CHAPTER THREE

The Concept of Nāda or Śabda in Sāṅkhya - Yoga Systems

Sāṅkhya is famous for its theory of cosmic evolution and Yoga for its meditative techniques. Both Sāṅkhya and Yoga share common ontological theory.

Sāṅkhya is ".....so called because it 'enumerates' twenty five Tattvās or principles. Of the twenty five principles, Puruṣa and Prakṛti are the first principles, from the associations of which, the entire creation evolves, on the basis of cause and effect relations. Sāṅkhya-Pravachana-Sūtram enumerates those twenty five principles as under:

"'Prakṛti' is the state of equilibrium of three Guṇas - 'Sattva', 'Rajas' and 'Tamas'. From Prakṛti evolves Mahat; from Mahat, Ahankāra; from Ahankāra, the five Tan-mātras and the two sets of Indriyas; from the five Tan-mātras, the gross elements. (Then there is) Purṣa, (in whose company (sānidhya) only) Prakṛti can evolve. Such is the group of the twenty-five (Principles)" (Sān. Pr.Su -1.61). 1

Mūla Prakṛti is conceived as the First Uncaused Cause in order to avoid the principle of ‘infinitesimal regression’. The evolvent is the cause having capacity to produce some other substance and the evolute is the effect or product. Mūla Prakṛti is only an evolvent. She evolves herself into Mahat. From Mahat, Ahankāra, is evolved. Ahaṅkāra, in turn, causes the production of ten Indriyas (five jnānendriyas and five karmendriyas) and five Tanmātras. As such this Ahaṅkāra is both evolute (from Mahat) and evolvent (for Tanmātras). In the same manner, all the 'Pañca Mahābhūtas are evolutes, evolved out of 'pañca tanmantras', their immediate causes. Thus, the objects like 'go' (cow), ghaṭa (pot), etc., which are amenable to our sensations are the ultimate evolutes (pariṇāma) of Mūla Prakṛti. In the same manner, 'ākāśa' is evolved out şabda-tanmātr’ and accordingly, the Sound (śabda), with which I am concerned in this thesis, is an evolute
from ākāśa(eather) principle. Thus, Mūla Prakṛti is the uncaused cause of all things in the cosmic and in the phenomenal world. An effect is present in the cause latently and hence all the things, including the Śabda (Sound), are effects already present in the Mūla Prakṛti (or Pradhāna), a Primordial Cause. If that is so, in order to have a better understanding of Pañca Mahābhūtas, one has to understand the respective ‘Pañca Tanmātra’ out of which a particular bhūta (element) or an ‘object’ has evolved. If that is so, in order to understand the nature of ‘śabda’ as ‘Sound’, we should try to understand śabda tanmātra, out of which has evolved ākāśa (ether) whose quality is ‘śabda’ or Sound.

Sankhya-Pravchana-Sutram of Kapila says that these Tanmātras, which are not amenable to our sense perceptions are, therefore matters of inference on the basis of the phenomenal gross elements only. Patanjali's Yoga Sūtra (2.19) also suggests such an inference of unspecialized, undifferentiated (unknown) qualities of noumenal (Tanmātras) possible from specialized, differentiated (known) qualities of phenomenal (bhūtas). These ‘bhūtas’ are matters of stages of ‘the qualities’. The 'Sānkhya-Pravachana-Bhāṣya' a commentary authored by Vyāsa, explains the Sutra by stating that the ‘bhūtas’ are different, due to the difference of nature shown by ‘the qualities' which constitute the 'knowable'. The Specialized, the Unspecialized, Undifferentiated Phenomenal and the Noumenals are the matters of stages of 'the qualities'. "Here the elements known as ākāśa (ether), vāyu (invisible gas), tejas (light or heat), āpa (water), prthvī (solid) are specialized modifications of the unspecialized soniferous, tangiferous, lumniferous, gustiferious and odoriferous measures thereof (tanmantras, the subtle elements)". Sānkhya Kārikā of Iṣvara Kṛṣṇa also has the same explanation of Subtle elements, (vide its Kārika No. 38). Yukti Dipika, an ancient commentary on Sānkhya Kārikā of Iṣvara Kṛṣṇa, whose author is unknown, commented this Kārika No. 38, explaining the term "tanmātra" as signifying absence of species ('avišeṣa'): Avišeṣa is
thus explained as ....'that in which there exists not a distinction, ('tasya guṇasya sāmānyam evāṭra na viseṣa iti'). in the shape of calmness (śāntā), fierceness (ghoras) and dullness (mūḍhās), etc.³

Yuktidīpikā also gives us another description of Tanmātras: "The five subtle elements are produced from egoity (ahaṅkāra). They are referred to as 'generic'. They are referred to as 'subtle elements' because they represent general categories, e.g., the essence of audibility or the essence of visibility, and so forth. The gross elements are produced from the subtle elements. One subtle element produces only one gross element, that is to say, the subtle element of sound produces the sound-producing gross element or space; the subtle element of touch produces wind; the subtle element of form produces light; the subtle element of taste produces water; and the subtle element of smell produces earth. Space has only one quality, and that is sound. Wind has two qualities - sound and touch. Light has three qualities - sound, touch and form. Water has four qualities - sound, touch, form and taste. Earth has five qualities - sound, touch, form, taste and smell."⁴ This statement takes us to the deeper relationship between Tanmātras (subtle bodies) and Sthūla śarīra (gross bodies) and their interrelationship.

Kapila in his Sānkhyā-Pravachana-Sūtram hints at such an intrinsic relationship between them by stating that:

"The gross (body) is the one usually produced from the father and the mother; the other ('itarat') one, is the one not so produced ('na thathā')",⁵ Bhāṣya of Vijnānabhikṣu comments on this aphorism by stating that "'itarat', the Subtle Body, "na thathā" is not the one produced from father and mother, because of its having been produced at the beginning of the creation" (p.283) Goudapāda, the commentator of Sānkhyā Kārikā of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa, commenting on Kārikā No.39, elaborated and differentiated the imperceptible 'sūkṣama śarīra' (Subtle body) from perceptible 'sthūla śarīra' (Gross body), in his 'Sānkhyā Kārikā Bhāṣya', : "The subtle body is made up
of intellect, egoity, mind, the sense capacities, the action capacities, and the five subtle elements (tanmātras). The gross body is the body produced from the mixture of seminal fluids............. The gross body is sustained by gross elements. Similarly, the subtle body is nourished and sustained by food provided to the organism through the umbilical cord of the mother. In this fashion the embryo (made up of subtle body, gross body, and gross elements) slowly begins to develop..... During the gestation period the embryo is wrapped in six sheaths. When the gestation period is finished, a baby is born from the mother's womb.

Of these specific forms (that is, subtle body, gross body and gross elements), only the subtle body is permanent and transmigrates from life to life.....Gross bodies and gross elements perish at the moment of death and merge again into unifferentiated gross elements."6

According to Sānkhya Philosophy, such transmigration of the subtle bodies from one life to another, takes place with its own accumulated 'sanskāras' (Predispositions) (good or bad). Commenting on Kārikā No.43 of Sānkhya Kārikā ofĪśvara Kṛṣṇa, Yukti Dīpika states that "According toĪśvara Kṛṣṇa, the basic predispositions (bhāva) are (a) innate (sāṃsiddhika), (b) natural (prākṛtika) and (c) acquired (vaikṛta)" (ibid., pp 266). The virtues or vices are acquired dispositions according to one's good and bad deeds; and being born out of sperm and ovum, on the basis of cause and effect, is natural disposition. From their characteristics, it appears that the natural dispositions are similar to hereditary characteristics and they migrate from one life to another along with such 'predispositions' (sanskārās). Precisely what 'genes' do according to Genes Theory.

Now another aspect of the problem is: Of what does the gross body consist of. According to 'Sānkhya-Pravachana-Sūtra (Śā. Pr.Śū. III.17) the gross body is formed of the five elements, viz., Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. It does not agree with the theory that such
Gross body consists of either four elements (Sa.Pr.Sū. III.18) (by excluding 'ether' (ākāśa) as pointed out by Vṛtti of Anirudha) or one element, (Sa.Pr.Sū. III.19) (as pointed out by Vijnāna bhikṣu), and Vaiśeṣikasūtram. (Vai.Sū. 4.2.2-4). But the consciousness not being present in these insentient gross elements, they could not produce "consciousness" (caitanya) in the body. On the other hand the subtle body (linga śarīra) consists of 18 elements (Buddhi, Ahankāra, and 5 Subtle Elements, and 10 Indirīyas, plus Manas) and as such could be the cause for "consciousness". Vijnānabhikṣu elucidates aphorism by stating that the gross elements ".....are the 'adhiṣṭhāna', i.e., a vehicle of that 'lingam' (subtle body). The 'linga śarīra' (subtle body) cannot stand by itself. In other words the gross body and the subtle body are co-existent like the object and its shadow. (Sān.Pr.Sū.III.12).

In fact the subtle body ('linga śarīra') is of the atomic size only. "...it is constituted by Sattva which is Light; hence it must be associated with the Bhūtās or Gross elements, and it is further suggested under aphorism (Sa.Pr.Sū. III.22) that this subtle body is responsible for the consciousness in the Gross body. But the subtle body, which is responsible for Consciousness, continues to exist even after the death of the body. If the consciousness were to be innate in the Gross body there would not have been death.

The concept of Tanmātra has not missed the attention of the modern thinkers. C.Dwarakanatha did examine the concept of Tanmātras in relation to Pañcamahābhūtas (five basic elements). According to him, the 'tanmātras' are "'active energy' possessing 'different sensory potentials', which cause "elementary quantum of action". By 'elementary quantum', he means 'the unit or quantity of protons' (radiant energy) required to produce just minimum sensation'. He further states that -- 'The term 'elementary quantum' refers to the unit of quantity of 'protons' (radiant energy) required to produce just the minimum sensation of light. Borrowed from modern physics, this term is used to stimulate the respective sensory organs to
sense the "bare awareness" (minimum sensation of their respective sensations, viz., sound (śabda), touch (sparśa), light (tejas), taste (rasya) and smell (gandha)" (p.87). “In this sense, tanmātras represent specific unit of stimuli of the senses” (p.88)...... “It is seen that śabda tanmātra which is the lightest of the five, from all accounts, has one property, viz, the capacity to evoke the sensation of sound, i.e., śabda. The kinetic involved in this phenomenon relates to disturbance caused by it which impinges on all the sense-organs but evokes response only from the organ of hearing. The disturbance caused by the movements of this tanmātra in the air is propagated in the form of waves, described often in terms of wave-lengths” (p.88-89).

Dwarakanatha appears to be right in his conclusion that the 'tanmātras' are 'ultimate energy units' or "quantas of specific modes energy" which cause both our sensations and the gross elements. Almost a similar theory of 'tanmātra' is also expressed by a renowned Vedic scholar, Sri Surendranatha Dasgupta who says :-

"....The 'tanmātras then are infra-atomic particles charged with specific potential energies. First, the potential of sound stimulus is lodged in one class of particles, 'tanmātras' which possess the physical energy of vibration ('parispanda') and serve to form the radical of the ether atom (ākāśaparamāṇu), then the potential of the tactile stimulus is lodged in another class of 'tanmātras, particles which possess the physical energy impact or mechanical pressure ......(etc)...." But Surendranatha Dasagupta offers slightly a different explanation of 'tanmātras' in his another book - A Study of Patanjali'. In this book he states that ".....from bhūtādi comes five 'tanmātras' which can be compared to the Vaiśeṣika atoms, as they have no parts and neither grossness nor visible differentiation.....The next one, the paramāṇu, which is gross in its nature and is generated from 'tanmātras which exist in it as parts (tanmātrāvayava), may be compared with the 'trasareṇu, of the Vaiśeṣikas or with atoms of Dalton...."
But according to me, these explanations offered by the learned scholars are deficient in not highlighting the 'mental element' of the 'tanmātrās'. All these explanations of 'tanmātrā' may be alright, viewed from merely the 'physical element' or 'physical energy' in them. But according to the Śāṅkhya Theory, these 'tanmātrā' are also evolutes of 'Ahaṅkāra', 'the cosmic mind' and as such they should also possess 'insentient' element, or the 'psych'. According to me, 'tanmātras' are supposed to evolve both mind and matter, which may indicate the 'mind-body relation' which bears testimony in the external world. The three 'guṇa-s' — 'sattva', 'rajas', 'tamas', constitute the necessary ingredients in 'tanmātrās', since Mūla Prkṛti in its primary status represents the equiposed status of these 'guṇa-s'. These 'guṇa-s' represent pleasant, unpleasant or passive state of mind in day to day life. It is, perhaps, to emphasize this aspect only, Surendranath Dasgupta further observes: "... I believe, it has been made clear that, when the inner and the outer proceed from one source, the ego and the external world do not altogether differ in nature from the inner; both have been formed by the collocation of the 'guṇas'. (sarvamidaṃ guṇāṇāṃ sanniveśaviśeṣamātram)."

The resultant conclusion, according to me, would be that, according to Sāṅkhya-Yoga, the Subtle Element (tanmātra-s), which is of atomic size (aṇuṣparīmāṇam —Sān. Pr. Su. III.14) is not a mere physical atom like that of Vaiśeṣikas but a Psycho-physical-organic-cosmic-gene, which is responsible both for the existence (prakṛti) and transformation (vikāra), of which, this universe is the resultant entity (pariṇāma) and also for the transmigration of soul. Thus the human body, for instance, is not composed of five gross elements only. It consists of 'vehicular' subtle body also, which is not gross. This Subtle body pervades the whole of gross body. The gross body is the seat of the master, i.e., (manas), the seat of reflection of Puṣṣa. (Bhāṣya). Under the Superintendence of Prāṇa, (the experiencer), his building, i.e., the body connected with senses, comes into existence.
Senses (Indrīyas), according to Sāṅkhya-Yoga, are attached to the body. The objects are manifested through senses. In the case of the manifestation of objects, there is modification of senses. "For the manifestation of objects, the senses must reach them. In reaching the objects, they must not quit connection with the body. So that, while their connection with the body is maintained, their connection with objects has to be explained. And this can be possible only by means of a peculiar modification of the Senses themselves, which is technically called 'Vṛttī' (modification)." These senses do not illuminate what they do not reach. In the case of senses what is necessary is that the stimuli of the external object and the sense organs should come in contact with each other so that there is the 'modification' (vṛttī) of that senses (so as to send message to the mind).

What is the nature of sound we hear, and what happens in the case of cognition of Sound?

To start with, one should note that, according to Sāṅkhya-Yoga, the Sound is not direct evolute of 'śabda tanmātra'. As we have seen above, from śabda tanmātra the gross element that evolves is "ākāśa". This 'ākāśa' has sound as its quality because the sound, as the quality is latently present in śabda tanmātra, though in an undifferentiated or unmanifested form. For 'ākāśa' could not have sound as its quality, if that were to be not present, latently, in Shabda tanmātra. According to Sāṅkhya Pravacana Sūtra (II.12) "space' and "time" are not the qualities of 'ākāśa' but are only upādhis (external conditions) of that "ākāśa" and accordingly appear to be limited by limiting objects. Bhāṣya of Vijnānabhikṣu further clarifies that - "Although limited space and time are (in reality, not the products of "ākāśa", but) "ākāśa" itself as particularized by this or that limiting object, still they have been stated here the effects of "ākāśa". similarly as, in the Vaiśeṣika System, the sense of hearing has been stated to be the effect of "ākāśa", following the custom admitting the thing particularized as separate and additional entity." (Tr. Nandalal Simha
In fact, "ākāśa" is all pervading without obstruction (anāvaraṇam), and, as such, is everywhere, including inside the pot, but it appears as separate in the pot, because of obstruction caused by the pot only. This 'ākāśa' is substance, like that of ākāśa in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, and not a vacuity as Buddhists believe it to be. (I will consider this concept in detail in the next chapter.) The Even Aphorism 40 of Yoga Sūtra states that there is the relationship between 'power-of-hearing' and 'ākāśa'. Its commentator, Vyāsa, in his Bhāṣya, elucidated this principle, as under:

"In 'ākāśa' abide all powers of hearing and all sounds. To all those whose organs of hearing are similarly situated, the situation of hearing is the same. The power of hearing is the means of perceiving sound. Of a deaf and not-deaf, one senses the sound, and the other does not. Therefore, the 'power of hearing' is the sphere for the 'action of sound'. Whoever performs samyama (concentration) with reference to the relation between the power of hearing and the 'ākāśa', evolves the power of higher audition" (meaning -may hear 'anāhata nada'). The gloss of Vāchāspati Miśra further clarifies that the relation between the 'power of hearing' and 'ākāśa', is of the type of - "the thing supporting and the thing supported". All powers of hearing, even though they have their origin in the principle of egoism, reside in the 'ākāśa', placed in the hollow of the ear. It is in this place where the power of hearing is located. When soundness or defect is noticed therein, soundness or defect, as the case may be, is noticed in the power of hearing also. Further, when the sounds working in unison with the power of hearing, the sounds of solids &c. are to be taken in, then the power of hearing located in the hollow of the ear, stands in need of the capacity of resonance residing in the substratum, of the ear. This sense of hearing then, having its origin in the principal egoism, acts like iron, drawn as it is by sound originate and located in the mouth of the speaker, acting as loadstone, transforms them into its own modifications in sequence of the sounds of the speaker, and thus senses them.
power of hearing is located is born out of the soniferous ‘tanmātra’, and has therefore the quality of sound inherent in itself. It is by this sound acting in unison that it takes the sounds of external solids, &c. This then establishes that the 'ākāśa' is the substratum of the power of hearing, and also possesses quality of sound......

Further the absence of obstruction is an indication of 'ākāśa'. If there were no 'ākāśa', the forms would be in such close contact with one another that even a needle-point would not find room between them. Everything would thus be obstructed by everything.17

The mode of the cognition of senses (in the context of sound,) is made clear by Sān.Pr.Sū-V.104, that a lamp not reached by the Eye cannot reveal itself. In the same way unless the sound reaches the ears the same cannot be perceived. In recognition of sound there is modification of sense of hearing in unison with 'ākāśa' in the ear (which ultimately reaches brain), on the principle - "In reality, however, by means of modification, that is, through connection, is the accomplishment thereof, that is, is the proof of the objects of recognition".18 Sān.Pr.Sū. (V.106), further adds that "Through the mark (linga) of the manifestation of the objects reached to, (there is) proof of the modification (of the senses)." The author, Nandalal Simha, adds by reading between the lines of the Sūtra and the commentary of Bhāṣya, the notes which clarify the position:- "Note:- "The reasoning, indicated here, may be exhibited as follows: For the manifestation of objects, the Senses must reach them. In reaching to objects, they must not quit connection with the body. So that, while their connection with the body is maintained, their connection with the objects has to be explained. And this can be possible only by means of a peculiar modification of the senses themselves, which is technically called 'vṛtti', i.e., modification. Thus the existence of 'vṛtti' is proved"19. Commenting on Sān.Pr.Sū. V.107, 'Vṛtti' of Aniruddha, clarifies that "this modification ('vṛtti') is a different principle which is formed of Ahaṃkāra , (and this does not run counter to our enumeration of twenty five principles)......Since the recognition of
unconnected (objects) is impossible, (unless there is) the favourable influence of 'Adrṣṭām', (the causes of enlightenment of connected objects. According to me, this 'Adrṣṭām' principle (Sān.Pr.Sū. 2..39) is nothing but Vedic 'ṛtam' principle. My opinion stands fortified by Bhāṣya which says: "...the activity of the Instruments, which also for the sake of Puruṣa, proceeds only from the manifestation of the Adṛṣṭām of Pūruṣa".

What is the nature of this 'vṛtti' or 'modification of senses' conceived by Sāṅkhya-Yoga in terms of modern psychology?

To my surprise, I find that the modern psychologists have also attempted to answer similar questions as to how the stimuli cause the modification of senses and in turn how they send message to the brain. "What are these ‘messages’? What does the nerve conduct or transmit? - are the questions framed in this context and answered by Robert S. Woodworth and Donald G. Marquis in their text book on ‘Psychology’ by stating that: “We call it the nerve impulse, and as far known it is an electro-chemical wave in the nerve fibre, which is very weak and consumes very little energy, but still is capable of arousing a muscle or a nerve centre to action”. (p.238)........ "The activity going on in the brain and cord is modified by the incoming nerve impulses. We should think of the system as constantly active and constantly receiving stimuli which modify its activity (p.244)”.

Perception, accordingly, is cognition which, coming into contact with the thing cognized (Vijnāna Bhikṣu), or being produced by means of relation to the thing cognized (Aniruddha), portrays the form thereof (i.e., of the thing cognized). According to Vṛtti of Aniruddha perception is sensual cognition of 'form' (ākāra) of the object like a water-pot. It is nirvikalpa or indeterminate without the help of memory. He does not agree with the theory of the Buddhists.
which holds that the cognition of an object (cow) is always with the help of memory (of cowness), as such it is determinate or savikalpa. Aniruddha further points out that though memory of cowness is helpful in cognition but it is not opposed to be the authority of direct sensual perception with the eyes. In the same way, Sound also is cognized with the ears.

In this background Sānkhya Pravacana Śūtram does not accept the doctrine of 'Sphoṭa', enunciated by the Yoga Śūtra of Patañjali and other Grammarians, while determining the relationship between word and its meaning. According to it, either on the basis of intuition or non-intuition, a "'word' is not of the nature of Sphoṭa." According to Bhāṣya the collection of letters, arranged in a particular manner, one after another, the object is manifested, and if that is so, then the supposition of 'Sphoṭa' is useless and unnecessary. (See Nandalal Simha -pp.441). Sānkhya Pravacana Śūtram forbids the identity of word and objects. Word acts as a signifier of the objects signified. When some one says - 'jār', such jār is cognized by the word heard in the ear and cognized by the figure of 'jar' seen with the eyes. Here both the word - jār, and the image - jār signify the object 'jār'. Thus -"The relation of word and object is the relation of the thing to be signified and that which signifies" (Sān.Pra.Sū.5.37) and nothing more." In the object (Artha) lies the power called signifiability, and in the word (śabda), significativeness. It is that (power) which constitutes their relation, as is the case with the adaptability of one thing to another. And through the cognition thereof becomes possible the presentation of objects by means of words. Such is the meaning. Thus Sānkhya Pravacana Śūtram does not accept the 'Sphoṭa' theory, which the Yoga Śūtra of Patañjali and the 'Yoga Sāra Sangraḥ' of Vijñānabhikṣu accepted. However, according to both, it is the convention that determines the relation between the word and its meaning. A word gets meaning by being referable to an object as per the convention.
According to Yoga Sūtra, the sacred word 'Pranavaḥ' itself conveys the meaning of 'Īśvara. "It denotes Him (i.e. 'Īśvara')" tasya vācakaḥ pranavaḥ"24 By commenting on this aphorism, Vyāsa Bhāṣya says that by virtue of the convention the word 'Pranavaḥ' (Aum) itself is the sign (sanketa) of 'Īśvara ('tat sanketah Īśvarasya'). "His relation with sign is inherent and thus ever present..... As the relation already existing between father and son, is only expressed by convention, --"this is the father, this is the son".25 Vijñānabhikṣu, in his Yoga Vārtika further adds that "Those who are well- verses in the scriptures (āgaminah) know that the relationship between the word and its meaning is permanent because of the permanency of similar usages (in successive generations)" 26

According to Yoga Sūtra, "By its repetition there is understanding of its meaning (tat-japaḥ tadartha bhāvanam - I.28). According to Vyāsa Bhāṣya, the relation between word, 'Pranavaḥ' and its meaning ('Īśvara) being eternal, and ever co-existing, by constant repetition of it, it manifests the essence of its meaning to the Yogis. The gloss of Vācaspati adds that by such constant repetition of it, 'Pranava' becomes "the very substance of the mental existence" (of such Yogi), and by such repetition" the mind feels bliss in the One Lord alone.....The Lord then becomes gracious to him up to his attaining the faculty of trance (Samādhi) and its fruit." 27 This state of mind is usually described as "nādānusandhāna" or absorption in 'nāda - meditation', which is the highest means of Salvation. Of the many kinds of Yogas, Nāda Yoga is considered to be very important, as Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā states -- "Adinātha propounded 1 1/4 crore methods of trance, and they are all extant. Of these, the hearing of anāhata nāda (nādanusandhāna ) is the only one, the chief, in my opinion" 28 ("nādanusandhānamakameva mānyamahe mukhyatamaṇ) Is sound eternal?

According to the Sāṅkhya philosophy, as we have seen above, sound ultimately is the effect of 'ākāśa' only. The Sāṅkhya Pravacan
Sūtra declares that "Sound (śabda') is not eternal, because it is seen to be an effect" (of 'ākāśa').²⁹ Likewise according to Sūtra the letters or syllables (varṇas) and word (śabda) (formed of such sound or sounds) are also not eternal.

But this sound, as the quality of 'ākāśa', is the 'physical sound' a pre-stage of Nāda, by taking Nāda as a 'modulated or modified sound' (vikṛtadhvani), in the sense Bṛhaṛhari uses. Vijnānabhikṣu in his Yogasāрасangraḥ clarifies the subtle distinction between sound and Nāda by elaborating three kinds of sounds: (1) The object of the sense of hearing (vāgendriyaviśayan), (i.e. the sound characterised by different parts of mouth- throat, palate, etc., --is the object of the sense of speech, being its effect. (2) The object of the sense of hearing (śrotrendriyaviśayan), (i.e. the Sound produced by sound, removed from the sense of speech and located in the ear, is the object of sense of hearing, being perceptible by it. and (3) The object of the Intellect alone (buddhimātra viśaya), like the concept 'ghaṭa' (jar) (i.e. śabda' or word) etc²⁹ In this kind of three sounds, Śaṅkhaya's 'śabda' is the 'Sound of the first kind'. Whereas, Bṛhaṛhari's 'nāda' is of the 'sound of the second kind'. The 'Sound of third the kind' by itself is 'sphoṭa' which Śaṅkhaya does not accept. Keeping aside 'the sound of third kind', (in the sense of 'sphoṭa'), amongst the remaining two sounds, Śaṅkhaya's discription of 'sound' belongs to the first kind. Yet the 'letters' as constituting 'word' nevertheless, are the the instances of the 'sounds the second kind', accordingly, belong to the concept of 'Nāda' as clarified Bṛhaṛhari. (see Chapter 7). At any rate Śaṅkhya, does not accept the eternality of sound, in either sense.

Ontologically also, except Puṟuṣa and Mūla Prakṛti, (with the equilibrium of her three guṇās) the rest are effects and non-eternal, and at the time of Pralaya or dissolution, they simply recede back into that Mūla Prakṛti. Likewise, the relation (of the name and the named) is non-eternal, since both are non-eternal.³⁰ Even "Eternality does not
belong to the Vedas, because it is heard that they are effects." Aniruddha has commented on this aphorism by stating that, - "He practiced penance; from that penance having been practiced, the three Vedas were produced" - would show that the Vedas were the product, and as such they are also not eternal. However, according to Sāṅkhya Pravacana Sūtra 'the verbal testimony of the Vedas is still acceptable like the books of medicine on the basis of their own intrinsic truth based on objective observations." From (seeing) the manifestation of the power inherent in the Vedas, their authoritativeness follows from themselves." Bhāṣya of Vijnānabhikṣu elucidates and says: - "Of the Veda what is 'Nija' or natural or innate "Śakti" or power of producing cognition corresponding to objective realities, of that, since there is observation of manifestation in the case of ......, the Āyurveda etc.; therefore, all the Vedic declarations, without exception, prove the authoritativeness of the ‘mantras’ by themselves, and not by means of their having their origin in cognition, corresponding to objective realities on the part of their speaker." This kind of proof is accepted on the basis of the word-meaning relation of the vedic mantras ("mantrārthavādayoḥ prāmānyam") described as "scriptural authority" by Prof. R.I. Ingalalli.

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The gist of the theories of Sāṅkhya and Yoga:

Nāda or Śabda is a quality (gūṇa) of ‘ākāśa’ (ether) — 
(Cosmic theory of Sound) —

Sāṅkhya-Yoga adopted the concept of Vedic Cosmic Vāk to explain human language or human ‘dhvani’ or ‘Nāda’. Their Prakṛti and Puruṣa are only eternal Cosmic principles. In the presence of Puruṣa, Prakṛti evolves into the entire creation; and at the time of
dissolution the said creation recedes into her. Except Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the other material substances and their qualities go on changing and, as such, are non-eternal. The qualities inherent in substance change in the process of modification, in the course of evolution. According to them, Sound as ‘quality’ subsists in ‘ākāśa’, which itself is evolved out of ‘śabda-tanmātra’, in the course of cosmic evolutionary process from Mūla Prakṛti. In the words of Surendranath Dasgupta, ‘śabda-tanmātras’ are ‘infra-atomic particles charged with specific potential energies.’ (inherited from Mūla Prakṛti).¹ Out of such ‘śabda-tanmātra’, ‘ākāśa’ arises, whose only potential quality is Sound. Sound, in the sense of ‘physical sound’ arising as quality of ‘ākāśa’ is not non-eternal.

Sāṅkhya does not use the word Nāda. A word is a group of letter-sounds (varṇas) signifying an object (or meaning), according to convention. These letter sound by virtue of their modulation would of the form of Nāda. But these letters and the words, constituted of these letters, are non-eternal. The Veda expressed in such non-eternal words is also non-eternal. However, the Vedas is acceptable as an authority just like the books on medicine.

Notes and References
2. Sān.Pr.Sū.1.62
3. See foot note - Suryanarayana Sastri, S.S.: 'Sāṅkhya Kārikā of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa', (With translation). at page 69 and 70 (1948), Pub: University of Madras.- it says “Dr. K. T. Behanan uses the equivalents as ‘unspecialised’ and 'specialised', and develops a useful analogy, comparing the former to protons and electrons and the letter to atoms”. (Yoga,pp. 76,77)
4. Larson & Bhattacharya: Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies ( Vol.IV,
pp.264). (Translation of text); Pub: Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi

5. Sān.Pr.Sū.3.7- Tr. Sinhal


7. Dwarakanatha C. - "Lectures on Tanmātras and Pancamahābhūtas", (1996); : Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office -Varanasi-1


10. Surendranatha Dasgupta- 'A study of Patañjali', pp.57 (Secon Ed. 2001); Pub: Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi-110062


13. Sān.Pr.Sū. V.106)


20. Nandalal Simha p.269.)


22a. Tr. ibid - p.139)


27. Tr.Rāma Prasāda —p.51)
28. "nādanusandhānamekameva mānyamahe mukhyatamaṃ (verse -65);
Pancham Sinh - 'Hatha Yoga Pradipika'; (Fourth Ed.1992); (Tr. at pp.58); Pub: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. Delhi).
30a. Sān.Pr.Sū.5.45.- Tr. ibid at page 428).
31. Sān.Pr.Sū.5.51).
33 "mantrārthavādayoḥ prāmaṇyam" (Kedarnatha Tripāthi :
34. Ingalalli R.I, Prof. : 'Shabda Pramāṇa- Epistemological Analysis',
"Consequently scriptural testimony as a set of true (credal) setences qualifies itself as a source of knowledge." at 146 ( Chapter on "Sciptural Testimony" ); (1988); Pub: Sri Satguru Publications —Delhi -110007).

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