

Hideyo Ogawa, *Process & Language: A Study of the Mahābhāṣya ad A 1.3.1 bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ*, foreword by George Cardona, Delhi: Motilal Benarsidass, 2005, xxii + 375 Pp. Rs. 695. (Hardback)

1. *Introduction*: The concept of *dhātu* is accepted by the tradition of Sanskrit grammarians as central in a sentence from the point of view of semantics. This fact is reiterated by Nāgeśa in the following opening remarks of the discussion about the meaning of *dhātu*, in his *Vaiyākaraṇa-Siddhānta-Maṅjūṣā* (edited by Kapil Deva Shastri, Kurukshetra: Vishal Publications, 1985, p. 32):

sakalaśabdāmūlabhūtatvād dhātvartho nirūpyate
(Because the meaning of the verbal root is at the root of the meanings of all the words, it is delineated [first amongst the abstracted meanings]).

The meaning of *dhātu* is *kriyā* or action. With regards the nature of action and related issues, there is quite a lot of critical discussion in the Sanskrit tradition. Bhartṛhari has devoted one entire section in his *Vākya-padīya* (*VP*) to the study of *kriyā*. He has also tried to define “action”. It becomes important, in order to be able to grasp the view of Bhartṛhari on this issue, to know the historical development of ideas in the field on the same issue. A detailed study of the *Vārttikas* (*Vt*) and the *Mbh* on them becomes imperative in this regard. This is what is aimed at in this work. And the author needs to be complimented for succeeding in achieving the said aim. As Cardona put it in his foreword, this is “an outstanding piece of careful scholarship a major contribution to our understanding of Pāṇini and the long tradition of renewed discussion which arose surrounding his *Aṣṭādhyāyī*” (p. xiii).

Although Pāṇini defines *dhātu* twice: *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 and 3.1.32, the discussion in the *Mbh* revolves around *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1. Filliozat (1986) translates the *Mbh* as well as the *Pradīpa* and Uddyota on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1.

2. *The aim and arrangement of the present work*: The author of the present book, Ogawa, clarifies his aim by saying that the notion of action developed by Bhartṛhari, is derived from the discussion in the *Mbh*. Thus it is imperative to have solid ground about the discussion in the *Mbh*, if one wants to seriously get the notion of action according to Bhartṛhari. Ogawa states the claim of this work in no uncertain terms in the following way:

The present work is intended as a comprehensive and detailed study of the *Mahābhāṣya* on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1. ... *VP* 3.8.1, so to speak, strikes the keynote of the *Mahābhāṣya* in question. (p. 18)

The work is arranged in ten sections with two appendices. The ten sections can be broadly classified under three as follows:

I. Sections 1 and 2: They deal with material which serves as a befitting background to the core material that is presented ahead. The material used here is from the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the *Kāśikāvṛtti* (*KV*), the *Nyāsa* (*N*), the

Padamañjarī (*Pm*) and the *Siddhānta-Kaumudī* (*SK*). The main issues discussed here are: Pāṇini's approach to verb and its meaning with the help of Kāraka theory, the *śloka-vārttika* on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 found in the text of the *KV* and its interpretations by the *N* and the *Pm*, *SK*'s interpretation of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1

- II. This is the core of the work. It is spread into sections 3-9. It discusses Kātyāyana's and Patañjali's views regarding many related topics. Key issues are- division of Kātyāyana's *Vts* into four groups, *dhātupāṭha* based definition of *dhātu*, semantic definitions of *dhātu-kriyā* based and *bhāva* based-, roles of *dhātupāṭha*, notion of intrinsic denotative nature of words etc.
- III. The concluding section of the work reviews in brief, semantics of verbs from Pāṇini to Bhartṛhari.

3. *Summary of sections:* Following is a summary of arguments in each section (abbreviations and italics are mine):

Section 1: Pāṇini's view of *dhātvartha*: Even though Pāṇini does not define the meaning of *dhātu*, his views can be inferred from the Kāraka theory stated by him. "Pāṇini assumes that a verb meaning is something characterized as *kriyā* in correlation to *kāra* and describes semantically the verb meaning as something yet to be brought to accomplishment in correlation to *sādhakas*" (p. 31).

Section 2: Traditional interpretations of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1: The *KV*, the *N*, the *Pm* and the *SK*, all discuss this sutra within the framework laid down by Kātyāyana and Patañjali. Amongst several issues, Patañjali suggests to combine both semantic as well as *dhātupāṭha* definition into this same sutra. He also discusses whether the semantic definition alone is enough and whether the *dhātupāṭha* definition can be done away with. However, this second approach is not accepted by the later tradition.

Section 3: *Vts* ad *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 *bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ*: There are in all 13 *Vts* discussed in the *Mbh* which can be grouped under 4 heads — formal definition of *dhātu*, *kriyā* based definition, *bhāva* based definition and roles to be played by *dhātupāṭha*. According to Kātyāyana, a modified *bhāva* based definition is a satisfactory definition of *dhātu*. He however does maintain that even if such a definition is provided, the *dhātupāṭha* would still be necessary.

Section 4: *Mbh* on *Vts*: This section is divided into 4 sub-sections corresponding to the grouping of the *Vts*, under 4 heads in the previous section. According to Patañjali, the *bhāva* based definition of *dhātu* is more preferable over a formal *dhātu* definition and in that case the *dhātupāṭha* will not have the roles Kātyāyana assumes it to play. He introduces the device of *svabhāva* or an intrinsic nature of a linguistic item.

Section 5: *kriyā* and *bhāva*: According to Patañjali, there are three types of notions of *kriyā*: causal (activity to lead to result), semantic (*bhāva* as what is brought into being), behavioral (differentiated activity). The action which Bhartṛhari tries to define is a semantic *kriyā* which is characterized as *bhāva* in the sense of that which is brought into being.

Section 6: Proof of the meaning of the verb *as* being an action: Patañjali tries to prove that the meaning of the root *as* is an action by (a) showing that it has properties of an action, (b) resorting to *agama* which says the meaning of the root *as* comes under actions and (c) showing that the non-occurrence of the question and answer *kim karoti — asti* does not disprove that the verb *as* denotes the action.

Section 7: Patañjali on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 as a semantic definition: The interpretations of the word *adi* in the compound *bhūvādi*, by Patañjali suggest that he wanted both the indication of the *dhātupaṭha* as well as the semantic definition out of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1. His semantic definition is: an item which denotes by its intrinsic denotative nature (*svabhāva*) something that is brought into being: such a thing is referred to by the term *bhāva* or *kriyā*: is called *dhātu*. (p. 286)

Section 8: Patañjali on the *dhātupaṭha* and its roles: Patañjali disputes and finally denies the need for the *dhātupaṭha*, Kātyāyana has seen with respect to its complimentary roles to a semantic definition. He also denies the preventive role of the *dhātupaṭha* in order to prevent corruptions.

Section 9: A roundup of Patañjali's interpretations of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1: In following a semantic definition of *dhātu*, Patañjali has developed his theory of semantics and grammar founded on the notion of *svabhāva* or an intrinsic denotative nature of a linguistic item.

Section 10: Bhartṛhari and his predecessors on the verb meaning (*dhātvartha*): Concluding remarks: Patañjali's description of a verb meaning is in conformity with Pāṇini's. Pāṇini's Kāraka categories allow Patañjali to characterize a verb meaning, the semantic *kriyā* as *bhāva* or something brought into being and to provide that an item which denotes such a *bhāva* by its intrinsic denotative nature is called *dhātu*. In *VP* 3.8.1, Bhartṛhari presupposes that the denotation of meanings by linguistic items is determined by their own nature, their intrinsic denotative nature. Further, Bhartṛhari's characterization of a verb meaning as what is to be brought to accomplishment is doubtless based on Patañjali's and hence Pāṇini's.

Appendix 1: Survey of previous researches on the *Mbh* ad *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1: In this section, two major works related to *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 are reviewed: (a) Joshi & Roodbergen, 1994 and (b) R. Rocher 1969. About (a), the author has made strong critical remarks through at least two instances (the interpretation of the compound *bhūvādi* and the interpretation of Bh. (3). He says: Regrettably, Joshi/Roodbergen fail to depict accurately what Patañjali means by Bh. 3. The main reason for that lies in their overlooking the framework in which Patañjali proposes those interpretations of the *sūtra*. (p. 317) About (b), he says that it is surprising that without giving a clear picture of the notions of *kriyā* and *bhāva* she can talk about them (p. 330).

Appendix 2: Analyzed text of the *Mbh* ad *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1: The *Mbh* portion presented here is divided into 4 parts. In addition, the text is paragraphed with each paragraph numbered, is given with its very brief outline which shows its content. This way of presenting the *Mbh* is very useful and scholarly and it reminds one of the presentation of the *Mbh*, by Joshi/Roodbergen in their

translation of the *Mbh*.

4. *Comments*: On the whole, this book is an in-depth analytical study and a must for the study of the concept of *kriyā* in the Sanskrit grammatical tradition. Ogawa, the author of the book, has in fact presented an authentic translation of most part of the *Mbh* ad *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 which can be further developed into a full-fledged volume containing translation with notes and introduction along with the selected portions from selected commentaries.

About the title: After reading the book one cannot but remark that the title is too broader with respect to the content of the work. More befitting title would have been perhaps, somewhat of the following nature: “Semantics of Verbs in Sanskrit: A study of the *Mahābhāṣya* ad *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 *bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ*.” Or as the author himself remarks (p. 18): ... Patañjali’s semantics of verbs is incidental to the main issue...”, “Patañjali’s semantics of verbs: A study of the *Mahābhāṣya* ad *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 *bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ*”.

Criticism of Joshi/Roodbergen: (a) Although, the author, while critically examining Joshi/Roodbergen (1994), says: “On the contrary, later Pāṇinīyas like Kaṇḍabhaṭṭa support my interpretation.” (p. 313), it would have lent more support to the argument, to quote Joshi (1993, 1995, 1997) in the same matter. Strangely, these references do not figure anywhere in the work, not even in the bibliography. They are:

Joshi, S.D.

- 1993 “Kaṇḍabhaṭṭa on the Meaning of Sanskrit Verbs (1)”, *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism: Saṃbhāṣā* 14: 1-40.
- 1995 “Kaṇḍabhaṭṭa on the Meaning of Sanskrit Verbs (2)”, *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism: Saṃbhāṣā* 16: 1-66.
- 1997 “Kaṇḍabhaṭṭa on the Meaning of Sanskrit Verbs (3)”, *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism: Saṃbhāṣā* 18: 1-34.

(b) On p. 313, in the same context the author says: “But there is no evidence to show that the compound *bhūvādayaḥ* in this context is formed from the two constituent *bahuvrīhis*”. Consider the following statement of the author on p. 236: “... Thus what are to be termed as *dhātu* are in effect to be referred to by both of the bahuvrīhi compounds *bhvādi* (*bhvādayaḥ*) and *vādi* (*vādayaḥ*).” (Underline and Bold characters are mine.)

On section 8: Although, the scope of the present work *is* the *Mbh* on 1.3.1 and *is stated* explicitly in the work, from the title itself, it would have been fruitful to have a complete picture of the views of Patañjali, on this issue by presenting some other references in the *Mbh*. The author admits on p. 20:

“As a result, my method of presentation and argument required that materials be repeated on several occasions. I am afraid lest readers should say that I have been repetitious. It is hoped that this is sufficiently offset by the accomplishment I have achieved.”

However, citing a few small passages of the *Mbh* on other *sūtras* of the

Aṣṭādhyāyī would also have served the purpose very well. Surprisingly, some very obvious such references are amiss.

I cite one such reference here (the *Mbh* on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 3.1.32):

1. *kim arthaṃ punar idam ucyate*
(Why again is this (*Aṣṭādhyāyī* 3.1.32) stated ?)
2. *na*
([*Aṣṭādhyāyī* 3.1.32] should not be stated)
3. *bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ ity eva siddham*
(because, [the result that is achieved by formulating this], is already established by *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1, *bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ*)
4. *na siddhyati*
(It is not established like that)
5. *pāṭhena dhātusamjśā kriyate*
(because the designation of *dhātu* is given by the *pāṭha*)
6. *na ceme tatra paṭhyante*
(and these [*san* etc.] are not recited there [i.e. in the *pāṭha*])

* To translate this passage, I have followed *Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali*, Vol. 3, with Marathi translation by M.M. Vasudevashastri Abhyankar, Pune: Deccan Education Society, 1951, p. 92. Arrangement of the *Mbh* sentences and numbering is my own.

5. *The KV on the ślokavārttika discussed in 'Section 2'*: It is interesting to discuss the second half of this *ślokavārttika*. The reading found in the printed text of the *KV* is:

bhuvo vārthaṃ vadantīti bhvarthā vā vādyah smrtāh

The present author remarks:

The *ślokavārttika* presented here demands an independent inquiry because commentators give different interpretations to it, especially with reference to the last half of it ... (p. 36)

It is clear that the above-quoted second half of the *ślokavārttika* appears in the *KV* for the first time. Both the *N* and the *Pm* offer three possible interpretations of it.

In the second section of this book, traditional interpretation on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.1 is discussed. The discussion revolves around material in the *KV*, the *N*, the *Pm* and the *SK*. The discussion in the *KV*, the *N*, the *Pm*, analyzed in this book revolves around a *ślokavārttika*, half of which only is found quoted in the *Mbh* and the second half of which is mentioned above. The author has given a detailed and scholarly analysis of the traditional material.

It is surprising, however, to find that he did not discern and mention one demerit in the interpretation of the word *vādi* as Signifier as proposed by both *N* and *Pm*, namely that it does not explain properly the word *vā*.

Further, there is no mention of another interpretation where the words *iti* and *vā* can be construed together to mean "or" (option) to indicate two optional

interpretations of the compound *bhūvādi*. They can be: (1) *bhuvo vārthaṃ vadanti* and (2) *bhvarthā vā vādyah*. In (1), *bhuvah* can be taken as nominative plural of *bhū* which stands for a *dhātu*. The phrase then means the *dhātus*, *bhū* etc. convey the meaning of *vā* (which is *kriyā*). The 2nd part means the elements beginning with *vā* are of the meaning *bhū* (which is *bhāva*). I am not saying that this is the correct interpretation. What I am saying is that among many interpretations discussed this could also have been one.

It is interesting to note that not all the manuscripts of the *KV* agree with the reading commented upon by the *N* and the *Pm* and eventually discussed by the author. In fact one such reading is already recorded in the edition of the *KV* published from Hyderabad in 1969, popularly known as the Hyderabad edition of the *KV*. The reading is:

bhuvo vārthaṃ vadantīti bhvarthā bhūvādyah smrtāh

This reading is found in a manuscript presently at the Oriental Research Institute, Vadodara and is written in Malayalam characters. It is to be noted that the readings discussed by the *N* and the *Pm* are invariably found in the manuscripts written in Devanagari (Dn) characters. I have consulted 28 Dn mss and 2 Sharada (Sh) mss. All these mss have the same reading as recorded by the *N* and the *Pm* and the printed editions of the *KV*. One Dn ms presently at Göttingen also adds:

*amṛtāmā prasiddhosāvāgame tena sinvatil
dhātu na śeṣasabdānām bījabhūtān mahāmuniḥ||*

Another Dn ms presently at London reads:

bhuvo vyarthaṃ vadantīti bhūvarthā vādyah smrtāh

The data from the mss written in other south Indian scripts, however, needs to be studied in this context to get a complete picture. Only then will it be possible to make a serious comment on the exact reading of this text and its interpretation.

6. *Minor Errors:* (The numbers refer to page and line [from top]) Following are some of the very minor errors:

- p. 68.6: that refer → that refers
- p. 74.8: Kaiyaṭa claims the → Kaiyaṭa claims that the
- p. 83.14: verb → verbal root
- p. 321.6: should obtain → should be obtained
- p. 331.17: is given its → is given with its

* I dedicate this article to my guide Prof. Saroja Bhate, who initiated me in the field of Sanskrit grammar. I also thank her for providing me with the invaluable references related to the readings of the *Kāśikāvṛtti* manuscripts that I have used in this article. I wish to express my deep sense of gratitude to my student Ms. Chaitali Dangarikar for helping me prepare the soft copy of this review article.

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Danielle Feller, *The Sanskrit Epics' Representation of Vedic Myths*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2004, xiv + 369 Pp. Rs. 695. (Hardback)

In this comparative study of Vedic and epic literature, Danielle Feller presents her readers with a welcome departure from the usual scholarly debates about the authenticity and textual development of the Sanskrit epics. While maintaining a close eye upon textual detail (a quality that sometimes eludes other contextualist studies), Feller examines the changing roles of Vedic myth and ritual within the two epics. Perhaps it might be better to say within the *Mahābhārata*, for aside from one chapter on the Indra-Ahalyā myth, the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* generally receives scant and unsatisfying attention in this work. Feller's approach to her materials can be described as structural but 'minimally diachronic' — less concerned with the internal textual development of the epic than with its historical relationship to earlier Vedic literature.

Though it is structured around the life of individual myths, Feller stresses that this book is not meant to be a catalogue of "‘R̥gvedic legends through the ages,' taking one myth from the Veda and following its various avatars throughout Sanskrit literature" (p. 41). Instead, she offers a comparative study of how four different myths (and the four corresponding Vedic deities) are first presented within Vedic ritual contexts, and then re-presented within the 'new' social and religious context of the Sanskrit epics. After an introductory chapter involving an overview of Vedic and epic literature, secondary scholarship, and general theories of myth, Feller compares the Vedic and epic versions of the myths of Agni's hiding in the waters (Chapter 2), Indra and Ahalyā (Chapter 3), the theft of Soma (Chapter 4), and Upamanyu's salvation by the Aśvins (Chapter 5). Consistent throughout these chapters is Feller's interest in comparative hermeneutics — how Vedic and epic texts differently interpret motifs such as fire, water, *soma/amṛta*, initiation and sacrifice. Central to her analysis is the argument that surface-level changes in these myths are due to differing religious aims of their Brahmin composers. Before her conclusions (Chapter 7), Feller provides a lengthy analysis of the *Mahābhārata*'s representation of the Bhārata war as a Vedic sacrifice, as the '*raṇa-yajña*' (Chapter 6). Previously published in an edited volume, this chapter strays from the comparative mythology of the other chapters, and thereby detracts from the thematic unity of the book; the author might have done well to replace it with a discussion of other Vedic deities (e.g., Varuṇa, Vāyu, or Sūrya) who play key roles in the epic background, but who are otherwise neglected in this study.

Ultimately, this book provides ample evidence of *how* Vedic myths were retold in the *Mahābhārata*, but sheds little new light upon the question of *why* the