



# A Grammarian's View of Negation: Nāgeśa's *Paramalaghumañjūṣā* on *Nañārtha*

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**Abstract** The theory of negation developed in the grammatical-philosophical system of later Vyākaraṇa remains almost entirely unstudied, despite its close links with the (widely studied) approaches to negation found in other philosophical schools such as Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā, and despite its consequent importance for a comprehensive understanding of the theory of negation in ancient India. In this paper we present an edition, translation and commentary of the relevant sections of Nāgeśa's *Paramalaghumañjūṣā*, a concise presentation by the final authority of the Pāṇinian tradition, together with an explanatory introduction outlining the grammarians' theory of negation and its relations particularly with the Nyāya theory of negation.

**Keywords** Vyākaraṇa · Negation · Paryudāsa · Prasajyapraṭiṣedha · Nāgeśa · Paramalaghumañjūṣā · Nañārtha

## Introduction

The theory of negation in ancient India has been a perennial topic of interest, particularly in its manifestation in the philosophical schools of Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya, and in Buddhist philosophy, see e.g. Bhattacharya (1944), Staal (1962), Matilal (1968), Kajiyama (1973), Chakrabarti (1978), Chakravarti (1980), Shaw (1980, 1988), Bilimoria (2008, 2017), Westerhoff (2006), Priest (2010, 2015, 2019), Guha (2013), Hsun-Mei and Wen-Fang (2020), Wada (2020, pp. 73–105), Rahlwes (2022), among others. One important strand of Indian thought on the meaning of negation remains relatively untouched, however: that of Vyākaraṇa, the

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grammatical tradition. The basics of the vyākaraṇa approach to negation, as first formulated in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, such as the fundamental distinction between *pariyudāsa* and *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* (roughly, term and propositional negation, respectively), underlie the later philosophical discussions, and are well known, at least in outline.<sup>1</sup> The functioning of negation in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* itself has been studied by a number of authors, e.g. Cardona (1967), Vergiani (1993), Scharf (1995). Discussions of the vyākaraṇa theory of negation post-Patañjali are rare; Ogawa (1984) and Timalisina (2014) are exceptions.

However, the later vyākaraṇa tradition addressed the theory of the meaning of negation in much more extensive and sophisticated terms than found in Patañjali, and is therefore worthy of detailed analysis. In the work of the later grammarians, particularly Bhaṭṭojidīkṣita, Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa, and Nāgeśabhaṭṭa, Vyākaraṇa developed into a sophisticated linguistically-oriented philosophy, standing alongside, and in many respects in opposition to, the other major philosophical schools of early modern India, in particular Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya.<sup>2</sup> In their treatment of negation, the situation is no different. The grammarians explore the fundamentals of the working of negation, always with a particular view to correct (i.e. Pāṇinian) linguistic analysis, but in so doing, they explicitly engage with, and attempt to refute, aspects of the theory of negation in other philosophical schools. In doing this, they develop their own unique theory of negation.

Numerous works by Bhaṭṭoji, Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa and Nāgeśa include discussions of *nañārtha* 'the meaning of *nañ*' (*nañ* = the negative marker, *nala(n)-*), including Bhaṭṭoji's *Śabdakaustubha*, *Siddhāntakaumudī*, *Praudhamanoramā* and *Vaiyākaraṇasiddhāntakārikā*, Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa's *Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇa* and *Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇasāra*, and Nāgeśa's *Brhacchabdenuśekhara*, *Laghuśabdenduśekhara*, *Laghuśabdaratna*, *Vaiyākaraṇasiddhāntamañjūṣā*, *Laghumañjūṣā* and *Paramalaghumañjūṣā*. For the most part these discussions cover similar ground, treating varying subsets of an apparently established set of 'problematic' cases, and starting out with similar assumptions. Yet the treatments, and conclusions drawn, differ in numerous ways not only between the three authors, but even within the works of each individual author.

A comprehensive treatment of the full range of the theory of negation in the later tradition of Vyākaraṇa would therefore be a significant undertaking, which cannot be attempted here. In this paper, as a first foray into the field, we present a detailed analysis, together with translation and commentary, of just one of these works: Nāgeśa's treatment of the meaning of negation in his *Paramalaghumañjūṣā* (PLM). This particular treatment is distinguished in being unusually both succinct and accessible, and in addition in presenting particularly clear and distinct conclusions.

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. the short summary in Rahlwes (2022), and for detail on Patañjali's treatment see Joshi and Roodbergen (1973, pp. 70–117).

<sup>2</sup> Evidence for the understanding of Vyākaraṇa as an independent philosophical school is established by its appearance as one of the sixteen darśanas in Mādhavāchārya's *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* (14th century). The treatment of the 'Pāṇinīya' darśana in the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* focuses on the concept of *sphoṭa*, and is mostly based on Helārāja's treatment of this topic in his commentary on Bhartṛhari's *Vākya-padīya*. The grammarians' theory of *sphoṭa* was already an object of attack from the Mīmāṃsaka Kumārila Bhaṭṭa in the second half of the first millennium, suggesting that the appearance of the 'Pāṇinīya' darśana in the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* reflects a tradition of understanding Vyākaraṇa as a philosophical school which was already several centuries old in Mādhava's time.

As we will see, Nāgeśa draws a clear semantic distinction between the two types of negation, *paryudāsa* and *prasajyapratishedha*. This semantic distinction underlies the debate in all the texts mentioned in the previous paragraph, but it is not presented so conclusively in any other work. Nāgeśa's treatment of negation in the PLM also contains one of the most extensive critiques of the Nyāya theory of negation found in this body of work.

Of all the works of the later grammatical tradition mentioned above, the *Paramalaghumañjūṣā* has a reasonable claim to representing the final authoritative account of the philosophy of the grammarians. Nāgeśa himself is generally considered the final authority in the Pāṇinian tradition of vyākaraṇa, and of his three major works on the semantics and philosophy of grammar, the *Vaiyākaraṇasiddhāntamañjūṣā* (or just *Mañjūṣā*), the *Laghumañjūṣā* (or *Laghusiddhāntamañjūṣā*), and the PLM, it is the latter which is likely his final composition, and thus the final presentation of his linguistic philosophy, being not merely an abridgement of the *Laghumañjūṣā* (itself theoretically an abridgement of the *Mañjūṣā*, although it is much longer), but also differing in some of the conclusions drawn.<sup>3</sup> A summary of the content and arguments of the PLM as a whole is provided in Raja (1990).

In the section “Nāgeśa's Theory of Negation in the PLM” we provide an overview analysis of Nāgeśa's theory of negation as presented in the PLM. In the section “Text with Translation and Commentary” we provide the text of the PLM itself, in transliteration, translation, and with explanatory commentary. In the final “Conclusion” section we conclude.

## Nāgeśa's Theory of Negation in the PLM

The vyākaraṇa theory of negation shares several basic features with corresponding theories in other philosophical schools. Perhaps the most important notion is *abhāva* ‘non-existence, absence’, which is necessarily a non-existence, or absence, of something, namely its *pratiyogin* ‘counterpositive’.<sup>4</sup> The notion of the *anuyogin* ‘substratum’ of negation, which is so prominent in the Nyāya theory of negation, is largely lacking in the vyākaraṇa treatments.

The PLM, like all the treatments of negation by the later vaiyākaraṇas, begins with the *paryudāsa* negation. This is because the grammatical tradition enters into

<sup>3</sup> The traditional view that the three texts are simply abridgements one of another is presented in Coward and Raja (1990, p. 324). The reality cannot be this simple, not least because the *Laghumañjūṣā* is considerably longer than the *Mañjūṣā*, and differs in the order of presentation. The latter is likely an earlier work of Nāgeśa's, appearing more beholden to the views of Kaundabhaṭṭa, while the *Laghumañjūṣā* can best be seen as the full presentation of Nāgeśa's mature philosophy of language. The PLM cannot be a mere abridgement of the *Laghumañjūṣā*, since it does not maintain all the same conclusions; there may be elements of pedagogical simplification at work. A full understanding of the relations between the three texts requires further research.

<sup>4</sup> The *Laghumañjūṣā* glosses *abhāva* as *bhāvavirodhin* ‘(that which is) in opposition to existence’. We try to maintain consistency in our translation of *abhāva* as ‘non-existence’, although in some contexts ‘absence’ would read more smoothly.

the debate on the meaning of negation through the introduction of the negative particle, *nañ*, in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (2.2.6), to license negative compounds. Since the primary locus of *pariyudāsa* negation is in nominal compounds, while the primary locus of *prasajyapraṭiśedha* is (non-compounded) sentential negation, which Pāṇini does not explicitly treat, the grammatical texts begin their discussion with the *pariyudāsa* negation.

However, as discussed below, the *pariyudāsa* negation is problematic for the grammarians in relation to the assumption that the negative particle denotes *abhāva*. In terms of outlining the vyākaraṇa theory of negation, particularly as presented in the PLM, it is therefore more helpful to begin with the *prasajyapraṭiśedha* negation.

## Prasajyapraṭiśedha

The majority context for *prasajyapraṭiśedha* is uncompounded *nañ* functioning as a sentential negation, as for example in the sentence *ghaṭo nāsti* 'the pot does not exist', in comparison with *ghaṭo 'sti* 'the pot exists'. Following Patañjali, for Nāgeśa in *prasajyapraṭiśedha* negation the negative particle takes as its *pratiyogin* a word denoting an action (*kriyā*) or a quality (*guṇa*), not a word denoting an entity (*dravya*), even in cases where the particle is compounded with a noun.

In the theory of negation presented in the PLM, an important feature of *abhāva* is that it cannot be a qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*), but only a qualified element (*viśeṣya*); the implications of this are discussed further below. In the context of *prasajyapraṭiśedha* negation, this means that the meaning *abhāva* 'non-existence, absence' of the negative particle is always the semantic head of its clause. In the semantic theory of the vaiyākaraṇas, the semantic head of a positive verbal clause is the meaning of the verbal root itself; for example, the meaning of the sentence *ghaṭo 'sti* 'the pot exists' is:<sup>5</sup>

- (1) *ghaṭa-karṭṛkā sattā*  
'An action of existing of which the agent is the pot.'

The grammatical and semantic head of this gloss is *sattā* 'existing, existence', which is qualified by the adjective *ghaṭakarṭṛkā* 'whose agent (*karṭṛ*) is pot', containing the meaning of the subordinate element *ghaṭa* 'pot'. In the negated version of this sentence, *ghaṭo nāsti* 'the pot does not exist', it is the meaning of the negative particle which is the grammatical and semantic head of the semantic paraphrase:

- (2) *ghaṭakarṭṛka-sattā-pratiyogiko 'bhāvaḥ*  
'A non-existence/absence whose counterpositive is an action of existing of which the pot is the agent.'

<sup>5</sup> The semantic glosses offered here are intentionally simple; much more elaborate glosses could be formulated. See Joshi (1993) for examples of more detailed semantic glosses, though not involving negation.

The meaning of the positive sentence is embedded under the meaning of the negation, mediated by the relation of being the *pratiyogin* 'counterpositive'.

The PLM offers various examples of Sanskrit sentences, the correct interpretation of which supports (at least according to Nāgeśa) this understanding of *prasajyapratishedha* negation. These include the expressions *nāsmākam ekaṃ priyam* 'there is not one thing that is dear to us', *na saṃdehaḥ* 'no doubt', *no 'palabdhiḥ* 'no comprehension', *anaci ca* 'and when a vowel does not follow', and sentences like *ahaṃ nāsmi* 'I do not exist', where the agreement facts follow from the grammarians' interpretation. These examples are discussed in detail where they appear in the section "[Text with Translation and Commentary](#)" below. A challenge to this understanding of negation is provided by sentences in which the subject/agent does not exist, similar to familiar examples from Western philosophy like *The king of France is bald*. Such sentences require special accounting for under Nāgeśa's approach; in the PLM, this is discussed in reference to the sentence *vāyau rūpaṃ nāsti* 'there is no colour in air', which appears in an apparently interpolated passage (text section 9 below).<sup>6</sup>

There are, of course, four recognized types of *abhāva*: *prāgabhāva* 'prior non-existence', *dhvaṃsābhāva* 'posterior non-existence, non-existence following destruction', *atyantābhāva* 'absolute non-existence', and *anyonyābhāva* 'mutual non-existence'.<sup>7</sup> Nāgeśa recognizes only the last two as possible meanings of *nañ*: *prasajyapratishedha nañ* can have either meaning when uncompounded, but when compounded it can only mean absolute non-existence. The example treated above, *ghaṭo nāsti* 'the pot does not exist', is an example of uncompounded *nañ* meaning *atyantābhāva*. In compound examples like *anaci ca* 'and when a vowel does not follow', the meaning of *nañ* is likewise *atyantābhāva*. The example Nāgeśa gives for *anyonyābhāva* with uncompounded *nañ* is *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ* 'the pot is not a cloth'.

### **Paryudāsa**

As noted above, the PLM begins its discussion of negation not with the *prasajyapratishedha*, but with the *paryudāsa* negation. The standard examples are *aghaṭa* 'non-pot' and *abrāhmaṇa* 'non-brāhmaṇa'. In *paryudāsa* negation, the negative particle modifies a noun, with which it is usually compounded, and the reference of the whole is to an entity which in some contextually relevant way (see below) lacks the relevant property introduced by the noun. So, *abrāhmaṇa* may refer to a person from a *varṇa* (social class) other than the brāhmaṇa *varṇa*, such as a kṣatriya, or it may refer, in a derogatory manner, to a brāhmaṇa whose conduct, for example, is not in keeping with his status.

Here, the grammarians encounter a difficulty with the intuition that *nañ* means *abhāva*. Since Nāgeśa holds to the assumption that *abhāva* is necessarily a *viśeṣya* element, and cannot be a *viśeṣaṇa*, if that is the meaning of *nañ* in a *paryudāsa*

<sup>6</sup> In the ontology assumed by Nāgeśa, colour cannot inhere in air, and so 'colour in air' is an impossible concept. The Naiyāyikas address the problem in a somewhat different way, as recently discussed by Wada (2020, pp. 73–105).

<sup>7</sup> The first three of these are grouped under the term *saṃsargābhāva* 'relational non-existence'; see Ingalls (1951, pp. 54–55).

negation, then *abhāva* would be the semantic head of the construction; for example, *aghaṭa* would have to mean something like *ghaṭa-pratīyogiko abhāvaḥ* ‘a non-existence of the pot’.

For the grammarians, the semantically predominant element should also be the grammatically predominant element. But there is evidence that the second member of a negative compound is the grammatically predominant element. Crucial evidence for the grammarians is found in compounds of negative+pronoun, such as *asarva* ‘not-all’, *atad* ‘not-that’. These follow the morphological rules for pronouns (e.g. taking the pronoun-specific case endings, such as dative *asarvasmai*, *atasmāi*), which in the grammarians’ theory can only be the case if the second member of the compound, the pronoun, is the predominant element. A contrast is provided by pronouns compounded with some other indeclinables, e.g. *atisarva* ‘all-surpassing’, with dative *atisarvāya*.

Furthermore, *nañ* (like *ati*) is classified among the set of indeclinables, *nīpātas*,<sup>8</sup> and *nīpātas* are standardly assumed to be *dyotaka* ‘manifesting’ rather than *vācaka* ‘denotative’. That is, while words such as nouns and verbs directly denote a particular meaning, or *artha*, by virtue of their particular *śakti* ‘denotative power’, *dyotaka* elements as it were indirectly manifest a particular meaning in, or in relation to, another (*vācaka*) word.

In a *pariyudāsa* negation, then, Nāgeśa takes the negative particle not to denote *abhāva* but rather to manifest a particular property of the referent of the construction. That property is *āropaviśayatva*, the property of being the range of a superimposition, *āropa*. By understanding the manifestation of this property in connection with the meaning of the modified noun, the hearer understands that the property denoted by the noun is applied to the object referred to as a superimposed (*āropita*) property. For example, the noun *brāhmaṇa* denotes the property of *brāhmaṇatva* ‘brāhmaṇa-ness’, which in an ordinary, unmodified use of the noun, would be interpreted as holding of the referent of the noun. That is, the referent of any semantically-appropriate use of the noun *brāhmaṇa* has the property *brāhmaṇatva*, and it is this property which is the reason for the use (*pravṛtī-nimitta*) of the word in relation to its referent. But in the compound *abrāhmaṇa*, due to the meaning manifested by *nañ*, the property holding of the referent is understood to be *āropitabrāhmaṇatva* ‘superimposed brāhmaṇa-ness’.

The terms *āropa* ‘superimposition’ and *āropita* ‘superimposed’ are familiar from philosophical discourse, where they are roughly equivalent to *adhyāropa* or *adhyāsa*.<sup>9</sup> In philosophical discourse *āropa* or *adhyāropa* is generally understood in terms of a cognitive error, such as mistaking mother-of-pearl for silver, or a rope for a snake. Here, though, the *āropita* nature of e.g. *brāhmaṇatva* in the use of the compound *abrāhmaṇa* is intended by the speaker, and intended to be understood as such by the hearer. The term Nāgeśa uses to describe the nature of *āropa* is *āhārya* ‘adventitious, removable’. This is a term used in the older tradition for assertions made in counterfactual arguments, and its transfer to the context of *pariyudāsa* negation by Nāgeśa is an insightful extension of this use. In the use of the word

<sup>8</sup> The discussion of *nañ* in the PLM and several other texts is embedded within the section on *nīpātas*.

<sup>9</sup> The term *āropita* has been discussed recently by Kataoka (2017) in the context of Dharmottara’s theory of *apoha*.

*abrāhmaṇa*, then, one understands a counterfactual, hypothetical, assignment of *brāhmaṇatva* to the referent of the noun.

### Context

This understanding of a superimposed property is only the penultimate stage in understanding the meaning of a *paryudāsa* negation. The final understanding involves moving beyond the literal or purely linguistic (*śabda*) aspect of meaning to meaning based on context (*ārtha*). The understanding of a relevant contextual meaning blocks the literal meaning.

Nāgeśa's PLM quotes a well-known verse which lists six contextually possible meanings for *nañ*:

- (3) *tatsādṛśyam abhāvaś ca tadanyatvaṃ tadalpatā /  
aprasāstyam virodhaś ca nañarthā ṣaṭ prakṛtītāḥ //*

‘(1) Similarity to that, and (2) non-existence, (3) the property of being other than that, (4) the property of being a small amount of that, (5) the property of being non-praiseworthy, and (6) opposition are declared to be the six meanings of *ñan*.’

For example, if *abrāhmaṇa* were used in reference to a member of the *kṣatriya varṇa*, we could understand from the literal meaning *āropitabrāhmaṇatva* that the intended meaning is e.g. *brāhmaṇasādṛśya* ‘the property of being similar to a brāhmaṇa’, or perhaps *brāhmaṇānyatva* ‘the property of being other than a brāhmaṇa’. If, on the other hand, it were used in reference to a brāhmaṇa, we could understand from the literal meaning *āropitabrāhmaṇatva* that the intended meaning is *brāhmaṇāprasāstyā* ‘the property of being non-praiseworthy in a brāhmaṇa’.

### The Argument with Nyāya

The final sections of the PLM are devoted to a refutation of various aspects of the Nyāya theory of the meaning of *nañ*, and a defence of the *vaiyākaraṇa* view against certain specific objections raised by the *Naiyāyika* theorists.

The Nyāya theory of negation is presented in detail by Matilal (1968) and cannot be recapitulated in full here. There are two key differences between the *Vyākaraṇa* and Nyāya approaches, one of which goes beyond simply the treatment of negation. For the *Naiyāyikas*, the semantically predominant element in a positive sentence is not the verb, as the grammarians hold, but the noun which appears in the nominative case, that is in Western terms the grammatical subject.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, in contrast to Nāgeśa, the Nyāya theory of negation has no problem with the idea of *abhāva* being a *viśeṣaṇa* element. Nyāya paraphrases of the sentences *ghaṭo 'sti* ‘the pot exists’ and *ghaṭo nāsti* ‘the pot does not exist’ would be, respectively:<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. Joshi (1993, pp. 29–32).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Matilal (1968, pp. 150–151) and Joshi (1993, pp. 31–32).

- (4) a. *sattānukūla-kṛtimān ghaṭaḥ* ‘The pot qualified by / possessing activity conducive to existence.’  
 b. *sattānukūla-kṛti-pratīyogika-abhāvavān ghaṭaḥ* ‘The pot qualified by / possessing non-existence whose counterpositive is activity conducive to existence.’

The Nyāya assumption that the nominative case argument is the predominant element in a sentence is attacked by the later grammarians in various contexts. Here, the criticism is that the grammatical agreement of verb with subject cannot be derived on this Nyāya analysis of *prasajyapariśedha* negation. The grammarians note that even in the presence of sentential negation, there is still agreement between verb and (in our terms) subject, so *aham nāsmi* ‘I do not exist’, *tvaṃ nāsi* ‘you do not exist’, etc., with respectively 1sg. and 2sg. agreement on the verb. This falls out unproblematically on the grammarians’ approach to the meaning of negation, because the relation between the meaning of the verb and the meaning of the noun does not change when the negation is incorporated, for example:

- (5) a. *mad-karṭṛkā sattā* ‘An action of existing of which the agent is me.’  
 b. *mad-karṭṛka-sattā-pratīyogiko ’bhāvaḥ* ‘A non-existence the counterpositive of which is an action of existing of which the agent is me.’

(5a) represents the semantic gloss of *aham asmi* ‘I exist’, fully parallel to (1), while (5b) represents the semantic gloss of *aham nāsmi* ‘I do not exist’, fully parallel to (2). Crucially, in both glosses the relation between *mad* ‘me’ and *sattā*, which represents the meaning of the verb, is identical.<sup>12</sup>

On the Naiyāyika view, on the other hand, the relation does change, such that in the negative sentence, there is no direct relation between the meaning of the verb and the meaning of its subject. If the meaning of *aham nāsmi* ‘I do not exist’ is structurally equivalent to (4b), that is

- (6) *sattā-pratīyogika-abhāvavān aham*  
 ‘Me, qualified by non-existence whose counterpositive is an action of existing.’

then the relation between *aham* ‘I’ and *sattā* ‘existing’ is mediated by the property of *abhāva* and the relation of counterpositiveness, and there is no way to directly account for the verbal agreement. In this context, Nāgeśa offers the example of the semantically equivalent sentence *madabhāvo ’sti* lit. ‘there exists a non-existence of me’ (i.e. ‘I do not exist’), where, just as in the semantic paraphrase of the Naiyāyikas, the relation between the verb and the first person pronoun is mediated by the *abhāva*, and where, quite correctly, the verb does not agree with the first person.

In at least one case, however, the Nyāya theory of sentence meaning and the meaning of negation has an apparent advantage over that of the vaiyākaraṇas. This is the sentence *vāyau rūpaṃ nāsti* ‘there is no colour in air’. This sentence is problematic granted the assumption that the counterpositive of an *abhāva* cannot be

<sup>12</sup> For the grammarians, this relation is mediated by the suffix on the verb, which of course is identical in both sentences.



unknown or impossible, and on the ontological assumption that colour cannot reside in air, i.e. that colour in air is impossible, the grammarians' paraphrase, roughly

- (7) *vāyavadhikaraṇaka-rūpakarṭṛka-sattā-pratīyogiko 'bhāvaḥ*  
'A non-existence whose counterpositive is an action of existing of which the agent is colour and whose locus is air.'

would involve an impossible counterpositive. On the other hand, the Nyāya analysis would not have this problem: *vāyuvṛttivapratīyogikābhāvavad rūpam* 'colour, possessing the property of non-existence whose counterpositive is occurrence in air'. The discussion of this example appears to be a later interpolation into the text of the PLM, but it appears in other texts, and has evidently found its way into the text as part of the refutation of the Nyāya theory.<sup>13</sup>

Following this is another refutation of a Naiyāyika criticism of the grammarians' theory of negation. The issue is the obvious truth that the existence of existing things cannot be denied or simply cancelled. In particular, the meanings denoted by words cannot simply be cancelled: if the word *ghaṭa* denotes a pot, or more specifically denotes *ghaṭatva* 'the condition of being a pot', then we face a problem if our analysis of a negated sentence such as *ghaṭo nāsti* does not include the denotation of *ghaṭatva*.<sup>14</sup> Nāgeśa's solution involves drawing a distinction between mental meaning, *bauddhārtha*, and external reference, *bāhyārtha*. Words denote mental meanings and do not directly denote external referents. Negation, therefore, does not cancel the given mental meanings, but denies the external referent. So the sentence *ghaṭo nāsti* does include *ghaṭatva* as part of the *bauddhārtha* it expresses (we may picture a pot when we say/hear it), but crucially it makes a claim which involves the non-existence of a pot in the real world.

The final engagement with the Naiyāyikas comes in the concluding paragraph of the text. After presenting his own analysis of the sentence *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ* 'the pot is not a cloth', Nāgeśa contrasts the corresponding Naiyāyika analysis, and finds it wanting in several respects. The details are presented in the final text section below.

## Text with Translation and Commentary

In this section we present the text, translation, and commentary on the section on *nañārtha* in Nāgeśa's *Paramalaghumañjūṣā*. Our text is based on the published edition of Shukla (1961, pp. 122–131), in comparison with the unpublished but superior edition of Cardona (forthcoming, pp. 57–61); we note some differences of reading below. We divide our presentation of the text into sections which

<sup>13</sup> The Naiyāyikas maintain the claim that the counterpositive of an *abhāva* cannot be unknown or impossible (see Wada 2020, pp. 73–105). As pointed out to us by an anonymous reviewer, the image theory of meaning adopted by the grammarians (see text section 11 below) does, at least in theory, permit impossible counterpositives to be expressed, insofar as they can be mentally constructed. The discussion in our text aims to show that even granted the relevant Nyāya assumption, it is still possible to produce a valid analysis of the sentence in question within the grammarian's approach.

<sup>14</sup> This is similar to a claim for monotonicity in linguistic analysis.

correspond as far as possible to logical units, but which do not correspond to either Shukla 's or Cardona 's paragraph divisions.

### 1: Definition of *Paryudāsa*

*Text*

nañ dvividhaḥ — paryudāsaḥ prasajyapraṭiṣedhaś ca. tatrāropaviṣayatvaṃ nañparyudāsadyotyam. āropaviṣayatvadyotakatvaṃ ca nañḥ samabhivyāhrtaḥḥāḍipadānām āropitapravṛttinimittabodhakatve tātparyagrāhakatvam.

pravṛttinimittam ghaṭatvabrāhmaṇatvādi. tasmād abrahmaṇa ityādāv āropitabrāhmaṇatvavān kṣatriyādir iti bodhaḥ.

*Translation*

*Nañ* is of two sorts, *paryudāsa* and *prasajyapraṭiṣedha*. Of these two, the condition of being the range of a superimposition (*āropa*) is to be made manifest by the *nañ paryudāsa*. And the condition of being something that manifests the condition of being the range of superimposition is the condition in *nañ* of being something that causes the comprehension of the intended meaning, that words like *ghaṭa* ('pot'), which are spoken together with it [i.e. in *aghaṭaḥ* 'non-pot'], bring about the knowledge of the cause for application (*pravṛttinimitta*) that has been superimposed.

The cause for application is the condition of being a pot (*ghaṭatva*), the condition of being a *brāhmaṇa* (*brāhmaṇatva*) etc. Therefore, from '*abrahmaṇa*' (non-*brāhmaṇa*) etc. there is knowledge of a *kṣatriya* etc. that possesses the superimposed condition of being a *brāhmaṇa*.

*Commentary*

Our text begins by distinguishing the two varieties of *nañ*, and immediately enters into the complexities of the *paryudāsa*. In a *paryudāsa*, *nañ* manifests *āropaviṣayatva*, the condition of being the range of a superimposition. This function is further defined as causing the comprehension of the intended (literal) meaning, specifically that the property which is the cause for application,  $\approx$  the reason for use, of a word is to be understood as being superimposed.

So ordinarily, *ghaṭatva* is the cause for application of the word *ghaṭa*: the use of the word *ghaṭa* causes knowledge of *ghaṭatva* as applied to a particular referent. This is the sense of *pravṛttinimitta* 'cause for application'. But the intention behind using the word *aghaṭa* is that the knowledge of *ghaṭatva* should be understood as superimposed in relation to its referent, and this intention is manifested by *nañ*.

Note that at this point we are discussing the literal, *śābda*, meaning that derives from a *paryudāsa* compound. We have not yet reached the point of contextual inference which gets us to our final, *ārtha*, understanding.

## 2: Further on *Paryudāsa*

### Text

ata evottarapadārthaprādhānyam nañtatpuruṣasyeti pravādaḥ saṃgacchate. ata eva ca atasmai brāhmaṇāya, asaḥ śiva ityādau sarvanāmakāryam. anyathā gauṇatvān na syāt. pravṛtinimittāropas tu sadṛśa eva bhavatīti paryudāsaḥ sadṛśagrāhīti pravādaḥ. paryudāse niṣedhas tv ārthaḥ. anyasminn anyadharmāropas tu āhāryajñānarūpaḥ.

bādhakālikam icchājanyam jñānam evāhāryam iti vṛddhāḥ. sadṛśādayas tu prayogopādhayaḥ paryudāse tv ārthikārthāḥ.

### Translation

For this reason the common claim that in a *nañ tatpuruṣa* the meaning of the following word is predominant makes sense. And for this reason, in ‘*atasmai brāhmaṇāya*’, ‘*asaḥ śivaḥ*’ (‘to a brāhmaṇa that is not-that (one)’, ‘Śiva, who is not-that (one)’) etc., an operation concerning a pronoun applies. Otherwise, because it is subordinate, it would not. And the superimposition of the cause for application takes place only in reference to something that is similar, and so the common view, ‘a *paryudāsa* causes the comprehension of something similar’ (holds true). And in a *paryudāsa* (the understanding of) prohibition is based on context (circumstance). And the superimposition of one thing’s (*anya*) feature on another (*anya*) item has the form of *āhārya* knowledge.<sup>15</sup>

According to the older tradition, it is just knowledge that is produced in accord with a desire at the time of a blocking that is *āhārya*. Similarity etc. are the limiting conditions for usage, and in a *paryudāsa* they are meanings based on context (*artha*).

### Commentary

As discussed in the section “*Paryudāsa*”, Nāgeśa’s analysis of *paryudāsa* negation in terms of *āropa* is related to the grammatical concern that the second member of a *nañ* compound must be the grammatically and semantically predominant member. This follows Patañjali, who states (*Mahābhāṣya* 1.87.7–9) that the name pronoun (*sarvanāman*) is not applied to a form, which would otherwise get this name, when it is ‘subordinate’ (*upasarjana*). However, *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 6.1.132 makes direct reference to pronouns in compound with the negative particle, which makes sense only if e.g. *saḥ* in *asaḥ* is still considered to be a pronoun.<sup>16</sup>

The statement that ‘the superimposition of the cause for application takes place only in something that is similar’ must be understood relatively loosely, or else in

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Laghumañjūṣā, pp. 677–78, and Kalā commentary, p. 682.

<sup>16</sup> *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 6.1.132 teaches the deletion of the nominative singular ending *-s* on the pronouns *tad* and *etad* before consonants, except in certain contexts, including when compounded with *nañ*. It is for this reason that the example given in the text, *asaḥ śivaḥ*, is both grammatically correct and an appropriate example for illustrating the pronominal nature of the negative compound.

reference to the most common case, given the subsequent mention of at least four other possible contexts for the use of *nañ* below.

As discussed above, *āhārya* has the sense ‘to be removed, adventitious’, and refers to an intentional attempt to assert something which is factually wrong, such as assertions made in counterfactual arguments. As Nāgeśa explains here, the *āhārya* nature of the *āropita* knowledge in a negative compound becomes apparent specifically at the moment where that knowledge is blocked, presumably contextually. Shukla’s (1961, p. 125) commentary states: “Even at the time of a certain judgment of blocking, i.e., that ‘the cloth possesses absence of the condition of being a pot’, it is just the knowledge that arises through a desire (willfully) in the form, ‘this is a pot’, that is ‘āhārya’.”<sup>17</sup>

The ‘limiting conditions for usage’ (*prayogopādhi*) are additional, here contextual, properties which limit the circumstances for use of a word, beyond the basic cause for application of a word, the *pravṛttinimitta*.

### 3: The Six Contextual Meanings

*Text*

tad uktaṃ hariṇā:

tatsādr̥ṣyaṃ abhāvaś ca tadanyatvaṃ tadalpatā  
aprāśastyam virodhaś ca nañarthāḥ ṣaṭ prakṛtitaḥ // iti.

tatsādr̥ṣyaṃ gardabhe ’naśvo ’yam ityādau. abhāvas tu prasajyapraṭiśedhe vakṣyate. tadanyatvam amanuṣyaṃ prāṇinam ānayetādau. tadalpatvam anudaraṃ kanyā ity atrārthāt sthūlatvaniśedhenodarasyālpatvaṃ gamyate. aprāśastyam brāhmaṇa abrahmaṇo ’yam iti prayoge. virodhaḥ asuraḥ adharmā ity prayoge.

*Translation*

That has been stated by Hari,

Similarity to that (1), and non-existence (2), the condition of being other than that (3), the condition of being small amount of that (4), the condition of being non-praiseworthy (5), and opposition (6) are declared to be the six meanings of *ñan*.

Similarity to that occurs in ‘this is a non-horse (*anaśva*)’ in reference to an ass etc. (1). And non-existence will be discussed under the topic of the *prasajyapraṭiśedha* (2). The condition of being other than that occurs in ‘bring a living being that is a non-human (*amanuṣya*)’ etc. (3). The condition of being a small amount of that occurs in ‘a waistless girl’ (*anudara*) where, on the basis of *artha*,<sup>18</sup> the smallness of the waist is understood through the denial of thickness (4). The condition of being non-praiseworthy occurs in the usage ‘this is a bad brāhmaṇa’ (*abrāhmaṇa*) in reference to a brāhmaṇa (5). Opposition occurs in the usage

<sup>17</sup> *Paṭo ghaṭatvābhāvavān iti bādhanīścayadaśāyām api ayaṃ ghaṭa ityākāraṃ yat jñānam icchayā samutpadyate tad evāhāryam.*

<sup>18</sup> Here *artha* must refer to a context or circumstance, as opposed to a meaning.

(s) 'opponent of the gods' (*asura*) and 'opposition to dharma' (*adharmā*) (6). [p. 125]

### Commentary

Although attributed here to Bhartrhari, this verse seems to be absent from the *Vākyapadīya*. Nevertheless it is a well-known verse, found in a number of earlier authors. The examples given are relatively self-explanatory, though it should be noted that in different texts the same examples are given as examples of different meanings of *nañ*; this reflects the contextual nature of these meanings. So *abrāhmana*, which is here given as an example of the 'non-praiseworthy' usage, is elsewhere given as an example of similarity (1) or the condition of being other than (3). *Anaśva* 'non-horse' is likewise elsewhere sometimes given as an example of (3).

It is interesting that Nāgeśa here does not give a *paryudāsa* example of sense (2), non-existence, but instead appears to restrict this sense of *nañ* to *prasajyapratīṣedha*. Other texts do offer the example of *apāpa* 'lack of sin' for sense (2), but without clearly assigning it to either *paryudāsa* or *prasajyapratīṣedha*.

## 4: Paryudāsa and Compounding

### Text

paryudāsas tu svasamabhivyāhṛtapadena sāmārthyāt samasta eva (prāyaḥ).<sup>19</sup> [kvacit tu yajatiṣu ye yajāmahaṃ karoti nānuyājeṣu ityādau ghaṭaḥ apaṭo bhavatiyarthake ghaṭo na paṭa ityādau ca samāsavikalpād asamāse 'pi. atrānyonyābhāvaḥ phalito bhavati.]

### Translation

A *paryudāsa* is only compounded with the word used together with it, on the basis of *sāmārthya* (connection of meaning). [But sometimes it occurs in a non-compound as well, as in 'He says (the formula) 'ye yajāmahe' at the sacrifices, and not at the after-sacrifices' (*yajatiṣu yeyajāmahaṃ karoti nānuyājeṣu*)<sup>20</sup> etc., and in 'the pot is not a cloth' (*ghaṭo na paṭaḥ*), when the meaning is 'the pot is a non-cloth' (*ghaṭaḥ apaṭo bhavati*), etc., because of the (general) option in regard to compounding. Here 'mutual non-existence' (*anyonyābhāva*) results.]

### Commentary

The text from *kvacit tu* through *phalito bhavati* ('But sometimes... results (*phalitaḥ*)') is absent from the manuscripts consulted by Cardona (forthcoming)

<sup>19</sup> Shukla (1961) reads *prāyaḥ* 'for the most part' in parentheses at the end of this sentence with a note that it is absent from many manuscripts. Presumably the intention is that *prāyaḥ* should be substituted for *eva* 'only'. Cardona (forthcoming, p. 58) notes no variants in the manuscripts, reading only *eva*.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Śābarabhāṣya* on *JS* 10.8.1.

and appears only in printed editions. That it is an interpolation explains the fact that the analysis of *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ* given here contradicts the analysis given below. The discussion of *nānuyājeṣu* is also problematic, since it contradicts Nāgeśa's treatment of this example in the *Laghumañjūṣā* and *Vaiyākaranasiddhāntamañjūṣā*.

The *nānuyājeṣu* example is a well-known example from Mīmāṃsaka literature. It is a potential problem for the Mīmāṃsakas, because under a *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* analysis—the natural analysis given that the negative is not compounded—they would end up with a *vikalpa*, an option: the sacrificer would be instructed both to say the *ye yajāmahe* formula at sacrifices in general (including the after-sacrifices), and not to say it at the after-sacrifices. They resolve the problem by treating this as an example of an uncompounded *pariyudāsa*, in which case *nānuyājeṣu* modifies *yajatiṣu*, and the whole thing means 'He says (the formula) 'ye yajāmahe' at the sacrifices which are not the after-sacrifices.' This is the analysis adopted without comment by the interpolated text here.

The '(general) option in regard to compounding' follows *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.1.11 *vibhāṣā* 'optionally', which governs most of the rules specifying compounding in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. *Sāmarthya* 'connection of meaning' as the basis for compounding follows *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.1.1 *samarthaḥ padavidhiḥ*.

## 5: Moving to Prasajyapraṭiṣedha

### Text

prasajyapraṭiṣedhas tu samasto 'samastaś ceti dvividhaḥ. tatra viśeṣyatayā kriyānvayanīyamāt subantenāsāmarthye 'pi asūryalalāṭayoh ityādiññāpakāt samāsaḥ.

### Translation

A *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* is of two types, compounded and not compounded. There, even though it (i.e., *nañ*) is restricted, as being the qualificand, to a connection with an action, and so there is no connection in meaning (*sāmarthya*) with a word in a case suffix, (still) on the basis of the indication (made) in rules such as *asūryalalāṭayoh* etc. there is a compound.

### Commentary

Nāgeśa recognizes both compounded and uncompounded *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* negation. The standard type is, of course, the uncompounded. Nāgeśa's point is that since in a *prasajyapraṭiṣedha nañ* means *abhāva*, and must therefore be the qualificand (*viśeṣya*), its primary semantic relation must be with the action which is the meaning of the finite verb. This means there is no direct connection between the meaning of *prasajyapraṭiṣedha nañ* and a word that ends in a case suffix (i.e. a noun or adjective), and so ordinarily, compounding (which can occur with a noun or adjective) should not be possible.

Nevertheless, *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 3.2.36 (*asūryalalāṭayoh dṛśitapoḥ*) licenses the compound *asūryampaśya* 'one who does not see the sun'. The accepted meaning of this compound involves *prasajyapraṭiśedha*, so this is taken as an indication that Pāṇini does license compounded *prasajyapraṭiśedha* negation.

## 6: Actions and Qualities

### Text

tad uktam — prasajyapraṭiśedho 'yaṃ kriyayā saha yatra nañ iti. atra kriyāpadaṃ guṇasyāpy upalakṣaṇam iti bahavaḥ. ata eva nañsūtre bhāṣye prasajyāyaṃ kriyāguṇau tataḥ paścān nivṛttiṃ kuruta ity uktam. udāharaṇam: nāsmākam ekaṃ priyam iti. ekapriyapraṭiśedhe bahupriyapraṭiṭiḥ. [evaṃ na saṃdehaḥ nopalabdhiḥ ityādy udāharaṇaṃ guṇasya. saṃdehādīnām guṇatvāt.

kriyodāharaṇam: anaci ca, gehe ghaṭo nāsti ityādi.]

### Translation

That has been stated,

This is a *prasajyapraṭiśedha*, where *nañ* occurs with a (word denoting an) action.<sup>21</sup> [p. 126] Here the word 'action' (*kriyā*) indicates (as included in its range) a quality (*guṇa*) as well, according to many. It is for this reason that in the (*Mahā*) *Bhāṣya* on the rule *nañ* (*Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.2.6), it is declared, 'he supposes (*prasajya*) an action or a quality, and then, subsequently, cancels it' (MBh. 1.412.3–4). For example: 'there is not one thing that is dear to us' (*nāsmākam ekaṃ priyam*). In the prohibition of one dear thing there is an understanding of many dear things. [Similarly, 'no doubt' (*na saṃdehaḥ*), 'no comprehension' (*no 'palabdhiḥ*) are examples of qualities, because doubts etc. are qualities.

An example of an action: '*anaci ca*' (and when a vowel does not follow), 'in the house there is no pot' (*grhe ghaṭo nāsti*), etc.]

### Commentary

Given the *Mahābhāṣya* statement which notes both actions and qualities as being subject to *prasañjana* 'supposition'<sup>22</sup> in a *prasajyapraṭiśedha* negation, the word *kriyā* in the quote given first is taken to include reference to qualities *guṇa*, as well.

An example is then given to illustrate negation involving *prasañjana* of a *guṇa*. The sentence *nāsmākam ekaṃ priyam* is a minor rewording of the example *na na*

<sup>21</sup> This is a line from a pair of verses widely cited in grammatical and poetic literature, the origins of which can no longer be traced; see Matilal (1968, p. 57).

<sup>22</sup> More precisely, the sense of *pra-sañj* found in the *prasajya* of *prasajyapraṭiśedha* is of admitting something as an undesired or to-be-cancelled possibility. Joshi and Roodbergen (1973, p. 107) translate the sentence of the *Mahābhāṣya* quoted in this passage as "Having (first) allowed the possibility of an action or quality, then, subsequently, he removes (that)".

*ekaṃ priyam* given in the *Mahābhāṣya* 1.412.7.<sup>23</sup> There, it appears alongside another example, *na na ekaṃ sukham* ‘there is not (only) one thing that is pleasant to us’. While *priya* does not occur in the standard Naiyāyika-Vaiśeṣika inventory of *guṇas*, *sukha* does, and it is clear from the context in the *Mahābhāṣya* that in these examples it is *priya* and *sukha* respectively which are the *guṇas* in question. This is despite the fact that number is a *guṇa* in the Naiyāyika-Vaiśeṣika ontology, and that it is the singular number which is subject to the *pratiśedha* of the negation. We are not aware of any acknowledgement of number as a *guṇa* within the vyākaraṇa tradition, and certainly not in any discussion of these examples.

The interpretation of *nāsmākaṃ ekaṃ priyam* is derived in the following way. All actions and qualities must have a substratum (*āśraya*), and therefore bring with them an implication (*ākṣepa*) of that substratum. The negation here is directed to that substratum as delimited by singularity, but since the implication of a substratum remains, we understand a substratum delimited by some other number.<sup>24</sup> That is, we rule out the existence of only one thing which is dear, and therefore understand a different number, necessarily more than one, of things which are dear; the sentence is therefore equivalent to saying ‘there are many things which are dear to us’.

The text from *evam* through *gehe ghaṭo nāsti ityādi* (“Similarly... ‘in the house there is no pot’ etc.”) is absent in manuscripts and appears only in editions. It merely adds a number of unobjectionable examples, first of negation of qualities, and then of actions. Knowledge in all its forms, including e.g. doubt and comprehension, are understood to be qualities of the *ātman*, and so the negation directed to words like *saṃdeha* and *upalabdhi* involves negation of qualities.<sup>25</sup>

*Aṣṭādhyāyī* 8.4.47, *anaci ca* ‘and when a vowel does not follow’, teaches doubling of any consonant other than *h* when these follow a vowel and are not followed by a vowel (*anaci*). Under a *paryudāsa* interpretation, the compound would mean ‘when something follows which is (similar to but) not a vowel’, i.e. when a consonant follows. The distinguishing context is before a pause or at the end of a sentence, i.e. when nothing follows; the grammatical tradition from Kātyāyana onwards accepts that doubling is possible at the end of a sentence. The grammarians therefore interpret *anaci* as an instance of compounded *prasaṅgyapraśiṣṭha*,

<sup>23</sup> The original form can be read either as equivalent to *nāsmākaṃ ekaṃ priyam*, that is with the second word being *naḥ* ‘to us’, or as an instance of doubling of the negative particle used in the context of *ābādha* ‘torment’, following *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 8.1.10 *ābādhe ca*, in which case it is taken as an exclamation in the context of an enemy having many dear things. The two possible interpretations are first discussed by Kaiyaṭa, and by Nāgeśa in his *Uddyota*.

<sup>24</sup> On MBh. 1.412.3–4, in the context of an analysis of *anekam*, which immediately precedes the example *na na ekaṃ priyam* and which is analysed by Patañjali in the same way, Kaiyaṭa comments: *nirāśrayayoś ca tayor asaṃbhavād aniyatasamkhyadravvyākṣepe saty ekapraśiṣṭhād bahūnām praṭītir ity arthaḥ* “Because those two [i.e., an action and a quality] are impossible when they lack a substrate, there is an implication of substance (*dravya*) with a non-restricted number, and due to the prohibition of ‘one’ (*eka*) there comes about an understanding of (two or) many. That is the meaning.” Pravartakopādhyāya, commenting on Kaiyaṭa’s initial gloss here, says (Narasimhacharya 1986, p. 330), “Here [on *anekasabdā*], the *prasaṅjana* of an action and a quality is just a *vidhāna*, so he says ‘*vidhāya*’. Because the *prasaṅjana* serves its purpose in the prohibition of the singular, how can there be an understanding of many (*bahutva*)? With this concern in mind he says, (‘because those two...’) when they lack a substrate’...” Cf. also *Vākyapadīya* 3.14.290.

<sup>25</sup> The commentators state that the absolute non-existence of doubt is understood from *na saṃdehaḥ*.



therefore meaning 'when not followed by a vowel', and meaning that Pāṇini's statement correctly licenses doubling in pausa.<sup>26</sup>

## 7: Types of *abhāva*

### Text

tasya samastasya tu atyantābhāva evārthaḥ. asamastasya tu atyantābhāvo 'nyonyābhāvaś ca. tādātmyetasambandhābhāvo 'tyantābhāvaḥ. tādātmyasambandhābhāvo 'nyonyābhāvo bheda ity arthaḥ. asūryampaśyā rājadārāḥ, gehe ghaṭo nāsti, ghaṭo na paṭaḥ, ity udāharaṇāni.

prāgabhāvapradhvaṃsābhāvau tu na naḍdyotyau.

### Translation

And when that is compounded it is just absolute non-existence that is the meaning. But when it is un-compounded, absolute non-existence and mutual non-existence (are the meanings). Absolute non-existence is the non-existence of any relation other than identity. Mutual non-existence is the non-existence of the relation of identity, and its meaning is *bheda* (difference).<sup>27</sup> 'The king's wives do not see the sun' (*asūryampaśyā rājadārāḥ*), 'in the house there is no pot' (*gehe ghaṭo nāsti*), 'the pot is not a cloth' (*ghaṭo na paṭaḥ*) are examples.

But prior non-existence and destruction are not manifested by nañ.

### Commentary

Specifically, the three examples given are respectively examples of *prasajyapratīṣedha*: 1. compounded, and expressing absolute non-existence; 2. un-compounded,

<sup>26</sup> This question is first addressed in Kātyāyana's third Vārttika on this rule as discussed in the *Mahābhāṣya*, which proposes to augment the Pāṇinian rule with *avasāne ca* 'and before a pause'. Kātyāyana therefore appears to have interpreted *anaci* as a *pariyudāsa*, and the rule as thus in need of augmentation. Patañjali rejects the proposed addition, saying: *vākk vāk. tvakk tvak. srukk sruk. tat tarhi vaktavyam. na vaktavyam. na ayaṃ prasajyapratīṣedhaḥ. aci na iti. kiṃ tarhi. pariyudāsa ayam. yat anyat acaḥ iti.* '[examples of doubling in pausa] That (proposed addition *avasāne ca*) therefore should be stated. No, it need not be stated. This is not a *prasajyapratīṣedha*, (meaning) 'not before vowels'. What then? It is a *pariyudāsa*, (meaning) 'something other than a vowel'.' However, as Kaiyaṭa observes, Patañjali's comments here do not make sense. Kaiyaṭa comments: *pāṭho 'yaṃ lekhaḥapramādān naṣṭaḥ. pariyudāse hy acsaḍśasya varṇāntarasya nimittatvenopādānād avasāne dvirvacanasayāprasaṅgāt. tasmāt "nāyam pariyudāso yad anyad aca iti kiṃ tarhi prasajyapratīṣedho 'ci na" ity ayaṃ pāṭhaḥ.* 'This reading is corrupted due to scribal negligence. For if this were a *pariyudāsa*, then due to the acceptance of another sound similar to a vowel as the cause, we would not get doubling in pausa. Therefore we should read, 'This is not a *pariyudāsa*, (meaning) 'something other than a vowel'. What then? It is a *prasajyapratīṣedha*, (meaning) 'not before vowels'.' There appears to be no better way to resolve the logical inconsistency in the existing text of the *Mahābhāṣya* than this proposed emendation. We can therefore conclude that Patañjali was first to reject the *pariyudāsa* interpretation of *anaci* in favour of the *prasajyapratīṣedha* interpretation, a move which eliminates the need to augment the Pāṇinian rule, and a move followed by all later grammarians.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Laghumañjūṣā*, beginning of section 33.

and expressing absolute non-existence; and 3. uncompounded, and expressing mutual non-existence. The first two are not significantly different from the examples discussed above (e.g. ex. 2, and *anaci* immediately above); the third will be discussed in more detail below.

The absence of the fourth logical possibility, compounded *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* expressing mutual non-existence, is interesting, but Nāgeśa offers no explanation. It is possible that mutual non-existence expressed by a compound would approximate so closely to *paryudāsa* negation as to be indistinguishable. In the interpolated passage given in text section 4 above, an instance of an uncompounded *paryudāsa*, *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ* was explained as meaning *ghaṭaḥ apaṭo bhavati*.

## 8: Connection with Verbal Meaning and Agreement

### Text

tatrātyantābhāvo viśeṣyatayā tiñantārthakriyānvayy eva. nañarthātyantābhāvaviśeṣyakabodhe tiñsamabhivyañṛtadhātujañyopasthiteḥ kārañatvāt. tathā ca ghaṭo nāstīyādañ ghaṭakarṭṛkasattāpratiyogiko 'bhāva itī bodhaḥ. ata evāhañ nāsmī tvañ nāstīyādañ, ghaṭañ na sto ghaṭā na santīyādañ ca puruṣavacanavyavasthopapadyate. anyathā yuṣmadādes tiñsāmāñadhikarañyābhāvāñ madabhāvo 'stīyādañ iva sā na syāt.

### Translation

Of these two, absolute non-existence is in fact connected, as something to be qualified, with an action that is the meaning of a finite verb. (This is) because with regard to knowledge in which the qualified item is the absolute non-existence that is the meaning of *nañ*, the presentment brought about by the root spoken together with the finite verb suffix is the cause. And in this way, at 'there is no pot' (*ghaṭo nāsti*) etc. there is knowledge of non-existence for which the counterpositive is existence (i.e., the act of existing) in which a pot is the agent. It is for this reason that in 'I do not exist', 'you do not exist' etc., and in 'two pots do not exist', 'multiple (three or more) pots do not exist' etc., the (correct) settlement of person and number comes about. Otherwise, because of the absence of agreement (*sāmāñadhikarañya*) of 'you' etc. with the finite verb suffix, just as in 'the absence of me exists' (*madabhāvo 'sti*) etc. that (settlement) would not occur.

### Commentary

The commentary glosses *tatra*, which we have translated as 'of these two', as *atyantābhāvāñyonyābhāvayoh* 'Of absolute non-existence and mutual non-existence'.

The term *upasthiti*, seen here in the compound *tiñsamabhivyañṛtadhātujañyopasthiteḥ*, and translated as 'presentment', is commonly used by the later grammarians to refer to the immediate mental effect of hearing a word. The

*upasthiti* here is *tiṅsamabhivṛyāhṛtadhātujanya* ‘brought about (*janya*) by the root (*dhātu*) spoken together (*samabhivṛyāhṛta*) with the finite verb suffix (*tiṅ*)’.

The semantic interpretation of *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* negation presented here is described in detail in the section “*Prasajyapraṭiṣedha*”; the discussion of agreement in the second half of this paragraph is discussed in detail in the section “*The Argument with Nyāya*”.

The following section is an interpolation in our text. Therefore the sentence which originally directly follows this section is the first sentence in our section 10, which makes explicit the fact that this section (8) is a direct refutation of the Nyāya theory.

### 9: ‘Doubtless’ and ‘Colour in Air’ (Interpolation)

*Text*

[*asaṃdeha ityādau tu āropitārthakanaṅaiva samāsaḥ.*

atyantābhāvas tu phalita eva. vāyau rūpaṃ nāstīty atra tu tātparyānupapattyā rūpapratiyogikātyantābhāve lakṣaṇā. tena vāyavadhikaraṇikā rūpābhāvakarṭṛkā sat-  
teṭi bodhaḥ. vastutas tu samaniyatābhāvaikyam āsṛitya phalitārtha evāyam. arūpam  
astītyarthakaṃ vā tat.]

*Translation*

[But in ‘doubtless’ (*asaṃdeha*) etc. there is a compound just with the *nañ* by which a meaning has been superimposed.<sup>28</sup>

And (the meaning) absolute non-existence in fact results. And in ‘there is no color in air’ (*vāyau rūpaṃ nāsti*), due to the impossibility of the intention (being expressed) there is *lakṣaṇā* with regard to the absolute non-existence in which color is the counterpositive. Therefore there is knowledge (perception) of the action of existing that has the air as its substrate and the non-existence of color as its agent. But in reality, by relying on the identity (*aikya*) of equally restricted absences (*samaniyata*)<sup>29</sup> this<sup>30</sup> in fact has the resulting meaning. Or, that has the meaning, ‘a non-color (*arūpam*) exists’.<sup>31</sup>]

*Commentary*

This whole section, from *asaṃdeha ityādau tu* through *arūpam astītyarthakaṃ vā tat* (“But in ‘doubtless’ (*asaṃdeha*) etc.... a non-color (*arūpam*) exists”) is absent in manuscripts and appears only in editions.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Laghumañjūṣā* end of section 32.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *Laghumañjūṣā*, p. 653, *samaniyatānām aikyam eva*.

<sup>30</sup> The commentary glosses *ayam* (this) as the knowledge (perception) described in the preceding sentence starting with ‘*vāyavadhikaraṇika*’ (Therefore there is).

<sup>31</sup> Or perhaps, ‘(something) colorless exists’?

The point of the first example is apparently to contrast with *ahaṃ nāsmi* ‘I do not exist’ etc., that although in *asaṃdeha* we derive a meaning of absolute non-existence (just as with *ahaṃ nāsmi*), in this case we are dealing with a compound not a phrase and there is specific reference to an understanding based on the working of *āropa*.

The sentence ‘there is no colour in air’ has been partially discussed above (“[The Argument with Nyāya](#)” section). What has not been explained is this text’s solution to the problem that this sentence raises for the vyākaraṇa theory of negation. Two or three options appear to be put forward. The first solution is that, given the impossibility of the literal meaning of this sentence, *lakṣaṇā* steps in: that is, the primary literal meaning is blocked, and a secondary meaning is inferred, here stated to be a non-existence of which the counterpositive is merely colour (as opposed to colour in air).

The second solution relies on the notion of equally restricted (*samaniyata*) non-existence. Two things which are *samaniyata*, i.e. which have identical extensions, can be treated as identical. Wherever there is non-existence of an action of existing of which colour is the agent, there is also the non-existence of colour, necessarily, meaning that these two non-existences are *samaniyata* and therefore possess identity (*aikya*). We can therefore move directly from the unacceptable interpretation to an acceptable interpretation in which the counterpositive of the non-existence is merely colour. Thus we make exactly the same move as on the first proposed solution, but we do so not on the basis of *lakṣaṇā*, but on the basis of logical equivalence.<sup>32</sup> The grammarians consider *lakṣaṇā* a costly process (cf. text section 13, below), which directly increases the complexity (*gaurava*) of any linguistic analysis; the recourse to *samaniyatānām aikyam* is therefore preferable.

The final sentence ‘or that has the meaning, a non-colour exists’, suggests the possibility of a *paryudāsa* interpretation of the negation in *vāyau rūpaṃ nāsti*. This would make it parallel to the solution proposed for the sequence *nānuyājeṣu* in the previous interpolated passage above (text section 4). This suggestion is not otherwise unpacked here, nor is it mentioned as a solution for this sentence in any other text we are aware of.

<sup>32</sup> Shukla’s commentary explains this in the following way (p. 129–130): “Surely, if absolute non-existence, the meaning of *nañ*, has a counterpositive that is limited by the condition of being an action, then in ‘there is no color in air’, since color possessing the condition of being the superstrate described by air is unknown (*aprasiddha*), and since the action of existing, in which the agent is that, is unknown, (and so) because a non-existence in which the counterpositive is unknown is not accepted, absolute non-existence, the meaning of *nañ*, cannot be connected as something to be qualified with action that is the meaning of a finite verb, and thus it is just the non-existence in which the counterpositive is color that is established by the experience of everyone... It is only the non-existence of color, as content of the knowledge, that is the content of the intention... Where there is the non-existence of color, just there there is also the non-existence of the action of existing (*sattā*) in which color is the agent, and so those two are *samaniyata*, and there is identity (*aikya*) of two things that are *samaniyata*, and therefore when the non-existence of the action of existing in which color is the agent is established, the non-existence of color certainly is established. This is the point.”

## 10: Objection

### Text

etenātyantābhāvaprakāarakriyāviśeṣyako bodha iti tārnikoktam apāstam.  
nanv [evam ghaṭasattārūpo 'rthaḥ prathamam buddho nañā nivartayitum aśakyah],  
sato niṣedhāyogāt, asatas tv asattvād eva nivṛttisiddhyā niṣedho vyarthaḥ. tad  
uktam:

satām ca na niṣedho 'sti so 'satsu ca na vidyate  
jagaty anena nyāyena nañarthaḥ pralayaṃ gataḥ //

### Translation

For this reason the claim by the Tārnikas (i.e. Naiyāyikas) that there is knowledge in which the item that is qualified is an action and the qualifier is absolute non-existence has been rejected.

Surely, [in this way a meaning, in the form of the existence of a pot (i.e., the action of existing performed by the pot), that is previously perceived, cannot be cancelled by *nañ*,] because there is no possible denial of something that exists, and it is from the non-existence of something that does not exist that the (effect of) vanishing (disappearing) is accomplished, whereby the denial is pointless. That has been stated,

There is no denial of existing things, and that is not found in non-existing things. By this principle the meaning of *nañ* has disappeared in the world.

### Commentary

The text from *evam* through *nañā nivartayitum aśakyah* ("Surely in this way... cannot be cancelled by *nañ*") is absent from manuscripts and appears only in the printed editions; the manuscripts have *nanu* in place of *nanv*.

As stated above, if we ignore the passages absent from the manuscripts, then the first sentence of this section directly follows the end of section 8, making clear that the arguments in that section are direct refutations of the Naiyāyika position.

What follows returns to the Naiyāyika pūrvapakṣa, representing their interpretation of the vyākaraṇa approach to negation and its apparent failings. The issue in question is the apparent 'cancellation', *nivṛtti*, of the meaning of a counterpositive. That is, if *ghaṭa* denotes a pot, and *asti* an action of existing (*sattā*), then it is problematic for a sentence *ghaṭo nāsti*, which contains both these words, to denote neither a pot nor an action of existing.

The argument goes further, undermining the very nature of negation as the grammarians understand it. Since an existing thing cannot be denied, and a non-existing thing does not need to be denied—that is, since words cannot affect the existence or otherwise of any thing—the idea that *nañ* involves a cancellation or denial renders it pointless.

The verse cited is Buddhist in origin; it appears in Helārāja's commentary on *Vākyapadīya* 3.3.42, and also e.g. in the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, 226.<sup>33</sup>

## 11: Refutation

### Text

iti cen na. bauddho hi śabdo vācakaḥ bauddha evārtho vācya ity uktatvād buddhisato 'py arthasya nañā bāhyasattāniśedhāt. buddhau sann api ghaṭo bahir nāstīty arthāt.

na ca ghaṭāstipadābhyāṃ yā ghaṭaviṣayāstibuddhir jātā sā nañā nivartyate kiṃ bauddhārthasvīkāreṇeti vācyam. buddheḥ śabdāvācyaatvena nañā tanniśedhāyogāt. etena bauddhārtham asvīkurvanto nañārthabodhāya kaṣṭakalpanāṃ kurvantas tārīkikāḥ parāstāḥ.

### Translation

If you say this, it is wrong. (This is) because it has been said that a mental (*bauddha*) word is denotative, and it is just a mental meaning that is denoted, (and) because in regard to a meaning, even when it exists in the mind (in a perception) (*buddhi*), there is a denial of its external existence by *nañ*. (And) because the meaning is that a pot, even if existing in the mind (a perception) (*buddhi*), does not exist externally.

And do not say that the knowledge (/perception, *buddhi*) of *asti* 'exists', whose range is a pot, and that has come about from the words 'pot' and 'exists', is cancelled by *nañ*, and so what is the point in accepting a mental (*bauddha*) meaning.<sup>34</sup> (This is) because knowledge (a perception) (*buddhi*) cannot be expressed by a word, and so it cannot be denied by *nañ*. For this reason the Tārīkikas, who do not accept a mental meaning and construct a difficult assumption for understanding the meaning of *nañ*, are refuted.

### Commentary

The grammarians' answer to the objection set forth in the previous section is that there is a difference between mental meaning, *bauddhārtha*, and external reference, *bāhyārtha*. Words denote mental meanings, not external referents; *nañ* does not cancel the mental meaning, but it does deny the external existence. Thus the (mental) meanings denoted by *ghaṭa* and *asti* in *ghaṭo nāsti* are not cancelled but remain; what is denied is the external existence of the pot.

The second paragraph continues the refutation. The presentation is rather oblique, but we are first presented in outline with a Naiyāyika response to the proposed solution which distinguishes mental meaning from external reference. Even if we accept this, the Naiyāyika argument runs, we still end up with the cancellation of

<sup>33</sup> The commentary glosses the verse as (*uktam khaṇḍanakṛtā* "stated by the author of the khaṇḍaṇa", i.e., Śrīharṣa, the author of the *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā*).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Laghumañjūṣā, p. 654, section 33.

something that unarguably exists, namely the cancellation of the *buddhi*, the knowledge or perception brought about by the words used. Thus it was pointless to bring in the concept of *bauddhārtha*. Nāgeśa's reply is that knowledge, *buddhi*, which is derived from the meaning, *artha*, of words but is not the same as *artha*, cannot itself be expressed by a word, and so the negation cannot touch it.

Shukla's commentary glosses *kaṣṭakalpanā* (difficult assumption) as *śaśaśṛṅgaṃ nāstī 'y atra śṛṅge śaśīyabhramādirūpā* 'having the form of something such as error about the hare-relatedness of a horn in the sentence, 'the horn of the hare does not exist'. The reference here is to the problem of negating non-existent or impossible entities, such as a hare's horn.<sup>35</sup>

## 12: 'The Pot is Not a Cloth'

### Text

ghaṭo na paṭa ity atra ghaṭapadasya ghaṭapratyogikabhedāśraye aprasiddhā śaktir eva lakṣaṇā, nañpadaṃ tātparyagrāhakaṃ. tātparyagrāhakatvaṃ dyotakatvaṃ evety uktam. ata evānyonyābhāvabodhe pratyogyanyuyogipadayoḥ samānavibhaktikatvaṃ niyāmakam iti vṛddhoktaṃ saṃgacchate.

### Translation

In 'the pot is not a cloth' (*ghaṭo na paṭah*), in the word pot (*ghaṭah*), it is just the unestablished denotative power that refers to the substrate of a difference (*bheda*) whose counterpositive is a pot that is *lakṣaṇā*, and the word *nañ* causes the comprehension of the intention. It is said that the condition of being something that causes the comprehension of the intention is just the condition of being something that manifests. It is for this reason that the declaration of the elders, namely, that with regard to knowledge of mutual non-existence, the condition in the *pratyogin* and the *anyogin* of having the same case suffix serves as a (required) restriction (*niyāmaka*), makes sense.<sup>36</sup>

### Commentary

The analysis proposed here for the final type of negation, uncompounded *prasajyapratishedha* with the sense of *bheda* 'difference' = *anyonyābhāva* 'mutual non-existence', is rather abruptly presented. We are simply told that a word like *ghaṭa* 'pot' has as one of its possible meanings 'the substrate of a difference whose counterpositive is a pot', and that the function of *nañ* here is to indicate that this is the intended meaning. The final sentence of this paragraph explains that the agreement between *paṭa* and *ghaṭa* in *ghaṭo na paṭah* constrains the final interpretation, which for Nāgeśa here is something like *ghaṭapratyogikabhedāśrayapaṭa* 'a cloth which is the substratum of a *bheda* of which the

<sup>35</sup> On this, see Wada (2020, pp. 73–105).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Matilal (1968, p. 156).

counterpositive is a pot'. This proposal is rather unsatisfyingly non-explanatory, perhaps, but within Nāgeśa's system there is nothing inherently problematic about it, in contrast with the Naiyāyika's approach, to which he now turns.<sup>37</sup>

### 13: The Final Criticism of the Naiyāyikas

#### Text

yat tu ghaṭapadaṃ ghaṭapratīyogike lākṣaṇikaṃ nañpadaṃ tu bhedaṃ, ato ghaṭapratīyogikabhedaṃ paṭa iti bodha iti tārikair uktam. tan na. bhedaṃ nañarthe bhedasyaikaśeṣatvāt tatra ghaṭārthānanvayāpatteḥ. padārthaḥ padārthe-nānveti, na tu padārthaikaśeṣeṇeti nyāyāt. padadvaye lakṣaṇāsvikāre gauravāc ca. bhāṣyamate lakṣaṇāyā nipātānāṃ vācakatvasya ca svikārābhāvāt. iti saṃkṣepaḥ.

#### Translation

But the Tārikikas say that [in the sentence *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ* 'the pot is not a cloth'] the word pot is secondarily denotative of something whose counterpositive is a pot, and the word *nañ* is (secondarily denotative) of something that has a difference (*bhedavat*),<sup>38</sup> and therefore the knowledge is, 'a cloth that possesses difference in which the counterpositive is a pot'.<sup>39</sup> This is wrong. If the meaning of *nañ* is something that has a difference, because the difference is a part (*ekadeśa*) there would be no connection with (of) the meaning of the pot there. (This is) because of the principle that the meaning of a word is connected with the meaning of a word, not with a part of the meaning of a word. And because there is complexity in accepting *lakṣaṇā* in two words. This is because in the opinion of the *Bhāṣya* there is no acceptance of *lakṣaṇā* or of the condition in *nipātas* of being denotative. This is an abbreviated account.

#### Commentary

Nāgeśa now contrasts the Naiyāyika analysis of *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ*. Crucially, this involves two instances of *lakṣaṇā*, which for the grammarians results in an unreasonably complex analysis. First, the Naiyāyikas assume that a word like *ghaṭa* can denote something whose counterpositive is a pot, but this denotation comes by *lakṣaṇā*, not as one of the possible primary meanings of the word. Secondly, for the Naiyāyikas *nañ* does not denote *bheda* here, but rather something that has *bheda*, *bhedavat*. The problem identified by Nāgeśa here is that we cannot directly combine the meanings of the pot and the negation to get the desired

<sup>37</sup> In the *Laghumañjūṣā*, Nāgeśa presents a rather different approach in greater detail, and does not mention even as a possibility the approach presented here. The question of why the two texts differ so significantly on this point is related to the question of the precise relation between the two texts, and what the purpose of the PLM is, whether an abridgement and update of the LM, or a pedagogical simplification of it. As noted above, these questions require further research.

<sup>38</sup> *Bheda* was offered as the sense of *anyonyābhāva* above.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *Laghumañjūṣā*, p. 668, section 36.



*ghaṭapratīyogikabhedavat*, because this would require us to combine the meaning of the word *ghaṭa* directly with a part of the meaning of the word *nañ*, i.e. with *bheda*; we cannot directly combine *ghaṭapratīyogika* with *bhedavat* as a whole to get the desired outcome.

Altogether then, the Naiyāyika account of *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ* faces a multitude of problems, in Nāgeśa's eyes: the composition of the meanings is impossible, *lakṣaṇā* has to be invoked twice, and, according to his final note, *nañ* should not be considered denotative (*vācaka*) in any case.<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusion

In the *Paramalaghumañjūṣā*, Nāgeśa presents a relatively clear theory of negation which draws a firm semantic distinction between *paryudāsa* and *prasajyapratīṣedha*. In the former case, the semantic contribution of *nañ* is to manifest the *āropita* nature of the meaning denoted by the word which *nañ* modifies (so e.g. *āropitabrāhmaṇatva*); context then enables the intended meaning (such as *brāhmaṇa-sādṛśya*) to be understood. In the case of *prasajyapratīṣedha*, *nañ* means *abhāva* 'non-existence', more specifically either *atyantābhāva* 'absolute non-existence' or *anyonyābhāvalbheda* 'mutual non-existence'/'difference'.

Although this appears to be a very clear and absolute presentation, which perhaps represents the final *siddhānta* of the final authority of the Pāṇinian tradition, it is worth noting that it obscures a history of debate among the later grammarians with respect to the meaning of negation. Nāgeśa's theory is tied in part to his assumption that *nañ* can only be *viśeṣya*; this assumption does appear to be part of the debate for Bhaṭṭojidīkṣita, who refers to it in the second of his *Kārikās on nañ*, but Bhaṭṭoji himself admits the possibility of *abhāva* being *viśeṣaṇa*, which opens the door to *abhāva* being the meaning of *nañ* even in the case of *paryudāsa* negation; this is the *siddhānta* for Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa. In contrast, in the *Laghumañjūṣā* Nāgeśa goes in the other direction, suggesting that the meaning of *nañ* is *āropa* even in the case of *prasajyapratīṣedha* negation. A detailed account of these fine-grained differences in the approaches to negation in the different authors and texts of the later vyākaraṇa tradition awaits future research.

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<sup>40</sup> How this final comment squares with the claim that *nañ* denotes *atyantābhāva* in *prasajyapratīṣedha* types other than the *ghaṭo na paṭaḥ* type (which was accounted for, at least in part, in the previous section) is not explained here. It fits with the final direction of the treatment of *nañ* in the LM, however, where it is suggested that even *prasajyapratīṣedha* negation involves *āropa*, and there is no direct denotation of *abhāva* by *nañ*.

## Declarations

**Conflict of interest** On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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