

Zeitschrift: Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft

Band: 47 (1993)

Heft: 1: Proceedings of the first international conference on Bhartrhari : University of Poona, January 6 - 8, 1992

Artikel: Once again on the authorship of the Triknd-Vrtti

Autor: Aklujkar, Ashok

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-147000>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 05.07.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

ONCE AGAIN ON THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE TRIKĀNDĪ-VṚTTI*

Ashok Aklujkar, University of British Columbia

1.1 I keep an open mind on the issue of the authorship of the Vṛtti (hereafter “V” in abbreviation) of the first two kāṇḍas of the Trikāṇḍī (abbreviated to “TK” in the following lines) or Vākyapadīya. My interest is not in arguing for a position by implicitly assuming the adversarial system analogous to that of the British or North American judiciary. That is why when I discussed the problem in 1972 I tried to consider in as much detail as possible all the pieces of evidence that had the potential to disturb the traditional authorship of the V. For example, I collected all cases of double or multiple glossing in the V and attempted to determine if each of them indicated alternative possibilities of meaning entertained by an uncertain commentator or whether the different glosses were in fact intended by the kārīkā author – whether what we had in front of us were, in effect, cases of sophisticated *śāstra* punning. In the end, the time-consuming investigation I invited upon myself revealed that the latter indeed was the case. Wherever we had more than one explanation given for a kārīkā expression, the content of each explanation was acceptable to the kārīkā author on some level or in some specific context. The alternative explanations could not be thought of as signs of uncertainty of understanding and thus be an evidence of the V author’s difference from the kārīkā author.

1.2 I do not at all mind being ultimately proven wrong with regard to the position I took in 1972 (if there is any such thing as the ultimate in Indology or historical writing). After all, one works with the evidence one has to the best of one’s ability. However, I do think that neither the 1964 attempt by Dr. Madeleine Biardeau nor the 1988 and 1991 attempts by Professor Johannes Bronkhorst constitute the way one should go about proving a different authorship for the V. These attempts are, largely if not

* In addition to the various institutions and agencies which have so far supported my research, I would like to thank co-workers in the field of Bharṭṛhari studies for the sources, knowledge, and stimulation they have provided. While I express my disagreement with Professor Johannes Bronkhorst in the present article, I very much value the considerable energy, time, and talent he has devoted to ensure that Bharṭṛhari is studied widely and critically.

entirely, flawed in a basic methodological respect. They do not at every crucial stage ask the vital question: 'Does the argument made here ultimately have a *necessary* and *specific* bearing on the issue of the authorship of the V? In other words, in there a real and logically tight implication?'

2.1 As I have a separate refutation of Biardeau's remarks awaiting finalization for publication, I shall deal here only with Bronkhorst 1988 and 1991. My main counter-observations, in addition to the very general one stated above, are as follows:

(a) It is not sufficient to treat here and there a few details of the other position's arguments. Such treatment, if valid (see 2.3-8), will at the most weaken those details. Before a broader conclusion to the contrary is reached, a researcher is still obliged to account for the remaining details. A *sthāli-pulāka-nyāya* cannot justifiably be invoked in all cases.

(b) Tip-toeing around the evidence available in ancient commentaries, when it is inconvenient to one's position, should not be done. Frequently, there are answers already in these commentaries for the problems of interpretation or the cases of strained interpretation that a modern researcher senses.¹

(c) The relative weight and number of the pieces of evidence on either side needs to be noted. Objective evidence, which does not need the intervention of a researcher's interpretation (e.g., clear colophons of manuscripts, some older author's explicit statement, citations, and borrowing or imitation of phrases, etc.), should normally carry more weight than the evidence which becomes relevant only through some kind of explaining or accounting, that is, which involves one additional step in the form of 'logic' supplied by the researcher. Bronkhorst in the aforementioned articles not only ignores evidence of elephantine proportions in favor of some little fly of an evidence found here or there, he does not take into consideration the roundaboutness involved in turning his pieces of information into relevant evidence.²

1 (a) This is not to say that the commentaries should be slavishly followed in each instance. But to show no recognition of the possible solution they might contain certainly amounts in most instances, as far as the ancient and medieval Sanskrit *śāstra* tradition is concerned, to an unjustifiable disrespect for scholars who seem to have spent their lifetimes studying particular systems, authors, and text.

(b) See 2.4 below for an instance in which Vrsabha's commentary already indicates an answer to the problem perceived by Bronkhorst. Additional instances in which my observation applies to both Bronkhorst and Biardeau will be found in my detailed treatment (under preparation) of Biardeau's arguments.

2 Moreover, I get the feeling in reading Bronkhorst's reconstructions of the early period

(d) It is not enough to show that there is a close correspondence between the *kārikās* and the *Mahābhāṣya-tīkā* (in abbreviation “MBT” hereafter). The close correspondence seen of the MBT with those parts of the V which do not replicate the *kārikā* content and which, for this reason, cannot be attributed to the presence of the *kārikās* still needs to be accounted for. How did it come to be there – in details, in diction, in preferred theoretical positions? The extent of such correspondence unique to the ‘V:MBT’ pair is not small.

2.2 Given these relatively general methodological observations against Bronkhorst’s way of establishing that the V has been authored by a person other than the *kārikākāra*, it should not be necessary to deal with his specific arguments. However, because some of them may leave lingering doubts in the minds of researchers, I shall briefly address them in the order in which they have been offered in Bronkhorst’s 1988 article. The 1991 article contains but one argument. So I shall take it up at the end of this section in 2.8. To save space, I shall in most instances only give the essence of my response, leaving it to the readers to acquaint themselves in Bronkhorst’s own words with the arguments to which I am responding.

2.3 (Pp. 109-111): The fact that a reference is made to *tatra-bhavat* in the V and a view attributable to *tatra-bhavat* is expressed in a *kārikā* does not imply that the author of the *kārikā* in question must be *tatra-bhavat*, must further be the author of all the *kārikās*, and hence different from the V author. Holding a view and writing a *kārikā* need not be done by one and the same individual. An author V can refer to author T’s view and again give expression to that view in a verse. It is not necessary that author T himself must write the verse.³

of the *śāstras* that he presses into service conclusions weak on account of the specified reasons to reach some other conclusions. The usual mode of that second-level argumentation is: ‘As I have shown ‘x’ in article A, ‘y’ in article B follows.’ That ‘x’ itself was not conclusively proved or that the objections raised against ‘x’ by fellow researchers were not adequately answered is not taken into account.

- 3 (a) The argument based on the presence of alternative explanations in the V is already taken care of in Aklujkar 1972. It is surprising that Bronkhorst (pp. 111-12) does not refer to that article and to Aklujkar 1977-78 and writes as if the possibility of the concluding verses of the *Vākya-kāṇḍa* being composed by someone other than *Bhartrhari* and the possibility of different authorship based on the occurrence of alternative explanations in the V are being raised for the first time.
- (b) What Bronkhorst (pp. 112-13) has to say about the so-called discrepancy of *vāc* levels (*vaikhari*, etc.) between the *kārikā* and the V will be taken care of by what I have to say in my examination of *Biardeau*’s arguments. I shall, therefore, leave it out here. Iyer

2.4 Bronkhorst's (pp. 113-14) point that *śabdānām yata-śaktitvam* in TK 1.6 is explained in the V in an incongruent way is not correct. Although superficially the V may seem to be pointing out only differences of word forms (or, to be precise, differences of phonetic features in the case of what could be viewed as essentially the same words) in different Vedas or in different branches of the same Veda,⁴ the reality is not so if the TK thought regarding *smṛti* is taken into account. Words with only certain phonetic features are held to be capable of conveying meaning and producing *abhyudaya*-causing merit in different contexts and periods.⁵ That the V wants us to look at *śabdānām yata-śaktitvam* in this way is evident from its gloss *tathārtha-pratyāyane sāmāthyāt, tathābhyudaya-hetutvāt*, where *tathā* means 'in *that* form, in that very shape.' To take *yata-śaktitvam* 'state of having a fixed or specific capacity' as signifying 'identity of meaning despite difference of phonetic form,' as Bronkhorst does, will make the import of TK 1.6c overlap with that of TK 1.6b.⁶ Besides, an interpretation like Bronkhorst's will at least not be any less specific (and, to that extent, any less arbitrary)⁷ than the interpretation found in the V.⁸

2.5 (P. 114): The change from *māthara* of TK 2.349 to *kaundinya* in the V thereto, which change is made without a comment, in fact indicates that the V author takes such liberties with the *kārikā* as an author would take

(1965:xxxv) points out a possible confusion in Biardeau's statement on the matter but does not demonstrate, as is possible to do, that the *kārikās* must be understood as recognising four levels of *vāc*.

4 The examples given by the V are: *deva-sumnyor yajusi kāṭhake* and *simasyātharvaṇe 'nta udāttah*.

5 (a) Cf. *tathārtha-pratyāyane* iti. *yena rūpeṇa svareṇa ca yukto yasyām śākhāyām uktah sa tatraivārtham abhidhatte, na śākhāntare. ato 'rthā-kriyā-niyamena śakti-niyamah abhyudaya-hetutvāt* iti. *tatraiva tathāivābhyudayaṁ jñānataḥ prayogato vā karoti. kāṭhake eva tathā sādhitvam* iti. Vrsabha p. 27.

(b) As for difference of capacities with difference of time, note *pratikālam drṣṭa-śabda-sva-rūpa-vyabhicārāni* in V 1.43, *viśiṣṭa-kālāvadhi-pravibhāgām yathā-kālam dharmā-dharma-sādhana-bhāvena samanvitām śabda-śaktim* in V 1.171, and Vrsabha's (p. 100, 223) statement regarding *nyānikava* and *naiyanika*.

6 There too, it is only through comprehending the meaning, through *pratyaya*, that the instrumentality of all *śākhās* or Veda-branches in a common ritual act is realised.

7 Note the restriction of *yata-śaktitva* 'having a controlled or circumscribed capacity' to 'having an identity of meaning' which is implicit in Bronkhorst's interpretation.

8 Bronkhorst's (p. 114) statement that the interpretation of *artha-vāda-rūpāni* in V 1.8 is doubtful is probably nothing but an echo of Biardeau's (1964:5, 37) statement to the same effect. He does not even indicate why he considers the V interpretation to be doubtful. It would, therefore, be appropriate if I addressed the argument in my examination of Biardeau's treatment of the matter of V authorship.

with his own composition. The observation would support unity of authorship, contrary to what Bronkhorst wishes to prove.

2.6 (Pp. 115-16): *ātma-bhedam/ātma-bhedas* of TK 1,46 is not a certain case of V showing awareness of variant readings. Since what would be obvious in the prose order *kecit purāṇagāḥ 'tayoh ātma-bhedah asti' iti āhuh* has been obscured by metrical restrictions in the verse order '*ātma-bhedas tayoh' kecit 'astī'ty āhuh purāṇagāḥ* - *kecit* has appeared between a split *iti*-clause, as if it were a part of the *iti*-clause, the author could have thought of advising the reader that *kecit purāṇagāḥ tayoh ātma-bhedam āhuh* was not the intended construction, for failing to offer which he should be faulted, that is, viewed as having written ungrammatical Sanskrit.

At worst, one could suppose that the remark *ātma-bhedasya bruvī-karmatve dvitīyā, vākya-sva-rūpānukaraṇe tu prathamā* was written by someone in the margin of an ancient *kārikā-vṛtti* manuscript and then it entered the subsequent manuscripts. The remark has that kind of 'note-to-onself' ring about it, and there are many instances in Sanskrit works of such marginal remarks having become part of texts.⁹

In either case, the remark does not furnish a definite proof of awareness of variant readings on the part of the V author.

2.7 Bronkhorst (pp. 116-21) makes the argument that even after syntactic completion by the V some *kārikās* remain incomplete.¹⁰ One feels like asking: "Does this really imply anything that has a definite bearing on the matter we are investigating?" What is logically relevant in the context is that there really be a syntactic bond between the V and the *kārikā*. Whether that syntactic flowing of the one into the other will satisfy all expectations of a reader in terms of intelligibility is another matter. The flowing could be hampered by such factors as loss or corruption of the

9 Vrsabha (p. 103) explains only the grammatical considerations involved in the remark. Neither the possibility that the remark could be seen as existence of variant readings nor the possibility that its presence could have implications for the identity of authorship which he assumes seems to have occurred to him.

10 (a) There are some details of this argument extending over five pages which are inaccurate or too general to be of any use in the particular problem of the authorship of the V. However, I shall leave them aside because at present we need to note only the incapacity of the main point to imply the result it seeks.

(b) If some *kārikās* remain incomplete despite borrowing words from the V, what about the others that borrow words from the V and become syntactically complete? How does one account for their dependence on the V under the hypothesis of different authorships for the *kārikās* and the V? Bronkhorst does not raise this question.

preceding or following text matter or by a reader's inability to interpret accurately. As long as it does not happen at the point at which the V and the *kārikā* meet, it cannot be used to invalidate the argument for common authorship based on syntactic unity.

2.8 In his 1991 article (pp. 17-18), Bronkhorst offers an argument which he characterizes with admirable forthrightness as 'neither the most important nor strongest.' He thinks that the interpretation of TK 1.99 (*deśādibhiś ca sambandho dr̥ṣṭaḥ kāyavatām api / deśa-bheda-vikalpe 'pi na bhedo dhvani-śabdayoh //*) given in the V is "more forced and artificial" than the one he offers. According to him, the literal sense of TK 1.99d 'there is no difference between sound and word' "makes good sense in the context of *sphoṭa* conceived as a universal, for universals and individuals represent the same thing, be it from its real and from its unreal side." "According to the *Vṛtti*, on the other hand, there is no denial of difference between sound and *sphoṭa* in this stanza, but denial of difference of location. And pāda c ... which [Bronkhorst translates as] 'even though we distinguish different locations [in the case of sound]' is, of necessity, interpreted in the *Vṛtti* as 'even though we wrongly distinguish different locations [for sound and *sphoṭa*]. But this makes little sense, for the tendency is to confuse sound and *sphoṭa*, not to assign different locations to them." Continuing with the same assumption regarding the tendency, Bronkhorst finds the V consideration of objections based on two different presuppositions ('the contacts and separations of articulatory organs are the manifestors' and 'the sounds following each other are the manifestors') absurd.¹¹

The essence of this argumentation, as of some others we have noted and as Bronkhorst himself has indicated, is that the V interpretation is not natural, relative to the alternative offered, and hence is unlikely to be a statement of the *kārikākāra*.

11 The assumptions in the foregoing thinking that the *kārikā* author could not have said anything absurd – that only a commentator removed in time from the author of the text being commented upon can say something absurd – and that an absurd proposition is necessarily non-genuine and therefore indicative of different authorship are interesting. However, as my intention at this point is to deal with textual details of arguments, I shall not expand upon the implications of the assumptions.

First, let me point out that the proposed alternative is not natural.¹²

(a) Given all his pronouncements elsewhere, it is unthinkable, in the first place, that B would *literally* assert the identity of *dhvani* and *śabda/sphota*.¹³ Any statement appearing to be an identity statement must be intended in some indirect sense or must owe its apparent identity form to constraints of wording that a metrical composition imposes.

(b) How can Bronkhorst assume the tendency to confuse sound and *sphota* in a context in which there are clear indications that the discussion is about spatial (*deśa*) distinctions? The common tendency or, to be precise, the superficially accepted view, as B has discussed at considerable length, is to impute a temporal sequence and differences of speed to *sphota*. Would people, or even theoreticians not thinking rightly in B's view, think that *sphota*, which is an abstract linguistic unit in the mind or the intellect,¹⁴ is the same as *dhvani*, which they hear outside and normally conceive as something concrete or physical? Theoreticians of other persuasions may not agree to accepting *sphota* in addition to *dhvani*, but would they commonly think that spatially both are the same?

(c) Would not a statement like "there is no difference between sound and word (i.e. *sphota*), even though we distinguish different locations [in the case of sound]"¹⁵ amount to an arbitrary assertion? Would not a listener of this statement ask why there is no distinction if only one of the two is amenable to different locations?

12 It should be noted that, in order to prevent the discussion from becoming too long, I am here leaving aside Bronkhorst's problematic view of universals in B's thought. I am also leaving aside his suggestion that somehow a particular notion of *sphota* is necessary for interpreting the verse properly. Having discussed the *jāti* and *vyakti* views of *sphota*, as well as the view of one *akrama*, *antah-sarīniveśin śabda-tattva* that transcends the *jāti-vyakti* distinction, at various points between TK 1.67-97, B is evidently concerned in TK 1.98-103 with objections to the thesis of *śabda/sphota* manifestation itself. Until that point, except *perhaps* in an inevitable reference to the other possibility in TK 1.71, he has proceeded on the assumption that all theoreticians of word accept that the word is manifested or revealed. Whether *sphota* is viewed as *jāti* or *vyakti* or as a permanent sequenceless principle not subject to distinctions does not really matter in TK 1.98-103. Many expressions denoting manifestation – *vyaktih* (= *abhivyaktih*), *abhivyaktih*, *vyāṅgya-vyāñjaka-bhāvena*, *prakāśakam*, *prakāśakānāṁ*, and *prakāśyah* – occur in close succession in this not too long a statement, which fact establishes that the author's main concern is with making a case for manifestation as the process.

13 Even in TK 1.105, which makes *sphota* a phonetic entity under a certain *anitya-pakṣa* the distinction of *sphota* and *dhvani* is maintained.

14 *sphota* must be so, especially if Bronkhorst's view that it is *jāti-sphota* or *śabdākṛti* that is intended in the present context is assumed.

15 Bronkhorst's translation of TK 1.99cd.

(d) How would the assertion connect with the preceding half of the *kārikā*? Why say even corporeal objects come into contact with space etc., that is, acquire spatial and other distinctions, if the intention is not to assert the same in the case of *both* word and sound? On the other hand, if an assertion of the indicated kind is to be made only with respect to sound, why make a pronouncement on the identity of word and sound at all?

(e) What justification is there in the context to import the words “in the case of sound” into the translation of the *kārikā*’s second half?

As for the naturalness of what we find in the V, in addition to (a) of the preceding point, note the following:

(a) The double objection or the two-tiered *pūrva-pakṣa* in the V that Bronkhorst finds absurd is related to clear indications in TK 1.105, which expresses *karāṇa-saṃyoga-vibhāga* as the cause of *sphoṭa* production under the *anitya-pakṣa*, and in TK 1.76-97, which assume *saṃyoga-vibhāgaja dhvani*¹⁶ as the cause of *sphoṭa* manifestation under the *nitya-pakṣa*. It cannot, therefore, be maintained that the objections are not based views that go back to the *kārikā* author’s time.

(b) That such objections were quite conceivable in B’s time and have not been imagined by a commentator desperately trying to make sense of someone else’s composition – that they could be a part of the historical context of B’s thought – is revealed by Vātsyāyana’s comments under Nyāya-sūtra 2.2.13: *kim ayaṃ [= śabdah] samāna-deśo ‘bhivyaḥyate, rūpādivat, atha saṃyogajācchabdācchabda-saṃtāne sati śrotra-pratyāsanno grhyata iti?*

3.1 As the preceding comments, offered with as much brevity as possible, indicate, no truly valid or relevant evidence that would seriously threaten the traditional ascription of the V has as yet been offered. Yet relatively few scholars seem to be ready to speak with confidence of Bharṭṛ-hari’s authorship of the V. The situation reminds me of a man or woman accused in the newspapers of some unethical or illegal conduct. The poor person may not have in fact assaulted anyone or be guilty of anything like embezzlement. But after the news appears, almost everyone begins to stay away from or behave cautiously with him or her. The authorship of the V,

16 Occasionally, the synonym or near-synonym *nāda* appears in the place of *dhvani*, but that is of no consequence in the present context.

I feel, has at present become a matter not only of what the evidence indicates but also of the psychology of B researchers.¹⁷ We seem to be going too far in our suspicion, substantiating the proverb *pāṇau payasā dagdhe, dadhy api bālo phūtkṛtya bhakṣayati*.

3.2 It needs to be recognised that the objective evidence favoring B's authorship of the V is much more multi-sided than in the case of most Sanskrit works. Internal evidence of both organizational and syntactic nature has been offered (Aklujkar 1972:189-96). It can be demonstrated quite objectively that the *kārikā* mss. have arisen out of the *kārikā-vṛtti* mss. We have citations of the V by authors at least as old as Maṇḍana, if not as old as Dignāga and Malla-vādin.¹⁸ There are many cases of sharing of unusual diction even where a V passage is far removed from a *kārikā* displaying similar diction – even where the situation is not one of explaining a similarly worded *kārikā* or of citing *pratīkas*. At least a dozen parallels have been pointed out by scholars like Charudeva Shastri, Abhyankar-Limaye, and Palsule in their notes to the V or to the MBT that hold good only in the case of the V without the mediacy of the *kārikās*.¹⁹ Both works contain references to an author Dhyānakāra or Dhyānagraha-kāra hardly attested elsewhere.²⁰ They have some not-so-common quotations in similar context indicating shared associations. The nature and extent of the author's/authors' knowledge and the general world of ideas are similar in them. On the whole, the same atmosphere seems to be breathing through them. Are these connections really likely to be due to mere imitation or borrowing? Can an imitator work so deep under the skin?

17 No historian worth his salt, I hasten to add, will object to the position that it is always safe to distinguish between the thought found in the *kārikās* or *sūtras* and the thought found in a commentary. If not a difference of authorship, a sense of an author's progression in thought may emerge from maintaining this kind of distinction.

18 When a prose part of the extant V as preserved in its manuscripts (as distinct from a prose part reconstructed from other sources) is attested in the works of Dignāga and Malla-vādin, we would be able to infer confidently that the V was known to them. As long as only a few verses are noticed as citations in their works as well as the V, the possibility that Dignāga and Malla-vādin could have taken those verses over from the same source as the V and that they may not be indebted to the V itself would remain. The fact that the works of Dignāga and Malla-vādin are only partly available in the original Sanskrit creates further uncertainties in determining if they were aware of the V. Cf. Bronkhorst 1988:131-32.

19 I have noticed several more such parallels and will point them out in future publications.

20 See Limaye 1966. Dhyāna-graha is attested as a work only in Bhāmaha's *Kāvya-lamkāra* outside the ones associated with Bhartr-hari.

Note also that the available evidence comes from many mutually independent sources. The tradition is solidly consistent. Should the tone of investigation really be one of asking the tradition to prove itself?

3.3 What do we have by way of objective or semi-objective evidence on the side of the thesis of different authorship? The name Hari-vṛṣabha found in a few colophons and a feeling that the styles (sentence lengths, etc.) of the MBT and the V are different, although the thought and diction have much in common.

Of these, as regards Hari-vṛṣabha, how far probable is it that a sequence of authors named Hari, Hari-vṛṣabha, and Vṛṣabha and removed from each other by centuries would emerge in the tradition of an advanced text belonging to an intellectually demanding branch of learning that was, even in the best of cultural periods, cultivated or taken ahead by only a few individuals? How many authors named Vṛṣabha are known in Indology? Is it really likely that a very original and valuable text that the V is was cited by widely informed and highly learned authors like Maṇḍana and Jayanta for more than four centuries but none of them would know its author as Hari-vṛṣabha?

Coming to stylistic difference, the only relatively precise statement I have read on the matter is the following: "... while there may be, ... parallel passages here and there in the Vṛtti and in Bhartr̥hari's commentary on the Mahābhāṣya, there seems to be a marked difference in the style of the two works. ... In contrast to the highly formal and literary style of the Vṛtti, that of the Mahābhāṣya commentary is more conversational. It consists of short and idiomatic sentences and reminds one of the style of the Mahābhāṣya itself. One does not find those long involved sentences which are a characteristic of the Vṛtti. Both the works are commentaries and it is reasonable to expect a similarity of style in them. But one does not find this similarity of style, though ... there are parallel passages." (Iyer 1969:32)²¹ Is this characterization of the difference sufficient? Could the

21 (a) Iyer has in the same place these other non-comparative observations to offer on the style of the V: "The Vṛtti is written in a rather unusual style. There is a certain strangeness or obscurity about it which must be distinguished from the fact of being merely archaic. It gives the impression of having been composed under the influence of a different tradition of writing. Sometimes it reminds me of the style of the Vyāsabhāṣya on the Yogasūtras of Patañjali. The impression of obscurity is not due to the presence of unknown words or the author's use of his own new technical terms. Some of the obscurity is due to the nature of the subject matter itself. Some of it, however, is due to the peculiar construction of sentences and compound words. Sometimes the language is very terse. Too much is taken for granted. There are not those indications, usually found

difference perceived not be due to the same author's development or to the different notions about a *ṭikā* type of commentary and a *vr̥tti* type of commentary?²² There is no reason why difference of sentence length should imply difference of authorship.

3.4 If at all B's authorship of the V is a misunderstanding, the misunderstanding must have come into existence at a very early period in the life of the TK *kārikās* – so early as to have been in existence before the *kārikās* began to circulate beyond their author's immediate surroundings, for the tradition does not seem to know anything other than the so-called misunderstanding.²³

We must then imagine scenarios like the following:

(a) B wrote the *kārikās* and a student of his²⁴ wrote the V. The student could pay extraordinary attention to the diction and thought not only of the *kārikās* but also of other works of B, such as the MBT, and could include much from them, as well as possibly add logical extrapolations and amplifications of the notions and views found in them²⁵ at

in other works, which compel one to understand the words and sentences in a particular way. There is a tendency to use long and rather involved sentences. Sometimes the whole commentary on a *Kārikā* consists of just one sentence. Those on Vāk. I.2, 46, 54, 91, 139 [147]; II, 14, 17 [these numbers, unlike the other numbers in this article, do not refer to Rau's edition but, I suppose, to Iyer's own editions. AA] may be mentioned as examples. Another noteworthy feature of the language of the *Vr̥tti* is the addition of the word '*ātman*' to other words and though there is usually a distinct addition to meaning, sometimes it is not clear what extra meaning the compound word thus formed expresses." Iyer 1969:32.

(b) I do not understand what the nature of the indications referred to by Iyer in the sentence "There are not ... particular way" is.

(c) The compounds with *ātman* can be shown to add the sense of 'unit, a reified entity.' They are found, among other texts, in the *Yoga-sūtra-bhāṣya*, Śabara's *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra-bhāṣya*, the MBT, and the TK *kārikās* themselves. While it may be worthwhile to ask why they are so common in the V, they do not seem to be unique or original to it as a stylistic feature.

22 Iyer comes close to realising this possibility when he remarks in the passage quoted in note 21 that the V "gives the impression of having been composed under the influence of a different tradition of writing."

23 Even in Bronkhorst's (1988:132) view, the ascription of the V to B could precede Dignāga's time.

24 I specify 'a student' because that kind of assumption will go well with *pranīto gurunāsmākam ayam āgama-saṃgrahah* (= TK *kārikās* under one natural interpretation) occurring in the verses at the end of the V. But it is not necessary that the V author be a student of B.

25 A preliminary comparison of the theoretical thought contents of the MBT and the V indicates that when there are common ideas in the two works (e.g. in the reference to *sphoṭa*, *prākṛta dhvani*, *vaikṛta dhvani*) the V usually contains more details even when the

all appropriate points,²⁶ without ever giving a sense of disjunction. In other words, he was a master imitator. He was also probably very self-effacing, for he did not record his authorship of the V and, by the time the TK began to circulate with the V, he was already forgotten as a contributor.

(b) Vasurāta, said to have been B's *upādhyāya*, *guru*, or teacher,²⁷ composed the *kārikās* that form the TK and B, the well-attested author of the MBT, wrote the V, imitating his teacher's diction to a considerable extent. Somehow Vasurāta's involvement was forgotten, and none of the *kārikās* was cited as his composition. B displayed different styles as far as sentence length etc. are concerned in the MBT and the V.

How far these scenarios are likely to be true is a matter of personal taste at this point in B's studies, not of history writing based on known evidence, and, in that sense, inconsequential.

The scenarios are inconsequential in another sense too. Under either of them, the period intervening between the composition of the TK *kārikās* and the composition of the V would be so short as to be insignificant from the point of view of our being able to delineate a historical development of ideas. We would have something comparable to the case of the *Tattva-saṁgraha* and its *Pañcikā*. We would have a difference of authorship, but we would not be able to say confidently that important notions such as *vivarta* or *avidyā* are different in the two works. Almost all of the considerable difference of philosophical atmosphere that someone like Biardeau (1964: introduction) sees in the *kārikās* and the V will have no hard temporal basis.

3.5 What have we learned from the discussion of V authorship that can be considered a gain for Indology?

content it shares with the *kārikās* is excluded. Therefore, if someone wrote the V on the basis of the MBT, he must, it seems, extrapolate and amplify the MBT statements to bring them to the level of the statements at present found in the V.

26 That the sequence for the introduction of ideas in the MBT and the V would be different is only to be expected. The former, being a commentary on the *Mahābhāṣya* must follow the *Mahābhāṣya* author's order of discussion, whereas the latter must abide by the order of the TK *kārikās*. A person using a work like the MBT to comment on the TK will have to engage in much transposing of observations.

27 The *Vākya-kāṇḍa-tīkā*, the summary verses at the end of the *Vākya-kāṇḍa-tīkā*, and the *Dvādaśāra-naya-cakra* of Malla-vādin either state or suggest that Vasurāta was B's teacher.

(a) We should not conclude that a commentary has a different author only because it gives alternative explanations of certain expressions. We should remember that the Sanskrit tradition was fashioned by authors who had a very sharp eye for punning possibilities.

(b) Merely because a sub-commentator like Vṛṣabha refers to the author of a *sūtra* or *kārikā* text and the author of a commentary thereto with different designations such as *granthakāra* and *vṛttikāra* it does not follow that he is thinking of two historical persons. He may be thinking simply of two different roles of the same person – of two different literary persona.²⁸

Bibliography of publications specifically referred to

- Aklujkar, Ashok. 1972. "The authorship of the Vākyapadīya-vṛtti." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 16:181-98.
- Aklujkar, Ashok. 1977-78. "The concluding verses of Bhartr̥hari's Vākya-kāṇḍa." *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, 58-9 (Diamond Jubilee Volume), pp. 9-26.
- Biardeau, Madeleine. 1964. (Ed., tr.) *Vākyapadīya Brahmakāṇḍa avec la Vṛtti de Harivṛṣabha*. Paris: Editions E. de Boccard. Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne. Série IN-8°. Fascicule 24.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes, 1988. "Etudes sur Bhartr̥hari, 1: L'auteur et la date de la Vṛtti." *Bulletin d'Etudes Indiennes* 6: 105-143.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes. 1991. "Studies on Bhartr̥hari, 3: Bhartr̥hari on sphoṭa and universals." *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* XLV.1: 5-18.
- Iyer: see Subramania Iyer.
- Limaye, Vishnu Prabhakar. 1966. "Dhyānagrahakāra or Dhyānakāra: a Pre-Bhartr̥hari Grammarian." *Vishveshvarananda Indological Journal* 4.228-9.
- Subramania Iyer, K.A. (1965. (Tr.) *The Vākyapadīya of Bhartr̥hari with the Vṛtti*. Chapter I. Poona: Deccan College. Deccan College Building Centenary and Silver Jubilee Series. No. 26.
- Subramania Iyer, K.A. 1969. *Bhartr̥hari[.] a study of the Vākyapadāya in the light of the ancient commentaries*. Poona: Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute. [Deccan College] Building Centenary and Silver Jubilee Series no. 68.

28 This has been independently pointed out in the context of the authorship of the Dhvanyāloka-vṛtti by Rewa Prasad Dwivedi in his excellent Hindi monograph on Ānanda-vardhana (Bhopal: Madhyapradeśa Hindi Grantha Akādamī, 1972). Thus, a confirmation has been provided from an unrelated corner.

