

BEING AND BECOMING IN NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA

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The article aims at analysing the semantics of Sanskrit verbs denoting being and becoming and their influence on the development of philosophical thinking, in particular the ontology of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. It is argued that in Sanskrit the durative aspect of the verb asti resulted in the development of the qualificative meaning of the present participle sat and the qualitative abstracts sattā and sattva. The process reached its peak in the concept sattva of Sūṃkhya philosophy. In Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika sat preserved its durative existential meaning, and its derivatives sattā and astitva comprised the positive reality as universals. In the negative description of reality the verb bhavati and its derivative abhāva prevailed, and this fact conditioned the development of the dynamic and concrete conception of absence. As a consequence, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika created neither the universal concept of non-being nor the concept of empty space.

The texts of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika always challenged scientists to the interdisciplinary research linking philosophy, philology and logic. The core idea of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school was to provide the enumeration of entities and the means of the right knowledge, therefore, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy depends much on the Sanskrit language and its logical structure. As early as the beginning of the 20th century Faddegon underlined that the category system in *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* “is closely connected with grammatical study”,¹ however, this notice was taken into account only gradually. In most studies on Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika the researchers preferred the systematic-functional approach to the philosophical texts and tried to reconstruct Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy as a coherent conceptual system.² In the recent years the hermeneutic approach and the reevaluation of the influence of cultural background and language on the philosophical thinking has refreshed Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika investigations. In the latest studies by Halbfass³ and Lysenko⁴ more attention is paid to the historical development of philosophical concepts and philological analysis; Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is considered not as a closed system, but as a coherent part of the Indian intellectual discourse. In my methodology,

¹ Barend Faddegon, *The Vaiśeṣika-System*, Amsterdam: Johannes Müller, 1918, 11.

² This approach can be seen in the following investigations: Surendranath Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922. Karl H. Potter, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977. Виктория Георгиевна Лысенко, *Философия природы в Индии: атомизм школы вайшешики*, Москва: Наука, 1987.

³ Wilhelm Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is. Classical Vaiśeṣika and the History of Indian Ontology*, State University of New York Press, 1992.

⁴ Виктория Георгиевна Лысенко, *Универсум вайшешики*, Москва: Восточная литература, 2003.

I adhere to hermeneutic analysis of the philosophical texts and further I want to stress the importance of language for the development of philosophical thinking. In this article, I suggest that Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika concepts of being, becoming and non-being should be treated as a result of the development of the Sanskrit language. To prove the thesis, I will compare certain features of Sanskrit with the Greek language, thus trying to contextualize the Indian philosophical language in the IE linguistics.

Besides these philosophical studies, special attention to the relation between language and reality in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika was paid in the investigations on Navya-Nyāya logic. The works of Ingalls⁵ and Matilal⁶ are based on the assumption that although logic of Nyāya lacks certain features of Western formal logic (e. g., quantifiers) and has its own features (e. g., qualificand–qualifier relation), still Western logic and Indian logic are commensurable and we can apply the first order predicate logic to its formalization. This assumption has been criticized by Nieuwendijk who insisted that the formal logic is too much committed to language while Navya-Nyāya logic tries to transcend language and “is intended to give an over-all theory of meaning within which a theory of meaning for human languages can be developed as a special case”.⁷ The starting point of Nieuwendijk’s theory is the assumption of Naiyāyikas that every *guṇa* is a non-repeatable entity. As ontologically *jñāna* belongs to the category of *guṇa*, Nieuwendijk insists that *jñāna* refers to a non-repeatable epistemic entity which itself has a meaning just as linguistic entities have. Inference is conceived in Nyāya logic as a succession of certain *jñānas*, therefore, the conclusion, i.e. recognition of *vyāpti*-relation (pervasion), depends not on the forms of expression, but on the circumstances of cognition. The language that is used in the inference has meaning in the contexts only. Nieuwendijk calls this kind of inference and language the situated inference and the semantically situated language.⁸ I think that Nieuwendijk’s theory reveals an important feature of Naiyāyikas’ epistemology and this theory can be applied to the interpretation of such context-dependent cognitions as the cognition of *abhāva*. As I will try to prove, the term *abhāva* for absence was chosen due to its correlation with a particular situation where *abhāva* is recognized.

The terms of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika that denote being and becoming are of IE origin, therefore, their semantics is determined by the IE means of expression. The PIE verb *es- ‘to be’ had several aspects of meaning which influenced the development of philosophical language in Greece and India. Most IE languages show that the PIE *es- had the primary existential

⁵ Daniel Henry H. Ingalls, *Materials for the Study of Navya-Nyāya Logic*, Cambridge (Mass.), London, 1951.

⁶ Bimal Krishna Matilal, *The Navya-Nyāya Doctrine of Negation. The Semantics and Ontology of Negative Statements In Navya-Nyāya Philosophy*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 1968.

⁷ Arthur Nieuwendijk, “Semantics and Comparative Logic,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 20 (1992): 377–418, 380.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 409.

concrete meaning ‘to be here, at hand’. This verb primarily indicated only the durative present, therefore in some languages it got the suppletive root **bheu-*.⁹ The durative aspect of the root **es-* is especially evident when we compare it with non-IE languages. For example, in Hebrew the verb *hayah* has the meanings ‘to happen, to occur, to become’ and a resultant meaning ‘to abide, to exist’.¹⁰ In Hebrew, durative ‘existence’ is a result of dynamic ‘becoming or occurring’, while the PIE root **es-* had no such dynamic component. This lack of dynamics resulted in the fact that IE verb ‘to be’ got a qualificative meaning in its derivatives. By qualificative meaning I suppose the meaning that implies not only the fact that ‘something exists’ (this would be the existential meaning), but also that ‘something is correct; it is the way it should be’. In some IE languages, the present participle, besides verbal meaning ‘being’, got the adjectival meaning ‘true, real, good’. This qualificative meaning is especially reflected in Sanskrit *sat* ‘daseiend, vorhanden; wie Jmd. oder etwas sein sollte: recht, wirklich, gut’.¹¹ Its feminine form *satī* ‘faithful wife’ and derivatives *satya* ‘true, good’ are evident examples of the qualificative meaning of *sat*. In Greek we also find traces of the development of qualificative meaning, but the Greek ἔών remained closer to the primary verbal meaning of existence and almost did not transform into adjectival usage. Among earlier authors, the qualificative meaning is found mainly in Herodotus who used ἔών as ‘true, right’.¹² In contrast to Sanskrit, the Greek εἰμί did not produce derivatives with qualificative meaning. Although Brugmann¹³ suggested that ἔτεός, ἔτυμος ‘true’ and ὅσιος ‘pious’ are derived from the root **es-*, this conjecture was rejected by Frisk.¹⁴ The early Greek language, preserving the primary ‘concrete’ existential meaning of εαμί “to be at hand”, developed the meaning of participle ὄν by using it in the substantival construction. Thus τ· ὄν got the

⁹ Julius Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *es-*, [cited 02/11/04]. Available from: <<http://iasnt.leidenuniv.nl/cgi-bin/startq.cgi?flags=endnnl&root=leiden&basename=%5Cdata%5Cie%5Cpokorny>>.

¹⁰ Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, s.v. *haya*, [cited 02/11/04]. Available from: <<http://www.biblestudytools.net/Lexicons/OldTestamentHebrew/>>. Cf. also Boman’s definition: “[Das Verbum *haya*] hat drei Hauptbedeutungen, Werden Sein und Wirken gefunden, die aber in innerem Zusammenhang stehen und eine Einheit bilden” (Thorleif Boman, *Das hebräische Denken im Vergleich mit dem griechischen*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977, 28).

¹¹ Otto Böhtlingk, Rudolf von Roth, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*, St. Petersburg, 1855–1875, s.v. *sat*.

¹² Hdt. 1, 95; 1, 97; 1, 116; 1, 30; 9, 11.

¹³ Karl Brugmann, Berthold Delbrück, *Grundriss der Vergleichenden Grammatik der Indogermanischen Sprachen*, Bd. II, 1, Strassburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1897, 401. Followed by Pokorny, *ibid.*, s.v. *es-*.

¹⁴ Hjalmar Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. ἔτεός and ὅσιος, [cited 02/11/04]. Available from: <<http://iasnt.leidenuniv.nl/cgiin/startq.cgi?flags=endnnl&root=leiden&basename=%5Cdata%5Cie%5Cfrisk>>. Followed by Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étimologique de la langue grecque. Histoire des mots*, Paris: Editions Klincksieck, 1977, s.v. ἔτεός and ὅσιος.

meaning 'what is at hand; resources'.¹⁵ This substantival conception of ὄν influenced the development of the Greek philosophical usage of being from Parmenides on.¹⁶

In Sanskrit, the qualificative meaning of *sat* influenced the conception of cosmogony. *Asat*, the contrariety of *sat*, was perceived not as an ontological but as a qualitative negation. According to the reconstruction of Ṛgvedic cosmogony in the works of Kuiper,¹⁷ in the first stage of cosmogony there was neither *sat* nor *asat*,¹⁸ then *asat* appeared and from it *sat* was born.¹⁹ After generation of *sat*, *asat* remained in the background until they would be unified in the highest heaven.²⁰ In Ṛgveda, *sat* and *asat* do not exclude each other and their relationship is not contradictory. This relationship in Ṛgveda is called *bandhu* 'connection, relation, kinship'.²¹ *Sat* and *asat* are the coexistent forms of the world and their difference is qualitative: *sat* represents a more developed stage of the world, 'the world as it should be'.

The Ṛgvedic conception of *asat* as a primary stage of the world was accepted and developed in Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads.²² The *asat* was regarded as having certain generative powers that enabled it to create *sat* from itself.²³ Brahman, the principle and creator of the world, had the characteristics both of *sat* and *asat*, the reality and the beyond.²⁴ On the other hand, an alternative conception of Brahman was developed in Chāndogya Upaniṣad according to which Brahman is only *sat*. This conclusion was drawn upon considering the generation of *sat* from *asat*. *Asat* was regarded as incapable to generate *sat*:

sad eva somyedam agra āsīd ekam evādvitīyam \ tad dhaika āhur asad evedam agra āsīd ekam evādvitīyam \ tasmād asata sad ajāyate \ kutas tu khalu somyaivam syād iti hovāca \ katham asata saj jāyeta \ sat tv eva somyedam agra āsīd ekam evādvitīyam "In the beginning, my dear, there was

¹⁵ τῶν τε Τντων χρημάτων καὶ τῶν προσιόντων τοῖς θεοῖς "the money on hand (belonging) to the gods and also the money coming to them" (*Inscr. Gr. I*, ed. Minor 91.24).

¹⁶ The development of the Greek philosophical concepts τὸ εἶν and οὐσία is analysed in Charles H. Kahn, *The Verb 'Be' in Ancient Greek*, Dordrecht, Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1973, 453–462.

¹⁷ Franciscus Jacobus Bernardus Kuiper, "Cosmogony and Conception: A Query," *History of Religions*, vol. 10, no 2, Chicago, 1970, 91–138. Franciscus Jacobus Bernardus Kuiper, "The Basic Concept of Vedic Religion", in *History of Religions*, vol. 15, no 2, Chicago, 1975, 107–120.

¹⁸ nāsad āsīn no sad āsīt tadānīm nāsīd rajo no vyomā paro yat "Then was not non-existent nor existent: there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it" (RV. 10, 129, 1).

¹⁹ devānām pūrve yuge 'sata sad ajāyata "Existent, in the earliest age of Gods, from non-existent sprang" (RV. 10, 72, 2).

²⁰ asac ca sac ca parame vyoman dakṣasya janmann aditer upasthe "Non-existent and existent in the highest heaven, in Aditi's bosom and in Dakṣa's birthplace" (RV. 10, 5, 7).

²¹ sato bandhum asati nir avindan hr̥di pratīṣyā kavayo manīṣā "Sages who searched with their heart's thought discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent" (RV. 10, 129, 4).

²² uatap. Br. 6, 1, 1, 1. Taitt. Br. 2, 2, 9, 1.

²³ asad evedam agra āsīt \ tat sad āsīt \ tat samabhavat \ tad āṇḍam niravartata "This world was non-being in the beginning, this [non-being] was being, it appeared, then developed an egg" (Chānd. 3, 19, 1, 3–6). asadvā idamagra āsīt / tato vai sadajāyata / tadātmanaṁ svayamakuruta / tasmāttatsukṛtamucyata iti "It was non-being in the beginning, from it was born the existent. That made itself its Self, therefore it is called the well-made" (Taitt. 2, 7).

²⁴ Taitt. 2, 6. Brh. 2, 3, 1.

only the existent, one only, without a second. Others say that in the beginning there was only the non-existent, one only, without a second; and from the non-existent the existent was born. But how could it be thus, my dear?' he said, 'how could the existent be born of the non-existent? No, my dear, only the existent was in the beginning, one only, without a second' (Chānd. 6, 2, 1).

In this excerpt, the meaning of *sat* and *asat* differs from the earlier cited text (Chānd. 3, 19, 1, 3–6) where *sat* was used as a predicate. In Chānd. 6, 2, 1 *sat* and *asat* are used only in subject and object positions. Further, *sat* and *asat* have their own predicates *ekam* 'one' and *advitīyam* 'without other', so it is evident that here *sat* and *asat* are used not as participles, but as substantives. Although participles with a qualificative meaning could be regarded as stages of the same substratum (world, Brahman), the substantives *sat* and *asat* were parted by negation ontologically. This text shows that the substantivation of *sat* and *asat* led to their incompatibility.

The substantival and qualificative meanings of *sat* were integrated in Chāndogya Upaniṣad by developing an influential teaching of being (*sadvidya*), based on the absolute primacy of *sat*. The cosmogony from *sat* is described by a metaphor of the root and offshoot. *Sat* is called *mūla* 'root', *āyatana* 'place, home' and *pratiṣṭhā* 'support, foundation'.²⁵ Everything is completely dependent on and resides in *sat*. In this metaphor *sat* is used both in the substantival and qualificative meaning. *Sat* is understood as a foundation of everything and also it permeates into everything and imparts the quality of *sat*.

The cosmogonies in Ṛgveda and Upaniṣads also influenced the development of the two main theories of causation in Indian philosophy: *satkārya-vāda* (according to the theory, the effect (*kārya*) is existent (*sat*) in the cause) and *asatkārya-vāda* (according to the theory, the effect is non-existent (*asat*) in the cause). There were two main conditions that facilitated the influence of early cosmogonies on the philosophical thinking. First of all, the common focus of attention in the mentioned cosmogonies and the causal theories is the matter out of which something is produced. Bhartiya maintains that it was a common feature of all Indian thinkers to treat the material cause as the main cause, although they accepted the efficient cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*) as well.²⁶ Both *satkārya-vāda* and *asatkārya-vāda* treated the cause as material. On the other hand, the cosmogonic query for the primary *sat* or *asat* was reinterpreted in the terms of the cyclical framework of time. In this framework, the origin and destruction of the world are recurrent events, therefore, as Halbfass puts it, "the old mythical question: What was all this in the beginning? is translated into the question: What is it, in the ultimate analysis?"²⁷ In this reinterpretation the analysis of the present was substituted for the reconstruction of the past. Due to this change the participle *sat* partially regained the existential meaning, which had been lessened by the qualificative meaning in the Ṛgvedic

²⁵ Chānd. 6, 8, 4.

²⁶ Mahesh Chandra Bhartiya, *Causation in Indian Philosophy (with Special Reference to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika)*, Ghaziabad: Vimal Prakāshan, 1973, 27.

²⁷ Wilhelm Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is*, 48.

usage. In the following I will try to compare the usage of *sat* and its derivatives in the texts of two *darśanas*: Sāṃkhya and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.

The main proponents of *satkārya-vāda* were the Sāṃkhya school who inherited *sadvidya* arguments on the primacy of *sat*.²⁸ In defence of the thesis, Īśvarakṛṣṇa in *Sāṃkhyakārikā* adduces the following argument:

asadakaraṇād upādāna-grahaṇāt sarva-sambhavābhāvāt śaktasya śakya-karaṇāt kāraṇa-bhāvāt ca sat-kāryam “The effect subsists, for that which is non-existent cannot be produced, and effects come from appropriate causes. Everything is not by any means possible, as capable causes produce only what they can and the effect is of the same nature as the cause” (SK. 9).

While the four arguments in this statement deal with the observational facts, the fifth argument reveals the relationship between cause and effect. Literally, *kāraṇa-bhāvāt* means “because of the nature of the cause”. It is maintained that the essence of the effect cannot differ from that of the cause. The conception of *sat* as the essence resembles much the Upaniṣadic *sadvidya*. Although in the whole argument of Īśvarakṛṣṇa *sat* is used in an existential rather than in a qualificative meaning, in the Sāṃkhya system the qualificative conception of *sat* prevails. This tendency is especially evident in the usage of the derivative *sattva*. In the Sāṃkhya system, *sattva* is one of three properties (*guṇa*) of the manifested (*vyakta*).²⁹ *Sattva* itself has qualities: it is considered to be buoyant (*laghu*) and luminous (*prakāśakam*).³⁰ The qualificative character of *sattva* is also manifested by the fact that it is a scalable quality.³¹ These features of *sattva* show that *sattva* has lost any connection with the existential meaning of *sat*.

The way of coining abstracts in Sanskrit enhanced the qualificative usage of *sat*. The common way of creating an abstract in Sanskrit was by adding a substantive suffix *-tva* (*-tā*) which indicates the quality of the underlying word.³² An important feature of this derivative process is in the fact that all the underlying words are treated as adjectives, despite their formal characteristics: “Let us call a term an ‘adjective’ if it is possible to abstract a property or *dharma* from it by the usual substantive suffixes ‘-tva’ or ‘-tā’” (‘-ness’, ‘-ity’) or by using such phrases as ‘the property of being such and such’. Thus, even terms like ‘man’ or ‘pot’

²⁸ The close relationship between Sāṃkhya and Upaniṣads is underlined in the investigations by Deussen: “Die Sāṃkhyalehre in allen ihren Bestandteilen aus dem Vedānta der Upaniṣad’s erwachsen [...] ist”. (Paul Deussen, “Die Philosophie der Upaniṣad’s,” in *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Religionen*, Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, Bd. I, Abt. II (1919): 216).

²⁹ SK. 11.

³⁰ SK. 13.

³¹ “Intellect (*buddhi*) is for ascertainment. Virtue, wisdom, dispassion and lordliness are its faculties when goodness (*sattva*) predominates, and the reverse is true when darkness (*tamas*) predominates” (SK. 23).

³² Wackernagel calls these derivatives *Eigenschaftsabstrakta* (Jacob Wackernagel, *Altindische Grammatik*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Bd. II, 2 (1987): 616. Renou also underlines the qualitative character of the abstracts: “L’ accent porte sur la qualité” (Louis Renou, *Grammaire sanskrite*, Paris, 1961, 233).

will be called adjectives under this convention”.³³ The Sanskrit language permitted to treat ‘pot’ as a locus (*āśraya*) where ‘potness’ resides. This way of abstraction was quite contrary to the Greek way of abstraction. Instead of extracting the essential property of a noun, Greeks substantivized adjectives and participles by adding the definite article. In Sanskrit, abstracts are properties which reside in certain loci, while in Greek all abstracts are ‘objects’.³⁴ The Greek substantivation enabled the philosophers to speak of qualities as things, and we find such treatment in Anaxagoras’ fragment: “the mixture of all things, the wet, the dry, the hot, the cold, the bright, the dark, since there was much earth in it and an infinite number of seeds”.³⁵ Contrary to the Greek properties-objects, the Indian properties-abstracts are dependent on the locus in which they reside. Similarly to the substantivized adjectives, the Greek participle with the definite article τὸ ὄν was recognized as an object *per se*, while the Sanskrit abstracts *sattva* and *sattā* were considered as properties of *sat*.

Although Sāṃkhya and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika used similar words (*sattva* and *sattā*) to denote being, their meaning differed. In the language of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, *sat* and *sattā* preserved more the durative existential meaning and accepted less qualificative meaning. A better articulation of being was provided by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika’s opposition to *satkārya-vāda* of Sāṃkhya. Instead of considering the world as a gradual evolution of *prakṛti*, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika assumed the plurality of entities which come into being and perish. Therefore, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika sensed better the difference between being and non-being.

In *Vaiśeṣikasūtra*, there are three words that denote being: *sat*, *sattā* and *bhāva*. The latter is derived from the verb *bhavati* ‘to become, to be (as a result of coming into being)’ and denotes ‘coming into being, being’. *Bhāva* in the Vaiśeṣika system is a universal (*sāmānya*) which does not differentiate among the entities.³⁶ *Bhāva* is a recurring universal attached to every *sat*.³⁷

Besides *bhāva*, Kaṇāda also uses *sattā*, which is formally equivalent to Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *sattva*. The main difference between Kaṇāda’s *sattā* and Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *sattva* is that *sattā* is a non-scalable quality. *Sattā* is described as something different from *dravya*, *guṇa* and *karman*.³⁸ Due to the presence of *sattā* one can say that a substance, quality or action is *sat*.³⁹ Praśastapāda in *Padārthadharmasamgraha* identifies *sattā* with Kaṇāda’s *bhāva* and calls it

³³ Matilal, *The Navya-Nyāya Doctrine of Negation*, 33–34.

³⁴ Cf. Snell’s remark on substantivation in Greek: “Der bestimmte Artikel leitet in solchen Substantivierungen Dreifaches: Er fixiert das Undingliche, setzt es als Allgemein-Ding, vereinzelt dies Allgemeine aber auch zu einem Bestimmten, über das ich Aussagen machen kann”. (Bruno Snell, “Die naturwissenschaftliche Begriffsbildung im Griechischen,” in *Um die Begriffswelt der Vorsokratiker*, Hans-Georg Gadamer (Hrsg.), Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968, 21–43, 26).

³⁵ ἡ σύμμιξις πάντων χρημάτων, τοῦ τε διεροῦ καὶ τοῦ ξηροῦ καὶ τοῦ θερμοῦ καὶ τοῦ ψυχροῦ καὶ τοῦ λαμπροῦ καὶ τοῦ ζοφεροῦ, καὶ γῆς πολλῆς ἐνεούσης καὶ σπερμάτων ἀπειρων πλῆθος (59 DK B 4, 33–37).

³⁶ VS. 1.2.4.

³⁷ VS. 1.2.17.

³⁸ dravyaguṇakarmabhyo ‘rthāntaram sattā (VS. 1.2.8).

³⁹ sad iti yato dravyaguṇakarmasu sā sattā (VS. 1.2.7).

'the higher universality'.⁴⁰ This usage of *sattā* as a non-scalable property shows that *sat* in the Vaiśeṣika school was perceived in the existential rather than in qualificative the sense.

Although Praśastapāda identified *sattā* with Kaṇāda's *bhāva* and this identification was taken for granted in the later Vaiśeṣika tradition, in the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* this synonymy is not absolute. Halbfass suggested that these terms probably reflected different sources of Vaiśeṣika ontology.⁴¹ In order to understand the meaning of the words, we should not neglect the fact that in *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* these terms have correlates: *sattā* is related to *sat* and *asat*, while *bhāva* correlates with *abhāva*. In Kaṇāda's vocabulary, the usage of (*a*)*bhāva* prevails over the usage of (*a*)*sat*(*tā*) with the ratio 83 to 28. The frequent usage of (*a*)*bhāva* resulted from Kaṇāda's way of reasoning. In most cases Kaṇāda uses (*a*)*bhāva* in ablative or locative 'because of (non)existence (of something)' and draws a certain conclusion. *Sat* is not used in ablative to denote a logical cause, it appears only in locative three times in the same construction, *sati sannikarṣe* + Gen. 'when there is a close contact (of something with something)',⁴² yet in this case it denotes circumstance rather than cause. *Sat* and *asat* either occur in the sentences without a cause–consequence structure or appear only in the consequence as a predicative participle or substantive.⁴³ Does this usage imply the semantic difference between (*a*)*sat* and (*a*)*bhāva*? In my opinion, the usage of (*a*)*bhāvāt* as a cause is probably related to its primary meaning '(non)appearance, (non)manifestation'. In this case, (*a*)*bhāva* is a particular act of being or manifestation that serves to draw a certain conclusion. On the contrary, (*a*)*sat* preserves its durative meaning, therefore, it is more convenient to use it in general statements. It was quite logical that in *Padārthadharmasamgraha* *sattā*, was substituted for *bhāva* as a higher universality. But since *sattā* was applicable only to the three categories (*dravya*, *guṇa* and *karman*)⁴⁴, Praśastapāda had to describe the ontological status of the other three categories (*sāmānya*, *viśeṣa* and *samavāya*). Here he also resorted to the verb *asti* and derived the abstract *astitva* as the highest universality.⁴⁵ Although it is difficult to define the difference between *sattā* and *astitva*, it can be assumed that *astitva* means a more general being. As Praśastapāda ascribes to all the six categories not only *astitva*, but also *jñeyatva* ("knowability") and *abhidheyatva* ("nameability"), I think that Halbfass rightly interprets *astitva* relating it with the enumeration of the world: "*astitva* can be applied to anything that is

⁴⁰ tatra param sattā mahāviśayatvāt sā cānuvṛtter eva hetuvāt sāmānyam eva "Existence is higher universality for it belongs to the largest number of things and is a cause of extensive intellection" (PDhS. 2.2(12)).

⁴¹ Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is*, 142.

⁴² VS. 2.1.15; 2.2.1; 3.2.6.

⁴³ E. g., *kriyāguṇavyapadeśābhāvād asat* "[an effect is antecedently] non-existent, inasmuch as there is non-existence of actions and qualities" (Kaṇ 9.1). *asati cābhāvāt* "there is non-existence [of exaltation] when [eating of pure food] does not exist" (Kaṇ 6.2.11). Other examples of thematic usage of *asat* "absence" are VS. 9. 1–7.

⁴⁴ PDhS. 2.3(17).

⁴⁵ PDhS. 2.3(16)

an enumerable and classifiable ingredient of the world, including reality itself'.⁴⁶ It can be assumed that *astitva* describes what has its identity in the most general sense of being.

Although Praśastapāda used the verb *asti* and its derivatives to denote general being, in Kaṇāda's usage of (*a*)*bhāva* and (*a*)*sat* one can see an attempt to unify 'becoming' and 'being' and to treat both words as synonyms. This is evident in his thematic usage of *abhāva* and *asat* as 'absences'. In *Vaiśeṣikasūtra*'s first adhyāya of the ninth book Kaṇāda exposed his theory of four varieties of absences. He argued in favour of *asatkāryavāda* on the basis that one cannot ascribe actions and qualities to an effect before it comes into existence.⁴⁷ In this statement he uses *asat* as a predicate to *kārya*, while in 9.7 he also speaks about prior non-existence and uses *abhāva* as a term to antecedent non-existence.⁴⁸ Here we may see the primary meaning of *abhāva* as 'non-appearance, non-manifestation'. However, Kaṇāda tried to assimilate *abhāva* with *asat*, therefore he maintains that "*Is not (nāsti)* designates nothing else but what has not come into being (*abhūta*)" (VS. 9.9).

Although Kaṇāda accepted the synonymy of *abhāva* and *asat*, the later Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika authors were not so consistent in the assimilation of the two terms. Gotama in *Nyāyasūtra* uses *asat* to refer to a thing which hasn't come into being, yet we can establish it by our understanding (*buddhisiddham*) (NS. 4.1.49). But to him the *terminus technicus* of absence is *abhāva* which he understands as an absence of a mark (*lakṣaṇa*) that marks out an object from the objects that have this mark (NS. 2.2.8). As a mark always belongs to a certain object, so *abhāva* is also related to a particular object. Matilal underlines that it was the common assumption of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school to treat absence only as the absence of something.⁴⁹ Also in epistemology Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika rejected the opinion that *abhāva* is a special means of right knowledge (*prāmāṇya*) and considered it to be an inference (*anumāna*).⁵⁰ Therefore, one can be aware of absence only after analysis of a certain situation and only of a particular object. I think this close relation between absence and its counterpositive (*pratiyogin*) explains why Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika chose *abhāva* rather than *asat* as the *terminus technicus* for absence. *Abhāva* in non-thematic usage always described a condition of something, so its philosophical usage did not essentially modify its meaning. On the other hand, *abhāva* had a dynamic, while *asat* had a durative aspect of meaning, therefore *abhāva* could better render the meaning of prior absence (*prāgābhāva*) and posterior absence (*dhvaṃsābhāva*).

The semantics of the *termini technici* influenced the conception of reality in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. The positive description of the world was unified under *sattā* and *astitva*, while the negative conception of reality was split into an infinite number of *abhāvas*. The multiplicity

⁴⁶ Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is*, 144.

⁴⁷ VS. 9.1.

⁴⁸ *tathābhāve bhāvapratyakṣatvāc ca* "likewise in the [case of antecedent] non-existence, [the perception that a thing is existent results] from perception of existence" (VS. 9.9).

⁴⁹ Matilal, *The Navya-Nyāya Doctrine of Negation*, 52.

⁵⁰ NS. 2.2.1. PDhS. 8.12.2.2.A(225.14)

and reality of *abhāvas* prevented the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas from creating the absolute conception of negation, comparable to the Greek τ· μὴ ὄν. In Greek philosophy, absolute negation was a starting point for creating the concept of empty space. In Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika such a concept was not perceived. This is clearly seen in Gaṅgeśa's, founder's of Navya-Nyāya, treatise *Tattvacintāmaṇi*. The first part of this treatise is titled *Abhāvavāda* and is dedicated to the discussion of *abhāva*. In the discussion of Naiyāyika with an opponent, the sentence *bhūtale ghaṭo nāsti* "there is no pot on the ground" is analysed. According to Naiyāyikas, the sentence denoted a substratum–superstratum relation between the absence of the pot and the ground (*ādhārādheyabhāva*).⁵¹ The objector contradicts Naiyāyika and insists that in this case there is no such relation but only the ground.⁵² What remains 'unnoticed' in this discussion is the empty space left by the removed pot.

Being unable to create the concept of space out of the absence, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika developed positive concepts to denote the container or place of the things. There were two main concepts, *ākāśa* and *diś*, pretending to denote space. However, neither of the concepts developed into a homogeneous space. *Ākāśa* was conceived as an all-pervading substance which bears sound as its *guṇa*.⁵³ *Ākāśa* preserved its physical characteristic, therefore, as Lysenko puts it, for Vaiśeṣikas "*ākāśa* is not an emptiness (empty room) suggestive of some motion, either mechanical or mental, but rather a 'fullness,' because it fills up the universe".⁵⁴ The concept *diś* was related to spatial localization of things. According to Kaṇāda, *diś* is inferred from statements like "this [is remote, etc.] from this".⁵⁵ In a similar way Praśastapāda originates from *diś* the notion of quarters of space.⁵⁶ Yet this function of relating things is the only function of *diś*. The characteristics of size (*parimaṇa*) and distance (being prior to *paratva* and posterior to *aparatva*) are regarded as qualities of things⁵⁷ and *diś* doesn't account for the qualities. It is evident that the positive concepts *ākāśa* and *diś* vaguely resembled the concept of space: *ākāśa* functioned as a container of things, while *diś* accounted for the positional relations. I think that the multiplicity of *abhāvas* was the reason for the inability of Vaiśeṣikas to develop one negative conception of reality.

To summarize, the main features of the Sanskrit verb *asti* and its derivatives were to convey the durative and the qualificative meanings. The qualificative meaning was enhanced by the coining of abstracts with the suffix *-tva* (*-tā*), and this meaning prevailed in Sāṃkhya philosophy. In the texts of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, the derivatives from *asti* to a greater extent preserved the durative existential meaning that led to a universal conception of being. As *asti*

⁵¹ GT. 1.2.

⁵² GT. 1.9.

⁵³ VS. 2.1.26-28. PDhS. 5(49.5).

⁵⁴ Victoria Lysenko, "The Vaiśeṣika notions of *ākāśa* and *diś* from the perspective of Indian ideas of space," in *Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities* 59 (1997): 417–447, 431.

⁵⁵ VS. 2.2.10.

⁵⁶ PDhS. 6.3(66).

⁵⁷ VS. 7.1.15–17; 7.2.25–27.

lacked the dynamic content, it was complemented by the derivatives of *bhavati*, but only in a negative description of reality. This led to a non-unified conception of negative reality or non-being.

Abbreviations:

- Brh. – *Brhad-Āraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, Mādhyandina-Recension / Kāṇva-Recension, on the basis of the editions by Albrecht Weber, *The Catapatha-Brāhmaṇa in the Mādhyandina-Cākhā with extracts from the commentaries of Sāyaṇa, Harisvāmin and Dvivedānga*, Berlin 1849 (Repr., Chowkhamba Sanskrit Ser. 96), Varanasi, 1964 and Willem Caland, *The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa in the Kāṇvīya Recension*, rev. ed. Raghu Vira, Lahore 1926 (repr. Delhi, 1983), edited by Marcos Albino, Erlangen 1996-1997; TITUS version by Jost Gippert, Frankfurt a/M, 31.1.1997 / 28.2.1998 / 21.6.1998 / 15.10.1999 / 1.6.2000. Available from: <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/yvw/upanisad/bau/bau.htm>>.
- Chānd. – *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, edited under the direction of Peter Schreiner by M. Christof, J. Gengnagel, K.-P. Gietz, A. Heckel, H. Petzel, M. Püschel, K. Sahni, J. Schiefele, Th. Weinert, Zürich 1985–1986, and corrected by Andreas Bigger, Gerald Grobbel, Salvatore Scarlata, Peter Schreiner, Heinz-Werner Weßler, Zürich 1990; TITUS version by Jost Gippert, Frankfurt a/M, 28.2.1998 / 21.6.1998 / 20.10.1999 / 1.6.2000. Available from: <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/sv/upanisad/chup/chup.htm>>.
- GT. – Gaṅgeśa *Tattvacintāmaṇi* in Bimal Krishna Matilal, *The Navya-Nyāya Doctrine of Negation. The Semantics and Ontology of Negative Statements in Navya-Nyāya Philosophy*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968, 173–189.
- NS. – *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, transl. M. M. Satisa Chandra Vidyābhūṣana, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990².
- PdhS. – [Prašastapāda *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha*] *The Praśastapādabhāṣya with Commentary Nyāyakandalī* of Śrīdhara, ed. V. P. Dvivedin, Sri Garbi Dass Oriental Ser. 13, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1895. Available from: <http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/ebene_1/fiindolo/gretil/1_sanskr/6_sastra/3_phil/vaisesik/paddhs_u.htm>.
- RV. – *Ṛgveda-Samhitā*, on the basis of the edition by Th. Aufrecht, Bonn 1877 (2. Aufl.), entered by H. S. Ananthanarayana, Austin / Texas; TITUS version with corrections by Fco. J. Martinez Garcia, synoptically arranged with the metrically restored version by B. van Nooten and G. Holland and the “Padapātha” version by A. Lubotsky, by Jost Gippert, Frankfurt a/M, 31.1.1997 / 28.2.1998 / 24.6.1998 / 22.10.1999 / 1.6.2000. Available from: <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/rv/mt/rv.htm>>.
- Śatap. Br. – *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, Mādhyandina-Recension, on the basis of the edition by Albrecht Weber, *The Catapatha-Brāhmaṇa in the Mādhyandina-Cākhā with extracts from the commentaries of Sāyaṇa, Harisvāmin and Dvivedānga*, Berlin 1849 (Repr. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Ser. 96), Varanasi, 1964, entered (books 1–11, 13–14) by H. S. Ananthanarayana (supervisor W. P. Lehmann), Austin, Texas, 1971; reedited by J. R. Gardner, Iowa, 1998; book 12 entered by Makoto Fushimi, Kyoto / Harvard 1999. TITUS version by Jost Gippert, Frankfurt a/M, 31.1.1997 / 28.2.1998 / 21.6.1998 / 14.10.1999 / 1.6.2000. Available from: <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/yvw/sbm/sbm.htm>>.
- SK. – *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa*, trans. Nandalal Sinha, in *The Sacred Book of Hindus*, vol. XI: *Sāṃkhya Philosophy*, Allahabad: Apurva Krishna Bose, at the Indian Press, 1915.

Taitt. – *Taittirīya-Upaniṣad* edited (in ITRANS format) by Kartik Jayaraman: TITUS version by Jost Gippert, Frankfurt a/M, 31.1.1997 / 28.2.1998 / 21.6.1998 / 19.10.1999 / 1.6.2000. Available: <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/yvs/upanisad/taittup/taitt.htm>>.

Taitt. Br. – *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa* ed. Makoto Fushimi, Ōsaka; TITUS version by Jost Gippert, Frankfurt a/M, 31.1.97 / 28.2.1998 / 21.6.1998 / 19.10.1999 / 1.6.2000. Available: <http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/yvs/tb/tb.htm>. 02 Nov. 2004.

VS. – Kaṇāda *Vaiśeṣikasūtra*. Available from: <<http://lapc01.ippan.numazu-ct.ac.jp/c/VSCtext.htm>>.

Greek abbreviations are used from: *Greek–English Lexicon*, ed. H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, rev. and augmented by Sir H. S. Jones, with a Supplement 1968, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1940.

BŪTIS IR ATSIRADIMAS NJAJOS-VAIŠEŠIKOS FILOSOFIJOJE

Saulius Šileikis

S a n t r a u k a

Šio straipsnio tikslas yra ištirti buvimą ir atsiradimą reiškiančių veiksmažodžių (*asti* ir *bhavati*) ir jų vedinių semantiką Njajos-Vaišešikos tekstuose bei kontekstualizuoti jų reikšmes Indijos intelektualiniame diskurse. Lingvistinėje analizėje naudojamas komparatyvistinis metodas, kuriuo siekama palyginti bendraindooeuropietiškos kilmės žodžių semantinę raidą sanskrito ir graikų kalbose bei šios raidos įtaką filosofinių sąvokų formavimuisi. Straipsnyje bandoma parodyti, kad duratyvinę-egzistencinę reikšmę turinčio veiksmažodžio *asti* vediniai sanskrite vis labiau įgijo kvalifikatyvinę reikšmę, kuri įsitvirtino Upaniṣadų *sadvidya* mokyme ir Sankhjos filosofijoje. Njajos-Vaišešikos mokykla, atmesdama Sankhjos *satkāryā-vada*, aiškiau artikuliuo *sat* ir *asat* perskyrą, todėl jos terminijoje vyravo duratyvinė-egzistencinė *sat* ir jo vedinių reikšmė, leidusi sukurti būties (*sattā* ir *astitva*), kaip aukščiausios universalijos, konceptą. Tačiau *asti* vediniai Njajos-Vaišešikos filosofijoje įsitvirtino tik pozityviosios realybės įvardijimui, tuo tarpu nebuvimą reišė veiksmažodžio *bhavati* vedinys *abhāva*. Kadangi *bhavati* reišė dinaminį įvykį „atsiradimą“, todėl *abhāva* taip pat reišė konkretų nebuvimo/neatsiradimo atvejį. Ši pluralistinė Njajos-Vaišešikos nebuvimo samprata neleido sukurti vieningo nebūties koncepto, eventualiai šioje Indijos filosofinėje mokykloje nesusiformavo ir tuščios erdvės samprata.

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