

The Epistemological Point of View of Bhartṛhari

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§1.1 There are several reasons why Bhartṛhari's Trikaṇḍī (respectively, 'B' and 'TK' in abbreviation) or *Vākyapadīya*¹ constitutes a very important watershed in the history of Indian philosophy. I have indicated them in some of my earlier papers (e.g., Aklujkar 1993:§§3.2-6) and stated them explicitly and somewhat extensively in the Introduction to my forthcoming publication *Excursions into Pre-Bhartṛhari Thought*. One of the reasons why the TK is a very significant landmark in the history of Indian philosophy—in fact, in the history of philosophy in general—is the epistemological viewpoint implicit in it. This viewpoint is, indeed, as I hope to demonstrate presently, quite unique.

§1.2 There are some relatively superficial and partial parallels to parts of B's viewpoint in the Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Mīmāṃsā traditions. For example, the accepted means of cognition² are *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna* and *śabda*,³ and, correspondingly, the implicit kinds of cognition are *pratyakṣa*, *anumiti* and *śabda*⁴ in the TK, as they are in the Yoga-sūtra and the Sāṃkhya-kārikā. The *buddhi*, roughly speaking, 'intellect-will' or 'mind,' is viewed as essentially consisting of linguistic units in both the TK and the Yoga-bhāṣya (YB in abbreviation).⁵ Thought or

epistemological concern in the form of *jñāna* is associated with (a) language or linguistic concern in the form of *śabda* and (b) reality or ontological concern in the form of *artha* in the *Śābara-bhāṣya* and the YB, as it is in the TK.⁶ However, such similarities are more a sign of the age to which B's work belongs and do not cover the core of his epistemological theory or his original contribution.

§1.3 Among the surviving texts on semantics in the tradition of Pāṇinian grammar, the TK is the earliest. It is also unique in that it has many statements of epistemological import, corresponding to which the later *artha-granthas* such as the *Vaiyākaraṇa-siddhānta-kārikā* by Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita, the *Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇas* by Kauṇḍa-bhaṭṭa, the *Vyākaraṇa-siddhānta-sudhā-nidhi* by Pārvaṭīya Viśveśvara-śūri, and the *Vaiyākaraṇa-siddhānta-mañjuśās* by Nāgeśa have very few. In fact, as far as epistemology goes, except for the theses of sentence primacy and *spṛṣṭa* in verbal communication, the traditions of Kashmir Śaivism and Poetics (*alankāra-śāstra*, *kāvya-śāstra*) may be said to have continued the line of B's epistemology more than the tradition of the Pāṇinīyas. It is not that the later Pāṇinīyas have rejected B's epistemology. They have simply not expressed much interest in restating, extending or modifying it. Being more interested in the grammatical or linguistic semantic (as distinct from the philosophical semantic) side of their topic, they have rarely gone beyond quoting relevant pronouncements of B.

§2.1 The TK, as would be clear to anyone who reads all of its three books, was not *primarily* composed as a work in what we would call philosophy. As Kārikās 1:24-26 state, it pertains to eight topics which are primarily topics we would include in the theory of language or theory of grammar.⁷ Both these theories could be called 'philosophy' in a secondary sense ('philosophy as identification of abstract underlying principles,' 'philosophy as a product of theorizing') in our time, but, as is implied by the overall context of this paper, such an extension of the term 'philosophy' is not what I have in mind. That the theories give the remaining philosophy proper a 'linguistic turn' and make B the earliest philosopher known to us who approaches problems of epistemology and ontology from a linguistic point of view is, from B's perspective, an incidental but, from our perspective a very significant achievement

(Aklujkar 1999, lecture 2). I have not read another work in Sanskrit philosophy, except the Yoga-sūtra, which achieves so much in so few words. For this reason, we should not expect to find in the TK statements that put epistemology or ontology at the forefront. These branches of philosophy, rather, appear as raising their heads within the frame of a linguistic-grammatical theory. Thus, most of the epistemological observations figure in as analogies or occur as asserted parallels, although, for the purpose of the present essay, I shall look upon them as if they are made with the intention of speaking specifically about epistemology.

§2.2 Even within the limits I have set for myself, some of you will immediately notice that my interpretation of B's philosophy differs significantly from that of Gaurinath Sastri, K.A. Subramania Iyer, Bishnupada Bhattacharya, Madeleine Biardeau and Raghunath Sharma—to name only some of the scholars who have published extensive expositions of B's thought utilizing the original Sanskrit texts. This has not been done just for the sake of carving a niche (or erecting a tomb) for myself. B is considerably earlier than Śāṅkara. Much misunderstanding of him has occurred at the hands of scholars who could not shake off, while thinking of B, what they read in or about Śāṅkara's works. Secondly, none of the scholars whom I have named above has put together or was in a position to put together, because of the earlier bad editing of B's text, all the pieces of evidence which should be taken into account to determine B's philosophy. I undertook this exercise in my unpublished 1970 Harvard University dissertation, *The Philosophy of Bhartṛhari's Trikaṇḍī*. There I have given all the evidence I could gather from his own words and from the words of his ancient commentators for every single view I have attributed to him. I have done my best to read B internally (that is, from within), comprehensively and consistently from a philosophical point of view only. I have also specified the few areas in which he and his ancient commentators may be suspected to differ.

As my objective here is the limited one of determining the general features of B's epistemological viewpoint and as my dissertation will probably be published in a revised form in the next few years, I have not given here the evidence that would support my determination of the general features through the supporting details. If the evidence I have

gathered in the dissertation for establishing the details is deemed satisfactory, it follows that the general features I see in B's epistemological approach must also be there.

The present paper should also be read as complementing the following papers of mine: 'Prāmāṇya in the philosophy of the Grammarians' (1988), 'The number of pramāṇas according to Bhartṛhari' (1989) and 'Bhartṛhari's concept of the Veda' (1991).

§3.1 The first and most important general feature of B's epistemological—indeed, his entire philosophical—approach which we should note is that the approach is linguistic. While it is fair to say that this sort of characterization of his approach is essentially to be found beginning with Hemanta Kumar Ganguli's 1963 book, *Philosophy of Logical Reconstruction*, neither Ganguli nor his successors in the field such as Bimal Krishna Matilal, as far as I can recall, have explained why this approach should be considered linguistic and in what sense it is linguistic or what its extent as a linguistic approach is. This is what I intend to accomplish in the following.

§3.2 As already intimated in §1.2, we find B speaking of three categories: *śabda* (or *vāc*), *artha*, and *jñāna*. The first stands for language, the second for things or entities, and the third for cognitions. In other words, B is concerned with (what we would call) a theory of language, with ontology, and with epistemology—with language, reality and thought (note 6). We then find B trying to establish some general theses about language with appropriate argumentation. Once they are established, he simply asserts parallel or logically related conclusions in the sphere of epistemology; he does not try to establish the epistemological theses in their own right. Similarly, as §§4.3-4 below will indicate, B merely works out the implications of his theses regarding language for the problems of ontology; he does not discuss ontological problems separately or as independent of considerations of language. One can, therefore, conclude with justification that, in his view, the key to typically philosophical problems, to topics of ontological and epistemological interest, is to be found in reaching certain definite conclusions about language.

§3.3 This evidence furnished by silence, however, is only one piece

among others. That B's approach to epistemology is essentially linguistic can be argued for also positively. Assigning centrality to language in our awareness of the world, acceptance of the thesis that our view of the world is through language—that we cannot conceive things independently of language, in pure abstraction, is an important feature of the linguistic approach. It is espoused in an absolutely unambiguous way in B's work. According to him, that which is never reflected in language, i.e., is never expressed by a linguistic expression, directly or indirectly, cannot be assumed to exist. An entity or a category of entities may possibly come into and remain in existence independently of language. But it cannot be cognized or determined as existent without language (Aklujkar 1970:§6.1).⁸ Moreover, B does not stop just with the common assumption of Sanskrit philosophers that forms of cognitions can be judged only from the linguistic forms used to express them. He goes a step further and explicitly states that no cognition either takes place or is noticed without the involvement of linguistic units (see §5.1 below for a possible qualification).⁹

§3.4 As the third piece of evidence, we should note what I have pointed out in my 1988 article on *prāmāṇya*, namely that the common Indian division of cognitions into *pratyakṣa* 'perception,' *anumiti* 'inferential cognition,' and *śabda* 'testimonial cognition' is viewed by B as secondary and non-essential; it is not the case that language is present only in *śabda* and not in the others. In accordance with this, B's notion of *śabda* as a *pramāṇa-āgama* is his preferred term—is multilevel and is, at its deepest or highest level, very similar to that of conceptual scheme developed in the writings of Quine.¹⁰

§4.1 Having thus made a case that philosopher B's approach is essentially linguistic, I will now give a few details about how it affects his epistemology. These details will, in turn, bear out the centrality language enjoys in his thinking and thus constitute a fourth piece of evidence in favour of the characterization offered in §3.1.

While developing a theory of cognition, one is required to postulate at least three entities:

(a) sentience, pure consciousness, or life-principle (*cit*, *citi*, *caitanya*),

(b) a cognizer, determinate consciousness or intellect (*buddhi*), serving as the agent of specific acts of cognizing, and

(c) a state, act, or event of cognizing, a particular cognition (*jñāna*).¹¹

As can be seen from the following table, in what B accepts as existing in the field of cognition, that is, in the ontology of his epistemology, so to speak, there is a correlation of these entities with the levels of language he accepts:

<i>vaikharī</i> 'language/1, speech'	
<i>madhyamā</i> 'language2'	= <i>jñāna</i> 'cognition'
<i>paśyantī</i> 'language3'	= <i>buddhi</i> 'mind, intellect'
<i>param paśyantyāḥ rūpam</i>	= <i>cit/citi/caitanya</i> 'sentience, consciousness'

sūkṣmā nityā atīndriyā vāc,
vācaḥ uttamam rūpam,
śabda-tattva-brahman,
 'language-principle, language/4'.

Not only is there a correlation, B identifies the three entities—*cit*, *buddhi*, and *jñāna*, respectively with language/4 (*parā paśyantī-rūpa*), language3 (*paśyantī*), and language2 (*madhyamā*). This is not explicitly stated in his extant works. But there are numerous indications in his remarks to the effect that the situation must be as I have outlined.¹² His ancient commentators too give or presuppose the equations I have given.

The reasoning behind the identifications probably was this: If we find no reason to hold that the intellectual¹³ counterparts of utterances, the totality of linguistic units, and the language-principle are different, respectively, from the cognitions, the intellect, and the principle which assumes the form of these two, then we must conclude that we have here not six entities, but only three. Otherwise, (a) there will be unnecessary postulates in the theory; the criterion of theoretical economy or simplicity (*lāghava*) will be sacrificed; and (b) we will also have subscribed to the naive realism that every name has a corresponding object—that six names must imply actual existence of six different entities.¹⁴

§4.2 B thus exhibits a distinctive linguistic approach to epistemology.

The approach may seem extreme. But it can also be viewed as showing the courage of following an insight to all its logical consequences. It is not an ideal language philosopher's approach. B was familiar, at least to a considerable extent, with an ideal language in the form of Pāṇini's metalanguage. But he viewed it too as inherently incapable of remaining unambiguous or free from philosophical problems. Nor is B's approach that of an ordinary language philosopher. He does deconstruct some ordinary Sanskrit expressions that had assumed philosophical significance such as *abhāva*, *samavāya* and *śakti*. But he does not accomplish this so much through an exploration of the usage of these words as through drawing attention to one or more general truths about language that he has established elsewhere. *In spirit*, therefore, his approach is closest to that of Quine and Chomsky—an approach depending primarily and directly upon determining the general nature of language, although its similarity with Quine's overall philosophical position is probably far greater than with Chomsky's.

§4.3 Now, to the second and last general feature of B's epistemology which I wish to point out. I think we are realizing increasingly that, although, as students of philosophy, we distinguish between ontology and epistemology, the two are not independent of each other in any philosopher's practice. A philosopher's ontological views are shaped by or revised in the light of his epistemological views, and *vice versa*. The truth of this observation is seen in an unparalleled way in B's philosophy at least as far as the Indian philosophical tradition goes.

We get one piece of evidence for the observation if we ask the question: What type of apparatus does B propose in order to explain the fact (or what is generally accepted as a fact) that we experience the world?

There is no discussion in the extant TK about the apparatus that must be presupposed in order to explain our knowledge or experience of the world. This apparatus, as mentioned above in §4.1, should be the *buddhi*. The *buddhi* or *buddhi-tattva* of B, as his commentators point out, is identical with *paśyantī*, the third level or aspect of language. It is not an evolute, either logical or chronological, from *prakṛti* as it is in the Sāṃkhya and Yoga systems.¹⁵ Nor is it distinguished from *manas*, *aḥamkāra*, etc. It is simply *citi* or *caitanya* in its aspect of holding the entire diversity of

linguistic units (phonemes, words and sentences, i.e., *varṇas*, *padas* and *vākyas*) of which a person is aware. There is no physical or material distinction between *citi* and *buddhi*. Just a functional one or one of the level of realization of truth.

This is the view of B's *buddhi* as a static entity—when *buddhi* is at rest. But there is also a dynamic aspect to *buddhi*. In that aspect, it is a continuum of cognitions reflecting specific linguistic units (Aklujkar 1970: §§3.4-5)—cognitions here being sentences or functional equivalents of sentences.¹⁶

Why, how and in exactly which sense B reduces awareness of the external world to linguistic units is part of his ontological exploration. The conclusions he reaches as a result of that exploration have a bearing on his epistemology. The *buddhis* consisting of linguistic units is a point, ^{among possibly others,} where his epistemology ties in with his ontology.

§4.4 To explain briefly, B's reduction seems to have its roots in his investigation of linguistic meaning (*artha*). Through scattered but multisided argumentation, that goes much beyond Frege and those who have developed Frege's insight, B establishes that word meanings are not external things or physical objects.¹⁷ He also points out that it would not do to think of word meanings as images of external things, as precepts. Nor would it be theoretically economical or justifiable to admit a secondary, linguistic, reality (*upacāra-sattā*)—something, I believe, corresponding to Putnam's internal realism. If not tied to the perceptible empirical reality, this reality would amount to an uncontrolled licence, a *carte blanche*, and lead to distinction without difference. Thus, ultimately the distinction between a meaning and its signifier must be only in the view we are accustomed to taking. We must be making an artificial distinction between the cognitions in which signifiers are apprehended and the cognitions in which meanings are reflected; *artha* must be a *vivarta* of *śabda* (Aklujkar 1970: §§5.15-17, 28).

§4.5 B seems to be saying that sense experience must precede conceptualization,¹⁸ although it may not be possible to prove the primacy of sense experience. There is no statement in his writings which would allow us to conclude that denial of the independent existence of physical objects out there in the world was his final philosophical position. At a

particular level in his thought, he unites the *generalized* existence of physical objects (*bhāva-sattā*, *mahā-sattā*) with the existence implicit in words or conceptualizations. But, except for a person in the state of spiritual liberation, physical objects are not said to cease to exist (Aklujkar 1970: §§6.6-8). The question of whether they are, *per se*, derivable, in the final analysis, from *śabda-tattva brahman*, the ultimate principle in B's philosophy, is left open.¹⁹

It suffices for B's purpose that (a) the *differentiation* of the physical world be viewed as coming from the *śabda-tattva brahman*, the language principle, and (b) the possibility of a person succeeding in wiping out the traces of the world be admitted.

B is aware of a stronger version according to which the physical objects themselves would be evolutes of the Ultimate, and the physical world would be a lower, dispensable reality—the Ultimate alone would be the final truth.²⁰ But he neither accepts that version as his only *philosophical* position nor does he deny the possibility of its being true.

Following his general tendency or strategy of going beyond specific conflicting positions to a non-conflicting common factor or meta-position—of achieving theoretical ascent wherever possible, B takes the minimum he needs to develop a coherent view of his own and declines to be further involved in possibilities that probably cannot, in his view, be proved or disproved logically—that become a matter of accepting this scripture or that scripture, with his personal preference going with the Veda as scripture.²¹

A philosopher wishing to determine whether the physical world consisting of distinct objects or our internal conceptual/linguistic world having a (generally corresponding) diversity should be accorded precedence may conclude that, from our perspective as subjects, the latter should be assigned a more fundamental status on the ground that if the latter did not exist the former would not exist *for us*. However, this does not amount to denying the existence of the former. In fact, it does not amount to anything more than holding that language is our window to the world (a thesis acceptable to B as pointed out earlier, but one which is really epistemological in nature, not ontological).

§4.6 In consonance with the preceding is B's concept of *avidyā*, the

tying point between epistemology and ontology for many schools of Indian philosophy. His *avidyā* does not consist in seeing *sva-bhāva* or essence where it does not exist (the Nāgārjunian version) or in believing in the reality of the perceptible world (the Viññāna-vādiya, Gauḍapāḍian or Śāṅkarite version). While it can possibly accommodate these understandings of *avidyā*, that is, while it does not necessarily conflict with them, its core consists in not being aware of the distortion that language introduces.

Śāṅkara's assertions (a) *avidyāvad-viṣayānyeva śāstrān*²² and (b) one does not acquire *vidyā*, one simply removes *avidyā*²³ have their parallels in B's pronouncement *śāstreṣu prakriyā-bhedair avidyaivopavarnyate / anāgamavikalpā tu svayaṁ vidyopavartate* (TK 2.233), but B's reasons for making the pronouncement are significantly different.

B's *avidyā* consists in the inability of linguistic expressions to refer to things precisely or only as they are. Language is said to introduce distinctions where there are none and to obliterate distinctions where they exist.

The introduction of distinctions is two-dimensional. There is a dimension of space and there is a dimension of time: *mūrti-kriyā-vivartāv/avidyā-śakti-pravṛtti-mātram* (Vṛtti 1.1).

Further, since *avidyā* is a property, attribute or capacity of the language principle, it and its two basic dimensions (or its two modes of asserting itself) should be beginningless, just as the language-principle should be beginningless for a philosopher: *caitanyavat sthitā loke dik-kāla-parikalpanā / prakṛtiṁ prāṇinām tām hi ko'nyathā sthāpayiṣyati* (TK 3.6.18).

Consequently, in B's view, there has never been a situation at the level of ordinary experience in which there was only pure perception, unattended by any conceptualization, of something in the world. The separation between sense experience in itself and conceptualization is either only theoretical (it is to be accepted as a theoretical necessity, as a kind of a priori) or can be entertained as a possibility only in the case of spiritually advanced beings, that is, only in the case of beings who are not like us—and only at the level of extraordinary experience.

There is no evidential or empirical wedge which would prove the primacy of sense experience.

§5.1 In the preceding, I have implicitly made a distinction between B as a philosopher (in our most prevalent contemporary Western sense of the term) and as a religious thinker. What that distinction suggests is that B, as a philosopher, need not be seen as needing the concept of *mokṣa* or, to use his expression in Vṛtti 1.5, of *brahmaṇaḥ prāptiḥ* for the other elements of his philosophy to stand.

Another implication of what I have said so far is that there are levels in B's ontology and they are related to his roles as a thinker. As a Grammarian or Vaiyākaraṇa, he accepts as existing everything that words can denote (even 'hare's horn' is deemed to exist from the Grammarian's perspective).²⁴ As a philosopher, he admits only the physical things and the language principle as truly existing. Everything else is seen as inseparable from either the things or the principle (time and space, as capacities of the latter, are inseparable from it; all other entities such as qualities, universals, etc. have no separate existence from substance). And as a religious thinker, he entertains the possibility that his philosophical ontic world could be superseded by one in which the language principle alone remains. The assumption then is that a person can reach a certain stage in which his mind (= *buddhi*, *paśyantī*) is divested of diversity and he 'becomes' the language principle.

§5.2 The distinction between B's roles as a Grammarian thinker and as a non-Grammarian thinker is conveyed by the remarks of his ancient commentators, particularly the remarks of Helā-rāja. The differentiation between a *śabda-pramāṇaka* ontology and a non-*śabda-pramāṇaka* (in effect, corresponding to our philosophical) ontology, which Helā-rāja makes,²⁵ has support in B's remarks.²⁶ That the non-*śabda-pramāṇaka* ontology is not explicitly characterized as philosophical or is not further divided into philosophical and religious is due to the absence of distinctive terminology for philosophy and religion in the Indian tradition.²⁷

Post-script :

As the preceding text was read toward the end of the seminar, it then contained, at this point, the following additional observations pertaining to the earlier exchanges in the seminar :

(a) The discussions we have had so far in this seminar have done justice, as far as Indian philosophy is concerned, mainly to the Nyāya concept of knowledge and have almost entirely left untouched those branches of Indian philosophy which are not included in the traditional enumeration of six *āstika darśanas*.

(b) The paṇḍitic tradition of the last two or three hundred years has been caught in the grooves of certain texts. It needs to bring back into its discussions texts such as Maṇḍana-miśra's *Vibhrama-viveka* and B's TK. It also needs to learn to discuss texts with a sharper awareness of the historical development of ideas.

(c) There are anticipations in B to the effect (i) that a distinction between belief and knowledge is useful only as a convenient theoretical fiction, (ii) that a distinction between cognition, mental state, attitude or disposition, and feeling is also useful only as a fiction convenient in our philosophical deliberations and (iii) that the Vaiśeṣikas did not remain pure realists when they accepted qualities, movements, universals, particulars, inherence and absence, just as, as was pointed in Dr. Wada's paper, they compromised their realism when they accepted numbers beyond 'one/1'.

Notes and References

1 (a) The extant works of the Grammarian-philosopher Bhartṛhari, who may or may not be identical with the poet-philosopher Bhartṛhari, are : (i) *Trikāṇḍī* or *Vākyapadīya*, (ii) *Mahābhāṣya-tīkā* or *Tripādī*, published under the title *Mahābhāṣya-dīpikā*.

(b) The physical structure of the *Trikāṇḍī*, which word roughly means '3 books,' and the relationship of that structure with the available ancient commentaries is as follows :

Brahma-kāṇḍa or Āgama-samuccaya (kārikās + Vṛtti):

tīkā on kārikās as well as Vṛtti by Vṛṣabha

Vākya-kāṇḍa or Vākyapadīya proper (kārikās + Vṛtti): tīkā on kārikās only; said to be by Puṇya-rāja but more likely to be an abridgment of a tīkā by Helā-rāja, Pāda-kāṇḍa or Prakīrṇaka (kārikās in 14 samuddeśas): tīkā by Helā-rāja

2 For an indication of why I do not employ here the word 'knowledge,' meaning 'valid cognition' or 'reliable awareness,' see the last remark in Aklujkar 1988:§2.7 and note 22 that goes with it.

3 (a) See Aklujkar 1988:§§2.1-2.

(b) The actual terms used may be different (e.g., *āgama* and *ānuśravika*), and they may have connotations revealing the special concerns of the systems. That their core contents agree is alone relevant here.

4 (a) The terms *ānumiti* and *śabda* themselves may not occur in all the texts mentioned here.

(b) There is a sense in which all cognition would be *śabda* according to the TK philosophy. This is pointed out in §3.3 below and in Aklujkar 1988 and 1989.

5 (a) ... *śabdo'pi buddhisthaḥ* TK 1.47; ... *śabda-bheda-bhāvanā-(bījā)/nugate buddhi-tattve yo'yaṁ śabdaḥ* ... Vṛtti 1.47; ... *śabda-śakti-sarhsṛṣṭayā śabdānuviddhayā śabdātmikayā buddhyā* ... Vṛtti 1.123; ... *vāg-rūpāyaṁ buddhau* ... Vṛtti 1.133. Supporting indications are available in: Vṛtti 1.53, Vṛtti 1.130.

(b) In the case of the YB, the evidence for the view attributed to it here is in the form of implication of several statements, that is, indirect.

There is a movement away from *śabda* when the practitioner progresses from *śavītarka* to *nirvītarka samādhi* (YB 1.42-43).

Similarly, there is a movement away from narrow intentional-referential activity, oriented toward specific individual objects, to increasingly wider or subtler categorial intending-referring in the substages of *śavīcāra samādhi*. The substages are expected to culminate in such a wide or subtle intending-referencing that, strictly speaking, it no longer remains intending-referencing—the act involved loses all specificity; it becomes *nirvīcāra* (YB 1.44-45).

This is from the point of view of the object. From the point of view of the meditating subject, similarly, inward referring is expected to grow gradually less and

less specific, ultimately ceasing to take cognizance even of meditational bliss (*ānanda*) and I-awareness (*asmitā*)—to become, as YB 1.17-18 puts it, *nirvastuka*, *artha-śūnya*.

These statements indicate that the starting point assumed by the YB for the journey from the ordinary states of consciousness to those of *samādhi* is a mind which has the means of intending and / or referring, namely internalized linguistic expressions.

(c) In the above, I am not suggesting that the notion of *buddhi* is identical in the TK and the YB. Unlike in the TK, there is evidence of acceptance of the Sāmkhya notion of *buddhi* in YB 2.15, 2.20; 3.35.

(d) Those statements in both the works in which *buddhi* is used in the sense 'cognition, cognizing act or event,' as distinct from 'cognizing organ,' (e.g., YB 3.17) are, of course, not intended in the present context.

6 (a) Śabara on Jaimini 1.1.5 has a long discussion bounded by the notions of *śabda*, *artha* and *jñāna*/vijñāna.

(b) *gaur iti śabda*, *gaur ityartho*, *gaur iti jñānam ityavibhāgena vibhaktānām api grahaṇam dr̥ṣṭam*. YB 1.42. ^

(c) Words indicative of the streams of thought in the TK, as well as of B's areas of thinking, are:

śabda/vāc 'linguistic expression (regardless of extent),'
'language' → language-and-grammar theory
artha 'thing, entity,' 'reality' → ontology.
jñāna 'cognition, mental state,' 'thought' → epistemology.

Cf. TK 3.1.103; 3.3.59; also, *etaddhī tat sarvaṃ yad uta jñānam vāg arthaśceti* Vṛṣaṇa 1.122, p.181. ^

7 Eight topics or subjects as stated in TK 1.24-26 (this list of topics is primarily applicable to the *kāṇḍa* in which it appears, that is, to the first book):

<i>anvākyeya</i>	<i>śabda</i>	<i>vākya</i> and <i>pada</i> 'sentence and its (ordinarily) meaning-bearing units'
<i>pratipādaka</i>	<i>śabda</i>	stems, roots, affixes (artificially meaning-bearing)
<i>apoddhārapadārtha</i> ^	<i>artha</i>	meaning in the stage of analysis
<i>sthita-lakṣaṇa artha</i> ^	<i>artha</i>	meaning in actual communication, meaning which does not need analysis to come into effect, typically sentence meaning and, at a certain level, word meaning.
<i>kārya-kāraṇabhāva</i> ^	<i>sambandha</i>	cause and effect relation between signifier and signatum.

<i>yogya-bhāva</i> /yogyatā	<i>sambāndha</i>	compatibility relation between signifier and signatum.
<i>pratyayāṅga</i> (<i>pratyaya</i> -)	<i>sambandha</i>	relation responsible for cognition.
<i>dharmāṅga</i>	<i>sambandha</i>	relation responsible for (cognition and) merit.

8 (a) Especially clear is the evidence furnished by the remark: *sad api vāgyavahāreṇānupagṛhitam artha-rūpam asatā tulyam*. Vṛtti 1.129

^ (b) The point made here has a bearing on B's notions of *vivarta* and *pariṇāma* and our understanding of them. §/4.4-6 will observe that B's notion of *vivarta* is different from the one commonly associated with post-Śāṅkara philosophers. Consequently, his notion of *pariṇāma* is also different. A detailed delineation of these notions, however, can be undertaken only in a separate publication.

9 (a) *na so'sti pratyayo loke yaḥ śabdānugamād ṛte/ anuviddham iva jñānam sarvaṃ śabdena gṛhyate* TK 1.131. Variant readings for the last word are: *bhāṣate*, *gamyate*, *vartate*.

(b) B's view given here does not imply that one must be aware of linguistic units at the time of cognition. He argues for his view by concentrating specifically on those cognition situations in which one is generally not aware of the role of language (Aklujkar 1970: §1.19-26).

10 B may further be understood as holding that, ultimately, there is no division between analytical truths such as '2 + 2 = 4' and synthetic truths such as 'Snow is white.' If we acquainted him with our notion of 'conceptual scheme', he would probably come up with a conceptual scheme that is inter-related and interdependent.

11 (a) It may be objected that some philosophers (e.g., the Buddhist philosophers) have not accepted the need to postulate all three entities. However, note that, in the case of entity (a), I am not saying that it must be a constant, stable, durable or eternal self. All I am saying is that a life force or fulfilment of the condition of being a living being is required. The Buddhists are not known to have rejected this (rather obviously needed) condition of ordinary experience. They have come close also to accepting the *buddhi* in their acceptance of a *vijñāna-sarvātāna*, *ālaya-vijñāna*, etc.

(b) Whether the Sanskrit terms used to designate the three entities are precisely the ones I have given here is not a major consideration. A terminology like *citta*, *caitta*, etc. will also do.

12 For example, *śabda-tattvam evedam vānmanasākhyam avibhāgam* Vṛtti 1.86.

13 I am using the neologism 'intellectual' to avoid the connotations of 'mental' and 'intellectual,' but I do not hold that its introduction is absolutely necessary.

14 B indicates awareness of the arguments that are likely to be made to assert a real difference between the linguistic entities, on the one hand, and the epistemological entities, on the other, but he does not explicitly deal with them. Given the nature of the problem, the onus of proving that there is in fact a difference should be on those who

assert the difference. Their proofs or arguments, it seems, would boil down to a determination of whether cognition without symbols is possible and whether the symbols involved can be essentially different from the symbols that constitute language. B's view, as stated in § 3.3, is that cognition without linguistic symbols is not possible. He also holds that language is innate. The view that all so-called nonlinguistic symbols are ultimately based on linguistic symbols can also be attributed to him with great probability. Thus we can infer that he would prefer to take the position that cognition without symbols is not possible and that the symbols involved will not, in the final analysis, be nonlinguistic. In other words, we can interpret him as saying that a wider definition of language and an admission of all symbols as ultimately linguistic in nature together constitute a better theory than a theory which would take the (apparent) separation between linguistic and nonlinguistic symbols as a given not to be given up.

15 In Vṛtti 2.31, B states the Sāṃkhya-Yoga view after what seems to be a statement of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view.

16 B advocates primacy of the sentence. He accepts the possibility of single-word and single-phoneme sentences (TK 2.40, 270-71).

17 The Sanskrit terms are: *buddhyartha* or *śabdārtha* 'sense, meaning'; *bāhyārtha* or *vastvartha* 'reference, referent, actual thing.'

18 I infer this from the direction reflected in B's remarks made in contexts other than those in which sense/experience or conceptualization *per se* is discussed, that is, from remarks made 'unawares,' as it were, in which his subconscious assumptions are likely to be revealed. One such remark is *sad api vāg-vyavahāreṇānupagṛhītam artha-rūpam asatā tulyam* (Vṛtti 1.129) quoted in note 8. The stance or assumption of its author is clearly that physical things exist first and then come into the purview of language, implying that, in general, sensing precedes concept formation (although he would still be free to hold that no particular time can be specified at which the intertwining of the physical world and language can be said to have begun; cf. the characterization of *avidyā*, which is primarily a language-based notion in B's thought (§4.6), as beginningless). We can probably detect similar evidence in other statements of B, suggesting that in his view physical things and their experience through senses deserves priority in systematization.

19 I say this despite several current interpretations in which B is represented as deriving both the concepts and physical objects from *śabda-tattva brahman* or as declaring all diversity in the world to be an illusion or a lower-level truth superimposed on *śabda-tattva-brahman*. I do not agree with those modern interpreters of B who, by adopting a later version of the '*vivarta : pariṇāma*' distinction declare B to be a *pariṇāma-vādin* or a *vivarta-vādin*. As I will point out in a future article, the understanding of *vivarta* and *pariṇāma* in the early period of Indian philosophy, to which B belongs, was different.

20 Note the citations in the Vṛtti of TK 1.124. The *kārikā* itself reads thus : *śabdasya pariṇāmo'yam ityāmnāyaviduḥ / chandobhya eva prathamam etad viśvaṃ vyavartata* .

21 (a) See Aklujkar 1991 for B's concept of the Veda, according to which even the *nāstika* philosophies have their ultimate source in the Veda.

(b) The remark made here, obviously, has a bearing on the question of B's religion. I view him as a follower of Brahmanism or Vedism who was not anti-Buddhist and who was, most probably, not anti-Jaina either. I expect to be able to be more specific in a future publication.

22 The words quoted here are a part of a longer statement in Śāṅkara's *bhāṣya* introducing the *Brahma-sūtra* or *Vedānta-sūtra* 1.1.1. Cf. *Upadeśa-sahasrī* 1.1.40, summarized in Potter 1981:221.

23 (a) Since acquiring *vidyā* would mean acquiring liberation, Śāṅkara's statement in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-bhāṣya* 3.3, summarized in Potter 1981:195-96, to the effect that liberation, truly speaking, is not acquired—it is not a production, an attainment, or a modification or purification—implies that *vidyā*, 'liberating knowledge,' is, truly speaking, not acquired. Note also *Upadeśa-sahasrī* 2.17.22, summarized in Potter 1981:240, where *vidyā* is said to be revealed—not produced or obtained.

(b) It follows that, in the following statement in Potter 1981:6, the use of 'manifested' is appropriate, but the use of 'acquiring' could be misleading: 'Since bondage depends on ignorance, liberation is manifested upon the removal of ignorance by acquiring its opposite, namely knowledge (*vidyā*).'

24 Compare Quine's procedure of beginning the investigation of what exists with the position 'everything.'

25 *śabda-pramāṇakānāṃ hi yacchabda āha tat paramārtha-rūpam*. Helā-rāja 3.1.11 p. 24.8-9. *śābde vyavahāre nirūpitasyaiva vastutvāt*. Helā-rāja 3.7.152 p. 351.1-8. *nāsmābhir darśana-vivekaḥ prārabdhah*. Helā-rāja 3.9.58 p. 70.25-28.

26 *asamākhyeya-tattvānāṃ arthānāṃ laukikairiyathā / vyavahāre samākhyānām tat prājño na vikalpayet* TK 2.142; *śabdapramāṇako lokah sa śāstreṇānugamyate* TK 3.7.38; also TK 2.296-97 and Vṛtti thereto; *sarvatra hi prasiddhirvārtha-vyavasthā-kāraṇam. anavasthitaiva hi tarkāgamābhyāṃ bhinneṣu pravādeṣu vastu-gatā vyavasthā*. Vṛtti 1.106.

27 (a) The intention behind the remarks made here is not to suggest that B's interest in what we would call religion or religious philosophy was not sincere. In his own perspective, the *mokṣa* or *brahma-prāpti* frame of his thought could, of course, have been meant seriously. The question of the relationship of the Ultimate or First Principle in his philosophy with the material world, however, is a philosophical question (one to be determined on the basis of logic and argumentation that does not rest on testimony, appeal to extraordinary experience of some kind, or depend on admitting an unverifiable possibility). The answer given to that question does have implications for religious thinking (e.g., for the notion of *mokṣa* to be accepted and for the method to be advocated for *mokṣa* attainment), but the answer itself is not decided at the level of religious thinking. The approving references to the *mokṣa* possibility that B may be seen as making or the *mokṣa*-supporting citations he gives from texts authoritative to him cannot,

therefore, be used as argument to establish that the religious ontology is B's final philosophical ontology as well and that, since in that ontology only his language principle remains, the physical world must actually be somehow derivable from it in his philosophy too.

(b) It also should not be said by way of objection that, if B's ontological thinking is restricted the way I have done, he would become a Dvaitin, whereas the tradition holds him to be an Advaitin. The 'Dvaitin: Advaitin' distinction pertains to the level of religious ontology. B would still remain an Advaitin at that level.

Bibliography and Abbreviations

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B = Bhartṛhari. *Trikāṇḍī* or *Vākyapadīya*. I have reproduced the text of the kārikās and the Vṛtti from my critical edition under preparation. Those wishing to verify my references to the Vṛtti prior to the publication of my edition should consult the editions by K.A. Subramania Iyer: (a) *Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari with the Vṛtti and the Paddhati of Vṛṣabha-*

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Helā-rāja: see under B.

* Potter, Karl H. 1981. (ed.) *Advaita Vedānta up to Śaṅkara and His Pupils*. → Motilal Banarsidass

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TK = *Trikāṇḍī*. see B.

Vṛtti: see under B.

Vṛṣabha: see under B.

YB = *Yoga-bhāṣya*: see Vyāsa under Patañjali.

* Patañjali: *Yoga-sūtra with the Commentaries of Vyāsa and Vācaspati-miśra*. (ed.) Vidyasagara, Jibananda. 3rd edn. Calcutta 1940.