CHAPTER- IV

CONCEPT OF NĀDA IN VYAKARANĀ
CONCEPT OF NĀDĀ IN VYĀKARANĀ

ŚABDABRAHMAN

Śabdānuśasana is the processing of sound by distinguishing between prakṛti & pratyaya. But it seems to be incredible when it is considered as a science to identify the reality of the universe. The Brahmā which is the eternal is organless. But sound is included within organs like Prakṛti, Pratyaya and Varṇā-s. How can it become the part of Brahmā? In short, how can the śāstrā which depends upon the science of the Prakṛti explain the ultimate reality. Is this science or vision? The world moves forward because it is the same sound which exists as Jagat which is the same totality of living and non-living objects.

According to the Vēdantin-s, mōkṣā means the realization of paramātmā.

“Atmā vā are draṣṭavyā śrōtavyō mantavya nītīdhyāṣītavyah”

(One should know the soul, hear the soul and meditate the soul).

When one probes with this mantra as its epicenter naturally a question arises whether Vyakaraṇā is Darśanā? But-
“Sadēva sōmya idamagrā asiḍ ēkamēvādvitiyam”
(“Dear child, before the creation there was nothing but Brahmā”).

“braḥmaivēdam sarvam”
(There was only one thing Brahma)

“atmēivēdam sarvam”
(It is the soul i.e., Ātmā which is everything).

In the following Śrutis it is evident that Satyam, Brahmavatvam and Ātmavatvam are one and the same:

“vāgēvartham brāvīti
vāgēvartham nihitam santanōti
vacyēva viśwam bahurūpam niḥaddham
tadētadēkam pravibhajya upabhunkte”
(It is the word which tells the meaning, it is the word which reveals the meaning, it is in this word that the multiplicity of the Jagat disappears and it is the word that brings the multiplicity of the word in to a form of single consciousness).

“ōhm ityētadksaramidam sarvam”
(It is ‘Ōhm’ which is ‘Omniscient’. Jagat is created by this Ohmkarā).

“vāgeva viśvā bhuvanāni jajñe”
(The visual world appeared from this word).
NADABRAHMAJÑĀNAM

Bhatṛhari in his book Vākyapadīya says that the world is nothing but a Vivarttā (apparent) of this 'Sabdabrahman'.

"anādinidhanam brahma
śabdatattvam yadakṣaram
vivarttatearthabhāvēna
prakriya jagatō yataḥ" 8

Vivarttā is the repetition of reality but different from it. Does this Kārika contain the real meaning of Darśanā of Vyākaraṇa. According to this Kārika, Sabda has no origin or end. It existence explains everything that happens in the world. It is responsible for the multiplicity of this world. When something is understood in a form different from its original form it is called 'Vivarttā'. In darkness one may mistake a thread for a snake. Similarly 'Nādabrahmā' the original forms of the sound are mistaken to the worldly things, then Nādabrahmā itself become the subject of organ. It is because of the lack of wisdom or 'Jñānā'. In this light one understands that it wasn’t a snake but only a rope. Similarly when one attains 'Nādabrahmajñāna' the whole world appears to be nothing but misinterpreted waves of the 'Nādabrahma'. The world which appears real is nothing but a dream9.
When we say that Jagat is the vivartta of Nādabrahmā, it doesn’t mean the sound of the babbling brook or the roaring of the clouds. These are available sounds that the ear receives. They are not primary sounds. They are the sounds in the form of ‘Paśyanti’.

ŚABDAPRABHĒDAH

“Catvāri vākparimitā padāni
tāni vidur brāhmaṇaḥ yē maniśināḥ
guhastrīṇi nihitaṁ nēṅgayanti
turiyam vācō manuṣyā vadanti”

The multiplicity and the evolution of sounds are not subjects accessible easily to the mind. We recognize only the worldly sounds. We cannot describe even a portion of it even we speak endlessly.

Patañjali says:-

“Brhaspatirindrāya divyam varṣasahasram
pratipadōktānam śabdānām
śabdapārāyaṇam prōvāca nacāntam jagāma”

Even Guru Bṛhaspati could teach only one word in thousand
divine years to his disciple **Indrā**.

He could never complete. Not to speak of human beings, who has such a short life span. The sound has four distinct parts. They are **Parā, Paśyanti, Madhyāmā** and **Vaikāra**. Only a **Brahmajñāni** can differentiate these form of sounds. The first three are believed to be hidden within the body. Only the last is understood by the human mind.

**PARA**

This is situated in the lower side of the navel. It is not accessible even for a **Yogi**. In the end of his sādhanā when the **Yogi** wins the **Parā** and he never comes back. In the state of **Para** the knower and the knowledge is the one. It exists in the **Mūlādhāracakrā**.

**PAŚYANTI**

It has no division. A **Yogi** can understand this even though it is very subtle and emotionless. It exists in the navel.

**MADHYAMA**

It exists in the heart. It can be laid as the prototype of human sound. It is the sound which exists before the **samyogā** of **prāṇavāyu**.

This is the **Madhyāmanādaspandana** (Vibration of the
Madhyama nādā). This can be described as the Upādānatatvā of Šabda, just like the clay become the Upādānatatvā of a pot\textsuperscript{15}.

VAIKHARĪ

It spreads along throat, forehead and palate. This is the sound which others can hear and we call it the voice. It is this sound which becomes *ka, ca, ta, pa*\textsuperscript{16}.

\begin{quote}
"Vaikharya hi kṛto nādah
parāśravana gocarah
madhamāya kṛto nādah
sphōta vyançaṅkoṣyatē" \textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

We have already seen that the Grammarians considered the Brahmana as the source and essence of all words and speech. According to Bhartrhari, the speech principle has three stages in the course of its manifestation, in the order Paśyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari.

\begin{quote}
"vaikharya madhyamaṅyāśca
paśyantyāśceitadatbhutam
anēkatirthabhēdāyāstrayya
vācaḥparam padam" \textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}
It corresponds to the conception of *māyāśakti* or the creative power, who is the *Iswara* or *Saguṇabrahmā*, the creator. *Sabda-brahman* or *Nāda-brahman* is said to be generated the ‘*Parā vāk*’ or the supreme speech which is all pervasive, the *parāvāk* then produces the *Paśyantī vāk* or the mental word. It in turn produces the *Madhyamā vāk* or the intermediary speech, which is the speech of the mystics or *Yōgen*-s, and this gives rise to *Vaikhari* or the articulate word which is proper to men.

The grammarians generally consider, the ‘*Madhyama*’ the third stage mentioned earlier as ‘*Sphota*’. *Patañjali* states the *Mahābhāṣya* that *śabda śāstra* or the principle of word is *śabda brahma*, which is the root cause of all. The words or letters are for the formation of integral *sphota*. Thus *Patañjali*’s observation is on the basis of linguistics.

**SPHOTA**

*Patañjali*, the author of *Vyākaranā Mahābhāṣya* states; “*Śabdā* or word has two aspects viz. *Sphota* and *Dhvani* (Sound), which are related as follows.

*Sphota* represents *śabdā* proper, where as sound is only a quality serving to manifest the ‘*Sphota*’.

*Patañjali* defines *sphota* thus: “*Sphutatyarthō f asmad*” i.e. that from which meaning is exploded.
The term ‘Sphōta’ is a sanskrit word and it is derived from the root ‘Sphut’. The verbal form ‘Sphutati’ means ‘to burst’.

“Sphuta vikāso iti dhātuḥ”\(^{21}\)

Sphutati - sput-a-ti- meaning prakāṣatē.

“Avaśgamyatē, arthō anēna asmāditi va spōtah iti vigrahah”\(^{22}\)

Here, ‘Sphōta’ means the process of bursting, opening, expansion and disclosure. It is defined by Monier Williams as “the eternal and imperishable element of sounds and words and the real vehicle of the idea which bursts or flashes on the mind when a sound is uttered”\(^{23}\). The verbal form ‘Sphutati’ means to burst open with sound, explode, split, blossom, disclose etc.\(^{24}\)

Kōndabhattā\(^{25}\) or Kaunda Bhattā (A.D. 1650), a teacher of Sphōta doctrine, states that the term ‘Sphota’ etymologically means “that from which the meaning bursts forth or that which is revealed by sounds”. Nagēsabhattā\(^{26}\) (18th Century) in his ‘Sphota vādā’ explains, “Sphōta is a form through which the meaning bursts out, that is, the signifier”.

**THE AGE OF SPHŌTA VĀDĀ**

There is no evidence to show when this theory of Sphōta originated.
“Catvāri srṅga trayō f sya pādāh
dvē sīrṣē sapta hastasō f sya
tridhā baddhō vṛṣabhō rōraṇī
dmahādēvō martyānāvīvesāh”

In this Vedamantrā a Vṛṣabhā is described as the symbol of sound. ‘Vṛṣabhōvarsanāt’ means that which helps to realize one’s desires. “Ēka śabdaḥ samyak jñātah” In this, sound is described as something which gives you everything. Here, the four srṅgās ‘catvāri srṅgāh’ means nāma, ākhya, upasarga, niptā. The three stages of the Vṛṣabhā are the present, the past and future (trayōṣya pādāh). The two heads (dve sīrṣē) are the Nityasabda and Kāryaśabda. The seven hands ‘Saptahastāsōf sya’ are the seven Vibliaktī. It is tide up in three places (tridha baddhāh); Uras, Kāntām and Sīras. They are the Udāttā, Anudāttā and Svaritā. ‘Vṛṣabhō rōraṇī’ the Vṛṣaṇa makes sound again and again. ‘Māhādēvō martyān āvīvesāh’. Mahādēva is seen as the Antaryami of all beings. Here, the Niśabdā is Spḥōta and Kāryaśabdā is the Dhvani ‘Vāca iti yacca martyam’. The word created all the worlds by itself. Here the never ending Sabdatattvā is the Spḥōta and the other is the Karyasabdā or Dhvani. Thus the Vēdā-s and the Brāhmaṇa-s shed light to the spḥōtā. A great acāryā called
Sphōtāyanā who lived before Pañini (B.C. 500). He should be the person who might have developed the Sphōtā system, taking different elements from Upaniṣad and Veda-s.

Avān sphōtāyanasya in the words of Pañini we can understand the respect Pañini had towards Sphōtāyanā. Haradattan in his poetic interpretation titled Pañīnījañali made it clear that, Sphōtāyanā is the Guru who propagated the theory of Sphōtā.

‘Sphōtapratipādanaparō vaiyyākaraṇacaryah’

Sphōtāyanā is actually only a pen name. But Pañini preferred to call him Sphōtāyanā and it showed his respect towards the philosophy of Sphōtāyanā. It is believed that Sphōtāyanā lived between 400 and 500 B.C. We can roughly estimate the age of this philosophy as 2,500 years.

The eternity of Sound (Śabdanityatva)

When Pañīnījañali (B.C. 200) speaks of the eternity of sound he quotes some words from the book ‘Samgraham’,

‘Śūngrahe ētat prādhanyena parīkṣitam
sabdah nityō va kāryo va iti’

There is no doubt that Samgraham was written by Vyādi. There are a lot of books which consider Samgraham as
an authority. Patañjali has done an in-depth study of this book. Viewed from this angle the person whom Pāṇini described by the pen name called as the writer of Saṁgraham as the Śabdatattvavādi are one. So we can come to the conclusion that the Sphoṭāyana in really the acārya.

Yaśkācāryā had also tried to establish the fact that the sound is eternal in the beginning of Niruktam. He opposes the Audumbarayana’s principles. He talks about the internal unity of the sound. The Sphoṭā theory also upholds this principle. This tatva is as old as the Vedas. So we can see that this theory is roughly 3000 years old.

Herold. G. Coward says:- Nāgēśabhatta identifies this theory with the teaching of the Rṣi Sphoṭāyana who was the grammarian claimed to be the traditional formulator of Sphoṭā theory. The earlier views on Sphoṭā as a linguistic symbol had little growth for comparatively a long period that extended from Patañjali to Bhatṛhari. Dr. K. Kuṇjuṇṇi Rāja a modern scholar says that

"The Sphoṭā theory of Bhatṛhari is the culmination of many such attempt in the solution of the linguistic problems that were worrying scholars in the various philosophical schools. However, it is generally accepted that "The Sphoṭā theory was fully
developed and systematized by the great grammarian Bhartrihari in the Vākyapadiya, but some of the ideas underlying this theory can be found even in certain grammatical and philosophical literature.\textsuperscript{39}

In Indian philosophical treatises especially Sabarabhāṣyā on the Mimamsā sūtra, Vatsyāyana’s bhāṣyā on the Nyāya sūtra, Vyāsā’s bhāṣyā on the Yōgasūtra and the Apōha theory of the Bhuddists, must have had a remarkable influence on Bhartrihari to formulate his doctrine based on the central problems of language\textsuperscript{40}.

**SPHOTĀ - MADHYAMĀ**

"Vaikharyā hi kṛto nādāh
paraśravaṇa gōcaraḥ
madhyamayā kṛtō nādaḥ
sphāta vyānca ka ucyatē"\textsuperscript{41}

From this we can understand that it is Madhyamā which is responsible for Sphoṭā.

**Different types of Sphoṭā (Sphoṭa bhedā)**

According to Sabdika doctrine Sphoṭā exists in eight types:-


**Akhaṇḍavākya Sphōtā**

Among these, **Akhaṇḍavākya Sphōtā** is the ultimate principle of grammarians. All others are hypotheses. They are all steps to this ultimate theory of **Akhaṇḍavākya Sphōtā**. **Varnā Sphōtā** refers to the explosion of the nature and other visual explosions. The varna-s of these explosions are not taken into an account. The grammarians doesn’t see any grammar aspect in this. Though from a **Pada Sphōtā**, a meaning come out. It is not considered important as a sentence can give only full meaning. Therefore **Vākya Sphōtā** is accepted. In **Varnā Sphōtā** if there are a lot of Varnā-s (Colours), it becomes difficult to understand. Therefore **Varnajātī Sphōtā** is accepted. It is the same with the **Padajātī Sphōtā** and **Vākyajātī sphōtā**. Without considering the **Prakṛti** and **Pratyayā** parts considering it as one, avoiding the organs of word formation. To conclude, sentence is meaningless in **Akhaṇḍavākya Sphōtā**. It is in this **Vākya Sphōtā** that a grammarian finds importance.

"Grāhyatvam grāhakatvam ca
dvē sakti tejasō yadhā
tadheiva sarvasadbana mēte
prthagiva stite"
**Sphōtā and Dhvani**

Sound is one and eternal. How can we make it a subject of intellect as *Pada*, *Vākya* etc. to give an example.

"Pratibimbam yadhāf nyatra
stitam tōya kriyāvaśāt
tatpravṛttimivanvēti
*Sa dharma sphōtanadayōhō*"⁴⁶

A completely transparent glass vessel cannot be seen from a distance. It can be seen only when a colour like red, green or blue acts as a medium i.e. if it is placed in a blue surface it appears as blue. (It is an illusion as the transparent vessel has no colour). The relation between the glass vessel and medium can be compared to the relation in *Sphōtā* and *Dhvani*. *Sphōtā* or sound is transparent like the glass vessel. Therefore it cannot be understood without a medium. *Dhvani* is the medium which makes the sound audible. *(Vakyapradipakam)*

"Dūratprabhēva dīpasya
dhvanimātram tu laksyate
ghanṭadīnām ca sābdēṣu
vyaktō bhēdah sa dṛṣyate"⁴⁷

'The term *Dhvani* used in the *Sphōtā* theory comes to occupy a central place in Indian aesthetics and receives further development in the hands of the literary critics⁴⁸. *Amarasimha*, the author of
Amarakṣāṇa uses the word Dhvani twice to mean 'sound'. The renowned grammarian Patanjali says Sphotaḥ Sabdah, Dhvaniḥ Sabdaguṇah.

According to Abhinavagupta in the poetic experiences of Dhvani the transcendental function of suggestion removes the primordial way of ignorance from our minds and leads to the discovery of the meaning to be experienced. Anandavardhana (9th century A.D) in his 'Dhvanyāloka' has given the following definitions of Dhvani. That kind of poetry, where the conventional meaning renders itself secondary in the (conventional) words renders its meaning and suggests the (intended) or implied meaning, is designated by the learned as Dhvani or suggestive poetry.

Thus the grammarians hold that Dhvani is used to denote certain aspects of speech and meaning. The Sahādayas, who hold the views of the grammarians in high regard, appear to have borrowed the expressions Dhvani from the field of grammar which reveals the depth and sweetness of poetry.

Bhartrhari describes Dhvani as having two meaningful aspects. One is related to the nada produced by sphota, the other is the product of the Sphota. To make it clear he distinguished between Prākṛta Dhvani and Vaiśravaṇa Dhvani. The former is one without which the manifested sphota cannot be comprehended while the latter enable the manifested sphota to be compre-
hended for larger and larger moments of time without any cessa-
tion\textsuperscript{55}.

\textbf{Dhvani and Nādām}

When one develops the desire to make a sound to convey a meaning a vibration starts in the air within the body. That vibration on its way along throat, pharynx, finally becomes the sound or voice. In \textit{Śukla Yajurveda} there is a reference of this \textit{‘Vāyu khāt’}\textsuperscript{56}. Air comes from space. This is exactly what Niyayikan said, \textit{‘Sabda guṇamākāsasam’}\textsuperscript{57}. This means the property of silence is sound. In \textit{Yajurveda} it is said that \textit{‘Śabdastat’}\textsuperscript{58} the sound is actually air.

In short it is the subtle sound of atom that finally become the sound which can be heard. The grammarian says it is the person who desires to transform himself into sound\textsuperscript{59}.

\textit{Bhartṛhari}'s observation is as follows. A listener's comprehension begins in \textit{Dhvanī}, that comes through short and long sounds. Three elements are heard by the listener in the form of \textit{Nādā}. The pronunciation takes place after the utterance of each \textit{dhvanī}. Each \textit{dhvanī} (either jointly or through the duration of the time taken for the pronunciation) from the variety of this short and long sounds are produced for communication'}
“Nādasya kramajanmatvāt
na purvō naparaśca saḥ
akrama krama rupēṇa
bhēdavaniva jayate”\(^60\)

In short, sounds are produced in various dhvani-s. The sound is completed when the process of pronunciation and comprehension of Nāda is completed. Till the comprehension of Nāda is fulfilled, the comprehension of sabda remains in darkness. As far as the listener is concerned, the primary stage of comprehension is Nāda, and finally it attains the form sound. This Sabda or sound is what we call ‘Sphoṭa’.

“Grahaṇaḥgrahābhhyayōḥ siddhāḥ
nitaya yāgyatā yathā
vyāṅgyavyaṅcaka bhavēṇa
tattheiva Sphōṭanadayōḥ”

FOOT NOTES

1. Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 3 - 4 - 5
   Atma va arē draṣṭavya śrōtavyō
   mantavyaḥ nīdīhyāsīteivaḥ

2. Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 6 - 2 - 1
   Sadeva sōmya! idamgra aśīdēkamēvadvitiīyam
3. Chandogyopanisad 2 - 7 - 1
   "Brahmeivēdam sarvam"
4. Chandogyopanisad 7 - 25 - 2
   "ātmeivēdam sarvam".
5. Nrṣimha Upanisad 7 - 2
6. Prasūpanisad 2 - 5 - 3
7. Vāgeśva viśwabhūvanāni jajnē
8. Vākyapadiya 1 - 1 - 1
9. Bhasatattvadarśanam - Dr. K. Chandrasekharan Nair
   P. 1 to 2
10. Rgvedam - Aṣṭakā.2, Adhyāya.3, Vargā. 22, Mantrā. 45
11. cf. Bhasatattvadarśanam. (Vākyapadiyavyākhyānam)
    Dr. K. Chandrasekharan Nair
12. Rgvedam. 2 - 3, -22, -45
13. INFRA
14. INFRA
15. INFRA
16. INFRA
17. Vākyapadiya - Brahmakaṇṭam. V. 143.
    Dr. K. Chandrasekharan Nair
19. Ibid.
20. Mahābhāṣyā, Patañjali. 1, P. 13 to 15.
21. Monier Williams, op. cit, P. 144
22. Ibid. 144
23. Ibid. 144
24. Monier Williams - Sanskrit - English Dictionary. P.144
    Dr. K. Kunjunni Raja, Encyclopedic of Indian philosophies.
    Vol. V, P. 308.
27. Mahābhāṣyam - Paśpaśāṇīkam. (catvāri), P.30.
28. Ibid. P. 20
29. Ibid. P. 20
30. Ibid. P. 20
31. Satapathabṛahmanam. - 6 - 5 - 314
32. Paniniyam. 6 - 1 - 123
33. Haradattamaṇjari, under Panini’s rule, Vol. I
    S.V.P. 102
34. Ibid. P.102

129
35. Mahabhasyam - Paspaśanīkam
36. Pāṇini - Aṣṭādhyāyī - VI. 1 - 123
37. Harold G. Coward, o.p, cit, P.71
40. Ibid P. 3 to 4
41. Vākyapadīya - Brahmakāṇḍam - V - 143
42. Vākyapadīya, Brahmakāṇḍam. Ver. - 44 to 74
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid. V. 55, P. 70
46. Ibid. P. 114.
47. Ibid. Ch. I, V. 104, P. 114
48. A.B. Keith, History of Sanskrit literature, P. 413
49. Ibid. P. 413
50. Patañjali - M.B. I, P.A
51. Harold G. Coward, G.P, Cit, P. 75
52. Dr. K. Panduraṅgi, Dhvanyaloka, ed. Niraṅga Sagar. P.1, 13.
53. This translation is in the light of the suggestion by K. Krsnamurty, O.P. Cit
54. Ānandavardhana, Dhvanyaloka. P. 240, 241
55. Bhartrhari - Vākyapadiya. I, V. 102
56. Gaurinath Sastri, A Study in the Dialectics of Sphota. P. 13
57. Vāyukhaṭ- S.Y.V. Adhyaya. 1. Sutra. 6
58. Sabdagunamakāśam
60. Ibid
61. Vākyapadīya 1 - Brahmakāṇḍam. V. 48