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## POINTS OF AGREEMENT AND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE VĀKYAPADĪYA AND THE MAHĀBHĀSYA-DĪPIKĀ IN THE MATTER OF SPOTĀ

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Now that the publication of the Critical Edition of the *Mahābhāsyā-Dīpikā* (henceforth *Dīp.*) undertaken by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, has been complete (i.e. as far as the text is available in the unique Berlin Ms), it is possible to study this oldest commentary on the *Mbh.* in a variety of ways. One of the lines of study could be a sort of comparative study of the *Vākyapadīya* (henceforth *Vākyap.*) and the *Dīp.*, both assigned to Bhartrhari since Vardhamāna, the author of the *Ganaratnamahodadhi*, who says: *bhartrharir vākyapadīyaprakīrnakayoh kartā mahābhāsyatṛipādyā vyākhyātā ca.*

I am interested in the Sphoṭa theory propounded by Bhartrhari since a long time. I have much tried to understand this theory, but I am not still sure that I have correctly understood it. Therefore, with the appearance of this new edition of the *Dīp.* I renewed my interest in this topic and tried to ascertain what Bhartrhari has to say about the Sphoṭa in the *Dīp.* In the present paper I have collected his occasional statements on Sphoṭa in the *Dīp.* (in all three, in the Āhnikas I and II), and have compared them with his statements on the same in the *Vākyap.* Frankly, this is not an exhaustive or thorough study: I have only jotted down points of agreement and difference regarding Sphoṭa in the two works and have offered a few passing observations.

### I. The fundamental thesis:

- (1) The sounds, the revealers of the Sphoṭa, and
- (2) The Sphoṭa, the conveyor of meaning.

In the view of both, the *Vākyap.* and the *Dīp.*, the physical sounds uttered by the speaker do not convey any meaning directly. Their only purpose is to manifest the Sphoṭa which, the latter, conveys the meaning.<sup>1</sup>

1 Direct statements for the meaninglessness of phonemes are very rare in these two texts, such as *ke cin manyante yo vā 'yamuccāryate kramavān avarah / kaś cid anyah akramah śabdātmā buddhistho vigāhate / tasmād arthapratipattih / kutah? yathaiवर्थान्तरानिबन्धनो नार्थान्तराम प्रत्याययति एवम् स्वरूपनिबन्धनो नोत्साहते प्रत्याययितुम्* (*Dīp.* I.3.13-15) / Elsewhere there is no dearth of such express statements. Kaiy. for

II. Some points of difference between the sounds and the Sphoṭa:  
 According to both the Vākyap. and the Dīp. -

- (1) The sounds are sequential (*kramajanman*), while the Sphoṭa is without any sequence (*akrama*).<sup>2</sup>
- (2) The sounds are transitory (*anitya*), while the Sphoṭa is permanent (*nitya*).
- (3) The sounds are transitory because they are produced (*karanebhyo vivṛttena dhvaninā* - Vākyap. I. 47), while the Sphoṭa is permanent (*nitya*) because it is only to be manifested, and not to be produced (*vyajyamāne tathā vākye...* Vākyap. I.90).<sup>3</sup>
- (4) Therefore the sounds are called *vyañjaka* 'manifestor' while the Sphoṭa is called *vyañgya* 'manifested' (*pratyekam vyañjakā bhinnā varnavākyapadeśu ye* I.88).<sup>4</sup>

instance says: *varnānām pratyekam vācakatve dvītyādivarnoccāraṇānarthakyaprasarīgāt, ānarthakte tu pratyekam utpattipakse yaugapadyenotpattyabhāvāt, abhivyaktipakse tu kramenaivābhivyaktyā samudāyābhāvāt, ekasmṛtyupārūdhānām vācakatve sarah rasah ityādāv arthapratipattyaviśesaprasarīgāt tadvyatirkītah sphoṭo nādābhivyāngyo vācako vistarena vākyapadiye vyavasthāpitah* [on the Mbh. 1.1.10.11: *yenoccāritena sāsnālāngūlavisānīnām sampratyayo bhavati/*].

Although Kaiy. expressly mentions here the Vākyap. in connection with the meaninglessness of phonemes, I have not come across such an explicit statement in that text. Still there is no doubt whatsoever that such a statement is implied there, since otherwise it will take the bottom clean out of the argument in favour of the Sphoṭa theory. For the meaningfulness of the Sphoṭa, see *aparo'nthe prayujyate* Vākyap. I.44. *jāter arthasya pratipattih / etac ca arthasvarūpam / sphoṭo 'yam eva śabdātmā nityah /* Dīp. I.3.17,18 [ke cin manyante] *yo vāyam uccāryate, [sa] kramavān avarah / kaś cid anyah akramah śabdātmā buddhistho vigāhate / tasmād arthapratipattih /* (quoted above). Tatra *yadāyam paksah vrksādayah śabdāh kramajanmānah ayugapaikālāh vrksaśabdavākrter akramāyā abhivyaktihetavo bhavanti - tadā vrksaśabdavād arthapratipattih / sā ca nityā / - tatra caitad uktam "ubhayatah sphoṭamātram pratinirdiṣyate, raśruter laśrutih" iti.* Dīp. I.17.4ff.

- 2 *nādasya kramajanmatvāt* Vākyap. I.48; Dīp. I.17.4ff. *na pūrvo na paraś ca sah / akramah -* Vākyap. I.48.
- 3 Also: *anekavyaktyabhivyāngyā jātih sphoṭa iti smṛtā* Vākyap. I.93 *yasyāpi śabdavyaktih tasyāpi nityah śabdah / sa tu nādābhivyāngyah* Dīp. I.17.9 *kramajanmānah - vrksaśabdavākrter akramāyā abhivyaktihetavah* (Dīp. I.17.4, 5)
- 4 Also: *vyañjakadhvaniḥedānupātēna* Vṛtti on Vākyap. I.46; *nādah sphoṭam avadyotayati* Vṛtti on Vākyap. I.48; *dhvaniprakāśite śabde* Vākyap. I.83.

- III. Both the *Vākyap.* and the *Dīp.* mention different views regarding where exactly the *samskāra* (perfection) is effected by the sounds which helps the grasping of the word (*indriyasya*, *śabdasya*, *ubhayoh*).<sup>5</sup>
- IV. Both the *Vākyap.* and the *Dīp.* also state that the manifested word (Sphoṭa) only apparently seems to partake of the properties of the sounds which manifest it; the Sphoṭa, in reality, is above the distinctions made by the properties of the sounds.<sup>6</sup>

5 *indriyasyaiva samskārah śabdasyaivobhayasya vā /  
kriyate dhvanibhir vādās trayo 'bhivyaktivādinām //* Vākyap. I.78  
*indriyasyaiva samskārah samādhānāñjanāñdibhih /  
visayasya tu samskāras tadgandhapratipattaye//* I.79  
*caksusah prāpyakāritve tejasā tu dvayor api  
visayendriyayor istah samskārah sa kramo dhvaneh //* I.80  
*sa ca nādah śrotrasyāñnugrahe vartate / tadanugṛhitam śrotram śabdopalabdhau samartham  
bhavati / yathāksnor añjanam ity eke / apare śabdasyaiva / yathā proksanam prthivyā eva  
na ghrānasya / ubhayor ity apare /* Dīp. I.17.15-17.

6 *nādasya kramajanmatvān na pūrvo na paraś ca sah /  
akramah kramarūpena bhedavān iva jāyate //* Vākyap. I.48  
 The Vṛtti on this: *asau [sphotah] ekatvam anatikrāman samsargino nādasya bhedarūpam  
upasamgrhṇāti /* (sequentialness)  
*pratibimbam yathānyatra sthitam toyakriyāvasāt /  
tatpravṛttim ivānveti sa dharmah sphotanādayoh //* 49 (number)  
*sphotasyābhinnakālasya dhvanikālānupātinah /  
grahanopādhibhedena vṛttibhedam pracaksate //* 75 (speed of utterance)  
*svabhāvabhedān nityatve hrasvadīrghaplutādisu /  
prākṛtasya dhvaneh kālah śabdasyety upacaryate //* 76 (length of vowels)  
 On this, Vṛśabha: *dhvanisphotayor vibhāgāparicchedād dhvanikrtam bhedam sphotे  
paśyanti.*  
*śabdasyordhvam abhivyakter vṛttibhedam tu vaikrtāḥ /  
dhvanayah samupohante sphotātmā tair na bhidyate //* 77  
*prakāśakānām bhedāṁś ca prakāśyo 'rtho 'nuvartate  
tailodakādibhede tat pratyaksam pratibimbake //* 99  
 The Vṛtti: *drstam abhivyāngyānām abhivyāñjakabhedānuvidhānam / tad yathā / nimnesv  
ādarśatalādisu mukhapratibimbam unnatam drśyate, unnatesu nimnam, khadge dīrgham,  
priyañgutaille śyāmam cīnaśastrayavanakācādisv ādarśapramārabhedānupātī parimāno  
bhedavikalpah / samkhyābhedo' pi ādarśabhede jalatarāngabhede ca drśyate sūryādi-  
pratibimbānām /*  
 Dīp.: *yathādarśamandalādisu pratibimbāni dīrghāni parimandalāni mahānti anyāni ca  
drśyante, evam śabdā api nādabhedena bhidyante / yathā salile tarāngabhedenā ekaś  
candro 'neka upalabhyate / pradīpabhedāc ca chāyā bhidyate / ādarśabhedāc ca pratibim-  
babhedah / tasmān niyatanādābhivyāngyā nādavṛddhihrāsānuvidhāyino vyaktiśabdā api  
nityāḥ* (I.17.11-14)

V. Both the *Vākyap.* and the *Dīp.* mention the different views held by different linguists as regards what exactly constitutes the Sphoṭa. They are:

- (1) The inner or mental word, the inner Word-principle which constitutes the reality of every being (*buddhisthah śabdah*,<sup>7</sup> *antahśabdatattvam*)<sup>8</sup>
- (2) The universal or the class notion (*jātiḥ*, *ākṛtiḥ*)<sup>9</sup>
- (3) A single word entity (*vyakti*)<sup>10</sup>
- (4) The sound (i.e. the first sound) produced by the activity of the speech organs (*yah samyogavibhāgābhyaṁ karanair upajanyate / sa sphotaḥ* *Vākyap.* I. 102)<sup>11</sup>

The first three make the sphoṭa *nitya* while according to the last view it is *anitya*, since it is produced (and not just revealed) (*anityapakṣe sthānakaranaprāptivibhāgahetukah prathamābhinivrutto yah śabdah sa sphotaḥ ity ucyate*, the *Vṛtti* on *Vākyap.* I.102).<sup>12</sup>

7 *aranistham yathā jyotiḥ prakāśāntararakāranam /*  
*tadvac chabdo 'pi buddhisthah śrūṇām kāranam prthak //* *Vākyap.* I.46  
*kaś cid anyah akramah śabdātmā buddhistho vigāhate / tasmād arthapratipattiḥ /*  
*(Dīp. I.3.13-14)*

8 *Yad antahśabdatattvam tu nādair ekam prakāśitam /*  
*tad āhur apare śabdām ... //* *Vākyap.* II.30  
 See also 12 below.

9 *anekavyaktyabhivyāṅgā jātiḥ sphota iti smṛtā /*  
*kaiś cid vyaktaya evāsyā dhvanitvena prakalpitāḥ //* *Vākyap.* I.93  
 On this the *Vṛtti*: *ākṛtinityatvāc chabdanityatvam ācaksāñāḥ ... sphotaśabdavācyām ...*  
*śabdākṛtim ācaksate /*

For the *Dīp.* (I.3.13-14 and 17-18) see Note 1 above.

10 *avikārasya śabdasya nimittair vikṛto dhvanīḥ /*  
*upalabdhanu nimittatvam upayāti prakāśavai //* *Vākyap.* I.94  
 On this the *Vṛtti*: *anye tv ākṛtivyaktivyavahāraprakriyāvaidharmyād ekam eva śabdatattvam*  
*nityam ... abhivyajyata ity āhuh /*  
*Dīp. (I.17.9ff.): yasyāpi śabdavyaktih tasyāpi nityah śabdah / sa tu nādābhivyāṅgah / ...*  
*niyatānādābhivyāṅgā nādavrddhihrāsānuvidhāyino vyaktiśabdā api nityāḥ /*

11 *atha vā kāryavad buddhim kṛtvā idam ucyate [viz. "ubhayataḥ ... bhavati" Mbh.] / tatra*  
*kāryapakṣe sphota eva samyogāt, vibhāgāt, samyogavibhāgābhyaṁ vā nispadyate /*  
*yat tv anurānanam tac chabdata eva / tena ya evāsau sphotaḥya nispādakah karaṇasya vyāpāras*  
*tāvata evāśrayanam /* *Dīp.* II.25.19-21.

11a *ya ete śabdāḥ kim te śabdākṛtayah āhosvid śabdavyaktayah iti ... niyatānādābhivyāṅgāḥ*  
*vyaktiśabdā api nityāḥ /* *Dīp.* I.17.3-14

12 Cf. also *athāyam āntaro jñātā sūksmavāgātmanā sthitah /*  
*vyaktaye svasya rūpasya śabdatvena vivartate //* [I.113]

Similarly,

*api prayoktūr ātmānam śabdām antar vyavasthitam /*  
*prāhur mahāntam vṛṣabham yena sāyujyam isyate //* I.122

## VI. Observations:

- (1) It must have been seen that there is agreement on most of the points concerning the Sphoṭa in both the texts.
- (2) Still there are some differences on a few minor points and in the matter of preferences. Thus, (i) the *Dīp.* speaks (foot note (11a)) of the *śabdavyaktayah* (in plural). The *Vākyap.* (I.94) is not very clear on this point. The *Vṛtti* on it speaks of *ekam eva śabdatattvam* (a single Word-principle) manifested by sounds while on *Vākyap.* I.23 it speaks of *nityāṁ sabda-vyaktim*. *Vṛśabha* commenting on the stanza I. 94 introduces it thus: *apare tv ākāśagata ekah sphota-varna ity āhuh - avikā-rasya iti.*<sup>13</sup> Though the author of the *Vṛtti* and *Vṛśabha* speak differently about this *Vyaktisphoṭa* as being either the (inner) *śabdatattva* or external Sphoṭa-phoneme, both of them take it as a single entity which appears in the forms of myriads of individual utterances. The *Dīp.* however seems to hold that for every word there is a different *vyakti-sphoṭa* (*ya ete śabdāḥ kim te śabdākṛtaya āhosvit śabdavyaktaya iti* I. 17.3).
- (ii) There is a difference of preferences as regards the *buddhistha śabda* vs. *ākṛti/vyakti*. The way the topic of Sphoṭa is introduced in the *Vākyap.* beginning with the *buddhistha śabda* (I.46) makes it almost certain that that is the author's own view. The *ākṛti* and the *vyakti* views, on the other hand, are mentioned (I.93,94) casually at the end and dismissed summarily. Exactly opposite is the treatment in the *Dīp.* where the *buddhistha śabda* is casually mentioned only once (I.3.14) and, there too, this view is indifferently ascribed to *kecit!* – while the *ākṛti* and the *vyakti* views are explained in detail (I.3.15 ff; I.17.2 ff; II. 25.21 ff).
- (3) How is this difference in the preference to be explained? One explanation could be that in the *Dīp.* Bhartrhari was commenting on the *Mbh.* Now, the *Mbh.* has in all probability used the word Sphoṭa only in a phonetic context. Further, only two views, *ākṛti* and *vyakti*, are mentioned in this context in the *Mbh.* (Pratyāhārāhnikā, *Mbh.* on Vārtikas

13 *Nāgeśa - sarvadhvani-bhir eka-sya sphota-syaiva tattadruṇena abhivyanjanāt /* (the *Pradīpa*: *ekaivākāravyaktih* on the *Vār.* *ekatvād akārasya siddham* / [pratyāhārāhnikā])

5 - 15. Vol. I. p. 16-18). That may be the reason why Bhartrhari gives prominence to these views in the *Dīp*. In the *Vākyap.* on the other hand he is free to give full scope to his own views. That is why he gives prominence to the *buddhistha śabda* there. It is also probable that, if he wrote *Dīp*. first and the *Vākyap.* afterwards, his own views may have been crystalised in course of time and so he stated the *buddhistha śabda* view prominently in the *Vākyap.* He may have mentioned the *ākṛti* and the *vyakti* views briefly, because he did not want to do any injustice to them by dropping them altogether.

Friends, as I said in the beginning, I do not claim to have made any substantial contribution to the subject under study. Still I may say this much:

- (1) The statements in the two works regarding different aspects of Sphota are near-identical (and may indicate a common authorship, if, indeed, a proof of the identity of the authors of the two works was needed), and
- (2) the difference between the preferences as regards the exact nature of Sphota (*ākṛti* / *vyakti* vs. *buddhistha śabda*) may indicate that initially Bhartrhari was under the influence of Patañjali but in the *Vākyap.*, free from that influence, he has given his own view prominently.