

Chapter 1

The Structure of the Nyāya Sūtras

THE Nyāya Sūtra is not an unknown text in the Indian tradition. In fact, it is not only regarded as the foundational text of Nyāya but also has been extensively commented upon by a number of very well known thinkers in that tradition. Not only this, there has been a concern with the text and the fixing of both the reading of the sūtras and the numbers contained in each section. The article entitled 'The Text of the Nyāya Sūtras-Some Problems', given in Appendix 1, attempts to deal with some of these problems. The task of finalising the text, and giving an analysis of its contents was undertaken by Vācaspati Miśra I in his Nyāya Sūcīnibandha where he gave an exhaustive list of the topics dealt with there and the sūtras devoted to each *prakaraṇa* in the text (Appendix n). But, no one has given any reasons as to why he should have felt the necessity of writing such a work giving not only the exact number of the sūtras in each section, but also dividing the sūtras in detail on the basis of the issues they had dealt with and also giving the exact number of the words in them. It is of course true that Uddyotakara's Vārttika on Vatsyāyana's Bhāṣya on the Nyāya Sūtras had perhaps been forgotten as has been explicitly mentioned by Vācaspati Miśra-I in his well known 'Tātparyatikā' on the Vārttika but there is little reason to believe that the Nyāya Sūtras themselves had become unknown by his time or the Vatsyāyana's Bhāṣya on them was not known.

Yet, though Vācaspati Miśra I's attempt in the Nyāyasūcī Nibandha is well known to all students of Nyāya it has not been the subject of any special attention either in the tradition or

amongst those in modern times who have been interested in the subject. A close look therefore on the way Vācaspati Miśra I has described the topics dealt with in Nyāya Sūtras and the number of sūtras devoted to each topic therefore a desideratum for any intensive study of this work which has provided the foundation for all Nyāya thinking in the Indian tradition. According to Vācaspati Miśra I there are five chapters, each containing two sections, containing the following number of sūtras in each:

1.1	41
1.2	20
2.1	61
2.2	61
3.1	73
3.2	72
4.1	68
4.2	51
5.1	40
5.2	24
Total:	511 Sūtras

The Nyāya Sūtras (150 A.D.) has two different purposes combined into one text and hence shows an inner conflict and tension in the thinking of the author of the work. The conflict and the tension can perhaps be resolved, but it will require at least a preliminary awareness about it. A reflection on this may also provide a clue to the insoluble problem that seems to plague Indian philosophical enterprise from its very beginning. The sūtra has not one, but two *prayojanas* or purposes as enshrined in the first two sūtras which, according to the author of the Nyāya *sūcīnibandha*, should be regarded as the *prayojana* sūtras. These are explicitly stated to be *niḥśreyasa* and *apavarga*. What is the exact relation between the two should be the central concern of Nyāya but this has nowhere been attempted in the tradition at least in a focal manner.

The tradition emphasizes only the first *prayojana* and treats

Nyāya as *pramāṇa śāstra* whose end is supposed to be the attainment of *niḥśreyasa*. The *pramāṇa vidyā*, however, is available to every one who wants to argue for any thing and hence is, as an instrument, available to every other discipline and also all those who want to use *buddhi* for the attainment of any purpose whatsoever. As these purposes are diverse, the term *niḥśreyasa* also may be seen as implying an intrinsic and essential diversity in it. Uddyotakara (610 AD) makes this clear in his Vārttika on the Sūtra 1.1.1.

The second sūtra is concerned with an analysis of the human situation and concerns itself with its articulation in the usual traditional manner which appears to be common to all Indian philosophical and non-philosophical disciplines. The question with respect to it, then, will be as to how the Nyāya Sūtra analysis of the human situation differs from that which is offered by the other schools of Indian philosophy. As for the *pramāṇa śāstra* portion of the Nyāya Sūtras which explicitly is termed by Vātsyāyana (425 AD) as *ānvīkṣikī*, the question, then, will be as to how its understanding and presentation differs from that which is offered by the other *pramāṇa śāstras* in the tradition.

The structural organisation of the Sūtras presents a distinctive character of its own which perhaps may provide a clue to the way India's intellectual enterprises were conducted in the past or, in other words, how a scientific enterprise in the field of knowledge conceived of itself and understood what it meant to be "scientific" or *Śāstric* in character. In other words, what did it mean to compose a *Śāstra* in the Indian tradition? This seems to have been divided into the following parts: (1) A clear and precise statement of the *prayojana* or the purpose of the *śāstra*, (2) To give a *lakṣaṇa* or the precise definition of the basic terms used in the construction of the *śāstra*; this was called the *lakṣaṇa-vicāra* (3) The next step was to engage in a detailed examination of the adequacy of the definitions offered. This was called the *parīkṣā prakaraṇa* and in this it differed from the notion of definition as offered in both the classical and the modern versions of logic in the western

tradition. This examination of the adequacy of definition was divided into three parts. The first concerned the definition in its generality and was called *sāmānya lakṣaṇa parīkṣā*. This was done at the most abstract and general level of the concept whose definition was given. The second was concerned with the more concrete and specific levels at which the concept was applied and was called *viśeṣa lakṣaṇa parīkṣā*. The third was concerned with discriminating and distinguishing the concept from other related concepts with which it could easily be confused because of the nature of objects to which the concept was applied. It may be called *lakṣaṇa bheda vicāra*.

Within this general framework, the Nyāya Sūtra begins a close examination of the concepts which define and demarcate the area of knowledge with which it is concerned. This area is extensionally presented in the sūtra 1.1.1 and is intensionally treated in the later discussion on the subject. The sixteen topics enumerated in this first sūtra, however, do not appear to form a homogeneous class and hence the author of the *Nyāya Sūcīnibandha* clearly distinguishes them in separate classes. These, strangely, recall *Bharata's Nāṭya Śāstra* (2nd Century AD) which shows some analogous similarity with the *Nyāya Sūtra* as seen by *Vācaspati Miśra* I (960 AD) in his analysis of the structure of the composition of the sūtra text. These he calls *pūrvāṅga*, *āśrayasiddhānta*, *nyāya*, *uttarāṅga* and *kathā*.

The term *pūrvāṅga*, strangely, refers to doubt which in this characterization is regarded as a necessary pre-condition of the process of self-conscious search for validation to start. Thus, in the opinion of Gautama, those who do not doubt can not embark on the enterprise of knowledge, at least as self-conscious human beings. If doubt is the foundational presupposition of all cognitive activity then, according to the Nyāya Sūtra, the resolution of the doubt is the end of the cognitive activity. The term 'Nyāya' denotes, in this context, the different steps of the process which lead from doubt to its resolution, that is, *nirṇaya*. It is not clear what role *prayojana*, *drṣṭānta* and *siddhānta* are supposed to play

in this process. Nor is it clear why the author of the Nyāya Sūci Nibandha has included *prayojana* and *dṛṣṭānta* in the *pūrvāṅga* and why the author discusses time particularly in the present tense.

The discussion of *śabda* starts with 2.1.49 and is divided into *śabda anityatā*, *śabda pariṇāma* and *śabda śakti*. The total number of sūtras devoted to this topic are seventy-six and form perhaps the largest number on any single topic discussed in the text. It is however, not clear what exactly is meant by the term *śabda* in this text. *Śabda* as a *pramāṇa* is defined as the *upādeśa* of an *āptapurūṣa*, but much of the discussion in the text does not seem to have any connection with this definition. The problem of eternity or non-eternity of *śabda*, for example, seems completely irrelevant to the definition offered by Gautama in the text. Thus, one has to find whether the term *śabda* means sound in general or word as spoken, or as the advice of a trustworthy person (*āpta*) for the well-being of the person concerned.

The sūtras try to establish the necessity for the postulation of a self or soul as distinct from the senses, the body, the mind and the buddhi. However, there is an interesting discussion on the eternity of buddhi as well as the problem whether the self can be conceived of as consisting of momentary phenomenological experiences as is argued for by the Buddhists. The whole of the third *adhyāya* including 3.1 and 3.2 is devoted to the discussion and elucidation of the various aspects and faculties constituting the embodied person and distinguishing the *ātman* from these. The various topics discussed in this *adhyāya* need to be separated and the issues raised therein distinguished from one another. The total number of sūtras comes to about 145 (see the detailed discussion in Ch. 2).

The fourth chapter shifts the discussion to the sūtra 1.1.2 which is concerned with *apavarga* and seems to be a different, though related, concern of the author of the Nyāya sūtras. The discussion provides a natural transition from the one which has been attempted in chapter 3 which is concerned primarily with

the establishment of the reality of *ātman* and hence may be regarded as connected with the attainment of *apavarga* or *mokṣa* by the *ātman* or self, a concern which is found in other schools of Indian philosophy also. The chapter 4.1 gives the *sāmānya lakṣaṇa* of *pravṛtti*, *doṣa*, *pretyābhāva*, *phala*, *duhkha* and *apavarga*, and examines the adequacy of the way the concepts have been defined in the text. These basically refer to the standard Indian formulation in terms of suffering, birth, the outgoing tendency of the consciousness and the basic problems arising from it along with the foundational false knowledge about these whose removal gives rise to liberation or *mokṣa* or *apavarga*. The roots of the whole cycle of birth and death are supposed to lie in false knowledge or *mithyā-jñāna* which according to Vātsyāyana consists of the following: (1) To think of self as the not-self and not-self as the self or subject as object and the object as subject; (2) To find pleasure or happiness in that which is essentially the opposite of these; (3) To consider that which is impermanent as permanent; (4) To regard that as living which is lifeless because it is infected with death; (5) To be fearless about that which on reflection one would find that one should be afraid of it.

It is this foundational false knowledge which gives rise to desire or unfulfillable seeking for objects which are mistakenly supposed to give one happiness but, in fact, give rise to suffering and lead to rebirth.

The notions of birth, suffering, desire, action, fruit and rebirth imply, in an essential sense, the existence of a world which is both independent of these and yet is dependent on these in the sense that it is only through a reference to these and in the context of these that it makes sense. There is, thus, an interesting discussion in the *adhyāya* 4.1 on the reality of the world and the mistaken notions that one may entertain regarding it. These need to be separated and analysed for the correct understanding of the Nyāya position in this regard.

The Nyāya Sūtras are known for the fact that they have not separately mentioned *Īśvara* or God as one of the *premeyas* in

their system. Yet they have accepted the reality of *Īśwara* and referred to it in some of the sūtras, but only negatively. A negative reference to *Īśwara* occurs in the sūtras 4.1.19-21 where it is said that he can not be considered to be an *upādāna kāraṇa* of the world.

The chapter four of the Nyāya sūtra is concerned with the achievement of the *tattva jñāna* which is the 'opposite' of *mithyā jñāna* and thus, provides a link between the themes of the two sūtras (I.I.I and 1.1.2). The term *tattva jñāna* which occurs at the end of the first sūtra is thus seen as related to the second sūtra which ends with *mithyā jñāna* whose removal is supposed to lead to *apavarga*. Strangely, a discussion of *avayava* and *avayavī* is introduced at this point by the author of the Nyāya Sūtras who is self-conscious of the fact that there is something strange in introducing it and hence is called *prāsaṅgika*. He returns back to the notion of doubt, perhaps existential doubt in this case, and suggests why he treated *siddhānta* separately in his classification of the topics mentioned in the N.S. 1.1.1. Similarly, the use of the term *āśraya* in the context of the topic of *siddhānta* does not seem to be clear unless it be assumed that the whole process of justification or validation which is required to resolve the doubt that has arisen presupposes some accepted and established *siddhānta* without which the process can not even start. The *siddhānta* and the *nirṇaya* will, in that case, be related in an intimate manner so that the latter only explicates what is already implicitly contained in the *siddhānta* and the whole process of the resolution of doubt will be, in a sense, to make oneself aware of the implications of that which one already believed on non-rational or trans-rational grounds. The steps, however, appear to be divided into three separate parts, the first of which alone is called *nyāya*, while the latter two are termed as *uttarāṅga* and consist of *tarka* and *nirṇaya*. These are the concluding portion of the process and, strangely, *tarka* is said to be a necessary step without which the *nirṇaya* or the resolution can not be attained. The distinction between *nyāya* or *avayava* and *tarka* and *nirṇaya* needs

to be clarified as also the inter-relationship between them. What exactly is the difference, for example, between *nigamana* and *nirṇaya*? The term *kathā* which includes *vāda*, *jalpa* and *vitandā* refers to the seriousness of the intension of those who engage in a discussion to settle a problem or explore an issue. Normally, the terms are said to apply only in the context of a discussion between two persons who hold opposite positions. But this is not necessary as the same distinctions may apply to the way one argues in a group or with oneself.

Interestingly, after examining the adequacy of the definitions (*lakṣaṇa*) of *saṁśaya*, *pramāṇa sāmānya*, *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*, as all knowledge simultaneously involves questions about the world and the self and as unless doubts about these are resolved, one can not 'know' the truth or 'be' what one ought to be, Gautama in his discussion of *tattva jñāna* and the related problem of the removal of two kinds of radical doubt, introduces the epistemological contention regarding the reality or indubitability of *bāhyārtha* or 'reference' as the essential foundation of all knowledge which is primarily epistemological in character in sūtras 4.25.26-37. As for the existential doubt, Gautama suggests that this can only be removed by a continuous process of 'existential living', something that is indicated by the term *sādhana* in the Indian tradition. The contention seems to be that this kind of doubt about the nature of consciousness or self or *ātman* can not be removed by any *pramāṇa vyāpāra* or the exercise of the theoretical reason. The practical reason, however, comes here in a radically different sense than the way it has in the western tradition where it primarily deals with morality and law on the one hand and instrumental rationality on the other. The existential concern is with the nature of the self and the attempt is to change it in the context of the existentially experienced dissatisfaction felt about it.

Chapter five in both its sections returns back to the discussion of the fallacies and the various methods employed by the

opponents to defeat each other or to frustrate each other by arguments which are inadmissible on logical grounds.

The Structure of the Nyāya Sūtra

A quantitative analysis reveals that in terms of the number of sūtras devoted to a topic or *adhikaraṇa* the situation is as follows:

- (1) Pramāṇa—145
- (2) Ātman—114
- (3) Prameya—8 4 excluding atman and jagat Buddhi—5
5 3.2.1-3.2.55
- (4) Śabda—76
- (5) Hetvābhāsa—47
- (6) Jagat—30
- (7) Nigraha Sthāna—23
- (8) Tattvajñāna—17
- (9) Phala—11
- (10) Apavarga—10
- (11) Pravṛtti Doṣa—9
- (12) Chala, jāti—8
- (13) Saṁśaya—7
- (14) Siddhānta—6
- (15) Duhkha—4
- (16) Īśwara—3
- (17) Vāda, jalpa, Vitandā—3
(Kathā Lakṣaṇa)

The largest number of sūtras are, as is to be expected, concerned with *pramāṇa*. The sūtras number about 145 and the matter is dealt with in 1.1, 2.2 and 2.1. The next topic that engages the attention of the author in his work is the establishment of the necessity for the postulation of *ātman* or soul or self, a reality independent from the senses, body, mind and the buddhi. The sūtras number around 114. The focus of the text thus is obvious. In other words, it seeks to establish the reality of *ātman* on the basis of the *pramāṇas* which have already been enumerated

and discussed and considering the contemporary context it is primarily an anti-Buddhist work.

However, as it tries to distinguish the self from the senses, the body, the mind and the intellect, it reminds one of the Sāṁkhyan position and hence one has to examine as to how its position differs from that of Sāṁkhya, which also makes the same distinction.

Yet, though the *ātman* seems to be the most important *prameya* which author of the N.S. wants to establish, it is not on the basis of the *śabda pramāṇa* which is the subject of the largest number of the sūtras among the *pramāṇas* dealt with in the text.

Strangely, the next topic that gets the largest number of sūtras is *prameya* (84), but as the *prameyas* include the atman also, the total number is both illusory and misleading. The *prameyas* mentioned in the text are *ātman*, *śarīra*, *indriya*, *artha*, *buddhi*, *manas*, *pravṛtti*, *doṣa*, *pretyābhāva*, *phala*, *duhkha*, *apavarga*. These are, for the author of the text those things which have to be established by argument and hence it may be said that the text is not a pure text on logic or even epistemology but is already prejudiced in favour of certain objects or entities or states which have to be established by argument and reason *at all cost*, irrespective of the possibility of any defects in the argument given.

A closer look at the *prameyas* reveals that the text is primarily concerned with man and accepts the general position of almost all philosophical schools in India regarding the theory of *karma*, the consequences thereof, the fact of rebirth, all of these implying that the outward-going tendency of consciousness and its engagement with the world in all its forms, that is, *pravṛtti* is necessarily mistaken and hence is by its very nature full of defects requiring a redress through the reverse movement (*nivṛtti* or *pratyāhāra*) which ends in *apavarga* or *moksa*.

The term *apavarga* occurs in the sūtra 1.1.2 where we also have the following terms which are regarded as *prameyas* in the

system—*duhkha*, *pravṛtti*, *doṣa* and *janma*. Strangely, neither the term *niḥśreyasa* nor *Īśwara* find a place in the list of *prameyas* given in the text. Also, the world is seen in terms of its relationship to the senses and finds no place as a reality independent of it. *Jagat* which may be considered as an equivalent of what is called the world is dealt with in thirty sūtras and is not considered as an independent *prameya* by the author of the sūtras. No distinction seems to have been made at least explicitly between the concept of *artha* that is the object of the senses and *jagat* that is the world.

After the *prameyas* the largest number of sūtras are concerned with *śabda* both as a *pramāṇa* and not as word but sound. It consists of seventy-six sūtras and argues against the *nityatva* of sound and *apauruṣeyatva* of the Veda. In this, it is obviously controverting the *mīmāṃsā* position on this issue.

The next largest number of sūtras are concerned with fallacies, but the term used suggests something else. It connotes what may be called illusory arguments or illusions of reason. However, it does not distinguish between removable and irremovable illusions as one normally does in case of sensory and perceptual illusions. In fact, the term should have been *pramaṇābhāsa* of which the *hetvābhāsa* is only a sub-class, as these occur only in case of *anumāna*, while illusions may occur in the case of all the *pramāṇas*.

The next largest number of sūtras are concerned with the world which is defined as an object of the senses and deal with the problem of its origin. The next largest number is concerned with *nigrahsthāna* which only means check and mate in argument. The sūtras dealing with *pramāṇa*, *śabda*, *hetvābhāsa* and *nigrahsthāna* deal with the same subject, that is, reasoning or *pramāṇa vyāpāra* and refers to different aspects or stages of it. Thus, the total number of sūtras concerned with reason or reasoning in the Nyāya Sūtras are 333 and form about 62% of the total number of sūtras in the text which amount to 530.

Reasoning		Prameyas	
(1) Pramāṇa	146	(1) Prameyas	84
(2) Śabda	76	(2) Ātman	114
(3) Hetvābhāsa	47	(3) Jagat	30
(4) Nigrahasthāna	23	(4) Īśwara	11
(5) Chala, jāti	8	(5) Pravṛtti-Doṣa	9
(6) Siddhānta	6	(6) Duhkha	4
(7) Vāda, jalpa, vitandā (Kathālakṣaṇa)	3	(7) Apavarga	10
(8) Samsaya	7		
(9) Tattvajnana	17		
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	333		262

The constituents of the reasoning process or *pramāṇa vyāpāra* as articulated in the Nyāya Sūtra consist of two radically different parts which, however, are integrally linked to each other. The first consists of the elements internal to the reasoning process, while the latter treats the reasoning process itself as embedded in the reasoning activity of human beings who engage in it. This involves psychological elements including motivation, desire to find the truth and/or to establish a doctrine or to deceive the other or to win an argument. The terms *vāda*, *jalpa*, *vitandā*, *chala* and *jāti* refer to these aspects of the reasoning activity. It should be noticed that *jalpa* is defined in terms of *chala* and *jāti* and hence consists of them (see sūtra 1.2.2). Thus, really speaking, there are only *vāda*, *jalpa* and *vitandā* as *jalpa* consists of *chala* and *jāti*. This reveals that ultimately the act of reasoning in its psychological aspect consists only of honesty and dishonesty in reasoning. Both *vāda* and *vitandā* are honest, even though the latter is not generally considered as such. But, the person who engages in *vitandā* is perhaps even more honest than the one who engages in *vāda*, because he openly declares that he has not yet found the truth or does not have any settled *siddhānta* of his own, but that he sees the defects in what someone else is claiming to be truth or proclaiming as a *siddhānta*. However, in this sense

of *vitaṇḍā* one who argues that reasoning can not establish any *siddhānta* at all or, in other words, can not find the truth or is a complete skeptic can not be considered a *vaitandīc*. Nāgārjuna, thus, can not be regarded as a *vaitandīc* for he proclaims that reasoning *per se* can not find truth or establish any *siddhānta*. Perhaps, the real skeptic is one who believes that not only reason, but nothing else can establish truth and, at a still deeper level, the complete skeptic will be one who believes that all the human faculties together can not, in principle, approach truth in any realm in an asymptotic manner, even in infinite time.

Issues to be closely examined in the Nyāya Sūtra and their subsequent discussion in Vātsyāyana, Uddyotakara, Vācasapati Miśra I, Udayana (Jayanta and Bhāsarvajña may also be included).

1. Definition of *śabda pramāṇa* in the establishment of the authority of the Vedas.
2. How does the mention of Āyurveda as the paradigm case of *śabda pramāṇa*, affect the authority of the Veda, or even the notion of practice itself.
3. The discussion of *nityatva* of *śabda* and its reputation in the Nyāya Sūtra.
4. How is *śabda* distinguished from sound.
5. What are the arguments for the reality of ātman and its distinction from the *indriyas*, the body, the mind and the *buddhi*.
6. What is the difference between these arguments and the ones given by Sāmkhya on the same subject.
7. What are the arguments for *Īśwara* or God in the Nyāya Sūtra and what is the relationship, if any, between the *Īśwara* and the ātman. Is ātman eternal, and is its eternity the same as that of *Īśwara*.
8. What is the difference and relationship between the different *padārthas* accepted as *nitya* in Nyāya.
9. What is the distinction between *niḥsreyasa* and *apavarga* and what are the relations between the two.

Śabda Pramāṇa

The discussion of the *śabda pramāṇa* in the Nyāya Sūtra is divided into the following topics: (1) The establishment of *śabda* as an independent *pramāṇa* which can not be reduced to *anumāna*. The discussion points out that *śabda* primarily relates not to the content of what is spoken or said but to the source from which it arises. In other words, it is the truthfulness or trustworthiness of the speaker which ensures the truth or credibility of what is said. There is, however, an implicit contention that a statement may generally be believed unless there are reasons to the contrary just as in the case of perception one normally takes for granted the “truth” or veridicality of what is perceived unless there are reasons to doubt it.

The discussion about word deals with two different issues. The first deals with the relation between the word and the object it refers to; and the second relating to the person who uses the language. The contention regarding the first is that the relation is conventional and not natural. Even if it be accepted that there is a rule governing the use of the language concerned, it is confined to a particular linguistic community alone and does not extend to communities outside it. The second is not the object of a general discussion but seems to be concerned specifically with the authority of the Vedas alone which, on the basis of the definition given in the text, should be treated as the word of an *āpta puruṣa*. This is indirectly made clear by a reference to the Āyurveda which is given as a paradigmatic example of what may be regarded as an authoritative text proper in the light of the definition of the *śabda pramāṇa* as given by the author of the Nyāya Sūtra. There is, thus, a two-fold distinction amongst the texts which are treated as authoritative under this heading. The first refers to the Vedas which are only indirectly referred to in the sūtras, while the latter alone is specifically mentioned in the sūtra 2.1.68 and is brought in to suggest that the former’s authority is to be understood in the light of the latter. Normally,

of the Vedas are supposed to be 'authoritative' in themselves and no one brings any of the other texts which are also known as a 'Veda' to provide support or foundation for their authority. In fact, the Āyurveda is not counted amongst what are called *upaveda* or even amongst the *vedāṅgas*. The mention of the Āyurveda as the standard example of the *śabda pramāṇa* is thus, surprising in more ways than one and, if properly reflected upon, will be seen as questioning the very authority of the Vedas, at least in the way they had been treated by the mīmāṃsakas and others who would not entertain even the possibility of their being ever mistaken in principle.

The discussion on the eternality or non-eternality of sound which follows the discussion on the *śabda pramāṇa* of the Vedas seems only indirectly relevant as it is concerned not with the problem of *śabda* but sound in general and deals with the question whether the latter is eternal or not. Perhaps, the mīmāṃsaka had argued for the eternity of sound in order to defend the authority of the Vedas by suggesting that they were eternal. But, then, all sound will become eternal entailing the conclusion that all words are eternal, and thus destroy the special character of the Vedic authority as it will make every statement equally authoritative. Also, as all sounds do not presumably have meaning or *artha* for the mīmāṃsaka, he will have to distinguish between sounds which have meaning and those which have not. It is not clear what the mīmāṃsaka will do with the eternality of all sounds such as those one hears in pure music which are difficult to associate with any meaning. In any case, the discussion has no relation to *śabda* as a *pramāṇa* as defined in sūtra 1.1.7. Same is the case with the discussion on the problem raised by the new meanings generated by *sandhi* and *samāsa* in the Sanskrit language and the different rules which govern this transformation. The discussion, though interesting, has hardly any relevance to the acceptance of *śabda* as an independent *pramāṇa*, unless it be argued that the content of the *upadeśa* is itself changed by this transformation. Gautama does not seem to argue explicitly for this position, but

there is the larger question that ultimately *upadeśa* is conveyed through words and any problem that affects the words is bound to have some direct or indirect relevance to the problem of the *pramāṇa* which is being discussed here. Strangely, the *vidhilinga* through which an injunction is conveyed does not seem to have been discussed by Gautama in his Sūtras. This is not understandable as the issue has been specifically discussed in the Mīmāṃsā which believes that only the *vidhi-niṣedha vākyas* of the Veda have an authoritative character. Perhaps, 'upadeśa' has to be distinguished from the injunctive imperatives of the mīmāṃsaka which have an authority of a different kind. *Upadeśa* is more like an advice than a command and may or may not be accepted or followed by one who hears it.

The discussion on meaning or the power of words to convey meanings is discussed in sūtras 2.2.58-69 but this too has little relevance to the basic issue of *śabda pramāṇa*. The discussion would perhaps have been relevant if it were conducted in the context of what has been called the 'performative' power of words. In other words, a word by itself has the power to bring reality into being or constituted just by the fact that it is uttered or spoken in a certain way. Austin's famous example in this connection is the statement "I promise" which when spoken in a certain way, brings promising into being. The discussion could easily have been done in the context of what in Mīmāṃsā has been called the *śabdī* and the *śrthi bhāvanā*, and could easily have been widened further to include the emotive power of words, as discussed in the *alamkāra śāstra* or poetics in the Indian tradition.

The discussion of *śabda pramāṇa* is primarily divided into three parts. The first relates to its definition, the second to the establishment of it as a separate *pramāṇa* which is irreducible to the other *pramāṇas* and the third, to the establishment of the authority of the Vedas on the basis of this *pramāṇa*. Gautama's definition of *śabda pramāṇa* brings in the notion of an *āpta puruṣa* and hence depends upon the exact characterization of the characteristics of the person whose statement is to be regarded

as 'true' because it is 'his' statement. There is, of course, the added condition that such a statement is meant to be helpful to the listener concerned or to the person for whom the advice is intended. This suggests that there is a three-fold requirement which has to be fulfilled if a person is to be regarded as an *āpta puruṣa*. He should intend it to be helpful to human beings and he should have the relevant knowledge based directly on his own experience and that he should be able to convey this knowledge as adequately as possible (this was added by Vācaspati Miśra). These conditions apply to all kinds of knowledge and all persons in all societies and at all times. There is, and can be, no restriction of any kind on these conditions and, in a sense, this is accepted by the commentators when they include even the *mīcchas* among those who can be *āpta* in this sense (Vātsyāyana Bhāṣya on sūtra 1.1.7).

The condition of knowledge, even existential knowledge, would however vary from person to person and from time to time, even if it be assumed that the existential structure of human conditions remains the same, or is invariant over spaces and times. The solution for this inescapable problem has been sought to be found in the postulation of an omniscient being or *sarvajña* which may be called by the names of God or Allāha or Īśvara, or the Buddha or the Mahāvira. Unfortunately the postulation does not help much as the text in which the omniscient being's message is conveyed is confined not only to a particular language but also is subject both to interpretation and verification by beings who are not only not omniscient, but differ radically in their cognitive and existential experiences.

The solution suggested, at least in the Indian tradition, is to confine the message received from the omniscient being to injunctive statements alone and/or to statements concerned with that which can not, in principle, be known either by human perception or by inference. The *mīmāṃsaka*, thus, treats only the *vidhi-nīṣedha vākyas* of the Veda as authoritative while the Vedāntin confines them to those which speak of *Brahman* alone.

The Naiyāyika, on the other hand, talks of *upadeśa* and suggests that the *upadeśa* that is contained in the Veda is given by Īśvara who is the most perfect embodiment of what may be called an *āpta-puruṣa* or, to use another term, is *Puruṣottama*. Unfortunately, Gautama does not establish the reality of Īśvara before bringing in the discussion of the *pramāṇatva* of the Veda in the Sūtras and hence it is a pure conjecture that the Vedas, according to him, are the *upadeśa* of Īśvara. To make matters worse, he cites the examples of *mantra* and Āyurveda in the sūtra 2.1.67 to suggest that the authority of the Vedas is like the authority of these which are known to us in other contexts. The term *mantra*, it should be noted, does not refer to what is ordinarily known as the mantras in the Veda, but only to Incantations (वात्स्यायन). It is conveniently assumed by the commentators from Vātsyāyana onwards that the mantras and the prescriptions given in the Āyurveda always achieve this result while the fact is that medicines do not always cure and the *mantras* do not always work. The recourse to the arguments given in the sūtra 2.1.57 to save the failure of the Vedic *yajñas* to achieve their result would hardly satisfy the person who dies because of the failure of medicine prescribed in the Āyurveda. Also, it is forgotten that the 'knowledge' contained in the Āyurveda goes on increasing and this is done by successive generations of medical practitioners who observe the way the medicine works and the course that the illness takes over time. The medical knowledge is like all other knowledge, fallible and hence subject to improvement and corrections. There can, thus, be no fundamental difference between the knowledge contained in the Vedas and the one contained in other fields of human knowledge. The latter are as 'beginningless' as the former or, ultimately, shrouded in mythical or transcendental, timeless origins, their validity derived from that source from which everything may be said to originate.

Strangely, the argument given in the successive commentaries on the sūtra 2.1.68 brings in considerations which, if taken seriously, would involve the acceptance of *pratyakṣa* and

anumāna as the basis of the *śabda pramāṇa* and invalidate the contention that it has to be accepted ultimately as a separate, independent *pramāṇa* as without postulating it certain kinds of knowledge can not be accounted for. "दृष्टार्थनाप्तेपदेशेनायुर्वेदेनादृष्टार्थो वेदभागोऽनुमातव्यः प्रमाणमिति, आप्तप्रामाण्यस्य हेतोः समानत्वादिति" (Bhāṣya on sūtra 2.1.68). Vārttika on sūtra 2.1.68 reads "यथा मन्त्रायुर्वेदवाक्यानिपुरुषविशेषाभिहितत्वात् प्रमाणम् तथा वेदवाक्यानीति पुरुषविशेषाभिहितत्वं हेतुः (Page 257). Vācaspati Miśra I's *Tīkā* on the *Vārttika* takes the discussion in a different direction which, as far as I know, has not been noticed. The discussion perhaps arises in the context of the issue as to why the Vedas, and the Vedas alone should be regarded as the source of the *śabda pramāṇa*, excluding other Āgamic texts such as those of the Buddhists and the Jains. Vācaspati takes recourse to the fact that only that *upadeśa* can be regarded as being of a perfect *āpta* puruṣa which covers all aspects of life and not he one dealing just with *adhyātama* or *ātma vidyā* alone. And, hence he must be a *sarvajña* in the real sense of the term. Both the Buddha and the Mahāvīra are supposed to be *sarvajña* but as they do not deal with the life of man in the world, their *upadeśa* cannot be regarded as that of a *sarvajña* in the fullest sense of the term. The vedic tradition alone has dealt with all the aspects of human life in detail as given in the Dharma Śāstra and the Vyavāhara Śāstra texts (Page 375, line 5-10 Vācaspati).

The mention of Īśvara in this connection by Vācaspati Miśra is instructive as it reveals the growing 'theistic' emphasis in Nyāya. The author of the Nyāya Sūtra, as is well-known, does not mention Īśvara amongst the *prameyas* and the only place where a reference to it is made, is in the context of a *pūrva-pakṣa* which is refuted in the sūtras. The sūtras 4.1.19-21 provide an evidence for this as they are concerned with the refutation of the contention that Īśvara is the *upādāna kāraṇa* of the world. Strangely, even Vātsyāyana in his Bhāṣya only says, "गुणविशिष्टात्मान्तरमीश्वरः" (page 228, Vātsyāyana).

It is only Uddyotakara (610 A.D.) who elaborates the statement in his *Vārttika*. He not only does this but also attempts to provide an argument for the postulation of the idea of Īśvara. In this connection he makes explicit use of the Vaiśeṣika idea of atoms as being the ultimate constituents of the physical universe and the Sāṃkhyan idea of *prakṛti* and suggests that the world, conceived in either form, can not have the principle of motion within it as that can only be found in a being which is conscious and hence be the sufficient ground for the world as we find it. This is a familiar argument and reminds one of Aristotle who defines God as the prime-mover from whom all other motions may be said to follow.

The discussion on the eternity (*nityatva*) or non-eternity (*anityatva*) of *śabda* which follows in the sūtras 2.2.13-57 has little relation to the question whether *śabda* should be regarded as a *pramāṇa* and, if so, in what sense. However, it raises interesting issues, particularly when it distinguishes two different aspects of *śabda*, that is, *varṇa* and *dhvani* and discusses the peculiar problem created by the combination of *varṇas* in *saṅdhi* and *saṃāsa* in the Sanskrit language.

The idea of Īśvara or God in the *prācīna* Nyāya has always been a matter of dispute and it has generally been thought that it is only around 10th century that Nyāya becomes a theistic system in the full sense of the term (quote from Potter's Nyāya volume) but a close reading of the Nyāya texts from the Nyāya Sūtra onwards reveals a different picture. The Nyāya Sūtras mention Īśvara only in Sūtras (4.1.19-21) but it appears there in the context of a *pūrva pakṣa* as the *upādāna Pāraṇa* of the *Jagata* and the author of the Sūtras refutes the view propounded in the *pūrva pakṣa*. There is no independent attempt at either establishing or refuting the existence of God in the Nyāya Sūtras. In fact, as is well-known, Īśvara is not mentioned as a separate *prameya* in the Sūtras and if a correct knowledge of the *prameyas* is supposed to be necessary for *apavarga* then one may conclude

that at least for the author of the *Nyāya Sūtra*, Īśwara was not necessary for attaining *apavarga*.

However, the situation seems to change dramatically from Vātsyāyana onwards. The *Bhāṣya*, which is assigned to around 410 A.D. by Potter in his Bibliography, clearly mentions Īśwara and describes it as गुणविशिष्टात्मानः (4.1.21, Page 227). He is supposed to be completely without *adharma*, *mithyājñāna* and *pramāda*. Positively he is supposed to be especially endowed with *dharma*, *jñāna*, and *samādhi* (the meaning of the last is not very clear). Besides this, he is supposed to have all the eight *siddhis* which the *Yoga Sūtra* ascribes to a person who has attained *samādhi*. However, the *Yoga Sūtra* considers these as harmful, or at least not very helpful for those who are seeking the real *samādhi*. The Īśwara is also supposed to be indirectly the cause or the distributor of the fruits of actions according to the *dharma* or *adharma* done by human beings. This he does by imparting motion to the material world so that it may work in correspondence with the *dharma* or *adharma* done by human beings. This argument is developed by Uddyotakara further who suggests as against Sāṃkhya that God is the prime mover who imparts motion to the universe.

Surprisingly, Vātsyāyana also thinks of Īśwara as one who is compassionate to his creation like a father and helps human beings in their distress. The term used is *parama kāruṇika* and is thus the model for others who help human beings and hence always act for the sake of others rather than for their own interests. This reminds one of the Buddhist Ideal of Bodhisattva who refuses to attain Nirvāṇa because of his desire to help the suffering humanity. In fact, Udayana later gives this as an argument to explain why Īśwara, in spite of the fact that he engages in action such as the creation of the world is not bound by the law of *karma*. “यद्यपि स्वसमवेतधर्मव्यतिरेकेणापि भगवतो स्यैश्वर्यस्य नाकृताभ्यागमदोषः अस्वार्थत्वात् मुक्तात्मनाभिव संयोगविभागवत्” (p.511, सूत्र 4.1.21).

Also, strangely Vācaspati Mīśra in his NVTT gives an argument why Īśwara alone as the creator of the world may be regarded as Sarvajña and not the Buddha or the Mahāvira who may be said to know only the path to *nirvāṇa* or *kaivalya* or *mokṣa*. The proof of this is provided by the fact that the Īśwara is not only the creator of the Vedas but also of the Dharma Śāstras and the Vyavahāra Śāstras which guide the worldly life of man.

Ātman

The discussion on the Ātman begins with the raising of the question as to why the self should not be considered to be a *Sanghāta* of the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect and the answer given is that it can not be so considered as the unity of the self is not the unity of the aggregates, but something radically different from them, though they are the means of both knowing and doing. The argument is against the Buddhists who consider that self is an aggregate and is built on the basis of the fact that the wholes or *avayavīs* are of two different types; the one consisting of parts which constitute the whole which itself is nothing apart from, or different from, them. The other type of whole or *avayavī* consists of that which may be called the unity of the agent, the instrumental cause and the action (कर्ता, करण व कर्म). The latter recalls the analogous unity of efficient, formal and final cause in Aristotle where only the material cause has to be conceived of always separately, even though the other three can also be separate from one another.

The second argument given by Vātsyāyana is in terms of the moral predicates that can not be ascribed to either the body or the senses or the mind or the intellect and hence have to be ascribed to some other entity which has to be separated from them.

Uddyotakara interestingly raises the question as to how a negation can ever deny the absolute existence of that which is negated for what it denies is only the existence of that entity at

a particular place or time, and in case the entity is not spatio-temporal its 'being' or reality can not be denied in any significant sense. Uddyotakara, however, does not seem to discuss the question as to how the existence of any entity whatsoever can be denied, if the argument is seriously accepted. If the 'temporal' condition is seriously accepted, then one cannot argue that such an entity will not ever exist in future. Also, he does not appear to give any criterion or lakṣaṇa in respect of entities that are to be regarded as non-spatio-temporal. Nor does he seem to make a distinction between that which is eternal and that which is non-spatio-temporal, or in case there are a number of such entities, how may one distinguish between them.

Uddyotakara's discussion reminds one of Quine's well known objections to such a kind of argument and it will be interesting to find what objections, if any, have been raised against Uddyotakara's argument, or any extensions or modifications made in respect of it.

Also, neither Vātsyāyana nor Uddyotakara seem to accept the 'self-certainty' of the 'I-consciousness' as given by the advaitins later. For them, the *ātman* is a matter of inference on the grounds given in the sūtra 1.1.10, but it is a strange kind of argument which attempts to prove the existential reality of an entity without having ever known it directly in perception. Can there ever be a *vyāpti* between experienced and non-experienced objects which is supposed to be the basis of *anumāna* in the Nyāya tradition? A similar problem is faced by the advaitin when he has to argue for the occurrence of an *adhyāsa* between that which 'is perceived and that which is not perceived (see Sankara's discussion on *adhyāsa* at the beginning of the Brahman Sūtra *Bhāṣya*).

The discussion regarding the reality of *ātman* as an entity separate from the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect is primarily done in the context of the Buddhist position which denies it completely. The discussion from Vātsyāyana to Udayana concerns itself with the following issues chiefly:

1. What sort of whole or *avayavī* is formed by the elements

or parts consisting of the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect? Is some separate entity to be assumed in order to provide a unity to these or there is no necessity of assuming it at all. In other words, is the so-called *ātman* only a *sanghāta* of these elements or something over and above them. But the critical problem as to what is exactly meant by a unity of elements which themselves are multiple or plural, in character, is not discussed at all. Some attempt is made to distinguish between different kinds of unities. Also, the unity is sometimes seen as provided by that which may be said to support the diversity of the elements, or that in which they inhere. Besides this, the issue of this 'support' being external or internal is also raised.

2. Another interesting issue that is raised relates to the fact whether the problem arises in respect of every thing, that is, the body, the mind, the senses and the intellect and even such sensed qualities as colour etc., or it arises only in the case of *ātman*. A question which is even deeper than these is raised in respect of the notion of 'appearing' itself and its distinction or difference from another 'appearance' and the question whether everything that appears is necessarily to be thought of as belonging to 'something', for we can not consider any quality as standing by itself and not as belonging to anything.

Yet, in spite of these and many other points which are philosophically highly interesting, none of these thinkers seems to have seen that all the arguments that they give for the reality and existence of the *ātman* will 'prove' the reality of anything whatsoever.

There seems, however, to be one difference which again does not seem to have been highlighted. This perhaps lies in the distinction between those kinds of objects which are both directly apprehensible and also provable by 'other *pramāṇas*' and those which can only be proved by other *pramāṇas* such as *anumāna* and *śabda* but which can never be apprehended through *pratyakṣa*. Īśvara or God is perhaps some such type of entity in Nyāya which can be established by *anumāna* and *śabda* but never by *pratyakṣa*.

On the other hand, the ātman according to the Naiyāyika, is established by all the three that is, *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna* and *śabda*. The term *pratyakṣa*, in this context has, however, an intrinsic ambiguity which does not seem to have been paid attention to at least in the Nyāya literature. There is no *pratyakṣa* of ātman in the sense in which *pratyakṣa* is defined in the 'Nyāya Sūtra'. There is no *indriyārtha sannikarṣa*, unless some *antarendriya*, that is, inner sense is postulated. But, even in that case, the ātman cannot be said to be an object of *pratyakṣa* as it does not appear as a *viśaya* in the sense in which all objects of internal perception appear to be so. It obviously cannot be considered to be an object of introspective awareness as one finds in the case of *mānasa pratyakṣa* or even that which may be said to be known by the intellect or *buddhi* as it is the precondition of them all and is known as the 'I-awareness' which can not be said even to be that which is conveyed by the term 'ahamkāra', as the latter is not the 'I-awareness' but the awareness of the I. In any case, even if this awareness be termed as 'pratyakṣa' in some sense or other, the awareness of the Īswara can not be the same, even if it be conceded that it may possibly become an 'object' to the same or some similar kind of awareness. The awareness of the self or the 'I' is a perpetual fact, something that is involved implicitly in the very nature of consciousness and it becomes explicit at the level of self consciousness. The co-relate awareness of the 'other' which occurs at the self-conscious level may either take the form of Īswara or Brahman. In the former case it is the unity of all that appears as the 'other' to which the self that is aware of it has a positive relationship where the feeling of the other-ness predominates even though it occurs in the context of a positive relationship which may assume all forms that such a positive relationship takes in actual life. In the case of the latter, the other is seen more in terms of Identity underlying and pervading everything, including the self. This sense of an essential identity relationship with the other only makes explicit at the self-

conscious level what is inalienably involved at the level of consciousness.

Prameyas

Amongst the *prameyas* the most pre-eminent is the ātman, but besides that there are also the body, whose existence is also to be proved. Strangely, not much attention has been paid to the establishment of these in the Nyāya tradition. The proof for the postulation of the reality of the senses is given on the ground of the fact that we apprehend colour, taste, smell, touch etc. and as we can not apprehend any of these through the other senses, each of the separate senses for these has to be postulated. A clearer presentation of this argument would involve a distinction between sensation or sense-data and the object on the one hand which is postulated to be its cause and the sense organ which is postulated to account for its apprehension by us. The body has to be postulated as that in which the senses inhere or exist. Also, it is seen as that through which, and in which, the effort to bring about any change occurs. Besides this, it has to be postulated as that in and through which we feel pleasure and pain.

The arguments for the postulation of the reality of mind as distinct from both the senses and the body, consist in the fact that even if the senses are in contact with the object, the knowledge of it may not arise and hence some thing else has to be postulated which has necessarily to be in contact with the senses so that the 'knowledge' of the colour or smell may occur (to be seen in the text).

The other argument that is given relates to the fact that we have to postulate something which feels pleasure or pain and mind or *manas* may be regarded as that which feels that. There is also another argument which is supposed to deal with the fact that we apprehend only one sensation at one time and it is the mind that makes us do so as otherwise we will be overwhelmed by a multiplicity of sensations at the same time. No argument

seems to have been given to explain the unification of sensations from different sense organs into knowledge of one object which possesses these different qualities.

The argument for the *nityatva* or eternity of soul seems to be established on two grounds, the second of which is stronger than the first. The first consists in the contention that we find the distinction of objects or entities which are *nitya* and *anitya* in our experience. Hence the question raised is relevant in the sense that the soul which is distinct from the senses, the body, the mind and intellect etc. is *nitya* or *anitya*. The contention is strange for, as a matter of fact, we do not find any entity which can be considered as *nitya* in the strict sense of the term. Things that are found to be *nitya* may be regarded as relatively more or less permanent but that something is eternal, or that which will never be subject to any change or destruction is not found in experience. As a matter of fact, such a thing can not, in principle, be found, for, how can one ever ensure that which is found in experience will never ever cease to exist in future. Such an argument can only be given by an analysis of the concept of destruction which has not been given either in the *Sūtra* or the *Bhāṣya*. Such an argument is given in the case of the atoms in the *Vaiśeṣika Sūtras* but, as far as we know, the same argument has not been applied to the case of the *ātman*. Perhaps, the translation of *nitya* as eternal or unchanging is mistaken. But, if so, the distinction between *nitya* and *anitya* will have to be understood differently.

The second argument is relatively stronger as it depends on an analysis of the behaviour of the living being at the moment of birth which, for its understanding, requires that some previous experience and its memory has to be assumed, as otherwise it will remain inexplicable. The behaviour of the new born infant shows fear, joy and sorrow in the context of *specific* objects which suggests that it must have experienced these feelings or emotions in relation to these objects in the past, which could have only occurred in some previous life prior to its birth. But this

only proves that the soul must have existed prior to its birth and not that it is *nitya*. Perhaps the argument is that one will have to assume an unending series of previous births where each is postulated to account for the behaviour of the new born infant as mentioned above. But, then, the series will become beginningless and its 'beginning' will be without explanation. The postulation of a birth after death seems to have no other ground than this, that is, if there was a life before birth then why should not there be one *after* death? But this, by itself, is a weak argument as death, at best will mean the destruction of the body with its five senses and not that of the mind and the intellect. Thus, one will have to postulate the existence of both the mind and the intellect and the *ātman* after the death of the body, proving each of them to be *nitya* and associated with one another. But, then, one need not postulate any rebirth in the sense of the association of these with a new body which, in any case, will require an explanation for such an event to occur. The separation of the mind and the intellect from the body and the senses raises the same problems as the separation of the *ātman* from the body. There is also the problem of the relation between the body and the senses, particularly as the Nyāya argument seems to make a distinction between the two. It is true that the body is supposed to be the *āśraya* of the senses, just as it is supposed to be the *āśraya* of pleasure and pain. But, then, the soul is also supposed to be the *āśraya* of *icchā*, *dveṣā*, *prayatna*, *sukha*, *duhkha* and *jñāna* but as body is considered to be the *āśraya* of *sukha*, *duhkha* also the destruction of the body should result in the cessation of that pleasure and pain which is due to it.

The argument, in any case, will apply to all living beings, particularly to those of the animal world where the new born child displays the same behaviour as that of the new born infant. Interestingly, the *sūtra* shows awareness of a 'naturalistic' explanation of all such phenomena, particularly in the context of the example it gives from the world of the plants where opening and closing of the petals occurs in the same way as is found in

the human world. This, paradoxically is the current paradigm of explanation of all that happens in the human world, including the behaviour of the infant on the basis of which the old Nyāya argument is based. At a deeper level, modern science finds the same phenomena even at the level of chemistry and physics in the behaviour of the elements that occur at that level.

The problem with the use of the word *nitya* does not seem to have been seriously analysed in the Indian philosophical tradition, even though the distinction between the *nitya* and *anitya* is supposed to lie at the heart of that enterprise in the tradition. The terms are defined in terms of origination and destruction and their absence. *Buddhi* which means knowledge or *jñāna* in the context of the *Nyāya Sūtras* is obviously something that is *anitya* in the sense that it is liable to origination and destruction. However, while it is clear that it comes into being, or that it has origination it is not clear why it is considered as liable to destruction. One, of course, does not continue to 'know' all the time, but one has memory of the same and one can recall it generally whenever one likes. It is true that one may forget, but forgetfulness is not destruction as one can successfully recall even after forgetfulness.

The Nyāya position is further complicated by the fact that it accepts both *prāgabhāva* and *dhvaṃsābhāva* which it considers as *nitya* and, if so, that which is beginningless can end and that which has a beginning can be endless. In other words, there may be no origination and yet there can be destruction; on the other hand there may be origination but no destruction. Strictly speaking, therefore, only that can be regarded as *nitya* which is both beginningless and endless. Such an entity, however, can not be found in experience.

There is another problem in Nyāya which does not seem to have been paid attention to. It relates to the question whether that which is *nitya* can have properties that are *anitya*? This is important as *buddhi* which is regarded as *anitya* is considered to be a property of *ātman* which is considered as *nitya*. But, in that

case, if the *buddhi* as an *anitya* property is accepted as a quality of the *nitya ātman*, *buddhi's anityatā* will affect the *nityatva* of the *ātman*, and it will no longer remain a *nitya* entity as 'unchanging'.

There is also the problem as to how one shall distinguish between the *nitya padārthas* in case they are more than one. Moreover, as *ākāśa* is supposed to be a *nitya padārtha* in Nyāya and as it is presumably the object of the senses, there will arise the problem as to how something that is *nitya* can be apprehended by something that is *anitya*.

There is another problem in Nyāya which perhaps has not been seen. The senses, the body, the mind and the *buddhi* are all supposed to be *anitya* and the last which means knowledge in the Nyāya presumably has *manas*, *śarīra* and the *indriyas* as its objects. But how can knowledge which itself is *anitya* have all these as its objects even though they are all *anitya*? But, surprisingly, it itself is the *result* of them. Knowledge or *jñāna* or *buddhi* is thus both the effect or the *phala* of the *śarīra*, the *indriyas*, the *manas* and the object of the senses and yet it is that which knows them.

There is the further problem as to how much of *anityatā* is there. A mountain may last a thousand years and a flower may not outlast the morning when it blooms. Both are *anitya*, a statement which may be 'philosophically' interesting but existentially totally irrelevant. And, how does the *nityatā* of *ākāśa*, if it is held to be *nitya*, make it more interesting or important or valuable than the eye which sees it and which, though *anitya*, is yet that which 'sees' it.

Niḥśreyasa

The *sūtra* 1.1.1! talks of *niḥśreyasa* and the *sūtra* 1.1.2 talks of *apavarga* raising the question, what is the difference between the two. Normally, not much distinction is made between them and the two terms are used interchangeably, just as the term

tattvajñāna is used to denote the knowledge of that which is real. Yet, though the Nyāya tradition points to a radical difference between them, it does not deal with the important issues raised by the distinction they have drawn. The term *niḥśreyasa* is supposed to refer to the *phala* which is achieved through the knowledge gained in any field whatsoever. Each *śāstra* or realm of knowledge is thus said to have its own *niḥśreyasa* and this is achieved through the correct knowledge of that realm which the *śāstra* is supposed to provide. *Apavarga* is the *niḥśreyasa* of *ātma vidyā* alone as it is concerned with the problem of suffering which seems to have been seen as the *only* problem belonging to this realm, an analysis which of course is totally absurd. The problem of *ātman* is *not* the problem of suffering as the Indian seems to have seen it. It certainly is one of the problems, but not the only one, or even the most important one as they seem to have thought.

The problem of the relation between different *niḥśreyasas* which are ultimately to be pursued by man and their relation to the *niḥśreyasa* called *apavarga* is the central issue that should have been attended to if the above analysis were to be accepted as it defines the human situation on the one hand and the relation between different fields of knowledge on the other. Strangely, there seems to be no *śāstra* of action or *karma* without which no knowledge or *tattvajñāna* can achieve its *niḥśreyasa*. The thinking on action or what may be called *sādhana* or *karma* occurs only sporadically and tangentially except perhaps in the *Gītā* which, however, is not concerned with the relation between the different types of *niḥśreyasa* or *puruṣārthas*. Also, the problem created by the fact that Nyāya subscribes to the reality of the plurality of selves, it is surprising that no attention seems to have been paid to the relation between these selves and the *apavarga* which would have to be attained in and through this interrelationship. *Dharma* is not a *prameya* in Nyāya, just as *Īśvara* is not one and it does not seem to have been even seen that knowledge itself is the result of the collective effort of a plurality of beings who have *indnyas*,

śarīra, *manas* etc. Even in respect of *sukha*, *duhkha*, *prayatna*, *ceṣṭa* etc., it has not been seen that these are not possible without the cooperation, help or even opposition of 'other' persons who are like oneself.

Notes

1. The Vaidalya Sūtra of Nāgārjuna is an attempt at the refutation of the *padārthas* propounded in the *Nyāya Sūtras* arguing that the so-called *pramāṇas* can not prove anything, a position that even the Buddhists did not seem to have accepted as otherwise they could not have developed a *pramāṇas śāstra* of their own. In fact, Nāgārjuna's *Syonyavāda* which is the logical result of his denial of the possibility of any theory of *pramāṇa* is only *one* of the four Buddhist philosophical schools, the rest of which actively reject his position.

On the whole question of the relation between the Nyāya Sūtra and the *Vaidalya Sūtra*. See Vaidalya Prakaraṇa, Fernando Tola and Carmen Dragonetti, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1995.