**Zeitschrift:** Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft =

Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie

**Herausgeber:** Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft

**Band:** 47 (1993)

**Heft:** 1: Proceedings of the first international conference on Bhartrhari:

University of Poona, January 6 - 8, 1992

**Artikel:** Points of agreement and difference between the Vkyapadya and the

Mahbhsya-Dpik in the matter of spota

Autor: Palsule, G.B.

**DOI:** https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-147011

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

# G.B. Palsule, Pune

Now that the publication of the Critical Edition of the Mahābhāsya-Dīpikā (henceforth  $D\bar{\imath}p$ .) 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  $V\bar{\imath}akyapad\bar{\imath}ya$  (henceforth  $V\bar{\imath}akyap$ .) and the  $D\bar{\imath}p$ , both assigned to Bhartrhari since Vardhamāna, the author of the Ganaratnamahodadhi, who says: bhartrharir  $v\bar{\imath}akyapad\bar{\imath}yaprak\bar{\imath}rnakayoh$  kartā mahābhāsyatripādyā  $vy\bar{\imath}akhyata$  ca.

I am interested in the Sphota 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  $D\bar{\imath}p$ . I renewed my interest in this topic and tried to ascertain what Bhartrhari has to say about the Sphota in the  $D\bar{\imath}p$ . In the present paper I have collected his occasional statements on Sphota in the  $D\bar{\imath}p$ . (in all three, in the  $\bar{A}$ hnikas I and II), and have compared them with his statements on the same in the  $V\bar{\imath}kyap$ . Frankly, this is not an exhaustive or thorough study: I have only jotted down points of agreement and difference regarding Sphota in the two works and have offered a few passing observations.

# I. The fundamental thesis:

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

In the view of both, the  $V\bar{a}kyap$ , and the  $D\bar{\imath}p$ , the physical sounds uttered by the speaker do not convey any meaning directly. Their only purpose is to manifest the Sphota which, the latter, conveys the meaning.<sup>1</sup>

Direct statements for the meaninglessness of phonemes are very rare in these two texts, such as ke cin manyante yo vā 'yam uccāryate kramavān avarah / kaś cid anyah akramah śabdātmā buddhistho vigāhate / tasmād arthapratipattih / kutah? yathaivārthāntaranibandhano nārthāntaram pratyāyayati evam svarūpanibandhano notsahate pratyāyayitum (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 Sphota:According to both the Vākyap. and the Dīp. -
  - (1) The sounds are sequential (*kramajanman*), while the Sphota is without any sequence (*akrama*).<sup>2</sup>
  - (2) The sounds are transitory (anitya), while the Sphota is permanent (nitya).
  - (3) The sounds are transitory because they are produced (karanebhyo vivrttena dhvaninā Vākyap. I. 47), while the Sphota 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 Sphota is called *vyañgya* 'manifested' (*pratyekam vyañjakā bhinnā varnavākyapadesu ye* I.88).<sup>4</sup>

instance says: vamānām pratyekam vācakatve dvitīyādivamoccāranānanthakyaprasangāt, ānanthakye tu pratyekam utpattipakse yaugapadyenotpattyabhāvāt, abhivyaktipakse tu kramenaivābhivyaktyā samudāyābhāvāt, ekasmntyupārūdhānām vācakatve sarah rasah ityādāv anthapratipattyaviśesaprasangāt tadvyatiriktah sphoto nādābhivyangyo vācako vistarena vākyapadīye vyavasthāpitah [on the Mbh. 1.1.10.11: yenoccāritena sāsnālāngūlavisāninām 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 Sphota theory. For the meaningfulness of the Sphota, see aparo'rthe prayujyate Vākyap. I.44. jāter arthasya pratipattih / etac ca arthasvarūpam /sphoto '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 ayugapatkālāh vrksaśabdatvākter akramāyā abhivyaktihetavo bhavanti - tadā vrksaśabdatvād arthapratipattih / sā ca nityā / - tatra caitad uktam "ubhayatah sphotamātram pratinirdiśyate, 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: anekavyaktyabhivyangyā jātih sphota iti smrtā Vākyap. I.93 yasyāpi śabdavyaktih tasyāpi nityah śabdah / sa tu nādābhivyangyah Dīp. I.17.9 kramajanmānah vrksaśabdatvākrter akramāyā abhivyaktihetavah (Dīp. I.17.4, 5)
- 4 Also: vyanjakadhvanibhedānupātena Vrtti on Vākyap. I.46; nādah sphotam avadyotayati Vrtti on Vākyap. I.48; dhvaniprakāšite šabde 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  $V\bar{a}kyap$ , and the  $D\bar{\imath}p$ , also state that the manifested word (Sphota) only apparently seems to partake of the properties of the sounds which manifest it; the Sphota, in reality, is above the distinctions made by the properties of the sounds.<sup>6</sup>

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5
       indriyasyaiva samskārah śabdasyaivobhayasya vā /
       kriyate dhvanibhir vādās trayo 'bhivyaktivādinām // Vākyap. I.78
       indriyasyaiva samskārah samādhānāñjanādibhih /
       visayasya tu samskāras tadgandhapratipattaye// 1.79
       caksusah prāpyakāritve tejasā tu dvayor api
       visayendriyayor istah samskārah sa kramo dhvaneh // I.80
    sa ca nādah śrotrasyānugrahe vartate / tadanugrhītam śrotram śabdopalabdhau samartham
    bhavati / yathāksnor añjanam ity eke / apare śabdasyaiva / yathā proksanam prhivyā eva
    na ghrānasya / ubhayor ity apare / Dīp. I.17.15-17.
    nādasya kramajanmatvān na pūrvo na paraś ca sah /
    akramah kramarūpena bhedavān iva jāyate // Vākyap. I.48
    The Vrtti on this: asau [sphotah] ekatvam anatikrāman samsargino nādasya bhedarūpam
    upasamgrhnāti / (sequentialness)
    pratibimbam yathānyatra sthitam toyakriyāvaśāt /
    tatpravrttim ivānveti sa dharmah sphotanādayoh // 49 (number)
    sphotasyābhinnakālasya dhvanikālānupātinah /
    grahanopādhibhedena vritibhedam pracaksate // 75 (speed of utterance)
    svabhāvabhedān nityatve hrasvadīrghaplutādisu /
    prākrtasya dhvaneh kālah śabdasyety upacaryate // 76 (length of vowels)
    On this, Vrsabha: dhvanisphotayor vibhāgāparicchedād dhvanikrtam bhedam sphote
    paśyanti.
    śabdasyordhvam abhivyakter vrttibhedam tu vaikrtāh /
    dhvanayah samupohante sphotātmā tair na bhidyate // 77
    prakāśakānām bhedāmś ca prakāśyo 'nho 'nuvartate
    tailodakādibhede tat pratyaksam pratibimbake // 99
    The Vrtti: drstam abhivyangyānām abhivyanjakabhedānuvidhānam / tad yathā / nimnesv
    ādarśatalādisu mukhapratibimbam unnatam drśyate, unnatesu nimnam, khadge dīrgham,
    priyangutaile syāmam cīnasastrayavanakācādisv ādarsapramānabhedānupātī parimāno
    bhedavikalpah / samkhyābhedo' pi ādarśabhede jalatarangabhede ca drśyate sūryādi-
    pratibimbānām /
    Dīp.: yathādarsamandalādisu pratibimbāni dīrghāni parimandalāni mahānti anyāni ca
    drśyante, evam śabdā api nādabhedena bhidyante / yathā salile tarangabhedena ekaś
    candro 'neka upalabhyate / pradīpabhedāc ca chāyā bhidyate / ādarśabhedāc ca pratibim-
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babhedah / tasmān niyatanādābhivyangyā nādavrddhihrāsānuvidhāyino vyaktiśabdā api

nityāh (I.17.11-14)

- V. Both the  $V\bar{a}kyap$ , and the  $D\bar{\imath}p$ , mention the different views held by different linguists as regards what exactly constitutes the Sphota. They are:
  - (1) The inner or mental word, the inner Word-principle which constitutes the reality of every being (buddhisthaḥ śabdaḥ, antahśabdatattvam)<sup>8</sup>
  - (2) The universal or the class notion (jātih, ākrtih)<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 samyogavibhāgābhyām karanair upajanyate / sa sphotah Vākyap. I. 102)<sup>11</sup>

The first three make the sphota nitya while according to the last view it is anitya, since it is produced (and not just revealed) (anityapakse sthānakaranaprāptivibhāgahetukah prathamābhinirvrtto yah śabdah sa sphotah ity ucyate, the Vrtti on Vākyap. I.102).<sup>12</sup>

- 7 aranistham yathā jyotih prakāśāntarakāranam/
  tadvac chabdo 'pi buddhisthah śrutīnām kāranam prthak // Vākyap. I.46
  kaś cid anyah akramah śabdātmā buddhistho vigāhate / tasmād arthapratipattih /
  (Dīp. I.3.13-14)
- 8 Yad antahsabdatattvam tu nādair ekam prakāsitam / tad āhur apare sabdam ...// Vākyap. II.30 See also 12 below.
- 9 anekavyaktyabhivyangyā jātih sphota iti smrtā / kaiś cid vyaktaya evāsya dhvanitvena prakalpitāh // Vākyap. I.93
  On this the Vrtti: ākrtinityatvāc chabdanityatvam ācakṣānāh ... sphotaśabdavācyām ... śabdākrtim ācakṣate /
  For the Dīp. (I.3.13-14 and 17-18) see Note 1 above.
- 10 avikārasya śabdasya nimittair vikrto dhvanih /
  upalabdhau nimittatvam upayāti prakāśavat // Vākyap. I.94
  On this the Vrtti: anye tv ākrtivyaktivyavahāraprakriyāvaidharmyād ekam eva śabdatattvam nityam ... abhivyajyata ity āhuh /
  Dīp. (I.17.9ff.): yasyāpi śabdavyaktih tasyāpi nityah śabdah / sa tu nādābhivyangyah / ... niyatanādābhivyangyā nādavrddhihrāsānuvidhāyino vyaktisabdā api nityāh /
- 11 atha vā kāryavad buddhim krtvā idam ucyate [viz. "ubhayatah ... bhavati" Mbh.] / tatra kāryapakse sphota eva samyogāt, vibhāgāt, samyogavibhāgābhyām vā nispadyate / yat tv anurananam tac chabdata eva / tena ya evāsau sphotasya nispādakah karanasya vyāpāras tāvata evāśrayanam / Dīp. II.25.19-21.
- 11a ya ete sabdāh kim te sabdākrtayah āhosvid sabdavyaktayah iti ... niyatanādābhivyangyāh vyaktisabdā api nityāh / Dīp. I.17.3-14
- 12 Cf. also athāyam āntaro jñātā sūksmavāgātmanā sthitah / vyaktaye svasya rūpasya śabdatvena vivartate // [I.113] Similarly,

api prayoktur ātmānam sabdam antar vyavasthitam / prāhur mahāntam vrsabham yena sāyujyam isyate // I.122

## VI. Observations:

- (1) It must have been seen that there is agreement on most of the points concerning the Sphota in both the texts.
- (2) Still there are some differences on a few minor points and in the matter of preferences. Thus, (i) the Dip. speaks (foot note (11a)) of the śabdavyaktayah (in plural). The Vākyap. (I.94) is not very clear on this point. The Vrtti on it speaks of ekam eva śabdatattvam (a single Word-principle) manifested by sounds while on Vākyap. I.23 it speaks of nityām sabdavyaktim. Vrsabha commenting on the stanza I. 94 introduces it thus: apare tv ākāśagata ekah sphotavarna ity āhuh - avikārasya iti.13 Though the author of the Vrtti and Vrsabha speak differently about this Vyaktisphota as being either the (inner) śabdatattva or external Sphota-phoneme, both of them take it as a single entity which appears in the forms of myriads of individual utterances. The  $D\bar{\imath}p$  however seems to hold that for every word there is a different vyakti-sphota (ya ete śabdāh kim te śabdākrtaya āhosvit śabdavyaktaya iti I. 17.3)
  - (ii) There is a difference of preferences as regards the buddhistha śabda vs.  $\bar{a}krti/vyakti$ . The way the topic of Sphota is introduced in the  $V\bar{a}kyap$ . beginning with the buddhistha śabda (I.46) makes it almost certain that that is the author's own view. The  $\bar{a}krti$  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  $D\bar{\imath}p$ . where the buddhistha śabda is casually mentioned only once (I.3.14) and, there too, this view is indifferently ascribed to kecit! while the  $\bar{a}krti$  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  $D\bar{\imath}p$ . Bhartrhari was commenting on the Mbh. Now, the Mbh. has in all probability used the word Sphota only in a phonetic context. Further, only two views,  $\bar{a}krti$  and vyakti, are mentioned in this context in the Mbh. (Pratyāhārāhnika, Mbh. on Vārttikas

<sup>13</sup> Nāgeśa - sarvadhvanibhir ekasya sphotasyaiva tattadrūpena abhivyanjanāt / (the Pradīpa: ekaivākāravyaktih on the Vār. ekatvād akārasya siddham / [pratyāhārāhnika])

5 - 15. Vol. I. p. 16-18). That may be the reason why Bhartrhari gives prominence to these views in the  $D\bar{\imath}p$ . In the  $V\bar{a}kyap$ , 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  $D\bar{\imath}p$ , first and the  $V\bar{a}kyap$ , afterwards, his own views may have been crystalised in course of time and so he stated the buddhistha śabda view prominently in the  $V\bar{a}kyap$ . He may have mentioned the  $\bar{a}krti$  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 (ākrti / 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.