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The last reason for *satkāryavāda*

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This modest contribution to the volume in honour of Professor Minoru HARA contains a supplementary observation to the lecture which, at his invitation, I had the pleasure of giving at the International Institute for Buddhist Studies in Tokyo in May 1996, and which became the basis for a series of lectures (Paris 1997) that have now been published under the title *Langage et réalité: sur un épisode de la pensée indienne* (BRONKHORST, 1999). This note is not based on new independent research, but has been inspired by and draws upon Professor Phyllis GRANOFF's contribution to the conference on Sāṃkhya and Yoga (Lausanne 1998) which too has now been published (GRANOFF, 1999).

The *Sāṃkhyakārikā* justifies the doctrine of *satkāryavāda* in kārikā 9, which reads:

> *asadakaraṇād upādānagrahaṇāt sarvasambhavābhāvāt/*
> *śaktasya śakyakaraṇāt kāraṇabhāvāc ca sat kāryam //9//*

This kārikā contains five arguments, the last of which concerns us at present. It reads, in Sanskrit: *kāraṇabhāvāt sat kāryam*. This is ambiguous, and allows of at least three different interpretations:

(1) "Because [the cause] is a cause, the product exists."

(2) "Because [the product] is [identical with] the cause, the product exists."

(3) "Because of the existence of the cause, the product exists."

Only the *Jayamaṅgalā* appears to opt for interpretation (3), in the following obscure passage:

> *kāraṇabhāvāc ceti: kāraṇasya sattvād ity arthaḥ. yady asat kāryam utpadyate kim iti? kāraṇād eva na kāryasya bhāvo bhavati, bhavati ca. tasmāc chaktirūpeṇāvasthitam iti gamyate.*
> "*Kāraṇabhāvāc ca* means: because of the existence of the cause. If it is asked: 'the product, [though] non-existent, comes into being, what [is the consequence]?' [54] [then the answer is:] 'The product does not exist as a result of the cause only, and yet it exists. It is therefore understood that [the product] is present [in the cause] in the form of a potency.'"[1]

[1] I thank Professor Wezler for help in interpreting this passage.

The logic of this argument is not fully clear to me. It may be something like this: The very fact that there can be a cause implies that there must be a product. Understood in this way interpretation (3) is not very different from interpretation (1).[2]

Most of the surviving commentaries on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* prefer interpretation (2). They all seem to agree that the product is identical with the cause. The *Gauḍapādabhāṣya*, for example, states:

> *kāraṇaṃ yallakṣaṇaṃ tallakṣaṇam eva kāryam api*
> "Whatever is the nature of the cause, the same is the nature of the effect" (tr. Mainkar).[3]

The *Māṭharavṛtti* and the *Sāṃkhyasaptativṛtti* use practically the same words.[4] The *Jayamaṅgalā*, having first presented interpretation (3), then gives, as an alternative, interpretation (2): *yatsvabhāvaṃ kāraṇaṃ tatsvabhāvaṃ kāryam*.[5] VĀCASPATI MIŚRA's *Tattvakaumudī* formulates the same position in the following words: *'kāraṇabhāvāc ca': kāryasya kāraṇātmakatvāt. na hi kāraṇād bhinnaṃ kāryam, kāraṇaṃ ca sat iti kathaṃ tadabhinnaṃ kāryam asat bhavet.*[6] The commentary translated by PARAMĀRTHA into Chinese appears to have adopted the same position.[7] The *Sāṃkhyavṛtti* edited under the name V_2 by Esther A. SOLOMON seems to accept a variant of this interpretation. If we accept the corrections proposed by its editor, it reads: *kāraṇabhāvād iti: kāraṇeṣu prāg utpatteḥ sat kāryam iti.* This suggest the interpretation: "Because [the product] is in the causes [before it comes into being], the product exists."
[55]

The similarity between these commentaries is great, and it is not surprising that SOLOMON in her comparative study of the commentaries remarks (SOLOMON, 1974: 27): "*kāraṇabhāvāt* is similarly explained by all." This is not however fully correct. The

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[2] Vaiśeṣikasūtra 1.2.1-2 read *kāraṇābhāvāt kāryābhāvaḥ; na tu kāryābhāvāt kāraṇābhāvaḥ*. In isolation this could be understood as a criticism of the Sāṃkhya argument *kāraṇabhāvāt sat kāryam* in interpretation (3). This would be surprising, since Vaiśeṣika did not confront the problem to which *satkāryavāda* is the Sāṃkhya response until the period following the composition of the Vaiśeṣikasūtra; see Bronkhorst, 1999: § II.9. However, it appears that these two sūtras must be read in the context of the immediately following ones, and have nothing whatsoever to do with the Sāṃkhya argument for *satkāryavāda*; see Oetke, 1999.
[3] Mainkar, 1964: 25-26.
[4] Sarma, 1922: 17: *iha loke yallakṣaṇaṃ kāraṇaṃ tallakṣaṇaṃ kāryaṃ syāt*; Solomon, 1973: 18: *iha loke yallakṣaṇaṃ kāraṇaṃ tallakṣaṇaṃ kāryam api bhavati.*
[5] Satkāriśarmā Vaṅgīya, 1970:74.
[6] Jha, Sharma and Patkar, 1965: 47; Srinivasan, 1967: 98-101.
[7] Cp. Takakusu, 1904: 991: "L'effet est de la même espèce que la cause."

Yuktidīpikā, the "most significant commentary on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*", comments in a manner which allows us to conclude that it accepts interpretation (1). It states:

> *'kāraṇabhāvāc ca sat kāryam': ihāsati kārye kāraṇabhāvo nāsti tadyathā vandhyāyāḥ. asti ceha kāraṇabhāvas tantupaṭayoḥ. tasmāt sat kāryam.*[8]

The explanation can be translated:

> "On the one hand (*iha*), something or somebody — as for example a barren woman — is not a cause in case there is no product. On the other hand (*iha*), from among the thread and the cloth [one of the two, viz. the thread] is a cause [because there is a product, viz. the cloth]. For this reason the product exists [while the cause is there]."

In other words, without a product being there, a cause is not a cause; or, the other way round, because a cause is a cause, there must be a product. This is interpretation (1).

It is surprising that interpretation (2) is so strongly represented in the surviving literature of Sāṃkhya, and interpretation (1) so weakly. Interpretation (1) is of a type that is wide-spread in Indian philosophical literature, as we shall see below; this is not true of interpretation (2).

Let us now turn to the material presented in GRANOFF's article mentioned above. GRANOFF draws attention to a Buddhist text — ŚĀNTARAKṢITA's *Tattvasaṃgraha* and its commentary *Pañjikā* by KAMALAŚĪLA — and to a number of Jaina texts which all cite and discuss *Sāṃkhyakārikā* 9, i.e. the Sāṃkhya arguments in defence of *satkāryavāda*. She argues convincingly that the Jaina texts follow here the lead of the *Tattvasaṃgraha*. All these texts offer an interpretation of *kāraṇabhāvāt* which is close to what is offered in the *Yuktidīpikā*. The *Tattvasaṃgraha*, for example, gives the following explanation:

[56]

> *kāryasyaivam ayogāc ca kiṃ kurvat kāraṇaṃ bhavet/ tataḥ kāraṇabhāvo 'pi bījāder nāvakalpate//*[9]
> "And because the product would in this way be impossible, what is it that the cause would produce? As a result the seed etc. cannot even be cause."

The *Pañjikā* comments:

> *asatkāryavāde sarvathāpi kāryasyāyogāt kiṃ kurvat bījādi kāraṇaṃ bhavet. tataś caivaṃ śakyate vaktum: na kāraṇaṃ bījādiḥ, avidyamānakāryatvād, gaganābjavad iti. na caivaṃ bhavati, tasmād viparyaya iti siddham: prāg utpatteḥ sat kāryam iti.*

[8] Wezler and Motegi, 1998: 124 l. 6-8.
[9] Tattvasaṃgraha 13; Dwarikadas Shastri, 1981: I: 26.

The logical proof contained in this passage can be translated as follows:

> "The seed etc. are no cause, because no product is present, like a lotus in the sky [which, being totally non-existent, is not accompanied by a product, and is therefore no cause]. However, it is not like this (i.e., seed **is** a cause); therefore the reverse [must be true], and thus it is established that the product is present before it comes into being."

ABHAYADEVA's *Tattvabodhavidhāyinī* cites the above verse from the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and explains the last argument in exactly the same terms as the *Pañjikā*.[10] But also PRABHĀCANDRA's *Prameyakamalamārtaṇḍa* is clearly influenced by these two Buddhist texts when it states: *bījādeḥ kāraṇabhāvāc ca sat kāryaṃ kāryāsattve tadayogāt. tathā hi: na kāraṇabhāvo bījādeḥ avidyamānakāryatvāt kharaviṣāṇavat. tat siddham utpatteḥ prāk kāraṇe kāryam.*[11] In his *Kumudacandra* PRABHĀCANDRA explains the logic behind the argument: *'kāraṇabhāvāc ca sat kāryam'. kāraṇabhāvo hi kāraṇatvam, tac ca nityasambandhitvāt kāryasambandham apekṣate, na ca asatā gaganāmbhojaprakhyeṇa kāraṇasya kaścit sambandhaḥ, ataḥ kāraṇe kāryaṃ tādātmyena vartate.*[12]

GRANOFF sums up the arguments as follows (p. 583): "The Jain texts (and the Buddhist *Tattvasaṃgraha* ...) agree that the argument is something like this: The product must exist, since we speak of a cause and causality is a relationship. A non-existent entity cannot be one term of a relationship. We do not see hare's horns [57] entering into any kind of relationship with anything. Therefore the product must exist in order for us to speak of something being a 'cause' at all." That is, they all follow interpretation (1) of the sentence *kāraṇabhāvāt sat kāryam* "Because [the cause] is a cause, the product exists."

Does this mean that these Jaina texts and the *Tattvasaṃgraha* from which they borrowed have all undergone the influence, direct or indirect, of the *Yuktidīpikā*? GRANOFF emphatically denies this: "the Jain texts show little or no awareness of the often unique arguments of the *Yuktidīpikā*, which might lead to the further speculation that the *Yuktidīpikā* was not a text whose theories were hotly debated outside Sāṃkhya circles" (p. 582). With regard to the first four arguments presented in *Sāṃkhyakārikā* 9 she observes: "The *Yuktidīpikā* ... deviates from the other interpretations [offered in the other commentaries on this text] considerably, but the Jain texts I have examined show absolutely no awareness of its arguments for much of the verse" (p. 583).

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[10] Saṃghavi & Dośi, 1924-1931: I: 283 l. 22-27.
[11] Kumar, 1990: 288 l. 9-11.
[12] Kumar, 1991: 353 l. 5-7.

All this means that the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and the Jaina texts that borrow from it share the fifth argument in favour of *satkāryavāda* with the *Yuktidīpikā* and with no other Sāṃkhya commentaries, but are totally ignorant of the first four arguments presented in that same *Yuktidīpikā*. How is this to be explained? GRANOFF offers the following solution (p. 583): "It seems ... likely that [these Jaina texts and the *Tattvasaṃgraha*] derive their interpretation from some text that we no longer have at our disposal today." She adds (p. 584): "There remains, then, considerable detective work to be done on this question."

Such detective work cannot be carried out here and now. It is however interesting to conclude that the *Yuktidīpikā* appears not to have been the only text that followed interpretation (1). This is reassuring, because there are good reasons to believe that interpretation (1) was the original interpretation of the sentence *kāraṇabhāvāt sat kāryam*.

How can one know the original interpretation of an ambiguous sentence that allows of at least three interpretations? Several factors support interpretation (1), all of them based on other texts than the Sāṃkhyakārikā and its commentaries.[13] One is that ĀRYADEVA's **Śataka*, which is older than the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, appears to contain the same argument, apparently in the same ambiguous form. Its commentator VASU, [58] by stating "If the pot does not pre-exist in earth, then earth could not become the cause of the pot", shows that he opted for interpretation (1).

More important is that the kind of argument embodied in interpretation (1) was widely used in Indian philosophy at the time when Sāṃkhya as a system was being created. For details I have to refer to my book *Langage et réalité*. Here I will merely cite a verse from NĀGĀRJUNA's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, which uses this argument:

> *naivāsato naiva sataḥ pratyayo 'rthasya yujyate/ asataḥ pratyayaḥ kasya sataś ca pratyayena kim//*[14]
> "Neither of a non-existent nor of an existent object is a cause possible. Of which non-existent [object] is there a cause? And what is the use of an existent [object]?"

We recognize the assumption which also underlies interpretation (1): for something to be a cause, there has to be a product, there and then. Once one accepts this assumption, one may be induced to drawing various counterintuitive conclusions: NĀGĀRJUNA that no cause can exist, the Sāṃkhyas their no less extraordinary position that the product is there before it has been produced.

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[13] For details, see Bronkhorst, 1999.
[14] MadhK(deJ) 1.6.

Is it possible to say more about the assumption underlying these and other arguments? GRANOFF formulates it as follows, as we have seen: "The product must exist, since we speak of a cause and causality is a relationship. A non-existent entity cannot be one term of a relationship. We do not see hare's horns entering into any kind of relationship with anything. Therefore the product must exist in order for us to speak of something being a 'cause' at all." This formulation takes care of the fifth argument in the *Yuktidīpikā* which we also find in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and the Jaina texts considered, and also of NĀGĀRJUNA's above argument, and no doubt of many other arguments found in Indian philosophical texts of that period. However, there are textual passages which allow us to conclude that a formulation has to be accepted in which the parellelism between what we say and the situation described finds expression. An example is the following passage from ŚAṄKARA's *Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya*, which argues precisely in defense of the *satkāryavāda*:

> *prāg utpatteś ca kāryasyāsattve utpattir akartṛkā nirātmikā ca syāt/ utpattiś ca nāma kriyā, sā sakartṛkaiva bhavitum arhati gatyādivat/ kriyā ca nāma syād akartṛkā ceti vipratiṣidhyeta/ ghaṭasya cotpattir ucyamānā na ghaṭakartṛkā,* [59] *kiṃ tarhy anyakartṛkā iti kalpyā syāt/ ... / tathā ca sati ghaṭa utpadyate ity ukte kulālādīni kāraṇāni utpadyante ity uktaṃ syāt/ na ca loke ghaṭotpattir ity ukte kulālādīnām apy utpadyamānatā pratīyate/ utpannatāpratīteḥ/*
> "If the effect did not exist prior to its coming into being, the coming into being would be without agent and empty. For coming into being is an activity, and must therefore have an agent, like [such activities] as going etc. It would be contradictory to say that something is an activity, but has no agent. It could be thought that the coming into being of a jar, [though] mentioned, would not have the jar as agent, but rather something else. ... If that were true, one would say "the potter and other causes come into being" instead of "the jar comes into being". In the world however, when one says "the jar comes into being" no one understands that also the potter etc. come into being; for [these] are understood to have already come into being."[15]

In other words, the situation described has to correspond to the way we describe it. This is also clear from the following verse that occurs in NĀGĀRJUNA's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*:

> *gamyamānasya gamane prasaktaṃ gamanadvayam/ yena tad gamyamānaṃ ca yac cātra gamanaṃ punaḥ//*
> "If there is a going of [a road] that is being gone, there would be two goings: that by which the [road] is being gone, and again the going on it."[16]

[15] Śaṅkara ad Brahmasūtra 2.1.18; cited and discussed in Bronkhorst, 1996: 2.
[16] MadhK(deJ) 2.5; cited and discussed in Bronkhorst, 1997: 34.

The only possible reason for thinking that there should be two goings is that the sentence describing the situation — something like "[the road] which is being gone, is being gone" (*gamyamānaṃ gamyate*) — has the verb 'going' twice over.

In the light of these and similar reflections I have proposed to formulate the more or less hidden assumption behind all these arguments as follows: "the words of a sentence must correspond, one by one, to the things that constitute the situation described by that sentence";[17] I call this the correspondence principle. It takes for granted that there is, at some particular time, a situation in which all the things that constitute it occur together, and this forced many Indian thinkers — among them [60] NĀGĀRJUNA and the Sāṃkhyas — to draw counterintuitive conclusions.

We cannot conclude this discussion without addressing the question as to why most of the commentaries of the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* have given an interpretation to the fifth argument different from the one originally intended. One answer may well be that the first and the fifth argument would otherwise be almost identical. The first argument, it may be recalled, reads:

> *asadakaraṇāt [sat kāryam]*
> "The product exists because one does not produce something that does not exist."

One might elucidate the logic underlying this argument with the following variant of GRANOFF's above explanation: "The product must exist, since we speak of producing and producing something is a relationship (between the maker and the product, or between the making and the product). A non-existent entity cannot be one term of a relationship. Therefore the product must exist in order for us to speak of producing something at all." Or, using the correspondence principle, one might say that there must be something corresponding to the word 'pot' in the situation described by the statement "He produces a pot". Either way the argument presented is close to the the fifth argument in interpretation (1).

However, more may have been involved in the preference for interpretation (2). The commentaries that offer this interpretation in this way take position in an altogether different debate, which may have been initiated by the Vaiśeṣikas. One of the fundamental positions of this school of thought — one of its "axioms" — is that composite objects are different from their constituent parts.[18] It may have arrived at this position as a result of

[17] Bronkhorst, 1996: 1; 1997: 32; 1999: § I.1.
[18] Bronkhorst, 1992.

opposing the Buddhist point of view according to which no composite objects but only their constituent parts exist. However this may be, once these points of view had been articulated in Indian philosophy, the Sāṃkhyas were more or less obliged to determine their own position in this controversy. They chose the position which maintains that composite objects and their constituent parts are not different from each other. Concretely speaking: a cloth is not different from the threads that constitute it.
[61]

It will be clear that this position could easily be made to agree with the doctrine of *satkāryavāda*. The cloth is namely also the product of the threads, which are its cause. The doctrine of *satkāryavāda* states that the cloth is there, in the threads, at the time when it has not yet been made. The classical Sāṃkhya position regarding parts and wholes states that the cloth is not different from the threads that constitute it. Combined they state that the cloth is there, in the threads, because it is not really different from them. This is interpretation (2) of the Sanskrit phrase *kāraṇabhāvāt sat kāryam*.

It is doubtful whether this argument adds much in support of the *satkāryavāda*, but this may not have disturbed the Sāṃkhya commentators much. The main argument of this doctrine having been given already by the phrase *asadakaraṇāt* (see above), the new interpretation (2) of *kāraṇabhāvāt sat kāryam* made it possible to present supporting evidence from the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* for the position that parts and wholes are identical.

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