Understanding Mīmāṃsā

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Perspectives and Approaches

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SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION

श्रा	shra
ई	ii
ऊ	uu
ऋ	ri
ल	l
ए	e
ऐ	ai
ओ	o
औ	au
ङ:	ng
च	ch
छ	chh
ञ	yna
ट	t
ठ	thh
ड	d
ढ	dhh
ण	n
व्	v
श	sh
ष	s
क्ष	ks
.	m
:	h

CHRONOLOGY OF MĪMĀṀSĀ–GRANTHAKĀR AND MĪMĀṀSĀ–GRANTHĀS

I. Brahmā
II. Prajāpati
III. Indra
IV. Agni
V. Vasishtha
VI. Parāshara
VII. Krishna Dwapāyana

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a. Shabarbhashyam
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a. Sutravyakhya (?)
6. Bhartrimitra, AD 100–200
a. Sutravyakhyā (?)
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PREFACE

Mīmāṁsā: Perspectives and Approaches to Meaning is devoted to explaining the extended meaning known as *Vākyārtha*, in accordance with the *Prābhākara* school of *Purva Mīmāṃsā*, the ancient Indian theory of meaning. The present work is based on the Vākyārthamātṛkā of Śālikanātha Misra, the most celebrated writer of the Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā.

In this work, the author discusses critically and comparatively the factors—viz., *Akaṁksha* (expectation), *yogyāta* (merit), and *sannidhi* (juxtaposition)—that are called the causes of deriving and understanding meaning from words and sentences. Moreover, the Abhihitānvayavāda of the Bhatta Mīmāṃsā and the Anvitabhidhānavāda of the Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā are discussed. The author has also discussed some important issues such as the cause of verbal comprehension, implication, importation, urge and implications, performability and achievability of the desired object known as *sakti* (force), *Laksāna* (imprints), *Adhyahāra vidhi* (process of absorption), *Arthāvāda* (lexicology), *Bhāvana* (connotation), *Apurva* (primal) and *kārya* (act), and so forth. The theories of *Bhāvanakyāārtha* (connoted meaning) of the Bhattas and *Niyogavākyārtha* (definite meaning) of the Prabhākaras have also been dealt with critically and comparatively.

How does a word consisting of a succession of phonemes generate a single meaning? How does a sentence consisting of a succession of words generate a single meaning? Indian philosophers of language like Katyāyana (300–200 BC), Patanjali (author of the Mahābhāṣya [200–100 BC]), the Mīmāṃsākas, and the Naiyāyikas examined the role of memory in the sequence of letters in a word and of words in a sentence. Unless they co-exist until the end of the sentence, the letters/sounds/phonemes of a word and the words of a sentence successively perish in actual utterance but persist in the memory of the listener. Choosing the word *gauh*, Patanjali vividly indicates the ephemerality of sounds: "When the speech is in *g*, it cannot be in *au* and *h*; when it is in *au*, it cannot be in *g* and *h*, and when it is in *h*, it cannot be in *g* and *au*" (Coward and Raja 1990, 117). For the Mīmāṃsākas and the Naiyāyikas, the single meaning of a word is established when the mind attaches its memory (*smrti*) or "impressions" (*saṁskaras*) of the previous successive sounds of the word to the last sound (*antima-varna*). However, if memory of sounds and of words is also

sequential like the actual utterance, how is the single meaning of a word or of a sentence experienced? Sequential memory was found to be insufficient as a source of the single meaning of *padārtha* and *vākyārtha*.

After Bhartrhari's contemplation of *pasyanti*, *vaikhari*, and *pratibha,* the most critically influential interpretation of sequence was propounded by the classical Mīmāṃsā philosophers Kumārila Bhatta (seventh–eighth centuries) and Prabhākara (seventh–eighth centuries). As part of their Mīmāṃsā hermeneutics, Kumārila and Prabhākara advanced theories of language that included an enquiry into how words in a sentence behave and generate meaning and the modus operandi of linguistic sequence. The crux of the problem of sequence has been whether a given element in a sequence carries a self-sufficient/isolated meaning whereby the meaning of the sequence is merely a mechanical aggregate of the separate meanings of the constituent units of the sequence, or whether the constituent element conveys not only its own original/independent meaning but also simultaneously an additional qualified meaning determined by the dynamics of the context, whereby it carries traces of its emergence out of what is prior to it and of its inclination towards what is ahead of it. In his approach to the sequence of a sentence (*anvitabhidhāna*), Prabhākara's starting point was a keen sense of *vākyārtha* or "sentence-meaning" as an independent meaning that transcends the totality of the individual word-meanings in the sentence.

The most dependable work on this system is the *Prakaranā-Pancikā*, a primer that deals with very important tenets such as *pramāna*, *prameyā*, and *vākyārtha*, and so on. The book is the magnum opus of Salikanātha Misra. I have great pleasure in expressing my immense gratitude to the respected learned scholars of Sanskrit Professor Mukund Madhav Tirtha and Professor R. N. Sarma, whose book *Mīmāṁsā Theory of Meaning* basically paved the way for understanding the basics of Mīmāṁsā. Sarma's text and examples have been used extensively in the present book and the publisher conveyed that separate copyright permission is unnecessary since the use is academic.

This book aims at a systematic examination of rather important problems in Purvamimānsa. It documents different manuscripts, texts, and commentaries available in Sanskrit and English. The book includes an appendix containing the thoughts of prestigious scholars on the subject. Many Sanskrit words are explained in English in the text itself to support the flow of the thought. The publisher is to be thanked for including this work in an important series. A number of libraries, book sellers, and publications provided much-needed support in bringing out this edition. I

also owe my gratitude to the eminent scholars, researchers, and critics whose comments and commentaries I've followed constantly.

I hope this book shall bring the study of Mīmāṁsā and its perspectives beyond departments of Sanskrit or Indology and that global scholars of comparative linguistics and semantics may find it useful. I thank my gurus, companions, teachers, and the Indian knowledge traditions that exposed me to the wisdom of writing.

Akshay tritiya, 2016
Neerja A
Ahmedabad

PROLOGUE

LANGUAGE AND TESTIMONY IN CLASSICAL INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

MADHAV DESHPANDE

Speculations about the nature and function of language can be traced to India's earliest period. These speculations are multifaceted in that one detects many different strands of thought regarding language. Some of these speculations are about what one may call the principle of language, but others are about specific languages or specific uses of these languages. One sees speculations regarding the creation of language as well as the role of language in the creation of the universe. Language appears in relation to gods as well as humans; it occupies the entire width of a spectrum from being a divinity herself to being a means used by gods to create and control the world, and ultimately to being a means in the hands of human beings to achieve their own religious as well as mundane purposes. Gradually, a whole range of questions were raised about all these various aspects of language in the evolving religious and philosophical traditions in India, traditions that shared some common conceptions but thrived in full-blooded disagreements on major issues. Such disagreements relate to the ontological nature of language, its communicative role, the nature of meaning, and more specifically the nature of word-meaning and sentence-meaning. On the other hand, certain manifestations of language, whether in the form of specific languages like Sanskrit or particular scriptural texts like the Vedā̃s, became topics of contestation between various philosophical and religious traditions. Finally, one must mention the epistemic role and value of language, its ability or inability to provide veridical knowledge about the world. In what follows, I intend to provide a brief account of these diverse developments in ancient, classical, and medieval India.

1. Pre-systematic conceptions of language in Vedic texts

The Vedic scriptural texts (1500–500 BCE) consist of the four ancient collections, that is, the *ṚgVedā*, the *SāmaVedā*, the *YajurVedā*, and the *AtharvaVedā*. The next layer of Vedic texts, the *Brāhmaṇas*, consists of prose ritual commentaries that offer procedures, justifications, and explanations. The last two categories of Vedic literature are the *Āraṇyakas*, "Forest Texts," and the *Upaniṣads*, "Secret Mystical Doctrines."

The word *saṃskṛta* is not known as a linguistic label during the Vedic period. The general term used for language in the Vedic texts is *vāk*, a word historically related to "voice." The Vedic poet-sages perceived significant differences between their own language and the languages of the outsiders. Similarly, they perceived important differences between their own use of language in mundane contexts and the use of language directed toward gods. The gods are generically referred to by the term *deva*, and the language of the hymns is said to be *devī vāk*, "divine language." This language is believed to have been created by the gods themselves. The language thus created by the gods is then spoken by the animate world in various forms. The divine language in its ultimate form is so mysterious that three-quarters of it is said to be hidden from the humans who have access only to a quarter of it. The Vedic poet-sages say that this divine language enters into their hearts and that they discover it through mystical introspection. Just as the language used by the Vedic poet-sages is the divine language, the language used by the non-Vedic people is said to be un-godly (*adevī*) or demonic (*asuryā*).

In the Vedic literature, one observes the development of mystical and ritual approaches to language. Language was perceived as an essential tool for approaching the gods, invoking them, and asking their favour, and thus for the successful completion of a ritual performance. While the gods were the powers that finally yielded the wishes of their human worshipers, one could legitimately look at the resulting reward as ensuing from the power of the religious language, or the power of the performing priest. This way, the language came to be looked upon as having mysterious creative powers, and as a divine power that needed to be propitiated before it could be successfully used to invoke other gods. This approach to language ultimately led to the deification of language and the emergence of the Goddess of Speech (*vāk devī*) and a number of other gods who are called "Lord of Speech" (*brahmaṇaspati*, *bṛhaspati*, *vākpati*).

In contrast to the valorous deeds of the divine language, the language of the non-Vedic people yields neither fruit nor blossom (*ṚgVedā*, 10.71.5). "Yielding fruit and blossom" is a phrase indicative of the

creative power of speech that produces the rewards for the worshiper. From being a created but divine entity, the speech rises to the heights of being a divinity in her own right and eventually to becoming the substratum of the existence of the whole universe. The deification of speech is seen in hymn 10.125 of the *ṚgVedā* where the Goddess of Speech sings her own glory. In this hymn, one no longer hears of the creation of the speech, but one begins to see the speech as a primordial divinity that creates and controls other gods, sages, and human beings. Here the goddess of speech demands worship in her own right, before her powers may be used for other purposes. The mystery of language is comprehensible only to a special class of people, the wise *Brāhmaṇas*, while the commoners have access to and understanding of only a limited portion of this transcendental phenomenon.

The "Lord of Speech" divinities typically emerge as creator divinities —for example, *Brahmā*, *Bṛhaspati*, and *Brahmaṇaspati*—and the word *brahman*, which earlier refers, with differing accents, to the creative incantation and the priest, eventually comes to assume in the *Upaniṣads* the meaning of the creative force behind the entire universe. While the Vedic hymns were looked upon as being crafted by particular poet-sages in the earlier period, gradually a rising perception of their mysterious power and their preservation by successive generations led to the emergence of a new conception of the scriptural texts. Already in the late parts of the *ṚgVedā* (10.90.9), we hear that the verses (*ṛk*), the songs (*sāma*), and the ritual formulas (*yajus*) arose from the primordial sacrifice offered by the gods. They arose from the sacrificed body of the cosmic person, the ultimate ground of existence. This tendency to increasingly look at the scriptural texts as not being produced by any human author takes many forms in subsequent religious and philosophical materials, finally leading to a wide-spread notion that the Vedās are not authored by any human being (*apauruṣeya*) and are in fact uncreated and eternal, beyond the cycles of creation and destruction of the world. In late Vedic texts, we hear the notion that the real Vedās are infinite (*ananta*) and that the Vedās known to human poet-sages are a mere fraction of the real infinite Vedās.

In the late Vedic traditions of the *Brāhmaṇas*, we are told that there is perfection of the ritual form (*rūpasamṛddhi*) when a recited incantation echoes the ritual action that is being performed. This shows a notion that ideally there should be a match between the contents of a ritual formula and the ritual action in which it is recited, further suggesting a notion that language mirrors the external world in some way. In the *Āraṇyakas* and *Upaniṣads*, language acquires importance in different ways. The

Upaniṣads, emphasising the painful nature of cycles of rebirths, point out that the ideal goal should be to put an end to these cycles of birth and rebirth and to find one's permanent identity with the original ground of the universal existence—that is, *Brahman*. The term *brahman*, which originally referred to creative ritual chants and the chanters, now acquired this new meaning: the ultimate creative force behind the universe. As part of meditative practice, one is asked to focus on the sacred syllable *OM*, which is the symbolic linguistic representation of Brahman. Here the language, in the form of OM, becomes an important tool for the attainment of one's mystical union with Brahman. The Sanskrit word *akṣara* refers to a syllable, but it also means "indestructible." Thus, the word *akṣara* allowed the meditational use of the holy syllable *OM* to ultimately lead to one's experiential identity with the indestructible reality of *Brahman*.

The role of language and scripture in the Upaniṣadic mode of religious life is complicated. Here, the use of language to invoke the Vedic gods becomes a lower form of religious practice. Can Brahman be reached through language? Since Brahman is beyond all characterisations and all modes of human perception, no linguistic expression can properly describe it. Hence all linguistic expressions and all knowledge framed in language are deemed to be inadequate for the purpose of reaching Brahman. In fact, it is silence that characterises Brahman, and not words. Even so, the use of OM-focused meditation is emphasised, at least in the pre-final stages of Brahman-realisation.

By the time we come to the classical philosophical systems in India, one more assumption is made by almost all Hindu systems; that is, that all the Vedās together form a coherent whole. The human authorship of the Vedic texts has long been rejected, and they are now perceived as being either entirely uncreated and eternal or created by God at the beginning of each cycle of creation. Under the assumption that they are entirely uncreated, their innate ability to convey truthful meaning is unhampered by human limitations. Thus if all the Vedic texts convey truth, there cannot be any internal contradictions. If an omniscient God, who by his very nature is compassionate and beyond human limitations, created the Vedās, one reaches the same conclusion: there cannot be any internal contradictions. The traditional interpretation of the Vedās proceeds under these assumptions. If there are seeming contradictions in Vedic passages, the burden of finding ways to remove those seeming contradictions is upon the interpreter, but there can be no admission of internal contradictions in the texts themselves.

2. Conception of language among Sanskrit grammarians

Before the emergence of the formalised philosophical systems or the *darśanas*, we see a number of philosophical issues relating to language implicitly and explicitly brought out by the early Sanskrit grammarians, namely Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, and Patañjali. Pāṇini (400 BCE) composed his grammar of Sanskrit with a certain notion of Sanskrit as an atemporal language. For him, there were regional dialects of Sanskrit, as well as variation of usage in its scriptural (*chandas*) and contemporary (*bhāṣā*) domains. All these domains are treated as subdomains of a unified language, which is not restricted by any temporality.

Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* refers to the views of Vyāḍi and Vājapyāyana on the meaning of words. Vyāḍi argued that words like "cow" denote individual instances of a certain class, while Vājapyāyana argued that words like "cow" denote generic properties or class properties (*ākṛti*), such as "cowness," that are shared by all members of certain classes. Patañjali presents a long debate on the extreme positions in this argument, and finally concludes that both the individual instances and the class property must be included within the range of meaning. The only difference between the two positions is about which aspect, the individual or the class property, is denoted first, and which is understood subsequently. This early debate indicates philosophical positions that get expanded and fully argued in the traditions of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas* and the *Mīmāṃsakas*.

The early commentators on Pāṇini's grammar from the late Mauryan and post-Mauryan periods, Kātyāyana and Patañjali (200–100 BCE), display a significant reorganisation of Brahmanical views in the face of opposition from Jains and Buddhists. For Kātyāyana and Patañjali, the Sanskrit language at large is sacred like the Vedās. The intelligent use of Sanskrit, backed by the explicit understanding of its grammar, leads to prosperity here and in the next world, as do the Vedās. Kātyāyana and Patañjali admit that vernaculars as well as Sanskrit could perform the function of communicating meaning. However, only the use of Sanskrit produces religious merit. This is an indirect criticism of the Jains and the Buddhists, who used vernacular languages for the propagation of their faiths. The grammarians did not accept the religious value of the vernaculars. The vernacular languages, along with the incorrect uses of Sanskrit, are all lumped together by the Sanskrit grammarians under the derogatory terms *apaśabda* and *apabhraṃśa*, both of which suggest a view that the vernaculars are degenerate or "fallen" forms of the divine language—that is, Sanskrit. Kātyāyana says, "While the relationship between words and meanings is established on the basis of the usage of

specific words to denote specific meanings in the community of speakers, the science of grammar only makes a regulation concerning the religious merit produced by the linguistic usage, as is commonly done in worldly matters and in Vedic rituals" (first *Vārttika* on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*). Kātyāyana refers to these "degenerate" vernacular usages as being caused by the inability of low-class speakers to speak proper Sanskrit. The grammarians tell the story of demons who used improper degenerate forms during their ritual and hence were defeated.

The relationship between Sanskrit words and their meanings is said to be established (*siddha*) and taken as given by the grammarians. Patañjali understands this statement of Kātyāyana to mean that the relationship between Sanskrit words and their meanings is eternal (*nitya*), not created (*kārya*) by anyone. Since, according to these grammarians, this eternal relationship exists only for Sanskrit words and their meanings, one cannot accord the same status to the vernaculars, which are born of an inability on the part of their speakers to speak proper Sanskrit.

While Pāṇini uses the term *prakṛti* to refer to the derivationally original state of a word or expression before changes effected by grammatical operations are applied, Kātyāyana and Patañjali use the term *vikṛta* to refer to the derivationally transformed segment. However, change and identity are not compatible within more rigid metaphysical frameworks, and this becomes apparent in the following discussion. In his *Vārttikas* or comments on Pāṇini's grammar, Kātyāyana says that one could have argued that an item partially transformed does not yet lose its identity (*Vārttika* 10 on P. 1.1.56). But such an acceptance would lead to non-eternality (*anityatva*) of language (*Vārttika* 11; *Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 136), and that is not acceptable. Patañjali asserts that words in reality are eternal (*nitya*), and that means they must be absolutely free from change or transformation and fixed in their nature. If words are truly eternal, one cannot then say that a word was transformed and is yet the same. This points to the emerging ideological shifts in philosophical traditions, which make their headway into the tradition of grammar, and finally lead to the development of newer conceptions within the tradition of grammar and elsewhere.

In trying to figure out how the emerging doctrine of *nityatva* (permanence, immutability) of language causes problems with the notion of transformation (*vikāra*), and how these problems are eventually answered by developing new concepts, we should note two issues: temporal fixity or flexibility of individual sounds, and the compatibility of the notion of sequence of sounds, or utterance, as a process stretched in time. From within the new paradigm of *nityatva* or eternality of sounds,

Kātyāyana concludes that the true sounds (*varṇa*) are fixed in their nature despite the difference of speed of delivery (*Vārttika* 5 on P. 1.1.70, *Mahābhāṣya*, I, p. 181). The speed of delivery (*vṛtti*) results from the slow or fast utterance of a speaker (*vacana*), though the true sounds are permanently fixed in their nature. Here, Kātyāyana broaches a doctrine that is later developed further by Patañjali, and more fully by Bhartṛhari. It argues for a dual ontology. There are the fixed true sounds (*varṇa*), and then there are the uttered sounds (*vacana*, "utterance"). It is Patañjali who uses, for the first time as far as we know, the term *sphoṭa* to refer to Kātyāyana's "true sounds which are fixed" (*avasthitā varṇāḥ*) and the term *dhvani* (uttered sounds). Patañjali adds an important comment to Kātyāyana's discussion. He says that the real sound (*śabda*) is thus the *sphoṭa* (the sound as it initially breaks out into the open), and the quality (length or speed) of the sound is part of *dhvani* (sound as it continues) *(Mahābhāṣya*, I, p. 181). The term *sphoṭa* refers to something like exploding or coming into being in a bang. Thus it refers to the initial production or perception of sound. On the other hand, the stretching of that sound seems to refer to the dimension of continuation. Patañjali means to say that it is the same sound, but it may remain audible for different durations.

This raises the next problem that the grammarians must face: can a word be understood as a sequence or a collection of sounds? Kātyāyana says that one cannot have a sequence or a collection of sounds, because the process of speech proceeds sound-by-sound, and that sounds perish as soon as they are uttered. Thus, two sounds co-existing at a given moment cannot relate to each other. Since the sounds perish as soon as they are uttered, a sound cannot have another co-existent companion (*Vārttikas* 9 and 10 on P. 1.4.109). Kātyāyana points out all these difficulties, but it is Patañjali who offers a solution to this philosophical dilemma. Patañjali suggests that one can pull together impressions of all the uttered sounds and then think of a sequence in this mentally constructed image of a word (*Mahābhaṣya*, I, p. 356). Elsewhere, Patañjali says that a word is perceived through the auditory organ, discerned through one's intelligence, and brought into being through its utterance (*Mahābhaṣya*, I, p. 18). While Patañjali's solution overcomes the transitoriness of the uttered sounds, and the resulting impossibility of a sequence, there is no denial of sequentiality or perhaps of an imprint of sequentiality in the comprehended word, and there is indeed no claim to its absolutely unitary or partless character. Patañjali means to provide a solution to the perception of sequentiality through his ideas of a mental storage of comprehension. But at the same time, this mental storage and the ability to view this mental image allows

one to overcome the difficulty of non-simultaneity and construct a word or a linguistic unit as a collection of perceived sounds or words, as the case may be. Kātyāyana and Patañjali specifically admit the notion of *samudāya* (collection) of sounds to represent a word and a collection of words to represent a phrase or a sentence (*Vārttika* 7 on P. 2.2.29). Thus, while the ontology of physical sounds does not permit their co-existence, their mental images do allow it, and once they can be perceived as components of a collection, one also recognises the imprint of the sequence in which they were perceived. Neither Kātyāyana nor Patañjali explicitly claim any higher ontological status to these word-images. However, the very acceptance of such word-images opens up numerous explanatory possibilities.

Although Kātyāyana and Patañjali argue that the notion of change or transformation of parts of words was contradictory to the doctrine of *nityatva* (permanence) of language, they were not averse to the notion of substitution. The notion of substitution was understood as a substitution not of a part of a word by another part but of a whole word by another word, in particular as a conceptual rather than an ontological replacement. Thus, in going from *bhavati* to *bhavatu*, Pāṇini prescribes the change of the *i* in *ti* to *u* (cf., P.3.4.86: "*er uḥ*"). Thus, *i* changes to *u*, leading to the change from *ti* to *tu*, and this consequently leads to the change of *bhavati* to *bhavatu*. For Kātyāyana and Patañjali, the above atomistic and transformational understanding of Pāṇini's procedure is contrary to the doctrine of *nityatva* (permanence) of words. Therefore, they suggest that it is actually the substitution of the whole word *bhavati* by another whole word *bhavatu*, each of these two words being eternal in its own right. Additionally they assert that this is merely a notional change and not an ontological change—that is, a certain item is found to occur, where one expected something else to occur. There is no change of an item *x* into an item *y*, nor does one remove the item *x* and place *y* in its place (*Vārttikas* 12 and 14 on P. 1.1.56). This discussion seems to imply a sort of unitary character to the words, whether notional or otherwise, and this eventually leads to a movement toward a kind of *akhaṇḍa-Pāda-vāda* (the doctrine of partless words) in the *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartṛhari. While one must admit that the seeds for such a conception may be traced in these discussions in the *Mahābhāṣya*, Patañjali is actually not arguing so much against words having parts, as against the notion of change or transformation (*Mahābhāṣya* on P. 1.2.20, I, p. 75).

Kātyāyana and Patañjali clearly view words as collections of sounds. Besides using the term *samudāya* for such a collection, they also use the word *varṇasaṃghāta* (collection of sounds). They argue that words are

built by putting together sounds, and that, while the words are meaningful, the component sounds are not meaningful in themselves. The notion of a word as a collection (*saṃghāta*) applies not only in the sense that it is a collection of sounds, but also in the sense that complex formations are collections of smaller morphological components.

This leads us to consider the philosophical developments in the thought of Bhartṛhari (400 CE), and especially his departures from the conceptions seen in Kātyāyana and Patañjali. Apart from his significant contribution toward an in-depth philosophical understanding of issues of the structure and function of language, and issues of phonology, semantics, and syntax, Bhartṛhari is well known for his claim that language constitutes the ultimate principle of reality (*śabdabrahman*). Both the signifier words and the signified entities in the world are perceived to be a transformation (*pariṇāma*) of the ultimate unified principle of language.

For Kātyāyana and Patañjali, the level of *Pādās* (inflected words) is the basic level of language for grammar. These words are freely combined by their users to form sentences or phrases. The words are not derived by Kātyāyana and Patañjali by abstracting them from sentences through using the method of *anvaya-vyatireka* (concurrent occurrence and concurrent absence) (*Vārttika* 9 on P. 1.2.45). On the other hand, they claim that a grammarian first derives stems and affixes by applying the procedure of abstraction to words, and then in turn puts these stems and affixes through the grammatical process of derivation (*saṃskāra*) to build the words. Here, Kātyāyana and Patañjali do make a distinction between the levels of actual usage (*vacana*) and technical grammatical analysis and derivation. While fully-fledged words (*Pāda*) occur at the level of usage, their abstracted morphological components do not occur by themselves at that level. However, they do not seem to suggest that the stems, roots, and affixes are purely imagined (*kalpita*).

Bhartṛhari has substantially moved beyond Kātyāyana and Patañjali. For him, the linguistically given entity is a sentence. Everything below the level of a sentence is derived through a method of abstraction referred to by the term *anvaya-vyatireka* or *apoddhāra*. Additionally, for Bhartṛhari, elements abstracted through this procedure have no reality of any kind. They are *kalpita* (imagined) (*Vākyapadīya*, III, 14, 75–76). Such abstracted items have instructional value for those who do not yet have any intuitive insight into the true nature of speech (*Vākyapadīya*, II. 238). The true speech unit, the sentence, is an undivided singularity and so is its meaning which is comprehended in an instantaneous cognitive flash (*pratibhā*), rather than through a deliberative and/or sequential process. Consider the following verse of the *Vākyapadīya* (II.10):

> Just as stems, affixes, etc., are abstracted from a given word, so the abstraction of words from a sentence is justified.

Here, the clause introduced by "just as" refers to the older, more widely prevalent view seen in the *Mahābhāṣya*. With the word "so," Bhartṛhari is proposing an analogical extension of the procedure of abstraction (*apoddhāra*) to the level of a sentence.

Without mentioning Patañjali or Kātyāyana by name, Bhartṛhari seems to critique their view that the meaning of a sentence, consisting of the interrelations between the meanings of individual words, is essentially derived not from the constituent words themselves but from the whole sentence as a collection of words. The constituent words convey their meaning first, but their interrelations are communicated not by the words themselves but by the whole sentence as a unit. This view of Kātyāyana and Patañjali is criticised by Bhartṛhari (*Vākyapadīya* II.15–16, 41–42). It is clear that Bhartṛhari's ideas do not agree with the views expressed by Kātyāyana and Patañjali, and that the views of these two earlier grammarians are much closer, though not identical, with the views later maintained by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas and Mīmāṃsakas. For Bhartṛhari, the sentence as a single partless unit conveys its entire unitary meaning in a flash, and this unitary meaning as well as the unitary sentence are subsequently analysed by grammarians into their assumed or imagined constituents.

Finally, we should note that Bhartṛhari's views on the unitary character of a sentence and its meaning were found to be generally unacceptable by the schools of Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, as well as by the later grammarian-philosophers like Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa and Nāgeśabhaṭṭa. Their discussion of the comprehension of sentence-meaning is not couched in terms of Bhartṛhari's instantaneous flash of intuition (*pratibhā*), but in terms of the conditions of *ākāṅkṣā* (mutual expectancy), *yogyatā* (compatibility), and *āsatti* (contiguity of words). In this sense, the later grammarian-philosophers are somewhat closer to the spirit of Kātyāyana and Patañjali.

3. General philosophical approaches to the status of Vedic scriptures

Early Vedic notions about the authorship of the Vedic hymns are different from philosophical views. Vedic hymns use words like *kāru* (craftsman) to describe the poet, and the act of producing a hymn is described as "Like cleansing barley with a sieve, the wise poets created the speech with their