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## Grammar & Other Modes of the Mind

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1. According to an oft-quoted line of Rudyard Kipling, “East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.” In the person of Professor Ashok Aklujkar, however, East and West do meet and that too in a fortunate and fruitful way. As a specialist of Sanskrit grammar, specifically Pāṇinian grammar, and of the philosophy of Sanskrit grammar, specifically the philosophy of Bhartṛhari, he maintains a keen interest in modern “Western” philosophy and has been an admirer of W.V.O. Quine ever since his time at Harvard University.

However, in spite of important similarities and of numerous borrowings from ancient Indian linguistics into western linguistics since the nineteenth century, it can be said that in the domain of grammar “East” is, to a large extent, still “East” and “West” still “West.” A point where the Indian grammatical tradition differs significantly and perhaps fundamentally from modern western linguistics is the following: Indian grammar and the theoretical reflections associated with it since Patañjali (2<sup>nd</sup> cent. B.C.E.) have a considerable overlap and occasionally a tensed relationship with what from a western perspective are entirely different domains such as philosophy, religion and prayer.

Why should there be any competition or any tension – presupposing an overlap – between on the one hand grammar and on the other hand philosophy, religion and prayer? Still, that is what we find in the tradition of Sanskrit grammar. To honour Professor Ashok Aklujkar who in his teaching and in his publications has contributed to all the domains involved in this question – grammar, philosophy and religion – I would here like to briefly explore some of its aspects.

2.1 Since grammar occupied such an important position among the sciences, we find references to its importance and discussions about its usefulness or otherwise in works and traditions outside grammar. In a famous line of a song attributed to Śaṅkara the study of grammar is said to be of no value (from a religious point of view) at the moment of dying. Hence instead of studying grammar one should adore the Lord: *bhaja govindam* (3x) ... *mūḍhamate / saṁprāpte saṁnihite kāle na hi na hi rakṣati 'ḍukṛṅ karāṇe' //* This may be rendered as: “Adore the Lord ... o fool! When the appointed time (for departure from this life) comes, (a grammatical rule such as) *ḍukṛṅ karāṇe* will, indeed, in no way save you.”<sup>1</sup> Apparently the reference is to a student of grammar who tries to learn the Dhātupāṭha by heart.

The problem perceived was perhaps similar but the solution proposed quite different in the grammars of Rūpagosvāmin and Jīvagosvāmin. In his *Systems of Sanskrit Grammar*, Belvalkar has the following to say about these grammars (1915: 94-95):

95. *Later sectarian schools.* – We now come to a class of grammarians who have carried to extremes the tendency, already present, as we saw, in Bopadeva, to make grammar the vehicle of religion: and prominent amongst these are the Vaiṣṇava grammars called *Harināmāmṛta*.
96. *Harināmāmṛta.* – There are two works going by this name. The one by Rūpagosvāmin, the companion and disciple of Chaitanya (1484-1527) and the author of several other Vaiṣṇava works, is perhaps the older of the two. The peculiarity of this work is the employment of various names of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, and of their acts, not simply by way of illustration but as actual technical terms. Thus the vowels of the pratyāhāra *ac* are each designated by the different incarnations of Viṣṇu ...

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<sup>1</sup> Mahadevan 1980: 37-38. *ḍukṛṅ* is the form in which the root *kṛ* is read in the Dhātupāṭha (VIII.10 *ḍUKṛṅ karāṇe*), as it is provided with two anubandhas which indicate its grammatical properties: *DU* which indicates that the root forms an adjective ending in *-trima* (A 3.3.88) and *Ñ* indicating that *ātmanepada* forms derived from this root signify that the fruit of the action is intended for the agent (A 1.3.72). *karāṇe* indicates the domain of meaning associated with the root “in the meaning domain of ‘doing’.”

As is to be expected, beyond the introduction of this sectarian element no other improvement on the existing texts of grammar is here to be met with. The whole subject is presented to us in a dull uninteresting manner.

The Harināmāmṛta grammar of Jīvagosvāmin, nephew and follower of Rūpagosvāmin, contains the following opening verses:

*vyākaraṇe maru-nīvṛti – jīvana-lubdhāḥ sadāgha-samvighnāḥ /  
hari-nāmāmṛtam etat pibantu śatadhāvagāhantām // 3 //*  
*“sāṅketyaṁ pārihāsyam vā stobham helanam eva vā /  
vaikuṅṭha-nāma-grahaṇam aśeṣāgha-haraṁ viduḥ” // 4 //*

The first verse may be rendered as: “Those eager for life in the desert area of grammar, always having mistakes and obstacles, let them drink this nectar of the names of Hari, a hundred times let them dive into it.” The second verse, actually a quotation from the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa (6.2.14), means “Whether it be conventionally, to laugh, as praise or as joke, it is known that to pronounce the name of Vaikuṅṭha (Viṣṇu) takes away all impurities.” Belvalkar’s negative judgement is not entirely fair as there is a complex and instructive iconicity: the relationships between figures in Kṛṣṇa’s and Vaiṣṇava mythology carefully mirror relationships between elements in the grammar. Moreover, the grammar contains “updates” to Pāṇini’s grammar, for instance when it prescribes the respectful use of the second person plural for a single person or for two (HA 4.2, *yuṣṁado gaurave tv ekatve dvitve bahu-vacanam*).

2.2 It is well-known that an early exponent of Kashmirian Śaiva Advaita, Somānanda, severely criticized Bhartṛhari for straying away from his main task as grammarian – to explain the form of words – and for starting to deal with a field that is not his own: the search for knowledge that leads to liberation.<sup>2</sup> Somānanda’s successors, however, Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, show

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<sup>2</sup> Iyer 1969: 9-10, 407; Torella 2002: xixf ; 2009.

great respect to Bhartṛhari and refer to his philosophy to support their own position.<sup>3</sup>

3.1 Turning now to mainstream grammatical thought, we find references to unexpected dimensions of grammar and grammatical language as early as in Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya on the grammar of Pāṇini. In an expression which seems to make little sense from a strictly grammatical or linguistic point of view, it is said (MBh III:58.14-15): *ekaḥ śabdaḥ samyag jñātaḥ śāstrānvitaḥ suprayuktaḥ svarge loke kāmadhug bhavati-iti*. "A single word, correctly known, conforming to the science (of grammar) and correctly employed becomes wish-fulfilling in heaven." From the nature of the preceding discussion<sup>4</sup> and from the use of *iti* at the end we can infer that the statement is a citation; the source, however, is not known.

The same statement, with the sequence of *śāstrānvitaḥ* and *suprayuktaḥ* inverted, is found in Bhartṛhari's MBhD I:11.1-2, where it is introduced with *asti hi smṛtiḥ* "for there is a traditional text." Bhartṛhari refers here to this statement to show that there is indeed traditional support in the form of a *smṛti* text for the stanza which the Mahābhāṣya gives to express one of the purposes of grammar (MBh I:2.19-20),

*yas tu prayuñkte kuśalo viśeṣe  
śabdān yathāvad vyavahārakāle /  
so 'nantam āpnoti jayaṁ paratra  
vāgyogavid duṣyati cāpaśabdaiḥ*

But he who is skilful and uses words with regard to a

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<sup>3</sup> Torella 2002, 2004, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> The preceding discussion culminates in the statement that it has been said (*ukta*) that there is indeed a purpose in the knowledge and in the employment of a word. It is next asked *kim?* which must either mean "which (purpose)" or "how (is it expressed)." To this question *ekaḥ śabdaḥ ... iti* is supposed to be a reply. A few lines before this passage, a similar pattern is found of a general statement (that there is a purpose in *ijyā* 'ritual worship') followed by the question *kim* and next a citation from an unknown source (on the reward that is there *svarge loke* for someone following the ritual prescription to perform the Agniṣṭoma).

particular topic appropriately at the time of communication, he obtains unending victory in the world beyond as he knows the method (*yoga*) of speech; through substandard words, however, he goes down.

Kaiyaṭa in his commentary on the Mahābhāṣya shows familiarity with Bharṭṛhari's Mahābhāṣya-Dīpikā where we can verify this. In the same context of the Mahābhāṣya discussion of the stanza *yas tu prayuṅkte ...* Kaiyaṭa first of all informs that this is part of a set of stanzas composed by Kātyāyana (MBh (b) p. 28). Next he says there is a text in support of this stanza composed by Kātyāyana which is not just a *smṛti* 'traditional text' but even a *śruti* 'revealed text': *asya ślokasya śrutir anugrāhikāsti*, after which Kaiyaṭa cites *ekaḥ śabdaḥ ...*<sup>5</sup>

The statement *ekaḥ śabdaḥ ...* (which the Mahābhāṣya does not mention here but at a much later occasion) refers to two requirements with regard to a word, (a) a proper knowledge in accordance with the teachings of grammar; (b) a proper employment of the word in speech. The fulfilment of these two as it seems quite worldly requirements is supposed to lead to a remarkable, apparently otherworldly result, a wishfulfilling "cow" in heaven. In the stanza *yas tu prayuṅkte ...* the emphasis is even more strongly on the appropriate employment of the words. The proper understanding of the word in accordance with grammar is not referred to but it may be taken to be implied in *kuśala* "skilful"<sup>6</sup> and it is again evoked in *vāg-yoga-vid* "knowing the method of speech." The *yoga* in this compound, an

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<sup>5</sup> The citation appears here in the form *ekaḥ śabdaḥ sujñātaḥ suṣṭhu prayuktaḥ svarge loke kāmadhug bhavati*. The form which it has in MBh III:58.14-15 and the one in the MBhD I:11.1-2 seem more correct and in any case both these forms show a structure of three times eight syllables (if *svarge* is restored to *s<sub>u</sub>varge*) followed by *bhavati*. It remains to be investigated how widespread the tendency to octosyllabic formulation in early Sanskrit prose, demonstrated for the Pūrva-mīmāṃsā-sūtra and for grammar (e.g. H. Smith 1951, 1953; H. Scharfe 1977: 92 note 25), really was.

<sup>6</sup> Joshi and Roodbergen, 1986: 43, accordingly translate *kuśala* as "being knowledgeable."

action noun derived from the root *yuj*, apparently refers to the knowledgeable employment of words; it evokes two other words with forms from the root *yuj*: *suprayuktaḥ* of the *ekah śabdaḥ* ... statement and *prayunkte* in the stanza *yas tu prayunkte* ... In both cases *yuj* apparently implies the employment (*prayoga*) of speech in communication. In the same section on purposes of grammar in the introductory chapter (Paspasā) of the Mahābhāṣya we also find the root *yuj* employed with regard to the employment of speech in ritual.

3.2 A different use of a derivative of *yuj* with regard to speech or the word (*śabda*) is found in the Vākyapadīya, VP 1.143-144.

*api prayoktur ātmānam śabdāntar avasthitam /  
prāhur mahāntam ṛṣabham yena sāyujyam iṣyate //  
tasmād yaḥ śabdasaṁskāraḥ sā siddhiḥ paramātmanah /  
tasya pravṛttitattvajñas tad brahmāmṛtam aśnute //*

They even say that the word situated within is the *ātman* ‘Self’ of the speaker, the Great Bull with whom one desires to be in union (*sāyujyam*).

That is why this perfection of words (following grammar) – it is the realisation of the supreme Self. He who knows the principle of the procedures of this (grammatical perfection) achieves the immortal Brahman.

This passage goes beyond the discussion we found in the Mahābhāṣya as is evident from the terminology employed – (a) *sāyujyam* which is not a reference to the employment of speech in daily life or in ritual; (b) a reference to *ātman* and to *paramātman*, (c) a reference to *brahman* – and the conceptual framework this implies. But in which direction does it go beyond the Mahābhāṣya? Not far from the already cited stanza in the Mahābhāṣya there is another stanza, this time cited from the Ṛg-veda, that should express a purpose of grammar. It is ṚV 4.58.3, *catvāri śṛṅgā* ... and is part of a hymn that glorifies the clarified butter (ghee) to be offered in a sacrificial fire and identifies it with Soma and with poetical speech. In the Nirukta (Nir 13.7)

ṚV 4.58.3, which speaks of a bull (*vṛṣabha*) with four horns, three feet, two heads, and of a great god who enters human beings,<sup>7</sup> is interpreted in terms of ritual, but in the Mahābhāṣya the bull of ṚV 4.58.3 is grammatical speech: its four horns are four classes of words, noun, verb, preverb and particle; its three feet are the three tenses, past, present, future; its two heads are the two natures of words, the permanent and the producible, etc. The gist of the stanza according to the Mahābhāṣya is that grammar must be studied in order to have *sāmyam* ‘similarity’ or ‘equality’ with speech who is a mighty god.

The verse of Bhartṛhari takes up the image of a great bull which we find in ṚV 4.58.3. Instead of *sāmyam* ‘similarity’ or ‘equality’ which seems a rather neutral expression he uses a more significant word, *sāyujyam* ‘union’. For this term there is a relevant early context with which Bhartṛhari must have been familiar, the Brāhmaṇa and Brāhmaṇa-like portions of the Yajurvedic Saṁhitās, and especially the Upaniṣads. The index of Limaye and Vadekar’s edition of Eighteen Principal Upaniṣads refers, under the word *sāyujya*, to places in only two Upaniṣads, the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-upaniṣad and the Maitrāyaṇīya-upaniṣad. In BĀU 1.5.23, for instance, it is recommended to follow an observance (*vrata*) in order to achieve union with, or to live in the same world as, a deity which is, in the context of the passage, Prāṇa ‘Vital Breath’.<sup>8</sup> In view of the relationship

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<sup>7</sup> The expression used for the entering of the god is similar to that used for Soma – juice and god – entering those who drink him, as Geldner pointed out with reference to ṚV 1.91.11, 8.48.12, 9.97.36, 10.16.6.

<sup>8</sup> BĀU 1.5.23: *teno etasyai devatāyai sāyujyam salokatām jayati*; Śaṅkara, in his commentary on this passage, perhaps understands the distinction between *sāyujya* and *salokatā* as a difference in degree – as in the later series of *sālokyā*, *sāmīpyā*, *sārūpyā*, *sāyujya* – when he says the second option, living in the same world as the desired deity, is obtained on account of a slowness in understanding: *evaṁ tenānena vrata-dhāraṇena etasyā eva prāṇadevatāyāḥ sāyujyam sayug-bhāvam ekātmatvaṁ salokatām samāna-lokatām vā ekasthānatvam – vijñāna-māndyopekṣam etat - jayati prāpnotīti*. Other occurrences of *sāyujya* in the BĀU are 1.3.22, 5.13.1-4 where the *sāyujya* is obtained not by following a *vrata* but on account of knowledge or of understanding something in a certain way (expressed in the

between Bhartṛhari and the Maitrāyaṇī branch of the Yajurveda that can be inferred from the citations of Vedic examples,<sup>9</sup> the link with the Maitrāyaṇīya-upaniṣad is of special interest. In MaiU 4.1 and 4.4 the *sāyujya* ‘union’ is obtained not with a deity but with the *ātman* ‘self’. According to MaiU 4.4 *sāyujya* is obtained on account of *vidyā* ‘knowledge’ (knowledge of Brahman), *tapas* ‘asceticism’ and *cintā* ‘reflection’. MaiU 6.22 speaks of *sāyujya-tvam* ‘the state of being in union’ which can be obtained by a meditator (*abhidhyātṛ*) in a passage that deals with two *brahmans*, *śabda* ‘word’ and *aśabda* ‘non-word’. The passage contains a brief description of meditative procedures and concludes with the verse<sup>10</sup> *dve brahmaṇī veditavye śabdabrahma param ca yat / śabda-brahmaṇi niṣṇātaḥ param brahmādhigacchati*, which van Buitenen translates as “Two Brahmanas are to be known, śabdabrahman and that which is beyond this. Immersed in the śabdabrahman, one attains to the Brahman beyond.”

In his VP-kārikā 1.143, Bhartṛhari uses his reference to the “Great Bull” of ṚV 4.58.3 to refer not to the liberation or state of union (*sāyujya*) of a meditator (*abhidhyātṛ*) but to that of a user of language, *prayoktṛ*. The root *yuj* in *sāyujya* does not refer to the employment of speech as it is rather to be understood as a reference to the Upaniṣadic concept of *sāyujya*. In the succeeding kārikā the goal of “union” with a deity is extended to the Upaniṣadic goal of achieving Brahman. The Vṛtti goes next a

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formula *ya evam veda*). In the AiB 2.24 *sāyujya*, *sarūpatā* and *salokatā* of certain divinities is what the sacrificer is supposed to obtain in his ritual. Other Vedic occurrences of *sāyujya* are TS 5.7.5.7 and TB 3.9.20.9.

<sup>9</sup> Rau 1980; Bronkhorst 1981, 1987; Houben 1997. The citation of words and phrases from Vedic literature for grammatical discussion is to be distinguished from the reference to Vedic lines in support of ideas put forward, just as the Mahābhāṣya referred to ṚV 4.58.3. Such references are found in the MBhD and in the ancient Vṛtti, but quite rare. For the parallelism of an important view of Bhartṛhari and the a view expressed in ṚV 1.164.23-24, see Houben 2007. For Bhartṛhari’s view on the revelation of the Veda see Aklujkar 1991 and 2009.

<sup>10</sup> This verse also occurs in the Mahābhārata and has been retained in the critical edition (1933-1966) where it is found in the Śāntiparvan, 224.60.

step further when it describes not only the goal but also the process of going towards this goal of union and that of achieving Brahman in a terminology and conceptual framework that seem close to those of the Yoga-bhāṣya.<sup>11</sup> It expands here the point made in VP 1.144ab that the grammatical formation of words is itself equivalent to the realisation of the *ātman* ‘self’. In support of this expansion the Maitrāyaṇīya-Upaniṣad can be cited in its large “vulgate” recension<sup>12</sup> which already contains brief

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<sup>11</sup> This is a first approximation. A closer study may reveal that the VP-Vṛtti is still closer to another text with Yoga or Sāṃkhya background. Philosophically, the Yoga-bhāṣya works with concepts and terms of the Sāṃkhya-system (e.g. Frauwallner 1953: 408f; Larson & Bhattacharya 2008; Helārāja cites a passage from the Yoga-bhāṣya on YS 2.19 as evidence for a Sāṃkhya view (VP III:42.5 on VP 3.1.34). For the closeness of the Yoga-bhāṣya and the VP-Vṛtti reference can be made to the use of terms which have a comparable function in both texts: *puruṣa* (in the Vṛtti often in the sense of ‘man’ but sometimes rather ‘soul’: Vṛtti on VP ) ; *prakāśa* and *prakāśātman* (cf. YS 2.18, 52 and their YBh; Houben 1995: 318 note 499); *upasañhṛta-dhvani-krama*; *pratibimba*; ‘*na sattām padārtho vyabhicarati*’; the word *yoga* when it is not referring to the employment of words in speech as in *vāg-yoga-vid* and *śabda-pūrva yoga*.

<sup>12</sup> Bronkhorst 2009 points out similarities between the five major points he recognizes in Bhartṛhari’s thought and statements in the Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad. van Buitenen (1962) reconstructed an original, much shorter MaiUp and claimed that the current version contains many later additions. According to Bronkhorst (2009: 106) it would be “a priori most likely ... that Bhartṛhari was acquainted with the original Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad.” However, even if we accept the results of van Buitenen’s reconstruction usually on internal criteria, how likely would it be that the “late” passages were added after and not (a considerable time) before Bhartṛhari (before late fourth / early fifth century)? Intensive engagements with ideas and practices on meditation etc. – which we also find in the chapters that have the largest number of accretions according to van Buitenen – are attested since the early centuries C.E. (Larson & Bhattacharya 2008: 67-70). If the additions would be after Bhartṛhari one should we not expect them to reflect a more advanced level of reflection on meditative practices? Be that as it may, the passages (4.1, 4.4, 6.22) which evoke Bhartṛhari’s wording and his ideas more closely are precisely those belonging only to the “vulgate”; they are neither found in the southern version of the Maitrāyaṇīya-Upaniṣad nor are they retained in van Buitenen’s reconstruction.

descriptions of yogic procedures.<sup>13</sup> An important distinction is that the Yoga-bhāṣya does not identify the self as “word” and does not describe it in linguistic terms but relegates language to a domain outside the self.<sup>14</sup>

The ideas on grammar and its role in the achievement and nature of liberation as expressed in the VP kārīkās briefly discussed above and in the ancient Vṛtti on them, are already announced in VP 1.14, esp. 14a.

*tad dvāram apavargasya vāṇmalānām cikitsitam /  
pavitraṁ sarvavidyānām adhididyam prakāśate //*

This (grammar) is the gateway to liberation (and) a therapy for impurities of speech; as the purifier of all sciences it shines in each of them.

The declaration in the first pāda that grammar is the gateway to liberation is substantiated only in 1.143-144. Moreover, the Vṛtti on this first pāda clearly evokes these two later kārīkās and their Vṛtti. The very first sentence of the Vṛtti states that *śabdapūrva yoga* “the *yoga* of the word” is obtained by the one who knows the undivided reality (*abheda tattvajña*) of the specific form of the word (*śabdasvarūpasya*); and the next sentence speaks of obtaining “the great word-self.” Later authors refer first of all to this first kārīkā (VP 1.14) in order to illustrate the position of grammarians that grammar is a means for liberation. The

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<sup>13</sup> For instance, MaiU 6.22 refers not only to “two Brahmans, sound and non-sound” but also to two sorts of practices associated with these two. One seems to imply that the syllable “om” is used to reach non-sound. This is next illustrated as follows: *atha yathorṇanābhis tantunordhvam utkrānto 'vakāśaṁ labhatīty evaṁ vāva khalv asā abhidhyātom ity anenordhvam utkrāntaḥ svātantryaṁ labhate*; Buitenen interprets *abhidhyāṭṭ* as “the yogin in meditation” and translates “Just as a spider climbing up along its thread finds open space, so indeed the yogin in meditation climbs up through OM and finds complete independence.” Ideas and illustrations such as these are still far removed from the systematic and technical discussions in the Yoga-bhāṣya.

<sup>14</sup> That is what we can infer from YS 3.17 and Bhāṣya and the definition of the state of liberation (*kaivalya*) in YS 4.34 and Bhāṣya.

Sarvadarśana-saṁgraha (ed. p. 310) of Sāyaṇa-mādhava (14<sup>th</sup> cent.) cites VP 1.14 (and VP 1.16 which is part of the Vṛtti<sup>15</sup>) in order to support the statement that the science of grammar is a means to liberation (*śabdānuśāsanaśāstrasya niḥśreyasa-sādhanatvaṁ siddham*).

3.3 Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita (16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> cent.) made major efforts to re-establish the Pāṇinian grammatical tradition by following more strictly than his immediate predecessors three ancient grammarians: Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali (cf. Houben 2008). These three grammarians, the three sages (*muni-traya*), are placed on a level of absolute authoritativeness in grammatical matters. From introductory verses and from non-grammatical works of Bhaṭṭoji we can infer that he also had specific ideas on religious practice and liberation.<sup>16</sup> In his *Tattvakaustubha*, for instance, we find a defence of Advaita Vedānta against Dvaita ideas and also a defence of Vedic ritual against Vaiṣṇava preferences of *bhakti*. However, that grammar would be able to play an important role in obtaining liberation is accepted by him but he does not pay much attention to it at places where we would expect this.

In his VSK Bhaṭṭoji discusses the established views of grammarians on grammatical and theoretical issues. A few *kārikās* of Bhartṛhari are adopted as *kārikās* of this work that is known in two different forms, one – the best known one – commented upon by Kaunḍa-bhaṭṭa and the other by Vanamāli-miśra. VP *kārikās* 1.14 and 1.143-144 are not among the VP-*kārikās* integrated in his text. Other VP-*kārikās* are cited by Kaunḍa-bhaṭṭa in his commentary. Under VSK 69 *pañcakośādivat* ... Kaunḍa-bhaṭṭa refers to VP 1.14 to support

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<sup>15</sup> If we apply the two criteria that a verse should not be explicitly said to be a citation and that it must have been commented upon as a *kārikā* in the Vṛtti in order to be accepted as a *kārikā* (cf. Iyer 1966 : x), VP 1.16 must be relegated to the Vṛtti (Aklujkar 1971 : 510).

<sup>16</sup> More details on technical and contextual factors of Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa's *Prakriyā-sarvasva* I discussed in Houben, forthcoming. A fundamental study is still Venkitasubramonia Iyer 1972.

his statement that grammar is the cause for heaven and liberation (*tasya ... svargamokṣādi hetutvam*).

In his Śabdakaustubha, a commentary on (parts of) the Aṣṭādhyāyī and paying much attention to the Mahābhāṣya, Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita cites *ekah śabdah ... and yas tu prayunkte ...* but does not elaborate on their significance (MBh ed. (b) p. 28). To the Ṛg-vedic verse that was cited in the MBh and that gave occasion to Bhartṛhari to compose his 1.143 *api prayoktur ...* Bhaṭṭoji refers very briefly (together with other Vedic verses) without further discussion: *ṛgvede'pi bahavo mantravarṇāḥ - catvāri śṛṅgā, catvāri vāk, uta tvaḥ paśyan, saktum ivetyādayaḥ* (MBh ed. (b) p. 32).

A century or so later, Nāgeśa in his Uddyota on *catvāri śṛṅgā ...* does cite VP 1.143 and explains it with a citation-cum-gloss of part of the Vṛtti on VP 1.143. In his Laghu-mañjūṣā Nāgeśa expresses as his view that the employment of language after knowing its analysis by grammar leads to purity of the mind and brings about liberation (... *jñānapūrvakaprayogasya cittaśuddhidvārā apavargasampādanatvena śāstrajñānasya āvaśyakatvāt* cited after Abhyankar & Limaye 1965: 200), which confirms his positive acceptance of the ideas expressed for the first time most clearly in the VP-Vṛtti on VP 1.14, 143-144.

3.4 From the preceding discussion we retain the following points.

(a) In the Mahābhāṣya grammar has a function with regard to reaching some blessed state expressed in terms of Vedic religiosity. Forms of *yuj* in this context refer to the employment of speech in daily communication and in (Vedic) ritual.

(b) In the VP-kārikās references are found to the efficacy of grammar with regard to religious or spiritual aims. The *sāmya* 'similarity' between "us" and the deity of speech in the Mahābhāṣya (in a special interpretation of ṚV 4.58.3), is replaced by the Upaniṣadic *sāyujya* 'union' in VP 1.143.

(c) Unlike the Maitrāyaṇīya-upaniṣad and even more unlike a text such as the Yoga-bhāṣya, the VP-kārikās pay no attention to process or procedure: this we find in the VP-Vṛtti, esp. on VP

1.14, 1.143-144. An important distinction with the Yoga-bhāṣya, which clarifies the peculiar position of the VP-Vṛtti and apparently of the later grammarians, is that for the Yoga-bhāṣya “language” remains distant from the “self” whereas the VP-Vṛtti, following the indications in the VP-kārikās, identifies the two.

4.1 Although the peculiar position regarding grammar and liberation found in the VP-kārikās and Vṛtti has been identified as THE view of the Pāṇinian grammarians (as we saw in the Sarvadarśanasamgraha), and although there are indeed starting points for this position in the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali, this is not the only Pāṇinian position adhered to by the grammarians of ancient and pre-modern India. Apart from the traditional line followed in the preceding discussion – from Patañjali to Bhartṛhari and Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita and finally Nāgeśa – there is another traditional line which was hardly less important although it has received less attention in modern research. For this other line, Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya is known and appreciated but no attempt is made to place it on an absolute footing as in the school of Bhaṭṭoji and his followers. This other line is the pragmatic – rather than exegetical and theoretical – grammatical tradition of which the Kāśikā (7<sup>th</sup> cent.) is the oldest extensive representative and that was continued in Kerala in the work of Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa who was roughly contemporaneous to Bhaṭṭoji-bhaṭṭa (16<sup>th</sup> / 17<sup>th</sup> century).

With regard to the topic under discussion, a possible link between grammar and liberation, we can be brief about the Kāśikā: it is absolutely disinterested and does not speak about it. After its introductory verse announcing the topic and textual context,<sup>17</sup> the Kāśikā immediately proceeds with the technical problems in understanding and applying the sūtras of Pāṇini.

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<sup>17</sup> It has now been argued, mainly on the basis of the evidence provided by the earliest commentaries, that only the first of three generally accepted introductory verses is authentic: Haag 2009.

4.2 The little-known Prakriyā-sarvasva (PS) by the brilliant and versatile author Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa of Melputtūr remains in several respects close to the Kāśikā, although it is mainly the grammar of Bhoja that is now and then praised by Nārāyaṇa. In any case the PS is quite unattached to Patañjali even if Nārāyaṇa is evidently familiar with his work. Although in the view of the orthodoxy of the school of Bhaṭṭoji and Nāgeśa, the PS of Nārāyaṇa may seem un-pāṇinian, it is thoroughly pāṇinian according to Nārāyaṇa's own statement. In introductory verse no. 9 (a Gīti), Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa explicitly acknowledges his teacher Acyuta (Piṣāroṭi) and the ancient grammarians Pāṇini and Kātyāyana; Patañjali and other ancient grammarians are apparently implied in *ādi*:

*ayam acyuta-guru-kṛpayā pāṇini-kātyāyanādi-kāruṇyāt /  
yatnaḥ phala-prasūḥ syāt*

*kṛta-rāga-raso 'dya śabda-mārga-juṣām //*

Through the compassion of the teacher Acyuta (Piṣāroṭi) and on account of the kindheartedness of Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and others, this effort should be fruitful – this effort which has as essence (*rasa*) a passion (*rāga*) that is today accomplished (*kṛta*) for those enjoying the way of words.

The PS is at least as comprehensive as the well-known grammar of Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita, the Siddhānta-kaumudī, but significantly differs from it in both method and substance, even if both remain within the framework of Pāṇini's system. The features of the PS are contrasted with those of other works, and its substance are explained in introductory verses 5 (Śārdūlavikrīḍita) and 6-7 (two Gītis), which are placed in the mouth of Nārāyaṇa's sponsor, the king Devanārāyaṇa of Ampalapuḷa. At present verse 5 is of interest as it contextualizes the Prakriyā-sarvasva:

*vṛttau cāru na rūpasiddhi-kathanā[>nam] rūpāvatāre punaḥ  
kaumudyādiṣu cātra sūtram akhilaṁ nāsty eva tasmāt tvayā /  
rūpānīti-samasta-sūtra-sahitaṁ spaṣṭaṁ mitaṁ prakriyā-*

*sarvasvābhihitam nibandhanam idam*

*kāryam mad-uktādhvanā //*

In the (Kāśikā-)Vṛtti the description of the formation of the form (of words) is not nice ; and again in the Rūpāvatāra (of Dharmakīrti) and in works such as the (Prakriyā-) kaumudī (of Rāmacandra), in these the text of the sūtras is not complete ; that is why you (Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa) should compose, according to the way which I (Devanārāyaṇa) tell you (in the next verses in which I sum up the 20 chapters), this clear and well-measured work called Prakriyā-sarvasva that contains all *sūtras* and the formation of forms."

Although the PS is pāṇinian in substance and method, Nārāyaṇa explicitly argues that Pāṇini's authority is not absolute. At the end of chapter 11 on verbal endings, Nārāyaṇa gives a verse (in the Sragdharā metre) that, in a nutshell, explains his position in a controversy with a scholar (probably from the Tanjavur court) who placed much emphasis on the authoritativeness of Pāṇini. The same verse appears again at the beginning of the Apāṇinīya-pramāṇatā (AP) where the argument is expanded. The position which Nārāyaṇa does not accept is: *pāṇinyuktam pramāṇam, na tu punar aparam candra-bhojādi-sūtram*, "Authoritative is (exclusively) what Pāṇini said, but not the other grammars of Candra, Bhoja etc." The arguments Nārāyaṇa gives to disagree with this include: (a) *na khalu bahuvīdām asti nirmūla-vākyam*, "Indeed, by persons (such as Candra and Bhoja) who know much no base-less statement is passed. (Hence, the grammars of Candra, Bhoja etc. cannot be dismissed just like that)"; *pāṇineḥ prāk katham vā*, "And how was the situation (with regard to linguistic correctness) before Pāṇini? (Even without Pāṇini's grammar people could speak correct Sanskrit)"; *pūrvoktam pāṇinīś cāpy anu-vadati*, "And Pāṇini (himself) repeats what has been said by predecessors (and thus accepts their authority)"; *virodhe 'pi kalpyo vikalpaḥ*, "Even if there is a contradiction (between other authorities and Pāṇini) a (grammatical) option is to be created (so that the non-Pāṇinian grammarians need not be rejected)."

Nārāyaṇa's attitude is remarkably rational and historically realistic and contrasts with Bhaṭṭoji's decision that there is no correct Sanskrit after the three sages whose authoritativeness is absolute and who are placed on a divine level. In this sense there is no interference of theology in grammar in the case of Nārāyaṇa's work. This can also be inferred from the fact that for Nārāyaṇa the *pratyāhāra-sūtras* are not composed by the god Śiva as is the generally accepted view in Bhaṭṭoji's school (where these sūtras are called Śiva-sūtras or Māheśvara-sūtras).<sup>18</sup>

4.3 Grammatical examples, however, are often original statements taken from the life of Kṛṣṇa and frequently of remarkable poetic beauty. This starts with the first introductory verse (Gīti) which is not just a simple reference to the *rāsa*-dance of Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs (cowherd women): it presents the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs as a mirror of the relationship of base and affixes.

*rāsavilāsavilolaṁ smarata murārer manoramam rūpam /  
prakṛtiṣu yat pratyayavat pratyekaṁ gopikāsu  
sammilitam //*

Bring to mind the charming form of Murāri (Kṛṣṇa),  
going round in the playful *rāsa*-dance, (the form of Kṛṣṇa  
which) like the (male) suffix to the (feminine) verbal  
themes, is unified, one by one, with each of the Gopīs.

As for the opposition Dvaita versus Advaita Vedānta which was of some importance for Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita, Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa is fully engaged in the *bhakti-mārga* which presupposes a dualistic outlook, but he speaks with sincere respect of the Advaita Vedāntist Śāṅkara<sup>19</sup> and in the Apāṇinīya-pramāṇatā (AP) he defends the correctness of one of Śāṅkara's "un-pāṇinian" verb-forms: *hunet* (instead of *juhuyāt*). Another

<sup>18</sup> Deshpande 1997.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Kunjunni Raja 1958: 140f.

dichotomy in disputes in which Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita was engaged concerned Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* and the adherence to Vedic ritual. In the case of Nārāyaṇa the two are harmoniously combined. There is no sign that Nārāyaṇa's enthusiasm for Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* interfered with his engagement in Vedic ritual or with his interest in Mīmāṃsā.

Since theology is basically a sphere that is different from grammar that remains limited to the content of examples and illustrations, there is for Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa little overlap and no occasion either to discuss their possible link or to end up in a dispute with non-grammarians philosophers who feel that their domain is encroached upon by the grammarians.

Nevertheless, at the end of chapter 17 on “principles of interpretation” which is also the end of the first major part (*pūrvabhāga*) of the entire grammar and which precedes the long technical discussions that have to constitute the second major part (*uttarabhāga*) consisting of the chapters on the Dhātupāṭha, the Uṇādi-suffixes and the Chāndasa-grammar, Nārāyaṇa pours out his heart in the following verse in the Śārdūlavikrīḍita metre:

*āstām anyad ihārthaśabda-paṭalīm tac-cintanādi-kriyām  
śabda-vyākṛti-janya-puṇya-nivaham pāpaṃ ca  
vāg-doṣajam /  
sarvaṃ tat prajuhomi nanda-tanaye mandasmitārdrānane  
pūrṇa-brahmaṇi ; tūrṇam eṣa karuṇā - sindhur  
mayi prīyatām //*

Let the rest (other possible principles of interpretation as discussed in chapter 17) remain. — Here the veil of words and meanings, (mental) activities such as thinking about them, the mass of merit produced by the analytic formation (*vy-ā-kṛti*) of words, and the demerit arising from mistakes in the language : of all that I make an offering to the son of Nanda (that is, to Kṛṣṇa), whose tender face has a faint smile : to (him who is no-one else but) the complete Brahman ; may that river of compassion quickly find satisfaction in me.

At the end of the long first major part of his work, Nārāyaṇa's mind shifts as it were to another gear: linguistic items and their meanings, the action of reflecting on them, the analytic formation of words (according to the rules of grammar), merit and demerit arising from the use of correct and incorrect words – they are all given up and transferred to Kṛṣṇa, whom he regards as the basis of the universe, Brahman (neuter). The verse expresses the aim to come out of an excess of intellectual activity and to become one with, or at least to become close to, either the personal Kṛṣṇa in the guise of the neutral Brahman or, vice versa, the neutral Brahman in the guise of the personal Kṛṣṇa. As such it brings to mind, on the one hand, the concept of *citta-vṛtti-nirodha* (YS 1.2), the stopping of (some or all) specific modes of functioning of the mind; and, on the other hand, the concept of yoga to be attained by an optional devotion to Īśvara, *īśvara-praṇidhānād vā* (YS 1.23).

4.4 From our discussion of Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa's grammar the following points can be retained.

(a) No link is suggested between the correct employment of speech in daily communication and in (Vedic) ritual and the achievement of a blessed state expressed in terms of Vedic religiosity, to which the Mahābhāṣya hinted. It is admitted that correct speech leads to some merit, which, however, is insignificant in the light of the result to be expected from devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

(b) There is therefore also no reference to any efficacy of grammar with regard to religious or spiritual aims (except for the apparently quite insignificant merit that comes from using correct speech). More generally, although Nārāyaṇa does not make it an explicit topic of his discussion, his occasional devotional expressions, esp. the one studied in the second part of paragraph 4.3, rule out the position of linguistic non-dualism for which Bhartṛhari had become famous, which was accepted by Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita, the grammarian contemporaneous with Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, and which was again embraced by Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita's successors.

(c) Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa shows little interest in the ideas, aims and practices of the Yoga-system except for the option of devotion; however, he is basically in agreement with the Yoga-bhāṣya when he posits “language” and grammatical reflection about it as distant from the “self” which desires to get close to Kṛṣṇa or Brahman. Here, Nārāyaṇa’s position and that of the Yoga-bhāṣya converge and are diametrically opposed to that of the VP-Vṛtti which, following the indications in the VP-kārikās, identifies the *ātman* and *śabda*, the “self” and the “word.” In addition, for Nārāyaṇa and Yoga-bhāṣya language means a plurality of words, there is no attempt to represent it as somehow “one” (which leads to forced renderings of *śabda*, normally ‘word’, as language-principle, or as Word with capital, etc.).

5. Whatever the comparison of a few marginal and two central lines of thought on grammar may have revealed, it is clear that the Indian grammatical tradition shows considerable internal diversity not only in technical aspects but also with regard to reflections on the place of grammar in a larger framework of philosophical and religious thought.

For Bhartṛhari language has a universal, non-dual aspect which is identical with the self of the speaker and which the speaker has to try to bring to perfection; for Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa language is a mode of the mind that can be suspended or given up. With regard to the major tradition of grammar from Patañjali via Bhartṛhari to Bhaṭṭoji-dīkṣita and Nāgeśa, comparisons along the lines sketched here can be expected to bring into sharper relief the peculiarity of some of its philosophical and religious decisions at the background of its scientific practice.

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