LANGUAGE AND SOTERIOLOGY: VEDANTIC AND BUDDHIST

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prcchāmi tvā paramantam prthivvāḥ, prcchāmi yatra
bhuvanasya nābhiḥ/
prcchāmi tvā vrsno aśvasya ratah, prcchāmi vācaḥ
paramam vyoma//

(Rx Veda I. 164. 34)

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ABSTRACT: The body of this work consists of the study of
the notion of language in Ṛg Veda, Śaṅkara, Pāli
Suttas, and Nāgārjuna with perhaps the main em-
phasis of the work falling on the two philosophers
mentioned. In each instance I have attempted to
come to an understanding of the notion of language
in terms of its relation to what might be described
as "ultimate concerns", or in other words, those
concerns which have as their horizons the endpoints
of metaphysical inquiry and soteriological endeavour.
The main scheme that I work towards is a heuristic
one, revolving around the bifurcation of language
conceived of as "divine" in the Brahmanical tradi-
tions studied, and as "diabolical" in the Buddhist
ones. However, this distinction, since it is an
heuristic one, should not be pressed too far.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The problem of 'Truth', or of 'Reality',—of discovering and understanding 'things' as they really are, without concession[1]—may well be said to entail the only pure and earnest philosophical inquiry. In fact, it seems that any and every question one might possibly entertain presupposes the archtypical force of this necessary disposition. However, while we have here the essential dynamism of the philosophical enterprise, it is language that provides it with requisite shape and content, that is, with articulation and meaning. Thus, I think that it is not too much of a generality to say that what we have come to call 'philosophy' revolves, though perhaps sometimes in a rather diluted manner, around the following great axial question: "What is Reality(Truth)?".

Both factors (language and the will/desire to uncover) are simultaneously crucial to man's confrontation with the given world, and it is out of such confrontation, on an isolated and personal level, that bare thought crystallizes into systematic philosophy. In this thesis I have chosen to concentrate on two of these systematic philosophies, those of Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna, with an effort to examine their respective conceptualizations of

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1 Here I am simply stressing the fact that in appropriating such an undertaking one is not dealing with 'half-way measures', nor aiming, once the end is reached, to grant or yield any sense of relativity whatsoever.

language and the relation of this language to what they hold to be
the Absolute, i.e., the answer to the "Great Question".

Within the limits of the Indian Tradition[1], the end re-
sult of—the actual 'answer' to—the "Great Question", has always[2]
been synonymous with the fulfillment of soteriological concerns,
namely, 'spiritual' emancipation (mukti, moksa, nirvāna). This is
nowhere more true than in the recorded thought of India's two grea-
test exponents of 'Transcendentalist'[3] philosophy: Śaṅkara and
Nāgārjuna. Therefore, in our effort to investigate the manner in
which these two eminent thinkers deliberated upon the "Great Ques-
tion", we must constantly bear in mind the inseperability of inquiry
and soteriology in the Indian Philosophical Tradition.

It must be pointed out that the manner in which Nāgārjuna
and Śaṅkara manage to answer the "Great Question" is only obtusely
a focus of this thesis, more accurately we are concerned with a
question within the one whose answer, according to Śaṅkara and Nā-
garjuna, vitiates all other questions[4]. This question which spe-
cifically concerns us might be formulated as follows: "What, ac-

1 I use the word "Tradition" here in the broadest possible sense,
 a sense that is more inclusive than exclusive, taking into ac-
 count all manifest and latent, cultural and philosophical, out-
 growths of presuppositions basic to that complex.

2 Excepting of course the Cārvākas (Materialists) whose short-lived
 contribution to the Indian Tradition was little more than negligible.

3 A provisional epithet, in the sense that neither of these phi-
 losophers would consider themselves to be so.

4 For Nāgārjuna the "Great Question" and its answer even vitiate
 themselves.

cording to Śankara and Nāgārjuna, is the relationship of the ar-
ticulation (shape) and meaning (content) of the 'Great Question'
to its own answer?", or in other words, "What is the relationship
between language and Absolute Reality according to each of these
two philosophers?"

Bearing this scope into our investigation, I think that
we will notice that the problems to be faced here are slightly
different from those that might be brought about by a similar in-
vestigation directd at some of the decidedly Realistic branches
of Indian Philosophy (e.g., Jaina, Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika),
wherein, as expected, one would encounter metaphysical convictions
that catered to, and encouraged, a structured-analytic approach to
the question of linguistic signification[1]. For example, the ques-
tions to be asked here are of the following variety: a) "If the
two systems we are dealing with are truly 'Trancendentalisms', and
therefore can be said to regard given existence as necessarily la-
cking genuine reality, then what can language—which seems to bear

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1 T. R. V. Murti in his "Welcome Adress" to the Second All-India
Seminar, as found on pages ix-x of Language and Reality (&
Other Papers), (Proceedings of the Second All-India Seminar
held at Banaras Hindu University), Ed., J. L. Mehta, Centre of
Advanced Study in Philosophy, B.H.U., Varanasi, 1968, puts forth
a similar bifurcation in the Indian Philosophy of Language:

> From the Indian point of view the problem of lan-
> guage has a two-fold aspect. One is the phi῀loso-
> phical tradition according to which Language is of
> Divine origin. The other approach is that of struc-
> tural analysis, where Indian Grammarians have made
> important cotributions.

But this cursory stratification is quite vague, and does not
account for language as conceived in the Pāli suttas,or Nāgār-
juna, for example.

a more natural affinity to the mundane sphere[4]—be said to repre-
sent or connote?"; b) "What can we make out to be the definitive
'role' of language in the grand scheme of these philosophies?";
c) On the other hand, it might additionally be asked whether the
import of adjectives and phrases put forward by these two philoso-
phers with the apparent intention of predicating the Absolute con-
forms to their accepted notions of what the applications and ca-
pacities of language truly are? Of course, the above key ques-
tions can only be persued once a fundamental understanding of the
nature of Absolute Reality and the nature of Language in each of
these two schools of thought has been achieved.

        Turning now to a few methodological considerations, I
may state that historically I will be dealing with the Śaṅkara of
the Bhāṣyas on the prasthānatrayī, and the Nāgārjuna of the Mūla-
madhyamakakārikā and Vigrahavyāvartanī. The former presents little

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1   That is, within these two Absolutisms language is clearly this
    side of Reality. T. R. V. Murti expresses this point aptly on
    page 153 of his major work The Central Philosophy of Buddhism,
    George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1960, when he states the
    following:

> Language is pre-eminently an instrument to express
> the empirical. This is not only natural, but prag-
> matically the more important. Very often philosophy,
> especially absolutism, has to convey through the usual
> symbols what admittedly cannot be symbolised. This
> it does by superimposing an induced or artifical sig-
> nification on conventional words. Many of the ambi-
> guities and apparent inconsistencies in the Mādhyamika
> or other absolutist systems are traceable to this ne-
> cessary predicament. They are ever trying to convey
> through language and concepts things for which lan-
> guage was not intended as an instrument of expression.

This then, is the general problematic context for our investiga-
tion of the relationship between Language and Reality in Śaṅkara
and Nāgārjuna.

problem as definite historical figure and author of the three

Bhāsyas attributed to him, Nāgārjuna, however, is a more enigmatic

individual in respect to both his historical existence and espe-

cially the works that we may say were authored by him[1]. To mini-

mize this problem, I have restricted myself to speaking of Nāgār-

juna as the author of those two philosphical works most confidently

attributed to him by modern scholars—Mūlamadhyamakakārikās and

Vigrahavyāvartanī[2].

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1 Richard H. Robinson in his Early Mādhyamika in India and China,
University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1967, (pp. 21-26), pro-
vides a concise synopsis of both traditional (Indian and Chinese)
and scholarly opinions on the date of Nāgārjuna, however, he does
not seem to side with any of these interpretations, nor does he
explicitly offer a view of his own, therefore, we can do little
more than side with Winternitz when he states on p. 341 of his
A History of Indian Literature, University of Calcutta, 1927,
that, "It is a good working hypothesis, though nothing more, that
he lived in the latter half of the 2nd century A.D.". As to the
works which we might consider to have been composed by Nāgārjuna,
Robinson, on p. 27 of the work referred to above, states the fol-
lowing:

> ...if we define Nāgārjuna as the author of the Mid-
> dle Stanzas, then there are no grounds for impeaching
> the authenticity of the other four works [Yukti sastika,
> Sūnyatā-saptati, Vigraha-vyāvartanī, and Vaidalyā lis-
> ted by Tāranātha, as their content agrees with that of
> the Middle Stanzas. In addition, the Ratnāvalī, Catuh-
> stava, Pratītya-samutpāda-hrdaya, and Bhava-samkrānti
> sāstra... are attested by quotations in Candrakīrti....

However, due to the availability of translations and the amount of
secondary work done on the Kārikās and Vigraha-vyāvartanī I have
decided to concentrate almost solely upon them.

2 This of course does not mean that allusions, where appropriate,
will not be made to some of the works mentioned in the preceding
note, such as Ratnāvalī and Catuh-stava, or even more dubious works
such as Mahāyāna-vimsaka and Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sāstra.

I must point out that the force behind this exercise
is one of 'thinking through' rather than one of arranging or
classifying according to historical or conceptual typologies,
although it is a simple fact of scholarship that one cannot
proceed to apply oneself to the former without displaying a
firm foundation in the latter. It may also be mentioned at
this point that the burden of our difficulty in talking about
the 'metaphysical convictions' of these two philosophers falls
generously on the side of the Nāgārjuna. In other words, while
in Śaṅkara's Advaita we find an express and lucid ontology, some-
thing that we can "sink our teeth into", Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika
demonstrates a 'raw dialectic' whose singular function in terms
of epistemology or ontology is by no means clear[1].

Besides chapters dealing specifically with the above
two figures, I have also incuded two chapters which attempt
investigate the concept of language in the earliest stages of
Brahmanical and Buddhist thought, with an effort to understand
the nature and the type of base that Śaṅkara's and Nāgārjuna's
thoughts about language necessarily assume. Most importantly,
the aim of this work is not comparative, the only comparison

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1. Robinson briefly comments upon this on p. 4 of his Early Ma-
dhyamika..., stating that:

> The dominant problem for the European discus-
> sants has remained the Mādhyamika ontology—whether
> this system acknowledges an absolute; whether it is
> Monism, Relativism, Nihilism, Scepticism, Absolu-
> tism; whether it has an ontology at all or confines
> itself to epistemology.

that is intended is implicit in the structure of the chapters
themselves.

On the other hand, one may well ask if this work is at
all a thesis in the most well known use of the word, that is, in
the sense of a thematic presentation and working-through of a
central proposition or problem towards the establishment of a
justified and gratifying conclusion. Clearly this work does not
have such an outward appearance. It does not attempt to ride
on the shoulders of a single and persistent question. This has
followed, I think, mainly from the somewhat overambitious scope
of the undertaking, which compelled me to deal with each of the
four major segments of the exercise contextually, or, as almost
self-contained investigations of instances (though not instances
in the sense of a necessary continuity and developement) of
dealing with the concept of language within Indian Thought. To
do otherwise, namely, to venture into outright Comparative Philo-
sophy, would involve an intensive investigation of the assump-
tions and presuppositions basic to that enterprise and their
specific relevancy to our questions and instances here. It is
something that might follow after the initial mapping-out that
comprises the body of this work.[1]

Lastly, we may adress ourselves to the question "Why

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1 Again, I have pointed to such possibilities of comparison in
   the overall arrangement and structure of the chapters themselves.
   Similarly, both Epilogues serve the double function of being
   what might be called a surrogate conclusion, and of bringing
   closer or linking together those chapters which obviously demand
   this.

should one at all bother oneself with the study of the concept
of language in any sense of the word?". Language is the constant
medium of one's own efforts to understand, to give shape to a
hermeneutic of existence, in the sense that all that man has to
work with in order to strive for an answer to the "Great Question"
is already given to him and stands in relation to him as a re-
presentation in language (words, concepts, symbols, the actual
form of thought). In respect to this T. R. V. Murti makes the
following important observation[1]:

> The philosophy of language is an end in itself.
> It is not cultivated as a means to acquire greater
> profieiency in the use of language. Through phi-
> losophy, Speech becomes conscious of itself. It
> awakens to its role as the creator and matrix of
> Word and Meaning which encompass the entire uni-
> verse of things.

It might be said that man as a thinking being, stands in the
wake of the Absolute, but one must also realise that the very
fibre of this wake is language itself.

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1 T. R. V. Murti. "Some Comments on the Philosophy of Language
   in the Indian Context", JIP., #2, pp. 321-331. The quotation
   appears on p. 325.

HOR	History of Religions (Chicago)
HOS	Harvard Oriental Series (Cambridge, Mass.)
IA	Indian Antiquary
IIJ	Indo-Iranian Journal
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly (Calcutta)
IPA	Indian Philosophical Annual (Madras)
IU	Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad (See TPU)
IUB	Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad Śaṅkara Bhāsya (See TPU)
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society (New Haven)
JCV	Jha Commemoration Volume ed., S. N. Dasgupta
JIP	Journal of Indian Philosophy (Dordrecht)
KU	Katha Upaniṣad (See TPU)
KUB	Katha Upaniṣad Śaṅkara Bhāsya (See TPU)
KeU	Kena Upaniṣad (See TPU)
KeUB	Kena Upaniṣad Śaṅkara Bhāsya (See TPU)
KS	Kindred Sayings (Saṁyutta Nikāya) tr., C. A. F. Davids and F. L. Woodward
M	Mahāyānaviṁśaka, ed., and tr., Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya
MLS	Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima Nikāya) tr., I. B. Horner
MMK	Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (As contained in Pr)
MN	Majjhima Nikāya (PTS) ed., V. Trenckner and Lord Chalmers
MU	Mundaka Upaniṣad (See TPU)
MUB	Mundaka Upaniṣad Śaṅkara Bhāsya (See TPU)
MaU	Māndūkya Upaniṣad (See TPU)

ABBREVIATIONS

(For detais on the primary source material, consult "Works Considered", below pp. 171f.)

ABORI	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Poona)
ALB	Advar Library Bulletin (Adyar, Madras)
AU	Aitereya Upanisad (See TPU)
AUB	Aitereya Upanisad Sankara Bhāsya (See TPU)
BDCRI	Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute (Poona)
BG	Bhagavadgītā (As contained in BGB)
BGB	Bhagavadgītā Sankara Bhāsya, ed., D. V. Gokhale
BS	Brahmasūtras (As contained in BSB)
BSB	Brahmasūtra Sankara Bhāsya, ed., Nārāyan Rām Achārya
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (London)
BU	Brhadāranyaka Upanisad (See TPU)
BUB	Brhadāranyaka Upanisad Sankara Bhāsya (See TPU)
BV	Bharatīya Vidya (Bombay)
CU	Chāndogya Upanisad (See TPU)
CUB	Chāndogya Upanisad Sankara Bhāsya (See TPU)
D	Dialogues of the Buddha, tr., T. W. Rhys Davids and C. A. F. Rhys Davids.
DN	Dhīga Nikāya, (PTS) ed., T. W. Rhys Davids and J. E. Carpenter
GS	The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara Nikāya) tr., F. L. Woodward and E. M. Hare

MaUB	Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad Śaṅkara Bhāṣya (See TPU)
NS	Niraupamyastava ed. and tr., G. Tucci (See Tucci, "Two Hymns...")
PEW	Philsophy East and West (Honolulu)
PS	Paramārthastava ed. and tr., G. Tucci (See Tucci, "Two Hymns...")
PTS	Pali Text Society, London
PTSICO	Proceedings of the Twenty-Sixth International Congress of Orientalists ed., R. N. Dandekar
PU	Praśna Upaniṣad (See TPU)
PUB	Praśna Upaniṣad Śaṅkara Bhāṣya (See TPU)
Pr	Prasannapadā ed., P. L. Vaidya (See Vaidya, Madhyamakaśāstra...)
R	Ratnāvalī ed. and tr., G. Tucci
RV	Ṛg Veda ed., Śrī Pāda Śarmā
SS	Collected Papers of Professor S. S. Suryana Rayana Sastri
TPU	Ten Principal Upanishads with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, no editor given, Motilal Banarsidass, 1964
TT	The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta ed., Mervyn Sprung
TU	Taittirīya Upaniṣad (See TPU)
TUB	Taittirīya Upaniṣad Śaṅkara Bhāṣya (See TPU)
VB	Vedānta and Buddhism (And Other Papers) ed., J. L. Mehta
VIJ	Vishveshwaranand Indological Journal
VV	Vigrahavyāvartanī ed., E. H. Johnston and A. Kunst
ZDMG	Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft

TRANSLATIONS CONSULTED

(My translations of Sanskrit passages employed in the body
of this thesis have been based upon the following existing
translations. For details see below pp. 171ff.)

Chapter I

Rg Veda

Geldner, K. F., Der Rig-Veda: Aus Dem Sanskrit
Ins Deutsche Und Mit Einem Laufenden Kommentar
Versehen

Griffith, Ralph.T, The Hymns of the Rgveda

Chapter II

Bhagavadgītā etc.

Edgerton, F., The Bhagavad Gītā

Sastri, A. Mahadeva, The Bhagavad-Gītā with the
Commentary of Srī Sankarāchārya

Brahmasūtrā etc.

Apte, V. M., Brahma-Sūtra Shānkara-Bhāshya

Gambhirananda, Swami, Brahma-Sūtra Bhāsya of
Śankarācārya

Upanisads etc.

Jha, Ganganatha, The Chāndogyopanisad (A trea-
tise on Vedānta Philsophy translated into Eng-
lish with the Commentary of Sankara)

Gambhirananda, Swami, Eight Upanisads With the
Commentary of Sankarācārya, Two Vols.

Madhavananda, Swami, The Brhadāranyaka Upanisad
With the Commentary of Sankarāchārya

Radhakrishnan, S., The Principal Upanisads

Chapter IV

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā

Inada, Kenneth K., Nāgārjuna (A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay)

Streng, F., "Fundamentals of the Middle Way" as contained on pp. 183-220 of the same author's Emptiness

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with Prasannapadā

Chapt. I and XXV, Stcherbatsky, Th., The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna, pp. 79-212

Chapts. II-IV, VI-IX, XI, XXIII, XXIV, XXVI, XXVII, May, Jacques, Candrakīrti Prasannapadā Madhyamakavrtti

Chapts. V, X, XII-XVI, Schayer, Stanislaw, Ausgewählte Kapitel Aus der Prasanapadā

Chapts. XVIII-XXII, De Jong, J. W., Cinq Chapitres de la Prasannapadā

Vigrahavyavartanī

Bhattacharya, Kamaleswar, "The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna (Translation of the 'Vigrahavyavartanī' from the original Sanskrit with Introduction and Notes)"

Mookerjee, S., on pp. 7-41 of his "The Absolutist's Standpoint in Logic"

Streng, F., "Averting the Arguments" on pp. 221-227 of his Emptiness

Divine Speech: Vāc in the Ṛg Veda

In attempting to investigate a concept, or a specific
idea-cluster, taken from the Ṛg Veda, one must first of all real-
ize with what one is dealing. The inital question should always
be, "What exactly is the Ṛg Veda, and how can we go about under-
standing it?". The structure of such a question, of course, is
basic to any sort of hermeneutical endeavour, yet the patience of
briefly going over the major points in this case might prevent us
from plunging haphazardly into quite a bewildering cosmos.

First of all, we are dealing with a self-contained text
of over one-thousand enigmatic, poetical sūktas (hymns) belonging
to various chronological strata[1] and frequently liable to inter-
polations. It is the oldest available Indian Text and contains a
complex of mythological[2], ritualistic[3], and what might tentatively

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1 The whole of the tenth Book and portions of the first are con-
sidered to be the most recent with the Family Books (II-VII)
being the earliest. See Louis Renou, Vedic India (trans. Phi-
lip Spratt), Indological Book House, Delhi-Varanasi, 1971, pp.
3-4. I mention this in passing since we are not concerned with
the historical developement of the concept of vāc in Ṛg Veda,
but with capturing a more integral assessment of it with a view
to seeing what relationship it might have to Śaṅkara's idea of
speech.

2 A. A. Macdonell's, Vedic Mythology, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi,
1974, being the most concise presentation, and Abel Bergaigne's
Vedic Religion, IV Vols., (trans. V. G. Paranjpe) Aryasamskrti
Prakashan, Poona, 1969-1973, being perhaps the most informative.

3 See Renou, Vedic India, pp. 93- 125.

be termed philosophical, preoccupations. It, of course, plays a pre-eminent role, both historically and traditionally in the Indian āstika schools of thought[1]. These are well known generalities and I make them only to emphasize two points: a) there is little, if anything, that can be called systematic or "clear-cut" in the conceptual content of the Ṛg Veda; b) that despite this, a more than significant segment of the Indian philosphical and religious[2] Tradition looks back on it as a body of revealed, and therefore foundational, truth.

If we now turn to the how aspect of our initial problem, we will quite naturally find that it is a constant function of our limitations, that is, if we can come to terms with the limits of our investigative tools in respect to this relatively inaccessible text, and constantly keep these limits in mind, then we will have established the methodological consciousness necessary to understand the Ṛg Veda—in effect, this is what method in Religious Studies entails, an understanding of one's limitations. Most importantly, I think that one should allow the text itself to serve as the overruling guide, even more so when the text is as self-

1 Śaṅkara, who holds the most interest for us, says of the Ṛg Veda that it is "...the source of all knowledge...." (sarvajñānākara) at BSB. I. 1. 3.

2 Though I do not mean to imply, in any sense, that these two aspects of the Indian Tradition are as divergent as they have come to be regarded in the West. An interesting article that attempts to show that what is felt to be philosophy in Indian thought is not as exclusive a concept as it is in the West is J. M. Freedman's, "Myth and Metaphysics in Indian Thought", in The Monist, Vol. 50, 1966, pp. 517-527.

contained[1] as the Rg Veda, and keep the 'reading into' the text
of one's own presuppositions[2] down to a minimum.

Though the Rg Veda itself may be our most important
tool, our most copious one is, of course, the vast body of secon-
dary literature available on the topic. These, I think, may be
roughly divided into two camps, the historians and the specula-
tors. The former might be called the 'technocrats' of Vedic stu-
dies, their concerns are basically within the realms of philology
and comparative mythology[3], the latter are themselves self-styled
poet-visionaries who delight in exploring the extensions and subtleties
of symbolism to which the Rg Vedic hymns easily lend themselves[4].

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1 By 'self-contained' I mean that the Rg Veda seems to stand by
itself without presupposing any other text, while the rest of
the Samhitās, Brāhmanas, etc. presuppose the Rg Veda. I might
also add that the most successful studies of the Rg Veda seem
to have been those who treated the work in this manner, such
as H. Oldenberg, Vedaforschung, Stuttgart, 1960, A. Bergaigne,
Vedic Religion, and Louis Renou, Études Védiques et Pāninéennes,
17 Vols., Paris, 1955-1966. For the treatment of Rg Veda as a
text by these and other scholars see Antonio T. de Nicolas,
Four-Dimensional Man: The Philosophical Methodology of the
Rigveda, Dharmaram College, Bangalore, 1971, pp. 12-13.

2 The presuppositions may be traditional ones such as make dis-
tinct, East-West ways of thinking and, which weigh most heavily on
comparative religious exercises, or they may be historical-con-
ceptual presuppositions within a tradition, which tend to anachro-
nistically read into terminology what is inappropriate.

3 Extending from the extant Nirukta of Yāska (c. sixth cent. B.C.)
to 19th century European scholarship, the vogue being exempli-
fied by such scholars as Rosen, Roth, Kuhn, Müller, Aufrecht,
Ludwig, Grassman, etc., up to Gonda in this century. For a treat-
ment of these scholars, and a brief history of this type of con-
cern with the Rg Veda consult R. N. Dandekar's booklet, Vedic
Religion and Mythology (A Survey of the Work of Some Western
Scholars), University of Poona, Poona, 1965.

4 In scholastic circles this group seems to be in the minority,
though if we include Sāyana in this group, and I think we must,
we will find that some scholars who are only borderline

Of course, I don't intend this to be a hard and fast dictum for categorising any writer's work on the Ŗg Veda, but rather, I only wish to point out what seems to me to be a general polarity in the history of Vedic scholarship.[1] For example, there are writers such as Bergaigne, Geldner, Brown, and perhaps Sāyaṇa and Gonda, who seem to fall within a grey area between the two approaches.

In any event, how are we to reconcile this polarity, or perhaps better, how are we to make a value judgement upon its two aspects? First of all they cannot be mutually exclusive of each other, though each implicitly seems to recognize and respect the limits of the other[2], for if that were the case Vedic studies would have quite likely stagnated long ago. Neither, do I

'technocrats' such as Wilson, and Geldner, rely heavily on Sā-yaṇa for their understanding of Ŗg Veda. Among the leading fi-guires of this style of interpretation we may list Sri Aurobin-do, On the Veda, Pondicherry, 1964; V. S. Agrawala, Vision in Long Darkness, Varanasi, 1963; Marlya Falk, Nama-Rupa and Dharma-Rupa, University of Calcutta, 1943; Stella Kramrisch, "The Tri-ple Structure of Creation in the Ŗg Veda", HOR, Vol. II, # 1, pp. 140-175, and Vol. II, #2, pp. 256-285, might with reserva-tions also be included in this group. Agrawala encapsulates the general stance of this approach when he states on p. 1 of his "The Traditional Approach to Vedic Interpretation", PTSICO, Vol. III, Pt. 1, pp. 1-13:

> The traditional approach takes into account the mul-
> tiplicity of evidence and rather insists that the
> total evidence should be admitted into the forum of
> Vedic interpretation and nothing should be ignored.
> It is not a question of one's convenience but all
> out necessity to deal with the totality of the evi-
> dence as presented by the tradition.

1 In fact, is this not the basic polarity found in Religious Stu-
dies in general?

2 Neither seems to take up what the other does in earnest. As an
instance we might submit the words of F. B. J. Kuiper, when after
a rather uproductive philological investigation of the word vāca-
rambhaṇam ("Vācārambhaṇam(II)", IIJ, Vol. II, pp. 306-310, p. 310), states
"In this matter the last word rests with the philosophers.".

believe that one can properly do both simultaneously, if only for
the reason that one seems to have so much more at stake in his en-
terprise than the other, and perhaps here is the point at which a
value judgement can begin.

The people who are well within the Tradition (or as per-
haps is the case with Sri Aurobindo, at least proximate to it) such
as Yāska[1], Sāyaṇa, and Agrawala, or for that matter any Indian Ve-
dic scholar even though he may not be a 'speculator' in terms of
working with Ṛg Veda, necessarily has more at stake than a Western
scholar in the same area, since the former is dealing with and ex-
ploring what, for him, is a sacred and revealed text. When, how-
ever, I imply that the philologists and other historians of Reli-
gion seem to have less at stake in studying the Ṛg Veda, I mean to
say that the product of their efforts does not exhaust (though it
may lay the mechanical groundwork for understanding it) the res-
ponse to the question "What is the conciousness of the way things
are, as it is presented in the Ṛg Veda?", or in other words, "What
were the things that were regarded as being the important things
in the Vedic cosmos?". The stake, of course, is that stake for
which thought is best suited, the pursuit of understanding, of
knowledge[1]—Religious Studies should be the last Discipline to
have to offer an apologetic for such an endeavour.

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1 Such a knowledge develops out of out of an intimacy with the
subject (here a text) one is studying, over and above the pre-
cision one might attain in dealing with historical or concep-
tual data relating to it. Mere existential pretention is a
common commodity, this is not what I hope to imply here, I only
wish to point out that thinking, even about religious phenomena,
is a very earnest enterprise.

It seems, therefore, that a reconcilliation (that is, a complete overlaping of interests) between the two poles of Vedic studies is not at all what is called for, but again, it should be kept in mind that this does not mean that each one should ingnore the efforts and findings of the other. The task of this section then, is not a philological or predominantly historical one, it is rather an attempt to delineate the major aspects of the idea-complex that makes up what is called <u>vāc</u> in the <u>Rg Veda</u>. I also hope that all of this will show that the basic attitude towards language in <u>Rg Veda</u> was to look upon it as a positive and integral entity, in fact, as something divine.

<div style="text-align:center">i.</div>

Any one who has studied, or even read a fair portion, of these puzzling hymns will easily recognize that Power is the comprehensive message of the Text and that manipulation of Power is the central concern of those individuals represented in it. It will also be seen that this Power seems to manifests itself in two essential ways: a) as violent Power and b) as regulating Power.

We encounter the former in references to the dynamism of naturalistic or meteorological phenomena[1] such as the Maruts who as dwellers within the storm turn over the well of the cloud by their <u>ojas</u> or might (I. 85. 10-11; V. 59. 8; V. 83. 6; etc.),

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[1] Bergaigne's <u>Vedic Religion</u>, is throughout emphatic in calling our attention to the importance of naturalistic consciousness on behalf of Rgvedic man, and rightly so.

or Vata, the Wind, who has the voice of thunder (stanayannasya ghosa, X. 168. 1), stirs up the sea (IX. 84. 4) as well as the flames of Agni (VI. 6. 3). Similarly Agni as the terrestrial fire scorches and eats the forests (I. 143. 5; VI. 3. 4; 6. 3), devours the sacrificial offering (II. 1. 13-14; III. 21. 1-2; 28. 1-6), is even called all devouring (visvādan, VIII. 44. 26), and in his atmospheric form Agni is lightning[1]. This same sense of violence is preponderant in the mythic or epic battle motifs such as the struggle of the devas against the asuras, one aspect of which is the cosmogonic Indra/Vṛtra encounter (I. 80. 11; II. 11. 9-10; VI. 17. 9; X. 89. 7; etc.)[2]. Psychologically, we may call attention to the frenzied intoxicating Power produced by the draught of Soma which inspires Indra into battle (II. 15. 1; Vi. 27. 1-2; 47. 1-2; VII. 22. 2; VIII. 81. 6) and which also, as Gonda[3] implies, may be conected with the inspired vibrant speech (vipā) of the kavis (poets) (cf. 8. 65.10).

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1 For the different forms of Agni consult Macdonnel, Vedic Mythology, pp. 88-100 and especially Kramrisch, "Triple Structure...", pp. 160ff.

2 For information on the deva/asura struggle consult A. K. Coomeraswamy's "Angels and Titans: An Essay in Vedic Ontology", JAOS, Vol. 55, 1935, pp. 373-419, and two articles by W. Norman Brown, "The Creation Myth of the Rgveda", JAOS, Vol. 62, 1942, pp. 85-98(which also concisely discusses the major aspects of the Indra/Vṛta myth) and "Theories of Creation in the Rgveda", JAOS, Vol. 85, 1965, pp. 23-34.

3 See Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, Mouton & Co., The Hague, 1963, pp. 36-40. On p. 38, Gonda states the following:

> Soma is not moved by mere Zurede, poems or oratory, but by the "vibrant" speech(vipā, 9, 3, 2, cf. 9, 65, 12) of a poet who was imbued with the divine spirit... and the soma juices which are mindful of, or aim at, inward excitation(vipaścitah) are in 9, 22, 3 stated to have completely reached or penetrated(vy ānaśuh) the visions(dhiyah) with ecstasy or excitment(vipā).

As for regulating Power, the chief Vedic concepts to be associated with this are, rta, dharman dhāman, and vrata[1]. The sense of all of them is more a cosmic one than a moral one, and if any one dominates the others it is, as Bergaigne[2] points out, rta since it is found to often govern the genitive of the others (I. 43. 9; 65. 3; VII. 36. 5; IX. 7. 1; 110. 4; X. 124. 3). This regulating Power also has its naturalistic expressions[3]: the year is symbolised by the twelve-spoked wheel of rta (I. 164. 11); Sūrya, the Sun, is said to travel between Heaven and Earth according to the dharman (I. 160. 1); Uṣas, the Dawn, appears daily according to the regulation of rta (I. 123. 8-9).

In terms of the mythic conflict, the victory of Indra over Vṛtra can easily be taken to represent the triumph of regulating power (rta) over chaotic forces (anrta), as might some of the other heroic accomplishments of that same god, such as the settling of the quaking mountains (II. 12. 2; X. 44. 8) or the setting free of the cows imprisoned by Vala (I. 11. 15; II.

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1 As according to Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. III, pp. 215-231. The root senses of the words are: dhāman, from √dhā to place, institute or establish; dharman, from √dhṛ to support, hold, or maintain; rta, from √r to adapt; and the problematic vrata which is either from √vṛ to envelope or cover, or √vṛ to to choose or desire. According to these root senses then, dhāman would be the power which establishes (the dhātṛ founds the sacrifice, IX. 10. 3), dharman would be the power which sustains (the dhartṛ maintains the law of the sacrifice II. 23. 17); rta would be that which fits or adapts things; vrata would mean either that which encloses something or else something akin to will.

2 Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. III. pp. 226-227.

3 See Bergaigne, Vedic Relgion, Vol III. pp. 231-232 for further examples.

12. 3; 14. 3). In this same vein, the gods are thought of as being receptacles of Power in the sense of vitality which is called ojas (II. 22. 3; VIII. 61. 2; X. 153. 2; etc.)[1] and in the sense of ability or efficacy, termed māyā (III. 53. 8; V. 63. 3-4; VI. 47. 8)[2].

Finally, the sacrifice is perhaps the most important arena for this regulating Power[3], for the efficacy of the sacrifice not only draws upon the regulating Power but, and more importantly, it maintains and replenishes the cosmic order, for the gods, who are regarded as being more proximate to rta, thrive on the sacrifice (I. 164. 50; III. 32. 12; X. 90. 16). The efficacy of the sacrifice also had a more pragmatic force to it,; since it was also an attempt to tap into, and acquire, the individual (material) and cosmic benifits of this regulating oder[4].

Thus, this sets the stage for our further investigation. The Rgvedic cosmos was a dynamic power-flux in which in which man's best and proper function was to be a manipulator rather than the manipulated, and this, of course, meant that he had to understand the variety of Powers that confron-

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1 See Gonda, _Some Observations on the Relations between "Gods" and "Powers" in the Veda, a propos of the Phrase Sunuh Sahasah_, Mouton & Co., The Hague, 1957

2 See Gonda, _Change and Continuity in Indian Religion_, Mouton & Co., the Hague, 1965, pp. 167-169.

3 See Bergaigne, _Vedic Religion_, Vol III., pp. 233ff.

4 Thus there is hardly a hymn in the _Rg Veda_ in which the speaker does not ask to be granted some sort of favour by the deity he addresses, whether it be wealth(I. 5. 9), health(I. 93. 7), safety(III. 32. 14), destruction of the enemy(X. 42. 7), cows and horses(I. 29. 2), and so on.

fronted him. He obtained such an understanding (or at least the possibility of such an understanding) from the visionary-of his time, namely the rsi, who as kavi (poet) was able to give outward expression to the power of his vision, and to the power of what he saw.

Thus the attempt to understand vāc must be built upon this groundwork, that is, in treating of vāc we must always remember that in its most rudimentary sense vāc is a Power in the midst of a cosmic vortex of Powers[1].

ii.

The first differential aspect of vāc that I should like to consider, is exactly its power to render expressible[2] the consumingly internal[3] vision of the rsi. In doing so, we will find that we are dealing with the question as to what the nature of the

1 I do not mean to imply the the Ṛgvedic Weltanschauung was ultimately pluralistic, in fact, the Rg Veda if it can be said to make a single statement it is one of implicit monism. This is what I would say allows, and, for that matter, encourages the solubility of images and symbols so characteristic of the Rg Veda. It surfaces explicitly in such late and well-known hymns as the "Asya Vāmasya Sūkta" (I. 164), the "Puruṣa Sūkta" (X. 90), and the "Nāsadīya Sūkta" (X. 129).

2 It must be noticed that this does not automatically mean understandable, and the history of Vedic scholarship will attest to this.

3 That is to say, the dhī cognates which are most specifically associated with rsi-vision in the Rg Veda all convey an inwardly functioning process (dhīh, 'thought', dhītih 'visionary insight', dhīra, 'wisdom'; see Gonda, Vision..., throughout).

actual composition of the Ṛgvedic sūktas involved. That is to say, were the rsis sūktadrastārah (seers of the hymns) or sūktakartārah (makers of the hymns)[1]? Upon entering the rsi[2], does vāc supply the possibility of externalizing an already existent vision, or does it in fact create that vision, or finally does it do both of these things in different aspects of its functioning? Our initial task then, is to shed some light upon these questions by investigating some of the major concepts connected with the visionary abilities of the rsi.

In the light of this, let us first of all say something about the concept of rsi[3]. This term is applied in the Rg Veda to specific individuals (i.e., individuals possessing proper names such as Dīrghatamas, etc.), it is used of the gods (Agni, I. 31. 1; 66. 4; III. 21. 3; Indra, VIII. 6. 41; 16. 7; Soma, VIII. 79. 1; IX. 96. 6; 107. 7), and mainly as a general term signifying one who has the powers of a rsi (VII. 28. 2; X. 89. 16). As for the characteristic abilities of the rsi we find these at VIII. 59. 6[4], where it states that Indra and Varuna gave to the rsis, in the beginning, intuitive wisdom (manīsā), "thought expressed in words"[5]

1 I borrow this terminology from V. G. Rahurkar, "The Word Rsi in the Veda", BDCRI, Vol. 18, 1957, pp. 55-57.

2 As at I. 164. 37: ...vāco aśnuve bhāgamasyāh. Cf. IV. 58. 3.

3 Rahurkar, "The Word Rsi...", provides the various etymologies of the word from the Taittirīya-Āranyaka (II.9) up to Grassman, only his conclusion should concern us here: "Whatever, however, be the correct etymology of the word, the concept, rsi has all along been taken to include ideas relating to poetic and prophetic vision, super-sensual knowledge, righteousness and ecstacy." (p. 57).

4 Indrāvarunā yadrsibhyo manīsām vāco matim śrutamadattamagre.

5 Following Gonda, Vision, p. 41, on this difficult term.

(vāco mati), and revelation (śruta)[1]. I feel that these three

things can be taken as the essential elements of vāc as it re-

sides within the rsi, and the fact that vāc does indeed reside

within the rsi, and so mark him apart from other men, can be learnt

from the poetic verses of X. 71. 3-4: "3 With sacrifice the trace

of Vāk they followed, and found her harbouring within the Rsis./

.... 4 One man hath ne'er seen Vāk, and yet he seeth: one man

hath hearing but hath never heard her./ But to another hath she

shown her beauty as a fond well-dressed woman to her husband."[2].

Let us then consider each of these three elements in a

more isolated fashion. The first, manīsā, I would take to denote

the whole internal[3] vision-complex denoted by the semantic-field

of dhī, manīsā, mati[4]. Though generally, there does not seem to

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1 We also encouter descriptions of the visionary and transcen-
dental character of the rsis in the Nirukta (I. 20) where
Yāska states that the rsis are bearers of that which is directly
revealed (sākṣātkrtadharmāna rsayah....), literally placed be-
fore the eyes, and at Vākyapadīya I. 139 we find that the vi-
sion of the rsis is based on Ultimate Reality (tattva), (rsi-
nām darsanam yacca tattve kiñcidavasthitam....).

2 I supply Griffith's translation (The Hymns of the Rgveda, Edi-
ted by J. L. Shastri, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1973) since
it captures the poetic exuberance of the sūkta. Vāc here is
personified as a godess, see below p. 35 .

3 By the word "internal" I do not mean to imply that there is
a critical distinction, consisistently expressed throughout the
Rg Veda, between what might be called introspection and the epi-
stemological speculation of looking outwards, and one does not
even appear to begin until what are considered to be rather late
verses such as I. 164. 37: na vi jānāmi yadivedamasmi....; and
X. 129. 6-7, with its speculations concerning the cosmogony.

4 This, of course, follows Gonda, Vision..., p. 13.

be any broad or exacting difference between each of these compo-
nents[1], a clue to the subtle difference between the first and se-
cond may be gleaned from RV I. 61. 2[2], where it is said that they
(probably the rsis) smear (marjayanta)[3] their dhiyah (visions)
with (their) heart (hrda), mind (manasa), and manisa (wisdom).
Gonda's inference with respect to this verse seems quite proper
when he concludes that, "[manisa] as compared to the immediate vi-
sion denoted by dhih is in a sense seconary referring to a pro-
cess which may become operative when the flash of intuition has
arisen."[4]. Along these lines, dhih could be explained as the ini-

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1 Gonda, Vision..., p. 13, is clear on this point, stating:

> I for one am inclined to adopt the hypothesis that
> generally speaking these words on the one hand re-
> tain a definite - though often not easily definable -
> "central meaning" or semantic nucleus which they also
> have in "non-technical" or otherwise different con-
> texts, and on the other denote what would appear to
> us to be complex ideas from different points of view,
> whilst emphasizing, different aspects, different sta-
> ges of development, different functions, different
> connotations.

Among these technical usages, an important and fairly common
one, and one which we may briefly mention here, is that of the
end product of this visionary or mental power, often transla-
ted by "hymn, poem, etc.". (See, S. A. Upadhyaya's two papers,
"The Word Vip in the Rgveda", BV, Vol. 27, 1967, pp. 109-114,
and "The Word Manman in the Rgveda", BV, Vol. 28, 1968, pp.
88-93, for examples). In respect to the use of dhih in exactly
this manner, Gonda (Vision..., pp. 133-134) is quick to empha-
size the fact that, such translations as "hymn, etc." do not
convey all the implications of the term (cf. RV VI. 21. 1).
Thus even when "hymn" is meant, the whole emphasis of the term
is on its dynamic visionary aspect.

2 Indraya hrda manasa manisa pratnaya patye dhiyo marjayanta.

3 Gonda, Vision... p. 54, and p. 278, translates it as "they po-
lish....", Griffith, Hymns..., as " they have decked...".

4 Gonda, Vision..., p. 54.

tial fact of vision, or, in other words, the essential raw mate-
rial of the <u>rsi</u>-vision, and <u>manisā</u> as the ensuing 'dwelling upon'
or processing of the raw power of that vision, until it is refi-
into the power of distilled wisdom[1], but yet not exactly discur-
sive (that being the province of <u>mati</u>, see below).

We find <u>dhi</u>- specifically connected with <u>vāc</u> at X. 71. 2,
where the visionaries create <u>vāc</u> by their mental capacity (...dhī-
rā manasā vācamakrata.)[2] like men passing corn-meal through a
sieve (cf. X. 111. 1). This general reference to the creation of
<u>vāc</u> by the visionary could be interpreted as simultaneously refer-
ring to manifestation of speech as the hymn, that is, in its phy-
sically perceptible form (viz. the speakable quarter, ...turīyam
<u>vāco manusyā vadanti</u>, RV I. 164. 45) and to the reciprocal em-
powerment of <u>vāc</u>, in almost a sense of cyclical conservation of
energy, by the <u>rsis</u>' who proclaim those visions which first entered
them on behalf of that same <u>vāc</u>.

Similarly, <u>manisā</u> is connected with <u>vāc</u> at IV. 5. 3[3], in
which Agni is said to have spoken (<u>vocat</u>) the <u>manisā</u> which is
like the invisible (or secret, <u>apagūlha</u>) track of the cow, and
this appears even more striking when we consider the fact that in

1 However, this should not be taken to mean that <u>manisā</u> is in
any sense superior to <u>dhī</u>, for if anything the <u>dhī</u> is the most
immediate of the lot.

2 Cf. I. 161. 7, where the Rbhus fashion a cow from the cow hide
by their <u>dhīti</u> (power of vision), and V. 45. 6, where the Mother
is said to have been able to throw open the stalls of the cows
on account of <u>dhī</u>. For the association of cow with <u>vāc</u> see be-
low pp. - .

3 <u>padam na gorapagūlham vividvānagnirmahyam predu vocanmanisām</u>.
Agni is further associated with <u>manisā</u> at IV. 6. 1, and IV. 11. 2.

III. 55. 1, we discover that the aksara (the imperishable syllable, see below pp. 27-8) is born in the track of the cow (...jajñe aksaram pade goh). Thus manīsā, or the wisdom applied to inspired vision, seems to be connected with the mysterious or invisible nature of vāc, the power that enables the secret aspects of vāc to enter the hymn and be communicated.

At this point we can emphasize that this idea of manīsā is quite often taken to be concerned with, or disclose knowledge of, a mysterious and transcendental kind. For example at X. 81. 4,[1] the ones who possess manīsā are commanded to inquire, by means of their mental faculties (manasā), where Viśvakarman stood while supporting the world, and at IX. 68. 6[2], the same type of people know the form of the Pleasant One (Soma) and when the eagle brought the Soma plant from the distance. Similarly the manīsin knows the four divisions of speech at I. 164. 45,[3] and by the manīsā of the kavi (poet-sage), searching in the heart, discovered the bond of sat (the existent) in asat (the non-existent) at X. 129. 4[4]. As yet there does not seem to be anything that would explicitly indicate that we are dealing with rsi-vision in its discursive or expressible form[5].

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1   manīsino manasā prcchatedu tadyadadhyatisthadbhuvanāni dhārayan.

2   mandrasya rūpam vividurmanīsinah śyeno yadandho abharatparāvatah.

3   catvāri vākparimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāhmana ye manīsinah.

4   sato bandhumasati niravindanhrdi pratīsyā kavyo manīsā.

5   Even when manīsā is used more generally as "hymn, etc."(see above, p. 13 n. 1) the emphasis is not on its being a discernable piece of communication, but on its being the eventual result of transcendental wisdom.

The recognition of the need for such expressibility is not wanting in the Ṛgveda, for at X. 111. 1[1] the ones who possess manīṣā are called upon to bring it forth to the same degree as the thoughts (mati) of men, and it is not surprising that the ability to do this should come from the mati of the ṛsi himself, as at X. 64. 15, where the ones possessing manīṣā are said to repeatedly contrive (avīvaśanta) their voices by means of their mati[2]. Thus mati (thought) seems to be a step further removed from either dhī or manīṣā in the context of ṛsi-vision.

In this way we pass into the field of the second component of vāc presented by Indra and Varuṇa to the ṛsi (see, VII. 59. 6, above pp. 11-12), namely, the "vāco matim". It occurs once more in the Ṛgveda at I. 143. 1[3], and I include Gonda's translation: "I offer a rather powerful and a new product of inspiration to Agni, an 'ausgedachte Rede' (Geldner) to the Son of victorious power."[4]. The term is probably best taken as a "genetive of apposition or explication", such as the example which Gonda provides in a different place[5]: "In 9, 97, 34 the phrase ṛtasya dhītim is followed by brahmaṇo manīṣām, neither

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1 manīṣiṇah pra bharadhvaṁ manīṣāṁ yathāyathā matayah santi nṛṇām.

2 ...bṛhadavīvaśanta matibhirmanīṣiṇah.

3 pra tavyasīṁ navyasīṁ dhītimagnaye vāco matim sahasah sūnave bhare.

4 Gonda, Vision..., p. 198. Geldner's "ausgedachte Rede" could be rendered by 'speech formulated by thought'.

5 Gonda, Vision..., p. 52, citing, Renou, Grammaire sanscrite, (Paris, 1930), p. 303.

(with Geldner) 'den Gedanken der heligen Rede' nor (with Luders) 'das Denken des Brahman', but rather 'the inspired thought manifesting brahman'.". Thus, the translation of <u>vāco matim</u> would be something to the effect of 'thought which manifests speech', that is, the mental capacity of the <u>rsi</u> to render his vision expressible.

The final endowment given the <u>rsi</u> is <u>śruta</u>. Generally, it occurs throughout the <u>Rg Veda</u> in the non-technical sense of fame (i.e., that which has been heard about someone) and is most often used in connection with Indra (I. 55. 8; II. 20. 6; IV. 30. 2; X. 22. 1-2; etc.). Even the phrase 'famed <u>rsi</u>' (<u>śruta-rsim</u>) appears at X. 47. 3. In our particular context however, and this seems to be the only time that it is used in such a way in the <u>Rg Veda</u>, it is taken to mean 'tradition'[1] in the sense of an accumulation and transmission of those <u>rsi-visions</u>. So while <u>vāc</u> is the source of its own concretization, it is also the source of its own preservation.

But, after having shown how vision and speech (<u>vāc</u>) are connected in terms of the <u>rsi</u>, we are still left with the question as to whether the <u>rsi</u> was a 'seer' or 'maker' of the hymns. (see above, p. 11). Roughly, we may associate the term <u>rsi</u> with

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1 Griffith, (<u>Hymns of the Rgveda</u>) gives "revelation", Gonda, Vision..., p. 41 gives "oral revelations or tradition" (cf. p. 211 of that work), Geldner, <u>Der Rig-Veda</u>, Part II, HOS Vol. 34, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1951, gives "Gelehrsamkeit" or 'learned tradition'. The meaning is perhaps the same as <u>śruti</u> in the later Indian Tradition, or the earliest sense of <u>śabda-pramāna</u>. There might also be a play on the word <u>sruta</u> as fame in the sense that the fame of the <u>rsis</u> is that they are possesed of the power to transmit and preserve their own visions, that is create the tradition (<u>śruta</u>). Sruta then, would be the form of <u>vāc</u> most removed from the immediacy of the original flash of vision (<u>dhī</u>).

'seer' and the term kavi [1] with 'maker', in relation to our pro-
blem.

I think we have seen that the rsis are kavis in the sense
that they render some internal vision expressible, that is, mani-
fest it by some sort of intellectual activity (mati), but I also
think that this should be seen as only the visible tip of the great
visionary iceberg of immediate experience [2] It is for this rea-
son, I feel, that the exact opposite of etymological precision

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1 See Gonda, Vision..., pp. 44-51. This association of kavi with
   'maker' is intended in a very loose sense, since it seems to be
   used in the Rg Veda mainly to signify someone who is in tune to
   secret knowledge. Thus P. R. Ray, in his "The Concept of Kavya
   in theRgveda", IA, Vol. III, 1969, pp. 177-180, cocludes (on p.
   180) the following about kāvya (that which relates to or quali-
   fies the kavi):

   > ...kāvya in the first instance means effective sec-
   > ret wisdom with mystic power possessed mainly by
   > the Gods. Kāvya as composition is secondary in its
   > nature though in the later literature it assumes the
   > primary meaning of the word.

   We therefore find in the Rg Veda that the kavis are the ones who
   know the secret places (vidvāṅsaḥ padā guhyāni..., X. 53. 10)
   and that Varuṇa who knows the secret names of the cows is cal-
   led a kavi (...ya usrānāmapīcyā veda nāmāni guhyā, VII. 41. 5).
   Agni is especially associated with the kavi at I. 12. 6; II. 6.
   7; IV. 11. 3; V. 21. 3; etc., and because of his kavya Agni who
   is a kavi is said to know all things (...kavih kāvvenāsi viśva-
   vit, X. 91. 3). The idea of the kavis as composers does however,
   seem to appear at X. 114. 5, where we find that the quivering
   kavis form the Bird (Agni, Vac?) who is One by their words
   in many ways (suparnam viprāh kavavo vacobhirekaṁ santam bahudhā
   kalpayanti).

2 J. A. B. van Buitenen, makes a more sweeping statement along si-
   milar lines on p. 211 of his "Notes on Aksara", BDCRI, Vol. 17,
   #3, 1955, pp. 204-215, when he states that: ...

   > ... [the] mentality behind the speculations on Vāc:
   > it is not mere abstract theorizing to reduce the Uni-
   > verse to its order, the order to the sacred Word and
   > the Word to its metere and ultimate unit of syllable,
   > but the immediate experience of the composing poet
   > himself.

and economy of words is what characterizes Vedic composition[1].
Thus when the rsis are primarily suktadrastarah (the seers of
the hymns) and when they are spoken of as being composers (sukta-
kartarah), it is not in the sense of actually manufacturing the
hymns[2], but merely in the sense of transmitting and transforming
what was an already existing vision into an accessible form, with
the exceptional skill of retaining the essence of that vision.
Vac serves as the source, groundwork, medium, and often the ob-
ject of all this activity.

iii.

Soma[3] is regarded in the Rg Veda to inspire and give rise
to vision in a number of places. At IX. 107. 18[4] we find that the
wise (kavi) Soma, while generating mati. resounds among the gods,

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1 Or else how could the fluidity and solubility of the symbolism
   in the Rg Veda be possible? Though J. A. B. van Buitenen, in
   his "Vacarambhanam Reconsidered", IIJ Vol. 2, 1958, pp. 295-305,
   makes the following statement with Upanisadic thought in mind,
   I think it is applicable to the Rg Veda:

   > ...etymological exactitude was hardly a prime con-
   > cern of these thinkers who in their adesas or upani-
   > sads summed up as many connections as the terms them-
   > selves could possibly provide in their sounds and
   > meanings.

2 Thus the term apauruseya (non-human) is ascribed to the Veda
   at Mimamsa Sutra I. 8. 27, and BSB I. 2. 2. , but also cf. RV I. 130.6.

3 That is the juice of the intoxicating plant. Nirukta XI. 2,
   gives osadhih somah sunoteh, yadenamabhisunvanti, i.e., Soma
   is a plant and derived from su, it is that which is repeatedly
   pressed.

4 ...janayanmatim kavih somo devesu ranyati.

and at IX. 96. 5[1] that the Soma which flows is that which gives
birth to the thoughts (mati), as well as the Sky and the Earth.
Similarly, the power to apprehend by dhī and by manas is closely
associated to the apprehension of a thing by means of Soma, for
I. 139. 2[2] states that the speakers of the hymn saw the golden
(thing) in the seats (of the gods) by means of dhī, manas, their
own eyes, and the eyes peculiar to Soma (cf. I. 87. 5). Soma
therefore acts upon and flows through the visionary faculties of
the rsis providing an intoxication that exhilerates the conscious-
ness and that is not detrimental but sought after and cultivated
for its prosimity to the secret of the functioning of the cosmos.

Just as Soma gives power to and impels the visionary
faculties, so also is it found to perform the same activity in
relation to vāc. For example at VI. 47. 3[3] we find that when the
Soma is drunk it exites (udiyarti) vāc and awakes the willing
manīsā, and at IX. 96. 7[4], that Soma has stirred up (prāvivipat)
like a river the wave of vāc, the songs, and the manīsā. It is
perhaps for this reason that Soma is called the lord or husband
of vāc (patim vācah, IX. 26. 4) and the one who begets the vāc
of the kavis (vaco jantuh kavīnām, IX. 67. 13)[5]. So we see that

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1 somah pavate janitā matīnām janitā divo janitā prthivyāh.

2 ...sadmasyapaśyāma hiranyayam, dhībhiścana manasā svebhiraksa-
   bhih somasya svebhiraksābhih.

3 ayam me pīta udiyarti vācamayam manīsāmuśatīmajīgah.

4 prāvivipadvāca urmim na sindhurgirah somah pavamāno manīsāh. Cf.,
   I. 87. 5, somasya jihvā pra jigāti caksasā (the tongue stirs
   because of the eye of Soma).

5 Cf., IX. 106. 12, where it is said that Soma, creating vāc
   while being filtered, flows on (punāno vācam janayannasisyadat.)

in its association with Soma, <u>vāc</u> reveals its exhilerating side, an aspect that results from a partaking in the intoxicating draught of divine power.

Again, we discover that this impowering is mutual, for while Soma impels <u>vāc</u>, <u>vāc</u> causes Soma to increase or prosper, as at I. 91. 11[1] where the knowers of <u>vāc</u> are said to do this by their songs, and at IX. 17. 4[2] the <u>uktha</u> (recitation of verse) in the sacrifice is said to do the same. In fact, at IX. 97. 2[3] we see that <u>vāc</u> actually fashions Soma. Therefore, if anything can be predicated of <u>vāc</u> in its connection with Soma, it is that <u>vāc</u> is a positive power, in other words a power that one seeks to be raised up to, and that to effect this 'raising up' one draws on other powers which are in turn created and given power to by <u>vāc</u>.

Soma not only exites and stirs up <u>vāc</u> but also the Waters (<u>āpah</u>), as for example at IX. 62. 26[4] and IX. 107. 21[5], which according to the <u>Nighantu</u> (I.12)[6] is a term synonymous with words direc-

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1   <u>soma gīrbhistva vayam vardhayāmo vacovidah</u>.

2   <u>ukthairyajñesu vardhate</u>.

3   <u>taksadyadī manaso venato vāk</u>....

4   <u>tvam samudriyā apo 'grivo vāca īravan</u>, "You (Soma), the fore-most of <u>vāc</u>, stirring the waters flowing into the ocean...." .

5   <u>mrjyamānah suhastya samudre vācaminvasi</u>, "Being purified, you (Soma) thē skilled one, invigorate <u>vāc</u> in the middle of the ocean.", <u>cf</u>., IX. 12. 6. Bergaigne, <u>Vedic Religion</u>, Vol. II, p. 27 , says of these verses that they: "...contain at least an allusion to Soma=lightning preceding the voice of thunder and letting flow the waters of heaven.".

6   Here one-hundred synonyms of <u>udaka</u> (water) appear, co-incidentally following fifty-seven synonyms of <u>vāc</u> at I.11. See Lak-shman Sarup, <u>The Nighantu and the Nirukta</u>, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1967.

tly belonging to the sphere of vāc, such as "aksaram" and "nāma".
Apah (the Waters)[1] stand for the terrestrial waters in the form
of the rivers, the floods, the oceans, the water in plants, etc.,
and for the atmospheric waters in the form of the waters latent in
the clouds and that which pours down to earth in the form of rain.
Thus we find that the foremost (hymns of the rsis) descend into
the sea (V. 44. 9)[2] and more strikingly at X. 125. 7[3] Vāk herself
reveals that her place of origin is in the ocean (samudra). Fi-
nally, we also find the root √ksar "to flow", exemplifying the es-
sence of the waters[4], used in connection with words belonging to
the semantic field of vāc (e.g., of gīr at I. 181. 7 and of dhī
at VIII. 50. 4).

In turning to the association of "Cow" with vac we can
easily recognise that its symbolism intersects with that of the
Waters in their mutually shared image of the cloud; the "Cow"
holds within itself the milk of life just as the cloud contains
within it the life-giving waters[5]. So we find that Vāk is called

1   See Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. I. ppl 251-261 for details.
    Nirukta IX.26, gives apah from √āp "to obtain", but does not
    explain it further, perhaps it is intended in the sense that
    water is that which is to be obtained.

2   samudramāsāmava tasthe agrimā(h).... Not with Griffith "...
    abideth in the sea...", but with Geldner "...kam hinab zum
    Meere...". The subject 'hymns' is obtained from the context
    of the preceeding verse.

3   ...mama yonirapsvantah samudre. The Goddess Vāk is speaking.

4   Compare this with aksara "the unflowing" used also as "the
    syllable", below p.216.

5   See Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. I. pp. 259-261, on p. 259
    he states: "...the most frequent representation given to waters
    terrestrial as well as celestial, is that of the cow.". Also
    consult J. R. Joshi, "The Cow in the Veda", IA, Vol. 5, #4,
    1971, pp. 212-219, especially for Brāhmaṇic references.

'the cow yeilding milk and food' (...duhānā dhenurvāk..., VIII.
100. 11, cf., VIII. 101. 16). Such images illustrate again, that
speech to the Vedic consciousness, was a valuable thing, a thing
worth getting, for what could be more valuable to him than the
means of sustinance?

To explore the direct relationship between "Cow" and "Word"
in the Rg Veda, let us delve a bit more deeply into a single hymn,
namely, I. 164. 41.[1] It reads as follows:

gaurīrmimāya salilāni taksatyekapadī dvipadī sā
catuspadī/
astāpadī navapadī babhūvusī sahasrāksarā parame
vyoman//

The buffalo cow lowed, fashioning the flood waters;
becoming one-footed, two-footed, four-footed, eight-
footed, nine footed she is the thousand-syllabled
one in the highest heaven.

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[1] The asya vāmasyasūkta (I. 164) is perhaps the most complex, in-
triguing, and informative single hymn in Rg Veda. Its importance
seems to have been recognized by a significant number of scho-
lars who have produced studies of the whole, or portions, of it.
The most notable among these are C. Kunhan Raja's, Asya Vāmasya
Hymn(The Riddle of the Universe), Ganesh & Co, Madras, 1956, which
provides quite a literal translation along with the Devanāgarī of
Sāyanabhāsyam and Ātmānandabhāsyam to it (the same author also
provides more exegetical notes to this hymn in his, Poet-Philo-
phers of the Rgveda(Vedic and Pre-Vedic), Ganesh & Co, Madras,
1963, pp. 1-49); V. S. Agrawala's Vision in Long Darkness, Va-
ranāsi, 1963, which contains a rather free and poetic transla-
tion, but is sometimes laboured in its cross-references; W. Nor-
man Brown's "Agni, Sun, Sacrifice and Vāc: A Sacerdotal Ode by
Dīrghatamas (Rig Veda 1.164)", JAOS, 88, pp. 199-218, which me-
thodologically and historically is more informative than the two
other translations. In reference to this specific verse two pa-
pers might be mentioned, the first "Gaurī", Indological Sudies
(In Honor of W. Norman Brown), Ed. by Ernest Bender, American
Oriental Society, New Haven Conn., 1962, pp. 1-7, is merely a
reprint of the chapter pertaining to this verse from Agrawala's
above mentioned book, and also V. Swaminathan's "Asya Vāmasya
Sūkta(RV I.164): A New Interpretation of Verse 41", VIJ, Vol 16,
1958, pp. 294-305, which draws its interpretation from the Bhāsyas,
Brāhmanas, and even Vaisnava texts (Laksmītantra).

Here we may perhaps isolate three motifs: a) the asso-
ciation of the cow with the waters; b) vāc in symbolised by the
"lowing"; and c) the differentiation (one... two..., etc.) of this
complex (cow-waters-vāc), which seems to be used in the sense of
accounting for the manifold nature through which that complex
somehow develops or evolves. We have already referred to the re-
lation of the cows to the Waters above, gaura the male aspect of
our term is a well-known appellation of Indra (I. 16. 5; VII. 98.
1; VIII. 4. 3; 45. 24; etc.) while the female gaurī is given as
a name of vāc at Nighaṇṭu I.11[1].

As for the "lowing" (mimāya), the Nirukta in exegeting
RV I. 164. 26 and 28 (which appear at Nirukta XI. 43 and 42 res-
pectively), in the last of which the verb "mī" recurs, explains it
as referring
to the speech of the middle region (vāgeṣā mādhyamikā), that is,
the atmospheric speech or thunder, with the cows representing
clouds(cf. I. 164. 9)[2]. At III. 53. 15[3] Sasarparī, which Sāya-
ṇa takes as an epithet of Vāk, lows loudly. Further, at III.

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1 A brief mention might be made of the fact that the gaurīs are
   said to drink the Soma juice at I. 84. 10 (cf. IX. 12. 3). Of
   greater interest is the fact that in the Upaniṣads as well, vāc
   is referred to as a cow: "One should meditate upon vāc as the
   cow." (vācam dhenumupāsīta.... BU, V. 8. 1, cf. Ch. Ū., I. 3. 7).
   Sankara(The Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad with the Commentary of Saṅka-
   rācārya, trans. Swami Madhavananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta,
   1975, p. 578) explains the phrase as follows: "Just as a cow se-
   cretes milk through her four teats for her calf to suck, so does
   this cow secrete... food for the gods etc. that is comparable
   to milk.".

2 This same interpretation seems applicable to III. 55. 13: anva-
   syā vatsaṃ rihatī mimāya kayā bhuvā ni dadhe dhenurudhaḥ - "She
   lowed liking the other's calf, into which world has she deposi-
   ted her udder?" (cf. X. 27. 4).

3 sasarparīramatim bādhamānā brhanmimāya jamadagnidattā, "Sasarparī,
   the gift of the Jamadagi, lowed loudly, having dispelled the lack
   (amati)."

31. 6 the cows released by Saramā (the hound of Indra) are said to make a sound (rava)and this again, as interpreted by Bergaigne[1] is the sound the thunderbolt.

In turning to the subsequent differentiation of gaurī, we find that there have been many views as to what it conveys, from Yāska (Nirukta XI. 40) to the Lakṣmītantra (XVIII.30-36)[2]. Yāska's seems to be a straightforward cosmographic one:

ekapadī madhyamena, dvipadī madhyamena cādityena ca, catuspadī digbhih, aṣṭāpadī digbhiścāvāntaradigbhiśca, navapadī digbhiścāvāntaradigbhiścādityena ca, sahas-rākṣarā bahūdakā, parame vvavane.

One-footed because of the atmosphere, two- because of the atmosphere and the sun, four... the four princi-pal quarters, eight-... the four principal and the four intermediary quarters, nine- the eight quarters and the sun, thousand-syllabled [means] possessed of much water in the highest heaven.

In conjunction with his interpretation of mimāya as thunder, which we referred to on the last page, Yāska seems to mean that gaurī is the thunder that permeates all of the regions named. Sāyaṇa's exe-gesis differs only minimally, considering one-footed to mean in the cloud (meghe), two-footed in the cloud and atmosphere, and nine-footed to mean the eight quarters plus another quarter which is the sun. The real difference seems to come when Sāyaṇa refers to sahasrākṣara as 'the unlimitted speech' (aparimitavacano 'yam), but otherwise Sāyaṇa too seems to think that the verse is concerned with the permeation of thunder through the various regions.

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1 See Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. II, pp. 324-325.

2 Again, V. Swaminathan, "Asya Vāmasya...", provides an excellent survey of all of these interpretations.

Sāyaṇa also encounters and interprets this verse in two
other places, namely, Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa II. 4. 6, and Taittirīya
Āraṇyaka I. 9, and he infuses both with his typically Advaita stand-
point[1]. Following Swaminathan[2] let me present their significant
details, since they illustrate the potential of the verse as being
explained in terms of vāc[3] In the former the evolution of gaurī
proceeds as follows: 'one' - praṇava (OM); 'two' - vyāhrtis (see
Ch. U.; II. 23, 3-4) and Sāvitrī; 'four' - the four Vedas; 'eight'
- the six Vedāṅgas plus Purāṇas and Dharmaśāstras; 'nine' - as Mī-
māṁsā, Nyāya, Saṅkhya, Yoga, Pañcarātra, Pāśupata, Āyurveda, Dhanur-
veda and Gāndharveda; 'one-thousand' - various vidyās. In the lat-
ter Sāyaṇa interprets the various stages as referring metres having
the appropriate number of feet. These however, need detain us
no longer.

Before leaving I. 164. 41, we cannot overlook the fact
that a new term has been introduced into our concern with the vāc-

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1 This, of course, is the well-known detriment of Sāyaṇa, however,
  this does not in any way render his commentary useless in under-
  standing Rg Veda, for, besides being one of the few complete ex-
  tant commentaries, it provides us with many clues and 'keys' to
  its interpretation which cannot be overlooked. Western scholar-
  ship on Rg Veda could not have begun without Sāyaṇa's work.

2 V. Swaminathan, "Asya Vāmasya...", p. 34.

3 In his commentary to I. 164. 41, Sāyaṇa gives the views of some
  other thinkers (kecidevamāhuh...) probably the Vyākaraṇa (Gram-
  marian) which explain the differentiation of gaurī in the follo-
  wing manner: 'one' - as the one-support (ekapratisthānā) or OM
  (praṇavātmanā); 'two' - as the difference between noun and verb
  (suptiñbheda); 'four' - because of the difference between noun,
  verb, preposition and particle (...upasarganipātabhedena); 'eight'
  - the eight nominal declensions (...astavibhakti...); 'nine' -
  those eight plus the indeclinable words as the ninth(sāvyayai()
  ...); 'one-thousand' as manifold or differentiated sound (aneka-
  dhvani).

complex, and that is aksara[1]. The word literally means 'the un-
flowing', 'that which is eternal', 'vāc reduced to its irreducible
essence' (Jaim. Up. Br. I.1[2]), and in the Nighantu I. 11-12, it
occurs in the list pertaining to vāc as well as being one of the
names of udaka (water). We learn at III. 55. 1[3], that the aksara
was born in the foot-print of the cow when the first dawns glim-
mered (ūsuh), again the cow most probably being vāc, and the im-
port, that the aksara had its origin in the earliest times along-
side vāc. In VI. 16. 35[4], the aksara is identified with the womb

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1 See, J. A. B. van Buitenen's two articles: "Notes on Aksara",
BDCRI, Vol. 17. #3, 1953, pp. 204-215 and "Aksara", JAOS, 79,
1956, pp. 176-187. In both he traces the development of aksara
=syllable from the Rg Veda to aksara=OM=Brahman in the Upaniṣads.
In terms of the Rg Veda he feels that aksara as it occurs there
already transcends uttered speech ("Aksara", p. 182), but that
"It is not yet a particular syllable [such as OM] which is su-
preme: it is the Syllable as such which is the ultimate because
it cannot be reduced further." ("Notes...", p. 213). Bergaigne,
Vedic Religion, Vol. I., p. 285, states that: "Literally the
word aksara appears to have a sense analogous to that of amrta
... and appears to denote the inexhaustible essence of the ce-
lestial Word.". Oldenburg in his "aksára, áksara im Rgveda",
from his Kleine Schriften, Ed. by K. L. Sanert, Teil I., Weis-
baden, 1967, pp. 293-295, is not willing to exclude the meaning
of "Cow" in relation to it: "Weit übrigens entfernen wir uns
mit der Bedeutung "Kuh" von der Bedeutung "Silbe" nicht; man
weiss ja, welche Rolle die symbolische Parallelität von Kuh und
heiligem Wort im Rv. spielt." (p. 294).

2 J. A. B. van Buitenen provides a translation of this passage, in
which the Creator is progressively squeezing the essences out of
the various classes of creation until he comes to the irreducible
aksara, on p. 179 of his "Aksara": "...he [the creator] could
not take the juice of this aksara; of this aksara, OM, the Word
came to be, for the Word is indeed OM. The juice of Word is Breath
etc.". Thus having found this irreducible essence the creator
can begin creation.

3 usasah purvā adha yadvyūsurmahadvi jajñe aksaram pade goh.

4 garbhe mātuh pituspitā vididyutāno. aksare/ sīdannrtasya yonimā.

of the Mother and associated with the source of rta (...rtasya yo-
nimā) and at I. 164. 42[1] we discover that all things live upon that
aksara which flows from her (gaurī's) ocean. Finally, at VII. 1.
14[2] Agni brings together the aksarā which has a thousand paths,
which could perhaps be associated with the sahasrāksarā of I. 164.
41, and if so, could be taken to mean that Agni brings together
the manifold quality of vāc into some form of a unified and even
transcendent whole.

In summation, the attempt of this section has been to
provide a glimpse of the intricacy of the Soma-waters-cow symbo-
lism and to show the role that this plays within the vāc complex.
If anything can be implied from this symbolism it is that it seems
to be attempting to convey the knowledge of the rsi-vision in the
form of a subtle allegory and metaphor, yet, this is not saying
enough, since for the rsi, the underlying unity of these things
in vāc was much more than symbolic it was actual.

iv.

Two things remain to be discussed, first the functioning
power of vāc as the 'word' and second, the divine quality of vāc.
The former can be dealt with in terms of three basic focii: a) the
cosmogonic power of the word in the mythical rescue of the cows by
Brhaspati; b) the power of vāc in terms of the sacrifice; c) the
power of vāc as knowledge.

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1   tasyāh samudrā(h)...tatah ksaratyaksaram tadvisvamupa jivati.
2   sahasrapāthā aksarā sameti.

Bṛhaspati's[1] feat is a well-known event and is often de-
scribed in Ṛg Veda[2]; the cows which are freed, represent, of course,
the waters, or in a more subtle form, vāc itself as the essence of
the efficacious power of creation. However, the cows are not our
specific interest here, instead we are concerned with the actual
act itself and how Bṛhaspati managed to sunder that which was bin-
ding the cows. With this concern in mind, we find that in many
places the instrument that causes the destruction of the mountain
(adri, or Vala) is some type of sound (vāc), particularly that of
thunder (rava). Thus at I. 62. 4[3] this is done by several types of
sounds, a shrill cry (sustubh), a cry (stubh), seven viprās (sapta
vipraiḥ) and simply a noise (svara). In the same verse, Indra[4],
the weilder of the thunderbolt, and the sound of thunder (rava) it-
self are said to accompany Bṛhaspati in his task, and similarly at
X. 67. 6 Indra is said to destroy Vala by thunder (indro valaṁ ra-
kṣitāraṁ dughānāṁ kareṇeva vi cakarta ravena, "By means of thunder,
Indra split apart, as if with his hand, Vala, the guardian of the
cattle!")[5]. Two more instances may be mentioned, at II. 24. 3,

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1 For descriptions of Bṛhaspati see Macdonell, Vedic Mythology,
   pp. 101-104, and Bergaigne, Vedic Religion, Vol. I. pp. 301-305.

2 As at, I. 62. 3-4; II. 23. 18; 24. 3-4; IV. 50. 5; VI. 73. 1-3;
   X. 67. 5-6; and the longest at X. 68. 4-9.

3 sa sustubhā sa stubhā sapta vipraiḥ svareṇadriṁ svaryo navagvaiḥ.

4 Indra is associated with Bṛhaspati at II. 23. 18; 24. 2; VIII.
   85. 15; and X. 67. 6.

5 Compare also IV. 50. 5, sa sustubhā sa rkvatā ganena valaṁ ru-
   roja phaligaṁ ravena - "He Bṛhaspati with a shrill cry, accom-
   panied by a troop full of praise, shattered the theif (? follo-
   wing Geldner for phaligam) Vala by means of thunder.".

the whole thing is said to be acomplished by a <u>brahman</u> (prayer),
and at X. 68. 6 by <u>agnitapas</u> (the heat of fire) which can loosely
be taken to mean lightning and hence the thunder that accompanies it.

From this quick look at the Bṛhaspati/Vala myth, we can
readily discern the important function of <u>vāc</u> as a cosmogonic po-
wer since it liberates the life-blood of creation, namely, the
Waters (here symbolised by the cows)[1]. The binding force of Vala
could not have been overcome without the shattering force of the
thunder, or more metaphorically, the hymn (<u>brahman</u>). There is per-
haps another interpretation that can accomodate the whole image
without putting too much of a strain on it, and this would involve
the notion that, as we have already found out, the cows not only symbolise
the Waters but speech as well; keeping this in mind, what we have
then is essentially a liberation of <u>vāc</u> by <u>vāc</u>. In order to un-
derstand what this could signify, I think we can look to the fa-
mous fourfold division of <u>vāc</u> at I. 164. 45[2] where we find that
three of the divisions are concealed within the cave (<u>guhā</u>) and the

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1   Bergaigne, <u>Vedic Religion</u>, Vol. II, p. 284 informs us that this
    is also the case in the Indra/Vṛta myth when he states:

> The hymns which help Indra to deliver the waters are
> naturally identified in heaven with the sound of the
> waters themselves, IV. 22. 7, or, in the mythological
> language, with the voice of the cows and of the moun-
> tains, VII. 85. 5, that is to say with the noise of
> thunder.

Similarly at p. 326 of the same volume: "... the most charac-
teristic feature of the Aṅgiras myth is exactly the eficacy of
song in ensuring victory for Indra.".

2   <u>catvāri vākparimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāhmaṇā ye manīṣiṇaḥ
    guhā trīṇi nihitā neṅgayanti turīyam vāco manuṣyā vadanti</u>.

Vāc has been divided into four quarters, the <u>brāhmaṇas</u> who are
possessed of <u>manīṣā</u> know them; three of them, hidden within the
cave, do not stir, humans speak the fourth.

fourth is spoken by man. Thus by making this juxtaposition, the Brhaspati myth could be looked upon as saying that the vāc which is immediately accessible to humans can be used to liberate, for their sake, the other three-quarters of speech hidden in the cave. In this way it could be a myth that exemplifies the purpose of the Rg Veda within the Vedic cosmos, saying, in other words that the physically perceptible portion of the Rg Veda might be used to break through to the concealed aspects of vāc.

In turning now to the sacrifice, we find that its connection with vāc in the Rg Veda is not explicitly stated anywhere in the text, though at X. 105. 8[1] we see that separately the sacrifice without prayer does not satisfy Indra, and similarly at VII. 26. 1[2] that those Soma juices which have been pressed without prayer do not satisfy Indra. Thus we cannot say that the Rg Veda is liturgical in its aim, in the sense that the Sāma or Yajur Veda might be, yet certain hymns read as if they were definitely intended for recitation in the context of the sacrifice[3]. Invocation of the gods must have quite clearly accompanied every sacrificial ritual, even the name of one type of priest, namely "hotr" (invoker or reciter), is from the root √hve "to call".

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1   nābrahmā yajña rdhag josati tve.

2   na soma indramasuto mamāda nābrahmāno maghavānaḥ sutāsaḥ. Soma which has not been pressed does not satisfy bountiful Indra, neither do those Soma juices which are without prayers.

3   Such as I. 93; III. 28; 52; V. 82; X. 179, for further details see V. M. Apte's "Vedic Rituals" in The Cultural Heritage of India, Ramakrishna Mission, Inst. of Culture, Calcutta, 1970, Vol. I, pp. 234-263 (especially p. 235). On p. 244 he states in reference to Rg Veda that: "As a rule, ritual accompanies prayer with few exceptions....".

In the light of the above I think that it is not unsafe to say that sacrificial ritual in the Ṛg Veda was bound to some form of sacred speaking (vāc) whether in the form of a sūkta or an extract from one.[1] In effect vāc could be taken as that which makes ritual efficacious and hence the key power in terms of making Vedic man the manipulator (see above p. 9) of his cosmos. Thus perhaps the most important (in the sense that it enabled him to become the manipulator par excellence) knowledge for Vedic man to strive for was that which taught him the when and where of the employment of vāc in terms of the sacrifice (yajña)[2].

As for the last of the three powers of vāc, namely that of knowledge, this must be seen as the necessary implication of all that has gone before. By knowledge we do not mean isolated understanding, but that understanding which enables one to become a manipulator of the cosmos, in other words the knowledge of vāc in all its aspects and implications. This is how, I feel, that Marya Falk[3] can make the following statement concerning vāc-know-

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1 Of course this does not exclude the possibility of 'silence' playing just as important a role in a specific ritual circumstance, however the notions of tūṣnīm and upāṁśu as referring to such instances seem to be more properly relegated to the sphere of the Brāhmaṇas as emphasized in A. K. Coomaraswamy's "The Vedic Doctrine of Silence", Indian Culture, Vol. III, #4, April 1937, pp. 559-569. See also Louis Renou, "La Valeur du Silence dans le Culte Vedique", JAOS, Vol. 69, 1949, pp. 11-18.

2 I exclude from the sacrificial force of vāc as a magical spell to ward of various misfortunes as X. 161-163 (cf. I. 50. 11-13) seem to be, or defeat enemies in battle as at X. 23. 5 and X. 166. Such aspects of vāc, though they may be just as integral to the Ṛg vedic consciousness are not, I feel, of the same order as the ones with which we are concerned.

3 Marlya Falk, Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa, University of Calcutta, 1943, p. 16.

ledge in respect to the Vedic tradition: "Knowledge of 'names' is in fact knowledge of things, for according to this ancient Indian conception the real nāman is nowise the fortuitous designation, but the inherent, unsenuous essence of the thing to which it belongs.". This does not, I think, lose any of its truth when applied specifically to the Rg Veda, since to know the names of the cows, for example, is not to know some conventionally established set of designations which might be used isomorphically to represent certain objects existing in a universe appart from those designations, but to know the very essence of the cows, throughout all its symbolic contrivances and which enables all those contrivences, namely vāc. Thus we find at X. 71. 1, the first verse of a whole sūkta devoted to Jñānam (Knowledge) reading as follows:

brhaspate prathamaṁ vāco agraṁ yatprairata nāma-
dheyaṁ dadhānāḥ/
yadeṣām ṡreṣṭhaṁ yadaripramāsītpreṇā tadeṣāṁ nihitaṁ
guhāvih//

O Brhaspati, when they (the rsis[1]), assigning name,
spoke out the earliest initial (utterances) of vāc,
Of these things, that which was concealed within them,
that which was the most splendid and spotless, was
revealed by (their) affection.

What seems to be said is that by naming things the rsis disclosed, or at least made possible the disclosure, of their essences.

One more thing should be pointed out in relation to this vāc-knowledge. Though the impetus of the acquisition of this vāc-knowledge may be schematically represented as going in the opposite direction to that force of vāc which manifests itself progressively

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1 Following Geldner: "Subjekt sind die ersten Ṛsi's, die Stifter des Kultus.".

and cosmogonically downwards throughout creation[1], we must take
care not to read into the Rg Veda the sense of jñāna in the Sah-
khyā-Yoga sense of enlightenment[2]. Knowing in the Rg Veda is
knowing only in the sense of gaining the ability to become a mani-
pulator in the cosmos, so that when one obtains 'enlightenment' in
this manner one is still as much concerned with gaining cattle
and defeating the enemy in battle as with knowing the mysteries
of creation or the four divisions of speech[3].

    We may now turn to the final concern of this section,
that is, the divine quality of vāc, and in using the word "divine",
I do not mean vāc only in the sense in which it is personified in the
form of the godess Vāc but also, and perhaps more importantly, in
the sense of the qualities which make vāc a 'thing to be cultivated'
and even striven for, by those who lack it[4].

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1   First of all, my use of the word "acquisition" earlier on in the
    sentence should be taken as an emphasis of the fact that vāc is
    a thing which should be sought, rather than in the sens that one
    may systematically and on one's own behalf attain to it, in fact,
    instances such as I. 164. 37 and X. 125. 5 indicate just the op-
    posite. As for the cosmogonic descent of vāc this can probably
    be best seen at I. 164. 41-42 (cf. VII. 76. 4; Mait. Up., VI.6;
    Tait. Up., I.5).

2   Marlya Falk, Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa, p. 7, seems to say some-
    thing similar:

> ...already in the Rgvedic texts two forms of the de-
> scent of Vāc are distinguished, divergent in their
> modes and opposite in their effects: one is the cos-
> mogonic event - the cosmic division ensuing upon the
> cosmig generation -, the other is the process of en-
> lightenment....

    However the impication here, as is too commonly the case with
    Falk, is far too Yogic.

3   We should not attempt to completely systemize the Rg Veda, just
    as we should not attempt to completely mythologize Sankara.

4   The differnece between those who have access to vāc and those
    who do not can be seen from X. 71. 5-6.

There are two <u>sūktas</u>, X. 71 and X. 125, *which* describe the goddess Vāc[1]. The major concern of the former seems to be the relationship betweeen being in possession of Vāc as some form of knowledge and not being so in possession of Vāc as exquisitely expressed in verse 4:

> <u>uta tvah paśyanna dadarśa vācamuta tvah śrnvanna</u>
> <u>srnotyenām</u>/
> <u>utó tvasmai tanvam vi sasre jāyeva patya uṣatī</u>
> <u>suvāsāh</u>//
>
> Both the one who is seeing has not seen Vāc, and
> the one who is hearing does not hear her.
> Yet she discloses herself to another like a long-
> ging, beautifully dressed wife to her husband.[2]

This, I think, offers us a glimpse of that precious divinity in which Vāc was held by those who were attuned to the essence of the <u>Rg Veda</u>. Such is also not wanting in hymn X. 125, for in verse 5 of that hymn we find Vāc herself saying: "That one which I love, him I make powerful, him I make a <u>brahman</u>, a <u>rsi</u>, him I make wise."[3]. However, it is in this latter hymn that we come across the actual grandeur of Vāc's divinity such as is evident in verses 7 and 8:

> <u>aham suve pitaramasya mūrdhanmama yonirapsvantah</u>
> <u>samudre</u>/
> <u>tato vi tisthe bhuvanānu viśvottāmūm dvām varsmanopa</u>
> <u>sprśāmi</u>//

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1   There does not appear to be much secondary source information
    on the godess Vāc as she presents herself in the <u>Rg Veda</u>. One
    may consult A. A. Macdonell, <u>Vedic Mythology</u>, p. 124; F. D. K.
    Bosch's <u>The Golden Germ</u>, Mouton & Co., 1960, pp. 52 f.; pages
    247-249 of Stella Kramrisch's "The Indian Great Godess", HOR,
    Vol. 14, #4, May 1975, pp. 235-265; and V. N. Misra's "Vāk Le-
    gends in the <u>Brāhmana</u> Literature", PTSICO, Vol. III. Pt. 1 pp.
    109-118 the first few pages which deal with Vāc in the <u>Rg Veda</u>.

2   This last part is also said of Usas (Dawn) at I. 124. 7.

3   <u>yam kānaye tamtamugram krnomi tam brahmānam tamrsim tam sumedhām.</u>

> ahameva vāta iva pra vāmyārabhamānā bhuvanāni viśvā/
> paro divā para enā prthivyaitāvatī mahinā sam babhūva//

I created the father on the summit of this (universe),
my origin (or source) is within the waters, in the
ocean.
From that place I have also spread over all (you) exis-
ting creatures, with my forehead I touch yonder heaven.

I blow forth like the wind, clinging to (or entering)
all existing things.
(Extending) beyond this earth, beyond the sky, I have
become so great by my power.

Such is the majesty of the godess Vāc, and as it is, it helps us to
understand why elsewhere (VII. 100. 10) she is referred to as Queen
of the gods (rāstrī devānām...).

Aside from this personified aspect, vāc can still be seen
to have what might be called divine connotations about it. For
example at IV. 1. 15,[1] men are said to perform that famous deed which
is usually associated with Brhaspati by divine speech (vaco daivyar),
and at X. 88. 8[2] we find that the speech of the hymn (sūktavāk) was
the first thing created by the gods. Similarly the brahman (prayer
or hymn) is said to be god given (devatta) at I. 37. 4[3] and such
also is the implication concerning arka (hymn) at VII. 97. 5[4].
Among some of the other characteristics of vāc that contribute to

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1 ...naro vacasā daivyena vrajam gomantamuśijo vi vavruh – "...the
   eager men opened the cow pen full of cattle with the divine
   speech.".

2 sūktavākam prathamamādidagnimādiddhavirajanayanta devāh, – "The
   gods first created the speech of the hymn, then Agni, then the
   oblation (havis).". Cf. X. 125. 3.

3 devattam brahma gāyata – "Sing the god-given hymn.", this recurs
   at VIII. 32. 27.

4 tamā no arkamamrtāya justamime dhāsuramrtāsah purājāh, – "The
   first born immortal ones gave us the arka, this gave pleasure
   to the Immortal One.". Cf., VIII. 86. 2 and II. 34. 7.

its divine structure is the fact that vāc is regarded to be eternal (nitya) at VIII. 75. 6 and also that its abode is regarded to be in the highest heaven (parame vyoman) as at I. 164. 39 and 41 (cf. I. 164. 10 and 45). These then, are the explicit represtations of the divine element in which vāc resides, on top of these we can also place that implicit divinity which allows vāc to function as the axis of the Ṛgvedic cosmos, and this, we have tried to show throughout everything that has gone before.

Finally, the pervasive respect for this divinity of vāc during the Vedic age is most blatant in the fact that the Veda itself was only transmitted orally and not commited to writing, though it seems to have existed at the time[1], for the great part of its early existence. The proper inference to be made here seems to be that for Vedic man there existed a significant distinction between the character of spoken and written language, not to mention the distinction between the revealed and mundane spoken word. V. M. Apte feels that this attitude towards vāc was the most important explanation for that: "...the most potent (and in my opinion the chief) reason was the the implicit faith of the ancient Indian in the unlimited—almost divine—power of Vāc or the 'spoken word'."[2]. However, as already made clear, I would go farther than simply saying "almost divine" as Apte does.

Above all, vāc is divine because it is supremely positive, in the sense that, for Ṛgvedic man, it is that by means of which he can take hold of the whole cosmos.

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1 The arguments are presented in V. M. Apte's "The 'Spoken Word' in Sanskrit Literature", BDCRI, Vol. IV, #1, pp. 269-280.

2 Apte, "Spoken Word...", p. 277.

Śaṅkara and Language

The essential questions that will be occupying us in this section are of course no different in form from those which set the tone for the section on Nāgārjuna, namely, "To what is Śaṅkara responding in undertaking his whole philosophical enterprise?", and conjointly, "How may his concern with language be seen to fit into this response?".

In proceeding along these lines we must first of all notice that the task, and in fact the impetus, for 'philosophizing,'[1] in India was, almost without exception, a soteriological one, that is to say, one of striving towards[2] a complete release from the bondage of the given or existential situation (māyā, avidyā, saṁsāra, duḥkha, etc.). To actually do philosophy in this sense involves not merely being entertained by abstract intellectual inquiry which seeks to progress towards a confrontation with some ultimate and irreducable state of affairs, and once having found it and deliniated it as best it can, takes it upon itself to call that which is before it the Truth. Instead we find that

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1 By this I mean the thinking that holds together the systematic lattice of metaphysics, epistemology, hermeneutics, etc., in essence partaking in fundamental inquiry and reflection.

2 Of course in the great Absolutist systems such as Advaita and Mādhyamika, the sense of directional progression conveyed by this phrase ultimately collapses.

on the Indian scene inquiry is always overshadowed by implica-
tion, one thinks philosophically not simply in order to gain know-
ledge or understanding in itself, but in order to 'effect'[1] a
transformation of one's very being, and thus we may call atten-
tion to the fact that a great majority of the words referring to
that which is to sought after in the Indian philosophical tradition
are words of transformation and becoming such as <u>mukti</u>, <u>kaivalya</u>,
<u>nirvāna</u>, and <u>moksa</u>.

    One might say that even in the abstract or evaluative[2]
pursuit of Truth there also exists a form of release or transfor-
mation, that is, a release from the fetters of ignorance, however,
this release in no way implies that the one who gains it actually
<u>becomes</u> Truth itself, which is the crowning point of Indian philo-
sophy[3] Philosophizing in terms of Indian thought does not culmi-
nate in a static confrontation with Truth, nor even with the fur-
ther possibility of appropriating that Truth into one's own exis-

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1   Again we must note the difficulty of employing causal and ob-
jective terminology such as this in reference to the two great
Monistic schools of Indian Philosophy that concern us in this
thesis. Sankara, for example, in his <u>TUB</u>. II. 5. 1, states the
following: <u>na hyātmanaivātmana upasaṅkramanam sambhavati, svāt-
mani'bhedābhavāt; ātmabhūtam ca brahma samkrmituh</u>(The transfor-
mation of the <u>ātman</u> by the <u>ātman</u> is not possible on account of
the absence of difference within the self (<u>svātman</u>) and Brahman
is the true self of the attainer). The inverted commas around
the word effect merely urge that it be interpreted heuristically.

2   That is, a purely intellectual pursuit of knowledge for its own
sake and which is devoid of existential implication. The trend
of post-Enlightenment Natural Science might be the most striking
example of this.

3   With the exception, of course, of the Lokāyata which has always
seemed to be placed outside the mainstream of Indian Philosophy.

tence, but in the certainty that the inquirer/knower himself be-
comes the Truth: <u>sa yo ha vai tatparamam brahma veda brahmaiva</u>
<u>bhavati...</u> (MU. III. 2. 9) ──He who verily knows that highest
Brahman, he even becomes (or is) Brahman.[1]

This unwillingness to disassociate Truth and knowing
from the actual becoming of the individual in the Indian tradition
is complemented by the corollary dependence of the majority of the
Indian systems upon insight rather than axiomatic or a priori con-
cessions[2]. In the <u>āstika</u> schools <u>śabdapramāna</u>[3] and an uncontested
reverence for <u>śruti</u> form the fundamental focal point for subsequent
deliberations, and in fact, this is what most basically defines
them, that they cultivate the wisdom of the language of insight.
(<u>jñāna, anubhava</u>). Similarly, it is well known that in Buddhism,
<u>prajñā</u> (P. <u>paññā</u>) is axial as the wisdom of direct insight into
<u>nirvāna</u>, and that the Buddha classifies himself among those teachers

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1   Compare also the metaphor of the bow and arrow at MU. II. 2. 4:
    which ends with "...śaravattanmayo bhavet.", that is one should
    become one with it (viz., the target, Brahman) like an arrow.
    MU. III. 2. 6 similarly conveys the same message that Vedāntic
    knowledge (vedāntavijñāna) leads to a unity with Brahman.

2   By "insight" I mean direct experience or immediate apprehension,
    which in Advaita and Mādhyamika is non-cognitive. In the context
    of Ŗg Veda, as shown in the section of this thesis on Vāc it is
    most commonly referred to as dhī- (See Gonda, Vision..., which
    also has informative sections dealing with vision in the Upaniṣads
    and in Buddhism). Śankara, in his commentary to MU. III. 2, 11,
    describes the ṛṣis as those who directly saw (dṛṣtavantaḥ) and
    directly experienced (avagatavantaḥ) Brahman. KU. II. 1. encap-
    sulates this process when it states: kaściddhīraḥ pratyagātrāna-
    maikṣādāvṛttacakṣuramṛtatvamicchan (Every once in a while a wise
    person, with his eyes turned inward, seeking immortality, has seen
    the inner ātman.).

3   See D. M. Datta, The Six Ways of Knowing, University of Calcutta,
    1972, pp. 247 ff..

who "... have attained here-now to excellence and to going beyond
through super-knowledge [abhiññavosānapāramippatta]" (MLS. II p.
400), as opposed to those who do not rely on personal insight but
on second-hand report (the anussavika) or on excessive reasoning
(the takkīvīmarsī)[1]. One might even go as far as to say that there
are no Truths as such in the Indian tradition but only insights
insights into becoming which are eternally present and available,
simply awaiting the ripening of the inquirer (brahmajijñāsin or
bhikkhu) to the point of receptivity[2]. Truth as evaluation[3] alone,
seems to be consistently subservient, in Indian thought, to that
reality which is obtained through direct perception or insight.

I call to attention this overriding emphasis on soterio-
logy and insight in Indian philosophy simply to set the general

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1   These latter two, of course, being the Brahmanical followers of
    the Vedic texts, and the Jainas respectively. For a further ex-
    position of this see K. N. Jayatilleke, "The Buddhist Attitude
    to Revelation", in The Wheel, Kandy, Ceylon (Buddhist Publica-
    tion Society #163), Vol. IX, 1971, pp. 33-46.

2   T. R. V. Murti, in his Central Philosophy..., p. 55 seems to be
    making a similar statement, when he says:

        Systems of philosophy are the elaboration, through
        concepts and symbols, of certain original intuitions.
        If all of us had those basic intuitions, systems
        should be superfluous. Every one is not a Buddha or
        a Yajñavalkya. It happens that the great mass of man-
        kind can but be followers and are no leaders in
        thought. Systems of thought are intended to lead them
        to the highest experience through symbols and contexts.

    Thus the aim of systematic philosophy in the Indian context is
    to retrieve the original intuitions of certain visionaries.

3   George Bosworth Burch, in his "The Definite and the Indefinite",
    Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya Memorial Volume, Indian Institute of
    Philosophy, Amalner, 1958, pp. 25-36, uses this terminology of in-
    sight and evaluation in a slightly different manner (see p. 29),
    that is, to establish a distinction between simple and perrenial
    philosophy.

tone for the rest of our investigation in this section. Thus we may say that, above all, Śaṅkara's philosophizing is a response to what might be rhetorically termed the 'metaphysical sorrow' or 'malcontent' of given existence (saṁsāra), and it is also a response that is founded upon insight into, rather than evaluation of, the sittuation that confronted him. The task and the path ahead of him was, in effect, the conversion of brahmajijñāsā (desire for the knowledge of Brahman) into the fruition of brahmavidyā (Brahman-knowledge)[1].

In the light of this, I propose to discuss Śaṅkara's philosophizing, and what can essentially be looked upon as a co-extensive concern with language, under two main headings, namely, i) Hermeneutics, and ii) Vyavahāra and Paramārtha. In the first we will be concerned with the nature and role of śruti in Śaṅkara Vedānta in the sense that it represents the ultimate language of insight, or in other words, revelation. On the other hand, the second will bring us into the heart of Śaṅkara's systematic metaphysics which seems to revolve around the axial point of the relationship between these two orders of reality (vyavahāra and paramārtha); in terms of language this can perhaps be translated into the problem of the ineffability of Brahman.

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1 From his writings on the prasthānāni Śaṅkara was clearly not a devotionalist, in his minor works however, the opposite seems to be coming through. Since it is well known that Śaṅkara was a Śaivite, we cannot say that his philosophical existence was completely free from any form of devotionalism, all we can say is that this does not seem to seep into any of his great Bhāsyas.

1) Hermeneutics

To begin this segment we might again echo the earlier point of emphasis made by us concerning the relationship between insight (immediate experience) and evaluation in the Indian tradition. Potter concisely points out, to our benefit, the fact that on the whole inference and perception do not enjoy an equal status in Indian thinking, when he states the following[1]:

> The Indians (in contrast with Western rationalism) never even considered the theory that one can de-duce the nature of reality from a priori priciples alone; in this perhaps Indian thought avoided a kind of problem which has cost European philoso-pheres a great deal of—it would now seem—fruit-less energy. All Indian philosophies agree that inference depends upon perception ultimately, and cannot function independently of experience.

This becomes even more pronounced in metaphysical (parokṣa) inquiry, and one can, I think, say that in India all systematic metaphysical inquiry begins by taking into account and interpreting the communi-cations or statements of those individuals who have claimed to have directly experienced that which is to be sought after, namely, Ul-timate Reality.

Śaṅkara, of course, is no exception to this. For him,

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1 Karl H. Potter, on pp. 161-62 of his "Realitly and Dependence in the Indian Darshanas", EIP., pp. 155-162. D. M. Datta adds to this on p. 205 of his "Verbal Testimony as a Source of Valid Cognition", appearing in Recent Indian Philosophy, Vol. I (Pa-pers selected from the Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress 1925-1934), Edited by K. Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 201-211, with the submission that: "...the attempt to re-duce testimony to inference is based on a confusion between the source of a knowledge and the source of the knowledge of the validity of that knowledge.". This seems to imply that in terms of knowing facts (as opposed to validity) testimony is not only on par with inference but is in fact the ultimate pramāṇa.

the Veda is such a collection of statements, in toto, a revelation (śruti) of Ultimate Reality, though as the name of this school suggests, he interprets the essence of this revelation to lie in its closing aphorisms—the Upaniṣads. Now, since these texts are the principal starting point[1] for his philosophizing it might be best, at this point, to supply some of the basic characteristics that defined them according to Śaṅkara.

First of all, for the Advaitin the origin of the Veda is apauruṣeya (non-human) and yet despite this the Veda is not considered to be eternal[2] since it subsequently dissolves back 'into' Brahman during the course of every pralaya[3]. However, for Śaṅkara śabda (the sacred word) exists prior to cosmogony[4], yet

1 I am using the phrase "starting point" here in a soteriological sense rather than simply in a biographic one, since biographically, given experience is the undisputed beginning for all modes of thinking.

2 The concept of apauruṣeya is taken over by Śaṅkara from the Mīmāṃsā (see Mīmāṃsā Sūtra I. 8. 27), however, the respective submission of the Mīmāṃsā is that the Veda is eternal (autpattika, see Mīmāṃsā Sūtra I. 7. 191), their position is summarized by Śaṅkara at BSB. I. 3. 29.

3 Śaṅkara, for example at BSB. I. 3. 30, takes pains to establish the fact that even though the Veda is destroyed at the onset of pralaya it reappears anew and without alteration at every creation. At one point he states: samānanāmarūpatvāccāvṛttāvapi mahāsargamahāpralayalakṣaṇāyāṃ jagato 'bhyupagamyamānāyāṃ na kaścicchabdaprāmāṇyādivirodhaḥ (There is no contradicition of the validity etc. of śabda, on account of the similarity of name and form in the [cosmic] cycles [even if] it is agreed that the universe is characterised by great creation and dissolution).

4 As at BSB. I. 3. 28: tathā prajāpaterapi sraṣṭuḥ sṛṣṭeḥ pūrvaṃ vaidikāḥ śabdā manasi prādurbabhūvuḥ, paścāttadanugatānarthānsasarjeti gamyate (It is understood that in this way, prior to creation, the Vedic words became audible in the manas of Prajāpati the creator, subsequently, he created those things which corresponded to that [i.e., those words]).

it is not considered to be the material cause (upādānakāraṇa) of
the world[1] as seems to be the case with the Śabdādvaitains[2]. Along
with this we find that the origin of the Veda is often connected di-
rectly with Brahman, as at BU. II. 4. 10 where the four Vedas are
metaphorically spoken of as being the breath of the Great Reality
(...mahato bhūtasya niḥśvasitam....)[3] or as in Śaṅkara's commentary
to the well known third sūtra of Bādarāyaṇa (śāstrayonitvāt).

We can see from this set of characteristics that śruti
has the quality of being more temporally proximate to Brahman than
any other form of language (viz. mundane language or laukika vāk).
By this I mean to say that as viewed from within the given world
(saṁsāra), in the sense that it is subject to time[4], the Veda as re-
vealed language extends itself to the very limits of that time.
It is indued with the primordial potency of cosmogony and, out of
symmetry, must be one of the final things to be reabsorbed into Brah-

1   This is made clear at BSB. I. 3. 28: na cedaṁ śabdaprabhavatvaṁ
    brahmaprabhavatvavadupādānakāranābhiprāyenocyate.(the origination
    from word, is not spoken of with the intention of [conveying the
    sense of] material cause as is origination from Brahman.). T. N.
    Dave, in his "Shri Shankaracharya and Sphoṭa" from Sarada Pitha
    Pradipa, #6, 1966, pp. 19-27, when on p. 27 he states the follo-
    wing: "As the blue-print always precedes the construction-work
    but is not the material from which the buildings are made, the
    Śabda with ākṛti always precedes without being the material cause
    of the Universe.".

2   As at Vākyapadīya I. 1, for example.

3   Śaṅkara, in his commentary to this passage gives paramātman for
    mahad bhūtam.

4   It is interesting to notice that ākāsa (space), another entity
    which extends to the limits of given consciousness, in its to-
    tality also possesses a proximity to the Absolute and is some-
    times called upon as a symbol of that Absolute (see C. U., III.
    12. 7-9).

man at <u>pralaya</u>. In terms of limits and origins, the Veda seems to take upon a divine character if only in a cosmological sense.

If we turn now to the accepted Śaṅkarite view of the content of <u>śruti</u>, we again find that in its broadest sense it is a communication of an immediate experience or vision of Reality, and for all that, it is an attempt to render that which is ineffable (<u>anirdeśyam</u>)[1] into an accessible form. It is well known that at the base of the whole complex that might be referred to as the content or meaning of the Veda, according to Śaṅkara, is a non-dual Brahman, and though his thought is more firmly anchored to the Upaniṣads than any other portion of <u>śruti</u> I think that it is safe to assume that Śaṅkara regarded this same essence to be the ultimate content of all of the Veda[2]. On top of this, <u>śruti</u> not only reveals Brahman, but it reveals Brahman in a manner far superior to any form of understanding (<u>pramāṇa</u>)[3] short of direct experience (<u>anubhava</u>) which in any event is above and beyond the <u>pramāṇas</u> altogether. Thus, in terms of its scope and content, <u>śruti</u> takes on a divine quality out of what might be called dogmatic considerations.

However, my use of the term dogma in such a way is not without qualification, in fact, it demands qualification, for if

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1   As at <u>KU</u>. II. 2. 14: <u>tadetaditi manyante 'nirdeśyaṁ paramaṁ sukham</u> ('This is that', in this way they declare the supreme bliss which is ineffable.).

2   This seems to be what Śaṅkara intends when he employs, at <u>BSB</u>. II. 3. 6, the following phrase: <u>ekavākyatvātsarvaśrutīnām</u> (Every <u>śruti</u> is possessed of unanimity [i.e. unity of purport].).

3   Such is stated by Śaṅkara at <u>CUB</u>. VIII. 12. 1: <u>tato gurutarasya pramāṇāntarasyānupapatteh</u> (Another <u>pramāṇa</u> higher than that [i.e. <u>śruti</u>] is not plausible.).

we can understand the way in which Śaṅkara held the Veda to be authoritative, we will be well on our way to understanding how Śaṅkara's philosophy is above all a hermeneutic response. Certainly, Śaṅkara more than simply revered the Veda for those qualities above that I chose to call 'divine', and it is also true that he regarded the projection (utsarga) of the Veda as initiating a lineage of traditional authority (saṁpradāya)[1], yet to call him dogmatic in the callous sense of the word would be a grave error.

The charge of dogmatism in the negative sense is not applied to those thinkers who choose to selectively place one means of authority above all others, but who do so with an irresponsible neglect and bias towards its obvious alternatives. A vindication of Śaṅkara must come in an examination of his attitude towards pramāṇas other than śruti, and his stance on the somewhat overlapping issue of the relationship between reason (tarka, yukti) and śruti[2].

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1 This we learn from Śaṅkara's comments to a smṛti passage which he quotes in BSB. I. 3. 28. Both run as follows:

> 'anādinidhanā nityā vāgutsṛṣṭā svayaṁbhuvā, ādau vedamayī divyā yataḥ sarvāḥ pravṛttayaḥ.' iti. utsargo 'ṛyayaṁ vācaḥ saṁpradāyapravartanātmako draṣṭavyaḥ; anādinidhanāvā anyādṛśasvotsargasyā-saṁbhavāt. ('Vāc, divine, without beginning or end, eternal, consisting of the Veda, from which come all activities -, was projected by the self-existent one [svayaṁbhū] in the beginning.' Even this projection of vāc is to be viewed as being of the nature of establishing a saṁpradāya, since a projection of another kind is not possible for that which is without beginning or end.).

2 S. K. Das has a well written lecture entitled "From Authority to Freedom: From Śruti to Anubhūti" devoted to this topic in his A Study of the Vedānta, University of Calcutta, 1937, pp. 74-107. One might also consult K. S. Murty's Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta, New York, 1959 and H. Nakamura's "Conflict between Traditionalism and Rationalism: A Problem with Śaṅkara", In PEW., Vol. XII, #2, 1967, pp. 153-162.

First of all, Śaṅkara nowhere really makes an attempt to deal with the _pramāṇas_ as an independent topic but instead treats them throughout his major works as being well known and generally accepted[1]. This may be due, in a sense, to his being lead on in his commentorial exegesis by texts that in themselves do not deal witn the _pramāṇas_ independently; it may also be partially due to his general consensus with the main body of this opponents as to the nature of the _pramāṇas_; but mainly it seems due to the fact that Śaṅkara was not committed to an exhaustive analysis of what was in any case only a relative reality, for its own sake, but instead with an ultimate and immediately experienced truth that was beyond the _pramāṇas_. Aside from all of this, however, Śaṅkara in his _BSB_. essentially seers to hold to three _pramāṇas_: _pratyaksa_ (direct perception), _anumāna_ (inference), and _śabda_ (revelation).

Of course in an extreme sense the knowledge provided by the _pramāṇas_ to the knowing subject (_pramātr_) is false and unreal[2] out of the fact that it is only another function of _adhyāsa_ within the _māyā_ complex. However, Śaṅkara grants pramānic experience, and I suppose experience in general, a provisional reality and validity up to the point of _ātman-realisation_ (_ātmāvagati_)[3], this

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1 See N. K. Devaraja's _An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge_, Delhi, 1962, p. 36.

2 As Śaṅkara states in his Introduction to _BSB_.: _tasmādavidyāvadvisayānyeva pratyaksādīni pramānāni śāstrāni ca_ (Perceptions, _pramānas_ and scriptures have as their objects [those things] imbued with _avidyā_.).

3 He makes this clear towards the conclusion of _BSB_. I. 1. 4 where

provisional and wholehearted commitment to assign validity to the
given experience can be seen most clearly in his arguments against
the Buddhists where he makes such statements as: naca svānubhavā-
palāpah prajñamānibhir yuktah kartum (It is not proper [logical]
for wise people to deny [the truth of] their own experience. --BSB.
II. 2. 29); nakalvabhāvo bāhvārthasyārthasyavasātum śakyate, kas-
māt? upalabdheh (It is not possible to understand external entities
as having non existence. Why? On account of perception. --BSB. II.
2. 28)[1].

Similarly, Sankara appears to approve of reasoning (yukti,
tarka) in its application to the mundane sphere and in its capacity
for analogical predication of things which are not readily percei-
vable within the limits of this same sphere. As he states in the

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states: nahvahevānupādevādvaitātmāvagatau nirvisavānyapramātr-
kāni ca pramānāni bhavitumarhantiti.... dehātmapratyavo yadvat-
pramānatvena kalpitah, laukikam tadvadevedam pramānam tvātmanis-
cayāt iti (Once within the realization of the unity of the ātman,
which is not to be discarded [or avoided] and which is not to be at-
tained, the experiencers [of pramānic knowledge] and the pramānas
[themselves] are to be entitled to no dwelling place.... Just as
the body has been felt to be valid [up till then], so also are the
pramānas valid only up to the certainty of the ātman.).

1 The same point is put in a different way in arguing against the
Mīmāmsā at BSB. I. 1. 2, where the intrinsic reality of external
objects is used to illustrate the fact that correct knowledge of
Brahman is not a matter of options as it is in the case of dharma-
jijñāsa, but again it implies that given experience is possessed
of a substantial though provisional reality. In fact all the pra-
mānas establish the existence of mundane experience (sarvapramāna-
prasiddho lokavyavahārah.... --BSB. II. 2. 31). Sankara's whole
argument against the Mīmāmsā notion of dharmajijñāsa comes to a
head at BSB. I. 1. 4 when he concludes that knowledge (jñāna) ari-
ses from the right means of knowledge (pramāna) which have exis-
ting things (bhūtavastus) as their objects, and that knowledge
therefore depends upon existing things (vastutantras) and not upon
Vedic injunction (codanātantra), nor upon man (purusatantra).

commentary to Brahmasūtra II. 1. 4: <u>drstasāmyena cādrstamartham</u>
<u>samarthayantī yuktiranubhavasya samnikrsyate, viprakrsyate tu śru-</u>
<u>tiraitihyamātrena svārthābhidhānāt</u> (Reasoning [yukti], which deter-
mines unknown things because of their similarity to known things,
is nearer to mundane experience [anubhava], while śruti is more re-
mote since the expression of its meaning is by mere tradition.)
Thus the great advantage of reasoning for Śankara seems to be its
natural proximity to that which is experienced on the mundane level,
however, since Brahman is also said to be accessible through śruti
alone[1], Śankara does not accept reasoning in itself as applicable
to, or helpful in, understanding Brahman[2]. Yet tarka as ancillary
to śruti does appear to be useful in establishing certain facets
of the Absolute[3], and this subservience of reasoning to śruti seems

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1 As at BSB. II. 1. 6: <u>rūpādyabhāvāddhi nāyamarthah pratyaksasya</u>
<u>gocarah, lingādyabhāvācca nānumānādīnam; āgamamātrasamadhigamya</u>
<u>eva tvāyamartho dharmavat</u> (Since it is devoid of any form and
without any distinguishing characteristics, this thing [which is
Brahman] is not an object of perception nor of inference [anumāna]
and the like; however, the sense of this Brahman is possessed of
the peculiarity of being understood by scripture [āgama] alone.).
Cf. KU. I. 2. 9 and the peculiar contradiction at Maitri U. VI.
20: <u>brahma tarkena pasyati.</u>

2 As at BSB. II. 1. 27: <u>...acintyasvabhāvasya brahmano rūpam vinā</u>
<u>sabdena na nirūpyeta..., tasmācchabdamūla evātīndrivārthayāthāt-</u>
<u>myadhigamah</u> (...one should not expound on the form of Brahman,
whose essence [svabhāva] is unthinkable, except with sabda....
Therefore, the apprehension of the real essence [yāthātmya] of that
which is supersensuous has its origin in sabda alone.). Similarly,
in the opening line of BSB. II. 1. 11 we find: <u>...nāgamagamye</u>
<u>'rthe kevalena tarkena pratyavasthātavyam</u> (Objection is not to be
found, by mere reasoning, in a matter which is accessible through
scripture [alone].). Reasoning disassociated from sabda is simi-
larly attacked by Bartrhari at Vākyapadīya I. 30, 34, 42, and 136.

3 For example Śankara properly credits reason conforming to scrip-
ture (āgamānusāritarka) in the closing line of BSB. II. 1. 11,
for helping his reaching the conlusion that sentient Brahman is
the material and efficient cause of the world.

to be the fundamental attitude in respect to the status of reason-
ing[1] throughout his _Brahmasūtrabhāsya_[2].

Still within this brief discussion of Śaṅkara's position
regarding what might be called bare empirical modes of thinking,
mention may also be made of _loka_ as a non-technical term for ex-
perience, which sometimes seems to approach the stature of a _pra-
māna_ in itself. Literally it stands for the world of ordinary ex-
perience as a collective whole (_e.g._, _loke 'anubhava_ - Introduc-
tion to _BSB._, or _lokavyavahāra_ - _BSB._ II. 2. 31). Appeal seems
to be made to _loka_ in the same way one would make a general appeal
to common sense, Śaṅkara, however, specifically notes that _loka_
is not considered to be an independent _pramāna_ at _BSB._ I. 3. 32:
...nehi tāvalloko nāma kimcitsvatantram pramānamasti, pratyaksādi-
bhya eva hyavicāritaviśesebyah pramānebhyah prasiddhyannartho lo-
kātprasidhyatītyucyate (there is indeed nothing whatever which is an independent _pra-
māna_ called _loka_, an object is said to be proven by _loka_ when it
is proven by _pramānas_ such as _pratyaksa_ etc., without cosidered
deliberation.). _Loka_ is thus a loose and superficial application
of the _pramānas_.

1 N. K. Devaraja in his "Pramānas and the Modes of Philosophical
  Reasoning in Indian Thought", _IPA_, Vol. IV, 1968, pp. 103-111,
  though he seems to be unduely critical towards the justification
  of the _pramanas_, provides a brief survey of the relationship bet-
  ween _tarka_ and _yukti_ and the _pramānas_ in some of the major schools
  of Indian thought.

2 Setting the stage for the rest of his commentary, Saṅkara ends
  BSB. I. 1. 1 with the following statement: tasmādbrahmajijñā-
  sopanyāsamukhena vedāntavākvamīmāmsā tadavirodhitarkopakaranā
  nihśreyasaprayojanā prastūyate (Thus is begun, by the entrance into
  the presentation of brahmajijñāsā, an analysis of Vedāntic state-
  ments aided by _tarka_ which is unopposed to them, and which has
  the highest aim.).

These last few paragraphs serve to establish two points concerning Śaṅkara's stance towards what might be called empirical thinking, that is, thinking independent of or divorced from śabda (the word). The first involves the fact that Śaṅkara's acceptance of adhyāsa or māyā does not automatically vitiate the validity of perceptual reality or the rationalizing (tarka, yukti) that is subsequently founded upon such experience. Thus, though he might in one sense be called an illusionist (māyāvādin), Śaṅkara still held to the principle that the unseen must be determined from the seen (dṛṣṭāccādṛṣṭasiddhiḥ, BSB. II. 2. 12) and this shows that there existed, within his metaphysic, a margin for the valid extension of thinking in itself, and that the conjectures which resulted from such extension were unacceptable if they were opposed to that which was simply seen to be the case—of course what this implies is the central empiricist axiom that facts essentially cannot be irrational. The second evident point in these paragraphs is that for Śaṅkara such thinking on its own is ultimately ineffectual in a soterio-logical sense, since it cannot tap the visionary force that is ca-pable of altering the being and becoming of the inquirer. What Śaṅ-kara seems to be saying in this respect is that such thought cannot contribute to a proper understanding (jñāna) of Brahman, and that even within its own realm of logic and abstraction it produces lit-tle more than relative conclusions[1].

1 This latter charge of relativity against the logicians is made, for example at BSB. II. 1. 11: kathamekarūpānavasthitaviṣayam tarkaprabhavaṁ samyagjñānaṁ bhavet?(How may there be correct know-ledge arising from tarka, [when] its object is not fixed upon a single form [ekarūpānavasthita]?). Compare also the Preamble to BSB. I. 1. 5; BUB. I. 4. 6; GB. X. 32.

So far, we have seemingly compounded rather than refuted the charge of dogmatism against Śaṅkara, yet what has been established is that empirical experience (pratyakṣa) and reasoning (tarka) lacked the necessary insightful potency to consummate the philosophical enterprise (brahmajijñāsā). Such a potency can arise only from śabda as the communicable essence of the immediate experience (brahmajñāna, anubhava) of what really is; to use Śaṅkara's nomenclature, ātman or Brahman. It is in this sense that śabda is the undisputed beginning of philosphising for Śaṅkara. To come to a final conclusion on the question of dogmatism I think that we must try and see how this beginning from śabda and its recognized potency, effect the further attitude towards, or appropriation of, empirical thinking in the Advaitin's pursuit of Being.

Whenever Śaṅkara makes such statements as: vākyārthavicāraṇādhyavasānanirvṛttā hi brahmāvagatiḥ, nānumānādipramāṇāntaranirvṛttā (The realization of Brahman is accomplished by the firm understanding upon deliberation on the meaning of [Vedic] sentences, not by other pramāṇas such as anumāna etc. - BSB. I. 1. 2) or brahmātmabhāvasya śāstramantareṇānavagamyamānatvāt (...on account of the non-realisability of the state of the unity of Brahman and ātman by means other than śāstra - BSB. I. 1. 4); I think that he is merely emphasizing the indispensability of śabda as the beginning for philosophical inquiry, which for Śaṅkara is essentially inquiry into the nature of the Absolute. He does not I think intend to say that śruti is a consistently exclusive means of acquiring a proper understanding of Brahman and that the other pramāṇas are totally incapable of making a positive contribution to

this understanding. Rather, the point intended seems to be that this beginning from *śruti* restructures the empirical *pramāṇas*, such as *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*, in the sense that they are instilled and augmented by the visionary potency of *śruti*. Thus we encounter at BSB. II. 1. 6 the following: *śrutyanugrhīta eva hyatra tarko 'nu- bhavāṅgatvenāśrīyate* (Only *tarka* which is blessed [or favoured] by *śruti* is resorted to as supplementing *anubhava*); this demonstrates, I think, how Śaṅkara does not display an outright contempt for all reasoning, but instead hastens to allow it an integral role within his systematic philosophysing.

It is in this way as well, that the Brahman of Śaṅkara, unlike the *dharma* of the Mīmāṃsā, is talked of as being indicated by *pramāṇas* other than *śabda*, as for example at BSB. II. 1. 4: *...pariniṣpannarūpaṃ tu brahmāvagamyate; pariniṣpanne ca vastuni pramāṇāntarāṇāmastyavakāśo yathā pṛthivyādiṣu* (...Brahman is under- stood as an having the nature of an existing thing, and in the case of such a really existing thing e.g., the earth, there is occasion for other *pramāṇas*.). Here we may also recall the analogy of the perception af a pillar (BSB. I. 1. 2) as an establised and existing entity (*vastutantra*), which had the intention of substantiating the knowledge of Brahman as also being the knowledge of an established entity. Finally in this vein we may mention the fact that *ātman*, at BSB. III. 3. 54, is spoken of as having the nature of perception (*upalabdhisvarūpa*) even though it is distinct from the body, and that even in *śruti* Yājñavalkya is asked to explain that Brahman which is *sākṣādaparokṣādbrahma* (BU. III. 4. 1), that is, directly and manifestly perceivable (cf., BSB. III. 3. 32).

With śabda as the spring of potency, the restructured and revitalized pramānas all confirm and work towards the apprehension of a non-dual Absolute. For this central reason, namely that in Śankara Advaita there eventually exists a mutual enhancement between śabda and the more empirical pramānas, I feel that Śankara is never capable of being subject to the vulgar charge of dogmatism. The ultimate consistency of this non-duality, extending from the apparent remoteness of transcendental ideals to the concrete actuality of mundane experience, is the crowning point of Śankara's system and is encapsulated in the renowned mahavākya: tattvamasi[1].

Thus we have the chief aspect of Śankara's system of philosophizing, which I see to be composed of the compelling interaction of the empirical pramānas, or in other words thought, with śabda or the communicable essence of visionary insight into Absolute Reality. The nature of this interaction is probably best described as a dialectical one, both in the more general sense of an activity which reaches its culmination by moving between question and response[2], and in the technical Hegelian sense as a synthesizing movement between the contradictory points of a fundamental opposition, which eventually overcomes its original static antagonism. Therefore when thought questions the word (śabda), res-

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1 CU. VI. 8. 7. The most exhaustive analysis of this mahavākya in the Śankarite tradition of Advaita seems to come from his direct pupil Sureśvara, and occurs in the third chapter of the Naiskarmyasiddhi.

2 It is probably debatable whether a dialogue in the true sense of the word dialectic occurs here, since on the surface, textual exegesis seems to be a one-way proposition, but anybody who has chosen to read the Upaniṣads with a philosphical spirit will readily find that they quickly raise far more questions than are immediately answerable and thus propel the inquiring mind ahead.

pondingly the word challenges thought, and presses it to its limits[1].
Similarly, _śabda_ and thought, as they are given, are essentially in
opposition, since the fundamental realm of the former is transcen-
dental and of the latter empirical; the one negatively complementing
the other. Yet _śabda_, as shown above, is able to restructure thought
towards its synthetic compatability with the word, producing a sys-
tematic consistency in Śaṅkara that avoids the liability of dogma-
tism.

This dialectical interaction between thought and _śabda_ is
what I choose to call Śaṅkara's hermeneutic, and it is an exegesis
of scriptural word that involves becoming—a very upbuilding of the
being of the inquirer. What is hermeneutic if it is not the inter-
action of thought and scriptural word? Thus Śaṅkara's philosophi-
zing must, in the first place, be seen as a hermeneutical response,
for his systematic philosophy begins with _śabda_. The actual role
of language within this hermeneutical response is essentially a
catalytic one, that is to say, it initiates the reaction and gives
power to it yet, it does not remain as a residue after the proper
culmination of it, for it consumes itself within the reaction so
that in _anubhava_ one leaves behind both Veda and the _pramāṇas_[2].

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1 The chief characteristic of the authority of scripture is its
   ability to generate understanding (_vijñānopādakatva_) and this
   is stated in BUB. I. 4. 7: _na vākyasya vastvanvākhyānam kri-
   yānvākhyānam vā prāmāṇyāpramāṇyakāranam, kiṁ tarhi niścita-
   phalavadvijñānotpādakatvam_ (The the reason for the authority
   or unauthority of a Vedantic passage is not its explanation of
   fact or action, but its ability to generate precise and fruit-
   ful understanding.).

2 See BU. IV. ?. 22, Śaṅkara comments on the phrase _vedā avedāh_
   in BSB. IV. 1. 3 as follows: 'isvata evāsmābhih śruterap-
   yabhāvah prabodhe (In the state of enlightenment we admit the

We must realize therefore, that this hermeneutical response serves as the fundamental base for the subsequent ontological dimension of Śaṅkara's philosophizing, and that the distinguishing mark of language (śabda) at this most fundamental level is its twofold capacity to generate knowledge and simultaneously restructure empirical thinking[1].

ii) Vyavahāra and Paramārtha

Such as he is, man qua philosopher is never content to merely accept the given, instead he must understand it, and if that understanding, in turn, points beyond itself, he is again compelled to meet its challenge until some final resolution is attained[2]. Even the devastating discovery that there is no Ultimate Truth or Reality[3] would not undermine this philosophical enterprise, for in that case as well, man will have come to terms with his passion for inquiry—an understanding (prajñā) will have been reached.

Having shown what in essence is the mode of Śaṅkara's philosophizing, namely the hermeneutical response, and where it be-

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absence of even śruti.). Also in the last phrase of BSB. I. 1. 4, we encounter a similar remark pertaining to the pramāṇas, namely that they are valid only up to the certainty of the ātman.

1 This restructured thinking participates again in the hermeneutic response after two integral fashions, manana (reflection) and nididhyāsana (repeated meditation). As at BSB. I. 1. 4: avagatvarthatvānmananananididhyāsanavoḥ (On account of the fact that both manana and nididhyāsana exist for the sake of realization.).

2 At which point, if you pardon the thetoric, either the philosopher conquers, or is devoured by his inquiry.

3 As is the case with the Mādhyamika.

gan, that is, with śabda, we must now turn to the intellectual fruit that is borne co-extensively with the hermeneutical response. I say co-extensively, since to separate the intellectual product and activity in Śankara from his strictly hermeneutical endeavours would be doing him the greatest disservice. Certainly in moving away from hermeneutics towards polemics, as the schema of this section is doing, the movement appears to be a movement away from becoming and into the domain of pure intellectualization, but I don't think Śan- ever truly saw it as such. Why should Śankara occupy himself with drawn out theoretical abstractions concerning Brahman or intense debates with other schools if the world and philosophizing itself is only an illusion? How can a systematic Advaita exist and still remain sincere to its own spirit? The answer seems to lie in the power of śabda to restructure and revitalize even the cosmic vanity of man's compulsion to make everything that confronts him subject to the limits of his rational comprehension, so that the importance and integral nature of thought and its products, even in what appears to be an illusionistic and ultimately mystical philosophy, is nowhere given up in the sense that we would expect. I choose to isolate these strata in Śankara's thought only to serve a heuristic purpose, and not in an effort to stray from the organic nature of Śankara's philosophizing.

In any event, we move on from a hermeneutic which interprets existence to a systematic ontology, abstracted from and through the hermeneutic, which seeks to define that Absolute Reality presented in the hermeneutic. It is from the compulsion to define Brahman that Śankara's ontology takes shape, and thus in its abstraction

it may appear one step removed from the immediacy of the hermeneutic, yet this is not so, for even the task of defining Brahman is not divorced from, but contributes to, the becoming of the inquirer (MU. III. 2. 9), albeit if done correctly. Śaṅkara's task is in no sense diminished or altered here, since he is still involved with the introspective cultivation (brahmajijñāsā) of the implosion of the false distance (avidyā, māyā) between the ground (adhisthāna) and the goal (jñeya) of existence (ground and goal both, being Brahman/ātman)—this is constant throughout Śaṅkara.[1]

The medium of philosophizing in this case is conceptualization, and a conceptualization which tirelessly persists after being (sat).[2] The concern with language here is easily determinable, for while in our discussion of hermeneutics in Śaṅkara we found that the chief mark of language was its revelatory potency, that is, its potency to interpret and reconstruct existence, in the ontological dimension of Śaṅkara Advaita the preoccupation with language involves its relative capacity, or dialectically its relative incapacity, to delimit Brahman.[3] One can see that the shift here is a subtle

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1 Śaṅkara states at the close of his 'Introduction' to BSB., that all the Vedāntas (texts, as well as the philosophy as a whole) are taken up for the destruction of evil and the acquiring of the knowledge of the oneness of ātman (asyānarthahetoh, ātmaikatvavidyāpratipattaye sarve vedāntā āramyante.). In other words, the self as knowing agent (pramātr) which is grounded in ātman becomes that self which is to be sought after (anvestavyātma) or Brahman (see the close of BSB. I. 1. 4)—this is the scope and culmination of Śaṅkara Vedānta.

2 For the importance of this concept in Śaṅkara and its identification with Brahman, see P. T. Raju's "The Conception of Sat (Existence) in Śaṅkara's Advaita", ABORI, XXXVI, 1955, pp. 33-45, and especially Richard Brooks, "The meaning of 'real' in Advaita Vedānta", PEW. XIX, 1969, pp. 386-398.

3 The ontological status of language itself is naturally included here as a problem.

one, involving a movement from an emphasis on the primordial po-
tency of language to a more formal concern with its capacity to
signify the object of its content[1].

In order to enter directly into the discussion, we can
first of all establish the general relation between Brahman and
language in Śaṅkara Vedānta. Language here is used in the broad-
est possible sense, so that ontologically it stands for the form
and content of everything 'this side of Brahman'[2]; the Sanskrit
equivalent for this would perhaps be the concept of nāmarūpa (name
and form)[3]. It is well known that in Advaita everything other

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1 The distinction of śabda, as word-form in general, from dhvani
   the actual sound itself, seems to have first been put forward
   by the early Grammmarians (for esample see S. D. Joshi, "Patan-
   jali's Definition of a Word: An Interpretation", PTSICO, Vol.
   III, Pt. 1, pp. 94-5). It appears to be a central base for the
   development of systematic philosophical reflection, and espe-
   cially of systematic ontology. This, I feel, is the great dif-
   ference in attitude towards language between Śaṅkara, who presup-
   poses such a distinction throughout his work (surfacing specifi-
   cally at BSB. I. 3. 28: tannibandhanāścodāttādayo viśeṣā na
   varṇasvarūpanibandhanāḥ – The difference in loudness etc., has
   its origin in that [dhvani] and not in the nature of the letters.),
   and Ṛg Veda where such a distinction is apparently absent.

2 By this I mean māyā or vyavahāra, that is, the totality of the
   ultimately unreal given existence.

3 The secondary work on this concept is indeed sparse. Marlya
   Falk in the first 55 pages of her Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa,
   University of Calcutta, 1943 presents a speculative survey of
   the term burdened by its obvious yogic and psychological em-
   phasis. Strictly in terms of Śaṅkara Advaita, which definite-
   vly makes use of the concept, the dozen or so pages that Paul
   Hacker devotes to nāmarūpa in his "Eigentümlichkeiten der Lehre
   und Terminologie Śaṅkaras", ZDMG, 100, 1951, pp. 246-286, are
   the most comprehensive. In the broadest sense nāmarūpa seems
   to be a metaphysical principal rather than an epistemological
   or psychological one even though it is quite often spoken of
   as arising from avidyā (BSB. I. 4. 22; II. 1. 14; 22; 3. 46;
   III. 2. 6), that is, if one may talk of metaphysical principles
   other than Brahman within the ontology of Śaṅkara.

than Brahman is ultimately unreal and belongs to the category of

'illusion (māyā), nāmarūpa is no exception to this, as stated at

BSB. I. 3. 41: nāmarūpābhyāmarthāntarabhūtamākāśaṁ vyapadiśiti;

na ca brahmaṇo 'nyannāmarūpābhyāmarthāntaram (It is mentioned

that ākāśa is different in nature from nāmarūpa; nothing other

than Brahman is different from nāmarūpa.)[1].

However, this relegation downwards on the ontological

ladder, as we should well expect by now, does not escape the de-

licate ontological finesse that is so characteristic of Advaita.

Nāmarūpa is not asat (completely non-existent), for as Śankara

points out at CUB. III. 19. 1, we often come across the employ-

ment of the word sat in the sense of differentiated nāmarūpa[2].

This of course, needs some amount of amplification, for how can

we consider anything other than Brahman to be sat (existent, real)?

Such an explanation comes, I think, in at least two significant

places, namely, CUB. VI. 2. 3. and CUB. VI. 3. 2. In the former,

Śankara encapsulates the Advaitin's philosophical position: na

tathāsmābhih kadācitkvacidapi sato 'nyadabhidhānamabhidheyaṁ vā

vastu parikalpyate. sadeva tu sarvamabhidhānamabhidhīyate ca

yadanyabuddhyā (We do not presuppose any designation or object of

designation whatsoever, other than sat [the existent]. But sat is

only every designation and everthing that is designated being

[wrongly] conceived as something else.). In the latter we en-

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1 Cf., nāmarūpamayā at BSB. II. 2. 2.

2 hāmarūpavyākṛtaviṣaye sacchabdaprayogo dṛṣṭaḥ. We find such an
   occurence in śruti, for example at BU. I. 6. 3: nāmarūpe sat-
   tyam (Name and form are truth.).

counter something even more relevant: sarvaṁ ca nāmarūpādi sad-
ātmaneva satyaṁ vikārajātaṁ, svatastvanṛtameva. 'vācārambhanaṁ
vikāro nāmadheyaṁ' (All that is born from modification, viz.,
nāmarūpa etc., is real [satyam] only in so far as it partakes of
the nature of Being [sadātman], but in itself it is just false.
'Modification is founded upon vāc, it is [only] name.')[1]. Thus,
just as with the pramāṇas and the whole of manifest existence in
general, language possesses only a partial ontological status,
that is to say, it is not ultimately real in the same sense
that Brahman is, yet its apprehension cannot be pragmatically
denied, in the same manner that one cannot completely deny the
experience of given existence[2]. Sat, for Śaṅkara, is the very
axis of existence, and as such an analogous residue of Brahman
in the world, it may be seen to figuratively partake of that
supreme sat which is the self-sustaining substratum of, and yet
beyond, all given existence—Brahman.

Though nāmarūpa is meant to account for, or include, all
manifest existence, this is not the only way in which it is used
by Śaṅkara, for at BSB. II. 1. 17 a rather clear distinction is

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1   The well known śruti quoted here by Śaṅkara is from CU. VI.
1. 4. A somewhat inconclusive philological study of the phrase,
and especially the peculiar initial compound, occurs in three
sequential papers: F. B. J. Kuiper, "Vācārambhanam", IIJ., Vol.
I., 1957, pp. 155-159; J. A. B. van Buitenen, "Vācārambhanam
Reconsidered", IIJ., Vol. II., 1958, pp. 195-305; F. B. J. Kui-
per, "Vācārambhanam (II)", IIJ., Vol. II, 1958, pp. 306-310.
Śaṅkara, through his commentary to the passage makes it quite
clear as to how the passage should be taken when he says nāmaiva
kevalam (it exists in name alone). Cf., CUB. VII. 1. 3: jñāta-
vānasītyetat, nāmaivaitat (That which you have known is only
nāman.), and BUB. II. 5. 1.

2   As opposed to the complete non-existence tuccha or logical im-
possibility such as a square circle, etc..

made pertaining to the concept. It runs as follows: vyákrta-
nāmarūpatvāddharmādavyākrtanāmarūpatvam dharmāntaram (The undif-
ferentiated nāmarūpa is other in character from the differentiated
nāmarūpa.). The psychological, epistemologocal, and cosmological
implications of this are easily recognisable by analogy, that is,
the differentiation of the jīva, the dawning of pramānic under-
standing, and the unfolding of the universe (jagat), all involve
a kind of satkāryavāda (the evolution of effect already contained
in the cause)[1] heuristically resorted to by Śankara[2].

After this fashion the unmanifested name and form (avyā-
krtanāmarūpa) is identified with the highest reality: ātmabhūte
nāmarūpe avyākrte ātmaikaśabdavācye (Unmanifested name and form con-
sisting of the ātman is to be communicated by the one word ātman. -
AiUB. I, 2). Paul Hacker summarizes the seminal potentiality that
might be associated with Brahman as the material satkaryavādic
cause of the universe, but instead is predicated of avyākrtanāmarūpa,
in the following words (his citations are from BSB.)[3]:

> ...I, 1, 5... sind die unentfalteten Nāmarūpe das
> Objekt, das dem Erkennen des Īśvara vor Beginn der
> Schöpfung gegenübersteht; I, 2, 22... werden sie
> mit dem "Unvergänglichen" (aksara) und dem "Unent-
> falteten" (avyākrta) identifiziert und als eine Sa-
> menkraft (bījasakti), deren Träger (āśraya) Gott
> der Herr (Īśvara) ist, bezeichnet; "Same" (bīja),

1   For a discussion of satkāryavāda consult pp. 36-54 of M. C. Bhar-
    tiya's Causation in Indian Philosophy, Vimal Prakashan, Ghazia-
    bad, 1973.

2   As, for example, at BSB. II. 1. 18 where Śankara defends this
    explanation of causation.

3   P. Hacker, "Eigentumlichkeiten....", p. 258.

"Same des Weltlaufs und der Weltausbreitung"
(samsāra-prapañca-bīja) werden die Nāmarūpe auch
II. 1. 14...genannt; I, 4, 2...und ähnlich I, 4,
3...wird vom Urzustande (prāg-avasthā) der Welt
gesprochen, in welcher Name und Gestalt noch nicht
entfaltet(vyākrta) oder manifestiert (abhivyakta)
waren...

However I think it is important to recognise that this avyākrta-
nāmarūpa is more than merely an insentient, primordial lump of mat-
ter in the manner of the Sāṅkhya pradhāna[1], for it contains within
itself the very form and logic of that which is manifested as the
cosmos, and this logic which conceptually structures existence (CUB. III. 12-1)
is essentially language.[2] This may perhaps account for the prominent
place of language in the cosmogonic scheme of Advaita, as in the
case of the vyāhrtis for example[3].

At this point, having given a outline of the two aspects
of nāmarūpa in Śaṅkara Advaita, we might briefly and speculatively
(since Śaṅkara never seems to attempt to do this) inquire into its
precise connection with language, that is, how is it a "thing to
do with language" and why use such a term to describe the totality
of manifest existence? It is easy to see that nāman (name), the

1   Though nāmarūpa is often talked about by Śaṅkara as being brought
     into existence by an agent (Īśvara; see Hacker, "Eigentumlichkei-
     ten....", p. 267 f.), I feel that he only impels the manifesta-
     tion and has nothing really to do with the latent structuring al-
     ready contained in the unmanifest nāmarūpa.

2   Conceptual appropriation of reality, seems in fact to be the re-
     sult of being able to name that reality and thereby fit it with
     a logical form that renders it meaningful and communicable to
     the appropriator. This view of Śaṅkara's would contrast with
     Wittgenstein's Tractarian viewpoint that language merely pictures
     a logic already existing in reality: "Der Satz zeigt die lo-
     gische Form der Wirklichkeit." (Tractatus 4.121d).

3   See BU. I. 2. 4, and BSB. I. 3. 28: ata eva hi vaidikācchabdād-
     devādikaṁ jagatprabhavati; also ibid.: tathā prajāpaterapi sras-
     tuh srsteh pūrvaṁ vaidikāh śabdā manasi prādurbabhūvuh.

initial part of the compound, stands for something essential to
language, that is, that element which has the capacity to copy or
correspond to something reciprocal in existence. In combination
these elements would compose the representational fabric of exis-
tence. Rūpa, on the other hand, does not as readily belong to
language as does nāma. Literally rūpa means shape or form, in the
same sense that a god, such as Agni for example, may be said to
possess many forms (rūpas), and by the analogy that each of these
shapes has its proper nāman (e.g., Jātavedas, Vaiśvānara, Apām Na-
pāt, etc.) we might say that rūpa is the specific content or mean-
ing of nāman in existence[1].

It must be rembered that the concept of nāmarūpa is em-
ployed by Śaṅkara in order to explain the radical multiplicity and
differentiation of manifest existence and its relationship to that
primordial essence from which it evolved. For Śaṅkara it seems
that nāman and rūpa, when they are manifested, are manifested si-
multaneously, one cannot have name without content. Language is
not evolved to correspond with some already present objectifiable
existence, nor is existence conjured up to correspond to some pri-
mordial name. Bhūh, etc., was uttered and at that instant the

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1 In essence, there does not appear to be any reason why we can-
   not take this as comperable to the relation between śabda
   (word) and artha (meaning). Mention must also be made of ano-
   ther compound which seems to be used by Śaṅkara in a manner
   similar to that of nāmarūpa, though there appears to be only
   two occurrences of it, both in CUB.. The compound is buddhi-
   śabda (notion or idea, and word), happening at CUB. VI. 2. 3:
   as śabdabuddhi, in the sense that for the knowers of the true
   character of clay, the śabdabuddhi of jar etc., cease (in the
   same sentence abhidhānabuddhi, or name and idea, parallels śabda-
   buddhi for the instance of the rope-snake), and at CUB. VI. 4. 1
   as buddhiśabda in the sense that this is what persits, in an il-
   lusory way, comprising existence. These occurrences would seem
   to indicate that the proper way to take nāmarūpa is in this
   sense of word and its conceptual content.

worlds etc., appeared, one did not follow after the other.

Thus namarupa is a descriptive two-element formula that reduces given existence down to its basic conceptual components: name and the objectifiable content of name (one essentially inseperable from the other). Its double nature (manifest and unmanifest) is used by Sankara to causally account for the multiplicity of given existence and its inherent structuring.

The most important point to be grasped throughout the whole of the preceding exposition of Sankara's concern with namarupa, is that Sankara uses it only as a heuristic device,and nothing more. For Sankara, Brahman can never, in a truly honest sense, be anything other than what it is, namely, Supreme Reality. In this way Brahman cannot be identified with even avyakrtanamarupa, for that would make Brahman something other than what it is, or in other words, the material cause of given existence. Sankara explains this emphatically at TUB. II. 6:

> Thus, it is because of Brahman that namarupa is possessed of essence in all occurrences. [Yet], Brahman does not consist of it. It [namarupa] is said to belong to that [Brahman] just in the sense that it [namarupa] is not, when that [Brahman] is taken away. And on account of these two upadhis Brahman as a factor becomes conceptual exchange made up of such words and meanings etc., as "knower", "that which is to be known", and "knowledge".[1]

In this way Sankara begins to make the most significant 'distinction'[2] in Advaita Vedanta and one that is essential to the syste-

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1 ato namarupe sarvavasthe brahmanaivatmavatI, na brahma tadatmakam, te tatpratyakhyane na sta eveti tadatmake ucyete. tabhyam copadhibhyam jnatrjneyajnanasabdarthadisarvasamvyavaharabhagbrahma.

2 Again we must simply note that all distinctions in Sankara Advaita are ultimately pseudo distinctions that dissolve themselves in a heuristic upbuilding of knowledge concomittant with being.

matic development of any true Absolutism, namely, that between pa-
ramārtha (highest or final truth) and vyavahāra (mundane or relative
truth)[1].

In the paramārtha sense Brahman is completely without
predication (nirguṇa)[2]; it is the primary essence and thus from
this highest standpoint given existence must be accounted for and
described by second order concepts such as māyā, adhyāsa, upādhi,
avidyā, etc.. Nāmarūpa, in its most proper sense, must also be
taken as one of these ontologically oblique concepts, and in fact
nāmarūpa appears to be the commonest upādhi (limiting adjunct)[3] of
the highest Brahman, referred to by Śaṅkara, as for example in the
following statement from BUB. II. 1. 20: ...nāmarūpopādhinimittā
eva ātmanyasaṃsāradharmini sarve vyavahārāḥ (All mundane relativi-
ties, in respect to the ātman that has the quality of being asaṃsāra,
are occasioned by the upādhis of nāmarūpa). Similarly, Brahman is

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1 This is of course, the common matrix for both Advaita Vedānta
and Mādhyamika as Absolutisms. A collection of well written
papers on this subject edited by Mervyn Sprung comprise a vo-
lume entitled The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta,
D. Reidel Pub. Co., Dordecht, 1973.

2 Nirguṇa Brahman is that Brahman which is sarvaviśeṣarahita (free
from all qualification - Preamble to CUB. III. 12. 1); it is de-
nied the character of an object that is approachable (prāptivi-
ṣayatvaṃ pratisidhyate - CUB. VIII. 4. 1) and nirākṛtasarvanāma-
rūpakarmaparmārthātmavastu (That reality which is the true ātman
having destroyed all name and form and action. - AiUB. Intro).
See also, MUB. I. 1. 6; KeUB. I. 3. 15; BUB. III. 5. 1; IV. 3.
30; etc.. Its counterpart is Saguna Brahman or Nirguna Brahman
as limited by various upādhis, that is, by attribution of quali-
ties; see KeUB. II. 1; MUB. II. 1. 2; CUB. III. 14. 4; VIII. 1.
1. (Intro.); etc..

3 The stock analogy is give at BUB. II. 1. 20: tāni nāmarūpagatāni
upādhaya eva ātmano ghaṭakarakāpavarakabhūchidraniva ākāśasya
(Those things which are situated in nāmarūpa are only upādhis of
ātman, just like a jar, a bowl, an inner room, and a crater are so
of the ether[ākāśa].).

spoken of as having námarūpa imagined as existing within it just as day and night seem to be in the sun but in a paramārtha sense they are not there at all[1]. The whole situation is nicely summed up by Śaṅkara at KeUB. II. 1:

> Many, indeed, are the forms of Brahman made by the upādhi of nāmarūpa, but not from its own standpoint. From its Brahman's own standpoint, words etc. as well as forms are disallowed: 'That which is in this way soundless, without touch, formless, undecaying, tasteless, eternal, and odourless.'.[2]

Therefore in respect to the ontological status of language as it fits under this designation of nāmarūpa, one must conclude that Brahman is ontologically a limit to it, that is to say that nāma-rūpa is functionally[3] real on its own ground (vyavahāra), but ultimately (paramārthe), nāmarūpa does not even merit the ontological concession that would allow a standing comparison between it and Brahman.[4]

However, and more importantly, this final assessment of

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1 TUB. II. 8. 5: te ca punarnāmarūpe savitaryahorātre iva kal-pite na paramārthato vidyamane. See also MUB. II. 1. 2 where two different akṣaras are discussed, one being an upādhi of Brah-man and the other being the[avyākṛta].

2 anekāni hi nāmarūpopādhikṛtāni brahmano rupāni na svataḥ, sva-tastu "aśabdamasparśamarūpamavyayaḥ tathā 'rasam nitya sagandha-vacca yat." iti śabdādibhih saha rūpāni pratiṣidhvante.

3 In the sense that nāmarūpa is potentially reducible to Brahman and must somehow partake of its being (sat), not to leave out the fact of its pragmatic givenness.

4 For if this were not the case we would have an usurping dualism creeping into Advaita, and this is what seems to be implied at BUB III. 5. 1, for example: yadā tu paramārthadṛṣṭyā paramāt-matattvāt śrutyanusāribhih[sic] anyatvena nirupyamāne nāmarūpe mṛdādivikāravat vastvantare tattvato na staḥ, salilaphenaghatādi-vikāravadeva, tadā tadarekṣya 'ekamevādvitīyam' 'neha nānāsti kiñcana' ityādi paramārthadarśanagocaratvah pratipadyate.

the ontological validity of namarupa in juxtaposition to the abso-
lute reality of Brahman, is summed up by Sankara in an expression
that is peculiarly invested with linguistic implications, namely,
anirvacaniya (indefinable). The term anirvacaniya occurs three
times explicitly in BSB. and once implicitly[1]. Of the explicit
occurrences, BSB. I. 1. 5 (tattvananyatvabhyamanirvacaniye nama-
rupe avyakrte vyacikirsite iti - The unmanifest namarupa which
is about to be manifested, is indefinable as that [Brahman] or dif-
ferent [from that].) and BSB. II. 1. 14 (...avidyakalpite namarupe
tattvanyatvabhyamanirvacaniye samsaraprapancabijabhute... - That
namarupa which is imagined by avidya and which is of the seed.
of the samsara cosmos is indefinable as that [Brahman] or different
[from that].) are both concerned with the relationship between Brah-
man and unmanifested namarupa, while BSB. II. 1. 27 (avidyakalpitena
ca namarupalaksanena rupabhedena vyakrtavyakrtatmakena tattvanyatva-
bhyamanirvacaniyena brahma parinamadisatvavyavaharaspadatvam prati-
padyate - Brahman [seemingly] occurs in the state which is the abode
of all given existence by way of transformation etc., through dif-
ference in forms which is characterized by namarupa both manifest
and unmanifest and imagined by avidya and which is indefinable as
that [Brahman] or different [from that].) amplifies the previous ac-
counts to include manifest namarupa within this indefinable rela-
tion to Brahman. The implicit case, BSB. I. 4. 3 (avyakta hi sa
maya; tattvanyatvanirupanasyasakyatvat - This maya is indeed the
unmanifest, on account of the impossibility of defining it as that

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1 As pointed out by Paul Hacker in his "Eigentumlichkeiten...",
   pp. 261-264.

Brahman or as different from that .), seems to align itself with the first two instances, that is, those dealing with unmanifested nāma-rūpa in relation to Brahman, yet, on top of this there appears to be an instance at BUB II. 4. 10 (nāmarūpayoh [sic.] eva hi paramātmopādhi-bhūtayorvyākriyamānavoh salilaphenavattatvānyatvenānirvaktavyayoh sarvā-vasthayoh saṃsāratvam... (Nāmarūpa alone, which is [in itself] the upādhis of the paramātman, which is manifested, and which like foam and water, cannot be described as that [paramātman] or different [from that], in all its stages constitutes saṃsāra...), which predicates this character-istic indescribability of manifested nāmarūpa alone and in this res-pect is different from all of the four other occurrences.

In undertaking a brief form-structural analysis of these five statements, we can isolate three parallel components which bear upon our concern with anirvacanīya as the concept which best accounts for the relationship between Brahman and nāmarūpa. The first and most problematic is the nāmarūpa component, since its content varies from its unmanifested to manifested aspect to both simulataneously. However if we take into consideration the fact that with the help of satkāryavāda we do not have to accept an essential distinction bet-ween the unmanifested nāmarūpa and its effect, so that in each in-stance both aspects are conveyed. The second component is, of course, the pivotal one in the statement since it is the verbal form upon which the relation stands, namely, anirvacanīya (lit., is not to be spoken of) and its intention is further clarified by its counterparts in the last two sentences (nirūpanasyāśakyatva and anirvaktavya). Still, the component that completes the relation and further defines the sense in which anirvacanīya is to be taken, is tattvānyatva (lit., thatness or otherness) which in the context carries the sense

of 'the same as Brahman or different from Brahman'[1]—the importance
of this component is further brought out by the fact that it is the
only component that is completely consistent throughout all of the
statements.

In this way we are left with the most basic statement:
'Nāmarūpa, in all its aspects, is indefinable in terms of being the
same as Brahman or different from Brahman.'. One can quickly recog-
nize that this is not a statement about Brahman, but about nāmarūpa,
that is, it does not attempt to say anything about Brahman in terms
of nāmarūpa, as for example, that Brahman is indefinable in terms
of nāmarūpa, or in other words, unspeakable, but quite the opposite,
that nāmarūpa is indefinable in terms of Brahman, or in other words,
that one cannot establish a positive or negative relation[2] between
nāmarūpa and Brahman in terms of Brahman. If we wish we can dialec-
tically make an aditional abstraction and state as N. K. Devaraja
does (in his own italics) that: "The description [anirvacanīya] ...
is meant to characterize the world rather than to declare it to be
characterless."[3]. In addition to this one will also recognize that
anirvacanīya is not employed here by Śankara with the same implica-

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1   It seems that tattva in tattvānyatva is more properly taken as
    an abstract of tat = tat-tva (thatness) rather than the substan-
    tive tattva (reality) which would render tattvānyatva as reality
    and otherness (unreality?) making it perhaps too analogous to
    the sadasat explanation of anirvacanīya in later Advaita. For
    the difference in renditions between use of the abstraction and
    the substantive see Paul Hacker "Eigentumlichkeiten...", pp.
    202-203.

2   It is interesting to note that the possibility for equivocation
    is left open and seems to occur, for example, at BGB. IV. 25.

3   N. K. Devaraja, An Introduction to Śankara's Theory of Knowledge,
    Delhi, 1962, p. 162.

tions that were bestowed upon it by the later Advaitins, who trans-
formed it into the technical anirvacanīyakhyāti theory of error[1].

What must be concluded from this statement, that stands
tangentially to the ontological status of both nāmarūpa and Brahman,
is that the speakability of Brahman in terms of nāmarūpa is in no
way here precluded, and in fact, those instances in which Brahman is
sometimes referred to as being beyond speech[2] and in essence unspea-
kable are in themselves a function of nāmarūpa and hence a speaka-
bility in terms of nāmarūpa. J. G. Arapura makes a definitive sta-
tement concerning this when he states the following[3]:

> Brahman talk also turns out to be māyā talk. Clear-
> ly the subject of discourse, that is māyā, is not it-
> self but Brahman, and as such the paradox of self-in-
> validation implied in the statement 'the world is il-

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1   This theory was employed by the later Advaitins to explain the
ontological status of erroneous or illusory perceptions. Basi-
cally it states that the illusory perception of a rope-snake, for
example, is on the one hand unreal (asat) because it is sublated
by a true perception of the rope, and on the other hand real (sat)
because it, as opposed to something that is completely unreal
(tucchika, e.g., a square circle), it is perceivable, and there-
fore as a result of this dialectical tension must be classified
as anirvacanīya (indefinable). D. C. Bhattacharya, on p. 259 of
his "Post-Śaṅkara Advaita" in The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol.
III, H. Bhattacharyya ed., Calcutta, 1969, pp. 255-280, attri-
butes the establishing of this theory to Sureśvara. See also, J.
Sinha, Problems of Post-Śaṁkara Advaita Vedānta, Sinha Pub. House,
Calcutta, 1971, pp. 80-87. For a concise survey of the various
khyātis consult J. Sinha, Indian Epistemology of Perception, Sinha
Pub. House, Calcutta, 1969, pp. 74-120. This transformation of
anirvacanīya to anirvacanīyakhyāti is archtypical or the transi-
tion from a foundational kind of Brahman oriented thinking in Śaṅ-
kara, to a type of thinking which emphasizes technical abstraction
(in the form of critical epistemology and dialectic) and is moreso
oriented in the givenness of existence, exemplified in later Advaita.

2   Such as at TU. II. 4: yato vāco nivartante; BGB. XIII. 12: vācah
[sic] agocaratvāt; etc..

3   From p. 117 of J. G. Arapura's, "Māyā and the Discourse About
Brahman", in The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta,
M. Sprung ed., Dordecht Holland, pp. 109-121.

lusory', it being part of that illusory world,
resolves itself. If *māyā* is the logical struc-
ture of the discourse about Brahman then discourse
about *māyā* is simply its obverse side, existing
only tenuously [as *anirvacanīya*].

Therefore, the possibility of making assertions about Brahman is
never truly given up by Śaṅkara and, strictly speaking, is necessary
in order to make Brahman accessible[1].

Having come thus far, the problem now remaining in this seg-
ment is: 'How does Śaṅkara exemplify Brahman as speakable in terms
of *nāmarūpa*?'. In other words, what does it mean to say that Brahman
is speakable in terms of *nāmarūpa*, according to Śaṅkara?

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1 This is what Śaṅkara seems to be saying in explaining the phrase
tadasya rūpaṁ praticaksanāya (That form of this [Brahman] is for
the sake of displaying [itself].) from BU. II. 5. 19 by stating in
the commentary to it: *...pratikhyāpanāya; yadi hi nāmarūpe na
vyākriyete tadā asyātmano nirupādhikaṁ rūpaṁ prajñānaghanākhyaṁ
na pratikhyāyeta* (...for the sake of making known; indeed, if
nāmarūpa were not made manifest, then the attributeless form of
this *ātman* having the appellation of Faultness Knowledge, would
not apprehended.). It is a more than taxing paradox, and seems
to imply that the unmanifested primordial state, though it is
causally more proximate to Brahman, is less conduicive to the
possibility of knowledge about Brahman. In any event, it is this
possibility that allows for the *ativādin* (the beyond-talker) who
is capable of perceiving that when anyone speaks, he speaks at all
times and through all his words only of *prāna* as existing beyond
that which begins with name and ends with hope (*taṁ cet brūyustaṁ
yadyevamativādinaṁ sarvadā sarvaih śabdairnāmādyāśantamatītya var-
tamānaṁ prānamevaṁ vadantamevaṁ paśyantam* - CUB. VII. 15. 4). The
ativādin is one who has the tendency of going beyond all other
things in his speech (*ativādī atītya sarvānanyānvaditum sīlamasye-
tyativādī* - MUB. III. 1. 4) and for example says things like: 'I
am the *ātman*, the *prāna* of the universe.' (*jagataḥ prāna ātmāham*
- CUB. VII. 15. 4). The *ativādin* therefore, is someone who seeks
to leave everyone behind in his speech, he seeks to apply his words
to objects beyond their conventional signification. However, once
the goal (Brahman) of all this beyond-speaking is reached (and thus
beyond-speaking is still approaching Brahman in terms of *nāmarūpa*)
the need for beyond-speaking passes away: *sarvaṁ vadātmaiva nān-
yadastīti drstam, tadā kiṁ hyasāvatītya vadet* (Once it has been
seen that everything is only *ātman* and nothing other, then what
indeed may he, having gone beyond, speak? - MUB. III. 1. 4). Again
for the very reason that cannot speak about *nāmarūpa* in terms of
Brahman (*tattvānyatva*).

First of all, one can easily notice that there is no lack of words that somehow stand for or represent Brahman, as the highest Absolute, in Śaṅkara's writings as well as in the body of those works upon which he comments. Perhaps the most common of these would fall under the category of meditations based upon symbols (pratīkopāsana), in which Brahman is represented by such symbols as, OM, ākaśa, the sun, etc.. Our concern here is not with the psychological implications (i.e., the technology of the cessation of the cittavrttis) of Yoga as it is incorporated into the Advaita of Śaṅkara, but with the nature and implication of a symbol's capacity to copy Brahman[1]. In addition to this, I feel that it is both sufficient and economical to restrict this particular phase of our investigation to the single most outstanding one of these meditational symbols, namely, OM[2].

Śaṅkara refers to OM as the best name for paramātman[3], sta-

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1 The one distinguishing character that the Sāṅkhya-Yoga system has indelibly imprinted on almost the whole of Indian Thought is the identification of soteriological endeavour with psycho-cosmic regression. One who is in search of the final goal must, so to speak, go against the grain of the cosmos (macrocosmically prapañca and microcosmiccally the stratified jīva) and the order of its original formation. This seems to be the spirit of Śaṅkara's introductory comments to CU.: tānyetānyupāsanāni sattvaśuddhikaratvena vastutāttvāvabhāsakatvādadvaita jñānopakārakāni (These meditations are aids to the knowledge of non-duality by causing the purification of the sattva thereby manifesting reality.). Compare also, his Introduction to IUB..

2 The two most definitive explanations of this symbol occur in the twelve verses of MaU. and PU. V. 2-7. Among other similar meditational symbols one may consider "da" at BUB. V. 2. 1-3, "hrdaya" at BUB. V. 3. 1, "satya" at BUB. V. 4. 1 and V. 5. 1, the gayatri at BUB. B. 14. 1-3, pañcagnāyah at BUB. VI. 2. 9-12, "ka" and "kha" CUB. IV. 11. 1, tadvana KeUB. IV. 6, jyotis at BSB. I. 1. 24, etc..

3 omityetadaksaram paramātmano 'bhidhānam nedistam - CUB. I. 1. 1.

ting the following at BUB. V. 1. 1: *yadyapi brahmātmādiśabdā brahmano vācakāh, tathāpi śrutiprāmānyādbrahmano nediṣṭamabhidhānamoṁkārah* (Though words such as Brahman, ātman, etc., are words that signify Brahman, still on account of that which relates to the authority of śruti, OM is the best name for Brahman.)[1]. Though this is quite clear, the problem that it gives rise to is even more obvious, namely: 'In what way can OM, as a name, point out a transcendent nondual Absolute that nowhere exists in the world as an isolated object capable of being pointed out?'. In attempting to answer this we must keep several things in mind. Meditation for Śankara was above all a means (*sādhana*) to a goal and never an end in itself[2], thus it is often referred to by Śankara as a vehicle for persons of dull intellect[3] and as producing results that were of only a negative or

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1 The identification of OM with Brahman is quite plentiful throughout the works that concern us. For example, KU. I. 2. 15 (*omityetat*), 16 (*etaddhyevākṣaraṁ brahma....*), CUB. I. 1. 3 (*paramātmapratīkatvāt*), TUB. I. 8. 1 (*omityetacchabdarūpaṁ brahmeti manasā dhārayedupāsīta*), MaU 8 (*so 'yamātmādhyakṣaramoṁkāro 'dhimātram*), BG. X. 25 (*girāmasmyekamakṣaram*).

2 As at BUB. V. 1. 1: *tasmāddhyānasādhanatvenaiva ihoṁkāraśabdasyopadeśa* (Thus the symbol OM is taught only as the sādhana [means of accomplishing] meditation.). Meditation itself, is seen only as an activity of the sense organs at BUB. I. 3. 2: *atra copāsanāyāh karmanaśca kartṛtvena vāgādaya eva vivakṣyante* (Here, vāc and the rest of the organs alone are being spoken of as the agents of meditation and action.). See also the Pratīkādhikaraṇa of BSB., viz., BSB. IV. 1. 4 f..

3 Śankara recognizes such defficiencies in the intellects of some people in a few places. At CUB. VIII. 9. 2. he states: *svacittagunadosavaśādeva hi śabdārthāvadhāraṇam tulye 'pi* (For people determine meanings of words in accordance with the capacity or incapacity of their intellects though they hear the very same thing); MaUB 12 meditation on OM is considered by Śankara to be a great help to men of dull or average intellect (*mandamadhyamadhīyam*). A similar statement is also made at BGB. VIII. 11, where OM as a symbol of parabrahman is said to be meant for people of dull and average intellect (*mandamadhyamabuddhi*). Cf., BGB. X. 20.

or lower in nature when compared with Brahman realisation[1]. There-
fore, meditation, according to the writings of Śaṅkara with which we
are concerned, is only, so to speak, a pseudo-science that stands in
an ancillary relationship to brahmajijñāsā.

In the light of this we can begin this brief investigation
by examining a quotation from PUB. V. 2[2]:

> Indeed the parabrahman is not suitable for any desig-
> nation upalakṣana by words etc., on account of its
> lack of distinguishing marks, and it is incapable of
> being explored [or understood] by the mind alone, be-
> cause it is beyond the range of the sense organs.
> However, to those who are meditators on OM, which
> has the intention of Brahman caused to have been fi-
> xed on it through bhakti and which is similar to the
> images of Viṣnu etc., that Brahman becomes distinct
> [or reveals itself]. This is understood on the basis of
> scriptural authority and such also is the aparabrahman.
> Therefore "Both the para and apara Brahman which are
> the OM.", is applied figuratively.

This passage seems to indicate that even though Brahman is not pos-

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1 Lower in the sense that only the world of hiranyagarbha is attai-
   ned, as at BUB. V. 10. 1, by meditation, or that mere longevity
   (āyus) is what is sought to be gained (BUB. IV. 4. 16). This is
   brought out even more strongly in the Preamble to TUB. II. 1. 1,
   with the following statement: na caitāvatāśesatah saṃsārabījasyō-
   pamardanam.... (And by so much [meditation] there is no final dest-
   ruction of the seeds of saṃsāra.). Similarly at CUB. V. 10. 2 we
   find that meditation results in only a relative immortality and
   not real liberation (sāpeksameva cāmrtatvam na sāksānmoksa), and
   in the Introduction to CUB I. 1. 1.we find that meditation brings
   about results which only aproximate absolute emancipation (kaival-
   yasamnikrstaphalāni). If anything, meditation is only preparatory
   in relationship to brahmavidyā (see BUB. I. 4. 1), and not at all
   indispensable in its attainment.

2 param hi brahma śabdādyupalaksanānarham sarvadharmaviśesavarjita-
   mato na śakyamatīndriyagocaratvātkevalena manasāvagāhitum. omkā-
   re tu visnvādipratimāsthanīye bhaktyāveśitabrahmabhāve dhyāyinām
   tatprasīdatītyavagaryate śāstraprāmānyāttathāparam ca brahma.
   tasmātparam cāparam ca brahma vadomkāra ityupacaryate. The whole
   of the fifth praśna is concerned with meditation on OM, especial-
   ly with the individual component letters.

sessed of qualities that are conduicive to metaphorical represen-
tation, it is somehow still appropriated into the conceptual sphere,
and the key notion in this whole endeavour is that it is all done
figuratively (upacaryate). Another thing that must be noticed is
that Brahman itself never becomes directly involved in the process,
that is to say, we are constantly operating within a closed circle,
for the intention of Brahman (brahmabhāva) which is fixed on OM is
in itself only a function of nāmarūpa. These two points may be ta-
ken as almost paradigmatic of all symbolic descriptions of Brahman
for the purpose of meditation, and even all symbolic representation
of Brahman in general.

Though Śaṅkara sometimes describes the relationship be-
tween symbol and Brahman as being between two different things[1], and
though he often says that the symbolic image is identical with Brah-
man[2], I think that in the end the relationship has to be seen as
analogous to that relationship which is used by Śaṅkara to account
for the false apprehension of given existence in its psycho-cosmolo-

1   As at BUB. I. 4. 10: anyasya hyanyatve sampatkriyate naikatve
    (The [meditation on] concord is done on difference with another,
    not on unity.). In other words, if the two things that were
    being symbolically compared were identical there would be no
    scope at all for symbolic comparison. Similarly at BUB. I. 3.
    1: ālambanatvena hi nāmādipratipattih pratimādivadeva, na tu
    nārādyeva brahmeti (The assertion of name etc. is because of de-
    pendence [on something, i.e., as a means of support], just like an
    image [of a deity], but name etc., are not Brahman.). Cf., CUB. I. 1. 1.

2   This is implied for example in the last phrase belonging to the
    quotation from PUB. V. 2, on the previous page. In defining OM
    as a pratīka of Brahman BUB. V. 1. 1, sates the following: yathā
    viṣnvādipratimābhedena, evamomkāra brahmeti pratipattavyah (Just
    as the images of Viṣṇu and the other gods are not different [from
    the respective god], so is OM to be understood as [identical with]
    Brahman.). Cf., CUB. VII. 1. 4.

gical capacity, namely adhyāsa (superimposition)[1]. In respect to this we find such language as, "...[the meditator] causes [Brahman] to enter into OM." (oṁkāre aveśayati - BUB. V. 1. 1), or, "The notion of Brahman should be superimposed on āditya and the rest." (brahmadrstirevādityādiṣu syāditi - BSB. IV. 1. 5) yet, the type of superimposition that is resorted to in meditational practice is not regarded by Śankara as being of the same erroneous nature that adhyāsa itself is[2], which therefore makes some indirect contribution to the knowledge of parabrahman possible.

The necessity for this whole process of superimposition is fully explained by Śankara at BSB. IV. 1. 5 (of which I supply Gambhirananda's translation[3]), wherein he discusses the sense in which the word Brahman should be taken when one is confronted with such statements as ādityo brahma (The sun is Brahman.), and so on. Śankara states:

> Now, because the words sun (āditya) etc. occur first, their primary meanings [mukhyā vrtti] have to be ac- to be accepted, for that creates no difficulty. And while the intellect remains occupied with these words in their primary senses, the word Brahman makes its appearance in these sentences at a later stage. But

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1 For an explanation of adhyāsa consult Śankara's 'Introduction' to BSB.. An interesting parallel is made by Śankara, between OM and ātman, in his introductiory remarks to MaUB. concerning the concept of adhyāsa. In this latter reference OM is said to be the substratum for the illusion of the manifest universe of speech (vākprapañca) in the same way that the ātman is so of such illusions (vikalpa) as prāna, or in the same manner as the rope is of the illusory snake.

2 BUB. I. 3. I: yathā sthānāvanirjñāte na sthānuriti, puruṣa evāyam iti pratipadyate viparītam, na tu tathā nāmādau brahmadrstirviparītam. Cf., also BGB. XVIII. 66 where the difference between gaunapratyaya and mithyāpratyaya is clearly brought out.

3 Swami Gambhirananda trans., Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya of Śankarācārya, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1972.

> since the word Brahman, in its primary sense, cannot stand in apposition [sāmānādhikaranya] with the sun etc., the only remaining conclusion that stands affirmed is that the intention here is to prescribe the superimposition of the idea of Brahman (brahmadrsti) [1].

One can easily recognise the way in which this explanation, that pertains essentially to the problem of meditation, has become a function of the problem of language in a very specific sense. The central point of the passage is that the Brahman upon which the meditation is concentrated is not the parabrahman itself, but only a notion of that Brahman (brahmadrsti) which is superimposed upon, and thus characterised by, a readily accessible object such as the sun. Sankara is not clear as to what he intends this concept of brahmadrsti to stand for, it can, more than likely, be taken as a synonym for sagunabrahman, the qualified or conceptualized Brahman, which because it is so, can be worked into the whole process of further and varied meditational predication. However, what is clear is that in order allow this organic meditational enterprise to pursue its ends, Sankara must accept the fact that words and notions are not necessarily restricted to their face-value meanings (mukhyārtha) but also possess extreemly fluid secondary senses (laksanārtha) and thus permit the predication of one thing by something which could be quite different from it [2].

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1 prāthamyāccādityādiśabdānām mukhyārthatvamavirodhādgrahītavyam. taih svārthavrttibhiravaruddhāyām buddhau, pascādavatarato brahmaśabdasya mukhyayā vrttyā sāmānādhikaranyasambhavādbrahmadrstividhānārthataivāvatisthate.

2 For explanations of the nature and use of primary and secondary sense in Vedānta, consult Vedāntaparibhāsa, Chpt. IV, as well as V. A. R. Sastri's "Mukhya and Gauna Words in Language", BDCRI. Vol. XIV #3, pp. 183-194, which follows Bartrhari on the subject.

Brahman therefore becomes speakable, not in a direct sense, but in an implied or indirect sense by means of these figurative meditations. In order to finally complete the circle, Śaṅkara seems to make one more progression through analogical extrapolation and produces what appears to be a concrete inference, and in terms of Advaita perhaps the essential inference, concerning Brahman, namely that Brahman is a real entity at the base of all this figurative expression. He states this at BUB. I. 3. 1 in the following words:

> ...and on account of the fact that there is a reliance of the secondary sense on the primary. Since the pañcāgni form of fire [comes] from [its] secondary sense [gaunatva] there is [evidence for something] which possesses real existence and is the primary sense [mukhya] of fire, similarly, since the names etc. of Brahman exist on account of secondary sense, there is evidence for the real existence [sadbhāva] of Brahman in the primary sense.[1]

With this, primary and secondary meaning take on directly ontological implications, so that even though all meditation upon Brahman is done figuratively, that is never directly touching the primary sense of the word Brahman, it still somehow depends upon the primary sense of Brahman or assumes it in its functioning.

If we move on now to a consideration of the way in which words as units of language are taken by Śaṅkara to apply to parabrahman, we will find that we are simply dealing with an extension of the above meditational problem, since Brahman can still not be in any way directly indicated by these words, but only indirectly

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1   mukhyapeksatvācca gaunatvasya. pañcāgnvādiṣu cāgnitvādergauna-
    tvāt mukhyāgnyādiṣadbhāvavannāmādiṣu brahmātvasya gaunatvān-
    mukhyabrahmasaṃbhāvopapattiḥ. Cf., also the analogy of the rela-
    tionship between the lines of the akāra and the true akāra pre
    sented at BSB. II. 1. 14.

indicated by them[1]. Our concern in this section has not been to explain the way in which words signify as constituents of nāmārupa in the given world, but the way in which they are at all capable of contributing to our understanding of the Absolute. Very briefly we may sum up the problem in the following manner: words function on the given plane according to their ability to, at the same time, indicate the general universal (jāti) and the particular mode of that universal, namely, the individual (vyakti), in respect to this, how are such words capable of signifying parabrahman which in its transendence escapes any universal category and individual determination?[2]. The answer to this seems to be that words have to be elevated up from their capacity to signify concretely (mukhyāvrtti)[3] so that they might indirectly indicate (laksanāvrtti) that which is sought after.

1 That is, paroksābhidhāna, as at BUB. II. 3. 3. In the opening sentence of this paragraph I do not mean to imply that historically the problem of Brahman-predication arose out of meditational preoccupation with Brahman, on the contrary, it can stand on its own within the context of the history of Sanskrit philosophy of language (in the sense that this term is employed by J. F. Stall, in his "Sanskrit Philosophy of Language", Current Trends in Linguistics, Vol. 5, 1967, pp. 499-531), and in fact, in doing so it subsumes the meditational problem under this context. This is the reason, perhaps, that Śaṅkara resorts to descriptions of the primary and secondary capacities of words in order to finally resolve this meditational problem.

2 See Richard de Smet, "Langage et connaissance de l'Absolu chez Çaṁkara", Revue Philosophique de Louvain, Vol. 52, 1954, pp. 31-77, where on pp. 36-37 he sets out this generality. This paper is the most comprehesive single study of Śaṅkara's thoughts on language. However, at BSB. I. 3. 28, Sankara does seem to place an emphasis on the universal: ākrtibhīśca śabdānāṁ sambandhah, na vyaktibhih. Cf., also BGB. XIII. 12.

3 Synonyms of this term seem to be presented at BUB. III. 4. 1, namely, sāksāt (visibly evident), avyavahita (un obstructed), aparoksāt (immediate), and amauna (primary).

Of the types of secondary implications that were acknow-
ledged by post-Śaṅkara Advaita, Śaṅkara himself appears to be
employing jahadajahallakṣaṇā in his application of language to pa-
rabrahman.[1] In this capacity, a word yields an indirect description
by simultaneously excluding as well as retaining a portion of its
primary sense, as for example in the phrase "This is that brahmin"
(uttered in recognition of a bald and rotund brahmin presently be-
fore you, who you recognise to be one and the same person you had
encountered years previously as a lean man with a full head of hair.)
where the words "this" and "that" retain the essential identity of
the person and discard the peripheral and accidental characteris-
tics (upalakṣaṇā) of his baldness, leanness, etc., in both instan-
ces[2]. If we apply this explanation of jahadajahallakṣaṇā to the
well known mahāvākya 'tattvamasi' ("That thou art.") we will find
that the words tat and tvam both discard the portion of their pri-
mary sense that conveys universal "thatness" (Īśvaratva) and univer-
sal "thisness" (jīvatva) and retains that portion which asserts the
identity of the consciousness that binds the two together[3]. As one
can see this is far from the tautology that often is forced upon
the phrase by some interpreters.

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1 For the other two types of lakṣaṇā, see de Smet, "Langage...",
   pp. 39-42, and for further amplification, Datta, The Six Ways
   of Knowing, pp. 289 ff.. Briefly the others are ajahallakṣaṇā
   in which the word without abandoning any part of its primary
   sense signifies the secondary sense which is connected with that
   former primary sense (i.e., both senses are taken together) and
   jahallakṣaṇā in which the word totally abandons its primary sense
   and signifies a secondary sense metaphorically.

2 The example is from S. V. S. Sastri's, "Sureśvara", in Percep-
   tors of Advaita, T. M. P. Mahadevan ed., Secunderabad, 1968, pp.
   70-74.

3 See S. V. S. Sastri, "Sureśvara", p. 73.

Richard de Smet[1] sees the interpretation of these various
statements which attempt to describe Absolute Reality as being com-
prised of three stages or phases:

> 1) une phase d'affirmation encore confuse (adhyā-
> ropa); la proposition y présente les notions posi-
> tives signifiées directement par ses termes, en même
> temps qu'apparaît l'impossibilité de retenir entière-
> ment cette signification direct;
> 2) une phase de négation (apavāda), durant laquelle
> le mode fini et imparfait selon lequel ces notions
> sont réalisées par leurs objets premiers est défini-
> tivement exclu ("neti neti": ce n'est pas ainsi, ce
> n'est pas ainsi);
> 3) une phase de transmutation élevante (laksanā)
> qui aboutit à affirmer l'identité parfaite dans ún
> sujet unique des notions exprimées par les termes,
> mais cette fois selon le mode suprême d'actuation qui
> leur est propre dans ce sujet absolument parfait.

This is the process eventually gives recourse to the final jahada-
jahallaksanā interpretation of such statements as tattvamasi. At
first glance one is compelled to reject such statements as the mahā-
vākyāni, not out of the fact that they are grammatically incorrect,
(for they are not so), but out of the fact that there appears to be
some semantical incongruity, that is, some defect in the meaning or
purport (tātparya) of the statement. However, that which undergoes
such rejection, and rightly so, is merely the face-value (mukhya)
sense of the statement, and here we have de Smet's first phase.

At this point, according to de Smet, one realizes also the
limitation of all objectifying and face-value predication in its pos-
sible application to the Absolute Brahman. This second or apavāda
(denial) phase is simply an intemediary phase which heuristically
contributes to the inquirer's metaphysical orientation but in itself

1 R. de Smet, "Langage...", pp. 56-57.

cannot be the last word on Brahman. As he himself puts it: "L'a-vantage de cette voie purement négative (apavādamārga) est simple-propédeutique. Elle est nécessaire mais ne peut suffire."[1]. Yet, it seems to me that such negative definitions of Brahman are more than mere intermediary stages in the understanding of parabrahman, for they too can be taken as an indirect definition (lakṣaṇā)[2] of Brahman which still implies the existence of a positive entity and perhaps even stands as a heuristic counter-pole to the concept of anirvacanīya (according to which nāmarūpa cannot be defined in terms Brahman).

In any event, what does become evident to the inquirer is that this semantic incongruity must somehow be resolved, and since it cannot be resolved on the primary (mukhya) level, the inquirer is compelled to take recourse to the implied sense (lakṣaṇārtha). Naturally, this is not, in the main, an immediate and intuitive process[3] as we find out by again consulting de Smet[4]:

> Lorsque le sens direct est impossible, l'exégète doit se guider sur le context (prakaraṇa) pour déter-miner auquel des divers sens secondaires possibles le texte doit être entendu. Cette règle est traditionelle dans l'Ecole de la Mīmāṃsā [MS. I. 4. 9; II. 3. 24; etc.] et Çamkara s'y conforme entièrement [BSB. I. 4. 9; BUB. I. 3. 21; etc.].

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1 R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 48.

2 Cf., M. Biardeau, "Quelques Réflexions sur l'Apophatisme de Śaṅ-kara", IIJ, Vol. III, 1957, pp. 81-101, specifically p. 98. In this paper Mme. Biardeau puts forward the speculative theory that Śaṅkara developed his explanations of negative and positive defi-nitions of Brahman at different stages in his thought, the former being the earlier. This seems to be a bit too speculative.

3 As suggested for example at BSB. IV. 1. 2., this is the exception.

4 R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 49.

> Cependant le context peut être insuffisant à
> éclairer le sens d'un texte. En ce cas il faut se
> référer au, sens (artha) général de la doctrine,
> tel qu'il s'exprime dans la section entière, ou
> même dans l'ensemble des textes révélés dont l'u-
> nité du sens est un postulat de la théologie çam-
> karienne [BSB. III. 3. 1; PUB. IV. 5; etc.]. Cette
> règle traditionnelle [MU. I. 4. 30], est adoptée sans
> discussion par Camkara [BSB. I. 1. 1; II. 3. 17; etc.].

One thus begins to undertake this resolution of the primary sense
of the statement by seeking a clarification of the concepts (padārtha-
viveka - BSB. IV. 1. 2) with an appeal to the context (prakaraṇa) of
the statement and, in a wider sense (i.e., if prakaraṇa is insuffi-
cient), to the most unified sense of the Upaniṣads as a whole (which
for Śaṅkara would be advaita).

Accompanying the above appeals, Śaṅkara, out of the fact
of his close methodological ties with the Bhātta school of Mīmāmsā,
also turns to a more intelectual means of resolving a given seman-
tic contradiction in a statement, namely, arthāpatti (postulation,
i.e., the supposition of a fact in order to resolve a given contra-
diction)[1]. D. M. Datta[2], furnishes us with the standard example of
arthāpatti taken from Vedāntaparibhāsā: "A person who is known to
fast by day is still quite stout. This stoutness cannot be accoun-
ted for, unless we suppose that he eats at night.". Its use by San-
kara seems to be for the most part implicit throughout his work, al-
it explicitly surfaces at such places as BUB. IV. 3. 34 and BGB.
XVIII. 67[3]. It would also seem that in using it in this way, Sankara

1 See D. M. Datta, Six Ways..., pp. 237-246, for a concise exposi-
  tion of this concept.

2 D. M. Datta, Six Ways..., p. 237.

3 See de Smet, "Langage...", pp. 50 f..

would most likely employ it only in the light of _prakarana_ etc.,
and never independantly.

These reasons, therefore lead the inquirer towards an im-
plementation of _jahadajahallaksana_ mode of interpretation, or in
other words he allows the words of these identity statmements (_ma-
hāvākyāni_) to function in their secondary semantic capacity (_laksa-
nārtha_). _Jahadajahallaksana_, is of course the most appropriate type
of secondary signification for Śankara to choose, since it mirrors
in language his metaphysic, or better yet, his ontology as viewed
form the lower standpoint (_vyavahāra_); that is to say, from this
standpoint Śankara is not prepared to completely give up the reality
of given existence, nor is he quite ready to endow it with the lable
of 'that which is real', and thus in talking about given existence
Śankara retains a portion of its _mukhyārtha_ (_viz._, that it is real
in the sense that it is experienced) and discards another poriton
of it (_viz._ that it is real in the sense of ultimately being that
which is)[1]. More clarification of this might be supplied if we con-
trast it with Sureśvara's approach, who since he holds to _ābhāsavāda_
(i.e., the transformation of the Absolute is false and indeterminable
in its entirety[2]) appropriately employs a _jahallaksana_ interpreta-

1 Though Śankara himself nowhere appends a name to his doctrine of
   illusory transformation of Brahman, a term which became prominent
   in later Advaita, namely, _vivartavāda_ is often used to describe
   it. J. F. Stall ("Sanksrit Philosophy...", p. 520) makes the fol-
   lowing interesting remark which similarly connects language with
   metaphysics: "...the _Prātiśākhya_ emphasis on _parināma_ 'transfor-
   mation' and the Pāṇinīya emphasis on _ādeśa_ 'substitution' may be
   the predecessors, respectively, of the Sāṁkhya _parināmavāda_ (...
   the effect is a transformation of the cause) and the Advaita _vi-
   vartavāda_ (...the effect is an illusory superposition on the cause).

2 See NS. II. 53, commentary.

tion of "tattvamasi", so that as in NS. III. 77, the primary sen-
ses of "tat" and "tvam" are completely discarded.

The speakability of Brahman encountered through an ana-
lysis of the mahāvākyāni must therefore be seen as of a different
order than that speakability of Brahman attained through medita-
tional symbols[1]. In the latter case the speakability of Brahman
simply indicates, and indirectly so, that Brahman is a real entity
(sadbhāva), in effect, a thing which is to be known (jñeya), in the
former, the possibility for the actual realisation (anubhava) is
itself presented as a speakability of Brahman.

However, Śankara also notes at BSB. I. 3. 25 that the
identity statements of the mahāvākyāni are not the only type of
vedāntavākya (this term seems to be used here to mean sentences
about Brahman) for sometimes they are also intent upon defining
the nature of Brahman[2]. Therefore before closing this portion of
our study we shall have to briefly take into account this latter
type of speaking about Brahman.

Of the types of statements which purport to supply de-
finitions (laksana) of Brahman, two broad categoriztions are most
often made, and we provide K. S. Murty's summary account of them[3]:

1 As at BSB. IV. 1. 3: atah pratikaśrutivairūpyādabhedapratipat-
   tih, bhedadrstyapavādācca (Thus, there is an assertion of non-
   difference in sentences such as the mahāvākyāni on account of
   their dissimilarity to scriptural texts concerned with medita-
   tional symbols, as well as on account of the denial of the no-
   tion of difference.).

2 dvirūpā hi vedāntavākyānām pravrttih, kvacitparamātmasvarūpani-
   rūpanaparā, kvacidvijñānātmanah paramātmaikatvopadeśaparā.

3 K. S. Murty, Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedanta, New York,
   1959, pp. 74-75.

(a) essential (svarūpa) non-relational definitions of Brahman, e.g., 'Brahman is reality, knowledge and infinity'; and (b) accidental (tatastha) definitions of Brahman based on some false attribution (adhyāropa-upalakṣana), e.g., 'Brahman is that from which beings are generated'. The latter is a tatastha definition, because it does not matter whether creatorship is attributed to Brahman or not; for inspite of all such attributions Brahman remains pure and indifferent (tatastha).

The latter of these, namely, the tatasthalakṣana occurs for example at BSB. I. 1. 2 and can, as de Smet[1] indicates, be transformed into a svarūpalakṣana in some instances. Still, our concern here will be only with the svarūpalakṣana, since it is the only type that is, in essence, a real definition of Brahman.

A svarūpalakṣana of Brahman is considered to be nirapekṣa (non-relational) and akhandārthaka (referring to an object which is without parts)[2]; this is perhaps best explained by referring to the best known svarūpalakṣana of Brahman and which is analysed at length in TUB. II. 1. 1, namely, satyam jñānamanantam brahma (that Brahman which is reality, knowledge, and infinity).

First of all, these three predicates are not taken by Śankara to stand for a set of respective qualities possessed by Brahman, instead they are simply a definition of Brahman in the sense that they demarcate Brahman as a noun from all other nouns[3]. What seems

1 R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 60.

2 See R. de Smet, "Langage...", p. 59. In this paper de Smet also provides a translation with a few notes of the relevant portion of TUB. II. 1. 1. See also S. S. Suryana Rayana Sastri's "Akhandārtha", SS., 1961, pp. 186-190.

3 yasmāllakṣanārthapradhānāni viśeṣanāni, na viśeṣanapradhānānyeva ...samāna jātīyebhya evam nivartakāni viśeṣanāni viśeṣyasya, lakṣanam tu sarvata eva...

to be significant here, is that since Brahman does not belong to any jāti (class or universal), satyam etc., cannot be taken as qualifiers of Brahman but only as an essential definition of it. In the light of this each of the three words is not related in any semantical way to either of the others (na parasparam sambadhyante) but only to the word Brahman, and this is what makes it a nirapeksa-laksana (non-relational definition)[1].

Thus the whole phrase revolves on the word "brahma" and not any of the discriminating words, and the semantic content of the phrase taken in this way has again to be gotten at, through jahada-jahallaksana[2]. In other words, satyam, jñānam, anantam, and even the word Brahman, cannot completely give up their original senses (svārtha), for then there would be no essential demarcation of Brahman from other nouns. Similarly, the context (prakarana) of the statement, etc., show us that we cannot simply hold to the primary sense of the three words that seek to define Brahman, not to mention the fact that we would again run into that semantical incongruity that we encountered when dealing with a mahāvākya strictly in terms of its primary sense (mukhyārtha). It is in this sense that we find Sankara stating (still at TUB. II. 1. 1) the following: tathāpi tadābhāsavācakena buddhidharmavisayena jñānaśabdena tallaks-yate, na tūcyate (Even so, [Brahman] is indicated indirectly, but not directly signified, by the word jñāna which pertains [in its primary

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1 TUB. I. 1. 1: ata ekaiko viśesanaśabdah parasparam nirapekso brahmaśabdena sambadhyate....

2 See de Smet, "Langage...", p. 66.

sense]to that characterised by buddhi [intellect] and signifying the
mere appearance of that [Brahman].).

Lastly, since this phrase is essentially a non-relational
definition (nirapeksalaksana), that is, a definition in which there
is no relation between each of its attributive components, it is ca-
pable of mirroring and relating to a thing, such as Brahman, which
is itself inherently partless (akhanda). Thus "satyam jñānamanantam
brahma", is a statement which is possessed of a sense which is whole
and indivisible; it is an akhandārtha and an essential defintion
(svarūpalaksana) of Brahman.

In conclusion, this segment has endeavoured to present the
nature and capacity of language, as it stands in relation to Brahman,
within Sankara's system of philosophizing. More specifically, we
have dealt with the problem of the speakability of Brahman in the
light of the fact that both language (nāmarūpa) and Brahman are of
different ontological orders, and have found, that inspite of this
disparity Brahman is speakable in two essential and indispensable
ways, namely, in terms of mahāvākyāni such as "tattvamasi" and in
terms of svarūpalaksanāni such as "satyam jñānamanantam brahma".
All this was done in the context of Sankara's philosophizing as an
intellectual response abstracted from his initial and necessary her-
meneutical response, that is, in the context of a response construc-
ted moreso out of thought in itself rather than exegesis, and yet one
that is never completely independent of scriptural exegesis — in
other words in the context of Sankara's systematic ontology.

Further, in respect to both the hermeneutical response and

the intellectual response in the way that it stands as an organic whole in Śaṅkara's thought, one must conclude that language must be described as a positive concept. This is visible, of course, in two basic notions that are crucial to Śaṅkara Advaita: (a) that language as revealed language (śruti) is the essential matrix of insight into 'that which really is' (Brahman) and that as such it is also the necessary foundation and catalyst for the whole enterprise of becoming in Śaṅkara Advaita, the aim of which is the realization (anubhava) of Brahman; (b) that although Brahman is completely beyond the reach of language in any direct sense (mukhyārtha), it is nontheless speakable in terms of the mahāvākyāni and svarūpalaksanāni (whose sense is akhandārtha).

Such a positive quality in Śaṅkara's conceptualization of language, on account of the revealed nature of that language, its essential indispensibility to and catalytic potency within the Advaita quest of becoming, as well its ability to delicately mirror the Absolute in certain precise occurrences, is enough reason, I think, for it to merit the appelation 'divine'.

Epilogue   A

Both the first and second chapters conclude with a description of their respective conceptualizations of language as "divine". With this "Epilogue", I wish to make some very brief submissions concerning the similarities and differences between both of these predications of language as "divine".

First of all, one must say that there exists between the two an overall similarity, and this is simply out of the fact that that in both cases the definitive characteristic of language is that it reveals that which is to be sought after. In the former, this thing which is to be sought after is the control and manipulation of the various dynamic forces that constituted the Rg-vedic cosmos, while in the latter, it is the realisation (anubhava) of the non-dual Brahman/ātman as the supreme metaphysical principle. Along with this, we will notice that in both instances, language itself is also that which is revealed, as a manifestation of visionary potency, in effect being something which is not made by or spontaneously accessible to everyday mankind. It is mainly for this last reason that such language is fitted with various conceptual trappings, such as its eternality (nityatva) and non-human (apauruseya) origin, which might be referred to as "divine". However, the the importance of the fact that, in both these cases, language is characteristically positive in the sense that it, in an overall

capacity, definitely contributes to rather than detracts from, the pursuit of that which is to be sought after.

Concerning their dissimilarity, one must come to the conclusion that it is one of degree and not kind. Thus in its Ṛgvedic context, vāc (even taking into account its revelatory capacity) is most appropriately understood as 'raw power', that is to say, as perhaps the essential driving force in a dynamic cosmos completely made up of such driving forces. Its essential status stemming from the fact that it seems to have been the most important key to Vedic man's ability to harness and thus control (rather pragmatically) those powers that made up that universe. It is clearly a mythical entity, though in any demeaning sense of the word, rather than sophisticated metaphysical entity. In Śaṅkara, the concept of language becomes clearly metaphysical. It is no longer a raw utilitarian power which had to be harnessed, but a refined capacity to signify, which must be exegeted. Language (śruti) is now the key to knowledge about Brahman, which in the highest sense (paramārthasatya) involves a ralization (anubhava) of Brahman.

In any event, the concept of language in both of these cases is looked upon as that which eventually leads to the goal and is essential in attaining the goal. Therefore it appears that one would be well justified in cluding that the positive attitude towards language as represented in Ṛgveda is foundational to and characteristic of the Brahmanical tradition as it is represented by the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara.

Papañca and Avyākata—Possible Roots
of Buddhist Linguistic Speculation

Early(Theravāda) Buddhism does not admit of an expressly

systematic concern with 'language', and touches the subject only

peripherally in such topics as anussava[1], avyākata, and papañca.

The last two will be the specific concern of this chapter since

they bear more directly upon the nature and limit of linguistic

speculation than anussava.

Papañca is the Pāli expression of the Sanskrit term pra-

pañca, which as V. Bhattacharya points out is from "...pra-√pac or

or √pañc 'to spread out, make clear or evident'"[2]. Of these two

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1   For this 'inter-darśanic' questioning of 'authority' see K. N.
    Jayatilleke, Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge, London, Allen
    & Unwin, 1963, pp. 175ff., where the two main arguments set
    forth by the Early Buddhists against the schools founded upon
    such 'authority' (especially the Brahmanical schools) appear
    to be that such 'authority' is unnaceptable because it a)
    could ultimately turn out to be either true or false—the grounds
    on which it was accepted being no final guarantee that that this
    authority is true (p. 184); and b) was not the result of a per-
    sonal realization, insight, or verification (pp. 190-1). As to
    the 'intra-darśanic' attitude of Early Buddhism to 'authority'
    —that is, within its own philosophy—Jayatilleke states the
    following in the eighth chapter of the same work: "the atti-
    tude to authority [anussava] recommended by the Buddha is not
    contradictory to 'and is in fact compatible with' the attitude
    recommended by the Buddha towards his own statements."(p. 389).
    In other words, even the statements of the Buddha should not be
    accepted without question, although, as Jayatilleke later (pp.
    400-1) points out, the latest stages of the Pali Canon do entail
    evidence of an emerging authoritative dogmatism.

2. V. Bhattacharya(trans.), The Āgamaśāstra of Gaudapāda, Univer-
    sity of Calcutta, 1943, p. 43.

spellings, the Sanskrit word is used in Vedāntic works to denote an "..."expansion of the universe' or the 'visible world' (prapañ-cyata iti prapañcaḥ)."[1]. Such is the usage in Āgamaśāstra II. 35: "...nirvikalpo... prapañcopaśamo 'dvayaḥ."—the cessation of the expansion of the universe is without duality and undifferentiated; and also in Brahmasūtra Bhāsya of Śahkara to III. 11. 21: "... Brahma is of one nature only and one in which all this variety of worldly manifestations (Prapancha) has ceased to be...."[2]. The term also occurs in two relatively late Upaniṣads—Māndukya VII, again as prapañcopaśamam, and Śvetāśvatara VI. 6 as prapañcaḥ[3]— In both instances it conveys the same sense of cosmic expansion. Though the above is far from exhaustive, I feel that it provides us with the general and accepted Vedāntic usage of the term pra-pañca and also shows that the term has no specific or primary con-nection with 'language', but instead refers to a type of 'expan-ding cosmic evolution or differentiation from a primordial centre'.

In turning to the Pali Canon[4] usage of the term papañca,

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1 V. Bhattacharya, Āgamaśāstra, p. 43.

2 V. M. Apte(trans.), Brahma-Sūtra Shankara-Bhāshya, Bombay, Po-pular Book Depot, 1960, p. 590.

3 S. Radhakrishnan in his The Principal Upaniṣads, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1969, translates this occurrence rather too loosely as "world".

4 Though I say Pali Canon here, I have restricted my investigation to the Sūtta Piṭaka, since it seems to be regarded by modern scholars in general as the foremost source of Early Buddhist Doc-trine.

we find that it occurs in a psychological context rather than a cosmological one. It is often translated as "impediment", as for example in MLS II p. 163 and MLS I p. 87: "This goal [nittha i.e., Arhatship] is for someone... who is without delight in impediments [nippapañcārāmas... nippapañcaratino] not for someone with delight in impediments....". Woodward translates papañcitaṃ as "obsession" at KS IV p. 135, and chinna-papañca as "...those who have broken down the hindrances...." in the description of past Buddhas at KS IV p. 28. Papañca is repeatedly translated as "difficulty" by Woodward on page 168 of GS II, and in a note to its occurrence he offers the following: "Papañca is often taken to mean 'Illusion'. It means 'proxility, obstruction'.". To sum up, in these isolated occurrences of papañca in the Sūtta Pitaka we can readily detect a negative and predominant sense of hindrance or obstruction.

Along with papañca, we commonly find a related construct, namely, papañca-sañña-saṅkhā, such as in MLS I pp. 143-45, for which Horner gives "...number of obsessions and perceptions...."; this according to his own note on page 143 follows Buddhagosa (Papañcasudanī, II.75) who explains "saṅkhā" by kotthasa ('number' or 'parts') and papañcasañña as perceptions connected with tanhā (craving), māna (conceit), and ditthi (views). Ñāṇananda[1], however, takes saṅkhā more literally as in the Sanskrit 'saṃ -√khya' or 'calculation', citing its use in Saṃyutta Nikāya III.70 as a considered

1   Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda, Concept and Reality (In Early Buddhist Thought, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Celon, 1971, p. 5.

example[1]. This latter interpretation of saṅkhā seems to express a more precise understanding of the psychological context in which papañca and its cognates occur, by emphasizing the word's dynamic sense of 'process'(calculation) rather than the static and misleading generality of Buddhagosa's quantifications ('number', 'parts'). As such, papañcasaññasaṅkhā seems most appropriately rendered by

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1 As in the translation at KS III p. 63:

> Whatsoever of matter, bretheren, is past, ceased, changed,——that is reckoned [saṅkhā] , termʌed and named as "has been". It is not reckoned [s.] as "is", nor is it recknoned [s.] as "will be".

This definitely does support Ñāṇananda's interpretation of the term, an interpretation which is certainly properly taken in respect to the psychological context of the term papañca.

2 In partial ancticipation of our chapter on language in Nāgārjuna, we may take into account Ñāṇananda's observance, on page 116 of his Conception, that papañcasaṅkhā and papañcasaññasaṅkhā are are conspicuously absent in Mahāyāna texts. However, prapañca itself does occur in two verses (XVIII.9 and XXXIII.15) of Mādhyamikakārikā. Stcherbatsky, when he discusses prapañca in The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa, The Hague, Mouton, 1965, takes it to mean "verbal designation(prapañca=vāk)" (p. 48), or "variety of names prapañco vak" (p. 209), in both cases implying the advent of mundane conceptualization of Nirvāṇa. On p. 91 of the same work, Stcherbatsky (in a note to Mādhamikavrtti 11.4) states that, "...nisprapañca=anirvacanīva...[adding that here] not only words but concepts are also meant."(an identical equation occurs on p. 156). If we take this usage of prapañca in Mādhyamika Buddhism as an example of the Mahāyāna concern with it, we can see that it has clearly become associated with language. Historically speaking, for such an association to emerge, it must have been present in some rudimentary form within the Pali occurrences of the term papañca. In any case, the usage of this term in the Mādhyamikakārikās will be more pointedly discussed in the final chapter.

an English translation along the following lines: 'calculations
or reckonings characterised by perceptions (sañña) of, or connec-
ted with papañca.

At this point in our investigation I think it would be
best if looked at a closed occurrence of the term papañca and its
complimentary construction papañcasaññasankhā. With this in mind,
we can find a classic usage of the two expressions in the Madhu-
pundikasutta (MLS I. ii. 18), where the sage-recluse Kaccāna gives
an exposition[1] on an anti-ontological implication previously ut-
tered by the Buddha[2]. In doing so, Kaccāna also provides us with
a schematic presentation for the Early Buddhist sequence of 'psycho-
perceptual' evolution and differentaition. He states:

> Visual consciousness... arises because of eye and
> material shapes; the meeting of the three is sen-
> sory impingement; feelings are because of sensory
> impingement; what one feels one perceives; what
> one perceives one reasons about; what one reasons
> about obsesses one; what obsesses one is the ori-
> gin of the number of perceptions and obsessions
> which assail a man in regard to material shapes
> cognisable by the eye, past, future, present.

This sequence is then repeated for auditory, olfactory, gustatory,

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1 This statement of Kaccana's occurs at MLS I p. 145.

2 This implication is found at MLS I p. 143, where the Buddha
   states:

> Whatever is the origin, monk, of the number of
> obsessions and perceptions [papañcasaññasankhā]
> which assail a man, if there is nothing to rejoice
> at, to welcome, to catch hold of, this is itself
> an end of propensity to attachment... repugnance
> ...views... perplexity... pride... ignorance....

It simply indicates that man's given existence has no real and
final substratum to it.

bodily (i.e., touch), and mental conciousness.

We can see that each of the different phassas (contacts or "sensory impingements") 'arises' out of the momentary conflagration of sensory organ, object, and sense consciousness—which, in the framework of Buddhist asatkāryavada and paticcasamuppāda[1] are mutually dependent on each other out of dynamic necessity. From phassa (contact) 'arises' vedana (feeling), then sañña (perception), vitakka (reasoning), and finally papañca. If we were to conjecturally choose one of these 'situations' as demonstrating a probable scope or capacity for the 'onset' of what might be called language, then (it would seem that vitakka or 'reasoning about' is the most appropriate. The three initial 'situations'—phassa to sañña—appear to be more elemental or crude, and rather provide backdrop for linguistic embellishment.

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1. The former is the more general of the two terms and Jayatilleke (Theory, p. 453) is reluctant to apply it as a predicate of the Early Buddhist causal theory. I have come accross two papers that are very helpful in understanding the concept of paticcasamuppāda. The first is by A. C. Banerjee, entitled "Pratītyasamutpāda", and appears in Gautama Buddha (25th Centenary Volume), No Editor given, Calcutta, Calcutta Oriental press, 1956, pp. 153-56. It provides a good structural account of the technical terminology associated with the twelve nidānas. The second is A. K. Chatterjee's "Pratītyasamutpāda in Buddhist Philosophy", from his own Facets of Buddhist Thought, Sanskrit College, Calcutta, 1975, pp. 5-17, in which he discusses the Abhidharmika, Mādhyamika, and Yogācāra interpretations of pratītyasamutpāda. The following quotation from p. 9 of the latter article capsulates the Abhidharmika (spec. Sautrantika) interpretation of the concept:

> The whole (saṅghāta) is a mere name, a fiction, a figment of imagination. Causation obtains, not between the parts or the moments themselves. It is the law as to how the moments arise and disappear (dharmasaṅketa). Nothing binds these moments together; it is their very nature to succeed each other in an endless chain.

Vitakka is translated simply as "thought" by Jayatilleke (Theory, p. 440) as distinguished from vicāra or reflective thought. S. A. Aung, throughtout his translation of the Abhidhammatthasaṅ-gaha[1] repeatedly renders these two terms as "... initial applica-tion [and] sustained application [of thought]"[2] respectively, and also further explains them in the following way: "Vitakka is the directing of concomitant properties towards the object. Vicara is the continued exercise of the mind on that object."[3]. Such an un-

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1. S. Z. Aung, Compendium of Philosophy, Pali Text Society, Lon-don, 1910.

2. Aung, Compendium, pp. 89, 95, etc.. In D. II p. 311, vitakka is translated as "Mental pre-occupation" with the Rhys Davids noting that, "The word is used, according to Suttanta method, not with any fine shade of psychological meaning, but in its popular sense of... 'being pre-occupied about.'". The prob-lem with its occurrence here, is that it is given as being 'caused' by papañca-sañña, which is not, as the Rhys Davids note on p. 312, "An exactly similar sequence of ethical states..." as occurs in the Madhupundikasutta (Majjhima Nikāya I, 111, 112). The latter gives only sañña and not papañcasañña. If we take the Dīgha sequence and equate sañña with papañcasañña, then we would have to accept sañña in our 'onset of language' in the Majjhima account, however such an equation does not convey the bare a-wareness that seems to be implied by sañña as the third khandha (for it does not seem to lose any of this sense here). Horner at MLS. p. 143 notes that the Commentary on Majjhima defines papañcasañña as "perceptions connected with obsessions, views, and craving.", this is certainly more than mere sañña. There-fore, I would tend to group papañcasañña with papañca, and say that it 'arises' (going against the Dīgha sequence) after vitakka.

3. Aung, Compendium, p. 17. Ñāṇananda, Concept, p. 4, gives a similar definition following Visuddhimagga I pp. 142-43:

    [vitakka is the] onset or initial application of thought... [vicāra the] ...discursive aspect of the intellect has the finer sense of investigation and deliberation. It follows faithfully in the wake of vitakka and seeks to sustain it.

derstanding of _vitakka_ as the initial 'application of thought',
coupled with the inherent human awareness of the concomittance
of thought and language[1] —along with the structural similarity
between thought and language[2] —may be enough to allow us to con-
sider _vitakka_ to be a 'latent form', or an 'intermediate stage' in
the sequence, of expressible language[3].

In any event, it is at this point that _papañca_ and _pa-
pañcasaññasankha_[4] 'enter in'. We have seen that _papañca_ has a
literal 'root sense' that deals with 'manifold expansion outwards',
and that it is taken by modern translators of the Pali Canon to in-
tend a 'hindrance' or 'obstacle' founded upon 'mental obsession'.

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1   The Buddhist or the Vedāntin, I think, would not disagree to
    any great degree. Ñāṇananda, at _Concept_, p. 4 states: "...
    conceptual activity presupposes language, so much so that
    thought itself may be regarded as a form of sub-vocal speech.".
    There is the common Pali formula asserting the concomittance
    of the following triad, _kāyena vācāya manasā_, occurring for
    example at _Majjhima_ III.178; also at _Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad_
    I. 4. 17, we find "...mana evāsyātrā vāgjvā...".

2   This is not to say that everything 'thinkable' is 'speakable',
    nor the reverse, that everything that can be spoken is capable
    of being translated into thought constructs. Mystics stand as
    the greatest spokesmen or examples that could be incorporated
    to justify such an attitude.

3   By this I mean language in the sense that it appears as mani-
    festly cognisable and communicable.

4   Up till now, the psychological stage has been set for the ap-
    pearance of _papañca_, in other words, _phassa_, _saññā_, and _vitakka_,
    gradually provide more and more of an impetus towards this 'lin-
    guistic expansion'. This is also the level on which I would
    place _papañcasaññā_, see note 14 above.

Juxtaposed as it is against vitakka, in our selection from the Ma-
dhupundikasutta, papañca could perhaps refer to a further or extra-
polated expansion outward of the conceptualizing tendency in man,
that is, after its initial onset (vitakka) and sustainment (vicāra).
In this sense, though the nature of the 'expansion' denoted by vi-
cāra is somewhat restrained and ordered, in other words, 'expansion
to a limit', the expansion that is indicated by papañca seems to
embody no limit at all—it is unbounded, rather than ordered, expan-
sion. Ñānananda appears to support such an interpretation of the
intended connotation of the term papañca when he discusses it in
the context of vitakka-vicāra; he states[1] :

> Papañca... is a more comprehensive term hinting
> at the tendency of the worldling's imagination
> to break loose and run riot. If vicāra, at least
> relatively, denotes cosmos [i.e., ordered diffe-
> rention] in the mental realm, papañca seems to
> signify chaos.

Such a sense of 'instability' might also be supported
by its occurrence at KS. IV, pp. 134-35, where papañca is used
along with the following predicates, iñjitam ("something moved"),
phanditam ("something wavering"), and mañagatam ("vain imagining"),
to modify the erroneous phrase "aham asmi" ("I am")[2]. Clearly,

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1 Ñānananda, Concept, p. 4. Though Ñānananda seems to get more
than enough mileage out of the term papañca in his book, I
don't think he is at all unjustified with his interpretation,
in view of the pragmatic concerns (viz., soteriological) of
Early Buddhism, and the framework that this forms for all of
its psychological and epistemological investigations.

2 This conceit of "aham asmi" is probably the worst possible thought
to occupy the aspirant's mind. Ñānananda, (Concept, p. 5) in re-
ference at the Madhupundikasutta occurrence of papañca, makes
this statement: "At this final stage of sense-perception [papañca],
he who has hitherto been the subject now becomes the hapless ob-
ject [i.e., 'victim' of papañca].". The Vedāntin would shudder at
such a reaction to the assertion that 'the self is'.

the intention of the first two predicates (iñjitam and phanditam)
is to convey a sense of motion, and this motion, when reflected
in the latter pair (papañca and mānagatam) contributes to an over-
all sense of consequential mental-proliferation, which in turn,
comes to a precise head in the concept of papañca. Taken in this
way, papañca demonstrates the same general 'root notion' of deli-
berate expansion that it does in its Vedāntic usage, with the re-
servation that here, p(r)apañca is on a microcosmic/psychological,
rather than macrocosmological, scale.

Furthermore, in our comparison of the Vedāntic and Bud-
dhist implementation of papañca, we may notice that while in the
Vedānta, macrocosmic expansion and evolution implies an ordered
series of events, the Buddhist concept of papañca weighs all of
its emphasis on the unrestrained and chaotic nature of expanding
conceptualization. Thus the sense of Early Buddhist papañca, in
psychological and soteriological terms, is totally negative, and
this negative sense is additionally compounded by its association
with the three kileśas: tanhā (craving), māna (conceit), and
ditthi (views). Ñāṇananda[1], states:

> ...the prolificity in concepts suggested by the
> term papañca manifests itself through the above
> three main channels [tanhā, māna, ditthi], so
> much so that the term has been traditionally
> associated with them.

In this way, the chaotic nature of papañca actually manifests it-

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[1] Ñāṇananda, Concept, p. 11, where he is following various
Nikāya Commentaries.

self and defines itself in terms of the three kileśas.

At this point, it might not be improper to distinguish, through analogy and our association of language with vitakka above (pp. 6-8), both a mental papañca and a verbal papañca in the sequential evolution of conception[1]. However, I do not consider this to be an earnest dichotomy, it is merely meant to indicate that the latter seems to presuppose the former activity. Verbal papañca would simply mean that speech which has subordinated itself to the realms of the manifest kileśas, or in other words, mundane speech in general[2].

If we were to summarize what has thus far been said about papañca we could state that it has, in Pali Buddhism, a triple connotation of expansion outwards, obsession, and hindrance (all especially in the realm of ideation), and that that connotation, to become directly applicable to the various modes of mundane verbal expression, needs only a minimal amount of extrapolation through the common and mediating substratum of the three kileśas. In this way papañca exemplifies the essence of the Early Buddhist attitude

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1. Ñāṇananda, Concept, p. 10, makes use of the same dichotomy when he states:

> ...we see a curious distinction between the relative meanings attached to 'papañca' when it is used with reference to the verbal and the mental realms respectively. Such short-hand devices as technical terms or code-words in a language help us to avoid 'verbal-papañca', but inasmuch as they are evolved through a complex process of thought activity they may be said to presuppose a good deal of 'mental-papañca'.

2. The negative attitude towards mundane speech, or the fact that mundane speech, as it stands, is not quite right or 'real', is again conspicuous.

towards conceptualizing language and its various verbalised modes.
In this light, the negative connotation of papañca as 'hindrance'
reiterates the antagonism of the other aspects of its triple sig-
nificance to the anatta metaphysic of Early Buddhism—in the sense
that this metaphysic stood as a reflective soteriological corol-
lary to the Four Noble Truths. In other words, 'expansion out-
wards' and 'obsession' (i.e., the reverberation of this fundamental
'expansion outwards' throughout phenominal reality so that ideas
of permanence become firmly established) through mental and 'vocal-
linguistic' channels, is a 'movement' directly in opposition to the
individual effort of 'self-negation' that sternly forms the single
soteriological pre-occupation of the Early Buddhist ideal, the Arhat.

Is this, however, true of all language as the Early Bud-
dhists saw it? If it is, then there could be no soteriological or
existential import to language at all, unless it ; is the implied
negative import that language arising in this manner is definitely
removed from 'the way things really are'. Early Buddhism, fortu-
nately, does not leave itself adrift on the surface of such a re-
signation, for there do seem to be two 'psycho-verbal situations'
that are definitely conduicive to the Early Buddhist 'achievement'
of Nirvāna, and these are phenomenally apparent as belonging to
the two Theravāda 'ideal individual states' namely, that of the
Arahant (muni) and that of the Buddha himself. If we can investi-
gate why they are not subject to papañca we may be able to com-
plete our picture of the Early Buddhist attitude towards language.

First of all, the Arahant was looked upon by Pali Buddhism to be the embodiment of individual effort and determination[1], and one who through such effort had reached the apex of manifest existence. In his case 'psycho-verbal constructs' have become reduced to 'empty state' in the sense that they are characteristically free from tanhā, māna, and ditthi. For a clarification of this we again return to the Madhupundikasutta (MLS. I pp. 141-42), where this time we find the Buddha making a response to the ensuing pointed question:

"What is the teaching of the recluse [muni], of what views [kimakkhāyī, lit., 'What does he point out or show?'] is he?

"According to my teaching, sir, in the world with its devas, Māras and Brahmās, with its creation, with recluses and brahmans, with devas and men, there is no contending with anyone in the world; for which reason perceptions do not obsess that brahman as he fares along not fettered to sense-pleasures, without questionings, remorse cut off, and who is devoid of craving for becoming and non-becoming.

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1. This individual determination was severly criticised by the Mahayāna as a completely self centred attitude that exhibited perfection of only a lower order. Har Dayal, in his The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature, Delhi, 1932, p. 1f., gives us an idea of what it meant to be an Arahant:

He was defined as one, who had eradicated the three āsravas (Pali: āsava = 'Intoxicants', sins, errors) of sense-desire, love of existence, and ignorance, and also the fourth supplementary asrava of speculative opinion. He practised the seven Factors of Enlightment (Pali: sambojjhanga): mindfulness, investigation, energy, joy, serenity, concentration and equanimity. He got rid of the five nīvaranas ('hindrances', 'coverings').... He freed himself from the three 'Roots of Evil': sense-desire, hatred, and delusion. He practised self restraint and concentration....

This passage makes two points regarding the Arahant's employment of 'language'. The first pertains to _ditthi_ or views —the _kilesa_ that is perhaps most intimately connected with 'psycho-linguistic constructions'—and is displayed in the phrase, "...there is no contending with anyone in the world.". Such an attitude is echoed at _KS_. III p. 117, when the Buddha states, 'in regard to his own speech, that, "I do not dispute with the world, but the world disputes with me."[1]. What these statements seem to imply is that, in his use of language, the Arahant does not appropriate any speculative or specific dogmatic stance, for this would run counter to the _anatta-anicca_ metaphysic in, first of all, positing a real 'holder of the view' (a real _aham_), and secondly, in granting some sense of permanency to the view in itself[2]. Such is also the stance (though in an explicitly existential sense) expected of the Arahant in the famous 'Parable of the Raft' (_MLS_. I p. 112f.), where it is emphasized by the Buddha that the Dhamma is, just like a raft, for crossing over to the other side, and not for retaining once one has crossed over.

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1 At _MLS_. I p. 141, note 6, we find a similar but untraced quotation: "A dhamma-speaker disputes with no one, but a speaker of non-dhamma disputes.".

2 This could well be evidence of the seed for Nāgārjuna's 'stanceless pure-criticism' as it manifests itself in the _catuskoti_ coupled with his statement at _VV_. 29: "...nāsti ca mama pratijñā...".

In this way, _ditthi_ can be regarded as one of the most negative manifest extremities of _papañca_ or, as we have come to know it, 'psycho-linguistic proliferation'; and at this point, we can afford to distinguish among three 'aspects' of _ditthi_: _micchāditthi_, _sammāditthi_, and more indirectly, that which encompasses both the first two aspects, namely, the 'clinging on' or 'holding' to a view. Defined in terms of epistemic content _micchāditthi_ is a false or untrue view (_i.e._, a view unconfirmable by _pratyaksa_ or _anumāna_) and _sammāditthi_ one that does correspond to perceptual fact and inference[1]. The third aspect of _ditthi_, is its fluid aspect, that which truly makes _ditthi_ a _kilesa_—the tendency to become attached to the actual content of the view itself (in fact, this aspect seems to be underscored by the other two _kilesas_, viz., _tanhā_ and _māna_; and becomes, in the clinging to _sammāditthi_, a doubly harmful manifestation of _papañca_). We see there-

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1. It is very difficult to say to what 'pramānas' the Early Buddhists attested, but since they were 'phenomenalists' (accepted the reality of the _dharmas_) it seems reasonable to say that they placed great emphasis on perception as a verifying principle; inference, however, we posit more dubiously. These are certainly the two _pramānas_ accepted by the later Yogācāra Logicians such as Vasubandhu and Dinnāga. Jayatilleke, _Theory_, p. 353, explains true and false beliefs in the following manner:

> ...while false propositions are considered false, when they do not correspond with or deny facts, true beliefs, conceptions or statements are said to be those which reflect or correspond with fact. The words used for true beliefs, conceptions or statements are sammāditthi, sammāsankappo and sammāvāca respectively....

This 'Positivistic' bent is certainly true of Early Buddhism.

that papañca, in its threatening proliferation, is a constant and persisting hazard, even to the adoption of sammāditthi (cf., 'The Parable of the Raft'—MLS. I p. 172 f.)

In the light of such an association of papañca and ditthi, we might perhaps posit one place where papañca may be said to run more rampantly loose than usual, and in unusually excessive concen-trations—the verbal debate. Here we encounter a lively exchange in the form of defense or rejection of submitted positions or views; this is the very 'stuff' that papañca is made of. The Arahant however, is free from the kilesas[1] and therefore, even posses no attachment to sammāditthi or the Dhamma, though it is true that he himself may em-'employ' and 'entertain' such a 'position' in order to preach sammā-ditthi or the Dhamma and in order to refute false views (micchādit-thi). As Nāhananda brings to our attention, "...sammā-ditthi it-self embodies the seed of its own transcendence, as its purpose is to purge the mind of all views inclusive of itself."[2]. Therefore,

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[1] Nāhananda, Concept p. 34, neatly summarizes the nippanpañca-'accomplished state' ahcieved by the Arahant when he states that:

> The data of sense experience, both precepts and concepts, which enter his mind... enter through the portals of 'thought (vitakka) but they never reverberate through the corridors of his mind as echoes of 'conceptual proliferation' by way of Craving, Conceit and Views (tañhā-māna-ditthi-pa-pañca). They never interfere with the sublime quietude reigning within the inner recesses of the mind.

[2] Ibid., p. 39.

even at the height of the debate, surrounded though he may be by a turbulent ocean of papañca, the Arahant remains aloof and inwardly silent. Again Ñāṇananda[1] provides us with a translation of a verse (Sutta Nipata 812) which appears particularly appropriate as a description of this state of nippapañca that is attained by the efforts of the Arahant: "Even as the drop of water on a lotus-leaf does not smear it, or as water that smears not the lotus flower, so aloof is the sage who does not cling to whatever he has seen, heard or cognised.".

Thus we come to the second point concerning the Arahant's 'employment' of language as described in the Buddha's answer to the question directed at him concerning the 'views' held by such a perfected being (above p. 106), namely, that the Arahant is "... not fettered to sense pleasures, without questionings....", and so on. In other words, this means that he is free from papañca[2], that is, 'psycho-linguistic proliferation', during the course of all of his activities—especially those directly related to the propagation of speech.

If we we turn now, from a consideration of the way in which 'language' was employed by the Arahant, to an investigation—along similar lines—of the Buddha himself, we would first of all have to make mention of what seems to be a subtle yet essential difference between the two, namely, that the Buddha was not only an

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1 Ñāṇananda, Concept, p. 98.

2 For nippapañca, see also, Dhammapāda 93 and 254.

Arahant, but, and most importantly, the Arahant. That is to say,
the Buddha was the Teacher, while all other beings in the universe
were only 'followers', including even the most perfect of Arahants.
He is the Teacher because, above all, he was the Founder of the
Dhamma this particular age, and it is this final characteristic
that truly distinguishes a Buddha from and Arahant, for as stated
at MLS. III pp. 58-59: "The Buddha renders the Path attainable
when and where no other being can.".

  We see that since the Buddha is an Arahant, he does not
suffer from papañca in his turning of the Wheel of the Dhamma, but
it must be noted that this aspect of his 'anti-' or 'ni-' papañca
qualification stems, though indirectly, from mundane reality (the
sphere of the kilesāni) as the progressive negation of that reality
in terms of itself[1]. On the other hand, as stated previously, the
Buddha is unique in existence simply because he has the capability
of declaring the Dhamma for each mahākappa[2], and as such, he is con-

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1   That is, through the employment of vitakka-vicāra (applied and
    sustained thoughts) to gradually eliminate unwholesome mental
    'states' (viz., papañca), as exemplified in the exposition pro-
    vided at D. I, pp. 250 f.. The analogy that the Buddha applies
    towards a clarification of this 'gradual process of elimination'
    is one (as at MLS. I. p. 153) of a carpenter progressively dri-
    ving out larger, blunt pegs with smaller and sharper ones, until
    in the 'state' of paññā, pegs and the act of 'driving out' are
    no longer needed.

2   As at MLS. III pp. 56-57:

            There is not even one monk, brahman, who is possessed
            in every way and in every part of all those things
            which the Lord was possessed, perfected one, fully
            Self-Awakened One. For, brahman, this Lord was one
            to make rise a Way that had not rised (before), to
            show a Way not shown (before)....

Cf., D. III p. 74.

sidered to be the manifestation of the Transendent Principle (Nib-
bāna). In this sense, the Buddha's nippapañca qualification can
be interpreted as stemming from beyond the mundane realm. Thus we
may recognize the Dhamma of the Buddha to be free from papañca in
all respects and from every perspective[1].

Here, it may be interesting to point out what I see to
be the major difference between the Early Buddhist concept of a
'Declaration of the Dhamma' and that understanding of 'Revelation'
occuring in the Vedānta use of the term śruti. In the latter case
what we seem to find is a 'Divine Manifestation' of revealed Truth
that is carefully handed down through tradition—an adjective that

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1   In connection with the ability of the Buddha to Declare and
    preach the Dhamma, mention might also be made of the four pati-
    sambhidā(s) - (skt., pratisaṁvid) or analytic comprehensions.
    These are as follows: i) atthapatisambhidā, a knowledge of the
    objects of denotation; ii) dhamma-, an analytic comprehension of
    causal conditions; iii) nirutti-, an analytic comprehension of
    definitions, or in other words etymology; iv) patibhāna-, an ana-
    lytic insight into the preceeding three. Occuring in Pali texts
    such as Points of Controversy (PTS., i.e., Kathāvatthu), p. 179;
    AN. II.p. 160; III p. 113 and p. 119, the four seem to appear
    merely as certain attainments or perfections of the Buddha and
    also other bhikkhu(s) (for this see S. Z. Aung and C. A. F. Da-
    vids' informative Appendix at pp. 377-382 of their Points of Con-
    roversy (PTS.)). Of the four, perhaps the first and certainly
    the third can be taken as bearing on the Early Buddhist concept
    of language. If we couple this with the fact that in later Bud-
    dhism the four become more closely associated with a bodhisat-
    tva or Buddha's ability to preach the Dharma, in the sense that
    these four analytic comprehensions are now looked upon as prere-
    quisites for successful and proper preaching of the Dharma (see
    Har Dayal, The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Litera-
    ture, Delhi, 1932, pp. 259-267), we can obviously take all of
    them as bearing directly on our concern with language. The es-
    sential question of course is: "Are these patisambhidā(s) to be
    included within papañca or not?". The answer to this seems to be
    that they are not, since the four have to be taken as comprising one
    partless, intuitive and instantaeous comprehension (as indicated
    at p. 312 of A. K. Warder's, Indian Buddhism, Delhi, 1970) and
    not something akin to a mental proliferation.

that is frequently used to describe it is <u>apauruseya</u>, that is, 'not dependent upon man for its origin'[1]. The importance of this predication appears to be that human effort has no bearing upon a disclosure of revelation in the cosmos. The Buddha, on the other hand, came to Declare the Dhamma out of a supreme individual effort that spanned many lifetimes and that culminated itself in his existence as Gautama. It is in this connection that we find him stating at <u>MLS</u>. II. p. 400 the following words:

> ...I am one of those recluses and brahmans who by fully understanding dhamma of themselves only, although these truths have not been heard before [in the sense of being traditionally established], claim that... they have attained herenow to excellence and to going beyond through super-knowledge.

And further at <u>MLS</u>. III p. 230: "What I am talking about, monks I have heard from no other recluse or brahman; and moreover what I am talking about is known only by me myself, seen by myself and discerned by myself."[2] Therefore, it appears that, leaving metaphysical subtleties (if we can say that a speculative metaphysic exists in

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1 This concept of <u>apauruseya</u> is originated by the Mīmāmsā (e.g., <u>Mīmāmsā Sutra</u>, I. 8. 27). See also above, p. 43, n. 2.

2 It is ironical however, that by the time of the Vaibhāṣikas speculation on the concept of <u>buddhavacana</u> (the actual word of the Buddha), which does not seem to play a significant role at all in the Nikāyas, results in the adoption of the very predication of <u>apauruseya</u>. P. S. Jaini has the following words on this in his "The Vaibhasika Theory of Words and Meanings" <u>BSOAS</u>., Vol. XXII, Part 1, 1959, pp. 95-107:

> The lack of speculation on the nature of the Buddha-vacana in the Pali tradition and its presence in the Vaibhāsika school suggests that this was a later development brought about by a certain influence of other schools, particularly the Mīmāmsakas and the Vaiyāka-raṇas, who, although for different reasons, had a pri-

in the Sutta Piṭaka), the two concepts are quite different, for while the Dhamma does not exist in the cosmos until the Buddha manages to 'win' it and Declare it, the Veda seems to recur as the matrix of every creation, and even goes on to residually exist after pralaya[1].

Having indicated how and why the speech of the Buddha is nippapañca, we may now turn to another and connected aspect of his implimentation of language, namely, his silent response to the avyākatāni[2]. The word avyākata literally signifies something that is unexplained, or as Hare indicates at GS. IV p. 39: "...literally

mary interest in the problem of words and their meanings. The Vaibhāṣikas seem to have benefited from the arguments of the early Sphoṭavādin Grammarians. But the Mīmāṁsakas seem to have exercised a far greater influence on them as is evident from the use of such expressions as apauruṣeya for denoting the Buddha-vacana. (p. 107)

1 See above p. 43 notes 3 and 4. We might also include the following quotation from BSB. I. 3. 30: pralīyamānamapi cedaṁ jagac-chaktyavaśeṣameva pralīyate. saktimūlameva ca prabhavati; itar-athākasmikatvaprasaṅgāt. (When dissolving, this universe dissolves having as residual a [latent] potency. And it re-emerges having this potency as its root cause, or else there would follow accidental contingency.). The context of this statement seems to indicate that this potency (sakti) is in effect the essential structure of the Veda itself. On the other hand the question as to whether each Buddha expounds an identical Dhamma in each world-cycle would, I think, most probably be of the same order as the avyākatāni.

2 The following papers specifically tackle the proble of the avyāka-tāni: Nathmal Tatia's, "The Avyākrtas or Indeterminables" in The Nava Nālandā Mahāvihāra Research Publication, Vol. II, Patna, No Date, ed. Satkari Mookerjee, pp. 141-159; T. W. Organ's, "The Silence of the Buddha", PEW. Vol. IV. #2, July 1954, pp. 125-140; S. Radhakrishnan's, "The Teaching of Buddha by Speech and by Silence", Hibbert Journal, Vol. 32, 1933-34, pp. 342-356; G. M. Nagao's "The Silence of the Buddha and its Madhyamic Interpretation", Studies in Indology and Buddhology, ed. G. M. Nagao and J. Nugawa, Hozokan Kyoto, 1955, pp. 137-151. An anthology of textual passages referring to the avyākatāni occurs at pp. 550-556 of G. J. Jennings' The Vedāntic Buddhism of the Buddha, London, 1948.

(a-vi-ā-kar) unexpounded, unanalyzed, undefined."[1]. We are particularly interested in the term as a designation or synonym for a set of ten[2] questions addressed to the Buddha and arranged, as for example in the Vacchagotta Saṁyuttaṁ (SN. III p. 258[3]), as follows:

> Is the world eternal? Or is the world not eternal?
> Is the world finite? Or is the world infinite? Is
> the self the same as the body? Or are the self and
> the body two different things? Does the Tathāgata
> exist after death? Or does the Tathāgata not exist
> after death? Or does the Tathāgata both exist and
> not exist after death? Or does the Tathāgata neither
> exist or not exist after death?

Clearly the questions are of a purely speculative nature, that is, they are concerned with topics that, at best, can only produce debatable conclusions —not simply in the Buddhist context but in the context of all the different Indian schools of that day.

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1 I am not of the opinion that the middle of these three predicates, i.e., "unanalyzed", is really a suitable translation for avyākata in the context of the ten questions. The Buddha, for example, though he is questioned about making a pronouncement on the questions in the form of expounding on or defining them, is not expected to analyze them, or in other words, to enter into an investigation of them as a bhikkhu might.

2 N. Tatia, in his "The Avyākrtas...", p. 141 n. 1, explains the discrepancy in numbering between Early and Later Buddhism:

> These are ten according to the enumeration in the
> Pāli canon (see Majjhima-Nikāya, Suttas 63, 72) and
> fourteen according to the Prasannapadā of Candrakīrti
> (p. 446, Poussin's edition). [Certain] questions... are
> not found in the Pāli canon in the present context,
> though the same are available in other parts of the
> canon in a different context. The number is elastic....

3 Sassato loko ti vā Asassato loko ti vā. Antavā loko ti vā Anantavā loko ti vā. Taṁ jīvaṁ taṁ sarīranti vā Aññam jīvaṁ aññaṁ sarīranti vā. Hoti tathāgato paraṁ maraṇā ti vā. Na hoti tathāgato paraṁ maraṇā ti vā. Hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṁ maraṇā ti vā. Nevā hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṁ maraṇā ti vā ti.

As such speculative questions, they are dependent upon a structu-
red dialectical framework, and this fully manifests itself in the
last, or "tathāgata", set of questions[1]. We can easily recognize
this structure as echoing the logical symmetry of Nāgārjuna's ca-
tuskoti. In this part of our investigation we will attempt to dis-
cover the nature of the contribution that the avyākatāni can be
said to make in terms of the Early Buddhist attitude towards, or
concern with, language—especially in the light of the Buddha's
silent response to them, since that is essentially what imparts
significance to them.

The two most informative occurrences of the avyākatāni
seem to be in the Brahmajālasutta (at D. I pp. 39-45) and in the
Cūlamāluṅkyasutta (MLS. II pp. 97-101). In the first we do not
encounter the standard topics (such as, the eternality of the cos-
mos, etc. as given in the Vacchagotta Saṁyuttaṁ) of the avyākatāni,
but such notions as the existence of another world or not etc.; the
existence of Chance Beings (opapātikā) or not etc., the existence
of the fruit of good and bad actions or not etc., with the tathāgata
topic remaining as the only constant (see D. I pp. 39-40). What
this in fact seems to indicate, is that the topics of the avyāka-
tāni are in themselves only secondary to the form of their logical
presentation as assertion, negation, conjunction and disjunction[2].
This is even further borne out by the context in which these avyā-

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1 As at T. R. V. Murti, Philosophy, p. 38, we cannot see why all
   of the questions could not follow the same fourfold formulation.

2 Here the avyākatāni are not presented as questions, but as the
   possibility of views on these topics held by various speculators.

katāni appear, namely, the presentation of sixty-two[1] varying theories or viewpoints concerning various metaphysical topics, which seem to be taken as characterizing the gamut of Indian philosophic-religious speculation of the time.

Taking this into account, the characteristically structured avyākatāni specifically appear designated under the type of view held by the so-called "Eel-Wrigglers" (amarāvikkhepikā), who are thus called because they tend towards dodging the issue and generally avoid commiting themselves to any exact position (see D. I pp. 37-41). The first kind of "Eel-Wriggler", for example, does so out of the fear that the position he adopts might simply be an erroneous one; the second, out of the fear that adopting a position gives rise to a grasping or clinging condition (upādāna)[2]; the third, out of the fear of not being able to explain (and perhaps defend) his adopted position in the face of antagonistic logicians (viz., the hair splitter or vālavedhin); the last, simply out of his dullness (manda) and supidity (momūha). All[3] of them are possessed of these specific fears because their actualization eventually leads to a "pain of remorse" (vighāta) and "hindrance" (antarāya), in other words general soteriological detriment.

Now, this "Eel-Wriggling" manifests itself directly in

1 These are all summarily enumerated at D. I. pp. 53-55.

2 "Eel-Wriggling" developing in this fashion, would certainly be the type of "Eel-Wriggling" to most likely arise and find a subsequent foothold within Buddhism itself, in the event that a disciple was not sufficiently cautious.

3 Though the mention of vighāta and antarāya does not occur following the fourth type, its implication is quite evident because of the obvious symmetry of the other three explanations.

in the linguistic and logical form of what is called "equivocation" (vācāvikkhepa), which amounts to a general confusion of speech. An example of such "equivocation" is appended to the explanation of the fourth and final type of "Eel-Wriggler", running as follows:

> "If you ask me whether there is another world,— well, if I thought there were, I would say so. But I don't say so. And I don't think it is thus or thus. And I don't think it is otherwise. And I don't deny it. And I don't say there neither is, nor is not, another world." Thus does he equivocate....
> (D. I p. 39)

One can see that, in fact, this "Eel-Wriggling" seems to simultaneously assert, and yet non-commitantly, all four of the forms characteristic of avyākatāni. It is not surprising therefore, that this "Eel-Wriggler" manages to perform his "equivocation" on views or propositions as they are structured in the characteristic four-fold assertion-denial-conjunction-disjunction sense of the standard avyākatāni, and that a small list of these positions should be furnished as an example (see D. I pp. 39-40)[1].

Thus in this way, we do not have here the avyākatāni proper, that is as they occur in the Cūlamāluṅkyasutta as ten specific propositions directed at the Buddha and commanding a response from him. Instead, the four-fold structured positions presented in our account of the "Eel-Wrigglers" are intended to exhibit the possibility of views or positions about which one can equivocate, in doing so these four-fold positions can also be taken as standing for the possible instants through which equivocation moves in its attempts

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1   Such lists, with seemingly the same intentions recur further on in the Brahmajālasutta at D. I pp. 44-45, specifically concerning theories pertaining to the soul (atta).

to dodge the issue.

Placed within this context of views (ditthiyo) as they are, the avyākatāni clearly belong to the realm of papañca[1]. However, the key point that must be noticed is that the avyākatāni not only belong to papañca, but that they genuinely typify the very form or structure of papañca. By this I mean to say that the four-fold construction of the avyākatāni represents the totality of possibilities of expressing views concerning any topic, and this in effect amounts to standing for the total possibility, in terms of views (ditthiyo), of papañca. Further, the total possibility of papañca, taken in this way, is essentially the limit of papañca, which in turn, is no more than saying that this four-fold construction is the actual shape or necessary form of papañca, i.e., the logic of papañca.

Yet, the crux of this whole matter and the thing which eventually gives voice to the Buddha's reaction to this whole logic of papañca, is the very simple fact that the limits to anything cannot be drawn from the inside alone. R. C. Pandeya[2] provides us with a few words that might better illustrate this point:

> The question as to what is the cause of the relativistic tendency of the mind itself cannot be answered because that involves a state beyond the relativity field, and our mind cannot venture in that realm.

Therefore one who takes it upon himself to illustrate the limits of

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1 For the relationship between ditthi and papañca see above, pp. 107-109.

2 R. C. Pandeya, "The Mādhyamika Philosophy: A New Approach", PEW. #14, 1964, pp. 3-24. The quotation is on p. 11.

papañca must be aware of that which lies beyond papañca, and though

Prof. Pandeya makes this statement within the context of Mādhyamika,

I think it more than suits our specific concern, as we can gauge by

the Buddha's own consistent response to the papañca exhibited by the

sixty-two views, throughout the sutta[1] when he states:

> ...brethren, the Tathāgata knows that these specula-
> tions thus arrived at, thus insisted on, will have
> such and such a result, such and such an effect on
> the future condition of those who trust in them. That
> does he know, and he knows also other things far be-
> yond (far better than those speculations); and having
> that knowledge he is not puffed up, and thus untarni-
> shed he has, in his own heart, realised the way of
> escape from them, has understood, as they really are,
> the rising up and passing away of sensations, their
> sweet taste, their danger, how they cannot be relied
> on, and not grasping after any (of those things men
> are eager for) he, the Tathāgata, is quite set free.
>   'These, brethren, are those other things, profound,
> difficult to realise, hard to understand, tranquilli-
> sing, sweet, not to be grasped by mere logic, subtle,
> comprehensible only by the wise, which the Tathāgata,
> having himself realised and seen face to face, hath
> set forth....

Two key points are brought out in this statement: a) that Buddha

does have knowledge of that which is other than papañca, this know-

ledge being itself nippapañca in nature[2]; b) that these things which

are known in this way by the Buddha are "not to be grasped by mere

logic" (atakkāvacarā)[3] or, in other words, not within the realm of

logic and thus incapable of giving rise to views (ditthiyo). The

1 This statement appears after each set of views enumerated in the
   second and third chapters of the Brahmajālasutta. However its
   most emphatic occurence seems to be just after the "Eel-Wrigglers".

2 In the sense of the phrase, "...having that knowledge he is not
   puffed up...." (tañ ca pajānanaṃ na parāmasati....).

3 See George Grimm's "The Reach in the Doctrine of the Buddha or
   Atakkavācara, the Idea of Not-Within-The-Realm-Of-Logical-Thought",
   Indian Culture, Vol. III, #3, 1937, pp. 489-495.

first of course allows the Buddha to draw the four-fold limit to papañca and the second reiterates the force of this limit, as it prevents conceptualization and views from reaching the knowledge of these other things[1]. To sum up, the avyākatāni as they appear in the Brahmajālasutta, represent the form and limit of papañca with expected emphasis on their inability to penetrate through to the final state of things.

If we now move on to the Cūlamāluṅkyasutta, we will find that here we encounter the standard set of ten avyākatāni as referring specifically to: "Those (speculative views) that are not explained, set aside and ignored by the Lord...."[2]. We can also recognize that, in comparison with the Brahmajālasutta, the focus shifts from the structure of the avyākatāni as the actual mould of papañca, over to the response that these questions evoke from the Buddha. The exact situation is that bhikkhu named Māluṅkyāputta, while meditating, suddenly becomes dissatisfied with the fact that these specific issues are left unexplained by the Buddha—so much so, that he approaches the Buddha and threatens to revert to secular life if these specific questions are not explained to him[3]. After mildly rebuking Māluṅkyāputta, the Buddha unfolds the well known analogy

1 This is perhaps some evidence for assuming that a theory of two levels of truth did, in fact, exist in the Nikāyas.

2 MLS. II p. 97. The Pali reads: Yān' imāni ditthigatāni Bhagavatā abyākatāni thapitāni patikkhittāni..... Such a specification is perhaps evidence that this sutta belongs to a later strata of the Nikāyas than the Brahmajāla-, but this is not a pressing concern for us.

3 By implication, Māluṅkyāputta would probably settle for any sort of commitment by the Buddha to these views, or even his ignorance in respect to them if that was indeed the case.

concerning the man wounded by an arrow (see MLS. II p. 99), but still never directly answers Māluṅkyāputta, and remains silent on the topic of the avyākatāni.

Quite obviously the problem that Māluṅkyāputta faces in confronting this silence of the Buddha does not reside in the silence itself, but in the Buddha's actual reason for so remaining silent. Modern scholarship is far from unanimous in the determination of this reason, and T. W. Organ[1] gives us an excellent overview of this situation with his submission of six possible alternatives for interpreting this reason:

1) He (the Buddha) accepted the current views.
2) He rejected the current views.
3) He had no views of his own (agnosticism).
4) He would not tell his own views (out of the inadequate capacity of man to properly understand them).
5) He could not tell his own views (because of the inadequacy of language).
6) He would not be distracted from his main purpose (pragmatism).

Proferssor Organ's elaboration of each of these possibilities is interesting, but in the light of the Brahmajālasutta the first must be rejected outright, for that whole sutta is a negative comment on all views current to Northern India at the time of the Buddha. The second, for this exact reason, seems to be acceptable, yet it is so only with qualification, that is to say, only in the more important sense that the Buddha's rejection of views does not result simply because of their specific content (i.e., what they may actually as-

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1 T. W. Organ, "The Silence of the Buddha", pp. 128 ff..

sert), but out of the fact that they are, in themselves, views (ditthiyo), i.e., papañca.

The third or agnostic possibility, which is at times indicated in the writings of A. B. Keith[1] and T. W. Rhys Davids[2], also has to be rejected in the light of those statements in the Brahmajalasutta which indicate that the Buddha is, in fact, aware of things both more subtle and beyond papañca (see above p. 120). The fourth and the fifth possibilities are closely connected, since man's understanding is consistently a function of language, or in other words, conceptual and thus belonging to papañca. N. Tatia[3] and G. M. Nagao[4] seem to hold to the former of these two views, and S. Radhakrishnan[5] to the latter. These last two possibilities for the Buddha's silence, namely, those resulting respectively from the the limited capacity of man to understand the nature of what the Buddha might have had to say and the inability of language which is the medium of that understanding to give adequate expression of the same, also seem to cause the Buddha to adopt a temporary, yet analo-

1 See T. W. Organ, " The Silence of the Buddha", pp. 132-133.

2 See N. Tatia, "The Avyākrtas...", p. 158.

3 N. Tatia, "The Avyākrtas..." P. 158: "In our judgment the Buddha was a rationalist who was however fully conscious of the limitations of the human reason.".

4 G. M. Nagao, "The Silence...", pp. 141: "When one responds to such questions and abides on the same level with the questioner, he inevitably falls into the difficulty of antinomy, and this does not lead to the true knowledge which was the goal of the Buddha.".

5 S. Radhakrishnan, "The Teaching...", p. 350: "To me the silence is not a proof either of denial or of agnosticism. It is an expression of the conviction that there are certain truths which cannot be expressed....".

gous, silence immediately after his attainment of elightenment[1].
However, in this latter case the Buddha is eventually persuaded
to speak, but this does not in any way mean that what he had to
speak about in this instance, was any less difficult for man to
understand than the answer to the avyākatāni which the Buddha does
not give. In fact, the phrase which describes the knowledge of the
Dhamma gained by the Enlightenment (translated by Horner at MLS.
I. p. 211: "...deep, difficult to see....") is identical in the
Pali with the phrase descibing the Buddha's knowledge of things
other than those which characterize the views of men (translated
by Rhys Davids at D. I. p. 40: "...profound, difficult to real-
ise...."; also see above p. 120)[2], especially the views of the
Eel-Wrigglers which are marked by their avyākata-type of four-fold
logical oscillation. Since the Buddha did speak in the one case
when presented with these two problems, they alone cannot be enough
to keep him silent in respect to the avyākatāni.

The final or pragmatic possibility is of course the single
most plausible reason of the six, and it is the one that T. W. Or-
gan[3] himself leans towards. This is further borne out by the fact
that this is precisley the manner in which the Buddha accounts for
his silence to Māluṅkyāputta (MLS. II. p. 101):

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1 For example see MLS. I. pp. 211-213.

2 For a discussion of this phrase and its occurence in the Nikāyas
   with a special emphasis on the concept of atakkāvacara, see G.
   Grimm, "The Reach in the Doctrine...".

3 T. W. Organ, "The Silence of the Buddha", p. 139: "If one must
   choose only one of the six hypotheses as the reason Gautama the
   Buddha avoided speculative questions, the pragmatic hypothesis
   seems to me the best explanation.".

> ...why, Māluṅkyāputta, has this not been explained
> by me? It is because it is not connected with the
> goal, is not fundamental to the Brahma-faring, and
> does not conduce to turning away from, nor to dis-
> passion, stopping, calming, super-knowledge, awaken-
> ing nor to nibbāna. Therefore it has not been ex-
> plained by me, Māluṅkyāputta.[1]

Thus, we see that the Buddha remains silent on the point of the
avyākatāni, because to do the opposite would give rise to specula-
tions that could only serve to deter those who aspired to Nibbāna
from reaching their goal. What this silent response of the Buddha,
concerning the avyākatāni, may be said to contribute to the Early
Buddhist understanding of language, is that language, as the four-
fold limit to conceptualization indicated by the avyākatāni[2], is
essentially detrimental to the pursuit and attainment of Nibbāna.

In concluding this chapter we may say that the Early
Buddhist concept of language, as exemplified by the notion of pa-
pañca and the Buddha's silent response to the avyākatāni, is pre-
dominantly a negative one. By the word "negative" we mean to say
that papañca and the avyākatāni (which can be reduced to papañca)
hinder and take away from the acquiring of that which is sought
after in Early Buddhism, namely, Nibbāna. The silence of the Bud-
dha in respect to the avyākatāni is merely a comment on this fact.
Along with this, or perhaps, because of this, we will also notice
that what might be called the 'essence'[3] of the Early Buddhist con-

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1 This reason is repeated to Vacchagotta under the similar circum
   stances in the Aggivacchagottasutta at MLS. II. p. 164.

2 As they appear in the Brahmajālasutta, see above p. 119.

3 By using this term I do not so much wish to make ontological im-
   plications as to indicate its nature as a function of that from
   which it draws its power to impede the attainment of Nibbāna.

cept of language belongs to that given expansion (papañca) which
is different from the Absolute State (Nibbāna); accordingly, the
little theory concerning the notion of language that is developed
in Early Buddhism arises in this context, and not out of an extended
analysis of the actual and declared words of the Buddha[1]. In fact
the speech of the Buddha is nippapañca (free from papañca), and not
really language (in the sense that the Early Buddhist idea of lan-
guage has all along been described in this chapter) at all, but the
pure Truth (Dhamma)[2] of Buddhism.

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1 Namely the buddhadhamma or better, buddhavacana (see above, p.
   113 n.2.

2 That is to say, the Dhamma as the Way, is the expression of the
   very essence of Buddhism, or in other words, the very essence of
   what the Buddha spoke about. In this respect it must be pointed
   out the final and most important aim of the Dhamma is not to make
   a pronouncement, in an ontological sense, concerning the actual
   state of things given, or as a corollary, to attempt to intention-
   ally define the Absolute (i.e., Nibbāna). Instead the supreme aim
   of the Dhamma is to show the way or path out of the impermanence
   (anicca) and suffering (dukkha) of the everyday world. J. W. de
   Jong stresses this fact in his "The Absolute in Buddhist Thought",
   Essays in Philosophy (Presented to Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan on his
   50th. Birthday) ed., C. T. K. Chari and others, Ganesh and Co.,
   Madras, 1962, pp. 56-64, for after supplying a brief list of si-
   milies that relate to Nibanna and occur in the Pali canon (this
   he does on p. 57), he states the following:

>   ...not one of these words contains a description
>   or definition of Nirvana. They only point to the
>   other shore (pāra, Samy. Nik. IV, 369). If we sub-
>   ject these terms to a careful examination, we see
>   that they convey either an antithesis to the con-
>   ditions of saṁsāra or a negation of these.

   Thus even the positive description of Nibānna as "supreme bliss"
   (paramam sukham, MN. I p. 508) is not meant to define Nibānna, but
   simply to indicate its complete otherness and difference from gi-
   ven existence. This is further atested to by the arrangement of
   the Four Noble Truths, since they culminate in the assertion of the
   Noble Eight-fold Path and not the more ontologically oriented ni-
   rodha.

Thus, from our brief study of the notion of language in
Early Buddhism[1], and especially in terms of papañca and the avyāka-
tāni, we can venture the general conclusion that a) language as
conceptual proliferation does not properly belong to the sphere of
that which is to be sought after (i.e., Nibānna) and b) that on top
of this, language as conceptual proliferation works, at every turn,
against the attainment of that which is to be sought after (by gi-
ving rise to klesāni etc.)[2]. In the light of these conclusions,
and the whole of the chapter in general, the predicate "diabolical"
seems more than appropriate in capturing the nature of language as
it was conceived of at this very early stage of Buddhism.

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1 Though I have restricted myself almost totally to the first four
   Āgamas in this chapter, a text that appears to belong to the old-
   est strata of the canon, namely, the Atthakavagga of the Sutta-
   nipāta also seems to bear significantly on this topic of the Early
   Buddhist notion of language. A recent paper by Luis.O. Gomez, i.e.,
   "Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli Canon", PEW. 26, #2, Apr. 1976, pp.
   137-165, centres its discussion around this very important text.
   Further work on this topic would, of course, have to begin with an
   in-depth study of this text.

2 The problem as to whether the words of the Buddha, i.e., the Dhamma,
   can be considered to be language in these two senses or not, is a
   difficult one. It does not seem to be touched upon at all by the
   Early Buddhists other than in the remarks that the Buddha's speech
   is nippapañca and therefore not really language in the above two
   senses (also see previous page). However, there are instances in
   the canon, such as the well known parable of the raft (MLS. I pp.
   112 f.) which seem to imply that even the Dhamma can give rise to
   papañca. It seems that the only way of reconciling this apparent
   contradiction is to look at it as a precursor of the famous Mādhya-
   mika doctrine of two truths (MMK. 24. 8), so that in the eyes of
   the enlightened and in terms of the Buddha himself he did not speak
   a single word between the night of his Enlightenment and the night
   of his parinirvāna (see Prasannapadā, Poussin's edition, p. 366),
   while in order to be taught the Dhamma has to rely on its mundane
   actuality and form (vyavahāramanāśritva paramārtho na deśyate, MMK.
   24. 10) with the accompanying danger that it too becomes conducive
   to papañca.

Nāgārjuna and Language

Here our question is once again (see p. 38) of the fol-
lowing double nature: "To what is Nāgārjuna responding in under-
taking his whole philosophical enterprise?", and "How may his con-
cern with language be seen to fit into this response?".

In preparing to answer this, we must keep in mind the
points concerning the characteristic soteriological aspects of In-
dian philosophizing made at the onset of the second chapter. This
of course becomes acutely important in terms of Nāgārjuna's philo-
sophy as it stands in MMK. and especially in VV., for here, at the
very core of Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika, we have what appears on the
surface to be simply an exercise in abstract thought and purely
critical dialectic. In the main part, we may attribute this to
the nature and intention of the two works as śāstra and polemic
respectively[1], but this does not divorce them from the fact that

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1   For the three classes of Buddhist śāstra see Bu-ston, History of
    Buddhism (Chos-hbyung), trans., E. Obermeiller, Tokyo, 1964, p.
    43. Though VV. is not a śāstra, it is classed on p. 51 of the
    same work as a text for "...refuting the challenges of antago-
    nists...". It is important to recognize at this point, that the
    great bulk of modern scholarship on Mahāyāna Buddhism in India,
    revolves around the śāstrāni and related philosphical works in
    themselves, without any effort being made to connect them to the
    broader base of sūtra literature along with its meditational and
    monastic implications. For a discussion of this last problem see,
    Jan Yün-hua, "Dimensions of Indian Buddhism", Pattra (Singapore)
    Vol. 8, 1975, pp. A8-A21.

they are essentially Buddhist works. What I mean to say, is that perhaps the most important and unifying statement that one can make about Buddhism, in all of its phases and manifestations, is that it is above all a teaching of a path rather than a systematic metaphysics in abstract pursuit of an Ultimate Reality.[1].

Therefore, though Nāgārjuna is attempting to press the doctrine of śūnyatā (emptiness) to its logical consequences and limits, often to the apparent detriment of soteriological possibilities[2] and even the validity of the Four Noble Truths (catvāryārya-satyāni)[3], one must not conlude that he is doing so to further a set of logical or sceptical aims, rather his aim is masterfully ironic in demonstrating the final insubstantiality and relativity of any

1 Such is of course epitomized in the Four Noble Truths which culminate not in nirodha, i.e., a statement about things (or reality), but in mārga, a statement about the Way (or becoming).

2 For example in his "Karmakāraka-Parīksā" ("Testing [of the Notions] of Actor and Action", MMK. VIII) Nāgārjuna establishes the fact that neither the actor as producer of action, nor the action as that which is produced by the actor hame any reality, and in doing so, he makes the following comment (v. 6):

> 6. phale 'sati na moksāya na svargāyopapadyate/
> mārgah sarvakriyānām ca nairarthakyam prasajyate//
> (In the case of the absense of the fruit [of action],
> a path arises neither for the sake of moksa or for
> the sake of heaven, and the purposelessness of all
> things which are to be done results.)

3 See MMK. XXIV ("Āryasatya-Parīksā"), however, Nāgārjuna takes great pains to bracket his whole discussion of this topic within the proper understanding of śūnyatā, i.e., in the light of the two-fold doctrine of truth (dve satye), namely verses 8 f.. To put this in further perspective, one might also cneck Nagarjuna's own commentary to his VV. 70: "yasya hi śūnyatā prabhavati tasya pratītyasamutpadah prabhavati... tasya catvāryāryasatyāni prabhavanti... tasya śramanyaphalāni prabhavanti, sarvaviśesādhigamah prabhavanti.".

abstract pursuit of the Absolute whatever. What better evidence is
there for making the assumption that there must be, what might be
called, a broader religious base underlying all of Nāgārjuna's dia-
lectical speculation, than the manner in which he opens and closes
his MMK., that is, by paying homage to the Buddha[1]. My point, there-
fore, is that in Nāgārjuna, the philosophical enterprise is never
divorced from the process of becoming (mārga) which is the founda-
tion of Buddhism. This I hope will set the general tone for the
rest of our investigation of Nāgārjuna's thought in this chapter.

Before entering directly into the main body of our dis-
cussion, a few brief historical remarks seem in order. Nāgārjuna
is the founder of the Mādhyamika[2] school of Buddhism and thus the
first Mahāyāna theoretician, flourishing in the late second or early

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1   Before beginning the MMK. proper, Nagarjuna supplies a list of
    the famous eight-negations and the following verse:

        yah pratītyasamutpādam prapañcopaśamam śivam/
        deśayāmāsa sambuddhastam vande vadatām varam//
        (I pay homage to the Fully Awakened One, the su-
        preme teacher who has taught pratītyasamutpāda
        and the blissful cessation of prapañca.).

    The final verse of MMK., i.e., XXVII. 30, is similar:

        sarvadṛṣṭiprahānāya yah saddharmamadeśayat/
        anukapāmūpādāya tam namasyāmi gautamam//

    as is the closing couplet of Nāgārjuna's commentary on VV. 70:

        yah śūnyatām pratītyasamutpādam madhyamām prati-
        padam ca/
        ekārthām nijagāda praṇamāmi tamapratimabuddham//

2   Literally, that which relates to the middlemost (position), and
    is to be taken in the sense of a school which avoids metaphysical
    and epistemological extremes in its philosophical outlook. See
    Richard A Gard, An Introduction to the Study of Mādhyamika Buddhism,
    (PHD. Dissertation), Claremont Graduate School, 1951, for a biblio-
    graphic survey of the six (Indian, Tibetan, Central Asian, Chinese,
    Korean, Japanese) regional developments of this school.

third century AD.[1]. Traditionally, Nāgārjuna has been closely as-
sociated, conceptually, historically and mythologically with _prajñā-
pāramitā_ literature (sūtras) and most modern scholarship is of this
same opinion[2]. A. K. Warder[3] however, is of the opinion that such
an association takes far too much for granted and he even plausibly
submits the thesis that Nāgārjuna was not a Mahāyānist, mainly out
of the fact that all of Nāgārjuna's allusions in MMK. are to Pāli
suttas[4]. Though we are not directly concerned with this problem in

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1   See Max Walleser, "The Life of Nāgārjuna from Tibetan and Chi-
    nese Sources", _trans._, A. A. Probsthain, _Hirth Anniversary Vo-
    lume_ (Asia Major, Introductory Volume), 1923, pp. 421-455, and
    Jan Yün-hua, "Nāgārjuna, One or More? A New Interpretation of
    Buddhist Hagiography", HOR. Vol. X, #2, Nov. 1970, pp. 139-155.
    In the latter paper, which is a continuation in effect, of the
    former, the author concudes that only one Nāgārjuna (the author
    of MMK.) really existed and that he became many Nāgārjunas (such
    as the Tantric or Alchemist Nāgārjuna.) through the passage of
    time and the aid of Buddhist hagiographers.

2   For example, see Richard H. Robinson, _Early Mādhyamika..._, pp.
    61-65; K. Venkata Ramanan, _Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as Presented
    in the Mahā-Prajñāpāramitā-Śāstra_, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi,
    1975, p. 43; Robert F. Olson, _Aspects of the Middle Way: A
    Study of the Mādhyamika Kārikās of Nāgārjuna in the Light of
    Perfection of Wisdom_, (PHD. Dissertation), Columbia University,
    1967; Richard A. Gard, _Introduction..._, pp. 306-307.

3   A. K. Warder, "Is Nāgārjuna a Mahāyānist?", TT., pp. 78-88. Also
    see the same author's _Indian Buddhism_, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi,
    1970, pp. 376-377. In this same respect we find that terms such
    as _prajñā_ (insight), _pāramitā_ (perfection) and _karuṇā_ (compassion),
    which abound in the _prajñāpāramitā_ sūtras, are conspicuously ab-
    sent in MMK. and VV. (see Richard H. Robinson, _Early Mādhyamika...,_
    p. 63 for a fuller list of terms which occur in the _Aṣṭasāhasrikā-
    sūtra_ frequently but are missing from MMK.).

4   Apart from this, certain authors have propounded strong conceptual
    affinities between Nāgārjuna and portions of the Pāli canon. See,
    N. Dutt, "The Brahmajāla Sutta, in the Light of Nāgārjuna's Expo-
    sitions", IHQ. Vol. VIII, 1932, pp. 706-746, and Luis O. Gomez,
    "Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli Canon", PEW. Vol. 26, #2, Apr. 1976,
    pp. 137-165.

our investigation, I think it is safe to say that Nāgārjuna was of the firm conviction that he was only illucidating the original and fundamental truth of the Buddha, in this respect his affiliation, or not, with the prajñāpāramitā sūtras is incidental. However, one cannot, on the other hand, overlook the fact that Buddhist tradition looks upon Nāgārjuna as the founder of scholastic Mahāyāna, as well as, in a more mythical sense, the person who brought the Satahasrikaprajñāpāramitāsūtra from the Nāga-world to the world of man[1], thus making him a Mahāyānist if only by default.

These things considered, our discussion of Nāgārjuna's thought will proceed along two major lines. First of all along the lines of what might be called a discussion of Nāgārjuna's metaphysic[2], under the heading of: "Samvrti and Paramārtha". Secondly, along the lines of an investigation of Nāgārjuna's critque of metaphysical viewpoints, under the heading of: "Dialectic and Pseudo-Polemic". In both of these segments we will attempt to concentrate upon certain topics and concepts, such as prapañca, prajñapti, śūnyatā, catuskoti, etc., which can be said to have a direct bearing upon the ontological status and role of language within Nāgārjuna's system.

1　See Bu-ston, History..., p.　　.

2　Whether this term suits Nāgārjuna's systematic philosophy is questionable since Nāgārjuna himself does not claim to have any position of his own (nāsti ca mama pratijñā, VV. 29) and śūnyavāda itself avoids any any implication whatsoever of a positive ontology. By using this term I merely wish to indicate that for Nāgārjuna śūnyatā serves, albeit in a dialectical manner, as both the ground and goal of becoming, and this is something akin to a metaphysical finality.

i) <u>Samvṛti</u> and <u>Paramārtha</u>

If one compares the overall tone of <u>MMK.</u> and <u>VV.</u> with that of the Pāli Nikāyas, one will notice that in the latter we find no overbearing concern to precisely describe and establish an Ultimate Reality (Nibbāna, see note 2, p. 126 above). What the Nikāyas do endeavour to show, is the nature of given reality as <u>dukkha</u> (Skt. <u>duhkha</u>, suffering) and the way (<u>magga</u>, Skt. <u>mārga</u>) out of this suffering, and in this way their teaching can be justifiably described as supremely pragmatic rather than speculative. Nāgārjuna, on the other hand, is concerned with presenting a systematic and argued explanation of the final implications of the third Noble Truth namely, <u>nirodha</u> or extinction (of suffering)[1] and in doing so, he employs a concept that is the conerstone of <u>prajñāparamitā</u> thought: <u>śūnyatā</u> (emptiness).

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1 Though, as we have said before (above p. 130), he does not in any way abandon the fundamental Buddhist soteriology of mārga. In the sense that Nāgārjuna brings to the forefront, in these two works, the analytic tone of a penetration into the real state of things, he works within the same context of the Abhidharma schools and Naiyāyika theorists of his day, and thus makes his attacks upon them that much more effective. One might also notice that the <u>prajñāparamitā</u> sūtras begin to devote a more prominent portion of their textual body to the symbolism of the final state of things (i.e., dharmatā = śūnyatā = tathatā = prajñāpāramitā, etc.) than do the Pāli suttas, and in fact, some scholars do actually refer to an ontology (if one can have an ontology without being) of the <u>prajñāparamitā</u> literature (see, for example: Edward Conze, "The Ontology of the Prajñāpāramitā", <u>PEW.</u> Vol. III #2, July 1953, pp. 117-129; Donald W. Mitchell, "The Paradox of Buddhist Wisdom", <u>PEW.</u> Vol. XXVI #1, Jan. 1976, pp. 55-66, especially p. 58). This type of Absolutism, which attempts to encompass the true state of things seems dominant in Nāgārjuna, though one cannot properly call it an ontology, as we might, for example encounter it in Śaṅkara Advaita.

In _MMK_. and _VV_., Nāgārjuna seems to presuppose what might be termed a basic _prajñāpāramitā_ understanding of the term _śūnyatā_[1] as an anti-ontological and anti-_sarvāstivādin_[2] absence of intrinsic own-reality (svabhāva), though he nowhere makes any explicit allusion to the more positive symbolism of _śūnyatā_ as _tathatā_, _prajñā_, etc., which, though rarely, does occur in the _prajñāpāramitā_ sūtras[3]. The closest that Nāgārjuna comes to actually defining the term "śūnyatā"[4] appears to be in two complementary passages, namely, _MMK_.

1　A sample of such an understanding in the _prajñāpāramitā_ litera- can be found in Edward Conze _trans_., _The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom_, Pt. I, Luzac & Vo., 1961, pp. 129-132, wherein twenty kinds or examples of _śūnyatā_ are presented. T. R. V. Murti, includes a short but informative exegetical discussion of this very passage and the twenty modes of _śūnyatā_ as an "Appendix" to his _Central Philosophy_...., pp. 350-356. The term itself is not absent from the Pāli canon, and even has two separate suttas devoted to it in _MLS_., _viz_., Cūḷasuññatasutta and Mahāsuññata- sutta (_MLS_. III, pp. 147-162), however, its meaning there is ob- scure and far more general than in the _prajñāpāramitā_ usage.

2　It is a well known fact that _MMK_. and the statements concerning _śūnyatā_ made therein are especially directed against the Sarvās- tivādins and their radical pluralism of independantly real (sva- bhāva) dharmas. For an analysis of the Sarvāstivādin metaphysic see Th. Stcherbatsky, _The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word "Dharma"_, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1974. See also, J. W. de Jong, "The Problem of the Absolute in the Ma- dhyamaka School", _JIP_. 2, 1972, pp. 1-6, for a summation of Scha- yer's four-fold interpretation of _svabhāva_ (pp. 2-3).

3　See Edward Conze, "The Ontology...", p. 126 and T. R. V. Murti, _Central Philosophy_...., p. 86.

4　The term _śūnyatā_ is used fourteen times in _MMK_. and far more fre- quently in _VV_. where the term _śūnyatva_ also occurs (e.g., v. 21). Of the occurences in _MMK_. five are connected with the improper postulations of opponents (XII. 3; XXIV. 6-7; 11; 13), it is used twice to describe the Buddha's teaching (XIII. 2; XVII. 20), twice as an incidental basis of inferences (IV. 8; XXVII. 29), leaving perhaps five (XIII.8; XVIII. 5; XXIV. 14; 18) as significant in themselves. For a broad study of the concept see F. J. Streng's _Emptiness_, New York, Abingdon Press, 1967, which should be read in the light of J. W. de Jong's review: "Emptiness", _JIP_. 2, pp. 7-15.

XXIV. 18 and VV. 22.

In the first of these Nāgārjuna states the following:

yah pratītyasamutpādah śūnyatām tām pracaksmahe/
sā prajñaptirupādāya pratipatsaiva madhyamā//
(We regard that as śūnyatā, which is pratītyasam-
utpāda/ It [śūnyatā] is [used as] an upādāya prajñap-
ti [metaphorical instruction], it is simply madhyamā
pratipad [the middle path]//).

This verse in its entirety, stands as perhaps the most crucial and

germinal single comment made by Nāgārjuna concerning the concept

of language, however, at this point we may restrict ourselves to

his equation of śūnyatā with pratītyasamutpāda (dependent origina-

tion)[1] in the first line. What we encounter in this equation is

the logical realisation that if one does accept this theory of re-

lational or relative causality, which is fundamental to Buddhism,

one must also accept the fact that no essential reality or dharma,

that is possessed of an independent existence (svabhāva) could

ever occur.

VV. 22 merely corroborates what has been said above in

the following manner:

yaśca pratītyabhāvo bhāvānām śūnyateti sā proktā/
yaśca pratītyabhāvo bhavati hi tasyāsvabhāvatvam//
(That which is the dependent [or relative] nature of
things is called śūnyatā/ For, that which is the
dependent nature [of things] is without independent
existence [asvabhāvatva]//).

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1   See above p. 99 n. 1. Two Chapters in MMK. are directly related
to pratītyasamutpāda, i.e., "Pratyaya Parikṣā" (Chpt. I) and
"Dvādaśāṅga Parikṣā" (Chpt. XXVI). Candrakīrti supplies this
etymology at Pr. 2.16: pratītyaśabdo 'tra lyabantah prāptāva-
pekṣāyām vartate. samutpūrvah padih prādurbhāvārtha iti samut-
pādaśabdah prādurbhāve vartate. tataśca hetupratyayāpekso bhā-
vānāmutpādah pratītyasamutpādārthah. As the final phrase indi-
cates it essentially involves the manifestation of things as de-
pendent or relative to their causes or conditions.

Thus śūnyatā for Nāgārjuna is above all the svabhāvasūnyatā of all dharmas[1], and this is in every way opposed to ontology as the science in pursuit of that which has real being. However, this does not prevent Nāgārjuna from making what paradoxically[2] appears to have the form or structure of an ontological presupposition in his implicit assumption that śūnyatā serves as both the ground and the goal of given existence (e.g., MMK. XXII. 16: tathāgato nihsvabhāvo nih-svabhāvamidaṁ jagat//)[3]. In this way, śūnyatā is the pivotal point of Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika philosophy.

Having, in this way, set up śūnyatā as the pre-eminent principle of Nāgārjuna's thought, our ensuing problem becomes the establishment of the nature and role of language[4] in respect to this absence of svabhāva in all things. First of all, the most comprehensive single term that Nāgārjuna employs to encompass what

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1 Nāgārjuna's commentary to this verse (VV. 22) amplifies this by providing the reason why things are empty: hetupratyayasāpek-ṣatvāt. yadi hi svabhāvato bhāvā bhaveyuh, pratyākhyāyāpi he-tupratyayam ca bhaveyuh. na caivam bhavanti, tasmānnihsvabhāva nihsvabhāvatvācchūnyā ityabhidhīyante. ([They are so] because of a dependence on cause and condition. For if things were on account of [their] own reality, they would exist even when having set aside the cause and condition. [However] they are not so. Therefore, they are devoid of own reality, [and] on account of this devoidness they are called empty [śūnya].).

2 The symbolic or verbal paradox of the prajñāpāramitā literature (see, Donald W. Mithchell, "The Paradox...") has become the logical paradox, or the paradox in thought, of the Madhyamika. R. F. Olson takes note of this in the Conclusion of his Doctoral Dissertation Aspects of the Middle Way....

3 Śūnyatā as the ground may perhaps be derived from the Early Buddhist doctrine of anattā (no-self), and śūnyatā as the goal from the Early Buddhist doctrine of nirodha (cessation).

4 Again, "language" is used here in the broadest possible sense of the word.

might be called language, in the broad sense of the word, is pra-
pañca (the expanse of psycho-linguistic proliferation)[1].

The term occurs only six times in MMK.[2] and is absent
from VV.[3], yet in these few instances it clearly emerges as that
which is antithetical to the goal of Buddhism, in other words, pra-
pañca is the essence and form of everything that stands in opposi-
tion to the finality of śūnyatā. In this way we find tattva (real-
ity = śūnyatā) described as: aparapratyayaṃ śāntaṃ prapañcairapra-
pañcitam (not conditioned by another, quiescent, not having been
extended by prapañca - MMK. XVIII. 9). What seems to be meant by
the predicate prapañcairaprapañcitam[4] is that tattva/śūnyatā never
becomes involved in, and is totally different from, the natural
tendency on the part of man to render the things that he encounters
and the things that are placed before him, as understood, by means
of conceptually appropriating them, and thus giving rise to an
extension (prapañca) of notions and words which, in turn, becomes
the essential matrix of his reality. This association of prapañca
with the rampant conceptualization and resulting impurities of gi-
ven existence (saṃsāra), as well as its necessary absence in śūnyatā,
are both commented upon in an earlier verse from the same Chapter,

1   See the previous Chapter for the use of this term in the Pāli
    Nikāyas. It does not, I think, vary significantly from Nāgār-
    juna's employment of it.

2   That is, counting the introductory dedication and MMK. XVIII. 5;
    9; XXII. 15; XXV. 24; XI. 6.

3   Neither does it appear to occur in Nāgārjuna's more dubious works,
    such as NS., PS., MV., except for R.T. 50-51.

4   Candrakīrti explains prapañcairaprapañcitam as vāgbhiravyāhrtam
    (not uttered [with perhaps a play on the sense of 'captured' or
    'eaten' contained in ā-√hr] by words), Pr. 159.8.

namely, MMK. XVIII. 5:

> karmaklesaksavānmoksah karmaklesā vikalpatah/
> te prapañcātprapañcāstu sunyatāyām nirudhyate//
> (Moksa exists on account of the destruction of
> the impurities of action, the impurities of ac-
> tion exist on acount of imagining/
> These [impurities] exist on acount of prapañca,
> but prapañca ceases in sūnyatā//).

In the light of this verse, it is not difficult to understand Nā-
gārjuna's use of the phrase prapañcopasamam sivam (blissful calming
of prapañca)[1] as a description of what the Buddha taught,(in the
dedicatory introduction to MMK.) or the equation of the phrase
with the calming of all mental perceptions (sarvopalambhopasamah
prapañcopasamah sivah/ - MMK. XXV. 24)[2]. We are therfore left with
one final verse for consideration, MMK. XXII. 15:

> prapañcyanti ye buddham prapañcatītamavyayam/
> te prapañcahatāh sarve na pasyanti tathāgatam//
> (Those who conceptually reach for the buddha
> who is unchangeable [and] who has passed beyond
> prapañca/
> They are all undone by prapañca and do not
> perceive the tathāgata//).

This verse again indicates the basic nature of prapañca as con-
ceptual extension and that as such, one must recognise within it
an inherent limitation that does not allow it to reach beyond it-
self, without the penalty of self-deception.

Having thus isolated prapañca, and shown that its defining
characteristics involve: a) the conceptual 'moving-outwards' into,
and appropriation of, given existence; b) the fact that such acti-

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1 Candrakīrti calls this sarvaprapañcopasama the aim (prayojana)
  of Nāgārjuna's treatise, at Pr. 4.1.

2 Candrakīrti (Pr. 236.7-8): vācāpravrttervā prapañcopasamascit-
  tasyāpravrtteh sivah. Thus, it is blissful because of the cessa-
  tion of words and thought.

vity is removed from the true state (tattva/śūnyatā) of things, and even ongoingly and spontaneously compounds its own alienation from reality; our present task is to formulate the possible implications of such a notion of prapañca, coupled with the most fundamental Mādhyamika tenet of the emptiness (śūnyatā) of all dharmas, in terms of what might be called a general Mādhyamika theory of language.

The first thing that one notices, of course, is that language as prapañca is a soteriologically negative complex that only deters one from reaching that which is to be attained[1]. This is the case because the whole process of conceptual expansion outwards (prapañca) presupposes the independent reality (svabhāva) of quite a number of things, such as the actuality of the external object being seized by the conceptualization, the actuality of the subject endeavouring to conceptualize, and the actuality of thought as the medium of this conceptualization—which Nāgārjuna can in no way accept. For Nāgārjuna, the only sense in which any thing can be spoken of as being in relation to another[2], is along the lines of an analogy to the Buddhist doctrine of causal dependence (pratītyasamutpāda), and what this means is that the realtion between "word" and "object" in Mādh-

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1 There is no room in Mādhyamika for śabdapramāna, though it would, I think, look upon the words and teaching of the Buddha as niṣprapañca and therefore empty. See MMK. XXV. 24: na kvacitkasyacitkaściddharmo buddhena deśitaḥ; and Candra-kīrti on this.

2 This intentional slip back into a 'thing-language' anticipates our discussion of the Mādhyamika theory of two truths.

yamika cannot be a static or intrinsic one, but only a relative or conventional one.

Language as such a network of conventional relations, is called samvrti[1] by the Mādhyamika, and for a full explanation of the term we have to look to Candrakīrti, who at Pr. 215.6-8 states the following:

> samantādvaranam samvrtih, ajñānam hi samantātsarva-padārthatattvāvacchādanātsamvrtirityucyate, paras-parasambhavanam vā samvrtiranvonyasamāśravenetyar-thah, athavā samvrtih samketo lokavyavahāra ityar-thah. (Samvrti is the concealment of the whole uni-verse. Samvrti is thus called ignorance, on account of the fact that it is that which covers over the true nature of all things. Or samvrti has the sense of 'containing one another', because of mutual de-pendence. Or else, samvrti is convention, the mun-dane world of conceptual exchange.).

From this, we can isolate three aspects of samvrti which can res-pectively be indicated by these three words: a) ajñāna (igno-rance); b) pratītyasamutpāda (mutual dependence = anyonyasamāśraya in the passage); c) samketa (convention). Though the last appears to be the most commonly used sense of the three[2], I think that

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1 This term only occurs once in MMK. at XXIV. 8. and surprisingly is absent from VV., as well as, NS., PS., MV., and R.. However, we do find vyavahāra occuring at MMK. XXIV. 10 and VV. 28 (as sam-). For information on the terms samvrti see, Gadjīn M. Nagao, "An Interpretation of the Term 'Samvrti' (Convention) in Buddhism", from Silver Jubilee Volume of the Zinbun Kagaku Kenkyusyo Kyoto University, Kyoto, 1954, ed. Shigeki Kaizuka, pp. 550-561. In this paper G. M. Nagao deals with Pāli, Mādhyamika, Vijñānavādin, and Chinese sources and he does not seem to think that the deri-vation from √vr or √vrt is very pressing difference (p. 556). See also the pertinent essays dealing with Buddhism in The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta, ed. G. M. C. Sprung, as well as bibliographical footnotes numbers 773 and 777 in Jacques May trans., Candrakīrti: Prasannapadā Madhyamakavrtti, Paris, 1959.

2 See G. M. Nagao, "An Interpretation...", p. 553.

we must consider the second (<u>pratītyasamutpāda</u>) as the most es-
sential to Mādhyamika notion of language, for it is here that
language tangentally comes in contact with the ultimate notion
of <u>śunyatā</u>[1]. Language as <u>saṃketa</u> or <u>ajñāna</u> is a derivative con-
cept in respect to this[2].

    However <u>saṃvrti</u> is not restricted, in Mādhyamika, to
this linguistic connotation, for it also has a broader epistemo-
logical sense in which it means 'lower truth' (<u>saṃvṛtisatya</u>) as
opposed to 'higher truth' (<u>paramārthasatya</u>)[3]. Thus, the often
quoted MMK. XXIV. 8:

> <u>dve satye samupāśritya buddhānāṃ dharmadeśanā/</u>
> <u>lokasaṃvrtisatyaṃ ca satyaṃ ca paramārthatah//</u>
> (The dharma-teaching of the Buddhas rests upon
> two truths/
> The relative truth of the world and truth in
> the highest sense//).

What we have then, in Nāgārjuna, is this epistemic bifurcation
of reality, a bifurcation which seeks to make cognisant the com-
plete difference between given and ultimate reality . Candrakīr-
ti's comments on this (<u>Pr.</u> 215.12f.) must be supplied here:

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1   For the relationship between <u>pratītyasamutpāda</u> and <u>śunyatā</u>,
    see above pp. 135-6.

2   Here therefore, I disagree with G. M. Nagao, "An Interpreta-
    tion...", p. 553, where he proposes that <u>ajñāna</u> perhaps serves
    as the most fundamental sense of the word <u>saṃvrti</u>, for the
    most fundamental notion of <u>saṃvrti</u> should be that notion which
    makes or allows the concept to work. In this sense <u>ajñāna</u> does
    not compare with <u>pratītyasamutpāda</u> as the fundamental notion
    of <u>saṃvrti</u>.

3   But then again, one must also notice that the linguistic-con-
    ceptual (<u>prapañca</u>) sphere and the epistemic sphere are not at
    all divided in Mādhyamika. For the connotations of samvrti-
    and paramartha- in this epistemic sense see especially G. M. C.
    Sprung's "The Mādhyamika Doctrine of Two Realities as a Meta-
    physic", <u>TT.</u>, pp. 40-53.

sarva evāyamabhidhānābhidheyajñānajñeyādivyava-
hāro 'śeso lokasaṃvrtisatyamityucyate. na hi
paramārthata ete vvavahārāḥ sambhavanti.... sa hi
paramārtho'parapratyayaḥ śāntaḥ pratyātmavedya
āryāṇāṃ sarvaprapañcātītaḥ. sā nopadiśyate na
cāpi jñāyate. (Lokasaṃvrtisatya is said to be just
all this which is without remainder the concep-
tual exchange involving name and the thing named,
knowledge and the thing known, etc.. In the pa-
ramārtha sense these things comprising conceptual
exchange cannot exist... For paramārtha is not
dependent on any other thing, it is quiescence, it
is that which is to be personally realised [pratyāt-
mavedya][1] by the wise, it is beyond all prapañca.
It cannot be taught or even known.).

We have already encountered such a bifurcation of reality in per-
haps a more 'ontological' (in the sense that it reaches for fi-
nality as a state rather than an awareness) setting in our dis-
cussion of the relationship between prapañca and śūnyatā[2], essen-
tially the statement here is the same, namely, that words, thoughts,
symbols, etc.—the essence of transactions and understandings in
the lower sphere—cannot touch ultimate reality[3].

Thus, to summarize our first point about a general Mā-
dhyamika theory of language, that is, language as prapañca = loka-
saṃvrtisatya = pratītyasamutpāda, we must say that in these terms

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1 J. May, Candrakirti..., translates this term as "...intuition
   personelle..."; see the same author's footnote 783 in the same
   work.

2 See above, p. 137.

3 Relevant references in this vein are also found in Nāgārjuna's
   more minor works. For example at MV. 1, that which has been
   taught by the Buddha is described as vācāvacyam (indescribable
   in terms of speech). At PS. 1, the Buddha is referred to as:
   lokopamāmatikrāntaṃ vākpathātītagocaram (having exceeded all
   worldly comparison, dwelling beyond the path of speech). The
   reason for this dividing line of indescribability is succinctly
   accounted for by T. R. V. Murti, Central Philosophy..., p. 235:
   "If the Paramārtha were not beyond concept and speech, it would
   cease to be that and would be identical with the empirical.".

language must be seen as a wholly relative complex which is merely able to convey a second-order knowledge, and that only in a conventional manner. What directly follows from this, is the fact of the complete ineffability of the Absolute as well as the fact that the degree of subjective immersion in, and reliance on the conceptual sphere is inversely proportional to soteriological advancement (i.e., becoming as it is in relation to śūnyatā).

However, and this will lead into our second point about the Mādhyamika concept of language, does Nāgārjuna, in propounding this theory of two truths[1], advocate the total abandonment of saṃvṛtisatya after the fashion, for example, of a Nihilist[2]? Or to put this in slightly different words, does the doctrine of two truths itself demand a two-fold interpretation? We find Nāgārjuna's statement on this at MMK. XXIV. 10 (cf., VV. 28; 3.I. 73):

> vyavahāramanāśritya paramārtho na deśyate/
> paramārthamanāgamya nirvāṇaṁ nādhigamyate//
> (One cannot communicate the highest truth without employing the sphere of conceptual exchange/
> Without having recourse to [the vision of] the highest truth, one cannot attain Nirvāṇa//)

Thus even in terms of the Mādhyamika śūnyatā, one cannot nihilistically assert the unqualified non-existence of given experience, for one must proceed through empirical reality in order to reach

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1 For a well organised account of the intricacies of this Madhyamika theory, see T. R. V. Murti's chapter entiteled "Absolute and Phenomena", in his Central Philosophy..., pp. 228-255.

2 The charge of "nihilism" is commonly inflicted on the whole of Buddhism but especially on Mādhyamika, and I think improperly so. See G. R. Welbon, "On Understanding the Buddhist Nirvana", HOR, V , 1965, pp. 300-325, for the occurrences of this in Buddhist scholarship, especially the Poussin - Stcherbatsky debate.

Nirvāṇa, Candrakīrti, in his commentary to this verse, empha-
sizes this: tasmānnirvāṇādhigamopāyatvādavaśyameva yathāvasthi-
ta saṃvrtirādāvevābhyupeyā bhājanamiva salilārthineti(Therefore,
saṃvrti such as it is[or in the way it has been presented], is
necessarily admitted in the beginning, because of the fact that
it is of the nature of the means for the attainment of Nirvāṇa,
just as a pot exists because of [or for the sake of] him who desi-
res water.). This produces a very fluid epistemic outlook on
reality, which seems to establish its comprehensive nature by a
constant dialectical fluctuation between one and the other level.
However, one can, I think, accept T. R. V. Murti's following sta-
tement as a static or crystalized portrait of the basic struc-
ture of this two-fold dynamism: "This is the true Mādhyamika
standpoint—acceptance of the empirical reality (saṃvrti satya)
of substance and modes etc., and rejection of them as not ulti-
mate (paramārtha satya)."[1].

If we bring this back into our central concern with
the concept of language, we will see that the doctrine of dve
satye takes us beyond the complete ineffability of the Absolute,
though primarily out of pragmatic considerations, so that pra-

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1 T. R. V. Murti, Central Philosophy..., pp. 250-251. One can,
restricting oneself to such a static formulation, viably make
many analogical and categorical divisions within the doctrines
of Buddhism such as, for example made by Murti in the same work
(p. 252): "The four Holy Truths (catvāri āryasatyāni) have to
be understood as included in these two: nirodhasatya as Nirvāṇa
is paramārtha; and the other three, including mārga, are within
saṃvrti.". However, this itself is a division within saṃvrti
and does not appreciate the dialectical fluidity of śūnyatā
which is capable of equating Nirvāṇa with saṃsāra (MMK. XXV. 19).

pañca gains a partial respectability by default. This, in a
sense (i.e., a two-fold sense) pragmatically justifies the em-
ployment of certain words and names intended to stand for, or
in some way describe, the Absolute, such as śūnyatā, tattva, tathā-
gata, nirvāna, etc.,

It is at this point, I think, that we should return to
MMK. XXIV. 18, which reads as follows:

> yah pratītyasamutpādah śūnyatām tām pracaksmahe/
> sa prajñaptirupādāya pratipatsaiva madhyamā//
> (We regard that as śūnyatā, which is pratītyasam-
> utpāda/ It [śūnyatā] is used as] an upādāya prajñap-
> ti [metaphorical instruction], it is simply madhyamā
> pratipad [the middle path]//')

the first part of which we have already considered above (p. 131).
Here our specific concern is the concept of upādāya prajñapti (me-
taphorical instruction)[1].

We can easily see that śūnyatā cannot be the name of, or
the word that stands for, the Absolute in any objective or defini-
tional type of relation, since the Mādhyamika Absolute is not, in
the highest sense, any sort of object or entity possessed of cha-
racteristics (laksanāni[2]). In this way, even emptiness is not

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1 More literally 'the instruction where there is depending', fol-
lowing the suggestion of Alex Wayman on p. 145 of his, "Con-
tributions to the Mādhyamika School of Buddhism", JAOS., 89,
1969, pp. 141-152. In this work Wayman provides a translation
and explanation of MMK. XXIV. 18-19. The phrase upādāya prajñap-
ti anywhere else in MMK., or in Nāgārjuna's other works except
for his very dubious Mahāprajñāparamitāśāstra (see the index to
K. Venkata Ramanan's Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as Presented in the
Mahā-Prajñāparamitā-Sāstra, Delhi, 1975. See also notes 449 and
840 in Jacques May's Candrakīrti.... Prajñapti by itself occurs
at MMK. XXII. 11(Cf., XVII. 6; XXII. 8; 10; XXIII. 10-11), PS. 2,
R. I. 47, in meaning a provisional or heuristic device,

[does not occur]

2 Cf., MMK. Chpt. V for a treatment of dhātu and laksana.

properly a name of that thing which is sought after by the Madhyamika, but purely a provisional or heuristic convenience designed to calm the inquirer's conceptual extensions, as they are in the process of developing in relation to the Absolute. For example, in a verse such as MMK. XXV. 3:

> aprahīnamasaṁprāptamanucchinnamaśāśvatam/
> aniruddhamanutpannametannirvāṇamucyate//
> (That which is not abandoned, nor attained, nor
> destroyed, nor eternal/
> That which is not extinguished nor originated,
> that is called Nirvāṇa//)

each apparent predicate of Nirvāṇa is not intended to define Nirvāṇa, but serves as an upādāya prajñapti by demonstrating, in conjunction with its respective opposite, the provisional applicability of several conceptual polarities[1] as limits to one's theorysing about the Absolute. Such heuristic expressions concerning the Absolute, can never be taken as assertions[2] but only as tangental truths, that touch the Absolute at one point alone—realisation (prajñā)[3].

Thus, in summarizing our second point about a general theory of language as a metaphysical response in Nāgārjuna, we may

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1 This slightly anticipates our subsequent discussion of catuṣkoti in the second segment of this chapter.

2 Cf., MMK. XXII. 11. This is paralleled in the dialectic and polemical sphere by the well known fact that the Mādhyamika do not assert a position of their own: nāsti ca mama pratijñā (VV. 29).

3 The whole notion of upādāya prajñapti presupposes the fact that the one who employs it understands and is speaking from the vantage point of paramārthasatya. In this respect, G. M. Nagao on p. 147 of his "The Silence...", defines upādāya prajñapti as "...'re-established word' after realization of śūnyatā.".

state that though prapañca is a completely negative state of af-
fairs, it is to an extent redeemable in certain instances, but
only by one who is established in paramārthasatya, and even then,
it is raised only to the status of a provisional validity. An
upādāya prajñapti is still prapañca and not paramārtha, however
it is prapanca in its most favourable light, that is, the light
of paramārthasatya, but this in turn, does not guarantee its in-
fallability as a guidepost for the attainment of that which is
to be sought after in Mādhyamika Buddhism[1]. From the standpoint
of either saṁvṛtisatya or paramārthasatya, an upādāya prajñapti
is a type of prapañca that is paradoxically intended to stop pra-
pañca. As Louis de la Vallée Poussin[2] summarizes it:

> L'enseignement de la vacuité (ou vrai caractère
> du Pratītyasamutpāda) a pour but d'arrêter toute
> parole mentale ou vocale (prapañca). Quand le dis-
> cours (qui se nourrit des notions d'existence, etc.)
> est arrête, l'accès est ouvert au paramārtha.

An upādāya prajñapti is simultaneously prapañca and anti-prapañca.

One very important point should, I think, be emphasized
here, before parting with this discussion of the second character-
istic of language in Nāgārjuna. In the context of Nāgārjuna, an
upādāya prajñapti is always a heuristic and linguistic device em-
ployed by one who is speaking from the standpoint of paramārtha-
satya in order to communicate, as best he can, the absolute state
of things (dharmas). It is used to justify such a person's occa-

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1 vināśayati durdṛṣṭā śūnyatā mandamedhasam/ (MMK. XXIV. 11).

2 From p. 39 of Louis de la Vallée Poussin's "Réflexions Sur Le
   Madhyamaka", Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques, Deuxième Volume,
   1932-1933, pp. 4-59.

sional recourse to words and names for the ineffable Absolute.
On the other hand, an inquirer who has not transcended the boundaries of the standpoint of samvrtisatya can only passively appropriate an upādāya prajñapti. On his terms, it is nothing more than prapañca that has the specific intention of serving as a predicate for the Absolute. This is to say, that śūnyatā, for example, can only become an upādāya prajñapti for that person once he has attained paramārthasatya.[1]

The third and final point that I wish to make concerning Nāgārjuna's general conceptualization of language involves again a return to a look at the problem of the relationship between śūnyatā and prapañca encountered in the discussion and establishment of our first point, namely, the difference between the two. Here however, we will attempt to see the implications of the higher understanding that if all dharmas are śūnyatā, prapañca itself must also be śūnyatā[2].

Can language function without being (svabhāva)? This is the crucial question. If one interprets the function of language to be the communication or conveying of meaning, that is, the communication of that which is to do with the true state of things concerned, and if one interprets being in this context, as the reality inherent in the true state of things concerned

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1 Neither Nāgārjuna nor Candrakīrti bother to sufficiently explain the concept of upādāya prajñapti, these are therefore, my own speculations.

2 This results in the supreme equation of Nirvāṇa with saṃsāra: na saṃsārasya nirvāṇātkiñcidasti viśeṣaṇam...(MMK. XXV. 19-20).

(that which is revealed by language) as well as the reality in-
herent in language itself[1], then the answer to our question must
be "no". This is further borne out by the seemingly complete de-
pendence of language, in both a grammatical and logical sense,
upon the copula "is" in order to accomplish the dynamics[2] of mean-
ing which follow from the synthesis of subject and predicate, and
which make communication possible?[3]

Nāgārjuna, I think, would not disagree with these things,
since what is essentially being said is that language must be of
the same order of reality as those things which it reveals, and in
terms of saṁvṛtisatya this is certainly the case, for here language
has a pragmatic, though provisional, validity. However, this is
the limit of the function (validity) of language, for in raising
language up to the level of paramārthasatya by equating it with
śūnyatā, Nāgārjuna also robs it of the copula "is" and as a re-
sult language collapses back in upon itself. In slightly differ-
ent words, Nāgārjuna would accept the proposition that language
cannot function (reveal) without being (svabhāva), but he would
simultaneously counter this with the submission that no such thing
as being (svabhāva) ultimately exists. What follows from this, is

1 That is to say, if language were not in itself real, then how
   would it be capable of revealing anything at all which is real?

2 Without the copula "is", and the ensuing possibility of pre-
   dication, one would simply be left with a succession of iso-
   lated and static particulars and universals.

3 For a brief discussion of the inherent contradiction of predica-
   tion see p. 28 of A. K. Chatterjee's "The Mādhyamika and the Phi-
   losophy of Language", in the same author's Facets of Buddhist
   Thought, Sanskrit College Calcutta, 1975, pp. 21-31.

that language does not function, that is, it does not reveal, in terms of Ultimate Truth (paramārthasatya). On the contrary, as we have learned above (p. 140), one of the chief and defining functions of language (saṁvṛti) in relation to paramārtha is that of a concealment (varana) which gives rise to ajñāna.

Thus the last point that I make here, in terms of Nāgārjuna's general metaphysical concern with language is that, as śūnyatā, it is ultimately possessed of an intrinsic self-collapsability as opposed to an intrinsic reality (svabhāva), and this is not different for any so called 'real' that one might attempt to insert into Nāgārjuna's system. Out of the fact that all given or relative reality (pratītyasamutpāda) is śūnyatā[1], language (prapañca) itself has no foothold (other than the illusory and provisional foothold of givenness) in being, and it must inevitably, once the ruse of its existence is pointed out and properly apprehended, collapse in upon itself without the concession of any ontic residue whatsoever.

In summation, I might say, that what I have tried to establish in this first segment of the present chapter, has been what I feel are the three essential points concerning a general philosophy of language in Nāgārjuna as it stands in relation to his thought as a metaphysical response, that is a response in pursuit of a final reality, to the given experience of existence. This response might better be called a hermeneutic of existence,

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1 Again as at MMK. XXIV. 18: yah pratītyasamutpādah śūnyatāṁ pracaksmahe/.

or in other words, an effort to understand the final real through an extended exegesis of given existence. The three points are as follows: a) that language (prapañca) is fundamentally opposed to that which is real (śūnyatā) — this is a conclusion couched in saṁvṛtisatya; b) that language (prapañca) can justifiably be employed as metaphorical instruction (upādāya prajñapti) by one who does so from the point of view of paramārthasatya, but only provisionally — in effect working as a bridge between saṁvṛtisatya and paramārthasatya; c) that prapañca is śūnyatā — this is the final conclusion, the conclusion from the standpoint of paramārtha-satya[1]. In the light of this last conclusion, the complex called 'language' in all of its manifestations, along with all of its essential presuppositions such as grammatical laws, the relation between name and thing (word and object), the assumption of the reality of a speaker (an author of a statement) and a hearer (one who understands a statement)[1] as well as the assumption of the reality of the language employed, etc., simply dissipates. Even an upādāya prajñapti does not violate this principle, for an upādāya prajñapti as restructured[3] language also becomes non-language (niṣprapañca), that is, śūnyatā-talk, meaning not talk about śūnyatā but talk which is śūnyatā itself.

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1 One could also justify considering "b)" after "c)", since an upādāya prajñapti can employed only after attaining paramārtha-satya, however the order given is presented in terms of the becoming of a person within saṁvṛti who must passively encounter an upādāya prajñapti, such as śūnyatā, before understanding it in the highest sense.

2 This does not mean that the two could not be the same person.

3 See above p. 146 n. 3.

We may also conclude that here, just as in the Pali literature consulted in the previous chapter, language as pra-pañca has to be looked upon as a genuinely negative concept. In order to illustrate this, let us consider each of the three points made about Nāgārjuna's theory of language in its metaphysical aspect. First of all, the incompatability of prapañca and śūn-yatā produces a two-fold, compounded negativity, for such a stark bifurcation results on the one hand in the complete ineffability of the Absolute, and on the other in the fact that what is not the Absolute (i.e., prapañca) necessarilly becomes soteriologi-cally detrimental, that is, it works against one's becoming. Se-condly, one must note that although an upādāya prajñapti can be looked upon as a provisional restoration of language by the il-lumination of paramārthasatya, it is in fact, just that, inherent-ly provisional and can in no way be regarded as a predicate of the Absolute, much less a definition of it. Lastly, the ultimate equation of prapañca with śūnyatā adds no positive connotation to the concept of language, for in order to become the Absolute, prapañca has to completely give up that fundamental nature (sva-bhāva) which stands in opposition to śūnyatā, and therefore it would no longer be language (prapañca), but in fact, its anti-thesis, or, that which is nisprapañca. This then, is Nāgārjuna's general philosophy of language in terms of his metaphysical re-sponse to given existence.

ii) Dialectic and Psuedo-Polemic

In the last segment we focussed our attention upon Nā-
gārjuna's ideas about language as they were set in what we have
chosen to call his metaphysical response to existence, that is,
in terms of his pursuit of the final state (which for him was
śūnyatā) of things. Here we wish to shift our concern, but only
slightly, to what we shall call Nāgārjuna's epistemological re-
sponse to existence, that is, his consuming interest in the li-
mits and form of our knowledge about things. The two, meta-
physics and epistemology, are not isolated streams in Nāgārjuna's
thought, for at every instance that he is concerned with the
content (metaphysics) of given and final reality, he is also
concerned with the form (epistemology) or the total possibili-
ties of apprehending or coming to terms with that content.

This said, I think that we may also, within this seg-
ment, complete our analysis of MMK. XXIV. 18, since we still have
one concept which is there mentioned, namely, madhyamā pratipad[1],

1   The phrase only occurs at this place in MMK. and once at the
close of Nāgārjuna's commentary to VV. 70 in a statement that
praises the teaching of the Buddha. The phrase does not ap-
pear in NS., PS., MV., or R. M. P. V. Bhattacharya, in the
first paragraph of his "Catuṣkoti", JCV., pp. 85-91 states:

In Buddhism there are two middle paths (majjhimā
pratipadā-madhyamā pratipad) and both of them are
expounded by the Blessed One himself. The first of
them is the Noble Eightfold Way (Ārya āstāngika mārga)
which avoids the two antas or kotis, extremities of
attachment to worldly enjoyments and to extreme self-
mortification. And the second is the one that avoids
the opposite views, such as asti, nāsti; nitya, anitya;
ātman, anātman, sukha, duhkha; śūnya, aśūnya; etc.

In this segment we will be concerning ourselves chiefly with the
latter. See also note 840(6) in J. May, Candrakīrti...

left to be considered. In fact the concept of madhyamā pratipad fundamentally describes and explains the essence of Nāgārjuna's dialectic and also his subsequent polemical emplyoment of that dialectic.

Our best beginning therefore, is an examination of the following explanation by Candrakīrti[1] of this concept of madhyamā pratipad:

> saiva svabhāvānutpattilaksanā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipaditi vyavasthāpyate. yasya hi svabhāvenānutpattih, tasya astitvābhāvah, svabhāvena cānutpannasya vigamābhāvānnāstitvābhāva iti. ato bhāvābhāvāntādvayarahitatvāt sarvasvabhāvānutpattilaksanā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipat, madhyamo mārga ityucyate. (It is just that which is characterised by the non-origination of svabhāva which is śūnyatā, it is given the name madhyamā pratipad. For that which is not possessed of origination in terms of svabhāva [also] lacks reality [astitva], but on account of the absence of the cessation of that which has its origination in terms of svabhāva it thus does not lack reality. Therefore, because of the avoidence of the two extremes of being and non-being [in the concept of] śūnyatā, as it is characterised as the non-origination in terms of svabhāva of all things, it [śūnyatā] is madhyamā pratipad, it is called the middle way.)

Here śūnyatā itself is madhyamā pratipad because it does not fall prey to the logical and ontological extremities of being and non-being (bhavābhavānta), for as indicated in the second sentence of the above quotation, one can easily make the mistake of apprehending śūnyatā by means of either of these dogmas[2]. In this way, Nāgārjuna seeks to resolve the given relativity of any polar op-

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1 Pr. 220.1-4. See also MMK. XV. 7 where Nāgārjuna alludes to the Kaccāyanasutta (SN. II. 17) and Candrakīrti on this.

2 Cf. MMK. V. 8.

position, not by the common Western practice of relying on a simple law of the excluded middle[1], but by allowing the dialectical[2] tension between the two polarities to produce and give way to a position[3] which in no way commits itself to, or depends on, anything less than a comprehensive or holistic apprehension of the inter-relatedness and mutual dependence of both of the original opposite points. The metaphysical correlate of this madhyama pratipad is, of course, pratītyasamutpāda = śūnyatā.

It must be noted that, Nāgārjuna's consistent recourse to madhyama pratipad has for its soteriological setting that same unmitigated concern with the arrest and subsequent dissipation of all conceptual extension (prapañca), especially in the form of views (dr̥ṣṭayaḥ), that we encountered in our examination of the Pāli suttas in the previous chapter. Thus we find at MMK. XIII. 8, that even the concept of śūnyatā, which has the final aim of logically trumping the assumed validity of all possible metphysical viewpoints, runs the danger of itself becoming of the same order as that which it attempts to undermine:

> śūnyatā sarvadrṣṭīnāṁ proktā niḥsaraṇaṁ jinaiḥ/
> yeṣāṁ tu śūnyatā dṛṣṭistānasādhyān babhāsire//
> (It has been declared by the Conquerors,[-i.e.,
> the Buddhas] that śūnyatā is the abandonment of
> all views/

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1   For a brief but thoughtful discussion of the respective treatment of polar opposition in the classical East and West see Betty Heimann's "Opposites: Contrasts or Complements_ in Early Greek and Indian Philosophy", ALB. #25, 1961, pp. 216-228.

2   In Nāgārjuna this is more than a simple Hegelian synthesis since a new position is not produced.

3   That, as I hope show further on below, is not really a position.

However, they have [also] said that those who
[hold] the drsti of śūnyatā are incurable//)

One can therefore see that when one applies the attitude of ma-
dhyamā pratipad to the possibility of regarding a state of affairs
in either one way or in its opposite, one must not look upon the
product itself as a new viewpoint.[1]

Madhyamā pratipad, as the transcendence of the dve ante
that comprise polar opposition, is for Nāgārjuna, the archtypical
dialectical force, and by means of its appropriate logical ex-
trapolation one obtains that which has come to be accepted as
Nāgārjuna's polemical banner, namely, catuṣkoti[2]. When one speaks
of Nāgārjuna's dialectic, one is usually referring to this catus-
koti. As one can see from the previous chapter it was not inven-
ted by Nāgārjuna but already existed in the form of the avyākatāni
in the Pāli suttas[3] Nāgārjuna only placed the spotlight on it, as
well as a few other key notions such as śūnyatā, pratītyasamutpāda,
madhyamā pratipad, etc.,[4] in order to formulate a coherent and in-
tegral system of thought.

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1 Words such as upādana and grāha with the detrimental sense of
   grasping or holding seem common in MMK., for example see MMK.
   VIII. 13; XV. 10; XVI. 9; etc., illustrating that clinging to
   views is definitely not desirable.

2 Literally the word means "four limits", and does not appear to
   occur in MMK. or VV., however the fourfold dialectic is clearly
   visible in such places as MMK. XXII. 11 and XXV. 17. See also
   M. P. V. Bhattacharya's "Catuṣkoti".

3 The chief instance is, of course, the avyākata concerning the
   Tathāgata. See also Luis O Gomez, "Proto-Mādhyamika...", and
   N. Dutt, "Brahmajālasutta...".

4 In fact the origination of the characteristic stance seems to
   be attributed to Sañjaya at D. I. p. 58.

Basically, catuskoti appears in Nāgārjuna in the following manner (MMK. XXII. 11):

> śūnyamiti na vaktavyamaśūnyamiti va bhavet/
> ubhayam nobhayam ceti prajñaptyarthas tu kathyate//
> (It should not be [the case] that śūnyam or
> aśūnyam are to be asserted/
> As also both and neither of them, however they
> are stated for the sake of instruction//).

We may represent the above more schematically in this way:

    a) affirmation (śūnya)
    b) negation (aśūnya)
    c) affirmation and negation (śūnyaśūnya)
    d) neither affirmation nor negation (na śūnyaśūnya).

Thus, for Nāgārjuna any proposition (pratijñā) can be accounted for and eventually shown to be self-contradictory and defective by its simple rotation through the four symmetrical limits of catuskoti. In the light of this, the fundamental purpose of catuskoti can be seen to be twofold, it first of all, in its totality, represents the limit or the logical possibilities of holding any position, and secondly, in conjunction with the demonstration of the self-contradictory nature of each of its parts, it points to the dissipation of all viewpoints or propositions.

The question now remains as to how Nāgārjuna manages to demonstrate the self-contradictory nature of given propositions?[1]

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1 One can consult the following secondary material specifically
on the problem of Nāgārjuna's dialectic and its application:
R. C. Pandeya's "The Logic of Catuskoti and Indescribability",
VB., pp. 25-40; Chapters V, VI, and VII of T. R. V. Murti's
Central Philosophy...; R. K. Tripathi's "The Mādhyamika Theory
of Dialectic", in Recent Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, ed., K.
Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 229-239; R. H. Robinson's
Early Mādhyamika..., pp. 50-58; F. J. Streng's "Metaphysics,
Negative Dialectic, and the Expression of the Inexpressible",
in PEW. Vol. XXV., #4, Oct., 1975, pp. 430-447.

In order to answer this question one must recall that, for Nāgārjuna, propositions cannot have a truth value realtion to facts or objects given in experience since these facts or objects are not ontological reals (i.e., possessed of svabhāva), on the contrary, propositions belong to the realm of mental fabrication (prapāñca). The touchstone with which Nāgārjuna tests propositions is not a correspondence to external fact[1], but whether or not the propo-

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1 Again, this does not mean that Nāgārjuna did not respond at all to the pragmatic actuality of given experience, for in fact, the hallmark of Buddhist epistemology, Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, has been to give complete presidence to a rationality, which appeals to pragmatic experience, as opposed to the characteristic reliance of the Brahmanical schools upon revelation (śruti). See above, p. 94 n. 1, as well as K. N. Jayatilleke's "The Buddhist Attitude to Revelation", The Wheel (Buddhist Publication Society # 163) Kandy, Ceylon, Vol. IX, pp. 33-46, and T. W. Organ's, "Reason and Experience in Mahayana Buddhism", Journal of Bible and Religion, Vol. XX, #2, 1952, pp. 77-83. Apart from this, one can, I think, perceive, in the devastatingly negative force of Nāgārjuna's dialectic (catuṣkoṭi) coupled with this statement of a denial of external material referends for words, the germ for the later Buddhist theory of meaning associated with Yogācāra logicians such as Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, and Ratnakīrti, namely, the theory of apoha (lit. denying). In short, this theory holds that the whole problem of meaning is an intellectual one, that is to say, words do not refer to particulars outside of the conceptual sphere and that the particular conceptual instance (svalakṣana) that stands as a word's 'meaning' is obtained by the dialectical interaction of the givenness of the word with its intrinsic repudiation of all other meanings (i.e., its non-givenness). Th. Stcherbatsky provides us with an example in his Buddhist Logic, Vol. I, New York, 1962, p. 460:

> The word "white" does not communicate the cognition of all white objects. They are infinite and no one knows them all. Neither does it communicate cognition of a Universal Form of "whiteness" as an external Ens cognized by the senses. But it refers to a line of demarcation between the white and the non-white, which is cognized in every individual case of the white. The white is cognized through the non-white, and the non-white through the white.

Thus, while doing away with the need for a universal which re-

sition itself along with its logical implications stands free

from internal and external contradictions[1]. In other words, the

proposition itself must first of all be a well made proposition,

i.e., one that is not non-sensical, and secondly it must be

faultlessly consistent with its implications, in order to be an

acceptable proposition for Nāgārjuna.

Of the two points just mentioned in the last sentence,

the first attempts to get rid of statements that deal with empty

or unreal concepts, and which have their paradigms in phrases

such as "the son of a barren woman", etc.. Its functioning does

not essentially recquire a dialectic, but a straightforward ana-

lytic process which Nāgārjuna can perform completely from the

standpoint of saṁvṛtisatya. On the other hand, the second point

necessarily implies an analysis of propositions in terms of para-

mārthasatya and in order to perform its function must draw upon

the dialectical process. It is in terms of this latter point,

that we may justifiably assert that we are encoutering the fun-

sides as an actuality in each particular (as for example we
might encounter in the Nyāya concept of jāti or generic pro-
perty), the theory of apoha is able to provide a meaning for
every concept even though, it must be noted, that this mean-
ing is necessarily an indirect or dialectical one. For se-
condary materials on the theory of apoha see Th. Stcherbatsky,
Buddhist Logic, Vol. I, pp. 457-482 (this also contains trans-
lations of some pertinent primary material), Vol. II pp. 403-
418 (for the most part containing a translation of Vācaspati-
misra's summation of the theory); R. C. Pandeya, The Problem
of Meaning in Indian Philosophy, Delhi, 1963, pp. 200ff.; D.
Sharma, The Negative Dialectics, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi,
1974, Chapt. V, as well as the same author's "Buddhist Theory of
Meaning (Apoha) and Negative Statements", PEW, XVIII, 1968, pp.
3-10; S. S. Barlingay, "The Significance of Pratītya Samutpāda,
Sāmānyalakṣaṇa and Apoha in Buddhism", IPC, (45th. Session),
Hyderabad, 1971, pp. 140-157.

1 See R. C. Pandeya, "The Logic...", pp. 26-27.

damentals of a Philosophy of Language in Nāgārjuna.

In any event, let us cite a brief example of Nāgār-juna's demonstration of the implicit contradiction of a given proposition. He states at MMK. I. 8[1]:

> naivāsato naiva satah pratyayo 'rthasya yujyate/
> asatah pratyayah kasya sataśca pratyayena kim//
> (The conditional cause for an object which is
> either existent or non-existent does not follow/
> [If] there is a conditional cause of a non-existent
> [object], [then] to what [does it belong]? And [if
> it] is existent, [then how can this be] because of
> the conditional cause?//)

Here Nāgārjuna is concerned with the proposition that there is such a thing as a conditional cause (pratyaya[2]) which gives rise to an object. In order to illustrate the contradictory nature of such an assumption, Nāgārjuna injects it into a polar dilemna, with a specific effort to initially delimit its logical possibilities. Thus, we may break down the first line of the above kā rikā into the following paraphrase which may be taken as its broader or underlying sense: a) it is reasonable to assume that if a conditional cause which gives rise to an object is a proper assumption, then it should hold true for either the case of that object which is produced being existent, or its being non-existent; b) if one of these cases proves to be inconsistent, then we are compelled, by the force of logic (i.e., the law of contradiction[3]) to accept the alternative as the true case, since what

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1 This appears in most translations as MMK. I. 6, but Vaidya counts the openning dedication to the Buddha, along with the enumeration of the eight negations, as MMK. I. 1-2.

2 See Stcherbatsky, The Conception..., p. 164 n. 6.

3 R. C. Pandeya in his "The Logic...", rightly sets up the distinction in Nāgārjuna between the law of the excluded middle and the law of contradiction.

is in fact the truth in any state of affairs has to be defined
in terms of its static relationship to what is not the truth in
that same state of affairs[1]; c) I, Nāgārjuna, submit that the
concept of conditional cause is inconsistent in both the case
of its giving rise to an existent object, as well as, its giving
rise to a non-existent object. The second line simply presents
the reasons for the inconsistency of each of the alternatives,
and may be paraphrased as follows: a) if the object which is
produced by the pratyaya is non-existent, then we have no thing
to speak of as being produced by the pratyaya and that object
cannot be spoken of as having a pratyaya[2]; b) if the object which
is produced by the pratyaya is existent, then we have an object
which is a perfectly completed thing, and can thus stand on its
own without any relation to a pratyaya whatsoever[3].

Where, then, does this leave the holder of the origi-
nal proposition asserting pratyaya? What seems to have happened
is that the law of contradiction[4], which had formerly served as
the proponent's static measure of truth over falsity, can now pro-
duce only an inconclusive oscillation grounded in relativity.
The carpet has been pulled from under his feet, and he must either

1 In this sense a polar opposition presents us with the least
   complex map of the possibility of the truth of any given state
   of affairs.

2 Candrakīrti reads (Pr. 28.14): asato hyarthasya avidyamānasya
   katham pratyayah syāt?

3 Pr. 28.18 : sato 'pi vidyamānasya labdhajanmano nisphalaiva
   pratyayakalpanā.

4 That is, if one asserts a proposition as true, one cannot si-
   multaneously assert its contradicory proposition as true.

accept the contradictory nature of his proposition, or seek to fit the elucidation of his proposition into alternatives other than those involved in basic polar opposition, which in any event are already accounted for by the last two components of Nā- gārjuna's catuṣkoṭi [1].

In this way, all propositions are shown by the Mādhya- mika to entail inconsistency in their implications and thus do not merit being entertained by them. How then, does Nāgārjuna himself escape this rather ominous pitfall? The answer to this, of course, lies in that concept which serves as the fundamental impulse to the whole Mādhyamika dialectic, namely, madhyamā pra- tipad, for here a commitment to one of the polar alternatives does not present the final solution in obtaining the truth con- cerned, in fact, commitment is expressly avoided, for to do so would breed the exact opposite of what is aimed for and thus only fur- ther compound the given problem (i.e., add to prapañca). One strives for the middle, the whole dialectic is a striving for the middle, and it is in this way alone that the absolute con- sistency recquired to produce a path out of the falsity of illu- sion is maintained.

We can see therefore, that Nāgārjuna was in possession of a devastatingly critical weapon which, in terms of polemics, put to question not only the systematic conclusions concerning the nature of reality arrived at by his contemporary philosophi-

1   However the actual mechanics of this dialectic in the more
    complex points of catuṣkoṭi present a difficult problem. Nā-
    gārjuna seems to restrict his explicit employment of the dia-
    lectic to the relationship between the first two koṭis.

cal counterparts, but also, and more importantly, put to question the very concept of truth upon which these systems were constructed. Yet, the most important thing to be recognised in terms of Nāgārjuna's polemics is that he carries on his critical assaults on other schools without ever commiting himself to a position (pratijñā) in opposition to them.[1] His only standpoint for the employment of the dialectic is paramārthasatya, which cannot be in any sense looked upon as a counterposition, for paramārthasatya is by definition the recognition that all standpoints or positions are śūnyatā (the nature of emptiness).

It is in this sense that we encounter the well known statements of VV. 29[2]:

> yadi kācana pratijñā syānme tata eṣa me bhaved-
> dosah/
> nāsti ca mama pratijñā tasmānnaivāsti me dosah//
> (If there were any proposition [made] by me, then
> there might be this error [belonging] to me/
> But there is no proposition which is mine, there-
> fore there is no error [which belongs] to me//)

But then again, one might ask how it is at all possible for Nāgārjuna to negate the validity (i.e., demonstrate the śūnyatā) of his opponent's statements by means of his own statements which are śūnyatā (and therefore not propositions)? In other words, how can one establish śūnyatā by means of that which is already

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1 This premise became the distinctive mark of the Prāsaṅgika school of Mādhyamika headed by Buddhapālita which stood in opposition to definitive Svātantrika Mādhyamika premise that one must commit oneself to a position in order to refute an opponents position, propounded for example by Bhāviveka. See Murti, The Central Philosophy..., pp. 87-103.

2 Cf., R. I. 60; II. 5; also VV. XXIV and commentary.

śūnyatā[1]? Nāgārjuna explains this exact point in VV. 23 and its commentary; the commentary, which is the more explicit of the two runs as follows:

> yathā nirmitakah puruso 'nyaṁ nirmitakaṁ purusaṁ
> kasmiṁścidarthe vartamānaṁ pratisedhayet, māyā-
> kārena vā srsto māvāpuruso 'nvaṁ māyāpurusaṁ sva-
> māyayā srstāṁ kasmiṁścidarthe vartamānaṁ pratise-
> dhayet, tatra yo nirmitakah purusah pratisidhyāte
> so 'pi śūnyah/ yah pratisedhayati so 'pi śūnyah/
> yo māyāpurusah pratisidhyate so 'pi śūnyah/ yah
> pratisedhayati so 'pi śūnyah/ evaneva madvacanena
> śūnyenāpi sarvabhāvānāṁ svabhāvapratisedha upa-
> pannah/ (Just as an artificially created person
> may negate [or oppose] another artificially created
> person who is existing because of something, or
> [just as] a phanthom person created by a conjurer
> may negate [or oppose] another phanthom person cre-
> ated by his own power of illusion who is existing
> because of something, there the artificially cre-
> ated person who is negated [or opposed], even he is
> empty/ He who negates, even he is empty/ The phan-
> thom person who is negated, even he is empty/ He
> who negates [that one] even he is empty/ Only thus,
> is the negation of the svabhāva of all entities
> by my statement, even though it is empty, possible/)

Here, the imagery of the illusory beings serves to call atten-
to the fact that, according to Nāgārjuna, the statements of his
opponent are already empty and that he is not as much negating
them as, negating the illusory assumption that they are not empty.
The whole process of negation, for Nāgārjuna, takes place on a le-
vel based on the illusion or ignorance (ajñāna) that propositions
are possessed of a svabhāva (own reality), or in other words, on
the level of saṁvrti, and it is an empty process. Though Nāgār-
statements are empty, this in no way prevents them from carrying

1   In such sentences, as in the quotation from VV. 23 that fol-
lows one usually finds the word śūnya used instead of the ab-
stract śūnyatā, however in the light of the famous monistic
(advaya) Mādhyamika identification of Nirvāṇa with saṁsāra,
I do not think that the latter is inappropriate.

their function within this sphere of samvrti, and this function
is to negate, or demonstrate the empty nature of all statements.
This point is specifically adressed in Nāgārjuna's commentary
to VV. XXII:

> yathā ca pratītyasamutpannatvāt svabhāvaśūnyā api
> rathapataghatādayah svesu svesu kārvesu kāsthatr-
> namrttikāharane madhūdakapavasām dhārane śītavā-
> tātāpaparitrānaprabhrtisu vartante, evamidam ma-
> dīyavacanam pratītvasamutpannatvān nihsvabhāvamapi
> nihsvabhāvatvaprasādhane bhāvanām vartate/ (Just as
> a cart, a garment, a pot, etc., which are empty of
> svabhāva on account of having been dependently ori-
> ginated, exist in their respective functions of
> carrying wood, grass, and earth, of containing ho-
> ney, water, and curds, of offering protection from
> cold, wind, and heat, just so my own statement,
> which is also without svabhāva on account of having
> been dependently originated, exists in the sense of
> effecting the no-own-beingness of things/)

We can conclude that Nāgārjuna's dialectic in its epistemic, and
especially its polemical sense, is an operation or technique per-
formed, and thus effectual, wholly within the sphere of samvrti
alone, although what we might call its base of operations is ne-
cessarily paramārthasatya. The aim of the dialectic is not to
produce a new position and it nowhere along the line assumes any
counterposition; the dialectic is epistemically and logically
only pure criticism[1].

Before closing the chapter, we may summarize the essen-
tial points made in this segment concerning Nāgārjuna's concept

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1   The doctrine of madhyamā pratipad is, of course, soteriologi-
    cally much more than this, and in these terms, we must whole-
    heartedly agree with T. R. V. Murti's statement on p. 212 of
    his Central Philosophy...: "The dialectic is not an avenue
    for the acquisition of information, but a catharsis....".

of language in terms of his dialectic and polemics[1]. Thus the
first recognition that Nāgārjuna makes in this respect is that
language in its daily application, in fact in its broadest sense
as the complete expanse of human conceptualization (prapañca),
is inconsistent and self-contradictory. Out of the fact that
it is a multiple and differentiated complex, it is not fitted
for the task which is most often assumed of it, namely, further-
ing the apprehension of non-relative truth. In other words,
language is differentiated, and the basic unit of differentia-
tion is intrinsic polarity (i.e., the concept of difference is
founded upon the polarity of "is" and "is not"), this coupled
with the law of contradiction can only result in relative truths,
just as the concept of truth itself is intelligible only in
terms of its relation to the concept of falsity. The meta-
physics of śūnyatā, in its non-duality, is not compatible with
such a process of truth determination, i.e., with such an epis-
temology, so that language (prapañca) taken in the above sense,
is not only incapable of establishing non-relative truth, but
in its attempts to do so, it works in diametrical opposition to
this exact end. Nāgārjuna's solution to this, is the most fun-
damental Buddhist solution to possibility, namely, the concept
of dialectical tension or madhyamā pratipad.

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1 We must again make it clear that Nāgārjuna never involves
   himself in what would be called genuine polemics, as made
   up of arguments based upon assertions and counter-assertions,
   for Nāgārjuna can never take up a position of his own with-
   out being to the inconsitency that he himslef criticizes.
   His is only a psuedo-polemic since its purpose is to under-
   mine all positions (assertions).

Secondly, one must consider the two-fold comment on language implicitly contained in Nāgārjuna's formulation of catuṣkoṭi. Passively it stands as a schematic representation of the logical limits or possibilities of language, in other words, we encounter in catuṣkoṭi the very form of language, and it does not have anything to do with reality (śūnyatā) which is altogether other than form (and for that matter, non-form). Actively, that is, in terms of the dialectical impulse of madhyamā pratipad, by means of which one is able to rotate a given concept through its corresponding counterpositions, one demonstrates the contradictory nature of language along with its self collapsability (svabhāvaśūnyatva). Catuṣkoṭi again, is a map of the fact that language (prapañca) is totally different from, and opposed to, that realisation (prajñā) which is śūnyatā.

Lastly, in order to remain consistent, Nāgārjuna must admit that his own statements are, in the perspective of saṁvṛti-satya (i.e., in the perspective of his opponents), no better off than the ones which he himself is attempting to expose as empty (śūnya). However, since Nāgārjuna employs language only with the awareness (prajñā) that it is empty (śūnya) and dependently originated (pratītyasamutpanna), he does not become attached to the views (dṛṣṭayaḥ) he may use to dialectically counter his opponent, and thus in an ultimate sense (paramārthasatya) he does not speak at all, and is niṣprapañca. There is no concession here, for language is still a completely negative concept

and not redeemable, except by the very fact that it has to be-
come exactly what it is not, that is, nisprapañca. Language,
for Nāgārjuna, is not redeemable as language, since everything
that it essentially entails must necessarily be transcended.

In terms of this chapter as a whole, we have attemp-
ted to present a study of Nāgārjuna's thought specifically in
relation to its bearing upon his concept of language. We have
done this in a double context. First of all, in the context
of discussing Nāgārjuna's thought as a metaphysical response to
given existence, and secondly, as an epistemological (dia-
lectical/polemical) response to given existence. The two, of
course, cannot be strictly separated, but such a division does
provide us with the skeleton of a methodological entrance into
Nāgārjuna. According to the metaphysical response, language
(prapañca) is a decidedly negative concept in terms of its re-
lation to the Absolute (śūnyatā) because it is completely dif-
ferent from the Absolute and therefore, cannot in any proper
way touch, much less contain, that Absolute. Even in its iden-
tification with śūnyatā, prapañca must give up its own-existence
(svabhāva) as prapañca. Similarly, in reference to the epis-
temological response, language is totally other than the Abso-
lute, and in fact, works against the realisation of śūnyatā as
final reality, so that in order for such a realisation of śūn-
yatā to take place, language must be completely undermined and
abandoned as language—it must become nisprapañca. Thus, language
(prapañca), as Nāgārjuna envisions it, is precisely something
'diabolical'.

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temological response, language is totally other than the Abso-
lute, and in fact, works against the realisation of śūnyatā as
final reality, so that in order for such a realisation of śūn-
yatā to take place, language must be completely undermined and
abandoned as language—it must become nisprapañca. Thus, language
(prapañca), as Nāgārjuna envisions it, is precisely something
'diabolical'.

Epilogue B

The last two chapters of this thesis have produced descriptions of language that, I think, can best be described as "diabolical". In this "Epilogue", as in the one adjoined to the first two chapters, I find it necessary to make a few brief comments on the similarities and differences in each respective and general description of language as "diabolical".

First of all, we can say that language as described in both the Pāli suttas and in Nāgārjuna's thought can be called "diabolical" for the same basic reason, namely, that it (language, or p(r)apañca) is fundamentally cut off from the Absolute (nibbāna, śūnyatā). In the Pāli suttas this is brought out by the inability of papañca to grasp the nature of the Absolute, while in Nāgārjuna this same thing is more sophisticatedly expressed in the doctrine of two truths (dve satye). In addition to this, in both chapters, p(r)pañca is not only that which is cut off from the Absolute, but, and more importantly so, it is that which at every turn, works against the attainment of the realisation (paññā, prajñā) which sees through to the Absolute. In terms of the above points there is no radical change whatsoever between the conceptualization of language as "diabolical" in the Pāli suttas and the conceptualization of language as "diabolical" in Nāgārjuna.

If one attempts to understand the transformations in-
volved in the development of a tradition such as Indian Buddhism,
one must, I think, recognize that each stage of its development
(in the broadest sense, for example, take the distinction of Hi-
nayāna/Mahāyāna) does not come about as a result of a break with
the former tradition as much as it results from the basic and
continuous inner dynamism that allows the essence of its original
and founding truth to encounter and come to terms with the total
phenomenon of human consciousness. Therefore, in marking out
difference in the respective conceptualizations of language as
"diabolical", we must again keep in mind that we are dealing with
one of degree rather than kind. In this respect, one may make
a case for the fact that papañca in the Pāli suttas is couched in
pluralistic realism (since we are dealing with a Sthaviravādin
recension[1]), while prapañca in Nāgārjuna is set in the transcen-
dental Void of śūnyatā. However, as far as I can see, this in
no way affects their respective views about p(r)apañca as that
which is different from and opposed to the attainment of that
which is sought after in both contexts, or in other words as,
"diabolical".

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1 Cf., A. K. Warder, Indian Buddhism, Delhi, 1970, pp. 7f.
and p. 296.

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