KARIN PREISENDANZ

THE PRODUCTION OF PHILOSOPHICAL LITERATURE IN SOUTH ASIA DURING THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD (15TH TO 18TH CENTURIES): THE CASE OF THE NYĀYASŪTRA COMMENTARIAL TRADITION*

Dedicated to Mm. Professor Anantalal Thakur in respectful appreciation of his foundational contribution to the study of the history of Nyāya

The following essay will present a broad survey as well as some first observations and results concerning the Nyāyasūtra commentarial tradition and its individual scholars in the pre-colonial period, from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, in accordance with the focus of the international project ‘Sanskrit Knowledge Systems On the Eve of Colonialism’ in which I am a participant. To be able to outline the general developments and specific changes which occurred just before

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and during this period I will have to provide a wider context and therefore first present a concise survey and analysis of the earlier commentarial tradition. Only with some understanding of this pre-history, both in general and from the relevant points of view such as the commentators’ motivation in composing their works, their intended audience, their attitude towards the foundational text and other, earlier commentarial works of the tradition, and their self-understanding in general, can one proceed to ask the right questions, to examine these aspects in the commentarial tradition of the relevant pre-colonial period, and to characterize its development and special features. Wherever possible, observations relating to the social and political–historical contexts of the authors of these commentaries and to the circulation of their works will be made.

As is well known, it was during Kushana rule and the following Gupta period that the major philosophical traditions of Classical South Asia crystallized on the sub-continent. Among them, the Nyāya or ‘logic’ tradition most probably arose within an intellectual environment of thinkers who were concerned in a scholarly manner with the prerequisites and principles of sound academic debate, with its instruments and its general rules; at the same time these thinkers must have also become engaged in philosophical questions, foremost in questions belonging to the domain of epistemology, which is of immediate relevance to debate, but also in questions pertaining to philosophy of nature, that is, the realm of physics, and to some extent metaphysics. This combination of areas of intellectual concern provided fertile ground for the formation of a full-fledged philosophical tradition.¹ Inasmuch as the art of debate and reasoned argumentation is of relevance to all philosophical and scholarly endeavours, it is not surprising that the Nyāya tradition from early on occupied a central position in South Asian intellectual history, which is reflected in its strong influence on other philosophical traditions and Sanskritic sciences in general, from a doctrinal as well as from a formal point of view.

The Nyāyasūtra or Nyāyaśāstra, as the foundational work of the tradition is most commonly called in the early tradition, is ascribed to the sage Aksapāda of the Gotama clan; there are indications that it was probably finalized in its classical form available to us nowadays by anonymous redactors in the first half of the fifth century.² Next to its most ancient core, i.e., the first and last chapters, which betrays the

¹ For a summary, cf. e.g., Franco/Preisendanz (1998a).
origins of Nyāya in the tradition of debate, in its three middle chapters the work presents – in a more or less systematic arrangement – numerous dialectically structured discussions on epistemological, psychological and metaphysical topics, as well as on topics of philosophy of nature,\(^3\) leading to the establishment of the position of the Nyāya proponent. The partners in conversation, or rather opponents in dispute, who can be identified by us or were already identified by the early commentators, are thinkers within the Nyāya tradition itself and contemporary or slightly anterior philosophers of rival traditions such as the Sāṅkhya and the Mīmāṃsā, the latter especially in the context of philosophy of language. Further opponents can be determined as adherents of the largely lost materialist tradition of Indian philosophy and as philosophers belonging to the early Buddhist traditions of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra as well as representatives of early classical Buddhist scholastics. Owing to their diametrically opposed metaphysical and epistemological presuppositions, the exchange of opinions with the Buddhist thinkers as reflected in the \textit{Nyāyasūtra} was especially fierce and controversial; prominent examples are the questions of the existence of an individual, permanent and substantial Self (ātman) in (wo)man\(^4\) or of the nature and very possibility of means of valid cognition (pramāṇa).\(^5\)

Those philosophers who were close to the tradition of the \textit{Nyāyasūtra} and studied it in subsequent times must have considered their required contribution to the tradition to consist in the explanation of the pithy statements of the \textit{Sūtra} under the aspect of their wording and content. This was achieved by them in accordance with their own philosophical ideas and knowledge of the tradition as such, probably taking into special consideration the explanations of their teachers; in the process they brought the philosophical discussions in the \textit{Sūtra} itself and earlier commentaries on it up to date. Most of the literature of classical Nyāya thus presents itself in the form of commentaries on the \textit{Nyāyasūtra}, sub-commentaries and further commentaries on these, and we know of quite a number of works belonging to these genres.

\(^{3}\) For a brief survey, cf. e.g., Franco/Preisendanz (1998b).
Except for some fragments, however, these works have been lost. Only a few independent treatises belonging to the classical and early medieval periods have been preserved or are known to have existed; the major ones among them which have come down to us, such as the Nyāyamañjarī and the Nyāyabhūṣaṇa, frequently refer to the Nyāyasūtra, together with the earliest commentary, the Nyāyabhāṣya, to its only preserved classical sub-commentary, the Nyāyavārttika, and to other lost commentarial literature, and therefore can be considered to partake to a certain degree of the nature of a commentary. From the point of view of our contemporary analysis of the situation, owing to their conciseness and resulting ambiguity the roughly five hundred ancient sūtra-s of the Nyāyasūtra were suitable to serve as directives for the discussion with rival philosophers even half a millennium after their composition, just as ancient landmarks may provide guiding points of reference even for the pilots of modern vehicles.

However, as has been observed by others with respect to Sanskritica commentarial literature in general, according to the – mostly only implicit – understanding of the authors of these commentarial works the individual aphorisms already contain the opinions and positions explicated by themselves in the light of the contemporary state of philosophical discussion; the doctrinal edifice which has been sketched in the Nyāyasūtra, including the rival critiques and positions, thus anticipates – as we would express it – the later developments or can harmoniously accommodate them. No express claim is made to personal intellectual originality or innovation on the part of the individual thinkers; it is rather explicitly denied in some cases. A further explicit authorial attitude to be encountered is that the commentarial activity serves the re-establishment of doctrinal positions expressed in the foundational work which have been misunderstood by opponents and therefore attacked or dismissed, with the result that their real meaning has become concealed. Uddyotakara, the sixth-century author of the Nyāyavārttika on the Nyāyabhāṣya, states in the auspicious invocatory verse (maṅgalaśloka) of his work:

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8 A notable exception to this is the Nyāyasāra by Bhāsarvajña.
"In the following I will [now] compose a compendium of the teaching (śāstra) that has been proclaimed by Aksapāda, the foremost of sages, for the sake of the world’s [mental and spiritual] peace, [a compendium] which [should] cause the misperceptions of poor logicians to vanish."\(^9\)

It is generally assumed and indeed highly probable that the ‘poor logicians’ (kutārikika) referred to by Uddyotakara here were foremost the proponents of the rising school of Buddhist epistemology and logic, in the first place Vasubandhu and Dignāga,\(^10\) the major critics of relevant aspects of the early Nyāya tradition, with whose novel conceptions Uddyotakara concerned himself in extensive polemic discussions. From our point of view, but by no means explicated in this way by Uddyotakara himself, their critique resulted from the antiquity and outdatedness of the foundational text of Nyāya in logical matters, a situation which would normally require, as the appropriate reaction of a commentator whose tradition is under attack, a fresh interpretation of the old positions in the light of the new developments, here the developments in logic brought about by Buddhist thinkers. However, Aksapāda’s status of a sage (muni) addressed by Uddyotakara in his maṅgalaśloka may have ruled out such an interpretation in the latter’s eyes. This status becomes evident also in the concluding verse of the Nyāyabhāṣya where Vātsyāyana refers to Aksapāda as a rṣi;\(^11\) could it be that even though the last touches on the final redaction of the classical Nyāyasūtra cannot have taken place much earlier than some fifty years before the composition of the Bhāṣya,\(^12\) Vātsyāyana rightly realized that the core portions of the Sūtra go further back in time? As regards Uddyotakara’s reference to the purpose of Aksapāda’s teaching, namely, to the mental and spiritual peace of the world (jagataḥ śamāya), it could

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\(^9\) Cf. \textit{NV} 1, 3–4:
\begin{verbatim}
yad aksapādah pravaro munīnām śamāya śāstram jagato jagāda /
kutārikājñānanivṛttiheḥ kāryate tasya mayā nibandhah ṛṣi.
\end{verbatim}

Umesh Mishra, whose account of the history of classical Nyāya displays an astonishingly fierce anti-Buddhist attitude, thinks that the verse refers to Buddhist attempts to ‘destroy’ or ‘distort’ the \textit{Nyāyasūtra} because their own arguments had been refuted with the help of the powerful logical and dialectical means expounded there (cf. Mishra, 1966: 21).

\(^10\) Cf. already Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary treated below on pp. 60–61.

\(^11\) Cf. \textit{Nbh} 320, 17–18:
\begin{verbatim}
yo kṣapadāṃ rṣim nyāyah pratyabhād vadaṭāṃ varam /
tasya vātsyāyana idam bhāṣyajālam avartayat ṛṣi.
\end{verbatim}

well have been provoked by the epithet ‘desiring the good of the world’ (jagaddhitaisin) assigned to the Buddha as an authority in Dignāga’s famous maṅgalaśloka of his Pramāṇasamuccaya.\textsuperscript{13}

The intense controversy of the Nyāya tradition with the Buddhist epistemologists in the wake of Dharmakīrti’s formidable works continued to inspire Naiyāyikas to turn to commentarial work in the described manner. In the tenth century, Vācaspati Miśra, according to the maṅgalaśloka-s of his Nyāyavārttikatātparyāṭikā, claims to have defended the Nyāyavārttika against criticism that is based on the mere distortion of Uddyotakara’s explanation of Akṣapāda’s work.\textsuperscript{14}

Vācaspati Miśra’s wish concluding the maṅgalavāda points again towards the Buddhist logicians as ‘live’ opponents. He says:

“I wish to obtain at least some merit from extracting (saving) Uddyotakara’s over-aged cows (words), which have become submerged in the hard-to-traverse swamp of bad compositions.”\textsuperscript{15}

His metaphor of the ‘over-aged cows’ suggests that Vācaspati Miśra was well aware of the weakness and obsolescence of Uddyotakara’s logic once Dharmakīrti had developed his new ideas on the

\textsuperscript{13} Cf. Hattori (1968), Appendix A following p. 238 (Sanskrit reconstruction), p. 1, 1–2: pramāṇabhbūya jagaddhitaisiṇe pranāmya śāstre sugatāya tāyine / pramāṇasiddhyai svamatāt samuccayah karisyate viprasṛtād ihaikataḥ //.

On the relationship of the various epithets according to Dharmakīrti’s and his commentators’ interpretation and on the relevance of this relationship for the proof-strategy of the Pramāṇasiddhi chapter of the Pramāṇavārttika cf. Franco (1997, chapter 1). Also Vatsyāyana’s use of the epithet ‘best of speakers’ (vadatām varah) relating to Akṣapāda (cf. n. 11 above) may have been a reaction to the maṅgalaśloka of a prominent Buddhist treatise, namely, of Nāgārjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (MMK 11, 15–16), in which the Buddha is characterized as ‘the best of speakers’:

\textit{yah pratītyasamutpādam prapañcospaśamāṃ śivam /
deśayāmāśa sambuddhas tam vande vadatām varam} //.

\textsuperscript{14} Cf. NVTT 1, 7–8:

granthavyākhyācchalenāvai nirastākhiładūṣaṇā /
nyāyavārttikatātparyaṭikāṃbhir vidhāsyate //.

\textsuperscript{15} Cf. NVTT 1, 9–10:

icchāmi kim api punyam dastarakunibandhapāṇkamanām /
uddyaṭotaraṃgavīnām atijāraṇīṃ samuddharanāt //.

Cf. also the first verse of the puspikā (NVTT 700, 2–3):

\textit{yad alambhi kim api punyam dastarakunibandhapāṇkamanām /
uddyaṭotaraṃgavīnām atijāraṇīṃ samuddharanāt} //. . .

A slightly reworded form of the latter verse appears in the concluding verses of the Nyāyasūcini.bandha ascribed to Vācaspati:

\textit{yad alambhi kim api punyam dastarakunibandhapāṇkamanām /
śrīgoṭomasuṣaugavīnām atijāraṇīṃ samuddharanāt} //... .

According to Umesh Mishra’s interpretation Vācaspati refers here to the attempts of the Buddhists to ‘do wrong’ to the Nyāyasūtra (cf. Mishra, 1966: 22).
foundations laid by Dignāga and his own teacher Īśvarasena. 16 This clearly contrasts with what Vācaspati has to say on Uddyotakara’s maṅgalaśloka and the role of his commentary vis-à-vis the teaching of Akṣapāda: The ‘poor logicians,’ whom he identifies as Dignāga and other hostile scholars posterior (arvācīna) to Vātsyāyana, had covered the śāstra with the darkness of bad reasons, with the result that it was no longer suitable to determine the true nature of things; Uddyotakara, however, removed this darkness by means of the light of his composition. 17 We can infer here that for Vācaspati Miśra Akṣapāda, the venerable sage (bhagavān munih), 18 remains the timeless authority; only the attempts by later scholars, such as Uddyotakara, to defend his teachings against unfair and unfounded accusations can lose their strength and become antiquated. Akṣapāda’s authority – as opposed to that to which the Buddhist opponents appeal – is further stressed by Vācaspati Miśra’s employment of epithets that, once more, are commonly and typically applied to the Buddha. In one of his maṅgalaśloka-s he calls Akṣapāda a ‘protector’ (tāyin), 19 a term which is commonly used by Buddhists and Jains as an epithet of the Buddha and of Mahāvira and other Tīrthamkaras respectively 20 and which immediately evokes again Dignāga’s maṅgalaśloka of the Pra-māṇasamuccaya; 21 furthermore, when referring to Uddyotakara’s successful efforts in the defence of the śāstra at an earlier time in the history of Indian philosophy Vācaspati Miśra applies the epithet ‘of highest compassion’ (paramakārūnika) to Akṣapāda 22 which may take its inspiration from Dharmakīrti’s stress on compassion as the proof or means of the Buddha’s being an authority. 23

16 Cf. also Thakur (1947: 37).
17 Cf. NVTT 2, 4–6: yadyapi bhāsyakṛtā kṛtavyutpādanam etat tathāpi dignāgaprabhṛtibhir arvācīnaiḥ kuhetusāntamasasamutthāpanenācchādītam śāstraṁ na tattvanirṇayāya paryāptam ity uddyotakareṇa svanibandhoddyotena tad apanīyata iti prayojanavān ārambha iti.
18 Cf. NVTT 2, 10 (cf. the quotation below, n. 22).
19 Cf. NVTT 1, 5–6:

namāmi dharmavijñānavairāgyaiśvaryasāline /
 nidhaye vāgyaśuddhīnām akṣapādāya tāyine //.
20 On the original meaning and development of the term tāyin, cf. Roth (1968).
21 Cf. Hattori, loc. cit. (cf. n. 13 above). This occurrence is evidence for the fact that the meaning of ‘protector’ had been attached to the Sanskritized term tāyin even before the seventh or eighth century, that is, the period which has roughly been assumed by Roth for this change (cf. Roth, 1968: 61).
22 Cf. NVTT 2, 10: paramakārūnika hi bhagavān munir jagad eva duḥkhapaṇ-kamagnam uddidhīrṣṭāḥ sāstraṁ pranītavān.
23 Cf. PV Pramāṇasiddhi chapter, v. 34; see also Franco (1997: 19ff.).
Aniruddha’s brief commentary, written probably at the end of the tenth century on difficult passages in the *Nyāyabhaśya*, *Nyāyavārttika* and *Nyāyavārttikatātparyatikā*, is not preserved for the first *adhyāya* where one would expect explicit statements as to the author’s conception of his own place in the tradition and his attitude towards its foundational work; elsewhere, it does not yield any relevant information. Bhāṭṭavāgīśvara’s *Nyāyatātparyādīpikā* is the only completely preserved direct commentary on the *Nyāyasūtra* between the *Nyāyabhaśya* and the fifteenth-century *Nyāyatattvāloka*; because it often follows the *Nyāyavārttikatātparyatikā* in its interpretation of the sūtra-s, it has to be dated between this work and Udayana’s *Pariśuddhi* (first quarter of the eleventh century), which was certainly not known to its author. Bhāṭṭavāgīśvara, who may have been from the south, merely mentions that the *Nyāyabhaśya* and *Nyāyavārttika* served as his basis, that is, that he had examined the former word by word and followed the latter in order to be able to throw light on the intention of the *Sūtra*. The final *pūspikā*, which consists of two verses and concludes both the fifth *adhyāya* and the whole work, has not been completely preserved and of its reconstruction I fail to grasp some details. It is clearly implied, though, that according to Bhāṭṭavāgīśvara, the ‘Indra of sages’ (*munindra*) Akṣapāda anticipated the controversy with the Buddhists and therefore enjoys timeless authority: Śiva himself smilingly approved of his work because Akṣapāda wished to provide those who partake of intimate union with God (*iṣasāyujyabhāj*) with dexterity in speech, considering that it would be indispensable for the instant defeat of their partners in debate (*vādin*) who are garrulous when it comes to claiming that their opponents have been defeated and to pronouncing unjustified objections; further, Akṣapāda considered that in the face of such partners in debate those close to God were also in need of dexterity in speech for achieving the knowledge of the Self and proclaiming it. Immediately before this, as the conclusion properly speaking of the fifth *adhyāya* in the first quarter of the verse, knowledge of the true nature of the ‘points of defeat’ in debate

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24 However, there is a reference to his *Vivaraṇa* in Udayana’s *Pariśuddhi* which presumably relates to the first chapter of this commentary and testifies to the original completeness of the work; cf. Thakur (2000: 114).

25 Cf. *NTD* 1, 5–6:

anvikṣyānupadām bhāṣyam apy anukramya vārtikam /
nyāyasūtrārthatātparyādīpikayāṃ vidhāsyate //;

cf. also Thakur (1970: 37).
determined in the final āhni ka is said to be of great consequence in the
two hostile types of debate, i.e., the verbal contest (jalpa) and the
contentious debate in which the opponent merely puts forth objec-
tions (vitaṇḍā). The reference to knowledge of the Self (ātma-
viṣayajñāna) and closeness to God in connection with hostile debate
thus alludes again to the heated controversy with the Buddhists —
skilled in debate and convinced of their superior logic and argu-
mentation — which centred on the two issues of the existence of the
Self and God.²⁶

Thus, the programmatic statements of the examined major com-
mentators of classical Nyāya²⁷ reveal that the Nyāya scholars
themselves explicitly acknowledged that what we conceive as the
lively and creative development of philosophical ideas in their time
took place especially in the controversy with the Buddhist philoso-
phers; we can also observe how the Naiyāyikas managed to place this
perceived evolution of ideas within the formal framework of the
obviously timeless authority of the Nyāyasūtra. The debate with the
Buddhists was always conducted in view of this timeless authority but
nevertheless accompanied by some conception of the historical
progression of ideas and concepts in the context of this exchange and

²⁶ Cf. NTD, Thakur’s introduction, pp. ṭha-ḍa, for a reconstruction of the verses in
śārdulavikriḍita metre:
evaṃ nigrahavastuttvam akhilāṃ nirṇītam etat punah, jñātaṃ jolpavitandaivyor bahu-
phalam tīvīte svayam vādinām /  
[sadyo nigrahajātvāda]mukharā jetuṃ katham vādināh, śakyanē katham evam ātma-
viṣayam jñānaṃ katham vocyte //  
iti jagati janānām tīsāśyujyabhājām anupajanita [dāksayāṃ dītisate] bhāsaṇeṣu /  
pāṣupatir api yasmai sasmitah sādhu sādhu itvadad (recte: ity avadad) avatu so ‘smaṇ
ākṣapāda munīndraḥ //.

My tentative translation runs as follows (reconstructed elements are placed between
round brackets): “In this way the full true nature of the topic of defeat [in debate] has
been determined. If this, however, is understood, it will by itself produce rich fruit in
verbal contest and contentious debate (i.e., such debates in which the opponent
merely contends the proponent’s position) for those involved in debates. — May
Ākṣapāda, the Indra of sages, protect us, [he] to whom the Lord of Animals for his
part smilingly said ‘Excellent, excellent!’ (when the former formed the wish to endow)
those persons in the world who partake of intimate union with God (with dexterity)
in speech which had not yet arisen [in them], wondering how partners in debate who
are loquacious (in claiming defeat [of their opponents] and pronouncing unjustified
objections) could be defeated instantly, [and] how the knowledge which has the Self
as its object [could] in this way (i.e., if one is confronted with such opponents) (?)
[arise] or be proclaimed (?).”

²⁷ Within the scope of the present contribution, the important evidence of Jayanta
Bhaṭṭa’s Nyāyamaṛḍī and Bhāsarvajña’s Nyāyabhūṣana, which may be considered
as part of the classical commentarial tradition in the wider sense of the word, will
have to be considered separately.
thus it would be unjustified to speak of blind traditionalism or lack of historical consciousness on the part of the Nyāya scholars.

The defence of the authority of the Nyāyasūtra against the powerful Buddhist epistemologists constituted the main inner or intellectual motivation of the commentators whose works have been preserved; the frequent references by Buddhist authors of the classical period to other, now lost commentaries allow the inference that their authors as well participated in this defence. This fruitful controversy reached its culmination in the early medieval period, in the eleventh century. Now the debate is for the first time conducted in truly independent treatises, foremost by the great logician Udayana. Udayana was obviously dissatisfied with the many commentaries and sub-(sub-)commentaries on the Nyāyasūtra which were after all formally and structurally bound by the given, partially very archaic formulations and argumentation of their root text(s), and no longer convinced about the effectiveness of works belonging to this genre when the logically impeccable establishment of the central metaphysical presuppositions of the Nyāya tradition against the formidable Buddhists was concerned. However, next to his famous treatises establishing the existence of an individual and permanent Self (ātman) and the existence of an omniscient eternal creator-god, the Ātmataītiviviveka and the Nyāyakusumāñjali, and two small works which present exhaustive definitions pertaining to the central topics of the Nyāya system, the Lakṣanāvali and the Lakṣanamālā, Udayana also devoted himself to writing a commentary on Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary on the Nyāyavārttika; this occurred demonstrably and, I think, significantly after he had completed his independent treatises.28

Commenting on Vācaspati’s comments on Uddyotakara’s maṅgalaśloka, Udayana makes a few remarks that point to his historical understanding of the Nyāya tradition. He considers the Nyāyavārttika an ancient (cirantana) composition that has been embraced or recognized by great personalities (mahājanaparigarhīta), obviously a sign of its authority. Nevertheless, there are many other such compositions; why bother about this one? In the course of his discussion Udayana suggests inter alia that its tradition may have been interrupted or broken off. Elaborating upon Vācaspati’s cow-metaphor (cf. above, p. 60) he speaks of Uddyotakara’s philosophical tradition as the cows’ (i.e., words’) youth; this youth,

however, has been lost owing to the cows’ maturation in time, i.e.,
their getting older with time. Why then, some fictitious partner in
discourse asks, should they not be rejuvenated by means of directly
administering the life-giving elixir consisting in the readily obtained

teaching of Vācaspati’s guru Trilocana? Udayana considers this
suggestion to be appropriate; however, first the Vārttika has to be
extracted from the swamp of bad treatises and put on firm ground
again, this ground being Vācaspati’s commentary on it. The even
more ancient Nyāyabhāṣya, however, is conceived by Udayana as
having the form of the body of the śāstra and thus not considered by
him as something additional to it, just like the Mīmāṁsā in relation
to the Veda; this statement has a predecessor already in Uddyotakara’s
puspikā where he calls Vātsyāyana ‘the likeness (pratima) of Aksapāda,’ or — following another reading of the verse — ascribes
to him the intuition (pratibhā) of Aksapāda. This close association
of Sūtra and Bhāṣya, not unparalleled in the early classical
philosophical literature, may well account for the fact that even after

29. Next to Trilocana’s presumed lost commentary on the Nyāyabhāṣya, his main
work Nyāyamaṇjarī could have had the form of an extensive commentary on the
Nyāyasūtra itself (cf. Steinkellner, 1961: 157; Solomon, 1986: 560, 564); Thakur,
however, considers the Nyāyamaṇjarī to have been a commentary on the
Nyāyabhāṣya (cf. Thakur, 2000: 110). As only fragments of Trilocana’s writings are
preserved, it is difficult to determine the formal nature of these works (cf. also
Thakur, 1947: 37) because he could have commented directly on selected sūtra-s also
in a commentary on the Nyāyabhāṣya or even the Nyāyavārttika.

30. Cf. NVTP 3, 4–11: nanu cirantane ‘smin nibandhe mahājanaparipṛbhite bahavo
 nibandhās tathāvidhāṃ sanscrit kalpanā mebhāvīහṃ anenyet aha — icchānīti (cf. NVTT 1, 9, quoted in
n. 15 above). nanu yadi granthakārāsampradāyīcchchedena te nibandhāh katham
 kunibandhāḥ (cf. again NVTT 1, 9)? atya sampradāyo vicchinnah katham tattvāpyam
 vicchinnasampradāyā tātparyātyāḥ sambandha ita ita aha — ati jaraṇāṃ (cf. NVTT
1, 10, quoted in n. 15 above) iti. uddyotakarasampradāyo hy amāśaṃ yavunam. taca
ekalaparipākavāsād galitam iva. kim nāma tri lo cānaguroḥ sakāśāḥ upa-
 deśarasāyanam āsāditam amāśaṃ punarnāvibhāvyā diṣṭā iti yujyate. na ca
 kuni bandhāparikamagnānaṃ tadi dātum uci nat. atas tasmād utkṛṣya svanibandhasthale
 sanniveśanarūpapramuddharanaṃ eva sāmpratam ity arthaḥ.

31. Cf. NVTP 3, 19–20: bhāṣyasya ca tadvivaraṇarūpayasya śāstraśa rīrūpayatayā na
 śāstraḥ adhikyaṃ manyate mīmāṁsāyā iva vedat.

32. Cf. NV 530 9: yad aksapādpratimo bhāṣyam vātsyāyano jagau /... . This reading
is confirmed by Vindhyeshvari Prasad Dvivedin’s edition in Bibliotheca Indica 113
(Calcutta 1887–1914), reset as Kashi Sanskrit Series 33 in 1915 (Benares). However,
in his extensive erudite introduction, the esteemed pandit refers to the relevant verse
with the alternate reading -pratibho, in this context preferred by him to -pratimo, as
read by some of his mss. (cf. p. 56 of his Bhūmikā to the B.I. edition and p. 73 of the
Bhūmikā in KSS 33, with n. 2). The edition of the NV in the Calcutta Sanskrit Series
(No. 18 and 29, Calcutta 1936–1944), which solely relies on the two editions by
Vindhyeshvari Prasad Dvivedin (cf. Preface p. 7), curiously enough reads aksapā-
Uddyotakara’s time quite a number of now lost commentaries were produced on both the basic sūtra-text and the Bhāṣya.\(^{33}\)

With Udayana, whom tradition places in Mithilā,\(^{34}\) the period of voluminous commentaries and sub-(sub-)commentaries on the Nyāyasūtra seems to come to an end and a new period begins in which a large number of independent treatises are produced that continue the new development ushered in by Udayana’s logical, terminological and argumentative innovations. Further, both Udayana’s independent and commentarial works now become the objects of commentarial efforts; it may be owing to a large extent to this stellar personality, who was rightly recognized as an innovator of pivotal importance,\(^{35}\) that the classical Nyāya commentaries known to us have been preserved, for had he not chosen to comment upon Vācaspiti Miśra’s Tātparātīkā this work as well as the Nyāyabhāṣya and -vārttika might have subsequently been neglected and perhaps even lost. Admittedly, there are references to a few works commenting upon the ancient foundational text in the centuries after Udayana. In the twelfth century Śrīmān(?), the teacher of the author of the so-called Sena court commentary on the Vaiśeṣikasūtra written in Vallāla Sena’s time, may have composed a Nyāyasūtra commentary. His disciple describes him as reviving Nyāya studies by means of his mature conceptualization after Gotama’s words had become endangered by the speech of bad people (durjana); similarly, with

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(Footnote 32 continued).

\(^{33}\) Vācaspiti Miśra’s teacher Trilocana has already been mentioned; for further information and materials on Bhāvivikta, Aviddhakarṇa, Śaṅkarasvāmin, Viṣavārūpa, Udbhāṣa and Adhyayana, cf. the contributions listed above, n. 6. Udbhāṣa, Sānātanī, called praudhagaudanaiyāyika by Udayana, and Śrīvatsa are credited with commentaries on the basic text only (Thakur, 1970: 34, 2000: 113); such a commentary is also reported to have been written by the teacher of the Vaiśeṣika scholar Vyomaśiva (cf. Thakur, 1970: 36, 1981: xxii).


regard to his own commentary on the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* he says that he is eager to demolish the positions of the heretic scholars (*pāsandipandita*). The information provided by the author of the Sena court commentary in respect to his teacher’s work on the *Nyāyasūtra* implies a general neglect of the *Nyāyasūtra* in the medieval period after the rise of Udayana. The then extant commentaries obviously did not enjoy sufficient popularity or were

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36 Cf. especially Thakur (1965: 331) as well as Thakur (1970: 36, 1981: xxii); the ninth *adhyāya* of the Sena court commentary on the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* was edited by Thakur in 1985 as an appendix to his edition of Vādindra’s long commentary on the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* (*Maharajadhiraja Kamesvar Singh Grantha Mala* 21, Darbhanga). The two pre-colophon verses of the Newari ms. (containing the tenth and last *adhyāya* of the commentary) that praise Śrīmān’s (?) revival of Gautama’s teachings and refer to the anonymous author’s own ambitions run as follows:

*durvārāsamaḥḍṛptaḥdurjanaṇavacovajrānalenāhatāḥ śrīmadgotamanirmītāḥ rasayuṭās tā bhāratiḥvallāyāḥ / yena praudhavikalpajālasalilair ujjīvītāḥ santataḥ jīyād adbhutakīrītur ujjvalagunāḥ śrīmān asau me guruḥ //*

*tatprāśādaḥ[śamā]vāptam mayaitat kiṃcid īritam / pāsandipanditāvātākhaṇḍanāhitākautukāt ||*

“Śrīmān, my teacher, of marvellous fame and splendid good qualities, should always be victorious, he who revived, by means of showers of water, [i.e.] the profusion of [his] mature conceptualization, the creepers, [i.e.] words, shaped (composed) by the glorious Gotama [and] full of sap (essence) [but] struck (assaulted) by lightning-fire, [which is] the speech of bad people who are difficult to be checked, mean (?) and arrogant.

Whatever [I] have said [here] out of an eagerness, provoked [by him], to demolish [the positions of] the heterodox scholars has been obtained by me thanks to his graciousness.”

The rather aggressive attitude towards heterodox scholars, presumably Buddhists, may be seen in connection with the revival of Brahmanism under the Sena dynasty after the preceding Buddhist Pāla dynasty had mainly supported Buddhist scholarship (cf. Chakravarti, 1906: 157, 1929–1930: 247, 1930: 24).

37 Further post-Udayana and pre-Gāṅgeśa commentaries on the *Nyāyasūtra* were a certain *Bhāskara* (cf. Thakur, 1970: 35, 1981: xxi; Sen, 1978) and, possibly, a *Ratnakoṣa* by Taranī Miśra (cf. Bhattacharya, 1947: 303, 1958: 76–79 as well as Bhattacharya 1978: chapter II, without reference to this work’s being a commentary, and Thakur, 1981: xxii; cf. also *GSP* 44, 15 [see nn. 102 and 124 below]). Cakrapāṇidatta, the eleventh-century Bengali author of the *Ayurvedadīpikā* on the *Carakasamhitā*, is credited by the late medieval commentator on the *Carakasamhitā* and Cakrapāṇidatta’s *Cikitsāsāṅgaraḥ*, Śivadāsasena (fifteenth century), with a *Nyāyavṛtti* (Thakur, loc. cit., unfortunately without reference), which would accord with Cakrapāṇidatta’s obvious first-hand knowledge of the *Nyāyasūtra*, as displayed in his commentary, especially on the philosophical–dialectical portions of *Carakasamhitā* *Vimānasthāna*, *adhyāya* 8. However, Meulenbeld’s *History of Indian Medical Literature* does not mention such a work of Cakrapāṇidatta’s or such an attribution (cf. Meulenbeld, 2000: 86). The works sometimes attributed to Cakrapāṇidatta which are listed in the *History* include a treatise on grammar (*Vyākaranatattvacandrikā*), but no work in the field of Nyāya.
not considered relevant enough to the advancement of the Nyāya tradition to be studied, repeatedly copied and spread for the purpose of study and therefore were not preserved. This proposed development should be seen in the light of the fact that about a hundred years after Udayana’s time the long-lasting and fertile controversy with the Buddhist epistemologists had come to an end.\textsuperscript{38} As is well known, the completion of the conquest of northern and eastern India towards the end of the twelfth century and the turn of the thirteenth by the Afghan–Turkish Ghurids brought an end to Buddhist learning, which was mainly located in the large monastic universities; especially Muhammad Bakhtyar Kilji’s conquest of Bihar and Bengal, that is, of regions where Buddhism had previously been generously supported by the Pāla dynasty, must have had disastrous effects on Buddhist scholarship.\textsuperscript{39} Only in remote Kashmir, next to Nepal a major refuge for Buddhist scholars, did Buddhist monastic communities continue to foster Buddhist learning until the middle of the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{40} Even though central philosophical positions of the former Buddhist opponents were still controversially discussed in South Asia, owing to historical–political changes these opponents had ceased to be living rivals with ever novel and sharp criticism of fundamental Nyāya presuppositions and especially pointed attacks on religious beliefs, such as those in the existence of the Self and God. The new major living adversaries of the Naiyāyikas were from then onwards the scholars of medieval Mīmāṃsā and the adherents of the various branches of Vedānta philosophy, both groups within the fold of āstikya as opposed to the nāstikya of the Buddhists. It appears that in spite of their radically different metaphysics and epistemology the

\textsuperscript{38} Chintaharan Chakravarti, on the other hand, blames the Buddhist dominance under the preceding Pāla rule for causing an alleged decline of Brahminical scholarship during this period. According to him, the effect of the Pālas’ sponsoring of Buddhist scholarship was so severe that even after the revival of Brahmanism under the Sena dynasty no philosophical literature was produced in Bengal. Cf. Chakravarti (1929–1930: 247–248). Monmohan Chakravarti’s opinion is less extreme; he presumes that Sanskrit Studies were not much attended to up to the time of Sena rule on account of Buddhist influences (cf. Chakravarti, 1906: 157).

\textsuperscript{39} Cf. Wink (1999: 135–149, 334–351). This does not mean, however, that Buddhism did not continue in some popular form in Bengal after these events; cf., e.g., Chakravarti (1930: 24).

\textsuperscript{40} Cf. Naudou (1980: 242–258). Orissa also provided a place of refuge for Buddhist monks from the north and was the home of Buddhist communities – with now less generous, fluctuating royal support for the building of temples and upkeep of monasteries – at least up to the sixteenth century (cf. Mitra, 1980: 224, 226). However, scholarly works by Buddhists living in this area of South Asia after the Muslim conquests in the north have not come down to us.
Naiyāyikas did not consider these groups a serious threat to the doctrinal edifice of Aksapāda and its long-claimed timeless authority. As a result its defence in the form of commentary was no longer intellectually exciting and ceased to present an urgent challenge to Nyāya scholars.

It is telling that the earliest Nyāyasūtra-related commentaries that have come down to us from the post-Buddhist period are two works of a peculiar nature: different from the older commentaries known to us they do not present a running commentary with attached independent reflections on the contemporaneous state of a certain philosophical topic, often inclusive of some polemic discussion, but treat individual, philologically as well as argumentatively difficult points of the basic text and the Nyāyacaturgranthikā, that is, the four classical commentaries from the Bhāṣya up to the Pariśuddhi. It is a purely scholarly or almost ‘antiquarian’ interest in the so-called Pañcaprasthānanyāyamahātarka, and primarily in Udayana’s commentary, that seems to have prompted the authors of these works. The later of the two, the Jain scholar Abhayatilaka, wrote his Nyāyālāṅkāra in Prahlādanapattana in Gujarat in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. Abhayatilaka, who belonged to the Kharataragaccha, was a pupil of Jinesvaraśūri and greatly indebted to his senior fellow student Lakṣmītilaka41 who – according to the concluding verse of the Nyāyālāṅkāra, which is called a pañcaprasthānanyāyamahātarkavīṣamapadavyākhyā in the colophon42 – revised the work very carefully,43 as he also did in the case of Abhayatilaka’s Dvīṣrayakāvyatikā.44 The two monks thus appear to have engaged in a joint scholarly project on the classical commentaries on the Nyāyasūtra. Abhayatilaka frequently discusses variant readings to the texts and even suggests emendations, anticipating a new, pronouncedly text-critical approach towards the foundations of a philosophical tradition. Śrīkaṇṭha’s earlier Tīpāṇaka, called a pañcaprasthānanyāyamahātarkadurgamārtha-vyākhyā in the Nyāyā-

41 Cf. the references to Jinesvara and Lakṣmītilaka in the fourth introductory verse of the work (NA 1, 11–12).
42 Cf. also the designation as sudurgamapadavyākhyā in NA 1, 14 (fourth introductory verse).
43 Cf. NA 794, 19: śrīlakṣmītilakopādhyāyaiḥ samśodhīteyam atinipuṇam /
44 Cf. Thakur (1981: xxx). Further information on Abhayatilaka is provided in the Kharataragacchaguruvāvali: he was initiated in 1235 and became upādhyāya in 1263, the same year in which he defeated the Digambara Vidyānanda in a debate held at Ujjainī (cf. Thakur, loc. cit.).
laṅkāra and declared to be its model, is preserved on only the first four sūtra-s; according to the testimony of some intermediate colophons, it contains a series of detailed topical expositions and comments (avacūrṇi-s).

Together with the further development of the text-critical approach a revival of interest in commenting extensively upon the Nyāyasūtra can be noted in the fifteenth century, with the voluminous Nyāyatattvāloka by the Naiyāyika and Dharmāśāstrin Vācaspati Miśra of Mithilā. Besides offering a commentary directly on the sūtra-s, Vācaspati provides long summaries of and discussions on portions of Gaṅgeśa’s Tattvacintāmani, thus making his commentary a vehicle of the most recent advances in Nyāya. However, he also quotes frequently from the Nyāyacaturgranthikā, which he praises as exceedingly skillful or proficient, as opposed to his own slim and unimportant work. Next to these four works, he refers to the Bhāskara, one of the few but lost post-Udayana commentaries on the Nyāyasūtra known to us. Being Vācaspati’s first work, the Nyāyatattvāloka seems to evidence the conscious effort of a young Nyāya scholar to turn back in appreciation to the classical commentaries and to the root text of the tradition itself; this impression is strengthened by the fact that Vācaspati also compiled the Nyāyasūtroddhāra in the early part of his career. In this little work

45 Cf. NA 1, 15–16 (introductory verse 5):
śrīśrikanṭhenāhitā durgamārthavayākhyaśmābhīr yāvatīksāṁbhbhūve /
paṅcaprasth<śn> anyāyatarkasya tasyās tāvatyāh sā* nyā vidheyet bodhyam //.
* scil. sudurgamapadyākhya mentioned in verse 4, cf. n. 42 above
46 Cf. e.g., SKT 57, 11: avavayāvacūrṇī.
47 Before Vācaspati Miśra, Gaṅgeśa’s son Vardhamāna commented on Udayana’s Pariśuddhi, as well as on others of his works. Vardhamāna’s Anvikṣānaya-tattvabodha, which is a direct commentary on the last adhyāya of the Nyāyasūtra, does not give us any clues as to his motivation in writing this work or his attitude towards the basic text. It is doubtful whether he ever wrote a direct commentary on the whole Nyāyasūtra (cf. Preisendanz, 1994: 20–21).
48 Cf. above, n. 37, and Bhattacharya (1947: 297). Further references are to Udayana’s Pariśīṣṭa, a commentary on the last adhyāya of the Nyāyasūtra, and to Vardhamāna’s Tattvabodha (cf. above, n. 47). His reference to Sānātani (cf. above, n. 33) may be secondary inasmuch as it was taken directly from Udayana.
49 A completely different interpretation is provided in the context of Mishra’s general and not very subtle anti-Buddhist attitude: there was a need to compile not only the Nyāyasūcinimbhandha (cf. above, n. 15), but also the Nyāyasūtroddhāra because the text of the Nyāyasūtra had been twisted and distorted by the evil Buddhists, who went so far as to even interpolate sūtra-s to do damage to this work (cf. Mishra, 1966: 292). Monmohan Chakravarti, for his part, describes Vācaspati as a smṛtti-writer who ‘could not avoid the general contagion, and touched also on Nyāya’ (cf. Chakravarti, 1915b: 432)!
he established what he considered to be the authentic Nyāyasūtra-text, assembling those sūtra-s he considered genuine and presenting – without further comment or even discussion – their correct readings. In devoting himself to this task, just like in writing the Nyāyatattvāloka, Vācaspati must have carefully studied the earlier commentaries available to him and evaluated their testimony. For the purpose of compiling the Nyāyasūtroddhāra special attention was paid by him to the Nyāyabhāṣya. This is suggested by the maṅgalaśloka of the Nyāyasūtroddhāra according to one of the manuscripts of the work accessible to me.  

50 The title word uddhāra of the compilation is telling: understood in the light of the maṅgalaśloka, the work constitutes an ‘extraction’ of the Nyāyasūtra from the Nyāyabhāṣya, the oldest and only classical direct commentary available to Vācaspati and his contemporaries, the concise graha ṇakavākyā-s of which had been susceptible to being taken as part of the root text in the course of transmission early on. The fact that the word uddhāra also means ‘rescue’ and is in this latter sense used technically to refer to the restoration of temples and cult-images, may in addition throw some light on Vācaspati’s perception and evaluation of the state of his tradition’s foundational text at that time.  

Vācaspati Miśra’s historicist perception of the Nyāya tradition which is implied in the above becomes evident in the way he refers to his fellow philosophers in this tradition and their respective historical position. The expressions used by him are navyāḥ or navināḥ for the “new” generation(s), vrddhāḥ, prāṇicah and sāṃpradāyikāḥ, 52 or even vrddhatamāḥ for the ‘older,’ ‘traditional’ generation(s). In his recent

50 Cf. the Jodhpur ms. (ms. no. 27940 in the catalogue of the Sanskrit and Prakrit manuscripts in the Jodhpur collection of the Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, edited by T. Joshi and D. Sharma) fol. 1v 1–2:

śrīvācaspatimīśraṇa mithileśvarasūrinā /
śrīgautamiyasūrāṇi likhyante bhāsyataḥ prthak ||

The same introductory verse appears at the beginning of a Nyāyasūtroddhāra ms. preserved at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI) (ms. no. 740 of 1887–1891, fol. 1v 1). On the problematic issue of the various published Nyāyasūtroddhāra-s, also in relation to the published Nyāyasūcīnibandha, cf. Preissendanz (1994: 3–5). A comparative study of sūtrapātha-mss. which bear the title Nyāyasūtroddhāra and other titles and in which the respective compilation of the sūtra-s is ascribed to Vācaspati Miśra II is under preparation.

51 Cf. also the expression samuddharaṇa – relating to Uddyotakara’s Nyāyavārttika – used by Vācaspati Miśra I in the introductory and concluding verses of the Nyāyavārttikatātparyātiṣṭhāna (cf. above, n. 15).

52 Cf. also the frequently used sampradāyas tu..., in contradistinction to the nayvāḥ or anye.
paper on the new intellectuals of the seventeenth century, Sheldon Pollock has singled out usages of this kind as indicative of the new intellectual climate of the period in which, contrary to the preceding times, one’s own position within a scholarly tradition is conceptualized in a historicist manner, that is, self-consciously located within a historical sequence and labelled accordingly. As Pollock points out, this intellectual attitude is to be observed in the discourse involving one’s own tradition, be it a philosophical tradition or some other scholarly or scientific tradition. Additionally, the relevant rhetorical elements are expressive of some awareness of the progress, from the point of view of content, of scholarly analysis, or at least of the expectation of such progress.53 As the example of Vācaspati shows, this phenomenon can be registered already in the fifteenth century, and before that it can be observed with Gaṅgeśa and the pre-Gaṅgeśa Naiyāyika Maṇikaṇṭha. Connected with the phenomenon and cause for some internal tension is the enduring high respect for the authority of the legendary founder of the tradition, expressed especially at the beginning and end of scholarly works. Returning to Vācaspati, I would like to point out in this connection that he speaks of Akṣapāda as a great sage (mahāmuni) who founded Ānvikṣikī to rescue the transmigrating beings sunk into in the swamp of suffering.54 Besides the reverence for Akṣapāda expressed here, one has to note the employment of the designation Ānvikṣikī for the Nyāya tradition, a designation which goes back to Vātsyāyana’s early efforts to establish his philosophical tradition among the orthodox sciences under the name of Nyāya, as the centrally important ‘investigating [science]’ praised already in Kauṭalya’s Arthaśāstra.55 I consider this use of an ancient, highly suggestive designation, which occurs several times in the Nyāyatattvāloka, as indicative of Vācaspati’s renewed pride in the historically conceptualized antiquity of his own tradition and of his positive evaluation of its foundational work in spite of its obsoleteness on the surface level. A further telling designation for the teaching or doctrinal edifice (śāstra) of Nyāya used by Vācaspati is Pañcādhyāyī,56 a term that immediately effects some association with

54 Cf. NTA 3, 14–16: ... iti sarvam abhisandhāya duḥkhapāṅkamagnān samsārāna uddhiṃśam kṣaṇam aksapatād mahāmunis taduṣāsasamasya paramparapāyabhūtaṁ ānvikṣikīṁ pramināya; cf. also the appellation Aksacaraṇamuni in NTA 26, 19 (... manasa indriyātābhhyupagamo 'kṣacaraṇamuneh ... ) and 117, 20 (... asūritamānasendriyātābhhyupagamo 'kṣacaraṇamuneh).
56 Cf. NTA 16, 20 (pañcādhyāyī śāstram).
Pāṇini’s Āstādhyāyī and accords it equal status, albeit in another basic scholarly discipline. This suggestive designation, which is uncommon in the classical and medieval period, is also found in the colophons of some Nyāyasūtrapātha manuscripts of northern India accessible to me which date from the pre-colonial and early colonial period, among them an alleged Nyāyasūtroddhāra manuscript.\(^{57}\) Ānvīkṣikī, for its part, reappears in the title of Jānakīnātha Bhaṭṭācārya Cūḍāmaṇi’s sixteenth-century commentary on the fifth adhyāya of the Nyāyasūtra, the Ānvīkṣikītattvavivaraṇa.\(^{58}\)

This revaluation of the ancient tradition, within a clear historical perspective, as an intellectual re-orientation, may be understood in a very general way within the context of the regional history of Mithilā or Tīrhuṭ, a region which was much more removed from the direct political and cultural impact of the Delhi Sultanate than other parts of northern India. Already the Karnāṭa dynasty, from the eleventh century onwards until the invasion of Mithilā by the Tughluqs in 1324,\(^{59}\) and afterwards the rulers of the Kāmeśvara—Oinīvāra dynasty\(^{60}\) provided a very fertile climate for the growth and development of especially Dharmaśāstra and Nyāya in Mithilā. Romila Thapar has suggested that the late medieval and early modern non-Muslim rulers of regional kingdoms in northern India turned to the promotion of Sanskritic scholarship in general to assert their cultural identity, at the same time distancing themselves from the remote

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\(^{57}\) Cf. Sarasvati Bhavana Library (SBL) ms. no. 33181, fol. 12r 12; cf. also BORI ms. no. 25/1879–1870, fol. 14r 2. For a classical occurrence of the term, cf. NV 1, 13. Cf. also Mitramiśra’s Viramitrodaya (CSS 62) 9. 26–27 on Yājñavalkyamsṛtī 1.3: pāṇīcādhyāyāsttram akṣapādapranītām, and Prasthānabheda (ASS 51) 6, 7.

\(^{58}\) Cf. SBL ms. no. 33189, fol. 166v 3. Cf. also the introduction to Rāmabhadra Sārvabhauma’s Nyāyarahasya, after the six maṅgalaśoka-s: atha bhagavatōkṣapade-nāvīkṣikīṃ samārīpamāṇāna kām iti maṅgalaṃ mahītam (SBL ms. no. 33189, fol. 1r 5–6; BORI ms. no. 28/1898–1899, fol. 1v 6–7; BORI ms. no. 743/1882–1883, fol. 1r 7–8 reads bhagavatā kanādena; the Nyāyarahasya, together with the Ānvīkṣikītattvavivaraṇa, has been edited for the first time in December 2003 by Prabal Kumar Sen, but I could procure a copy of the two volumes only after this paper was already in print). The designation Ānvīkṣikīsāsana appears twice in the introductory part (fol. 1v 1) of an as yet unstudied commentary on the Nyāyasūtra together with the Nyāyabhāṣya (and Vārttika?) preserved at the Sanskrit College, Kolkāta (hand list of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika manuscripts no. 1372 = descriptive catalogue of 1965 no. 252). For the use of the designation Ānvīkṣikī referring to the Nyāyasūtra and -sāstra, cf. also Kṛṣṇākānta Vidyāvāgīśa’s Sautrasandīpanī, a commentary on the Nyāyasūtra written in 1818 in Bengal (cf. the second introductory verse, which I fail to understand in some details, quoted in Sastri, 1968: 520).


Muslim rulers and their cultural elite in this way, possibly also to bolster their own legitimization as indigenous (semi-)independent rulers. The appreciative return to the ancient "roots" of Nyāya within the – from the point of view of content and scholarly sophistication – innovative and advanced intellectual climate of Navya-Nyāya, a return which we see commencing in Mithilā with the Nyāyatattvāloka, may be placed within this wider context of external motivation; the latter may have promoted such an intellectual re-orientation, in any case presented a sympathetic historical setting for it and thus enhanced the internal motivation of scholars, while the indirect impact of Muslim rule and culture transmitted to Mithilā owing to the increased mobility of and social interaction between members of the intellectual elite may have been responsible for or at least reinforced the more and more pronounced historicist concept of the Nyāya tradition as such.

Unfortunately, we do not know the precise circumstances of the composition of the Nyāyatattvāloka and the compilation of the Nyāyasūtroddhāra, except that they were Vācaspati's first works. However, the evidence of either of the two alternative verses prefixed to the Nyāyasūtroddhāra manuscripts accessible to me indicates that he was already at that time a scholar connected with the court of a Mithilā ruler. His numerous and celebrated works in Dharmaśāstra were all written after his Nyāya works, under and for the Kāmeśvara rulers Harinārāyaṇa (Bhairavasimha) and his son Rūpanārāyaṇa (Rāmabhadra), perhaps following a brief stay abroad in Pañ-

62 Cf. SBL mss. no. 32672, 33181 and 33219; cf. also ms. no. 5682 (catalogued as a Nyāyasūtra ms.) of the Prajñā Pāṭhasāla Maṇḍala, Wai: śrīvācaspatīdhīrenā mithileśvarasūrinā / likhyate munimūrdhanyaśrigautamamataṃ mahat //, for the alternative verse cf. above, n. 50.
63 Cf. e.g., the introductory verses to the Dvaitanirṇaya, which also refer to Queen Jayā (no) as commissioning the work, referred to in Chakravarti (1915b: 427), Bhattacharya (1958: 157), Kane (1975: 847).
64 The Mahādānānīrṇaya is attributed to both Harinārāyaṇa and Rūpanārāyaṇa in verses attached to the beginning and end of the work respectively; the authorship of Vācaspati is reduced to 'assistance' (saḥakāritā) in the first case, scil. śrīvācaspatidhirāṃ saḥakāritayā samāśāda / śrībhairavendra-rātpatiḥ svayam mahādānānīrṇayam tanuṭe //, and not even mentioned in the second. The Pitrbhaktitarośī or Śrīdadhakalpa, Vācaspati's last work, was written at the request of the latter. Cf. Chakravarti (1915b: 427, 429), Bhattacharya (1958: 157–158) and Kane (1975: 849, 851–852, with n. 1288).
cālabhūmi.65 Born in a family of Karmamīmāṃsakas,66 he achieved a high position at the court of Mithilā owing to his expertise in Dharmāśāstra.67 Basing himself on the Mithilā pañjī-ś, introduced by the Karnāta ruler Harasimhadeva in 1324, Dineshchandra Bhattacharya provides us with further details as to Vācaspati’s personal and scholarly network.68 He was from the Samauli branch of a family belonging to the Vatsyagotra, with Pallī as their mālāgrāma, and related by his fourth wife of the famous Sodarapura family69 to another important Naiyāyika of the fifteenth century, Śaṅkara Miśra,70 while his first two wives linked him with the royal family.71 One of Vācaspati’s granddaughters was married to Bhavanātha, the son of Śucikara Upādhyāya of the Kuñjapalli (Kuvalī) family of Bha victarauli (Bhaura);72 Śucikara, a pupil of the illustrious Naiyāyika and commentator on the Tattvacintāmaṇi Jayadeva alias Pakṣadhara Miśra (related to Śaṅkara Miśra, who was a paternal uncle [pitrīya] of his, and thus also a member of the Sodarapura family)73 was the teacher of Maheśa Ṭhakkura, the founder of the Darbhanga Raj in 1556/1557 and author of a celebrated commentary on Pakṣadhara’s Āloka on the Tattvacintāmaṇi.74

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66 Cf. the final verse of his Kṛtyapradīpa quoted by Bhattacharya (1947: 295, 1958: 143): vaṃśe jātaḥ kaluṣarathite karmamīmāṃsakānām avikṣayām gurukarunayā labdha-
tattvāvabodhayā śrīmān vācaspatir aham iha prītaye puṇyabhājām natvā natvā kamalanayanam kṛtyadipam tanomī ||.
67 In the colophons to the Pitṛbhartitarāṅgini (cf. Chakravarti, 1915b: 429; Bhattacharya, 1958: 143; Kane, 1975: 851, n. 1288) and Śūdrācāracintāmaṇi (cf. Kane, 1975: 851) Vācaspati is called sakalapanditamandaliśīromani and pariṣad (advisor in difficult legal points) to the two kings; in the Dvaitanirṇaya we find the epithet nikhilatantravid (cf. Bhattacharya, op. cit., 157).
70 This wife was a cousin (pitrīyaputri) of Śaṅkara Miśra (cf. also Mishra, 1966: 290).
71 His first wife’s great-great-grandfather was Rāya Bhogīśvara (cf. Chakravarti, 1915b: 415–416), his second wife’s father was the son of the daughter of Bhogīśvara’s younger brother Bhaveśvara (Bhaveśa, Bhavasimha), the first ruler over all of Mithilā (cf. Chakravarti, 1915b: 417); cf. Bhattacharya (1958: 156–157) and Mishra (1966: 289).
72 Cf. also Mishra (1966: 358).
74 On Maheśa Ṭhakkura, the first ruler of the Khaḍavālā dynasty, cf. Bhattacharya (1958: 172–176) and Mishra (1966: 355–361). The Darpana was an early work of his
The renewed interest in the Nyāyasūtra demonstrated by Vācaspati Miśra in fifteen-century Mithila re-manifests itself about a hundred years later in the person of Keśava Miśra, who composed a Gautamiyāsūtraprakāśā.\(^{75}\) Keśava Miśra, son of Viśvadhara and brother of Umāpati,\(^{76}\) was a third-generation descendent of Śaṅkara Miśra and belonged to the Kaṭakā branch of the Sodarapura family; besides his Nyāyasūtra commentary and another, earlier and most probably more extensive Nyāya work entitled Tarkatāndava,\(^{77}\) he wrote several works on poetics as well as Dharmaśāstra works.\(^{78}\) In some of the puṣpikā-s of his Nyāyasūtra commentary, he introduces himself as the main scholar on the advisory board of the king of

(Footnote 74 continued).
and may have been written between 1535 and 1540 according to Bhattacharyya; Mishra even calls it his first work (Mishra, 1966: 358) which, however, makes it impossible that it was written in 1612, as Mishra states following Parameshvar Jha (cf. Mishra, 1966: 356). Pakṣadhariapracāra, mentioned in the Gādhivamśavarnana (cf. Benson, 2001: 112) may have been an alternative title of this work. Maheśa Thakkura is also said to have introduced the dhautaparikṣā for Maithila scholars in 1550 (cf. Mishra, 1966: 360; Jha, 2001: 271).

\(^{75}\) This is the title of the work according to the colophon after adhyāya 1.2 in the ms. preserved at Kameshwar Singh Darbhanga Sanskrit University (which may also be the source for the corresponding longer colophons after the other preserved adhyāya ends, i.e., 3.2, 4.2 and 5.2, as well as after the end of 5.1 printed in K.N. Jha’s edition) even though the puṣpikā concluding adhyāya 1, just as the one after adhyāya 3, refers to a Sūtraprakāśikā; cf. GSP 24, 14–15 [1.2] and 70, 4–5 [3.2]:

tirabhuktimahiśālaparishanmukhyasvarinā / śrīkesāvavāivindrena kṛtā sūtraprakāśikā //

against GSP 25, n. 1: iti mahāmahopādhyāyavedāntavīśvāsaśrīkesavamiśraktrengautamiyāsūtraprakāśe ... (cf. also GSP 70, 14–15 [3.2]; 97, 15–16 [4.2]; 114, 13–14 [5.1]; 124, 25–26 [5.2]; in shorter form, possibly provided by the editor, GSP 17, 34 [1.1] and 54, 31 [3.1]). The introductory verses to adhyāya-s 2, 4 and 5 speak of a Nyāyasūtraprakāśana, unless this is not at all a title but refers to the poet’s activity (GSP 25, 12 [2.1]; 71, 4 [4.1]; 98, 6 [5.1]):
sukhenādhyāpayan kāśyāṃ nyāyavedāntadarśane / śrīkesāvavāś cakre nyāyasūtraprakāśanam //;

in the slightly modified verse at the beginning of adhyāya 3 this is replaced by sūtravyākhyāna (GSP 41, 4 [3.1]). On Keśava Miśra cf. Bhattacharyya (1958: 186–189); Mishra (1966: 368–370).

\(^{76}\) Cf. GSP 17, 32, 86, 27, 97, 13, 114, 10 and 124, 17: umāpatisagarbhena śrīviśvadharajanmanō/śrīviśvadharasūrūnā / ...; umāpatisagarbhaya śrīviśvadharajan manah / ... .

\(^{77}\) Cf. GSP 23, 19 (... iti prapañcitam mayaiva tarkatāndave); 104, 17 (vistaras tū tarkatāndave); 112, 19 (tatt sarvam darśitam tarkatāndave); 122, 13 (... tathā prapañcitam tarkatāndave) (cf. also Bhattacharyya, 1958: 188).

\(^{78}\) Cf. Jha (1978: [2]–[3]), referring to the evidence of the colophon of Keśava Miśra’s Saṅkhyaśāramiśra and the Maithila pañji-s.
Tirabhukti who may have been the last ruler of the Kāmeśvara—Oinīvāra dynasty, Kaṃsanārāyaṇa (Lakṣmīnātha). It seems, though, that he commented only upon the first adhyāya in Mithilā and then, during the troubled times following the overthrow of the Kāmeśvaras, left the region; the remaining adhyāyas were expounded by him while he was ‘happily teaching the philosophical world views of Nyāya and Vedānta in Kāśi,’ as he states in his introductory verses to these chapters. Chapters one, three and four are dated 1553, 1557 and 1560 (i.e., Lakṣmaṇa era 434, 438 and 441) respectively in the manuscript preserved at Kameshwar Singh Darbhangā Sanskrit University; should this manuscript actually be a rare autograph, as suggested by the editor of the work, Kishor Nath Jha, this would mean that Keśava did not return to Mithilā after the Darbhangā Raj had been granted by Akbar to Maheśa Ṭhakkura – allegedly in recognition of his abridged translation of the Akharnāma into Sanskrit under the title Sarvadeśavṛttiāntasaṅgraha – but chose to continue teaching in the city of Kāśi, where Maheśa Ṭhakkura himself had studied Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta under Rāmeśvara Bhaṭṭa of the famous Gāḍhī family before he acquired the Raj. The autograph of the Gautamiyasūtraprakāśa, however, must eventually have found its way from Kāśi to Mithilā. Jha identifies Keśava as one of the pandits who contributed to the Kavindracandrodaya, the ‘Festschrift’ that was compiled to praise Kavindrācārya Sarasvatī for having convinced the Moghul ruler Shah Jahan to abolish the tax for pilgrims visiting Kāśi and Prayāga earlier introduced by him. Indeed, four verses in this compilation were composed by a certain Keśava Miśra, the twelfth of the altogether 69 contributors; however, as this tax must have been abolished at least some years after 1628, the year of Shah Jahan’s

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79 Cf. GSP 24, 14 and GSP 70, 4, quoted above in n. 75. Cf. also the initial verse of his Alāṅkāraśekhara quoted in Jha (1978: [4]).
82 Cf. Jha (1978: [2]).
84 It has to be noted, though, that at the end of adhyāya 3 the reference to Keśava Miśra’s position at the court of Mithilā is repeated; cf. n. 75 above.
85 Cf. Shastri (1912: 9) and Bhattacharya (1958: 173–175); cf. also Benson (2001: 112). It is chronologically almost impossible that Maheśa Ṭhakkura spent his last years in Kāśi studying with Rāmeśvara Bhaṭṭa, as stated by Mishra (1966: 360).
86 Cf. Jha (1978: [3]).
enthronement, from the chronological point of view this identification seems very improbable.

Keśava Miśra’s basic attitude towards the roots of Nyāya is not so much different from that of Vācaspati Miśra of Mithilā. For him, too, the venerable author of the doctrinal edifice of Nyāya, whom he calls by his gotra-name Gotama, is a great sage, even the greatest sage,\(^8\) endowed with greatest compassion (paramakārūni). Just as Vācaspati, Keśava refers to the Nyāyaśāstra as Pañcādhyāyi\(^9\) and Ānvikṣikī. The classical commentaries are referred to by him,\(^3\) but the brief references seem to be second-hand and do not attest to much genuine interest in these works or to their profound study, except maybe of the Tātparyaṭikā or Udayana’s – unacknowledged – Pariśuddhi. A number of positions are attributed to the ‘ancient ones’ (vṛddhāḥ, prāṇcāḥ), but not in opposition to the ‘new’ scholars.\(^4\) Regarding the substance of his commentary, Keśava is very much indebted to Vācaspati’s Nyāyatattvāloka, even though he does not take into consideration the more extensive and sophisticated digressions in this commentary. He frequently paraphrases or summarizes the explanations of the sūtra-s in the Nyāyatattvāloka in his own words or slightly modifies them. Sometimes the correspondences are so close that it is even possible to emend the obviously corrupt text of the edited Gautamiyasūtraprakāśa on the basis of the Nyāyatattvāloka. It is therefore surprising that Keśava does not mention Vācaspati or his work on the Nyāyasūtra explicitly anywhere in the Gautamiyasūtraprakāśa. However, there may be some implicit reference after all. In his rather boastful maṅgalaśloka-s Keśava states that there is indeed no lack of knowledgeable scholars familiar with the ways of reasoning who previously assembled in the dense thicket of Nyāya; however, there are also some scholars of Nyāya, desirous

\(^{9}\) Cf. GSP 1, 8: pāramarśāni sūṭrānī ...(v. 3a).
\(^{10}\) Cf. GSP 1, 24: atha paramakārūni ko bhagavān gotamo mahārṣīḥ saṁsārāṅgāreṣu pac- yamānān samuddidūrṣuḥ ...
\(^{11}\) Cf. e.g., GSP 1. 12: ... pañcādhyāyi-parinātarahasyapranayaṁ ... (v. 4c) (cf. the full quotation in n. 96 below) and 3, 13: pañcādhyāyi śāśīram.
\(^{12}\) Cf. the continuation of the sentence quoted in n. 90 above: ... sakalavi- dyāśīroratnamahītām ānvikṣikīṁ praṇītavān.
\(^{13}\) I.e., there are a few quotations from the Bhāṣya, the Vārttika and the Tikā as well as from the Nyāyamaṇḍari, and even two references to Sānātani (cf. above, n. 33).
\(^{14}\) Keśava rather uses the neutral expressions anye, apare, eke and kecit. In at least one case (GSP 98, 18), ācāryāḥ seems to refer to Vardhamāna, whose position is rejected in favour of that of the ‘ancient ones.’
of knowing the fully developed secret of the Pañcādhyāyī, who are — in their interpretation of this science — disposed to go against the rule to avoid contradiction.\textsuperscript{95} Although there exists a commentary (vyā-khyā) by an earlier learned man for the delight of those endowed with analytic understanding, Keśava continues, his (i.e., Keśava’s) own composition cannot be obtained elsewhere on account of its spotless virtues, such as excellence of explanation, conciseness and simplicity of expression, mutual coherence and harmony of individual topical sequences (?).\textsuperscript{96} I would like to suggest that it is the author of the Nyāyatattvāloka to whom he obliquely refers to in these verses as an earlier scholar and with whose work he compares his own composition. Keśava thus would have appreciated the Nyāyatattvāloka as a demanding commentarial work meant for specialists who can follow the analytical discussions on central Navya-Nyāya topics as presented by Vācaspati with reference to the Tattvacintāmaṇi; at the same time he would imply that compared to his own commentary the Nyāyatattvāloka contained less excellent explanations of the sūtra-s themselves, was too extensive and complicated in its wording, less coherent and presented a not always felicitous order of topics treated (?). Furthermore, he may have implied that the spotless qualities of the Gautamīya-sūtraprakāśa ensure an appropriate understanding of the ‘secret’ of the Pañcādhyāyī also for those interested Naiyāyikas who are prone to misunderstanding it, something which the Nyāyatattvāloka could not achieve owing to its complicated expositions taking into consideration the developed contemporary discourse as well as its more difficult, less smooth style.

Two extensive quotations in the Gautamīya-sūtraprakāśa come from a certain Vīyāśāgara, the author of a lost Tīkā on the Nyāyasūtra whom Anantalal Thakur has identified with

\textsuperscript{95} The wording is too laconic to decide the precise nature of the contradiction. Keśava Miśra may have had in mind contradiction with reasoning in general or with relevant contemporaneous ideas, or with older, established traditional explanations.

\textsuperscript{96} Cf. GSP 1, 10–17 (vv. 4–5):

\begin{verbatim}
iha nyāyāranyе prakṛtigahane tarkasaranipravinā vidvāṃsaḥ kati kati na pūrvaṃ samabhavan / param paničādhyāyīparinātārasyapraṇayino virodhavyāśedhavyasanapaṭavaḥ kecana punah //
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
āste yadyapi pūrvapāṇḍitakrtā vyākhyaiṣa samkhyāvatām ānandāya tathāpi keśava- kaver vācām iyaṃ gumphanā / vyākhyāsaустhavaśabdālōghavamithāhsambandhāpūrvāparapratyarthapratibaddhat(e)?- nirmalagunā kutrānyato labhyatām //.
\end{verbatim}
Puṇḍarīkākṣa Vidyāśāgara, a cousin of Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma.\textsuperscript{97} Should this identification be correct, it would imply that Keśava Miśra was aware of some sūtra-interpretations in a late fifteenth-century Nyāyasūtra-commentary written in Bengal, if he did not even have a copy of the whole work at his disposal. Vidyāśāgara for his part refers to the pre-Gaṅgeśa Nyāyabhāskara\textsuperscript{98} and Vardhamāna’s late fourteenth-century Tattvabodha among other works belonging to Mithilā.\textsuperscript{99}

In spite of these and the few other references to earlier work done on the Nyāyasūtra, on the whole the emerging picture presented by the Gañatiyāyasūtraprakāśa, as already indicated above (cf. p. 78), is one characterized by a lack of historical depth and perspective as compared to these aspects as they are evident in the Nyāyatattvāloka. However, another kind of intellectual interest, towards which a tendency could already be noted in the Nyāyatattvāloka in conjunction with the Nyāyasūtroddhāra, can be observed with the Gañatiyāyasūtraprakāśa, namely, a strong concern about the constitution of the root text. The individual adhyāya-s of the commentary are followed by verses in which the number of the sūtra-s relating to the individual topics (prakaraṇa-s) is indicated both by cardinal number words and by descriptive number words; also the topics themselves are enumerated.\textsuperscript{100} At the conclusion of the first adhyāya, the number of prakaraṇa-s of the whole śāstra is also indicated in a verse.\textsuperscript{101} In consonance with this attention to formal features, Keśava Miśra devotes more space than his predecessors to the discussion of struc-

\textsuperscript{97} Cf. GSP 32, 4–8 and 76, 12–19, and Thakur (1976). Puṇḍarīkākṣa Vidyāśāgara was a scholar of grammar (with extant works) who is said to have also composed commentaries on the Aṅkāraśāstra works by Daṃdin, Vāmana and Mammaṭa. Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma’s father, the scholar Narahari Viśārada, was Puṇḍarīkākṣa’s uncle; cf. Bhattacharyya (1940: 59).

\textsuperscript{98} Cf. above, n. 37.


\textsuperscript{100} Cf. e.g. the verses at the conclusion of adhyāya 1 (GSP 24, 16–22, vv. 2–3):

\begin{verbatim}
akṣi (= 2) pañca (5) dhruvaś (= 14) caiva tri (3) saṣ (6) aśva (= 7)* yugandharah (= 2) /
pasćāt tri(3)saṣ(6)vasu(= 8)trim(3) prathamādyāyāyasūtrakām ///
\end{verbatim}

* aśva seems to be a mistake because the prakaraṇa contains not seven but eight sūtra-s. For this reason, Kishor Nath Jha corrects saḍaśva to saḍvasu.

\textsuperscript{101} Cf. GSP 24, 23–24 (v. 4):

\begin{verbatim}
sapt(7)sṛuti(= 4) grahā(= 9)mbodhī(= 4) grahā(= 9)svac(= 7) vāsava(= 14)-
rtukau(= 6) ///
\end{verbatim}
tural considerations, such as the correct number and extent of prakarāṇa-s\textsuperscript{102} and their sequence and coherence as regards content (saṅgati). Furthermore, he discusses the status of disputed sūtra-s\textsuperscript{103} as well as the precise wording and extent of certain sūtra-s.\textsuperscript{104} I would like to suggest that with the Gautamīyasūtraprakāśa a significant further step takes place in the development of what one could call Nyāyasūtra-commentaries with a ‘philological and text-critical’ emphasis, as opposed to such commentaries with philosophical and historical emphasis.

This new tendency finds its culmination in the Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā, also known as Anvikṣaṭattvavārīkṣā.\textsuperscript{105} According to the colophon of the manuscript preserved at the Mithila Research Institute, Darbhanga,\textsuperscript{106} which has convincingly been argued to be an autograph by Prabal Kumar Sen,\textsuperscript{107} this commentary was written in 1735 by Vamśadhara in the village of Maṅgalavānī (Maṅgaraunī, Maṅgroṇī) near Madhubani. The first introductory verse of two incomplete mss. of the Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā kept in the Sarasvati Bhavana Library\textsuperscript{108} provides the further information that Vamśadhara was the student of

(Footnote 101 continued).

\textit{jiṃūta}(= 17) (?)*vāhāv(= 7) ādyantāhīnike prakaranaṃ kramāt //.

* jīmūta, not recorded as a descriptive number word, is an epithet of Śiva and may therefore correspond to 11; the actual number of prakarana-s in the first āhīnika of the final adhyāya according to the Gautamīyasūtraprakāśa is 17.

\textsuperscript{102} Cf. e.g., the discussion as to the reason why Nyāyasūtra 3.1.12–14 do not form a separate prakarana, as assumed by Taranī Miśra in his Bhāya (cf. above, n. 37; cf. also n. 124 below), in GSP 44, 15–19 or to why the first five prakarana-s of the third adhyāya do not form an āhīnika by themselves in GSP 47, 4–6 (ātiparīkkānumūtī in line 4 should probably be corrected to read ātiparīkkānumūtībhūtaia). Cf. also GSP 33, 14–16 on the possibility that the third and fourth prakarana of the first āhīnika of the second adhyāya form an independent āhīnika, and GSP 57, 4–7 on the suggestion that the second prakarana of the second āhīnika of the third adhyāya constitutes only a part of the first prakarana.

\textsuperscript{103} Cf. e.g., the discussion on Nyāyasūtra 3.1.28–30 in GSP 47, 26–28 and on 3.2.10 in GSP 56, 24–25.

\textsuperscript{104} Cf. e.g., the comments on Nyāyasūtra 3.2.10 in GSP 56, 26–29.

\textsuperscript{105} Thus, Mishra’s statement that Keśava Miśra was the last Maithila scholar of the traditional type who wrote a commentary on the Nyāyasūtra (cf. Mishra, 1966: 369) has to be taken with caution.

\textsuperscript{106} Ms. no. 497. The colophon is quoted in Sen (1980: 103); however, I read the expanded title of the work mentioned there as mahārṣigautamapraṇītanīyayatattvavārīkṣā (instead of -nyāyasūtra tattra-).


\textsuperscript{108} SBL mss. no. 31556 (containing the commentary on the first adhyāya) and 31557 (covering the first āhīnika of the first adhyāya and parts of its second āhīnika, discontinuing right in the middle of the commentary on Nyāyasūtra 1.2.12), obviously not known to Sen. The two manuscripts preserved in Darbhanga (at the
Gokulanātha and that Gokulanātha, together with his younger brother, Vamśadhara’s maternal uncle (*mātula*) Jagannātha\(^{109}\) — with whom he spend some years in Garhwal under the patronage of the Muslim ruler Fateh Shah\(^{110}\) —, taught Vamśadhara how to comment

\(^{108}\) Continued.

Mithila [Research] Institute and the Darbhanga Raj Library, i.e., the Library of Kameshwar Singh Darbhanga Sanskrit University (KSDSU) and available to Sen for his 1980 study are incomplete at the beginning: the first contains the commentary on *Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.11 to 1.2.3 only, the second the complete text starting with *adhyyāya* 2. A further ms of the commentary on the first *adhyyāya*, dated 1187 Bengali era (= 1780), has been reported by Rajendralal Mitra (cf. also Jha, 1947: 322) to be preserved at Magrāṇī (= Maṅgalavānī), in the possession of a certain Pandit Chhoti Jha (cf. Mitra and Sastri, 1990: 193, no. 1877); beginning and end of this ms. (= M), also unknown to Sen and maybe not available any longer, have been transcribed by Mitra. Mitra correctly listed this ms. under the title *Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā*. Just as in the case of the ms. belonging to the Darbhanga Raj Library (cf. Sen, 1980: 101), SBL mss. no. 31556 and 31557 of the *Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā* are catalogued as containing an *Anvīksātattvavārīkṣā* although the two preserved colophons after the first *āhika* of the first *adhyyāya* clearly identify the work’s title as *Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā*; cf. fol. 41v 4 and fol. 37r 8: *iti nyāyatattvavārīkṣāyāṃ prathamādhyāyasya* (ms. no. 31556 reads: *prathamādhyāyasya*- *prathamaāhnikam tattvataḥ parīkṣitam*. The colophon at the end of *adhyyāya* 1 in mss. no. 31556 (fol. 50v 6) gives the alternative title *Anvīksātattvavārīkṣā* which may be the result of the scribe’s having been influenced by the immediately preceding concluding verse

\[ \text{anvīksā śrīvamśadharasārmanā dvitiyāhnikagocorāḥ} \]

\[ \text{tattvaiḥ parīkṣitāḥ samyak} \]

\[ \text{cp. the similar second introductory verse to the second *āhika* of the first *adhyyāya* which is preserved in the KSDSU ms. (as reported in Sen, 1980: 101), but not in SBL mss. no. 31556 and 31557. Also the final colophon of M confirms the title *Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā*; cf. Mitra and Sastri (1990: 194): *iti nyāyatattvavārīkṣāyāṃ prathamā dhyāyāḥ.*} \]

\(^{109}\) Cf. also Jha (1965: xiii). The syntax of the verse (cf. n. 111 below) does not attest to a third preceptor and Jha, who lists the names and aliases of the three brothers of Gokulanātha, does not mention a brother called Śambhu (loc. cit.); cf. also the genealogy of the Phanandaha or Phanadahā family given in Jha (1947: 318) and Mishra (1966: 375). The word *śambhu*, as an adjective meaning ‘helpful, gracious,’ is clearly used here to qualify Vamśadhara’s maternal uncle Jagannātha (cf. also Jha, 1947: 322 on the evidence of the two introductory verses of the *Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā* as quoted by Rajendralal Mitra from the Maṅgalavānī ms. [cf. n. 108 above]), and does not refer to a further maternal uncle named Śambhu, as assumed in Sen (1980: 100) with reference to the very similar verse in the beginning of Vamśadhara’s *Anumāṇadhitattvavārīkṣā*. This is supported by the fact that in the second introductory verse to the *Nyāyatattvavārīkṣā* as found in SBL mss. no. 31556 and 31557 as well as in the Maṅgalavānī ms. Jagannātha is mentioned again and designated as *mātula* (cf. again n. 111 below).

upon the statements of Akṣapāda; thus Vamśadhara was Gokulanātha’s sister’s son (bhāgineya), which fits well with the fact that Maṅgalavanī is the native village of the well-known Naiyāyika Gokulanātha. Jagannātha must have assumed the role of the principal teacher of Vamśadhara while his elder brother was busy as a scholar at the court of the Kāmeśvara ruler Rāghava Simha or after he had departed for Kāśi, where he passed away at the age of ninety. This is corroborated by the fact that according to the śarayantra declaration of Datta Ṣarman’s (cf. below) the ānvīkṣikī vidyā is said to have passed on from Gokulanātha to Jagannātha to Vamśadhara. Vamśadhara, himself of the Dariharā family, is also said to have enjoyed the patronage of Rāghava Simha of Mithilā and, like several other members – including of course Gokulanātha – of the learned family of his mother and of his scholarly lineage, passed the highly demanding śarayantra examination, thus succeeding his uncle

111 Cf. SBL mss. no. 31556 (fol. 1v1–2) and 31557 (fol. 1v 1–2); Maṅgalavanī ms. (= M) (Mitrā and Saṭstri, 1990: 193–194): sūrō goṅkulanāthaṭaś tadaṇujād yo va2 jagannāṭhataḥ śambho3 prāpīmayaṅ- kṣapādacanayākhyāvādhīr mātulāt / tattvāṁ gūḍham api svabhāvaghahane nyāye paricīkṣoḥ śrīmadvasadharasya me ’tra śaṅraṇam sarvārthacintāmanīḥ4 //.

1 Ms. no. 31557: kuo-, 2 M: missing due to damage to leaf; 3 Ms. no. 31556: śambho, M: missing due to damage; 4 Mss. no. 31556 and 31557: sativam ca cintāmanīḥ

This verse is very similar to the third introductory verse to Vamśadhara’s Anu-māṇadidhitattvaparikṣā quoted in Sen (1980: 100) (who there reads ānvīrōh instead of sūrō in the beginning, and satkṛsṇacintāmanīḥ instead of sarvārthacintāmanīḥ in the last pāda). The second introductory verse to the Nyāyatattvaparikṣā according to SBL mss. no. 31556 (fol. 1v 2–3) and 31557 (fol. 1v 2–3) as well as M reads as follows: mātulāśrījagannāṭhād adhitya nyāyadarśānāṁ / śrīmadvasadharas tatra tattvāṁ samayk parīkṣate1 //.

1 Ms. no. 31556: parīkṣite, M: parīksyate


113 Cf. Bhattacharya (1958: 195–196), where Mādhava must be a mistake for Rāghava. Mādhava Simha Bahādur became the ruler of Mithilā only in 1785.

114 Cf. Jha (1947: 310): iyam ānvīkṣikī vidyā ... mahāmahopādhyaḥyagyokulanā- thaṣarmanu śthāpitā ... tato ’pī mahāmahopādhyaḥyagyajagannāṭhādvitīyaṣa jaggannā- thaṣarmanāṃ samāsāditā tataś ca mahāmahopādhyaḥyagyavamsadharasarmanālambhi ..... Jha (1947: 322) speculates that Jagannātha may have taken upon the teaching of his sister’s son after his elder brother had passed away. However, at least at the time of the completion of the Nyāyatattvaparikṣā Gokulanātha may have been still alive; cf. Bhattacharya (1958: 195) who argues that he must have died in the decade 1730–1740.


Jagannātha. Information about this official distinction is obtained from the valuable and interesting document (preserved in two copies) containing a declaration circulated by Gokulanātha’s grandson Datta Ėarman in which the latter announced his intention to take the śarayantra.¹¹⁷ Like Vācaspati Miśra of Mithilā, Vāṃśadhara was also renowned as a dharmaśāstrī.¹¹⁸

Vāṃśadhara’s commentary on the Nyāyasūtra has been aptly described by Prabal Kumar Sen, with respect to its sources – among which the Gautamiyasūtraprakāśa figures prominently – and specific text-critical methods.¹¹⁹ Especially noteworthy is Vāṃśadhara’s distinction between mūlasūtra-s and bhāsyasūtra-s, that is, his coinage of a new methodological term for those succinct sentences of the Nyāyabhāṣya which were considered by some as original sūtra-s.¹²⁰ In this way Vāṃśadhara distinguishes the latter from the text of the foundational work by sage Aksāpadā¹²¹ and at the same time suggests that they are endowed with if not equal then at least similar authority.¹²² Another novel text-critical expression introduced by Vāṃśadhara into Nyāyasūtra exegesis is the term śeṣapūraka, referring to those parts of the Nyāyabhāṣya which supply what remains to be said by the author of the root text, almost as if they reflected his own unsaid words.¹²³ As in the Gautamiyasūtraprakāśa, considerable space

¹¹⁷ Cf. Jha (1947); cf. also Bhattacharya (1958: 193–194) and Mishra (1966: 381–382). According to Triloknath Jha (2001: 270–271), Vāṃśadhara’s uncle Gokulanātha was the last śarayantri, a statement which has already been made by Ganganath Jha in 1928–1929 (cf. the reference in Jha, 1947: 321); to solve the obvious contradiction resulting from the evidence of the Datta Ūarman’s declaration, Ramnath Jha considers that after Gokulanātha’s time the examination did no longer take place with the participation of the public (cf. Jha, loc. cit.). ¹¹⁸ Cf. Jha (1965: xiii). ¹¹⁹ Cf. Sen (1980). ¹²⁰ Cf. the excerpts given in Sen (1980: 108–109, 119–120, 122–123). In general, the text as presented by Sen often requires obvious emendations and conjectures, sometimes based on the evidence of other commentaries; however, it is outside the scope of the present contribution to individually point these out and justify them. ¹²¹ Cf. the reference to Aksāpadā in the concluding verse no. 3 of the Nyāyatattvaparikṣa (quoted in Sen, 1980: 103):

\[ jñānāṁbhonidhir akṣapāda rṣibhrn nyāyo 'syā suktaṁ mahat, tattvam gādham amusya tasya vihitā yaisā parikṣā maya / \]

I fail to understand rṣibhrn in the relevant first pāda of this verse and unfortunately did not prepare my own transliteration of it when I saw the ms. Could rṣibhrn be a scribal mistake or misreading?


is given to the discussion of the extent and names of the prakaraṇa-s\textsuperscript{124} as well as of their mutual relationship and pertinence (saṅgati);\textsuperscript{125} individual readings of sūtra-s, their extent and order are also discussed.\textsuperscript{126} Here and in the discussion of disputed sūtra-s Vamśādhara often agrees with Keśava Miśra’s verdict. It can therefore be assumed that he utilized the Gautamiyaśātra-prakāśa when composing his work, additionally borrowing the references to earlier commentaries from it.\textsuperscript{127} In one of his introductory verses, Vamśādhara mentions his exclusive desire for discernment and claims that accomplishment in discernment between what is true and false (right and wrong) will result in the disappearance of low-minded persons in this world.\textsuperscript{128} Could it be that with the term ‘discernment’ (viveka) Vamśādhara also refers to his text-critical approach towards the Nyāyasūtra?

To sum up and conclude: In the eleventh century, when treatises written in the old style of proliferating sub-commentaries, sub-sub-commentaries, etc., on the Nyāyasūtra were no longer considered adequate to effectively counter the increasingly sophisticated challenge of the Buddhist epistemologists, this type of literary production was discontinued and gave way to more focused independent treatises which subsequently flourished, unburdened or unimpeded by the task of Sūtra exegesis and apologetics. After the demise of Buddhism in India and the firm establishment of Muslim rule in the north, related but categorically distinct external factors which must have jointly influenced the motivation of scholars, we can observe, in the

\textsuperscript{124} Cf. e.g., the discussion and rejection of Taranī Miśra’s opinion, expressed in his Bhāsyā, that Nyāyasūtra 3.1.12–14 form a separate prakaraṇa (Sen 1980: 114–115), to be compared with the one in the GSP (cf. n. 102 above); cf. also Sen, 1980: 123–124.
\textsuperscript{128} Cf. introductory verse no. 1 at the beginning of the second āhnika of the first adhyāya (SBL mss. no. 31556 fol. 41v 4–5 and no. 31557 fol. 37r 8–9; quoted from the Mithila Research Institute ms. in Sen (1980: 101):

\begin{quote}
tvām vāni vanśadharāsūrīr upāśya mātar ekam vivekam abhilāṣapadam* karoti / jātodaye sadasator vimale viveke loke na ke 'pi puruṣāh krpaṇā bhavanti //.
\end{quote}

* Both SBL mss. read abhilāṣapade
fifteenth century, a return of concern with the Nyāyasūtra, the ancient foundational work of the Nyāya tradition, accompanied by a new kind of focussed and increasingly intense interest in its text-critical analysis which involved inter alia the evaluation of sporadic earlier text-critical remarks and positions; furthermore, the formerly prominent engagement in controversies with Buddhist philosophers occasioned either directly by topics addressed in the Sūtra or indirectly by related reflections in the sub-commentaries gives way to the endeavour to present and comment upon, wherever appropriate, the relevant topical discourse found in recent and contemporary Navya-Nyāya treatises. The mentioned turn together with the new attitude may well have been part of a historicist search for originality and authenticity which in this specific case, i.e., with regard to the Nyāyasūtra, had become possible because there was no longer any psychological and ideological need to respond to the Buddhist challenge in any interpretation of and comment on the Sūtra; a second reason may be that the necessity to present the Sūtra as the internally undisputed and unambiguous foundation of the Nyāya tradition vis-à-vis the Buddhist critics was not felt any longer. The historicist stance indicated by the text-critical approach is also reflected in the more and more prominent historicist periodizations which had been expressed in the works of the Nyāya tradition in north-eastern India already in the thirteenth century. Both intellectual phenomena, the historicist search for originality and authenticity as well as the historicist periodizations, may have been influenced by the increasing intellectual interaction of the non-Muslim elite with Islamic culture which can be specifically demonstrated for some Nyāya scholars, the former phenomenon having possibly been motivated by the wish to assert one’s own cultural identity and — in view of the clear realization of the historical antiquity of the object of examination — superiority vis-à-vis the Muslim rulers. This latter inner motivation may have coincided with or been reinforced by the external factor of the boosted promotion of Sanskritic scholarship by local non-Muslim rulers, some of them Sanskrit scholars themselves and some related to prominent scholars through family ties, for their own purposes of cultural self-assertion and legitimization.

APPENDIX AND OUTLOOK

The line of development regarding the major Nyāyasūtra-commentaries and the attitudes and approaches of their authors sketched
above has, of course, only the nature of a working hypothesis which has to be corroborated in further detail or to be modified in the light of a more thorough analysis of the works and other testimonies. Also, the information about the authors themselves, their patrons and their networks is only fragmentary and remains to be fleshed out. Furthermore, the tradition of Navya-Nyāya in Navadvīpa, where after Ilyas Shah the general conditions for scholarship and for scholarly travel (foremost to centres of learning such as Mithilā and Kāśī) must have improved, resulting in the production of a voluminous philosophical literature, could not be addressed within the scope of the present contribution. The Navadvīpa tradition of commenting upon the Nyāyasūtra is mainly represented by a small fragment of a Nyāyasūtravākyākhyā by Māthurānātha Tarkavāgīśa, followed by Rāmabhadrā Śārvabhauma’s important Nyāyaratnas (end of the sixteenth/beginning of the seventeenth century), both works that I have not yet been able to study in sufficient detail. Supplemented his father’s commentary on the fifth adhyāya only of the Nyāyasūtra, that is, Jānakinātha’s above-mentioned Anvikṣikītatattvavivaraṇa, Rāmabhadrā, who was the teacher of the more famous Jagadīśa Tarkālaṅkāra, commented on the first four adhyāya-s. Another prominent representative of this tradition is Viśvanātha Pañcānana, whose well-known, but not yet thoroughly studied Nyāyasūtrakṛttī was completed in 1634 in Vṛndāvana, that is, some hundred years after Keśava Miśra of Mithilā wrote his Gautamīyasūtraprakāśa; his self-proclaimed motive in composing this commentary was to make the extensive Nyāyasūtra of Akṣapāda, whom he elsewhere calls a sage, able to be understood easily and without much effort even

130 For a first study of the Nyāyaratnas cf. Sen (1987, for Sen’s recent edition of this work cf. n. 58 above). Śūlapāṇi (Thakur, 1970: 37, 1981: xxi) and Śvapnāśvara (Thakur, loc. cit.), grandson of Vāsudeva Śārvabhauma (Bhattacharya, 1940: 60), are said to have written commentaries on the Nyāyasūtra, but their works have not yet been located.
131 Among other preceding commentaries on the Nyāyasūtra quoted by Jānakinātha he refers to the lost Bhāskara (cf. n. 37 above) (cf. Mishra, 1966: 421, relying on information provided by Dineshchandra Bhattacharya).
133 Cf. the first concluding verse of the Nyāyasūtrakṛttī in which Viśvanātha also refers to (Raghunātha) Śrīromaṇi, devotee of Kṛṣṇacandra, with the help of whose utterances he composed his commentary (NVṛ 1201, 16–19):

\[\text{eśā munipravaragautamasūtrakṛttī śrīviśvanāthakṛtānā sugamālpavarnā} \]
\[\text{śrīkṛṣṇacandraśarānāmbujaciścarīkarāśīmacchiromaniśvaracahpracayair akāri} \//\]
by lazy-minded people.\footnote{Cf. introductory verse no. 5 (NVr 28, 25–26): alasamātir apidaṃ vistṛtam nyāyasāstram virahitabahuyatno tilayā vettu vijñāh / itī vinihīcetāh kauśalam kartukāmo gurucaraṇarajo 'ham karnadhārikaromi //.} Viśvanātha Pañcanana, the youngest son in the family,\footnote{Cf. Mishra (1966: 434) and Upadhyaya (1994: 34).} was a student of his father Vidyānivāsa Bhāṭṭācārya, who is honoured by him in one of the introductory verses of the Nyāyasūtraṇa\footnote{Cf. introductory verse no. 4 (NVr 28, 23–24): advaitam gurudharmayar iva lasatksmāmanḍalimanḍanaṁ rūpaṁ kiścana pariṣṭhanti / gira iva prāghalbhayasampādakam / dāne karnam ivāvatiṁ param dāne dayādakṣaṇam tattva viśvaśāricāruyaśasam / vidyānivāsam namah //; cf. also verse 6 where Viśvanātha refers to himself as son of Vidyānivāsa (NVr 29, 24): vidyānivāsasūnoh kṛitr esā viśvanāthasya / viduṣām atisūksmādhiyām amatsarānām mude bhavatu //.} and regularly mentioned in the intermediate and final colophons of the manuscripts of this work. Quite a number of details are known about Vidyānivāsa Bhāṭṭācārya whom Dineshchandra Bhattacharya calls ‘the leader of Bengali scholars in Benares for a long time’: he was defeated in a dispute with the Mīmāṃsaka Nārāyaṇa Bhāṭṭa of the Gāḍhi family (cf. above, p. 77)\footnote{According to Mishra (1966: 434), Vidyānivāsa was the winner, a statement which is most probably a mistake.} on the occasion of a śrāddha ceremony in Todarmall’s house in Delhi\footnote{Cf. Shastri (1912: 9–10) and Upadhyaya (1994: 47); cf. also Benson (2001: 113) whose ms. evidence does not support Shastri’s characterization of the nature of the dispute but points to another topic of discussion.} and is mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbari in the fourth category of the learned men of Akbar’s time, namely, among ‘those who look upon testimony as something filled with the dust of suspicion and handle nothing without proof’; he signed a nirṇayapatra issued in 1583 in Kāṣī\footnote{Cf. Bhattacharyya (1937: 34–35).} and may have been among the contributors to the Kavīndracandrodaya (cf. above, p. 77).\footnote{Cf. Shastri (1912: 12).} According to Umesh Mishra\footnote{Cf. Mishra (1966: 434).} he was the son of a younger brother of Vāṣudeva Sārvabhauma; this statement tallies with Baldev Upadhyaya’s comment that he was the son of the youngest son of Nārāhari Viśārada,\footnote{Cf. Mishra (1966: 434).} named Vidyāvācaspati.\footnote{n. 97 above.} A grandson of his, Govinda Bhāṭṭācārya, son of Vidyānivāsa’s son Rudra Nyāyācaspati Bhāṭṭācārya,\footnote{Cf. Upadhyaya (1994: 34).} may have been the 27th among the 77
scholars who signed a nirñayapatra issued in Kāśi in 1657 (cf. below).\textsuperscript{145}

In addition, the Nyāyasiddhāntamāla, a commentary in the broader sense on selected sūtra-s of adhyāya-s 1 and 5.2 of the Nyāyasūtra,\textsuperscript{146} written in the second half of the seventeenth century in Kāśi by the Bengali Jayarāma Nyāyapañcānana,\textsuperscript{147} a student of Rāmabhadrā Sārvabhauma,\textsuperscript{148} remains to be examined.\textsuperscript{149} Jayarāma Nyāyapañcānana’s signature appears as the 74th name on the already mentioned vyavastha- or nirñayapatra issued in 1657 in Kāśi;\textsuperscript{150} he also contributed to the Kavīndracandrodaya.\textsuperscript{151} A further unexplored, still not edited commentary is the Mitabhāṣīni by Mahādeva Bhaṭṭācārya of the last quarter of the seventeenth century, of which several manuscripts are preserved;\textsuperscript{152} Mahādeva, son of Vāgīśvarācārya and Bhāgirathī, wrote this commentary at the request of a certain Someśvara Bhaṭṭa. He may have been a Vedāntin and also author of the Sāṅkhya-vṛttisāra.\textsuperscript{153} Only after these available materials have been taken into consideration will our broad picture of the commentarial literature on the Nyāyasūtra from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, their authors and their contexts, become more complete, ready to be filled in with further details gained from additional sources.


\textsuperscript{146} Cf. Shastri (1928: (1)–(5), (9)–(10)); see also the characterization in Chakravarti (1929: 230) and Mishra (1966: 438).

\textsuperscript{147} Cf. Chakravarti (1915a: 283) and Kaviraj (1982: 94–95); according to Kaviraj, the work was composed in 1693.

\textsuperscript{148} Kaviraj, followed by Shastri (1928: [17]–[18]), identifies Jayarāma’s teacher with Rāmabhadrā Siddhāntavāgīśa, the grandson and student of Jagadīśa (Kaviraj, 1982: 94, 89–90). However, Bhattacharyya has clearly shown that this Rāmabhadrā must be Rāmabhadrā Sārvabhauma because Jayarāma refers to the latter’s Nyāyarahasya ascribing the quoted passage to guravah (cf. Bhattacharyya, 1945: 96–97; cf. also Mishra, 1966: 435, 437).

\textsuperscript{149} The work refers to the Nyāyabhāṣya, the Nyāyavārttika, the Tātparyaṭīkā and Vardhāmāna’s Nyāyanibandhaprakāśa and Tattvabodha; Udayana may be referred to by ṛcāryāḥ. Jayarāma also mentions the Bhāskara (cf. n. 37 above) and Sānātani (cf. n. 33 above) once.

\textsuperscript{150} Cf. Kaviraj (1982: 152); Shastri (1928: 19); no. 68 in the list as presented in Gode (1943: 138), no. 31 in Upadhyaya (1994: 87).

\textsuperscript{151} Cf. Gode (1943: 138) and Upadhyaya (1994: 85).

\textsuperscript{152} Cf. Kaviraj (1982: 103).

\textsuperscript{153} Cf. Kaviraj (1982: 103, 154). Gaurinath Sastri, relying on the Navadvipamahimā, mentions still another Vṛtti on the Nyāyasūtra written in the middle of the eighteenth century in Navadvīpa, by a certain Śivarāma (cf. Sastri, 1968: 518). However, this work has not yet been discovered.


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Institute for South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies
University of Vienna
Spitalgasse 2, 2.1
A-1090 Vienna
Austria
E-mail: karin.preisendanz@univie.ac.at