

NAKAMURA ON BHARTṚHARI

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1.1 An article by Professor Hajime Nakamura, "Bhartṛhari The Scholar", was published in the fourth volume of the *Indo-Iranian Journal* (1960: 282-305). That article was a revised translation of a part of Nakamura's *Kotoba no Keijijogaku*, which is regarded by many scholars to be Nakamura's important contribution to the study of *Vedānta* in general and to Bhartṛhari studies in particular. Naturally I was very surprised to find in it, as I shall presently demonstrate, a large number of inaccurate translations, remarks, conclusions, and comparisons. My purpose in demonstrating what I consider to be Nakamura's mistakes is, of course, purely that of *śāstra-śuddhi* "purification of a branch of learning"; the positive aspects of the present article, namely the correct translations of some of the key verses in Bhartṛhari's *Trikāṇḍī*¹ (TK in abbreviation) and a correct understanding of Bhartṛhari's position, are more important in my view than the refutation of the contents of Nakamura's article.²

¹ (a) It is generally believed that the title of the work to which I refer as the *Trikāṇḍī* is *Vākyapadīya*. In a recent article (Aklujkar, 1969: 547-555), I have argued that *Vākyapadīya* was originally the title of only the first two books of Bhartṛhari's magnum opus and that *Trikāṇḍī* is the only ancient name that can refer to the work under study as a whole. (b) Some scholars advocate the view that the composition referred to as *Vṛtti* (as *V* in abbreviation) is not Bhartṛhari's work and that it is much later than the verses (*kārikā*) which alone form the genuine TK. I see absolutely no reason to subscribe to this view. In my paper, "Authorship of the *Vākyapadīya-vṛtti*", read at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society (1969) (to appear in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, vol. xvi, May 1972), I have exposed the weaknesses of the arguments on which this view is based, and I have shown with unmistakable internal evidence that the traditional ascription of the *V* to Bhartṛhari cannot be doubted by any unprejudiced mind.

² (a) My practice in the following is to quote Nakamura's words first, then to reproduce the Sanskrit original, and then to translate the Sanskrit original as I think it should be translated. In general, I do not adduce any additional evidence or refer to the ancient commentators when it is quite obvious that my translation follows the Sanskrit original more closely than Nakamura's. It should also be noted that I italicize all Sanskrit words for the sake of uniformity. Nakamura's practice, which is justifiable

2.1 Incorrect translations: P. 283.16-17, fn. 5: "... so does the *smṛti* [go on forever without interruption] though it was composed by scholars." *śiṣṭair nibadhyamānā tu na vyavacchidyate smṛtiḥ* // (TK 1.146/1.136cd³): "But the *smṛti* is not lost (literally, cut off) if it is composed [again and again] by the elite." The verse (*kārikā*) expresses the view of the *Mīmāṃsakas* (Puṇyarāja (? see fn. 2 above), p. 58.4-8; *V* pp. 223.6-224.4, p. 226.1-3; cf. 5.1 below). According to them, the *śruti* is eternal and hence it does not require the assistance of the elite for its survival, but the *smṛti* is preserved only by the elite.

2.2 P. 283.17-18, fn. 6: "The words of the *śruti* were composed a long, long time ago." *śāstram atidūre vyavasthitam* // (TK 3.14.74, p. 487/p. 39). Here we come across a classic instance of how Nakamura takes Bhartṛhari's words out of context (cf. 2.6, 12, 18 below). The entire verse runs thus: *śabdā yathā vibhajyante bhāḡair iva vikalpitaiḥ / anvākhyeṃs tathā, śāstram atidūre vyavasthitam* // It refers to Bhartṛhari's well-emphasized thesis that the segments of linguistic units (sentences, words, and phonemes, which correspond respectively to Sanskrit *vākya*, *pada*, and *varṇa*) set up in grammar are convenient fictions,⁴ and that, for this reason, the science

from a different point of view, is not to italicize those words which, although of Sanskrit origin, have now become a common stock of the English language. (b) Although it has been convincingly argued as early as 1930 (Charudeva Shastri 1930: 636-644, 1934: Skt. Intro. pp. 18-26; Ramakrishna Kavi 1930: 235-241; Kunhan Raja 1936: 285-298), that the *Brahma-kāṇḍa* commentary published in the *Benares Sanskrit Series* (Nos. 11, 19, and 24; 1887) and ascribed to Puṇyarāja is an abridgement of Bhartṛhari's *V* (see fn. 1b above) on the *kārikās* of the first book of the *Vākyapadiya*, Nakamura refers to that commentary as Puṇyarāja's work. He also seems to have not known the two volumes of Helārāja's commentary *Prakīrṇaka-prakāśa* published under the editorship respectively of Sāmba-śiva Śāstrī and Ravi Varmā in 1935 and 1942 (see the bibliography at the end for more particulars). Those volumes give a better text of the *Prakīrṇaka-prakāśa* than the volume published in the *Benares Sanskrit Series* (Nos. 95, 102, 130, 160-164; 1905-37), which Nakamura has used. However, it should be noted that my criticism of Nakamura's article is entirely independent of the literature that *could have* become available to Nakamura but was obviously unavailable. If I refer to the editions later than the ones used by him, it is only to facilitate the locating of almost identical passages in the different editions.

³ In the place of Nakamura's abbreviation *Vākyap.* (for *Vākyapadiya*), I use the abbreviation *TK* (for *Trikāṇḍī*; see fn. 1 above). Also, I change his Roman numerals to Arabic numerals, thus writing 1 for I and 2 for II. References according to more recent editions (see the bibliography at the end) are given after the references according to Nakamura are specified.

⁴ (a) *pade na varṇā vidyante varṇeṣv avayavā na ca / vākyāt padānām atyantam praviveko na kaścana* // (TK 1.73) "There are no phonemes in a word, and there are no parts in phonemes. There is absolutely no separate existence whatsoever of the words from the sentence." *iha nirbhāḡeṣv apūrvāpareṣv abhedyeṣu varṇa-pada-vākyeṣu ...* (*V* 1.85 p. 151.4); *V* 1.88 pp. 154.5-155.2; *TK* 2.13a and *V*; *TK* 2.30 and *V*. For more references to the statements of this point in the *TK* and its commentaries, see not-

of grammar is far removed from the permanent, unitary linguistic units, which constitute the linguistic reality.⁵ As is obvious from the context as well as Helārāja's crystal-clear comments, the verse has nothing to do with the *śruti* or the *Veda*. It should be translated as follows: "Linguistic units should be derived in grammar in accordance with how they are segmented by the imagined parts, [for] the science [of grammar] remains far away [from the linguistic units]."

2.3 Pp. 283.30-284.4, fn. 8: "... the composition of the *smṛti* writings are multifarious: some are clear as to their aim and purpose (for instance the writings on medicine); some are vague and difficult to follow (as for example the writings on what foods should and should not be eaten). But all the *smṛti* writings were propounded by the Vedic scholars (*Vedaivid*) following the special characteristics (*liṅga*) of the *Vedas*." *smṛtayo bahu-rūpāś ca dṛṣṭādrṣṭa-prayojanāḥ | tam evāśritya liṅgebhyo veda-vidbhiḥ prakāśitāḥ ||* (TK 1.7). Here *dṛṣṭa-prayojana* and *adrṣṭa-prayojana* should have been translated respectively as "having mundane purposes" and "having non-mundane (otherworldly) purposes", and *liṅga* as "indications"; see *V* 1.7, pp. 28.4-29.4; Vṛṣabha, p. 28.16-17, 22-23; *V* 1.11, p. 40.6; *Tripādī*,⁶ p. 35.20. It is a thesis accepted by many schools of Indian philosophy that the *smṛtis* must have some supporting indications in the *Vedas* in order to qualify as authoritative sources of knowledge; cf. *V* 1.7, p. 30.1-2.

2.4 P. 284.16-20, fns. 16-17; "... the *śruti* perishes only to grow like

4.19b-d of my Harvard dissertation referred to in the bibliography. (b) The following passages establish that, *on the level of analysis*, Bhartṛhari assumes the sentence to be made of words and that, on that level, he thinks of the word in itself as identical with its counterpart in a sentence: *V* 1.24-26 p. 65.4-5; Vṛṣabha, p. 79.21-22; TK 2.10cd; BSS p. 91.14-15, p. 132.17-20, p. 143.19-21; *vyāptimāṁś ca laghuś caiva vyavahāraḥ padāśrayaḥ | loke śāstre ca kāryārthaṁ vibhāgenaiva kalpitāḥ ||* (TK 2.344) "The linguistic activity centering around words, which allows generalization and achieves economy [of effort], is brought about in ordinary life and in the science [of grammar] for the sake of the [desired] purpose only through the analysis [of sentences]." BSS pp. 167.15-168.3, p. 186.17; TK 3.1.1, Helā. p. 2.3. (c) For a similar consideration applied to the word and the sub-word units, see *yathā pade vibhajyante prakṛti-pratyayādayaḥ |* (TK 2.10ab); *V* 2.164-165; TK 3.1.1d, Helā. p. 2.3-4, 7-8.

⁵ TK 2.226-238 and *V*; especially, *śāstreṣu prakriyā-bhedair avidyāvopavarnyate/anāgama-vikalpā tu svayaṁ vidyopavartate ||* (TK 2.233) "With different analyses and derivations, it is only *avidyā* (knowledge of a unitary entity as non-unitary) that is put forth in [all] sciences; *vidyā*, which is free of *āgama* (see 3.2 below) and intellectual constructs, approaches on its own (that is, is not acquired as a *direct* product of the study of sciences)."

⁶ Modern scholars generally give the name of Bhartṛhari's commentary on the *Mahābhāṣya* as *Mahābhāṣya-dīpikā*. In a forthcoming article, I shall argue that the evidence for this name is very scanty and that the commentary should be referred to by the name *Tripādī* (*The Adyar Library Bulletin*, 1971).

seeds (*bīja*) out of the *Vedas* again. It is our fixed belief that the *āgama* was produced out of some source or other. When all the *āgama* [sic] have perished, the three *Vedas* will remain like seeds to give new birth to the *āgama*.⁷ *tāni* [= *veda-vākyāni*] *purvāgameṣu vicchinneṣu anyeṣu prañetrṣu āgamāntarānusaṁdhāne bījavat avatiṣṭhante*.⁸ (Puṇyarāja(?) on TK 1.134/1.124, pp. 51.20-52.1) *na jātv akartṛkaṁ kaścīd āgamaṁ pratipadyate/ bījaṁ sarvāgamāpāye trayy evātau*⁹ *vyavasthitā* // (TK 1.134/1.124). The correct translation of Puṇyarāja's (?) remark is: "After the earlier schools of thought (*āgama*; see 3.2 below) have perished, they (the sentences of the *Veda*) remain like seeds for the bringing into currency of new schools of thought on the part of different (new) proponents [of schools]." Also, verse 1.134 should be translated thus: "No one (no proponent of a school of thought) is ever of the view that [his] school is non-manmade (eternal.) In the beginning (see fn. 9 above) when all schools of thought have perished, only the Vedic Triad remains as a seed [for the future schools of thought]."

2.5 P. 286.17-20, fn. 22: "Therefore the excellent scholars began to teach the significance of words according to the *Vedas* which were not created by man, and, according to the *smṛti*, which laid down the rules (on the usage of words)." *tasmād akṛtakam śāstraṁ smṛtiṁ vā*¹⁰ *saṁbandhanām* / *āśrityārabhyate śiṣṭaiḥ śabdānām anuśāsanam* // (TK 1.43) "Therefore the instruction of linguistic units is begun by the elite by depending on the non-manmade science (*śruti*) and (see fn. 10 above) the *smṛti* which has support [in the *śruti* or in the conduct of the elite]." Cf. Vṛṣabha, p. 99.19-22.

2.6 P. 286.29-30, fn. 25: ... [grammar is] the highest among the studies of the three *Vedas* which are made up of many branches of study." *aneka-tīrtha-bhedāyās trayyā vācaḥ paraṁ padam* // (TK 1.144/1.134). If Nakamura had taken into consideration the first line of this verse, the word *vācaḥ*, or Puṇyarāja's(?) commentary, he would have noticed that the verse does not say anything about the three *Vedas*. What Bhartṛhari here speaks about are the three levels, aspects, or phases of language

⁷ It is impossible to reconcile these lines of Nakamura's article with the remarks in the preceding lines of the same paragraph. In particular, it is not clear what distinction of reference he sees between *śruti* and *Veda*, and how he separates *āgama* from the three *Vedas* once (p. 284.11-13) he has remarked that *āgama* includes *śruti*.

⁸ Subramania Iyer's edition of the unabridged *V* (see fn. 2b above) has the following reading: *tāny āgamāntarānām prañetrṣu vicchinneṣv āgamāntarānusaṁdhāne bījavat anutiṣṭhante*. However, the purport of the passage is not affected by this reading.

⁹ The reading of Subramania Iyer's edition is *evāto*.

¹⁰ Vṛṣabha reads *ca*, which Subramania Iyer rightly accepts as the correct reading.

(*vāk*), namely *vaikharī*, *madhyamā*, and *paśyantī*. Each of these levels becomes different in numerous (*aneka*; in fact, innumerable; see *V* p. 214.2, p. 215.3, p. 220.4) ways because of the difference in loci (*tīrtha*). The science of grammar is the great abode of such three-fold language.

2.7 P. 287.1-3, fn. 26: "As the species of the meanings of all words are subject to their forms (*ākṛti*), the study of grammar is the original source of all studies (*vidyā*) in the world." *yathārtha-jātayaḥ sarvāḥ śabdākṛti-nibandhanāḥ / tathaiva loke vidyānām eṣā vidyā parāyaṇam //* (TK 1.15) "Just as all meaning-universals are tied to the universals of linguistic forms, so also this science [grammar] is the ultimate path (or merging point) of [all] sciences in the world." In certain contexts Bhartṛhari does not distinguish between *jāti* and *ākṛti*; cf. *Tripādī* p. 3.17-20, p. 17.21-22, p. 18.11-25; *V* 1.23 pp. 52.1-57.2, p. 58.5-7; Sreekrishna Sarma, 1957: 56-57. For the point of the first line in this verse, see TK 3.1.6. It is also important to note that Bhartṛhari does not assign the highest position to grammar for any partisan or sectarian reasons; grammar is the science of sciences for the simple reason that exact expression and correct understanding depend on it. See Vṛṣabha, p. 49.24; *V* pp. 48.6-49.5; Puṇyarāja (?), p. 8.14-17.

2.8 P. 287.3-5, fns. 27-28 (cp. p. 288.17-22): "It is the foundation on which all other studies are based and can be likened to a purifying fire." "Being a purifying fire to all study, it shines brightly over all branches of learning." *pavitram sarva-vidyānām adhividyam prakāśate //* (TK 1.14cd) "A purifier (remover of errors) of all lores [through the teaching of what expressions are best suited for the intended meanings], it (the lore of grammar) shines at the top of [all] lores." See conclusion of 2.7 above.

2.9 P. 288.11-12, fn. 35: "... The rules of this sacred study have been handed down in an unbroken chain to the educated." *avicchedena śiṣṭānām idam smṛti-nibandhanam //* (TK 1.143/1.133). This passage can be translated in three different ways, but certainly not in the way in which Nakamura translates it. From the words *etad* and *tad* in TK 1.144/1.134 and 1.145/1.135, which stand for *vyākaraṇa*, it is clear (cf. Vṛṣabha, p. 212.20) that the word *idam* in this passage also refers to *vyākaraṇa*. The three possible and justifiable translations, therefore, are: (a) "Because of the unbroken chain of the elite, this (grammar) has its roots in the preserved [reliable] knowledge." *śiṣṭānām avicchedena idam smṛti-nibandhanam*. Cf. *V*. p. 213.1-2. (b) "For the elite, this (grammar) is always a bond [called] *smṛti*." *śiṣṭānām idam avicchedena smṛti-nibandhanam* (= *smṛti-rūpaṁ nibandhanam*). Cf. *V* p. 212.8-9. (c) "This composing of the *smṛti* on the part of the elite is without break (that is,

the elite compose the *smṛti* called *vyākaraṇa* again and again).” *śiṣṭānām idaṃ smṛti-nibandhanam avicchedena*. Cf. *V* p. 213.1.

2.10 P. 289.10-11, fn. 42: “The knowledge of the inner self cleans dirt from the body, from speech, from the mind and can be compared to a healing process.” *kāya-vāg-buddhi-viṣayā ye malāḥ samavasthitāḥ / cikitsā-lakṣaṇādhyātma-śāstrais teṣāṃ viśuddhayaḥ* // (TK 1.148/1.138) “Those which are impurities of the body, the speech, and the intellect are removed by the sciences [respectively] of medicine, grammar, and *yoga*.” Nakamura has somehow failed to notice the *yathāsaṃkhyā* “respectively” construction in the verse. He also seems to be unaware of the fact that Sanskrit authors many times refer to the system of their present concern with the word *lakṣaṇa*; cf. *V* 1.12 p. 43.6.

2.11 P. 290.17-19, fn. 45: “Various divine powers such as demons, *pitṛs* and vampires which exist outside the realm of perception and inference (employed by the ordinary man) are the result of certain processes such as asceticism.” *pratyakṣam anumānam ca vyatikramya vyavasthitāḥ / rakṣaḥ-pitṛ-piśācānāṃ karmajā eva siddhayaḥ* // (TK 1.36) “The extraordinary capacities of the demons, manes, and goblins, [capacities] which remain beyond perception and inference, can only be results of actions [in the previous lives].” The verse is intended, as is obvious from the verses 1.35, 37, 38, and 39, to point out that there can be extraordinary means of knowledge, means which are not exhausted by perception, inference, and testimony; cf. Vṛṣabha, p. 93.20. Its context and wording do not in any way support Nakamura’s (p. 290.19-23) interpretation of it.

2.12 P. 290.23-26, fn. 46: “There is no ordinary *liṅga* to prove the existence of the universal and the form, the essence and the species. Therefore some other source (i.e. that of the sacred books) is used.” *sāmānyam ākṛtir bhāvo jātir ity atra laukikam / liṅgam na sambhavaty eva tenānyat parigrhyate* // (TK 3.14.323 p. 605 / 3.14.320 p. 143). Here we come across one more (see 2.2 above) instance of how Nakamura interprets the *TK* verses out of context. The present verse is intended to restate Patañjali’s (on Pāṇini 4.1.3) observation that the grammarians cannot afford to confuse the ordinary meaning “sex” of the word *liṅga* with the meaning “gender”, that they cannot accept determination of gender by sex. As an illustration of this point, attention is drawn to the words *sāmānya*, *ākṛti*, *bhāva*, and *jāti*. All these words denote the universal, but *sāmānya* is a neuter word, *bhāva* a masculine, and *ākṛti* a feminine. As one and the same entity, which is the universal in this instance, cannot *actually* possess mutually contrary properties resembling the sex distinc-

tions, it is clear that the genders of words are not related to the sex (*laukika liṅga*) distinctions. The grammarians, therefore, accept *alaukika* (*anyat*) *liṅga*; that is, they understand the word *liṅga* in a specific, technical sense as denotative of some non-actual distinctions expressed by the words.

2.13 P. 291.1-2, fn. 47: "... the meaning of things is indeed determined by the sacred scriptures." *tayā hy artho vidhīyate* // (TK 1.130d/1.120d). Here Nakamura overlooks the fact that *śruti* can mean "sound", "word", or "formal aspect of a linguistic unit as opposed to its semantic aspect",¹¹ and that *artha* can mean "entity" or "thing" as in 2.17 below. What Bhartṛhari points out in this line is that words give rise to entities lacking physical existence (e.g. *śaśa-viṣāṇa* or Pegasus), that words shape, fashion, or determine entities. This is clear even from Puṇyarāja's (?) commentary (p. 50.1-4) which Nakamura claims to have followed here.

2.14 P. 291.18-22, fn. 52: "Therefore as the spirit (in the doctrine of subjectivity) (is not harmed by anything), so will those who follow the ways of *āgama* handed down to us without interruption meet with no refutation from the schools of logic (*hetu-vāda*)." *caitanyam iva yaś cāyam aviśchedena vartate* | *āgamas tam upāsīno hetu-vādair na bādhyate* // (TK 1.41) "One who adheres to this *āgama* (see 3.2 below) which exists without break like sentience, is not moved from his position by the talk of [logical] reasons as in the case of sentience." The phrase *caitanyam iva* serves two purposes in the present verse. It points out that the continuity of *āgama* is like the continuity of sentience, beginningless and natural (V p. 98.3; Vṛṣabha, p. 98.14), and that just as, with the help of reasoning, one cannot talk a man into believing that he does not exist, so also one cannot, with logical reasoning as means, make an *āgama*-advocate give up his reliance on *āgama* (Puṇyarāja (?), p. 19.5-7; V p. 98.3-8).

2.15 P. 295.20-21, fn. 69: "When a person does not doubt his knowledge even as he does not doubt his senses, how can anyone persuade him?" *yo yasyā svam iva jñānaṃ darśanaṃ nābhiśaṅkate* | *sthitam pratyakṣa-pakṣe tam katham anyo nivārayet* // (TK 1.39) "How can the other person [using reasoning] prevent X [from accepting as truths those matters which lie beyond ordinary cognition] who does not doubt the [extraordinary] perception on the part of Y as if it were his own expe-

¹¹ For example, see: V 1.9 p. 37.3; V 1.12 p. 42.2; V 1.34 p. 92.3; V 1.44 p. 101.6, p. 102.4; TK 1.46; TK 1.60 V p. 119.7; V 1.62 p. 120.9; V 1.68-69 p. 131.2, p. 132.3, 5; V 1.74 p. 139.8-9; TK 1.87 V p. 153.8; V 1.92 p. 158.2; V 1.93 p. 159.4; V 1.102 p. 168.3; V 1.107 p. 175.3; V 1.115 p. 189.3; V 1.116 p. 191.2; TK 1.120 V p. 197.4, 7; TK 1.121 V pp. 198.3-199.1; V 1.134 p. 213.6; V 1.143 p. 232.3. See also 3.7 below.

rience, and [thus] stands on the side of perception [that is, thinks of the matters being disputed as self-perceived truths if Y says that he cognized them]?” In this verse Bhartṛhari points out that inference or logical reasoning cannot be an effective tool in changing the views of a person who firmly believes that he has received his information from a highly reliable person gifted with extraordinary capacities of cognition.

2.16 P. 298.24-27, fn. 77: “Though all men are able through the *āgama* to understand things the fruit of which is yet to be experienced, what is stated in the *āgama* can be interpreted in the contrary meaning.” *sarvo ’dṛṣṭa-phalān arthān āgamāt pratipadyate / viparitām ca sarvatra śakyate vaktum āgame* // (TK 1.142/1.132) “All come to know the matters of non-mundane consequences [only] through *āgama* (see 3.2 below). And it is possible to voice opposite views [as regards the consequences] in the case of all *āgama*.” Cf. Puṇyarāja(?), p. 55.4-5; *V* p. 212.1-4.

2.17 P. 301.8-11, fn. 89: “Therefore the wise observe correctly with the mind even those things which can be directly perceived by the senses. As intuition should be true knowledge, we should not present the things which we perceive.” *tasmāt pratyakṣam apy arthaṃ vidvān ikṣeta yuktitaḥ / na darśanasya prāmāṇyād dṛśyam arthaṃ prakalpayet* // (TK 2.143) “Therefore, a wise man should examine with reasoning even that thing which is perceptible. He should not form his ideas about a perceptible thing believing in the validity of his perception.”

2.18 Fn. 96: “If the words were founded upon the *darśana* (= *pratyakṣa*) there would be no need for inference. Indeed when the *darśana* is established why should be need for inference?” *na cālam anumānāya śabdo darśana-pūrvakah*¹² / *siddhe hi darśane kiṃ syād anumāna-prayojanam* // (TK 3.13.12 p. 436 / p. 142). Here again (see 2.2 above) we notice Nakamura’s utter disregard of the contexts of Bhartṛhari’s remarks. As Helārāja explains, the real purpose of the present verse is to reiterate Patañjali’s (on Pāṇini 4.1.3) objection *anyonya-saṃśrayaṃ tv etad* directed against those who hold that actual distinctions corresponding to the distinctions in genders exist in the entities (see 2.12 above). A more accurate translation would be as follows: “The word [having a distinction in the form of its gender] is not capable (i.e. does not serve as a valid tool) of inference [that an actual distinction corresponding to the gender-distinction must exist in the denoted entity] if it is preceded by a perception [of that actual distinction]. For what purpose is there for [employing]

¹² Sāmba-śiva Śāstri’s edition accepts the reading *śabdo ’darśana-pūrvakah*, that is, with an *avagraha* or *akāralopa* in between the two words. But Helārāja’s commentary does not seem to support that reading.

an inference when a perception [of the entity to be inferred] has [already] materialized?"¹³

3.1 Incorrect remarks: P. 284.6: "Frequently however the term *śāstra* refers to the *Vedas* in a broad sense, ..." In the verses TK 1.43 and 1.137/1.127, to which Nakamura refers as evidence, we find that the words *akṛtaśāstra* and *veda-śāstra* denote the *Vedas* as a phrase and as a compound expression. It is evident then that *śāstra* alone does not stand for the *Vedas* as far as Bhartṭhari is concerned. Nakamura's identification of that word with the *śruti* or *Veda* results in wrong translations and wrong understanding of Bhartṭhari's statements on p. 302.4-10.

3.2 P. 284.11-12: "But in the *Vākyapadīya* the term *āgama* refers to the books of the pure orthodox Brahmanic schools ..." This statement is contradicted by Nakamura's footnotes 14 and 15 which show that *āgama* can mean "something which has been handed down from ancient times" and that "it can stand for books such as those of the Vaiśeṣika school." There is no point, therefore, in taking the statement seriously, but I may seize the opportunity provided by it to explain Bhartṭhari's concept of *āgama*.¹⁴ A study of the occurrences of the word *āgama* shows that it possesses a host of related meanings which can be divided into at least three strata or groups. The most general meaning can be said to be "inherited lore", "conceptual inheritance", "knowledge that one inherits because of birth in a particular biological species or linguistic community", or "lore of the forefathers".¹⁵ Next, in those contexts in which awareness and preservation of knowledge is assumed, come the meanings: "tradition",¹⁶ "traditionally inherited body of knowledge",¹⁷ "traditional instruction of

¹³ This section concludes the demonstration of the eighteen glaring mistakes of translation that are found in Nakamura's article. Of relatively less importance are the following errors: (a) *dharma* = laws (p. 291.24). In the context of TK 1.30, *dharma* means "ritually beneficial action", "conduct leading to favorable consequences", or "merit, *punya*". (b) *rūpa* = colour; tangible, material contents of the sacred books (p. 299.12-16, fn. 80). In the context of TK 1.137/1.127, the word *rūpa* quite obviously means "form [of a word or expression]". (c) *āpta-vacana* = Intuition of the Brahman (p. 302.29). I do not know how Nakamura derives this meaning from the etymological and generally accepted meaning "testimony, statement(s) of a trustworthy person".

¹⁴ The following exposition is in all essentials a reproduction of § 0.13 of my Harvard dissertation referred to in the bibliography.

¹⁵ TK 2.118ab, 151.

¹⁶ *śiṣṭānām yad idam avicchinna-pāramparyaṁ smaraṇaṁ sa āgamaḥ*. (Vṛṣabha, p. 81.19-20); V 1.27 p. 82.1, 4.

¹⁷ TK 1.30 V p. 86.2, 4.

conduct",¹⁸ "body of knowledge and views preserved by the adherents of a system",¹⁹ "traditionally preserved view",²⁰ "sources of testimony", "authoritative literature",²¹ and "imbibed or internalized results of the activity of systematization".²² Most particularly, in sufficiently transparent contexts, *āgama* denotes the *śruti* and *smṛtis*.²³

3.3 P. 287.6-7: "Sometimes it [the grammar] is likened to a light in the darkness (*tamasi jyotiḥ*)." Obviously Nakamura has in mind *TK* 1.18cd: *yad asminn eva tamasi jyotiḥ śuddhaṃ vivartate* //. But from *TK* 1.17-22, it is evident that the line describes *brahman*, not *vyākaraṇa*. Cf. Vṛṣabha, pp. 50.19-51.10, p. 51.21-24.

3.4 P. 288.9-10, fn. 34: "According to Bhartṛhari the sacred study of grammar aimed at continuity (*nitya*) and correctness of language." *TK* 1.29, to which Nakamura here refers as evidence in support of his remark, runs thus: *nānarthikām imāṃ kaścid vyavasthāṃ kartum arhati / tasmān nibadhyate nityā*²⁴ *sādhutva-viśayā smṛtiḥ* //. How can *nityā* be translated as "continuity" or be construed as an adjective of language? It is obviously an adjective qualifying *smṛti*.

3.5 P. 288.22-24, fn. 38: "Bhartṛhari illustrates this point [that there cannot be an understanding of the real nature of words without grammar] by means of the simile of the mirror which reflects the images of various objects." As pointed out in 3.3 above, *TK* 1.20 is about *brahman*, not grammar.

3.6 P. 288.30-32, p. 301.23 (cp. p. 301.30-31): "... [Bhartṛhari] came to the conclusion that words were component parts of the *Brahman* and therefore on the same level as it." This is a gross misrepresentation of Bhartṛhari's metaphysics, but considerations of space prevent me from including here a proof to that effect. For my understanding of Bhartṛhari's position, I refer the reader to my Harvard dissertation (1970).

3.7 P. 292.4-6, fn. 56: "He [Bhartṛhari] holds, too, that something which may be quite difficult to exist in actual life must nevertheless be acknowledged if it is laid down in the sacred *āgama*." *atyantam atathā-bhūte nimitte śruty-upāśrayāt / dṛśyate 'lāta-cakrāḍau vastv-ākāra-nirūpaṇā* //

¹⁸ *anādīr agrhyamāṇa-kāraṇa ācāropadeśa āgama ity āgama-lakṣaṇam*. (Vṛṣabha, p. 82.15).

¹⁹ *TK* 1.26d; *V* 1.74 p. 139.7; *TK* 1.124 *V* p. 203.7-9; *V* 1.125 p. 204.3-4; *TK* 2.482-484, 486-487.

²⁰ *V* 1.108 p. 178.1; *TK* 3.7.164ab; *TK* 3.8.23.

²¹ *V* 1.11 p. 41.1; *V* 1.127 p. 205.6, p. 206.1-2; *V* 1.130 p. 210.5; *TK* 1.132 *V* p. 212.3-4.

²² *V* 1.24-26 p. 65.3; *V* 2.235; *TK* 3.11.6, 9.

²³ *pāramparyeṇāvicchinna upadeśa āgamaḥ śruti-lakṣaṇaḥ smṛti-lakṣaṇaś ca*. (*Tripāḍi* p. 8.17-18); *TK* 1.41 *V* p. 98.5.

²⁴ The correct reading is *śiṣṭaiḥ*. See *V* 1.29 pp. 84.6-85.3; Vṛṣabha, p. 84.17-25.

(TK 1.131/1.121). Here again Nakamura misses the contextually appropriate meaning of the word *śruti* (see 2.13, fn. 11 above). The verse means: “[Even] when the cause [of the coming into currency of a denotative form, that is, the referent] is of an altogether different nature (that is, does not possess the nature of a spatially continuous thing) [then also], because of the [very] recourse to the denotative form, a cognition of the form of a thing is found in the case of “firebrand-wheel”, etc.”²⁵

4.1 Incorrect conclusions: Although the central theme of Nakamura’s article is to show how Bhartṭhari preferred testimony to logical reasoning (see 4.2 below), he drops hints throughout his article to the effect that somehow Bhartṭhari’s advocacy of *āgama* was half-hearted and superficial (p. 282.16-21, p. 285.33-34, p. 290.9-10, p. 299.22-24, p. 300.1-3, 5-7, p. 302.13-16). This is not only contradictory but also lacks justification in the form of supporting evidence from Bhartṭhari’s writings.

4.2 Nakamura (p. 290.11-13, 32-33, p. 291.9-11, p. 292.2-10, p. 295.2-6) depicts Bhartṭhari as a philosopher who had declared a total war against inference or logical reasoning. From the preceding sections it is clear that Nakamura’s inability to interpret Bhartṭhari’s remarks accurately has led him to this wrong view of a pioneer Indian philosopher.²⁶ What Bhartṭhari actually does²⁷ is to draw attention to the lack of guarantee about the validity of an inferential cognition and to point out the limitations of inference. An inferential cognition may turn out to be true or false.²⁸ Its unreliability is borne out by the perpetual differences of opinion among philosophers.²⁹ The fact that inference is governed by three factors — perception,³⁰ inherited lore,³¹ and language³² — provides many

²⁵ Besides the incorrect remarks pointed out in these sections, Nakamura’s article contains a number of unsubstantiated remarks. For example, he does not furnish any evidence in support of the statements appearing at the following places: pp. 285.35-286.2; p. 291.12-15; pp. 296.28-297.25.

²⁶ Nakamura (p. 287.1-16; p. 298.8-15; p. 302.21-24; p. 303.3-4) criticizes Bhartṭhari for refuting inference with the help of inference. As there is no evidence of any wholesale refutation of inference by Bhartṭhari, it follows that this criticism is unwarranted.

²⁷ The following portion of the present section is reproduced from §§ 1.8-11 of my Harvard dissertation referred to in the bibliography.

²⁸ *ko hy anavasthita-sādharmya-vaidharmyeṣu nityam alabdha-niścayeṣu puruṣa-tarkeṣu viśvāṣaḥ.* (V 1.30 p. 86.2-3) “How can one trust the inferences drawn by [ordinary] persons — [inferences] in which the similarity and dissimilarity [of entities] are uncertain and about which one always lacks certitude?” V 1.38 p. 96.3.

²⁹ *yānenānumito ’py arthaḥ kuśalair anumātrbhiḥ / abhiyuktatarair anyair anyathaivopapādyate //* (TK 1.34) “A point inferred with effort by skilled logicians is accounted for quite differently by other [logicians] of still greater skill.” V pp. 90.9-92.3; BSS p. 285.5-6.

³⁰ How perception figures in inference (fn. 31a below) and how it can occasionally

grounds for possible error; none of these factors assures a valid knowledge of reality. Moreover, it is often found that an event or result predicted through inference does not take place because of some change in the environment.³³ Further, there are branches and stages of philosophical inquiry in which the unrestricted validity of inference cannot be accepted. In deciding non-mundane matters like whether a specific kind of knowledge or conduct causes merit or demerit, inference cannot be given a blank cheque. Such questions arise if at all one is ready to accept the authority of some scriptural lore; if one's logical instincts forbid one to believe in any tradition, these problems do not exist.³⁴ Once, however,

lead to an invalid inference is pointed out in the following remark: ... *pākādy-anumānārthāni kriyā-viśeṣeṣu pratiniyatāny aṅgāni vipralambhārthāny api kvaścit kathañcid upādīyante* (V 1.34 p. 92.4-5) "Some people somehow take to (start the performance of) those components [of actions] which are regularly related to specific actions and which are intended for (to lead someone to) the inference of actions like cooking even for the purpose of deceiving [someone]". In the light of the explanation given by Vṛṣabha (p. 92.24-27), the purport of this remark is as follows: To deceive someone, say, a mendicant, one may start performing actions which are usually performed in the process of cooking. Thinking that he will get a sumptuous meal, the mendicant may stay around only to find that he has been cleverly deceived. Thus, his inference based on perception makes him a laughing stock.

³¹ (a) ... *tad-avirodhād evānumāna-siddhiḥ. yad vānumite 'pi tāvan na niścīyate yāvat pratyakṣāgamābhyām na pratītam iti* (Vṛṣabha, p. 92.23-24) "An inference becomes valid only when it does not conflict with them (namely, perception and *āgama*; for the latter see 3.2 above). Or, even when [an entity] is inferred, a definite conclusion [concerning it] is not reached as long as [it] is not borne out by perception and *āgama*." (b) It seems that, according to Bhartṛhari, one acquires most of the *āgama* without one's noticing it. In its most general sense, "inherited lore" (see 3.2 above) *āgama* pervades language entirely; in fact, it is nothing but language understood in an abstract sense, as a totality of signs and sign-combinations, as *paśyanti*; and, in its particular sense, "tradition" or "traditional thought of a philosophical school", it affects language considerably (V 1.24-26 p. 65.3-4; V 1.121 p. 199.3-4; Vṛṣabha, p. 199.16-17; TK 2.134-137; BSS pp. 138.8-139.11; TK 2.235-237 and V; TK 3.11.6, 9). As the first language that one learns, at least, is internalized without one's being conscious of it, so also are the inherited lore and traditional thought contained in it. Inferences of logicians, therefore, cannot be totally independent of either.

³² (a) Bhartṛhari (TK 1.129 V p. 209.2-3) points out that inference means determining what a linguistic unit can mean in the case of those thinkers who use inference only to interpret scriptural lore. (b) For the influence of language on inferences, see fn. 31b above.

³³ *avasthā-deśa-kālānām bhedād bhinnāsu śaktiṣu | bhāvānām anumānena prasiddhir atidurlabhā ||* (TK 1.32) "It is extremely difficult to establish [the existence, or nature, of] things on the strength of inference, as the capacities [of the things] become different in different states, regions, and times." V pp. 88.5-89.6; TK 1.33 V p. 90.3-6.

³⁴ V 1.27 p. 82.3-4; *nāgamād rte dharmaṣu tarkeṇa vyavatiṣṭhate* | (TK 1.30b) "Merit (favorable non-mundane result) cannot be determined with logical reasoning, without *āgama*." *adṛṣṭārthānām karmaṇām phala-niyame sva-bhāva-samvid āgama-pratibaddhā* (V 1.30 p. 86.1-2) "In determining the fruits of actions intended for non-mundane results, the knowledge of the nature [of the actions, that is, the knowledge whether the

some authority is accepted, inference can properly be used only for the purposes of interpretation and justification; it cannot be used to oppose or uproot the authoritative source. It is always possible to deduce through some inference a conclusion contradictory or detrimental to that of a scripture,³⁵ but so doing, one contradicts one's own initial acceptance of the validity of the scripture. For this reason, in transcendental matters, inference is to be restricted to the interpretation and justification of the accepted authority.³⁶ Just as it is incapable of contradicting scriptural lore, for the two do not belong to the same sphere, in the same way it is incapable of contradicting or invalidating a cognition derived from extraordinary perception.³⁷ Furthermore, it cannot be used to question the nature of the final postulates of a theory or system. There is a limit to which one can answer the question, "Why is it so?" At some level, it is inevitable that one will be forced to say, "Well, this is the very nature of the thing(s); it cannot be otherwise." We cannot go on questioning the postulates of a theory indefinitely with a "why". If, for example, an atomist (*Vaiśeṣika*) were asked, "Why is it that the smallest particles combine in a particular way?" he would point out that specific particles attract certain other particles only. But this is just another way of phrasing the point in question; it does not answer the "why".³⁸

5.1 Incorrect comparisons: As I have demonstrated so far, there are serious flaws in Nakamura's understanding and statement of Bhartṭhari's views. Consequently, his comparisons are of little value. I shall touch upon only one. Nakamura (p. 283.25-27) remarks that Bhartṭhari's position on the eternality of the *Vedas* is "precisely the same as" that of the Mīmāṃsakas. But in fact there is an important difference. According to Bhartṭhari, after the dissolution of the universe, the *Veda* remains in a

actions are capable of non-mundane results and, if they are capable, what type of non-mundane result they produce] is tied to (is derived only from) *āgama*." TK 1.132ab.

³⁵ See TK 1.142cd/132cd in 2.16 above.

³⁶ (a) *tasmād āgamaṃ kañcit pramāṇikṛtya vyavasthite tasmin yā kācid upapattir ucyamānā pratipattāv upodbalakatvaṃ labhate* (V 1.132 p. 212.4-5) "Therefore, any piece of logical reasoning which is stated after an *āgama* has been accepted and well established, serves to strengthen one's understanding (or acceptance, or determination to practice the teaching [of the *āgama*])." (b) Bhartṭhari realizes the fact that some persons misinterpret *āgama* intentionally (V 1.31 p. 88.1-2).

³⁷ *atindriyān asaṃvedyān paśyanty ārṣeṇa cakṣuṣā / ye bhāvān vacanaṃ teṣāṃ nānu-mānena bādhyate* || (TK 1.38) "The statement of those who, with their seer's eye, see entities that are beyond senses [and] beyond feeling, is not invalidated by inference." V pp. 95.6-96.5.

³⁸ *sarve hi vādino dūram api gatvā sva-bhāvaṃ na vyativartante*. (V 1.30 p. 86.1); Vṛṣabha, p. 86.7-14; TK 3.1.95, Helā. p. 95.11-20; cf. V 1.127 pp. 205.8-206.1.

unitary, subtle form which is not different from the language-principle, *śabda-tattva-brahman*.³⁹ It again appears as a diversity with main and subsidiary divisions after the creation of the universe. The Mimāṃsakas, on the other hand, hold that even the divisions of the *Veda* are eternal, that it remains with divisions even in the event of the dissolution of the universe. See *TK* 1.5cd, *V*. pp. 24.2-26.5; *V* 1.6 p. 27.8-10; *V* 1.136 pp. 223.6-224.3; *V* 1.137 pp. 226.1-227.7.

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³⁹ *V* 1.5 p. 24.2-4 (cp. *V* 1.134 p. 216.1-2, p. 219.6-7), p. 25.2, p. 26.5; *V* 1.6 p. 27.8-10; *TK* 1.9 *V* p. 37.3-8; *TK* 1.10a *V* pp. 38.3-39.8; *TK* 1.11a *V* p. 40.1; *TK* 1.112 *V* p. 184.2; *chandaḥ-śabdena paraṃ vāk-tattvam āha*. (Vṛṣabha, p. 183.21-22); *TK* 1.137ab *V* p. 227.3-4.

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