CHAPTER THREE

'VACHASPATHI'S VIEWS ON THE SATKARYAVADA'

The Sāṃkhya theory of evolution of the cosmos out of Prakṛti is based upon its theory of causation. According to the Sāṃkhya, the effect pre-exists in the cause in a potential condition; the effect is modification (Pariṇāma), manifestation, development, or redistribution of the cause. The effect is not a new beginning as the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika holds. It is not a new creation. It is not non-existent in the cause. It exists in the cause prior to its manifestation. So, the Sāṃkhya advocates the doctrine of Satkārya as distinguished from the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika doctrine of Asatkārya or Ārāmbhavāda. The effect and the cause are equally real, the former being a modification of the latter.

The Sāṃkhya offers the following arguments to prove the pre-existence of the effect in the cause. They are:

1. If the effect does not pre-exist in its cause, it becomes a mere non-entity like the hare's horn or the sky-flower and can never be produced (asadakaranat).

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1. asadakaranādunāgrahapāt sarvasambhavabhāvāt // saktasya sākyakaranāt, kāraṇābhāvācca sar kāryam //

SK, K. 9.
(2) The effect is only a manifestation of its material cause, because it is invariably connected with it (upādānagrahaḥ). 

(3) Everything cannot be produced out of everything. This suggests that the effect, before its manifestation, is implicit in its material cause (Sarvasambhavābhāvāt). 

(4) Only an efficient cause can produce that for which it is potent. This again means that the effect, before its manifestation, is potentially contained in its material cause. Production is only an actualization of the potential (Saktasya sākyakaraḥ). Were it not so, then curd should be produced out of water, and cloth out of reeds, and oil out of sand particles. 

(5) The effect is the essence of its material cause and as such identical with it. When the obstructions in the way of manifestation are removed, the effect naturally flows out of its cause. The cause and the effect are the implicit and the explicit stages of the same process. The cloth is contained in the threads, the oil in the oil-seeds, the curd in the milk. The effect pre-exists in its material cause (kāraṇābhāvāt). Vācaspati Misra forwards the following proves ² that establish the non-difference

². kāryasya kāraṇābhedasādhanaṇi - ca pramāṇāni.
STk under Sk. k, 9.
of the effects from the cause:

(i) The effect is not different from its material cause, since it is a property of the cause and inheres in it. A cloth is not different from the threads which constitute it, because it is a property of the threads and inheres in them. If an object is different from another in essence, it can never inhere in it. A cow is different from a horse, and so cannot inhere in the latter. But a cloth inhere in the threads, and so does not differ from them in essence.

(ii) There is the causal relation between the material cause and the effect constituted by it. So they are not different from each other in essence. The causal relation can never subsist between two objects which essentially differ from each other. There is no causal relation between a jar and a cloth, which are essentially different from each other. But there is the causal relation between a cloth and the threads. So they cannot differ from each other in essence.

(iii) If two objects are different from each other they can be conjoined with each other, (e.g. a pool and a tree), and they can exist separately from each other (e.g. the Himalayas and the Vindhyas). But there is neither conjunction nor separate existence of a cloth and the constituent thread.

3. na paṭastantubhyo bhidhyate, tantudharmatvāt. Ibid.
4. upādānopādeyabhāvācca nārthVVatvatam tantupatayah. Ibid.
So they are not different from each other in essence. The material cause and the effect cannot be conjoined with each other; nor are they capable of separate existence. Hence they are not different from each other in essence.  

(iv) The material cause and the effect are identical with each other in essence, because there is quantitative equality between them. The threads and the cloth are equal to each other in weight. This fact conclusively proves the essential identity between the material cause and the effect.

Cause and effect are different states of one and the same substance. So they are distinct from each other. Their distinction is based on our practical interests. A jar can hold water, but a lump of clay cannot. They are distinct from each other because they serve different purposes. But they are not different from each other in their essential nature.

The Sāmkhya recognizes two kinds of causes, material cause and efficient cause. The material cause enters into the constitution of the effect and contains the potentiality of being reproduced in the form of the effect. The efficient cause exerts an extraneous influence on the effect, co-operates with the causal power inherent in the material cause and liberates it. God is the material cause of an

5. itas ca nārthāntaratvam tantupatayah, Ibid.
ornament, enters into its constitutions, and continues to be operative as long as the ornament lasts, and after its destruction it relapses into the potential condition again. But the activity of the goldsmith is the efficient cause of the ornament, because it liberates the casual energy inherent in the material cause, and because it actualizes the potentiality of the effect; its casuality ceases with the production of the ornament. 6

In connection with the theory of Satkārya the following observation of Vācaspati is to be taken into consideration.

The non-differences between the cloth and the yarns having been thus established, it follows that the cloth is only the yarns arranged in a particular shape and that the two do not differ from each other in essence. Nor can the two be proved to be entirely different by such arguments as - (a) "If the cause and effect were not different, it would involve self-contradictory action that is, when the 'cloth' is torn and reduced to 'threads', it involves the action of being destroyed on the part of the cloth and that of being produced of the part of the threads or yarns; the identity of the cloth and the yarns would thus mean that the same thing is both destroyed and produced at the same time; (b) there an notion and assertion of the cause and

6. itaśca pāṭaṣṭantubhyo na bhidyate, gurutvāntarakāryāgra-
    haṇat,  
Ibid.
the effect being related (which means that the two members of the relationship are different); (c) the function of the useful purpose served by the cause, is different from that served by the effect (e.g. the cloth serves the useful purpose of covering things, which purpose cannot be served by the yarns). These arguments, we say, cannot prove the difference between cause and effect; because all the said differences can be explained and reconciled by attributing the notions to the appearance and disappearance of certain factors; (a) For instance, the limbs of the tortoise disappear on entering its body and appear again on emerging from it; but for this, we cannot say that the limbs are either produced from, or destroyed by, the tortoise; in the same manner, the jar, the crown, and other things, which are only particular modifications of clay, gold and so forth, are said to be produced on emanating and appearing from these latter, and to be destroyed on entering them again (i.e. being formed into clay, etc.) and disappearing. As a matter of fact, however, there can be no 'production' or birth for what is 'non-existent', nor 'destruction' for what is 'existent'; as has been declared by the revered Kṛṣṇa-dvāipayana (Vyāsa in the Bhagavadgītā 2.16) - 'There is no being for the non-existent, nor non-being for the existent.' - I the instance cited, the Tortoise is not different from its appearing and disappearing limbs; and similarly the jar, the crown and other products are not different from clay, gold and so forth.
(b) The 'assertion' (of difference between the cloth and the yarns) implicit in such notions as 'This cloth is in (made up of) these yarns' is explicable, as being analogous to the assertion 'There are Tilaka trees in the forest'.

(c) As for the difference in the useful purpose served, that also does not establish the difference between the cause and the effect, because one and the same thing is found to serve several useful purposes; for instance, the single thing, fire, serves the purposes of burning, cooking, and lighting. As a matter of fact, any variation of functions cannot be a ground of difference; because we find that the functions of the same things vary with their operating collectively or severally; for instance, each individual Bearer performs the function of indicating the path, but not that of carrying the palanquin, while collectively, they carry the palanquin; in the same manner, even though the yarns severally do not serve the purpose of covering, yet on combining and thereby appearing in the form of the cloth, they can serve the purpose of covering.

This doctrine is called Satkāryavāda, i.e., that the Kārya or effect is sat or existent even before the casual operation to produce the effect was launched. The oil exists in the sesamum, the statue in the stone, the curd in the milk. The causal operation (kāraka-vyāpāra) only renders that manifest (āvirbhūta) which was formerly in an unmanifested
The Buddhists also believed in change, as much as Śāmkhya did, but with them there was no background to the change; every change was thus absolutely a new one, and when it was past, the next moment the change was lost absolutely. There were only the passing dharmas or manifestations of forms and qualities, but there was no permanent underlying dharma or substance. Śāmkhya also holds in the continual change of dharmas, but it also holds that these dharmas represent only the conditions of the permanent reals. The conditions and collocations of the reals change constantly, but the reals themselves are unchangeable. The effect according to the Buddhists was non-existent, it came into being for a moment and was lost. On account of this theory of causation and also on account of their doctrine of Śunya, they were called Vaināsikas (nihilists) by the Vedāntins. This doctrine is therefore contrasted of Śāmkhya doctrine as asatkāravyāvāda. The Jaina view holds that both these views are relatively true and the from one point of view Satkārasyāvāda is true and from another Asatkāravyāvāda. The Śāmkhya view that the cause is continually transforming itself into its effects is technically called Pariṇāmavāda.

Vācaspati Miśra in his Tattva-Kaumudi lays down the opinions of the Buddhists, the Naiyāikas and the Vedāntins.
(1) According to the Buddhists existence comes into beings from not existence. The theory of causation according to the Buddhists is called Asatkāryavāda. But Vācaspatri refutes this view of the Buddhists - saying that though it is true that products like the sprout and the jar and found to be produced after the destruction of the seed and clay yet the causal efficiency cannot be attributed to destruction which is a pure negation. It can belong only to the positive entities in the shape of the constituent particles of the seed (Bīja) and the clay (Mrīt). If a positive entity were produced out of mere negation then such negation would be easily available everywhere.

(2) In Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system an existent cause produces a non-existent effect. This theory in also called Asatkāryavāda. But this view of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system is also not acceptable to Vācaspatri. As there would be no identity between the Sat and Asat, the effect could not be regarded as constituted entirely by the cause and so

8. tathāhi kecidāhuḥ asataḥ sat jāyate iti. STK, p. 40
9. yadya pī bijamṛśtpndādipradh vaṣānāntaramankuraḥātaḥadyutpa Hirupalabhyyate ........... .... apitu bhāvasyaiva bijādyavyavyayavyasya. Ibid, p. 43.
10. anyetu 'sataḥ asat jāyate' iti, Ibid, p.40.
according to this theory there could be no proof for the existence of Prakṛti. ¹¹

(3) The Vedāntins maintain that the cause alone is Sat, the effect being only an apparent change. This theory known as vivartavāda. ¹² But Vācaspati Miśra does not accept this view also. Because, the belief in the existence of the phenomenal world, according to the Vedāntins, cannot be said to be illusory unless there is some proof denying its existence. Therefore, the effect cannot be considered as a mere illusory evolution. ¹³

Thus, according to Vācaspati and Sāṁkhyāits it is established that, the effect is ever existent. ¹⁴

¹¹ yeṣāmapi kaṇabhakṣākṣacrojanādāṇām sata eva kāraṇādasato janma teṣāmapi ......... ... .......na tanmate pradhānasiddhiḥ. Ibid, p. 41.


¹³ prapaṇca pratyayascāsati bādhake na śakyo mithyeti vaditumiti. Ibid, p. 43.

¹⁴ tasmāt satkāryamānti puṣkalam. Ibid, p. 53.