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Action Theory and Scriptural Exegesis in Early Advaita-Vedānta (3): Maṇḍana Miśra on Ontology, Time and Commandment

Hugo David

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Hugo David. Action Theory and Scriptural Exegesis in Early Advaita-Vedānta (3): Maṇḍana Miśra on Ontology, Time and Commandment. V. Eltschinger, B. Kellner, E. Mills & I. Ratié. Road Less Travelled. Felicitation Volume in Honor of John Taber, University of Vienna, pp.37-95, 2021, 978-3-902501-39-4. hal-03609883

HAL Id: hal-03609883

<https://hal.science/hal-03609883>

Submitted on 16 Mar 2022

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WIENER STUDIEN ZUR TIBETOLOGIE UND BUDDHISMUSKUNDE 100

A Road Less Traveled

Felicitation Volume in Honor of John Taber



ARBEITSKREIS FÜR TIBETISCHE UND BUDDHISTISCHE STUDIEN
UNIVERSITÄT WIEN

WIEN 2021

A ROAD LESS TRAVELED

FELICITATION VOLUME IN HONOR OF
JOHN TABER

EDITED BY
VINCENT ELTSCHINGER, BIRGIT KELLNER,
ETHAN MILLS AND ISABELLE RATIÉ

WIEN 2021

ARBEITSKREIS FÜR TIBETISCHE UND BUDDHISTISCHE STUDIEN
UNIVERSITÄT WIEN

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Bildrecht, Wien 2021



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ISBN: 978-3-902501-39-4

IMPRESSUM

Verleger: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien
Universitätscampus, Spitalgasse 2-4, Hof 2, 1090 Wien

Herausgeber und für den Inhalt verantwortlich:

B. Kellner, K.-D. Mathes, M. Viehbeck

alle: Spitalgasse 2-4, Hof 2, 1090 Wien

Druck: Ferdinand Berger und Söhne GmbH, Wiener Straße 80, 3580 Horn

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	ix
<i>Publications of John A. Taber</i>	xvii
Dan Arnold, Location, Location, Location! Thoughts on the Significance of a Grammatical Point for Some Mādhyamika Arguments.....	1
Hugo David, Action Theory and Scriptural Exegesis in Early Advaita-Vedānta (3): Maṇḍana Miśra on Ontology, Time and Commandment.....	37
Vincent Eltschinger, Dharmakīrti on the Origin of Suffering. An Annotated Translation of PV 2.179–189.....	95
Christopher Framarin and Stephen Harris, Pleasure, Desire, and Welfare in Buddhist and Hindu Texts.....	127
Eli Franco, The <i>Bhāvīkāraṇavāda</i> of Jitāri. A Tenth-Century Buddhist Treatise on Backward Causation.....	147
Elisa Freschi, Mīmāṃsā between Epistemology and Hermeneutics: The History of <i>Arthāpatti</i>	175
Alessandro Graheli, Epistemology Meets Poetry: Jayanta on <i>Dhvani</i>	219
Kunio Harikai, Kumārila on <i>Sādhuśabda</i>	247
Matthew T. Kapstein, The * <i>Madhyamakaprajñāvatāra</i> of a Late Candrakīrti.....	269
Kei Kataoka, Bhāviveka and Kumārila on Omniscience and Scripture: Reconsidering the New Chronology.....	279
Ethan Mills, “ <i>Prapañca</i> ” in Gauḍapāda and Nāgārjuna.....	301
Roy W. Perrett, Moral Motivation and Hindu Ethics.....	325
Isabelle Ratié, A History of Time in the Sāṃkhya Tradition.....	341
Ernst Steinkellner, Analyse einer Sammelhandschrift von Werken Dharmakīrtis.....	421
Tom J. F. Tillemans, Reversing Śāntarakṣita’s Argument. Or Do Mādhyamikas Derive Part-Whole Contradictions in All Things?.....	443

Alex Watson, Jayanta on the Question of God's Existence.....	471
Kiyotaka Yoshimizu, Jaimini, Bādari, and Bādarāyaṇa in the <i>Mīmāṃsāsūtra</i> and the <i>Brahmasūtra</i>	505
<i>Contributors</i>	541

Action Theory and Scriptural Exegesis in Early Advaita-Vedānta (3): Maṇḍana Miśra on Ontology, Time and Commandment*

Hugo David

The linguistic phenomenon of injunction (*vidhi*) gave rise to an intense theoretical interest in medieval India, where it often stood as a prototype for non-assertive discourse, first of all among specialists in Pāṇinian grammar (*Vyākaraṇa*) and Vedic exegesis (*Mīmāṃsā*), later on in other schools of thought which, for various reasons that still need to be cleared, developed an interest in the *vidhivāda*, the “discussion of injunctions/of the cause of human action.” The philosophical and historical significance of this discussion is now widely recognised,¹ and a preceding study was devoted to exploring some of its consequences for the early evolution of *Mīmāṃsā* as an exegetical theory (David 2013b). Little attention has been paid, however, to its implications for the development of Brahmanical

* Research for the present article was started as part of the project “Language and Action in Early Brahmanical Philosophy,” carried out at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Vienna) in 2013–2015 and funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF-project no. P25287 – G15). My reflection on the imperative also greatly benefitted from numerous discussions I had with Vincenzo Vergiani during my stint at the university of Cambridge as a Newton International Fellow in 2013–2014. Earlier versions of the main argument of this essay can be found in my recent monograph (David 2020a: vol. 1, pp. 46–48 and vol. 2, n. 717) and in a previous article in French (David 2017). I thank Elliot M. Stern for sharing with me, for the last decade, unpublished material regarding the *Vidhiviveka* and its commentaries, Vincent Eltschinger for useful corrections on an earlier draft, and S. L. P. Anjaneya Sarma for useful clarifications on some Sanskrit passages translated here for the first time.

¹ After a long break following E. Frauwallner’s pioneering study of the concept of *bhāvanā* in the work of Kumāriḷa Bhaṭṭa and Maṇḍana Miśra (Frauwallner 1938), Brahmanical theories of injunctive discourse have enjoyed some new attention in recent years. See in particular studies by Marui (1989), Freschi (2012) (who also proposes an overview of secondary literature [pp. 19–21]) and David (2013a and 2013b). The historical and ideological background of these discussions is sketched in David 2015.

ontology.² Still, it is remarkable that the most ancient Brahmanical treatise entirely devoted to an investigation of the cause of human activity (*pravṛtīhetu*), the *Vidhiviveka* (“An enquiry into the cause of human action,” henceforth ViV) by Maṇḍana Miśra (660–720?), also offers the most elaborate argument in favour of existence (*sattā*) as the highest universal in early Mīmāṃsā.³ Equally significant is that the only parallel for this discussion in Maṇḍana’s work should precisely be a large section of the second book (*kāṇḍa*) of his presumably later *Brahmasiddhi* (“Proof of *brahman*,” henceforth BS), for the most part a defence of Vedāntic exegesis against the Prābhākara hypothesis of the “commandment” (*niyoga*) as the object of all linguistic utterances.⁴ The purpose of the present study is to attempt an explanation of what may otherwise appear as a mere coincidence or a case of theoretical “digression” (*prasaṅga*), a view further comforted by the conspicuous absence of ontological reflection in later Brahmanical writings on injunction.⁵ This investigation might also allow us, it is hoped, better to

² An important exception to this statement is the work of Wilhelm Halbfass, who first proposed to correlate the Mīmāṃsakas’ conceptions of being (*bhāva/sattā*) with their linguistic analysis of Vedic injunctions. Halbfass’s sketch of the early history of the concept of *sattā* in Mīmāṃsā deserves to be quoted at length: “(...) in the field of ontology, the different explanations of ‘being’ are associated with exegetic positions. While Kumāṛila adopts and modifies the Vaiśeṣika notion of the highest universal *sattā*, Prabhākara and Śālikanātha explain it as *pramāṇasaṃbandhayogyatā*, ‘suitability for being connected with valid cognition,’ in order to accommodate *kārya*, ‘the ought,’ as a reality *sui generis*. Maṇḍana, who rejects Prabhākara’s *kārya* and wants to support his own interpretation of the nature of *vidhi*, ‘injunctions,’ proposes *vartamānatā*, ‘being present,’ or *vartamānakālasaṃbandhitva*, ‘connectedness with the present time.’ Yet, at the same time, these definitions are contributions to the general ontological debate. As such they have been recognized not only within the Mīmāṃsā, but also in the wider arena of Indian philosophical debates” (Halbfass 1991: 33).

³ ViV(SV) 12 (S 330.2–371.1 [= G 45.2–57.1]). The ViV is quoted, for the *pūrvapakṣa*-part, as in Elliot M. Stern’s critical edition (Stern 1988), marked S. Since this edition is still unpublished, references to the most widespread edition by Mahāprabhu Lāl Goswāmī, marked G, are given in square brackets. As the two published editions of the ViV I could access (i.e. the *editio princeps*, marked M, and G) generally do not provide any additional evidence with respect to E. Stern’s critical apparatus, variant readings from these editions are not systematically mentioned for this part of the text.

⁴ BS(SV) 2.29–58 (pp. 84.24–96.22). I accept the division of the BS in three books (and not in four, as in K. Kuppuswami Sastri’s *editio princeps*) proposed by Diwakar Acharya (2006). For a summary and discussion of Acharya’s arguments, see David 2013b: 281–82, n. 32.

⁵ The section of the ViV including a lengthy discussion of *sattā* (ViV 5–14, especially ViV 8–14), was neglected, not only by modern scholarship on Maṇḍana (the brief monograph by K. Natarajan [1995] devotes only a few pages [pp. 41–52] to his refutation of the doctrine of the *niyoga*), but also by his medieval readers. In his metrical rendering

understand how a reflection on forms of discourse defining what *should be* can have decisive implications for our conception of what there *is* and, eventually, of *being* as an architectonic idea allowing the understanding of reality as a unified totality.

Between the beginning of the 6th century and the end of the 8th Mīmāṃsā saw the rise of two fundamentally distinct and mutually incompatible doctrines in the field of ontology.⁶ The former, of which Maṇḍana Miśra was the first advocate, is characterised by a univocal concept of existence (*sattā*), equally applicable to all kinds of positive entities (substances, qualities, universals, etc.).⁷ At the heart of this conception of being lies the equation of existence and being present (*vartamānatā*): for Maṇḍana, *to be* essentially means to be *in the present*.⁸ Past and future entities owe their existence (or rather, their non-vacuity)⁹ to their

of the ViV's *pūrvapakṣa* in the *Nyāyasudhā* 1.2.7 (pp. 26–29), Someśvara Bhaṭṭa (12th c.?), for instance, supplements his fairly trustworthy paraphrase of ViV 1–4 (*k.* 1–15) by a refutation of the Prābhākara hypothesis of the “obligation” (*kārya*) entirely based on Śālikanātha's works (*k.* 16–41), with no consideration whatever of Maṇḍana's own exposition. That Maṇḍana's objections to Prabhākara are omitted by a scholar quite explicitly following his course of argument reveals, I believe, a shift in Brahmanical theory of action from a wider reflection including ontological preoccupations to a purely psychological analysis of human action, a shift that must have taken place between the time of Maṇḍana and that of Śālikanātha.

⁶ I follow here the terminological usage introduced by W. Halbfass in his fundamental work on classical Vaiśeṣika (Halbfass 1993), whose chapter 7 (“The conceptualization of Being in Classical Vaiśeṣika”) constitutes the most immediate background of this study. See also Halbfass 1975, 1986 and 1989. Thus the word “ontology” will be used here in the restricted sense of an “explicit conceptualisation of being” or of an explication of what it means to say that something *is*, distinguished from “categoriology” understood as the mere enumeration of “what there is.” However, I do not adopt Halbfass's distinction between “existence” and “reality” (respectively translating *astitva* and *sattā*), since the concept of *astitva* plays no role in the texts under consideration here. I consequently keep the more literal translations “being” for *sat* and “existence” for *sattā*.

⁷ On the exclusion of absence (*abhāva*) from the domain of *sattā*, see Vācaspati's *Nyāyakaṇikā* (NyK) ad ViV 12 (SV): *na khalu prameyatā sattā, tadanuvṛttāv api sattāyā abhāvād vyāvṛtteḥ*; “Existing differs from being known, for even though the latter [= being known] pertains to absence, existence does not” (S 331.6–7 [= G 45.23–24]). On the difference between the Mīmāṃsaka concept of *sattā* and that of the Vaiśeṣika, see below n. 11.

⁸ See ViV 13 (SV – Introduction): *vartamānataiva hi sattvam ucyate*; “For [we] maintain that existence is nothing but being present” (S 375.1–2 [G 58.1]); BS 2.35 (SV): *sac ca vartamānam ity ucyate*; “And [we] maintain that being is whatever is present” (p. 87.18).

⁹ In one place in the ViV, Maṇḍana qualifies past and future objects as “indescribable [in terms of being and non-being]” (*anupākhyeya*). See ViV 15 (SV): (...) *jñānotpattāv ajātanivṛttayor anupākhyeyatvād asāmarthyā*; “(...) for [an entity] that has not come

having been *formerly* present, or to their being *about to be* present. There is little doubt that this kind of ontology was implicitly admitted even by some of Maṇḍana's predecessors in Mīmāṃsā. The reason why it needed to be voiced and argued in both his main exegetical works is that it had to confront a fundamentally distinct comprehension of being, based on radically different assumptions. For its advocates being was not a distinct property of things. Nor can it be associated with any temporal characteristics belonging to the thing in itself, but only with its (actual or potential) relationship to cognition (*pramāṇa*).¹⁰ Thus, according to this second conception, there is no contradiction entailed in saying that an entity *is* and that it is *not*, never has been and will never be *present*, as long as one can provide a convincing epistemological basis for its distinction from non-existent entities such as sky-flowers, hares' horns and the like. The price to pay for this significant extension of the realm of being to entities that do not exist *in time* (strictly speaking they are *timeless* entities) was the dissolution of the univocal conception of being elaborated by earlier Mīmāṃsakas in close confrontation with early Vaiśeṣika,¹¹ and the correlative dissemination of being into an irreducible

[into existence] or has ceased [to exist] does not have the capacity to produce knowledge, since it is indescribable [in terms of being and non-being] (*anupākhyeyatvāt*)” (S 466.1–2 [G 83.4]). For a similar usage of the adjective *anupākhyeya*, see for instance Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* (VP) 1.26 (SV): *sa caikapadanibandhanaḥ satyāsatyabhāvenānupākhyeyaḥ*; “And this [i.e. the artificially extracted word-object – *apoddhārapadārtha*], which depends on a single word, is indescribable in terms of ‘real’ or ‘unreal’” (p. 65.7). For another (less explicit) occurrence of the same term, see VP 1.83a and SV (p. 149.6). Śrīvr̥ṣabha's gloss in the *Sphuṭākṣarā* is similar in both cases: *satyo 'satya ity ākhyātum aśakyaḥ* (p. 66.10); *idaṃ tad iti tasya (...) ākhyātum aśakyatvāt* (p. 149.27–8). More striking yet, in VPSV 2.24 (p. 203.19), Bhartṛhari uses the similar adjective *nirupākhyā* to qualify the two “edges” (*koṭi*) of the “middle” (*madhya*) that is the present time, i.e. past and future (read *nirupākhyayoḥ* as in Cārudeva Śāstrī's edition [Ed^{1939/40} p. 20.11] instead of *nirupākhyayoḥ* as found in Iyer's edition [Ed¹⁹⁸³ p. 203.19]). This characterisation of past and present, as far as I can see, is taken up without change in Maṇḍana's own theorisation of time.

¹⁰ See ViV 12 (SV): *pramāṇagrāhyatā sattvalakṣaṇam*; “The defining characteristic of existence is the fact of being grasped by a [valid] cognition” (S 330.2 [G 45.2]); BS 2.30–31 (SV – Introduction): *na pramāṇagamyatāyā anyā kā cana sattā*; “And there is no ‘existence’ that would differ from the mere fact of being apprehended by a [valid] cognition” (p. 85.10).

¹¹ In spite of Halbfass's somewhat ambiguous claim that “Kumārila adopts and modifies the Vaiśeṣika notion of the highest universal *sattā*” (quoted above, n. 2), the older Mīmāṃsaka notion of *sattā* (“existence”) should not be confused with the Vaiśeṣika understanding of this concept as the highest generality (*paraṃ sāmānyam*) inherent only in substances, qualities and movements. See *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* 1.2.7–8: *sad iti yato dravyaguṇakarmasu* (7) *dravyaguṇakarmabhyo 'rthāntaraṃ sattā* (8); “*sattā* is the cause for [our cognition] that substances, qualities and movements ‘exist,’ [and] it is a different thing with respect to

diversity of beings (in the plural), devoid of any common aspect (*ākāra*) and not governed by any common principle (if we except, of course, their purely verbal designation as “beings,” *sad iti*).

The origin of this second position is not easy to trace, and we cannot even be sure that its fully-fledged formulation predates Maṇḍana. Vācaspati Mīśra ascribes it to Prabhākara in person,¹² and the number of quotations from Prabhākara’s

substances, qualities and movements” (text: Isaacson 1995: 169). See also *Padārthadharmasaṃgraha* p. 81.8–14, Halbfass 1993: 143–147 and Isaacson 1995: 25–26. To this technical use of the word *sattā*, Kumārila and his followers oppose the common usage of *sattā* as the “quality of what exists” (*sadbhāva*), possessed indifferently by all kinds of positive entities. This point is made particularly clear by Kumārila in the *Tantravārttika* (TV) 1.3.30 [9/10]: *sadbhāvaḥ satteti, na tu vaiśeṣikaparibhāṣayā yato dravyaguṇakarmasu sad iti pratītiḥ, sā sattety evaṃlakṣaṇā jātiḥ pratipattavyā* “Existence is the quality of what exists (*sadbhāvaḥ sattā*), and one should not admit a universal ‘existence’ defined, according to the technical usage of the Vaiśeṣika, as ‘the cause for’ our cognition ‘that substances, qualities and movements ‘exist’” (vol. 2, p. 240.4–5 – Harikai [2012] has a slightly different reading *sad iti yato dravyaguṇakarmasu sad iti pratītiḥ*, which I am not following here). This extension of the domain of *sattā* beyond the first three Vaiśeṣika categories is reaffirmed by Maṇḍana in BS 2.39 (SV): *api ca sāmānyavaiśeṣasamavāyā api santa eva, na teṣv aupacārikaḥ sacchabdaḥ, pratyayasāvāilakṣaṇyāt*; “Moreover, even generality (*sāmānya*), particularity (*viśeṣa*) and inherence (*samavāya*) exist, [and] the use of the verb \sqrt{as} (‘to be, to exist’) to [denote] them is not figurative, for there is no difference in the cognition [of their existence].” (p. 89.12–14). In his commentary on this passage, Śaṅkhaṇḍī quotes a half-verse I was unable to identify so far, which expresses the same idea: *jātyādiṣv api sadbuddheḥ sattā taj jātiṣu sthitā* |; “Since the idea that ‘it exists’ also applies to universals, etc., existence (*sattā*) is also established for universals” (*Vyākhyā* p. 205.23–24). Thus, if it is true that the opposed Mīmāṃsaka notion of being as the “ability to be grasped by a valid knowledge” (*pramāṇagrāhyatā*) constitutes “one of the most conspicuous challenges to the Vaiśeṣika conception of being” (Halbfass 1993: 153), this might not have been its most immediate purpose.

¹² See NyK ad ViV 12 (SV – Introduction): *saṃprati ṭīkākārīyaṃ matam upanyasyati*; “Now he exposes the view of the Commentator [= Prabhākara]” (S 299.3 [= G 35.23]). The use of the word *ṭīkākāra* (“the Commentator”) to refer to Prabhākara, although it occurs only once in the NyK, is not exceptional in Mīmāṃsā literature. Śālikānātha, for instance, frequently contrasts the view of the *ṭīkākāra* (Prabhākara) with that of the *vārttikakāra*, the “Author of the *Vārttikas*” (Kumārila). See for instance *Rjūvimalā* 1.1.1 (M₁ 1.16) and 1.1.5 (M₁ 116.10–20); see also Raja 1934: 13. Similarly, in the *Vākyārthanirṇaya* (p. 89.12–13), Pārthasārathi Mīśra identifies two of the main positions regarding the object of the sentence (*vākyārtha*) as that of the *ācārya* (“the Teacher,” i.e. Kumārila) and that of *ṭīkākārapādāḥ* (“the Revered Commentator”), in which we clearly recognise Prabhākara’s *anvīṭābhīdhānavāda* (see also Rāmānujācārya’s commentary: *saṃprati* [...] *gurumataṃ svamataṃ cāha*; “Now he states the view of the Guru [= Prabhākara] [...], as well as his own” – *Nāyakarātna* p. 92.1).

work in the *vṛtti* on ViV 12–14 leaves, in fact, little doubt as to the identity of Maṇḍana’s main target. Still, I was unable to find in the *Bṛhatī* any clear statement confirming this attribution.¹³ Some characteristic features of this theory, beginning with the negation of *sattā* as a universal (*jāti*), are found in the works of Prabhākara’s earliest commentator, Śālikanātha (around 900),¹⁴ who always betrays close dependence on Maṇḍana’s works on that topic (the BS, in particular),¹⁵ so that it is impossible to know whether he or Prabhākara himself is the source of Śālikanātha’s elaborations.¹⁶ Our earliest testimonies for the opposition of the two ontologies outlined above are therefore Maṇḍana Miśra’s

¹³ See below, Section 2, for a discussion of the relevant passage of the *Bṛhatī* (2.1.1). Further evidence – admittedly negative – for Prabhākara’s relative indifference to “general” ontology is found in the *Bṛhatī* 1.1.5 (M₁ 158.5–159.3) and its commentary by Śālikanātha (*R̥juvimalā* 1.1.5 – M₁ 159.14–160.15). In this passage, which is part of Prabhākara’s refutation of the grammarians’ *sphoṭa*-theory, the author of the *Bṛhatī* rejects the existence of a universal *śabdatva* (“being-*śabda*”) because of the absence of any common feature between the various speech-sounds (*ka*, *ga*, etc.). However, he does not extend the application of this criterion to other universals. Śālikanātha, on the other hand, takes this discussion as an opportunity to reject *sattva* (“being”) on a similar basis: *etena sattvādisāmānyāni pratyuktāni, na hi jātiḡuṇakriyādravyeṣu sād̥hāraṇākārāvamarśo ’sti, sadādiśabdānāṃ prameyādiśabdavat pravṛttisaṃbhavāt*; “By this [principle], generalities such as ‘being’ are [also] rejected, for one does not recognise (*ava-√mṛś*) any aspect (*ākāra*) that would be common to universals, qualities, movements and substances; in fact, nothing prevents a word like *sat* (‘being’) from being used as the word *prameya* (‘knowable’)” (M₁ 159.17–19). Had there been a discussion of *sattā* elsewhere in the *Bṛhatī*, I find it likely that Śālikanātha would have developed his arguments in the corresponding section of his commentary, and not as an appendix to the discussion of *śabdatva*. Thus, although one cannot exclude that a discussion of ontological topics was carried out in Prabhākara’s presumably lost “Short Gloss” (*Laghvī* or *Vivaraṇa*) on Śabara’s *Bhāṣya*, this passage of the *R̥juvimalā*, which exactly parallels the discussion of *sattā* at the end of the *Jātinirṇaya* (see following note), rather suggests that the topic was introduced into the Prābhākara-tradition by Śālikanātha himself, possibly under Maṇḍana’s impulse.

¹⁴ See *Jātinirṇaya* (pp. 97.1–100.4) and *R̥juvimalā* 1.1.5 (M₁ 159.17–160.15).

¹⁵ As rightly pointed out by the editor of the *Jātinirṇaya*, A. Subrahmanya Sastri (p. 98, nn. 1–2), Śālikanātha’s refutation of *sattā* at the end of that treatise is mostly addressed to Maṇḍana, disdainfully called “another, who prides himself as a scholar” (*anyaḥ paṇḍitaṃmānya* – p. 98.1).

¹⁶ The refutation of the universal *sattā* became a familiar topic of later Prābhākara treatises, which rely in large measure on Śālikanātha’s treatment of the subject. See, for instance, Bhavanātha Miśra’s *Nayaviveka* 1.1.5 (pp. 100.5–101.5 and p. 180.3–4), generally dated in the 11th/12th century (Verpoorten 1987: 44) and the presumably later *Prabhākara Vijaya* (pp. 62–65) by Nandīśvara (13th–14th c.).

treatises, especially the earlier one, the ViV, which will thus be the main focus of the present study.

My purpose in what follows is to highlight two related factors that must have contributed to the crystallisation of this opposition in the ViV and, later on, in the BS, both of which have to do with the interpretation of Vedic injunctions. The first factor was a theoretical attempt, unknown in earlier Mīmāṃsā, to account for the functioning of Vedic injunctions in terms of a particular relation between the action referred to by an injunctive verbal form and *time* as perceived by the listener. The second was a particular difficulty underlying Kumārila's theorisation of *dharma* (the main object of a Vedic injunction, according to MīSū 1.1.2) as an entity “not within the reach of the senses” (*nendriyagocaraḥ*) due to its relation to a future result,¹⁷ a difficulty that finds no clear solution in Kumārila's works. My contention is that Prabhākara's theory of the “commandment” (*niyoga*) represented, for Maṇḍana, the accomplishment of such an attempt to correlate injunction and time *and* thereby to provide a successful explanation for *dharma*'s imperceptibility, but that the introduction of the concept of “commandment” into Mīmāṃsā had consequences for ontology he was unwilling to accept. In order to avoid such consequences he had to produce his own theory of existence as presence (*vartamānatā*), a theory that would remain influential and associated with his name for many centuries to come, even when its exegetical origin would somehow fail to be clearly recognised.

My investigation will proceed in three steps. I shall consider, firstly, three theoretical models (all eventually rejected) found in the intermediate portion of Maṇḍana's *pūrvapakṣa* (ViV 8–14), converging in the elaboration of a *temporal interpretation of imperativity*. After examining the first two models separately (Section 1), I shall show how the last, Prabhākara's theory of the commandment, had decisive implications for the understanding of the relation between *dharma* and time, hence between *existence* and time (Section 2). Finally, we shall see how Maṇḍana, just before engaging in his *siddhānta* (ViV 25), proposed an alternative to Prabhākara's theory, improving on Kumārila's theory of *dharma* while remaining compatible with his own ontological premises (Section 3).

1. A temporal interpretation of imperativity. Two hypotheses (ViV 8–11)

Within the set of verbal suffixes (*lakāra*) introduced by Pāṇini in sections 3.2 and 3.3 of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (A) a fair number are justified by the speaker's intention

¹⁷ *Ślokaṁvārttika (codanā°) k.* 14d (quoted below – Section 3).

to express the *time* in which the action takes place. *laṭ* (the affix of the present tense), for instance, is introduced when the action referred to by the verbal base takes place at the moment of the enunciation (*vartamāne laṭ* [A 3.2.123]), *luṅ* (aorist) when it occurred in the past (*bhūte* [A 3.2.84] *luṅ* [A 3.2.110]), *lṛt* (future) when it will occur later on (*bhaviṣyati* [A 3.3.3] *lṛṭ śeṣe ca* [A 3.3.13]), and so on. This, however, is not the case of “modal” suffixes such as *loṭ* (imperative) and *liṅ* (optative) which, along with the suffixes used to form gerundives (*kṛtya*), are most typical of injunctive discourse.¹⁸ These suffixes are never defined by Sanskrit grammarians in relation to temporal characteristics of the prescribed action,¹⁹ but in reference to a set of “intentions” listed by Pāṇini – command (*vidhi*), invite (*āmantraṇa*), prayer (*adhīṣṭa*), etc.²⁰ – systematised already in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* as the triad of “command” (*ājñā/praiṣa/preṣaṇa*), “request” (*abhyarthanā/adhyeṣaṇa/adhyeṣaṇā*) and “permission” (*anuññā/abhyanuññā*), and collectively referred to by Bhartṛhari (5th c.) as “properties of the speaker” (*prayokṭṛdharma*).²¹ The group of stanzas here taken into consideration (ViV 8–14)

¹⁸ These three groups of suffixes are generally gathered together under the stereotyped phrase *liṅādi*, “*liṅ*, etc.,” freely translated here as “injunctive suffixes.”

¹⁹ As rightly pointed out by V. Vergiani, the grammatical definition of action (*kriyā*) as something “to be realised” (*sādhya*) found, for instance, at the beginning of Bhartṛhari’s *Kriyāsamuddeśa* (VP 3.8.1: [...] *sādhyatvenābhidhīyate* | [...] *tat kriyety abhidhīyate*; “[...] [that which] is expressed as something to be realised [...] is called ‘action’ [in grammar]”) does not have any temporal implications, so that “linguistically, tense is not an indispensable component of verb meaning” (Vergiani 2010: 391). On this distinction and on its difference from the similar distinction current in Mīmāṃsā, see below n. 88.

²⁰ See especially A 3.3.161 and 163.

²¹ On the concept of *prayokṭṛdharma* (“property of the speaker”), see David 2013b: 287–288 and Vergiani 2014. In the *pūrvapakṣa* of the ViV Maṇḍana makes repeated use of the twin expressions *prayokṭṛdharma/puruṣadharmā* (“property of the speaker”/“property of a person”) to designate the most immediately “perceived” (*pratīta/prajñā[īta]*) value of injunctive suffixes in the subjective experience of Sanskrit speakers. See ViV 3 (SV – S 155.3–156.1 [G 12.9–13.1]) and ViV 5 (*kārikā* and SV – S 195.1–196.1 [G 17.6–18.3]), both translated in David 2013b: 287–288, nn. 52–53. Maṇḍana’s debt to Bhartṛhari is, again, suggested by ViV 7, where the concept of *prayokṭṛdharma* is used to differentiate injunctive suffixes (*liṅādi*) from the affix of the causative (*ṇic*): *prajñāyate liṅādīnām vyañjanīyā pravartanā* | *prayokṭṛdharṇo na ṇico yathāniyatākartṛkā* || *lokād dhi śabdārthādhiḡamaḥ. tatra ca pravartanā niyatādhārā prayokṭṛsaṃśrayaiva liṅādyarṇo ’vagamyate. ṇijarthas tu sāniyatādhārā. na ca ṇijarthaval liṅādyarṇo ’pi bhavitum arhati, yathālokaprajñānam śabdārthavyavasthānār;* “[Ordinary speakers of Sanskrit] perceive that the instigation which is to be manifested (*vyañjanīyā*) by injunctive suffixes is a property of the speaker (*prayokṭṛdharma*), unlike [the instigation that is characteristic] of *ṇic* [= the affix of the causative], whose agent is variable (*aniyatākartṛ*).’ Sure enough, [our] knowledge of the meaning of speech[-units] is based on worldly usage. And there

is therefore the earliest (and perhaps the only) testimony to an attempt by Indian theoreticians to understand the linguistic phenomenon of imperativity on the basis of temporal characteristics belonging to the action (*kriyā/bhāvanā*) prescribed, or to its most immediate product. Our main concern here is of course not that Maṇḍana disagreed with such an approach, but rather that it was prominent enough in 7th-century Mīmāṃsā to deserve a relatively detailed treatment by one of its most eminent proponents, if only to be deemed an essential failure.

The unity of ViV 8–14 might not appear at first sight, embedded as it is in an exhaustive and apparently homogeneous series of refutations of all kinds of “objects” (*artha*) possibly aspiring to the rank of ultimate “cause of [human] activities” (*pravṛttihetu*), Maṇḍana’s most obvious purpose in that section of his *pūrvapakṣa* (ViV 5–14).²² Seven distinct “objects” are successively examined, whose knowledge ought to be sufficient, according to some, to explain the undertaking of *any* activity by a rational agent after hearing an injunction. These are: 1. the three “properties of a speaker” (*prayokṭṛdharma*) from the grammarians’

we understand that the meaning of injunctive suffixes (*linādi*) is an instigation whose subject is invariable (*niyatādhāra*), because it is always (*eva*) located in the speaker (*prayokṭṛsaṃśraya*). But [the instigation which is] the meaning of *ṇic* has a variable subject (*anīyatādhārā*). And the meaning of injunctive suffixes cannot be identical with the meaning of *ṇic*, for the establishment of the meaning of speech[-units] should conform to [our] perception (*prajñāna*) in worldly usage” (S 268.1–269.1 [= G 26.7–27.2]). Although such an explanation of the difference between injunctive and causative suffixes is not proposed by Bhartṛhari in the section of the *Sādhanasamuddeśa* dealing with the difference between *loṭ* and *ṇic* (VP 3.7.125–126), a very close distinction is made by Helārāja in his commentary on VP 3.7.125 (*Prakīrṇaparakāśa* pp. 328.24–329.2, on which see Vergiani 2014). There is, of course, more than one possible explanation of such a similarity, particularly visible in the parallel idea that injunctive suffixes “manifest” ($\sqrt{\text{vyañj}}^{\text{caus}}$) (Maṇḍana)/“illuminate” ($\sqrt{\text{dyot}}^{\text{caus}}$) (Helārāja) intentions of the speaker without expressing (*abhi-√dhā*) them, but it is at least possible that the learned Kashmiri commentator directly adopted from Maṇḍana what he might have considered a trustworthy elaboration on Bhartṛhari’s views. In any case a direct filiation from Bhartṛhari to Maṇḍana on that particular point is very likely, and is further suggested by the quotation of another stanza from the *Sādhanasamuddeśa* (VP 3.7.7) at the end of the immediately preceding portion of the *svavṛtti* on ViV 6 (S 266.2–3 [G 26.2–3]).

²² See ViV 5 (SV – Introduction): *astu tarhy arthabhedah. naitad api (...)*; “Well then, let [*vidhi*] be a certain kind of object! – This, also, is not the case (...).” (S 194.1 [G 17.5]). This proposal is made in direct reference to the three hypotheses enumerated at the very beginning of the treatise (ViV 2 [SV – Introduction]; S 66.1–70.1 [G 4.1–2]): *vidhi* (the cause of human activities when they are the result of an injunction) could either be a certain speech-unit (*śabda*), its operation (*vyāpāra*), or a certain object (*artha*) referred to by injunctive suffixes. The first two hypotheses are examined in ViV 2 and ViV 3–4 respectively. For an overview of these passages, see David 2015: 581–585.

psychological model of injunction (see above): command, request and permission (k. 5); 2. “incitement” (*pravartanā*), understood as their common objective denominator (k. 5); 3. the “[expected] result” (*phala*) of the prescribed action (k. 6); 4. the “act” (*karman*) in itself (k. 7); 5. “effectuation, provided that [its] particular [relationship to] time is not acknowledged” (*bhāvanā* [...] *aparāmṛṣṭakālabhedā*) (k. 8); 6. “one’s own relation to the action, whose relation [with an agent] has not yet been obtained” (*aprāptasaṃbandhayā kriyayātmanaḥ saṃbandha[h]*) (k. 9–11); 7. “commandment” (*niyoga*), in the specific sense given to this term by Prabhākara (k. 12–14).²³ Apart from the first and last hypotheses, clearly

²³ A similar, though not entirely identical, list is found in BS 2.101–104 (SV): *nanv adhyavasāyaḥ, ākūtam, ādyā pravṛttiḥ, kālatrayaviyuktaṃ pravṛttimātram, ajñātakriyākartṛsaṃbandha iti vidhivido vidhiṃ vyācakṣate*; “[Objection:] but, those who know about *vidhi* (the cause of human activities) characterise it as (a) the decision (*adhyavasāya*), (b) the intention (*ākūta*), (c) the nascent activity (*ādyā pravṛttiḥ*), (d) the mere activity, detached from the three times (*kālatrayaviyuktaṃ pravṛttimātram*) [or as] (e) the [hitherto] unknown relation between an action and an agent (*ajñātakriyākartṛsaṃbandha*)” (p. 117.3–4). It is easy to recognise under (d) and (e) positions (5) and (6) of the ViV respectively. According to Śāṅkhaṇḍīyī (Vyākhyā p. 241.24), position (a) of the BS should be identified with Prabhākara’s theory of the *niyoga* (7 in the ViV), but this identification is made somewhat implausible by the joint mention of positions (a)–(c) in ViV 8 (SV – S 267.5–268.1 [G 29.5]), with no connection whatsoever to Prabhākara’s theory. Older commentators on the ViV and BS agree in understanding *adhyavasāya* as *prayatna* (“effort”) and *ākūta* as *icchā/cikīrṣā* (“desire”/“desire to do”). See NyK (S 278.4–5 [G 29.21–22]), *Abhiprāyaparakāśikā* (p. 421.26) and *Bhāvaśuddhi* (p. 421.8). Only Śāṅkhaṇḍīyī differs in this respect by interpreting *adhyavasāya* as *niścaya* (“certitude”); his gloss of *ākūta* as *saṅkalpaviśeṣa* (“a particular wish”), on the other hand, corresponds to that of his predecessors (Vyākhyā p. 241.24–25). In any case all commentators agree that elements (a)–(c) in the BS appear to form a system, and constitute a rough description of the stages immediately preceding the performance of the main action that is undertaken. This “system” can, however, be seen in various ways. Thus Vācaspati, in the NyK, regards *adhyavasāya* and *ākūta* as two subdivisions of *ādyā pravṛttiḥ* (S 278.4–5 [G 29.21–22]), the latter preceding the former (on that point, see also Parameśvara’s *Juṣadhvaṅkaraṇī* – S 278.10–12). His conception can be summarised as follows (the arrow marks a succession in time):

ākūta/cikīrṣā (= *ādyā pravṛttiḥ* 1) → *adhyavasāya/prayatna* (= *ādyā pravṛttiḥ* 2) [→ *uttarā pravṛttiḥ*]

This, however, seems hardly compatible with the enumeration found in the BS, and it is regrettable that the corresponding part of Vācaspati’s *Tattvasamīkṣā* is not available to us. In any case some among the later commentators on the BS tend to interpret the three items (a)–(c) as three successive *stages* in the process leading to the main action. Śāṅkhaṇḍīyī (Vyākhyā p. 241.24–25), for instance, understands their succession as follows, in accordance with his “cognitive” interpretation of *adhyavasāya*:

adhyavasāya/niścaya → *ākūta/saṅkalpaviśeṣa* → *ādyā pravṛttiḥ* [→ *uttarā pravṛttiḥ*]

imputable to the Pāṇinian grammatical tradition and to Prabhākara respectively, none of these positions can be attributed with any certitude to a particular thinker or current of thought in or out of Mīmāṃsā, and it is not impossible that several of them were actually devised by Maṇḍana.²⁴ Leaving aside views (1)–(4), I shall now concentrate on the views where temporality plays a key role.

a. Activity without time: first hypothesis (ViV 8)

Among the last three hypotheses (5–7) only the first makes an explicit mention of the perception of time (*kāla*) as a reason for undertaking – or rather, for *not* undertaking – a certain action. It is voiced in the prose introduction to ViV 8:²⁵

Now, some [theoreticians] observed [in Śabara's *Bhāṣya* ways of speaking such as] “The effort of a person (*puruṣaprayatna*) is reiterated”²⁶ [or] “But the operation consisting of (*gata*) the oblation [or] the sprinkling of clarified butter [on the kindling sticks] (*homāghāragataḥ* [...] *vyāpāraḥ*) is explicitly stated,”²⁷ [and] consider [on this basis] that the effectuation

This second interpretation of the process leading to the performance of the main action seems to be partly confirmed by Ānandapūrṇa, who considers that “the nascent activity immediately follows desire” (*ādyā pravṛttir icchānantarabhāvinī – Bhāvaśuddhi* p. 421.8–9), while Citsukha apparently has no definite opinion on that particular point. However it may be, the identification of *vidhi* with one or the other of those three elements does not seem to be taken very seriously by Maṇḍana, who briefly refutes it both in the ViV (S 277.5–279.1 [G 29.6–9]) and in the BS (p. 117.3–6).

²⁴ For a discussion of a possible attribution of the third hypothesis to Uddyotakara (*Nyāyavārttika* 3.2.3 – p. 378.2), see Stern 1988: 20, who concludes, however, that it should not be ascribed to any Naiyāyika, but rather to “some now unidentifiable Mīmāṃsaka.”

²⁵ ViV 8 (SV – Introduction): *yasya tv 'evaṃ sati puruṣaprayatno 'nuvādaḥ,* ‘*homāghāragatas tu vyāpāraḥ śrutyocyata*’ *iti darśanāt cetanakarṭavyāpārātmikā, itarathā vā bhāvanā vidhiśabdaparyāyā liṅgartho 'parāmṛṣṭakālabhedā, laḍādiṣu tu sattve 'pi kālavīṣeṣeṇa vidhirūpapratibandhād apravṛttihetutvāt, yadyādibhir iva liṅghidheyāyāḥ iti darśanam,* (...) (S 269.1–271.3 [G 27.3–7]). A much shorter allusion to this thesis is found in BS 2.101–104 (SV), where Maṇḍana mentions a definition of *vidhi* as “mere activity, detached from the three times” (*kālatrayaviyaktaṃ pravṛttimātram*) (p. 117.3).

²⁶ ŚBh ad MīSū 4.1.5 [3]: *puruṣaprayatnaś caivaṃ saty anuvādaḥ;* “And this being so, the effort of a person is reiterated” (vol. 4, p. 1200.11–12).

²⁷ ŚBh ad MīSū 2.2.16 [5] (*pūrvapakṣa*): *nanv āghārayati, juhoṭīti homāghāragato <°gato em.: °mato Ed> vyāpāraḥ śrīyate, na dadhyūrdhvatādisaṃbandhaḥ;* “[Objection:] but [in Vedic sentences such as] ‘He sprinkles with clarified butter’ [or] ‘He performs the oblation,’ it is the operation consisting of the oblation or the sprinkling of clarified butter that is explicitly stated, not the [simple] relation with curds [in the case of the oblation] or with the upper direction [in the case of sprinkling]” (vol. 2, p. 501.1–2). The two ritual acts referred to by Śabara are the sprinkling of clarified butter on the kindling sticks during the Darśapūrṇamāsa-ceremony and the Agnihotra-oblation. On the wider context

(*bhāvanā*) [itself], for which the word *vidhi* is a synonym and which consists in the operation of a conscious agent (*cetanakartr̥vyāpāra*) or in something similar,²⁸ is the object of *lin̄* [= the optative suffix], so long as its particular time is not considered (*aparāmṛṣṭakālabheda*). On the contrary, [so they argue,] in the case of *laṭ* [= the suffix of the present tense], even though [the effectuation] is present, it is not the cause of an activity (*pravṛttihetu*) because its quality of being *vidhi* is hindered by the particular time [expressed by the *laṭ*-suffix, i.e. the present time] (*kālavīṣeṣa*), just as it happens for the [effectuation] expressed by *lin̄* along with [particles] such as *yadi* (“if”), etc.

The two quotes from Śabara’s *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* (ŚBh), claimed here as a traditional basis for the *pūrvapakṣin*’s argument, are borrowed from two distinct and largely independent exegetical contexts. The first is taken from a chapter of the fourth *adhyāya* establishing that the “vows [related to] Prajāpati” (*prajāpativrata*)²⁹ such as “He should not look at the rising or setting sun” (*nodyantam ādityam ikṣeta, nāstam yantaṃ*)³⁰ are observed by the sacrificer “for the sake of the person”

of this *adhikaraṇa*, see Benson 2010: 382–383 (especially n. 102).

²⁸ As Vācaspati rightly points out in the *Nyāyakanikā*, Maṇḍana probably alludes here to his own definition of “effectuation” (*bhāvanā*), in the *Bhāvanāviveka* (BhāV), as the “cessation of apathy” (*audāsīnyapracutyi/udāsīnatvaviccheda*), of which the “effort” (*prayatna*) of a conscious being is but a particular case. See NyK ad ViV 8 (SV – Introduction): **itarathā vā spandāspandasādhāraṇyenaudāsīnyapracutyupalakṣyamānātma-vyāpāramātram**; “**or in something similar**, [for instance in] an operation in general (*vyāpāramātra*), whose nature is marked (*upa-√lakṣ*) by the cessation of [the agent’s] apathy (*audāsīnyapracutyi*), due to the fact that movement and absence of movement meant the same [to him]” (S 269.8–270.3 [G 27.16–17]). Cf. BhāV 5 (SV): *sakalapuruṣapratyātmavedanīyaś cetanasyātmana audāsīnyapracutyupalakṣyamānātma^a prayatnaśabdasaṃvedanīyo^b vyāpāro bhāvanā*; “Effectuation (*bhāvanā*) is an operation, experienced individually by every human being, whose nature is marked by the cessation of apathy in a conscious self, and commonly referred to by the word *prayatna* (‘effort’)” (R 18.1–3 [J 8.2–3]). ^a °*pracyutyupalakṣyamānātma* R: °*pratyupalakṣyamāś cātmā* J; ^b *prayatnaśabdasaṃvedanīyo* R: *prayatnādiśabdapravedanīyo* J; BhāV 48ac: *udāsīnatvavicchedasāmānyātmā tato mataḥ | karotyarthah (...)*; “Thus we consider that the object of the verbal root *√kr̥* (*karotyārtha* [= *bhāvanā*]) generally consists in the suppression of apathy (*udāsīnatvaviccheda*) (...)” (R 168.1–2, J 91.5–6). Maṇḍana’s definition of *bhāvanā* ultimately goes back to Kumārila’s elucidation of this concept in TV 2.1.1 [1] (SV on *k.* 33): *yad audāsīnyapracutyimātreṇa parispandarūpaṃ nirūpyate, sā bhāvanā*; “That which is understood [in verbal forms such as *pacati* or *yajati*] as consisting of movement [in general] (*parispandarūpa*), due to the mere cessation of apathy (*audāsīnyapracutyimātreṇa*), is [what we call] *bhāvanā* (‘effectuation’)” (text: Kataoka 2004: 85).

²⁹ On the *prajāpativrata*s, see Kane 1974: 24 (especially n. 42).

³⁰ Quoted in ŚBh ad MīSū 4.1.3 (vol. 4, p. 1198.8–9). For possible Vedic sources see Benson 2010: 134.

(*puruṣārtha*) – that is, for his own sake – and not for the sake of the sacrifice (*kratvartha*) (ŚBh ad MīSū 4.1.3–6). The second belongs to a section of the *Bhāṣya* stating that Vedic injunctions like “He sprinkles clarified butter upwards” (*ūrdhvam āghārayati*) or “He performs the oblation with curds” (*dadhnā juhoti*) merely teach the subsidiary nature of the mentioned elements (the upper direction for sprinkling ghee, curds as a substance for oblation in the Agnihotra rite), and do not prescribe a distinct ritual operation (ŚBh ad MīSū 2.2.16).³¹ This whole exegetical context appears, however, of little relevance to the *pūrvapakṣin*’s argument. It is more likely that both quotes were chosen simply because they state in a relatively unambiguous way that injunctive suffixes primarily denote the “effort” (*prayatna*) or the “operation” (*vyāpāra*) of a sentient being, two terms understood as rigorous synonyms of “effectuation” (*bhāvanā*).

Maṇḍana builds here on the theory of *bhāvanā* he propounded in the *Bhāvanāviveka* (BhāV), according to which “effectuation” – consistently understood in his work as a synonym for Kumārila’s “objective effectuation” (*ārthī/arthātmikā bhāvanā*) – is the object of all verbal suffixes.³² He also presupposes his own definition of effectuation, in the same treatise, as the “suppression of apathy” (*udāsīnatvapracūyitī/audāsīnyaviccheda*),³³ itself twofold: “effort” (*prayatna*) in the case of a conscious agent (*cetana*) or self (*ātman*), “movement” (*parispanda*) in the case of inanimate substances like chariots, etc. (*rathādi*).³⁴ On this basis Maṇḍana circumscribes the function of injunctive suffixes in an entirely negative way. Two verbal forms such as the imperative *gaccha* (“Go!”) and the present *gacchati* (“He goes”), for instance, have in common that the verbal suffix (respectively *loṭ* and *laṭ*, in Pāṇinian terms) denotes an effort on the part of a conscious agent. The difference between them lies in the fact that the latter does so by relating it to the present time (*vartamāna*), while the former simply refers to the effort without any perceivable reference to time. In other words, following this hypothesis, the use of the imperative (or one of its equivalents: the optative, etc.)

³¹ The gist of Śābara’s argument is summarised in the following lines of the *Bhāṣya*: *ūrdhvam āghārayati, dadhnā juhōtīti ca naitad uktaṃ bhavati: ‘āghāraḥ kartavyo,’ ‘homaḥ kartavyaḥ’ iti, kiṃ tarhy ūrdhvatāghārasaṃbandhaḥ kartavyo, dadhīhomasāṃbandhaḥ kartavya iti*; “In [Vedic sentences such as] ‘He sprinkles upwards’ or ‘He makes the oblation with curds’ it is not said that the sprinkling or the oblation [in themselves] should be done, but rather that one should carry out the relationship between the clarified butter and the upper direction, or the relationship between curds and the oblation” (vol. 2, p. 500.9–12).

³² On Maṇḍana’s extension of Kumārila’s concept of (*ārthī/arthātmikā*) *bhāvanā* to all verbal suffixes, see Frauwallner 1938: 233–36.

³³ On this definition see above n. 28.

³⁴ See BhāV 48 (SV – R 170.1, J 91.7–9) and Frauwallner 1938: 238–39.

does not add any semantic value with respect to non-imperative verbal forms. The imperative rather represents the “primary” form of the verb³⁵ – the simple mention of an activity being in itself, as it were, an incitement to perform it –, to which assertive values such as the description of a present state of affairs or the narration of past events are simply added. In this last case the “natural” imperative value of the verb undergoes a process of dissimulation or, as Maṇḍana puts it, of “hindrance” (*pratibandha*) through the establishment of a relation between the action and a certain point of time in which it takes place, took place or will take place.³⁶

b. Validation by a future action: second hypothesis (ViV 9–11)

The obvious weakness of such a position, which is not taken up in later literature on injunction,³⁷ is that it assumes a necessary causal link between activity and the absence of consciousness of time without being able rationally to account for it. Why, after all, should an agent start walking when the idea of walking is suggested to him without relation to time? As Maṇḍana points out:³⁸

For sure, cognition of the mere form of a thing (*vasturūpamātra*) is not [in itself] the cause of an activity: when one grasps an object from [a single word like] “pot,” one does not [necessarily] act towards such an [object]!

³⁵ This “primacy” of the imperative and associated verbal forms is, of course, not to be understood in an historical, but in a semantic or derivative sense.

³⁶ It is hard not to be reminded, at that point, of the structural description of the imperative made by É. Benveniste in his famous article on the distinction between imperative and performative: “L’impératif n’est pas un temps verbal; il ne comporte ni marque temporelle ni référence personnelle. *C’est le sémantème nu employé comme forme jussive avec une intonation spécifique*” (Benveniste 1966: 274). The main point of divergence between Benveniste’s linguistic description of the imperative and the ViV’s analysis is, I believe, the stress laid by the former on the “specific intonation” thanks to which the “bare” verbal stem acquires its pragmatic value. Understandably such an extra-linguistic device plays no role in the present theory, which is meant to account also for “impersonal” injunctions such as those found in the Veda. Still, there is every reason to think that the external aspect of verbs in the imperative (which, in Sanskrit as in most Indo-European languages, have no visible termination in the third person singular) played a significant role in the elaboration of such a view.

³⁷ Although I was unable to find a later formulation of this hypothesis in a Mīmāṃsā text, an echo of this (or a similar) theory may be found in the sixth chapter of the *Abhinavabhāratī* (10th/11th c.), Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. See David [2014] 2016.

³⁸ ViV 8 (SV): *na hi vasturūpamātrapratīṭiḥ pravṛttinimittam. na hi ghaṭa itī pratipadya tato ’rthaṃ tāvaty eva tasmin pravartate* (S 275.1–2 [G 28.9–10]).

It is therefore hardly surprising that the next hypothesis (6), discussed in ViV 9–11, should be centred precisely on the establishment of a relation (*saṃbandha*) between the agent and his proposed activity:³⁹

Now some people judge that the activity results from the cognition of one's relation with the action [expressed by the verbal root] (*kriyayātmanaḥ saṃbandha[ḥ]*), whose relation [with an agent] has not [yet] been obtained (*aprāpta*). For instance, in worldly usage, [we often hear] “This is your task (*karman*) for today.”⁴⁰ [Objection:] even so (*atrāpi*), a [verb] in the future

³⁹ ViV 9 (SV – Introduction): *yad api samarthanam: aprāptasaṃbandhayā kriyayātmanaḥ saṃbandhasya pratītyā pravṛtīḥ, yathādyā tavedaṃ karmeti loke. atrāpi lṛḍante śrotuḥ pramāṇāntareṇānadhigatam artham avagamayati vidhitvaprasaṅgaḥ! – na nimittāntarāprāpte tasya tadabhidhānam, tatra nimittāntarāprāptasyaiva bhaviṣyattvenābhidhānād arthasya, liṅādibhis tu tathābhidhānam. ataś cājñātajñāpanam apravṛttapravartanam ubhayavidhāprāptipratishedhenāprāptakriyākartṛsaṃbandho vidhir iti vidhividām udgārāḥ* (S 279.3–282.2 [G 30.1–7]). Cf. BS 2.101–104 (SV): (...) *ajñātakriyākartṛsaṃbandhaḥ iti vidhivido vidhiṃ vyācaṣṭe*; “People who know about *vidhi* define it as (...), [or] as a [hitherto] unknown relation between an action and an agent” (p. 117.3–4).

⁴⁰ The relation (*saṃbandha*) which, on the present hypothesis, constitutes the specific import of the injunction is expressed in the example by the genitive *tava* (“your”). Vācaspati's explanations might not be out of place here: *svāminā hi yadā bhṛtyaṃ praty ucyate 'caitra! adya tava nagaragamanam karma' iti, tadā khalv ayaṃ caitra ātmano nagaragamanasaṃbandhaṃ svāmivacanād anyato 'nadhigatam avagamyā gamane pravartate. tathēhāpi svargakāmāder yāgādikriyāsaṃbandhaṃ liṅāder anyato 'nadhigatam avagamyā svargakāmasya yāgādau pravṛttir ity aprāptakriyākartṛsaṃbandha eva vidhir ity arthaḥ*; “When a master says to his servant ‘Caitra! Your task for today is to go to the city,’ Caitra understands the relation [established] between him and the action of going to the city, which he could not have understood without the master's statement, and acts accordingly. In the same way, here [= in the Veda], one first understands from *liṅ*, etc. the relation between someone who desires Heaven, for instance, and actions such as sacrificing, which cannot be understood without the injunction; then, one who desires Heaven undertakes the activity, e.g. a sacrifice. Thus *vidhi* [= the cause of an activity] is nothing but the relation between an action and an agent, which has not been obtained [before hearing the injunction]” (NyK ad ViV 9 [SV – Introduction] – S 279.13–280.6 [= G 30.12–16]). It is not impossible that the idea that the function of an injunction is newly to establish a relation between an action and an agent echoes Patañjali's reflections on the distinction between the imperative (*loṭ*) and the causative (*ṇic*) in the *Mahābhāṣya* ad A 3.1.26 (vt. 2 – vol. 2, p. 33.9–17). See also Helārāja's insightful remarks on the same topic in the *Prakīrṇaprakāśa* ad VP 3.7.125 (pp. 327.19–328.25). The specific contribution of the grammarians is to show that, unlike other verbal suffixes, which rely on an independent relation of action and agent, the imperative establishes an entirely new agency (*navam eva [...] kartṛtvam – Prakīrṇaprakāśa* ad VP 3.7.125, p. 328.22) in a person who is not yet “possessed with action” (*sakriyā – VP 3.7.126c*), “for,” as Helārāja says, “an order is given [with the thought] ‘become the agent of that action!’, not when the agent is already there!” (*kriyāyām kartā bhaveti hi preṣyate, na tu kartaiva san –*

tense (*lṛḍanta*) [also] communicates an object which is not apprehended by any other means of [valid] cognition, so the undesired consequence [of your hypothesis] is that [the future affix *lṛt*] should also be [referred to as] *vidhi!* – It [= *lṛt*] (*tasya*) does not express this [relation] (*tadabhidhānam*) as something which has not been obtained by any other cause (*nimittāntarāprāpte*),⁴¹ for in the case of [a verb in the future tense] (*tatra*)⁴² the object (*artha*) expressed as future is already (*eva*) obtained by another cause (*nimittāntarāprāpta*).⁴³ On the contrary, [suffixes] such as *lin* express a [relationship] of this kind [i.e. that is not obtained by any other cause].⁴⁴ And that is the reason why people who know about *vidhi* repeatedly urge (*udgāra*) that *vidhi* is a relation [established] between an action and an agent that has not been obtained (*aprāptakriyākartṛsaṃbandho vidhiḥ*), a twofold “obtaining” (*prāpti*) being [thus] excluded: [an injunction] teaches what is not known (*ajñātajñāpana*) and puts into motion someone who is not in motion (*apavr̥ttapravartana*).⁴⁵

That this second analysis should involve a particular relationship between action and time is not immediately evident from the preceding explanation, where *vidhi* is simply defined as a kind of relation (*saṃbandha*) instituted by the injunctive sentence (“John, wash your hands!”) between its addressee (John) and a certain type of action (washing his hands), whose knowledge is considered sufficient to

Prakīrṇaparakāśa ad VP 3.7.125, p. 328.22–23).

⁴¹ See NyK: *pariharati codakaḥ – na nimittāntarāprāpte kriyākartṛsaṃbandhe tasya lṛḍādes*^a *tadabhidhānam saṃbandhābhidhānam*; “The opponent replies: **it** (*tasya*), i.e. *lṛt*, etc. **does not express this**, i.e. the relation **when it**, i.e. the relation between the action and the agent **is not obtained by any other cause.**” (S 280.13–281.3 [G 30.19–20/ M 41.12–13]). ^a *lṛḍādes* S: *linādes* var. (S) G M.

⁴² See NyK: *tatra lṛḍātau* (S 281.4 [= G 30.20]).

⁴³ By this we should understand that the hearer’s activity is not provoked by the sentence itself, but may be due to any other motive or cause (*nimitta*). For instance, a statement like “John will come tomorrow” expresses the relation between John and his future coming, but is not the cause of John’s coming, unlike a corresponding imperative statement like “John, come tomorrow!”

⁴⁴ See NyK: *tathābhidhānam nimittāntarāprāptatayābhidhānam* (S 281.5–6 [= G 30.21–22]).

⁴⁵ The classical definition of *vidhi/vidhāna* as the “conveying of what is not known” (*ajñātasya jñāpanam*) goes back to Śabara (ŚBh ad MīSū 2.3.4 [3] – vol. 2, p. 593.4–5 – see Stern 1988: 667), and one finds the definition of *vidhi* as the “putting into motion of someone who is not in motion” (*apavr̥ttapravartana*) in Prabhākara’s *Bṛhatī* 6.1.1 (M₅ 25.2 – see Stern 1988: 667). The joint mention of both conditions, however, might be Maṇḍana’s own contribution. Cf. BS 2.97cd–98a: *ajñātajñāpanam ato ’thāpavr̥ttapravartanam || vidhiṃ ācakṣate dhīrāḥ*; “The sages call *vidhi* the conveying of what is not known and the putting into motion of someone who is not in motion” (p. 114.1–3).

provoke the agent's activity. A closer look at the theoretical consequences of this hypothesis reveals, however, that the association of the action with a certain point of time (in that particular case, with the future) in the hearer's consciousness is not less vital to this position than the absence of such an association was to the preceding one.

As Maṇḍana makes clear at the end of the passage, the institution of the action/agent relationship at stake here implies that the action satisfies simultaneously two kinds of "non-obtaining" (*aprāpti*) or indeterminacy. The first is what we may call an *epistemological* indeterminacy: so that we can speak of the sentence as a "means of [valid] cognition" (*pramāṇa*), the hearer must have no clear idea of what is conveyed by the injunction before hearing it; in our example, John must still be unaware of his relation with the prescribed action. This should be distinguished from another kind of indeterminacy we could call *ontological*: the sentence should be the *only* cause (*nimitta*) of John's subsequent effort. Thus, in order to be distinguished from the prediction of a soothsayer for instance ("Now, John will go and wash his hands!"),⁴⁶ which, after all, also fulfils the first of these two conditions, an injunction must constitute in itself, one could say, the whole of the agent's motivational complex. But how can the knowledge of a relation *in itself* constitute a motive? Where, in other words, should the addressee's compliance (*anurodha*) with an impersonal prescriptive speech-unit (*śabda*) come from?⁴⁷

It is not my purpose here to analyse in detail the various attempts to answer these questions examined by Maṇḍana in ViV 9–11 and the corresponding *svavṛtti*. What is of interest to the present investigation is the opponent's recourse to an argument based on the validity (*prāmāṇya*) of injunctive sentences: were the action *not* to take place at any time, the injunction would simply lose its validity – strictly speaking, it would be "false" (*mṛṣā*) –, because the relationship between the action and a potential agent, which is supposedly its specific import, would never exist! Thus the mere consideration that the sentence is *true* should

⁴⁶ The example of the soothsayer – more precisely, the expert in palmistry (*sāmudra-vid*) – is traditional in Indian discussions on action. See for instance Śālikanātha's *Vākyaṛthamāṛkā* 2.4cd (SV) p. 427.6–7 and Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi* (*vidhi*^o) vol. 4.2, p. 170.4. The example may actually have been used for the first time by Maṇḍana (see ViV 11 [SV] S 298.2 [G 35.5]), who does not mention it, however, in that particular point of the discussion.

⁴⁷ See ViV 9 (SV): *nanv ihāpi śabdānurodhī pravartsyati. – na śabdānurodhe kiṃ cana nimittam*; "[Objection:] but even here [= in the case of an impersonal sentence, such as a Vedic injunction], he who complies with speech (*śabdānurodhin*) usually acts! – There is no reason [for the hearer] to comply with speech [in itself]." (S 284.2–3 [= G 31.4–5]).

be enough to explain the agent's activity. In fact no act of obedience is possible without at least a certain amount of confidence in the prescription, either based on personal charisma or on its belonging to an authoritative textual corpus.⁴⁸ In the *pūrvapakṣin's* own words:⁴⁹

Still, [an injunction] has validity (*prāmāṇya*), and this [validity] is sanctioned (*samarthita*) by [the hearer's] activity (*pravṛtti*), for otherwise [i.e. if the hearer did not act] it would simply be false (*mṛṣā*)! [Objection:] how? – Since there is no past or present relationship [between the hearer and the action], if [that] person was not going to act at least in the future (*bhaviṣyaty api*), [the sentence] would have no [validity at all], so it would, alas, be false.

It would be all too easy to be ironical about the obvious circularity of such an argument (for why should anybody care to ensure the validity of the command that is given to him?⁵⁰). I find it more interesting to see how it presupposes a particular conception of the validity of injunctions, based not so much on the prescribed actions' being known or felt as mandatory as on their being actually performed, and relies on the existence of the action at a certain time.⁵¹ In other words, in the view reflected by this *pūrvapakṣa*, the action/agent relationship glossed by the phrase “This is your task for today” (*adya tavedaṃ karma*) should

⁴⁸ That the authority of an injunction should depend, at least in part, on its epistemic validation (*pramāṇīkaraṇa*) is by no means characteristic of the present hypothesis, and one can only subscribe to E. Freschi's observation that, for most Mīmāṃsakas, “the Veda is a deontic authority only insofar as it is an epistemic one. It pertains to the sphere of what must be done, but it derives its authority from the fact that it is the only instrument that enables us to know about this sphere” (Freschi 2012: 62).

⁴⁹ ViV 9 (SV): *prāmāṇyaṃ nanv asti, tac ca pravṛttau samarthitaṃ bhavati, anyathā mṛṣātvāpātāt. katham? – bhūtavartamānayoḥ saṃbandhayoḥ abhāvāt bhaviṣyaty api na cet puruṣaḥ pravarteta, na tat syād iti mṛṣātvāpātāḥ* (S 284.4–285.4 [G 31.5–7]).

⁵⁰ This is, in substance, Maṇḍana's counterargument in the following lines of the *svavṛtti*: *kāmaṃ bhavatu mṛṣā! kimartha 'yam asya śabdapramāṇīkaraṇaprayāsaḥ? bahutaraṃ ca tasyaivam āyasitavyam āpatati sakalamithyājñānapramāṇīkaraṇāt*; “Well then, let it be false! Why should this [person] make an effort to make this speech into a means of [valid] cognition? And he will have to make a good effort indeed, should he make every false cognition into a valid one!” (S 286.1–3 [= G 31.8–32.1]).

⁵¹ This is indeed, as far as I can see, one of the only passages in Mīmāṃsā literature which clearly asks whether injunctions should be validated by the actual performance of the prescribed action or rather constitute statements “modally distinct from the statements of facts, and (...) hence valid in a different way” (Freschi 2012: 62). Although the overwhelming majority of Mīmāṃsakas, no doubt, subscribe to the second view, and consider that the authority of the Veda has nothing to do with the people's actually performing Vedic rituals, the present discussion suggests, nonetheless, that the alternative possibility was taken seriously by at least some early theoreticians.

not be understood on the mode of an *ought*, but rather as something that necessarily *will be* (in the future), with the notable restriction that it will be only in virtue of its being verbalised (“John, you *will* wash your hands!”). By apparently circumscribing the validity of injunctions in terms of “true” or “false” (rather than “trustworthy” or “delusive”), Maṇḍana’s *pūrvapakṣin* reduces prescriptions to a particular case of description of future actions, in a way that recalls the definition of the imperative in the initial section of Elizabeth Anscombe’s famous essay on *Intention*:⁵²

An imperative will be a description of some future action, addressed to the prospective agent, and cast in a form whose point in the language is to make the person do what is described. I say that this is its point in the language, rather than that it is the purpose of the speaker, partly because the speaker might of course give an order with some purpose quite other than that it should be executed (e.g. so that it should *not* be executed), without detriment to its being an order.

2. An ontology of commandment? Third hypothesis (ViV 12–14)

Now, in spite of their intrinsic interest, the two hypotheses discussed above appear as nothing but a preliminary to Maṇḍana’s real *pièce de résistance* in that section of his *pūrvapakṣa*, namely his confrontation with Prabhākara’s theory of the commandment. Again the centrality of time is striking, especially in comparison with its almost total disappearance in subsequent writings on injunction.⁵³ Let us first consider Maṇḍana’s general rendering of Prabhākara’s theory:⁵⁴

⁵² Anscombe 1963: 3. Equally relevant to the present discussion is Anscombe’s remark that “execution-conditions for commands correspond to truth-conditions for propositions” (p. 3), an order being called “sound” or “unsound” rather than “true” or “false” (as an assertion) due to what she calls a “dispensable usage” (p. 3), in other words to a mere linguistic habit. By ascribing the distinction between commands and (other types of) prediction to a fact of “superficial grammar” (p. 4), she nonetheless seems to go one step beyond what would be acceptable to an Indian theoretician, in so far as the second condition of “non-obtaining” (*aprāpti*) which characterises injunctive suffixes (the injunction being the unique cause of the agent’s activity) should be enough, in the present case, to justify the intuitive distinction between the use of the future tense and of the various injunctive suffixes, simply reflected by grammatical formalisation.

⁵³ Among the few later works regarding temporality as a key dimension of Prabhākara’s theory of *niyoga*, the *Śābdanirṇaya* (ŚN) by the Vedāntin Prakāśātman (950–1000) stands out for its extensive treatment of the topic. See in particular ŚN 56–57 (SV – pp. 233–234 [= G 53.10–54.3]). As I have shown elsewhere (David 2020a: 495–98), Prakāśātman borrows most of his arguments from the ViV, with which he shows a deep familiarity.

⁵⁴ ViV 12 (SV – Introduction): *yad api darśanam – pramāṇāntarāgocaraḥ śabdāmātrā-lambano niyukto ’smīti pratyātmavedaniyaḥ sukhādivad aparāmṛṣṭakālatrayo linādīnām*

According to another view (*yad api darśanam*), *vidhi*, the object of injunctive suffixes, lies beyond the domain of other [= non-Vedic] means of [valid] cognition, [and it is therefore] exclusively dependent on [Vedic] speech (*pramāṇāntarāgocaraḥ śabdāmātrāmbanaḥ*);⁵⁵ it is experienced individually, just like pleasure and similar [feelings], [in the cognition] “I am bound [to this task]” (*niyukto ’smṛti*), [and] its [relationship to the] three times is not acknowledged (*aparāmṛṣṭakālatraya*).

In this crucial passage Maṇḍana defines the entity soon to be named “commandment” (*niyoga*),⁵⁶ and thus addresses one of the key concepts of Prabhākara’s Vedic hermeneutics, to which he will devote a full chapter of the BS, the so-called “Chapter on Commandment” (*Niyogakāṇḍa*).⁵⁷ The introduction of this concept

artho vidhir iti (S 298.5–299.2 [= G 35.7–9]).

⁵⁵ I follow Vācaspati’s interpretation of the compound *śabdāmātrāmbana*. See NyK: *śabdāmātrāmbanaḥ*. *śabdāmātram ālambanam āśrayaḥ pratipādatatayā yasya sa tathoktaḥ*; “**Exclusively dependent on [Vedic] speech.** This is said of an [entity] whose *ālambana* (‘base’) – that is, its ‘support’ (*āśraya*) – is [Vedic] speech, and nothing else (*śabdāmātra*), inasmuch as [speech] is what conveys it” (S 299.5–6 [= G 35.24–25]). For a different interpretation of the same compound as a *tatpuruṣa* (with a masculine *ālambanaḥ?*), see Yoshimizu 1997: 244, who considers that *ālambana* refers to the “object of words” (“Gegenstand der Worte”), not to the cause of our knowledge of the *niyoga*.

⁵⁶ The first occurrence of the term *niyoga*, which becomes recurrent in the subsequent part of the text, is found in ViV 12 (SV) S 301.1–2 (different text in G 36.6–37.1).

⁵⁷ The only extensive study of Prabhākara’s concept of *niyoga* available to date is Yoshimizu 1997. On Maṇḍana’s critique of this theory, see also Yoshimizu 1989 (in Japanese). It is impossible to render with a single English word all the nuances of this Sanskrit term, which covers a wide semantic field ranging from “command” or similar intentions to “duty,” understood as that which is to be fulfilled *by* the action (see, for instance, the examples given in Apte, *Dictionary* [s.v.]). For a discussion of the translation of *niyoga* into German, see Yoshimizu 1997: 10 (n. 1), who chooses the German “Weisung,” more or less equivalent to the English “directive.” A literal translation of *ni-√yuj* as “to appoint” (as when we say, for instance, that somebody is “appointed” to a certain office or task, with “appointment” and “appointee” respectively translating *niyoga* and *niyojya*) would be possible and generally quite faithful, but sounds awkward in English in many contexts. It seems, besides, necessary to distinguish between (at least) two usages of the term *niyoga*, which are closely related and are both present in Prabhākara’s work. 1. In a first sense, *niyoga* is the “command(ment)” of an authoritative person or text, understood as a particular speech-act or sentence whose *content* is an obligation (*kārya*). This more common sense of *niyoga* is still found, for instance, in the *Bṛhatī* 1.1.25 [7]: *tataś ca kāryābhidhāyitā loke niyogasyāvagatā, ‘ācāryacoditaḥ karomi’ iti hi darśanam*; “And therefore we understand from worldly usage that a commandment (*niyoga*) expresses an obligation (*kārya*), for we hear [statements such as] ‘I am doing (*karomi*) what the master ordered me to do’” (M₁ 386.2–387.1). See also *Bṛhatī* 2.1.1 [1] (M₂ 303.2), translated below,

in the ViV constitutes an important move in Maṇḍana's argument, since all hypotheses considered so far were meant to account for both "worldly" and ritual action, while the domain of application of the concept of *niyoga* is strictly restricted to the analysis of Vedic injunctions. As it is generally interpreted by Prabhākara and his followers, the *niyoga* is a specific object (*artha*) conveyed by an injunctive verbal suffix (and by no other means), which is "to be realised" (*kārya*) by the action referred to by the verbal root.⁵⁸ It is therefore distinct both

and ViV 14 (SV) S 325.1 (G 62.2), where "the master's command(ment)" (*ācāryaniyoga*) is put into equation with "the king's decree" (*rājaśāsana*). 2. In a second, more frequent sense, the *niyoga* is what "binds" (*ni-√yuj*) a certain person to a certain task; it is therefore on the side of the object (*artha*), not on the side of speech (*śabda*). See for instance *Bṛhatī* 1.1.25 [7]: *pravartakatvaṃ tu śabdārthaḥ, sarvatrāparityāgāt. – ato niyogābhidhānam idam; "[Objection:] but the incitement (pravartakatva) must be the object of [injunctive] speech[-units], for it is never absent [when they are uttered]. – Then, it is [a case of] expression of a commandment (niyoga)!"* (M₁ 388.2–3). These two senses of the word *niyoga* might have been confused, to a certain degree, in common Sanskrit parlance due to the relative polyvalence of the primary suffix *-a* (*ghañ*, according to Pāṇini's grammar) with which it is formed. A specialisation of the term is seen, however, in the practice of later Prābhākara authors. Only the second, "objective" signification of *niyoga* is commonly found, for instance, in the work of Śālikanātha, who technically defines *niyoga* in the *Vākyārthamātrkā* (2.26) as "that which, being an obligation (*kārya*), incites the [person] to whom the commandment is given (*niyojya*) to its own [undertaking]" (*kāryatvena niyojyaṃ [...] svātmani prerayan – p. 441.7*). He therefore considers *niyoga* as a synonym of *kārya* ("obligation") and *apūrva* ("the Unprecedented"), and this exclusively in a Vedic context (as far as I know, the "worldly" obligation, identical with the action to be done, is never called *niyoga* by Śālikanātha). On the equivalence between *niyoga* and *apūrva* for Śālikanātha see for instance *Ṛjuvimalā* 1.1.25 [7]: *niyogaśabdena kriyāvyaতিরিক্তম্ apūrvam (...) ucyate; "The word niyoga refers to the Unprecedented (apūrva), distinct from the action [referred to by the verbal root] (...)"* (M₁ 387.18). This last, technical usage being an adaptation, for technical purposes, of the more common sense of the word, I prefer to keep trace of this origin by giving a uniform translation of *ni-√yuj* as "to command" and of *niyoga* as "commandment," without trying to render the etymology. It seems, besides, that Maṇḍana was still thinking of the *niyoga* as a form of commandment emanating from an authoritative person, as appears from some of his arguments in the ViV, which simply would not make sense in the context of the Prābhākara theory as canonised by Śālikanātha. See for instance ViV 12 (SV): *api ca niyoktrvyāpāro niyogo na niyoktur vināvakalpate. na cāsya sambhavaḥ, apauruṣeyatvāc chabdasya pratiśedhāt; "Moreover, a commandment, which is the operation of [a person] who commands, cannot be conceived in the absence of [a person] who commands. And such a [person] does not exist [in the case of the Veda], for it has been denied for [Vedic] speech, since it lacks a personal [author]"* (S 326.2–27.1 [G 43.2–44.1]).

⁵⁸ See *Bṛhatī* 1.1.2 [2]: (...) *kārya eva cārthe vedasya prāmāṇyam (...). na ca pramāṇāntarāvaḡamyo 'yam arthaḥ; "The Veda is a means of [valid] cognition only with respect to an object that is to be realised (...). And this object cannot be known by any other*

from the action (*kriyā*) and from its various factors (*kāraṅka*).⁵⁹ Accordingly, Prabhākara can say that the action is at the same time its content (*viśaya*) – I am commanded *to perform* a certain action – and its instrument (*karaṇa*) – I am “accomplishing” the commandment *through* the action.⁶⁰ Following this analysis, in a Vedic (or pseudo-Vedic) injunction like *svargakāmo yajeta* (“Let him who desires Heaven sacrifice!”), the optative verbal form *yajeta* states that a certain “commandment” is to be accomplished (*kārya*) by the sacrificer (*yajamāna*) through the sacrifice (*yāga*) referred to by the verbal root \sqrt{yaj} (“to perform a sacrifice”). The sacrificial act is therefore at the same time *what* the sacrificer is commanded to do (the content of the commandment) and that *through which* this commandment reaches its fulfilment (its instrument).

Later expositions of Prabhākara’s theory tend to lay exclusive stress on the privilege of the Veda as an epistemic source for knowing the commandment, the *niyoga* being at the same time something known only through the Vedic speech and the only object specifically conveyed by the Veda. Compare, for instance, Maṇḍana’s presentation of Prabhākara’s theory with that of a later (Bhāṭṭa-)Mīmāṃsaka, Pārthasārathi Miśra (1050–1120?),⁶¹ at the beginning of his *Vidhinirṇaya* (I underline the elements directly borrowed from the ViV):⁶²

Vidhi is the commandment (*niyoga*), which lies beyond the domain of other means of [valid] cognition [and is therefore] exclusively dependent on speech[-units] such as *liṅ*, etc. Its nature is that it has to be accomplished (*kāryātman*) [and] its content is a process [= an action] such as the sacrifice; it incites the [person] to whom the commandment is given (*niyojya*), [for instance] he who desires Heaven, to its own [undertaking].

means” (M₁ 23.5–7).

⁵⁹ The distinction between the *niyoga* and the action expressed by the verbal root in a Vedic injunction is made by Śālikanātha in the *Vākyārthamāṭṛkā* 2.23bd: (...) *vidhivācibhiḥ* (|) *kāryam kālāntarasthāyī kriyāto bhinnam ucyate*; “(...) [Speech-units] that are expressive of *vidhi* convey an obligation persisting in a later time [and] distinct from the action [expressed by the verbal root] (*kriyāto bhinnam*)” (p. 436.2); *Vākyārthamāṭṛkā* 2.25ab: *kriyādibhinnam yat kāryam vedyam mānāntarair na tat*; “This obligation, which is distinct from the action and [its factors] cannot be known by any other means [than the Vedic injunction]” (p. 441.3–4). See also *R̥jvimalā* 1.1.25 (quoted above n. 57). I see no good reason to think that Śālikanātha is unfaithful to Prabhākara on this particular point.

⁶⁰ On these two aspects of Prabhākara’s concept of *niyoga* see Yoshimizu 1997: 79–82.

⁶¹ On Pārthasārathi’s date, see Verpoorten 1987: 41.

⁶² *Vidhinirṇaya* 1 (SV): *pramāṇāntarāgocharo liṅādīśabdamaṭṛālambanaḥ kāryātmā yāgādibhāvārthagocaraḥ svargakāmādinīyojyam ātmani prerayan niyogo vidhir iti* (p. 63.3–5).

We can see how Pārthasārathi draws heavily on the ViV but, at the same time, considerably reduces its scope. In fact such a presentation, without being properly unfaithful, significantly underplays at least two central elements in Maṇḍana's understanding of Prabhākara's theory: the nature of the experience of the commandment, first of all, namely the certitude of being "bound" (*niyukta*) to a certain task, a certitude whose vividness and immediacy make it comparable with the experience of pleasure and other feelings;⁶³ secondly, the absence of its relation to time (*kāla*): the commandment being essentially known as something "to be accomplished" (*kārya*), this excludes all relationships to past and present time, but also, according to Maṇḍana's *pūrvapakṣin* at least, relation to a future course of events.⁶⁴

⁶³ The "intimate" or "inward" (*āntara*) nature of both pleasure and the commandment is well underlined by Vācaspati, who also insists that pleasure is experienced only through the mind (*manomātrapravedanīya*) – hence through a single epistemic source – a point that plays no obvious role in Maṇḍana's use of the comparison. See NyK ad ViV 12 (SV): *yathā hi saṃtāpadhūnaś candanānulepanānantaram āntaram api manomātrapravedanīyam āmilitalocanaḥ sukhabhedam ananyapramāṇakam anubhavati, evaṃ niyogam api liṅādivākyaśravaṇānantaram ity arthaḥ*; "Just as someone who is afflicted by a burning heat, after smearing [his body with] sandal paste, feels with his eyes closed a great pleasure, most intimate, experienced only through the mind and inaccessible to other means of knowledge, so does one [feel] the commandment after hearing a sentence [with] an injunctive suffix" (S 299.9–12 [G 35.27–30]). The subordination of the last two properties of the *niyoga* to the first – its radical inaccessibility to non-Vedic *pramāṇas* – is characteristic of Vācaspati's reading of this passage of the ViV and does not directly result from Maṇḍana's explanation.

⁶⁴ As in the case of the *niyoga*'s inwardness (*āntara*[*tva*], see preceding note), Vācaspati interprets this last characteristic as a reason (*hetu*) justifying the idea of the commandment's inaccessibility to all non-Vedic *pramāṇas*. See NyK ad ViV 12 (SV): *pramāṇāntarāgocaratve hetum āha*; "He states the reason for [the commandment's] inaccessibility to other means of [valid] cognition" (S 299.9–300.8 [= G 35.30]). Unlike in the preceding case, this interpretation seems to be confirmed by Maṇḍana later on in the same discussion. See ViV 12 (SV): *yad api pramāṇāntarāṇāṃ kālaviparivrtyartha-viṣayatvāt kurv iti tadaparāmarśād ananyagocaratvam...*; "Now if someone says that the other means of [valid] cognition are about things [subject to] the passing of time (*kālaviparivrtyi*) so that, inasmuch as one does not acknowledge it [= time] when one hears 'Do it!', [the commandment] is inaccessible to other [means of valid cognition], [we answer...]" (S 327.1–2 – The text in G [44.2] is fragmentary).

This last point, which allows Maṇḍana to pick up the thread of the discussion started in ViV 8, might be made in direct reference to a short, but crucial, passage of Prabhākara's *Bṛhatī* (2.1.1 [1]),⁶⁵ which reads as follows:⁶⁶

And therefore,⁶⁷ only the number (*saṃkhyā*) pertaining to the agent or to the object is expressed, in a finite verb (*ākhyāte*), by the [grammatical] number (*vacana*).⁶⁸ The agent and other [factors of action] are not, for they can be known through other means of [valid] cognition: either through the [Vedic] commandment⁶⁹ or through perception and the like. And therefore,

⁶⁵ Yoshimizu (1997: 244, n. 55) regards as “probable” the identification of this passage as Maṇḍana's direct source. This conclusion is corroborated by Vācaspati's commentary, where Prabhākara's most significant statement (*kāraḥavyāpāro hi kālatrayāvachchedyo nādhikāraḥ*) is quoted and discussed. See NyK ad ViV 12 (SV) (S 330.3–4 [G 45.9]).

⁶⁶ *Bṛhatī* 2.1.1 [1]: *ata eva cākhyāte^a kartṛkarmagatā saṃkhyocyate vacanaiḥ, na punaḥ kartrādayaḥ. pramāṇāntarāvagamyā hi te, niyogataḥ pratyakṣādibhir vā. ata eva ca^b niyogaḥ kārye 'py arthe na bhaviṣyantam artham avagamayati. kāraḥavyāpāro hi kālatrayāvachchedyaḥ, nādhikāraḥ* (M₂ 303.1–4). ^a *ākhyāte* Ms: *ākhyātārthe* Ed; ^b *ca* Ms corr. (Yoshimizu): *tu* Ed. Readings from the only known manuscript of the *Bṛhatī*, kept at the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Calcutta) and marked “Ms,” are borrowed from Yoshimizu 1997: 243–44 and 409, who also provides the only existing translation of the passage (into German).

⁶⁷ The justification for the next statement is Prabhākara's view that a verbal ending (*tīnvibhakti* – *Ṛjuvimalā* M₂ 303.6) does not express the relation (*saṃbandha*) between the action expressed by the finite verb (*ākhyāta*) and its various factors (the agent, etc.), a point on which Prabhākara claims the authority of Pāṇini: *ākhyātam na saṃbandhe smarati pāṇiniḥ*; “Pāṇini does not teach that a finite verb [refers] to a relation” (*Bṛhatī* 2.1.1 – M₂ 302.2). See also Śālikanātha's comments in the *Ṛjuvimalā* (M₂ 302.22–303.7 – translation: Yoshimizu 1997: 243, n. 146).

⁶⁸ I adopt the reading *ākhyāte* (instead of *ākhyātārthe*, as in the Madras edition) from the Calcutta manuscript of the *Bṛhatī* (see Yoshimizu 1997: 243, n. 149 and above n. 66), although K. Yoshimizu prefers to keep the reading *ākhyātārthe* found in Śālikanātha's commentary (M₂ 303.6). He accordingly translates the sentence as follows: “Durch die Personalendung (*vacana*) wird eben deshalb nur die Zahl, die zum Agens bzw. dem Ziel des Gegenstands des Verbums (d. h. der Handlung) gehört, ausgedrückt” (p. 243). This choice, however, makes the syntactical construction of the sentence unnecessarily complicated, in my opinion. The identification Yoshimizu proposes of *vacana* with *tīnvibhakti* (“personal ending”) on the basis of Śālikanātha's use of the term *tīnvibhakti* in the *Ṛjuvimalā* (M₂ 303.7–9 – see also Yoshimizu 1997: 143, n. 146) is possible, but not absolutely compelling. I find it equally plausible that Śālikanātha simply uses a more generic term, even while understanding *vacana* in Prabhākara's text in its usual sense of “[grammatical] number.”

⁶⁹ On this point see *Ṛjuvimalā*: *vede niyogataḥ kartur avagamaḥ. yasya niyojyatvaṃ, tasyaiva kartṛtvam. tena niyogataḥ kartur avagamaḥ*; “In the Veda, the agent is known through the [Vedic] commandment: the [person] to whom the commandment is addressed (*niyojya*) becomes, precisely, the agent. Therefore, the agent is known through the [Vedic]

the [Vedic] commandment,⁷⁰ although it [refers to] an object [that is] to be done (*kārya*), does not convey a future object (*na bhaviṣyantam artham avagamayati*), for [only] the operation of a factor of action is to be delimited be the three times (*kālatrayāvachhedya*), not the duty [to perform the rite] (*adhikāra*).⁷¹

Prabhākara's most important statement for our purpose is, of course, his final claim that the object "to be done" (*kārya*) – here called *adhikāra* ("duty") or *niyogārtha* ("the object of the commandment" – *Ṛjvimalā*), but referred to as *niyoga* ("commandment") elsewhere in the *Bṛhatī* and in Maṇḍana's rephrasing of the theory⁷² – escapes the delimitation by the three times (*kālatrayāvachhed[a]*): past, present and future. This statement, however, leaves space for at least two interpretations, both of which can claim support in the later tradition, as we shall see. According to a "weaker" interpretation of Prabhākara's statement, there is no absolute ontological difference between the *niyoga*⁷³ and other entities existing in time. A relation of the *niyoga* to future time does exist, but it is not perceived

commandment" (M₂ 303.11–12 – equivalent German translation in Yoshimizu 1997: 244, n. 151; see also Yoshimizu's very useful explanations in the same note). Unlike for the second occurrence of the term (see following note), Śālikanātha does not make clear whether he understands *niyoga* here as an individual speech unit (*lin̄*, etc.) or as the injunctive statement taken as a whole.

⁷⁰ Although Śālikanātha (*Ṛjvimalā* – M₂ 303.14) identifies the commandment with "a speech[-unit] such as *lin̄*" (*lin̄ādiśabda*), I see no real benefit in this "technicisation" of the term *niyoga*, which could simply refer, in its two occurrences in this passage of the *Bṛhatī*, to the injunctive sentence taken as a whole. Yoshimizu (1997: 244) follows Śālikanātha and translates the word *niyoga* as "der (Wortteil für die Bezeichnung) der Weisung (d. h. die Optativendung u. ä.)."

⁷¹ On the interpretation of the word *adhikāra*, see *Ṛjvimalā*: *nādhikāro na niyogārtha ity arthaḥ*; "not the entitlement; the meaning is: not the object of the commandment" (M₂ 303.18).

⁷² The equation of the three concepts of *adhikāra* ("duty"), *niyoga* ("commandment") and *kārya* ("obligation") in this context is made by Vācaspati while commenting Prabhākara's statement in the NyK. See NyK ad ViV 12 (SV): *avyāpārātmatayādhikāro niyogaḥ kāryaṃ na kālatrayasambhinnaḥ*; "Since it is not an operation (*vyāpāra*), duty, [i.e.] commandment or obligation, is not mixed up with [any of] the three times" (S 330.5 [= G 45.10]).

⁷³ In order to avoid confusion between post-Prabhākara nomenclature and Prabhākara's own terminological habits, I shall use from now on the word *niyoga* to refer exclusively to the commandment in its *objective* dimension (= duty, appointment, etc.), i.e. as a synonym for Prabhākara's "entitlement" (*adhikāra*), thus *not* in the sense it had in the above passage of the *Bṛhatī*, where it stood for the commandment in its *linguistic* dimension (= order, injunction, etc.). On the distinction between these two meanings of *niyoga* in Prabhākara's work see above n. 57.

by the listener due to the particular mode of expression of the commandment (the imperative, etc.), which leaves it unnoticed. By contrast, a “stronger” interpretation of the theory would claim that the *niyoga*’s separation from the three times is not a mere fact of language, but characterises its very mode of existence: the commandment exists, objectively, without any relation to past, present or future. Following this second interpretation, which alone has bearing on ontology, we must say that the commandment as understood by Prabhākara literally *is* “without time” (*kālavivikta*).⁷⁴

The most uncompromising supporter of the first, “weaker” interpretation of Prabhākara’s view is no doubt his faithful commentator Śālikanātha, who makes it absolutely clear in the *R̥juvimalā* that, for him, *to be known* (verbally) without relation to time does not by any means imply that the thing *is* without time:⁷⁵

Although the quality of being an obligation (*kāryatā*) concerns something [that will happen] in the future (*bhaviṣyat*), its being future is not understood by the word (*pada*) [= the injunctive suffix].

Such an interpretation is certainly allowed by Prabhākara’s formulation and even, one may say, by Maṇḍana’s general rendering of the theory in the ViV: provided one interprets the verb *parā-√mṛś* in Maṇḍana’s expression *aparāmṛṣṭakālatraya* in a cognitive sense (“to acknowledge,” as in our translation of the passage above), even his description of Prabhākara’s theory does not, strictly speaking, imply that a relation of the prescribed action to time does not *exist*, but only that it is not *recognised* when we hear an injunction.⁷⁶

As to the second, “stronger” interpretation of Prabhākara’s statement, we find one of its earliest formulations after Maṇḍana in a short passage of the second *āhnika* of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa’s *Nyāyamañjarī* (NM) dealing with the perception of Yogis, a text to which attention was drawn for the first time by John Taber.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ See ViV 12cd: *kālaviviktaṃ ca khapuṣpavat* (S 300.3 [= G 36.3] – translated below).

⁷⁵ See *R̥juvimalā* 2.1.1: *bhaviṣyadviṣayāyām api kāryatāyām na padena bhaviṣyattvā-vaḡamasiddhiḥ*^a (M₂ 303.15–16). ^a *bhaviṣyattva° em.: bhaviṣyatva°* Ed. German translation in Yoshimizu 1997: 244.

⁷⁶ Recall that the same verb *para-ā-√mṛś* is already used in Maṇḍana’s formulation of the first hypothesis (see above, Section 1a) in the introduction to ViV 8.

⁷⁷ NM₁ 270.11–271.8; partial translation in Taber 2005: 178, n. 18. I find it very plausible that Jayanta borrowed this interpretation from Umbeka’s commentary on the *Śloka-vārttika* (*pratyakṣa°*) k. 34, which will be dealt with later on (Section 3). Umbeka might, then, be considered the earliest advocate of the “stronger” interpretation of Prabhākara’s statement after Maṇḍana. The connection of his argument to the ViV is, however, less evident than in the case of Jayanta.

These lines, sometimes mistaken for a restatement of Kumārila's views,⁷⁸ deserve special attention in the present context as Jayanta here unambiguously considers the hypothesis of an objectively "timeless" object of the Veda. In a skilful adaptation of Maṇḍana's *pūrvapakṣa* to the debate on the perception of Yogis,⁷⁹ the 9th-century Kashmiri philosopher refers polemically to the difficulty Yogis have in perceiving *dharma* if it is "devoid of contact with the three times" (*trikālasparśavarjita* – NM₁ 270.11), in other words if it is "not delimited by the three times" (*trikālānavacchinna* – NM₁ 271.3). In so doing, Jayanta implicitly proposes a different interpretation of the verb *parā-√mṛś* in the compound *aparāmṛṣṭakālatraya* of the ViV, not as "to acknowledge" but as "to touch," "to be in contact with" the three times. It is clear that Jayanta is not speaking here of a property of our *verbal* knowledge of *dharma* from Vedic injunctions which, obviously, is not what is at stake in the case of Yogis, but of an intrinsic characteristic of *dharma* making it radically imperceptible even to Yogis.

That Maṇḍana himself took this second possibility very seriously appears from his refutation of Prabhākara's hypothesis in ViV 12 and the corresponding *svavṛtti*. In fact the flaw in Prabhākara's conception of action as resulting from cognition of the commandment is not that it would be incapable of accounting for human action, as was the case in the two preceding hypotheses, but rather the "absolute non-existence" (*atyantāsattā*) of its object. For how could anything that lacks a position in time be said to "exist"? Is it not rather an appropriate definition of absolute non-existence of a thing – hares' horns and the like – that it does not appear at any time?⁸⁰ As Maṇḍana states in his usual pithy style: "what has no [position in] time (...) is like a sky-flower" (*kālavivikṭam [...] khaṇuṣpavat*).⁸¹

⁷⁸ See for instance K. S. Varadācārya's note in the Mysore edition of the *Nyāyamañjarī* (NM₁ 270.25–26), where *k.* 13 of the *codanā*-section of the *Ślokavārttika* is quoted.

⁷⁹ See in particular the beginning of the prose portion (NM1 271.3–4), which unmistakably recalls the wording of ViV 12 (SV) S 298.5–299.2.

⁸⁰ See ViV 12cd (SV): *athārthataḥ, atyantāsattvaṃ khaṇuṣpādivat, tallakṣaṇatvād atyantāsattāyāḥ*; "If this [= the fact that time is not acknowledged when hearing an injunction] is due to the object[']s having no actual position in time], [then this object] is entirely inexistent (*atyantāsat*), like a sky-flower, for this is [precisely] the mark of absolute non-existence" (S 328.1–3 [G 44.3–4]). See also Vācaspati's explanation in NyK ad ViV 12cd (SV): *yathā khaṇuṣpādayo nābhuvan na bhavanti na bhaviṣyanti, tathā cen niyogo 'pi, nāśya tebhyo viśeṣaḥ. na hy atyantāsattāyā anyal lakṣaṇam ataḥ kālatrayavivekāḍ*; "A sky-flower and [similar objects] never were, are not and will never be. If this is also the case with the commandment, there will be no difference between them. For there is no other mark of absolute non-existence than being separate from the three times (*kālatrayaviveka*)" (S 328.8–11 [= G 44.15–17]).

⁸¹ ViV 12cd (S 300.3 [= G 36.3]).

Later theoreticians diverge on the plausibility of this second interpretation of Prabhākara's views, although all agree in attributing it to Maṇḍana. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's careful consideration of Prabhākara's hypothesis of *dharma*'s being "without time" may be in sharp contrast to the scepticism displayed, for instance, by Śālikanātha, who scornfully discounts Maṇḍana's arguments as "the refutation of [an hypothesis] that never came forth" (*asaṃbhavidūṣaṇa*).⁸² One fact remains, though: whenever the hypothesis of an objectively "timeless" *niyoga* is discussed by later authors it is always in reference to the ViV's claims against the author of the *Bṛhatī*.

Still, even from Maṇḍana's point of view, an exception to this apparently obvious equation between "existing" and "existing in time" is not as unlikely as it seems. As was pointed out more or less at the same time by Sucarita Mīśra, the 10th-century commentator on Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika*,⁸³ and by the Kashmirian Śaivasiddhāntin Rāmakaṇṭha II (950–1000),⁸⁴ quoting ViV 12cd in the chapter on time of his *Mataṅgaparameśvaravṛtti*, the Mīmāṃsaka theory of time as an eternal (*nitya*), (all-)pervading (*vyāpaka*) substance presupposes at least one such exception, namely time itself. For otherwise how could one determine "when" time exists – that is, at which point of time – without entering a vicious circle?⁸⁵

⁸² *R̥juvimalā* ad *Bṛhatī* 2.1.1 [1]: *tena paropādhikaiva bhaviṣyattā. kārakavyāpāravatyirekeṇa cānyeṣām api na kālasaṃbandhaḥ. tena yad ucyate "kālatrayaviyuktaṃ ca khaṇuṣpavat" iti, tat khaṇuṣpavad evāsaṃbhavidūṣaṇam*; "Therefore, [the commandment's] being future is conditioned by something else (*paropādhika*). Besides, even other [entities denoted by the words of a sentence] have no relation to time without the operation of a factor of action. Therefore, [the statement that] '[an entity] having no [position in] time is like a sky-flower' (≈ ViV 12cd) is indeed very much like a sky-flower, [for it is] the refutation of [something] that never came forth!" (M₂ 303.18–20). Śālikanātha might not be so categorical everywhere in his work. In fact the distinction between an action to be realised (*kārya*) and an event expected in the future (*bhaviṣyat*) is well marked in his critique of Maṇḍana's theory of the "means for realising a desired [end]" (*iṣṭasādhana*) in the *Vākyārthamātrkāvr̥tti*: *kriyāphalayoḥ sādhyasādhanatāvagame 'pi na pravṛttir upapadyate, tṛptihetau bhojane 'tīte vartamāne vāpravṛtteḥ, bhaviṣyaty api tatsādhane sāmudraavidākhyāta ivānuṣṭhānābhāvāt*; "In order to justify the activity [of a rational agent], it is not enough to say that he understood the action and its expected result to be [respectively] the means and what is realised [by this means]. For no activity [is devoted] to [the action of] eating, the cause of satiety, if it already [took place] (*atīta*) or if it is currently [taking place] (*vartamāna*). Even if this means [of realisation] was still to come (*bhaviṣyat*), nobody would act [to make it happen], just as in the case of [the event] predicted by an expert in palmistry" (2.4cd [SV] p. 257.5–7).

⁸³ On Sucarita's date, see Kataoka 2011₂: 20.

⁸⁴ On Rāmakaṇṭha II's date, see Goodall 1998: xiii–xviii.

⁸⁵ See *Kāśikā*, ad *Ślokavārttika* (*autpattika*^o) 15 (discourse of a Prabhākara *pūrvapakṣin*):

Maṇḍana's rendering of Prabhākara's ideas follows a similar line of argument: why, after all, should we take for granted that "being" and "being in time" are coextensive? Could there not be an alternative explanation to our consistent usage of the word "being" (*sat*)? The conception of being as "being graspable by a means of [valid] cognition" (*pramāṇagrāhyatva*), discussed in the remaining part of the *vṛtti* on ViV 12, constitutes precisely such an alternative. In order to support his critique of Prabhākara's theory of *niyoga* as a "timeless" entity Maṇḍana therefore needed to resort to a clear and uncontroversial concept of existence, which earlier Mīmāṃsaka tradition was unable to provide.

It is now manifest that, in spite of its apparent dispersion, Maṇḍana's reflection on time in ViV 8–14 is a fairly systematic investigation of a limited set of philosophical and exegetical options, which forms the immediate background of his investigation of existence. All are related to the central hypothesis of an intimate relationship between the activity (*pravṛtti*) of a rational agent and his perception of time (*kāla*), conceived in three ways following two alternatives: 1. whether the matter at issue is the temporality of the action/effectuation or that of the commandment, distinct from the action; 2. whether the agent's incentive is the consideration of the future or the absence of a perception of time. The three hypotheses (H1–3) might be rearranged along these two lines, as follows:

yady evam asat kāryaṃ kālatrayāparamarśāt śaśaviṣṇāṇavad āpadyate. – na, kālenānekāntāt. kālo hi na tāvat kālāntaraparicchinnah. na ca nāsti kālah! kālāntarāvachchede tv anavasthāpātaḥ; "[Objection:] but if it is so, the obligation (*kārya*) becomes inexistent, for its [position in any one of the] three times is not acknowledged, as it happens for a hare's horn. – No, for this [reasoning] knows [at least] one exception, [namely] time itself. For time, first of all, cannot be delimited (*paricchinna*) by another time. Nor is it true that time does not exist! But if it is delimited by another time, an infinite regress ensues" (p. 9.8–10); *Mataṅgaparameśvaravṛtti (Vidyāpāda) 12.19: yad vastu, tat kālāviviktam. "kālāviviktaṃ ca khapuṣpavat." vastu cātmādi. atas tato 'vivekasiddhyā kālasya nityatvavyāpakatvasiddhir iti maṇḍanamīśraḥ. tasya kālenānaikāntiko 'yaṃ hetur iti nānena kālasya nityatvaṃ sidhyati;* "An [existing] thing cannot be devoid of [position in] time, [as it is said] 'and an [entity] having no [position in] time is like a sky-flower' (ViV 12cd). And the Self and similar entities are [existing] things. So, since it is proved that [time] is not separate from such [things], it is [also] proved that it is eternal (*nitya*) and [all-]pervasive (*vyāpaka*). This is [the view of] Maṇḍana Mīśra. But this [inferential] reason of his has [at least] one exception, [namely] time [itself]. Therefore, it cannot prove the eternity of time." (345.28–346.2). I have not been able to trace this argument back to any Mīmāṃsaka source prior to Rāmakaṇṭha, but Vācaspati, who does not try to solve this problem, appears to be aware of it, since he repeatedly states that the equivalence between "being" and "being in time" is valid for all entities "except time" (*kālavyatirikta*). See NyK ad ViV 12cd (SV) S 328.12/15 (G 44.18/21).

	Action/effectuation	Commandment
Without time	H1	H3
Future	H2	

Table 1. Three hypotheses regarding action and time.

But by introducing **H3** Maṇḍana not only pursues the logic of this investigation; he also operates a shift from the field of linguistics and psychology of action, where it had developed so far, to that of ontology. The appropriate response to the challenge posed by the theory of *niyoga* would therefore not be an alternative theory of action – that Maṇḍana would propose only much later – but a new theory of being.

One point remains to be clarified: in introducing the concept of *niyoga* as an entity “without” time, Prabhākara not only aimed to provide a successful explanation of action as resulting from an immediate “you must;” he also accounted for the radical cognitive “otherness” of the object of the Veda. By bringing back religious duty, in the form of the “means to a desired end” (*iṣṭasādhanaṭā*),⁸⁶ in the realm of “presence” (*vartamānatā*), did Maṇḍana not run the risk of making *dharma* an object among others, and thereby undermine the specificity of Mīmāṃsā as an enquiry into a field inaccessible to human faculties?

3. *Dharma* and time. Another concept of duty?

The question of time in Mīmāṃsā is not confined to the field of action theory and the linguistics of verbal modes. Indeed, it lies at the very heart of one of the school’s most essential hermeneutic presuppositions, namely the radical “otherness” of the object of the Veda.⁸⁷ According to one of Mīmāṃsā’s most fundamental dogmas, *dharma* (the “ritual function”) is known through Vedic injunctions (*codanālakṣaṇa* – MīSū 1.1.2), and through them alone, in virtue of its being an entity “to be accomplished/to be produced” (*sādhya/utpādyā*), as distinct from “accomplished/produced” (*siddha/utpanna*) entities like the pot in front of our eyes or the cooking taking place in the nearby kitchen. The aim of Scripture as Mīmāṃsakas conceive it is therefore not to teach us what there *is* – be it something as unfathomable as the origin of the universe, the existence of

⁸⁶ On Maṇḍana’s theory of *iṣṭasādhanaṭā*, and for some preliminary hypotheses regarding its hermeneutic background, see David 2013b.

⁸⁷ The last section of this essay can be read as a free – though hopefully faithful! – elaboration on John Taber’s enlightening remarks on verses 17–18 of the *pratyakṣa*-section of Kumārila’s *Ślokavārttika*. See Taber 2005: 51–52 and 178, n. 18.

heavens or hells, etc. – but to provide instructions on practical matters, ways of acting ritually that cannot be learned from mere experience.

This distinction of *siddha* and *sādhyā* as traced by early Mīmāṃsakas is truly ontological as much as it is epistemological.⁸⁸ For a “non-accomplished” entity – the Agnihotra which is to be performed tomorrow morning, for instance – is as different from a *future* event (for example, the result of the next election) as it is from a *past* event (like the result of last year’s election). Past and future events differ according to the point in time where they take place and to the knower’s own position in time, and the way they are known (by perception, inference, etc.) also differs accordingly. What makes ritual duties “non-accomplished,” however, is precisely that they are not *events*; it is not, strictly speaking, that they have not taken place *yet*, rather they exist in a different mode, that of an “ought” (to borrow John Taber’s felicitous expression), radically distinct from the mode of existence of all, even future events.

It is significant that, in spite of that, whenever early Mīmāṃsakas were driven to explain what they meant exactly by this “ought,” they did so, once again, by having recourse to temporal categories. From the earliest stages in the development of the school, the fundamental distinction between what is “accomplished” and what is “non-accomplished” or “to be accomplished” (both can be expressed indifferently by the same gerundive *sādhyā*), and between the faculties capable of grasping them, was interpreted in terms of a relation to distinct points of time or, alternatively, of certain limitations (or absence of limitations) with respect to time. Consider, for instance, Śabara’s seminal characterisation of the object of Scripture in contrast to that of perception and other “worldly” sources of knowledge in the *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya*:⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Note that this distinction, cardinal in classical Mīmāṃsā (though rarely explicated by Mīmāṃsakas themselves), differs from the well-known *siddha/sādhyā* distinction at work in Pāṇinian grammar, which rather has the sense of an opposition between the processual (*sādhyā*, which is the object of finite verbs), and the non-processual (*siddha*, as the object of nominal and participial forms). Thus past action as denoted by a finite verb like the aorist *apakṣīt* (“He cooked”), for instance, though *sādhyā* in the grammatical sense of the term (because it is described *as* a process, though the latter took place in the past), will be considered *siddha* according to the Mīmāṃsaka distinction. For an attempt at theorising this distinction from the point of view of Vyākaraṇa see for instance Helārāja’s comments on the first verse of Bhartṛhari’s *Kriyāsamuddeśa* (*Vākyapadīya* vol. 2, k. 3.8.1).

⁸⁹ ŚBh ad MīSū 1.1.2: *codanā hi bhūtaṃ bhavantaṃ bhaviṣyantaṃ sūkṣmaṃ vyavahitaṃ viprakṣṣitaṃ ityevaṃjātīyakam arthaṃ śaknoty avagamayitum, nānyat kiṃ canendriyam* (text: Frauwallner 1968: 16.12–14).

A [Vedic] injunction (*codanā*) is able to convey an object of all sorts: *past, present, future*, subtle, hidden, distant and so forth. No other faculty can do that!

As rightly pointed out by Kumāriḷa, Śābara's remark does not seem to be specifically about "injunctions" – though the word *codanā* is, no doubt, used in that sense and in direct reference to MīSū 1.1.2 –, but about language in general.⁹⁰ Unlike perception, language is not riveted to the present and reaches as far in the past or future as one can conceive. The epistemic capacity of Vedic injunctions, then, is nothing but an instance of that extraordinary capacity of language to go beyond the immediate preoccupations of the knowing subject through narration, fantasy, prophecy, etc. and it is precisely that capacity, according to Śābara, which allows the Veda to become a means (*nimitta*) to knowledge of *dharma*. By contrast, the connection of perception to the present time (*vidyamāna*, an exact synonym of *vartamāna* in the present context) is established by Jaimini in MīSū 1.1.4, and taken up by Śābara as an argument against the capacity of the senses to convey religious duty:⁹¹

[MīSū:] perception (*pratyakṣa*) is the birth of an idea for a person whose senses are in contact [with an object, and] it is not a means [to know *dharma*], for it grasps something present (*vidyamāna*). [Śābara's comment:] (...) but that object (i.e. *dharma*), being future (*bhaviṣyat*), does not exist at the time of cognition, while this (i.e. perception) is the grasping of something that exists (*sant*), not of something that does not exist (*asant*). Therefore, perception is not a means [to know *dharma*].

Śābara's commentary leaves no space for doubt: according to him, religious duties are *sādhyā*, and thereby inaccessible to perception and the like, because they relate to something future (*bhaviṣyat*), indeed because they *are* something future.⁹² What, then, allows us to distinguish *dharma* from other kinds of future

⁹⁰ See *Ślokavārttika* (*codanā*^o) k. 7ab: *codanety abravīc cātra śabdamaṅtravivakṣayā* |; "And here, [Śābara] speaks of a '[Vedic] injunction' having in mind language in general." Text: Kataoka 2011₁: 2. Translation: Kataoka 2011₂: 201 (modified).

⁹¹ MīSū 1.1.4, and Śābara's *Bhāṣya* thereon: [MīSū:] *satsaṃprayoge puruṣasyendriyānāṃ buddhijanma tat pratyakṣam animittam, vidyamānopalambhanatvāt*. [ŚBh:] (...) *bhaviṣyaṃś caiṣo 'rtho na jñānakāle 'sti. sataś caitad upalambhanam, nāsataḥ. ataḥ pratyakṣam animittam* (text: Frauwallner 1968: 22.9–15).

⁹² There is, no doubt, some degree of ambiguity in Śābara's way of putting things, and it is indeed tempting to read Kumāriḷa's theory (see below) as a welcome clarification of the old Mīmāṃsaka's views. Are we to understand that *dharma* – identified in the same section with the sacrifice (*yāga* – see below and n. 112) – is "future" because we are speaking of sacrifices that still need to be accomplished, not of past ones? Or is it because *dharma* is to be interpreted here as "the result of *dharma*," i.e. "the expected fruit of the

events, some of which may well be known by inference? For how could any action take place without one's at least being able to predict, with a degree of certainty, the results that may be expected from that action? No answer to these questions is to be found in the work of Śabara, who rather seems content with the broad division of the two realms of perception and Scripture as respectively dealing with what "exists [at present]" (*sat*), and what "does not [yet] exist" (*asat*).

Still, the idea that *dharma* is inaccessible to perception, etc. because it relates to something future (if not because it *is* something future) safely made its way into classical Mīmāṃsā, and indeed, became the typical position of the followers of Kumārila, who elaborates on Śabara's remark in a considerably subtler way in the *codanā*-section of his *Ślokavārttika* (ad MīSū 1.1.2):⁹³

It will be established later on that the substance [for oblation], the action [= the sacrifice], qualities [of the substance], etc. are *dharmas*.⁹⁴ Although they are [possible] objects of the senses, they are not *dharmas* under that aspect. For the fact that they are means to realising the Supreme Good (*śreyaḥsādhanatā*) can only be known through the Veda, and it is under that aspect that they are *dharmas*, therefore [*dharma*] is not an object for the senses.

What do we learn from a Vedic injunction like *svargakāmo yajeta* ("He who desires Heaven should sacrifice!"), if not the holding of a relation (*sambandha*) between an action – the sacrifice (*yāga*) – and its expected result, namely the obtaining of Heaven (*svarga*)? Should one object that sacrifices are actually not beyond perception, for one does observe sacrifices, at least, when they are performed by others? Kumārila answers that it is not the sacrifice *as such* that can be qualified as (a) *dharma*, but only the sacrifice inasmuch as it produces a result in the future. Precisely such a capacity of the rite (and its auxiliaries) with respect to a future result – technically called its "being a means to accomplishing the

sacrifice"? I think both options can be defended, although the second is certainly more in line with later interpretations of Śabara's text.

⁹³ *Ślokavārttika* (*codanā*^o) k. 13–14: *dravyakriyāguṇādīnāṃ dharmatvaṃ sthāpayiṣyate | teṣāṃ aindriyakatve 'pi na tādrūpyeṇa dharmatā || 13 || śreyaḥsādhanatā hy eṣāṃ nityaṃ vedāt pratīyate | tādrūpyeṇa ca dharmatvaṃ tasmān nendriyagocaraḥ || 14 ||* (text: Kataoka 2011,; 3; translation: Kataoka 2011,; 206–209 [slightly modified]).

⁹⁴ Kumārila refers here to a later passage in the same *codanā*-section (k. 190–200), where the signification of the word *dharma* will be topically considered. Several views are refuted in that passage, on which see Kataoka 2011,; 440–454. On the word *dharma*'s referring not only to the main sacrifice but also to its subsidiaries, see Kataoka 2011,; 206–207, n. 118. On Kumārila's use of the plural *dharmas* (instead of the more common singular *dharma*) see David 2012: 405, n. 20 and 2015: 569, n. 6.

Supreme Good” (*śreyaḥsādhanatā*) – is taught by the Veda, nor is it accessible to any other, non-Vedic means of knowledge. As Kumārila states again later on in the *pratyakṣa*-section of the same work:⁹⁵

Dharma is perceptible neither prior to its execution nor after it has been carried out, since it does not exist at that time as a means of bringing about its result.

Results such as Heaven are expected beyond the life of the sacrificer, so the impossibility of observing their relation to any action performed in the present life is not incidental; it is a form of radical imperceptibility due to the impossibility of perceptually establishing a relation whose two correlates are never present at the same time, and that can never be brought back to any form of “natural” causality.⁹⁶

If Kumārila’s “relational” interpretation of the imperceptibility of *dharma* enjoyed wide success in later Mīmāṃsā, this did not prevent it from undergoing a sustained critique, sometimes stemming from the Master’s own ranks. The earliest and perhaps the most important of such critiques is certainly Maṇḍana’s: in Kumārila’s view, as we have seen, what we know by a Vedic injunction is a certain relation, in other words a capacity of the sacrifice (*śakti*, in Maṇḍana’s re-formulation; see below) to produce an expected result in the future, for instance,

⁹⁵ *Ślokavārttika (pratyakṣa°) k. 34: pratyakṣaḥ prāg anuṣṭhānān na dharmo ’nuṣṭhito ’pi vā | phalasādhanarūpeṇa tadānīm yena nasty asau ||* (text: Taber 2005: 152; translation: Taber 2005: 56).

⁹⁶ On the relation of *dharma(s)* to time in Kumārila’s view see in particular *Ślokavārttika (codanā°) k. 7cd: na hi bhūtādiviṣayaḥ kaś cid asti vidhāyakaḥ*; “For there is no enjoining [speech] about [an action] that is past or [present]” (text: Kataoka 2011₁: 2; translation: Kataoka 2011₂: 201 [modified]); *Ślokavārttika (pratyakṣa°) k. 18: pratyakṣam yaj jane siddham tasyaivamdharmakatvataḥ | vidyamānopalambhatvam tena dharme ’nimittatā ||*; “Since perception, which is well known to ordinary people, has such a property, it is the apprehension of that which is present. Therefore, it is not a basis of knowledge of Dharma” (text: Taber 2005: 152; translation: Taber 2005: 51). Although neither of these two passages explicitly states that *dharma* should be understood as something future (*bhaviṣyat*), or relating to the future, this is nonetheless the most natural consequence of Kumārila’s statements, which were generally interpreted in this way both by modern interpreters (Taber 2005: 51, Kataoka 2011₂: 201, n. 107) and by his medieval commentators. See, for instance, Sucarita Miśra’s commentary on *Ślokavārttika (pratyakṣa°) k. 18: tataś ca bhaviṣyaty avidyamāne dharme ’nimittatā*; “Therefore, **it is not a means of [valid] cognition concerning dharma** [Taber: ‘it is not a basis of knowledge of Dharma’], because it is future (*bhaviṣyat*), [hence] not present (*avidyamāna*)” (*Kāśikā*₁ p. 209.20). Sucarita’s idea that *dharma* not only relates to the future but *is* future is, I think, to be traced back to Śabara.

the capacity of the New and Full Moon sacrifice to produce Heaven (*svarga*).⁹⁷ It is that capacity, connecting a present, ephemeral event like the sacrifice with its result in a remote future that makes a *dharma*, strictly speaking, imperceptible. Now, such a capacity, Maṇḍana argues, though *relating* to something future, is not *in itself* something future (unlike Heaven, for instance), but something present at the time of the sacrifice, which *could* in principle be observed in a sacrifice taking place in front of us, and consequently become the basis of a teaching about religious duty. Our “*de facto*” incapacity to perceive such a subtle quality is, then, not essential, but only relative to our current perceptual faculties which, as far as logic is concerned, could be indefinitely improved. How, then, can one maintain the idea of a radical imperceptibility of the object of the Veda? This objection is voiced at the very end of Maṇḍana’s *pūrvapakṣa*, in the prose introduction to ViV 25, and most certainly addresses directly Kumārila’s conception of *dharma*:⁹⁸

Even [a sacrifice] which is [already] produced (*utpanna*) is not a *dharma* as such (*svarūpeṇa*), but only inasmuch as it is the means for realising the Supreme Good (*śreyaḥsādhana*); and this [property of being a means] is beyond the reach of the senses.⁹⁹ [Objection:] but, what is this [property]? If, first of all, you argue that it is a capacity (*śakti*) [of the sacrifice], and that it is beyond the reach of the senses, then [your idea that] the senses are not limited in their object (*viśayaniyama*) either by measure or [the object’s] nature is well-established indeed!¹⁰⁰ [One proposes:] but [this

⁹⁷ It is noteworthy that Kumārila, in all passages quoted so far, never speaks of a “capacity” of the sacrifice to produce its fruit. The (apparently harmless) introduction of the concept of “power/capacity” (*śakti*, *sāmarthyā*) in the present context is thus Maṇḍana’s own contribution, and it is cardinal to his discussion of the problem of *dharma*’s imperceptibility. This might however have been made on the basis of Kumārila’s own account of the “Unprecedented” (*apūrvā*) as a “capacity” of the sacrifice, as we shall see.

⁹⁸ ViV 25 (SV – Introduction): *utpannam api na svarūpeṇa dharmāḥ, śreyaḥsāadhanatvena tu, tac cātīndriyam. kiṃ punar idam? yadi tāvac chaktiḥ, sā cātīndriyety uktam atra nendriyāṇām parimāṇato vā svarūpato vā viśayaniyamaḥ sunirūpita iti. atha tadāsattvāt, kālāntarabhāvītvāc chreyasaḥ. – tatsāadhanatvaṃ tv atīśayo yāgādisamavetas tatkālah, anyathā dharmatvahāneḥ. tasmād yadā tadā bhavatu śreyaḥ, tatsāadhanatvaṃ tu vartamānam iti nākṣāṇām aviśayaḥ* (S 736.1–738.2 [G 162.2–163.1]).

⁹⁹ This, of course, is nothing but a very close paraphrase of Kumārila’s verses quoted above (*codanā*° k. 13–14), where *tādrūpyeṇa* (“as such,” i.e. as object of the senses) is benignly replaced by *svarūpeṇa* (“as such,” i.e. in its very nature as a sacrifice, regardless of its result).

¹⁰⁰ Maṇḍana alludes here, through the words of his opponent, to his own idea that perception cannot be limited by any factor other than time (*kāla*), advanced earlier in ViV 15 while refuting the idea of the Buddha’s omniscience. See ViV 15 (SV) S 461.2–468.1 (G 82.6–84.3); translation: David 2020b: § 3.2. In Maṇḍana’s view perceptive abilities

is not the case], because [this capacity] does not exist by then [= at the time of the sacrifice], since the Supreme Good will only take place at a later time. [Answer from the opponent:] well, the property of being a means [to realise it] is inherent in the sacrifice, etc. (*yāgādisamaveta*) as a supplement (*atiśaya*), [thus] it is contemporaneous with that [sacrifice] (*tatkāla*), otherwise the latter's being a *dharma* would have to be abandoned. Therefore, let the Supreme Good occur when it pleases you; the property of being a means to realise it, in turn, is there at present (*vartamāna*), so nothing prevents it from being an object of the senses.

Maṇḍana's reduction of the relation (*sambandha*) with the Supreme Good to a capacity (*śakti*) inherent in the sacrifice sheds light on an essential weakness of Kumārila's argument for the imperceptibility of *dharma*. A relation of the sacrifice to an object placed in an "absolute" future may well exempt it from being perceived by ordinary observers of a rite. Still, when we speak of a "relation" – no matter how remote this relation may be – we are still talking about a certain state of *facts* (namely a present action, its future result and their connection). How could such a fact account for the modally distinct cognition resulting from a Vedic injunction, in the form of an "ought"? Surely what is taught by the injunction is not a fact, but something that *should be*. Such considerations – or similar ones – therefore called for another, more radical interpretation of the imperceptibility of *dharma*, one that would entirely withdraw it from the realm of "things" by denying it their most immediate feature: their relation to time (*kāla*). Prabhākara's theory of the commandment as an entity known exclusively through the Veda and without connection to time provided precisely such a robust theoretical alternative, definitively placing *dharma* out of reach of perception, be it the super-sensory perception of Yogins.¹⁰¹ Being entirely "without time" (*kālavivikta*), the commandment is not a fact, not a "thing;" it exists, for sure, but on a different modality, that of the imperative.

Additional evidence for the connection we postulate between Prabhākara's theory of the commandment and the problem of the imperceptibility of *dharma* is

can be extended indefinitely in terms of the object's dimension (*parimāṇa*), distance in space (*deśa*), etc., but can never extend beyond the present time. In other words an individual may become capable of perceiving atoms, or far away galaxies, but never what happened the day before or will happen the next, let alone his past or future lives, as Buddhists claim. The same idea is alluded to earlier on in the same portion of the SV on ViV 25 (S 734.1–2: *na hi rūpataś cakṣurādīnāṃ viṣayaniyamo nirūpyata ity uktam*; translated below).

¹⁰¹ In this respect, I find it significant that Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, as we have seen (above, Section 2), introduces Prabhākara's theory of the *niyoga*, not as a hypothesis regarding injunctions, but as an objection to the possibility of a super-sensory perception of *dharma* by Yogins.

provided by Umbeka (8th century), the earliest commentator on the *Śloka-vārttika*, but also on Maṇḍana's *Bhāvanāviveka*, and a great name of early Mīmāṃsā. Quite astonishingly, when commenting on k. 34 of the *pratyakṣa*-section of Kumārila's work (quoted above) – as we have seen, one of Kumārila's key statements on the problem of the imperceptibility of *dharma* – Umbeka chooses not to comment on the stanza itself, but to refute Kumārila's position in terms clearly recalling Prabhākara's *niyoga*-theory; of course, the question of time plays, once again, the crucial role:¹⁰²

This [i.e. Kumārila's statement in k. 34] cannot be justified (*tad anupapannam*). For, as is well known, the fact that substances, actions and qualities are *dharma*s is equivalent to their being means for accomplishing the Supreme Good (*śreyaḥsādhanatvaṃ dharmatvam*). And that [property] surely does exist both before and after the performance [of the sacrifice], for who would undertake [to perform an act] which is not the means of accomplishing the Supreme Good either before or after the performance, hence [an act] that would be totally fruitless (*niṣphala*)?¹⁰³ And [the sacrifice] also does not acquire this quality at the time when the expected result comes into existence (*bhavana*), for at that time the means (*sādhana*, i.e. the sacrifice) has ceased to exist! (...) Therefore, the following explanation should be given: here [= in the Veda], an injunction conveys that the effectuation (*bhāvanā*)¹⁰⁴ is an obligation (*kārya*). And that [obligation] is not touched by the three times (*kālatrayāsaṃśṛṣṭa*), and it is as such (*tādrūpyeṇa*)¹⁰⁵ that the effectuation is said to be a *dharma*. Therefore, *dharma* is not the object of perception, which is the apprehension of something present; this is the meaning. Thus, one shows in this manner that perception and injunction have distinct objects, and there is no fault.

¹⁰² *Tātparyatīkā (pratyakṣa°) k. 34: tad anupapannam. dravyakriyāguṇādīnāṃ śreyaḥsādhanatvaṃ nāma dharmatvam. tac cānuṣṭhānāt prāg uttarakālaṃ ca vidyata eva. yo hy anuṣṭhānāt prāg uttarakālaṃ ca śreyaḥsādhanatvaṃ na, kas tatra niṣphale pravartate? na ca phalabhavanakāle śreyaḥsādhanateti, tadānīṃ sādhanasya vinaṣṭatvāt (...). tasmād evaṃ vyākhyeyam: vidhir iha bhāvanāyāḥ kāryatvaṃ avagamayati. tac ca kālatrayāsaṃśṛṣṭam, tādrūpyeṇa ca saiva bhāvanā dharmatva ity ucyate. tasmād vidyamānopalambhanasya pratyakṣasyāgocarō dharmatva ity arthaḥ. tad anena prakāreṇa vidhyasamānārthatāṃ pratyakṣasya darśayatīty anavadyam (p. 128.9–16).*

¹⁰³ Despite a slightly different wording, one can easily recognise here Maṇḍana's objection to Kumārila's theory of the imperceptibility of *dharma*(s) in ViV 25 (see above). This in itself is not surprising considering Umbeka commented on the ViV's "twin" treatise. It is, then, all the more noteworthy that Maṇḍana's response to that objection finds no place whatsoever in Umbeka's discussion.

¹⁰⁴ Understand: the action (*kriyā*) that is the sacrifice.

¹⁰⁵ Umbeka's use of the expression *tādrūpyeṇa* is of course an iconoclast – but perfectly recognisable – imitation of Kumārila's own use of that expression in k. 13–14 of the *codanā*-section.

I find it remarkable that Umbeka, even while commenting on Kumārila’s work, clearly states the superiority of Prabhākara’s solution of the problem at issue. This passage is also quite extraordinary in that it is the *only* text in the whole tradition, to the best of my knowledge, mentioning the idea of an object “without time” as a solution to the problem of *dharma*’s imperceptibility without any intention of refuting it.¹⁰⁶

Another, perhaps less compelling clue to the inference that the main aim of Prabhākara’s theory – at least as it is interpreted by Maṇḍana – was precisely to account for the impossibility of a “Knower of *dharma*” (*dharmajñā*) is its reappearance in the introduction to ViV 25, some ten stanzas after its final refutation in ViV 12–14 (I underline the obvious reference to Prabhākara’s theory):¹⁰⁷

[Objection:] very well then, let no Omniscient (*sarvajñā*) be the author of the commandment (*niyoktā*);¹⁰⁸ but let us accept [at least] a Knower of *dharma* (*dharmajñā*) [as its author]! For, as you said, no limitation of the object (*viṣayanīyama*) of the eye and other [senses] in terms of form (*rūpatas*) is observed.¹⁰⁹ Now, if[, as you claim,] they are limited with

¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, neither of the later commentators on Kumārila’s verse, even while acknowledging the problem raised by Maṇḍana of a possible perception of the “capacity” (*śakti*) of the sacrifice to produce its result, follows in Umbeka’s steps, and both evacuate it in a similar (and equally laconic) manner on the basis of the general imperceptibility of *śaktis*. Sucarita: *śaktis tu sarvabhāvānām nityaparokṣaiva, tena na tadviśiṣṭo dharmah pratyakṣo bhavātīti*; “The capacity (*śakti*) of all things is perpetually beyond perception; therefore, *dharma* qualified by that [capacity] can never be perceived” (*Kāśikā*, p. 220.18–19); Pārthasārathi: *yo ’pi yāgasyāpūrvam phalaṃ vā prati śaktiḥ, sā yady api yāgakāle vidyate, tathāpi na pratyakṣā, sarvaśaktīnām atīndriyatvāt*; “As for the capacity (*śakti*) of the sacrifice to [produce] the Unprecedented or the expected result, even if it exists at the time of the sacrifice, it is not perceived [at that time], for all capacities are beyond the reach of the senses” (*Nyāyaratnākara* p. 144.8–10).

¹⁰⁷ ViV 25 (SV – Introduction): *nanu mā bhūt sarvajñō niyoktā, dharmajñās tv iṣyatām! na hi rūpatas cakṣurādīnām viṣayanīyamo nirūpita ity uktam. kālatas tu nīyame yadā vartamānatvam, tadātiśayavaccakṣurādīviṣayabhāvo ’viruddhaḥ. ātvantike cāvartamānatve ’atvantāsattvam khapuṣpādivat’ ity uktam. na ca kury ity artho dharmah, yāgāder viṣayasya dharmatvenopagamāt* (S 733.4 – 735.3 [G 161.162.1]).

¹⁰⁸ For the general context of Maṇḍana’s discussion of omniscience (*sarvajñatva*), a debate that reaches back as far as ViV 15 and extends practically up to the end of the *pūrvapakṣa*, see David 2020b: § 2.1. Despite the mention of an “author of the commandment” (*niyoktā*), the discussion of omniscience is very loosely connected to the consideration of Prabhākara’s *niyoga*-theory in ViV 12–14.

¹⁰⁹ On Maṇḍana’s position on perception, referred to here by the opponent, see above, n. 100. The mention of “form” is a short designation of a list of four potentially limiting factors enumerated earlier on in the treatise: form (*rūpa*), acuity/feebleness (*paṭumandatā*), distance in space (*deśa*) and dimension (*parimāna*). See David 2020b: § 3.2.

respect to time (*kālatas*), then if [*dharmā*] is present (*vartamāna*), there is no difficulty in its being an object for the eye, etc. when the latter possesses a special excellence (*atīśayavant*). As for something that would absolutely not be present (*ātyantike* [...] *avartamānatve*),¹¹⁰ we have said before that “it is entirely non-existent, like a sky-flower, etc.”¹¹¹ And it is not the case that *dharmā* is an object [having the form] “do!” (*kuru*), for [Mīmāṃsakas] maintain that objects such as the sacrifice (*yāgādi*) are *dharmas*.¹¹²

Precisely because such a solution was unacceptable to him on ontological grounds, Maṇḍana had to find another alternative to Kumārila’s view, one that, unlike Umbeka’s, would not fall into the trap of sky-flower-like “timeless” entities. Before considering his own original answer to this problem in ViV 25, let us sum up all positions available in his time to account for the imperceptibility of *dharmā*:

	Nature of <i>dharmā</i> (s)	Cause of imperceptibility
Śabara	Sacrifice (<i>yāga</i>)	Existence in the future (<i>bhaviṣyat</i>): Of the sacrifice Of the results of the sacrifice
Kumārila	Sacrifice (<i>yāga/karman</i>) Substance (<i>dravya</i>) Qualities (<i>guṇa</i>)	Relation (<i>saṃbandha</i>) to something future (<i>bhaviṣyat</i>) = being a means for the Supreme Good (<i>śreyahsādhantā</i>)
Prabhākara	Commandment (<i>niyoga</i>)	Absence of connection to time (<i>kālatrayāparāmarśa</i> , <i>kālatrayāsparśa</i> , <i>kālaviveka</i>)

Table 2. Three views on *dharmā* and its imperceptibility.

The tenor of Maṇḍana’s response in ViV 25 is not always easy to grasp, and led to surprising hypotheses as to the identification of the various opponents in that section of the *pūrvapakṣa*. E. Stern (1988: 43) identifies Maṇḍana’s main opponent as “a Bauddhaḥ who accepts, at least for the sake of this argument, certain Mīmāṃsā constructs and theories,” and the target of his attacks as “evidently

¹¹⁰ Understand: something that is not and can never become present.

¹¹¹ ViV 12 (SV): *atyantāsattvaṃ khapuṣpādivat* (S 328.2 [= G 44.3–4]).

¹¹² ŚBh ad MīSū 1.1.2: *yajatiśabdavācyam eva dharmam samāmananti* <em.: *samānanti* Ed>; “They teach that *dharmā* is none but what is expressed by the root *yaj-* (‘to sacrifice’)” (text: Frauwallner 1968: 20.11; full context quoted in Stern 1988: 1575); according to Kumārila’s commentary on this passage (*Ślokavārttika* [*codanā*°] k. 191), this includes, besides the ritual act (*karman*) itself, also the sacrificial substance (*dravya*) and its qualities (*guṇa*), presumably referred to here by °*ādi* in *yāgādi*.

a Naiyāyika” (*ibid.*). But, as we have just seen, the argument Stern attributes to Nyāya (*dharma* is imperceptible due to its being a means to producing the Supreme Good) is almost certainly Kumārila’s, and I find it also very unlikely that the critique addressed to him should be ascribed to a Buddhist (although the hypothesis of a *sarvajña* who is also a *dharmajña* admittedly has some Buddhist flavour).¹¹³ Rather, it seems we are dealing here with a solution devised by Maṇḍana himself to a difficulty he sees in the views of his illustrious predecessor in the field of Mīmāṃsā.¹¹⁴ It is, in fact, a clear token of Maṇḍana’s dialectical skill that he was able to introduce an alternative view on such a crucial topic without leaving the aporetic framework characteristic of his so-called “*pūrvapakṣa*.”

Maṇḍana’s solution to our main problem consists in simply dissociating the “capacity” (*śakti*, *sāmarthya*) of the sacrifice to produce a result from the ritual act (*karman*) itself, by having recourse to Kumārila’s theory of the “Unprecedented” (*apūrva*). His main statement in ViV 25 and the corresponding *svavṛtti* reads as follows:¹¹⁵

[Kā:] “[In order to account] for a result [taking place] after a long period of time (*cirakāla*), they postulate a capacity (*sāmarthya*)¹¹⁶ of the rite, [in

¹¹³ As I have remarked elsewhere (David 2020b), Maṇḍana generally does not proceed by directly refuting “schools” of thought but dialectically, by inserting the various theoreticians’ arguments within a homogeneous (and most of the time anonymous) course of argumentation. It is also clear that Buddhism does not have for him the prominence it had, for instance, in Kumārila’s critique of omniscience. On this last point, see David 2020b: § 1.3.

¹¹⁴ This strategy of discreetly improving on Kumārila’s views on a given topic is by no means exceptional in Maṇḍana’s work, though it is not always easy to detect. For similar cases, see Frauwallner 1938 and David 2020b: § 2.1–2.5.

¹¹⁵ ViV 25 (SV): [kā:] *atulyakālaṃ sāmarthyam karmaṇaḥ kṣaṇabhaṅginaḥ | cirakālaphalāyāhur na tad adhyakṣam iḥṣyate ||* [SV:] *āsutaravināśitvāt karmaṇaḥ pralīyamānakarmalabdhopajanaḥ pūrvāparāṅgapāditāvasthāntaro deśakālādyapekṣāsāditaparīnatibheda ānantaryam api karmaṇo ’tīvartamānaḥ ko ’py atīśayaḥ kartari nityātmani karmaṇaś cirabhāvinaḥ phalasya sādhanam kathyate vṛddhaiḥ. tad asau na karmakāle vartamānaḥ, svakāle vartamāno ’pi karmaṇo nivṛttatvān na karmasaṃbandhitayādhyakṣam iḥṣyate. tad uktam: ‘phalasādhanarūpeṇa tadānūṇi yena nasty asau’ iti. karmakāle tasya bhāvitvam, tatkāle ca karmaṇo ’bhāvaḥ. katham tarhi karmaṇaḥ sādhanatvam tadanyasamavāyī? – tadāhitatvāt. na hi svasamavāyī eva sādhanatvam iti kaś cin niyamaḥ. kāryānumeyaṃ tad yatra kāryāyālaṃ tatraiva yuktam, tadāhitatvāc ca tasya śaktiḥ. na cettham aupacārikaḥ karmaṇaḥ sādhanabhāvaḥ, kāṣṭhādīḥu tathaiva siddheḥ (S 740.2–745.2 [G 163.6–165.1]).*

¹¹⁶ The two words *śakti*, used in the opponent’s discourse (introduction to ViV 25, quoted above), and *sāmarthya* are, of course, rigorous synonyms in the present context.

itself] momentary (*kṣaṇabhaṅgin*), [to produce the expected result], [a capacity] which is not contemporaneous [with the sacrifice] (*atulyakāla*); that [capacity] is not seen to be perceived.” [SV:] Since the rite disappears immediately [after being performed], the Elders (*vṛddha*) postulate a certain supplement (*atiśaya*)¹¹⁷ born from the rite as it vanishes, of which a different stage is produced by the former and latter members [of the sacrifice],¹¹⁸ and whose particular transformation (*pariṇatibheda*) is established in dependence on space, time and other [conditions].¹¹⁹ [That supplement,] which goes even beyond the immediate subsequence (*ānantarya*) to [the sacrifice],¹²⁰ is [inherent] in the agent, whose Self is permanent (*nityātmani kartari*), and it is the means (*sādhana*) of accomplishing the expected result of the rite, which takes place only after a long period of time. Therefore, that [supplement] is not present at the time of the rite (*na karmakāle*

¹¹⁷ As confirmed by Vācaspati (NyK S 742.7 [G 164.15]), this “supplement” identified with the “capacity” (*sāmarthya*) of the rite is none but the “Unprecedented” (*apūrva*) linking, according to Kumārila, the ritual act to a result taking place only much later. Note that Maṇḍana’s opponent in the introduction to ViV 25 already spoke of the capacity (*śakti*) of the sacrifice to produce a result as a “supplement” (*atiśaya*) inherent in that sacrifice.

¹¹⁸ The interpretation of the compound *pūrvāparāṅgopapāditāvasthāntara* is difficult, and Vācaspati’s commentary is not of much help here, nor is E. Stern’s rather loose paraphrase (“The succession of subsidiary actions assume a new condition in it[, which is a particular evolute, etc.]”). The main question is whether this “different stage” (*avasthāntara*) is assumed by the sacrifice or by the supplement itself, i.e. the Unprecedented (*apūrva*), both options being, I think, possible. I choose here the second solution, which seems grammatically more natural, though the fact of speaking of the various “intermediary” *apūrvas* and of the “final” *apūrva* as different “stages” (*avasthā*) is unfamiliar to me. On the “former and latter members [of the sacrifice],” see NyK: *pūrvāparāṅgāgnyanvādhānādibrāhmaṇatarpaṇānta...*; “**the former and latter members [of the sacrifice]**, beginning with the reinstallation of the fire, up to the feeding of the Brahmins” (S 741.6–7 [G 134.9]).

¹¹⁹ I take it that the word *pariṇati* is not another name of the “supplement” (*atiśaya*), as suggested by E. Stern’s paraphrase (“a particular evolute arising with regard to space, time, and so on” – Stern 1988: 44), but rather refers to the “maturation” (\approx *paripāka*) of the *apūrva* enabling it to bear its fruit in a certain time and place, and under various circumstances. I thank S. L. P. Anjaneya Sarma for suggesting this interpretation of that difficult compound.

¹²⁰ This remark, in itself not very explicit, could be a form of *a fortiori* reasoning, as suggested by Vācaspati: *karmānantaryam api tasya nāsti, kim aṅga punas tatkālatā?*; “That [supplement] does not even [take place] immediately after the rite, how could it [take place] at the same time?” (NyK S 741.5–6 [= G 163.28]); *kim punaḥ samānakālatā?*; “How could it [take place] at the same time?” (NyK S 741.10 [G 164.10–11]). Nor is it impossible that Maṇḍana tries to avoid the kind of temporal proximity that would allow the establishment of a “natural” causal relation between the rite (*karman*) and the *apūrva*.

vartamānaḥ); even though it is present in its own time (*svakāle vartamāno 'pi*),¹²¹ since [at that time] the rite has disappeared, it is never seen to be perceived as something which is connected to the rite. As [Kumārila] says: “(...) since it (*asau*)¹²² does not exist by then (*tadānīm*), for it is the means to accomplishing the result [of the sacrifice]” (*Ślokavārttika* 1.1.4, k. 34). At the time of the rite, it is future; in its own time, the rite does not exist [anymore]. [Objection:] but then, how can the property of being a means (*sādhanatva*), [belonging to] the rite, be inherent in something else? [Answer:] because it is placed [in the Self of the sacrificer] by the [rite]. In fact, there is no rule stating that the property of being a means (*sādhanatva*) should be inherent precisely in that [means]. It is [rather] correct [to think] that the [property of being a means], inferred from the effect, is there wherever it is sufficient to [produce] that effect, and it is the capacity of whatever placed it [there]. And we do not say that the rite is the means for accomplishing [the expected result] in a figurative way, for this is established in the case of the pieces of firewood (*kāṣṭha*).¹²³

Reading this crucial passage of the ViV one cannot help wondering how much of it actually differs from Kumārila's views. Two points need to be considered: the appeal to Kumārila's theory of the *apūrva*, and the quote from the perception chapter of the *Ślokavārttika* (k. 34). Regarding the second point, first of all, the new inflection given by Maṇḍana to this half-verse is noticeable. In the context of the *Ślokavārttika* the pronoun *asau* can only refer to *dharma*, that is, in Kumārila's interpretation, to the ritual action (*kriyā*), the substance (*dravya*) or its qualities (*guṇa*).¹²⁴ Even though the verse could, in principle, be read in the same way when quoted in the ViV, the flow of Maṇḍana's discourse, especially the use of the same pronoun *asau* (“this”) in the preceding sentence to denote the “supplement” (*atiśaya*) that is the *apūrva* and the constant designation of the act by the neuter *karman*, clearly invites the reader to interpret *asau* in Kumārila's

¹²¹ As rightly pointed out by Vācaspati, this remark is probably meant to prevent an understanding of the *apūrva* as a “timeless” entity, as in Prabhākara's theory: that supplement is present (hence existent) in its own time, only this time does not coincide with that of the sacrifice. See NyK: *atha sarvadaiva kim avartamānaḥ? tathā ca gagana-kamalakalpaḥ prasajyeta!*; “Or is [that supplement] never present? Then it is, alas, similar to a sky-lotus!” (S 742.11–13 [G 164.18–19]).

¹²² On the interpretation of the demonstrative *asau*, see our remarks below.

¹²³ On the example of the pieces of firewood (*kāṣṭha*), which Maṇḍana almost surely borrows from the *Tantravārttika*, see below and n. 129.

¹²⁴ See above and n. 94. All commentators agree on this point: *asau* refers, according to Umbeka, to “substance, action, qualities, etc.” (*dravyakriyāguṇādi – Tātparyaṭīkā* p. 128.9), according to Sucarita to “substance and the like” (*dravyādi – Kāśikā*₁ p. 220.13), according to Pārthasārathi to “sacrifice and the like” (*yāgādi – Nyāyaratnākara – p. 143.23*).

verse as referring, again, to the *apūrva*. Following this interpretation, the half-verse should not be translated as

since it [= the sacrifice] does not exist at that time [= the time of performance] as a means of bringing about its result (Taber's translation, quoted above)

but as

since it [= the *apūrva*] does not exist at that time [= at the time of the performance], for it is the means of bringing about the result [of the sacrifice]. (My translation, in the context of the ViV.)

The reason for this inflection is clear: being perishable and momentary (*āśuvīnāśīn*, *kṣaṇabhāṅgin*, etc.), the sacrifice is not, strictly speaking, the means to realising any result as long as it does not have a “supplement” (*atiśaya*) – the *apūrva* – that helps build a continuity between the ephemeral performance of the rite and the production of its fruit. If we now examine the theory of *apūrva* mobilised in this section by Maṇḍana, we see that there is in fact very little in it that does not have an equivalent in the *Apūrvādhikaraṇa*, the “Chapter on the Unprecedented” of the *Tantravārttika* (2.1.5). The idea of the *apūrva* as an “ability” (*yogyatā*) pertaining to the sacrifice or the sacrificers, first of all, is part of Kumārila's very definition of the Unprecedented.¹²⁵ The *apūrva* is also often called by Kumārila a “capacity” (*śakti*),¹²⁶ in most ways similar to the capacity of worldly actions “like agriculture, drinking butter (?) or study” (*kṛṣighṛtapānādhyayanaprabhṛti* – p. 395.5) which, like the sacrifice, cannot bear their fruit immediately.¹²⁷ Similarly,

¹²⁵ See in particular TV₁ 2.1.5: *karmabhyah prāg ayogyasya karmaṇa puruṣasya vā | yogyatā śāstragamyā yā parā sāvīrvam iṣyate* ||; “That ability (*yogyatā*) of a rite or a person that did not have any ability before [the undertaking of] the rite, which is different [from the rite] and which is grasped by Scripture is called the ‘Unprecedented’” (p. 394.6–7); *saiva ca puruṣagatā kratugatā vā yogyatā śāstre 'smīn apūrvam ity apadiśyate*; “And that ability pertaining to (*gata*) the person or the rite is called ‘Unprecedented’ in the present discipline” (p. 394.10–11).

¹²⁶ See TV₁ 2.1.5: *yadā darśapūrṇamāsas tadavayavo vā kāṃ cid puruṣe śaktim anādhāyaiva vinaśyēt...*; “If the New and Full Moon sacrifices or their parts vanished without laying down a certain capacity (*śakti*) in the person [who performs them]...” (p. 394.23–24); *apūrvākhyāḥ śaktayaḥ*; “the capacities called ‘Unprecedented’” (p. 394.29); *yāgād eva phalaṃ tad dhi śaktidvāreṇa sidhyati* |; “For the expected result arises from the sacrifice through its capacity (*śakti*)” (p. 395.11); *yāgāhitayā tu śaktyā sādhyamānaṃ yāgenaiva sādhitam bhavati*; “That which is produced by the capacity laid down [in the person] by the sacrifice is produced by the sacrifice, and by nothing else” (p. 395.13–14). The idea of the Unprecedented as a “capacity” (*śakti*) of the sacrifice is already expressed in k. 199 of the *codanā*-section of the *Ślokavārttika*. See Kataoka 2011₂: 158, 452 and n. 588 and Yoshimizu 2000: 154–155.

¹²⁷ TV₁ 2.1.5: *laukikaṃ cāpi yat karma phale kālāntarodgatau | tatrāpi śaktir evāste na tv*

the idea of the Self of the agent as the locus of inherence of the *apūrva* is fully Kumārīlan,¹²⁸ as is the example of the pieces of firewood (*kāṣṭha*) used to explain how the production of a thing from another may suppose the operation of an unexpressed causal link.¹²⁹ Even the *apūrva*'s keeping away from perception is occasionally underlined by the author of the *Tantravārttika*, though on slightly different grounds.¹³⁰ Only one major difference is noticeable, as far as I can see: if Kumārīla accepts, as does Maṇḍana, that the *apūrva*, although a capacity of the sacrifice, may inhere in something else, he is less categorical than the author of the ViV on the possibility, for the *apūrva*, first to inhere in the act itself, before it vanishes, as can be seen from the following verse:¹³¹

Although we accept that the capacity of [ritual] acts is inherent in [the acts] themselves (*svasamaveta*), it will not be [inherent in that way] after they have perished; but since it is present [i.e. inherent] in the agent (*karṭṛstha*), it does not perish.

Such a distinction is, of course, entirely unacceptable to Maṇḍana, for whom the idea of the act's capacity to produce a fruit being inherent in the act itself (*svasamaveta*) immediately involves its being perceptible. For him, the capacity of the rite *must* be inherent in something else; for Kumārīla it *can* be inherent in something else, although it is, at first, inherent in that entity to which it pertains as a *śakti*.¹³²

apūrvam iheṣyate ||; “A capacity is there even in worldly actions, aiming at a result that will arise only much later, only it is not called the ‘Unprecedented’” (p. 395.3–4).

¹²⁸ See TV₁ 2.1.5: *ātmaiva cāśrayas tasya kriyāpy atraiva ca sthitā* ||; “And its support is none but the Self, and the action also stands there” (p. 397.29).

¹²⁹ TV₁ 2.1.5: *kāṣṭhaiḥ paktavyam ity ukte nirdiṣṭā jvalanakriyā* ||; “When we say ‘This should be cooked by means of firewood,’ we also designate [implicitly] the action of burning [pertaining to the pieces of firewood]” (p. 395.20).

¹³⁰ See TV₁ 2.1.5: *pratyakṣeṇa tāvan nāvagamyaṭe, rūpādyanātmakatvena cakṣurādibhir asaṃbandhāt*; “[The Unprecedented], first of all, is not grasped by perception, for not being a colour, etc., it cannot be connected with the eye and other [sense-organs]” (p. 390.14–15).

¹³¹ TV₁ 2.1.5: *yadi svasamavetaiva śaktir iṣyeta karmaṇām | tadvināse tato na syāt karṭṛsthā tu na naśyati* || (p. 398.4–5).

¹³² That Maṇḍana had this particular passage in mind while elaborating his theory appears clearly from a comparison of the last lines of the passage of the ViV quoted above with the immediately following verse in the *Tantravārttika*: *śaktiḥ kāryānumeyatvād yadgataivopayujyate | tadgataivābhyupetavyā svāśrayānāśrayāpi vā* ||; “Since a capacity is to be inferred from its effect, it will be assumed to pertain (*gata*) to that [entity] pertaining to which it is useful, regardless of whether [that entity] is its own substratum (*svāśraya*) or not” (TV₁ 2.1.5 – p. 398.8–9).

What is new, then, in Maṇḍana’s treatment of the topic is the slight adaptation of Kumārila’s theory of the *apūrva* to the question of the imperceptibility of *dharma*. So understood, the theory of the “Unprecedented” could solve two difficulties: the “inherence” (*samavāya*) of the capacity to produce a result in the sacrifice, and its being (therefore) “contemporaneous” (*tatkāla*) with the rite.

To represent this difference graphically we may explain Kumārila’s account of *dharma*’s inaccessibility to perception in two steps:¹³³

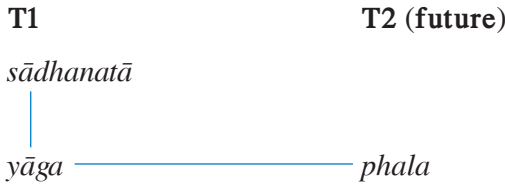


Figure 1. Kumārila’s two-step model of *dharma*’s imperceptibility.

Maṇḍana’s version of the theory simply denies, on the basis of Kumārila’s own theory of the *apūrva*, that the property of “being a means” can be inherent in the sacrifice, and also that it can take place at the same time. By temporally dissociating the sacrifice from its capacity to produce a result, Maṇḍana therefore substitutes for Kumārila’s two-step model a three-step structure, where the act and its causal power simply cannot be grasped together:

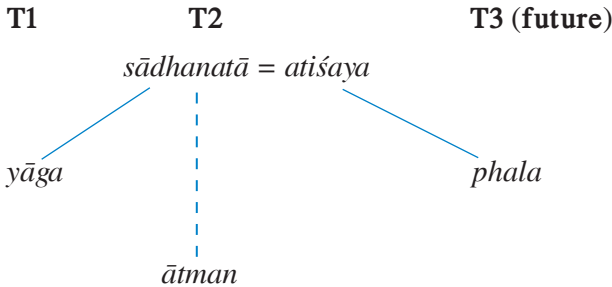


Figure 2. Maṇḍana’s three-step model of *dharma*’s imperceptibility.

What makes the teaching of the Veda inaccessible to perception is therefore not that its object would entirely escape the constraints of time, but that its two components, the sacrifice and its property of being a means, though “present” (*vartamāna*) each in its own time (*svakāle*), are never found together at the *same* time. From the standpoint of the act efficiency towards the goal is always something “to be

¹³³ This graphic representation of Kumārila’s theory is loosely inspired by Kataoka 2011₂: 116 and 158.

done” (*sādhya*), that cannot come into existence unless the corresponding act disappears altogether. That an object is *sādhya* thus does not mean, for Maṇḍana, that it is *not present*, but that it is essentially a *composite* whose members do not share a single point in time. This discrepancy, that clings to all ritual acts (but not to others), allows Maṇḍana to account for the specificity of a *Vedic* teaching on *sādhya* objects without having to dissolve the intimate connection of being (*sat*) to the present time. The defence of a strict definition of being as presence and the interpretation of the injunctive “ought” as (temporal) non-coincidence of the act and its capacity are thus correlative theses, and indeed the two sides of the same coin.

Conclusion

It appears from what precedes that Maṇḍana’s reflection on injunction – culminating in his identification of “being a means to accomplishing what is desired” (*iṣṭasādhanatā*) as the object of all injunctive suffixes in ViV 26–28 – and his investigation of *dharma*’s imperceptibility as (temporal) non-coincidence of that property with the ritual act, are essentially part of the same theoretical complex, whose epicentre is his conception of existence as presence (*vartamānatā*). It is because being is equivalent to being present that a temporal interpretation of imperativity was bound to fail, and it is for the same reason that the Vedic “you must” had to be distilled to a mere non-coincidence of a property and its possessor. The opposite view, which I still hesitate to attribute to Prabhākara in person, is not less coherent, and explains, under the premise of an equivocal conception of being as “being cognised,” both, linguistically, the functioning of injunctive discourse and, hermeneutically, the specificity of the object of the Veda. This second position, piecing together views on being, language and action, can therefore properly be called an “ontology of commandment,” if I may borrow this expression coined by G. Agamben. Not quite illegitimately, it seems to me, for it is precisely as a result of a brilliant reflection on liturgy and the imperative in the Western tradition that the author of *Homo Sacer* proposes to distinguish an ontology “of operativity” (as he also calls it), “at work in the the juridical and religious sphere” from the ontology developed by the philosophical and scientific tradition, “which speaks in the indicative.”¹³⁴ Maṇḍana’s thesis of being as presence, which marks the irruption of Mīmāṃsā in the philosophical arena of debate on “existence” (*sattā*), can only be understood in reaction to such an attempt to inscribe in ontology “the contraction of what is and what ought to be” (Agamben 2012: 136). That attempt, however, did not have all the con-

¹³⁴ Agamben 2012: 135–138 (I translate from the Italian).

sequences one might have expected for the history of Brahmanical reflection on being. Already Śālikanātha, followed in that by the later Prābhākara tradition, loses sight of the ritual background of the two ontologies. For him *sattā* is just a particular case of pseudo-universal, a fictitious entity comparable with universals of caste (“being a Brahmin,” *brāhmaṇatva*) or sound (*śabdatva*). Maṇḍana’s definition of being as presence, on the other hand, is alluded to in texts as diverse as the Buddhist Prajñākara’s *Pramāṇavārttikālaṅkāra* (around 800)¹³⁵ and Vyomaśiva’s *Vyomavatī* (9th–10th century), a work on Vaiśeṣika,¹³⁶ though entirely severed from its original exegetical background. And indeed this might be the natural destiny of an ontology of commandment that it should always remain in the margins of a metaphysical reflection essentially devoted to what there *is*, not to what *ought to be*. By cutting off their reflection on being from its exegetical roots, and the thought of commandment from its ramifications in ontology, Mīmāṃsakas thus certainly facilitated the inscription of their discipline as a “philosophical view” among others; but they also renounced what was perhaps one of their most adventurous attempts: rationally to account for being when it is modally distinct, hence without common measure, with objects as we normally experience them.

Appendix: *niyoga* as an independent category (*padārtha*)?

One of the most intriguing aspects of Prabhākara’s theory of the *niyoga* – but one for which our sources are scarce – is the hypothesis of the commandment as a separate ontological category (*padārtha*). Could consequences of Prabhākara’s understanding of injunctions on ontology have led some among his followers to recognise *niyoga* as a separate kind of entity? Without drawing any final conclusion, this appendix gathers the evidence available so far for an independent investigation in the field of categoriology among early advocates of the school.

The enumeration and definition of “entities” or “categories” (*padārtha*) is not a common topic in early Mīmāṃsā, and Prābhākara-Mīmāṃsā is no exception to

¹³⁵ See *Pramāṇavārttikālaṅkāra*: *nanu vartamānakālasaṃbandho ’stitvam, na sākṣātka-
raṇam*; “But, existence is the connection with the present time, not direct perception” (p. 112.7).

¹³⁶ *Vyomavatī* 36.12: *ato ’rthakriyākāritvena sattvam iti śākyā manyante. vartamānakāla-
saṃbandhitvenety apare*; “The Buddhists believe that ‘existence’ [can be explained] by ‘practical efficiency’ (*arthakriyā*). Others (*apare*) [take it] in the sense of ‘having a connection with the present time’” (translation: Halbfass 1986: 77 [modified]); *Vyomavatī* 37.15: *etena vartamānakālasaṃbandhitvena sattvaṃ pratyuktam*; “With this [argumen-
tation] the theory that ‘existence’ is due to a ‘connection with the present time’ is also refuted” (translation: Halbfass 1986: 77 [modified]).

this rule. This, of course, is not to say that the reality and independence of some of the entities isolated as “categories” by early Vaiśeṣika (for instance, absences or universals) is not discussed at length in Prābhākara treatises. However, it does not seem possible, from the extant Prābhākara literature from its beginnings to the time of Bhavanātha (11th c.?), to draw any univocal list of categories that would have been accepted by all theoreticians belonging to that tradition.¹³⁷

Such a list is found at a much later probable date in two anonymous Prābhākara tracts retrieved from Kerala at the beginning of the last century and published in Trivandrum under the (fabricated) titles *Gurusaṃmatapadārthāḥ* (GSP) and *Gurusaṃmatapadārthasaṃkṣepa(h)* (GSPS).¹³⁸ Although neither text can be dated with any precision, their proximity to the second section (*Prameyaparicheda*) of Rāmānujācārya’s *Tantrarāhasya* (TR) (15th–17th c.)¹³⁹ suggests they might belong to the last stages in the history of the Prābhākara school. The GSP, GSPS and TR all agree in advocating the same list of eight kinds of entities (list A): substance (*dravya*), quality (*guṇa*), movement (*karman*), universal/generalality (*jāti/sāmānya*), potentiality (*śakti*), inherence (*samavāya*), number (*saṃkhyā*) and similarity (*sādrśya*).¹⁴⁰ The same list is also found in two treatises ascribed to Śālikanātha: the *Pramāṇapārāyaṇa* (included in all printed editions of Śālikanātha’s “*Prakaraṇapañcikā*”) and the lost *Prameyapārāyaṇa*, known only through

¹³⁷ Lists of entities are occasionally found in older literature. See for instance *R̥juvimalā* 1.1.5 (M₁ 159.16–18), where Śālikanātha denies the existence of any common aspect in “universals, qualities, movements and substances” (*jātiḡuṇakriyādravyeṣu*). There is, however, no way to decide whether Śālikanātha regarded such a list as exhaustive.

¹³⁸ As the editors in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series themselves point out (GSP – Introduction, p. 1; GSPS – Introduction, p. 1), the edition is based in each case on a single manuscript with neither title nor final rubric. The two titles have been artificially extracted by the editors on the basis of the first stanza of each treatise. See GSP: (...) *itīme ’ṣṭau padārthā gurusaṃmatāḥ* (p. 1); GSPS: (...) *aṣṭau padārthā atha tān vibhajya saṃkṣīpya vakṣyāmi guror matena* (p. 1).

¹³⁹ For a discussion of Rāmānujācārya’s date, see Freschi 2012: 9–10.

¹⁴⁰ See TR 2: *dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyasamavāyaśaktisaṃkhyāsādrśyāny aṣṭau padārthāḥ*; “There are eight [kinds of] entities: substance, quality, movement, generality, inherence, potentiality, number and similarity” (p. 20.4); GSP 1: *dravyajātiḡuṇāḥ karma saṃkhyāsādrśyaśaktayaḥ | samavāya itīme ’ṣṭau padārthā gurusaṃmatāḥ || 1 ||*; “The eight [kinds of] entities accepted by the Guru [= Prabhākara] are: substance, universal, quality, movement, number, similarity, potentiality and inherence” (p. 1); GSPS: *dravyaḡuṇāḥ karma ca jātiśakti sādrśyasamkhye samavāya ete | aṣṭau padārthā atha tān vibhajya saṃkṣīpya vakṣyāmi guror matena || 1 ||*; “The eight [kinds of] entities are: substance, quality, action, universal, potentiality, similarity, number and inherence. I will [first] distinguish them [from one another], and [then] explain them briefly according to the view of the Guru [= Prabhākara]” (p. 1).

brief mentions in the *Pramāṇapārāyaṇa* and in late Nyāya works.¹⁴¹ The authenticity of both treatises is doubtful, and it is impossible, on the basis of current research, to get a clear idea of their date.

However, as M. Hiriyanna already pointed out a century ago in an important article (Hiriyanna 1972, first published in Madras in 1930), other sources suggest the existence, at an earlier date, of another list of eight kinds of entities (list **B**), excluding the last three of the above list and including particularity (*viśeṣa*), dependence (*pāratantrya*)¹⁴² and the commandment (*niyoga*) as independent categories. If the inclusion of *viśeṣa* can be interpreted as a concession to the Vaiśeṣika doctrine of categories, the distinction of the *niyoga* as a kind of entity *per se* is significant for the present enquiry as it testifies to an attempt, on the part of at least some Prābhākaras, at theorising the commandment not only in linguistic or psychological terms, but also in relation to other entities existing in the world.

Unfortunately, the earliest occurrences of this second list are quite late and, what is even more disturbing, do not include any Prābhākara work. Reference to this second list is mostly found in Vedāntic texts. We come across list **B** for the first time in a doxographic passage of the *Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa* by the Vedāntin Prakāśātman (950–1000),¹⁴³ in which various lists of entities developed

¹⁴¹ *Pramāṇapārāyaṇa* (*upamāna*^o): *kiṃ punar idaṃ sādṛśyam? nedaṃ dravyaguṇa-karmasāmānyasamavāyaviśeṣāṇām anyatamam (...). ataḥ padārthāntaram evedam, śaktivat saṃkhyāvac ceti prameyapārāyaṇa evoktam*; “But what is it [that you call] ‘similarity’ (*sādṛśya*)? It is not counted among the following [kinds of entities]: substance, quality, movement, generality, inherence, particularity (...). Therefore it must be a different [kind of] entity, just like potentiality or number, as is explained in the *Prameyapārāyaṇa*” (pp. 167.4–168.13). In the same passage, the author of the *Pramāṇapārāyaṇa* makes it clear that particularity (*viśeṣa*), which is not included in list **A**, is mentioned here for the sake of argument, not because it would be recognised as an independent kind of entity, for “those who are conversant with the means of [valid] cognition do not accept [the existence] of an entity called ‘particularity’” (*viśeṣākhyam [...] padārthaṃ pramāṇavādino nānumanyante* – p. 268.7–8). The passage of the *Prameyapārāyaṇa* referred to here may correspond to a fragment of this work quoted in Mallinātha’s commentary on Varadarāja’s *Tārkikarākṣā* (around the 15th c.): *dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyaśaktisaṃkhyāsādṛśyasamavāyā aṣṭau padārthāḥ*; “The eight [kinds of] entities are: substance, quality, movement, generality, potentiality, number, similarity and inherence” (quoted in Hiriyanna 1972: 50, n. 6).

¹⁴² Some authors argue that dependence (*pāratantrya*) is equivalent to inherence (*samavāya*) in this context. See *Tātparyadīpikā* (Citsukha): *pāratantryaṃ samavāyaḥ*; “Dependence is [nothing but] inherence” (p. 644.22); *Tattvadīpana* (Akhaṇḍānanda): *pāratantryaṃ samavāyaḥ* (p. 628.18). Note, however, that Mādhava, who often closely relies on Citsukha, does not give such an explanation in the corresponding passage of the *Vivarāṇaprameyasamgraha* (quoted below).

¹⁴³ On this date see David 2020a.

in the philosophical schools of his time are discussed.¹⁴⁴ Later Vedāntic tradition from Citsukha (13th c.) and Mādhava (14th c.) onwards then distinguishes (possibly on the sole authority of Prakāśātman’s text) between “ancient Prābhākaras” (*cirantanaprābhākara*) upholding list **B**, and “contemporary [Prābhākaras]” (*ādhunika[-prābhākara]*) advocating list **A**.¹⁴⁵ The “older” list is the only one found in a later Vedāntic work, Rāmānanda Sarasvatī’s *Vivaraṇopanyāsa* (16th c.), but Rāmānanda’s neglect of the “new” list is more likely to be a sign of his exclusive reliance on Prakāśātman’s *Vivaraṇa* (of which his work is a paraphrase) than of a persistence of list **B** in later Prābhākara tradition.

The two lists can better be compared in the following chart (the list of six categories commonly accepted in early Vaiśeṣika sources is added for reference):

List A (“new” Prābhākaras)	List B (“older” Prābhākaras)	Vaiśeṣika
A1. <i>dravya</i>	B1. <i>dravya</i>	V1. <i>dravya</i>
A2. <i>guṇa</i>	B2. <i>guṇa</i>	V2. <i>guṇa</i>
A3. <i>karman</i>	B3. <i>karman</i>	V3. <i>karman</i>
A4. <i>sāmānya/jāti</i>	B4. <i>sāmānya</i>	V4. <i>sāmānya</i>

¹⁴⁴ *Pañcapādīkāvivaraṇa* (5th *varṇaka*): *dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyaviśeṣaśaktipāratantryaniyogā aṣṭāv iti prābhākarāḥ*; “According to Prābhākaras, there are eight [kinds of entities]: substance, quality, movement, generality, **particularity**, potentiality, **dependence** and **commandment**” (pp. 643–44). Prakāśātman examines the lists of entities established by eight schools of thought (the number of categories is indicated in brackets): Vedāntins (3), Bhāṭṭa-Mīmāṃsaka (*vārttikakārīyāḥ*) (4), Śaivas (5), Vaiśeṣikas (6), Jains (*kṣapaṇakāḥ*) (7), Prābhākaras (8), Naiyāyikas (16) and Sāṃkhya (25). This account is certainly eclectic and over-systematic, but it is nevertheless generally faithful to the various doctrines taken individually, so there is no reason to think that Prakāśātman’s description of the Prābhākara doctrine of categories would have been made up.

¹⁴⁵ *Tātparyadīpikā* (Citsukha): *idaṃ tu cirantanaprābhākaramatam. dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyasamavāyaśaktisaṃkhyāsādrśyānīty aṣṭapadārthā ādhunikamatena*; “This [= the view exposed by Prakāśātman] is the view of the ancient Prābhākaras. According to the opinion of contemporary [Prābhākaras], the eight [kinds of] entities are: substance, quality, movement, generality, inherence, potentiality, number and similarity” (p. 644.22–24); *Vivaraṇaprameyasamgraha* (Mādhava): *dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyaviśeṣapāratantryaśaktiniyogā aṣṭāv iti cirantanāḥ prābhākarāḥ. dravyaguṇakarmasāmānyasamavāyaśaktisaṃkhyāsādrśyānīty aṣṭāv ity ādhunikāḥ*; “According to the ancient Prābhākaras, the eight [kinds of entities] are substance, quality, movement, generality, particularity, dependence, potentiality and commandment; according to contemporary [Prābhākaras], the eight [kinds of entities] are substance, quality, movement, generality, inherence, potentiality, number and similarity” (p. 201.5–7).

A5. <i>śakti</i>	B5. <i>śakti</i>	V5. <i>viśeṣa</i> (= B7)
A6. <i>samavāya</i>	B6. <i>pāratantrya</i>	V6. <i>samavāya</i> (= A6)
A7. <i>saṃkhyā</i>	B7. <i>viśeṣa</i>	
A8. <i>sādrśya</i>	B8. <i>niyoga</i>	

Table 3. Categories (*padārtha*) according to “old” and “new” Prābhākaras, compared with Vaiśeṣika.

Since all dated sources concerning both lists are later than 950, it is impossible to draw definite conclusions on the evolution of the Prābhākara doctrine of categories before that date.¹⁴⁶ Prakāśātman may of course be wrong when he ascribes the doctrine of the commandment as a separate category to some Prābhākara thinkers (if not to “Prābhākaras” taken as a single homogenous group), but there is no decisive reason to think so. All we can say for the moment is that an interpretation of Prabhākara’s *niyoga* as an independent entity might have been available at some point before the 10th century, and that the abandonment of commandment as a category somewhat coincides with the evolution of philosophical ideas on ontology, time and the imperative as it is outlined in the present article.

¹⁴⁶ M. Hiriyanna’s 1930 (1972) article is ground-breaking, and also presents a much more nuanced opinion than that put forward by A. B. Keith (1921), who did not hesitate to ascribe list A to... Prabhākara himself (p. 52)! Still, one might not be ready to follow his reasoning in all its consequences. Taking at face value Mādhava’s (in reality, Citsukha’s) distinction between “ancient” and “contemporary” Prābhākaras, Hiriyanna first argues that this really refers to “an ‘old’ and a ‘new’ school among the Prābhākaras themselves” (p. 49). The fragment of the lost *Prameyapārāyaṇa* mentioned earlier is then considered sufficient ground to identify the latter with “the school of thought as represented (*sic*) by Śālikanātha” (p. 50). The older list is in turn ascribed to Prabhākara himself or to one of his immediate followers. Leaving aside the serious doubts one might entertain regarding Śālikanātha’s authorship of the *Pramāṇa*^o and *Prameyapārāyaṇa*, it seems rather unlikely that Prakāśātman, certainly one of Śālikanātha’s most acute readers in his time, would have had no knowledge whatsoever of his doctrine of categories. It would be equally surprising that Citsukha and Mādhava, writing in the 13th and 14th century respectively, should still refer to Śālikanātha’s opinion as that of a “contemporary” (*ādhunika*). Thus, even admitting there really was an evolution between an “old” and a “new” doctrine of categories in the Prābhākara tradition (which, again, is anything but certain), the available evidence rather suggests that this modification took place in the period between the 10th and the 13th century, a period in which the twin (pseudo-?)śālikanāthan treatises *Pramāṇa*^o and *Prameyapārāyaṇa* could also have come to light.

References and abbreviations

Sanskrit texts

A = *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini. Quoted according to Sharma 1995.

Abhiprāyaparakāśikā of Citsukha. In: *Bhāvaśuddhi of Ānandapūrṇamuni and Abhiprāyaparakāśikā of Citsukhamuni. Two Commentaries on Brahmasiddhi*, ed. N. S. Ananta-krishna Sastri. Madras 1963.

BhāV = *Bhāvanāviveka* of Maṇḍana Miśra:

J = *The Bhāvanāviveka of Maṇḍana Miśra, with the Commentary of Bhaṭṭa Umbeka*, ed. G. Jhā and G. Kāvīrāj. Benares 1922.

R = *Bhāvanāviveka with Viśamagranthibhedikā*, ed. V. A. Rāmasvāmī Śāstrī and K. A. Śivarāmakṛṣṇa Śāstrī. Annamalainagar 1952.

Bhāvaśuddhi. See *Abhiprāyaparakāśikā*.

Bṛhatī of Prabhākara Miśra:

C = *Bṛhatī (a commentary on Śābarabhāṣya) by Prabhākara Miśra with the commentary Rjvimalā of Śālikanātha Miśra*, ed. A. Chinnaswami Sastri. Benares 1929.

M₁₋₅ = *Bṛhatī of Prabhākara Miśra (on the Mīmāṃsāsūtrabhāṣya of Śābarasvāmin) with the Rjvimalāpañcikā of Śālikanātha*, ed. S. K. Ramanatha Sastri (vols. 1–2) and S. Subrahmanya Sastri (vols. 3–5). Madras 1934–1967.

BS(SV) = *Brahmasiddhi by Ācārya Maṇḍanamiśra with [the] commentary by Śaṅkha-pāṇi*, ed. S. Kuppaswami Sastri. Madras 1937.

GSP = *Gurusaṃmatapadārthāḥ*, ed. S. Kunjan Pillai. Trivandrum 1954.

GSPS = *Gurusaṃmatapadārthasamkṣepa*, ed. V. G. Namboodiri. Trivandrum (Anantaśayana).

Jātinirṇaya of Śālikanātha. See *Prakaraṇapañcikā*.

k. = *kārikā*.

*Kāśikā*₁₋₃ of Sucarita Miśra = *The Mīmāṃsāślokavārttika with the Commentary Kāśikā of Sucaritamīśra*, ed. K. Sāmbaśiva Śāstrī (vols. 1–2) and V. A. Rāmasvāmī Śāstrī (vol. 3). Trivandrum 1926–1943.

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Mataṅgaparameśvaravṛtti = *Mataṅgaparameśvarāgama (Vidyāpāda) avec le commentaire de Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha*, ed. N. R. Bhatt. Pondicherry 1977.

MiSū = *Mīmāṃsāsūtra: Śrīmajjaiminipraṇīte Mīmāṃsādarśane...*, ed. Subbāśāstrī. 6 vols. Pune 1929–1934.

Nāyakarātna of Rāmānujācārya. See *Vākyārthanirṇaya*.

Nayaviveka of Bhavanātha Miśra = *Nayaviveka of Bhavanātha Miśra with the Vivekatattva of Ravideva [Tarkapāda]*, ed. S. K. Rāmanātha Śāstrī. Madras 1937.

NM₁₋₂ = *Nyāyamañjarī of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, with Tippanī – Nyāyasaurabha by the editor, ed. K. S. Varadācārya. 2 vols. Mysore 1969–1983.*

Nyāyaratnākara of Pārthasārathi Miśra. See Ślokavārttika.

Nyāyasudhā of Someśvara Bhaṭṭa = Nyāyasudhā, a commentary on Tantravārttika by Paṇḍit Someśvara Bhaṭṭa, ed. Mukunda Śāstrī. Benares 1909.

Nyāyavārttika of Uddyotakara = Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika of Bhāradvaja Uddyotakara, ed. A. Thakur. New Delhi 1997.

NyK = *Nyāyakaṇikā of Vācaspati miśra. See ViV.*

Padārthadharmasaṃgraha of Praśastapāda (Praśastapādabhāṣya). See Bronkhorst and Ramseier 1994.

Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa of Prakāśātman. In: Pāñcapādikā of Śrī Padmapādācārya, with the Commentaries Prabodhaparīśodhinī of Ātmasvarūpa and Tātparyārthadyotini of Vijñānātman and Pañcapādikāvivarāṇam of Śrī Prakāśātman with Tātparyadīpikā of Citsukhācārya and Bhāvaprakāśikā of Nṛsiṃhāśrama, ed. S. Śrīrāma Śāstrī and S. R. Kṛṣṇamūrti Śāstrī. Madras 1958.

Prabhākara Vijaya of Nandīśvara = Prabhākara-Vijaya of Nandīśvara, ed. Ananta Krishna Sastri. Calcutta 1926.

Prakaraṇapañcikā, collection of treatises ascribed to Śālikanātha = Prakaraṇapañcikā of Śālikanātha Miśra, with Nyāyasiddhi of “Jaipuri” Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, ed. A. Sūbrahmanya Sastri. Benares 1961.

Prakīrṇaparakāśa of Helārāja. See VP 3.

Pramāṇapārāyaṇa of Śālikanātha. See Prakaraṇapañcikā.

Pramāṇavārttikālaṅkāra of Prajñākaragupta = Pramāṇavārtikabhā[ṣ]yam or Vārtikālaṅkāraḥ of Prajñākaragupta (being a commentary on Dharmakīrti’s Pramāṇavārtikam), ed. R. Sāṅkrityāyana. Patna 1953.

R̥juvimalā of Śālikanātha. See Bṛhatī.

ŚBh = *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya of Śābara (Śābarabhāṣya). See MiSū and Frauwallner 1968.*

Ślokavārttika of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa = Mīmāṃsāślokavārttikam, śrīmatkumārīlabhaṭṭapāda-viracitam, (...)pārthasārathimiśrapraṇītayā nyāyaratnākarākhyayā vyākhyayānugatam. Benares (Kāśī) 1898.

See also Kataoka 2011₁ and Taber 2005.

ŚN = *Śābdanirṇaya of Prakāśātman. See David 2020a.*

G: *The Śābdanirṇaya by Prakāśātmayātīndra, ed. T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī. Trivandrum 1917.*

Sphuṭākṣarā of Śrīvṛṣabha (= Paddhati of Vṛṣabhadeva). See VP(SV) 1.

SV = *svavṛtti.*

Tātparyadīpikā of Citsukha. See Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa.

Tātparyāṭikā of Umbeka/Umveka Bhaṭṭa = Ślokavārttikavyākhyā Tātparyāṭikā of Umveka Bhaṭṭa, ed. S. K. Rāmanātha Śāstrī. Madras ²1971. Revised ed. – 1st ed. 1940.

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TR = *Tantrarahasya* of Rāmānujācārya, ed. R. Shamashastry. Baroda 1923.

TV₁₋₆ = *Tantravārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. See MīSū and Kataoka 2004.

Vākyārthamātrikā and °*vṛtti* of Śālikanātha. See *Prakaraṇapañcikā*.

Vākyārthanirṇaya of Pārthasārathi Miśra. In: *Nyāyaratnamālā of Pārthasārathimiśra, with the Commentary of Rāmānujācārya entitled the Nyākaratna*, ed. K. S. Rāmaswami Śāstrī Śīromaṇi. Baroda 1937.

ViV(SV) = *Vidhiviveka* of Maṇḍana Miśra:

M = *Vidhivivekaḥ, śrīmadācāryamaṇḍanamiśraviracitaḥ, pūjyapādaśrīmadvācaspati-miśranirmitayā nyāyakaṇikākhyayā vyākhyayā samalaṅkṛtaḥ*, ed. Mānavallyupāhvataiṅgarāmaśāstrī. Benares 1907.

G = *Vidhivivekaḥ of Śrī Maṇḍana Miśra, with the Commentary Nyāyakaṇikā of Vācaspati Miśra*, ed. Mahāprabhu Lāl Goswamī. Benares 1978.

S = Stern 1988.

Vivaraṇaprameyasamgraha of Vidyāraṇya = *The Vivaraṇaprameyasamgraha of (Mādha-vācārya) Vidyāraṇya*, ed. Rāmaśāstrī Tailaṅga. Benares 1893.

VP 3 = *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartṛhari (*kāṇḍa* 3):

Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari with the commentary of Helārāja. Kāṇḍa 3, part 1 (3.1–3.7), ed. K. A. Subrahmania Iyer. Pune 1994. Reprint. 1st ed. Pune 1963.

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VP(SV) 1 = *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartṛhari (*kāṇḍa* 1):

Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari, with the Vṛtti and the Paddhati of Vṛṣabhadeva. Kāṇḍa 1, ed. K. A. Subrahmania Iyer. Poona 1966.

VP(SV) 2 = *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartṛhari (*kāṇḍa* 2):

Ed^{1939/40}: *Vākyapadīyam, bhartṛharyupajñāvṛttisanātham puṅyarājaṭikāsaṃyutaṃ dvitīyaṃ kāṇḍam (dvitīyabhāge prathamakhaṇḍaḥ)*, ed. Cārudevaḥ Śāstrī pāṇinīyaḥ. Lahore [Lavapura] 1939/40 (= Vikrama era 1996).

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vt. = *vārttika*.

Vyākhyā = *Brahmasiddhivyākhyā* of Śāṅkhapāṇi. See BS(SV).

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