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Śālikanātha's "Introduction" to His "Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning"

Andrew Ollett

1 Introduction

Śālikanāthamiśra's *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning* (*Vākyārthamāṭṛkā*), perhaps composed in the early ninth century, is one of the most important contributions to the debate on sentence meaning in premodern South Asia.¹ It is a two-part essay that is included in a set of twelve other writings, under the title of *Commentarial Essays* (*Prakaraṇapañcikā*). The first part, which is shorter than the second and framed as an introduction to it, develops a general theory of sentence meaning, according to which the words convey the sentence meaning directly by expressing their proper meanings in relation to each other. The second part examines the meaning of injunctive sentences in particular, and argues that the primary meaning of such sentences is "something to be done" (*kāryam*), which in the context of the Veda takes the form of what Mīmāṃsakas call "something previously unknown" (*apūrvam*).² In both parts, Śālikanātha claims to be developing the insights of Prabhākara, the earlier scholar of Mīmāṃsā whom he identifies throughout his writings as his teacher.

Both parts are written in the form of a set of verses—twenty-two in the first part, and around fifty in the second—accompanied by a commentary. The commentary is mostly prose, although it includes, besides verses quoted from other authorities, a number of summary verses (*saṅgrahaślokāḥ*) that summarize Śālikanātha's position on various topics. The verses, when read on their own, present a relatively streamlined and coherent argument, and it is the verses of the introductory essay that I will focus on in this chapter. Śālikanātha did write several other essays in the form of a set of verses without any surviving commentary. The commentary generally provides additional context

for the verses, often by discussing alternative views at length. He thus probably composed the verses first and added a commentary “as a favor to the virtuous,” as he says at the end of the essay.³ From the fact that Śālikanātha refers to the *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning* several times in his *Straightforward and Lucid* (*Rjuvimalā*) on Prabhākara’s commentary, it appears that he composed the essay before undertaking his ambitious commentarial project.⁴

The commentary of the *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning* includes quotations from other authorities, from which we can gain an idea not just of who his interlocutors were, and how he thought of them, but also what kind of intellectual project he was engaged in. Tellingly, Śālikanātha barely quotes his teacher Prabhākara. The authority that he quotes most often is Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, the most renowned Mīmāṃsaka of his time, and perhaps of all time. Because Śālikanātha is concerned to develop and defend Prabhākara’s insights, Kumārila’s views often come in for criticism. But Śālikanātha clearly held Kumārila in enormous esteem, and he borrows or builds upon Kumārila’s ideas as often as he criticizes them. Indeed, the theory that Śālikanātha develops in the *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, although presented as Prabhākara’s theory, can be seen as a slight modification of Kumārila’s theory in order to take account of Prabhākara’s insights regarding the importance of context. To Śālikanātha, Kumārila was not just as an intellectual sparring partner, but also a kind of role model: Kumārila was a system builder, indeed the most successful system builder in the history of Mīmāṃsā, and Śālikanātha’s overarching goal was to build a system out of Prabhākara’s often obscure teachings. Śālikanātha quotes from Kumārila’s *Explanation in Verse* (*Śloka-vārttikam*) and *Explanation of the System* (*Tantravārttikam*), as well as verses that are not found in either text and are thus likely to have been drawn from his *Extensive Notes* (*Bṛhaṭṭīkā*), which is now lost.⁵ These verses are often programmatic: they discuss, for example, the role of Mīmāṃsā as a system of thought and its distinctive epistemological and hermeneutical positions.⁶ Hence, although Śālikanātha created a system of “Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā” that would later come to be thought of, and indeed defined, as an exclusive alternative to the “Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā” system created by Kumārila, Śālikanātha’s importance derives in part from his role as witness to, and interpreter of, Kumārila’s thought.

Śālikanātha made two significant interventions in the first part of the *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, one philosophical and one doxographic. The philosophical intervention was his presentation of what he called “the expression of relational meanings” (*anvitābhidhānam*). In one of his typical maneuvers, he took this relatively obscure phrase from the writings of

Prabhākara and developed it into a comprehensive theory.⁷ This theory was both compositional and contextualist.⁸ The principle of compositionality holds that the meaning of larger units of language somehow arises from the meanings of the smaller units out of which they are composed. This principle, or some version thereof, was widely accepted in ancient Indian thought. Within Mīmāṃsā, in particular, it was never seriously doubted that the meaning of a sentence arose from the meanings of its constituent words, although there was an extended debate over precisely how it so arose. The principle of contextualism holds that the meaning of any given expression depends on the context in which that expression appears, or alternatively, that "the meaning of a word in a given sentence is the contribution it makes to the meaning of the sentence" (Janssen 2001, 116). While all Mīmāṃsakas did accept some version of this principle—indeed, much of Mīmāṃsā can be described as interpretation in the light of context—no Mīmāṃsaka had been as radical a contextualist as Śālikanātha. He claimed that the same word expressed a different relational meaning in all of its different contexts of use. It is worth noting here that compositionality and contextualism are generally considered to be in tension (Janssen 2001, 117; Recanati 2012), if not in outright conflict: "Clearly it can't be," wrote Fodor (2003, 97), "that both are true." The more the context seems to determine the meanings of the constituent words, the less those meanings appear to contribute to the overall sentence meaning. The interplay of compositionality and contextualism has been a major issue in contemporary philosophy of language, and Śālikanātha's attempt to reconcile these two principles has ensured the philosophical relevance of his *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning* up to the present day.

Śālikanātha's doxographic intervention was arguably even more important. As noted above, he called his theory "the expression of relational meanings" (*anvitābhīdhānam*), borrowing the phrase from Prabhākara. The alternative to this theory was "the relation of expressed meanings" (*abhihitānvayaḥ*), which does not appear in Prabhākara's writings. Śālikanātha appears to have invented this term, for although Śālikanātha describes Kumārila's position with it, Kumārila himself does not use the phrase. Kumārila's earliest commentator, Umbeka, uses the phrase "expression of relational meanings," which he associates with Prabhākara, but never uses the complementary phrase "relation of expressed meanings," at least in the surviving portion of his commentary.⁹ Indeed, the concept of a "relation" (*anvayaḥ*) between word meanings is characteristic of Prabhākara's thought, and hardly appears at all in Kumārila's work. In sum, Śālikanātha framed the debate on sentence meaning as a debate

between two complementary positions, “the expression of relational meanings” and “the relation of expressed meanings.” These positions differed precisely according to how they accounted for the “relation” between word meanings, although historically only the first position offered such an account.

Hence, like most doxographers, Śālikanātha had framed the debate in such a way as to favor his own position. Nevertheless his framing would prove to be enormously influential. Almost immediately, everyone who spoke about sentence meaning in South Asia spoke in the chiasmic terms that Śālikanātha provided. The first to do so, it seems, was Bhaṭṭa Jayanta in the late ninth century CE, who reviewed “the expression of relational meanings” and “the relation of expressed meanings” in his discussion of sentence meaning in his *Racemose Reasoning* (*Nyāyamañjarī*). There is, however, no clear evidence that Jayanta had read Śālikanātha, which raises the possibility that both Śālikanātha and Jayanta had borrowed the chiasmic framing from earlier followers of Prabhākara whose works are now lost. Subsequently, the theory of sentence meaning became a topic of intense debate in Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya, and Alaiṅkāraśāstra, and the positions were precisely those that Śālikanātha had staked out.¹⁰

2 Sentence Meaning as a Determinate Particular

To understand Śālikanātha’s argument in the *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, we must begin with the notion of a “sentence meaning” that gives the essay its title. This phrase translates the Sanskrit compound *vākyārthaḥ*. The word *arthaḥ* has a notoriously broad range of meanings.¹¹ Most pertinent to this discussion, it means the “meaning” of a particular linguistic expression, the “signified” corresponding to a given signifier. But it also means a “thing” that could be designated by a linguistic expression and, more broadly, to a “state of affairs.” The coincidence, or lack thereof, between these two senses was a long-standing topic of debate. One of Śālikanātha’s other essays, the *Path of Reason* (*Nītipathaḥ*), adopts a position midway between realism and mentalism: the “meaning” of a linguistic expression is a veridical “state of affairs” by default, because of its inherent power to express such a meaning, but in the case of everything except the Veda we can never be certain of this correspondence unless we have recourse to other sources of knowledge (e.g., by verifying through perception that the meaning of a particular statement is a real state of affairs). The inspiration for such a position certainly came from Prabhākara, who accepted that linguistic expressions are sources of knowledge

in and of themselves only when they occur in the Vedas (Jha 1978, 63–66). The third shade of meaning of *arthah* is a "purpose," that is, something sought after. This sense was particularly important for Mīmāṃsakas, who generally thought of the unity of a text—whether a sentence, or a larger passage, or indeed of an entire work—as a teleological unity, in which all of the elements take their place in relation to a single overarching purpose.¹² One of Jaimini's *sūtras* says that "a sentence is one on account of there being just one *arthah*," and Śābara understands this latter word not simply as "meaning," but also as "purpose" (*prayojanam*).¹³ The *sūtra* comes in the context of determining the boundaries of sentences in the Veda, though Kumārila noted that it will apply just as well to sentences outside of the Veda.¹⁴ Śālikanātha's view of sentence meaning involves all three of these shades of *arthah*: it is what is signified by a sentence; it is a state of affairs; and it possesses a teleological unity.

Mīmāṃsakas agreed that there was a qualitative difference between "sentence meaning" and "word meaning." It was not, in other words, simply that a sentence had a greater number of signifying elements in it than a word. For Mīmāṃsakas, word meanings were classes (*jātiḥ*): the meaning of the word "cow" is "cowness," a class that inheres in, and is instantiated by, every particular cow. Sentence meanings, by contrast, were particulars (*vyaktiḥ*, *viśeṣaḥ*). As Śālikanātha notes, quoting from one of Kumārila's lost works, the determination of the "sentence particular" (*vacanavyaktiḥ*) from a given sentence, on the basis of a set of rational principles, is precisely what Mīmāṃsā does.¹⁵

At this point, however, we must think about what it means for the meaning of a sentence to be a "particular." For certain kinds of sentences, such as "the pot is on the ground," it is easy to imagine that the particular expressed by the sentence is the state of affairs in which the pot is on the ground. From this perspective, the sentence particular seems similar to a proposition. Propositions, however, are commonly thought to be bearers of truth-values, and most of the sentences with which Mīmāṃsakas are concerned are injunctive, and therefore not capable of being evaluated as either true or false, at least not on the surface. What would be the proposition corresponding to a sentence such as "one should perform the *agnihotram* oblation as long as one lives"? This is not, of course, an insuperable problem, since many solutions have been offered for relating the propositional content of a sentence to other putative features of the sentence, such as its modality, force, and so on. For example, we could think of the aforementioned sentence as presenting some propositional content ("x performs the oblation as long as he lives") as well as some additional elements that account for both

the statement's deontic force (what Mīmāṃsakas call the "injunctive meaning," *vidhyarthah*) and the binding of variables to agents in the "real world" (what Mīmāṃsakas call "eligibility," *adhikārah*).

There is another puzzle related to the sentences with which Mīmāṃsakas are concerned, and that is their timelessness. When we speak of "sentence meanings" in the world, we almost always refer to sentences that are uttered by speakers in time. The context against which their meaning is determined and evaluated is thus a historical context. Indeed, the very name of "contextualism" is now largely associated with a movement in the history of ideas, and in particular with the work of Quentin Skinner.¹⁶ By contrast, Mīmāṃsakas emphatically denied that the sentences of the Vedas could be understood with reference to a historical context. Although this denial was motivated by considerations that we might call dogmatic—the imperative to preserve the Vedas as the unique and infallible source of knowledge about *dharma*—it requires an ahistorical contextualism. This is an interesting requirement from a theoretical perspective, since it implies that there is no privileged "context of utterance" against which the sentence meaning can be evaluated. Indexical terms such as "I" or "now," which are typically taken as pointing to a particular context of utterance, are instead taken as pointing to an infinite series of such contexts. This amounts to a theory, albeit an implicit one, of how indexical terms are bound to their referents—of the "character" of such terms, in Kaplan's terminology (Kaplan 1989). From a hermeneutical perspective, this requirement forces us to think of the "context" against which the meaning of a sentence can be evaluated not in historical terms, but in textual and logical terms: our interpretation of any given sentence, in other words, is constrained by our understanding of the text of which it forms a part and by our knowledge of what is logically possible in the world. This is not necessarily the case for sentences outside of the Vedas, where situational factors might enter into the context that is relevant for determining their meaning.

Śālikanātha once characterizes sentence meaning as a "determinate particular" (*nirdhāritaviśeṣaḥ*). He does so in response to the argument that a sentence meaning is a general term (*sāmānyam*), since it is composed out of general terms, and that we arrive at a specific meaning (*viśeṣaḥ*) by implication (*ākṣepaḥ*) from the general term.¹⁷ The opponent compares this process to the implication of an individual from the class: the class "cowness" inheres in every individual cow, and indeed would not exist if some individual cow did not exist, and hence we can cognize "some individual cow" simply on the basis of the cognition of the class. Śālikanātha says, however, that the cognition

of a determinate particular is qualitatively different from the cognition of an implicated particular. Although Śālikanātha does not go into details here, we can think of two meanings for an expression like "some cow," one non-determinate ("any cow at all") and another determinate ("a certain cow").¹⁸ Sentence meaning is determinate and thus cannot be known by implication from non-determinate general terms. We may wonder whether the distinction Śālikanātha had in mind corresponds in some way with the distinction in modern philosophy of language between intensions and extensions: it certainly seems as if the problem with the opponent's proposal is that there is no direct path from general terms, which are intensional, to the extension expressed by a sentence. Yet it is not clear what it would mean for sentence meanings to be extensional, especially since propositions, which we had tentatively identified with sentence meanings above, are often taken to be intensions. Indeed, the distinction between intensions and extensions, which makes sense when speaking of individual terms, is harder to maintain when talking about complex states of affairs.

Thus the theory of sentence meaning has to satisfy two requirements, compositionality and particularism. The meaning of the sentence should be a function of the meanings of the smaller expressions within it, and the final sentence must be a "determinate particular." For Mīmāṃsakas, who hold that word meanings are classes, it will be difficult to satisfy both requirements simultaneously. At what point does the meaning of an expression make the qualitative shift from a class to a particular? Kumārila invoked secondary meaning (*lakṣaṇā*) to solve this problem (see Chapter 18 in this volume).¹⁹ If word meanings are classes, then a complex of word meanings is simply the class that represents their mutual intersection. We know, however, that sentences are used with reference to particular states of affairs. Hence, primary meaning fails to get us to the final meaning of the sentence, which is a particular. This failure triggers the process of secondary meaning, wherein we attempt to recover a meaning that is distinct from, but nevertheless related to, the primary meaning. If the primary meaning is a class, the secondary meaning could be an individual that belongs to that class—something that is both related to the primary meaning and fulfills our requirement that the meaning of the sentence is a particular. For Śālikanātha, this solution is inelegant, because it implies that we can never understand a sentence meaning without first failing to understand it. Moreover, as Lawrence McCrea has noted, the failure of primary meaning is a serious problem for Prabhākara and Śālikanātha, who are committed to the more general epistemological principle that veridical cognitions—such as the cognition of word meanings on the model of sentence meaning under

consideration here—can never really be invalidated.²⁰ Śālikanātha thus needs to find another way of resolving the tension between compositionality and particularism.

3 The Mutual Relation of Meanings

Śālikanātha's solution to the problems outlined above—the tension between contextualism and compositionality, and between compositionality and particularism—is relation (*anvayaḥ*). In relation to the amount of work that this concept does for him, it is rather underdetermined. The essential insight, however, comes from Prabhākara.²¹ In the context of a sentence, the meaning that an individual word actually expresses is related to the meanings of the other words in that sentence. Thus, in the sentence “bring the cow,” the word “cow” does not express merely the class of cows, but the class of cows in relation to all of the other meaning-bearing elements in the sentence. Śālikanātha does not explain what the precise nature of this relation is. It is clear, however, that his model of sentence meaning is the hierarchical organization of elements in a sacrifice (*vinīyogaḥ*). Hence every meaning-bearing element is integrated into the hierarchical unity of the sentence meaning through its being primary or subordinate to other elements.²² This concept of relation allowed Śālikanātha to distinguish between two kinds of meanings, relational (*anvita-*) and non-relational (*ananvita-*). Although the “proper meaning” (*svārthaḥ*) of a word can be considered in both its relational and non-relational aspects, each is the target of different cognitive processes, with different epistemological consequences. Śālikanātha calls the non-relational meaning the “proper form” (*svarūpam*). Although it is technically a class, we can think of it nontechnically as the “dictionary definition” of a word. This is what is expressed by a word in Kumārila's view. In Śālikanātha's view, however, the proper form is not expressed at all. It is merely “called to mind,” and this act of recollection—like any act of recollection—is not a veridical cognition in itself. Once it is called to mind, however, it enters into relations with other such elements. It is this relational meaning that is expressed by the word. To truly understand a relational meaning, according to Śālikanātha, is also to understand the relations in which it is embedded, and hence to understand the sentence meaning.²³

Kumārila's account of sentence meaning is often considered to have two stages. First, the individual words express their proper meanings, and then these meanings combine with each other to produce a sentence meaning.²⁴ Prabhākara's

account, by contrast, can be thought of as having a single stage, in which the individual words express their proper meanings in relation to each other, and in so doing convey the sentence meaning. Yet, in elaborating Prabhākara's account, Śālikanātha comes very close to Kumārila's two-stage model. The principal difference would seem that Kumārila applies the term "expression" to the first stage, in which each word produces an awareness of its non-relational meaning, whereas Śālikanātha applies the term to the second stage, in which the word produces an awareness of its relational meaning. And indeed, Śālikanātha seems to see his theory as a revision of Kumārila's account, based on Prabhākara's insights, to make it more theoretically streamlined and less open to the kinds of criticism that Kumārila himself had anticipated. Nevertheless, the concept of "expression" ends up looking very different in Śālikanātha's account than it does in Kumārila's. For Kumārila, expression really stops at the word meaning. Although other cognitive processes fill in the gap between these word meanings and the particular sentence meaning, the comprehension of sentence meaning is "verbal" because of the essential role that the expression of word meanings plays in it.²⁵ It is important for this comprehension to be "verbal" (*śabda-*), that is to say, based on language as a source of valid knowledge (*śabda-*), because otherwise the knowledge of *dharma* with which the Vedas alone are supposed to provide us, and which consists in the knowledge of what the sentences of the Vedas mean, would no longer be based on a source of valid knowledge. For Śālikanātha, by contrast, expression stops at the sentence meaning and conveys not only the word meanings but the specific relations they have to each other.

To say that a linguistic expression "expresses" (*abhidhatte*) a meaning is to say that it possesses a power (*śaktiḥ*) to generate a cognition of that meaning in a competent speaker of the language. Thus the discussion about the nature and limits of expression can be framed as a discussion about the quantity and quality of such powers. When framed in this way, the issue becomes a bit clearer, since powers are the types of things that can only be postulated—we cannot directly perceive them and, for the same reason, cannot infer their existence—and a postulation is only warranted when the phenomenon we are trying to account for cannot be accounted for otherwise. This is the basis on which Śālikanātha argues for compositionality. If we need to postulate an additional power for every element of meaning we encounter, we can economize on postulations by associating such powers with individual words rather than larger expressions, up to and including sentences. As an example, Śālikanātha presents a small subset of the Sanskrit language, consisting of seven words: four terms of address ("boy," "child," "son," and "kid"), two imperative verbs ("bring" and "tie"), and

one direct object ("cow"). From this subset, eight ($4 \times 2 \times 1$) different sentences can be formed. On a non-compositional account of sentence meaning, we must postulate a separate power to express a meaning for each of the eight sentences. On a compositional account, by contrast, we only need to postulate seven powers for each of the seven words. The relative economy of the compositional account increases exponentially as more words are added to the language.²⁶

How can this kind of strategy help to establish Śālikanātha's contention that the meanings expressed by words are relational? Both positions—Śālikanātha's and Kumārila's—involve postulation, namely, the postulation of a power to express a meaning on the part of a linguistic expression. Now we must ask precisely what kind of power each position requires us to postulate, and whether it solves the problem of expressivity that required us to postulate it in the first place. Prabhākara and Śālikanātha put forward the language acquisition argument, discussed below, to prove that words are only expressive of their meanings in some discursive context. If we take this claim seriously, then the only power that can solve the expressivity problem is a power that, as Śālikanātha says, "extends as far as the relation."²⁷ In Kumārila's account, by contrast, the expressive power extends only as far as the non-relational meaning, and other cognitive processes then fill in the gap between these non-relational meanings and the overall sentence meaning. Śālikanātha claims that if we are going to postulate an expressive power in the first place, we might as well postulate the kind of power that actually accomplishes what we mean by "expression." Kumārila might have argued that such an argument goes too far: postulation is only warranted when we cannot otherwise account for a given phenomenon, and in this case, we can account for our cognition of a relation between word meanings through other means.

What means exactly? Śālikanātha claims that the three criteria of compatibility (*yogyatā*), proximity (*saṃnidhiḥ*), and dependency (*ākāṅkṣā*) are present whenever we cognize the relation which is, on his view, constitutive of sentence meaning.²⁸ Both Kumārila and Prabhākara make reference to these three criteria in their discussion of how an incomplete sentence in the Vedas can be completed by carrying over (*anuṣaṅgaḥ*) elements from a nearby sentence.²⁹ In fact, Kumārila's argumentation here comes quite close to contextualism, since he claims that these criteria allow one to understand a relation (*sambandhaḥ*) between the part of the sentence that is expressed but incomplete and the part that is not expressed, entailing—contrary to the position that he develops elsewhere—that the expressive power of language depends on one's knowledge of a relation between word meanings. Śālikanātha could therefore be implying that Kumārila had already hit upon the "expression of relational meanings" in

his discussion of this particular question, of carrying over elements from one sentence into another in order to arrive at a complete sentence, but had failed to generalize the model beyond this case.

Let us review Śālikanātha's model so far. What we end up with is a cognition of a "sentence particular." We can think of this sentence particular as a fully specified blueprint of a particular state of affairs. In Mīmāṃsā, this state of affairs will generally be the performance of a sacrifice. It is fully specified in the sense of comprising elements of meaning that are totally integrated into a hierarchical structure called a "relation" by Śālikanātha; these elements of meaning are, from this perspective, "relational." On the end of the output, so to speak, he is in complete agreement with the Mīmāṃsakas who preceded him. The same is true on the other end, that of the input. All Mīmāṃsakas agreed that sentence meaning is compositional and specifically that the expressive elements in a sentence are the individual words that comprise it. Mīmāṃsakas also agreed that the proper meaning expressed by a word was a universal, partly because it helped them to make the argument that the relationship between words and meanings was not subject to change (see Chapter 9 in this volume). Śālikanātha attempted to answer the following question: How do we integrate these two pictures, one of words that individually express abstract universals, and the other of sentences that express actionable particulars? Unless we appeal to other cognitive processes to fill in the gap—which would introduce the epistemological liability of making the cognition of sentence meaning partly inferential—we have two options. We can identify some feature of the input that continues to be present in the output. This was apparently Kumārila's solution when he said, without much explanation, that the sentence meaning we cognize is "colored by" the word meanings.³⁰ Alternatively, we can identify some feature of the output that is present, if only in a latent or implicit form, in the input. Such a feature, according to Śālikanātha, is the relation between word meanings. If he can establish that words express relational meanings in the first place, then the cognition of a sentence meaning, conceived as a hierarchical relation of word meanings, will follow unproblematically from the cognition of word meanings.

4 Language Acquisition and Language Structure

Śālikanātha attempts to prove his hypothesis with an argument from language acquisition: when we learn the meaning of a word, we actually learn a relational meaning, and hence it is a relational meaning that the word has the power to

express. All Mīmāṃsakas conceived of learning the meaning as a word in terms of grasping a connection between the word and its meaning that has always existed. But there are several ways in which this can occur. One way is through what Wittgenstein (2001, I §27) called “ostensive definition”: one person points at a cow and says “cow,” and the other person learns the connection. Prabhākara, however, had emphasized that the way we actually learn language is through careful observation of the discursive practice (*vyavahārah*) of our elders (Jha 1978, 61–62). People do not point at things and shout their names in the real world. They engage in different types of activity through the mediation of language. The associations that we actually form are between sentences, such as “bring the cow,” and particular states of affairs, such as someone bringing a cow. It is by comparing such sentences as “bring the cow” and “bring the horse” with their corresponding states of affairs that we differentially establish the meanings of words such as “cow” and “horse.” The meanings we establish are, in every instance, relational.³¹ That is, we understand the meaning of “cow” as being related to the act of bringing, and we understand the meaning of “bring” as being related to the cow, its object.³²

As intuitive as this account may be, there is still a serious problem on the horizon: a single word may be used in an infinite number of different sentences, and therefore it has an infinite number of relational meanings. We are simply not able to learn all of these relational meanings one by one; to do so, in any case, would be to sacrifice the principle of compositionality. Further, how would we determine which among the infinite number of relational meanings a word has in a given instance? In the course of language acquisition, we are assisted by our perceptual access to the states of affairs expressed by each individual sentence. The relation between word meanings is put before our eyes. What happens when we have to rely on language alone, without the assistance of other sources of knowledge, to know what it is that a given sentence means? What accounts for a word expressing a particular relational meaning? Or what accounts for it not expressing an infinite number of other relational meanings? Śālikanātha’s imagined opponent makes it clear that it will not do to simply say that a word expresses its proper meaning in relation to other meanings in general, that is, without determining precisely what those other meanings are. One of the phenomena that the “expression of relational meanings” was meant to account for in the first place is the fact that sentence meanings are fully determinate particulars.³³

The burden on Śālikanātha is therefore to explain how, in a given instance, a word can express not just a meaning that is related to the meanings of all of the

other words in the sentence—that would be relatively simple—but also express the specific set of relations that unites all of the word meanings into a single sentence meaning. The word meanings are like the pieces of a puzzle for which there is only a single solution: their "proper meanings" are like the images found on each piece, and their mutual relations are like their shapes. This is a much richer and more complex notion of word meaning than offered by previous thinkers. The problem is whether Śālikanātha can reasonably claim that the words themselves possess a power to generate an awareness of such a meaning.

Śālikanātha sees no reason not to postulate an expressive power for words that "extends as far as the relation," given that we must postulate some such power in any case. But it is not the case that words express their relation in which their proper meanings are embedded all by themselves: they must always be accompanied by the aforementioned three criteria of compatibility, proximity, and dependency, without which the relation between word meanings cannot be determined. Śālikanātha calls these three factors "conditions" (*upādhiḥ*) and "secondary characteristics" (*upalakṣaṇam*). A condition is something that must be present for a cause (in this case, the word) to produce its effect (in this case, a cognition of its relational meaning), the way that fire only produces smoke in the presence of wet fuel. For Mīmāṃsakas, words are expressive precisely because they have a natural power to produce an effect, namely, the cognition of their proper meanings, but the production of the effect always depends on a number of conditions, including, for example, the articulation of the word in speech. Śālikanātha thus means that the aforementioned triad, although, strictly speaking, extrinsic to a word's expressive power, is nevertheless necessary for a word to express its meaning in any given instance.

As noted above, Śālikanātha was not the first thinker to invoke this triad as a way of determining the relation between word meanings. He was, however, the first to make it an indispensable part of understanding a sentence. The precise characterization of these three conditions was debated for many centuries, and the debate continues in current scholarship (Kunjunni Raja 1969, 157–69). It is essential to bear in mind, however, that they pertain to word meanings, not to words, and that they are present if and only if those meanings are integrated into a determinate relational structure. Thus, for all three conditions, they are "semantic" in that they refer to relations between elements of meaning, and they are "syntactic" in that they characterize the hierarchical structure in which those meanings are embedded, but they do not fit comfortably within syntax or semantics, if what we understand by these terms concerns more or less separate domains of language structure.

Śālikanātha defines all three of them in relational terms, that is, as ways of relating one word meaning to one or more of its correlates (*pratiyogī*). Dependency is when a listener stands in need of knowing the correlate of a given word meaning, in order for either the expressed meaning to make sense at all or the word to fully express its relational meaning.³⁴ His example is someone uttering the word “door!” (*dvāram*). Because the word has an accusative ending, it stands in need of a transitive verb in order to express a relational meaning. In this case, the relational meaning is a door related to some verbal action, such as opening or closing, as the patient of that action.³⁵ Śālikanātha’s introduction of relational meaning into the definition of dependency is important, because it excludes a psychological characterization of the concept. If dependency were merely the listener’s desire to know, then it would not have a natural termination: “bring a cow” could generate a desire to know any number of things on the part of a listener (bring a cow of what color? bring a cow with what instrument? etc.).³⁶ For Śālikanātha, by contrast, dependency is fulfilled by the expression of a relational meaning.³⁷ Since every element of meaning within a sentence enters into a relational meaning, there is dependency on the part of the meaning of the word “cow” for the meaning of the word “white” in “bring the white cow,” since the meanings of these terms are related in the sentence as a whole, but no such dependency ensues when it occurs in the sentence “bring the cow.” Śālikanātha’s notion of dependency comes close to the notion of dependency in linguistics, which is, however, more closely associated with words than with word meanings, and hence with syntax rather than semantics. Nevertheless, some frameworks posit a distinct unit of structure that represents relations of dependency more or less exactly. In Lexical Functional Grammar, for example, the “functional structure” includes abstract semantic relations such as agent and patient (Dalrymple 2001, 3).

Śālikanātha follows Kumārila closely in defining proximity rather broadly as the presence in the listener’s mind of a word meaning when another word meaning is already present.³⁸ At first glance, this seems to imply little more than that, in order to come into relation with each other, meanings must be expressed by words that are pronounced in immediate succession. But he takes care to note that proximity is not exclusively “born of linguistic expressions,” that is, he rejects the idea that the proximity of word meanings in the listener’s mind simply mirrors the proximity of words in a sentence. He does think of proximity as sequential and explicitly states that the sequence of proximate meanings depends on the sequence of words that “put the meanings into proximity” with each other.³⁹ Yet here, as elsewhere, Śālikanātha insists on the independence of

meanings from the words that express them.⁴⁰ A word can “put another meaning into proximity” with its proper meaning, that is, present this other meaning to the listener’s mind, without necessarily calling to mind a word to express it. Hence the meanings expressed by “shut” and “the door” in the sentence “shut the door” are proximate, not only because they happen to be pronounced in immediate succession but because each word puts the meaning of the other into proximity with its own meaning. Indeed, it is under the topic of proximity that Śālikanātha discusses ellipsis completion: if we only hear the phrase “the door,” we can nevertheless come to an understanding of an entire sentence meaning, because the meaning of “the door” is often found in proximity with a relatively small set of correlate meanings, such as closing and opening. Although Śālikanātha does not exactly say it, this example makes it clear that proximity refers to the listener’s expectations regarding the sequential association of word meanings formed through repeated exposure. Proximity, insofar as it encompasses the conditional probability of one meaning given another, is thus quite close to the statistical language models that are widely used in computational linguistics.

Śālikanātha finally defines compatibility as the ability to be connected with something else.⁴¹ This, too, refers to the listener’s expectations. If we hear the word “sprinkle,” we expect the act of sprinkling to be connected with a liquid. According to Śālikanātha, we rely on this general kind of compatibility to determine whether two particular word meanings are in fact compatible with each other, such as sprinkling and water, and therefore in the determination of relational word meanings. Chomsky’s famous sentence, “colorless green ideas sleep furiously,” does not express a sentence meaning principally because of the absence of compatibility between its word meanings. Compatibility is generally thought of as extralinguistic: we simply rely on our knowledge of the world, independently of our training in a particular language, in order to determine whether two meanings are compatible. Yet here, too, Śālikanātha’s claim that compatibility is something we rely on in language acquisition and bring to the understanding of meaning—and especially his claim that meanings are known to be compatible with certain general types of other meanings—recalls the concept of “subcategorization” in lexical semantics. This refers to features of our mental representations of lexical items that lead us to expect them to enter into combination with some other lexical items in specific grammatical configurations. To say, for instance, that certain verbs can take an “instructional imperative” construction (e.g., “bake the cake” in a recipe) while others generally can’t (*“like the cake”) may be to say that relational meanings, in this case baking and liking in relation to the imperative mood,

are differentially compatible with other meanings (Levin 1993, 40). This kind of compatibility is linguistic, since it would be difficult to account for the differences in possibilities of combination simply on the basis of our knowledge of the world.

These three conditions help Śālikanātha to offer a revised, and thoroughly contextualist, picture of the connection between word and meaning. Prior to Śālikanātha, Mīmāṃsakas considered each individual word to have a fixed connection to the meaning it expressed. Language acquisition was more or less a matter of learning this connection, that is, to know what is expressed by the words “cow,” “white,” “bring,” and so on. Once this was done, hearing the word “cow” in any sentence will convey the associated meaning. Śālikanātha instead claims that the word meanings in any sentence are *in fact* relational, in the sense that they are embedded in the hierarchical structure that he calls “relation” and which he identifies with the sentence meaning. This is a claim about the structure of language. Correspondingly, when we learn the meanings of words, we learn them in context. We come to know that a given word expresses its proper meaning only in relation to other meanings that stand in relationships of compatibility, proximity, and dependency with them. This is a claim about language acquisition. In effect, it says that in learning language we learn to situate word meanings in a relational structure and, moreover, that in learning word meanings we do not merely learn “dictionary definitions,” but build up complex mental representations that includes information about their relational possibilities. Finally, after the stage of language acquisition, when we encounter sentences, we understand their meanings by determining the relational meanings of their constituent words. In doing so, we rely on our mental representations of those meanings, including our expectations about how they might connect to the other meanings in the sentence through compatibility, proximity, and dependency. This is a claim about language comprehension, or alternatively about the expressivity of words.

One way of seeing Śālikanātha’s intervention is to see him as replacing a relatively simple picture of language acquisition, in which words come to be associated with their meanings, with a more sophisticated picture, in which we also cognize relations between word meanings along with the meanings in their “proper form.” One of his key claims in the *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning* is that the criticism that each word would be connected to an infinite number of relational meanings, and must fail to express all but one of the meanings that are in fact associated with it, would simply disappear if only we accept his picture of language acquisition.⁴² This must be because language acquisition sufficiently

equips us with the expectations, mental representations, and principles that we need in order to cognize relational meanings from the words of a sentence. He admits that the number of relational meanings for any word is infinite, or at least very large.⁴³ If, however, we know that we must ultimately arrive at a single, unified configuration of word meanings, we know that the configuration implied by a particular word meaning—the shape of the puzzle piece, to return to our earlier metaphor—must match the configuration implied by all of the other word meanings. Recognizing the solution to this puzzle might be a problem for other theorists, but for Śālikanātha it is no problem at all, since the way we acquire language in the first place is by starting with the solution, so to speak, and then ascertaining the shape and content of the pieces that comprise it. We avail ourselves of the same properties of compatibility, dependency, and proximity in determining the relations between word meanings, both at the stage of acquisition, that is, when faced with a sentence whose meaning we already know, and subsequently, that is, when faced with a sentence whose meaning is not already presented to us through another source of valid knowledge.

5 From Utterance to Recollection to Expression

As noted above, despite the fact that Śālikanātha figures his theory, “the expression of relational meanings,” as the exact antithesis of Kumārila’s, which he calls “the relation of expressed meanings,” Śālikanātha has taken many of Kumārila’s insights on board. Both consider the expression of sentence meaning to proceed in two stages, one in which word meanings are presented to the mind and another in which they are combined into a sentence meaning. And in the second stage both make the ontological leap from the abstract class, expressed by the words, to the determinate particular, expressed by the sentence as a whole. Let us now consider how Śālikanātha connects the two stages, why he considers “expression” to be an appropriate designation of the second stage alone, and what problems he believes he has resolved with his model.

At the beginning of the process, one hears a collection of words.⁴⁴ Then, each of the words individually calls to mind the “proper form” of its meaning, which is non-relational. By the application of a set of rules or principles, the listener integrates these meanings into a sentence particular. Once this has been carried out successfully, the listener has a cognition of the unique relation in which that sentence particular consists.⁴⁵ The contribution that each of the words makes

to this cognition is their relational meaning, and it is this meaning that they are properly said to express.

Whereas Kumāṛila would have said that the word “expresses” its meaning, Śālikanātha maintains that, on its own, it can only call the meaning to mind. When one hears the word “cow” outside of the context of a sentence, one will certainly have some idea of a cow, but it will be completely non-relational. One could think of situations wherein “cow” on its own does in fact convey a relational meaning (for instance, if we can reasonably expect, on the basis of past experience, that it is a command to look at a cow nearby), but these are exceptions, and they are handled by the concept of proximity. These kinds of associations are parallel to, for example, the association between a certain smell and a certain place. As mere associations, they cannot be considered sources of valid knowledge, which axiomatically make one aware of something of which one was not previously aware.⁴⁶ At the earliest stage of understanding a sentence meaning, words merely call their non-relational meanings to mind in precisely the same way that they do outside of the context of a sentence.

Once populated by such non-relational meanings, the mind then sets to work in ascertaining a relation in which all of those meanings can be embedded. Although he does not mention it in this context, the requirement of mutual compatibility, proximity, and dependency among the meanings almost certainly guides this process. At the very least, these three conditions constitute a test that any proposed relation between word meanings must pass. Indeed, they have been leveraged in precisely this way in recent natural language processing work: if a number of different parses are available for a sentence simply on the basis of its grammatical structure, some of those parses may still be disregarded because of their violation of the requirements of compatibility, for example (Panchal and Kulkarni 2018). They may, however, have a more active role to play in determining the relation, in the sense that they provide the listener with expectations that lead her immediately to viable candidates. For Śālikanātha, moreover, it is quite clear that the context which the listener takes into consideration at this stage is not merely the individual sentence, but any relevant information that is present in the listener’s mind. This includes, for example, what we may call discursive context, or the horizon of expectations constituted by sentences that have previously been encountered and understood in a given discursive unit (*prakaraṇam*), as well as the context of utterance, or the practical situation in which the listener has encountered the sentence. Mīmāṃsakas recognized that both types of context make enormous contributions to the meaning of a sentence. When ascertaining the meaning

of sentences of the Vedas, however, Mīmāṃsakas largely ignored the second type, since they maintained that the meanings of those sentences must remain constant across every single utterance. Śālikanātha is largely silent about how it is, precisely, that these types of extra-sentential context contribute to the meaning of a sentence. One possibility, however, which would be consonant with the principles of Mīmāṃsā, is that progressively larger expressive units constitute progressively more complex relations. Thus in a discursive unit comprising several sentences, the meaning of each sentence must be integrated into a single set of relations with each of the others. And when the context of utterance contributes to the meaning of a sentence, the listener's awareness of that context provides elements of meaning—which are not, however, word meanings, because they are not expressed by any words—that are similarly integrated into the set of relations that constitute the sentence meaning.

Perhaps one of the most pregnant phrases in the *Fundamentals* is Śālikanātha's claim that the complex of words establishes the sentence particular through the operation of "principles" (*nyāyas*).⁴⁷ This means that the input-output relation between the words and the sentence meaning is not arbitrary or opaque; there are principles that guide this process, and we can think of them as constraining certain relationships between the input and the output. Some of these principles are probably so obvious that they do not need to be spelled out—for instance, that the meanings called to mind by the words in the first stage should generally be present in the second stage, which is a version of the compositionality principle. Others, however, are less obvious. These are the "Mīmāṃsā principles," that is, the principles that have been formulated in the Mīmāṃsā system. Although Śālikanātha quotes Kumārila's description of Mīmāṃsā as accounting for how it is that people perform sacrifices on the basis of the texts of the Vedas, he nevertheless states that the principles formulated by Mīmāṃsā apply equally to language outside of the Vedas.⁴⁸ These principles allow us to determine the "local" relations between word meanings, which can then be integrated into a single "global" relation. For every element of meaning, Śālikanātha says, we need to know, for example, whether it is the topic of the sentence (*anuvādyam*) or the comment (*vidheyam*), whether it is primary (*pradhānam*) or secondary (*guṇabhūtam*) in relation to another element of meaning, and whether the meaning that has been called to mind is actually intended (*vivakṣitam*), in the sense that it ends up being incorporated into the final sentence meaning, or unintended (*avivakṣitam*).⁴⁹ Mīmāṃsā attempts to discover the principles that allow us to answer these questions in a systematic and consistent way. For instance, a well-known principle of Mīmāṃsā holds that an element of meaning

is unintended if it is a secondary qualification of the topic of the sentence (see Yoshimizu 2006).

When a listener applies these principles in order to ascertain the sentence particular, she will likely not be aware that she is doing so. In some sense, then, the “Mīmāṃsā principles” are like the grammatical rules which a speaker of a language internalizes and applies without a conscious awareness of the rules themselves. Interestingly, however, Śālikanātha comments that there are cases in which we do have to apply these principles consciously and deliberately in order to arrive at a suitable sentence meaning, and he contrasts these cases to sentences in which we are “very well practiced,” where the comprehension of meaning is immediate.⁵⁰ Since what is at stake here is the ascertainment of a relation between word meanings, this statement suggests that at least some of the information needed for this ascertainment is stored in the listener’s internal “language model,” and not collected and processed at the moment of hearing.

Mīmāṃsakas consider language, at least the language of the Vedas, to be a source of valid knowledge. If “expression” is the word for the production of a cognition of a meaning, and if this cognition is to count as a source of valid knowledge, then we should really only speak of sentence meanings as “expressed.” For word meanings cannot constitute sources of valid knowledge in themselves, since by definition we can only cognize a meaning from a word if we have already cognized the same meaning before. Kumārila is aware of the problem: on the one hand, he has designated words as “expressive,” although they do not in themselves allow us to cognize particular states of affairs; on the other, sentences do allow us to cognize particular states of affairs, but he cannot refer to this as “expression,” since that process has culminated in the word meanings.⁵¹ He ends up arguing for a transference of the expressive power of words to the sentence. Śālikanātha avoids this double bind. If words are expressive of their proper meanings only when they help us to understand a qualified sentence meaning, then we have no reason to think of individual words, outside of or isolated from a sentence, as expressive at all. Similarly, if the sentence meaning is simply the relation in which the individual word meanings find their place, the gap between the expression of word meanings and the expression of a sentence meaning disappears completely. Finally, Śālikanātha makes the ontological jump from abstract classes to determinate particulars by having the listener rely on a set of principles for processing the non-relational meanings of words into a determinate relational framework. Relational meanings are particulars.⁵² This allows him to avoid saying, as Kumārila did, that sentence meaning is only ever expressed indirectly.

6 Text and Translation of the Verses

The notion of the sentence meaning emerges from the words themselves: that is how we represent the thought of Prabhākara Guru: (1)

*padebhya eva vākyārtha-
pratyayo jāyate yathā /
tathā vyaṇṇ nibadhnūmah
prabhākaraguror matam // 1 //*

If it is through words, which use up their power in expressing their proper meanings in relation to each other, that those meanings are cognized, then, when that is the case, the sentence meaning is cognized as well as cognized in the same way. (2)

*padair evānviṭasvārtha-
mātropakṣiṇāśaktibhiḥ /
svārthāś ced bodhitā buddho
vākyārtho 'pi tathā sati // 2 //*

The wise proclaim that sentence meanings are nothing other than word meanings that have acquired a mutual relation in terms of being primary and secondary. (3)

*pradhānaguṇabhāvena
labdhānyonyasamanvayān /
padārthān eva vākyārthān
saṅgirante vipaścitaḥ // 3 //*

Although words have a large number of proper meanings taken individually, on account of there being one motive, they express a single sentence meaning. (4)

*bhūyāṃso yady api svārthāḥ
padānāṃ te prthak prthak /
prayojanatayā tv eka-
vākyārthaṃ saṃpracakṣate // 4 //*

The sentence, too, is said to be single, since the understanding of that is its single effect. For the primary element is the single motive for conveying the secondary elements. (5)

*tatpratītyekakāryatvād
vākyam apy ekam ucyate /
pratīpattir guṇānāṃ hi
pradhānaikaprayojanā // 5 //*

The powers of words are ascertained differentially, by addition and subtraction, when the practical activity of adults arises upon their hearing sentences. (6)

*vyavahāreṣu vṛddhānāṃ
vākyāśravaṇabhāviṣu /
āvāpoddhārabhedena
padānāṃ śaktiniścayaḥ // 6 //*

What are added and subtracted are proper meanings in relation to each other. From this one understands that it is only in regard to relational meanings that words have an expressive capacity. (7)

*opyante coddhriyante ca
svārthā anvayaśālināḥ /
anviteṣv eva sāmāthyam
padānāṃ tena gamyate // 7 //*

If the basis of language acquisition is this—that words express their proper meanings in relation with other meanings that are compatible with them, and which have attained dependency and proximity with them (8)

*ākāṅkṣāsannidhiprāpta-
yogyārthāntarasāṅgatān /
svārthān āhuḥ padānīti
vyutpattiḥ saṃśritā yadā // 8 //*

—then there will be no problem at all on account of infinitude or lack of invariable concomitance. Even with respect to word meanings, this same causal complex is present when one becomes aware of a relation. (9)

*ānantyavyabhicārābhyām
tadā doṣo na kaścana /
padārtheṣv api caivaiṣā
sāmagry anvayabodhane // 9 //*

Their power, however, is not observed through any other source of knowledge. Since there is no other way to account for it, it must be postulated. It is brought about by contact with words that aim at a qualified meaning. (10)

*kiṃ tu teṣāṃ adṛṣṭaiṣā
śaktir mānāntarād gatau /
kalpyā viśiṣṭārthapara-
padasaṃsparśabhāvitā // 10 //*

Because of their priority, because of their expressivity, and because we must accept in any case that they are aimed at that, it is better to accept that that power belongs exclusively to the words themselves. (11)

*prāthamyād abhidhātṛtvāt
tātparyopagamād api /⁵³
padānām eva sā śaktir
varam abhyupagamyatām // 11 //*

The whole collection of words, once it is heard, calls to mind meanings that are not related. Afterwards, it brings about an awareness of the sentence meaning by establishing the particular through exegetic principles. (12)

*padajātaṃ śrutaṃ sarvaṃ
smāritānanvitārthakam /
nyāyasaṃpāditavyakti
paścād vākyārthabodhakam // 12 //*

Even during the expression of a relational meaning, the proper form continues to be present. Therefore, a linguistic expression can generate a recollection regarding the proper form of its meaning on its own. (13)

*anvitasyābhidhāne 'pi
svarūpaṃ vidyate sadā /
tena svarūpamātre 'pi
śabdo janayati smṛtim // 13 //*

Just as the word is sometimes recalled by a thing that is not itself a source of valid knowledge, in the same way, the meaning will be recalled by a word, even though the word is not a source of valid knowledge. (14)

*yathārthenāpramāṇena
svapadaṃ smāryate kvacit /
padenāpy apramāṇena
tathārthaḥ smāryaṣyate // 14 //*

There is no circular reasoning, because a word expresses its proper meaning in its entirety, which is related in this way to the other meanings that are proximate in recollection. (15)

*smṛtisannihitair evaṃ
arthair anvitam ātmanaḥ /
artham āha padaṃ sarvaṃ
iti nānyonyasaṃśrayaḥ // 15 //*

Because both the meanings and the relation are grasped when the words, through their powers, create an awareness of the relational meanings in this way, there is no need of a separate power. (16)

*anviteṣu padair evaṃ
bodhyamāneṣu śaktibhiḥ /
anvayārthagṛhītātvaṃ
nānyām śaktim apekṣate // 16 //*

For a man, in understanding the relation, can understand that to which it is related, just as he can understand the class of something in understanding the particular. This is a well-known principle. (17)

*pratīyann anvayaṃ yasmāt
pratīyād anvitam pumān /
vyaktiṃ jātīm ivārthe 'śāv
iti saṃparikīrtiyate // 17 //*

How could those who explain that what words express is something related to a general term account for their relation to a restricted particular? (18)

*sāmānyenānvitam vācyaṃ
padānām ye pracakṣate /
niyatena viśeṣeṇa
teṣāṃ syād anvayaḥ katham // 18 //*

It may be that the particular is implicated, just as in the case of the individual and the class. Nevertheless a determinate particular is not understood, exactly as in that case. (19)

yady apy ākṣipyate nāma
viśeṣo vyaktijātivat /
nirdhāritaviśeṣas tu
tadvad eva na gamyate // 19 //

Although it is a particular that is dependent, compatible, and heard in proximity, nevertheless that is not grasped in the absence of something that makes one aware of the relation. (20)

yady apy ākāṅkṣito yogyo
viśeṣaḥ sannidhau śrutaḥ /
saṁbandhabodhakābhāve
grhyate na tathāpy asau // 20 //

If one takes the view that the relation is with a particular, however, then the criteria such as compatibility come to act as conditions for an awareness of the relation at the stage of language acquisition. (21)

sambandhabodhe vyutpattāy
upādhitve samāviśat /
viśeṣānvayavāde tu
yogyatvādy upakāraṁ // 21 //

Moreover, since the connection with the general term is established simply on the strength of the way things are, those who want that to be what is expressed have subjected language to needless exertion. (22)

kiṁ ca vastubalenaiva
siddhe sāmānyasaṅgame /
tasya vācyaṭvam icchadbhir
vṛthā śabdaḥ prayāsitaḥ // 22 //

Notes

- 1 When and where Śālikanātha lived is not known with certainty. His Sanskrit style makes it unlikely that he was from South India (as K. Kunhan Raja guesses in his introduction to Prabhākara's *Long Commentary*).
- 2 For the different views that Mīmāṃsakas have taken on *apūrvam*, see Yoshimizu 2000. For the second part of the *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, see Chapter 14 in this volume.
- 3 *racitā saccharitānām anugrahārthaṁ kartukāmena / vākyārthamātrkāyā vṛttir iyaṁ śālikenaiva* // (*Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 450).
- 4 See *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, Part 2, p. 7 (a reference to v. 12); Part 3, p. 268; part 4, p. 709 (a reference to v. 4) and p. 767.
- 5 For (rather speculative) reflections on Kumārila's lost work, see Frauwallner 1962.
- 6 See the quotations on pp. 396, 402, and 404.
- 7 The phrase occurs, for example, in Prabhākara's *Long Commentary*, p. 395.
- 8 These two principles, contextualism and compositionality, have both been attributed to Frege. For their history, see Janssen 2001.
- 9 *Purport of the Explanation in Verse*, pp. 61, 106.
- 10 "The expression of relational meanings" and "the relation of expressed meanings" are discussed by Mukulabhaṭṭa, Abhinavagupta, and Bhoja. The latter quotes entire verses of both Bhaṭṭa Jayanta and Śālikanātha (see Kunjunni Raja 1969, 199, 213,

- 215). We know that there were earlier followers of Prabhākara, who are referred to as “Old Prābhākaras” (*jaratprābhākarah*) in contrast to Śālikanātha.
- 11 See Kunjunni Raja 1969 and Ganeri 2011, both of whom deal primarily with the various senses of the word *arthaḥ* in the realm of signification.
- 12 The most eloquent exposition of this insight can be found in McCrea 2008.
- 13 See *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*, 2.1.46, and Śabara’s commentary thereon.
- 14 *Explanation of the System*, p. 445: *lokamantrabrāhmaṇeṣv avyabhicāry etad vākyalakṣaṇam iti sthitam*.
- 15 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 404. My translation of *vacanavyakti-* as “sentence particular” follows McCrea 2008.
- 16 See Skinner’s programmatic essay, “Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas” (Skinner 2002) and Ganeri’s application of it to Indian intellectual history (Ganeri 2008).
- 17 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 19.
- 18 Ganeri (2011, 10) calls the last two meanings “indefinite non-generic” and “definite non-generic,” respectively.
- 19 The verse cited by Śālikanātha (*Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 393) is presumably from Kumāṛila’s *Extensive Notes*: “our position is that sentence meaning is always based on secondary meaning” (*vākyārtho lakṣyamāṇo hi sarvatraiveti naḥ sthitiḥ*).
- 20 McCrea 2013, 139–40. This epistemological principle is most evident in Prabhākara’s theory of error (explained by Śālikanātha in one of his *Commentarial Essays* called *Byroad of Reasoning*, *Nayavṛthiḥ*), according to which cognitions that are apparently invalidated by subsequent cognitions are actually composite cognitions whose component parts retain their validity in spite of being synthesized incorrectly. For a review of Prabhākara’s theory, and a wider discussion of South Asian theories of error, see Schmithausen 1965, 205–12.
- 21 See *Long Commentary*, on 1.1.26, pp. 394–95.
- 22 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 3.
- 23 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, vv. 16–17.
- 24 See the *Sentence* section of Kumāṛila’s *Explanation in Verse*, v. 228.
- 25 See the *Sentence* section of Kumāṛila’s *Explanation in Verse*, v. 233.
- 26 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 379.
- 27 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 400. *tasyā* (sc. *abhidhānaśakteḥ*) *evānvayaparyantatā kalpayitum sukarā*.
- 28 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 9.
- 29 *Explanation of the System*, p. 455. Since Kumāṛila’s interpretation self-consciously differs from earlier interpretations of this section, I consider it likely that the idea is his.
- 30 *Explanation in Verse*, *Sentence* section, v. 233.
- 31 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 7.

- 32 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 403: *dvāv etāv arthau, yad ānayānvitam gotvam, gavānvitam cānayanam.*
- 33 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 382: *sāmānyānvayābhīdhānam ca nāśaṅkanīyam eva, vākyebhyo viśeṣānvayāvagamāt.*
- 34 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 388: *anvitasābhīdhānārtham uktārthaghaṭanāya vā / pratiyogini jijñāsā yā sākāṅkṣeti gīyate //*
- 35 Keating (2017) discusses this example, which the followers of Kumārila understood as postulation (*arthāpattiḥ*), in contrast to Śālikanātha (see footnote 40).
- 36 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 385.
- 37 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 388: *anvitasābhīdhānasiddhyartham evākāṅkṣā.*
- 38 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 389: *arthasya śravaṇānantaram ākāṅkṣāyogyatābhyām arthāntare buddhiviparivṛttiḥ.* Cf. *Explanation in Verse*, p. 455: *saṁnidhir iti buddhau viparivṛttiḥ.*
- 39 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 390: *saṁnidhāpakasāmagrikrameṇa kramavān asau.*
- 40 At this point in the *Fundamentals*, he enters into an argument against "postulation on the basis of what is heard" (*śrutārthāpattiḥ*). Whereas Kumārila says that when a statement that is heard does not make sense otherwise (e.g., "fat Devadatta does not eat during the day") we postulate a linguistic expression ("he eats at night"), Śālikanātha says that we postulate only the meaning. See his *Review of the Pramāṇas (Pramāṇapārāyaṇam)* in his *Commentarial Essays*, p. 279.
- 41 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 390, *yat sambandhārham.*
- 42 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, vv. 8–9ab.
- 43 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 4.
- 44 In fact the process begins with hearing sounds, which are recognized as phonemes, and then recognized as discrete words. For more on this process, see Chapter 2 in this volume.
- 45 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 12.
- 46 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 13.
- 47 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 12.
- 48 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 404: *lokavyavahāravartibhir nyāyaiḥ.*
The quotation, presumably from Kumārila's lost *Extensive Notes*, is *dharme pramīyamāṇe hi vedena karaṇātmanā / itikartavyatābhāgam mīmāṃsā pūrayiṣyate //*
- 49 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 404.
- 50 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, p. 404: *nanu loke drāḡ eva vākyārthāvagatir neyatīm sāmagrīm apekṣate. ucyate: atyantābhyasteṣu vākyeṣu syād evam.*
- 51 *Explanation in Verse*, Sentence section, vv. 229–30.
- 52 *Fundamentals of Sentence Meaning*, v. 20.
- 53 Subrahmanya Sastri's edition reads *-āvagamād.*

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