Sāṃkhyan View in the Yoga-bhāṣya

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The Yoga-bhāṣya attributed to Vyāsa came to have a remarkable tendency to Sāṃkhya. The Sāṃkyan idea found there does not seem to be based on the theory of Īśvarakṛṣṇa. Who was the author of the Sāṃkhya theory on which the Yoga-bhāṣya based?

The Yoga-bhāṣya often quotes some passages from older Sāṃkhya works in order to authorize its own assertion. Most of them are attributed to Pañcaśikha by Vācaspatimiśra (Tattvavaiśāradī). According to him, the Yoga-bhāṣya is the document in which the most numerous fragments of Pañcaśikha are quoted. It can be said consequently that it looks up the philosophy of Pañcaśikha as the authority. But now that the Yuktidipikā (a commentary on the Sāṃkhya-kārikā), a new source, has become the object of our attention, we can no longer entirely agree to what Vācaspatimiśra says. P. Cakravarti pointed out that some of the fragments attributed to Pañcaśikha so far is ascribed to Vārṣagaṇya by the author of the Yuktidipikā. He quotes in his commentary on YS. 2–15, 3–13 for example the following fragments in order to prove that a thing consists of Sukha, Duḥkha and Moha that struggle one another: rūpātiśayā vṛtty atiśayāḥ ca paraspareṇa viruddhyante / sāmānyāni tv atiśayaiḥ saha pravartante / This passage is, according to Vācaspatimiśra, a fragment from Pañcaśikha. But the same passage appears in the Yuktidipikā where it is ascribed to Vārṣagaṇya himself. In a commentary on YS. 3–13, Vyāsa quotes the views of four doctors of Abhidharma. Toward the end of the commentary, presenting a refutation of dharma and dharmin by Buddhists, he refutes it again

(1) P. Chakravarti ed., Yuktidipikā, Calcutta 1938.
(3) Yuktidipikā, p. 72.
by quoting the following passage: tad etat trailokyam vyakter apaiti / nityatva-pratibandhat / apetam apy asti / vinashaapratibandhat / samsargac casya sauksyam sauksmyac canupaladbhir iti / Neither Vyasa nor Vacaspati refers to the source of this passage. A portion of this passage is found intact in Uddyotakara’s Nyaya-varttika 1-2-6 and Vatsyayana’s Nyaya-bhashya 1-2-6 without showing the source. This fragment appear, however, in a modified form in the Yuktidipika in which it is ascribed to the followers of Varsagaña. Moreover, the chap. V of the Abhidharmakosa-sāstra translated by Hiuen Tsang quotes the theory of the Varsaganāh (雨乘外道) in refuting the saktāryavāda of the Sāmkhya i.e. 有必常有, 無必常無, 無必不生; 有必不滅. 雨乘 found in the Chinese Buddhist scriptures means the followers of Varsagaña. We find 婆沙乾若 (Ba-sha-ken-nya in Jap.) instead of 雨乘外道 in the chap. V of the Abhidharmakoṣa-(vyākyā)sastra translated by Paramārtha. This is no doubt a Chinese transcription of Varsagaña. So we can attribute the passage to Varsagaña himself. The latter half of the passage is quoted literally in the Yoga-bhashya 4-12 a and in NBh. ad. NS. 1-1-29 as an authorized theory of the Sāmkhya.

We shall now consider the relation with the Sāmkhya, mainly the theory of recognition found in the Yoga-bhashya. The Yoga-sūtra 1-7 admits, as is wellknown, just like the Sāmkhya, the three pramāṇas: pratyakṣa (perception), anumāṇa (inference) and āgama (verbal-communication). In his commentary on this Sūtra, Vyāsa says with reference to the pratyakṣa as follows: “Perception is that source-of-valid-ideas (which arises as a modification of the inner-organ) when the mind has been affected by some external thing through the channel of the sense-organs. This fluctuation is directly related to that (object), but, whereas the intended object consists of the general (sāmānya) and of the particular (viśeṣa), it (the fluctuation) is chiefly concerned with the ascertainment of the particular (the general being subordinate in perception of the particular).” (Bombay ed. p. 11 f). In connection with the inference he says, “The inference is (that) fluctu-
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ation (of the mind) which refers to that relation which is present in things belonging to the same class as the inferred object (anumeya) and absent from things belonging to classes different (from that of the inferred object); and it is chiefly concerned with the ascertainment of the general.” (ibid., p. 12). He says in another place, “The inference exhausts its force in bringing a general proposition to a conclusion, but is powerless to prove a particular instance.” (YBh. ad. YS. 1–25). He gives a comment as to the verbal-communication, too (p. 12). Our attention is attracted on his words that the verbal communication has the general for its object just like the inference (YBh. ad. YS. 1–49). Classifying all the phenomena into two categories, the particular (višeṣa) and the general (sāmānya), Vyāsa regards the particular as the object of the pratyakṣa and the general as the object of anumāṇa and āgama. Such wording is not found in the Sāmkhya-kārīkā.

Looking for Buddhism on the other hand, we find that this theory of Vyāsa is of the similar kind to the theory of Dignāga and the later school of Buddhist logicians. Dignāga says in his work entitled Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti: “There are only two pramāṇas (the instrument of recognition), the pratyakṣa and the anumāṇa, for they have the two laksana as its object. There is no object of recognition that has other laksāna than that of the self (sva) and the general (sāmānya). It is the pratyakṣa that has svalaksana for its object, while it is the anumāṇa that has sāmānya-lakṣaṇa for its object. Thus it must be known.” Though the term višeṣa is not used in the work of Dignāga, svalakṣaṇa and sāmānyalakṣaṇa are referred to in contrast. Therefore the term no doubt means the particular. If it was Dignāga that asserted for the first time such a theory in connection with the pratyakṣa and the anumāṇa, it can be said that Vyāsa’s theory of recognition was influenced by Dignāga. As I discussed in another occasion, however, the author of the Yoga-bhāṣya refutes Dignāga’s tri-amsa theory (grahaka,

(6) Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti, (Tohoku No. 4204, Sde-dge ed. Ce, 14 b)
(7) S. Takagi, A Phase of Interrelation between Yoga-philosophy and Buddhism. (Studies in Indology and Buddhismology, presented in Honour of Prof. G. Nakano on the occasion of his 70th Birthday).

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ākāra and svasaṁvid) in his commentary on YS. 4-14 ff. The constituent factors of the tri-aṁśa theory are found already in the Mahāyānasamgraha. Subject (見), object (相) and cognisance (識) are referred to in the Vajrachędikāśutra-śāstra. It is said, in consequence, that the tri-aṁśa theory was conceived by Maitreya, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. But Dignāga himself was the man who presented it clearly as a theory. Then it follows that the Yoga-bhāṣya came into existence after Dignāga (480—540 A.D.). Dignāga also refuted the theory of pratyakṣa by the Sāṁkhya school in one of his works. The theory of pratyakṣa by a certain Sāṁkhyaist that was then refuted is that “the pratyakṣa is the faculty of the senses such as the auditory sense etc.” It is proved by Uddyotakara’s Nyāyavārttika (ad. NS. 1–1–4) and Vācaspati’s Nyāyavārttikatātparyatikā that the Sāṁkhyaist who propounded this theory was Vārṣagana, a predecessor of Īśvarakṛṣṇa. The Yuktidipikā quotes the definition of pratyakṣa theories by the philosophical systems to refute them. The pratyakṣa theory mentioned above is ascribed to the followers of Vārṣagana (p. 39). Anyhow the pratyakṣa theory of Vārṣagana, a Sāṁkhyaist, was criticized not only by Dignāga and other schools, but by other Sāṁkhyaists. I suppose this might have led Vindhyavāsin to rectify the Vārṣagana’s definition of pratyakṣa. He gave the rectified one as follows: “The pratyakṣa is the faculty of (sense-organs) such as the auditory sense-organ etc. that does not distinguish.”

On the other hand, Guṇaratna explains the Vindhyavāsin’s theory of pratyakṣa in his commentary on Śāḍdarśanasamuccaya 43:

“Vindhyavāsin says, the pratyakṣa is the faculty of the auditory sense-organ etc. that does not distinguish. There are 5 sense-organs, auditory, tactual, visual, gustory and olfactory. Therefore the auditory etc. means 5 senses. Their operation means the one of transformation. Thus the pratyakṣa means that the senses transform into the presentation of object. Such is his definition. Avikalpikā means that there is no ideal element of perception such as name (nāma) or genus (jāti), but it merely means the
pure perception recognized by the sense-organs.” If we refer to Gunaratna’s commentary, we come to know that Vindhyavāsin’s definition of the pratyakṣa is very similar to that of Dignāga himself, who says: “The pratyakṣa is the pure perception divested of ideal elements and disconnected with the name and the genus.” The chronological order of Dignāga and Vindhyavāsin is not known. But supposing, as Prof. E. Frauwallner said, that Vindhyavāsin was contemporary with Vasubandhu (400—480), it follows that Vindhyavāsin’s definition of the pratyakṣa preceded that of Dignāga. The theory of pratyakṣa in the commentary on the fifth verse of the Chin-ch’i-shih-lun (Suvarṇasaptati) in Chinese translation resembles the theories of Vindhyavāsin and Dignāga. It is to be remarked that the pratyakṣa is regarded as the pure perception divested of the ideal elements.

I have observed that the Yoga-bhāṣya had the same view as Dignāga concerning the pratyakṣa. I am inclined to believe that the author of the Yoga-bhāṣya was influenced by Vindhyavāsin rather than by Dignāga. I can not discuss on this point minutely by the trifling fragments from Vindhyavāsin. But such way of thinking seems to be more valid in view of the refutation of Dignāga’s tri-āmsa theory by Vyāsa.

Besides the above-mentioned points the Yoga-bhāṣya and Vindhyavāsin are similar in regard to such important views that both of them recognize only the inner-organ of the mind (manas) and not sūkṣma-śarīra. Now we can understand that the theory of Sāṃkhya in the Yoga-bhāṣya was based on a Sāṃkhya theory belonging to the line of Vārṣagānyā. That was, I suppose, why Vācaspati regarded Vārṣagānyā the author of the Yoga-śāstra. In fact, the author of the Yoga-bhāṣya looked up Vārṣagānyā as his authority because the latter had an inclination pretty Yogaic, in other words, he had a Sāṃkhya-Yogaic thought. Is that not the reason why his name is omitted in the traditional lineage of the Sāṃkhya?

(11) Pramāṇasamuccaya, fol. 15 a. (12) Indische Philosopie, Bd. 1, s. 401
(13) 對應解證量者，耳於聲生解，乃至鼻於香生解，唯解不能知，是名為證量 (Taisho ed., vol. 54, p. 1246 a).