The Structure of the Whole Discussion on śabda in the Nyāyamañjarī

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1. Introduction  That the first category of pramāṇa occupied a special position in the framework of sixteen categories (sodaśa padarthāḥ) of Nyāya philosophy was already obvious at the time of compilation of the Nyāyasūtra (= NS) in its present form, since the second chapter is almost entirely dedicated to the examination (parikṣā) of pramāṇa, though it may well be said that perhaps more significance was given to the second category prameya in view of the fact that the remaining examination chapters, i.e. the third and the fourth, are devoted to the treatment of the latter. At any rate there is no doubt that the consideration of pramāṇa acquired increasingly more importance in the development of Nyāya philosophy, until finally Gaṅgeśa (14th century) composed the Tattvacintāmani by arranging four chapters in accordance with the four kinds of pramāṇa traditionally accepted by Nyāya. Such a historical shift was already reflected in Bhāsarvajña's radical reformation of the Nyāya System in the composition of the Nyāyasūra (10th century),¹ which consists of three chapters in accordance with the three kinds of pramāṇa he accepted. The same seems to be the case with the Nyāyamañjarī (= NM) of Jayanta (AD ca. 890).

As he himself admitted, NM does not cover all the sūtras of NS, but mainly deals with the definition-aphorisms (laksāṇa-sūtrāṇī) as well as the classification-aphorisms (vibhāga-sūtrāṇī) that are given in the first and the fifth chapters, and only occasionally refers to some examination-aphorisms (parikṣā-sūtrāṇī) of the intervening three chapters.² In other words Jayanta explains the sixteen categories one by one, beginning with introductory discussion of the pramāṇa in the first chapter (āḥnika) and ending with the last category nigrāhasthāna in the closing twelfth chapter of the NM. A glance at the number of pages spent for the treatment of each category will clearly display how much importance was attached by Jayanta to the discussion of pramāṇa in NM. Below we will show the number of pages according to the edition Kashi Sanskrit Series 106,³ which normally contains few, if any, lines of footnotes.

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2. Arrangement of the 16 Categories in the Whole NM (Ch. I–Ch. XII = 600 pp.)

Ch. I (pp. 1–11) = Introduction (pp. 1–5) and general account of the whole sixteen categories (pp. 5–11).

Ch. I (pp. 12–60)–Ch. VI (pp. 336–392) = (1) pramāṇa (380 pp.)

Ch. VII (pp. 1–45)–Ch. IX (pp. 77–117) = (2) prameya (117 pp.)

Ch. X (pp. 118–144) = (3) saṃśaya (pp. 118–125 = 8 pp.), (4) prayojana (pp. 125–126 = 1 p.), (5) drṣṭānta (pp. 126–127 = 0.5 p.), (6) siddhānta (pp. 127–130 = 3 pp.), (7) avayava (pp. 130–144 = 14 pp.)

Ch. XI (pp. 144–173) = (8) tarka (pp. 144–148 = 4 pp.), (9) nirṇaya (pp. 148–150 = 2 pp.), (10) vāda (pp. 150–151 = 2 pp.), (11) jalpa (pp. 151–153 = 1 p.), (12) vi-tanḍā (pp. 153 = 0.5 p.), (13) hetvābhāsa (pp. 153–168 = 13 pp.), (14) chala (pp. 168–173 = 5 pp.)

Ch. XII (pp. 173–208) = (15) jāti (pp. 173–190 = 16 pp.), (16) nigrahasthāna (pp. 190–208 = 19 pp.)

Thus the discussion on pramāṇa occupies about 63 percent (380 pp.) of the whole NM (600 pp. = Part I, 392 pp. + Part II, 208 pp.). Therefore, we may safely say that the character of pramāṇa-śāstra was already prominent in the Nyāya System as presented in NM. 4)

But on the other hand it may be relevant to note that Jayanta’s exposition of Nyāya philosophy still retained a certain extent of mokṣa-śāstra since he dedicated nearly 20 percent (117 pp.) to the account of twelfefold prameya, the totality of objects that must be known properly for the attainment of liberation.

3. The Predominance of Discussion on śabda-pramāṇa in NM  The outstanding feature of the compositional structure of NM, however, is the predominant treatment of śabda-pramāṇa in comparison with the other kinds of pramāṇa as well as the other categories.

〈Discussion on pramāṇa〉 (380 pp.)

(1) General exposition: Ch. I, pp. 12–60 (49 pp.)

(2) On pratyakṣa: Ch. II, pp. 61–100 (40 pp.)

(3) On anumāna: Ch. II, pp. 100–118 (27.5 pp.)

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(4) On upamāna: Ch. II, pp. 128–136 (8.5 pp.) (pratyakṣa up to upamāna = 76 pp.)

(5) On śabda: Ch. III–Ch. VI (pp. 137–392 = 256 pp.)

Whereas all the other three sorts of pramāṇa are dealt with in the second chapter only (76 pp.), as many as four chapters (altogether 256 pp.) are devoted to the discussion on śabda, which amounts to a little more than 67 percent of the whole discussion on pramāṇa and nearly 43 percent of the whole NM. It would be no exaggeration to say that śabda-pramāṇa forms the main topic of NM. Therefore, to analyze the structure of the discussion on śabda would be to elucidate the composition of NM as a whole.

4. A Brief Survey of the Structure of Discussion on śabda: Division of Two Parts

There is not sufficient space for the present paper to go into full detail, but at least we should make a provisional brief survey of the arrangement of discussion on śabda in NM.

Ch. III

(1) On the definition of śabda in NS 1.1.7 (NM I, pp. 396.1–401.6).

(2) Is śabda a sort of anumāna or not? (pp. 401.7–412.8)

(3) Is śabda a pramāṇa at all? (pp. 412.9–419.17): Introduction of a series of the fundamental questions (14 verses) and a provisional dispute.

(4) Dispute on the nature of pramāṇya (pramāṇya-vāda) between the svataḥpramāṇya-theory of Mīmāṃsā (Kumārila and his followers) and the parataḥpramāṇya-theory of Nyāya, part 1 (pp. 419.18–451.20): Foundational discussion with reference to the validity of a cognition (jñāna-pramāṇya).

(5) Extension to the khyāti-vāda (discourse on the nature of erroneous cognition) (pp. 451.21–481.4).

(6) Establishment of the extrinsic (paratah) nature of the validity of śabda (śabda-pramāṇya) by application of the parataḥpramāṇya theory of cognition proved at (4) (pp. 481.5–483.24).

(7) Proof of the existence of the almighty God (iśvara) as the author of the Vedas (pp. 484.1–512.18).

(8) Demonstration (a) that the Vedas have an author because śabdas as the phonemes (varṇa) are impermanent products (pp. 513.1–572.12); NS 2.2.13 and 18 are quoted on p. 569.
Ch. IV

(9) Demonstration (b) that the Vedas have an author because words, sentences or the compositions are impermanent products (pp. 573.1–590.14).

(10) Demonstration (c) that the Vedas have an author because the relation between a word and its referent is determined by an agreement of human origin (pp. 590.15–603.4); NS 2.1.54 is quoted on p. 595.

(11) Conclusion that because the Vedas have an author, the validity of the Vedas must be proved by the logical reason of “being uttered by a reliable speaker” (śruti), not by the reason of being permanent (nātīyatva) (p. 603.5).

(12) Argument that reinforces the above conclusion to the effect that the invariable concomitance (vyāpti) between the śruti and the pramāṇa can be ascertained on the empirical evidence (pp. 603.6–610.11); NS 1.1.8 and 2.1.66 are quoted on p. 609.

(13) Other arguments for the validity of the Vedas and the extended discussion on the authority of the Atharva Veda (pp. 610.12–629.13).

(14) To what extent can the above argumentation for the validity of the Vedas be applied to other scriptures? (pp. 629.14–640.4)

(a) It can be applied to the Dharmaśastras and the Itihāsapurāṇa (pp. 630.4–635.5) and also to the sacred texts of Hindu sects that are not contradictory to the Vedas such as the Āgamas of the Śaivasiddhānta and the scriptures of the Pāncarātra (pp. 635.6–637.2).

(b) But it cannot be applied to the scriptures of Buddhists and Sāmāramocakas (pp. 637.3–640.4).

(15) Appendix: Three doctrines that proclaim the validity of all the religious scriptures (pp. 640.5–649.7).

(16) Final conclusion that the Vedas are authoritative because they are the words of the reliable speaker who is the almighty God (p. 649.8–11).

(17) Refutation of the heterodox criticism against the validity of the Vedas (pp. 649.12–667.6); NS 2.1.55 and 56 are quoted on p. 652.

(18) Supplementary account of the relevance of division of Vedic sentences (pp. 667.7–690.12).

(19) On the question whether the Vedas are authoritative with reference to what should
be accomplished (kārya) or what has been established (siddha) (pp. 691.1–702.15).

(20) Closing remark on the arguments for the validity of the Vedas (p. 703.1–8).

Ch. V

(21) Introduction of a new dispute topic whether śabda as a word or a sentence can refer to the real entities (NM II, pp. 3.1–4.2).

(22) Examination of a meaning or a referent of a word (padārtha) including refutation of the apoha-theory of Buddhists and the conclusion that a word does refer to a real object, not to a fictitious entity (pp. 4.3–69.6); NS 2.2.56 and 64 are quoted on p. 4 and p. 47 respectively.

(23) Examination of the meaning of a sentence (vākyārtha) as the core message of an utterance (pp. 69.7–142.19); NS 1.1.24 and 2.2.64 are quoted on p. 135 and p. 136 respectively.

Ch. VI

(24) Examination of the cause of cognition of a word meaning and a sentence meaning including refutation of the sphota-theory (pp. 143.1–184.9).

(25) Dispute between the anvītābhidhāna-theory and the abhihitānvaya-theory (pp. 185.1–219.11).

(26) Excursive discussion on the meaning of the science of grammar in connection with the question how the learning of word meanings of the Vedas is possible.

(27) Concluding remark of the long discussion on śabda (p. 262.5–8).

(28) Concluding remark of the discussion on pramāṇa (p. 262.9–12).

Thus the whole discussion on śabda may be divided into two parts. The former two chapters (Chs. III and IV) deal with the validity of śabda-pramāṇa, that of the Vedas in particular, whereas the latter two (Chs. V and VI) discuss such linguistic issues as the meaning of a word or the cognitive process of understanding the meaning of a sentence. But we should also regard the second part as a continuation of the first part, because we find the following opening statement at the beginning of Ch. V: “Now the answer will be provided with regard to the above-mentioned objection to the effect that words have no connection with the real objects since there is no real referent of a word.” (NM II, p. 3.3–4: atha yad uktaṁ vāstavasya śabdārthasyāvidyamānatvād arthāsamsparsināḥ śabdā iti, tat pratīvidhiyate/). As the editor of the Mysore edition says, “the above-mentioned objec-
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tion” evidently refers to the second verse in particular included in a series of opening fundamental questions that consists of 14 ślokas. Jayanta puts those questions after he has started his discussion on ṣabda by making comments on the wording of NS 1.1.7 that defines ṣabda and has subsequently refuted the assertion that ṣabda should be nothing but a sort of anumāna. In fact it is those 14 verses that will afford us a vital clue for disclosing the basic structure of the whole discussion on ṣabda in NM.

5. The Fourteen Verses as a Keystone for Disclosing the Basic Structure on ṣabda in NM

(a) (b) Raising the fundamental objection: The very validity of ṣabda as a pramāṇa is not tenable after all, because words have no connection with real objects since they are based only on a conceptual fiction. Therefore there is no sense in examining whether the ṣabda has an independent status as a pramāṇa distinguishable from anumāna, since that examination presupposes that the Vedas are perfectly valid as a pramāṇa.

nanu siddhe pramōṇatve bhedadaparikṣaṇam/
kriyate na tu śabdasya prāmāṇyam avakalpate//1//
arthapraṇitijanakam pramāṇam iti varṇitam/
vikalpamāṇatvāt vārtham śabdāh sprṣanty amē//2//

(c) How can we determine any real entity as a referent of a word? A species (jāti), an individual (vyakti) or an individual qualified with a species is not valid as such.

artho nirūpyamāṇaś ca ko vā śabdasya śakyate/
vaktum, na jātir na vyaktir na tdvān nāma kaścana//3//

(d) Moreover, there is neither a permanent relation nor a conventional connection between a word and its referent. Even if we admit such a relation between them, it is impossible to confirm it in the case of a supersensible referent such as dharma.

sambandho 'py asya nārthena niyō 'sti samayo 'tha vā/
śakyah sann api boddhum arthe katham atindriyel//4//

(e) We cannot determine the nature of a sentence meaning, either. The injunctive force (niyoga), the productive force (bhāvanā), the mutual exclusion (bhedā), the mutual association (samsarga), or any others are invalid as such.
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vākyārtha 'pi na nirṇetum pāryate pāramārthikah／niyogabhāvanābhedasamsargādisvabhāvakah∥/5∥

(j) (Even if we can determine its nature,) we cannot explain the cognitive process of obtaining the meaning of a sentence. It cannot be determined whether it is caused by the meanings of constituent words, the sentence endowed with correlated meaning-units, or a metaphysical entity called sphaṭa.

tapatrātyabhīṣyāyaś ca kim padārthah (read: padārthāḥ) padāni vā／vākyāṁ vā vyatīṣaktārtham sphaṭo veti na lakṣyate∥/6∥

(g) (Even if we can determine that process,) we cannot ascertain the foundation of the validity of śabda as a pramāṇa. Is it due to the permanence of śabda, or the property of being uttered by a reliable speaker?

siddhāyām api tadāduḥdhau tasya draḍḍhimakāraṇam／(draḍḍhiman = prāmanyam)／nityatvam āptoktatvam vā na samyag avatiṣṭhate∥/7∥

(h) (i) Even if we admit the permanence of a word, the question arises whether the compositions of the Vedas are of origin of some agent or eternal. Even if we admit that they were composed by some agent, it is quite difficult to know who he is. We cannot say whether he is the only agent, he is omniscient, or compassionate.

pade nitye 'pi vaidīkyo racanā kartṛpūrviḥ／nityā vā, kṛtakate 'pi kṛtiḥ keneti durgamam∥/8∥／kartāsti sa ca nirdvandvah sa caikāḥ sa ca sarvavit／sa ca kāruṇiko veti pratipattam na śakya∥/9∥

(j) There is a great variety of religious texts that are contradictory to each other. We do not know which of them is attributable to the God.

parasparairuddhāḥ ca santi bhūyāmsa āgamāḥ／teśāṃ kasyēśvarah kartā kasya neti na manmahe∥/10∥

(k) The Vedas themselves have many defects such as mutual contradictions, much of repetition, and the failure to obtain the results guaranteed by them.

vede doṣāḥ ca vidyante vyāghātah punaruktātāh／phalasyānupalambhaḥ ca iathā phalaviparyayah∥/11∥

(l) Moreover, we cannot find any textual unity (samanvaya) in the Vedas because they simply present miscellaneous collections of various types of sentences such as conjunctions, explanatory comments on ritual acts, ritual formulas and the names of rit-
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(*m*) In what sense can the Vedas be taken as authoritative? With regard to what should be accomplished, or what has been established, or both?

\[
\text{kīdrśaś cārtha-vādānāṁ viruddhārthāḥ bhidhāyināṁ} \\
\text{mantrānāṁ nāmadheyādipadānāṁ vā samanvayāḥ}!12//
\]

(*n*) For these reasons the course of justifying the authority of the Vedas is obstructed by insurmountable difficulties. You have no choice but to accept it only by the thought that the Vedas will serve the means of livelihood for Brahmins or on blind faith.

\[
\text{tena vedapramāṇatvam viṣame pathi vartate}!14//
\]

After this set of wide-ranging and fundamental objections or censures against the validity of *śabda-pramāṇa* and ultimately the authority of the Vedas, Jayanta first provides the following short answer.

NM I, p. 415.1–2: *aṭrābhidhiyate* sarva evaite doṣā yathākramam pariharisyanta ity alam asamā-śvāsenā supratistham eva vedaprāmāṇyam avagacchatv āyuśmān/

Namely, Jayanta tries to relieve the respectable reader in advance by promising that he will refute all these accusations one by one and solidly establish the authority of the Vedas. He then provides a provisional discussion and finally makes the following concluding remark with regard to the criticism (*b*) in particular.

NM I, p. 419.16–17:

\[
\text{yā tu jāyādiśabārthāparākaranavartmanāī} \\
\text{arthāsamsparsīta proktā sā purastān niṣetsyate}!/
\]

Undoubtedly, the expression “that (i.e. the critical statement that words have no connection with real entities) will be denied later” (*sā purastān niṣetsyate*) corresponds to the above-mentioned opening statement at the beginning of Ch V. But accordance is not restricted to this case; on the contrary there is a close correspondence between a series of 14 *slokas* and the whole subsequent discussion on *śabda* until the end of the Ch. VI.

6. Close Correspondence between the 14 Verses and the Whole Subsequent Discussion

Even a rough comparison will show the following close correspondence:

\[(a) (b)\] Ch. III (3) and Ch. V (21) \[(c)\] Ch. V (22) \[(d)\] Ch. III (10) \[(e)\] Ch. V (23)
(f) Ch. VI (24) (25) (g) Ch. III (8) and Ch. IV (9) (11) (12) (h) (i) Ch. III (7) (j) Ch. IV (14) (15) (16) (k) Ch. IV (17) (l) Ch. IV (18) (m) Ch. IV (19) (n) Ch. IV (20) and Ch V (26)

Moreover, establishment of the parahpramāṇya-theory in Ch. III (4) (5) (6) may well be considered to be corresponding to (g) because it serves the logical foundation for the Nyāya’s thesis that the validity of the Vedas should be justified by the logical reason of being uttered by a reliable speaker. Consequently, all the issues raised in the series of verses (vv. 1–13) are discussed and answers are gradually given from Ch. III up to the end of Ch. VI and nearly all of the topics or items (3)–(26) have correspondence to some or other question or censure in the series of ślokas under consideration. This observation is definitely supported by the closing verse for the discussion on śabda.

NM II, p. 262.5–8 = Ch. VI (26):

\[
\text{evam mrṣātvam udāgiyata yena yena cchidrena kalpitapiścaravair anāryaihi}
\]
\[
tat tat samagram apasāritam ity ataś prāmāṇyam apratihi tam sthitam āgamānām\]

This verse seems to say that all the censures and questions introduced by barbarian opponents with the above-mentioned series of verses have been rejected and answered with the counter-arguments adduced from Ch. III (3) to Ch. VI (26) and thus the authority of the sacred texts and the Vedas in particular have been defended without any impediments. In other words the promise stated by Jayanta on NM I, p. 415.1–2 has been fulfilled by arranging the whole subsequent discussion on śabda until the end of Ch. VI.

7. Concluding Remarks  Finally, we would like to see the connection between the above conclusion and Jayanta’s view of the purpose of Nyāya philosophy that he expressed in the introduction of NM (I, pp. 1.1–12.13). There he emphasized that the raison d’être of Nyāya lies in that it constitutes the solid ground for the defense of the authority of the Vedas (p. 7.6–7: vedaprāmāṇya-rakṣā-hetu) against persistent heretical criticisms and that the aim of Nyāya is to determine the validity of the Vedas (p. 10.1: vedaprāmāṇya-nirṇaya-prayojana). For the objection that the Mīmāṃsā System serves this purpose and therefore the Nyāya would be meaningless, he answers that their arguments of intrinsic validity of the Vedas and our cognition in general are not strong enough to refute the apparently formidable criticisms elaborated by evil-minded logicians, and proclaims that it is nothing but the mission of Nyāya philosophy to demonstrate that the authority of the Vedas must be extrinsically defended by the logical reason of being uttered by a reliable speaker.
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Thus it fits in quite well with this view of Jayanta on the purpose of Nyāya that he devoted as many as four chapters to the long and detailed discussion on *śabda* ultimately to justify the authority of the Vedas, since this task forms the very mission of Nyāya according to him. It must be left to future study to make a more detailed analysis of the structure of his whole discourse on *śabda*, but it may be fairly easy to answer the question why he postponed to the Ch. V his counter-argument against the most basic rebuke of the validity of *śabda* as a *pramāṇa* because of the lack of linkage between words and reality. The reason seems to be that Jayanta found it essential to consolidate the theoretical foundation within the Brahmanical circle in advance before he set out on a journey of crashing the heretic criticisms.

2) NM I, p. 30.7-12: *asmābhīs tu lakṣaṇa-sūtrāṇy eva vyākhyāsya
tel/parīkṣāsūtrasukta
tu vastu sopayogalakṣaṇanvarjanāvasara eva yathā-buddhi
darśayissate/na prthak parīkṣāsūtrasuvīvaraṇasramah
cariṣyat
ta
ta eva prathamasūtrānantarām
tu
duhkhajana
ta
ta
ta
ta
ta
ta
ta


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