

Concept of Abhāva across Darśanas: Application in Vyākaraṇa

by R Mridula

Submission date: 06-Nov-2020 02:57PM (UTC+0530)

Submission ID: 1437883569

File name: Thesis_Mridula-PC.pdf (1.14M)

Word count: 42374

Character count: 227490

**CONCEPT OF ABHĀVA ACROSS DARŚANAS:
APPLICATION IN VYĀKARAṆA**

Thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for award of the degree

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Sanskrit Studies

By

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November 2020

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled – ‘Concept of Abhāva across Darśanas: Application in Vyākaraṇa’ submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Prof JSR Prasad (Department of Sanskrit Studies) and Co-supervision of Prof K Subrahmanyam (Retired Professor, Centre for Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies), School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India is a bonafide research work which is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or full to this or any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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CERTIFICATE

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This thesis is free from plagiarism and has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other university or institution for award of any degree or diploma.

Further, the student has the following publications before submission of the thesis for adjudication and has produced evidence for the same.

1. *Glimpses of Vedānta through Bhartṛhari's Kārikās on Abhāva*, Pg.160-166., The Journal of Sanskrit Academy (Vol. XXV), ISSN – 0976-089X, Hyderabad, 2018.
2. *Mahābhāṣyam as the base for Bhartṛhari: Exploring Nañārtha*, Pg.105-112., Dhīmahī – Journal of Chinmaya International Foundation Shodha Sansthan, Vol.10, ISSN 0976-3066, Ernakulam, 2019.

And has made presentations in the following conferences –

1. *Agreement and conflict between Vyākaraṇa and Nyāya: A study in Abhāva in light of Vākyapadīyam*, International (3 day) Conference on New Frontiers in Sanskrit & Indic Knowledge, Chinmaya Viswavidyapeeth, Kochi, Dec 17-19, 2018.
2. *Abhāva in Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya: A Reconciliatory Approach*, Three Day International Conference on Dispassionate Churning of Indology, Bharatiya Vidvat Parishat & Tattwa Samshodhana Samsat Udupi (in association with ICPR, New Delhi and Indic Academy, Hyderabad), Jan 04-06, 2019.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I profusely thank my Ācārya, Prof Korada Subrahmanyam, for being a beacon of light to the Śāstras, and for having kindly consented to be my Co-Supervisor. His command over a plethora of Vidyāsthānas instils awe, however his style of teaching automatically gets the student into the groove even while dealing with many complex Śāstras at a time. The time he spent teaching me key texts like Vākyapadīyaṃ, and going through my thesis, is invaluable and can never be repaid. His guidance with respect to Vyākaraṇa, Prācīna-Nyāya, Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṃsā, has given me the right perspective and confidence to handle a topic with massive scope such as this. My words are inadequate to convey the depth of my regard and gratitude to him.

I express my sincere gratitude to Prof JSR Prasad, my Supervisor, who has been a great pillar of support for all my activities be it academic or artistic, and a constant motivator from the very beginning of my research. Particularly with regard to incorporating the traditional research methodology of Bhāratīya Śāstras (Tantrayuktis), and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika textual readings on the concept of Abhāva, I must say that the discussions were immensely beneficial.

I wish to convey my heartfelt thanks to Dr Gabbita Jayamanikya Shastri (Associate Professor, Department of Nyaya, Shri Jagannath Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, Puri), whose invaluable time and effort in teaching a terse Navya-Nyāya text ‘Nañvāda’, without expecting any return, helped me with a good part of my thesis.

I would like to thank Prof Amba Kulkarni, Head of Department, for being a continuous source of inspiration and providing an appropriate environment for researchers like me. The department is always abuzz with the lively interactions among research scholars, and the discussions with my colleagues on various occasions, have shaped my thought process and kindled my research spirit, for which I am indebted to them.

Last but not the least, I am eternally grateful and indebted to my family – especially my parents and significant other, for allowing and motivating me to

carry on my research and academic activities, without any hindrances, and being there at all times of need.

Any merit attributed to this work, is completely due to my respected Ācāryas, while shortcomings may be seen as entirely due to me.

R Mridula

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¹ T.Y. - vidhānam

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ABBREVIATIONS

Bh.G. – Bhagavad Gītā	RV - Ṛg Veda
Br.S. – Brahma Sūtra	T.Y. – Tantrayukti
Ch.U. – Chandogya Upaniṣad	S.Ka. – Siddhānta Kārikā
J.S. - Jaimini Sūtra	S.S. - Sāṅkhya Sūtra
L.Sah. – Lalitā Sahasranāma	S.T.K. - Sāṅkhya Tattva Kaumudī
M.Bh. - Mahābhāṣyaṃ	S.V. – Śloka Vārtikaṃ
M.Bh.Pr. - Mahābhāṣya- Pradīpa	SB – Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
N.Bh. – Nyāya Bhāṣyaṃ	V.P.,Br.K. - Vākyapadīyaṃ Brahma Kāṇḍaṃ
N.K. – Nyāya Kandalī	V.P.,Pa.K.Sam.Sa - Vākyapadīyaṃ Pada Kāṇḍaṃ Sambandha Samuddeśa
N.Ku. – Nyāya Kusumāñjali	V.P.,Pa.K.Vr.Sa. - Vākyapadīyaṃ Pada Kāṇḍaṃ Vṛtti Samuddeśa
N.R. – Nyāya Ratnākara	V.P., Va.K. - Vākyapadīyaṃ Vākya Kāṇḍaṃ
N.S. – Nyāya Sūtra	V.S. - Vaiśeṣika Sūtra
N.V. – Nyāya Vārtikaṃ	V.Sah. - Viṣṇu Sahasranāma
N.V.T. – Nyāya Vārtika Tātparyatīkā	Y.S. – Yoga Sūtra
N.V.T.P. – Nyāya Vārtika Tātparya Pariśuddhi	
P.S. - Pāṇini Sūtra	
Pr.Bh. – Prasastapāda Bhāṣyaṃ	

SCHEME OF DIACRITICAL MARKS

The present work uses this scheme of transliteration:

अ आ इ ई उ ऊ ऋ ॠ ए ऐ ओ औ अं अः ऽ (*avagraha*)

a ā i ī u ū ṛ ṛ̣ e ai o au aṃ aḥ '

क ख ग घ ङ च छ ज झ ञ ट ठ ड ढ ण त थ द ध न्

k kh g gh ṇ c ch j jh ñ ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṇ t th d dh n

प फ ब भ म य र ल व श ष स ह

p ph b bh m y r l v ś ṣ s h

For the purpose of uniformity in script, Sanskrit words are given in English alphabet, adhering to the IAST format. Sanskrit words, phrases, and quotations are italicised, in order to highlight them from the rest of the content. Key words like Abhāva, Anupalabdhi, names of the Darśanas, names of texts etc., begin with capital letters and are not italicised.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Bhāva, and Abhāva its direct opposite, have been dealt with extensively in the Sanskrit works. Nevertheless, Abhāva has been a bone of contention across the systems of Indian Philosophy. The concept has been dealt with, at various levels – ontological, logical, epistemological and metaphysical. Some give it ontological¹ status, others epistemological², while elsewhere, it is altogether refuted³. The six *Āstika darśanas* viz., Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta, along with the principal *Nāstika-darśanas*, viz., the Cārvāka, Bauddha and Jaina, upon careful study, can enlighten us regarding their method of understanding Abhāva.

1.1. A bird's eye view of Abhāva in various *Darśanas*:

The earliest known philosophical system where Abhāva had found mention is the Vaiśeṣika, where Kaṇāda describes it in the ninth *adhyāya*. Although he speaks of Abhāva, he does not give it the status of a *padārtha*. He enumerates only six *padārthas* – dravya, guṇa, karma, sāmānya, viśeṣa and samavāya. It was included as the seventh *padārtha* only by the later Naiyāyikas like Udayana. In the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra, non-existence is mentioned in the form of a *prameya*. It had been dealt with at length in the Praśastapādabhāṣya, an authoritative commentary on Vaiśeṣika Sūtras.

For the Naiyāyikas, the Abhāva which has a '*Pratīyogī*' (counter-positive), is always known to be real. *Pratīyogī* is defined

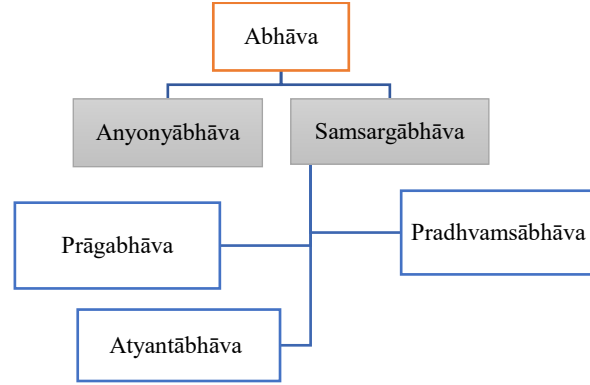
¹ Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika syncretic system of thought.

² Anupalabdhi *Pramāṇa* in Mīmāṃsā.

³ It is *tuccha* or *avastu* in Vedānta-darśana.

as ‘the absence of absence⁴’, or the entity itself, of which the absence is being spoken of. They have given a systematic classification: It has been broadly categorized as two – *Samsargābhāva* and *Anyonyābhāva*. *Samsargābhāva* is again classified into three types – *Prāgabhāva*, *Pradhvamsābhāva* and *Atyantābhāva*.

Fig. 1



The Navya-Naiyāyikas went into detailed discussions on Abhāva, with the prime intent of refuting the theories of the Cārvākas, Bauddhas and Jainas. Absence is also considered by them as one that is produced, because, just as the creation of a pot requires some material causes like clay, stick, wheel etc., even the production of absence (destruction) of a pot requires a cause like a hammer etc. The author of the *Nyāyalīlāvatī*⁵ has even elevated its position stating that the knowledge of Abhāva helps in *Mokṣa*.

The Sāṅkhyas, who consider everything as existent, refute the concept of Abhāva, and rather see the absence of something as the presence of another thing. For them, prior to the creation of a pot,

⁴ ‘*abhāvasya abhāvaḥ*’ – e.g., the absence of ‘absence of pot’ is the pot itself.

⁵ T.Y. - *apadeśaḥ*; Wherever throughout the thesis, the view of various authors is stated, it is to be understood as *apadeśaḥ*.

there is the presence of clay, and not the absence of the pot. Similarly, after a pot is destroyed, they see shards instead of the pot's absence.

The system of Yoga, however, takes a more practical path, deviating a little from the puritanism of the Sāṅkhyas. We can observe that, an idea of Abhāva is required in order to understand two *Sūtras* defining the terms *vikalpa*⁶ and *nidrā*⁷. Here, non-existence is not dealt with as a concept separately, yet its need is suggested.

Although Mīmāṃsā does not speak directly of Abhāva as a *padārtha*, one of the accepted *Pramāṇas*, called 'Anupalabdhi', can be taken on a par with Abhāva. Here too, the Prābhākaras as opposed to the Bhāṭṭas, reject the theory of Anupalabdhi as a *Pramāṇa*.

According to Advaita Vedānta, *sat* and *asat* being the manifestations of the single eternal truth, which is signified by every word, is seen as a multitude due to the diverse powers of *Māyā*. So, the idea of non-existence comes into picture only at the level of *Vyavahāra*.

According to the followers of Mādhvavedānta, Abhāva is considered as an independent entity in line with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, while the Viśiṣṭādvaitins⁸ consider it as nothing but its locus. For the Bauddhas, Bhāva is unacceptable as the signifier of reality. The Bauddha theory is that everything is momentary. The Mādhyamikas proclaim, '*sarvaṃ śūnyam*'.

1.2. Theories on Cause-Effect Relationship:

⁶ *śabdajñānānupātī vastuśūnyo vikalpaḥ* - Y.S.1-9

⁷ *abhāvapratyayāḷambanā vṛttirnidrā* – Y.S.1-10

⁸ *abhāvaśca bhāvavyatiriktaḥ svatantraḥ padārtha iti vaiśeṣikāḥ naiyāyikāḥ mādhvāśca pratipadyante/ adhikaraṇasvarūpa eva abhāvo nātirikta iti mīmāṃsakāḥ rāmānujīyāḥ advaitavedāntinaśca/* - Sarvadarśanaśaṅgraha

The relationship between a cause and its effect has provided enough material for discussion in philosophy, and the concept of Abhāva plays a key role here. Several theories have been advocated in which this relationship has been sought to be explained. The effect, which already existed in its cause in subtle form, was manifested when favourable circumstances were created; because a real effect cannot be produced from an unreal or non-existing cause. This theory is called '*Satkāryavāda*' and was propounded by the Sāṅkhya. *Asatkāryavāda* believes that the effect is not real until it exists manifestly, and so it isn't implicitly present in the cause. The Nyaya and Vaiśeṣika philosophies expounded this view. *Asatkāryavāda* literally means 'the theory of non-existent effect'. A real effect ('*kārya*') is produced from the cause though it did not exist earlier (hence '*asat*') in that cause.

There are many theories put forth regarding the dichotomy of earlier said *vādas*, by various systems of philosophical thought. Needless to say, the notion of Abhāva held by each of these systems, plays a crucial part in determining their approach towards understanding the nature of existence of a thing.

1. *Ārambhavāda/Asatkāryavāda* : Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika
2. *Sanghātavāda* : Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika
(Bauddhas)
3. *Vijñānavāda/Ātmakhyāti* : Yogācāra (Bauddhas)
4. *Śūnyavāda/Asatkhyāti* : Mādhyamika (Bauddhas)
5. *Pariṇāmovāda/Satkāryavāda* : Sāṅkhya, Yoga and
Viśiṣṭādvaita
6. *Vivartavāda/Dṛṣṭiśṣṭivāda* : Advaitavedānta and
Vyākaraṇa

1.3. Vyākaraṇa as the ground of Application:

The theories put forth by the Naiyāyikas, Mīmāṃsakas and Vedāntins have invariably found application in Pāṇini's system of grammar. In Vyākaraṇa-darśana, we can observe an amalgamation of the opinions of different schools of thought, which has given us a totally new perspective of Abhāva.

This makes Vyākaraṇa a dependable source to understand how the seemingly opposing thoughts on Abhāva are actually founded on the same constructs. While Nyāya Darśana propounds *Asatkāryavāda*, it is evident on close observation that Pāṇini has constructed his Vyākaraṇa on the principles of *Satkāryavāda* (of the Sāṅkhyas) and *Vivartavāda* (of the Vedāntins).

In Vyākaraṇaśāstra, Abhāva finds expression in as many as 9 *Sūtras* directly and in the application of many other *Sūtras* indirectly. By Pāṇini's *prakriyā*, the word Bhāva come from the root *bhū sattāyām* (*bhavanaṃ bhāvaḥ* - '*bhāve ghañ*'), and by prefixing *nañ* to it, the word Abhāva is formed. In the Nañarthanirṇaya of the Bhūṣaṇasāra, Kaundabhaṭṭa enlists six meanings of *nañ*:

tatsādṛśyamabhāvaśca tadanyatvaṃ tadalpatā /

aprāśastyam virodhaśca nañarthāḥ śatprakīrtitāḥ //

Abhāva is upheld to be the primary meaning of *nañ*, as validated by the Bhāṣyakāra. This is stated in the Siddhāntakārikā of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita –

abhāvo vā tadartho 'stu bhāṣyasya hi tadāśayāt /

Bhartr̥hari, in the Sambandha Samuddeśa in Padakāṇḍa of his magnum opus, Vākyapadīyam, sheds light on the diverse arguments between the śāstrakāras, before setting forth his own *Siddhānta*, i.e., in line with Advaita Vedānta. Here, he has brought in the viewpoints of all the *Darśanas*, making his observations a culmination of the thought processes revolving around the two – Bhāva and Abhāva. *Bauddha-sattā* is an important notion that is upheld by the Vaiyākaraṇas⁹ in line with the Yoga concept of *Vikalpa*. This idea is exemplified in quite a few Vedic mantras, tenets of Mīmāṃsā and poetic principles¹⁰.

1.4. Purpose of this Research Work:

Earlier literature produced in this area is each restricted to elucidate the concept of Abhāva from the perspective of one or at the most two Śāstras. The present research has been taken up to offer a panorama of the various theories of this concept, which will enable one to derive a comprehensive understanding of Abhāva.

1.4.1. Objectives of the present work¹¹:

1. To analyze and consolidate all the theories on Abhāva;
2. To prove that all the seemingly contradictory theories are only the product of varied standpoints, that have to do with the core foundational principles of each specific *Darśana*;

⁹ In *Bhāṣya* on the *Sūtra* ‘*arthavadadhāturapratyayah prātīpadikam*’, Patañjali states that *artha* here denotes *bauddhārtha*, due to which the grammatical formation of words like *śaśaviśāṇa* are achieved, although they do not have external existence.

¹⁰ The examples of which will be dealt in detail in upcoming chapters. (T.Y. - *anāgatāvekṣaṇam*)

¹¹ T.Y. - *prayojanam*

3. To prove that these contradictory theories can be applied in one *Śāstra* at various levels by taking the example of Pāṇini's monumental work of brilliance, the Aṣṭādhyāyī.

1.4.2. Methodology:

- Use of comparative and analytical qualitative methods;
- Study of select chapters from the Padakāṇḍam of Vākyapadīyaṃ;
- Study of the various concepts of Abhāva at the Ontological, epistemological and metaphysical levels;
- Study of texts pertaining to the following *Darśanas*: a. Vaiśeṣika; b. Prācīna and Navya Nyāya; c. Sāṅkhya; d. Yoga; e. Pūrva Mīmāṃsā; f. Uttara Mīmāṃsā;
- Study of Pāṇini's *Sūtras* where the concept of Abhāva is observed, using Mahābhāṣyaṃ as the reference;
- Analysing and elaborating on Pāṇini's use of various Dārśanic theories of Abhāva in the Aṣṭādhyāyī.

1.5. Survey of Literature¹²:

1.5.1. Abhāva-Vimarśa: Dipak Ghosh

PhD Thesis, Sampoornaanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi, 1983.

In his work, the author compiles various views on Abhāva within Nyāya-darśana (both *prācīna* and *navya*), and wherever there is a *Pūrvapakṣa* from Mīmāṃsā (Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara) or from Vedāntins like Ādi Śaṅkara, their views are brought in and refuted from the Nyāya perspective. Characteristics of Abhāva, Abhāva as

¹² T.Y. - *apadeśaḥ*

a *prameya/padārtha*, Abhāva as a *Pramāṇa*, *Asatkāryavāda* as valid over *Satkāryavāda* and *Pariṇāmavāda*, and types of Abhāva are the topics dealt in depth in this book.

1.5.2. Indian Tradition and Negation: KN Upadhyaya

Journal: Philosophy East and West, Vol.38, No.3, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Hawaii (July 1988), pp. 281-289. URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1398867>

The aim of the author is to resolve the problem of Abhāva through a simplistic approach, and to show that the arguments put forth by various Indian systems of philosophy on this matter are not altogether irreconcilable, but each having their own strengths and weaknesses. The root of the differences in opinion on Abhāva is rightly shown to be the varied notions on reality, which has not been defined in the same sense by the schools of Indian philosophy.

The author classifies them on this basis: Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika and Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā that consider negation to be real, as opposed to the Bauddha, Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā and Advaita Vedānta who deny it any place in reality. He then proceeds to describe how these notions were defended.

His solution to the problem of Abhāva leans heavily against *Satkāryavāda*. What is existent is real and what is real is existent. Conversely what is non-existent is not real and what is non-real is not existent. With two examples, he proves that a negative cognition is arrived at on the basis of a positive reality, and one's psychological interest and disposition is of paramount importance in this connection. He says, 'the suggested content of negation is found

discrepant in the context and therefore stands negated by the reality, thus giving rise to a negative cognition'. It is merely a derivation, a construction which is only ideal and never real. The author closes the discussion, by considering Abhāva merely as an epistemological¹³ or a logical¹⁴ category, and not as a metaphysical¹⁵ category.

1.5.3. The Reality of Negation: P.T.Raju

Journal: The Philosophical Review, Vol. 50, No. 6 (Nov., 1941), pp. 585-601, Duke University Press

URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2180813>

The author attempts to solve the contentious problem of the reality of negation with complete straightforwardness. He places the viewpoints of the Western logicians on the problem, and proceeds to bring out the crucial angles of approach of the Naiyāyikas and Advaitins, occasionally mentioning that of the Vaiśeṣikas and Bauddhas. His conclusions are that, not all forms of negation are real. Only those, the *Pratiyogīs* of which are real and are a possible object of cognition, are real negations. Negations in judgements such as, 'Air has no colour', and 'There is no sky-flower', are not real. The 'real negation' of Indian Philosophy has something in common with the 'significant negation' of the Western. Also, he treats difference as a positive judgement rather than as a negative, in the form of *Anyonyābhāva* (mutual negation). The reason being that, difference can hold true of reality, only if it is a positive entity.

¹³Validly knowable

¹⁴Validly expressible

¹⁵Existential/real

Otherwise, in ‘the cow is not an elephant’, the identity of elephant and cow being negated, this identity becomes the *Pratiyogī*, and as explained before, for the negation to be considered real, its counterpart also should be real, and in this case, the identity of cow and elephant is actually not possible. Therefore, as ‘*pr̥thaktva*’ or ‘*bheda*’, it should be seen as a positive entity, to be considered real. The author brings to light some interesting observations from the Vaiśeṣika scholar Chandrakānta’s works, which might help us extract the right constructs to determine the reality and non-reality of negation.

1.5.4. Negations in Paninian rules: George Cardona

Journal: Language, Vol.43, No.1 (Mar. 1967), pp.34-56, Linguistic Society of America. URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/411384>.

The conclusions derived from Mahābhāṣyam on the operation of negative compounds in the form of *Paryudāsa* and *Prasajya-pratiṣedha* are used to judge some formulations in the Kāśikā. Cardona brings to attention the focus of modern scholars, who either briefly characterized the two types of negation or focused on their formal logical aspects, and neglected an important aspect, i.e., how this distinction corresponds to the major principles followed by Pāṇini in framing the rules.

The inference of a positive operation from a negation is established by Patañjali and Kaiyaṭa in the Bhāṣya and Pradīpa of the *Sūtra* ‘*naveti vibhāṣā*’ –

Patañjali – ‘*prasajya kiñcinnavetyucyate, tena ubhayam bhaviṣyati*’

Kaiyaṭa – ‘*pratiṣedhādvīdhiranumāsyate tato vikalpaḥ setsyati*’

Kaiyaṭa (I -327) ad vt.10 comments: ‘*bhāvābhāvau vidhātum na śakyete*’, on which Nāgeśa notes: ‘*bhāvābhāvāvitīmāveva bhāṣye vidhipraṭiṣedhaśabdenoktau*’

The *Vidhi* and *Pratiṣedha* are compared to *utsarga* and *apavāda*, both considered together as one context¹⁶. This is expressed clearly by Bhartṛhari in *Vākyapadīyaṃ*:

*anekākhyātayoge’pi vākyaṃ nyāyyāpavādayoḥ/
ekameveṣyate kaiścidbhinnarūpamiva sthitam//*

One such example is the pair of *Sūtras* ‘*śi sarvanāmasthānam*’ and ‘*suḍanapumsakasya*’.

1.5.5. Between Self and No-Self: Lessons from the Majjhima Nikāya, Douglas W. Shrader

URL:

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/summary?doi=10.1.1.462.1435>

The intention of the author is to clarify the Buddha’s stand on the Self and Non-Self, to show that, being more concerned with the alleviation of pain and suffering, the Buddha had set aside discussions on the nature of the self and its existence/non-existence,

¹⁶ An observation: ‘*prasajya ca apavādaviśayam utsargah pravartate*’ - Although it is said that Abhāva expects Bhāva, in *Vyākaraṇa*, at the time of *prakriyā*, this *paribhāṣā* clarifies that the special rule is to be applied first, then comes *utsarga*. This is one distinguishing factor, apart from what Cardona mentions as an essential difference between *Pratiṣedha* and *apavāda*: while the latter counters an *utsarga* by providing a positive operation, the former counters a *Vidhi* only by providing its Abhāva. That the *utsarga-apavāda* pair in *Vyākaraṇa* is the exact parallel of the *Vidhi-Niṣedha* pair in *Mīmāṃsā*, as intended by Annambhaṭṭa in his gloss over Kaiyaṭa, does not conform in every way.

considering such reflections to be in vain and rather engaging the mind in the unwise chain of thoughts. The Sabbasava Sutta provides 16 examples of unadvisable thoughts, and particularly names three contradicting pairs of propositions as false, which are to do with the Self and non-Self. Wise reflection is to with the four Noble Truths. It is very curious to observe the Buddha's silence on matters concerning the existence/non-existence of the self. But at the same time, he follows the maxim of '*neti, neti*', eliminating the five skandhas from the possibility of being understood as the self. It is interesting to note that in the final exchange, where Vacchagotta asks the Buddha regarding the existence/non-existence of the Self, the Tathāgata chooses silence, and upon being asked by his favourite disciple Ānanda, he remarks, that he didn't wish to side either with the eternalists or the nihilists, as in both cases his doctrine of impermanence would suffer. This has opened the floodgates of discussion over the millennia, and led to the rise of various schools of Buddhism, each of which developed its own interpretation of the Buddha's words.

1.5.6. Vyadhikaraṇābhāva – A type of negation: Gopikamohan Bhattacharya

Book: Navya-Nyaya, Some logical problems in historical perspective, Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, New Delhi, 1978.

In Chapter 5 of his book, Prof Bhattacharya brings to the forefront, a concept in connection with the Navya-Nyāya definitions of *vyāpti*, which is '*vyadhikaraṇadharmāvacchinnapratiyogitāka-abhāva*'. In order to defend their definitions using the notion of *avyabhicaritatva* (non-deviation), the predecessors of Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya came up

with a method applying the negations of both *sādhya* and *hetu*. For example, the non-occurrence of *hetu* in the locus of absence of the *sādhya* affirms their *avyabhicaritatva*. The Tattvacintāmaṇi lists seven such negative definitions of *vyāpti* and rejects them:

1. *sādhyaābhāvavadavṛttitvam*
2. *sādhyaavadbhinnasādhyaābhāvavadavṛttitvam*
3. *sādhyaavatpratiyogikānyonyābhāvasāmānādhikarāṇyam*
4. *sakalasādhyaābhāvavanniṣṭhābhāvapratyogitvam*
5. *sādhyaavadanyāvṛttitvam*
6. *sādhyaśāmānādhikarāṇyānādhikaraṇatvam*
7. *sādhyaavaiyadhikarāṇyānādhikaraṇatvam*

The first five are called *vyāpti-pañcaka*, while the last two are called *simha-vyāghra* definitions. But these become very narrow in their applicability and many cases of *vyāpti* are not covered. In order to overcome this difficulty, a type of negation called *vyadhikaraṇābhāva* was posited by Navya-naiyāyikas like Soṇḍala, Rucidatta etc. Usually, the *Pratiyogitā* of the Abhāva is delimited (avacchinna) by a property that occurs in the same Adhikaraṇa as the *Pratiyogitā* itself. As in, ‘*ghaṭo nāsti*’, which can be interpreted by the Navya-naiyāyika, as that Abhāva which has *ghaṭatva* as the delimiting property (*avacchedaka*) of *Pratiyogitā*, that occurs in the same locus (*ghaṭa*). However, in *vyadhikaraṇābhāva*, *Pratiyogitā* is delimited by a non-concurrent property (*vyadhikaraṇa-dharma*), which is like saying, ‘*paṭatva-avacchinna ghaṭasya abhāvaḥ*’, i.e., the absence of a pot whose *Pratiyogitā* is delimited by clothness, a property not occurring in a pot. This type of Abhāva is universally existent, in the pot itself and in other objects. From this discussion, we come to know that there are two kinds of *Pratiyogitās* possible:

samānādhikaraṇadharmā-avacchinna and *vyadhikaraṇadharmā-avacchinna*. But later Naiyāyikas like Vāsudeva, put efforts to show that a non-concurrent property (*vyadhikaraṇadharmā*) cannot be the *avacchedaka* of *Pratīyogitā*. Following him, his famous disciple, Raghunātha, also gives modified definitions of *Vyāpti* without admitting *Vyadhikaraṇābhāva*, and elucidates the same arguments given by Gaṅgeśa earlier, against this kind of negation.

1.5.7. Studies in the process of law-making in the Dharmashastras:

Anindya Bandyopadhyay

PhD Thesis, Jadavpur University, 2014: Chapter 5 – Law of Prohibition.

In the fifth chapter of his thesis, titled ‘Law of Prohibitions’, the author has discussed different prohibitory directions and negative sentences, showing their impact on the law-making process of the Dharmaśāstra literature. By undertaking an extensive study of Mīmāṃsā principles of interpreting *Vidhi* and *Niṣedha* sentences, the various meanings of the negative particle *nañ* in different contexts are elucidated. A negative sentence in the context of the Veda or Dharmaśāstra could operate in any of the following ways: *Prasajya-pratiṣedha*, *Paryudāsa*, *Vikalpa*, *Niyama*, *Parisaṅkhyā* or *Ārthavāda*. Examples of interpreting various aspects of the Dharmaśāstra literature are given using the above methods of operation. Further, the author has also brought out a multitude of contextual meanings which can be elicited from the commentaries on Manusmṛti etc., apart from the usual 6 attributed to the particle *nañ*.

1.5.8. Samanvaya of Advaita of Bhartṛhari and Śaṅkara: N Sivasenani

PhD Thesis, University of Hyderabad, 2016

Speaking about the *Pramāṇas* that are acceptable to Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṃsā, and Vyākaraṇa from the standpoint of Bhartṛhari, Dr Sivasenani says, ‘Bhartṛhari views that both Bhāva and Abhāva have a similar ontological status, in that both are mental conceptions’, quoting the *kārikā* ‘*ekasmādātmano'nanyau bhāvābhāvau vikalpita*’ (3-3-60). Advaita follows the Anupalabdhi of Mīmāṃsā only at the operational (*vyāvahārika*) level, discarding it at the level of *paramārtha*. Further, in his analysis of multiple levels of reality in the second chapter, there is a discussion on what is unreal too. Here, we observe that ‘*asat*’ in the context of ‘*asad vā idam agra āsīt*’¹⁷, is interpreted as the unmanifest Brahman, while ‘*sat*’ is the world of manifestation. This *asat* is different from *atyantāsat* – absolutely unreal, i.e., sky-flower and so on. Therefore, the word *asat* can be understood not only as Abhāva, but also as unreal, unmanifest etc., depending on the context of its usage. In his third chapter, the duality of Bhāva and Abhāva has been dealt with at length as per the Sambandha Samuddeśa, Padakāṇḍa, Vākyapadīyaṃ. This seeming duality is caused only due to *avidyā*, as both are just adjuncts of the one and only reality, i.e., Brahman.

¹⁷ Śāṅkarabhāṣyaṃ - Taittirīyopaniṣad 2.7

Chapter 2: ABHĀVA IN NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA

2.1. A GENERAL SURVEY

Initially, a bird's eye view of the various standpoints regarding Abhāva, within Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika is being offered before delving deeper into the principal texts of these two systems.

From the Nyāya perspective, there are 16 *padārthas*, which are existential or positive. Are there any negative categories, and if any, what is its nature? The knowledge of the *padārthas* leads to the understanding of *tattva*, the enquiry of which has been the prime intent of the different systems of Indian philosophy. Vātsyāyana elaborates further - '*Tattva* is the being of what is, and the non-being of what is not'¹⁸. Uddyotakara, in his Nyāya-Vārttika defines *tattva* as inclusive of both being and non-being¹⁹.

The Naiyāyikas were of the opinion that the categories of non-being stood described by the description of the categories of being. In his Nyāyavārtika Tātparyaṭīkā, Vācaspati Miśra explains that the first *padārtha*, *Pramāṇa*, is of two types: means of knowledge of being and means of knowledge of non-being²⁰. He extrapolates this meaning from the second Nyāya Sūtra, whose essence is, 'the non-being of the cause proves the non-being of the effect'²¹, which directly takes us to the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra, '*kāraṇābhāvāt...*²²'.

¹⁸ *kiṃ punastattvam? sataśca sadbhāvo 'sataścāsadbhāvah/* - N.Bh.1.1.1

¹⁹ *kiṃ punastat? sadasatī tat, tasya bhāvastattvam/* - N.V.1.1.1

²⁰ *dvidvidham pramāṇam – bhāvo 'abhāvaśca/* - N.V.T. 1.1.1

²¹ *duḥkhañjanmapravṛttidoṣamithyājñānānāmuttarottarāpāye tadanantarāpāyādapavargah/* - N.S. 1.1.2

²² V.S. 1.2.1

Udayana enumerates some of the negative categories – ‘The absence of a foe, son, etc., non-violence, rebirth as the casting off of the previous body, elimination of a caused disease, etc.’²³

Giving two alternative interpretations of Vātsyāyana’s statement – ‘*sacca khalu ṣoḍaśadhā vyūḍhamupadekṣyate*’, Vācaspati Miśra says, ‘*sat* alone will be described in sixteen divisions, not *asat*, which is revealed through *sat*’²⁴. Udayana adds to this observation, ‘the categories of non-being are to be mentioned only for treatment’s sake, and this is very much achieved by the treatment of the locus of their opposites (*Pratiyogī*)’²⁵.

Harsh Narain ²⁶says, ‘*the word Bhāva denoting action soon acquired the sense of existence (Sattā) as a category more abstract and fundamental than action. The Vaiśeṣika concept of Bhāva/Sattā seems to have been inspired by this later sense developed in the Nairukta and Vaiyākaraṇa traditions.*’

Aruna Goel ²⁷says, ‘*Abhāva means not mere negation but contrast. It is a contrast between what exists and what does not exist. Of two contradictory things, the non-existence of one establishes the existence of the other. If we infer the non-existence of a thing from the existence of another, it is only a case of inference, the mental process being, ‘if the thing existed, it would be seen; since it is not seen, it must be concluded that it does not exist’.*

²³ *artho 'pi śatruputrādyabhāvādiḥ, pravṛttirahimsādiḥ, pretyabhāvo 'pi pūrvaśarīraparityāgādiḥ, phalamapyutpannarogapradhvamsādyasadbheda iti mantavyam/* - N.V.T.P. 1.1.1

²⁴ *saddhi ṣoḍaśadhā vyūḍhamupadekṣyate, nāsat, tasya sadadhīnaprakāśatvāditi/* - N.V.T. 1.1.1

²⁵ *pratipādanāya hi te vaktavyāstacca pratiyogyadhikaraṇapratipādanādevārthato bhūtam/* - N.V.T.P. 1.1.1

²⁶ Pg.171, Early Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Categoriology

²⁷ Pg.6, Indian Philosophy

2.1.1. Abhāva as a *padārtha* in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika

Non-existence as a category is absolutely necessary for their philosophy of realistic pluralism. They hold that every experience has its counterpart in the external world. Thus, when we say, ‘absence of a pot on the ground’, the non-existence of the pot should have an objective reality, unlike the ‘hare’s horn’ or ‘sky-flower’ which are unreal. The whole framework of metaphysics developed by the Navya-Naiyāyikas is built upon the theory of reality of Abhāva. Their causal theory is also based on this. The argument of Udayana and the rest for including Abhāva as one of the *padārthas* is that, although Kaṇāda does not directly mention non-existence as an independent category, he indicates it with its four kinds as a possible object of knowledge. Uddyotakara establishes Abhāva as an objective reality in the discussion on the sense–object contact (*indriyārtha-sannikarṣa*). It is stated there that *samavāya* and Abhāva are perceived through the sixth contact called ‘*viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*’. According to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika syncretic system, non-existence not only possesses objective reality, but it is also directly perceptible by the senses like all other objects.

After Śivāditya introduced Abhāva formally as a separate category in his work ‘Saptapadārthī’, the syncretic treatises like ‘Tarkasaṅgraha’, ‘Nyāyasiddhāntamuktavālī’, ‘Tarkakaumudī’, ‘Tarkāmṛta’, ‘Tarkabhāṣa’ and ‘Tārkikarākṣā’ hold non-existence to be a distinct category. In the words of Dr S Radhakrishnan²⁸, ‘*Though an empirical classification of existent things has no need*

²⁸ Pg.219, Indian Philosophy

for an independent category of non-existence, still the dialectical representation of the universe requires the conception of negation’.

2.1.2. Classification of Abhāva

Abhāva is at first divided into two kinds namely, ‘*Samsargābhāva*’ or the absence of something in something else, and ‘*Anyonyābhāva*’ or the fact that one thing is not the other. The latter is further classified into three – ‘*Prāgabhāva*’, ‘*Pradhvamsābhāva*’, and ‘*Atyantābhāva*’.

Prāgabhāva (Prior non-existence):

Before the production of a cloth, there is non-existence of the cloth in the threads. It had no beginning, but does have an end. If prior non-existence is not destroyed, the effect cannot be produced. This is the basis of the ‘*Asatkāryavāda*’ theory of causation propounded by the Naiyāyikas.

Pradhvamsābhāva (Posterior non-existence):

It is identified by the destruction of a previously existent thing. For example, when a pot is broken, it has posterior non-existence. It has a beginning, but no end.

Anyonyābhāva (Mutual non-existence):

This is nothing but showing difference (*bhedavyavasthā*) between two things. It is the non-existence of one thing as another which is different from it. A jar is not a cloth and vice-versa.

Atyantābhāva (Absolute non-existence):

It is the absence of any connection between two things in the past, present, and the future. It is impossible to find a purely non-existent entity at all times and places, as explained by Śrīdhara – ‘Absolute negation is denial of an absolutely non-existent entity, which is not limited by space and time, but which is only conceived by the intellect’²⁹.

Śrīdhara also clarifies upon the need for the four-fold understanding of Abhāva:

- If there were no Prāgabhāva, no effect could be produced;
- If there were no Pradhvamsābhāva, effect would not get destroyed;
- There would not be different things with specific natures if Anyonyābhāva were not accepted; and
- All things would become eternal and omnipresent if Atyantābhāva were not accepted.

In the words of Dr S Radhakrishnan³⁰,

- *‘Prior negation is limited by production of an effect in future;*
- *Posterior negation is limited by its existence in the past;*
- *Mutual negation is negation of identity between two things at present, which is its counter-entity. It is limited by their specific natures.*
- *Absolute negation is non-existence of relation, which is not limited by any time.’*

2.1.3. Point of debate with other Systems of Philosophy:

²⁹ His perspective may be understood as corroborating the Yoga-Vyākaraṇa concept of *Vikalpa-Bauddhasattā* - N.K. Pg.230

³⁰ Pg.220, Indian Philosophy

The Bhāṭṭa school of Mīmāṃsakas point out that, although the non-existence of a jar and the ground seem to be simultaneously cognized by the senses, the former cannot be a sense-object, because, ‘firstly it is devoid of form, which is a necessary condition of visual perception, and secondly, sense contact is impossible with a non-existent thing’. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa refutes these arguments saying, ‘Form is not a pre-requisite towards visual perception, as even though atoms possess form, they are invisible. Similarly, the principle of senses reaching an object is applicable only to positive entities. Non-existence being negative, the eye can produce its cognition even without having contact with it’.

The Prābhākaras altogether discard the theory of reality of non-existence. They hold that if non-existence were a reality, then the negation of this non-existence would have to be another reality, which leads to *avyavasthā* or infinite regression. To avoid this, the Naiyāyikas maintained that the negation of a negation was equivalent to its positive.

The Vedāntins also reject non-existence as a category. They regard it as a simple substratum, and in the oft quoted example – ‘the ground is qualified by the absence of a pot’, negation is identical with its locus. The Vaiśeṣikas contend that if the negation of the pot were identical to the ground, then *ghaṭābhāva* would be perceived even on a ground on which the pot exists. But Vedānta takes a different stand – It says that negation of a pot is identical with the mere ground, which is different from the ground on which something exists. Absolute negation of the pot on the ground refers solely to the mere ground, which is a positive entity. A positive entity

is called a negation with respect to another positive entity. So, there is no negation.

2.2. VAIŚEṢIKA SŪTRAS

The following are the *Sūtras* authored by Kaṇāda, in which the concept of Abhāva finds mention.

Types of Non-existence:

- 9.1. *kriyāguṇavyapadeśābhāvāt prāgasat/* (Prior Non-existence)
- 9.2. *sadasat/* (Posterior Non-existence)
- 9.3. *asataḥ kriyāguṇavyapadeśābhāvādarthāntaram/* (Sat and Asat different)
- 9.4. *saccāsat/* (Reciprocal Non-existence)
- 9.5. *yaccānyadasadatastadasat/* (Absolute Non-existence)

Causes of the perception of these types:

- 9.6. *asaditi bhūtapratyakṣābhāvāt
bhūtasmr̥tervirodhipratyakṣavat/*
- 9.7. *tathā 'bhāve bhāvapratyakṣatvācca/*
- 9.8. *etenā 'ghaṭo 'gauradharmas̥ca vyākhyātaḥ/*
- 9.9. *abhūtam nāstīyanarthāntaram/*
- 9.10. *nāsti ghaṭo gehe iti sato ghaṭasya
gehasamsargapratīṣedhaḥ/*

Reciprocal indicators:

- 3.1.11. *virodhyabhūtaṃ bhūtasya/*
- 3.1.12. *bhūtamabhūtasya/*
- 3.1.13. *bhūto bhūtasya/*

Cause and effect relation:

1.2.1. *kāraṇābhāvāt kāryābhāvaḥ/*

Here, the Praśastapāda bhāṣya says: ‘*abhāvo ’pyanumānameva yathotpannam kāryam kāraṇasadbhāve liṅgam/*’

1.2.2. *na tu kāryābhāvāt kāraṇābhāvaḥ/*

This is contradicted by the Bhāṣya: ‘*evamanutpannam kāryam kāraṇāsadbhāve liṅgam/*’

Existence defined:

1.2.7. *saditi yato dravyaguṇakarmasu sā sattā/*

1.2.8. *dravyaguṇakarmabhyo ’arthāntaram sattā/*

1.2.17. *saditi liṅgāviśeṣād viśeṣaliṅgābhāvāccaiko bhāvaḥ/*

2.2.1. Aforesaid *Sūtras* elaborated:

Kaṇāda divides all things primarily into two – Existence and Non-existence. The first class is then divided into 6 objects, *dravya* etc. Based on relation and identity, non-existence is classified into 4 types.

The cardinal aphorism says, ‘*dharmaviśeṣaprasūtād dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyaviśeṣasamavāyānām padārthānām sādharmyavaidharmyābhyām tattvajñānānniḥśreyasam*’. The real knowledge of the similarities and dissimilarities of the six objects, which is attained due to the peculiar nature of dharma, is the cause of the ‘*niḥśreyas*’. *niḥśreyas* is defined by Śaṅkara Miśra in his Upaskāra as ‘*ātyantikī duḥkhanivṛttiḥ*’ or absolute cessation of pain.

Here, the point to be discussed is that, although Abhāva is not mentioned forthright, it is understood by the word ‘*vaidharmya*’, which is nothing but the negation of *dravya* etc. And the final aim is

cessation of pain, which is also Abhāva. Thus, *Mokṣa* is the antecedent non-existence of pain up to the moment of annihilation of the innumerable particular attributes. To those who contend that Kaṇāda has vocally ascribed real knowledge only to the six objects, and that the realization of Abhāva cannot aid in the attainment of the supreme good, Sāyaṇa Mādhava in his *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* gives a fitting reply³¹ – ‘*na cāsyā puruṣārthaupayikatva nāstītyāśaṅkanīyaṃ, duḥkhātyantocchedāparaparyāyaniḥśreyasarūpatvena paramapuruṣārthatvāt*’ - (*ayamabhāvaḥ svayameva paramapuruṣārthasvarūpaḥ*), thus necessitating the comprehension of Abhāva too.

Kaṇāda further establishes, in *Sūtra* IX-1-3, that existence and non-existence are two different real concepts. The existent is different from the non-existent, because action and attribute cannot be predicated of the non-existent³². Four kinds of *asat* are explained: Prior non-existence, which is understood by the non-application of action or attribute to a thing before its production; consequent non-existence, which arises out of the perception that a thing which existed no longer exists; reciprocal non-existence, perceived as an absence of identity among two things; and lastly, absolute non-existence, which is different from the aforesaid three. The examples of these are given in the same order: Absence of the pot before its production; absence of the pot after its destruction; absence of cloth in a pot, i.e., a cloth is not a pot and vice-versa; non-existence of color in air, sky flower etc.

³¹ Pg.368

³² Abhāva cannot have an action - Chāndogya upaniṣad śāṅkara bhāṣya and V.P.P.K. Vṛttisamuddesa *kārikā* 309.

The *ṛṣi* also describes the causes of perception of these four kinds of non-existence. Due to the current non-existence of the *Pratīyogī* (counter-positive) of Abhāva (none other than the object itself), and the memory of its past, consequent non-existence is perceived. Due to the perception of the current object, and through the same process as before, prior non-existence is also perceived. By the argument stated before, we also perceive that a cloth is not a pot, a cow is not a horse etc., i.e., reciprocal non-existence.

The words ‘*abhūta*’ and ‘*nāsti*’ convey the same import. If the import of ‘*abhūta*’ is ‘*anutpannam*’, then it conveys prior non-existence; if the import of ‘*abhūta*’ is ‘*utpannasyābhāva*’, it conveys consequent non-existence; and if by ‘*abhūta*’, the absence of an object in one locus being present elsewhere is conveyed, it is absolute non-existence. And in a sentence like ‘*nāsti ghaṭo gehe*’, none of the four kinds are intended, it is rather the contact between the pot and the house that is negated.

To the question as to why *Anyonyābhāva* cannot be included in *Atyantābhāva* – absolute negation of cloth-ness in a pot and so on, it is said:

Absence of ‘*paṭatva*’ in a ‘*ghaṭa*’ is against our experience. For, *sāmānya*, *viśeṣa* and *samavāya* (all being properties) are dependent on an object for their existence, and as such talking about absolute non-existence of a *dharma* (property) without referring to its substratum (*dravya*) is opposed to our experience. Hence *Anyonyābhāva* has to be considered a distinct category from *Atyantābhāva*.

In the third *adhyāya*, Kaṇāda talks about the indicators of the existent and the non-existent. Here, the word ‘*bhūta*’ denotes current happening and ‘*abhūta*’ denotes past happening. The intent is to relate time and the existence or non-existence of an action, not an object. With this in mind, he says, ‘the non-occurrence (e.g. of rain) is an indicator of the occurrence (of contact between wind and clouds). Similarly, the occurrence (e.g. of rain) is an indicator of the non-occurrence (of contact between wind and clouds).

In the first *adhyāya*, in the process of establishing *Asatkātyavāda*, and the relation of cause and effect, Abhāva finds mention. The main premise here is that, the effect is not already present in the cause. For, if that be the case, there would be no purpose served in its coming into existence. Non-existence of effect follows from the non-existence of cause. The same cannot be shown here: that non-existence of cause can be deduced from the non-existence of effect. Although the seed is a cause of a sprout, and the granary is full of seeds, no sprout is observed, because the other agents like water, etc., are unavailable. Praśastapāda gives a different perspective of this: just as the appearance of the effect becomes indicative of the existence of the cause, so also does the non-appearance of the effect become indicative of the non-existence of the cause. But here, Abhāva or rather *Anupalabdhi* as a *Pramāṇa* is the point of discussion, which means that the non-appearance (*Anupalabdhi*) of the effect indicates the non-existence (Abhāva) of one or more supporting causes.

Praśastapāda uses the term Abhāva to mean *Anupalabdhi*. For the Vaiśeṣikas there are only two *Pramāṇas*: *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*. All the other *Pramāṇas* elaborated by other *Darśanas* can be included under *anumāna*.

2.2.1.1. Kaṇāda on *Sattā* (Existence):

The reason for *dravya*, *guṇa* and *karma* to be understood as beings, is existence. It is a universal, that is common to all the three. *Sāmānya* cannot be called existent, because, it is always known through the individual, and *Sattā* can never become the *Viśeṣya*³³. *Viśeṣa* and *Samavāya* are also not included under *Sattā* as they are dependent on the aforesaid three for their expression.

Existence is different from *dravya*, *guṇa* and *karma*, although found in all of them. The relation between existence and any of the three is akin to that between *jāti* and *vyakti* (*samavāya*).

In the 17th *Sūtra*, Kaṇāda uses the word ‘Bhāva’ synonymously with *Sattā*.

2.2.2. Status of Abhāva in Vaiśeṣika as against Sāṅkhya:

It is true that in older works³⁴, only six categories are explicitly announced, but it does not mean that Abhāva is not recognized as real.

With the Vaiśeṣika, (unlike the Sāṅkhya), for whom *pratīti* (in greater measure than its counterpart *Vyavahāra*) as an ultimate fact of consciousness given in the form of belief, is the determinant of objective reality, Abhāva is necessarily real. The necessity of Abhāva as a metaphysical concept was twofold, arising a) from the

³³ ‘*tatra param sattā mahāviṣayatvāt sā cānuvṛttereva hetutvāt sāmānyameva*’ - Praśastapādabhāṣya

³⁴ V.S. 1.1.4; Pr.Bh. p.6; S.S. 1-25; Kandalī p.334.

fundamental assumption that *Mokṣa* is negative, b) from its doctrine of *Asatkāryavāda*, which allows of a real negative judgement.

In Sāṅkhya-Yoga, *Satkāryavāda* sets aside any possibility of including Abhāva as a predicate, as they assume that everything exists everywhere, or one thing is identical with another³⁵, and all negation would be merely verbal (*vaikalpika*). This can be connected with what Bhartṛhari establishes in the *Sambandha Samuddeśa*³⁶.

Prāgabhāva and *Pradhvamsābhāva* are both, according to Sāṅkhya and Yoga, really two forms of Bhāva (there being no room for *asat* in this system), the one known as the ‘*anāgatadharmā*’ and the other as the ‘*atītadharmā*’ of the matter. It may be observed that Vaiśeṣika allows only ‘*vartamānadharmā*’, to be a positive predicate. *Mṛttikā* may be said to be an *ādhāra* of *ghaṭa*, only after its production and before its destruction. This allows the prior and posterior states to be negatively predicated.

Naturally, therefore, the *atīta* and *anāgata-vastu* of Sāṅkhya-Yoga is considered as *asat* in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.

Unlike Sāṅkhya-Yoga, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika does not accept the doctrine of unity of matter, and is in fact an advocate of absolute difference (*atyantabheda*) between any two things, which necessitates an understanding of *Anyonyābhāva*. The same applies to *Atyantābhāva* too.

³⁵ ‘*jātyanucchedena sarvaṃ sarvātmakam*’ - Y.S.3-14 Vyāsaśāstrīyam

³⁶ Refer V.P.Pa.K.Sam.Sa. 64 discussed later in Chapter 4 Footnote 25 (*anāgatāvekṣaṇam*)

It seems to have been the outcome of a reaction against the extreme views of the Sāṅkhya on one hand (where A=B) and of the Bauddha on the other (where A= not A).

2.3. NYĀYA DARŚANAM

In the very first Sūtra³⁷ after enumerating *pramāṇa*, *prameya* etc., whose real knowledge leads to *niḥśreyasa*, Gautama explains in the second³⁸, how this *tattvajñāna* that replaces *mithyājñāna* generates a chain of events: Once false knowledge is erased, it removes defects like desire etc., due to which *pravṛtti* or activity is done away with. Once activity is discarded, the need for a new *janma* ceases to exist. Thus, the cycle of birth and death, which is the chief cause of all pain is extinguished, destroying pain itself. Hence it is said by the later Naiyāyikas: ‘*duḥkhāntyantābhāvaḥ apavargaḥ*’ – *apavarga* is the cessation of all pain. Here, we observe that the very purpose of the śāstra requires an understanding of what Abhāva is.

2.3.1. Discussion on Abhāva as a *Pramāṇa*

The Mīmāṃsaka argument for accepting Abhāva as a *Pramāṇa* is presented: Abhāva of rain gives rise to the cognition of contact between cloud and wind. Vātsyāyana directly refers to the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra (3.1) ‘*virodhyabhūtam bhūtasya*’ to validate this example. Viśwanātha in his *Vṛtti* cleverly implies that Abhāva as a *Pramāṇa*

³⁷ *pramāṇaprameyasamśayaprayojanadr̥ṣṭāntasiddhāntāvayava...*

tattvajñānānniḥśreyasādhigamaḥ /

³⁸ *duḥkhajanmapravṛttidoṣamithyājñānānāmuttarottarāpāye tadanantarāpāyādapavargaḥ /*

is at work even in the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra ‘*kāraṇābhāvātkāryābhāvaḥ*’³⁹. As a reply to the above, Gautama says, that the knowledge of Abhāva is nothing more than inference, which agrees with the Vaiśeṣika Praśastapāda’s words, ‘*abhāvo ’pyanumānameva*’. This declaration implies that *vyāpti* is not only w.r.t positive entities, but also belongs to the negatives⁴⁰.

To the doubt that Abhāva cannot be a *Pramāṇa* because there is no *prameya*, i.e., non-entity is mere emptiness⁴¹, it cannot be treated as an object of cognition, it is answered that although non-existence cannot be marked by a *guṇa* or *kriyā*, still it is marked by the absence of any *lakṣaṇa*, and so Abhāva is not an invalid *Pramāṇa*. Absence of a mark is in itself a mark, because it exists in relation to the presence of the character which is its counter-entity. Abhāva is a real object of cognition, also because it is known before the production of its counterpart viz., a *ghaṭa* in ‘*ghaṭo bhaviṣyati*’⁴².

2.3.1.1. Anupalabdhi

During the course of discussion of the nature of light rays that cause visual perception, the concept of Anupalabdhi is again brought in. Though being endowed with intermediate magnitude, color and touch, the rays emitted from stars are not perceived during daytime, indicating their absence. But mere non-perception cannot establish non-existence just as how non-perception of the moon’s other side and the earth’s lower portion do not negate their existence. They can

³⁹ *athavā kāraṇābhāvādinā kāryābhāvādiññānam abhāvaḥ bhāvanīṣṭavyāptireva anumānāṅgamityāśayaḥ /*

⁴⁰ Viswanatha - *abhāvanīṣṭavyāpteśca anumānāṅgatve na virodhaḥ /*

⁴¹ Gautama Sūtra 2.2.7

⁴² Gautama Sūtra 2.2.12

be proved by inference. This argument leads to the Sāṅkhya idea which was expounded by Patañjali in his Mahābhāṣya⁴³ w.r.t the causes of non-perception like *atidūra*. The reason behind the non-perception of light rays is explained in the subsequent *Sūtra*. The characteristic of the substance and that of quality being different, in a substance mixed with the element of water (like wet mud), water is not perceived as a substance, but at the same time is perceived due to its quality (cold-touch). In the same way, the ray made of the element of fire and characterized by a hidden color, remains unperceived along with its color, but the other quality viz., warm touch, is perceived. Gautama also mentions that the reason for non-perception may be due to the light ray being overpowered by broad daylight. This may be related to *abhibhava*, described by the Sāṅkhyas as a cause of Anupalabdhi. But this argument is untenable, as even at night, the passing of light rays through the eyes, is not perceived.

2.3.1.2. Criticism of Abhāva as a *Pramāṇa*

From *Sūtra* 2.2.7 to 2.2.12, Abhāva as a *Pramāṇa* is criticized.

In the context of speculating the eternality and non-eternality of sound, the Naiyāyika perspective of Anupalabdhi is brought in. For them, Anupalabdhi is not non-perception which is a *Pramāṇa* that gives rise to the cognition of non-existence. Rather, it is non-attainment through any of the *Pramāṇas*⁴⁴. Therefore, Anupalabdhi is not an independent *Pramāṇa* on its own, but is that which is non-perceptible through any of the four *Pramāṇas* accepted by the

⁴³ Bhāṣya of Pāṇini Sūtra ‘*striyām*’

⁴⁴ ‘*pramāṇato yadupalabhyate tasya sattvaṃ yannopalabhyate tasya cāsattvaṃ* /’

Naiyāyikas. The basis for accepting or refuting it as a *Pramāṇa* lies in the difference in interpretation of the word itself. The terms *upalabdhi* and *Anupalabdhi* are found many times in the Nyāya Sūtra and Bhāṣya, but is not used by the later Naiyāyikas. In Navya-Nyāya it is altogether discarded.

2.3.3. Bauddhas' *kṣaṇikavāda* refuted

The Bauddha doctrine of momentariness has been subjected to strong criticism in almost all the *Āstika-darśanas*. All existent things exist only for a moment, and the inherent parts undergo continuous production and destruction. In the same way, the Bauddha claim that all existent objects produce their effects in succession only because they are momentary. In short, nothing is eternal. Gautama refutes their *kṣaṇabhangavāda* with the *Sūtras* from 3.1.12 to 3.1.17.

Naiyāyikas who strongly uphold the cause and effect relation, vehemently oppose the Bauddhas according to whom, the cause for successive production and destruction is not apprehended. Moreover, Gautama says, there is no ground to state that all things are destroyed and created every moment, for, if that be the case, then things that are destroyed at the atomic level cannot support production. The constituent atoms being destroyed, there would be no ultimate basis for the production of an object. In contrast, the Naiyāyikas opine that destruction involves only the disintegration of these atoms and production involves their re-arrangement in a different form of conjunction⁴⁵, which can be known by inference. Some others have postulated that an object is only transformed and

⁴⁵ 'vyūhāntarāt dravyāntarotpattidarśanam pūrvadravyanivṛtter anumānam' - 3.2.16

not destroyed. Transformation means the production of a new essential property in an unchanging substance after the previous essential property disappears⁴⁶.

Upon analyzing the above elucidations, we may conclude that the Bauddhas and the Naiyāyikas based their argument on the paramount importance of Abhāva, but differ on the aspect of impermanence and complete destruction. The last argument, though not specifically described so, can be taken to be suggestive of the Sāṅkhya doctrine, where Abhāva is not given any credence, everything is *satpadārtha*, and change is mere transformation of some essential qualities. But in the following *Sūtra* (3-2-16), Gautama establishes his theory that, by seeing a thing grow after the component parts of another thing have been disjoined, it is inferred that the latter is really destroyed. In short, the formation of curd follows the decay of milk. And the Bauddha opinion that the cause for the process of production and destruction cannot be apprehended, is also inappropriate, because there will be an uncertainty of conclusion on the assumption that the cause of destruction is perceived in some cases and not perceived in others⁴⁷. As a fact, in every case, there is perception of the cause of destruction, since the very existence of an effect is an indicator of a cause being there⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ ‘na payasaḥ pariṇāmaguṇāntaraprādurbhāvāt’ - 3.2.15

⁴⁷ ‘kvacidvināśakāraṇānupalabdheḥ kvaciccopalabdheranekāntaḥ’ - 3.2.17

⁴⁸ *kāryaliṅgaṃ hi kāraṇam* /

It is obvious that Abhāva cannot be a cause for Bhāva, and it was established by Bhartṛhari too. Yet, the Bauddhas, who believe in the momentariness of everything, opine that all entities come into existence from nothingness⁴⁹. The example taken up is that of the seed and sapling. The sprout comes into existence after destroying the seed. Therefore, the destruction (non-existence)⁵⁰ of the seed is the cause of the existence (birth) of the sapling.

The two *nañs* in ‘*na na upamr̥dya*’, emphasize on the conviction of the Bauddhas in this opinion⁵¹. The basis of the *kṣaṇabhangavāda* is, non-acceptance of *jāti*. Otherwise, a person viz., Devadatta will not be recognized, when he is passing through the six-fold *bhāva-vikāras*, since the *jāti* - *devadattatva* itself is not accepted.

If the seed is not accepted to be destroyed, the sapling and the seed should co-exist, which is impossible. But the statement ‘*upamr̥dya prādurbhāvāt*’, is untenable, rather self-contradictory⁵². Something that is on the verge of coming into existence, cannot destroy its own self, nor can it become existent by extinguishing itself.

To this, the Bauddha retorts, that verbal usage is testimony to the fact that the activities in the past (which have already happened) and in the future (which are yet to happen) are spoken of using the words denoting *kāraka* (agent)⁵³. Some instances are – ‘The man is

⁴⁹ ‘*abhāvādbhāvotpattih, nānupamr̥dya prādurbhāvāt*’ - 4.1.14

⁵⁰ It is interesting to note that the word ‘*upamr̥dya*’ means just moulding or change, and not destruction, in the Paspasāhnikam of M.Bh., where the exposition is of *ākṛti* through the example of solid gold being transformed into ornaments of various shapes and sizes.

⁵¹ ‘*dvau nañau prakṛtārtham draḍhayataḥ*’/

⁵² ‘*vyāghātādaprayogaḥ*’ - 4-1-15

⁵³ ‘*na, atītānāgatayoḥ kārakaśabdaprayogāt*’ - 4.1.16

grieving over the broken pot’, ‘the unborn sons are bringing sorrow to the father’ etc. The former refers to a past event, while the latter signifies the birth that will happen in the future⁵⁴. Since things that have perished or are yet to come into being, are used with relation to *kāraka*, it is not contradictory to say ‘*upamṛdya prādurbhāvaḥ*’. All these usages express *ānantarya* or continuity. In the case of the sapling and the seed too, the activity is sequential. Again, the above rationale is dismissed by Gautama as irrelevant to the issue on hand – a new sprout cannot spring out of the destroyed seed, and so existence cannot occur all of a sudden from non-existence.⁵⁵

Rather the sapling grows as a product of *paurvāparya*, which is itself a sequential order, wherein there is a gradual change in the arrangement or structure of the component parts of the seed⁵⁶. At every moment the previous structure is replaced by another structure, and in this manner, destruction of a former arrangement followed by the production of a subsequent arrangement continues until the sapling is apprehended, and even then, this process of change never stops. The sapling grows into a plant, plant into tree, and such a sequence is controlled by the power of time until the death of the entity⁵⁷. Hence, it is established that Abhāva (destruction) cannot be the cause for Bhāva (creation).

2.3.4. Bauddhas’ *śūnyavāda* refuted

⁵⁴ In some ways, this is similar to the context of ‘*bhāvinī samjñā*’ discussed in Mahabhāṣyam by Patañjali.

⁵⁵ ‘*na, vinaṣṭebhyo ’aniṣpatteḥ*’ - 4.1.17

⁵⁶ ‘*kramanirdeśādapraṭiṣedhaḥ*’ - 4.1.18

⁵⁷ ‘*kālaḥ pacati bhūtāni kālaḥ samharati prajāḥ*’ - Mahābhāratam 1/247, 1/251

After discussing and refuting *kṣaṇabhangavāda*, *śūnyavāda* is brought in for elaboration. The entire world of entities is Abhāva or nothingness, since in each and every thing, there can be said to reside, the absence of every other thing⁵⁸. As in, the cow is not a horse, and a horse is not a cow. The cow is non-existent in the form of a horse and vice-versa. It is evident that this argument is baseless even at the first glance. In the above examples, since both Abhāva and Bhāva are found to reside in the same object, they also have *samānādhikaraṇyam*.

Now the loophole in the *Sūtra* is highlighted. The *pratijñā vākyam* (assertion) as well as the *hetu* (rationale) are self-contradictory. The assertion here is, ‘*sarvamabhāvaḥ*’, and rationale, ‘*bhāveṣvitaretarābhāvasiddhiḥ*’. The meaning of *sarva* is totality without remainder, while Abhāva is negation of existence. The former can be affirmed to possess qualifications (*sopākhya*) while the latter is devoid of them (*nirupākhya*). Here, how can one that is *sopākhya* suddenly become *nirupākhya*? Never would it be possible to cognize the existent entirety as nothing. Further, we can never apprehend Abhāva as *aneka* (many in number) and *aśeṣa* (without remainder). As soon as the word ‘*sarvam*’ is uttered, it obviously follows that there is no Abhāva.

Coming to the contradiction in *hetu*, it is reasoned that due to the understanding of mutual non-existence, everything is non-existent. View it from the other side, an understanding of mutual non-

⁵⁸ ‘*sarvamabhāvaḥ, bhāveṣvitaretarābhāvasiddheḥ*’ - 4.1.37

existence depends on an understanding of existence (Bhāva). As in ‘*anaśvo gauḥ*’, first the cow and horse need to be known before explaining the cow as not a horse and vice versa. But if we were to accept the assertion ‘*sarvamabhāvaḥ*’, the question of mutual existence does not arise at all. Therefore, it is shown that the assertion, rationale and combination of the two, all are self-contradictory.

Now, the *Sūtrakāra* proceeds to give an argument against the Bauddha stand that everything is Abhāva⁵⁹, which is supplemented with varied interpretations by the Bhāṣyakāra, Vātsyāyana.

Since existent entities have an independent nature that is their original self, they cannot be called non-existent. And what may be these independent characteristics? Nothing other than those elaborated by the Vaiśeṣikas, that a *Dravya* has *guṇa* and *karma* and *Sattā*, the generic feature, and other peculiar qualities like earth has smell etc. But since Abhāva cannot be described in such terms, those entities are not cognizable as Abhāva.

Here, the *Bhāṣyakāra* gives two more interpretations – *svabhāvasiddhi* refers to *svarūpasiddhi*. And the *svarūpa* is none other than the *Dravya* qualified by *jāti*. Since the word ‘*gauḥ*’ when uttered signifies an individual belonging to the class of cows, to say that it expresses Abhāva is illogical. Or, why say ‘*asan gauraśvātmanā*’? Why not say ‘*asan gaurgavātmanā*’ if everything were Abhāva? *Svabhāvasiddhi* is nothing but the understanding ‘*gavātmanā gaurasti*’. Since ‘*anaśvo*’ *aśvaḥ*’ and ‘*gauragauḥ*’ are

⁵⁹ ‘*na, svabhāvasiddherbhāvanām*’ - 4.1.38

not valid usages, the standpoint ‘*sarvamabhāvaḥ*’ does not stand a chance.

If this is the case, how do we express mutual absence in a phrase like ‘*asan gauraśvātmanā*’? To this, it is replied, ‘*avyatirekapraṭiṣedhe ca bhāvānām asatpratyayasāmānādhikaraṇyam*’. *Vyatireka* means a relation like *saṃyoga*, *samavāya* etc. *Avyatireka* refers to the relation of *abheda*. When an entity (Bhāva) denotes an absence (Abhāva), in order to signify the denial of being the same (*abheda*) as another entity, there occurs a *sāmānādhikaraṇya* of Bhāva and Abhāva. An example is ‘*na santi kuṇḍe badarāṇi*’, where the cognition of absence of *badara* berries in the jar is akin to the cognition of just the jar devoid of any relation. Hence when we say that a cow is not of the form of a horse, there is a denial of oneness between the two. So, in such cases, both Bhāva and Abhāva are observed to have the same locus. But this is valid only when the concept of mutual absence comes in.

The Bauddha further extends the argument – *svabhāva* is not a fixed idea, rather it is relative, i.e., like the concept of long and short⁶⁰. Nothing is long as it is – it is perceived as long in comparison with a shorter one, while being perceived as short in comparison with a longer one. The point is that, a pot expresses Abhāva in relation to a cloth and vice-versa, and it does not give rise to an independent cognition.

⁶⁰‘*na svabhāvasiddhiḥ āpekṣikatvāt*’ - 4.1.39

This argument is again dismissed by Gautama⁶¹. *Anyonyaśraya* (reciprocal dependence) is a common defect dealt with in the *śāstras*. The well-known phrase is ‘*itaretarāśrayāni kāryāṇi na prakalpante*⁶²’. If everything were dependent upon everything else for their existence, then the destruction of one will cause the destruction of the other i.e., Abhāva of one causes Abhāva of all. This is a situation of *avyavasthā* (disorder). Also, with or without *apekṣā*, a substance remains a substance. In the event of a special consideration (*apekṣā*), there is a specific quality that is highlighted in comparison to another substance. Seeing two buildings, and noticing a greater height in one as compared to the other, a person concludes that one is tall and the other short. This is *apekṣāsāmarthyam*.

2.3.4.1. Example from Pūrva Mīmāṃsā

In the light of the previous discussion against Abhāva being a cause for Bhāva, another point is brought forth, by which it is said that performing an *agnihotra* results in the attainment of heaven, although it may not be immediate like in the case of milking or cultivation. In the Nimittaparīṣtyadhikaraṇa of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, a similar issue is discussed - Veda ordains ‘*citrayā yajeta paśukāmaḥ*’ - the one who desires more livestock should perform *Citreṣṭi*⁶³. Here, comes the *Citrākṣepavāda* – After performing *Citreṣṭi*, one did not get any livestock, therefore, following *Pratyakṣa-Pramāṇa*, the above Vedic sentence is not to be taken as an authority – is the

⁶¹ ‘*vyāhataatvādayuktam*’ - 4.1.40

⁶² ‘*vrddhirādaic*’ - M.Bh. 1.1.1

⁶³ Following *Citrākṣepa-Nyāya* in Nimittaparīṣtyadhikaraṇam of Mīmāṃsā Darśana (1.1.3.5)

Pūrvapakṣa. The *Siddhānta* is this – Although one does not find any livestock immediately after performing *Citreṣṭi* as per *Pratyakṣa-Pramāṇa*, the abovesaid Vedic sentence cannot be stamped as unauthoritative. Rather, since *Śabda-pramāṇa* is also accepted as a valid means of knowledge and since the quoted injunction does not expressly say that the result of *Citreṣṭi* would immediately be available. Therefore, all such sentences, such as ‘*svargakāmo yajeta*’ have to be interpreted in this fashion. Here, the *Pūrvapakṣī*, whoever it may be, though not specifically mentioned, is obviously a *Nāstika*, and he argues that the result i.e., attainment of heaven cannot happen at a much later time, as the action i.e., *agnihotra* is completed. The rationale employed is that, an effect cannot arise from a destroyed cause⁶⁴. To counter this, Gautama takes recourse to an analogy⁶⁵. The action of watering a plant does not end with that. The water element absorbed by earth element, together with the chemical reaction caused by the element of fire, transforms into a nutrient substance, that travels up the plant body and in various manifestations creates leaves, fruits etc. In the same way, the act of *agnihotra*, creates a *saṃskāra*, which is of the nature of dharma and adharma, and along with other causal factors, gradually leads to the attainment of result (heaven) at some point of time. Hence it cannot be said that the act ends and the result occurs immediately. It is rather a continuous series of cause-effect-cause-effect progression leading up to the final result. This thought can be correlated to that of a sapling from a seed.

⁶⁴ ‘*kālāntareṇā’niṣpattiḥ hetuvināśāt*’ - 4.1.46

⁶⁵ ‘*prāñniṣpattervrkṣaphalavat tatsyāt*’ - 4.1.47

And the result is neither absent nor present, nor is it in a combined state, as such a combination is impossible due to the absolutely contradictory nature of *sat* and *asat*. The reason behind this statement is explained by Vātsyāyana: That which is said to be in the process of production cannot be non-existent, since a material cause is required for any creation, and such a cause cannot be attributed to nothingness. If it were accepted that this state before production were *asat*, then since this state is common to all the entities before their production, it would mean that a pot can be made from threads or a cloth may be produced from mud. Hence, non-existence cannot be the state previous to existence.

Nor can the prior state be existence, as that which is already present, need not come into existence. And due to the absolute difference between *sat* and *asat*, they do not have *sāmānādhikarṇya*⁶⁶ and so cannot be said to be residing in the same locus. In this state of confusion, the theory set forth by Gautama, is that the antecedent state to an effect coming into existence is indeed *asattva* i.e., non-existence, the reason being the observation that there is creation and destruction to every object, they being transient (impermanent).

The Sūtra 4.1.49 '*utpādayayadarśanāt*' lays the foundation for the establishment of *Asatkāryavāda* in the Nyāya system. And to the previous argument, that an *upādāna* (a material cause) is to be known, the Sūtra 4.1.50 '*buddhisiddham tu tadasat*' gives the solution. The fact that only clay is capable of forming a pot and not thread, is arrived at by the proof of the intellect (*buddhisiddham*).

⁶⁶ '*na'asat na sat na sadasat – sadasatorvaidharmyāt*' - 4.1.48

The non-existence of the effect before its production presupposes the purpose of such a productive activity. Otherwise there is no purpose served in the production of something already existent. That each effect has a peculiar cause is known by the proof of the intellect. The implication is that, though the *upādāna* (existence of material cause) is understood by our intellect, from the external perspective, the previous state to creation is considered as *asat*. This is of the form of *asattva*, of that which has the dharma of *utpatti* (potential to create). Take the example of a seed, which has *utpatti-dharma* to create a plant, but this is known only by our intellect. Outwardly, the non-existence of the tree is evident.

2.3.4.2. Dismissal of *śūnyavāda*:

In this section, the *Sūtras* are presented in the form of a dialogue between the *Pūrvapakṣī* i.e., the Bauddha, and the *Siddhāntī*. The theory that all entities are objects of the intellect is challenged by the Bauddha⁶⁷, for whom the reality is that of absolute nothingness (*śūnya*). Upon intellectual analysis of the Bhāvas (existent entities), there is non-cognition of reality (*yāthātmya* – the state of being as it is), because, upon the removal of threads, it is not possible to cognize a cloth. Hence such a cognition of all entities being the objects of the intellect is nothing but false. The Bauddha tries to strengthen *śūnyavāda* through various illustrations, to project the falseness of entities, which are:

⁶⁷ ‘*buddhyāvivēcanāttu bhāvānām yāthātmyānupalabdhistattvapakarṣaṇe paṭasadbhāvānupalabdhipattadanupalabdhiḥ*’ - 4.2.26

1. Just as how the things seen in a dream are imaginary and not actually existent⁶⁸;
2. Like an illusion created by magicians, stars in the sky giving an impression of a celestial city, or the illusion of water created by a mirage⁶⁹.

But these statements are invalid⁷⁰, on grounds that, intellectual analysis presupposes the existence of an object of the intellect, and it cannot be false because false entities are not objects of the intellect, viz., hare's horn. Thus, the entire step by step progression of reasoning made by the Bauddha is observed to be self-contradictory at each stage.

For the Vaiyākaraṇas, if an object can be cognized, or has sense in the intellect, its existence is accepted at the level of the intellect (*bauddhārtha*), although it may not physically exist in the external world⁷¹. This is also backed by the Yoga Sūtra 1.6: '*śabdajñānānupāti vastuśūnyo vikalpaḥ*'⁷². Though the Nyāya Sūtra '*buddhisiddham tu tadasat*' can be interpreted to convey the same intent, the Naiyāyikas seem to have opted a different course by saying that unreal entities like sky-flower cannot even qualify to be objects of the intellect. Thus, there appears to be a conflict among the various commentators of the Nyāya Sūtra and Bhāṣya.

⁶⁸ '*svapnaviṣayābhimānavadayaṃ pramāṇaprameyābhimānaḥ*' - 4.2.31

⁶⁹ '*māyāgandharvanagaramṛgatṛṣṇikāvadā*' - 4.2.32

⁷⁰ '*vyāhatahvādahetu*' - 4.2.27

⁷¹ '*arthavadadhāturapratyayaḥ prātipadikam*' - M.Bh.

⁷² In the context of Yogadarśana, the intangible and abstract object of experience, which is devoid of a physical reality, is termed as *vikalpa*. A thing that is not physically available, but understood through *śabda* and *jñāna* alone, is called *vikalpa*.

2.4. Abhāva in later Vaiśeṣika texts

2.4.1. SAPTAPADĀRTHĪ

The text Saptapadārthī authored by Śivāditya is usually credited with having brought about the syncretism of the two systems of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. It is here that we first see Abhāva being enumerated as the seventh *padārtha*. The commentator Jinavardhana Sūrī adds some more important observations key to understanding the way in which the Naiyāyika perspective on Abhāva evolved from here.

The argument for considering Abhāva as a separate *padārtha* is that it cannot be included in any of the other 6 categories. *Padārtha* is defined as ‘*pramitiviṣayaḥ*’- that which is the object of knowledge; and Abhāva is defined as ‘*pratiyogijñānādhīnajñāno’bhāvaḥ*’ – that whose knowledge is dependent on the knowledge of the *Pratiyogī*.

Atyantābhāva is that absence that has no beginning or ending, i.e., eternal –

‘*atyantam anādyanantatvena abhāvaḥ atyantābhāvaḥ; yathā ātmani rūpasya, ghaṭādiṣu jñānasyābhāvaḥ*’/

It is to be observed that a part of this definition assumes the later Naiyāyika definition of *Atyantābhāva*. But, Mādhava Sarasvatī, in his *Mitabhāṣiṇī* commentary, brings in the later Naiyāyika understanding stating his definition as – ‘*pratiyogisamavāyī-atiriktasthale iha ghaṭo nāstītyādi niṣedhastraikāliko’atyantābhāvaḥ*’.

To the question that *Anyonyābhāva* need not be considered, as it is expressed by the *guṇa* ‘*pr̥thaktva*’ itself, it is answered, that the quality of difference only gives the idea – ‘this is different from that’, while by mutual absence, the idea – ‘this is not that’ is formed. Balabhadra, in his commentary *Sandarbha*, states that *Anyonyābhāva* is also of four types - *svarūpa*, *bheda*, *pr̥thaktva* and *vaidharmya*.

The absences that can be known through the four kinds of *Abhāva* are endless, due to the infinite number of *Pratiyogis*. Śeṣānanta’s *Padārthacandrikā* incorporates the later broad division into *Samsargābhāva* and *Anyonyābhāva*. Meanwhile, Balabhadra stays sincere to the original Vaiśeṣika division of *padārthas* into *Bhāva* and *Abhāva*. He enunciates the categories of *Abhāva* according to the views of various sections of scholars. Some say that there are two broad divisions: *Samsargābhāva* and *Atyantābhāva*, the former further classified into three types. Some include a category called ‘*sāmayikābhāva*’, while others define *Samsargābhāva* as ‘*utpattivināśaśālī*’⁷³.

D.Gurumurti, who has brought out the 1932 edition of Śivāditya’s *Saptapadārthī*, makes a notable observation – ‘*Abhāva rendered as negation emphasizes the logical concept while as non-existence it refers to the ontological aspect. The doctrine arose as a logical concept and was afterwards adopted as a category in the ontological*

⁷³ This will be elaborated further in Page 32 {just before footnote number 54}.

scheme of later Vaiśeṣika school, though it was not considered one either by Kaṇāda or Praśastapāda’.

2.5. Abhāva in Navya-Nyāya texts

2.5.1. NYĀYAKUSUMĀÑJALI

*‘vyāvartyābhāvavattaiva bhāvikī hi viśeṣyatā/
abhāvavirahātmatvam vastunaḥ pratiyogitā//’*

Udayanācārya ventures on this topic while trying to establish the existence of God. To the atheist’s possible contention that, although God is non-existent, a negative inference denying creatorship to God or affirming God’s non-existence can be had, the above verse is a reply. A definition of what is *viśeṣyatā* and *pratiyogitā* is given, so as to make it amply clear that, if God is an illusive entity, non-creatorship as a *viśeṣaṇa* cannot be talked about, because its *viśeṣyatā* cannot be inferred. The nature of the *viśeṣya* consists in it being the locus of the absence of the exclusion of the *viśeṣaṇa*, i.e., anything other than the *viśeṣaṇa* cannot reside on that *viśeṣya*. And the nature of the counter-positive (*Pratiyogī*) of a negation consists in its being identical with the negation of the negation of its self. Thus, it follows that, no illusory non-existent entity can either be a *viśeṣya* or a *Pratiyogī*. This paves the way for the Naiyāyika answer to the problem of *śaśa-śṛṅga*. If an illusory unreal thing cannot be a *Pratiyogī*, then how can its absence be expressed? To this, Udayana

gives a quizzical answer: ‘It cannot be negated in any possible manner⁷⁴’.

In keeping with the principal Nyāya construct, anything unreal cannot be expressed in terms of a real concept, be it Abhāva or Bhāva. At this juncture, NS Dravid’s thoughts on the problem of absolute negation of unreal entities are worth pondering upon –

“... ‘how is the unreal like the hare’s horn negated if the object negated is non-existent?’ One may say Nyāya’s answer to the question is that the unreal is never the object of negation. In the apparent denial of the hare’s horn, what is actually denied is the inherence of the horn in the hare or the horn being part of the hare’s body. This denial appears to be just like the denial say, of red color in a blue piece of cloth. But are these denials of the same type? The blue piece of cloth could quite well have been of red color but could the hare have been endowed with horns as a cow and buffalo are? Perhaps one may not mind giving an affirmative answer to the question. Let us therefore take the example of the denial of the square–circle. When we say that ‘there cannot be a square-circle’, do we deny the inherence of circularity in the square just as we deny for example the inherence of the property of visibility in a figure? Certainly not. The negation of red color in a blue piece of cloth is not an absolute negation but the negation of circularity in a square is an absolute negation which means that the square can never have circularity. In other words, this negation implies that, squareness is opposed by nature, to circularity. The common negation called

⁷⁴ ‘katham tarhi śaśasṛṅgasya niṣedhaḥ? na kathañcit’ - N.Ku.

‘relational negation’ in Nyāya terminology does not bring out this natural opposition between two things; unless a different type of negation which cancels the very reality of its counter-positive is admitted, a satisfactory account of the denial of the non-existent cannot be given”.

2.5.1.1. Criticism of Anupalabdhi as an independent means of knowledge:

Anupalabdhi does not oppose theism. It is verily perception i.e., it doesn’t differ from perception. The reason behind such a conclusion is given in this Kārikā –

*‘pratipatterapāroksyāt indriyasyānupakṣayāt/
ajñātakaraṇatvācca bhāvāveśācca cetasaḥ//’*

The concept of Anupalabdhi is dealt with at two levels in the Nyāyakusumāñjali. The first stage being simple or perceptual Anupalabdhi (perceptual non-cognition) and the next being the cognition of such an Anupalabdhi which is termed as *jñātānupalabdhi* or cognized non-cognition. Perceptual Anupalabdhi is the cognition of absence, while cognized non-cognition is the cognition of perceptual Anupalabdhi, which by itself is non-perceptual.

The sensory cognition of a color or taste is direct and immediate, and such is the case with a cognition like *‘bhūtale ghaṭo nāsti’*. This is

so because whichever cognition of absence is caused by a cognized non-cognition, is non-perceptual, while the cognition of absence produced by non-cognition itself is a perceptual process. An example of a cognized non-cognition is – ‘*mayā mandire nipuṇataram anusṛtaḥ caitraḥ, na ca upalabdhaḥ*’. From this statement we can inferentially conclude that Caitra was not present in the temple⁷⁵.

If the cognition of non-cognition is a perceptual process, then the sense organ cannot be pre-occupied with perceiving the locus of the absence {according to the Naiyāyikas, the nature of sensory contact with absence (*indriyārthasannikarṣa*) is *viśeṣya-viśeṣaṇabhāva*}. To this objection, Udayana answers, that if this were so, then even a blind person should be able to sense the absence of color on a pot (locus of absence), which is apprehended by him through the sense of touch. Since an absence is apprehended by the sense organ which apprehends the *Pratīyogī* of the absence, color which is the *Pratīyogī* of the absence here, is not sensed by the sense of touch, but has to be sensed by the eye, which the blind man lacks.

Only competent cognition is supposed to produce the cognition of absence according to both Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā. This competence is nothing but the collocation of all the conditions of perception of a thing excluding itself – whose absence is sought to be cognized. One of the contacts is sense-object contact (*indriyārthasannikarṣa*). Eye contact with the locus of absence in addition to the remaining

⁷⁵ This concept of cognized non-cognition (*jñātānupalabdhi*) is akin to the concept of *anuvyavasāya*.

conditions provides this competence to non-cognition, otherwise, the visual function is not required for the perception of absence.

It naturally follows from this example, that Anupalabdhi is the means of valid knowledge, only w.r.t the absence which is located in the locus that is sensed by the sense organ apprehending the *Pratiyogī*. In which case, the cognition of the absence of color and form in air, which is the locus of such an absence, by means of Anupalabdhi, would not be possible, as air is perceived only through the tactual sense. Since the cognition of absence is dependent upon the cognition of the *Pratiyogī*, it needs no explanation to say that the sense organ required for the cognition of a thing is needed for the cognition of its absence too.

Another argument put forward by the Mīmāṃsakas is this – The visual function is exhausted in the perception of some characteristic property residing in the locus of absence. Therefore, the eye cannot be of use in cognizing the absence, and hence Anupalabdhi as a separate means of valid knowledge is necessary. The cognition of the absence of color in air may be understood through inference, that the air is devoid of color, because no color is seen in it.

Both the Naiyāyika as well as the Mīmāṃsaka admit that there occurs sense contact with the absence, and the non-cognition of the object, which is the *Pratiyogī*. They differ on the basis of primary causality, whether it is sense contact leading to a perceptual cognition (for the Naiyāyikas) or it is non-perceptual cognition

through Anupalabdhi or inference, the sense organ being preoccupied with the cognition of the locus of absence (for the Mīmāṃsakas). The common principle here is that the locus of absence has to be perceptible by the very sense by which the *Pratiyogī* is perceived.

As against the Nyāya contention that the cognition of absence does not invariably depend upon the cognition of the locus of absence, the Mīmāṃsaka says that the absence of color is known through inference rather than direct perception. The origin of the above said Nyāya theory is in their need to uphold their metaphysical assumption that the imperceptible *ākāśa* is the locus and the inherent cause of sound. Since sound can be perceived through the ear, its locus the *ākāśa* being invisible, the absence of sound is also perceptible without the *ākāśa* being perceptible. But this reasoning is pointed out to be faulty in many ways.

It cannot be denied that a person notices the absence of a thing at a place only when seeking that thing, which he fails to find at that particular place. Testimony of experience validates the Mīmāṃsā theory that the recollection of an object sought for, coupled with the perception of the expected locus of absence leads by itself to the cognition of absence.

One point raised by Udayana deserves mention: ‘*na hi upalambhābhāvaḥ bhavatām abhāvopalambhaḥ, upalambhasya atīndriya-abhyupagamāt*’. On a lighter note, this may be likened to

a lawyer's common statement – 'absence of evidence is not evidence of absence'. Just because there is an absence of cognition, it cannot be concluded that absence is cognized, since there may be very many reasons why some thing is not perceived. These are enlisted in the Sāṅkhya-Vyākaraṇa Darśanas viz., *atidūra* etc. This contention is raised on behalf of the Naiyāyikas against the arguments of the Bauddhas rejecting the existence of God. The perception of God is *atīndriya*, and one who lacks that capability can by no means establish the non-existence of God. When Udayana says, that *Vāyu* is known by touch only, and its colorlessness is perceived by the eye, but who knows, those with *yogipratyakṣa* can see even air, his idea has its origin in the Vedic *Śānti-mantra*: '*śamno mitraḥ śam varuṇaḥ...tvameva pratyakṣaṃ brahmāsi*'.

2.5.1.2. Abhāva is known through *Pratyakṣa*:

Although the weight of the argument favors the Mīmāṃsā stand, Udayana makes a brave attempt to uphold the theory that Anupalabdhi comes under *Pratyakṣa-Pramāṇa* by stating the following ideas⁷⁶:

1. The cognition of absence is generated as a result of direct sense object contact, because the *Pratīyogī* is apprehended in the same manner.
2. The sensory perception of the locus does not come in the way of producing an absence of cognition by the same sense organ.

⁷⁶ *pratīyogini sāmāthyāt vyāpārāvyavadhānataḥ /
akṣāśrayatvāt doṣāṇām indriyāṇi vikalpanāt //*

Finally, Udayana winds up this discussion by stating that non-cognition, along with sensory perception generates absence cognition, although having begun the discussion stating that perception alone is competent in cognizing an absence.

2.5.2. ABHĀVAVĀDA (TATTVACINTĀMAṆI)

Abhāvavāda is a chapter in the Tattvacintāmaṇi of Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya. The whole chapter revolves around the sentence ‘*bhūtale ghaṭo nāsti*’, and the discussion is regarding the ontological status of negation. The fundamental theory that Abhāva is the seventh *padārtha* being accepted, it necessitates the perceptual process of cognizing absence becoming one of *viśeṣya-viśeṣaṇabhāva*. Gaṅgeśa presents the arguments of the Early Nyāya system against the objections raised by other *śāstrakāras* viz, Mīmāṃsakas.

The two chief concerns here are:

1. Abhāva is not identical or does not coincide with Bhāva.
2. It is perceived through the *ādhāra-ādheyabhāva* i.e., it does not exist independently, rather it always resides on a locus⁷⁷.

2.5.2.1. Point of debate with Mīmāṃsakas:

According to the Prābhākaras, absence of a pot on the ground can be very well stated as the ground itself. In other words, the object of cognition is the mere ground, not the absence of a pot. This property

⁷⁷ This may be connected to the P.S. ‘*virāmo ’avasānam*’, which is going to be discussed in Chapter 5 (T.Y. - *anāgatāvekṣaṇam*)

of mere-ness is severally denoted by the terms ‘*kaivalya*’, ‘*tanmātrabuddhi*’ and ‘*tadekaviśayatābuddhi*’. There is a prolonged argument by them in support of *tanmātrabuddhi*, which is refuted and Abhāva upheld. An interesting elucidation is made by Gaṅgeśa against those who say that the cognition being that of a mere locus, it is dependent upon the speaker’s intent to express an Abhāva of a counter-positive. It is from *anubhava* (experiential perception) that *Vyavahāra* (verbal expression) proceeds, not vice-versa. Thus, if the *Vyavahāra* is ‘*iha ghaṭo na*’, the *anubhava* also should have been of the absence of a pot, and not a mere locus.

In the course of this discussion, two new concepts, viz, *vyadhikaraṇābhāva* and *samānādhikaraṇābhāva* are put forth. An example of the former is ‘*bhūtale ghaṭo nāsti*’, wherein the locative case is used for the locus of absence, whereas an example of the latter would be ‘*ghaṭaḥ paṭo na*’, where both words are in the same case ending. Gaṅgeśa simplifies a complex verbose discussion thus: ‘*etāvānstu viśeṣo yat tava samānādhikaraṇaniṣedhapratītiriyamanyo ’nyābhāvabhedaṁavagā hate, mama tu svarūpaṁ*’. Implying that the Prābhākara insists on *anyonyābhāva* in the notion, ‘this ground is not now a ground with a pot on it’, while for the Naiyāyika it involves the *svārūpa* (essential nature) itself of the two.

2.5.2.2. Is *abhāvatva* a generic property?

A proposition is made, in order to justify the use of the same expression ‘Abhāva’, in different instances, that *abhāvatva* be taken

as a generic property. But such an understanding is possible only if there is ‘*anugama*’, a common consecutive character perceived in each and every instance of Abhāva. Also, there should be a relation of inherence which connects two positive entities, which is not found in absence.

Sattā is the highest *jāti*, and it occurs in the trio – *dravya*, *guṇa* and *kriyā*. The other categories, although giving rise to the notion of existence (*astitva*), as in ‘*sāmānyam asti*, *viśeṣaḥ asti*’ etc., are not said to have *Sattā* as a true qualifier, i.e., such an idea is but erroneous. This observation is justified by Śrīdhara too, in his Nyāyakandalī⁷⁸: ‘*svātmaikasattvaṃ svarūpaṃ yatsāmānyādīnāṃ tadeva teṣāṃ sattvaṃ, na sattāyogaḥ sattvaṃ*’.

The main reason behind *Sattā* not being ascribed to *jāti*, *viśeṣa* and *samavāya*, is to protect the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika doctrine ‘*nissāmānyāni sāmānyāni*’. They are forced to accept such a position in order to avoid *anavasthā* (infinite regress).

Raghunātha feels that *abhāvatva* is as good an *akhaṇḍopadhi* as *bhāvatva*,⁷⁹—

‘*abhāvatvameva* *vā*
anugatapratyayasiddho ‘*akhaṇḍopādhiḥ*’/ *bhāvatvam* *vā*
akhaṇḍopādhiḥ/ *tacca jñeyatvādivat ghaṭābhāvādivacca svavṛtti*
api/’

The Prābhākaras deny *abhāvatva* by saying that we need *jāti* to explain our experience of a difference between pots, cows etc.; But

⁷⁸ N.K. Pg.19.

⁷⁹ Padārthatattvanirūpana (Pg.49-51)

in the case of Abhāva, the loci where the absences occur, are experienced as different, not the absences themselves. This observation in turn, paves the way, for an analysis of what exactly is *Atyantābhāva* according to the Naiyāyikas. Is it absolute absence as in *gaganakusuma*, or does it apply to instances like ‘*bhūtale ghaṭābhāvaḥ*’ too? If it be said that Abhāva is one and unique like *samavāya*, without *anugama*, then it must also be accepted to be *nitya* (eternal) like *samavāya*; but this will contradict temporary absences like *Prāgabhāva* and *Pradhvamsābhāva*.

2.5.2.3. Differences of opinion on *Atyantābhāva*:

There is difference of opinion among the Naiyāyikas themselves as to what constitutes *Atyantābhāva*: Instances like sky-flower, or color in air, or an absence of pot on the ground. Viśvanātha Pañcānana in his *Muktāvalī* (p.63-64) says:

‘*yatra tu bhūtalādaḥ ghaṭādikam apasāritaṃ punarānītaṃ, tatra ghaṭakālasya sambandhāghaṭakatvādbhāvasya nityatve’pi ghaṭakāle na ghaṭātyantābhāvabuddhiḥ/ tatropādavināśasālī caturtho’yamabhāva iti kecit/*’

The author of *Kiraṇāvalī* commentary upon *Muktāvalī* elaborates:

‘*ghaṭa-atyantābhāvasya yaḥ sambandhaḥ – yasmin kāle yatra bhūtalādaḥ ghaṭo nāstīti pramā, tatkālavīṣṭatadbhūtakālātmakaḥ svarūpasambandhaḥ, tatra sambandhe yasminkāle yatra bhūtale ghaṭo vartate tatkālasya apraveśāt/ naiyāyikaikadeśinaḥ*
‘*nityapratyogikābhavo’atyantābhāvah*’,
‘*nitya’anyapratyogikābhāvah* *sāmayikābhāvah*’

utpādavinaśśāśālyabhāvaḥ’, ‘*prāgabhāvadhvaṃsau ceti samsargābhāvasya cāturvidhyam svīkṛtya...*’

Thus, it is clear that majority of the Naiyāyikas include both instances under *Atyantābhāva*, and a minority call the first example *Atyantābhāva*, the second example being one of *sāmayikābhāva* or *utpādavinaśśāśālyabhāva*.

2.5.2.4. *Siddhānta* of Gaṅgeśa on Abhāva:

After presenting before the reader the views of Early Nyāya vs Mīmāṃsā, Gaṅgeśa proceeds to set forth his own theory:

- a.) An absence is always apprehended along with its counter-positive.
- b.) Absence is not equivalent to mere locus, because the cognition of a mere place does not come with the cognition of a counter-positive.
- c.) The cognition of an absence is dependent upon a cognition of the counter-positive, as in the case of *sādrśya* of a *gavaya* to a cow⁸⁰.
- d.) There is *ādhāra-ādheyabhāva sambandha* between Abhāva and its locus, not *svarūpasambandha*.

Dīdhiti (Raghunātha) and Gādādhari (Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa) have a different opinion – ‘*abhāvatvaṃ cedamiha nāsti idam idam bhavatīti* *pratītinīyāmakabhāvābhāvasādhāraṇaḥ svarūpasambandhaviśeṣaḥ*’ (Gd. P.475);

⁸⁰ On Gaṅgeśa’s statement ‘*pratiyogijñānādhīnajñānatvañca abhāvasya anubhavasākṣikam*’, the commentator Jayadeva in *Tattvacintāmaṇi āloka*, gives a contrary explanation, but somehow later reconciles to Gaṅgeśa’s view – ‘*pratiyoginirūpaṇādhīnanirūpaṇatvaṃ sapratyogikatvaṃ*’.

‘*tatpratiyogisvarūpanirūpitānuyogitvanāmā sambandhaviśeṣaḥ*’
(Gd. P.476)

The phrase ‘*bhāvābhāvasādhāraṇaḥ*’ is novel⁸¹. The word Abhāva here is not used in its derivative sense of ‘*na bhāvaḥ abhāvaḥ*’. Rather it is in the technical sense (*rūḍhiḥ*)⁸².

Gaṅgeśa asserts that *abhāvatva* lacks *jāti* or *upādhi*, which contradicts Raghunātha’s claim that *abhāvatva* can be considered as an *akhaṇḍopādhi*. When we say ‘*iha bhūtale ghaṭo nāsti*’, the absence of the pot is as much related to the ground as it is related to that particular time frame. But this does not mean that Abhāva is nothing but the ground’s connection with a particular time segment. Abhāva cannot be equated with a time segment, although both occur in relation with the same ground, because of two more notions that an absence gives rise to:

- a.) It has a counter-positive;
- b.) It occurs in the particular time connection.

Hence an identity between the two is not possible.

According to Gaṅgeśa, an absence is an individual entity that occurs in many different time segments. The theory of the Bauddhas is refuted by him after quoting a verse from Jñānaśrī Mitra’s *Nibandhāvali*⁸³—

⁸¹ Refer the section on Sambandha samuddeśa of Vākyapadīyam

⁸² ‘*bhāvenāpi ghaṭe ghaṭatvābhvo nāsti, ghaṭo na ghaṭabhinnaḥ, iti pratīterjananāt bhāvaḥ/ tadavacchinne ca abhāvapadasya rūḍhishaktiḥ paribhāṣaiva vā, ato na bhāvo ’abhāva iti avayavavyutpattyā taddharmapratyaye ’pi na kṣatiḥ*’ - Gādādhara P.476

⁸³ Pg.167

‘*dṛṣṭastāvadāyam ghaṭo ’atra ca patan dṛṣṭastathā mudgarah
 dṛṣṭā karparasamhatih paramito ’abhāvo na dṛṣṭo ’aparah/
 tenābhāva iti śrutih kva nihitā kiñcātra tatkāraṇam
 svādhīnā kalāśasya kevalamiyam dṛṣṭā kapālāvalī//*

Neither does the Buddhist see prior absence of a pot before the components come together, nor is its posterior absence observed after a pestle struck it, breaking it into shards. All he sees is the arrangement of pot shards, earlier in the form of a pot, and later in disarray. Such an observation is erroneous, because we do have the cognition ‘*vinaṣṭo ghaṭah*’ – the pot is destroyed, leading to the cognition of posterior non-existence.

On a concluding note, Gaṅgeśa reverts to Raghunātha’s opinion that there is a *svarūpa-sambandha* between Abhāva and its locus, as otherwise, ascribing a relation other than *svarūpa* might risk an infinite regress. *Viśeṣanātā*, being a type of *svarūpa-sambandha*, is established as connecting absence with its locus.

2.5.3. NYĀYA MAÑJARĪ

In this text, Jayanta Bhaṭṭa’s primary opponents are the Bauddhas, and he strives to establish Abhāva as an ontological entity. The style of presentation is more like a dialogue. In view of clearly outlining the chief differences in opinion between the Naiyāyika and Bauddha, the content is presented here too, in the form of a conversation.

Naiyāyika: To safeguard distinctness between existent entities, Abhāva is to be accepted.

Bauddha: It will lead to *itaretarāśraya-doṣa*. In actuality, to differentiate between Abhāvas too, the differences between existent entities (Bhāvas) are also to be considered. So, it is proper to say that the distinctness of absences, depends upon the existent, not vice-versa.

Naiyāyika: Then what is the meaning of *nañ*?

Bauddha: It is *vikalpa* (objectless cognition); sometimes *Paryudāsa* or *Pratiṣedha*.

Naiyāyika: Then what about the 11 types of Anupalabdhis that is accepted by the Bauddhas?

Bauddha: Those are to know the causes of the usage of *asat* (included under the *svabhāva-hetus*) and not as *Pramāṇas* for the knowledge of Abhāva. The Bauddha endeavors to differentiate *asat* from Abhāva. For him, *asat* is only a usage having the *yogyatā* to deal with Anupalabdhi. And Anupalabdhi itself is not of the nature of negation of knowledge of an existent entity. Either it is knowledge of *bhūtaḥ* which is qualified by the negation of a pot, or just the knowledge of *bhūtaḥ* alone. The argument given in support of this stand is that, if Anupalabdhi were to be of the nature of negation, it would lead to *anavasthā-doṣa*, where one Anupalabdhi to know each absence would be necessitated.

Now the Naiyāyika steers the discussion towards such absences as that of sky-flower etc.

Naiyāyika: Then, by this Anupalabdhi, anything that cannot be seen, will be fit to be called *asat* (including a ghost/sky-flower etc).

Bauddha: This issue does not arise, because we define *asat*, as the negation of that which can be seen. Since sky-flower is not seen at all, it cannot be called *asat*.

2.5.4. NYĀYASIDDHĀNTAMUKTĀVALĪ

The definition of Abhāva here is given as ‘*abhāvastu nañpadajanyapratītiṣayaḥ*’. The definition given by other Naiyāyikas i.e., ‘*dravyādiṣaṭka-anyonyābhāvavatvam*’ is discarded because it has demerits – it specifies only *Anyonyābhāva*, not the other three, and there is also *anavasthā-doṣa*. So, the definition ‘*nañarthabodhakapadajanyapratītiṣayatvam*’ is more appropriate. In his Kiraṇāvalī commentary, Śrī Kṛṣṇavallabhācārya says, that division of Abhāva into four types arises from the intellect of expectancy⁸⁴. In his opinion, *Atyantābhāva* and *Anyonyābhāva* are *nitya*, while *Prāgabhāva* and *Pradhvamsābhāva* are *anitya*. Unfortunately, since he refrains from citing examples for the four, we do not exactly know whether he accepts the example of ‘*bhūtale na ghaṭaḥ*’ as that of *Atyantābhāva* or that of absence of color in air. He says, that Abhāva is an *akhaṇḍopādhi*, i.e., the concept encompasses the entirety of Abhāva as a whole, not in parts.

⁸⁴ *abhāvacatuṣṭayam apekṣābuddhijanyam* /

It is held that Abhāva is perceived through *Pratyakṣa-Pramāṇa*⁸⁵ as against Praśastapāda who included Abhāva in *Anumāna*. By telling that, in places where the locus is devoid of an object, Abhāva is cognized through direct perception, and placing the word *kaścit* implies that this is not always so, indirectly suggesting that it could also be cognized through *Anumāna*. Further, the *samāsa Samsargābhāva* is split variously as ‘*samsargasya abhāvaḥ*’, ‘*samsargeṇa abhāvaḥ*’, etc. The difference arises because of assigning *tr̥tīyārtha* as ‘*avacchinnaḥ pratyogitākatvam*’, and *ṣaṣṭhyārtha* as ‘*nirūpakatvam*’. *Samsarga* means *sambandha*, other than *tādātmya*. *Anyonya* is *tādātmya* itself.

In the context of exposition on *samavāya*, there is a discussion on the difference between *svarūpasambandha* and *samavāya*. Among the many types of relations, that exist in substances, it may be said that there is a relation called ‘*vaiśiṣṭya*’ (the relation of locus and non-existence of a jar there located, which is differenced from the locus on which a jar stands). This relation is not the same as either *samavāya* or *samyoga*. Now the point of debate is whether this *vaiśiṣṭya* is eternal or non-eternal. If it were eternal, the following problems arise:

- Abhāva of jar would be recognized on the ground even after the jar is placed there.
- The jar must be recognized as both absent and present, which is absurd.

⁸⁵ ‘*pratyogyanadhikaraṇe deśādāvabhāvaḥ kaścit pratyakṣasiddhaḥ*’ - Kiraṇāvalī Pg.59

It is admitted that absolute non-existence of a thing cannot be destroyed, as the relation *vaiśiṣṭya* is eternal. If it is considered to be non-eternal, then we will be constrained to postulate an unending number of transitory *vaiśiṣṭyas* leading to very many non-existences at different points of time. Although there is a demerit called *gaurava*, this stand is taken as the conclusion.

2.5.5. NAÑVĀDA

Raghunātha Śiromaṇi's Nañvāda is one of the three independent essays that he wrote in Navya-Nyāya style, the rest being commentaries. Since Gaṅgeśa seems to have omitted an elaboration of the particle '*nañ*' in his Śabda-khaṇḍa of Tattvacintāmaṇi, it is appropriate on the part of Raghunātha to have written on this topic. In a way, Gaṅgeśa's Abhāvavāda represents the Orthodox school of Nyāya, while Raghunātha's Nañvāda represents the radical notions of the Navya-Nyāya school.

2.5.5.1. Abhāva as *Nañartha*:

In general, *nañ* signifies Abhāva. In the same manner as the earlier Naiyāyikas, Raghunātha classifies it first into two and then four. He defines Abhāva as:

'anvayitāvacchedakāvacchinna-pratīyogitākatvam abhāvatvam'.

For example, 'to a pot that is delimited by potness, *nañartha* i.e., Abhāva gets related with the association of being a *Pratīyogī*'. Here *avacchinna* = *bhedya* = *viśeṣya* = pot, and *avacchedaka* = *bhedaka* = *viśeṣaṇa* = potness.

This definition is claimed to be got through *vyutpatti/pratīti* (ascertainment from an obvious perception). This is in line with the Nyāya doctrine ‘*pratīti-vyavahārābhyām vastusiddhiḥ*’.

Just like a true Navya-Naiyāyika, he proceeds to give examples of the four kinds of Abhāvas with indirect counter-examples, as in: ‘the ground which has a blue pot has no pot’ – for *Atyantābhāva*, and ‘the blue pot is not a pot’ – for *Anyonyābhāva*. Further the relation between the pot and ground is of the nature of ‘*ādhāra-ādheyabhāva*’, in the sentence ‘*bhūtale ghaṭaḥ*’, and in the sentence ‘*bhūtale na ghaṭaḥ*’ too, the relation of the pot’s absence with the ground is of the same nature, the ground being *anuyogī* and the absence being *Pratiyogī*. The same principle is also illustrated using the example of ‘*pacati caitraḥ*’ and ‘*na pacati caitraḥ*’ wherein the ‘*pākānukūlā kṛtiḥ*’ is said to be residing or not residing in Caitra, both *ādhāra-ādheyabhāva sambandha*.

Then the sentences ‘*caitrasya idam dhanam*’ and ‘*na idam caitrasya*’ are examined, where *dhanam* is the *anuyogī*, in which ‘*caitraniṣṭhasvāmitvanirūpakatvam*’ is said to be there or not there. In this context, there begins an elaborate discussion on the nature of understanding the meaning of *ṣaṣṭhī* (*sva-svāmibhāvaḥ*), Caitra being the *svāmī*, and *dhanam* *svam*. The theory of the Vaiyākaraṇas is raised and then dismissed by putting forth the Nyāya method of understanding the same, which strongly fights for and establishes Abhāva as an independent entity. This is followed by a discussion on the *viśeṣya-viśeṣaṇabhāva sambandha* between Abhāva and its

locus, from the standpoint of texts like Vyutpattivāda, and the *śābdabodha* of a sentence having *nañ* is also dealt with at length. Some doctrinal phrases like ‘*jātau na sattā*’ are taken up for analysis of *nañartha* and its *śābdabodha* would be ‘*jātivṛttitvābhāvavati sattā*’.

After Samsargābhāva, *Anyonyābhāva* is taken up for delineation. In the Vyutpattivāda, Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa says, ‘*śābdabodhe ca ekapadārthe aparapadārthasya samsargaḥ samsargamaryādāyā⁸⁶ bhāsate*’. *Samsarga* is a relation like *abheda* etc. Raghunātha says – ‘where there is an *abheda* relation between the *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa*, there *nañ* expresses *Anyonyābhāva*’⁸⁷. And since *abheda* is defined by Gadādhara as that which is known by having same *vibhakti*, number and being immediately successive, without an obstacle in between, in statements like ‘*ayam ghaṭo nīlaḥ*’ and ‘*nāyam ghaṭo nīlaḥ*’, the *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa* being in the same *vibhakti*, there is *Anyonyābhāva*, which is nothing but *bheda*/difference.

Later, the Mīmāṃsaka stand is refuted w.r.t the Vedic injunction ‘*yajatiṣu yeyajāmahaṃ karoti nānuyājeṣu*’⁸⁸ and the Naiyāyika method of *śābdabodha* of *nañartha* in such sentences is established. Only a superficial understanding of the application of *nañartha* w.r.t Nyāya-Mīmāṃsā-Vyākaraṇa Darśanas is intended, as it is beyond the scope of this research work, to delve in detail into the *śābdabodha* of sentences having *nañ*, the focus being solely on

⁸⁶ Samsargamaryādā = ākāṅkṣā

⁸⁷ ‘*yatra ca viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣayayoḥ abhedena anvayaḥ vyutpannaḥ, tatra anyonyābhāvaḥ nañā bodhyate*’.

⁸⁸ This sentence will be explained in detail in the following chapter (T.Y. - *anāgatāvekṣaṇam*)

Abhāva. Hence, the elucidation of Nañvada of Raghunātha is limited to this much.

2.6. Observations by Modern scholars on the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika concept of Abhāva

2.6.1. Kuruganti Sri Rama Sastry:

A few ideas expressed by Sri Kuruganti Sri Rama Sastry in the *Tarkasaṅgraha Sarvasva*, about the four types of Abhāvas deserve special mention. Every scholar has given his own definition in his original work or commentary. The version given by Sastry is novel in that, the definition anticipates Bhāva rather than Abhāva⁸⁹. He also indirectly demonstrates the queer ways adopted by Navya-Naiyāyikas in order to justify their concept. For instance, it is unanimously accepted in Nyāya that uttering the word *nāsti* signifies *Atyantābhāva*. But exceptions are granted just to safeguard the ontological status given to Abhāva by the Naiyāyikas⁹⁰.

2.6.2. Prof RK Tripathi:

The observations of Prof RK Tripathi⁹¹, on the merits and demerits of the Nyāya understanding of Abhāva are as follows:

⁸⁹ 'bhaviṣyatīti pratītiṣayaḥ prāgabhāvaḥ; dhvasto naṣṭa iti pratītiṣayaḥ pradhvamsābhāvaḥ; nāstīti pratītiṣayaḥ atyantābhāvaḥ; na bhavatīti pratītiṣayaḥ anyonyābhāvaḥ'/

⁹⁰ 'nāstipadābhilāpasthale eva atyantābhāvo bodhyate / parantu tādātmyasambandhena nāstītyatra nāstipadaprayogo 'pi anyonyābhāva eva bodhyate'/'

⁹¹ Problems of Philosophy and Religion, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, 1971.

1. There is a distinction between non-existence and negation. In Nyāya, the word Abhāva refers both to the thing that is non-existent and the property of non-existence (negation) itself.
2. The *dalaprayojana* of the four types of Abhāva are –
 - a.) If *Prāgabhāva* is not accepted, there can be no beginning.
 - b.) If *Pradhvamsābhāva* is not accepted, there can be no end.
 - c.) The difference between two things cannot be recognized if there was no *Anyonyābhāva*.
 - d.) If *Atyantābhāva* is not admitted, then everything could exist everywhere. Here, the comment of Prof Tripathi is interesting: ‘We may notice here that non-existence for Nyāya is only relational and not absolute or metaphysical. There is no such thing as utter non-existence’.
3. Difficulties in admitting *viśeṣaṇatā* (locus qualified by absence) –
 - a.) To know the locus as qualified by absence, presupposes a prior knowledge of absence – where does that come from?
 - b.) Memory of a past absence – Is it recalling only the absence of knowledge of a thing or is it recalling a positive knowledge of absence?
4. Nyāya viewpoint on illusion and unreality –

Negation is purely relative, due to which a rope mistaken for a snake, upon realizing that it is not a snake, does not mean that the snake is nowhere. What is meant is that the rope is not a snake, and in some other place and time, a snake does exist.

This is termed as ‘*anyathākhyāti*’, where the components are not unreal, only their relation is unreal. The same logic is applied to sky-flower etc. It is held that the sky and the flower being real, their combination alone is unreal. The Naiyāyikas make a tenacious effort to be consistent with the realist principle that no content of knowledge is false. Hence Nyāya vigorously opposes utter non-existence and universal negation, while their counterparts, the Bauddhas esp. Mādhyamikas uphold universal negation through their *śūnyavāda*. An interesting statement by Prof Tripathi in this connection is: ‘*It appears that while Nyāya emphasizes on the knowledge of absence, the Buddhist relies on the absence of knowledge*’.

Having gone through the development of the idea of Abhāva in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika so far, from the earliest texts up to the contemporary scholars, it is thus clear as to how the concept has been shaped and remodeled from being just a logical idea, to ontological and then metaphysical. It is indeed interesting to note, that all these ideas find their correlates, or application in some or other form, in other *śāstras*, as will be discussed in forthcoming chapters.

Chapter 3: ABHĀVA IN MĪMĀMSĀ AND VEDĀNTA

3.1. A GENERAL SURVEY

The Bhāṭṭa school of Mīmāṃsā point out that, although the non-existence of a pot and the ground seems to be simultaneously cognized by the senses, the former cannot be a sense-object, because, ‘firstly it is devoid of *rūpa* which is a necessary condition of visual perception, and secondly, sense contact is impossible with a non-existent thing’.

The Prābhākaras altogether discard the theory of reality of non-existence. They hold that if non-existence were a reality, then the negation of this non-existence would have to be another reality, which leads to *avyavasthā* or infinite regression. They accept illusion as a case of *akhyāti* (*apratīti*), and not confusion⁹². Prof RK Tripathi says, ‘Truth and falsity therefore refer to two orders of consciousness, and not merely to dialectic or the principle of self-contradictoriness’.

Vedānta stands as a median between the rejection of nothing (Nyāya), where there is Universal Objectivity, and rejection of everything (Bauddha) where there is Universal Subjectivity/*Vijñāna*. Here, negation is the denial of a belief/affirmation/judgement, not of a thing. So, the sky-flower cannot be negated, as it is never affirmed in the first place. According to Mīmāṃsā, although *Vidhi* and

⁹² *ātmakhyātirasatkhyātiḥ akhyātiḥ khyātiranyathā/
tathā 'nirvacanakhyātiḥ ityetaḥkhyātipañcakam//
vijñānaśūnyamīmāṃsātarkādvaitavidām matam/*

Niṣedha are two kinds of sentences, in the greater context, *Niṣedha* also comes under the wing of *Vidhi*⁹³. So, negation itself is a kind of assertion.

To a large extent, Uttara Mīmāṃsā follows the principles laid by Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, and the same is the case with Abhāva too. The process of understanding negation is irreducible i.e., it cannot be simplified into direct perception or inference. It is a more complex process, and requires a higher critical consciousness than affirmation. The subjective element is indispensable in all negations. Though the process is complex, the knowledge of an absence of knowledge has to be direct and independent. Accordingly, negation is ‘absence of possible knowledge’. This is what is meant by the Anupalabdhi of Mīmāṃsā. Hence it follows that knowledge of the absence of knowledge is in its own right, a kind of knowledge.

The negated is something that claims to be real, but is not actually real. In this way, the negated (snake) at once distinguishes itself from the real (rope), which is present and also from *asat* (sky-flower), which cannot be claimed to be real. Abhāva is not a qualifier of the locus as against the Nyaya opinion. Abhāva of Abhāva is *adhikaraṇasvarūpa*, of the nature of the locus itself, and nothing more.

The Vedāntins reject non-existence as a category. They regard it as a simple substratum, and in the oft quoted example – ‘the ground is

⁹³ Elaborating on this, in Mahāvākyavicāraḥ, Pg.10, Prof Korada Subrahmanyam quotes Śabara from Śākhāntarādhikaraṇa (2-4-2-21) – ‘...*tatra na ninditasya pratiṣedho gamyate, kintvitarasya vidhiḥ*’.

qualified by the absence of a pot', negation is identical with its locus. The Vaiśeṣikas contend that if the negation of the pot were identical to the ground, then *ghaṭābhāva* would be perceived even on a ground on which the pot exists. But Vedānta takes a different stand – It says that negation of a pot is identical with the mere ground, which is different from the ground on which something exists. Negation of the pot on the ground refers solely to the mere ground, which is a positive entity. A positive entity is called a negation with relation to another positive entity. So, there is no negation. Following *Vivartavāda* of Vedānta, universal negation is not supported. Being featureless and formless, *Parabrahman* might appear as *śūnya* (pure void), because we are in the unconscious habit of regarding only the determinate as real.

A.) ABHĀVA IN PŪRVA MĪMĀṂSĀ

3.2. MĪMĀṂSĀ DARŚANAM

3.2.1. Establishment of Abhāva as an independent means of cognition:

In the first *pāda* (*Tarkapāda*) of the first *adhyāya*, the *Pramāṇas* are enumerated and defined. After mentioning *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna*, *Śabda*, *Upamāna* and *Arthāpatti*, Abhāva is taken as a *Pramāṇa*, that is defined as the absence of the above five. The object of cognition here is, 'it does not exist', with regard to things not in contact with the sense organs. In other words, the non-operation of five means of cognition, is itself a means of cognition that brings about a cognition that a thing is non-existent.

Non-perception (Anupalabdhi) is utilised by the *nāstikapūrvapakṣī* as a tool to challenge the authority of *Śabda* (Vedic statements). The *Sūtra*⁹⁴ itself is quoted, where the last part ‘*animittam vidyamānopalambhanatvāt*’ alone is taken to suit the opponent’s agenda. Since only what exists is perceived, and a thing not perceived is considered non-existent, like a hare’s horn, the injunction that a *citra-yāga* brings about the acquisition of cattle, is found to be unreliable, because although the cattle is perceptible by our senses, no cattle is found to appear immediately after the performance of the sacrifice. Thus, the Vedic injunction is not a means of right cognition. This is the objection raised by the opponent, to which Śābara replies: The particle ‘*tu*’ in the subsequent *Sūtra*⁹⁵, mitigates this misinterpretation. The meaning of that *Sūtra* is that: ‘The relation between *Śabda* and *artha*, which is *nitya* – eternal, primordial, original and self-sufficient, and not dependent upon any other means of cognition, is the *jñānam*, means of knowledge, ‘*tasya*’ – of such things like *agnihotra* and other sacrifices, which are not cognisable by any other *Pramāṇa*’. Then the notion derived from the Vedic statements must be right, as they are *apauruṣeya*, not man-made.

The answer to the question as to why no cattle is perceived immediately after the *iṣṭi*, is that, an *adrṣṭa* is produced, which fructifies in due course of time, and the performer of the sacrifice acquires cattle. The results such as *svarga*, are not immediately achieved, like the pleasure derived from a massage.

⁹⁴ ‘*satsamprayoge purushasyendriyāṇām buddhijanma tatpratyakṣam animittam vidyamānopalambhanatvāt*’ - 1.1.4 .4.

⁹⁵ ‘*autpattikastu śabdasya ’arthena sambandhaḥ tasya jñānamupadeśaḥ avyatiṛekasā ’arthe ’anupalabdhe tatpramāṇambādarāyaṇasyānapekṣatvāt*’ - 1.1.5.5.

3.2.2. Illustration of the application of Abhāva in Śāstra:

In the second *pāda* of the first *adhyāya*, the *Sūtra* ‘*avidyamānavacanāt*’ is illustrated by the commentator Śabara with an example: The mantra from Ṛk-saṃhitā 4/58/3⁹⁶ states:

‘*catvāri śṛṅgā trayo ’asya pādā dve śīrṣe saptahastāso asya/
tridhā baddho vṛṣabho roravīti mahādevo martyā āviveśa//*’

It is said that what is dictated by the Vedic texts should be helpful towards the performance of sacrifice, but certain mantras such as the above one, have no correlate in the real world that would help in a sacrificial act. There is no bull in reality that has four horns, three feet, two heads or seven limbs (likewise with hare’s horn or sky-flower). Therefore, such mantras, although devoid of an external meaning, are to be used merely for the purpose of *uccāraṇa*, and such reciting would lead to some transcendental end, which is *adrṣṭa*. A similar justification is not acceptable to Patañjali and other commentators for quite a few *Sūtras* of Pāṇini⁹⁷.

Another example is the mantra ‘*mā mā hiṃsīḥ*’, which is addressed to the blade, at the time of *keśavapana* (shaving off hair), in a *cāturmāsya yāga*. Though the blade is used only for shaving, the mantra is recited simply to appeal to the blade not to hurt saying ‘do not hurt’ is redundant, the mantra is used only as an utterance. The *Niṣedha* is not to be understood in its literal sense.

⁹⁶ Also found in Taittirīya Āraṇyaka 10.10.2

⁹⁷ In the Bhāṣya of ‘*vṛddhirādaic*’ (P.S.1-1-1), we find – ‘*tatrāśakyam varṇenāpyanarthakena bhavitum, kimpunariyatā sūtreṇa*’, which Nāgeśa elaborates in Uddyota – ‘*anarthakeneti/ bodhyārtharahitena ityarthah/ tena pārāyaṇe sarveśāmadṛṣṭārthatve ’pi drṣṭaprayojanarāhityarūpamanarthakatvaṃ varṇapadasūtrāṇāmastyeveti na vakṣyamāṇasūtrādipratyākhyānāsaṅgatiḥ*’

In the first *pāda* of the second *adhyāya*, the *Sūtra* – ‘*yeṣāṃ tu utpattāvarthe sve prayogo na vidyate tānyākhyātāni tasmāttebhyaḥ pratiyeta’āśritatvāt prayogasya*’, gives the definition of *ākhyātas* (verbs) as those words on whose utterance, what is denoted by them is not in existence, i.e., what is denoted by them does not exist at the time of their utterance. This correlates to the *kārikā* from *Vākyapadīyam* – ‘*yāvatsiddham asiddham vā sādhyatvenābhidhīyate āśrita...*’. Thus, it conveys an activity that leads to accomplishing something (*sādhyā*). Until the completion of that activity denoted by the *ākhyāta*, there is *Prāgabhāva* of the meaning expressed by the verb.

3.2.3. *Paryudāsa* and *Pratiṣedha*

The *Sūtras* in the beginning of *pāda* 8, *adhyāya* 10, introduce the concepts of *Paryudāsa*, *arthavāda* and *Pratiṣedha*. They are:

1. *pratiṣedhaḥ pradeśe’anārabhyavidhāne ca prāptapraṭiṣiddhatvād vikalpaḥ syāt/*
2. *arthaprāptavaditi cet/*
3. *na, tulyahetutvādubhayam śabdalakṣaṇam/*
4. *api tu vākyaśeṣaḥ syādanyāyyatvādvikalpasya vidhīnām ekadeśaḥ syāt/*
6. *ṣiṣṭvā tu pratiṣedhaḥ syāt/*

When the particles *nañ*, *na* or *mā* are used, how do we understand whether they express a prohibition (*Pratiṣedha*) or an exception (*Paryudāsa*)? The possibilities are discussed in detail.

Two instances are laid down in order to begin the analysis. The first one being, in connection with the *mahāpitṛyajña*, the text that reads,

‘*na hotāram vṛṇāte nārṣeyam*’ – One does not appoint the *hotā* or *ārṣeya*. This is a prohibition of a general law. The second instance is that of an act not to be done – ‘*āśrāvayeti caturakṣaram astu auṣaḍiti caturakṣaram yaja iti dvyakṣaram, yeyajāmahe iti pañcākṣaram dvyakṣaro vaṣaṭkāra eṣa vai prajāpatiḥ saptadaśo yajñeṣu anvāyatte*’ and then ‘*tato nānuyājeṣu yeyajāmahaṃ karoti*’⁹⁸. *Āśrāvaya* consists of four letters, *astu auṣaṭ* four letters, *yaja* two letters, *yeyajāmahe* five letters, and *vaṣaṭ* two letters. These 17 are the *prajāpati* and are fit for sacrifices. The word *yeyajāmahe* is laid down without reference to any particular sacrifice, and the prohibition relating to it is that, ‘one does not utter ‘*yeyajāmahe*’ in an *anuyāja*’.

Now a doubt arises whether the prohibition in both instances leads to optionality (*vikalpa*) or an exclusion. *Vikalpa* could be considered as the general injunction as well as the prohibition is enjoined by an authoritative Vedic text. Even so, mundane phrases like ‘*viṣaṃ mā bhuñjīta*’ are taken to convey an act that is not to be done at all, leaving no option. Analogically, it is concluded that the prohibition comes in only after the injunction, and sets aside the latter. Hence, ‘*yeyajāmahe*’ should never be used in an *anuyāja* and in the *mahāpitṛyajña*, the *hotā* and *ārṣeya* are never to be appointed.

⁹⁸ This is the context of the discussion:

‘*yadā adhvaryuḥ yajaticodanācoditeṣu karmasu devebhyo havirdātum udyunkte, tadā haviḥ pūrṇāṃ juhūm haste grhītvā āgnīdhraṃ prati ‘āśrāvaya’ iti praiṣaṃ dadāti/ he āgnīdhra! yakṣyamāṇadevatāṃ prati tubhyamidam dīyate ityābhimukhyena śrāvaya ityāśrāvayetyasya arthaḥ/ saḥ ‘astu śroṣaṭ’ iti pratibrūyāt/ evam adhvaryuṇokte sa āgnīdhraḥ astu ityaṅgīkṛtya śrauṣaṭ iti śabdena śrāvayet iti sa ‘astu śrauṣaṭ’iti brūyāt ityasyārthaḥ/ śroṣaṭ ityasya ‘he devāḥ! yuṣmadviṣayamidam havirdānam śṛṇuta’ ityārthaḥ/ tato ‘adhvaryuḥ ‘agnim yaja’ ityādīṛitīyā tyājyamānadravyoddeśyabhūta devatāvācīpadaṃ dvitīyāntamuccārya yaja iti vadet/ tacchrutvā ca hotā ye yajāmahe iti padadvayaṃ vadet/ ‘ye vayam hotāraḥ adhvaryuṇā yaja iti preṣitāḥ, te vayam yajāmahe – yājyāṃ paṭhāmāḥ’ iti yeyajāmahe ityasyārthaḥ/*

Although it may be well argued that both the injunctive and prohibitive statements being a part of the Vedic texts, both being sanctioned by Scripture, one cannot set aside the other, and this results in optionality; but in reality, the theory is that a prohibition is to be taken as a supplementary statement, that is very much a part of the injunction.

In fact, the interpretation that ‘*yeyajāmahe*’ is not to be used in the *anuyājas*, is fallacious. In ‘*nānuyājeṣu*’, *nañ* is construed with ‘*anuyāja*’, and not with the verb ‘*karoti*’ in the preceding sentence. This leaves the expression ‘not in the *anuyājas*’ incomplete as a sentence, thus creating an *ākāṅkṣā* (expectancy) to connect with the preceding part of the sentence ‘*yajatiṣu yeyajāmahaṁ karoti + nānuyājeṣu*’, which means, ‘*yeyajāmahe* is to be used at all sacrifices, except in the *anuyājas*’. This shows that the whole text is just an injunction with an exclusion of *anuyājas*, thus giving no room for an option. Likewise, the first example ‘*na hotāraṁ vṛñite nārṣeyam*’ is to be understood as ‘*mahāpitṛyajña* should be performed like the general archetype, except the appointment of the *hotā* and *ārṣeya*’. Here, *nañ* is construed with the *dhātu* ‘*vṛñ*’, again giving rise to a *Paryudāsa*.

Here, the *Purvapakṣī* raises an objection – If the *nañ* joins with *anuyājeṣu* in sense, then it should become a compound according to Kātyāyana’s Vārtika – ‘*vāvacanānarthakyañca svabhāvasiddhatvāt*’. But this is refuted, because, according to

Pāṇini's Sūtra 'vibhāṣā⁹⁹', which is an *adhikāra* that applies up to Sūtra No.2-2-35 (*mahāvibhāṣā*), ordains the *nañ-samāsa* to be optional; and Pāṇini's words are taken to be more authoritative than those of Kātyāyana.

Therefore, it follows from the above discussion that both the instances pertain to exclusion (*Paryudāsa*).

The distinguishing feature of a *Pratiṣedha* as denoted in J.S.10/8/6 is – 'negation following an injunction'. For example, take the sentences '*nātirātre ṣoḍaśinam grhṇāti*', and '*atirātre ṣoḍaśinam grhṇāti*'. This cannot be considered as an exclusion, and the only possible meaning would be, 'one does not take *ṣoḍaśī* at the *atirātra*', which is purely prohibitive. In view of both the injunction and prohibition being mutually incompatible, we must consider only one of the two alternatives at a given time, and such an adoption of either of the alternatives renders this optional.

Paryudāsa and *Pratiṣedha* are unanimously accepted by all *śāstrakaras* as the two modes of operation of the negative particle. Interestingly Jaimini includes *arthavāda* as another point of application through the following *Sūtras* in the same section –

5. *apūrve ca arthavādaḥ syāt/*

7. *na cedanyaṃ prakalpayetpraklṛptāvarthavādaḥ
syādānarthakyāt parasāmarthyācca/*

3.3. MĪMĀṢĀNYĀYA-PRAKĀŚA

⁹⁹ P.S.2-1-11

This text is a *prakaraṇa-grantha* authored by Āpadeva. In the section dealing with *Niṣedha*, we get to understand the Mīmāṃsā approach to the interpretation of a *Niṣedha* and of the particle *nañ*. Vedic statements are mainly of two types – *Vidhi* (injunction) and *Niṣedha* (prohibition). From a broader perspective, *Niṣedha* is also a *Vidhi* – The former enjoins man to do something while the latter enjoins him to not do something, i.e., it motivates him to withdraw from an action, which will not have good consequences. The two possibilities in interpreting the action of *nañ* in a sentence i.e., *Paryudāsa* and *Prasajya-Pratiṣedha* are discussed, and an attempt to obtain the *śābdabodha* is also made.

3.3.1. *Vidhi* and *Niṣedha*

Niṣedha becomes a *Puruṣārthānubandha* (serves the end of man) by motivating men to turn away from an action that would have undesirable consequences. Just as how a *Vidhi* suggests that a sacrifice will bring about the man's ascent to *svarga* ('*svargakāmo yajeta*'), and so instigates him to perform it, similarly, a *Niṣedha* like '*kalañjaṃ na bhakṣitavyam*¹⁰⁰' conveys a deterrent, and suggest that the thing prohibited *kalañja*, will give rise to an undesirable result.

How is it said with conviction, that the prohibition conveyed effects a deterrent, and not that something other than what is prohibited should be done? Because, in the sentences, '*na bhakṣitavyam*', or '*na hantavyaḥ*', due to the unobstructed proximity of *nañ* with the *dhātu*, the *nañ* will be construed with the meaning of the *dhātu*, and

¹⁰⁰ J.S.6/2/19-20 - Bhāṣyam

nañartha being *tadanyatvam*, will signify something excluded by the meaning of the root. And so, a *Niṣedha* will also convey *pravartanā* (instigation to do something other than the meaning expressed by the *dhātu*) and not *nivartanā* (determent).

This reasoning is not correct, because the *dhātvartha* being subordinate (*upasarjana*) to the *pratyayārtha*, cannot be construed with *nañ*, even if *nañ* is unobstructed to the *dhātu*. The meaning of the verb root is dependent on the meaning of the suffix, and a subordinate is not to be construed with another. Otherwise, in ‘*rājapuruṣam ānaya*’, the component ‘*rāja*’ of the *samāsa*, which is subordinate to *puruṣa* will be construed with *ānaya*, and the sentence might mean that the king is to be brought. The author also cites an example from the *aruṇādhikaraṇam* – ‘*aruṇayā piṅgākṣyā ekahāyanyā somaṃ krīṇāti*’. Here, the adjective *āruṇya* (ruddiness) is construed with the cow, and not with another adjective ‘*ekahāyanyā*’ (one year old), although it is closely associated.

Again, this would not mean that *nañ* connects with *kalañja* in ‘*kalañjam na bhakṣayet*’, because the *prātipadika* ‘*kalañja*’ is also considered as subordinate to the *kāraka* suffix (case-ending). Therefore, being incapable of connecting with anything else, the meaning of *nañ* is construed with the *pratyayārtha*, which is the principal element¹⁰¹.

According to Mīmāṃsā, the suffix *kṛt* or *tiṅ* denotes two components – the general *ākhyātārtha* (verbality) i.e., *bhāvanā*, and *liṅartha* (instigation) i.e., *pravartanā* or *iṣṭasādhanaṭvam*. The *nañ*, upon being connected with the suffix, further operates on the *liṅartha*, and

¹⁰¹ *prakṛtipratyayau sahārthaṃ brūtaḥ tatra pratyayārthasya prādhānyaṃ/*

not on *ākhyātārtha*, because *ākhyātārtha* is again subordinate to *linārtha*. Thus, the negation combines with the part which denotes *linārtha*, which is the chief element of all¹⁰². Now, the nature of *nañ* is such that, it operates on the thing with which it combines, to express an opposite connotation. Here the *nañārtha* being considered is *virodha*.

3.3.2. Differences between *Vidhi* and *Niṣedha*

Where the word ‘*asti*’ signifies beingness (*sattva*), ‘*na asti*’ conveys the opposite of it i.e., non-being. Similarly, *linārtha* being *pravartanā*, on being combined with *nañ*, the opposite is conveyed i.e., *nivartanā*. Thus, the previous objection that both *Vidhi* and *Niṣedha* ultimately denote *pravartanā* holds no ground, and the extent of their contradictory nature is illustrated in this verse:

‘*antaram yādrśam loke brahmahatyāśvamedhayoh/*
dṛśyate tādrgevedam vidhānapratiṣedhayoh//’

The two are distinct in five ways: *phalaṃ* (result), *buddhi* (Mental attitude), *prameya* (Object of cognition), *adhikārī* (Qualified person), and *bodhaka* (Indicator).

1. Result: *Vidhi* – Desirable ends such as *svarga*; *Niṣedha* – Avoidance of undesirable results.
2. Mental Attitude: *Vidhi* – The listener realizes that ‘he is instigating me’; *Niṣedha* – The listener realizes that ‘he is deterring me’.

¹⁰² Pg. 264, Śabdaśaktiprakāśikā - ‘*nañārthe tiñarthasya anvayaḥ*’

3. Object of Cognition: *Vidhi* – Instrumentality of Sacrifice etc, for a desirable end; *Niṣedha* – Instrumentality of killing etc, for an undesirable end.
4. Qualified person: *Vidhi* & *Niṣedha* – Whoever is instigated or deterred only by the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions or that of *śiṣṭas*.
5. Indicator: *Vidhi* – The *liṅ* or *kṛt* suffix; *Niṣedha* – *Nañ* connected with such a suffix.

Even for those who hold that the meaning of *liṅ* is *iṣṭasādhanaṭvaṃ*, i.e., instrumentality in gaining a desired end, the *nañ* joins with *liṅ* to denote the opposite of that meaning, i.e., instrumentality in gaining an undesirable end.

3.3.3. Operation of *Paryudāsa* as an exception:

It was established that negation is construed always with the meaning of the suffix. However, when there is some obstacle, then, since there is no way out, it is construed with the *dhātvārtha*. There are two such obstacles:

1. Being introduced by the phrase ‘*tasya vrataṃ*’;
2. The possibility of an option.

In such an event, the *nañ* acts as an exclusion (*Paryudāsa*), as distinct from prohibition in general (*Prasajya-Pratiṣedha*). The author has borrowed the definition given by Bhartṛhari in his *ṭīkā* on Mahābhāṣyaṃ for both *Paryudāsa* and *Pratiṣedha* –

‘*aprādhānyam vidheryatra pratiṣedhe pradhānatā/
prasajyapraṭiṣedho*’ *ayam kriyayā saha yatra nañ* //

pradhānatvaṃ vidheryatra pratiṣedhe 'apradhānatā/

paryudāsaḥ sa vijñeyo yatrottara padena nañ//'

Prohibition: Instigation is unimportant, while prohibition is given importance, and the *nañ* combines with the verbal ending.

Exclusion: Here instigation is important (injunction to do something other than that which is negated) and *nañ* combines with the succeeding word (be it verbal root or a noun).

The first kind of obstacle in the way of *Niṣedha* is taken up for discussion:

In a sentence like '*nekṣeta udyantam ādityam*' that is introduced in the context of '*tasya vratam*', i.e., the vows of a *brahmacārī*, we assume exclusion and not prohibition. A vow or a solemn duty means a thing to be done. And so, the sentences which follow the introduction '*tasya vratam*', can only convey what should be done (not to be avoided), in order to satisfy the expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*) in the introductory statement. Otherwise, if prohibition is accepted here too, the question of 'what is to be done' would be left unanswered, thus making '*tasya vratam*' unauthoritative. Another issue that crops up is that the syntactic unity (*ekavākyatā*) would be lost, because there would not be a sensible connection between 'He shall not look' and 'His vows are...'. Thus, for exclusion to be grasped, *nañ* cannot be construed with the suffix, rather it should be combined with the verbal root. The injunctive force having gone, the negation of the meaning of the *dhātu* '*īkṣa*' conveys an action which is the opposite of looking.

3.3.4. Discussion on *nañārtha*

Now, the focus shifts to the oft-discussed topic of whether *nañārtha* is simply Abhāva or exclusion or contradiction. Although there is a popular saying that presents six meanings of *nañ*, the unanimous vote is for Abhāva as the primary meaning (*śakyārtha*), while the others are understood through *lakṣaṇā*¹⁰³. This is backed even by a *smṛti* sentence – ‘*amānonāḥ pratiṣedhe*’.

In this manner, *nekṣeta* would just mean an absence of looking, and not any other contrary action. The author replies succinctly to this objection: Though it is true that the primary meaning would be absence of an act of looking, we have to extract the inferential meaning like *tadanyatvaṃ* or *virodha*, to suit the context. Since in the sentence ‘*nekṣeta*’, the suffix does not combine with *nañ*, it should enjoin something, as the ending is in *liṅ*. Since the connection ‘*na+īkṣa*’ denotes an absence of the act of looking, and an absence cannot be enjoined, a certain meaning which is capable of being enjoined by ‘*na+īkṣa*’ has to be taken, which is contradiction, and this conclusion is arrived at, taking recourse to *lakṣaṇā* (implication).

To the doubt as to what that contrary meaning could be, it is nothing but *saṅkalpa*, or the resolution to not look at the rising sun. And the sentence is completed by the succeeding statement that conveys the result of such a resolution ‘*etāvatā hainasā viyukto bhavati*’. Thus, the complete sense would be ‘by a resolution of not looking, he shall

¹⁰³ In the Ratnaprabhā commentary on Śābarabhāṣyam, it is stated – ‘*atyantābhāve eva nañāḥ śaktiḥ, bhedātau lakṣaṇā*’. The example given here is ‘*brāhmaṇo na hantavyaḥ*’.

accomplish a desired end i.e., the destruction of evil'. Such is the operation of *Paryudāsa* (exclusion) in the case of '*tasya vratam*'.

The second obstacle in applying prohibition is the possibility of an option. The example cited here is '*nānuyājeṣu yeyajāmahaṃ karoti*', from the Taittirīya Saṃhitā. Before reciting the *yājya*, i.e., before the *adhvaryu* offers *havis* to the deity, the *hotā* exclaims *yajāmahe* on instigation from the *adhvaryu*. The question raised here is whether prohibition can be applied. With this prelude, the mode of operation of *Pratiṣedha* is elaborated and how it is understood as '*Prasajya-Pratiṣedha*' is explained. If the above sentence is understood as '*anuyājeṣu yeyajāmahaṃ na kuryāt*', where the *nañ* construes with the verbal ending, then it would mean that there is a contingency of *yeyajāmahe* being recited in all sacrifices, and then it is prohibited by this rule. But it is not so. Prohibitions operate only after the establishment of those actions.

That is the reason why, in '*nāntarīkṣe na divi agnicayanam kuryāt*', it is not prohibition, because building a sacrificial fire in the sky or atmosphere itself is itself impossible, to be prohibited. This is also the reason why '*brāhmaṇo na hantavyaḥ*' is considered a prohibition or determent, as it deters the person who is inclined to kill due to base intentions, from killing. If prohibitions were dependent on prior possibility of the action being done, then the rule might be effective only for a man, who has no intentions to kill, which would be meaningless, thus rendering the rule redundant. Since this rule is inapplicable to a person who is not impelled to kill, it comes into effect only w.r.t a person who is so impelled, and deters him from the act, by pronouncing the undesirable consequences of such an action.

3.3.5. Condition for the occurrence of a *vikalpa*:

Now that it is obvious that prohibitions are dependent on establishment of the act, to say that *yeyajāmahe* in an *anuyāja* is prohibited, we must accept its prior possibility of being used in an *anuyāja*. Since, there is no precedence of this, we have to take recourse to *Paryudāsa*, as the only option. Further, when an established injunction is prohibited, it is impossible that the prohibition should entirely annul the injunction, and it would just operate as an exception to a general rule. This would result in *vikalpa*, due to which the statement ‘*nānuyājeṣu...*’ would lose its authority. The other mishap that ensues is the assumption of a double unseen result (*dviradrṣṭakalpanā*) – one from the *Vidhi* to recite *yeyajāmahe* in an *anuyāja*, and another from the *Niṣedha*. Therefore, to do away with these complications, we consider *nañ* to be construed with the word ‘*anuyāja*’ to get a *Paryudāsa*. And this is the sense expressed: ‘He says *yeyajāmahe* at those occasions which are excluded by the *anuyājas*’. ‘*yajatiṣu yeyajāmahaṃ karoti*’ – this being the general rule, its limitation to those other than *anuyājas* is established by the exclusion ‘*nānuyājeṣu*’.

3.3.6. Condition for the occurrence of an *upasaṃhāra*:

A classification is necessary to not confuse *Paryudāsa* (exclusion) with *upasaṃhāra* (restriction), because both are understood to be based on limiting an activity. According to some scholars¹⁰⁴, *upasaṃhāra* is that which limits an action to something, while *Paryudāsa* excludes an action from something. For others,

¹⁰⁴ Āpadeva might be referring to the author of *Nyāyasudhā* or to Pārthasārathi Miśra.

restriction lies in particularly limiting a general establishment, while *Paryudāsa* is specifically the bond of the negative particle with a *dhātu* or *nāma*. The difference is essentially in the very nature.

Even then, there is scope for a doubt, that wherever there is an exclusion, there will be restriction. It is clearly not seen in the first example ‘*nekṣeta...*’ because there is no restriction, it is merely a resolution to not look at the rising sun in order to get rid of evil. But in the second instance, ‘*yajatiṣu...*’, there is a chance for confusion. Now, the author makes it clear that a restriction is itself an injunction (*Vidhi*) while an exclusion is a special condition in addition to an injunction. This is the distinction which we need to grasp in order to know in which instance a *Paryudāsa* and *Upasaṃhāra* exist. A well-known example of a restriction would be – ‘*puroḍāśaṃ caturdhā karoti*’, which is a rule limited to Agni, by the *upasaṃhāra* - ‘*āgneyaṃ caturdhā karoti*’.

3.3.7. Points to note:

Having stated that *Paryudāsa* operates in the two cases of ‘*taśya vratam*’ and contingency of an option, there might be instances where, there being an option, still *Pratiśedha* is the only resort. Take the example ‘*nātirātre ṣoḍaśinaṃ grhṇāti*’. It is preceded by the *Vidhi* ‘*atirātre ṣoḍaśinaṃ grhṇāti*’. Thus, the dictum (*niyama*) that was previously quoted, that in the event of non-availability of a prior injunction, a *Paryudāsa* is understood, cannot be applied here, since an injunction is given, and then negated. The same act of taking the *ṣoḍaśī* is both enjoined and prohibited, and so an option ensues. But exclusion is impossible here, forcing us to admit a prohibition which becomes optional. Since both the *Vidhi* and *Niṣedha* are ordained by

the Scripture, the doing or non-doing will not have contrary results. The points to be understood at this juncture are:

1. Where the prohibition produces an option, the thing prohibited does not give an undesirable effect upon man, since both *Vidhi* and *Niṣedha* are *kratvartha* (ritualistic in purpose). E.g. ‘*nātirātre ṣoḍaśinaṃ gṛhṇāti*’.
2. Where there is no option, and the prohibition is for man’s well-being (*puruṣārtha*), and yet the action is performed out of natural motivation like passion, there an undesirable result occurs. E.g. ‘*kalañjaṃ na bhakṣitavyam*’.
3. Where there is a prohibition, but not for man’s welfare per se, but just for the purpose of the ritual, if the prohibited act is performed, no undesirable consequence happens to the man, but it will spoil the *adṛṣṭa* of the ritual. E.g. In the context of *darśapūrṇamāsa* ritual, the *Niṣedha* – ‘*na striyam upeyāt*’.

The author concludes this section stating that *Niṣedhas* serve as *Puruṣārtha* in the same way as *Vidhis* do, and the Vedas are universally conducive to the welfare of man.

3.4. ŚLOKAVĀRTIKAM

3.4.1. Abhāva as an entity –

The very first instance where Kumārila Bhaṭṭa states explicitly that Abhāva is an entity (*vastu*) is in the section ‘Nirālambanavāda’, where the *vijñānavādī* Bauddha’s (*Pūrvapakṣa*)¹⁰⁵ claim that all cognitions are without corresponding objects in the external world

¹⁰⁵ The Pūrvapakṣa as stated in the Bhāṣya – ‘*nanu sarva eva nirālambanaḥ svapnavatpratyayaḥ pratyayasāpi nirālambanatāsvabhāva upalakṣitaḥ svapne; jāgrato’pi stambha iti vā kuḍya iti vā pratyaya eva bhavati; tasmātso’pi nirālambanaḥ*’

is sought to be refuted. Their argument is based on our experience of a dream, where the cognitions are born without the perception of anything external. In the same way, they say, that even in the waking state, the cognitions are *nirālambana* (devoid of an external foundation). The *vārtikakāra* puts in an effort to deny these claims with the *kārikās* in this section and establish the *Siddhānta*¹⁰⁶ of the Mīmāṃsakas as presented by Śabara, according to which both external objects and related cognitions are real.

asataḥ kalpanā kīdrk klṛptau vastu prasajyate /

kathamīṣṭamabhāve ced vastu so 'pīti vakṣyate //40//

How can something that does not exist be assumed by the mind? If it is assumed, (by the mere fact of this assumption) it should be an entity. If it be asked, as to how the Mīmāṃsakas apply cognizability to Abhāva (which is a non-entity), it is replied that Negation is held to be a real entity.

kathamutpādayejjñānaṃ tatrāsaṃścet, kutonviyam//115//

arthasyāvidyamānasya vijñānotpattyaśaktatā/

bāhyāḥ lambanatāyāṃ nau vivādo 'rthasya sannidhiḥ//116//

yadi nāsti kimevaṃ syādasmatpakṣanivartanaṃ/

tasmādyadanyathāśantamanyathā pratipadyate//117//

tannirālambanaṃ jñānaṃ abhāvāḥ lambanaṃ ca tat/

bhāvāntaramabhāvo 'nyo na kaścidanirūpaṇāt//118//

To the question, as to how an object, not existing, can bring about a cognition, it is answered with a counter question – ‘how can

¹⁰⁶ ‘pratyaye jāgrato buddhiḥ supariniścitā katham viparyeṣyati?’

we conclude on the incapacity of non-existing objects to produce cognitions? That which does not exist at the present time cannot perform any action etc. But this does not mean that it cannot bring about cognitions; as we have cognitions of many past and future objects. The absence of proximity does not imply an absence of the external substratum of cognitions. Therefore, it is only that which comprehends an object otherwise than in the form it exists in, that can be said to be devoid of substratum; and that cognition which has Abhāva for its object (*ālambana*) is in fact, one that has a real substratum; because this negation is not an independent entity by itself. By ‘cognition without a substratum’ is meant a wrong cognition or misconception. And the notion ‘this is not a pot’, also has a real substratum, as this negative conception is nothing more than a positive cognition, having for its object, the absence of the properties of the pot. However, for the Bauddha, there can be no cognition devoid of real substratum – because a cognition, according to them, cognises itself.

By the *kārikā* –

pratiṣedhadvayātena vidhireva pradarśitaḥ//125//

na ca śakyo vidhirvaktuṃ vastunyaṣati kenacit/,

the popular dictum ‘*dvau nañau prakṛtārthaṃ draḍhayataḥ*’ is ascertained, and it also justifies that no action can be performed with reference to negation, if it were not an object.

The last *kārikā* justifies *nirālambanavāda* as must have been envisioned by Buddha, but has been unreasonably taken to the utmost extent, by his followers, as the denial of all external substrata of cognitions. The sole intention of Buddha in denying the reality of

external objects was to alienate the attachment of men from worldly objects, much similar to what Vedānta expounds -

yuktyānupetyāmasatīm prakalpya yadvāsanāmarthanirākriyeyaṃ/

āsthānivr̥ttiyarthamavādi bauddhairgrāhaṃ gatāstatra

kathañcidanye//201//

In the subsequent discussion on *śūnyavāda*, proposed by the Mādhyamikas (Bauddhas), we find the reiteration of Abhāva being a *vastu* and not just an idea -

vastvantarasya cābhāvāt tvayā apoho 'pi duṣkaraḥ /

nājñānaṃ nāma kiñcit syādapohyaṃ jñānavādinaḥ //136//

apoho nahyabhāvasya kathañcidupapadyate /

vastvantaram abhāvaḥ syāt apohyatvācca vastutā //137//

In his concluding remarks on *śūnyavāda*, Kumārila interestingly states –

evamādyapramāṇābhyāṃ na tāvadbāhyaśūnyatā//259//

āgamasya tu naiveha vyāpāraḥ, ato 'nyathāpi vā/

nopamā sadṛśābhāvāt, nārthāpattirviparyayāt//260//

tasmādabhāvagamyatvaṃ śūnyatāyāḥ sthitam hi naḥ/

So *śūnyatā* is known only through the means (*Pramāṇa*) of Anupalabdhi, which implies that *śūnyatā* itself is denied existence i.e., it is non-existent.

3.4.2. Reality of Abhāva vis-à-vis Bhāva:

Then in the section where the concept of Abhāva as a *prameya* and *Pramāṇa* is detailed (*Abhāvavāda*), many reasons are provided to justify the reality of Abhāva on a par with Bhāva -

kṣīre dadhi bhavedevaṃ dadhni kṣīraṃ ghaṭe paṭaḥ /
śaśe śṛṅgaṃ pṛthivyādaṃ caitanyaṃ mūrtirātmani //5//
apsu gandho rasaścāgnau vāyau rūpeṇa tau saha /
vyomni saṃsparśitā te ca na cedasya pramāṇatā //6//
na ca syādvavyavahāro 'yaṃ kāraṇādivibhāgataḥ /
prāgabhāvādibhedena nābhāvo bhidyate yadi //7//
na cāvastuna ete syurbhedāstenāsyā vastutā /
kāryādīnāmabhāvaḥ ko yo 'bhāvaḥ kāraṇāditaḥ //8//
yadvā anuvṛttivyāvṛttibuddhigrāhyo yatastvayam /
tasmādgavādivadvastu prameyatvācca gamyate //9//

The reasons as mentioned in the *kārikās* above are:

If negation were not accepted, these would be the fallouts –

1. *Sāṅkhyā* – Existence of curd in milk/milk in curd; pot in cloth/cloth in pot; horns on a hare; and so on.
2. Usage with regard to differentiation of cause and effect cannot be there.
3. Negation has to be accepted, because it is very much an object of cognition like a cow, and is capable of giving us the notion of *anuvṛtti* and *vyāvṛtti* (collectivity and differentiation).

svarūpapararūpābhyāṃ nityaṃ sadasadātmake /

vastuni jñāyate kaiścid rūpaṃ kiñcit kadācana //12//

Every object has a dual character - with regard to its own form, it exists (i.e., as pot, a pot exists); while with regard to the form of another object, it does not exist (the pot does not exist in the form of a cloth). Both forms are entities; sometimes people cognise one and sometimes the other. To the objection offered by the Mādhyamikas and Prābhākaras that, there is no such independent entity as Negation, apart from the bare ground (i.e., as the non-existence of the pot in a particular place is none other than the mere place devoid of the pot), and this latter is amenable to Sense-perception, there is no room left for any other independent means of cognition like Negation, Bhaṭṭa replies, that the fact of the non-existence of the cloth in the pot simply means that the cloth in its non-existent form inheres in another object, the pot, and as such, produces the cognition of its non-existent form in the pot. And certainly, this non-existent form of the cloth could never be cognisable by *Pratyakṣa* or other *Pramāṇas*. Hence, Negation is a distinct and independent object and a distinct means of cognition.

The inter-relation between the positive and negative forms of the entities is explained in the following *kārikās*:

tasyopakāratvena vartate 'ṃśastadetarāḥ /

ubhayorapi samvittāvubhayānugamo 'sti hi //14//

ayameveti yo hyeṣa bhāve bhavati nirṇayaḥ /

naiṣa vastvantarābhāvasamvittyanugamād ṛte //15//

nāstītyapi ca samvittirna vastvanugamād rte /

jñānaṃ na jāyate kiñcidupaśṭambhanavarjitam //16//

All through the course of cognition of negation, the other (existent) form continues latent, helping in the cognition of its counter-entity. Because, in the cognition of each of these, we always have the touch of the other. Neither can we have a definite notion of positive existence as in – ‘this is (a pot) and nothing else’, without a hidden idea of the absence of everything else, nor is the cognition – ‘it (pot) does not exist’ possible, without a notion of the counter-entity itself; for, there can be no cognition without a solid substratum.

rūpāderapi bhedaṃ ca kecid grāhakabhedataḥ /

varṇayanti yathaikasya puṃsaḥ putrādirūpatām //22//

The difference identified between form etc., is explained by some, as the difference in the means of their cognition; just as in the case of one and the same person having the character of son (with regard to his father) and father (with regard to his own son). So is the case with Bhāva and Abhāva.

3.4.3. Abhāva (Anupalabdhi) as a *Pramāṇa* –

Śabara states – ‘*abhāvo’pi pramāṇābhāvo nāstītyasyārthasya asannikṛṣṭasya’*

Negation, being an absence of all other means of cognition, gives rise to the notion - ‘it does not exist’ with regard to an object imperceivable. Kumārila elaborates the term *pramāṇābhāva* as the non-application of the previously discussed five means of cognition viz, *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna*, *Upamāna*, *Śabda* and *Arthāpatti*. This

itself qualifies to be the sixth *Pramāṇa*. It is noteworthy that in the entire section, the word ‘Anupalabdhi’ is not used, instead Abhāva only is used to mean both *prameya* and *Pramāṇa*.

Just as how the knowable entities (*prameyas*) are classified into Bhāva and Abhāva, their means of knowledge (*Pramāṇas*) can also be classified into the previous five for knowing Bhāva and Anupalabdhi for Abhāva. This is explained in the following two *kārikās* –

abhāvaśabdavācya tvāt pratyakṣādeśca bhidyate/

pramāṇānāmbhāvo hi prameyāṇāmbhāvavat//54//

abhāvo vā pramāṇena svānurūpeṇa mīyate/

prameyatvādyathā bhāvastasmādbhāvāt makātpṛthak//55//

The nature of how negation is understood through *pramāṇābhāva* could be through two ways –

pratyakṣāderanutpattiḥ pramāṇābhāva ucyate/

sātmanah pariṇāmo vā vijñānaṃ vānyavastuni//11//

The non-appearance of *Pratyakṣa* and the rest, implies that the occurrence is either a particular modification of the *ātman* - *manas*, or the cognition of another object. If the negation of the particular modification of the *manas* is in the shape of the sensory perception of the pot, then, such a negation should be accepted as a means of right notion, as it brings about the cognition of the non-existence of the pot; and the effect of this means is the knowledge that ‘the pot does not exist’. If, however, this cognition of non-existence, arising

with regard to a distinct object in the form of the absence of the pot, be called negation, then the effect thereof would be the abandoning or some other action of the object¹⁰⁷.

The process of how an absence is cognised: firstly, the mere location is perceived, then the counter-entity is remembered. That this is a purely mental notion (*mānasam nāstitā jñānam*), independent of the sense organs, is explained in these kārīkās –

*grhītva vastusadbhāvaṃ smṛtvā ca pratiyoginam/
mānasam nāstitā jñānam jāyate 'kṣānapekṣaṇāt//27//
svarūpamātram dṛṣṭvāpi paścāt kiñcit smarannapi/
tatrānyanāstitām prṣṭastadaiva pratipadyate//28//*

Having at first seen a bare place, and later happening to remember a little of it, if one is asked as to the non-presence of an object in that place, he at once becomes cognisant of such an absence. This is a very commonplace experience that everyone would have come across.

3.4.4. Unreal entities –

The debate on what constitutes Reality and what constitutes Unreality, continues throughout the Śloka-vārtikam in various contexts. In *nirālambanavāda*, we find this being discussed at length. For the Mīmāṃsakas, the reality or unreality of a cognition is based upon sense contact with the object –

sarvatrārthendriyāṇām naḥ samyogasadasattatayā/

¹⁰⁷ Pg.337, N.R. - 'saiva yā buddhirghaṭādyabhāvarūpe vastuni jāyamānā lakṣaṇayā anutpattiyabhāvaśabdābhyāmucyate, tatprāmāṇye hānādidhīḥ phalam'/

samvittau vidyamānāyām sadasadgrāhikā sthitiḥ//55//

No such entity can be admitted that has the feature of having no real correlate in the external world. Therefore, it is not right to question its absence or presence –

nirāmbanatā nāma na kiñcidvastu gamyate/

tena yadvyatirekādaḥ praśno naivopapadyate//38//

From the *kārikās* 109-113, the external causes of the ordinary misconceptions of the senses are explained with respect to the circle of light observed by twirling the fire-brand, a celestial city, mirage, hare's horn, etc. It is shown that misconceptions (illusions) are not totally devoid of some external reality. To cite one example, the peculiar shape of clouds and their likeness to some buildings seen earlier, could be the cause of misconceiving the *gandharvanagaram* (a city in the sky).

alātacakre 'lātam syācchīghrabhramaṇasamskṛtam¹⁰⁸/109//

gandharvanagare 'bhrāṇi pūrvadr̥ṣṭam gr̥hāṇi ca/

pūrvānubhūtatoyam ca raśmitaptoṣaram tathā//110//

mṛgatoyasya vijñāne kāraṇatvena kalpyate/

dravyāntare viśāṇam ca śaśasyātmā ca kāraṇam//111//

śaśaśṛṅgadhiyaḥ maunḍyam niṣedhe śiraso'sya ca/

vastvantarairasamśṛṣṭaḥ padārthaḥ śūnyatādhiyaḥ//112//

kāraṇatvam padārthānāmasadvākyaṛthakalpane/

¹⁰⁸ In Vākyapadīyam (1-130), Bhartṛhari discusses *bauddhārtha* -
atyantamatathābhūte nimitte śrutyupāśrayāt /
dr̥śyate 'lātacakrādaḥ vastvākāranirūpaṇā //

atyantānanubhūto 'pi buddhyā yo 'rthaḥ prakalpyate//113//

In *śūnyavāda*, in the context of the discussion on the Bauddha theory of *apohā*, Bhaṭṭa says, 'kalpitaṃ syādapohyaṃ cet, nātyantāsatyakalpanā', which Pārthasārathi Miśra seeks to explain further¹⁰⁹ – 'kalpanā hi buddhiviśeṣaḥ, na cātyantāsatyasya buddhiviśayatā sambhavati'/ That is, there can be no assumption of that which can never exist¹¹⁰. However, elsewhere, under the *codanā-sūtra*, Bhaṭṭa says with regard to objects that never exist in external reality, *Śabda* can still bring about some cognition, as in the case of *śaśaśṛṅga* –

atyantāsatyapi jñānam arthe śabdaḥ karoti hi /

tenotsarge sthite tasya doṣābhāvātpramāṇatā//6//

Earlier to Kumārila, Bhartṛhari in *Brahmakāṇḍa* of *Vākyapadīyaṃ* discusses this aspect –

atyantamatathābhūte nimitte śrutyupāśrayāt /

dṛśyat'lātacakrādaḥ vastvākāranirūpaṇā //130//

It is interesting to note that a similar *kārikā* with only the second *pāda* different, but discussing a different point, that is to prove *svataḥ-prāmāṇya*, and refute *parataḥ-prāmāṇya* of Naiyāyikas, is found in the *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā* of Śrīharṣa –

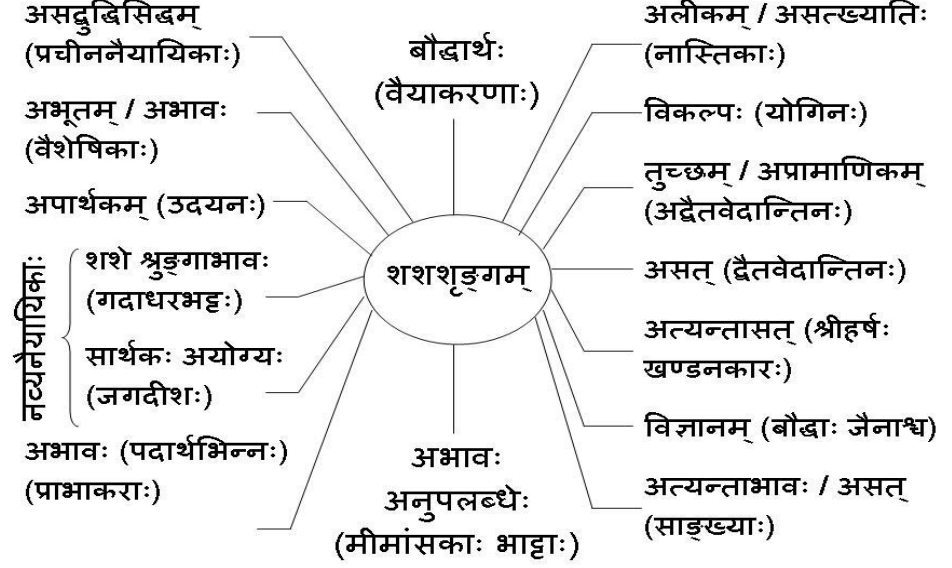
atyantāsatyapi jñānam arthe śabdaḥ karoti hi /

abādhāttu pramāmatra svataḥ prāmāṇyaṇiścalāṃ //

¹⁰⁹ Śūnyavāda 138, S.V., Pg.218.

¹¹⁰ This is in contradiction to the Vaiyākaraṇa's stand that unreal things like the sky-flower can still be objects of the intellect (*buddhisattā*).

An interesting diagram on *śaśaśṛṅga* has been conceptualized by Prof Korada Subrahmanyam¹¹¹ – Fig.2.



3.4.5. Application of Abhāva in Śāstra:

At last, the application of Abhāva in accordance with the purpose of Mīmāṃsā, is explained –

*karmāṇi sarvāṇi phalaiḥ samastaiḥ sarvairiyathā vacca
yadaṅgakāṇḍaiḥ/*

*na saṅgatānīha parasparam ca nāṅgaṃ tadetat prabhavaṃ
kratūnām//56//*

So that all actions do not become related to all results, all sacrifices do not become related to all subsidiaries (*aṅgas*), and so that all these subsidiaries do not become related to one another, all this is possible by means of Abhāva.

¹¹¹ Pg.18, *Pramanas in Indian Philosophy* (to be published).

B.) ABHĀVA IN UTTARAMĪMĀMSĀ/VEDĀNTA

In Vedānta, negation is generally addressed by the words *asat*, *tuccha*, *nirupākhya*, *alīka*, etc. Although as a *Pramāṇa*, Anupalabdhi is accepted following Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā¹¹² (‘*vyavahāre bhāṭṭanayaḥ*’ - Citsukhī), Abhāva as a *Prameya* is not given credence in Advaita Vedānta, while Dvaita accepts it following the Naiyāyikas. In this section, the *Prasthāna-traya*, viz. Upaniṣads, Brahma Sūtra, and Bhagavadgītā are taken for study to understand how Abhāva is viewed in this *Darśana*. A different order of presentation is followed, first, the Bhagavadgītā, then the Upaniṣads and lastly, the Brahma Sūtra, in order to simplify the terse subject on hand and for an easier understanding of the concept.

3.5. BHAGAVADGĪTĀ

That the unreal never has an existence and the real never becomes non-existent, is understood from *śloka* 16 of the second chapter, Sāṅkhya-yoga, of the Bhagavadgītā –

nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ/

ubhayorapi dr̥ṣṭo ’ntastvanayostattvadarsibhiḥ//

The truth as seen by the *tattva-darśin* is that the real is ever existent and the unreal is never existent. Śaṅkarācārya in his Bhāṣya says, that heat, cold, etc., and their causes are only *vikāras* (transient) and

¹¹² In fact, the author of Vedānta Paribhāṣā, Dharmarājādharīndra, attempts to establish Anupalabdhi as a distinct sixth *Pramāṇa*.

so their existence is unreal. A similar explanation is given by Gauḍapāda in his Māṇḍūkya-Kārikā –

ādāvante ca yannāsti vartamāne 'pi tattathā/

vitathaiḥ sadṛśāḥ santo 'vitathā iva lakṣitāḥ//4-31//

Whatever does not exist prior or later, only being in the present, is unreal. They are actually illusions, appearing as if real.

Every effect is unreal because it is not found to be different from its cause, just like the pot cannot be seen as distinct from its cause, the clay. In turn, clay, as an effect, is not to be found separately from its cause, the constituent atoms. Only the absolute reality is not conditioned by causality and so it is the only existent truth.

Every experience has two aspects of cognition – *sad-buddhi* and *asad-buddhi* (roughly translates to ‘awareness of real and awareness of unreal’). For instance, in ‘*san ghaṭaḥ*’ or ‘*san hastī*’, the pot and elephant are unreal, while the aspect of their existence is real. This is because *sattā* is always existent, while the pot etc., is not found across time and space constantly¹¹³.

Thus, the distinction between *ātman* which is *sat* and *anātman* which is *asat*, as the real and unreal, is the essence that is grasped by the seers of the ultimate truth. Lord Kṛṣṇa counsels Arjuna to follow the same principle, and endure unreal pairs like heat/cold, joy/sorrow etc., which are as much illusory as a mirage.

Sat and *asat* are also used in the sense of existent and non-existent (Bhāva and Abhāva) in the 13th verse of Chapter 13 (*kṣetrakṣetrajñavibhāga-yoga*), where the Supreme Brahman, that is

¹¹³ Refer Mahābhāṣyam - ‘*nahi padārthaḥ sattām vyabhicarati*’, of P.S. 5-2-94

to be known (*jñeyam*), is defined as ‘*na sat, na asat*’, i.e., neither being nor non-being.

*‘jñeyam yattatpravakṣyāmi yajjñātvāmṛtamaśnute/
anādimatparam brahma na sattannāsaducyate’*

3.6. CHĀNDOGYA UPANIṢAD

In the second section of the sixth chapter of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, there is an inquiry into what was there before the Universe emerged. Was it *sat* (being) or *asat* (non-being)? Taking on the *Pūrvapakṣa* that there was non-existence before the world came into existence, the *Siddhānta* that it was only *sat* (pure and unmanifest) that existed before the manifest world came into being, is established by Śaṅkarācārya in the Bhāṣya.

sadeva somya idamagra āsīdekamevādvitīyam/

Pūrvapakṣa –

*taddhaika āhurasadevedamagra āsīdekamevādvitīyaṃ
tasmādasataḥ sajjāyata//1//*

In the beginning, this was existence only, singular, without a second. According to some, in the beginning, this was non-existence alone, without a second. From that non-existence, existence was born.

kutastu khalu somyaivaṃ syāditi hovāca kathamasataḥ sajjāyeteti/

sattveva somyedamagra āsīdekamevādvitīyam//2//

But how can this be so? How can *sat* be born out of *asat*¹¹⁴? It was indeed *sat* only, in the beginning, singular and without a second.

The term ‘*sat*’ stands for that which is purely being, subtle, unqualified, all pervading, singular, taintless, a whole devoid of parts, and of the nature of knowledge. This *sat*, although present now in the manifest world, was different before the creation of the world, as an unmanifest, devoid of the differentiation into name, form or action¹¹⁵. The example given to substantiate this is – ‘Just as one sees clay being spread out by the potter in the morning, and later in the afternoon, upon returning from another place, observes the same clay in various shapes and sizes, in the form of pots, saucers etc’, in the same manner, the very same unmanifest being has undergone multiple modifications to become the manifest world’. The only difference between the two situations is that, in the creation of pot etc, there is the potter, wheel and so on, which are also instrumental (*nimitta-kāraṇa*) in its creation other than the clay (*upādāna-kāraṇa*) itself ; whereas, in the creation of the world, ‘*sat*’ – the unmanifest being is ‘*abhinna-nimittopādāna-kāraṇa*’ i.e., it itself is instrumental in the creation and the same is material cause as well, without a second agent – this is what is meant by the term ‘*advitīyaṃ*’ in the sentence. In the Aitareya Upaniṣad too, it is said - ‘*ātmā vā idameka evāgra āsīt/ nānyatkiñcana miṣat/ sa īkṣata lokānnu sṛjā iti//*’

In the beginning there was the one *ātman* alone. Nothing else, which was active. He envisioned – that the worlds must be created.

¹¹⁴ Refer N.S. ‘*buddhisiddham tu tadasat*’.

¹¹⁵ ‘*idam jagat, nāmarūpakriyāvadvikṛtamupalabhyate yat, tat sadeva āsīt ...prāgutpattestu agre kevalasacchadbuddhimātragamyameveti /*’ – Pg.341, Chāndogya Upaniṣad Śāṅkarabhāṣyam

Thence, Śaṅkarācārya brings in for discussion the hypotheses of the Vaiśeṣikas who are called ‘*ardha-vaināśikas*’ as also that of the Bauddhas who are called ‘*Vaināśikas*’. The ‘*sat*’ mentioned in the above Upaniṣad statement is to be understood as different from the term ‘*sat*’ used in Vaiśeṣika, which is common to *dravya*, *guṇa* and *karma*. They posit the coming into existence of an object from absolute nothingness (*asatkāryavāda*) – a sapling (*sat-dravya*) is born as a result of the destruction (*asat-dravya*) of the seed, is how they analyse the process of creation. But in Vedāntic thought process, *sat* can never come from *asat* nor can it become *asat*, as it is an eternal being, the ultimate essential cause of the universe.

The Naiyāyikas hold negation as an entity contrary to existence, but for the Bauddhas it is not so. They do not give it the status of an entity. For them, the condition of non-being before the world’s creation is the ultimate reality¹¹⁶. This is what is mentioned in the second sentence of the Upaniṣad statement – ‘*tat ha eke (vaināśika) āhur asadevedamagra āsīd...*’. In fact, this concept of mere nothingness without accepting any positive entity, is itself quite faulty, because, if that were the case, then the person holding this opinion would himself have to be denied. Although it may be argued that the holder of the opinion is considered an entity at the present, not before his birth, that cannot be admitted, as there is no evidence to show that prior to birth there was nothingness.

Though the sprout seems to appear only after the seed is destroyed, even so, this instance would not be compatible with the opinion that

¹¹⁶ Pg.343, Chāndogya Upaniṣad Śaṅkarabhāṣyam - ‘*sadabhāvamātram hi prāgutpatteḥ tattvaṃ kalpayanti bauddhāḥ / na tu satpratidvandvi vastvantaramicchanti / yathā saccāsaditi grhyamāṇaṃ yathābhūtaṃ tadviparītaṃ tattvaṃ bhavātīti naiyāyikāḥ*’

it is from Negation alone that things are produced. In fact, the constituents of the seed, continue to subsist in the sprout in a different arrangement¹¹⁷, and there is no total destruction of those constituents on the birth of the sprout, which otherwise would have arrested the growth of the plant which exhibits a totally related material from the seed to sprout. Thus, as the constituents of the seed also have their own constituents, and these are further made up of still subtler constituents, and so an infinite series of constituent elements, there is no possibility of total annihilation in any case. The common notion of ‘sat’ runs through all this and there is no sudden disappearance of this character of existence at any point. With this, the theory that a positive entity is produced from another positive being, is established. As for the upholders of *Asatkāryavāda*, there is no instance to show that a positive entity is born from nothingness¹¹⁸. And thence, this ‘sat’ wished to diversify and gradually the various elements and then the world emerged – ‘*tadaikṣata bahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti...*’.

3.7. TAITTIRĪYA UPANIṢAD

3.7.1. Seeing the three karmas from the perspective of Abhāva:

In the introduction to the Śīkṣāvallī, Śaṅkarācārya explains the purpose of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad to be *Brahmavidyā*, that would dissolve all the causes that lead to the performance of various karmas. Two possible ways in which *Mokṣa* might be attained due

¹¹⁷ The same idea is expressed in the Vākyapadīyam (V.P., Pa.K.Sam.Sa.70) –
āmatattvaparityāgaḥ parato nopapadyate/
āmatattvam tu parataḥ svato vā nopakalpate//

¹¹⁸ ‘*sadbuddhyanuvṛtteḥ sattvānivr̥ttiśceti sadvādinām sata eva sadutpattiḥ setsyati / na tu asadvādinām dṛṣṭānto ’sti asataḥ sadutpatteḥ /*’ - Śaṅkarabhāṣyam

to the giving up *kāmya* and *pratiṣiddha-karma*, and performance of *nitya-karma*, are opened for discussion.

In this context, it is said (by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa) that non-performance of *nitya-karma* will lead to *pratyavāya* (undesirable consequences); performing them results in gradual nullification of the *pāpa* acquired by previously committed *pratiṣiddha-karma*. Then arises the question that such a reasoning is beyond all accepted *Pramāṇas*, because if non-observance of a *karma* will produce some result, then it would mean Bhāva springing out of Abhāva. Therefore, it is justified, that the non-performance of *nitya-karma* is only an indication of the misery in store on account of the *pāpas* previously incurred. Also, when it is established that *Mokṣa* is *nitya* (eternal), to say that it is produced by observance of certain *karmas*, is contradictory. Anything produced is found to be non-permanent (*anitya*) in the world, and anything permanent has no beginning or end. Since *Mokṣa* is of the nature of existence, it cannot be explained with such terms as *Pradhvamsābhāva* too; it deserves mention that, *Pradhvamsābhāva* cannot be said to be produced, as it is obvious that Abhāva cannot be defined, and only Bhāva (positive entity) can be variously known in the form of a pot, cloth etc., not Abhāva, as it is opposed to existence. This is further elaborated thus –

‘bhāvapratiyogī hyabhāvaḥ’/ yathā hyabhinno’pi bhāvo
ghaṭapaṭādibhirviśeṣyate bhinna iva ghaṭabhāvaḥ paṭabhāva iti,
evam nirviśeṣo’pyabhāvaḥ kriyāguṇayogāddravyādivadvikalpate/
na hyabhāva utpalādivadviśeṣaṇasahabhāvī’¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Pg. 614, Śīkṣāvallī, Taittirīya Upaniṣad, Śāṅkarabhāṣyam

With this exposition, we come to understand that although Abhāva and Bhāva are alike in certain characteristics, yet the main disparity is that there can be no adjuncts of *kriya/guṇa* for negation, as there is in an instance such as ‘*nīlotpala*’ (dark-lily/blue lotus).

3.7.2. Is Brahman existent or non-existent?

In the sixth *anuvāka* of the *Brahmānandavallī*, the question of whether Brahman is existent or non-existent, and the process of creation of the manifest world from the unmanifest, is discussed –

‘*asanneva sa bhavati / asadbrahmeti veda cet / asti brahmeti cedveda / santamenam tato viduriti /*’

It is being established here with conviction, that Brahman is very much existent, and not non-existent just because it is not perceivable by the senses. One who argues that the Brahman is non-existent is himself as good as non-existent, as it is evident that he is unconnected with the objects of human existence. Due to this he considers all right conduct (as in *varṇāśrama-vyavasthā*), to be meaningless/non-existent. Such a *nāstika* is considered *asādhū* (ignoble) in the world. As for the one who believes in the existence of Brahman, there is no inkling of doubt in his mind with regard to the baselessness of considering Brahman non-existent. He is one with the real, himself taking the form of Brahman, following and propagating *dhārmikapravṛtti*; such a person is considered noble and virtuous (*sādhū*).

But due to plain reasoning, it may be argued that, something that is not the subject of speech, is non-existent, and since Brahman is beyond the power of speech, it is also non-existent. That which is apprehended by its particular attribute through the senses, like a pot

etc, is known as existent, and that which is not so apprehended, is non-existent, like a hare's horn. As Brahman is beyond sensory perception and devoid of attributes, it does seem reasonable to argue that it does not exist.

Yet, it cannot be said so, because Brahman is the cause of *ākāśa*, and the rest which are perceived by the senses. It is observed in the world that, that from which anything is produced, exists, like clay, seed etc, from which a pot or sapling arise. Therefore, it follows that, being the cause of *ākāśa* etc, Brahman also exists. We also have *śruti-pramāṇa*, that validates that a positive entity cannot come out of nothingness¹²⁰. Therefore, it is but proper to say that Brahman exists, as a cause to the entire world, having consciousness.

3.8. BRAHMA SŪTRA - ŚAṆKARABHĀṢYA

3.8.1. Refutation of the three eternal non-entities:

In the Samudāyādhikaraṇam, from the *Sūtra* 2.2.18 – ‘*samudāya ubhayahetuke’pi tadaprāptiḥ*’, the theories of the semi-nihilists (Vaiśeṣikas) and nihilists (Bauddhas – Yogācāras and Mādhyamikas) are sought to be refuted. The doctrine of permanence of the Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas, as well as the doctrine of momentariness of the other Bauddhas, is vehemently refuted by Śaṅkarācārya. There are three non-entities that are said to be eternal, and whatever is an object of knowledge other than these three, is said to be momentary in nature¹²¹. The three are – 1. *pratisaṅkhyā-nirodha*, 2. *apratisaṅkhyā-nirodha*, and 3. *ākāśa*; and they are considered as *avastu* (non-entity), *abhāvamātram* (absolutely non-

¹²⁰ ‘*kathamāsataḥ sajjāyeta*’ - Chapter 6, Chāndogya Upaniṣad

¹²¹ Br.S. 2-2-22 - ‘*pratisaṅkhyāpratisaṅkhyānirodhāprāptiravicchedāt*’

existent) and *nirupākhya* (undefinable). The artificial or deliberate destruction of things is called *pratisaṅkhyā-nirodha*; the opposite of this (natural destruction) is *apratisaṅkhyā-nirodha*; while *ākāśa* is plainly absence of any obstruction.

The first two are known either through ‘*santāna*’ (series of production) or ‘*Bhāva*’ (individual entities). But both are impossible, because of ‘*aviccheda*’ – there can be no cessation in either case. Since it is the *Bhāvas* that constitute the *santāna*, and these individuals continue uninterruptedly as a series of causes and effects, and also as the common substratum that persists throughout any such change is found not to be annihilated (like clay in saucer, pot, shard etc.), *nirodha* of either kind, is found to be untenable. Even *ākāśa* is not justifiable as a non-entity¹²², as we have the *śruti-pramāṇa* which says – ‘*ātmanaḥ ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ*’¹²³, i.e., it was born out of the self; also, because we can infer its existence from the quality of sound – ‘*śabdaguṇakam ākāśam*’. Further, such a claim by the Bauddhas would be self-contradictory, as in their own view, in the series of questions beginning with ‘*prthivī bhagavaḥ kiṃsaṃniśrayā*’, it is asked ‘*vāyuḥ kiṃsaṃniśrayaḥ*’, for which it is replied, ‘*vāyurākāśasaṃniśrayaḥ*’ – ‘*vāyu* rests on *ākāśa*’. Only if it is a *vastu*, can it be consistent to say that it supports something. Thus, it is illogical to posit that *ākāśa* is a non-entity. Apart from that, the claim that the aforesaid three non-entities are eternal, is also impossible, as there can be no concept of eternality or non-eternality with respect to *avastu* – non-existent things.

3.8.2. Dismissal of the Vaināśika theory of Cause and Effect:

¹²² Br.S. 2-2-24 - ‘*ākāśe cāviśeṣāt*’

¹²³ Anuvāka 1, Brahmānandavallī, Taittirīya Upaniṣad

The *Sūtra* ‘*nāsato ’dṛṣṭatvāt*’¹²⁴ refutes the theory of the Vaināśikas, for, their opinion that the cause does not persist in the effect, upon its production, would imply that Bhāva comes out of Abhāva in line with the *Pūrvapakṣa Nyāya Sūtra* ‘*nānupamṛdya prādurbhāvāt*’¹²⁵. Accordingly, a sprout is produced upon the destruction of the seed; curd upon the destruction of milk, and so on. If a product were to be born of an unchanging cause, anything could be created out of anything, the cause being common to all. Following the *Brahma Sūtra*, Śaṅkarācārya provides various reasons why Bhāva cannot be assumed to be produced from Abhāva.

The same condition arises when we assume existence to come out of non-existence, as then, an indistinguishable Abhāva becomes a common cause to all kinds of existence, like that of the sprout, curd, and so on. Then the sapling could proceed from a hare’s horn too. To avoid this problem, if we were to consider Abhāva as having distinctive attributes (*viśeṣa*), like that of the *nīlotpala*, then non-existence would turn into existence due to the very fact that it now possesses *viśeṣa*. But by experience we know that positive entities are distinguished from negative entities. It is also seen that gold as a material cause persists in an ornament produced from it; in the instance of a sapling, although the seed appears to be destroyed, still, the parts of the seed continue to exist in the sprout as its material cause, nevertheless in a different arrangement. Further, if Abhāva creates Bhāva, then things could be accomplished even without putting in the required effort¹²⁶. Without working, the farmer could harvest his crop, the weaver could get his cloth spun, and no one

¹²⁴ Br.S. 2-2-26

¹²⁵ N.S. 4-1-14.

¹²⁶ Br.S. 2-2-27 - ‘*udāsīnānāmapi caivaṃ siddhiḥ*’

would strive for attaining *svarga* or *Mokṣa*. But such a scenario is against our experience and so also it is obvious that, Bhāva does not arise from Abhāva.

3.8.3. Dismissal of the Vijñānavādī stand:

In the *Abhāvādhikaraṇam*, the stand of the *Vijñānavādī*, that in reality there are no external objects, and all cognitions are self-born, just as in our experience of a dream, mirage or celestial city (*gandharvanagaram*), is sought to be refuted starting with the *Sūtra* – ‘*nābhāva upalabdheḥ*¹²⁷’. Since external objects like the pillar, wall, etc., are very much perceived, they cannot be considered as non-existent. Cognitions are dependent upon these perceptions, and thus they do not arise by themselves. According to the Bauddhas, the internal awareness of an object appears as if externally present – ‘*yadantarjñeyarūpaṃ tadbahirvadavabhāsate*’. This is bluntly set aside by Śaṅkarācārya, in a mocking tone – ‘*na hi viṣṇumitro vandhyāputravadavabhāsate iti kaścidācakṣīta*’ (it cannot be said by anyone that Viṣṇumitra is the son of a barren woman) – the possibility of ascertaining a thing as existent is dependent on the applicability of a means of knowledge to it. And once that is achieved, the nature of cognition is not in the form of ‘*vatkāra*’ – likeness to something; it is indeed the thing itself ascertained.

To the argument of the Bauddhas, that an external object cannot logically exist because, a pillar, for instance, cannot be proved to be either different or similar to the atoms constituting it, the Bhāṣyakāra retorts, that apart from the strength of perception, the simultaneity in

¹²⁷ Br.S.2-2-28

the appearance of a cognition and its object is due to the relation of causality between them, and not identity. Also, the cognition in the form blue pot or black pot, gives us proof that the object is different from the cognition of it, as the substance is same, while only the adjectives differ.

The point raised by the *Pūrvapakṣī*, that cognitions are independent of external reality, just like a dream, magic etc, is now refuted with the Sūtra – ‘*vaidharmyācca na svapnādivat*¹²⁸’. The condition of the waking state is different from that of the dream state, and the nature of the cognitions are also different. After waking up, a person who has seen the dream would immediately realise that he had not actually been in contact with any person or object experienced as part of that dream; but that is not so with respect to his cognitions in waking state – he knows for sure that the wall or pillar that he comes across are really present there and that he has very much come in contact with them through his senses. In the same way, when a person sees a magic act being performed, the false objects that he perceives are later cognised by the intellect as not really present. The same analogy may be followed with respect to illusions like mirage, celestial city etc. The visions that come in a dream are a kind of recollection (*smṛti*) while the visions in waking state are direct perceptions (*upalabdhi*). The difference between recollection and perception is that while the latter leads to the cognition of a thing present, the former gives rise to the cognition of an absent entity.

If the Bauddha says, that experiences of awareness even without an external object, are the result of the action of diverse *vāsanās*¹²⁹, then

¹²⁸ Br.S. 2-2-29

¹²⁹ Br.S. 2-2-30 - ‘*na bhāvo ’nupalabdheḥ*’

that is also impossible, as the process is in fact, the other way round. From the perception of external things arise *vāsanās*; so, if there are no objects in the external world, there cannot be *vāsanās*¹³⁰ too. Further, the doctrine of momentariness (*kṣaṇikavāda*) advocated by the Bauddhas (both Vijñānavādins and Śūnyavādins), is applicable to *ālayavijñānaṃ* also, from where the *vāsanās* are said to be born. That makes it incapable of creating connected *vāsanās* in a continuous way, and hence, in all manners, the theory of the Vaināśikas stands rejected.

Thus, we see that Advaita Vedānta holds Bhāva to be always existent, and Abhāva is not complete non-existence. It is in fact seeing another positive entity where one thing is sought to be seen. It may be said that, Abhāva is *asat* for the Vedāntins, for whom the entire world is *mithyā*, the only truth being Brahman.

¹³⁰ Pg.402, Brahmasūtra Śāṅkarabhāṣyam - '*vāsanā nāma saṃskāraviśeṣāḥ, saṃskārāśca nāśrayamantareṇāvakalpante*'

Chapter 4: CONCEPT OF ABHĀVA IN OTHER DARŚANAS

4.1. Abhāva in Dvaita Vedānta

In Dvaita Vedānta or Pūrṇaprajña-Darśana, the unreality of the world is not accepted, unlike Advaita Vedānta. Since the school of Mādhva closely follows the doctrines of Nyāya Darśana, they believe in the reality of the existent world, and only the non-existent is unreal - *‘abhāvaśca bhāvavyatiriktaḥ svatantraḥ padārtha iti vaiśeṣikāḥ naiyāyikāḥ mādhvāśca pratipadyante/’*. In fact, *asat* and *mithyā* are synonyms for them. The Advaitins see the world as unreal, but do not consider it non-existent. Says Sāyaṇa Mādhava in the Sarvadarśanaśaṅgraha¹³¹ —

‘ghaṭasya nāstitāyāṃ nāstitoktāvastitvavatprakṛterupapatteḥ / nanu prapañcasya mithyātvamabhyupeyate nāsattvamiti cettadetatsoyaṃ śiraśchede’pi śataṃ na dadāti viṃśatipañcakaṃ tu prayacchatīti śākaṭikavṛttāntamanuharet / mithyātva-asattvayoḥ paryāyatvāt /’

4.2. Abhāva in Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta

The Viśiṣṭādvaitins¹³² who follow Rāmānuja, consider Abhāva as nothing but its locus, in line with the Prābhākaras -

¹³¹ Pg.232

¹³²Pg.368, Sarvadarśanaśaṅgraha - *‘abhāvaśca bhāvavyatiriktaḥ svatantraḥ padārtha iti vaiśeṣikāḥ naiyāyikāḥ mādhvāśca pratipadyante/ adhikaraṇasvarūpa eva abhāvo nātirikta iti mīmāṃsakāḥ rāmānujīyāḥ advaitavedāntinaśca/’*

*‘adhikaraṇasvarūpa eva abhāvo nātirikta iti mīmāṃsakāḥ
rāmānujīyāḥ advaitavedāntinaśca/’*

4.3. Abhāva in Sāṅkhya

The Sāṅkhya Kārikā of Īśwarakṛṣṇa enlists eight reasons for the non-perception (Anupalabdhi) of existent things –

atidūrātsāmīpyādindriyaghātānmano ’navasthānāt /

saukshmyādvvyavadhānādabhibhavātsamānābhihārācca //7//

1. *Atidūra* – Due to extreme remoteness, like that of a bird soaring high above in the sky;
2. *Atisāmīpya* – Due to extreme proximity, like that of collyrium applied to one’s eyes;
3. *Indriyaghāta* – Due to a defective or injured organ, like that of partial or complete blindness;
4. *Mano ’navasthāna* – Absence of mind, like that of Śakuntalā in *stambhāvasthā*;
5. *Saukṣmya* – Minuteness, like that of atoms of earth, air etc;
6. *Vyavadhāna* – Obstruction, like that of a store of gold on the other side of the wall;
7. *Abhibhava* – Overpowering, like that of the stars being invisible during day-time due to the overpowering Sun;
8. *Samānābhihāra* – Admixture of similar things, like the raindrops entering a water tank.

Vācaspati Miśra, says that if we find direct perception inapplicable in the case of objects whose existence is ascertained through other means of cognition, we must at once understand that it is due the

incapacity of *Pratyakṣa* and not due to the non-existence of the object. Elsewhere, under the *kārikā* 5 that discusses the *Pramāṇas* acceptable to Sāṅkhya system, he refutes the conception of Anupalabdhi as a sixth means of cognition by the Bhāṭṭas, attempting to bring the cognition of Abhāva also under the wing of *Pratyakṣa*¹³³. All the above reasons are for non-perception of existent things. By the use of the particle ‘ca’, we have to understand other four reasons, that are not mentioned, but indicate the non-perception of non-existent things, according to Vācaspati Miśra and other commentators -

‘cakāro’nuktasamuccayārthaḥ / tena anudbhavo’pi saṅgrhītaḥ /
tadyathā kṣīrādyavasthāyām dadhyādyanudbhavānna paśyati /’
(Sāṅkhyatattvakaumudī)

Says the commentator of Paramārtha –

‘asatāmapi vastūnām caturdhā’nupalabdhiḥ /
prāgabdhāvādanupalabdhiḥ, yathā mṛdā bhājanam yadā na kṛtam
tadā bhājanam nopalabhyate / pradhvaṃsābhāvādanupalabdhiḥ,
yathā ghaṭo dhvastaḥ na punarupalabhyate /
itaretarābhāvādanupalabdhiḥ, yathā gavi aśvatvaṃ na dṛśyate,
aśve gotvaṃ na dṛśyate / atyantābhāvādanupalabdhiḥ, yathā
anīśvarasya dve śirasī trayo bāhavaḥ /’

Here we see that the four types of Abhāva propounded by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika syncretic system, are incorporated by the commentators of Sāṅkhya-darśana, bringing the total number of reasons of non-perception, from 8 to 12. Among these, the reason why *Prakṛti* is not perceived is because of *saukṣmya*, and not because of its non-

¹³³S.T.K. 5 - ‘evamabhāvo’pi pratyakṣameva ... nāsti pratyakṣānavaruddho viśayo yatra
abhāvāhvayaṃ pramāṇāntaramabhyupeyeta /’

existence. But she is knowable from her effects (*kārya*) - ‘*saukṣmyāttadanupalabdhirnābhāvātkāryatastadupalabdhīḥ*’. The reason behind the non-perception of *Puruṣa* is mentioned later – ‘*saṅghātaparārthatvāt*’¹³⁴.

4.4. Abhāva in Yoga –

In the first *adhyāya* of Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra 9 and 10, the concept of Abhāva finds usage.

Among the five *vṛttis*, *vikalpa* and *nidrā* are two which need elaboration in this context.

‘*śabdajñānānupātī vastuśūnyo vikalpaḥ* /9/’

Usually there are three pillars of cognitive process – *śabda*, *artha*, and *jñāna*. *Artha* is the external entity or *vastu*. When a *vṛtti* happens in spite of the non-existence of a *vastu*, only due to *śabda* and *jñāna*, that particular state is called *vikalpa*. Such a cognition is neither *Pramāṇa* nor *viparyaya*, i.e., it is just an intellectual awareness, an abstract imagination. This may be correlated with *buddhisattā* of the Vaiyākaraṇas, for such entities like the hare’s horn, celestial city etc., which do not have an external existence¹³⁵.

The next *vṛtti* defined is *nidrā* or the sleep state –

‘*abhāvapratyayālambanā vṛttirnidrā* /10/’

The non-existence spoken of here is of the other *vṛttis* that happen in the waking state. The word *Pratyaya* here means the cause of such

¹³⁴ In *Kārikā* 17.

¹³⁵ Refer Mahābhāṣyaṃ of the Pāṇini Sūtra ‘*striyām*’, to be discussed in Pg.30 of next chapter (T.Y. - *anāgatāvekṣaṇam*).

an Abhāva. When we sleep a kind of inertia overcomes our body and the veil of darkness that covers the light of our intellect (*buddhi*) causes our awareness of absolute non-existence (ineffable), once we wake up from a deep sleep.

In this manner, although the concept itself is not dealt with at length, Abhāva is found to be applied in the understanding of two important *vṛttis*.

4.5. Abhāva in Vedas -

There can be found many references to *sat* and *asat* in the context of explaining the process of origination of the world in the Ṛgveda –

1. *brahmaṇaspatiretā saṃ karmāra ivādhamat / devānām pūrvye yuge 'sataḥ sadajāyata* // RV. 10.72.2
2. *devānām yuge prathame 'sataḥ sadajāyata / tadāśā anvajāyanta taduttānamapadaspari* // RV 10.72.3
3. *nāsadāsīnnosadāsīt tadānīm, nāsīdrajo no vyomā paro yat / kimāvarīvaḥ kuha kasya śarman nambhḥ kimāsīdgahanam gabhīram* // RV 10.129

A Brāhmaṇa identifies '*asat*' here with '*manas*'¹³⁶ - '*...neva hi san mano nevāsīt* /'

Another text in the same Brāhmaṇa relates *asat* with the *ṛṣis* or in other words, *prāṇas*¹³⁷ - '*ṛṣayo vāva te 'gre 'sadāsīt / ...prāṇā vā ṛṣayaḥ* /'. Sāyaṇa construes them to mean 'manifest' and 'unmanifest' respectively -

¹³⁶ Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, 10.5.3 1-2, part IV, pp 155-156

¹³⁷ SB 6.1.1.1, Part III, p.1

‘*asataḥ nāmarūpavarjitatvena astāsamānātad brahmaṇaḥ sakāśāt sat nāmarūpaviśiṣṭaṁ devādikamajāyata prādurabhūt* /’¹³⁸ ; as also ‘*asadavyaktanāmarūpaṁ* /’¹³⁹.

It would be a gross overlooking, if the first line from the Nāsadīya-sūktam¹⁴⁰ were not quoted in this context – ‘*nāsadāsīnnosadāsīt tadānīm...*’. There was neither *sat* nor *asat* at that time of creation. It was pure Brahman, which is beyond such dichotomies.

4.6. Other Illustrations of *sat* and *asat*/ Bhāva and Abhāva:

In the Viṣṇu Sahasranāma as well as in the Lalitā Sahasranāma, *sat* has been used in the sense of that Brahman which is permanent, unchangeable and the substratum of *asat*, which is the universe, that is transient and ever-changing¹⁴¹. Both Lord Viṣṇu and Goddess Lalitā are worshipped as being both *sat* as well as *asat*, in this context. It is also noteworthy that another divine name of Lalitā is ‘*bhāvābhāvavivarjitā*’¹⁴² – devoid of existence and non-existence. Since the substratum is real and ever-present, it is different from both Bhāva and Abhāva, where Bhāva is that which is created and transient, while Abhāva is of the form of *Prāgabdhāva* etc. An interesting point that we observe is that, in the Bhagavadgītā, *sat* and *asat* are used to mean Bhāva and Abhāva apart from the earlier denotation – ‘*na sattannāsaducyate*’¹⁴³. Here, it is the *Vyāvahārika* level of being and non-being that is being denied as qualifying the

¹³⁸ RV 10.72.2, Part IV, p.538

¹³⁹ SB 6.1.1.1, Part III, p.1

¹⁴⁰ RV 10.129

¹⁴¹ V.Sah. - ... ‘*sadasat*’ *kṣaramakṣaram* (51); L.Sah. – ‘*sadasdrūpadhāriṇī*’ (130)

¹⁴² L.Sah. – 133.

¹⁴³ Verse 13, Chapter 13, Bh.G.

Supreme Brahman who is the *kṣetrajña*; the *Paramārtha* being eternal Bhāva/*sat*.

Thus, we see that these terms are used in varied contexts to signify the meanings intended appropriate to the larger framework of the text.

Chapter 5: CONCEPT OF ABHĀVA IN VYĀKARAṆA ŚĀSTRA

5.1. ABHĀVA IN VĀKYAPADĪYAM

As far as the concept of Abhāva is concerned, the Pāṇinīya tradition has got a totally different perspective. On the semantic front, Vyākaraṇa Darśana culminates with Advaita Darśana. According to the latter, there cannot be anything other than Brahman, which is considered to be a *Dravya*. *Śabda* would denote a *Dravya* which is always associated with *jāti/guṇa/kriyā*. The gamut of things that are available in the universe, are but a false form of Brahman only.

On the other hand, it can be argued that, a *Śabda* denotes Abhāva only. In other words, there is no difference between Bhāva and Abhāva and the fourfold categorisation of Abhāva by the Vaiśeṣikas is untenable. Further, it is acceptable to all that Abhāva presupposes Bhāva, and as such, Abhāva is left with *ākāṅkṣā* or expectancy.

Bharṭṛhari, in Sambandha Samuddeśa of the Padakāṇḍa, goes for a profound analysis of the aspect of Abhāva vis-à-vis Bhāva and therefore this section brings out a conglomeration of different ideas that are strewn across Vyākaraṇa, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Vedānta (Advaita), etc.

In reality, there is no *Pradhvamsābhāva/ Prāgabhāva/ Anyonyābhāva/ Atyantābhāva*. Abhāva is a concept that comes into usage only after knowing ‘Bhāva’. Thus, before the coming into existence of a *ghaṭa*, until and unless the *ghaṭa* is perceived, its Abhāva cannot be perceived, because just like Abhāva requires

Bhāva¹⁴⁴ for its subsistence, Bhāva also requires Abhāva, for its identification.

Then, is Abhāva absence of anything at all (*Atyantābhāva*)? This is impossible, as all the Bhāva *padārthas* cannot be said to have arisen from nothingness (refuting *Asatkāryavāda*)¹⁴⁵. In the Bhāṣya of ‘*nañ*¹⁴⁶’, while discussing whether the *samāsa* has *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*, Patañjali gives the example, ‘*abrāhmaṇamānaya*’ where the meaning would erroneously become ‘*brāhmaṇamātra*¹⁴⁷’ that would contradict the required sense. Likewise, in ‘*pūrvatrāsiddham*¹⁴⁸’ Pāṇini does not imply complete *asiddhatva*. Rather he resorts to *āhāryajñānam*. Although the *tripādī-sūtras* are verily intact and appear wherever their application is necessary, still for the sake of running the *Śāstra*, he had to employ a device by which we are to consider those *Sūtras* as temporarily non-existent or inactive. This shows us that only if there is a *Vidhi*, there is possibility of a *Niṣedha*, only if there is the positive, there can be its negation.

5.1.1 Metaphysical Status of Bhāva and Abhāva

As in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, ‘*nāmarūpe vyākaraṇāṇi*¹⁴⁹’, ‘*mṛttiketyeva satyam*¹⁵⁰’, everything in this world is one or the other form of Brahman, with diverse names and forms. Up to the 52nd Kārikā, Bhartṛhari discusses the Bhāṣya sentence – ‘*nahi padārthaḥ*

¹⁴⁴ *yathā bhāvamupāśritya tadabhāvo ’nugamyate /*

tathā ’bhāvamupāśritya tadbhāvo ’pyanugamyate // - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 60)

¹⁴⁵ *nābhāvo jāyate bhāvo naiti bhāvo ’nupākhyatām/* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 61a)

¹⁴⁶ P.S. 2-2-6

¹⁴⁷ *brāhmaṇamātrasyānayanam prāpnoti/*

¹⁴⁸ P.S. 8.2.1

¹⁴⁹ Ch.U.6-3-2

¹⁵⁰ Ch.U.6-1-4

*sattām vyabhicarati*¹⁵¹. Then, keeping in mind that Brahman is the ultimate truth, the word is shown to be incapable of denoting the actual truth. For worldly *vyavahāra*, we only consider *upacāra sattā*. There too, the word does not denote a part of the whole implied, nor the *jāti* associated with it, or the *guṇa* etc, that are its attributes¹⁵². And this condition is compared to a person having a defect in his sense organs, who naturally has a defective perception too¹⁵³. Though a single word ‘*ghaṭa*’ is used to denote a pot, due to the *arthamāhātmya*, upon hearing ‘*ghaṭa*’, the shape, colour, number, gender, *jāti* and *kāraṭva* associated with it, all these things are cognised at once¹⁵⁴.

The cognition of the diversity of the universe is due to the *Māyā*, a power of Brahman. A *jīvanmukta* transcends this *Māyā* to see the *tattva*. But the rest of us, cannot see the reality due to the veil called *Māyā*. Even so, both the *jīvanmukta* and the common man use these words in the same sense when it comes to worldly usage.

In the Śikṣā and other Pāṇinīya works, *vāyu* is considered the driving factor¹⁵⁵ of *Śabda*. For the Sāṅkhyas, it is the *tanmātra*; for the Jains, it is *paramāṇu*¹⁵⁶. But in Vedānta, *Śabda* comes from *jñāna* which is *nirupāśraya*, independent and the purest entity¹⁵⁷. This is according to *kāryaśabdavāda*. All words in truth, denote the ultimate Brahman¹⁵⁸, and are therefore not *kārya*, but *nitya*. Since a word

¹⁵¹ *tadasyāstyasminniti matup* - M.Bh.Pradīpa 5.2.94

¹⁵² *pradeśasyaikadeśaṃ vā parato vā nirūpaṇam/ viparyayam abhāvaṃ vā vyavahāro ’nuvartate//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 52)

¹⁵³ *yathendriyasya vaiguṇyāt sattādhyāropavāniva/ jāyate pratyayārthebhyastathaivoddeśajā matiḥ//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 53)

¹⁵⁴ *akṛtsnaviṣayābhāsaṃ śabdaḥ pratyayamāśritaḥ/ arthamāhātmyarūpeṇa svarūpeṇānirūpitam//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 54)

¹⁵⁵ ‘*vāyorañūnām jñānasya śabdatvāpattiriṣyate*’ – (V.P., Br.K.110)

¹⁵⁶ M.Bh. *ākhyātopayoge*: P.S.1-4-29

¹⁵⁷ ‘*nahi jñānena sadīśaṃ pavitram iha vidyate*’ – Bh.G.4-38

¹⁵⁸ ‘*sarveṣāṃ śabdānām brahmaṇi tātparyam*’ - Śrī Bhāṣyam

denotes a pot, mat, etc., which are nothing but *Māyā*, it is evident that on the philosophical front, both Abhāva and Bhāva are equivalent. Bhāva is the same as Abhāva and vice-versa¹⁵⁹.

When *jñāna* is manifest in the external objects, born due to the cognition of *abheda*, it also seems to become impure¹⁶⁰. For example, in the phrase, ‘*ayaṃ rāmaḥ*’, the usage follows a supposition of *tādātmyaṃ* or *abheda* between *rāmaśabda* and *rāmaśabda-vācya*. Thus, although there is *bheda* between the denoter and denoted, we impose an *abheda* without which *vyavahāra* would have become impossible. This makes *jñāna* appear almost impure. Just as how *jñāna* attains an imperfect state due to its association with objects, *artha* too is removed far from its real sense due to its dependence on (or limitation by) *jāti*, *guṇa*, *kriyā* etc¹⁶¹. If this association of *artha* with *jāti* etc, is not accepted, the whole concept of a word denoting a meaning and the surrounding framework would collapse.

In this way, because *Śabda*, *artha*, and *jñāna* do not represent their true self, due to a kind of defective perception, for the sake of general usage, Bhāva and Abhāva are considered as equivalent, becoming suitable for *vyavahāra*¹⁶². Here, we can observe that for day-to-day transactions, Dvaita has to be followed while Advaita helps one in the comprehension of reality.

It is clear from the statement of Hari that he has been closely following the *Siddhāntas* of Advaita Vedānta. In the present case,

¹⁵⁹ *ekasmādātmano 'nanyau bhāvābhāvau vikalpitau*// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 61b)

¹⁶⁰ *upaplavo hi jñānasya bāhyākārānupātītā/*
kāluṣyamiva tattasya samsarge vyatibhedajam// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 57)

¹⁶¹ *yathā ca jñānamālekhādaśuddhau vyavatiṣṭhate/*
tathopāśrayavānarthāḥ svarūpādviprakṛṣyate// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 58)

¹⁶² *evamarthasya śabdasya jñānasya ca viparyaye/*
bhāvābhāvāvabhedenā vyavahārānupātinau// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 59)

two kinds of *satyam* out of the three mentioned in Advaita are taken up to explain the essence of Pāṇinīya Vyākaraṇa. *Pāramārthika*, *Vyāvahārika* and *Prātibhāsika* are the three kinds of *satyam* advocated. Here, Hari wants to show that although in reality, it is *Pāramārthika-satyam* only that can be accepted, since it is simply impossible to run the show with just *Paramārtha*, one has to accept *Vyāvahārika-satyam* to reckon with day-to-day transactions. The third category, viz., *Prātibhāsika-satyam* is that which one often comes across. Hari refers to the first two types of *satyam* and suggests that although in *Paramārtha* it is Abhāva only that is denoted by a *Śabda* and the trio, namely *Śabda*, *artha* and *jñāna* got corrupted due to the relation with unreal things. Nevertheless, since one has to run the show, called *vyavahāra*, there is no other go but to accept the trio as it is available and the fact is that, Pāṇini, in constructing his Vyākaraṇa, followed *Vyāvahārika-satyam* rather than *Pāramārthika-satyam*.

5.1.2. Relation between Bhāva and Abhāva

Returning to the topic, thus Bhāva and Abhāva are mutually expectant (*parasparāpekṣā*). Abhāva does not become Bhāva nor does Bhāva attain nothingness. The *kārikā* ‘*nābhāvo jāyate bhāvo...*¹⁶³’ is reminiscent of the *śloka* ‘*nāsato vidyate bhāvo...*’ of Bhagavad Gītā. According to the Nyāya Sūtra ‘*buddhisiddham tu tadasat*¹⁶⁴’, *asat* is understood only through its cognition (*buddhisiddham*). Some have explained this *Sūtra* in such a way to

¹⁶³ V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 61

¹⁶⁴ N.S.4-1-50

substantiate the claim of *Asatkāryavāda*, following which, Bhāva is said to come from *asat*.

Hari uses the term ‘*anupākhyatā*’ occasionally in place of Abhāva. Bhāva and Abhāva are mere abstractions of the One Parabrahman. Here we can correlate the usage ‘*ekasmāt*¹⁶⁵’ with ‘*ekameva advitīyam brahma*¹⁶⁶’.

Just as how Abhāva of an object is conjectured on the basis of the object’s presence, similarly the existence of an object (Bhāva) is also arrived at on the basis of its Abhāva.

Even *kāryakāraṇabhāva* fails for both. Hari proceeds to refute both *Satkāryavāda* of the Sāṅkhyas and *Asatkāryavāda* of the Naiyāyikas. In Vedānta Darśana, neither is accepted, rather they advocate *Vivartavāda* or *Pariṇāmavāda*¹⁶⁷. Because Abhāva is *anupākhyā*, i.e., indefinable, or in other words, indescribable into parts, we cannot attribute such and such a cause to it. In this manner, *Asatkāryavāda* is proved to be baseless. Coming to Bhāva, which is *sopākhyā*, that is definable, there is no use speculating about the cause, because it has already come into existence. Once an effect has come into existence, there is no further use of a cause to it. Thus, *Satkāryavāda* also is dismissed as irrelevant to Bhāva and Abhāva.

External things cannot be called as *sat*, nor can they be set aside as *asat*. But the ṛṣis who are *Bhāvavādīs*, who believe the world to be various forms of one Bhāva, do not accept Abhāva as another entity¹⁶⁸. In their opinion, the preceding and successive states of

¹⁶⁵ *tasmāt sarvamabhāvo vā bhāvo vā sarvamiśyate/*
na tvavasthāntaram kiñcidekasmāt satyataḥ sthitam// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 63)

¹⁶⁶ Ch.U.6-2-1

¹⁶⁷ ‘*ekam sadviprā bahudhā vadanti*’ – Rg Veda 1.164.46

¹⁶⁸ *tasmānnābhāvamicchanti ye loke bhāvavādinah/*
abhāvavādino vāpi na bhāvaṃ tattvalakṣaṇam// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 64)

Bhāva is Abhāva (*Prāgabhāva* of pot = clay before the pot is created; and *Pradhvamsābhāva* of pot = shards after the pot is destroyed). While for the *Abhāvavādins*, like the Bauddhas, Bhāva is unacceptable as the signifier of reality. The Mādhyamikas proclaim – ‘*sarvam śūnyam*’. Hence, nothingness is what is real for the *nāstikas*.

Even when the entire cosmos is by its own nature a non-dual unity, the diversification caused by *avidyā* is to be considered as *avicārita-ramaṇīya* – that which becomes enjoyable without any enquiry.

5.1.3. Bhāva vs. Abhāva

Just as how the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system has classified the imaginary concept of Abhāva into four, similarly, the idea of classification of objects like pot, cloth, etc., into two, i.e., existence and non-existence, is also a conceptualization based on imagination¹⁶⁹. Being formless, to talk about Abhāva as being contradictory or non-contradictory to Bhāva does not conform to reason. Abhāva cannot be said to be existent nor non-existent, because if we say Abhāva exists, then it is self-contradictory and if it is said that Abhāva does not exist, that too amounts to dismissing one’s own theory (*mūlaccheda*). Further, we cannot attribute either sequence or sequenceless-ness to Abhāva because of its being formless¹⁷⁰.

Our comprehension of the world and life around us is dependent completely on the divisions of time and dimension. Understanding

¹⁶⁹*catasro hi yathāvasthā nirupākhya prakalpitāḥ/
evam dvaividhyamapyetad bhāvābhāvavyapāśrayam*// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 66)

¹⁷⁰*avirodhī virodhī vā sannasan vāpi yuktitaḥ/
kramavānakramo vāpi nābhāva upapadyate*// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 67)

time as past, present and future is inevitable to our understanding of events happening around us. Hari shows that this division of time into three is not possible if there were total nothingness. In the same way, it is impossible that Bhāva be differentiated on the basis of time measures¹⁷¹. Differentiation into various time units is not possible with the likes of sky-flower or a rabbit's horn. So, the usages – ‘*Abhāvaḥ āsīt/asti/bhaviṣyati*’ are meaningless, the aforesaid being valid for Bhāva also. Of course, such a conclusion is possible only at the *Paramārtha* stage. Hence, the variations seen due to time factor is also established as not a *Pāramārthika-satyam*.

By Pāṇinian process, the word Bhāva comes from the root ‘*bhū sattāyām*’ (*bhavatīti bhāvaḥ*-that which exists is existence) and by prefixing *nañ* to it, the word Abhāva is formed. *Sattā* is existence, and *sat*¹⁷² is that which has this existence. So, when we talk about a *sat-padārtha*, it can denote existence only, and there is no scope of it becoming non-existent at any point of time. In other words, *sat* can always be *sat* only, how can it suddenly change into *asat*? The *ātmatattva* (unique/real nature) of a *sat-padārtha* is its *sattva*, and that can never be lost on account of any other cause¹⁷³. For example, once a pot is broken, it is unreasonable to ascribe to the stick, the reason behind the pot's non-existence. The pot is always a pot, and once it is destroyed, the usage ‘absence of a pot’ is faulty. ‘The shards exist’ – this would be more appropriate. So also, is the case with a phrase like ‘*aṅkuro jāyate*’ – The sapling which was not there till now is born. A non-existent thing coming into existence all of a

¹⁷¹ *abhāve triṣu kāleṣu na bhedasyāsti sambhavaḥ/ tasminnasati bhāve’pi traikālyam nāvatiṣṭhate//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 69)

¹⁷² *asa bhuvi + śatr, ‘śnasorallopaḥ’, = sat*

¹⁷³ *ātmatattvaparityāgaḥ parato nopapadyate/ ātmatattvam tu parataḥ svato vā nopakalpate//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 70)

sudden on its own is untenable¹⁷⁴. It is equivalent to describing Abhāva as attaining a form (*rūpa*). With these arguments Hari refutes *Prāgabhāva* and *Pradhvamsābhāva* from the Sāṅkhya standpoint. What he intends to say is that, at the *Pāramārthika* level, an existent thing is always existent while a non-existent thing would always remain so.

What if both Bhāva and Abhāva are considered as having a single *tattva*? No, this is not possible, as both are opposing in nature. If the two are not considered as having either *bheda* or *abheda*, *vyavahāra* would cease to exist¹⁷⁵. Hence for grammatical and other transactional purposes, depending on the context, Bhāva and Abhāva are taken to be of the same nature or of different nature.

The relation between the Vedic injunction, ‘*darśapūrṇamāsābhyām svargakāmo yajeta*’ and the *prayājas* and *anuyājas* is of the nature of ‘*upakāryopakāraka-bhāva*’, and this kind of relation, i.e., mutual dependency, is not found between Bhāva and Abhāva. The true nature of a positive entity does not cease to exist, for the sake of its Abhāva (as in *Pradhvamsa*)¹⁷⁶. For instance, once a pot is destroyed, we say, ‘there is absence of a pot’. But the fact is that the pot need not lose its identity so that its absence be perceived. Similarly, the theory that the positive entity is cognised as the destruction of its negation is also not valid, because both are independent of each other. This principle is illustrated by taking two varieties of cows – the *Śābaleya* and the *Bāhuleya*. The existence of either does not

¹⁷⁴ Even in the Niruktam, the six *bhāvavikāras* viz., *jāyate*, *asti*, *vipariṇamate*, *vardhate*, *apakṣyate* and *vinaśyati* are enlisted as the various modifications that an existent being undergoes.

¹⁷⁵ *tattve virodho nānātva upakāro na kaścana/ tattvānyatvaparityāge vyavahāro nivartate//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 71)

¹⁷⁶ *na hyabhāvasya sadbhāve bhāvasyātmā prahīyate/ na cābhāvasya nāstitve bhāvasyātmā prasūyate//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 74)

negate the presence of the other. Both can co-exist, independent of the other¹⁷⁷.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system postulates seven *padārthas*, Abhāva being one of them. How can Abhāva be considered a *vastu*, when its form etc., are not perceivable? And it would also lead us to infinite regression, where an Abhāva of Abhāva, and a further Abhāva of that Abhāva would have to be recognized¹⁷⁸. Probably, Kaṇāda was also of the same view and that's why he avoided mentioning it along with the six *padārthas* and separately mentioned it in the ninth *adhyāya*. So, the inclusion of Abhāva as the seventh category by Udayana and later Naiyāyikas is untenable. Ascribing differences is rational only if it is to a positive entity. Once Abhāva is denied the very status of being an entity, there remains no need to classify it again into four types.

5.1.4. From *Vyavahāra* to *Paramārtha*

Only when Bhāva is considered to be an interim stage, the confusion arises with regard to its prior and posterior stages. The author of the *Vākyapadīyam* states that Bhāva is not an intermediate. A sequence can be described only if the thing is made of many parts. But here, the *Bhāva-padārtha* is declared to be a composite whole, inseparable into parts.

Unless specified, the word 'Bhāva' should be taken to mean the ultimate reality 'Brahman'¹⁷⁹. In the 83rd *kārikā*¹⁸⁰, Hari uses the

¹⁷⁷ *na śābaleyaśyāstitvaṃ bāhuleyasya bādhakam/*
na śābaleyo nāstīti bāhuleyaḥ prakalpate// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 75)

¹⁷⁸ *abhāvo yadi vastu syāt tatreyam syādvicāraṇā/*
tataśca tadabhāve'pi syādvicāryamidam punaḥ// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 76)

¹⁷⁹ In Uddyota of the '*striyām*' (P.S.4-1-3), Nāgeśa says '*nirupapadabhāvaśabdasya brahmaṇi rūdhiḥ*'. Even in *Liṅgasamuddeśa* of *Vākyapadīyam*, *kārikā* 21, '*bhāvatattvadṛśaḥ śiṣṭāḥ...*', the word means the same.

¹⁸⁰ *bhāvaśaktimataścainām manyante nityavādināḥ /*

word in this sense. It is only due to the power of Brahman, that the universe is comprehended as possessing differences and sequence. This observation takes us back to the 3rd *kārikā* of the *Brahmakāṇḍa*¹⁸¹ where the potentiality of time is praised. Simultaneity and sequence are considered as opposing in character. But in fact, both are one and the same, just as *Bhāva* and *Abhāva* are considered as identical¹⁸².

Both Simultaneity – ‘*khalekapotanyāyah*’ and Sequence – ‘*rājapurapraveśanyāyah*’ have been accepted by Mīmāṃsakas in *Mahāvākyārthabodha*. Thus, the two are not contradictory in nature¹⁸³.

An illustration is given to grasp the nature of their similarity – the locative case is used to denote the thing that is the base for another¹⁸⁴, viz, ‘*bhūtale ghaṭaḥ*’ – The pot is on the floor. The floor being the substratum, it takes on *saptamī vibhakti*. But in the phrases ‘*śatrorabhāve sukham*’ and *suhṛdabhāve duḥkham*’, ‘happiness lies in the absence of a foe’ and ‘unhappiness lies in the absence of a friend’, the base (*ādhāra*) is absence of a friend or foe. Being a non-entity, how can it become the base for another thing?

Similarly, the *pañcamī vibhakti* is used to denote the sense of cause. Then in the sentence ‘*rāgādikleśanīśādutsāhaḥ*’, the destruction, or in other words, the absence of obstacles like attachment and the like, becomes the cause of *utsāha* - new endeavour or energy. Here too,

bhāvameva kramam prāhurna bhāvādaparaḥ kramam //

¹⁸¹ *adhyāhitakālāṃ yasya kālaśakti upāśritāḥ /*

janmādayo vikārāḥ śadbhāvabhedaśya yonayah //

¹⁸² According to Einstein’s theory of relativity, simultaneity is not an absolute relation between events; what is simultaneous in one frame of reference will not necessarily be simultaneous in another.

¹⁸³ *kramānna yaugapadyasya kaścid bhedo ’sti tattvataḥ/*

yathaiva bhāvānnābhāvaḥ kaścidanyo ’vasīyate// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 84)

¹⁸⁴ *ādhāro ’dhikaraṇam*: P.S. 1-4-45; *saptamyadhikaraṇe ca*: P.S. 2-3-36

the imagination of a non-entity becoming a cause should be discarded. But the aforesaid usages do exist and are very much current. The *vibhaktis* are assigned to them by considering them as ‘*bauddha-padārthas*’ or intellectual entities. This is an *utprekṣā* (a figment of imagination) made by *laukikas* who apply the principles that are suitable for existent things, even to non-existent abstract things, just so that their day-to-day affairs are not hindered¹⁸⁵. This example has made Hari’s point clear enough, that simultaneity and succession are verily the same.

Sat and *asat* being the manifestations of the one eternal truth, which is signified by every word, is seen as a multitude due to the diverse powers of *Māyā*¹⁸⁶. Bhartṛhari concludes this discussion emphasising that the *Siddhānta* being the aforesaid, still the division of the *Padārthas* and the huge framework of *śāstras* is meant for the regular activities of the people. Looking back at the *kārikā* ‘*upāyāḥ śikṣamāṇānām bālānām upalālanāḥ / asatye vartmani sthitvā tataḥ satyaṃ samīhate*’¹⁸⁷, these are just stepping stones that lift us from the *Vyāvahārika-satyam* to *Pāramārthika-satyam*. And even for one who has attained the *Paramārtha*, but is a *jīvanmukta*, (liberated yet embodied), *Vyavahāra* is indispensable, which is why it is called *mukhya* – important. Otherwise Pāṇini’s colossal work in the form of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* would be rendered meaningless.

5.2 ABHĀVA AS NAÑARTHA

¹⁸⁵ *Kālasypāpyaparam kālāṃ nirḍisāntyeva laukikāḥ/ na ca nirdeśamātreṇa vyatireko ’nugamyate//* - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 85)
ādhāraṃ kalpayan buddhyā nābhāve vyavatiṣṭhate/ avastuṣvapi notprekṣā kasyacit pratibadhyate// - (V.P., Pa.K. Sam.Sa. 86)

¹⁸⁶ *taśmācchaktivibhāgena nityaḥ sadasadātmakaḥ/ eko ’rthaḥ* - (V.P., Pa.K.Sam.Sa.87)

¹⁸⁷ V.P., Br.K.53

In Vyākaraṇasāstra, Abhāva is denoted by the *avyayas nañ* and *nir* in general which are found in *samāsas*. *Na* is another *nipāta* used commonly in sentences although its use in *samāsas* like *naike*, *nagaḥ* etc, also is in vogue¹⁸⁸.

Nañ is an *avyaya*. It can combine with a noun to give rise to three types of compounds – *avyayībhāva*, *bahuvrīhi* and *tatpuruṣa*. In the former, the sense of *pūrvapada* is prominent and in the latter the sense of *uttarapada* is predominant. When the force of *nañ* is that of absence (Abhāva), i.e., it expresses the absence of the object denoted by the second term, it could optionally be either of the compounds. Thus, in Mahābhāṣya, we find in Paspasā, ‘*rakṣohāgamalaghvasandehāḥ prayojanam*’ where due to the action of the *Sūtra* ‘*paravalliṅgaṃ dvandvatatpuruṣayoḥ*¹⁸⁹’, the compound takes on the gender of the final component. Here it is masculine.

Avyayībhāva compound takes on neuter gender. So ‘*asandehaḥ*’ being masculine, is a *tatpuruṣa*, although it expresses the sense ‘absence of doubt¹⁹⁰’. Whereas, in the *Vārtikaṃ*, ‘*adrutāyām asamhitam*’, which is read in the *Sūtra* ‘*paraḥ sannikarṣaḥ samhitā*¹⁹¹’, ‘*asamhitam*’ having neuter gender, is an *avyayībhāva*, denoting absence of conjunction.

The argument of Nāgeśa goes like this: By the *Sūtra* ‘*avyayaṃ vibhaktisamīpa...*¹⁹²’, in the meaning of Abhāva, examples such as *nirmakṣikam* are illustrated. Let all *avyayas* except *nañ* take on

¹⁸⁸ This is not accepted by Nageśa in his Laghuśabdenduśekhara.

¹⁸⁹ P.S. 2-4-26

¹⁹⁰ There is more discussion on *asandehaḥ* relevant to Abhāva, to follow soon in the next section.

¹⁹¹ P.S. 1-4-109

¹⁹² P.S. 2-1-6

avyayībhāva-samāsa. *Nañ* will be compounded as a tatpuruṣa. If the case of ‘*adrutāyām asamhitam*’ is brought up, then there is usage of the word *samhitā* in neuter too (*samhitam*) found in the Prātiśākhya.

Since Patañjali has not explicitly stated that the *Sūtra* ‘*nañ*’ will nullify *avyayībhāva*, both types of compounds can be accepted when *Abhāva* is to be expressed. Taking the same analogy, we can form compounds like *anupalabdhiḥ*, *avivādaḥ*, *avighnam*, etc.

5.2.1. ‘*nañ*’ - Mahabhāṣyam

The *Sūtra* that rules *nañ-tatpuruṣa samāsa* is ‘*nañ*’, its meaning being ‘*nañ supā saha samasyate*’: *nañ* compounds with a *subanta*. As to how the meaning arises in this compound, there is an elaborate discussion in Mahabhāṣyam, following which most scholars have dealt with it, *nañartha* becoming an independent topic of debate and discussion on its own.

5.2.1.1. Three possibilities of *nañartha*

Between the two words – *nañ* and the word with which it compounds, which one is *pradhāna* (principal) in deciding the meaning, this is the question raised by Patañjali in Bhāṣya on this *Sūtra*. There are three possibilities – *anya-padārtha*, *pūrva-padārtha* and *uttara-padārtha* becoming instrumental in connoting the word sense. Take the example – ‘*abrāhmaṇamānaya*’ – *nañ* compounds with the word ‘*brāhmaṇa*’. By this combination, where *brāhmaṇa* denotes its *jāti*, if a different sense is denoted, not common to either, that is, a *kṣatriya* etc., then the importance is of *anyapadārtha*. When *nañ* which denotes absence in general, is qualified by *brāhmaṇatva*, then it will be *pūrvapadārtha-pradhāna* – absence of

*brāhmaṇatva*¹⁹³. And when due to wrong guidance or false knowledge the word *brāhmaṇa* is used for a *kṣatriya* & c., then this mistake is realised, and the principal meaning of the word *brāhmaṇa* is removed naturally by *nañ* which acts as an illuminator (*dyotaka*), it is *uttarapadārtha-prādhāna*¹⁹⁴.

A common example which can illustrate the sense expressed by *pūrvapadārtha-prādhāna* is – ‘*brāhmaṇavad asmin kṣatriye vartitavyam*’. Here, the said *kṣatriya* is endowed with certain qualities of a *brāhmaṇa*, yet by birth belongs to *kṣatriya jāti*. Such a sense is intended when the *nañ* being a *pūrvapada*, is principal in expressing the meaning of a *samāsa*.

In *nañ-tatpuruṣa*, since the meanings of both words are not found to be expressed independently, the possibility of *ubhayapadārtha-prādhānya* is not considered.

Among these three, the case of *uttarapadārtha* being principal, has the least number of solutions (*parihāra*) required, although all of them have some demerit. Hence, this is first upheld by the *Bhāṣyakāra*. He sets forth to show the faults in each of the three –

1. *Uttarapadārtha-prādhānya* – When we say ‘*abrāhmaṇamānaya*’, there is a chance that only a *brāhmaṇa* is brought.
2. *Anyapadārtha-prādhānya* – ‘*avarṣāḥ*’ in ‘*avarṣā hemantaḥ*’ may have to agree with *hemanta* in gender and number.

¹⁹³ Nāgeśa in his Uddyota explains: Abhāva here means *bheda*, because it is difficult to prove an absence of absence, which may lead to infinite regression (*anavasthā-doṣa*). Hence the meaning obtained is ‘*brāhmaṇabhinna*’ – other than *brāhmaṇa*.

¹⁹⁴ ‘*uttarapadārthapradhānaḥ samāsasya caramāvayave rūḍhaḥ*’ /

3. *Pūrvapadārtha-prādhānya* – In this case, it may get *avyaya samjñā*, for, its *pūrvapada* is an *avyaya (nañ)*.

The argument for (1) is that, *nañ* being a qualifier, does not have the capacity to completely set aside the meaning of the principal ‘*brāhmaṇa*’. So even a *brāhmaṇa* who may not be completely following the code of conduct required of a *brāhmaṇa* will be denoted by *abrāhmaṇa*¹⁹⁵. If the meaning of the principal word is completely negated by *nañ*, then how can that word be principal? This makes the use of *nañ* purposeless, as both *brāhmaṇa* and *abrāhmaṇa* will become synonyms.

In (2), the word ‘*varṣāḥ*’ is to be always used in feminine and plural form¹⁹⁶. But as per the rule ‘*yalliṅgaṃ yadvacanam yā ca vibhaktiḥ viśeṣyasya, talliṅgaṃ tadvacanam sā ca vibhaktiḥ viśeṣaṇasyāpi bhavati*’, ‘*avarṣāḥ*’ being the *viśeṣaṇa* of ‘*hemantaḥ*’, it should take up the same gender and number as *hemanta* {i.e., masculine, singular). This is the fault in favouring *anyapadārtha-prādhānya*. Another issue pointed out by Kaiyaṭa, that crops up is that, a *bahuvrīhi* compound like ‘*abrāhmaṇako deśaḥ*’ will not be produced. This is because the *anyapadārtha* has already found expression in *nañ-tatpuruṣa*, and this would nullify the need to use *bahuvrīhi*. Further, in words such as, ‘*asaḥ*’¹⁹⁷ and ‘*asarvasmai*’, due to subordination of the *uttarapadārtha*, the *Sūtras* ‘*etattadoḥ sulopo...*’¹⁹⁸ and ‘*sarvanāmnah smai*’¹⁹⁹ cannot be applied to get the desired form.

¹⁹⁵ ‘*vasa brahmacaryaṃ na vai somyāsmatkuḷīno’nanūjya brahmabandhuriva bhavātīti*’ Ch.U. 6.1.1

¹⁹⁶ ‘*striyāṃ prāvṛṣṭ striyāṃ bhūmni varṣāḥ*’ - 1.4.19 - Amarakoṣa

¹⁹⁷ By the *vārtika* ‘*saṃjñopasarjanapraṭiṣedhaḥ*’, the *tyādādi* words, if *upasarjanas*, cannot get *sarvanāma-samjñā*.

¹⁹⁸ *etattadoḥ sulopo* ‘*koranañsamāse hali*’ - P.S. 6-1-132

¹⁹⁹ *sarvanāmnah smai* - P.S. 7-1-14

The argument against the defect shown in (3) is that *avyayasamjñā* applies to those read in the *gaṇapāṭha* and *nañsamāsa* is not read there. Even then, *nañ* is an *avyaya*, but due to being used in relation to a word having gender and number, the *samāsa* also gets gender and number. To the doubt whether this peculiarity is due to verbal directive (*vācanikam*) or natural (*svābhāvikam*), it is answered that this is natural – just as how, of those who study equally with the same desire of becoming wealthy, some get it and others do not, because one succeeds it is not necessary that all others succeed, or because one fails, it is not necessary that all others have to fail²⁰⁰. In the same way, it is but natural for *nañ* which is devoid of gender or number, to have them after it becomes a part of a *samāsa*. Another solution is arrived upon – that *liṅga* and *saṅkhyā* are decided from the words that are qualified. As in ‘*śuklam vastram, śuklā śāṭī, śuklāḥ kambalāḥ*’ etc., so also the *samāsa* takes the gender and the number of the *Dravya* which it refers to.

5.2.1.2. *Uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*

After discussing at length, the problems that arise in all the three propositions, the *ācārya* once again puts forth the case of *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*, which as formerly described by Kaiyaṭa²⁰¹ requires the least effort to sort out its demerit. Another reason why this is upheld by Patañjali is because, the use of ‘*anañsamāse*’ in the *Sūtra* ‘*etattadoḥ sulopo...*’ is a sign or proof

²⁰⁰ *samānamīhamānānāñca adhīyānāñca kecidarthairuyante’pare na / na cedānīm kaścidarthavāniti kṛtvā sarvairarthavadbhiḥ śakyam bhavitum, kaścidvā’narthaka iti sarvairanarthakaiḥ* // - M.Bh. (P.S.2-2-6)

²⁰¹ *evam pakṣatrayasambhave’lpapratividheyapakṣam āśrayitumāha – uttarapadārthapradhāna iti* / - M.Bh.Pr. (P.S.2-2-6)

that in Pāṇini's opinion, *nañ-samāsa* should have *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*. Otherwise the *sandhis* in 'aneṣo dadāti/aso dadāti' cannot be achieved.

The problem that was pointed out earlier for *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*, that when we say 'abrāhmaṇamānaya', there is a chance of any *brāhmaṇa* alone being brought, does not arise, if it is handled in the same manner as the *samāsa* 'rājapuruṣa'. Although the word 'puruṣa' is principal, here, any *puruṣa* is not brought, rather, one who is qualified by 'rāja' is brought. Likewise, in *abrāhmaṇa*, the one qualified by *nañ* is brought. And who is the one qualified by *nañ*? *Nañartha* being Abhāva, and *brāhmaṇa* being Bhāva, both are mutually contrary. Kaiyaṭa says, the *nañ-viśiṣṭa* denotes *kṣatriya* & c., on whom *brāhmaṇa* is imposed. This sense already residing in *brāhmaṇa* is illuminated by the presence of *nañ*. Hence, here *nañ* is to be considered a *dyotaka*. This meaning is accepted because *nañ* being *viśeṣaṇa*, cannot contradict the meaning of the *viśeṣya*, but can only slightly change it.

Coming back to the question posed by the *bhāṣyakāra*, he answers, *nañ-viśiṣṭa* is one from whom the *mukhya-padārtha* (prominent sense) is withheld. In which case, another doubt is expressed – is it so by its very nature or is it achieved due to the word *nañ* (*vācanikī*)²⁰²? The implied question is whether *nañ* is a *dyotaka* or *vācaka*.

In the case of *nañ* being a *vācaka*, it should be stated that *nañ* in association with a noun withholds from it the comprehension of its

²⁰² *vacanena labhyam* – obtained by the word (P.S. 5-1-93: *tena parijayyalabhyakāryasukaram*)

prominent meaning. On the other hand, if *nañ* is *dyotaka*²⁰³, what purpose is served by the use of *nañ* if the meaning is withheld by its very nature²⁰⁴? Hence *nañ* is supposed to act like a wedge, which when beaten, makes the counter-wedge fall down.

Here the *ācārya* humorously remarks – If this is the greatness of *nañ*, kings will never maintain elephants and horses. They will simply utter ‘*na*’²⁰⁵. So, the *nivṛtti* must be by its own nature. Just as how the sight of objects in dense darkness is with the aid of light²⁰⁶, although they are not created by light, similarly, the comprehension of the meaning ‘*āropitabrāhmaṇyavān*’ setting aside the prominent meaning, is with the help of *nañ*.

That *nañ* acts as a *dyotaka* is upheld with another argument. The Vaiśeṣika thought ‘*guṇasamudāyo dravyam*’ is brought in to strengthen the discussion. The *varṇa* division into *Brāhmaṇas* etc, is on the basis of their *guṇas* (here *guṇa* = *dharma* – certain features). Patañjali quotes from the Smṛtis:

‘*tapah śrutaṃ ca yoniśca etadbrāhmaṇakāraṇam /*
tapah śrutābhyāṃ yo hīno jātibrāhmaṇa eva saḥ //’

Tapas (following *vratas* etc²⁰⁷), study of the Vedas, Vedāṅgas etc, and birth to a *brāhmaṇa* couple, are the grounds to call one a

²⁰³ *nipātāḥ dyotakāḥ kecit prthagarthābhīdhāyinaḥ |*

āgamā iva kepi syuḥ sambhūyārthasya vācakāḥ || - (V.P., Va.K.192)

²⁰⁴ The word ‘*ārāt*’ is used in both meanings – nearby and far (*ārāt dūrasamīpayoh*).

Likewise, if the word ‘*brāhmaṇa*’ denotes one with *brāhmaṇa-dharma* as well as the one without, then the presence of *nañ* would be meaningless.

²⁰⁵ This can be correlated with the Śāṅkarabhāṣya of the Brahmasūtra 2-2-27 –

‘*udāsīnānāmapī caivam siddhiḥ*’ / Refer page 36 of Chapter 3.

²⁰⁶ In the Tarkasaṅgraha Dīpikā it is said – *tamo hi na rūpidravayam ...*

rūpidravayacākṣuṣapramāyām ālokasya kāraṇatvāt/ tasmāt

prauḍhaprakāśakatejasaṁnyābhāvastamah/

²⁰⁷ *Tapas* is a word pregnant with meaning – it broadly includes leading an austere life, and practices like various *vratas* viz., *kṛcchra/atikṛcchra* etc, that induce rigorous discipline of both mind and body. It is derived from the root verb ‘*tap-santāpe*’, which means – to generate heat.

brāhmaṇa. He who is devoid of the first two is called a *jāti-brāhmaṇa*. Other qualities like *gaura* complexion, cleanliness, purity of conduct, reddish hair etc., are also ascribed to a *brāhmaṇa*²⁰⁸. And the words that denote a cluster of qualities, are also found to denote a part of them, as in ‘*pūrve pañcālāḥ*’, ‘*uttare pañcālāḥ*’, ‘*ghṛtaṃ bhuktaṃ*’ etc. So also, the word ‘*brāhmaṇa*’ denotes a person possessing all qualities as well as one who lacks some of them. To illustrate, though a *brāhmaṇa* by birth, if he urinates or eats in standing position, he is considered an *abrāhmaṇa*²⁰⁹. Similarly, although a person is not born a *brāhmaṇa*, he might possess all the other qualities, which misleads us to think that he is a *brāhmaṇa*; this situation arises either due to wrong advice or false knowledge. Even so, after realizing the *jāti*, the earlier misconception is removed with the knowledge that he is an *abrāhmaṇa*. Hence, *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*²¹⁰ of *nañ-tatpuruṣa* is established. This conclusion has another positive fallout too – In the word ‘*anekam*’, *nañ* acts not only to deny *ekatva*, for, if that be the case, then the *samāsa* should get plural number. *Nañ* enjoins *kriyā* and *guṇa*, and then prohibits one (*eka*) from having them, as in ‘*anekam – āsaya śāyaya bhojaya*’. This behaviour of *nañ* is observed in instances where *kriyā* or *guṇa* are not already enjoined too, as in ‘*anekaṃ tiṣṭhati*’, ‘*na na ekaṃ sukham*’, ‘*na na ekaṃ priyam*’ etc. Whereas the former is an example of *Prasajya-pratiṣedha*, the latter are examples of *Paryudāsa*.

²⁰⁸ ‘*gaurāḥ śucyācārah piṅgalāḥ kapilakeśa*’ ityētānapyabhyantarān *brāhmaṇye guṇān kurvanti*’ - M.Bh. (P.S.2-2-6)

²⁰⁹ *guṇahīne tāvat – ‘abrāhmaṇo’yam yastiṣṭhanmūtrayati*, ‘*abrāhmaṇo’yam yastiṣṭhanbhakṣayati*’ - M.Bh. (P.S.2-2-6)

²¹⁰ In *uttarapadārthaprādhānya*, *nañ* negates the *upacārasattā* residing in the word *brāhmaṇa*.

5.2.2. *Nañartha* in *Vākyapadīyam*

Starting from *kārikā* 248 of *Vṛttisamuddeśa* in the *Padakāṇḍa* of *Vākyapadīyam*, Bhartṛhari elucidates the opinion of the *Bhāṣyakāra* and elaborates further on the sense expressed by the *nañ-tatpuruṣa* compound, and discusses how *nañ*, an *avyaya*, having no gender or number can attain the same upon becoming a component of a *samāsa*.

He begins by clarifying that, although the popular meaning in an instance like ‘*abrāhmaṇa*’, as one who is not a *brāhmaṇa*, is intact, for the sake of showing the multiple actions of the word, and to explore the various possible meanings and derive a logical conclusion, Patañjali sets forth to discuss the three possibilities of meaning, as delineated earlier²¹¹. Stating ‘*na brāhmaṇaḥ*’ as a sentence, is different from using a *samāsa* ‘*abrāhmaṇaḥ*’. Yet, imagining an identity between the two, the *nañ*, which is a member of the *samāsa*, is separately dealt with, even though a compound is, in truth, to be considered *akhaṇḍa*, and even the meaning conveyed by it is also *akhaṇḍa*, not to be broken and analysed into parts²¹².

5.2.2.1. *Nañ* as a *Dyotaka*

In *kārikā* 250, Hari gives us a new dimension while analysing the exact nature of the involvement of *nañ* before becoming a component of a *samāsa*²¹³. In the sentence, ‘*na brāhmaṇaḥ*’, *nañ*

²¹¹ *śāstrapravṛttibhede’pi laukikārtho na bhidyate/
nañsamāse yatatatra trayāḥ pakṣā vicāritāḥ*// – (V.P., Pa.K.Vr.Sa.248)

²¹² *śabdāntare’pi caikatvam āśrityaiva vicāraṇā/
abrāhmaṇādiṣu nañāḥ prayogo nahi vidyate*// – (V.P., Pa.K.Vr.Sa.249)

²¹³ *prākṣamāsāt padārthānām nivṛttirdyotyate nañā/
svabhāvato nivṛttānām rūpābhedaḍalakṣitā*//

acts as a *dyotaka*. How, it is explained. Abhāva does not have an independent existence. It requires a *vastu*, whose non-perception gives rise to the notion of the absence of that *vastu*. Now, the word ‘*brāhmaṇa*’ being there, it would go against reason to assign the capacity to negate ‘*brāhmaṇa*’ just by uttering the word ‘*nañ*’ alongside. Hence it is assumed that the noun *brāhmaṇa* itself is potent to express both the *padārtha* and the *nivṛtta-padārtha*²¹⁴. The only role of *nañ* is to illuminate the secondly intended sense upon its usage.

The need to form *nañ-samāsa* is discussed. In the sentence, ‘*na brāhmaṇam ānaya*’, *nañ* associates with the action expressed by the *ākhyāta* (verb), and the meaning would be thus – ‘Do not bring a *brāhmaṇa*’. In such a case, *vṛtti* between *nañ* and the noun *brāhmaṇa* cannot occur²¹⁵. *Vṛtti* occurs only between words having *sāmarthyā*. Because, *nañ* already has expectancy with the verb, it is *asamartha* to give rise to a *samāsavṛtti*²¹⁶.

The opinion of the *Pūrvapakṣa* is set forth: unlike in a sentence, where *nañ* is considered a *dyotaka*, it should be considered a *vācaka* in the case of a *samāsa*. Only then would we be able to embark on expounding the three possibilities based on predominance in meaning. Take the example, ‘*apācaka*’, where the word *pācaka* expresses both the universal action (*sattā-sāmānya* – *asti*) and the specific action (*pac* – to cook). Here if *nañ* is assumed to be a *dyotaka*, the aforesaid deliberation as regards determining the

²¹⁴ Refer the section on ‘*acaḥ parasmīn pūrvavidhau – santi na santīti...*’

²¹⁵ *brāhmaṇādīstheyā vākyeṣvākhyātapadavācyayā/ kriyayā yasya sambandho vṛttistasya na vidyate//* – (V.P., Pa.K.Vr.Sa.251)

²¹⁶ ‘*samarthaḥ padavidhiḥ*’ – *sāpekṣam asamarthaṁ bhavati* – M.Bh. (P.S.2-1-1)
Vārtikam – ‘*saviśeṣaṇānām vṛttirnāsti, vṛttasya vā viśeṣaṇayogo na*’/

meaning would not be possible. Hence, *nañ* must be considered *vācaka* in a compound.

To this, Bhartṛhari gives a striking reply – If the relation of all words is assumed with *sattā-sāmānya*, then in such a case as ‘*asan*’, we would need to assign another *sattā* to *nañ*. And in ‘*akṛtvā*’, ‘*akartum*’ etc., the relation between *nañ* and the action verb is of *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya-bhāva*. Here, *nañ* does not negate the *sattā-sāmānya*. Therefore, it ascertains that *nañ* cannot be a *vācaka*.

To the question as to what kind of relation can be described between *nañ* and the principal *vastu*, Hari answers, that it is ‘*sāmānya-viśeṣa-bhāva*’. As to how such a relation is arrived at, he says, the *sattā* of the *vastu* is taken as *kriyā* (*kriyājāti*). The *ādhāra* of this *kriyājāti* is the *vyakti*. The universal (*sāmānya*) meaning of *nañ* being *Abhāva*, it negates the meaning of the *vyakti*, which becomes a *viśeṣa*. This *sāmānya-viśeṣa bhāva*²¹⁷ is established between them. Due to this, there would be no further hindrance, in considering *nañ* as a *vācaka* for the sake of discussing the three possibilities in *samāsa*.

Now the doubt is clarified as to how the *nañ* which is a *dyotaka* in a sentence becomes a *vācaka* when compounded. In compounds like *niṣkauśāmbiḥ* and *atikhatvaḥ*, the *avyayas nir* and *ati* express the meaning, ‘one who has left *Kauśāmbi*’ and ‘one who has gone beyond the cot’. In this manner, though *nañ* being an *avyaya* is a *dyotaka* in a sentence, expresses another meaning, having taken up a *vṛtti*, and so is a *vācaka*.

²¹⁷ ‘*nirviśeṣam na sāmānyam bhavecchaśaviṣāṇavat*’ – S.V. Ākṛtivāda 8,10

5.2.2.2. Three possibilities

Viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya bhāva can be applied on *nañ* and the other word in the compound reversibly, which gives rise to three possibilities –

1. When *brāhmaṇa* is *viśeṣaṇa* and *nañ* is *viśeṣya* – *pūrvapadārthaprādhānya*;
2. When *brāhmaṇa* is *viśeṣya* and *nañ* is *viśeṣaṇa* – *uttarapadārthaprādhānya*;
3. When both are *viśeṣaṇas*, then it is *anyapadārthaprādhānya*.

At first, Hari takes up the case of *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*. The meaning of the principal word *brāhmaṇa* does not change whether it denotes Bhāva or Abhāva. The presence of *nañ* brings out this *viśeṣa*, just as how the formerly unspecified cloth, becomes specifically described as ‘*śuklaṃ vastram*’. If we utter *vṛkṣaḥ*, our intention is not grasped until we say *asti* or *nāsti*. Therefore, the use of *nañ* gives us the understanding of a person who is not a *brāhmaṇa*.

On seeing a *kṣatriya*, due to similarity and/or *durupadeśa/mithyājñāna* etc., the mind thinks that he is a *brāhmaṇa*. But on realising the truth, it cancels the *upacārasattā* and instead brings in the notion, ‘*abrāhmaṇo ’yam kṣatriyaḥ*’. This is the point of application of *nañ*. From this expansion of the activity of *nañ*, we also understand that *nañ* does not just negate the second word’s sense in a *samāsa*, but also gives us the implied meaning, ‘*tatsādṛśye tadbhinnaḥ*’, i.e., one who is similar yet different from a *brāhmaṇa*. That’s why a person asked to bring an ‘*abrāhmaṇa*’ brings a *kṣatriya* & c., not a stone etc.

Without having a definable referent, it is simply impossible to talk of Abhāva independently. Therefore, to make it possible, for our

mind to cognise the absence, we first think of *brāhmaṇa* and then negate it using *nañ*. Elaborating on the sentence from the Bhāṣya – ‘*athavā sarve ime śabdāḥ guṇasamudāyeṣu vartante...avayaveṣvapi vartante*’ in Kārikā 264, Bhartṛhari says, though words denote the totality of qualities or attributes, at times they are used to denote only a part of them. If it is said, ‘*tailaṃ bhuktam*’, ‘*ghṛtaṃ bhuktam*’, it does not mean that the entire amount of oil or ghee was consumed, rather that some of it was consumed.

By analogy, the *nañ* in *abrāhmaṇa* brings out a few attributes that belong to a *brāhmaṇa*, like *tapah*, *śrutam*, and good conduct, which are observed in a *kṣatriya*. Reversibly, a *brāhmaṇa* who does not possess these qualities, being only a *jāti-brāhmaṇa* (a *brāhmaṇa* by birth), may also be called an *abrāhmaṇa*. Likewise, in ‘*kṛtaḥ kaṭaḥ*’, although the mat is yet to be completed, using certain indications, it is asserted that the mat is made²¹⁸. If the logic that ‘*sarve śabdāḥ guṇasamudāyeṣu vartante*’ is applied, the principal word *brāhmaṇa* will express *mukhya-brāhmaṇa*, i.e., one who has all the qualities. The purpose of *nañ* is to negate this sense and instead apply the *nyāya* ‘*kvacid avayaveṣvapi vartante*’, to get the *amukhya* sense of *brāhmaṇa*, thus denoting one who has a few attributes.

In *kārikā* 269, Hari observes, that invariably, every *brāhmaṇa* lacks one or the other quality, and so due to the non-perception of difference between an *abrāhmaṇa* and *brāhmaṇa*, *nañ* is rendered meaningless. Both the words become synonymous. This makes Pāṇini’s effort in creating a *Sūtra* ‘*nañ*’ appear in vain.

²¹⁸ Refer ‘*vartamānasāmīpye vartamānavadvā*’ - P.S. 3-3-131

A solution to this situation is offered – The role of *nañ* is only in accommodating the conceived idea (that the *samāsa* denotes one who is similar yet different from a *brāhmaṇa*) without nullifying the actual sense of the word.

The four ‘*pravṛtti-nimittas*’ of a word are – *jāti*, *guṇa*, *kriyā* and *saṃjñā*. When the word *brāhmaṇa* in the *samāsa* is said to not signify *brāhmaṇatva* (because *guṇa-samudāya* leads to the concept of *jāti*, and here the word is assumed to denote only a part), then it loses a *pravṛtti-nimitta* – *jāti*, without which the word cannot function. Then again, if the word *brāhmaṇa* itself has the potential to express both the senses, like the word *ārāt* discussed before, why use *nañ* at all? For, even if *nañ* is a *vācaka*, it cannot completely negate the *mukhyārtha*, thus necessitating a separate explanation that *nañ* annuls the *padārtha*. This paves the way for *nañ* to be accepted as a *dyotaka*.

Even if a word can signify two mutually contradictory meanings, only the prominent meaning is cognised. For instance, following the principle, ‘*dhātūnām anekārthatvam*’, the verb ‘*sthā*’ denotes both senses ‘to stay’ and ‘to leave’, the former being more prominent. The latter sense is understood only if the *upasarga* ‘*pra*’ is added, which acts as a *dyotaka*, as in *prasthānam* or *pratiṣṭhate*. In *abrāhmaṇa* too, *nañ* acts as a *dyotaka* and illuminates the secondary meaning over and above the prominent meaning.

Further, the following doubt is raised: Why all the complication of using the word *brāhmaṇa*, setting aside its *mukhyārtha* and then using *nañ* to express a *kṣatriya* etc., who is similar yet different from a *brāhmaṇa*? Instead can’t we directly use the word *kṣatriya* etc? To this, Bhartṛhari answers, that it is dependent upon the intent

(*vivakṣā*) of the speaker. If he/she intends to emphasise that the *kṣatriya* is not a *brāhmaṇa*, the word *abrāhmaṇa* is used; or due to *durupadeśa* or *mithyājñāna*, a person conceived as a *brāhmaṇa* is again cognised as a *kṣatriya* on realising his *jāti*.

A word such as *vrkṣaḥ* conveys its sense to our mind indifferent to *Bhāva* or *Abhāva*. To make out this difference, a qualifier such as *san* or *asan* is required. Because the meaning of the *samāsa* is taken to be '*tatsādrśye tadbhinnatvam*', a word like *abrāhmaṇa* can never signify a stone etc., which lack the least bit of similarity.

5.2.2.3. Advantages in considering *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*

Now Hari proceeds to enumerate certain other advantages in considering *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*. In *anekasmāt*, *anekasmai*, *anekasmin*, '*eka*' being the principal word, has the designation '*sarvanāma*' and so in *pañcamī vibhakti*²¹⁹, gets the suffix '*smāt*'. Likewise, in '*asaḥ śivaḥ*', due to *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*, the *Sūtra* '*etattadoḥ...*' does not apply, in the same manner as it applies in '*sa śivaḥ*'. Another advantage as mentioned in *Mahābhāṣyam* is *aneka*. Here, the word '*eka*' being prominent, even if qualified by *nañ* which negates its meaning, takes on only singular number, though signifying duality or plurality. Just as how the words like *brāhmaṇa* on compounding with *nañ*, are conceived to signify *kṣatriya* and so on, the word *eka* is applied to signify two or more, upon compounding with *nañ*.

²¹⁹ *nasinyoḥ smātsminau* - P.S. 7-1-15

5.2.2.4. *Prasajya-pratiṣedha* and *Paryudāsa*

The two applications of *nañ*, viz, *Prasajya-pratiṣedha* and *Paryudāsa*, are shown using the example of *aneka*. *Prasajya* means *vidhāya*, having enjoined. After enjoining *ekatva* on two or more numbers due to error, when one realises the mistake and uses *nañ* to negate (*pratiṣedha*) that *ekatva*, it is called *Prasajya-pratiṣedha*.

In the sentence, ‘*na ekaḥ gacchati*’, the word *eka* signifies two or more numbers without losing its own meaning. Similarly, in *samāsa* too, *eka* being *pradhāna* signifies duality/plurality without losing its *ekavacanam*. Analysing the two components in *aneka*, *eka* signifies ‘*āropita-ekatvam*’, while *nañ* negates this. Because *āropita-ekatvam* also contains *ekatva*, it should get singular number only.

To demonstrate how *Paryudāsa* acts, we are given the example, ‘*aśuklaḥ* - non-white’. The role of *nañ* does not stop with negating white colour. The *samāsa* signifies other colours apart from white, like black. In the same manner, the role of *nañ* in *aneka* is not limited to denoting just the absence of oneness, it also expresses other numbers of two or more. This is *Paryudāsa*.

The difference between the two is explained using the example, ‘*āsaya śāyaya bhojaya anekam*’. The *kriyās āsaya* etc expect an instrument (*kāraka*), and the case being imperative indicates a *karma-kāraka*, and so the verb relates to *ekam*. After applying (*prasajya*) the verb to *eka*, it is cancelled (*pratiṣedha*). Then because the verb anticipates an object (*karma*), the two or more numbers are brought in to relate with the said actions. Whereas in *Paryudāsa*, such a complicated process is done away with. There is no question of doubt, because the *samāsa* directly denotes two or more numbers,

without depending on the *kriyā*. Hence it is obvious that while *Prasajya-pratiṣedha* is an indirect method, *Paryudāsa* is a direct method of arriving at the same connotation. The former necessitates *vākyabheda/asamastha-samāsa*, while there is *ekavākyatā* in the latter.

If it be said that in the presence of a *kriyā* or *guṇa*, negation acts in the mode of *Prasajya-pratiṣedha*, then in either's absence, how do we understand the action of *nañ*? To this, Hari answers, just as how a *kriyā* anticipates a *kāraṇa* (*dravya*), a *dravya* (*siddha*) also expects a *kriyā* (*sādhya*)²²⁰. So, even if *aneka* is uttered without a verb, it attracts a general verb such as *asti* or *tiṣṭhati*, thereupon giving scope for *Prasajya-pratiṣedha*. *Paryudāsa* is anyhow applicable. Same analogy is followed in sentences too, as seen in this example – ‘*na na ekaṃ priyaṃ, na na ekaṃ sukhaṃ śatroḥ*’, where the verb is not mentioned. Therefore, applying ‘*tatsādṛśye tadbhinnatvam*’ to *aneka*, we get: *ekabhinna* – other than one, *ekasādṛśa* – similar to one (i.e., other numbers), which gives the meaning – two or more numbers.

How come when *ekatva* is negated, *dvitva* or *bahutva* is denoted, why not any other sense? This is answered by giving an illustration: Āyurveda enjoins us to eat food mixed with oil. But in specific circumstances, if oil is prohibited, ghee is mixed, because it is similar to oil in its greasiness. Milk or curd are not used as substitutes for oil. Likewise, *dvitva* and *bahutva* belong to the same class as *ekatva*: all are numbers. So, when *ekatva* is negated, the natural substitutes will be two or more numbers.

²²⁰ ‘*vākyam tadapi manyante yatpadaṃ caritakriyam*’ – (V.P., Va.K.235)

5.2.2.5. Observations of Bhartṛhari

Wrapping up the discussion on *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya*, Hari ventures upon elaborating the pros and cons of considering *anyapadārtha-prādhānya*. When the *nañ* and *brāhmaṇa* in the compound *abrāhmaṇaḥ* denote a new sense, not belonging to both, as in ‘*avidyamānaṃ brāhmaṇyaṃ yasmin kṣatriyāḍau*’, the prominence would be for the other sense, not of the components themselves. In short, it will lose its character of being a *tatpuruṣa* and end up becoming *nañ-bahuvrīhi*.

But it is observed that in certain cases *tatpuruṣa* also has *anyapadārtha-prādhānya*. Such an example is ‘*śastrī-śyāmā*’. The *vigraha* being ‘*śastrī iva śyāmā*’, both the words signify a different *padārtha* i.e., some girl. This is a *karmadhāraya-samāsa*, a variant of *tatpuruṣa*. Another example is ‘*asāsno gauḥ*’. By this sentence another animal, *gavaya*, is intended. The *nañ* in *asāsnaḥ* doesn’t just negate the dewlap, it also indicates a class of animals without dewlap, but similar to the cow in other attributes. Yet another common example is ‘*khadirabarburau gaurakāṇḍau sūkṣmaparṇau*’. Both the trees have reddish stem and fine leaves. The differentiator is ‘*kaṇṭakavān khadirah*’. *Khadira* having thorns varies from *barbura*. Likewise, by *abrāhmaṇa* also, a different *jāti* (*kṣatriya*) is implied. The word can be used to denote a *brāhmaṇa* also, who having lost many qualities of a *brāhmaṇa*, is similar to a *brāhmaṇa*, yet not one. We observe that here too ‘*tatsādṛśye tadbhinnatvam*’ is purported.

In certain cases, only *sādṛśyam* is observed viz, ‘*avarṣāḥ hemantaḥ*’, which leads to *tādrūpyam*. The *hemanta* season is covered with mist

and is almost like the monsoons, which is also darkened due to clouds.

One of the devices employed to do away with the confusion that arises due to *nañ-samāsa* being *anyapadārthapradhāna*, is that, as a tatpuruṣa itself, *nañ-samāsa* first relates with *brāhmaṇatva* as a *jāti* and then indicates the *anyapadārtha* - *kṣatriya* who is a *vyakti*. This device also benefits other usages such as ‘*aguḥ aśvaḥ*’, which means that a horse is not a cow. When both *nañ-tatpuruṣa* and *bahuvrīhi* have to act at the same locus, it creates a *doṣa* called *sāṅkarya*. To avoid it, considering *jātivīśiṣṭa-vyakti* as the locus of action of *nañ-tatpuruṣa* as in *aguraśvaḥ*, and *matubartha* as the locus of action of *bahuvrīhi* as in ‘*aguḥ - avidyamānāḥ gāvaḥ yasya saḥ*’) is the only solution.

5.2.3. Operation of *Nañartha*

The word ‘*anantarāḥ*’ in the *Sūtra* ‘*halo ’anantarāḥ samyogaḥ*’²²¹’ is being analysed. Is the word ‘*antaram*’ compounded with *nañ* or the word ‘*antarā*’? This question is taken up for deliberation by Patañjali. *Antaram* means a gap or a time unit bereft of any letter. On the other hand, *antarā* means, ‘in the middle’. There is a relation between these two, the former being *ādhāra* and the latter *ādheya*.

The possible *vigrahas* of the *bahuvrīhi* are:

1. *Avidyamānam antaram yeṣāṃ te* – Here, the *ādhāra* is negated, while in the other,
2. *Avidyamānā antarā yeṣāṃ te* – the *ādheya* is negated.

²²¹ P.S.1-1-7

The problem that crops up when the first is opted for is that, in the *padapāṭha* of Ṛksamhitā of ‘*apsviti-ap’su*’ there won’t be *samyoga-samjñā* due to the presence of *avagraha*. Whereas, in the second option no problem arises. But finally, the *bhāṣyakāra* defends the first one, as there is no demerit or merit in ‘*ap’su*’ not getting *samyoga-samjñā*.

Avagraha involves a time unit of $\frac{1}{2}$ a *mātra*. *p* and *s* when uttered immediately should be called *samyoga*. But due to this $\frac{1}{2}$ a *mātra* gap in pronunciation, we cannot call these two halves *samyoga*, due to which there won’t be *pluta* ruled by the *Sūtra* ‘*guroranṛto’nantyasāpyekaikasya prācām*’²²². But the *Sūtra* itself cannot act here, as the basis ‘*dūrāddhūte ca*’²²³ itself is not applicable. And as regards words like ‘*apsavya*’ and ‘*apsuyoniḥ*’, there won’t be *avagraha* for a portion of *prakṛti* and there will be *avagraha* only at the end of the words in a compound (i.e., ‘*apsu’yoniḥ*’). Hence, the *vigraha* ‘*avidyamānam antaram yeṣāṃ te*’ is upheld²²⁴.

5.3. APPLICATION OF THE CONCEPT OF ABHĀVA IN SELECT *SŪTRAS*

5.3.1. *acaḥ parasmin pūrvavidhau*²²⁵

²²² P.S.8-2-86

²²³ P.S.8-2-84

²²⁴ In this *bahuvrīhi*, the words of meaning ‘to be’, which are next to *nañ*, are compounded, and in the compound, they are optionally elided. This is ruled by the *vārtikam* ‘*nañō’styarthānām vā vācottarapadalopah*’ (under the *Sūtra* ‘*anekamanyapadārthe*’). For example - *avidyamānaputrah aputrah* and in the same way, *avidyamānāntarāḥ anantarāḥ*. In general, the meaning of the word ‘*antaram*’ is taken to be impediment, and in this context, *ac* letter is the impediment. Refer Amarakoṣa 3.3.187:

‘*antaramavakāśāvadhīparidhānāntardhibhedatādarthyē*’.

²²⁵ P.S.1-1-57

Even though *ādeśa* is ordained to become similar to the *sthānī*, it does not lose its own properties. Hence the *kārya* pertaining to the *ādeśa* may chance to set in there and it has to be prohibited. For instance, in ‘*vāyvoḥ*’, once ‘*yaṇ*’ comes in place of ‘*u*’, the elision of ‘*y*’ due to the *Sūtra* ‘*lopo vyorvali*’ is possible, but undesired for. To solve this, a discussion follows, that *ādeśa* should be declared *asiddha* as well as like *sthānī*. But both have their faults. At this point, Kātyāyana reads this *Vārtikam*:

‘*kāmamatidiśyatām vā saccāsaccāpi neha bhāro*’*sti* /

kalpyo hi vākyaśeṣo vākyaṃ vaktaryadhīnam hi//’

‘As the sentence depends upon the speaker for its content, the ellipsis in the sentence is to be supplied. There is no difficulty to do the *atideśa* by will – let it be or not be.’

In the usage ‘*sthānivat*’, the mention of the particle ‘*vat*’ allows us to complete the sentence as per our will. For instance, ‘*uśīnaravad madreṣu yavāḥ*’ may be completed by the expression *santi* or *na santi* and the sentence ‘*mātrvad asyāḥ kalāḥ*’ may be completed by the expression *santi* or *na santi*²²⁶. So also, here we may say ‘*sthānivadbhavati*’ or ‘*sthānivanna bhavati*’. Then the problem is solved in *vāyvoḥ*, *paṭvyāḥ* etc. In *paṭvyāḥ* firstly there is *yaṇādeśa* in *ādeśa*, in the same way as it is in the *sthānī* and then there is no elision of ‘*v*’ in *ādeśa* in the same way as it is not in the *sthānī*.

This conclusion by the *bhāṣyakāra* indicates that although it is assumed that *asti* is used when no particular action verb is

²²⁶ In this connection, it may not be out of context to take a leaf from Pūrva Mīmāṃsā (1.1.3.1), ‘*tasya nimitta parīṣṭiḥ*’ that was commented upon by Upavarshacarya that, *nañ* has to be supplemented to this *Sūtra* – ‘*tasya codanārūpadharmasya pramāṇaparīkṣā na kartavyā*’. This is a rare phenomenon and not frequently seen across literature, both *Vaidika* and *Laukika*.

mentioned, there are occasions when the negative correlate is also assumed as in *santi - na santi*.

5.3.2. *Virāmo 'avasānam'*²²⁷

Patañjali brings out the difference in opinion regarding *avasāna-samjñā*. Some say that Abhāva is its characteristic (*lakṣaṇam*) while others say *virāma*. Now the two cases are analysed. If it is held, 'abhāvo 'vasānam', then, it should be read further as 'uparyabhāva' i.e., Abhāva after the word, so that it may not refer to the Abhāva which exists before the word. Kaiyaṭa directly says that this is a pointer to *Prāgabhāva* and *Dhvamsābhāva*. In order to refer to the halt in pronunciation after the sound is produced, the word 'uparyabhāva' will have to be used in place of Abhāva. For, without such specification, the *Sūtra* 'kharavasānāyorvisarjanīyaḥ'²²⁸ might apply in *rasaḥ*, *rathaḥ* etc, *visarga* having a chance to replace 'r' which is undesirable.

If it be 'virāmo 'vasānam', we have to include 'virāme' too, by which we could understand that when there is a halt in sound production, the termination should be known by the name 'avasāna'. But then, the same would apply in the case 'abhāvo 'vasānam', in which case, the *Sūtra* 'adarśanam lopah'²²⁹ will be read as 'abhāvo lopah'²³⁰ and then follows 'avasānam ca' where Abhāva is taken forward as *anuvṛtti*. In the former *Sūtra*, Abhāva is a *samjñā* while in the latter it acts as an *upalakṣaṇam*.

²²⁷ P.S.1-4-110

²²⁸ P.S.8-3-15

²²⁹ P.S.1-1-60

²³⁰ Kaiyaṭa observes – 'adarśanamabhāva ityeka evārthaḥ'.

The *virāma*vādī says, that he too could use the same technique ‘*virāmo lopah*’ and follow it up with *avasānaṃ ca*. By now it seems like *virāma* and Abhāva are synonymous. Hence the objection, that the word *uparivirāma* has to be read, so that the beginning of a word doesn’t come to be known as *avasāna*. This objection is baseless, as the very word *virāma* suggests an ending. *Virāma* may be taken to denote only *dhvamsābhāva*, and thus cannot denote the absence before the word.

Virāma need not always mean cessation of activity. The verbal root ‘*ram*’ does not necessarily mean *nivṛtti* (suspension) preceded by *pravṛtti* (commencement). It may also denote complete inactivity, as in ‘*uparatāni asmin kule vratāni*’ (*vratas* have never existed in this *kula*) and ‘*uparataḥ svādhyāyaḥ*’ (*svādhyāya* has never existed). Here we may observe that –

1. *Atyantābhāva* and *Prāk/Dhvamsa Abhāva*, all are signified by the same root.
2. By telling that ‘*nāvaśyamayaṃ ramiḥ pravṛttāveva vartate*’, Patañjali indirectly hints at ‘*dhātūnāmanekārthatvam*’ and the *upasargas* (*vi/upa*) act only as *dyotakas*.
3. This also suggests that all words express both *Bhāva* and *Abhāva*²³¹.

Now Patañjali strikes at the very foundation of the two aforesaid *lakṣaṇas*: A *śabda* has *Sattā* (existence) and it is self-contradictory to talk of a *virāma* (ending) to it. Kaiyaṭa elaborates: The *Abhāva* talked about should either be self-related or related to another word. The former stance is self-contradictory as it is not proper to impose

²³¹ Refer earlier ‘*santi na santīti*’ in ‘*acaḥ parasmin...*’ and later ‘*asti brahmeti veda cet asadbrahmeti ced veda...*’ in Chāndogya Upaniṣad.

non-existence on something that is existent. Nor can the latter stance be correct, because *ghaṭābhāva* cannot mean *paṭābhāva*.

The purpose of this discussion is to clarify the locus of *avasāna*, whether it is a word or a letter. Thence it must be plainly stated that the final letter of a word gets *avasāna-samjñā*. But such a statement needs no separate enunciation, because the word *avasāna* is well known even to the common man, as also the word *samhitā*. Kātyāyana feels that the two *Sūtras* ‘*paraḥ sannikarṣaḥ samhitā*’ and ‘*virāmo ’vasānam*’ are unnecessary as these *samjñās* are already well known to the world outside *Śāstras* and the object is achieved.

The conclusion is that to an ever-existent word (in *akhaṇḍapada-sphoṭa*), we apply non-existence using an abstract concept of *paurvāparya* of letters.

5.3.3. *striyām*²³²

In the *Bhāṣya* of this *Sūtra*, Patañjali analyses the basis of assigning gender to objects of the universe. In this context, the concepts of *asat* and Anupalabdhi are brought in.

‘*asattu mṛgaṭṛṣṇāvat*’ – *Vārtikam*

Liṅga being absolutely non-existent in a cot or tree, is still comprehended by our intellect just as how a mirage, where there is no water, is still wrongly perceived by the eyes. A section of scholars (Naiyāyikas) object to this example, according to whom we cannot say that the mirage is completely non-existent, as this kind of perception is due to the memory of water previously experienced.

²³² P.S.4-1-3

To satisfy them, Patañjali gives another example, that of a *gandharvanagaram*²³³. It is absolutely imaginary, and its non-availability is widely accepted. Similarly, gender is understood at first, but on deeper analysis, cannot be found in a tree or cot. In both of these illustrations, Abhāva/Anupalabdhi is only of the external object (*bāhyasattā*), the objects being existent/available to the intellect (*bauddhasattā*). Because it is difficult to digest the fact that a non-existent gender is conceived in an illusory manner, now Patañjali reverses his stand and says, let gender be existent, yet non-perceivable, like the movement of the sun. By observing the prior and posterior positions of the sun, its movement is inferred. So also, in a tree or cot, due to its subtlety (*saukṣmya*), gender is not directly perceived.

The many reasons behind Anupalabdhi are enlisted in the Sāṅkhya Darśana²³⁴. In the *Bhāṣya*, a) *atisannikarṣa* (excessive proximity), b) *ativiprakarṣa* (excessively distant), c) *mūrtyantara-vyavadhāna* (obstructed by another object) d) *tamasāvṛtatva* (covered by darkness), e) *indriya-daurbalya* (weakness of an organ), and f) *atipramāda* (negligence), are the reasons given.

The examples for each of these are provided by Kaiyaṭa – a) collyrium in the eyes, b) flying bird, c) gold obstructed by a wall, d) a pit not noticed due to darkness, e) opacity of eye lens, f) mind engaged in another thought.

Those having *yogi-pratyakṣa* (supra-sensory perception) due to *sādhana* can perceive the subtle gender, therefore, *indriya-daurbalya* is the reason behind our non-perception of gender.

²³³ ‘*gandharvanagaram yathā*’ - M.Bh. (P.S.4-1-3)

²³⁴ Refer page 1 of Chapter 4.

5.3.4. *Bhāvinī Samjñā*

In quite a few *Sūtras*, *Bhāṣyakāra* employs the term ‘*Bhāvinī Samjñā*’ i.e., a designation that is used prior to the designate’s coming into existence. In other words, the attributes (name, quality, action) of an existent thing are imposed on its *pratiyogī* i.e., *Prāgabdhāva*. The common example cited by him is that of a man telling a weaver, ‘spin a *Śāṭakam* of this yarn’. Then the weaver thinks, ‘if it is a *Śāṭakam*, there is no need to spin it; if it is to be spun, it is not a *Śāṭakam*; it is contradictory to say ‘spin a *Śāṭakam*’ as there is no *yogyatā* in this sentence. But he has said so anticipating the ‘*Śāṭakam*’. Hence, he thinks it will become a *Śāṭakam* if spun.

Though there is *Prāgabdhāva* of the *Śāṭaka*, the term ‘*Śāṭakam*’ is used keeping in mind the future existence of it. This device is used in Vyākaraṇa Śāstra to settle issues in many *Sūtras* such as ‘*igyaṇaḥ samprasāraṇam*²³⁵’ – The issue is whether the designation *Samprasāraṇa* denotes the meaning of a sentence (*vākyavidhiḥ - yaṇaḥ igbhavati*) or the letter (*varṇavidhiḥ - ik* which replaces *yaṇ*). To support and conclude that the *Sūtra* denotes *varṇavidhi* as well, Patañjali employs the rationale of *bhāvinī-samjñā* by which it is established that the designation *Samprasāraṇa* goes to *ik* which takes the place of *yaṇ*. The name is so used keeping in mind the future substitution of *yaṇ* by *ik*.

5.3.5. *adarśanaṃ lopah*²³⁶

²³⁵ P.S.1-1-45

²³⁶ P.S.1-1-60

The non-appearance of a letter which is supposed to be there is to be known by the term ‘*lopa*’. By the word *adarśanam*, the absence of a letter is understood. In *Bhāṣya*, the following *Vārtika* ‘*sarvaprasaṅgastu sarvasyānyatrādṛṣṭatvāt*’ proves that everything in this world is at some point of time or place absent. All Bhāva things cannot exist everywhere and at all times. If a pot is found inside a room, it means that it is absent elsewhere. But its Anupalabdhi (non-availability) does not mean that it is non-existent. Rather the pot exists elsewhere. This can be connected to the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra ‘*nāsti ghaṭo gehe iti ghasamsargapraṭiṣedhaḥ*’²³⁷ – the presence of the pot on the said locus is negated, not the pot itself.

In the *Sūtra* ‘*pratyayasya lukślulupaḥ*’²³⁸, Nageśa in his Uddyota says that Patañjali’s intention is that the terms *luk*, *ślu* and *lup* stand for *pratyayābhāva* – absence of *pratyaya*. Here, it may be argued in favour of the Naiyāyika stand, that Abhāva being a separate *padārtha*, can be given a *samjñā*, in the same manner as the rest of the 6 *padārthas* are endowed with *samjñā*.

5.3.6. Paspasāhnikam

a.) *astyaprayuktaḥ*

In the very first chapter of Mahābhāṣyam, called ‘Paspasāhnikam’, in the *Vārtika* ‘*astyaprayuktaḥ*’, Kātyāyana feels that there are words which are not in use although existent (formed according to grammatical rules) viz., *ūṣa*, *tera*, *cakra*, *peca* etc. In the previous context of deciding the *sādhutva* of words, *bhāṣyakāra* had

²³⁷ V.S.9-1-10

²³⁸ P.S.1-1-61

established that it depends on usage. Therefore, it implies that those words which are not in usage cannot be correct.

The phrase ‘*astyaprayuktaḥ*’ is self-contradictory. To say that there are words, but not in usage, for, if they are existent, they cannot have fallen out of use, and if they have fallen out of use, they cannot exist. Then, it is argued that there is no contradiction: the words exist theoretically since they are formed from the rules of Vyākaraṇa, but are not in use since they are not used in the world. Further, the sense which the words *ūṣa* etc are supposed to express are denoted by other phrases. For example:

ūṣa – kva yūyam uṣitāḥ

cakra – kva yūyam kṛtavantaḥ

tera – kva yūyam tīrṇāḥ

peca – kva yūyam paktavantaḥ

But still, a one-word substitute is not shown here, as all are phrases. Yet, such words do not become non-existent – they should be treated like the *dīrghasātras*, *yāgas* which are of a hundred- or thousand-day duration. Although they are not performed now-a-days, since they are there in Veda, the authors of Kalpaśāstra (*yājñikas*), following Veda, recorded the same. Moreover, certain words that are out of use here may be current in another region. Effort must be put to find out such usages before labelling such words as *asādhū*. At this point, Patañjali describes the amazing scope of word usage. The earth with its seven continents, three worlds, four Vedas with their *aṅgas* and Upaniṣads of manifold varieties, Yajurveda with 101 branches, Sāmaveda with 1000 branches, Ṛgveda with 21 branches,

Atharvaveda with nine branches, Vākovākyam²³⁹, Itihāsa, Purāṇas and works on Medicine etc. Without knowing all this, it is but too bold to say ‘*santya prayuktāḥ*’. More illustrations are given in support of words and their varied usages –

- The root ‘*śav*’ is used in the sense of ‘to go’ in Kamboja, as in ‘*śavati*’, while elsewhere in Aryāvarta, it is used only in the meaning of a dead body.
- The roots ‘*ham*’ and ‘*raṁh*’ are used in Saurāṣṭra and middle-east regions, while Aryas use ‘*gam*’.
- And the very words *ūṣa*, *tera*, *cakra*, *peca* etc., are found in the Ṛgveda –

‘saptāsye revatīrevadūṣa/ yadvo revatī revatyām tamūṣa/ yanme naraḥ śrutyam brahma cakra^{240/}

yatrā naścakrā jarasaṁ tanūnām^{241/}

From the above discussion, we can glean the concept that Abhāva cannot be considered independently, at the level of *vyavahāra*. It always presupposes existence (Bhāva). In fact, Abhāva of a word in a certain place expects the existence of the word in another place²⁴². Thus, Abhāva can be defined only w.r.t the limiting factors like place, object, time etc. Atyantābhāva (absolute non-existence) is unknowable.

²³⁹ Vākovākyam is a section of a text (verse form) in the format of a conversation or dialogue. In fact, there is an auxiliary text of the Yajurveda itself called ‘*vākovākyam*’. One example of such a verse is from the Hanumannāṭakam – ‘*re re vānara ko bhavān ahamare tvatsūnuhantāhave...*’

²⁴⁰ R.V.1/165/11

²⁴¹ R.V.1/89/9

²⁴² Even in *Pāṇinīya* and *Bhāṣya*, there are different usages of words outside the usual norm – as in, ‘*tasya vyākhyāna (vyākhyānam) iti ca vyākhyātavyanāmnah*’ in P.S.4-3-66; in ‘*bhūte*’ – P.S.3-2-84, ‘*ko’sau anumānah*’

b.) *asandehaḥ*

In the context of elaborating on the 5 main *prayojanas* of Vyākaraṇa Śāstra, Kaiyaṭa explains - *asandehaḥ* (absence of doubt), does not mean *Pradhvamsābhāva* (doubt that existed and then is destroyed due to the knowledge of Vyākaraṇa); it means *Prāgabhāva* (prior non-existence of doubt)²⁴³. Here Nāgeśa explains, that the *pratyaya* ‘*aṇ*’ which is enjoined by the *Sūtra* ‘*tadadhīte tadveda*’ to form the word ‘*vaiyākaraṇa*’, is to be understood only to denote ‘*vedanārtha*’ (one who knows); not ‘*adhyayanārtha*’ (one who studies). So, if a scholar of Vyākaraṇa has some doubt in a particular topic, he is to be considered as an ‘*avaiyākaraṇa*’ in that aspect²⁴⁴.

5.4. DISCUSSIONS ON ABHĀVA IN LATER TEXTS

Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, who was one of the foremost among later Vaiyākaraṇas, was strong in his opinion that *uttarapadārtha-prādhānya* is to be upheld in a *nañ-tatpuruṣa samāsa*. This can be understood from his conviction in all his works, like the Śabdakaustubha, Prauḍhamanoramā and Siddhāntakārikā.

‘*nanvevaṃ nañtatpuruṣasya uttarapadārthapraḍhānyamityādi bhajyeranniti cenna, pūrvapadadyotyam prati prādhānyamiti tadarthāt*’ - Śabdakaustubha;

²⁴³ ‘*sandehasya prāgabhāvo*’tra draṣṭavyo na tu pradhvamsābhāvaḥ / *nahi vaiyākaraṇasya samśaya utpadya vinaśyati, itarasyaiva tu tadutpādāt* / - M.Bh. Paspasāhnikam – Pradīpa

²⁴⁴ ‘*yasya tvadhītavaiyākaraṇasyāpi kvacit sandehaḥ, sa tadviśayakavaiyākaraṇatvābhāvavāneva, vedanārthe hi tatra pratyayaḥ*’ / - M.Bh. Paspasāhnikam – Uddyota

‘tattu yathāyatham ārthikārtham abhipretya kathañcinneyam/ sarvathā’pi nañsamāsasyottarapadaprādhānyam bhāṣyoktam nānyathayitavyam/’ - Prauḍhamanoramā;

Haridīkṣita, in his commentary on the above statement clarifies further -

‘āropitatvabodhottaram prakaraṇāditātparyagrāhakavaśān mānasastadarthabodhaḥ iti bhāvaḥ/’ - Śabdaratna.

The Siddhānta-kārikā of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita reiterates the theory of *bhāṣyakāra*, that in a *nañ-tatpuruṣa*, there is *uttarapadārthaprādhānya*, wherein the *nañ* particle acts as a *dyotaka*, illuminating the meaning ‘*āropitatva*’ in the principal word, and due to which *sarvanāma-samjñā* is achieved, without which words such as *asaḥ* will not be formed, like *atisarva*²⁴⁵. A discussion that finds place in the Vācaspatyam, also supports *uttarapadārthaprādhānya* - In the sentences ‘*atvaṃ bhavasi*’, ‘*anahaṃ bhavāmi*’ etc., if *Abhāva* is taken as the *viśeṣya*, then according to the P.S. ‘*yuṣmadyupapade samānādhikaraṇe sthāninyapi madhyamaḥ*’, the sentence would be improper.

It is also clearly stated that *Abhāva* is the principal meaning of *nañ*²⁴⁶, although other 5 related meanings which are mentioned in the verse ‘*tatsādrśyamabhāvaśca...*’ are also to be considered based on the context. The Śabdacintāmaṇi reiterates this fact – ‘*abhāva eva naño mukhyārthaḥ*’. The following are the examples of the six enlisted by Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa in his Bhūṣaṇasāra:

- *sādrśyam - abrāhmaṇaḥ*

²⁴⁵ *nañsamāse cāparasya prādhānyāt sarvanāmatā/ āropitatvaṃ nañdyotyam na hyaso pyatisarvavat//* -S.Ka.40

²⁴⁶ *abhāvo va tadartho’stu bhāṣyasya hi tadāśayāt/* -S.Ka.41

- *abhāva – apāpam*
- *anyatvam - anaśvaḥ*
- *alpatvam – anudarā kanyā*
- *aprāśastyam – apaśavo vā 'nye go 'śvebhyaḥ*
- *virodha - adharmah*

In the Laghumañjūṣā, Nāgeśa says, that in a sentence like ‘*ghaṭo nāsti*’, *nañ* is a *vācaka*, while in the *samāsa* ‘*aghaṭaḥ*’ or even in ‘*nānuyājeṣu*’, it acts as a *dyotaka*. It illuminates the secondary meaning of ‘*āropitatvam*’ as discussed earlier. When *nañ* is not in a compounded state, then its meaning is only *Abhāva*.²⁴⁷ He goes into a detailed discussion about *nañartha* bringing in the theories of the Mīmāṃsakas and the Naiyāyikas, in the chapter ‘*nīpātārthanirūpaṇam*’.

Even in the *Paribhāṣenduśekhara*, during the discussion of the *Paribhāṣā* ‘*nañivayuktamanyasadṛśādhikaraṇe tathāhyarthāvagatiḥ*’, Nāgeśa says, that ‘*tatsādṛśye tadbhinnatvam*’ as applied in worldly usages like *abrāhmaṇa* to mean a person who is similar to a *brāhmaṇa* at the same time different, like a *kṣatriya*, is also applied in *Śāstra*, in *Sūtras* like ‘*bhṛśādibhyo bhuvyacveḥ*’, where *acviḥ* means something that is like a *cvyanta* at the same time different from it. He also quotes the *Bhāṣyakāra*, ‘*na hi abrāhmaṇamānayetukte loṣṭamānīya kṛtī bhavati*’.

²⁴⁷ *asamaste tvabhāvo nañarthaḥ* - *Nañarthanirṇayaḥ*, Laghumañjūṣā

The Medinī-koṣa as quoted in the Śabdakalpadruma²⁴⁸, goes on to include two other meanings for *nañ*, in place of *aprāśastyam* – ‘*nañabhāve niṣedhe ca svarūpārthe’pyatikrame/*

īṣadarthe ca sādṛśye tadviruddhatadanyayoḥ//’

Thus, the concept of Abhāva finds its application in various forms in different texts of Vyākaraṇa Śāstra – the four types given by the Naiyāyikas, *Pratiṣedha* and *Paryudāsa*, the six meanings of the particle *nañ*. However, at the metaphysical level, Bhartṛhari dismisses Abhāva, as according to Vedānta, Bhāva or Brahman is the sole truth.

²⁴⁸Pg. 818, Vol.2.

Chapter 6: CONCLUSION

The preceding chapters dealt with the delineation of the concept of Abhāva at various levels, across the *Āstika Darśanas*, such as Vaiśeṣika, Nyāya, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, Advaita Vedānta, Dvaita Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Vyākaraṇa, and Bauddha Darśana which is *Nāstika* (came in the form of *Pūrvapakṣa* for the Naiyāyikas, Mīmāṃsakas and Vedāntins).

6.1. *SIDDHĀNTAS* ON ABHĀVA

Following are the *Siddhāntas* on Abhāva put forth by each system of philosophy:

6.1.1. Vaiśeṣika –

All objects of knowledge can be broadly classified into *sat* and *asat*. The *sat-padārthas* can be divided into six categories beginning with *Dravya* etc. *Asat* is of four kinds – *Prāgabhāva*, *Pradhvamsābhāva*, *Anyonyābhāva* and *Atyantābhāva*. *Atyantābhāva* is absolute non-existence, like that of ‘absence of color in air’. The earliest known commentator, Praśastapāda, states that *Anumāna* is the means of cognition of Abhāva, but some later commentators try to establish the *Pramāṇa* as *Pratyakṣa*.

6.1.2. Nyāya –

All objects of knowledge are classified into seven *Padārthas* from *Dravya*..., to Abhāva. The four-fold classification continues, with further divisions coming out of the differences in opinion among various Naiyāyikas. Abhāva is broadly divided into two –

Samsargābhāva and *Anyonyābhāva*. The former is again said to be of three kinds - *Prāgabhāva*, *Pradhvamsābhāva* and *Atyantābhāva*. This move is to establish that all the three are strictly relational absences only, and there is no scope to explain *Atyantābhāva* especially, as absolute non-existence. This way, an instance like ‘*bhūtale ghaṭo nāsti*’ is also to be considered as *Atyantābhāva*. Predominantly *Pratyakṣa* and according to some Naiyāyikas, *Anumāna*, are the means of cognition of Abhāva. There is a remarkable elevation in the position of Abhāva and as a topic of incessant discussion, intensified by Navya-Naiyāyikas, in their mission to defend their theories on Abhāva from Bauddha attacks. Through this period, we also see Abhāva transition from being an entity of ontological importance to that of logical and linguistic importance, mainly due to the development of the terse Navya-Nyāya language. The Dvaita school of Vedānta, in accordance with their notion of *atyantabheda*, follow the Nyāya theories, as far as Abhāva is concerned.

6.1.3. Pūrva Mīmāṃsā –

Here, there is a marked difference of opinion among the Bhāṭṭas and Prābhākaras. For the latter, Abhāva is just ‘*adhikaraṇasvarūpa*’ (mere locus), and does not qualify to be an entity. The Viśiṣṭādvaitins follow the Prābhākaras. Whereas, for the Bhāṭṭas, Abhāva is very much an entity (*vastu*), and a separate means of cognition, *Anupalabdhi*, is required to cognize this *vastu*. Kumārila also explains the need for such an understanding, towards the proper application of *Vedavākyas* and performance of rituals.

6.1.4. Advaita Vedānta –

Though by the dictum ‘*vyavahāre bhāṭṭanayaḥ*’, in worldly matters, Advaita follows the theories set forth by Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, in *Pāramārthika* stage, they consider Abhāva as *tuccha* (unreal and insignificant). The real ultimate truth is Bhāva, or Brahman, which is pure existence. There is no place given for Abhāva as a metaphysical entity. It is quite interesting to note, that Abhāva itself is denied, as if it is accepted, then that would also be an existent entity, and that would entail it to be included under Bhāva/*Sattā* (existence), which is self-contradictory. Whatever is absolutely non-existent, like *vandhyāputra* or *śaśaśṛṅga* is unreal and not an eligible subject for discussion.

6.1.5. Sāṅkhya and Yoga –

As everything is considered existent (only *sat* and no *asat*), Abhāva is not an object of knowledge. The only way they come close to the idea, is by enumerating the causes of non-perception (*Anupalabdhi*) of existent things. However, this *Anupalabdhi* is different from the *Pramāṇa* discussed by the Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṃsakas. In Yoga too, the idea of Abhāva comes into use, to explain two *vṛttis* – *Vikalpa* and *Nidrā*. Apart from that, there is no further discussion on it.

6.2. OBSERVATIONS

6.2.1. Observations of similarities and dissimilarities between the *Darśanas*:

1. Advaita and Nyāya – consider existence and non-existence in terms of reality and unreality, if we compare the

Śāṅkarabhāṣyaṃ on ‘*nāsato vidyate*’ (Bh.G.) and the Nyāyavārtikaṃ.

2. Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā – Both the Nyāyavārtika-tātparyatīkā and Ślokavārtikaṃ divide the *Pramāṇas* on the basis of Bhāva and Abhāva. Vācaspati Miśra’s statement gives strength to the Bhāṭṭa’s theory of sixth *Pramāṇa* -Anupalabdhi.
3. It is universally accepted across *Darśanas*, that Abhāva is revealed through Bhāva / *asat* revealed through *sat*. This could also be interpreted as unmanifest revealed by manifest, which is its effect.
4. Nyāya and Advaita - The discussion and analysis of Abhāva was quite minimal in Prācīna Nyāya until after Udayana, who has said - ‘the categories of non-being are to be mentioned only for treatment’s sake, and this is very much achieved by the treatment of the locus of their opposites (*Pratīyogī*)’. Naiyayikas hold that every experience has its counterpart in the external world. Thus, when we say, ‘absence of a pot on the ground’, the non-existence of the pot should have an objective reality, unlike the ‘hare’s horn’ or ‘sky-flower’ which are unreal. This is in contrast to the understanding of what is real and unreal by Advaita.
5. Nyāya/Vaiśeṣika/Vyākaraṇa - Idea of *Atyantābhāva* in Vaiśeṣika as presented by Sṛīdhara is more akin to the Vaiyākaraṇa understanding. However, there is no common

definition of it followed standardly by the Naiyāyikas, who define it variously on a contextual basis.

6. Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika/ Mīmāṃsā - As a metaphysical entity, Abhāva is elevated by the Naiyāyikas and some Vaiśeṣikas alone, as the key to *niḥśreyasa* or the ultimate requirement ('*paramapurūṣārthasvarūpa*' – as described by Sāyaṇa Mādhava). Even the Mīmāṃsakas consider *Niṣedhas* in *Vedavākyas* as equally contributing to *Puruṣārtha*, on a par with *Vidhis*.
7. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika - Although the later Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika texts vociferously uphold that negation is known through *Pratyakṣa Pramāṇa*, the cause of cognition given by Kaṇāda and Praśastapāda, and the Nyāya Sūtra-Bhāṣya lean towards that explained by Kumārila in the Ślokavārtikaṃ, that it is a mental process, involving sensory perception of the locus of the negation and recollection of the *Pratīyogī*. It is noteworthy, that Praśastapāda puts it under *Anumāna*, which is also permitted by Gautama and early Naiyāyikas, the Vaiśeṣikas accepting only two *Pramāṇas*, the other one being *Pratyakṣa*.
8. Nyāya/Dvaita-Advaita - The necessity of Abhāva for the Naiyāyikas as a metaphysical concept was twofold, arising a) from the fundamental assumption that Mokṣa is negative, b) from its doctrine of *Asatkāryavāda*. Dvaita Vedānta, which

follows their perspective of *atyantabheda*, also gives the same position. However, Advaita Vedānta considers only Bhāva as qualified for metaphysical discussion and dismisses Abhāva.

9. As we progress from Dvaita through Viśiṣṭādvaita to Advaita, we can see the gradual diminution of the metaphysical importance of Abhāva, which is nothing but the fallout of their respective views on reality.
10. Vaiśeṣika allows only '*vartamānadharmā*', to be a positive predicate. *Mṛttikā* may be said to be an *ādhāra* of *ghaṭa*, only after its production and before its destruction. This allows the prior and posterior states to be negatively predicated. But in other *Darśanas* like Sāṅkhya and Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, the perspective changes, seeing being and non-being to be properties (*dharma*) alone, the *sat-vastu* considered ever-existent.
11. Unlike Sāṅkhya and Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika do not accept the doctrine of unity of matter, and is in fact an advocate of absolute difference (*atyantabheda*) between any two things, which necessitates an understanding of *Anyonyābhāva*.
12. The Bauddhas and the Naiyāyikas based their argument on the paramount importance of Abhāva, but differ on the aspect of impermanence and complete destruction.

13. Both the Naiyāyika as well as the Mīmāṃsaka admit that there occurs sense contact with the absence, and the non-cognition of the object, which is the *Pratīyogī*. They differ on the basis of primary causality, whether it is sense contact leading to a perceptual cognition (for the *Naiyāyikas*) or it is non-perceptual cognition through Anupalabdhi or inference, the sense organ being preoccupied with the cognition of the locus of absence (for the Mīmāṃsakas).

14. Although in Vedānta it is said that the unreal never has an existence, only the real being existent; as also that the world of objects is unreal (*mithyā*), then it would follow that Vedānta considers the world to be non-existent which is almost what the Bauddhas posited. But that is not the case, as here, what is meant by existence is permanence – and non-existence is transience.

15. It may be observed that the Sāṅkhya Kārikā itself does not explicitly mention the reasons for Anupalabdhi of non-existent things, and it may be assumed that the later commentators, with a *vāsanā* of other *Śāstras* like Nyāya, included the four additional reasons for cognising *Prāgabhāva* etc. As the Sāṅkhya system considers nothing non-existent, these additional reasons do seem to be unnecessary in their scheme of things.

16. Since only *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna* and *Śabda Pramāṇa* are accepted in Sāṅkhya Darśana, an effort is made by Vācaspati Miśra to reject the Bhāṭṭas' *Anupalabdhi Pramāṇa*, and bring it under the fold of *Pratyakṣa* itself.
17. In the Vedas, the word *asat* denotes various meanings – falsity, untruth, unreality, unmanifest, non-existence etc. While *sat* signifies existence, manifest, truth, reality etc.
18. Bhartṛhari, being a follower of Advaita, speaks mostly from the *Pāramārthika* standpoint on the nature of Bhāva and Abhāva, in *Sambandha Samuddeśa*. At that level, what is meant by both the terms cannot be equated with their meaning in the *Vyāvahārika* level, which is what is the subject of discussion for the Naiyāyikas and others. In *Paramārtha*, Bhāva refers to existence that is eternal in the form of the *Sattā* of all beings, which is ultimately Brahman alone. And Abhāva refers only to absolutely non-existent unreal entities like *śaśaśṛṅga*. Therefore, both are completely unconnected, and cannot be said to be mutually expectant, as this Abhāva has no *Pratīyogī*, nor does the Bhāva have a prior or posterior absence. The four-fold classification is also irrelevant to such an Abhāva.
19. The idea expressed by Kumārila in the *Abhāvapariccheda* of *Śloka-vārtika*, that existence and non-existence are the attributes of every object, is found to be applied in the *Bhāṣya* of 'acaḥ parasmin pūrvavidhau', where the verb is not

specified, both ‘*santi* and *na santi...*’ can be assumed, and also by Bhartṛhari in the course of analysing the word ‘*abrāhmaṇa*’, when he says, that the word *brāhmaṇa* is itself capable of denoting both *padārtha* and *nivṛtta-padārtha*, the *nañ* as a *dyotaka*, only illuminating the latter.

20. The unanimous opinion on *nañartha* is for Abhāva as the primary meaning (*śakyārtha*), while the others like *tadanyatva*, *virodha* etc., are understood through *lakṣaṇā*. *Paryudāsa* is nothing but *bheda* or *tadanyatva*, while *Pratiṣedha* ascertains the prior existence of an injunction (*prasajya*) that is negated. A prohibition operates only after the establishment of that action. It comes into effect only w.r.t a person who is so impelled, and deters him from the act, by pronouncing the undesirable consequences of such an action.

6.2.2. Observations of Differences in terminology -

- In Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya, the words *asat* and Abhāva are used inter-changeably.
- It is noteworthy that in the entire section on Abhāva in the Ślokavārtikam, the word ‘Anupalabdhi’ is not used, instead Abhāva only is used to mean both *Prameya* and *Pramāṇa*.
- In Vedānta, negation is generally addressed by the words *asat*, *tuccha*, *nirupākhya*, *alīka*, etc. We observe that ‘*asat*’ in the context of ‘*asad vā idam agra āsīt*’, is interpreted as the unmanifest Brahman, while ‘*sat*’ is the world of manifestation. This *asat* is different from *atyantāsat* –

absolutely unreal, i.e., sky-flower and so on. Therefore, the word *asat* can be understood not only as Abhāva, but also as unreal, unmanifest etc., depending on the context of its usage.

6.2.3. Reason behind the controversial theories of Naiyāyikas and Bauddhas –

- ❖ Although the Naiyāyikas uphold *Asatkāryavāda*, which only means the non-existence of effect in the cause prior to its production, it does not mean that the sprout is born resulting in the destruction of the seed. Gautama is very clear when he says, ‘*na, vinaṣṭebhyo’ aniṣpatteḥ*’ and ‘*kramanirdeśādapraṭiṣedha*’. Only the previous arrangement of the components of the seed is destroyed, upon the re-arrangement of the same components to produce a sprout. It was the Bauddhas who exaggerated the idea to mean that existence comes out of non-existence.
- ❖ For the Naiyāyikas, intellectual analysis presupposes the existence of an object of the intellect, and it cannot be false because false entities are not objects of the intellect, viz., hare’s horn; this is opposed to the Vaiyākaraṇa stand. As a *Pratīyogī* is required to talk about any absence as real, then in the case of hare’s horn, since there is no such *Pratīyogī* in reality, the only way out is by denying the inherence of the horn in the hare or the horn being part of the hare’s body, as then it would be possible to show a *Pratīyogī*. The common negation called ‘relational negation’ in Nyāya terminology does not bring out natural opposition between two things;

unless a different type of negation which cancels the very reality of its counter-positive is admitted, a satisfactory account of the denial of the non-existent cannot be given. Non-existence for Nyāya is only relational and not absolute or metaphysical. There is no such thing as utter non-existence.

- ❖ In truth, the intention of the Vijñānavādins behind their theory that there is no external reality and that it is all false, is the same as that found in Vedānta, where the entire world of objects is declared to be false, Brahman alone being real. But the logic they use, is rejected by various *Āstika Darśanas* as untenable, as also the reason that they do not admit the authority of the Veda. The Buddha, being more concerned with the alleviation of misery, and disengaging men from their attachments, had set aside discussions on the nature of the self and its existence/non-existence, considering such reflections to be in vain and rather engaging the mind in an unwise chain of thoughts.

6.3. CONCLUSIONS

Upon careful analysis and evaluation of how each system of philosophy has approached and presented their own perspective of the idea of negation, the observations lead to certain findings and conclusions which are laid forth now.

Atyantābhāva -

Not all forms of negation are real. Only those, the *Pratiyogīs* of which are real and are a possible object of cognition, are real

negations. Negations in judgements such as, ‘air has no colour’, and ‘there is no sky-flower’, are not real.

Anyonyābhāva -

Difference can hold true of reality, only if it is a positive entity. Otherwise, in ‘the cow is not an elephant’, the identity of elephant and cow being negated, this identity becomes the *Pratiyogī*, and as explained before, for the negation to be considered real, its counterpart also should be real, and in this case, the identity of cow and elephant is actually not possible. Therefore, as ‘*prthaktva*’ or ‘*bheda*’, it should be seen as a positive entity, to be considered real.

In the cognition of Bhāva and Abhāva, we always have the touch of the other. Neither can we have a definite notion of positive existence without a hidden idea of the absence of everything else, nor is the cognition of negation possible, without a notion of the counter-entity itself.

The multiple ways in which the concept of Abhāva comes into picture in Vyākaraṇa, affirms our hypothesis that the seemingly contradictory perspectives and theories put forth by the various *Darśanas*, are in fact, reconcilable, if seen through the lens of *Vyāvahārika* and *Pāramārthika satyaṃ*. As has been established at the beginning of this chapter, Pāṇini constructed a model of Vyākaraṇa keeping *Vyavahāra* in mind, thereby applying Abhāva subscribing to the ideas of the Naiyāyikas and Mīmāṃsakas, pertaining to *Śāstra*, while, Patañjali and later Bhartṛhari took it forward as a *Darśana*, where *paramārtha* is emphasised in the understanding of Abhāva, along the lines of the Sāṅkhyas and Advaita-Vedāntins.

The arguments put forth by various Indian systems of philosophy on this matter are not altogether conflicting. The root of the differences in opinion on Abhāva is rightly shown to be the varied notions on reality, which have been defined variously by the *Darśanas*, in keeping with their core principles.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

1. **Abhāva** – Non-existence, Absence, Negation, Void, Non-entity, Non-being, Nothingness.
2. **Anupalabdhi** – Non-perception, Absence
3. **Anuyogī** – A term that signifies a relation, Subjunct, First term, Correlate
4. **Anyonyābhāva** – Mutual non-existence, Relative difference
5. **Asat** – Unreal, Unmanifest, Non-existent, False, Transient
6. **Asatkāryavāda** – The theory upheld by the Vaiśeṣikas and the Naiyāyikas that an effect is non-existent in its cause before its production.
7. **Atyantābhāva** – Absolute non-existence, Absence of an object conditioned by space and time.
8. **Bhāva** – Existence, Existent entity, Creation, Created object
9. **Buddhisattā** – Object of the intellect, Abstract entity, Virtual existence.
10. **Pradhvamsābhāva** – Non-existence in consequence of annihilation, Destruction, Posterior absence.
11. **Prāgabdhāva** – Non-existence of an object before its production, Prior absence, Antecedent non-existence.
12. **Pratiyogī** – A term that signifies a relation, Object depending upon the other (anuyogī), Adjunct, Counter-positive, Counter-correlate.
13. **Samsargābhāva** – Absence of any kind of relation or connection, as in space or time, Relational non-existence
14. **Sat** – Existence, Truth, Real, Reality, Permanent, Eternal
15. **Satkāryavāda** – Theory upheld by the Sāṅkhyas, which asserts that the effect exists in its cause prior to its production
16. **Śūnyavāda** – Bauddha theory of absolute non-existence of the external world.

17. **Tuccha** – Vedāntic term for Abhāva, False, Futile, Insignificant
18. **Vijñānavāda** – Bauddha theory that asserts that there is no external reality, and everything is virtual.
19. **Vikalpa** – Term from Yogadarśana that refers to an abstract concept which has no external being, but has the potential to be cognized and signified by Word; similar to Bauddhārtha/Buddhisattā.
20. **Vivartavāda** – Vedāntic theory of causation which speaks of the created world being an apparent transformation or modification of the Supreme Brahman.

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ISSN 0976-3066

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Published with the financial assistance of Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan,
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The Journal of Sanskrit Academy
Volume XXV - 2018
ISSN - 0976 - 089X

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Year : 2018

Copies : 100

Price : Rs 150

Publisher & General Editor

Director I/c,
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