I. A discerning student of the history of philosophy, East or West, finds a constant recurrence of basic problems and themes, despite differences in their formulations. The Sāṃkhya-Yoga theories of causation (satkāryavāda) and evolution (parināma), are among such recurrent themes which need to be enquired into to assess their validity and efficacy.

The primary function of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga, like other systems of Indian Philosophy, is to find a way out of saṁsāra, the three-fold pain (trīḍha duḥkha) and restore Puruṣa to its original condition of isolation from Prakṛti. This cannot be achieved in the absence of insight into the factors that bind Puruṣa to Prakṛti and those which contribute to its release. It is in this context that the Sāṃkhya-Yoga doctrine of evolution (parināma) assumes importance. Prakṛti is supposed to bind Puruṣa through evolution...
and also provide an opportunity for its release. Hence, the need for a systematic study of the Sāṁkhya-Yoga doctrine of pariṇāma.

II. Though the term 'pariṇāma' stands for any type of change (sarūpa or virūpa), according to the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, generally it is the evolution of heterogeneous categories starting from mahat that is called "evolution" (pariṇāma). We need have no objection to call this process of Prakṛti, "evolution", provided we do not confuse this use of the term with "evolution" used in the context of the Darwinian or any other form of biological evolution. It should be noted that the Sāṁkhya-Yoga theory of evolution is a metaphysical theory par excellence. It is not like the biological theories of evolution particularly Darwinian, for the simple reason that Prakṛti does not evolve like the forms of life that biological evolution speaks about, Prakṛti can scarcely struggle and evolve in any environment, since it itself is the environment. According to the Sāṁkhya, the process of evolution is indirectly initiated by Puruṣa, which thereby distinguishes it from naturalism (svabhāva-vāda). According to Sāṁkhya, just as the bodily organism can be seen to contain design, so the Universe in its evolution exhibits a design. Puruṣa is the principle, for the liberation of which Prakṛti evolves. In otherwords, the activity of Nature (Prakṛti) is intended to serve the liberation of soul (Puruṣa). Enjoyment (bhoga) and liberation (apavarga) are puruṣārthas, and
the conjunction of the triguṇas creates a ceaseless flow of modifications and complexities for the enjoyment and liberation of Puruṣa.

III. The Sāmkhya-Yoga theory of causation termed as satkāryavāda, is a seminal feature of this system. It is based primarily on the principle that whatever is non-existent cannot be brought into existence and that whatever is existent cannot be made totally non-existent. The logical corollary that follows from this principle is that the effect is produced from the cause not totally dissimilar to it, as no interaction is possible between two absolutely distinct entities. It is true that these two tenets are not fully and explicitly stated in the Sāmkhya-Yoga. However, the whole trend of discussion on satkārya-vāda does suggest these two principles as its basic underlying assumptions. The Sāmkhya-Yoga uses the terms 'kāraṇa' and 'kārya' in a context which is quite different from the context in which such terms are usually employed in the discussions of causality in the Western philosophical tradition. In the context of Sāmkhya-Yoga, the cause in fact manifests the effect as its very self, the effect immediately showing it. Cause and effect are different in form but identical in essence. But, it should not be supposed that the form is alien to the cause. The content and form of the effect are traceable to its material cause (upādāna-kāraṇa).

Thus, conversion and transformation of matter and energy from one
form to another seems to be the basis of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga theory of parināma. The effect is nothing but the cause, transformed and modified. Like causes always produce like effects, leaving absolutely no place for miracles. In this respect the Sāṃkhya-Yoga theory of saṁkīryavāda comes very close to Aristotle's view according to which causation is nothing but the transition from the potential being to the actual being. A similar idea is also discernible in Hegel who holds that causation is a passage from the implicit to the explicit. The notion of cause (kāraṇa) and effect (kārya) in the Sāṃkhya-Yoga should, therefore, be viewed in terms of some dynamic transformation or operation by means of which a thing moves from its potential to its actual state. Saṁkīrya, then, is rather a theory of implication than a theory of causation. According to saṁkīryavāda, the relation between the material cause and its effect resembles the logical relation of implication. In the relation of implication, the premises imply the conclusion; the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises. Similarly, according to saṁkīryavāda the effect necessarily follows from its material cause. The saṁkīryavāda of Sāṃkhya-Yoga resembles the entailment theory of causation in Western Philosophy.

The theory of saṁkīrya is at the root of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga theory of parināma. Creation (sṛṣṭi) is nothing but the process of transformation of the implicit into the explicit. Ahamkāra remains in an implicit state
in the mahat and the mahat in its turn in Prakṛti. When the obstacles are
removed, and the guṇas are thrown out of balance, Prakṛti changes into
mahat, mahat into ahaṅkāra and so on. Although, pariṇāmavāda reveals to
us a continuous process of becoming, yet at the root of it something eternal
is clearly admitted and this eternal principle, though essentially mutatative, is
still the underlying support of all mutations and changes. Becoming is the
becoming of some dynamic force and change is merely the change of form
and not the production of something new and unforeseen. This eternal dynamic
principle is the same as Prakṛti—the name given to the complex of the
three guṇas, namely, sattva, rajas and tamas.

Just as āraṇbhavāda of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is an inevitable outcome
of asatkāryavāda, pariṇāmavāda is an inevitable outcome of the Śāṅkhya-Yoga
doctrine of pre-existent effects (saṅkāryavāda). The effect, according to
āraṇbhavāda, begins to be, having not existed before and hence, it is new.
In fact it is totally a different entity over and above its material cause
though it resides in it by means of a peculiar relation called inherence
(samavāya). The commitments of pariṇāmavāda to the doctrine of pre-existent
effects do not permit the effect to be new. But on the assumption of āraṇbhavāda,
it is impossible to explain the law of universal causation. It does not rule
out the possibility of anything being produced from everything and hence,
we cannot account for the restriction of the production of certain effects to certain causes. On the other hand, if we can understand *parināma* as the doctrine based on the necessary connection between cause and effect and not literally that the effect is pre-figured in its material cause, it will not only clear the mist surrounding the doctrine of pre-existent effects but also offer an intelligible explanation for the law of universal causation.

IV. Within the scope of the world of experience (*vyāvahārika*), the *parināma* view of causation received acceptance in Śaṅkara’s philosophy, but it is subordinated from the standpoint of *pāramārthika* to the doctrine of apparent change (*vivartavāda*).

Śaṅkara, who was convinced that the *nisprapañca* view as standing for the ultimate teachings of the Hindu Scriptures, *Śruti* and *Smṛti* had the problem of reconciling this with other notions expressed in some Scriptures of the *saprapañca* variety. He sought to resolve this problem through the application of his distinction between the statements of *Śruti* directed to the standpoint of *vyāvahārika*, and the statements of *Śruti* concerned with *pāramārthika*. The *saprapañca* aspect of *Brahman*, while appearing real enough within the context of empirical experience was but an appearance from the ultimate point of view i.e., from the *nisprapañca* position. In this connection, it is important to remember Thibaut’s observation that by this adroit method
Śaṅkara was able to do real justice to the complex totality of Upaniṣadic teaching better than other commentators such as Rāmānuja.

Śaṅkara is well aware of the Scriptures in which the relation between Brahman and the world is developed along the lines of pariṇāma. But, this has to be viewed purely as a tentative measure, true from an empirical point of view, vivarta being true from the ultimate point of view. It is a matter of our experience that any discussion begins from the level of common thought and evolves itself into more and more abstract levels of cognition. In this psychological sense even the staunch critics of Śaṅkara might view as intelligible the dual use of pariṇāma and vivarta modes of causality in the context of the relation between Brahman and the world.

Thus, while the pariṇāma relation obtains between Brahman and the world on the empirical level, the vivarta relation holds between them on the ultimate plane. In fact, the Advaitin dispenses with the category of causality as such from the ultimate point of view. For, while causal relations are a legitimate subject of discourse within the context of the world order, we cannot properly speak of a causal relation between entities belonging to different orders, namely, Brahman, the ultimately real and the world, the empirically real. The world is neither a creation of Brahman, nor its modification. It is merely an appearance (vivarta) of Brahman. Brahman is the ground (adhisthāna)
of world-appearance and not its cause. We have already seen the reasons for the Advaitin's rejection of pariṇāma as reflecting the true purport of satkāryavāda and how pariṇāma is not compatible with satkāryavāda. But the Sāṃkhya-Yoga has no commitment to the philosophy based on the lines of distinction between pāramārthika and vyāvahārika made by the Advaitin, who built this philosophy on considerations of experience and reason and they have convinced thus of satkāryavāda and pariṇāmavāda.

If we can understand the Sāṃkhya-Yoga doctrine of satkārya as standing for the notion of necessary connection of effect to its cause and not its actual existence before its production, then the mist surrounding the doctrine of satkārya slowly disappears and we begin to see the meaning in it. Pariṇāmavāda as standing for the development of the effect from its implicit to its explicit-state also becomes more meaningful and the weakness of the doctrine of asatkārya of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is at once realised. The Sāṃkhya-Yoga doctrine of pariṇāma not only offers an intelligible explanation of the law of universal causation, but also a convincing explanation of the conception of 'change'.

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