

A ŚABDA READER

LANGUAGE IN CLASSICAL INDIAN THOUGHT

Translated and edited by JOHANNES BRONKHORST

A ŠABDA READER

Historical Sourcebooks in Classical Indian Thought

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Preface

While I was preparing this book, it soon became clear that much of what should be covered by the subtitle *Language in Classical Indian Thought* does not easily lend itself to presentation in the format of a reader. Too many topics in this area have been understudied and are far from being correctly understood by modern scholarship. The texts are often technical and obscure, and they frequently create more confusion than understanding at a first reading. Even longtime study does not always guarantee a full grasp of these texts.

I try to resolve this difficulty in the following manner. A number of topics that are crucial for an understanding of the historical role of language in Indian thought can only be hinted at in this reader (mainly in the introduction). Some of these have received fuller treatment in my book *How the Brahmins Won* (Brill 2016; esp. §§ IIA.4, III.3–4). Readers who look for fuller documentation are advised to refer to that publication.

In the present volume, the sections of the introduction (part I) correspond by and large to the sections of the reader (part II), in the sense that, for example, section I.1 and II.1 deal, on the whole, with the same or similar topics. This correspondence is not, however, perfect. An example is section I.3, which deals with the grammarian Patañjali, whereas section II.3 presents passages from both Patañjali's work and more recent texts that deal with the same or similar issues.

Readers may further keep in mind that in this volume I have tried to resist the temptation of cherrypicking, i.e., of choosing topics on the basis of their similarity to or relevance for modern language philosophy. On the contrary, I have tried to bring out the importance that language has in Indian thought in many or most of its forms, irrespective of whether the Indian notions might or should interest a modern philosopher.

A ŠABDA READER



PART I

Introduction



General Observations About Philosophy in India

The most serious mistake a modern reader can make is to assume that Indian philosophers were just like modern philosophers, the main difference being that they lived many centuries ago, in India, and expressed themselves in different languages, mainly Sanskrit. This would be overlooking the fact that most human activities, including philosophizing, are profoundly embedded in the beliefs, presuppositions, and expectations that characterize the culture and the period in which they take place. The French historian Lucien Febvre used in this connection the expression *outillage mental*, “mental equipment,” different for people living in different ages. Atheism in the modern sense of the term, Febvre points out in his book *Le problème de l'incroyance au XVIe siècle*, was simply unthinkable in sixteenth-century Europe: people did not have the mental equipment to conceive of it.

Quite independently of the question whether Febvre’s claim is correct in its full generality, this example should discourage us from entering too easily into a discussion with Indian thinkers on our terms. Like the Europeans of the sixteenth century, they had many beliefs, presuppositions, and expectations of which they were perhaps not or only partly aware, and for them too there may have been ideas they could not conceive of. More precisely perhaps, they might have understood those new ideas if someone had presented them, but since this did not happen, the ideas never crossed their minds.

Febvre’s observation concerns a belief that seemed essential to thinkers of sixteenth-century Europe: the existence of (a) God. Thinkers of classical India were less convinced that there is only one possible position on this particular issue; many of them felt quite comfortable with the idea of a world without creator God. Among their presuppositions we rather find the deep conviction that language and reality

are deeply intertwined. Language is for them rarely, if ever, a marginal philosophical issue. Quite the contrary: more often than not, ideas about language are the very basis of their philosophies. The remainder of this book will illustrate this.

This takes us back to the relation between classical Indian and modern philosophers, and to the rather obvious observation that a discussion with a philosopher who lived many centuries ago is bound to be a one-sided affair. The ancient philosopher may have had all the intelligence needed to come to terms with ideas that a modern philosopher might propose to him, but alas, he is dead. The modern scholar is in a more advantageous position: he can learn to understand the ancient thinkers on their own terms, if only he is open to it and willing to make the effort. This too will be attempted in this book.

Philosophy in India, then, was not carried out by philosophers who had no prior concern with language. Most of the participants were either Brahmins or Buddhists. (The Jainas, who will also figure in this book, played a relatively minor and sometimes intermediary role.) Neither Brahmins nor Buddhists were independent observers where language was concerned. Both approached this field with strong, though different, convictions.

Consider first the Brahmins. In their own self-understanding, these men (women were not expected to recite the Veda) owed their Brahmanical status to the fact that they knew part of the Veda by heart and recited it at appropriate occasions. The Veda is a corpus of texts, portions of which were meant to be recited at ritual occasions. This recitation was, and to some extent still is, believed to contribute to the efficacy of the ritual concerned. In other words, Brahmins believed that they possessed verbal utterances that had an effect in the world. At first sight this is not particularly surprising. All language users utter words and sentences with the expectation that this may have an effect in the world. But for most language users, this effect comes about through the intermediary of those who hear and understand their words and sentences. We can order or request others to do something, or influence others to act and behave in accordance with our wishes by means of other verbal messages.

This was not the way Brahmins believed their sacred formulas affected the world. Sacred formulas, called *mantras* in the Indian context, were believed to affect the world without the intermediary of other beings, whether human or nonhuman. *Mantras* work directly, on condition that they are correctly pronounced (in the right circumstances, of course). This efficacy is at least in part due to their language, the one that came to be called Sanskrit, but which early Brahmanical users and thinkers merely considered the correct use of words. Underlying the Brahmins' ritual activity is the conviction that Sanskrit can have a direct effect on the world, because

Sanskrit and reality are related in ways other languages (considered “incorrect use of words”) are not. Brahmanical myths even explain that the world was created in accordance with the words of the Veda.

The Veda, then, is a corpus of texts containing *mantras* that have an effect on the world without the intermediary of a hearer. For many Brahmins, the Vedic *mantras*, and more generally the whole Veda, have no initial speaker either. The Veda has no author, and is therefore pure, self-existent speech. Having no author implies that it has no beginning in time. It is therefore beginningless, eternal speech. Being pure speech, not soiled by the interference of an author (who may conceivably be ill informed, or ill intentioned), the statements and injunctions of the Veda cannot but be reliable, if only we can interpret them objectively. This belief is behind the need felt to develop a method to find an objective interpretation of the Veda. Reflections about the interpretation of Sanskrit sentences in general did not lag behind, and continued until recent times.

Let us return for a moment to the centrality of Sanskrit in Brahmanical linguistic thought. This belief is so fundamental that it is easily overlooked in modern scholarship. It influenced all Brahmanical thought about language, and about much else. As a matter of fact, languages other than Sanskrit were rarely, if ever, taken into consideration by Brahmanical thinkers. Their linguistic thought concerned a privileged language, from their point of view the only correct one, the only language also that has a natural and intimate link with reality. One exaggerates but little when stating that much of Brahmanical thought is an inquiry into the consequences of this belief.

Unlike Brahmanism, Buddhism did not start out with any identifiable implicit or explicit convictions about language. The message of the Buddha was spread in local languages, being adjusted or translated where necessary. Language did come to play an important role in Buddhist thought, but not until a few centuries after the death of the Buddha, and initially in a region far removed from where he had preached. Gandhāra, a region in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent (in present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan), witnessed a thorough rethinking of Buddhist teaching. The philosophy there created saw the world as essentially atomic and momentary in nature, as made up of ultimate momentary constituents called *dharma*s. To be more precise, these momentary *dharma*s occur in sequences, in which each succeeding *dharma* is determined by the immediately preceding one. This is also true of mental processes, which are thought of in the same unilinear fashion. Thinkers went one step further and looked upon these *dharma*s as the only really existing things. Things made up of *dharma*s—which includes all things we are acquainted with, such as chariots, houses, etc.—not being *dharma*s themselves, did not really exist.

So far language plays no role in the philosophical vision elaborated by the Buddhist scholiasts of northwestern India. It does play a role in explaining that we believe we live in a world of chariots, houses, and much else that does not really exist; only *dharma*s exist. All these ultimately nonexisting “things” are nothing but words. Stated differently, we are tricked by language into thinking that we live in a world populated by objects that do not really exist.

The Buddhist philosophy of northwestern India spread in subsequent centuries all over the subcontinent and beyond, and underwent many developments. However, the conviction that we live in an unreal world, and that this unreal world has a close link with language, remained a characteristic of Buddhist thought.

It follows from the above that Brahmanical and Buddhist thinkers, though starting from altogether different positions and without influencing each other during the early period, arrived at very similar conclusions. Both now believed that there was an intimate link between the world of our experience and language. Both accepted, each in their own way, that our common-sense world has been created by language.

There were important differences, of course. Brahmanical thinkers thought that language was close to the *real* world; Buddhists thought that it was close to the ultimately *unreal*, imaginary, world of our experience. Brahmins did not talk about language in general, only about Sanskrit, for them the only real language; Buddhist thinkers did not privilege one language, at least not initially.

Brahmanical and Buddhist thinkers came to interact in subsequent centuries. This led to a refinement of their positions, and sometimes to large-scale borrowing. The Buddhist notion of the unreality of our common-sense world did not initially agree with Brahmanical conceptions of the world. However, roughly from the middle of the first millennium CE onward this notion found favor with at least some Brahmanical thinkers, who adjusted it to their needs. In doing so, they also reserved a place for language (the Sanskrit language, of course), which had to play a role, here too, to explain our common-sense world.

But Brahmanical thought had already much earlier borrowed a notion of linguistic philosophy from Buddhism. The Buddhist philosophy created in northwestern India had put much emphasis on ontology: what exists and what does not exist? It had come to the conclusion that, apart from *dharma*s, nothing exists at all. For reasons that can only be conjectured, these Buddhists had not been happy to draw the seemingly inevitable conclusion that words and other linguistic units do not really exist, the way chariots and houses do not really exist. To avoid this, they had introduced three (or perhaps originally two; the earliest sources are not clear) *dharma*s that stood for linguistic units: speech sounds, words, and sentences. Words and other

linguistic units therefore really exist, even in the reductionist ontology of early Buddhist scholasticism. This idea was not without appeal to certain Brahmanical thinkers. In their discussions of words and the like they were confronted with some fundamental questions: If words are no more than successions of sounds that do not coexist simultaneously, then whole words do not exist. Similar considerations apply to speech sounds and sentences. A number of Brahmanical thinkers adopted the Buddhist solution by postulating that beside the sequence of succeeding speech sounds there was another existing entity, the word. In this way Brahmanism came into the possession of what they called the *sphoṭa*, probably the best-known notion from grammatical philosophy.



CHAPTER ONE

The Brahmanical Background

A major part of Indian philosophy is Brahmanical philosophy. It is for this reason important to sketch the background of Brahmanical thought.

Brahmans play an important role in Indian society, and have done so for a long time. One of the justifications for this importance, perhaps the most crucial one, is that they are in possession of the Veda, a literary corpus of considerable size. Every Brahman worth the name is expected to know at least some portion of the Veda by heart, and some can verbatim, and without mistakes, recite impressive lengths of text. Studying and reciting the Veda is indeed the primary task of this social caste-class. The famous *Laws of Manu* (*Mānava Dharmasāstra* 2.168), which may date from the second or third century CE, specifies that a Brahman who has not studied the Veda and puts his effort into other things loses his status and becomes a Shudra, i.e., a member of the lowest caste-class, along with his children. Knowledge of the Veda and Brahmanhood are inseparable, at least in theory.

What is it in the Veda that justifies the Brahmans' preeminent position in society? What is there in this corpus of literature? Seen from the Brahmanical point of view, its *mantras* represent its greatest value. *Mantras* are power formulas, the mere utterance of which (by the right person and in the right circumstances) brings about an effect. Most of the Vedic *mantras* were meant to be uttered in the context of Vedic rituals, which constitute the right circumstances. The right person is the right kind of Brahman engaged in the performance of one of these rituals. But whatever the circumstances and whoever the person, *mantras*, by the mere fact of being uttered, can have an effect on the outside world. It was considered a given that there is and has to be a connection between linguistic utterances (the *mantras*) and the objective world. Somehow, there cannot but be a close link between language and reality.

Apart from *mantras*, the Veda contains texts that later scholiasts collectively refer to as *brāhmaṇa*. These are mainly in prose and deal with a variety of primarily ritual topics. However, their general outlook can be described as magical thought. What strike us in these texts are the frequent identifications of or correlations between at first sight unconnected items, as when the god Vishnu is identified with the sacrifice, or the cow with breath. Often the phonetic similarity of the words used to designate the items plays a role. Identifications of this kind are of special interest in the present context, for they are necessarily based on the implicit conviction that language and reality are interconnected. The Vedic *brāhmaṇa* texts do not explicitly state what procedure they follow. However, in most cases this procedure is relatively straightforward. Items designated by words that resemble each other are thought of as connected. These items can be of many kinds: concrete objects, abstract notions, actions, etc. All that counts is the resemblance between words.

Modern scholars have often looked upon such passages that claim to establish links between items on the basis of the words that refer to them as innocent word play. They are more than that. These word plays are means to discover a reality that is hiding below the surface of everyday existence. Knowledge of this hidden reality is important, for it brings advantages. Those who perform a ritual—correctly, of course—while knowing what the various ritual elements and constituent activities stand for will attain the goals for which the ritual is carried out. A modern interpreter may be tempted to think that these ritual elements and constituent activities have a symbolic meaning that must be known and understood. Once again, this is not yet fully correct: real, not just symbolic, connections (or identities) are involved from the point of view of the Vedic sacrificer. Fundamental to this worldview is the belief in the hidden universe of links, access to which gives him powers that he can use to exert an influence over this world, which he shares with his less enlightened fellow human beings. One aspect of this worldview, as we have seen, concerns the links between words and things.

The Veda, then, contains both *mantras* and *brāhmaṇa* passages. *Mantras* are to be recited, and it is vital that they be correctly pronounced. An incorrectly pronounced *mantra* is ineffectual. It is not surprising that great pains were taken to assure their correct pronunciation. The speech sounds of Sanskrit came to be described and analyzed, and no efforts were spared to guarantee that also in combinations they would assume their correct shape. Phonetic analysis flourished and gave rise to numerous early treatises, many of which have survived until today. These treatises were not interested in the meanings of the words and sentences of which these sounds were part. This is understandable. The sounds studied occurred primarily in *mantras*, whose efficacy was not in doubt. The unshakable conviction of a link between those

mantras and reality, or rather of the effect those *mantras* had on reality if properly uttered, was the basis without which any interest in the constituent sounds would be a waste of time and effort. Those early phoneticians followed the same principles as the reciters who learned *mantras* by heart and continue doing so today: both were deeply concerned with the correct pronunciation of the *mantras*, but totally uninterested in their literal meaning.

The Vedic *brāhmaṇas*, in contrast, were not uninterested in the meanings of words. Indeed, their so-called word plays are evidence that the connection between form and meaning of words was taken seriously. This connection was thought of not as conventional but rather as natural. Those who wish to exert control over things through knowing the hidden links between items based on the similarities of their words had better know the correct words for things. Otherwise their ritual and other efforts may be without effect. The correct forms of words are those they have in the Sanskrit language. Only the words of Sanskrit have a close and natural link with the things they refer to.

It should be clear from what precedes that it was licit to apply phonetic analysis to Vedic *mantras*. Indeed, phonetic analysis permitted the preservation of those *mantras* in their original form, pronounced until today much as their composers pronounced them. However, is it allowed to subject those *mantras* to semantic analysis? What is more, do *mantras* have meaning? If the main purpose of *mantras* is to be correctly pronounced at appropriate occasions and this is sufficient for bringing about desired results, does it make sense to believe that they express any literal meaning at all? This question came to occupy the minds of traditional scholars, and some argued that, as a matter of fact, *mantras* do not express meaning. No one in the Brahmanical milieu doubted their importance or their efficacy in bringing about results. But the proof of a *mantra* is in its use, i.e., recitation, in the appropriate ritual context; understanding its words plays no role.

A number of Brahmins were convinced that *mantras* are expressive of meaning; a text from around the third century BCE, the *Nirukta—Etymology*—of Yaska, had even developed a method—also called *nirukta*, “etymology”—to find the meaning of unknown words in *mantras*. This work contains a discussion of the meaningfulness or otherwise of *mantras*. It presents the opinion of a certain Kautsa, who maintained not just that *mantras* are difficult to understand but also that they have no meaning whatsoever. Kautsa’s arguments are interesting, and some of them are those a modern scholar of ritual formulas might use to argue the same point (what, after all, is the meaning of *abracadabra*?). Among these arguments, we find: (i) unlike ordinary expressions, *mantras* have a fixed word order; (ii) *mantras* have impossible meanings; (iii) *mantras* have contradictory meanings. Yaska responds to these arguments one

by one. He points out, for example, (i) that some worldly expressions too have a fixed word order; (ii) that impossible meanings become understandable once we look at the idea behind them; (iii) that some worldly expressions too have contradictory meanings.

It bears repeating that Kautsa's opinion does not imply that *mantras* are senseless and serve no purpose. Kautsa is sometimes presented in modern scholarship as a skeptic, but this misses the point altogether. We may almost guess that of the two, Kautsa and Yaska, it is the latter who ventured into relatively new territory by concentrating on the meaning of the words of old *mantras*, for *mantras* were not there to be understood, but to be used in appropriate circumstances.

Incidentally, whether Vedic *mantras* express meaning was not the idiosyncratic preoccupation of a single individual. It was a question that was to accompany Brahmanical religion for centuries to come. A long discussion is dedicated to it in the most important surviving text of the school of thought concerned with Vedic interpretation, *Mimamsa* (*Vedic Interpretation*), composed many centuries after Kautsa. By its very nature, this school was interested in the meaning of the *Veda*, but significantly it focused on the *brāhmaṇa* portions, not on the *mantras*. Indeed, it deemed it necessary to discuss the question of the meaningfulness of *mantras* in considerable detail. It did so in Shabara's *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*, *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation*, a text belonging to the middle of the first millennium CE, in a passage that draws much inspiration from the discussion in Yaska's *Etymology*. There are important differences between Kautsa and Shabara's opponent, to be sure. Kautsa had posited that Vedic *mantras* have no meaning. The opponent in Shabara's *Commentary* says no such thing. He rather claims that *mantras* are not intended to be expressive of meaning. We must conclude that in Shabara's time, and presumably already well before him, no one doubted that Vedic *mantras* can be interpreted, that they can be understood as expressing meaning, and therefore that they do have meaning. Not even Shabara's real or hypothetical opponent doubted this. The opponent's position therefore amounts to something less drastic than what Kautsa had maintained: Vedic *mantras* can express meaning, but they are not intended to do so. He makes an enlightening comparison: a blind man has eyes, but does not (cannot) use them to see. Kautsa might have rather made a comparison with a man who has no eyes at all.

Let us now turn to the other use of language found in the Vedic corpus, primarily in the *brāhmaṇas*. These texts, as we have seen, assume the existence of hidden links between words and things. Similar words, in particular, are thought to refer to similar things. From a modern point of view, this may be difficult to accept in its full generality, but it is obvious in certain cases. Consider the following list of English words: "moves," "moved," "movement," "movable," "moving." Even the least sophisticated

user of English will agree that the meanings of these words have something in common; and it seems reasonable to assume that this shared meaning is expressed by the part they have in common: “move.” It seems equally clear that this list of words is not unique in the English language; one could make other similar lists that are recognizably parallel, such as “displaces,” “displaced,” “displacement,” “displaceable,” “displacing,” with a shared meaning expressed by “displace.” Nor is it far-fetched to recognize in “displace” two constituent meaning-bearing units, “dis” and “place,” each of which can independently occur elsewhere, as in “disregarded” and “replaces.”

Sanskrit, being an inflected language, lends itself far better than English to this kind of analysis. And the temptation to ascribe meanings to the constituent parts of words is greater. Indeed, the idea that similar words express similar meanings (an axiom of Vedic thought) makes sense if one assumes that words are constituted of smaller parts that are the real meaning bearers. These minimal meaning bearers join up to form larger units, such as words and sentences.

This belief makes eminent sense against the background of Vedic thought. It is, however, clear that it applies more neatly to some words than to others. In some cases it is not evident at all. To give one more example from English: the analysis of “barking” into “bar” and “king” does not look convincing, at least at first sight. In cases like this the step from similarity of form to similarity of meaning is not immediately clear. And yet, Vedic thought was not ready to discard such cases in a hurry. As a matter of fact, it created two disciplines to deal with them.

These two disciplines came about in late-Vedic times. Their Sanskrit names are *vyākaraṇa* and *nirukta*. We will follow common usage and employ the English equivalents “grammar” and “etymology” respectively. These equivalents are fine, on condition that we keep in mind that they may not precisely correspond to what a modern linguist would call grammar and etymology.

The oldest text of Sanskrit grammar that has reached us is Panini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*—literally *Composition in Eight Chapters* but hereafter *Grammar*—dating perhaps from the second half of the fourth century BCE. It is as old as certain Vedic texts—the language it describes is particularly close to that of the Vedic *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (*Brāhmaṇa of Aitareya*)—and can therefore be expected to contain an expression of systematized Vedic thought. Unfortunately it does not say much about Vedic thought, or about any thought. The text is highly condensed, and confines itself to showing how minimal meaning bearers join up to form words and sentences. It does so in much detail, breaking down the process into individual steps prescribed by individual grammatical rules, of which there are some four thousand. The minimal meaning bearers themselves fall into a limited number of categories—among them verbal roots, nominal stems, and various types of suffixes

and infixes. But one looks in vain in Panini's work for philosophical explanations, or for an analysis of background assumptions.

A very simple (and simplified) example will illustrate how Panini's grammar "works." To express "[he/she/it] is" in Sanskrit, the semantic elements that have to find expression are "being," "agent," "third person singular," and "present tense." "Being" gives rise to *bhū*, "agent" to *lat*, which is replaced by *ti* in order to express "third person singular": *bhū + ti*. For various reasons an element *a* is then inserted between these two (*bhū + a + ti*), and the vowel *ū* of *bhū* is reinforced so as to become *o*: *bho + a + ti*. A phonetic rule, finally, replaces *o* of *bho* with *av*, resulting in *bhavati*. The derivation of this word passes therefore through the following stages:

bhū
bhū + lat
bhū + ti
bhū + a + ti
bho + a + ti
bhav + a + ti

Each preceding stage in this derivation determines the next.

This is not always the case. Consider the form *bhavatu*, which is an imperative and expresses the meaning "he/she/it must be." Its derivation is similar to that of *bhavati*, but adds one more stage:

bhū
bhū + lot
bhū + ti
bhū + a + ti
bho + a + ti
bhav + a + ti
bhav + a + tu

The step from *bhavati* to *bhavatu*, i.e., the replacement of *i* by *u* (or *ti* by *tu*) depends on the element *lot* that was present in the second stage but has meanwhile disappeared. Here, therefore, the final stage is not determined by the immediately preceding one.

Whatever the details, it is not difficult to see how grammar makes sense against the background of Vedic thought in general. Grammar shows the formation of correct words out of the ultimate meaning bearers. It is because of this relationship that

words can be linked to each other, and to items in the external world, in the manner that is taken for granted in Vedic thought.

The language described by Panini has no name; he does not, for example, call it Sanskrit. And indeed, Panini's grammar does not deal with one language at the expense of others. It deals with correct words, distinguishing these, implicitly, from incorrect words. In modern terminology one might say that for Panini there is only one language, the one we call Sanskrit; all other languages are not languages at all, but at best corruptions of the one real language. More recent authors state this explicitly.

If we now try to think the way Panini must have thought, we can understand that only correct words are connected with each other and with the outer world in the manner presupposed by Vedic thought. To participate in this access to reality, the use of correct words is crucial. Panini's grammar shows which these correct words are, and how they are constituted of more elementary parts, the minimal meaning bearers. Given that the use of correct language (i.e., Sanskrit) is one of the features that distinguishes Brahmans from other, lesser people and gives them their special powers, primarily in the form of *mantras*, the grammarians of the Sanskrit language provided Brahmans with an essential tool of their trade, viz., the means to keep their language pure and uncorrupted.

Grammar, then, is an understandable outcome of the Vedic view as to how words are related to each other. However, grammar deals only with certain instances of similarities between words. It only shows the relationship between words that have a regular grammatical derivation. In English, it would account for the similarity between words such as "moves" and "moved." But clearly, grammar does not explain all similarities between words. There are other similarities that are not the result of being derived from the same identifiable minimal elements, as in English "barking," "bar" and "king." And Vedic thought cast its linguistic web much wider, well beyond mere grammar. There is no grammatical element that *dakṣinā* "sacrificial fee" and *dakṣate* "becomes fit" have in common, and yet a Vedic text connects the two. From the Vedic perspective, there are many cases of meaningful similarities between words that are not covered by grammar.

At this point etymology comes in. As indicated above, we use this term as the English equivalent of *nirukta*. There is nothing wrong with this as long as this Indian linguistic activity is not confused with what passes as etymology in modern historical linguistics. In modern linguistics "etymology" has something to do with the history of words; from the Indian point of view, Sanskrit words have no history, because Sanskrit does not change. The etymologies proposed in the Indian discipline have therefore nothing to do with the history of words, but all the more with the presumed fact that similarities between words indicate that they refer to similar things. This conviction,

as we have seen, was used in Vedic religion to discover links, or “identities,” between at first sight unrelated things. In the discipline of etymology this same conviction was used differently. If similar words must refer to similar things, then one can find the meaning of an unknown word by looking at words that resemble it: the unknown word must refer to something that resembles the things referred to by similar words.

The first and only treatise on etymology that has survived is Yaska's *Nirukta* (*Etymology*), already mentioned. In those days there were unknown words aplenty, mainly in the collection of *mantras* of the *Rgveda* (this collection later came to be known as *Rgveda-Samhitā*). Many of these *mantras* were already many centuries old when Yaska composed his *Etymology*, and the almost exclusive emphasis laid on the form of those *mantras* along with the long time that had passed explains why Yaska and his contemporaries had great difficulty understanding them. (This, at any rate, is the explanation that sounds plausible to us modern readers. Yaska would have none of it: for him the Sanskrit language does not change, so if there are words that he does not understand, it is because he is not familiar with the language in all its fullness.)

What is the relationship between etymology and grammar? Yaska's *Etymology* (*Nirukta*) gives a straightforward answer: etymology is the complement of grammar, not its substitute or alternative. Etymology comes into play where grammar reaches its explanatory limits. Etymology is therefore an extension of grammar meant to deal with words that grammar is not equipped to explain. But this extension is a lot less rigorous than grammar. Vague similarities in form or meaning must sometimes guide the etymologist, in contrast to the grammarian, who follows strict rules. What is more, etymologists considered their activity a secret that should not be revealed to uninitiated learners. No such secrecy surrounded grammatical activity, as far as we can tell. No wonder that not all grammarians were happy with this extension of their domain, and some were positively critical of it.

There can be little doubt that the question sometimes arose whether, perhaps, individual speech sounds were the minimal meaning bearers. Plato, in his dialogue called *Cratylus*, considered this possibility, and nothing seems more natural. However, the ancient Indian thinkers so far considered did not pursue this question. No doubt they foresaw the difficulties it would give rise to: is it really possible to assign a single meaning to a single speech sound, say *i*, that fits all the words in which it occurs? We may yet assume that the thought was never far from their minds. The grammarian Patanjali, in a slightly more recent period, returns to it, and an altogether different answer to the same question came to be proposed by Tantric thinkers, more than a thousand years later. We also know that already in late Vedic times the behavior of individual speech sounds was looked upon as significant on a level well beyond the mere phonetic plane.

To show this, a few words must be said about the different phonetic shapes of certain Vedic texts. The *Rgveda*, to which we will confine this discussion, was preserved in three different forms: (i) the “word text” (*pada-pāṭha*), in which the words were separated from each other; (ii) the “joined text” (*samhitā-pāṭha*), in which the words were joined; and (iii) the “ordered text” (*krama-pāṭha*), which combined features of both word text and joined text. Joining words often involved changing them phonetically; joining the words *atha* + *ataḥ*, to give an example, gives rise to the new form *athātaḥ*. In classical Sanskrit (and in modern linguistics) this process is called *sandhi*. In Vedic times the term used was *samhitā*. The *samhitā-pāṭha* (joined text) is therefore the “recitation with sandhi.”

The ancient Indian linguists, including Panini, showed great interest in the process of joining words, i.e., joining the last speech sound of the preceding word with the first speech sound of the following one, and described it in great detail. More interesting for our present purposes is that other Vedic thinkers—and presumably also the ancient Indian linguists themselves—were convinced that the process had a much deeper, and indeed mystical significance. Some late-Vedic texts talk about the secret (*upaniṣad*) connected with the junction of words (*samhitā*). The *Aitareya Āranyaka* (*Forest Text of Aitareya*), for example, records the opinion that the preceding speech sound is the earth, the following speech sound is the sky, and their junction is the wind. Alternatively, the preceding speech sound is speech, the following speech sound is the mind, and their junction is the breath.

In the following chapters we will see that Brahmanical ideas about language underwent important developments and even radical changes. What did not change is the conviction that language and reality are closely connected. Mastery of language can therefore give power over the outside world. This belief was fundamental to the use of *mantras* already in Vedic times, and was never given up. During the early centuries of the Common Era, the *Laws of Manu* (11.31–33) states in so many words that speech is the Brahman’s weapon; with it he can kill his enemies:

A Brahman who knows his duty should not pass on any information to the king. He should punish those men who harm him by means of his own power.

Between his own power and the power of a king, the power of the Brahman is greater. For this reason a Brahman should restrain his enemies by means of his own power.

He should use the formulas of the *Atharva-Veda* (*Veda of the Atharvan Priest*), this is beyond dispute. Speech is the sword of the Brahman; he should kill his enemies with its help.



CHAPTER TWO

Buddhist Thought

Source of Inspiration

THE SCHOLASTIC REVOLUTION

Panini's *Grammar* (*Aṣṭādhyāyī*) and Yaska's *Etymology* (*Nirukta*) are the two main surviving documents testifying to the efforts that were made in late-Vedic times to systematize, at least in the realm of words, the Vedic conviction that similarities indicate hidden connections. This means that similar words and their meanings are connected. Systematizing this belief almost inevitably leads to a search for minimal semantic entities, minimal meaning bearers. This search succeeded to a considerable extent in grammar, but largely due to self-imposed limitations. Beyond the limits of grammar, etymology did its best, but never succeeded in systematically identifying minimal meaning bearers. Yaska could not say that there were none, because this would go against the Vedic conviction that was his point of departure. In the end, he could do no more than offer a more or less satisfactory method to find the meanings of unknown words.

These systematic efforts to make sense of a fundamental Vedic belief, if only in the realm of words, came to a sudden halt. The Brahmanical attitude with regard to its sacred language changed, for reasons that may have much to do with a number of political and cultural changes that took place in northern India.

Around the year 185 BCE the Maurya Empire, the first empire that had united most of the Indian subcontinent, collapsed. A Brahman general, Pushyamitra, killed the last Maurya ruler, Brihadratha, and put himself in charge of part of the empire. For Brahmanism, this signaled a major change. None of the previous rulers of the empire had been favorably inclined to Brahmanism, and to the extent we know they all had preferred religions that had arisen in their homeland, Magadha, and surroundings.

Some had supported Jainism, others Buddhism or Ajivikism. With Pushyamitra all this changed. Pushyamitra went to the extent of performing the Brahmanical horse sacrifice, thus emphasizing his preference for the Brahmanical tradition.

Presumably in the same year, the Bactrian Greeks took possession of another region that had been part of the Maurya Empire: Gandhara. From Gandhara, Greeks made inroads into other parts of South Asia a few decades later, reaching perhaps as far east as Pataliputra, which had been the capital of the Maurya Empire.

These political changes also had major effects on intellectual culture. Gandhara (or, if one includes neighboring regions, Greater Gandhara) was home to many Buddhists at that time. Their interaction with their new Greek rulers appears to have led to an explosion of creative and systematizing activity, which would soon affect the Indian intellectual world at large, including thought about language.

The inhabitants of Greater Gandhara, being situated at the very edge of the Indian subcontinent, were and had long been in frequent contact with representatives of different cultures. The Persian influence was strong (Gandhara had been part of the Achaemenid Empire), as was the Greek influence after Alexander led his troops through this region and left Greek settlements at some points. This Greek presence became particularly prominent when, in or around 185 BCE at the collapse of the Maurya Empire, neighboring Greeks took power. During the following decennia, the Buddhists of that region did not just have Greeks as neighbors, they were ruled by Greeks.

It seems likely that this strong Hellenistic presence is one of the reasons the Buddhists of this part of the subcontinent thoroughly rethought their Buddhist heritage and re-created it from within. They reinterpreted many elements of Buddhist teaching and ended up with what appears to have been the first systematic philosophy the Indian subcontinent had seen. This philosophy had little in common with Buddhist thought as it had existed until then and as it continued to exist, especially outside the subcontinent (most notably in Sri Lanka). Briefly put, the new philosophy held that the world of our experience is not really what it looks like. It is constituted of countless numbers of minute elements of existence, called *dharma*s. This philosophy can be called atomic, on condition that one keep in mind that the Buddhist *dharma*s are not all material and are in many respects different from atoms as we may conceive of them. These *dharma*s were believed to be not only exceedingly small but also exceedingly short-lived. *Dharma*s, in fact, are momentary: they disappear the moment after they come into existence.

The northwestern Buddhist scholiasts took one further step. They maintained, as they had to, that the *dharma*s really exist, but added that they are the *only* things that really exist. Objects that are constituted of *dharma*s—i.e., the collective wholes

we come across in our daily experience—do not really exist. Thus, these Buddhists ended up believing that the world of our ordinary experience is not real, that there is a reality hiding behind it that is not evident.

If the world of our ordinary experience does not really exist, how are we misled into believing that it does? A frequent answer to this question is: the objects of our experience, whether they be chariots, houses, people, or anything else, are in reality nothing but names. Our language ultimately misleads us. This answer appears in the *Questions of Milinda* (*Milindapañha*), a text whose title links it to the Indo-Greek ruler Menander, who ruled around 150 BCE. Milinda is forced to admit in a discussion that his chariot is nothing but a word. Other Buddhist texts say the same in different terms. The idea that words are ultimately responsible for the way we perceive the world became the basis of the Buddhists' language philosophy. More will be said about it below.

One more question must be dealt with here. If only *dharma*s exist and spatially and temporally composite wholes do not, one might think that words (and other linguistic units, such as sentences and speech sounds) do not exist either. After all, from the point of view of the Buddhist scholiasts, words were not all that different from pots and chariots: all were no more than wholes made of successions of *dharma*s, and one might think that the ultimate nonexistence of words was no more disturbing than the ultimate nonexistence of chariots. For reasons that we can only guess, the Buddhist scholiasts were of a different opinion. Perhaps they thought that the nonexistence of words implied the nonexistence of the Buddha word, which would deprive the Buddhist tradition of its most valuable asset. But whatever the reason for their concern, the result is visible in their texts. The Buddhist scholiasts posited the existence of words and other linguistic units in the only way open to them, viz., by stating that words and other linguistic units are *dharma*s, different from the sequences of vibrations that are produced when using them. They postulated the existence of three such *dharma*s: the “body of word” (*nāmakāya*), the “body of sentence” (*padakāya*), and the “body of sound” (*vyañjanakāya*).

The early Buddhist scholiasts from northwestern India, then, introduced three (perhaps originally two) linguistic *dharma*s. In so doing, they introduced a notion that was to have a long history in India.

THE PERFECTION OF WISDOM

Implicit in the scholastic developments just described was the notion that the world of macroscopic objects, i.e., the world of our daily experience, is not ultimately real. This was to become a lasting theme in Indian Buddhism. But if the world of chariots,

houses, and people is not real, how do we explain it? The Buddhists of northwestern India, as we have seen, had their answer: the ultimately unreal objects that populate our common-sense world are nothing but words. In other words: language creates the world of our ordinary experience.

As stated above, the early Buddhist scholiasts accepted only the *dharma*s as real. The emphasis in their writings, however, is on what is there (the *dharma*s) rather than on what is *not* there, which includes chariots, houses, and people. In spite of this, they had to, and did, distinguish between things that exist conventionally and those that exist in the highest sense. And obviously, complete wisdom, which plays an important role in Buddhism, had to be free from the unreality created by words.

The cultivation of wisdom becomes especially important in the form of Buddhism known by the name Mahayana—“the Great Vehicle,” but perhaps originally rather “the Great Path.” Adepts of Mahayana strive for more than mere “ordinary” liberation (i.e., more than “ordinary” *arhat*-ship; an *arhat* is someone who has reached liberation by following the Buddhist path to the end); their goal is rather to become buddhas, more elevated than *arhats*. The Perfection of Wisdom (*prajñāpāramitā*) is the last and highest of a number of perfections that those who aspire to buddhahood have to master. Unsurprisingly, the highest wisdom is not misled by the confusion that language imposes on the experience of the world of those less advanced. It is for this reason that the nonexistence (or “emptiness”) of the world is a recurring theme in Mahayana texts.

One of the earliest Mahayana texts is the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (*Treatise on the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses*). We know that this text, or rather an early version of it, existed already before the beginning of the Common Era, for a (partial) manuscript of it has been found in Gandhara. Indeed, it is not impossible that the text was initially composed there, and that Mahayana was born in that same region. It is not surprising that this text existed in the very area and at the same time as the new Buddhist scholasticism was being developed, for an important part of the Perfection of Wisdom consists in drawing the consequences of the new vision of reality that was being created. Recall that these scholiasts maintained that only *dharma*s really exist. Something that is not a *dharma* does not exist. Well, there are many things that are not *dharma*s, to begin with the readers of these texts themselves. Many of them aspired to become buddhas, and as such they were bodhisattvas. Bodhisattvas are not *dharma*s, so they ultimately do not exist. The *Treatise on the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses* and other such texts emphasize this non-existence of various entities, shaking their readers into an understanding of the unreal nature of the world we live in.

From the point of view of the early scholiasts, such statements do not bring anything new. For them it is almost banal to observe that bodhisattvas do not figure in the recognized lists of *dharma*s and therefore do not exist. Such statements do little beyond illustrating the basic ontological claim central to the scholastic revolution that had taken place in northwestern India. Whereas the Buddhist scholiasts directed their attention to what there is, viz. the *dharma*s, the Perfection of Wisdom texts are interested in all those things that are *not* recognized *dharma*s, and therefore do *not* exist. They discover, and triumphantly emphasize, that even many of the most fundamental entities of Buddhism, including bodhisattvas and the Perfection of Wisdom itself, turn out to be nonentities.

There is a certain tendency to radicalism in the Perfection of Wisdom texts. We find in them awareness of the fact that the things and persons of our ordinary experience owe their pseudo-existence to the words of language, along with a rejection of the existence of words themselves. In this respect the authors of these texts go further than the scholastic masters whose ideas they elaborate. These scholiasts had introduced some *dharma*s representing words and other linguistic units. They might therefore maintain that, even though there is no bodhisattva, the word “bodhisattva” exists. Some Perfection of Wisdom texts disagree with this and state in so many words that names do not exist either. This amounts to a rejection of one of the *dharma*s introduced by the scholiasts. Clearly these texts here part ways with those scholiasts. Other passages push this radicalism even further: they do not just discard one *dharma*; they discard them all. That is to say, the nonexistence of things and people familiar to us from everyday life is extended to cover the one remaining anchor into reality, the *dharma*s: they too do not exist.

NAGARJUNA

So far the Buddhists had created a most remarkable ontology. In essence, it stated that the world of our experience does not exist, that it is a mirage created by language. The question of what then does exist was answered in different ways. The initial position was that only *dharma*s exist. Some Buddhists continued to hold on to this position in more recent times, but others dropped the *dharma*s too. For them everything was empty, i.e., ultimately nonexistent.

This ontology, as remarkable as it is, remained entirely without proof. Why should anyone believe that the world of our everyday experience does not really exist? The scholastic thinkers tried to answer this question with limited success, and depended largely on some heavily reinterpreted Buddha words.

This, however, changed. Reflection about the relation between statements and reality provided reason to think that the world of our everyday experience did not exist because it *could* not exist: it was contradicted by reason. This can be seen as follows. The first question is: Do statements correspond to reality, and if yes, how? Clearly untrue statements don't, but what about true statements? They cannot but correspond to reality, or at least to an aspect of reality: if the statement "the cat sits on the mat" is true, then the cat sits on the mat. Indian thinkers, like us, found this self-evident and uncontroversial, and went one step further: they took it for granted that the words of a true statement correspond to the items that make up the situation described; we may call this the *correspondence principle*. The situation correctly described by the statement "the cat sits on the mat" is made up of the items "cat," "mat," and "sitting." The fact that Sanskrit does not use articles ("the" and "a") and that one single word in Sanskrit corresponds to English "on the mat" makes this correspondence all the more evident. It is therefore not surprising that Buddhist thinkers of the early centuries CE agreed with it. Their belief that common-sense reality was created by words made the correspondence between words and things all the more plausible.

However, this conviction has consequences. There are true statements that do not, or not obviously, fit the correspondence principle. This is particularly true of statements that describe a situation in which something is produced or comes into being, or more generally, of statements that involve both present and future, or past and present, and causality. The statement "the potter makes a pot" describes a situation in which there is a potter, the activity of making, but no pot. If there were a pot in that situation, the potter would not need to make it. How then can one make sense of such statements?

Nagarjuna may have been among the first to take on this problem. He lived in all probability toward the end of the second century CE. Being a Buddhist, he started from the assumption that the world of our everyday experience is not ultimately real, and that its supposed existence is due to language. Nagarjuna set out to prove that the common-sense world involves contradictions and therefore *cannot* exist. One of the ways he did so used the problem associated with statements like "the potter makes a pot" or "the pot comes into being."

Nagarjuna's presentation is often difficult and enigmatic, and frequently based on specific Buddhist technical doctrines; it provides modern scholarship with an almost inexhaustible quantity of puzzles and material for further exploration. However, contradictions of the kind illustrated by "the potter makes a pot" and "the pot comes into being" are clearly among his favorite arguments to show that the world of our ordinary experience cannot exist. These are statements that cannot possibly refer to anything, and yet our ordinary experience tells us that they do.

For many Buddhists such arguments may have been welcome. They were, after all, of the opinion that the world of our experience is not ultimately real, and the discovery that statements describing this world contain contradictions did not oblige them to fundamentally rethink their view. In spite of this, they had to find a place for these contradictions in their worldview, and not all Buddhists agreed with the way Nagarjuna did so. Indeed, some may have thought of these contradictions already and arrived at a different explanation. This appears to have been true of the Sarvastivadins, the Buddhist scholiasts mainly responsible for the scholastic developments studied above. These Buddhists owed their name to their conviction that all (*sarva*)—past, present, and future things—exists (*asti*). Sometimes this was expressed by saying that all things have their own nature, or an essential character, that is timeless. The original justification for this peculiar belief does not concern us at present. The use of this doctrine when confronted with the inner contradictions inherent in certain statements concerns us all the more. If the future pot exists already, the words of the statements “the potter makes a pot” and “the pot comes into being” correspond, all of them, to existing entities, and there is no contradiction left.

In this way the Sarvastivadins could offer a solution to the perceived contradiction in statements like “the potter makes a pot” or “the pot comes into being,” taking recourse to the peculiar dogma that gave them their name. Other Buddhist scholiasts rejected this. But even without the dogma that past and future things exist, Buddhist scholasticism could easily explain away contradictions of this kind by pointing out that words may correspond to our daily experience, but not to the deeper reality hiding behind it. Buddhist scholastic ontology only accepted *dharma*s, and activities (such as making a pot) are not *dharma*s. Rapid successions of *dharma*s are all there is, and the impression that there are activities besides is mistaken. This is the position taken by Vasubandhu, the author of the *Commentary on the Treasury of Scholasticism* (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*), and by many others.

Whatever the justification, the notion of a higher, or deeper, reality behind the common-sense reality we experience in our daily life is fundamental to all forms of Indian Buddhism influenced by the northwestern innovations. Buddhist texts henceforth often distinguish between that which is “real in the highest sense” and that which is “relatively real.” What is relatively real, and therefore ultimately unreal, is so by virtue of words. Both forms of reality (“highest” and “relative”) are accessible to human cognition, but access to what is real in the highest sense is reserved to those who have made considerable progress on the path to spiritual perfection. The idea of two levels of cognition is implicitly present from the beginning, and will become explicit in later developments.



CHAPTER THREE

The Grammarian Patanjali

This short presentation of the beginning of Buddhist systematic thought equips us to turn to the next Brahmanical thinker in the grammatical tradition. Patanjali, the author of the *Great Grammatical Commentary* (*Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya*)—also *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*)—wrote this work probably about half a century after the collapse of the Maurya Empire. He was aware of the political history of his time. He refers, for example, to Pushyamitra and to the Greek inroads into the subcontinent. There are reasons to think that he lived in Kashmir or moved there at some point in his life, perhaps following Pushyamitra.

Kashmir is near Gandhara and is sometimes considered part of Greater Gandhara. Like Gandhara, it had a strong Buddhist presence, and it is more than likely that the Buddhist doctors of Kashmir participated in the intellectual revolution described above. Unlike Gandhara, Kashmir was conquered by Pushyamitra after the collapse of the Maurya Empire, and Patanjali indicates that he once worked for this ruler, presumably as a sacrificial priest. Pushyamitra is reported to have treated local Buddhists harshly. Buddhism did not disappear from Kashmir as a result; it continued to flourish there for a number of centuries. In other words, it is possible or even likely not just that Patanjali was in contact with Buddhists but that he became acquainted with the new philosophical developments in this religion. This acquaintance manifests itself in his approach to grammar, and to language in general. Some of the innovations that Patanjali introduced into the Paninian grammatical tradition are most easily explained by the assumption of Buddhist scholastic influence.

One of these is Patanjali's tendency to look upon words and speech sounds as independently existing entities. This betrays ontological concerns that Patanjali did not share with his grammatical predecessors. Ontological concerns were, on the other

hand, at the very heart of the philosophical reflections of Patanjali's Buddhist contemporaries, who were also his direct neighbors. Ontologically speaking, Patanjali realized, words and speech sounds constitute a problem, because they are sequences of elements that do not occur simultaneously. The sounds of the word "cow" have to be pronounced in sequence, not simultaneously, in order to be understood. At no single moment, therefore, is there something one might call "the word 'cow.'" Certain Buddhists, we know, had denied this, and claimed that there *is* a word "cow": it is a *dharma*, and as such it is momentary and exists quite independently of the constituent speech sounds. They made similar claims with regard to speech sounds and sentences.

Patanjali repeats their claim, with certain modifications. He too accepts the existence of words and sounds beside and independently of their "constituent elements." Like the Buddhists, he does not accept the existence of morphemes as independent entities, even though morphemes play a central role in Panini's grammar and are indeed its basic elements. He does not, of course, call these independently existing words and sounds *dharmas*, nor does he accept that they are momentary. On the contrary, he considers them to be eternal: "Words are eternal, and in eternal words there must be speech sounds that are lasting, unchangeable, not subject to loss, additions, or modifications." Patanjali does not present this claim as something new; he rather does as if his predecessors had always "known" that Sanskrit was eternal, and therefore without beginning in time.

The new belief in the eternity of words pulled the rug from underneath the efforts of Panini, Yaska, and no doubt many others. No longer was grammar ultimately motivated by the search for minimal meaning bearers that help to explain the hidden links that connect words and their meanings, following a fundamental tenet of Vedic thought. No longer was language the result of the dynamic interaction of minimal phonetic elements expressive of minimal meanings. For Patanjali words are eternal "entities" with meanings that they have always possessed. The parts of words that join up and are modified or replaced one by one have no place in Patanjali's scheme of things. The reality behind the addition and substitution of elements in a word is, for him, that whole words are replaced by whole words. In other words, for Patanjali the basic elements of Panini's grammar have lost their independence. What is more, Patanjali reduces the derivational process to a mental process: the knowledge of one word followed by the knowledge of another. The significance of this new way of thinking about derivations will be considered below.

This difference between Patanjali and his predecessors is subtle but had radical consequences. For one thing, it affected Patanjali's understanding of the text of Panini's *Grammar*. Consider the following. Panini used a number of terms to indicate the

optional use of certain formations. The particle *vā* indicated that the use of a particular form was to be preferred; *vibhāṣā* indicated the opposite, viz., that the resulting form should rather not be used; and *anyatarasyām* showed equal preference for two possible forms. Patanjali shows no awareness of this distinction. This might be and has been explained by the assumption that Patanjali no longer knew the correct interpretation of these terms, that the correct understanding of Panini's *Grammar* had been lost by his time. However, nothing is less certain. Even if Patanjali was aware of the distinction among these three particles, his different vision of the Sanskrit language had no place for more or less preferred words. His language consisted of correct words and excluded incorrect words. Correct words are not preferred to one another; they are all equally correct. Certain correct words may not be used very often. Others, Patanjali points out, are not used among cultured Brahmins but *are* used among the despised foreigners. More recent Brahmanical thinkers, most notably the Vedic Interpreters (*Mimamsaka*), the professional interpreters of Vedic texts, agree with Patanjali and have to confront the question what meaning to ascribe to such words. Can one simply accept the meaning that foreigners give to the words, or should one try to arrive at their meaning by strictly Brahmanical means, such as etymology? Whatever the answer, it is clear that not even educated Brahmins necessarily use all correct words, even though they are eternal. Some words may be used in other worlds, and some may even "survive" among despised foreigners.

Why should one use correct words? The purpose of Patanjali's predecessors, notably Panini and Yaska, had been to systematize the Vedic belief about the links between words that resemble each other. In Patanjali's scheme of things, there is no place for minimal meaning bearers or for a deep significance attributed to similarities. Grammar, from this perspective, no longer contributes to an understanding of the reality believed to hide behind the world of our daily experience. If so, what is grammar good for? Why should people bother to learn it, and indeed, why should they bother to speak correct words rather than corrupted ones? Patanjali has an answer, to be sure, but it seems clear that he steers the discussion about the use of grammar in a new direction. For reasons that he does not specify, he believes that correct words bring merit.

This gives rise to some further questions. Does merit arise from the use of correct words or from their knowledge? If the latter, we are confronted with a new problem. There are, as we have seen, correct words that are not used, or that are used in remote regions; there are far more incorrect words that *are* used. What is more, everyone knows more incorrect than correct words, so that one might expect a massive amount of demerit. Patanjali's final position appears to be that the merit that results from

knowing correct words is sufficient to destroy the demerit resulting from knowing incorrect words.

Can incorrect words express meaning? Patanjali's remarks suggest that the meaning "cow" can be expressed by incorrect words—such as *gāvī*, *gorī*, *gotā*, *gopatalikā*—as well as by the correct word *go*. The general attitude, here and elsewhere, appears to be that incorrect words are corruptions of correct words, spoken by groups that in a remote past spoke correct words, i.e., Sanskrit.

The belief that words are eternal is not without repercussions for the question what words refer to, because eternal words must refer to eternal things. Most words, or at any rate nouns, can be used to refer to two "things": an individual or a general notion. The word "bear" in "there is a bear in my garden" refers to an individual, but in "a bear is a dangerous animal" it does not. Patanjali is aware of this double potential of many nouns, and uses the expressions "form" (*ākṛti*) and "substance" (*dravya*) to distinguish between the two. The word "bear" in "there is a bear in my garden" refers to a substance, but in "a bear is a dangerous animal" it refers to a form shared by numerous individual animals. Patanjali, as we know, holds that the word is eternal, that its meaning is eternal, and that the relation between the two is eternal. Since, then, the meaning of words is eternal, does this apply to the form or to the substance? Patanjali dedicates a passage to this question and comes to the ambiguous conclusion that "the word refers to that which we look upon as eternal."

Another innovation of Patanjali that has a direct bearing on grammar is the following. We saw, while studying the derivation of *bhavatu*, that some steps in certain Paninian derivations require more information than merely what is available at the preceding stage. The step from *bhavati* to *bhavatu* could only be made because the element *lot* had figured at an earlier stage that was no longer there. There are other derivations where information from subsequent stages is required in order to proceed. Patanjali did not like either of these two possibilities. He admits only derivations in which all the information for the next step is present at the immediately preceding stage. Since many derivations are not like this, Patanjali subjects them to highly technical and complicated analyses, at the end of which he can somehow claim that they all follow his scheme. Why did he do so?

There is a simple and straightforward answer to this question. Patanjali imposes on grammatical derivations (which are, in his opinion, mental processes) the same scheme that the Buddhist scholiasts had imposed on all reality including mental processes: both consist of a succession of stages in which the step toward each next stage is fully determined by the immediately preceding stage. Patanjali does not, of course, admit that he has borrowed this scheme from his Buddhist neighbors. But

PART I. INTRODUCTION

then he does not even admit that Buddhists exist. As a traditional Brahman he is bound to maintain that his traditional knowledge, every bit of it, is ancient and owes nothing to anybody whatsoever. (Remember that both the Sanskrit language and the Veda are eternal, i.e., beginningless.) But this pretense should not mislead us. The scheme Patanjali imposes on Paninian derivations is the cause of endless complications that can only be resolved in the most ingenious ways, often through the introduction of principles and rules unknown to Panini. There is no sensible explanation for this bizarre new requirement, except for the fact that Patanjali shared an intellectual world with Buddhist scholiasts who had just recently created a philosophy in which this kind of linear step-by-step thinking constituted a crucial ingredient.



CHAPTER FOUR

The Special Place of Sanskrit and the Veda

Brahmanism had and continued to have a special relationship with language. The main impetus to further thought came from the school of Vedic interpretation called *Mimamsa* (Vedic Interpretation). In a certain way one could say that this school in its classical form dealt with language, and that Vedic interpretation was subsidiary to it. Language here meant, of course, Sanskrit, the language of the Veda. (Modern linguists may not be keen to identify the language of the Veda with Sanskrit—for the former they use expressions such as “Vedic,” or “Old Indo-Aryan”—but for the adepts of this school, as for everyone else in classical India, they were one and the same.) Communications in this language (as of course in every other language) are often “polluted” by the fact that a speaker or author is involved who may not be correctly informed, or who may wish to mislead or deceive his listeners. The Veda, and only the Veda, does not and cannot suffer from this defect, because it has no author. It was always there: like its language, Sanskrit, the Veda is eternal, without beginning. The Veda is in this way an expression of pure, uncontaminated language. Taking this position as a point of departure, the school of Vedic Interpretation elaborated principles to correctly interpret the Veda. This means that Vedic Interpretation interpreted Sanskrit in its various manifestations, which included above all, the Veda. Putting the matter like this had consequences that we will explore below.

Information about early classical Vedic Interpretation must be derived from Shabara’s *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mimamsabhasya*) and from fragments of earlier texts of the school.

SINGLE WORDS AS SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Does the reliability of the Veda only concern its sentences (statements, injunctions, etc.) or also its individual words? Recall that the language of the Veda is Sanskrit, and that the reliability of the Veda is based on the fact that it is the uncontaminated expression of that language (the only one there is). Can we derive information about the world from the words of the Sanskrit language? Can we conclude from the different kinds of words that exist what kinds of things there are in the world? For example: Can we transfer linguistic categories to the real world? And can we conclude from the presence of a word in Sanskrit that the corresponding object exists?

It appears that many Brahmanical thinkers would give an affirmative answer to these last two questions. They appear to have thought of such a parallelism between linguistic categories and the real world as completely self-evident. This is the reason why there are to my knowledge no passages in their classical works that discuss this issue explicitly.

Patanjali's *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*) distinguishes three kinds of words: words that relate to universals (*jātiśabda*), words that relate to qualities (*guṇāśabda*), and words that relate to actions (*kriyāśabda*). These three kinds of words are what we would call nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Elsewhere in his *Great Commentary* Patanjali points out that words that relate to universals designate, as a matter of fact, universals and individuals.

Patanjali's threefold division of words—which was certainly not meant to be exhaustive—was later used by the Vaisheshika school of philosophy (literally “School of Distinctions”) to develop an ontology in which the three corresponding entities—substances, qualities, and actions—constituted the three fundamental categories. This school of thought, which exerted a profound influence on other schools, notably Nyaya (Logic), in this way based its very structure on the belief in the parallelism between words and things. A more detailed discussion will be found below.

The next question is: If words correspond to things, what can we learn from these words about the world? Can we, for example, conclude from the existence of a word that the object it denotes exists too? At first sight this question may look bizarre. Can we derive from the existence of the word “Martian” in English that there are Martians? Or from the word “angel” that angels exist?

Comparison with the English words “Martian” and “angel” exposes us to the danger of thinking of Sanskrit as just another language, different from but at the same time comparable to any of the innumerable other languages of this world. This is not the way Brahmanical thinkers thought of it. For them, Sanskrit was the only real language, beginningless and not created by human beings. Moreover, it was the

language of the Veda, a beginningless body of literature. New words designating imaginary entities do not exist in this language. It is therefore conceivable that there were Brahmanical thinkers who took it for granted that the existence of a Sanskrit word guaranteed the existence of a corresponding item. Did they?

Yes, they did. A number of early classical Sanskrit works show this beyond doubt. The discussion often involves such words as “heaven” and “deity,” referring to entities that cannot be observed. Early Indian thinkers, most of them apparently belonging to the school of Vedic Interpretation, accepted that the very existence of these words guaranteed that the objects denoted—heaven and deities respectively—exist.

Surprisingly, Shabara’s *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*) no longer accepts this. It appears that Vedic Interpretation had abandoned this position at or before his time (in the fifth century CE or earlier). Far from maintaining that the existence of heaven and of deities is vouchsafed by the words that designate them, Shabara comes close to denying that they exist at all. The reason for this rejection lies in Shabara’s critical attitude toward temple priests and the worship of gods they orchestrated. His criticism therefore has a social undercurrent. It takes the form of a denial of the very existence of the deities that the temple priests are supposed to serve. This, however, was only possible by abandoning a belief that had been part of Vedic Interpretation, namely, that words have to correspond to existing things.

The individual words of Sanskrit, then, came to be abandoned as reliable sources of knowledge of what exists in the world. Before this happened, this conviction had exerted a determining influence on the Vaisheshika system of philosophy, which is essentially an ontology, a presentation of what there is. A brief discussion of its relevant features is therefore necessary. We will base it primarily on the *Padārthadharmasaṅgraha* (*Compendium of the Characteristics of the Categories*), a text better known by the name *Praśastapādabhāṣya* (*Prashastapada’s Commentary*). Prashastapada—or without the honorific *-pāda*, simply Prashasta—is its author.

Prashasta’s *Compendium* presents a coherent system—or at least one that aspires to coherence—demonstrating several remarkable traits. It enumerates a certain number of “categories”—the term most often used to translate the Sanskrit *padārtha*, which literally means “word meaning”—that are supposed to encompass everything that exists. The number of categories accepted by Prashasta is six (other Vaisheshika texts accept seven or even ten categories). These categories cover all existing entities, and their enumeration is thus an enumeration of all that exists. The six categories are substance (*dravya*), quality (*guṇa*), motion (*karman*), universal (*sāmānya*), particularity (*viśeṣa*), and inherence (*saṃavāya*). For the author of this text, all that exists is either a substance, a quality, a motion, a universal, a particularity, or inherence.

The categories admit of internal divisions, of course. There are, for instance, nine substances, twenty-four qualities, five motions, etc.; this does not alter the fact that Vaisheshika offers in its six categories a catalogue of everything that exists. It covers not only ultimate constituents but also composite objects. But what interests us most at present is that Vaisheshika assumes a close connection between words and the objects of the phenomenal world.

Look again at the Vaisheshika list of categories. It is clear that the first three—substance (*dravya*), quality (*guṇa*), and motion (*karman*)—constitute its core. The designation “object” (*artha*) is reserved for these three categories; the other categories do not count as “objects.” Their role is clearly subordinate to that of the three main categories. A universal (*sāmānya/jāti*) groups together a certain number of objects, while particularity (*viśeṣa*) distinguishes them from one another; inherence (*samavāya*)—which is single: there is only one inheritance—is responsible for their interaction. While the secondary role of these last three categories does not prove that they were added at a later time to an original list containing only substance, quality, and motion, we cannot rule out this possibility. What is important is to note the foundational role of the first three categories in the system.

These first three categories—substance, quality, and motion—correspond to the three principal types of words in Sanskrit: nouns, adjectives, and verbs. It would be a mistake to conclude that this categorization was necessary for Sanskrit speakers. Many did not accept it, including the Buddhists and the adherents of the philosophy called Samkhya. We must rather consider that the Vaisheshikas consciously accepted the classification, as well as the correspondence between these categories and the three types of Sanskrit words. Their own texts may not state it explicitly, but we have already seen that they could draw inspiration from Patanjali’s *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*) in this respect. What is more, the Vaisheshika belief concerning the close connection between words and things finds expression in other ways too.

The first of the three categories, substance, is, in a certain sense, the most important. It is substance that supports the other two, which are in turn largely determined by the substances in which they inhere. In a complete enumeration of all that exists, a specification of what are substances is therefore essential. This specification occurs in two stages. First, a list of nine substances is presented. Five of these are the material elements: earth, water, fire, wind, and ether; this list reflects then current views on the composition of matter. The other four are time, space, soul, and mind. Obviously, Vaisheshika did not claim that there were only nine, or even five, substantial objects in the world, so a further specification is needed. The number of substantial objects is in fact quite considerable, but Vaisheshika texts make no effort to list them all. Why? And how can one claim to present a complete enumeration of

everything that exists without providing a criterion for determining which objects are substances?

The answer is simple: in principle, a list of Sanskrit nouns is sufficient to delimit the domain of substances. One must be careful, of course, since some nouns denote qualities, or motions, or something else, but the principle remains sound. Indeed, the existence of certain nouns attests to the presence of substances whose existence is less than evident. The same applies to personal pronouns. The personal pronoun “I,” for instance, indicates the existence of a soul (conceived of as a substance by the Vaisheshikas). The fact that this pronoun does not enter into apposition with the word “earth,” etc. (as in “I am earth”), proves that the soul is different from the body (which is, in the case of human beings, a form of earth). The substance “time,” again according to Prashasta’s *Compendium*, is the cause of the origin, preservation, and destruction of all produced things, and this because language tells us so. The commentators gloss this in the following manner: we say that a certain object is produced at this or that moment, etc. This same substance “time” is also responsible for our use of words referring to various durations, such as “day,” “month,” “year,” etc.

One encounters a good number of arguments of this sort, intended to prove the existence of various qualities. Pleasure, for instance, is a quality of the soul, because we say: “I am pleased.” The qualities “distance” and “nearness” are responsible for our use of the words “distant” and “near,” respectively.

This short presentation of some points of the Vaisheshika philosophy should suffice to show that this ontology is, in an important measure, the outcome of an attempt to uncover the structure of reality based on the assumption of a close connection between words and things.

SENTENCES AS SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Let us now return to the school of Vedic Interpretation and its preoccupation with the Veda. We have seen that Shabara abandoned individual words as a reliable source of knowledge of what exists in the world. This did not affect the Brahmanical conviction that the Veda is a reliable source of knowledge. This task now fell exclusively on the shoulders of its sentences.

Many Indian thinkers could subscribe to the general belief that Vedic sentences are reliable, but the specific task of figuring out what those sentences actually said belonged to Vedic Interpretation, the school of Vedic hermeneutics. This school developed a number of principles, some of which we will briefly discuss.

The point of departure is expressed as follows in Shabara’s *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*) on sūtra 1.1.2: “It is a contradiction to say ‘the Vedic

utterance speaks' and 'incorrectly.' When one says 'it speaks,' this means 'it makes known,' that it is the cause that a thing is known." This general principle is fundamental, but only of limited use in determining what all the sentences that constitute the Veda actually say. Shabara is aware that sentences can be ambiguous, that they often allow multiple interpretations. The interpreter of Vedic sentences must therefore grasp not just any meaning of the sentence concerned, but the meaning that is nearest to the text. (Recall that the intention of the author plays no role, since the Veda has no author.) The search for the "nearest meaning" and the rejection of "more remote" meanings characterizes Shabara's *Commentary* throughout, and is fundamental to his procedure. Efforts are made to determine what it means for a meaning to be "nearest" or "more remote."

Shabara's exegetical efforts frequently concentrate on comparing two different interpretations of a Vedic statement. One of the two is in the end discarded, the other one retained. Vedic Interpretation formulated a number of criteria meant to be of help in such situations. These criteria do not interest us in themselves at present. We are more interested in the type of reasoning used to establish them and to choose between different interpretations in general. Shabara regularly uses expressions like "nearest meaning" (*samnikṛṣṭa artha*) and "more remote meaning" (*viprakṛṣṭa artha*). Of these two, he always gives preference to the "nearest meaning." He follows in this respect the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* on which he comments.

The principle that the most direct interpretation is the correct one pervades many other discussions in Shabara's *Bhāṣya*. For one thing, if we are to find the most direct interpretation of a Vedic statement, it must exist and be unambiguous. This is not evident in all cases. Take the meanings of individual Sanskrit words. Almost any Sanskrit word, as is testified by the dictionaries, has various meanings. Which is the "direct" interpretation that we must choose? Vedic Interpretation takes a categorical position: each word has but one primary sense; the other meanings are derived from it. The primary sense is known from the word alone; secondary meanings are understood because of some connection with the primary sense. In concrete cases it is not always easy to decide which of two known senses is primary and which is secondary. Where there are Vedic passages that clearly use the term concerned in one of the two meanings, there is no difficulty. The word *yava*, for example, can refer to barley and to long pepper. The Vedic sentence "Where other plants wither, these [*yava* plants] stand up happily, as it were" shows that the meaning "barley" is primary in the Veda. Sometimes the Veda does not help in making the choice. Take the example of the word *parvan*. It is known right from the Himalaya down to Cape Comorin, Shabara reminds us, that this word is used in the sense of "time" and

“combination.” Which is the primary sense? Etymological reflections point to “combination.” The meaning “time” can be obtained from this primary sense, and is therefore secondary. Different reasons are adduced to choose between the two meanings of *caru*, “vessel” and “oblation of rice,” both of them “known from the Himalaya down to Cape Comorin.” The details and the outcome of this discussion do not interest us at present. The presupposition that expresses itself in them interests us all the more: it is the principle that Vedic statements allow an unambiguous and direct interpretation.

Shabara’s *Commentary* also contains an interesting discussion on what exactly is denoted by words. Is it the form (*ākṛti*) shared in common by all individuals designated by that word? Or is it an individual (*vyakti*) thus designated? Both are understood when a word (and Shabara obviously thinks here in the first place of generic terms, such as “cow”) is pronounced, but both cannot be designated (no doubt for the same reason as above, viz., that a word cannot have two “meanings”). Only the form is directly expressed. Shabara establishes that the individual is understood from the form rather than directly from the word, by showing that an individual is known from the form even when no word is uttered; and where a word is uttered but the relevant form is not understood, no individual is understood either. In other words, what we understand directly from the word is the form. This form, in its turn, can bring to our mind an individual that is characterized by it. This means that the form, rather than any individual, comes most immediately to our mind when we hear a word. And this means, in view of the principle under discussion, that words denote forms rather than individuals.

Elsewhere Shabara’s *Commentary* considers a different answer to the question of which is the notion most directly communicated by words. According to an opponent, it is the notion of mere sound devoid of meaning. This position is clearly inspired by the principle we are studying. Words first communicate the notion of sound; the meaning that we understand from a word arises as a result of recognizing the sound first. Ergo, words primarily communicate the notion of sound. It is obvious that this conclusion, though close to the general exegetical principle of Vedic Interpretation, cannot be accepted. Both the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* (7.2.5) and Shabara’s *Commentary* reject it by stating that the connection between words and meanings is natural. In other words, no extra step is required to get from hearing the sound to understanding its meaning. This way the exegetical principle of Vedic Interpretation is saved. One could also say that the belief that the words and meanings of the Sanskrit language have an inherent connection is a consequence of the dogma that Vedic statements can be correctly and unambiguously interpreted by choosing the “most direct”

interpretation, here understood to mean: the interpretation that involves a minimum of mental or epistemological stages. This same principle allows us to understand numerous other discussions in Shabara's *Commentary*.

There is an obvious psychological/epistemological dimension to many of these exegetical arguments. Interpretations that require a minimum of mental steps are to be preferred to those that require more numerous mental steps. This in its turn identifies the mind as a potential source of error in the correct interpretation of a Vedic statement. The correct interpretation must involve an absolute minimum of participation of the mind. In fact, the most direct interpretation is the one that involves the least participation of the mind. It is axiomatic in Vedic Interpretation that the perfect interpretation of a Vedic statement exists and can be found. In other words, it is possible to reduce the participation of the mind to an absolute minimum.

This position can be extended so as to cover all forms of valid cognition. It then states that all forms of cognition are right, unless they have been interfered with. This is what came to be known under the name "self-sufficient validity of valid cognition" (*svataḥprāmānya*). This notion and the exegetical principle identified in the preceding pages are closely related. Both try to identify, then to exclude, disturbing influences from the process leading to valid cognition, and both start from the assumption that such identification and exclusion are indeed possible. Perception that arises from a causal complex free of disturbing factors is necessarily correct. In the same way, Vedic statements naturally (*svataḥ*) (i.e., when there are no disturbances by more than basic human mental activity) give rise to an interpretation (i.e., understanding, cognition) that is necessarily correct. The belief that an interpretation can—and should—be found that has arisen without disturbances is a programmatic principle that determines how to interpret Vedic statements. Interpreting the Veda means identifying disturbing factors—such as the more than minimal activity of the human mind—and eliminating them. Any interpretation that requires more participation of the mind than is strictly necessary is no longer Vedic, it is rather due to human understanding.

The purity of the Veda, then, is endangered by the activity of the human mind, or any other mind. This conviction is also expressed in another fundamental dogma of Vedic Interpretation. For mental activity not only threatens to play a role in the interpretation of a text; mental activity normally plays a role in its composition too. Vedic Interpretation avoids this danger by denying that the Veda has been composed at all. The Veda has no author, and this is possible because it has no beginning in time. Eternality and authorlessness are therefore two sides of the same position. And this position is ultimately based on the belief that the purity of the Veda is endangered by contact with any mind, human or divine. In order to justify this position,

Vedic Interpretation presents a theory of the inherent correctness of verbal utterances, which can however be lost as a result of interference by human or divine beings.

The dogma of the authorlessness of the Veda influences the way Vedic statements are interpreted. A text without beginning cannot refer to events that happened at any particular time. Shabara is aware of this and explicitly refers to it in some places. There is, for example, a Vedic statement that says that the god Prajapati extracted his omentum. Shabara discusses it and observes: "If a historical event were to be referred to, the Veda would be open to the charge of having a beginning." In cases like these the principle of the most direct interpretation and the dogma of the beginninglessness of the Veda are in conflict. Clearly, the most direct interpretation of the statement "Prajapati extracted his omentum" is that Prajapati, at some point in time, extracted his omentum. The principle of the most direct interpretation meets with difficulties in other situations too. Some Vedic statements do not agree with our experience. Shabara gives the following examples: "The trees sat down for a sacrificial session"; "The snakes sat down for a sacrificial session"; "The old bull sings mad songs." Cases like these serve as justification in numerous instances to deviate from the most direct interpretation and resort to a secondary interpretation instead. Secondary interpretations play a major role in Vedic Interpretation; this school interprets most of the Veda in this way. This does not, however, change the fact that a secondary interpretation is only allowed in cases where the primary interpretation is not possible for one reason or another. The statements that remain for direct interpretation are few indeed. Only Vedic statements that are not and cannot be in conflict with other sources of knowledge are in the end interpreted literally. Such statements are the injunctions. The injunction, Shabara explains, is a part of the Veda that communicates something that remains unknown by other means. As a result, Mimamsa as understood by Shabara does little if anything beyond enjoining ritual activity.

But even if, for practical reasons, only a minority of Vedic statements can be strictly interpreted according to the rule expounded above, the general principle remains unaffected. It states that each Vedic statement allows for a most direct interpretation that is (almost) independent of the mental activity of the person who "receives" this interpretation.

The Veda, then, is not produced by a human mind (or by any other mind), and it should not be interpreted by a mind. Or rather, only those interpretations that reduce the interference of the mind to a minimum can be accepted as correct. In this way the Veda remains pure, not touched by any mind, both in its composition and in its interpretation. This purity of the Veda is only possible if it is accepted that the Veda

is eternal, i.e., without beginning and therefore without author, and that this corpus allows a “direct” interpretation. The first consequence became a central tenet in the worldview of classical Vedic Interpretation. The second consequence constituted a point of departure for philosophical developments and elaborations within the school.

VEDANTA

The strict and methodical interpretation that the Vedic Interpreters championed was widely respected in Brahmanical circles. Yet not all agreed that the Veda did nothing beyond enjoining ritual activity. Since ancient times there had been thinkers who were of the opinion that the Vedic tradition also has a place for different, more spiritual preoccupations. The Vedic corpus itself, as it came to be recognized in subsequent centuries, contains a number of texts—most of them called *Upanishad* (Secret Teaching)—that deal with issues such as the highest reality and the possibility of liberation from this world. There have no doubt been followers of the Upanishads through the centuries, and indeed, new Upanishads kept being produced until relatively recent times. However, these spiritually inclined thinkers do not appear to have participated in early philosophical discussions, and they made no efforts to systematize their thoughts.

This changed toward the middle of the first millennium CE. Thinkers started composing treatises that tried to present a rational basis for their belief in a highest reality called Brahma and for the illusionistic nature of the ordinary world. They could draw inspiration (without admitting that they did so) from Buddhist philosophers, who had for many centuries maintained that the ordinary world is unreal. But some of them were not ready to abandon the link with the Veda. They were confronted with the challenge to prove that the Veda not only enjoins ritual activity but also provides information about the highest reality. In responding to this challenge, they could not possibly reject the fundamental principles of the school of Vedic Interpretation; after all, arriving at the most direct interpretation of Vedic statements was also their concern. So they had to show that a strict and rigorous application of these principles would extract more than mere injunctions from this corpus of texts; it would also find information about the highest reality. These thinkers were Vedantins, because they were interested in Vedanta: “end of the Veda” or “essence of the Veda,” a term often used to refer to the Upanishads. They also considered themselves Vedic Interpreters (*mīmāṃsaka*), because they applied the same principles of interpretation as the “ritual” Vedic Interpreters, only in a way that they considered more correct.

Not all Vedantins presented themselves as Vedic Interpreters, and it seems a priori likely that Vedanta as Vedic Interpretation was a relatively late innovation made in certain Vedantic circles. But the author or authors of the *Brahmasūtra* and its various commentators presumably all welcomed this way of presenting Vedanta. Shankara (end of the seventh century CE) may be the earliest commentator on the *Brahmasūtra* whose work has survived.

In the beginning of his *Commentary on the Brahmasūtra* (*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*), Shankara presents a justification of the way he interprets the Upanishads. Since this way would at first sight seem to be in contradiction with the traditional principles of Vedic Interpretation, he begins by presenting the latter's point of view. This passage admirably presents, in few words, what we know is the classical position of Vedic Interpretation. There is no place for information about existing things to be derived from the Veda. The Veda, not having been composed by fallible beings, cannot possibly contain incorrect information, and therefore no information that could be in conflict with other means of knowledge such as perception. For this reason it cannot contain information about what the world is like. However, it can and does contain information about what human beings *must do*, for this cannot be obtained by any other means. The result is that injunctions have to be taken literally, whereas all other Vedic pronouncements may have to be understood metaphorically.

Shankara does not agree with this. He claims that the principles of Vedic Interpretation do not exclude that information about Brahma can be obtained from Vedic texts. His logic is simple. He agrees with traditional Vedic Interpretation that the Veda can on no account be in conflict with other means of knowledge and that, therefore, the Veda can only provide information about things that we cannot learn about in any other way. For traditional Vedic Interpretation the only things that fulfill this requirement are the injunctions. Shankara argues that Brahma falls into the same category: the only way to obtain knowledge about Brahma is through the Veda.

Note that Shankara does not express disagreement with the basic principles of Vedic Interpretation. On the contrary, he agrees with all of them. He only maintains that in applying these principles, the traditional Vedic Interpreters overlook something. They are right in thinking that the Veda should never be in conflict with other means of knowledge. They are also correct in maintaining that the injunctions, by their very nature, cannot be in conflict with any other means of knowledge and must therefore be taken literally. He only adds that the same reasoning applies to the passages that provide information about Brahma, for Brahma too cannot be known by any other means of knowledge.

Shankara sets out his arguments by pointing out that traditional Vedic Interpretation is completely correct but for the fact that its very principles should oblige it

to look upon Upanishadic sentences pertaining to Brahma as statements that, in addition to injunctions, also have to be taken literally. Far from being a critic of Vedic Interpretation, he presents himself here as an even more conscientious champion of its principles.

Shankara's acceptance of the principles of Vedic Interpretation does not mean that he always reaches the same conclusions as the ritual Vedic Interpreters. Statements about Brahma have to be accepted for reasons that the traditional Vedic Interpreter should find convincing. But Shankara goes further. Information contained in "laudatory statements" (*arthavāda*, i.e., Vedic statements like "He wept") and in *mantras*, if it is not in conflict with other sources of knowledge, will have to be accepted too. In this way we learn that the gods have bodies, etc., a position rejected by Shabara. Here, once again, Shankara turns the methods of Vedic Interpretation against itself. He does not deny that "laudatory statements" are to be understood with injunctions. He merely adds, on the basis of a semantic analysis, that this does not do away with their literal contents, which have to be accepted if no other means of valid cognition militates against this. Shankara applies essentially the same method to distinguish between statements about Brahma that are literally true and those that are not.

If then Shankara makes an effort to present the Vedantic way to liberation as a form of Vedic Interpretation, does this have any effect on the precise nature of this path? Recall that Vedic Interpretation—first of all, ritual Vedic Interpretation—takes as its point of departure the hypothetical situation of a man (not a woman, for women are not allowed to study the *Veda*) with an open mind and without prior expectations, being confronted with the contents of the *Veda*, presumably during the process of learning it by heart. Coming across an injunction, this man will know that he must execute this or that activity, he will interpret other Vedic sentences along with the injunctions, etc. The whole of Vedic Interpretation in its sometimes confusing complexity is presented as resulting naturally from this confrontation, in which the learner must preserve his unbiased openness to the text. In the end he will carry out rituals and do all the other things that are required, not (according to the theory) because someone told or taught him to do so, but simply because this is the natural reaction to a confrontation with the texts he has learned, i.e., with the eternal word.

This same hypothetical situation applies to Brahma-Mimamsa, the term sometimes used for Vedic Interpretation that concentrates on Brahma. Imagine the same man as before who, as part of his Vedic education, now learns the Upanishads by heart. He will come across sentences that teach him, for example, that his self is identical with Brahma. Shankara makes a point of arguing that these sentences are not

injunctions, so there is no prescription to meditate on Brahma or the like. That is to say, these sentences do nothing beyond passing on information. But important information it is, the kind that informs a person that the snake that gave her a fright is really a rope. Such information does not prescribe anything, yet totally changes the situation of those who receive it. Our Vedic student will all of a sudden know that his self is Brahma and will therefore be liberated. He does not have to do anything to attain this state; indeed, there is nothing he *can* do. Liberation in this way is the result of an unbiased confrontation with the relevant parts of the Veda, and of nothing else.

Shankara's determination to present Vedanta as Vedic Interpretation inevitably leads him to the position that liberation is the result of the mere confrontation with the relevant Upanishadic statements. He does emphasize in various places that only knowledge is required to attain that goal, either from the mere hearing of Upanishadic sentences or from contemplation on them. However, there are reasons to think that Shankara's position must have been somewhat more complex. On several occasions Shankara states quite clearly that works can purify a person so that he can then know the self. And his *Commentary on the Brahmasūtra* (*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*) enumerates, under the first *sutra*, the following preconditions for an aspiring student: (1) an ability to distinguish between the temporal and the eternal; (2) dispassion for the enjoyment of the fruits of one's actions both here and hereafter; (3) attainment of the means of tranquility, self-restraint, and the like; (4) the desire for liberation. These and similar passages show that not just anyone confronted with the Upanishads will attain liberation. Some will, others won't. The difference lies in the degree of preparedness of the students. The preliminary requirements are far from negligible; they exclude all those who have not studied the Veda in the prescribed manner (and therefore presumably Shudras and women, not to mention foreigners), and further reduce the numbers of those who have properly carried out their Vedic studies to those who have practiced the intellectual and ascetic virtues indicated.

Given that Vedic Interpretation as practiced by these Vedantins presents itself as the correct interpretation of the Veda, it goes without saying that a precondition for the useful study of the *Brahmasūtra*—or more precisely, for the inquiry into Brahma—should be the study of the Veda. Depending on the inclination of the student, the study of *ritual* Vedic Interpretation can at that point be skipped, allowing the student to concentrate on the insight to be obtained from the Upanishads, altogether leaving aside ritual activity. This is what Shankara says in his *Commentary on the Brahmasūtra* (*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*). These and other passages show that Shankara's “improved” Vedic Interpretation disposes, for all intents and purposes, of ritual Vedic Interpretation, leaving room only for Brahma-Mimamsa. Shankara does not say this

in so many words, but his admission that one does not miss out if one does not study ritual Vedic Interpretation and does not perform sacrificial rites says it all. Shankara's "palace revolution" inside Vedic Interpretation leaves an altogether different ideology in charge. Finally, the relationship between Brahma, i.e., Shankara's absolute, and the common-sense world is an important theme in Shankara's writings.

Having discussed in some detail the way Shankara presents his thought as an improved form of Vedic Interpretation, we can be brief with regard to the other early commentators on the *Brahmasūtra* whose works have survived. Chronologically next to Shankara comes Bhaskara. More recent is Ramanuja. Both share with Shankara one fundamental tenet: Brahma can only be known through the Veda. That is to say, like Shankara, they treat Vedanta as a form of Vedic Interpretation.

We can compare Shankara's position with that of his possible contemporary Mandana Mishra. Like Shankara, Mandana's *Proof of Brahma* (*Brahmasiddhi*) maintains that Brahma can and must be known from the Veda. However, he believes that Brahma can be known through perception as well.

BHARTRIHARI

Chronologically we now step back to consider a Brahmanical thinker who occupies a place of his own in the history of Indian philosophy. Bhartrihari must have lived around the middle of the fifth century CE, before Shankara and possibly before Shabara as well. He was a grammarian and a philosopher at the same time. Subsequent tradition tends to look upon him as a philosopher of grammar, but this may be overstating the case. Bhartrihari was certainly influenced by the grammar of Panini and by Patanjali's *Great Commentary* (on which he wrote a long, and perhaps the first, commentary), but his ideas were not only of a grammatical nature. He was familiar with developments in Buddhism, in Jainism, and in the Brahmanical schools of thought different from his own, and these contributed in various ways to his ideas.

Bhartrihari presents a picture of the world that is, or is claimed to be, based on the Veda. We know that Bhartrihari was thoroughly familiar with the principles of Vedic Interpretation, yet the philosophy he develops uses the Veda in a less analytical and more abstract manner. Bhartrihari does not admit, but a study of his work reveals, that he was strongly influenced by Buddhist philosophy. Recall that Buddhists held that words are responsible for the fact that we recognize items corresponding to them. Milinda's chariot was just a word, ultimately without reality. Behind the world of items corresponding to words, the Buddhists believed there is a higher reality. Depending on the school of thought he adhered to, a Buddhist might

think of that hidden reality as consisting of *dharma*s, the ultimate constituents of all, or he might even deny the existence of *dharma*s. From this point of view, words have the effect of making us believe, incorrectly, in the existence of collections of *dharma*s corresponding to the units of our experience: chariots, bodies, etc.

Bhartrihari too thought of our common-sense world as the result of language, and as ultimately unreal. In his view, the reality behind this common-sense world is different from that of the Buddhists. According to Bhartrihari, words do not create collections of elementary constituents, as the Buddhists thought. Quite the contrary, they divide an essentially undivided whole. This whole he sometimes calls Brahma; it is the totality of all there is. It is not identical with the self or with consciousness, as certain other thinkers (among them Shankara) believed to be the case. Nowhere in his *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*) is Brahma—which appears under various names—identified with consciousness. It is true that the mind plays a certain role in the perception of the phenomenal world, but an “objective” part remains that is emphasized. Bhartrihari speaks several times of external objects as being different from the consciousness or knowledge of the speaker, and never denies their existence.

For Bhartrihari, Brahma is the totality of all that exists. For him the whole is real, whereas its parts are not. It is not surprising that the *Treatise on Sentences and Words*, before dealing with sentences (*vākya*) and words (*pada*), considers first the existence of wholes in language. This is one of its main theses, especially in the second book: only the sentence exists, not the words and the speech sounds that are part of it. The sentence is not a collection of words or of speech sounds, but rather a single entity. The words of a sentence are derived through analysis, not the other way around. The second book of the *Treatise* offers various arguments to support this position, but they are in the present context of little interest. The goal is clearly to strengthen a foregone conclusion, viz., that only the sentence is an existing entity, because it is a whole; the whole really exists, unlike its parts.

One might extend this argument and conclude that, if the sentences themselves are parts of a larger collection, only that larger collection is real. It follows that the Veda, which is a (or perhaps one should say: the) collection of sentences, is single and undivided, and more real than its parts.

If we extend Bhartrihari’s argument even further, we arrive at the following: if the whole is more real than its parts, then ultimate reality, i.e., the absolute, must be the totality of all that exists, conceived of as a single entity. This totality is both temporal and spatial. The relation between the absolute and the phenomenal world is therefore the relation between the whole and its parts. One might even add that

the absolute and the phenomenal world, though real and unreal respectively, are not different. Purified consciousness, which gives access to Brahma, has as its object the totality of all that exists.

Why did Bhartrihari elaborate this vision of the world? The idea of Brahma as totality existed before him, to be sure. But Bhartrihari did not simply borrow this idea from earlier texts. He developed it and made it part of an extraordinary vision that assigns superior reality to each and every totality in comparison to its parts. And this vision is the exact opposite of the view adhered to by most Indian Buddhist thinkers of his time, who held that totalities do not really exist. Theirs is the opposite extreme, almost as radical as Bhartrihari's. Clearly Bhartrihari's position is a reaction to the Buddhist one, although he nowhere admits Buddhist influence. On the contrary, he refers to his own tradition in order to justify his position. Nevertheless, the nature of his argumentation takes us straight to Buddhism as an important source of his thought.

Beside important differences, Bhartrihari shared one idea with the Buddhists. They all believed that the phenomenal world is not real and owes its form to the influence of words. This idea had been an essential part of Buddhist thought since long before Bhartrihari, as we have seen. It is, on the other hand, quite the opposite of the Vaisheshika position. We have already discussed the Vaisheshika conviction that words do not correspond to an unreal, but rather to the real world. Bhartrihari accepted the position of the Buddhists but adapted it to his own requirements.

LANGUAGE AS A MEANS OF VALID COGNITION

We have seen that Brahmanical thinkers had long entertained and then abandoned the idea that the existence of a Sanskrit word was proof of the existence of the entity it refers to. Abandoning this idea was presumably a major step to take for the Vedic Interpreters, in whose thought the close correspondence between language and reality was fundamental. With Shabara and perhaps others before him, they had given up believing that the words of the Veda, i.e., the words of Sanskrit, provide reliable guidance with regard to what there is in the world. The question could not but arise whether the sentences of the Veda—its statements, its injunctions, etc.—also had now lost their status as providers of reliable information. Doubts in this regard would undermine the very reason of existence of Vedic Interpretation. It is therefore not surprising that these thinkers held on to the principle that language (*śabda*) is an independent means of valid cognition. This no longer meant that each word of the Sanskrit language was a means of valid cognition, but rather that Sanskrit sentences constitute a means of valid cognition.

Formulating this principle is difficult. True, Vedic sentences could be accepted as providing valid cognition, but not all Sanskrit sentences are Vedic sentences. Unlike new Sanskrit words, which cannot be created, new Sanskrit sentences can be created by any speaker, and are not necessarily reliable. A speaker may utter a Sanskrit sentence to lie, or to give expression to an incorrect conviction he holds. Or he may pronounce an immoral injunction. In all these cases there will be Sanskrit sentences that yet do not provide valid cognition. How can the principle of language as a means of valid cognition be maintained in this situation?

In cases like these it is obvious that the reliability of a Sanskrit sentence depends upon the reliability of its speaker: Is the speaker trustworthy? Does he know what he is talking about? It is not surprising that a number of philosophical thinkers introduced the notion of a trustworthy speaker into the discussion of language as a means of valid cognition.

Buddhist thinkers, beginning with Dignaga, were less keen to accept language as a means of valid cognition. They admitted, of course, that we can sometimes obtain reliable information from verbal utterances, but they preferred to think that in such cases inference was involved. We infer from a verbal statement that its speaker holds such and such a view. If, moreover, the speaker is reliable and well informed, we can go one step further and conclude that the statement informs us correctly about the world. Some Brahmanical thinkers came to adopt the same position.

THE ROOT LANGUAGE IN BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

Brahmanism had Sanskrit, the only really existing language that was closest to reality and the source of all other languages. Buddhism and Jainism had nothing of the kind, at least not initially. The adherents of these non-Brahmanical religions must have felt this as a disadvantage, for claims about the special nature of the languages of their sacred scriptures soon arose. These claims took different forms, depending on the specific tradition of each of them.

Consider first the Buddhists of the Indian subcontinent. Their sacred scriptures had been preserved in a Middle Indic language that is nowadays often referred to as Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit but is really a different language from Sanskrit. Interestingly, the Buddhists concerned started making the claim that this language was really Sanskrit, and that the many irregular forms (irregular from the point of view of Sanskrit) that this language so obviously possessed had to be explained with the help of the rules of grammar that account for Vedic forms. The Vedic language deviates sometimes considerably from classical Sanskrit, and the grammar of Panini accounts for this with the help of a number of rather open-ended rules. The

Buddhists used these same rules to account for certain forms of Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit. The result was that they were, at least as far as the language of their sacred scriptures was concerned, not in disagreement with Brahmanism: both used the one really existing language, a language worthy to convey a message that concerns the ultimate truth.

The same solution was not open to those Buddhists whose sacred scriptures were preserved in the language we now call Pali, but which those Buddhists called Magadhi, the language of the region called Magadha. The Buddha, these Buddhists maintained, had preached in Magadhi, and they came to feel that this had to be a special language, in fact, the most special language in the world, the root of all other languages, and the most natural way of expression.

Jainism had to confront a similar challenge, and its two main branches opted for different solutions. The two main branches of Jainism are the Shvetambara (white-clad) Jainas, whose monks wear white clothes, and the Digambara (space-clad) Jainas, whose monks wear no clothes at all. The Shvetambara Jainas maintained that the language in which the founder of their religion, Mahavira, had preached is Ardha-Magadhi (literally half-Magadhi), and that this is the root of all other languages, including Sanskrit. Indeed, a canonical passage explains that Ardha-Magadhi changes into the different languages of all those who listen to it.

The Digambara Jainas elaborated this idea further. Some came to adopt the view that Mahavira had not preached in any specific language at all, that he had rather emitted a “divine sound” (*divyadhvani*) that was subsequently translated by his most advanced followers into ordinary language. This particular position had great advantages at a time when language itself had started to be looked upon as a source of false beliefs about the world. This idea, as we have seen, had been introduced by the Buddhist scholiasts of northwestern India and subsequently taken over by certain Brahmanical thinkers, first Bhartrihari, then Shankara and others. The belief in a “divine sound” freed Mahavira from all suspicion of preaching a message polluted by the fact of being expressed in ordinary language.



CHAPTER FIVE

Self-Contradictory Sentences

The preceding pages have dealt with the consequences of the Brahmanical belief that Sanskrit is an, or rather the, eternal language that manifests itself in a corpus of texts, the Veda, that is likewise eternal. These consequences only concerned those who shared this belief, essentially Brahmans, not others who did not share it, which includes most Buddhists. However, even those who did not share the Brahmanical beliefs about Sanskrit could learn things from language. Chapter I.2 briefly discussed a problem that Buddhist thinkers, beginning with Nagarjuna, confronted. Brahmanical thinkers were not immune to this problem, and their attempts to deal with it deeply affected the further development of their philosophies.

The problem is the one evoked by sentences of the type “the potter makes a pot”; we will call it the problem of origination. Such sentences were felt to be self-contradictory because of the universally held belief that there is a close correspondence between the words of a true statement and the items constituting the situation described (the correspondence principle). The realization that such sentences constitute a problem was probably more serious for Brahmanical thinkers than it had been for many Buddhists. To understand why, note that a general distinction opposed Buddhist and Brahmanical philosophical thought roughly until the middle of the first millennium CE: whereas Buddhist philosophers were of the opinion that our common-sense world is not ultimately real, Brahmanical philosophers were convinced that it is. And the challenge posed by the problem of origination may be one of the factors that facilitated a change, at the end of which various Brahmanical philosophies also denied the ultimate reality of our common-sense world.

For a number of centuries, all Buddhist philosophers denied the reality of the world of our everyday experience, and all Brahmanical philosophers accepted it.

What explains this distinction? We will briefly consider this question before we return to the problem of origination.

Nothing in the teaching of the Buddha as traditionally handed down suggests that ordinary reality does not exist. This idea was introduced later into the Buddhist tradition, of which it became a generally accepted feature; Brahmanical philosophical schools initially did not adopt this idea, and it did not find entrance into some of their schools until much later. Why this opposition? Were there perhaps nonphilosophical reasons behind the Brahmanical attachment to ordinary reality and the Buddhist inclination to do away with it? Why were these Buddhists so determined to prove the illusory nature of ordinary experience, and the Brahmins committed to its reality? Before exploring possible explanations, it will be necessary to establish that this divide actually existed. To do so, recall some known facts about the early history of Indian philosophy.

To begin with Brahmanism, it is well known that the first mention of Vedanta (or Vedantism) as a philosophical school dates from the sixth century CE, when the Buddhist thinker Bhavya refers to it. Before that time, other philosophical schools debated with each other, but Vedanta did not participate in these debates, and others did not criticize Vedanta. The only sensible conclusion is that Vedanta did not exist as a philosophical school at that time. (This does not necessarily mean that ideas similar to those we associate with Vedanta did not exist. It only means that we have no evidence that those ideas had been systematized and used in the interschool debates of the time.)

Other Brahmanical philosophical schools *did* exist during that period. Two ontologies in particular were important: Vaisheshika and Samkhya. Variants of these were adopted in the texts of Nyaya and Yoga respectively. We cannot enter into details, but note that these two ontologies looked upon the world and the objects it contains as really existing entities. In this respect these two ontologies were in striking contrast with Buddhist ontology. As we have seen, the earliest Buddhist ontology was developed in northwest India, probably by the Sarvastivadins. It recognized the existence of constituent *dharmas*, but not that of things composed of *dharmas*. The objects of our everyday experience, such as houses and chariots, exist as little as human beings do; all are thought of as accumulations (and successions) of *dharmas*. Subsequent Buddhist thinkers—most notably Nagarjuna—developed arguments to show that the world of our experience does not exist. These proofs had the further consequence of showing that the *dharmas* themselves did not exist either. A further noteworthy development in Buddhism was the idealism associated with Vasubandhu and other thinkers of the Yogacara school. Whatever the differences among the

various Buddhist thinkers, all agreed that the world of our experience does not exist as such.

This shows that there was indeed, roughly until the middle of the first millennium CE, a fundamental difference between Buddhist and Brahmanical thought. In spite of all the internal differences and disagreements, all Buddhist philosophers rejected the existence of the common-sense world, and all Brahmanical philosophers accepted it. Why?

Both Brahmans and Buddhists depended to a large extent on support from the royal court. In this sense they were in competition with each other. However, the services they offered in return were for a long time altogether different.

The Brahmans had a long tradition of offering services to rulers, primarily in two forms: ritual support and political advice. It is not necessary to enter into details. Vedic ritual offered the kind of magical protection that no king might wish to do without. And the political advice in Brahmanical works like the *Science of Statecraft* (*Arthaśāstra*) and the *Laws of Manu* (*Mānava Dharmasāstra*)—not to speak of numerous other texts, among them the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*—was no doubt of the greatest utility for rulers faced with the political reality of their days.

The Buddhists had nothing comparable on offer. They had very little in terms of ritual and even less in terms of useful political advice. The few Buddhist texts of political advice that have survived—ascribed to the likes of Matriceta and Nagarjuna—are totally impractical, and do little beyond counseling the king to be good, and if that does not work, to become a monk.

The Buddhists of that time were obviously aware of their shortcomings in the realm of political counseling, for they left this job to Brahmans. They started depicting society and their own history in Brahmanical terms. This is clear from the fact that, from the time they started using Sanskrit (itself a major concession to Brahmanism), Buddhists started depicting the good kings of their own past—the father of the Buddha, the Buddha himself in earlier lives—as ideal Brahmanical kings.

Buddhists might still be heard at the royal courts, but hardly in order to solve problems connected with the daily running of a kingdom. Theirs was a different domain, the domain of spiritual well-being, rebirth, and ultimately liberation, and they accepted this.

In this situation it would hardly have been appropriate for Brahmans to argue that the everyday world of the king, in which he had to stay in control, in which he might have to combat neighboring kingdoms or survive revolts, did not really exist. Quite the contrary, the Brahmans were there to advise him in the world of political reality, to keep him in power, and to allow him to extend his sovereignty. Their

philosophy was therefore solidly anchored in the reality of the ordinary world, because that was the world in which Brahmans made themselves useful. The Buddhists, in contrast, played on the spiritual sentiments of the ruler, his fear of death, his worries about future lives. They defended positions in which the reality of the present world was denied, in which thinkers were led to abandon, at least in thought, this everyday world.

In the Brahmanical philosophies of those days, then, the world of our experience corresponds to reality. The belief in the close correspondence between words and things had always been dear to Brahmans, and we have seen that it was not without difficulty that the idea of something corresponding to each and every word—including words like “heaven” and “deity”—came to be abandoned, for reasons that may at least in part have been social. Brahmanical thinkers were in no hurry to abandon the conviction that true statements and situations in the real world were deeply connected.

The problem of origination presented a major challenge to these Brahmans. Solving it while continuing to accept the reality of the world was far from easy, and certain thinkers—among them Bhartrihari and Shankara, discussed earlier—ended up abandoning this view altogether.

The Samkhya philosophy proposed a solution that came to be known as *satkāryavāda*, “doctrine of the effect preexisting in the cause.” According to this doctrine, to stick to our earlier example, the pot (the effect) is already present in the clay (the cause). This implies that the pot is already present at the time when the potter makes it, in the clay. In other words, there is something corresponding to the word “pot” in the situation described by the statement “the potter makes a pot,” and the contradiction felt to find expression in this statement is solved.

It is open to question whether this is a satisfactory solution to the problem of origination, a solution that saves the common-sense world. The same solution was later adopted by Shankara, who in his philosophy was not at all concerned with saving the common-sense world. The *satkāryavāda* has much in common with the *sarvāstivāda* (“doctrine according to which past and present exist,” discussed earlier) of certain Buddhists: in both cases, the future object exists already in the present.

A number of philosophers did not accept the *satkāryavāda* and opted for the *asatkāryavāda*, the “doctrine of the nonexistent effect.” As its name shows, it is the opposite or even denial of the *satkāryavāda*. That is to say, the followers of this doctrine hold that the situation described in “the potter makes a pot” does not contain a pot. This doctrine was most notably adopted by the Nyaya school of philosophy. A consideration of some passages of one of its classical texts, Vatsyayana’s *Nyāyabhāṣya* (*Commentary on Logic*), reveals various ways the problem is addressed. The example

"He makes a mat" occurs in one of these passages. The word "mat" is claimed to give expression to the intention of the agent, his intention to make a mat. The absence of a mat in the situation depicted therefore presents no difficulty to Vatsyayana.

The *Commentary on Logic* has more to say about the production of new entities. In one passage it states that words expressive of grammatical actors (i.e., the agents, objects, etc. of a sentence) can refer to the past and the future; they do not have to designate something that is present in the situation depicted. In another one it claims that the pot—in "the potter makes a pot"—is "established in (or by) the mind"; the word "pot," therefore, refers to a mental pot, not to a pot made of clay. Vatsyayana has one further solution at hand. He accepts that a word refers to the individual and the universal, and that universals are existent and eternal. The universal ("pot-ness") is therefore already present in the situation described by "the potter makes a pot," and the correspondence principle is saved, along with the common-sense world. Vaisheshika too ends up adopting this last position, but not until after experimenting with alternative solutions.

Another group of thinkers were loath to abandon the common-sense world and felt threatened by the problem of origination. These were the Jainas. And to deal with the challenge, they opted for the *anekāntavāda*, "doctrine according to which reality is manifold." It solved the problem of production in the following manner: "A pot is being produced having been produced in the form of clay, etc., because it is made of that. That same pot is being produced not having been produced concerning its particular shape, because that was not there before." Since the pot is there in the form of clay, we can say that the potter makes a pot.

It should be clear from the above that thinkers struggled to continue believing in the reality of the world of our everyday experience, and the solutions proposed were not perfect. Others gave up, and accepted that the world of our everyday experience is not ultimately real. This is true of Shankara's Vedanta, who yet adopted the *satkāryavāda*, as we have seen. Another text in the Vedanta tradition opted for a more radical position, the *ajātivāda*, "doctrine according to which there is no arising." This is the *Science of Tradition* (*Āgamaśāstra*), a work in four chapters that is attributed to an author called Gaudapada, but may in reality be a collection of chapters by different authors. The later chapters show strong Buddhist influence and may be Buddhist in origin. The text as a whole is yet considered a work of Vedanta philosophy, and legend has it that Gaudapada was the teacher of the teacher of Shankara. The position adopted in this text is the *ajātivāda*, "doctrine according to which there is no arising." This is a more radical response than the *satkāryavāda* to the question whether something existent or something nonexistent is produced: the pot that is being produced, does it exist or not? The radical response that goes by this name cuts the knot by

stating that, since this question cannot be answered, nothing is produced at all. The *Science of Tradition* (*Āgamaśāstra*) states in so many words that nothing arises.

The *ajātivāda* is much closer to the general Buddhist position than the *satkāryavāda*. While the *satkāryavāda* tries to save the phenomena by insisting that there are objectively real things corresponding to, say, the pot in “the pot is produced,” the *ajātivāda* abandons hope and states that “the pot is produced” cannot possibly correspond to objective reality: all the items in this sentence are nothing but words.

Bhartrihari also confronted the problem of origination. He too needed to know what the word “pot,” in “the potter makes a pot,” refers to. His *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*) offers several solutions, some being the ones presented above, and a further one that he may have invented himself. Here words are stated to refer to a metaphorical existence. In other words, the pot in “the potter makes a pot” has metaphorical existence, and this supposedly suffices to solve the problem created by the correspondence principle.

Buddhist thinkers were better prepared to deal with the problem of origination. We have already met several of them, most prominently Nagarjuna (whose solution is commonly referred to as *śūnyavāda*, “doctrine according to which all is empty”), but also the Sarvastivadins, who already had a solution (the *sarvāstivāda*, “doctrine according to which past and present exist”) before the problem arose. At this point we must add one further Buddhist solution, the one known as *apohavāda*, “doctrine of exclusion.”

The theory of *apoha* was invented (if that is the right term to use) by Dignaga and presented for the first time in his *Collection of Means of Knowledge* (*Pramāṇasamuccaya*), probably his last work. Bhartrihari had used the term *apoha*, “exclusion,” before him, and it is not impossible that he was Dignaga’s source. The *apoha* theory, however, is Dignaga’s. Why did he develop it?

Let us recall one of the solutions to the problem of origination that had been proposed by Brahmanical thinkers. Some of them maintained that the word “pot” in “the potter makes a pot” denotes not the individual pot that does not yet exist, but rather the universal (“pot-ness”) that inheres in all pots and is always present. Their solution lay in semantics. For those who did not accept the existence of universals, this semantic solution was not available, at least not obviously. Many Buddhists found themselves in this situation. What could they do?

Here Dignaga’s *apoha* theory provided an answer. Words do not refer to individuals, he points out at the beginning of the chapter concerned, which is chapter 5 of the *Collection of Means of Knowledge*. And universals do not exist. However, the *apoha* theory creates something that is as good as universals but without ontological implications. Put briefly, the *apohavāda* claims that words do not directly denote

anything whatsoever: words exclude. The word “pot” excludes everything that is not a pot. Functionally this is as good as the acceptance of universals. The word “pot” in “the potter makes a pot” does not correspond to anything in the situation described, because that is the way words work. No strict application of the correspondence principle is therefore possible, and the problem that occupied so many others does not exist.

It has to be admitted that, strictly speaking, Dignaga abandons the belief in the correspondence between the words of a sentence and the items in the situation described. In his *apoha* theory there is nothing in the situation described by a sentence that corresponds to the words of that sentence. The *apoha* theory signifies in this way a departure from the correspondence principle.

After Nagarjuna and the Buddhist scholiasts, Dignaga's was a third Buddhist solution to the problem of origination. Subsequent Buddhists had a choice of solutions. Buddhist thinkers could henceforth look upon the problem of origination as being deprived of its sting.



CHAPTER SIX

Do Words Affect Cognition?

The Buddhist *Treatise on the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses* (*Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*) introduces a notion that became fundamental to Buddhist thought. It is the notion of a higher, or deeper, reality that hides behind the common-sense reality we experience in our daily life. This common-sense reality is not ultimately real. For some Buddhists, the deeper reality consists of *dharma*s; others hold that even the *dharma*s are not real. For our present purposes it is important to remember how we are misled into thinking that our common-sense world is real: things in this world correspond to the words of language; they exist by virtue of words. Buddhist texts often distinguish between that which is “real in the highest sense” and that which is “relatively real” (and therefore real by virtue of words, and ultimately unreal). Both forms of reality are accessible to human cognition, but access to what is real in the highest sense is achieved only by those who have made considerable progress on the path to spiritual perfection.

Since there are two forms of “reality” that can be cognized, there are two kinds of cognition. The kind of cognition that presents us with our common-sense world is unreliable, for it presents us with a world that is not ultimately real. The usual way to explain this cognition is that it depends on conceptual constructs (*vikalpa*, *kalpanā*). The things and people that fill our world are conceptual constructs. Many texts therefore distinguish between cognition *with* conceptual constructs and cognition *free from* conceptual constructs. In Buddhism the latter is the higher form of cognition, which sees the world as it really is; it may even be the only form of cognition recognized.

The notion of a double cognition—or two levels of cognition—spread beyond its original Buddhist milieu and came to exert an influence on Brahmanical thinkers

as well. The *Yogaśāstra* (*Science of Yoga*), a text dating from around 400 CE, does not only adopt, virtually without change, the Buddhist way of thinking; it also tries to explain how language can mislead us.

The Buddhists could reject the world of words as ultimately unreal, but for most Brahmanical thinkers of that time this was not possible. For them, the world of words was real, ultimately real. Unlike the Buddhists, they had to face the challenge of finding a place for a form of perception in which words play no role, i.e., perception without conceptual constructs.

Bhartrihari, who appears to have lived less than a century after the author of the *Yogaśāstra* (*Science of Yoga*), expresses the Brahmanical position most radically. He combines the Brahmanical conviction that the Veda is the natural expression of language with the idea that our world, the world we live in, corresponds to language. This means, primarily, that this world corresponds to the words of language. But it also means that the injunctions of the Veda are part of objective reality, as are all our duties and obligations. Morality in the widest sense becomes in this way part of external reality, and is not ultimately based on personal or social preferences.

Dignaga was a Buddhist thinker living not long after Bhartrihari who gave the Buddhist position its classical expression. This in its turn became the starting point for elaborate philosophical discussions within Buddhism and for debates with Brahmanical thinkers. Dignaga took a drastic position by stating that perception and language do not concern the same world. Perception, which is without conceptual constructs according to him, concerns particulars, and particulars cannot be designated by words. Words refer to universals, but these are not accessible to perception. In fact, ultimately they do not exist. Yet in the world of universals, another means of cognition operates: inference.



CHAPTER SEVEN

Words and Sentences

Sentences are made up of words. It seems evident that there is, or must be, a link between the meanings of the constituent words and the meaning of the sentence they are part of. However, the moment one wishes to describe that link in detail, many unresolved questions pop up that had been hiding below the surface. Is the meaning of the sentence simply the sum of the meanings of its constituent words? A minority of thinkers maintained this point of view, but they faced considerable difficulties and were obliged to extend the meaning of individual words in rather unexpected ways. If, instead, the meaning of the sentence is not simply the sum of the meanings of its words, then what should be added to or deducted from the accumulated word meanings so as to arrive at the sentence meaning? Alternatively, is it possible that the sentence meaning is altogether different from the word meanings, without a specifiable link to them? All these positions found representatives in the history of Indian thought, each in the possession of arguments to defend their specific point of view.

Before turning to these positions, we must consider a condition without which a collection of words cannot form a sentence. Words do not constitute a sentence if there is no mutual expectancy (*ākārikṣā*). The enumeration “cow, horse, person, elephant” is not a sentence, because there is no expectancy between the words. “Bring the cow,” though, is a sentence, because the word “bring” raises the question what is to be brought, and “cow” is in need of a specification as to what the cow does, or what is done to it. (Later Vedic Interpreters [*mīmāṃsaka*], perhaps beginning with Kumarila Bhatta, add two further requirements: beside mutual expectancy, there must be suitability [*yogyatā*] and proximity [*sāṃnidhi/āsatti*]. Nyaya authors added “knowledge of the intention of the speaker”; see esp. section II.7, below.)

These questions already occupied the early Vedic Interpreters. Their thoughts about the matter find expression in *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 2.1.46 and Shabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*) thereon. Not surprisingly, Shabara's thoughts do not concern the sentence in general, but rather the Vedic prose formulas called *yajus*.

The notion of mutual expectancy is widely accepted in both earlier and later literature as a precondition for a sentence. However, an analysis of the concept confronts one head-on with the question how word meanings and sentence meanings are related to each other. The two main commentators on Shabara, Prabhakara Mishra and Kumarila Bhatta—who stood at the beginning of two schools of Vedic Interpretation—defended two radically different positions in this respect.

According to Prabhakara and his followers, there is in a sentence “expression of connected meanings” (*anvitābhidhāna*). The position of Kumarila Bhatta and his followers is known as “connection of what has been expressed” (*abhihitānvaya*). According to the first position, words themselves already express their connections with other words. The sentence does not therefore add anything to the meanings of the constituent words, for these already express all there is to be expressed by the sentence.

The second position, that of Kumarila Bhatta and his followers, is different: the words do not express all there is to be expressed by the sentence. The sentence therefore modifies or adds to the meanings of its constituent words. Kumarila Bhatta's position—the “connection of what has been expressed”—proved more popular than Prabhakara's and was accepted by thinkers from other schools, also outside Vedic Interpretation. In this position, the words each express their own meaning; the sentence connects those meanings, and in doing so adds to them. We will see below what is added and how.

A third position is possible. Rather than maintaining that the meaning of the sentence is the sum of the word meanings, or the sum of the word meanings plus something else, one could hold that that something else is the sentence meaning. This had been suggested in Patanjali's *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*), and Bhartrihari repeats it in his *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*). Neither author gives further details as to what exactly is meant.

This takes us to the fourth possibility. One might argue that the sentence has a meaning of its own, quite independent of the word meanings. We find this position, for the first time it seems, in the philosophical writings of Bhattoji Dikshita and his nephew Kaunda Bhatta, more than a thousand years after Bhartrihari and Shabara. Bhattoji and his nephew draw inspiration from the old notion of *sphoṭa* (see section II.2) but give it an altogether different meaning. *Sphoṭa* was and had always been an ontological notion, connected with the claim that words and sentences (and even

individual speech sounds) existed separately from their constituents. The sentence was believed to be an entity different from its constituent words, and the word an entity different from its constituent speech sounds.

Bhattoji and Kaunda Bhatta made good use of the discussions about the *sphoṭa* that had taken place before them, both inside and outside the grammatical tradition. In these earlier discussions the word is ontologically different from its “constituent” sounds, the sentence from its “constituent” words; these ontologically different entities were called *sphoṭa*. Bhattoji and Kaunda Bhatta, being less interested in ontological questions, proposed to think of the *sphoṭa* primarily as a meaning bearer. They therefore represented the earlier positions in the following modified way: the *pada-sphoṭa*, i.e., the word, is a different meaning bearer from the “constituent” *varṇa-sphoṭas*, the morphemes (*varṇa* does not here mean speech sound, as usual!); and the *vāky-a-sphoṭa*, i.e., the sentence, is a different meaning bearer from the “constituent” *pada-sphoṭas*, the words. The expressive power of the word is not, therefore, merely the accumulation of the meanings of its morphemes; and the meaning of the sentence is not merely the accumulation of the meanings of its words but its own, different meaning. The *sphoṭa* theory, as revamped by Bhattoji and Kaunda Bhatta, provided a perfect justification for the complex and structured meaning, different from the sum of the meanings of the constituent parts, these grammarians assigned to the sentence. Interestingly, the new *sphoṭa* theory again had a place for morphemes, which had not been included in the old *sphoṭa* theory, as observed above.

How is the sentence meaning related to the word meanings? According to Prabhakara and his school, the words in a sentence express their meaning, and that is it. Once the words of a sentence have expressed their meanings, the sentence has expressed its meaning as well, because the sentence does no more than express the already connected meanings of its words.

The situation was less simple for Kumarila Bhatta and his followers. For them the expression of the meanings of the individual words is not good enough to produce the meaning of the sentence. In fact, metaphorical expression plays a role in the process: words must metaphorically (but not directly) express the meaning that finds its place in the sentence meaning. What is more, one of those meanings must be central, and be qualified by the other ones.

The idea that there must be a most important constituent meaning in a sentence came naturally to Vedic Interpreters. We know that they were primarily interested in Vedic injunctions. Injunctions are expressed in sentences that normally consist of a number of words. Of all these words, or parts of words, the element that gives expression to the injunction has to be central; all the other parts of the sentence are

subordinate to it. And if there is a central element accompanied by subordinate elements in injunctive sentences, the same will no doubt be true of other sentences.

Reflections of this nature led the Vedic Interpreters to interpret and paraphrase Vedic injunctions in ways that suited their purposes. Such paraphrases are already found in Shabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*). Shabara paraphrases the injunction *svargakāmo yajeta*, "he who wishes to attain heaven should sacrifice," as *yāgena svargaṇi bhāvayet*, "by means of the sacrifice he should effect [the attainment of] heaven." Kumarila's more recent *Tantravārttika* (*Comments on the Doctrine*) assigns the general meaning "productive energy" (*bhāvanā*) to the verbal ending (-*ta* in the case of *yajeta*). "Productive energy" being central in the injunction, the meaning of an injunctive sentence can now be understood to be "productive energy" (i.e., injunctive force) qualified by the meanings expressed by the other elements of that sentence. Duly adjusted so as to account for the precise meanings of those other elements, this allows Kumarila to propose a paraphrase of sentences like "by means of the sacrifice he should effect [the attainment of] heaven" (see above) in terms of "productive energy": "productive energy whose goal is heaven and whose means is the sacrifice" (simplified).

What about noninjunctive sentences, such as statements like "he cooks" (*pacati*)? Here too there is a verbal ending (-*ti*), but it has no injunctive force and, one might say, no productive energy. Do we have to conclude that Kumarila's analysis is confined to the subset of possible sentences that are the injunctions? Kumarila is not of that opinion. According to him, the meaning of -*ti* in *pacati* is also productive energy (*bhāvanā*), but of a different kind. He ends up distinguishing two kinds of productive energy: "verbal productive energy" (Kumarila calls it *abhidhābhāvanā*; after him the expression *śābdī bhāvanā* or *śabdabhāvanā* became frequent) and "objective productive energy" (Kumarila calls it *arthātmabhāvanā*; subsequently *ārthī bhāvanā* or *arthabhbāvanā* became current). "Verbal productive energy" is responsible for the fact that Vedic words instigate listeners to carry out what they are enjoined to do. The goal of the "verbal productive energy" in injunctions is the "objective productive energy" expressed by the same ending (-*ta* in the case of *yajeta*). Kumarila felt obliged to propose an interpretation also for sentences that are not injunctions. We will see below that thinkers of other schools were not pleased.

From Kumarila onward, Vedic Interpreters had a theory about the meaning of sentences: sentences express the meaning of the verbal ending, i.e., "productive energy"; this "productive energy" is qualified by the meanings of the other parts of the sentence.

Kumarila and his followers (as already Shabara before him) take Panini's analysis of the verb for granted but do not follow Panini in his semantic interpretation of the

verbal ending (primarily “agent”). Panini’s formal analysis of the remainder of the sentence, on the other hand, plays no role in Kumarila’s discussions. It gains importance in some of the subsequent refinements introduced in the school. The constituent elements of a statement like *rāmaḥ odanam pacati*, “Rama cooks rice”—*rāma* + *s—anna* + *am—pac* + *ti*—give rise to a paraphrase that gives each element its due and has the following (simplified) form: “The (objective) productive energy (*bhāvanā*; meaning of *ti*) happening at present is carried out through the instrumentality of cooking that has rice as its object goal, and this efficient force is qualified by Rama as its agent.”

Kumarila’s innovations were largely ignored by thinkers of other schools, at least for a number of centuries. Ontological considerations play a role in the first coherent alternative to Kumarila’s understanding of the sentence that came to be adopted by Gangesha and his followers. Gangesha lived in the fourteenth century, some seven centuries after Kumarila, and was a key figure in the new developments of the school of Nyaya that are known by the name *Navya-Nyaya*, “the New Logic.” Since this school of philosophy looks upon actions as inhering in substances, a simple sentence like “Caitra cooks” describes, first of all, a substance (the person called Caitra) that is qualified by the activity of cooking. In other words, the agent of a sentence is, at least for sentences like these, the main qualificand. Gangesha and his followers also present a paraphrase of verbal cognition that remains close to the Paninian analysis of the sentence. Indeed, the reality of Paninian morphemes is so much taken for granted by the thinkers of this school that they refer to them as “words” (*pada*). The main qualificand here is not the meaning of the verbal ending (as with the Vedic Interpreters), but that of the word with the nominative ending. The meaning of the sentence *rāmaḥ pacati*, “Rama cooks,” is here approximately paraphrased as: “Rama who is qualified by the effort that is conducive to cooking.” The verbal ending is given the meaning “effort,” which is, again, different from Panini’s meaning, “agent.”

The grammarians Bhatoji Dikshita and his nephew Kaunda Bhatta joined the debate around 1600 CE. They were no doubt irked by the cavalier fashion in which both Vedic Interpreters and Logicians treated, or rather mistreated, Panini. Panini had given semantic interpretations to the verbal ending and other parts of the sentence, which the participants in the debate had so far ignored or distorted. These grammarians stuck to the Paninian meaning, “agent,” for the (active) verbal ending, and followed Bhartrihari in looking upon the meaning of the verbal root as the main qualificand. Kaunda Bhatta assigned the meaning “activity conducive to the result” to verbal roots; the substratum of the activity is the agent, the substratum of the result the object. The sentence “Rama cooks rice” (*rāmaḥ odanam pacati*) is

therefore to be paraphrased as (simplified): “present activity whose substratum is Rama, which is conducive to softening whose substratum is rice.”

By using the *sphoṭa* theory, the grammarians could avoid postulating functions such as intention (*tātparya*) or secondary signification (*lakṣaṇā*) that others invoked to explain the step from word meanings to sentence meaning, yet arrive at a satisfactory explanation of the sentence meaning. The *sphoṭa* theory was thus used to solve a problem that accompanied verbal cognition (*śabdabodha*). This was a grammarians’ solution, but the problem was common to all who were interested in this kind of analysis. The Logicians and Vedic Interpreters had proposed other ways to bridge the gap between the meaning of the sentence and the meanings of its constituent parts. This gap was real, according to those other thinkers, and therefore had to be bridged. The grammarians’ solution was more elegant in that it denied the importance, or even the existence, of this gap: since these grammarians considered the sentence to be an expressive unit by itself, they believed that it would be a mistake to think that a sentence even expressed the meanings of its constituent words.



CHAPTER EIGHT

Other Denotative Functions of the Word

We have seen that, to the extent possible, Brahmanical thought held on to a close correspondence between words and things. This could not but confront its thinkers with the fact that words do not only and exclusively refer to their own meaning, or rather, that words have more than one expressive function. Daily usage presents countless illustrations of this, both in English and in Sanskrit. Neither “Chamberlain was an idiot” (in English) nor “the tribal called Vahika is a cow” (in Sanskrit) is correctly understood when taken literally. The words “idiot” and “cow” are here used to designate something different from a real idiot or a real cow. Words in ordinary language can clearly use a secondary expressive function.

Shabara under *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 3.1.9 (see § II.4) makes clear that where a word is used in more than one sense, only one of the meanings can be primary. As we saw earlier, he gives as an example the word *yava*, used to refer to both barley and long peppers. Only the meaning “barley” is primary, and the use of *yava* to refer to long peppers is secondary. This discussion shows that Shabara is aware of the fact that words can be used in a secondary sense. He warns against using a secondary meaning in interpreting the *Veda*.

Different issues come up in the study of non-Vedic literature, especially poetry and drama. An essential aspect of these genres is that they seek to evoke emotions. Clearly these types of literature go beyond the mere denotative function of words. It is therefore not surprising that a theory proposed by Anandavardhana in the ninth century added an altogether new expressive function to words, beyond their primary and secondary expressive functions. This new function is *dhvani*, “suggestion,” and the new theory is known as the “theory of *dhvani*.” The theory of suggestion has its place in the study of Indian thought about language, but it is harder, or at any rate

less customary, to include it in the study of Indian philosophy. This theory receives full attention in another volume of this series (*A Rasa Reader*, by Sheldon Pollock), and we can do no more here than point out that the theory was propounded and gained extraordinary popularity in the circles concerned.

Not all thinkers were sympathetic to the new theory. Some maintained that the primary and secondary expressive functions of words were capable of expressing whatever was expected of them, including poetic suggestion. One of these was Mukula Bhatta. He wrote a treatise called *Source of the Modes of Denotation* (*Abhidhāvṛttimātrikā*). As its title indicates, it deals with modes of denotation in general. However, Mukula takes care to show that the regular modes of denotation—primary and secondary reference—can account for all uses of words, including poetic uses. An extract from the *Source of the Modes of Denotation* is found in § II.8, below.

At the end of this introduction it may be useful to recall that its structure corresponds to the structure of the following reader. The understanding of parts of the reader may be facilitated by consulting the corresponding portions of the introduction, and vice versa.



CHAPTER ONE

The Brahmanical Background

1.1. SIMILAR WORDS REFER TO CONNECTED THINGS

The following *brāhmaṇa* passage illustrates that the things referred to by similar words are believed to be related. It occurs in the *Brāhmaṇa of Aitareya* (*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 2.1[6].1):

They [the gods who went upward to heaven] obstructed [ayopayan] it [the way to heaven] by means of the sacrificial post [yūpa]. In that they obstructed [ayopayan] by means of the post [yūpa], that is why the post has its name [lit. that is the yūpaship of the yūpa].

The similarity between *ayopayan* and *yūpa* (*yopa* in *ayopayan* is close to *yūpa* in Sanskrit phonology) is believed to establish a connection between a sacrificial post, which is a concrete object made of wood, and an action that the gods presumably carried out in an indeterminate past. The links presented often involve mythological tales that may have been invented for the occasion.

A second illustration occurs in the *Brāhmaṇa of the Taittiriya Branch of the Veda* (*Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa* 3.11.8.7–8):

Prajapati [the creator god] did not know how to give the sacrificial fee [*dakṣinā*]. He put it in his right hand [*dakṣināḥ*]. He took it, speaking the ritual formula: “For fitness [*dakṣa*] I take you, the sacrificial fee [*dakṣinā*.]” Therefore he became fit [*adakṣata*]. The one who *knowing thus* receives the sacrificial fee [*dakṣinā*] becomes fit [*dakṣate*].

Here three at first sight unconnected things—the sacrificial fee, the right hand, fitness, and becoming fit—are linked, once again on the basis of the similarities between the words that refer to them: *dakṣinā*, *dakṣināḥ*, *dakṣa*, *adakṣata*, *dakṣate*.

Our third example comes from the *Collection of the Taittirīya Branch of the Veda* (*Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 1.7.4.6):

“You are the grass bundle [vedā], you are gain; may I gain,” he says. By the grass bundle the gods won [avindanta] the desirable wealth of the Asuras; that is that which makes the *vedā* the “*vedā*.”

The root *vid*, from which *avindanta* is derived, is close to *ved[aj]* in Sanskrit phonology.

1.2. DO MANTRAS EXPRESS MEANING?

Discussions about the meaningfulness of *mantras* have been preserved both in Yaska's *Nirukta* (Etymology; perhaps third century BCE) and in Shabara's *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* (Commentary of Vedic Interpretation; middle of first millennium CE).

The following passage from Yaska's *Etymology* (*Nirukta* 1.15) presents this discussion in the form of a criticism of Yaska's procedure by someone called Kautsa, and Yaska's response:

Kautsa expresses the following opinion: If the discipline of etymology has the understanding of the meaning of *mantras* as purpose, it is pointless, for *mantras* have no meaning.

Kautsa should consider the following:

[The arguments in support of Kautsa's position are:]

1. *Mantras* use fixed expressions and have a fixed word order.
2. The contents of *mantras* that are clear are once again enjoined by a *brāhmaṇa* text. For example: the *mantra* “Spread out widely” is followed by the *brāhmaṇa* “thus he spreads out”; and the *mantra* “Let me push away” is followed by the *brāhmaṇa* “thus he pushes away.”¹
3. *Mantras* have impossible meanings. Consider the *mantra*: “O herb, protect him”; or “O axe, do not harm him,” which someone pronounces while harming.
4. *Mantras* have contradictory meanings. Consider the following two *mantras*: “There is only one Rudra, no second” and “On earth there are countless thousands of Rudras”; or “Without enemy were you born, O Indra” and “Indra conquered a hundred armies at the same time.”

5. A *mantra* orders someone who already knows what to do: “Speak to the fire that is being kindled.”

6. A *mantra* states that the goddess Aditi is everything: “Aditi is the sky, Aditi is the atmosphere.” . . .

7. The meanings of certain words in *mantras* are not clear, such as *amyak* [Rgveda 1.169.3], *yādrśmin* [Rgveda 5.44.8], *jārayāyi* [Rgveda 6.12.4], *kāṇukā* [Rgveda 8.77.4].

However, mantras do have meaning, because they use the same words as we do, as in the *mantra* “Playing with their sons and grandsons.”²

1. Concerning the objection that *mantras* use fixed expressions and have a fixed word order: the same can be said about utterances used in the world; for example: *indrāgni* [“Indra and Agni”], *pitāputrau* [“father and son”].

2. Concerning the objection that the contents of *mantras* that are clear are once again enjoined by a *brāhmaṇa* text: this is a mere repetition in the *brāhmaṇa* of what was already said in the *mantra*. . . .

3. Concerning the objection that *mantras* have impossible meanings: one must understand from the Vedic statement that no harm should be done.

4. Concerning the objection that *mantras* have contradictory meanings: the same can be said about utterances used in the world; for example: “this Brahmin has no rivals,” “the king has no enemies.”

5. Concerning the objection that a *mantra* orders someone who already knows what to do: one greets mentioning one’s name to someone who knows it already; one mentions the offering of a mixture of honey to a guest who knows it already.

6. Concerning the objection that a *mantra* states that the goddess Aditi is everything: the same can be said about utterances used in the world; for example: “all liquids imitate water.”

7. Concerning the objection that the meanings of certain words in *mantras* are not clear: it is not the shortcoming of the pillar that a blind man cannot see it; it is the shortcoming of the man.

Shabara’s *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on *sūtras* 1.2.32–39) deals with a very similar question, drawing inspiration from the above discussion in Yaska’s *Etymology* (*Nirukta*):

[Question:] Are *mantras* intended to be expressive of meaning or are they not intended to be expressive of meaning? Do they play a role in the sacrifice through making their meaning known, or through mere recitation? If through mere recitation, the *mantra* “I cut the grass to make a seat for the gods” should not necessarily be used in

connection with cutting grass. If, on the other hand, they play a role through referring, the *mantra* whose auxiliary nature is known from the context cannot play a role elsewhere than in that context. As a result, the *mantra* could then only be used in connection with cutting grass, even in the absence of a statement to that effect.

[*First argument:*] We hold that *mantras* play a role in the sacrifice through mere recitation. Why? Because the same meaning is repeated in *brāhmaṇa* passages. A *brāhmaṇa* passage directs the priest exactly in respect of that which also the *mantra* can express. The statement in a *brāhmaṇa* “he spreads out the sacrificial cake with the *mantra* ‘O wide-spreading one, spread out widely’” is pointless if *mantras* play a role in the sacrifice through referring. But if *mantras* play a role in the sacrifice through mere recitation, their use must be stated, and indeed, it has been stated. It follows that *mantras* do not play a role in the sacrifice through the expression of their meaning. If, by way of comparison, a man with eyes is led by someone else, we understand that he does not see with his eyes.

...

From what precedes it follows that the form of the *mantra* “I cut the grass to make a seat for the gods” is no proof that it must only be used in connection with cutting grass.

[*Second argument:*] Because the word order in *mantras* is fixed. An example is the *mantra agnir mūrdhā divah* [“Fire is the head of the sky”], in which the words must be used in this order, not in any other order. If the purpose of *mantras* were to convey meaning, the restriction would be pointless because the meaning is also understood with the words in any other order. But if *mantras* must be uttered in a specific way, a restriction is imposed because the utterance would be different in the case of another word order. . . . Is it not true that a restriction is also observed in the case of utterances that do have meaning, as in *indrāgnī*, “Indra and Agni”? In this case that is appropriate, because no meaning would be conveyed through a different word order.³

[*Third argument:*] Sometimes, when a thing is already known from study, a *mantra* is capable of expressing that same thing. An example is the *mantra* “O priest, disperse the fire.” What should this *mantra* teach, if that information is already known? But if *mantras* must be uttered in a specific way, a specific utterance, even if the thing is already known, would be right.

...

[*Fourth argument:*] In a sacrifice, that which is instrumental to the performance of that sacrifice must be made known. But there is no such thing as that to which *mantras* give expression. Consider the *mantra* “Four horns. . . .” There is nothing that is instrumental to the sacrifice and that has four horns, three feet, two heads, and seven hands. What is it that the *mantra* gives expression to, if its purpose is to be

expressive of meaning? However, if the purpose of the *mantra* is to be uttered, this is possible. In the same way, what could the *mantra* “don’t do harm” express, given that no harm is done?

[*Fifth argument:*] Mantras fix their object with regard to something that is insentient, as in “O herb, protect him.” Such *mantras*, if they played a role in the sacrifice by way of making their meaning known, would instruct a herb to protect the sacrificial animal. But that herb, being insentient, cannot be instructed. There is however nothing wrong if mere utterance is the purpose of the *mantra*. It follows that mere utterance is the purpose of *mantras*. Another example is: “Listen, O stones.”

[*Sixth argument:*] The meaning of *mantras* contains contradictions, as in “Aditi is the sky, Aditi is the atmosphere.” Who would ever consider that sky and atmosphere are the same? [If we are] not willing to consider that, does the *mantra* play a role in the sacrifice through making its meaning known? There is, on the other hand, no contradiction if the purpose of the *mantra* is to be uttered. It follows that mere utterance is the purpose of *mantras*. Another example of contradictory *mantras* is: “There is only one Rudra, no second” as against “On earth there are countless thousands of Rudras.”

[*Seventh argument:*] At the time of Vedic study, a Purnika does the threshing,⁴ and the student studies the threshing *mantra*. He does not practice that which is denoted by that *mantra* and concentrates his efforts on a consideration of the correct order of its syllables. Only that by which a purpose is served should be practiced. That is why we hold that, as a result of practicing the utterance of *mantras*, a purpose is served by means of their utterance.

[*Eighth argument:*] Moreover, it is completely impossible to understand the meaning of certain *mantras*. Examples are: *amyak so ta indra ṛṣṭir asme, sṛṇy eva jarbhārī turpharītū*, and *indraḥ somasya kāṇukā*. What could these *mantras* convey? There is however nothing wrong if mere utterance is the purpose of the *mantra*. It follows that mere utterance is the purpose of *mantras*.

[*Ninth argument:*] If it were the purpose of *mantras* to express meaning, they would be connected with noneternal things. Take for example the *mantra* “What do those bovines do in Kikata . . . ?” Kikata is the name of a country, Naicashakha is the name of a city, Pramaganda is a king.⁵ If it were the purpose of *mantras* to express meaning, it would be understood that this *mantra* had not been experienced before King Pramaganda [and would not therefore be eternal and without beginning].

For the above reasons . . . we must conclude that *mantras* are not intended to be expressive of meaning.

A discussion of Shabara’s detailed refutation of the arguments here enumerated would lead too far into the technicalities of Vedic Interpretation (*mīmāṃsā*) (some of

which will be considered below). The points that this passage has in common with the discussion of Kautsa's views in Yaska's *Etymology* (*Nirukta*) are striking the eye. However, there are some fundamental differences. Kautsa had posited that Vedic *mantras* have no meaning. The opponent in Śabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* says no such thing. He rather claims that *mantras* are not intended to be expressive of meaning. In Śabara's time, and presumably already well before him, no one doubted that Vedic *mantras* can be interpreted, that they can be understood as expressing meaning, and therefore that they *have* meaning. Not even Śabara's real or hypothetical opponent doubted this. The opponent's position amounts to something less drastic than what Kautsa had maintained; according to him, Vedic *mantras* can express meaning, but they are not intended to express this meaning in the context of the Vedic sacrifice.

Inevitably, a fundamental and characteristic belief of classical Vedic Interpretation has found its way into this passage. The opponent's final objection is based on the belief that the *Veda*, including the *mantras* contained in it, is eternal, and has therefore no beginning in time. Vedic texts, including *mantras*, as a result cannot refer to historical events, for if they did, they would have to be more recent than those events, and then would have a beginning in time. This objection did not figure in Kautsa's list. It is an argument in support of the view that in his and Yāska's day this belief had not yet been formulated. We know that already the grammarians Katyayana and Patanjali adhered to it, and may have been among the first to do so.

1.3. A PANINIAN DERIVATION

The following passage, reduced and simplified, is taken from a commentary that was composed some two thousand years after Panini (the *Siddhānta-kaumudī*, *Moonlight of Established Truth* of Bhattoji Dikshita, ca. 1600 CE). One of its virtues is that it presents Panini's rules in an order that suits individual derivations. This passage shows how the verbal form *bhavati*, “he/she/it is,” is derived:

(P. 3.2.123:) To express the present, *lat̄*.

After a verbal root that expresses a present action, one adds *lat̄*. The sounds *a* and *t̄* of *lat̄* are markers that must be suppressed.

(P. 3.4.69:) *L* also in the sense “object” and in the sense “action” after intransitive verbal roots.

After transitive roots, *l* is added in the senses “object” and “agent”; after intransitive roots, *l* is added in the senses “action” and “agent.”

(P. 3.4.77–78:) In the place of *l*: *tip tas jhi sip thaś tha mip vas mas ta ātām jha thās āthām dhvam it vahi mahiṇī.*

These will be the eighteen substitutes for *l*.

(P. 1.4.99:) *L* is *parasmaipada*.

The substitutes for *l* will be called *parasmaipada*.

(P. 1.4.100:) The substitutes from *ta* to *mahiṇī* and *āna* are *ātmanepada*.

The substitutes from *ta* to *mahiṇī*, and the suffixes *śānac* and *kānac*, are called thus.

This is an exception to the preceding name *parasmaipada*.

...

(P. 1.3.78:) After the rest, *parasmaipada* to express the agent.

After a verbal root that does not cause *ātmanepada* endings, one should add a *parasmaipada* ending to express the agent.

(P. 1.4.101:) Of the substitutes from *tip* to *mahiṇī*, the three triplets are called first, middle, and last.

The three triplets of endings for the *parasmaipada* and the *ātmanepada*, are called, respectively, first, middle, and last.

(P. 1.4.102:) Each of these triplets consists of singular, dual, and plural.

The three triplets now called first, etc. will each consist of items called singular, etc.

(P. 1.4.105:) When a second person pronoun, explicit or implicit, is coreferential, one adds the middle.

When a second person pronoun, expressive of the actor designated by one of the substitutes from *tip* to *mahiṇī*, is used or not used, one should add the middle.

...

(P. 1.4.107:) When a first person pronoun is coreferential, one adds the last.

...

(P. 1.4.108:) In the remaining cases, one adds the first.

Where the middle and the last do not apply, one adds the first.

The verbal root *bhū* is expressive of “being.”

When we wish to express the agent of being [“he/she/it is”], we get *bhū + ti*.

(P. 3.4.113:) The substitutes from *tip* to *mahiṇī*, and that which has the marker *s*, are *sārvadhātuka*.

...

(P. 3.1.68:) When an agent is designated, *śap*.

When a *sārvadhātuka* follows that is expressive of the meaning “agent,” one should add *śap* after the verbal root. *ś* and *p* are markers that are suppressed.

(P. 7.3.84:) When a *sārvadhātuka* . . . follows.

When this follows . . . , the final vowel of an element called *aṅga* will be reinforced.

av will replace *o*.

The result is *bhav-a-ti*.⁶

It can here be seen that, in order to express “he/she/it is” in Sanskrit, the semantic elements that have to find expression are “being,” “agent” and “present tense.” “Being” gives rise to *bhū*, “agent” to *ti*: *bhū + ti*. For various reasons an element *a* will be inserted between these two (*bhū + a + ti*), and the vowel *ū* of *bhū* will be reinforced so as to become *o*: *bho + a + ti*. A phonetic rule, finally, will replace *o* of *bho* with *av*, resulting in *bhavati*.

1.4. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GRAMMAR AND ETYMOLOGY

Yaska's *Etymology* (*Nirukta* 2.1–3) explains the different domains of grammar and etymology:⁷

We next turn to etymology. Words in which accent and grammatical formation agree with the meaning to be expressed and that have been modified in a way that fits the derivation, such words should be explained in agreement with their regular grammatical derivation. But if the meaning is not accompanied by the right accent and formation and the modification is not such as fits the grammatical derivation, in such cases one should look for a derivation based on the meaning and explain the word on the basis of some similarity of behavior in undergoing a phonetic change, i.e., similarity with a phonetic change accepted by the grammarians for the explanation of other forms in grammar. If not even such similarity is found, one should explain the word on the basis of similarity in a syllable or in a single sound. But one should not abstain from providing an etymological explanation. In such cases one should not heed the grammatical formation. . . . The divisions of words into syllables and individual sounds should be interpreted according to the sense of the words to be derived. . . .

One should not explain grammatically unanalyzed words to a nongrammarian, or to a nonresident pupil, or to someone who is not conversant with it [grammar]. For the scorn of the ignorant for knowledge is eternal.

Nirukta 1.12–14 presents a discussion between etymologists and some grammarians, who object to the methods of etymology:

According to Shakatayana and the general agreement of the etymologists, all nominal words are derived from verbs. Gargya and some of the grammarians think that

not all of them are thus derived, but only words in which accent and grammatical formation agree with the meaning to be expressed and that have been modified in a way that fits the derivation. Grammatically unanalyzable words such as “cow,” “horse,” “person,” and “elephant” are conventional.

[*Objection 1:*] But if all nominal words are derived from verbs, the same nominal words should denote any item that carries out the same activity. Anything that would “attain” [aśnūvīta] the road should then be called aśva [horse]. Anything that “pierces” [trṇdyāt] should then be called trṇa [grass].

[*Objection 2:*] If all nominal words are derived from verbs, something should have as many names as there are activities for which it can be used. . . .

[*Objection 3:*] Moreover, people should then use words of which the formation is regular, giving rise to nominal words that express the action concerned, in such a way that the meaning is understood; they should use puriśaya [lying in a city] instead of puruṣa [person], aṣṭṛ [attainer] instead of aśva [horse], tardana [means of piercing] instead of trṇa [grass].

[*Objection 4:*] People speculate with regard to fixed expressions, and say: the earth is called pṛthivī because of spreading [prathana]. Who would spread it? And what does it rest on?

[*Objection 5:*] Shakatayana—even though the meaning of the word is not in agreement with its parts and the modification does not fit regular derivation—unacceptably formed parts of words out of other words. To derive the word satya, he took as final part the causative form of the root *i*, i.e., āya, and of that the portion that begins with *y*, i.e., ya, and the pure form of *as*, i.e., ast, putting the *s* at the beginning. [This gives *sat+ya = satya*.]

[*Objection 6:*] Finally, it is said that an activity presupposes an entity that can be active. The derivation of the name of an earlier entity from its subsequent activity is not appropriate.

All this is not correct.

There is no disagreement that all those words in which accent and grammatical formation agree with the meaning to be expressed and that have been modified in a way that fits regular derivation are correctly derived by grammar.

[*Response 1:*] With regard to the objection that, if all nominal words are derived from verbs, the same nominal words should denote any item that carries out the same activity: we see that certain items that carry out the same activity get the same name, others do not. Examples of the former are “carpenter” [takṣan] and “wandering mendicant” [parivrājaka], which refer to all those engaged in those activities; an example of the latter is bhūmija, “earth born,” which covers only certain items that are born from the earth, not all.

[Response 2:] This also answers objection 2.

[Response 3:] As to the objection that people should use words in such a way that the meaning is understood, there are indeed words, of rare occurrence, which, though ending in primary grammatical suffixes, must be treated as grammatically unanalyzable words [so that their grammatical formation does not elucidate their meaning].

[Response 4:] Concerning the objection that people speculate with regard to fixed expressions: the examination of rules cannot but concern fixed expressions. They say: the earth is called *prthivī* because of spreading [*prathana*]. Who would spread it? And what does it rest on? Well, it is visibly spread out, even if others did not spread it out. What is more, if we proceed like you, all statements of what can be seen become objects of disagreement.

[Response 5:] Regarding the objection that Shakatayana unacceptably formed parts of words out of other words: he who forms a word even though its meaning is not in agreement with its parts, he should be blamed for that; the blame rests on the person, not on the science of etymology.

[Response 6:] With regard to the objection that the derivation of the name of an earlier entity from its subsequent activity is not appropriate: we see cases where entities are named after activities they perform after they have come into being; other cases are not like that.

1.5. MYSTICAL SPECULATIONS ABOUT SPEECH SOUNDS

The following passage from the late Vedic *Forest Text of Aitareya* (*Aitareya Āranyakā* 3.1–3) illustrates the secret significance attributed to the junction of words:

Now the secret [*upaniṣad*] about the junction of words [*samhitā*]. The preceding speech sound is the earth, the following speech sound is the sky, their junction is the wind, according to Mandukeya. Makshavya rather stated that their junction is ether. . . . According to Agastya, the two are the same . . . , for wind and ether are the same. This much regarding the deities. Now regarding the self. The preceding speech sound is speech, the following speech sound is the mind, the junction is the breath, according to Shuravira Mandukeya. But his oldest son said: The preceding speech sound is the mind, the following speech sound is speech; with the mind, indeed, does one first resolve and then with speech does one utter it. Therefore, the earlier speech sound is the mind, the following speech sound is speech, while the

junction is the breath. The opinion of these two, father and son, amounts to the same. This is a chariot yoked with three horses, connected with mind, speech, and breath. He who knows junction to be like this, he is united with offspring, cattle, fame, glory, heaven. He will live a full lifespan. This is the position of the Mandukeyas.

Next the position of Shakalya. The preceding speech sound is the earth, the following speech sound is the sky; their junction is rain; the god of rain, Parjanya, is the uniter. . . . This much regarding the deities. Now regarding the self. They say that man here resembles an egg: it has two halves. One has the form of earth, the other the form of the sky; between them there is ether, just as there is ether between sky and earth. Breath rests upon this ether here, just as wind depends on that ether there. . . . He who knows junction to be like this, he is united with offspring, cattle, fame, glory, heaven. He will live a full lifespan.

Next the discourses on the Uncut One [= *samhitā-pāṭha*.⁸] The Uncut One has the earth as abode, the Pierced One [= *pada-pāṭha*] has the sky as abode, the One in Between [= *krama-pāṭha*] has intermediate space as abode. . . . When he applies *sandhi*, that is the form of the Uncut One. When he pronounces the two syllables pure, that is the form of the Pierced One. This is the beginning. In the One in Between both are reached. He who desires food should recite the Uncut One. He who desires heaven should recite the Pierced One. He who desires both should recite the One in Between.

...

The reciters of the Uncut One say: The preceding syllable is the preceding form; the following syllable is the following form. The space between the preceding form and the following form is the junction [*samhitā*]. He who knows this junction in this manner, he is united with offspring, cattle, fame, glory, heaven. He will live a full lifespan.

Some Upanishads explain certain words by attributing specific meanings to their constituent syllables. An example is the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (5.3), which explains the word *hrdayam*, “heart,” through its three syllables, *hr-da-yam*:

Hṛ is one syllable. Both his own people and others bring [*hṛ*] offerings unto him who knows this. *Da* is one syllable. Both his own people and others give [*dā*] unto him who knows this. *Yam* is one syllable. To the heavenly world goes [*eti* (pl. *yanti*)] he who knows this.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (8.3.5) explains the word *satyam*, “truth,” by analyzing it into the three syllables *sat-ti-yam*:

The word *satyam* has three syllables: *sat*, *ti*, and *yam*. Of these *sat* is the immortal, and *ti* is the mortal, while *yam* is that with which one joins those two together. Because one joins the two together with it, it is called *yam*. He who knows this goes to heaven every single day.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (2.22.3–5) also shows an interest in the speech sounds themselves:

All vowels are bodily forms of Indra. All spirants are bodily forms of Prajapati. All stops are bodily forms of Death. If someone censures him with respect to the way he pronounces vowels, he should say to that person: I have taken refuge in Indra; he will answer your criticism. And if someone censures him with respect to the way he pronounces spirants, he should say to that person: I have taken refuge in Prajapati; he will crush you for this. And if someone censures him with respect to the way he pronounces stops, he should say: I have taken refuge in Death; he will burn you for this.

All vowels should be pronounced with resonance and with force, thinking: Let me give force to Indra. All spirants should be pronounced without swallowing them, without throwing them out, with open space between tongue and place of articulation, thinking: Let me give myself to Prajapati. All stops should be pronounced lightly without joining them to following sounds, thinking: Let me remove myself from Death.

A much more recent text, Abhinavagupta's *Tantrāloka* (*Light on the Tantras*), describes how the creation of the universe is also a manifestation of the speech sounds. The list of speech sounds to which Abhinavagupta refers is a sequence, first of vowels (short and long) followed by two sounds called *bindu* and *visarga* respectively, then of consonants (note that consonants are combined with a following vowel *a*) plus the combination *kṣa*. The whole enumeration looks like this:

a ā i ī u ū r ī l ī e ai o au m ḥ ka kha ga gha ṇa ca cha ja jha ṇa ṭa ṭha ḍa ḍha ṣa ta tha da dha na pa pha ba bha ma ya ra la va śa ṣa sa ha kṣa

These speech sounds are manifested in the creation of the universe. A full presentation of the verses that explain this process would take us too deep into mythical and theological issues related to the form of Tantric religion to which Abhinavagupta adheres. We must therefore confine ourselves to a limited choice of verses (*Tantrāloka* 3.67–95):

The highest energy of God, who is *Akula*, is Kauliki . . . , from whom the Lord is never separated. (3.67)

The coupling of these two is known by the name “embrace.” It is called the energy of bliss [*ānanda*], from which the universe is created. (3.68)

...

The awareness that arises in this embrace on account of its being conscious by nature is the energy of desire [*icchā*], the chief of Shiva’s nonterrible energies. (3.71c–72b)

That same energy, if agitated, becomes the Mistress (*īśitri*). (3.72ab)

...

The reflection upon itself, which was earlier all by itself, is by its nature the Expansion [*unmeṣa*] of the knowable universe, and remains as the energy of knowledge. (3.73c–74b)

...

When the knowable part, while expanding, gets strongly agitated, then an appearance of Deficiency [*ūnata*] is produced in as far as pure consciousness is concerned. (3.75c–76b)

...

The five vowels explained thus, when manifesting themselves under mutual influence, take on different forms because of the mutual mixture.⁹ (3.92c–93b)

The highest [*anuttara*] supreme vibration, and the bliss [*ānanda*] that manifests itself along with it, take altogether different forms as a result of the embrace with desire [*icchā*] and expansion [*unmeṣa*]. (3.93c–94b)

The two consciousnesses, highest [*anuttara*] and bliss [*ānanda*], connected with the energy desire [*icchā*], are called “triangle”;¹⁰ it is beautiful through the joy of emission. (3.94c–95b)

It will be clear from these few verses that not only do the speech sounds themselves play a role in the creation of the universe; modifications that these speech sounds may undergo (*sandhi*) do so too. A concern that found expression in certain Vedic texts reappears here. It shows that the conviction that Sanskrit, including its individual speech sounds, has an intimate connection with reality was like an undercurrent of classical Brahmanical culture throughout its history, an undercurrent that from time to time becomes visible in the surviving literature.



CHAPTER TWO

Buddhist Thought

Source of Inspiration

2.1. THINGS ARE NOTHING BUT WORDS

The *Questions of King Milinda* (*Milindapañha*) presents a discussion that supposedly took place between the Greek king Milinda and a Buddhist monk called Nagasena. This discussion may never have happened in this particular form, but Milinda was a real Indo-Greek king, better known by the name Menander, who ruled over Greater Gandhara around the year 150 BCE.

Then King Milinda approached the venerable Nagasena, greeted him, and, having exchanged pleasant and polite words with him, sat down on one side. The venerable Nagasena returned the greeting, so that the mind of the king was pleased.

Then King Milinda said the following to the venerable Nagasena: “How are you known, sir? What is your name?”

“I am known as ‘Nagasena,’ O king, my fellow monks address me like that. But even though parents give a name—such as ‘Nagasena,’ or ‘Surasena,’ or ‘Virasena,’ or ‘Sihasena’—this ‘Nagasena’ is nothing but a word, an appellation, a designation, a mere name, no person is perceived here.”

Then King Milinda said: “Hear, O five hundred Greeks and eighty thousand monks, what Nagasena says: no person is perceived here. Is it proper to approve of that?”

He then said to the venerable Nagasena: “If no person is perceived, who then gives to you monks your requisites in terms of robes, food, lodgings, and medicine? Who enjoys receiving those requisites? Who sticks to correct behavior? Who cultivates the mind? Who realizes the path to liberation, its fruit, *nirvāṇa*? Who kills life? Who takes what has not been given? Who misbehaves with respect to carnal desires? Who lies?

Who drinks alcohol? Who commits the five evil deeds that bring immediate result? It would follow that nothing is good or bad, that there is no one who does good or bad deeds or causes them to be done; there is no fruit and result of good and bad deeds. If someone were to kill you, O Nagasena, he would not have committed a murder. You monks would have no teacher or preceptor, nor would you have undergone ordination. So when you say that your fellow monks address you as 'Nagasena,' who is this Nagasena?... You speak an untruth, a lie, when you say that there is no Nagasena."

Then the venerable Nagasena spoke as follows to King Milinda: "You, O king, are delicately nurtured as a king, extremely delicately nurtured. If you, O king, walk on foot at midday on the heated earth, on hot sand, stepping on rough gravel, pebbles, and sand, your feet hurt, your body becomes tired, your mind is afflicted, and a bodily sensation along with pain comes about. Have you come on foot or in a vehicle?"

"I do not come here on foot, sir, I have come by chariot."

"If you have come in a chariot, O king, then tell what that chariot is. Is the pole the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Is the axle the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Are the wheels the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Is the chariot box the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Is the flagpole the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Is the yoke the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Are the reins the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Is the driver's stick the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Are then the pole, the axle, the wheels, the chariot box, the flagpole, the yoke, the reins, the driver's stick the chariot?"

"No, sir."

"Is the chariot apart from the pole, the axle, the wheels, the chariot box, the flagpole, the yoke, the reins, the driver's stick?"

"No, sir."

"Then, O king, even though I ask and ask, I see no chariot. *Chariot* is just sound. Which is the chariot here? You speak an untruth, a lie, O king. There is no chariot. You are the foremost king in the whole of India. Who are you afraid of that you lie? Hear, O five hundred Greeks and eighty thousand monks, what King Milinda says: I have come by chariot. Asked to explain what a chariot is, he does not come up with a chariot. Is it proper to approve of that?"

When he said this, the five hundred Greeks expressed their agreement with the venerable Nagasena, and said to King Milinda: "Speak, O king, if you can."

Then King Milinda spoke to the venerable Nagasena: "I do not speak an untruth, O Nagasena. It is based on the pole, the axle, the wheels, the chariot box, the flagpole, the yoke, the reins, the driver's stick that the word, the appellation, the designation, the name 'chariot' is used."

"You understand the chariot correctly, O king. In the same manner, it is based on the hair of my head, body hair, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, entrails, intestines, stomach, excrements, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, snot, synovic fluid, urine, the brain in the head, corporality, sensation, ideation, the formations, and cognition, that the word, the appellation, the designation, the mere name 'Nagasena' is used. In highest reality no person is perceived here. This has been spoken by the nun Vajira in the presence of the Buddha: "Just as the word 'chariot' is there as a result of bringing together the constituent parts, in the same way there is the conventional expression 'being' when the aggregates are present."

"Bravo, Nagasena! Wonderful, Nagasena! You have given excellent answers to my questions. If the Buddha were here, he would express his agreement. Well done, well done, Nagasena. You have given excellent answers to my questions."¹

The following passage is from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (*Commentary on the Treasury of Scholasticism*) of Vasubandhu. This text was composed some half a millennium after Buddhist scholiasts elaborated and systematized the doctrine of *dharmas* for the first time. It is yet considered a useful compendium of the ideas worked out by the Sarvastivada Buddhists and those related to them. The emphasis is, initially, on the evident reality of the *dharmas*; it mentions in passing that the only justification for believing in the existence of macroscopic objects is that conventional names have been given to them. The role of words and the need to go beyond the world created by them come out again in the ensuing discussion of the different forms of insight:

The Buddha proclaimed four truths. He also proclaimed two truths: conventional truth and ultimate truth. What are their characteristics?

That of which the notion does not persist when it is broken, or when one mentally removes other aspects, that exists conventionally, like a jar or like water. Otherwise it exists in the highest sense. (4)

Something the notion of which does not persist when it is broken into pieces exists conventionally, as for example a jar. For the notion “jar” does not persist when it is broken into potsherds. Furthermore, also that should be known to exist conventionally the notion of which does not persist after one has mentally removed other *dharma*s from it. An example is water. For here, once one has mentally removed *dharma*s such as its color, etc., the notion “water” does not persist. Those who say with regard to these things that the jar exists, or that water exists, by virtue of the convention that conventional names have been given to them, they speak truth, they do not lie; this is conventional truth. Ultimate truth is different from this. Here the notion of an object does persist even if it is broken. It exists in the highest sense even if one mentally removes other *dharma*s. An example is color. The notion of the true nature of color persists, even if the object is broken down all the way to individual atoms, or after one has removed other *dharma*s such as odor. Sensation and other such *dharma*s should be seen in the same way. This is ultimate truth because these things exist in the highest sense.²

The *Commentary on the Treasury of Scholasticism* then discusses three different kinds of wisdom:

What are the characteristics of the three kinds of wisdom?

The wisdoms arising from what is heard, etc., have as objects respectively names, names and things, and the things themselves. (5cd)

Those Buddhists who follow the treatise called *Vibhāṣā* hold the following: The wisdom arising from what is heard is based clearly on names. The wisdom arising from reflection is based on both names and things: sometimes it grasps a thing through the intermediary of sounds; sometimes it grasps the sounds through the intermediary of the thing. The wisdom arising from meditation is based on the things and nothing else, for it reaches the thing while remaining independent of sounds. . . .

Others, however, hold that in this presentation there is no place for wisdom arising from reflection. For wisdom based on names is what we call “wisdom arising from what is heard” and wisdom based on things is what we call “wisdom arising from meditation.”

One should not find fault with these characteristics of three kinds of wisdom. Wisdom arising from what is heard is certain knowledge born from the fact that the words of reliable people are authoritative. Wisdom arising from reflection is certain

knowledge born from consideration with reason. Wisdom arising from meditation is born from absorption.³

This passage introduces an idea that was not clearly present in the *Questions of King Milinda* but that was to play an important role in many schools of Indian philosophy: the idea that we are, in principle, capable of experiencing the world as it really is. In “wisdom arising from texts” the world of names, i.e., of chariots and other macroscopic objects, plays a role; “wisdom arising from meditation,” on the other hand, concerns the real objects, i.e., the *dharma*s.

The following passage is from the first chapter of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (*Treatise on the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses*). Keep in mind that for its author(s) only *dharma*s really exist. Something that is not a *dharma* does not exist.

Thus has been heard by me. At one time the Lord dwelt in Rajagriha, on Mount Vulture Peak, along with a large group of monks, one thousand two hundred and fifty monks, all of them—with the exception of one person, the venerable Ananda—liberated saints who had destroyed their taints, free from impurities, controlled, their minds completely free, their wisdom completely free, well-bred, great serpents, their tasks accomplished, their obligations carried out, their burden shed, their goal reached, the fetters of existence destroyed, their minds fully freed through perfect knowledge, having attained the highest mastery and in control of their whole mind.

At that occasion the Lord spoke to the venerable elder Subhuti: Let it be clear, Subhuti, to the bodhisattvas and great beings how bodhisattvas and great beings reach the Perfection of Wisdom, starting from the Perfection of Wisdom.

...

Then the venerable Subhuti spoke, by the power of the Buddha, the following to the Lord. When the Lord says, “Let it be clear, Subhuti, to the bodhisattvas and great beings how bodhisattvas and great beings reach the Perfection of Wisdom, starting from the Perfection of Wisdom,” what is called “bodhisattva,” O Lord, of which *dharma* is this word “bodhisattva” a designation? I do not see a *dharma*, O Lord, that is called “bodhisattva.” Nor do I see a *dharma* that is called “Perfection of Wisdom.” Since then, O Lord, I do not find, observe, or see a bodhisattva or a *dharma* called “bodhisattva,” and I do not find, observe or see a Perfection of Wisdom, what bodhisattva shall I proclaim and instruct in which Perfection of Wisdom? However, if the mind of a bodhisattva who has been thus talked to, addressed, and taught does not cower, does not melt away, does not become despondent, does not become dejected, if his spirit does not become depressed, is not broken, does not tremble or shiver, and does not become terrified, then this bodhisattva and great being must be instructed in the

Perfection of Wisdom. This itself should be recognized as the Perfection of Wisdom of this bodhisattva, of this great being. This is the proclamation with respect to the Perfection of Wisdom. If he stands firm in this manner, this is the proclamation and instruction.⁴

Our text is aware of the fact that the things and people of our ordinary experience owe their pseudo-existence to the words of language, but it protests against this too:

Then the venerable Subhuti said the following to the Lord: Since I do not find, observe, or see a bodhisattva,⁵ I do not find, observe, or see the Perfection of Wisdom either. Not finding, observing, or seeing a bodhisattva, and not finding, observing, or seeing the Perfection of Wisdom either, what bodhisattva shall I proclaim and instruct in which Perfection of Wisdom? It would be bad if I were to produce a coming into being and subsequent disappearance of a bodhisattva by means of the mere name “bodhisattva,” given that I do not find, observe, or see an object corresponding to it. Moreover, O Lord, that name itself is not established, nor nonestablished, nor fixed, nor nonfixed. Why so? Because that name does not exist.⁶

In this passage the author of the *Treatise on the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses* may go further than the scholastic masters of northwestern India would accept. The Sarvastivadins had introduced some *dharma*s representing words and other linguistic units. They would therefore have maintained that, even though there is no bodhisattva, the word “bodhisattva” does exist. The present passage disagrees with this, stating explicitly “that name does not exist.”

The formulation may be significant. Our passage does not say that there is no *dharma* that is a name. Presumably our author knew better. He simply states that the name (presumably all names are meant) does not exist. In other words, one of the *dharma*s accepted by the scholiasts of northwestern India does not exist. At this point the author of our passage clearly parts ways with those scholiasts. Other passages confirm that not just one *dharma* is discarded; all of them are. That is to say, the non-existence of things and people that are familiar to us from everyday life is extended to cover the one remaining anchor into reality, the *dharma*s: they too do not exist.

2.2. WHAT ARE WORDS?

Vasubandhu

The following passage from Vasubandhu’s *Commentary on the Treasury of Scholasticism* (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*) deals with the linguistic *dharma*s. This text, which was

composed several centuries after their invention, no longer accepts the existence of these *dharma*s.

Which are the “body of word” [*nāmakāya*], etc.?

The “body of word,” etc. are the collection of names, of phrases, and of phonemes respectively. (verse 2.47ab)

The word “etc.” in the verse covers the “body of sentence” and the “body of sound.” “Word” means name, as in “form,” “sound,” etc. “Sentence” means “phrase,” through which a complete meaning is expressed, as in “composite things do not perdure,” etc.; through the sentence one understands the specific connections of a thing with action, qualities, and time. A sound is a phoneme, such as *a*, *ā*, etc.

But are phonemes not also letters, i.e., the names of parts of writing?

No! For phonemes are not used to make known letters, but letters are used to make known phonemes.

...

Examples of “bodies of word” are: “form,” “sound,” “smell,” “taste,” “touch,” etc.

Examples of “bodies of sentence” are: “all composite things perish,” “all *dharma*s are without self,” “Nirvana is peaceful,” etc.

Examples of “bodies of sound” are: *k*, *kh*, *g*, *gh*, *ñ*, etc.

[*Objection*:] Aren’t these, being speech by nature, also sound by nature, so that they should be categorized as matter? Why then are these linguistic *dharma*s enumerated under the category “separate from mind”?

[*Answer*:] These linguistic *dharma*s are not speech by nature. For speech is resonance, and no meanings are understood by means of mere resonance. Rather, speech leads to “body of word” and “body of word” elucidates the meaning.

[*Objection*:] Not all resonance is speech; only the resonance by means of which the meaning is understood is speech. By which resonance is the meaning understood? The resonance that is designated by speakers to be used with regard to certain meanings. An example is the word *go*, which has been designated to be used with regard to the following nine meanings:

A wise person should consider that the word *go* is used in the following nine meanings: “speech,” “direction,” “earth,” “ray,” “thunderbolt,” “cattle,” “eye,” “heaven,” and “water.”

He who thinks that the “body of word” elucidates the meaning must necessarily also accept that the meaning of that body of word is known. The same result is obtained on the basis of mere sound whose meaning is known. Why then do you postulate something else, namely, a body of word? Moreover, it is not known how speech leads to body of word. Does the former produce the latter, or does it

illuminate it? If speech produces a body of word, then, given that speech is nothing but resonance, all resonance will produce a body of word. Or whatever specific resonance is wished to produce a body of word will elucidate a meaning. But if you maintain that speech illuminates a body of word, then, given that speech is nothing but resonance, all resonance will illuminate a body of word. Or whatever specific resonance is wished to illuminate a body of word will elucidate a meaning.

There is, furthermore, no whole of sounds, a joining up in one single moment. And the production of a single *dharma* part by part is not possible, so how would speech, while producing, produce a body of word? (You may think that the last sound, depending on earlier sounds, produces the body of word.) It would follow, because the body of word is then produced when the last sound is present, that he who only hears this single sound would understand the meaning.

And if you propose that speech produces the body of sound and the body of sound produces the body of word, you will be confronted with the same undesired consequence, because the whole of bodies of sound does not exist. And the same undesired consequence will present itself if you believe that speech illuminates the body of word....

You might accept that a body of word naturally comes into existence along with an object, just as it has a universal, etc. In that case no present body of word would be possible for a past or future object. Parents give names to their children as they like, but if we proceed in this manner with regard to objects, which body of word would come into existence along with it?....

Alternatively, one might postulate that only the body of sound exists as a separate substance. Bodies of word, etc. are collections of those bodies of sound, and are therefore mere designations that do not refer to real things. The Sarvastivadins who follow the *Vibhāṣā*, on the other hand, maintain that bodies of word, etc. really exist.⁷

Patanjali

Vasubandhu had not invented the notions discussed in the above passage. They had been invented a number of centuries before him, in northwestern India, by the Buddhists who had settled there. This explains how these ideas were already known to Patanjali, the author of the *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*), who appears to have lived in Kashmir during the second century BCE. His discussions of the nature of the word are therefore influenced by the Buddhist thought of that time and region, even though he never explicitly acknowledges being acquainted with it. Relevant passages from his work will be presented in section 3, below.

Yogaśāstra

Also more recent authors in the Brahmanical tradition were interested in these ontological questions. Consider the following passage from the *Yogaśāstra* (*Science of Yoga*):

There is confusion between words, their corresponding objects, and the corresponding notions, because they are mutually superimposed on one another. As a result of concentration on their distinction, knowledge of the cries of all living beings arises. (*Yogasūtra* 3.17).

Here the function of speech is limited to the manifestation of speech sounds. And the ear has as sole object the modification of sound. The word, for its part, is grasped by the mind through uniting the vibrations into a whole. Since the speech sounds that constitute a word cannot coexist at one and the same time, they cannot mutually support each other. Not having jointly touched the word or having fixed it, they appear and disappear. This is why speech sounds are stated not to individually constitute the word. However, each single speech sound is a word, if it is possessed of the power to express all things and has reached, as it were, this diversity on account of its connection with other accompanying speech sounds. An earlier speech sound is fixed in a specific meaning by a succeeding speech sound, and a succeeding speech sound by an earlier one. In this way many speech sounds in a certain order are assigned by convention to designate a specific object, so that so many speech sounds—viz., *g* followed by *au* followed by *h* [*gauh* means “cow”]—though possessed of the power to express all things, refer to the object with a dewlap, etc. [i.e., to a cow]. The single notion associated with those speech sounds, assigned by convention to designate a specific object and the sequence of its sounds united into a whole, that single notion is the word; by convention it is expressive of the meaning to be conveyed. That single word has a single notion as object, is grasped by a single effort, is without parts, without sequence, without speech sounds, and is mental by nature, fixed into its role by the impression of the last speech sound of the word. As a result of the wish to communicate something to others, the word is commonly understood as an established entity by the minds of people that are pervaded by traces of a beginningless use of language, with the help of nothing but speech sounds that are pronounced, uttered, and heard by listeners. The distinction between word and object is based on our awareness of the convention, so that we say: “This kind of collection of so many speech sounds is expressive of that meaning.” The convention, for its part, is of the nature of memory, and consists of the mutual superimposition of the word and the object denoted: “The convention

consists of the following mutual superimposition: this word is this denoted object, this denoted object is this word." In this way the word, the object, and the corresponding notion are confused as a result of mutual superimposition, as in: the word "cow," the object "cow," the notion "cow." He who knows the distinction among these three knows all.⁸

Bhartrihari

Bhartrihari has a great deal to say about the nature of the word and its relationship to the sound that manifests it in the first book of his *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*). The following verses illustrate this:

Those knowledgeable about words recognize two words among words that convey meaning: the one is the cause of the other words, the other is used in a meaning. (44)

Some upholders of tradition maintain that there is an essential difference between the two. Some others proclaim that there is a division, resulting from a conceptual division, of something that is undivided. (46)

Just as the fire that resides in the churning sticks is the cause of a different fire [i.e., of the fire it produces], in the same way also the word that resides in the mind is the cause of audible sounds and is different from them. (47)

Initially conceived of by the mind and associated with a certain meaning, the word is helped by sound arising from the speech organs. (48)

Born from a sequence of vibrations, the word is not for that reason earlier or later. Without sequence, the word arises as if it has parts in the form of a sequence. (49)

Just as a reflection situated elsewhere [i.e., in water] follows the activity of the water because of the latter's movement, such is the manner in which *sphota* and sound relate to each other. (50)

Just as in knowledge its own form as well as the object of knowledge are seen, so its meaning and its own form appear in the case of the word. (51)

The power called "word" is like an egg. Its activity, like a movement, becomes bit by bit sequential. (52)

Just as the notion of a speaker first turns to words, in the same way the understanding of listeners arises from those same words. (54)

Just as fire has two powers—that of being grasped and that of allowing observers to grasp—in the same way all words have these two powers. (56)

...

There is no word different from the speech sounds that constitute it. And there is no sentence different from its speech sounds and words. (73)

There are no speech sounds in a word, and no parts in the speech sounds. There is no difference at all between the words and the sentence. (74)

They state that the difference in speed in the case of the *sphoṭa*, whose duration is not different from one occasion to another but which follows the duration of the sound that expresses it, is due to the difference in the conditions of perception. (76)

...

Some maintain that sound is perceived jointly with the *sphoṭa*; others assume that sound that conveys the *sphoṭa* is imperceptible, others again that it is independent of the *sphoṭa*. (83)

...

Things as big as mountains, etc. cannot arise on the surfaces of diamonds and mirrors, whose sizes are altogether different. (103)

For this reason speed of utterance and own duration of speech sounds, sentences, words, etc., whose duration is in reality not different, are distinguished on the basis of the difference of the sound that expresses them. (104)

Whether in a short or in a long word, the duration of the *sphoṭa* is not different. The following extension of the word, however, is characterized by increase and diminution. (106)⁹

In the second book, Bhartrihari emphasizes the unitary nature of the sentence:

Just as the single cognition of a whole is divided in accordance with the division of its visible parts, the understanding of the meaning of a sentence is like that. (7)

Just as the single variegated color¹⁰ is explained with the help of different colors that look different, blue, etc., in the same way a single sentence that is not at all in need of other words is explained with the help of its constituent words that are in need of each other. (8-9)

Just as, in the case of a word, stems, suffixes, and other grammatical parts are obtained by division, so a separation of words in the case of a sentence is possible. (10)

In reality words have no parts; how then could their meanings have parts? With the help of assumed parts, the ignorant arrive at different grammatical derivations. (13)

If there are words in a sentence and speech sounds in a word, there should then also be a division of parts of speech sounds in speech sounds, [and this division should then continue until the smallest phonetic elements,] as in the case of atoms. (28)

Since these parts would not be in contact with each other [because they succeed each other], there would be no speech sound and no word. Since those parts cannot be designated, what else could be designated? (29)

Just as a single smell, in the case of flowers and so on, is conceived of as differentiated, in the same way a differentiation of meaning is expressed also in the case of a sentence. (89)¹¹

The unitary nature of linguistic units was a topic that drew the attention of other thinkers as well. In a way, this discussion was the linguistic parallel of a discussion that occupied most philosophers of that time, concerning the unitary nature of composite objects. This general philosophical discussion had originated in Buddhism, which denied that composite objects have any independent existence at all. We have studied this issue in section 2.1, where the dialogue between the monk Nagasena and King Milinda culminated in the admission by the king that the chariot in which he had arrived did not really exist. (He further admitted that the chariot was nothing but a name, but this is not relevant here.) Later Buddhists had continued the dogma as to the unreality of composite objects, but certain Brahmanical thinkers—most notably the Vaisheshikas—had defended the opposite point of view: composite objects, such as pots, separately exist beside their constituent parts.

This discussion could be transferred to the realm of linguistics, but not without important modifications. The constituents of a pot, or of a chariot, coexist simultaneously. Linguistic utterances are constituted of more elementary parts that succeed each other: a sentence is a succession of words, a word a succession of speech sounds, and a speech sound a succession of more elementary parts. At no time do the words of a sentence coexist; the same applies to the constituents of words and speech sounds. Postulating the separate existence of a composite material object, such as a pot, is not therefore the same as postulating the separate existence of a linguistic unit such as a word. And yet the temptation was great, for without such separate units all linguistic entities would be liable to dissolve into thin air.

Kumarila Bhatta

We have already come across the notion that words are different from their constituent speech sounds. Some thinkers stopped at the idea that speech sounds are different from their constituents, without making additional assumptions about the separate reality of words and sentences. One of these is Kumarila Bhatta. Kumarila lived in the seventh century CE and is known for the three-part commentary he wrote on Shabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*). He dedicates

a chapter (called “discussion of *sphoṭa*,” *Sphoṭavāda*) of his *Ślokavārttika* (*Comments in Verse*) to the question. The first point he has to prove is that meaningless speech sounds have a separate existence, whereas meaningful words do not. In order to follow his reasoning, I will here translate *śabda*, normally rendered “word,” as “speech”; in this way *śabda* can include meaningless speech sounds:

Those who look for speech through the intermediary of the understanding of meaning, let them hold back for a while. We will investigate it with the help of perception. (3)

We do not consider perception incapable of helping us in studying speech. Once the meaning has been ascertained, therefore, speech should be investigated in this manner because there is no other, stronger means to proceed. (4)

For this reason, whether or not something grasped by the ear conveys meaning, it is speech. This fact, known to the world, we do not abandon. (5)

If speech, thus defined, does not have the power to convey meaning, another entity may then be postulated, but this would not be well known as speech. (6)

For smoke, etc. are not speech, even though they make known fire, etc. Nor are single speech sounds not considered speech because they do not convey meaning. (7)

It is not the case that the notion “speech” does not arise with regard to something grasped by the ear before its meaning is understood. And something that is not heard is not speech, even after its meaning is understood. (8)

Only speech sounds are comprehended according to their own form, and independent of each other, by ear consciousness, not entities that precede or follow the speech sounds. (9)

The mind grasps speech that is pronounced even with a very small effort either clearly as a whole speech sound, or not. (10)

Parts of speech sounds are never separately perceived. Parts woven into speech sounds are not observed, as threads are observed in a cloth. (11)

Since these parts are not perceived, it is known that an inferential marker to establish their existence would be inappropriate. Scriptural statement about these parts do not exist, and analogy can never be used to prove the existence of something that cannot be perceived. (12)

Nor would there be inconsistency without the assumption of parts of speech sounds, just as there is no inconsistency without the assumption of further parts of ultimate parts [i.e., atoms]. (13)

Why should not the speech sound be known by perception to be without parts? The notion of the speech sound without parts is its inferential marker, as it is in the case of ether.¹² (14)

As in the case of ether, the speech sound is undivided even though it occurs in different places, because a single notion corresponds to it.

[*Objection:*] The notion of difference between different occurrences of the same speech could in that case not exist.

[*Response:*] If so, why do you too have the idea of singleness in the case of a speech sound? (15)

[*Objector:*] I have the idea of one with regard to the universals, and the idea of difference with regard to the individual speech sounds. For I do not accept that there is only difference, since in that case the idea of singleness would not occur. (16)

[*Response:*] Apart from speechness, no universal different from the individual is cognized in speech sounds. If the universal is not different from the speech sound, it is the speech sound, and not a universal. (17)

The idea “that is the same speech sound” is not similarity. Similarity cannot be present in something without similarity of its parts. Well, there are no parts in speech sounds. (18)

...

[*Question:*] Just as the universal speechness is postulated in the case of the individual speech sounds *g*, etc., so there is a universal cowness in the case of individual cows called “Shabaleya,” etc. Why is no universal corresponding to the mere sound *g* postulated? (20)

[*Answer:*] The notion of a universal does not apply to Shabaleya, to *g*, etc., which are complete as individuals. For this reason we accept the existence of a universal as well that covers all those individuals. (21)

In case there is difference in speed of pronunciation, etc., it is not the case that one individual *g* is cognized as complete, clear, and different from other individuals *g*. (22)

A single notion of a speech sound as being one is therefore produced. The presence of a notion of difference is due to the difference in the manifesting vibrations. (23)

Just as, according to you, the universal *g*-ness, though known through specific instances such as being pronounced rapidly, etc., is not for that matter multiple, in the same way the speech sound, according to us, is not multiple. (24)¹³

Kumarila, as can be seen from this extract, looks upon individual speech sounds as indivisible entities, but is not ready to look upon whole words, or sentences, in this manner.

Shankara

The Vedantin Shankara takes a position similar to Kumarila in his *Commentary on the Brahmasūtra* (*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 1.3.28). The passage that interests us follows the claim that the world is created out of words:

With what kind of word in mind is it stated that the world arises out of words?

[First answer:] It is the *sphoṭa*, they say. For if one accepts the position that words are nothing more than speech sounds, it would be impossible to maintain that individuals such as gods, etc. arise out of eternal words, because speech sounds disappear as soon as they have come into being. Speech sounds disappear as soon as they have come into being, because they are experienced differently each time they are pronounced. Indeed, a specific person, though he is not seen, is identified as different through the mere hearing of the sound of his recitation, so that one says: this one is Devadatta reciting, that one is Yajnadatta reciting. It is not possible to counter that the notion of difference based on speech sounds is a false notion, because there is no notion that conflicts with it. Nor is it correct to say that the understanding of meaning comes from the speech sounds. Because the speech sounds do not convey the meaning one by one, as that would lead to error. And the notion of a collection of speech sounds is not produced either, because the speech sounds have a sequence. You might say that the final speech sound, along with the impressions produced by the experience of preceding speech sounds, will convey the meaning. That, however, is not the case. For a word, on condition that its connection with its meaning is grasped, may convey its meaning when cognized, just as smoke, etc., once their association with fire, etc. are known, will bring to mind fire, etc. But there is no cognition of a final speech sound along with the impressions produced by the experience of preceding speech sounds, because impressions cannot be perceived. You might think that the final speech sound along with the impressions made known by their effects conveys the meaning. But this does not work either. Because the effect of an impression, i.e., memory, has sequence too.

It follows from what precedes that the word is the *sphoṭa* and nothing else. And that *sphoṭa* suddenly appears as the object of a single cognition in the mind that has that cognition, in which the impressions laid down by the cognitions of the individual speech sounds are the seed; and that has matured as a result of the cognition of the last speech sound. And this single cognition is not the memory of the speech sounds, because the speech sounds, being multiple, cannot be the object of a single cognition. The *sphoṭa*, moreover, being recognized each time it is pronounced, is eternal, because the cognition of differences does not have the *sphoṭa* but rather the

speech sounds as object. It follows that the world, the object of speech and consisting of activities, acting agents, and the results of these two, arises out of the eternal, expressive word, which is a *sphota* by nature.

[Second answer:] The venerable Upavarsa holds that only the speech sounds constitute the word.

Wasn't it stated that speech sounds disappear as soon as they have come into being?

This position is not correct, because speech sounds are recognized so that one says "these are the same speech sounds we heard before"; clearly they have not disappeared.

One could maintain that the recognition is explained not by the identity of earlier and later speech sounds but by their mutual similarity, as in the case of the new hair that grows after a haircut.

That position is not tenable either, because this recognition cannot be invalidated by another means of knowledge.

What about this: the recognition is based on the identical form of earlier and later speech sounds?

No way, because we recognize individual speech sounds. For if different individual speech sounds were cognized each time they are pronounced, just as different individual cows are cognized, their recognition would be based on their identical form. But this is not the case here, for individual speech sounds are recognized each time they are pronounced. We know, for example, that the word "cow" can be pronounced twice, not two words "cow."

Didn't you say that speech sounds too are cognized as different because of difference in pronunciation: we cognize a difference when hearing the sound of recitation coming from Devadatta and Yajnadatta respectively?

We answer: Even though the recognition of speech sounds is certain, the variable cognition of speech sounds is not based on the form of those speech sounds but on the variability of the manifestors of those speech sounds, which is caused by the fact that they are manifested by contact and separation of the speech organs. What is more, he who holds that these differences belong to the individual speech sounds themselves must postulate, in order to explain that speech sounds can be recognized, that the forms of the speech sounds are involved. He must further accept that the cognition of difference in those forms is due to external conditions. It would be better, and one would have to make fewer assumptions, if one accepted that there is cognition of difference in the individual speech sounds themselves due to external conditions and that recognition is based on their specific form. Recognition is cognition that suppresses the cognition of difference with regard to the speech sounds.

For how could one single syllable *ga*, when pronounced by many speakers in one single moment, simultaneously have multiple forms: one may have the acute accent, another the grave one, a third the circumflex one; another one may be nasal, or again non-nasal?

Alternatively, this difference in cognition is due to the vibrations, not to the speech sound. In this way there is no problem.

What is it that you call vibration?

That which, coming from afar, reaches the ear of someone who listens but cannot identify the speech sounds. It is responsible for the distinction between shrillness, softness, etc. in the speech sounds in the case of someone who is nearby. Distinctive features such as the acute accent and so on depend on the vibrations, not on the form of the speech sounds, because speech sounds are being recognized each time they are pronounced. This being the case, the cognitions of the acute accent and so on will be based on something. Otherwise distinctive features such as the acute accent and so on would have to be considered as being produced by the contacts and separations of the speech organs, given that the speech sounds that are being recognized do not differ from each other. Since the contacts and separations of the speech organs cannot be observed, distinctive features that reside in them cannot be determined as residing in the speech sounds; the cognitions of the acute accent and other distinctive features would therefore not be based on anything whatsoever.

Moreover, one should not insist that there could be a difference between speech sounds that are yet being recognized on account of the difference between the acute accent and other distinctive features. For there cannot be a difference of one thing that is not differentiated on account of the difference in something else. People do not think that a universal is differentiated by the difference between individuals.

Since, then, the cognition of meaning arises from the speech sounds, the assumption that there is a *sphoṭa* serves no purpose.

If you object that you do not assume a *sphoṭa*, that you rather experience it directly, because it appears just like that in a mental comprehension in which impressions have been laid by the process of grasping the individual speech sounds, you are wrong. Because this mental comprehension too has speech sounds as object. This single mental comprehension “cow” arises after the grasping of the individual speech sounds and has all those speech sounds as object. It has nothing else as object.

How do you know this?

Because in this mental comprehension too the speech sounds *g*, etc. succeed each other, not other speech sounds such as *d*, etc. If this mental comprehension had a different object than *g*, etc., viz., the *sphoṭa*, then the speech sounds *g*, etc., like *d*,

etc. would be absent from it. But that is not the case. It follows that this single mental comprehension is a memory with the speech sounds as object.

If you object that, as has been stated before, the speech sounds cannot be the object of a single mental comprehension, because there are several of them, we answer: several items can be the object of a single mental comprehension, as we see in the case of a row, a forest, an army, and the numbers ten, hundred, thousand, and so on. The mental comprehension “this is the single word ‘cow’” is metaphorical, and depends on the fact that we distinguish a single item in many speech sounds, as in the case of the mental comprehension of a forest, an army, etc.

Here a critic objects: If the speech sounds in their totality, becoming the object of a single mental comprehension, are the word, then the distinction between *jārā* and *rājā*, and between *kapi* and *pika*, and between other such pairs, would not be noticed. The very same speech sounds appear here and there.

We respond: Even though we consider all the speech sounds, only when following a sequence will they lead to the notion of a word, just as ants only give rise to the notion of a line when following a sequence. Even though speech sounds are without distinguishing features, this does not contradict that the understanding of a specific word is produced by a specific sequence. The speech sounds that have a certain sequence and are endowed with a specific meaning in the usage of one’s elders and that appear exactly like that also in one’s own usage and in the mental comprehension that reflects all the speech sounds after they have been grasped one by one, they will communicate that very same meaning without deviation. The assumption of the person who holds that only speech sounds exist is therefore simpler.

The position of those who postulate the existence of the *sphoṭa*, however, amounts to abandoning what is perceived and claiming the existence of what cannot be perceived. To claim that these speech sounds, when grasped in sequence, manifest the *sphoṭa*, and that that *sphoṭa* manifests the meaning, would be a more complicated assumption.¹⁴

Mandana Mishra

Mandana Mishra disagrees with Kumarila, and his *Sphoṭasiddhi* (*Proof of Sphoṭa*) is largely a criticism of the latter’s position. Mandana argues in detail that speech sounds alone cannot account for the meanings of words. We have to assume entities that correspond to whole words; they are Mandana’s *sphoṭas*. The following are passages from this work:

[Question:] Could it be that the speech sounds, and only the speech sounds, are the cause that we understand meaning, and that speech sounds participate in the notion

of “word” when they are grouped in accordance with the limits imposed by the understanding of their meanings?

[Response:] This misses the point. Because speech sounds do not convey meaning individually; nor do they occur together, given that collaboration is impossible for speech sounds that necessarily appear in a sequence and are therefore not simultaneous. We see, moreover, that no understanding arises from speech sounds that are pronounced by several speakers rather than by one; it does not arise either when their order is changed or when they are uttered simultaneously. As a result, the understanding of meaning, given that it cannot arise out of the speech sounds, points to a cause that is different from the speech sounds.

[Objection:] If we see that no understanding of meaning arises from speech sounds characterized in a certain way, then we must accept that they are not expressive of meaning in that way. What contradiction is there in maintaining that they are expressive of meaning if they have acquired some other special feature and are subsequently seen to produce the effect of an understanding of meaning?

...

The answer to this objection is:

It is claimed that something that has not arisen out of something devoid of a special feature can arise when the special feature is there. This is true. However, no special feature is observed in this case. (v. 4)

He who upholds the expressiveness of speech sounds should be asked what difference there is between the speech sound called *visarjanīya* [=h] in *gauḥ* [cow], *aśvah* [horse], or when pronounced on its own, a difference based on which there is a difference in the cognition of meaning, and a presence or absence of understanding at all.

[Objection:] There is a difference, and it is as follows: in one case the *visarjanīya* is unaccompanied, in the other two it is accompanied by specific speech sounds.

[Response:] Where is this accompaniment, when at the time of the *visarjanīya* no other speech sounds are observed? There is accompaniment on account of an activity in the effect, but there is no activity of something that does not exist at that moment. The activity of those other speech sounds while they are there takes place at that time alone. It is not the cause of the production of an effect now, because those speech sounds have disappeared.

[Objection:] Let this then be the difference. Specific accompanying speech sounds have been observed in the case of *gauḥ* and *aśvah*, but not in the other case.

[Response:] This misses the point. The observation of past specific speech sounds is not capable of distinguishing the *visarjanīya*, for those past speech sounds are no

longer there. There is no difference between something that has never come into being and something that has disappeared without a trace.

...

[*Objection:*] Speech sounds are capable of carrying out a single activity, through the impressions based on their perception along with the cognition of the final speech sound. As it has been stated: "The final speech sound, if accompanied by the impressions produced by the preceding speech sounds, is expressive." There is therefore nothing wrong with our position.

[*Response:*] This misses the point.

Impressions cause the cognition of those things by whose perception the impressions were caused. It follows that an understanding of meaning is not possible in this manner. (6)

Impressions, as a matter of fact, when awakened by certain causes, bring about a cognition of those things by the perception of which they were produced to begin with; they do not bring about a cognition of other things. For an impression produced by the notion of a cow will never evoke the memory of a horse.

...

Preceding speech sounds, whose cognition has stopped, do not distinguish the final speech sound. If they all appear in a single cognition, their sequence, etc. have disappeared. (14)

If you maintain that preceding speech sounds distinguish the final one, you are wrong, because their perception has disappeared at that moment, and because they do not differentiate the final speech sound by their mere existence. Since all the preceding speech sounds do not differ from each other in terms of existence, they would all make up one single word. The earlier speech sounds might distinguish the final cognition born from the seeds of the memory impressions produced by the perception of all of them, because they would coexist at that moment; however, distinguishing features such as sequence would have disappeared in that cognition, and speech sounds that have lost the distinguishing features such as sequence cannot communicate meaning, because there would in that case be cognition of meaning from speech sounds that had been heard before in whatever order and that subsequently appeared in one single perception. All this has been stated earlier.

...

For those who accept the *sphoṭa*, neither sentence nor word has multiple parts. It has been shown that the perception of this entity without parts, though single, is sequential. (29)

Discussing what is wrong with a sentence or word that is thought of as having multiple parts is like ruminating on empty space, because we do not accept it. We have explained in detail how the sentence or word, though single, is perceived sequentially, through distinguishing between succeeding cognitions that are initially imprecise, then precise.

...

The essence of the word, free from differentiation, has been shown with the help of reasoning and tradition. They must understand the other linguistic unit, i.e., the sentence, which too has shaken off all differentiation, in the same manner. (36)¹⁵

Jayanta Bhatta

An interesting discussion concerning the existence of the *sphoṭa* occurs in Jayanta Bhatta's *Nyāyamañjari*. In this passage different words are used that have no precise equivalents in English. Most confusing is the Sanskrit *śabda*, which is often translated “word” but also covers larger meaningful units (e.g., “sentence”) and meaningless sound (such as the sound of thunder). Since there are other Sanskrit words for these notions—*pada*, “word,” *vākya*, “sentence,” *dhvani*, “noise”—I translate *śabda* throughout as “sound.” This may occasionally look confusing, but the lack of a corresponding term in English forced the choice.

[SOUND AS A MEANS OF VALID COGNITION]

(§ 7.1)

[Objection:] It has not yet been ascertained that sound [*śabda*] is a means of valid cognition, since the seed of the cognition of word [*pada*] and sentence meaning has not yet been examined.

[Response:] What is here to be examined? That which occurs before something else, that is its cause. When one hears a word or a sentence, one cognizes its meaning. That word or that sentence is therefore the cause of the latter.

But what is this word, what is this sentence? With respect to this it has been stated that a word is a collection of speech sounds, and the sentence a collection of words.

(§ 7.2)

[Objection:] Thinkers do not accept this. They declare: A collection of speech sounds is not something really existing, so how could there be a word that is such a collection? And since the word does not exist, the sentence, which is a collection of words, cannot exist. Expressiveness of speech sounds is not possible, because it is excluded

by the alternative between separate and joint expressiveness. It follows that there is another sound, of the nature of the *sphoṭa*, that expresses meaning.

(§ 7.3)

—Let us look at it this way. Let it be true that there is a *sphoṭa*, totally different from the speech sounds, that expresses the meaning. What harm does that do to the position of the Naiyayikas?

—How is it that it would do no harm?

—The Naiyayikas state that sound is a means of valid cognition because it has been established by reliable people. The *sphoṭa* has not been established by reliable people, because it is eternal. And the sound in the form of speech sound, which *has* been shown to be noneternal, cannot be the cause of the cognition of meaning [because that is claimed to be the function of the *sphoṭa*]; as a result it cannot be a means of valid cognition. And the sound that is the *sphoṭa* and the cause of the cognition of meaning is not noneternal and has therefore not been established by reliable people. The Naiyayikas would therefore be wrongly upset. In fact, they have to establish that the noneternal speech sounds themselves are expressive, and that the *sphoṭa* is to be discarded.

The situation is explained as follows: Because we cognize meaning when we come to know speech sounds such as *g*, etc., and because we don't cognize meaning when we don't, those speech sounds have the capacity of conveying meaning. Only they are entitled to be called "sound," because they fall in the realm of cognition whose instrument is hearing. It is not therefore necessary to postulate a sound called *sphoṭa* that is inaccessible to cognition and beyond perception and inference.

[DEFENSE OF THE *SPHOṬA*]

(§ 8.1.1)

The defender of the *sphoṭa* states: How can this be? Let's discard wishful thinking. How can speech sounds convey meaning? Those speech sounds, *g*, etc., when conveying meaning, do they do so jointly or separately?

(§ 8.1.1.1)

Certainly not separately, because no cognition of meaning arises upon hearing each and every speech sound.

(§ 8.1.1.2)

And a totality of speech sounds does not exist. Such a totality would have to be assumed as merely existing or as cognized. In the opinion of the Naiyayikas, to begin with, simultaneity of sounds has no existence, because we see that sounds instantaneously disappear.

Moreover, the doctrine of the Mimamsakas accepts that sound is eternal, but it does not consider which collection of speech sounds conveys which meaning, given that for them all speech sounds exist simultaneously.

[*Objection.*] In this context the following observation is made: Unlike the eye, etc., speech sounds are not actants [*kāraka*]. If they were, existential simultaneity of speech sounds, even when not perceived, could be a factor in conveying meaning. In reality, perceived speech sounds can convey meaning, because they make known their object, like smoke, etc. [which allow us to infer the presence of fire, etc.]. A totality of cognized speech sounds is therefore appropriate.

[*Response:*] This too is not possible. Consider the following: A totality of cognition, does it cover the speech sounds used by one single speaker, or rather the speech sounds spoken by various people? Since the speech sounds spoken by several people constitute an indistinct noise, it is difficult even to distinguish their forms. So whose totality or nontotality are you thinking of? Alternatively, such a totality may exist, but no cognition of meaning accompanies it.

In the case of speech sounds used by a single speaker, sequence (rather than simultaneity) is necessary, because a speaker cannot do without the sequence of external and internal effort, and points of articulation. And since there is a sequence, there should be cognition of meaning brought about by each individual speech sound, but this we do not observe. It follows that speech sounds are not expressive of meaning, because of the impossible alternative between separate and joint expressiveness.

(§ 8.1.2)

Also notions pertaining to the speech sounds must be distinguished in the same way. Also those notions cannot be simultaneous, and if they occurred in sequence it would follow that meaning would be cognized on the basis of the awareness of each single speech sound.

(§ 8.1.3)

It has been suggested that the final speech sound of a word, accompanied by the mental traces [*samskāra*] produced by the preceding speech sounds, conveys meaning. That is not correct. For a mental trace brings about the memory of that by the experience of which it was itself produced, not a cognition that has something else as object. [In other words, each mental trace brings about the memory of the speech sound concerned; it does not participate in bringing about a cognition of meaning.]

If you counter that the mental trace will make known the meaning through the intermediary of the memory of individual speech sounds, you are wrong again. Because it would follow that all the relevant cognitions are simultaneous. For just as the memory of a preceding speech sound comes immediately after the knowledge of the final speech sound, also the memory of the convention that links the speech sounds

with their meaning occurs at that same moment. As a result there will be simultaneity of cognitions.¹⁶ And we see no cause to think that they arise in sequence. Moreover, if it is true that the two cognitions occur in that sequence, even so, the cognition of the final speech sound will have ceased at that moment. To what would then the memory of a preceding speech sound lend assistance? All this has been stated on the assumption that there is one single memory that has several preceding speech sounds as object. However, there is no single memory that covers all speech sounds. Why?

There may be different memories produced by different mental traces that are born from different perceptions, but there is not one memory that covers several of them.

(§ 8.1.4)

If one were to say that there will be one single joint cognition that covers both the speech sounds that are present and those that are not, and that the speech sounds that are accompanied by those others will convey the meaning, that too is nothing but vain hope, because there is no cause for such a cognition to arise. The sense organ is not capable of grasping a past speech sound, a mental trace does not grasp something that is present, and the sense organ and the mental trace do not simultaneously produce this notion, because a mental trace, which is awakened by an accompanying sight or the like, and which is known to be capable of producing memory only, has no business with the sense organ. It follows that the speech sounds are not expressive.

(§ 8.1.5)

Similarly, if the speech sounds were expressive, they would convey meaning even if they were used in a different sequence. If sequence is to be taken into consideration, it has to be considered whether it is different or not different from the speech sounds. If it is not different, why then don't those speech sounds convey meaning, given that they are nothing but those speech sounds? But if it is different, something additional has been accepted as being expressive; in that case, you may wish to come over to my side in the debate.¹⁷

(§ 8.1.6)

[*Objection:*] By force of learning, a sound becomes expressive of meaning. In learning, as many speech sounds have been seen to express a meaning when used in a specific sequence, those, if used in that same sequence, will be expressive of that same meaning. This being the case, what is the use of adding one distinction after another? This has been expressed in the following stanza:

As many speech sounds of a certain kind as are known to be capable of conveying a certain meaning, those speech sounds, if used in that manner, make known that meaning.¹⁸

[Response:] Some thought should be given to learning. What one understands oneself from sound is preceded by someone else's understanding. But which speech sounds, how many, in which manner, has one seen in someone else's understanding as conveying a particular meaning, so that one might understand that same meaning from those same speech sounds in the same manner? The path of speech sounds is difficult to understand indeed.

You can say, "As many speech sounds of a certain kind," etc., as long as you are not asked, "which speech sounds, how many, of which kind."

It follows from the above that speech sounds are not expressive by any means.

(§ 8.2.1)

There is, on the other hand, an understanding of the appropriate meaning that arises from sound when pronounced. This understanding, moreover, cannot come about without an instrument. Well, that instrument of understanding is the *sphoṭa*. This may be an inference from the effect, or an inference of the only remaining possibility, or implication.¹⁹ This instrument is in any case postulated to exist on the basis of the effect, which is the cognition of meaning. This instrument is called *sphoṭa*. It is without parts, eternal, single, without sequence. And this is why it is not susceptible to the refutations capable of destroying the position according to which speech sounds convey meaning.

(§ 8.2.1.1)

It follows that the *sphoṭa* makes known the meaning, because it is common usage to say "We understand the meaning from sound." For in your opinion it is the mental trace born from the speech sounds that makes known the meaning. But there the meaning of the stem "sound" is not possible.

If instead the speech sounds are designated by the sound "sound" and they convey meaning,²⁰ then the singular number expressed by the case ending of "from sound" would not fit, and one would rather say "We understand the meaning from sounds," in the plural. But if we accept that sound that is expressive of meaning is the *sphoṭa*, then both the meaning of the stem "sound" and the singular meaning of the case ending fit.

(§ 8.2.1.2)

[Objection:] The *sphoṭa* is not designated by the sound "sound"; only the speech sounds are. For the sound "sound" is well known as meaning "that which is grasped by the ear"; and speech sounds are grasped by the ear.

[Response:] It is not like this. Because there are things that are grasped by the ear and yet cannot produce the effect of sounds, viz., convey meaning, these things are the universal that resides in sound and is grasped by the ear, and noises such as the noise of waterfalls and the like. We conclude that a sound is that from which we

understand meaning. And we understand meaning only from the *sphoṭa*, not from speech sounds. The *sphoṭa* is therefore sound.

(§ 8.2.1.3)

[*Objection:*] If so, smoke, etc. also would be sound, because they are the cause of cognizing meaning.²¹

[*Response:*] Don't say that. Since a passage in Shabara's *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* begins:²² "Upon hearing 'cow,' many things appear to the mind."²³ From among these, which one is the sound?" and concludes: "A sound is that from which we understand meaning," why should we entertain doubt that smoke, etc. can be sounds?

(§ 8.2.1.4.1)

[*Objection:*] This cognition of meaning is present when the speech sounds are present, and is absent when those are absent; why then do you leave those speech sounds out of consideration and claim that meaning is the effect of the *sphoṭa*?

[*Response:*] What cannot be established in any other manner and what is present when a specific other thing is present, that informs us that it is the effect of that other thing, but the same cannot be said of something that *can* be established in another manner. In this case, however, there *is* something that is established in another manner. How? Because speech sounds manifest the *sphoṭa*, cognition of the meaning occurs immediately after them. The *sphoṭa* that is manifested by speech sounds causes knowledge of the meaning, and the man who thinks, "This cognition of meaning has been brought about by speech sounds," errs.

(§ 8.2.1.4.2)

[*Objection:*] Even if the *sphoṭa* is manifested by the speech sounds, where have the alternatives between separate and joint expressiveness gone? As [Kumarila] Bhatta states:²⁴

He who holds that the *sphoṭa*, which is without parts, is manifested by the notions of the speech sounds, he too is not freed from this question.

Also the author of the (*Mīmāṃsā-*)*Bhāṣya*, having raised the question "if one assumes mental traces, one assumes something invisible," responds: "if one assumes the sound, one assumes that and the sound."²⁵

[*Response:*] Nothing wrong here. In the manifestation of the *sphoṭa* those alternatives do not come up. Why?

(§ 8.2.1.4.3)

Some, to begin with, say that the *sphoṭa* is manifested the very moment the first speech sound is heard. And yet, the second and following speech sounds are not without purpose, because only their awareness brings about a superior quality of cognition. It is as in the case of experts who examine jewels: Even though at first sight the

shape of the jewel appears faultless, after it is examined again and again, the essence of the jewel shines out blameless in the final moment of inspection. It is similar in the case of the *sphoṭa*: Even though the *sphoṭa* is revealed as a result of hearing the first speech sound, the other speech sounds will be used to arrive at a fuller cognition.²⁶

(§ 8.2.1.4.4)

Others, however, say that the noises themselves manifest the *sphoṭa*. The partless *sphoṭa*, being manifested by those same breaths, appears as if connected with various parts in the form of vowels and consonants that present themselves on account of the condition of the breaths being in contact with various points of articulation and instruments such as the palate. Those noises, which disappear as soon as they have been uttered because the breaths are unsteady, appear as imagined parts. Even though unreal, their form is seen to be manifest on account of those conditions, just as a face is seen as dark or long depending on the difference between the manifesting media, such as the blade of a sword, a jewel, or a mirror. Sound that consists of mere vibrations (and is therefore meaningless) is experienced as acquiring multiple characters depending on the difference between the manifesting instruments, such as the lute, the flute, the tabor, or the drum. It follows that those speech sounds are not ultimately real, and that they do not manifest the *sphoṭa*. So where could alternatives between separate and joint expressiveness arise?

Owing to different conditions, those speech sounds, which appear but whose form is unreal, are experienced as conforming to the cognition of meaning, through agreement and difference [*anvayavyatireka*]. It is for this reason that with respect to the claim that in assuming sound one makes two assumptions, one should respond that not even a single assumption is made, much less two of them.

It is therefore established that the cognition of meaning comes only from sound that is the *sphoṭa*. Its conformity to speech sounds is effected otherwise.

(§ 8.2.2)

Moreover, the Logicians love inferences. To please them, but not because it corresponds to the highest truth, it has been stated that this is an inference. In highest truth only the perceptible *sphoṭa* appears in auditory cognition.

[*Objection:*] Why do you behave like a thief, unheard of before? According to you, the unfortunate speech sounds, though directly perceived, are not perceptible, but the lucky *sphoṭa*, though not appearing, is perceptible.

[*Response:*] We do not say that speech sounds are not perceptible. Even though they do not exist they appear on account of conditions, just like the length of our face in the example discussed above. The sound, though, is cognized as being single and without parts. We have a cognition of one single form, both in the case of a word and

in the case of a sentence. Different speech sounds are not the basis of that cognition. For the cognition of a universal is not based on individuals, nor is the cognition of a whole based on its parts. The notions “word” and “sentence” are not incorrect in the way the notions “army” or “forest” [which only designate collections] are incorrect. Because nothing stands in the way of taking “word” and “sentence” as single notions.

(§ 8.2.2.1)

If you maintain that this cognition of a single form is produced by the condition that the word or the sentence conveys one single meaning, we respond: Where does this notion of a single meaning come from? For the notion of a word meaning or of a sentence meaning is necessarily preceded by the notion of a word and a sentence. To maintain that the cognition of a word and a sentence as having one single form results from the fact that their effect, viz., the notion of the word meaning or of the sentence meaning, is single, is therefore a case of mutual dependency, and unacceptable as an answer. It is also easy to state that the cognition of a universal or of a whole depends on conditions.

You might still object that these remarks are made invalid by the fact that these cognitions are solid because they are free from obstacles or doubts. This would not be correct, because the same applies elsewhere too.

It follows that the object of the cognition of a word is the word *sphoṭa*, and the object of the cognition of a sentence, the sentence *sphoṭa*, so that the *sphoṭa* is very much perceptible. From the word *sphoṭa* we come to know the word meaning, and from the sentence *sphoṭa* the sentence meaning.

(§ 8.2.3.1)

[*Objection:*] If the sound, i.e., the *sphoṭa*, has no parts, then, since the sentence too is sound, it cannot have parts in the form of individual words. If, on the other hand, the sentence has parts in the form of individual words, the individual word must have parts in the form of speech sounds.

[*Response:*] My heart is somewhat elated. It seems to me that the light of knowledge will arise in you, that by being taught you will understand something. We have demonstrated that this word *sphoṭa* is without parts in order to instruct people like you whose understanding has been deceived by the appearance of a division into speech sounds occasioned by different conditions in the form of the accompanying noise. In reality, however, the word *sphoṭa* is not at all a part of the sentence *sphoṭa*. The partless sentence conveys the partless sentence meaning. Just as the word has no parts, so the sentence has no parts in the form of words. This has been expressed as follows: “Since there are no words in a sentence, there are no word meanings in the sentence meaning; both sentence and sentence meaning are without parts.” If one were to assume that a sentence has parts, then, just as the sentence has parts,

viz., words, and words have parts, viz., speech sounds, in the same way also speech sounds must have parts, and those parts must have other parts, and so on ad infinitum; what would be the limit? But if you maintain that one should stop postulating parts at the speech sounds, you should rather stop at the sentence itself. For the cognition of the sentence meaning in the form of a single unit must arise from a sentence that is also a single unit. Language users learn the meaning of language from the usage of their elders. There they do not see the use of the single word, because that is not part of usage. The sentence, on the other hand, is fit to be used, so that language users learn sentences and understand meaning from sentences only. The appearance of parts is mere confusion.

(§ 8.2.3.2)

Even the meaning of a sentence is single, as in the compound “man-lion” [*narasiṁha*]. For what is called “man-lion” is a different universal, in which the meaning “man” and the meaning “lion” do not figure.²⁷

In this way the sentence meaning is different from the word meanings, just like a drink and the like. Just as a drink is different from the sugar and the different plants that add to its taste, and just as a thing whose color is variegated is different from the vermillion, yellow, red, and other substances that constitute it, or just as a musical melody is different from its constituent tones, in the same way the sentence is different from the words, and the sentence meaning is different from the word meanings.

(§ 8.2.3.3)

[*Objection:*] How then do we experience their parts?

[*Response:*] It is only imagination, it is not real.

[*Objection:*] The parts must be real, because we observe that the meaning accompanies the sound.

[*Response:*] That is not correct, because the appropriate meaning does not accompany the words *kūpa*, “well,” *sūpa*, “broth,” *yūpa*, “sacrificial post,” even though several speech sounds are shared by all of them. And you cannot say on the mere basis that something accompanies something else that one is the cause of the other; it would follow that, just as elephants, horses, and the like accompany a cloud of dust, also a line of ants that is seen to accompany a heap of dust is the cause of the latter. That is why, as in the case of stems and suffixes that are supposedly parts of a word, we resort to imagining unreal word meanings as a way to cognize the sentence meaning. However, the sentence meaning is not observed in those constituent word meanings, as in the case of the tree called “horse ear” even though it has nothing to do with a horse or an ear.

(§ 8.2.3.4)

We observe, as a matter of fact, that something unreal can serve as a means to arrive at something real: unreal snake bites and the like can be the cause of real death, and written letters, though unreal speech sounds, can convey real meaning. If you object that written letters are real in their own right, you are wrong, because being mere squiggles they cannot convey meaning. Squiggles that are being grasped as “this is the letter *g*” are indeed causes of the cognition of meaning. But those squiggles do not convey meaning in the form in which they are real [i.e., as squiggles], and they convey meaning in the form in which they are not real [i.e., as speech sounds].

(§ 8.2.3.5)

[*Objection:*] Also the parts of a word we call stem, suffix, etc. really exist, because that is how they appear, and because they are the causes of the notions that are their meanings.

[*Response:*] It is not like that. Because it is not possible to determine what is their exact form in view of the fact that they are enumerated differently [in different grammars]. In the verb “to be” [*bhū*], the stem is sometimes enumerated as *bhū*, sometimes as *bhava*. Since there is disagreement on how various factors are enumerated—such as the suffix, the substitute, the augment, lengthened and strengthened vowels, elision of a speech sound—what is the correct division into stem and suffix? It is mere imagination to say “this is the stem, this is the suffix.”

Similarly, also the extraction of words from a sentence occurs by means of imagination only. This has been expressed as follows:²⁸

Having extracted them from the sentences, just as one extracts stems, suffixes, and the like.

Moreover, if words were real, their form would be understood to be fixed and not subject to disagreement. However, their form is subject to disagreement. Their form is not fixed, because we observe that there are various collections of speech sounds that can be a noun as well as a verb. That form is therefore imaginary, not real. And one cannot even decide which is the correct reading. For what is the division into words of *kālenadantināgāḥ*? Two meanings are possible, and in both the speech sounds are the same. Should the words be separated like this: “With a black [*kālena*] elephant [*dantinā*] you went [*agāḥ*]”? Or rather “At the time [*kāle*] roar [*nadanti*] the elephants or snakes [*nāgāḥ*]”? Because then their forms are not fixed, the division into words and their meaning is not real.

If, on the other hand, the division into words and their meaning is in accordance with the first sentence meaning that is understood, then what is the use of that separated word or word meaning? They have no use, because the sentence meaning is first understood [and the word meaning is therefore derivative].

We observe, furthermore, that in *dadhyatra*, “curds here” and *madhvatra*, “honey here” we understand the meaning, even though the sounds *dadhi* and *madhu*, which end in *i* and *u* respectively, are not heard. For this reason too the division into words and speech sounds is not real. It is thus established that a sentence without parts is expressive of a sentence meaning without parts.

(§ 8.2.4)

[*Objection:*] You say that there are no speech sounds in words, and no words in sentences. In the same way, there would also be no constituent sentences in complex sentences. Does this mean that complex sentences are not real with respect to chapters, and that chapters are not real with respect to whole treatises? Does it follow that that the essence of all treatises is single, without parts and without a second?

[*Response:*] If you ask about the essence, or if you know it, it is indeed like that. The Sound Brahma is without a second, but it appears in the form of objects because differentiation affects it as a result of memory traces of beginningless ignorance. However, there is nothing called “expressed” that is different from the *expressive*. We therefore take the position that the division between expressed and expressive is imaginary and nothing else, and that ignorance itself is the means to knowledge. The essence, however, is its verbal nature, because speech is never absent in any cognition. As it has been said:

If knowledge were to lose the verbal nature that always accompanies it, light would loose its luster, for its verbal nature makes it conscious.²⁹

(§ 8.2.4.1)

Speech appears divided into three, as *vaikhari*, “articulated speech,” *madhyamā*, “middle speech,” and *paśyantī*, “seeing.” The speech that is a collection of speech sounds such as *g*, etc. that are being manifested by a sequence of inner and outer efforts [*karaṇa/prayatna*] with respect to the points of articulation [*sthāna*], that is called *vaikhari*. They say that *vikhara*³⁰ [from which *vaikhari* is derived] is connection between body and sense organ. That which is in *vikhara* is *vaikhari*. This has been expressed as follows:

The *vaikhari* speech, which uses speech sounds when wind has hit the points of articulation, is based on the activity of the users’ breath.³¹

Speech, on the other hand, that does not manifest the form of speech sounds grasped by the ear but does possess sequence and is mentally conceived, that is called *madhyamā*, “middle speech.” It is mentioned in the following verse:

Merely perceived by the mind, yet following a sequence, the *madhyamā* speech goes beyond the activity of breath.³²

But speech that is without distinctions and sequence, etc. that can be grasped by the ear, and which consists of its own light, viz., consciousness, that is called *paśyanti*, “seeing.” It is mentioned in the following verse:

Because it has no divisions, sequence in the *paśyanti* speech has been completely interrupted. Since its form is an internal light, this subtle speech does not perish.³³

(§ 8.2.5)

Enough now of hanging on to a matter that has already been discussed in excess. The deliberation will not be extended further because it only produces obstacles to the topic at hand. Our purpose in the present context is to show that cognition of the meaning of a sentence is not based on speech sounds and words. Because usage in the world takes place by means of the sentence and the latter’s analysis into parts is not possible, the expressive linguistic element [i.e., the sentence] is without parts, and the meaning it expresses is without parts too. We do not deny that also a constituent sentence that is suitable for use can be a cause of usage. It is a state of ignorance that resides in usage.³⁴ Let ignorance be as it is observed to be: for knowledge all this is useless. Since there is no usage with the help of speech sounds or words, and since speech sounds and words are not used in isolation, their own form is not accepted to be real in the state of knowledge.

It follows that one single sentence *sphoṭa*, in which there is no sequence and whose unreal division into parts is the result of imagination, produces an idea with respect to such a thing as it refers to.

The speech sounds, which are light by nature and whose very position is exclusively due to imagination, do not add any notion to the meaning. Enough therefore of stories about them.

[REJECTION OF THE SPHOṬA]

(§ 9)

To the preceding claims about the existence of the *sphoṭa* we respond as follows: Is the *sphoṭa* known (1) by way of inference, or (2) by force of a perceived cognition?

[Ad (1): The sphoṭa is not known through inference]

(§ 9.1)

It is, to begin with, not possible to ascertain the form of the *sphoṭa* by way of inference, because the cognition of meaning comes about through the instrumentality of a collection of speech sounds whose specific sequence can be observed.

(§ 9.1.1)

[Question:] Has the issue whether speech sounds can be expressive not been discarded because of the alternatives that they can do so neither separately nor jointly, nor in any other way?

[Answer:] No. These are bad alternatives. Separate speech sounds cannot be accepted as being expressive, but when joined they are expressive.

(§ 9.1.1.1)

The objection that there is no totality of speech sounds because they appear in sequence does not hold. We often see that items jointly bring about an effect even though they appear in sequence. Just as three simultaneously existing stones can be observed to jointly hold one cooking pot, in the same way mouthfuls of food that occur in sequence can be seen to jointly produce one single sense of satiety. That satiety will not be the same if a single mouthful is left out. It follows that all those mouthfuls are jointly the cause of satiety. All those mouthfuls cannot be simultaneously eaten. In the same way, when we listen to the recitation of a chapter, the subsections, even though they occur in sequence, can form a whole and can therefore be efficacious, because without even a single one of those subsections the chapter cannot be presented [*āmukhikaraṇa*]. In this way being a whole and having sequence are observed to co-occur in the world.

(§ 9.1.1.2)

Also in the Veda we see that fire sacrifices and so on—which have been combined by way of the copulative compound “Darśa and Pūrṇamāsa” that indicates that the two are mutually connected, and whose sequence should not be shunned because they must be used in both the Darśa and the Pūrṇamāsa—these sacrifices bestow a single prerogative. And we see that, though occurring in sequence, the repetitions concerning the seizing of the Soma cups—“he grasps the cup of Indra and Vayu,” “he grasps the cup of the Ashvins”—jointly bring about the single main action.

There is therefore no contradiction between being a whole and producing a sequence. In this way, the speech sounds, though sequential, will convey a single meaning.

(§ 9.1.1.3)

[Question:] It is no doubt correct to state that mouthfuls and subsections jointly produce sequence, for we see that their effect, such as satiety, is also brought about in sequence. But we do not see that a partial understanding of meaning is brought about corresponding to the number of speech sounds that are being heard in

sequence. Such being the case, what sequential effect do you observe that is brought about as a result of fire sacrifices, etc.?

[Answer:] We claim it is the intermediate unseen effect [*apūrva*], because of the authoritativeness we attribute to sound [which implies that a prescribed action cannot be without result]. It is stated that the production of the highest unseen effect will take place when the whole of intermediate unseen effects has come about.

—Which is the intermediate effect of the sequential moments of activity that are parts of the fire sacrifices in the production of the intermediate unseen effects? Alternatively, what production do we observe? Moreover, before its completion, no effect is ever observed, as claimed by you, nor indeed any process connected with it. For the intermediate unseen effect does not bring about a little bit of heaven, since in that case the meaning of the Veda would not have been brought about. So what is the use of the intermediate unseen effect even though it has been accomplished?

—It cannot be shown that no effect similar to an intermediate unseen effect exists also in the case of speech sounds.

—What effect would that be?

—It would be either the grasping of their own form or the mental trace.

—But these two are not part of the main effect?

—Let it be that they are not part of the main effect; they do contribute to it.

—Talking of part and whole in connection with intermediate and highest unseen effect is problematic.

It should be no fault to talk like this about words, given that it is quite clear that words bring about an effect that we call cognition of the word meanings, which is part of the main effect that is an understanding of the sentence meaning.

(§ 9.1.2)

In the case of speech sounds too, even though no part of their effect when added up in sequence appears with the individual speech sounds—just as no part of the effect of the activity of walking, i.e., reaching a village, appears with the individual steps, and no part of the effect of mouthfuls, i.e., satiety, appears with each individual mouthful, and no part of the effect of subsections, i.e., presentation [*āmukhikaraṇa*], appears with each individual subsection—no part of the effect is created as a result of the production of an initial effect that serves as means and has the form of a mental trace of its own perception; combined speech sounds can therefore produce a sequence. In this process preceding speech sounds, though past, will lend assistance, but the final speech sound is present; this kind of imaginary collection of speech sounds, like the collection of the constituent moments of an activity, will convey the meaning.

(§ 9.1.3)

Alternatively, even though the speech sounds are heard in sequence, a collective recuperative mental cognition comes about that has all the speech sounds as object; that cognition contributes to conveying the meaning. In a sentence like “Devadatta ate a hundred mangoes,” we see a simultaneous mental recuperation, even though the fleeting word meanings are experienced in sequence. One cannot object that this is not a cognition, or that it is doubtful, or in conflict with something else. If you do not accept such a collective cognition, numerous usages that are based on it have to be abandoned.

(§ 9.1.3.1)

This collective cognition is acknowledged to be multiform, since it covers both present and nonpresent speech sounds, its object being earlier speech sounds that are being remembered and the final speech sound that is being experienced. And when also the final speech sound has disappeared, the cognition does not cover any speech sound that is present, it will not be multiform, and it will be the single cause of understanding the meaning. Alternatives between separate and joint expressiveness are therefore out of place.

(§ 9.1.3.2)

[Question:] If also in a collective cognition the speech sounds appear in sequence, then that sequence too will not be different from the notion of each single speech sound that has arisen earlier; wouldn't in that case the speech sounds fail to be the causes of the understanding of meaning, even when sequence has been added? If, however, that cognition appears like a single bunch, then, because sequence is not observed in it, those same speech sounds but in a different sequence would produce an understanding of meaning.

We respond: The collective cognition that appears immediately after the experience of a string of speech sounds with a specific sequence, that is the cause of the understanding of meaning. It is not the mere determination of a bunch. In that case, how could the idea of a different sequence arise? When a bunch appears, there is no question of sequence, so whose sequence could be different or nondifferent? The preceding notions of speech sounds after which the collective cognition occurs appear in a specific sequence, so how could there be the false notion of a different sequence? It follows that there is nothing wrong in saying that the speech sounds, which have a sequence determined by their initial perception³⁵ and are helped by a subsequent collective cognition in which all speech sounds appear, produce the understanding of meaning.

(§ 9.1.4)

Alternatively, let us accept that speech sounds convey meaning as described by the honorable author of the *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*: “the final speech sound accompanied by the mental traces produced by preceding speech sounds.”³⁶

(§ 9.1.4.1)

[Question:] It has been stated that mental traces are not known to produce an understanding of meaning; they are only used with respect to memory.

—Is this a royal command, that only memory can be produced by a mental trace?

—This is not a royal command, but a command of reason. For what is called a mental trace is not something independent that has properties; a mental trace is rather the cause of one's own memory capable of recalling things that have been grasped repetitively or with attention. It is a power that is being postulated by force of its effect, which is memory and nothing else. And a mental trace, which is a power, cannot have another power producing the understanding of meaning. What other effect could there be apart from the effect by force of which that power is postulated? Experience is the cause of the production of a mental trace that is the cause of a memory. We do not perceive a cause of a new mental trace that is the cause of the experience. It follows that the mental trace is not the cause of the understanding of meaning.

[Response:] This cannot be correct. Because we see that a man whose mind has been prepared by the experience of speech sounds understands meaning. For a mental trace is not the power to remember, but a quality of the self also called impression [*vāsanā*]. It is capable of producing not only memory but also understanding of meaning. Experience is everywhere our authority. The capacity of the mental trace to produce memory is known because we see that it does so, and we also see that it produces experience. The speech sounds and their experiences are past. Something else, the essence of sound, is not experienced; this we will explain. And there is the understanding of meaning, which must not be in a state without instrument; since it does not arise without instrument, it hints at the instrument. The instrument of this understanding of meaning is the mental trace, and this is why, like memory, also the understanding of meaning, being its effect, allows us to infer its existence.

[Question:] Wherfrom does such a mental trace arise?

[Response:] This is a stupid question. Because the fact that it is caused by experience is well known. As they say: "This is the character of the thing whose distinct experience lays down the seed of its memory."

[Question:] How can something that is called the seed of memory be a seed of experience?

[Response:] There is no restriction stating that it is the seed of memory only. An experience lays down a corresponding property of the self. Moreover, it has been stated that that experience requires another cause for a difference with respect to the effect to arise; and a difference of effect of this experience is cognized, because we see that there are two effects.

(§ 9.1.4.2)

Alternatively, what is the point of insisting? A mental trace does not produce an understanding of meaning directly, but through the intermediary of memory. There will be cognition of meaning in which speech sounds play an instrumental role: those that are being remembered on account of a mental trace bearing on preceding speech sounds, and those that are being experienced on account of the auditory organ bearing on the final speech sound. What is wrong here?

[Question:] Also memories that correspond to the capacity of mental traces that have been laid down in the sequence of the original experience should arise in sequence, not simultaneously. And this would lead to a shortcoming discussed earlier, viz., that no totality can exist.

[Response:] This is no shortcoming. Sequential experiences that have several speech sounds as objects lay down a single mental trace [*sam-skāra*] that covers the whole sequence, just as a sequence of preparatory processes lead to a single purification [*sam-skāra*] of gold. They do so in such a manner that the mental trace remembers all previously experienced speech sounds in one go.

(§ 9.1.4.3)

Don't object that in this world one mental trace cannot arise out of another mental trace. It can, as is proved in the study of Vedic recitation, given that each of the enunciations is momentary. The final enunciation would not be different from the first enunciation if one were not to accept that the mental trace laid down by each of these enunciations produced another mental trace. Would this mean that even in a man's lifetime no chapter could be presented [*āmukhikṛ*]?

(§ 9.1.4.4)

[Question:] Must we assume such a procedure for the purpose of establishing a single memory, or must we assume that the mental trace is the cause of understanding meaning? Either way we are not free from assuming something invisible, so we do not see what is the inclination toward mental trace and what the disinclination toward the *sphoṭa*, by which we might know: this must be assumed, not that.

[Response:] The author of the *Bhāṣya*, whose name is mentioned with favor, has stated: "if one assumes the sound, one assumes that [i.e., the mental trace] and the sound."³⁷

[Question:] No double assumption is made, for the mental trace is generally known to exist; what assumption is required for that? For unlike you, we have not skipped a property of the mental trace, viz., that it is the single cause of memory.

[Answer:] How can you say that you have not skipped this? You too assume that it is the cause of the single memory that has all the speech sounds as object. The process that leads to the understanding of meaning of the speech sounds is also the

process that leads to the manifestation of the *sphoṭa*. Assuming those speech sounds, you assume a sound that is different from those. In this way, skipping the belief accepted by those who accept both kinds of mental trace, viz., that it produces memory, we merely say in addition that it produces understanding of meaning. You, though, have elevated everything anew from the beginning, maintaining that a new and different sound exists, that it is different from its speech sounds, and that it is devoid of parts. How can you deny that you have made an excess of assumptions?

This has been given expression in the following verse:

For you there would be existence and difference as well as abandoning of parts,
in addition. It is therefore a real effort for you to understand the meaning.³⁸

(§ 9.1.4.5.1)

It has been said that the essence of the *sphoṭa*, manifested at the very moment of cognition of the first speech sound, becomes the object of an ever more perfect understanding by subsequent cognitions, as in the case of the essence of a jewel. That is a misstatement. For in the case of the jewel there is occasion for subsequent cognitions to grasp more subtle specific parts that had not been the object of the first cognition, because a jewel has parts. The *sphoṭa*, however, is partless like a speech sound. Its specific form is therefore manifested by the very first speech sound; what is there for the other speech sounds to do? The manifestation of its parts is not possible, as little as it is possible in the case of a partless speech sound. As it has been said:

Even with a small effort the mind grasps a sound that has been pronounced,
or it does not grasp it at all; a speech sound is manifest as a whole.³⁹

A second example was cited earlier: A chapter or a stanza, though grasped at the first subsection, becomes more clearly circumscribed with the practice of other subsections; so also the *sphoṭa*, manifested by the first speech sound, manifests itself ever more perfectly with the other speech sounds. This example is not appropriate either, because you cannot maintain that stanzas and chapters have no parts. Some parts, whether speech sounds or individual words, may not appear clearly in the first cognition but will become manifest in a subsequent cognition that repetition of the subsection has rendered perfect. The *sphoṭa*, on the other hand, is partless like the speech sound, so how could its cognition gain perfection? It follows that this is not an appropriate example either.

(§ 9.1.4.5.2)

Those who think that the *sphoṭa* cannot contain the notion of speech sounds because it is manifested by noise, do not see things correctly either. Because the cognition of a sound does not arise from noises after we have discarded the cognition

of speech sounds. And because meaning is not understood from a sound in which the division into speech sounds is not perceived on account of the wish to speak extremely fast.

It has been objected that noises, when they form an individual sound, present an unreal division into speech sounds in accordance with the points of articulation and vocal instruments, just as swords, when reflecting a face, may present a dark color or the like [even though the face concerned does not have that dark color]. This objection is not correct, because there is no reason to accept the unreality of those speech sounds. For speech sounds are cognized by an unobstructed mind, and no sound that is different from them is cognized. If you were to say that what is not cognized [the sound] exists, and the things that are cognized [the speech sounds] do not exist, you might as well say that the hare does not exist, whereas its horn does.⁴⁰ This is not therefore a path capable of removing the fault of too many assumptions. It has therefore been correctly said: "if one assumes the sound, one assumes that and the sound."⁴¹ It follows that the sequence that must be accepted in order to know the *sphoṭa* must be accepted in order to know the meaning. So what is the use of the *sphoṭa*?

(§ 9.1.5)

Others declare that the speech sounds, whose existence follows their observation, convey the meaning. That is not desired here. Because speech sounds are momentary, their existence cannot follow their observation. In any case, speech sounds convey meaning in accordance with what one has learned, so that one accepts the meaning as one has heard it before. This has been expressed in the stanza "As many speech sounds of a certain kind . . ."⁴²

With regard to the opposite opinion "which speech sounds, how many, of which kind?",⁴³ here the cognitions should be asked, not poor us. This is nonsense.

(§ 9.1.5.1)

It has been claimed that even speech sounds used in reversed sequence should convey meaning, or that the sequence itself should be the *sphoṭa*. That is not acceptable either. For sequence is a portion of time, and time cannot be the *sphoṭa*. Nor can sequence independently convey meaning, or reside in a meaning; sequence depends on speech sounds. In this regard it has been said:

When both sequence and speech sounds are there, it must be known that there is that which is expressive of meaning.

Do the speech sounds possess sequence, or does the sequence reside in the speech sounds?

Should it be proved by reason that sequence is subordinate to things that have sequence?

We accept that it is merely a characteristic of them, not something different.⁴⁴

For this reason, if speech sounds are observed to convey a meaning in whatever sequence, they will convey that meaning in that sequence; meaning is therefore not known from the *sphoṭa*. It is therefore settled that neither inference from the effect nor implication [*arthāpatti*] is capable of proving the *sphoṭa*.

(§ 9.2)

It has also been said that the usage “we know the meaning from sound” is testimony in favor of the *sphoṭa*. This claim is empty. Since the expressiveness of speech sounds has been validated in the manner indicated above, such usage is also possible when that position is taken.

[*Objection:*] How can such usage be possible? The sound “sound,” to begin with, does not designate the mental trace, for this is not how the sound “sound” is known in the world. And it is difficult to understand how we learn a word that refers to an expressive mental trace. For one’s own understanding from a sound is preceded by someone else’s understanding, and it is not possible to grasp a mental trace in someone else that produces a cognition in someone else again, because it is invisible. And if the sound “sound” refers to speech sounds, it must refer to them one by one, or it must refer to a collection of speech sounds. If the sound “sound” refers to each speech sound separately, then there cannot be understanding of meaning from sound [in the singular], because a single speech sound cannot be expressive. But the sound “sound” cannot refer to a collection either, because it is a word that relates to a universal. If “sound” is used with dual or plural endings with reference to individuals, no word that relates to a universal can be used with a singular ending, since it is in apposition with those individuals. We cannot say “the man who is Devadatta and Yajnadatta,” or “the tree that is a Dhava, a Khadira, and a Palasha”; nor should we say “the sound that is *g* plus *au* plus *h*” [i.e., *gauḥ*].

Don’t counter that the sound “sound” can give expression to a collection the way the sound “forest” does, as in “the trees are the forest,” not as a word that relates to a universal. This does not work, because we observe that in such cases a difference from the elements that make up the collection is specified, as in “a forest of mango trees,” “a forest of monkey trees.” No difference is indicated in the case of the sound “sound,” because we do not see expressions like “the sound of *g*, *au*, and *h*.”

One might say that the sound “forest” is used as being nondifferent from its constituents, as in “the mango trees are the forest,” so that one could also say that *g*, etc. are the sound, but this cannot be done: it is possible to use the expression “the

mango trees are the forest” as a consequence of the metaphorical imposition of non-difference on the whole and its parts, given that it is well known that “forest,” etc. are sounds designating collections, on account of the fact that they designate differences but are not used with respect to each constituent individual. On the other hand, no indication of difference is ever observed to be designated as in “a sound of *g*, etc.,” whereas its use with respect to individual speech sounds can be observed. The sound “sound” cannot therefore be a word designating a collection. The statement that we know the meaning from sound is therefore in any case impossible for those who hold that the speech sounds are the sound.

(§ 9.2.1)

[*Response:*] To this we respond: What is this “possible” and “impossible” meant to prove? What if something is possible? And what if it were not possible? Reality is not based on worldly statements.

[*Objection:*] But don’t the authors of authoritative treatises use words in that same way, as in “he expresses an activity with a verb”?⁴⁵

[*Response:*] We cannot accept something not based on a means of knowledge, even on the basis of the usage of the authors of authoritative treatises. And what kind of means of knowledge is “worldly statement”? Inference has been rejected, and perception too will be rejected. And no other means of knowledge is applicable to prove the existence of the *sphoṭa*. This conceit of a *sphoṭa* by examining worldly statements is therefore out of place.

(§ 9.2.2)

Moreover, this worldly statement (“we know the meaning from sound”) is not completely unsuitable on the alternative that one accepts the speech sounds as expressive. It is fully suitable if the final speech sound accompanied by mental traces produced by preceding speech sounds is expressive. Because that final speech sound is sound and single.

(§ 9.2.3)

There is nothing wrong on the alternative that that speech sound, along with the cognition of the preceding collection, is expressive. For the sound “sound” is not used alongside sounds indicative of distinction, as in “we know the meaning from the sound, viz., *g*, etc.”; the word referring to the universal by itself, with a singular ending, is not in contradiction with this, even though there are many speech sounds.

(§ 9.2.4)

What is more, the statement “we know the meaning from sound” is all the more impossible on the position that one accepts the *sphoṭa*. Speakers are not seen to apply the sound “sound” to the *sphoṭa* as they do to speech sounds, because the stem has no meaning.

(§ 9.3.1)

“Being a cause for knowing meaning” as definition of “sound” is not correct, because it would include too much, viz., smoke, etc. which, though causes for knowing meaning, are not sounds.⁴⁶

[Ad (2): The sphota is not perceived]

Through a reflection on its temporal progress, the following definition of “sound” has been proposed: “being a cause of knowledge grasped by the ear.” This definition is not valid for the *sphota*, because it is not the object of auditory cognition.

The fact of being grasped by the ear is all by itself capable of excluding other things, so that alone should do as definition; so what is the point of including both “being a cause of knowledge” and “grasped by the ear” in the definition? And only speech sounds are grasped by the ear, nothing else. It follows that only speech sounds are sound. This has been expressed in the following stanza:

Only speech sounds, independent of each other, are known by auditory awareness according to their true form, not things that precede or follow.⁴⁷

(§ 9.3.1.1)

You might object that the definition of the sound as “the fact of being grasped by the ear” also applies to “existence” and so on, but this is not correct, because what is intended is determination by the ear only. You might protest that this determination [“by the ear only”] is not established, because sounds are grasped by both the ear and the mind [*manas*], but once again you would be wrong, because the determination is for the sake of excluding something similar. This expression [“by the ear only”] excludes the eye, etc., but not the mind. If you think that this definition would include too much, viz., the universal soundness, you make a mistake, because the object defined, while having a universal, depends on specific features that must be observed in sequence. Nor does this definition include more than is intended, such as the noise of thunder, because such noises are accepted to be “sounds.” This has been stated by the author of the *Bhāṣya*: “Sounds are of two kinds: speech sounds and general noise.”⁴⁸

(§ 9.3.1.2)

It has already been stated that the feature of conveying meaning cannot be a definition of “sound,” because, since a sound in the form of a speech sound, without known connection with other speech sounds, does not convey meaning, a speech sound would not be a sound. And if that connection were to be known at another moment, that same speech sound would then be a sound. This definition therefore does not stand up.

There is the further claim that, when one examines the nature of a sound, there is the risk that the things designated by that sound, whether universals, qualities, or actions, will be themselves “sounds” and that steps must be taken to discard this risk. We do not know what this claim is based on, because these things are being excessively analyzed.⁴⁹

It follows that the worldly statement “we learn the meaning from sound” only fits the upholders of speech sounds, not the upholders of the *sphoṭa*, because a sound is what is grasped by the ear and the *sphoṭa* is not grasped by the ear. This has now been established.

(§ 9.3.2.1)

[Objection:] Why is it not accepted that the *sphoṭa* is grasped by the ear? After all, a cognition of the form “this is a word,” “this is a sentence,” in which the ear is instrumental and which has one single form, is individually experienced by listeners. As stated before, speech sounds should not be its support.

[Response:] This is not correct. In this world, the notion “cow” that arises in connection with each individual cow, Shabaleya, etc., takes as object a form that is common to all those individuals. It is accepted to be the universal cowness. In the same way, if the notion “this is a word,” “that is a word” or “this is a sentence,” “that is a sentence” were to arise in connection with each speech sound, as in the case of a universal, then we would accept the word and the sentence as some kind of form that is present in all speech sounds. Cognition, however, is not like this.

(§ 9.3.2.2)

When one sees a cloth for the first time, a cognition of the whole arises whose object is the cloth, which is the effect produced by the threads that are its parts, without one seeing those parts. In the same way, if the notion “word” or “sentence” were independent of our grasping each single speech sound that is being pronounced in sequence, we should accept the word and the sentence to have one single shape, like the whole that is the cloth. However, this is not what happens. The word is not produced by speech sounds the way a cloth is produced by threads.

The fact that the notion “cow” or “earth” or “boat” is seen to arise all of a sudden and without inner distinctions is due to the condition that these words have but one vowel. In words like “Devadatta” that contain different vowels, the grasping of different syllables is experienced as spread over time. In notions like “cloth,” its parts do not appear separately. A word or a sentence does not therefore appear as undivided, like a whole or a universal.

(§ 9.3.2.3)

[Objection:] The notion of the *sphoṭa* is the notion “sound”?

—Does this mean that the *sphoṭa* is identical with the universal soundness?

—Certainly not. We are speaking of the *sphoṭa*, whereas you speak of the universal soundness. Where, on seeing one individual, there is a connection with another one, we speak of a universal, as when grasping the cow called Shabaleya there is a connection with the cow called Bahuleya. In the present case, on the other hand, when the sound *g* is grasped, there is no connection with the sound *au*;⁵⁰ this is not therefore a universal. But the appearance of a single form has the essence of the sound as object, and the essence of the sound is the *sphoṭa*.

[Response:] Yes, out of fear for this, certain people, alarmed by the *sphoṭa*, reject the known universal that is soundness. This panic is, however, out of place. For the *sphoṭa* is not soundness. The notion “sound” is associated with every speech sound. But the speech sounds are not the *sphoṭa*.⁵¹ This universal of sound is the basis of the notion “sound,” not the *sphoṭa*. It has been determined earlier that connection with another individual is not the cause of knowing a universal. That is why the *sphoṭa* does not appear even where there is the notion “sound,” as it does in the notion “word” or “sentence.” This is why he says in truth that this notion “word” or “sentence,” based as it is on the fact of producing a single effect, has the same value as the notion “forest” or “army.” There is no need to have no confidence in notions of universals, etc., because the difference has been demonstrated.

(§ 9.3.2.4)

[Objection:] The objection could be raised that there is mutual dependency in the notion of nondifference based on the fact of producing a single effect, as follows: the notion “word” or “sentence” is preceded by the cognition of a single meaning, and the cognition of the single meaning is preceded by the notion “word” or “sentence.”

[Response:] This objection is not correct. We stated that cognition of meaning is produced by speech sounds that are remembered or experienced; it is not preceded by the determination of an undivided word. So how could there be mutual dependency?

(§ 9.3.2.5)

—The objector might say that without singleness of word or sentence, how could there be a single cognition of the meaning of word or sentence?

—This is an extremely foolish proposition. Distinctions or nondistinctions in cognitions follow the distinctions or nondistinctions in the objects of those cognitions, not the distinctions or nondistinctions of their means. Even distinct means—such as the eye, light, and the internal organ—can jointly produce a notion that grasps an object that is without distinctions. Let therefore the word meaning be single, because the notion of the word meaning is single, given that the word meaning is the object of the notion; but the cause, i.e., the word, is not single. Moreover, let the

sentence meaning be single, because the notion of the sentence meaning is single; but the sentence, which is the cause that turns many sequentially occurring speech sounds into a collection, is not single. This is the feature that conveys one single meaning, but it does not communicate that word and sentence are without divisions. As is well known, the grammarians think that words and sentences are also without division, but they are deceived. Their confusion is that sound meaning is not different from sound, because that difference has been established with the help of strong means of knowledge. The superimposition onto the sound of its meaning is not accepted, because it contradicts cognition.

Enough has been said. It has been established that the *sphoṭa* is not known through perception either.

(§ 9.4)

[Question:] The notion of the sentence meaning is without divisions, and the division or nondivision of the notion is in agreement with the division or nondivision of the object. Does it follow that the sentence meaning itself is without divisions?

[Response:] Yes, it does. The sentence meaning is without divisions, but this does not mean that it is without parts: also things like a cloth, though without divisions, do have parts. The claim that it is without parts is made totally without skill in conscious awareness.

The worry “are there parts or are there not” is completely inappropriate. We should leave it to the wise to worry whether something is without parts or not.

There is cognition of parts because the distinction between a word and its meaning clearly appears in each sentence, and because sentence and sentence meaning whose division into parts is accepted do not appear.⁵² If you object that that cognition is mistaken, you are wrong, because nothing stands in its way. Moreover, you will have to specify what underlies that error. It is not similarity, because we do not know what is similar to what. If the main parts were well known, it would be understood that there would be error where that similarity does not prevail, or where it is absent. But such is not the case. Since preceding sentences have no divisions, the parts “man” and “lion” are recognized as being experienced separately in the expression “man-lion.” In the same way we must allow the existence of parts in some sentences here accepted. Also in a picture different colors, such as green and vermillion, can be recognized; in a drink there can be a taste of cardamom, in a musical scale various notes—called *ṣadja*, *r̥ṣabha*, *gāndhāra*, etc.—are known. These are not examples of things that have no divisions.

—Let the notions of pictures, etc. then be examples.

—Right, we accept that the notion of the sentence meaning is without divisions, because all notions, being without shape, are without parts. But the object of a notion

does have parts, whether in the example or in what the example is meant to illustrate. It is therefore not correct to say that sentence and sentence meaning are without divisions.

(§ 9.4.1)

[*Objection:*] It has been said that from the usage of elders only an understanding of the connection between sentence and sentence meaning can come about; not [of a connection] between a word and its meaning, because there is no usage by means of isolated words.

[*Response:*] That too is incorrect. The learning that takes place on the basis of the sentence reaches all the way to the word meaning. In this way it is possible that someone whose mind has been trained in words and their meanings arrives, on the basis of even a sentence composed by a recent poet, at a cognition of the sentence meaning. Because the number of sentences is endless, it is not possible to learn the meaning of each of them, because of a variety of composition that depends on the adding and removing of words.⁵³ That will not be required. But otherwise [if we did not learn words and their meanings] that would certainly be required.

The claim that the above is an untruth because words are not used in isolation, is itself untrue. Because if it were true, then also the claim that a constituent sentence inside a longer sentence is not used would be true. If you respond that a constituent sentence is used in its own meaning, we counter that also a single word is sometimes used in its own meaning. Where the meaning of other words is obtained through semantic, contextual, and other considerations, people pronounce it in isolation as long as those other words are not yet known.

Determining the forms of the speech sounds is also fruitful when reading written books and so on.

(§ 9.4.2)

Alternatively, let words and speech sounds not be fruitful. Even so you cannot deny their existence in their own right, just as you cannot deny the existence even of those parts of a chariot that do not have the capacity to carry out the purpose of a chariot. If you object that those chariot parts are good for something else, we answer: words and speech sounds will also be good for something else. If you say that those parts of the chariot carry out a small portion of the purpose of the chariot, we respond that also words carry out a portion of the purpose of the sentence. Moreover, some speech sounds have meaning. We conclude that words and speech sounds are not nonexistent.

(§ 9.4.3)

[*Objection:*] It has also been stated that just as a sentence has words, and just as words have speech sounds, so speech sounds too should have further parts.

[Response:] This is new panditry. For the fact that a jar has parts does not imply that also atoms must have parts. Or you might say that because atoms have no parts, a jar should have no parts either. Observation and nonobservation establish things as existing. Something is as it is observed; it is not as it is not observed. The parts of sentences and words are observed, but not the parts of speech sounds. This has been well stated in the following stanza:

With a small effort the mind grasps sound that has been pronounced; it either does not grasp it at all, or it grasps the whole speech sound clearly.⁵⁴

It is therefore a puerile objection to maintain that speech sounds must have parts, the alternative being that words and sentences have none.

(§ 9.4.4)

It follows that sentence and sentence meaning have parts, because we see that the meaning is added to or reduced respectively by the addition or removal of words. By the same logic it must be understood that the parts of words—viz., stems, suffixes, etc.—are real, not merely based on imagination. In *vṛkṣam* “the tree” [accusative]—*vṛkṣena* “by the tree” [instrumental], the meaning of the suffix differs, while both words are in agreement with the meaning of the stem [“tree”]; in *vṛkṣam* “the tree” [accusative]—*ghaṭam* “the jar” [accusative] the meaning of the stem differs, while both words are in agreement with the meaning of the suffix. It is determined that in such cases, the meaning that accompanies a specific sound unit is the meaning of that sound unit. So how could one say that these divisions are unreal?

[Objection:] It has been stated that in words such as *kūpa*, “well,” *sūpa*, “broth,” and *yūpa*, “sacrificial post,” there is agreement as far as speech sounds are concerned, but not in meanings. Agreement in terms of speech sounds is not therefore a cause of understanding the meaning.

[Response:] This is inappropriate. For no notion is produced that has not already arisen through agreement and difference, so that one might suspect it to arise in words like *kūpa*. When, however, a cognition has been established and the extent of the expressive part has been determined, agreement and difference are used; it is not appropriate to forcibly impose correspondence between meaning and speech sounds, though seen in one place, somewhere else where it is not seen.

(§ 9.4.5)

The production of confusion by way of a line of ants that accompanies a cloud of dust is not attractive either, because we determine that such a line is not the cause of such a notion when we see a line of ants without a cloud of dust. Even when there can be confusion with respect to each animal—as in the case of elephants, camels,

or horses—because the general form of a specific living beings does not go away, the cloud of dust is understood to have it as cause.

(§ 9.4.6)

[*Objection:*] It has been said that also elsewhere it is like that, as in “horse ear” [the name of a tree], because the meanings of the parts are dropped.

[*Response:*] That does not square up either. For the term “horse ear,” even though referring to a different thing because the meanings of the parts have disappeared, because the expressive power of the parts is played down for semantic and contextual reasons, is not completely without the meanings of its parts, because we are aware of those meanings in other usages in which the terms “horse” and “ear” occur either separately or together. They are separately used in “mount the horse” and “put the ring in the ear.” And when one wishes to convey “the ear of a horse,” the expression “horse ear,” with the constituent terms used together, is seen to occur without loss of those specific meanings. The parts of expressions like “horse ear” are not therefore completely without meaning.

(§ 9.4.7)

The idea that a fixed division of words into stems and suffixes is not possible because of disagreement as to how they are enumerated is not acceptable either. We follow only the true division into stems and suffixes accepted by Panini, in accordance with the grammar of the three Munis [i.e., Panini, Katyayana, and Patanjali] on the authority of the statements of the [sequentially] more reliable sages. Moreover, in general all the commentators are in agreement as to how much counts as stem, how much as suffix. There is only disagreement about infixes and the like, and that is insignificant. Authorities are therefore not divided by merely assuming parts as stems and suffixes, because these stems and suffixes are ultimately real.

(§ 9.4.8)

[*Objection:*] It has been maintained that the knowledge of the division into words is difficult in expressions like *kālenadantināgāḥ*, because the speech sounds in the two ways this expression can be analyzed are the same.⁵⁵

[*Response:*] This claim is without substance, because there can be means to understand the division into words, such as the accent, tradition, or something else. The expression *sarāmaḥ* has one accent, etc. when it is a verb, and another one when it is a nominal word.⁵⁶ And even when it is a nominal expression, if it is two words, combining *sa* [he] and *rāma* [Rama], it has one shape [“he is Rama”]. And when it is one word meaning “he is with a beautiful woman,” it has another shape, conveying the sense “all is easy for those engaged in specific exertions.” Separating the parts of words therefore is not impossible.

(§ 9.4.9)

It has been stated that in *dadhy atra*, “curds here,” and *madhv atra*, “honey here,” we understand the meaning of the words *dadhi*, “curds,” and *madhu*, “honey,” even though we do not observe those words in their correct form. Some respond to this that there is nothing wrong either, because these very words [*dadhi* and *madhu*] have been lightly modified and we recognize them.

Alternatively, since *dadhy* and *madhv*, ending in *y* and *v*, like *dadhi* and *madhu* that end in *i* and *u*, can be correct when referring to another object, in the same way the two words ending in *y* and *v* will convey meaning because they have been learned by people who know this.

Let this be enough of such talk based on false hope.

(§ 9.4.10)

—Why do elders put so much effort into learning words if they are not real?

—One might answer that something unreal can become the means of attaining something real, but this is not correct: such things are not observed to take place. Because the example given of unreal snake bites that are presumably the cause of real swooning are no such thing: like poison, the fear of poison can be the cause of that effect. Snake bites that are unreal because they have not been seen can yet be the cause of real swooning. What is called apprehension is a state of mind. And you cannot maintain that a state of mind cannot be a cause. And the state of mind is not nonexistent.⁵⁷

(§ 9.4.11)

—It is said that written syllables, though not real, convey real meaning.

—That too is the talk of an ignorant person. To begin with, the squiggles that make up writing are by themselves real, and for him whose mind has been trained by the instruction of a strict teacher, they are instrumental in making him infer speech sounds. As a result of grasping the connection in this manner, meaning is understood from speech sounds that are inferred from squiggles. It is therefore not true that the means to arrive at something real is itself unreal.

Saying that this squiggle is the sound *g* is an error based on the fact that both refer to the same, because of the metaphor of identity applied to the sign and that of which it is a sign. For example, barley flour measured in kilos is referred to by the word “kilo.”⁵⁸ In the same way a squiggle can be called *g*, because the speech sound *g* is inferred from that squiggle. If this does not please you, also someone ignorant of writing would understand meaning from that squiggle, because the squiggles that are not speech sounds are there. However, this is not how it is. It follows that the understanding of meaning from written squiggles is preceded by the inference of speech sounds. Sequence is not marked, because the subject has been learned by

heart, and time is subtle. Otherwise no understanding could be derived from it. It has therefore been established that sentence and sentence meaning are not partless, because words and their meanings are real.

On the claim that through rejecting word and speech sound as part of the sentence one engages in proving the Sound Brahma, which is free from duality, we will make an extensive statement further down.

(§ 9.4.12)

It has furthermore been claimed that speech is threefold. That they do not accept either. Only one speech, viz., *vaikharī* speech, is well known in the world.

The *madhyamā* speech is described as being an inner conversation. It is a state of mind, it is not a division of speech. The mind, while delineating the expressed or that which is expressive, does not abandon its own form, which is consciousness.

Paśyanti, on the other hand, is another name for a mind without conceptual constructs. For consciousness, which has the form of light, is never speech. When it arises and illuminates its object, either it calls up speech or not. Consciousness without speech is never dumb.

(§ 9.5)

Let us now leave aside this discussion of Sound Brahma. We return to the subject under consideration:

These speech sounds, having been taken as object by the mind that turns to them, become words or sentences. Only the speech sounds are expressive.

No other sound (such as the *sphoṭa*) appears in hearing when communication takes place. No other sound, struck by fate, is capable of creating a notion of the meaning to be conveyed.⁵⁹

2.3. BUDDHIST RESPONSES TO THE CORRESPONDENCE PRINCIPLE

The correspondence principle was discussed in the introduction above in connection with Nagarjuna and other thinkers (§§ I.2 & I.5). We will here consider some passages in which it plays a role, beginning with Nagarjuna's main work, the *Fundamental Verses of the Middle Path* (*Mūlamadhyamakārikā*). The following choice of verses makes use of the principle.

As is well known, depending upon causes, something arises. How is it that they are not considered noncauses as long as nothing arises from them? (1.5)

A cause of something nonexistent makes no sense; a cause of something that exists makes no sense either. Which nonexisting thing has a cause? And what could be the purpose of a cause for something that exists? (1.6)

If something, even though nonexistent, can come forth out of causes, why then does the result not come forth from noncauses? (1.12)

No material form is observed that is separate from the cause of material form; moreover, no cause of material form is seen that is separated from material form. (4.1)

If there were material form that is separate from the cause of material form, material form would be without cause. But there is nothing, nowhere, that is without cause. (4.2)

If the cause of material form were to be separate from material form, the cause would be without effect. But there is no cause without effect. (4.3)

When material form is present, the cause of material form cannot be there. When material form is not present, the cause of material form cannot be there either. (4.4)

If there existed anywhere something unarisen, it could arise. Since no such thing exists, what is it that arises? (7.17)

The production of something that exists already is not possible; the production of something that does not exist is not possible either; nor is there production of something that both exists and does not exist. This has been shown earlier. (7.20)

The destruction of an existing entity is not possible. (7.30ab)

The destruction of a nonexisting entity is not possible either, just as there is no cutting off of a second head. (7.31)

An existing agent does not make something that exists. A nonexisting agent does not aim at making something nonexistent. (8.1)

Something nonexistent is not made by something existent; something existent is not made by something nonexistent. (8.8ab)

For reasons explained earlier, an existing agent does not make something that is nonexistent or both existent and nonexistent. (8.9)

For reasons explained earlier, a nonexisting agent does not make something that is existent or both existent and nonexistent. (8.10)

If present and future depend upon the past, present and future will exist in the past. (19.1)

If, on the other hand, present and future do not exist in the past, how could present and future depend on it? (19.2)

However, present and future not depending upon the past is not possible. It follows that present and future time do not exist. (19.3)

A thing is not produced out of itself; it is certainly not produced out of something else. It is not produced out of itself and something else. Out of what is it produced? (21.3)

In reading these verses it is helpful to keep statements such as “the potter makes a pot” or “the pot comes into being” in mind. In the situations they describe there is no pot. This then gives rise to many of the questions raised in these verses. Similar questions can be raised with respect to statements such as “the pot perishes,” which again describes a situation in which there is no pot.

The *Mahāvibhāṣā* (*Great Exposition*) is a Sarvastivada text, composed in Kashmir during the early centuries of the Common Era, that has only been preserved in Chinese translation. It contains the following passage:

When future conditioned *dharma*s arise, do they arise being already arisen, or do they arise being not yet arisen? There are difficulties with both views. How so? On the first view, why do they not continue to arise? On the second, how do you deny that the conditioned *dharma*s exist [or begin to exist] after not existing?

Here is the reply. —One can say: They arise being already arisen, because there are causes and conditions. That is to say: all the *dharma*s possess their own nature already, for each future *dharma* resides in its essential character. Possessing an own nature already, they are said to be already arisen: it is not the case that their own nature arises from causes and conditions. Being subsequently produced through the coming together of causes and conditions, they are said to arise.

They arise being not yet arisen, because there are causes and conditions. That is to say: future *dharma*s are said to be unarisen, for it is in virtue of causes and conditions that they actually arise.

When future conditioned *dharma*s arise, do they arise already existing or not existing? There are difficulties with both views. On the first, what is the point of their arising, since their being [*svarūpa*] already exists? On the second, one will have to say that the *dharma*s, after not existing, exist: the doctrine of Sarvastivada is then overthrown.

Here is the reply. —One can say that the *dharma*s arise already existing.

You avoid the second difficulty, but how is the first to be resolved?

As follows. —The own nature of the *dharma* exists, but not its activity. Encountering causes and conditions, the *dharma* gives rise to activity.⁶⁰

The end of this passage is reminiscent of verse 7.17 of Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Verses of the Middle Path*, cited above ("If there existed anywhere something unarisen, it could arise. Since no such thing exists, what is it that arises?"), and there can be no doubt that both confront the same difficulty. They do not, however, offer the same solution. Whereas Nagarjuna's questions throw doubt on the very possibility of something coming into being, the *Mahāvibhāṣā* claims that the *dharmas* exist already in some form (through their own nature) before they come into being.

The following is a discussion between Vasubandhu, the author of the *Commentary on the Treasury of Scholasticism* (*Abhidharmakośabhbāṣya*) and a "follower of the word" (*śābdika*), about the correct interpretation of the Buddhist technical expression *pratīyasamutpāda*, "dependent arising." Vasubandhu proposes the interpretation "arising having attained," but the follower of the word does not agree with this:

[Vasubandhu:] What is the meaning of *pratīya-samutpāda*? In *pratīya* (i.e., *prati-i-t-ya*), the preverb *prati* means "attaining." The verbal root *i* means "to go." Because the meaning of the verbal root is modified by force of the preverb, and because *ya* is the suffix of the gerund, *pratīya* means "having attained." In *samutpāda*, the verbal root *pad* means "to be." When preceded by the preverbs *sam* and *ut*, it means "to arise." *pratīya-samutpāda* is therefore "arising having attained dependence."

[Opponent:] This is not possible. For the gerund suffix is prescribed with regard to the earlier action when one single agent carries out two actions,⁶¹ as in: "having bathed, he eats." But before the arising there is nothing that, having first attained dependence, subsequently arises. Nor is there any action that has no agent. This has been expressed in the following verse:

If you say that it attains dependence before it arises, the response is that this is not possible because it does not exist. If you say that it attains dependence and arises at the same time, the response is that the gerund is not justified because it is prescribed for an earlier time.

[Vasubandhu:] Nothing wrong here. One should ask the follower of the word [*śābdika*] what he thinks of the following questions. In what state does a *dharma* arise, present or future? If a present *dharma* arises, how can it be present if it has not arisen? If there is arising of something that has already arisen, there will be infinite regress. If, on the other hand, a future *dharma* arises, how can something nonexistent be the agent, or how can there be an action without an agent? It follows that in the state in

which a *dharma* arises, it attains dependence. And in what state does it arise? It is the future, i.e., turned toward arising. In that state it attains dependence.

The separation of agent and action of the follower of the word—distinguishing between that which becomes, i.e., the agent, and becoming, i.e., the action—is not established. We do not observe a becoming, i.e., an action, that is different from the thing that becomes. There is therefore no deception in conventional expressions.⁶²

For Vasubandhu “there is no deception in conventional expressions,” for he knows that conventional expressions do not correspond to the deeper reality that hides behind the surface of our common-sense world. This is the response he offers to the difficulties arising from the correspondence principle.



CHAPTER THREE

The Grammarian Patanjali

3.1. PATANJALI ON THE EXISTENCE OF WORDS

Patanjali expresses awareness of the difficulties resulting from the nonsimultaneous occurrence of speech sounds under *sūtra* 1.4.109. This *sūtra* introduces the notion of *samhitā*, “junction of speech sounds.” Here he proposes to understand *samhitā* to mean “succession not separated by time”:

Alternatively, we’ll define *samhitā*, “junction of speech sounds,” to mean “sequence not separated by time.”

[Vārttika:] If you say that *samhitā*, “junction of speech sounds,” means “sequence not separated by time,” then nothing will be joined, because there is no earlier and later.

If you say that *samhitā*, “junction of speech sounds,” means “sequence not separated by time,” then the name *samhitā* will not apply, because there is no earlier and later. For there is no sequence of speech sounds.

What is the reason?

[Vārttika:] Because speech resides in each separate speech sound, and because speech sounds disappear as soon as they are pronounced.

Speech resides in each separate speech sound. One does not pronounce two speech sounds simultaneously. In the word *gauḥ*, “cow,” as long as speech resides in *g*, it does not reside in *au* or in *ḥ*. As long as it resides in *au*, it does not reside in *g* or *ḥ*. As long as it resides in *ḥ*, it does not reside in *g* or *au*. Because they disappear as soon as they are pronounced. A speech sound does indeed disappear as soon as it is pronounced.

Then another speech sound is used. One speech sound is not the companion of another one.

Having made all movements in his mind, the wise agent whose mind reaches the objects of the senses, having seen the things that are to be expressed with the help of words, should produce the sequence in his mind.¹

The sequence of sounds is the object of the mind.² In this world, a man who thinks before he acts, sees: “In this meaning that word must be used, in this word first this speech sound, then that one, and then that other one.”³

The following passage presents some of Patanjali’s reflections:

What is the word in “cow”? Is it the object that possesses a dewlap, a tail, a hump, hoofs, and horns?

The reply is no. That is what is called the substance.

Is it the shaking, the movement, the winking of the eye?

The reply is no. That is what is called its activity.

Is it the white, blue, black, brown, or grey?

The reply is no. That is what is called its quality.

Is it the general notion that remains undivided when the things are divided, uncut when the things are cut?

The reply is no. That is its form.

What, then, is the word?

The word is that through which, when pronounced, the notion of objects possessing a dewlap, a tail, a hump, hoofs, and horns arises.

Alternatively, sound that has a known meaning in the world is called “word.”⁴

Here Patanjali states that word is sound. But he also holds that the word is eternal, as we will see in section 3.2.

One might think that words are nothing but sound, but that similar sound patterns are repeated, so that one has the impression that the same word is used again and again from beginningless time. The word would then be eternal in this specific sense. This may not have been the way Patanjali thought about words. A number of passages in his *Great Commentary* suggest something different altogether. In the following passage he contradicts his earlier statement. Sound is here rather a quality of the word. The word itself is said to be the *sphoṭa*, a term that will be used again by more recent authors:

The *sphoṭa* is the word, sound is a quality of the word. How is that? Like the beating of a drum. Having beaten a drum, one person can go twenty steps, another one thirty, a third one forty steps. The *sphoṭa* in these three cases is of the same length; the increase in length is due to sound.

Words have both sound and *sphoṭa*. Sound is perceived as short or long by some. Both sound and *sphoṭa* belong naturally to the word.⁵

The context of this passage suggests that the “word” here discussed includes—perhaps even primarily or even exclusively—individual speech sounds. But elsewhere Patanjali distinguishes between words and speech sounds, and states that both are eternal:

Words are eternal, and in eternal words there must be speech sounds that are lasting, unchangeable, not subject to loss, additions, or modifications.⁶

Patanjali’s remarks, as can be seen from these passages, are sometimes obscure. One reason may well be that Patanjali does not normally show an interest in ontological questions.

3.2. PATANJALI ON THE ETERNALITY OF WORDS

Is the word eternal or produced? This issue has been centrally examined in the *Samgraha*. There the defects as well as the uses of these two positions have been enumerated. The conclusion reached is that, whether the word be eternal or produced, grammar must be practiced. How has grammar been practiced by the venerable Panini? (In other words, does Panini believe words to be eternal or produced?)

[*Vārttika:*] Since word, meaning, and their relation are established . . .

[*Patanjali’s explanation:*] Since the word is established, the meaning is established, and their relation is established. What is the meaning of the word “established”? The word “established” is synonymous with “eternal.” How is that known? Because it is used in connection with things that are unchanging and immobile. For example: “The sky is established,” “the earth is established,” “ether is established.”

[*Objection:*] But, my dear sir, isn’t it also used in connection with things that are produced? For example: “the cooked rice is established,” “the soup is established,” “the gruel is established.” Inasmuch as the word “established” is also used in connection with produced things, why do you claim that here the synonym of “eternal”

is employed, not the word “established” that is used in connection with something produced?

[*Patanjali's response:*] We think, first of all, that the synonym of “eternal” is here used, because “established” is an antonym of “produced” in the *Samgraha*. Here the same applies.

Alternatively, some words, though single words, are limiting. For example, the person called water consumer is understood to consume *only* water; the person called wind consumer is understood to consume *only* wind. The same applies here too: “established” means “*only established*” [and therefore “eternal”], not “to be established.”

Or again, we must understand that a preceding word has been elided: “established” means “definitely established.” Examples of such elision of a preceding word are Datta for Devadatta, Bhama for Satyabhama.

Or, finally, we simply declare that “established” is here used as a synonym of “eternal,” on the basis of the maxim that a declaration must provide precise knowledge, because grammar should not cease on account of uncertainty.

...

How is it known that the word is established, the meaning is established, and their relation is established?

From the world.

Because in the world people use words to express various meanings, without putting in an effort to make them. However, an effort is put in to make produced items. For example: He who plans to carry out some work with a pot goes to the house of a potter and says, “Make me a pot, I plan to carry out some work with it.” But someone who plans to use some words does not, in similar manner, go to the house of a grammarian and say, “Make me some words, I plan to use them.” They use words to express various meanings, without further ado.⁷

Patanjali’s belief in the eternity of words has an effect on their grammatical formation:

It is not appropriate that augments are taught in the case of eternal words: in eternal words the sounds must be unchanging, immobile, without loss, addition, or modification. And an augment is something new, an addition to the word.

But then, is it appropriate that there should be substitutes in the case of eternal words? Yes, that is appropriate. But there must be other words in this case. The knowledge of one whole word after another whole word is appropriate.

In that case, the forms with augments will be substitutes for the forms without augments. How about that?

For Panini the son of Dakshi, all substitutes are substitutes of whole words, for if there were a modification of a part, the eternality of words would be compromised.⁸

This passage is remarkable for more than one reason. Apart from indicating that all the basic elements of Panini's grammar have lost their independence for Patanjali, it reduces the derivational process to a mental process: the knowledge of one word after another.

3.3. PATANJALI AND SHABARA ON CORRECT WORDS

The first passage is from Patanjali's *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*):

[Vārttika:] There is that which is not used.

[Patanjali's explanation:] There are words that are not used; for example, *ūṣa*, "you dwelt," *terā*, "you crossed," *cakra*, "you made," *peca*, "you cooked."

—What does it matter that there are words that are not used?

—You decide whether words are correct on the basis of their use. Words that are not used these days would then not be correct.

—It is a contradiction to say that there are words that are not used. If they exist, they are not unused. And if they are really not used, they do not exist. It is a contradiction to say that they exist and are not used. While using them, you say that there are words that are not used. Which person, different from you but similar to you at the same time, would now be correct with regard to the use of words?

—This is not a contradiction. We say "they exist," to begin with, because experts prescribe them in accordance with the science of grammar. We say "they are not used" because they are not used in the world. With regard to your complaint, "Which person, different from you but similar to you at the same time, would now be correct with regard to the use of words?," we do not say that they are not used by us, but rather, they are not used in the world.

—But aren't you too in the world?

—I am in the world, but I am not the world.

[Vārttika:] If you claim that there are words that are not used, you are wrong, because words are used in certain meanings.

If you claim that there are words that are not used, you are wrong. Why? Because words are used in certain meanings. Words are used in certain meanings, and the meanings of these words, in which these words are used, exist.

[*Vārttika*:] There is nonuse of certain words because other words are used in their place.

It is correct that these words are not used. For what reason? Because other words are used in their place; because they use other words in the meanings of these words. For example: in the meaning of *ūṣa* they use *kva yūyam uṣitāḥ*, “where did you dwell?”; in the meaning of *terā* they use *kim yūyam tīrṇāḥ*, “what did you cross?”; in the meaning of *cakra* they use *kim yūyam kṛtvantah*, “what did you make?”; in the meaning of *peca* they use *kim yūyam pakvavantah*, “what did you cook?”

[*Vārttika*:] Regarding words that are not used, it is like the long sacrificial Soma sessions that are prescribed but not used.

Although certain words are not used, they must absolutely be prescribed by rules, just like the long sacrificial Soma sessions. For example: Nowadays no one performs the long sacrificial Soma session that lasts a hundred or a thousand years. Considering that the mere traditional instruction of the ancient seers is virtuous, ritual specialists prescribe them [the sessions] in their science.

[*Vārttika*:] All words are used in other regions.

All these words are used in other regions. They are not therefore observed. An effort must be made to observe them, for the realm of use of words is large. The earth with its seven continents; the three worlds; the four Vedas with their auxiliary sciences and Upanishads, divided in many ways; the one hundred and one branches of the *Yajurveda*; the *Sāmaveda* with its thousand paths; the twenty-onefold *Rgveda*; the ninefold *Atharvaveda*; disputes; various stories about the past; texts about medicine—all this constitutes the realm of use of words. Not having heard this whole realm of use of words, it is mere temerity to state that there are words that are not used.

In this exceedingly large realm of use of words, certain words are observed to be confined in their use to certain regions. For example: the verb *śav*, meaning “to go,” is only used among the Kambojas; the Noble Ones use it in derivations in the sense “modification,” as in *śava*, “corpse.” The verb *hamm* is used among the Surashtras, *raṁh* among the people from the east and from the middle of Brahmanical territory, while the Noble Ones only use *gam* in the sense “to go.” The verb *dā* is used in the sense “to cut” among the easterners; only the derived form *dātra* is used among the northerners. And forms that you think are not used (viz., *ūṣa*, *cakra*) are also observed to be used. Where? In the Veda: *yad vo revatī revatyam tad ūṣa*; *yan me narah śrutyam brahma cakra*; . . .⁹

The words here discussed by Patanjali—*ūṣa*, *terā*, *cakra*, and *peca*—may be rarely used, but there is no doubt about their grammatical formation and therefore about their meaning. There are other words that are not used among cultured Brahmins

but *are* used among the despised foreigners; these same words, moreover, occur in some Vedic passages. Brahmanical thinkers, and particularly the Vedic Interpreters, the professional interpreters of Vedic texts, were confronted with the question what meaning to ascribe to these words. Could one simply accept the meaning with which foreigners use these words, or should one try to arrive at the meaning by strictly Brahmanical methods? A discussion of this question has survived in Shabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*). It runs as follows:

There is a doubt with regard to words that no Noble Ones use in any sense but that despised foreigners use in some sense; examples are: *pika*, *nema*, *sata*, *tāmarasa*, and others. Should their meaning be derived from the verbal root by means of exegetical works, etymology, and grammar? Or is the meaning of those words the one in which despised foreigners use them?

—It has been pointed out that the behavior of cultured people is authoritative, not the tradition of uncultured people. It follows that their [the words'] meaning should be derived by means of exegetical works and so on. In this way the exegetical works and so on will have use. What is more, uncultured people are not skilled with regard to the meanings of words, whereas others, i.e., cultured people, *are* skilled in them. The meaning of those words should therefore be derived from the verbal root.

—If this is your position, we answer:

What will be understood, having been offered as interpretation even by uncultured people, having been unknown to cultured people and on condition that it is not contradicted by a regular source of authority, once being known, should not be abandoned.

The objection that the behavior of cultured people is a source of authority should be answered as follows: it is a source of authority with regard to things unknown by means of sense perception.

With reference to the objection that cultured people are skilled with regard to the meanings of words, it is answered that the despised foreigners are more skilled in rearing and catching birds.

The objection that exegetical works, etymology, and grammar will have their use in finding the meaning of such words should be answered like this: they have their use there, where the meaning of the word is not known even to despised foreigners.

Moreover, if the meaning is to be derived by means of exegetical works and so on, the meaning of words will not be precisely fixed, and there will be lack of certainty.

It follows that *pika* should be taken to mean "cuckoo," *nema* should be taken to mean "half," *tāmarasa* "lotus," and *sata* "a round wooden vessel with a hundred holes."¹⁰

It follows from the preceding passages that words being eternal, they are not necessarily all used even by educated Brahmans. Some may be used in other worlds, and some may even “survive” among despised foreigners.

3.4. PATANJALI ON MERIT RESULTING FROM CORRECT SPEECH

If it is the case that words are not produced by grammarians and that the world is the standard in this respect, what is grammar good for?

[Vārttika:] Assuming that the use of words is occasioned by their meanings and derives from the world, grammar provides a restriction for the sake of merit.

Assuming that the use of words is occasioned by their meanings and derives from the world, grammar provides a restriction for the sake of merit. . . .

[Vārttika:] As in worldly and Vedic matters.

. . .

In the world it is said that a domestic cock and a domestic pig should not be eaten. What can be eaten is taken to ward off hunger. One can ward off hunger even by means of such forbidden foods as dog meat, etc. Here a restriction is provided specifying what can be eaten and what cannot be eaten.

Similarly, men approach women on account of an urge; this urge will cease whether the woman is fit to be approached or not. Here a restriction is provided specifying which woman is fit to be approached and which one is not.

In the Veda too it is said that a Brahman takes the vow to live on milk, the Kshatriya the vow to live on gruel, the Vaishya the vow to live on curd. A vow is taken with the aim of taking food. One could also take a vow to live on rice or meat. Here a restriction is provided.

Similarly, it is said that a sacrificial post must consist of Bilva wood or of Khadira wood. A sacrificial post is used to tie the sacrificial victim to. One could tie the sacrificial victim to any piece of wood, having raised it or not. Here a restriction is provided.

Similarly, having placed the potsherds in the fire, one recites the *mantra bhṛgūṇām angirāṣāṁ gharmasya tapasā tapyadhvam*, “be heated with the heat of the perspiration of the Bhrigus and the Angirases.” Also without the *mantra*, fire, which burns by nature, heats the potsherds. Here the restriction is provided that, if done in this way, it will bring success.

In the very same way, in the present situation, even though meaning is understood in exactly the same manner whether with the help of a correct or an incorrect word, a restriction is provided for the sake of merit: meaning must be expressed

only by means of correct words, not by means of incorrect words; if done in this way, it will bring success.

...

Does merit lie in the knowledge of correct words or in their use? What is the difference?

[Vārttika:] If merit lies in knowledge, then there is demerit.

If merit lies in knowledge, then demerit would result. Someone who knows correct words also knows incorrect words. Just as merit lies in the knowledge of correct words, demerit also lies in the knowledge of incorrect words.

Or rather, more demerit would result: there are more incorrect words than correct words. For each and every correct word there are many corruptions. For example: for the one correct word *gauh*, there are many corruptions, such as *gāvī*, *goṇī*, *gotā*, *gopotalikā*, and so on.

[Vārttika:] The restriction concerns behavior.

The Vedic seer makes known that there is a restriction that concerns behavior, by stating, “Those demons were defeated because they mispronounced *helayo helayah* for *herayo herayah*.”

Let merit then lie in usage.

[Vārttika:] If in usage, the whole world would have it.

If merit lies in usage, success would accrue to the whole world.

Why are you jealous if success would accrue to the whole world?

This is not jealousy, but it means that all effort would be pointless. Effort must lead to a result and should not be devoid of result.

Could one not say that those who make an effort will use words more correctly, and will therefore attain success more fittingly? Moreover, one can observe a separation between effort and its outcome: there are those who make an effort but are not proficient, and others who do not make an effort and yet are proficient. There might also be a separation between effort and result?

Okay, then, merit does not lie exclusively in knowledge or in usage. What then?

[Vārttika:] There is success in the case of usage accompanied by knowledge, just as in the case of words from the Veda.

Success will accrue to him who uses words accompanied by knowledge. The same is true in the case of words from the Veda. Also words from the Veda state this: “He who performs the Agnishtoma sacrifice and knows this”; “He who piles up the Naciketa fire and knows this.”

Someone else says: “The same is true in the case of words from the Veda” means that, just as words from the Veda bear fruit when studied in accordance with the

prescribed restrictions, similarly, success will accrue to him who uses correct words in accordance with grammar.

Alternatively, let it be so that there is merit in mere knowledge.

Didn't you say that if merit lies in knowledge, then demerit would result?

Nothing wrong here. We take the word as our measure. What the word says, that is our measure. And the word says that there is merit in the knowledge of correct words, not that there is demerit in the knowledge of incorrect words. What has not been taught and what is not forbidden does not harm, nor does it bring success. For example, hiccupping, laughing, and scratching do no harm, nor do they bring success.

Or again, the knowledge of incorrect words is a means to know correct words. He who knows incorrect words also knows correct words. It follows that, for someone who says that there is merit in knowledge, there is merit in the knowledge of correct words that is accompanied by the knowledge of incorrect words.

Or it is like the digger of a well. Just as the digger of a well, even though he will be besmirched with earth and dust, will attain, if he finds water, the quality by which that disadvantage will be removed and more success will accrue to him, similarly here too, even though there is demerit in knowing incorrect words, there is so much merit in knowing correct words that that disadvantage will be removed and more success will accrue to the speaker.

As to the statement that the restriction concerns behavior, the restriction concerns ritual activity. For the following is heard. There were seers called *yarvāṇas tarvāṇah*, who had insight into the nature of things, who were in possession of higher and lower knowledge, who knew what had to be known, and who understood ultimate reality. These worthies used *yarvāṇas tarvāṇah* where it would be correct to use *yad vā nas tad vā nah*, but did not use incorrect words in ritual activity. The demons, on the other hand, did use incorrect words in ritual activity and were as a result defeated.¹¹

3.5. PATANJALI AND BHARTRIHARI ON INCORRECT WORDS

It is a major concern of the Brahmanical tradition not to use incorrect words. This is and remains an important challenge, for there are far more incorrect words than correct ones. There are, as we have seen, *correct* words that are *not* used, or that are used in remote regions; there are far more *incorrect* words that *are* used. Patanjali says as much:

The following are further uses for teaching correct words: “Those demons . . .”; “A corrupt word . . .”; “What has been recited . . .”; “He who uses . . .”

“Those demons . . .”: Those demons, uttering incorrect *helayo helayah* instead of correct *herayo herayah*, perished. For this reason a Brahman should not use barbaric language, he should not use corrupt speech. Incorrect speech is indeed barbaric language. Grammar should be studied in order that we may not be barbarians.

“A corrupt word . . .”: A corrupt word, whether with regard to accent or to sound, is incorrectly used and does not convey the intended meaning. It is a thunderbolt in the form of speech that kills the sacrificer, just as the word *indraśatru* killed him who pronounced it because of a mistake in the accent.

“What has been recited . . .”: What has been recited but has not been understood and is therefore verbalized merely by way of utterance, that never burns, like dry fuel where there is no fire. Therefore grammar should be studied in order that we may not learn something without meaning.

“He who uses . . .”: He who uses correct words as he should at the time of communication, competent in the distinction between correct and incorrect words, he, knowing the propriety of speech, attains to endless victory in the other world and perishes through incorrect words.

Who? Only he who knows the propriety of speech. Why that? Because he who knows correct words also knows incorrect words. And just as there is merit in the knowledge of correct words, there is also demerit in the knowledge of incorrect words. Or rather, there would be more demerit. Incorrect words are more numerous, correct words less numerous. For there are many corruptions of each correct word. For example: *gāvī*, *goṇī*, *gotā*, *gopotalikā*, and other words are corruptions of the correct word *go*, “cow.”

What about the person who does not know the propriety of speech?

Ignorance is his refuge.

Ignorance should not be his refuge in all cases. I think that that someone who, without knowing it, kills Brahmins or drinks alcohol will still be a fallen person.

In that case we proceed like this: He who knows the propriety of speech attains to endless victory in the other world and perishes through incorrect words. Who? Only he who does not know the propriety of speech.

What about the person who does know the propriety of speech? Knowledge is his refuge.¹²

Patanjali is not yet happy with this, so he takes up the matter again a few pages later, in the passage studied in section 3.4 above. His final position appears to be that the merit that results from knowing correct words is sufficient to destroy the demerit resulting from knowing incorrect words.

This last passage does not deal with the question whether incorrect words can express meaning. Or rather, having first stated that a corrupt word does not convey the intended meaning, it suggests that the meaning “cow” can be expressed by incorrect words—such as *gāvī*, *goṇī*, *gotā*, *gopotalikā*—as well as by the correct word, *go*. The general attitude, here and elsewhere, appears to be that incorrect words are corruptions of correct words, spoken by groups that in a remote past spoke correct words, i.e., Sanskrit.

The question accompanied Brahmanical thinkers in subsequent centuries. It is taken up, for example, by Bhartrihari, a grammarian and philosopher who lived in the middle of the first millennium CE and who was probably the first to write a commentary on Patanjali’s *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*). The following passage is taken from his most well-known work, the *Vākyapadīya* (*Treatise on Sentences and Words*), and from the commentary (*Vṛtti*) thereon, whose author appears to have been someone different but close to him:

[*Vākyapadīya*:] An incorrectly formed word that one wishes to use in the sense of “cow” is considered a corruption when used to express a specific meaning. (139/175)

[*Vṛtti*:] The author of the work called *Samgraha* stated that corruptions are based on correct words. There is no such thing as an independent corruption that is not based on a correct word. All corruptions have a basis that is correct. However, some corruptions gain independence because they are so well known and gain popular acceptance. While only *go* should be used to express the meaning “cow,” people use words that are based on it, such as *gāvī*, etc., because they are incapable of using *go* or for some other reason, such as carelessness. Those corruptions, when used with reference to the same animal with dewlap, etc., are no longer correct. Used with reference to another object, however, they may be recognized as being correct. For their incorrectness is not associated with their mere form.

[*Vākyapadīya*:] The words *asva* [a corruption of *āśva*], *goṇī* [a corruption of *go*], and so on are correct when used to refer to something else [*asva* means “poor,” *goṇī* means “sack”]. The correctness of a word is in all cases established on the basis of the specific cause underlying its use. (140/176)

[*Vṛtti*:] The correctness of the word *goṇī* when used with reference to a container and of the word *asva* to designate the absence of property [*sva*] is established. Thus these two words are recognized as correct, even if, for some special reason, they are used with reference to an animal with a dewlap [a cow] and to an animal that neighs, etc. [a horse] respectively, this because they correctly refer to something else. In “the cow is like a sack [*goṇī*],” the cow is referred to by means of the word *goṇī* because of its general feature of being a container, which concerns the fact that the cow carries

much milk. Similarly, that which has no *sva*, “property,” is *asva*, “poor.” It follows that no object with regard to which a term is established as being correct or incorrect is determined as long as the reason the term is applied to it has not been grasped.

[*Vākyapadīya*:] Those corruptions bring about an understanding through an inference relating them to correct words. They elucidate the word meaning, having become, as it were, identical with the correct words. (141/177)

[*Vṛtti*:] For corruptions, when used with reference to the objects of correct words, convey the meaning through the intermediary of correct words, just as a wink, etc., as a result of familiarity, are known to be as if they had taken the form of words. Corruptions do not, however, refer directly; this is the proposal of the next verse.

Why are these forms *gāvī*, etc. not recognized as synonyms of the word *go*?

In such matters, which depend on tradition, no other justification is designated than being well known from the conduct of the cultured. If *gāvī*, etc. were synonyms of *go*, these forms too would be followed by the cultured in their rules, and they would be used. A word used, like perception, with reference to the things it denotes and that cause its use, that word is correct. The thing denoted that directly causes their use is conveyed by correct words. This is why he says:

[*Vākyapadīya*:] Because corruptions are not accepted as correct synonyms by the cultured in their traditional science, they are not directly expressive. (142/178)

[*Vṛtti*:] This verse has already been explained.

[*Vākyapadīya*:] Just as a child that is learning to speak pronounces “Mama, mama” indistinctly, and those who know determine with its help the distinct form. (143/179)

[*Vṛtti*:] A child, because it does not yet fully control its vocal organs, uses indistinct words, even though it makes an effort to try to use correct words. Those who listen to it discern the distinct word that is its basis. They consider that only the distinct word is connected with meaning, not the corruption used by the child.

[*Vākyapadīya*:] In the same way, the corruption that is used when a correct word should be used expresses a meaning through the intermediary of the correct word. (144/180)

[*Vṛtti*:] In a confused state of language, corruptions are used instead of correct words. Through those corruptions, educated people who know the science of grammar understand the correct words. They look upon the meaning as being expressed by those correct words. The incorrect word is the means by which we infer the correct one, just as smoke is the means by which we infer fire.

[*Vākyapadīya*:] As a result of continuous use, corruptions have become established among unqualified speakers; for them, the correct word is not expressive. (145/181)

[*Vṛtti*:] As a result of repeated use, corruptions that are being used by women, Shudras, outcastes, and others and among careless speakers have gained currency, so that the usage of those corruptions is better established than correct usage. And

when there is a doubt arising from the use of a correct word, the matter is nowadays decided with the help of the corresponding corruption. They consider that incorrect word to be expressive and on the side of perception. The correct word they place on the side of inference.

[*Vākyapadīya*:] This divine speech has been corrupted by incompetent speakers. The upholders of impermanence, on the other hand, hold the opposite view with regard to this doctrine. (146/182)

[*Vṛtti*:] It is heard that in an earlier age people who carried light in their own bodies used speech that was free from falsehood and from all corruptions. That speech, however, being corrupted as a result of the observation of the repetition of earlier mistakes, gained for those users currency, as if it were the original form.

The upholders of impermanence, on the other hand, i.e., those who do not accept that correct words are the cause of virtue and who consider the establishment of a correct word as similar to a convention passed between wrestlers or something of the kind, they explain that the Prakrit language is the collection of correct words.¹³ Modifications have been introduced later, decided by people of agitated minds, by means of accents, regular formation, etc.

[*Vākyapadīya*:] Since both, correct and incorrect words, have been handed down without interruption, if one uses one word while one intends to pronounce another one, the first word is not expressive of meaning. (147/183)

[*Vṛtti*:] Even those who do not accept that there was an earlier age and that the uncorrupted divine speech ever existed, even they accept that a distinction between correct and incorrect words has always been maintained by the cultured without interruption, just as a distinction between women who can and cannot be married has been maintained without interruption. A word that, like children's talk, is used with regard to certain objects while another word is intended, such a word, whether adopted in usage or not, is not expressive of the meaning. The understanding of the meaning in those cases passes through the intermediary of correct words. Alternatively, the mere notion is produced in careless people as a result of repeating the incorrect word, just as a notion is produced by means of winking, etc.¹⁴

3.6. PATANJALI AND OTHERS ON THE REFERENTS OF WORDS

Patanjali deals with this issue in the following passage:

The *Vārttika*: “Since word, meaning, and their relation are established” has been analyzed as “Since the word is established, the meaning is established, and their relation is established.” What reference for the word “meaning” underlies this analysis?

The answer is: form.

Why?

Because forms are eternal, while substances are noneternal.

But if we take it that the substance is referred to, how must we then analyze the phrase?

In that case we must analyze “Since the word and its relation with the meaning is established.” For the relation of meaningful words with their meanings is eternal.

Alternatively, even if the substance is referred to, it is appropriate to analyze “Since the word is established, the meaning is established, and their relation is established.” For substance is eternal, form noneternal.

How do you know?

We see in the world that clay associated with one form becomes a lump; having destroyed the form of the lump, we can make small pots; having destroyed the form of the small pots, we can make larger vessels. Similarly, gold, when associated with one form, becomes a lump; having destroyed the form of the lump, we can make necklaces; having destroyed the form of the necklaces, we can make bracelets; having destroyed the form of the bracelets, we can make cross-shaped ornaments; restored to its original shape, the lump of gold, when given another form, becomes a pair of earrings that resemble the embers of Khadira wood. The form is in each case different, but the substance remains the same. When the form is destroyed, only the substance remains.

Even if the form is referred to, it is appropriate to analyze “Since the word is established, the meaning is established, and their relation is established.”

Has it not been stated that the form is noneternal?

This is not correct. The form is eternal.

How?

Establishing that a form has disappeared in one place does not imply that it has disappeared everywhere: one can perceive it in another substance.

Or again, this is not the right definition of “eternal”: “that which is fixed, unchanging, immobile, without loss, addition, or modification, without beginning, without growth, not connected with decay, that is eternal.” That too is eternal in which the essence is not destroyed. . . In form too the essence is not destroyed.

Or, finally, what is the point of discussing what is eternal and what is not? We analyze “Since the word is established, the meaning is established, and their relation is established,” considering that the word refers to that which we look upon as eternal.¹⁵

The Nyaya (Logic) school of philosophy was also interested in what it is that words refer to, and dedicated a rather long discussion to this issue in its classical text, Vatsayana’s *Nyāyabhāṣya* (*Commentary on Logic*), belonging to the fifth century CE. The

influence of Patanjali's *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*) on the following passage will be clear, but it is equally clear that the discussion had evolved during the period separating the two texts:

The following examination concerns the nominal word. The example is "cow." With regard to its meaning,

[*Nyāyasūtra* 2.2.59:] **There is doubt because the word is used in the presence of the individual, the form and the universal.**

The word "presence" in the *sūtra* means inseparable occurrence. The word "cow" is used to refer to the individual, the form and the universal, which are inseparable from each other. This being the case, it is not known whether one of the three or rather all three constitute the meaning of the word.

The meaning of a word is determined on the basis of the force of usage. Therefore,

[*Nyāyasūtra* 2.2.60:] **The meaning of the word is the individual, because the following are used with reference to an individual: (1) relative pronouns, (2) groups of items, (3) the act of giving, (4) property, (5) numbers, (6) growth, (7) decrease, (8) colors, (9) compounds, (10) continuity.**

The meaning of the word is the individual. Why? Because relative pronouns, etc. are used with reference to an individual. . . .

(1) Consider the relative pronoun "that" in the following examples: "The cow that stands," "The cow that sits." These phrases do not give expression to a universal, because there is no difference between the universal of a cow that stands and that of a cow that sits. Because there is a difference between the cows in these two phrases, they give expression to individual objects.

(2) In "a group of cows," individual objects are referred to because of the difference between them, not universals, because there is no difference in that case.

(3) In "he gives a cow to the doctor," there is a question of a gift of an individual object, not of a universal, because a universal has no concrete shape, and because it is not possible for a universal to be passed forward and backward.

(4) Property is the connection with an object as one's own. Phrases like "Kaundinya's cow" and "the Brahman's cow" are possible because the connections are different on account of the fact that the individual objects—the cow that belongs to Kaundinya and the cow that belongs to the Brahman—are different, on condition that we accept that individual objects are denoted by the word "cow." The universal "cow," however, is undivided.

(5) Numbers, as in "ten cows," "twenty cows." Individual objects can be counted because they are different from each other. The universal cannot be counted because it is undivided.

(6) Growth: There can be an increase in constituent parts of an individual object that consists of constituent material causes, as in “the cow grew.” The universal, though, is without constituent parts.

(7) Decrease is explained in the same way.

(8) Colors, as in “a white cow,” “a tawny cow.” An individual object can be associated with a quality; a universal cannot.

(9) Compounds, as in “what is good for a cow” and “well-being of a cow.” An individual object can be associated with well-being, etc.; a universal cannot.

(10) Continuity means the continuous production of things similar to itself, as in “a cow produces a cow.” This is possible in the case of an individual object because an individual object has the characteristic of being produced out of something similar to itself, unlike the universal which is the opposite of that. . . .

Refutation of the preceding:

[Nyāyasūtra 2.2.61:] No, because the word would not rest on any particular objects.

The individual is not the meaning of the word. Why? Because the word would not rest on any particular objects. What is qualified by the relative pronoun, etc., that is the meaning of the word “cow” in “The cow that stands,” “The cow that sits.” No individual object not qualified by a universal is denoted, but rather an individual object qualified by a universal. It follows that the individual is not the meaning of a word. The same applies to “groups,” etc.

If the individual is not the meaning of the word, how then can a word be used with reference to an individual? For specific reasons a word can be used also with reference to something that is not its real meaning.

[Nyāyasūtra 2.2.62:] A word can be used also with reference to something that is not its real meaning: (1) in the case of a Brahman as a result of association, (2) in the case of a platform as a result of location, (3) in the case of a mat as a result of purpose, (4) in the case of a king as a result of his activity, (5) in the case of flour as a result of the measure, (6) in the case of sandalwood as a result of holding, (7) in the case of the word “Ganges” as a result of proximity, (8) in the case of a cloth as a result of contact, (9) in the case of food as a result of being the means, (10) in the case of a man as a result of predominance.

The expression “a word can be used also with reference to something that is not its real meaning” means that the word designates something that does not correspond to that word.

(1) “As a result of association”: In “Feed the staff,” a Brahman who carries a staff is referred to.

(2) "As a result of location": In "The platforms shout," the men standing on those platforms are referred to.

(3) "As a result of purpose": When grasses are arranged in order to make a mat, we say "He makes a mat."

(4) "Because of activity": We say "The king is the god of death" or "The king is the god of wealth" because he behaves like them.

(5) "As a result of the measure": Flour measured by three kilograms is "three-kilogram-flour."¹⁶

(6) "As a result of holding": Sandalwood held by a scale is "scale-sandalwood."

(7) "As a result of proximity": In "Cows roam in the Ganges," the land next to it is referred to by the word "Ganges."

(8) "As a result of contact": A cloth is called black because it is in contact with the color black.

(9) "As a result of being the means": "Food is life."

(10) "As a result of predominance": "This man is the family," "This man is the lineage."

In these cases a word denotative of a universal is used with reference to a different individual, as a result of association or connection.

If the individual is not the meaning of the word "cow," then let it be as follows:

[Nyāyasūtra 2.2.63]: The form, because establishing the nature of the thing depends on it.

The form is the meaning of the word. Why? Because establishing the nature of the thing depends on it. Form is the fixed arrangement of the parts of the thing and of their parts. When the form is grasped, the nature of the thing is established, like this: "This is a bovine, this is a horse." It is not established when the form is not grasped. The word should refer to that as a result of the grasping of which the nature of the thing is established; that is its meaning.

This is not correct. The word "cow" denotes that which is connected with the universal as qualified by that universal. And there is no connection of the arrangement of parts with the universal. What then is so connected? The individual object whose arrangement of parts is fixed. It follows that form is not the meaning of the word.

Consider then the following: the universal is the meaning of the word.

[Nyāyasūtra 2.2.64]: The universal, because activities such as sprinkling cannot be applied to a clay cow even though it is connected with individual and form.

The universal is the meaning of the word. Why? Because activities such as sprinkling cannot be applied to a clay cow even though it is connected with an individual

and the form of a cow. Statements like “sprinkle the cow,” “bring the cow,” “give the cow” are not used with reference to a clay cow. Why? Because the universal is not there. There is in this case indeed an individual, there is a form that because of whose absence this is not experienced as a cow; that is the meaning of the word “cow.”

[Nyāyasūtra 2.2.65:] No, because the manifestation of the universal depends upon form and individual.

The manifestation of the universal depends upon form and individual. When form and individual are not grasped, no pure universal, all by itself, is grasped. It follows that the universal is not the meaning of the word.

Certainly it is not possible that there is no meaning of the word! What then is that meaning?

[Nyāyasūtra 2.2.66:] In reality, individual, form, and universal together constitute the meaning of the word.

The words “in reality” serve the purpose of distinguishing different cases. Which are they? The relationship between primary and secondary is not a fixed part of this specification of the meaning of the word. When one wishes to give expression to differences and the understanding evoked concerns distinctions, then the individual is primary, the universal and the form secondary. However, when one does not wish to give expression to differences and the resulting understanding is general, then the universal is primary, the individual and the form secondary. This is frequent in usage. Examples where the form is primary can be thought of.¹⁷

We will have occasion to come back to at least one item touched upon in this passage. We learn from it that a word may designate something that does not correspond to it. Among the examples we find “He makes a mat,” and this example is stated to give expression to purpose. Strictly speaking, there is no mat in the situation described in this statement, but clearly its agent has the intention of making one. The word “mat” supposedly designates the grasses that will be turned into a mat, rather than the mat itself. As said, the issue will come up again in a later section.

Two issues were prominent in the preceding passage. One concerns the question whether individuals, forms, or universals are referred to by words; all three are referred to according to this passage of the *Commentary on Logic*, even though the primacy of one of the three depends on the wish of the speaker.

A different position as to the referent of words is adopted by Buddhist authors, at least from Dignaga onward. Dignaga proposes that words—he refers primarily to what Patanjali had called *jātiśabda*, “words that relate to universals,” i.e., nouns—do not, strictly speaking, refer at all. They do not refer to universals, whose very existence is denied by Dignaga and other Buddhists, nor do they refer to individuals. Words

rather exclude all that is different (*anyāpoha* or simply *apoha*), so that the word “pot,” for example, excludes all that is not pot. A *palāśa* tree can be referred to with the help of the two words *palāśa* and “tree.” This does not mean that the two words are synonymous, or that they refer to different universals. They are different because they exclude not quite the same things: the word *palāśa* excludes, for example, the *khadira* tree, which is not excluded by the word “tree.”

Dignaga deals with *apoha* in the fifth chapter of his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (*Collection of Means of Knowledge*). This chapter is called *Anyāpoha-parīkṣā*, “Examination of the exclusion of what is different.” In reading Dignaga, keep in mind that the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* appears to be a patchwork of more or less edited text from work he had written earlier, none of which has survived in its original form. The *Pramāṇasamuccaya* is therefore characterized by extreme economy of exposition. Some verses of the “Examination of the exclusion of what is different” read as follows:

That means of cognition that is based on word is not a means of cognition different from inference. Because the word expresses its own object through the exclusion of other things [*anyāpoha*], just as an inferential mark such as “being produced” [*kṛtakatva*] establishes the object to be proved through the exclusion of what does not possess that inferential mark.¹⁸ (1)

A word that relates to a universal [*jātiśabda*] does not denote particulars because the number of particulars is endless, and because there would be deviation. Nor does it denote the universal or the relation between the universal and a particular, because it is heard without a difference in case ending with words referring to particulars.¹⁹ (2)

The relation is here denoted as something to be expressed by a property of its relata. Thus it is expressed considering it as a thing [*bhāva*], and that thing is related to something else [viz., the relata]. (3)

A word that relates to a universal [*jātiśabda*] does not denote a particular possessing that [i.e., a universal] because it is not independent,²⁰ and because the word figuratively refers to the particular, and because there can be no similarity between universal and particular, because the form of the cognition is different, as in the case of the figurative application of the word “king” to a servant. (4)

Also because the universal and the particular are not mentioned in succession, as in the case of “white jasmine flower” [*śuklam kundam*], “white conch shell” [*śuklam śaṅkham*], etc.

Dignaga’s position was strongly contested by Brahmanical thinkers. The Vedic Interpreter Kumarila Bhatta, for example, criticizes the notion of *apoha* in a chapter

called *Apohavāda* in his *Comments in Verse* (*Ślokavārttika*). The following are selected verses from this chapter:

Those who think that the universal of “cow” should be stated to be the negation of what is not a cow, clearly refer to the universal “cowness” as an existing thing by means of the words “exclusion of what is not a cow.” (1)

It has earlier been explained by you that an absence is just another thing. So tell me what kind of thing the negation of a horse, etc. is. (2)

It cannot be the specific object of the senses, because no mental construction applies to these objects. Nor does the negation of what is not a cow apply to individual cows called Shabaleya and the like, because it would follow that this negation is not a universal. (3)

The individual cows Shabaleya, etc. do not share the same form in common, nor is there, according to you Buddhist, a single thing all the others have in common. It would follow that the word “cow” has an infinite number of meanings. (4)

Nor is it correct to think that those noncows could be excluded directly by a specific cow: the knowledge of the individual cow called Shabaleya does not depend on the negation of what is not a cow. (5)

Knowledge of that individual cow comes about by way of negating other individual cows such as Bahuleya, etc. If it were to bring about the negation of all that is not a cow, it would not exclude those individual cows, just as it does not exclude itself. (6)

If you assume that there is nonexclusion of Bahuleya by the aspect of being a cow but also exclusion by its own form that is not Shabaleya, then there would be a contradiction in the form of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion. (7)

It follows that the exclusion of what is not a cow by means of individual shapes is not possible. Also in the case of a collection of cows it is not possible that they negate what is not a cow. (8)

That notion might arise if one could perceive all cows, and it would not attach to each individual; moreover, that notion does not arise because it is impossible to perceive all cows. (9)

For this reason the notion “cow” must be based on the form that is present in all cows and established in each and every one of them; it is not different from the universal “cowness.” (10)

Exclusions must be based on an existent thing [viz., a really existing universal]. Moreover, if you assume that universals are not really existing things, you will find nothing really existing apart from the ultimate particulars [i.e., atoms].²¹ (35)

And there is no dealing with ultimate particulars, nor can they be observed. What the word refers to is emptiness in a different manner. (36)

In that emptiness the notions "horse," etc. would be grasped on the basis of their different aspects, and it is accepted that the idea that something is referred to through the exclusion of others serves no purpose. (37)

For there will be a really existing universal in the form of a notion. For the meaning of the word will be independent of any object, and exclusion will be imagined in vain. (38)

That really existing notion appears in connection with the meanings of words. One should therefore accept something really existing that is referred to by words, and whose nature does not consist in the exclusion of other notions. (39)

Just as the meaning of a sentence is clear to us even though there is no external object corresponding to it, let it be the same in the case of word meaning. Why should you assume exclusion? (40)

We are not aware of a separation of one notion from another [as would be the case if one notion consisted in the exclusion of other notions]. A notion does not contain any part different from that resulting from the mere arising of its own form. (41)

If we assume that different exclusions exclude different things [e.g., the word "cow" excludes different things than the word "horse"], there would be exclusion of what is not cow in every individual cow; such being the case, the thing you need—viz., something that is common to all individual cows, Shabaleya, etc.—is not obtained. (51)

The idea that the external things to be excluded delineate that which its associated substrates cannot delineate is pure fantasy. (52)

In what is not a cow we find the same as in what is not a horse, plus the horse; what is not a horse is the same as what is not a cow, plus the cow; all else that is to be excluded, i.e., elephants, etc., is the same in the two cases. (53)

Let there be difference between these two cases [i.e., between what is not a cow and what is not a horse] on account of this single difference, and nondifference on account of the multiple nondifference; nondifference between cows and horses would result because their exclusions have most elements in common. (54)

The cow is not different from the horse in that both exclude the elephant, etc. If the cow excludes the horse, their identity will be contradicted. (55)

No one can know all cows, etc., given that no similarity between them has been established, as being the objects of exclusion. (71)

There is no possibility of ascertaining which are the things to be excluded, i.e., horses, etc., without them having a characteristic in common; exclusion in this case is not established. (72)

Inferential marks and words cannot be used in connection with things that have no features in common. Without these two there can be no exclusion, and common features are not found in things that have nothing in common. (73)

Exclusion has not been established, so where must we look for a constant association of exclusion with the relevant objects? When this constant association cannot be found, inferential marks and words cannot be its means of knowledge. (74)

You might accept exclusion even in the absence of similarity. If so, why don't you accept exclusion of what is not a cow in the case of cows and horses? (76)

Both the cow called Bahuleya and horses are different from the cow called Shabaleya. If you do not accept something else that cows may have in common, where can exclusion of what is not cow be applied? (77)

Exclusion of what is not cow is not first determined by the sense organs, nor are words used without it. If so, what have speakers seen that allows them to use words? (78)

Inferential knowledge is of no use either, for reasons explained earlier. No experience of a link connecting word and exclusion is therefore possible. (79)

Concerning those who do not know words expressive of negation, since they do not know what is not a cow, yet know what is a cow, the universal cannot be discarded. (80)

How would you know that something is referred to by "what is not cow"? (81ab)

A known noncow must be excluded, and its nature is the negation of a cow. In that situation it must be explained what is that cow that is negated by the negative particle. (83)

If you say that the cow is the negation of what is noncow, there would be mutual dependency.

And if you say, in order to determine what must be excluded, that the cow is known, it is pointless to assume that there is exclusion. (84)

If the cow is not known, there is no noncow, and if there is no noncow, how will you know what is a cow? (85ab)

We do not cognize the negation of something else in the case of verbs, for there is in that case nothing to be negated by means of a nominal negation. (139)

Even when one says "not not" [as in "he does not not cook"], there is negation of a negation; what remains is "he cooks" as it is, non-negated. (140)

The cognition of the situation referred to by a verb as being something to be accomplished, and its determination as being past, present, or future, would become baseless because exclusion is something completed [and not therefore something to be accomplished, or past, present, or future]. (141)

And in accumulations of meaning, as in injunctions, etc., we do not see an exclusion of other things.

And what exclusion could be obtained from a negative particle that is combined with another negative particle? (142)

Words like “and” cannot be negated, so there can be no exclusion here. And it is not possible to claim that sentence meaning is a negation of something else. (143)²²

In spite of criticisms, the Buddhists did not give up the notion of exclusion (*apoha*). One of the most recent examples of a defense of this notion is Ratnakirti’s *Proof of Exclusion* (*Apohasiddhi*), composed during the first half of the eleventh century. The following passage is taken from this work.

Exclusion is said to be the meaning of words.

[*Objection:*] What is the thing that is called “exclusion”? Three positions are possible: (1) an external object is intended, negated by things belonging to a different class, in accordance with the derivation “this is excluded from something else, or something else is excluded from this, or something else is excluded in this”; (2) a mental image is intended; or (3) exclusion is the mere act of excluding.

The first two positions are not possible, because here something positive is intended by the word “exclusion.” And the third one is not possible either, because it is contradicted by our cognition. Indeed, the verbal cognition of the form “there is fire on part of the mountain” is perceived as depicting something positive, not as showing the mere negation “there is no nonfire.” And it is only too well known that nothing else can prove what has been contradicted by perception.

Suppose you were to argue as follows: Even though there is no conceptual construct [*vikalpa*] corresponding to “I cognize a negation,” a depiction of a negation is no different from a depiction of a negated thing. For there is no qualified cognition that does not include a cognition of the qualifier. Even in the absence of a conceptual construct corresponding to “I cognize a universal,” the notion of a universal held by others is the notion of a conceptual construct resulting from the appearance of a shared form. In the same way, the notion of negation suggested by a negated cognition is responsible for the cognition of exclusion.

If you argue that way, we respond: If the notion of a universal establishes itself as something positive in case a shared form appears, what about the establishment of

a cognition of negation in a mental event in which a negative form does not appear? Who could then reject the presence of a cognition of negation if there is an appearance of the form of negation, even if there is nothing of the form “I cognize negation”? Otherwise, given that there will be cognition of something that does not make itself manifest, let there be the notion of a horse in a mental event that has the form of a cow.

It has been stated that the cognition of negation is included as a qualifier [in the cognition of something negated]. Even so, if the conceptual construct has the form “excluded from what is not cow,” then the cognition of exclusion must be included in it. However, the cognition is simply “cow.” Because then the qualifier that is negation, even though it exists, does not appear in that cognition, how is the cognition of that qualifier established?

But if you think as follows: “that which appears as something positive, that too is excluded from other things; there is therefore cognition of exclusion,” we respond: there is in that case only a connection of exclusion with something positive. Only the positive itself is directly perceived. Moreover, it could then not be denied that also perception, that specifically depicts a single negated thing on the basis of a conceptual construct and sees it as negated by everything else, has exclusion as its object. It follows that a conceptual construct, like perception, can only have something positive as object because it grasps the form of something positive; it cannot have the exclusion of what is different as object. So how can it be proclaimed that exclusion is the meaning of words?

[Response:] The answer to the preceding objection is as follows. We do not intend to say that the word “exclusion” only refers to something positive, or exclusively to what is negated by other things. The meaning of words is rather something positive that is qualified by the exclusion of what is different. The difficulties connected with each of the three positions do not therefore present themselves.

The opinion of the upholders of positive denotation—according to which exclusion is known afterward by force of the fact that in the cognition of a cow, that which has that nature does not have the nature of something else, or the opinion of the upholders of exclusion—according to which, in the cognition of the exclusion of what is different, that which is excluded by what is different is ascertained by force of that same fact, neither of these positions is beautiful. Because even someone who learns the word for the first time is not seen to acquire knowledge in this order. For it is not the case that someone, having obtained the knowledge of something positive, next becomes aware of exclusion by implication; or having obtained the knowledge of exclusion, next becomes aware of that which is excluded by what is different. That is

why the knowledge of that which is excluded by what is different is called knowledge of the cow.

Moreover, even though the words “excluded by what is different” are not depicted, it is yet not the case that there is no knowledge of the exclusion of what is different as a qualifier. Because the word “cow” applies precisely to that which has been excluded by what is not cow. Just as it cannot be denied that blueness becomes manifest at the very moment when we become cognizant of a blue lotus on account of the word *indīvara*, a word that applies to a blue lotus, in the same way it cannot be denied that the exclusion of what is not cow becomes manifest simultaneously with the cognition of a cow on account of the word “cow,” a word that applies to what is excluded by what is not cow, this because the exclusion of what is not cow is a qualifier of that cognition. Just as perception has the potency to produce a conceptual construct of an absence, i.e., the grasping of an absence of something that might have been there,²³ in the same way we state that also positive conceptual constructs have the potency to act accordingly, i.e., they can grasp an absence.

...

Exclusion is also understood in sentences such as “this road goes to Shrughna.” It is just this road as opposed to other roads that are not under discussion. It goes only to Shrughna, as opposed to places different from Shrughna where one does not wish to go. It goes there because it is not cut off like roads in the wilderness. It is only a road because other things that go to Shrughna, such as caravans and messengers, are excluded. In this way it is easy to understand the exclusion connected with each of the constituent words. It follows that we understand from words something positive that is characterized by exclusion, just as we understand from the word *pundarika* a lotus characterized by whiteness.²⁴

3.7. PATANJALI ON MINIMAL MEANING BEARERS

Patanjali could not escape from the question whether individual speech sounds have meaning. He discusses it in the following passage:

Do speech sounds have meaning or not?

[*Vārttika*:] Speech sounds have meaning, because verbal roots, nominal stems, suffixes, and particles that consist of a single speech sound are observed to have meaning.

Verbal roots that consist of a single speech sound are observed to have meaning. An example is the verbal root *i*, with conjugated forms such as *eti*, *adhyeti*, *adhīte*.

Nominal stems consisting of a single speech sound have meaning. An example is *a*, with declined forms such as *ābhyām*, *ebhiḥ*, *eṣu*.

Suffixes consisting of a single speech sound have meaning. An example is *a*, which is added to “Upagu” to create *aupagava*, “descendant of Upagu,” and to Kapatu to create *kāpaṭava*, “descendant of Kapatu.”

Particles consisting of a single speech sound have meaning. Examples are *a* in “*a*, go away,” *i* in “*i*, look at Indra,” *u* in “*u*, stand up.”

Because verbal roots, nominal stems, suffixes, and particles that consist of a single speech sound are observed to have meaning, we think that speech sounds have meaning.

[Vārttika:] Also because another meaning is understood when one changes a speech sound.

Also because another meaning is understood when one changes a speech sound, we think that speech sounds have meaning. Consider the three words *kūpa* [well], *sūpa* [soup], *yūpa* [sacrificial post]. In *kūpa*, with *k*, one meaning is understood; in *sūpa*, which one gets by taking away *k* and adding *s*, another meaning is understood. In *yūpa*, which one gets by taking away both *k* and *s* and adding *y*, again another meaning is understood. We therefore think that the meaning “well” in the case of *kūpa* belongs to *k*, the meaning “soup” in the case of *sūpa* belongs to *s*, and the meaning “sacrificial post” in the case of *yūpa* belongs to *y*.

[Vārttika:] And because a specific meaning is not understood when the relevant speech sound is not perceived.

And because a specific meaning is not understood when the relevant speech sound is not perceived, we think that speech sounds have meaning. Consider the pairs *vṛkṣa* [tree] / *rksa* [bear], *kāṇḍīra* [archer] / *āṇḍīra* [having many eggs]. In *vṛkṣa*, with *v*, a certain meaning is understood; in *rksa*, without *v*, that same meaning is not understood. In *kāṇḍīra*, with *k*, a certain meaning is understood; in *āṇḍīra*, without *k*, that same meaning is not understood.

...

[Vārttika:] And because their combinations have meaning.

And because their combinations have meaning, we think that speech sounds have meaning. Entities whose combinations have meaning, their parts have meaning too. Entities whose parts have no meaning, their collections have no meaning either. For example: One person with eyes is capable of seeing; a collection of such persons, even a hundred of them, is capable of doing so. And one sesame seed is capable of providing oil; a collection of such seeds, even several bushels of them, is capable of doing so.

Entities whose parts have no meaning, their collections have no meaning either. For example: One blind person is incapable of seeing; a collection of such persons,

even a hundred of them, is also incapable of doing so. One grain of sand is incapable of providing oil; a collection of such grains of sand, even a hundred bushels, is also incapable of doing so.

...

[Vārttika:] Speech sounds have no meaning, because we do not perceive meaning in the case of each speech sound.

Speech sounds have no meaning. Why? Because we do not perceive meaning in the case of each speech sound. Meanings are not perceived in the case of each speech sound....

[Vārttika:] Because we see meaning in the case of interchange, removal, addition, and modification of speech sounds.

We think that speech sounds have no meaning, because we see meaning in the case of interchange, removal, addition, and modification of speech sounds.

In the case of interchange of speech sounds: *tarku* [spindle] is derived from *kṛt* [to cut]; *sikatā* [sand] is derived from *kas* [to move]; *simha* [lion] is derived from *hiṁs* [to harm]. There is here interchange of speech sounds, but no interchange of meaning.

Removal means elision. Examples are *ghmanti*, *ghnantu*, *aghnan*, verbal forms of the root *han* [to kill] in which the vowel *a* has been elided. There is here removal of a speech sound, but no removal of meaning.

Addition means augmentation. Examples are *lavitā* [reaper] and *lavitum* [to reap], where *i* is added to the suffixes *tā* and *tum*. There is here addition of a speech sound, but no addition of meaning.

Modification means substitution. Examples are *ghātayati* [he makes kill] and *ghātaka* [killer], derived from the root *han* with substitution of *t* for *n*. There is here modification of a speech sound, but no modification of meaning.

Just as there are interchange, removal, addition, and modification of speech sounds, there should similarly be interchange, removal, addition, and modification of meaning. In these cases it is not like that. That is why we think that speech sounds have no meaning.

In the preceding lines it has been claimed both that speech sounds have meaning and that they have no meaning. Which of these two positions is correct?

The reply is: both. Why? Because of their nature. Among people who endeavor to attain the same, or who study the same, some reach their objects, others don't. It does not follow from the fact that a certain speech sound has meaning that they all can have meaning; or from the fact that a certain speech sound has no meaning that they all can be without meaning.

In that case, what can we do?

It is but natural that verbal roots, nominal stems, suffixes, and particles that consist of a single speech sound have meaning, and that speech sounds different from these have no meaning.

What about the reasons you have presented in the above *Vārttikas* to show that speech sounds have meaning, viz., “Speech sounds have meaning, because verbal roots, nominal stems, suffixes, and particles that consist of a single speech sound are observed to have meaning,” “Also because another meaning is understood when one changes a speech sound,” “And because a specific meaning is not understood when the relevant speech sound is not perceived,” “And because their combinations have meaning”?

In the case of the words *kūpa*, *sūpa*, and *yūpa*, three different combinations are used in three different meanings. For if one understands a different meaning as a result of an interchange of speech sounds, most of the meaning of *kūpa* should be present in *sūpa*, most of the meaning of *sūpa* should be present in *kūpa*, most of the meaning of *kūpa* should be present in *yūpa*, most of the meaning of *yūpa* should be present in *kūpa*, most of the meaning of *sūpa* should be present in *yūpa*, and most of the meaning of *yūpa* should be present in *sūpa*. Since, however, there is nothing of *kūpa* in *sūpa*, nothing of *sūpa* in *kūpa*, nothing of *kūpa* in *yūpa*, nothing of *yūpa* in *kūpa*, nothing of *sūpa* in *yūpa*, and nothing of *yūpa* in *sūpa*, we think that three different combinations are used in three different meanings. Claiming that speech sounds have meaning, you have rather elucidated that they don’t. For he who thinks that the meaning of *kūpa* belongs to *k*, the meaning of *sūpa* to *s*, the meaning of *yūpa* to *y*, for him the part *ūpa* would be meaningless.

The reason “And because their combinations have meaning” has not been refuted as yet!

The author of the *Vārttikas* will refute this too, under the *sūtra* that defines the term “nominal stem.”²⁵

The *sūtra* that defines the term “nominal stem” is P. 1.2.45. Under this *sūtra* Katyayana and Patanjali refer back to the above discussion, and then continue:

The reason “And because their combinations have meaning” has not been refuted as yet!

Here is its refutation.

[Vārttika:] If one objects, “And because their combinations have meaning,” the answer is: an entity can visibly attain a goal with the help of a subordinate entity that cannot attain that goal.

If one objects “And because their combinations have meaning,” the answer is: we see that an entity can attain a goal with the help of a subordinate entity that cannot attain that goal. Here are some examples:

A single thread is incapable of protecting the skin, whereas a collection of threads, in the form of a blanket, is capable of doing so.

A single rice grain is incapable of stilling hunger, whereas a collection of rice grains, in the form of a dish of rice, is capable of doing so.

A single blade of grass is incapable of binding, whereas a collection of blades of grass, in the form of a rope, is capable of doing so.

This comparison is inappropriate. For there is in these cases a certain quantity of the goal, however small it may be. For with respect to something a single thread is capable of protecting the skin, a single rice grain capable of stilling hunger, a single blade of grass capable of binding. Speech sounds, however, are completely without meaning.

Consider then the following: Just as the parts of a chariot are each of them separately incapable of movement, whereas their collection, in the form of a chariot, is capable of it, in the same way collections of speech sounds have meaning, whereas their parts, the speech sounds themselves, have no meaning.²⁶



CHAPTER FOUR

The Special Place of Sanskrit and the Veda

4.1. SINGLE WORDS AS SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

A passage from the *Nyāyavārttika* (*Comments on Logic*), a work composed in northwest-ern India presumably in the sixth or seventh century, shows that its author, Uddyotakara, took it for granted that the existence of a Sanskrit word guaranteed the exis-tence of a corresponding item, at least in certain cases:

He who negates the self must say what the word “self” refers to. Because we observe that there is not a single word that does not denote something. . . . There is no word that does not denote something.¹

Vatsyayana’s *Nyāyabhāṣya* (*Commentary on Logic*), which may belong to the second half of the fifth century CE, presents two answers to the question why there is a per-fect correspondence between words and things. According to the first answer, words are a means of inference; Vatsyayana rejects this, but not without first describ-ing it:

The word is a means of inference; it is not a distinct means of knowledge. —Why? Because the object of a word is inferred. —How so? Because it is not apprehended by means of perception. A sign-possessing object, though unapprehended, comes to be known through a knowledge of the sign; it follows that the sign is a means of infer-ence. Likewise, an object, though unapprehended, comes to be known through a knowledge of the word by which it is designated. Therefore, the word is a means of inference. . . . There is also the following reason: when a means of knowledge is

distinct, apprehension involves two distinct processes. For apprehension takes place one way in the case of inference and another way in the case of analogy. . . . But in the case of word and inference, apprehension does not involve two processes. The process involved in inference is the same as the process involved in word. Since there is no difference, the word is a means of inference. . . . One grasps an object through verbal knowledge when the relation between a word and the object connected to it is well known, just as one grasps an object through inferential knowledge when the relation between an inferential sign and the object possessing the sign is well known.²

Vatsyayana himself has a different answer:

It is not because of words on their own that one believes in the existence of imperceptible objects such as “heaven,” “the [heavenly nymphs called] Apsarases,” “the [mythical country said to be inhabited by the] Northern Kurus,” “the seven continents,” “the ocean,” or “the shape of the world”; rather, one believes in their existence because they have been spoken of by trustworthy people. Otherwise one would not believe in them. Inference, however, is not like this.³

There are reasons to think that there were Vedic Interpreters (*mīmāṃsakas*) who believed, unlike Vatsyayana, that the existence of a word guarantees the existence of the item denoted. Their position is criticized in Uddyotakara’s *Nyāyavārttika* (*Comments on Logic*) on *sūtra* 1.1.7. This *sūtra* introduces the notion of reliable teaching (*āpta-upadeśa*). The rules of Sanskrit grammar allow of two ways to analyze this compound: “teaching by a reliable person” or “teaching that is reliable.” The *Nyāyabhaṣya* (*Commentary on Logic*) opts for the former interpretation, but Uddyotakara’s *Nyāyavārttika* (*Comments on Logic*) introduces an opponent who disagrees, for the following reason:

If we only accept teaching by a reliable person, there would be no teaching concerning such entities as “heaven,” *apūrva* and “deity,” because these things are beyond the senses. If reliability is understood as the direct perception of a thing, there would be no discourse informing us about such entities as “heaven,” *apūrva* and “deity,” since no one can see them. For this reason it is appropriate to analyze the compound as “teaching that is reliable” rather than as “teaching by a reliable person.”⁴

Uddyotakara rejects this position, but it is possible to identify those who held it. The distinction between “teaching that is reliable” and “teaching by a reliable person” must be understood in light of the belief that the Veda has no author. The Veda,

according to those who held this belief, contains reliable teaching but is not the teaching by one or more reliable people: it is authorless. The belief in the authorlessness of the Veda is characteristic of Mimamsa, the school of Vedic Interpretation. This suggests that Uddyotakara's opponent is a *mīmāṃsaka*.

This impression is confirmed by the presence of *apūrva* in the list of items enumerated. This term remains here untranslated, primarily because there is no simple English word that corresponds to it. *Apūrva* is a technical term of Mimamsa, which designates an unseen effect (*apūrva* literally means “unprecedented”) responsible for the future outcome of sacrificial activity.

There is a further passage informing us of the belief that the existence of a word guarantees the existence of the corresponding entity. It is a verse in Bhartrihari's *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya* 2.119), which reads:

They say that the characteristic of what is to be conveyed is that all words have things corresponding to them; this applies to words such as “cow” as much as to the words *apūrva*, “deity,” and “heaven.”⁵

The fact that these are the same examples as in Uddyotakara's *Nyāyavārttika* (*Comments on Logic*) confirms that the same thinkers are referred to, presumably *mīmāṃsakas*.

Bhartrihari's commentary on Patanjali's *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*) also has something to say about the three items *apūrva*, “deity,” and “heaven”:

Or rather, the perception of a thing is the means by which we are able to infer that the corresponding word exists, because there is nothing that has no word to denote it. **Just as the words “heaven,” *apūrva*, and “deity,” when perceived, enable us to infer that things that are absolutely imperceptible exist**, in the same way, does not a thing when perceived enable us to infer that the corresponding word exists?⁶

This passage takes it for granted that the three entities “heaven,” “deity” and *apūrva* must exist because the words for them exist.

Then there is the Buddhist thinker Bhavya, who in his *Verses Concerning the Heart of the Middle Path* (*Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* 9.5–6) attributes to a Vedic Interpreter the view that the existence of objects such as heaven and *apūrva* are known on the basis of the Veda:

How can there be knowledge of things that are completely hidden from perception and that cannot be inferred, things such as heaven and *apūrva*?



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Vatsyayana’s *Nyāyabhāṣya* (*Commentary on Logic*), which may belong to the second half of the fifth century CE, presents two answers to the question why there is a per-fect correspondence between words and things. According to the first answer, words are a means of inference; Vatsyayana rejects this, but not without first describ-ing it:

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How can there be knowledge of things that are completely hidden from perception and that cannot be inferred, things such as heaven and *apūrva*?

The word is eternal and manifested by sound; its connection with its denoted object is eternal. From the word arises knowledge of the denoted objects in the knower.⁷

There is, finally, a passage that explicitly criticizes the school of Vedic Interpretation for maintaining that a word, say “cow,” is a valid means of cognition for knowing the universal concerned (in this case, “cowness”). This passage occurs in the *Tattvopaplavasiṃha* (*The Lion That Is a Disaster for All Essences*) of Jayarashi Bhatta, a sceptical author belonging to the eighth century. Arguing that a valid means of knowledge should bring about apprehension of something not apprehended before, he claims that individual words cannot do this. He therefore rejects the view that individual words are a means of valid cognition:

The fact that words like “cow,” etc. cannot be a means of valid cognition is revealed by this same circumstance, viz., that such words convey the universal “cowness” and so on that were cognized before.

How is that?

Here is the answer: Do you tell us that the word “cow” expresses as meaning the same universal “cowness” that was apprehended at the time of learning the convention linking the word and its meaning? Or does it rather express a different meaning?

If it is maintained that the word “cow” makes known the form of the universal “cowness” apprehended at the time of learning the convention, then the word “cow” cannot be a means of valid cognition, because in that case it makes known the form of an object that is already known. If, however, you maintain that it is a means of valid cognition in spite of the fact that it makes known the form of an object that has already been made known, then you must explain what is the realm of the qualification “agent of knowing an object not yet known” [which is the way you define a means of valid cognition]?

If, on the other hand, the word “cow” expresses a different meaning, then a meaning is understood from the word “cow” that has not been linked to that word by convention. As a result, a contradiction with cognition as accepted in your established doctrine will be hard to avoid.

If you object that only the universal “cowness” is understood by means of the word “cow,” we respond:

Here too, the fact that the word “cow” apprehends what has already been apprehended is a cause for not accepting it as a means of valid cognition; this has been elaborately discussed elsewhere.⁸

Jayarashi returns to the same issue later in his book:

Some say: The word “cow” is a means of valid cognition, because it is expressive.

That is not correct, because there is no relation between words and objects. This relation cannot be an identity, because the shapes of words and their objects are different. Nor is it of the kind that one arises from the other, because words are seen to be used even when their object is not there.

The relation between words and objects is not conventional either, because there is an infinity of individual words and objects corresponding to “cow,” and a single undivided cause is impossible. Nor is the agreed word present at the time we get to know the object concerned. And the agreement concerning a word that makes an object known is not cognized either, because it is not yet there at the time when the convention is made. . . .

The relation between words and objects is not natural, because it is not known either through perception or through inference.

The relation between words and objects is not inferred by means of implication.⁹ Implication is impossible, for implication is preceded by perception and so on. Without perception of the relation between words and objects, that relation cannot be deduced through implication. Implication is not different from inference, and you do not proclaim that the relation between words and objects is grasped through inference. (Others, most notably the Buddhists, do proclaim this.) But that inference does not exist. . . .

Such being the case, without relation between words and objects it is not proper to claim that words are expressive.¹⁰

Surprisingly, the Vedic Interpreter Shabara rejects the necessary correspondence between words and things. On “heaven,” he says the following:

[*Objection:*] The word “heaven” is well known in the world to refer to a specific place, in which there is no heat, no cold, no hunger, no thirst, no dissatisfaction, and no depression, and where those who have done good deeds go after death, but no others.

[*Answer:*] The answer is as follows. If no people go there without having died, or come from there without having been born, such a place is not accessible to the senses. Nor is it known from inference or by any other means.

[*Objection:*] Some people with occult powers, different from us, have seen heaven and have talked about it.

[Answer:] There is no proof that there are such people with occult powers, and that they, having seen heaven, talk about it. No such place therefore exists.

[Objection:] We learn from people in the world, from stories and from the Veda, that there is such a place called “heaven.”

[Reply:] This is not acceptable. The words of people constitute no proof, because they have no contact with such a place. Nor should stories be heeded, because they have been composed by human beings. Even the stories about heaven in the Veda do not occur in injunctions.¹¹ They are eulogies to be construed with an injunction different from them.¹²

How about gods? Don’t they play a role in the sacrifice, and do they not bring about the fruit that the sacrificer aspires to? Shabara first lets an opponent speak who represents this position:

Because of the deity, there is connection with the fruit for the one who honors the deity. Him who honors the deity through sacrifice, the deity connects with the fruit. How is this known? From tradition and custom. For tradition reports that a deity gives the fruit to the sacrificer. The observation that he who honored the lord of animals got a son confirms this traditional statement with custom. Moreover, interpreted Vedic texts show the same.... Therefore the deity is worshiped through the gift of an oblation and through the mention of its qualities; being pleased, it gives the fruit. When Agni is worshiped by means of a ritual act, he gives the fruit of which he is in charge; Surya cannot give that fruit. One knows from a Vedic statement who gives what. A Vedic statement pertaining to Agni, for example, does not concern Surya.¹³

Shabara’s response is as follows:

The opponent has stated that it is known from tradition, custom, and interpreted Vedic texts that the deity has a body, and that the deity eats. This is not correct. Because tradition is based on sacrificial formulas and illustrative statements in the Veda. It is well known that knowledge based on tradition arises from sacrificial formulas and illustrative statements in the Veda. And we will explain that sacrificial formulas and illustrative statements in the Veda are not about that.

If they are not about that, then that knowledge is not based on sacrificial formulas and illustrative statements in the Veda.

For those who consider sacrificial formulas and illustrative statements by merely looking at them, that knowledge is based on tradition. For those who, on the other

hand, consider them with expertise, that knowledge, though it contradicts the correct interpretation of the Veda, is, in the opinion of some, based on tradition. For this reason we maintain that tradition derives from sacrificial formulas and illustrative statements in the Veda.

Custom too is based on tradition.

...

The claim that the deity eats because tradition, custom, and interpreted Vedic texts maintain it does is rejected by the fact that the deity has no body. What is more, an offering made to a deity who actually eats it would diminish in quantity. And there is no proof that deities only eat the essence of food, like bees, so that its quantity remains unchanged. In the case of bees this is visibly the case. In the case of the deity the situation is not like that. It follows that the deity does not eat.

It has been objected that an offering made to a deity loses its essence.

There is nothing wrong with that. Food that has been exposed to wind, and that has become cold, loses its essence.

...

The claim that we learn from tradition, custom, and interpreted Vedic texts that the deity can own property is false. It has already been pointed out that tradition is based on sacrificial formulas and illustrative statements in the Veda, and these are not about the deity possessing anything. Custom too, as we find it in the habit of offering a village or a field to gods, is nothing but custom, and no deity is required to understand it. He who can use something as he pleases, he is its owner. And no deity uses a village or a field as he pleases. It follows that the deity does not give anything in return. The attendants of the god derive their income from what worshipers have abandoned in favor of the deity.

It has been objected that interpreted Vedic texts proclaim that the deity owns property, as in “Indra rules over heaven.” Seeing that the deity clearly rules over nothing, we conclude that these words are used in a secondary sense.

Some object to this, saying: Because of the authority of the Vedic word itself, we understand that the deity does rule, so we conclude that when people use the riches bestowed on the deity, this is done in accordance with the intention of the deity.

This is not correct. We understand from direct perception that the intention of the attendants of the deity is involved, not that of the deity itself. This cannot be denied. Even those who depict the deity as ruler do not deny that the intention of the attendants is involved. What is more, they say: The deity acts in accordance with the intention of its attendants. But he is not a ruler who obeys the intention of others and whose own intention is not respected.¹⁴

Regarding the “unseen effect” (*apūrva*), Shabara does not deny its existence. But far from claiming that it must exist because there is a word for it, Shabara tries to prove its existence by giving reasons.

But *apūrva* exists, because an activity is enjoined by the words “let someone who desires heaven sacrifice.” Otherwise [i.e., without assuming the existence of *apūrva*] the injunction would be pointless, because the sacrifice is transient. If the sacrifice disappeared without giving rise to something else, there would be no result, there being no cause to bring about that result. It follows that the sacrifice does produce something else.

[Opponent:] Suppose that the ritual act does not disappear, by force of the fact that the result is mentioned.

[Reply:] This is not possible, for we do not observe another form of the ritual act. It is called “act” because it moves its substrate to another place. It does not inhere in the self, because the self is omnipresent . . .

The material substance in which the ritual act inhered has disappeared. It is understood that as a result of the disappearance of the material substance also the ritual act has disappeared.

[Opponent:] Suppose that the substrate has not disappeared either.

[Reply:] This is not possible, because we observe the ashes.

[Opponent:] Perhaps the ritual act exists even though there are ashes.

[Reply:] This is not possible because, even though we can observe what is there, the ritual act is not seen.

[Opponent:] The bringing about of a result may be an indication that the ritual act continues to exist after its execution.

[Reply:] If such were the case, a justification must be given to explain that we do not observe the ritual act after its execution. If you think that this justification will be one of the factors that prevent visibility, minuteness, etc., something is being imagined. In that situation where either *apūrva* or the ritual act must be imagined, there is reason to imagine something nonspecific [such as *apūrva*] rather than something specific [like the ritual act that has been executed].¹⁵

We will conclude with a remark from Jayanta Bhatta’s *Sprout of Logic* (*Nyāyamañjari*), composed at the end of the ninth century. It occurs in a section that has been translated as a whole in § 2.2, above. The immediate context tries to derive conclusions from what it is possible to say. For example, we can say, “We know the meaning from the word,” and this indicates that a word is a single entity, not a collection of speech sounds. This claim is countered with the following remark:

To this we respond: What is this “possible” and “impossible” meant to prove? What if something is possible? And what if it is not possible? Reality is not based on worldly statements.

4.2. SENTENCES AS SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Shabara

Shabara explains some principles of Vedic Interpretation in the following extract:

[*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 3.3.14:] If the following criteria apply at the same time—“direct statement,” “word meaning,” “connection,” “context,” “position,” and “name”—each item situated later in this enumeration is weaker than all the items preceding it, because it is more remote in meaning.

...

The question is: If these criteria apply at the same time, which one is stronger? Since speech has a single meaning and is not simultaneously connected with two, our deliberation will concern each time two of the criteria.

Between “direct statement” and “word meaning,” is “direct statement” stronger or “word meaning”?

An example is the injunction “One must worship the *gāṛhapatya* fire with the Aindri formula.” The question here is whether there is uncertainty—so that either Indra¹⁶ or the *gāṛhapatya* fire should be worshiped, or should only the *gāṛhapatya* fire be worshiped? If both the criteria—“direct statement” and “word meaning”—had equal strength, one would have a choice. But if “direct statement” is stronger, only the *gāṛhapatya* fire should be worshiped.

What is in this example “direct statement,” and what is “word meaning”?

“Direct statement” is the hearing of the word *gāṛhapatya*. “Word meaning” is the capacity of the word “Indra” that occurs in the Aindri formula to designate a specific deity....

From among “direct statement” and “word meaning,” “direct statement” is stronger. Why? Because “word meaning” is **more remote** in meaning.... What is the meaning? The meaning of the “direct statement.” The meaning of the “direct statement,” i.e., “one must worship the *gāṛhapatya* fire,” is **nearer**. “Indra must be worshiped” is **more remote**. How so? The formula that contains the word “Indra” does not directly state that Indra must be worshiped. Even though “Indra” has the capacity to designate, we understand that Indra must not be worshiped, because it is not explicitly stated.

...

An example of a contradiction between “word meaning” and “connection” is the Vedic formula: *“I make your seat agreeable, with a stream of clarified butter I make it very dear. Sit on it, establish yourself in the nectar of immortality, oh oblation of rice, being favorably disposed.”*

With regard to this formula there is a doubt. Should the whole formula be used during the preparation of the seat *and* during the placing of the sacrificial cake? Or should rather the first half be used during the preparation of the seat and the second half during the placing of the sacrificial cake? If “connection” is stronger than “word meaning,” the whole formula should be used at both occasions. Why? The part beginning with “*Sit on it*” constitutes a single sentence (through “connection”) with the part ending in “*I make it very dear*,” as follows: “*Sit on that which I make very dear.*” If, however, “word meaning” is stronger than “connection,” only the part ending in “*I make it very dear*” should be used during the preparation of the seat. Why? Because the part “*I make your seat agreeable . . .*” is sufficient to indicate the preparation of the seat. The part “*Sit on it*,” being sufficient to indicate the placing of the sacrificial cake, is used during the placing of the sacrificial cake.

Which of the two possibilities is correct?

...

From among “word meaning” and “connection,” “word meaning” is stronger. Why? Because “connection” is **more remote** in meaning. . . .

The formula is understood to be subsidiary to the New and Full Moon sacrifice, because it is recited in the proximity of that sacrifice, of which it constitutes the context. Since the expressive power of the formula has been used when the placing of the sacrificial cake is enjoined on account of the power to express the placing of the sacrificial cake embodied in “*Sit on it*,” there is no proof that the formula should also be used during the preparation of the seat. Similarly, the part “*I make your seat agreeable*” is subsidiary to the New and Full Moon sacrifice because of the expressive power of the recitation in context; because of this expressive power, it has fulfilled its purpose by being used in the preparation of the seat and should not be used during the placing of the sacrificial cake. It serves no purpose whatsoever if used during this activity. Similarly, the expressive power of “*Sit on it*” does not extend to the preparation of the seat, and the expressive power of “*I make your seat agreeable*” does not extend to the placing of the sacrificial cake. The expressive power of “*Sit on it*” only extends to the preparation of the seat once it has become a single sentence with the preceding part, “*I make your seat agreeable*.” And the expressive power of the preceding part, “*I make your seat agreeable*,” only extends to the placing of the sacrificial cake because it has become a single sentence with the following part, “*Sit on it*;” it does not extend to both of its own. This is the **remoteness** of meaning. The main thing is that the expressive power of “*I make your seat agreeable*” belongs visibly to the

activity on the seat. The fact that the expressive power of the part “*Sit on it*” belongs to it when it has become a single sentence with the preceding part is of secondary importance. The stated meaning of the “word meaning,” viz., that the preceding formula [“*I make your seat agreeable*”] has been assigned to the preparation of the seat as a result of its expressive power, is **nearest**.¹⁷

The following passage shows that words cannot have more than one meaning:

[Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.3.8:] Since no opposition is seen in them, the discrepancy should be the same.

The words *yava*, *varāha*, and *vetasa* occur, respectively, in the following Vedic sentences: *yavamayaś caruh* (“the oblation consists of *yava*”), *vārāhī upānahau* (“shoes made of *varāha*”), *vaitase kāṭe prājāpatyān saṃcinoti* (“he collects the things sacred to Prajapati on a mat made of *vetasa*”). With regard to these, some use the word *yava* to refer to barley, others to refer to long peppers. Some use the word *varāha* to refer to pigs, others to refer to a crow. Some use the word *vetasa* to refer to reeds, others to refer to black plums. Since in these cases the meaning of the word is understood both ways, there is doubt.

[Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.3.9:] In reality, those versed in the scriptures, because they are the basis of correct usage.

The words “in reality” discard one of the two possibilities.

The word *yava*, if it refers to barley, will refer to long peppers as well because of the similarity between the two; if it refers to long peppers, it will refer to barley as well because of that same similarity. What is this similarity? When earlier grain has decayed, barley and long peppers remain; this is the similarity between them.

What is the right decision to take in this matter? The meaning of the word is the one given by those versed in the scriptures. Who are the ones versed in the scriptures? Cultured people. They are in the possession of an uninterrupted tradition with regard to words and Vedas. This is why cultured people are the basis for decisions in matters related to Veda and tradition.

Those cultured people, when flour vessels filled with *yava* have been prescribed, complete this injunction with another Vedic sentence: the Veda shows *yava* to be barley in “there where other plants wither, these ones happily stand up.” We understand from this that the word *yava*, based on an uninterrupted tradition, refers to barley, because this can be seen in the Veda.

It follows that the use of *yava* to refer to long peppers is secondary. For this reason a sacrificial cake must be made of barley.

The Vedic sentence “Therefore the cows run after the *varāha*” shows that the word *varāha* refers to a pig. And “*vetasa* is born in water” shows that the word *vetasa* refers

to reeds. For cows run after a pig, and reeds are born in water. The black plum tree grows on dry land, or near mountain streams.¹⁸

Shankara

Shankara presents traditional Mimamsa in the following passage:

How can it be stated that the Veda is the means of knowing Brahma, in view of the fact that it has been shown—[in *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.2.1, which reads:] “Since the Veda is for ritual activity, passages that are not for that are without purpose”—that the Veda concerns ritual activity? The Upanishads are therefore without purpose, since they are not for ritual activity. Alternatively, they are adjuncts to injunctions that prescribe ritual activities in order to make known their agent, deity, etc.; or they are meant to enjoin other activities such as adoration. For it is not possible that they provide information about an existing thing, because an existing thing is the object of other means of knowledge such as perception, and because no human purpose [*puruṣārtha*] is served in providing information about an existing thing, by which nothing is to be gained or lost. It is for this reason that, in order to avoid that Vedic statements like “He wept” be without purpose, such statements are stated to serve a purpose in that they eulogize an injunction, in [*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.2.7.] “Because they form one sentence with an injunction, they serve a purpose by eulogizing injunctions.” Mantras such as *iṣe tvā* [TaitS 1.1.1] have been stated to be connected with ritual acts as being expressive of ritual activity and the means thereto. For this reason Vedic sentences are nowhere seen to have purpose except in connection with injunctions, nor would this be possible. Nor is an injunction possible that pertains to the existing aspect of a thing, because an injunction concerns an activity. It follows that the Upanishads are adjuncts of injunctions that prescribe ritual activities by making known the forms of the agent, deity, etc. required by the ritual act. And if this is not accepted out of concern for the different contexts of Upanishads and Vedic injunctions, they must be accepted as concerning adoration and other things mentioned in their own sentences. It follows that Brahma is not known from the Veda.¹⁹

Shankara sets out his own arguments in a long passage, of which the following parts are most important in the present context:

And Brahma, even though by its nature an existing thing, is not the object of perception, etc., because the identity of Brahma and the self known from “That’s who you are” [*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.8.7] cannot be known without the Veda. . . . Although

elsewhere Vedic sentences are not seen to be authoritative without being connected with injunctions, the authority of Vedic texts that concern knowledge of the self cannot be rejected, because knowledge of the self leads to a result.²⁰

Put differently, traditional Vedic Interpretation is completely correct but for the fact that its very principles should oblige it to include among the statements that will have to be taken literally, beside injunctions, Upanishadic sentences pertaining to Brahma. Shankara presents himself here as an even more conscientious applier of the principles of Vedic Interpretation than the traditional Vedic Interpreters themselves.

Elsewhere in his *Commentary on the Brahmasūtra* (*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*) Shankara emphasizes again that Brahma cannot be known by any other means than the Veda:

As to what has been claimed, namely that other means of knowledge may be possible with respect to Brahma because the latter is a completed thing, the answer is: That too is wishful thinking. For this object [viz., Brahma], not possessing color, etc., cannot be the object of perception; nor of inference and so on, because there is no inferential mark. This object can rather only be known through the Veda, just like Dharma (which can only be known through Vedic injunctions).²¹

Shankara in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 4.3.14 clearly distinguishes between Vedic statements about Brahma that are literally true and others that are not:

[Opponent:] Brahma can have different powers since the Upanishads show it to be the cause of the origin, continuance, and dissolution of the universe.

[Vedantin:] Not so, since the Upanishadic texts denying distinctive attributes cannot be interpreted in any other way.

[Opponent:] In the same way the texts about origin, etc. cannot be interpreted otherwise.

[Vedantin:] Not so, for their purpose is to establish unity. The text that propounds the reality of Brahma, existing alone without a second, which proves the unreality of all modifications with the help of illustrations like clay, cannot be meant for establishing the truth of origin, etc.

[Opponent:] Why again should the texts about origin, etc. be subservient to the texts denying distinction and not the other way around?

[Vedantin:] The answer is that this is so because the texts denying distinction lead to a knowledge that is complete by itself [and leaves behind no more curiosity to be satisfied]. For when one has realized that the self is one, eternal, pure, and so on, one

cannot have any more curiosity to be satisfied as a result of the rise in him of the conviction that the highest human goal has been reached. . . . The texts that deny distinctions cannot be understood to be subservient to others. But the texts about origin, etc. cannot give rise to any such self-contained knowledge [that allays further curiosity]. As a matter of fact, they are seen to aim at something else. . . . Thus since the texts about creation, etc. are meant for imparting the knowledge of oneness, Brahma cannot be possessed of many powers.²²

Contrary to Shabara, Shankara accepts the existence of deities in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1.3.33:

With regard to what has been said—viz., that neither a *mantra* nor an *arthavāda* [“laudatory statement”] is capable of revealing the body and other features of divinities, this because *mantra* and laudatory statement have another purpose—we answer: cognition and absence of cognition, not the fact of having or not having another purpose, are the cause for accepting the existence and nonexistence respectively of something. For example, a man, though traveling for another purpose, knows that the grass, leaves, and other things that have fallen on his path are there.

At this point the opponent objects: The comparison is not appropriate. For in that comparison perception of grass, leaves, and other things as objects has taken place, with the help of which the traveler knows that these objects are there. In the present case, since the laudatory statement has praise of some sacrificial injunction as purpose by being united with that injunction into one sentence, it is not possible to determine that it has, by having a different purpose as well, an event as object. For a sentence that is included in a larger sentence that expresses a meaning does not separately express another meaning. For example, in the negative sentence “One should not drink alcoholic beverages” (*na surāṁ pibet*), because of the connection among the three constituent words, only one meaning, viz., the prohibition of drinking alcoholic beverages, is understood; but not also the injunction to drink alcoholic beverages, on account of the connection between the two words *surāṁ pibet* “One should drink alcoholic beverages.”

Here the following reply is given: The comparison is not appropriate. It is correct that in the prohibition of alcoholic beverages the meaning of the included sentence [*surāṁ pibet*] is not understood because there is only one connection between the words. However, in the case of an injunction and its accompanying laudatory statement [*arthavāda*], the words of the laudatory statement, having first and separately reached agreement with an event as object, they subsequently, under the influence of the question “What for?,” do indeed praise the injunction. . . . Therefore, where the

meaning of an included sentence belongs to the realm of another means of valid cognition [and is corroborated by it], there the laudatory statement plays its role in accordance with that other means of valid cognition. Where the meaning of the included sentence is contradicted by another means of valid cognition, there the laudatory statement plays its role through secondary communication. But where neither of the two is the case, there those who rely upon cognition must accept that the laudatory statement communicates something existing, on the basis of the following reflection: "Should it be secondary communication on account of the fact that there is no other means of valid cognition [with regard to its contents], or a communication of something existing because it is not in contradiction with another means of valid cognition?" In this same way the *mantra* has been explained.²³

Works can have a purifying effect, allowing people to obtain liberating knowledge. Shankara's commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* 4.4.22 illustrates this.

But how do Brahmins desire to know the self by means of works such as the obligatory recitation of the Veda? For those works do not illuminate the self, as do the Upanishads.

Nothing wrong here, because these works are the cause of purification. For those who have been purified by works, whose selves are pure, are able to know the self revealed by the Upanishads without obstruction.

Shankara's commentary on *Taittirīya Upanishad* 1.11 is equally clear:

It is precisely because of this conflict between karma and knowledge that knowledge does not depend on karma as far as liberation is concerned. With respect to its own attainment, however, we have said that obligatory karma becomes the *cause* of knowledge insofar as it removes previously accumulated hindrances. . . . Thus there is no contradiction of those scriptural passages that enjoin karma. Hence it is proved that the highest good is a consequence of knowledge alone.²⁴

The beginning of the prose portion of Shankara's *Thousand Teachings* (*Upadeśasāhasrī*) confirms that liberating knowledge will not be the share of those who do not fulfill a number of demanding preconditions:

The direct means to liberation, that is, knowledge, should be imparted again and again until it is firmly grasped to a Brahman disciple who is pure, indifferent to everything that is transitory and achievable through worldly means, who has given

up the desire for a son, for wealth, and for this world and the next, who has adopted the life of a wandering monk and is endowed with control over his mind and senses as well as with the other qualities of a disciple well known in the scriptures, and who has approached the teacher in the prescribed manner and has been examined with respect to his caste, profession, conduct, learning, and parentage.

Ritual activity is no absolute precondition for liberating knowledge. In his explanation of *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.1 (*athāto brahmajijñāsā* “Then therefore the inquiry into Brahma”) Shankara raises the issue that *atha*, “then,” indicates that inquiry into Brahma has to follow something else and asks what that could be. The answer is found in the following passages:

Given that the meaning “immediate succession” is expressed by the word *atha*, it should be stated what it is that inquiry into Brahma requires as necessarily preceding it, just as inquiry into Dharma requires study of the Veda as necessarily preceding it. The fact of being preceded by Vedic study is however common both to the inquiry into Brahma and to the inquiry into Dharma.

[Question:] Isn’t the difference in this case of inquiry into Brahma that it is to be preceded by understanding ritual activity [i.e., traditional Vedic Interpretation]?

[Answer:] No, for inquiry into Brahma is possible for one who has studied the Veda, even before inquiry into Dharma.²⁵

What further preconditions are there for someone to enter upon “inquiry into Brahma”? The answer is given in the following sequel to the preceding passage:

Something must therefore be stated after which inquiry into Brahma is taught.

The answer is: The requirements for entering upon inquiry into Brahma are discernment between eternal and noneternal things; renunciation with regard to enjoyment in this and the next world; excellence in means such as peace, restraint, etc.; and desire to become liberated. For when these elements are present, one can desire to know, and know, even before enquiry into Dharma, as well as after it, not however in the opposite case.²⁶

Language plays a role in Shankara’s conception of the world. Phenomenal reality corresponds to language. The highest reality, for its part, corresponds to the sacred syllable OM. The following passage occurs in Shankara’s commentary on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*.

How does the determination of the meaning of the sacred syllable OM become a means to understanding the essence of the self?

The answer is provided by a number of Vedic statements, among these the following: “All this is OM” [*Jaiminiya Upaniṣad* 1.10]; “This is the support” [*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.18]; “This, oh Satyakama, is it” [*Praśna Upaniṣad* 5.2]; “One should concentrate on the self as being the syllable OM” [*Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad* 6.3]; “OM is Brahma” [*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 1.8]; “This all is nothing but OM” [*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 2.23.3]. Just as a rope or the like is the substratum of the mental construct of a snake and so on, and the nondual self, being the highest thing there is, is the substratum of the mental construct of the vital breath, etc., just so all this diversity derived from speech is the object of mental constructs associated with the self in the form of the vital breath, etc.; in reality it is nothing but OM. And that syllable OM is the form of the self, because it designates all that. All things, i.e., the mental constructs associated with the self in the form of the vital breath, etc., are designated by words that are modifications of the syllable OM, and they are not different from their designations, on account of Vedic passages like the following: “All this rests on words, is a modification, is only a name” [*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.1.4]; “All this is bound by speech as the cord, by names as ropes; all this is nothing but names.” [*Aitareya Āranyaka* 2.1.6]²⁷

Other Vedantins

Bhaskara establishes under *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.4 that the proper application of the principles of Vedic Interpretation supports his claim that Upanishadic statements can provide knowledge about an established thing, viz., Brahma. **Bhaskara** states here:

Since Vedic statements are without author, they do not depend upon other means of knowledge. Since moreover the root cause of the world [i.e., Brahma] is not known through any other means of knowledge, it is not its not being established or its having to be carried out that is the cause of the authoritativeness of the relevant Vedic statements. On the contrary, it is the fact that those Vedic statements make known an object that is otherwise unknown, which is the cause for those statements being authoritative.²⁸

Bhaskara's formulation is a bit complex, but his intentions are clear. The ritual Vedic Interpreters may maintain that only things that are not established and that have to be carried out, i.e., activities, can be made known through the appropriate Vedic statements, i.e., the injunctions, **Bhaskara** formulates the criterion differently. Vedic statements must make known what is not known by other means. This includes activities that are to be carried out, but not only those. It also includes the root cause of the world, for this cannot be known by other means either.

Ramanuja's commentary, called *Commentary of Affluence* (*Śrībhāṣya*), introduces the discussion of *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.4 as follows:

If one has the doubt that, even though Brahma is not covered by any other means of knowledge but the Veda, yet the Veda does not teach Brahma because, being an established thing, it has nothing to do with activity and abstention from activity, the answer is given in what follows.²⁹

His conclusion is, of course, that Brahma is taught in the Veda precisely because it is not covered by any other means of knowledge but the Veda.

Mandana Mishra is familiar with various views regarding the Upanishads, as he points out at the very beginning of his *Proof of Brahma* (*Brahmasiddhi*). He rejects them all:

The learned disagree with respect to the Upanishads.

—Some think that they are not a means of valid cognition, (i) because, if the self is known through another means of knowledge, the Upanishads do nothing but repeat what is already known; (ii) if, on the other hand, the self is not already known, it cannot be the object of a sentence, given that it is not the object of a word because the link between word and object cannot in that case be grasped; (iii) since they do not give instruction into what to do and what not to do, they serve no human purpose.

—Others state that they are not really a means of valid cognition, using the excuse that they are a means providing the cognition that knowledge of the self must be accomplished.

—Others again think that the Upanishads express figurative meanings, because they are in conflict with the ritual injunctions and with perception, etc.

To reject these positions this work is begun.³⁰

The chapter called *Tarkakāṇḍa* (“Chapter on Reasoning”) shows elaborately that perception presents nondifference, whereas the distinctions (or particulars) we believe we perceive are due to conceptual constructs (*vikalpa*):

Perception is first without conceptual constructs, and has for its object the bare thing. The constructive cognitions that follow it plunge into particulars.³¹

Mandana does not say explicitly that nondifference or the bare thing are identical with Brahma, but this is clearly the case. In fact, the characteristics of the “bare

thing” of the *Tarkakāṇḍa* coincide largely with the features by which Brahma is described in the *Brahmakāṇḍa* (“Chapter on Brahma”). We must therefore assume that the following passage in the final chapter (*Siddhikāṇḍa*, “Chapter on Proof”) of the *Proof of Brahma* (*Brahmasiddhi*) presents Mandana’s own position:

Or rather, Brahma is not totally unknown in ordinary experience, because it is knowable in every cognition, because no object of cognition except Brahma exists, and cognitions of particulars are always accompanied by the form of the universal.³²

Mandana, then, maintains that Brahma is the object of perception. In the chapter called *Brahmakāṇḍa* he also suggests that a certain kind of reasoning leads to knowledge of Brahma; this reasoning runs as follows:

Only by removing distinctions does one obtain, with the help of the word, knowledge of it [i.e., of Brahma], as of the essence of gold. For the essence of gold, free from distractions in the form of specific shapes like that of a clump, a neck ornament, etc., is not observed. Nor do those specific shapes themselves constitute the essence of gold, because the essence is still there, in the form of another shape, even when those particular shapes are abandoned. And yet the essence of gold itself, even though its distinction from distractions in the form of specific shapes cannot be seen, is known by means of the removal of the specificities with the help of thought, and it can be communicated to someone else.³³

However, because perception is always sullied by ignorance, Mandana holds on to the position that knowledge of Brahma is based on the Veda alone:

But this Brahma as the nonexistence of phenomenal diversity is said to be based on the Veda alone, because perception, etc. are associated with nescience [*avidyā*]. For, because they do not take Brahma as their object under the form where all difference has disappeared, the disappearance of difference is knowable from the Veda alone.³⁴

Verse 2 of the *Brahmakāṇḍa* is no doubt to be understood in the same way:

The wise proclaim knowledge of this [i.e., Brahma] on the basis of the Veda, and its determination through the dissolution of the manifoldness of divisions.³⁵

Verses 3 and 4 of the *Siddhikāṇḍa* leave perhaps least occasion for ambiguity:

Or rather, though the form of Brahma is established as being known in each cognition, the resorption of manifoldness is conveyed by the word only.

Since Brahma in that form, in which manifoldness has been resorbed, is not the object of any other means of cognition, it is considered to exclusively depend on the *Veda*.³⁶

To conclude our discussion of **Mandana Mishra**, how did he see the relationship between Brahma and ordinary, common-sense reality? Like Shankara, Mandana holds that Brahma constitutes the highest reality, whereas common-sense reality, which is ultimately unreal, is closely bound up with language. The following passage shows this:

According to the Samkhya philosophy, modifications are a continuation of the form of original nature. According to us, the world is a continuation in the form of speech. It is therefore understood that the world is a transformation or an unreal appearance of speech.

How can there be continuity with speech?

Because the world must be known by means of a cognition that is colored by speech. Indeed, knowledge derived from the word is not like knowledge derived from the eye and other sense organs, because without awareness of the word there will be no knowledge of the object, unlike knowledge derived from a sense organ, which *can* occur without awareness of the sense organ. Nor is knowledge derived from the word like knowledge derived from smoke and so on, because here the words are not in syntactic agreement. Indeed, because there is no syntactic agreement in the case of knowledge such as “here is fire, because of smoke,” i.e., in the case of inferential knowledge, the difference of knowledge derived from the word is clearly recognized by all. . . . What is more, if the word were a cause of knowledge the way smoke is, the word would not be cognized as having the same form as the object. Certain knowledge of fire that is derived from smoke or from some other means of cognition does not resemble the form of smoke (“smoke is fire”). On the other hand, certain knowledge of objects, even when derived from another means of knowledge, calls to mind the form of the word (“this is fire”). From that observation we conclude that also in the case of knowledge derived from the word, the knowledge is like that [i.e., it calls to mind the form of the word], and it is not an error caused by the proximity of the word. Even the behavior of babies with regard to the breast, leaving aside other things, would not be possible without them having certain knowledge of the form “this.” . . . There is no certain knowledge that is not colored by words, and therefore also the knowledge of those babies, who preserve the traces of words from earlier

existences, is determined as being colored by speech. We understand in this manner that the world, which is to be grasped with the help of the form of speech, is an unreal appearance of speech.³⁷

Bhartrihari

About Brahma, the undivided all-encompassing whole, Bhartrihari says the following:

Brahma is without beginning and end, it is the essence of the word, it is imperishable, and from it the production of the world unfolds in the form of objects. (Vkp 1.1)

Tradition holds that it is single, and even though it is not separate from its powers, it seems to be separate from them because the different powers depend on it. (Vkp 1.2)

The six modifications, birth, etc., which are the sources for the division of becoming, depend upon its power called “time,” onto which time divisions are projected. (Vkp 1.3)

Being one and the seed of all, it exists in multiple forms in the shape of experencer, experienced, and experience. (Vkp 1.4)

The way to reach that Brahma is the Veda, itself an imitation of Brahma, traditionally handed down separately by the great seers, itself single but seeming to consist of many paths. (Vkp 1.5)

Bhartrihari’s remarks about his absolute—which he does not always call Brahma—are scattered throughout his *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*). Certain elements recur regularly. The absolute is real, single, and without divisions, yet the (ultimately unreal) phenomenal world is the result of division.

Most of the *Chapter on Substance* (*Dravyasamuddeśa*), which is chapter 2 of book 3 of the *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*), is about the absolute, which is here presented as the substance underlying the phenomenal world:

The real thing [i.e., the absolute] is known by means of its unreal forms. The real is designated by words that are conditioned by the unreal. (Vkp 3.2.2)

Just as the house of Devadatta, grasped by means of a token that is not fixed (such as a crow on its roof), is itself designated by the word “house.” (Vkp 3.2.3)

Just as gold, etc., connected with its passing forms, is itself referred to by words such as necklace. (Vkp 3.2.4)

The capacity of words to designate everything is limited because it is reduced by different forms, just as the capacity of eyes, etc. is limited by a tube, etc. (Vkp 3.2.5)

The word that is used in connection with those forms, like that, designates in reality the eternal absolute, because those forms are identical with the absolute. (Vkp 3.2.6)

The tradition handed down by the ancients says that there is no difference between reality and unreality. They think that reality that has not been reflected upon is “unreality.” (Vkp 3.2.7)

Reality, which is undifferentiated, assumes a differentiated form. It has no temporal distinctions; temporal distinctions are yet experienced. (Vkp 3.2.8)

Just as characteristics of objects can in no way belong to the awareness of those objects—the awareness, which is not at all like them, appears to be like them—in the same way, the modifications can in no way belong to reality—reality, which is not at all like them, appears to be like them. (Vkp 3.2.9–10)

True reality, which remains in the end when all forms are destroyed, is eternal, it is designated by the word, and it is not different from the word. (Vkp 3.2.11)

It does not exist and it does not not exist. It is not single and it is not multiple. It is not composed of parts and it is not divided into parts. It is not modified and it is not unmodified. (Vkp 3.2.12)

It does not exist and it exists. It is single and it is multiple. It is composed of parts and it is divided into parts. It is modified and it is not modified. (Vkp 3.2.13)

One sees that this single reality takes the form of word, object, and the connection between word and object. It is the visible, vision, the viewer, and the purpose of viewing. (Vkp 3.2.14)

Just as they call true gold that which remains in a bracelet when the transformation has gone, so they call true and highest nature that which remains when the transformations of the world have gone. (Vkp 3.2.15)

That highest nature is designated by all words, and the words themselves are not different from it. And even though they are not different from each other, there is a connection between the two as if they were different. (Vkp 3.2.16)

In the highest reality, which is unborn, eternal, and free from temporal sequence, birth and so on are observed in contradictory fashion, just as contradictory form may appear in the dream of one single consciousness: oneself–another, dear–despised, speaker–spoken purpose. (Vkp 3.2.17–18)

Bhartrihari does not insist that the absolute must be thought of as a substance. One can also think of it as a universal. Indeed, he begins the third book of his

Treatise on Sentences and Words (Vākyapadīya) with two verses, the second of which states:

When subtracting the concrete word meanings, two eternal word meanings are described for all words: universal or substance. (Vkp 3.1.2)

Thought of as a universal, the absolute is described in the following verses:

All things have two parts: a true and an untrue part. The true part is the universal; the individuals are taught to be untrue. (Vkp 3.1.32)

Existence itself, being divided into cows, etc. because of the differentiation of the things connected to it, is called the universal. All words are based on it. (Vkp 3.1.33)

They say that existence is the meaning of nouns and verbs. It is eternal. It is the Great Soul of mythology. Abstract nouns refer to it. (Vkp 3.1.34)

Existence, when it adopts sequence in the details, is called “action.” When the sequence disappears, it is called “entity.” (Vkp 3.1.35)

It is existence that adopts the six states with respect to the modifications of becoming. It becomes visible as a sequence through its own powers. (Vkp 3.1.36)

Sequence is also its own nature, in which time becomes visible, divided as it were into a before-and-after. (Vkp 3.1.37)

When things disappear, even not being there is existence. When the disappearance is sequential, we understand that the thing perishes. (Vkp 3.1.38)

Existence is called production when it has fallen from an earlier condition and has not yet reached the next state, because it depends on the interval between different forms. (Vkp 3.1.39)

Words, and following them the mind, separate things from each other, but the absolute is both single and divided:

People have language as authority, and they are followed in this by science. (Vkp 3.7.38)

In highest reality, however, singleness is not different from separateness. Reality appears as separate and as single. (Vkp 3.7.39)

Certainly, separateness is not different from singleness. Certainly, singleness is not different from separateness. (Vkp 3.7.40)

Sky, earth, wind, sun, oceans, rivers, directions: these are divisions of the reality of the inner organ that are situated outside the inner organ. (Vkp 3.7.41)

That single reality exists in the form of temporal divisions. For time is an entity that, though devoid of earlier and later, is observed as a sequence. (Vkp 3.7.42)

Among the powers that are responsible for these divisions we find time, which is accountable for temporal divisions. But behind these unreal divisions, there is the undivided highest reality, and the highest form of knowledge has that totality as object:

The purity of knowledge, which is not based on the senses, is the fact of having the totality of objects as form. Some say that an even higher purity of knowledge is without form altogether. (Vkp 3.3.56)

Observing the totality of things includes observing past and future:

The knowledge of past and future, in the case of those in whom the light has appeared and whose minds are not agitated, is not different from perception. (Vkp 1.37)

Reality, then, is undivided and all-encompassing, yet our phenomenal reality is the result of a division of that undivided reality. This position is a specific instance of a more general view that Bhartrihari adheres to: wholes are as real as their parts, or even more real than those parts. This is, of course, the exact opposite of the Buddhist position, according to which parts are more real than the wholes they constitute. Bhartrihari's point of view make good use of the position defended by certain contemporary philosophers—most notably the **Vaisheshikas**—who held that wholes exist beside their parts: a pot is one single thing, besides the parts that constitute it. Bhartrihari agrees:

The atom and the pot are both, by their very nature, without parts. (Vkp 3.6.15ab)

The fool looks upon the atom as having parts, and upon a whole as being connected with parts different from itself. (Vkp 2.236)

Bhartrihari goes one step further and maintains that the whole is not just as real as its parts, but actually more real. To show this, he concentrates on language, and most specifically on words and sentences. Much of the second book of his *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadiya*), as we have seen in section 2.2 above, deals with this issue.

Language has its role to play in the division of the absolute reality. Recall (Vkp 1.5) that the Veda, which is single but seems to consist of many paths, is an imitation of Brahma. Like Brahma, the Veda is divided, ultimately into sentences, words, and even simpler grammatical units. If the absolute is ultimately more real than its parts, the Veda too must be more real than its parts. What is more, the higher-ranking parts are more real than the lower-ranking ones. Concretely speaking: sentences and their meanings are more real than their constituent words and their meanings.

External objects are different from the consciousness or knowledge of the speaker:

By means of words that are pronounced, one gets to know the thought of the speaker, the external object, and the form of those words. (Vkp 3.3.1)

The distinction between the phenomenal world and private imagination is emphasized in the following stanzas:

Seeing is the same, whether one sees water or a mirage. Yet water is not a mirage, because touch, etc. are different. (Vkp 2.287)

Even though the seeing is the same in the case of a rope and a serpent, one must conclude that there is a difference between them because their effects are known to be different. (Vkp 2.288)

There is continuity of touching when the hand touches a real wheel. It is not like that in the case of a firebrand turned around, for that is destroyed when touched. (Vkp 2.291)

Touch and protection are provided by ramparts, walls, etc. in the case of real cities. In the case of imaginary cities of Gandharvas it is not like that. (Vkp 2.292)

A large surface is covered by recognized mountains and the like. Their reflection is seen to be situated on a small surface. (Vkp 2.294)

Real poison, etc. cause death, etc. They do not accomplish their goal in the same manner in dreams etc. (Vkp 2.295)

Among Buddhists and Vedantins, the private imaginations that Bhartrihari here rejects as unreal illustrate the imaginary character of the phenomenal world. Bhartrihari shows with their help that one must separate the world shared by all from the private world created by one's imagination.

For Bhartrihari, as we have seen, wholes are more real than their parts, and different from them. The existence of "wholes" is described as "miraculous," or even as "extremely miraculous":

The manner in which the essence, without parts and without sequence, of things that were not there before is revealed is extremely miraculous. (Vkp 3.3.81)

The manifestation of the effect, moved forward by the universal, occurs in the eternal action; it is somehow restrained in miraculous manner by the powers. (Vkp 3.9.17)

Just as a whole appears in miraculous manner, without sequence, without support, and without place, in the same way it disappears. (Vkp 3.9.26)

The miraculous aspect is no doubt the existence of “wholes” whose parts do not exist. Bhartrihari’s “wholes” extend over time as well as space:

What does not exist has no sequence, for it cannot be divided. The essence of that which does exist is the same. (Vkp 3.9.36)

Collections of words are more real than the constituent words. And the Veda, which is a large collection of sentences, is a single entity that is more real than its constituents:

All word meanings depend upon the sentence meaning. Sentence meanings that require other sentences, though, are not different from word meanings. (Vkp 2.325)

In a collection of sentences that expresses a single meaning and whose parts require one another, even the sentence meaning does not exist. (Vkp 2.76)

Though one, the Veda has been separately handed down as if it consists of several paths. (Vkp 1.5)

The difference in time between a fourth of a *mātrā*³⁸ and the ten books of the *Rgveda*, caused by the division of the quantity of time, does not exist in the word itself. (Vkp 3.9.66)

The relation between the absolute and the phenomenal world is the relation between the whole and its parts. In that sense the absolute and the phenomenal world, though real and unreal respectively, are not different from each other; they are two aspects of one and the same entity:

There is no unity without multiplicity, nor multiplicity without unity. In reality there is absolutely no difference between the two. (Vkp 3.6.26)

According to the tradition that has come down to us from the ancients, there is no difference between reality and nonreality. (Vkp 3.2.7ab)

Bhartrihari says more about the absolute in these verses:

Because we see pots, etc., the world is conceived of as limited; because things have a beginning, the eternal Brahma is conceived of as having a beginning. (Vkp 2.237)

Brahma appears separate from its powers, although it is not separate from them. (Vkp 1.2cd)

The whole, which is the collection of the powers and parts and has multiple aspects, exists always and in all forms. (Vkp 3.7.2)

Sometimes the absolute is described as the substance that the world is made of, as here:

Substance is not and it is not true that it is not; it is not one and it is not divided; it is not joined and it is not separated; it is not modified nor its opposite. (Vkp 3.2.12)

It does not exist and it exists; it is one and it is divided; it is joined and it is separated; it is modified and its opposite. (Vkp 3.2.13)

The relation between the absolute and the phenomenal world is essentially one of division. The undivided totality is real, single, and devoid of modification; its division, i.e., the phenomenal world, is unreal, multiform, separated, and modified.

Division, including temporal division, gives rise to the phenomenal world, its actions and forms:

It is because of time that actions are obtained through division, and because of space that all forms are obtained through division. All these divisions are based on ultimate reality, which is without divisions. (Vkp 3.7.153)

In it there is no division of time, yet a division of time is perceived. (Vkp 3.2.8cd)

It follows that ultimate reality is eternal and without before and after (Vkp 3.2.18); Brahma is without beginning and end (Vkp 1.1).

How do these unreal divisions in the absolute take place? Here the so-called “powers” play an important role, including “direction” or “space” and “time”: they cause spatial and temporal divisions. The things in themselves, which have not undergone the effect of these powers, have neither spatial nor temporal dimensions. The pot, as Bhartrihari puts it, is “without spatial dimension.” The powers join up to make things, which are yet, each of them, not multiple but unique:

Since it is certain that a single thing is made up of all the powers, the notion that things can be divided is useless. This is why all powers, i.e., substance, etc., that have different characters, accomplish man’s purposes when joined, but not when isolated. Just as the totality of sense organs, etc. is understood to be the body, similarly also in the case of the combination of relations and related things. (Vkp 3.1.22–24)

The “combination of relations and related things” produces ordinary things, which constitute organic wholes. This same comparison with the body as constituted of organs, etc. is used elsewhere in the *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadiya*) to clarify the relation between sentences and words:

Just as the activity of sense organs, which differ from each other and deal with different objects, is not possible without a body, in the same way words, which each have a different meaning, serve no purpose when separated from sentences. (Vkp 2.423–424)

Like the body, which, though single, is constituted of sense organs, etc., and like the sentence, which, though single, is constituted of words, each object in the phenomenal world, though single, is constituted of the powers of Brahma. This is the reason “an object, though without form, is perceived in the form of a conjunction.” (Vkp 2.426cd).

Phenomenal reality has metaphorical existence:

In verbal usage, the objects referred to by words have a different, metaphorical existence; this metaphorical existence shows the form of all things in all their states (i.e., past, present, and future). (Vkp 3.3.39)

No object designated by a word goes beyond this metaphorical existence, which is without contradictions even though its characteristics are different and contradictory; which all words refer to in order to explain contradictory things; which is not differentiated by time while resting on objects that are differentiated by time; and which is the cause of the use of all words. It has been shown in Patanjali's *Great Commentary* to be different from present existence. (Vkp 3.3.49–51)

A word that refers to this metaphorical existence can be connected with attributes that contradict it, as in the case of a negation, and elsewhere:

In this way, in order to make possible the negation of things that are to be negated, negation applies metaphorically to the things to which it refers. (Vkp 3.3.42)

“Production” is the name of obtaining one’s own being; what is to be obtained is obtained by something that exists. If something existing is produced, how can something nonexistent be produced? (Vkp 3.3.43)

Metaphorical existence is based on the mind:

Nonexistence preceding production is based on a state of the mind. The subject [i.e., “pot” in the sentence “the pot is produced”] becomes the agent of its own production, just as another subject that really exists is the agent of an action. (Vkp 3.7.105)

The absolute is without divisions, whereas phenomenal reality referred to by language is divided:

The knowers of the essence of the Veda base themselves on the truth of that object, in which seer, seen, and seeing are not differentiated. (Vkp 3.3.72)

With regard to things, whose reality is beyond differentiation, the world is followed in linguistic expressions that are based on conventions. (Vkp 3.6.25)

Heaven, earth, wind, sun, oceans, rivers, the directions, these are divisions of the reality belonging to the inner organ, even though they are situated outside it. (Vkp 3.7.41)

Note that this last verse does not prove that Bhartrihari was an idealist, that he denied the existence of the outside world. It rather states that the *divisions* of the

outside world are produced by the inner organ, and therefore by words, as we will see.

These few citations show that, despite important differences, Bhartrihari shared one idea with the Buddhists. Both they and he believed that the phenomenal world is not real and owes its form to the influence of words. This idea had been an essential part of Buddhist thought since long before Bhartrihari, as we have seen. It is, however, quite the opposite of the **Vaisheshika** position—that words do not correspond to an unreal but rather to the real world. Bhartrihari accepted the position of the Buddhists, but adapted it to his own requirements.

For Bhartrihari, the language involved is Sanskrit, the divine language:

This divine speech has been muddled by incompetent speakers. (Vkp 1.182ab)

Words separate things from each other, and in so doing create the phenomenal world:

By force of the fact that understanding has the form of words, every produced thing is distinguished from other things. (Vkp 1.133cd)

Words are the only basis of the true nature of things and of their use. (Vkp 1.13ab)

Those who know the nature of things see the power of words. (Vkp 1.171cd)

The power residing in words is the basis of this whole universe. . . . Since the difference between different musical notes is perceived only when explained by words, all categories of objects are based on the measures of words. (Vkp 1.122–23)

It is observed in the case of a torch wheel, etc. that the form of an object is perceived on account of words, even though the basis of the perception is entirely different. (Vkp 1.142)

There is no cognition in the world that does not follow words. All knowledge appears as if permeated by words. (Vkp 1.131)

It is from words that things proceed; words create the distinctions in the phenomenal world. (Vkp 3.14.198ab)

The words of the language of the Veda, i.e., Sanskrit, correspond to items in the phenomenal world. The same applies to the sentences of the Veda, and therefore to

the rules and injunctions they give expression to: these tasks and obligations are parts of the world, not something imposed upon it.

Different sciences unfold, based on the primary and secondary limbs of that Veda, which is the organizing principle of the worlds, sciences that are the causes of the mental traces of knowledge. (Vkp 1.10)

Those who know the sacred tradition know that this universe is a transformation of the word. In the beginning this universe proceeds exclusively from Vedic verses. (Vkp 1.124)

The texts of tradition [*smṛti*, i.e., texts that are not Vedic in the strict sense], which are multiform and have visible as well as invisible aims, have been arranged by knowers of the Veda on the basis of the Veda with the help of indicators. (Vkp 1.7)

Even if all philosophies had disappeared and there were no other authors, the world would not deviate from the rules expressed by the Veda and by the tradition. (Vkp 1.149)

All duties in the world are based on words; even a child knows them because of mental impressions acquired earlier. (Vkp 1.129)

Whether the intuition is directly produced by the word or by the result of impulses, no one deviates from it where duties are concerned. (Vkp 2.146)

Under the influence of that intuition even the animals act. . . . Who changes the sound of the male cuckoo in spring? How have animals learned to build nests and the like? Who induces wild animals and birds to eat, love, hate, swim, and so on, activities well known among the descendants of each species? (Vkp 2.147cd & 149–150)

Since knowledge is natural, the traditional religious and scientific treatises serve no purpose whatsoever. (Vkp 1.150ab)

With regard to the two positions “this is virtuous” and “this is sinful,” there is little use for religious and scientific treatises right down to the untouchables. (Vkp 1.40)

The direct link between words and things explains the effects words can have on things:

Just as it is observed that colors, etc. have well-defined capacities with regard to certain things, in the same way one observes that words have well-defined capacities to remove snake poison, etc. Just as they have a capacity to do this (i.e., to remove snake poison, etc.) it should be understood that they also have a capacity to produce merit. Therefore, good people desiring elevation should use correct words. (Vkp 1.155–156)

On the basis of traditional knowledge received from the well educated, correct words are established as a means toward merit. While there is no difference in expressing the meaning, incorrect words are the opposite (i.e., they are not a means toward merit). (Vkp 1.27)

Words, then, shape Bhartrihari's world as much as they shape the world of the Buddhists, but in opposite ways. For Bhartrihari, words divide an ultimately indivisible absolute whole into ultimately unreal entities, whereas for the Buddhists, they unite ultimate constituents into equally unreal entities.

Given the role of language in creating phenomenal reality, the absolute is beyond the reach of language:

Knowledge arising from a defect in the organs of perception and the supernormal knowledge of seers, verbal usage does not take place on the basis of these two; words are based on everyday life. (Vkp 2.297)

What the seers see and what is established in highest reality; this is not expressed in language, it is not based on words. (Vkp 2.139)

To have the form of the totality of objects, without dependence on a support, is purity of cognition. Some say that if it has a purity that is without any form whatsoever, it is still higher than that other purity. It is indeed a distortion of cognition when it follows an outer form. It acquires a kind of impurity, which arises from the close connection when there is commingling with objects. (Vkp 3.3.56–57)

The pure knowledge here referred to is the goal to be attained, because it leads to liberation. But how is it obtained? Traditional knowledge and grammar play an important role in the process, but the superior insight arrives spontaneously:

Even the knowledge of the seers is preceded by tradition. (Vkp 1.30cd)

Grammar is the door to liberation, the cure of the impurities of speech. (Vkp 1.14ab)

The purification of the word is the perfection of the highest self. He who knows the truth of the employment of the word attains the immortal Brahman. (Vkp 1.144)

It is only nescience that is described in the different sciences of grammar through different modes of derivation. Real knowledge, in contrast, arises spontaneously, free from the alternatives of tradition. Just as an effect is inexplicable, not being related to its causes,³⁹ just so real knowledge is inexplicable; it only appears to be obtained by means of the science of grammar. (Vkp 2.233–234)

Why should knowledge that is beyond speech lead to liberation? There was only one movement in early classical India, beside Bhartrihari himself, that accepted knowledge of the kind specified by Bhartrihari as leading to the highest aim: Mahayana Buddhism. Since this situation can be explained in the case of Mahayana Buddhism as the result of a historical development, whereas Bhartrihari's Brahmanical background does not help to explain the presence of these ideas in his philosophy, it seems justified to conclude that Bhartrihari, in this respect, was influenced by Mahayana Buddhism. However, Bhartrihari never borrows ideas without thoroughly adjusting them to their new surroundings. Many of his ideas may be Buddhist in origin; together they constitute Bhartrihari's philosophy, which, as such, is not Buddhist at all. His is the philosophy of a traditional Brahman, who manages to adjust Buddhist and other ideas in such a way that they come to contribute to a Veda-centered view of the world.

4.3. OPINIONS ABOUT THE VEDA

Kumarila on the Veda as the Body of a Conscious Being

Alternatively, in the case of intention and nonintention, it is the aim of the souls that are present in the collections called *Rgveda*, etc. that is at stake.

Conscious selves, residing in bodies made of the great elements, wish to express one meaning and do not wish to express another one.

The desire that is hidden inside them is known, through the power of the word, to those who reflect upon the meaning of the statements uttered by them; this inner desire becomes as it were external and visible.

The different kinds of bodies of those selves that are not the Highest Self are observed to be in agreement with the power of karma, as a result of the variety of possible creations from primordial matter.

The bodies that mainly consist of parts of earth, helped by additional parts of water, etc., are seen on earth and are of four kinds: born from the womb, etc.

Bodies made of water, connected with other elements, and with transparent limbs, are stated to be found in the world of Varuna, i.e., the ocean.

Many living creatures with light and subtle bodies made of wind, supported by bits of earth, etc., roam in the sky.

Bodies mainly made of fire and accompanied by clear lights flourish in heaven on account of the fire of the sun that is scattered there.

It has indeed been stated in the supplement to the statement concerning the sacrifice to the stars that “the lights that are the stars belong to those virtuous people who go to heaven.” And the person who goes to heaven by a straight road has been described by Manu as “made of fire.”

Just as there are selves in bodies made of these elements, there is also, according to the scriptures, a Highest Self that has ether [the fifth element] as body. It is constantly honored by libations of water and is described in the Vedic words “Brahma is ether.”

The qualities of the great elements—color, touch, etc.—are the basis for experiencing the bodies with regard to each of the selves.⁴⁰

And this scripture called Veda and described as “the Brahma that is word” is in its totality inhabited by the single Highest Self.

And the separate bodies called *Rgveda*, etc., being experienced as bodies by certain selves, they too are constantly endowed with consciousness.

The intention or nonintention of those selves, which have the hidden desire to communicate sentence meanings, is known by virtue of the power of the word.

All that has been grasped by the power of injunction is intended, but that which has been abandoned by the power of injunction must be explained as not being intended.

Also the intention or nonintention of the Self of the Brahma that is word, i.e., of the Self that is in agreement with the Veda as a whole, must in the same way be formulated on the basis of the power of injunction.

In this manner the explanation of intention and nonintention with regard to the meaning of the Veda, even though the Veda is without beginning and end, can also take place by taking the word “intention” in its literal sense.⁴¹

The *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* on the Eternality of the Veda

In the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* (*Discussion of Vedānta*) we read:

The Vedic Interpreters who occupy themselves with the sacrifice [i.e., the ritual *mīmāṃsakas*] maintain that the Vedas are valid because they are eternal and

therefore free from all human faults. In our opinion [i.e., that of the Vedantins], however, the Veda is not eternal, because it has an origin.

...

[*Objection:*] The fact that the Vedas have an origin and have been made by God proves that they have an author; such being the case, your position according to which the Vedas have no author is shown to be incorrect.

[*Reply:*] Not so, for “having an author” does not, to begin with, mean “being uttered by a person.” Nor does it mean “having an origin that depends on a person.”

To explain: at the beginning of creation God made the Veda in such a way that its composition is identical to the composition of the Veda established during the previous creation, not a different Veda. The Vedas have, as a result, no author in the sense that they are not the object of an utterance that is independent of a similar utterance [made during an earlier creation]. The utterance of the *Mahābhārata*, etc., on the other hand, is independent of a similar utterance [during an earlier creation], and therefore these texts do have an author. In this way tradition has been defined as being divided into parts that have and those that do not have an author.⁴²

Instead of a beginningless tradition of recitation, the Vedanta of the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* accepts a beginningless series of creations. In each of these creations the Veda (or the Vedas; the text appears to use both expressions interchangeably) is newly introduced, but in exactly the same form as before. The result is that the Veda may not be eternal (it supposedly does not exist during the periods separating succeeding creations), but it certainly is beginningless and therefore without author.

4.4. THE WORD AS MEANS OF INFERENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

Prashasta's *Compendium of the Characteristics of the Categories* (*Padārthaadharmasaṅgraha*, also known as *Praśastapādabhāṣya*) is brief about the word as means of inferential knowledge:

Words and other putative means of knowledge too are included in the category inference, because they work the same way. Just as, for someone who knows the established link, e.g., between smoke and fire, an inference relating to something that cannot be observed (fire) arises from the undoubted observation of the inferential mark (smoke) and the memory of the knowledge of the link between the two, just so also from words, etc. Sacred scripture, whether it be the Veda or the traditional texts, derives its reliability from the authority of those who pronounced these texts, as

confirmed by the sutra “The authority of sacred scripture is derived from the fact that it has been pronounced by those speakers.”⁴³

The commentator Shridhara explains what kind of inference words give rise to in his *Plantain Tree of Logic* (*Nyāyakandali*):

First one understands from the word “cow,” when uttered, that the speaker wishes to communicate the object that has a hump, etc. [i.e., a cow], because we observe in ourselves that the uttering of the word “cow” is preceded by the wish to communicate the object that has a hump, etc. There is inference of that object by means of the wish to communicate that object. Formally the inference takes the following shape:

—The person who speaks has the feature that is to be inferred, viz., the wish to communicate the object that has a hump, etc.

—because that person is the agent of uttering the word “cow”

—like I myself.

[*Objection*:] No object is established on the basis of the wish to communicate it, for we observe that unreliable people can have this wish even in the absence of that object.

[*Response*:] If you do not accept that an object can be established on the basis of the wish of a speaker to communicate it, how then can it be established? On the basis of the word itself, i.e., without the use of an inference? That will not do, because words are used without corresponding objects, whether through error or the intention to deceive.

[*Objection*:] Let us then say that the notion of an object arises from a word uttered by a reliable person.

[*Response*:] This is the same as saying that knowledge of an object arises from the mere intention of a reliable person.

Granted that the word is an inferential marker, there can, unlike with smoke and fire, be deviation between a word and its meaning, as when one and the same word is used in different meanings in different regions. With regard to this there is the following rule. Smoke is the inferential mark of fire on account of the natural connection that links the two. The word, though, is like a gesture that communicates information. Given that it proceeds by means of a convention created by people, it is an inferential mark only of that to which it has been assigned by someone, through the intermediary of knowledge of the speaker’s wish to communicate. It follows that something can be definitely known from the word, in accordance with the fact that that word has been used by a reliable person, just as something can be known from

a gesture, because no deviation can arise between the word uttered by a reliable person and its object, just as no deviation can arise between smoke that is characterized by features such as moving constantly upward, and fire.

[Question:] Why don't you postulate that the word communicates its object directly, rather than through the intermediary of the speaker's wish to communicate?

[Reply:] Because no connection exists between a word and its object, and because, if one accepts that something can communicate something unconnected, this would extend beyond the acceptable.

[Objection:] The connection between word and object is natural.

[Reply:] No, because a single word communicates various things in different regions. For example, the word *caura* means "thief" among the noble speakers of Sanskrit, "devotee" elsewhere.

[Objection:] When the word is used by the noble speakers of Sanskrit, it is expressive; elsewhere, when used in accordance with a convention, it is an inferential mark.

[Reply:] This is not correct. The word *caura* calls up the notion "thief" and "devotee" equally; there is no reason to make a distinction so that it is expressive with regard to "thief" and an inferential marker with regard to "devotee."

—The notion of an object derived from the word *caura* is, also in the case of the noble speakers of Sanskrit, preceded by an inferential marker

—because it is a notion produced by the word *caura*

—just like the notion produced by the word *caura* that is in use among the southerners, as agreed by both parties.

Moreover, there is no proof that there is a natural connection between words and objects.⁴⁴

Jayanta Bhatta's *Nyāyamañjarī* (*Sprout of Logic*) adds the following:

It has been said by Dignaga, "The word is a means of inference, because of the general feature that the speech of a reliable person is not false."⁴⁵

That has been extremely well stated. For word and inference have different realms of applicability. For the authoritativeness of the notion of the object of a word is proved by reason of the fact that the speech of a reliable person communicates it. That notion itself is not produced by that reason. As Kumarila said:⁴⁶

The truthfulness of a sentence by reason of the fact that it is the speech of a reliable person is one thing, the meaning of a sentence is something different; and it is the meaning of the sentence that is known before its truthfulness comes into question.

Therefore, if the truthfulness of a sentence is inferred from the fact that it is the speech of a reliable person, how can the understanding of the meaning of a sentence be an inference?

The appearance of notions upon hearing the words both of reliable and unreliable people is the same. . . .

Do not say that, without determining its authoritativeness, a sentence will be a mere appearance, for the understanding of the meaning of words is established by experience.

These considerations also reject the claim that words have the speaker's wish to communicate as object, for what is called the wish to communicate is not the object expressed by the word. On the contrary, only the meaning is expressed by the word.

It can be observed that the word is an inferential mark of the speaker's wish to communicate, just as it can be an inferential mark of ether, being a product of ether.⁴⁷ It is not expressive of the speaker's wish to communicate, nor of ether.

From a word, when uttered, first a cognition arises whose object is that which is expressed by the word. Subsequently this cognition may inform us about the speaker's wish to communicate.⁴⁸

4.5. A BUDDHIST OPINION ABOUT THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

Those Buddhists whose sacred scriptures were in Pali, came to believe that Pali, which they called Magadhi, was the root language of all other languages, and the most natural form of expression. The *Sammohavinodanī* (*Dispeller of Delusion*), commentary to the *Vibhaṅga* of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, ascribes the following opinion to a monk called Tissadatta:

Suppose the mother is a Damili, the father an Andhaka. Their newborn child, if it hears first the speech of the mother, it will speak the language of the Damilas. If it hears first the speech of the father, it will speak the language of the Andhakas. But if it doesn't hear the speech of either of them, it will speak the language of the Magadhas. Also someone who is born in a big jungle, devoid of villages, where no one else speaks, he too will by his own nature start to produce words and speak this same language of the Magadhas. In hell, among the animals, in the realm of ghosts, in the world of men, and in the world of gods, everywhere this same language of the Magadhas is preponderant. The remaining eighteen languages—Otta, Kirata, Andhaka, Yonaka, Damila, etc.—undergo change in these realms. Only this language of the Magadhas, rightly called the language of Brahma and noble language, does not change.⁴⁹

The *Mohavicchedanī* (*Destroyer of Doubt*), which dates from the twelfth-thirteenth century, goes to the extent of stating that all other languages are derived from Magadhi:

Magadhi was first predominant in the hells and in the world of men and that of the gods. And afterward the regional languages such as Andhaka, Yonaka, Damila, etc., as well as the eighteen great languages, Sanskrit, etc., arose out of it.⁵⁰



CHAPTER FIVE

Self-Contradictory Sentences

5.1. TEXTS ON SATKĀRYAVĀDA AND LANGUAGE

Sāṃkhyakārikā (*Verses on Sāṃkhya*) 9:

The effect pre-exists in the cause, because one cannot make what does not exist, because one always grasps a material cause, because not everything is produced from a given cause, because something can only make that which it is capable of producing, and because a cause is a cause.

Yuktidīpikā (*Light Through Reason*) thereon:

[Opponent:] Also for the following reason the effect does not pre-exist in the cause: because the words “production” and “existing” contradict each other. The word “production” gives expression to the process of becoming that belongs to the object that was previously not there. The word “existing,” on the other hand, gives expression to being the cause of a different activity altogether, viz., being rather than becoming. If production were to belong to something that exists already, the two would express the same meaning, i.e., there would be no difference between being and becoming. That cannot be the case. It follows that it is incorrect to state that something existing is produced.

...

[The author of the *Yuktidīpikā*:] The argument according to which the word “production” gives expression to the process of becoming that belongs to the object that was previously not there is mere wishful thinking. Because there is disagreement

about this. While there is disagreement whether “production” has something existing or nonexisting as object, the position of him who states that the word “production” expresses the becoming existent of something that was previously nonexistent is truly extraordinary. . . . All this is inappropriate. Why? Because the word “production” refers to configurations. It has already been pointed out that these words—“production” and its synonyms—are used when an entity adopts a new configuration, which is not, however, a different object. This is seen in the world, as in “he makes, he produces, he creates a hilt, a bell, an earring.” [In all these cases the same metal is put into different configurations.] . . . These same words are not used when we refer to things that are well established in the two extremes: being totally nonexistent or being eternally existent. An example of a totally nonexistent thing is a hare’s horn; it cannot be produced. It follows that you, the opponent, end up with something undesired.

We can cite here the following verse:

If you accept that nonexistence is the cause for the production of pots and so on, you end up having to accept the production of a hare’s horn, because it is no different from your other cases.

In this way it has been established that the effect pre-exists in the cause.¹

The *satkāryavāda* was not limited to Samkhya. The same position is taken in Shankara’s *Commentary on the Brahmasūtra* (*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*), which justifies it as follows:

If the effect did not exist prior to its coming into being, the coming into being would be without agent and empty. For coming into being is an activity, and must therefore have an agent, like such activities as going, etc. It would be contradictory to say that something is an activity but has no agent. It could be thought that the coming into being of a pot, though mentioned, would not have the pot as agent, but rather something else. . . . *If that were true, one would say “the potter and other causes come into being” instead of “the pot comes into being.”* In the world, however, when one says “the pot comes into being” no one understands that also the potter, etc. come into being; for these are understood to have already come into being.²

This passage, and the italicized sentence in particular, show the close link between *satkāryavāda* and language in Shankara’s mind.

Another early Samkhya text, the *Yogaśāstra* (*Science of Yoga*), does not adopt the *satkāryavāda* but rather remains close to the Buddhist doctrine according to which past and present exist (*sarvāstivāda*). This illustrates the proximity of *satkāryavāda*

and *sarvāstivāda*. Indeed, since there is no further specification in the text, it can be read as an expression either of *sarvāstivāda* or of an extended *satkāryavāda*. But either way, it is clear that the author of the *Yogaśāstra* had an answer to the difficulties associated with “the potter makes a pot.” For “the cause of an already existent fruit is capable of making it present, but not of creating something new.” Since the pot (i.e., the fruit) is already existent in the clay (i.e., the cause), the latter is capable of making the former present:

What does not exist does not arise, and what exists does not pass away; in view of this, how do the unconscious impressions, which arise as real things, pass away?

The past and the future exist in their own nature, because properties are divided along the three times. (*Yogasūtra* 4.12)

That which will be manifested is future, that which has been manifested is past, that which is engaged in its own activity is present. These three things constitute the object of knowledge. And if this threefold object did not exist in its own nature, this knowledge, which would be without an object, would not arise. Hence the sutra says: “The past and the future exist in their own nature.” Moreover, if the fruit of an action that leads to enjoyment, or of an action that leads to liberation, were nonexistent when it is yet to arise, then the good conduct that has such fruit as its goal or cause would be useless. And the cause of an already existent fruit is capable of making it present, but not of creating something new. The cause, when it is established, performs a specific service for that which is caused, but does not produce anything new.³

5.2. THE ĀGAMĀŚĀSTRA (SCIENCE OF TRADITION) ON ARISING

In their debates with one another, some teachers maintain the arising of what exists; other intelligent ones maintain the arising of what does not exist.

Nothing that exists can arise—what does not exist cannot arise either; arguing thus, followers of nonduality teach nonarising.

We approve of the nonarising taught by them; we are not in contradiction with them. Listen to how there is no contradiction.

Disputants claim the production of a thing that has not already been produced. How will something that has been neither produced nor destroyed become destructible?⁴

In ultimate truth, nothing arises.⁵

The birth of something existent is possible through illusion, but not in reality. For someone who thinks that something arises in reality, it is an arisen thing that arises.

The birth of something nonexistent is possible neither through illusion nor in reality. The son of a barren woman is born neither in truth nor through illusion.⁶

The commentator Shankara (perhaps the same as the Vedantin of that name, but here representing a different position) appears to correctly present “Gaudapada’s” intentions in the following passage:

[Objection:] A pot arises from clay, and a son from a father.

[Reply:] It is true that among uninstructed people, we find the idea and the verbal expression “That arises.” This verbal expression and this idea are examined by people of discernment, who ask: “Do these two represent the truth, or are they false?” The thing characterized as a pot, a son, etc., which is the object of the verbal expression and the idea, insofar as it is examined, is only a word. For the Veda says: “a support for words.” If a thing is existent, it does not arise, for it exists already, like clay, the father, etc. If it is nonexistent, it still does not arise, precisely because it does not exist, like the horn of a hare, etc. If it is both existent and nonexistent, again it does not arise, for it is impossible for a single thing to be contrary to itself. Hence it is established that nothing arises.⁷

5.3. VATSYAYANA AND OTHERS ON THE PROBLEM OF PRODUCTION

Vatsyayana first presents the position of an opponent:

Next the points of view of certain opponents will be shown:

An entity arises out of a nonentity, because it does not appear without having destroyed the preceding entity. (Nyāyasūtra 4.1.14)

The position taken here is that something existent arises out of something nonexistent. Why? Because it appears having destroyed what precedes. A sprout is produced after having destroyed the seed, not without destroying the seed. If the destruction of the seed were not the cause of the sprout, the sprout would be produced even without destroying the seed.

Here it is responded:

This claim is wrong, because of the contradiction it involves. (Nyāyasūtra 4.1.15)

The claim according to which an entity appears after having destroyed the preceding entity is inappropriate, because of the contradiction it involves. That which destroys cannot appear after having destroyed, because it is already there. And that which appears cannot destroy while it has not yet appeared and is not yet there.

There is no contradiction, because words expressive of grammatical actors can refer to the past and the future. (*Nyāyasūtra* 4.1.16)

Words expressive of actors can be used with regard to things that are past and future and not therefore present. Secondary usages of words are seen all over, as in: “a son will be born”; “he rejoices at the son that will be born”; “he gives a name to the son that will be born”; “there was a jar”; “he mourns over the broken jar”; “the pieces of the broken jar”; “sons not born bring sorrow to a father.” What is the secondary usage here? Immediate succession. By virtue of immediate succession we arrive at the meaning of appearance after having destroyed: the sprout that will appear destroys the seed. The agency of the sprout is secondary.

No, because there is no production out of destroyed things. (*Nyāyasūtra* 4.1.17)

No sprout is produced out of a destroyed seed. It follows that an entity does not arise out of a nonentity.

There is no contradiction, because a sequence is taught. (*Nyāyasūtra* 4.1.18)

The sequence is the limitation as to the order in which destruction and appearance occur. That sequence is taught to be the cause of the arising of an entity out of a nonentity. And the importance of that sequence is not denied. However, a substance is produced, not out of a nonentity, but out of an alternative arrangement of parts whose earlier arrangement has been destroyed, when that earlier arrangement has ceased to exist. The parts of a seed, in which for whatever reason movement has come about, abandon their earlier arrangement and adopt a new arrangement; out of this new arrangement the sprout is produced. It can indeed be observed that the parts of the seed and the contacts between them are the causes for the production of the sprout. When the earlier arrangement has not disappeared, the parts of the seed cannot adopt a new arrangement. This is why there is a sequence, a limitation as to the order in which destruction and appearance occur. It follows that no entity is produced out of a nonentity. And there is no cause for the production of a sprout other than the parts of the seed. That is why the material cause of the sprout is the seed and nothing else.⁸

This passage gives expression to the position of an opponent. It yet contains an important observation that we can attribute to the authors of *Sūtra* and *Bhāṣya*, viz., that words expressive of grammatical actors (i.e., the agents, objects, etc. of a sentence) can refer to the past and the future; they do not have to designate something that is present in the situation depicted.

Sūtra and *Bhāṣya* take up the question of production again in the following passage:

That which is being produced, before its production,

It is not nonexistent, nor existent, nor existent and nonexistent, because existent and nonexistent have different properties. (*Nyāyasūtra* 4.1.48/47)

Before its production, something that is about to be produced is not nonexistent, because of the limitation as to the material cause. For something to be produced, the appropriate material cause has to be taken, for something cannot have just anything as material cause. This limitation excludes therefore a nonentity.

Something about to be produced is not existent either, because the production of something that exists already before its production is not possible.

Nor can it be existent and nonexistent, because existent and nonexistent have different properties. The word “existent” affirms the existence of a thing, the word “nonexistent” denies it. There is a contradiction, a difference of fundamental characteristics between the two, and because of this contradiction they cannot apply to the same thing.

Before its production, something that is about to be produced does not exist, that is for sure. Why?

Because we see the production and destruction of things. (*Nyāyasūtra* 4.1.49/48)

Concerning the statement [under *sutra* 47/48] that the effect is not nonexistent before its production because of the limitation as to the material cause:

That effect, though established in the mind, does not exist (*Nyāyasūtra* 4.1.50/49)

Before its production, the effect that has a specific cause is established by the mind—thinking “this, but not everything, is capable of producing that”—on the basis of its experience of the restrictions governing production. For this reason the limitation as to the material cause becomes possible. If, however, the effect is already there before its production, there will be no production.⁹

The end of this passage is important: The pot, in “the potter makes a pot,” does not exist objectively, but it is “established in (or by) the mind.” The word “pot” refers therefore to a mental pot, not to a pot made of clay.

This is not Vatsyayana’s final solution. Following the *Aphorisms on Logic* (*Nyāyasūtra*), he holds that the meaning of a word covers all of the following three: individual, form, and universal.¹⁰ The third is particularly useful for the problem at hand. The universal “potness” being existent and eternal, it is already there when the pot comes into being or is made. Schools like Nyaya did not therefore have to accept the *satkāryavāda* and chose rather the opposite position, the *asatkāryavāda*: the pot is not yet there when it is being made.

Vaisheshika ended up adopting the same position, but after a long period of attempting other solutions. For a while this school thought that metaphorical usage would explain the difficulty. This is not the position held in its surviving texts, so we have to base this conclusion on isolated remarks in some texts, one of which does not even belong to the school.

A passage from the *Commentary That Sheds Light on the Exposition* (*Vibhāṣāprabhāvṛtti*), a commentary on the *Abhidharmadīpa*, a text of the Buddhist Sarvastivada school, attributes the following position to the Vaisheshikas:

The Vaisheshika thinks as follows: The substance “pot,” which is not present in the potsherds out of which it will be constituted, and the substance “cloth,” which is not present in the threads out of which it will be constituted, come into being as a result of the contact between the potsherds and that of the threads respectively. And through secondary thought one speaks of the existence of the agent of coming into being, existence that has as object a state of the pot that is opposite to the present.¹¹

Mysterious as this passage may be, it states quite clearly that the pot exists prior to its coming into being, thanks to a secondary thought. No further details are provided.

The position here attributed to Vaisheshika is confirmed in the *Celestial Commentary* (*Vyomavati*) of Vyomashiva, a commentary on Prashasta’s *Compendium of the Characteristics of the Categories* (*Padārthadharmasaṅgraha*). In a critique of the Samkhya position, Vyomashiva makes the following observation:

One should consider the designation “sprout” in “the sprout arises,” as well as “pot” in “make a pot,” to be metaphorical, because there exists an obstacle to primary denotation. To explain: if one regarded the already existent pot as the object of the act of making, and the already existent sprout as the agent of the act of arising, arising would be contradicted, and the action of the actants [*kāraka*] would be useless, because the pot and the sprout would already exist. . . . It follows that, as something existent cannot be the thing that arises, the sprout is metaphorically the agent of its own arising and the pot the object of the act of making. In this way these designations are differently established.¹²

Metaphorical existence was therefore the solution that at least certain thinkers of the school accepted before they came to adopt its classical position.

However, there are indications that earlier texts of the Vaisheshika school, which have not survived, argued for a different solution to the problem of origination. When a pot comes into being, there is a moment at which the pot comes into existence, in the literal Vaisheshika sense that the universal called “existence” comes to inhere in the pot. This suggests that there is a pot before it gains existence in the literal Vaisheshika sense. In other words, there are two kinds of being: simple “being” and strict “existence.” Vaisheshika thinkers played with these ideas and postulated that there is already a pot (in the sense of simple “being”) when the pot comes into existence, but it takes a little while before the universal “existence” comes to inhere in it. In other words, there is a pot in the situation described by “the pot is produced” or “the potter makes a pot.”

Most of the passages that inform us about this earlier position of Vaisheshika occur in a Jaina text, the *Wheel of Standpoints with Twelve Spokes* (*Dvādaśāranyacakra*) of Mallavadin. Some of these are highly technical and cannot be presented here. The following two are relatively straightforward and present Mallavadin’s familiar criticism of the *asatkāryavāda*, followed by the early Vaisheshika response.

First Mallavadin’s familiar criticism:

If the effect is not present in its causes, it would not come into being, for there would be no agent of the operation of coming into being at hand, just as in the case of a sky flower. Or alternatively, also a sky flower would come into being, because there would be no agent of the operation of coming into being at hand, just as in the case of an effect.¹³

The Vaisheshika responds:

Unlike the sky flower, the effect, having come into being through its own “being” [*astitva*], becomes, even without the relationship of inherence with the universal “existence” [*sattā*]), a support for that universal.¹⁴

5.4. BHARTRIHARI ON THE PROBLEM OF PRODUCTION

Bhartrihari articulates the problem in the following verse:

What we call origination is the fact of attaining one’s own nature, and only something existent attains what is to be attained. If this thing exists already, why does it arise? But if it does not exist, how does it arise? (Vkp 3.3.43)

At some places Bhartrihari states that words such as “pot” in “the potter makes a pot” refer to the universal:

Nothing arises that has no universal; the universal incites the cause to manifest itself. Universals, having entered into the causes, whether eternal or noneternal, manifest themselves again and again somewhere in the effects. The universal is also the means of realization for a grammatical object that is being produced; it incites the action to bring about the object in which it resides. (Vkp 3.1.25–27)

In the sentence “he makes a pot,” the word “pot” is the grammatical object and refers to the universal residing in the pot (“potness”). This universal already exists; it incites the causes, i.e., the elements that will make up the pot or contribute to its arising, to manifest the pot. The universal, we may recall, is eternal.

Elsewhere in his *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*) Bhartrihari adopts a position that is close to the *satkāryavāda*. Words, he there maintains, refer to substances, and substances are eternal:

Gold, for example, is associated with transient forms, but terms such as “necklace,” etc., express only its pure state; the distinction introduced by these forms prevents the terms “necklace,” etc. from having all of these meanings. . . . Likewise, the word that expresses such forms expresses only what is eternal in them, for it has the nature of essential reality. (Vkp 3.2.4–6)

The chapter concludes with the assertion that reality, which is without origin, without before and after, is nonetheless perceived as if it did have an origin, etc.:

Likewise, one perceives that reality, which is without origin, eternal, and devoid of prior and posterior, has an origin, etc., although this is contradictory. (Vkp 3.2.18)

Clearly, on this view, the word “pot” in “the pot comes into being” refers to the substance that will make up the pot, and the sentence presents no difficulty of understanding.

Bhartrihari offers yet another solution to the problem of origination, one already met with in section 4.2. According to this solution, words do not refer to absolute reality, whether in the form of a universal or a substance, but to a metaphorical existence. One verse puts it thus:

In linguistic usage, it is another existence, of a metaphorical nature, that belongs to the objects of words; this metaphorical existence shows the form of all things in all states. (Vkp 3.3.39)

The expression “in all states” doubtless refers to past, present, and future. We can immediately see that if words refer to their objects in the future or the past, the central problem of the arising of things is no more. All one has to do is say that the word “pot,” in “the pot comes into being,” designates the future pot that does not yet exist, and one rids oneself of all contradictions.

Bhartrihari has one more solution to the problem of arising. It finds expression in the following verse:

On the assumption that the meaning of the word is the individual, it is established that the grammatical object that is being produced, for example sound, is the means; this is done on the basis of mental form. (Vkp 3.7.7)

In other words, in the sentence “he produces a sound,” the word “sound” refers to a mental reality that, unlike the sound itself, exists when the sentence is spoken. Another verse in the same chapter expresses the solution just as clearly:

Nonexistence prior to arising is based on a condition of the mind. The subject [e.g., “pot” in the sentence “the pot comes into being”] becomes the agent of its arising, just as another subject, which really exists, is the agent of an action. (Vkp 3.7.105)

In other words, the word “pot” refers to a mental reality, which exists in the mind and nowhere else.

5.5. ANEKĀNTAVĀDA

One relatively early passage in Jaina literature that expresses the doctrine according to which reality is manifold (*anekāntavāda*) occurs in Jinabhadra’s *Special Commentary on the Āvaśyaka Sūtra* (*Viśeṣāvaśyakabhāṣya*; sixth century CE). The passage first gives voice to an opponent:

What has been produced is not being produced, because it is already there, like a pot. But if you accept that also that which has been produced is being produced, you will have infinite regress. What has not been produced is not being produced either, because it is not there, like the horn of the donkey. And if you accept that also that

which has not been produced is being produced, you will have to accept that nonentities, such as the horn of a donkey, etc., can be produced. That which has been both produced *and* not produced is not produced either, because the problems bound up with both positions would accrue.¹⁵

This position is subsequently criticized. The following passage clarifies Jinabhadra's position:

In this world there are things that are being produced having been produced already, others being produced not having been produced already, others being produced having been produced and not having been produced, others again being produced while being produced, and some not being produced at all, according to what one wishes to express. . . . For example, a pot is being produced having been produced in the form of clay, etc., because it is made of that. That same pot is being produced not having been produced concerning its particular shape, because that was not there before. The pot is produced having been produced *and* not produced at the same time with respect to its color, etc., and its specific form, because it is not different from these things. It is produced while being produced because an action can take place only in the present moment, given that a real action is not possible by reason of the fact that the past has vanished and the future is not yet present.¹⁶

The beginning of this passage gives expression to *anekāntavāda* in at least one of its usual forms: "there are things that are produced having been produced already, and others that are produced not having been produced already; there are those that are produced having been produced *and* not produced at the same time, and still others that are produced while being produced." Reality is manifold, and this solves the problem of the potter and his pot.

5.6. JAINISM'S DIVINE SOUND (*DIVYADHVANI*)

Jainas of the Digambara division held that Mahavira had preached through uttering a divine sound, which was subsequently translated into ordinary language by his advanced disciples. This belief had a lot to do with the conviction that the omniscience attained by Mahavira was not acquired through the sense organs and could not be expressed in words.

The following passage from Siddhasena Mahamati's *Descent of Logic* (*Nyāyāvatāra*) with Siddharshi's *Expansion of the Descent of Logic* (*Nyāyāvatāra-vivṛti*) thereon informs us about perfect knowledge:

Wishing to explain the characteristics of omniscience, and with the purpose of eradicating the opinions of those who do not accept a highest form of knowledge, omniscience, which covers all things and is obtained through the destruction of all veils of karma, he states:

That which shines forth as something perfect, freed from all veils, that is the highest perception, the uninterrupted presentation of the essence of all things.
(Nyāyāvatāra 27)

...

This highest perception is ultimate, because the word “perception” [pratyakṣa] can be taken literally, as follows: the word *akṣa* is a synonym of “soul”; that which acts on the soul is *prati-akṣa* [> *pratyakṣa*]. Here the soul is directly active. Everyday perception, on the other hand, is ultimately indirect, because it is produced by the activity of the soul that is separated from external reality by the sense organs, just like knowledge of fire that is derived from smoke, because in both cases the object of knowledge is hidden.¹⁷

For those who are not liberated, there are only standpoints (*naya*), various incomplete ways to arrive at partial knowledge. Some of these *nayas* are linked to words, and like the other *nayas*, they do not provide perfect knowledge. The following passage from Siddharshi’s *Nyāyāvatāra-vivṛti* (*Expansion of the Descent of Logic*) first presents a defense by a critic of the word-related standpoints as satisfactory means of knowledge:

Now the standpoints that are capable of considering words will be described. All three—called “word,” etc.—have a common intention, namely, that the word is the highest thing, not the meaning, because the latter is not different from the former.

If you raise the question how the two can be nondifferent, given that it is established that their separateness is real, we answer: their identity is based on a means of valid cognition [viz., inference], as follows: (i) The meaning is not different from the word, (ii) because the meaning is cognized when the word has been cognized. (iii) Something that is cognized when something else has been cognized is not different from that something else, as for example the form of a word: when the word is being cognized, its form is cognized. (iv) When a word is being cognized, its meaning is cognized. (v) It follows that the latter is not different from the former.¹⁸

If you object that the meaning is different from its word, because someone who has not learned the convention [that links a pot to the word “pot”] does not cognize a pot even when he hears the word “pot,” we respond: since an ignorant person is

not aware of the killing power of poison, poison and its killing power would be different. This is not, however, the case, for it would follow that poison does not kill, like a portion of molasses, which is also different from killing power. . . . A thing does not become different through the shortcoming of a knower who is not properly informed. If it were otherwise, one would have to accept the absence of color because a blind person cannot see it.

If you object that the reality of things without designations, quite apart from words that might refer to them, has been established, this cannot be accepted, because there are no things without designations. The only distinction is that some are named by means of specific words and others by means of general sounds. Alternatively, there is no proof that there are no specific sounds that are expressive of all meanings. All meanings have words that refer to them, because they are meanings, just like the meaning "pot."¹⁹ On the basis of this means of valid cognition it is established that meaning is not different from the word, because all meanings refer to themselves. . . . It follows that meaning is ultimately not different from the word, but it is metaphorically spoken about in this manner by common people who do not reflect upon the highest reality. This object, whether it be metaphorical or constituted of words, must be accepted as being momentary, because speech sounds are cognized as disappearing in a moment.²⁰

This position is rejected in the following passage:

Also the standpoints of words, etc. that support the complete nondifference of word and meaning are defective standpoints, because the ground adduced to prove them—namely, that when that [i.e., the word] has been cognized, this [i.e., the meaning] is cognized—is inconclusive. Consider the following: there is no invariable rule of the form "the fact that when one thing has been cognized something else is cognized implies that the former is nondifferent from the latter"; for when smoke, etc. have been cognized, fire, etc., though different, are cognized by force of the fact that both are connected through not being otherwise explainable. In the same way also a word makes its meaning known, even though the latter is different from the former, this because the word is expressive of its meaning; for a meaning nondifferent from the word is in conflict with perception, etc., because the meaning is experienced as being different from the word. And once this ground has been established as being inconclusive, also the proof of the nondifference of the meaning from the word, on account of the proof that all meanings presumably have words that express them, has been discarded. There is no means to establish the connection "every meaning must have a word that expresses it," because it cannot be established on the mere example of a

pot, etc., and because it is established that momentary and invisible modifications of substances cannot be expressed in words, because it is not possible to express them since there is no means to grasp the convention [that supposedly links those modifications to words]. . . . The standpoints of words, etc., inasmuch as they posit what is intended by each speaker with reference to his own opinion and conceal word meanings that are opposed to that, are defective standpoints. For this much has been established by means of valid cognition, that a word is positively expressive of a meaning. There is no limitation of the form that this word is expressive of that meaning only, not of any other meaning, because we observe that all words can make known many different meanings on account of the variety of place, time, persons, conventions, etc., and because they can denote many different meanings on account of having the aptitude to do so since they have endless characteristics; meanings too have endless characteristics, so that nothing opposes their being denoted by many different words. We do indeed see that words are used in this manner without discord. If one were not to accept this, the use of words would collapse. It follows that all sounds have the aptitude to express all meanings. However, they somehow produce cognition only with reference to certain meanings, depending on the partial annihilation and subsidence of karma, etc. . . . These standpoints called "word," etc. are therefore real standpoints when they show the intended word meaning in disregard of all other intended word meanings, because also that intended meaning is present in the word. When they proceed to obstruct other standpoints, on the other hand, they are defective standpoints, without basis.²¹

The following passages from Virasena's *Dhavalā* (*Pure Commentary*) on the oldest surviving canonical text of the Digambaras, the *Ṣatkhaṇḍāgama*, provide some information about the divine sound itself. The first passage points out that an omniscient saint (*kevalin*), even though in the possession of a mind, does not use it to acquire his omniscient knowledge. The second one deals directly with the divine sound.

[Opponent:] Because they have a mind, also omniscient saints [*kevalin*] must be in the possession of conceptual awareness.

[Proponent:] No. Because the omniscient saints, once their veils of ignorance have been destroyed, have no conceptual awareness since, by force of stopping the mind, they do not grasp external objects in that manner.

[Opponent:] In that case, omniscient saints must be without conceptual awareness.

[Proponent:] No. Because it would be a contradiction to say that beings who have immediate access to all things are without conceptual awareness.

[Opponent:] Omniscient saints are without conceptual awareness because they grasp external things independently of the mind, just like people whose sense organs are defective.

[Proponent:] It is like that if you use the expression “absence of conceptual awareness” based on the mere arising of knowledge independently of the mind.

[Opponent:] What then is the basis of absence of conceptual awareness?

[Proponent:] The absence of clear consciousness resulting from the absence of mind.²²

About the divine sound we read:

[Opponent:] Can the speech of an omniscient saint produce doubt and indeterminate cognition?

[Proponent:] No. The hearer can be misled because he has not completely destroyed and stopped his veils of ignorance, and the objects of knowledge of the omniscient sage are infinite in number. The speech of a Fordmaker [*tīrthaṅkara*; an omniscient teacher] has the form of sound [*dhvani*] because it does not consist of syllables, and for this reason it is single.

[Opponent:] Because it is single, it cannot be of two kinds [i.e., both true and neither true nor false]. This cannot be correct, because it has not been established that that sound has no syllables, because the Fordmaker uses speech that is neither true nor false, as when he says, “it can be [syāt] this or that,” and so on. And if it has syllables, that speech would constitute just a single language and would not have the form of all languages.

[Proponent:] This you cannot say. For there is no contradiction in saying that sound—even if it is a collection of several phrases each consisting of sequential speech sounds, and used by different living beings—has the form of all languages.

[Opponent:] In that case, why is the Fordmaker’s speech called “sound” rather than language?

[Proponent:] Your opposition is misplaced, because it has been established that it is sound because it is impossible to show that it is only this or that particular language.

[Opponent:] The omniscient sage does not have a mind, because his knowledge is beyond the senses.

[Proponent:] That is not correct, because even a Fordmaker has a physical mind.

[Opponent:] He may have a physical mind, but not its effect.

[Proponent:] It is true that he does not have its effect in the form of destructible and perishable knowledge. However, the effort to bring knowledge about is there,

because that does not obstruct anything. The so-called mind exertion is therefore an exertion of the self.

[Opponent:] Does this mean that the effort to bring that about, though present, would not effect its own effect?

[Proponent:] No, because its accompanying causes have not been destroyed and stopped.

[Opponent:] How do the two kinds of speech, true and neither true nor false, arise from a nonexistent mind?

[Proponent:] This question is inappropriate, because these two are only metaphorically made to arise from it.²³

Earlier than the *Dhavalā* (because known to it) are the following passages from the *Teaching on the Three Worlds* (*Tiloyapanṇatti*):²⁴

When infinite knowledge has arisen and veiled knowledge has been destroyed, a divine sound that concerns the ninefold objects expresses the meaning of the canonical teachings.

And again:

For nine moments an uninterrupted and incomparable divine sound comes forth reaching up to a *yojana* [i.e., about 13 kilometers] during morning, noon, and evening. At other times the divine sound expresses meaning in accordance with questions of the original composers of the canonical texts [*gaṇadhara*], the king of the gods, and of world rulers.



CHAPTER SIX

Do Words Affect Cognition?

6.1. DOUBLE COGNITION

Yogaśāstra

Vikalpa (“conceptual construct”) results from the knowledge of words, but is devoid of objective referent. (*Yogasūtra* 1.9)

Vikalpa is not a valid means of cognition, nor is it erroneous cognition. Even though it is devoid of objective referent, we see that verbal communication is based on the imprint of our knowledge of words. Consider the following. We say: “Consciousness is the essence of the self.” Since the self is nothing but the power of consciousness, what is here named by what? And yet we proceed to speak in this manner about the self, which is devoid of all activity and to which we know that real characteristics are denied. It is therefore impossible to say that the self *has* something the way we say that the man called Caitra *has* a cow.

In statements like “The arrow is at rest, will be at rest, was at rest,” the verb “be at rest” has merely a negative sense: the arrow has stopped moving. In the same way, in “The self is characterized by nonarising,” we merely understand that the characteristic “arising” is absent; we do not understand it to mean that the self is accompanied by a characteristic “nonarising.” That characteristic “nonarising” has been merely imagined, it is not really there. But it is with the help of this imagined characteristic that we speak.¹

No doubt the realization that one says “the self *has* consciousness” while in reality the self *is* consciousness can make a reader aware of the distorting potential of language. It takes him only a short distance toward realizing that all use of language

distorts reality, so much so that we inhabit a world that ultimately does not exist. This, at any rate, is the Buddhist position that the author of the *Science of Yoga* too appears to adopt.

In this context we repeat the following verses from Bhartrihari's *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (*Vākyapadīya*):

Knowers of the Veda know that all this is a transformation of the word. This universe evolves initially out of Vedic verses.

All obligations in this world depend on the word. Even a baby, owing to the residual traces laid down in an earlier existence, knows these obligations.

Without the impulse given by the word, there would be no initial movement of the speech organs, no pushing out of breath, and no striking of the places of articulation.

There is no cognition in the world that does not follow words. All knowledge appears as if permeated by words. (Vkp 1.124, 129–131)²

6.2. DIGNAGA AND HIS CRITICS

The following passage is taken from Dignaga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (*Collection of Means of Knowledge*). Dignaga takes a drastic position by stating that perception and language do not concern the same world. Perception, which is without conceptual constructs, concerns particulars, and particulars cannot be designated by words. Words refer to universals, but these are not accessible to perception. In fact, ultimately they do not exist. It is yet in the world of universals that another means of cognition operates: inference.

Perception and inference are the two means of cognition.

These are the only two, because

Two characteristics constitute the object of cognition.

Indeed, there is no object of cognition different from the universal and the particular. We will explain that perception has the particular as object, and inference the universal.

If one grasps a color or the like as being noneternal, etc., or if one grasps something more than once, how about that? Things like that [i.e., things qualified by something else] are grasped, but

there is no other means of cognition to put the complex object of cognition together

because, having grasped color or the like through what is inexpressible and through colorness, which are its particular and its universal respectively, and

having grasped it as noneternal, one puts the two together with one's mind, so that one gets: "color and the like are noneternal." There is therefore no other means of cognition.

Nor is there another means of cognition in the case of ever-renewed cognition.

If one grasps something more than once, that is, with regard to that object, recognition. It is not a different means of cognition. Why?

Because there would be infinite regress

If all cognition were accepted as being a means of cognition, the means of cognition would be without basis.

just like memory, etc.

Memory itself is remembered. Just as memory, desire, hatred, etc. with regard to a previously experienced object is not another means of cognition, just so.

Among these means of cognition

Perception is free from conceptual construct.

Perception is the cognition that has no conceptual construct. What is it that you call "conceptual construct"?

The association with a name, a universal, etc.

In the case of proper names, the object is characterized by a name, such as "Dittha." In the case of words that relate to universals, the object is characterized by a universal, such as "cow." In the case of words that relate to qualities, the object is characterized by a quality, such as "white." In the case of words that relate to actions, the object is characterized by an action, as in "cook." In the case of words that relate to a substance, the object is characterized by a substance, as in "staff bearer" or "horned animal."

Some say that the object is characterized by a connection, while others hold that in these cases an object is expressed that is characterized by words void of corresponding objects. Where there is no conceptual construct of this kind, that is perception.³

Conceptual constructs, in Dignaga's opinion, are not part of perception. For many Brahmanical thinkers this position was unacceptable. In their opinion, words correspond to things, and conceptual constructs too, therefore, correspond to reality. Many still felt that they had to find a place for cognition without mental constructs.

The Brahmanical thinker who took Dignaga's ideas by the horns, so to say, is the Vedic Interpreter called Kumarila Bhatta. The following passage is taken from the chapter on perception of his *Ślokavārttika* (*Comments in Verse*), which is a commentary

on part of Shabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*). Kumarila argues here as follows:

The position according to which inferential markers and so on cannot be grasped by perception because no conceptual constructs are perceived is not correct, because conceptual constructs that assist in grasping the form of an object are accepted as perception too. (111)

For there is first a cognition that is mere perceiving, free from conceptual constructs, similar to the cognition of infants and mutes, arising from the pure object. (112)

At that moment neither the specificity nor the universal of the object is experienced; their support, on the other hand, the individual, is ascertained. (113)

...

Also in a cognition without conceptual constructs, one grasps an object even though it is of a dual nature. However, the cognizer grasps the pure object,⁴ (118)

not as unique, because one does not distinguish it from something else, nor as a universal, because there is no conception of something it has in common with other specific instances. (119)

The cognition by means of which a thing is subsequently determined with the help of its characteristics such as its universal, etc., that too is considered perception. (120)

The sense organ is the instrument of cognition. Knowledge is not situated in it. For this reason conceptual constructs are not excluded from perception on the alleged ground that the sense organ is incapable of memory. (121)

Knowledge resides in the self and nowhere else, for the self is known to be the knower. It also has the capacity of memory, and of combining things, etc. (122)

Therefore, a person who conceptually construes a thing with the help of its own characteristic has a perception if there is a connection between the sense organ and the object, even if that person is remembering. (123)

Since that cognition depends upon the sense organs, it is indicated by those sense organs. A cognition, however, that has not arisen out of a connection with a sense organ is not accepted as being perception. (124)

...

Things do not appear to people who have just entered from the heat into the inner chamber of a temple or the like; it does not follow from this that these things are not grasped by the sense organs. (126)

Just as, having first known these things by their appearance, people subsequently cognize them as they are, people subsequently know things by the characteristics, such as their universal, etc. (127)

But if someone, after reflection and having closed his eyes, were to conceptually construe an object, that would not be perception, because it does not result from a connection with a sense organ. (128)

The self, etc. are also causes in the case of a conceptual construction that is not connected with a sense organ. For this reason the sense organ is not a common cause for all conceptual construction. (129)

The sense organ is not even the only cause of cognition without conceptual constructs. (130ab)

...

Perception with conceptual constructs in particular is agreed in the world to be perception, not perception without conceptual constructs. (131b-d)

For us, all word meanings are to be understood from the usage of elders. One should not therefore deviate from the meaning in which a word is used. (132)

Thoughtful people should follow established usage. That which has been established by all cannot be canceled by a definition. (133)⁵

In the Nyaya school of thought too, conceptual constructs find their way into the understanding of perception. We will trace part of this development by concentrating on a few commentators on the *Aphorisms on Logic* (*Nyāyasūtra*) 1.1.4. This *sūtra* provides a definition of perception:

Perception is cognition produced by the contact between sense organ and object; it is inexpressible by words, nonerroneous, and is of the nature of definitive knowledge. (1.1.4)

The expression “inexpressible by words” suggests that the author wished to leave a place for cognition free from words. This expression is used as a peg by some commentators to introduce the idea of two levels of cognition into the interpretation of the *sūtra*.

Vatsyayana, in his *Nyāyabhāṣya* (*Commentary on Logic*), does not yet do so. Nor does Uddyotakara in his *Nyāyavārttika* (*Comments on Logic*), which comments upon the *Nyāyabhāṣya*. This changes with Vacaspati Mishra’s *Nyāyavārttikatātparyāṭikā* (*Gloss on the Purport of the Comments on Logic*). It contains the following passage:

In this world there are two kinds of perception: one without conceptual constructs and one with conceptual constructs. Though both of them are covered by part of the definition, viz. “cognition produced by the contact between sense organ and object and nonerroneous,” each is taken care of by its own word, because there are

different opinions about this. The part of the definition that concerns the kind of perception that is without conceptual construct is “inexpressible by words”; the part that concerns the kind of perception that is with conceptual construct is “of the nature of definitive knowledge.”

In this context an expression is a characteristic or a distinctive feature such as a name, a universal, etc. The object of an expression is that which is expressible, that is to say, that which is characterized. Every cognition that is with conceptual constructs—as for example “This is Dīttha,” “this is a cow,” “this is white,” “this one carries a water pot,” “this one goes”—refers to things through the relationship of characterization to characterized. A perception in which there is nothing expressible is inexpressible. It pertains to the form of universals, etc.; that is to say: it does not pertain to the mutual relationship of characteristic and characterized belonging to the universal, etc.

Wishing to reject the opinion of those who disagree with the preceding, saying: “There is no such thing as a perception that is void of names and without conceptual constructs,” the author of the *Bhāṣya* states: “There are as many naming words as there are things.” All things are in all manner, always and everywhere accompanied by words that name them. There is no thing ever, anywhere and in whatever manner, that is separated from the word that names it. In this manner he recognizes the inseparable unity of words and things. He states the reason for this: “By means of those words that name, the notion of the thing referred to, arises.” For things, when conceived of, are accompanied by their names and are understood as referring to one and the same thing, as in: “the thing called ‘cow,’” “the thing called ‘horse.’” . . . As it has been said:

“There is no cognition in the world that does not follow words. All knowledge appears as if permeated by words.” [quoted from *Vākyapadīya* 1.131]

The cognition of infants and mutes too is penetrated by words on account of the beginningless impulse of the word. This is what Bhartrihari stated in the following verse:

Without the impulse given by the word, there would be no initial movement of the speech organs, no pushing out of breath, and no striking of the places of articulation. [quoted from *Vākyapadīya* 1.130]

The rejection of this position has been indicated by the expression “inexpressible by words” in the definition.⁶

Clearly, then, the temptation to accept that perception is pervaded by words was strong for Brahmins, especially if they agreed (which they mostly did) that “there are as many naming words as there are things” (a topic we have explored above).

Those who did not accept this position, like the author of the *Aphorisms on Logic* (*Nyāyasūtra*) and his commentators, had to argue against it.

Let us next consider a passage from the *Nyāyamañjari* (*Sprout of Logic*), a Nyaya work composed by Jayanta Bhatta at the end of the ninth century, probably a century before Vacaspati Mishra. The *Nyāyamañjari* contains a long and sometimes confusing discussion of the need of the words “inexpressible by words” in the *Nyāyasūtra*, bringing together a variety of participants and not leading to a clear conclusion. The following passage is a small part of this discussion, but it brings out the difficulty faced by Brahmanical thinkers to accept perception as a category at all:

The words “inexpressible by words” have been included in the definition of perception to avoid the mistake of defining something that is impossible. For an opponent thinks as follows: the formulation of a definition is appropriate if the thing to be defined exists. In this case, however, the thing being defined, viz., perception that has arisen from the contact between sense organ and object, does not exist, because cognitions like “cow,” etc., “cow” being the object denoted by a word, are of a verbal nature. For the distinctive feature of cognitions is difficult to establish without taking their objects into consideration, because the nature of consciousness by itself is the same whatever the objects it is directed to. Just as the notions “staff bearer” or “white” become distinct by virtue of the fact that their objects are characterized by certain characteristics, so the notion “cow,” etc. becomes distinct by virtue of the fact that its object is denoted by a certain word. And this notion is verbal by virtue of the fact that its object is denoted by that word, because it is not possible to assume that this notion is the effect of a different instrument. For this cognition cannot have a sense organ as instrument, because the eye does not have the characteristic [i.e., the word “cow”] as object, and the ear is incapable of grasping the object characterized [i.e., the cow]. And a single cognition that arises simultaneously through two sense organs has never ever been observed.

One might consider the following: this cognition could be mental in the sense of originating in the mind, like the awareness of a fragrant *badhūka* tree. About this cognition it has been stated that the effect that arises when the activity of other instruments—such as the word or the inferential mark—ceases is thought of as having only the mind as instrument, but not if such other instrument may be involved. In that case there would be a single means of cognition, namely, the mental means of cognition.

In the present case, however, the word is the instrument. For the word, like the sun, illuminates itself and its object. It follows that the cognition “cow,” when it arises even with reference to an object of the senses, is verbal and verbal only; this is our position.

[Question:] Words such as “cow” have been heard when we learned what they stand for, but that is now past. How can there be a notion created by that past word?

[Answer:] Because the word that is not being heard at present but that has entered into memory is the cause of that notion.

...

You must therefore agree that this notion has been produced in this manner by a word that has been made the object of memory. Just as, even if the designated object is out of sight, a word, when pronounced, illuminates itself and its object, in the same way, if the designated object is in view, that same word, being remembered, illuminates itself and its object; it is in this way that we have to look for the appearance of a designated object as delimited by its designation in notions of this kind.

...

There is no notion that is without connection with a word, because even in notions in which no word figures explicitly there is finally the possibility of the appearance of a general word, because a notion, which is of the nature of illuminating, does not arise without a word coming to figure explicitly in it.

Bhartrihari put it as follows:

There is no cognition in the world that does not follow words. All knowledge appears as if permeated by words. [quoted from *Vākyapadiya* 1.131]

The author of the (*Nyāya*-)sūtra, considering the mistake of defining something that is impossible, which someone might reproach him for, saying “since the thing to be defined, viz., perception, does not exist, what is it that you are proposing a definition of?”, states: “inexpressible by words.”

The cognition that arises in the case of someone who does not know the connection between word and thing, or the cognition that comes about in the case of someone who does know this connection, at the moment of the first contact of the object with the sense organ, when no word figures as yet explicitly in this cognition and the cognition is still only the cause for remembering the word, that cognition is not verbal. Perception has as object something that is not delimited by a word, it is inexpressible by words, it has as single instrument the contact between sense organ and object, and it is without mental constructs. It is not on account of the word maker that notions are illuminating; they are like that of their own nature. No general words, of the kind “this is something,” are experienced by anyone when a cognition is without conceptual constructs. Therefore, even though cognitions such as “cow” are verbal, the definition of perception is not pointless, because such a cognition as is to be defined exists. On account of this, the words “inexpressible by words” serve the purpose of removing the mistake of defining something that is impossible.⁷



CHAPTER SEVEN

Words and Sentences

7.1. SHABARA ON MUTUAL EXPECTANCY

[*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 2.1.46:] Because of its singleness of meaning, something is a single sentence if expectancy presents itself in case of separation.

How do we know, in the case of prose formulas that are recited in close contact with their context, how much constitutes a single prose formula?

Exactly the quantity of words with the help of which one sacrifices constitutes a single prose formula.

And with what quantity of words does one sacrifice?

The answer is: So much constitutes a sentence as is needed to carry out a ritual act, because that much must be expressed. That is why the *sūtra* states: “Because of its singleness of meaning, something is a single sentence.”

If for this reason a collection of words constitutes a single sentence, it follows that a collection of words with a single meaning is a sentence.

Yes, but on condition that a word, when separated from the sentence, manifests an expectancy with regard to the others.

...

[*Objection*:] Each word in a sentence has a single meaning.

True, but in case we separate that word, i.e., a word that has a single meaning, from the sentence, it has no expectancy with regard to the others. Singleness of meaning is not possible in that case, because there are many word meanings in a sentence. And it has been stated that the collection of words has no separate meaning of its own.

If one proposes that the difference from the word meanings, or their conjunction, constitutes the sentence meaning, this is not satisfactory, for in that case too the sentence would not have a single meaning. The reason is that in a sentence of many words there are many differences and many conjunctions.¹

It is clear from this short passage that the notion that a sentence has a single meaning confronts Shabara with difficulties. He therefore opts for an alternative interpretation of the *sūtra*, attributing singleness of purpose to the sentence rather than singleness of meaning. He can do so because the Sanskrit word *artha* means both “meaning” and “purpose.”

7.2. SHABARA ON WORDS AND SENTENCES

[Objector:]

Even though the word and its connection with meaning are natural and therefore eternal, even so the Dharma cannot be of the nature of an injunction. For an injunction is a sentence. For we do not understand from the sentence “He who desires heaven should perform the Agnihotra sacrifice” [*agnihotram juhuyāt svargakāmāḥ*] that heaven will result from one of its words, i.e., Agnihotra. But we understand it when the three words—“he-who-desires-heaven,” “should-perform” and “Agnihotra-sacrifice”—are pronounced. And there is here no fourth word apart from this collection of three words to express the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

This collection of words, from the usage of which a meaning is understood, does not exist in this world. These three words have been used, and they have a meaning that is eternal. The collection, however, has not been used. It follows that the meaning of this collection is either artificial or an illusion. And the word meanings themselves do not constitute the sentence meaning. For a word refers to something universal, the sentence to something particular. Something universal is one thing, something particular something different. And the understanding of the sentence meaning does not follow from the word meaning. Because there is no connection between the two. If, given that there is no connection, a different meaning were to be understood when the word meaning is understood, then everything might be understood when one thing is understood. And such is not the case. It follows that the sentence meaning is different.

Consider the following. If it is believed that, as a result of the nature of the sentence, an understanding of its meaning can be obtained even from a sentence that has not been used earlier, without there being a connection, in that case language would go beyond its own character. It is not the character of language that meaning

is understood even from an utterance that has not been used before. For it is not the case that certain people understand meaning from some utterance that they hear for the first time.

To this we answer: This is a characteristic of words, not of sentences. For it is evident that people understand meaning also from a sentence they hear for the first time.

Such is not the case. If people were to understand meaning even from a sentence they hear for the first time, then all, whether they know the words or not, would understand the sentence. But people who do not know the words of a sentence do not understand that sentence. Therefore, such is not the case.

But the connection with the sentence meaning will not be created, not even by those who understand the sentence and know the meanings of the words. Prepared by their knowledge of the word meanings, they will understand the sentence meaning, just as they understand that very word meaning by hearing the word a second and third time.

We answer: No. If the final speech sound in a sentence, along with the mental traces produced by the earlier speech sounds, makes known a meaning different from the word meanings, then assistance in arriving at the sentence meaning is not provided by knowledge of the word meanings. It follows that the understanding of a sentence meaning is either artificial or an illusion. Knowledge of the sentence meaning is impossible through the word meanings.

But is it not true that when a specifying word, such as “white” or “black,” occurs near a word such as “cow” or “horse” that refers to a universal, then a sentence meaning is understood?²

No. How could a notion that results from verbal information and is derived from a word that refers to a universal such as “cow” or “horse” and therefore covers all cows and all horses, how could it turn away from a specific cow or horse under the influence of the sentence in which it occurs? And the word meaning of a specific expression such as “white” is not the exclusion of “black,” etc. Nor can one invent a meaning out of fear that the word might be meaningless. It follows that the sentence meaning is not produced by the word meaning. The sentence meaning is therefore artificial. These are only groups of words, and groups are seen to be made by people, as for example in: “The geese roaming in the forests of blue lotuses, making sweet sounds, dance as it were dressed in blue silk.” Vedic collections of words too have therefore been made by a person.

...

[*Shabara's position:*]

The sentence is not known to separately have its own meaning without regard for the word meanings. Why? Because there is no means of knowledge for this. There

is no means of knowledge by which we could know it. For the final speech sound of a sentence, without regard for the word meanings and without the mental traces produced by the earlier speech sounds, does not have the expressive power to refer to a meaning different from the word meanings.

But isn't there implication [*arthāpatti*],³ by which we understand a meaning different from the word meanings? And that is not possible with expressive power.

No. Because the sentence meaning has those word meanings as cause. There would be implication if no other cause were possible, even in the absence of expressive power. But a cause is known. Which one? The word meanings.

For words have no other function once they have expressed their respective word meanings. Now the word meanings, when understood, make known the sentence meaning. How is that? Because once a quality—"white" or "black"—is understood, it is capable of producing an understanding of the quality possessor. This is why people who wish to have knowledge of a quality possessor pronounce only the word for the quality. The result they aim at will come about. There will be the notion of a qualified object. And the notion of the qualified object is the sentence meaning. If, then, the sentence meaning is understood from something different than a presumed expressive power belonging to the sentence, who will ever say that the expressive power of a collection of words is understood by means of implication?

Moreover, this is known through positive and negative concomitance. For sometimes, as a result of mental distress, it can happen that no word meanings are determined on the basis of words that are pronounced. In that case people would necessarily not understand the sentence meaning if it is not separate from the word meanings. And indeed, they necessarily do not understand it. Furthermore, he who cognizes whiteness certainly cognizes something that has white as a quality.

It follows that sentence meaning is word meaning; it has no link with the collection of words.

Earlier the objection was raised that a word meaning, which is arrived at through hearing, cannot turn away from a specific under the influence of the sentence in which it occurs.

This is indeed true. In cases where it is understood that the whole word meaning that is used becomes pointless because it serves no purpose, there one understands, considering that there must be a sentence meaning, that a qualified meaning is conveyed by the word. This does not imply that the word always conveys a qualified meaning. Such being the case, the objection stating that the exclusion of another quality [such as "black"] is not part of the word meaning [of an expression such as "white"], has also been answered.

...

It follows that from the meanings that are understood from the words “He who desires heaven should perform the Agnihotra sacrifice” it is understood that heaven results from the Agnihotra sacrifice. Understanding of the word meanings comes from the words, and the sentence meaning comes from the word meanings.⁴

7.3. SHALIKANATHA MISHRA ON THE MEANING OF A SENTENCE

Shalikanatha Mishra is no doubt Prabhakara’s most famous follower. His works are more read than those of the master. One of his works is the *Prakaraṇapañcikā* “*Exposition of Topics*.” Its eleventh chapter (topic) is the *Vākyārthamātrikā* “*Source of Sentence Meaning*,” which may originally have been an independent work.⁵ Here he argues at length against alternative positions regarding the sentence meaning and in defense of his own. After a few introductory remarks, he continues:⁶

He first explains the fact that words express connected meanings.

There are those who declare that the sentence by itself, in which word divisions have disappeared, is expressive of the sentence meaning; others that the final speech sound of the sentence is; others again declare that the word meanings expressed, unconnected with words, reveal their connection with each other.

In order to reject these positions, he states:

We fix the position of Prabhakara, our teacher, as saying that awareness of the meaning of a sentence arises only from its words. (1)

Only from its words. This means: not from the sentence, nor from the final speech sound, nor indeed from the word meanings. (1)

He begins the discussion:

If the meanings of words are conveyed by those words, their expressive power being exhausted by nothing more than their own connected meaning, then the sentence meaning too is understood. (2)

...

How is the understanding of the sentence meaning established, given that words convey nothing more than their own connected meanings?

The answer is:

The learned agree that sentence meanings are nothing but word meanings that have acquired mutual connections through the relationship of principal and secondary. (3)

[*Objection*:] Since there are many word meanings, there would then be many sentence meanings and sentences rather than one.

The answer is:

Even though the meanings of the words, taken separately, are many in number, they yet convey a single sentence meaning as purpose. (4)

They also speak of a single sentence, because there is a single effect resulting from that understanding. (5ab)

How can those words have a single purpose?

The answer is:

Because the understanding of secondary features has the principal as single purpose. (5cd)

For how can the principal item be understood as qualified? It is for this reason that secondary features are conveyed. By that means the intention is on the principal. It is the principal that is to be known, because speech is accepted to be a means of cognition with regard to that which is intended. Knowledge of what is intended is not based on a single word, and therefore the sentence is its means of cognition. It is for this reason that it has been stated at the beginning of the sixth chapter of Prabhakara's *Bṛhatṭīkā*: "There is no word in the sentence, and there are no word meanings in the sentence meaning." This means that the word on its own is no means of cognition, and that word meanings on their own are not things to be cognized by means of words. This has been clearly explained in that passage from the *Bṛhatṭīkā*.

He now proceeds to refute the opinions of those who state that the sentence itself is expressive of the sentence meaning, and of those who think that the final speech sound of the sentence is:

Learners determine what is the expressive power of words by means of the presence or absence of those words in verbal exchanges of elders, verbal exchanges that consist in the hearing of sentences. (6)

Even though every acquisition of language derives from the verbal exchange between elders, and verbal exchange consist of sentences, even so, the expressive power of words is determined to be that meaning that is present when the word is present, and absent when the word is absent. Do not say that in that case no such thing as the understanding of a sentence meaning is impossible: we will explain below the rule on account of which, going by the effect, it appears as if there is a single sentence without the speech sounds and words that are yet visibly part of it.

What is more, if one accepts that the sentence is a single entity, eight expressive powers must be postulated for the following eight sentences: "Boy! Bring the cow"; "Boy! Tie up the cow"; "Youth! Bring the cow"; "Youth! Tie up the cow"; "Child! Bring the cow"; "Child! Tie up the cow"; "Lad! Bring the cow"; "Lad! Tie up the cow." For him who holds that the word is expressive, there are in these examples only seven expressive powers belonging to the seven words used.⁷ He therefore has to postulate fewer of them.

In the same way, if we add the word “white,” so that we get “bring the white cow,” “tie up the white cow,” he who holds that that the sentence is expressive must postulate eight further expressive powers, whereas he who holds that the word is expressive must postulate only one more. One should further consider how agreement regarding the acquisition of language is attained if the division into words and word meanings is not ultimately real.

In the opinion of those who say that the final speech sound of a sentence is expressive of meaning, the acquisition of language would also be possible, because they too accept the division into word meanings as ultimately real.

[*Objection:*] It is said that the acquisition of language consists in the grasping of the relationship between what is expressed and what expresses. In the opinion of those who hold that the final speech sound of a sentence is expressive of meaning, a word is not expressive of a word meaning. It follows that from their point of view too, the acquisition of language has no object.

[*Response:*] It is not without object, because the relationship cause—caused is agreed to exist between the two.

How can something that is not expressive be a cause?

No problem. From a sentence in which words are used, we cognize a sentence meaning that is connected with word meanings; those words, though not expressive of those meanings, are their cause.

However, as before, also those who hold that the final speech sound of a sentence is expressive of meaning have to postulate more expressive powers than we.

There are also those who maintain that the remembered sentence, and only that, conveys the sentence meaning. They too suffer from the same shortcoming that they cannot get rid of, viz., that they have to postulate too many expressive powers, as before. The statement by Shabara, the author of the *Bhāṣya*, to the effect that the final speech sound accompanied by the traces produced by earlier speech sounds conveys the meaning, is without object. It is impossible to remember a long sentence in a single moment. We must therefore accept that expressive power resides in words and in words only.

Here some raise the following objection: Determining the expressive power of words is not possible in a sentence that is used in the discourse of elders, because human sentences are accepted as a means of knowledge in the form of an inferential sign, with regard to their meaning. For the speaker’s prior knowledge of that meaning, which is the cause, is inferred from the sentence, which is its effect. And because that knowledge does not deviate from what it is about, there is ascertainment of what is to be known, not knowledge of expressive power.

The answer to this objection is as follows: You do not correctly take into consideration what has been stated in the chapter called *Nītipatha*, “Path of Right Behavior.”⁸

For there this objection has been refuted: A child who is learning to speak acquires an understanding of the meaning produced by words that is inferred from the specific behavior that immediately follows when the elder addressed hears a linguistic utterance. Having learned this, he hears someone utter a sentence that is a sequence of words whose meanings are not connected with any behavior. As he hears this, the following thought occurs to him: “How has this sentence, a sequence of words whose meanings are not connected with an activity that is carried out, created certainty as to its meaning in the elder addressed? Also the elder will, like me, have doubts about the sequence of words with unconnected meanings occurring in this sentence produced by a human being.” When this doubt arises in him, he concludes: “Certainly this listener has determined that the speaker only uses words whose meanings are connected.” Since such a restriction with regard to the use of words is not possible when no connection has been observed, he infers that a connection is observed and determines that there is one. Once the connection is known with certainty, the sentence merely repeats the meanings of the words. He then thinks that, if the sentence is expressive of meaning by way of repeating the meanings of its words, the knowledge of a prior expressive power of those words cannot be incorrect. If it had been otherwise,⁹ I would not have understood that the determination of meaning by this listener is preceded by a prior inference. Moreover, inferential knowledge of the speaker’s specific knowledge of a meaning if no connection has been determined is not possible on the basis of mere awareness of the form of words; it is only possible on the basis of an awareness of their specific features. And apart from expressive power, we learn nothing specific belonging to words. It follows that the listener, like me, has determined the expressive power of words. He has therefore inferred, on the basis of the use of expressive words that are specifically connected, that the speaker had a prior knowledge of the objects concerned. The great lake of Right Behavior is deep indeed.¹⁰

Having thus argued for the “expression of connected meanings” (*anvitābhidhāna*), Shalikanatha next turns his attention to the “connection of what has been expressed” (*abhihitānvaya*). He introduces this position first, and then shows that it is unacceptable. The following passage presents the rejected position:

In this context, some state the following:

Let it be accepted that words are known to have expressive power with respect to their meanings. This does not prove that there is expression of connected meanings. Consider this: Since there is no end to the things to which something can be connected, there is no end to the possible connections; since there is no end to the

possible connections, also connected items are without end; this being the case, it is impossible to grasp the link between words and their connected items. If you maintain that a word can be expressive in spite of the fact that its link with its connected items has not been grasped, it would follow that an understanding of all meanings can result from a single word. And you should not suggest that expression of connection in general is at stake, because we learn from sentences about specific connections. Even though it is possible to account for sentence meaning by means of the expression of nothing but the form of words, in resorting to the position of expression of connected meanings you fall victim to the fault of postulating too many expressive powers.

Next, the connected meaning that is being expressed by a word, is it expressed in connection with another word meaning that has already been expressed, or rather with one that has not yet been expressed? These two options must be considered.

If the meaning expressed is connected with the meaning of another word that has not yet been expressed, it is pointless to use that other word, because an understanding of the connections with all words would derive from one single word.

If, on the other hand, the meaning expressed is connected with the meaning of another word that has already been expressed, then that word requires, in order to express its meaning, the meaning taken from that other word, because it is expressive of what is connected. This would result in the fault of reciprocal dependence.

It follows that words express their meanings by means of nothing but their own forms that are independent of the expressiveness of other words. Those word meanings expressed by words, if characterized by expectancy, proximity, and compatibility, convey the sentence meaning. One need not worry about the requirement that there be a link between those word meanings. Because this link characterizes the words, not their meanings. This is what Shabara, the author of the *Bhāṣya*, states in these words: "For words, once they have expressed their own meaning, cease to act. Next the word meanings, once understood, convey the sentence meaning."¹¹

Shalikanatha's response comes in the following verse:

To refute the above, he starts off:

The meanings of words that are prone to be connected are added and removed. That is why the expressive power of words is only understood in the case of words that are connected. (7)

...

In case the acquisition of language is of the form "words express their own meanings accompanied by other meanings that are compatible and have

expectancy and proximity," there is no fault due to endlessness and deviation. (8-9b)

It was stated above that there can be no determination of the expressive power of words, because the possibilities are endless. It was also stated that, if something whose expressive power has not been grasped can be expressive, there would be deviation from the regular forms of denotation. All this is not correct. Understanding of the link between a word and its meaning can also be reached with the help of secondary indications. Acquisition of language then takes the form: "A word expresses its own meaning accompanied by a meaning characterized by expectancy, compatibility, and proximity, because that is the easy way."

The following verse sums it all up:

A word conveys its own meaning accompanied by whatever is characterized by expectancy, compatibility and proximity.¹²

Shalikanatha then dedicates a passage to the importance of expectancy (*ākāñkṣā*), proximity (*sannidhi*), and suitability (*yogyatā*):

But what is expectancy [*ākāñkṣā*]? It is the listener's desire to know. What is it based on?

Some say that it is based on nonoccurrence in isolation [*avinābhāva*]. That is to say, an action does not occur without an actant [*kāraka*]. On the basis of the action, therefore, one desires to know the actant. In the same way, moreover, when one knows the actant, one desires to know the action.

We think this is incorrect. Because there could then be no end to the desire to know. For consider the following: when there is initially a desire to know an actant, then also the desire to know other things presents itself, such as: what produced that actant, what are its qualities and actions, what other actants act on it? If, however, there is no desire to know anything different from one actant, because such additional knowledge serves no purpose, it would serve no purpose either to know that actant even when only the action is understood; there would therefore be no desire to know any actant. When an action is understood as something to be accomplished, knowledge of an actant serves no purpose because it cannot be accomplished without an actant.¹³ But since the action is not understood as something to be accomplished when it is presented in the present tense or the like, knowledge of an actant does serve a purpose.

Where people think that a sentence is incomplete, this incompleteness concerns the expression of a meaning for which there is expectancy. For this reason they supply in such cases what is missing.

Wherever we understand that an action is to be accomplished, there would then be a desire to know all actants. For example, the sentence “Devadatta! Bring the cow” would be incomplete because the instrument is not expressed. If it is maintained that, since the accomplishment of an action is possible even if only one actant is known, there is no desire to know other actants, in that case there would be no expectancy for the word “stick” even in the sentence “Devadatta! Bring the cow with the help of a stick,” where it is actually used. And therefore, since there would be no expectancy for that word, it could not be construed into the sentence meaning. Moreover, expectancy of that word “stick” is assumed, because it is pronounced. Otherwise, if the meaning of the word “stick” could not be in agreement with the rest, the pronunciation of that word would be meaningless.

In the same way, there would be lack of agreement even in the Vedic statement that says, “He buys Soma by means of a red one-year-old calf with tawny eyes.”¹⁴ For none of the words, apart from “He buys Soma,” would be in agreement, for the following reason: there is no proof that the pronunciation of a Vedic word cannot be meaningless, and there is therefore no reason to believe that expectancy for those other words arises. What is more, the co-occurrence of action and actant are known from the world, and that is attained when just any action and actant are taken. Nothing is therefore missing. For this reason no desire to know comes about that is too specific. For a desire to know comes about with respect to what is not known, not with respect to what is already known.

Our position is as follows. The basis for the arising of a desire to know is when an expression and that which is to be expressed are incomplete. For when a single word such as “door” is used, the expression itself is not complete. For when no word is pronounced that brings the counterpart to mind (such as “shut” in “shut the door”), no connected expression can be made. Through the usage of elders it is known that words are meant to convey a connected meaning. For that purpose, it is appropriate to desire to know the counterpart. Also in the opinion of those who hold that there is agreement between expressed meanings, there cannot be agreement of one meaning without another meaning. Because of this, it is appropriate to desire to know the counterpart in order to attain that agreement. When there is such a desire, a suitable counterpart is supplied on the basis of context, etc., because it is known in the world that a supplied word can complete an incomplete sentence.

In statements like “At the day of the new moon, during the afternoon, they perform the sacrifice in which a ball of rice is offered to the ancestors,”¹⁵ it is appropriate to desire to know which performer is qualified in the context to attain the goal, for the following reason: even though the above statement is an expression whose parts are in agreement because several words are used in it, the stated goal, which

is the unseen effect (*apūrva*), cannot be a goal without performance of the sacrifice, and performance is not possible without an agent; an agent would be improper without the authority to do so, and authority is impossible without a qualified performer. When there is such a desire to know, even though something has to be supplied here as in the world, and since it would not be correct to reject the performance of the rite given that a living being is necessary and the injunction is central, considering that just any specification of a qualified performer would be possible if one were to abandon this supplied meaning, “one who desires heaven” is supplied as being a qualified performer, because only heaven, which pertains to all people who have desires, is suitable to be a specification of the qualified performer.¹⁶

No qualified performer is supplied in the case of the rule to study, where the goal is accomplished in a performance prompted by others. Expectancy does not disappear without supplying a qualified performer when unseen effect is the goal, because this is not a worldly goal. In cases like “Desirous of divine splendor, he should pour an oblation dedicated to the sun,”¹⁷ since this does not concern a worldly goal and the injunction cannot be carried out without the help of an instrument, there is a desire to know that instrument, and a desire to know the meaning that produces that instrument. It is for this reason that, in the absence of an instrument, the author of the *Mimāṃsābhāṣya*—i.e., Shabara—considering first that certain statements are incomplete, subsequently discarded that idea.¹⁸

[Objection:] Given the above, how can there be expression of connected meanings [*anvitābhidhāna*] in the example from the world “Bring the white cow”? Here three words are used [viz., “bring,” “white,” and “cow”], but since there cannot be two different actants in this case, there is no expectancy. The sentence is already complete with the mere words “Bring the cow.”

[Response:] True! When no further word [“white” in this case] is pronounced, it is indeed like that. However, when such a further word is pronounced [in “Bring the white cow”], we assume that it has expectancy with respect to “bringing,” because that further word too occurs in the proximity of “bringing,” so that we understand it to form a single sentence with the latter. Moreover, this further word [“white”] expresses its own meaning as being connected with “bringing,” which would not be possible without expectancy. As a matter of fact, Shabara, the author of the *Mimāṃsābhāṣya*, has said: “There is expectancy with respect to the word ‘red.’”¹⁹ Here too, therefore, expectancy serves to prove that there is expression of connected meanings [*anvitābhidhāna*]. However, there is this difference: in cases like “door” there is expectancy of that very word in order to arrive at an expression of connected meanings, whereas in cases such as “Bring the white cow” there is expectancy of another word.

The following verse sums it all up:

The desire to know the counterpart, either to express what is connected or to connect it up with what has already been said, that is expectancy.

This expectancy, once there, is resorted to as a secondary mark for understanding. Why not just proximity [*samnidhi*] and suitability [*yogyatva*]?²⁰ Because we see there is no expression of connected meanings in the case of words that have no mutual expectancy. In sentences like “Here comes the son of the king, this man must be removed,” it is not the case that the “king” is connected with the “man,” without expectancy for its link with the word “son.”²¹

Question: Both words, “son” and “man,” are near the word “king” and are suitable to be connected with it. Why then is “of the king” only connected with “son,” not with “man”?

Answer: The king is connected with his son because the latter is always dependent upon the former; this is clear from the sentence, because understanding a sentence depends on rules. Because the word “king” has no expectancy with regard to the connection with the “man,” it has no connection with the latter. It is in this way that expectancy is resorted to as a secondary mark for understanding.

The following verse sums this up:

There is no agreement of a word, even though it is suitable and near, with another word that is already fully connected elsewhere. This is why also the expectancy of words is a secondary mark for understanding.

This expectancy does not all of a sudden arise with regard to all counterparts, but rather in the order in which their causes present themselves. Consider the following: without an object, the goal of unseen effect [*apūrva*] cannot be attained. The need for an object resulting from an understanding of the injunction therefore comes first. Once the meaning of the injunction that is linked to its object is understood, the expectancy of a qualified performer presents itself, because without a qualified performer the object cannot be attained. When in this manner the instrument, which is the object and the meaning of the action, has been obtained, there is expectancy of the use of the instrument, i.e., of the unseen effects of subsidiary rites. Once that has been obtained, there is expectancy of the meanings that produce it.

As they say:

Expectancy does not arise at one and the same moment with regard to all counterparts. It rather arises gradually, in the order in which the causes present themselves.

Also the expression of connected meanings follows that order. About this there is the following verse:

Just as the desire to know of a conscious person arises with respect to connected things (i.e., in a certain sequence), in exactly the same way also arises the words' expressiveness of connected meanings.

[Sannidhi]

Next topic: What is proximity? It is the turning of the mind, after hearing one meaning, to another meaning under the influence of expectancy and suitability.²² And that turning of the mind, not being based on words only, is a secondary mark for understanding the expression of connected meanings, for in the world the expression of connected meanings is also seen with respect to supplied words. And one should not say: "Only the word is supplied, and that in its turn brings the meaning to mind," for the word "proximity" is not only employed that way. Nor is there proof for this position. It is true that the proof for the need to supply items is provided by implication [*arthāpatti*], but it is incorrect to assume that words have to be supplied. For implication proves the existence of something in the absence of which an impossible situation would arise. But meanings without words are not impossible.

Consider the following opinion: "Implication, which proceeds by way of assuming²³ something, ends up accepting a prior word. The reason is that that something will be made known by means of a cognition with conceptual constructs [*savikalpaka*] and that cognitions with conceptual constructs result from words."

This is not correct. Implication does not always work by means of words only. An inferential sign [*liṅga*], to be sure, leads to cognition with conceptual constructs, which results from words. Sense organs, however, lead to something in a state that is free from conceptual constructs [*nirvikalpaka*], because their capacities are known to be like that. In the same way, we accept that implication, in the case of an implication based on what is seen, is a proof of a mere something that presents itself. It is therefore proper to state that implication is a proof of a mere something, also in the case of an implication based on what is heard. It is no proof of the need to supply words. Because words cannot directly remove the impossibility that justifies implication.

What is more, in all cognitions with conceptual constructs, the word, which is based on memory, does not need proof. In cognitions with conceptual constructs,²⁴ the fact that words have been cognized before does not need proof. On the contrary, in cognizing a thing, the memory of the corresponding word enters simultaneously into this cognition. For this reason, an implication based on what is heard does not have words as object. And it is not proper to assume a word on the ground that,

without that assumed word, a verbal impossibility would arise. This is not proper because a word is not impossible on its own. However, one assumes that meanings have to be supplied on the ground that without them, expression of connected meanings would be impossible. Such an assumption has a suitable meaning as object that acts as counterpart, because there is only expectancy for such meanings, and because the word, even though it has been cognized before, should be ignored, just as the meaning of a word should be neglected in accordance with what Shabara explains at the beginning of the tenth book of his *Mimāṃsābhāṣya*.²⁵

Where it is necessary to supply a meaning, as in “door,” implication is not able to determine whether the sense “close” or “shut” is to be assumed, because implication only justifies a general assumption [not the choice of a specific meaning]. This is why we know from the world that something has to be supplied so as to complete an incomplete sentence. Only meaning completes the sense, because of considerations of suitability, and on the basis of specific knowledge we possess as a result of context, etc. Supplying words would not be useful. Expression of connected meanings is therefore attained through the need for a qualified performer in rites like the Vishvajit sacrifice, with the help of an instrument everywhere, by means of meanings used in connection with principal sacrifices in the case of secondary sacrifices, even though these supplied elements are not presented by words. It should be known that, as in the case of expectancy, also in the case of proximity, the order follows the order in which elements are presented, and also the expression of connected meanings is in agreement with that.

The following verses sum this up:

Proximity born from the word is no secondary mark for understanding,
because we see in the world that there can be a connection also with a supplied meaning.

Proximity of all counterparts does not take place all of a sudden. It is sequential, following the order of the collection of elements that present themselves.

There is understanding of connected meanings by means of words in the same order in which the proximity of counterparts arises.

It follows that a sentence is construed with another meaning that is obtained through expectancy and proximity as explained, i.e., for which there is expectancy, that is near, and that is suitable. That is the meaning.

[Yogyatā]

Question: What is suitability [*yogyatva*]?

Answer: It is that which is fit to be connected.

—How do we know that something is fit to be connected?

—Because we see it as being connected.

Question: If so, how can there be expression of connected meaning in the Veda with respect to the goal, i.e., the unseen effect [*apūrva*], given that no connection with it can be seen?

Response: Nothing wrong here. Knowledge of suitability in general is a means to understand it in specific cases.²⁶ The unseen effect, whatever it be, certainly is a goal. We therefore decide that whatever has a connection with a goal, seen or unseen, is suitable.

The following verse sums this up:

What is known in the world as suitability in general, that is a secondary mark for understanding expression of connected meanings.

Others, however, say the following: what is not ascertained to be unsuitable, that is suitable. This is why expression of connected meaning is possible also with the meaning of an injunction, which is not of this world.

This position is worthless. Just as it is impossible to ascertain of something that it is suitable with respect to something that is unknown through some other means of knowledge, so it is also impossible to ascertain that it is unsuitable, because there would in that case be connection of everything with it by all means, including unknown means. Only the meaning of the verb is connected as object of the sentence, and only a person such as one who desires heaven, if characterized by characteristics that are not unacceptable,²⁷ is connected as qualified performer. No further restriction is necessary. Enough has been said. (8)

[*Objection:*] On the view that there is expression of connected meanings, the fact of resorting to suitability as a secondary mark for understanding implies making more assumptions than necessary.

The author of the verse text responds to this objection, saying:

Also with respect to word meanings this collection of factors (i.e., expectancy, proximity, and suitability) is required to convey connection. (9cd)

Also in the opinion of those who think that only word meanings make mutual connection known, they too must resort to the following in order to succeed in conveying a specific connection, namely: only word meanings that possess expectancy, proximity, and suitability convey sentence meaning; other meanings do not do so. When asked why it should be like that, one should point out that this limitation is based on the fact that that is what we see in the usage of elders. Since therefore both positions [the *anvitābhidhāna* “expression of connected meanings” and the

abhihitānvaya “connection of what has been expressed”] have this in common, this objection is not valid. (9)

[*Objection:*] Based on what distinction do you opt for “expression of connected meanings” [*anvitābhidhāna*] and reject “connection of what has been expressed” [*abhihitānvaya*]?

The author of the verse text responds:

But the power to convey connection is not seen to belong to meanings when they are understood as a result of another means of knowledge. It must be assumed to be produced by the contact with words that refer to specific meanings. (10)

Meanings that are understood as a result of a means of knowledge different from verbal communication are not experienced as conveying mutual connection. The power to convey that must be assumed to belong to meaning expressed by verbal communication. For this power to arise, contact with verbal communication must be admitted to be the cause. For we see that it is verbal communication that is used in the world to make known a specific meaning. Verbal communication is not capable of conveying the sentence meaning directly; it uses word meanings as intermediaries. If those word meanings are capable of conveying mutual connection,²⁸ they can be used as intermediaries, not otherwise. This power to convey mutual connection belonging to those intermediary meanings appears as a result of contact with verbal communication that refers to those specific meanings. Verbal communication too must therefore be admitted to possess a power that underlies the power to convey the connection residing in meanings.

[*Objection:*] It would be like that, if meanings determined by some other means of knowledge did not have the capacity to convey mutual connection. But they do have that capacity. Because we see that (1) directly perceived whiteness whose specific substrate is not determined, (2) a horse whose specific qualities are not known but that is inferred because we hear it neighing and stamping its feet, and (3) a running whose agent is unknown together convey a connection that takes the form “a white horse is running.” The author of the *Ślokavārttika*, i.e., Kumarila, expresses this as follows:

Someone who sees a white coloration and hears the sound of neighing and stamping hooves, is, even without sentence, seen to have the notion “a white horse is running.”²⁹

“Coloration” means “indistinct color.” This means that the specific quality is not clearly determined.

The response to this objection is as follows. Does only a person who becomes aware of the sounds of neighing and the stamping of feet, both residing in something in

which whiteness also resides, have the notion “a white horse runs”? Or also someone who cannot determine where these impressions come from?

—So what?

—If you answer that someone who has not worked out where the sound of neighing and the noise of running feet come from has this notion “a white horse runs,” then there would be a contradiction of notions. For he understands: there must be a horse at this place, and there must be something that runs. But if he considers, on the basis of experience, that the noise of hooves can only be connected with a horse, then he infers that the fast gait cannot but be in that horse. Realizing that the gait does not occur on its own, he understands its connection with the horse, by reason of the meanings.

Someone else first determines that there is nothing else but a horse at that place. He next ascertains that the sound of neighing comes from the horse, because it could come from nowhere else. He finally ascertains that horsemanship and whiteness reside in the same substrate [i.e., the horse]. Also this person uses implication as means of knowing that “this white thing is a horse”; it is as when seeing that someone is not in the house is a means of knowing, by implication, that he is outside.

He however who ascertains that the sound of neighing and the noise of the hooves have the same substrate as whiteness, he too uses inference to know that horsemanship and a fast gait reside in what is white, and are therefore not independent. It follows that meanings that appear unconnected by another means of knowledge are never known to convey mutual connection except through inference and implication.

Moreover, if mutual connection is understood on the basis of an understanding of the meanings alone, then please explain what means of knowledge that understanding belongs to. It cannot be the verbal means of knowledge, because there are no words in that situation. For it is your doctrine that knowledge of connection that derives from words, through a function that is internal to the expression of meanings, is verbal. This understanding that is based on the meanings alone does not therefore belong to verbal knowledge. If, on the other hand, you accept another means of knowledge, there is no longer verbal knowledge, because that other means of knowledge would then be a means of knowledge also with respect to meanings understood through words. You would therefore have to assume that the meanings expressed by words have a capacity, unseen elsewhere, to convey the sentence meaning, plus an underlying expressive power belonging to the words. It is as a result more correct to assume only an expressive power belonging to the words that conveys their connected meaning, because in this way one has to make fewer assumptions. This discards the view according to which words indirectly have a capacity with respect to connected meanings.

[*Objection:*] If so, you would have to assume endless numbers of expressive powers of the word, powers whose objects would be the meaning of the word connected with endless numbers of counterparts. On the view called “connection of what is expressed” [*abhihitānvaya*], though, one word has just one expressive power with respect to a single meaning.

[*Response:*] Your objection is invalid. Because different effects can result with the help of a single expressive power—which is the power of expressing the meaning as connected with another meaning that fulfills the requirements of expectancy, proximity, and suitability—as a consequence of different counterparts, like the eye, etc. Just as the eye produces different cognitions with the help of a single power of vision on account of different accompanying counterparts such as pots, etc., similarly the word does so on account of different counterparts; this has to be considered. What is more, the same applies to meanings too. Your objection is therefore void.

—Others, however, say: Meanings that possess expectancy, proximity, and suitability *become* the sentence meaning, they do not *convey* the sentence meaning.

—That position is too feeble for words, because it would follow that the understanding of a sentence meaning has no cause. Given that the words are not the means to understand the connection, if also the meanings are not its cause, the understanding of the sentence meaning would have no cause at all.

—Consider the following opinion: Once meaning, with expectancy, has been expressed by the verb or by a word that refers to an actant, whatever other meaning concerning a suitable counterpart is presented by another word is connected with the meaning of that verb or of that word referring to an actant.

—True. But you must specify what the understanding of that connection is based on. Moreover, when the earlier meaning with expectancy has been expressed, the other word that is uttered leads to its own meaning as connected with that earlier meaning, just like a grammatical suffix. Just as a suffix that is being uttered, once the meaning of the stem has been grasped, expresses its own meaning as qualified by that stem meaning, the same can be said about another word. This has been expressed in the following words: “Stem and suffix jointly express the meaning of the suffix.”³⁰ The stem presents its own meaning as a qualifier of the meaning of the suffix. Which means: it expresses that meaning by means of the suffix.

And it has been stated:

A suffix is always used in a qualified sense, because the meaning of the stem known earlier qualifies it.

[*Objection:*] We accept, then, that the second word expresses connected meanings, but not the first one.

[Response:] Wrong! Because in a sentence there is no restriction on word order. What is sometimes first is at other times second. It follows that all words express connected meanings [*anvitābhidhāna*].

And he who holds, unlike us, that there is connection of what has been expressed [*abhihitānvaya*] looks for connection of what has been expressed, as in the case of words, also between stem and suffix, whose separate expressive powers are known by means of agreement and difference [*anvayavyatireka*]. This is what he states:

Since stem and suffix jointly express the meaning of the suffix, that meaning is expressed as most important, even though the meanings of both are expressed separately.

In *pācaka*, “cook,” the verbal root *pac* expresses the cooking, and the suffix *aka* expresses the agent. No single part needs to express the agent as connected with cooking.

[All this is absurd.]

Moreover, if you admit that the suffix expresses what is already connected, why don’t you agree that words too, not being different, express what is already connected? What is the point of half a murder? Moreover, if only stem and suffix express what is connected, then in the case of “door,” neither “open” nor “close” can be supplied on the basis of an expectancy that is based on the impossibility of expressing what is connected.

—Listen. In “door,” the nominative ending expresses a meaning that is not different from the meaning of the nominal stem.³¹ Therefore, with what is there expression of what is connected?³²

—There is nothing wrong here, because what is supplied in cases such as “[enter the] door,” where “door” has an accusative case ending, which has a meaning different from the mere stem, is just like what is supplied in “should perform the Vishvajit sacrifice” [namely, “one who desires heaven”], because an expressed meaning is not possible here.³³

7.4. VACASPATI MISHRA ON WORDS AND SENTENCES

Vacaspati Mishra’s *Tattvabindu* (*Drop of the Truth*) takes the defense of Kumarila Bhatta’s position. After a brief introduction in which various positions as to the expressiveness of sentences are enumerated, he refutes these positions one by one and terminates his treatise with an enumeration of arguments that are in favor of the “connection of what has been expressed” (*abhihitānvaya*).

The introduction reads as follows:

In this world, it is beyond dispute that, after hearing a collection of words, men who know the conjunction between words and their meanings will become aware of a so far unknown meaning. Scholars disagree as to the cause of this awareness.

Some believe that its cause is a totally partless sentence in which a division into unreal speech sounds and words is superimposed by beginningless ignorance.

Some think that its cause is the knowledge of the final speech sound of the sentence, accompanied by the memory traces born from the experience of the real words and word meanings that preceded this final speech sound.

Others hold that it is a series of speech sounds reflected in a memory that has come into existence on account of a number of memory traces produced by the experience of the individual speech sounds, words, and word meanings.

Others again state that this cause consists in the words themselves, expressive of their own meaning connected with other words' meanings and characterized by expectancy, compatibility, and proximity.

According to the Masters, however, the meanings expressed by words that occur together are the causes of the awareness of the sentence meaning, on condition that those word meanings are characterized by expectancy, compatibility, and proximity.³⁴

Vacaspati then proceeds to analyze and reject the different positions here enumerated. Only the last one, that of the Masters, is acceptable to him. He justifies it in the following passage:

The meanings of words are necessarily connected, because words occur together; this has to be accepted, because there is no other way to account for the meaning of a sentence.

One does not get to know the potency of things on the basis of some special means of knowledge; on the contrary, such knowledge merely depends on the impossibility that the effect might arise in any other way. In this case, the knowledge of the connection between the meanings of words can somehow arise on various accounts, visible and invisible; it is not appropriate to think that the power of expression of the word is the means that brings it about. Indeed, those competent in Vedic lore state that the meaning of the sentence is that which cannot be obtained from something else. That is why they do not consider that the verbal ending and other suffixes are expressive of the agent, etc. It is through metaphorical expression that the connected state of affairs that inheres in the meanings expressed by words is communicated

by words whose meanings are connected, because their joint occurrence makes no sense otherwise. For words that do not occur together are not in a position to give this result through the mere understanding of their meaning. People do not aim at communicating mere word meanings. They pronounce words so as to make known what they wish to be understood. They would be ignored as being neither ordinary speakers nor scholars if they were to communicate things they did not wish to be understood, because their words would then not be worth paying attention to. Listeners do not wish to understand, again and again, the mere meaning of words they know already. Competent people use words with the intention of conveying a meaning that is not yet known to their listeners. The joint use of words in order to communicate a meaning not yet known, therefore, not being possible without that as yet unknown meaning, metaphorically expresses the connected state of affairs that inheres in the meanings of those words, a state of affairs that is not yet known to the listeners. As it has been stated: "The joint use of words among people is instigated by the special meaning that it will express."

The connected state of affairs that is metaphorically expressed by virtue of the visible presence of a memory imposed by a group of words whose joint use would otherwise make no sense—the meanings of those words being characterized by mutual expectancy, proximity, and compatibility—this connected state of affairs does not have the power of expression of words as its means of production, because that state of affairs [i.e., the sentence meaning] is obtained by other means than that.

[Objection:] Consider now the following. Let it be that collections of words in the world, woven together by an intelligent person in accordance with their intention, metaphorically express a meaning not so far known, because otherwise this weaving together of words by an intelligent person makes no sense. However, Vedic words have not been woven together by a person and do not emanate from an intelligence; in their case there is nothing that makes no sense, on account of which we might conclude that they metaphorically give expression to a connected state of affairs.

[Tentative rejoinder:] Aren't words spoken in the world and Vedic words identical?

[Rejection of rejoinder:] In that case, you have to accept that the same word "Ganges," which is metaphorically used in "there is a hamlet on the Ganges,"³⁵ is also metaphorically used in "there is water in the Ganges," "there are fish in the Ganges."

[Tentative rejoinder:] No, because in the latter two examples the impossibility [there can be no hamlet in the river] is no longer there.

[Response to rejoinder:] The same applies to Vedic words that are known not to emanate from an intelligence.

[*Objection continued:*] Why then should there be, from the point of view of the opponent, communication of an unknown meaning in the case of collections of Vedic words?

[*Tentative answer:*] Because in the world we understand the expressive power of words with respect to their own meaning connected with other meanings, and because Vedic words are not different from words used in the world.

[*Correct answer:*] This cannot be the case. Words in the world agree with the intention of a person because their arrangement depends upon that person, not because they express a connected meaning [which they do not]; for this reason they can communicate his intention. It is therefore incorrect to attribute a meaning connected with other meanings to them.

[*Objection:*] If so, understanding the meaning of Vedic utterances is impossible.

[*Response:*] Let it be impossible. What have the Logicians taken away from us? The purpose follows the means of knowledge, not the other way round. Abandoning therefore our attachment to our respective views and resorting to the straight road of the orthodox, we, i.e., you and I, will follow that road. The cause of understanding the meaning of Vedic utterances is now without obstacles. The established position is that the connection between a linguistic utterance and its meaning is natural. This follows from the fact that there can be understanding of meaning from a linguistic utterance even if there is no one who made the connection, given that there is a means to learn the connection between words and their meanings in the form of the beginningless succession of verbal usage deriving each time from the preceding generation of speakers. Moreover, determining a specific meaning depends on a specific cognition, and a specific cognition is not different from a meaning, so that when no specific cognition is expressed there is no expression of meaning at all. Alternatively, if there is expression of a specific meaning, that itself would prove that that connection between a linguistic utterance and its meaning is natural, for from the impossibility to express that specific meaning it would follow that the activity of the instruments of speech, such as the palate, etc., would also be expressed, given that we have to postulate that activity as a cause in the act of expressing.³⁶

The connection of a linguistic utterance, is it with a meaning connected with other meanings, or only with its own meaning? And even if words only express their own meaning, are those words meant only to express their own meaning, or is it their aim to communicate a connected state of affairs? If words are not intended to communicate more than their own meaning, it will be impossible to understand the meaning of a sentence, because something that has no purpose cannot give expression to a purpose. The result would be a world that is entirely blind and mute.³⁷ The only possibility that remains is that collections of words in the world, whose

purpose is to communicate a specific [sentence] meaning, are expressive of their own meaning connected with other meanings and are meant to communicate a connected state of affairs. The expressive power of a word that must be connected with other meanings cannot be made to cover that connection, because the connected meaning can be known even if words express only their own meaning, so it cannot be obtained through implication.³⁸

Consider the following: a learner infers the notion that is the cause of the activity, inactivity, joy, sorrow, or fear that occurs in a listener after hearing a sentence used by an experienced speaker. He determines that that is their cause which arises after hearing that collection of words but does not arise if other words are used. That notion is not part of the word meaning by itself; since it is postulated on the basis of the resulting activity, etc., it is accepted that that notion belongs to the realm of a specific meaning, and it is determined that the use of words by experienced speakers is meant to convey that specific meaning. This determination cannot be made without remembering the nonspecific meaning of the words, so that the bringing to mind of the nonspecific meanings of words is eclipsed by the appearance of their specific meaning. This circumstance should not make it impossible for words to express a specific meaning. Nothing ever destroys its own cause, certainly not itself.

It does not follow that words express a specific meaning. Words can give rise to specific meanings even though their own meanings are not specific. It is for this reason that, as in the world, even a Vedic collection of words, used in a specific sense while giving expression to a nonspecific meaning, conveys a specific meaning through metaphorical use. This is because even their own [nonspecific] meaning, to the exclusion of the contextually determined specific meaning, would be impossible on account of the fact that if that were all they are about, the Vedic sentence would serve no purpose. This is what the author of the *Ślokavārttika* (i.e., Kumarila Bhatta) expresses in the following verses:³⁹

Even though speech sounds directly only convey word meanings, they do not restrict themselves to that pointless function. Conveying word meanings is the immediate function whose purpose is conveying the sentence meaning, just like the burning of firewood for the purpose of cooking.

Moreover,

We hold the position that sentence meaning is always metaphorically conveyed.

If you maintain that, since we all agree that the connected meaning of words is intended in a sentence, words must give expression to that connected meaning, I ask

you: Would in that case the word “Ganges” in “there is a hamlet on the Ganges” express the meaning “shore,” because that is intended?

If you say, “No; because the meaning ‘shore’ is understood on account of its proximity to the proper meaning of ‘Ganges’ that is brought to mind, the word ‘Ganges,’ which is meant to convey the sense ‘shore,’ does not need to express it,” I respond: If this is what you maintain, we say that the same applies in other cases, by the same procedure. For this reason intention, which is variable, is not a basis for establishing the expressive power of words. Firewood, though burning with the ultimate intention of cooking food, is not capable of directly bringing about the cooking, but only of burning, because through the intermediary of burning it brings about the cooking.

The primary function of those words, which do not belong to one and the same class, is not to give expression to the specific meaning [required in the sentence], so that one might postulate an expressive power on their part with respect to the understanding of a connected meaning, giving rise to those meanings through their primary function. The fact that words do not belong to one and the same class has been shown, because they are expressive of their own form only, and because the assumption that they express a connected meaning would be overly complicated. Nor is it necessary to postulate that word meanings that are visibly accompanied by mutual expectancy, etc. have another expressive power that gives rise to the understanding of a specific meaning; this is not necessary, because that understanding can arise from those word meanings as they are.⁴⁰

7.5. ADDED MEANING IS SENTENCE MEANING

Patanjali’s *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 462 l. 4, on P. 2.3.46 vt. 2) states:

What is added to the word meanings, that is the sentence meaning.

Bhartrihari’s *Treatise on Sentences and Words* (Vkp 2.42) elaborates:

When the words are connected, the extra that appears, different from the word meanings, that, they say, is the sentence meaning. It is based on several words.

7.6. BHATTOJI DIKSHITA ON THE UNIT OF EXPRESSION

In reality expressiveness resides in the *sphoṭa* only. In this respect there are eight positions: the morpheme⁴¹ is expressive, the word is expressive, the sentence is

expressive, the indivisible word is expressive, the indivisible sentence is expressive.⁴² These are the five individual *sphoṭas*; there are further three universal *sphoṭas*, one each for the morpheme, the word, and the sentence.

For example, the position according to which the morpheme *sphoṭa* is expressive is that all morphemes that occur in an utterance and that are delimited by this or that sequence—as for example the forms *kar*, *kār*, *kur*, and *cakar* (in the case of the verb *kṛ*)—are expressive, just as in the case of the words *rṣabha*, *vṛṣabha*, *vṛṣa*, etc. (which all mean “bull”), because a deviation from the sequence that delimits the state of denoting, by way of an interchange of sounds and the like, is natural in words, and because—since someone gets to know the denotative power of a word for the first time with regard to any one possible sequence—it is not possible to determine which variant calls to mind which other one.

The question whether *kar*, etc. are expressive of meaning or not is contested. The position according to which the word *sphoṭa* is expressive holds that only the complete word—for example *rāmam*, accusative singular of *rāma*—is expressive of its object as qualified by the meaning of the accusative, because it is impossible to determine in a complete form [such as *rāmam*, *rāmeṇa*, *rāmāya*, i.e., the accusative, instrumental and dative singular of *rāma*, or *haraye*, *harau*, *harīn*, i.e., the dative singular, locative singular, and accusative plural of *hari*] which part expresses the substance and which part the accusative, etc.

The position according to which the sentence *sphoṭa* is expressive is as follows: only the sentence can express a qualified meaning, because, as in the preceding case, one cannot determine which part expresses what in *dadhīdam*, *hareva*, and *viṣṇova*.⁴³

The indivisible word or sentence, both different from the constituent morphemes, are yet manifested by the morphemes; they are single because the notion “this is one word” or “this is one sentence” is not contradicted, just as the notion “this is one cloth” is not contradicted.⁴⁴

[Question:] Is the notion of being single not due to adventitious circumstances?

[Answer:] If so, the same might be said of a cloth, whose single nature is yet beyond dispute.

...

In these last two positions morphemes are not necessary.

...

Also Bhartrihari said:

There are no morphemes (*varṇa*) in a word, and there are no parts in morphemes. There is absolutely no difference between a sentence and its words.⁴⁵

It follows that the word, or the sentence, is indivisible.

All the preceding five are internal divisions of the individual *sphoṭa*.

Those, on the other hand, who uphold that the universal *sphoṭa* is expressive, say that the fact that *ta* follows *gha* (in *ghata*), etc. should be stated as a delimiter of the state of denoting in the first three positions. Otherwise there would be no difference in the notions produced by *saras* and *rasas* and other such cases. And that takes the shape of a contingent feature. And that contingent feature is the universal, indirectly connected with the words. That universal, in its turn, is the form of Brahma, the abode of all.

...

Even though eight positions have here been enumerated, the authorities prefer the position according to which the sentence is expressive. Here again the universal *sphoṭa* is to be chosen, because each succeeding unit comes about through the destruction of each preceding one.⁴⁶

7.7. SHABARA ON THE HIERARCHY OF WORDS IN SENTENCES

In the first chapter of this *Bhāṣya* we said that Dharma is of the nature of an injunction. An injunction is a sentence that names an activity, and in a sentence there are word meanings. Here the following question arises: Is Dharma expressed by each single word, or is there one Dharma that is expressed by them all? What difference does this make?

If you maintain that Dharma is expressed by each word, our answer is: The unseen effect [*apūrva*]⁴⁷ arises from one word, and each other word is auxiliary to that. In this way there will be fewer postulates as to the need to infer unseen entities. There is therefore only one unseen effect.

If there is only one unseen effect, the following doubt comes up: Does unseen effect arise from words that refer to being [i.e., verbs], or from words that refer to substances and qualities [i.e., nouns and adjectives]?

What is “being,” and which are those words that refer to being?

Words like “he-sacrifices,” “he-gives,” “he-pours-an-oblation,” etc.

[*Objection:*] These words refer to “sacrifice,” “gift” and “oblation”; they are not words that refer to being.

[*Answer:*] This is not the case. These are words that refer to “sacrifice” and so on, and they are also words that refer to being. The sense of “sacrificing” is understood to be “let him bring into being”; he should sacrifice in such a manner that something comes into being. Therefore these are words that refer to being. From words that refer to substances and qualities we derive a notion of a substance or of a quality, not of bringing into being [*bhāvanā*]. Therefore they are not words that refer to being.

What if the words express unseen effect without distinction?

Here we say: The words that refer to being are words that refer to activity. From these words—as, for example, from “he should sacrifice”—we understand the action.

Why?

Because they refer to being.

In the sentence “he who desires heaven should sacrifice,” those who say “he should bring something into being” will add, based on the link with the word “he who desires heaven,” “he should bring heaven into being.” The action, therefore, is understood from all those words. The action of the result is its making, its production. Those words, connected with sacrifice, giving and pouring an oblation, give expression to the production of heaven.

Why?

Because this is prescribed. Since he who desires heaven proceeds by means of sacrifice, etc., the question “How does he bring heaven into being?” is answered: by means of sacrifice, etc. And the word by whose meaning the fruit is realized, on the basis of that word the unseen effect is understood, since heaven is realized by means of that word after producing the unseen effect, not otherwise. Therefore, from the word that is expressive of heaven the unseen effect is understood. But there is no word that is directly expressive of the unseen effect. Words whose meaning is being must bring something into being, and the desire of heaven⁴⁸ must be brought into being by something. Both expressions are in need of something that is not directly expressed, so the two join up, like the person who has lost his horse joins up with the one whose cart has burned.

Expressions like “one should sacrifice” have expectancy [*ākāṅkṣā*] in the form of the following questions: “what,” “with what,” “how”? Such expressions become free from expectancy on account of the purpose that is expressed by “he-who-desires-heaven.” The words expressive of substance and quality are not like that. For this reason the words that refer to activity, whose meaning is being, enjoin the unseen effect.⁴⁹

7.8. SHABARA AGAINST PANINI ON THE MEANING OF VERBAL SUFFIXES

All verbs give expression to the performance of an action, not to any actant [*kāraka*]. How then is the actant understood? From the cognition that arises from the verb. For we cognize that an action is to be performed.

[*Objection:*] People cognize the agent too.

[*Response:*] True, people cognize it, but not from the utterance.

Wherefrom then?

From implication. When it is enjoined that an action must be performed, it is understood by implication that an actant is involved. But what is understood by implication is not expressed. . . .

[*Objection:*] It is understood from the instruction of the teachers that the agent is expressed by the utterance, and so is the object; this because stem and suffix together give expression to the meaning of the suffix. The teachers state the meaning of the suffix to be “agent” and “object” in the *sūtras* “the suffix *śap* is added when a suffix that expresses the meaning ‘agent’ follows” and “the suffix *yak* is added when a suffix that expresses the meaning ‘object’ follows.”⁵⁰ “Agent” and “object” are therefore expressed by the utterance.

[*Response:*] To this we respond that “agent” and “object” are not expressed by the utterance, neither according to the teacher [i.e., Patanjali] nor according to the author of the *sūtras* [Panini]. They are understood from the cognition. The action to be performed, being cognized, makes us cognize the actants; this is understood. What is more, the teachers state that neither agent nor object is the meaning of the suffix.

[*Objection:*] Panini states explicitly that the suffix *l* (which will be substituted by the verbal endings in the course of the derivation) expresses the meanings “agent” and “object.”⁵¹

[*Answer:*] Panini does not state explicitly that *l* expresses “agent” or “object,” but rather something different, viz., that when there is one agent, the singular is used, when there are two, the dual, when there are many, the plural.⁵² The link is as follows: “When there is one agent, the singular is used”; “When there are two agents, the dual is used”; “When there are many agents, the plural is used.” In the same way the object is connected with singularity, etc. It is not like this: “The suffix is used to express the agent, and when there is one agent.”

How then?

“When there is one agent the singular is used.” This is the meaning. The same when there are two or many agents, or with regard to the object. When it is explained like this, the meaning of the *sūtras* is in accordance with the rule of common experience. And tradition too is like this: when singularity, etc. are the meaning of the verbal ending, object, etc. act as qualifier.

[*Objection:*] The opposite too holds: when object, etc. are the meaning of the verbal ending, then singularity, etc. act as qualifier.

[*Response:*] The meanings “object,” etc. are obtained by implication; they are not what is directly expressed by the utterance. Singularity, etc., on the other hand, are not obtained by implication. These, therefore, constitute the meaning of the utterance. It follows that, even though singularity, etc. are the qualifier, it is the qualifier

that is expressed. An example where this is the case is the following: in “the sacrificial priests proceed wearing a golden necklace,” the fact of wearing a golden necklace acts as qualifier, yet that qualifier is what is enjoined. For this reason the singularity of the agent is the meaning, not the agent itself.

[*Objection:*] Because of the singularity of the agent one uses the singular, because of its duality, the dual, because of its plurality, the plural. From this we understand that agent is the meaning of the utterance.

[*Response:*] This cannot be established by means of inference. It is evident that the agent is understood because we understand an action that must be performed. That is not opposed by anyone. When the singular is taught, we understand that there is one agent; when the dual is taught, that there are two agents; when the plural is taught, that there are many agents. That too is evident. Which of these two evident facts could an inference invalidate? We must look upon this as we look upon the following example: even though words refer to forms, we understand a specific substance when the dual is used, and a single substance when the singular is used.⁵³

7.9. KUMARILA AND HIS FOLLOWERS ON THE MEANING OF THE SENTENCE

Kumarila, *Tantravārttika* (*Comments on the Doctrine*) on *sūtra* 2.1.1:

From words of action that have being as their meaning we understand the activity of the unseen effect [*apūrva*]. With their help, i.e., with the verb “to sacrifice” [*yaj*], one should produce heaven. This is what is prescribed [in sentences such as “he who desires heaven should sacrifice”; *svargakāmo yajeta*].

The connection with the result is the reason that we know the unseen effect. This connection is preceded by the mutual expectancy of the word. And that expectancy is seen to proceed from words that refer to being, not from words that refer to substances and qualities. It follows that the production of the unseen effect is understood from verbs. Here the meaning of the verbal root is understood to be the instrument, because it is near the verbal ending. It is therefore determined that by means of that meaning of the verbal root, which is the instrument to produce the result, the unseen effect is brought into being, because there is no other way to explain it.

[*Objection:*] How?

Separating the verbal roots *yaj*, etc., the meaning “productive energy” [*bhāvanā*] that is expressed by the suffix on its own is grasped, in the form “one should bring about” [*bhāvayet*].

Why?

The verbal endings of the optative mood express by their own power an injunction and nothing but that. Which part of the verb expresses the causative meaning of “to be” [i.e., “to produce”]?

The verbal root *yaj* [“to sacrifice”] does not convey the meaning of another verbal root [viz., “to produce”], because they are only used in their own meaning. The meaning “one should bring about” is therefore superimposed without any word or part of word that gives expression to it.

What is more:

Whatever meaning of a phonetic unit is expressed by synonyms, in that meaning that phonetic unit is not used along with the synonym.

For example: To someone who does not know the meaning of *pika* in “bring a *pika*,” only the synonym “cuckoo” is used, not both, as in “bring a *pika* cuckoo.”⁵⁴ In the same way, if, in the present case, the words “he makes” or “he brings into being” are synonyms of the verbal ending, then those synonyms alone should be used to convey that meaning, not along with the verbal ending, for then one does not know separately which activity is made known by which part. But here in the paraphrases of the verbal ending of the optative mood “he should bring into being” and “he should make,” the ending of the optative mood is used again. Hence, the meaning conveyed by a form different from *yajeta* [viz., by *yāgam bhāvayet*], should itself be conveyed by *bhāvayet* different from the first *bhāvayet*;⁵⁵ in this way there would be a multiplication of the form *bhāvayet*. This procedure is therefore non-Vedic.

[Response:] The answer is as follows. Everywhere the verbal ending expresses an activity whose agent is established, there the meaning “he does” is understood because it has the same substrate.

In this world, after certain verbal roots—such as *asti*, *bhavati*, and *vidyate*, which all mean “to be”—the verbal ending, when pronounced, conveys no other operation than the becoming of the agent. After other verbal roots, in cases where the agent is established, the verbal ending gives rise to the cognition of a operation whose object is the becoming of something different from the agent. Examples are: “he sacrifices,” “he gives,” “he cooks,” “he goes.” What is referred to by “operation” [*vyāpāra*] is nothing but a substance that has specific capacities, whose essence moves forward, whose own nature is spread out over time, that is sequential and that, separated from its initial state, has not yet reached the next state.⁵⁶ Sometimes it is the agent itself that is cognized to be in that state; sometimes, when the agent is established, it is something else. When the agent itself is in that state then, since it itself is aiming at a state of becoming starting from something else, it is not expressed by “it does,” because its operation does not lead to the production of something else. When, on the other hand, the agent has reached its own identity and it operates on something

different from itself, then one says that “it does.” In this manner, in “What does he do? He reads, he goes,” one can see that “he does” and “he reads” or “he goes” are used with reference to the same substrate, which they refer to in general and specific terms respectively. In contrast to this, the question and answer “What does he do? He becomes, or he is” cannot be used. It follows that verbs that express an operation carried out by an agent that has reached its own identity have the meaning of “to do.” In such cases there must be something that is being done. Why?

There is no making without an object that is being made.⁵⁷ The object of making is the agent of becoming.

Since “to make” is always transitive and therefore requires an object, its meaning is not determined as long as that which is being made is not grasped. From among all the actants [*kāraka*] that are made to convey that they are the agent of secondary activities, the division into object, etc. concerns the principal activity. For each activity there are a variety of secondary activities, according to the suitability [*yogyatā*] of each actant. Through positive and negative concomitance it is known that the object of making becomes the agent of the activity of being. As it has been said:

That which never exists, or that which exists eternally, that is not being made,
like a sky flower [which never exists] and ether [which exists eternally].

For only something that is instigated by something else, having come into being or having been brought into being, only such a thing is known as being made, not anything else. In concrete terms, no one is ever observed making a sky flower or making ether. Even in cases where it is seen that established things are used as the object of *kṛ*, “do, make,” as in “do your feet” [*pādau kuru*],⁵⁸ even there there is no deviation from the above rule, because the use of the words “feet,” etc. in such cases is inspired by the desire to give expression to mental traces of something that is not established. The verb *kṛ*, “do, make,” has admittedly several meanings, and yet some general notion of producing what was not yet there is understood in activities as varied as hurting, blaming, etc. Otherwise put, when this verb *kṛ*, “do, make,” expresses producing, then it is clear that it has the same substrate as a specific verb. It is then proper to conclude that the object that is being produced comes into existence. The activity of becoming is in this way obtained. Therefore:

The agent of the meaning “making” is the instigator of “becoming.” What becomes, while depending upon that [agent], is that which is instigated.

Since “becoming” and “making” have different expressive powers, they necessarily refer to the operation of the instigated and the instigator respectively, as in “softening” of rice grains and “cooking.” Sometimes the speaker merely wishes to express the operation of the instigator, the operation of the instigated being hinted

at by the expressive power of the object mentioned or being hinted at by itself, as in “he makes a mat,” “he cooks rice.” Sometimes he merely wishes to express the operation of the instigated, the operation of the instigator being hinted at, as in “the pot comes into being,” “the rice grains soften.” Sometimes words are used such that both operations, though different, find expression, as in “Devadatta makes a mat, and that mat comes into being.” Sometimes one wishes to express the operation of the instigated to which the operation of the instigator is subordinate, as in “the mat is being made by Devadatta” or “the rice cooks by itself.” Sometimes again one wishes to express the operation of the instigator to which the activity of the instigated, seized by part of the same word, is subordinate. In this last case a causative is used—as in “he causes something to be” and “he causes the rice grains to soften”—to express or to suggest that the expressive power of the verb cannot proceed directly, (1) because “to make” and “to cook” are not used on account of the fact that they do not express the same as the causative forms,⁵⁹ and (2) because “to be” and “to soften” reside exclusively in the activities of the instigated. As it has been said:

Causative forms of verbs that convey exclusively the operation whose agent is the instigated are used with reference to the actions that instigate them.

...

In this way the meaning “brings into being” is established for all verbs through the intermediary of the meaning “makes,” and through this the agency of the thing effected with regard to “being.” And those who are knowledgeable about the productive energy call the activity of the instigator “productive energy” [*bhāvanā*].

In contrast, the claim that has been made according to which the verbal endings of the optative mood, etc. do not give expression to anything different from the fact that they are injunctions is incorrect. Why?

The verbal endings of the optative mood, etc. give expression to one kind of productive energy, viz., the verbal productive energy [*abhidhābhāvanā*]. Another kind of productive energy, viz., the objective productive energy [*arthātmabhāvanā*] is understood in the case of all verbs in general.

For when the productive energy that accompanies all verbs can be expressed with the help of the verbal root *kṛ*, “do, make,” and is of the nature of a human operation, has been cognized, then specifics that are expressed by specific units different from the general verbal ending are understood, such as injunction, prohibition, past, future, present, and so on. In this way the general meaning “do, make” is cognized in all cases, as follows: “What does he do? He cooks”; “What did he do? He cooked”; “What will he do? He will cook”; “What should he do? He should cook”; “What should he not do? He should not cook.” In that object-oriented productive energy, there is a

second productive energy, the verbal productive energy, a characteristic of language, called an injunction; it is the operation of instigation toward humans that belongs to the endings of the optative mood, etc.⁶⁰

A thousand years after Kumarila Bhatta, Apadeva's *Light on the Rules of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa*; seventeenth century) presents the following summary of the thought on *bhāvanā* (productive energy) as it was still current at that time in Kumarila's school:

The venerable seer Jaimini, endowed with supreme compassion, has communicated his thoughts about Dharma in the twelve chapters of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*, beginning with *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.1.1: *athāto dharmajijñāsā*, “Next the desire to know Dharma.” In this context, Dharma is that which is prescribed by the Veda with a purpose in view, such as sacrifices, etc. It is prescribed by sentences such as “he who desires heaven should sacrifice” [*yajeta svargakāmah*] with heaven in view. This goes as follows. In *yajeta* “he should sacrifice” there are two parts: the verbal root *yaj* and the suffix. In the suffix too there are two parts: general verbal force and injunctive force. The general verbal force is present in all ten kinds of verbal endings. The injunctive force is only present in the optative endings. Both the general verbal force and the injunctive force express “productive energy” [*bhāvanā*]. What is called “productive energy” is the specific operation of what produces that leads to the coming into being of that which comes into being. Productive energy is of two kinds: verbal productive energy [*śabdi bhāvanā*] and objective productive energy [*ārthī bhāvanā*].

From among these, verbal productive energy is a special operation of that which promotes leading to human activity. This verbal productive energy is expressed by the part that is injunctive force, because, when hearing the optative ending, one necessarily understands: “it makes me act,” “it has an operation that leads to my activity.” What one understands from something, that is what is expressed by the latter, as cowness is expressed by the word “cow.”

In the world, a special operation leading to activity is a particular intention residing in a person. In the Veda it resides in the optative endings, etc., because in the case of the Veda there is no question of a person. For the Veda has not been composed by a person. This fact has been established by verses like the following:

All study of the Veda follows the teacher's study of the Veda, because this is the general rule of Veda study, as for example the study of the Veda today.⁶¹

Moreover, the postulate according to which it was composed by someone who had seen its meaning by some other means of knowledge is not possible. It is possible to

hold that God, because each world period is preceded by another one and the cycle of world periods is without beginning, God being omniscient, remembers in the present world period the Veda as it was in the past world period and teaches it to humans. Because then there is no person involved, this productive energy resides in words. That is why it is called “verbal productive energy.”

Verbal productive energy depends on three things: goal, means, and manner.

With regard to the need for a goal, the objective productive energy, which also has three parts as will be explained below, is construed as its goal, because, being understood from a single suffix, it is expressed by the same verbal element. Even though other meanings too are expressed by the same single suffix—for example, number, etc.—they are not connected as that which is to be accomplished, since that would not be suitable.

With regard to the need for an instrument, the knowledge of the endings of the optative mood is construed as being the instrument. It is not an instrument in the sense of producing productive energy, just as proximity is instrumental in bringing about cognition of shapes, etc. It is not like this, for this would have the consequence that there is no productive energy—which is a characteristic of the word—prior to our knowledge of the optative endings, etc., just as there is no cognition of shapes prior to the proximity that makes that cognition possible. It is an instrument in the sense of producing that which the productive energy is meant to bring about. For cognition of the optative endings produces the objective productive energy [*ārthī bhāvanā*] that is to be brought about by the verbal productive energy [*sābdī bhāvanā*], just as an axe produces a cut. This is why cognition of the optative endings, etc. is connected with the function of being an instrument.

With regard to the need for a manner, the cognition of praise is construed as being the manner. This cognition of praise is produced by laudatory statements such as “Wind is the fastest deity.”⁶² For those laudatory statements, while conveying their own meaning, not having a purpose of their own, convey praise of the sacrifice by means of secondary signification, because they would serve no purpose if they were to convey only their own meaning. Do not say that this would be acceptable, because purposelessness is impossible by virtue of the fact that all such statements are covered by the injunction to study. The injunction to study—“the Veda should be studied” [*svādhyāyo dhyetavyah*]—while making known that the whole of the Veda must be studied, suggests that the whole Veda has a meaning that serves a purpose, because it would be improper to study something that serves no purpose.

...

What exactly is this verbal productive energy [*sābdī bhāvanā*]?

The answer is as follows: It is a special operation leading to human activity. It is the meaning of injunctions because, when we hear optative endings, etc., we necessarily understand this in the following manner: this statement urges me to do something.

It is, however, not true that the meaning of an injunction is the fact that it is a means to attain what one desires. If that were the case, “meaning of an injunction” would be a synonym of “means to attain what one desires.” That is not correct. Because we can use these expressions jointly, as in “the twilight adoration is a means to attain what you desire, you must therefore carry it out”; synonyms, though, cannot be used jointly.

It follows that the meaning of an injunction is a special operation. In the world that operation resides in a person in the form of a special intention. In the Veda, because there is no person involved, it resides in the word and nowhere else, and is synonymous with “impelling” [*preraṇā*]. This is what has been stated.

...

Exhortation [*pravartanā*] is the operation leading to activity. That operation takes various forms, such as that of an order, etc. Since each of these various forms cannot be expressed by the injunctive words because they deviate from one another, one comes to the conclusion that exhortation in general is that which is expressed by the injunctive words. In this way, when an injunction is heard, the intention of the speaker in the form of an order or something else is cognized as being an exhortation, not as something more specific, because its power of expression is grasped in that form. Its cognition as something more specific [such as, for example, an order] takes place through secondary signification.

In the same way, also when an optative ending or the like that occurs in the Veda is heard, a general exhortation is cognized. With regard to the question “Which is that operation?”, it is conceived that it is an operation that resides in the words and is synonymous with impelling, because in the Veda that has not been composed by a person there can be no intention of a speaker that takes the shape of an order, etc. That is why verbal productive energy is an operation, synonymous with impelling, that resides in the words. It is the meaning of an injunction in the form of an exhortation. This is the meaning of Kumarila Bhatta’s *Tantravārttika* when it says:

The verbal endings of the optative mood, etc. give expression to one kind of productive energy, viz., the verbal productive energy [*abhidhābhāvanā*].⁶³

The word *abhidhā* [in *abhidhābhāvanā*] means “utterance expressive of an injunction.” The productive energy that is the operation of that injunctive utterance is what is expressed by the optative endings, etc. This is what certain teachers maintain.

Others, however, maintain that the meaning of the injunction is exhortation in general, because that is the expressive power we grasp. Exhortation is the operation that leads to activity. Since there can be no such thing as an order or the like in the Veda that has not been composed by a person, we must postulate some specific operation that leads to the activity of a person, because a general exhortation, which is what the injunctive utterance conveys, is not complete without a specification. With regard to the question which is that specific operation, it must be assumed that it is the fact of being the means to a desired end conveyed by the verbal root, for that too leads to activity. For everyone who knows that that is the means to a desired end will engage in the activity concerned. Even if one is impelled by something else [different from the Vedic word] but does not know that it is a means to a desired end, he will not engage in the activity concerned.

Even if one agrees that the Vedic word impels on its own, knowledge that the activity suggested is a means to a desired end must be accepted, since otherwise the injunction could not exhort. It follows that out of necessity the meaning of the injunction is the circumstance of being a means toward a desired end in the form of an exhortation. In this manner the well-known fact that is valid in the world is established, viz., that the utterance of an injunction conveys an operation that resides elsewhere.

...

And one should not say that, in case the fact of being the means to attain what one desires were the meaning of the injunction, the two could not be used jointly, as in: "the twilight adoration is a means to attain what you desire, you must therefore carry it out." Since being the means to attain what one desires is specific, it is not expressed by the injunction, which only expresses the general notion of exhortation. General words and specific words are seen to be used jointly, as in "Drupada is the king of the Pancalas" and other examples. For this reason the fact of being a means to attain what one desires is the meaning of the injunction, in the general sense of being an exhortation. In this form it is expressed by the injunctive utterance. This is the verbal productive energy.

The idea behind the passage from the *Tantravārttika* cited above is: *abhidhā* is the fact of being the means to attain a desired end. This, once expressed, brings about, as exhortation, the activity of a person. For this reason it is productive energy. That productive energy is expressed by the optative endings, etc. As they say:

Nothing instigates humans to carry out ritual acts apart from the fact of being means to attain a desired end. This characteristic, which is the cause of activity, is called exhortation.

It has now been established that verbal productive energy is expressed by the part that is injunctive force.

The part that is general verbal force expresses the objective productive energy [*ārthī bhāvanā*].

[*Objection:*] What is this objective productive energy? One cannot say that it is an operation of the agent, because in that case the sacrifice, which is also an operation of the agent, would be productive energy. And this is not acceptable, because sacrifice being the meaning of the stem [viz., the verbal root *yaj*] it cannot be the meaning of the suffix.

[*Response:*] Here some say: True! Productive energy is not the sacrifice, but rather the effort that has sacrifice as object and has been produced by the desire for heaven. That effort is expressed by the part that is general verbal force. This is because when hearing the verb *yajeta*, “he should sacrifice,” the following cognition arises: “he should make an effort by means of a sacrifice.”

Effort is the meaning of “do, make.” This is clear from the fact that we see that the verb “do, make” is used with respect to someone who does something that requires effort, as in “Devadatta does the going,” whereas in the case of a movement caused by wind, etc. [in which there is no effort], we say, “it does not do anything, but the movement arises on account of wind, etc.” We also see that the verb and the paraphrase using “do, make” have the same substrate, as in: “he should sacrifice = he should make by means of a sacrifice,” “he cooks = he does the cooking,” “he goes = he does the going.”

From the fact that verb and “do, make” have the same substrate, it follows that effort is expressed by the verbal ending. One should not object that in that case one could not say “the chariot goes,” given that there is no such thing as effort in a chariot. One can say that, because the effort of the draft horse is projected upon the chariot.

Even in the opinion of those who think that productive energy is the general operation that leads to the production of something else, the usage “the chariot goes” is metaphorical, given that no operation different from going is observed in the chariot.

It follows that the verbal productive energy is effort. As they say: One cannot say that verbal productive effort, expressed by the verbal ending and topic of discussion here, is different from effort; here we can stop.

Others (including Apadeva himself), however, say: Productive energy is the specific operation of what produces that leads to the coming into being of that which comes into being. That is to say: such an operation that, once the operation has been

carried out, the instrument is capable of producing the result. And that is the meaning of the verbal ending. For when one hears the verbal form in “he cuts with an axe,” this notion appears: “An operation with an axe takes place such that, when that operation has been effected, cutting with an axe takes place.” This operation, which is in one case raising and lowering the axe, in another case the sequence beginning with putting fuel on the fire and ending with satisfying the Brahmans, is subsequently understood in its specifics regarding the manner of performance. From the verbal form it is understood in general to lead to the production of something else.

In “the chariot goes to the village,” here too an operation conducive to reaching a village is cognized by means of the verb, for the cognition is that the chariot, by going, operates in such a way that, once the operation has been carried out, the village is attained as a result of this going. Here, however, mere going is not the meaning of the verbal ending, because that is expressed by the verbal root. With regard to the question “Which is this operation?”, it is subsequently understood that it is of the form of separating from and connecting with earlier, later, and intermediate spots on the road, because one says, “having separated from an earlier spot and connected with a next one, the chariot goes to the village,” just as one says, “having raised and lowered the axe, he cuts.”

In the same way, in “Devadatta makes an effort” Devadatta operates in such a way that there is effort, so that the meaning of the verbal ending is “operation conducive to effort” rather than “effort,” because “effort” has been expressed by the verbal root. With regard to the specifics of the operation, desire and so on are subsequently cognized, just like the raising and lowering in the case of cutting with an axe.

The meaning of the verbal ending is “operation conducive to the production of something else” in general, not just effort, because this meaning fits everywhere. “Effort,” however, is not expressed by the verbal ending in examples like “the chariot goes” and “Devadatta makes an effort.” And it is not proper to say that these examples constitute an exception, because it is not appropriate to think that these constitute an exception when the main meaning [viz., “operation conducive to the production of something else”] is possible. And the meaning of “do, make” too is “operation conducive to the production of something else,” not just “effort,” because “do, make” can be used as paraphrase for the verbal ending whether the agent is conscious or not. In this way it has been established that the “objective productive energy” [*ārthī bhāvanā*] is an operation that is conducive to the production of something else.

That productive energy, then, is expressed by the part of the verb that is the verbal ending, so that it means: it should bring about. With regard to the goal: heaven, etc. are connected with it as goal; with regard to the instrument: the sacrifice, etc. are connected with it as instrument; the fore-sacrifice, etc. as the manner. In this way, because sacrifice, etc. are enjoined with reference to heaven, etc. by statements like “one should sacrifice,” it has been established that sacrifice, etc. constitute Dharma, because they have been enjoined by the Veda in view of some purpose.⁶⁴

7.10. THE NEW LOGICIANS ON WORDS AND SENTENCES

The *Nyāyasiddhāntamuktāvalī* (*Pearl Necklace of Established Truth of Logic*), or simply *Siddhāntamuktāvalī* (*Pearl Necklace of Established Truth*), is a commentary on a verse text variously called *Kārikāvalī* (*String of Verses*) or *Bhāṣāpariccheda* (*Analysis of Speech*). Both works are commonly attributed to Vishvanatha Nyayasiddhanta Pancanana, but according to some this attribution is incorrect: their real author would be Krishnadasa Sarvabhauma. This controversy has an effect on the date we have to assign to this text: Krishnadasa wrote in the mid-sixteenth century, Vishvanatha in the first half of the seventeenth.

The following passage is a translation of part of the chapter on words (*śabdakhanda*) of the *Siddhāntamuktāvalī*:

The author of the *Bhāṣāpariccheda* explains the manner of verbal cognition [*śābdabodha*]:

The instrument is knowledge of the word; the means knowledge of the word meaning; verbal cognition is the result; knowledge of the expressive power its associate.

“Knowledge of the word,” not the word known, is the instrument, because there can be verbal cognition even in the absence of a word, as in a verse recited in silence.

“Knowledge of the word meaning.” The operation that leads to verbal cognition is the memory of the word meaning that is produced by the word. Otherwise someone who knows the word concerned might, in the presence of the object/meaning, arrive at verbal knowledge by means of perception and the like.⁶⁵

Here too, it is to be kept in mind that the word meaning must be produced by the word by way of a signifying function. Otherwise there would be verbal cognition of ether too, on the basis of words like “pot,” given that the memory of ether arises from words like “pot” through the relation of inherence. “Signifying function” is either the relation of denotative power or the relation of secondary signification. Here knowledge of the denotative power is useful, because, if the denotative power is not first grasped, there cannot be memory of word meaning by that relation, even if

there is knowledge of the word. For knowledge of the word as knowledge of a related item recalls the meaning. And denotative power, being the relation of the word meaning with the word, is ontologically speaking a desire of God of the form “let this meaning be understood from this word.” There is denotative power in names given in the present day to newborn children, because God’s desire is that a father give a name to his newborn child on the eleventh day. However, tradition maintains that there is no denotative power in a conventional term agreed upon in the present day.

The New Logicians disagree and claim that denotative power is not ontologically speaking a desire of God but rather just any desire belonging to any conscious being; there is therefore denotative power also in a conventional term agreed upon in the present day.

Denotative power is grasped on the basis of grammar and so on. As it has been said:

The ancients say that denotative power is grasped on the basis of grammar, analogy, lexicon, the statement of a reliable person, usage, the remainder of a sentence, explanation, proximity of a word already known.

The denotative power of roots, stem, suffixes, and so on is grasped on the basis of grammar. Sometimes, when something stands in the way, the position of grammar is not accepted. For example, grammarians say that the verbal ending denotes the agent: in sentences like “Caitra cooks” Caitra is construed as not being different from the agent (and therefore from that which is expressed by the verbal ending). That is not accepted, because it is overly complicated. It rather denotes resolution [*kṛti*], because that is simpler. Resolution appears as a subordinate qualification [*prakāra*] of Caitra.

One should not object that in that case the verbal ending would not express the agent, with the result that an instrumental ending would be added to the stem “Caitra.”⁶⁶ This objection does not hold, because the question of not expressing the number of the agent is here at stake.

...

Denotative power is also grasped on the basis of usage. For example, one elder directs another one with the words “bring a pot”; having heard this, the other one brings a pot. Having ascertained this, a child standing nearby ascertains that the effect, consisting in the bringing of a pot, has been instigated by the words “bring a pot.” Next he ascertains the denotative power of the word “pot,” etc. as referring to the pot that is part of what is to be accomplished, by means of positive and negative concomitance⁶⁷ on the basis of utterances like “take the pot, bring the cow.”

Some claim that there is no verbal cognition in the case of utterances like “a blue pot stands on the floor.” There is no verbal cognition here, because, while the words “pot,” etc. are ascertained to be capable of giving rise to the notion of a pot that is part of what is to be accomplished, optative endings, etc. are capable of giving rise to the notion that something is to be accomplished, and there is here no optative ending or the like.

That is not correct. Even though initially the denotative power with regard to a “pot,” etc. that is part of what is to be accomplished is ascertained, it is proper to subsequently abandon the bit “part of what is to be accomplished,” because that is simpler. That is why a listener—after first inferring that a person is happy or sad on the basis of the expressions on his face, pleased or sour, in the presence of such messages as, respectively, “Caitra, a son is born to you” and “Your daughter has become pregnant,” and next determining, through elimination, that verbal cognition is the cause of this happiness or sorrow—ascertains that those words are the cause of Caitra’s mental state. Here then we have denotative power that does not concern something that is part of what is to be accomplished, because there is nothing to be accomplished in these situations. And we do not have to supply other words, such as “Look at your son,” because such a claim is without proof. Moreover, no such words can be supplied if the message is “Caitra, a son is born to you, but he died” or something like it. In this way one abandons the notion that denotative power concerns a pot that is part of what is to be accomplished, and ascertains that the denotative power of the word “pot” concerns the pot and nothing more, because this is simpler.

Denotative power can also be grasped on the basis of the remainder of a sentence. For example, in “the oblation consists of *yava*,” the noble ones use the word *yava* in the sense “a special kind of barley,” the despised foreigners in the sense “Panic seed,” for the denotative power of this word can be determined on the basis of the remainder of the sentence, viz., “there where other plants wither, these happily stand up.” Using the word *yava* in the sense “Panic seed” results from an error with regard to its denotative power, because it is unnecessarily complicated to postulate several denotative powers in connection with a single word. However, in the case of the word *hari* and other such words, we must postulate that they have several denotative powers each, because there is no way to choose among them.

Denotative power can also be grasped on the basis of explanation. Explanation is the description of the meaning of a word by means of synonyms. For example, one can grasp the denotative power of the word “pot” as referring to a jar on the basis of an explanation that explains “there is a pot” by means of “there is a jar.” In the same way it is claimed that the verbal ending has the meaning “effort” on the basis of an explanation that explains “he cooks” by means of “he does the cooking.”

Denotative power can be grasped on the basis of the proximity of a word already known. For example, one can grasp the denotative power of the word *pika* as referring to a cuckoo in a sentence like “the *pika* sings sweetly in the mango tree.”

...

Secondary signification is a relation with what is referred to by denotative power, because it is impossible that the intention of the speaker relates to that.

About secondary signification: in an example like “a hamlet on the Ganges” it is not possible to construe “hamlet” with what is referred to by denotative power by the word “Ganges,” viz., the course of water; alternatively, it is not possible that this is the intention of the speaker. In cases where it is understood that the literal meaning is not possible, the cognition of the shore arises, by secondary signification.

That secondary signification is of the nature of a relation with what is referred to by denotative power. It goes like this: the shore is recalled, because the relation with what is referred to by denotative power, viz., the course of water, is grasped in the shore. From that recall verbal cognition arises.

However, if the impossibility to construe were fundamental to secondary signification, then there would not be secondary signification in the example “let the staffs enter” (where in reality staff-bearing Brahmans are let in), because it is possible to construe the entering of staffs. In letting in staffs, however, the intention of the speaker is to feed the staff bearers, and because it is impossible to feed the staffs, there is secondary signification that refers to the staff bearers. In the same way, in examples like “protect the curds from the crows,” the word “crow” refers, by secondary signification, to all that prey upon the curds, because the intention of the speaker aims at protection of the curds from all sides. Similarly, in examples like “the umbrella holders pass by,” the word “umbrella holder” refers by secondary signification to the fact that there is a single group consisting of some who hold umbrellas and others who do not. This is called “secondary signification that does not abandon its own meaning,” because one cognizes both umbrella holders and others different from that as constituting one single group.

...

Proximity [āsatti], suitability [yogyatā], expectancy [ākāṅkṣā], and knowledge of the intention of the speaker [tātparyajñāna] are accepted to be cause of verbal cognition. Nearness of a word is called proximity.

...

Some maintain that, because all word meanings of a sentence are remembered at the same time, a verbal cognition comes about in the form of a cognition of the connection of all word meanings as action and object [as in “bring the pot”];⁶⁸ this is in

accordance with the rule of pigeons on a threshing floor. This rule finds expression in the following verse:

Just as pigeons, whether old, young, or very young, alight simultaneously on a threshing floor, so are all word meanings simultaneously connected with each other.

Others, however, quote the following verse:

The meaning is communicated by words as being connected with whatever for which there is expectancy, that is suitable and near.

They further say that after the cognition of a partial sentence meaning the cognition of the whole sentence meaning arises, through the memory of the word meanings. The need for a word *sphoṭa* that is revealed by all the constituent speech sounds is thereby rejected, because the final speech sound, if accompanied by the different mental traces [*samskāra*] of the preceding speech sounds, can reveal the word.

The following should be kept in mind, however. If the word “door” has been uttered, there is verbal cognition because words such as “shut” are known, not because meanings such as “shutting” are known, because the presence of word meanings that are born from the corresponding words is the cause of the relevant verbal cognition. Moreover, there is expectancy for words expressive of action and object in that very form [i.e., as words]. How indeed could there be verbal cognition without a word expressive of action? In the same way, in a case like “for flowers,” the words “he longs” have to be supplemented, because without it the word *for* in “for flowers” would make no sense.⁶⁹

...

He explains expectancy [*ākāṅksā*]:

A word that is not understood without a second word, that word has expectancy with regard to that second one. The desire of the speaker, on the other hand, is called “intention.”

This means: a word whose connection with other words is not understood without a second word, that word has expectancy with regard to that second word. Without a word expressive of action [i.e., a verb], a word expressive of an actant does not produce a cognition of the connection of words; it has therefore expectancy with regard to that verb.

In reality, the nearness of words expressive of actions and actants has been dealt with under “proximity.” However, knowledge of the accusative ending of the word “pot” is the cause that we understand that “pot” is the object. There is therefore no verbal cognition in the case of such sequences as *ghaṭāḥ karmtvam ānayanam kṛtiḥ*.

[“pot, objecthood, bringing, resolution”; an enumeration of the meanings of the constituent elements of *ghātam ānaya*, “bring a pot”]. . . .

He explains intention [*tātparya*]: it is the wish of the speaker. If knowledge of the intention of the speaker were not a cause of verbal cognition, then there would not be possible cognitions arising from the statement “bring *saindhava*”: sometimes “bring the horse,” and sometimes “bring the salt.” . . . In this way, in the case of the Veda, the existence of God as its creator is postulated so that knowledge of the intention of its speaker might be possible. And one should not say that in that particular case knowledge of the intention of the teacher is the cause of verbal cognition, for there was no teacher at the beginning of creation. Nor should one say that there is no destruction of the world, and therefore no beginning of creation either; this is wrong, because the destruction of the world has been taught in the scriptures. In sentences spoken by a parrot too, knowledge of the intention of God is the cause of verbal cognition. In sentences spoken by a parrot that are not in agreement with the truth, knowledge of the intention of the person who taught it to speak is the cause.

Others say that knowledge of the intention of the speaker is only sometimes a cause of verbal cognition, as when words with several meanings are used. In this way there can be, in the case of sentences spoken by a parrot, verbal cognition without knowledge of the intention. In the case of the Veda, there is determination of the meaning with the help of the reasoning perfected in Vedic Interpretation since beginningless time.⁷⁰

Gangesha’s *Desire-fulfilling Gem of Truth* (*Tattvacintāmani*) contains the following discussion about the meaning of the verbal suffix:

[A. Introduction]

The teachers of Nyaya hold the following view: the verbal ending is expressive of effort [*yatna*]. However, in sentences without reference to a sentient being such as “the chariot goes,” there is a secondary reference [*lakṣaṇā*] in the verbal ending to “operation” [*vyāpāra*]. For example: in cases like “he/she cooks,” the verbal ending is expressive of effort, because all verbal endings are explained with the help of the verb “do/make” that is expressive of effort, as in “he cooks means he does cooking.” We learn the use of words also from such explanations (as long as nothing stands in the way), just as we learn the use of words from the usage of elders. . . . If one asks a question regarding someone’s effort, saying, “what is he doing?,” the answer “he is cooking” would not be possible if one did not accept that this expresses the meaning “effort.”

[B. The Mimamsa view]

In this respect there are those who say:

Neither the verbal ending nor the verb “do/make” expresses the meaning “effort,” (1) because the verbal ending is used even when there is no question of an effort leading to the meaning of the verbal root—as in “the chariot goes,” “he knows,” “he tries,” “he sleeps,” etc.—and (2) because the verbal ending in “the chariot goes” is explained with the help of “do/make”: it does the going; if in this case the meaning of “do/make” is “operation,” it has the same meaning also in the case of a sentient agent. One should not object that in this case the verbal ending and the verb “do/make” are used in a secondary sense, because nothing stands in the way of this being their primary sense. It follows that the question (“what is he doing?”) and the answer (“he is cooking”) do not express effort. The verb “do/make” rather expresses activity and nothing else. Since, therefore, the question “what is he/it doing?” concerns only activity, also a response that specifies an activity—such as “he cooks,” “it goes”—is appropriate.

[Objection:] The verb “do/make” does have the meaning “effort,” (1) because it is common usage to say that a pot is made and that a sprout is not made, since the former is produced with effort while the latter is not so produced, this in spite of the fact that both are equally produced through an activity; (2) and also because the word *kartṛ*, “agent”—derived from the root *kr*, “do/make,” with the ending *tr*—refers to the substrate of a resolution [*kṛti*.]⁷¹ If the verb “do/make” had only activity as meaning, the word *kartṛ*, “agent,” would refer to the substrate of activity. In that case it would unjustifiably be applicable to all actants [*kāraka*]. As it is, the verb “do/make” means “effort”; and since the verbal ending is explained by means of this verb, also that verbal ending means “effort.” As it is said: “Because of the difference of the form of the agent on account of the division between ‘made’ and ‘not made,’ resolution [*kṛti*], which is prior with respect to what comes later, is nothing but effort; and that resolution is productive energy [*bhāvanā*.]”⁷² That resolution, which is the meaning of the verbal ending, is called “productive energy.”

[Answer:] This is not correct. Because it is common usage to say “the sprout has been made by the seed,” “happiness has been made by a garland, etc.,” “the seed makes the sprout,” even though no effort is involved in these activities. Moreover, the word *kartṛ*, “agent,” is not derivative [*yaugika*.],⁷³ as can be seen in the following manner: if the root *kr*, “do/make,” means effort, and the ending *tr* means resolution [*kṛti*] or agent, then there would be no mutual agreement between the meanings of root and suffix, neither when both mean resolution nor when they mean resolution and agent respectively.⁷⁴ The reason in the first case is that resolution is not produced by another resolution and that resolution is not the object of another resolution; and in the second case, that something characterized by resolution [i.e., an agent] does not have expectancy for another resolution. In this way, when the root *kr*, “do/make,”

means action [*kriyā*] and *tr* gives expression to the substrate of action, the two are not in mutual agreement. It follows that, on both views, the word *kartṛ*, “agent,” just like words such as *karman*, “object,” has a conventional meaning [*rūḍha*]. The question whether this conventional meaning is the substrate of resolution or the substrate of action is different.

It follows from the above that the root *kṛ*, “do/make,” does not mean effort, as was argued above on the basis of the difference of the form of the agent on account of the division between “made” and “not made.”

Moreover, neither the verbal ending nor the root *kṛ*, “do/make,” means effort. Because we would then either understand the meaning “effort” twice over, or an effort whose object is an effort, in examples like “he makes an effort to cook” [*pākāya yata*] and “he does cooking” [*pākāṇ karoti*]. Because the meaning of the stem and the meaning of the suffix would be the same, they could not be in agreement because they would repeat the same thing, and there would be the vice of having an affirmation [*vidhi*] and its repetition in one and the same expression.

[*Objection:*] If the stem has a certain meaning, there is nothing wrong in the suffix having the same meaning. For this belief that the two must express different meanings is contradicted by words like *ekah*, “one” [where both the stem and the suffix express the singular], *dvau*, “two” [where both the stem and the suffix express duality], *bahavah*, “many” [where both the stem and the suffix express multiplicity] and *iśiṣiṣati*, “he desires to desire” [where both the stem and the suffix express desire]. If you answer that in your examples too one may assume a second effort, just as we assume a second number in *ekah*, *dvau*, *bahavah*, and a second desire in *iśiṣiṣati*, then you are wrong. Because there is no second number, desire, or effort. And because there is nothing wrong in having agreement with only one of the two [i.e., stem or suffix]: in reality, while we ascertain expressive power in each of them, both must be presented given the division between stem and suffix in words. Moreover, you too accept the same with respect to the verbal ending meaning resolution in “he makes an effort to cook” and “let him do cooking.”

[*Answer:*] This objection does not hold water. In the case of “one,” “two,” “many,” it is proper to understand agreement of the meaning of the stem with the number expressed by the case ending. It has not been ascertained that the endings of the present indicative [*lat*] are expressive of effort, while it has been ascertained that endings of the optative [*lin*]—as in “he should cook”—are expressive of resolution.

[*Objection:*] A verbal ending after a root that does not mean effort, does mean effort. There is therefore no absence of agreement [between stem and suffix] in “he tries/makes an effort.” And in the case of an insentient agent, the use of the verbal ending is secondary. One should not assume an expressive power for the suffix when it

is possible to use it with the help of an alternative signifying function [*yrtti*].⁷⁵ Alternatively, a morpheme [*pada*] that refers to an effort that is conducive to a goal can be used merely referring to a part of that meaning, viz., the fact of being conducive, just as one can use the word *śrotriya* [“learned Brahman”] to refer to a Brahman by emphasizing only his purity. What is more, the second and first persons cannot be used with reference to something insentient, because the accompanying words “you” and “I” refer to something sentient. Or again, let it be that the use of the verbal ending can be secondary. After all, people do not object to it.

Kumarila Bhatta rejects this objection, observing that since nothing pleads against a verbal ending being used in its primary sense even in the case of a insentient agent, there is no question of it being used in a secondary sense; the verbal ending must therefore be expressive of an operation [*vyāpāra*] that is conducive to the goal. For this reason, and because there is an operation conducive to the meaning of the root in the case of both sentient and insentient things, the use of the verbal ending is primary. Don’t object that in this case one can say “he cooks” with respect to someone who, due to the fatigue of a journey, is lying down, presumably because lying down is an operation conducive to cooking through the intermediary of discarding the fatigue. Because one should add that a specific operation, one conducive to the goal, is intended, just as in your case a specific effort is intended. Otherwise, even though it be specified that effort must be expressed, one would say “he cooks” with reference to someone who engages in effort leading to the production of grain. In this way, also the meaning of *kṛ*, “do/make,” is a specific operation, because we can explain the verbal suffix with the help of the verb “do/make” even in the case of an insentient agent.

[Question:] How then does the cognition arise of a person who makes an effort conducive to cooking when we hear “Caitra cooks”? Don’t say that this results from implication, because there is no implication of effort through the meaning of the verbal ending, whether this be operation or number, for these two can exist without effort. Nor is there implication through the agent, because an agent is nothing but a substance, and if the verbal ending were to express someone possessing effort because it is the agent, then it would express effort as well. And nor is there implication of effort through the mere meaning of the verbal root, because that meaning of the verbal root can also exist without effort. And finally, the meaning of the verbal root is not effort, because it is rather the action or its fruit that is expressed by the verbal root. Because otherwise we would experience effort also when hearing the noun “cooking.”

[Answer:] You are wrong, for there is implication of effort through the specific root meaning “cooking,” etc., this because this specific root meaning is not possible

without effort. But couldn't we attribute the meaning "effort" to the verbal ending on the basis of the explanation "he is the possessor of an effort to cook" for "he cooks"? In that case it would also have the meaning "agent." For the explanation is not just "effort to cook" [but rather "possessor of an effort to cook"]. That explanation "effort to cook" is an explanation of "he cooks" in accordance with the intention of the speaker. And that explanation is possible by means of implication.

[Question:] The same can be said with regard to "effort."⁷⁶ How in that case can there be the experience of productive energy [*bhāvanā*] in the phrases "the chariot goes" and "the sky exists"?

[Answer:] There cannot be. Because productive energy does not fit in an agreement with the meaning of the verbal root, you too have to accept in those cases secondary usage.

C. The Naiayika refutes the Mimamsa view]

The author of the text responds as follows to the Mimamsa position explained above: In "Caitra cooks," it is effort that is the meaning of the verbal ending, because we understand effort conducive to cooking when hearing it; this is the least cumbersome interpretation. The meaning of the verbal ending is not operation [*vyāpāra*] conducive to something, because the fact of being an operation is a secondary condition [*upādhi*] with respect to the fact of being an effort; this is therefore the more cumbersome interpretation.

It should not be maintained that operation and operation only, which fits all relevant cases, is the meaning of the verbal ending so as to be able to use the primary meaning of the verbal ending also in the case of an insentient agent, because it would presumably be incorrect to abandon the primary meaning where the primary meaning is possible. Because the denotative power of the verbal ending can be defined with respect to something simpler [viz., effort] by means of a means of knowledge that grasps the denotative power, and because usage with respect to something insentient is possible by means of another signifying function [viz., secondary expression, *lakṣaṇā*]. If you assume a denotative power [viz., operation] in order to use the primary meaning, you exclude the use of another signifying function. This refutes the view that the verbal ending, expressive of operation, brings to mind effort, which is a special kind of operation, on account of its proximity⁷⁷ to the root—such as "cook"—whose meaning is to be attained through effort. The meaning of the verbal suffix is "effort," because this is less cumbersome.

Don't object that it has been stated that effort is not the meaning of the verbal suffix, because we get at effort through the inference that cooking as cooking is to be attained through effort. This objection is not justified. In "Caitra cooks" we understand a possessor of effort that is present and conducive to cooking. There is no

invariable concomitance [*vyāpti*] between cooking and effort that is present, because of the deviation [*vyabhicāra*] with respect to effort that is past or future. And in case effort is inferred from the meaning of the root, no understanding of a connection between the verbal suffix and the fact of being present will be possible, because by understanding that the meaning of the verbal suffix, i.e., operation, is present, the verbal suffix will have provided all the information it has, this because effort is (according to you) not the meaning of any morpheme.

[*Objection:*] After the verbal understanding “Caitra possesses an operation that is present and conducive to cooking,” there is the inference: “Caitra possesses effort that is present and conducive to cooking, because, given that he is sentient, he possesses an operation that is present and conducive to cooking, as in the case of Maitra.” Without this inference there is a cognition that the effort of cooking is present because the verbal ending is erroneously taken to denote effort.

[*Response:*] This inference is not correct, because there is deviation between effort and operation when the operation produced by an effort is present while the effort is no longer there. Moreover, you make two assumptions—that operation is expressed by the verbal ending, plus the inference of effort that is present on the basis of that operation as inferential sign. Better than these two assumptions would be to accept that effort is expressed by the verbal ending, for this would be less cumbersome. And it is not correct to make this assumption on the basis of our knowledge that the verbal ending expresses operation in the case of an insentient agent, because we can in such cases understand operation from the verbal ending as a result of secondary usage or error with respect to its denotative power. When effort is no longer present but the operation it has produced still is, the verbal ending in “he cooks” does denote operation that is present through secondary signification, just as in “the chariot goes.” It follows that the verbal ending does not denote operation in accordance with that usage, because that meaning can be obtained otherwise. If it were otherwise, the expression “he cooks” would not apply, even from your point of view, at the moment when effort is there, but operation not yet. For this reason the following inference applies: (1) the verbal ending of the present expresses effort, (2) because it is a verbal ending, (3) just like the verbal ending of the optative. Also a *reductio ad absurdum* [*tarka*] to prove the same has been stated above.⁷⁸

The preceding considerations refute the opinion of the Master [i.e., of the Mimamsaka Prabhakara], which runs as follows: “The meaning of the verbal root is “operation that is conducive to the result”; the verbal suffix gives expression to the number. For this reason we use the suffix in its primary sense in both “Caitra cooks” and “the chariot goes,” because we understand both Caitra and the chariot to be in possession of an operation that is conducive to the meaning of the root. The element

"effort" in "he cooks" is obtained through implication [*ākṣepa*], because no operation conducive to the softening of rice grains is possible without effort. The presence of effort conducive to cooking in the case of "he cooks" is not obtained through implication, because it is the meaning of the verbal suffix.

[D. The *Ratnakośa*]

The author of the *Ratnakośa* states:

The meaning of the verbal root is "operation," the meaning of the verbal suffix is "producing." The fact of producing is the "productive energy" [*bhāvanā*], because in examples like "he cooks," the verbal suffix is explained as "he produced cooking." Producing the meaning of the verbal root takes place in the case of both sentient and insentient agents, so that in all cases the verbal suffix can be used in its primary meaning. Even in phrases like "he tries," "he knows," the meaning of the verbal suffix is "he produces an effort," "he produces knowledge."

Don't say that the meaning of the verbal suffix is operation or effort, for it is not justified in cases like "he tries" [*yata*] to use a secondary interpretation when a primary interpretation is possible. The explanation of the meaning of the verbal suffix, though being the meaning of "do/make" [*kṛ*], is productiveness, because the explanation of "he does" in cases like "he does cooking" is "he produces." In "he makes a pot" the meaning of "make" is understood to be production. This is why the general question regarding production, "what does he do?" can correctly be answered by means of the specific production of cooking in "he cooks." In "Caitra produces," the meaning of the root itself is production and is in agreement with Caitra. The meaning of the verbal suffix is production that is not in agreement with the production expressed by the verbal root, since there cannot be a production of a production.

In reality, the verbal root itself in "he produces" means producing. It follows that in other cases, where the verbal suffix follows a root that does not mean producing, this verbal suffix is expressive of producing, because this meaning cannot be obtained in any other way. The meaning "effort" in cases like "he cooks" is obtained by implication through the meaning of the root, "cooking," etc., and not through mere "production" [which is the meaning of the verbal suffix], because there would be deviation [*vyabhicāra*].

[E. The *Ratnakośa* refuted]

Also the opinion of the author of the *Ratnakośa* stands refuted, for the same reason. The meaning of the verbal suffix is effort because we understand effort in "he cooks," and because this is the least cumbersome. It does not mean productivity, because that would be cumbersome in view of the fact that productivity is a subsidiary condition, and because the meaning "effort that is present and conducive to cooking" cannot be attained even by means of implication and the like. In reality

we cognize—in phrases like “Caitra knows,” “Caitra desires,” “Caitra tries”—that Caitra is the possessor of knowledge and so on, not that he produces. Because it would follow that expressions like “he/she/it knows” would also be used with respect to insentient things such as words, inferential signs, sense faculties, etc. that produce knowledge; and there would be doubt when someone says “he cognizes the jar” whether the person concerned is in possession of cognition of the jar or not. Because something insentient can yet produce cognition. We experience that words, etc. make known, not that they know. It is therefore effort that is expressed by the verbal ending, because this assumption is least cumbersome and because we cognize effort that is past, future, and present when we hear “he cooks,” “he will cook,” and “he cooked.” And it is the being present, etc. of effort that is denoted by the verbal suffix, because we cannot obtain this information in any other way. In verbs like “he knows,” “he desires,” “he tries,” “he sleeps,” it is the meaning of the verbal root—effort, etc.—that is in agreement with Caitra, because we experience this as “Caitra possesses effort,” etc. And when effort, etc. is the meaning of the verbal root, there is no connection with effort that is the meaning of the verbal suffix, since there is no effort that has effort, etc. as object. There is secondary expression of operation in the verbal suffix in “the chariot goes.” We therefore merely cognize that the chariot possesses operation conducive to going.

[F. An alternative position]

Just as we say “he cooks” at the moment of one resolution that is conducive to cooking, one should say “he cooked” and “he will cook” in the middle period when one resolution has gone and the next one has not yet arisen.

Do not object that “he cooked” and “he will cook” are used when a collection of resolutions has gone or has not yet appeared, because the verbal suffix supposedly denotes a collection of resolutions, just like a word denoting an object that endures in time. If that were true, one could never say “he cooks,” because at no moment is there a collection of resolutions.⁷⁹

You may think that past and future must be ascertained with the help of an absence of resolution, and that at the time of a resolution there is no absence of resolution because there can be no absence in a thing that possesses something of the same kind as the counterpositive. But this thought is wrong. Since anterior absence [*prāgabhāva*] and disappearance [*pradhvamsa*] are the counterparts of specific resolutions, they may be there at the time of any other resolution, because they cannot have all resolutions as counterpart.

[*Objection:*] The verbal suffix expresses resolution that is not separated from the result. That is why we do not use “he cooks” when someone is buying the rice that is conducive to cooking. In this way we use “he cooks” in its primary sense at the time

of the final resolution before the result, "he will cook" at the time of its anterior absence, and "he cooked" at the time of its disappearance. Before that final resolution it is secondary usage to say "he cooks."

[Response:] This is not correct. In that case we would say "he will cook" when someone is in the middle of cooking, because at that moment the final resolution has not yet arrived. Similarly, we would say "he will cook" or "he cooked" in the middle of the process also when a collection of operations were to be the meaning of the verbal suffix or of the verbal root.

[G. The Naiyayika response]

With regard to what precedes, we state the following:

If each resolution or operation in a collection expressed by the verbal suffix were to be a cause for using the present tense, there would be use of the past and the future tenses on account of the disappearances and anterior absences of so many of them, and there would be no other cause for using the present tense, because there is none. Because we use words in the same way for eating by a sentient and going by an insentient agent, and where we use them we do so following a reason. Even those who maintain that the verbal root or the verbal suffix is expressive of an operation that is conducive to cooking accept this, because they have no alternative.

[Objection:] The grammarians argue as follows. Let it be as you say. In the active and passive sentences "Caitra cooks rice" and "rice is cooked by Caitra" the agent and object, which are expressed by the verbal ending, are in agreement with the number of the verbal suffix, like effort. The restriction therefore applies that the number of the verbal suffix resides in that which is expressed by the verbal suffix. Otherwise, if there were agreement with all countable things that are implied, there would be no restriction.

[Response:] No. Where the number of the agent is expressed, there we understand agreement of the number with the agent. That is the rule.

If you ask in what cases the number of the agent is expressed, this amounts to asking in what cases the agent is expressed.

It does not do to claim that the number of the agent is expressed in cases where the number of the agent is cognized, because that would be a case of mutual dependency: where the agent is expressed, we cognize its number, and through cognizing its number we know that the agent is expressed.

Nor does it do to maintain that in cases where the speaker wishes to express the agent through the verbal suffix, there the agent is indeed expressed, because one might as well claim that the number of the agent is expressed in cases where the speaker wishes to express the number of the agent. In the same way, it is not the object that is expressed by the verbal suffix in a passive construction, but rather

the number of the object. Panini's statement to the extent that agent and object are expressed by the verbal ending means that their number is expressed by it.

[H. A detailed presentation of the Naiyayika position]

The traditional view is as follows:

The grammatical number, though it has expectancy for just anything that is countable, agrees with something that has agreement with productive energy [*bhāvanā*], because of the proximity that is due to the fact that both are obtained through one and the same morpheme. Productive energy, being an operation, has expectancy for the pure meaning of a nominal stem, not for actants such as an object or an instrument, because those actants are presented as possessing an operation by the various case endings: accusative, etc. For this reason also actants like the object, etc. have no expectancy for an operation. There is therefore agreement of productive energy only with what is indicated by the nominative case ending, because an operation has also expectancy for a nominal stem in order to arrive at agreement with the action. The pure meaning of the nominal stem is the agent in the sentence "Caitra cooks rice with fire"; it is the object in "rice is cooked by Caitra." There is agreement of the productive energy with that pure meaning only, and this is why the agreement of the number too is with that pure meaning only. As it has been said: "Whatever the productive energy pursues, this also the number pursues. This is our position."

Consider the following: In "Caitra cooks rice" there can be agreement of Caitra with productive energy [*bhāvanā*], because Caitra is the substrate of productive energy. In "rice is cooked by Caitra," there is no agreement of rice with productive energy with rice being the object of productive energy, because effort has the operation conducive to the softening of rice as its object. Alternatively, if there is agreement of rice with productive energy as being the object of the latter, then there is also agreement of rice as object with productive energy in the active voice "he cooks rice"; as a result, the grammatical number expressed by the verbal suffix would reside in the rice, but not with rice as its substrate, because it does not have rice as substrate. Nor would there be agreement of Caitra with effort in the passive voice ("rice is cooked by Caitra"), because it would be prevented by effort that is expressed by the instrumental case ending ("by Caitra"). As a result, productive energy would not be in agreement with Caitra. And since there is no agreement of productive energy in the case of an insentient agent, how can there be a rule regarding the agreement of the grammatical number?

This is not correct. For the grammatical number is in agreement with that which is qualified by effort. In "Caitra cooks rice," rice is in agreement with the verb as its object, but Caitra is the substrate of the effort that produces the operation that

produces a result in the rice. This is how we cognize it, and Caitra is therefore that which is qualified by effort. In “rice is cooked by Caitra” we understand rice to be the substrate of the result produced by an operation produced by effort that resides in Caitra; so that rice is indirectly qualified by effort. In this way, even though in both cases Caitra is the agent and rice the object, the grammatical number is in agreement with that which is qualified by effort. Also in the case of an insentient agent, as in “the chariot goes to the village,” the chariot is understood as the substrate of an operation that produces a result in the form of going that resides in the village. In “the village is gone to by the chariot,” the village is the substrate of the result produced by an operation that resides in the chariot. Here too, the grammatical number is in agreement with something that is qualified.

Don’t say that if in this way there is agreement of the number with that which is qualified by effort or operation, then there is no common determinant. Since there is agreement of the number with what is qualified by the object of the speaker’s intention with respect to the verbal suffix, that object is either effort or operation. In the passive of “Caitra sleeps,” i.e., “it is slept by Caitra,” Caitra cannot be qualified by productive energy [*bhāvanā*], because that is prevented by the meaning of the instrumental case ending. There is in that case no grammatical object, so that the meaning of the verbal root itself is qualified by productive energy, either because it is the result or because it is the object. The agreement of the grammatical number is now with the meaning of the verbal root. Use of the dual or of the plural number would in that case be incorrect. This has been expressed as follows: “There is no assuming a denotative function with respect to what is to be counted when that can be obtained through implication. This is to be determined with the help of what has expectancy for resolution, even if we can obtain something countable from the verbal suffix.” The agent and the object can be obtained by implication because they are presented by words with a nominative case ending and they are qualified by productive energy; they are not the object of an inference in which the grammatical number is the inferential sign [*liṅga*], because through inference we cognize number merely as belonging to something that can be counted.

[*Objection:*] Even though there can be agreement of productive energy with respect to the meaning of a noun, there is no agreement of the grammatical number of the verbal suffix with that meaning. The reason is that that number is without expectancy for the noun on account of its agreement with what is presented by the nominative case ending. Don’t say that the nominative case ending is not expressive of number but is rather correct usage. For we understand the singular number from the mere statement “Caitra is now king,” which has no verb and no verbal suffix.⁸⁰ If it were otherwise, we would also have to assume that number is not the meaning of

the verbal ending, given that the agent or object is in agreement with the number presented by the nominative case ending.

[Response:] This objection is not valid. For one and the same number is expressed by both the nominative case ending and the verbal suffix, in agreement with the fact that both refer to the same thing,⁸¹ as in “Caitra has a stick.”⁸² Otherwise there would be no agreement of the number expressed by the nominative case ending with Caitra, because also in your opinion the number of Caitra would have to be expressed by a verbal suffix [which does not exist in this sentence]. In “let him who desires rice cook,” the same method must be understood, even by you, because here the agent is not expressed by the verbal suffix. This will be explained below.

[Objection:] Also the agent is expressed by the verbal suffix, because both Caitra and the verbal suffix refer to the same thing in “Caitra cooks.”⁸³ If it were otherwise, given that they have no signifying function [*vṛtti*] with respect to one and the same thing, and that they have different causes for the use of words [*pravṛttinimitta*], the noun and the verbal suffix would not refer to the same thing.

[Response:] This is not correct. The verbal coreferentiality of two nouns or of a noun and a verbal suffix in examples like “a blue cloth,” “Caitra cooks,” and “the rice is cooked” consists in the very fact that they are expressive of one and the same number; it is not the signifying function of something with a different cause for the use of words with respect to a single thing. This last assumption would be cumbersome and lead to deviation in phrases like “let him who desires rice cook.” For the verbal suffix of the optative, which is expressive of resolution, is coreferential with the noun⁸⁴ because the two denote the same number, not because they are expressive of one and the same agent. In that same case, if the agent were to be expressed by the verbal suffix, it would not act so as to communicate that it is the means to the desired end, because the agent is not the goal to be attained. Having abandoned the agent as meaning of the verbal suffix because this meaning does not fit, and given its agreement with the state of being the means to the desired end that characterizes either cooking, i.e., the object of resolution, or resolution that has cooking as object, we conclude that the agent is not denoted, this because it is not in agreement with that state and because we do not cognize it when hearing the verbal suffix.

If you object that the agent is expressed, because the phrase “he cooks” is explained as “he possesses the effort to cook,” then you are wrong. Because there would be deviation [*vyabhicāra*] also in the case of the explanation of copulative and other compounds through analysis [*vigraha*], since the denotative power of such a compound does not cover the meaning of the analysis. Given that the agent is not expressed by the verbal suffix because it is obtained otherwise, the explanation makes known the

object of the speaker's intention; alternatively it is based on confusion with respect to the expressive power of the agent. In reality, since in "he cooks" something possessing effort is denoted, and the meaning of the verbal root is either the object or the goal to be attained, there would be no agreement with resolution, because there can be no agreement of the meaning of one word with part of another word meaning that is presented as a qualification of another word meaning. It has been established in the process of learning that word meaning agrees with word meaning. An example is "bring the king's man"; here it is not the king that agrees with bringing. Effort, being presented as being in agreement with its substrate, does not have expectancy for something else. And since cooking and the possessor of effort are in agreement, the cognition would be that cooking is to be attained by the possessor of effort, or that the possessor of effort produces cooking; there would be no cognition of a relationship of object and object possessor between cooking and effort. Also in "the agent of cooking" there is no cognition of an agreement between cooking and resolution, because resolution is not the meaning of any morpheme. The cognition is rather: "the substrate of resolution is the producer of cooking." This discards the following idea: "Since we can use the noun 'cook' [pācaka] also with respect to someone even while he is not cooking, the nominal suffix -aka [in pācaka, 'cook'] is expressive of the suitability for resolution." The noun "cook" [pācaka] in that situation is used secondarily, because otherwise there would be no agreement of cooking with resolution.

[Objection:] Agent and object are expressed by the verbal ending. Since then agent and object are already denoted by that verbal ending, there will be no nominal ending expressive of agent and object, because these can only be used when these meanings have not yet been denoted. Only the nominative case ending could then be used. If, however, agent and object have not yet been denoted by the verbal ending, we would have to use the case endings that give expression to these meanings—the instrumental for the meaning "agent," the accusative for the meaning "object"—which would give rise to such forms as "by Caitra cooks rice" [caitrena (instr.) pacati tanḍulam (acc.)] and "Caitra is cooked rice" [caitraḥ (nom.) pacyate odanam (acc.)].

[Response:] It is not like that, because the possibility of undergoing the effect of having or not having been denoted⁸⁵ by the verbal ending results from the denotation or nondenotation of the grammatical number associated with the agent and object. Moreover, such usage as you propose is incorrect. Grammar can be taught when an expression is known to be correct; it does not become correct merely by being in agreement with grammar. If it were otherwise, forms like grāmagāma—a form meaning "who goes to the village" that is grammatically possible but never used—would be correct.

The New Logicians, in contrast, think as follows. A nominal ending conveys its own meaning, which is the number of the meaning of the stem; and a verbal ending conveys the number of the meaning of the word with a nominative case ending. This is how we learn to use these endings, and this corresponds to their real nature. It can also be derived from their result. The meaning of the word with a nominative case ending is agent or object. This is why there is no agreement with number in the passive sentence “is slept by Caitra,” because there is here no word with a nominative case ending.⁸⁶ There is also no agreement of number with the meaning of the verbal root [“sleep”]: even if one were to sleep twice or many times, the usage would still be “is slept” in the singular, because there can be no dual or plural in such a case. Since then only sleeping is understood, and given that there is no agreement here between the meaning of the verbal suffix, i.e., effort, and number, the verbal suffix is correct in its mere use, because using the mere root without suffix is incorrect. It follows that the agent and the object are not expressed by the verbal ending, following the number expressed by that same verbal ending.

But we make the following statement.⁸⁷ In “rice is cooked by Caitra” and “the village is gone to by the chariot,” rice and the village are cognized as objects of the action. Both possess a result in the form of an action that inheres in something else [Caitra and the chariot respectively]. This is the fact of being an object,⁸⁸ and that is expressed by the verbal suffix. This follows from the circumstance that the fact of being an object cannot be obtained from anything else, as it can in the case of “he cooks rice,” where it can be known from the accusative case ending after “rice.” We conclude therefore that the verbal ending can give expression to objectness, just as it can give expression to agency, this because the bearers of these features, viz., agent and object, can be obtained otherwise.⁸⁹

7.11. KAUNDA BHATTA ON THE MEANING OF THE VERB

Kaunda Bhatta’s *Essence of the Ornament of Grammar* (*Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇasāra*) states the following about the meaning of verbs:

Having bowed down before the sages Panini, etc., and before my father called Ranagoji Bhatta, a veritable deity of speech in masculine form who removed the darkness of the Dualist philosophy, and also before the god Ganesha, I show the correct philosophical position that has been corrupted by the commentators of the word of Gautama [the creator of the Nyaya philosophy] and of Jaimini [the creator of Vedic Interpretation thought], in order to destroy them.

...

He lays down his thesis:

The verbal root is held to designate both operation (*vyāpāra*) and its result. The verbal endings are held to refer to their substrate. The operation is predominant with respect to its result. The meaning of the verbal ending qualifies it.

The connection in the case of “**the verbal root**” [singular] is with the modified form “is held” [a singular] rather than with the plural “**are held**” that actually occurs in the verse.

The “**result**” in the case of the standard example “he cooks rice” is “softening” of the rice grains.

“**Operation**” is an action called “productive energy” [*bhāvanā*]; it is designated as that which is to be accomplished.

It has been said in the *Treatise on Sentences and Words* [Vākyapadīya 3.8.1]:

Whether already accomplished or not yet accomplished, it is designated as that which is to be accomplished. Because it takes the form of a sequence of the elements in which it resides, it is called “action.”

One should not object that there is no proof that there is designation as that which is to be accomplished. The proof is that we see that in the pairs “cooks, cooking,” “does, doing,” there is respectively nonexpectancy and expectancy with regard to other activities, even though in both of the constituent items the meaning of the verbal root is understood in the same manner. Indeed, being that which is to be accomplished delimits not producing expectancy with respect to another activity. And being of that nature means: not being an entity. One should look at the following line from the *Vākyapadīya* [2.195cd], keeping this in mind:

Verbs express a becoming that is not an entity.

The “operation” can be explained as consisting of blowing into the fire, heating the pot from below, effort, etc., because in the case of a verb like “he cooks” a cognition is established in our experience that has these characteristics. It does not follow that verbal roots have many meanings, for it is the specific thought of the speaker that chooses what delimits their denotative power, as in the case of demonstrative pronouns like “that.” Also the singleness of an action in a verb depends on the singleness that figures in the delimiting thought of the speaker. As it has been stated in the *Treatise on Sentences and Words* [Vākyapadīya 3.8.4]:

What is called “action” is a collection of elements that arise in sequence, connected with subordinate parts, and conceived of by the mind as being without divisions.

Having described the meaning of the verbal root, he turns to the meaning of the verbal ending.

"The verbal endings are held to refer to their substrate" means: to the substrate of the results and the substrate of the operation. The substrate of the result is the object, the substrate of the operation is the agent. Since result and operation are obtained by means of the verbal root, the verbal ending cannot denote that portion, because it is already covered by something else....

[*Objection:*] What is the proof that these two [viz., object and agent] constitute the meaning of the verbal ending? These two meanings can be understood by means of secondary signification, from implication, or from the word with the nominative case ending.

[*Response:*] The proof is the grammatical *sūtra*, which states: "the suffix *l* is added after a verbal root also in the sense 'object' and in the sense 'action' if the root is intransitive" [P. 3.4.69]. Because of the word "also," the words "in the sense 'agent'" are drawn in from *sūtra* 3.4.67....

One should not raise the doubt that in that *sūtra* the words "agent" and "object" refer to agentness and objectness respectively; in this way, since agentness equals resolution [*kṛtl*] and objectness equals result, these two will be the meaning of the verbal ending. This doubt should not be raised, because it would be inappropriate to postulate that result and operation, which can be obtained from the verbal root, are also denoted by the verbal ending.

If one holds that the verbal suffix should express operation, because according to another school of thought [viz., Vedic Interpretation] operation is not the meaning of the verbal root, then it cannot be established either that primary nominal endings express "agent," "object," etc., because the rule that prescribes primary nominal endings in the sense "agent" [P. 3.4.67] finds itself in exactly the same situation as the rule that prescribes verbal ending in the sense "agent."

What is more, let the Vedic Interpreters accept that verbal endings, just like primary nominal suffixes, express the agent, and that the productive energy is not expressed by these ending, even though it can sometimes be understood through implication. If they object that in that case "productive energy" would not be the principal meaning, they are wrong, because something arrived at by implication, such as the individual pot in a sentence like "bring the pot," can be the principal meaning.

If they insist that productive energy is expressed because we see that forms like "he cooks" can be explained as "he does the cooking," they are once again wrong, because one can equally well take "agent endowed with an operation that is conducive to cooking" as the topic of explanation.

And one should not object that an explanation in terms of the agent is an explanation of the intended meaning—just as the explanation of “he cooks” as “he does the cooking” involves objectness [in “cooking”] that is yet not the meaning of any word in “he cooks,” or just as the explanation of a compound that combines items [*itaretarayogadvandva*] involves the part “accumulation” that is yet not expressed by any part of the compound⁹⁰—it does not determine what is the meaning of that expression itself. This objection is pointless, for the same could be said about an explanation in terms of productive energy.

Moreover, since it can be seen that the two words in “Devadatta cooks” are in agreement, accordingly the agent is necessarily expressed by the verbal form “cooks,” just as in “Devadatta is a cook.”

And one should not object that for understanding that the two words refer to the same thing, they should have the same case termination, and that is not the case in “Devadatta cooks.” This objection is not valid, because it would entail that the two words in the following examples would not be understood to refer to the same thing either: “he should perform a Soma sacrifice,” “he cooks a little,” “king’s man.”⁹¹

...

“The verbal endings are held to refer to their substrate.” This is said with the intention of showing that the denotative power, i.e., the power to denote, resides in the verbal endings *ti*, etc. only, not in the *l* they replace.

Having described the meaning of the words, he describes the meaning of the sentence: **“The operation is predominant with respect to its result. The meaning of the verbal ending qualifies it.”** “With respect to its result” means: “with respect to the softening, etc.”

“**The meaning of the verbal ending**” is “agent,” “object,” “number,” and “time.” The agent and the object qualify the result and the operation. The number resides in the agent in the case of an active construction, in the object in the case of a passive construction, because number and agent, respectively number and object, are expressed by the same ending. The causal relationship that results is as follows: the presence of agent and/or object produced by the verbal ending is the cause that we have a cognition in which the number expressed by the verbal ending is a qualifier.

...

Time qualifies the operation. Indeed, in the *sūtra* “in the meaning ‘present tense’ the suffix *lat* is added” [P. 3.2.123], the words “after a verbal root” are understood from the governing rule “after a verbal root” [P. 3.1.91]. And the connection of “present tense” is with “verbal root,” because that *sūtra*, giving the meaning of the verbal root, conveys primarily the notion of operation.

One should not raise the doubt that time, like number, is connected with the agent and object, because this would lead to the undesired consequence that one says “he cooks,” in the present tense, with respect to an agent whose productive energy (and therefore action) belongs to the past. It would moreover not be possible to say “he cooked” in that case. And it would not be possible to say “he will cook” if the agent is present but the activity of cooking has not yet begun.

Nor is it possible to connect time with the result, because it would not then be possible to say “he cooks” even though the operation is under way, in case the result [i.e., the softening of the rice grains] has not yet been produced; instead one would then have to say “he will cook.”

Do not object that the result would be that one says “he stands up” in the case of someone whose body has been paralyzed by rheumatoid arthritis, on account of the fact that this person makes the effort that is normally conducive to standing up. People do not say this, because the effort of someone else cannot be known. And in case that effort is known by reason of some movement or other, people prefer to understand this as follows: this person stands up, but because he does not have the force to do so, the result does not come about.

In this way the meaning of the verbal ending is a qualifier, and the productive energy is most important.

Even though we see in other situations that between stem and suffix the meaning of the suffix is most important, it is determined—on the basis of the *Nirukta* passage that says that “the verb has becoming as its fundamental notion, nouns have being as their fundamental notion” [*Nirukta* 1.1], and of the *Bhāṣya* on P. 1.3.1, which explains that action is most important—that the productive energy expressed by the verbal root is most important.

Furthermore, if the meaning of the verbal ending were most important, it would follow that the word with the nominative ending would be most important, because the verbal ending is syntactically connected with Devadatta, etc. (in examples such as “Devadatta cooks”). Such being the case, the words “See, the deer is running,” which are established in the *Bhāṣya* as constituting a single sentence,⁹² would not constitute a single sentence, because the nominative “deer” that is qualified by the activity of running would then be the object of seeing, and should therefore be an accusative.

...

In this manner, the statement of the Logicians to the extent that the presence of that which is produced by the word with the nominative ending is the cause that we have a cognition in which productive energy is a qualifier should not be heeded. The real causal relationship should rather be seen to be: the presence of that which is

produced by the verbal root, as an object that is delimited by the fact that it is productive energy, is the cause that we have a cognition in which the agent expressed by the verbal ending is a qualifier.

...

In this way, the understanding we derive from “he cooks” is: productive energy conducive to cooking that resides in a single substrate; and the understanding we derive from “it is cooked” is: productive energy conducive to softening that resides in one substrate.

In case words such as “Devadatta” are used (as in “Devadatta cooks”), there is agreement of such a word with the agent, etc. expressed by the verbal ending.⁹³



CHAPTER EIGHT

Other Denotative Functions of the Word

MUKULA BHATTA

Mukula Bhatta's *Source of the Modes of Denotation* (*Abhidhārvṛttimāṭṛkā*) accepts two and only two expressive functions. The following passage distinguishes between the two and explains the primary expressive function:

(0.1) In this world, things that are means to attain enjoyment or liberation, and that serve the purpose of avoiding their opposites, cannot enter into usage without their secure knowledge [*niścaya*]. In this way, all means of knowledge [*pramāṇa*], which are the foundation of our understanding the objects of knowledge, become authoritative because they lead to secure knowledge. There is understanding, based on the means of knowledge, of things that are means to attain enjoyment or liberation and that serve the purpose of avoiding their opposites. Secure knowledge is therefore the basis that allows these things to enter into usage. And secure knowledge takes as object a thing along with the corresponding word. A word, in its turn, is a cause for understanding a thing through either its primary or its secondary expressive function. This is why we make here a distinction between the primary and the secondary expressive function.

(0.2) Doubting what is the primary or secondary expressive function, the author presents the following verse in order to introduce these two expressive functions by way of a presentation of their objects:

That is primary whose understanding derives from the usage of words. That which has to be understood on the basis of its [primary] meaning is agreed to be secondary. (I)

(I.1) That is primary whose direct understanding derives from the usage of words. Just as one looks at the face before looking at all other body parts, such as the hands, so one cognizes the primary meaning before all other meanings that are understood. This is why the primary meaning is in Sanskrit referred to with the help of the word *mukhya*, that is the word *mukha*, “face,” with the ending *ya* in the sense “*mukhya* is like *mukha*,” in agreement with a grammatical rule of Panini (5.3.103). An example is: “A cow should be tied up.” Here, from the use of the word “cow,” we understand the universal “cowness” as the means to perform a sacrifice. That cowness is therefore the primary meaning. In this way the primary meaning is understood from the usage of words.

(I.2) That expressive function is secondary whose understanding of the meaning comes about through reflection on the meaning known from the usage of words. Like the cognition of the individual in the preceding example. For that individual is not understood from the usage of words, because a word leads only to the universal, by the rule: “Expression should not concern what is qualified; it has lost its expressive power in denoting the qualification.” However, a universal without an individual cannot become a means to perform a sacrifice. In this way, an individual, which is that in which a universal resides, is implied by force of the universal that is conveyed by the word. That is why it is secondary. In this way—through the intermediary of describing a primary or secondary object—the expressive function of words has been explained to be twofold, viz., having the thing directly as object and relating to the thing indirectly.

(1.3) He now states that the primary meaning is fourfold:

Between these two, the primary meaning must be known to be fourfold, viz., universal, etc. (II)

(II.1) Between the primary and secondary meanings, the primary meaning has four divisions: universal, etc. The revered Patanjali, author of the *Mahābhāṣya*, has stated that words function in four ways: there are words that relate to universals [*jātiśabda*], words that relate to qualities [*gunāśabda*], words that relate to actions [*kriyāśabda*], and arbitrary words [*yadr̥cchāśabda*]. The way words function depends on conditions, because all words, when functioning in order to communicate their meaning, have distinct objects as they are colored by conditions.

(II.2) There are two kinds of condition: the one introduced by a speaker and the one that is a feature of the object. One kind of condition can indeed be introduced as condition by a speaker with respect to this or that object. The other condition is just a feature of the object. A condition that is arbitrarily introduced by a speaker with respect to this or that object through the manifestation of an expressive power that has this or that named thing as object, that is a condition arbitrarily introduced by the speaker.

An example is the form, its sequence being condensed, of proper nouns such as “Dittha,” grasped with the cognition of its final speech sound. That form is arbitrarily introduced with respect to this or that named thing as condition by the speaker who manifests in this way the pertinent expressive power. This is why arbitrary words such as “Dittha” depend on that expressive power. Those who hold that no form of “Dittha,” etc., its sequence condensed, is projected onto the named things because there is no own form of condensed sequence different from the phonemes *d*, etc., they too can accept that “Dittha,” etc. are arbitrary words, because for them the word “Dittha,” etc., being an imagined whole, functions to give expression to this or that name in accordance with the specific expressive power that is being manifested by the speaker’s arbitrariness. Thus the condition introduced by the arbitrariness of the speaker has been explained on the basis of the rule of the grammarian Patanjali presented above.

(II.3) Also the condition that is a feature of the object is twofold, depending on whether it is to be accomplished or already accomplished. Words that relate to actions [*kriyāśabda*] depend on conditions that are to be accomplished, as in “[he/she] cooks” [*pacati*]. There are two kinds of conditions that are already accomplished, because of the distinction between universals and qualities. Some accomplished conditions, such as universals, give life to the thing concerned. For nothing can exist without a connection with a universal. This has been expressed as follows in the *Vākyapadiya*: “Something is neither cow nor noncow by its nature; it is a cow on account of its connection with the universal cowness.”¹ Some conditions, however, are the cause that a distinction is added to an already existing thing; examples are the qualities “white,” etc. For qualities such as “white” are no precondition for the existence of things such as cloths, because the latter have gained existence on account of the appropriate universals. That is why a quality is a cause that a distinction is added to an existing thing. This applies even to eternal qualities such as “atomic smallness” [*paramāṇutva*], because they are all qualities. In this way, words that depend on a condition that gives life to things are words that relate to universals [*jātiśabda*], as for example “cow.” Words from which we understand a meaning that causes a distinction to be added to something that exists already are words that relate to qualities [*guṇāśabda*], as for example “white.”

(II.4) [Objection:] All words that refer to qualities, actions, and arbitrary words depend on universals. For instance, words relating to qualities such as “white,” etc. give expression to the universals that inhere in the different qualities, “white,” etc., that themselves inhere in substrates such as milk, a conch shell, or a crane. In the same way, also words relating to actions give expression to the universals that inhere in specific actions such as cooking, different from each other and residing in substances such as lumps of sugar, sesame seeds, and rice grains. Arbitrary words such as the proper noun “Dittha” have a universal that inheres in the word “Dittha,” etc.,

each time different when uttered by a parrot, by a Maina bird, or by a human being; this universal, which is expressed by the arbitrary word, is projected onto the appropriate name bearer.

Alternatively, we must accept that a universal “Dittha-ness” inheres in the object understood from the word “Dittha”; it is that because of which an identical notion of the form “this is Dittha, that is Dittha” arises, without contradiction, undifferentiated even though the object named, i.e., Dittha, can be different at different occasions because he may gain or lose weight. It is that universal that words such as “Dittha” refer to. We conclude that words cannot function in four ways (as claimed above), because words that relate to qualities, words that relate to actions, and arbitrary words are words that relate to universals.

(II.5) Our response is as follows. The individuals named by the words relating to qualities and actions and that show differences based on various conditions are the basis of uniform understanding, not the universal; this is what the revered author of the *Mahābhāṣya* meant in the above passage. Just as a single face can appear in multiple forms as a result of the different substrates that make us perceive its reflection, such as oil, a sword, water, or a mirror, in the same way a single individual quality such as white, delimited by its own specific place and time, manifesting itself variously by virtue of specific substrates, such as a conch shell, produced by its respective collection of causes, shows itself differently. Therefore, because the individual “white” is single and because the universal “whiteness” is not there because a universal inheres in different substrates, words like “white” are not words that relate to a universal. The same should be said with regard to verbs like “[he/she] cooks,” to proper nouns like “Dittha,” and to Dittha, etc. that are named by the latter. Because these appear in various forms respectively by virtue of the internal difference between the constituent acts of cooking, etc. that manifests the single individual that is the activity of cooking, or of the difference between the sounds that manifest the single individual that is the word “Dittha,” etc., or the difference of age, i.e., youth, etc., that characterizes the single individual called Dittha. It is established that the primary meanings of words are fourfold, because there are four causes for the use of words [*pravṛttinimitta*.]²

At this point Mukula begins his discussion of the secondary expressive function:

(II.6) He now shows that the secondary expressive function is of two kinds:

Secondary expression is thought to be of two kinds, “pure” and mixed with metaphor [*upacāramiśra*.] (III)

(III.1) Secondary expression is of two kinds: it is either pure or mixed with metaphor [*upacāramiśra*].

Pure secondary expression we find in the example “hamlet on the Ganges.” In this example this specific river cannot be the place where the hamlet is situated. This is why the word “Ganges” conveys, by secondary expression, the shore that is near the specific river referred to by the word.

Secondary expression mixed with metaphor occurs where one thing is metaphorically applied to something else, as in “the tribal [called Vahika] is a cow.” Here the word “cow” is metaphorically applied to the tribal who has qualities—stupidity, slowness, etc.—that are similar to the qualities stupidity, slowness, etc. that a cow possesses, by virtue of the circumstance that the stupidity and slowness of a tribal are like the stupidity and slowness of a cow. The primary meaning of the word “cow” is prevented by the fact that this word cannot relate to the same thing as the word “tribal.” This is why this secondary expression is mixed with metaphor. It has thus been stated that secondary expression is of two kinds: pure and mixed with metaphor.

(III.2) Now he shows that also pure secondary expression is of two kinds:

Pure secondary expression is thought to be of two kinds, as a result of appropriating or indicating another meaning. (IV)

(IV.1) The above presented pure secondary expression has been stated to be of two kinds. Sometimes secondary expression appropriates another meaning, and sometimes it indicates another meaning.

(IV.2) What is this appropriating of another meaning, and what is this indicating of another meaning?

Where something else is implied as the meaning established by itself [*svasiddhyartha*], that is appropriating another meaning. Indicating another meaning is thought to be its opposite. (V)

(V.1) Where something else is implied as a meaning established by itself, there we speak of appropriation. As in “the cow should be tied up.” Here “cowness” cannot be a means with respect to the sacrifice without verbally implying an individual; this is the implication [*ākṣepa*] of an individual as the meaning established by itself. And in “fat Devadatta does not eat in the daytime,” one inserts by implication the cause, viz., eating at night, as a meaning established by itself; because being fat is an effect, eating at night is understood as characterized by not eating in the daytime. For this fatness is not produced by the administration of drugs or the like, because this only counts as an example if it has been determined by other means that no drugs have

been used. Moreover, fatness as qualified by not eating in the daytime is a reason for excluding that drugs have been administered.

Let it be true that the incomplete means of knowledge, which becomes complete when preceded by the verbal implication “he eats at night,” is verbal implication [*śrutārthāpatti*]; alternatively, let there be implication [*ākṣepa*] of eating at night as cause of Devadatta’s being fat. In any case, “appropriation” [*upādāna*] is suitable here, because, being preceded by the implication of something else, that something else is included as a meaning established by itself.

Where, on the other hand, in consequence of the opposite of appropriation as explained above, there is no suggestion of something else as a meaning established by itself but rather a presentation of the meaning as a meaning established by something else, there we speak of indication [*lakṣaṇa*]. As in the earlier example “hamlet on the Ganges,” For here the word “Ganges” refers to the shore that carries the hamlet because it is its support. The word “Ganges,” therefore, refers to its own denotatum, i.e., a specific river, in order to convey something different, viz., its shore. This is the presentation of the meaning as a meaning established by something else. This, then, is indication [*lakṣaṇa*], because it is the opposite of appropriation explained above. In this way pure secondary expression is divided into two.

(V.2) To explain that secondary expression mixed with metaphor [*upacāramiśra*] has four divisions, he states:

Metaphor is of four kinds, because each of the two metaphors, pure and qualitative, is divided by superimposition [*āropa*] and identification [*adhyavasāna*].

(VI)

(VI.1) Metaphor is of two kinds: pure and qualitative. Pure metaphor is where one thing is metaphorically applied to something else by way of secondary expression because, since there is no fundamental relationship of object and subject of comparison, secondary expression is possible with respect to a quality that is similar to a quality of the object of comparison, on account of the fact that there is some such relationship between the two as cause and effect. An example is “clarified butter is long life.” Here the fact of having a long life is an effect because, given that clarified butter is the cause of long life, the expression “clarified butter is long life” results from secondary expression regarding a causal relationship connecting the two; both the fact of having a long life and the word denoting it are in this way metaphorically applied to clarified butter. This is therefore a pure metaphor.

Qualitative metaphor is where the word referring to the object of comparison and its meaning are superimposed onto the subject of comparison in consequence of secondary expression with respect to a quality that is similar to a quality of the object

of comparison, based on a fundamental relationship of object and subject of comparison. That metaphor, since it comes from qualities [*guṇa*], is designated by the word “qualitative” [*gaुṇa*]. An example is “the tribal is a cow.” For here there is metaphorical application of the word “cow” and of cowness onto the tribal because of the latter’s association with stupidity, slowness, etc. similar to the stupidity, slowness, etc. of a cow.

Some, however, accept in the case of metaphor only verbal metaphor, not semantic metaphor. That is not correct. Because verbal metaphor cannot exist without semantic metaphor.

In this way metaphor has been stated to be of two kinds: pure and qualitative.

(VI.2) Each of these two is of two kinds, on account of superimposition [*adhyāropa*] or identification [*adhyavasāna*]. There is superimposition where one thing is metaphorically applied to something else without concealing the difference between the object of superimposition and that to which it is metaphorically applied; in that case the nature of the superimposition on something else is not concealed, because that other thing is something extra that is being superimposed. Examples are the last two discussed [i.e., “clarified butter is long life” and “the tribal is a cow”]. In “clarified butter is long life,” we do not understand the cause, viz., clarified butter, as being inherent in its effect, viz., long life, because we understand it in its nature. The fact of living a long life is understood because clarified butter, being understood in its nature, is a cause of long life. This is why we speak in this case of superimposition. Similarly in the case of “the tribal is a cow,” because the nature of object and subject of comparison is not concealed. In this way we speak of superimposition in cases where the nature of the object onto which something is to be metaphorically applied is not concealed by that which is to be metaphorically applied.

In other cases, where this nature is concealed because one wishes to convey that the object onto which something is to be metaphorically applied is inherent in that which is being metaphorically applied, there we speak of identification. An example of identification in the case of pure metaphor is “Pancalas.” Here the word “Pancala” is used with reference to a country through indicated secondary expression [*lakṣītalakṣaṇā*], because it is the place where the descendants of Pancala live. Because Pancala indicates his descendants and his descendants indicate the country in which they live. We do not understand the object onto which something is being metaphorically applied as being different from that which is being metaphorically applied, because we understand it as if it is being swallowed by the thing that is metaphorically applied. The fact that it is a metaphor is therefore perceived as if it had disappeared in favor of conventional meaning [*rūḍhi*]. We speak therefore of pure metaphor with identification at its core.

An example of identification in the case of a qualitative metaphor is “king.” For the word “king,” because we see it being used with reference to Shudras and others, being used in its primary function with reference to a Kshatriya, is here used in a secondary function with reference to Shudras and others on account of secondary expression relating to the protecting of countries and cities, which is similar to the protecting of countries and cities that is part of the duty of Kshatriyas. In this case one is not instantly aware of the word’s secondary usage, because that has to be established through reflection. This is why secondary usage, having disappeared because it is not instantly cognized, is grasped through reflection. We therefore speak in this case of a qualitative metaphor with identification at its core.

Metaphor has in this way been divided into four. Joining the two divisions of secondary expression discussed earlier with this fourfold metaphor, secondary expression can be stated to be sixfold.

(VI.3) This secondary expression has three parts, on account of purity, superimposition, and identification respectively. The twofold nature of its pure part has already been explained, as being appropriation or indication. The fact that superimposition and identification have two divisions each, because they can be mixed with pure or qualitative metaphor, has also been mentioned. In order to show that these three have different objects, he now states:

Pure secondary expression relates to what is totally distinct [*tatastha*]; it is superimposition when it concerns something that is not far, identification when it concerns what has been swallowed up, because of conventional meaning and of being nearer. (VII)

(VII.1) This secondary expression that has been taught to be of two kinds, either pure appropriation or pure indication, must be seen to pertain to an object that is cognized as being totally distinct, because it is not conceptually colored by the thing that expresses secondarily. For we do not cognize the thing that is secondarily expressed as being conceptually colored by the thing that expresses secondarily. Because in “hamlet on the Ganges” the word “Ganges” is used with the intention of referring to the shore that is the actual situation of the hamlet—as in “the hamlet is on the Ganges, not on the Vitasta,” there no conceptual coloring is understood of the shore by the river, because the word “Ganges” is only used to refer to the specific river. The shore is understood as being totally distinct.

The same should be said with respect to appropriation, illustrated by “*fat Devadatta does not eat in the daytime.*”

(VII.2) When, however, one wishes to give expression to the shore as conceptually colored by a specific river and ignoring its own form, because the specific

river designated by the word “Ganges” is near, then we speak of superimposition in the earlier example, because we understand the shore as conceptually colored by that specific river, thus: “the hamlet is situated on the shore that is a specific river,” because it is near that specific river. But when this sentence is used in order to convey the extreme closeness of a specific river with respect to the hamlet, ignoring the shore as being swallowed up by that specific river, then we speak of identification, in the form “the hamlet is in the Ganges itself, not outside it.”

This single example [“hamlet on the Ganges”] has been presented for superimposition and identification as related to pure metaphor; in the same way a single example can be presented for qualitative metaphor: “the tribal is a cow” and “this one is literally a cow.” Here there is identification of the tribal’s cowness respectively through his association with a quality that is similar to a quality of a cow, and because he is near a cow. And just as identification was earlier distinguished by being nearer, it should also be distinguished by being conventional meaning. As in the earlier examples “Pancalas” and “king.” This is expressed in the verse with the words “because of conventional meaning and of being nearer.” This means: there is identification with respect to something that has been swallowed up on account of it being the conventional meaning or on account of it being nearer.

(VII.3) [*Objection:*] A word can convey its primary meaning because we determine its link to the latter; it cannot convey a secondary meaning because there is here no such link. At the time of determining the link between a word and its meaning, there is first an ascertainment of the relationship of cause and effect between the user’s use of a word and his understanding of its meaning, as situated in the as yet nondistinguished sentence and its meaning. Subsequently, as a consequence of agreement and difference after seeing the sentence and its meaning three, four, or more times, there is the determination that there is a causal relationship between the use of a word and the understanding of its meaning resulting from the distinction between the sentence and its meaning. After that again, one understands the connection between word and meaning because without it the user’s understanding of the meaning would not be possible. That understanding concerns the fourfold primary meaning only—i.e., the universal, etc.—not the six-fold secondary meaning. For there is no link of a word with its secondary meaning. Such a link is only seen to exist with the primary meaning. Such being the case, that meaning should be primary only, not secondary. But if it is claimed that a link is observed to exist of the secondary meaning with the primary meaning of a word, so that we understand, through that indirect link, the secondary meaning of a word, then we reply: if an independent word, through the intermediary of conveying its own meaning, conveys a secondary meaning, then it should

always convey that secondary meaning. If, instead, the word is dependent, what is it dependent upon?

Having considered this objection, the author of the verses replies:

The wise should distinguish the secondary function as sixfold on the basis of the determination of the different shapes of speaker, sentence, and expressed meaning. (VIII)

(VIII.1) He who utters a sentence in order to be understood is a speaker. A sentence is a collection of words with mutual expectancy that expresses one meaning. The expressed meaning is what the word is about, based on its primary or secondary expression. The secondary function must be determined by the wise on the basis of the multiplicity of natures of these three [i.e., speaker, sentence, and expressed meaning], taken separately or together, and joined, either separately or together, with differences in place, time, and circumstances. Because the connection with the secondary meaning is determined by the usage of elders through the meaning of words that convey their own meaning in dependence on the combination of speaker, etc. thus taken. This is what has been stated in the above verse. Words do not convey a secondary meaning when the link with those secondary meanings has not been determined. Nor do we grasp this link directly. What then? Through the interposition of their own meaning and depending on the combination of speaker, etc. As it has been said by the teacher Shabaravamin:

(VIII.2) “How can one word refer to something different? We respond: through expressing its own meaning.”³ It is here stated that words get their secondary meanings through the intermediary of their own meanings. The same author [i.e., Shabara] states again: “Secondary expression is also worldly.”⁴ Here it is stated that words, though depending on the determination of the link with its primary meaning, can have a secondary meaning. The word “world” in this quotation designates the means of knowledge—perception, etc.—known from common usage. “Worldly” signifies “known in the world,” learned from common usage. This means: “residing in words whose links with their objects is fully grasped.” This is what Kumarila Bhatta stated in the following verse:

Some secondary functions are conventional, because they have expressive power, like designating; others are made at present; others again are not, because they are impossible.⁵

Secondary functions that are conventional are “king,” etc. Secondary functions that are made at present are seen to occur with respect to another object that is similar with regard to speaker, etc. in the usage of elders.⁶

At this point Mukula enters into a detailed analysis of a few poems that illustrate some poetic applications of secondary usage. We skip this, because it adds little that is of interest to the concerns of this volume. Mukula then continues:

(VIII.8) In this way the fourfold primary meaning has been established. The six kinds of secondary meaning have been stated.

Now thinkers take four positions: “connection of what has been expressed” [*abhibhitānvaya*], “expression of connected meanings” [*anvitābhidhāna*], their combination, and the absence of either. In order to show the distribution of secondary meanings in these, the author says:

In connection of what has been expressed, secondary meaning is accepted to occur after the word meanings have been expressed.

Where connected meanings are expressed, on the other hand, it is situated before the word meanings have been expressed. (IX)

In two, there are two. In the case of an indivisible sentence meaning,⁷ there is in reality no secondary meaning. But if word meaning is imagined, the sentence meaning is divided as before. (X)

(X.1) According to some, the sentence meaning—such as joy or sorrow in the following examples—does not find expression on account of expectancy [*ākāṅkṣā*], proximity [*saṃnidhi*], and suitability [*yogyatā*] between the word meanings in words used only in their own senses, viz., the respective universals that are to be ascertained through agreement and difference [*anvayavyatireka*]; rather, the sentence meaning has to be ascertained. Examples are: “Oh Brahman, a son is born to you,” “Oh Brahman, your unmarried daughter is pregnant.” Here the joy and sorrow that are caused respectively by the birth of a son and the pregnancy of an unmarried daughter are not expressed by the words “joy” and “sorrow” themselves; even so, they are implied by virtue of the things expressed by the words. In this way we must look upon the fact that something can be implied by a word meaning even though it is not expressed by the sentence. According to those who hold this view, there is connection of what has been expressed, because the meanings that have been expressed are subsequently connected with each other.

(X.2) Others, however, say: The connection between word and meaning is ascertained on the basis of the usage of elders. That usage of elders can take the form of activity or nonactivity. And activity and nonactivity relate to specified meanings. That is why we determine words to be connected with specified meanings. The word meanings, therefore, are specified, but there is no subsequent specification of

initially unspecified word meanings. In this way there is expression of connected meanings because the words convey meanings that are mutually connected and have now become sentence meaning, and whose connection with the words that express it is grasped as covered by their respective universals.

(X.3) According to others again, the things expressed by words are their respective universals. The thing expressed by the sentence, in contrast, are the word meanings connected to each other. In this way there is connection of what has been expressed with respect to the words, and expression of connected meanings with respect to the sentence. Thus there is a combination of the two, connection of what has been expressed and expression of connected meanings.

(X.4) Those, however, who hold on to the view that the sentence meaning is indivisible, state the following. If we grant that the sentence meaning is something specified, then the specification, not being in connection, is in contradiction with the universal, which is its opposite. It is for this reason not possible to grasp the connection of the specificities—being covered by the ultimate meaning, viz., the universals—with elements that give expression to them. Therefore, since sentence and sentence meaning are ultimately indivisible, there is neither connection of what has been expressed nor expression of connected meanings. Their combination is not appropriate either, because there are no word meanings. Both, whether separate or joined, are possible as residing in imagined word meanings.

(X.5) First “connection of what has been expressed” [*abhitānvaya*]. When there is a connection of what has been expressed, mutual agreement of the word meanings that have been expressed by their signifiers comes about, in the form of qualifier-qualified, after that which has been expressed, as a result of expectancy [*ākāṅksā*], proximity [*samnidhi*], and suitability [*yogyatā*]. In that situation secondary expression of the word meanings, i.e., of universals, takes place when the sentence meaning is understood due to the capacity of word meanings after the primary meanings, i.e., universals, have been expressed. This is what the adherents of this view accept.

(X.6) If one holds the position of “expression of connected meanings” [*anvitābhidhāna*], though, specified word meanings constitute that which is expressed, and there is no subsequent specification of word meanings that initially express universals. Here it is not possible to say that things that are being specified constitute the word meaning. When we cognize the meaning that is the cause, viz., the universal, known to underlie the meanings of all sentences that contain that word, and whose connection with the corresponding expressive element is correctly appraised, sixfold secondary expression does not appear in accordance with the subject matter of each respective sentence. Therefore, in expression of connected meanings,

secondary expression is established before the specified word meanings that make up the sentence meaning are expressed, in a causal state that precedes it.

(X.7) In the combination of “connection of what has been expressed” [*abhihitānvaya*] and “expression of connected meanings” [*anvitābhidhāna*], through joining the two rules stated earlier, there is secondary expression with regard to words after they have expressed their general meaning; the state with regard to the sentence precedes that secondary expression.⁸ This is expressed by the words “In two, there are two” in stanza 10. “In two” means: in the combination of “connection of what has been expressed” [*abhihitānvaya*] and “expression of connected meanings” [*anvitābhidhāna*]. “There are two” means: prior existence to secondary expression, but following the moment when words express their general meaning.

(X.8) But if the sentence meaning is indivisible, there is in reality no secondary meaning. Because in reality it is not then possible that different word meanings are expressed, and because secondary meaning depends on such expressed word meanings. Secondary meaning can, however, be cognized in the divided lower parts, according to one's liking, by resorting to imagined word meanings, assuming, as before, connection of what has been expressed, expression of connected meanings, or their combination. Because these divided lower parts are conventional by being found in all users, being distinguished from each other by space and time.

(X.9) The author now shows that, where the primary meaning is not possible, secondary meaning has as object something near to the primary meaning, if that serves a purpose:

In usage, secondary meaning is observed to have proximity to the primary meaning as cause because the primary meaning is not possible, either following convention or a purpose. (XI)

(XI.1) The sixfold secondary meaning that has been discussed above is seen to be based, in the usage of elders, on the following three causes: (1) the primary meaning is not possible because it is prevented by another means of knowledge; (2) the secondary meaning is close to the primary meaning; (3) grasping a different meaning serves a purpose. Master Bhartrumita has shown, in the following stanza, that proximity to the primary meaning can be of five kinds:

Secondary meaning is accepted to be of five sorts: (i) because of a connection with what is to be expressed; (ii) because of similarity; (iii) because of combination; (iv) because of contrariness; (v) because the two share an activity.

Purpose too is of two kinds. Sometimes the purpose in grasping another meaning is based on convention, because it follows well-known and beginningless usage

by elders; an example is “containing twice the sound r” [*dvirepha*]. For the expression “containing twice the sound r” follows convention through the intermediary of its secondary sense relating to *bhramara* [“bee”], which contains twice the sound r. The other kind of purpose is different from the purpose that follows convention. It is a communication of a specific form belonging to something else that is not directly expressed by the word [*asaṁvijñānapada*]. An example is “I am Rama,” discussed earlier.⁹

These two kinds of purpose must be followed, in accordance with the subject matter, when the primary meaning is not possible and when a secondary meaning is understood on account of proximity to the primary meaning by way of the five connections shown above.

(XI.2) [(i) Connection with what is to be expressed:]

An example of secondary meaning based on connection is “the hamlet on the Ganges.” Here the word “Ganges” secondarily refers to the shore on the basis of the relationship of nearness, because the specific river that is directly denoted by the word cannot be the location of the hamlet; its primary meaning is in this way prevented. The purpose of this secondary meaning is to convey the purity, loveliness, etc. that go with the Ganges but that are not directly expressed by the word [*asaṁvijñānapada*]. These features [purity, loveliness, etc.] cannot be expressed by those words themselves, because these would cover either too little or too much.

(XI.3) [(ii) Similarity:]

An example of secondary meaning based on similarity is:

Oh bee, tell me truly and without taking sides, if you have ever, while roaming the regions, found or seen or heard a flower like this that can compare to the jasmine flower?

Here the words “bee” and “flower” are prevented from use in their primary sense because bees and flowers cannot be addressed; by secondary meaning they refer to something else that has qualities similar to those of the bee and the flower, because of similarity with what is directly denoted. And the purpose is to convey actions and qualities similar to the actions and qualities that go with bees and flowers, but that are not directly expressed by words [*asaṁvijñānapada*].

(XI.4) [(iii) Combination:]

An example of secondary meaning based on combination is “the umbrella bearers are going.” Here the primary meaning of the word “umbrella bearer” is prevented on account of the use of the plural. For the use of the plural with respect to a single umbrella bearer is not appropriate. Through secondary usage, the word “umbrella bearer” also refers to people without umbrellas, because of the combination, i.e., association, of people without umbrellas with the umbrella bearer in the activity of

going. The purpose here is to designate people completely without umbrellas who follow their master who is equipped with an umbrella.

(XI.5) [(iv) Contrariness:]

An example of secondary meaning based on contrariness is “good-looking.” Here the own meaning of this term is prevented, because “good-looking” is here used with respect to someone who is not good-looking. It therefore gives expression to the circumstance of not being good-looking, by way of the secondary meaning based on contrariness, because that is the contrary of what is designated by the term, viz., being good-looking. The purpose of this secondary meaning is the concealed cognition of the true meaning. For the true meaning, though concealed, is here generally conveyed by users on account of their respective intentions.

(XI.6) [(v) Shared activity:]

An example of secondary meaning due to shared activity is “You are Shatrughna in the great battle.” For here the primary designation of Shatrughna is prevented by the fact that it is used with reference to someone who is not Shatrughna.¹⁰ The word “Shatrughna” [which means “who kills his enemies”] is secondarily used with respect to someone who is not Shatrughna because of the latter’s association with the agency of killing enemies. The purpose is to convey that this other person has attained the characteristics of the king designated by the word “Shatrughna.” Consider the stanza:

Your are Prithu on account of your virtues, Rama on account of your beauty, your are Nala and Bharata. You are Shatrughna in the great battle, you are Janaka on earth on account of your stability. In this way you bear the names of ancient kings on account of your good deeds. Why, oh Lord, are you not Mandhatri even though you are victorious in the three worlds?

Here the royalty of this king is described in laudatory terms, giving him the characteristics of Shatrughna.

Thus it has been explained how three kinds of secondary meaning arise from three bases.

(XI.7) In proximity as explained above, and based upon five kinds of connections, the expressed sense is sometimes completely concealed, sometimes intended, and sometimes not intended. In order to demonstrate the division of subject matter of these three, demonstrated by connoisseurs, he now states:

There is concealment of the expressed meaning in the case of similarity and contrariness. There is intention or nonintention in the case of connection and combination. (XII)

There is intention in the case of appropriation, nonintention in the case of indication, concealment in the case of shared activity, and sometimes the opposite. (XIII)

(XIII.1) In the fivefold proximity presented in the stanza “Secondary meaning is accepted to be of five sorts,” above, there is concealment of the expressed sense in the cases of similarity and contrariness. As a matter of fact, in a secondary meaning based on similarity, the expressed sense, which is the object of comparison, is completely concealed because the word expressive of the object of comparison refers to the subject of comparison. This is illustrated in “smeared with charming dark splendor” and “friends of the clouds” in the stanza discussed earlier. Here the primary meanings of the words “smeared” and “friend” are not connected with the effect, because they refer to things that are compared with these primary meanings.

(XIII.2) Also in a secondary meaning based on contrariness the expressed meaning is completely concealed, because a different meaning, the contrary of what the word expresses, is accepted. As in “good-looking.” Here the fact of being good-looking is completely concealed because the person concerned is not good-looking. In this way “similarity” and “contrariness” completely conceal the expressed meaning.

(XIII.3) The expressed meaning in the case of connection and combination is intended or not intended, but not completely concealed. For there the expressed meaning is intended if the secondary meaning is of the appropriating kind. Connoisseurs¹¹ have explained that, in the realm of poetry, intention aims at something different from the expressed meaning. In the case of indication, on the other hand, the expressed meaning is not intended, because it has passed onto another meaning.

(XIII.4) An example of secondary meaning based on connection, along with appropriation and intention of the expressed meaning, is “fat Devadatta does not eat in the daytime.” The intended effect here, viz., being fat while not eating in the daytime, implies, through secondary meaning based on connection, a cause in the form of eating at night as the meaning established by itself [svasiddhyartha].

(XIII.5) In secondary meaning based on combination, with appropriation, the expressed meaning is intended. An example is “the umbrella bearers are going.” Here, the umbrella bearer also implies those without umbrellas as the meaning arrived at on account of the connection with its plural ending, because of this plural ending. In that situation the expressed meaning, i.e., the umbrella bearer, is intended when appropriation based on combination is made of those without umbrellas.

In this way it has been stated that the expressed meaning is intended in secondary meanings of the appropriating kind that are based on connection or combination.

(XIII.6) The expressed meaning in the case of these two secondary usages can be unintended; it cannot be completely concealed, because it is somehow connected with the effect through the intermediary of the secondary object. An example of unintended expressiveness in the case of a secondary meaning that is based on connection is "I am Rama." The thing directly expressed by the word "Rama," viz., the son of Dasharatha, is not taken in its own form because it is transformed into another feature that is alluded to. That is why it is not intended, while yet not completely concealed: it is somehow connected with the sentence meaning through the intermediary of the feature alluded to. One should proceed in the same manner in cases like "the hamlet on the Ganges."

(XIII.7) The unintended expressed meaning in the case of secondary meaning based on combination or connection can be illustrated in "the umbrella bearers are going." The fact of bearing an umbrella is here taken to concern a collection of people, because the connection with a plural ending would otherwise not make sense. In that situation the expressed meaning is not intended, because a collection of people is intended. Also the connection of the umbrella bearer with the activity [of going] is easy to understand through the intermediary of a collection, because the umbrella bearer is part of that collection. The expressed meaning of "umbrella bearer" is therefore not completely concealed in this case, because it is connected with the activity by being part of the collection.

In this way it is established that the expressed meaning in the case of secondary meaning based on connection of combination can be intended or unintended, but it cannot be completely concealed.

(XIII.8) In the case of a secondary meaning based on shared activity, the secondary meaning is rooted in the expressive power of the word, in following the expressive power that resides in parts of the word.¹² In that case the expressed meaning is concealed, as in "the man is a real man." Since here the first word "man" designates an object belonging to a specific class, the second word "man" designates an excellence different from what is expressed by the word itself, by way of secondary meaning based on shared activity. Where, on the other hand, the expressed meaning being intended for some reason, another meaning is inserted based on another expressive power of the word, the situation is the reverse, the opposite of the activity of the expressed meaning. The expressed meaning in this case is not concealed, but very much intended. As in "in the great battle you are Shatrughna." Here the word "Shatrughna," while conveying the agency of killing enemies through a secondary meaning based on shared activity, also makes, as object of the comparison, its own meaning known, viz., the son of Dasharatha. Its own meaning is therefore also intended. And even though the connoisseurs accept that the

expressed meaning is completely concealed in such a domain, because we take the object of comparison as referring to the subject of comparison, the expressed meaning is yet not concealed, because we accept the expressed meaning as object of comparison when there is occasion for secondary meaning based on shared activity. In this way it has been established that in the case of secondary meaning based on shared activity, the expressed meaning is sometimes concealed and sometimes intended, by virtue of the fact that several meanings are involved. All this will not be explained at present, because it would require many words. This much has been said here to show in outline that suggestion [*dhvani*], presented by connoisseurs as something new, is really part of secondary meaning [*lakṣaṇā*]. The learned should examine this with penetrating intelligence. They should not scorn it without reflection.

Enough has been said. The classification of the expressed meaning in the case of a secondary meaning that conceals the intention¹³ has been explained.

(XIII.9) When the word essence, the undivided whole of all words, manifests itself in the three forms of word, meaning, and their connection, like the rope that manifests itself as a snake, then the expressive function [*abhidhāvṛtta*] appears as entering into tenfold usage, not as having the speech essence without sequence as object. In order to show that, he states:

The speech essence, when it manifests itself, is observed to be tenfold. If it were to appear without sequence, how would those expressive functions be known?

(XIV)

(XIV.1) The word essence, the undivided whole of all words, when like the serpent in the rope it manifests itself, in four ways—as knower, means of knowledge, object of knowledge, and knowledge, each of them appearing multiply as the expressed, the expressive word, and their connection—is connected with the expressive function that is thus tenfold, as explained above. How could those ten expressive functions be known if the speech essence does not manifest itself because sequential distinctions are withdrawn, the shortcomings of concepts and descriptions having disappeared? This means: they would not appear.

(XIV.2) He now summarizes the intention of the treatise:

In this way he has distinguished the expressive function into ten. (XV)

(XV.1) There are four kinds of primary expressive function, and six of the secondary one. In this way the expressive function has been distinguished as being tenfold.

(XV.2) He now shows the fruit of all this:

He who applies that which is reflected in words, sentences, and means of knowledge to poetry, his speech is successful. (XVI)

(XVI.1) “Word” in this stanza is grammar [*vyākaraṇa*], because it is the cause of understanding words. “Sentence” is Vedic Interpretation [*mīmāṃsā*], because it is the cause of the ascertainment of agreement in a sentence. “Means of knowledge” is reasoning [*tarka*], because it provides information about the means of knowledge. He who applies the tenfold expressive function—the reflection of whose closely examined essence has passed into the sciences divided into three, dealing respectively with words, sentences, and means of knowledge, sciences that are the means to attain all knowledge useful for the four ends of man—to poetry, called a mirror of all worldly conduct, he will be the master of speech, his speech being successful. It has now been explained that the tenfold expressive function pervades all conduct, because all movement of speech is pervaded by this tenfold expressive function, because it is useful with respect to the four sciences [viz., grammar, Vedic Interpretation, and reasoning], and because, through them, it extends into all forms of knowledge, the roots of all conduct.

The Source of the Modes of Denotation [*Abhidhāvṛttimāṭyṛkā*] has here been examined by Mukula the son of Bhatta Kallata, for the instruction of the wise. (XVII)

Thus concludes the *Source of the Modes of Denotation*, composed by Mukula Bhatta, son of the venerable Bhatta Kallata, who resides in a place that is purified by the dust of the feet of the goddess Sharada.¹⁴

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- Abhidhāvṛttimātrkā* (*Source of the Modes of Denotation*) of Mukula Bhaṭṭa: pp. 203–205; 205–209; 212–218
- Āgamaśāstra* (*Science of Tradition*) of Gauḍapāda: 3.27–28; 3.48cd; 4.3–5
- Aitareya Āraṇyaka* (*Forest Text of Aitareya*): 3.1–3
- Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (*Brāhmaṇa of Aitareya*): 2.1(6).1
- Apohasiddhi* (*Proof of Exclusion*) of Ratnakīrti: pp. 58–60
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- Brahmasiddhi* (*Proof of Brahma*) of Maṇḍana Miśra: p. 1 l. 7–11; p. 18 l. 1–17; p. 23 l. 18–19; p. 26 l. 16–20; p. 71 l. 1–2; p. 157 l. 10–13; p. 157 l. 14–15; p. 157 l. 19–21
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- Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa* (*Light on the Rules of Vedic Interpretation*) of Āpadēva: pp. 193–194, 268–272
- Mohavicchedanī* (*Destroyer of Doubt*) of Kassapathera: p. 186
- Mūlamadhyamakārīkā* (*Fundamental Verses of the Middle Path*) of Nāgārjuna: 1.5–6; 1.12; 4.1–4; 7.17; 7.20; 7.30ab; 7.31; 8.1; 8.8ab; 8.9–10; 19.1–3; 21.3
- Nirukta* (*Etymology*) of Yāska: 1.1; 1.12–14; 1.15; 2.1–3
- Nyāyabhāṣya* (*Commentary on Logic*) of Vātsyāyana: pp. 534–535; 536; 638; 658–671; 935–940; 996–1000
- Nyāyakandali* (*Plantain Tree of Logic*) of Śrīdhara: pp. 502–504
- Nyāyamañjari* (*Sprout of Logic*) of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa: I pp. 122–125; I pp. 225–226
- Nyāyasūtra* (*Aphorisms on Logic*): 1.1.4; 2.2.59–66
- Nyāyavārttika* (*Comments on Logic*) of Uddyotakara: pp. 174; 699–702
- Nyāyavārttikatātparyatīkā* (*Gloss on the Purport of the Comments on Logic*) of Vācaspati Miśra: pp. 108–110
- Nyāyāvatāra* (*Descent of Logic*) of Siddhasena Mahāmati: v. 27
- Nyāyāvatāra-vivṛti* (*Expansion of the Descent of Logic*) of Siddharṣi: pp. 420–421; 449–450; 470–471
- Padārthaḥadharmaśāṅgraha* (*Compendium of the Characteristics of the Categories*), also known as *Prāśastapādabhāṣya* (*Commentary by Praśastapāda*) of Praśasta: § 256–257
- Pramāṇasamuccaya* (*Collection of Means of Knowledge*) of Dignāga: ch. 1, p. 1 l. 15–p. 2 l. 14; 2.5; 5.1–5
- Śabdakaustubha* (*Gem of Words*) of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita: pp. 7–9
- Sāṃkhyakārīkā* (*Verses on Sāṃkhya*) of Īśvarakṛṣṇa: 9
- Sammohavīnodanī* (*Dispeller of Delusion*) of Buddhaghosa: p. 387
- Siddhānta-kaumudi* (*Moonlight of Established Truth*) of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita: on rules 2151–2168
- Ślokavārttika* (*Comments in Verse*) of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa: Apohavāda 1–10, 35–41, 51–55, 71–74, 76–81, 83–85, 139–143; Pratyakṣapariccheda 111–113, 118–133; Śabdanityatā 285–286; Sphoṭavāda 3–18, 9, 10, 20–24, 69, 91, 94; Vākyādhikaraṇa 244–246, 342–343, 358, 366
- Sphoṭasiddhi* (*Proof of sphoṭa*) of Maṇḍana Miśra: pp. 9, 12, 16, 38, 85, 92
- Śrībhāṣya* (*Commentary of Affluence*) of Rāmānuja: p. 306
- Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (*Brāhmaṇa of the Taittirīya Branch of the Veda*): 2.1.1.1; 3.11.8.7–8
- Taittirīya Saṃhitā* (*Collection of the Taittirīya Branch of the Veda*): 6.1.6.7
- Taittirīyopaniṣadbhāṣya* (*Commentary on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad*) of Śaṅkara: pp. 352–353
- Tantrāloka* (*Light on the Tantras*) of Abhinavagupta: 3.67–95
- Tantravārttika* (*Comments on the Doctrine*) of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa: on 2.1.1, p. 340–344; on 3.1.12, p. 46; on 3.1.13, p. 69–70
- Tattvabindu* (*Drop of the Truth*) of Vācaspati Miśra: pp. 61; 85–88
- Tattvacintāmaṇi* (*Desire-fulfilling Gem of Truth*) of Gaṅgeśa: pp. 819–846
- Tattvopaplavasimha* (*The Lion That Is a Disaster for All Essences*) of Jayarāśi Bhaṭṭa: pp. 57; 211–212
- Vaiyākaraṇabhusaṇasāra* (*Essence of the Ornament of Grammar*) of Kaunḍa Bhaṭṭa: pp. 1–5
- Vākyapadiya* (*Treatise on Sentences and Words*) of Bharṭṛhari: 1.2; 1.1–5; 1.5; 1.7; 1.10; 1.13; 1.14; 1.27; 1.30; 1.37; 1.40; 1.44; 1.46–52; 1.54; 1.56; 1.73–74; 1.76; 1.83; 1.103–104; 1.106; 1.122–123; 1.124; 1.129; 1.129–131; 1.131; 1.132; 1.133; 1.142; 1.144; 1.149; 1.150; 1.155–156; 1.165; 1.166; 1.167; 1.171; 1.175–183 (with Vṛtti, ed. Iyer pp. 228–235); 1.182; 2.7–10; 2.13; 2.28–29; 2.42; 2.76; 2.89;

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2.119; 2.139; 2.146; 2.147; 2.149–150; 2.233–234; 2.236; 2.237; 2.287–288; 2.291–292; 2.294–295; 2.297; 2.325; 2.423–424; 2.426; 3.1.1; 3.1.2; 3.1.22–24; 3.1.25–27; 3.1.32–39; 3.2.2–18; 3.2.4–6; 3.2.7; 3.2.8; 3.2.12–13; 3.2.18; 3.3.1; 3.3.39; 3.3.42; 3.3.43; 3.3.49–51; 3.3.56; 3.3.56–57; 3.3.72; 3.3.81; 3.6.15; 3.6.25; 3.6.26; 3.7.2; 3.7.7; 3.7.38–42; 3.7.41; 3.7.105; 3.7.153; 3.8.52; 3.9.17; 3.9.26; 3.9.36; 3.9.66; 3.14.198

Vākyārthamātrikā (*Source of Sentence Meaning*) of Śālikanātha: p. 376–381; p. 381–383; p. 383–384; p. 385–395

Vedāntaparibhāṣā (*Discussion of Vedānta*) of Dharmarāja Adhvarin: pp. 85, 87–88

Vibhāṣāprabhāvṛtti (*Commentary That Sheds Light on the Exposition*): p. 274

Viśeṣāvaśyakabhbhaṣya (*Special Commentary on the Āvaśyaka Sūtra*) of Jinabhadra: vol. II, p. 378; vol. II, p. 385

Vyomavatī (*Celestial Commentary*) of Vyomaśiva: vol. 2 p. 129

Yogaśāstra (*Science of Yoga*): 1.9, p. 16–17; 4.12, p. 187–188; 3.17, p. 137–142

Yuktidipikā (*Light Through Reason*): p. 112 l. 8–11; p. 122 l. 3–17

The Texts and Their Dates

ABHIDHARMAKOŚABHĀṢYA OF VASUBANDHU

Much has been written about Vasubandhu, the author of a number of Buddhist texts that do not all give expression to the same philosophy. Were there several authors of the same name? If so, is information about the date of other works of Vasubandhu of use in determining the date of composition of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*? Given these numerous difficulties, Schmithausen's (1992: 392–397) observations seem to be the best available at this moment. According to Schmithausen, the *Laikāvatāra Sūtra*, which was translated into Chinese in 443, cites one of Vasubandhu's late works, the *Trīṃśikā*. This would situate Vasubandhu at the beginning of the fifth century CE, or even earlier if we follow the calculation proposed by Franco (2007: 295–297). This agrees with the fact that Paramārtha's *Life of Vasubandhu* presents Vasubandhu as a contemporary of Vindhyanavāsa (=Vindhyanavāsin) (Larson & Bhattacharya 1987: 131 ff.), who may have to be dated around 400 CE (see *Yogaśāstra*, below).

ABHIDHĀVRTTIMĀTRKĀ OF MUKULA BHATṬA

Mukula Bhaṭṭa lived in Kashmir, around the year 900 CE.¹ As he indicates at the end of the *Abhidhāvṛttimātrkā*, his father was called Bhaṭṭa Kallatā.

ĀGAMAŚĀSTRA OF GAUDAPĀDA

It is far from certain that the *Āgamaśāstra* is a single work. It may be no more than a collection of four independent works, which survive as its four chapters (*prakaraṇa*). The single authorship of these four chapters is not guaranteed, all the less so since some of these (especially number 4) were, to all appearances, originally Buddhist works, whereas others are not. It is therefore not certain that Gauḍapāda, the single author of the *Āgamaśāstra*, ever existed. Later tradition yet sees in him the teacher of the teacher of Śaṅkara. To the extent it makes sense to speak of the *Āgamaśāstra* as a single work, it has to be dated before Śaṅkara, and its relationship with certain Buddhist authors suggests a date in the sixth century.²

AITAREYA ĀRANYAKA

See under *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*.

**AITAREYA BRĀHMAÑA, TAITTIRĪYA BRĀHMAÑA, AND
AITAREYA ĀRANYAKA**

These three texts are Vedic texts. They are part of the Vedic corpus that most Brahmanical thinkers came to think of as beginningless, and therefore timeless. Modern scholarship does not accept this, but has major difficulties dating these and other Vedic texts with confidence. Earlier attempts were mere guesswork, with a tendency to date them as early as possible. More detailed research has brought to light that the language of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* is particularly close to the language described by Pāṇini, more so than to a number of more recent texts. The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* and the *Aitareya Āranyaka* contain forms that are explicitly rejected by Pāṇini, so that we must conclude that he did not know these texts. If it is true that the *Taittirīya* texts borrowed from the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, as it has been maintained, they must be younger.³ It follows that these three Vedic texts may roughly date from the time of Pāṇini, the author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (see below), or even later.

APOHASIDDHI OF RATNAKĪRTI

Comparison with other authors who cite or are cited by Ratnakīrti allows us to date him in the eleventh century.⁴

AṢṬĀDHYĀYĪ OF PĀṄINI

Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* has been the target of much guesswork as to its date. Only recently have more serious proposals been made. Oskar von Hinüber (1990: 34) arrives, on the basis of a comparison of Pāṇini's text with numismatic findings, at a date that can hardly be much earlier than 350 BCE; Harry Falk (1993: 304; 1994: 327 n. 45) refines these reflections and moves the date forward to the decennia following 350 BCE.⁵ If Hinüber and Falk are right, and there seems no reason to doubt this, we have here for Pāṇini a *terminus post quem*. Further precision cannot be achieved at this moment, apart from the fact that his commentator Patañjali wrote during the decennia following 150 BCE (see below) and that between Pāṇini and Patañjali a further named author (Kātyāyana) is known to have been active. We cannot therefore exclude that the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was composed after the creation of the Maurya empire (perhaps 320 BCE), and indeed, it appears that Patañjali believed that Pāṇini had lived under the Mauryas (Falk 1994: 327). The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is aware of the Greeks, but the conclusion that it was therefore more recent than the incursion into India of Alexander the Great (326 BCE) is contested. As to his region, Xuanzang, a Chinese visitor to India during the seventh century CE, claims that Pāṇini had lived in Śālātura, in northwestern India (now Pakistan). A northwestern location for Pāṇini is confirmed by a number of features of his grammar, most notably his far greater familiarity with the northwest than with other regions of the subcontinent; see Thieme 1935a: 75 ff.

AŚTASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ

The *Aśtasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* is the earliest surviving Buddhist Mahāyāna text, whose oldest version must go back to the first century BCE, and may belong to the same northwestern region of the Indian subcontinent as the original *Milindapañha*.⁶

BRAHMASIDDHI AND SPHOṬASIDDHI OF MANĀDANA MĪRĀ

Maṇḍana Miśra appears to have been a contemporary of Śaṅkara.⁷ See *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.

BRAHMASŪTRABHĀṢYA OF ŚAṄKARA

For Śaṅkara, a date toward the end of the seventh century, based on an analysis of the complex relationships between Śaṅkara and other Indian thinkers, appears to gain scholarly consensus.⁸

BRAHMASŪTRABHĀṢYA OF BHĀSKARA

Bhāskara must have been slightly more recent than Śaṅkara.⁹

BRHADĀRĀNYAKOPANIṢADBHĀṢYA OF ŚAṄKARA

See *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.

DHAVALĀ OF VĪRASENA

It appears that this sole surviving commentary on the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* “was completed by Virasena on the 13th day of the bright fortnight of Karttika in the year 738 of the Saka era, when Jagattunga (i.e., Govinda III of the Rashtrakuta dynasty) had abandoned the throne and Boddana Raya (probably Amoghavarsha I) was ruling. . . . [T]he date corresponds . . . to the 8th October 816 A.D., Wednesday morning.”¹⁰

DVĀDAŚĀRANAYACAKRA OF MALLAVĀDIN

Mallavādin “flourished after Dignāga (5th c. A.D.) and before the 7th c. A.D.”¹¹

MADHYAMAKAHṛdaya OF BHAVYA

Bhavya may have lived in the sixth century, in South India.¹²

MAHĀBHĀṢYA OF PATAṄJALI

The date of Patañjali’s *Great Commentary* is one of the few relatively certain dates of early Indian literary history. This text must have been composed in the decennia following 150 BCE, because Patañjali refers to historical events that took place during his lifetime and around that time: the inroads into northern India by the Indo-Greeks and the reign of Puṣyamitra,

one of the successor kings after the collapse of the Maurya empire (see Cardona 1976: 263–266; Scharfe 1977: 153). Patañjali's geographical location may be known too. Recent research has brought together evidence to suggest that he lived in Kashmir (Aklujkar 2008; Bronkhorst 2016: 43–46, 308 ff.).

MAHĀVIBHĀṢĀ

The *Mahāvibhāṣā* is a Buddhist scholastic text, composed in Kashmir. It refers to the “former king, Kaniṣka, of Gandhāra” (Willemen, Dessein, & Cox 1998: 232; Dessein 2009: 44). Kaniṣka’s realm appears to have begun in 127 CE (Falk 2001; further Golzio 2008). The *Mahāvibhāṣā* is presumably younger than this, but not much.

MĀNAVA DHARMAŚĀSTRA

The date of the *Mānava Dharmashastra* (“Laws of Manu”) has recently been discussed by Patrick Olivelle in the introduction of his edition and translation of this text (2005). The date he suggests (second–third centuries CE) is possible, perhaps even probable, though not quite certain.¹³

MĀNDŪKYA-UPANIṢAD-BHĀṢYA/ĀGAMAŚĀSTRAVIVARĀNA OF ŚĀNKARA

There is difference of opinion whether this Śāṅkara is the same as the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. This is possible, perhaps even likely, but not certain.¹⁴

MILINDAPAÑHA

The *Milindapañha* is a Buddhist text in Pali whose date is not known. However, it goes back to a lost text from northwestern India that also gave rise to two somewhat different versions preserved in Chinese translation. Its northwestern origin is clear from the fact that the person whose name figures in the title—King Milinda, better known as King Menander—is the very ruler whose inroads into North India are referred to by Patañjali (see *Mahābhāṣya*, above). The oldest version of this text must therefore have been composed when the memory of King Menander was still alive, presumably not later than the first century BCE. Interestingly, Patañjali's *Great Commentary* (*Mahābhāṣya*) betrays an awareness of the Buddhist philosophy that also finds expression in (certain passages of) the *Milindapañha*.¹⁵

MĪMĀṂSĀBHĀṢYA OF ŚABARA

Śabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*) is very hard to date with precision.¹⁶ This text was not yet known to Bharṭṛhari.¹⁷ About the latter we know that he lived before Dignāga (who quotes him), and that “Simhasūrigana, a sixth-century Jain writer, tells us that Bharṭṛhari studied under a grammarian named Vasurāta, whom he identifies as a brother-in-law of a pupil of another famous Buddhist, Vasubandhu.”¹⁸ Bharṭṛhari must have lived in or around the middle of the fifth century CE. For Śabara a date toward the middle of the first millennium CE looks therefore probable. This relatively late date agrees with the fact that various *Mīmāṃsā* (= Vedic interpretation) commentators are known to have been active

before Śabara, even though most of their work has not survived; part of one such commentary (by the so-called Vṛttikāra “commentator”) is incorporated in the *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation*.

MĪMĀMSĀNYĀYAPRAKĀŚA OF ĀPADEVA

Āpadeva lived in the early part of the seventeenth century.¹⁹

MOHAVICCHEDANĪ BY KASSAPATTHERA OF COŁA

This work was probably written about 1200 CE.²⁰

MŪLAMADHYAMAKAKĀRIKĀ OF NĀGĀRJUNA

The date of Nāgārjuna, the author of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, is uncertain, and estimates range from the first to the third century CE.²¹ A date toward the end of the second century seems most likely.²²

NIRUKTA OF YĀSKA

The date of Yāska’s *Nirukta* has been subject to much speculation. Yāska is older than Patañjali (see, e.g., Limaye 1974: 9, 14, 15, 93). His familiarity with Pāṇinian technique and terminology, first pointed out by Paul Thieme (1935: *23*–*24* (530–31); further Scharfe 1977: 118 f.; Bronkhorst 1984a: 8 f.), is sufficient reason (if no absolute proof) to accept that he is younger than Pāṇini. He may therefore belong to the third century BCE.

NYĀYABHĀŚYA OF VĀTSYĀYANA

There are reasons to believe that this text belongs to the second half of the fifth century CE.²³

NYĀYAKANDALĪ OF SRĪDHARA

“This writer flourished in A.D. 991, according to his own testimony. He is celebrated by Bengalis as the ‘first Bengali writer on philosophy.’ He tells us he came from ‘Bhuriśreṣṭha in Rārhā (modern Bhursut) in Howrah district,’ and identifies his parents as Bāladeva and Acchokā, his patron as Pandudāsa, a Kāyastha.”²⁴

NYĀYAMAÑJARĪ OF JAYANTA BHATṬA

Jayanta Bhatṭa lived and worked at the end of the ninth century, in Kashmir.²⁵

NYĀYASŪTRA

Dating the *Nyāyasūtra* is difficult, because it appears to be a composite text whose parts have different dates. According to one interpretation, most of the *Nyāyasūtra* is a unitary whole that dates from before Nāgārjuna (and therefore presumably from before the end of the second

century); some sections were subsequently added and are more recent than Nāgārjuna.²⁶ Other studies contest the unitary nature of most of the text, but arrive at a similar chronological conclusion: much of the *Nyāyasūtra* predates Nāgārjuna.²⁷

NYĀYAVĀRTTIKA OF UDDYOTAKARA

“Uddyotakara himself mentions his place of residence as Śrughna, which has been identified as a town in the Punjab on the west bank of the Jamunā about 40 miles north of Thāneśvar. . . . He must have lived after Dignāga and Praśastapāda, and probably he slightly preceded Dharmakīrti. In any case the *terminus ad quem* is defined by his being mentioned in Subandhu’s *Vāsavadattā*, a Sanskrit work written before 705. Thus Uddyotakara cannot be earlier than the last half of the sixth century, and not later than the 7th.”²⁸ Much depends on the date of Dharmakīrti, a much debated issue. The most recent suggestion (a “working hypothesis”) is to date Dharmakīrti as early as the middle of the sixth century CE,²⁹ which might then also be the approximate date of Uddyotakara.

NYĀYAVĀRTTIKATĀTPARYATĪKĀ AND TATTVABINDU OF VĀCASPATI MIŚRA

Volume IV of the *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* has this to say about Vācaspati’s date:

According to tradition, [Vācaspati Miśra] was a Maithila Brahmin from the region of Bihar. He lived either in the middle of the ninth century (ca. 841) or toward the latter half of the tenth century (ca. 976). The reason for the discrepancy in date relates to a reference in one of Vācaspati’s own writings, namely, the *Nyāyasūcīnibandha*, in which Vācaspati reports that he composed the work in 898. If this latter date is calculated according to the Vikrama era (beginning in 58 BCE), it becomes 841 of the Common Era. If the date is calculated according to the Śaka era (beginning in 78 CE), it becomes 976 of the Common Era. Arguments have been given for preferring either of these dates, and the issue has yet to be resolved, although there appears to be a growing consensus in favor of the date 976.³⁰

Volume XI adds the opinion of S. Sankaranarayanan:

Vācaspati’s earliest work, namely the *Nyāyakāṇikā*, refers to the victorious reign of the great conqueror Ādiśūkra Mihira Bhoja (c. A.D. 836–885) of the Gurjara Pratihāra dynasty of Kan-nauja. Vācaspati prepared two compilations of the *Nyāyasūtra* under the titles *Nyāyasūtrodhāhā* and *Nyāyasūcīnibandha* some time in A.D. 906–907 when Mihira Bhoja’s son, Mahendrapāla (A.D. 885–911) was on the throne. He wrote his last work, namely *Bhāmatī*, during the reign of Mahendrapāla’s mighty and scholarly son, Mahīpāla (c. A.D. 912–945). In fact he highly praises the King Mahīpāla twice in the *Bhāmatī*.³¹

NYĀYĀVATĀRA OF SIDDHASENA MAHĀMATI

Balcerowicz (2001: introduction; 2001a) has convincingly argued that Siddhasena the author of the *Saṃmati-tarka-prakaraṇa* is different from the Siddhasena who wrote the *Nyāvāvatāra* (he

calls them Siddhasena Divākara and Siddhasena Mahāmati respectively). He may have lived in the seventh century CE.

NYĀYĀVATĀRA-VIVRTI OF SIDDHARŚI

Siddharṣi lived around the year 900 CE.³²

PADĀRTHADHARMASĀNGRAHA (PRAŚASTAPĀDABHĀṢYA) OF PRAŚASTA(-PĀDA)

The author of this text, Praśasta, is also known to have composed a commentary (*Tīkā*) on a work called *Kaṭandī*. The *Kaṭandī* was known to Dignāga, and was therefore composed before him. (It was composed after Vasubandhu, whose logical innovations it uses.) Praśasta, however, is more recent than Dignāga, because he adopts certain innovations proposed by the latter.³³ More precise information about his date is hard to come by, except of course that the *Padārthadharmasāṅgraha* must have preceded the earliest commentator thereon, presumably Vyomaśiva (tenth century CE).

PRAMĀNASAMUCCAYA OF DIGNĀGA

Dignāga lived and wrote before Dharmakīrti and after Bhartrhari, i.e., presumably between the middle of the fifth and the middle of the sixth century, perhaps around the year 500 CE. “The name of the native home of this important philosopher . . . is given to us as Siṃhavaktra near Kāñcī (modern Conjeveram). According to Tibetan tradition he lived in a cave on Bhoraśaila in Orissa and sojourned in Nalanda, but Hsüan-tsang [Xuanzang] is reported to have found a hill in Andhra near Vangi in the West Godavari district, and that Dignāga was born in Simhapura or Nellore.”³⁴

ŚABDAKAUSTUBHA OF BHĀṬṬOJI DĪKSITA

See *Siddhānta-kaumudi*.

SĀMKHYAKĀRIKĀ OF ĪŚVARAKRṢNA

Evidence derived from the *Yuktidīpikā* suggests that Īśvarakṛṣṇa was a younger contemporary of Vindhyaśvin, and may therefore have lived in or soon after 400 CE.³⁵

SAMMOHAVINODĀṄI ASCRIBED TO BUDDHAGHOSA

The *Sammohavinodāṅi* is one of three Abhidhamma commentaries that were conceived as a unit. These three commentaries “are connected to Buddhaghosa, who is mentioned as their initiator . . . , ruling out the possibility that he is the author.”³⁶ No precise date has been proposed.

SIDDHĀNTA-KAUMUDĪ OF BHĀṬṬOJI DĪKSITA

Bhaṭṭoji Dīksita lived and worked around the year 1600, in Varanasi.

ŚLOKAVĀRTTIKA AND TANTRAVĀRTTIKA OF KUMĀRILA BHATṬA

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa appears to have been an older contemporary of Śaṅkara, to be dated in the seventh century.³⁷

SPHOṬASIDDHI OF MANDANA MIŚRA

See *Brahmasiddhi*.

ŚRĪBHĀṢYA OF RĀMĀNUJA

Rāmānuja lived around the year 1200, in South India.³⁸

TAITTIRĪYA BRĀHMANA

See under *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*.

TAITTIRĪYOPANIṢAD BHĀṢYA OF ŚĀNKARA

See *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.

TANTRĀLOKA OF ABHINAVAGUPTA

Abhinavagupta worked around the year 1000, in Kashmir.

TANTRAVĀRTTIKA OF KUMĀRILA BHATṬA

See *Ślokavārttika*.

TATTVABINDU OF VĀCASPATI MIŚRA

See *Nyāyavārttikatātparyāṭikā*

TATTVACINTĀMANI OF GANGEŚA

Gangeśa probably lived in the early part of the fourteenth century, in Mithilā.³⁹

TATTVOPAPLAVASIMHA OF JAYARĀŚI BHATṬA

The *Tattvopaplavasimha* is a unique text. It is the only text of the Lokāyata or Cārvāka school that has come down to us, and it is also the only Sanskrit text in which full-fledged skepticism is propounded.⁴⁰ A careful consideration of the texts quoted by Jayarāśi and of those that quote him justifies the conclusion that he probably lived in the eighth century.⁴¹

VAIYĀKARANABHŪṢĀNASĀRA OF KAUNDA BHATṬA

Kaunda Bhatṭa was a nephew of Bhatṭoji Dikṣita and lived therefore in the seventeenth century.

VĀKYAPADĪYA OF BHARTRHARI

Bhartṛhari lived before Dignāga (who quotes him), and presumably before the composition of Śabara's *Commentary of Vedic Interpretation* (*Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*) (with which he is not acquainted even though he discusses issues of Vedic interpretation).⁴² “Śimhasūrigaṇa, a sixth-century Jain writer, tells us that Bhartṛhari studied under a grammarian named Vasurāta, whom he identifies as a brother-in-law of a pupil of another famous Buddhist, Vasubandhu.”⁴³ A date in or around the middle of the fifth century CE seems therefore likely.

VĀKYĀRTHAMĀTRIKĀ OF ŚĀLIKANĀTHA

Śālikanātha Miśra must have lived between 800 and 950 CE.⁴⁴

VEDĀNTAPARIBHĀṢĀ OF DHARMARĀJA ADHVARIN

“Dharmarāja, the author of the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, was a native of Kandramanikkam village, Tanjavur District, in South India. He appears to have lived and written in the seventeenth century.”⁴⁵

VIBHĀṢĀPRABHĀVṚTTI

According to the editor of this text, P. S. Jaini, the *Vibhāṣāprabhāvṛtti* and the text on which it comments, the *Abhidharmadīpa*, have a single author he tentatively identifies with Vimalamitra, a pupil of Samghabhadra. This author lived after Vasubandhu (see under *Abhidharmakośa*), perhaps between 450 and 550 CE.

VIŠEṢĀVAŚYAKABHĀṢYA OF JINABHADRA

The volume on Jaina philosophy of the *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* situates Jinabhadra around 600 CE.⁴⁶

VYOMAVATĪ OF VYOMAŚIVA

This author belongs to the tenth century CE.

YOGAŚĀSTRA

The *Yogaśāstra* consists of two parts: the *Yogaśūtra* and the *Yogabhāṣya*. They have been handed down together, and the colophons ascribe the two combined to someone called Patañjali. The notion that the *Yogaśūtra* was composed by Patañjali and the *Yogabhāṣya* by Vyāsa, common in modern scholarship, is based on a demonstrably late tradition (Maas 2006: xii f.). The philosophy presented in the *Yogaśāstra*, also according to its colophons, is the Sāṃkhya philosophy. A

Sāṃkhya thinker called Patañjali is known from the *Yuktidīpikā*, but unfortunately the specific views here attributed to him do not correspond to those of the *Yogaśāstra*. Another Sāṃkhya thinker, still according to the *Yuktidīpikā*, is Vindhavāsin, and his views correspond in detail with those of the *Yogaśāstra* (Bronkhorst 1984). Vindhavāsin, according to Paramārtha's *Life of Vasubandhu*, lived "more than 1100 years after the death of the Buddha." Since Paramārtha himself claimed to have lived 1265 years after the nirvana of the Buddha and this must have been between 546 and 569 CE, 1100 years after the death of the Buddha becomes roughly 400 CE (Bronkhorst 1985).

YUKTIDĪPIKĀ

The name of the author of this commentary on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* is not known. It is more recent than Bhartṛhari, more recent also than Dignāga and Praśasta, but not necessarily more recent than the grammatical *Kāśikā*.⁴⁷

Tentative and Approximate Chronological Table of Authors and Works

-400		<i>Aitareya Brāhmaṇa</i>	
	Pāṇini	<i>Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa</i>	
-300		<i>Aitareya Āraṇyaka</i>	
	Yāska		
-200			
-150	Patañjali	<i>Milindapañha</i>	
-100			
-50		<i>Aṣṭasāhasrikā</i>	
0			
+50			
+100			
+150		<i>Mahāvibhāṣā</i>	<i>Nyāyasūtra</i>
+200		<i>Nāgārjuna</i>	
+250			
+300		Manu	
+350			
+400	<i>Yogaśāstra</i>	Vasubandhu	Īśvarakṛṣṇa
+450	Bhartṛhari	Vātsyāyana	
+500	Śabara	Dignāga	Vibhāṣāprabhāvṛtti
+550	Āgamaśāstra	Bhavya	Uddyotakara
+600	Jinabhadra	Praśasta	Siddhasena
+650	Maṇḍana	Śaṅkara	Kumārilā
+700	Yuktidīpikā	Bhāskara	
+750	Jayarāśi		

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF AUTHORS AND WORKS

+800	Vīrasena			
+850				
+900	Śālikanātha	Jayanta	Vācaspati	Mukula
+950	Siddharsi			
+1000	Śrīdhara	Abhinavagupta		
+1050	Ratnakīrti			
+1100				
+1150				
+1200	<i>Mohavicchedanī</i>	Rāmānuja		
+1250				
+1300				
+1350	Gaṅgeśa			
+1400				
+1450				
+1500				
+1550				
+1600	Bhaṭṭoji	Āpadeva		
+1650	Dharmarāja	Kauṇḍa		
+1700				

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Technical Terms and Their Equivalents in English

<i>abhidhā</i>	expression
<i>abhidhābhāvanā</i>	verbal productive energy
<i>abhidhāvṛtta</i>	expressive function
<i>abhidhāvyāpāra</i>	expressive function
<i>abhihitānvaya</i>	connection of what has been expressed
<i>adhyavasāna</i>	identification
<i>ajātivāda</i>	doctrine according to which there is no arising
<i>ākāṅksā</i>	expectancy
<i>ākṛti</i>	form
<i>ākṣepa</i>	implication
<i>anekāntavāda</i>	doctrine according to which reality is manifold
<i>anvaya</i>	agreement
<i>anvayavyatireka</i>	agreement and difference
<i>anvitābhidhāna</i>	expression of connected meanings
<i>apoddhāra</i>	extraction
<i>apoha</i>	exclusion
<i>apohavāda</i>	doctrine of exclusion
<i>āpta</i>	reliable (person)
<i>āpta-upadeśa</i>	reliable teaching
<i>apūrva</i>	unseen effect
<i>āropa</i>	superimposition
<i>artha</i>	meaning/thing/object
<i>arthabhāvanā</i>	objective productive energy
<i>arthāpatti</i>	implication
<i>arthātmabhāvanā</i>	objective productive energy
<i>arthavāda</i>	laudatory statement
<i>ārthī bhāvanā</i>	objective productive energy
<i>asamvijñānapada</i>	that are not directly expressed by the words
<i>asatkāryavāda</i>	doctrine of the nonexistent effect

TECHNICAL TERMS AND THEIR EQUIVALENTS IN ENGLISH

<i>āsatti</i>	proximity
<i>astitva</i>	being
<i>atiśayokti</i>	hyperbole
<i>avadhāraṇa</i>	determination
<i>avāntaravākyā</i>	constituent sentence
<i>āvāpa</i>	grasping an expression as a whole
<i>avasāya</i>	ascertainment
<i>avidyā</i>	nescience
<i>avinābhāva</i>	nonoccurrence in isolation
<i>bhāṣya</i>	commentary
<i>bhāvanā</i>	productive energy
<i>dhvani</i>	suggestion/noise
<i>dravya</i>	substance/individual thing
<i>gaurava</i>	making more assumptions than necessary
<i>guṇa</i>	quality
<i>guṇaśabda</i>	words that relate to qualities
<i>itaretarayogadvandva</i>	copulative compound in which the constituent items have a mutual relationship with each other
<i>jāti</i>	universal
<i>jātiśabda</i>	words that relate to universals
<i>kalpanā</i>	conceptual construct
<i>kāraka</i>	actant
<i>karman</i>	motion/grammatical object
<i>krama-pāṭha</i>	ordered text
<i>kriyāśabda</i>	words that relate to actions
<i>kṛti</i>	resolution, doing
<i>lakṣaṇa</i>	indication
<i>lakṣaṇā</i>	secondary expression/secondary signification
<i>lakṣitalakṣaṇā</i>	indicated secondary expression
<i>lin̄ga</i>	inferential sign
<i>mahāvākyā</i>	longer sentence
<i>mantra</i>	sacred formula
<i>nāmakāya</i>	body of word
<i>naya</i>	standpoint
<i>nirukta</i>	etymology
<i>nirvikalpaka</i>	free from conceptual constructs
<i>niścaya</i>	secure knowledge
<i>niyojya</i>	qualified performer
<i>pada</i>	word
<i>padakāya</i>	body of sentence
<i>pada-pāṭha</i>	word text
<i>padārtha</i>	category
<i>pada-sphoṭa</i>	word sphoṭa
<i>pradhvamsa</i>	disappearance
<i>prāgabhāva</i>	anterior absence
<i>prajñāpāramitā</i>	Perfection of Wisdom

<i>prakāra</i>	subordinate qualification
<i>prakaraṇa</i>	chapter/topic
<i>pratītyasamutpāda</i>	dependent arising
<i>pratyoyin</i>	counterpart
<i>pravartanā</i>	exhortation
<i>pravṛttinimitta</i>	cause for the use of words
<i>puruṣārtha</i>	human purpose
<i>rūḍha</i>	conventional
<i>rūḍhi</i>	conventional meaning
<i>śabda</i>	sound, speech, word
<i>śabdabhāvanā</i>	verbal productive energy
<i>śābdabodha</i>	verbal cognition
<i>śābdī bhāvanā</i>	verbal productive energy
<i>śābdika</i>	follower of the word
<i>sāmānya</i>	universal
<i>sāmānyatodṛṣṭānumāna</i>	inference based on noncausal uniformity
<i>samavāya</i>	inherence
<i>saṃhitā</i>	junction (of words/speech sounds)
<i>saṃhitā-pāṭha</i>	joined text
<i>saṃnikṛṣṭa</i>	nearest
<i>saṃnidhi</i>	proximity
<i>saṃskāra</i>	mental trace
<i>sarvāstivāda</i>	doctrine according to which past and present exist
<i>satkāryavāda</i>	doctrine of the effect preexisting in the cause
<i>sattā</i>	existence
<i>savikalpaka</i>	with conceptual constructs
<i>smṛti</i>	tradition
<i>sthāna</i>	point of articulation
<i>śrutārthāpatti</i>	verbal implication
<i>śūnyavāda</i>	doctrine according to which all is empty
<i>svasiddhyartha</i>	meaning established by itself
<i>svataḥprāmāṇya</i>	self-sufficient validity of valid cognition
<i>tarka</i>	<i>reductio ad absurdum</i>
<i>taṭastha</i>	totally distinct
<i>tātparya</i>	intention
<i>tātparyajñāna</i>	knowledge of the intention of the speaker
<i>udvāpa</i>	extraction
<i>upacāramiśra</i>	mixed with metaphorical use
<i>upādāna</i>	appropriation
<i>upādhi</i>	condition
<i>upamāna</i>	object of comparison
<i>upameya</i>	subject of comparison
<i>upaniṣad</i>	secret/secret teaching
<i>utpreksā</i>	metaphorical attribution
<i>vācya</i>	expressed meaning
<i>varṇa</i>	speech sound/morpheme

TECHNICAL TERMS AND THEIR EQUIVALENTS IN ENGLISH

<i>vikalpa</i>	conceptual construct
<i>viprakṛṣṭa</i>	remote
<i>viśeṣa</i>	particularity
<i>viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva</i>	relation of qualification and qualificand
<i>vṛtti</i>	signifying function
<i>vṛddhavyavahāra</i>	usage of elders
<i>vyabhicāra</i>	deviation
<i>vyākaraṇa</i>	grammar
<i>vyakti</i>	individual
<i>vyājanakāya</i>	body of sound
<i>vyāpāra</i>	operation
<i>vyāpti</i>	invariable concomitance
<i>vyavasāya</i>	recuperation
<i>vyavasāyarūpa</i>	recuperative
<i>vyutpatti</i>	learning
<i>yadṛcchāśabda</i>	arbitrary words
<i>yaugika</i>	derivative
<i>yogyatā/yogyatva</i>	suitability
<i>yūpa</i>	sacrificial post

Abbreviations

Abhidh-d	<i>Abhidharmadīpa</i> with <i>Vibhāṣāprabhāvṛtti</i> , ed. P. S. Jaini, Patna 1959 (TSWS 4)
BCE	before the Common Era
CE	Common Era
HILA	History of Indian Literature, ed. J. Gonda, Wiesbaden 1973ff.
Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, Nyāyamañjarī	<i>Nyāyamañjarī</i> of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa
P.	Pāṇinian sūtra
TaitS	<i>Taittirīya Saṃhitā</i>
TSWS	Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series, Patna
Jinabhadra, Viśeṣāvaśyakabhāṣya	<i>Viśeṣāvaśyakabhāṣya</i> of Jinabhadra
Vkp	Bhartṛhari, <i>Vākyapadiya</i> , ed. W. Rau, Wiesbaden 1977
vt.	<i>Vārttika</i>

Notes

PART II

1. THE BRAHAMANICAL BACKGROUND

1. The force of this argument is that, if the *mantras* concerned had meaning, no *brāhmaṇa* would be required to enjoin those activities.
2. I accept the transposition in the text proposed by Mehendale (1965: 11 ff.), who follows suggestions by Roth, Sarup, and Rajavade.
3. Pāṇini's *Grammar* (P. 2.2.33) prescribes that in compounds like *indra* + *agni*, meaning "Indra and Agni," a word beginning with a vowel and ending in short *a* (here *indra*) should be placed first: *indrāgni*.
4. This sentence is not clear, as it contains two words—"Pūrṇikā" and "threshing" (*avahanti*)—that are otherwise unknown.
5. The words "Naicāśākha" and "Pramaganda" occur in the sequel of the *mantra*, not here cited.
6. Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, *Siddhānta-kaumudi*, rules 2151–2168.
7. The interpretation follows Mehendale 1978 and Bronkhorst 1984a.
8. "Uncut One" (*nirbhija*), "Pierced One" (*pratṛṇja*), and "One in Between" (*ubhayamantareṇa*) are technical terms; it becomes clear from what follows that they refer, respectively, to the *samhitā-pāṭha*, the *pada-pāṭha*, and the *krama-pāṭha* of the *R̥gveda*.
9. The commentator Jayaratha explains that the five vowels explained are *a*, *i*, *ī*, *u* and *ū*, this because long ā (*ānanda*, bliss) is not different from *a* (*anuttara*, the highest consciousness). The "mutual mixture" of vowels is the process of *sandhi*, which gives rise to new sounds: *a/ā + i/ī > e*, *a/ā + u/ū > o*, *i + a > ya*, *u + a > va*.
10. The shape of the letter *e* is triangular.

2. BUDDHIST THOUGHT: SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

1. *Milindapañha*, pp. 25–28.
2. Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, pp. 333–334.
3. Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, pp. 334–335.
4. *Aśṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, p. 1 l. 4–p. 3. l. 15.
5. I correct the text following Schmithausen 1977: 59.
6. *Aśṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, p. 4 l. 13–24.
7. Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, p. 80–81.
8. *Yogaśāstra* on sūtra 3.17, pp. 137–142.
9. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadīya* 1.44, 46–52, 54, 56, 73–74, 76, 83, 103–104, 106.
10. The Vaiśeṣika philosophy accepts “variegated” (*citra*) as a single color, while recognizing that different colors can be discerned in it.
11. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadīya* 2.7–10, 13, 28–29, 89.
12. Ether is held to be single and partless in many Indian schools of thought.
13. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, 3–18, 20–24.
14. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 1.3.28, pp. 253–260.
15. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Sphoṭasiddhi*, pp. 9, 12, 16, 38, 85, 92.
16. It is a fundamental conviction of Nyāya and other schools of Indian philosophy that several cognitions cannot occur simultaneously.
17. Because the defender of the *sphoṭa* too believes that there is something different from the speech sounds that is expressive.
18. This is Kumārila Bhaṭṭa’s *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, v. 69.
19. These are three forms of inference. For a detailed discussion, see Oberhammer et al. 1991: 43–60 (s.v. *anumānam*); 88–92 (*arthāpattiḥ*); 1996: 157–159 (*pariśeṣah*).
20. I skip the problematic phrase *idaṁ tv anyathāsiddham*.
21. In an inference one can conclude that there is fire from the presence of smoke.
22. A similar, though not identical, passage occurs in Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 1.1.5 (Frauwallner 1968: 38 l. 3–10).
23. The commentator Cakradhara mentions the following: a universal, certain qualities, certain activities, colors, the *sphoṭa*, etc.
24. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, v. 91.
25. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sutra 1.1.5 (Frauwallner 1968: 40 l. 11–12).
26. Reading *sphuṭatarapratītyai* for *sphuṭatarapratītyaiva*.
27. The god Vishnu was a “man-lion” in his fourth incarnation. Philosophers point out that he was neither man nor lion, but something different from both.
28. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadīya*, 3.1.
29. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadīya*, 1.132.
30. Graheli’s edition reads *pūrvikhara*, but *pūr-* is not present in all mss. and makes the passage hard to understand.
31. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadīya*, 1.165.
32. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadīya*, 1.166.
33. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadīya*, 1.167.
34. I do not fully understand the sentence *avidyāvastheyam vartate tatreyaṁ vyavahāravartanī*.
35. I am not quite sure how to translate (*pari-*)*pathana*: recitation?
36. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 1.1.5 (Frauwallner 1968: 38 l. 13).

3. THE GRAMMARIAN PATANJALI

37. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sutra 1.1.5 (Frauwallner 1968: 40 l. 11–12). See above.
38. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, 94.
39. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, 10.
40. The “hare’s horn” is a regular example of something that does not exist.
41. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sutra 1.1.5 (Frauwallner 1968: 40 l. 11–12). See above.
42. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, 69; quoted and translated above, § 8.1.6.
43. Quoted and translated above, § 8.1.6.
44. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Śabdāṇyatā*, 285–286.
45. Yāśka, *Nirukta*, 1.1. Presumably the idea is that the singular “verb” is here used to refer to words that consist of several speech sounds.
46. Smoke is a cause for knowing fire.
47. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, 9.
48. Vātsyāyana, *Nyāyabhāṣya* introducing sūtra 2.2.40, p. 638.
49. I am not sure what the phrase *teṣām ativibhaktarūpagrahaṇāt* means.
50. The reading *vakārānusandhānam* is mysterious, and may conceivably refer to the word *gauḥ*, “cow,” in one of its declined forms, such as, for example, *gavā* (instrumental singular). My translation may therefore not be strictly correct, but it does, I think, convey the general idea.
51. The reading *varṇā sphoṭāḥ* cannot be correct, so I translate *varṇāḥ sphoṭāḥ*.
52. This may refer to examples like *kālenadantināgāḥ*, discussed earlier.
53. This is an argument also used by modern linguists against behavioristic theories of language acquisition.
54. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Sphoṭavāda*, 10.
55. As explained above, this expression can be understood in two ways: “With a black (*kālena*) elephant (*dantinā*) you went (*agāḥ*)” or “At the time (*kāle*) roar (*nadanti*) the elephants or snakes (*nāgāḥ*). ”
56. The expression *sarāmaḥ* can be a verb (“we run”), a combination of a pronoun and a proper noun (“he is Rama”), or an adjective (“with a beautiful woman”).
57. An apposite observation in the context of the present-day discussion around placebo effects.
58. The Sanskrit measure *prastha* does not exactly correspond to a kilogram, but this is irrelevant here.
59. The section has recently been edited critically (Graheli 2015), and the translation refers to the paragraphs as numbered in that edition.
60. *Mahāvibhāṣā* p. 394b l. 19–p. 394c l. 5. Translation based on La Vallée Poussin 1937: 15–16.
61. This is prescribed in Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, 3.4.21.
62. Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, p. 138.

3. THE GRAMMARIAN PATANJALI

1. This verse, and especially the part “whose mind reaches the objects of the senses,” is obscure. The commentator Kaiyatā proposes an alternative reading, and some forced interpretations.
 2. On this translation, see Bronkhorst 2016: 316.
 3. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 355 l. 23–p. 356 l. 13.
 4. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 1 l. 6–12.

5. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 181 l. 19–24, on P. 1.1.70 vt. 5.
6. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 18 l. 14–15.
7. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 6 l. 12–27; p. 7 l. 26–p. 8 l. 1.
8. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 75 l. 8–14, on P. 1.1.20 vt. 5.
9. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 8 l. 23–p. 10 l. 3.
10. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 1.3.10, pp. 149–154.
11. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 8 l. 1–22 & p. 10 l. 4–p. 11 l. 14.
12. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 2 l. 3–28.
13. Prakrit is the name collectively given to languages other than Sanskrit. The position here taken is that Prakrit (*prākṛta*) rather than Sanskrit is the original language, because Prakrit literally means “situated in the origin” (*prākṛtam = prākṛtau bhavam*, by Pāṇini, *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 5.3.53).
14. Bhartṛhari, *Vākyapadiya*, 1.175–183 with *Vṛtti* (ed. Iyer vv. 139–147, pp. 228–235).
15. Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 7 l. 8–25.
16. It is not clear in this example whether “flour” refers to “three kilograms” or vice versa. Similar doubts attach to case (6). Both these cases refer to peculiar usages of Sanskrit expressions.
17. Vātsyāyana, *Nyāyabhāṣya* on sūtras 2.2.58–66, pp. 658–671.
18. The inference implicitly referred to is: “x is impermanent, because it has been made.”
19. Since the universal “existence” (*sattā*) resides in an individual thing (*dravya*), we would then be able to say “existence is the individual thing” (*sattā dravyam*) rather than “existence belongs to the individual thing” (*sattā dravyasya*).
20. The commentary explains: the particular is subordinate to the universal.
21. The commentator Pārthaśārathi Miśra points out that even a combination of two atoms requires a universal, viz., the number two.
22. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Apohavāda* vv. 1–10, 35–41, 51–55, 71–74, 76–81, 83–85, 139–143.
23. I read *prasajyarūpābhāvagrahanam* for *prasajyarūpābhāvāgraḥanam*.
24. Ratnakīrti, *Apohasiddhi*, p. 58–60.
25. Patanjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 30 l. 1–18; p. 30 l. 24–p. 31 l. 4 & p. 31 l. 11–p. 32 l. 11, on *Śivasūtra* 5 vt. 9–12, 14–15.
26. Patanjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 220 l. 14–24, on P. 1.2.45 vt. 11.

4. THE SPECIAL PLACE OF SANSKRIT AND THE VEDA

1. Uddyotakara, *Nyāyavārttika* introducing sūtra 3.1.1 (pp. 699–702).
2. Vātsyāyana, *Nyāyabhāṣya* on sūtras 2.1.49–51, pp. 534–535.
3. Vātsyāyana, *Nyāyabhāṣya* on sūtra 2.1.52, p. 536.
4. Uddyotakara, *Nyāyavārttika* on sūtra 1.1.7 (p. 174).
5. Bhartrhari, *Vākyapadiya*, 2.119.
6. Bronkhorst 1987a: 28 l. 7–10.
7. Ed. Lindtner 2001: 92.
8. Jayarāśi Bhaṭṭa, *Tattvopaplavasimha*, p. 57.
9. Implication (*arthāpatti*) is a means to know what is implicit in a statement. E.g., “when there is no cause, the effect does not arise” implies that the effect *does* arise when the cause

is there. On the relationship among *arthāpatti*, *ākṣepa* (both translated “implication”) and secondary signification (*lakṣaṇā*), see Raja 1994.

10. Jayarāśi Bhaṭṭa, *Tattvopaplavasimha*, pp. 211–212.
11. Śabara holds the view that in the Veda only injunctions have to be taken literally; see below.
12. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 6.1.1, p. 177 l. 9–21.
13. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 9.1.8, p. 74 l. 16–p. 75 l. 3.
14. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 9.1.9, p. 76 l. 11–18, p. 79 l. 16–p. 80 l. 12.
15. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 2.1.5, p. 358 l. 16–p. 373 l. 1 & p. 377 l. 1–7.
16. The Aindrī is a sacred formula that contains the word “Indra,” and refers therefore to Indra through “word meaning.”
17. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 3.3.14, pp. 219–222, 248, 252–256.
18. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtras 1.3.8–9, pp. 139–142.
19. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* introducing sūtra 1.1.4, p. 58 l. 6–p. 61 l. 4.
20. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 1.1.4, p. 63 l. 4–p. 65 l. 2.
21. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 2.1.6, p. 360 l. 6–8.
22. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 4.3.14, p. 884 l. 5–p. 885 l. 5.
23. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 1.3.33, p. 269 l. 12–p. 272 l. 2.
24. Śaṅkara, *Taittirīyopaniṣadbhāṣya*, pp. 352–353.
25. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 1.1.1, p. 29 l. 1–p. 33 l. 1.
26. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 1.1.1, p. 36 l. 2–p. 37 l. 2.
27. Śaṅkara, *Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣya*, p. 425.
28. Bhāskara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, p. 13 l. 14–16.
29. Rāmānuja, *Śrībhāṣya*, p. 306.
30. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 1 l. 7–11.
31. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 71 l. 1–2.
32. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 157 l. 14–15.
33. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 26 l. 16–20.
34. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 157 l. 19–21.
35. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 23 l. 18–19.
36. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 157 l. 10–13.
37. Maṇḍana Miśra, *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 18 l. 1–17.
38. A *mātrā* is the time required to pronounce a short vowel.
39. Recall that for Bhartrhari, a material effect—such as a pot—does not really have parts, so it is not really related to its material causes.
40. I read *dehasambhogahetavaḥ* for *dehāḥ sambhogahetavaḥ*.
41. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Tantravārttika* on sūtra 3.1.13, p. 69 l. 8–p. 70 l. 18.
42. Dharmarāja Adhvarin, *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, pp. 85, 87–88.
43. Praśasta, *Padārthadharmasaṅgraha*, p. 48 § 256–257.
44. Śrīdhara, *Nyāyakandalī*, pp. 502–504.
45. This is Dignāga, *Pramāṇasamuuccaya*, 2.5.
46. The following three verses are cited from Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Vākyādhikarāṇa* vv. 244–246.
47. Sound is thought of as a quality, and therefore a product, of ether.
48. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, *Nyāyamañjarī* I, pp. 225–226.
49. Buddhaghosa, *Sammohavinodanī*, p. 387 l. 29–p. 388 l. 7.
50. Kassapathera, *Mohavicchedanī*, p. 186 l. 14 f.

5. SELF-CONTRADICTORY SENTENCES

1. *Yuktidīpikā*, p. 112 l. 8–11 & p. 122 l. 3–17.
2. Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* on sūtra 2.1.18, p. 389.
3. *Yogaśāstra* on sūtra 4.12, pp. 187–188.
4. Gauḍapāda, *Āgamaśāstra*, 4.3–5.
5. Gauḍapāda, *Āgamaśāstra*, 3.48cd.
6. Gauḍapāda, *Āgamaśāstra*, 3.27–28.
7. *Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣya* on Gauḍapāda, *Āgamaśāstra*, 4.22 (p. 477).
8. Vātsyāyana, *Nyāyabhāṣya* on sūtras 4.1.14–18, pp. 935–940.
9. Vātsyāyana, *Nyāyabhāṣya* on sūtras 4.1.47–49, pp. 996–1000.
10. See section 3.6.
11. *Vibhāṣāprabhāvṛtti ad kārikā* 310, p. 274 l. 5–7.
12. Vyomaśiva, *Vyomavatī*, vol. 2, p. 129 l. 19–27.
13. Mallavādin, *Dvādaśāraṇayacakra*, vol. 2, p. 455 l. 1–2.
14. Mallavādin, *Dvādaśāraṇayacakra*, vol. 2, p. 456 l. 1–2.
15. Jinabhadra, *Viśeṣāvāsyakabhāṣya*, vol. II, p. 378 (under verse 2149).
16. Jinabhadra, *Viśeṣāvāsyakabhāṣya*, vol. II, p. 385 (on verses 2183–84).
17. Siddharṣi, *Nyāyāvatāra-vivṛti* thereon, pp. 420–421 (§ 27.0–1), ed. Balcerowicz.
18. Points (i)–(v) follow the traditional pattern of a logical inference.
19. Note that the word for “meaning,” *artha*, can also mean “thing,” and that the argument leans to some extent on this ambiguity.
20. Siddharṣi, *Nyāyāvatāra-vivṛti*, pp. 449–450 (§ 29.18), ed. Balcerowicz.
21. Siddharṣi, *Nyāyāvatāra-vivṛti*, pp. 470–471 (§ 29.27), ed. Balcerowicz.
22. Virasena, *Dhavalā* on sūtra 1.1.173, p. 411 l. 1–6.
23. Virasena, *Dhavalā* on sūtra 1.1.50, p. 285 l. 7–p. 287 l. 4.
24. Since no edition of the text is accessible to me, I translate some passages from it that are cited in the *Jainendra Siddhānta Kośa* (II, pp. 430–431).

6. DO WORDS AFFECT COGNITION?

1. *Yogaśāstra* on sūtra 1.9, pp. 16–17.
2. Verses 125–128 in Rau’s edition belong to the *Vṛtti* rather than to the *Vākyapadiya*.
3. Dignāga, *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, chapter 1, p. 1 l. 15–p. 2 l. 14.
4. I do not translate the obscure expression *lakṣaṇākhyeyam*.
5. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Pratyakṣapariccheda*, vv. 111–113, 118–133.
6. Vācaspati Miśra, *Nyāyavārttikatātparyāti*, pp. 108–110.
7. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, *Nyāyamañjari* I, pp. 122–125.

7. WORDS AND SENTENCES

1. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on 2.1.46, pp. 431–436.
2. Clearly Śabara looks upon expressions like “a white cow” or “a black horse” as sentences.
3. On implication (*arthāpatti*) as means of knowledge, see the note to section 4.1, above.

4. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtras 1.1.24–26 (pp. 110–120).
5. This I learn from Elisa Freschi.
6. Pandurangi (2004: viii) says the following about the *Prakaraṇapañcikā*: “A sentence by sentence translation of such highly technical works is not possible.” Readers may keep this in mind if they find the translation offered below taxing.
7. These seven words are (in Sanskrit): boy, bring, the cow, tie-up, youth, child, lad.
8. This is chapter 2 of the *Prakaraṇapañcikā*; the present passage belongs to chapter 11 (see above).
9. I am not sure of this translation of Skt. *yadi param*.
10. Śālikanātha, *Vākyārthamāṭyka*, pp. 376–381.
11. Śālikanātha, *Vākyārthamāṭyka*, pp. 381–383.
12. Śālikanātha, *Vākyārthamāṭyka*, pp. 383–384.
13. I do not understand the meaning of this sentence.
14. This is a slightly modified version of *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 6.1.6.7. In (almost) its present form it occurs in Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 3.1.12.
15. This is a reduced version of a statement that occurs Āpastamba *Śrautasūtra* 1.7.1–2.
16. The translation of this difficult and confusing sentence remains tentative.
17. *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* 2.2.2 has *sauryam ghrte carum nirvape[c] chuklānām vrīhīnām brahmavarcasakāmaḥ*, which corresponds, apart from the word order, to the line quoted by Śālikanātha. Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* frequently cites the shorter line *sauryam carum nirvaped brahmavarcasakāmaḥ* (e.g., on sūtra 7.4.1, see below), and only this much is here translated.
18. The reference is to Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* following sūtra 7.4.1, where the line *sauryam carum nirvaped brahmavarcasakāmaḥ* is discussed (see the preceding note).
19. This is a quotation from Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 1.2.7, which deals with the sentence “a red cloth comes into being” (*raktah paṭa utpadyate*).
20. Reading *sannidhiyogyatve eva nāśriyete* for *sannidhiyogyatva eva nāśriyate*.
21. In the sentence *ayam eti putro rājñāḥ puruṣo ‘yam apanīyatām* the words *rājñāḥ puruṣo* might mistakenly be read together: “king’s man.”
22. This definition shows that “proximity” (*saṃnidhi*) for Śālikanātha also covers “mental proximity,” “mental association.”
23. Reading *arthakalpanayaivārthāpattiḥ* for *arthakalpanāyaivārthāpattiḥ*.
24. Reading *savikalpakajñāneṣu* for *savikalpalakapakajñāneṣu*.
25. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 10.1.1–2.
26. Reading *viśeṣapratipattāv* for *viśeṣapratittāv*.
27. Reading *anupādheyaviśeṣaṇāviśiṣṭasyaiva* for *anupādheyaviśeṣaṇāviśiṣṭasyaiva*.
28. Reading *anyonyānvayabodhane* for *anyonyānyānvayabodhane*.
29. This is *Comments in Verse* (*Ślokavārttika*), ch. 7 (*Vākyādhikaraṇa*), v. 358.
30. On this quotation, which occurs in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* (II p. 58 l. 11–12, on P. 3.1.67 vt. 2), see my forthcoming article, “Kumārila and the Grammarians,” in *History of Science in South Asia*.
31. On account of P. 2.3.46: *prātipadikārthaliṅgaparimāṇavacanamātre prathamā* “nominative case endings are used when only the meaning of the nominal stem, gender, measure, or number is to be expressed.”
32. The nominative case ending of “door” has no expectancy for anything else, so there is no need to supply words so as to arrive at “the door must be shut” or “the door must be opened.”

33. Śālikanātha, *Vākyārthamātrkā*, pp. 385–395.
34. Vācaspati Miśra, *Tattvabindu*, p. 61.
35. Here the word “Ganges” is metaphorically used to mean “the shore of the Ganges.”
36. I am not sure whether I have correctly understood this sentence.
37. Because verbal communication would not bring light and guidance.
38. Accepting the reading *arthāpatti**parikṣayān nānvayaṁ*. For “implication” (*arthāpatti*), see the note to section 4.1, above.
39. These are verses 342–343 of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Vākyādhikarana*.
40. Vācaspati Miśra, *Tattvabindu*, p. 85–88.
41. *varṇa-sphoṭa*. Bhaṭṭoji here irregularly uses the word *varṇa*, “speech sound, phoneme” to refer to morphemes.
42. Since the *sphoṭa* is here a semantic category, not an ontological one, I translate expressions like *pada-sphoṭa-pakṣa* as “the position according to which the word is expressive.”
43. These single expressions are yet the results of combining two words: *dadhīdam* < *dadhī* *idam*, *hareva* < *hare* *ava*, *viṣṇova* < *viṣṇo* *ava*.
44. This is a reference to the Vaiśeṣika doctrine that holds that composite entities have a separate existence from their parts: there is one single cloth and also a multitude of threads that constitute it.
45. Bhartṛhari, *Vākyapadiya* 1.74. I have translated *varṇa* as “morpheme,” because this is how Bhaṭṭoji here uses the word. For Bhartṛhari, it meant just “speech sound, phoneme.”
46. Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, *Śabdakaustubha*, pp. 7–9.
47. Unseen effect (*apūrvā*) is the postulated entity that acts as intermediary between present sacrificial activity and its future result; see § 4.1, above.
48. This is what the printed text says: *svargakāmasya... bhāvyatā*. The following meaning would make more sense: “heaven must be brought into being by something” (*svargasya... bhāvyatā*). Must the printed text be emended?
49. Śabara, *Mimāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 2.1.1 (pp. 336–341).
50. The expressions *kartari śap* and *karmani yak* in Śabara’s text refer, respectively, to P. 3.1.68 (*kartari śap*) and P. 3.1.67 (*sārvadhātuke yak*).
51. The reference is to P. 3.4.69.
52. The reference is to P. 1.4.21–22.
53. Śabara, *Mimāṃsābhāṣya* on sūtra 3.4.13, pp. 337–367.
54. Recall that *pika* is one of the words “that no Noble Ones use in any sense but which despised foreigners use in some sense” according to Śabara; see above.
55. The paraphrase *yāgaṁ bhāvayet* for *yajeta*, i.e., *bhāvayet* for the optative ending of *yajeta*, should be repeatable, because *bhāvayet* itself has an optative ending.
56. The Sanskrit text misses several words. Diaconescu (2012: 271, with note 489) provides the (correct) reading of an earlier edition: *dravyam eva ca viśiṣṭāśaktuyupetam pracalitātmatavvam viprakīrṇasvabhāvam pūrvāparībhūtam prathamāvasthātaḥ pracyutam parām avasthām aprāptam vyāpāraśabdavācyam bhavati*.
57. Since the Sanskrit verb *kṛ/karoti* has both the meanings “to do” and “to make” and is transitive, I use each time the meaning that best fits the context.
58. This expression is used in the sense “clean your feet,” as is clear from Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya*.
59. “He makes” (*karoti*) does not express the same as “he causes to be” (*bhāvayati*), and “he cooks” (*pacati*) does not express the same as “he causes to soften” (*vikledayati*).

60. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Tantravārttika* on sūtra 2.1.1 (pp. 340–344).
61. This verse is quoted from Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, *Vākyādhikaraṇa*, 366.
62. *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 2.1.1.1.
63. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Tantravārttika* on 2.1.1; see above.
64. Āpadeva, *Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa*, pp. 193–194, 268–272.
65. These sentences attempt to keep a distinction between verbal cognition (*śabdabodha*) and cognition with conceptual constructs (*savikalpa*).
66. In Pāṇini's grammar, if the verbal ending does not express the agent, the word referring to the agent takes an instrumental ending (by P. 2.3.1). This normally allows for passive constructions like *caitreṇa pacyate* “[the food] is being cooked by Caitra.” The objector fears that, if the verbal ending does not express the agent even in an active sentence, the result would be a nonsensical **caitreṇa pacati* “cooks by Caitra.”
67. *āvāpa-udvāpa*. I do not find appropriate translations for these terms in the Sanskrit-English dictionaries accessible to me. The *Nyāyakośa* proposes for *āvāpa* the explanation *saṃgraha*, “grasping together,” and for *udvāpa*: *śrūyamāṇapadaparityāgah paścāt*, “subsequently ignoring a word that is being heard” (Jhalakikar 1978: 131, 157). Together these terms suggest the combination of grasping an expression as a whole and subsequently extracting relevant parts from it. See also the next note.
68. This is the example given by the commentator Dinakara.
69. In the original Sanskrit there is no *for*, but rather a dative case ending.
70. Wada 1995.
71. Note that Gaṅgeśa treats “resolution” (*kṛti*), “effort” (*yatna*) and “agency, agentness” (*kartr̥tvā*) as synonyms; see Wada 2014: 66.
72. This is a quotation from Udayana's *Nyāyakusumāñjali*.
73. That is to say, the meaning of the word *kar-tr̥* cannot be derived from the meanings of its constituent elements *kṛ* and *tr̥*.
74. Recall that resolution (*kṛti*) and effort (*yatna*) are synonyms in this text.
75. In other words, there is no need for the verbal ending to denote something different from effort, when secondary usage accounts for its use in some special cases.
76. In other words, just as one can reach, through implication, the meaning “effort” on the basis of “owner of effort,” one might reach “owner of effort” on the basis of “effort.”
77. I read *upasandhānena* for *upasandānena*.
78. The sentence “If it were otherwise, the expression ‘he cooks’ would not apply” shows the unacceptable consequence of believing that the verbal ending does not express effort.
79. Resolutions succeed each other and do not exist simultaneously.
80. The copula *is* remains frequently unexpressed in Sanskrit.
81. Reading *sāmānādhikaranyānurodhāt* for *samānādhikaranyānurodhāt* (following Wada)
82. This sentence has no verb in Sanskrit.
83. Reading *sāmānādhikaranyāt* for *samānādhikaranyāt*.
84. “Noun” (*nāman*) covers nouns, pronouns, and proper nouns, and might properly, though clumsily, be translated “nominal word.”
85. Reading *evābhīhitānabhīhita°* for *evāhitānabhīhita°*, following Wada.
86. In Sanskrit every active sentence—including “Caitra sleeps”—can be expressed in the passive voice: “is slept by Caitra.”

87. Gaṅgeśa now presents his own view.

88. Or objectness (*karmatva*), here defined as “the fact of possessing a result in the form of an action that inheres in something else.”

89. Gaṅgeśa, *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, pp. 819–846. In preparing this passage, I have made use of Toshihiro Wada’s translation (2007; 2012; 2013; 2014a). I thank Professor Wada for sending me one of these publications, to which I had no access.

90. An example of an *itaretarayogadvandva* compound is *plakṣanyagrodhau*, “a *plakṣa* [tree] and a *nyagrodha* [tree].” Here the element “and” (which necessarily figures in the English translation) has nothing corresponding to it in the compound.

91. These examples are agreed by all discussants to consist of words that refer to the same thing: *somena yajeta* (“he should perform a Soma sacrifice”) is analyzed as “he should produce what he desires by means of the sacrifice that is nondifferent from that which possesses Soma”; *stokam pacati* (“he cooks a little”) as “productive energy favorable to the softening [of rice], which is not different from a little”; *rājapuruṣah* (“king’s man”) as “a man who is dependent upon the king.”

92. Kauṇḍa Bhaṭṭa is mistaken: the sentence “See, the deer is running” (*paśya mrgo dhāvati*) does not occur in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya*; it does occur in the *Kāśikā* (on P. 8.1.39) and in Bhartrhari’s *Vākyapadīya* (3.8.52).

93. Kauṇḍa Bhaṭṭa, *Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇasāra* on verse 2, pp. 1–5.

8. OTHER DENOTATIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE WORD

1. In point of fact, this line does not occur in Bhartrhari’s *Vākyapadīya*. See Rau 1981: 95.

2. Mukula Bhaṭṭa, *Abhidhāvṛttimāṭrikā*, pp. 203–205.

3. This must be an allusion to Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sutra 1.4.23 (p. 326), without being a literal quotation.

4. Śabara, *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* on sutra 2.2.6 (p. 37).

5. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Tantravārttika* on sūtra 3.1.12 (p. 46).

6. Mukula Bhaṭṭa, *Abhidhāvṛttamāṭrikā*, pp. 205–209.

7. Reading *vākyārtha paramārthataḥ* instead of *vākyārthaparamārthataḥ*.

8. The reading *vākyārthottarakālaṁ* is confusing and cannot be correct. I translate instead *vākyāpekṣayā*, as in § X.3.

9. This example occurs in a portion of the text that we skipped. The word “Rama” here refers not so much to the historical person but rather to some of his characteristics, such as loss of kingdom, life in the forest, the abduction of Sita, the death of his father, etc.

10. The “real” Shatrughna is the brother of Rama, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

11. Here and in what follows, the term “connoisseurs” (*sahṛdaya*) appears to refer to Ānandavardhana, the author of the *Light on Suggestion* (*Dhvanyāloka*).

12. Presumably this refers to an “etymological” interpretation of the word.

13. It is not clear what this expression (*tiraskṛtvivakṣyām*) is meant to convey here.

14. Mukula Bhaṭṭa, *Abhidhāvṛttimāṭrikā*, pp. 212–218.

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1. Mahanty 2008: vi–vii; McCrea 2008: 261 f.
2. King 1995; Clark 2006: 109 n. 14.
3. Bronkhorst 1991: 97–99.
4. Kajiyama 1966: 7–10 [197–200].
5. “It . . . cannot be entirely excluded that . . . rūpya . . . referred to Persian or Greek coins. . . In view of Pāṇini’s linguistic and cultural orientation towards the north of the Indian subcontinent . . . it would nevertheless be more likely that reference is made to an Indian coin” (Houben & Rath 2012: 22 n. 42).
6. Falk & Karashima 2012; Bronkhorst 2013.
7. Clark 2006: 111 n. 28.
8. See Clark 2006: 108–114; Slaje 2006: 116 n. 1.
9. Van Buitenen 1961.
10. Introduction to the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* (see edition under *Dhavalā*), p. ii.
11. Mahendra Kumar Jain, as quoted in Malvania & Soni 2007: 201.
12. Lindtner 2001: xi–xii.
13. Bronkhorst 2012.
14. Mayeda (1967) and Hacker (1968: 124 [218] f.; 1972: 116 [253] n. 2) are examples of authors who are in favor of this identification; Wood (1990: 97 f.) is against it.
15. See Bronkhorst 2016: § III.3.2.
16. See Slaje 2006: 131–132 n. 61, for opinions.
17. Bronkhorst 1989.
18. Coward & Raja 1990: 121.
19. Edgerton 1929: 17–18.
20. Hinüber 1996: 164–165.
21. Ruegg 1981: 4 ff. n. 11; 1982: 505–530.
22. Walser 2002; 2005: 86.
23. Franco & Preisendanz 1995.
24. Potter 1977: 485.
25. Potter 1977: 341–342; Dezső 2005: 15–26.
26. Bronkhorst 1985a.
27. E.g., Oetke 1991; Meuthrath 1996; 1999.
28. Potter 1977: 303.
29. Krasser 2012: 587.
30. Larson & Bhattacharya 1987: 301.
31. Potter 2006: 33.
32. Balcerowicz 2001: xxxviii.
33. Bronkhorst 1993.
34. Potter 2003: 312.
35. Larson & Bhattacharya 1987: 135 f.
36. Hinüber 1996: 151.
37. Clark 2006: 110–111 n. 26; Taber 2005: 163 n. 2.
38. Carman 1974: 24 ff.
39. Potter & Bhattacharyya 1992: 85–86.
40. Franco 1987: 3.

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41. Franco 1987: 9 ff.
42. Bronkhorst 1989.
43. Coward & Raja 1990: 121.
44. Verpoorten 1987: 38; Potter 2014: 304.
45. See the introduction to the edition, p. xiii ff.
46. Malvania & Soni 2007: 224.
47. Bronkhorst 2011: 54–55 n. 125.

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