CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION
1. Introduction:

The Śāṅkhya, one of the oldest philosophical enquiries of India, is being shaped and re-shaped through the ages. Tradition accepts Śāṅkhya as one among the six orthodox (āstika) systems of Indian philosophy. As an āstika school, though Śāṅkhya believes in the authority of the Vedas yet the popular Śāṅkhya is very much silent about the existence of God. It is rather known as a dualistic system in Indian philosophical tradition which accepts two ultimate principles, i.e. prakṛti and puruṣa. As it can be said, Śāṅkhya is one of the oldest systems in Indian philosphical tradition, so there are lots of confusions regarding its origin and development. Over the years many interpreters have attempted to trace the development of the Śāṅkhya and to assess its meaning in their own lines of thinking. The opinions of the interpreters have varied widely, but there has been little attempt to synthesize them.

1.1: Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to offer an exposition of the philosophy of Śāṅkhya, with special reference to Śāṅkhya-Kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa along with an evaluation of the same. It is a humble attempt to take a fresh rational look at the ontology of Śāṅkhya and to assess an interpretation which probably comes closer to the original theme of Śāṅkhya philosophy of prakṛti (matter).
To start with, we must keep in mind that though Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *Sāṅkhya-Kārikā* is the first available systematic popular text of Sāṅkhya, still Īśvarakṛṣṇa is not the founder of this system. Tradition accepts Kapila as the founder of this system and his *Sāṅkhya-Sūtra* as the original text. There is a vast chronological gap between Kapila’s original Sāṅkhya and Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *Sāṅkhya-Kārikā*. It is generally agreed that Kapila flourished around the 8th century B.C. and he must have composed *Sāṅkhya-Sūtra* which is unfortunately not available at present. On the other hand the approximate date of Īśvarakṛṣṇa is 350AD to 450AD. Hence, it is not impossible, as observed by some critics, that there is a scope for questions on the authenticity of *Sāṅkhya-Kārikā* as the leading text of this system. The critics are of opinion that there are some deviations in these kārikās from the original Sāṅkhya of Kapila. The problem one has to face in studying Sāṅkhya systematically is that no text of Kapila’s time is available at present. However, here an attempt is made to evaluate the *Sāṅkhya-Kārikā* as a whole and the criticisms against it with a view to arrive at a reasonable conclusion. It is an attempt to study Sāṅkhya with a scientific approach.

1.2: What is Sāṅkhya:

The Sāṅkhya, as it is mentioned above, is regarded as one of the oldest systems of Indian philosophy and tradition regards Kapila as the founder of this system. Though philosophers are talking about an approximate time of Kapila, as it is mentioned above, still it is very difficult to determine a commonly
accepted time of Kapila. According to some thinkers Kapila was earlier than the Vedic tradition as his name was appeared in the *Rg Veda* (x.27.16)\(^1\) and that is why it can be thought that he was earlier than the Vedic tradition. This can be one of the causes for which Sāṁkhya system of Kapila is said as the oldest system of Indian philosophy. References can be found about Sāṁkhya doctrines in some of the *Upaniṣads*, e.g., in the *Chāndogya*, the *Prashna*, the *Katha*, and particularly in the *Śvetāsvatara*, in the *Mahābhārata*, in the *Gitā*, and in the *Smṛtis* and the *Purāṇas*.\(^2\) Hence, some interpreters even try to label Sāṁkhya as “the philosophy of India” considering its enormous impact on the rest of the schools of Indian philosophy.

Sāṁkhya philosophy finds its place among the orthodox Brāhmaṇical system of Indian thought. It is generally held that Sāṁkhya accepts the authority of the *Veda* and hence, is called āstika. But the concepts of *prakṛti* or *pradhāna*, *svabhāvavāda*, the contradiction of the three opposite entities known as *guṇas* and the concept of evolution have given Sāṁkhya a radical character distinct from other orthodox schools. These concepts present another character of this system viz. realism if not materialism. In Indian tradition, it is said that there are two main streams of orthodox philosophy grew out of the *Upaniṣads*: the realistic, of which Sāṁkhya is the earliest representative, and the idealistic, of which Vedānta is the leading representative.

The Sāṁkhya system represent one of the most interesting and fascinating phases of Indian thought. It really has exerted an important influence in the development of Indian philosophical enterprise, and many of
its terms and notions have been and continue to be employed by other systems. The Śāṅkhya is famous for its rationalistic approach to philosophical problems. It has been able to discuss the problems of life and reality away from a dogmatic religious touch. Probably, this fact enables it to stand as a pure philosophy. It seems, it has tried to prove that supernatural religion has no place in philosophy. The modern orthodox interpreter Radhakrishnan also admits that: “it undermines the foundation of supernatural religion by substituting evolution for creation.”

Perhaps on this very point Garbe has described it to be “the most significant system of philosophy that India has produced.”

1.3: Meaning of the Word ‘Śāṅkhya’:

The word ‘Śāṅkhya’ itself occurs in the Upaniṣads along with the usual associate Yoga and indicates metaphysical inquiry, inquiry about the cause of the universe, an inquiry that leads to the knowledge of this cause. (Tatkāranam Śāṅkhhyayogabhipānnam. Śvetāsva, VI.13). Different and interesting explanations have been offered about the precise meaning of this word ‘Śāṅkhya’. The original meaning of the Sanskrit word ‘Śāṅkhya’ is enumeration or number, although another meaning, probably slightly later, is reflection. The original meaning of the Sanskrit word ‘Yoga’ is contemplation. Hence Śāṅkhya philosophy is said to aid its adherent to attain ultimate salvation by means of knowledge, while Yoga philosophy does this by means of contemplation. Śāṅkhya is essentially intellectualistic whereas Yoga is
perhaps voluntaristic. The term ‘Sāṁkhya’ appears to be derived from the root, khyā, together with the prefix, Sam, meaning ‘reckoning’, ‘summing up’, ‘numeration’, ‘calculation’ etc. It is said to be derived from saṁkhyā or number and the name is appropriate to a system which aims at a right knowledge of reality by the enumeration of the ultimate objects of knowledge. According to some other philosophers, the word ‘Sāṁkhya’ is derived from the word samkhya which means right knowledge (samyak-jñāna) and a philosophy of right knowledge is justly named Sāṁkhya. The Bhagavad-Gītā uses this word in the sense of knowledge, so does the Mahābhārata at other places also. In the Mahābhārata it is said that the Sāṁkhya exercise reason (saṁkhyā) and discuss nature and the twenty-four principles and are therefore called Sāṁkhya. Vijñānabhikṣu in his commentary explains the noun Sāṁkhya as meaning ‘discrimination’, “the setting forth of spirit as distinct from matter (prakṛti)”.

In the very first chapter of the ‘Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy’, vol.iv, p.3, three dimensions of meaning in the word ‘Sāṁkhya’ can be noticed. At first it says - as an adjective, the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ refers to any enumerated set or grouping and can presumably be used in any inquiry in which enumeration or calculation is a prominent feature. Secondly, as a masculine noun, the term refers to someone who calculates, enumerates or discriminates properly and thirdly as a neuter noun, the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ comes to refer to a specific system of dualistic philosophizing that proceeds by a method of enumerating the contents of experience and the world for the purpose of attaining radical liberation from frustration and rebirth. These three dimensions
of meaning in the word ‘Sāṁkhya’ indicate the historical development of the word in the ancient period. That is to say, in the ancient history of South Asian Culture there appear to be three identical phases of development of the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ that roughly corresponds to these three basic dimensions. These can be briefly characterized as follows:

1) Intellectual inquiry in the oldest learned traditions of ancient India (from the Vedic period, time of which is accepted as 1500 B.C.E..) was frequently cast in the format of elaborate enumerations of the contents of a particular subject matter- for example, the principles of statecraft as preserved in Kauṭilya’s Arthaśāstra, the principles of medicine as preserved in the Caraka-Saṁhitā and Suśruta-Saṁhitā and so fourth. The Vedic corpus itself exhibits this tendency as do traditions of law and politics, and it is in such environments that one finds some of the early references to Sāṁkhya. Kauṭilya, for example, refers to Sāṁkhya as one of three traditions of ānvikṣikī. The notion of ānvikṣikī in these ancient contexts means something like the enumeration of the contents of a particular subject matter by means of systematic reasoning. The practice of ānvikṣikī is not really ‘philosophy’ in our usual senses of the term; it is, rather a kind of general ‘scientific’ inquiry by means of the systematic enumeration of basic principles, such enumeration appeared on a variety of intellectual subject areas, including phonology, grammar, statecraft, medicine, law, cosmology and iconography and the compilation of these subject-area enumerations sometimes came to be called tantras.
2) The second phase in the development of the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ begins from the period of the oldest, pre-Buddhist Upaniṣads, approximate time of which is eighth or seventh century B.C.E, and can be traced through traditions of the early ascetic spirituality in South Asia, namely, the various monastic groups, the early Jaina and Buddhist movements and so fourth, reaching a culmination in the sorts of speculative thinking one finds in the Mokṣadharma portion of the Mahābhārata, in the Bhagavad-Gītā and in the cosmological descriptions of the oldest Purāṇas. If in the oldest period the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ could refer generally to any enumerated set of principles, in this second period the notion becomes linked to a methodology of reasoning that results in spiritual knowledge that leads to liberation from the cycle of frustration and rebirth. There is a possibility also that in the oldest period the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ in its general sense of intellectual enumeration was applied on the occasion in contexts of meditation and religious cosmology - the enumeration in Rg Veda I.164,X.90, OR X.129, or the enumerations of the parts of the body or the breaths in the Atharva Veda or in the Brāhmaṇa literature would suggest as much - but there is little doubt that it is primarily in this second period that ‘Sāṁkhya’ becomes a prominent notion in those environments in which meditation, spiritual exercises, and religious cosmology represent the crucial subject matters.

3) The third phase in the development of the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ marks the beginning of the technical philosophical tradition and coincides with the end of the second period, namely from about the last century B.C.E. through the first
several centuries C.E. It can be imagined that the third phase was as shrouded in obscurity as the second phase, and Edgerton, for example, in 1924 claimed that Sāṁkhya as a technical philosophical system was not really in existence prior to Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s Sāṁkhya-Kārikā.  

Except the above mentioned explanation about the term ‘Sāṁkhya’, different philosophers have tried to give different interpretation of it. For example Garbe sees the term primarily as a designation for the notion of ‘number’, from which the later ideas of ‘enumeration’, ‘investigation’ and ‘analysis’ were derived. According to Garbe; the Sāṁkhya is that school or system which emphasizes the enumeration of principles, evolutes or emergent. Oldenberg prefers the idea of ‘examination’, ‘calculation’, or the “description by enumeration of constituents.” Jacobi has offered two interpretation of the term. On the one hand, says Jacobi, ‘Sāṁkhya’ refers to those who define a concept by setting forth or enumerating its content. On the other hand, ‘Sāṁkhya’ refers to those who investigate or analyze the various categories of existence. Eliade goes beyond these basic meanings and suggests that the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ refers to those who seek the ultimate ‘discrimination’ or ‘discernment’ of the difference between prakṛti and puruṣa. In the other words Eliade understands the word in terms of the ultimate goal of salvation of the system. Edgerton emphasizing the uses of the term in the older texts suggests that ‘Sāṁkhya’ refers to the notion of ‘reasoning’, ‘ratiocination’. In the older texts, says Edgerton, the term ‘Sāṁkhya’ is not a technical designation for a particular system of thought. It is, rather, a term which refers
to those who seek salvation by knowledge. Moreover in the kārikā no-LXIX, it can be noticed, Īśvarakṛṣṇa has mentioned the phrase “expounded or enumerated by the great sage” for Śāṅkhyā system.

From the above discussions it can be understood that the term ‘Śāṅkhyā’ refers primarily to the idea of ‘number’ or ‘enumeration’ but that it also signifies those who analyze something by means of the enumeration of categories. Still one thing is very important to mention that the term ‘Śāṅkhyā’ was probably used and understood in a variety of ways by different writings and traditions, thus making it impossible to limit the term to any one technical meaning.

1.4: Place of Śāṅkhyā in Indian Philosophical Heritage:

Śāṅkhyā philosophy occupies a key position in Indian philosophical heritage. The beginnings of the Śāṅkhyā system of thought may be discovered in some of the early Upaniṣads. It is tried to link up the various strands of thought that can be found in the Mahābhārata, the Gītā, the Purāṇas and the Caraka-Samhitā and also in other relevant Buddhist and Pāṇcarātra texts, which may lead to the conclusion that the Śāṅkhyā system of thought must have passed through various stages of development, which shaped and reshaped it at various times both theistically and atheistically. The historical development of the Śāṅkhyā may be arranged conveniently into four basic periods. These are –
1) Ancient speculations, including the speculative Vedic hymns and the oldest prose *Upaniṣads*. This period extends from the eighth or ninth century B.C. through the period of Jainism and the rise of early Buddhism. In this first period of development, Sāṃkhyā as such — either in its classical or proto-classical forms - is nowhere to be found. It is in this ancient period, however, that many motifs, ideas and structures of thought begin to appear which are later assimilated into Sāṃkhyā contexts.

2) Proto-Sāṃkhyā speculations including the 'middle' *Upaniṣads*, such texts as the *Caraka-Saṃhitā* and *Buddhacarita*, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and the speculative passages from the *Mokṣadharma* portion of the *Mahābhārata*. This period extends from about the fourth century B.C. to the first century A.D. In this period one is able to discern the appearance of a definite *Sāṃkhyā-Yoga* tradition.

3) Classical Sāṃkhyā speculation, including the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*, the *Yoga-Sūtra* and related commentaries. This period extends from about the first century A.D. to the tenth or eleventh century A.D. At the beginning of the period one may find Sāṃkhyā differentiating itself from other Yogic traditions, although one still finds a great variety of doctrines within the developing tradition. This diversity leads eventually to the normative system of Īśvarakṛṣṇa which remains the authoritative interpretation for many centuries or may be till today.
4) Renaissance or later Sāṅkhya speculation including the Sāṅkhyaapravacanasūtra and the commentaries of Aniruddha, Mahādeva and Vijñānabhikṣu together with the Tattva-samāsasūtra. This period reaches from about the fifteenth century A.D. to the seventeenth century.

1.5: Views on Sāṅkhya by the Epics and Some Contemporary Thinkers:

As Sāṅkhya is found to be the oldest system of Indian philosophy, so it is very difficult to have a common interpretation of it. Secondly, the original texts of this system are not available at present. That is why diverse interpretations can be noticed about Sāṅkhya, its meaning, origin, development etc. Much have been written in regard to the history and interpretations of the Sāṅkhya. Scholarly opinions vary widely, and as a result, the Sāṅkhya has been interpreted in a number of quite differing and sometimes contradictory ways. Here attention is given to the views of the great epics on Sāṅkhya with most significant interpretations of scholars of the twentieth century.

1.5.1: Sāṅkhya in the Mahābhārata:

The Mahābhārata appears to have attached the greatest importance to Sāṅkhya system. Critics are of the opinion that the matters, relating to Sāṅkhya, are far more elaborate than those relating to other systems. The epic
mentions several Sāmkhyacāryas, e.g. Jaigisavya, Asita, Devala, Yajñavalkya, Āsuri, Pañcaśikha, Kapila (Sāntiparva 318/59-66, 318/67, 68, 218/9, 10, etc.). Of them, Yajñavalkya has been accorded the most exalted position (Sāntiparva 318/67, 68) and his teaching has been adumbrated in some detail. Pañcaśikha has been stated to have taken great pains to disseminate the knowledge of Sāmkhya through a succession of disciples. In Sāntiparva 301/108, 109, Sāmkhya has been proclaimed as the repository of all kinds of salutary knowledge enshrined in the Vedas, Purāṇa, and Yoga etc.\textsuperscript{12}

The elements of Sāmkhya are scattered in the epic. As regards padārthas of Sāmkhya, the epic mentions eightfold prakṛti and sixteen vikṛti. Prakṛti comprises avyakta, mahat, ahaṃkāra, pṛthvi, vāyu, ākāsa, āp and jyoti. Here the mūlaprakṛti and its vikṛtis, mahat etc. are called by the common name prakṛti. Vikṛti comprises the five sensory organs, five motor organs, five subtle elements as well as the mind. Critic says, the Sāmkhya order of evolution has been mentioned in the epic. (Sāntiparva, ch. 310; Ásvamedhaparva, 35. 20-23, and 47. 12-15). Over and above the aforesaid 24 tattvas, admitted in Sāmkhya, twenty-fifth one has been added; that is puruṣa. (Sāntiparva, 302/38-42). One vital difference between Sāmkhya philosophy, specially Classical Sāmkhya and the Mahābhārata is that while God has no place in the former, the latter has accepted God as the twenty-sixth tattva over and above all others. All this may indicate that it was a period when reflection was very busy on the Sāmkhya problems.
Radhakrishnan says, in cosmology the *Mahābhārata* accepts the Sāṃkhya theory, though not consistently. It makes both *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* aspects of the one Brāhmaṇ. He again says, there is no doubt that the Sāṃkhya ideas were slowly maturing in this period, though they were not formulated into a system. The chief features of the Sāṃkhya system as found in the *Mahābhārata* may be noted, since most of the subsequent thought accepts the psychology and the cosmology of the Sāṃkhyas, though not their metaphysics and religion. The Sāṃkhya enumeration of the elements is accepted by the *Mahābhārata* (Santiparva, 303-308). The *Mahābhārata* assumes the doctrine of the *gūṇas*. The constituents of *prakṛti* are the three qualities of *sattva* (goodness), *rajas* (passion), and *tamas* (darkness). They are present throughout all things, though in different degrees. Beings are classified into gods, men and beasts accordingly as the one or the other quality predominates. (*Anugītā*, 14. 36-38).¹³

The great epic *Mahābhārata* contains within itself valuable suggestions, expositions and lucid analysis of Sāṃkhya concepts. Of course these ideas are so scattered and so diversely explained that the task of spinning out only one coherent system of thought is fraught with great risk. The most common view of the Sāṃkhya that has been frankly and openly admitted in several chapters of the "Sānti Parva" of the *Mahābhārata* is, however, theistic and monistic. The existence of a "*Puruṣottama*" (the highest spiritual being) as the ‘Ultimate-Reality’ is too apparent in *Mahābhārata*, and *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, the spirituality and physico-mentality, are but phases of this highest Lord.
1.5.2: Sāṁkhya in the Bhagavata-Purāṇa:

It is said, as in the Mahābhārata, the Sāṁkhya in the Bhagavata-Purāṇa also shows a religious transformation of the system under the influence of the Vaiṣṇavas. Kapila, the propounder of the Sāṁkhya, has been described here as the God himself take his birth in this world for the promulgation of proper knowledge - a knowledge leading to the realization of the self. (Bhagavata-Purāṇa, III. 25. 1; cf. also, ibid, III. 24. 36-37). A perusal of the Sāṁkhya recorded in this Purāṇa show that the inclusion of God here is necessitated mainly on the ground of preparing a means to the attainment of the final end. Puruṣa, according to this Purāṇa is eternal and unqualified. It is consciousness in its very essence and immanent in the universe. Puruṣa, as the Bhagavata Purāṇa contends, is itself devoid of all sorts of agency, although it associates itself with the latter through its connection with prakṛti.¹⁴

1.5.3: Sāṁkhya in the Gītā:

Bhagavad-Gītā, the most sacred book of Hindu religion contains considerable Sāṁkhya materials. Chapter-II of Bhagavad-Gītā is known as Sāṁkhya-Yoga, chapter-XIII is designated as prakṛti-puruṣa-viveka-yoga. In the Gītā, the word ‘Sāṁkhya’ has been used in many contexts, but it can be noticed, no where it has been used in the sense of Kapila’s Sāṁkhya or any other form of Sāṁkhya. There is reference of the word ‘Sāṁkhya’ in the second chapter of the Gītā, but here, it cannot be interpreted in any manner except “pursuit of true knowledge”. In other words, in this context, the word
Sāńkhya is clearly used in the sense of the path of philosophic wisdom, which leads to the realization of the essential nature of the soul or ātman. Sri Krishna’s subsequent instruction of the “pursuit of true knowledge” i.e. Jñāna-Yoga refers actually to Karma-Yoga or the disinterested performance of duties. Sāńkhya-Yoga or “the path of knowledge” directly destroys ignorance which is the root cause of human misery and is, therefore, meant for those blessed seekers who are endowed with keen intellectual and volitional power for discrimination and renunciation. So, in Gītā, the word ‘Sāńkhya’ is definitely used in the sense of ‘wisdom’, as it has been stated that the Sāńkhyas (wise men) follow the path of knowledge for attaining liberation from the miseries of the world.

According to Garbe, “the teaching of the Sāńkhya-Yoga constitutes almost entirely the foundation of the philosophical observations of the Bhagavad-Gītā. In comparison with them the Vedānta takes a second place. Sāńkhya and Yoga are often mentioned by name, while the Vedānta appears only once (Vedāntakṛt, xv. 15), and then in the sense of Upaniṣad or treatise....”15 The terms Sāńkhya-Yoga when they occur in the Gītā do not represent the classical schools of Sāńkhya and Yoga, but only the reflective and meditative methods of gaining salvation. Besides, during the period of the Gītā there was no clear-cut distinction between the Sāńkhya and Yoga as two distinct philosophical systems.

The psychology and order of the creation of the Sāńkhya are accepted by the Gītā, though the metaphysical implications of the Sāńkhya are rejected
by it. (Śāṅkhyaśāra, ii. 11-16, 18-30; ii. 27-29; v.14; vii. 4; xiii. 5.) Kapila’s name is mentioned, though not that of Patanjali. It cannot, however, be sure that this Kapila is the founder of the Sāṁkhya system. Even if it be so, it does not follow that the system in all its details was elaborated by that time. The terms buddhi or understanding, ahaṅkāra or self-sense, and manas or mind, occur, though not always in their Sāṁkhya significance. Again, while the Classical Sāṁkhya deliberately avoids the question of the existence of God, the Gītā is most anxious to establish it.\(^{16}\)

In the Bhagavad-Gītā the distinction between puruṣa and prakṛti is recognized, but the dualism of Sāṁkhya is overcome here. Here, puruṣa is accepted as the form of God and the psychical intelligence is given a higher status. In the Sāṁkhya system it can be noticed that Sāṁkhya looks upon all the modes of prakṛti as phenomena implying a permanent subject to whom they appear and for whom they exist. Though in Sāṁkhya, prakṛti is accepted as unconscious, its activities are purposive, meant as it is for the freedom of the puruṣa (soul). But the teleological character of its activities is not in accord with its alleged unconsciousness. In the Gītā, critic says, this difficulty is overcome. Here it is said, there is a spiritual fact behind the play of prakṛti. Puruṣa or soul is not the independent reality in Gītā’s opinion. The Gītā does not recognize any ultimate distinctness of individual souls. It also believes in the existence of an Uttama-puruṣa, or supreme soul. Yet the character of the individual soul and its relation to nature as given in the Bhagavad-Gītā show the influence of the Sāṁkhya theory. (Śāṅkhya-Kārikā, 62; B.G., xiii.34)\(^{17}\)
After these epics views on Sāṅkhya, let us have a brief outlook of some contemporary scholar’s views on the same.

1.5.4: Richard Garbe:

Garbe says that Sāṅkhya is one of the oldest philosophies of the Indian tradition. To support this claim, Garbe cites the well-known reference in Kautilya’s Arthasastra to the three systems of ‘philosophy’ or ‘science’ current at that time: Sāṅkhya, Yoga, and Lokāyata (materialism). Garbe accepts the dating of the Arthasastra to be around 300 B.C.

Garbe says, there is a relationship between Sāṅkhya and Buddhism regarding its antiquity. There are several striking similarities between the Sāṅkhya and Buddhism which seem to argue for the influence of one upon the other. Moreover, these similarities argue, according to Garbe, for the priority of Sāṅkhya to Buddhism.

Garbe accepts the tradition that the sage Kapila was the historical founder of the system. Garbe admits that most references to Kapila are legendary, but he maintains the notion that the Sāṅkhya system in its principal features is the work of one man. He again says, the name of Gotama’s birth place, Kapilāvastu, is important, as an indication of the possible region in which the sage Kapila did his work. Again, Garbe continues, the Sāṅkhya system is not Brāhmaṇical. He says, “The doctrine of Kapila, although later numbered as a part of the great wisdom or knowledge of Brāhmaṇism, was yet originally non-brāhmaṇical - i.e., a Kṣatriya philosophy.”
Regarding the approximate time of the rise of the Sāṁkhya, Garbe offers two assertions. First of all, the reference in the Brahmajala-Sūta (ii, 1 ff.), to the doctrine of sassātavāda (Skt. Sasvāta-vāda) is very close to the Sāṁkhya notion of satkāryavāda and probably indicates the existence at that time of a Sāṁkhya tradition. Secondly, Garbe asserts that no distinctive Sāṁkhya doctrine can be found in any pre-Buddhist, Brāhmaṇical literature. This may lead to the conclusion that the Sāṁkhya was formulated in the period between the oldest pre-Buddhist Upaniṣads (Brhadāranyaka, Chāndogya, etc.) and the rise of the Buddhist tradition. Garbe says, we can know from Jaina as well as Buddhist sources that there were many schools which flourished in this ancient period.

Garbe has given some noteworthy points regarding the interpretation of the meaning of the Sāṁkhya. First of all, he emphasizes that Sāṁkhya is atheistic. A god or gods play no part in the system of Kapila. Secondly, the Sāṁkhya is remarkable, says Garbe, because it seeks to solve the problems of the universe and man simply by means of reason. Garbe even suggests at one point that the Sāṁkhya should be of interest to those modern men whose primary interest is natural science. Thirdly, Garbe rejects the notion of some scholars that Sāṁkhya is a kind of idealism. He stresses, rather, that Sāṁkhya is much closer to a naturalism, or modified materialism.
1.5.5: K.C. Bhattacharya:

K.C. Bhattacharya had a deep study of ancient Indian philosophy - particularly of the Advaita-Vedānta, Sāṁkhya, Yoga and Jaina philosophies. Although K.C. Bhattacharya’s work contributes little to the problem of the historical interpretation of Classical Sāṁkhya, his treatment of the meaning of Sāṁkhya as a philosophical position is one of the most creative and profound in modern scholarship. His essays entitled “Studies in Sāṁkhya philosophy” remained unpublished during his life time (1875-1949) and were finally issued posthumously in 1956 as part of volume-i of a two-volume work entitled “Studies in philosophy”, edited by Gopinath Bhattacharya. In the preface to these essays on Sāṁkhya, K.C. Bhattacharya indicates his methodology as follows:

Much of Sāṁkhya literatures appear to have been lost, and there seems to be no continuity of tradition from ancient times up to the age of the commentators...The interpretation of all ancient systems requires a constructive effort; but while in the case of some systems where we have a large volume of literature and a continuity of tradition, the construction is mainly of the nature of translation of ideas into modern concepts, here in Sāṁkhya the construction at many places involves supplying of missing links from one’s imagination. It is risky work, but unless one does it one cannot be said to understand Sāṁkhya as a philosophy. It is a task that one is obliged to undertake. It is a fascinating task because Sāṁkhya is a bold constructive philosophy. Sāṁkhya is not the avowed formulation of religious experience
which Vedānta is primarily, nor do analytical and critical like Nyāya but based on speculative insight and demands imaginative-introspective effort at every stage on the part of the interpreter.\footnote{32}

1.5.6: S. Radhakrishnan:

It seems, most of Indian thinkers including Radhakrishnan offer only very general summaries of the doctrines of Sāṁkhya followed by a criticism of the system from the point of view of Advaita-Vedānta. Radhakrishnan says: the Sāṁkhya system takes its name from the fact that it arrives at its conclusions by means of theoretical investigation. The word ‘Sāṁkhya’ is said by some to be derived from saṁkhyā, or number, and the name is justified as being appropriate to a system which gives an analytical enumeration of the principles of the cosmos. In his book “\textit{Indian Philosophy, vol-ii},” Radhakrishnan says, “In our account of the cosmology of the \textit{Rg Veda}, we referred to certain vague anticipation of the Sāṁkhya theory of \textit{puruṣa} and \textit{prakṛti}. When we pass through the \textit{Upaniṣads}, we find, in their varied teachings, the leading conceptions of the Sāṁkhya philosophy.” When the Sāṁkhya claims to be a system based on the \textit{Upaniṣads}, there is some justification for it, though the main tendency of the \textit{Upaniṣads} is radically opposed to its dualism. The realistic tendencies of the \textit{Upaniṣads} receive emphasis in the Sāṁkhya conception of the universe. Radhakrishnan says: the first mention of the Sāṁkhya is in the \textit{Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad}, though the elements coordinated into the system are to be met with in the earlier \textit{Upaniṣads}. 
As an absolute idealist Radhakrishnan seemed not to be satisfied with the dualistic Sāṃkhya. He criticizes this particular system of Kapila for deviation from idealism. He says: “If we admit the Sāṃkhya view of prakṛti and its complete independence of puruṣa, then it will be impossible to account for the evolution of prakṛti. We do not know how latent potentialities become fruitful without any consciousness to direct them... beyond the pradhāna there exist no external principle which could either impel the pradhāna to activity or restrain it from activity. The puruṣa is indifferent, neither moves to nor restrain from action. As therefore the pradhāna stands in no relation, it is impossible to see why it should sometimes modify itself into mahat and sometimes not.... prakṛti and puruṣa have no common purpose. Unconscious prakṛti cannot suffer; inactive puruṣa cannot experience suffering. How can the two co-operate for the redemption of the world? The question cannot be answered so long as the Sāṃkhya declines to admit a higher unity.” It seems, Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that dualism in Sāṃkhya is not final, there can be higher unity than prakṛti and puruṣa for its dependence and according to him, only such a view can make the Sāṃkhya philosophy more consistent.

1.5.7: E. H. Johnston:

In his famous essay “Early Sāṃkhya - an essay on its development according to the texts” published in 1937, Johnston sets out to ascertain the principles common to all forms of early Sāṃkhya, to show in what respects
differences of opinion were tolerated, and to trace different doctrines up to its culmination in the Sāṁkhya-Kārikā. Although this work is not concerned with the Classical Sāṁkhya - i.e., it is limited to an analysis of pre-Classical Sāṁkhya terms and texts, still it is important for comprehending the history of Sāṁkhya speculations. It can be said, Johnston's conclusions reveal the complexity of the problems surrounding the history of the Sāṁkhya, and his careful examination of key terms offers fresh insights on a number of issues of interpretation.

Regarding the origins of Sāṁkhya, Johnston points to the speculations of Brāhmaṇas and earliest Upaniṣads in which one observes a concern for discovering the essential nature of the individual along with a concern for the nature of life after death. Actually Johnston tried to find out the mortal and immortal parts of individual discussed in the ancient texts. He refers to the Yājñavalkya-Matreyi dialogue in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad in which one finds mention of the five organs of sense, the five organs of action, and manas (mind). He again says: one finds also in this Upaniṣad references to vijñāna, which later becomes buddhi in the Sāṁkhya scheme, as well as references to the five objects of the senses. Thus he concludes, seventeen of the final twenty-three principles of prakṛti are already present in the Brhadāranyaka. One important thing Johnston has mentioned, none of these speculations in the older texts can be called Sāṁkhya, but they do at least give clear indication of the context from which the Sāṁkhya emerged.
1.5.8: Surendranath Dasgupta:

S.N. Dasgupta, one of the prominent philosophers of India has given the most penetrating analysis of the origin and significance of the Śāṅkhyā. With respect to the origin of the Śāṅkhyā one can summarize Dasgupta’s view as: ‘The major ideas and terms of the Śāṅkhyā clearly come from the Vedic-Upaniṣadic heritage’.36 There are probably many schools of Śāṅkhyā in the period between the end of the oldest Upaniṣads and the composition of the middle Upaniṣads.37 An older school of Śāṅkhyā can be seen in the Caraka-Saṁhitā and in the doctrines of Pañcaśikha in Mahābhārata 12.219. This school accepted only twenty-four principles. It included puruṣa within the avyakta or prakṛti.38 Dasgupta says, Śāṅkhyā was probably theistic originally which is, of course, very controversial. Dasgupta cites here the content of Saṣṭītantra, which is purported to be an old Śāṅkhyā textbook now lost, as described in the Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā. According to him the Śāṅkhyā went through three stages:

a) Theistic stage as seen in the Saṣṭītantra;

b) An atheistic stage as seen in the Śāṅkhyā schools of Caraka and Pañcaśikha;

c) Final atheistic stage as seen in Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s Śāṅkhyā-kārikā.39

In the Mokṣadharma portion of epic (chap.304) three schools of Śāṅkhyā are described:

a) A school holding to twenty-four principles which is probably the schools of Caraka and Pañcaśikha;
b) A school holding to twenty-five principles which is the Classical Sāṅkhya;

c) A school holding to twenty-six principles which is the Yoga.40

According to Dasgupta, Īśvarakṛṣṇa can be safely dated around 200 A.D. or little later. His Sāṅkhya-Kārikā is the classical statement of the Sāṅkhya view.41 The Sāṅkhya-pravacanasūtra and the Tattvasamāsa are both late works, i.e., 14th or 15th century A.D.42 Vijnānabhikṣu, the commentator to the late Sāṅkhya-pravacanasūtra, offers the most satisfactory explanation of key Sāṅkhya doctrines. Many difficult points of interpretation can only be cleared up by restoring to Vijnānabhikṣu's discussion.43

1.5.9: Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya:

D.P. Chattopadhyaya is one of the prominent contemporary Indian philosophers. Among Marxist interpreters of Indian thought including Th. Stcherbatsky, D.D. Kosambi, W. Ruben, N.P. Anikeev and others, the most interesting and sustained treatment of the history and meaning of Sāṅkhya philosophy is to be found in the work of Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya. His basic position regarding the interpretation of Sāṅkhya was first set forth in his important book, "Lokayata - A Study in Ancient Indian Materialism" (first edition, 1959), and he has more or less reiterated his basic views in his subsequent books, including "Indian Philosophy - a popular introduction". (first edition, 1964), "Indian Atheism - A Marxist Analysis" (first edition, 1969).

Chattopadhyaya has tried to give a very new dimension in the Sāṁkhyā tradition. Two basic lines of argument are apparent in Chattopadhyaya’s treatment of Sāṁkhyā and can be used for purposes of providing a brief summary of his perspective. These are:

Firstly, Chattopadhyaya argues that the form of Sāṁkhyā found in Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s Sāṁkhyā-Kārikā is neither the oldest form of the doctrine nor a very consistent form of the Sāṁkhyā position. Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s Sāṁkhyā system is a syncretistic product of an older materialist philosophy derived from pre-Vedic or non-Vedic sources together with Vedānta notions about the puruṣa or consciousness taken over from the idealistic Upaniṣads. The result of this syncretism is a hopeless bundle of contradictions which Ācārya, as a consistent idealist, rightly criticizes and rejects in his Vedānta-Sūtra-bhāṣya. Chattopadhyaya accepts at face value Ācārya’s claim that the Sāṁkhyā system as set forth in the Sāṁkhyā-Kārikā is anti-Vedic and has no legitimate claim whatever to be an acceptable interpretation of the orthodox tradition. The necessary interpretive task, therefore, according to Chattopadhyaya, is to reconstruct what the original Sāṁkhyā position was; and, in view of the fact that the puruṣa is an anomalous notion within the classical system, the way to proceed in reconstruction of the Sāṁkhyā position without the classical notion of the Puruṣa. There is some textual support for such an approach, says Chattopadhyaya, since the older Sāṁkhyā texts like Caraka-Saṁhitā and
certain passages from the *Mahābhārata* appear to suggest an interpretation which assigns a minor role to the *puruṣa* or consciousness.\(^{45}\)

Secondly, Chattopadhyaya argues that the most important notion in Sāṁkhya is *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is accepted as the material cause of this universe in Sāṁkhya tradition. Chattopadhyaya tried to give importance in the self-sufficiency of *prakṛti* regarding the origination of this world. The crucial problem in Sāṁkhya as a classical philosophical position is its dualism of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, but Chattopadhyaya deals with the problem by denying it. Sāṁkhya is really not a dualism; it is a monistic materialism, a precise antithesis to Śaṅkara’s monistic idealism. Chattopadhyaya tried to say that original Sāṁkhya had no notion of the *puruṣa*; it was simply the philosophy of *pradhāna-kārana-vāda*.

1.5.10: Daya Krishna:

In his famous book *“New Perspective in Indian Philosophy”* Daya Krishna says: Sāṁkhyan thought, which by common consent is supposed to be non-Vedic, is found earlier to the period of the Buddha and the Mahāvira, if we accept that Sāṁkhya or what Larson has called ‘proto-Sāṁkhya thought’ is found in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. (pp-23, 24) In the same book he says: as for Sāṁkhya, it is a matter of common knowledge that while there are no specific Sāṁkhya texts before *Saṣṭītantra* which is ascribed by Larson to 100 B.C. and which Potter in the third edition of his Bibliography has assigned to A.D. 100, there are ample references to Sāṁkhyan thought scattered in almost
all the texts that are dated prior to that period. The first important Sāṅkhya text after Śaṭītantra is supposed to be Sāṅkhya-Kārikā which is ascribed to around A.D. 350. However, there seems to be a peculiarity in the case of Sāṅkhya in that though the Sāṅkhya-Kārika did enjoy some sort of a pre-eminence after it was written, independent works differing from it continued to be composed and it never occupied the status which the sūtras of other schools of philosophy normally did in the Indian philosophical tradition. Rather, Daya Krishna is of the opinion that Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s Sāṅkhya-Kārikā can be questioned whether it is really Sāṅkhya in character?

Daya Krishna again says: Sāṅkhya is supposed to have an independent origin and has continued to lead an autonomous life of its own. Even the impact of Sāṅkhya which may be regarded as independent from the traditions deriving from the Vedic corpus was far greater in the period than that of the Brahma Sūtra.46

1.6: Source Materials:

As has been mentioned earlier, Kapila’s Sāṅkhya-Sūtra is accepted as the original text of Sāṅkhya philosophy. But unfortunately it is not available at present. The only available text of Īśvarakṛṣṇa is composed about not less than eight hundred years later. During this huge gap of time come the Upaniṣads, probably Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Bhagavad-Gītā, Brahma-Sūtra of Bādārāyana etc. wherein frequent references to Sāṅkhya can be traced. Hence,
it happens to be a difficult job on the part of a researcher to determine what can serve as the authentic source of Sāṁkhya.

Still if we want to search for the origin of the Sāṁkhya philosophy we must search it in the Upaniṣads. Although the principles of the Sāṁkhya in their details are not to be found in the Upaniṣads, yet the presence of Sāṁkhya ideas in germinal forms in the Upaniṣads is an undisputed fact. Of course the main theme of all the Upaniṣads is both idealistic and monistic, as each one of them seeks to establish the supremacy of one infinite spirit; but there are passages here and there, indicating the growth of ideas which were knitted into systematic form in the philosophy of Sāṁkhya. There are many Upaniṣads which are full of Sāṁkhya elements. The Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad is one of them. T.G. Mainkar says, “For the early history of the Sāṁkhya, the Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad is the most important one, it being almost the ‘locus classicus’ of the Sāṁkhya philosophy”.

We may testify this statement by referring to this Upaniṣad:

\[ \text{Ajamekam luhitsuklakṛṣnah} \]
\[ \text{Baddhīh prajāh srjamanam sarupah} | \]
\[ \text{Aju dhyeko jasamanoenu śvete} \]
\[ \text{Jahatyenam bhuktabhogam joenyah ||} \]

(Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad- 4.5)

It means:

“With the one unborn female, red, white and black, who produces many creatures like herself, there lies an unborn male taking his delight; another unborn male leaves her with whom he has had his delight.”

\[ ^{47} \]

\[ ^{48} \]
Here the unborn female refers to Sāṅkhya’s *prakṛti* and red, white and black stand for *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas guṇas* respectively. The unborn male indicates *puruṣa* and the state when it leaves *prakṛti* indicates its liberated state. Thus, although in gross form, in this verse all the principles of the Sāṅkhya philosophy are clearly mentioned.

The *Katha Upaniṣad* also can be said as another early source material of Sāṅkhya philosophy. The first and second vallies of this *Upaniṣads* speak of Sāṅkhya elements. The fourth *prasna* of the *Praśna Upaniṣad* also contains these elements.\(^{49}\)

Apart from these *Upaniṣads*, the Sāṅkhya elements can also be found in the great epics and literatures. The elements of Sāṅkhya can be found in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, in the *Purāṇas*, in the Vedānta system and in many others. The *Mahābhārata* also refers to the philosophies of Sāṅkhya and Yoga as two ancient systems. In this epic, the Sāṅkhya is mentioned as the highest truth with a belief in God as the twenty-sixth principle, in addition to twenty-five categories, recognized in the Classical Sāṅkhya. This was because Sāṅkhya and yoga, perhaps, were not separated at that time.

It can be said that Sāṅkhya has its root in the *Upaniṣads* but it is first mentioned as a separate school around the time of Alexander’s invasion (327B.C.) of West India and about the time that Kauṭilya was minister to the founder of the Maurya Empire, Candragupta.\(^{50}\) Again it has already been mentioned in this work that Kauṭilya referred to three schools of philosophy, i.e. Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Lokāyata in his *Arthaśāstra*. 
Sāṁkhya philosophy is really the oldest school of Indian Philosophy. Two main streams of orthodox philosophy grew out of the *Upaniṣads*: the realistic, of which Sāṁkhya is the earliest representative and the idealistic, of which Vedānta is the leading representative. It can be said that the extant literatures of Sāṁkhya is not as early as that of Buddhism or Jainism, but there are strong reasons to believe that like Cārvāka, Sāṁkhya flourished contemporaneously with Buddhism and Jainism. It is assumed that the earliest fairly lengthy account of it is to be found in Caraka’s *Atreyatāntra* (78 B.C.). Caraka was one of the leading members of the medical school. He wrote the *Caraka-Saṁhitā*, a treatise representing Atreyā’s system of medicine.

The proper information of Sāṁkhya can be found mainly in the works of Caraka, Pañcaśīkha and Īśvaraśṛṇa which can be said as the heart of this particular tradition. Gauḍapāda’s *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā-Bhāṣya*, Vācaspati Miśra’s *Tattva-Kaumudi*, Vījñānabhikṣu’s *Sāṁkhya-Pravacana-Bhāṣya* are available commentaries on Sāṁkhya, particularly on the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* of Īśvaraśṛṇa. These can be said as the additional source materials with *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* of Īśvaraśṛṇa.

Some philosophers say, though the origin of the Sāṁkhya may be searched in the *Upaniṣads*, yet the real source of it is to be sought in non-Vedic origin. It is imagined by those philosophers that Sāṁkhya philosophy might have been prevalent among the non-Āryans although in non-formal state. The Āryans might have adopted this philosophy and adjusted it to their thinking. Interpreters like Max-Muller also admit that Sāṁkhya has a non-Vedic origin.
He says “The Sāṁkhya-philosophy, is supposed to have been originally without a belief in revealed character of the Vedas.” Here, we can have idea about the non-Vedic origin of Sāṁkhya or the original unorthodox character of this philosophy. Max-Mullar again rightly says, “Some scholars think that the recognition of the supreme authority of the śruti was an after-thought with Kapila, a mere stroke of theological diplomacy.” He says that the Sāṁkhya philosophy did not begin with the sūtras. What is important for us is the non-sūtra form of Sāṁkhya; for it contains more of the materialist elements. Another analysis regarding the origin of Sāṁkhya tries to say – the time when the sūtras were formulated was of a class divided society. So the sūtras of that time had to side with the dominating class for fear of reprimandation. The loss of the Kapila’s sūtras is also a significant event. Prof. D.P. Chattopadhyaya has given a fine analysis regarding the originality of Sāṁkhya in his famous work “Lokayata- a study in ancient Indian Materialism” which may give us lots of new information regarding the origin of Sāṁkhya philosophy.

1.7: Chronology of the Texts and Exponents of Sāṁkhya:

It is not really easy to find out the exact date of Indian texts and its exponents, even approximately. The texts and exponents of Sāṁkhya tradition is not an exception to that. In verse no- LXIX of the Sāṁkhya-Kārikā, Īśvarakṛṣṇa, indicates that the Sāṁkhya system has been “fully enumerated” or “explained” by the “Supreme sage”, who is unanimously identified within the Sāṁkhya tradition as the sage Kapila. In verse no-LXX of the Kārikā
Iśvarakṛṣṇa informs us further that out of compassion Kapila transmitted the knowledge of Sāṅkhya to Āsuri who in turn passed on the system to Pañcaśikha. Moreover, according to Iśvarakṛṣṇa in verse no-LXX, the Sāṅkhya system was “expanded” or “widely disseminated” by Pañcaśikha. Attempts have been made in the commentarial tradition to trace the line of teachers from Pañcaśikha to Iśvarakṛṣṇa. Therefore, it seems, it is permissible to conclude in Sāṅkhya tradition that the writers of Sāṅkhya texts (a) identified Kapila as the founder of the system (b) recognized Āsuri as someone who inherited the teaching (c) considered Pañcaśikha as someone who further formulated the system and widely disseminated it, and (d) described Iśvarakṛṣṇa as someone who summarized and simplified the old system after an interval of some centuries.

Though it is not very easy to find out the exact chronology of Sāṅkhya tradition still taking all the disparate historical observations together, one might suggest a tentative chronology for early philosophical Sāṅkhya.56

1) Śaṣṭītantra, a tradition of “sixty topics” that was either a format for the treatment of philosophical Sāṅkhya or the actual name of a text, an old form of which was attributed either to Kapila or Pañcaśikha - (ca. 100 B.C.E. - 200 C.E. or before than that).

2) Paurika, Pañcādhikarana, Patanjali, and other early philosophical ācāryas - 100-300 C.E.

3) Vārṣaganyā, who composes a revision of the Śaṣṭītantra - ca. 100 - 300 C.E.
4) Followers of Vārṣaganyā, including -
   (a) Vindhyavāsin, ca. 300-400. who further revises the Sāṅkhya system and who carries on a vigorous polemic with the Buddhists, and
   (b) Īśvarakṛṣṇa, ca. 350-450, who composes a definite summary of the Sāṅkhya position, the Sāṅkhya-Kārikā, based on Vārṣaganyā’s Śaṭītantra but corrected as a result of the Buddhist debates and the work of Vindhyavāsin.

5) Mādhva, the creator of Sarva-darśana-saṁgraha goes even further in adjusting the views of Sāṅkhya to Vaiśeṣika and Buddhist thought – ca. 450 - 500.

6) Patanjali’s Yoga-Sūtra and Vyāsa’s Yogasūrabhāṣya, which possibly preserve the older Vārṣaganyā-Vindhyavāsin, interpretation of Sāṅkhya in the format of Patanjala-Sāṅkhya - ca.500 -700.

Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s Sāṅkhya-Kārikā brings us to the threshold of the beginning of technical system of Sāṅkhya. Till the Sāṅkhya-Kārikā there has been no available Sāṅkhya textual tradition, and the historical account has been based on reconstructions and occasional references in the ancient literature.

After Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s Sāṅkhya-Kārikā, Gauḍapāda (around 950-1050 A.D.) wrote a commentary on Sāṅkhya-Kārikā. Vācaspati Misra (900 A.D.) the
great scholar, wrote a commentary on *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*, known as *Sāṃkhyaatattvakaumudī* which is regarded as the most authoritative work on the Sāṅkhya system. Aniruddha (1500 A.D.) wrote a commentary on it known as *Sāṃkhyaśūravṛtti*. Vijñānabhiṣṇu (1600 A.D.) wrote a commentary on the *sūtras*, named *Sāṃkhyaapravacanabhāṣya* with a theistic bias.

1.8: *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā* as the Leading Text of Sāṅkhya:

*Śāṅkhya-Kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa gives a fairly systematic treatment of the doctrine. The approximate date of Īśvarakṛṣṇa is 350 A.D. – 450 A.D. as it is already mentioned. Īśvarakṛṣṇa describes himself as laying down the essential teachings of Kapila as taught to Āsuri and by Āsuri to Paścaśikha. He refers also to *Ṣaṣṭītantra* (doctrine of sixty conceptions), the main doctrines of which he claims to have expounded in the *Kārikā*. Though two types of Sāṅkhya i.e. theistic and atheistic are found in Indian tradition, yet the *Śāṅkhya-Kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa is atheistic in character and the traditional expositions of the Sāṅkhya are mainly based on this work. Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *Śāṅkhya-Kārikā* is found to be consists of seventy-three *kārikās*. The subject matter of *Śāṅkhya-Kārikā* mainly consists of the two ultimate realities i.e. prakṛti and puruṣa including the doctrines of causation, evolution, liberation etc.

In *Śāṅkhya-Kārikā* Īśvarakṛṣṇa says, reality is of two fold - prakṛti and puruṣa i.e. Matter and Spirit. The prakṛti is one yet changeable and evolves the world out of itself and reabsorbs at the time of the destruction of the universe. Īśvarakṛṣṇa has explained the doctrine of evolution of prakṛti by the help of the
doctrine of causation i.e. satkāryavāda according to which effect exist in the cause before its production. He says evolution takes place in the prakṛti due to the influence of puruṣa. The puruṣas (spirit) are many, pure, conscious, changeless, inactive and beyond the guṇas (nirguna). The prakṛti (matter), on the other hand is made of three qualities, the sattva, rajas, and tamas which in themselves are ever active, in collaboration with each other. The prakṛti is unconscious but active. It is inanimate yet it functions for the good of the puruṣa just as water and milk do functions for the nourishment and benefit of the living beings and the calf. The presence of the puruṣa by the side of prakṛti is sufficient for the later to evolve, because of the disturbance of the equipoise of its constituents. Puruṣa in its origin is free from all kinds of miseries as it is ‘nirguna’. But due to the identification of the puruṣa with the evolutes of prakṛti, it feels that all the sufferings are for Him only. It is this identification that is the root cause of all miseries and it is the knowledge of the separateness of the spirit and that nothing belongs to Him that wins salvation. So, for liberation, puruṣa will have to get discriminative knowledge. This is the brief summary of this leading text of Sāṅkhya tradition. Here Īśvarakṛṣṇa has made a good effort to actualize his intention to give primacy to the problems of practical life which will be discussed in details in the later chapters.
References:


6) Edgerton, *The Meaning of Sāṁkhya and Yoga*, p.34.


8) Hermann Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden*, p.351.


16) Ibid., p.528.

17) Ibid., pp.528-529.

19) Ibid., p.4.

20) Garbe (Ed), *Sāṅkhya Sūtra Vṛtti*, op. cit., p.i.

21) Ibid., pp. v-xiv.


23) Ibid., p.12.


25) Ibid., p.15.


27) Ibid., P.15.


29) Ibid., p.184.

30) Ibid., p. 185.

31) Ibid., p. 259.


33) Brodov, V., *Indian Philosophy in Modern Times*, p.106


35) E. H. Johnston, *Early Sāṅkhya - an essay on its historical development according to the texts*, p.19


37) Ibid., p. 217.

38) Ibid., pp. 213-217.
39) Ibid., pp. 219-221.
40) Ibid., p.217.
41) Ibid., p.212.
42) Ibid., p.212.
43) Ibid., pp.223-225.
45) Ibid., pp.398-400.
46) Daya Krishna, _New Perspective of Indian Philosophy_, p.49.
47) Mainkar,T.G., _Sāṃkhya-Kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa with Gaudapadabhāṣya_, p.23
48) Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad, chap-4.5, by - Swami Tyagisananda; tran. Hume. R.E.
49) Vide _Katha Upaniṣad_, 1.3.10, 11; 2.3.7, 8. _Prasna Upaniṣad_, 4.8.
50) Dale Riepe, _Naturalistic Tradition in Indian Thought_, p.177.
51) Ibid., p.178.
52) Ibid., p.180.
53) Muller, M., _The Six System of Indian Philosophy_, p.111.
54) Ibid., p.232.
55) Baruah, Girish, _Indian Philosophy_, p.96.