

Monika Nowakowska 
m.nowakowska@uw.edu.pl
(University of Warsaw, Poland)

Kumārila’s Engagements with the Pāṇinīyas— Towards Any Future Study of Vyākaraṇa’s Presence in Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā¹

ABSTRACT: Kumārila-bhaṭṭa might be treated as an exemplary student of the paradigmatic Brahmanical *śāstras*. He represented Mīmāṃsā tradition of Vedic ritual exegesis, and for doctrinal reasons heavily relied on its two main fellow branches of knowledge: Vyākaraṇa and Dharmaśāstra. In both the fields he proved to be an important commentator, but it is the former which really informed much of his oeuvre. In the article I trace the main directions of Kumārila’s references to the grammatical tradition and its personal authorities, with particular interest to those preceding Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* which on the other hand seems to be one of the most influential inspirations for Kumārila’s discussions.

KEYWORDS: Kumārila, Mīmāṃsā, Pāṇini, Vyākaraṇa

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Kumārila-bhaṭṭa (ca. 600–660²) might be treated as an exemplary student of the paradigmatic Brahmanical *śāstras*. He represented the Mīmāṃsā tradition of Vedic ritual exegesis and heavily relied on its two main fellow branches of knowledge: Vyākaraṇa and Dharmaśāstra. In both the fields he proved to be an important commentator, but it is the former which widely informed much of his oeuvre, especially in those aspects where Vyākaraṇa intertwines with and enters the domain of *dharma* (on that see more below). In particular, one of Kumārila's treatises titled *Tantravārttika* draws heavily from Patañjali, in parts almost tracing the whole discussions recorded in the *Mahābhāṣya*. But Pāṇini himself as an authoritative figure, not only his monumental opus, also finds a significant place in Kumārila's philosophical argumentation. It is thus important to assess the background and the sources of Kumārila's writings to be able to appreciate his own contributions and not to be astonished by his apparently surprising claims, which under further scrutiny often appear to be rooted within or inspired by earlier and contemporaneous debates. It might also help towards not accusing him of shallow or narrow-minded religious bias, while he, fully immersed in his own tradition, offered a newly systematized ideological Brahmanical worldview. Moreover, he carried out his argumentative endeavours according to the spirit of the times, i.e. meeting the obligation to account for all the prior claims in each discussion. That good practice would meet with approval and understanding in many a current of contemporary philosophy, too. Kumārila was the product of his Brahmanical upbringing, formed by his tradition, and while being an active participant of the ongoing cultural or even civilisational debates, he reached for arguments from various sources and perspectives.

This article is a follow-up to my earlier summary of the observations collected over years on the influence of grammatical tradition generally on Mīmāṃsā and particularly on Kumārila (Nowakowska

² The dates proposed for example by Kataoka (2011: 14). One should note that Yoshimizu (2015: 43) sets Kumārila's dates quite earlier, ca. 560–620, with additional arguments in Yoshimizu (2024: 27, fn. 32).

2022), which reported on a number of identifications of Kumārila's sources or indirect references. In this contribution, I focus initially more on pre-Patañjali Vyākaraṇa and the status of the grammatical tradition in Kumārila's treatises, with only subsequent partial attention to the *Mahābhāṣya* itself. I was interested in underlining Kumārila's reasons for his sustained involvement in some aspects of the grammatical literature. In my approach in this preliminary survey, I followed Mīmāṃsā's perspective, guided first by their direct references to Pāṇini or *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. Fortunately, there are informed publications of scholars (in our context for example Yoshimizu 2012, 2024; Bronkhorst 1987, 2016;), covering both traditions, which help us to navigate through often subtle, complex, and technical argumentation of both, Vyākaraṇa and Mīmāṃsā.

1. The early relationship of Vyākaraṇa and Mīmāṃsā

Mīmāṃsā represents the Vedic ritual functionaries as ritual exegetes who also quite early tried to support their professional interests with metaphysical and epistemological claims about the special status of the source of their ritual instructions, i.e. the Vedas. By the latter they understood broadly the whole Vedic corpus of ritual instructions and formulas. From the viewpoint of an individual human being, according to Mīmāṃsā, this corpus (the metrical hymns, *chandas*, and their exegetical addenda) has always already been there, together with the language of its instruction and interpretation, i.e. Sanskrit. Both, the Vedas and the perfectly formed (*samskr̥ta*) language—Sanskrit, were understood within the Mīmāṃsā tradition to be independent of and thus uninfluenced by any personal or generic human defects and agendas, as both the Vedas and the Sanskrit language in its most authoritative capacity were believed to be, in their sound and meaning, *nitya*, i.e. permanent, already established, without any beginning, never subject to any convention or creation. Or, to put it in ontologically weaker terms, any assumed temporal beginnings of the Vedas or the perfect language could never have been an object within the domain

of human cognition as such. To a human being, the Vedas and Sanskrit have always been there. According to early and classical Mīmāṃsā, to ask about their starting point would be like asking about the emergence of the first human. Even if under certain conditions the event is at least conceivable, it could not but remain imperceptible, the moment having no other witnesses, and thus remaining beyond the horizon of human cognition.

Therefore, Mīmāṃsā dealt with the Vedas and Sanskrit as constant (*nitya*), already present and transmitted by Āryas from generation to generation. Both corpora were learnt and studied as speech, the object of auditory perception, and their linguistic character meant that one had to control that medium to be able to master the world of ritual. Which also explains why the world of Vedic ritual and recitation produced so profound and sophisticated disciplines of linguistic knowledge (the majority of *vedāṅgas*). Mīmāṃsā was not included among *vedāṅgas*, while Vyākaraṇa and Nirukta were, so the exegetical school most probably emerged later than the six auxiliary “limbs of the Vedas”, maybe because there arose the need for its metalinguistic approach and for specialists in syntax, i.e. sentences (*vākyajña*, see ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepa*) 27).³ It might also have evolved with time from *kalpavedāṅga*, i.e. ritualistic expositions, as an independent discipline with its own name (Nowakowska 2022). A significant argument for the latter theory would be the strong textual relationship between *kalpasūtras* (with their various subclasses) and Mīmāṃsā. Asko Parpola showed in his articles (1981: 165; 1994: 298–305⁴) a telling statistical identity of topics discussed, and vocabulary used between the foundational exegetical *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* (MS, ca. 400?–300? BC) and ritualistic *Kātyāyanaśrautasūtras*. According to Parpola, the latter could be slightly posterior, dated around 250 BC. Parpola also argued (1994: 298) that there were good reasons to consider that eponymous

³ See also the discussion on the status of Vyākaraṇa and argumentation against its placement within the category of *smṛti* in the *vyākaraṇādihikaraṇa* ad MS 1.3.24–29 (see below).

⁴ Referring to Paranjpe 1922 and Garge 1952. One should also mention here Kane (1962: 1155–1156).

Kātyāyana “both a *mīmāṃsaka* and a grammarian”, and he identified him with the author of grammatical *vārttikas* to Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (400–350? BC), transmitted as contained in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* (MBh, ca. 200–150? BC; cf. more in Bronkhorst 1987b).

As I noted earlier (Nowakowska 2022), and for the above-mentioned reasons, we must consider Vyākaraṇa and Mīmāṃsā as interconnected, firstly because of the common material of their reflection, i.e. the Vedic and Sanskrit languages, but also because of their shared educational Brahmanical formation. Let us recall again Kane (1962: 1156) in his observation that “Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* is full of Pūrvamīmāṃsā matters”. Patañjali does also use the term *mīmāṃsaka* (“a practitioner of Mīmāṃsā,” Kane *ibid.*) in his commentary.⁵

2. Kumārila-bhaṭṭa

Similarly, within the Mīmāṃsā camp, one of the main predecessors of Kumārila, Śabara, the author of the first surviving direct commentary (*bhāṣya*) on the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*, i.e. the *Śabarabhāṣya* (ŚBh), is considered to have drawn heavily from the grammatical authoritative trinity, with the MBh as his main source. Kane (1924) and Garge

⁵ Kane refers us to A 2,2.29. According to the KA, the first occurrence of the term *mīmāṃsaka* falls under A 1,2.64.4 (*sarūpāṇām ekaśeṣa ekavibhaktāu*, or as explained by Cardona (1997: 260): “only one of the possible series of items having the same form occurs, as a single remainder”), in the MBh: *mīmāṃsakaś ca mīmāṃsakaś ca mīmāṃsakau*, which was the grammatical explanation for derivation of dual (and in the same vein plural) nominal forms. Another mention of a practitioner of Mīmāṃsā is given under the *sūtra* A 2,2.29.1 (*cārthe dvandvaḥ*; Cardona 1997: 221: “An unrestricted number of *padas* may combine to form a compound called *dvandva* under the condition that part of the derivative’s signification is a meaning of *ca* ‘and’”) in the discussion of compounds, where one of the border cases between *dvandva* and *karmadhāraya* compounds is considered: *aukthikaś cāyaṃ mīmāṃsakaś ceti*, in reference to one and the same person (the case of *saṃānādhikaraṇa*) who is an *aukthika* (i.e. who knows the Ukthas) and *mīmāṃsaka*. See Joshi, Roodbergen 1974: 46/145. More on the various problems related to A 1,2.64 and A 2,2.29, see Pontillo 2013: 107–110.

(1949, 1952) demonstrated the respectful approach of the ŚBh to Pāṇini and Kātyāyana, whom Śabara mentions by name beside Piṅgala, Nirukta, Upavarṣa, Manu. Although Śabara's commentary does not refer to the author of the MBh by name, as Garge points out (1952: 23–24; 239–242), he quotes from him, calling him *ācārya* (“guide, master”) and *abhiyukta* (“competent specialist”). The latter term will come back in the linguistic context in Kumārila's discussion on the question of human expertise on the matters of meaning in various languages (see below).

Mīmāṃsā's main declared interest was *dharma* (MS I.1.1 *athāto dharmajijñāsā*, lit. “And now for the desire to know *dharma*”), which however underwent intensive reinterpretation in the tradition while it followed in the footsteps of Dharmaśāstra's innovations (see for example Wezler 2009). And yet Mīmāṃsā specified the concept even further. For Mīmāṃsā, *dharma* was first a ritual duty, enjoined by ritual instructions, an abstract idea of ritual obligation which could only be learned about and denoted by ritual injunctions (*codanā*, *vidhi*). It was the meaning and the objective of verbal injunctive or optative formulas, a sphere of future ritual outcome, not yet there, only to be realized.

Therefore, in the light of such a conceptualisation of *dharma*, one can appreciate the indispensable role of the language, and in particular of the linguistic corpus of Vedic ritual instructions which were the source of learning *dharma* and providing the only access to the realm of *dharma*. To get there, to perform ritual duties, one had to follow the word, i.e. one had to understand it, and to preserve its denotative power with utmost diligence, not allowing for any language corruption (we will come back to that point below).

Kumārila joined or perhaps even led the Brahmanical ranks in their response to the growing position and influences of other religious offers available, which Vedic ritual specialists considered as competition.⁶ He reorganized the structure of Mīmāṃsā system, strengthening and supplying it finally with various as yet missing or unarticulated

⁶ See Yoshimizu 2022 for substantiated assumptions on Kumārila's historical circumstances. On a more general plane, see Verardi 2011.

elements, hoping to resist Buddhists, Jains, and a number of other according to him non-Vedic proposals such as Pāñcarātra, Paśupata, Sāṃkhya, Yoga (see the list of *sāṃkhya-yoga-pāñcarātra-pāśupata-śākyā-nirgrantha* in his *Tantravārttika* (TV) ad MS I.3.4.⁷). In this project, he drew from the two oldest *dharmaśāstras*, i.e. *Gautama-* and *Āpastamba-* (see Nowakowska 2020a), and was an avid student of the *Mānavadharmasāstra* (MDhŚ). From the latter comes the idea of the four sources of human knowledge of *dharma*: *śruti*, *smṛti*, *sadācāra* and *ātmatuṣṭi*, which cover first (*śruti*) the Vedas, secondly (*smṛti*) other traditional authoritative texts such as *vedāṅgas*, epics, *dharmaśāstras*, thirdly (*sadācāra*) the practices and customs of good moral people (*sat*, i.e. *śiṣṭa*, see below), as well as fourthly (*ātmatuṣṭi*) the moral internal compass of such people. In the MDhŚ, this basic list with slight variations appears twice (MDhŚ 2.6 and 2.12), with no information about the relations among them. Kumārila systematically and with extended argumentation, following the MS and ŚBh, placed the four categories hierarchically, with the Vedas as the most important and the only independent source for learning *dharma*.

In this endeavour, Kumārila often reached over to the MBh. Because of the historical developments and transmission outcomes of what was considered as authoritative by later generations, as well as in result of the activities of Bhartṛhari (Bronkhorst 1987a; 1987b), Patañjali's line of grammatical knowledge and interpretation (as one of among the trinity: Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, and Patañjali) was to become the pillar of Brahmanical education. As I already stressed (Nowakowska 2022), Kumārila not only was the product of that education, but he also importantly helped to strengthen it. The MBh famously defines *Āryāvarta* (the land "inhabited by Āryas") in terms of its geography⁸ and its population as the land of people linguistically (Sanskritically) educated and morally exemplary, *śiṣṭas*. Kumārila would use these identifiers, beside the teachings of *dharmaśāstras*, as ethical, religious, and linguistic criteria to establish and define a society governed by

⁷ TV in MS, p. 194.

⁸ See Sastri 1944: xv–xvi, Killingley 2007: 125, Deshpande 2008: 180.

Brahmanical *dharma* and *dharmaśāstras*' institutions. It seems again to be Patañjali (following Kātyāyana) who lends the *mīmāṃsaka* the distinction between the *vaidika* (Vedic, religious, not of human origin) and the *laukika* (secular, of human origin) in the context of moral and dharmic disquisitions, which is so ever-present in Kumāṛila's analyses. Or at least both, the MBh and the TV refer to the distinction while mentioning dharmaśāstric matters.

Kumāṛila authored four commentarial texts, of which three are extant—the *Ślokaivārttika* (ŚV), the *Tantravārttika* (TV) and the *Ṭupīkā* (ṬṬ), while the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* (BṬ) has survived only in quotations in other authors' texts. The chronological order of the four works is the subject of analyses (cf. Yoshimizu 2007), but in sequential terms, the former three are commentaries on the consecutive portions of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* (MS) and the *Śabarabhāṣya* (ŚBh): the ŚV comments in verses on the first *pāda* (so-called *Tarkapāda*) of the MS and the ŚBh, the TV continues commenting on the MS up to the end of third *adhyāya* with the ŚBh, in prose and in verses, while the ṬṬ provides occasional short prosaic remarks on the rest of the MS (4th–12th *adhyāyas*) and the ŚBh. The BṬ seems to have been a separate work, one large commentary on the whole *Mīmāṃsā* fundaments (MS and ŚBh).

2.1. The *Ślokaivārttika* and the epistemological grounding

The *Tarkapāda* of the MS (1.1.1–32), and especially the ŚBh interpreting it and quoting fragments of earlier commentaries by enigmatic Vṛttikāras (see Frauwallner 1962: 96; 1968: 82), inspired Kumāṛila in his ŚV to expand into epistemological analyses of *pramāṇas* (means of valid cognitions) and related subjects, with a prolonged section (ad MS 1.1.5), covering several subchapters, commenting upon and developing the line of *sūtras*. Firstly, he did a survey of the means of valid cognitions other than perception (i.e., *pratyakṣa*, which cannot reach *dharma*) and authoritative speech (i.e., *śabda*, being the only instrument of reaching *dharma*), such as inference, comparison, etc., and their definitions and application. Secondly, he analyzed arguments

for and against the permanent meaningfulness and independent validity of Vedic injunctions as the sole means to learn what was *dharma* and what was *adharma*. Because it was also one of the Vṛttikāras who quoted Patañjali's definition of a linguistic sound (ad MS 1.1.5⁹) which introduced into Mīmāṃsā the discussion on the meaning carrier and on the relationship between words and objects, Kumārila while following the ŚBh developed these topics and entered into numerous arguments with various points of view, including grammarians' idea of *sphoṭa*, i.e. of indivisible, meaningful sound-forms of up to three categories of speech: phonemes, words, and sentences (see Saito 2020). This last group comes back in the last but one chapter of the ŚV—in a long discussion on the meaning of a sentence (*vākyādhikaraṇa*). While arguing in the two sections (*sphoṭavāda* and *vākyādhikaraṇa*) against the proponents of *sphoṭa* (*sphoṭavādins*), Kumārila referred to theories of Bhartṛhari but did not name him.

2.1.1. The grammarians themselves, not only their works, happen to be recalled as authoritative figures, especially as authors, too. In his ŚV Kumārila mentioned Pāṇini's name five times. Four times in two groupings the name of the author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was recalled in the section on *sambandhākṣepaparihāra* (lit. “the confutation of objections against [the original character of] the relationship [between words and their meanings]”) of the *autpattikasūtra* (ŚV 5) which proclaims that the relationship is “original”, inborn (*autpattika*). The section famously gathers arguments against the idea of an act of world creation, and of a god-creator, to strike down the concept of a god as the creator of language and the author of the Vedas. One of the claims against such divine figures stresses that there is no memory of them as bound to the language in general. On the other hand, the text voices a doubt why people should follow and understand at all a jargon or a formula artificially created by one person.

⁹ For some introduction, see Nowakowska 2020b; for grammatical context, see Candotti 2020.

In the discussion, a polemical argument was raised that the meanings (*artha*) of linguistic sounds (*śabda*) could have been set not by their own denotative power (*svaśakti*) but by a trustworthy person (*āpta*) who by his own authority could propagate their usage. This raises a question then how it could have happened when there is no memory of such a figure.¹⁰ Because one can observe from experience that people who rely on the teachings of some person believe them to be reliable because of the very fact of those teachings coming from that person, like for example Buddhists (*bauddhādayas*) who do not accept any statement, even if they understand it, unless they know it comes from Buddha.¹¹ The counterargument of the *pūrvapakṣa* points out that some verbal conventions (*samaya*) are known and used by people who do not necessarily remember their authors, like in case of Pāṇini's *ādaic* known as *vrddhi* (cf. A 1.1.1 *vrddhir ādaic*)¹².¹³ The answer to this objection emphasizes that the convention has been being remembered precisely because it was taught by Pāṇini.¹⁴ Furthermore, the case of *vrddhi* belongs to the domain of perception, we can hear the phenomenon, it can be identified ostensively.¹⁵ However, *dharma* which is at stake in this discussion is imperceptible, the only means of knowing it is *śabda*. No linguistic rules or restrictions for

¹⁰ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 123cd–124ab: *yadā cāptapraṇītātvaḥ chabdo 'rthaṃ pratipādayet ||123cd|| na svaśaktiā tadāptatvam ito* na smaryate katham* (*the reading noted in ŚV (1), p. 478, fn.).

¹¹ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 124cd–125ab: *yathā bauddhādayo yāvad budhdhādyuktam na jānate ||124cd|| na tāvat pratipadyante bodhe vākyena saty apī*.

¹² In Katre's translation: "(The technical term) *vr̥d-dhi* denotes the vowel phonemes long *ā* (=āT) and the diphthongs *ai*, *au* (= aiC)." (A 1.1.1, p. 7). As Cardona (1987: 4) explains: the first *sūtra* "provides that *ā*-, *ai*-, and *au*-vowels [...] have the class name (*saṃjñā*) *vr̥ddhi*". The *sūtra* not only begins the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, in this way functioning as an identifier of the text, but it also introduces a specific technical name learnt and used by everyone learning Sanskrit the Pāṇinīyan way.

¹³ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 125cd–126ab: *samaye kathyamāne 'nyair asmaranto 'pi pāṇinim ||125 || ādaicāḥ pratipadyante vr̥ddhiṃ kartuṃ smṛtir vr̥thā*.

¹⁴ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 126cd: *sūtrasthaḥ pāṇinis tatra svasaṃjñāṃ pratipādayet*.

¹⁵ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 128cd: *dṛṣṭārthavyavahāratvād vr̥ddhyādau sambhaved api*.

the sake of *dharma* could have been established without a Pāṇini-like figure.¹⁶ And yet, people do not have any memory of any author of everyday language. Moreover, in case of *ṛddhi*, without Pāṇini there would be no certainty about a correct use of the rule (for example to explain the *taddhita* form “Āśvalāyana” according to A 7,2.117–118).¹⁷

The reference to Buddha was not random by all means, as the whole commotion about the anchoring of the Vedas as the most important source of knowledge of *dharma*, and the idea and identification of the *dharmamūlas* (lit. “roots of *dharma*”) as such came up in the Brahmanical circles as their answer to the idea of Buddha’s teachings, i.e. *Buddhavadāna* as the source of Buddhist *dharma* (see Olivelle 2018). The argumentation in this section of the ŚV is complex and layered, firstly it is about determining whether words are meaningful by themselves (*svaśakti*), whether in result of some agreement (*samaya*) or usage (*vyavahāra*), or whether someone individually ascribe them their meaning. Secondly, at the level of searching for epistemologically trustworthy authors and individuals as sources of some linguistic corpora, we refer to people respected in given circles, identified by name, indicating in this manner that certain formulas or texts may be accepted in wider use precisely because they are associated with the status of the respected figures in the tradition. And thirdly, we

¹⁶ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 129ab: *dharmāya niyamo ’rāpi na vinā pāṇiner bhavet*. Cf. Yoshimizu 2022: 53–54, fn. 166.

¹⁷ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 129cd–130ab: *ākārānugamo yo hi ṛddhyā syād āśvalāyane ||129|| nāsāv apāṇinīyatve sādthur ity avagamyate*. As Cardona (1997: 316) explains A 7,2.117 (*taddhiteṣv acām ādeḥ*) and A 7,2.118 (*kiti ca*): “Taddhita affixes [...] with [*ñ* or *ṇ*] markers condition particular operations on their stems. The first vowel (*acām ādeḥ*) of a stem is replaced by a *ṛddhi* vowel (*ṛddhiḥ*) before a taddhita affix that is marked not only with *ñ* or *ṇ*, but also with *k* (*kiti ca*),” where marker *k* (*phak*) sends us to A 4,1.99 which teaches the formation of gotra descendants (*-āyana*, *Āśvalāyana* “a descendent of *Āśvala*”), in which already the *ṛddhi* vowel replacement occurs and stays put throughout in subsequent derivation, for example to refer to something related to *Āśvalāyana* (also *Āśvalāyana* with a difference in pitch (*svara*) only). As Pārthasārathimiśra expands in his commentary on the ŚV (ŚV 1: 677): *yo hi kiti cetyādivṛddhividhānād āśvalāyanādiṣu padeṣv acām āder akāśyākārānugamo nāsāv asati pāṇinīyatvasmaraṇe sādthur iti niṣeṣyata iti*.

return to the issue of the authority of the Vedas as a superior analogue of *Buddhavacana* on *dharma* issues in response to Buddhist dharmic competition. Mīmāṃsā claims that the case is qualitatively different, the two are not comparable because such figures as Buddha known by name nevertheless belong hierarchically to a level lower than the Vedas, and besides, these personalities enjoying respect of their followers could have said what they said precisely because language already existed. Therefore, in the very following verses of the ŚV, the discussion returns to common nouns like cow. No one, says Mīmāṃsā, has ever connected cow with the word “cow.” From a human perspective, this connection has existed forever (see below).

2.1.2. Pāṇini as the author of rules of vowel-alternation or rather, as we will see, of substitution, together with his name, returns in the long chapter on *śabdanityatādhikaraṇa* (ŚV 6.202) (see Kanazawa 2001: 113), in the *siddhānta* section. As the topic of the chapter implies, the discussion concerned the *nitya* character of the linguistic sound (*śabda*), i.e., its established, permanent nature. The opponent in the *pūrvapakṣa* raised the often-articulated, standard argument that something which is *nitya* cannot undergo any modification or changes. And yet, the Sanskrit language and its phonemes undergo changes, for example for euphonic reasons, claims the *pūrvapakṣin*, when the vowel <i> changes into <y> before another vowel (*dadhi* -> *dadhya*). So, the opponent’s claim was that *śabda* could not be *nitya*. That is a point cleverly referring those who state that *śabda* is *nitya* to the authority of Pāṇini. But Kumārila immediately points out that Pāṇini did not make such a rule, or rather that his rule established something else.¹⁸ The grammatical *sūtra* A 6,1.77 does not teach a modification of a vowel, but a substitution of one phoneme with another.

Furthermore, and that is very important to Mīmāṃsā’s stand: a meaningful language, words with established meanings, have to be prior to any grammatical regulations of their usage, because otherwise

¹⁸ ŚV 6.202cd–203ab: *na hy evaṃ pāṇiner vacaḥ* ||202 || *ikārapariṇāmena yakāraḥ kriyātām iti* (referring to *iko yaṇ aci* A 6,1.77).

their meaning could not be ever established.¹⁹ The formula *siddhe śabdārthasambandhe* is a direct reference to the MBh and Kātyāyana's *vārttika*: *siddhe śabdārthasambandhe* (Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 20/90²⁰) and indirectly to the discussion in the MBh. The regulatory function of grammar is possible only when the language is already to be used and in use. Moreover, Pāṇini's *sūtra* teaches that in specific phonetic circumstances, in place of the word *dadhi* one should use the word *dadhya*. This is not the case of any modification (*vikāra*).²¹

2.1.3. Towards the end of the ŚV, the last but one, an exceedingly long chapter amounting to 369 verses, called *vākyādhikaraṇa* [lit. "the topic of a sentence"], offers commentary on the MS I.1.24–26. It treats sentences and their meanings, and syntactical connections, it analyses the working of stems and inflectional affixes, the mechanisms of compounding and their semantic dimension, and it discusses if and what role all these elements play towards the meaning of a sentence, what the relationship between the sentence meaning and the meanings of sentence parts is, etc. The discussion is conducted in technical grammatical terminology, though no names of grammatical authorities are given. The chapter argues against the theses and idea of *spṛṣṭa*, therefore mainly against Bhartṛhari or his circles (but see: Scharfe 1977: 170, fn. 5). The chapter is being edited and translated by Hugo David, thus it soon will be available for a better appreciation.

¹⁹ ŚV 6.203cd–204ab: *siddhe śabdārthasambandhe tacchāstraṃ hi pravartate ||203|| prayoganiyamārthāya na caivaṃ siddhatā bhavet.*

²⁰ See Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 90: "When (it is assumed that) the relation between a word and (its) meaning has already been (established on account of the usage of people)."

²¹ As Katre translates and explains the *sūtra* A 6,1.77: "The substitute semivowel phonemes denoted by the siglum yaṆ (=y, v, r, l) [...] replace the vowel phonemes denoted by the siglum iK (=i, u, ṛ, ḷ) (before) a vowel phoneme (aC-i) [in continuous utterance] (A: 675)." In the words of Cardona (1997: 78) on A 6,1.77, this is "Pāṇini's general rule of semivowel replacement".

2.2. Topics of Mīmāṃsā proper in the *Tantravārttika*

In his TV, Kumārila recalls Pāṇini four times. First time, in the *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* (the section commenting on MS 1.3.24–29), secondly, in the *upamāśūyājādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 2.2.9–12), and twice in the discussion on the meaning of *rājan* in the *aveṣṭyadhikaraṇa* (ad MS 2.3.3). All these cases, except for the second one, use in fact the formula *pāṇiniprabhṛta-*, referring to Pāṇinīya grammarians in general.

The name Kātyāyana appears in the TV mostly as the *kalpavedāṅga* authority, once only as a grammarian. He is recalled six times in the *kalpasūtrādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 1.3.11–14), once, importantly, in the conclusion of the *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 1.3.27, referring to the *vārttika*: *jñāne dharma iti cet tathādharmah*; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 30/145²²), and once again as an authority on ritual (*kalpa*) matters in the *caturdhākarāṇādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 3.1.26–27), while Patañjali's name is as expected absent, although the presence of his great commentary can be time and again felt in the background of many a discussion.

2.2.1. Some linguistic difficulties, relevant to the question of a correct language, were already tackled by Kumārila in the TV ad MS 1.3.8–9, under *śāstrasiddhapaḍārthādhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the meanings of words as established in the *śāstra* [the Vedas]”), known also in part as *yavavarāhādhikaraṇa* (“the topic of [such terms as] *yava*, *varāha*”).²³ MS 1.3.8–9²⁴ state that differentiation of meanings of some terms in the Vedic corpus can be treated as optionally and equally valent (*samā*), unless there is some contradiction (*virodha*). Yet the meaning supported by the Vedas and Veda experts is preferred as they define what is the source of human knowledge of *dharma* (*tannimittatvāt*).

²² See the translation in Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 145: “If (it is argued) that *dharma* ‘religious merit’ (lies) in *jñāna* ‘(grammatical) knowledge,’ (then we say that) there would be a chance for *adharma* ‘religious demerit’ as well.”

²³ For more context and detailed analysis see Nowakowska 2014.

²⁴ MS 1.3.8 (p. 216): *teṣv adarśanād virodhasya samā vipratipattiḥ syāt*. MS 1.3.9 (p. 217): *śāstrasthā vā tannimittatvāt*.

ŚBh reports on semantic variations (quoting the words noted in Vedic literature: *yava*, *varāha*, *vetasa*) and suggests that the correct understanding of the terms depends on their contexts and uses, with upmost respect for Vedic reading. Commenting on the following MS 1.3.10, ŚBh again confronts the problem of words that are part of the Vedas but are not normally current among Āryas (who are depositaries and recipients of the hymns), but happen to be in use among Mlecchas (non-Sanskrit speakers, religious outsiders and cultural aliens), such as *pika*, *nema*, *sata* and *tāmarasa*. ŚBh discusses the question of their meanings and the source of knowledge about them (either by Sanskrit explanations, etymology and grammar, i.e. *nigamaniruktavyākaraṇa*, or with reference to the Mlecchas' usage, i.e. *ācāra*), while MS 1.3.10²⁵ is interpreted as sanctioning such words' place in the Vedic canon as they are understood as long as they are not contradictory (*avirodhā*) to the rest of the Veda. ŚBh mentions the standpoint which denies Mlecchas any linguistic competence, but he decides that because such terms are part of the Vedas' lexicon and as long as they are not contrary to the Vedic instruction, though being understood in reference to the usage of Mlecchas only, they should be accepted in that very sense used by Mlecchas. ŚBh adds that linguistically learned people (*śiṣṭa*) are the source of guidance on matters that are not accessible to sense-perception (as for example *dharma*), while Mlecchas can be better versed (*abhiyuktatara*), for example, in talking about rearing and catching birds (*pakṣiṇām poṣaṇe bandhane ca*). Reliance on Sanskrit linguistic instruments only would not have made sense with words not understood by anyone, as there would have been no criterion of final certainty in the process of their analysis. Therefore, ŚBh proposes understanding the above non-Aryan terms according to the usage of Mlecchas.²⁶

²⁵ MS 1.3.10: *coditaṃ tu pratīyetāvirodhāt pramāṇena*.

²⁶ SBh ad MS 1.3.10 (p. 228): *pika iti kokilo grāhyo, nemo 'rdham, tāmarasaṃ padmam, sata iti dārumayam pātram parimaṇḍalaṃ śatachidram* ("pika should be understood as meaning 'cuckoo', *nema* 'half', *tāmarasa* 'lotus', [and] *sata* as 'wooden vessel, round, with hundred-holes'"). See Nowakowska 2014.

Kumārila — while following ŚBh in the TV — develops extensively the argumentation on whether the meanings supplied by Mlecchas should be accepted and whether their usage is less or more important than the attempts to arrive at their meaning using Sanskrit linguistic weaponry. Kumārila's *pūrvapakṣin* claims that Mlecchas cannot be trusted, and even less so on linguistic matters because they do not know correct speech (*samskṛtaḥ śabdāḥ*), but admits that one can find words in the idiom of Mlecchas resembling the proper tongue, and make sense of them, but this is only by resorting to several additional procedures, like adding or cutting out syllables from the words to arrive at something resembling Aryan vocabulary. And then he famously illustrates his argument with quoting Dravidian terms on which some Āryas “from the elements of speech ending in consonants produce meanings according to their own language by such operations as affixation with vowel endings, case terminations, feminine gender, etc.” (see Nowakowska 2014). The illustration, although not traced back to any textual source, seems to refer to a real procedure, maybe a grammatical treatise.

In the *siddhānta* section, Kumārila still follows the position of Śābara, and he is of the opinion that it is more reasonable to accept non-Aryan derivations for non-Aryan words than to stretch Sanskrit etymologies and grammar rules, especially when these explanations and understandings are not against the Vedas. And in the case of the non-Aryan words being part of the Veda, the problem of establishing their meaning is even slighter for those Āryas who are bilingual (*āryair dvaibhāṣikais*). Furthermore, Kumārila explains that even in the context of Vedic ritual, there are domains of expertise into which priests do not venture (like killing animals—*prāṇivadhā*) and in which they depend on others. In the case of *pika*, *nema* and similar words forming part of the Vedic ritual injunctions, if their meaning cannot be known from the Veda or the usage of Āryas, it must be accepted from Mlecchas. And, again, Kumārila also points out that the inferiority and weakness (*daurbalyam*) of Mlecchas' linguistic competency concern only *dharma*. In the context of secular (*laukika*) activities (*dr̥ṣṭārthavyavahāra*) like farming etc., (*kṛṣyādi*) Mlecchas' verbal

competence and terminological adequacy does not have to capitulate to that of Āryas (there rules equality — *tulyatā*), and in the case of service jobs or housework etc., Mlecchas' competence is much higher (the opinion tells us something about the social structure of Kumārila's environs). The same applies to the context of products or objects made by Mlecchas or brought from their countries. Kumārila emphasizes that etymology and grammar are of help only in reference to already known and used vocabulary. In other words, Sanskrit etymology and grammar operate in Sanskrit or to a degree in languages related to it. Outside this area both disciplines cannot retain their corrective power (*na bādhakāni*; TV ad MS 1.3.10, p. 228).

2.2.2. The question of correct language resurfaces in the same third *adhyāya*, ad MS 1.3.11–14 in the *kalpasūtrādhikaraṇa* (lit. “the topic [of the status] of *kalpasūtras*”). In his commentary, Kumārila analyses how much *kalpasūtras* were authoritative on the matter of *dharma* as understood by Mīmāṃsā, allowing for them only dependent legitimacy, as programmatically, according to Mīmāṃsā, the Vedas solely held independent command over dharmic matters.

While situating *kalpasūtras* within the hierarchy of texts in terms of their authoritativeness on *dharma*, Kumārila discusses also false traditions (pseudo-*smṛtis*), with Buddhists at the head of the list. He claims that the teachings of Buddhists, Jains and others overflow with incorrect words, and they are often articulated in corrupt or regional dialects (*māgadha*, *dākṣīṇātya*, *apabhraṃśa* etc.).²⁷ He then spices his

²⁷ TV ad MS 1.3.12 (p. 237): *asādhuśabdabhūyiṣṭhāḥ śākyajaināgamādayaḥ | asannibandhanatvāc ca śāstratvaṃ na pratīyate || māgadhadākṣīṇātyatadapabhraṃśaprayāsādhuśabdanibandhanā hi te* (quoted in de la Vallée Poussin 1902; and in Pollock 2007: 55–56). See a recent English translation of the fragment in Yoshimizu (2022: 54): “Literature handed down in Buddhism and Jainism mostly consists of incorrect language (*asādhuśabda*). Because they are written in incorrect (language), they cannot be understood as scripture. In fact, they are based on incorrect language from the Magadha region and the south that has been corrupted (*apabhraṃśa*) from that (Sanskrit).”

tirade with some illustrative quotations as he seems to like to do (compare the case of the Dravidian languages).²⁸

The point is that words incorrect in pronunciation and grammar cannot be true and meaningful (*arthasatyatā*), they cannot have unchanging, established meaning (*anāditā*).²⁹ Even if by any chance every now and then for example Buddhists would manage to use correct words in a correct manner, their texts are full of defective terms, grammatically incorrect language (for example *prajñapti-vijñapti-paśyanā-tiṣṭhana* as faulty verbal forms),³⁰ as well as disformed, sloppily recorded and transmitted vocabulary like *bhikkhave* (not to mention the suffix *e* present in the plural Accusative, but absent in the Nominative or Vocative³¹), sometimes so deformed that impossible to recognize (like in Apabhraṃśa instead of Sanskrit *saṃskṛta* one can see *sakkata*, not even *sakkaḍa*, etc.³²). Therefore, Kumārila concludes, because of the

²⁸ These illustrative quotations were identified and grammatically cleared by Yoshimizu (2022: 55).

²⁹ TV ad MS 1.3.12 (p. 237): *tataś cāsaty aśabdeṣu kutas teṣv artha-satyatā | dr̥ṣṭāpabhraṣṭa-rūpeṣu katham vā syād anāditā*.

³⁰ TV ad 1.3.12 (p. 238): *śākyādigrantheṣu punar yad api kiṃcit sad-huśabdābhiprāyeṇāvinaṣṭabuddhyā prayuktaṃ tatrāpi prajñaptivijñapti-paśyanātiṣṭhanādiprāyaprayogāt kiṃcid evāviplutaṃ labhyate*. Cf. Edgerton 1993: 358, 485. Translated in Yoshimizu (2022: 56, fn. 181): “In the literature of Buddhism, etc., even the certain pieces spelled with an unhindered intellect generally use *prajñapti*, *vijñapti*, *paśyanā*, *tiṣṭhana*, and other [irregular word forms] from the intention to use language properly, so only a small number of proper items can be obtained.”

³¹ The matter is complex but see for example Collet 2014.

³² TV ad 1.3.12 (p. 239, corr. after Yoshimizu 2022): *kim uta yāni prasid-dhāpabhraṣṭadeśabhāṣābhyo 'py apabhraṣṭatarāṇi bhikkhave ity evam ādīni. dvitīyābahuvacanasthāne hy ekārāntaṃ prākṛtaṃ padaṃ dr̥ṣṭam, na prathamā-bahuvacane sambodhane 'pi. saṃskṛtaśabdasthāne ca kakāradvayasamyogo 'nusvāralopaḥ. rvarṇākārāpattimātram eva prākṛtāpabhraṃṣeṣu dr̥ṣṭam, na ḍakārāpattir api*. (The form with *ḍ* was noted among earlier quoted fragments (*saṃkkaḍā dhammā*)). Yoshimizu (2022: 56): “In addition, [Buddhist scriptures] have (word forms) like *bhikkhave*, which are further corrupted, compared to the regional languages, which are well known as corrupted forms, because Prākṛit (derived language) forms ending in *e* are observed in places with the accusative plural cases, but not in places with the nominative plural and vocative plural cases.

linguistic incompetency in Buddhist texts they cannot be considered as authoritative as the Vedas, nor even can they be considered as *nitya* which would be the first required step towards any meaningfulness and authority. Kumārila stresses that grammar is the only discipline which provides means for determining what is original, what derived. The Vedas' language is correct and amenable to structure analysis which cannot be said about the medium of Buddhist texts. Therefore, the expression *asaṃniyama* (lit. "without regulation", that is not precise enough, interpreted also in the commentarial discussion as *asan-ni-yama* as "with no rules", see Nowakowska 2020c) originating in MS 1.3.12 (*nāsaṃniyamāt*) as one of the reasons why *kalpasūtras* cannot be part of the Vedas (they lack accents, see Yoshimizu 2008: 63, fn. 52), which Kumārila used also against the Buddhist teachings, implies their abuse or even lack of any grammatical rules. Parenthetically, one can note that Kumārila seems to be ignorant of or to have ignored intentionally any Buddhist authors wielding their Sanskrit efficiently. On the other hand, the reason for this omission on Kumārila's part might be the fact that the point under discussion is authoritativeness and epistemic validity of the root dharmic texts, in this case Buddha's words, contending to have such validity, which according to the Buddhist tradition were not articulated in Sanskrit on purpose.

2.2.3. In the light of the above, it seems only logical for Mīmāṃsā to introduce a discussion on the role and purposes of Vyākaraṇa, i.e. the *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* (the chapter on "the topic of grammar") which is Kumārila's contribution to the discussion ad MS 1.3.24–29 as commented on by the ŚBh. His chapter is well known and acknowledged in the Sanskrit grammatical line of research.³³ This is because Kumārila, following the arguments of the MBh (*paspaśāhnikam*,

Moreover, concerning the word *saṃskṛta*, the various languages derived [from Sanskrit] and corrupted have doubled the *k* sound and lost *anusvāra*, changing the *r* sound into the *a* sound (in other words, to make *sakkata*) and nothing else, and the change [of the *t* sound] into a *ḍ* sound [as in *sakkaḍḍa[h]* in the quoted Buddhist scripture] is not [observed]."

³³ See for example the comments by Joshi and Roodbergen (1986: i; v).

KA I,1.14–I,5.11; Joshi, Roodbergen 1986: 6–13; 26–69), discusses there in great detail the tasks of and needs for the science of grammar and its rules, in the overall context of the reflections on the authority of texts classified as *smṛti* (‘[traditions transmitted as] memory’, considered authoritative if complying with the Vedas). Again, in his analysis Kumārila does not use the names of his grammatical authors but employs the appellations *sūtrakāra* (‘the author of the *sūtras*,’ i.e., of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*), *vārttikakāra* (‘the author of the *vārttikas*’), and *bhāṣyakāra* (‘the author of the *bhāṣya*’) instead. The last one is not a unique designation, as most often, in other parts of the TV, it refers to Śabara.³⁴ The *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* has been being edited and translated by Alessandro Graheli for a couple of years now and should be soon accessible to appreciate it with all its contextuality and background. Let us only note that the chapter begins with returning to the question of polysemic words like *yava*, i.e. words that can mean various things, and to the problem of more or less “corrupt” variants of one word (*gauḥ* → *gāvī*, etc.) denoting the same element of the world (a cow). All that should be seen in the overall frame of Mīmāṃsā insistence on the *nitya* character of word-meaning relationship. This gives rise to the analysis of the purposes of grammar, inspired by the MBh. In the conclusion of this section Kumārila states that Vyākaraṇa not only is an indispensable *śāstra*, offering useful linguistic restrictions which help in realisation of *dharma*, but it is in its continuity beginningless (*anādi*) and also as permanent (*nitya*) as *nitya* is the practice of making the sacrificial post etc. (*yūpādikaraṇavadvyavahāra*).³⁵ And the ultimate argument, a quotation from the Vedic śabda is supplied: *tasmād eṣā vyākṛtā* (*vāg*), i.e. the Vedas also talk about speech (*vāc*) grammatically organized. Therefore, the practice (*vyavahāra*) of Vyākaraṇa is timeless, permanent (*nitya*).³⁶

³⁴ For instance, in the preceding chapter, *holākādhikaraṇa* (TV ad MS.1.3.16–23).

³⁵ TV ad MS 1.3.27–29 (p. 228): *tatra yūpādikaraṇavadvyākaraṇaparamparānāditvād [...]*.

³⁶ TV ad MS 1.3.27–29 (p. 228): *tasmād eṣā vyākṛtā—iti ca vyākaraṇavyavahāranīyatvam uktam*. Harikai (2021: 250) traced the Vedic quote to “*Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 6.4.7.3, with *iyam* for *eṣā*.”

2.2.4. As for other chapters of the TV, not dedicated any longer to the question of the sources of human knowledge of *dharma* (*dharma-mūlas*) but concerned with Mīmāṃsā hermeneutical analyses, in the technical section *upāṃśuyājādhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the *upāṃśuyāja*”) ad MS 2.2.9–12, while applying proper Mīmāṃsā exegetical and grammatical analyses, Kumārila (following the MS and ŚBh) discusses a particular expression *upāṃśuyājam* and its possible function (whether it is a separate sacrifice with *upāṃśu* as its manner, reciting “quietly”, whispering) and reference (or just a reference to a series of sacrifices mentioned together with it). And in this context Pāṇini’s name is recalled together with A 7,3.52³⁷ in the *pūrvapakṣa* (following the ŚBh), and then again in the *siddhānta* (the problem is the form of the term *upāṃśuyāja*, not *upāṃśuyāga*, as the *sūtra* teaches). The point is tiny and subtle: according to the *pūrvapakṣa*, if the sentence in question (*upāṃśuyājam antarā yajati*, see below) had been interpreted as an injunction characterized by the manner *upāṃśu*, then the formation of the compound in line with A 7,3.52 would have been regular, i.e. *upāṃśuyāga*, understood as *upāṃśu ijjate yaḥ sa* (lit. “the one which is sacrificed whispering”), or would be considered ungrammatical (*asādhū*), unless it would be treated as a name (*nāman*) for other sacrifices, mentioned immediately after.³⁸ The *siddhānta* does not accept this stand, and while pointing out other important aspects of the sacrificial setting, it is able to classify and locate the *upāṃśuyājam* within their sacrificial system, interpreting the sentence *upāṃśuyājam antarā yajati* (“he performs in the meantime an *upāṃśu*³⁹ sacrifice”) as an injunction of a separate, specific

³⁷ A 7,3.52 (p. 926): *ca-j-oḥ kU GHIT=NyàT-oḥ*. In Katre’s translation: “A substitute velar stop (kU) replaces phoneme c or j [...] with IT marker GH and NyàT.” Cardona explains (1987: 290): “-c and -j (*cajoh*) of a verb stem are replaced by velar stops before an affix marked with gh (*ghit*) and before *nyat* (*ghinnyatoh*).”

³⁸ The derivative *yāja* (*śatayājam*) seems to be noted in *Atharvaveda* (both recensions), while -*yāga* as the second member of compounds belongs to *kalpasūtras* and younger *upaniṣads*, see Werba 1997: 394.

³⁹ Cf. Benson (2010: 381): “between them he offers an *upāṃśu* (whispered) sacrifice.”

sacrifice (MS 2.2.10). Again, the grammatical awareness of the mechanisms of Sanskrit helps to navigate ritualistic instructions, but might be wielded also against exegets. Or in other words, the exegets themselves defuse a potential missile of the allegation of ungrammaticality of a formation, including that grammatical rule in their exegesis, skillfully deflecting the weight of the accusation.

2.2.5. A fascinating long chapter combining Mīmāṃsā and Vyākaraṇa interests and instruments is the *karṭṛ-adhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the subject”) ad MS 3.4.12–13, recently analyzed and contextualized by Yoshimizu 2012. The discussion initially starts with a prohibition (*nāṇṛtam vadet* “one should not tell an untruth,” see *ibid.*: 555) which is articulated within the context of *daśapūrṇamāsa* sacrifice. One of the main lines of analysis concerns the sentence subject (the agent, *karṭṛ*) and its syntactical construal, and precisely whether and which part of a finite verb (the base or the suffix) denotes an agent. As Yoshimizu (*ibid.*) phrases it: in the discussion “Mīmāṃsakas resort to a grammatical maxim that gives a suffix priority over a base within a word: “A base and a suffix express the meaning of the suffix together” (*prakṛtipratyayau pratyayārthaṁ saha brūtaḥ*).” However, as Yoshimizu (*ibid.*: 558) points out the maxim “is not accepted in the Pāṇinian school. According to the *Kāśikāvṛtti* on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (A) 1.2.56 this maxim was formulated by a previous teacher (*pūrvācārya*), but Pāṇini laid down A 1.2.56 in order to refute it.” Moreover, though Patañjali quotes the maxim in his MBh ad A 3,1.67, he applies it differently than Mīmāṃsakas. “With this quotation he maintains that the components of a word cooperate harmoniously, but he does not say that a suffix is the principal component” (*ibid.*: 558). Yoshimizu in his article meticulously proves the engagement of the debate in the TV with the grammatical tradition, concluding that Kumārila debated in fact with a posited opponent, who could be identified neither as a Mīmāṃśaka nor a grammarian, just to show off his knowledge and skills in grammar. However, as it was pointed out by Bronkhorst (2016), a careful consideration of the time frame allows for another hypothesis: that in fact Kumārila just reported on an earlier stage in

the development of Vyākaraṇa tradition. As Bronkhorst (2016: 2–3) put it: “Kumārila may [...] have discussed [...] with grammarians who did not in all respects agree with the *Kāśikā*”, as he preceded this text.

2.2.6. The name of Pāṇini and his treatise return in the discussion on the meaning of *rājan* in the *aveṣṭyadhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the *aveṣṭi* [offerings]” ad MS 2.3.3). It was studied and carefully translated into English by Yoshimizu (2024), so it is easier now to appreciate the main points of the discussion. The linguistic aspect under consideration is the meaning and semantic scope of the term *rājan*. In this context *sūtra* A 5,1.128⁴⁰ is mentioned, teaching the derivation of *rājya* from the noun *rājan*, which implies that first someone is a *rājan*, and then his power and prerogatives are termed *rājya*, i.e. royal, not the other way round. On the other hand, Kumārila reports on the whole range of interpretational possibilities of understanding the term *rājan*—from any representative of *kṣatriya* class to a ruler (of any class), distinguishing etymology (*yoga*) and usage (*prayoga*).⁴¹ From our perspective, however, the most important conclusion from the discussion is Kumārila’s linguistic flexibility (cf. Halbfass 1990: 183). Although in the ritual context he tends to be literal and rigorous (*rājan* as a *kṣatriya* ruler only), he records after the ŚBh that people from the country of Āndhrās (Kumārila prefers to call them Draviḍās) apply the term *rājan* to every *kṣatriya*, even if he is not a king. For one, it is of significance that apparently Āndhrās or Draviḍās use or used Sanskrit, secondly that Kumārila deemed it proper to note this usage in his analysis (see also above the case of Dravidian languages).

⁴⁰ A 5,1.128 (Katre, p. 548): *pāti=anta-puró-hita=ādi-bhyaḥ=yáK*. In Katre’s translation: “[...] *yáK* is introduced [after [...]] nominal stems] terminating in -*pāti*- (in composition: -*anta*-) and the class of words beginning with *puró-hita*- ‘chaplain’ [...]”

⁴¹ The whole discussion was translated into English, analyzed and grammatically explained in Yoshimizu 2024. One should only add that also in the *Mahābhārata* *kṣatriyas* are politely addressed *rājan*, even if they are not kings, do not wield royal power nor would they ever do.

3. Concluding remarks

Kumārila was a very well-educated scholar, proponent of Brahmanical ritualist version of religion. Curious, interested, and interesting, in his approaches to various Mīmāṃsā problems and more philosophical questions he tried to be as comprehensive as possible, and to account for various positions on a given subject. Schooled in Sanskrit grammar, he remembered and reminded us in his texts about the contentious topics and paradigmatic illustrations of various aspects of linguistic knowledge. He treated the famous personalities of scholarly traditions, even if legendary, as authorities in his own world, as representatives of the *smṛti* class. But that did not stop him from maintaining an independent perspective as he would use grammar and grammatical rules for his own agenda, for his Mīmāṃsā purposes. Ultimately, his main goal was the project of (re)grounding Vedic ritualists and improving the position of Vedic religion. The project that most probably was anachronistic already in his time.

Within his schedule, Sanskrit grammar was indispensable as the instrument of controlling the correct form and voice of Sanskrit in its most important role, which was the medium of ritual instruction, but one should not limit oneself to grammar nor treat it dogmatically as the only instrument to deal with languages. Kumārila allowed also for other languages to play their role, even if by definition outside of ritual context. Although sometimes those other languages had to be accommodated somehow as they were already part of the Vedas. To accept them as such was pragmatically a better option than to attack them with all the weaponry of Sanskrit morphology. Thus, Kumārila seemed to offer a broader perspective, a more practical approach, not allowing to be trapped in a narrow stiff tradition if it seemed irrational and unjustified.

Therefore, when one looks at the above illustrative survey of the presence of Pāṇini and *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in Kumārila's commentaries, the great grammarian appears first of all as the authority behind his Sanskrit grammar. His treatise is quoted and referred to in Kumārila's commentaries on behalf of opponents and proponents in various

linguistic and exegetical deliberations. One of the most important aspects of Vyākaraṇa's engagement is the question of correct language (*sādhūśabda*) and the access it gives—via the Vedas and ritual injunctions—to *dharma*. On the other hand, as the great grammarian, Pāṇini and his name get involved in the discussions about the sources of valid verbal knowledge (*śabdapramāṇa*, *śāstra*), while his person with the whole authority behind exemplifies a human, individual (*pauruṣeya*) source of knowledge and a respected author. He was used in the discussion as an additional argument for the extraordinary status of the Vedas, i.e. their lack of any author. When human beings author anything of importance, other people tend to remember their names. Which is not the case with the Vedas, according to Mīmāṃsā.

Kumārila would use grammar and grammatical terminology as means of linguistic and textual analysis, but he was also an active participant of linguistic and cultural discussions of both the earlier and his own times. In this aspect he is an important witness to various traditions, precisely because of his education and surprisingly liberal curiosity, his openness, even if just dialectical, to other propositions. One just wishes now, seeing the publication of Giudice and Pontillo 2025, that a similar volume accounting for both direct and implied references to grammatical literature in early Mīmāṃsā or preferably in Kumārila's works is written one day.

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BṬ = see Frauwallner 1962.

KA = *The Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali*, edited by F. Kielhorn (1880–1885), revised by K. V. Abhyankar, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona 1972–1996. (->GRETIL, input by G. Cardona)

MBh = see KA.

MDhŚ = see Olivelle 2005.

MS = *Śrīmajjaiminipraṇīte Mīmāṃsādarśane: Ādita Ārabhya Dvitiyādhyāyapraṭhamapādāntaḥ Prathamō Bhāgaḥ. Tatra ca prathamas tarkapādaḥ. Mīmāṃsākaṇṭhīravamīmāṃsāratanetyādīpadavibhūṣitaśrīvadyanāthaśāstripraṇītaprabhābhīdhavyākhyāsametaśābarabhāṣyopetaḥ. Dvitiyapādaprabhṛti. Śrīkumārīlabhaṭṭaviracitantravārtikākhyavyākhyāśahitaśābarabhāṣyasametaś ca*, edited by V. G. Āpte, Ānandāśramasamṣkṛtagranthāvaliḥ, no. 97, Ānandāśramamudraṇālaye, Poona 1929.

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ŚBh = see MS.

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