Sāmkhya philosophy is undoubtedly one of the oldest systems of Indian philosophy. It proposed a rational and realistic approach to the problem of reality. Thus, it has served a background for other systematists to try new lines of thought in the formulation of their own philosophy. The Sāmkhya system had found a place of honour in ancient Indian literature like Chāndogya Upaniṣad, Kāṭhopaniṣad, Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad, Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad, Praśnopaniṣad, Mahābhārata, Purāṇa, Śruti, Smṛti, Brahmasūtra, and Arthasastra etc. The Mahābhārata attached the supreme importance to Sāmkhya as a system of Philosophy. It remarks there is no knowledge like that of Sāmkhya. Even Śaṅkarācārya, the chief critic of Sāmkhya, describes the Sāmkhya as the chief opponent, which suggests that the Sāmkhya is esteemed as occupying the highest place in all the systems criticised by him.

1. Mbh. 12. 304.2
2. Śaṅkarabhaṣya on Brahmasūtra, 1.4.28.
The term "Sāṃkhya" is derived from the word Sāṃkhya which is again etymologically derived from the root Khya (jñāna) preceded by the suffix sam, sām + khya. The word Sāṃkhya denotes number philosophical investigation or the knowledge arisen from such a philosophical investigation. Consequently, the term Sāṃkhya comes to mean a system which analyses the facts of experience by means of enumeration of categories or a system dealing with the consideration of twenty five categories, or the knowledge of pure soul as distinct from the Prakṛti, Gunaratna, however, thinks that the term Sāṃkhya is read as Sāmkhya and is called so because it is founder by Śāmkhya.

Though it is evident that Sāmkhya system attained the position of a full-fledged system before the other systems, yet we do not come across some ancient authentic work which could contain the original form of the system: Up to the Śāmkhyakārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa we know only some names of Sāmkhya teachers along with a scattered reference to their theories. We can postulate the beginning of the Sāmkhya record in the Upaniṣads and the earlier or pre classical Sāmkhya in the Mahābhārata and its contemporary literature. After Īśvarakṛṣṇa and before Vācaspati Miśra, there is a big gap in literary continuity. We have only the Yuktidipikā and a few other commentaries of the Śāmkhyakārikā. There is again a gap of centuries till we
come to Aniruddha and Viśnunabhiṣkṛṣu. Thus, Viśnunabhiṣkṛṣu presents a landmark in the history of Sāṃkhya philosophy, we do not come across any powerful author of Sāṃkhya after Viśnunabhiṣkṛṣu.

Sāṃkhya consists of two divisions - the Sāṃkhya properly so called, and the Yoga; and like the other systems, it professes to teach the means by which external beatitude, or the complete and personal exemption from every sort of ill, may be attained. This means in the discriminative acquaintance with tattva, or the true principles of all existence and such principles are according to the Sāṃkhya system, the following twenty-five:

Prakṛti or Pradhāna, substance or nature; it is the universal and material cause; eternal undiscrete, inferable from its effects; productive, but unproduced. Its first production is Mahat (the great), or buddhi (intellect), or the intellectual principle, which appertains to individual beings. From it devolves Ahamkāra (the assertion of "I"), the function of which consists in referring the objects of the world to one′s-self. It produces five tanmātra, or subtle elements, which themselves are productive of the five gross elements. Ahamkāra further produces five instruments of sensation - viz. the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the skin; five instruments of action - viz. the organ of speech, the hands, the feet, the excretory termination of the intestines, and the organ of generation;
Lastly manas, or the organ of volition and imagination. The five subtle elements produce the five gross elements - viz. ākāśa, space or ether, which has the property of audibleness, is the vehicle of sound, and is derived from the sonorous tānmātra; air, which has the properties of audibleness and tangibility, is sensible to hearing and touch, and is derived from the aerial tānmātra; fire which has the properties of audibleness, tangibility and colour, is sensible to hearing, touch, and sight, and is derived from the igneous tānmātra; water, which has the properties of audibleness, tangibility, colour, and savour, is sensible of hearing, touch, sight, and taste, and is derived from the aqueous tānmātra; lastly, earth, which unites the properties of audibleness, tangibility, colour, savour, and odour, is sensible to hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell, and is derived from the tarrene tānmātra. The 25th principle is Puruṣa or soul. It is neither produced nor productive; it is multitudinous, individual, sensitive, eternal, unalterable, and immaterial. The union of soul and nature takes places for the contemplation of nature, and for abstraction from it, "as the halt and the blind join for conveyance and for guidance, the one bearing and directed, the other borne and directing". From their union creation is affected. The soul's wish is fruition or liberation.

3. mūlaprakṛtiravikṛtirmahādādyā prakṛtivikṛtayāh sapta / 
    goḍāsakastu vikāro, na prakṛtirna vikṛtih puruṣah //
    SK. K.3.
The Sāmkhya system underwent a mythological development in the Purāṇas, in the most important of which it is followed as the basis of their cosmogony. Thus, Prakṛti, or nature, is identified by them with Māyā, or the energy of Brahma; and the Matsya Purāṇa affirms that Buddhi, or Mahat, the intellectual principle, through the three qualities, goodness, passion, and sin, "being one from becomes the three gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva". The most important development, however, of the Sāmkhya is that by the Buddhistic doctrine, which is mainly based on it. The Sāmkhya system is probably the oldest of the Hindu systems of philosophy, for its chief principles are, with more or less detail, already contained in the chief Upaniṣads, but whether the form in which it has come down to us, and in which it is now spoken of as the Sāmkhya, is also older than that in which the other systems are preserved, is a question as yet not solved by Sanskrit philosophy. That this form, however, is not the oldest one, is borne out, for instance, by the differences which exist between the Sāmkhya doctrine of the Upaniṣads and the doctrine propounded in the first book of the Institutes of Manu on the one side, and the doctrine of the actual Sāmkhya on the other.

(A) Sāmkhya Philosophers and their works:

An evident from the references found in the Smṛtis, the Mahābhārata, the Sāmkhyakārikā and the commentaries there
are many Sāmkhya philosophers of whom special mention may be made to Kapila, Āsuri, Pañcasikha, Vindhyavāsa, Vārṣagāṇya, Jāgīśavāya, Vṛkṣu, Devala, Sanaka, Kāśyapa, Ulūka, and others.

It is obvious that this list of Sāmkhya philosophers has a limited historical value, for, many of the philosophers mention in the above list appear to be mythical names and nothing more. But compared with this list, another list if prepared of the names of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, Gauḍapāda, Māṭhara, Paramārtha, Vācaspati, and Vijnāna-bhikṣu would be far more interesting. Some of the names are referred to as holding this or that view on a particular point and thus these though valuable as throwing light on a particular problem in reality do not achieve anything more than creating anxiety about them. Tradition is not unanimous regarding the authorship of work ascribed to many in this list, e.g. Kapila, Pañcasikha and others.

Kapila: Tradition is unanimous in ascribing the founder-ship of the Sāmkhya system to Kapila. But, it is doubtful, whether Kapila was a historical philosopher. The Śvetāsvatara-purāṇa mentioned Kapila first and is, by no means unambiguous. The Bhagavadgītā refers to says Kapila as can

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4. V.2.
be found in the ten chapters. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa makes Kapila, son of Devahūti and incarnation of Vāsudeva. Kapila is believed to be the writer of the Sāṁkhya Śūtras.

Āsuri: Āsuri is believed to be the successor of Kapila. According to A.B. Keith, Āsuri is a mere name and cannot be accepted as a historical philosopher without more proof. The Mahābhārata considers Pañcasikha as a student of Āsuri. In his Sañdarśanasamuccaya, Haribhadra quotes a verse ascribe to Āsuri.

Pañcasikha: Generally in the list of the Sāṁkhya philosophers, Pañcasikha is mentioned after Āsuri whose student he is supposed to be. The Mahābhārata speaks of one Pañcasikha belonging to the family of Parāṣāra. In the works quotations from Pañcasikha's work are found. Vācaspati refers to the name of Pañcasikha in his commentary. The date of Pañcasikha is the matter of discussion. Svapneśvara

5. aśvatthāḥ sarvarśvināṁ devarṣināṁ nāradah /
gandharvanāṁ citrarathah siddhānāṁ kapilo munih //x.26

6. vivikte dṛkparinātav buddhau bhogosya kathyate /
pratibimbodayah svaccho yathā candramasombhāsi//
as quoted in the introduction (p.13) to the
S.K. ed by T.G. Mainker.

7. Sānti, 320.23.
regards Pāṇcaśīkha as the real founder of the Śāṁkhyā system.

Vindhyāvāsa: Dr. A.B.Keith opines that there might have been many thinkers possessing the name Vindhyāvāsa. Vindhyāvāsa is mostly known through the quotation in the works like Yoga Sūtra, commentary of Medhātithi, Ślokavārtika, and Saḍdārśanasamuccaya etc. Vindhyāvāsa is believed to write a commentary on the Śāṁkhyā-Kārikā.

Vārṣaganya: Vārṣaganya is believed to be author of the Kārikā and the commentary thereon. It may be mention that Vārṣaganya lived in a lake in the vicinity of the Vindhyā mountain where he had his student Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Vindhyāvāsa. Commentator Balorāma clearly states Vārṣaganya to be the author of Saśītāntara. Vācaspati quotes Vārṣaganya as Bhagavān Vārṣaganya. In the Vāyasabhāṣya we find a reference of Vārṣaganya.

Jalgiśavya: In the Kūrma Purāṇa, it is stated that Pāṇcaśīkha and Jalgiśavya studied together and probably the teacher was one and the same. In Yoga Sūtra of Patañjali, Jalgiśavya is stated to be a teacher of the Yoga philosophy. Vācaspati Miśra considers him as an author of the Dharma Śāstra.

9. “mūrtivyavahijātibhedābhāvānāsti mūlapṛthaktam iti vārṣaganyah” III. 53
9. II. 54
10. NVIT under NS III. 2. 3.
Asvaghosa says that Jaigisavya attained liberation through Sāṁkhya.

Voghu: On the life of Voghu nothing can be known, he is sometimes mentioned as a teacher of Sāṁkhya. His name appears in the list of the Sāṁkhya philosophers, to whom oblation of water is daily offered after Kapila and Āsuri but before Pañcasikha.

Devala: According to P.V. Kane, Devala belonged to some-time between the 4th and 6th centuries as he is regarded as a contemporary of Brhaspati and Kātyāyana. Devala and Īśvarakṛṣṇa appear to have flourished in times quite close to each others and it will be too-much to regard as many centuries having elapsed between the two. Except this much nothing is known about Devala.

Sanaka: Gauḍapada in his Sāṁkhya-kārikā bhāṣya quotes a verse and a half in which he enumerates the names of the seven sons of Brahman. They are: Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana, Āsuri, Kapila, Voghu and Pañcasikha. But in the

11. sanakaśca sanandaśca tṛtiyaśca sanatanaḥ / āsuriḥ kapilasīcaiva voghu pañcasikha stathā / ityete brahmaṇaḥ putrāḥ sapta proktā maharṣayaḥ // as quoted in the kārikā.1.
Mahābhārata, the list is different, viz. Sana, Sanatsujata, Sanaka Sanandana, Sanatkumāra, Kapila and Sanatana. Unfortunately, we find no information about Sanaka etc. except a reference to Sanandana in Sāṁkhya Sūtra. Isvarakṛṣṇa: Isvarakṛṣṇa (supposed to have flourished in the 5th century A.D.) is the representative of the classical Sāṁkhya. Takakusu thinks that Vindhyavāsin was a title of Isvarakṛṣṇa and Garbe holds that the date of Isvarakṛṣṇa was about 100 A.D. It seems to be a very plausible view that Isvarakṛṣṇa was indebted for his Karikas to another work, which was probably written in a style different from what he employs. This identification by Takakusu, however, appears to be extremely doubtful, for Gunaratna mentions Isvarakṛṣṇa and Vindhyavāsin as two different authorities (Tarkarahasyaśāpikā, pp. 102 and 104). The verse quoted from Vindhyavāsin (p.104) in anustuba metre cannot be traced as belonging to Isvarakṛṣṇa. It appears that Isvarakṛṣṇa wrote two books, namely the Sāṁkhya-kārikā and an independent work on Sāṁkhya, a line from which, quoted by Gunaratna, stands as follows: "pratiniyatādhyavasāyaḥ śrotrādisamuttha adhyakṣam" (p.108)

Vijñānabhiṣku: Vijñānabhiṣku presents a landmark in the history of Sāṁkhya philosophy. We do not find some authentic records of the personal life of Vijñānabhiṣku. He was

12. Śānti. 340, 67-69
13. lingasariranimittaka iti sanandanacaryah. VI. 69.
a prolific author and he covered a wide range of subjects in his writings, we have the following published works to his credit. (i) Sāmkhyapravacanabhaṣya, (ii) Sāmkhyasāra, (iii) Yogavārttika, (iv) Yogasārasaṅgraha, and (v) Viṣṇu-
āṃśṭabhāṣya is believed to have written Isvaragītabhaṣya, Upadesaratnamāla, Brahmadarsa and a commentary called Aloka on the following Upaniṣads: Kathāvalli, Kaivalya, Maitreyī, Maṇḍūkya, Mūḍaka, Praśna, Taittiriya and Śveta-
śvata. The latter set of his works is still unpublished.

Gaṇḍapāda: Gaṇḍapāda is one of the commentators on the Sāmkhya-kārikā of Isvarakṛṣṇa. His commentary is known as Sāmkhyakārikābhāṣya. It is a popular and important commentary on the Sāmkhyakārikā. There is controversy regarding Gaṇḍapāda as the commentator on the Sāmkhyakārikā and Gaṇḍapāda as the author of the Maṇḍūkya-kārikā. The Maṇḍūkya-kārikā belongs to the Vedānta. However, most of the thinkers accept both as identical. The Sāmkhyakārikābhāṣya of Gaṇḍapāda is very simple and lucid. For an easy understanding of the Sāmkhyakārikā it is very much helpful.

Maṭhara: Maṭhara is also a commentator on the Sāmkhyaka-
rīkā. The name of his commentary is known as Maṭhara-vṛtti, which is supposed to be the latest of the five commentaries and therefore it may be dated anywhere from the 9th century onward. The Maṭhara-vṛtti contains quotations from
the Purāṇas and it presents overall a full and more systematic treatment of the Sāṁkhyā system. It follows the Sāṁkhyā-saptatīvṛtti. Mathara is also recognised as Madhava. As a vṛtti type of commentary the Matharavṛtti can be accepted as the most reliable one.

Vācaspati Miśra: Vācaspati Miśra is a versatile genius with an encyclopaedic learning. He has wonderful expository skill and presentation of whatever subject or system he takes to handle. A multi-sided philosopher he devoted himself to task of setting forth authoritative exposition of all the Dārsānas. His famous commentary of the Sāṁkhyā system is the Sāṁkhyā-Tattva-kaumudi. A detail account of works of Vācaspati is presented below:

(B) Vācaspati and His Works:

According to tradition, Vācaspati, a famous interpreter of the schools of Indian philosophy is a Maithila Brahmin from the region of Bihar. He is supposed to have lived either in the middle of the 9th century or towards the latter half of the tenth century. As already stated above a versatile philosophic genius Vācaspati has written expositions on almost all the philosophical systems.

The works of Vācaspati may thus be mentioned below:

(i) Nyāyakanikā - one of his works, is a commentary on the vidhi viveka of Maṇḍana; (ii) Tattvasamikṣa - a commentary
on Mandana's Brahmasidhi; (iii) Tattvabindu - an independent treatise on Vakyarthas; (iv) Nyayasucinibandha - the Nyaya work, perhaps written as a supplement to Tatparya;
(v) Nyayavartikatatparyatika - his another great work - is a commentary on Udyotakara's Nyayavartika; (vi) Tattva-Kaumudi a commentary on Isvarakrsna's Sankhya-Karika ;
(vii) Tattva Vaisaradi a commentary on Vyasa's Yogabhasya;
(viii) Bhamat a commentary on Brahmasutra of Sankara-Bhagya. All these works find their reference in the concluding third verse of Bhamat.

Besides these works Vacaspati is supposed to have written other works like (1) Nyaya Tattvaloka, (2) Nyayaratnatika, (3) Brahmatattva samhitoddipini,(4) Yuktidipika and (5) Vedanta Tattva-Kaumudi.

(i) Nyayakanika: It is a commentary on the Vidhiviveka of Mandana Misra. The Vidhiviveka is a work on the Bhattta school of Purvamimamsa. The Vidhiviveka deals with the Vidhi or injunctive sentences. Nyayakanika is a very lucid commentary.

(ii) Tattvasamiksha: It is a commentary on his Tattvavaisaradi a work on Sankhya-yoga system. The commentary is however, lost to us. So nothing in detail can be known about this commentary.
(iii) Tattvabindu: Tattvabindu is an independent work by Vācaspāti. This is a work on the Bhāṭṭa school of Purva-mīmāṃsā. Its main theme is what is efficient cause of verbal knowledge (śabdabodha or Vākyārthabodha). There are five traditional views regarding this subject of which four or considered primafacie (Purva pakṣa) views and the fifth siddhānta or Uttarapakṣa.

(iv) Nyāyasūcinibandha: It is a work on the Nyāya system which attempts to establish the number and order of the Nyāyasūtra of Gautama. It is supposed to have been written as a supplement to Tātparya.

(v) Nyāyavārtikatātparyatīkā: It is a commentary on the Nyāyavārtika, a work on the Nyāya system. It is an epistemological work which discusses the nature of Pramāṇas in detail. It also reconstructs the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika philosophy.

(vi) Tattva-Kaumudi: This is philosophical work which is an excellent exposition of Sāṃkhya-philosophy. It is a commentary on the Sāṃkhya-kārikā which exposes each an every Kārikā word by word and also supplies the comparative and critical notes discussions as an where necessary. It is a very important and indispensable commentary.

(vii) Tattvavaisāradī: This is a commentary on Patañjali's Yogasūtra and Vyāsa's Yogasūtra-bhāṣya, probably written by
Vācaspati Miśra at about the same time as or in tandem with the Tattvakaumudī. Unlike the Tattvakaumudī, the Tattvavai-dārada is a detailed and technically proficient treatment of Pāṇājala-Sāṃkhyā. It will be summarized in detail in the forthcoming Yoga volume of the encyclopedia.

(viii) Bhamati: It is the commentary on the Advaita Vedānta. It is the only source as far as the Vedāntic views of Vācaspati are concerned. Apart from being a commentary, Bhamati has all the features of an independent work. Bhamati is not a mere commentary but may be called a Vārtika.

(C) An Exhuastive Note on the Sāṃkhya-Kārikā and the Tattvakaumudī:

Sāṃkhya Kārikā: The Sāṃkhya-kārikā is hardly a 'philosophical' text as that designation is understood in an Indian intellectual environment. There is very little of the polemical give and take so typical of Darsāna or philosophical literature. Instead, the Sāṃkhya-kārikā is a philosophical poem, laying out the contours of the Sāṃkhya system in a relaxed and artful manner, presenting its content in serious and elegant ārya verses that flow easily and make use of striking similes and metaphors throughout. If the term 'Darsāna' is to be taken in its original sense as an 'intuitive seeing' that nurtures a quite wisdom and invites ongoing thoughtful meditation, then surely the Sāṃkhya-kārikā must stand as one of the most remarkable productions.
of its class, far removed, on one level, from the laconic sūtra style that glories in saying as little as possible and presupposing everything, and even further removed, on another level, from the frequently petty and tedious quibbling of Indian Philosophy. But alas, philosophers are seldom poets, and it is hardly surprising, therefore, that more prosaic minds both ancient and modern have faulted the text for its lack of precision and incisive polemic. In any case, the seventy verses of Īśvarakṛṣṇa have been remarkably influential both as a summary of the Sāṁkhya position and as a symptom of Sāṁkhya’s contribution to India’s philosophical and cultural heritage. It is surely appropriate, therefore, that the present volume begins its sequence of full summaries with this ancient philosophical poem.

Sāṁkhya-kārikā is the first available text on sāṁkhya philosophy by Īśvarakṛṣṇa. This book was translated into Chinese language by Paramārtha in 6th century A.D. In Chinese version it is popularly known as 'Hiranyasaptati or 'Suvarnasaptati'. Most important commentaries on Sāṁkhya-kārikā are Sāṁkhya-kārikābhāṣya of Gauḍapāda, Māṭharavṛtti of Māṭhara, Tattvakaumudi of Vācaspāti Misra and Jayamaṅgalā of Śaṁkarācārya.

The following tenets of the Sāṁkhya-kārikā are as follows:

1. Padārthas - twenty-five in number (Mahatete).
(2) Pramāṇas - three in number (Perception and Verbal Testimony).

(3) The theory of causation - Satkāryavāda (i.e., the effect pre-exists in the cause)

(4) The theory of guṇas - three in number (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas)

(5) Establishment of the multiplicity of the Self (Puruṣa bahutva or Plurality of Puruṣa)

(6) Theory of change (Pariṇāmavāda)

(7) Theory of liberation or Mokṣa (Kaivalya).

Sāṁkhyā-Tattva-Kaumudi:

Of the many commentaries on the Sāṁkhyā-Kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa the Sāṁkhyā-Tattva-Kaumudi of Vācaspati Miśra occupies the prominent place. It is a fairly simple and plain exposition of the Kārikās of Īśvarakṛṣṇa. This commentary of Vācaspati is the most exhaustive one. The title of the commentary means the 'Moon light' of the truth or reality. Really the title carries the significance in its contents. While commenting on the kārikās, Vācaspati explains every word of the original text critically and comparatively. At the beginning of his commentary, Vācaspati observes the formality of introducing the auspicious verses (Maṅgalā carana) which contains an indication of the
Prakṛti which is the equilibrium state of three Guṇas, Viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, It also gives an indication of Puruṣa of the Sāṁkhya system. Vācaspati also pays respects to the teachers on Sāṁkhya like Kapila, Āsuri, Pañcasikha and IśvaraKrṣṇa. Before going to explain the Kārikās Vācaspati starts an introduction before each an every Kārikā of IśvaraKrṣṇa. Vācaspati also takes up the important issues for discussion here and there in his commentary. While explaining the Kārikās relating to the source of valid knowledge accepted in the Sāṁkhya system, Vācaspati discusses the other Pramāṇas such as Upamāṇa, Arthāpatti, Abhāva, saṁbhava and Aitihya recognised by philosophers of other systems. Likewise, in the context of his exposition of the Kārikā dealing with the theory of causality (satkāryavāda), Vācaspati refers to the theory of other systems also. In this connection mention may be made of the theories like the Asatkāryavāda, Ārambhavāda and Vivartavāda. Again in connection with his exposition of the Kārikās speaking of the Guṇas, Vācaspati discusses everything in detail with the help of example and citation, similarly, in discussing the plurality of the Puruṣa (Puruṣa bahut va), Vācaspati Miśra very

14. ajāmekaṁ lohitsuklakṛṣṇam bahviḥ prajāḥ srjamanāṁ namāmaḥ/
    ajā ye tāṁ juṣamanāṁ bhajante jahatyenaṁ bhuktabhośāṁ
    numastān //
Kapilāya mahāmunaye manaye siṣyāya tasya cāsuraye /
pañcasikāya tathesvarakṛṣṇāyaśānāmasyām //
clearly and critically deals with. In this way, Vācaspati
dwells at length the topics like evolution of creation and
the nature of Mokṣa etc.

It may be mentioned here that Vācaspati's language
is very lucid. In this commentary Vācaspati makes
reference to some verses from other works. Of all the
commentaries available on the सांख्यकारिका Vācaspa-
ti's Tattva-Kaumudi is very much important as it gives
a thorough knowledge of the tenets of the सांख्यa Philo-
sophy enumerated by Īsvarakṛṣṇa in the सांख्यकारिका.