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The Role of *paribhāṣā*s in Mīmāṃsā: Rational Rules of Textual Exegesis

Abstract: This article provides a first investigation on the metarules adopted in the Mīmāṃsā school of textual exegesis. These are not systematically listed and discussed, but they can be seen at work throughout the history of Mīmāṃsā. The Mīmāṃsā school has the exegesis of the sacred texts called Veda as its main focus. The metarules used to understand the Vedic texts are, however, not derived from the Veda itself and are rather rational rules which can be derived from the use of language in general and which Mīmāṃsā authors recognized and analyzed. Since the metarules are considered to be not derived from the Veda, it is all but natural that later authors inspired by Mīmāṃsā apply them outside the precinct of the Veda, for instance in the fields of textual linguistics, poetics, theology and jurisprudence.

Keywords: Mīmāṃsā, *paribhāṣā*, metarule, textual linguistics, deontic

The article also suggests to divide Mīmāṃsā metarules into three groups, namely metarules dealing chiefly with linguistic issues, metarules dealing chiefly with hermeneutic issues and metarules dealing chiefly with deontic ones. Last, the Mīmāṃsā metarules bear clear similarities with the ones found in Grammar and in the Śrautasūtras, but also important differences. The Śrautasūtras rules have the same primary objects, namely Vedic prescriptions, but are different from the Mīmāṃsā ones because the latter are more general and systematic and can generally be applied also outside the Veda.

In the following, I will focus on the referent of *paribhāṣā*, namely, the concept of metarule (or general rule, as one will see), in Mīmāṃsā. By contrast, I will not focus on the term *paribhāṣā*, which is not very frequent in Mīmāṃsā (I could locate only two occurrences in the *Śābarabhāṣya*, see Section 3.2, and none in the

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Mīmāṃsāsūtra) and does not denote metarules (as in the case of the late *Mīmāṃsā Paribhāṣā*, which is only an 'Elucidation on Mīmāṃsā' and does not aim at providing the metarules for Mīmāṃsā or of Mīmāṃsā). The term used in Mīmāṃsā for the function of *paribhāṣā* is *nyāya*.[1] A more comprehensive investigation on the emergence of the two terms remains a desideratum, but whereas it is easy to imagine how the meaning of "general rule" could have been smoothly accommodated within the semantic sphere of *nyāya*, the semantic development through which the term *paribhāṣā* became —at a later point— the standard term for metarules seems to be the result of an intentional turn (possibly by someone within the Pāṇinian tradition) in the direction of its technical use.

As will be shown below, a study of the (emergence of) general rules in Mīmāṃsā runs the risk of being a study of Mīmāṃsā *tout court*, thus, the present paper will focus on delineating their specific characters, often against the background of their use in Grammar and Śrautasūtras. The former provides the normative referent for the usage of *paribhāṣā*s, whereas the latter are the texts historically closer to Mīmāṃsā.

1 What is Mīmāṃsā?

Mīmāṃsā (lit. 'investigation'[2]) is one of the six traditionally recognized Indian philosophical systems (*darśana*). It was born out of an ancient tradition of exegesis of Sacred Texts and keeps as its primary focus the Veda[3] ('knowledge', Indian sacred texts, not accepted as such by Buddhist and Jaina schools). Thus, like all other philosophical systems generally look at Vaiśeṣika for natural philosophy and at Nyāya for logic, so they look at Mīmāṃsā as a reservoir for exegetic rules, making it possibly the main source for the Indian approach to hermeneutics in general. This influence is particularly evident in the case of

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1 "Some principles of interpretation were concurrent with the ritual literature and practice. The old name for such principles seems to be *nyāya*" (Chakrabarti 1980: 6). *vyākaraṇe yathā sākṣāt mahābhāṣye eva bhūyasyaḥ paribhāṣā uktāḥ, na tathā mīmāṃsāyāṃ bhāṣyādiṣu prācīneṣu bhāṭṭadīpikādiṣu vārvācīneṣu grantheṣu paribhāṣā nāma kācid apy uktā | nyāyās tu nānāvidhā uktāḥ | tathāpi bhāṣyādau dṛṣṭāni kānicid vākyāni paribhāṣāvat jñāyamānāni* (MK, s.v.).

2 The desiderative formation, later reinterpreted as conveying the wish to reflect, might have originally rather conveyed the continuous strive to investigate, as common for Vedic desideratives, see Heenen (2006: 70–73).

3 For Mīmāṃsā authors, the main part of the Vedas are the prescriptions contained in the Brāhmaṇas. The Vedic Saṃhitās are considered to contain mainly mantras to be used during sacrifices, whereas the mythological parts of the Brāhmaṇas, as well as the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads are to be understood as delivering mainly *arthavāda*s 'commendatory statements', to be understood as supplements of prescriptions.

Vedānta schools, where Mīmāṃsā rules (*nyāya*), adjusted to the Vedānta view of the Veda or other Sacred Texts, have been systematically applied and constitute the background of most theological discussions.

The bulk of the system is based (as usual in India) on a collection of *sūtra* 'aphorisms', Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* (henceforth MS) which would be quite obscure without Śabara's *Bhāṣya* ('commentary', henceforth ŚBh). Jaimini's is possibly the most ancient philosophical *sūtra* and it has been convincingly argued that he was a contemporary of the grammarian Kātyāyana.[4] By contrast, there is no direct evidence about the date of Śabara, who knows some sort of Mahāyāna and seems to be aware of a theory of *sphoṭa* (which seems more primitive than Bhartṛhari's one[5]), but does not refer to any known author after Patañjali (ca. second century BC.). Some centuries later, around the seventh century (sixth century according to Krasser 2012), Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and Prabhākara Miśra wrote philosophically engaged commentaries on the ŚBh. These commentaries have been again commented upon by later Mīmāṃsā authors (Pārthasārathi, e. g. wrote a line-to-line commentary on Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* and Śālikanātha a similar gloss on Prabhākara's *Bṛhatī*). According to the different tenets of these two main thinkers, Mīmāṃsā is traditionally distinguished in two schools, the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, which follows Kumārila, and the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā, which follows Prabhākara. Mīmāṃsā may also be referred to as Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, to distinguish it from Uttara Mīmāṃsā (or Vedānta). For brevity's sake, I shall restrict the use of "Mīmāṃsā" to Pūrva Mīmāṃsā only. A thinker belonging to the Mīmāṃsā school is called Mīmāṃsaka 'follower of the Mīmāṃsā'.

The main Mīmāṃsā tenets originated out of issues connected with Vedic exegesis, with 'Veda' referring to first and foremost to the Brāhmaṇa part of the Veda, which mainly consists of ritual exhortations.

2 In search of an absent definition of *paribhāṣā*: Mīmāṃsā and Śrautasūtras

2.1 What is a *paribhāṣā*?

The meaning of *paribhāṣā* is ─against expectations─ not fixed. As for its usage in the Śrautasūtras, Chakrabarti explains:

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4 See Paranjpe 1922, Parpola 1994.

5 Bhartṛhari's date is itself controversial, but scholars tend to agree on the fifth century AD.

> The term *paribhāṣā* was not well-defined and it appears that no definition was strictly adhered to when the sūtras were characterized as *paribhāṣā*. Not only the basic interpretative clues, but also the general rules were regarded as *paribhāṣā*. They contain some heterogeneous topics, and some insignificant rules too crept into the *paribhāṣā*s.[6]

And:

> A precise definition of the term '*paribhāṣā*' was not available to the writers who characterized some parts of the Śrautasūtras as *paribhāṣā*. For the present study, the sūtras that are described as such by commentaries or colophons are accepted as *paribhāṣā*.[7]

As for Grammar, Wujastyk argues that *paribhāṣā*s have been introduced for solving problems of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and suggests that they might have, accordingly, a different degree of abstraction:

> Rather than giving up Pāṇini's grammar as wrong in such cases, it is natural to try to improve the theory. The tradition introduces extra rules to correct the situation. These are the *paribhāṣā*s, a term which may be translated as 'metarules', 'principles', 'theorems' or 'auxiliary hypothesis'.[8]

In Mīmāṃsā, by and large, we might understand the term *paribhāṣā* (and even more so its quasi-equivalent in Mīmāṃsā, i. e. *nyāya*) in two senses: in a loose or in a technical sense. In the following, I shall deal mainly with the latter, thus a few words on the former and on their distinction are not out of place here. In the looser sense, a *nyāya* is a general rule regarding a certain behavior. In the stricter sense, it is a rule ruling other rules. Thus, technically speaking a *paribhāṣā* is a rule which does not deal with anything specific and rather deals with the general system of rules outlining its basic principles. *paribhāṣā*s are, accordingly, useful and economical insofar as they allow authors to avoid repetitions, but may lead to difficulties if one is focusing on one part only of the system. In other words: the reader/listener needs to have the whole system in sight in order to benefit of the use of *paribhāṣā*s.

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6 Chakrabarti 1980: vii.
7 Chakrabarti 1980: 5.
8 Wujastyk 1993: xi.

In the looser sense, *paribhāṣā*s even precede the Śrautasūtras:

> Some *paribhāṣā*s of the Śrautasūtras can be traced in the Brāhmaṇas. The older authors sometimes introduce a *paribhāṣā* with the expression *iti vijñāyate*, thereby showing the existence of the principles before the composition of the Śrautasūtras.[9]

An example of the former kind of *nyāya* is the Mīmāṃsaka *khalekapotavan-nyāya* 'the rule of the pigeons in the threshing floor'. This is only a simile used to represent cases in which many items at once occur in the same place, just like pigeons hurrying to grasp some grains. But it does not regard rules. By contrast, rules such as 'the meanings of the words in the MS are the same as in the ordinary communication' (about which see infra, Section 3.2) apply to other rules, the ones mentioned in the MS. Although the technical usage of *nyāya*s derives from the looser one, it is convenient to distinguish between the two.

2.2 What does the fact of having metarules tell us about Mīmāṃsā and Śrautasūtras?

In order to be a metarule, a rule needs to refer to further rules. Since the main focus of the Mīmāṃsā is the Veda, rules regarding it directly do not need to be metarules. By contrast, in Mīmāṃsā metarules are rules ruling a certain exegetical rule (for instance, all rules applying to other rules of the Mīmāṃsā system, or all rules applying to an exegetical rule discussed in the ritualistic thought prior to the MS).

The fact of using metarules is a further evidence of the fact that the purpose of Mīmāṃsā was not the production of ritual manuals, since, as already hinted at, metarules are useful if one has the system in view, but impractical if one focuses on one of its parts. This point could be extended to at least some parts of the Śrautasūtras, which are not only a ritual manual.[10]

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9 Chakrabarti 1980: 6.

10 Although some portions of the Śrautasūtras focus on the performance of a given ritual, all the Śrautasūtras I am aware of also contain at least some *sūtra*s, or even whole sections of *sūtra*s which are dedicated to the understanding of the structure of rituals rather than to their performance. Metaphorically speaking, the Śrautasūtras may resemble cooking books, but they do not contain only recipes. A striking example is the *karmānta* section in the *Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra*, where also epistemological questions are dealt with (see Freschi/Pontillo 2013b, chapter 2). An extreme perspective on this topic is the one expressed by Hillebrandt: "It is clear that the [Śrauta] Sūtras, with their precise structure could not be enough for practical needs, nor indeed can they have been calculated for these needs. They are rather just artificial scientific systems, where the prescriptions to be employed for each ritual act merge uniformly into each other. Hence, in the case of an actual

Given that Mīmāṃsā and Śrautasūtras resemble each other from this point of view, the problem of the differences among the use of *paribhāṣā*s in the former and in the latter amounts to the problem of the different degree of systematic-ness in them. The Śrautasūtras presuppose in their reader the knowledge of the ritual they are dealing with. In the case of Mīmāṃsā, the distance from the actual performance is even bigger. In fact, in a Śrautasūtra the ritual elements tend to be discussed according to the order of their appearance in the ritual,[11] whereas in Mīmāṃsā only the structure and some chief topics of the ritual are discussed, usually the ones leading to theoretic problems. In this sense, the Mīmāṃsā presupposes both the knowledge of the ritual, and of the Śrautasūtra discussions about it.

More in general, the following ones are the main distinctive traits of the Mīmāṃsā's prosecution of the Śrautasūtra discourse on *paribhāṣā*s:

1. from a quantitative point of view: the Mīmāṃsā applies in a generalized way the *paribhāṣā* method, whereas the *paribhāṣā*s are altogether absent in the most ancient Śrautasūtras and are still confined to a specific portion of the text in the most recent ones,

2. from a qualitative point of view: the *nyāya*s of Mīmāṃsā regard the exegesis of the Brāhmaṇas, i. e. they regard another text, and not the ritual directly, whereas the *paribhāṣā*s of the Śrautasūtras regard the ritual itself (this point will be dealt with again infra, Section 3.3),

3. speaking again from a qualitative point of view: the Mīmāṃsā applies *paribhāṣā*s even outside the domain of ritual exegesis.

These differences reflect the ones highlighted by Lars Göhler —who has been studying the way Mīmāṃsā emerged out of the Śrautasūtras' milieu[12]— as the general differences among the former and the latter are[13]:

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performance [of a ritual] one should extensively take into account the commentaries and the manuals, which translated back the scientific description into praxis" (Es ist klar, dass die Sûtra's bei solch präciser Fassung dem praktischen Bedürfniss weder genügen noch überhaupt auf dasselbe berechnet sein können; vielmehr sind sie lediglich construierte wissenschaftliche Systeme, in welchem die bei den einzelnen Handlungen zur Anwendung kommenden Vorschriften einheitlich verschmolzen werden. Bei einer praktischen Darstellung war darum auf Commentare und Leitfäden, welche die wissenschaftliche Darstellung wieder in die Praxis umsetzen, eingehend Rücksicht zu nehmen, Hillebrandt 1879: XI).

11 "The Śrautasūtras furnish a well-connected and systematized description of the rites in due sequence from the beginning to the end of a sacrifice. They avoid legends and mystic interpretations, which are the chief interest of the Brāhmaṇas" (Chakrabarti 1980: 2).

12 Göhler further shows how direct links between Vedic and Mīmāṃsā terminology and epistemology can be traced.

13 Göhler 2011: 122.

1. In den Śrautasūtras können diskursive Methoden angewendt werden, in der Mīmāṃsā ist dies zwingend bei jedem Thema der Fall. Es gibt keine größere Erörterung ohne das Anführen der Auffassung eines Opponenten (*pūrvapakṣa*).
2. Alle Erörterungen der Mīmāṃsā stehen im Zusammenhang mit einem möglichst widerspruchsfreien Gesamtsystem des Opfers und der Theorie über das Opfer. Die Elemente dieses Gesamtsystems können jederzeit als Argument für die Entscheidung einer Detailfrage herangezogen werden; dies ist besonders häufig bei der Klärung der Hierarchien der Fall. In den Śrautasūtras findet sich zwar gleichfalls ein Gesamtsystem des Opfers, dieses ist aber schulgebunden. Darüber hinaus entwickeln sie keine einigermaßen komplexe Theorie über das Ritual, in der Weise, wie es die Mīmāṃsā tut.
3. Bei der Entscheidung der kontroversen Themen hält sich das Śrautasūtra im Zweifelsfall eher an die Texte der eigenen Schule, während für die Mīmāṃsā die allgemeine logische Konsistenz des Rituals eine weit größere Rolle spielt.

And what is the specificity of the system of Mīmāṃsā? Again, in the words of Göhler:

> Jaimini deutet das gesamte Opfersystem erstmals als eine in sich konsistente Hierarchie. Er beginnt das Thema mit einem Gemeinplatz: Etwas ist untergeordnet, wenn es einem anderen Zweck dient. Nach einem Bādari sind dies Substrate, Qualitäten und Vorbereitungszeremonien. Nach Jaimini jedoch sind dies auch Tätigkeiten. Jaimini geht die übliche Stufenleiter weiter: All diese Dinge dienen also dem Resultat und das Resultat dient menschlichen Zwecken. Damit stünde der Mensch am Ende dieser Hierarchie. Dies ist für Jaimini unbefriedigend, denn der Mensch ist gleichzeitig der Tätigkeit untergeordnet, weil er sie vollbringt. Damit gibt es keine eindeutige Kette der Über- und Unterordnungen mehr, die in einem höchsten Prinzip endet. Die drei Hauptfaktoren des Opfers: Person, Resultat und Tätigkeit sind sich gegenseitig sowohl unter- als auch übergeordnet. Kumārila spricht deshalb später von einem Doppelcharakter dieser Prinzipien. Alle drei sind sowohl grundlegend als auch sekundär.[14]

This all leads to conclude that the *paribhāṣā*s, though present in the Śrautasūtras, are less generally used. It might be objected that there are general

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14 Göhler 2011: 92.

metarules also in some Śrautasūtras, such as *prasaṅgād apavādo balīyaḥ* (see Chierichetti) (*Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra* 1.1.22). However, in general these *metarules* are absent in the most ancient Śrautasūtras (such as *Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra*[15] and *Lāṭyāyana Śrautasūtra*) and tend to represent a later development, possibly influenced by Mīmāṃsā itself, since the later Śrautasūtras (such as the *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*) have most probably been composed after the first Mīmāṃsā works. The presence of this later developments within the Śrautasūtra corpus is evidence of the links between them and the Mīmāṃsā, although the birth of the latter did not mean the decline of the former, due to their different focuses. Their relative chronology rather resembles the one described in Figure 1.
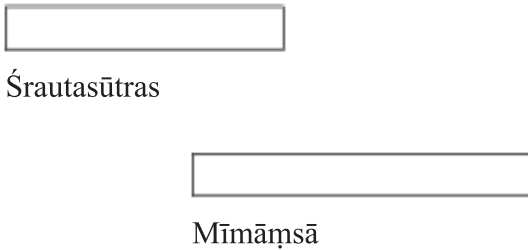
Śrautasūtras

Mīmāṃsā

Figure 1: Chronology of Śrautasūtras and Mīmāṃsā.

3 Analysis of some *paribhāṣā*s in the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*

Let us now examine the strategies of the Mīmāṃsā *paribhāṣā*s, both in their specific purpose of organizing the exegesis of rituals and in their extended use.[16]

The MS starts with what has been later labelled *tarkapāda*, i. e. a short chapter dealing with the theoretical matters preliminary to the ritual exegesis.

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15 The *karmāntasūtra* section in this Śrautasūtra, where *paribhāṣā*s are grouped, though ancient, constitutes a later development within the *Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra*.

16 As already hinted at, unlike in the case of Grammar, there is no list of Mīmāṃsā *nyāya*s, nor are they univocally identified by commentators. A useful tool is thus Kane's Appendix to Section VII Chapter XXX in his *History of Dharmaśāstra*, and Jhā 2013 where *nyāya*s relevant for Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṃsā are listed. I am grateful to Sudipta Munsi for having pointed them out to me.

Thus, the *tarkapāda* is more likely to include *paribhāṣā*s in the second sense. And in fact, it contains *sūtra*s such as:

> The *dharma* is a purpose known through a Vedic injunction (*codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmaḥ*, MS 1.1.2).

This is a handy definition of the complex term *dharma*, which is not complete (in the sense that it does not spell out the complex semantics of *dharma*), because it does not aim at completeness. Rather, it aims at being used while reading the rest of the MS. It says that, within the MS, *dharma* must be understood in this way (and not in the many other ways, already current at the time the MS had been authored). In this sense, it can be said to be a *paribhāṣā*,[17] although its language is not distinct from the rest of the text, nor is it identified as such in any other way. We shall see that this lack of characterization is a recurring feature of *paribhāṣā*s in Mīmāṃsā and that this is quite telling in itself. Summing up, this *paribhāṣā* is a metarule about the MS, although it is not identified as such. Recurring to the —more developed— technical terminology of the Vyākaraṇa school, we might call this kind of *sūtra*s "*saṃjñāsūtra*s", i. e. '*sūtra*s stipulating a conventional meaning'.[18]

What about later chapters in the MS? MS 1.2 focuses on the difference between Vedic injunctions and statements in the Veda which are not injunctive in nature and, thus, are not instruments of knowledge. This definition presupposes MS 1.1.2, that states that *dharma* is conveyed by Vedic injunctions, so that whatever is not an injunction does not convey *dharma* and has, accordingly, no independent epistemological value regarding *dharma*.[19] An example of this group of *sūtra*s is the following:

> Since [commendatory statements and other non-injunctive statements in the Veda] form a single sentence with the [corresponding] injunction, they are meant for the purpose of praising the injunctions.
> (*vidhinā tv ekavākyatvāt stutyarthena vidhīnāṃ syuḥ*, MS 1.2.7).

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17 In the Pāṇinian terminology, one might more precisely call it a *saṃjñāsūtra*. This terminology was not present in Mīmāṃsā, as far as my knowledge reaches.

18 On *saṃjñāsūtra*s as *paribhāṣā*s, see Candotti and Pontillo's contribution in this volume.

19 Given that Mīmāṃsakas only consider as an instrument of knowledge what conveys a fresh piece of information, this risks to imply that they have no epistemological value at all, but this does not need to bother us now. See Kataoka 2003.

An interesting consequence of the above metarule is the following one:

> Sometimes [one encounters] an injunction which is meaningless. Then, praise should be understood [as its meaning]. The same [applies] to other [similar sentences] due to their similarity with the first one.
> (*vidhiś cānarthakaḥ kvacit tasmāt stutiḥ pratīyeta tatsāmānyād itareṣu tathātvam*, MS 1.2.23).

In these cases, the *sūtra*s offer a metarule applying to the exegesis of all Vedic texts: sentences which are not injunctive are only to be construed together with an injunction. Conversely, sentences which cannot be understood independently, must not be considered injunctions. Once again, nothing identifies the sentence as a metarule and its domain of application is broad (in fact, the exegesis of the whole Veda).

3.1 Which classification for the Mīmāṃsā *paribhāṣā*s?

Chakrabarti, in his foundational work on *paribhāṣā*s in the Śrautasūtras, mentions three sorts of *paribhāṣā*s:

> Śrautī: The principles given in the Brāhmaṇas, borrowed verbatim or nearly so, and reduced to the form of *paribhāṣā*s by the authors of Śrautasūtras.
> Jñāpitā: The principles implied by the Vedic passages and codified by the Sūtrakāra in the form of *paribhāṣā*s.
> Sautrī: The principles based on convention, reasoning or instances from worldly practice, or those devised by the authors for helping the particular method they follow in composing their Śrautasūtras.[20]

Chakrabarti does not mention any source for this classification,[21] which anyway shares some similarity with the Grammarians' concept of *jñāpaka*[22]. Could this classification apply to the Mīmāṃsā *nyāya*s? Probably not, insofar as Mīmāṃsā authors never overtly state that a certain *nyāya* derives from a Brāhmaṇa usage, nor do they mention *jñāpaka* passages of the Veda as their source. Thus, even if a Brāhmaṇa prehistory can be safely postulated, it is never a conscious element

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20 Chakrabarti 1980: 31.
21 Probably it is his own proposal, since in chapter 4 he writes: "In the first chapter I have classified the *paribhāṣā*s according to their origin, into 3 categories: *Śrautī, Jñāpitā* and *Sautrī*" (Chakrabarti 1980: 55).
22 I. e. any element of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* which hints at a rule or a principle only fully spelt out at a later time.

for Mīmāṃsā authors. By contrast, Mīmāṃsā authors explicitly state that their *nyāya*s are not derived from the Veda (which includes the Brāhmaṇas), but rather from the worldly usage of language (*lokavyavahāra*, VM 1, *ad* v. 12).

Thus, how else could Mīmāṃsā *nyāya*s be classified? A first distinction is between:

1. Rules which are meant as exegetical rules to be applied to the Brāhmaṇas.
2. Rules which prescribe how to interpret the MS (or the ŚBh) itself.

Among the former are:

a) *āmnāyasya kriyārthatvād ānarthakyam atadarthānāṃ tasmād anityam ucyate* (MS 1.2.1)

   Since the transmitted [Veda] has the purpose of [promoting an] action, what has not this purpose is meaningless and therefore should be said to be not [part of the] fixed [Veda].[23]

b) *vidhinā tv ekavākyatvāt stutyarthena vidhīnāṃ syuḥ* (MS 1.2.7)

   Since they form a single sentence with the prescription, they must be for the sake of praising the prescriptions.[24]

c) *guṇavādas tu* (MS 1.2.10)

   But it states something connected.[25]

d) *vidhir vā syād apūrvatvād vādamātraṃ hy anarthakam* (MS 1.2.19)

   Rather, it should be an injunction, because it [conveys] something new: a sheer description is in fact meaningless.[26]

e) *lokavad iti cet* (MS 1.2.20)

   Like in common experience.[27]

f) *na pūrvatvāt* (MS 1.2.21)

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23 This sentence is an objector's one, contesting the validity of commendatory statements and other portions of the Veda which do not enjoin any ritual action. The point of reference of *anityam* is not clear, Śabara speaks of "sentence" (*vākya*). Although this *sūtra* comes from an objector, I would nonetheless label it a *paribhāṣā* because it states a general rule, although one that will end up being refuted. See infra, Section 3.3 for further thoughts on this point.

24 Here Jaimini offers a *paribhāṣā* which is alternative to the *paribhāṣā* proposed by the opponent in MS 1.2.1, in order to explain the role of commendatory statements.

25 Replying to an objection that says that *arthavāda*s cannot be commendatory statements, since often what is commended is different than what is enjoined, Jaimini states that the connection is indirect. In other words, in these cases the commendatory statement, for the sake of praising X, praises Y, which is connected to X.

26 This *sūtra* should be read together with MS 1.2.21: the couple conveys the general principle that each sentence should convey something new and that, if this seems not to be the case, one is misconstruing it.

27 This principle is a key one in Mīmāṃsā: unless and until contrary evidence arises, one must use common experience as the litmus test for the validity of one's conclusions. See also, below,

This is not the case, because it conveys something already known.

g) *uktaṃ tu vākyaśeṣatvam* (MS 1.2.22)

By contrast, it has been said that [what does not convey anything new is to be construed] as a supplement to an injunction.[28]

h) *śrutiliṅgavākyaprakaraṇasthānasamākhyānāṃ samavāye pāradaurbalyam arthaviprakarṣāt* (MS 3.3.14)

If the (epistemological instruments) of direct mention, word-meaning, syntactical connection, context, position, or appellation[29] come together, the latter is always weaker than the former, because it is remoter from the purpose.

i) *arthadravyavirodhe arthaṃ praty ādartavyam* (ŚBh *ad* 6.3.39)

In case of contrast between the substance and the purpose [of a ritual], one has to honour the purpose.

j) *āśraye pravartamāne tadāśritam api pravartate. yathā paṭe ākṛṣyamāne tadāśritaṃ citram apy ākṛṣyate* (ŚBh *ad* 8.1.23)

Once the substrate undertakes an action, also what rests on it is led to undertake it. Like, if a cloth is drawn towards oneself, also the colours resting on it are.

k) *akartavyānām itikartavyatayā nāsti sambandhaḥ* (ŚBh *ad* 9.1.1)

There is no connection of the procedure in the case of [acts] which ought not to be performed.

l) *aṅgaguṇavirodhe pradhānaguṇo balavān* (ŚBh *ad* 12.2.25)

In case of contrast between the qualities of [principal] and subsidiary [rituals], the quality of the principal [ritual] is more important.

m) *antaraṅgabahiraṅgayoś cāntaraṅgaṃ balīyaḥ* (ŚBh *ad* 12.2.27)

Between what is intimately related and what is remotely related [to the sacrificial animal], what is intimately related is stronger (PP).[30]

It is easy to see how some of the above rules could be applied also outside the domain of Vedic exegesis (as it has regularly happened, within and outside

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ŚBh *ad* 1.1.1 for its application to language. The *sūtra* is part of a *pūrvapakṣa*, but the principle is not sublated, only its application to a specific case.

28 *vākya* is used as a synonym of *vidhi* in the Mīmāṃsā system, since injunctions are the chief example of meaningful sentences.

29 On these means of knowledge, see Āpadeva's *Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa* in Edgerton 1929, chapters 68–181.

30 The objector wants to establish the principle that in case of conflict between two sets of sacrificial details, one should perform the ones which are more directly related to the offering substance. The established conclusion, in the next *sūtra*, will be that what has been directly enjoined has precedence. Thus, the explicit mention is stronger than the factual connection.

Mīmāṃsā). Readers familiar with the Sanskrit Grammatical thought will, for instance, immediately notice the similarity of the terminology of ŚBh *ad* 12.2.27 with Patañjali's treatment of *antaraṅga* and *bahiraṅga*.

The latter group, by contrast, is far less numerous. A few instances are:

- *loke yeṣv artheṣu prasiddhāni padāni, tāni, sati sambhave, tadarthāny eva sūtreṣv ity avagantavyam* (ŚBh *ad* 1.1.1)
  The words in the MS must be understood, if possible, according to those meaning which they bear in common experience.

- *aṅgāṅgam api tasya iti śakyate vaktum, yathā vājapeyasya yūpaḥ iti* (ŚBh *ad* 8.1.10)
  Also an auxiliary of an auxiliary can be said to be [the auxiliary] of something, like the post, which [is spoken of as an auxiliary] of the Vājapeya [although it is actually an auxiliary of the Vājapeya's auxiliary, the Paśu-sacrifice].[31]

Last, an intermediate category encompasses

3. Rules which could serve both the exegesis of the Brāhmaṇas and that of the MS

For instance,

- *anyāyaś cānekārthatvam* (ŚBh *ad* 1.3.30)
  It is incorrect that [a word] has multiple meanings.

- *anyāyaś cānekaśabdatvam* (MS 1.3.26)
  It is incorrect that [a same meaning is expressed by] more than one linguistic statement.[32]

One would expect to find rules ruling the understanding of the MS even within the MS itself, as it happens in the case of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. In fact, an anonymous reviewer of this article suggested that MS 3.3.14 (discussed above) could be read as referring (also) to the MS itself. I could not find any indication justifying this

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31 This second example entails an instance of metalanguage, since it explains how to interpret a certain term, which seems to be part of natural language, in a technical way.

32 The word *śabda* has a broad semantic spectrum, ranging from sound in general (in Nyāya) to language (in Mīmāṃsā). Within Mīmāṃsā, it can indicate any linguistic unit, from phoneme, to word, to sentence or text passage. I discussed this topic more in detail in Freschi forthcoming.

interpretation in the commentaries thereon, so that this hypothesis remains to be proven.

The Brāhmaṇa-exegetical rules (group 1) are general, overarching rules, which rule over the content and not the form of other rules, whereas the MS-structural ones (group 2) are rules ruling the form of other rules. The rules applying to both (group 3) also regard the form and are hence a subcategory of the formal rules.

Thus:

1. content-metarules regard the Brāhmaṇas' exegesis
2. form-metarules regard the MS itself (and sometimes also the Brāhmaṇas)

3.1.1 Guidelines of content-metarules

As for the content-metarules, a general trend in them (see metarules a–c, g–i, and l–m) is the hierarchical organization of sacrifice (and consequently of language, see next chapter). This is a tendency which characterizes Mīmāṃsā throughout its history[33] and which has deeply influenced Indian culture.[34]

The hierarchical organization requires that the sequence is made clear (see metarule h, above), but also that rules for dealing with potential conflicts are laid down (see metarules i and k–m above).[35]

3.2 *Paribhāṣā*s about language

As already noted, Mīmāṃsakas do not focus on ritual, but on texts about ritual. Consequently, their focus is textual. This also differentiates them from the Grammarians, whose main focus is language in its phonological/morphological/syntactic dimensions rather than its textual one. The Mīmāṃsā looks at the Veda starting from the assumption that the Veda is an instrument of knowledge. This point is not explicitly made because it is just the rationale of the existence of Mīmāṃsā. The next step is the assumption that the Vedic language is understandable, i. e. not only is the Veda valid knowledge in itself, but it yields valid knowledge to human beings. This step is hinted at in Śabara's commentary (ŚBh *ad* MS 1.1.1, discussed in the previous

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33 See McCrea 2000 and Freschi 2012, chapter 4.1.2.
34 On its influence on Grammar, see Brill 2013: 42, on that on Dharmaśāstra, see Lubin 2013.
35 Brill discusses in this connection the case of recurring to option as discussed in MS 10.8. *adhikaraṇa* 3 (see Brill 2013: 44–45 and Benson 2010, *ad loc.*).

section), where Śabara says that the words in the MS should be interpreted just like the ones of common language. Śabara does not say explicitly that the same holds true for the Veda, but the reader is led to assume that unless it is explained that a certain word has a technical meaning in the Veda, its meaning is the same as in the ordinary language:

> If possible, the words must be understood in the MS according to the meanings which are well known in the ordinary communication. Their meaning should not be postulated by means of supplying [additional hues] nor is it to be explained as a *terminus technicus*. In this way, the Vedic sentences are explained through these [sentences of the MS]. If not, the Vedic sentences should be explained and the own words [of the MS] should also be explained. Therefore, this would result in a lot of effort.[36]

Interestingly, the root *bhāṣ-* with the preverb *pari* is not frequent in early Mīmāṃsā and is used here in a meaning different than the stipulative meaning we agreed upon at the beginning of this volume, i. e. *paribhāṣā* as 'metarule'. By contrast, *paribhāṣ-* means here 'to define as a *terminus technicus*'.[37]

Once one has accepted the metarule that language has to be understood in the ordinary way, specific metarules follow, each with a narrower domain of application, but each still general enough to be applied to the Veda as a whole.

Apart from the MS 1.2 rules mentioned in the previous section (on the distinction between injunctive and non-injunctive parts), one may consider the following ones:

> – *prakaraṇe sambhavann apakarṣo na kalpyeta* [...] (MS 1.2.24)
> If [a text] can be [made sense of] in [its] context, it should not be supposed that it is drawn away.
> – *vidhau ca vākyabhedaḥ syāt* (MS 1.2.25)
> And, in case [also the quality mentioned in a sentence is understood as] an injunction, there would be a split in the sentence.[38]

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36 *loke yeṣv artheṣu prasiddhāni padāni, tāni, sati sambhave, tadarthāny eva sūtreṣv ity avagantavyam | nādhyāhārādibhir eṣāṃ parikalpanīyo 'rthaḥ, paribhāṣitavyo vā | evaṃ hi vedavākyāny evaibhir vyākhyāyante | itarathā vedavākyāni vyākhyeyāni svapadārthāś ca vyākhyeyāḥ | tad yatnagauravaṃ prasajyeta |*

37 Cfr. the gloss by Kumāra Varadācārya to this passage of the ŚBh within his commentary on Veṅkaṭanātha's *Mīmāṃsāpādukā: sāṅketikavyavahāraḥ paribhāṣā* "A *paribhāṣā* is a linguistic usage ruled by convention" (*ad* MP 13). A similar instance of *paribhāṣ-* just meaning 'to explain' is ŚBh *ad* 1.4.1.

38 The *sūtra* deals with cases such as *khādiraṃ vīryakāmāya yūpaṃ kuryāt* "One should build a *khādira*- wood-post, in order to bring about vigour". If *khādira* is also understood as having an

It may, further, be noted that some MS particles could be read as technical terms (similar to the treatment of *vā/vibhāṣā/anyatarasyām* in Grammar, about which see Kiparsky 1979). A preliminary investigation has been done in Clooney (1990), where it is for instance cleared that *vā* does *not* indicate option in the MS (in fact, it rather marks the *siddhāntin*'s position).[39]

Further passages of the ŚBh regard the interpretation of the language of the MS and could be interpreted as extending to the whole MS (thus reaching the level of metarules):

> – *tuśabdāt pakṣo viparivartate* (ŚBh *ad* 1.1.12)
> The thesis is turned down because of the word "but".
> – *api veti pakṣavyāvṛttiḥ* (ŚBh *ad* 1.3.7)
> The thesis is rejected with the word "rather".
> – *vāśabdaḥ pakṣaṃ vyāvartayati* (ŚBh *ad* 1.3.9)
> The word "rather" rejects the thesis.

However, such indications are repeated again and again by Śabara, thus showing that he does not intend their first enunciation to be enough to cover the whole MS.

3.3 Is the whole Mīmāṃsā a complex of *paribhāṣā*s?

From a certain point of view, the whole early Mīmāṃsā consists of a complex of *paribhāṣā*s. Similarly to what happens in Kātyāyana's *vārttika*s, we have first someone proposing one principle of interpretation, next someone else suggesting a different one, last a *siddhāntin*. The whole discussion focuses on *paribhāṣā*s and on arguments in favor or against the one or the other. For instance:

> [PP:] If a single ritual were conveyed by all Vedic branches, than the repetition in another branch of a ritual which has already been prescribed in a certain branch would be purposeless.

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injunctive force ("One should build a post out of *khādira* wood"), then one would end up with the original injunction splitting into two. More in general, the general rule is: unless and until contrary evidence, each sentence conveys only one piece of information.

39 Clooney 1990: 44–45. Brill suggests further investigation as well on "the significance of frequently used particles in the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*" according to what has been done in Clooney 1990 (2013: 53).

[*paribhāṣā* = Vedic injunctions from different Vedic branches about a certain ritual must be read as conveying a single ritual]

[S:] But this error does not occur in case the [rituals] are different. Therefore there is difference among the rituals [prescribed by the various Vedic branches].

[*paribhāṣā* = Vedic injunctions about a certain ritual from different Vedic branches must be read as conveying different rituals][40]

The presence of discussants shows that different *paribhāṣā*s were upheld by different experts of ritual (sometimes possibly identifiable with adherents of the one or the other Śrautasūtra).

Summing up, the Mīmāṃsā could be thought of as a complex of *paribhāṣā*s, if we understand *paribhāṣā*s as general rules. Metarules are, by contrast, rare. To this point, however, one should add that the rules about ritual (i. e. the sacrificial injunctions) are —according to Mīmāṃsakas— given in the Brāhmaṇas. In this sense, thus, the Mīmāṃsā is a complex system entailing rules about these operative rules and a few meta-metarules about the functioning of the Mīmāṃsā system itself. In other words, the Mīmāṃsā system lays down the rule which make the sacrificial injunctions work, and since the latter are operative rules about sacrifice, the Mīmāṃsā is the system of metarules about them. In the next table, I show how the Brāhmaṇas provide the operative rules for sacrifices, whereas the Mīmāṃsā provides the metarules. This distinction is not present in the case of language, where all rules are laid down in Grammar.

Field	language	sacrifice
operative rules provided by	Grammar	Brāhmaṇas
metarules provided by	Grammar	Mīmāṃsā

3.4 Location and origin of the *paribhāṣā*s in Mīmāṃsā

Śabara points out at the beginning of his commentary the way he will interpret the language in the MS (see above, second paragraph within Section 3.1). However, in another case, i. e. his comment on MS 8.1.10 (discussed in the same paragraph), he states a principle which might be potentially applied to

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40 *yadi sarvaśākhāpratyayam ekaṃ karma, ekasyāṃ śākhāyāṃ vihitasya karmaṇaḥ śākhāntare vacanaṃ punaruktam anarthakaṃ syāt. na tu bhedapakṣa eṣa doṣo 'sti, tasmād api karmabhedaḥ* (ŚBh *ad* MS 2.4.8).

all injunctions. There is thus no preferred place for stating more general rules. However, some of Jaimini's *sūtra*s work as *adhikaraṇa-sūtra*s, influencing the subsequent ones and some parts of them descend per *anuvṛtti* to the subsequent *sūtra*s.

How are the *paribhāṣā*s grounded? They are worldly and not Vedic, just like the whole Mīmāṃsā is not of Vedic origin, although it deals with Vedic texts. Further, *a posteriori*, one may note that:

1. a basic general principle is economy (of tools and of actions): whenever more options are possible, one opts for the more economical one,
2. a basic general exegetical rule is that each sentence must be interpreted as conveying one single meaning,
3. the comparison with the world, which is either expressed as a general principle (see MS 1.2.20 and 1.2.29 below) or in the form of specific instances, functioning as an explanation for further, unpredictable, rules,
4. the Veda's validity is inviolable and thus provides a further orientation for decisions concerning its exegesis.

As for 1., it includes the logical consistency of the Mīmāṃsā Śāstra itself, so that if, for instance, *agnihotra* needs to be construed as the name of a sacrifice (and not as a generic description of an 'oblation for Agni') in a certain occasion, the same meaning needs to be accepted in all other cases (cf. MS 1.4, *adhikaraṇa* 4; MNP[41]). This is also the reason whence, once a conclusion has been settled in a certain case (e. g. that Vaiśvadeva is not the name of a specific sacrifice, see MS 1.4, *adhikaraṇa* 11), the same conclusion can serve as a ruling principle for all similar instances (the *vaiśvadevanyāya*). Similarly, economic reasons lead to the conclusion that whenever a plural ending is used and no specific number is mentioned (e. g. in "One should offer *kapiñjala* birds for the spring"), one needs to assume the lowest possible number, i. e. three (MS 11.1, *adhikaraṇa* 8).

2. is the oddest principle, from our contemporary point of view, and it in fact does lead Mīmāṃsā authors to problems whenever prescriptions seemingly prescribe two things, e. g. the performance of a given sacrifice and its tools. However, one can only imagine how important such a rule must have been in order to extract from the uninterrupted recitation of the Saṃhitās and of the Brāhmaṇas the ritual prescriptions and the mantras which should accompany them.

As for 3., often enough a general rule is explained through a comparison with worldly experience (cf. the similar usage of Patañjali, see Section 4.3), e. g.

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41 Edgerton 1929, §§ 273–301.

– *lokavad iti cet* (MS 1.2.20) (discussed above, Section 3.1).

– *arthas tu vidhiśeṣatvād yathā loke* (MS 1.2.29)

But [commendatory statements] have a meaning, because they are supplementary to the injunction, like in worldly experience.[42]

The comparison with the world would not be a sufficient foundation unless one bears in mind also 1., i. e. the idea that unless and until contrary evidences arise, there is no need to postulate a more cumbersome solution. Thus, if something is observed to happen in the world, unless contrary evidences, there is no need to postulate a different behavior in the case of the Veda. This is perhaps even more evident in the case of local comparisons, e. g. *khalekapotavat* (see Section 2.1).

The other foundation is the validity of the Veda, which could be further split into the idea that, since the Veda is an instrument of knowledge it must (a) be able to communicate knowledge (and, thus, be understandable, see above, Section 3.2), (b) communicate something new,[43] (c) not communicate anything invalid, so that if it seems to do so, an alternative explanation must be looked for.

In this study, I will not investigate in detail how these foundations are followed in the MS itself. It is nonetheless certain that they have their origin in the MS itself and have not been newly introduced by Śabara and his sub-commentators.

Is there any hierarchy between these foundations? My study of Mīmāṃsā inclines me to say that *loka* and Veda are two completely separated domains, with their own instruments of knowledge.[44] Economy, consistency and compliance with some basic exegetical rules seem, in turn, to have a general value —unless and until they clash with common experience (*loka*) or with the Veda's validity, so that the virtuous circle of mutual dependence among the principles is closed.

Concerning the relations between Mīmāṃsā and Grammar, one might suggest that No. 1 bears some similarity with the *nyāyasiddha paribhāṣā* 'metarules established through reasoning' discussed in Vyākaraṇa, whereas No. 3 bears some similarity with the *lokanyāyasiddha paribhāṣā* 'metarules established through worldly rules'.

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42 Śabara explains that even in common experience we might say things which are, on a closer analysis, inaccurate, but which make sense in their context, e. g. "Devadatta is the strongest", although he is not stronger than a tiger.

43 See Kataoka 2003 on this requirement. See again Kataoka 2003 and Freschi/Graheli 2005.

44 However, in his commentary on MS 1.1.32, Śabara resorts to our experience of Vedic sentences in order to establish the fact that they are well-formed and are, thus, not the work of a mentally insane author: *viniyuktaṃ hi [vedaṃ] dṛśyate, paraspareṇa saṃbandhārtham | [...] katham unmattabālavākyasadṛśam iti vakṣyāmaḥ |*. Additions in square brackets are mine.

4 *Paribhāṣā*s in Mīmāṃsā, Śrautasūtra and Grammar

4.1 *Paribhāṣā*s in Śrautasūtra and Mīmāṃsā

Unlike in the Śrautasūtras, the *paribhāṣā*s as general rules regarding the ritual are almost absent in Mīmāṃsā. Rather, *they regard the Brāhmaṇa texts* and not the rituals prescribed in such texts. Accordingly, the *paribhāṣā*s in the earliest Śrautasūtras are found scattered in the sections about the various rituals, and in the later Śrautasūtras they are found in separate sections. By contrast, the *nyāya*s in the MS are organized according to the systematic plan of the MS, with six books dedicated to the archetype rituals and six to the ectype rituals and so on. Chakrabarti (1980) discusses in this connection the example of rules about analogical extension (*atideśa*) and centralized application (*tantra*), which are found all in the same section in the MS, whereas they are distributed in various sections in the various Śrautasūtras.[45]

Moreover, already in Jaimini some rules might be applied also to the MS itself. For instance, *na, pūrvatvāt* (MS 1.2.21) "No, because it has been already known" could refer not only to the need for Vedic prescriptions to convey something new, but also to the need to interpret the MS itself in the same way, i. e. each *sūtra* must convey something not known before.

What is then the difference between such principles and the proper metarules (for instance the metalinguistic ones found in Grammar)? That the latter only work within the system, whereas Jaimini's metarules are general rules which are so general, that they can also be applied to the text enunciating them.

4.2 *Paribhāṣā*s in Grammar and Mīmāṃsā

What about the *paribhāṣā*s in Grammar? The question is legitimate not only because of the importance of *paribhāṣā*s in Grammar, but also because of the relevance of the connection between Mīmāṃsā and Grammar in their early history.[46]

An obvious difference between the Grammatical *paribhāṣā*s and the Mīmāṃsā *nyāya*s is that the former have been more formalized throughout the

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45 Chakrabarti 1980: 108. The entire chapter 6.4 in Chakrabarti 1980 is dedicated to the chronological relation between MS and the Śrautasūtras and contains several insights derived from their comparison.

46 About which, see, e. g. Deshpande 1991, Freschi/Pontillo 2013a, Freschi/Pontillo 2013b.

history of Grammar. Moreover, the Grammatical *paribhāṣā*s regard the exegesis of a highly technical text, namely Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and can be convincingly argued to be present within the text itself, whereas this is not the case for Mīmāṃsā, which is a technical exegesis of non-technical texts, the Brāhmaṇas. An illuminating example, in this regard, is the parallel of the lamp used by both Śabara and Patañjali (see Candotti-Pontillo, this volume, section 2.2) which, in the former, refers to sacrificial prescriptions and in the latter to grammatical rules.

However, there are also some basic similarities, especially if one focuses on the earliest stages of the grammatical use of *paribhāṣā*s. The technical term *paribhāṣā* is not found in Pāṇini and is only used twice by Kātyāyana (see Candotti-Pontillo, fn. 2). It is only Patañjali that codifies the term[47] and uses it consistently while solving seeming inconsistencies in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.[48] Furthermore, commentators agree on the link between what later Pāṇinīyas called *paribhāṣā* and what is known as *nyāya* in Mīmāṃsā.[49] Last, also in Grammar, *paribhāṣā*s are not necessarily identified by specific marks (be it the usage of a technical sigla or their position in the text).

Do these similarities lead to the conclusion that Grammar, Śrautasūtra and Mīmāṃsā share a common prehistory or is the one indebted to the other? Dominik Wujastyk, in the Introduction to his edition of Vyāḍi's *Paribhāṣāvṛtti*, implicitly suggests a common prehistory, with possibly the Mīmāṃsā preceding Grammar in the usage of *paribhāṣā*s,[50] whereas Sharon Ben-Dor, quoting Vashishtha Jhā, suggests that the direction of borrowing is Mīmāṃsā → Grammar.

> Actually, the Pūrvamīmāṃsā can be viewed as the discipline that established this method. According to Jha, this discipline is a system that deals with principles (*nyāya*s) of textual interpretation for texts whose authors

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47 *paribhāṣā punar ekadeśasthā satī kṛtsnaṃ śāstram abhijvalayati pradīpavat; tad yathā pradīpaḥ suprajvalita ekadeśasthaḥ sarvaṃ veśmābhijvalayati*, M on A 2.1.1 (see also Candotti-Pontillo, this volume). Candotti and Pontillo (¶) pointed out that Patañjali seems here to imitate the *Nirukta*-style and to make sense of *paribhāṣā* through a semantic analysis: a *paribhāṣā* is accordingly something that shines (*bhās-, abhijvalati*) all around (*pari, sarvaṃ veśma*).

48 For his procedure, see Wujastyk 1993: xii.

49 Ben-Dor 2009: 7. A longer discussion on the terms *paribhāṣā* and *nyāya* is found in Chakrabarti (1980: 25–28).

50 "It is a moot point whether or not Pāṇini actually had some of these *paribhāṣā*s in mind as he composed his grammar; probably he did have at least some of them in mind, whether explicitly or not. A study of the earliest Mīmāṃsā from this point of view might throw some light on this question" (Wujastyk 1993: xii).

were no longer present. He adds that these principles were used by all the Indian philosophical systems, and argues that all the systems are indebted to Pūrvamīmāṃsā because it has provided the tools to interpret a text (Jha 1992: 2). [...] In respect to Kātyāyana, some scholars have indicated the close relationship between the *vārttika*s in the *Mahābhāṣya* and the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* of Jaimini, and it is likely that some of the interpretive principles mentioned by Kātyāyana are adopted from this discipline. [...] [W]hat is evident is that already in the time of Kātyāyana, this method of referring to daily life activities for interpreting a text was an established and accepted practice among Indian scholars.[51]

This last element does, in fact, incline one to think that it might have been possible for Mīmāṃsā to influence Grammar rather than the other way round. For it is Mīmāṃsakas who trust ordinary experience, whereas Pāṇini tends to build a consistent system which only refers to ordinary linguistic use and it is not clear what would be the epistemological foundation of the fact that other ordinary usages could bear any influence on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (more on this topic below, Section 4.4). All the authors mentioned here leave the Śrautasūtras out of the picture and in fact the Śrautasūtras seem to lack the reference to ordinary experience as source for general rules. Thus, once one has noticed the similarity in this approach to ordinary experience in Mīmāṃsā and Vyākaraṇa one is left with a question concerning the direction of influence or with the hypothesis of a shared prehistory, which, however, cannot be traced back to the Śrautasūtras.[52]

On a different perspective, Ben-Dor does not take into account the distinction between the *paribhāṣā*s as present in the Śrautasūtras and in Mīmāṃsā (about which see above, Section 2.1).

This distinction is the reason why the metarules developed in Mīmāṃsā have been adopted outside Mīmāṃsā, whereas the metarules developed within the Śrautasūtras have not. The latter were, in fact, not systematic enough, and furthermore they only regarded a given text. Similarly, most metarules of Grammar have been adopted by later Pāṇinīyas, but have not been extended (as far as my knowledge reaches) to other fields.

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51 Ben-Dor 2009: 8–9.
52 Unlike in the case of other elements of a shared prehistory, such as the principles of rule-extension, see Freschi/Pontillo 2013a and 2013b.

4.3 Closed and open systems of *paribhāṣā*s

To summarize in an oversimplifying way (further details are, given after the table):

Śrautasūtra	Mīmāṃsā	Grammar
p. applied within the same text	p. applied also to other texts or: to all possible texts	development of a technical language
closed system	open system	closed system

With "closed system" I mean the fact that the *paribhāṣā*s found in the Śrautasūtras do not seem to aim at shedding light on domains outside the ritual one, that they tend to focus on one ritual at a time, and that they often seem to focus only on a specific version of the ritual (on the more ecumenic tendency of the Mīmāṃsā, which often compares the ritual habits of different Vedic branches).[53] This does not deny that many *paribhāṣā*s were shared, as shown in Chakrabarti 1980. Nor does it deny the fact that rules set down in the context of one ritual were then applied also to other contexts (e. g. *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra* 1.2.8 on the fact that only Brahmins can officiate). But the fact that they are repeated in the various Śrautasūtras exactly points at the idea that each text had to settle the ground for its school's approach to rituals and that it could not count on the other texts' results. Accordingly, a Śrautasūtra states for the most part rules regarding a (certain version of a) determinate ritual (e. g. *antarā sāmidhenīṣv anūcyam* (*Āpastamba Śrautasūtra* 24.1.11) "One should recite during the Sāmidhenīs with a tone of voice which is intermediate [between low (*mandra*) and sharp (*kruṣṭa*)]") or, in a few cases, the Śrautasūtra itself (e. g. *prasaṅgād apavādo balīyaḥ* (*Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra* 1.1.22; see Chierichetti) "An exception is stronger than a general rule"). Similarly, relatively infrequent (or late) are statements regarding the ritual in general (e. g. *phalayuktāni karmāṇi* (*Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra* 1.1.2) "The ritual acts are connected with a result"), whereas I could never detect the ambition of stating a general rule, applicable also to other fields. This is not necessarily the case for Mīmāṃsā, partly because of its longer history, which made it interact with other schools — most of all with Vedānta and Dharmaśāstra— and provide them exactly with a set of exegetical rules (which might have had originally a more limited scope).

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[53] See Göhler 2011: 27.

Let me clarify with an example, that of two similar *sūtra*s coming from a Śrautasūtra and from the MS:

> *teṣāṃ vākyaṃ nirākaṅkṣam* (*Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra* 1.3.2)
> Of them [Yajus words] one sentence is one which does not expect [anything else].
> *arthaikatvād ekaṃ vākyaṃ sākāṅkṣaṃ ced vibhāge syāt* (MS 2.1.46)
> [Within a Vedic text,] a single sentence is that which would expect [further linguistic elements] if they were separated [from it], since they have a single meaning.

The commonalities are striking, since the author of the MS probably elaborates on a common lore, making a general statement from a particular one. How general? Lars Göhler suggests that the MS definition applies to sentences in general.[54] Kumārila in his commentary on MS 2.1.46 explicitly restricts the definition to Vedic sentences only. Śabara does not address directly the topic, but he starts by mentioning examples of Yajus sentences and then moves to sentences in general. The immediate context of the MS seems to suggest that Jaimini had in view all Vedic sentences. Furthermore, Jaimini adds a motivation for his claim, thus making it available for further discussions on sentences in general within the śāstric milieu.[55]

As for Grammar, the situation is, in fact, further complicated by the fact that within Grammar, one encounters two types of *paribhāṣā*s, that is, (a) some of them coming from a worldly background (hinted at with the label *laukika* by Patañjali) and (b) the metalinguistic metarules regarding the technical meaning of the case-endings, etc., within the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. The first type suggests perhaps that there might have been a common reservoir of such rules, and that it might be applied in an "open system" way, even outside Grammar, as shown by Patañjali's examples of worldly applications of them. Moreover, the very fact that Patañjali justifies some of them linking them to worldly usages suggests that some of them have a

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general validity. By contrast, it is only in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* that the locative is used to indicate the preceding item, which shows that some metarules are only valid within Grammar.

A further distinction lies in the precise meaning of *paribhāṣā* as metarule in Grammar. As already hinted at (in Section 2.1), Mīmāṃsaka *nyāya*s may be not metarules, but just rules.

It remains to be settled whether Mīmāṃsā authors consciously pushed the process of generalization of the rules up to the point of having rules valid for all sorts of texts independent of an author (or: whose author could no longer be consulted).

This issue is connected with the way Mīmāṃsakas understood their *nyāya*s. Are they just arbitrary rules, such as Pāṇini's formalization about the meaning of the locative in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*? Or do they tell us something which is necessarily true about each text? I could not find any explicit answer in Mīmāṃsā texts. However, if one holds in mind the intrinsic validity theory (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*),[56] one might suggest that Mīmāṃsā authors generally trust ordinary experience. If something works in ordinary experience, unless and until contrary evidence, this is likely to work also in the Veda (see also Śabara's similar claim regarding the meaning of words in the Veda, Section 3.2). After all, if we were to deny this possibility to access the Veda, this would remain forever precluded to us.

4.4 Influence of Mīmāṃsā

How far does the influence of Mīmāṃsā for the topic of *paribhāṣā*s exactly reach? On the one hand, the Mīmāṃsā might have furnished other schools with specific *paribhāṣā*s[57] and with the general assumption that common experience can be a source of knowledge about the textual world, too (see Section 3.4, concerning the role of common experience as a source for Mīmāṃsā rules, and Section 4.3).

Furthermore, specific exegetical *paribhāṣā*s applied to the Veda by Mīmāṃsakas have been borrowed and adapted by other schools (see, e. g. Sarkar 1909 for their application to Indian jurisprudence). On the other hand, many

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56 According to this theory, one's cognitions are valid unless and until contrary evidence arises. A fuller analysis of the theory and of its philosophical significance is found in Taber 1992, whereas Kataoka 2011 dedicates a chapter to the analysis of the theory in Kumārila (Taber takes into account also his commentators) with a more historical-philological focus.

57 Brill suggests, for instance, that the grammatical *uttarottaram* principle derives from MS 3.3.14 (2013: 42).

*paribhāṣā*s are already present in the Śrautasūtras,[58] while the Grammarians have developed many independent ones.

A specific point regards the origin of the idea of using common experience as the explanation or justification of some rules. The link to common experience is constitutive of Mīmāṃsā throughout its history (from Jaimini, see Section 3.4, to Kumārila's well-known claim —in ŚV *codanā* 98d–99ab— that "We Mīmāṃsakas do not admit anything over what is commonly experienced" and in general to the Mīmāṃsā *svataḥ prāmāṇya* theory). By contrast, the resort to common experience seems less essential to Vyākaraṇa,[59] so that one might advance the hypothesis that its presence in the case of the *paribhāṣā*s is due to a Mīmāṃsā or proto-Mīmāṃsā influence. This theory is however still in need of verification.

5 Conclusions

The term *paribhāṣā* is not present in the early Mīmāṃsā literature. The whole Mīmāṃsā could be considered as a system of *paribhāṣā*s, or metarules to be used either to make sense of the Brāhmaṇa texts or of the preceding ritualistic tradition. Accordingly, metarules are not explicitly indicated.

Śabara pushes the process further, insofar as he makes explicit some of the presuppositions implicit in Jaimini (i. e. regarding the meaning of the words in the MS) and may be credited with creating metarules which directly apply to the Mīmāṃsā system itself.

The main difference with the *paribhāṣā*s of the Śrautasūtras is the fact that the latter seem to focus on a narrower context, that of a specific Śrautasūtra, whereas the Mīmāṃsā ones aim at constructing a system of ritual exegesis which is internally consistent. They are, hence, not merely practical devices relying only on the form of rules (such as the succession of rules in Pāṇini, which has often the only purpose of economy). Rather, they seem to aim at reflecting the inner consistency of Vedic texts and of the sacrificial system.

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58 An obvious example is *ādipradiṣṭā mantrā bhavanti* (*Bharadvāja Srautasūtra* 1.1.21) "The mantras are indicated through their beginning" (see Pellegrini, Editor's Overview).
59 Although this procedure is shared by Patañjali, it might be said to be in contrast with the highly formalized language of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. On this point, consider the following remark: "This leads us to a crucial point concerning the view that a principle known from daily life should not be stated; if this view is taken radically, some of Pāṇini's sūtras or parts of sūtras (e. g. A 1.1.21) may be considered useless because the matters for which they are stated can be known from daily life activities" (Ben-Dor 2009: 14).

Abbreviations

A   *Aṣṭādhyāyī*
ĀŚrS   *Āśvalāyana Śrautasūtra*
MK   Kevālanandasarasvatī, ed. (1952–1954). Mīmāṃsākośa.
MS   Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*. In: Subbāśāstrī 1929–1934.
ŚBh   Śabara's *Bhāṣya* on MS, q.v.

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MS = Jaimini (1994) [I ed. 1929–1934]: *Śrīmajjaiminipraṇīte mīmāṃsādarśane prathamādhyāyasya tarkapādanāmā prathamapādaḥ*. Edited by Subbāśāstrī. Pūṇe: Ānandāśrama.

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