

Notes on the Translation

What are the Darshanas?

There are many compositions from ancient India on religion and philosophy, and there are many schools of thought that all have a common source in the most ancient of the compositions, the Vedas, some dating back perhaps 3500 years. The six Darshanas, also known as "upa-anga", are taken to be foundational texts of the schools of Indian philosophy that bear their names, but schools tend to take on lives of their own. The Sankhya school, for example, represented over the centuries by writers like Ishvara-Krishna and others, is something quite different from the teaching of the Sankhya Pravachana Sutra as translated here, and so is the Yoga of a certain fifth-century commentator calling himself "Vyasa". I want to stress that my translation and interpretation of these works do not necessarily reflect the doctrines of the various schools as they are understood today. It is clear to me that they are expositions of solipsism and subjectivism, despite having since been forced into unfitting molds of analysis, religion, and mysticism.

The dates of composition of the Darshanas are unknown but generally thought to be in the period from a few centuries BCE to a few centuries CE. The Sankhya work first appears in the commentary of the 15th century vedantin Aniruddha, and then the 16th century Vijñana Bhikshu. The modern suggestion, based on the lack of any previous historical mention of it, that it was actually written a mere century or so earlier is not very convincing. It may have been lost but then rediscovered like so many Roman and Greek works were in the period of Aniruddha. The claim is especially suspect considering that the modern analysts have missed the true structure and thesis of the work. Even Aniruddha and Vijñana considered it to be the work of the ancient Kapila.

The authorship of the Darshanas, however, is not known for certain, nor did the authors provide titles to their work. The Yoga is attributed to Patanjali, the Vaisheshika to Kanada, the Sankhya to Kapila, and the Vedanta to Bādarāyana. Because of the personal and non-objective way that I read them, it hardly matters to me exactly when they were composed, or what they are now called, or exactly who composed them. I find a great integrity in the works of these unknown ancient fathers, speaking from the heart of the great India. Admittedly, my approach, like that of the medieval vedantins, is that of an apologist, if not an advocate, but I believe that recognizing the solipsist and subjectivist teachings in these works from the start has resulted in a translation and interpretation that is far cleaner and more accurate than any previous effort I know of.

Errors in Past Interpretations

The numbering of these sutras as they appear in manuscripts, and their division into "books", are far from sacred or incontestable. It is surely the work of ancient editors, and in many cases it is not true to the original, so I have corrected that numbering to my own satisfaction. For example, some of the original sutras in the Sankhya were mistakenly divided into two or even three, and sometimes two or three were patched together into one. Integral with the incorrect numbering, there was the problem that editorial remarks had been interpolated into the texts and never recognized as such. The following observations are my own opinions, but for me, the evidence for them is conclusive.

In the Yoga, I found a fair amount of editorial meddling and I left it where I found it, but in italics. In that work, the interpolations are indicated by the editor's tendency to want to list or outline the various points to be found in subsequent sutras, sometimes incorrectly, and by his seeming fascination with the idea of supernatural powers. Also, in the later chapters, the interpolations, consisting of three sutras each, are most often found between the authentic nine-sutra sections, where they quite obviously interrupt the flow of the surrounding material.

In the Sankhya there was very little foreign material, but in the Vaisheshika, there was a great deal, and I did translate and even comment on it, but I removed it to an appendix so as to clear away the awkward obstacles to the smooth and orderly flow of the original text. The ancient editor does not try to pass his work off as authentic, but consistently uses certain key words to indicate his voice, such as: "na vidyate" or "na vidyante" meaning "It is not found" read as "He (the author) does not find", various forms of "etena ... vyākhyāta" meaning "by that (passage), it is explained that ...", and "uktam", meaning "he has declared that", read as "That is what he is trying to say."

In the Brahma Sutra, there is a considerable amount of interpolation, most in the form of brief statements about the opinions of certain other scholars (Jaimini, Auḍulomi, Bādari, etc.). Key words here include "apī ca smaryate" and "eke".

In the Upanishad the key word is "tasmāt", meaning "From that" which reads, "From that passage we understand that ..." The tone of many of these comments is amusing in that the Brahmin editor is often very concerned about affirming the status of his class, and about various kinds of payment for the services of a priest.

I did what I could to right the mistakes in numbering by restoring certain patterns in the original that became evident after removing the commentary. Guided by context, continuity, the underlying subjectivist theme, and the clear and logical system of sutra groupings, I deferred to these over blind conformity with

tradition wherever the boundaries between sutras or sections came into question. Thus, you will find in the Darshanas presented here, chapters consisting of eighteen sutras each. There are nine such chapters in the Vaisheshika, Yoga, and Brahma Sutra, and twenty-four in the Sankhya. The various chapter and section headings, however, are of my own invention, based on the contents of each. In the Sankhya I also restored three small sections that were somehow displaced from their original position in the text: 1.20-26, 1.43-47, and 3.29-37.

Interestingly, the first five chapters of the first book of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad increase in their amount of content by multiples of nine short blocks of text: the first chapter having nine, the second eighteen, the third twenty-seven, and so on. At least this is clear to me, though it has not been recognized before.

The Structure of This Translation

In the Vaisheshika and the Yoga it seemed to work best to divide the sutras into blocks of three for translation, and in the Sankhya, blocks of nine, all treated in a fairly standard and commonly used format consisting of four parts for each block. The first part is the text in Devanagarī script. The second, all in one paragraph (or two in the Sankhya), contains a word-by-word glossary-style translation of its individual terms and compounds, with comments in italics. For each word, the Sanskrit is given (sandhis resolved) in bold type in a transliteration format known as IAST or "International Alphabet for Sanskrit Transliteration", and that is followed by an indication of its grammatical inflection and the meaning of that inflection in parentheses, e.g., (gen. belonging to), (abl. because), etc. Following that, the translation of the word is given. For compounds, the translations of the component words are given in the order in which they occur, separated by dashes. I find that the inclusion of these first two parts is necessary as a way of verifying the correctness of the translation for anyone who might be interested, but for the average reader it is certainly not necessary and should simply be skipped over. The third part is a paragraph consisting of the overall translation of the block as a whole in bold type, using the terms found in the word-by-word paragraph, and the fourth part is my commentary in normal type.

I deliberately spell "Sankhya", "Vaisheshika", "darshana", "sutra", and a few other words without using the proper IAST letters because I feel that those words should be a little more English-friendly, and for the same reason I have used only the letters familiar to English speakers in the introduction up to this point. The abbreviations: VD, SD, and YD in the many cross-references refer to the Vaisheshika, Sankhya, and Yoga Darshanas respectively. BS and BU refer to the Brahma Sutra and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, while MW refers to the wonderful Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation of the Sanskrit alphabet (as represented in IAST) is different than what an English speaker is used to. The letters t d and n are pronounced with the tongue touching the teeth, while ṭ ḍ ṛ ṛ ṅ and ṣ (sh) have it approaching or touching the roof of the mouth further back than we do, and there is nothing in between. Consonants followed by h (bh, dh, etc.) have a definite little aspiration "ha, hee, hoo", etc. (depending on the vowel) blended in right after the consonant. (It is interesting that most of us already aspirate the unvocalized consonant sounds t k p at the beginning of, e.g., "tool, cool, pool".) The letter ś = sh, c = ch, the terminal ḥ = "ha, hee, hoo", etc. but very easy on the vowel sound, if any. Vowels with a macron, like ā, are well lengthened and those without are shorter than we are used to. The letter "a" sounds like the u in cup, i like pit and u like put, e as in hey, ai as in high, and au as in how. The r is not so much rolled as sort of flicked, so "karma" sounds something like "kḍrma" (stressing the first syllable), rather than "kaarmaa". The v is not so much with the upper teeth and tends a little toward w. The ṁ is nasalized like the vowel sound in the French "temps". Finally jñ as in "jñāna" sounds like gya but more palatal and nasal.

My Approach to Translating

I believe it is important to avoid a certain practice that is seen in most translations, of leaving many of the words in their original Sanskrit as if there were no proper English equivalent, or as if the Sanskrit were somehow more sacred or true. In many instances there is indeed no single-word English equivalent for a Sanskrit term, but the meaning can always be fairly rendered in two or three words with a little explanation. In such cases, the practice of reverting to the original Sanskrit only creates a sense of frustration for the reader as he stumbles through a mixture of familiar and foreign words, or for those who are familiar with both, an undue sense that the writing was just not meant for readers who aren't, all of which defeats the purpose of a translation in the first place. In grammars and textbooks this mixture may serve as a learning tool, but it is out of place in a work meant for a more general readership. I have made some exceptions with words that may be more familiar to English speakers, like "yoga", "karma", "dharma" etc. In those cases I follow the convention of quoting out-of-context words in their stem form, except for "karma".

I prefer not to be too general in translating words. For example, "pratipakṣa" in YD 5.2 doesn't mean just any kind of opposition or contradiction, but specifically an opponent or adversary; "bhoga" doesn't mean just any experience, but enjoyment; "pratayaya" not just any mental object, but a belief, etc. I also try for the most literal meanings based on roots, affixes, "taddhita" forms, inflections, etc.,

and on a thorough examination of as many other examples of derivations and uses in compounds as I can find; this as opposed to accepting so-called "technical terms", which were co-opted centuries ago by schools that modified the meanings to suit their particular doctrines. For example, "brahmacharya", literally "attending to Brahma (Veda)" means "chastity" in many works, but not in the Yoga, and the word "saṃskāra" (making up or putting together) means a "construct", not "impressions" of past lives.

It can be particularly difficult to read some of the old translations where single sutras containing perhaps five or six original words are embellished with many times that number in parentheses, or laden with many pages of commentary. In these efforts the work tends to feel less like a clean and fair rendering, letting the author's writing speak for itself, and more like an original treatise by the commentator using the source text as a mere prop in order to expound (or create) in great detail the doctrines of his school. I admit, I do my share of expounding, but I try to keep it simple and separate.

Sanskrit is read from left to right, but in these works I find that in order to get a good English translation it is often necessary to read both sutras and compounds, except for the list (itaretara) parts, in reverse order because the subject is usually found at the end, with secondary material preceding it (e.g., SD 10.8). In many cases, reading the last word, then the first, and then the middle, works best (e.g., SD 23.1). One might think of it as "sewing", the root meaning of the word "sutra". You start from the end of a stitch or sutra and loop back to its beginning and then forward to the end of the next stitch and back to its beginning and so on.

Nouns and Pronouns

Sutra composition is sparse and economical, so in the translation it is often necessary to add little words like pronouns, articles, and connectives. Reflexive pronouns are most often left out in the original sutras, and it is common practice to supply them in translations. This is a very important feature that will be found throughout the translations. For example, in Vaisheshika 4.13-15, "It (the non-womb-born) is known by its previousness in a realm of dimension that is undefined, and by its particular dharma, and by the existence of its name", the words "it" and "its" are not found in the original but they have a silent presence as references to the subject of the previous sutra.

Related to the economy of composition, one of the most important considerations is that the Sanskrit of these works is very much context-dependent. Readers or listeners must have been accustomed to keeping a mental log of nouns in the order they were presented, because so much of the text refers back to recently-stated nominals indirectly with short pronouns, or even with just the silent

implication of the intended back-referral to be inferred from the context. This would have avoided redundancy and contributed to economy, which was useful given that the works had to be either memorized or committed to inscription on palm leaves. Because of this, I have very often supplied words like "such", "that", "this", "those", etc., to refer to previous words and phrases. For example, in Vaisheshika 5.15, "... it is thus that there is such a flowing (even) in trees." or in Yoga 7.4, "... the understanding of thought in those others belongs to such a belief ...", the word "such" referring to "beliefs" in sutra 7.2.

It is also common for a noun to be advanced to a further level of abstraction without the use of the extra words that would normally be necessary, e.g., in Vaisheshika 1.8, "The consistency ... is their being (comprehended as) instance and originator." In many cases I have supplied the word "notion" in parentheses, for example in the Sankhya 7.17, "There is no contradiction of that scripture on non-duality by (the notion of) singularity of individual lives."

Some sutras begin with a pronoun, and for clarity I have occasionally translated these in the relative sense, even though they are not written that way. For example, with "tatra" it may be better to punctuate with a comma followed by the relative locative, "in which case", rather than a period followed by "In that case", or with tataḥ (the tasil ablative), "from which" rather than "from that". This helps to correct the otherwise jerky "aphorism" style of reading, by supplying the same smooth flow in a connected group of sutras that would be expected in a full sentence.

For the same reason, I have properly translated many nouns as present participles or gerunds. For example in the Yoga Chapter Six, my translation is quite different than the common definition-style interpretation that usually reads something like: "pratyāhāra is ... dhāraṇa" is ... dhyāna is ... samādhi is ..." (with those terms left in the Sanskrit). I have also tried to be careful in sorting out present participles from past participles or other forms; for example, in general "mukti" means liberating, "mukta" liberated, and "mokṣa" liberation; "citti" thinking, "citta" thought, "cit" intellect. Dṛṣṭi and dṛṣṭa are actually quite different in meaning, the first having a more direct sense of "seeing" as comprehension, and the second, "seen" meaning commonly known or learned.

Dvandva

The dvandva (dvaṁdva) sense of opposition is very prominent in this writing, which is consistent with the dualist teaching. It is commonly expressed within compounds, or with the ablative used in the sense of "apart from", or in the

opposing meaning of adjacent sutras, most often to be understood without any particular indicator word like "but", "whereas", "while", "rather", or "and yet". Accordingly, I have supplied those words in parentheses in some places. In many dvandva compounds consisting of two terms opposite in meaning, I have indicated their opposition by supplying the word "versus" or "vs." rather than "and". In the Sankhya, the division in each section between the opponent's statement and the author's is also to be understood without any indication other than the obvious reversal of point of view in the material, or in some cases the use of a "cet" (if ... then) clause, which is just the author saying "If you have this particular objection, well then here is the reply."

In that work there are many instances where a "because" or "from" clause in the ablative case is to be taken as part of the point of view that is being argued against. For example, something like, "Your point is not proved just because no one denies it", or in SD 15.16 "That it is like seed and sprout is not to be understood from scripture on the world having a beginning." In such clauses a word like "merely", "only", "just", or even "supposed", often needs to be supplied by the translator, for example, SD 18.6 "there is no glory of liberation for dull ones ... because of a (supposed) difference between the two ..." Sometimes it is actually supplied by the author, as in SD 8.12, "There is no establishing that from mere hearing."

Particles

There are some translations where Sanskrit particles and connectives and even the meanings of the various cases are given very little scope, where "ca" always means "and", "vā" always "or", the ablative always "because", or in simple tatpuruṣa compounds the default genitive connection is always taken when another might be more appropriate. I have tried to be more flexible (while still technically correct) in rendering these, letting the obvious meaning derived from the context dictate the choice of words. The word "vā" meaning "or" is also translated fairly: "as an alternative of" or "alternatively to", sometimes accompanied by a word in the genitive case, e.g., in the Sankhya 5.1, "Alternatively to the one in relation to the two." The word "ca" (and) often means something like "moreover" or "including" or sometimes "indeed" or "even", similar to the word "api".

"Api" as an intensive is often translated with something a little more common than "indeed", like "in fact", "really", "surely", etc. It often has a somewhat contrary or concessive sense like "even so", "rather", "however", or with a word in the locative case, "even though". In some cases I read "evam" more strongly than something like "similarly". In the Sankhya it can represent the notion of things being exactly and definitely so without a doubt, mainly in referring to the physical world. "Iti" can mean "called" or "said to be", or even "just mentioned", referring

to an antecedent phrase, or it can mean "according to" followed by its referent, e.g., "Iti Jaimini" (according to Jaimini). Sometimes it just means "thus".

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, being several centuries older than the Darshanas, is written in a style closer to Vedic Sanskrit. Unlike the sutra style, it freely uses verbs, most in the 3rd person singular in either the perfect or imperfect form of past tense. It also contains fewer compounds than sutra writing and many more small particles. Some of these particles are typically ignored in translations, but I found it useful to include them, especially "vai" (associated with "vā"), which is used in pairs, meaning "on the one hand ... on the other hand, and "ha" meaning something like "so." It does not use "api", which is plentiful in the sutras.

Noun cases

The sutras are generally without verbs, and out of the eight possible cases for nominals, the vocative and accusative are not used at all and the dative very rarely. The normal uses for the other five need no explanation and can be learned by noting their various applications in the text, where except for the nominative I have supplied in parentheses the abbreviated name of the case as well as its particular meaning for that word or compound. There are, however, special considerations regarding some of the cases, which could use further explanation.

When the locative concessive construction is used (with "api"), or in any hypothetical statement using the locative, the hypothetical sense will often be reinforced in the translation by supplying the words "would", "might", "may be", etc. For example, in Yoga 8.18, "... there would be the non-existence of those (instances) upon the non-existence of that (desire)."

The genitive case is sometimes used for linking by abbreviation, where the original referent is written only once but needs to be supplied by the translator in all the following sutras where only the term in the genitive is given. We see this in English too: "The principal diet *of anteaters* consists of insects. That *of sheep* consists of grass. *For (of) lions* it is meat, *for dolphins*, fish, etc. We find this in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and in all the Darshanas, e.g., in the Sankhya 3.6, where the word "inference" is found in connection with a word in the genitive, but where "inference" must be supplied in 3.8, 3.9, and 3.10 as a complement to terms given there in the genitive. In some instances of the genitive "point of view" sense, additional words may be supplied in the translation as they are with the locative, e.g., "for one possessed of distinguishing, absolutely all of that is seen as suffering" (cf. YD 4.5).

The ablative case, in addition to its usual "coming from" or "arising out of" meaning, is occasionally used in a somewhat adverbial sense, sometimes with a

ṣyañ type of bhāvārtha nominal, for example in the Sankhya, "on its own" (svātantryāt" SD 11.6), "the object being attained" (cāritārthyāt SD 13.7) "surely" (āñjasyāt SD 13.10), etc. The word "because" for the ablative, as a reason for knowing, means literally "inferred from" or "known by" and I have very often used words like these for clarity. Even when "because" is read, it may be "because there is that" or "because it is that" rather than always "because of that", depending on the context.

There are also many instances of the "away from" meaning of the ablative as "considered apart from" or "compared against". There are several examples of this in Chapter Seven of the Yoga, and in those passages, reading it that way makes all the difference from an incorrect reading on the pattern: "By performing this particular mystical mantra, that particular magical power is acquired."

As for gender, in all modern writing it is as awkward as it is convenient to use only one gender for pronouns referring to any person, male or female, so please read "he" and "his" as also "she" and "hers", etc. Even better, read all pronouns, including "we" (or "me"), as simply "you", "your", etc. As for number, it sometimes fits better in the context to translate non-terminal compound elements in the plural, e.g., "like the accomplishments of those ... revered" (upāsyasiddhivat SD 14.18).

In addition to the many "supplied" words you will find some words and phrases in parentheses, but I have tried to keep these to a minimum. They are most often used to point to referents existing previously in the text, which is a defining characteristic of sutra composition, or as a short but necessary clarification of a word. In most cases one should be able to read sensibly even while skipping over the parts in parentheses. You will also find some words in quotes referring to specific terms from a previous part of the text or in explaining certain translations of words.

It is not always possible to translate these ancient writings smoothly without sacrificing accuracy, so my goal has been to balance the two, favoring accuracy. One of my main concerns in the commentary has been to mitigate some of the unavoidable rough reading in the translation itself. It has been my goal overall to extract a solidly correct, yet simple and sensible translation of these important and clearly subjectivist/solipsist works.

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