

# Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita on sphoṭa

Johannes Bronkhorst

July 2002

The philosophy of grammar has only four major representatives in the history of Indian thought. One of these is Bhartṛhari, who lived in the fifth century C.E. The other three lived more than a thousand years later, in Benares, and may have known each other. The first of these three, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, was the paternal uncle of the second, Kauṇḍa Bhaṭṭa. The third one, Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa, was a pupil of Bhaṭṭoji's grandson.

This paper will explore what induced Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita to come up with his - in relative terms - innovative ideas, concentrating on his ideas about the sphoṭa in particular. This will be done by studying Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita's ideas against the background of their intellectual precursors, but not only that. In contrast to most earlier Sanskrit authors, we know at least something about the circumstances – social, economic, traditional – in which pandits like Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita worked, and which inspired them to produce their often voluminous works. An attempt will be made, using these various kinds of information, to obtain some sort of insight into what made a scholar like Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita tick.