvāstivādin’s discussions are conducted on the level where the concern is with lived time. The dharmas are temporal in the sense of possessing reality by virtue of their own intrinsic nature in the three modes of temporal existence.
Is There A Pre-Abhidhamika Notion of Time as Receptum?

Scholars have noted the opaqueness of the course of development that the time conception in early Buddhism followed.¹ But more often than not the time conception in early Buddhism has been misunderstood. Schayer is a case in point. He suggests that the theories of time in pre-Abhidhamika Buddhism tend to look at Time as the great container of all changes, a true reservoir of the changing entities or the phenomena.² According to Schayer, though we do not have any direct evidence to the effect that the pre-Abhidhamika Buddhism contributed to the notion of Time as receptum of entities, a close study of some Abhidhamika passages clearly indicates that this indeed was one of the immediate contexts of the Abhidhamika enunciation of the notion of three times.³ In Mahāvibhāṣa, we come across a passage which mentions the ideas contained in the following as an erroneous view to be guarded against:

The svabhāva of Time is nitya, but the svabhāva of samskṛtadharmas is anitya. The samskṛtadharmas wander across the times just as a fruit from one pot to another, or as a man from one house into another. This is also the case with the samskṛtadharmas: going out of the future they enter into the present, and they go out of the

¹See Barel, Andre, "The Notion of Time in Early Buddhism", East and West (Rome); 1943, pp. 353-364.

²Schayer, Stainslaw, op. cit., pp. 15-17.

³Ibid.
present and enter into the past.\(^1\)

It is important to remember here that Mahāvibhāṣā mentions this position as an erroneous view to be guarded against. However, Schayer takes this to be a representative position of early Buddhism and draws the untenable conclusion that this theory of time as reservoir is only a later development of "the more primitive conception of Time as a unique, universal reservoir in which future, present and past entities are placed in layers, one upon another".\(^2\)

However we must not forget the fact that Mahāvibhāṣā, traditionally, is assigned to the Buddhist Council held during the reign of Kanishka,\(^3\) and one of its specific purposes was to record various alternative Abhidharmika positions and, finally, to evolve a standard Abhidharmika formulation on the fundamental ontological and doctrinal concerns of Abhidharma.\(^4\) What Schayer takes to be a reference to some pre-Hinayānistic Buddhist Theory of Time was perhaps one of the current Abhidharmika positions which Mahāvibhāṣa takes to be a wrong interpretation of the true Ābhidharmika understanding of temporal differentiations.

Another evidence that Schayer adduces in support of his contention that pre-Ābhidharmika Buddhism proposed a spatial understanding of Time

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\(^1\)Mahāvibhāṣā, 393a, cf. Ibid., p. 15.

\(^2\)Schayer, op. cit., p. 15.

\(^3\)See Warder, A.K., op. cit., p. 345-346.

\(^4\)Ibid.
as the reservoir of entities comes from the Abhidharmkosā. The Abhidharmkosā mentions a certain version of the traikalyavada which maintains that the actualization in the sense of bringing into present (vartamānikaraṇa) of a future effect consists in 'dislocation' (desāntarakarsana). Reaffirming his contention that early Buddhism contributed to the reservoir ideal of Time conceived after a spatial understanding of it, Schayer finds that in the pre-Abhidharmika doctrine, "the theory of spatial dislocation totally fulfils its object, thus corroborating its archaic character".

Schayer has failed to see that the language of reservoir which has been discredited in the Abhidharmkosā is an unique version of the Sarvāstivāda understanding of Time differentiations in terms of "avasthā (states) whose spatial connotation should be taken in its metaphorical sense only. The idea of reservoir that Schayer is so willing to credit to some unknown pre-Abhidharmika sect is actually a grossly misrepresented version of some Abhidharmika theories of time differentiations. We will have occasion to refer to these variations of Sarvāstivādin conception of Time. But it must be noted at this point that a reservoir ideal of Time is totally alien to the

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1 kimidāṁ vartamānikaraṇam nāma? desāntarakarṣāni ceti Abhidharmakośam, op. cit., p. 817.

2 Schayer, op. cit., p. 16.

3 Infra., p. 231 ff.
basic Buddhist ontological framework and it is very implausible to attribute it even to the pre-Ābhidhamika Buddhism.

It is not our intention to deny the possibility of a spatial understanding being the context against which the classical Sarvāstivāda formulation of temporality, in terms of "efficiency" (kārita) as the distinguishing mark of the present, took place. However, it is our contention that the receptum notion of Time, instead of being a remnant of pre-Ābhidhamika Buddhism forming the immediate background of the classical Sarvāstivāda enunciation of temporality was, in reality, a misunderstood version of the Ābhidhamika doctrine of temporal differentiation in terms of the avasthās of dharmas. It is this misinterpretation of avasthā theory in terms of reservoir that both the Mahāvibhāṣā and the Abhidharmakosā record as the immediate target of the sarvastivadin's attack.

Refutation of such misinterpretation of avasthā theory became all the more imminent in the later stages of Sarvāstivāda developments. Certain opponents of Sarvāstivāda tended to take a spatial interpretation of temporal differentiation as the most definitive statement of Sarvāstivāda. Thus, Samghabhadra vehemently rejects the following argumentation of an opponent who denies the reality of three temporal differentiation, by alluding to their spatial characteristics:

Past and future do not really exist because, if they existed, they would resist one another. Indeed, the elements of rūpa must occupy a definite

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1Infra. p. 239.
place. If the already destroyed elements and the elements not yet born existed really then they would resist one another. All rūpa-elements, if they exist, possess impenetrability (apratīghatva) and whatever does not possess impenetrability is not a rūpa.¹

This argument also presupposes that past and future are two receptacles of finite volume. However the Abhidharma canons anticipating this problem attempted to resolve this by suggesting that spatialization is not a necessary concomitant of dharmas. Thus Mahāvibhāṣā makes the following point of clarification:

If a dharma has the nature of rūpa, is it desāstha (localized or spatialized)? If a dharma is desāstha, it has necessarily the nature of rūpa; there exists, however, dharmas which have the nature of rūpa and which are not desāstha, viz, the past and the future rūpas…²

This was a conscious effort on the part of the Mahāvibhāṣā thinkers to rectify the damage done by those Abhidharmikas who tended to look, at the temporal differentiations of past, present and future only in terms of the differences of avasthā, of spatial position in one of the three Time-phases.

Moreover, it is our contention that the Abhidharmikas of Sarvāstivāda tradition, in their formulation of the theory of momentariness, were closer to the legacy of early Buddhism than the Sautrāntikas. Contrary to what Schayer suggests, Early Buddhism in point of fact seems

¹ Nyāyānusārasāstra of Samghabhadra, 636a, (trans.) Schayer, op. cit., p. 1

² Mahāvibhāṣā, 395a, (trans.) Schayer, op. cit., p. 17.
to suggest a relativistic and experiential interpretation of Time.¹

Early Buddhism avoids the two extremes of considering absolute time as the receptacle of entities and of reducing every form of experience into further indivisible moments. During the early period of Buddhism, the most dominant view of time was the one that recognized a finite segment of time as constituting the core of one's immediate experience.² Indeed the acceptance of this finite segment of time as a component of our temporality implied a positing of a certain duration of temporal experience no matter how infinitesimal this duration may be.³ This stands in glaring contrast with the later Sautrāntikas who looked at the moment as irreducible and durationless.⁴ Impermanence in Early Buddhism revolved round this element of finitude of existence and was not built upon an idea of durationless momentary existence which indeed received a lion's share in Sautrāntikas. In the Sarvāstivādin's formulation of the problem, which served as the

¹See Kahpahana, David J., The Buddhist Conception of Time and Temporality, Philosophy East and West, 24, 2, April 1974, pp. 181-190.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 185.

⁴The Ābhidharmikas classify dharmas as eternal and non-eternal, and ascribe all samskrita dharmas to the later category. But they do not make them strictly momentary. The Sautrāntikas, however, reduce all to a series of moments of coming to be. See Tattvasamgraha for Sautrāntika-Sarvāstivāda debate on the endurance of a moment. Tattva Samgraha of Sāntarakṣita with the commentary of Kamalśila, op. cit. 1822-1833, pp.516; also see Keith, op. cit., p. 107; Kalupahana, op. cit., p. 186.
paradigm for all Ābhidharmika formulations, the moment continued to be conceived as a finite segment of time characterized by a certain duration. This finite duration, according to the Sarvāstivāda contains four stages of phenomenalization of a dharma, the production or birth (jāti), duration (sthiti), decaying or change (jara), and the cessation or disappearance (nirodha). This conception of impermanence does not exclude the element of finitude of phenomenal existence and still somehow aims at retaining the element of continuity. And it is precisely in this context that the enigma of Sarvāstivāda becomes all the more acute. The paradox of Sarvāstivāda consists in its concern with an articulation of the process of temporality while at the same time being also concerned with elements that go into the making of this process. Though, methodologically speaking, the distinction between the dynamic and static aspects of reality is always admissible, in the final analysis (looking at in terms of concrete actuality) the seemingly static elements are part of the dynamic nature of things. Such is the predicament that the Sarvāstivāda faces inescapably in its formulation of the problem of temporal existence.
Reality of Past, Present and Future: Arguments From Cognition and Moral Law

The grounds for the reality of dharmas in the past, present and future mode of being are to be discerned within the framework of the empirically and realistically slanted epistemology of Sarvāstivāda. A careful review of the arguments offered by Sarvāstivāda in support of their assertion will serve to highlight the nature of their orientation to knowledge. The empiricistic-realistic approach to cognitional experience and its compatibility with the soteriological goal of realizing freedom (Nirvāna) are reflected in their arguments. The role of epistemology is conceived here, in conformity with the general tenor of Indian Philosophy, as ancillary pursuit in the service of soteriology, and a mutually reinforcing role is assigned to them.

The following arguments are offered by Sarvāstivāda to support their assertion of the reality of dharmas in the three modes of existence. The arguments are present in the Abhidharmakosā, the Sphutārtha as well as in the Tattvasaṃgraha; and they claim to be valid both in terms

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1 Thus Abhidharmika argued that past and future dharmas are real because Buddha had taught that an enlightened disciple (ārya-srāvaka) becomes indifferent to the past and future material objects (rūpa) only by concentrating on their rūpas: Uktam hi Bhagavatā atītam ched bhikṣavo rūpam nābhavisyannā śrutavānāryaśrāvakōtite rupēnapeksobhavīsyat. yasyāmāttahryastyatītaṁ rūpam asmaccūtāvanāryaśrāvakōtite rupēnapeksaḥ bhavati. anāgataṁ cedṛūpaṁ nābhāvīyate na śrutavānārya śrāvakōnāgataṁ rūpaṁ nābyanaṁ nīdiṣyate. yasmaś māttahryastyānāgataṁ rūpaṁ iti vistārāḥ Abhidharmakośam, 1972, op. cit., p. 804. Also, see Sphutārtha on the above.
of experience and by means of its appeal to scriptural basis.\(^1\)

1. *Dvayaśtyam ca Viṣṇāna:* According to Ābhidharmikas all cognitions are contingent on two factors:\(^3\) (a) the objective correlate (*viṣaya, Ālambana*) and the (b) cognizing consciousness (*citta, viṣṇāna*). While sense experience relates to the cognition or consciousness of the present the mental cognition refers to the past and future objects as well. If past or future objects (*viṣaya*) were denied reality, then on this basis, argues the Ābhidharmika, there could arise no cognition produced by the coming together of the *viṣaya* and the *citta*.

The Ābhidharmika seeks support for this common sense theory from the 'scripture' by referring to the unequivocal statement of Buddha to such effect.\(^4\) The postulation of the existence of real in all the three

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\(^1\)See supra, note 1, page 121 for reference to Buddha's words. The argument offered seeks to establish the reality of the past, present and future dharma by taking recourse to the testimony of the Master. Thus, appeal is made to the scriptural authority. This is an important element in the argument for it clearly brings out the ultimate soteriological concern that is constantly present.

\(^2\)The *Tattvasamgraha* of Sāmitaraksita, op. cit., p. 504.

\(^3\)dvayaṁ *praṭītya* viṣṇāṇasyotpadaḥ, ityuktām. dvayaṁ *katamat?cakṣū rūpāṇi* yāvat *manodharma* iti. asati *vātītānagāke* tadālambanāṁ viṣṇānaṁ dvayaṁ *praṭītya* na syāt. evam tāvadāgamatoṣṭyaṭītānāgatam. Abhidharmakosam, 1972, op. cit., p. 804.

\(^4\)The vogue of appealing to Buddha vacana for justification of the validity of statement is comparable to the Brhaminical use of *śabda pramāṇa* (testimony as a valid means of knowledge). Historically, which is prior is very difficult to decide in this particular use, but there is a striking consensus among scholars over the question of the "priority" of the discussion of the "pramāṇa". At the hands of the Buddhist logicians like Vasubandhu, Dignaga and Dharmakīrti. It was the latter that gave rise to the pre-occupation with pramāṇa in the different sūtra commentatorial literature in brhaminical Hinduism.
modes is implicit in this contention of the Master and a denial of it will amount to the contradiction of the scripture (āgamaviruddha). The upshot of the argument formulated above is the realistic conviction that whatever causes mental cognition has an objective existence or be objectively real.1 There is mental cognition of past and future dharmas. The crucial datum, here, on which the Abhidharmika builds or constructs his theory is the fact of the givenness of past and future dharmas to mental cognition. If they (past and future dharmas) are not objectively real how could there be mental cognition of them. Were they not real "knowledge" of them will not be different from phantasy: their cognition will transpire to be non-cognition. A cognition by definition must have a specific real as its object.2

Arguing against the position that cognition is possible without the objective correlate, which is the point of view of Sautrāntika, the Abhidharmika argues: a consciousness (vijñāna) can only be defined qua 'what cognizes' (vijñātī vijñānām); if there is no object to be cognized (vijñeya), then it necessarily follows that no consciousness as cognition can exist.

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1 See Vasubandhu's Bhāṣya on Abhidharmkosa, Karika 24. sati viśaye vijñānam pravrtate, nāsati. yadi cātītāṅgataṁ na syādasyā- lambanaṁ vijñānam syāt. tato vijñānameva na syād; ālambanābhāvāt. The Abhidharmkosam, op. cit., p. 805.

2 atītāṅgatañānam anyathā, viśayaṁ bhavet; Tattvasamgraha, 1788, op. cit., p. 504. Also see Panjika on it: pratīvastā vijñāpītyātmaṁ vijñānam, asatī ca jūye na kincidānena jneyam ity avijñānam eva syāt, Ibid., p. 505.
The Sautrāntika alternative is that a consciousness as cognition may be defined just by the mere fact of its being the 'illuminating accompaniment' (bodhānugama) of all cognitions. There is no warrant, according to them, for invoking the object of cognition as part of the definition. To this the Sarvāstivāda answers in the following way: the 'illumination' itself constitutes the objective correlate of consciousness as cognition. Cognition is defined as the coming together of consciousness (vijñāna) and its objective correlate (rūpa, vedana etc.). But the two factors (the subjective vijñāna and objective rūpa, vedana etc.), according to the Ābhidharmikas, stand on the same ontological footing in the sense that they are dharmas. As dharmas they carry their 'own nature' (svabhāva). 'Illuminating' element in the cognition is the 'own nature' (svabhāva) consciousness (vijñāna) which consists of the dharma being objectively real. Thus, illuminating accompaniment (bodhānugama) in cognition too is an objective element which has an independent reality as the svabhāva of vijñāna in the three phases of its existence. This is the thesis of the Ābhidharmika.

2. Karmatitam Ca Niṣattvaṁ Kathañ Phaladasyate. The past karmas, according to the authority of scripture, are assigned retributive power. Accordingly, argues the Ābhidharmikas, past, present and future

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1 Bodhānugatimātreṇa vijñānam āti cocyate; The Tattvasamgraha, 1849, op. cit., p. 518.

2 Ibid., 1789, p. 504.
alike must possess reality. "The past moral or immoral karmas, like the present ones, are really existent in as much as they, like the latter, become effective at the time of their fruition. If that were not the case, the past moral or immoral (good or bad) karmas would bear fruit in the present."¹ The "causal efficiency" (kārita) being the criterion of reality, then the past too like the future possessing as they do, as much causal efficiency as the present (this is what is implied in the assignment of retributive power to karmas) must also therefore possess a reality of their own. A non-existent past could not be the cause of an effect which has yet to take place in the distant future. Admission of this would imply the denial of the moral law; good or bad acts would not produce their effects. The non-terminable character of the moral and immoral acts is the condition of the moral law being effective. This was the insight of Buddha.

The Sautrāntikas take strong exception to this proposition of Sarvāstivāda. Denying any reality to the past karma as possessing any causal efficiency Santarakṣita observes:

We do not admit that a past moral cause (vipākahetu) gives a retribution (phala): The retribution is granted only as an effect of a whole series of conscious moments (vijñāna-prabandha), so far as it became permeated (vāsita) by the (the moral character of) this (past cause).

¹ yadi cātītam na syat sūbhāsūbhasya karmanah phalamyatyām kathām syat. na hi phalotpattikāle vartamāno vipakaheturstīti; The Abhidharma-kosām, op. cit., p. 805.
(the whole sāntāna) having been permeated or perfumed
(vāsita) by the past karma becomes capable of producing
retribution.  

The Sarvāstivādins are not prepared to accept this. They refer
to the statement of the great teacher, Buddha: "A karma which is anni-
hilated, reduced to naught and destroyed does not, nevertheless, cease
to exist".  

Sarvāstivādins refuse to take the Sautrāntika proposition of
'permeation' (vāsita) seriously on the ground that the sāntāna (continuum)
which seems to be perfumed (vāsita) by the vāsanā, cannot be the cause
of the production of an effect (phala), because sāntāna by its definition
does not have a causal efficiency (kārītra) of its own. Arguing against
the Sarvāstivādin postulation of the reality of past, present and future
dharmas, the Sautrāntikas point out that the phala (effect) does originate
directly from moral or immoral karma (act). According to the Sautrāntikas
the karma leaves its impression on the consciousness-continuum (sāntāna).
Thus permeated or perfumed (vāsita), the phala (effect) takes place in the
continuum in its due course.  

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1vipākahetuḥ phalado nātītobhyupagamyate, sadvāsitattu vijñānapra-
bandhāthphalamisyate; The Tattvasamgraha, 1850, op. cit., p. 518.

2yattarhi lagudāsiḥhīyakān parivrajākanvadhiṣṭyoktam bhagavatā-
yat karmābhyaṣṭān kṣīnas niruddhām vigataṁ viparinataṁ tadastiti, kim
te tasya karmaṇo bhūtapūrvatvam necchantisam; Abhidharmakośam, op. cit., 1972,
p. 812.

3.....tatpūrvakāt sāntānyāśādityatmādapiṣedhe sampravedayisu-
yāmāḥ......; Ibid., p. 817.

Also: vāsītam grāmārpayā phalotpādanāsamarthamutpādītam; Panjika
by Kamalāśīla on Tattvasamgraha, op. cit., p. 518.
Against the Sarvāstivādin's position the argument that is urged is as follows: if both past and present exist or are real, then effect too co-exist with the cause (vipāka). What then is the relationship between the two and which of the two should be held responsible for the production (utpādaa).1 The Sarvāstivādin seek to resolve the problem by asserting that it is the causal efficiency (sāmarthya) of the act of production which is responsible for the actualization of a pre-existent effect (phala). This indeed is what is implied in the assertion that the production takes place in the present. "Causal efficiency" is thus defined in the present context as the "actualization through making present" (vartamānikarana).2 Actualization through making present (vartamānikarana) consists in a mere modification of the temporal mode of past into the present mode of existence.

3. Atītanāgata Jñānam Vibhaktam Yoginān: 3 A final argument for the reality of the dharmas as past, present and future comes from the recognition of the possibility of yogins having the vision of past, present and future. The argument takes for granted the validity of the scriptural

1 Abhidharmkosa, op. cit., p. 817; also Sphutartha on above.

2 Vartamānikarane tarhi sāmarthyam. Vasubandhu's Bhasya in Abhidharmkosa, op. cit., p. 817; also vartamānikaranaḥsāmarthyam iti cet; Tattvasamgraham Panjika, op. cit., p. 516.

3 Tattvasamgraha, 1789, op. cit., p. 504. The view is assigned to Vasumitra by Kamalaśīla in the Tattvasamgraha Panjika. "How can such ideas as one Mandhan Brahmadatta lived, the Chakravarti King Sankha will be the Maitreya Tathāgata etc. (cognized) distinctly by Yogins. (such cognitions) of the past and the future could not be possible (for) there is no distinction among things that are non-existent." Tattvasamgraha Panjika, op. cit., p. 505.
statement that Buddha was omniscient in the sense that he had an intuitive access to the reality in its past, present and future modes. This claim for the intuitive cognitive awareness of the past, present and future implies their intrinsic reality and to question that would amount to the transgression of the truth of the āgamas (scriptures containing the true words of Buddha).  

While the position of the Sarvāstivāda regarding the question of time and temporality thus seems clear enough, it does not of course follow that the arguments adduced to vindicate the position are conclusive. In fact, indeed in the way that it is outlined above, it has a circular character, and the opponent, who in this case happens to be the Sautrāntika, does not hesitate to criticise it. What, however, stands underscored in this enterprise, significant from the point of view of what it implies in terms of our understanding of temporality, is the theory of 'causal efficiency' (kārtira), a concept of overwhelming importance to be taken up for discussion in the next chapter.

Both the Sarvāstivāda and Sāmkhya-Yoga argue for the reality of the present as well as the past and the future. Not only is the past as real as the present, but the future also is real awaiting to become the actualized existence. The two traditions seek to support their argument in terms of different ontological bases. The Sāmkhya-Yoga, as it has

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1For a Sautrāntika critique of the scriptural basis for the reality of past, present and future dharmas, see Tattvasamgraha, 1847-1850, op. cit., pp. 517-518.
been shown, posits a dynamic continuant (parināmi nitya) which admits of being spoken of as the subject which has change as its predicate. This material continuant, also significantly called the material cause (upādāna kārana) provides the scope for one mode to supersede another mode. It is the matrix for the criss-cross and supersession of qualities (guna). Thus is established an ontological ground which makes possible for reality to exist in all times without being unchangingly eternal. The Sarvāstivādin likewise rests his argument for the existence of the future elements which are constitutive of reality in terms of an ontology of a dynamic continuum of reals which may be described as elements existent in their very essence in all times. There is no unitary material cause into which the dharmas merge or from which to emerge. And yet they are in a state of continuum whereby their existence in all times is derived from the continuance of their essence in time.

The two traditions show, despite the differences in language and also the conceptualization of their respective ontological base, profound convergence over the question of the consideration which seem to have weighed in favour of according reality to the future. Both seem to say, in effect, through their varied and similar formulations of the issue, that the essence of the present consists of its being preceded by the past, its essence likewise includes in turn its relation of precedence to the future awaiting actualization. Why do they say this? For both thought systems moral law is a fundamental requirement. Good and bad acts produce the results. Moral and immoral acts (karma) are continuous.
Accordingly, a doctrine of the reality that is in full accord with this requirement must view the present as implying at once the reality of the future as well as the past. If the future is simply nothing, i.e. if the future effects of acts were simply non-existent, it is not conceivable that good acts be done with a view to perpetuation in good results. What is equally inconceivable, the absolute non-existence will come into being. Should it be the case that the future effect lies latently in the material cause so that when it becomes actualized it will not be a case of novel production out of nothing. The good or bad act (karma) is the efficient cause (nīmitta kārana) of the appearance of the future effects (sataśca phalasyanimitam vartamanikaraṇe samarantham na purva janane).

In strikingly similar manner the Sarvāstivādin also argues: the past acts, moral or immoral like the present ones are really existent and likewise the future acts too exist in their fruition. Instead of employing the language of material cause or efficient cause the Sarvāstivādin employs the "logical" criterion of the real as causal efficiency. We can speak of something as real differently from what is not real only in terms of a difference that it makes (arthakriyā kārita). To exist can be distinguished from non-existence only in terms of the difference that the former makes. In the Sarvāstivādin's language the difference is the production of effect. Employing this criterion he argues that if future dharmas were denied reality status on the mere ground that future does not yet exist, then it would mean the denial of the moral law. According to the principle of moral law (Law of Karma), present acts,
good or bad, produce their future effects. It may thus be seen that in Sarvāstivāda as well as in Sāmkhya-Yoga traditions, what serves as the primary concern for a doctrine of reality and a consequent theory of time and temporality is the principle of *karma*.
CHAPTER IX

ĀBHIDHARMIKĀ CONCEPTION OF KĀRITRA AND TEMPORAL DISTINCTION

The most significant conceptual contribution of Sarvāstivāda to Buddhism is the notion of kārita. Kārita is the mark of actuality (vagyamāna). It is that element in the real which accounts for its "efficiency". The existent in order to be actual must be efficient. Efficiency of the real consists in its capacity to project an effect (phala, kārya). That which is not capable of or does not possess the potency for the projection of kārya is not efficient, and by the same token lacks actuality. This wanting of actuality does not reduce the real to nothingness, or inexistence. Rather actuality is only one element of real, the other being the non-actuality. This non-actuality is the mark of existents or dharmas which are past or future. Dharmas as past and future are real but they are not actual because they are wanting in kārita (efficiency). This in brief is the upshot of Sarvāstivāda doctrine of Kārita.

Three Stages in the Development of Kārita Doctrine

Concept of Kārita in Mahāvibhāṣā: The earliest formulation of Kārita as the determinant of temporal distinctions can be discerned in

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the Mahāvibhāṣā. In this formulation an equation is made between the svalaksana or svabhāva (the specific mark) of a dharma and its special function (svakriyā, vṛtti, kārita, svabhāga). This equation is further exemplified in the definitions of the Abhidharma: "the essence of a dharma, its svabhāva as definiendum (= lakṣya) is defined by its kārita (= svakriyā or svalaksana) as definiens."\(^1\) However, the relationship between the svabhāva and kārita of a dharma remains enigmatic for the authors of Mahāvibhāṣā, and although, accepting the equation of svabhāva and kārita of a dharma, Mahāvibhāṣā prefers to be non-committal as to the specific nature of the relationship between the two. Further pressed with the question whether kārita and svabhāva are the same or different, the Mahāvibhāṣā makes the following point:

> It cannot be said categorically whether they are the same or different. Just as the svabhāva of each sāsrava dharma possesses many lakṣanas as anitya etc., and it cannot be said categorically whether

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\(^1\) This double logical and ontological meaning has been discussed by Schayer in Ausgewählte Kapital aus der Prasannapada (Krakowie, 1931, p. 2) in a remark on Chapter V of the Madhyamakakārikā where the problem of the lakṣya and lakṣana is taken up by Nāgārjuna with reference to ākāsa, and its svalaksana, the anāvaranatva (quality of non-veiling). Stecherbatsky has differed with Schayer on this matter and maintains that these discussions do not have anything to do with the problem of dharm-svabhāva and Kārita. He accuses Schayer of failing to distinguish between lakṣana = svalaksana and lakṣana = saṃskṛtalaksana. (See Stecherbatsky, S., "Die drei Richtungen in der philosophie des Buddhismus", Rocznik Orientalistyczny, 10, 1924, p.35). However, it is important to note that from the point of view of Abhidharmikas of Vaibhasika orientation even asaṃskṛtadharma, e.g. ākāsa also have their svakārita. See de La Valée Poussin, Documents d'Abhidharma, Bulletin d l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient, Paris, 1, 1931, p. 43. Also, Schayer, Stanislaw, op. cit., p. 21.
they are identical with or different from (these lakṣaṇas), such is the case here. Therefore, (the relation between kārita and svabhāva is not predicable.\footnote{Mahāvibhāṣā, op. cit., 394c, cf. Schayer, op. cit., p. 25.}

However, this unpredictability of the relationship between the two refers only to the conceptual articulation of an ontological fact. While efficiency must be grounded in the real (dharma), and it belongs only to the real, it does not exhaust all the possibilities of the real. Proceeding from this assumption the Mahāvibhāṣā makes causal efficiency (kārita) the criterion of temporal distinctions:

On what is based the distinction of Time-epochs? On the kārita. The sāṃskṛta dharma which do not yet possess the kārita are called 'future', the sāṃskṛta dharmas which just now possess the kārita are called 'present', the sāṃskṛta dharma whose kārita is already destroyed, are called past. Or: the rūpa, when it does not offer resistance just now, is called present, when it has already ceased to offer resistance, is called past, etc.\footnote{Mahāvibhāṣā, op. cit., 393c, cf. Schayer, op. cit., p. 22.}

Difficulties inherent in this formulation of kārita as the basis of temporal distinctions are multifarious, and the Sarvāstivāda thinking had to wrestle with the issues of great variety in order to propose a coherent and comprehensive theory of temporal determination. Equation of kārita with the svabhāva of the dharma and the subsequent description of the relationship as unpredictable involved difficulties that were to be overcome by the later Sarvāstivādins. If the kārita and the svabhāva of a dharma were identical then, in what sense a dharma is said to come to possess its
kārita in the present mode of existence. Further, in what sense can a dharma's kārita may be said to be destroyed (in the past) for the destruction of the dharma's kārita would amount to annihilation of the dharmasvabhāva and consequently to admitting of the unreality of the dharma (in the past mode of existence). Moreover, if a dharma is considered present only on account of the performance of the special function (kārita) then we may have difficulty in discerning the status of the being of eye (cakṣu dharma) which does not perform its special function of seeing during slumber or when obstructed by darkness. We cannot deny that cakṣu dharma is present in either of the cases, but then obviously it is not performing its special function. Difficulties inherent in the simple formulation of the kārita theory in Mahāvibhāṣā prompted the Sarvāstivādins to pursue the analysis of kārita as the determinant of temporal distinctions further in this direction.

Vasumitra's Conception of Kārita: Before we turn our attention to the efforts of Sarvāstivādins like Samghbhadra to offer a more comprehensive analysis of kārita, we may consider another attempt to define the notion in the context of original Mahāvibhāṣā position. Such an attempt was made by Vasumitra. According to this position manifestation of the specific function of dharma A is the activity not of this very dharma, but of other preceding dharmas, say P, Q, R, etc. by which the function of the

1 Supra, p. 229.

2 Supra, p. 229.
dharma is causally determined. The true activity of a dharma consequently is, its facility of determining other dharmas, i.e. of compelling future dharmas to manifest their special functions. This interpretation of kāritra seems to draw its strength from the well-acknowledged fact that the Ābhidhammikas accepted six different kinds of such determinations: (1) sahabhukāraṇa (simultaneous cause), (2) samānāntararkāraṇa (an immediate cause), (3) sarvatragaṅgāraṇa (an omnipresent cause), (4) vipākakāraṇa (a specific cause), (5) sabhāgaṅgāraṇa (homogeneous cause), (6) adhipatikāraṇa (a general negative cause). Thus, according to this way of looking at the kāritra of a dharma, in the appearance of one specific dharma of, say, sight (caksurindriya), the said dharma is (a) the simultaneous determinant of the samskrītalakṣāṇas, (b) the homogeneous determinant of all the future dharmas of sight which form the continuity (samatatī) of an eye, and, (c) the general negative determination of all other dharmas whose origination it does not hinder. Given this understanding of the operation of causal efficiency of a dharma, the kāritra of a dharma is no more its (svakāritra, svabhāga, etc.) but its hetubbhāvāsthāna, its phalotpadaṃśmartya: its causal function and its facility of producing effects.

This interpretation of kāritra as conceived by Vasumitra anticipates

1Kāraṇ sahabhūs'caiva sabhāgaḥ samprayuktakāḥ sarvatrago vipākākhyāḥ śadvidho heturiṣyate. Abhidharmakośam, (1970), op. cit., p. 279. For further discussion of this, see Vasubandhu's Bhāṣya on above as well as Yasomitra's vyākhyā.

some of the elements of Samghabhadra, but is unable to resolve the difficulties pointed out earlier in our discussion. Indeed, by accepting this interpretation of kārita, we can explain the present character of eye (caksurindriya) even in the state of slumber or under obstruction from darkness. For, in these cases, it performs the function of being the determinant of other dharma. Here the kārita of the caksu dharma does not consist of its capacity of sight.\textsuperscript{1} However, Abhidharma specifically defines kārita in terms of the svabhāva or svakārita of dharma, its nature which is sufficient unto itself; any attempt to interpret it relatively to the operations of some causal factors goes against its true import. Moreover, even if we accept that the kārita of a dharma is defined by its relationship to other dharmas, as indeed the view under consideration does, then we will have to enforce some other restrictions on it, before it can serve the general purpose of defining the temporal distinctions of dharmas. For example, accepting this definition of kārita in terms of a dharma's relationship to other dharmas, we may face a situation where a past dharma will have to be regarded as present.\textsuperscript{2}

The karmic retribution becomes ripe only some time after the act has been committed. The karmic cause having ceased in the moment of its appearance, stay and disappearance (utpāda, sthiti and vyaya), the effect

\textsuperscript{1} tatsabhāgasya caksuṣaḥ kim kāritram. yadvī kāritralakṣaṇaṁ svakarma na karoti, tat tatsabhāgaḥ. tasya ca māstikāritram darsānalakṣanam. kathaṁ tat pratyutpannamityabhīprāyaḥ. phalaṁpratigrhaṁiti. Sphutārthā with Abhidharmakośam, op. cit., 1972, p. 808.

\textsuperscript{2} añitānāmaṁ terhi sabhāghetyādīnāṁ phaladānāt kāritraprasaṅgo drha-kāritrasya vēti lakṣaṇa samkaraṁ. Abhidharmakośam, op. cit. p. 808.
(phala) has not arisen yet. Thus the determination of a dharma by another dharma in this case lasts beyond the moment of the appearance, stay and disappearance of the first. Should we therefore accept that a past continues to be present as long as it has not produced its effect?¹

Apparently these considerations led to a re-formulation of the Sarvāstivādin position. They accepted the possibility of the realization of the effect of a cause in the same moment in which the cause had previously arisen, stayed and passed away, or in the immediately subsequent moment or in some distant moment in continuum (saṁtāna) when the original causal determinant may not be present. Under this scheme the sahaṁbhukāraṇa and samanāntarakāraṇa belong to the first category of causal operation, sahaṁgakāraṇa and sarvatrāgakāraṇa operate in the second or third manner and the effect of a vipākakāraṇa is realized in the third manner.²

Samghabhadra on the Concept of Kārita: A revised version of kārita theory is proposed by Bhadanta Samghabhadra which is in accord with the conception of causal operation just outlined. According to this theory, the kārita of a dharma does not consist in a real production of an effect nor is it contingent upon its relationship to another dharma. Samghabhadra zealously defends the original position asserting the constancy of the svabhāva of a dharma, and still accounting for its temporal determination with reference to the operation of kārita of dharma.³ But kārita is

¹See Sphutārtha, op. cit., p. 808.


³Supra, p. 230.
conceived not as a capacity to produce an effect nor as a causal determinant but as the potency to project an effect (phalākṣepaśakti). It is the presence or absence of this potency of a dharma that determines the presentness, pastness or futurity:

The kārita of a dharma is projecting a kārya, not producing it. The past (dharma) do not possess this potency of projection and therefore cannot possess a kārita.....kārita here means vyāpāra, activity or operation, as seeing; (in another words) it is (the special potency) by which the eye is seeing, the ear is hearing, the nose is smelling, the tongue is tasting, etc; it is (further the special potency) by which consciousness (vijñāna) is active as cognizing; (and finally it is special potency) by which visual forms (rūpa) etc. are made objects of the corresponding sense-organs (svendriya gocaratva).

The kārita of the dharmas means potency (śakti) only of projecting results (phalākṣepa = grahaṇa), not the actual generation (jñāna = dāna). Past causes, (sabhāga) etc. do not possess the potency of projecting results because the projecting takes place only in the state of presence. An (already) projected result is not, on its part, connected with (new potency of) projection, because otherwise a regresus ad infinitum would result. Therefore, no past dharmas can possess a kārita and hence there is no confusion of time-marks.¹

In this formulation of the kārita theory Sāmghabhadra attempts to

¹yatāḥ samprāptakāritro vartamāna uccyate, uparatkaśārito' titah, aprāptkārito' nāgata ityadhvānah kāritaṇa vyavasthītah. kim punaratra kāritraṁ abhiṣhekatam.....darśānādilakṣāṇo vyāpārah, yathā pancānāṁ ca caksurā- dināṁ darśānādikam - yatascaksuh pasyaṁ sa rotram aṁnoti ghrāṇam jighrati jihvā svādāyatītyādiviṣānaṁasyāpi viṁnatītvam viṁnāti kṛtvā rūpadināṁ-driyagocaratvam...

dharmānāṁ kāritramucyate phalākṣepaśaktiḥ, natu phalajanaṁ, naśa- titānāṁ sabbhāgahetvādināṁ phalākṣepa' sti, vartamānaḥṣaḥṭhāyāṃśevāksiptavāt. naśaṃśeṣāyākṣepo yuktō'navasthāprasangāt. tasmādītānāṁ na kāritrasam- bhava iti nāsti lakṣaṇasaṃkara iti. Tattvasamgraha Panjika, op. cit., p. 506.
meet three specific objections raised by Sautrāntikas against Sarvāstivāda conception of kārita. In order to present the Sautrāntika's objections against kārita being the basis of temporal differentiation we may refer to its formulation in Tattvasamgraha:

1. If kārita means vyāpāra, activity or operation of seeing, etc., then how can we account for the eye-fascimile (tatsabhāga-caksu) being called present when it is not exercising its function of seeing (darśana). ¹

2. Acceptance of the function of phaladāna as the definitum of kārita would entail confusion or co-mingling of the determining characteristics (lakṣaṇasaṃkara) of the past and the present in the same dharma. ²

3. If kārita is conceived as including both phaladāna and phalagrahan then this would imply the semi-presence (ardha-varttamānatva) of the past dharmas as sabhāgahetu or vipākahetu. In the case of sabhāgahetu or vipākahetu at least one of the constituent factors of kārita (phaladāna and phalagrahana) is present. Consequently, it is past-cum-present - a contingency which is not free from the confusion or co-mingling of the characteristics (lakṣaṇasaṃkara). ³


²Ibid.

³Ardhakāiritrasya va (prasaṅgah) lakṣaṇasaṃkaraḥ. Abhidharmkosām, op. cit., p. 808. Also see, Sphutartha, op. cit., 1972, p. 808.
However, in the reformulation of the kārita theory by Samghabhadrā these difficulties are cleverly and adroitly avoided. By defining kārita as the potency (sakti) only of projecting results (phalākṣepa = grahaṇa)\(^1\) and not the actual generation of the result, Samghabhadrā tends to overcome the objections of laksānasamkara against the kārita theory. Samghabhadrā avoids the difficulties that plagued Vasumitra's formulation by insisting that kārita must be defined only as the potency for phalagrahaṇa (also called phalākṣepa, acquisition of effectivity) and that this alone must be regarded as the sole criterion of a dharma being called present. The past dharmas have no such capacity, and therefore they are not even semi-present (ardhavartamāna).\(^2\) To be present is to be vested with the potency for effectivity. The occasional coincidence of the actual generation of effects (phaladāna) with the acquisition of effectivity (phalapratigraha) does not imply a necessary concomitance of the two. The actual generation or production of effect is not the distinctive feature of presentness for it is also discerned in the past dharmas. But the projection of an effect (the act of throwing out) and the potency for this projection can be discerned only in the present.\(^3\) The presence of kārita and its operation is thus possible only in the present dharmas. This possibility being excluded

\(^1\)See Supra, p. 234.


\(^3\)Ibid.
from the past, the contingency of the confusion of the temporal character-
istic is thus avoided.

Samghabhadra further makes a distinction between sāmarthya and kārita of a dharma. In his response to the Sautrāntika critique that kārita cannot be the basis of time-distinctions in dharmas because it involves a confusion or co-mingling of the time-marks (adhvalakṣaṇanam sam-
kāro bahvet), Samghabhadra points out the failure of Sautrāntikas to appreciate the significance of the Sarvāstivādin’s understanding of the dharmasvabhāva. There is a distinction between the sāmarthya and kārita of a dharma. While both of them are saktis of a dharma they are not identical. While sāmratya may be obstructed by extraneous circumstances and its operation may be subject to external hinderances kārita is intrinsi-
cally constitutive of the dharmasvabhāva and accordingly it is immune from the obstructions which may hinder the operation of the sāmartaya of a dharma. All the difficulties that the Sautrāntika sees as diminishing the explanatory value of kārita theory emanate from their failure to appreciate the distinction between the two. As Samghabhadra puts it:

The saktis of a dharma are of two kinds: one is called kārita, the other is called sāmartaya. Kārita has been defined as a phalākṣe pasāmartaya, but kārita is not always identical with sāmartaya. There exists also a sāmartaya which is different from kārita. If for example, in darkness the eye sees the rūpas, its sāmartaya is obstructed by an āvaraṇa, but not its kārita. The darsanasāmartaya is obstructed by the tāmas and it is why, in darkness, the eye is not able to perceive the rūpas. But its kārita (which is identical with) ‘projecting an effect’ (phalāk-
sepa) is not obstructed by darkness. The eye is able to project an effect also in darkness.
Apart from the present condition (avasthā), karitra is absent, because it arises only in dependence with the present. (A dharma) the karitra of which is destroyed, is not absolutely inactive (niśkriya): when an other svabhāva originates, it may become its determinant. But this (determination) is not karitra, it is only samartha. Because (a dharma) can project an effect only when it is present. What is (absolutely) inactive cannot project its special effect (na svaphalam aksipati) and only the projection of a special effect is called karitra.¹

Kārītra And The Svabhāva Of Dharma

The relationship of kārītra to the svabhāva of dharma has been problematic within the framework of Sarvāstivāda ontology. Sautrāntika have capitalized upon the ambiguity and mystification that infests the Sarvāstivāda explication of this relationship. Sarvāsitvāda postulates kārītra to be the mark of existent only in the mode of actuality and thereby tries to account for the temporal distinctions of dharma as real in terms of the actual operation of the potency of projection of effectivity (phalākṣepa or phalagrāhāna) in the present. Sautrāntika, while accepting the proposition that causal efficiency or the capacity for effectivity is the mark of real as present, (artha-kriyā-kārītra), further assert that there is no other way that real can exist. Effectivity or efficiency is the mark of the present and as such real can only be present; past and future lacking such efficiency are devoid of reality. Sautrāntikas reach at this conclusion through a comprehensive critique of the nature of kārītra and its relationship to dharmasvabhāva. Probably Sarvāstivādins too realized the difficulties involved in their formulation of the relationship and consequently settled for the unpredictability of this relationship.¹

The Sautrāntika raised objections against Sarvāstivāda conception of Kārītra on the ground that it is neither different from nor identical with the dharmasvabhāva and as such it can not be the basis of temporal

¹See infra, pp. 246-248.
distinctions. Refusing to accept any other possibility of the relationship between the kārita and the dharmasvabhāva the Sautrāntika proposes that the acceptance of any of the two alternative by the Vaibhāṣikās would imply consequences that are irreconcilable with the basic tenets of Vaibhāṣika thought. If we accept the substantial difference between the kārita and the svabhāva of a dharma then we will have to accept the antecedent and subsequent unreality of dharmas because of the fact that kārita has been accepted to be operative only in the present on account of which alone a dharma is held to be a hetu and samākṛta (that which conditions and is conditioned). If on the other hand, kārita is identical with the svabhāva of a dharma then kārita too will be permanent and eternal like the dharma and as such it cannot be the basis of temporal distinctions in dharmas.

Sāntaraksīṭa maintains:

These (sarvāstivādins) will have to admit that kārita is either different from, or the same as, the dharma. There is no other way in which they can exist. If it is something different from the object, then the past and future states of present dharmas would have to be regarded without any reality, for they are causes and are embellished, and so forth like the kārita. Otherwise (if they are not different) permanence will follow on account of the ever-presence of the svabhāva of a dharma. Indeed, besides substantial identity there is no other essential mark of permanence. ¹

The Sautrāntika formulates the following critique of kārita theory:

Considering that the kārita in question is different from the

¹ tait kāritramidām dharmādanyattadūpameva vā, abhyupeyam yadanyā'sti gatiḥ kācinna vāstavī; Tattvasāmgraha, op. cit., p. 506.
anyatve vartamānānām praṣūrdhivām va'svabhāvatā hetutvāsāmśkrta tva-de kāritrasyeva gamyataṁ; Ibid., p. 507.
anyatha nityatōpattiḥ svabhāvavasthiteḥ sadā naitadrūpātiriktaṁ hi vidyate nityalakṣanām; Ibid.
dharma the unreality (niḥsvabhāvatā) of the present dharma in its antecedent and subsequent states will have to be accepted. Reason for the subsequent and antecedent unreality of the dharmas as present consist in the fact that being different from the kārītra, it must contain in itself the ground for its phenomenal existence i.e. being a cause and being contingent or embellished. In either respect the dharma is like kārītra which also functions as cause and is the ground of contingency and which is non-existent in the subsequent and precedent states.¹

If, on the other hand, the present dharma were not unreal (niḥsvabhāva) in the past and future states, then all the samskṛta dharmas which are defined as contingent and embellished will have to be regarded as eternal. In other words "if there were no antecedent and no subsequent unreality, then the permanence (nityatā) of all which is contingent (samskṛta) would arise, because the svabhāva of a dharma would continue to be always (sarvādā vyavasthitatvāt). Indeed, apart from the constant reality (sadāsattva) there is no other essential mark of permanence or eternality."² But according to Sarvastivada only asamskṛta dharmas are eternal or permanent.

The thrust of the Sautrāntika's argument is that the postulation of

¹Tattvasamgraha, op. cit., p. 507.

²anyathā yadi prāgurdhva ca niḥsvabhāvatā na syāttadā sarvasya samskṛtasya nityatā prapnoti, svabhāvasya sārvadā vyavasthitatvāt, na ca sadāsattvavyatirekāma nityatvalakṣanamastī; Ibid.
kāritra as different from the dharma implies consequences which are not compatible with the basic tenets of Sarvāstivāda. Moreover, the admission of kāritra as something different from the dharmas will amount to the contradiction of the fundamental thesis of the Buddhist doctrine contained in the declaration of the Buddha: All things (sarvam), Brahmanas, are included in the five skandhas, twelve āyantanas and eighteen dhātus. Thus the reality of a kāritra is obviously rejected by the great teacher.  

Sautrāntika then analyses the second alternative that the kāritra is identical with the dharma. Here too the primary concern is to show the incompatibility of the position with the basic tenets of Sarvāstivādins. The strategy employed is to propose two mutually exclusive alternative positions none of which can be acceptable to the opponent. Any other alternative having been excluded the opponents position is rendered redundant.  

Sāntarakṣita offers the following arguments against the proposition that kāritra is identical with the dharma:

If, on the other hand, the kāritra is not different from the dharma, then, being inseparable from the dharma it will be there at all times, just like the nature of the dharma. And therefore the distinctions of Time could not be made on the basis of this (kāritra), for there would be no possibility of distinction between the cessation, attainment or non-attainment of that (kāritra).  

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1 Ibid.

2 This method of argument is called prasanga and has been extensively employed in the later Buddhist circles, specially by the Madhyamikas.

3 ananyatve'pi kāritraṁ dharmādyatirekataḥ svarupamiva dharmasya prasktam sārvakālikan. Tatvasamgraha, op. cit., p. 507.

tatscādhyavivhaṅgo'yaṁ tadvaśānnaprakalpyate na hi tasva cyutih prāpraptirvā vibhāgataḥ. Ibid.
Accepting the non-difference of the kārita from the dharma implies its inseparability from the dharma just like the svarupa of the dharma. And in that case kārita would be something existing at all times. Accordingly there cannot be any distinction of times based on kārita: that which has ceased its kārita is 'past', that which has attained its kārita is 'present' and that which has not attained its kārita is the unarrived 'future'. It is only when the distinction of the attainment and non-attainment of the kārita is made that we can make any distinction of the past, present and future dharmas. But however, if kārita is identical with the dharma then such distinctions are not possible. Conversely, if kārita is non-different from the dharma, the dharma too, like the kārita, will have only a reality of the middle point, i.e. of the present only. The dharma, being like the kārita, will be devoid of the previous and later states, and as such its total reality will be condensed in the present only.\(^1\) The unreality of the past and future will result.

The Sarvāstivādins are unperturbed by these prasangas proposed by the Sautrāntikas. They maintain that the two prasangas which accept only the possibilities of identity or difference of the kārita and dharma do not exhaust all the possibilities. The Sarvāstivādins propose another alternative according to which kārita and dharma are and are not identical:

\[^1\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 508.\]
Kārītra and dharma a third theory is possible according to which kārītra and dharma are and are not identical. This is just our stand-point. We teach that kārītra does not exist independently as something different from the dharma, but we deny that the kārītra is simply identical with the dharma and that it lasts permanently.¹

The Sarvāstivādins are wary of the prasanga argument on two counts: First, they explicitly maintain that saṃskṛta dharmas are not eternal.²

Eternality or permanence as opposed to the momentary existence is assigned only to asaṃskṛta dharmas. Saṃskṛta dharmas are subject to the four marks of impermanence or conditionedness and consequently they are not eternal. Thus the element of eternity presupposed in the aforesaid Sautrāntika argument is misplaced, for they admit all dharmas (except the asaṃskṛtas) as subject to the four characteristics of the conditioned, viz. origination, decay, continuity and impermanence (asaṃskṛta-laksana-yogana sāsvavaprasangaḥ). Thus the prasanga that the non-difference of kārītra with the dharma in the middle moment of present implies eternity of the kārītra is redundant. When dharma itself is not conceived as eternal how can kārītra be eternal? The prasanga in question is misconceived in as much as it is based on the possibility of the eternity of kārītra being intrinsic to the Sarvāstivādin postulation of the identity of kārītra with the dharma. This tacit supposition is necessary for deducing the prasanga formulated by the Sautrāntika. This very starting point is, however, erroneous. The Vaibhāsikas do not teach that kārītra possesses the three times.

¹Schayer, op. cit., p. 42.
²Supra, p. 175-176.
The other prasanga, as we saw, points out that the kārita and dharma cannot be different because their difference would imply the unreality (niḥsvabhāvā) of the dharma in its precedent and subsequent states. Otherwise, if the unreality of the present dharma in precedent and subsequent states is not accepted then the permanence or eternity of saṃskṛta dharma will have to be accepted. Moreover, the acceptance of kārita as different from the dharma will amount to the acceptance of the existence of something other than the five skandhas, twelve āyatanas and eighteen dhātuṣ.

The whole prasanga is misconceived in as much as it tends to look at kārita as an entity which is different from the dharma. Differentiation of the kārita from the dharma past, present and future is based on the functional differentiation of the dharmas as past, present and future. Present dharma is distinguished from the past and future precisely in terms of the operation or actualization of the potency for effectivity. Kārita in operation and kārita as a mere potency having-been-realized and to-be-realized are basically functional terms which define the temporal distinctions of dharmas or kārita. Moreover, Sautrāntikas can bring in the prasanga arguments against the kārita only because they tend to confuse reality with existent. This becomes all the more apparent when they tend to define permanence in terms of constancy of reality (naca sadās-attvavyatireken nityatvalakṣanamasti). Eternality or permanence can only be defined in terms of constant existence (sarvadāsitva) and not in terms of the constancy of reality (sadāsattva). Moreover, the objection that
postulation of kārītra contradicts the fundamental Buddhist doctrine that 'all' means skandhas, āyatanas and dhātus is also off the mark. For according to Sarvāstivādins kārītra is not an entity over and against the reality of the dharma.¹

Impredicability (anirvacanīyatva) of Kārītra

The Sarvāstivādins are aware of the difficulties involved in their characterization of kārītra as the ground or basis of all temporal differentiations. It is the difficulties involved in providing a more intelligible understanding of the relationship between the dharma and the kārītra that led them to describe the relationship as essentially ineffable. The four theories mentioned in the preceding chapters were partial attempts to account for the temporal variations in terms of the identity and difference of the dharmasvabhāva and are only partially able to resolve the issues. However, Sarvāstivādins had already realised the futility of verbal explication of the extremely evasive nature of the relationship of kārītra and svabhāva as early as the Mahāvibhāṣā where the relationship was described as one of identity and difference and consequently beyond the grasp of categories of logical thinking operating in terms of either-or relationship. In Mahāvibhāṣā we come across the following discussion:

¹We are not here concerned with the relative logical adequacy of either of the positions concerned by themselves. What has been attempted here is to vindicate the plausibility of the Sarvāstivāda position.
Are kāritra and svabhāva the same or are they different: it cannot be said categorically whether they are identical or different. Just as the svabhāva of each sasrva-dharma possesses many laksanās as anitya etc., and it cannot be said categorically whether they are identical with or different from (these laksanās), such as the case here. Therefore (the relationship) between kāritra and svabhāva is not predictable.1

Samghabhadra in Nyāyānusārasāstra accepts the Mahāvibhāṣā definitions of the relationship and describes them as one of identity and difference and considers them essentially ineffable. Thus he writes:

the relation between kāritra and svabhāva is, just in the same manner, not accessible to determination as in the case with the relation between the dharmas and the saṃtāna. In one word: kāritra and svabhāva are and are not identical.2

Samghabhadra has taken strong exceptions to Sautrāntika’s ridicule of the theory of asserting the identity and difference of the kāritra and the dharmasvabhāva.3 The Sautrāntika’s have rejected the doctrine of identity and difference of kāritra and the Svabhāva as not deserving serious consideration. However, Saṃghabhadra, maintaining that the identity and difference of kāritra is not an instance of arbitrariness which can become the caprice of divine beings, not meriting consideration from the point of view of serious reflection.

Quoting from the earlier Pitakas Samghabhadra points out that Buddha Bhagvāna himself has made statements like: Tathāgata is and is not

1Mahāvibhāṣā, 394c, cf. Schayer, op. cit., p. 25.


lokkottara'; 'the dharmatā of the pratityasamutpāda is and is not nitya'.

He asks whether Buddha Bhagvana too be made subject to ridicule for these utterances.

We accept that dharmas are real always, and at the same time we teach that dharmas are not eternal....the terms 'eternal' and 'not- eternal' are used here in two different senses....The dharma lasts eternally but the dharma-bhāva changes. When the samskrtdharmanas wander across the times, they do not lose their svabhāva and the kārita which arises depends on pratyayās. Immediately after its origination, kārita disappears. Therefore, we teach: the dharma is eternal but the dharma-bhāva is not eternal.

Some Concluding Observations

1. Three distinct phases in the development of the Sarvāstivādin conception of kārita can be discerned. Earliest version recorded in the Mahāvibhāṣā tends to identify the svabhāva and kārita of a dharma. Svabhāva of a dharma is defined in terms of its svakārita. Seeing defines the caksu dharma, for it is the special function of the eye, the performance of which constitutes the very essence of the being of the caksu-dharma. In the second phase the kārita came to be understood in terms of phalākṣepa-sakti which included both the moments of phala-grahana and phala-dāna. This formulation of kārita by Vasumitra was a definite advancement upon the simplicity of the Mahāvibhāṣā which tends to look

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2 Ibid.
at kārita only in terms of the specificity of the svabhāva of dharma. In Vasumitra's formulation of the kārita theory the twin moment of phala-dāna and phalagrahana are conceived as constituting a continuum through which the phalotpādansāmarthya of a dharma operates. Phalotpādansāmarthya as the specific moment which acts as the causal determinant of an other svabhāva of a dharma, as the concomitant factor in the emergence of it, tends to define kārita not in terms of svakārita or svabhāga of a dharma. Kārita here acquires a new meaning when it comes to be understood in terms of its function of concomitant determination of an other svabhāva. Sāmghbhadra, however, goes beyond Vasumitra when he restricts the kārita within the limits of a dharma's potency or capacity for the projection or conception (phalākṣepa or phalagrahana) of a phala.

2. In his definition of kārita Sāmghbhadra excludes the moment of phala-dāna (actual production of the effect) and thereby overcomes the objection of laksānasamkaratva brought by Sautrāntikas against the Sarvāstivādin conception of kārita. His theory also tends to retain the original Mahāvibhāṣā concern with the svabhāva or savkārita of a dharma and thereby does away with the ontological dispersion that tends to split up internal unity of a dharma by distinguishing between the svabhāva and svakārita of a dharma. It is the kārita of a dharma that defines the svabhāva of a dharma in the three modes of its being. The difference between the past, present and future dharma does not consist in the absence or presence of its kārita which also constitutes its svabhāva. However, the temporal distinctions reflect the state (avasthā) of a kārita (potency for
effectivity). This potency may either be latent or patent; accordingly it will determine the presentness, pastness or futurity of a dharma. Thus:

All samskrta-dharmas in the state (avasthā) of phalākṣeṣa are called present. This state of phalākṣeṣa is "previously" and "subsequently" inexistent. In accordance (with this previous and subsequent inexistence) the distinction of the three Times is established. Past and Future are real just as the Present. In brief: although the svabhāva of all samskrta-dharmas remains always the same, yet the 'potencies' are different. In this manner although the svabhāva of (the dharmas) as constituting the three temporal moments is the same, yet, their kārita is not without differentiation.¹

It seems to us that the relationship between the dhamasvabhāva and kārita can only be understood and defined as exemplifying the duality of aspects of the dharmas. Professor Stcherbatsky has tried to define Sarvāstivādin ontology as asserting the duality "of two different planes of two sets of elements".² However, we tend to see at Sarvāstivādin ontology as implying only a duality of aspects. To our way of understanding kārita cannot be considered as supplementing the svabhāva of a dharma; neither can it be considered as the second element or the second nature of the element. It is equally wrong to maintain that kārita is the dharma itself or the svalaksana of the dharma. Indeed, Samghabhadra takes great pains to reject this theory. Both Tattvasamgraha and Nyāyānusārasāstra record Sarvāstivādin's denial of this alternative. The duality of aspects

¹Ibid.

²Stcherbatsky, Central Conception of Buddhism, op. cit., p. 42.
implied in the Sarvāstivādin ontology of dharmaśvabhāva comes out very clearly if we remember that the difference between kārita of a dharma as the phalākṣepākṣa (power of projecting effects) and the svakārita of dharma, equivalent to the svalaksana of a dharma consisting both of phaladāna (projecting effect) and phalagrāhaṇa (receiving effect), is fundamental. Undermining this fundamental difference will lead to the postulation of total identity or total independence of the dharma and kārita; either of the two alternatives being unacceptable to the Sarvāstivādins. The only alternative that seems to be admissible within the framework of Sarvāstivādin ontology is the one which looks at the relationship between the essential nature of being and its phenomenal manifestation as one of identity in difference. Indeed phalākṣepākṣa (an accidental characteristic of a dharma, it is only kādācikta (adventitious). But even as kādacikta when it is operative it defines the total being and cannot be conceived in isolation from the being of dharma. It is only when it is not operative, i.e. when it is only a potency, that a conceptual distinction between the two is possible. However, as a potency it does not have an independent status and actuality. Though it is distinctly discernible it is not cognized as different from the dharma. This relationship we prefer to describe one of bhedabheda or identity in difference. Instead of characterizing it as a logically different position, different alike from identity and difference, we prefer to understand this "identity in difference" as implying the inherent character of the dual aspects intrinsic to reality. Thus, the characterization of the relationship as ineffable simply expresses the logical difficulty in expressing the relationship of kārita and
svabhāva on lines of mere identity and difference.

While Santrākṣita and Kamalāśīla seem to have realized certain difficulties involved in the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of kārita, their critique fails to see the real significance of the Sarvāstivāda formulations of the dharmasvabhāva. Dharma for Sarvāstivāda is not an eternal entity as Santrākṣita seems to suggest. As a matter of fact, dharma is neither an entity nor eternal in the usual sense of the term. Sarvāstivāda is an assertion of the reality of all dharmas (sarbam asti), but it is not the assertion of the existence of all dharmas in all times (sarvadā asti) as the Sautrāntikas would like us to believe. Given this understanding of the essential nature of dharma it would be wrong to postulate that dharma or dharmasvabhāva is conceived by Sarvāstivādin to be eternal or permanent. Permanence or substantial identity of dharma in all the three periods of time is not what Sarvāstivāda proposes. A dharma whether past, present or future is essentially momentary (kṣanika). Momentary existence of dharmas as real specific events that go into the making of phenomenal existence at one specific moment of its life history is indubitable. The reality of dharmas as past, present and future cannot be gainsaid. A dharma having lost its existence and actuality as present surely does not lose its reality. Its ongoing influence on the phenomenal existence through vāsanās attests to the continued reality of dharmas as past. An essential overlooking of what may be described as distinction between the existence and reality, or actuality and being of the dharma lies at the basis of the Sautrāntika critique of Sarvāstivāda. The difficulties which, according to Sautrāntika's, beset its conception of dharmas as formulated by the
Sarvāstivādin, do not seem to be intractable once the significance of the above distinction is grasped. The explanatory value of a similar distinction was seen in an earlier context when we sought to interpret the Śāmkhya–Yoga distinction of the real and the existent.
PART III

SĀṆKHYA-YOGA AND ĀBHIDHARMA BUDDHISM

IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE
CHAPTER X

TEMPORAL BECOMING AND THE REAL:
THE ĀBHDHARMIKA AND SĀMKHYA-YOGA PERSPECTIVE

In this chapter we will attempt to look at the question of temporal becoming in the context of its relationship to the thing which undergoes change. We will try to show that for both, the Sāmkhya-Yoga and Ābhidharma Buddhism, the question of temporal becoming is integral to the question of the reality status of that which undergoes change. However, there are important differences between the two systems' understanding of the dynamism of the temporal process. According to Ābhidharmika, real does not have a mode of being other than the mode of becoming. A dharma is self-subsistent; it carries its own nature (svabhāva). That which 'becomes' changes in its totality. There is no residuum or constancy of a self-identical substance. On the other hand, according to Sāmkhya-Yoga, the temporal process involves only one aspect of the reality. This, the changing aspect of reality, is called dharma in Sāmkhya-Yoga terminology. But this does not exhaust the real in its completeness. There is an aspect of real which is constant and self-identical. This is the dharmin, the common referential content which remains constant through the changing phases of the real. While for Ābhidharma Buddhism temporal becoming exemplifies the constancy of the 'continuum' (samtāna), the Sāmkhya-Yoga speaks of the constancy of the continuant (samtāni).
The Ābhidharmika Doctrine of the "Mutual Otherness" (Anyathātva) of Temporal Distinctions

Ābhidharmika sources record as many as four theories of temporality proposed by the Sarvāstivādins. These four variations of Sarvāstivādin's account of temporal differentiation are confirmed by different sources and the possibility of their having been proposed by different Sarvāstivādin thinkers at different times cannot be confirmed by any direct evidence drawn from the period. These four teachers probably belong to the period of the Buddhist Council at the time of Kanishka. The Vibhāṣā or Mahāvibhāṣā which is assigned to this period seem to mention these four versions of Sarvāstivāda. It seems reasonable to believe that the name of various teachers came to be associated with the different Sarvāstivāda position about the same time. While the historical question is not our primary concern, it may be of some interest to note that similarity between some of these positions and certain facets of some Buddhist positions mentioned as erroneous views on time by Vibhāṣā is quite striking.

1 These four variations of Sarvāstivāda is mentioned in Mahāvibhāṣā, where the other three are rejected in favour of Vasumitra (infra, p. 240). See Warder, A. K., op. cit., pp. 346-347. Later we find Vasubandhu echoing this tradition and accepting the Vasumitra's formulation as the best. Thus, tṛtiyā (Vasumitra's) sobhanah, Abhidharmakośa, op. cit., p. 808. The theories are also mentioned by Yosomitra, the celebrated commentator on Abhidharmakośa as well as by Sāntarakṣita and Kamalśīla in Tattvasamgraha and Tattvasamgraha Panjika respectively. But it is important to note that while the later tradition following Vasubandhu has invariably regarded them as four representative positions within Sarvāstivāda, Mahāvibhāṣā which was composed to settle the controversial issues within Sarvāstivāda tradition explicitly rejected the three in favour of Vasumitra's as the representative doctrine of Sarvāstivāda. See Warder, A. K., op. cit., pp. 346-347.
It seems to us that the congruity between later records reflecting Sarvāstivādin's understanding of temporal differentiation and the earlier records in Mahāvibhāsā is extremely important. It is on the basis of these passages in Mahāvibhāsā that Schayer argued that pre-Ābhidhammika Buddhism had a conception of Time as the reservoir or receptum of entities. It is our contention that not only the passages referred to do not belong to pre-Ābhidhammika Buddhism, but also that the conception enunciated there does not involve a reservoir ideal of Time.

The whole confusion specially with reference to Vasumitra, seems to have arisen from the ambiguity of the term avastha which has both spatial and temporal connotations. Avastha can be translated both as "a state of affair" or "a time span in the personal history" of an entity. A spatial reading or interpretation of the term avastha in the passages of Mahāvibhāsā as well as in the context of the theories of the Ābhidhammikas to be considered, seem to have obscured a proper appraisal of Ābhidharmic conception of temporal determinations. It is an uncritical acceptance of the spatial rendering of the term avastha that prompted Schayer, McDermott and others to suggest that temporal determinations in these four versions of temporality involves a conception of dharma as a free floating entity wandering through the three periods of time. However, a careful reading of the text does not substantiate their conclusion and it becomes clear that such spatial interpretations of avastha theory seems quite off the mark.

The four theories proposed by these teachers may be looked upon as different ways to account for the fact of continuity (samṭāna) in the phenomenal world despite it being the case that change is the characteristic
mark. It is a commonplace doctrine shared by the generality of all Buddhist Schools that the phenomenon of change characteristic of existence must be understood as total change. At the same time they also emphasise, in the same breath, the phenomena of continuity in keeping with the foundational insight of Buddha about the causal interconnectedness. To advert to the four theories propounded by the teachers of Sarvāstivāda. The upshot of the theories is: the dharmas, in the process of becoming, maintain their own nature (svabhāva), and changes which characterises existence relates to modes (bhāva) or character (laksana) or aspects (avasthā) or relational orientation (anyathānyathikā) of the dharmas. The fact of change is acknowledged, but it is not supposed to affect the integrity of the nature of the dharmas. The differences within these theories refer to the specific understanding of change, but the persistence of "own nature" (svabhāva) through the entire spectrum of change is allowed. Change belongs to the very nature of dharmas and yet does not corrode them.

This basic insight is important for a proper appraisal of the Sarvāstivāda understanding of temporal becoming. What follows in the ensuing paragraphs is purported to be a descriptive account of the views of the four Sarvāstivādin thinkers. The exposition of the different theories is followed by a review of the parallelism of ideas in this connection that exists between them and the Sāmkhya-Yoga thesis, which also, formally stated, accords reality to the substantial permanence of things whose integrity remains unaffected by the modal changes.

Bhāvanyathātva of Dharmatrātā: According to Dharmatrātā, temporal becoming is nothing but transmutation of modes. A dharma acquires the
character of "otherness" (anyathātva) by a change in its modes. It is the differences in modes that constitute the distinguishing mark of a dharma's pastness, presentness and futurity. A dharma remains identical in its own nature (dravyataḥ). Thus, according to Yaśomitra Dharmatrātā prescribes only the otherness of bhāva through the past, future and present mode of coming into existence; there is no otherness of the essence qua substance (dravyataḥ). While Yaśomitra defines bhāva including both the form (ākṛti) and quality (guna), Kamalśīla mentions only quality (guna) being included under the definition of bhāva. Kamalśīla offers following rendering of Dharmatrātā's argument for bhāvanyathātva:

When a dharma has entered into its course of actuality (dharmasyadhvasu) there is the otherness only of bhāva, not of dravya. For example, the substance gold undergoes several changes in its qualities by virtue of which it comes to be called the 'armlet', 'necklet', 'ear-ring', etc., but there is no change of gold itself. Similarly, the dharma is differentiated in respect of the bhāvas of future etc. (like gold) the dharma, by abandoning its 'future' bhāva, it attains the 'present' bhāva, and by discarding its present bhāva it acquires the past bhāva. And yet there is no otherness of the dravya (of dharma), for there is no absence of the (dharma's) dravya (sarvatra dravyasyavyabhicārāt).

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1 bhāvanyathiko bhadantadharmatrātāḥ, sa kilaḥdharmasyadhvasu pṛavar-
tamānasya bhāvanyathātvan bhavati, ... dharmo'pyanāgatādadhvanāḥ pratyut-
pannamadhvāṇa-māgacchannāgatabhāvam jahūti, na drayabhāvam. ... Abhidharma-
kośam, op. cit., pp. 805-806.

2 atītaṃgata-pratyutpannasya bhāvasya-nyathātvan bhavati, na dravya-
yathātvan; The Sphutārthā, op. cit., p. 805.

3 yathākramākṛtigunanyathātvanajāpanārtham; Ibid.

4 kaḥ punarbhāvaste nesāḥ?gunayiṣesah, yatōtūtādyabhidhānajñāna-
pravṛttih; Tattvasamgraha Panjika, op. cit., p. 504.

5 Ibid.
Kamalśīla equates dravya with the svabhāva of dharma and its translation as substance is only literal and misses the true import of the figurative use.¹ In Yaśomitra's formulation of the argument the true import of bhāvanyathātva is well articulated. Thus, milk, when transformed into curds, changes its qualities of taste, digestibility, etc., but its rūpa dharma (material nature) remains unchanged.² Yaśomitra's formulation of the argument clearly recognizes the continuity of the svabhāva or svalaksana of dharma, not without, but through the changes in its bhāva. Thus, though bhāvas of dharma undergoes change "there is no otherness (temporal distinction) of the svalaksana of rūpa etc. (dharmanas) on account of this (na rūpādi-svalaksanasyanyathātvam)."³ The bhāva which consists of form (akṛti) and quality (guṇa) passes away, but the rūpa dharma (the material nature), in which the bhāvas find their ground, does not cease to be. "Thus, the examples of gold and milk given above refer to the transmutation of form and quality respectively and show the continuity of the rūpa dharma.⁴ Thus Dharmtrātā reduces becoming to bhāva-nyathātva or reciprocal

¹Jha seems to have missed this and has made precisely this mistake. However, the substance language as such is inappropriate to Sarvāstivādins. See Tattvasangraha (tr.) Jha, Ganganath, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1939, Vol. 2, p. 862.

²Sphutārtha in the Abhidharmakosā, 1972, op. cit., p. 806.

³Ibid., p. 805.

⁴Suvarṇam kāṇīram ceti dṛṣṭāntadvayam yathākramamākṛti guṇānyathātvajñāpanārtham; Ibid., p. 806.
otherness in the bhāva (manner of being, manifestation or appearance) of a dharma which itself stands spanning the reciprocal distinctions. The changes wrought on dharma are mere epistemological precipitates, its mode of manifestation to consciousness. The problem of temporal evolution is solved by assigning to it a modal status of reality instead of making it intrinsic to it. Accordingly, temporal becoming does not touch the essential core of being.

Laksana-anyathātva of Ghoṣaka: Ghoṣaka accounts for temporal differentiation in terms of the laksana (character) of the dharma. There is simultaneity of the laksanas of past, present and future in each dharma and that a dharma is called past, present or future respectively when one of these laksanas are patent and other two are latent. According to Ghoṣaka's laksana anyathātva:

when the dharma has entered into its course of existence it is said to be 'past' when it has emerged as vested with the laksana of past without however being, at the same time deprived of the laksana of the future and the present. The futurity and the presentness (of a dharma) are to be explained the same way (as one may explain a man's not being disinterested in other women even though he is attached to his own. The empirical applicability

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1For a modern attempt to look at this doctrine in the light of contemporary logic of de-tensers see McDermott, A. Charles, The Sutrāntika Argument Against the Traikāyavāda, Philosophy East & West, 24.2, April 1974, pp. 193-200.

2laksanānyathiko bhadantaghoṣakah sa kilāhādharmo'dhvasu pravarttāmāno 'tīto'tita laksanayuktah; anāgata pratyutpānābhyāmaviyuktah. evam pratyutpanno'pyatītānāgatābhyāmaviyuktah. The Abhidharmakośam, op. cit., 1972, p. 806.
(vyvahāra) (of temporal distinctions) rest on the fact of the acquisition of the character (vṛtti) of the specific laksāṇa. ¹

Thus the dharma as essence remains intact while its temporal phases vary on account of the pre-eminence of the specific laksāṇa of past, present and future. ² A dharma, in the course of its existence, is vested with the character of 'past' on account of its pre-eminence; but the temporal phase of past does not totally exclude the phases of present and future. If the future were exclusive of the present and past, it would never become present or past, because what was not can never be (na bhutvā bhavah). ³

Significantly, it is not that the dharmas belong to the three time phases of past, present and future, but the laksāṇas of past, present and future belong to dharma itself. The future, the present and the past phases are thus found to co-exist together. The specific nature of the character of past, present and future remain unexplored in the explications of Ghoṣaka's view in the Abhidharma Kosā and the Tattva Samgraha. However, we have occasion to dwell upon this in our exposition of the Abhidharmika notion of Kāritra and its bearing on their understanding of the temporal becoming.

¹ Dharmo'dhvasu vartamāno'tīto'tītalaksāṇayuktō'nāgatapratytuppannābhyaṁ laksāṇābhyāmaviyuktah, yatha puruṣā ekasyām striyām raktah s' eşāsvavirakta evamanāgatapratytuppannāvāpi vācyē. hyatītādilaksāṇavṛttīlābhāpekṣo vyavahara iti purvakādbhedah. Tattva Samgraha Panjika, op. cit., p. 504.

² lakṣāṇānyathikasya lakṣaṅavṛttīlābhāpekṣo vyavahārah. Sphutārtha, 5.26, op. cit., p. 806.

³ vartamānam atītānāgatābhyaṁ viyuktām anāgatameva vartamānam, vartamānamevātītām syāt. Ibid.
Suffice it to note here that the alternation in the temporal phases is not attached to the dharma's essence (svabhāva) itself. Rather, change is explained in terms of a dharma's adjuncts.

Anyathā—anyathika of Buddhdeva: The specific purpose of Buddhdeva is to explain the temporal becoming by distinguishing and defining the past, present and future existence of dharma precisely in the context of a dharma and its relationship to other dharmas. Temporal determinations are nothing but the expression of the relationship of one dharma to others. Thus a dharma is called differently as future or present or past with reference to the prior or the posterior dharma. ¹ A dharma:

is called future in relation to the past and the present which are prior to it; it is called present in relation to the past which is prior to it and in relation to the future which is posterior to it; it is called past in relation to the present and the future which are posterior to it. ²

The case of the same woman being designated as mother in relation to her daughter, and daughter in relation to her mother is an instance in point.

As Kamalśila points out:

Having entered the course of actuality a dharma is called one or the other in accordance with its relation to what has gone before and what is ahead. For example, the same

¹ anyathānyathiko bhadantabuddhadevaḥ sa kilāḥdharman dhvasu pravṛta-māṇaḥ purvāparampeksayānya'nya ucyate avasthāntaratāḥ, na dravyāntaratāḥ. Abhidharmakośam, op. cit., p. 807.

² purvam evātītām vartamānām vāpeksyānāgata iti. purvam vṛtītām, aparām vā'ṇāgatum apekṣyā vartmāna iti, aparām eva vartamānām-anāgataṁ vāapeksyātīta iti..., Sphurthā 5.26, op. cit., p. 807.
women is called 'mother' and 'daughter'. Similarly the usage (of temporal distinctions) is also dependent upon the past and the future (dharma). A dharma related to an antecedent but without any subsequent is called future; that which has its antecedent as well as its subsequent is called present; that which has only its subsequent but no antecedent moments is called 'past'.

Thus, according to the theory of anyathātatva temporal determination is explained in terms of the diverse orientational features or relationship of an invariant dharma.

Avasthā-anyathātatva of Vasumitra: Most celebrated of the four variations of Sarvāstivāda theories of temporality is attributed to Bhadanta Vasumitra. Vasumitra equates kārita (causal efficiency) with the avasthā of a dharma and accordingly proposes that dharmas are continuants, the applicability of the temporal phases (avasthā) of 'past','present' and 'future' being due to each dharma's kārita. Vasumitra maintains:

A dharma, having entered the course of actuality, it is designated variously according to the variations in avasthā (conditions of states) and not on account of the dravya (or svabhāva). The dravya remains the same in the three time variations. Just as the clay counting piece in an abacus, when placed in the place of units is designated as one, in the place of hundreds is called "hundred" and in the place of thousands is called "thousand", similarly

\[\text{dharma} \text{dhusu vartamānaḥ purvāparamapakeśyānyonya ucyate iti. yathaikā strī mātā cocyate duhitā ceti. asya pūrvāparāpekso vyavahāraḥ, yasya pūrvevāstī nāparah so'nnāgataḥ, yasya pūrvevasti apaṁ ca sa vartamānaḥ, 'asyāparaṁeva na purvam so'citā. The Tattvasamgraha, Panjika, op. cit., p. 504.}\]

\[\text{avasthā nyathiko bhadantavasumitraḥ.....advānah kārīten vyavasthitāḥ. yadā sa dhamma kāritram na karoti tadā anāgataḥ, yadā karoti tada pratyupannah yadā kṛtva niruddhastadā iti. Abhidharmakosam, op. cit., pp. 806-808.}\]
a dharma (bhāva), when it is in the state of kārita, is called present, having ceased its kārita is called past, and while it has not acquired its kārita, is called future. Thus the applicability of (time designations) depends on the avasthā (of kārita) just as in the case of abacus.  

Thus a dharma is designated as future when it does not exercise its kārita (causal efficiency); it gets the designation of present when it does exercise the kārita; and it is designated past when it has already exercised its kārita. The temporal designation of a dharma then is a derivative of the variations in the states (avasthā) of causal efficiency (kārita). Variation is only of state not of essence. The dharma acquires different temporal significations only on account of the variations in its kārita while the svabhāva of dharma does not undergo any change.  

A more elaborate treatment of the notion of kārita and its relationship to the svabhāva (own nature) of the dharma must remain in abeyance at this point. But to anticipate the difficulties that it encounters in the Vasumitra's formulation of it and its further elaboration in a later thinker, Saṅghabhadra, the following may be observed: whether the kārita is defined as the capacity of giving or grasping a result (phala-dāna-grahaṇa) or as the potency to project a result (phalākṣepaśakti), in either way, one can see

1Dharma’dhvasu varttamāno’vasthāmavasthām prāpyānyo’nyo mirdisyate’vasthāntaratato, na dravyataḥ, dravasya triṣvapī kāleṣyabhīnnatvāt. yathā mṛdgudīkā ekaṅke prakṣipta ekamityucyate, satāke sataṁ, sahasrāṅke sahasraṁ, tathā kāritre’vasthitoh bhāvo varttamanastataḥ prachyuto’tita-stadapraṇto’nāgata iti. Tattva Samgrah Panjika, op. cit., p. 504.

2See Sphutarthā 5.26, op. cit., p. 808.
it faces some unsoumroundable difficulties. If the dharma's functionality (kārita) is regarded as an aspect of the dharmasvabhāva, distinguishable from dharma, the difficulty in explaining it adequately seems obvious. What is there in the structure of becoming that accounts for the holding of kārita in abeyance at one time and becoming productive at another? There is again the important question of the relationship between the svabhāva and kārita of a dharma. Indeed these are the very issues raised in the scathing critique of the thesis of three times (trai̊kālyavāda) by the Sautrāntikas. 1

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1 A. Charles McDermott, in his recent article on the question, has offered an excellent summary statement of the Sautrāntika critique of the Kārita doctrine. He writes: "whether Kārita be defined as, for example, the capacity of giving or grasping a result (phala-dāna-grāhāna) or, again, as the potency to project a result (phalākṣepa-sāktya) insofar as a dharma's functionality is thereby regarded as (1) an aspect of the dharmasvabhāva, distinguishable from the dharma, cogent reasons for that functionality's being held in abeyance at one time, and becoming productive at another, cannot be given. (2) Neither is a halfway house, namely, the theory that the dharmasvabhāva and its kārita or functionality both are and aren't identical, a congenial resting place. (3) Nor is there much solace to be derived from the evasive stance that the relationship between svabhāva and kārita is ineffable. (4) If, finally, a dharma's kārita is alleged to have a merely nominal existence (prajñaptisat), he will ipso facto have conceded the Sautrāntika's point. McDermott, A. Charles, op. cit., p. 197. While the grasp of the Sautrāntika position reflected in the above passage is beyond doubt, what seems to have been overlooked is the import of Sarvāstivāda ontology and its implications for understanding the Kārita doctrine. Moreover, by bracketing the soteriological question and its bearing on the problem of time, he tends to ignore the true import of the Sarvastivada formulations. As we shall see, the soteriological questions which are integral to the Abhidharmika formulations have weighed heavily in accepting the reality of dharma - past, present and future.
The Parallelism of Sarvāstivāda and Sāmkhya-Yoga Doctrine of Change

The similarity of the Ābhidharmika views of change recorded by Vasubandhu, Yaśomitra and Kamalśila to the Sāmkhya-Yoga understanding of the problem is too striking to be ignored or even treated casually. In fact, Vasubandhu himself, while expounding the first of the four theories, namely Dharmatrātā's thesis of change as transmutation of modes, labels this view as the Sāmkhya thesis (Sāmkhya Pakṣa). Likewise, the second theory, namely that of Ghoṣaka, which conceives change as the transformation of one temporal phase into another (lakṣānyathā) bears close affinity with the laksanaparīnāma of the Yogabhāṣya both in respect of terminology and conception - and also in the manner in which the two notions are illustrated. In the same manner, the theory of change as variation of states (avasthānyathātva) finds its close analogue in the avasthā parināma of Yogabhāṣya, by which is meant changes of states assumed by the underlying substratum and the consequent differences in the values acquired at different moments of existence. Finally, the view of change as temporal relativity associated with the name of Buddhadeva is corroborated in the Yoga thesis and illustration of different dharmas being differently designated with regard to their mutual relative positions while the substratum itself remains non-relative, i.e. constant.

1Ābhidharmakośam, op. cit., 1972, p. 807.
It is useful to go into this question of parallelism in some detail and see if it is merely terminological or also conceptual. If latter, we have to face the problem of explaining how the Sāmkhya-Yoga solution which partakes of the general Ātman doctrine of Brahmanical orthodoxy (āstikā-vāda) could find its place in the heart of Sarvāstivāda school of Buddhism. It is by no means suggested that this problem will admit of satisfactory resolution merely by virtue of the fact that it is encountered in the present context. In the light of the unmistakable affinities which exist side by side with the obvious differences the issue may even serve the purpose of re-opening the question of the radical opposition between the two philosophical traditions, at least in the genetical state of their respective development. Maybe, there has been a history of interaction between the two schools that one can discern here, even though from the very nature of the case and the general paucity of historical data one is not able to substantiate it through independent sources.

Let us briefly examine the parallel ideas with respect to each of the four theories. Dharmatrata's doctrine of bhāvānyathātva indeed looks identical with the dharmaparipūrṇa of Yoga philosophy. What is described as modal transmutation (bhāvānyathātva) by Dharmatrata is described as formal transmutation (saṃsthāna paripūrṇa) by Vacaspati Misra. Each dharma gives place to the next dharma disappearing meanwhile in the common substratum.

1 dharmasya dharmini vartamāṇasyayāvādhvasvatītānāgatavartamāneṣu bhāvānyathātvam bhavati, na tu dravyānyathātvam. Yogabhāṣya, op. cit., 3.13, p. 112.

2 Tattvavaisārādi of Vacaspati Misra, on the above, op. cit., p. 113.
While noting the obvious and commonplace similarity one cannot also fail to note the dissimilarity. The Sarvāstivāda speaks of dharmas indeed as discrete elements (dravyas), but which are conditioned (samskṛta), subject as they are to origination, decay, continuity and impermanence. The only thing the dharmas seem exempt from passing into non-being; the future is replete with the possibility of all conditioned dharmas, which become present given the assemblage of conditions in its fullness, and in the very next moment passes into the past mode of existence to remain forever as potential of the origination of future dharmas in course of time. Even though, the dharma as discrete element functions, as it were, as its own substratum throughout the three moments of existence in which its modes (bhāva) changes. This distinction in respect of function is intrinsic to the structure of dharmas and in this respect it may be conceptually distinguishable from the Sāmkhya-Yoga. We, therefore, do not agree with the criticism that there is, here, a distinction "between" the "dharma qua continuant" and the "dharma qua transitory" which is "done explicitly by different names, dharmin and dharma".¹ The Sarvāstivāda terminology of dharma seeks to steer clear of the distinctions of dharmin and dharma and imports in its place the notion of continuum. The Sarvāstivāda strives to verbalize an ontology of particulars that steers clear of a rigid logic of exclusion, dialectic of which leads to the Sautrāntika critique of the

theory and also of a logic of inclusion of the kind advocated by the Jainas.1

The second theory of laksanëmyathätva shifts the burden of change from the modes (bhāvas) to the phases (lakṣāṇas) which are temporal and because of which the modes may be conceived as changing. It is well known that the Yoga Bhāṣya speaks of the temporal characteristic of a dharma as laksana which accounts for the ontological sequence of change between two different dharmas occurring in succession. The example of the sequence of clay lump and clay jar vis a vis the constant of clay given in Yoga Bhāṣya is a case in point. While clay lump is present, i.e. actual, the clay jar is future, i.e. that which shall arise when the clay lump passes off. This temporal sequence of change is what is described as the sequence of the transmutation of the temporal characteristic (laksana parināma krama).2

The objection of the confusion of times implicit in the thesis of laksana parinama is faced by the author of Yoga Bhāṣya in a manner which is similar to the account given by Vasubandhu of Buddhadeva's thesis. The Yoga Bhāṣya resolution of the problem in terms of a constant dharmin which serves as the substratum of varying dharmas also serves to bring out the difference between the two theories of temporal becoming.3 The Buddhist answer to the problem of co-mingling of times (adhvasaṃkara) is simple.

1The Jaina logic of the manifoldness of the real (anekantavada) asserts, contra the laws of excluded middle and contradiction, that A can be also AB, meaning by B, not –A. For an illuminating account of the Jaina logic of inclusion in its distinct form from the genre of Buddhist schools see Padmarajī, Y. J., A Comparative Study of Jaina Theories of Reality and Knowledge, Bombay: Jaina Sahitya Vihara Maudala, 1963, pp. 247 ff.

2pindah prayavate, ghata upajāyata iti dharma parināmakramah, Yoga Bhāṣya, op. cit., 3.15, p. 119.

3Ibid.
There is no scope for a simultaneous activation of the three temporal phases in one self-identical state. The temporal phases (lakṣaṇas) of prior, present and posterior occur successively subject to the fulfillment of the conditions of their appearance. The Sarvāstivādin, in terms of his ontology of particulars, does not have to face the problem of the three temporal phases existing together. In sum, we witness again to the same situation of the two theories of temporal becoming appearing terminologically similar and yet standing apart in terms of their ontological implications.

The doctrine of change as temporal relativity (anyathānyathikatva) defines the temporal distinctions in terms of each other. The example of the same woman designated mother in relation to the daughter, and daughter in relation to the mother or sister with reference to the brother and vice versa, illustrates the theory according to which the past, present and future distinctions are purely relational.\(^1\) A possible way of distinguishing between the Sarvāstivādin’s version and the version of the Yoga Bhāṣya would be with reference to the admission or the non-admission of a common non-relative substratum. What seems to be implied by the example of the same woman being designated differently because of relational differences seem to differ in the two points of view. According to the Yoga Bhāṣya it is the identity of the self-same person which makes it not contradictory

\(^1\) yathā caiktiṣe pi strī mātā cocyate duhitā ca svasā ceti, Yoga-bhāṣya, op. cit., 3.13, p. 114.
to speak of the same person in different terms. Likewise, in the case of the temporal distinctions the coincidence of the three times in one time could be explained. But according to the Sarvāstivāda it is not the self identity of a common person but the very matrix of relativity that permits designation of the persons in different terms. Likewise the successive moments of past, present and future are not found all at once and yet their distinction obtains with reference to the very relationality of the prior or the posterior dharma (purvāparamapekṣyānyonyaucye). ¹

The basic difference between the orientation shared by the schools of Buddhism and reflected in the Sarvāstivāda theories considered earlier and the orientation of Hindu thought typified in Sāmkhya-Yoga is obvious. The latter emphasizes substantial continuity to the point of underestimating change as qualified. Nothing can come into being afresh or pass away finally. This is the famous doctrine of identity of the effects with their cause (sar-kāryavāda). In sharp contrast to this stands the Buddhist thesis of the non-identity of the effect with cause. What is often overlooked in this way of understanding the difference between the two philosophical traditions, and this misunderstanding is prompted by the form of the contrast under which it is contemplated in the Hindu philosophical writings, the emphasis that Buddhism lays on the factor of continuity in causal relation. It is the causally dependent nature of things that constitutes the mark of the real. Keeping in mind this extreme significance of continuity that characterizes change according to the Buddhist understanding we may restate the point at

¹Abhidharmakośa, op. cit., 1972, p. 807.
issue between the two traditions, i.e. the Sāṃkhya-Yoga and the Sarvāstivāda in the following terms. The former advocates a theory of the identity of the continuant (saṃtāṇī) whereas employing the language of identity the position of Sarvāstivāda may be described as a theory of the identity of continuum (saṃtāṇa).

From the foregoing account the ontological outlooks of the Sarvāstivāda and Sāṃkhya-Yoga doctrines emerge with clarity in terms both of their similarities and dissimilarities. There is no gainsaying of their convergence in their understanding of the problem of temporality despite their radical opposition as metaphysical systems. The convergence, even after making due allowance to the differences in their respective ontologies of particulars, is so striking that one may expect a similar convergence between the respective soteriologies. To this question we will address ourselves in the final chapter.
A Sautrāntika Critique of Vasumitra’s Avasthā Theory

A detailed examination of the Sautrāntikas’ critique of Sarvāstivāda conception of Kārita will be undertaken in a separate section. Currently, we will engage ourselves with the Sautrāntika’s critique of Sarvāstivādin’s conception of states (avasthā) of a dharma and its implications for temporal determination. It is our contention that the Sautrāntika’s critique emanates from a rejection of the basic ontological slant of the Sarvāstivāda. There are, surely, difficulties inherent to Sarvāstivādin formulations of the problem and they cannot be gainsaid. But the difficulties involved in the understanding of temporal becoming must be viewed in the context of the wider ontological framework, so that they may appear in the light of their positive significance. The Sarvāstivāda’s formulation of temporal distinctions are questioned by the Sautrāntikas. The Sautrāntikas maintain that differentiations of temporal determination on account of avasthās (states or conditions) or 'activity', 'inactivity' 'cessation of activity', etc. implies the continued existence of the self-same dharma in the three states. This self-same dharma in the three states must be undifferentiated (abheda). However, the possibility of the presence of 'activity', 'inactivity', etc. as the characteristic mark of the dharmas in the three states will not be without its difficulty. It amounts to asserting the co-existence of three mutually exclusive qualities in the undifferentiated dharma by which the distinction of successive states of future, past and present is thought to be established. 1 The Sautrāntika

1...kim tadevātītāṇāgatāvasthāmahosvidanyat. yadi tadeva, kathamakasmīnirvīṣīṣte’smirūpādike vastunyakriyādayaḥ parasparaviruddha dharmā yuyante. Tatvamāgrahā-Panjīka, op. cit., p. 511.
argues: if, despite the presence of contradictory properties a real be considered to be identical, then all differentiation would disappear and the entire world will collapse into oneness.\(^1\) The Sautrāntika’s critique is based on the assumption that the self-same dharma passes from one state into another. If what is assumed were the case then surely the critique is valid. The three properties, which account for the temporal differentiations, cannot belong to the same undifferentiated dharma without disputing its unity.

It therefore remains to be seen whether this assumption is legitimate. The Sarvāstivāda certainly denies that the dharma or the vastu is undifferentiated. But what should not be overlooked here is that it also denies that the dharmas are identical (nirvisīśta). In reality the dharma or vastu in the past, present and future stand differentiated by the difference of abandoning and grasping of causal efficiency (kāritra); it is, therefore, not the case that it is strictly undifferentiated.\(^2\) To the question if states are different or non-different from the svabhāva (being, reality) of the dharma, the answer is that they are not different (abhedā). If the dharma were different from its state (avasthā), then, it is inconceivable how even in the present state (avasthā) the activity of the being can set in. The dharma as such, different from the avastha or state, will not be able to act as an active agent; efficent activity (causal efficiency) as it is argued by the Sarvāstivādins, belongs

\(^1\) yadv hi viruddhadharmādyasya'pyakatvām syāt, utsannā tarhi bheda-svayavasthā, tatasa sarvameva jagadekameva syāt. Ibid.

\(^2\) Ibid.
only to the present avasthā of the dharma:

By virtue of the variations undergone in the process of abandoning one state and taking up another, the vastu in the three states is not entirely undifferentiated. If it is so, it is asked: are these states different or non-different (abheda) - why - because, in that case the inactivity of the being would be the consequence. Through positive and negative concomitance (anvaya-vyatirekabhyām), it has been ascertained that causal efficiency belongs only to the states. (Hence, by being different from the states, the vastu could not be an active agent).

Some important observations can be made at this point. It is true that Sarvāstivādins are not quite unequivocal about the exact nature of the differentiation of the vastu as reflected in the three states of past, present and future. They do not state clearly whether the differentiation of activity, inactivity, etc. belong to the same vastu which exists as past, present and future, or that the properties of activity, inactivity, etc., are the properties of different vastus existing as past, present and future. Two implications can be drawn from the statement that "by virtue of the variations undergone in the process of abandoning and grasping of the states, the vastu is not conceived to be entirely undifferentiated". 2

1. The differentiation is caused in the same vastu on account of abandoning one state and taking up another state.

1 athāpyavasthāpavītyāgaparīkṣahabhedena bhīmatvādadhvasu vastu na nirviśiṣṭamātī kalpate, evampi kim tā avasthā bhāvābhinnā āhosvī-dabhinnā iti vaktavyam...bhidyante bhāvāditi sambandhah. kasmāt, bhāva-syākartṛtāptitāḥ - akartṛtvaprasangāt. anvayavyatirekābhhyām tāsāmevāvasthānām kāryām prati sāmarthyasiddheh. Ibid. p. 511.

2 See Supra, note, 2, p. 250.
2. The differentiation in different phases of the real consists in the different dharma's state of abandoning the state of kāritra (causal efficiency) and of taking up of kāritra in different moments of time.

The second interpretation of the statement in question seems to be more in conformity with the overall picture of reality assumed in Sarvāstivādin ontology. According to this picture the state and vastu or dharma are one (abheda). From this it will follow that the vastu in the state of activity is different from the vastu in the state of inactivity. If state and vastu are identical and not different, then definitely the vastu in the state of activity is different from the vastu in the state of inactivity. It is not the same vastu that is both active and inactive in two different moments. Rather in the saṁtāna or the life continuum, one vastu with activity (kāritra) is preceded or succeeded by another vastu with activity, or secession of activity. Vastu which is active is both real and existent, but the vastu in the state of 'inactivity' or 'cessation of activity' is real but not existent. The vastu can be existent and non-existent. But it cannot be unreal. Reality (satva) and existence (astitva) are not one and the same thing. Sautrāntika's critique of Sarvāstivāda rests on the confusion of the two which probably has its origin in the Vasubandhu's rendering of Sarvāstivāda (a theory of sarvastisthe) as sarvāstisthe (a theory of sarvasthe astitva).

1When we make this statement, it has to be recognized that though the distinction is crucial, it is only implicit in the Sarvāstivāda which does not speak the language of real (sattā) as a constant element which is more concretely applicable to the Brahmical tradition.
Some Concluding Observations

It is instructive to be reminded that the 'sarvam' has a specific connotation in the Buddhist canonical literature. Sarvam does not include the multiplicity of the phenomenal world as such. Rather, sarvam connotes only the dharmas classified as skandhas, dhatus, and ayatana. It is their conglomeration that constitutes the specific pluralities. "The people are saying 'all'; O Brahman! by all are meant the five skandhas, the twelve ayatanas, the eighteen dhatus".  

1 Sarvam connotes the 'dharmas' which alone are real, specific combinations of them constitute the life continuum (samtana). Samtana itself is conceived to be only prajnaptisata or conceptually real. Momentary dharmas carrying their own svabhava (being) alone are real. These dharmas come and go. Arising into existence they pass away. There is no continued existence of the dharma, and hence the question of the existence or continuity of same dharma in the past, present and future does not arise. Sarvastivada is the assertion of the reality of dharmas as past, present and future. It is not a doctrine maintaining the reality of the past, present and the future. Time, apart from the thing or the dharma, does not have any reality. From the Sarvastivadin point of view "experiential events do not take place or flow in time. Rather, it would be more appropriate to say that events flow as time".  

2 Seen from this point of view our awareness of time acquires

1 sarvam sarvamiti brāhmaṇa yaduta pāncaskandhā dvādaśayatānāni, aśtādaścā bhava. cf. The Tattvasamgraha Panjika, op. cit., p. 507.

altogether a new dimension. The emphasis shifts from the static element of existence to the very dynamism of the process. Dynamism itself, however, instead of being only a by-product of the relational thought seeing static elements in a series, is built in the very structure of the becomingness of being.\(^1\) It is in the Abhidharma Buddhism that a breakthrough is reached in the Indian speculation of time. It is here that the static concern with the time and its constituents give way to the dynamic concern with the temporality of being, the very structure of the becomingness of reality (dharmanadvasau). Thus what is generally true of Buddhism according is more specifically true of Sarvastivada:

(Here) we are able to appreciate the deeper dimensions of being because now we must focus on the process itself, the becomingness of being. Here the sister concept of temporality seems to appear almost naturally. Temporality at least moves us in the right direction and seems to permit us to have glimpses of what Buddhists call reality. It has a profound meaning in that it runs across but retains or contains the multiple set of conditions and factors at play in the empirical process.\(^2\)

It may not be out of place here to refer to the Sāṃkya-Yoga understanding of process and time and its close similarity with Buddhism. According to Sāṃkhyā-Yoga system also dynamism is rooted in the order of being built into it. The concept of Prakṛti connotes allness (sarvam) and, as the dynamic matrix of reality, provides the basis for the temporality of existence. There is however, a difference, and this difference


\(^2\) Inada, Kenneth, op. cit., p. 174.
is by no means viewed an inconsequential (and is in fact the basis on which the two differ in respect of their generic essence). The difference is: what would be considered as belonging to the order of existence and reality alike in Sarvāstivāda would be assigned a reality status different from pure consciousness which in itself is a-temporal. The Sāmkhya-Yoga however, will concede that it is through the means of focusing on the temporal structure, the becomingness of being, that one can recover or re-gain the separation of pure consciousness.
CHAPTER XI

TRANSCENDENCE AND TEMPORALITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR A SOTERIOLOGY OF THE PRESENT

In this concluding chapter we shall attempt to grasp the significance of reflection as a special mode of being and the central role that it plays in the transcendence of temporality. Herein it will be argued that for both Sāmkhya-Yoga and the Abhidharma Buddhism, reflection as a function of consciousness is the structure of the transcendence of temporality. Reflection itself is a temporal act and operates within the confines of the temporal process. But as a function of consciousness, which itself is always given as 'consciousness of', reflection has a built in structure of transcendence whereby it steps out of itself and relates itself to the object of reflection. The transcendence of temporality lies within the compass of reflection in terms precisely of its inherent capacity of stepping outside of itself. Objectification is the primary mode of being of the reflective consciousness. While this seems to be true of the structure of consciousness as part and parcel of temporal mode of being for both Sāmkhya-Yoga and Abhidharma Buddhism there is one important difference between the two systems' articulation of the problem. For Sāmkhya-Yoga, the transcendence of temporality by reflective consciousness (Buddhi-Ahaṁkāra structure) means recovery of the pure or transcendental consciousness conceived as a mode of being Purusa. For Abhidharma Buddhism, on the other hand, it implies a total extinction or dissolution
of consciousness conceived on the model of a drying-up of a stream or flow. This basic difference emanates from a difference of ontological orientation. However, despite this dissimilarity in their ontological perspectives they share a common trait of Indian soteriologies in emphasizing the possibility of transcendence of the temporal process in and through the moment of 'present'. This aspect of their soteriology we prefer to call 'non-eschatological.'

Consciousness And Transcendence of Temporality: The Sāmkhya-Yoga Perspective

We have argued that for the Sāmkhya-Yoga, 'to be present' is the primary mode of existence of the empiric being. But the empiric being, as the self-constituting synthesis, is also the locus of the ontological relation of the temporal modes of past, present and future. The empiric subject (Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure) comprehends past, present and future as distinct and yet not disjoined. By means of such comprehension is provided the order for these moments. It sees them as different but not as disparate. Seeing it thus it also constitutes its orderliness which comes to be grasped as objective time. Thus:

The continuous flow of these moments, is a sequence (krama). However, there is no real (basis) for the combination of the moments and their sequence . . . (thus), time has no real (objective) existence, it is only creation of buddhi, and follows on account of 'knowledge by words' . . . (However), the moment is objective (it has a basis in the real) and is the basis (a ground) of sequence; the sequence (krama) consists in the continuous (uninterrupted) succession of moments, and it is this that is called time (kāla) by yogins who know time (its real nature).

1 ... tatpravāhāvācchedastu kramah.ksanatkramayornāsti vastusamāhāra... sa khāvalyam vastuṣūnyo buddhinirmanāh sabdajñānānupati...ksanastu vastupatitah kramāvalambī. kramaśca kṣanānantar yatmā. Vyāsa Bhāṣya on the Yoga Sūtra, op.cit., 3.52.
Temporal order on the phenomenal level is a conscious creation of the empiric subject (Buddhi-Ahamkāra structure). But the temporal flux or the flow of moments or events is ontologically pre-given in the objective being or the sphere of objectivity (prakṛti).¹ Time-order as the principle of continuity is constituted by the empiric subject (Buddhi parikalpita). "As a matter of fact, there is no real aggregation between the moments and their succession. Hence all such divisions of time ...... are purely subjective".² Time is nothing but the relational mode of being (sambandhamatropakāri).³ But in the constitution of the temporal structure, the empiric subject does not act as a principle independent of the objective flow or the flux of moments or events. The empiric subject itself is, out and out, temporal.

How then are we to look at the temporal flow and its relationship to subjectivity as embodiment and the principle of I-ness? It is precisely in the structure of the constitution of subjectivity, i.e. subject as lived and embodied, subject as the centre of I-ness and agent of all activity and willing that the essential structure of temporality, as the unity in difference or the suffusion of fissuration, is manifested. What we see in

¹We see therefore that time, space, etc., are the limitations which regulate, modify and determine to a certain extent the varying transformations and changes and the seeming differences of things, though in reality they are all ultimately reducible to the three gunas (the constituents of prakṛti) .....Dasgupta, S. N., Yoga as Philosophy and Religion, op. cit., p. 79.

²The Tattva Kaumudi by Vacaspati Misra, op. cit., p. 215; also see Dasgupta, S. N., History of Indian Philosophy, op. cit., p. 256.

³Yuktidipika, op. cit., p. 74.
subjectivity is an essential drive, a lived tension and a continuous turning to new events and activities. This is the mode of being of rajas, the element of activity and energy, the life impetus which is continually operating in calling forth to existence that which lies dormant in the future. The constant tension of triguna in the manifestation and non-manifestation of existence mediated by the element of activity is most vividly operative in the structure of subjectivity as temporality. It is in the present that the subject acts and reacts and calls forth what is not present within in the purview of its own field (ksetra). It is not that subjectivity is located in the present through which events pass from the future to the past. Rather, the future becomes the present by the subject's act of making it present (i.e. through the preponderance of rajas). The subject does not observe the flow of temporal events, (this, of course, is what lies under the purview of Purusa as the transcendental subject, the pure subject of witnessing) it performs it; it is not carried through time, it acts it; it does not have time, it exists temporally. The form, the order and the course of time are the universal and necessary structures of subjectivity (subject as activity). Thus "pure or empty time as such is nothing or is non-existent. It is nothing apart from actions or events that are revealed in experience. If it is anything it is one with them."  

For the Sāmkhya-Yoga the significance of the present is that it is

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1 Sāmkhya Pravacana Sūtra, op. cit., 6.50.

2 Sen, S. K., op. cit., p. 412.
the moment of mutation. And as such it is also the moment of the suffusion of the temporal fissuration.

In the present there is a single moment and there are no earlier or latter moments. There is no combination of them. But those moments which are past and future are to be explained as inherent in the mutations. Accordingly, the whole world passes through a mutation in a single moment.¹

The moment of mutation, the present is also the moment of activity for the subject. The subjectivity, as activity, in the present, could not call forth that which is disjunct or independent of it. The suffusion of fissuration is possible only because the subjectivity as present is ontologically related to its past and future mode of being. The subjectivity (Buddhi) then exists as already-having been, presence-to, and being-possible. Over against the past, the subject exists in the present and acts in order to actualize the future.

Had there been no past (existence of being in its unmanifest form) the existence of the present (existence of being in its manifest form) would have been impossible. And the present contains the future mode of being in its potential form (existence of being in its unmanifest form). Had it not been the case, the future never could come into existence as manifest being.²

¹Thus, then, the present is but a single moment, there are no 'preceding' or 'succeeding' moments (in it), for there is no combination of these. The past and the future moments are, then, to be explained as inherent in the change (mutation). In that one moment (the present) the whole world experiences change (undergoes mutation).Vyāsa Bhāṣya, op. cit., p. 151.

The fundamental mode of the experience of subjectivity (subject as activity) is temporal. In the present the subject shoves back the former moments and makes present the future ones. This disengagement from one moment (ksana) and a turning toward another is what is given as the primitive phenomenon of succession (krama). A succession of events, however, is not the same thing as a conception or awareness of that succession. It is a pre-thematic mode of subjective being. Due to the process of making present over against 'having already been' (bhuta) and toward 'that which is to come' (bhavisya) life of the subject is lived as temporal flow. We live in a flux because the subjective experience is structured temporally. But the temporal subject is not aware of its temporality; to be aware of its temporality is to be self-aware, i.e. to objectify itself, to step aside and be able to look at itself as a totality, as an ordered whole. In doing this the subject does not act but reflects. This is that mode of being in which the sattva gets preponderance over rajas. Conscious reflection takes the place of purposive activity. Time-awareness emerges through self-conscious reflection upon our presence to and engagement in the world, as 'having already been' (bhuta) toward 'that which is to come' (bhavisya).

Through the complex interrelation of existential and conscious factors, each of the temporal dimensions appear as ordered despite their differences. At the same time, we become aware of the interdependence of each of the dimensions in so far as the conscious acts through which we have access to the past, present and future point beyond themselves to real aspects of a single subjective being.
Self-reflection being the mode of 'objectification' of the self-reflecting self is also the mode of the recovery of the transcendental subject or transcendental consciousness as the formal ontological ground of the self-reflecting self. It is in the mode of reflection that the true dialectical character of the being of the empiric subject (Buddhi) can be grasped. We have already noted this point. However, before bringing out the full implications of the transcendental consciousness let us attempt to grasp the significance for the subject which is essentially temporal.

In and through, reflection the essential structure of temporality as the manifold of subjective experiences discloses itself to the self-reflecting self. The self-reflecting self grasps the essential 'otherness' of the whole world of our ordinary experience. Reflection discovers our empiric existence in the self-reflecting act of subjectivity (being of Buddhi) as the mode of its world-involvement, of its entanglement in everyday situations and projects (adhyavasāya or vyavasāya).¹ As a structure of this everydayness the self-reflecting self comes to discover the structure of temporality, i.e. the order of time, the form of time, etc.

Furthermore, in the reflective mode of being the subject discovers that as subjectivity it is present to various kinds of objects in its phenomenal mode of existence. It discovers that in being present to the world it is out there in the world of its own past and future. Past and future constitute the existential background over and against which

¹ See Supra, p. 113.
subjectivity as adhyavasāya operates as being present to the world of things which it is actively concerned with and which it uses for its own purpose. Thus, in reflection the subject comes to see that it is absorbed in the objects to which it is present, and thereby it grasps that an aspect of its existence is to be present-to and present alongside of a multitude of objects.

The subject then through reflection discovers the essential mode of being of subjectivity — it discovers as a unity which exists as already-having-been, present to objects of various kinds and as a possibility towards its own future. Through reflection, then, the subject becomes conscious of its own existence as tri-dimensional. Thus in the mode of self-reflection the subject gains access to the structure of temporality vis-a-vis to subjectivity. It becomes aware of its own temporal experience as a lived unity of its own strivings and dispositions. Thus the subject relates to itself as temporal. In the process, the subject sees itself as the principle of I-ness, as the temporal becoming which tends to appropriate the world as its own (Ahaṃkāra).

However, the dialectic of reflection also demands that by the same act that the subject objectifies itself it also comes to grasp its formal grounding in the pure subject or the transcendental consciousness. The dispersion and fissuration of subjectivity also consists in the very ontological structuring of it.¹ While it has its existential ontological

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¹It is important to remember that subjectivity (Buddhi-Ahaṃkāra structure) has a peculiar ontological character. On the one hand being the realm of embodiment it is related to Prakṛti. On the other,
ground in the world (Prakrti) its formal ontological grounding is in the realm of transcendental consciousness itself. It is precisely this formal ontological grounding in the pure consciousness that constitutes the possibility of transcendence in the mode of self-reflection. The moment of reflection for the empirc subject is also the moment of discriminative awareness (viveka). In the discriminative awareness, the subject discovers not only the essential otherness of its existence as subjectivity, but it also comes to recover its own original mode of being, its own formal ontological grounding in pure consciousness. In this single instance of the being of consciousness the subject-object distinction is totally obliterated. ¹ Here, in the mode of discriminative awareness, the subject is precisely that which is subjectively identical with itself and, therefore, is not an independent object to itself. The Sāṃkhya-Yoga "is not concerned at all with the world in itself except so far as it is instrumental in the discrimination of the isolated or pure Purusa."² And we may add, here, that the Sāṃkhya-Yoga is typical of the entirety of Indian Philosophy in the attitude to the world.

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reflecting the consciousness of Purusa, it seems to take the form of Purusa. Thus empiric subject has a built-in structure of fissuration. Purusa is its formal ontological basis because Buddhi tends to take the form of consciousness that belongs to Purusa. Prakrti, on the other hand, is the existential ontological basis, for subject (Buddhi) is essentially embodiment and operates through Indriyas. See Jayamāngalā: ......buddhyādi dvārī bhavati......śeṣāni tu buddhiṃḍriyakarmendriyāṇi dvārāṇi......trailokyagataṃ puruṣasyārtha sukṣamasthuviṣayalaksanaṃ prakṣyābhivyaktiṃ......The Jaya-


² Larson, op. cit., p. 222.
Thus, in the act of reflection we can discern two specific moments; the moment of discovery and the moment of recovery. The first mode of reflection is operative within the framework of otherness, i.e. where consciousness sees itself as something out of itself, as something in and along with the world of objectivities. This is the mode of discovery of the being of the self as not-self. In this discovery of the essential being of the self as not-self (Buddhi-Ahaṅkāra structure), the self comes to constitute itself as of the world. Reflection as discovery (the being of Buddhi) is essentially the mode of the constitution of the self as not-self. Reflection as discovery is the realm of actuality and activity, and as such it belongs to the present for present alone is the moment of activity and actuality. Activity is the mark of otherness of the subject and the object; it is the mode of subjects acting on the object. It is precisely for this reason that reflection as acitivity of discovery is also the mode of the self-transcendence of the reflective self. In reflection as discovery the reflective self turns to itself as an object of reflection.

However, contrasted with this is the mode of reflection as recovery. Reflection as recovery isolates itself from the contents of consciousness. It is the mode of the dispossession of the objective contents of reflection founded on or individuality (Ahaṅkāra). Viveka (discrimination) is concomitant with vairagya (dispossession). While reflection as discovery is the structure of the withdrawal of the self into the original mode of its being as pure consciousness. Reflection as recovery is pure contemplation and makes possible the being of consciousness in its pure form. The being of consciousness in its pure form, when seen from the perspective of
temporality, manifest the very characteristics of eternity precisely in the sense of 'non-temporality' (timelessness).\textsuperscript{1} It is the dissolution of the inner structure of reflection as activity\textsuperscript{2} (an act of the subjectivity) in the present which comprises the past and future as an ontological relation within the structure of subjectivity. Reflection as contemplation is deliverance from activity of the present; the present itself undergoes a metamorphosis in that it comes to be a pure present or a now which is essentially eternity. While the now of the subjectivity as temporality is always fragmentary and incomplete the now of the transcendental subject is essentially limitless in the sense that it is complete. It is infinite presence.

It must, here, be noted that this transcendence of the temporal now is itself a function of the present. The dialectical character of the relationship of the world and consciousness is nowhere more concretely discernible than in the structure of the present. The present which is eminently the moment of world-involvement and subject's activity is also at once the moment of the transcendence of the world of subjectivity. It is in the present that the self-reflecting self undergoes a complete

\textsuperscript{1}Vyāsa Bhāṣya on the Yoga Sūtra 4.33, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{2}The Sāṃkhya-Yogā looks at reflection as an action and thus extrinsic to the essential being of Purusa as pure consciousness. For the modification of thought called "meditation" is the noblest of all modifications (incident to Soul, or pure Thought, whose blessedness, or state of emancipation, it is to have no modification at all)......meditation cannot belong to Soul essentially, because of the immobility of Soul (Purusa); whereas "meditation" is an effort.....The Sāṃkhya Aphorisms, (trans.) Ballantyne, J. R., \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 218-219.
metamorphosis - it emerges essentially as what it is - as the pure consciousness, bereft of all vicissitudes, dispersions and contradictions of the realm of the objective being (prakṛti). It is in this sense, Samkhya-Yoga is a soteriology of the present. Salvation is attained in the present, and thus a soteriology which is non-eschatological. It is not without reason that the system speaks of the contemplation on the 'Moment' as the mode of the being of eternity. In this Moment, the moment of the present on which the reflective self reflects, is also when the whole universe seems to undergo a radical change. This is also the moment of the dawn of discriminative awareness which coincides with the transcending of the realm of temporality (the realm of limited now) into the realm of eternity (the realm of eternal now). The realm of Purusa in isolation from the world of activities is the realm of eternity - it is the mode of the being of Infinitude.
Consciousness and Transcendence of Temporality: The Abhidharma Perspective

We will now examine the structure of consciousness (vijñāna) and the pivotal role assigned to it in the Abhidharma scheme of things. Contrasted with the Sāṃkhya-Yoga understanding of pure-consciousness in substantive terms the Ābhidharmikas propose a purely functional understanding of consciousness. Emphasis here shifts from the givenness of consciousness as a transcendental condition of all reflection and cognition to the very process of the operation of consciousness, conceived as immanent in the functions of cognition and reflection. Consciousness is not the mode of being of a self-identical self which, essentially, is a-temporal and without differentiation and fissuration. Rather, consciousness (Vijñāna) as a dharma is continually on the go, is never self-identical; and as the structure of becoming and causal conditioning it is essentially temporal.\(^1\) Change, differentiation and fissuration are built into the mode of being of consciousness as a dharma.\(^2\) Temporality, therefore cannot be overcome by consciousness.

\(^1\) Vijñāna is a saṃskṛta dharma. By definition saṃskṛta dharmas are temporal (adhva) and impermanent: tā eva saṃskṛtā gata-gacchhatā-yantrādāhā, adyante nityatayeti vā; Abhidharmaśāstra, (1970), op.cit. p. 26, adyanteṃ nityatayā bhaksyanta ityadhvāna iti saṃskṛtā evadāvastabdenu bhagvata desitāḥ; Sphutārthā Abhidharmaśāstra Vyākhyā, 1949, op.cit., p. 23.

\(^2\) Samāskṛtā dharmas are called temporal (dhvā) precisely because change or impermanence (anityata) eats them up." Ibid.
as long as it is consciousness. Overcoming of temporality, i.e. 
transcendence of the realm of temporal existence would imply the 
overcoming of the fissuration, change and becomingness of consciousness. 
But since these are structural to consciousness it follows that its 
transcendence would mean its dissolution. Nirvāṇa or freedom is not 
the recovery of an original mode of being of consciousness; it is the 
dissolution of any mode of being of consciousness. It is extinction of 
the very structure of the consciousness as flow. Contrast with the 
Sāṃkhya-Yoga ontology is obvious here.

Phenomenologically speaking, the distinction between the 
overcoming of temporality in the recovery of consciousness and the 
dissolution of consciousness is an extremely important distinction. 
Losing sight of this distinction will lead to an underestimation of 
the differences between the basic orientation of the two systems. For 
both the systems temporality is essentially an imperfection characteristic of the finitude and ought to be overcome in the mode of being 
of the non-temporal. However, the mode of being of the non-temporal 
has drastically different implications for the subject as the structure of world involvement. While for Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Subject as pure consciousness retains its individuated identity and is a case of recovering of its original mode of being, for Ābhidharmaikas the subject must give

\[1\] This is the connotation of the term vikṛti characteristic of the phenomena as modification of Prakṛti in Sāṃkhya-Yoga. A similar understanding of phenomena constituted of samskrta dharma is present in the Abhidharma literature.
up its original mode of being and its individuality in order to attain nirvana. Nirvana, though eternally existent and constantly present, is not an original mode of being that the subject somehow lost and regains. World (samsāra) as the structure of temporal becoming does not share the ontological character of Nirvana which for the Abhidharmikas is eternally existent and beyond the operation of the forces of conditionedness (samskrta).  

It is important to be reminded that for Abhidharmika Buddhism, Nirvana is not a negative concept; it is not an emptiness either in the form of an ontological nothingness without any substance or a state of being which is rendered non-existent on conceptual analysis.  

1 The question of the existence of Nirvana as a separate dharma which is not subject to the forces of conditionedness has been a matter of controversy between the Sarvastivadins and the Sautrantikas. While the Sautrantikas deny that Nirvana exists or is real, Sarvashivada affirms its reality as a separate dharma. For the details of the argument and counterargument, see Abhidharmakośa, 1970, op.cit., pp 318-328. Also see Sphutartha Abhidharmakośā Vyākhyā, 1949, op.cit., pp. 145-152.  

2 The negativism as a philosophical doctrine (sūnyavāda), if at all the ultimate philosophical position, is the one that is associated with Nāgārjuna. This is at least the historical truth even though it is increasingly questioned in modern times. Śaṅkara criticised it as expressly a negative doctrine (See Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on Brahma Sūtra 2.2.31). The other exponent of negativism as a viable philosophical doctrine is Prajñākaramati, the author of the Panjika on the Bodhicaryavatāra of Śantideva.  

As a paradigm of a negativism implying dissolution through conceptual analysis may be cited the Advaita Vedānta, according to which the state of being is rendered in retrospection non-existent by means of conceptual separation of the ground and the superimposed. See Mandana's Brahmasiddhi, Madras: Madras Law Journal Press, 1932, p. 136, ff.
Rather, *Nirvāṇa* is a mode of positive being, an eternal existence which is acquired or reached and possessed (*prāpti*). Nirvāṇa is eternally existent and as a reality it is posited over and against the reality of temporally determined dharmas. Within the Abhidharmika context it is possible to discern distinction reminiscent of the Sāmkhya-Yoga categories of permanence (*parināmi nityatā*) and eternity (*kūtastha nityatā*). *Sāmāṇa* or the continuum which, theoretically, is never-ending and is in that sense 'permanent' is not, however, a case of overcoming of temporality.2 Endlessness is not conquering of temporality at all, but rather it is a prolongation or perpetuation of temporality's defect. *Sāmāṇa* (continuum) may be described as having a temporal mode of permanence in the sense that its coming to an end is not part of its meaning as becoming. But this 'permanence' of the continuum can not be ascribed the value of eternity because it is only continuity of imperfection (conditionedness), prolongation of non-perfection. Nirvāṇa, on the other hand, is described by Abhidharmika as eternal (*nitya*) in a non-temporal sense. As dharma or reality Nirvāṇa is eternity precisely in the sense that it transcends the mode of imperfection or conditionedness (*saṁskṛtattva*). Nirvāṇa is unconditioned and eternal because it is not subject to the operation of the forces of conditionedness, namely *jāti*, *jāra*, *sthiti* etc.3

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As the realm of eternity Nirvāṇa is fullness of spiritual being, a completedness which constitutes the horizon into which the individual as subject dissolves. Overcoming of temporality in the present case also is a function of reflection as a mode of the being of the subjectivity as consciousness. As reflection subjectivity is essentially in fellowship with what is contemplated. Reflection as an act of consciousness consists of a fellowship of what is contemplated and what contemplates.\(^1\) Contrasted with Sāṃkhya Yoga, which admits the possibility of consciousness without content, Abhidharma proposes an essential reciprocity of the consciousness and its content.

In this reciprocity of consciousness and content consists the essential imperfection of consciousness (samskṛtatva), for consciousness itself is both conditioning and conditioned by other dharmas.\(^2\) Reciprocity and mutual conditioning also implies reciprocal otherness between the two. While the Sāṃkhya-Yoga makes the recognition of this otherness as the very condition for freedom, for the Abhidharmika the

\(^1\) According to Abhidharmakosā citta, manas and viññāna are interchangeable terms used for consciousness. Consciousness is always dependent upon what it cognizes: cittam mano'tha viññānamekartha pāncadha, Abhidharmakosā, 1970, op. cit., p. 208-209, samprayuktakahetustu cittachaitṭah, Ibid., p. 306; also saman āsrayo yesām te cittacaitta anyonyam samprayuktakahetuh, Ibid., p. 307.

\(^2\) Cittacaittaḥ sahaṃvasyām sarva samskṛtalakṣaṇaṁ prāptyā, Ibid., p. 185-186.
otherness must be dissolved. However, the dissolution of the otherness does not consist in the discerning of an identity overreaching the different i.e., the consciousness claiming the object or the content of it as its own (such would be a case of invetrate tendency to conceptualize in terms being, the satkāyadrsti, which Ābhidhārmika rejects.). It consists in the disclaiming of consciousness as well as its content (visamyośga).  

Thus the overcoming of temporality, the process of becomingness of the conditioned dharmas (samskrtattva) is essentially the dissolution of the subjectivity in the mode of otherness. Subjectivity or consciousness which loses the other through which alone could it express itself, loses its subjecthood. Just as the object which become the possession of the consciousness are not mere objects and must be described as that which belongs to the consciousness (caitiesika), so the consciousness which is bereft of its content must completely lose its existing character as consciousness.

Thus, within Ābhidhārmika scheme, at least two moments in consciousness can be discerned. Cognition is the mode of claiming of object as other by the subject. Reflection is the mode of disclaiming

1 See Supra, p. 155.

2 Visamyośga kṣayo dhiyā

3 See Abhidharmakosām, 1970, kārika 23-33 and bhāṣya on them, ibid, pp. 186-211.
of this otherness. It is the realization that all dharmas are conditioned essentially on the same ontological footing. It is the realization that consciousness, as much as its content, is essentially impermanent and conditioned. Reflection as an act of consciousness, then, inevitably brings about as it were a perfect unity of the subject and object, but this unity is nothing other than the abrogation of the subject by its complete annulment. Temporality surely is overcome through the negation of the distinction of the subject and object. But it must not be forgotten that this in turn entails an overcoming of the subjecthood. The eternity of Nirvāṇa as the stillness of consciousness (sthita) overcomes the flow of temporality through complete extinction of consciousness as the cognitional basis of all temporality. In this lies the dialectical character of consciousness.

There is another implication of this dialectic of consciousness. Consciousness, according to the Ābhidhārmikas, takes the form of the object that it cognizes. Accordingly the consciousness which cognizes Nirvāṇa must also become of the nature of Nirvāṇa. Consciousness itself is temporal because it is both conditioning and conditioned. It retains this character of temporality in its encounter with the objects which themselves are temporal and conditioned (samskṛta dharma). But in its encounter with that which is unconditioned and beyond the pail of temporality and becomingness, consciousness must of necessity lose its own conditionedness and temporality. In other words it must lose its character of consciousness.

1 Ibid., p. 208.
Eternity of Nirvāṇa in the sense of constant presence or 'eternal now', within the grasp of consciousness as reflection, brings out the true soteriological import of Abhidharmika speculation about the structure of temporal becoming. Here too structural similarity and thematic congruity with the Sāmkhya-Yoga soteriology are quite prominent. For both the systems salvation is not in future, but it is in the present. It is not to be realized at some distant moment, when the temporal process shall come to an end. The process of temporal becoming as the structure of world participation is a given fact, and as a fact it cannot be annihilated or terminated. It will never come to an end. The process as fact is permanent (in the temporal sense). Its termination is not conceivable. Salvation therefore, of necessity, lies in the present. It is in the temporal present that the Nirvana can be attained. It is the present that constitutes the stepping stone to the 'eternal now'.

The realization of Nirvāṇa as eternity is possible precisely because it is an existent fact. It is not something previously non-existent which becomes existent in the present. It is eternally present and as such is the very opposite of the temporal now which is constantly moving. But the act of transcendence as an act of consciousness is performed within the compass of this temporal present. It is not without significance that the Buddhist canons exhort the aspirant: "Get ye across this sticky mire, let not the Moment pass (khano ve mā upaccagā), for they shall mourn whose moments past
Those whose "moment has been caught" \((\text{Khānāṭītā hi socanti})\) are the fortunate ones, while those whose moment has past \((\text{Khānāṭīt}ā)\) are the unfortunate ones. The moment of release is sudden and "contrasts with the length of the Way, the aeonic time that is now and once for all escaped".\(^3\)

**Concluding Observations**

In this final chapter we offered our interpretation of two systems' articulation of temporality and its implications for consciousness. The thrust of the argument was to bring out the structure of metaphysical transcendentalism as represented in their conception of eternity that the two systems imply. Of pivotal importance both to Sāmkhya-Yoga and the Ābhidharma Buddhism, was the analysis of the experience of temporality defined as finitude, and to determine whether or not experiencing of temporality necessarily implied positing a transcendental time as the receptum of entities. In other words, is temporality an experience of the flow of entities and events as they are present to consciousness in the original mode of their limitation i.e. finitude, or is it an experience of the flow of entities and events as mediated through a transcendental principle of time? It was our attempt to show that in both the systems temporality

\(^1\) Cited in Coomaraswamy, *op.cit.*, p. 44 (Sn. 333, cf. Dh. 315, Tha. 403, 653, 1005, The. 5, 459.)


is explained in terms of our experience, which is radically and essentially a revelation of our immediate contact with the world of dynamic change and flow exemplifying finitude.

In pursuit of this insight we analyzed the Sāmkhya-Yoga attempt to ground temporality in subjectivity. Our analysis was primarily an attempt to show that the Sāmkhya-Yoga does not tend to reduce the experience of temporality to the consciousness of temporality for an atemporal transcendental consciousness. The two were placed in two realms of being, though with a possibility of the dialectical contact between the two. However, the dialectic of contact (sāmyoga) also implies the loss of the original mode of being of the transcendental consciousness, which can be regained or recovered through the dialectic of reflection, which itself, in the ultimate analysis, is part and parcel of the temporal mode of being. Thus from our point of view, the Sāmkhya-Yoga's analysis of temporality can be regarded as an argument both directly for the possibility of temporal experience independent of time as a transcendental condition of this experience, and indirectly for the transcendence of temporality in the realm of eternity, which we saw to be the mode of being of Purusa. The important aspect of this argument is the implicit assertion that temporality as the experience of the becomingness of the world as a dynamic flow cannot be reduced to a mere appearance for a transcendental consciousness.

The temporal differentiation is not appearance to the pure subject, but enters into awareness as a specific fact in the life-history of subjectivity as the structure of world-involvement. On
this specific issue we found the basic positions of both the Śāmkhya-Yoga and the Abhidharma concurrent. In either case it can be said that any attempt to reduce temporality to appearance in and for atemporal consciousness would be an exercise in futility. For both the systems, experience of temporality for an atemporal consciousness must be ruled out. Both of them seem to agree in maintaining that experience of temporality entails subjectivity immanent to the structure of world-involvement (Buddhi-Ahamkāri structure in the case of Śāmkhya-Yoga and the structure of Skandhas in the case of Abhidharma Buddhism). Subjectivity as immanent in this structure is always losing its autonomy precisely in the sense that subjectivity as empiric consciousness is inconceivable without the content of consciousness. In the mode of being of subjectivity, the mutual otherness of the subject and object or consciousness and its content is constantly and steadily overcome. It is subject to systematic disappearance. This is what is implied by becoming aware of something. Awareness or experience, then, in a sense, is this very structure of the 'disappearance' of consciousness as consciousness is, e.g., as entailing the otherness of subject and object. This is the mode of being of empiric consciousness which always is "consciousness of" (citta, Buddhi). Phenomenologically speaking, this structure of 'disappearance' of consciousness discernible in the experience of temporal becoming or temporality also provides the clue for the transcendence of temporality. If empiric consciousness loses itself partially in the experience of temporality, it loses itself completely in the experience of eternity. This is accomplished through
self-reflection or critical reflection as a mode of transcendence which thus seems intrinsic to the very structure of consciousness as reflection.

Thus, above is a generalized picture of this common structure between the two points of view outlined in the course of this study. The constant concern with the analysis of moments in both the systems under investigation may be understood as the exemplification of a soteriology of the present, or what we have termed as the non-eschatological soteriology. Sāmkhya-Yoga, while not accepting the kṣanikavāda of Buddhism (the momentary arising and disappearance) accepts the doctrine of the moment (ksana) over against the more popular Brahmanical doctrine of time (Kāla). Whether the doctrine is originally a Buddhist doctrine or a Brahmanical one is a question that evades any easy solution. We are not quite certain if Stecherbatsky's observation that "the origin of the theory of Instantaneous Being is probably pre-Buddhist" has any positive historical evidence to support it. Nor is there any incontrovertible evidence to substantiate the claim that the Yoga-Bhāṣya in its articulation of the problem of temporality agreed verbatim and accepted the doctrine of the Ābhidhārmikas. The historical question of the exact nature and extent of interaction between Sāmkhya-Yoga


and Abhidhāmika Buddhism is an important issue demanding further and fuller investigation by the historians of religions. This however, is beyond the scope of the present work. What we have attempted in these pages is to show a significant structural similarity in the articulation of the specific problem. This raises important questions about the philosophical postulates of the two soteriologies. Are the two systems really two distinct and opposed expressions of the philosophical spirit characteristic of the religious philosophies of India, or is it not perhaps the case that despite their differences they also profoundly share some important ontological nuances and stand together in contradistinction only to the "eschatological" soteriologies of Judaeo-Christian traditions?
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