

# **THE PHILOSOPHY OF BHARTṚHARI: SOME PROBLEMS**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled **THE PHILOSOPHY OF BHARTRHARI: SOME PROBLEMS** has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Nirmal Kumar Roy, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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## ABSTRACT

The Philosophy of Bhartṛhari is purely cognitive in the sense that it concerns only the cognitive world i.e the world which can be known. Actually, the cognitive background of Bhartṛhari's philosophy is analysed in my research work. Here an attempt is made to show that Bhartṛhari's philosophical discussion is confined only within the mental world. For him, only our mental world can be known and only our known world i.e the mental world can be expressed through language. So, his whole philosophical discussion is centred around mental world. The world of his philosophical discussion is the world of language. Bhartṛhari opined that the world of language consists of three units- *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*. *Paśyantī* is the state of pure consciousness, *madhyamā* is the state of idea or thought and *vaikharī* is the state of verbal language. First of all idea comes in our mind. Subsequently we feel an urge to express our ideas to others. Consequently we take the help of verbal language i.e *vaikharī* to communicate the same to others. This *vaikharī* level of language varies from subject to subject, from society to society but the other two level do not vary in that way. The verbal language may be high and low, rough and sweet, Bengali or English but the idea or thought remains the same. In this context one important point must be taken care of that the idea or thought is always intertwined with language, one cannot be divorced from another. No thought is possible without language. The only difference between the language of the *madhyamā* state and that of the *vaikharī* level is that the former one is non-verbal but the later one is verbal. The *paśyantī* level of language is presupposed as the locus of idea or thought. In this sense the state of *paśyantī* is inferred by the common people like us and only a few people who are the seers of truth can know that state directly through their intuition.

An attempt is made to discuss here about the *sphoṭa* theory of language advocated by other *śābdīka* philosophers from *veda* onwards and tried to compare them with Bhartṛhari's philosophy. Actually, Bhartṛhari did not take into account of the controversy raised by the opponents of the *sphoṭa* theory like Mīmāṃsakas, the Naiyāyikas and the vedāntins against Grammarians. *Vākyapadīya* is the earliest work in which *sphoṭa* doctrine of Grammarians is expounded. A comparative study between *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartṛhari and *Brahman* of Śaṅkarāchārya is also discussed in the present work. Bhartṛhari and Śaṅkarāchārya both of them claimed that there is only one ultimate reality. The ultimate reality accepted by Bhartṛhari is *Śabdabrahman* and the ultimate reality accepted by Śaṅkarāchārya is *Brahman*. The basic difference between them is that the ultimate reality of Śaṅkarāchārya is a metaphysical entity but the ultimate reality accepted by Bhartṛhari is purely cognitive entity. Actually, Bhartṛhari aimed to describe the world in terms of language and he technically used the term language in his philosophy. Actually, an attempt has been made in the present work to discuss Bhartṛhari's philosophy free from traditional metaphysical allegiances.

## PREFACE

Bhartṛhari is one of the greatest linguistic philosophers and language for him is a conscious force, the unit of awareness. In the present work language has been used as a combination of two; one is inner meaning revealing language i.e *sphoṭa* and another is verbal utterance i.e *dhvani* through which the *sphoṭa* is manifested. *Śabda-yoga* in *Vākyapadīya* is associated with the enquiry of the indivisible word which is sequence less in character. A serious discussion is made in the present work about the cognitive approach of Bhartṛhari's philosophy in connection with interpreting and analyzing cognition by language. The cognitive activity in his philosophy is confined to the awareness character of beings. Metaphysical assumptions are referred in Bhartṛhari's philosophy as the basis of achieving religious goal but he did not build his philosophy from the metaphysical viewpoint. Metaphysical assumptions are not accepted by Bhartṛhari as the object of philosophical reflections. An attempt has been made here to discuss about the concept of *Śabdādvaīta* by analysing cognition through language.

The present work is associated with the concept of *Śabdādvaīta* which is presented as the analysis of thought infused with language. In *Vākyapadīya* the concept of *sphoṭa* is taken as the cognitive beings. The philosophy of Bhartṛhari is developed on the basis of the fact that the cognition cannot be differentiated from language and the analytic divisions are artificially imposed upon the indivisible cognition. Actually, it is understood as a whole. We have discussed here the cognitive holism of Bhartṛhari's philosophy which clearly indicates the ubiquitous character of indivisible language. Here we have maintained that cognition cannot be made possible isolated from language. So, both the determinate and indeterminate cognition are made possible infused with language. Even the ontic existence of the metaphysical entities cannot be inferred if they are not cognized infused with language. Actually, language is not accepted here only as a linguistic property but as the cognitive unit also.

The presentation of the whole work consists of six chapters and it contained with the problem of language and reality and tries to relate them from the cognitive viewpoint. Actually, our purpose is to discuss here the *advaitic* view of Bhartṛhari regarding the concept of ultimate reality. But it is done not from the metaphysical viewpoint but from the cognitive perspective of his philosophy.

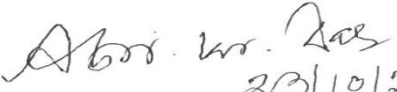
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## Chapter-I

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I have dealt with the concept of *Śabdabrahman* as it is discussed in *Vākyapadīya* by Bhartṛhari. I have tried to explain the cognitive background of Bhartṛhari's philosophy. Bhartṛhari is one of the greatest linguistic philosophers and he is a monist. According to him there is only one reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman*. For him, *Śabdabrahman* is the ultimate reality and the world and everything in this world are manifestations of *Śabdabrahman*<sup>1</sup>. One and the same *Śabda Aum* is the root of all other *Śabdās*. More clearly to say whatever we come across in the world ultimately comes from *Aum*. *Aum* or *Śabdabrahman* is the seed of the whole world. The whole world can be brought under three categories- the knower, the known and the knowledge. All of them come from *Śabdabrahman*. *Śabdabrahman* remains in our mind in the form of idea or thought or knowledge or consciousness and in the external world it, the same reality remains in verbal or written form or in the form of external objects. More importantly the knower or the speaker and the hearer are also nothing but the different form of the *Śabdabrahman* itself. But it is worthy to note that the term *Śabda* in the philosophy of Bhartṛhari has been used in a technical sense. In ordinary sense, *Śabda* means what we can perceive through ear. But Bhartṛhari used the term *Śabda* in a different sense. For him, the term *Śabda* is a combination of two, one is inner meaning revealing language and another is verbal utterance. Actually, we know that Bhartṛhari is a linguistic philosopher and he wanted to describe the world in terms of *Śabda* (language). Bhartṛhari claimed that language, thought and cognition, all of the three are identical. But this language is not like verbal language through which we can communicate with each other. Verbal language is the instrument through which thought or inner meaning revealing language can be manifested and the hearer grasp the intention of the speaker. The language understood by Bhartṛhari consists of two units- inner and outer. The

inner unit stands for consciousness, thought or idea and the outer unit stands for verbal language which is uttered and heard and is used as a tool for communication.

Now, if we accept Bhartrhari's standpoint that language, thought and cognition all of the three are identical then there must be a linguistic form within us and we think about something in a linguistic form. In the case of a speaker and a hearer, when a speaker wants to utter a sentence to express his thought then before uttering the sentence the thought of the speaker remains in the inner linguistic form and this linguistic form is inner language. In the same way after hearing the utterances of the speaker, the hearer understands the intention of the speaker and he understands the intention of the speaker with the aid of linguistic form. After seeing the beauty of a picture when we utter the sentence, oh! How beautiful it is, then before uttering the sentence the emotion remains in the inner linguistic form and because of this inner linguistic form we can utter the sentence oh! How beautiful it is. It is worthy to note that all of us have one and the same linguistic form but we are not aware of that linguistic form. Knowledge and inner linguistic form, these two, are identical. Both of them are intertwined. One cannot be separated from another. Knowledge is possible within a linguistic form. So, it can be said that there is an inner linguistic form within us and because of this inner linguistic form we can use verbal language. So, we think, the combination of language, thought and cognition is an inner linguistic form and it is one and common for all of us.

Next, we have focused on the levels of language advocated by Bhartrhari which are known as *paśyantī*, *madhyamā*, and *vaikharī*<sup>2</sup>. Among these three levels *paśyantī* is the pure one and it is free from ignorance. This *paśyantī* level of language is the inner linguistic form and it is one and common for all of us. We live in a society so we want to communicate with each other, we want to express our thought, we want to share our feelings and for these purposes *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* levels come. But these two levels are not free from ignorance. But these two levels are not possible without *paśyantī* level which is pure inner linguistic form.

According to Bhartṛhari this *paśyantī* level actually is known as *Śabdabrahman* and it is pure consciousness. But we think pure consciousness has an ultimate linguistic form which is *Aum* and it cannot be manifested through *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* level of language. It is actually, inner language which is known as *Śabdabrahman*. Here, we have used the term linguistic form to indicate the ultimate inner language i.e *Aum*. Because of our ignorance we the common people cannot realise the ultimate inner language *Aum*. Only a few *Ṛsis* can realise *Aum*. When our ignorance goes away only then we can realise that ultimate inner language *Aum* which is indescribable. Actually this ultimate inner language *Aum* is pure consciousness. Pure consciousness is actually pure understanding which is justified by itself in a linguistic form. There is no ignorance in pure understanding.

In my work I have also tried to analyse why Bhartṛhari claimed that *Śabdabrahman* is the ultimate reality out of which knowing souls, known objects and experiences come into being. I think Bhartṛhari's philosophical view cannot be ignored because as *Śabdabrahman* means pure consciousness so if pure consciousness is not there within us then no experiences comes into us and we cannot identify an object as black, blue, small, big etc. But it is important to note that pure consciousness is one and common to all of us and because of our ignorance we can see the differences in this world. Say for example, after seeing different objects like, chair, table, books etc. we can use different sentences like sit on the chair, read the book, it is a table etc. to communicate with others and to express our feelings but among these differences there is an unique one i.e. objectness which resides in pure consciousness. Actually, we can see and indicate different objects in this world because of our pure consciousness which is known as *Śabdabrahman*. So, it can be said that experiences depends on pure consciousness or *Śabdabrahman*. In the next chapter of my work an attempt has been made to show how the world of experiences depends on *Śabdabrahman*. Obviously, it is an idealistic view of describing the world but we think this view is more authentic to achieve the

ultimate reality which is *Śabdabrahman*. Bhartṛhari wanted to describe the world in terms of language. In Bhartṛhari's philosophy, language means inner language which is *Aum* and *Aum* is identical with pure consciousness which is one and common to all of us. *Aum* is a pure inner linguistic form which is also known as pure consciousness and all knowledges are resided in a pure inner linguistic form. If we think deeply then we can see that if we are not purely conscious about the world and worldly objects or if we don't have the pure inner linguistic form about the world then we cannot describe the world and worldly objects by outer language or by verbal language. So, all of us have an inner pure linguistic form which is metaphorically termed as *Aum*. This *Aum* is actually pure consciousness. According to Bhartṛhari *Śabdabrahman* actually is pure consciousness which is known as *paśyantī*.

Now the question comes if there is only one ultimate reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* then how we can explain the differences in this world? Following Bhartṛhari it can be said that the differences in this world are actually modifications of one and the same *Śabdabrahman* and one and the same *Śabdabrahman* reveals as many in the form of different objects due to our ignorance. As we are not aware of the real nature of pure consciousness i.e. *Aum*, we believe in the differences in the world. When our ignorance goes away then we can realise the ultimate reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* and the false knowledge of plurality of objects goes. Here we find the echos of the well known philosophy of Śaṅkarāchārya who said '*Brahma satya jagat mitthyā*'. According to Śaṅkarāchārya *Brahman* is the only reality and the jagat (the world) which appears as plural as false. Likewise, Bhartṛhari also believed that the only true reality is *Śabdabrahman* which is absolutely one and all sorts of plurality of the world either in the form of language or in the form of objects is false. Here another problem is yet to solve. So far as our discussion is concerned the problem of the plurality of the world is resolved. But what is about the plurality of the knowers, the souls? We see in our day to day experience that I am different from you. And again both you and me are different from them,

the others. Thus it is seen that the plurality of the souls is a fact. We think the same problem can easily be solved following the well known reply given by Śaṅkarāchārya- '*jīva brahmaiva na paraḥ*'. In fact *jīva*, the soul is identical with *Brahman* but due to ignorance we consider ourselves as different from *Bharman*. When our ignorance goes the knowledge of *Tattvamasi* comes and we realise that we are one with *Brahman*. The observation of Bhartṛhari is very close to that of Śaṅkara. But one should not underestimate the originality of the thinking of Bhartṛhari because as he is predecessors of Śaṅkara the question of copying the philosophy of Śaṅkara does not arise. The *vedic* concept of *Tattvamasi* means You and I am one and same. Here 'You' means *Brahman* and 'I' means conscious being within me. But it is important to note that *Brahman* also exists within us. *Brahman* actually is pure consciousness within conscious being. So, it is better to say that *Brahman* is combined with conscious being. But owing to ignorance conscious being cannot realise *Brahman* or pure consciousness. Following Bhartṛhari it can be said that pure consciousness must has a linguistic form which is indivisible. This inner indivisible linguistic form is *Aum*.

In my work I have tried to focus on a difference between Bhartṛhari and Buddhist philosophers regarding the status of knowledge. According to Bhartṛhari knowledge must be *svavikalpaka* but on the other hand, according to Buddhist knowledge must be *nirvikalpaka*. So, a sharp distinction is seen between Bhartṛhari and Buddhist philosophers as per as the status of knowledge is concerned. As Bhartṛhari claimed that language, thought and cognition, all of the three, are identical, it can be said that knowledge and language are inseparable. So, according to Bhartṛhari knowledge necessarily is *svikalpaka*. But according to Buddhist philosophers there is no any inner language which is identical with knowledge. According to them knowledge must be *nirvikalpaka*. I think, the distinction between them is made because of the concept of momentary principle accepted by Buddhist philosophers. This momentary principle says that everything exists just for a moment and in the next

moment there is a new thing and this new thing also exists just for a moment and in the next moment again there is a new thing and it is an ongoing process. That is why Buddhist philosophers claim that when we say that this is an object then this object is not same with the knowledge of that object. Say for example, when we see a table then our knowledge is actually knowledge of table1 and when after seeing the table1 we say that it is a table then the table actually becomes table2. For using language we need atleast two moments. In the first moment we perceive an object but in the subsequent moment we pass a statement. Momentary principle says that Table1 exists just for a moment and when we say that this is a table then Table 1 is no more, it already turned into Table 2 but Table 2 is yet to be known. So, the languages we use to describe the object known always miss the object. So, it can be said that through language we cannot explain our knowledge properly. So, our knowledge must be *nirvikalpaka*. Everything exists just for a moment so language cannot explain anything as it is.

One problem may crop up regarding the levels of *Śabdabrahman* given by Bhartṛhari. As far as the explanation particularly of the *paśyantī* and *madhyamā* level of *Śabdabrahman* is concerned it can be said that these two states of *Śabdabrahman* are actually non-verbal consciousness. Now the question comes, is that non-verbal consciousness identical with consciousness of our soul or it is different from it? In either of the cases problem comes. If that consciousness is the consciousness of our soul then no doubt it would be dependent upon our soul. In that case *Śabdabrahman* cannot be considered to be the ultimate Reality. If it is otherwise, that is if that *Śabdabrahman* is different from the consciousness of our soul then why it would be there within us? And again why it would be produced from the very centre of our navel part of our body? We think these questions may arise regarding the *paśyantī* and *madhyamā* level of *Śabdabrahman*. Actually, according to Bhartṛhari *paśyantī* level is known as *Śabdabrahman* and it is inner meaning revealing language out of which knowing souls,

known objects and experiences come into beings. If knowing souls come from *paśyantī* i.e the *Śabdabrahman* then it implies that *Śabdabrahman* is the cause and souls are the objects. Effects are dependent upon the cause but the cause is not dependent upon the effect. So, *Śabdabrahman* or *paśyantī* and *madhyamā* cannot be dependent upon our soul but our soul itself is dependent upon the *Śabdabrahman* or *paśyantī* and *madhyamā*. So, it is accepted as ultimate Reality.

So, in reply to the above mentioned questions following Bhartṛhari it can be said that Bhartṛhari's philosophical inquiry is actually a cognitive analytic inquiry into the nature of cognition and communication<sup>3</sup>. For him, the real is the intelligible being or idea which revealed non-differently in the mind by language. He accepts language as a unit of distinct and self-determinate cognition or as a revealing force of awareness<sup>4</sup>. According to Bhartṛhari the existence of Beings that is things-in-themselves is actually an ontological substratum of the cognition and of the objects of cognition revealed in the mind by language. I think Bhartṛhari did not speculate into the problem of Reality on the basis of mystical experience. He interpreted the problems from the point of view of cognition as revealed in the mind by language. For him, the outside reality is inferred on the basis of the cognition revealed by language. We think Bhartṛhari was not interested in the ontic nature of things. He discusses about the transcendental Beings as the ontological substratum of beings expressed by language in mind that is cognitive beings and this cognitive being is actually the unit of awareness in nature. For him, language is actually the revealing force of awareness. So, it can be said that the *paśyantī* level of language which is known as *Śabdabrahman* is the revealing force of awareness and because of this awareness the outside reality is inferred<sup>5</sup>. So, finally it can be said that the source of the entire world of individual things which consists only of *nāma* and *rūpa* is the *Śabdabrahman* which is the ultimate Reality mentioned by Bhartṛhari. So, on the basis of the above discussion it is clear that the philosophical approach of

Bhartṛhari is a cognitive one. He investigated beings from the point of view of cognition and not from the point of view of finding a Reality as its substratum.

According to Bhartṛhari Philosophy is a cognitive activity and as cognition is always infused by language Philosophy concerned with language primarily as a cognitive activity. We think Bhartṛhari wanted to show that as only ideas can be revealed in the mind by language, ideas are the objects of cognition and these objects of cognition are infused by language. The primacy of language in cognitive activities is most important. So, following Bhartṛhari it can be said that no knowledge can be possible without language and all knowledge is revealed by language<sup>6</sup>. That is why Bhartṛhari claimed that language, thought and cognition all of the three are identical. Actually Bhartṛhari's view on ultimate Reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* is a cognitive one. We think Bhartṛhari accepted language as the object of philosophical reflection because cognition can be revealed by language. According to him without language thought is not possible<sup>7</sup>. But it is important to note that he technically used the term language. If we follow Bhartṛhari's Philosophical view then, we think, the idea of private language does not arise. Because the inner meaning revealing language i.e. *sphoṭa* is ubiquitously given in the mind of all individuals. It is articulated variously through verbal utterances. The essential feature of language is to participate in a linguistic society and it can be possible only because of ubiquity of language that reveals cognition<sup>8</sup>. But it is important to note that though Bhartṛhari accepted inner meaning revealing language i.e. *sphoṭa* as the foundational being of the world of communication, he also gave importance to verbal utterances as the instrument through which *sphoṭa* can be manifested. So, verbal utterances and inner meaning revealing language are inseparably involved in the purpose of communication. I think the idea of private language does not arise in Bhartṛhari's philosophy because according to him language is ubiquitously given in the mind of all individuals and he believes in the ubiquity of language to explain communication.

According to Bhartṛhari language itself and the meanings revealed by it non-differently are the objects of cognition. So, both being and non-being are revealed in the mind by language. As language itself and its meaning reveal non-differently, unitary and indivisible cognition is accomplished by language. So, cognition independent of language ceases to be cognition. If we accept Bhartṛhari's viewpoint then it can be said that in every cognition language reveals itself first and then it reveals its meaning non-differently<sup>9</sup>. So, for him, no meaning is possible without language. Language forms itself an object of cognition through language. In cognition language is expressed by language and that is why it is an expressed entity also. It means language reveals itself as the object of cognition by language. Actually before revealing meaning language reveals itself first. So, it is both expressed and expresser. If the language that is the expresser is not revealed then no cognition can be possible as all cognition is expressed by language.

In Bhartṛhari's philosophy meaning is not independent of language because it is revealed non-differently in the mind by the language. These two are related with each other as expresser and expressed. For Bhartṛhari, when *Śabda* is manifested by verbal noises, it reveals its own nature i.e. *sphoṭa*. A sharp distinction is seen between perception process and the process of cognition by language. In the case of perceptual or inferential process there is a distance between the senses and the indications. Actually, after expressing knowledge the senses and the indications are separated from the external known object but language is not separated from the cognition in the case of verbal cognition. Following Bhartṛhari it can be said that *Śabda* is an inner meaning revealing unit which is ubiquitously given in all individuals and it is manifested by verbal noises. We cannot perform an action without cognition and no cognition is possible without language. So, the inner language i.e. *sphoṭa* is accepted by Bhartṛhari as potency to perform an action and without this potency we cannot perform an action. Even in the case of a dumb and deaf person who can't speak or hear, when

he intends to communicate, his bodily behaviour manifests the inner *sphoṭa* and after seeing his bodily behaviour the audience can understand his language. But it is true that through this process in all the cases determinate cognition cannot be possible to achieve. We think according to Bhartṛhari not only determinate cognition is infused with language but also indeterminate cognition is infused with language. So, both the determinate and indeterminate cognition is infused with language. In determinate cognition the expresser i.e *sphoṭa* and the expressed both are cognized distinctly but in the case of indeterminate cognition the expresser i.e *sphoṭa* is not revealed fully and that is why the expressed i.e meaning is not distinctly cognized. So, no cognition either determinate or indeterminate can be expressed without language i.e *sphoṭa*. Even *svapna* can be known distinctly because *svapna* is also intertwined with language. If language is not there then the illuminating nature of *svapna* can not be possible.

So, in the philosophy of Bhartṛhari the inner meaning revealing language i.e *sphoṭa* is not a mental construction. Actually, *sphoṭa* is the awareness that reveals itself and the meaning unitedly and it is common to all<sup>10</sup>. Expresser and the expressed are actually intelligible beings which are awareness in character. So it can be said that for Bhartṛhari language is not a metaphysical reality but is a cognitive being. Actually, he accepts metaphysical reality as the metaphysical substratum of the cognition revealed by language. Even the mind or soul is accepted by him as metaphysical substratum of the cognition which is revealed by language. Bhartṛhari did not accept metaphysical entities as directly cognized by language but for him these are logically inferred for seeking a metaphysical principle of the beings and these are revealed in the mind by the language as the metaphysical substratum of the cognition<sup>11</sup>.

Though Bhartṛhari's philosophy has a similarity with that of *Advaita vedāntins* and he is also a monist, there is a distinction between Bhartṛhari and *Advaita vedāntins* as far as the concept of ultimate reality is concerned. We think, on the basis of the holistic conception of *Brahman*

*Advaita vedāntins* deduce the solution of the philosophical problems but Bhartṛhari accepts *Śabdabrahman* as the ultimate reality and he accepts ultimate reality as the ontological substratum of the cognition. Actually, Bhartṛhari wanted to describe the world of communication by taking it as a cognitive problem and he claimed that the ontological substratum of cognition i.e. *Śabdabrahman* can be revealed by language in communication. Clearly it can be said that Reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* is an all pervading consciousness and it is common to all. Actually, *madhyamā* level is an intelligible language and we can perceive *vaikharī* level when intelligible language is cognized as a unit of awareness and after that meaning can be revealed in the mind. The *paśyantī* level i.e. *Śabdabrahman* is the subtlest among the three levels. *Paśyantī* level is the ontic substratum of intelligible language. I think, this ontic substratum of intelligible language is identical with pure consciousness and this pure consciousness is known as *Śabdabrahman*. But it is important to note that *Śabdabrahman* accepted by Bhartṛhari is one and same but due to our ignorance the ultimate reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* is revealed as many.

Now, one question may arise, why did Bhartṛhari accept *Śabda* as *Brahman*? In reply, it can be said that according to Bhartṛhari *Śabda* is not used only as a means of communication but for him, the term *Śabda* has also cognitive and spiritual significance. Actually for him, *Śabdabrahman* means pure consciousness which is common to all. Among the three levels of speech principle accepted by Bhartṛhari *paśyantī* level is known as *Śabdabrahman* i.e. pure consciousness. Bhartṛhari accepted that there are different layers of language and these are *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*. So, being the place of origin of different layers of language as well as being the same reality from subtle to gross it is called *Brahman*. I think, from cognitive viewpoint *Śabda* is the indivisible awareness and from metaphysical viewpoint *Śabda* is consciousness itself. This consciousness is not produced. It is manifested by human efforts in the form of verbal utterances. For Bhartṛhari, *Śabda* is eternal and it has

neither a beginning nor an end and hence, not subject to birth and death<sup>12</sup>. So, as *Brahman* also has neither a beginning nor an end and hence, not subject to birth and death, Bhartṛhari designated *Śabda* as *Brahman*. Besides this this is not the case that the concept of *Śabdabrahman* is purely a new concept. This concept is traced in *Upaniṣads* in the form of *Aum*.

So, on the basis of the above discussion it can be said that *Śabda* i.e eternal and indivisible reality is the cause of all elements but it is itself uncaused. Actually, Bhartṛhari accepted *Śabda* as the nature of all existing or non-existing things. *Śabdabrahman* i.e pure consciousness is comparable to the foundational metaphysical reality of the *Vedānta* i.e *Brahman*. Bhartṛhari accepted *Śabda* as *Brahman* because of its all-pervading and illuminating nature. So, if the question comes how *Śabda* can be taken as the nature of all existing and non-existing things, it can be said that everything can be pervaded by *Śabda*. All existing and non-existing things are of the nature of *Śabda* and everything is expressed by *Sabda*. It is important to note that Bhartṛhari accepted grammar as a means to realize the ultimate reality i.e *Śabdabrahman*. According to Bhartṛhari the indivisible language i.e *Śabdabrahman* is eternal and it has neither a beginning nor an end. We can not create or destroy it. It is eternally given within us and whenever our ignorance goes away then we can realize it. Verbal utterances are destroyed in the sequence of uttering but *Śabdabrahman* i.e pure consciousness is not destroyed with the destruction of those utterances. It is ubiquitously given in the mind as illuminating principle. Actually, Bhartṛhari accepted *Śabda* as awareness and the cognition of existent or non-existent being can be possible by it. If we accepted thought as imagination then that imagination cannot be possible without language because language infuse them. If we do not accept language prior to its articulations then the expectancy to speak or to articulate will not arise. Everything in this world can be communicated through language (*Śabda*) i.e awareness. If we are not aware of existent or of

non-existent beings then we cannot communicate those beings. These are expressed by language (*Śabda*). So, language is taken as a pre-requisite of the beginningless world of communication<sup>13</sup>.

From the cognitive viewpoint, Bhartṛhari accepted *sphoṭa* as the real *Śabda*, the expresser, indivisible and as an intelligible language. This *real Śabda* can be manifested by utterances and we can accept it as universal because like universal it is also eternal and it is not destroyed but it is prevented after and before its articulations. Actually, this real *Śabda* acts as a cause of the incentive to speak when revealed by language in the mind. Bhartṛhari has taken this *real Śabda* as an absolute one i.e. *Śabdabrahman* and it is not subject to birth and death. He accepted the *real Śabda* as eternal in the sense of beginningless of communication. So, it can be said that he accepts *Śabda* as eternal in the two different senses. The first one is, he accepts *Śabda* as eternal in the absolute sense which is not subject to birth and death. The second one is, he recognized *Śabda* as eternal in the sense of the beginningless of communication. So, in both of the senses Bhartṛhari accepted *Śabda* i.e. real word as eternal. In Bhartṛhari's philosophy it is claimed that this real word i.e. *Śabdabrahman* can be inferred as the ontological substratum of indivisible cognition revealed in communication. Being indivisible this cognition is not a construction out of parts. *Śabdabrahman* is not a construction out of a collection of external things or their qualities. Language is a unit of awareness in nature that is manifested by utterances. All cognitions can be cognized through this language.

Bhartṛhari was influenced by *Upaniṣads*. In *Upaniṣads* *Brahman* is accepted as almighty and omniscience. *Upanisadic Brahman* is taken as the material and efficient cause of this universe because of its *māyā śakti*. In the same way Bhartṛhari also has elucidated language i.e. real language as power. Influenced by the *Upaniṣadic* philosophy Bhartṛhari accepted language as a power because he wanted to elucidate that everything in this empirical world or

in the transcendental world are dependent on *Śabda* i.e real language for their illumination. Actually, he accepted *Śabda* as an expressive power of creation and cognition. It is true that if we accept language only as an association of letters then we cannot explain it as a cognitive unit. The language in the state of an idea i.e. meaning revealing language is explained as a cognitive unit. Actually, among the three levels of *Śabdabrahman* accepted by Bhartṛhari, the *paśyantī* level is ubiquitously given to all living beings as their own consciousness. This *paśyantī* level can be manifested by verbal utterances which is known as *vaikharī*. It revealed itself as an idea in the mind and this level is known as *madhyamā* level of *Śabdabrahman*. Through this process one can realized the all comprehensive consciousness i.e *Śabdabrahman*. Following Bhartṛhari we can say that the physical entities are actually the external substratum of the meaning of language. From the point of view of ontological substratum of cognition language is called as *paśyantī* i.e consciousness itself or *Śabdabrahman* and from the subtle viewpoint language is known as inner meaning revealing language i.e language as awareness or idea. This inner meaning revealing language, thought and cognition all of the three are identical. It is worthy to note that though language and meaning are non-different we accept language and meaning as different due to our ignorance, we cannot realize its meaning revealing or awareness character. When our ignorance goes away then we can realize that there is only one reality i.e *Śabdabrahman* and language and meaning revealed non-differently in the mind. It is important to note that the differences in this world are possible because of the power of one and the same reality i.e *Śabdabrahman*. Actually; the power of *Śabdabrahman* is the potential or unmanifested form of *Śabdabrahman* because of which it manifests in specific forms of diversity. On the basis of the above discussion it can be said that Bhartṛhari is a *satkāryavādi*. Because, *satkāryavāda* claimed that the effect necessarily exists in the cause before its production and the cause reveals as effect. In the same way Bhartṛhari also claimed that there is only one reality i.e

*Śabdabrahman* and the one *Śabdabrahman* revealed as many. This implies that plurality of the world was there in the *Śabdabrahman* before its production. The differences in this world are actually manifestation of one and the Same *Śabdabrahman*. Because of our ignorance we accepted the differences in this world as real.

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## Chapter- II

### *Śabdabrahman* interpreted by other *Śābdika* philosophers

Linguistic problems have been discussed in Indian philosophy from *veda onwards*. In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss various philosophical approaches on Indian linguistic philosophy specifically on the theory of *sphoṭa*. Actually, here I have dealt with the *sphoṭa* theory of language advocated by other *Śābdika* philosophers from *Veda* onwards and tried to compare them with Bhartṛhari's philosophy. Various Indian philosophical schools from centuries or more have produced insights into the working of language. A comprehensive compendium of all aspects of linguistic study is derived from the works of Pre-Pāṇiniān gramamarians like vyādi, Vājapyāyana, Audumbarāyana and yāska. Actually, the theory of *sphoṭa* is pronounced first by Audumbarāyana and he proclaimed the inherent indivisibility of sentence. For him, *sphoṭa* is an indivisible unit in the form of any kind of categories of words and it is an integrated unit in the mind. Sākatāyana, another predecessor of Pāṇini claimed that all words must be originated from the verbal roots. Again, Vyādi and Vājapyāyana, the other two predecessors of Pāṇini held the view that particular and universal both are denoted by a word respectively. Vyādi opined that the primary sense of word is substantive i.e the particular and universal is an attribute and it can not be the meaning of a word. But on the other hand Vājapyāyana claimed that an eternal and essential attribute of the word is universal and it is mentioned by him as the primary sense of a word. It is important to note that the whole Pre-Pāṇiniān school of linguistic philosophy contributed the analytical and metaphysical approaches to a language.

However, we think that pāṇiniān approach on grammar and linguistic philosophy is foremost for all times. For him, language is a united conceptual whole and as a mental affair it is reflected in the phonemic sequences. According to him, words exist in the total structure of

language. In pāṇiniān thought it is claimed that words exist isolatedly or independently from the whole structure of language. Pāṇiniān language theory is based on pragmatic approach and it answers to all socio-linguistic requirements<sup>1</sup>. According to him language revealed the practical functions of human mind. For him, language is a total and integrated system and it contributed a lot to understand the human mind itself. As a sentence grammarian he accepted both universal and particular as the import of word. But it is important to note that he has not always kept directly the notion of the sentence as the uppermost in the mind.

In the later period the pāṇiniān philosophical view on linguistic philosophy was revealed clearly both by Kātyāyana and Patañjali. Both of them accepted the particularity and universality of word. Kātyāyana discussed the relation between *śabda* and *artha*<sup>2</sup>. Actually, Kātyāyana's philosophical view is regarded as a basis of more elaborate philosophical discussions in the later works of Patañjali and Bhartṛhari. According to him, the diction style of a sentence depends on the speech habits of the speaker<sup>3</sup>. However, it is clear from the above discussion that the Pre-Patañjali concept of *sphoṭa* is somewhat opaque in nature. There is no similarity between the Pre-Patañjali sources of *sphoṭa* and the *sphoṭa* doctrine developed later. The concept of *sphoṭa* cannot be derived distinctly and clearly from the Pre-Patañjali linguistic thought.

Now the question comes how Patañjali developed the *sphoṭa* theory of language? In reply to this question it can be said that he made a distinction between *sphoṭa* and *dhvani*. For him, the permanent element of a word is *sphoṭa* and it is considered as an essential word<sup>4</sup>. He opined that *dhvani* is an aspect of *sphoṭa* and it is an ephemeral element<sup>5</sup>. According to him *sphoṭa* can not be affected by the peculiarities of the individual speakers. So, it can be said that *sphoṭa* is a permanent element which is manifested by the speaker's utterances and heard by the listener. But it is important to note that there are two aspects of *sphoṭa*, one is internal i.e innate expressiveness of the word meaning and another is external i.e uttered sound which

is perceived by our sense organs and through which the sentence *sphoṭa* with its inherent word meaning can be manifested. Actually, the concept of *sphoṭa* advocated by Patañjali acts as an intermediary between sound and sense and it is a conceptual form of physical sound. This conceptual form of physical sound i.e *sphoṭa* can be grasped by the intellect. Actually, Patañjali opined that *sphoṭa* acts as a bridge between thought and sound and its nature is phonetic but not semantic. This *sphoṭa* is fixed in nature in contrast to the sounds of particular phoneme. So, it can be said that for him, *sphoṭa* is not a meaning conveying word because as it is lacking of sequence it cannot be associated with meaning.

In Nāgeśa's thought *sphoṭa* is present in the particular rather than in the universal<sup>6</sup>. The plurality of individuals is not admitted by him. According to him, when a phoneme is associated with the diversity in the speech events, it cannot be appeared as one, otherwise a phoneme is in reality only one. Actually, associating with time, qualities etc the one and same individual phoneme assumed varied forms and this diversity is associative. So, it is clear from Nāgeśa's thought that *sphoṭa* arised from the experiences of individual phoneme and he admitted *sphoṭa* in the particular rather than in the universal<sup>7</sup>.

On the other hand Śesakṛṣṇa, the supporter of Bhartrhari's *sphoṭa* theory, explained the cognition of word by means of analogy of the process of learning a verse by heart through its repeated readings. Each successive reading gives a clear impression of the verse than the one left by the previous one. The last readings helped by the previous readings fixed the verse fully and clearly in memory. For him, the same is true of *sphoṭa*. He claimed that the *sphoṭa* word can be grasped after hearing the last sound.

After discussing the above mentioned views of different philosophers I have tried to focus on Bhartrhari's contribution on language theory specifically on *sphoṭa* theory which is designated by him as *Śabdabrahman*. For him everything possesses real and unreal elements.

The real is the universal which is eternal and immortal and the unreal is the particular which is subject to change and destruction. Following Bhartṛhari it can be said that a sentence conveys its meaning and is understood in a flash as an undivided utterance<sup>8</sup>. Actually, this flash of understanding is intuitive (*Pratibhā*) which is indefinable. *Pratibhā* acts as a guiding instinct of all our activities because we cannot act unless words come to our consciousness but we cannot be conscious of its operating. All our concepts and acts originate from *Pratibhā*. It is important to note that though the initial frame work of *sphoṭa* theory was provided by Patañjali but a developed and systematic philosophical analysis on this theory was given by Bhartṛhari. Actually, Bhartṛhari has introduced the *sphoṭa* theory in contrary to the Patañjaliān *sphoṭa* theory. For him, *sphoṭa* is cognised progressively by perceiving each phoneme. Both the ancient and modern scholars have identified the meaningful *Śabda* with *sphoṭa*. But Bhartṛhari mentioned that *Śabda* is a two sided entity. One is verbal utterances and another is inner indivisible meaning revealing unit. This indivisible meaning revealing unit is designated by Bhartṛhari as *sphoṭa* i.e. *Śabdabrahman* in his philosophy. For him, *sphoṭa* is a unity which already exists in the mind of the speaker and he utters the sounds in order to manifest it. Actually, the linguistic form within us is *sphoṭa*. *Sphoṭa* is an inner principle, the integrated word, the expressive element, which is manifested by the sound.

According to Bhartṛhari, *sphoṭa* cannot be realised without sound (*dhvani*) because *sphoṭa* is instinctively related to sound. Bhartṛhari opined that there are two types of sound namely, primary sound and secondary sound. The initial vibration of articulatory organs produces the primary sounds which reveal *sphoṭa*. But when this vibration stops then the secondary sounds come out from the initial sounds through which the perception of *sphoṭa* is continued. Actually, after manifesting *sphoṭa* the initial sound produces the secondary sounds through which *sphoṭa* can also be manifested and this chain of sounds continues to reveal the same *sphoṭa*. But it is important to note that though the secondary sounds can be affected by the

differences in the utterance, *sphoṭa* remains unaffected by such differences. Actually, Bhartṛhari opined that *sphoṭa* is a complete unique philosophical dimension and it is neither a meaning bearing unit nor a linguistic sign. It is something more than that. For him, the real linguistic potency is in our inner faculty of intellect. Actually, the ability to express in speech form and to understand meaning both are the two dimensions of linguistic potency possessed by all conscious being. For Bhartṛhari, this potency is known as *Śabda* or *sphoṭa* i.e. *Śabdabrahman*. The expressive word and the meaning expressed are present in the consciousness of the speaker and the hearer. So, the speaker and the hearer share the same *sphoṭa*. Before uttering meaningful statements the idea of what the speaker intends to say remains within him in non-sequential and undifferentiated form. Actually it is the linguistic potency of the speaker through which the speaker expresses his intention in the form of utterance. In the process of linguistic communication both the speaker and the hearer use their potential linguistic power through which the audible word forms and helps to convey meaning. So, it is clear that both the speaker and the hearer share the same *sphoṭa* which is designated by Bhartṛhari as *Śabdabrahman*. So, it can be said that the linguistic forms along with its power to convey meaning are already present in the linguistic potential stage of all human beings.

So, it is clear that in Bhartṛhari's philosophy the term *sphoṭa* is used to signify any unit of meaning. But it is important to note that for him the primary unit of meaning remains in the sentence, not in the word and phoneme. Bhartṛhari in his *Brahmakānda* declared that no knowledge is possible without assuming the form of a word. Language is the only way through which our knowledge of reality is shaped. But it is important to note that Bhartṛhari technically used the term language in his philosophy. For him, there are two aspects of language, one is the *sphoṭa* i.e. the nature of awareness and the other is the verbal utterances through which the *sphoṭa* can be revealed. In Bhartṛhari's philosophy it is clear that there are

three levels of *Śabda* principle and these are *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* out of which *paśyantī* level is accepted as the *sphoṭa* which is also designated by Bhartṛhari as *Śabda-Brahman*. This *Śabdabrahman* is the absolute being which is not a subject to birth and death. It can not be destroyed. According to him, *Śabdabrahman* is the only ultimate reality out of which the whole world comes into existence. *Paśyanti* level of *Śabda* principle is transcendental to other levels of *Śabda* but it is accepted as the ontological substratum of the *sphoṭa* revealed in the mind by itself. *Madhyamā* level is a cognitive being i.e being of awareness by nature which is manifested by *sphoṭa*. *Vaikharī* level is the verbal utterance, the purpose of which is to give expression and to act as a vehicle for *vāk*.

Actually, the idea of *sphoṭa* was developed by Bhartṛhari in a completely unique philosophical dimension. For him, *sphoṭa* is neither a meaning bearing unit nor a linguistic sign. It is something more than that. Bhartṛhari claimed that the primary basis of all sorts of deliberations on the nature of language is *sphoṭa*. For him, language is not simply analysable in terms of phonetics, syntax, grammar and semantics. Actually, it is inter subjective where both the speaker and the hearer plays an active role. Bhartṛhari claimed that in case of meaningful linguistic utterances two elements of language have been comprehended, one is root cause of manifestation and the other is applied to convey the meaning. The former is called *Sphoṭa* and the latter is called *dhvani*. This *sphoṭa* is designated by Bhartṛhari as *Śabdabrahman* and because of our ignorance *Śabdabrahman* appears as the world of objects. Whenever our ignorance goes away then there is only one reality i.e *Śabdabrahman*. It is clear from Bhartṛhari's writings that ignorance remains in the verbal utterances and *sphoṭa* i.e *Śabdabrahman* is free from ignorance. Actually, Bhartṛhari's linguistic analysis is a metaphysical process to achieve cognitive being and that cognitive being is *Śabdabrahman* through which knowing souls, known objects and experiences come into being.

But it is important to point out that whether *sphoṭa* represents the meaningful aspect of the word is a difficult problem and regarding this problem there are two groups of scholars holding different views. Gourinath Sāstri, K.A.S Iyer believed that *sphoṭa* represents a meaningful aspect of the language. For them, *sphoṭa* is a meaning bearing aspect of speech elements. But another scholar S.D. Joshi held that Bhartṛhari's concept of *sphoṭa* is a auditorily grasped speech unit which may or may not be understood semantically. He claimed that in Bhartṛhari's writings it is clear that *sphoṭa* is not related with meaning. He never used the meaningful *Śabda* as a synonym of *sphoṭa*. Actually, Iyer and Sāstri both were depended on the commentaries of Nāgeśa, Harivṛṣabha who explained the *sphoṭa* concept of Bhartṛhari in the light of meaning conveying speech unit. But it is very difficult to interpret why these great traditional commentators jumbled up the meaningful *Śabda* with *sphoṭa*. But it is important to note that Bhartṛhari did not accept isolated word as meaningful units in ordinary language. He claimed that sentence is universally accepted as the unit of expression and the division of sentence into words and that of words into phonemes does not exist. Actually, Bhartṛhari admitted *akhandavākya sphoṭa* which maintains that in an ordinary conversation when one hears or speaks a sentence then that sentence is not taken in terms of series of meaningful units but a unitary whole. He maintained throughout *Vākyapadīya*, the indivisibility of sentence unit. His *akhandavākya sphoṭa* theory is similar to modern operational approach in semantics. Accordingly, the words are unreal abstraction and the reality is a single undivided utterance. The division of a sentence into a number of components is only a grammatical fiction invented to enable the beginner to understand the structures of a sentence. The entire sentence is endowed with the denotative function.

However, after discussed various views on *sphoṭa* theory it is clear that there are so many differences between the Pre-Patañjali sources of *sphoṭa* and the *sphoṭa* doctrine of Bhartṛhari. The *sphoṭa* concept cannot be derived distinctly and clearly from the Pre-Patañjali linguistic

thought. Again I have seen a sharp distinction between Nāgeśa's philosophical thought and Bhartṛhari's philosophical thought. Nāgeśa claimed that *sphoṭa* is present in the particular rather than in the universal. Actually, Nāgeśa opined that *sphoṭa* arises from the experience of individual phoneme and he admitted *sphoṭa* in the particular. But Bhartṛhari claimed that everything possesses two elements namely, real and unreal. For him, the real is the universal and the unreal is the particular. The particular is subject to change and destruction but universal is eternal and immortal. The universal is the essence and the particular is its external manifestation. So, I think it is clear from Bhartṛhari's writings that he admitted *sphoṭa* in the universal and communication becomes possible because all of us share one and the same *sphoṭa*. Every word, first of all, means the class or the universal of that word, and then the same is superimposed on the particulars of a class or universal. Actually, *sphoṭa* is one but it appears to be many in the form of manifesting sounds. We think it is very much like consciousness itself. Because consciousness is really one but it becomes differentiated when it illuminates different objects of the world. So, after discussing various views on *sphoṭa* theory and comparing them with Bhartṛhari's philosophical thought it can be said that Bhartṛhari's theory of language is based on the conception of *sphoṭa* which is said to be the object of the cognitions of each of the letters though it at first appears in the form of a letter.

After going through Śaṅkara's writings I have seen that Śaṅkara in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* argued against Bhartṛhari's notion that the *sphoṭa* is directly perceived. He claimed that only the individual letters of a word are perceived and these individual letters are combined through the inferential activity of the mind into a word-aggregate. For him, there can be no question of degrees of cognition because the psychological process is one of inference instead of perception. Śaṅkara argued that the error of *anumāna* is to be overcome by a new inferential construction of mind or by super-conscious intuition of *Brahman*. But Bhartṛhari claimed that the overcoming of error is a perceptual process admitting of degrees

of positive approximation. Thus the position of Bhartṛhari and the position of Śaṅkara are not at all analogous. Because in Śaṅkara's thought it is clear that the overcoming of error is a negative process of inference admitting of no degrees. Again we have seen that Maṇḍana Miśra in his *Sphoṭasiddhi* defended Bhartṛhari's view that *sphoṭa* is something over and above the phonemes. He claimed that when the phonemes are uttered then these phonemes manifest only the changeless *sphoṭa* which exists within the speaker and is potentially present within every hearer and when the *sphoṭa* is manifested then it reveals the meaning but the phonemes do not convey the meaning.

However, after explaining the above mentioned views on *sphoṭa* theory of different philosophers it can be said that Bhartṛhari did not take into account of the controversy raised by the opponents of *sphoṭa* like Mīmāṃsakas, the Naiyāyikas and the vedāntins against grammarians. Actually, *Vākyapadīya* is the earliest work in which *sphoṭa* doctrine of grammarians is expounded. This personality and fame of Bhartṛhari called forth opponents of equal calibre like Kumāriḷa Bhaṭṭa and Vācaspati Miśra and supporters too of great eminence like Maṇḍana Miśra.

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### Chapter-III

#### *Śabdabrahman* interpreted by Bhartṛhari

In this chapter an attempt has been made to examine the reasons for designating *Śabda* as *Brahman* by Bhartṛhari along with other considerations. In this context the cognitive and metaphysical background of Bhartṛhari's philosophy has been shown. The word *Śabda* has been used in different senses in different contexts. In general, *Śabda* is used in the sense of sound (*dhvani*) of any kind, which is perceived by the auditory sense organ. According to the *Nyāya* philosophy *Śabda* is used in the sense of a sentence spoken by a reliable person (*āptavākyam*), which is taken as testimony. But the term *Śabda* has been used by Bhartṛhari and all other Grammarians in technical sense. In Grammar *Śabda* stands for word manifested by *dhvani* (sound). Patañjali has used the term *Śabda* in three different senses, such as, a mere sound, meaningful word and the conceptual sound entity, otherwise known as *Sphoṭa*<sup>1</sup>. Bhartṛhari asserted that sound does not express the meaning; but it reveals the significant word which he designated as *sphoṭa*. According to him *Śabda* is a totality of two i.e. the inner meaning revealing unit that is *sphoṭa* and the verbal noises that is *dhvani*. The former is the nature of awareness and the latter is the tool of revealing the former. Actually, Bhartṛhari opined that both the verbal noises and the expresser are involved in the accomplishment of communication. The speaker for the purpose of sharing his views employs a sentence comprising words uttered in a sequence. The word itself comprises letters that follow one after the other.

According to Bhartṛhari *Sphoṭa* is considered as real *Śabda*. Bhartṛhari classified *Vāk* into subtle and gross forms of which *Paśyantī* is the subtle form of *Vāk* while *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* are its gross forms<sup>2</sup>. *Paśyantī* is often referred to as *Śabdabrahma*. *Paśyantī* is inaudible and beyond the range of the physical ear. *Madhyamā* is an intellectual process,

during which the speaker becomes aware of the word as it arises and takes form within him and he grasps it. *Vaikhari* is the articulated speech that is heard and apprehended by the listener. These three forms of speech are said to represent *icchāśakti*, *jnanaśakti* and *kriyāśakti*.

The ancient Grammarians are seen to use the term '*dhvani*' to denote the sound of an utterance that reaches the ears of the listener. *Dhvani* therefore is the vehicle of a word and is determined by the nature of the *varṇas* composing it. Some Indian aestheticians such as, Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta used the term *dhvani* to imply the subtle mood or the *rasa* evoked by a poem or a gesture in a play or in dance. According to Bhartṛhari *dhvani* is the auditory aspect of the *Śabda*. The intellect of the listener grasps *dhvani* in a flash. The *sphoṭa* is therefore the intellectual and inaudible aspect of the *Śabda*. Bhartṛhari used the term *sphoṭa* to indicate the meaning; and *dhvani* to refer to the uttered and heard sound. Bhartṛhari maintained a difference between *sphoṭa* and *dhvani* out of which the former is a cognitive being and the latter is the instrumental only in manifestation of the former. The latter is perceived as verbal – noises while the former is revealed. The *sphoṭa* is known directly as revealed in the mind and it is the *Śabda* at *madhyamā* level, the middle stage in the metaphysics of *Śabda* principle. The *Śabda* at this level is not an ontological but a cognitive being. In Sanskrit Grammar *Śabda* stands for the word manifested by *dhvani*. While *dhvani* is variable *Śabda* is not. The purpose of the *dhvani* is to give expression to and to act as a vehicle for *vāk*. The *dhvani* as perceived by the intellect of the speaker in a flash is *sphoṭa*. The *sphoṭa* is the intellectual impression of the audible sound patterns. The *Śabda* therefore combines in itself the physical form of word and its intellectual inaudible form.

Bhartṛhari maintained that *Śabda* does not mean any articulated verbal form but pure consciousness for which he has also chosen another expression, viz, *sphoṭa*. *Śabda* or *sphoṭa* is the self-luminous identity. Bhartṛhari said that every bit of knowledge is, in its state of

manifestation, intertwined with *Śabda* and that there cannot be any knowledge in which *Śabda* does not figure<sup>3</sup>. The evolution of *Śabda* runs in two lines *Śabda-vivarta* and *artha-vivarta*<sup>4</sup>. The speech sound represents the former type of evolution while the other type is represented by the whole host of objects. Bharṭṛhari has used the term *Śabda* in the following five senses: speech, word, *sphoṭa* word, sound and one of the means of knowledge<sup>5</sup>. Bharṭṛhari assumed two types of words: mental and audible. The mental word is an abstract form known as *sphoṭa* whereas the audible word is a phonetic form known as *dhvani* or *nāda*. According to him there is a cause and effect relationship between these two types of words. If viewed from the speakers point, the abstract form is the cause of phonetic form. When a speaker intends to speak, he first selects a word related to a particular meaning in his mind and then expresses it with the help of articulated sound. The articulation of sound is done in sequence and in parts.

Bharṭṛhari in his *Vākyapadīya* and *Mahābhāṣya Dīpikā* dealt with the *dhvani* theory in detail. According to him, the physical audible sound manifests the *sphoṭa*, which is nothing but the mental articulated image of the sound through which the meaning is conveyed to the listener. Thus *dhvani* is the physical body of the word, whereas *sphoṭa* is the conceptual entity of sound<sup>6</sup>. Bharṭṛhari made a new distinction within the manifesting sounds (*dhvani*); *Prākṛta dhvani* and *Vaikṛta dhvani*<sup>7</sup>. *Prākṛta dhvani* is that without which the form of *sphoṭa* would remain un-manifested and therefore unperceived. *Prākṛta dhvani* is considered to be the root cause of *sphoṭa* because as soon as we hear the *prākṛta dhvani*, *sphoṭa* is perceived. The second type of *dhvani* arises out of the *prākṛta dhvani* after the manifestation of *sphoṭa*, and therefore does not affect the quality of *sphoṭa*. It can be perceived again and again uninterruptedly for a longer period of time. An important feature of sound (*dhvani*) is its fixed capacity to express a particular phoneme. For instance, a particular sound, produced by its particular articulated efforts, reveals a particular phoneme. *Dhvani* is a divisible entity. It

is produced and grasped in a particular sequence and generally by mistake the same qualities of sound are superimposed on *sphoṭa*.

On the basis of the above discussion it can be said that *Śabda* which in general sense meant sound was later used by the Grammarians to denote different levels of the speech, such as, articulate sound, word, *sphoṭa*, and the speech itself. Bhartṛhari raised the word to the level of ultimate reality, as all human experiences are intertwined with the word. The word is said to be the principle cause of existence. Patañjali and Bhartṛhari speak of two types of words such as mental and audible. The mental word popularly known as the *sphoṭa*, is the abstract form of audible word, whereas the audible word popularly known as *dhvani* is the manifestation of the mental word. Bhartṛhari has elucidated the relation between *sphoṭa* and *dhvani* by explaining it from the standpoint of the speaker as well the listener. His theory about the explanation of the *dhvani-sphoṭa* relationship is very significant as it provide the solution to some of the linguistic problems.

Bhartṛhari propounded a philosophy similar to Śaṅkara's *Advaitavāda*. According to the philosophy of Bhartṛhari *Śabdabrahman* (*Logos*) is the Ultimate Reality out of which knowing souls, known objects and experience come. *Śabdabrahman* is modified into the world of objects with the aid of time. Identity in *Śabdabrahman* is real, and plurality in it is imaginary. It creates the root sound *Aum*, which is modified into the manifold world. There are no cognitions devoid of words, and there are no words devoid of cognitions. Words are non-different from the objects denoted by them. Natural sounds, modified sounds or words, cognitions and objects all are modifications of one eternal *Logos* (*Śabdabrahman*) or *Sphoṭa*, which is self-luminous. Distinctions of subjects and objects, cognitions, names and objects, are attributed to *Śabdabrahman* due to *avidyā*. The *Logos* (*Śabdattva*) is the Infinite Self devoid of *avidyā*. It appears as a finite self (*jīva*) subject to *avidyā*. There is one, eternal, self-

luminous *Sphoṭa* or *Śabdabrahman (Logos)* underlying the empirical world of a plurality or finite selves and diverse objects.

There is not even a single idea devoid of word, as all ideas are necessarily known as accompanied by them. If cognitions were not attended with words, they would not have been manifested<sup>8</sup>. Words manifest cognitions. Cognitions are in the nature of words, which are manifested as cognitions in consciousness. Language and meaning or thought are not two different entities<sup>9</sup>. In fact they are identical. So the question of separating one from another simply does not arise. But yet we separate one from another just to understand each other's speech and to communicate. This is nothing but instrumental to our mutual understanding. Ultimately, they are one and the same.

The view of Bhartṛhari can be properly understood only through the reference to his theory of *Sphoṭa*. But his theory of *sphoṭa* is so difficult and so vast that it is almost impossible to explain it within a short span of space. We shall give here just hints of the same. Bhartṛhari's theory of *Sphoṭa* can be represented in a better way by contrasting with that of the other philosophers. The theory of *Sphoṭa* is regarded as one of the most important contributions to the principal problems of general linguistics and of the philosophy of language. What is language? Some of the Indian grammarians say in reply that language is *sphoṭa*. *Sphoṭa* is the real language and the real vehicle of meaning. A word or a sentence, this theory holds, is not simply a concatenation composed of different sound-units arranged in a particular order, but a single whole or a single symbol bearing a meaning.

It is worthy to mention that though *sphoṭa* is said to be a language, it is language not used and understood in ordinary sense. The *sphoṭa* does not mean the articulate and audible sounds which we use in any particular discourse. One is the reveler and the other is revealed. The audible sounds are the means in terms of which, the symbol, the *sphoṭa* is revealed. The

*sphoṭa* theory maintains that language is also comprehended, but this comprehension of the meaning can only be possible through the comprehension of the *sphoṭa*.

The etymological meaning of the term '*sphoṭa*' also will help us to understand the *sphoṭa* theory to some extent. The term '*sphoṭa*' is derived from the root '*Sphut*' which means manifested, displayed, burst forth, and expressed etc<sup>10</sup>. Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa in his *Śphoṭavāda* interpreted it as that by which meaning is revealed<sup>11</sup>. Thus the literal meaning of *sphoṭa* is that from which the meaning is bursts forth. In explaining the etymological meaning of the term '*sphoṭa*' Mādhava in his *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* said 'bursts' means 'to make explicit'; so the meaning of *sphoṭa* is what is made explicit by letters on the one hand, and what, being made explicit, makes the meaning explicit on the other hand. So, the *sphoṭa* stands for what, in being itself revealed in terms of letters or sounds, conveys the meaning to the hearer. According to some Ideologists, the *sphoṭa* is a 'mysterious entity'. This is because of the fact that Bhartṛhari's general philosophy associates the concept of *Brahman* with the essence of speech and *sphoṭa*. Sometimes Bhartṛhari used the terms *Śabda* and *sphoṭa* inter-changeably. Patañjali maintained that *sphoṭa* is the 'speech' or 'language' (*Śabda*) while the noise or sound (*dhvani*) is a quality of the speech. The audible parts of language are dependent upon the speaker, so these parts are determined by the particular style of delivering the speech by the speaker, but the *sphoṭa* is independent of the speaker, so it remains always constant being unaffected by the particularities of the particular speaker<sup>12</sup>. The former part, i.e. the audible part may be soft or loud, or long or short, the latter part remains the same. The *sphoṭa* is an unit of sound, a single letter or a letter series. *Vyādi*, a great teacher, possibly a contemporary of Pāṇini in his work *Samgraha* has distinguished two faces of language, original sound (*Prākṛta-dhvani*) and transformed sound (*Vaikṛta-dhvani*)<sup>13</sup>. Bhartṛhari said that the 'original sound' is what causes our perception of the latter, but the transformed sound accounts for the differences in particularities in style of utterance, loudness and so on<sup>14</sup>.

Now let us come to the *sphoṭa*-theory of Bhartṛhari which is different from that of the others already mentioned to a great extent. In *Vākyapadīya* Bhartṛhari dealt with the doctrine of *sphoṭa* theory. Bhartṛhari's doctrine of *sphoṭa* is of three fold namely; *varna-sphoṭa*, *pada-sphoṭa* and *vākya-sphoṭa*<sup>15</sup>. The *sphoṭa* as described by Bhartṛhari is partless and indivisible having no internal sequence<sup>16</sup>. Bhartṛhari stated that a *pada-sphoṭa* i.e. a *sphoṭa* in the form of word is a meaning-bearing unit. The *Vākya-sphoṭa*, i.e. the *sphoṭa* in the form of sentence, which is the most important among the three, is a primary meaning-bearing element too. *Vākya-sphoṭa* is sequence less or part less whole which gets expressed or manifested in a sequential and temporary utterance. One of the eminent scholars Bimal Krishna Matilal said that 'meaning-bearing unit' is a wrong term. According to him, *sphoṭa* is not different form but identical with meaning. So language cannot be considered to be vehicle of meaning. Thought anchors language and language anchors thought. Language is thinking and thought 'vibrates' through language. So, language and meaning or thought can't be separated, as they are identical.

The predecessors of Bhartṛhari said of two aspects of language. Bhartṛhari himself mentioned these two aspects of language. He held that among the two aspects of language one is the linguistic unit properly understood, the real language, and the other is what 'manifested' or 'expressed' it. Bhartṛhari and some of his followers related this duality to what Matilal called the *sphoṭa-nāda* distinction of language. *Nāda* manifests *sphoṭa* and *Sphoṭa* conveys meaning. The *sphoṭa* is a whole having no parts. *Sphoṭa* must be made explicit to make communication possible between the speaker and the hearer. But *sphoṭa* can't be made explicit without the aid of *nāda*, the casual factor for making *sphoṭa* explicit. In fact *sphoṭa* has no parts and sequence but it is when the speaker utter *nāda* in particular sequence and it expresses *sphoṭa* in sequence and part by part then *sphoṭa* this way falsely appears to have parts and temporal sequences in the same way in which the moon reflected in wavy waters

appears to be wavy and disintegrated<sup>17</sup>. Thus some spurious attributes are superimposed on the *sphoṭa*. The *sphoṭa* of the speaker is made explicit by the sounds uttered by him. But by the sounds made by the speaker the *sphoṭa* of the hearer is ‘awakened’ because the one and the same *sphoṭa* is also shared by the hearer.<sup>18</sup>

We think, Bhartṛhari’s philosophical inquiry is actually a cognitive analytic inquiry into the nature of cognition and communication. For him, the real is the intelligible being or idea which revealed non-differently in the mind by language. He accepted language as a unit of distinct and self-determinate cognition or as a revealing force of awareness. According to Bhartṛhari the existence of Beings that is things-in-themselves is actually an ontological substratum of the cognition and of the objects of cognition revealed in the mind by language. We think, Bhartṛhari did not speculate into the problem of Reality on the basis of mystical experience. He interprets the problems from the point of view of cognition as revealed in the mind by language. For him, the outside reality is inferred on the basis of the cognition revealed by language. We think, Bhartṛhari was not interested in the ontic nature of things. He discussed about the transcendental Beings as the ontological substratum of beings expressed by language in mind that is cognitive beings and this cognitive being is actually the unit of awareness in nature. For him, language is actually the revealing force of awareness. So, it can be said that the *paśyantī* level of language which is known as *Śabdabrahman* is the revealing force of awareness and because of this awareness the outside reality is inferred. Finally it can be said that the source of the entire world of individual things which consists only in *nāma* and *rūpa* is the *Śabdabrahman* which is the ultimate Reality mentioned by Bhartṛhari. So, on the basis of the above discussion it is clear that the philosophical approach of Bhartṛhari is a cognitive one. He investigated beings from the point of view of cognition and not from the point of view of finding a Reality as its substratum.

So, it is clear to us that according to Bhartṛhari Philosophy is a cognitive activity and Philosophy is concerned with language primarily as a cognitive activity because according to him cognition is always infused by language. We think, Bhartṛhari wanted to show that as only ideas can be revealed in the mind by language, ideas are the objects of cognition and these objects of cognition are infused by language. The primacy of language in cognitive activities is most important. So, following Bhartṛhari it can be said that no knowledge can be possible without language and every knowledge is revealed by language. That is why Bhartṛhari claimed that language, thought and cognition, all of the three are identical. Actually Bhartṛhari's view on ultimate Reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* is a cognitive one. We think, Bhartṛhari accepts language as the object of philosophical reflection because cognition can be revealed by language. According to him without language thought is not possible. But it is important to note that the term 'language' has been used by him in technical sense. Here language means inner meaning revealing language i.e. *sphoṭa* and this inner meaning revealing language is common to all of us. If we follow Bhartṛhari's Philosophical view then the idea of private language does not arise. Because the inner meaning revealing language i.e. *sphoṭa* is ubiquitously given in the mind of all individuals. It is articulated variously through verbal utterances. The essential feature of language is to participate in a linguistic society and it can be possible only because of ubiquity of language that reveals cognition. But it is important to note that though Bhartṛhari accepted inner meaning revealing language i.e. *sphoṭa* as the foundational being of the world of communication, he also gave importance to verbal utterances as the instrument through which *sphoṭa* can be manifested. So, according to Bhartṛhari verbal utterances and inner meaning revealing language are inseparably involved.

The Philosophical inquiry of Bhartṛhari about the nature of language and reality culminates in the idea of *Śabdabrahman* and it stands as the ground of all phenomenal multiplicities and changes. The principle of language is identified with the reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* and it is a

form of monism in which Bhartṛhari established his philosophical thought. Bhartṛhari traditionally directed his intellectual activity towards the realization of the ultimate knowledge. The ultimate reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* manifested itself as the phenomenal word because of its many powers (*śakti*) but it is important to note that the powers of ultimate reality are not different from its source. So, it can be said that without losing its oneness the ultimate reality manifests itself as many. Our knowledge of everything is intertwined with the word and without cognizing the word first we cannot cognize an object. As all manifestations of *Brahman* are intertwined with word, *Brahman* must be of the nature of the word i.e. it must be *Śabdātattva*. But it is worthy to note that the term *Śabda* in the philosophy of Bhartṛhari has been used in a technical sense. It is conceived as the very consciousness and this very consciousness in the ultimate sense of the term is the inner indivisible linguistic form i.e. *Śabdabrahman*. Bhartṛhari in his *Vākyapadīya* declared that *Śabdabrahman* is the ultimate reality and he has given explanation to show how the creation of the world proceeds from that ultimate reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman*. Assuming the word form all phenomena manifests itself as the uttered phonemes for the purpose of communication. The phenomenal world is described as consisting of three things, the experience, the things experienced and the experience itself.

Bhartṛhari maintained that *Śabdabrahman* is the ultimate reality out of which the phenomenal world comes out. But here a pertinent question arises how the world comes into being out of the *Śabdabrahman*? Śaṅkarāchārya held that the world appears out of the *Brahman* due to *māyā* underlying it. But what's about the answer given by Bhartṛhari, in this regard? Bhartṛhari said in reply that *Śabdabrahman* appears as the world because of its *Kālaśakti*. So *Kālaśakti* in the philosophy of Bhartṛhari stands for *māyā* in the philosophy of Śaṅkarāchārya. Thus it is seen that Bhartṛhari equated *māyā* with *Kālaśakti* which leads one to surmise that phenomenal existence. Bhartṛhari accepts *Kālaśakti* as the divine power. It is

the efficient cause by which *Brahman* controls the cycles of universe. The phenomenal world is the manifestation of one and the same *Śabdabrahman*. Now the question is, is this phenomenal world a case of *vivarta* or is it something else? In reply to this question eminent scholars have given their views taking this as a serious matter of their study. Gaurinath Sāstri argued that as Bhartṛhari did not believe in any real change of *Śabdabrahman*, the status of the phenomena –words in relation to *Śabdabrahman* could not be adequately characterized by either *parināma* or *vivarta*. So, the sāmkhya conception of *parināma* and the conception of Śaṅkara of *vivarta* is ruled out. So, if we agree with the view of Saṅtri then we can realize that Bhartṛhari did not conceive of any difference between *Śabdabrahman* and its *śaktis*. For Bhartṛhari *Śabdabrahman* and its power both of the two are actually identical. So, the concept of *vivarta* is not applicable in his philosophy as he seen no difference between diversity of phenomena in relation to the unitary Absolute. Actually, Saṅtri claimed that, for Bhartṛhari the phenomenal manifestation of *Śabdabrahman* and its power (*śakti*) are identical with the ultimate reality (*Śabdabrahman*). Their relationship is described on the analogy of the mirror and its reflections. The phenomenal manifestation of *Śabdabrahman* is nothing but the reflection of it and it is the *ābhāsas* of it which can have no independent existence without the ultimate reality i.e *Śabdabrahman*.

K.A.S Iyer observed that Bhartṛhari's opinion, in this respect is not different from the traditional *Vedānta* doctrine. Bhartṛhari opined that *Brahman*, the indivisible power can be interpreted in two different ways. One interpretation seems to be associated with Vājapāyana according to whom the persisting aspect of the word is universal which it connotes. According to this view though there are several universals like man, cow, dog etc. but over and above all these universals there is only one single ultimate universal king. All phenomenal word forms ultimately mean this universal king. The other interpretation comes from vyādi according to which the persisting substance being which is perceived is nothing

but the individual produced through a limitation (*upādhi*) of that unreal being. All universals taken in the ordinary language such as man, cow, horse are nothing but the appearances through the limitation of the ultimate being, *Śabdabrahman*. As these beings are the results of limitation (*upādhi*) they cannot be true. Thus, it is seen that the *Śabdabrahman*, the ultimate reality is the meaning of all limiting individual word-forms. *Śabdabrahman*, the ultimate reality is cognized through the unreal word-forms. Simply because of the unreal limiting factors are first denoted by words. In this way K.A.S Iyer shown that both of the interpretations are consistent with *vivartavāda*. So, the observations of Sastri in this regard cannot be accepted.

Sāntarakṣita, another eminent scholar expressed deliberately the word *parināma* as the real manifestation to explain the word *vivartate* occurring in it. It is claimed that manifestation is not real but affecting by *avidyā* or ignorance people look upon the one reality as many. So far as the observation made in *Vākyapadīya* 1.112 is concerned perhaps there is no difference in the meanings of the roots *parināma* and *vivarta*.

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## Chapter-IV

### **A comparative study between the *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartṛhari and *Brahman* of Śaṅkarāchārya**

In this chapter an attempt has been made to show a comparative study between *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartṛhari and *Brahman* of Śaṅkarāchārya. Though Śaṅkara in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* argues against Bhartṛhari's notion that the *sphoṭa* is directly perceived but it is true that *Advaitism* of Śaṅkara is identical with linguistic monism of Bhartṛhari. *Advaitism* claimed that reality is one and any form of multiplicity can be ultimately resolved in that one reality<sup>1</sup>. Bhartṛhari developed the *Advaitic* trend in philosophy in a unique way and it is otherwise known as *Śabdādvaitavāda*. He claimed that the world itself is the manifestation of *Śabdādvaita*. So, it can be said that Bhartṛhari's philosophical thought is very close to the *vedāntic* form of *Advaitism*. Actually, Bhartṛhari is regarded as one of the earliest *Advaitins* among the grammarians. Bhartṛhari in his *Vākyapadīya* claimed that *Brahman* is identical with language and *AUM* is the basic manifestation of that language. Bhartṛhari in his *Vākyapadīya* described *AUM* as the source of all scriptures and the common factor of all original causes.

Śaṅkara developed non-dualism or spiritual monism as the main teaching of the Upaniṣads<sup>2</sup>. According to Śaṅkara the individual letters of a word are combined through the inferential activity of the mind. For him, only the individual letters of a word are perceived. Śaṅkara claimed that the psychological process is one of the inferences but not the perception. The error of *anumāṇa pramāṇa* is to be overcome by a new inferential construction of mind or by super-conscious intuition of *Brahman*<sup>3</sup>. But Bhartṛhari opined that the overcoming of error is a perceptual process. So, it can be said that the position of Śaṅkara and the position of Bhartṛhari are not same because Bhartṛhari claimed that the overcoming of error is a positive

perceptual process admitting of degrees whereas Śaṅkara opined that it is a negative process of inference admitting of no degrees. Śaṅkara claimed that nothing can be inferred as the cause of *Brahman* due to its self-evident Omniscience and Omnipotence<sup>4</sup>. Bhartṛhari carefully distinguished between evolution of the world from *Brahman* and evolution of the world from *Śabda*. He asserted that, *Brahman* is both the efficient and material cause of the world whereas *Śabda* is only an efficient cause<sup>5</sup>. Experience shows us that in doing something we first remember the significant words and then act accordingly. So, it can be said that before creation the *Vedic* words became manifested in the mind of the creator and the creator created things corresponding to those words. Thus, *Śabda* is seen as the efficient cause of creation. However, Śaṅkara takes us a step further to take it as the material cause. The originating will which lies behind *Śabda* was the mysterious desire of *Brahman* to get into diversity from unity and this was the direct cause of creation. In agreement with the *Mīmāṃsā*, Śaṅkara maintained that *Śabda* is eternal. He argued that meaning results from the comprehension of an aggregate of letters by the *buddhi* and not from the manifestation of some mysterious *sphoṭa* manifested by the group of letters as is argued by the grammarian school. In this way the metaphysical achievement of Śaṅkara rests on the intensity of thought with which the search for reality is conducted.

Śaṅkarāchārya claimed that the empirical world appears to be different from *Brahman* due to *māyā*<sup>6</sup>. After breaking the fetters of *māyā* human beings achieve self-realization and after achieving this state human beings experience supreme bliss during which all the distinctions between him and rest of the world disappear. Śaṅkara asserted that *Brahman* is immutable, ineffable and has no links with anything which human mind can cognize, conceive and imagine<sup>7</sup>. Śaṅkarāchārya ascribed the creation of the world from *māyā* which has many attributes of divinity and he deems it as neither real nor unreal. It is an integral part of *Brahman*. Here one question may arise how could *Brahman* create the world as it remains

unchanged? In reply to this question it is said that there is no creation in the real sense. Following Śaṅkarāchārya it can be said that the world does not exist on the same ontological level as *Brahman*. Actually, the existence of our very world is the creation of *māyā*<sup>8</sup>. So, the question of reconciling the immutability of *Brahman* with the ephemerality of the world does not arise at all. But the question is how *māyā* transforms *Brahman* which is undifferentiated, partless and immutable into our phenomenal world marked by plurality? In reply to this question it is said that this is simply because *māyā* is ineffable and totally beyond the ken of human cognition. According to Śaṅkarāchārya the two levels of reality are one is *pāramārthika* (ultimate) and another is *Vyāvahārika* (Practical). At the ultimate level of reality there is only *Brahman* while at the practical level of reality there is our world. It is the power of *māyā* which links these two levels of reality. Śaṅkarāchārya used the term *Brahman* to refer to consciousness in its purely transcendental state which is conceived as the utter perfection of non-duality. For him, the realization of the identity of the self with transcendental consciousness is the highest goal of human life. Śaṅkara said that pure consciousness has no distinguishing mark such as name, or form or action or species or qualities<sup>9</sup>. The validity of Śaṅkara's transcendental argument rests on the qualification that the cause of the totality of phenomenal reality which remains constant throughout the creation and destruction of the universe must neither be limited by its opposite nor confronted with duality of any kind. In this sense there can be nothing outside ultimate reality, even the non-existence of the phenomenal world is included in the existence which is the essential nature of consciousness.

Bhartṛhari's conception of *Brahman* as the word principle is an inheritance from the *vedic* tradition. Bhartṛhari stressed upon the importance and significance of all thought and all knowledge being intertwined with the word. Here he deviated from other like the Naiyāyikas who held that it was possible to have cognition of the pure object which is free from

intermixture with the word. But for Bhartṛhari there is no thought or knowledge which is not intertwined with the word. But if consciousness or awareness of all kinds is thus intertwined with the word, the question naturally arises as to whether the two are different from each other or identical. Bhartṛhari asserted that what is called awareness is the fact of having the form of the word. Consciousness in all Beings never goes beyond it, that is, it is never different from this fact of having the form of the word. Therefore, when Bhartṛhari said that *Brahman* is *Śabdatattva*, the word principle, he implied that it is consciousness.

So, it is seen that both Bhartṛhari and Śaṅkara logically searched for the attainment of the same goal, but only their starting point is different. Bhartṛhari started with the impermanence of the language or word from its empirical point of view which can be rectified by the grammar. As a successor of Bhartṛhari Śaṅkara started with the impermanence of world and establishes the eternity of *Brahman*. He realized *Brahman* through momentariness of the appearance of the world. Bhartṛhari said in the same way that is through the universal conditions like *Kāla*, *Sādhana*, *Sambandha*, parts of speech etc, we can understand the whole world and realize the word principle or language. Language becomes meaningful and communicable through above elements. Although Śaṅkara appeared to differ from Bhartṛhari on many points, yet the ideology on which he has based his theory is same. Śaṅkara's theory can be called "ontological monism" and Bhartṛhari's theory can be called "linguistic monism"<sup>10</sup>.

In this chapter I have also mentioned that the desire for the knowledge of *Brahman* follows upon something else which one must have already accomplished in order to qualify oneself for this enquiry<sup>11</sup>. In order to bring out the specific requirements for this enquiry, it is compared and contrasted with the enquiry about *dharma* or religious duty<sup>12</sup>. Neither *dharma* nor *Brahman* is an empirical object and we never come upon them in the course of our ordinary experience<sup>13</sup>. We know about them only through the *Vedas*. Bhartṛhari and

Śaṅkarāchārya both opined that our ignorance goes away only through *Veda* and only through *veda* one must realize the ultimate reality i.e *Brahman* or *Śabdabrahman*. So the study of the *Vedas* is necessary for realizing *Brahman*. We should like to know here what, besides a study of the *Vedas*, is specifically required for an enquiry about *Brahman*.

It may be supposed that what is needed in the present case, in addition to the study of the *Vedas*, is the knowledge of various religious duties or rites, in the performance of which the Vedic religion largely consists<sup>14</sup>. But such a supposition would not be right, in as much as a man who has studied the *Vedānta* may very well desire to know *Brahman*, even before, or without, desiring to know *dharma* at all. There is no relation of necessary sequence between an enquiry about *dharma* and an enquiry about *Brahman*. It cannot be made out that one enquiry is part of the other enquiry or that one is competent to ask about *Brahman* only when one has already known about *dharma*. Besides, we know that these two enquiries have different objects as well as different results. What results from a knowledge of *dharma* is well-being or prosperity, whether in this life or in the next, and that, too, is dependent upon our actual performance of *dharma*. What results from the knowledge of *Brahman* is the highest end of our life or liberation, and it does not depend on any other performance. The *dharma* which is sought to be known does not yet exist when we merely know about it. It has to be brought about by some action of a human agent. In the case of *Brahman*, what is sought to be known is the existent reality, which, being eternal is never dependent upon any action of man.

Moreover the *Vedic* injunctions or declarations, from which we learn about *Brahman* and *dharma*, differ in their significance<sup>15</sup>. What a religious duty or *dharma* is, is determined by the *Vedic* injunction alone. Our religious duties are what the *Vedas* enjoin. Such an injunction is intelligible only as a direction to perform the particular action enjoined. But the *Vedic* declaration about *Brahman* gives us only knowledge about *Brahman* but no direction

whatever for any action. Knowledge is never produced by an injunction. It arises automatically when its particular conditions are fulfilled, as we see in the case of our perception of an external object, which results automatically from its contact with our senses, without any direction from anybody.

So our main question remains: what are the preconditions of an enquiry about *Brahman*? Really we want to know what qualifications are needed by an aspirant after attaining the knowledge of *Brahman*, so that his enquiry about *Brahman* may be fruitful.

These qualifications are fourfold. First one is the discrimination between what is eternal and what is not eternal. One should realize that the self alone is eternal, while the world and all its objects are perishable and impermanent. Secondly, one must give up all desire for objective or sensuous enjoyment, whether in this world or in the next. Thirdly, one must have self-control, control over the sense as well as the mind. Lastly one must have a real desire for absolute freedom or liberation. Having acquired these qualifications one may very well enquire about *Brahman* and know it, even before or after an enquiry about *dharma*. But without these qualifications it is not possible to know *Brahman* and there would be no sense in an enquiry about it. So, the enquiry about *Brahman* is to be made after one has acquired these qualifications.

The *Vedas* themselves declared that the different sacrifices which we are enjoined to perform in order to achieve some good cannot lead to any permanent result. Even if we go to heaven we can stay there only for a time and have to come down again when the merit we acquired through sacrifices is exhausted. *Veda* also says that we can attain the ultimate end and achieve permanent satisfaction by the knowledge of *Brahman*. So one should enquire about *Brahman* after one has acquired the aforesaid qualifications.

*Brahman* is the direct object of our enquiry. The word *Brahman* here means the absolute being. An enquiry, as the etymology of the word (*jijnasa*) shows, really means a desire for knowledge. Desire is always directed towards some result to be achieved<sup>16</sup>. Here the object of desire is knowledge which is not merely *veda*, but a direct intuitive realization. What is sought to be realized through valid knowledge is *Brahman*, and the realization of *Brahman* is the ultimate goal of man which removes the great evil of ignorance, the root cause of our worldly existence as well as of all our sufferings. It is on this account that *Brahman* has to be enquired about and known.

Now the question is whether *Brahman* is something already known or not known at all. In the first case, there is no need to enquire and in the second case, it is not possible to enquire. We not need to enquire about things we already know, nor can we enquire about those which we do not know at all. The difficulty is solved when we realize that although we know *Brahman* in a general way, we are in the dark about its specific character. By the word *Brahman*, as its etymology suggests, we understand an eternal being which is pure, conscious and free as well as omniscient and omnipotent. And as it constitutes the self of all, its existence is, of course, known, because everybody is conscious of his own existence and nobody says ‘I am not’. If the self were altogether unknown, everybody would realize that he is not. Now, if the self is *Brahman*, and if in knowing the self we know *Brahman*, then, no doubt, *Brahman*, in effect, turns out to be known already: but still we have to carry our enquiry further about it, because although we know the self in a general way, there is a good deal of misunderstanding and difference of opinion about its specific character.

Ordinary people and some philosophers, who are materialists, take the self to be the body only, endowed with the attribute of consciousness. For others the self is but the senses, which are conscious. For some the mind is the self. Some (e.g. some Buddhists) take the momentary state of consciousness to be the self. For others (e.g. *Mādhyamika* Buddhists), the self is a

mere vacuity (*shunya*), void of all contents. Many (e.g. *Naiyāyikas*) regard the self as distinct from the body and object to transmigration, and also capable of acting and enjoying. Thus there are so many different concepts regarding the self. Such being the case, if anyone accepts any of these views without due considerations he is liable to miss the goal of his life and suffer evil consequences. By premising an enquiry about *Brahman*, what is really begun here is a discussion of *Vedāntic* texts with arguments, which are in keeping with the spirit of the *Vedāntis*, with a view to determine their exact and true significance. Such determination is felt to be necessary for the attainment of the highest goal of life or *Mokṣa* which cannot be attempted, far less realized, without proper scriptural guidance.

Bharṭṛhari and Śaṁkarāchārya both opined that *Brahman* or *Śabdabrahman* is the source of the world. So, we should seek to know *Brahman*. But what is meant by *Brahman*? We have already come to know the view of Bharṭṛhari in our previous discussion. Now I have mentioned the view of Śaṁkarāchārya on *Brahman*. Śaṁkarāchārya claimed that *Brahman* is the ultimate Reality from which the entire world we see with its multifarious contents of different names and forms has arisen. How such a world is made and how it operates is really beyond the conception of any human being. *Brahman* is the all-knowing and all-powerful cause of this world and it is *Brahman* again who maintains it in existence and into whom it will ultimately disappear. It is not possible to conceive that a world of the above description can proceed from unconscious nature or atoms or mere non-being or a finite person, as some philosophers suppose. The origination, subsistence and dissolution of the world require an all-knowing and all-powerful being who is none other than God. The phenomena of the world cannot be explained by mere unconscious nature. Because they take place at determinate times and places and follow from definite causes, indicating thereby clear regulation by some supremely intelligent and powerful being. Those who believe in God, as distinct from finite individuals, make use of this kind of inference to prove His existence.

The knowledge of *Brahman* is to be brought about through a firm determination of the meaning of *Vedāntic* texts, resulting from such discussions. This knowledge cannot arise from inference or any other source of empirical knowledge. When there are *Vedāntic* texts relating to the origin, subsistence and dissolution of the world, one may no doubt make use of inference or reasoning in order to understand clearly and determine firmly their true significance, taking care, of course, that such reasoning does not militate against the spirit of the *Vedānta*.

In an enquiry about *dharma* our only source of knowledge is Scripture, but not so in an enquiry about *Brahman*. Here our own direct experience as well as scriptural revelation has to be availed of as far as possible, not only because the knowledge of *Brahman* has ultimately to mature into our own immediate experience, but also because it relates to an existent reality. In regard to a religious duty which has to be performed, we do not depend on our experience but on a scriptural injunction which directs us to perform it. Moreover, a duty, for its realization or performance, depends entirely on a personal agent. A duty after all is some act to be done ; and an act, whether religious or secular, can be done in one manner or in another or left wholly undone, just as a man may go to a place on horseback or on foot or not go at all. So also, we find sometimes a ritual is prohibited and sometimes it is enjoined. This involves no contradiction, because the injunction and the prohibition may apply to different cases, under different circumstances. So alternatives and exceptions are quite possible and intelligible in regard to subjective acts and Vedic injunctions. But in regard to a real existing thing, we cannot conceive of any alternatives. We cannot say that it is such or not such or even not there at all. Such alternatives are purely conceptual, i.e. are fabrications of human intelligence and do not exist in reality.

The knowledge of things as it is, is not determined objectively by the intelligence of an individual subject but by the nature of the thing itself. In regard to a man-sized tree, our true

knowledge is not expressed by saying that it is either a tree or a man. It is surely false to say that it is a man or something else. The true knowledge being that it is a tree and not anything else. Thus we see that the validity of our knowledge of something real is determined by the nature of the thing itself. So the knowledge of *Brahman* is also determined by the nature of reality (and not by any injunction), as it relates to something real.

It may be supposed that if *Brahman* is something real, it may as well be an object of some ordinary means of knowledge such as perception or inference. So it can be said that a discussion of *Vedāntic* texts in this connection would be rather pointless. But such a supposition would be wrong. *Brahman* is certainly not an object of our senses and we cannot possibly perceive its relation with anything whatever. Our senses are naturally turned towards external objects and not towards *Brahman*, i.e. inward. If *Brahman* were an object of sense-perception, we could see objects, which are its effects, as related with it. But we see merely objects or effects and can by no means determine whether they are related with *Brahman* or with something else. Śaṅkarāchārya claimed that *Vedāntic* statements described *Brahman* as the cause of the world. Actually, the *advaitic* trend of Śaṅkarāchārya claimed that *Brahman* is the ultimate ground of the world which is eternal, pure, free and all-knowing.

Śaṅkarāchārya have shown that *Brahman* is the cause of the world and, so, implied that it is omniscient. For him, scripture is the source of our knowledge of *Brahman*. By the word 'scripture' we understand the *Vedas* and other inspired writings from which all our knowledge is ultimately derived. We know, on scriptural authority, that the *Vedas* have come from God, without any special effort being made on his part for this purpose. They came as easily and effortlessly from him as the breath of a man flows from his nostrils. It is common knowledge that an author always knows more than what is contained in his books and so it goes without saying that the great being which could produce so effortlessly what is in fact the mine and source of all knowledge should itself be all knowing.

Following *Veda* Śaṅkarāchārya opined that the scripture is the source of our knowledge of *Brahman*. So, it can be said that both Bhartṛhari and Śaṅkarāchārya have given importance on scripture which is the valid source of our knowledge of *Brahman*.

Like Bhartṛhari, Śaṅkarāchārya also accepted the identity relation between individual and the Absolute i.e *Brahman*. Śaṅkarāchārya accepted the complete identity of *Brahman* and the individual self. To suppose that *Brahman* is the creator of the world is really to suppose that the individual or the embodied self is the creator. This means that the individual has created the seat and source of all its troubles. This is quite implausible. No conscious being, who is a free agent, will consciously and willingly enslave him and make a veritable prison house for himself to cause him endless troubles and sufferings. When a man does anything he normally remembers that he has done so, just as a magician knows that he has put up a magical show and if he finds it in any way painful to him, he forthwith withdraws the show quite easily. But we neither remember that we have created the world nor can we unmake the world, not even a small part of it which constitutes our bodily self. We are made to suffer in spite of ourselves, which shows clearly that I am not the creator of the world, that is, *Brahman* as identified with me is not the creator.

The solution of this difficulty lies in the fact that the creator is different from the embodied self. The all-knowing and all-powerful *Brahman*, who is eternal and pure and ever free, is believed by us to be the creator of the world; and it, is different from the individual embodied self, who is not supposed to be the creator of the world. For the individual self there may be something harmful or beneficial. If he is the creator of the world, he would no doubt be liable to the charge of doing something harmful to himself. But there is nothing harmful or beneficial to *Brahman* who is beyond good and evil and is eternally free. There is nothing harmful to him to be avoided and nothing beneficial to be sought after, and so the charge of having created a world against his own whatever. That *Brahman* is different from the

embodied self is clearly known from the scriptural injunction that the highest self or *Brahman* has to be sought after and heard and known for the object of our spiritual search and knowledge must be different from ourselves who are to seek and know it. The object is always different from the subject of any act, whether knowing or any other. But there is a difficulty. Just as distinction is implied in the above injunction, identity is also clearly asserted when we are told 'thou art that'. How can there be both identity and difference, they being contradictory of each other? The difficulty is solved by the analogy of space as universal and as enclosed within a limited object like a jar. Space is no doubt one and the same. The space enclosed within a jar is not anything other than space as such, and still we understand it as distinct, owing to the limiting condition. In the same way, although the self is no doubt one and the same, the embodied self is understood as distinct from the absolute or supreme self on account of the limiting adjuncts of our body and mind.

Moreover, when one is made to realize the identity of the individual with the absolute on hearing the scriptural declaration 'thou art that', one ceases to be subject to the worldly life. In fact the world ceases to be these, and *Brahman* is no longer conceived as the creator of the world. All our conceptions of distinction and difference, and so of the world and its creator, are really born of our perverted false notions, and they are completely removed on the rise of true knowledge. And so there is really no problem of creation or of doing something contrary to one's interests. We have repeatedly asserted that the world or the entire creation does not in reality exist but is a mere illusion, due to the non discrimination of the self's adjuncts like the body etc., which are constituted by mere names and forms presented by *avidyā*. The creation being not there at all, the question of there being something done contrary to one's interests does not arise at all. As long as the illusion persists and is not removed by right knowledge, the question, no doubt, is pertinent and is bound to arise, and it is to be solved by the suggested difference between the embodied self and the supreme self.

One may still be troubled by doubt as to how the world of infinite complexity and variety is to be explained by the one unitary principle of *Brahman*. But there are various analogies available which should help to dispel the doubt—the analogies of stones etc. Stones are nothing but some modes of earth or solid matter and are possessed of a single common nature. But still we find a great variety among them in kind; quality and value. Some are very precious and rare, while others are lying in plenty by the wayside. Similarly seeds sown on the same plot of land give birth to plants of various kinds, differing in their flowers and leaves etc. Also the same food substance, when eaten, gives rise to various effects like blood, bone etc. In the same way, although *Brahman* is a unitary principle, it can account for all its various effects, and so there is no room for any suspicion of inconsistency in our theory as alleged by our opponents.

I have already discussed how *Śabdabrahman* can create the world. Now the question is how can *Brahman* described by Śaṅkarāchārya create the world out of itself or out of nothing?

It is urged by some people that whoever makes or does anything does so with the help of some suitable means which are used as the material or instrument of action. For example, a potter makes pots with the help of clay, wheel, stick etc., and a weaver makes cloth with the help of thread, shuttle, spindle etc. But *Brahman* is absolutely alone and so quite helpless.

The difficulty is solved by the consideration that there is a number of things in the world which of themselves undergo modifications and result in their appropriate effects, without resorting to any external means. Milk, for instance, changes into curd without any instrument for this purpose. Our opponent may say that even milk requires external heat to change into curd. But we may point out that what the external heat does in the case of milk turning into curd is merely to accelerate the process of change and is not at all responsible for the particular effect, which would ensue sooner or later without the application of external heat.

If it were not in the nature of milk to turn into curd, heat would never make it do so. We can never get curd out of air or ether by means of external heat. If heat does anything, it is merely to add to the capacity of milk, which is already there, to turn into curd. Such addition to power is not, however, possible in the case of *Brahman*, which is absolutely perfect and does not lack anything. Thus *Brahman* by its own infinite capacity, without taking any external help, can account for all the various effects which issue out of it.

Some people objected that the case of *Brahman* and that of milk are not similar. Milk is something material and can of itself change into some material effect. But *Brahman* is an intelligent principle and, like a potter (who is an intelligent being), would need some instrument for its action and creation. We are helped out of this difficulty by many instances found in our ancient literature of gods and men of superhuman power, producing wonderful things by their mere will without employing any external means. They are known or, at least, said to be able to make for themselves human bodies, buildings and chariots of wonderful structure by themselves. They too are conscious and intelligent beings like potters and weavers. The critics may urged that although the superhuman beings are conscious and intelligent, they are not mere consciousness or intelligence like *Brahman*, but are possessed of their characteristic bodies which, even though subtle, are after all material in some sense. They may be helped by their bodies in their creative activity, where as *Brahman* has no body at all, and is therefore quite helpless. Our reply is that we have cited the instances of gods and other superhuman beings merely to bring out the great difference between their method of work and that of ordinary potters and weavers. Weavers and potters require external help but gods and other superhuman beings do not. This is enough to show that what is true in some cases of intelligent beings need not apply to all. So *Brahman* need not make the world in the way a potter makes his pots. So, it can be said that according to Śaṅkarāchārya *Brahman* is the material and efficient cause of the world. In the same way Bhartṛhari also claimed that

*Śabdabrahman* is both the material and efficient cause of the world and I have already discussed about this in my previous chapter.

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10. Tiwari D.N: *Language, Being and Cognition*, Astha publication, Assam, 2014, pp.269-271.
11. Das Rasvihari: *Introduction to Shankara*, Firma K.L.Mukhopadhyay publication, Calcutta, 1968, p.1.
12. Ibid, p.1.
13. Ibid, p.1.
14. Ibid, p.1.
15. Ibid, p.2.
16. Ibid, p.3.

## Chapter-V

### **Some Philosophical problems and their probable solutions**

In this chapter an attempt has been made to point out some philosophical problems of Bhartṛhari's philosophy and subsequently probable solutions to those problems have been suggested. Bhartṛhari observed that *Śabdabrahman* can modify itself into the form of the world and thus be the cause of it without any external help for the purpose. But here a problem comes. *Brahman* has been described in the philosophy of Śaṅkarāchārya as a single unitary whole without having any parts whatsoever. Bhartṛhari also accepted that *Śabdabrahman* is a single unitary whole out of which everything comes into being<sup>1</sup>. Now, if such a whole is to change into a different form, it must be wholly changed into it, without leaving any vestige of its former position. In such a case *Śabdabrahman* would be entirely lost in the form of the world. That is there would be just this world, the complete substitute of *Sabdabrahman*, and nothing else. In that case, the scriptural injunction to attain the knowledge of *Brahman* would be quite point less, because we just open our eyes and see the world, i.e., *Brahman*, without any efforts. If on the other hand we suppose that *Brahman* becomes in part the world and in part remains itself as *Brahman* even then problem crops up. In that case we have to imagine that it has parts which would militate against many explicit scriptural assertions. Moreover, to suppose that *Brahman* has parts is to suppose that it is liable to disintegration and is therefore perishable and cannot be eternal. This goes directly against the very conception of *Brahman*. Hence it is difficult to maintain that the world has come out of *Brahman*. As Bhartṛhari was influenced by the *Vedānta* scripture a probable solution can be offered from the *Vedāntic* viewpoint.

To meet this objection, we have to refer to our only source of knowledge about *Brahman*, i.e., to scripture, and in scripture we are told that the world has come out of *Brahman*, and also

that *Brahman* has no parts and is not subject to any change or modification<sup>2</sup>. We have to perfectly clear that *Brahman* is not known through any ordinary perception or inference, but from scriptural revelation. And our ordinary logic which follows common sense and sense experience may not be applicable here. It is told that we should not try to apply logic where it has no scope, i.e., to matters which are not definitely thinkable. *Brahman* is such a subject. We have therefore to think, on the evidence of scripture that through some inscrutable power of its own, *Brahman* can change into the form of the world and also remain essentially unchanged<sup>3</sup>.

But one may still argue that even scripture cannot make us understand and accept what is self-contradictory, viz., that *Brahman* is partless and yet undergoes change, but not wholly. Our ordinary reason, then, says that if *Brahman* is partless, either it does not change at all, or, if it changes, it changes wholly.

It cannot be supposed that *Śabdabrahman* is changed in some respects and remains the same in other respects. This is as good as to suppose that it is changed partly and partly remains the same, which after all means that it consists of parts. This supposition, as we have already seen, will make *Śabdabrahman* subject, to disintegration and make the very concept of *Brahman* self-contradictory and meaningless.

When different and opposed courses of action are prescribed in scripture, it does not involve any self-contradiction. Because action depends upon man's will which is various and the different courses of action may be just alternatives to be adopted by different persons. But there are no alternatives in reality; reality is just what it is and is not dependent on any subjective choice. We cannot therefore tolerate contradiction in fact. When a statement of fact is seen to involve self-contradiction, we have to reject it as false or meaningless.

This crucial objection, presenting a fundamental difficulty, is sought to be met in the following way.

Bhartrhari readily granted that in fact there is no variety of aspects possible in *Śabdabrahman*. But through ignorance we may conceived it differently and the variety of aspects or forms, so conceived, will not make *Śabdabrahman* consist of parts. When a person, for instance, suffering from some eye-trouble, sees the moon as double, the moon remains just one and does not become two. The variety of forms, and in fact the element of plurality and diversity, consists of nothing but mere names and forms presented by ignorance (i.e., are due to misconception) without any substantial reality. We cannot, however, in our present empirical condition, definitely assert them to be either real or unreal and therefore we describe them as unspeakable. *Śabdabrahman*, viewed under this fundamentally illusory aspect is what is subject to modification and change and constitutes the basis of practical thought and action. In itself, however, *Śabdabrahman* is absolutely changeless and never suffers any modification and really transcends the limits of our thought and speech.

There are no doubt scriptural passages which speak of the transformation of *Brahman* into the form of the world; what is really meant to be conveyed by these passages is not the fact of change (the knowledge of such change is not said to lead to any spiritually desirable result), but something else. The real purpose of these passages is to make us understand that *Brahman* is the ultimate basis of all that exists and is at the same time beyond all changes and beyond the scope of our thought and speech. *Brahman* is absolutely distinct from everything empirical that is said to lead to our highest spiritual good or liberation.

We should not wonder how a single unitary principle, *Śabdabrahman*, can account for the manifold creation, because such things are seen due to our ignorance and therefore is not real. A self, although a unitary principle, is responsible for, and is really the creator of the various

objects seen in a dream. We know that jugglers also can produce, out of themselves, multifarious objects shown by them. In such cases neither the self nor the juggler loses himself or his unity, in spite of his manifold creation.

The question about how a manifold world can be produced out of a single unitary principle is not peculiar in the philosophy of Bhartṛhari. If it be a defect to derive the manifold world out of a single unitary principle, then we find this defect to be equally present in the Sāṃkhya-Yoga or in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school. According to the former the world is produced out of *Pradhāna* and according to the latter the world comes out of atoms. *Pradhāna* is supposed to be without any parts or determinations and devoid of all sensible qualities, and the question can pertinently be asked how this determinate world of infinite complexity, endowed with all sensible qualities, can be produced out of such *Pradhāna*. It may be supposed that *Pradhāna* is not really partless, in as much as it consists of the three elements of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which may be considered as its parts. But the Sāṃkhya School does not consider them as parts of *Pradhāna*. Besides this, these elements themselves are partless and each is supposed to be responsible for the creations of its own kind. Even if it is helped by others in its creation, the fact remains that it alone is responsible for its effects, and hence, here also, the charge of deriving a manifold out of a single unitary principle remains valid.

We found a similar difficulty with the atomic theory of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school also. Atoms are partless, and when they are joined with others, they are supposed to produce effects with many parts. But how is this possible? An atom being partless, if it is joined with another of the same nature, it must be wholly lost in the other and the effect will be atomic, and one can never get an effect of a bigger size. If we supposed that an atom, in joining with another atom, remains partly outside the other, then we shall be obliged to deny its partless character which would go against the original hypothesis of the atomists. Thus we find that what our

opponents argue against us as a defect of our theory is common to their theories also, and so they should not charge us particularly with this defect.

Now the question is how can the cognition which is designated by Bhartṛhari as inner and indivisible be explained? Actually, here an attempt will be made to show the nature, validity and the scope of the cognition. Following Bhartṛhari it can be said that in communication what is figured in the mind is the language itself and the meaning revealed non-differently by it<sup>4</sup>. Bhartṛhari accepted cognition on the basis of how it figured in the mind by language in usual communication. Some metaphysicians were taking the relation between cognition and Reality to be the crucial problem by putting Reality in the centre of their speculation. But Bhartṛhari did not follow the traditional metaphysical trend. Bhartṛhari was not interested in the ontic nature of things though he has given some hints in the very beginning of his *Vākyapadīya*. He explained the metaphysical issue like *Śabdabrahman* as it is used in communication or as it revealed cognition in the mind. For him, the ontological substratum of the being i.e the transcendental being is expressed by language in mind and that transcendental being is actually the cognitive being which is the unit of awareness in nature. He was concerned with the transcendental beings as they seem unavoidable in the analysis and interpretation of the beings of language and of meanings. Bhartṛhari did not take epistemology as a system of justification of his metaphysical assumption. He did not use the term “language” in his *Vākyapadīya* as an indicator to reality rather he used the term “language” as revealers of cognition. The meaning that is an idea or cognised being is revealed by language but the reality (in the ontological sense) is not revealed by language. Bhartṛhari claimed that meaning is not different from language and that is why it can be said that both are revealed non-differently. But the non-difference of thought and language in interpreting communication is the basic problem of Bhartṛhari’s *Vākyapadīya*.

Bhartrhari's *Vākyapadīya* maintained that the sentence, the word and the meaning are revealed non-differently. Bhartrhari accepted *Śabda* or language as awareness or as a self-determinate cognition. He claimed that language and meaning revealed non-differently in the mind and in that way a clear exposition of communication is possible. Actually, *Vākyapadīya* is a cognitive analytic inquiry into the nature of cognition and communication and that is why it is claimed that what is real are beings or ideas which are revealed in the mind by language non-differently by it. Our world of communication is based on these beings or ideas through which philosophical reflections are confined. That being or intelligible being forms the subject matter of philosophy as a cognitive activity. Bhartrhari accepted the existence of beings that is things –in- themselves as ontological substratum of the cognition and of the objects of cognition and that object of cognition revealed in the mind by language. Bhartrhari interpreted the problem of Reality from the cognitive viewpoint which is revealed in the mind by language. So, his viewpoint is different from that of other metaphysicians because like others he did not speculate into the problem of Reality on the basis of mystical experiences. For him, communication becomes possible without any ontological reality. Bhartrhari claimed that what is directly revealed by words serves as the base of inferred reality. So, the inferred reality is secondary and the former is the primary. So, as the outside reality is inferred by the cognition that is revealed by language it is accepted by Bhartrhari as secondary. Actually, Bhartrhari explained beings from the cognitive viewpoint and he did not admit *Śabdabrahman* as an ontological reality<sup>5</sup>. For Bhartrhari, Reality is the known and expressed (*vācya*) and it is not an ontological Reality<sup>6</sup>. This Reality is an idea or being which is revealed by language independently of Being and it is inferred as substratum of the cognition and of the object of cognition revealed in the mind by words.

The philosophy of Bhartrhari accepts that cognition is made directly by the indivisible unit i.e *vākya- sphoṭa*. The indivisible flash of understanding is the meaning which is revealed non-

differently in the mind by *sphoṭa*. Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* is a treatise on the philosophy of language and Grammar which claimed that the indivisible unit of understanding i.e *sphoṭa* can be realised by associating of the grammatically analyzed words, word meanings and so on. But following Bhartṛhari it can be said that there is no part in an indivisible sentence i.e *sphoṭa*. The process of understanding and explaining the indivisible sentence through parts is significant only for the purpose of grammatical analysis. So, we can understand the holistic approach of sentences in our day to day life communication only when the indivisibility of cognition is taken place. We cannot deny the indivisibility of cognition because cognition is intertwined with the inner indivisible unit of communication i.e *sphoṭa*. . Bhartṛhari opined that *sphoṭa* is the inner indivisible unit having a character of awareness and there is no part in awareness. Meaning is conveyed non-differently by this *sphoṭa* which is partless and because of our ignorance we can understand this part less reality having parts. There is no separate awareness of words in cognition of a sentence and of letters in a word because the awareness as a whole made communication possible. Bhartṛhari claimed that if a complete meaning is revealed by a word or even by a single letter they are then sentences and not discrete words or letters. So, word is also an indivisible unit and its meaning is conveyed indivisibly. Actually, words are taken to be real meaning conveying units of language in Grammar and practice. In *Vākyapadīya* Bhartṛhari explained the communication, cognition and semantic rules of language by taking the word and its meaning as real cognitive units.

Bhartṛhari accepted meaning as the expressed and language as the expresser. As a linguistic philosopher he confined reflections to beings by accepting meaning as the expressed and language as the expresser. Actually, Bhartṛhari was interested in interpreting cognition as revealed in communication. His philosophical approach is different from others because he interpreted cognition with the help of grammar, metaphysics and philosophy. Bhartṛhari claimed that there is no need to accept things-in-themselves for explaining concepts. For

Bharṭṛhari *sphoṭa* is the expresser and it is accepted by him as an inner language which when manifested by utterances revealed itself and its meaning non-differently<sup>7</sup>. Accepting language as the expresser Bharṭṛhari opined that language is the revealing force of awareness<sup>8</sup>. He accepts also the *vaikharī vak* i.e outer language for the accomplishment of communication in our day to day practice. Primarily, philosophy is concerned with language as a cognitive activity because cognition is confined to language and always infused by language. But Bharṭṛhari observed that Philosophy is not concerned only with a specific discipline of cognition but with all sorts of disciplines of cognition. Philosophical reflections are concerned with the clarifications of problems for cognition of the beings as they figured by language in communication. In *Vākyapadīya* Bharṭṛhari said that cognition is revealed by language and that is why the primacy of language has been accepted as the object of philosophical reflections. Bharṭṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* clearly mentioned that thought is infused with language and thought cannot be there within us being isolated from language. Language is not confined to the articulated sounds or written marks but it is the expressive power of itself and of meaning. According to Bharṭṛhari language is not confined to what we speak, read or write. For him, uttered sounds, written words and other experiences are only the instrument through which the indivisible language is manifested. When this inner indivisible language *is* manifested by verbal utterances or written words it reveals itself first and then meaning is revealed by it non-differently in the mind.

Language that is designated by Bharṭṛhari as *sphoṭa* is communicative by its own nature. Bharṭṛhari claimed that *sphoṭa* is given ubiquitously in the mind of all individuals and it is manifested differently through the uttered sounds or written words which are the instrument to articulate *sphoṭa*. In our society we can make communication through verbal or written language which demands the participation of speakers and hearers. So, if following Bharṭṛhari it is maintained that language i.e *sphoṭa* is ubiquitously given to all then the idea

of private language does not arise in philosophy. Bhartṛhari held that only for the ubiquitous nature of language one can participate in a linguistic community and that ubiquitous nature of language revealed cognition. In our society the uttered languages are accepted only for the communicative nature of language. We know that Bhartṛhari recognised language (*sphoṭa*) as the foundational being of the world of communication. But he did not reject the uttered languages because he accepted uttered languages as an instrument to manifest *sphoṭa*. Actually, Bhartṛhari opined that the uttered language and the inner meaning revealing language (*sphoṭa*) both are involved inseparably for the purpose of communication<sup>9</sup>. Uttered languages are the tools through which the *sphoṭa* can be manifested. Through the analysis of language in our usual communication Bhartṛhari clarified the concept of meaning on the basis of cognition. Bhartṛhari's enquiry on language and meaning played an important role for the purpose of cognitive philosophical analysis and for understanding concepts in its clarity. The *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartṛhari dealt clearly and distinctly with the syntactic and semantic issues in philosophy. Bhartṛhari argued that the foundational character of cognition cannot be denied because cognition revealed by language is always veridical. For Bhartṛhari language is awareness in nature and it revealed meaning non-differently by it and that is why Bhartṛhari accepted the foundational character of language.

Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* clearly mentions that cognition is revealed by language in the mind and the sources of cognition like perception, inference, implication etc. are only the instruments which are helpful for the manifestation of the real language i.e. *sphoṭa*. So, it can be said that Bhartṛhari is not an epistemologist as the term is taken popularly. Accepting cognition as virtue and in the light of cognition as virtue Bhartṛhari has criticized *tarka* specifically in the verses *Vākyapadīya* 1/31, 1/36-38, 2/78, perception in *Vākyapadīya* 2/296 and inference in *Vākyapadīya* 1/30-42, 136, 138, 2/46, 2/368, 2/352, 2/140. He has criticized *tarka*, perception, and inference as the sources of leading erroneous cognition on the basis of

which communication cannot be possible. For him the world of communication is possible only intertwined with language i.e *sphoṭa*. The main cause of refuting *tarka* and inference is the subjective nature of these through which the acquiring knowledge is vitiated. For Bhartṛhari, *tarka*, inference etc. cannot work independently of the cognition which is revealed in the mind by language that serves as the cognitive ground of reasoning. Though the other theorists accept inference, perception as a means of cognition independently of language Bhartṛhari has refuted them as a valid means of cognition. But it is important to note that Bhartṛhari have accepted the importance of inference, perception, and implication as they are based on the scripture (*veda*). Scripture is the expresser of cognition which is revealed by the language used in it. So, cognition cannot be possible isolated from language.

For Bhartṛhari language and the meaning which is revealed non-differently by the language both are the objects of cognition. Our reflections are confined to the objects of cognition which are revealed by language (*sphoṭa*) in the mind. German philosopher Immanuel Kant maintained that we know only the phenomena and the noumena is unknown and unknowable. Kant argued that the objects of our cognition are the subjective qualities that are constituents of perceptual things<sup>10</sup>. But Bhartṛhari's view is different from Kantian view. Bhartṛhari observed that perceptual things cannot be revealed as being or non-being rather being and non-being are known as they are revealed in the mind by language. We know that some philosophers interpreted the noumenal world through the linguistic analysis but Bhartṛhari's thought is quite different from them. Bhartṛhari explained that the noumenal world is something that is beyond the grasp of language and mind. For him, cognition is revealed by language (*sphoṭa*) in usual communication and the interpretation of cognition is the main aim of philosophy. As far as the cognition or the purpose of communication is concerned there is no need of physical entities. We can acquire the sense data through the written or spoken utterances which can be used as an instrument in the manifestation of language and meaning.

The objects are formed in the mind by language and our cognition is confined to these objects. Language for Bharṭṛhari is an inner indivisible meaning revealing unit which is not confined to the utterances or written sentences or words. These are acts as an instrument to manifest language (*sphoṭa*) and language is accepted by him as an expresser and meaning as an expressed but both of these are manifested inseparately by language (*sphoṭa*). For Bharṭṛhari language is accepted as the object of cognition.

In *Vākyapadīya* it is mentioned that the cognition of being and non-being is revealed by language in the mind. The language which is revealed itself in the mind is an intelligible being or idea and it is accepted by Bharṭṛhari as the expresser (*vācaka*) and the meaning which is accepted by Bharṭṛhari as the expressed (*vācya*) is revealed unitedly by the language that is the expresser. Language revealed itself and is eternally fit to reveal the meaning non-differently. So, the accomplishment of indivisible cognition is made possible by language. To Bharṭṛhari meaning without language is not possible and cognition independently of language is ceased to be cognition. Following Bharṭṛhari we can say that the analysis of thought and language is possible only if cognition is intertwined with language. But some philosophers have doubted the objectivity of the study of language by language itself. For them all thoughts about language must be carried out in language itself due to human limitations that he has only language to study even language itself. Bharṭṛhari opined that language as the expresser revealed itself first in every cognition and then meaning is revealed by it. Bharṭṛhari did not accept any meaning independent of language and isolated from language and if language is not revealed itself first then meaning could not be revealed. Now one question may arise in connection with Bharṭṛhari's opinion. How can the language as an expresser be expressed itself also? In reply to this question following Bharṭṛhari we may say that language also figures as an object of cognition through language. According to Bharṭṛhari functional language is a totality of two- one is the cause of the cognition of

language and another is the cause of the cognition of the meaning. Language is an expressed being and it is expressed by itself as an object of cognition. Before revealing the meaning language reveals itself first. Bhartṛhari is of the opinion that the cognition is revealed by language first and then meaning is revealed non-differently by it. According to Bhartṛhari verbal utterances are only the instruments to manifest indivisible language given in the mind and after manifesting in a sequence of verbal utterances it revealed its own nature i.e *sphoṭa*.

According to Bhartṛhari the main characteristic of language is to reveal itself in cognition and it is distinguished from the sense. Bhartṛhari accepted their differences on the basis of the fact that before knowing the objects senses need not be cognised themselves. For Bhartṛhari, senses can be cognised only when they came into contact with the objects. But language (*Śabda*) reveals itself before revealing meaning and that is why Bhartṛhari defined it as the expressed and the expresser. If for the accomplishment of cognition the language is taken only as an instrument then there would be no need for knowing the language itself before knowing the meaning. So, language is known first when it is manifested by utterances and then the meaning is known when it is expressed by the real language (*Śabdabrahman*) non-differently by it. As all cognitions are expressed by the language no cognition is possible unless and until language is revealed. But the Mīmāṃsakas and the Naiyāyikas refute the aforementioned view of Bhartṛhari and claim that without perceiving the senses themselves we can perceive a thing by the senses. Similarly we can say that as language is taken only as a means of cognition there is no need for accepting it as prior to cognition. But Bhartṛhari accepted language as an active principle. For him, the nature of language is to reveal its own nature before revealing meaning. If the language itself is not revealed in the mind first then the meaning cannot be revealed because language revealed meaning non-differently by it. Bhartṛhari did not accept language only as a means of cognition. In *Vākyapadīya* language is

taken as consciousness or awareness which reveals itself and the meaning is revealed accompanied by it.

In *Vākyapadīya* we have seen a sharp distinction between the process of perception and the process of cognition. The senses and the indications in perception and inference stand at a distance from each other. After expressing knowledge they are separated from the knowing objects. But in Verbal cognition the language is not separated from the cognition. For Bhartṛhari, language is an inner indivisible meaning revealing unit which is ubiquitously given to all and when it is manifested by the verbal noises it reveals its own nature that is *sphoṭa*. Though meaning is an inner being it is not independent of language because meaning is revealed by the language non-differently by it. So, it can be said that the two inner beings are related with each other. Bhartṛhari defined cognition as intertwined with language. Language is infused with all sorts of cognitions. So, the process of cognition is the only cause for the differences among them. But Naiyāyikas and the Mīmāṃsakas refute the Vaiyākaraṇas view and argued that cognition as intertwined with language cannot be proved. They opined that language is an instrument in the indication of the meaning. So, the language is an indicator and the meaning is indicated. The indicator and the indicated cannot be taken to be intertwined. The indicator stands always at a distance from what it indicates and is separated after performing the act of indicating. Now the question may arise: is there any authenticity to claim that the senses which are the means for the accomplishment of cognition of an object and the object cognised through them are intertwined with each other? Those who accepted language only as an instrument of cognition argued that the word cow, the meaning cow and the cognition cow are indicated by the speaker by the same word cow because except language there is no other instrument to indicate it. The speaker used the same word cow as an indication of all of them and this is the limitation of the speaker. But this limitation of the speaker cannot be taken as a ground of accepting cognition as

intertwined with language. The opponents strongly argued that there is no infusion of the senses and the object perceived by them and they rejected *Vaiyākaraṇas* holistic approach of language which is based on the infusion of cognition and language as ignorance.

But in response to the above objection following Bhartṛhari it can be said that the Mīmāṃsakas and the Naiyāyikas are based on their oversight of the difference between perception and cognition. Before revealing meaning the language reveals itself and this is the main characteristic of language. As language is infused with cognition and this nature of language cannot be changed, one is bound to accept the cognition which is cognised directly by the language. If one rejects that cognition then the communication cannot be made. It is important to note that the discriminative nature of cognition is based on language. If the cognition of cow and the cognition of pot is not taken as infused with language then the different senses of them cannot be distinguished from each other. As cognition is infused by language the very sense of cow separated from language cannot be known as the object of cognition. The perceptual or inferential cognition of cow cannot be understood distinctly isolated from language.

But Jayanta Bhaṭṭa in his *Nyāya Mañjarī* refuted the above view of Bhartṛhari and argued that between the determinate and indeterminate perceptual cognition the later could not be taken as intertwined with language. For him, the indeterminate perceptual cognition is not associated with language. The determinate perceptual cognition is associated with language. The determinate and indeterminate cognition cannot be differentiated if both of them are infused with language. Rejecting the above views the grammarians replied that it is wrong to confine language with verbal noises. Actually, Bhartṛhari's theory of *sphoṭa* claimed that the cognition is essentially and cognitively intertwined with language. The language (*Śabda*) as the expresser expresses itself and the meaning. As the objects of cognition are revealed by language they cannot be known separately from the language. If cognition is separated from

language then it is ceased to be cognition. We can perform an action with the help of cognition and no cognition is possible being isolated from language. Even the cognition in a newborn baby is intertwined with language. The crying, sucking, vibrating of the vocal organs of a newborn baby cannot be accomplished if there is no incentive to act. So, as the incentive to act or not to act cannot deny the cognition as the cause of the incentives must be accepted. But it is important to point out that there is no possibility of a newly born baby being taught the language we speak, read or write. So, those who took language as confined with spoken or written language which we learnt gradually after birth failed to understand the nature of cognition and they denied it to the newly born baby. Bhartrhari argued that if the inner language as potency for incentive is not accepted as given in the mind of a newborn baby its activities of crying, sucking etc. would not be possible. The modern scientists and the psychologists also prove the presence of cognition as the cause of the incentive to crying, smiling of a baby. The inner language as potency reveals the cognition that causes incentive in a baby and that inner linguistic potency is given since its birth. As this potency is given since its birth it tries to communicate by crying, smiling etc. If it is not then it would not be possible for it to make efforts for learning and communicating. So, Bhartrhari explained the cognition of a newborn baby as infused with language. But it is important to note that here he used the term language as an inner linguistic potency which is needed for incentive to perform an act.

Bhartrhari claimed that infusing with language cognition is distinctively known as cognition. Inferential cognition can be known distinctively on the basis of language. Even the cognition of dream objects is also intertwined with language. Actually, cognition cannot be illuminated in isolation from language. So, it can be said that nothing can be expressed separately from and independently of language. Bhartrhari refuted the propositionalist's view who accepts proposition as abstracted from several instances and occurrences of sentences. Bhartrhari

argued that a sentence i.e inner meaning revealing unit is not an abstraction from the occurrences and the perceived instances. For him, sentence i.e inner language is foundationally given as awareness itself. Verbal noises are the instruments through which the inner meaning revealing language can be manifested. Following Bhartṛhari's we can say that language is not an abstraction from the outside and it is also not a mental construction. Actually, it is an awareness that reveals itself and the meaning. If *sphoṭa* is taken as an abstraction then it must lose its expressive character. No cognition can be made if thought itself is abstracted from language because without infusing with language thought cannot reveal itself and the meaning also. The idea of abstraction may lead to the undesirable metaphysical presumption of the things from which it is abstracted. If an abstracted proposition is not signified itself first then the meaning cannot be signified by it and hence the idea of proposition as abstraction is cognitively and logically inconsistent. For Bhartṛhari the inner meaning revealing language i.e *sphoṭa* is not abstracted from verbal utterances or verbal noises. It is a self-restrained being that acts for expressing thoughts of itself and of its meaning. So, it can be said that there is no difference between language and thought. But those who have taken language and thought as different did not accept the above view of Bhartṛhari. They have taken meaning as thought and made a difference between thought and language. Because they accept language only as a referring instrument of thought. But Bhartṛhari denied the above view and argued that if language and thought are taken as different then the clarification of thought by the analysis of language cannot be possible. Actually, the analysis of thought through the analysis of language cannot be possible if language is taken only as confined to verbal utterances and as abstracted from verbal utterances. Actually, Bhartṛhari's view of *akhandavākyasphoṭa* is based on the idea of infusion of language and thought and of language and cognition.

There is no philosophical and logical need for accepting proposition as an abstraction. The proposition as an abstraction denied the revealing nature of language and that abstraction amounts to unnecessary metaphysical assumption. According to Bhartṛhari language is a foundational being of awareness in nature. It reveals itself and its meaning that is the primary being of the cognitive world of communication. Bhartṛhari accepted cognition as infused with language on the basis of the illuminative character of cognition and of the expressive nature of language. But it is important to note that language does not infuse thought only but it is thought itself. Language reveals itself and the meaning is revealed non-differently by it. Verbal utterances, written words are the only tools in the manifestation of the *sphoṭa*. So, the representative theory of cognition is inconsistent with the distinctive nature of cognition and language itself.

Here an attempt has been made to discuss Bhartṛhari's view on the nature and philosophical significance of the being that is figured in the mind by language in the accomplishment of communication.

It is started with the view of Mahābhāsyakāra Patañjali who has classified all beings into two categories, one is external being (*vāhya-sattā*) and another is intelligible being (*buddhistha-sattā*). Intelligible being is figured in the mind non-differently by language and hence it is eternally related with the language. Mahābhāsyakāra claimed that meaning is never deprived of being. Though all the 'tables' may be destroyed, the meaning of the word 'table' is necessarily revealed in the mind by the word 'table.' Now the problem is if being is not taken as externally existent then the uses like being exists would be contradictory. The opponents argues against the pāṇini *sūtra* '*tadasyāstyasminniti matup*' (*Astādhyayi*, 5/2/95) and claimed that if the *padārtha* is never deprived of its being then there is no need of using the word 'exist' in the *sūtra* for characterizing the being as exist. Bhartṛhari observed the external being as the only being revealed by language and the intelligible being as the *mukhya-sattā*

which is transcendental to cognition. The intelligible being in contrast with the external being is figured in the mind by language. Though from the cognitive perspective the intelligible being is taken as primary, yet as the word 'exist' is popularly used for the external being, its use for the intelligible being is taken for the secondary being. According to Bhartṛhari both kinds of beings are not separated one from another from the cognitive viewpoint. The external being is also revealed as a being in order to be known and it is also the object of cognition. It is contradictory to accept that the inner intelligible being is never deprived of existence. Its existence in the present is not denied also. That inner intelligible being is figured in the mind by the words in all the times past, present and future.

The intelligible being can be figured in the mind by language as being and non-being as well. As that intelligible being is revealed in the mind by language it is revealed equally as being, non-being, existence, and non-existence etc. Actually, that being can be expressed when it is revealed by language. Following Bhartṛhari it can be said that the external existence cannot be revealed as an existent and a non-existent being and it is also not revealed as an existent or a non-existent both at the same time. Bhartṛhari opined it is not the case that the idea of being can be figured in the mind positively and the idea of non-being can be figured in the mind negatively by the language. Both the idea of being and non-being can be figured in the mind positively. By taking the example of crystal, mirror, and jewel Bhartṛhari has clarified the issue of figuring the ideas equally as being and non-being. Being transparent they configured as the form and colour of the things kept near to them. Similarly, the idea of being is revealed as both the being and non-being by the respective expresser that is language. For Bhartṛhari, as the meaning is figured in the mind by language the idea that it is a cow and the idea that it is not a cow is known as they figured in the mind by the respective sentences. There is no any contradiction to the being. The idea of the term contradiction is figured as the idea of it on account of which it is cognised. Helārāja, one of the commentators of Bhartṛhari's

*Vākyapadīya* dealt with the purpose of accepting intelligible being which is figured equally as being and non-being. He argued that the crystal mirror does not undergo any change with the association of different things of different colour and configured things kept near to them. Similarly, the intelligible being figured always positively as being or non-being by the respective expresser (*vācaka*). It is important to note that the intelligible being can be figured positively even by the negative sentences. If it is not then no knowledge by negative expressions would be possible. As being of awareness in character the existence of being and non-being is revealed by language equally as being and non-being. Meaning is accepted by Bhartṛhari as universal. For him, meaning is the meaning of being and of non-being as well.

Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas refuted Bhartṛhari's theory of meaning as inner-being. They opined that language is the expression for the external existents or non-existents. For them if the negation of the intelligible being is accepted then it would be a *pratiyogi* of negation. As the *pratiyogi* and its negation are opposite to each other both of the two cannot co-exist simultaneously. They argued that the *Vaiyākaraṇas* claimed that the intelligible being can be figured as both being and non-being and if it is the case then the word negation cannot be taken as the negator of the inner being and similarly existence cannot be taken as the expresser of its existence. On the basis of the above arguments they have accepted the terms 'exist' and 'non-exist' as expressions for Being and Non-being of external existence.

In reply to the above objections Bhartṛhari and his commentator Helārāja explained the intelligible being by the analogy of Vaiśeṣika's notion of *sattā*. Vaiśeṣika accepts *sattā* as the unity of substance, quality and action. Bhartṛhari accepted intelligible being as the unit that is figured equally as being and non-being. Unlike Vaiśeṣika Bhartṛhari accepted intelligible being as the universal that is figured in both the being and non-being. *Vaiyākaraṇas* accept intelligible being as a crystal that is configured as the things kept near to it. *Vaiyākaraṇas* claim that intelligible being is figured equally as the idea of negation, emptiness, non-

existence etc. by the respective expressions. That which is common to both in figuring as being and non-being by language can be opposit neither to a being nor to a non-being. External existence can be perceived only as existence and not as non-existence. It is only intelligible being that figured in the mind equally as being and non-being when it is revealed so by the language (inner meaning revealing unit i.e *sphoṭa*) in the mind.

The opponents argued that though Vaiyākaraṇas have accepted the being as existence, it cannot be a *pratiyagi* (counterpart) of negation. In other words, being externally existence it can never be non-existence. Contrary to it for them external being is non-existence in the past and in future as well. Thus, that of which non-existence is possible can only be negated by the negative usage of words. As non-existence of only being is possible, it is only the being which is negated by the use of the negative words.

Replied to the above objections the Vaiyākaraṇas claimed that a negative word is naturally expressive of negation. By the usages of negative word the existence of the external being is not negated. It only expressed the idea of the negation of external existence. Actually, negation did not negate the existence of externals but it revealed the idea of the negation of them. The idea of the non-existence of some external existence is revealed by the negative word (*nañ*). The negation of the *Brahman* by the word *nañ* in the expression *abrahman* will not be possible if external being is taken as the meaning of the words. The word *Brahman* is expressive of inner-being and by the use of negative words the idea of the inner being of *brahman* which is the object of negation is negated in the external being by the use of the word *abrahman*.

Bhartṛhari did not accept any metaphysical substance for the explanation of the world of communication. For him, all cognitions as confined to the beings are revealed by language in the mind. But it is true that in some parts of *Vākyapadīya* he discussed about the

metaphysical issues from which it appears that his *Vākyapadīya* is a book of metaphysics which is based on non-dual indivisible language unit i.e. *Śabdabrahman*. Now a question may arise: if our cognition is confined to the beings and revealed in the mind by language and if metaphysical reality is beyond the touch of language then how can it be accepted at all? But it is important to note that Bhartṛhari's view to explain the metaphysics is different from those who explained the world of physical things by accepting a metaphysical reality as ultimate. Bhartṛhari explained cognition by the language in usual communication and it is restricted to beings only. He accepted language not as a metaphysical being but as a cognitive being. Bhartṛhari opined that metaphysical beings are not cognised by language directly. He accepts it as a logically inferred being. For the explanation of the cause of cognition, the existence of mind, soul or consciousness is implicated as the substratum of the cognition revealed by these words in particular and that of language in general. Taking these matters of fact in consideration Bhartṛhari has accepted the existence of mind or soul as the metaphysical substratum of the cognition revealed by language. For him cognition is intertwined with language and language and meaning are the objects of cognition. If one goes through the *Vākyapadīya* seriously then he finds that Bhartṛhari has a cognitive understanding of language and he has not viewed the metaphysical understanding of it as contradictory to the cognitive understanding. However, this kind of evaluation of the *Vākyapadīya* faced many problems for reconciling the metaphysical beings that are beyond the grasp of language and the beings that are revealed by language. We know that any ontic substratum beyond the ideas is not an object of cognition revealed by language. Bhartṛhari observed that ontic substratum as the object of yogin's realization and hence it is a subject matter of *sādhanā*. So, we can say that the world of metaphysical, physical, and psychological entities and the world of communication can well be explained only if the *Śabdabrahman* as the ontic substratum of the cognitive beings is presumed on the basis of cognition revealed by language. Though in

*Vākyapadīya* the ontological process of creation of the physical entities of the empirical world is not clearly mentioned Bhartṛhari accepted these entities as the external substratum of the meaning of language which is known by implication made on the basis of them. The *paśyanti* level of *Śabdabrahman* is bursts forth as different beings when it instrumented through the *vaikhari* level of *Śabdabrahman*. On this account language and meaning are understood as different. The ignorant person accepts it only as a form of language and he does not realize its meaning revealing unit or awareness character. Among the three levels of *Śabdabrahman* *vaikharī* level is important for communication because of its two functions in cognition: one is, it manifests the inner indivisible meaning revealing language and another is it distinguishes correct and incorrect uses of the given words. The inner meaning revealing language i.e *paśyantī* level and the *madhyamā* level both are manifested gradually through the *vaikharī* level. Only yogins can realized the *paśyantī* level of language that is the inner indivisible unit of language without the help of *vaikharī* level of language.

Now the question comes is Bhartṛhari a *vivartavādin* in the sense of the term as taken by Śaṅkara or not? *Vivarta* can also be taken for falsity only when the relation between the cause and effect is false. Those who accept Reality as independent of mind and matter take the relation between independent ultimate Reality and the world of mind and matter as false. But Bhartṛhari's position is different from them. For him the independent ultimate Reality as power of manifestation is responsible for all sorts of creation and manifestation. If the relation between Reality and its powers is taken as *yogyatā* of an independent Reality it will be contradictory to accept the relation between the two as false. It is the *yogyatā* of *Śabdabrahman* on account of which it manifested in specific forms of diversity. Taking this matter of fact in view it can be said that Bhartṛhari's concept of *vivarta* cannot be taken for falsity but for the manifestation of the unmanifested. In *Vākyapadīya* this process of manifestation is operated by the *yogyatā* of the reality of which time, space, action and means

are given much importance as the power which specified the *yogyatā* of language principle. Bhartṛhari accepted beings revealed by language as the self-sustained beings of awareness in character. As beings revealed by language are taken as an awareness in character there is no need of any other cause of incentive in order to reveal them. The beings revealed by language serves itself as the cause of incentive. Actually it is awareness in itself and that is why it is taken as the self-restrained. Awareness is the cause of all expectancy and no expectancy is possible isolated from language that revealed it. The beings are revealed by language independently of any sort of metaphysical or psychological entities and that is why also the beings i.e awareness is taken as self-restrained. No substance can be expressed without the awareness of that substance.

In conclusion following Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* it can be said that language revealed itself first and then it revealed meaning and that is why Bhartṛhari accepted language as self-restrained. In *Vākyapadīya* it is clearly mentioned that cognition is infused by language and independently of physical or psychological entities the cognition of the beings revealed in the mind by the language<sup>11</sup>. The intelligible being is a self-restrained being and by self-restrained being we mean to say that the objects of cognition are not abstracted but foundational. The beings revealed non-differently by language itself into the mind but these are not the construction of the mind. There we have seen a difference between the cognition of objects and the cognition itself in *Vākyapadīya*. The cognition of objects is relational to the cognition itself. But as the light does not need another light in order to be illuminated in the same way cognition is also foundational in itself. As communication is made possible by the accomplishment of cognition by language the objects of cognition also become the objects of communication and of philosophical reflections. The existence of things-in-themselves is not rejected by Bhartṛhari. He accepted things-in-themselves as the ontic substrata of the cognition. In cognition we know only the beings and when that cognition is imposed upon

external beings by habit, practice, perception is indiscriminately taken as the object of cognition. Following Bhartṛhari we can say that verbal noises like sense data are taken as tools only in the manifestation of the inner-language and when that inner-language is manifested it revealed itself first as expresser and then the meaning as expressed is revealed by it non-differently. We perceive the physical world by our physical organs because of our ignorance and because of that ignorance we cannot realize the actual role of these physical organs which act as the tools in the manifestation of inner language. We cannot realize the foundational character of cognition intertwined with language.

Bhartṛhari opined that things-in-themselves are beyond the grasp of language and they are not beings revealed by language<sup>12</sup>. If we follow Bhartṛhari's holistic philosophy of language then we can find that he did not admit things-in-themselves as Reality. Even sense data cannot be known isolated from language. We know that the philosophical reflections are confined to the objects which are figured in the mind by language. But as things-in-themselves are beyond the grasp of language there is no philosophical significance of them. So, Bhartṛhari's theory of objects of cognition is justified only when he accepted the objects of cognition as revealed by language and not as a constructed form of mind. Bhartṛhari did not accept the objects of cognition as ideas hypothesized as external-things. So, it can be said that Bhartṛhari's holistic philosophy of language accepted the object of cognition not as an ontic or a psychic one but as a cognizable and communicable one that revealed in the mind by language.

By taking cognition as intertwined with language Bhartṛhari resolved the problem of relation between language and meaning in a verbal cognition. The being i.e thought object is figured by language in the mind and for Bhartṛhari that being is identified as meaning or intelligible being that is awareness in character. If inner being as revealed by the expressions is not taken into account as philosophical being then the empty concepts like the hare's horn, barren's son etc. cannot be explained. No expression of the external things which exists only in the present

can be possible if meaning as inner being is denied. If the inner being is not accepted as its cause then the prior expectancy of expression is not possible. Bhartṛhari's holistic approach of philosophy has given importance to the cognition infused by language. Language in his philosophy is taken as a luminous and illuminating being of the world of communication. Our cognitions and reflections are confined to the language. Bhartṛhari accepted external being as the external substratum of the inner-being revealed in the mind by language. Cognition cannot be made possible if it is not revealed by and intertwined with language. So, it can be shown that language is the luminous and illuminating principle of cognition and cognition is intertwined with that language that is designated by Bhartṛhari as inner meaning revealing unit.

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## CHAPTER- VI

### **Concluding Remarks**

This chapter is the concluding part of my work. Bhartṛhari is a non-dualist who propounded an ontological theory i.e *sphoṭa* theory on the basis of the language principle as the absolute reality<sup>1</sup>. An attempt has been made by Bhartṛhari to make his theory free from traditional metaphysical allegiances. Bhartṛhari aimed to explain communication as it is revealed in the mind by language<sup>2</sup>. He considered communication on the basis of the cognition revealed by the language in the mind of the hearer. Bhartṛhari's *sphoṭa* theory of language is characterized as a cognitive holism and language in his philosophy is taken as inner, indivisible and ubiquitously given being and that language is revealed itself first and then meaning is revealed non-differently by it. The metaphysical entities are accepted by Bhartṛhari as trans-cognitive and trans-communicative because these are beyond the grasp of language<sup>3</sup>. Bhartṛhari accepted language and meaning as the beings of awareness<sup>4</sup>. If we follow Bhartṛhari's philosophy then we can find that cognition is not made possible isolated from language and if cognition is not infused by language then it ceased to be cognition. In Bhartṛhari's philosophy verbal utterances, written words and experiences are used as the instrument in manifesting the real language i.e *sphoṭa*. Bhartṛhari's *sphoṭa* theory of language is a holistic approach of language where words, roots and suffixes etc. are considered as helping tools for the ignorant people to understand language. This is grammatical analysis of indivisible sentence.

It is important to note that there is a difference between cognitive holism and sentence holism in his philosophy. The cognitive holism in his philosophy is one in terms of which the unit of language i.e sentence and its meaning are revealed non-differently as awareness in nature<sup>5</sup>. But sentence holism is used to emphasize the fact that the indivisible sentence is the original

unit of cognition given in the mind by which the meaning is revealed by it non-differently. The existence of the metaphysical entities that are beyond the touch of language is not denied by the cognitive holistic approach of Bhartṛhari. In his philosophy things-in-themselves are taken as the ontological substratum of cognition that are known by implication and revealed by language in the mind. The distinction between the ontic being and the cognitive being is made for maintaining the distinction of Bhartṛhari's philosophical reflections from metaphysics. Cognition is revealed in the mind by language independently of any allegiance to metaphysical entities. But it is important to note that some thinkers accepted language as a series of verbal utterances or noises having a conventional value of indicating psychological, Mental or transcendental entities. Some other group of philosophers including Indian grammarians accepted language as an inner, indivisible unit of communication which is ubiquitously given as a meaning revealing being. Those who accepted language as a series of verbal noises considered it as a tool through which our experiences of the things-in-themselves are communicated. For them the experiences of cognitions are acquired by perception, inference etc. and language is used as a means through which these experiences are communicated. But if we follow Bhartṛhari's view then we can say that the experiences like verbal utterances, perception etc. are only the instruments in the manifestation of cognition and cognition is always revealed and infused by language. Bhartṛhari made a distinction between cognition and the sense-data acquired by experience. The data themselves required language in order to be known distinctly. The abstracted data are relational to the object perceived and to the mind that perceives, but cognition is foundational. But it is important to note that abstraction itself belongs to the empirical world and required to be expressed distinctly and this expression is not possible in isolation from language. If cognition is taken as abstraction then it is cognition no more because cognition is not an abstraction, it is a revealed unit. As abstraction is abstracted out of several instances of

individuals it is not taken as foundational. Now the question is if sense data are taken as abstracted from the non-linguistic entities then how a non-linguistic entity can be known and communicated by language? This view did not match with the spirit of the philosophy of Bhartṛhari because as far as his philosophy is concerned sense data is taken as infused by language.

Those who considered knowledge as experience of things accepted the actual object of the cognition as the entities that are deformed by the process of experiencing them. Now the question is what can be said about the possibility of cognition of the objects like hare's horn that have no external existence? If the experience and the cognition that are revealed by language are taken as identical then they must be known simultaneously. But Bhartṛhari opined that no simultaneous cognition is possible, that is why these two are not conducted simultaneously. The perceiver did not express the same experience through language. Because if the expectancy for expression is denied then no expression is possible and the expectancy for expression is not possible if external existents are taken as objects of cognition. As Bhartṛhari accepted the object of cognition as the being cognitive and communicable by nature the inactive discrete data abstracted by experience cannot be taken as the object of cognition. The cognitive and communicable being is taken by Bhartṛhari as the intelligible being that is revealed or expressed by language. Nothing can exist independently of and isolately from cognition and cognition is always revealed by language. No positive or negative cognitive claim can be made independent of language. Language and thought are intertwined with each other and if the theory of language is taken as a set of signs and symbols formed on the basis of awareness then the very fact cannot be explained. Cognition for Bhartṛhari is foundationally a unit of awareness and it is not a construction at all. Experiences like verbal noises are means for manifesting inner-language (*sphoṭa*) which is awareness by nature. Manifested by them the inner language revealed itself and its

meaning is revealed non-differently by it. The inner-language (*sphoṭa*) revealed meaning non-differently from it but it is different from metaphysical entities. Though Bhartṛhari accepted the intelligible being (*upacāra-sattā*) as the object of cognition he did not accept cognition itself as the object of cognition rather he accepted it as the self-awareness of itself. Actually, Bhartṛhari's cognitive holistic philosophy is based on the difference between the awareness of the object and the awareness itself and that difference is based on the idea of non-difference of the objects of cognition and the cognition of the object. The verbal utterances or noises and the real language (*sphoṭa*) are not essentially or existentially separated from each other; rather they are functionally separated from each other. The real language is manifested by the verbal noises and when it is manifested by the verbal noises revealed itself and its meaning non-differently by it. In communication verbal noises are the outer manifestation of the real language and manifested by the expectancy of the real language.

According to Bhartṛhari if real language is confined to verbal utterances or noises then it is not possible to frame any fixed syntactical and semantic rule applicable to verbal utterances. No fixed rule of language can be given appropriately if language is not taken as inner, indivisible and ubiquitously as a meaning revealing unit. Three levels of language are mentioned in Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* and among these three levels of language *paśyantī* is the awareness nature of language on the basis of which the *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* level is made possible<sup>6</sup>. Bhartṛhari's concept of *sphoṭa* as a cognitive unit is different from those who accept language as confined to the verbal utterances or noises. But Bhartṛhari did not accept language as confined to verbal utterances or noises. Actually, there are two perspectives of Bhartṛhari's language theory, one is metaphysical perspective and another is cognitive perspective. From metaphysical perspective language is accepted by him as an indicator or pointer to the physical or mental things. From this perspective language is used for indicating

the ontic nature of things which are known by inference or presumption. But from the cognitive perspective the actual function of language is denied if our investigation is limited only in the metaphysical understanding of language. Language is used in Bhartṛhari's philosophy as an expressive force which expressed itself first and then the meaning is expressed by it accompanied.

In Bhartṛhari's philosophy the real language i.e. *sphoṭa* is explained as a metaphysical as well as a cognitive unit. Only for the purpose of clear understanding of Bhartṛhari's philosophy the difference between the two perspectives on *sphoṭa* must be clarified. As a cognitive unit *sphoṭa* is taken as a self-revealed being and as a metaphysical being it is taken as a being known by implication made on the basis of cognition revealed by *sphoṭa* as its ontological substratum. There is a difference between the 'mind' as an ontic real and the 'mind' as a cognitive being revealed in the mind by the language 'mind'. The cognitive being is a revealed being but the ontological being is cognitively beyond the knowledge and its existence is established only by the implication or presumption. This implication or presumption is made on the basis of the cognition that mind in itself is known as an ontological substratum of the cognition which is revealed by a language. From the cognitive perspective it is accepted that language is not an abstraction from verbal noises. Language is a self-revealed being and verbal noises are only instrumental in its manifestation. But no any such instrument is required for the yogin's realization of the language principle. The sentences, the words and their meaning all are emphasized by Bhartṛhari as concepts. The word '*sphoṭa*' itself is a concept. The real language i.e. *sphoṭa* revealed by itself is a universal. The meaning that is revealed by the real language non-differently by it is also a universal. The identical cognition of real language and the meaning is not formed by the verbal utterances or noises. This identical cognition is not changed or destroyed with the change and destruction of the verbal utterances. The real language is not confined to the act of hearing

and uttering. This real language is taken by Bhartṛhari as the unit of communication. Actually, Bhartṛhari's holistic approach of language is based on the non-difference between the indivisible cognition and that of the unit which revealed it.

Bhartṛhari did not accept any part in the real language and he accepted real language as indivisible. But through grammatical analysis language can be divided into parts and the parts derived by the grammatical analysis of it for the purpose of grammatical and practical understanding are also taken as real. The divisions of the indivisible i.e words, suffixes etc. are taken as real for all practical purposes they perform. So, it can be said that the division of the indivisible is only the way to make indivisible awareness understandable. The intelligible being figured in the mind by language is not ontological in character. It is a revealed being which is cognitive in nature.

Another important aspect of the philosophy of Bhartṛhari is that negation is not accepted by Bhartṛhari as a counterpart of positive being. It is also figured positively as a being by language. If the idea of negation is not accepted as a positive idea then the knowledge by the negative expressions is not possible. As both the positive and the negative being are accepted as the awareness in character their ontological differences did not arise significantly<sup>7</sup>. Both of them are revealed by language separately and that is why both of them are known distinctly. In Bhartṛhari's philosophy language is taken as an expresser which is naturally able to express its meaning non-differently by it in the mind. But it is important to note that it is not the mind that construct the relation between the expresser and the expressed. The relation between the expresser and the expressed is called *yogyatā-sambandha* by which expresser is naturally related with all its meaning. If language and meaning, both of them are not taken as distinct facts independently of each other their relation cannot be explained. But Bhartṛhari did not accept the two as distinct facts. He accepted the two as a revealed unit which is revealed by language. For Bhartṛhari, meaning is not independent of language. The relation

between them is called *yogyatā-sambandha* by which language is naturally related with all its meaning<sup>8</sup>. Following Bhartṛhari we can say that meaning independently of language is not possible and cognition isolated from language is ceased to be cognition. Cognition is always intertwined with language. The analysis of language and thought is not possible if both of them are not taken as intertwined. Cognition is foundationally differentiated from abstraction, imagination etc. Language itself is known first and then its meaning is known as a being revealed non-differently by it and in this sense language is taken as foundational in character. So, we can say that as cognition is revealed by and intertwined with language no cognition is possible in the absence of proper figuring of the language. Even the cognition of dream-sleep and that of deep-sleep also are intertwined with language.

If we agree with the view of Bhartṛhari that language is given ubiquitously and cognition is revealed by this ubiquitously given language then cognition becomes impartial. When cognition revealed by language is imposed on our allegiance to metaphysical entities it is used as interested cognition otherwise it is always disinterested in nature. As imposition required some foundation Bhartṛhari mentioned the imposition of the cognition on different allegiances and the imposition of the cognition is not possible in the absence of the cognition which is revealed directly by language. The traditional metaphysicians explained imposition of the unknown on the known but Bhartṛhari on the other explained the imposition of the known on those that are not directly known by language. He has given primary importance to what is revealed and accepted those on which it is imposed as known consequentially by imposition as the substratum of it. If the knowledge of experience is taken as isolated from language no knowledge of experience is made possible. Because of our ignorance we are so involved in sense perception and other means of cognition that we do not realize that they are only instrumental in manifesting the language that revealed cognition. Communication is accomplished without any evidences and justifications because language is expressive of

cognition which is always a veridical cognition. Even the verity of cognition revealed directly by language is accepted as the foundation or cognitive base for the empirical evidences and epistemological justifications.

The whole phenomenal world is manifested from *Śabdabrahman* that is the ultimate reality. Bhartṛhari's doctrine of *Śabdatattvavāda* deserves serious consideration of being because in his philosophy the fundamentally spiritual character of speech lies at the basis of all our thought process and pragmatic activities. There is no scope for duality in Bhartṛhari's metaphysical scheme. The world of objects and the world of words cannot be cognised independent of one another. Bhartṛhari did not deny the existence of empirical world independent of cognition. Cognition being word-potent can framed the picture of the objects as it is presented through words. The real existence (*mukhyasattā*) cannot be known by the ignorant person<sup>9</sup>. Language for his philosophical reflection is not a metaphysical but a cognitive being. He accepted things-in-themselves by implication as the metaphysical substratum of the cognition revealed by language. Thus, metaphysical entities are not beings to be revealed and cognised directly by language but are logically inferred beings or entities. These are logical for those who seek a metaphysical principle of the beings, revealed in the mind by language as their metaphysical substratum or for those who seek an external referent of the cognition revealed by language and take language as that which stands by proxy for external entities. For the explanation of the cause of cognition, the existence of mind, soul or consciousness is implicated as the substratum of the cognition revealed by these words in particular and that of language in general. Taking this matter of fact in consideration he has accepted the existence of mind or soul as the metaphysical substratum of the cognition revealed by language. Cognition is infused by language and language and meaning are the objects of cognition. External things are implicated as the external basis (*ālambana pratyaya*)

of the beings revealed by language and so is the mind as the metaphysical basis of cognition itself.

Finally it can be concluded that Bhartṛhari in his *Vākyapadīya* confined his reflection only to the beings that we know and not to the things-in-themselves or metaphysical entities. By inner language he meant idea or thought object that is intelligible being and not to be taken as mind or conscious. For him idea or thought cannot be taken as a metaphysical entity rather it is taken as a cognitive entity. In Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* thought or idea is called *sphoṭa* that is the intelligible being. In *Vākyapadīya* *sphoṭa* or intelligible being cannot be accepted as consciousness rather it is accepted as the flash of consciousness. The ultimate Reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* is accepted by Bhartṛhari as a metaphysical reality for *sādhana* but it is beyond the grasp of mind. We know that we confine only to what we know and our mind can grasp the language (*sphoṭa*) and its meaning (*pratibhā*). Bhartṛhari also confined his attention only to the beings that we know and described about the creation of the world from the cognitive viewpoint and not from the metaphysical one. Actually, Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* is a treatise on analysis of cognition. Through this analysis process of cognition he described the creation of the world but it is important to note that this creation is revealed by the ultimate reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman*. Because of our ignorance one and the same *Śabdabrahman* is revealed as many and this revealing process is going on through the *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* level of *Śabdabrahman*. These three levels of *Śabdabrahman* are actually the manifestation of one and the same *Śabdabrahman* and this manifestation process is a cognitive process to describe the world. Bhartṛhari's philosophical inquiry about the nature of language culminates in the idea of *Śabdabrahman* as the ground of all phenomenal multiplicities and changes. It is a form of monism in which the principle of language is identified with the reality that is accepted in his philosophy as *Śabdadvaitavāda*. Following Bhartṛhari we can say that the universe consists of the infinite number of

phenomena arranged in a temporal and spatial sequence and of the words which are expressive of them. The universals of these phenomena and their words already exist in the word-principle as potentialities. So, the word-principle is the ultimate source of the universe consisting of *vācya* and *vācaka*. Actually, Bhartṛhari began his *Vākyapadīya* with a metaphysical enquiry into the nature and origin of language in relation to *Brahman*. In the first section of *Vākyapadīya* he tried to explore technical grammatical points in the day to day use of language and in the concluding verses of the second section of *Vākyapadīya* Bhartṛhari tried to establish the importance of the ancient *āgamas* and called his treatise as *āgama-samuccaya*, a systematization of traditional teachings relating to *Vyakāraṇagama*. In *Vākyapadīya* it is cited that grammar is the door to salvation. Now the question comes what type of salvation is aimed at to be achieved by grammar? If we follow Bhartṛhari's writings then we can find that Bhartṛhari has very thoroughly dealt with the all pervasive character of the principle of speech from the lowest level (*vaikharī*) reaching up to its highest and subtlest level viz. *paśyantī*. But we know that he is not too much methodological to the nature of salvation or the path attaining to it. He has introduced a new way for attaining salvation. In his philosophy it is cited that the practice of *śabda-yoga*, the study of the correct form of speech as described and analysed in grammar is necessary for achieving salvation. By the practice of *śabda-yoga* one can be free from all ignorance attached to his mind and the level of *pratibhā* or pure consciousness can be achieved. This level of *pratibhā* or the pure consciousness level is the very womb of the phenomenal creation in which all the differences are merged. It constantly shines within us where there is no darkness in the form of ignorance. So, it can be said that Bhartṛhari accepted the ultimate reality (*Śabdabrahman*) the pure metaphysics in mind even when he was dealing with what appears to be purely linguistic and grammatical issues.

After going through the philosophy of Bhartṛhari one serious question may arise that whether Bhartṛhari is a *vivartavādīn* who claimed that the world is an unreal appearance or a *parīnāmavādīn* who described the creation as a real transformation of the ultimate reality. Regarding this question there are different observations among scholars. Some of the scholars like Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, Vācaspatimiśra accept both the *parīnāmavāda* and *vivartavāda* for explaining the philosophy of Bhartṛhari. At the same time other scholars like Bhaṭṭoji Diksita, Prabhākara and others accept *vivartavāda* for explaining the creation of the world. But one eminent scholar Gaurinath Saśtri claimed that Bhartṛhari was not familiar with the differences between *parīnāma* and *vīvarta* for explaining the creation of the universe. Actually, in *Kārikā* Bhartṛhari has used the two terms *parīnāma* and *vīvarta* as synonyms. Regarding the concept of *parīnāmavāda* and *vīvartavāda* there are two groups of philosophers among the Grammarians schools. One is the school of Patañjali and another is the school of Bhartṛhari. The former is the supporter of *parīnāmavāda* and the latter is the supporter of *vīvartavāda*. But it is important to note that Bhartṛhari himself did not point out whether his philosophy is a *parīnāmavāda* or a *vīvartavāda*.

Now the question is what arguments are given by the scholars for establishing their respective views. The scholars who hold that the philosophy of Bhartṛhari is a case of *parīnāmavāda* argued that the supporters of *vīvartavāda* explained the philosophy of Bhartṛhari influenced by the *advaitic* philosophy of Śaṅkarāchārya. So, their observation is biased. To establish *parīnāmavāda* they also claimed that the power i.e. *kālaśakti* of Śabdabrahman conceived by Bhartṛhari is as real as *Brahman* and there is no difference between Śabdabrahman and its Śaktis in the system of Bhartṛhari. Śabdabrahman and its power are identical. As the power of Śabdabrahman is as real as the ultimate reality, the creation through this power is also real. So, it can be said that the plurality of powers partakes of the character of the word as the power inherent in and identical with the Absolute. Actually, the powers of Śabdabrahman

like time, space, etc. are ultimately real and have the same ontological status as that of Absolute itself. They reject *vīvartavāda* by saying that the power of the Absolute that is called *māyā* in Śaṅkara's philosophy is attached to the Absolute in a most mysterious way. *Māyā* is neither identical with nor distinct from the Absolute. We know that if cause is false then its effect must be false. As *māyā* is false power of *Brahman* the creation of it is also false. But *Vākyapadīya* does not maintain the powers of the Absolute as unreal and that is why the phenomenal world which is a creation of powers is real and not a *vīvarta*, a mere illusory appearance. Actually, the *parīnāmavādins* established their view by accepting the view of Trika writers of Kashmir who have maintained Bhartṛhari's position much closer to the notion of reflection (*ābhāsa*). The relationship between the *Śakti* and its phenomenal manifestation is described on the analogy of the mirror and its reflection. Here the mirror is the Absolute and the reflection is the *ābhāsas*. The *ābhāsas* can have no independent existence without the former yet; it also has a reality which is somehow identical with the former.

The arguments produced by the above mentioned scholar's in favour of *parīnāmavāda* seem to be sound but if we have a close scrutiny then I think one important point has been ignored by them. Both Bhartṛhari and *Śaṅkarāchārya* are of the opinion that this world is nothing but the result of our ignorance. We know that whatever is the result of ignorance must be false. When we perceive a snake in the place of a rope then no doubt the snake, the result of our ignorance is false because in reality it is not a snake, it is a rope. Likewise, if this world, the creation is the result of our ignorance then how it can be true. In reality according to Bhartṛhari there is only one Absolute and that is the *Śabdabrahman* which is a unitary principle then how the creation, the world which is plural can be true. If the creation is true then the numbers of the actual realities are two- one is *Śabdabrahman* and another is the

world which amounts to duality. But we know that Bhartṛhari is a monist. This view is substantiated by the very first *śloka* written by Bhartṛhari in his *Vākyapadīya*:

*anādinidhanam brahman śabdatattvm jadaḥṣaram*

*vivarttatte hrtevāben prkriyā jogotoḥ jotoḥ//*

Here in this *śloka* the term *vīvarta* clearly implies that the world which is the reflection of the *Śabdabrahman* is nothing but a mere appearance, not a real creation. So, I think there is no room for confusion whether Bhartṛhari is a *vīvartavādin* or a *parīnāmavādin*. Besides the argument given above another important argument can be rendered. If we go through Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* then we can see that Bhartṛhari held that *tarka*, perception and inference are not the instruments of valid cognition. The only reason due to which Bhartṛhari considered them as the instruments of invalid cognition is that the world which is known through them is false. Here the falsity of the instruments comes from the falsity of the object of *pramāṇa*. The philosophers who maintained perception, inference, etc. as valid source of knowledge must recognize the world which is known through those *pramāṇas* as true. For example, the *Nyāya vaiśeṣika* philosophers maintain the authenticity of those *pramāṇas* as they believe that the world is true.

But the scholars who like to attribute Bhartṛhari as *parīnāmavādin* and claimed that according to him this world is true failed to understand that they actually commit a blunder. To claim that Bhartṛhari is a *parīnāmavādin* and this world is true is to establish that the philosophy of Bhartṛhari is similar with the philosophy of Rāmānuja but surprisingly they do not do so. We all know that the philosophy of Rāmānuja is qualified monism (*viśiṣṭāvaita vāda*). According to Rāmānuja *māyā*, the principle of creation is true and that is why the world, the creation is true. And as the world is true he supports *parīnāmavāda*. It is very evident that the scholars who are claiming that according to the philosophy of Bhartṛhari the

world is true and Bhartṛhari is a follower of *parīnāmavāda* then thereby they are establishing that the philosophy of Bhartṛhari is similar with that of Rāmānuja. And if it is so then the duality comes in Bhartṛhari's philosophy. Thus, it can be shown that they suffer from serious contradiction.

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## BHARTṚHARI ON LANGUAGE AND REALITY: SOME PHILOSOPHICAL OBSERVATIONS\*

ABIR DAS

It is a well known fact that the concept of language is one of the important issues with which philosophy deals. Language reveals reality to us. There is a serious philosophical debate among the linguistic philosophers regarding the nature of language and reality, and also about the relationship between them. Different views have been proposed by different philosophers on these issues. Most of the linguistic philosophers maintain that language and reality are purely different. One is expresser and another is expressed. But interestingly enough, Bhartṛhari, one of the greatest linguistic philosophers and also a monist, claims that language and reality are same. They are like the two sides of one and the same coin. Consequently, one cannot be separated from another. Even though language reveals reality but Reality for him, is *Brahman* and language is *Śabda*. Language is reality and reality is language. Reality is not independent of language and vice-versa. As reality and language are intertwined both of the terms *Śabda* and *Brahman* have been coined and called as *Śabdabrahman* to designate both of them. For him, *Śabdabrahman*, on the one hand, is the ultimate reality and on the other hand, this *Śabdabrahman* itself is the inner meaning revealing language. Bhartṛhari claims that *Śabdabrahman* is the ultimate reality out of which knowing souls, known objects and knowledge come into being.

Bhartṛhari is known as monist as he believes in one ultimate reality i.e the *Śabdabrahman*. The *Śabdabrahman*, according to him, is without beginning and end and it is also beyond all sorts of change and modifications though the whole world is manifested from it through the process called evolution.<sup>1</sup> *Śabdabrahman* creates the root sound *Aum*, which is modified into the manifold world. It is modified into the world of objects with the aid of time. *Śabdabrahman* is one but it appears as many. This manyness or plurality is false. Plurality is simply imaginary. In fact, everything in this world is actually the manifestation of one and the same *Śabdabrahman* and the manifold differences of the manifested worldly objects are due to our ignorance. *Sabdabrahman* is one but plurality is imposed upon it due to our *avidyā* (ignorance).

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One' has to transcend it through the process of self realisation. An analysis and reflection on the nature of the self is a means of knowing *Śabdabrahman* which is known as the ultimate reality in Bhartrhari's philosophy.

Bhartrhari holds that reality is one and he interprets the creation of this world in terms of time (*kāla*). But it is important to note that the *Kālaśakti* is the inseparable power of *Śabdabrahman*. Bhartrhari says that *Śabdabrahman*(Reality) is revealed through language and it is manifested into speech without affecting the true essence of reality. Reality and *Śabda* both are intertwined each other and that is why the object is not different from the word, as it is the word which has turned into the object.<sup>2</sup> But it is important to point out here that Bhartrhari technically uses the term *Śabda* or language. He has given emphasise on the internal aspect of language, i.e. the essence of language and following Bhartrhari it can be said that the essence of language is all about of reality. This is the reason why he says that the reality i.e. the *Śabdabrahman* and language are inseparably related. In fact, language itself is reality. It is language through which reality is revealed and it is revealed not as a separate entity but as an integral part of language. In this sense Bhartrhari claims that language is reality.

According to Bhartrhari there are five kinds of *Pramāna* i.e. *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna*, *Śabda*, *Adṛṣṭa*, and *Abhyāsa*.<sup>3</sup> Among them *Śabda pramāna* is most important. Bhartrhari observes that if knowledge does not assume the form of word then it cannot be claimed as a knowledge.<sup>4</sup> In this world no comprehension is possible in isolation of speech. No knowledge will shine in the form of a recollection without speech. It is a speech i.e. the word which makes recollection possible.<sup>5</sup> According to Bhartrhari language is not just a conveyor rather it constitutes a vital part of thought, because the cognitive faculty operates necessarily with the verbal faculty. For him, all knowledge must culminate in verbal knowledge. So, language is the only window to the world. The usage of language shapes our knowledge of reality. It is worthy to note that the *Vākyapadiya* begins with a declaration that there is no world beyond language and it ends up with a note that reality transcends language. In the second *kānda* of *Vākyapadiya* Bhartrhari refers to the keen relationship between language and reality.<sup>6</sup> He claims that a word is mere indicator like a lamp which reveals an object. In the third *kānda* of *Vākyapadiya* Bhartrhari shows how our analytical minds

sees diverse properties in a single object and accordingly manifest them in language.<sup>7</sup> So, although language is just the one window to manifest the world, yet it is too small to give us a complete picture of reality. The reality transcends or goes beyond the range of language. Reality is never understood by an ordinary person; only *Rsis* are capable of knowing it. Whatever the sages understand or perceive, they do it with their senses and mind and use words according to figures existent in their mind.<sup>8</sup> Language has thus no power enough to hold reality.

In the third *kānda* of *Vākyapadiya*, Bhartṛhari describes the vital role of intellect in creating and shaping this reality. Thought at this *buddhi* or differentiated stage of word sequences, perhaps is best understood as internal speaking. *Madhyamā vāk* is chiefly associated with that intellect. Bhartṛhari claims that cognition of a complete reality is not possible. So, it can be said that words based on such cognition present objects different from their own form.<sup>9</sup> There is no difference between a wise person and an ignorant person as far as the cognition and the expression are concerned.

Bhartṛhari says that due to the inherent incompetence of language and limited nature of cognition language fails to reflect in its own form. Reality is so higher in level that cannot be described by language. Thus language can never reach reality, because when it ends, reality starts. So, it can be said that when Bhartṛhari claims that language itself is a reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman* then by the term 'language' he means the inner meaning revealing language and when our ignorance goes away after exercising grammar then that inner meaning revealing language reveals as a reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman*.

As far as our observation of Bhartṛhari's philosophy is concerned we think that Bhartṛhari's philosophy suffers from some serious problems. There is no scope to deal with all the problems in this paper. We are citing only the three problems out of them. Bhartṛhari claims that the reality transcends the range of language. But he also holds that language and reality are one and the same. Both of the statements cannot be true at the same time. If reality and language are identical i.e. one and the same then how one can transcend another and again if one transcend another then how one can be identical with another? Secondly, if reality transcends language and both of

them are true then monism, the metaphysical position of Bhartṛhari cannot be maintained.

Both of these problems appear to be serious. But we think these problems can be resolved through the careful analysis of the Philosophy of Bhartṛhari. The language as it is understood by Bhartṛhari, has altogether three layers- *paśyanti*, *madhyamā* and *vaikhari*. Sometimes, Bhartṛhari distinguishes his language into two halves- internal and external. Internal language which is called by him as inner meaning revealing language consists of two layers- *paśyanti* and *madhyamā*. The external language which is described by him as verbal language is nothing but the *vaikhari* level of language. Problems crop up only because he uses the term 'language' in different contexts in different senses. Sometimes he means inner-meaning revealing language, sometimes verbal language and again sometimes both of them taken together by using the same term 'language'. When he says that language and reality are identical then he uses the term language in the third sense mentioned. But when he says that reality transcends language then he uses the term 'language' in the second sense i.e. verbal noise. The moment we understand the different senses of language in which it is used in the Philosophy of Bhartṛhari the problems resolve.

In the first *śloka* of *Vākyapadiya* one of the terms called *akṣaram* has been used. A controversy is seen among the scholars exactly in which sense that term has been used. According to some, the term *akṣaram* has been used to mean that *Śabdabrahman* is something which is beyond destruction. But some of the thinkers do not agree with them. They argue that the term *anādinidhanam* already used in this *śloka* states that *Śabdabrahman* is beyond both the creation and destruction. Therefore, the term *akṣaram* cannot be used in the same sense. They hold that here the term *akṣaram* has been used in the sense of alphabet. But it is important to point out that here the alphabet (*varna*) stands for both the word and sentence. I think the first alternative answer is more consistent and acceptable than the second one. The term *śabdatattva* used in the first *śloka* clearly implies that the *Brahman*, the ultimate reality, stands for *śabda* designating word, sentence, language etc. So, if the term *akṣaram* is used in the same sense then it would be a mere repetition. But if the term *akṣaram* is used to designate something beyond change and modification then it would be more consistent and rational. I think the term *anādinidhanam* and *akṣaram*

are not synonymous. *Anādinidhanam* means something without having creation as well as destruction. But the term *akṣaram* means something which is beyond the change and modification. Though it is true that a thing which is without having the creation and destruction must be beyond change and modification yet the two terms are not synonymous. It is true that a father must be married yet the term father cannot be synonymous with the term married. The same is true in the case of the two terms *anādinidhanam* and *akṣaram* used in that *śloka*. Actually, the two terms refer to one and the same thing but their meanings are different. Thus it is proved that the first alternative is more rational and consistent than the second one.

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1. *anādinidhanam brahma śabdattvaṃ yad akṣaram/ vivartate'rthabhāvena prakriyā jagato yatah//*
2. Bhartṛhari, *Vākyapadiya*, I.123.
3. VP.I. 35-40
4. VP.I.123: *na so'sti pratyayolake ya śabdānugamāt rte/ anubiddham iva jñānam sarvam śabdena bhāṣate//*
5. Ibid.124: *vāgrūpatā cet niṣkrāmet avabodhasya śāsvatī/ na prakāśaḥ prakāśeta sā hi pratyavamarśinī//*
6. VP.II. 434
7. VP.III.14.571
8. VP.III. 3.53, *rṣinām darśanam yat ca tattve kimcid avasthitam/ na tena vyavahāro'sti na tat śabdanibandhanam//*
9. VP.III.3.54: *akṛṣṇaviṣayābhāṣam śabdāḥ pratyayamāśritāḥ/ artham āhanyarūpeṇa svarūpeṇānirūpaṇam//*

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# Demarcation of Morality in Human Life

Possibilities and Consequences

*Edited by*

**Ranjit Kumar Barman  
Ranjan Kumar Das**

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## *Śabdabrahman: A Vehicle of Morality*

*Abir kumar Das*

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Today our society is running through a crisis because the people of our society are not morally conscious. Our ignorance about the moral activity gives birth to the different types of problems that our society actually comes across. So, our society can overcome these crises only by making people morally conscious. If people become conscious about what should be done and what should not be done then no moral problem will be taken place. But the question is how people can be made morally conscious? My present paper is concerned with whether *Śabdabrahman*, the philosophical theory advocated by Bhartrhari, has any positive role to play in generating the moral consciousness in the minds of people. But before entering into that plot of our discussion first of all we should be acquainted with what do we mean by *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartrhari.

For Bhartrhari, there is only one reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman*. Bhartrhari claims that *Śabdabrahman* is the ultimate reality and the world and everything in this world are manifestation of *Śabdabrahman*. But it is important to note that the term '*Śabda*' in his philosophy has been used in a technical sense. For him, the term '*Śabda*' is a combination of two, one is the inner meaning revealing language and another is verbal utterance. Actually, we know that Bhartrhari is a linguistic philosopher and he wants to describe the world in terms of

language. Bhartṛhari claims that language, thought and cognition all of the three are identical. But this language is not like verbal language through which we can communicate with each other. Verbal language is the instrument through which thought or inner meaning revealing language can be manifested and the hearer grasp the intention of the speaker. Following Bhartṛhari it can be said that the differences in this world are actually due to the differences of the modifications of one and the same *Śabdabrahman* and one and the same *Śabdabrahman* reveals as many due to our ignorance. When our ignorance goes away then we can realise the ultimate reality i.e. *Śabdabrahman*.

If we are to examine whether the *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartṛhari has any role to play in making people morally conscious, let us first see how a person generally becomes morally conscious. A child does not have any sense of moral duty. He knows nothing about what should be done and what should not be done. But as he grows up in the course of time he becomes morally conscious. A person becomes conscious about his moral duty in two different ways. Sometimes he observes personally that some other peoples are performing their moral duties. So, here he takes the moral lesson through direct observation. So far as this direct observation is concerned language has no role to play. But one can take the lesson of moral duty and becomes morally conscious just by coming across different types of imperative moral statements uttered by others. Suppose a person advises his child that we should tell the truth, we should be refraining from doing harm to others, we should stand by others in their ill days and thereby the sense of morality is injected in the mind of the child. In this way a person becomes morally conscious to a great extent. One person also becomes morally conscious just by going through the religious scriptures like the *Vedās*, the *Rāmāyana*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Gītā* and so on. In this case also one gets the moral lesson through language. Thus, we see the language has a great role to play in generating the moral consciousness in the mind of people. This is what is about the impact of the language in making one morally conscious. As, the *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartṛhari is a language it also plays the same role here. But has the theory of *Śabdabrahman* any special role to play? Let us deal with it.

Each and every moral theory necessarily presupposes some metaphysical theory. The nature of a particular moral theory is

determined by the nature of a particular metaphysical theory upon which it is based. Say for example, hedonism, the ethical theory propounded by the *Cārvāka* School is based upon materialism i.e. a metaphysical theory of *Cārvāka*. German philosopher Kant proposes for a deontological theory because the metaphysical theory advocated by him is not materialism like that of *Cārvāka*. Likewise, the *Gītā* proposes for *niskāmakarma* as a moral theory only because it supports spiritualism as a metaphysical theory.

So far as the metaphysical theory i.e. the *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartrhari is concerned no doubt, it is, spiritualistic. From this it can be concluded that the ethical theory of Bhartrhari cannot be hedonistic like *Cārvāka*. Rather it would be deontological in nature. The truth of our observation can be traced if we go through the *Nitiśataka*, the famous ethical poem written by Bhartrhari. As he is a monist or *Advaitin* like Śaṅkarāchārya he believes in the reality of one *Śabdabrahman*. According to him, each and every thing and being of the world is nothing but the manifestation of one and the same ultimate reality, *Śabdabrahman*. So, each and everybody of the whole universe is brother/sister like. Here it is worthy of quoting the statement of Swami Vivekananda who actually brought a revolution in the religious history of the world just by passing only one statement in the World Religious Conference held in Chikago of America in 1893 “my sisters and brothers of America”. Swami Vivekananda was able to pass such a statement because he believed in *Advaitavāda*. As Bhartrhari like Swamiji believes in *Advaitavāda*, he also like Swamiji can say from the very core of his heart that the whole world is his family. The moto of Bhartrhari is to advise the people to perform an activity which promotes the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers (*Bahujana hitāo bahujana sukhāo*). If we follow this ethical theory in our society then no doubts the crisis that our society actually running through today can be resolved quite easily.

In conclusion, it can be said that there are three levels of *Śabdabrahman* advocated by Bhartrhari which are known as *Paśyanti*, *Madhyamā* and *Vaikhari* and among these three levels, *vaikhari* level is the only way through which a person generally becomes morally conscious. But it is not ignored that this *vaikhari* level is the manifestation of one and the same *Śabdabrahman*. The *Nitiśataka*,

which is a series of poetical epigrams or rather sentences about morality, is the concrete example of *Vaikhari* level of *Śabdabrahman*. Through these poetic languages a person becomes conscious about his moral duty. One person becomes morally conscious just by going through the *Nitiśataka* of Bhartrhari. Actually, the language used in *Nitiśataka* of Bhartrhari has a great role to play in generating the moral consciousness in the mind of the people. These languages are actually the manifestation of one and the same *Śabdabrahman*. So far as our foregoing discussion is concerned it is seen that there are three levels of *Śabdabrahman* and among these *vaikhari* level has a great role to play in generating moral consciousness. Apparently we may think that it is only the *Vaikhari* level of *Śabdabrahman* which plays a role in generating the moral consciousness in the minds of people. But the other two levels that are *paśyanti* and the *madhyamā* do not have any role in doing so. But if a close examination is made then we can understand that the *paśyanti* and the *madhyamā* level also have some impact in making people morally conscious. The hearer can grasp the very meaning of the moral sentence uttered by the speaker because both of them share one and the same *paśyanti* and the *madhyamā* level of *Śabdabrahman*. Had the *paśyanti* and the *madhyamā* level of *Śabdabrahman* of the hearer been different from that of the speaker, the hearer would not have understood the sense of morality of the sentence uttered by the speaker. So, the whole *Śabdabrahman* consisting of the three levels plays a role in generating the moral consciousness in the mind of people.

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