CHAPTER-I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.

SECTION-I: INTRODUCTION.

Human civilization, for its genesis and growth, owes vastly to our use of language consisting of sentences made up of words expressive of some meanings. We live in air and by air but ordinarily remain unaware of it. Similarly, human beings, as social animals mutually communicating various ideas, perform all their works and duties with the help of meaningful words and sentences, but generally remain unaware of this fact. People in general do not ponder over the actual nature of a word or that of a sentence. Similarly, they seldom think over how a word or a sentence conveys a meaning. They rarely bother about the particular relation subsisting between a word and its corresponding meaning. They are also unaware of what an 'apabhrāmsā' word is and of whether it is denotative or meaning or not. But the Indian thinkers beginning from the hoary past, discussed these problems and tried to find out their solutions.

This dissertation proposes to deal with various views about the concept of meaning put forward by different schools of Indian philosophy - the grammarians (with special emphasis upon Nāgārjuna), the Viśisṭha-Advaitists and the logicians. The views of the Buddhists have been discussed in connection with the import of words. The views of the rhetoricians regarding the functions of conveying meanings have also been taken into account. Some references have also been made to the views of the Monistic Vedantins and the Carvākās on some points. An attempt has been made to point out their various purposes acting behind their dealing with the said problems. The concept of 'āptā' or authority has elaborately been discussed in connection with the nature of Sabda-gramāṇa or Verbal Testimony. The discussion throughout is an open-minded one as far as possible and no blind effort has been made to support or refute any particular school of philosophy. Sometimes the views of some foreign thinkers have also been taken into account in order to show their
similarity with some Indian views.

In the first chapter the nature of Šabda-pramāṇa and early enquiries into the nature of meaning, as found in the Brāhmaṇas, the Nighantus and the Mirukta, have been briefly discussed as the background.

Meanings are taken to be conveyed primarily by words. So, in the second chapter, different views about the nature of word and meaning have been discussed.

Words signify meanings and so it must be admitted that they have got some functions of conveying meanings. Therefore, the third chapter deals with different views regarding these functions of words.

In this connection different views about the nature and denotation of 'apabhrāṃśa' (non-Sanskrit) words have been elaborately discussed in the fourth chapter.

In our linguistic behaviour we actually communicate our ideas only through sentences and not through isolated words. Therefore, in the next and final chapter different views about the nature of a sentence and different theories regarding sentential meaning have been dealt with. In conclusion an attempt has been made to trace the evolution of the concept of meaning.

Different portions of the above-mentioned problems have previously been discussed in different research treatises. While utilising the learned discussions found in these works, this thesis aspires to a comprehensive discussion of the concept of meaning in a new setting with attempts of shedding fresh light on various problems. The concept of 'āpta', Nāgęśa's 'Bauddhārthavāda' and denotation of apabhrāṃśa words have been discussed elaborately and with greater attention as the topics, so far as my knowledge goes, have not been treated as yet in detail they deserve. The attempt of tracing the evolution of the concept of meaning may also humbly claim to be original in the same sense. The points, which were elaborately dealt with in previous research works, have been discussed in brief in the present dissertation for obvious reasons.
SECTION - II : GENESIS OF THE PROBLEM.

We utter various sounds some of which are expressive of meanings and are called words. Generally, a word is taken to be a combination of letters or articulate sounds which are transitory in character. But how do the transitory letters combine to form a word? Moreover, a word, e.g., 'cow' is uttered variously by various persons and yet it seems to be the same word and conveys the same meaning. But how is it possible? Again, is it a fact that all people understand the same concept on hearing a particular word, e.g., 'cow'? If so, how? If not, how is it possible to communicate our ideas through linguistic usage with the help of sentences and words constituting them? How does a word always convey the same sense? What empowers a particular word to express a particular meaning? Such points stand in need of exposition if we want to understand the process of communication of ideas through the medium of language.

From very ancient times different schools of Indian philosophy tried in right earnest to solve the problems for various reasons of their own. The grammarians are concerned with the dissection of language consisting of sentences, words and meanings. So they rightly took up the issues for solution. The Buddhists believe in the transitoriness of the whole world; moreover, they do not accept the authority of the Vedas. So, in order to challenge the authority of the Vedas consisting of meaningful words and propositions, they tried to establish the transitory nature of words and meanings. The Mimansists' aim is to uphold the authority of the Vedas and so they had to deal with the aforesaid issues and they tried to establish the eternity of words, meanings and their mutual relation. The logicians are very much particular in their use of language in the correct and unambiguous form and, hence, they also took pains to discuss the said problems. The rhetoricians deal with poetry composed by poets through a special combination of beautiful words and meanings. Therefore, they also dealt with these problems in order to establish the special power of communication belonging to the words
used by the poet's muse. Due to such differences of their ends in view the same problem assumed different forms of questions and those were answered differently by different schools of philosophical thought.

Most of our ideas about various things are formed on the basis of our belief in the words of others, heard or read by us. Only a small fraction of our daily performances is based on our direct knowledge. Indirect knowledge arises mainly through inference and verbal testimony. Verbal Testimony is based upon words and meanings. So, in order to establish the trustworthiness of the scriptures and the words of the authorities, different philosophical schools had to discuss the aforesaid problems. A brief discussion about the nature of Sabda-pramāṇa or verbal testimony is required for a clear understanding of this point.

In Indian philosophy, 'pramāṇa' means knowledge or valid cognition and 'pramāṇa' means the source or way of acquiring valid cognition. There was a time when in Europe there arose sceptics who maintained that no valid cognition can ever be acquired. But that scepticism was rejected outright on the plea that, in that case, the sceptic view itself cannot be regarded as a valid one. Therefore, everybody has to admit that we can acquire knowledge. But, regarding the way or ways of knowing, different thinkers differ widely among themselves. Western thinkers generally admit of two sources, viz., perception and inference. Among Indian philosophical schools the Carvākas take perception to be the only valid source of knowledge. The Buddhists and the Vaiṣeṣikas accept perception and inference only. According to the Buddhists, the words or the sermons of the Buddha convey some valid ideas which were attained by him through perception and the same are ascertained by others through inference. The Śaṅkhya-philosophers admit of verbal Testimony in addition to these two. A section of the logicians add 'Upamāṇa' or comparison to these three. The Prabhākara-school of Mīmāṃsā philosophy recognises 'Arthāpatti' or postulation as the fifth
method. To these five, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and his school of Mīmāṃsā philosophy and
the monistic Vedantins add 'Anupalabdhi' or non-cognition and thus admit of six
ways of knowing.

(pratyaksam ekām cārvākāḥ kañcāda-sugatau punah. v.7
amamānam ca taccātha sāṅkhyāḥ sābdām ca te api,
nyāyaikadesino'phaṇam upamānam ca kecana. v.8.
artha-pattiyā sahātiṇā catvāryāha prabhākaraḥ,
abhāva-saśthānayetāni bhāṭṭā vedāntinastathā. v.9., Tār, p.56).
Here we are concerned with Verbal Testimony only and so we propose to discuss its
nature in brief.

Gautama, the author of Nyāya-sūtras (the Nyāya-aphorisms), defines Verbal
Testimony as the teachings of an 'āpta' or authority. (āptopadesāḥ sābdāḥ. NŚ. 1.1.7)
Vīśvanātha, in his Vṛtti on this sūtra, explains the word 'āptopadesāḥ' as the
instrument or agent from which valid cognition of a unit of thought can be acquired.
(āptaḥ yathārthah upadesāḥ sābdabodha yasmāt. NNr, p.27). Then he explains
Verbal Testimony as the instrument that gives rise to valid cognition of 'sābda'
(a unit of thought—a sentence according to the logicians). According to the
Navya-Naiyāyikas (the neo-logicians), the knowledge of the terms constituting
a sentence is the primary or instrumental cause (karaṇa) of sābda-bodha or verbal
cognition; the memory-knowledge of the meanings of those terms acts as the
vyāpāra or intermediate function of this cause; the knowledge of the denotative
capacity of the words is the auxiliary cause, and the effect or final result is
the verbal cognition.

(padaṇānām tu karaṇām dvāram tatra padārtha-dhīḥ,
sābdabodhaḥ phalam tasya sāktidhīḥ sabhākārinī. BP, v.81).
Therefore, according to Vīśvanātha, the memory-knowledge of the words constituting
a sentence is the 'karaṇa' of sābdabodha and, hence, it is to be termed as
sābdapramāṇa or Verbal Testimony. The reason behind is that a 'pramāṇa' or source
of valid cognition is defined as a kāraṇa or instrumental cause of prāmāṇa or valid cognition.

(pramāṇaḥ kāraṇam pramāṇam iti pramāṇa-samānyā-lakṣaṇam. TD, p.24)

A 'kāraṇa' is defined as a cause having 'vyāpāra'. (asyadhāraṇam kāraṇam kāraṇam, asyadhāraṇatvam vyāpāra-vattvam. SM, p.246). A 'vyāpāra' or intermediate function is itself caused by the primary or instrumental cause, which gives rise to the main effect or result as an immediate cause of it. (tajjanya-sati tajjnya-janakatvam vyāpāratvam. Ms, p.265). An axe is the primary cause (kāraṇa) of the cutting of a tree (vrksacchchedana) which is the desired effect. But if the axe remain inactive on the ground, it cannot cut the tree. There must be an axe-tree contact (with force) which is caused by the action of the axe and which itself becomes the cause of the cutting of the tree. Therefore, the axe-tree contact is the vyāpāra and the axe is the kāraṇa as it possesses this vyāpāra. Similarly, the knowledge of parts of speech gives rise to the recollection of their meanings which causes verbal cognition. Thus the knowledge of the terms possesses a vyāpāra in the form of the said recollection and, hence, it is the instrumental cause of verbal cognition. Therefore, it is to be regarded as Verbal Testimony. Here there is no reference of 'āpta'. Moreover, in the alternative explanation of the term 'āpta' as given in the 'vrtti' of Viśvanātha, which has already been shown, is 'yathārtha' or 'valid' and not a person having authority. But Gautama himself opines that meanings are cognised from words or sentences only owing to their capacity arising from their utterance by an āpta or authority. (āptopadeśa-sāmartyo-chudādartha-sampratayayah. NS.II.1.53)

This clearly shows that the alternative explanation of NS.II.1.7 as forwarded by Viśvanātha is not in conformity with Gautama and, therefore, not acceptable. Vātsyāyana, the commentator on Nyāya-sūtras, also comments that verbal cognition arises from a sābda (a sentence) only because it is uttered by an authority;
otherwise there would arise no verbal cognition. (āptair-ayam uktah sābdah ityataḥ sampratayah, viparyaye sampratayābhāvāt. Ny, p.123). Here we see that, according to Vātsyāyana, the term 'āpta' means a person and not 'valid' as explained by Visvānātha.

The sense of the term 'āpta' forms the object of an interesting study. Vātsyāyana explains the term 'āpti' as the attainment of assertive knowledge of some objects of cognition through some valid sources of it. Then he explains the term 'āpta' as a person having 'āpti' and also willing to impart that knowledge to others. Thus an 'āpta' is a person who has acquired the valid cognition of some objects through some sources (of valid cognition) and at the same time is willing and efficient to impart that knowledge to others with strict faithfulness. (āptah khalu śākṣaṭ-ktā-dharmā yathā-dṛṣṭasyārthasya cikhyāpayasyā prayukta upadeśyā. śākṣaṭ-karāṇam arthasyāptīḥ, tayā prayartata ityāptah. Ny, p.21). All the terms involved in the definition are significant. The term 'dharma' is used to signify objects of knowledge. The term 'śākṣaṭ-karāṇam' generally means cognition through perception; but here it means cognition through any valid way of knowing. Hence inference also comes under the ken of 'śākṣaṭ-karāṇam'.

Nāgasa, in his Vaiyākaraṇa-siddhānta-laghumaṇṭyāśa, quotes the definition of 'āpta' from Caraka-saṃhitā. Here 'āpta' is defined as a person who has acquired thorough and sound knowledge of the real nature of some objects by direct perception and who never communicates this knowledge to others in a distorted form as he does not yield to attachment, envy, abhorrence, etc. (āpto nāmā-nubhavena vastu-tattvasya kārtṣaṇya naścayavān rāgdvisaśād-api nānysthāvaddtīḥ saḥ-iti caraka patañjaliḥ. VSūN, p.11). Here the term 'anubhavena' rules out the possibility of the inclusion of interference, etc., in the sources of acquiring knowledge by an āpta. This may be the intention of the author of Nyāyabhāṣya also. But the term 'śākṣaṭ-kṛta-dharmā' is vague. The most i
deviation of the definition given in Garaka-samhitā from that of Nyāyabhāṣya is the inclusion of 'the absence of any influence of attachment, etc'. A person yielding to attachment and the like distorts facts and in that case he can never be regarded as an 'āpta'. In fact, no person other than God (personal) is completely free from attachment, etc. By including the term 'rāgādivaśādapi' in the definition of āpta the author of Garaka-samhitā seems to be influenced by the Buddhist philosophy of 'Nirvāṇa' or Vāsanā-nirmukti', i.e., freedom from attachment. 'Īśvara' is defined by Patañjali in his Yoga-sūtra as a person who is not touched by the reaction due to klesa (pain), karma (action), vipāka (fruit of action) and āsāya (attachment). (klesā-karma-vipākāsāyair-aparāṁśam puṣrūga-viṣeṣa Īśvarāḥ, YS.1. 64). The utterance of a human being, qualified by all the pre-requisites mentioned above, also attain the status of verbal Testimony since as an āpta or authority he enjoys the same status as that of God who, as we have already seen, is to be considered as an āpta. (tādiyā-sābdā-sūjātāya-laukikānām tathātvaṁ iti bhāvaḥ. KT, p.12). If the Vedas are taken to be God's creation, God is an 'āpta' and, as such, the Vedas are a valid source of knowledge. On the other hand, if these be regarded as ever-existent and not created by any agent, then the Vedas are to be accepted as self-evident truths.

Vatsyayana opines that the status of an āpta may be attributed to the speakers of valid propositions irrespective of the seer, the learned Aryan as well as to those who are not conversant with the chaste Sanskrit words. (ṛṣyārya-mlecchaṁ samānām lakṣanām. NB, p.24). The main principle to be adopted in determining the āptatva (status of an authority) of a person is whether his utterances are made after proper cognition of facts and whether he is free from all the above-mentioned drawbacks.

It is to be noted in this connection that in the Nyāya school the conception of āpta is essentially connected with the theory of the agency of God in the
creation of the universe. In the Yoga-philosophy, however, God has not been conceived as the Creator of the universe; but, unlike the Mimansists, the teachers of Yoga philosophy admit that the Vedas are the utterances of God.

In Indian schools of philosophy the understanding of the meaning of a sentence, i.e., verbal cognition, is known as 'sábdabodha'. "This cognition of the meaning of a sentence, is a qualified cognition (visista-jñāna), a judgement, which results in the wake of the understanding of the meaning of the constituent words in the sentence, not directly but coalesced. The word-meanings must be mutually connected. This requires that there must be syntactical relation (samsarga). This at the outset differentiates sábdabodha from other types of valid cognition, e.g., perception, and inference, which concern neither with word-meanings nor with their mutual syntactical relation". (NN, p.85). However, the Cārvākas include it in perception. But the logicians and others do not accept this view.

Perception is generated through 'sannikāra', i.e., a relation like contact, inherence, etc., established between a sense-organ (indriya) and an object of cognition (viṣaya). (indriyārtha-sannikāra-jñāyam jñānam pratyakṣam. Ṭs, p.29). It may be of two types, direct (laukīka) and indirect (alaukīka). In a case of direct perception the object must be actually present to a sense organ. It must also be fit for perception by that particular sense-organ. When I see a jar my visual sense-organ comes in contact (samyoga) with the jar which is a fit object of cognition by this sense-organ. Here the sannikāra is 'samyoga' (contact). Now, it is a fact that we acquire knowledge from such a sentence that conveys a concept which is not amenable to our sense-perception. Even if an object be so amenable, its physical presence or its contact with our sense-organs is not at all necessary for its verbal cognition. However, direct perception is not determined by word while verbal cognition is so determined.
Hence verbal cognition cannot be comprehended under direct perception.

The cognition of sentential meaning cannot be considered as a type of indirect perception also. Indirect perception is generated by indirect contact (laukika sannikāra) which is of three types - 'sāmānyalakṣaṇa', 'jñānalakṣaṇa' and 'yogaja'. The logicians hold that, when we cognise a particular individual of a particular class we also at the same time comprehend the universal inherent in it. Through the knowledge of this generic property we might at the next moment perceive all the individuals belonging to the same class even though most of them are not present to our sense-organs. This is an indirect cognition through 'sāmānyalakṣaṇa sannikāra'. Here the knowledge of the class-element acts as the sannikāra. Thus, when we see a cow-individual we also perceive the universal cow-hood inhering in it, through which we visualise all cows. But all cows are not present before our eyes and, hence, the perception is indirect.

According to the logicians, this type of indirect contact is the basis of our knowledge of pervasion or universal concomitance (vyāpti) between two entities, e.g. between fire and smoke (tasmin antar - vahir vā sarvopā-sahārenāviniḥbhāv... vagantavyah. NV.I 1.1.) Now, in the case of verbal cognition from such a sentence as, "the cow exists", there is neither any direct contact between a cow and our eyes nor do we cognise all cow-individuals. Hence verbal cognition cannot be included in this type of indirect cognition generated through sāmānyalakṣaṇa-sannikāra.

It may be argued that verbal cognition should be regarded as a type of indirect perception generated through jñāna-lakṣaṇa-sannikāra where memory-knowledge of a previous direct perception acts as the relation of a particular
sense-organ with an object which is not fit for perception by that organ.

(visäyä yasya tasyaiva vyäpäro jñänalaksañah BP, v.65). As for example, on seeing a fragrant piece of sandalwood somebody says: "surabhi candanam aham pasyāmi." ('I see a fragrant sandal-wood' or 'I see that the sandal-wood is fragrant'). But fragrance is not fit for visual perception. So the visual organ cannot come in contact with fragrance. Here what actually happens is that, one remembers the fragrance of a piece of sandal-wood scented before and this memory impression acts as the sannikāra. Memory being one kind of knowledge (jñāna), such a sannikāra is named jñāna-laksañā (of the nature of knowledge). Actually, this is a type of knowledge inhering in the self which comes in contact with the mind and mind in its turn comes in contact with an external object.

(jñāna-laksañā-sannikārasaḥ sva-samyukta-manaḥ-samyuktātma-samavetā-jñāna-rūpaḥ. Ma, p.263). Here the perceptual knowledge of fragrance is generated through its memory knowledge. Similarly, the memory knowledge of word-meanings should be considered as jñāna-laksañā sannikāra and, hence, verbal cognition generated through it is to be regarded as an indirect perception of the discussed type.

But the logicians cannot see eye to eye with this view. In the above example, fragrance is the qualifier (visēśañā) and the sandalwood is the qualificand (visēśya). But the case may also be a reverse one in another indirect perception of this type, i.e. the object of such perception (e.g., fragrance) need not always be a qualifier. The order may change (upanītayor visēśañā- visēśya-bhāvasya kāmacūrē. KK, p.67). But in the case of the cognition of a sentential meaning the order of the qualifier and the qualificand can never be so reversed. In the sentence, "the cow exists", the existence is the qualifier and the cow is the qualificand. This order admits of no change. It is invariable. (sva-sva-vṛttyā padārthānām upasthityuttaram gavādāv-astitvāder anvayā-vagānā vilaksaño bodho,........ SŚP, p.7). Moreover, the generation of verbal
cognition depends upon syntactical pre-requisites of expectancy (ākāṅkṣā), compatibility (yogyatā) and contiguity (āsatti) (explained fully in Ch.V, sec.1).

But, perception generated through ānālaksana sannikāra does not do so. Therefore, verbal cognition cannot be brought under this type of indirect perception.

Indirect perception of the yogins generated through yogajasā sannikāra depends solely upon their super-normal power of yoga or meditation. Hence popular and normal verbal cognition cannot even be compared to it.

Verbal cognition cannot be regarded as a type of memory-knowledge (smṛti) also. According to the logicians, the primary cognition (anubhava), the latent impression (samskāra) and its revived form, memory, must have the similar objective content and sequential inter-relation. But in the case of verbal cognition, the meanings of words forming a sentence are remembered in a discrete manner independent of each other. 'This fact differentiates verbal cognition from memory. (samsānakāra-samskāraprabhavatvāt. SŚ, p.8).

The Vaiśeṣikas include the understanding of sentential meaning in inferential knowledge. (etena śabdam vyākhyātam. VS.IX.2.3). "Inference is based on the ascertainment of pervasion (vyāptī) between the inferable property (sādhya) and the mark (hetu). We infer something unperceived from perceived facts. This fundamental principle involved in inference also holds good in the case of cognition of sentence meaning. It is after all the ascertainment of the relation existing between the meanings of the component words. This relation can be ascertained only when the person who hears the sentence is not only sure that the word-components are syntactically related but also remembers it." (MN, p.91).

We infer fire as existing on a mountain from which incessant smoke is seen rising up. We say, 'the mountain possesses fire because it has smoke on it, like a kitchen' ('parvato vahnimān dhūmāt, yathā mahānasādān'). We have already acquired the knowledge of universal invariable concomitance (vyāptī) existing between smoke and fire in the form: 'where there is smoke, there is fire'. Then
on seeing smoke we remember this pervasion (vyāpti) and we consider that the mountain possesses smoke which is pervaded by fire (vahni-vyāpya). Hence we come to the conclusion that the mountain must have fire on it. The Vaiśeṣikas maintain that, also, similar is the case with verbal cognition and Verbal Testimony. From our experience of the linguistic behaviour of our elders we acquire the knowledge of universal invariable concomitance existing between the terms possessing the triple syntactical requirements on the one hand and, on the other, the relation subsisting amongst the meanings of the component words in a sentence. Hence on hearing a sentence we infer: "These terms possess the relation subsisting amongst the meanings conveyed by themselves because these are multitude of terms possessing expectancy, etc., like a correct sentence (we heard from our elders)". Hence the so-called verbal Testimony cannot enjoy a separate status of a pramāṇa (source of knowledge) but should be included in inference. (nārāyanī padāni sva-smūritartha-samsarga-vanti ākāākāśāmat-pada-kadambakatvāt sad-vākyavād-ityanumānādeva samsarga-jñāna-sambhavāc-chābdho na pramāṇāntaram iti. TD, p.54).

The syllogism may also be put in the form: "These word-meanings possess mutual relation as they are recollected by the terms having expectancy, etc., like the word-meanings recollected by the terms, 'bring the cow with the help of the stick". The subject of inference (pakṣa) may be either the terms or their meanings. But eitherway, contend the logicians, the inference is incapable of producing verbal cognition because the cognition generated by the parts of speech is an altogether distinct kind from that aroused by an inference. Besides, it produces the introspective consciousness (anuvyayāsāya): 'I know from words (or a sentence)' which differs from that aroused by an inference: 'I know by inference'. (...

anumityapekṣayā sābda-jñānasya vilakṣāṇasya sābdāt pratyemītyanuvyayāsāya-sāksikasya sarva-sammata-tvāt. TD, p.54). This reply is not very satisfactory since it rests on self-consciousness which may vary from person to person. Of course, there are other arguments in favour of regarding Verbal Testimony as separate from
inference. An inference, like the one mentioned above, cannot be a correct or even a possible one. The conclusion derived from it can be either a certainty (pariccheda) or a possibility (sambhava). If it be the former, the syllogism is vitiated by the defect of discrepancy (anaikānta hetvābhāsa) since a certain conclusion is not warranted by the premises which cannot generate the cognition of the particular relation subsisting among the word-meanings. If the latter alternative be accepted then there is no ascertainment (siddhi) of the probandum (sādhyā) and, hence, there will be no verbal cognition. Therefore, 'Sābda' or Verbal Testimony must be recognised as a direct source of knowledge which causes cognition of a peculiar sort.

(anaikāntaḥ paricchede sāmbhave ca na nisciayāḥ. NK, p.390).

Moreover, when an entity is otherwise known, it can still be inferred if there be a will to do so. Without any such will no pre-perceived entity can ever be inferred. But the case is otherwise with verbal knowledge. A person is bound to have verbal cognition, whether there is a will to have it or not, whenever he hears a sentence even if the sentence and the idea conveyed by it be already known to him. This fact also differentiates verbal Testimony from inference. (siddhatve icchāḥ vināpi bodha-darsanāccha. VSLM., p.57).

The neo-logicians have taught the Vaiṣeṣikas from another angle. "Inference has been defined as a cognition generated by the inferential mark (liṅga). If the definition is accepted the question will naturally arise: what would be the inferential mark in the case of the understanding of a sentence meaning such as, for example, (i) gaur asti ('the cow exists')? In an ordinary case of inference, say, 'the mountain has fire because of smoke', the 'smoke' is the mark through which the fire is known to exist on the mountain. The Vaiṣeṣika should find out some 'mark' by which 'existence' can, on this theory, be proved to exist in the cow". (NN, pp.91-92). They, however, may take semantical competence (yogastā) of the nature of 'absence of any contradiction' as the mark. Thus the given example may be put in the form: 'gaur astitvavān astitvābhāva-virahat' ('the
cow has existence because it lacks the absence of existence'). But it is a fact that, in order to comprehend the meaning of the sentence it is not at all necessary for us to know with certainty that the cow lacks non-existence. Or, in other words, we need not have any prior knowledge of the existence of the cow in order to grasp the meaning of the sentence. (gavādāv-astitvāder-anubhavārtham na tāvad astitvāder-bādha-virahitva-rūpam yogyātā-mātraṁ līṅgam bādha-nīscayabhāvyātyathā-siddhasya yogyātānīscāyasyanāvasāyakatvāt. SS, pp.11-12). Moreover, nobody admits that verbal cognition arises from such a multitude of words as: 'ghaṭāḥ karmatvam ānayanam krtih' ('the pitcher to an accusative, bringing an effort'), because it lacks syntactical expectancy (ākāṅkṣā) though it has competence. Therefore, competence alone is not essential for verbal cognition and, hence, it cannot be regarded as the 'mark'. So the Vaisesikas attempt to prove verbal cognition as a case of inference fails through and through. (yogyātā-mātra-liṅgaka-samsargānumāna-syānvaya-buddhitve ghaṭāḥ karmatvam ityādi-sthalīyasyāpi tasya tathātva-pātat. SS, p.12).

The Vaisesikas may defend their position by mentioning that, absence of any hostile fact is necessary for acquiring any knowledge and, lack of expectancy being a hostile fact in this case, the non-comprehension of judgemental thought is quite natural. But this cannot bring them out of difficulty. Assertion of the mark in the subject of inference is indispensable for a valid inference. But it is a universal experience that, verbal cognition arises even from sentences where competence is doubtful. But an entity, whose very existence in the subject is doubtful, cannot be regarded as a mark of inference. (yogyatāh anāsāya-sthale-pyanvaya-buddher-anubhavikatvācca. SS, p.12).

Again, syntactical competence may be defined as relatedness of the entities conveyed by the words constituting a sentence. In that case the inferable property becomes identical with the mark of inference because this relatedness is what we actually want to infer. Thus an attempt is made to prove what is already proved
and this is known as a logical fallacy known as 'siddha-sādhana'. (śābda-buddhau yogyātā-jañatvena hetuvād anumitau tu hetumattā-mis-sayasyaiva hetuvād yogyatā-samsaya-stahlyānvaya-buddhau anumītīva-kalpa-sambhavād iti bhāvaḥ. KK, p.12).

In order to steer clear of this difficulty the Vaiséyikas may put forward syntactical expectancy as the 'mark' in lieu of competence. But this does not help them much. Syntactical expectancy is defined as the sequential arrangement of words constituting a sentence. (anvaya-bodhānukālāmūrvi-paryāsita-tvāakaṅkā. SSP, p.12). Thus it belongs to words and not to the concepts conveyed by them.

"Obviously expectancy cannot be an attribute of the subject of inference. The subject is invariably a concept or an entity. Thus the inference is based on an unproved mark, a fallacy called svarūpa-siddhi, which happens when the mark cannot be proved to exist in the subject of inference". (NN, p.95). Moreover, expectancy is a potential cause that generates verbal cognition by its very existence (svarūpa-sattā). The hearer need not be aware of its existence. But a mark, on the other hand, must be consciously known to be existent in the subject of inference before hand. Therefore, verbal cognition cannot be brought under the ken of inferential knowledge. (svarūpa-sattāyānvaya-buddhāv-upayujyate, na tu jañāta, pramanābhaṅvāt. SSP, p.15).

Another point goes to distinguish verbal cognition from inference. The logicians hold that the subject of inference must always be limited or determined by some property, i.e. it must be a particular entity in which the existence of an inferable property is sought to be proved. The subject cannot be ambiguous. For example, fire is inferred to be existent in a particular mountain having a definite character. But if the meaning of such a sentence as 'ghatād anyāḥ' ('something different from a pitcher') be taken to be derived through inference and not through Verbal Testimony, then the inferable quality is 'difference' and the subject of inference to which it is ascribed is an indefinite 'something'. It may be argued
that the subject in this case may be specified as 'that which is possessed of
difference'. But in that case the delimiting property of subjectness (paksatāva-
cchedaka) is the 'difference' (from cloth, etc.) by which 'that' is qualified. But
our inferable property, too, is this difference and thus it involves the fallacy
of petitio principii. So we cannot comprehend the meaning of such a sentence
through the process of inference. (paksavidhayānvayaśya bhāne'pyanyatva-prakāreṇ-
ānyasya tatrābhaṅvāt. SSP, p.19).

There is yet another point that goes against the Vaiśeṣika view. When
causal conditions leading to two different types of cognition in respect of the
same object, perception and inference, remain present at the same time, perception
overrides inference. Between perception and verbal cognition also, the former
overrides the latter in the said circumstances. Similarly, it is experienced that,
if a person hears the sentence, 'the hill is fiery' at a moment when on seeing
smoke on the hill he is about to infer the existence of fire on it, he at once
stops inferring and acquires the knowledge from the sentence. Thus verbal cogni-
tion overrides inference. This mutual exclusion also shows that verbal cogni-
tion is different from perceptual and inferential knowledge. (śabdadiyāh praty-
kvābhīyupagame pratyaksādi-sāmānyam prati śabda-sāmagryāḥ pratibandhaktva-samha-
vāt. SSP, p.10).

Thus there is no other way out but to accept verbal cognition as a special
type of cognition distinct from perceptual and inferential ones and, consequently,
Verbal Testimony must be awarded the status of a valid source of knowledge separate
from the process of perception and inference. Unlike perception it is a mediate
knowledge like inference, etc. But in Nyāya the definition of inference has been
formulated in such a way that it excludes śabdabodha. Inference is a cognition
generated through the mediacy of the knowledge of pervasion (vyāpti), while
śabdabodha is through the cognition of the constituent words in a sentence.

......The meanings of individual words may be known to us before, but their syntactic
relation is what is given by the new sentence. This relation which would be the
'mark' if it were an inference, is not given to us before". (NN, p.98).

However, one may or may not accept Verbal Testimony as a separate and valid
way of knowing. But universal use of language compels any thoughtful and inqui-
sitive mind to think over the science of meaning. "In their attempt to justify
the authority of the Vedas the ancient thinkers raised valuable problems, which
can be studied for their own importance, independently of that of the Vedas.
The problem of language as the verbal symbol of thought, of words, meanings, and
the relation between meaning and its symbols, of the knowledge of meaning, the
perception of words and meanings, the worlds of thought, meaning and reality,
the import of propositions, the source and ultimacy of the validity of knowledge
etc., and finally of the claim of verbal testimony to be an independent source
of knowledge, have been discussed so seriously, thoroughly and logically that
their philosophical worth can be ignored only through an unphilosophical preju-
dice". (SwK, p.250).
Studies in the science of meaning are now receiving more and more encouragement from the students of Semantics. But the question of the relation subsisting between sound and sense, which is the central problem of the science of meaning, was nowhere taken up so seriously as it was in India. A primary beginning of the science of meaning is to be found in the Brāhmaṇas where we notice the first attempts at giving etymological justification of names. The thinking mind of the ancient Indo-Aryans pondered over the question how a particular word always gives rise to a particular concept. They began to search after and examine such a concept associated with the same word as would justify its inseparable relation with the corresponding concept. Thus the Brāhmaṇas have shown the path along which we should proceed in order to construct the real biography of words. In his Veda Ṛgveda (p.226), Anirvāṇa maintains that in different Brāhmaṇas there are at least six hundred cases where attempts have been made to find out the meaning of words. Let us discuss some of them.

In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, the meaning of the word 'agni' is explained as 'the first of gods'. (agnir-vai devānām avamaḥ. AB, I/1). Here the word is derived from the root 'ag' meaning 'to be first'. The same meaning is explained more clearly in another sentence where it is said that, Agni is the face, i.e., first of the gods. (agnir mukham prathamo devatānām. AB I/4). The same sense is expressed in another sentence in the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa where it is remarked that, Agni is the foremost, i.e., first among the gods. (agnir agre prathamo devatānām. TB II/4/3/3). The meaning is all the more explicit in another sentence where it is said that, "He was born first among the gods and so he is named Agni". (vājasaneyinstvevaḥ āmananti. 'sa vā eṣo agre devatānām aja[yata tasmāḥ-agnirnāmati'. ŚP, p.3). This derivation is all the more interesting as the position of god Agni in the Vedic pantheon is thus made clear to us. Similarly the meaning
of the term 'purohita', an epithet of Agni, is explained in the Taittirīya Samhitā as: 'The priests place him (Agni-fire) in front of them and so he is called 'purohita'. (pura emañ dadhāti. Ta.11.1/2/9). This explains the place of fire in a Vedic sacrifice. In the same manner the meaning of the word 'Aṅgiras' is explained in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa as: 'Those who were charcoals became the Aṅgirasas'. (yēṅgārā āsamstēngi-raso'bhavan. AB. III 3.34). Thus the word 'aṅgiras' is derived from the word 'aṅgāra' (charcoal). This indicates that the Aṅgirasas were a group of men who died and became charcoals as they were burnt after death. This derivation is all the more interesting as it indicates that the custom of burning dead-bodies was in vogue even in the Vedic age. It also indicates that Aṅgirasas were a group of forefathers of the Vedic Aryans. In a figurative sense, the word may also be taken to mean producer of fire or fire-priest. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa derived the term 'arka' from the root 'arc' and explained the meaning as: 'He (the creator) was engaged in a sacrifice and from him water was created; he thought, 'what came out of me while I was engaged in sacrifice?' So it (water) is 'arka'. (so'rcannacarat. tasyārcata āpo jyotārccato vai me kam abhūd iti tadevārkaśyārkatvam. Śbr. X/6/5/1). Thus the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa comes to the conclusion that the word 'arka' means 'water'. (āpo va ārkaḥ. Śbr. X/6/5/2).

This investigation of meaning advanced further in the next stage by the Nighantus and the elaborate etymological interpretations of the Nīruktas. "Already in early times Indian scholars busied themselves with the interpretation of the Rgveda. So-called Nighantus or 'glossaries', collections of rare and obscure words which occur in the hymns, were prepared. The first commentator of the Rgveda, whose work is preserved to us, was Yāśka, who on the basis of the Nighantus, explains a great number of Vedic verses in his work Nīruktas (i.e., Etymology). This Yāśka, who doubtless is older than Pāṇini, already quotes no less than seventeen predecessors, whose opinions frequently contradict each other". (HIL, p.60).
There were many Nighantuś only one of which, generally ascribed to Śākalya, has come down to us with the commentary of Yāśka. "Belvalkar dates Yāśka's Nirukta from the 7th century B.C. This is likely enough, though not certain, but we have no idea how much earlier the Nighantuś may be." (HIL, p.251). This shows that, even in the hoary past, Indian thinkers put their efforts to investigate into the meanings of words, of course, found in the Vedas. "Nighantuś are five lists of words, which are divided into three sections. The first section (Naighantuṇaka-kāṇḍa) consists of three lists, in which Vedic words are collected under certain main ideas. For instance, there are quoted 21 names for 'earth', 15 for 'gold', 16 for 'air', 101 for 'water', 122 verbs for 'to go', 26 adjectives and adverbs for 'quick', 12 for 'much', and so on. The second section (Naigamakāṇḍa or Aikapadiṇa) contains a list of ambiguous and particularly difficult words of the Veda, while the third section (Daivata-kāṇḍa) gives a classification of the deities according to their regions, earth, sky and heaven". (HIL, p.251). This description of H.Winternitz gives us a general idea of the Nighantuś. The Nighantuḥ, which is still extant, shows the earliest specimens of Indian lexicography and presents to us a collection of Vedic words arranged in several groups according to their meanings. (nirūḍhā hiyam etasmiṇchabda-

samudāye saṃjñet-ahhiprayaḥ. Dur, p.6). In it a number of words denoting the same meaning have been placed in one group and several groups of such type are found in the Nighantuḥ. It has also been noticed that a single word may denote more than one meaning. (ekārtham aneka-sādām ityastad-

uktam. atha yānyanekārthānyeka-sādām tāṇyato 'nukramisyamo' navagata-svara-samsā-

rāgaḥ nigamāṁ tad aikapadiṇam ityacakṣate. Nir.IV, p.291). In his Mahābhāṣya, Patanjali also has drawn our attention to this important fact that there are many words like 'Indra', 'Śakra', 'puruhūta' and 'purandara', all of which denote Indra, the king of gods, and there are also other words like 'aṁśa', 'pāda', 'māsa', etc., each of which denotes several meanings. (vahavo hi sādāsākarthā
Modern scholars recognise the importance of lexicography for the study of meaning. Of course, there are some who may object to etymological interpretations as they are sometimes fanciful and misleading. But it is not a sufficient reason why we should ignore them altogether as inefficient to render us any help in our enquiry of meaning. We cannot ignore the fact that the science of etymology, at least as it was worked out by the authors of the Nirukta, seems to have been based upon the proper and radical investigation of meaning.

Yāska explains the word 'deva-ra' (younger brother of one's husband) as the abbreviated form of the two terms, 'dvitiyāḥ varaḥ' meaning, 'the second bridegroom'. (deva-raḥ kasmād, dvitiyō vara ucyate. Nir, p.248). Thus he finds in it the reminiscences of an ancient social custom which is well-known to the Indians from the tales of Sugrīva and Vibhiṣaṇa of the Rāmāyaṇa. Both of them took the wives of their elder brothers as their own wives, after the demise of their elder brothers. Similarly, Yāska brings out the meaning of the word 'kitava' (gambler) as the imitation of the terms 'kim tava asti' ('what have you?). (kitava kim tavastiti sābdānukṛtīḥ. Nir, p.471). Thereby he shows the characteristics of a gambler. In the same way he explains the words like 'kāka' as coined through the imitation of the cawing of the bird (crow) and thus the word denotes the particular class of birds (crows). (kāka iti sābdānukṛtīḥ. Nir, p.264.

Vide also: yādṛṣaṁ evaṁ sābdam karoti tayaivānukṛtya tasyā namāpi bhavati. Dur, p.265). Yāska's exposition of the meaning of the word 'duhitā' (daughter) is very much interesting. He explains: "duhitā durhitā dūre hitā dogdherva" (Nir, p.207). The word comes from either 'durhitā' meaning a female issue who is always given improperly whenever or whererever she may be given away in marriage.
to somebody; or, the word might have been formed by the contraction of the terms 'dūre hitā' meaning a female child who is good (to her father) if she lives afar; the word might also have been derived from the root 'duh' (to milk) as a daughter always tries to milk (to take something from) her father. (duhitā durhitā. sā hi yatraiva diyate tattraiva durdattā bhavati. dūre vā satī sā pītuḥ . hitā patīḥā bhavatīti duhitetyucyate. dogdhervā. sā hi nityam eva pītuḥ sākṣat dravyag dogdhi prārthanā-jaıvā. Dur, p.208). Thus he beautifully brings out the characteristic relation of a daughter to her father, at least as it was in India at the time of Yāska. The word may also be taken to primarily signify the duty of milking which the unmarried girls used to perform in the morning. He further explains the term 'varāha' as the shortened form of the word 'varāhāra' (good meal). (varāho megho bhavati varāhāraḥ. Nir, p.406). Very often Yāska has given us what is called folk- etymology having no bearing either on grammar or on philosophy. But, for our purpose, it is interesting so far as we can read into this process an evolution of the science of word and meaning.

There are many such explanations scrutinising which no one would venture to maintain that Yāska could not foresee the important intellectual canons of language we are now in possession of. Similarly, the dissertations of Durga, the famous commentator of Yāska's Mīrūkta, on the words 'pravīṇa', 'udāra' and 'mistrīmsā' show positive instances how the intellectual process of generalisation works in the expansion of meaning. The original meaning of the word 'pravīṇa' is 'a man who is an expert in playing on lyre'. But, by generalisation, the word now signifies one who is an expert in any discipline. Similar are the cases with the words 'udāra' and 'mistrīmsā'.

utpanna-kausālo bhavati sa tatrocyate pravīṇa iti. Dur, pp. 122-23). Another classical example of this process is the word 'kusāla' (an expert) which has been the cause of headache to the rhetoricians. (discussed in Ch.III, Sec.IV).

Language is an organic body and has both physical and psychological aspects represented by words and meanings respectively. The relation of a word with its corresponding meaning is the same as subsists between the body and the soul. Thoughts arising in our minds find their audible expressions through words produced by our vocal organs. Patañjali is correct in observing that the expression of thought is the sole purpose that is served by the use of words. (artha-gatyarthāsabda-prayogah arthām sampratīyayisyamīti sabdāḥ prayuyjate. MB., III, p.30).

The Indian etymologists assert greater importance to the psychological side in their principles of derivation. This is evident from the express statement of Yāska that, in deriving words, especially those which do not signify the usual senses by mere grammatical mode of analysis, one should pay greater attention to their meanings. (athānavite-rtheśca rthastāya parīkṣeta kenaśa-vṛtti-saṁānyenaśākyamāne saṁānye 'pyakṣara-varṇa-saṁānyāṁ-nirvṛūyāṁ-na tu na nirvṛūyāṁ-na saṃskāram ādityeta. Nir, p.120). The main purpose of etymology is to explain the meanings of those words, which cannot be understood by easy grammatical derivations and herein lie the characteristics of Nirukta (etymology). (na ca nirukte kāraka-hāraka-lāvakādi-sabdā vyutpādyante subodhaiva hi teṣāṁ vyutpattih prasiddhaiva ca vyākaraṇa iti. ya eva tu durbodhaḥ paraśatī-paroksasā-vṛttaye bilmakrd-arordara-vaitasa-parva-sābdādayastā eva vyutpāda nirucyante. teṣu hi viśeṣaṁ artha-vatta niruktasya. Nir, p.124).

Yāska's conception of verb is very much interesting. He observes that the verbs like 'vrajati' (goes), 'pacati' (cooks), etc., mean series of actions having a beginning and an end. (pūrvaparibhūtam bhāvam ākhyātenācakṣate vrajati-pacatītyupakrama-prabhūtyapavarga-paryantam. Nir, 1, p.5). The term 'apavarga-paryantam', used by Yāska in this definition of verb, suggests the basis of our
division of the continuous streams of active moments into different cross-sections of history. The word 'apavarga' means 'attainment of the result.' A root is taken to mean an action which leads to some results. (phala-vyāpāra-yog-dhātuḥ.ṣa.ṣa.ṣa.ṣa.ṣa.ṭaḥ.)

Thus the root 'gam' (to go) signifies a series of sub-ordinate actions beginning from the first step down to the last step by which the destination is reached.

Nothing in the universe remains without an action even for a moment. So, actions will, no doubt, continue even after the destination is arrived at. In spite of this fact, with an eye to the result we want to achieve, we abstract away a segment of the action stream and give it the name 'gam.' (going), because this serves our practical purpose. "A series of action-moments is called 'one action' or kriyā from the pragmatic consideration of the result to which the series is thought to be directed. The series is taken to be one or identical and the ever-changing sub-ordinate moments of action are conveniently ignored. The serial unity is superimposed on the diversity of the successive moments. This reminds us of the Buddhist conception of a constructed stream of moments (ksanasthāna)." (PL, p.16).

Such examples from the Brāhmaṇas and the Nirukta can easily be multiplied. But we need not do so because our purpose is only to show the antiquity of the enquiry into the concept of meaning and this works as the background of the discussions carried out by different schools of Indian philosophy.