SĀṆKHYA Reported by Paramārtha in the Buddhist Canon

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Paramārtha (A. D. 499–569) was one of the great translators of Chinese Buddhist Books. He seemed to lecture on the texts he has translated. His own explanation is as usual found in his Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya when compared with other versions. This explanation includes a passage on Sāṃkhya as follows:

I "Sāṃkhya proves the existence of the primordial Matter (prakṛti) by mentioning the following five examples. 1) Because the specific objects must have the whole. In this world, where the specific objects exist, there must inevitably be the whole. For example, when a bracelet and others are made from gold, we can deduce the amount of the (original) ingot from the amount of these bracelet and others. (Just like that) we can deduce (the conclusion) that the primordial Matter must have its quantity from the fact that the Manifested (vyakta) have their quantity. 2) Because the Manifested are homogeneous with the Unmanifested (avyakta). For example, when the sandal wood is cut into pieces, each piece has its own odor similar to the original (wood). (Just like that) each of the Manifested has three constituents viz. sukha, duḥkha and moha, hence we can deduce that the primordial Matter itself has three constituents too. 3) Because of the efficiency (śakti) (of the cause) on the Produced (vikāra). For example, a smith has an efficiency on forging, hence on making utensils (made of iron). (Just like that) the primordial Matter with the efficiency on manifesting is able to manifest the whole world. If this efficiency has no substratum, it would not be successful. 4) Because of separation between cause and its product. For example, clay is the cause and pot is its product. Just like that the primor-

Primordial Matter is the cause and the Manifested are its product. 5) Because of non-discrimination of the triple world. For example, at the destruction (pralaya) of the world the eleven sense organs (indriya) merge in the five gross elements (mahabhata), the five gross elements in the five subtle elements (tanmata), the five subtle elements in the Egotizing organ (ahaṅkāra), the Egotizing organ in the Intellect (buddhi) and the Intellect in the primordial Matter2). Then the triple world becomes undistinguishable in the primordial Matter. At the production of the world (sarga) the primordial Matter produces the Intellect, the Intellect produces the Egotizing organ—thus the five gross elements produce the eleven sense organs. If the primordial Matter doesn’t exist, (the whole world) after its destruction would not be produced any more. Even if they are produced, their production would not be put in order because they will not have their cause (any more)3). (Taisho vol. 31, p. 164b-c)

The Lakṣañānusārin, though listed in the Chinese canon as written by Gunaratna4), is obviously a part of its commentary written by Paramārtha himself5) who is listed as translator in the canon. The work has somewhat long passage on Sāṃkhya which seems to be important to know the system of that school those days.

2) The order of the evolution given here;

prakṛti-buddhi-ahaṅkāra-5 tanmātras-5 mahabhūtas-11 indryas

is identical with what is shown in the Śataśāstra (百論 Taisho vol. 30, p. 170c) of Āryadeva and in the 成唯識論述記 (Taisho vol. 43, pp. 252c & 253a). See also the Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa of Nāgārjuna, (Taisho vol. 25, p. 549c). It seems to be old since indriya solely appears last, as the Kaṭhopaniṣad (I. 3. 10-11 & II. 6. 7-8) has shown us.

3) Each example corresponds closely with what is shown in SK. 15.

1) bhedānām parimaṇāt 2) samanvayāc 3) chaktitah prayṛtṛtē cā,
4) karaṇa-kārya-vibhagad 5) aśvabhagad vaiśvarāpyasya.

All of these five proofs to the existence of the primordial Matter are referred here for the first time in the Buddhist canon.

4) The Tibetan Tripitaka has recorded the Abhidharmakośaṭṭhā-lakṣañānusāriṇī as written by Pūrṇavardhana, cf. Tohoku Catalogue no. 4093.

5) Cf. H. Ui; Studies in Indian Philosophy, vol. 6, pp. 96-7.

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II “Saṃkhya, Vaiśeṣika and others maintain an argument on eternity (nityavāda). The non-existence cannot be existent. All the beings, if inexistent, are perpetually inexistent, since non-existence never becomes existence. If existent, (all beings) are perpetually existent, since existence never becomes non-existence. All the beings without exception are eternal. As a matter of fact we actually see the origination and the destruction of all beings, however such (phenomena) are nothing but mere transformation (of beings). Their noumena are not originated in the beginning, nor destroyed in the end. For example, when (an ingot of) gold is transformed into bracelet, gold itself is never originated nor destroyed.

According to their doctrine the primordial Matter produces (indirectly) the ether and other elements, further these five elements produce five sense organs. How the primordial Matter produces the ether? The ether is originated together with sound. The ether is a root and the sound is a branch. The sound is the quality of the ether. (Taisho vol. 32, p. 166c) The ether is the most subtle and nothing can destroy it. The primordial Matter produces the wind. (The wind) is originated together with touch. The wind is a root and the touch is a branch. The touch is the quality of the wind. The wind is gross, (but) the ether is subtle. The ether can destroy the wind. The wind joins with the ether. The wind possesses both qualities viz. touch as its own quality and sound as other's quality. The primordial Matter produces the fire. The fire is originated together with color. The fire is a root and the color is a branch. The color is the quality of the fire. The fire is gross, (but) the wind is subtle. The wind can destroy the fire. The fire joins with the wind. The fire possesses three qualities viz. color as its own quality, and sound

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6) See the Abhidharmakośa in my article Saṃkhya in the Buddhagotra, JIBS, vol. xviii, no. 1, p. 434.
7) The Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya has same example, see above.
8) See the Buddhagotra 自性生五唯等 (Taisho vol. 31, p. 791c) in my article JIBS, vol. xviii, no. 1, p. 438.
9) May be an old type of evolution, see above note 2).
10) Are the gross elements roots and the subtle elements branches? Isn't it an interpolation from or mixture with the Vaiśeṣika doctrine?
and touch as other’s qualities. The primordial Matter produces the water. The water is originated together with taste. The water is a root and the taste is a branch. The taste is the quality of the water. The water is gross, (but) the fire is subtle. The water possesses four qualities viz. taste as its own quality, and sound, color and touch as other’s qualities. The primordial Matter produces the earth. The earth is originated together with smell. The earth is a root and smell is a branch. The smell is the quality of the earth. The earth is gross (but) the water is subtle. The water can destroy the earth. The earth joins with the water. The earth possesses five qualities viz. smell as its own quality, and sound, color, touch and taste as other’s qualities. These five elements as the causes produce five sense organs. These five sense organs are the results. The ether produces ear, and the ear in its turn takes the ether. As its own quality does not take other’s qualities, (the ear) can only hear the sound and never see the color etc. The wind produces skin. The skin means skin, flesh and others. The skin in its turn takes the wind. Its own quality takes only touch and never takes other’s qualities. The fire produces the eye, the water produces the tongue and the earth produces a class of nose\(^\text{11)}\). One should understand just according to the first two (viz. the cases of the ether and the wind). The five sense organs are originated already from the five elements, (hence) the five sense organs dissolve into the five elements. The ear dissolves into the ether or the nose into the earth. Therefore everything is eternal. ......(Vaiśeṣika’s assertion)......

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\(^\text{11)}\) **SCHEMA**; (element) (sense) 

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<td>sound</td>
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Cf. my article; *Dharmapāla’s Report on Sāmkhya*, JIBS. vol. xvii, no. 1, pp. 440-441. This type of evolution, though different from that of the classical Sāmkhya, appears in the following texts; 1) Mahāprajāpāramitopadesa (Taisho vol. 25, p. 546c) 2) Vyāsa ad Yogasūtra II. 19 3) here 4) Dharmapāla’s com. on the Catuḥśataka (Taisho vol. 30, p. 232c) 5) Māṭhara ad SK. 38 6) Vācaspatimiśra ad SK. 22, 38.
Question; How does the fire destroy the water? Reply: The color is the quality of the fire, and you can see the color in the water. This means that the fire destroys the water.

Question; What is the primordial Matter which is said to be producer (of the world)? Reply; There are three categories viz. the primordial Matter, the Soul (puruṣa) and the Manifested (vyakta). Among these three the first one is named only the primordial Matter, the Soul the Soul, but the Manifested is named both productive and product. Because the first one being ignorant cannot be named the Soul and being unmanifested cannot be named the Manifested. Hence it is solely called the primordial Matter. The Soul, though with understanding, being unable to seize (the object) cannot be named the primordial Matter and being unmanifested (p. 167a) cannot be named the Manifested. Hence it is solely called the Soul. All what consists of three constituents (triguna), are ignorant. What produces its procreation initiated with (these three constituents), is called the Productive (prakṛti). What is produced from other and changes, is called the Manifested (vikṛti). These three categories are all eternal. The first two are eternal and unchangeable. The last one is eternal but changeable, like gold changes into bracelet without changing its quality. The Soul is the Self (atman).

The primordial Matter, like a blind man, can go but cannot see the way. The Soul, like a man with eyes but without legs, can see but cannot go. The primordial Matter can act but cannot know. The Soul can know but cannot act. The Soul, after being united with the primordial Matter, produces the productive Manifested. There are eight productive Matters viz. 1) the Root Matter, 2) three constituents, 3) the Great, 4) the Egotizing organ, 5) the subtle elements, 6) the gross elements, 7) the organs of perception.

12) Three categories are also mentioned in the Śāṃkhyakārikā as vyakta, avyakta and jña, in the Madhyamakārydaya vi. 1 and in the 成唯識論述記 (Taisho vol. 43, p. 252b) as 自性, 変易, 我知.
13) Cf. SK. 3 prakṛti-vikṛti. Isn't it an implication to the classification into four?
14) See above the Mahāyānasamgrahābhasya.
15) See SK. 21, also the Śataśāstra 百論 of Āryadeva (Taisho vol. 30, p. 172b).
16) Very strange! Moreover the mind (manas) is not included in these 8 principles!
and 8) the organs of action\(^{17}\). The first one among three is this Root Matter (\textit{mula-prakṛti}). It exists originally. From this Root Matter the (other) seven productive Matters are produced. These seven productive Matters are also the manifested productive Matters. From the Root Matter the three constituents are produced. \textit{triguna} is an Indic word. The first is named \textit{sattva}. There is no appropriate equivalent (in Chinese word, but) it means (something like) 稚有 ‘exquisite being’. Its origination is exquisite and its nature is being. The second is named \textit{rajas}. It originally means ‘dust’. It stirs and torments\(^{18}\). It torments, therefore is named ‘dust’. The third is named \textit{tamas}. It originally means ‘darkness’. Its nature is to obstruct. In their ordinal usage the first means ‘light’ and ‘bright’ (\textit{laghu-prakāśaka}), the second means ‘stiring’ and ‘supporting’ (\textit{calam upastambhakaṁ ca}) and the third means ‘heavy’ and ‘covering’ (\textit{guru-varaṇaka})\(^{19}\). All the beings both inside and outside of (mind) consist of these three. First, the heretical school classifies the elements (in the world) into four. According to it, the elements of ether and fire are light and bright, the element of wind is stiring and supporting i. e. it supports thing and lets the thing not fall down, the elements of earth and water are heavy and covering i. e. their natures are heavy and cover in darkness\(^{20}\). As to the six modes of existence, the heavenly existence is light and bright, the mankind is stiring and supporting and the four evil modes of existence\(^{21}\) are heavy and covering…… (application to the Buddhist doctrine)……At the

\(^{17}\) \textit{indriya} appears solely last! see note 2). That \textit{karmendriya} comes after \textit{buddhendriya}, seems to be peculiar but might mean that the former was incorporated later on in the system of evolution.

\(^{18}\) 磨 is a word from \textit{śkliś} in its origin.

\(^{19}\) Cf. \textit{Śamkhyakārikā} 13.

\(^{20}\) Not seen in the Śamkhya texts.

\(^{21}\) Cf. 金七十論 ad SK. 30, 39, 40, but the classical Śamkhya says \textit{tairyag-yaṇaś ca pañcadhā} (SK. 53).

\(^{22}\) This may be the first passage in the Buddhist canon giving us a comparatively detailed information on \textit{triguna}. The schema is as follows;

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\begin{tabular}{lll}
\text{\textbf{sattva}} & 妙有 & 長，光，\text{\textit{ākāśa}}, \text{\textit{tejas}}; 天 \\
\text{\textbf{rajas}} & 墜，動，能染；動，持；\text{\textit{vāyu}} & 人 \\
\text{\textbf{tamas}} & 間，塞 & \text{\textit{prthivi}}, \text{\textit{ap}}; 四悪趣
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origination of three constituents the inside exquisite being appears first and the outside things do not appears yet, they appear afterwards. Form the three constituents the productive Great is produced. The Great means the Intellect (buddhi). The Intellect is the source of knowledge. It has a function of apprehension (覚察 adhyavasāya). From the productive Great the productive Egotizing organ is produced. It adheres that the Soul exists distinctively from others. According to the Sāmkhya system, from this Egotizing organ the subtle elements are produced. (And from these) subtle elements the gross beings are produced (p. 167b)......The subtle element means that there are solely five elements and no other thing appears yet. From five subtle elements the gross beings i.e. five gross elements are produced. As all the beings cannot be outside of them, they are called gross (maha). They are beings because all the things can come into and go out from existence only in these five. All the beings in themselves have their transformations, but their natures exist perpetually without mutation. For example, the sense organ of ear (Çáeye) dissolves into the ether. The sense organ of ear itself has dissolution, but the ether does not have dissolution. As well as the sense organ of nose dissolves into the earth. Hence we call these elements beings. From these gross beings the organs of perception (buddhindriya) are produced. (They are called organs of perception) because the five organs such as eye and others have capacity to know. From these organs of perception the organs of action (karmendriya) are produced. The organs of action are five viz. 1) tongue, 2) hand, 3) foot, 4) anus and 5) genital organ. The tongue can speak and is the organ of speech. Speech is an action of tongue, The hand is the organ of grasp and grasp is an action of hand. The foot is the organ of going and going is an action of foot. The anus is the organ of excretion and is able to excrete feces. Excretion is an action of anus. The genital organ gives birth to baby. To give birth to baby is an action of genital organ. These are the twenty-five principles. Five organs of action, five organs of perception, five subtle elements and five gross elements are twenty in number. The Egotizing
organ is the twenty-first, the Great principle is the twenty-second, the triad
of constituents is the twenty-third, the Soul is the twenty-fourth and the pri-
mordial Matter is the twenty-fifth.

Question; You comment on three constituents in connection with five gross
elements24). Five gross elements should only belong to the great being, why
they belong to three constituents? Reply; Their natures belong to three
constituents, (but) five gross elements themselves belong to the great being.
For example, when an ivory is cut into pieces and one of them is carved
into a horse and another into an elephant, these and elephant are of same
ivory natures though their shapes being different (from the original ivory
and each other). Just so is in the case of five gross elements. Five gross ele-
ments themselves belong to the great being, but in the final subsumption of
their natures they belong to three constituents. Previously we said 'the pri-
mordial Matter produces the ether and others'25), that intends to mean the
primordial Matter has a capacity to production. Sāmkhya doctrine maintains
the existence of the effect (already) in the cause. For instance branches, leaves,
blossoms and fruits are already prepared in the pātala seed. Just so the seven
manifested Productives are already prepared in the primordial Matter. When
it is united with the Soul, the seven are manifested successively. This is called
the evolution (sarga). The evolution does not mean that what did not exist
previously becomes to exist later on........

Question; There is knowledge in three constituents and the Great principle
is said to be the Intellect. Why all the manifested Productives are said to
be unspiritual. (Reply;) The Soul is spiritual. The Soul is able to know only.
The seven Manifested (productives) by themselves have no function to know.
For example (p. 197c) a man can cut (with it), hence (an instrument is)
called knife. He who cuts is a man and practically a knife (by itself without
a hand of man) cannot cut (anything)26).

Question; The subtle elements are nothing but five objects such as color

24) See note 20) and the schema in note 22).
25) See note 8).
26) No trace of pratibimba.
and others. How can such subtle elements manifested the gross elements? Reply; All of the gross elements are atomic size and cannot be seen. Five objects such as color and others the products of five gross elements. Seeing the product one can understand what produces it. Not being atomic (size) five objects such as color and others are visible²⁷).

Question; The primordial Matter is the productive and the transformer. Three constituents are the products and the transformed in relation to the primordial Matter, but are at the same time the productive and the transformer in relation to the Great principle. Why the primordial Matter though as the producer having the name ‘productive’ yet does not have the name ‘transformation’ though it is transformer, on the other hand three constituents possess both names? Reply; The transformer and the productive are generally the names of cause, the transformed and the product are generally the names of result.

What is called simply ‘transformation’ or simply ‘production’, that is the name of result. After having come into existence the result is nothing but ‘transformed’ and ‘product’. The cause cannot be ‘transformed’ nor ‘product’. In the case of the primordial Matter ‘producer’ means simply ‘transformer’ and ‘transformer’ means ‘producer’. Not being the transformed, it (i.e. the primordial Matter) cannot be called ‘transformed’. (But) being both active and passive, three constituents have both names (‘transformer’ and ‘transformed’ or ‘productive’ and ‘product’).

Question; Why the productive is (called) the primordial Matter? Reply; The productive must be the source which means primary cause, therefore it is called the primordial Matter.

Question; The Soul also is the source. Why it does not have the name ‘primordial Matter’? Reply; Not acting nor transforming the others it (the Soul) is not called ‘the primordial Matter’.

III “Sāmkhya and Vaiśeṣika also maintain that the pleasure (sukha) exists, and say that in the metempsychosis (samsāra) there exists actually (satya)²⁷)

²⁷) An influence of Vaiśeṣika?
pleasure as well as misery (duḥkha). The human and the divine being are actually pleasurable, but the beings in the hell, the beast and others actually miserable. This fact is inferred from the cause. In the cause already there actually exist the virtuousness (dharma) and wickedness (adharma). The wickedness brings about misery and the virtuousness pleasure. The cause being actual, the result must be actual too”

IV “Śāṃkhya proves the existence of the Soul with following five reasons;

1) We infer the existence of the Soul because the collection (of the things) are (made) for the other (saṃghāta-parārtha). Like a man collects the sacred book (sūtra) in order to propagate the truth not for his own benefit but for other’s benefit. Also like a man collects the materials for making bed, not for the benefit of himself but for other’s use. The collection being already for other’s benefit, we see the existence of other. The body of human being must not be an exception. The collection of five objects, four elements, five sense organs, five members of aggregate (skandha) and others is not for the benefit of themselves, but for the other’s benefit. The other must be the Soul, therefore we conclude that the Soul exists.

2) Seeing that the primordial Matter is transformed into seven (Manifested) such as triple constituent and others, we know that the Soul exists. The primordial Matter doesn’t know, (therefore) it cannot (solely by itself) be transformed into the seven (Manifested) such as triple constituent and others, nevertheless it can be transformed into the seven such as triple constituent. Therefore we conclude that there must be the knower who comes to be united with the (primordial Matter) and thus the Manifested appears. This knower must be the Soul, hence we conclude that the Soul exists.

3) Seeing that there is an intellect in the Manifested, we know that the Soul exists. (On the other hand) the primordial Matter doesn’t have an intellect. The primordial Matter is the root and the Manifested are the branches. The root already having no intellect, there must not be intellect in the bran-

28) We do not know whether the Śāṃkhya system accepts the retributive justice in the universe or not, but see SK. 44.
29) This may be a comment by Buddhist Paramārtha.
ches. An intellect nevertheless being in the Manifested, we know that there must be another substance with the intellect. (The Manifested not being united yet with the primordial Matter, there is the intellect in them)\(^{30}\). This subject of the intellect must be the Soul. This being the Soul, we know that the Soul exists\(^{31}\). This fact shows that the Soul is bound, because the Egotizing organ is produced from the Intellect\(^{32}\).

4) Seeing what is used (\textit{kārya}), we know that the Soul exists. As long as there exists what is used, there must inevitably exist the one who uses it (\textit{kāraka}). The primordial Matter is what is used and the Soul is one who uses it. (Seeing already that there exists what is used, we know that there must exist one who uses it.)\(^{33}\) Therefore we know that the Soul exists. For example, a woman is what is used and a man is one who uses her. Seeing that women exist, one can know that men exist. The primordial Matter being what is used, the Soul is united with it. After their union it is transformed into the seven such as triple constituent and others. The seven (Manifested) bind the Soul. Later on, having received the instruction of his teacher and obtained the knowledge of hearing (\textit{śravaṇa}), thinking (\textit{cinta}) and meditating (\textit{nididhyāsa})\(^{34}\), and having understood that this bondage and the metempsychosis are originated from the primordial Matter, one abominates this primordial Matter and the bondage. Having already abominated and been freed from the bondage, his Soul is liberated. For example, a man held an intercourse with a leprous woman in the darkness again and again without any hatred, but later on when he sees her in the light he abominates her. (The-

\(^{30}\) The meaning of the text seems to be not suitable, this passage may be a wrong interpolation.

\(^{31}\) Far better reason to prove the existence of the Soul than what is given in the SK. 17 \textit{adhiṣṭhānat} which seems to be substantially same argument with the first reasoning.

\(^{32}\) Paramārtha seems to admit the bondage, the transmigration and the emancipation of the Soul, (not of the primordial Matter?).

\(^{33}\) Superfluous repetition!

\(^{34}\) Hearing, thinking and meditating might be taken from Buddhism, but they are found later in the introductory part of Viññānabhiṣṣu’s Pravacanabhāṣya.
the woman if coercive may be still hanging on her man, but if delicate, once abominated, she may never even go to him again. However, though not going to him timely (as a matter of fact), she is inclined to go there (in her mind). (On the other hand) the primordial Matter, once abominated, is not united with the Soul for ever\(^{35}\). Even a delicate woman is no match for the delicacy of this primordial Matter\(^{36}\).

5) Because of the real existence of the Isolation (\textit{kaivalya}), we know that Soul exists. After having known (that the Soul is) bound since the Manifested are produced from the primordial Matter, one attains the knowledge. (The Soul) becomes to be averse to the primordial Matter, the Soul is isolated. As being isolated, the Soul is liberated. If there exists no Soul, there would be no Isolation. Yet the Isolation already exists in reality. For that reason we conclude that the Soul exists\(^{37}\).

Why Parmārtha has reported such Sāṃkhya philosophy different from what is given in the \\textit{金七十論} which is said to be translated by himself? We should not conclude that the reporter Parmārtha did not have a precise knowledge upon the system of the classical Sāṃkhya, as far as we think that he is identical with the translator of the \\textit{金七十論}. Might it be possible to imagine that 1) the \textit{金七十論} and the Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya are by Parmārtha himself, because the Sāṃkhya philosophies reported by both texts are almost same, 2) on the other hand, the Laksanaśirasūrin and the Buddhagotra\(^{38}\), though listed as written by Parmārtha, are not by him, but expeditiously ascribed to him, because the Sāṃkhya doctrines reported there are sometimes dissimilar or rather partially strange to the classical one?

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35) This is inconsistent with SK. 66 which says “Even if there exists the union between them, there would not exist the necessity of creation (any more)”.  
36) Cf. SK. 61 \textit{prakṛteḥ sukumārataram na kim-cid asti 'ti me matir bhavati, yā drṣṭā smi 'ti punar na darśanam upaścita puruṣasya.}  
37) Similar five proofs are found in SK. 17. 
1) \textit{samghata-parārthatvat} 2) \textit{triguna-'di-viparyayat} 3) \textit{adhiṣṭhānāt, puruṣo 'sti} 4) \textit{bhokṛ-bhavat} 5) \textit{kaivalya-'ṛtham pravṛtteś ca.}  
Here the Paramārtha’s explanation seems to be more intelligible. They are not quite identical with each other, especially in the third reasoning.  
38) See my article \textit{Sāṃkhya in the Buddhagotra}, JIBS. vol.viii, no.1.