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NĀGĀRJUNA AND THE NAIYĀYIKAS*

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1.1. Nyāya sūtras 2.1.8-11 raise an objection against the earlier claim (1.1.3) that perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), comparison (*upamāna*) and testimony (*śabda*) are means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). They read:

- 2.1.8: *pratyakṣādīnām aprāmāṇyaṃ traikālyāsiddheḥ*
 “Perception etc. are no means of knowledge, since the three times (past, present and future) do not exist.”
- 2.1.9: *pūrvam hi pramāṇasiddhau nendriyārthasaṃnikarṣāt pratyakṣotpattiḥ*
 “For if the means of knowledge were to exist before [its object], perception would not arise from the contact of sense-organ and object (as required by sūtra 1.1.4).”
- 2.1.10: *paścāt siddhau na pramāṇebhyaḥ prameyasiddhiḥ*
 “In case [the means of knowledge] were to exist after [its object], the object would not be known by virtue of the means of knowledge.”
- 2.1.11: *yugapat siddhau pratyarthaniyatatvāt kramavṛttitvābhāvo buddhīnām*
 “In case [both] were to exist simultaneously, mental acts would not occur in sequence (as required by sūtra 1.1.16), since they would be tied to their respective objects.”

The precise meaning of these sūtras is not immediately obvious. Vācaspati, and following him most investigators, ascribe the objection contained in this passage to a Mādhyamika. It is true that sūtra 2.1.10 can be interpreted in a way that reminds us of the arguments used by Nāgārjuna, the first and most important Mādhyamika. It seems typical of his style to point out that [108] a known object (*prameya*) cannot exist without a means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). But it is hard to see why a Mādhyamika should say that mental acts would not occur in sequence in case objects and means of knowledge were to exist simultaneously, as he seems to say in sūtra 2.1.11.

This last sūtra, 2.1.11, gives us the clue to a correct understanding of the set. If we assume that both the means of knowledge and their objects are of a mental nature — are

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mental acts (*buddhi*) — then the simultaneous existence of these two cannot but violate the rule that mental acts occur in sequence, the reason being that the (by assumption) simultaneous objects and means of knowledge are ‘tied together’ (*pratyarthaniyatavāt*).

The main reason to think that this interpretation must be the correct one is that our set of sūtras now come to deal with a problem that had been extensively discussed elsewhere, and there too in the context of the question regarding the existence of the three times. Sarvāstivāda was a school of Buddhism which considered the existence of all the three times — past, present and future — a point of such importance that it derived its name therefrom: *sarvam asti* means ‘everything exists’. The main argument used by the Sarvāstivādins in order to establish their central tenet was precisely this, that two mental acts cannot exist simultaneously (they shared this point of view with Nyāya sūtra 1.1.16); since mental states can be observed, and observation of something non-existent is unacceptable, the conclusion was drawn that also past and future objects exist.

This argument is found in the first chapter (*skandhaka*) of the *Vijñānakāya*, a canonical Abhidharma work of the Sarvāstivādins ascribed to Devaśarman (or Devakṣema; see Takakusu, 1905: opp. pp. 74-75, n. 4) which has been preserved in the Chinese translation of Xuanzang made in 649 A.D. (T. 1539).¹ I shall present, in English translation, the first portion of this chapter (pp. 531a24-b16), in order to show that the argument of Nyāya sūtras 2.1.8-11 can clearly be recognized, in spite of the difference in wording:

The monk (*śramaṇa*) Maudgalyāyana says: ‘The past and the future do not exist; the present and the unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*) exist.’

One must ask him: ‘Yes or no; has it been well said by the most venerable one in the Sūtra, well told, well spoken, that there are three roots of evil: the root of evil which is attachment, the root of evil which is hatred, and the root of evil which is delusion?’

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He replies: ‘Yes.’

One asks him again: ‘Yes or no; are there people who have seen, see now, or will see that the root of evil which is attachment is evil?’

He replies: ‘Yes.’

‘Is the object of vision past, future, or present?’

¹ The first two chapters of this work have been translated into French by La Vallée Poussin (1925).

If he says that [such people] see the past, he must also admit that the past exists. He cannot say that the past does not exist. It would not be proper to maintain that the past does not exist.

If he says that [such people] see the future, he must also admit that the future exists. He cannot say that the future does not exist. It would not be proper to maintain that the future does not exist.

If he says that [such people] see the present, he must also admit that in one person (*pudgala*) simultaneously two mental acts occur together: the one which is seen, and the one which sees. As a result he cannot say that [such people] see the present. It would not be proper to maintain that [such people] see the present.

If he says that [such people] do not see the past or the future or the present, then there are no people who have seen, see now, or will see that the root of evil which is attachment is evil. If there are no people who see this, then there are no people who have become disgusted, are now disgusted, or will be disgusted. If there are no people who are disgusted, then there are no people who have become detached, become now detached, or will be detached. If there are no detached people, there are no people who have become liberated, become now liberated, or will become liberated. If there are no liberated people, there are no people who have reached Parinirvāṇa, reach now Parinirvāṇa, or will reach Parinirvāṇa.

The same argument is repeated over and over again in but slightly differing words throughout the first chapter of the *Vijñānakāya*.

We see that on this interpretation of Nyāya sūtras 2.1.8-11, sūtra 10 does not have to be interpreted in a Madhyamaka way. It now allows of the similar explanation according to which all objects, including mental acts, can only be known with the help of means of knowledge.

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1.2. The objection embodied in sūtras 2.1.8-11 is answered in sūtras 12-16, as follows:

2.1.12: *traikālyāsiddheḥ pratiṣedhānupapattiḥ*

“The rejection [of perception etc. as means of knowledge] is not valid, because the non-existence of the three times [which you use as argument, undermines your own position].”

2.1.13: *sarvapramāṇapratīṣedhāc ca pratiṣedhānupapattiḥ*

“The rejection is also not valid since you reject all means of knowledge. (How then would you know the correctness of your rejection?)”

2.1.14: *tatprāmāṇye vā na sarvapramāṇavipratishedhaḥ*

“Or, if that [rejection] has validity (*prāmāṇya*), there [can] not be rejection of all means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*).”

2.1.15: *traikālyāpratishedhas ca śabdād ātodyasiddhivat tatsiddheḥ*

“Moreover, the rejection of [the existence] of the three times is not [possible], since their [existence] is proved in the same way as [the existence] of a drum is proved on the basis of its sound.”

2.1.16: *prameyatā ca tulāprāmāṇyavat*

“And [the mental acts which are the objects of other mental acts can be] objects of knowledge, just as a balance [which is primarily an object of knowledge] can be a means of knowledge (viz., when weighing things).”

Only the last two of these sūtras need closer attention. Sūtra 15 accepts the existence of the three times, as does sūtra 5.1.19.² The Nyāya sūtras represent for this reason a point of view which is closely connected with that of the Sarvāstivādins, at least in this respect.

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Sūtra 16 has traditionally been read with the following sūtras (2.1.17-18), which raise another objection against the possibility of the existence of means of knowledge. Sūtra 16 then answers an objection before it has been raised,³ an obvious weakness of this interpretation. However, our new understanding of sūtras 8-11 allows us to look upon sūtra 16 as connected with the preceding set. Mental acts have as a rule objects, and are then means of knowledge. In the present context mental acts are discussed which are themselves objects of knowledge (*prameya*). How can this be explained? Sūtra 16 gives the answer: mental acts, though primarily *pramāṇa*, can also be *prameya*,⁴ just as a balance, though primarily *prameya*, can also be *pramāṇa*.

Since now sūtra 16 has been apportioned to the sūtras preceding it, the following sūtras 17-19 can be interpreted as an independent set. They read:

² Ruben (1928: 195 n. 165) suggests that sūtra 2.1.15 is a later addition. The agreement with sūtra 5.1.19 makes this unlikely.

³ This does not seem to be the case anywhere else in the Nyāya sūtras; see however note 10 (???) below.

⁴ All this agrees with the sūtras of *Nyāya Sūtra* 1.1: *pratyakṣa* is *jñāna* (1.1.4); its object is in the cases under discussion also *jñāna*; *jñāna* can be called *buddhi* (1.1.15); *buddhi* is *prameya* (1.1.9).

- 2.1.17: *pramānataḥ siddheḥ pramāṇānām pramāṇāntarasiddhiprasaṅgaḥ*
 “Since the means of knowledge [must themselves] be known by virtue of means of knowledge, there is the undesired consequence that [in order to know a means of knowledge, each time] another means of knowledge is required.”
- 2.1.18: *tadvinivṛtter vā pramāṇasiddhivat prameyasiddhiḥ*
 “Or, in case this [infinite regress] were to stop, the result would be that, like the means of knowledge, also the objects of knowledge would be known [without the help of a means of knowledge].”
- 2.1.19: *na pradīpaprakāśavat tatsiddheḥ*
 “[This is] not [correct], since the means of knowledge are known after the manner of the light of a lamp.”

The meaning of this set of sūtras, and of 2.1.19 in particular, is clear. Just as the light of a lamp illumines both itself and other things, so the means of knowledge bring about the knowledge of themselves and of other things. We shall study below why the traditional explanation of this sūtra took a different direction.

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1.3. The arguments contained in sūtras 2.1.17-19 are repeated in Nāgārjuna’s *Vigrahavyāvartanī* vv. 31 f. I translate vv. 31-33, plus a portion of Nāgārjuna’s own commentary on v. 33 (pp. 128-30/30-32):⁵

[31:] And if according to you all objects are known by virtue of means of knowledge, explain then how according to you those means of knowledge are known.

[32:] If means of knowledge are known through other means of knowledge, then there is infinite regress (*anavasthā*). Neither the beginning nor the middle nor the end are in that case known.

[33:] But if⁶ those [means of knowledge] are [themselves] known without the help of means of knowledge, then the initial position is abandoned. There will be inequality [in treatment], and a special reason must be given for this.

⁵ *yadi ca pramānatas te teṣāṃ teṣāṃ prasiddhir arthānām /
 teṣāṃ punaḥ prasiddhiṃ brūhi katham te pramāṇānām // 31 //
 anyair yadi pramāṇaiḥ pramāṇasiddhir bhavet tad anavasthā /
 nādeḥ siddhis tatrāstī naiva madhyasya nāntasya // 32 //
 teṣāṃ atha pramāṇair vinā prasiddhir vihiyate vādah /
 vaiśamikatvaṃ tasmin viśeṣahetuś ca vaktavyaḥ // 33 //*

[Comm.:] ... *atrāha / pramāṇāny eva svātmānam parātmānam ca prasādhayanti / yathoktam —
 dyotayati svātmānaṃ yathā hutāśas tathā parātmānam /
 svaparātmānāv evaṃ prasādhayanti pramāṇānīti //*

[Comm.:] In this connection [the opponent] says: The same means of knowledge make known themselves and other things. As it has been said:

Just as a fire brightens itself and something else, so the means of knowledge make known themselves and other things.

The *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa*, which is likewise attributed to Nāgārjuna, has a similar passage on Vaidalyasūtras 4-5 (p. 135, l. 11-23):⁷

If it is assumed that without means of knowledge no object of knowledge is established, on what [basis] are the means of knowledge assumed to be established without means of knowledge? Is there a special reason? The inequality must be explained.

Even if you say that all objects are established with the help of means of knowledge, the undesired consequence would be the statement that means of knowledge are established with the help of means of knowledge other than they [themselves]; because the means of knowledge are included among all objects.

If means of knowledge are not established with the help of means of knowledge, then your assurance that all objects must be established with means of knowledge, is violated.

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[The opponent] says:

[Sūtra 5:] Means of knowledge have no means of knowledge (by which they are known). In this respect a means of knowledge is like a lamp: it establishes itself as well as other things.

Just as a lamp is seen to light up itself as well as other things, so do also means of knowledge establish themselves as well as other things.

The *Vigrahavyāvartanī* and *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa* refute at length the view of the opponent, which is the position adopted in the Nyāya sūtras, as we now know.

⁶ ‘But if’ often gives the correct meaning of *atha*, as pointed out to me by Prof. T. E. Vetter long ago; see also Lindtner, 1982: 71 n. 111 (*sin autem*).

⁷ *gal te tshad ma med pas gshal bya grub pa ma yin par ḥdod na gañ gis na tshad ma rnams med par tshad ma rnams grub par ḥdod pa yin te l khyad par gyi gtan tshigs sam mi ḥdra ba ñid brjod dgos so ll gal te yañ don thams cad tshad mas grub par yin no ṣe na l tshad ma rnams de las gṣan pañi tshad mas grub bo ṣes bya bar thal bar ḥgyur te l tshad ma rnams ni don thams cad kyi nañ du gtogs pañi phyir ro ll gal te tshad ma rnams ni tshad ma rnams kyiṣ ḥgrub pa ma yin na ni don thams cad tshad mas bsgrub par bya ba yin no l ṣes bya bañi dam beaḥ ñams pa yin no ll smras pa l*

[sūtra 5:] *tshad ma rnams la ni tshad ma med do l ḥdir mar me bñin tshad ma ni rañ dañ gṣan sgrub par byed pa yin no l*

1.4. It is of some importance to note that the objection expressed in Nyāya sūtras 2.1.8-11, and which had erroneously been attributed to a Mādhyamika, is not referred to in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* and *Vaidalyaprakarāṇa*. It is true that the mutual dependency of object and means of knowledge is discussed in both these works, but the connection with the Nyāya sūtras is only apparent, not real. This will be clear from the following passages. *Vigrahavyāvartanī* vv. 40-51 (pp. 133-38/35-40) reads:⁸

[40:] If in your opinion the means of knowledge are known by themselves, then they are known independently of the objects of knowledge; not is something known by itself dependently of something else.

[41:] If in your opinion the means of knowledge are known independently of the objects of knowledge, then these same means of knowledge are not [means of knowledge] of something.

[42:] But if you think that there is nothing wrong in supposing that those [means of knowledge] are known dependently [of their objects, I reply that in that case] you are establishing what was known already, for something unknown is not dependent on something else.

[43:] For if the means of knowledge are in all cases established dependent upon the objects of knowledge, then the objects of knowledge cannot be established on the basis of the means of knowledge.

ji Itar mar me ni rañ dañ gśan gśal bar byed pa mthoñ ba de bñin du tshad ma rnam kyañ rañ dañ gśan sgrub par byed pa yin no ||

⁸ *yadi svataś ca pramāṇasiddhir anapekṣya tava prameyāni /
bhavati pramāṇasiddhir na parāpekṣā svataḥ siddhiḥ // 40 //
anapekṣya hi prameyān arthān yadi te pramāṇasiddhir iti /
na bhavanti kasyacid evam imāni tāni pramāṇāni // 41 //
atha matam apekṣya siddhis teṣām ity atra bhavati ko doṣaḥ /
siddhasya sādhanam syān nāsiddho 'pekṣate hy anyat // 42 //
sidhyanti hi prameyāny apekṣya yadi sarvathā pramāṇāni /
bhavati prameyasiddhir nāpekṣyaiva pramāṇāni // 43 //
yadi ca prameyasiddhir nāpekṣyaiva bhavati pramāṇāni /
kim te pramāṇasiddhyā tāni yadarthaṃ prasiddham tat // 44 //
atha tu pramāṇasiddhir bhavaty apekṣyaiva te prameyāni /
vyatyaya evaṃ sati te dhruvaṃ pramāṇaprameyānām // 45 //
atha te pramāṇasiddhyā prameyasiddhiḥ prameyasiddhyā ca /
bhavati pramāṇasiddhir nāsty ubhayasyāpi te siddhiḥ // 46 //
sidhyanti hi pramāṇair yadi prameyāni tāni tair eva /
sādhyāni ca prameyais tāni katham sādhayiṣyanti // 47 //
sidhyanti ca prameyair yadi pramāṇāni tāni tair eva /
sādhyāni ca pramāṇais tāni katham sādhayiṣyanti // 48 //
pitṛā yadi utpādyah putor yadi tena caiva putrena /
utpādyah sa yadi pitā vada tatropādayati kaḥ kam // 49 //
kaś ca pitā kaḥ putras tatra tvam brūhi tāv ubhāv api ca /
pitṛputralakṣaṇadharau yato bhavati no 'tra saṃdehaḥ // 50 //
naiva svataḥ prasiddhir na parasparataḥ parapramāṇair vā /
na bhavati na ca prameyair na cāpy akasmāt pramāṇānām // 51 //*

[44:] But if the objects of knowledge cannot be established on the basis of the means of knowledge, why then do you establish the means [114] knowledge? The reason for which you do so (viz., the objects of knowledge) has been established already.

[45:] But if in your opinion the means of knowledge are established as dependent upon the objects of knowledge, there will certainly be an interchange of means and objects of knowledge (since the dependency ought to be the reverse).

[46:] But if in your opinion the objects of knowledge are established by the establishment of the means of knowledge and vice versa, then neither are for you established.

[47:] For if the objects of knowledge are established with the help of the means of knowledge, and those [means of knowledge] must be established with the help of those same objects of knowledge, how then will those [means of knowledge] establish [anything]?

[48:] And if the means of knowledge are established with the help of the objects of knowledge, and those [objects of knowledge] must be established with the help of those same means of knowledge, how then will those [objects of knowledge] establish [anything] ?

[49:] If the son must be begotten by the father, and if that father must be begotten by that same son, tell me, who begets whom in that case ?

[50:] Tell who is the father in this case, who the son, since both have the characteristics of a father and of a son. We are in doubt.

[51:] The means of knowledge are [as a result of all this] not known by themselves, by each other, or by other means of knowledge, nor also by the objects of knowledge or by accident.

Also the *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa* gives an altogether different argument, even where it resembles the Nyāya sūtras closely, viz., in its discussion of the means and objects of knowledge in their relation to time on sūtra 11 (p. 137, l. 21-31):⁹

⁹ [sūtra 11:] *tshad ma dañ gsal bya dag ni dus gsum du ma grub po / tshad ma ni gsal byaḥi don las sña rol du ḥam phyis sam / tshad ma dañ gsal bya dag cig car du yod grañ / de la gal te tshad ma gsal byaḥi don las sña rol du yin na ni gañ gi na de tshad mar brjod par bya ba gsal byaḥi don yod pa ma yin na gañ gi tshad ma yin sñi ci sig tshad mas ñes par byed / ḥon te phyis nas yin na gsal bya yod pa la ci sig tshad mar ḥgyur / ma skyes pa ni skyes paḥi tshad mar ḥthad pa ma yin te / ri boñ gi rva sogs pa yañ tshad ma ñid du thal bar ḥgyur baḥi phyir dañ / ma skyes pa dañ skyes pa dag lhan cig mi gnas paḥi phyir ro // ḥon te cig car ba yin na de yañ srid pa ma yin te / dper na ba lañ gi rva cig car skyes pa dag rgyu dañ ḥbras bur mi ḥthad pa bñin no //*

[Sūtra 11:] The means of knowledge and the object of knowledge are not established in the three times.

Is the means of knowledge earlier or later than the object to be known? Or perhaps means and object of knowledge exist simultaneously. Among these [possibilities,] [1.] if the means of knowledge is earlier than the object to be known, with respect [115] to what has it been called ‘means of knowledge’? When the object to be known does not exist, of what is it then means of knowledge? What is certified with [such a] means of knowledge? [2.] If, on the other hand, it is later, what then becomes a means of knowledge, given the fact that the objects of knowledge exist already? What has not come into existence cannot be a means of knowledge of what has come into existence, because [then] also a hare’s horn etc. would become a means of knowledge, and because what has not come into existence and what has come into existence do not occur together. [3.] Moreover, it is also not possible that they are simultaneous. For example, the two horns of a bull that have come into existence simultaneously cannot be cause and effect.

We know now that it would be wrong to interpret Nyāya sūtras 2.1.8-11 in the light of Nāgārjuna’s arguments, in spite of the similarity. It becomes however understandable that later authors made this mistake.

1.5. We see that there is good reason to think that the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* and *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa* were later than Nyāya sūtras 2.1.8-19. Oberhammer (1963: 68-69) has pointed out that *Vigrahavyāvartanī* v. 69 with commentary shows acquaintance with Nyāya sūtras 5.1.18-20. The *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa* quotes and refers to numerous Nyāya sūtras; see Lindtner, 1982: 87; Williams, 1978: 287f. The conclusion which presents itself is that Nāgārjuna knew the whole of the *Nyāya Sūtra*. We shall see below that this conclusion must be modified to some extent.

2.1. Nāgārjuna’s attack on the means of knowledge did not remain unnoticed. Pakṣilasvāmin, alias Vātsyāyana, the author of the *Nyāya Bhāṣya*, was acquainted with it and remedied it in a twofold manner. On the one hand he reinterpreted a number of the sūtras concerned in such a manner that they now seemed to answer the objections raised by Nāgārjuna. On the other hand he wrote in a passage of the *Bhāṣya* a very competent reply to Nāgārjuna’s arguments.

Sūtras 2.1.8-11 originally raised an objection which drew its inspiration from the Sarvāstivādins; this we know. In Pakṣilasvāmin's interpretation they do something different altogether. Here they embody the criticism [116] contained in Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī* vv. 40-51 and *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa* on sūtra 11. This becomes clear in Pakṣilasvāmin's commentary on sūtra 2.1.10. This sūtra originally raised the point that if a mental act would exist before the mental act whose object it is, it would be known without this latter mental act, i.e., without a means of knowledge. In Pakṣilasvāmin's paraphrase however it means: "When the means of knowledge is not present, by which [means] would the object be known and be object of knowledge? Only with the help of a means of knowledge can an object be known and recognized as 'object of knowledge'." (p. 92: *asati pramāṇe pramīyamāṇo 'rthaḥ kena prameyaḥ syā / pramāṇena khalu pramīyamāṇo 'rthaḥ prameyam ity etat sidhyati /*) This is a more or less satisfactory restatement of *Vigrahavyāvartanī* v. 43 and *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa* on sūtra 11 possibility 2, but has nothing to do with the original meaning of the sūtra, as we know.

Pakṣilasvāmin's explanation of sūtra 2.1.11 is not very satisfying, and this can scarcely surprise us in view of the fact that this sūtra expresses most clearly the original intention of its author. Far more interesting is a portion of the remainder of the Bhāṣya on this sūtra. We find here Pakṣilasvāmin's direct answer to Nāgārjuna, which brings clearly to light the weaknesses in the latter's arguments. It focuses on Nāgārjuna's criticism of the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) and object of knowledge (*prameya*), but could with minor adjustments be used to counter many of Nāgārjuna's arguments. It reads (p. 94):¹⁰

A designation is such and such because the reason underlying that designation is connected with [any one of] the three times.¹¹ Regarding what has been said in connection with sūtra 2.1.10 — viz. that when the means of knowledge is not present an object of knowledge cannot exist [since only] an object known with

¹⁰ *samākhyaḥetos traikālyayogāt tathābhūtā samākhya / yat punar idaṃ paścāt siddhāv asati pramāṇe prameyaṃ na sidhyati pramāṇena pramīyamāṇo 'rthaḥ prameyam iti vijñāyata iti / pramāṇam ity etasyāḥ samākhyaḥ upalabdhihetutvam nimittam / tasya traikālyayoga upalabdhiṃ akāṣṭid upalabdhiṃ karoti upalabdhiṃ kariṣyati / samākhyaḥetos traikālyayogāt samākhya tathābhūtā / pramito 'nenārthaḥ pramīyate pramāsyata iti pramāṇam / pramitaṃ pramīyate pramāsyata iti ca prameyam / evaṃ sati bhaviṣyaty asmin hetuta upalabdhiḥ / pramāsyate 'yam arthaḥ prameyam idaṃ ity etat sarvaṃ bhavatīti / traikālyānabhyanujñāne ca vyavahārānupapattiḥ / yaś caivaṃ nābhyanujñāyāt tasya pācakam ānaya pakṣyati lāvakaṃ ānaya laviṣyati vyavahāro nopapadyata iti /*

¹¹ This sentence is sometimes looked upon as a sūtra; see Jhā, 1939: 121 n. It must certainly be looked upon as a brief statement which is then elaborated in what follows; the same sentence is as a matter of fact repeated in an only slightly different order a few lines later. We witness here another instance of the 'Vārttikastyle' which was current in India during several centuries of the first millenium A.D.; see below § 2.4.

the help of a means of knowledge is conceived of as an ‘object of knowledge’ — [we reply:] The condition underlying the designation ‘means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*)’ is the circumstance that it brings about awareness. That condition is connected with [any one of] the three times, so that it has brought about awareness, brings about awareness, or will bring about awareness. The designation is such and such because the reason underlying that designation is connected with [any one of] the three times. A means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) [is called such] because an [117] object has been known (*pramīta*) by it, is known (*pramīyate*) or will be known (*pramāsyate*) [by it]. And an object of knowledge (*prameya*) [is called such] because it has been known (*pramīta*), is known (*pramīyate*) or will be known (*pramāsyate*). Such being the case, all this is [correct] that [we say] ‘this is an object of knowledge’ [because] awareness of it will occur on the basis of a [good] reason, [or because] this object will be known. And if [the connection of the designation with] the three times is not accepted, ordinary usage will not be possible. For him who does not accept this, ordinary usages like ‘bring the cook, he will do the cooking’, and ‘bring the cutter, he will do the cutting’ will not be possible.

Pakṣilasvāmin also answers Nāgārjuna’s criticism of Nyāya sūtra 2.1.19, according to which the means of knowledge make known both themselves and their objects, like the light of a lamp. Here again he reinterprets the sūtra, in such a way that it agrees with his interpretation of sūtra 2.1.16 which he connects with the same problem.¹² In Pakṣilasvāmin’s interpretation sūtra 16 states that a means of knowledge can at the same time be an object of knowledge. Sūtra 19 is then made to convey this same sense, it being understood (and made explicit in the Bhāṣya) that one means of knowledge is the object of another means of knowledge. Nāgārjuna’s criticism is in this way passed by, but only incompletely. In point of fact, the remark ‘by each other’ (*parasparataḥ*) in *Vigrahavyāvartanī* v. 51 was directed precisely against the interpretation of sūtras 2.1.16 and 19 that Pakṣilasvāmin would give them.

2.2. Pakṣilasvāmin’s refutation of Nāgārjuna was not new. His main point, viz., that the designation of a thing may be occasioned by what it has done or will do in addition to what it does at present, is expressed in Nyāya sūtra 4.1.16, in a section (4.1.14-18) which seems clearly directed against the Mādhyamikas. We read:

¹² This is not the only time that Pakṣilasvāmin disturbs the original and normal order (objection: refutation of objection) by reinterpreting the sūtras. The same appears to have happened in the case of sūtras 4.1.19-21; see Ingalls, 1957.

- 4.1.14: *abhāvād bhāvotpattir nānupamṛdya prādurbhāvāt*
 “Existing things arise from non-existence, since [nothing] appears without destroying [its cause].”
- [118]
- 4.1.15: *vyāghātād aprayogaḥ*
 “[Obj.:] This is not correctly said, because it is self-contradictory.”
- 4.1.16: *nātītānāgatayoḥ kārakaśabdaprayogāt*
 “No, for words expressive of things engaged in activities are used [also] with reference to the past and the future.”
- 4.1.17: *na vinaṣṭebhyo ‘niṣpatteḥ*
 “[Obj.:] [This is] not [correct], since there can be no origination from destroyed things.”
- 4.1.18: *kramanirdeśād apratiṣedhaḥ*
 “This rejection is not valid, since we teach a sequence [of cause and effect].”

It seems impossible to deny the connection of these sūtras with the famous arguments in which Nāgārjuna ‘proved’ that nothing can ever be produced. I give a few verses from the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* in order to show this:¹³

7.17: If there were a non-arisen thing anywhere, it might arise; since such a thing does not exist, what arises?

...

8.1: An existing agent (*kāraka*) does not produce an existing object; nor does a non-existing agent aim at a non-existing object.

8.2: When [the object] exists, there is no making [any more] of it, and the object would be without maker. When [the maker] exists, there is no making [any more] by him, and the maker would be without object.

8.3: If a non-existent agent produces a non-existent object, the object would exist without ground, and the maker would exist without ground.

¹³ *yadi kaścid anutpanno bhāvaḥ samvidyate kva cit / utpadyeta sa kiṃ tasmin bhāva utpadate ‘sati // 7.17 //*

...
sadbhūtaḥ kārakaḥ karma sadbhūtaṃ na karoty ayam / kārako nāpy asadbhūtaḥ karmāsadbhūtaṃ ihate // 8.1 //
sadbhūtasya kriyā nāsti karma ca syād akartṛkam / sadbhūtasya kriyā nāsti kartā ca syād akarmakaḥ // 8.2 //
karoti yady asadbhūto ‘sadbhūtaṃ karma kārakaḥ / ahetukaṃ bhavet karma kartā cāhetuko bhavet // 8.3 //

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There is another discussion with Mādhyamikas in Nyāya sūtras 4.1.34-37:

- 4.1.34: *sarvam abhāvo bhāveṣv itaretarābhāvasiddheḥ*
 “[Obj.:] Everything is non-existence, since in all things the non-existence of the other thing is established.”
- 4.1.35: *na svabhāvasiddher bhāvānām*
 “No, because the own nature (*svabhāva*) of things (*bhāva*) is established.”
- 4.1.36: *na svabhāvasiddhir āpekṣikatvāt*
 “[Obj.:] The own nature is not established, since it depends [on other things].”
- 4.1.37: *vyāhatatvād ayuktam*
 “This is not proper, since it is self-contradictory.”

Dependence on something else is an important argument in Nāgārjuna’s works to show that no own nature of things can exist. We find it, for example, in *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 10.10-11:¹⁴

10.10: The thing which is established depending [on something else], if that on which it depends is established as depending thereon, let it then be established what depends on what.

10.11: The thing which is established depending [on something else], how can it depend [on something] without being established? But if something established depends [on something else], its dependence is not proper.

2.3. The relationship between Nyāya sūtras 4.1.14-18 and 34-37 on the one hand, and Nāgārjuna’s works on the other, raises new questions regarding the chronology of the Nyāya sūtras. Some of them are undoubtedly older than Nāgārjuna, others are younger. Where should we draw the dividing line?

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A solution can be arrived at on the basis of a survey of the topics discussed in the Nyāya sūtras. The very first sūtra enumerates the categories whose knowledge leads to release (1.1.1). These categories are further briefly specified in sūtras 1.1.3-1.2.20.

¹⁴ *yo ‘pekṣya sidhyate bhāvas tam evāpekṣya sidhyati / yadi yo ‘pekṣitavyaḥ sa sidhyatām kam apekṣya kaḥ // 10 // yo ‘pekṣya sidhyate bhāvaḥ so ‘siddho ‘pekṣate katham /*

Subsequently the most important categories are discussed in full detail: doubt (*saṃśaya*: 2.1.1-7), means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*: 2.1.8-2.67), objects of knowledge (*prameya*: 3.1.1-4.1.64), false objections (*jāti*:¹⁵ 5.1.1-38), positions of defeat (*nigrahasthāna*: 5.2.1-24). The means of knowledge and the objects of knowledge are dealt with in accordance with the classifications given initially (2.1.20-66 and 3.1.1-4.1.64). It is clearly visible that the structure of the work as a whole was well thought out, and this supports that it is a unitary creation. However, the structure of the work is disrupted at a few places. One of them is 4.1.11-40, which deals with the rejection of some wrong opinions that hardly fit the context: sūtra 4.1.10 concerns existence after death (*pretyabhāva*), and sūtra 4.1.41 continues with a discussion of the results (*phala*) of action; ‘existence after death’ and ‘result of action’ are two consecutive objects of knowledge enumerated in sūtra 1.1.9.

We see that our two sets of sūtras 4.1.14-18 and 34-37 have the appearance of being part of a later insertion into the text of the *Nyāya Sūtra*. In itself there is nothing unlikely in such an assumption. Nāgārjuna’s attacks had been directed against some of the Nyāya sūtras, and an answer was due. The question which remains is: who added these sūtras?

2.4. There are several reasons to suspect Pakṣilasvāmin, the author of the *Nyāya Bhāṣya*. One reason, admittedly only a minor one, is that the response to Nāgārjuna in sūtra 4.1.16 is exactly the one given by Pakṣilasvāmin on sūtra 2.1.11 in a passage which we studied in § 2.1 above. This reason is only minor because it is conceivable that Pakṣilasvāmin derived his response from those sūtras, in which case those sūtras would antedate him.

But our suspicion of Pakṣilasvāmin is supported by the consideration that the author of a Bhāṣya — usually the first and major commentary on a Sūtra text; see however below — is more than anyone before or after him in a position to determine the final shape of the Sūtra text. There is also reason to think that *bhāṣyakāras* sometimes did not shy away from using these powers. It seems that the Yoga sūtras were collected together by the author of the *Yoga Bhāṣya* (Bronkhorst, 1984: § 1). It is not impossible that Pakṣilasvāmin did the same thing, if on a more limited scale.

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We may not have to go to this extent in order to explain the presence of added sūtras in the *Nyāya Sūtra*. Another explanation may lie in the style of the *Nyāya Bhāṣya*. Like certain other works of the same period, parts of the *Nyāya Bhāṣya* are

athāpy apekṣate siddhas tv apekṣāsyā na yujyate // 11 //

¹⁵ The word *jāti* does not occur in this section; it does occur in the Bhāṣya introducing it.

written in the ‘Vārttika-style’, a style in which short nominal sentences alternate with more elaborate explanations of the former (see Windisch, 1888: 15 f.). This style cannot always be explained by the assumption that two authors produced the text — one the nominal sentences (*vārttika/vākya*), the other their explanations — as was the case in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya*, which contains Kātyāyana’s vārttikas. Rather, the ‘Vārttika-style’ evolved as an imitation of the style of the *Mahābhāṣya* in a time when the double authorship of this work was no longer known (Bronkhorst, 1990).

It goes without saying that the ‘Vārttika-style’ enabled Pakṣilasvāmin to discuss material in his Bhāṣya that had not been mentioned in the sūtras, in a manner scarcely distinguishable from what had found expression therein. The homogeneousness of treatment was enhanced by another peculiarity of Bhāṣyas — it is demonstrably present in the *Yoga Bhāṣya* and in the Jaina *Tattvārthadhigama Bhāṣya*; see Bronkhorst, 1985: § 4.2 —, viz., to treat the combination sūtras + Bhāṣya as a unitary whole. The result would inevitably be that later readers found it hard to distinguish between sūtras and vārttikas. And this is indeed what happened frequently in the *Nyāya Bhāṣya*.¹⁶ It was almost inevitable that where Pakṣilasvāmin deemed it necessary to add discussions of his own, the vārttikas therein would come to be looked upon as sūtras.

All this shows that it is very well *possible* that sūtras 4.1.11-40 derive from the *Nyāya Bhāṣya*. A reason to think that this is what *actually* happened is the following. It is hard to understand why sūtras 4.1.11-40 should follow the one sūtra (4.1.10) which deals with existence after death (*pretyabhāva*): “Since the soul is eternal, existence after death is established” (*ātmanityatve pretyabhāvasiddhiḥ*). Sūtras 4.1.11-24 deal with origination (*utpatti*) of material objects. The connection is made in the Bhāṣya which cites sūtra 1.1.19 (*punarutpattiḥ pretyabhāvaḥ*) and remarks that it is wrong to think that existence after death implies the origination (*utpāda*) of one being (*sattva*) and the destruction of another. This is then reason to continue (p. 286): “If [you ask] how origination takes place ...” (*katham utpattir ici cet ...*).¹⁷

However, there is one important reason to doubt that Pakṣilasvāmin [122] composed sūtras 4.1.14-18. It appears that the *Nyāya Bhāṣya* does not interpret these

¹⁶ Regarding the authenticity of individual sūtras and the question if they are not really part of the Bhāṣya, see Ruben, 1928: 6, 168-69 n. 43 (on 1.1.13), 16 (1.2.11), 25, 186 n. 117 (2.1.19a), 27 (2.1.25), 28, 187 n. 121 (2.1.27a and b), 29, 187 n. 122 (2.1.30), 35 8 2.1.50a), 43 (2.2.12a), 45 (2.2.20), 47 (2.2.28), 49, 193 n. 160 (2.2.36a), 50 (2.2.41a), 52 (2.2.47; 2.2.47a and b), 55 (2.2.57), 60 (3.1.14a), 61 (3.1.16a and b), 64 (3.1.26a, b and c), 67 (3.1.33a, b and c), 70-71 (3.1.47a, b and c), 71 (3.1.49), 73 (3.1.60), 75 (3.1.66), 78 (3.2.9a; 3.2.10a; 3.2.11), 86 (3.2.33a; 3.2.36a), 89 (3.2.42a; 3.2.43a and b), 93, 125-26 (3.2.59), 94 (3.2.63), 95 (3.2.66a), 96 (3.2.67a; 3.2.70), 104 (4.1.28), 105 (4.1.29a, b and c), 108 (4.1.41a), 113 (4.1.56a), 117 (4.2.7), 118 (4.2.8), 126 (4.2.41), 150 (5.2.14a).

¹⁷ Also Jhā (1939: 415 n.) is of the opinion that the only possible connection lies in the remarks of the Bhāṣya. He does not draw the unavoidable conclusion that then Pakṣilasvāmin must be responsible for the position, and perhaps also the form, of sūtras 4.1.11 f.

sūtras as originally intended.¹⁸ This original intention is to all appearances as expressed in the translation above (§ 2.2). Here existing things are said to arise from non-existence, in the sense that the causes of a thing do not exist simultaneously with it, but in immediate sequence with it. Pakṣilasvāmin does not seem to feel at ease with this interpretation. He introduces sūtra 4.1.14 as giving the view of an opponent (*prāvāduka*). He then explains sūtras 14-17 in such a manner that it is not clear to which party they belong; but his explanation of 4.1.18 seems to reject, or at any rate modify, the position of sūtra 14. It reads (pp. 289-90):¹⁹

[Sūtra 4.1.18:] There is no rejection, since we teach that there must be a sequence.

Sequence (*krama*) is the fixed succession of destruction and arising. That [sequence] is taught to be the cause of the arising of an existent thing from non-existence. And that is not rejected. A substance arises not from non-existence, [but] from a new arrangement of parts whose arrangement has been disturbed, when their earlier arrangement has come to an end. The parts of a seed come for whatever reason into action, abandon their earlier arrangement and acquire another one; from this other arrangement the shoot arises. The causes of the arising of a shoot are, as a matter of fact, seen to be its parts and their connections. It is not possible that the parts of a seed adopt another arrangement as long as the earlier arrangement has not come to an end; for this reason there is a fixed succession of destruction and arising, [which is called] ‘sequence’ (*krama*). Consequently existing things do not arise from non-existence. Moreover, there is no other cause for the arising of a shoot than [just] the parts of the seed, and therefore the necessary connection with a seed as material cause is fitting.

Pakṣilasvāmin’s appears to be a qualified agreement with the original intention of these sūtras. This means that if these sūtras were originally vārttikas of his Bhāṣya, at least some of his vārttikas were borrowed from somewhere else.

¹⁸ See Ruben, 1928: 211 n. 248-49.

¹⁹ [Sūtra 4.1.18:] *kramanirdeśād apratiśedhaḥ //*
[Bh.:] *upamardaprādurbhāvayoḥ paurvāparyānyamaḥ kramaḥ / sa khalv abhāvād bhāvotpatter hetur nirdeśyate / sa ca na pratiśidhyata iti / vyāhatavyūhānām avayavānām pūrvavyūhanivṛtau vyūhāntarād dravyaniṣpattir nābhāvāt / bijāvayavāḥ kutaścīn nimittāt prādurbhūtakriyāḥ pūrvavyūhaṃ jahati vyūhāntaraṃ cāpadyante vyūhāntarād ānkura utpadyate / drśyante khalv avayavās tatsaṃyogās cānkurotpattihetavaḥ / na cānivṛtte pūrvavyūhe bijāvayavānām śakyaṃ vyūhāntareṇa bhavitum ity*

In itself this cannot be considered an impossibility. As a matter of fact, [123] earlier authors had come to the opinion that during the time between the original *Nyāya Sūtra* and the *Nyāya Bhāṣya* sūtra-like statements were composed (Ruben, 1928: 88, 150, 215 n. 274, 219-20 n. 299) and that at least some of the vārttikas in the *Bhāṣya* existed prior to the *Bhāṣya* (Randle, 1930: 18-24). Indeed, it is possible that an earlier commentary on the *Nyāya Sūtra* existed (Wezler, 1969a: 200 f.; 1969b: 839 f.) of which some or all of these earlier vārttikas were part.

3.1. We see that the relationship between the *Nyāya sūtras* and Nāgārjuna is satisfactorily explained by assuming that the *Nyāya Sūtra* is a unitary whole apart from the sections which do not organically fit. It is true that it is not easy to answer the question who added the later sections — Pakṣilasvāmin is a likely candidate, but no more than that; this does not however affect the main point.

It is time to pay attention to the suggestion made by Tucci (1929: xxvii) according to which books II-IV of the *Nyāya Sūtra* existed separately as a part of a Vaiśeṣika treatise before it was incorporated into the former. This suggestion was readily accepted by Oberhammer (1963: 70) who likes to see in books I and V an originally separate work on *vāda*. Which is the evidence on which this suggestion is based?

Āryadeva's *Śataśāstra*²⁰ quotes four sūtra from *Nyāya Sūtra* book III.²¹ The commentator Vasu ascribes these sūtras to "the disciples of Ulūka, who recite the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra".²² The *Śataśāstra*, together with Vasu's commentary, was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva in 404 A.D. During the time of Vasu, which must have been the fourth century at the latest, these *Nyāya sūtras* were still part of a Vaiśeṣika treatise; so the argument runs.

I think this argument is without value. I have maintained elsewhere (1981) that the so-called 'Yoga system of philosophy' arose because someone who adhered to the Sāṃkhya philosophy wrote a handbook of Yoga practice which happened to become influential. It seems that the so-called 'Nyāya system of philosophy' arose because someone who adhered to the Vaiśeṣika philosophy wrote a handbook on rules of debate.

upamardaprādurbhāvayoḥ paurvāparyaniyamaḥ kramah / tasmān nābhāvād bhāvotpattir iti / na cānyad bījāvayavebhyo 'ñkurotpattikāraṇam ity upapadyate bījopādānaniyama iti //

²⁰ T. 1569. An English translation of this work can be found in Tucci, 1929. On the correctness or otherwise of the title of the work, see Gard, 1954: 751 f.

²¹ T. 1569 p. 172c19 = NS 3.1.12;
T. 1569 p. 172c21 = NS 3.1.1;
T. 1569 p. 173a14 = NS 3.1.17;
T. 1569 p. 173a27-28 = NS 3.1.7.

²² T. 1569 p. 171b7-8. Note that this ascription is not fully beyond doubt, since the discussion shifts from Vaiśeṣikas to Sāṃkhyas and then presumably back to Vaiśeṣikas, this last shift being made without indication to that effect. See Tucci, 1929: Notes on ŚŚ: 50 ("Here the author refutes again the Vaiśeṣika (Nyāya) point of view").

In both cases expositions of already existing systems of philosophy (Sāṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika respectively) in specific contexts (Yoga and rules of debate) came to be mistaken for basic works on separate systems of philosophy ('Yoga' and 'Nyāya'). This means that the Nyāya sūtras, and more in particular those among them which do [124] not directly deal with rules of debate, could justifiably be called 'Vaiśeṣika sūtras'.

To this must be added that there is reason to doubt that the term 'Nyāya' was in use from the beginning. It occurs nowhere in the Nyāya sūtras. Moreover, the older term for rules of debate and reasoning appears to have been 'Ānvīkṣikī' (cf. Hacker, 1958). The word 'Nyāya' was originally associated with Pūrvamīmāṃsā rather than with 'our' Nyāya (Winternitz, 1920: 423). Pakṣilasvāmin calls the followers of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika 'Yogas' (p. 49, on 1.1.29; cf. Bronkhorst, 1981: 310). And the one time he mentions 'Naiyāyikas' (p. 51, on 1.1.32), he may have Sāṃkhyas in mind (Sadhu Ram, 1958; 15-18). According to Tucci (1929: xxviii; cf. Ui, 1917: 55-56 n. 3) and Lindtner (1982: 250 n. 194) the early Naiyāyikas were sometimes called 'Naya-sauma'.

3.2. We turn finally to a passage of the *Nyāya Sūtra* which has been claimed to argue with the Mādhyamikas. It occurs in *Nyāya Sūtra* 4.2, which deals with knowledge, a subject that does not easily fit at that place. The passage to be considered is therefore of suspected authenticity. A closer inspection reveals that its connection with Madhyamaka is not proven.

Nyāya sūtra 4.2.26 embodies an objection that is answered in sūtras 27-30. The whole set reads:

4.2.26: *buddhyā vivecanāt tu bhāvānām yāthātmyānupalabdhis tantvapakarṣaṇe paṭasadbhāvānupalabdhiḥ tadānupalabdhiḥ*

"But the real nature of things is not known by analyzing them mentally. It is not known, just as the existence of a cloth apart from the [constituting] threads is not known."

4.2.27: *vyāhatatvād ahetuḥ*

"This is no reason [to think so] since it contradicts [experience (?)]

4.2.28: *tadāśrayatvād aprthaggrahaṇam*

"Because [the properties] depend [for their existence] on that [real nature], it is not separately perceived."

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4.2.29: *pramāṇataś cārthapratipatteḥ*

"And [your opinion is incorrect] because things are known with the help of means of knowledge."

4.2.30: *pramāṇānupapattyupapattibhyām*

“Because means of knowledge are either impossible (in which case your argument becomes worthless) or possible (in which case they must be agreed to make know the real nature of things).”

The subject-matter of these sūtras is something which is not separately perceived (28) but apparently only in combination with things that depend on it, and which is known with the help of means of knowledge (29). These sūtras do not, therefore, deal with the atoms which had been discussed immediately before them. The mention of the validity or otherwise of the means of knowledge reminds us of sūtras 2.1.8 f., where this same topic had been dealt with in a confrontation with Sarvāstivāda ideas, as we have seen. The question presents itself if perhaps here again the objection can be understood against the background of Sarvāstivāda beliefs.

This is indeed possible. The Sarvāstivādins, and other Buddhists with them, rejected the belief in a soul (*ātman, pudgala*). This idea applied originally no doubt to living beings alone, but was soon extended, so that everything came to be considered ‘soul-less’ (*anātmaka*) and empty (*sūnya*). We find this doctrine for example in the *Abhidharmahṛdaya* (or *Abhidharmasāra*) of Dharmaśrī (or Dharmaśreṣṭhin),²³ a work which may antedate Nāgārjuna. A passage from the *Milindapañha*,²⁴ in which ‘soullessness’ is demonstrated by showing that there is no chariot apart from its parts, indicates that the denial of a whole as different from its parts was intimately related with the emptiness of things. The Naiyāyikas, on the other hand, accepted the existence of wholes (see e.g. Nyāya sūtra 2.1.30 etc.), and this was additional reason to defend the view that the ‘real nature’ (*yāthātmya*) of things can be known.

Nyāya sūtras 4.2.31-32 are answered in sūtras 33-34. They read:

4.2.31: *svapnaviṣayābhimānavad ayaṃ pramāṇaprameyābhimānaḥ*

“This erroneous conception of means of knowledge and objects of knowledge is similar to the erroneous conception of things in a dream.”

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4.2.32: *māyāgandharvanagaramṛgatṛṣṇikāvad vā*

“Or it is like magic, like a city of Gandharvas, like a mirage.”

²³ T. 1550 p. 818a24-b2. The *Abhidharmahṛdaya* has been translated by Willemsen (1975) and Armelin (1978).

²⁴ II.1.1. Translated in Frauwallner, 1956: 66 f.

- 4.2.33: *hetvabhāvād asiddhiḥ*
 “[Your objection] is without proof, since there is no reason [to think as you do].”
- 4.2.34: *smṛtisamkalpavac ca svapnaviṣayābhimānaḥ*
 “Moreover, the erroneous conception of things in a dream is like in a memory or resolution.”

At first sight the objection of sūtras 31-32 seems to derive from Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 23.8. There the objects of the senses — i.e., colour, sound, taste, touch, smell and *dharma* (the object of mind) — are compared to a city of Gandharvas, to a mirage (*marīci*) and to a dream.

However, dream and the like are old and obvious indications that our perception may sometimes be wrong.²⁵ Moreover, the answer of sūtra 4.2.33 shows that Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* cannot be the source of this objection. Contrary to what this sūtra states, Nāgārjuna gives plenty of reasons to think that the objects of the senses are like dreams etc.

Nyāya sūtras 4.2.26 f. are a continuation of sūtras 4.2.1-25, which primarily establish the existence of wholes (*avayavin*) over and above the parts (*avayava*). Here there is no need whatever to think the opponent is a Mādhyamika; most of the earlier Buddhist Ābhidharmikas, among them the Sarvāstivādins, held the opposite view that wholes do not exist.

4. The main conclusion of this investigation is simple. The *Nyāya Sūtra* existed before Nāgārjuna and was known to him. The terms used in this conclusion must however be specified to some extent. ‘Nāgārjuna’ here is the author of the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* and the *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa*, who, if he be different from the author of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* at all, was certainly not far removed from him in time. The *Nyāya Sūtra* known to Nāgārjuna appears to have been identical with the one known to us, except for at least one portion which anyhow does not fit organically. Only in [127] this added portion do we find that Nāgārjuna’s type of arguments is answered. The absence of such an answer in the remainder of the *Nyāya Sūtra* — a work on rules of debate! — shows that the original *Nyāya Sūtra* was not acquainted with the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, nor with the type of reasoning used therein.

²⁵ See e.g. *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad* 4.2, where a dream (*svapna*) is characterized as ‘faulty vision’ (*mithyādarśana*). The term *gandharvanagara* does not occur in the Buddhist Āgamas, as is confirmed in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra* ascribed to Nāgārjuna (Lamotte, 1944: 370). Perhaps Nāgārjuna used this word under the influence of Nyāya sūtra 4.2.32. Note however that the term seems to have been used in

Another result of our study is the ascertainment of the influence of Sarvāstivāda on the Nyāya sūtras. Nyāya took from Sarvāstivāda at least two important doctrines, viz., the existence of the three times — past, present and future —, and the non-occurrence of more than one mental act at a time in one person. The Sarvāstivādins were apparently for the author(s) of the Nyāya sūtras a school whose ideas still formed a source of inspiration, both positively and negatively.

Pakṣilasvāmin, the author of the *Nyāya Bhāṣya*, was well acquainted with the works of Nāgārjuna, whereas the Sarvāstivādins were no longer of much consequence to him. As a result he reinterpreted sūtras which really dealt with the latter in such a way that they seemed to deal with the Mādhyamikas. He did this so skillfully that apparently all interpreters, both ancient and modern,²⁶ were misled thereby.

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Harivarman's *Satyasiddhiśāstra* (T. 1646, p. 316b3-4) which was composed when Nāgārjuna was ten years of age if the dates proposed by Lamotte (1962: 76) are correct.

²⁶ Note that even Tucci (1929: Notes on VV p. 36-37) and Bhattacharya (1977), who protest against the posteriority of some of the Nyāya sūtras to Nāgārjuna, describe others as responding to Nāgārjuna (or Mādhyamikas). Both agree that *Nyāya Sūtra* Chapter II and the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* are 'interdependent'.

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