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**A Contribution of Vedānta to the History of Mīmāṃsā.  
Prakāśātman's interpretation of 'verbal effectuation'  
(śabdabhāvanā)**

Hugo David

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## Four

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# A contribution of Vedānta to the history of Mīmāṃsā: Prakāśātman's interpretation of “verbal effectuation” (*śabdabhāvanā*)

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Hugo David

The brahmanical exegetical system developed, at least from the time of Maṇḍana Mīśra and Śaṅkara (end of the 7th - beginning of the 8th century CE) into two divergent – and most of the time rival – “systems”, which came to be recognized, though probably much later,<sup>1</sup> as two distinct “[philosophical] points of view” (*darśana*).<sup>2</sup> These two systems of exegesis, respectively

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<sup>1</sup>As it has been convincingly demonstrated in GERSCHHEIMER 2007, Vedānta was not included in the lists of philosophical systems (*darśana*) until a rather late date (13th/14th century), and even Mīmāṃsā was not part of the most popular list of the so-called “six doctrines of speculation” (*ṣaṭtarkī*) in use in India and even in India-influenced countries like Campā as early as the last centuries of the first millennium.

<sup>2</sup>I am not taking here into consideration the much debated hypothesis according to which the two systems would have parted from an “originally” unique science of exegesis, the basic text of which would have been, according to some, a unique collection of *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*-s in twenty books, including the twelve books of the current *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*-s, the rather enigmatic *Samkarṣaṇa*- or *Devatākāṇḍa* and the four books of the *Brahmasūtra*-s (or earlier versions of the currently available texts bearing these titles). Despite its importance for the early history of Indian exegesis, this discussion is of no relevance for the present demonstration, which is principally concerned with



named Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā (“Exegesis of the prior [part of the Veda]”) and Uttara-Mīmāṃsā (“Exegesis of the latter [part of the Veda]”) are more commonly known as “Mīmāṃsā” (“exegesis”, thus considered as unique)<sup>3</sup> and Vedānta, the basic texts of which are the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*-s attributed to Jaimini and the *Vedānta*- or *Brahmasūtra*-s ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa, respectively. Although the opposition of these two schools is often considered a purely doctrinal one – especially ontological or soteriological –, their principal dissension is actually exegetical: besides the classification of Vedic sentences into *mantra* (“formula”) and *brāhmaṇa* (“ritual instruction”), the second school distinguishes a third kind of sentences, called *vedāntavākya* (“sentence from the final part of the Veda [= Vedānta]”), stating the existence and nature of a “realized” (*siddha*) entity, the knowledge of which would constitute a second purpose (*tātparyā*) for the Veda. The separation of the “two Mīmāṃsā-s” is then, above all, the opposition of two irreconcilable views of the Vedic text *as a whole*.<sup>4</sup>

It is therefore logically relevant – if not necessarily fruitful –, for a historian of Indian exegetical *praxis*, to take into consideration its realization and reflexive awareness inside both traditions, and not only inside one of them, namely the first one, as it is generally done.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, two kinds of re-

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the period in which this partition, whatever causes it may have had, has already taken place. For a defence of the “unique collection-thesis”, see JACOBI 1911, NAKAMURA 1989: 390-424 (first published in Japanese in 1950-56) and, more recently, PARPOLA 1981 and PARPOLA 1994. For a detailed – though equally inconclusive – refutation of Parpola’s arguments, see BRONKHORST 2007.

<sup>3</sup>For evident reasons of clarity and brevity, I am following here this convention. Hence I am using the appellation “Mīmāṃsā” for Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, except where a confusion might be possible.

<sup>4</sup>It should not be overlooked that the term *vedānta* is used, in most cases, as an abbreviation of the compound *vedāntavākya* (“sentence of the Vedānta”), and that it consequently refers to a certain category of *sentences*, rather than a category of *texts* (a concept which is not easy to circumscribe in the framework of Vedic exegesis). Hence, in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, Śāṅkara indifferently designates the science he is dealing with as *vedāntamīmāṃsāśāstra* (“the science of exegesis of the Vedānta”) [p. 46.1] or as *vedāntavākyaṃmīmāṃsā* (“the exegesis of the sentences of the Vedānta”) [p. 83.2]. This insistence on the level of sentences explains, for example, that, while most *vedāntavākya*-s are found in the Upaniṣad-s, some of them are actually found in *Brāhmaṇa* texts (see for example, the sentence quoted as a *vedāntavākya* in Vācaspati Miśra’s *Nyāyakaṇikā* [S193.3-6; T18.15-19], which, despite formal similarity with sentences from the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* [III.7.3-23], is found only in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* [For this reference see STERN 1988: 499]). For the same reason, some sentences of the Upaniṣads can be considered, without contradiction, as “injunctions” (*vidhi*), which are a kind of *brāhmaṇa*-sentences (for instance, *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* II.4.5, according to Prakāśātman and his followers).

<sup>5</sup>The attempt to consider the relationship between the two Mīmāṃsā-s from the point

sults may be expected from an enquiry into the Vedāntic textual tradition: (1) from a point of view which is *external* to Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, conceptual innovations advanced by the Vedāntin-s in relation to the set of principles (*nyāya*) and theses established in the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*-s, in Śabara's *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* and in their commentaries; (2) from an *internal* point of view, indirect information about the evolution of [Pūrva-]Mīmāṃsaka concepts and arguments.

Without denying, of course, the interest of the first perspective, I wish to give an example of the second kind of result, by examining the evolution of the concept of *śabdabhāvanā* (“verbal effectuation”) between the 7th and the 10th centuries CE.<sup>6</sup>

As is well known, this concept is the cornerstone of the explanation of the relationship between (secular or sacred) speech and human action proposed by the [Pūrva-]Mīmāṃsaka author Kumāriḷa Bhaṭṭa (7th century) – one of the two main commentators on Śabara's *Bhāṣya* – and by the “Bhāṭṭa” school claiming his heritage.<sup>7</sup> It is the basis of an “enlarged” theory of action which encompasses, besides an explanation of human acts in general, a more specific account of acts performed in a context of interlocution.

One of the most striking features of these comparatively early stages in the reflexion on action within the brahmanical schools – particularly when we compare it with later philosophical developments – is indeed the fact that the authors who wrote during this period considered (at least provisionally) that, when an act is the consequence of an injunctive statement, it should possibly require a fundamentally distinct interpretation in comparison to an act performed independently of any directly related speech (what the Indian

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of view of their exegetical praxis, and not only from that of their “philosophical” views, has hardly been made by modern scholars, with the exception of some traditional Pandits. The only significant example I know of a study of this kind is indeed Maṇḍrāvīḍa's unpublished thesis (in Sanskrit) from the Madras Sanskrit College (see bibliography).

<sup>6</sup>The expressions *śabdabhāvanā* or *śābdī bhāvanā* (“verbal effectuation”), very common in the immediately subsequent tradition (at least from Śālikanātha onwards), are not found in Kumāriḷa's works, or even, as far as I can tell, in those of Maṇḍana Miśra, his principal successor. Kumāriḷa himself prefers to use expressions such as *śabdātmikā bhāvanā* (“effectuation consisting of speech”) (see for instance *Tantravārttika* A<sub>2</sub>12.16), *abhīdhābhāvanā* (“effectuation of an expression” or “effectuation consisting of an expression”) (*ibid.* K74.5 [= A<sub>2</sub>344.8]) or *abhīdhātmikā bhāvanā* (“effectuation consisting of an expression”) (K74.13 [= A<sub>2</sub>344.16-17]).

<sup>7</sup>Of Kumāriḷa's voluminous work, I am using here only a few chapters of the *Tantravārttika*. I am quoting the first *pāda* of the second *adhyāya* (ad *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* II.1.1-4[1]) in Kei Kataoka's critical edition (KATAOKA 2004 = K, followed by page number). Other passages (especially *Tantravārttika* ad *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* I.2.7[1]) are quoted from the second volume of the “Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series” edition (A<sub>2</sub>).

theoreticians call an “independent” [*svatantra*] act).<sup>8</sup> The main advocates of this “equivocal” interpretation of action (in the sense that the concept of “action” would thus comprise heterogeneous realities) were, certainly, the Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṃsaka-s.

It is thus around the time of Kumāriḷa, and probably to a large extent in his wake, that a new area of reflexion was developed, which centred around the concept of *vidhi*. This was of course linked to the old concept of *vidhi* understood as “injunction”, but it came to refer more specifically to “that which provokes an agent’s activity when it is the consequence of a speaker’s utterance”<sup>9</sup>, the element thus characterized being either verbal *or* non-verbal. As a consequence, around the same time we witness the appearance of a new class of philosophical works entirely devoted to the discussion of this concept. The prototype of this new “śāstric genre” was certainly Maṇḍana Miśra’s *Vidhiviveka* (“An examination of *vidhi*”), which served as a constant reference – and sometimes even as a model – for later works like Pārthasārathi Miśra’s *Vidhinirṇaya* (12th century?) or the *Vidhivāda* of Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya’s *Tattvacintāmaṇi* (14th century). Maṇḍana Miśra’s very detailed and skillful analysis also partially formed the basis for treatises of wider interests, such as Śālikanātha’s *Vākyārthamātrkā* (8th-9th century) and, as I will argue later on, Prakāśātman’s *Śābdanirṇaya*.

This enlarged reflexion on action is coupled, within the Bhāṭṭas’ theoretical framework, with an equally enlarged theory of language, reaching towards what we could call a general theory of the efficiency (or efficiencies, in the plural) of speech. In fact, even if “verbal knowledge” (*śābdabodha*) – that is the mediate (*parokṣa*) knowledge of an external complex of (realized or non-realized) entities through the combination of speech units endowed

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<sup>8</sup>That a significant part of this debate progressively sank into oblivion clearly appears from the comparison between two “canonical” works on action such as Maṇḍana Miśra’s *Vidhiviveka*, probably written around the end of the 7th century, and the *Vidhivāda* of Gaṅgeśa’s *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, probably from the 14th century. At the beginning of his treatise, Maṇḍana asks a general question about the nature of *vidhi*, that is to say, about what could be the driving element or the direct cause of an agent’s activity when it immediately follows an injunctive statement. This *vidhi* can be, according to Maṇḍana, either a particular sound/element of speech (*śabda*), its operation (*tadvyāpāra*), or a certain object (*artha*) [passage translated below]. On the contrary, Gaṅgeśa quickly dismisses the first two possibilities to concentrate on what is, for him, the only relevant question in this context: which object, when it is known, is the direct cause of the agent’s act, or rather of his “desire to act” (*cikīrṣā*)? He thus confirms a very conscious alignment of the analysis of injunctive behaviour with the explanation of action in general, dating back (at least) to Śālikanātha. See in particular *Vākyārthamātrkā* (ad *Vākyārthamātrkā* II.4cd) p. 419.10-16.

<sup>9</sup>The use of *vidhi* in such a technical sense is already found in Kumāriḷa’s works. See for instance *Tantravārttika* II.1.1[1] (K74.13-75.1 [= A<sub>2</sub>344.14-16]) [translated below].

with “expressive power” (*abhidhānaśakti*) – remains for all (Uttara- and Pūrva-) Mīmāṃsaka-s the model for an explanation of what language actually does, this does not prevent them from conceiving more direct effects of (written or spoken) speech on people who are confronted with it.<sup>10</sup>

The combination of these two complementary perspectives on action and on language is meant to account for a very common fact, namely that certain sentences – whether secular statements, such as the instructions for preparing a dish in a recipe book, or a Vedic (or Veda-inspired) statement like *darśapūrṇamāsābhyāṃ svargakāmo yajeta* (“Let one who desires heaven perform the New- and Full-moon sacrifice”) – have a direct effect on the people hearing or reading them and, at least in some cases, this happens without any real reflexion on the motives of the action consequently undertaken or on the situation in which this is actually about to take place. It is indeed part of our common experience as (at least partially) independent agents that we sometimes start to act immediately after having heard or read a prescriptive sentence which obviously does not provide us with sufficient information about the reasons why we should undertake such an action. For instance, if one hears a sentence like “Close the door!” or “Please, take a sheet of paper!”, one may act accordingly even without having a clear idea of the utility of one’s action, or even without being convinced that it actually has any utility. This fact is even more surprising in the case of prescriptions issued by a text the author of which is unknown to us, like the instructions for the performance of a religious ritual. In many cases, there *might* certainly be a clear idea of the motives of action, but the reflexion on these motives does not necessarily *precede* the undertaking of the action.

In the following pages, I will first present the salient features of Kumāri-tila’s interpretation of action in a context of interlocution by means of a twofold “effectuation” (*bhāvanā*), and then I will try to show that some important consequences of his theoretical innovations were not considered by him, nor inside the Mīmāṃsā tradition as it has come down to us, but only *outside* it in little-known works, mostly *prakaraṇa*-s, written by Advaita-Vedāntin-s such as Prakāśātman (10th century), Ānandabodha Bhaṭṭāraka (11th century?) and Ānandapūrṇa (*alias* Vidyāsāgara) (14th century).<sup>11</sup> As a corollary to this demonstration, I would like to suggest the existence, be-

<sup>10</sup>One of the most striking examples of this “extended” theory of speech is the Advaitic thesis, possibly advocated for the first time by Prakāśātman, of a *śābdāparokṣajñāna* (“immediate verbal knowledge”), that is to say, a kind of perceptive knowledge produced through a linguistic process. For a general approach to this discussion, see CAMMANN 1965: 159-160.

<sup>11</sup>The dates I am giving here are all provisional. Prakāśātman’s date, fixed around 1200 by DASGUPTA 2000 [1932]: 103 – consequently about one century later than his

sides the well-known divisions of the Vedāntic tradition into distinct “line[s] of interpretation” (*prasthāna*), of a direct textual and philosophical filiation between these three renowned authors. Finally, I will consider the hypothesis that the complete and well articulated theory found in Vedāntic sources may be a reinterpretation of some ideas scattered in the first part of Maṇḍana Miśra’s *Vidhiviveka*.

## I. Kumārila’s distinction of two types of “effectuation”: “objective effectuation” (*arthātmikā bhāvanā*) and “verbal effectuation” (*śabdātmikā bhāvanā*)

Kumārila’s analysis of human action in a verbal context is comparatively well-known from its account in late didactic works introducing the Mīmāṃsā system.<sup>12</sup> Detailed studies of some crucial passages of the *Tantravārttika*<sup>13</sup> have also been published by Erich Frauwallner and, more recently, by Kei Kataoka,<sup>14</sup> from which a clear picture of Kumārila’s thought can be sketched. Since these studies are of easy access, I will only sum up in this section a few ideas from his commentary on *Śābarabhāṣya* I.2.7[1] and from the first chapter of the second *adhyāya* (ad *Śābarabhāṣya* II.1.1-4[1]) of the same work which are relevant to the present demonstration.

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commentator Ānandabodha! – has been rightly pushed back to the 10th century by CAMMANN 1965: 4-8.

<sup>12</sup>See for instance the explanations given by Āpadeva (17th century) at the beginning and end of the *Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa*, translated into English by Franklin Edgerton (See EDGERTON 1929: 39-42 and 179-188). A similar introduction is found in other more or less contemporary manuals, for instance at the beginning of Laugākṣi Bhāskara’s *Arthasaṃgraha* and in Kṛṣṇa Yajvan’s *Mīmāṃsāparibhāṣā* (p. 11.15-12.24).

<sup>13</sup>Kumārila’s exposition of the “two-*bhāvanā*” theory in the *Tantravārttika* is not systematic, but follows the logic and needs of his commentary on Śābara’s *Bhāṣya*; hence, although the concept of *śabdātmikā bhāvanā* with its three parts, as well as its distinction from *arthātmikā bhāvanā* is already used in the discussion on the status of “discourses on [existent] things” (*arthavāda*) at the beginning of the second *pāda* (*Tantravārttika* ad *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* I.2.7[1] A<sub>2</sub>12.16), a systematic explanation of its nature and a real justification for its existence are not found before the beginning of the second *adhyāya*.

<sup>14</sup>FRAUWALLNER 1938, exclusively based on *Tantravārttika* 2.1.1-4[1], and centred mostly on the concept of *arthabhāvanā*, remains the best explanation of the general concept of *bhāvanā* available for those (like the author of these lines) who do not read Japanese. A more up-to-date work is, however, KATAOKA 2004. I am widely using the author’s English summary of this work (KATAOKA 2001).

In order to understand Kumāriḷa’s conception of action in general, and of prescribed action in particular, it is necessary to start from his *linguistic* reflexion on the expression of an action through a finite verb. A very broad distinction is drawn in the *Tantravārttika* between two kinds of verbs: those the ending ([*tiṅ*] *vibhakti* or *ākhyāta*) of which expresses a state or a change of/in the agent (*karṭṛ*)— for instance, the verbal forms *asti* (“[He/she/it] is”) and *bhavati* (“[He/she/it] becomes”)<sup>15</sup> – and those the ending of which expresses a change in something else (*anya*): verbs like *yajati* (“[He/she] sacrifices”), *dadāti* (“[He/she] gives”), *gacchati* (“[He/she] goes”) or *paṭhati* (“[He/she] reads”) [K70.16-71.3; A<sub>2</sub>341.19-342.2], which are the only ones susceptible of having an object (*karman*).<sup>16</sup> One can easily isolate the latter category by analysing the verbal form through the procedure called *vivarāṇa* or *vyākhyāna* (“explicitation”) (in fact, by glossing the verbal affix) with the help of the root *kr-*, a procedure which turns out to be impossible for verbs of the first type. For example the form *yajati* can be analysed with the help of the periphrasis *yāgaṃ karoti* (“[He/she] performs a sacrifice”), but a form like *asti* cannot.<sup>17</sup> In other words, verbs of the latter kind are characterized by the property of being possible answers to the question *kiṃ karoti?* (“What does he/she/it do?”), to which a verb like *bhavati* can never be a meaningful reply [K71.7-10; A<sub>2</sub>342.5-8].

On the basis of the principle according to which every factor (*kāraṇa*) of the “main action” (*pradhānakriyā*) expressed by the verb of a sentence is also the agent (*karṭṛ*) of an “intermediate (or secondary) action” (*avān-*

<sup>15</sup>Kumāriḷa actually seems to hold that every single verbal ending expresses an *operation* (*vyāpāra*), thus contradicting the very idea of a verb expressing a *state* (as a supplementary argument, see the kumāriḷian definition of *vyāpāra* given by FRAUWALLNER 1938: 226). It seems, however, difficult to consider that a verb like *asti* expresses an operation of any kind. This thorny question would certainly require a study of its own.

<sup>16</sup>It is not wrong to describe these two categories with the help of the distinction between “intransitive” and “transitive” verbs, as is done in KATAOKA 2001: 10-11, if what is meant is that a verb of the latter category always implies a relation to a kind of object (*karman*), like the root *kr-*, with the help of which its affix should be glossed: *karoter nityasakarmatvāt* (...); “since [the root] *kr-* always has an object (...)” (K71.14; A<sub>2</sub>342.12). Nonetheless, this distinction should not be confused with the grammatical distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs, for even grammatically “intransitive” verbs may be possible answer to the question “*kiṃ karoti?*”, and may accordingly be glossed with the help of the root *kr-*. One may prefer, therefore, to keep Frauwallner’s more literal distinction between “Verbe des Werdens” and “Verbe des Machens” (FRAUWALLNER 1938: 221).

<sup>17</sup>The analysis of a verb like *pacati* into *pākaṃ karoti* has to be considered as nothing but provisional, with respect to the final gloss of the form by *pākena karoti*, where the object of the verbal root is considered as the instrument of the *bhāvanā*, not as the entity which is “to-be-realized” (*sādhyā*) by its means.

*tarakriyā*) [K71.14-72.1; A<sub>2</sub>342.12-14], Kumārila defines the general structure of actions expressed by verbs of the latter type as a *causative* structure (that is, a structure which, when explicitated, will be *expressed* by a causative sentence), based on the relationship between an instigator (*prayojaka*), namely the “agent” (*kartr*) of the main action, and an instigated person or thing (*prayojya*), namely the agent of a secondary action of the former type described above, also named *bhavitr* (“that which becomes”) [K72.14-15; A<sub>2</sub>343.3-4]. In other words, a relationship is established between what “causes [something] to become” (*bhāvayati*) and what “becomes” (*bhavati*). It is defined as follows: *bhavatikriyāyāḥ kartā karoteḥ karma sampadyate*; “The agent of becoming becomes the object of making” [K72.2; A<sub>2</sub>342.15, translation by Kei Kataoka<sup>18</sup>].

For example, a simple sentence describing an action occurring at the present time, such as *rāma odanaṃ pacati* (“Rāma cooks [cooked!] rice”) will be understood as referring to two distinct though complementary processes: (a) the coming into existence (*prādurbhāva* or *niṣpatti*) of cooked rice (*odana*) by the process of getting soft (*viklitti*) of the (raw) rice grains (*taṇḍula*) and (b) Rāma’s incitation, which causes this first process to happen. Hence, the action described in a sentence having the form “A causes B to do C”, comprising an explicit causative sign *-ay[a]* (*ṛic*, in the Pāṇinian system) – as in the sentence *devadattaḥ pāṭhayati yajñadattam* (“Devadatta causes Yajñadatta to read”) for instance – is just a particular (and in fact more complex) case or rather a reduplication of a more general scheme, applicable even to actions described by morphologically “non-causative” sentences such as *devadattaḥ paṭhati* (“Devadatta reads”).<sup>19</sup>

The relationship between *bhāvanā* (literally: “causing-to-become”; “effectuation”) and *bhāva* (“becoming”) thus provides us with a model for the analysis of any (physical or mental) action, unless it concerns “the mere obtaining of the agent’s state of being” (*kartrātmalābhamātra*) [K70.18; A<sub>2</sub>341.21].<sup>20</sup> Consequently, following Kumārila’s terminology, an “action”

<sup>18</sup>KATAOKA 2001: 11. Frauwallner translates this sentence in a similar way: “Das Objekt jedes Machens ist also Subjekt eines Werdens” (FRAUWALLNER 1938: 222).

<sup>19</sup>For this very reason, I prefer to speak, in the case of Kumārila, of a *causative* analysis rather than of a *causal* theory (KATAOKA 2001: 11). I am not considering here whether such a causative analysis of action is compatible with a “causal” explanation of action. To answer this question, much debated in modern theories of action, in the Indian context would require a more in-depth study.

<sup>20</sup>As it has already been pointed out by FRAUWALLNER 1938: 222, the question of a possible expression of a *bhāvanā* by *all* verbal endings – not only by those pertaining to verbs of the second category – is a delicate issue in Kumārila’s thought, which will be taken up by Maṇḍana Mīśra in the *Bhāvanāvivēka*. According to Frauwallner, Kumārila’s answer would be, in a way, aporetic: “Es ergibt sich also, dass Kumārila in dieser

can be thought of in two different ways, and thus referred to by two different words. In a very general way, the concept of *kriyā* virtually includes everything that can be expressed by a finite verb, even if it is an obviously action-less state like mere being. In a more restricted sense, an action is an effectuation (*bhāvanā*), defined as “the action of an instigator” (*prayojakakriyā*)<sup>21</sup>, and it is expressed exclusively by verbal endings; in other words, it is the operation by which one initiates another process, taking place in a distinct entity.<sup>22</sup> To distinguish it from the second kind of effectuation (see below) Kumāriḷa calls this kind of effectuation *arthātmikā bhāvanā* or *arthātmabhāvanā* (“objective effectuation”).<sup>23</sup>

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Frage zu keiner eindeutigen Stellungnahme gekommen ist (...)” (*ibid.* p. 223). However, I believe that one can get a somewhat clearer picture of Kumāriḷa’s position. In the first passage, where he speaks thrice of the expression of a *bhāvanā* by “all verbal endings” (*sarvākhyāta*) [K74.1,6 and 7 (= A<sub>2</sub>344.3,9)], he obviously has in mind only the verbal endings of the *latter category*, that is, those which can be glossed with the help of the root *kr-*. See for example K74.1 (= A<sub>2</sub>344,3): *evaṃ karotyarthadvāreṇa sarvākhyāteṣu bhāvayatyarthaḥ siddhaḥ*; “Hence, it is proved that the object of [the verb] *bhāvayati* (“He effectuates”) is [expressed] in [the case of] all verbal endings through the object of the root *kr-*”. This statement can hardly be valid for a verb which is *not* an answer to the question “*kiṃ karoti?*” When this problem arises again at a later point of the same chapter [K80.9-82.14 (= A<sub>2</sub>347.12-348.17)], Kumāriḷa gives two options – the second one being marked by *atha vā* (“or else”) –, both based on the fact that no *bhāvanā* is “seen” or “felt” (*na lakṣyate / na pratīyate*) by someone who hears a verb like *asti:* (a) since it is not felt, the question as to which verbal element expresses it simply does not arise [K80.10-11 (= A<sub>2</sub>347.14-15)]; (b) one comes to know that the *bhāvanā* is expressed “on the strength of the [verbal] ending” (*pratyayasāmarthyād*); the *bhāvanā* is then interpreted in an essentially *reflexive* way, the act of becoming, expressed by the verb *bhavati* for example, thus being interpreted as an act of “making oneself become”; the verbal form could thus be developed in a sentence like *bhavana ātmānaṃ bhāvayati* (“He brings himself to being through becoming”) [K80.13-81.9 (=A<sub>2</sub>347.17-348.1)]. Looking at Kumāriḷa’s exposition, it seems to me that a sentence like *ghaṭo bhavati* (“A pot exists” or “A pot comes into being”) should not be seen as an exception to the analysis described above, but rather as a *partial view* of a more complete process, including both *bhāva* and *bhāvanā*. A clear example in this respect is the sentence *viklīdyanti taṇḍulāḥ* (“The [raw] rice-grains get soft [through cooking]”), which is the obvious counterpart of a sentence expressing the *bhāvanā*, like *odanaṃ pacati* (“He cooks rice”) for instance.

<sup>21</sup>See *Tantravārttika* K74.3 (*kārikā* 23cd in Kei Kataoka’s numeration [= A<sub>2</sub>344.5]): *prayojakakriyāṃ āhur bhāvanāṃ bhāvanāvidāḥ*; “The experts in *bhāvanā* claim that it is the action of an instigator”.

<sup>22</sup>An interesting situation for the Bhāṭṭa analysis would be the case of “reflexive” actions, such as those expressed by sentences like “He watches himself”, or “He gets dressed”, expressing the action of an agent on an object which happens to be himself. Unfortunately, I have not come across such an analysis in their writings for the time being.

<sup>23</sup>See, for instance, *Tantravārttika* A<sub>2</sub>12.16; K74.6 (= A<sub>2</sub>344.9); K74.12 (= A<sub>2</sub>344.14). I have not come to any conclusion as to the exact meaning of the word *artha* in this



This [*arthātmikā*] *bhāvanā* requires three elements or “parts” (*aṃśa*), answering to the triple “expectation” (*ākāṅkṣā*) manifest in the three questions *kiṃ bhāvayati* (“What [does he/she effectuate]?”), *kena* (“By means of what?”) and *katham* (“How?”). These three elements are: (1) an entity which is an “[expected] result” or “to-be-effectuated” (*bhāvya*), in other words an entity “to-be-accomplished” (*sādhya*), (2) an “instrument” (*karana*) or “means of realization” (*sādhana*), by which the fruit gets produced and (3) an “auxiliary” or “subsidiary factor” (literally a “procedure”) (*itikartavyatā*) assisting this instrument. Some later expositions, for example Prakāśātman’s (see below), consider the agent (*kartr*) of the *bhāvanā* as a fourth “part”. However, this does not constitute a major modification of this well-spread threefold scheme.

As I said before, actions described by explicitly causative sentences are nothing but a particular case or a reduplication of the essentially causative structure of every action (with the above stated restriction). Then, the situation where the activity of an agent is, in its turn, “instigated” by a verbally expressed command – an imperative sentence like “Bring a pot!” for example – is nothing but a particular case of this “second-degree” analysis, which has to be understood as a special case of “effectuation” (*bhāvanā*), that is, as an instance of the more general “instigator/instigated” (*prayojya/prayojaka*) structure. The astonishing fact is not, then, that Kumāṛila considered the operation of speech as a form of *bhāvanā*, but rather that he felt the necessity to isolate it as a second kind of *bhāvanā*: *śabdātmikā bhāvanā* (“effectuation consisting of speech”) [A<sub>2</sub>12.16], otherwise called *abhīdhābhāvanā* [K74.6; A<sub>2</sub>344.8] or *abhīdhātmikā bhāvanā* (“effectuation consisting of an expression”) [K74.13; A<sub>2</sub>344.15-16].<sup>24</sup> The term *vidhi* is considered a synonym of these compounds: *sā dvitīyā śabdadharmo ’bhīdhātmikā bhāvanā vidhir ity ucyate*; “This second effectuation, consisting of an expression, which is a property of speech, is what [we] call *vidhi*” [K74.13-75.1; A<sub>2</sub>344.15-16].<sup>25</sup>

The definition of verbal effectuation as a “property of speech” (*śabda-*

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context. However, the formation of the compound as is found in the *Tantravārttika* excludes an interpretation in terms of “goal” or “purpose” (for example, Edgerton’s translation of *ārthī bhāvanā* as “end-efficient-force” [EDGERTON 1929: 40]), since it would not make any sense to speak of an effectuation “consisting of a goal”.

<sup>24</sup>The clear understanding of the compound *abhīdhābhāvanā* as a *karmadhāraya* by Kumāṛila himself apparently did not prevent later writers to consider that the analysis of it as a *ṣaṣṭhātaturuṣa* (meaning then “the effectuation of an expression”) was possible. See for instance Vācaspati Mīśra’s *Nyāyakaṇikā* S148.4 (= T12.14).

<sup>25</sup>It is of course impossible to translate the term *vidhi* in this context with the English word “injunction”, since it does not refer to any full *sentence* but rather a property of one of its parts, the injunctive ending. I must confess I myself cannot think of any better translation that would not be a mere periphrasis.

*dharmā*) seems to disqualify its confusion, at least in non-scriptural usage, with an intention (*abhiprāya*) of the speaker, such as those described by Pāṇini,<sup>26</sup> a widespread opinion in later didactic expositions of the doctrine.<sup>27</sup> Kumārila makes this point perfectly clear in the chapter on *arthavāda*-s: “In this respect, the injunctive endings (*linādi*) are the agent of the instigation (*prayojakakartr*), while the instigated (*prayojya*) is a person. (...) And even if [somebody says that] injunctive endings cannot operate such an instigation because they are insentient, even so, since the person [who utters the injunction] cannot be the instigator of the instigated [person], the injunctive [endings] are the instigators, by means of [the person’s] consciousness.”<sup>28</sup>

Finally, since verbal effectuation is nothing but a species of “effectuation” in general, the homogeneity of the *bhāvanā*-theory requires a threefold structure of *śabdabhāvanā*, similar to that of its “objective” counterpart. The entity “to-be-effectuated” (*bhāvya*) or “to-be-realized” (*sādhya*) by verbal effectuation is nothing but “the activity of the agent” (*puruṣapravartana*), in other words “objective effectuation” (*arthabhāvanā*), as was described above [A<sub>2</sub>12.19-20]. The *itikartavyatā* is the knowledge of the excellence (*prāśastya*) of the action enjoined, since nobody begins to act if he does not consider the action to be begun of any value [A<sub>2</sub>12.25-13.2]. In the case of a Vedic injunction, this excellence is suggested by *brāhmaṇa*-sentences which are not directly prescriptive, the *arthavāda*-s (see above).

More problematic is, however, the instrument (*kaṛaṇa*) of verbal effectuation. The problem of its definition is very close to that of the nature of *śabdabhāvanā* itself. Kumārila simply says that it is “the consciousness of a *vidhi*, dependent on the prior knowledge of a relationship [between a verbal element and its object]” (*pūrvasambandhānubhavāpekṣ[am] vidhivijñān[am]*) [A<sub>2</sub>12.24-25].

<sup>26</sup>See in particular the *sūtra*-s III.3.161 and 163 of Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

<sup>27</sup>See for instance Āpadeva’s *Mīmāṃsānyāyaparakāśa* [= EDGERTON 1929: 194]: *loke puruṣaniṣṭho ’bhiprāyaviśeṣaḥ* “In non-scriptural [usage], [it] is a particular intention, occurring in a person” (translation mine). Again, in the exposition of Someśvara Bhaṭṭa’s opinion [EDGERTON 1929: 269]: *ataś ca vyāpāraviśeṣa eva vidhyarthah. sa ca loke puruṣaniṣṭho ’bhiprāyaviśeṣaḥ*. The same statement is found in Kṛṣṇa Yajvan’s *Mīmāṃsā-paribhāṣā* (p. 12.12-13): *loke gavānayanādipratyanukūlapreraṇākhyo vyāpārah prayok-trpuruṣagatābhiprāyaviśeṣaḥ*.

<sup>28</sup>*Tantravārttika* I.2.7[1] (A<sub>2</sub>12.19-22): *tatra linādīnām prayojakakartr̥tvam, puruṣaḥ prayojyaḥ. (...) yady api cācetanatvāl linādīṣv evaṃvidhaṃ prayojakatvaṃ na sambhavati, tathāpi puruṣasya prayojyasya prayojakatvānupapattes tadgatacāitanyadvāreṇa vidhāyakānām prayojakatā*. Another equally possible understanding of the last part of this sentence, which would lead to the same conclusion, would be as follows: “since the instigated person (possibly: “the person, since he is the one who is instigated”) can never be his [own] instigator, the injunctive [endings] are the instigators, by means of his own consciousness”.

The later tradition often equates the knowledge of *vidhi* with “the knowledge of injunctive *endings*” (*linādijñāna*), in other words, with an injunctive element of speech (*vidhiśabda*).<sup>29</sup> Moreover, if we believe Āpadeva’s rendering, this point would be agreed upon by the two principal older branches of the Bhāṭṭa school – that of Someśvara Bhaṭṭa and that of Pārthasārathi Miśra –, which both consider *śabdabhāvanā* as the *object* (*artha*) of *vidhi* (understood as a synonym of *linādi* [“injunctive endings”]).<sup>30</sup>

Such a reading would imply that the word *vidhi* should be understood in two different ways: (a) in the definition of verbal effectuation in the second *adhyāya*, *vidhi* and *śabdabhāvanā* would be considered as synonyms; (b) in the explanation of its instrument in the chapter on *arthavāda*-s, *vidhi* would be taken as an abbreviation of the compound *vidhiśabda* (“an injunctive unit of speech”). This is certainly not impossible. Still, one cannot exclude the possibility that the author of the *Tantravārttika* made a consistent use of the term *vidhi*, intending then the *same thing* in both occurrences. If it were so, the instrument (*karaṇa*) of verbal effectuation would be nothing but *a consciousness* (in the hearer) of *verbal effectuation itself*. In other words, speech would be efficient in that it would reveal its own efficiency in the mind of the agent.

I will try to show, in what follows, that the version of Kumārila’s theory found in Vedāntic sources can be read as an attempt to explore this possibility.

## II. Verbal effectuation according to Prakāśātman’s *Śābdanirṇaya*

Prakāśātman’s *Śābdanirṇaya* [henceforth ŚN] (“An enquiry into verbal knowledge”), was probably written around the 10th century CE.<sup>31</sup> This “independent treatise” (*prakaraṇa*) in “mixed” (*miśraka*) style, comprising 75 *anuṣṭubh* verses (72 in T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī’s *editio princeps*) with

<sup>29</sup>See *Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa* [= EDGERTON 1929: 194]: *karaṇākāṅkṣāyām linādijñānam karaṇatvena sambadhyate* “As for the requirement of means, (the hearer’s) knowledge of (the meaning of) the optative etc. endings is construed as the means (to the word-efficient force)” (Translation in EDGERTON 1929: 41). The same is stated in the *Mīmāṃsāparibhāṣā* (p. 12.18-19): *adhyayanāvagatalinādikaṃ karaṇatvenānveti*.

<sup>30</sup>See *Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa* [EDGERTON 1929: 268-271].

<sup>31</sup>The only edition of the ŚN based on manuscripts is T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī’s (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series n° 53. 1917). The more recent printing of the text, along with Anandabodha’s *Nyāyadīpikā*, by Prabhākaraprasāda (Delhi. 2003) generally reproduces it without taking into account the readings of the transcript he used to edit the commentary. For questions of dates, see above n. 11.

the author's own *vṛtti*, is tightly linked with the eighth and ninth books (*varṇaka*) of the [*Pañcapādikā*-] *Vivaraṇa*, Prakāśātman's voluminous commentary on the *Pañcapādikā* (itself a detailed gloss on the first five sections of Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* composed in the 8th century by his alleged disciple, Padmapāda). It was commented upon only once, around one century later, in the *Nyāyadīpikā* (otherwise known as *Śābdanirṇayadīpikā*) of Ānandabodha Bhaṭṭāraka (11th century?), the celebrated author of the *Nyāyamakaranda*, where it is explicitly referred to.<sup>32</sup>

Despite being strongly anchored within the textual and doctrinal building of Advaita, the ŚN also shows a style typical of certain independent treatises, the best examples of which are earlier found in the works of Śālikanātha Mīśra (8th-9th century), Prakāśātman's most obvious source of inspiration. More precisely, the similarity of construction of both treatises, as well as a profusion of (generally "mute") quotations, both suggest that the ŚN is, to a large extent, a non-dualist response to Śālikanātha's *Vākyārthamāṭṛkā*, assimilating some of the most central concepts of Prābhākara semantics and hermeneutics while giving them a fully new shape. This proximity, suggesting, among other clues, a prominence of Prābhākara-Mīmāṃsā within the Indian philosophical debate around the turn of the millennium, may also provide us with a partial explanation of Prakāśātman's decision to compose the only incontestably Advaitic work dealing exclusively, and in fact quite exhaustively, with the philosophy of language.

The second half of the ŚN<sup>33</sup>, beginning with *kārikā* 42, discusses two major and highly dependent features of Prābhākara semantics as is exposed in the second part of the *Vākyārthamāṭṛkā*: Śālikanātha's hypothesis about the meaning of sentences (*vākya*) and his understanding of injunctive endings (*linādi*). As a preamble to this discussion, a rather long *pūrvapakṣa* restates some of Śālikanātha's arguments in favour of his typical semantic thesis, namely the pre-determination of the object of any sentence as something "to-be-accomplished" (*kārya*), and consequently the ascertainment that the object of every *word* is "linked with [an entity] to-be-accomplished" (*kāryānvīta*).

As one might expect, most of the arguments found in Prakāśātman's text as put in the objector's mouth, and even some of his quotations, can be traced back to Śālikanātha's treatise. A striking exception to this rule is his exposition and consequent refutation of Kumārila's theory of the two

<sup>32</sup>*Nyāyamakaranda* p. 170.6-7: *dīnāmātram atra sūcitam, vistaras tu nyāyadīpikāyām avagantavyaḥ* "I suggest here only the general direction, the details have to be understood from [my] *Nyāyadīpikā*".

<sup>33</sup>There are no "sections" in T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī's edition. I am responsible for the mentioned divisions of the text.

“effectuations”. To be more precise, Śālikanātha *does* consider and extensively refute this theory,<sup>34</sup> but Prakāśātman moves away, most of the time, from his treatment. What is more, this attitude strongly contrasts with the refutation of the same theory, this time by Prakāśātman himself, in the second *varṇaka* of the *Vivaraṇa*, where Prakāśātman very “faithfully” follows Śālikanātha’s wording, and where only some of the innovations encountered in the ŚN can be found.<sup>35</sup>

Prakāśātman starts his exposition in the ŚN with a general definition of both “objective” and “verbal” effectuations:<sup>36</sup>

*tatra ke cid āhuḥ: śābdavyavahāre śābdabhāvanā pravṛttihetur  
iti. tatrābhūtaprādurbhāvaphalaṃ karotyarthamātraṃ bhāvanā.  
tatrārthavyāpāro ’rthabhāvanā; śābdavyāpāras tu svābhidheyaj  
ñānaajananalakṣaṇaḥ śābdabhāvanā.*

“On this topic, some say: in a verbal exchange, verbal effectuation is the cause of [the agent’s] activity. “Effectuation” is the general object of [the verbal root] *kṛ-* (“to effectuate”), the [expected] result of which is the coming into existence (*prādurbhāva*)<sup>37</sup> of an [entity] which has not yet come into being. Among [entities coming under this concept,] we distinguish between “objective effectuation”, that is the operation of an object, and “verbal effectuation”, that is the operation of a verbal [element,] defined as the production of the cognition of its own expressed [entity] (*svābhidheyajñānajanana*)”.

The definitions of “effectuation” in general, and even of “objective effectuation”, are mere restatements of Kumārila’s ideas. The same does not hold

<sup>34</sup>See *Vākyārthamātrkāvr̥tti* p. 419.17-427.14. The synthetic account of Kumārila’s concept of *śābdabhāvanā* is found on pages 419.17-420.9.

<sup>35</sup>See *Vivaraṇa* [2] p. 463.3-464.11.

<sup>36</sup>The text of the *Śābdanirṇaya* I reproduce and translate here is based on the following sources: (1) The two editions of the text (Ed<sup>1</sup> and Ed<sup>2</sup> – see bibliography); (2) The following manuscripts: Oriental Manuscript Library (Trivandrum) n° MC.246.B (= P<sup>1</sup>), n° T.146 (= T<sup>1</sup>), n° T.437 (= T<sup>2</sup>); Government Oriental Manuscript Library (Madras) n° 2986 (= M<sup>1</sup>), n° 3238 (= M<sup>2</sup>). A more complete description of these sources or a full reproduction of the text with all variant readings was not possible in the space allowed by the present publication. I indicate all the significant changes made to Ed<sup>1</sup> in footnote, except the (quite numerous) changes in the punctuation. The passage reproduced here corresponds to p. 34.9-35.16 of this edition. It is integrally quoted in Ānandapūrṇa’s *Nyāyacandrikā* (p. 218.13-221.8).

<sup>37</sup>The word *prādurbhāva* (literally: “appearing”) should be understood in a “strong” sense, as it is suggested by Ānandabodha’s gloss [*abhī*]niṣpatti (“realization”) in the *Nyāyadīpikā* (p. 306.19), and not simply as the “manifestation” (\**abhivyakti*) of something which would already exist.

for “verbal effectuation”, the application of which is considerably widened. In fact, defined as it is here, this operation does not only apply to each and every verbal ending (without exception), but also *to all verbal units* capable of referring to an object (more precisely: of producing [*jan-*] a cognition [*jñāna*] having for its content a certain expressed entity). As a consequence, since a word denoting a mere substance – the word *ghaṭa* (“pot”) for instance – can produce a knowledge having for its content a pot, which is its “expressed” (*abhidheya*), its operation will be brought under the concept of “verbal effectuation”. Thus understood, *śabdabhāvanā* is extremely close to what is more commonly called [*abhidhāna*]*śakti* (“[expressive] power”) or *abhidhānasāmarthya* (“expressive capacity”). The only real (and ontologically significant) difference I can see between these two broadly used concepts and *śabdabhāvanā* itself is that this *bhāvanā* is the result (the actual production [*janana*] itself), and not a mere capacity.

Prakāśātman’s description of the three – in fact, four – “parts” (*aṃśā*) of the second type of effectuation confirms this extended range of *śabdabhāvanā*:

*sā ca śabdakarṭṛkārthajñānabhāvyaniṣṭhā śabdajñānakaraṇikā sambandhajñānasamskāretikartavyatākā ca*<sup>38</sup> *sarvaśabdānām aviśeṣavatī.*

“And this [verbal effectuation], the agent of which is speech, resting on the [expected] result which is the knowledge of [its] object, the instrument of which is the knowledge of speech, and the subsidiary factor of which are the traces left by the knowledge of the relationship [between a word and its object,] is common (*aviśeṣavatī*) to all [elements of] speech”.

As I said before, one should not be misled by the adjunction of a fourth part – the consideration of the “agent” (*karṭṛ*) – to the classical threefold structure of every *bhāvanā*, for in spite of this, the Kumārilian scheme remains essentially the same.

Nonetheless, as far as I can see, the purpose it serves exceeds Kumārila’s intentions. The concept of *śabdabhāvanā* developed in the *Tantravārttika* was meant to explain the specific causative operation of *one category* of speech units, the injunctive endings. Prakāśātman gives it the dimensions of a general theory of the production of knowledge through language, by integrating the elements traditionally recognized within brahmanical exegetical schools as the causal complex giving rise to “verbal knowledge”

<sup>38</sup> *ca* (read in M<sup>1</sup>, M<sup>2</sup>, T<sup>2</sup>, and in the *Nyāyacandrikā*) is added to the text of the editions.

(*śābdabodha*) – the hearing of an articulate sound, the memory of the previously apprehended relationship between this series of phonemes and a class of objects, etc. – as “parts” of *śabdabhāvanā*. The incitation of the hearer of a sentence to act, then, is nothing more than a particular case of a *generalized* theory of expression, understood as a type of causative operation: a “causing-to-become” (*bhāvanā*), initiating the “becoming” (*bhāva*) of a cognition about the object of a speech unit.

This, however, is only the preamble of Prakāśātman’s explanation of the specific class of injunctive endings, which remains, above all, the topic of his investigation:

*linādiśabde tu bhidyate. sā hi<sup>39</sup> linādikartṛkārthabhāvanālakṣa-  
ṇapurusaṣapravṛttibhāvyaniṣṭhā svajñānakaraṇikā stutinindārtha-  
vādādiñānetikartavyatākā ca samāśrīyate.*

“But in speech [units] such as the injunctive endings (*linādi*), [verbal effectuation] is distinct, for [in that case] we consider that it has *lin* [“the optative ending”], etc. for its agent, that it ends up in the [expected] result which is the activity of a human being – defined as “objective effectuation” –, that its instrument is its own knowledge (*svajñāna*), and that its subsidiary factor is the knowledge of [sentences] such as the discourses on things (*arthavāda*), [which express] praise and blame.”

This passage is very close to Kumārila’s definition of *śabdabhāvanā* in the *arthavādādh*<sup>o</sup> (*Tantravārttika* I.2.7[1] – see above). The characterization of its *instrument*, however, is slightly different. Kumārila spoke of “the consciousness of *vidhi*” (*vidhivijñāna*), whereas Prakāśātman simply says it is “its own knowledge” (*svajñāna*). This rather cryptic formula, found in the same context in the *Vivaraṇa*,<sup>40</sup> can be understood in two different ways: either the particle *sva-* stands for *linādi* (“the injunctive ending[s]”), mentioned at the beginning of the sentence, or it stands for *śabdabhāvanā* itself, recalled by the pronoun *sā* (“it”).<sup>41</sup> In the general description of the threefold part of *śabdabhāvanā* as is found in all speech units (see above), Prakāśātman stated that its instrument was “the knowledge of speech” (*śabdajñāna*). This, certainly, is a good argument in favour of the first reading,

<sup>39</sup>*hi* (read in M<sup>1</sup>, M<sup>2</sup>, T<sup>1</sup>, T<sup>2</sup>, Ed<sup>2</sup> and in the *Nyāyacandrikā*) is added to the text of Ed<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>40</sup>See *Vivaraṇa* [2] p. 463.3-4: *linādiśabdavyāpārah (... svajñānakaraṇakah (...)*

<sup>41</sup>The same compound is found in Śālikanātha’s *Vākyaṛthamātrkāvr̥tti* p. 419.17-420.1: *linādīvyāpārarūpā (... svajñānakaraṇikā (...)*. Śālikanātha’s explanations are, however, not sufficient to decide whether it should be read in the same way as in Prakāśātman’s exposition, or if it simply refers to speech (*śabda*).

according to which the instrument of the *śabdabhāvanā* would be the hearing of an injunctive ending.

Nonetheless, I maintain that the *second* reading is not only equally plausible, but is in fact the only possible one. According to this interpretation, verbal effectuation would operate through the recognition, on the part of the hearer, of its (that is, the effectuation's) very existence.

I believe the justification for such a claim can be found in Prakāśātman's reasoning itself:

*katham? pākam karotīti pacatītyākhyātārthasya karotīnā vyākhyānāt sarvākhyātānām tāvat karotyārtho 'bhidheyah. liṅādīnām tu vidhivivaksayā prayujyamānānām cetanaviśayapravṛttiyogitvāt<sup>42</sup> puruṣaprayatnaḥ puruṣārthabhāvvyaniṣṭho dhātvarthakaraṇaḥ prayājādītikartavyatāko 'rthabhāvanālakṣaṇaḥ karotyārtho 'bhidheyah. tatra svābhidheyārthabhāvanājñānajanano liṅādīśabdavyāpāraḥ svābhidheyārthabhāvanām api bhāvayatīti viśeṣaḥ.*

*katham? liṅādīśabdaśravaṇānantaram pravṛttidarśanāc chabdamātrasyāgrhītasambandhasyāpravartakatvāt pravṛttihetuḥ kañcid artham abhidhāya śabdaḥ pravartayatīti gamyate. tatrārthāntarābhidhānakalpanāyām kalpanāgauravāt svābhidhānavyāpāram abhidheyajñānajananalakṣaṇam abhidhāya taddvāreṇa arthabhāvanām pravṛttim<sup>43</sup> janayatīti pariśeṣārthāpattibhyām gamyate.<sup>44</sup>*

“How [is it proved]? First of all, the explanation (*vyākhyāna*) of the object of a verbal ending by means of [the root] *kr-*, by [a periphrasis such as] *pākam karotīti pacati* (“[The expression] *pacati* [“He/she cooks”] stands for *pākam karoti* [“He/she accomplishes the cooking”]”), proves that every verbal ending expresses the object of [the root] *kr-*. But injunctive endings, which are ut-

<sup>42</sup>Ed<sup>1</sup> reads here *cetanaviśayaprayogitvāt*. This reading is not found in any of the manuscripts I have used, with the notable exception of P<sup>1</sup>. The *Nyāyacandrikā* also confirms the reading adopted here. If we followed Ed<sup>1</sup>, we should translate “are used (*prayogin?*) about a conscious [being]”. This – to say the least – rather unusual use of *prayogin* for \**prayukta* makes me think that the other reading – despite the equally unusual use of the term *viśaya* – is the correct one.

<sup>43</sup>I prefer here the reading of most manuscripts (and of the *Nyāyacandrikā*), against both editions and P<sup>1</sup>, which read *arthabhāvanāpravṛttim* instead of *arthabhāvanām pravṛttim*.

<sup>44</sup>The reading *kalpyate*, pointed out by Ed<sup>1</sup> and found in a good number of manuscripts (M<sup>1</sup> M<sup>2</sup> T<sup>1</sup> T<sup>2</sup>) as well as in the *Nyāyacandrikā*, is also possible here.



tered when one intends to give a command (*vidhi*)<sup>45</sup>, are used [to provoke] the activity of a conscious being (*viśaya?*). Hence, they express the effort of a human being, resting on the [expected] result which is one of the goals of men, the instrument of which is the object of the [corresponding] verbal root, [and] the subsidiary factor of which are the preliminary offerings, etc.; [that is to say, they express] the [specific] object of [the root] *kr-* characterized as “objective effectuation”.<sup>46</sup> Then, the particularity of speech units such as *lini* (“the optative ending”) is that their operation, [consisting in] the production of the knowledge of that [entity] they express – that is, objective effectuation – also *effectuates* (*bhāvayati*) that very objective effectuation they express.

How [does this happen]? Since we can see the activity [of an agent] following immediately the hearing of a speech unit (*śabda*) such as *lini*, and since a mere sound (*śabda*), of which we have not grasped the relationship [with any object] cannot produce any activity, we understand that this sound activates [the agent] after having expressed an object which is the cause of [his] activity. Concerning [its nature,] since the supposition of the expression of any other object would contravene the economy principle, we suppose, by presumption and by eliminative [inference], [the following process:] having expressed its own operation of expression (*svābhīdhānavyāpāram abhīdhāya*), consisting in the production of the knowledge of what it expresses, [it] produces, by means of [this operation,] [the agent’s] activity, that is to say, objective effectuation.”

Prakāśātman’s reasoning in this rather terse passage is organized in two main stages.

In the first one (corresponding to the first paragraph), he defines a double specificity of injunctive endings. *First*, they are the only verbal end-

<sup>45</sup>The term *vidhi* should not be understood here in any of its two specifically Mīmāṃsaka senses (that is, either as “injunction” or in the Kumārīlian sense described above), but in its general sense of “command”, as it is used by Pāṇini in the above mentioned *sūtra* of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (see above, n. 26).

<sup>46</sup>If we follow Ānandabodha’s commentary, the object of the root *kr-* is an “operation” (*vyāpāra*) in general, which can further be specified as the activity of a human being (*puruṣapravṛtti*). We should then distinguish between “an effectuation consisting of the object of [the root] *kr-*” (*karotyarthalakṣaṇabhāvanā*) and “an objective effectuation consisting of the effort of a human being” (*puruṣaprayatnalakṣaṇārthabhāvanā*). See *Nyāyadīpikā* p. 307.1-3.

ings expressing *invariably* an objective effectuation, or the activity of a human being. An ending of a different type, *laṭ* (“the present ending”) for instance, sometimes expresses such an activity – in a verb like *paṭhati* (“He/she reads”) for example –, sometimes it does not – in a verb like *gacchati* (“It goes”) when it is used in a sentence like *ratho gacchati* (“A cart goes”) for instance. But in *all* sentences comprising a verb in the imperative (*loṭ*), the optative (*lini*), or one of their nominal equivalents, the ending does express such a *bhāvanā*, for a verbal form like *gaccha* (“Go!”) cannot (if not metaphorically) be employed talking to a cart or to any inanimate (*acetana*) object. Then, their operation of expression, common to all endings, and even to all meaningful speech units, is doubled by a *second* operation: they do not only *speak of* an agent’s activity, they also *cause* it.

The second stage of the reasoning aims at explaining this last operation, that is to say the *causation* of the agent’s activity by that class of verbal endings. Recall that the operation by which an injunctive ending, just like any word, expresses its object, is just another name of verbal effectuation. The simple knowledge of an agent’s operation by means of it, however, is not enough to produce the agent’s activity, as we can see in a present verbal form like *gacchati* (“He/she goes”), or even *gacchasi* (“You go”). Hence, another object has to be expressed to provoke the action. Since no other object is at hand, we must assume that verbal effectuation *expresses itself*, or that the cause of action is the knowledge of *śabdabhāvanā* itself, conveyed by means of its own expressive operation.<sup>47</sup> Subjectively, this probably corresponds to the recognition by the hearer that *there is* an invitation to act, something like the conscious thought: “This sentence encourages me to act” (\**mām prerayatīdaṃ vākyam*).<sup>48</sup>

Having put forward this main hypothesis, Prakāśātman is finally able to solve the problem of the *instrument* of verbal effectuation:

*tataś cārthabhāvanābhāvyaṇiṣṭhā śabdabhāvanā na kevalaṃ taj-  
jñānabhāvyaṇiṣṭhā. abhidhānanyaṃ śabdabhāvanāviśayaṃ vi-*

<sup>47</sup>See also Ānandabodha’s *Nyāyadīpikā* p. 307.10-11 [Quoted in Ānandapūrṇa’s *Nyāyacandrikā* p. 221.1-3]: *tasmād abhidhānavyāpāra evābhidhāyamānaḥ sāksāt pravṛttiṃ prasūte, śabdā tu tadabhidhānapraṇāḍīkayeti siddham*; “Therefore, it is proved that the operation of expression itself, when it is expressed, directly generates [the hearer’s] activity, whereas speech [does it] by means of the expression of this [operation]”.

<sup>48</sup>The fact that the prompting element in a sentence like *darśapūrṇamāsābhyāṃ svargakāmo yajeta* is nothing but the expressive operation of the optative ending is well evidenced in the analysis of that sentence in terms of *bhāvanā*. If the *arthabhāvanā* and its “parts” can appear through the use of the verb *bhāvayati* (“He/she effectuates”) and of case-endings in a paraphrase such as *darśapūrṇamāsāyāgena svargaṃ bhāvayet* (“One should accomplish heaven by means of the sacrifice of New- and Full-Moon”), the only “mark” of the *śabdabhāvanā* is nothing but...the optative ending itself!

*jñānaṃ pravartakajñānatvāt pravṛttilakṣaṇabhāvyaṇiṣpādāna-  
dvāreṇa śabdabhāvanāṃ prati karaṇatām<sup>49</sup> aśnute. aṃśatrayasa-  
hitārthabhāvanāviśayastutinindārthavādādijñānam api praroca-  
nādvāreṇa pravṛttihetutvāc chabdabhāvanāṃ pratītikartavyatām  
anubhavati.*

“So, verbal effectuation, resting on the [expected] result that is an objective effectuation, does not only end up in the [expected] result that is the *knowledge* of such [an objective effectuation]. The consciousness, produced by the [operation of] expression, *which has for its content verbal effectuation*, is a driving knowledge; hence, it becomes, by means of the production of [its expected] result – [the hearer’s] activity –, an *instrument* (*karaṇa*) of verbal effectuation.<sup>50</sup> The knowledge of [non-injunctive sentences] such as discourses on things, etc., [expressing] praise or blame about the objective effectuation with its three parts, is also the cause of [the hearer’s] activity, by means of the seduction (*prarocanā*) they exert. Hence, they enjoy the status of a subsidiary factor of verbal effectuation.”

Let us now sum up the contribution of the author of the ŚN (or of the source he takes his inspiration from). It is threefold:

(1) The operation called “verbal effectuation” (*śabdabhāvanā*) is not only that operation of speech which causes somebody’s action, and it is not found only in the case of injunctive endings. It is, more generally, an operation of *all speech units*, which ends up, ordinarily, in the cognition of an object, and, in specific cases only, in a bodily movement.

There are three instances of this operation: (a) the reference made to an object in general (in a word like *ghaṭa*); (b) the mere reference to *arthabhāvanā* (in non-injunctive endings referring to the operation of a conscious

<sup>49</sup>Both editions (supported by P<sup>1</sup> and T<sup>1</sup>) read *kāraṇatām*, but Ed<sup>1</sup> indicates the reading *karaṇatām* in footnote. This last reading, found in three further manuscripts (M<sup>1</sup>, M<sup>2</sup> and T<sup>2</sup>) and in the *Nyāyacandrikā*, must be adopted in order to maintain the triple structure of *bhāvya*, *karaṇa* and *itikartavyatā*. It is confirmed by a parallel statement in the *Vivaraṇa* (see below n. 50) and by Ānandabodha’s *Nyāyadīpikā* (p. 308.1).

<sup>50</sup>Cp. *Vivaraṇa* [2] p. 464.3-5: *tatra śabdabhāvanāviśayaṃ jñānaṃ liṅādisabdajanyaṃ pravartakajñānatvāt stutyādijñānāvgrhītaṃ puruṣapravṛttinivṛttihetur iti bhāvyanivṛttidvāreṇa śabdabhāvanāṃ prati karaṇam ucyate*; “Then, the knowledge having for its content verbal effectuation, produced by speech [units] such as *liṅ*, is a driving knowledge, and as such, when it is assisted by a knowledge of praise, etc., it is the cause of the activity or abstention from activity of a human being. Hence, by means of the production of [its expected] result, it is said to be the instrument of verbal effectuation”.

being); (c) the reference *and* causation of *arthabhāvanā* (in injunctive endings).

(2) The driving power of speech cannot be a property of its mere phonic form – technically said, “speech in its own form” (*śabdavarūpa*) –, but it implies a process of expression (*abhidhāna*).

(3) The result of this process is the *self-expression* of the expressive operation of speech.

This amounts to saying that hearing an injunctive sentence is one of the rare situations – maybe the only one – where the causal operation of speech, which normally has to be inferred from its effect (the knowledge of an object) can also be *experienced* by the hearer in a quasi perceptive way, since it is present in his mind *along with the expressed object*. Thus, the knowledge of the efficiency of speech should be considered as twofold: a *theoretical* one, gained by means of an inferential process, and a *practical* one, directly arrived at through one’s own act.

It is not easy to trace the legacy of Prakāśātman’s critical exposition of the double *bhāvanā* in the ŚN. Very few direct quotations of this treatise are found in later non-dualist literature. Even Ānandabodha’s *Nyāyama-karanda*, which is often a mere rewriting of his presumably earlier *Nyāyadīpikā*, does not contain any mention of the theory of *bhāvanā*. Still, an almost identical development – with the addition of some sentences taken from Ānandabodha’s commentary – is found a few centuries later in the *Nyāyacandrikā*, a *prakaraṇa* written by Ānandapūrṇa/Vidyāsāgara (14th century). This nowadays little-known treatise seems to be, after Ānandabodha’s works, the most direct heir of the ŚN, and suggests that the latter was still an authority on the topic, at a time where Mīmāṃsā itself had undergone substantial changes from the age of Prakāśātman.

The correlative question of Prakāśātman’s *sources* can find, I think, the beginning of an answer, despite the gaps in our knowledge of the early history of Mīmāṃsā. I will try to show, in the concluding part of this article, that at least some dispersed elements of the “Vedāntic” version of the *bhāvanā*-theory can be found in Maṇḍana Miśra’s *Vidhiviveka*.

### III. Maṇḍana Miśra’s *Vidhiviveka*: a possible source of Prakāśātman’s account of *śabdabhāvanā*?

Maṇḍana Miśra’s *Vidhiviveka* (“An examination of *vidhi*”) is probably the most direct continuation of Kumāriḷa’s elaborations on *śabdabhāvanā* in

the *Tantravārttika*, and it is also one of the most constant authorities for Advaitin-s such as Prakāśātman and his followers in their elaboration of a theory of human action. It is therefore legitimate to ask whether the three points I have just spelled out in Prakāśātman’s exposition of the *bhāvanā*-theory as major innovations with regard to Kumāriḷa, could not be traced back to this ground-breaking work.

I would like to suggest that, even if the *full* theory developed by Prakāśātman is not mentioned in the *Vidhiviveka*, its elements can be found in isolation, scattered in Maṇḍana’s *pūrvapakṣa*.<sup>51</sup>

As we have already seen at length, the most difficult part of Kumāriḷa’s theory was to determine the exact nature of the *instrument* of verbal effectuation: the “consciousness of *vidhi*” (*vidhivijñāna*). This question, precisely, is the one Maṇḍana raises in the very first prose sentence of his work, immediately following the introductory stanza, and to which the whole treatise is a possible answer: “This [*vidhi*,] which is the cause of [the hearer’s] activity, has to be considered either as a kind of speech [unit] (*śabdabheda*), such as *lini*, etc., or as a supplement in its operation (*tadvyāpārātiśaya*), or else as a particular object, by the expression of which a speech [unit] would also be called [*vidhi*]”.<sup>52</sup>

Without entering into all the details of Maṇḍana’s very complex refutation of the first hypothesis, we must keep in mind its main defect: the assimilation of injunctive endings to the efficient cause (*kārahetu*) of a movement, such as a very strong wind for instance, would imply that a knowledge of the relationship (*sambandha*) of this sound – allegedly causing the hearer’s activity – with an object of any kind would become superfluous; thus, the action would follow automatically, even if the enjoined person did not understand the language in which the injunction is pronounced, which is absurd. Moreover, the agent’s wish to act would not come into consideration, like in the case of somebody carried away by the flow of a river for instance.

However, these difficulties can be avoided, even without supposing in the agent the knowledge of any other object, if one accepts that the operation of speech prompting the hearer’s activity *is itself expressed*:

*nanv anabhidheya ete doṣāḥ, abhidheya eva tu linādiśabdānām*

<sup>51</sup>I am quoting Elliot Stern’s critical edition of the first part of the *Vidhiviveka*, marked S (see STERN 1988). The page numbers are those of Stern’s edition of the text (different from the common pagination of the thesis). Since this work is still unpublished, I am also giving the corresponding pages in the most easily available edition of the text by Prabhulāl Gosvāmī (Tārā Publications. 1978), marked T.

<sup>52</sup>*Vidhiviveka* S66.1-70.1 (= T4.1-2): *sa khalu śabdabhedo vā linādiḥ tadvyāpārātiśayo vā pravṛttihetur upeyate, arthabhedo vā, yadabhidhānāc chabdo ’pi tathā vyapadeśyaḥ.*

*puruṣaṃ prati prayojakavyāpāra ātmīyaḥ pravartanā. evaṃ hy uktam: “abhidhābhāvanām āhur anyām eva līṅdayaḥ” (Tantravārttika II.1.1[1]) iti. tathā ca jñāpakatvāt prāmāṇyam. pravṛtti-hetuṃ buddhvā puruṣasyecchayā pravṛttiḥ. sambandhabodhāpekṣā cābhidheyasambandhaniyamaś ca, abhidheyatvāt.*<sup>53</sup>

“Still, these are defects of something unexpressed, but in fact the own operation of speech [units] such as *līṅ*, etc., which incites human beings [to act], [that is to say their] instigation, *is* expressed, for it is said: “In reality, injunctive endings convey another [effectuation]: the effectuation [consisting of] an expression”. Then, they are means of knowledge, since they are knowledge-effecting [causes] (*jñāpaka*). [Further], human beings act, after having known a [possible] cause of activity, [only] according to their will (*icchayā*). Finally, the knowledge of the relationship [between a speech unit and something expressed] is required, and the relationship between what is expressed [by *līṅ* and what is expressed by the verbal base] is constant, because [*vidhi*] is [itself] expressed.<sup>54</sup>”

It is easy to recognize in this second hypothesis – equally rejected by Maṇḍana’s final *siddhānta* – two of Prakāśātman’s main points in the ŚN (n° 2 and 3): to be really efficient, and to match with the concrete variations of human actions, the instigative power of speech implies a process of expression, and the object of this process is none but *bhāvanā* itself. This possibility is supported, besides the use of the verbal form *āhuḥ* in the verse of the *Tantravārttika* quoted by Maṇḍana, by Kumāri’s statement about the instrument of the *śabdabhāvanā*: it “depend[s] on the prior knowledge of a relationship [between a verbal element and its object]” (*pūrvasambandhānubhavāpekṣa*) [quoted above].

However, there is no trace here of the *first* aspect of *bhāvanā* underlined in the ŚN (n° 1): its identification with the expressive operation of all speech units. This can be found in a second opinion (*mata*), different from the one I have just reported, which is very briefly stated in the introduction to *kārikā* 4, where it is refuted by Maṇḍana:

*atha matam: abhidhaiva bhāvanā vidhir līṅdyartha iti.*<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Vidhiviveka* [introduction to *kārikā* 3] S147.1-152.1 (= T12.1-5).

<sup>54</sup> I am not quite sure I understand the last part of this sentence. I am following Vācaspati’s explanation in the *Nyāyakaṇikā* S150.5-151.4 (= T12.19-22).

<sup>55</sup> *Vidhiviveka* S120.1 (= T16.1).

“Or else, the [following] opinion [is given]: the effectuation, which is expression itself, is [called] *vidhi*; it is the object of injunctive endings.”

The partial identification of this last opinion with the one detailed in the ŚN can be inferred from the beginning of its refutation by Maṇḍana:

*abhidhā ced vidhiḥ sarvaśabdānāṃ yathāsvam abhidheyeṣu tad-bhāva iti ghaṭādiśabdebhyo 'pi pravṛttiprasaṅgaḥ, tasyā aviśe-ṣāt.*<sup>56</sup>

“If *vidhi* was expression [itself], then it would be found in every individual speech [unit], about the [object] it expresses; then, one would act even after [hearing] a word like *ghaṭa* (“pot”) – which is absurd –, for [expression] is the same [in such a word and in injunctive endings]”.

The teaching of this refutation is twofold. First, the mention of a word like *ghaṭa* indicates that the expressive operation in question is the one present in all elements of speech. Then, however, this opinion does not take into account the teaching of the *first* view mentioned by Maṇḍana, for this difficulty disappears if we accept that the expression of *something* extends itself as far as language can reach, but that the *self-expression* of the operation of speech is, on the contrary, specific to injunctive endings. Hence, either we have to suppose that Maṇḍana considers these two views as completely independent, or we must admit that he consciously refuses the isolation of the verbal effectuation’s own expression to the case of endings such as *lini*. This last supposition is supported by the fact that he qualifies *abhidhā* as “the object of injunctive endings” (*linādyartha*), which clearly implies that the second objector takes into account the limitation of the process of expression to injunctive endings.

To conclude, the few elements gathered in the present study do not certainly claim to be an exhaustive reconstruction of the process by which this “advanced” version of the *bhāvanā* theory came to be read in a Vedāntin’s treatise as an objection raised against his main *pūrvapakṣa*. Nor do they allow any conclusions about Prakāśātman’s exact role in this process. Nonetheless, I believe they suggest that the development of Indian philosophical schools should not be traced exclusively from their internal evolution, but should also take into account the permeability of their limits and the complexity of their relationships.

<sup>56</sup> *Vidhiviveka* S122.1-3 (= T16.4-5).

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