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NOTES ON THE MANUSCRIPT TRANSMISSION OF THE VAIŚEṢIKASŪTRA AND ITS EARLIEST COMMENTARIES*

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Summary

In view of the textual problems surrounding the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* an examination of the surviving manuscript evidence is an urgent desideratum, as was emphasized by A. Wezler in an article published in 1982. A start in this direction has been made, and some of the findings made thus far are presented in this paper. Section I introduces the problem and summarizes earlier work. In sections II and III two manuscripts containing the *sūtrapāṭha* alone are reported on; both are shown to diverge extensively from the published recensions of the text. Section IV discusses Candrānanda's commentary on the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra*. It is shown that a re-examination of the manuscripts can lead to improvement of the text. Two manuscripts not used in the published edition are introduced. Section V contains observations on the two versions of the commentary by Bhaṭṭa Vādiṅdra on the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra*. Substantial improvements over the published text of the abridged version prove to be possible, especially with the aid of the palm-leaf manuscript which was not available to the editor. Section VI concludes by offering some general remarks, chiefly on questions of method.

I

Anyone who attempts to study the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* (VS) will soon enough be confronted with problems resulting from the defective transmission of this text. This is a fact that has often been remarked on, but to date the best summary of the situation is that found in the opening pages of A. Wezler's

* For access to or copies of manuscripts referred to in this article I am indebted to the authorities of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Poona), the L.D. Institute (Ahmedabad), the Oriental Institute, M.S. University of Baroda, the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, and Kerala University Manuscripts Library (Trivandrum). I am very grateful to Prof. Dr. A. Wezler for help in acquiring copies of several manuscripts and for his kind encouragement in the work reported on here. Some helpful comments on a draft of this paper were made by the other participants of the panel on early Vaiśeṣika at the 34th ICANAS, by Dr. H.T. Bakker and by Prof. Dr. A. Wezler. For financial support I am grateful to the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

article in the Festschrift for J.W. de Jong.¹ Among other points, Wezler emphasized the importance of examining manuscripts containing the text of the VS alone, i.e. without a commentary, in view of the possibility that some such manuscripts might either represent an independent transmission of the *sūtrapāṭha* or contain a text which was extracted (*uddhṛta*) from a commentary which preserved at least a better text than that of the 'Maithila version,' i.e. that commented on by Śaṅkara Miśra. Wezler concluded his observations on the manuscript transmission of the VS with the following paragraph.

Since I do not intend, or rather am not able at present, to carry out this indispensable examination of all the MSS of the VS, I shall not dwell on this point any longer. This much only I should like to add by way of summary: the transmission of the VS has unfortunately been of such a kind that even the faintest opportunity should not be missed to enlarge the documentary basis on which a critical edition of this important text ought to be built. Though well known, the fact bears repetition: elementary philological work done till now in the field of Indian philosophy is quite inadequate and unsatisfactory. (Wezler 1982, 645)

These words were written and published already more than a decade ago – yet, as far as I am aware, the 'indispensable examination of all the MSS of the VS' has still not been carried out. Nor have I been able to do so, but for some time now I have been making efforts to examine as many manuscripts of the VS and its commentaries, as well as of Praśastapāda's *Padārthadharmasamgraha*,² as I could gain access to, either directly or in the form of copies of some kind. Though this study is still far from being complete and exhaustive, the manuscripts thus far examined include a number which do indeed seem to provide new and significant evidence for the text of the VS, so that I believe it may be worthwhile to present a preliminary report.

As to manuscripts containing the text of the VS without an accompanying commentary, the only two scholars who have published information so far, to the best of my knowledge, are Gopinath Kaviraj and Anantalal Thakur.³ In a brief article which was published as long ago as 1929, but which has been

- 1 Wezler 1982, 643-648. Among earlier publications which discuss the general problems posed by the textual situation of the VS, one might mention in particular Thakur 1963a and the introduction contributed by Thakur to Muni Jambūvijaya's edition of the VS together with Candrānanda's commentary.
- 2 The manuscript tradition of this text forms a separate problem, and one of a different nature. A discussion must be postponed till a future occasion.
- 3 Their relevant publications are also referred to by Wezler in the article which was quoted above: see p. 643-644, note 3 on p. 674, and n. 8 on p. 675.

perhaps somewhat undeservedly neglected,⁴ Gopinath Kaviraj reports on ‘an apparently very old manuscript (undated) of the Vaiśeṣika Sūtras,’ from a private collection in Benares.⁵ Kaviraj noticed that the text of this manuscript contained ‘several differences from the current text’ (i.e. the text as commented on by Śaṅkara Miśra) and in his article gives, so he says, the differences. Regrettably, a complete transcript of this manuscript was never published,⁶ and its present whereabouts are not known to me – it is not unlikely that it may never be traced. We must therefore rely solely on Kaviraj’s collation, the completeness of which is uncertain at best. It is noteworthy that in several cases the reported text contains lacunae, and it seems therefore very likely that also in cases where Kaviraj found no clear difference from Śaṅkara Miśra’s text to note, the manuscript may have been in fact damaged or illegible. I am therefore very doubtful as to whether for sūtras for which Kaviraj does not give a variant reading from the manuscript, we may always safely conclude *ex silentio* that it read as does Śaṅkara Miśra.

It would appear to be Anantalal Thakur who has gone to the most trouble to examine manuscripts of the VS and its commentaries, as well as to exert himself laudably in the work of editing. According to an article with the title *Textual Problems of the Vaiśeṣikasūtras*, published in 1963, Thakur had at that time ‘collated the sūtra-readings from six printed editions and sixteen Manuscripts preserved in different Manuscript Libraries.’⁷ Unfortunately, Thakur does not give details of the manuscripts he collated, not to speak of their readings. The sentence immediately following on the one quoted also has a confusing rather than an enlightening effect: Thakur says that ‘[a]mong them two have subsequently formed the basis of the editions of the *Vaiśeṣikadarśana* published by the Mithila Institute, Darbhanga and the Oriental Institute, Baroda.’ The two editions referred to must of course be Thakur’s own edition of the abridged version of Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra’s commentary (V)⁸ and Muni Jambūvijaya’s edition of Candrānanda’s commentary (C), respectively. But since two manuscripts were used by Jambūvijaya and one by Thakur, these two editions are based on three rather than two manuscripts, as Thakur states here. Furthermore, it appears from this that the sixteen manuscripts mentioned include manuscripts of the VS together with

4 Nozawa’s *Comparative Table of the Vaiśeṣikasūtra* (1985), for instance, does not report the divergent readings Kaviraj quoted in this article.

5 Kaviraj 1929, 71. The name of the owner of the collection is not given because, as it appears, he wished to remain anonymous.

6 Kaviraj tells us that he was able to use the manuscript for a few days only (p. 71).

7 Thakur 1963a, 187.

8 This text and Thakur’s edition are discussed in section V below.

commentaries, but it is not made completely clear whether or not manuscripts containing only the *sūtrapāṭha* were also collated. Nor can it be excluded that the manuscripts Thakur referred to included some of the VS together with Śaṅkara Miśra's commentary.

Earlier, in the introduction to his edition of V, Thakur had stated that '[t]he known manuscripts of the Vaiśeṣikasūtras are not numerous. They generally represent the Maithila version just mentioned.'⁹ Here too, Thakur unfortunately gives no information as to the exceptions which he implies exist, and once more the possibility cannot perhaps be excluded that Thakur had in mind manuscripts giving the text of the VS together with commentaries (for instance those of Candrānanda – at the time known of but not published – and Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra) as well as manuscripts of the *sūtrapāṭha* alone.¹⁰ In short, Thakur's publications prove to give disappointingly little concrete information as to manuscripts which give a *sūtrapāṭha* alone and differ from the text followed by Śaṅkara Miśra. The hope need not yet be given up that Thakur one day will give us more details, or even publish the critical edition he had been planning, or else collations of all the manuscripts he has examined, but as the years pass, the chance of this happening becomes ever slimmer.

II

My examination of manuscripts containing the *sūtrapāṭha* without a commentary has confirmed Thakur's remark as to the prevalence of the version commented on by Śaṅkara Miśra, but two manuscripts I have been able to collate have proved highly interesting exceptions. Both contain texts which differ from the known recensions of the VS, as well as being mutually quite different. The publication of a complete 'edition' of these two manuscripts is envisaged in the near future; this section and the following one aim at briefly introducing them and demonstrating, by means of quotes, their independence from the known commentaries.

9 This remark is found on p. 11 of the English introduction. The corresponding passage in the Sanskrit *bhūmikā* reads *upalabhyamānāḥ sūtramātrkās tu prāyaśo maithilapāṭhānu-sārīnyah* (p. 24).

10 In another article we again find the statement that '[o]ld manuscripts of these sūtras are rare and those available generally follow the *Vaiśeṣikasūtropaskāra* of Śaṅkaramiśra (15th cent. A.D.)' (Thakur 1963b, 78). But here too, no details are given after this general statement.

The first manuscript I shall deal with is a 'Sammelhandschrift' in the L.D. Institute, Ahmedabad, Nr. 26307, hereafter designated as A. The first text in the manuscript is that of the *Nyāyasūtra*, without a commentary. This is followed by the VS, again without a commentary. Only the folios containing the *Nyāyasūtra* and the VS, together with the beginning of another work which I have not yet identified, are available to me at present, in the form of a photocopy (made from microfilm) kindly provided to me by Prof. A. Wezler. Hence I shall not, indeed can not, here provide a full description of the manuscript.

The manuscript is written in Jaina Devanāgarī script and by a single hand. The portion available to me bears no date. I am skeptical about the possibility of dating it on purely palaeographical grounds, but, for what it's worth, my personal judgement would be that the hand is relatively early; that is to say, I should be a little surprised if it were to prove to be later than the seventeenth or early eighteenth century. The text of the VS begins on folio 4^V and ends on folio 7^r. The individual sūtras are not numbered, nor is there always a single or double *danḍa* after them. On the other hand, there are occasional *danḍas* in the middle of what must, on considerations of sense as well as in view of the other recensions, be a single sūtra. I may remark that this, as well as the fact that sandhi is regularly applied between the end of a sūtra and the beginning of the next, suggests that the text in this manuscript probably was not extracted directly from a manuscript containing the sūtras embedded in a commentary. For if we assume that the scribe of A went through a manuscript containing both sūtras and commentary and copied out the sūtras alone, it follows that he would have had to be able to identify the sūtras in the exemplar he was copying from and recognize where each sūtra ended and the commentary began. Therefore the signs I mentioned, suggesting that in fact the scribe does not always identify the ends and beginnings of the sūtras correctly, speak against this theory.¹¹ Of course it remains perfectly

11 Two other scenarios seem also to be unlikely. One might consider the possibility that the scribe had before him a manuscript of a commentary which did not give each sūtra separately, followed by its commentary, but merely contained occasional *pratikas* of the sūtras. This I find highly unlikely because I cannot credit that the result of such a scribal reconstruction of the sūtras would have been nearly as good as A in fact is. Furthermore, none of the manuscripts I have examined of the VS together with a commentary are in fact of this type. One more possibility could be that the manuscript was dictated to the scribe, whether by someone using a manuscript with sūtras and commentary, by someone using a manuscript with the *sūtrapāṭha* alone or from memory. However A contains enough errors which point to copying from another manuscript for this hypothesis to be quite unconvincing. For instance, we find some clear cases of misreading of similar *akṣaras*, as well as of probable eyeskip.

possible that an ancestor of A was extracted from a commentary in some way or other.

In the following sections, references to sūtras use the numbering of C unless otherwise stated. In transcribing from manuscripts I add word divisions but make no further changes or additions. Consonants written with a *virāma* (which may in some cases be an indication of sūtra division) have been indicated as such by a line under the letter concerned, e.g. *ṭ*. The text of the VS followed by Bhaṭṭa Vādindra is designated as BhV when based on the long version of the commentary and V when based on the abridged version. These two versions are discussed in section V below. The readings of the VS found in the so-called ‘Sena Court’ commentary, available on *adhyāyas* nine and ten only, are referred to by the siglum S.¹²

- 1 A omits 1.1.4 of ŚM, *dharmaviśeṣaprasūtād dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyaviśeṣasamavāyānām padārthānām sādharmyavaidharmyābhyām tattvajñānān niḥśreyasam*.
- 2 2.1.26 reads *liṅgam ākāśasya* in A, agreeing with C and diverging from BhV/V’s *śabdo liṅgam ākāśasyeti* and ŚM’s *pariśeṣāl liṅgam ākāśasya*.
- 3 4.1.13 in A reads *arūpiṣv acāksuṣatvāt*, in agreement with C and V and differing from ŚM’s *arūpiṣv acāksuṣāni*.
- 4 In 5.2.21 and 5.2.22 A has *dravyaguṇakarmanispattiḥ* (read °*nisṣatti*°) *vaidharmyād bhāsa abhāvas tamas tejaso dravyāntareṇāvaraṇāc ca tamaḥ*. In place of this C reads *dravyaguṇakarmavaidharmyād bhāvābhāvamātram tamaḥ* (5.2.21), *tejaso dravyāntareṇāvaraṇāc ca* (5.2.22). V has merely *dravyaguṇakarmanispattivaidharmyād bhābhāvas tamaḥ*,¹³ with no counterpart for the second sūtra. ŚM *dravyaguṇakarmanispattivaidharmyād abhāvas tamaḥ* and *tejaso dravyāntareṇāvaraṇāc ca*.
- 5 7.1.12, which reads in C *aguṇavato dravyasya guṇārambhāt karmaguṇā aguṇāḥ*, and in V *karmaguṇā aguṇā*, is found in A in the following form: *aguṇavato dravyasya guṇārambhāt karmmanāguṇāḥ*. The sūtra has no equivalent in ŚM. In this case, the possibility must be considered that the form found in A is a corruption of C’s reading.

12 The ninth *adhyāya* of this commentary has been published as an appendix to Thakur’s edition of BhV. The *sūtrapāṭha* of the tenth *adhyāya* is given in Thakur 1965; I have checked it against the manuscript.

13 Thus the palm-leaf MS (cf. section V below), clearly supported by the commentary; not °*vaidharmyād abhāvas tamaḥ* as in Thakur’s edition, followed by Nozawa 1985, 85.

- 6 The eighth *adhyāya* is divided into two *āhnikas*, with the sūtra *artha iti dravyaguṇakarmasu* (= 8.14) the last one in the first *āhnika* and the sūtra *dravyeṣu pañcātmakam pratyuktam* the first of the second. In this A differs from the other recensions: C does not divide this *adhyāya* into *āhnikas*,¹⁴ V starts the second *āhnika* one sūtra earlier, with *artha iti guṇadravyakarmasu* and ŚM starts it earlier yet, with (C's) 8.12, *ayam eṣa tvayā kṛtam bhojayainam iti buddhyapekṣam*. Note by the way that in this sūtra, for ŚM's *tvayā kṛtam* C reads *kṛtam tvayā* and V as well as A simply *tvayā*.
- 7 A does not divide the ninth *adhyāya* into *āhnikas*. In this it agrees with C and (probably) S;¹⁵ V unfortunately is lost after [9.7 = C's] 9.8, but the commentary on this sūtra is followed by a colophon of the first *āhnika* of the *adhyāya*. ŚM divides into *āhnikas*, taking 9.18, *asyedaṃ kāryaṃ kāraṇaṃ saṃyogi virodhi samavāyi ceti laiṅgikam* as the opening sūtra of the second *āhnika*.
- 8 9.1 in A reads *kriyāguṇavyapadeśābhāvād asat*, as also found in C and V. ŚM and S read *kriyāguṇavyapadeśābhāvāt prāgasat*.
- 9 The tenth *adhyāya* is again divided into two *āhnikas* in A. The sūtra *laiṅgike pramāṇaṃ vyākhyātam* is the final one of the first *āhnika*; this corresponds to C's 10.19, which has *laiṅgikam* for *laiṅgike*. S however reads as does A; V is again not available. The sūtra has no counterpart in ŚM, where the second *āhnika* begins with C's 10.12, *kāraṇam iti dravye kāryasamavāyāt*. Note that with the *āhnika* division found in A, the second *āhnika* is reduced to a mere two sūtras; and, perhaps significantly, these sūtras are the two which occur earlier in the VS. The sūtra *drṣṭānām drṣṭaprayojanānām drṣṭābhāve*

14 And in this, as has often been remarked, agrees with the brief description of the VS given in Mādhava's *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*.

15 One cannot perhaps be completely certain about S, for one folio, folio 31, appears to be lost in the unique manuscript. The last sūtra on folio 30^v is 9.10; the first on folio 32^r is 9.15. It can therefore not be determined which of the intervening sūtras were actually known to the commentator (note that C's 9.11 and 9.12 are not in ŚM's text), nor can it be completely excluded that the missing folio contained a colophon for a first *āhnika* of 9. The fact that ŚM divides the *adhyāya* elsewhere, after (C's) 9.17, does not rule out this possibility, for we already saw with regard to the eighth *adhyāya* that the recensions which do divide into *āhnikas* do so at different places. The fact that the final colophon of 9 in S does not mention *āhnikas* is also inconclusive; the same may be said of most of the *adhyāya* colophons in the manuscripts of Candrānanda's commentary on the VS, even in the *adhyāyas* which do consist of two *āhnikas*. None the less, I think it likely that S indeed did not accept such a division; note that none is found in the manuscript of the tenth *āhnika* of S.

prayogo 'bhyudayāya (C's 10.20; A, S and ŚM all have the same reading too) occurs earlier as 6.2.1, while the final sūtra *tadvacanād āmnāyaprāmānyam* (thus C, S¹⁶ and A; ŚM reads *tadvacanād āmnāyasya prāmānyam*) is VS 1.1.3.

- 10 10.8 in A reads *abhūd ity abhūtāt*, agreeing with C and S, and differing from ŚM which reads *abhūd ity api*. V is not available here.

The cases listed above, though a mere sample,¹⁷ should I think be sufficient to establish that A represents a hitherto unknown version of the VS, and one which is in numerous respects superior at least to that commented on by Śāṅkara Mīśra. On the whole, A's text is decidedly closest to that followed by Candrānanda, but the differences between the two versions, such as those noted under points 4, 5, 6 and 9 above, are too many to allow us to regard them as belonging to the same recension.

III

Another manuscript which contains the text of the VS with no accompanying commentary is a palm-leaf manuscript in the Kerala University Manuscripts Library, Trivandrum.¹⁸ I shall refer to this MS in the following as T. As in A, the text of the VS is preceded by that of the *Nyāyasūtras*, again without a commentary.¹⁹

- 16 Thakur reports S as reading *tadvacanād āmnāyasya prāmānyam* with ŚM (Thakur 1965, 21). But this is incorrect; the manuscript (which I have consulted from photocopies kindly provided by the Asiatic Society, Calcutta) is a little difficult to make out but definitely reads *tadvacanād āmnāyaprāmānyam*.
- 17 A's readings of a number of other sūtras are quoted, by way of comparison, in several of the examples given in the following sections below.
- 18 The manuscript number is 22615B, although the photocopy kindly supplied to me erroneously has the number 921B written on it. It appears to be uncatalogued; it is not listed in the *Alphabetical Index of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Oriental Research Institute and Manuscripts Library, Trivandrum. Vol. III (Ya to Sa)* (Bhaskaran 1984).
- 19 I am not sure what conclusions, if any, may be drawn from the fact that both A and T are 'Sammelhandschriften.' From having stumbled on these two cases in the course of my really rather limited examination of VS manuscripts, I suppose that there may well be other such manuscripts containing, for example, the text of the *Nyāyasūtra* and the VS, perhaps together with other texts. Unfortunately, such manuscripts are at a greater risk than most of being wrongly catalogued, since correct identification depends on the manuscript being gone through more carefully than by a mere glance at beginning and end which is sometimes all that a cataloguer will find time to have.

Once more, I refrain from attempting to give a thorough description of the manuscript, in view especially of the fact that I have access only to photocopies of the folios which contain the text of the VS. The VS covers folios 20^V - 34^r. The script is Malayalam. The manuscript bears no date but is in good condition; from its general appearance as well as on the basis (admittedly uncertain) of palaeography I should hazard that it is no older than the nineteenth century. Punctuation marks, usually small dots between the *akṣaras*, are occasionally found, but by no means between all the *sūtras*. Similar considerations as set out in regard to A above lead me to believe that the exemplar from which the manuscript was copied also contained the *sūtrapāṭha* with no commentary.

Unfortunately, the number of scribal errors and corruptions in T is far greater than in A, so that in many cases it is not possible to be certain of the intended reading. None the less, the following are some of the interesting readings which feature in this manuscript, which seem to me to justify speaking of yet another recension.

- 1 T too does not contain ŚM's 1.1.4, but instead reads a different *sūtra*, found in no other source known to me, after 1.1.3: *sādhanāny asya dravyaguṇakarmāṇi* (cf. Candrānanda's introductory remarks on 1.1.4: *uktam dharmasvarūpaṃ tallakṣaṇam ca | sādhanāny asyedānīṃ dravyaguṇakarmāṇi vakṣyāmaḥ*). This *sūtra*, which no doubt should not be regarded as 'original,' seems to serve a purpose somewhat similar to that of ŚM's 1.1.4. That is to say, its inclusion may be motivated by the desire to have the *sūtras* state their subject matter (*abhidheya*) at their outset more clearly than is done in 1.1.1 (*athāto dharmamvyākhyāsyāmaḥ*²⁰), as well as to indicate the connection (*sambandha*) between the subject matter of the VS and the ultimate goal (*prayojana*), which is understood from 1.1.2 (*yato 'bhyudayaniḥśreyasasiddhiḥ sa dharmah*²¹) to be both worldly and supreme good. Frauwallner apparently found it inconceivable that the 'original' text of the VS should fail to name the categories of the Vaiśeṣika;²²

20 Thus all recensions, supported by numerous testimonia.

21 Thus, bar orthographical variants and obvious slips, all recensions, again supported by several testimonia.

22 Frauwallner's keen philological instinct may perhaps have erred when he wrote 'In den Vaiśeṣika-Sūtren mit dem Kommentar des Candrānanda (VSū¹) und mit dem anonymen, von Anantalal Thakur veröffentlichten Kommentar (VSū²) [i.e. V] fehlt das vierte Sūtram. Doch ist am Anfang des Textes eine Nennung der sechs *padārthāḥ* unerlässlich' (Frauwallner 1984, 36-37 n. 5). It is precisely the absence of the expected enumeration of

those responsible for adding this sūtra and ŚM's 1.1.4 may well have thought much the same.²³ It is interesting, however, that the added sūtra in T has a perhaps slightly archaic ring to it, in that it enumerates only the first and most fundamental three categories, unlike ŚM's 1.1.4.

- 2 The sūtras 2.2.4-5 read in C and A *tejasy uṣṇatā* (2.2.4), *apsu śītatā* (2.2.5). For *tejasy uṣṇatā* V reads *tejahsūṣṇatā* and ŚM *tejasa uṣṇatā*. T is unique in reversing the order of these sūtras; its reading is *apsu śītatā tejasy uṣṇatā*.
- 3 2.2.16 is found in T in the following form: *ādityasaṃprayogāt bhaviṣyato bhūtāc ca prācī*. The edition of C reads *ādityasaṃyogād bhūtapūrvād bhaviṣyato bhūtāc ca prācī* (but see section IV below), as do ŚM and A, while BhV/V has *ādityasaṃyogād bhūtapūrvād bhaviṣyato bhūtāc ca*.²⁴
- 4 T reads 3.1.9 as follows: *prasiddhabhūtapūrvakatvād apadeśasya*. This differs from the other versions; C *prasiddhapūrvakatvād apadeśasya*, V, ŚM and A *prasiddhipūrvakatvād apadeśasya*.
- 5 Between the sūtras 6.1.4, *buddhipūrvo dadātiḥ* (thus C, V, ŚM and A; T, though reading *buddhipūrvo dadāti* should also be corrected to read thus) and 6.1.5, *tathā parigrahaḥ* (thus all versions), T inserts what appears to be a hitherto unknown sūtra *mahīne cāpravṛttiḥ*. In this case it seems most likely that this sūtra has arisen due to some form of textual corruption. Compare 6.1.14 *same hīne cāpravṛttiḥ* (thus C and T; A *same hīno cāpravṛttiḥ*, which should be emended to agree with C and T; ŚM *same hīne vāpravṛttiḥ*). If some sort of eyeskip forward and again back is indeed the source of this 'sūtra' (though there is no obvious cause of such an eyeskip), this would tend to confirm that the exemplar also contained the *sūtrapāṭha* only.
- 6 7.2.14 reads as follows: *yutasiddhyabhāvāt kāryakāraṇayos saṃyogavibhāgā na vidyante*. C, V and ŚM all read *yutasiddhyabhāvāt kārya-*

categories which is likely to be original here. Indeed an enumeration of *six* categories would be suspect, for I think it very likely that in the earliest period of composition of sūtras the classical list of *padārthas* had not yet been settled on.

- 23 And such considerations may well underlie the *pratijñā* attributed to Kaṇāda in the sentence, quoted twice by Vyomaśiva in his *Vyomavatī*, with slightly different wordings, which Frauwallner supposed to be the original opening of the VS. Cf. Frauwallner 1984 and Halbfass 1992, 69-70, as well as Jan Houben's contribution to this volume.
- 24 The suggestion of Nozawa that V should read ... *ca na prācī* (Nozawa 1974, 472 and Nozawa 1985, 79) is ruled out rather than confirmed by the publication of BhV; cf. BhV p. 269.

- kāraṇayoḥ saṃyogavibhāgau na vidyete.*²⁵ A reads *yutasiddhyabhāvāt kāryakāraṇayoḥ saṃyogavibhāgo na vidyate*, but this should probably be taken to be a scribal error for ... *saṃyogavibhāgau na vidyete*.
- 7 In 7.2.16 T agrees with C and V, as well as A in reading *guṇe ca bhāsyate*. ŚM reads *guṇo 'pi vibhāvyate*.
- 8 7.2.17 is read unanimously by C, V, ŚM and A as *niṣkriyatvāt*. In T we find the following: *ubhayopagamanān niṣkriyatvād atītānāgatapratyayābhāvāt prasamgāt*. We cannot be certain, but this should perhaps be taken as four separate sūtras, three of which are not known to me from any other source. If they have been introduced from some commentary, it must be one which has not yet been discovered, for I could find nothing in the commentaries by Candrānanda, Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra or Śāṅkara Mīśra which even vaguely resembled these sūtras.
- 9 The eighth, ninth and tenth *adhyāyas* are not divided into *āhnikas* in T.

From the above examples it will be gathered that T is an interesting and rather eccentric manuscript. Its differences from the other recensions are usually more radical than those of A. Like A, it contains many features which make an older impression than the text of ŚM. Despite the fact that the manuscript is not a very correct one, the divergent readings and extra sūtras it appears to contain deserve to be taken seriously and judged on their own merits. The possibility that the recension represented by T is an old one cannot be ruled out; as far as we can tell, different versions of the VS were in existence already at an early period.

IV

In addition to manuscripts containing the text of the VS alone, those containing the sūtras together with a commentary should of course also be collected and examined as thoroughly as possible. It may not be vain to hope that one day a hitherto unknown commentary, that of Ātreya for example,²⁶ may yet be found to exist in manuscript form. And besides, we should not neglect to look for material which might allow improvement of the texts of the com-

25 V should be corrected to read thus, as indicated by Nozawa 1974, 471, and in fact already by Thakur himself in the second appendix (giving the *sūtrapāṭha*) of his edition. The edition itself, as well as the reprint of the text in the appendix of Thakur's edition of BhV, reads *vidyate* for *vidyete*.

26 The best source of information on this commentary to date is formed by the fairly numerous quotations from or references to it in the commentary by Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra.

mentaries already available to us. That such improvement is possible in regard to the texts of our two oldest commentaries, by Candrānanda and Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra respectively, is what I shall try to demonstrate in this section and the following one.

The publication in 1961 of the commentary on the VS by Candrānanda formed a landmark in studies of the Vaiśeṣika. A recension of the VS was hereby made available that was clearly superior to that represented by Śāṅkara Mīśra as well as that of Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra, which had been published a few years earlier. Besides, the commentary too presented us with several interpretations which, in their simplicity, seemed superior to those of the later scholiasts. Finally, the text was fortunate in its editor, the Jaina Muni Jambūvijaya, perhaps the most distinguished scholar to edit a Vaiśeṣika text. Small wonder then that this publication was received with gratitude and admiration by the most prominent scholars working in the field.²⁷

Jambūvijaya's edition is indeed a good one, perhaps one of the most satisfactory editions of a classical Indian philosophical text. Still, it may be truly said that no edition is ever really definitive, and in the course of examining the manuscripts of Candrānanda's commentary I have been brought to the conclusion that further progress is possible in regard to this text. At present I am working on a new edition of the commentary, and in the following, I hope to show that this is not wholly superfluous labour. But if some of my remarks are critical, I should stress that they intend no disrespect, nor can they, of course, lessen the lasting merit of Jambūvijaya's work.

Two manuscripts form the basis for Jambūvijaya's edition; a Śāradā manuscript in the Oriental Institute, Baroda, and a manuscript in Jaina Devanāgarī script, at that time in the possession of the well-known Jaina scholar Muni Puṅyavijaya. No other manuscripts are mentioned, and we may assume none were known to him. The Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript has now passed into the collection of the L.D. Institute, Ahmedabad.²⁸ I am indebted to the kindness and efforts of Muni Jambūvijaya, Prof. A. Wezler and the authorities of this institute for a photocopy. The Baroda Śāradā manuscript I was allowed to photograph.

A collation of these two manuscripts with Jambūvijaya's edition revealed a very considerable number of cases where the manuscripts have been misread, wrongly reported or not reported at all. In several of these cases a misreading appears to have led to errors entering the edited text. I shall try to

27 I may refer especially to the English introduction contributed by Anantalal Thakur and the review by E. Frauwallner in the WZKSO, 1962.

28 As far as I am aware, it has yet to be catalogued.

illustrate this by an example which is particularly suitable because it can be checked by anyone who has access to the edition, simply by examining for himself the plates contained in it which reproduce the beginning of the commentary as it is found in the two manuscripts.

According to Candrānanda, the VS was taught by the sage Kaṇāda to an unnamed brahmin who came to him with questions. The first word of the first sūtra, *atha*, conveys according to the commentary the sense of *ānantaryam*; immediately after he has been questioned as to the dharma, Kaṇāda announces his intention to expound on dharma. The second word of the sūtra is *ataḥ*, and on this the commentary as edited by Jambūvijaya reads '*ataḥ*'śabdo 'pi vairāgyaprajñākathāparipākādikāṃ śiṣyaguṇasampadaṃ hetutvenāpadiśati, yasmād ayam śiṣyo guṇasampadā yuktas tato 'smai praśnebhyo 'nantaram dharmam vyākhyāsyāmaḥ. The only variant reading given by the editor is P (the siglum for the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript) °*nopadi*° for °*nāpadi*°.

Now the term *kathāparipāka*, as a virtue of a student, is to me at least quite obscure, and I believe that some doubt as to the reliability of the text here is not unjustified.²⁹ So let us have a look at the manuscripts as reproduced in the edition. First the Śāradā manuscript, the opening leaf of which is to be found as Plate I. I transcribe the manuscript's reading of this sentence, starting in the middle of line 9, introducing word-division but making no other alterations to the text. *ataḥśabdo pi vairāgyaprajñākaṣāyaparipākādikāṃ śiṣyagatasampadaṃ hetutvenāpadiśati*³⁰ *yasmād ayam śiṣyo guṇasampadā yuktah tato smai praśnebhyo nantaram dharmam vyākhyāsyāmaḥ.*

This is rather alarming; in a single sentence we find two substantive differences from the edition, neither of which is reported in the critical apparatus. One of these, *śiṣyagatasampadaṃ* for *śiṣyaguṇasampadaṃ*, may be rejected as an error, particularly in view of the subsequent *guṇasampadā yuktah*. The other, however, provides us with a reading °*kaṣāyaparipākādikāṃ*, which certainly yields sense, and to my mind better sense than *kathāparipāka*.

29 I do not mean to say that it is *impossible* to interpret the term; had that been the case, no doubt Jambūvijaya would not have left it in the text without comment. In his translation of the VS with Candrānanda's commentary, the first fascicule of which has just recently appeared, Nozawa translates the portion of text quoted above in the following way: '... and also the word '**henthforth**' [sic] indicates that the accomplishment of such necessary qualifications of a disciple as detachment, intelligence, ability to carry on discussion, etc., is the ground (based on which the sage imparts him the knowledge of the nature of *dharmā*)' (Nozawa 1993, 98). The translation of *kathāparipāka* here is perhaps the best that one can hit on, but fails to convince me completely. I find 'ability to carry on discussion' a most strange item in the list, and have also some doubts as to whether any similar use of *kathāparipāka* (or a nearly equivalent term) can be found.

30 After this there is a small mark which should probably be interpreted as a half-daṇḍa.

But let us see what Jambūvijaya's other manuscript reads here before considering the matter in detail. The text of the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript may be transcribed as follows from Plate V, beginning in line 5. *ataḥśabdo pi / ataḥśabdo pi vairāgyaprajñākathā(ya)paripākādikāṃ śiṣyagūṇasāmpadam hetutvenāpadiśati / yasmād ayam śiṣyo gūṇasāmpadā yuktas tato smai praśnebhyo nantaram dharmam vyākhyāsyāmaḥ*. At the point we are presently concerned with the scribe wrote °*kathāya*°, but this was later altered – whether by the scribe himself or another we cannot tell – to °*kathā*°, by the cancellation of the *ya*. We can now reconstruct the sequence of events quite convincingly as follows; the scribe of the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript misread *ṣa* for *tha* (an easy mistake to make, especially from an exemplar in Śāradā script)³¹ and the reading °*kathā*° is a wrong correction of the senseless °*kathāya*°. It may therefore be regarded as virtually certain that °*kaṣāya*° is the correct reading; if °*kathā*° were correct, it would be very difficult to explain the textual facts, especially since, as appears even from Jambūvijaya's edition and apparatus, the Śāradā and the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript share very few errors³² and can hardly have a close genetic relationship. The term

31 There are other places too where the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript shows traces of having been copied from a Śāradā exemplar. For instance, in a few cases *jihvāmūṭya* before *k* has been misread by the scribe as *tk*; thus in 1.1.28 the section of the manuscript which gives the *sūtrapāṭha* separately reads *saṃyogavibhāgāt karmaṇām* for *saṃyogavibhāgāḥ karmaṇām*. Another case which should be noted is the sūtra 8.10. The edition reads this *dravyeṣv anitaretarakāraṇāt kāraṇāyaugapadyāt*. No variants on this are given in the critical apparatus, but in the *vṛddhipatṛakam* Jambūvijaya reports that the Śāradā manuscript and the section of the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript which gives the sūtras within the commentary read thus, while the first part of the Jaina manuscript, giving the *sūtrapāṭha* alone, reads *dravyeṣv itaretarakāraṇāt kāraṇāyaugapadyāt*. He then adds '*dravyeṣv anitaretarakāraṇāḥ kāraṇāyaugapadyāt*' *iti pāṭho 'tra samīcīno bhāti* (p. 231). He certainly is right about this, but two points need to be remarked on. First of all, the Śāradā manuscript is in fact not available here as a witness. As was correctly noted in the last entry in the apparatus on p. 62, a large section, including the text of 8.6-13, has been left out in the Śāradā manuscript (and this applies also to the other Śāradā manuscript, not known to Jambūvijaya, which is introduced below). So it is the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript alone which is present here. Secondly, the reading °*kāraṇāt* which we find in both sections of the manuscript, can with virtual certainty be explained as a misreading of °*kāraṇāḥ* written with (Śāradā) *jihvāmūṭya* before the following *kāraṇāyaugapadyāt*. The fact, then, that even the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript most probably descended from a Śāradā manuscript, is an additional piece of evidence tending to suggest that Candrānanda was a Kāśmīra, to be added to the data – in themselves not really conclusive – gleaned by Aklujkar (1970) and Shah (1975) which already pointed in that direction.

32 And those errors which they do have in common may perhaps be due to coincidence in error ('convergence') and not be evidence of a common hyparchetype.

kaṣāyaparipāka seems to me to fit better in the list of *śiṣyaguṇas*, which by the way may well be intended to be a hierarchically ordered one. For a parallel, I may in the first place point to a verse quoted from *smṛti* (I am unaware of the exact source) in Śāṅkara's commentary ad *Brahmasūtra* 3.4.26: *kaṣāyapaktiḥ karmāṇi jñānaṃ tu paramā gatiḥ / kaṣāye karmabhiḥ pakve tato jñānaṃ pravartate* || (ed. J.L. Shastri, Delhi 1980, p. 802-803). It should also be noted that the term is semantically quite close to *malaparipāka*, an important concept in (especially dualist) Śaiva metaphysics, and one which it is very likely that Candrānanda was familiar with.³³ And from his acceptance of °*kathā*°, with not so much as a note in the apparatus, we are forced to conclude that in this case at least the editor has been less than scrupulously careful in transcribing his manuscripts and in critically reading his own text. We may note that another substantive variant of the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript has not been reported in Jambūvijaya's apparatus, though this is admittedly only the clear dittography of *ataḥśabdo pi*. On the other hand the single variant which is given in the apparatus is a false one, for the manuscript clearly reads *hetutvenāpadiśati* as transcribed above, and not *hetutvenopadiśati* as the apparatus suggests.

Despite the fact that this is no isolated example, I should repeat here that Jambūvijaya's edition is an impressive achievement. Nonetheless, re-examination of the manuscripts does frequently bring to light readings which were either overlooked or wrongly reported in his edition. Regardless of whether or not the text of a new edition were to differ in many places from Jambūvijaya's edition, it would be sufficiently justified, I feel, if it succeeded in reporting the manuscript evidence more accurately, and thus allowed the user of it to judge the authority of the text for himself. Furthermore, I am happy to say that the manuscript basis for a new edition can now be extended somewhat further. In the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, there are in fact two manuscripts of Candrānanda's commentary which apparently have hitherto escaped notice. One of these, No. 403 of 1875-76, is a manuscript in Śāradā script, while the other, No. 99 of 1873-74, is in Jaina Devanāgarī script and is dated *saṃvat* 1931 (A.D. 1874). The latter proves to

33 The fact that there was in many cases a close relation between Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika authors and certain Śaiva groups has long been known.

For those who may be less familiar with the term *malaparipāka*, I quote a single passage from a Śaiva Siddhānta work; the commentary by Rāmakaṇṭha (a Kashmiri) on the *Mokṣakārikā* of Sadyojyotis: *nanv īśvaro 'pi katham na sarveṣāṃ yugapan mokṣahetuḥ, apekṣyābhāvāt | na, malaparipākāpekṣyatvāt, anyathā yathādrṣṭānīyamānupapatteḥ* (quoted from Vrajavallabha Dvivedī (ed.), *Aṣṭaprakaraṇam*, Varanasi 1988 (Yogatantra-granthamālā vol. 12), p. 259 l. 14-15).

be of very little significance, for as I hope to demonstrate in detail elsewhere,³⁴ it is virtually certain that it is an apograph of the manuscript in Ahmedabad. The Śāradā manuscript, however, seems to be a new witness for the text. It is closely related to the Śāradā manuscript used by Jambūvijaya, sharing quite a number of common errors, but each has errors and omissions of its own which rule out the possibility that either is an ancestor of the other. Instead, the evidence strongly suggests that both are descendants (I suspect even direct apographs) of a single hyparchetype; a manuscript which is lost or at least has not yet been brought to light.

On the basis of all the manuscript evidence, conclusions differing from those of Jambūvijaya are sometimes possible not only in the text of the commentary but also as to the reading of some sūtras. A single example. In 2.2.16 the reading accepted by Jambūvijaya is *ādityasamyogād bhūtapūrvād bhaviṣyato bhūtāc ca prācī*. In the critical apparatus he notes that O (the Śāradā manuscript in Baroda) reads °*samprayogād* instead of °*samyogād*. This is correct, and I may add that the other Śāradā manuscript, in Poona, reads the same. What Jambūvijaya has however failed to record, either in the critical apparatus on the page or in the *vṛddhipatṛakam*, which contains additional variants for the text of the sūtras,³⁵ is that the portion of the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript which gives the *sūtrapāṭha* separately (Jambūvijaya's siglum PS) also reads °*samprayogād*. It is therefore only in the sūtra as found within the commentary in the later portion of the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript that the reading accepted in the text is to be found. Since °*samprayogād*, on the other hand, is attested in both the streams of transmission, it must be accepted as the reading most probably followed by Candrānanda. In the commentary on the same sūtra, the word reoccurs; Jambūvijaya again reads *ādityasamyogād*, with the Jaina Devanāgarī manuscript, and this time fails to report that his Śāradā manuscript once more has *ādityasamprayogāt*, a reading which, again, is shared with the Poona Śāradā manuscript. Further on, in the commentary on 2.2.17, we again find the term *ādityasamprayogāt*, this time in all the manuscript witnesses. What is more, Helārāja, in a passage to which attention was drawn by Aklujkar,³⁶ quotes 2.2.16 with the reading

34 In the introduction to my forthcoming edition of Candrānanda's commentary.

35 This *vṛddhipatṛakam* is introduced by Jambūvijaya with the words *asmin granthe O. P. PS. madhye ye sūtrapāṭhabhedās te tatra tatra ṭippaneṣūpadarśitāḥ | tathāpy asmadana-vadhānād ye 'vaśiṣṭāḥ pramārjanīyā vā pāṭhabhedās te 'tropadarśyante | katipayānām sūtrāṅgāṃ granthāntareṣūddhṛtena sūtrapāṭhena saha tulanā cātropadarśayiṣyate.* (p. 227).

36 Aklujkar 1970, 340; the passage is also referred to in Nozawa 1993, 115 n. 134. Neither scholar makes any comment on the reading *ādityasamprayogāt*.

ādityasamprayogāt, and adds an explanation closely resembling Candrānanda's commentary and once more containing the word in the same form. It is interesting to note that *ādityasamprayogād* is also supported by the manuscript in Malayalam script described in the previous section, T (see the third example quoted in section III above). This reading thus does not seem to be a purely local, Kashmiri one.³⁷

Finally I should mention that there is a possibility that still other manuscripts of Candrānanda may have survived. Only recently I learned of the existence of a Śāradā manuscript of a *Vaiśeṣikasūtravṛtti* in Ujjain and a Devanāgarī manuscript said to bear the same title in Jammu.³⁸ There is more than a slight chance that one or both of these may turn out to contain the text of Candrānanda's commentary. I hope to have an opportunity to examine these manuscripts in the near future.

V

I turn now to the next oldest extant commentary on the VS, that by Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra. The situation with regard to the commentary by this scholar is somewhat complicated – as may be witnessed by the fact that even some very recent publications seem to have fallen victim to a certain confusion – and the scope for textual improvement here is considerably greater than with Candrānanda's commentary, as I hope to be able to show.

In 1957 a slim volume appeared containing the text of the VS together with what the title-page called an anonymous commentary.³⁹ As the editor, A. Thakur, informs us in the introduction, the text was based on a Devanāgarī transcript from a single palm-leaf manuscript in Malayalam script.⁴⁰ This

37 A full discussion of the merits and originality of the readings *ādityasamprayogāt* and *ādityasamyogāt* in VS 2.2.16 must be left to another occasion. It should be noted that here I have merely attempted to show that *ādityasamprayogāt* most probably was the reading followed by Candrānanda, and hence that an edition of the VS with Candrānanda's commentary should adopt it.

38 I am indebted for this information to Mr. Dominic Goodall, Wolfson College, Oxford. Addendum: In February 1994 I was able to photograph the Ujjain MS, which proved indeed to be of Candrānanda's commentary.

39 For the details of this publication see under V in the first section of the bibliography below.

40 It is thus incorrect to say that the edition is based on the Malayalam palm-leaf manuscript itself, as Jambūvijaya does when in the *dvitīyaṃ pariśiṣṭam* of his edition of the VS with Candrānanda's commentary he writes *malayalipinibaddhāṃ tālapatralikhitāṃ grantha-pātabahulāṃ ekāṃ eva māṭṛkāṃ avalambya mithilāvidyāpṛhaprādhyāpakaiḥ śrīmadbhir*

manuscript had been mentioned five years earlier by V. Venkatarama Sharma, in a very brief article published in the *Journal of the Oriental Insitute, M.S. University of Baroda*.⁴¹ The transcript, riddled with errors and lacunae, was sadly defective as a basis for the constitution of a reliable text, but on the other hand the importance of the work was so great – remember that at this time Candrānanda's commentary had not been published – that we may be grateful indeed to Thakur for undertaking the task of its editor.⁴²

Although the text was published as the work of an anonymous author whose date could not be precisely fixed, in the introduction Thakur stated that 'it agrees with the sūtra tradition followed by Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra of the South. A preliminary study of the available portions of the Kaṇādasūtra-nibandha of Vādīndra has convinced us that the present commentary is an abridged version of this °nibandha.'⁴³ Some time later, after a more thorough comparison of the text he had edited with manuscripts of the commentary by Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra on the VS (BhV),⁴⁴ Thakur concluded that the former was

anantalāladevaśarmabhiḥ sā vṛttiḥ sampādītā (p. 101 l. 7-9). Note by the way that some information, such as the fact that the original manuscript was a palm-leaf one and that the transcript used was into Devanāgarī, is to be found in the Sanskrit *bhūmikā* (in this case on p. 23), but is omitted in the corresponding portion of the English introduction. There are numerous other differences of content and wording as well.

- 41 Sharma 1952, 226-227. The wording used by Sharma, '[r]ecently I was able to procure a palmleaf manuscript containing an unknown commentary (*vṛtti*) on the Vaiśeṣika-sūtras, with the text,' implies that the manuscript was actually owned by him at the time. The introduction of Thakur's edition, however, suggests that the manuscript had been in the possession of V.A. Ramaswami Shastri (who had however passed away by the time the introduction was written); '... a transcript of a single Malayalam manuscript prepared and supplied to us by the late lamented scholar, V.A. Ramaswami Śāstrin' (p. 7), ... *mātrkeyam ... vi° e° rāmasvāmiśāstrimahodayasyāntika āsīt* (p. 23).
- 42 As Thakur himself elegantly puts it, *atra truṭibāhulyam asmān sthagayati sma viṣaya-gauravaṃ ca prakāśanavidhau prerayati smety ubhayata ākṛṣyamāṇair asmābhiḥ prakāśanam evorarikṛtam* (p. 23).
- 43 English introduction to the edition of V, p. 8. The corresponding passage in the Sanskrit *bhūmikā* reads *trayodaśasatakasthitasya śaṅkarakiṅkarāparanāmno bhaṭṭavādīndrasya kaṇādasūtranibandhena prastutasya granthasya dṛḍhaḥ sambandho vihaṅgamadrśā avalokito 'smābhiḥ | iyaṃ hi vyākhyā viṣayasāmyena bhāṣāsāmyena ca tasya nibandhasyaiva sārasaṃgraharūpā ity ābhāti* (p. 26).
- 44 It is something of a problem to determine what we should call this text. The name *Vaiśeṣikasūtravārttika* is found in three of the four colophons quoted from the manuscripts by Thakur (1960, 23 and 26); the fourth uses the name *Kaṇādasūtravārttika*. These colophons are again reproduced in the printed text. The colophon of the section commenting on the first three sūtras, attributing it to Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra's patron, the Yādava king Śrīkṛṣṇa, reads as follows: *iti śrīyadukulakamalakalikāvīkāsabhāskara-bhūpālalalitamahārājādhirājaśrīkṛṣṇabhūpālaviracite tarkasāgaranāmni vaiśeṣika-*

indeed ‘nothing but an abridged version of the *Nibandha* giving mainly the interpretation of the sūtras. It must have been prepared by Vādīndra himself or some of his followers for those who were interested in the purport of the sūtras and had no aptitude to enter into the abundant discussions of the *Nibandha*.’⁴⁵

The publication of the extant portion of BhV itself, edited again by Thakur, unfortunately only followed very much later, in 1985. This edition is in many respects less satisfactory than the edition of V; we are, for instance, given no information on the manuscript basis of the text.⁴⁶ Since variant readings are never given, one suspects that the text may be no more than a

sūtravārttike trisūtrīvyākhyā samāptā (Thakur 1960, 23 n. 2; BhV 57). This provides us with another title, and one which is explicitly said to be a real name rather than a description or generic name (as *Vaiśeṣikasūtravārttika* can be taken to be). Of course the extent to which colophons should be relied on in these matters is debated. None the less, this particular colophon is probably authorial rather than scribal, bearing in mind the fact that it is not a concluding colophon of the work or an *adhyāya* or *āhnika*, but separates what is supposed to be the work of the royal patron (we may agree with Thakur in taking this to be a polite fiction) from that of Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra himself. Certainly the style of this colophon is more flowery than one would expect a scribal one to be, and it seems more likely that a complimentary colophon should have been composed by Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra than by a later scribe unconnected with the court of Śrīkr̥ṣṇa. For these reasons, I am inclined to believe that the title *Tarkasāgara* may be the one bestowed on the work by its author, and that he also calls the work a *Vaiśeṣikasūtravārttika*. The titlepage of the edition refers to the text as *Vaiśeṣikavārttika*, and this form of the title is also used by Halbfass (e.g. Halbfass 1992, 79). As far as I am aware, there is no basis for this title in the colophons or the work itself. Most likely it is an abbreviation of *Vaiśeṣikasūtravārttika* introduced by Thakur or – perhaps even more probably – by the publishers. In his introductions to the edition of V, Thakur had called the text *Kāṇādasūtranibandha*, as we saw above; he also uses this form in the introduction he contributed to Jambūvijaya’s edition of the VS together with Candrānanda’s commentary. Finally, Thakur’s 1960 article refers to the work as *Kāṇādasūtranibandha*, on the basis of the second half of the opening verse of the commentary: *kāṇādasūtrasya mayā nibandho vidhīyate śāṅkara-kiṅkareṇa*.

The reprint of V as an appendix to Thakur’s edition of BhV is given the name *Nibandhasāra*, an allusion to the last two possible titles of BhV. But here, again, there is no manuscript authority for such an appellation of V, and this is probably to be regarded as a title made up by the editor or the publisher.

- 45 Thakur 1960, 27. Thakur reaffirmed his opinion that the brief ‘anonymous’ commentary was an abridgement of Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra’s voluminous one in the introduction he contributed to Muni Jambūvijaya’s edition of the VS with Candrānanda’s commentary (p. 17).
- 46 There is no introduction by the editor, though we find an *āmukham* by Dr. Jayamanta Miśra and an *aumakramikam* (sic) by Ānanda Jhā. Neither of these provides the sort of information that a student of the text looks for first.

transcript, sporadically corrected, of a single manuscript.⁴⁷ This publication also contained a reprint of the text of V in an appendix. This has however practically no value; it introduces new misprints, contains no improvements (though a number would have been possible on the basis of BhV; cf. below), and does not even incorporate the corrections contained in the list of addenda and corrigenda appended to the original edition of V. Finally, a second appendix contained another welcome *editio princeps*, this time of the ninth *adhyāya* of the anonymous commentary on the VS written at the Sena court (S) – yet another text on which Thakur had given valuable information in an earlier article.⁴⁸ The commentary on the tenth *adhyāya*, surviving, like that on the ninth, in a single manuscript in the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, remains unpublished.

Whatever its shortcomings, this publication allowed scholars with no direct access to the manuscript material to compare BhV and V for themselves, at least for a sizeable portion of the text. And in my opinion, Thakur's judgement of the relationship between the two texts is most probably correct. The difference in length between the two commentaries is very great indeed. The available portion of BhV covers 256 pages of Thakur's edition; the corresponding text of V, as reprinted in the appendix of the same edition, merely 26. But almost each sentence of V can be found also in BhV, though sometimes with slightly different wording. And in numerous places the published text of BhV allows us to correct what are clearly errors in V.

A small example.⁴⁹ On p. 3, line 22-23 (p. 156 line 15-16 in the reprint in BhV, appendix 1), we read in V *dvipṛthag ityādivyavahārasya dvitvādya-*

47 In his article on this text Thakur had mentioned that three manuscripts in Malayalam script are preserved in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library. His quotations are all based on transcripts of these manuscripts in the Mithila Institute. I doubt that Thakur ever consulted the Malayalam manuscripts themselves. From his description of the extent of the manuscripts, it appears that for a large portion of the preserved text at least two manuscripts should be available. The complete lack of variant readings in the edition is therefore odd. My own guess is that the edition is basically nothing else than a transcript of the largest of the Mithila Institute transcripts, and has not been collated against the other two transcripts.

48 Thakur 1965. This article contains the basic information on the manuscript material which one would have looked for in an introduction to the edition.

49 More significant examples could be given, but would require very much more space to set forth and discuss. Let me just mention here, without a detailed demonstration, that the text of the sūtra numbered 2.1.12 in V (corresponding to C's 2.1.13), as well as the commentary thereon, should be emended in the light of BhV. The reading of the sūtra should be *adravyatvena nityatvam uktam*. Some other cases where BhV confirms a correction made on the basis of the palm-leaf manuscript of V will be given below.

vacchinnaprthaktvād evopapatter iti kecit. The corresponding passage in BhV is to be found on p. 67, line 5-6, where we find *it dvau prthag ityādivyavahārasya dvitvāvacchinnaprthaktvād evopapatter iti kecit.* Since we are here speaking of *vyavahāra*, the reading *dvau prthag* is clearly to be preferred. And in fact this is exactly what the palm-leaf manuscript (see below) of V reads, so that the reading *dviprthag* in this case probably originated as an error in the Devanāgarī transcript which was Thakur's sole source for V.

It seems therefore that we should for the moment at least follow Thakur's hypothesis as to the relationship between these two texts. Though we should certainly remain aware of some problems and difficulties, his characterization of V as an abridgement of BhV,⁵⁰ retaining especially the portions of direct relevance to the interpretation of the sūtras and omitting many lengthy discussions and digressions, is clearly more accurate and helpful than the mere statement that '[b]oth works are indebted to Udayana and use similar versions of the Sūtra text.'⁵¹

50 It might be objected that BhV could equally well be an expanded version of V. This possibility cannot perhaps be completely ruled out, but the probabilities are weighted very heavily against this in my opinion. It seems unlikely that Bhaṭṭa Vādindra should omit to compose one or more opening verses for a commentary on the VS, even a brief one. Nor does it seem plausible to me that he should have made the commentary of another author the basis for his own fuller one, following it so faithfully as to hardly omit a word in it, and yet fail to acknowledge the fact; Bhaṭṭa Vādindra is I think too much an original scholar and idiosyncratic thinker for that. In addition, I suspect that there is internal evidence which points to V indeed being an abridgement made on the basis of BhV. I must however postpone discussing this point, which is obviously complicated by the fact that both texts are only available to us in mutilated and sometimes corrupted forms.

Another question which is more difficult to settle is whether Bhaṭṭa Vādindra is himself responsible for abridging BhV into V or whether this is the work of another hand. And in the latter case, is the abridgement none the less roughly contemporaneous with the composition of BhV – is it for instance an extract made by a student of Bhaṭṭa Vādindra for his own use – or is it a (much) later recast? This question is of importance for our evaluation of the occasional sentences in V which do not seem to have a counterpart in BhV. Once more, I can not present evidence in full – an attempt to settle the matter would require very close study of the two texts together with the other extant works of Bhaṭṭa Vādindra, and would in effect almost have to be preceded by re-editing both versions – but I personally feel that it is quite unlikely that the abridgement is authorial.

51 Halbfass 1992, 84 n. 25. Also in the other passages of this important book where Halbfass refers to Bhaṭṭa Vādindra's commentary, it appears that he regards BhV and V as quite unrelated texts. Thus on p. 75, he speaks of 'several apparently older commentaries; that is Candrānanda's *Vṛtti*, Bhaṭṭavādindra's *Vārttika*, and the anonymous commentary edited by Anantalal Thakur,' and on p. 79 he calls V 'an anonymous *Vyākhyā*, which

The text of V as printed is in many respects problematic and unsatisfactory. For this one can hardly reproach Thakur, for the material he had to work with simply was too poor and scanty to establish a reliable text. On the basis of Candrānanda's text and commentary some improvements were possible, particularly in regard to the sūtra text followed by Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra, and both Muni Jambūvijaya (in the second appendix of his edition of the VS with C) and M. Nozawa (in an article which appeared in 1974) put forward a number of emendations to the *sūtrapāṭha*.⁵² Further correction of the text of V, at least for the first two *āhnikas*, became possible with the publication of BhV, as has been remarked above. But even so, further improvements are rather badly needed, especially for the portions where the corresponding text of BhV is not available.

Fortunately, there is a source which will allow an advance in the right direction. This is nothing else than the palm-leaf manuscript of V, from which the transcript used by Thakur was made. This manuscript was acquired rather recently by the Kerala University Manuscripts Library, where it bears the number 21600C.⁵³ The route by which it came into the library's collection is not completely clear. According to the library's records, its last owner was K.V. Sharma. There can however be little doubt that this is indeed the very same manuscript which was described by V. Venkatarama Sharma and transcribed for Thakur; for that the manuscript agrees too closely with the edition. For instance, the lacunae in the edition which Thakur usually attempts to fill up by conjecture nearly always correspond to the places where text has been lost due to the margins of the palm-leaf manuscript being broken.

may be several centuries older than the *Upaskāra*.' Nowhere does Halbfass give his reasons, if there are any, for differing from Thakur's judgement.

I do not however wish to imply that there are no discrepancies at all between the two commentaries. But I suspect that most of the cases where they seem to differ in substance (as opposed to mere variation, usually slight, in wording) are to be explained as resulting from the defective state in which both have reached us. Indeed, as will be shown directly below, consultation of the original palm-leaf manuscript of V frequently allows restoration of a text substantially closer to that of BhV. Another factor to be taken into consideration is the possibility that errors were made during the process of abridgement; for instance, in some occasions, the sense of a passage may have been altered, even perhaps against the intention of the abridger, by the omission of certain sentences or words. Of course this is only likely if the person responsible for the abridgement was, as I suspect, different from Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra himself. This type of change or error can however probably not be identified with certainty because it can never be excluded (and is usually more plausible) that omissions of the kind I am thinking of are to be put down to scribal error.

52 The two scholars do not however always agree in their emendations.

53 This manuscript too is not listed in Bhaskaran 1984. I have consulted it from photographs.

The condition of the manuscript seems to have deteriorated only slightly from the time that the transcript Thakur used was made. The margins of most of the leaves are damaged, frequently resulting in the loss of a few *akṣaras*, but in some case rather more than that. Only in a few places does it appear that syllables which were in Thakur's transcript, and hence presumably legible in the palm-leaf manuscript when the transcript was made, have now been lost, due to further crumbling of the margins. Several folios have been considerably darkened, most probably due to the effects of smoke, but this has not led to text becoming illegible. The hand is early Malayalam, perhaps of the seventeenth century.⁵⁴ In addition to the commentary we are concerned with, it contains the *Nyāyadīpāvalī* and a commentary thereon. Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra's commentary covers folios 110-147. At the end, some stray folios occur containing part of the end of Śaktibhadra's well-known play, the *Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi*; these probably originally belonged to a different manuscript.

As was to be expected, a comparison of the palm-leaf manuscript with the printed text brought to light a substantial number of cases where corrections are possible. The transcript undoubtedly contained a number of misreadings, and also has on occasion omitted passages, usually due to homoeoteleuton or homoeoarcton. Furthermore, where the original was damaged, the transcript probably did not indicate the number of syllables which may have been lost, so that some of Thakur's conjectural restorations are implausible simply in view of the space they would have taken up. Given that Thakur was unable to make use of the original manuscript itself, this sort of problem was of course well-nigh inevitable. One helpful feature of the palm-leaf manuscript is that the sūtras are usually set off from the commentary by the addition of tiny dots at their beginnings and ends. These are the only punctuation marks found in the manuscript. Thakur's statement that 'the manuscript does not distinguish the sūtras from the commentary'⁵⁵ thus applies only to the transcript, and demonstrates the fact that he never saw the original manuscript.

But even with the palm-leaf original at our disposal, to establish a satisfactory text is a formidable task – in several cases an impossible one. The manuscript contains a rather large number of scribal errors, and numerous passages are viciously corrupt. Larger lacunae can of course hardly ever be restored with anything approaching certainty, unless another manuscript should come to light. The character and style of the text also does not make

54 Such would be my guess, and in this I find myself in agreement with Sharma's estimate of the age of the manuscript as some three hundred years (cf. Sharma 1951, 226).

55 From the English introduction, p. 9. The sentence has no parallel in the Sanskrit *bhūmikā*.

matters any simpler. Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra's style is often intricate,⁵⁶ his thought, influenced by Udayana, sophisticated and his explanations of sūtras frequently surprising, not to say unnatural. Still, with care, it should be possible to arrive at superior readings in a great many cases. Here I shall confine myself to giving a few examples which are relatively clear and should not require too much discussion.⁵⁷ More extensive lists of corrections and emendations are intended to be published elsewhere.

First a few cases where text has inadvertently dropped out in the printed edition. The reading of the edition is given first. References are to the page number and line of Thakur's 1957 edition (rather than to the reprint in the appendix of his edition of BhV). The portions between square brackets in the quotes from the edition are Thakur's proposals for filling up real or conjectured lacunae.

- 1 In the commentary on VS 1.1.3 (*tadvacanād āmnāyasya prāmāṇyam*), *āmnāyasya* is explained by Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra by adding *śrutismṛtīti-hāsādeḥ* (p. 2 l. 17). Thus the edition; the manuscript has *śrutismṛtīti-hāsapurāṇādeḥ*, the same reading as is found in BhV (p. 13 line 2).
- 2 In the long (even in the abridged version) and intricate commentary on the sūtra *kriyāvad guṇavat samavāyikāraṇam iti dravyalakṣaṇam* (C's 1.1.14, numbered 1.1.15 in the edition of V and 1.1.14 in the edition of BhV⁵⁸) we find a sentence which reads as follows: *nāpi vṛddhavyavahārād eva dravyaśabdavācyatvasiddhe[r anumānasya vaiyarthyaṃ, ekasādhanenānyasādhanasya, anyathā anumānena dravyaśabdavācyatvaprāsiddhe]r vṛddhavyavahāravaiyarthyaṃ durvāratvāt* (p. 8 l. 7-9). Thakur deserves full credit here for realizing that the text available to him was corrupt and for correctly diagnosing the location and cause of the corruption: loss of text due to homoeoteleuton. The manuscript reads *nāpi vṛddhavyavahārād eva dravyaśabdavācyatvasiddher vyatirekiyaivayarthyaṃ* (read *vyatirekivaiyarthyaṃ*) *tasyānupajīvyatvāt anyathā vyatirekeṇaiva dravyaśabdavācyatvasiddher vṛddhavyavahāravaiyarthyaṃ durvāratvāt*. This

56 Though at least the abridged version makes for easier reading than the long one.

57 For keeping discussion of the often considerable problems at a minimum here I must plead shortage of time and, above all, space.

58 Here there is a discrepancy between V and BhV that cannot be easily accounted for. But *na tu kāryābhāvāt kāraṇābhāvaḥ* which is numbered in V as 1.1.14 is no doubt not to be taken as a sūtra which is meant to go here. It is a quote of 1.2.2. Perhaps text has been lost in BhV which contained this quote and the following passage in V which seems to have no equivalent.

- agrees exactly with the corresponding passage in BhV (p. 103 l. 19-22), except that the latter has *duṣpariharatvāt* for *durvāratvāt*.
- 3 In the commentary on 6.2.1, *drṣṭānām drṣṭaprayojanānām drṣṭābhāve prayogo 'bhyudayāya*, we read [*evam sati*] *gobrāhmaṇādyuddeśena tyāgaḥ svargasādhanadharmasādhanam* [*vedapramāṇe*] *na bodhyata iti* (p. 61 l. 4-5). The manuscript has *prayogo brāhmaṇādyuddeśana* (read *brāhmaṇādyuddeśena*) *tyāgaḥ tathā ca drṣṭānām hiraṇya-samidājyacarupuroḍāśādīnām brāhmaṇādyuddeśena tyāgas svargasādhanadharmasādhanatayā ...* (2-3 *akṣaras* lost here) *na bodhyata iti*. Again, the loss of text was clearly caused by eyeskip.
- 4 In the edition, the sūtra *adoṣo 'nupadhā* (C's 6.2.5) is not to be found; after the commentary on 6.2.4 (numbered 6.2.5 in V) the edition continues with the sūtra [*yad*] *iṣṭarūparasagandhasparśam prokṣitam abhyukṣitam ca tac chuci* (p. 61 l. 18; the sūtra corresponds to C's 6.2.6). The missing sūtra is however present in the manuscript. After the final word of the commentary on (C's) 6.2.4, the following should be added: *adoṣo [']nupadhā* [6.2.6 = C's 6.2.5] *aduṣto bhisandhinupadheti* (read *'bhisandhir anupadheti*) *lakṣaṇam*. In this case an entire sūtra and its (brief) commentary has dropped out due to homoeoteleuton; the commentary on 6.2.5 (C's 6.2.4) also ends on the word *lakṣaṇam*. In the following sūtra, the [*yad*] was added by Thakur to make the sūtra agree with ŚM; it may now be removed,⁵⁹ for it is lacking in the manuscript, which is undamaged here, is not supported by the commentary, and is not found in C's text.

Finally, some corrections which do not involve omission of text.

- 5 In V's 3.1.3, corresponding to C's 3.1.2, the reading we find in the printed text is *indriyārthaprasiddher indriyārthebhyo 'rthāntarasya hetuḥ*. The manuscript reads *indriyārthaprasiddher indriyārththebhyo rtthāntaratve hetuḥ*. The *akṣara tve* has been added under the line (but by the same hand) and is perhaps a little difficult to read, but I believe there is no real doubt possible about the reading. I propose emending to read with C *indriyārthaprasiddhir indriyārthebhyo 'rthāntaratve hetuḥ*. The all too brief commentary – it merely runs *prasiddhyāśrayasyeti śeṣaḥ* – supports °*prasiddhir* rather than

⁵⁹ As was already suggested (by implication) by Jambūvijaya; see the *dviṭīyam pariśiṣṭam* of his edition of the VS with Candrānanda's commentary, p. 115 l. 18-19. Nozawa (1974) is silent about this sūtra; apparently he follows Thakur (cf. Nozawa 1985, 87).

°*prasiddher*, as does also the commentary on 3.1.1, which runs *indriyārthaprasiddhir iti dharminī kvacid āśritatvaṃ sādhyam, kārya-tvagunatvādayas ca hetava iti tātparyam | prayogas tu pratītiḥ* (note that this is used here as a synonym for *prasiddhi*) *kvacid āśritā, kāryatvāt, guṇatvāc ca, rūpavad iti | śarīratadavayavā na pratīter āśrayaḥ, gandhavattvāśrayatvāt, rūpavattvāt, sparśavattvāt, ghaṭavat | nendriyāṇi pratīter āśrayaḥ, karaṇatvāt kuṭharavat | prāṇo na pratīter āśrayaḥ, vāyutvāt, bāhyavāyuvat ||* (p. 34 l. 4-8).

- 6 6.2.2 is read as follows in the edition: *abhiṣecanopavāsabrahmacaryagurukulavāsavānaprasthayajñadānaprokṣaṇadiñnakṣatramantrakālaniyamās cādṛṣṭāya*. Thus also ŚM; C has °*vānaprasthya*° for °*vānaprastha*°. The palm-leaf manuscript indeed reads as printed by Thakur. In the commentary on this sūtra, however, we find the following remark: *vanād vanam pratiṣṭhata iti vānaprasthaḥ | sa tu tṛtīyāśramī tasya karma vānaprastham* (p. 61 l. 10-11). The manuscript has *na tu* for *sa tu*, and *vānaspatyam* for *vānaprastham*. I suggest that we should read and punctuate *vanād vanam pratiṣṭhata iti vānaprasthaḥ | na tu tṛtīyāśramī | tasya karma vānaprasthyam*. Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra's intention is, I believe, to explain that the neuter noun *vānaprasthya* is derived from the masculine noun *vānaprastha* by addition of the *taddhita* suffix *Ṣyañ* in the sense of the activity or occupation of a person (*karma*), in accordance with Pāṇ. 5.1.123. And the masculine noun *vānaprastha* is to be understood as meaning 'one who goes from forest to forest,' i.e., presumably, a wandering ascetic, and not as someone in the third stage of life (as the word would ordinarily be taken), who would be – as Candrānanda says – one who leaves from his house to the forest. Compare Candrānanda's commentary ad loc.: *sāstravidhinā gehān niḥsrtyāranyam prasthito vānaprasthaḥ, tasya karma vānaprasthyam* (C p. 48 l. 13-14).⁶⁰ I must admit that it is not clear to me why Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra should wish to understand the word in a sense different from the well-known one, and do not wholly rule out the possibility that *na tu* should be emended to *sa tu* (as in the printed edition), but *sa tu* in this context strikes me as slightly unnatural, and the difference between Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra's explanation of *vānaprastha* and that of Candrānanda seems

60 I am not sure by what rule Candrānanda and Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra mean to derive the word *vānaprastha* (with *vṛddhi* in the first syllable); evidently they do not assume *vāna* to be used in the sense of a *vanasamūha* in accordance with Pāṇ. 4.2.37, as is usually explained. Nor can they have Pāṇ. 4.2.110 in mind.

significant. In either case, it appears to me that we should emend the sūtra to read °*vānaprasthya*° with C and ŚM. It should be noted though that A and T both have °*vānaprastha*°.

VI

The previous sections have done little more than present some notes on the manuscript tradition of the VS and the commentaries by Candrānanda and Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra. A more thorough treatment would require very much more time and space than is at my disposal just now. Nonetheless I hope that some of the readings discussed above, and the corrections of printed texts proposed on the basis of manuscript readings, may prove of interest to fellow students of the Vaiśeṣika. To conclude, I should like to venture onto what is in a sense even trickier ground, and offer a few general remarks on questions of method. Though many of my observations are perhaps obvious, not to say banal, these basic points, or their implications, can sometimes all too easily be forgotten. I hasten to add also that I am most painfully aware of how far the work presented above, which can at best be described as preparatory, falls short of the ideal which is broadly sketched below.

Those who undertake to study classical Indian philosophy must inevitably base their researches in the first place on texts. And since it is practically speaking never the case that we possess the author's autograph manuscript, certified beyond doubt, and unambiguously legible,⁶¹ it appears to me to follow inevitably that textual criticism is an essential discipline.⁶² And especially in cases where the surviving manuscripts are all many centuries later than the texts they transmit – and this is the situation with all of our early texts – it would appear to be self-evident that it is our task to attempt to collect all available evidence, both primary and secondary, and to bring to bear all we can learn about the ways in which texts were transmitted and altered in the hope of thus being able to determine as far as possible what the original form of the text was and how it changed over time. I would like to

61 In fact, the problems and disagreements of editors of modern English and American authors should warn us that even in the case of works available in autograph manuscripts or typescripts, it is by no means always possible to arrive at agreement on the precise text to be adopted.

62 Even scholars who work exclusively from printed texts can certainly benefit from studying the transmission of the texts they deal with. For instance, knowing which scripts the manuscripts of a text were written in, together with a grounding in palaeography and codicology, can clearly help in alerting one to corruption and dealing with it.

stress that recovery of the original is, in my view at least, not necessarily the highest, and certainly not the only goal of the text critic. Rather, one must attempt to reconstruct the history of the text, which is essential for the recovery of the original, but which often includes far more. For it requires, one might say, that we enter into the mind and thought not only of the writer but also of all those who have influenced its transmission. It demands, in addition to the more mechanical and basic skills, sensitivity to historical development, awareness of why and how a text may have been changed – and this means an understanding of the text as a part of the culture to which it belongs. Rather than making the reconstruction of a single moment of creation our goal, this approach attempts to grasp the development of the text in its entirety. Over and above the individual thinker, the critical study of texts can shed light on Indian culture as something changing and developing.

To be a little more concrete; if we wish to reconstruct the original text of the VS – if one can profitably speak of such a thing – it will be necessary to identify the accretions and changes to the text. In this we are faced by different kinds of problems. We shall have to determine what readings (including omissions and additions) may be purely scribal, arising from unconscious changes during the course of transmission. For that we need to study scribal usage and habits – and in India these differ in numerous important respects from the practice of medieval scribes in Europe, which has been carefully studied by classicists and medievalists. In the case of so important and wide-spread text as the VS, scribal practices of different times and regions must inevitably be taken into account. Furthermore, we must try to fathom the nature and motivation of the changes – and in the case of the VS they are doubtless many – which are deliberate; which serve a purpose, though not always the same one. The desire to bring the text into line with changed views, in some cases perhaps sectarian ones,⁶³ the desire to defend against opponents' criticism and to be able to attribute the defence to the authority of the *ṛṣi* – these may be among the most important and most frequent motives of such change, but we may also have to take into account metrical and aesthetic considerations, including, perhaps, in some cases the wish to express a thought more clearly, and in some cases the wish to express it more tersely. And, at least in the case of deliberate change,⁶⁴ we should not,

63 The extent to which different recensions of the VS are to be associated with different (sub-)schools, holding divergent views on certain points, is something which has not been determined; the evidence available at present is perhaps not sufficient to do much more than speculate.

64 It should be born in mind that unconscious error too may produce a reading which, not being recognized as incorrect, has permanent influence on cultural development.

having settled on the reading we believe to be 'authentic,' discard the others and pay them no further heed. It may be from them that we can learn most about the Vaiśeṣika; it may be from them that we can learn most about India.

It need hardly be said that in the case of the vast majority of texts the task of collecting the evidence, not to speak of the task of historical reconstruction, has barely begun. But it is not for us to reproach earlier generations of scholars for this. The practical difficulties of such work, starting from the problem of locating manuscripts and gaining access to them, as well as the sheer quantity of labour involved, are usually only realized when confronted with them oneself. Nonetheless, it is of the highest importance that work should proceed as rapidly as possible. For it may be regarded as certain that the passage of years, and changing circumstances in India, have already caused many manuscripts to be lost since the beginning of our century. The funds available to Indian manuscript libraries for the conservation of their holdings are grossly inadequate; manuscripts in private hands face even more uncertain fates. It is a little sobering to reflect on the fact that a number of our sources for early Vaiśeṣika are preserved in single, unique manuscripts.

My plea is therefore in the first place that we should not forget how our knowledge ultimately rests on highly perishable documents, the larger part of which has yet to be studied thoroughly. This is something which some who work exclusively with printed texts may occasionally lose sight of. This does not mean that I advocate all of us immediately leaving our desks to go in search of manuscripts, although I do think that such work must be kept up by a few at least. But we should remember not to accord the editions we have more authority than they deserve. Chance has played too great a rôle in determining which texts are now available to us as printed books, and in what form – the chance of one work surviving while another was lost; the chance of one being transmitted more or less faithfully while another was corrupted by poor scribes or changed deliberately to suit the needs or taste of a later period; the chance of one being discovered while another molds in an unsearched stack of manuscripts; the chance of one finding a competent and sensitive editor while another suffers from the rough hands of an impatient scholar, all too quick to emend what he does not understand.⁶⁵ With this in our minds, we would do well to be humble about the reconstructions we may arrive at of the thought of writers separated from us by so many centuries and the work of so many scribes.

65 A conservative editor, slow to admit that the text of his manuscripts is corrupt and loath to emend it, is likely to do less damage.

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