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PĀRASĪKA-BARBARA-YAVANA-RAUMAKĀDI-BHĀṢĀSU ...  
VERSUS KAMBOJEṢU – KUMĀRILA-BHAṬṬA  
ON (VERY FOREIGN) LANGUAGES

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the most recent, comprehensive and, unless some new source materials are discovered, definitive study by Karttunen on *Yonas and Yavanas in Indian Literature* (2015)<sup>1</sup>, the only reference to Yavanas known to us in classical philosophical Sanskrit texts is by Kumāri-la-bhaṭṭa in his commentary *Tantra-vārttika* (TV) ad *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* (with the *Śabara-bhāṣya*) 1.3.10<sup>2</sup>. The ethnonym appears there in a compound threading of names of barbarian peoples whose speeches are very foreign to Āryas' (i.e. Indo-Aryan) cultural language, Sanskrit: *pārasīka-barbara-yavana-raumakādi* („Pārasīka, Barbara, Yavana, Raumaka, etc.”; see below). The larger context of this reference in the TV is very interesting in itself; it had very early on caught the attention of, for example, H.T. Colebrooke, who, while describing „Mīmānsā” in his essay „On the Philosophy of the Hindus. Part III [From the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. I, p. 439–161]”, read at a public meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1826, observed: „Then follows, in Cumārila's *Vārtika*, much upon the subject of provincial and barbaric dialects; which, adverting to the age in which he flourished, is interesting, and merits the attention of philologists. He brings examples from the *Andhra* and *Dravida* dialects, and specifies as barbaric tongues the *Pārasīca*, *Yavana*, *Raumaca*, and *Barbara*, but confesses his imperfect acquaintance with these.”<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> K. Karttunen, *Yonas and Yavanas in Indian Literature*, (Studia Orientalia 116), Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 107–108; also mentioned on p. 383, 398.

<sup>3</sup> H.T. Colebrooke, *Miscellaneous Essays in two volumes*, Vol. I, London: H. Allen and Co., 1837, p. 315 (cf. Karttunen, *op. cit.*, p. 108). The question of the term *Andhra* and of the acquaintance of Kumārila with Dravidian languages is discussed by the present author in: M. Nowakowska, „Kumārila's Knowledge of Dravidian Languages”, in: *Tamil in Warsaw. Celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup>*

Later, the same TV passage also attracted the notice, although indirectly and as second-hand knowledge, of Robert Caldwell, the author of *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South-Indian Family of Languages* (in its 2nd edition, revised and enlarged, of 1856), who referred to this very text as the reason and support for his coinage of the name for the Southern Indian family of languages and for making other cultural and linguistic inferences of comparative significance<sup>4</sup>.

The Dravidian link in the TV has been followed and examined several times, not least because of its historical value for Dravidian studies<sup>5</sup>. Here, I would like to focus in turn on a slightly secondary, in argumentative terms, reference to other tongues – languages of (more or less) north-western non-Aryans, quoted in the title – to try to make some general remarks on the perspective of this conservative school of Vedic ritual interpretation, i.e. Mīmāṃsā, on the question of (the) language and (other) languages, as presented by Kumārila-bhaṭṭa (ca. 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> C.E., see below).

## II. THE TV PASSAGE IN ITS CONTEXT

II.1. One can repeat after Halbfass that Mīmāṃsā, „this most ‘orthodox’ philosophical school of Hinduism, which specialize[d] in the exegesis of the Veda and the exposition of the *dharma*, pa[id] more attention to the *mlecchas* than any other traditional philosophical system (*darśana*) of Hinduism”<sup>6</sup>. (By *mlecchas* we should understand non-*āryāvarta-nivāsins*<sup>7</sup>, non-Sanskrit speakers, outsiders

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*Anniversary of Tamil Studies at the University of Warsaw (2012/2013)*, ed. by D. Stasik and J. Woźniak, Warsaw: Dom Wydawniczy ELIPSA, 2014, p. 91–107.

<sup>4</sup> See Nowakowska, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> See for example K. Kunjunni Raja, „Kumārila-bhaṭṭa on the Dravidian Languages”, in: *Rājasudhā: Collected Papers of Dr. K. Kunjunni Raja*, Madras: The Dr. Kunjunni Raja Śaṣṭyabdapūrti Celebrations Committee, 1982, p. 209–218; W. Halbfass, *India and Europe. An Essay in Philosophical Understanding*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990; K.V. Zvelebil, *Companion Studies to the History of Tamil Literature*, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1992; and *Dravidian Linguistics: An Introduction*, Pondicherry: Pondicherry Institute of Linguistics and Culture, 1995; M. M. Deshpande, „Mīmāṃsā on the Linguistic Uses of the Mlecchas as an Aid to Vedic Interpretation”, in: *Ancient India in Its Wider World*, ed. by G. Parker and C.M. Sinopoli, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 2008, p. 129–142; as well as, recently, with more references and clarifications (but then without the knowledge of Deshpande, *op. cit.*), Nowakowska, *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> Halbfass, *op. cit.*, p. 183. On this apparently surprising attitude of Mīmāṃsā see also Deshpande, *op. cit.*, p. 130f.

<sup>7</sup> The terms *āryāvarta* („the habitat of the Āryas”), *āryāvarta-nivāsin* („a resident of the habitat of the Āryas”) are used by Kumārila quite often, as the opposite of *mlecchas*, although without further explication, so we cannot be sure what extent of the Aryans’ region he envisioned. Most probably, though, in his period it was larger than the area defined in the *Mānava-dharma-śāstra* (II.22) or by Patañjali in the *Mahā-bhāṣya* (cf. D. Killingley, „Mlecchas, Yavanas and Heathens: Interacting Xenologies in Early Nineteenth-Century Calcutta”, in: E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism – The Work of Wilhelm Halbfass and its Impact on Indian and Cross-Cultural Studies*, Delhi:

to Vedic and Sanskrit culture, non-Āryas)<sup>8</sup>. However, the context of Mīmāṃsā's uncommon attention to (cultural) aliens was very much fitting to the generally apologetic tone of the school. Mīmāṃsā, as a Vedic exegetical tradition, laid great stress on language as the main and only source of (Āryan) human knowledge in respect of all that was beyond perception. The latter was understood in realistic terms as cognition based on the actual contact of a cognizer and his / her sense organs with a cognized object<sup>9</sup>. Everything that did not meet those requirements and did not come into the defined domain of perceptual process, nor could, moreover, be mentally worked out by other cognitive procedures (dependent in their input data on perception, such as inference, etc.), had to be considered imperceptible (*adrśya*). But imperceptible did not have to mean uncognizable. According to Mīmāṃsā, some imperceptible 'objects', and especially meanings and objects (*artha*) of ritual injunctions (*codanā*), which were defined as *dharma*<sup>10</sup>, i.e. the field of ritual duty, could certainly be targets of cognition, although a very special, verbal type (*śabda*). It was verbal incentives that informed, firstly, about the duty of undertaking ritual activities by a qualified person (male or female) and, secondly, about the ultimate aim which performing these activities would lead that person to, defining him / her as someone „desirous of heaven” (*svarga-kāma*)<sup>11</sup>.

Thus, Mīmāṃsā claimed that it was (Vedic) *codanā* / *śabda* that provided valid knowledge about human ritual obligations and their rewarding outcomes, i.e. knowledge about something which was not yet here, which should happen, knowledge of *dharma*. The source of *codanā* – ritual instructions, collectively called the Vedas (embracing in general all Vedic literature, ca. 1400–500 B.C.E.) – was considered *pramāṇa* (a source of reliable knowledge) on matters related to *dharma*. To strengthen the Vedas' unflinching position, Mīmāṃsā framed them as eternal and authorless. The Vedic Word, Vedic language was forever meaningful and meaningful in a given way, while the natural, original relation between words and their meanings was permanent, fixed and independent of any person (author, speaker), divine or human (*apauruṣeya*).

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Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 2007, p. 125; M.M. Deshpande, „Sanskrit in the South Asian Sociolinguistic Context”, in: B.B. Kachru, Y. Kachru and S.N. Sridhar (eds.), *Language in South Asia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 180.

<sup>8</sup> More on the characterisation of *mlecchas* as *an-āryas*, in: M.M. Deshpande „What to Do with the Anāryas? Dharmic Discourses of Inclusion and Exclusion”, in: J. Bronkhorst, M. M. Deshpande (eds.), *Āryan and Non-Āryan in South Asia. Evidence, Interpretation and Ideology*, Delhi: Manohar, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> The rudiments of later Mīmāṃsā epistemology come from an important portion of the *Śabara-bhāṣya*, the earliest wholly survived commentary on Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsā-sūtras*, ad 1.1.1–5.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* 1.1.2.

<sup>11</sup> The hierarchy among these various necessary elements of the whole structure of ritual obligation were interpreted differently by the two main branches of later Mīmāṃsā, with the focus more on the ritual's fruit (Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā) or more on the very obligation (Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā).

With such an approach to their language, the users of Sanskrit and followers of Vedic ritual had thus an interpretative problem in how to place other languages and their speakers. Especially taxing was the question of how to explain away the presence of terms in the Vedic corpus which were not current among Āryas, could not be derived from Vedic / Sanskrit roots with the help of grammatical procedures, and whose meanings, which made it even more complex, were supplied by *mlecchas*. The difficulty was discussed in Mīmāṃsā under the *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* 1.III.10 (the so-called *pika-nemādhikaraṇa*, i.e. „the topic of [such terms as] *pika*, *nema* [etc.]”), the broader framework of which was the analysis of the authority of sources other than the Vedas – such as the *smṛti* corpus and traditional customs or usages – on matters related to *dharma*<sup>12</sup>.

In this context, one not further known, but very important author, Śabara<sup>13</sup>, in his commentary to the MS (the so-called *Śabara-bhāṣya*, ŚBh, ca. 5<sup>th</sup> C.E.) discussed such terms as *pika*, *nema*, *sata* and *tāmarasa*, their meanings and the source of knowledge regarding them. They could be identified and understood either by Sanskrit explanations, via wordlists, etymology and grammar, i.e. *nigama-nirukta-vyākaraṇa*<sup>14</sup>, or with reference to the *mlecchas*’ usage – *ācāra*. Our commentator opted for the latter solution, as long as *mlecchas*’ understanding of these and similar words was not contradictory in any way to the Vedas. He had also no problem with accepting that non-Aryans might be experts on various secular, worldly (*laukika*) activities and provide proper vocabulary for them, especially if these occupations tended to be neither popular among nor pursued by Āryas (for example rearing and catching birds – *pakṣiṇām poṣaṇe bandhane ca*<sup>15</sup>).

II.2. The subject was further taken under extensive consideration by Kumārila-bhaṭṭa, one of the most significant representatives of Mīmāṃsā, dated ca. 600–650 C.E., in his commentary *Tantra-vārttika*. He introduces the aspect of other languages already ad MS 1.III.8–9, under *śāstra-siddha-padārthādhikaraṇa* („the topic of the meanings of words as established in the *śāstra* [here: the Vedas]”), known also as *yava-varāhādhikaraṇa* („the topic of [such terms as] *yava*, *varāha*”), which initially brought the problem of what we might loosely call

<sup>12</sup> See in more detail in Nowakowska, *op. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Whose name / nickname (?), left by the tradition unexplained, in itself immediately recalls the *mleccha* group of Śabarās, known for example from the *Mahā-bhārata*, located somewhere in the eastern-northern part of Deccan, above Andhras. We have also earlier Vedic data linking a name of Śabara(s) to eastern and south-eastern tribes (cf. M. Witzel, „Aryan and non-Aryan names in Vedic India. Data for the linguistic situation, c. 1900–500 B.C.”, in: Bronkhorst, Deshpande, *op. cit.*, p. 337–404).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. J. Houben, „The Sanskrit tradition”, Part II, in: W. van Bekkum, J. Houben, I. Sluiter, K. Versteegh, *The Emergence of Semantics in Four Linguistic Traditions: Hebrew, Sanskrit, Greek, Arabic*, (Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, Series III – Studies in the History of the Language Sciences, Vol. 82), Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1997, p. 81.

<sup>15</sup> See also Nowakowska, *op. cit.*, p. 98; and Deshpande, *Mīmāṃsā on...*, p. 133.

either homonymy or polysemy (and which Kumārila formulated this: *eka-śabdān anekārthaṃ* – „one word having many meanings”). This is the case of two meanings – either related to some degree or not – of one, apparently same sounding word, but used in various circumstances or by different groups of people.

The MS 1.III.8–9<sup>16</sup> simply state that sometimes the differentiation (*vipratipatti*) in meanings of some terms is acceptable; they can be treated as optionally and equally valent (*samā*), unless there is some contradiction (*virodhā*), but ultimately the meaning supported by the Vedas and Veda experts (*śāstra-sthā*) is preferred as they define the source of human knowledge of dharma (*tan-nimittatvāt*). Śabara in his commentary on the two *sūtras* simply reports on the semantic variations (quoting the words noted in Vedic literature: *yava*, *varāha*, *vetasa*), and suggests that the correct understanding of the terms in question depends on their contexts and uses, with particular respect for *śāstra*'s, i.e. the Vedic reading. In Śabara's explications (ad MS 1.III.9), moreover, among the words discussed, *yava* appears to be to some extent polysemous – possessing two meanings related by some actual similarity – *sādṛśyā* – observed between things. Namely, it denotes first of all barley (*dīrgha-śūka*) and then, figuratively (*gaṇa*), a species of beautyberry (? *priyaṅgu*)<sup>17</sup>, based on their similar blooming time (summer, when other plants wither: *yatrānyā ośadhayo mlāyante, athāite modamānā ivōttiṣṭhantīti*). Concerning the other two examples, Śabara merely reports on the proposed meanings, i.e. *varāha* – denotes either a boar (*śūkara*) or a crow (*kṛṣṇa-śakuni*), while *vetasa* happens to name two different plants, willow-leaved water croton (*vañjulaka*) or black plum, i.e. *Syzygium cumini* (*jambū*). However, only the first given meanings of *varāha* and *vetasa* are supported by the Vedas, therefore only they can be considered correct, according to Śabara.

Kumārila disagrees with the ŚBh on the precise interpretation of this *adhikaraṇa*, most probably because he no longer knows about the other uses of those terms outside the Vedic context, which Śabara reported on or merely quoted from some earlier literature<sup>18</sup>. Instead, Bhaṭṭa proposes a couple of alternative explications of the 1.III.8–9 *sūtras*, or one might say, different linguistic problems related to their topic. He enters into a long review of a number of more or less semantic difficulties, in which he first states, although with a distancing word *kila* ('so reported'), that in other places or countries one can meet other meanings of some words known to Āryas (*kila kvāpi deśāntare prayujyante*). This statement strongly

<sup>16</sup> *teṣv adarśanād virodhasya samā vipratipattiḥ syāt* (MS 1.III.8). *śāstra-sthā vā tan-nimittatvāt* (MS 1.III.9).

<sup>17</sup> The approximate (as not the most important aspect of the reported discussion to me) identification of the plants is based on the Pandanus Database for Plants (<http://iu.ff.cuni.cz/pandanus/database/>). For *priyaṅgu* Deshpande (*Mīmāṃsā on...*) gives 'long pepper', while Witzel (*op. cit.*) shows reasons for the understanding of 'millet', which would also perhaps be more fitting here.

<sup>18</sup> Cf.: *naivōcyante kvacid deśe yava-śrutyā priyaṅgavaḥ, jambūṃ na vetasaṃ prāhur varāhaṃ nāpi vāyasam*. See also Deshpande, *Mīmāṃsā on...*, p. 131.

echoes Patañjali's *Mahā-bhāṣya* 1.95 (MBh, ca. 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C.E.) ad Kātyāyana's *Vārttika* 9 (*sarve deśāntare*; see below) and the grammarians' discussion of words known from Vedic texts but not in use (*aprayukta*) among the people of their times (cf. section VII in Joshi, Roodbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 28, 126 ff.). In one of the explanations that the MBh offers we find a remark that all such words were in fact in use at the time, but in other regions – *sarve khalv apy ete śabdāḥ deśāntare prayujyante* (MBh 1.95; Joshi, Roodbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 29, 136–137). Thus, Kumārila's recalling Patañjali's observation in his commentarial introduction to the discussion was appropriate to the context, even though Patañjali did not analyze the same examples as Śabara.

Next, in the *pūrva-pakṣa* portion of the first interpretation of the *yava-varādhādhikaraṇa*, closest to Śabara's, Bhaṭṭa mentions *Kambojas* (on this see further below), who use a word *śavati* with the meaning of *gati* – 'moving' (*śavatir gati-karmā kambojeṣv eva dṛṣṭaḥ*)<sup>19</sup>, while Āryas mean by *śava* a 'corpse', 'dead body': *śavam iti mṛta-śarīrābhidhāna*. The difference is explained in terms of the root form and its derivative (*vikārāpannam*), compared to the ritualistic analysis and the differentiation between the primary (*prakṛti*) and subsidiary (*vikṛti*) sacrifices. With the *śava* example Kumārila obviously follows in the footsteps of Yaska's *Nirukta* (6<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> B.C.E.) and, again, Patañjali's *Mahā-bhāṣya*. The first text, *Nirukta* II.2, seems to be the source of quotation: *śavatir gati-karmā kambojeṣv eva bhāṣyate* [...] *vikāram asyāryeṣu bhāṣante śava iti*<sup>20</sup>, while the preceding sentence, introducing the example, implies that different peoples use the various morphological formations of the same roots (*athāpi prakṛtaya evāikeṣu bhāṣyante, vikṛtaya ekeṣu*; cf. Sarup, *op. cit.*: „Further, primary forms alone are employed (in speech) among some people; secondary forms among others.”). The second source, Patañjali's MBh 1.98, presents the same information about *Kambojas* and *śava* under a slightly different light, in the passage continuing the remark on the use of some lexemes in other places, as mentioned above. Namely, Patañjali addresses the doubt voiced in reference back to the MBh 1.95 and its claim that all words in the meanings under discussion find some usage somewhere (*sarve* [...] *deśāntareṣu*), objecting in the MBh 1.96 that they are not in fact observed in use (*na caīta upalabhyante*). The MBh 1.97 responds that they might be observed somewhere, if only one makes some effort towards it (*upalabdḥau yatnaḥ kriyatām*), because „[t]he area in which words are used is vast”<sup>21</sup> (*mahān hi śabdasya prayoga-viśayaḥ*), starting from „the earth with its seven continents, the three worlds, the four Vedas”, etc. (*sapta-dvīpā*

<sup>19</sup> On the languages of *Kambojas*, cf. Joshi, Roodbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 139f.; also Karttunen's remark that the language seems to be Iranian (*op. cit.*, p. 345f.).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. the translation by Lakshman Sarup (*The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta: the Oldest Indian Treatise on Etymology, Philology, and Semantics*, Delhi-Varanasi-Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1967 (2<sup>nd</sup> Reprint), p. 22): „The verb *śavati*, meaning to go, is used by the *Kambojas* only. [...] Its modified form *śava* is used by the *Aryans*”.

<sup>21</sup> Joshi, Roodbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 29, 137.

vasumatī trayo lokās catvāro vedāḥ [...])<sup>22</sup>. And as the very first example of such varied usages in various geographical areas the MBh 1.98 recalls *śavatiṅ gati-karmā kambojeṣv eva bhāṣito bhavati*, adding also the same information about the Āryas' *śava* (*vikāra enam āryā bhāṣante śava iti*)<sup>23</sup>. Any possible subtle differences in interpretations aside, Kumārila's references to the two (or one, the younger, quoting the older) authoritative sources are again contextually justified. We might also come to an observation that for Kumārila's *pūrva-pakṣa* speaker Kambojas were not very distant *mlecchas*, if at all, as he did not call them that anywhere directly, though they were not Āryas, as their corresponding linguistic usages were contrasted. At least such were most probably the circumstances at the time of Yaska, who recorded the *śavati-śava* pair, which later, with time, might become a stock example, transmitted by successive generations of the *nirukta* followers.

In addition, immediately afterwards in this *pūrva-pakṣa*, Kumārila adds that there are many verbs and nouns which in given places or countries are used with different meanings (*bahava eva hi dhātavo nāma-śabdās ca prati deśam artha-bhedeṣu vyavasthitā dṛṣyante*). This statement most probably refers to various regional usages mentioned in the MBh 1.98, following the Kambojas quotation. In sum, the sources for the first interpretation of *pūrva-pakṣa* are the *nirukta* and *vyākaraṇa* traditions, but, interestingly, the implication of these opinions is that in their view (and maybe in Kumārila's, too) Kambojas and Āryas share some common linguistic basis, and only use different morphological formations of shared roots. This thesis finds support in the perspective of the traditional placement

<sup>22</sup> The whole enumeration: „The earth with its seven continents, the three worlds, the four Vedas with their ancillaries and Upaniṣads, divided in various ways, the 101 recensions of the *adhvaryu*s, the Sāmaveda of the 1000 paths, the twenty-one-fold *bāhvryca*, the nine-fold Veda of Atharvan, the *vākovākya*, *itihāsa*, *purāṇa*, (and) the science of medicine. So vast is the area in which words are used.” etc. (*sapta-dvīpā vasumatī trayo lokās catvāro vedāḥ sāṅgāḥ sa-rahasyā bahudhā vibhinnāḥ eka-śatam adhvaryu-śākhāḥ, sahasra-vartmā sāma-vedāḥ, eka-viṃśatidhā bāhvrycaṃ, navadhā 'tharvaṇo vedāḥ, vāko-vākyaṃ itihāsaḥ, purāṇaṃ, vaidyakam ity etāvāṅ śabdasya prayogaṅviśayaḥ*) (Joshi, Roodbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 137f.).

<sup>23</sup> In the English translation by Joshi, Roodbergen (*op. cit.*, p. 139): „The Āryas use it in speech in the sense of *vikāra* ‘decomposition’, (compare) *śava* ‘corpse’” (*vikāra enam āryā bhāṣante śava iti*). Similarly, in their translation of the commentator on the MBh, Kaiyaṭa (ca. 11<sup>th</sup> C.E.) in his commentary Pradīpa: „(On) *vikāra* ‘decomposition’. That is to say the condition of being dead for one who lived (is called) *vikāra* in relation to that (earlier living one)” (*vikāra iti, jīvito mṛtāvasthā vikāraḥ; tatrēty arthaḥ*; Joshi, Roodbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 30, 140). This choice of the English equivalent of *vikāra* might be slightly confusing, suggesting some further departing from the meaning of ‘modification’ (already figurative in the MBh, but still based on the grammatical / ritualistic use of *prakṛti* / *vikṛti*), which is not necessary. According to Bhartṛhari (5<sup>th</sup> C.E.), whom Kaiyaṭa follows (cf. Joshi, Roodbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 140), in Bronkhorst (*op. cit.*, p. 20f., 90): *jīvataḥ prakṛter mṛto vikāraḥ. mṛto nāśaṃ gata ity arthaḥ. atha vā gater vikāraḥ gaty-uparamaḥ. uparati-kriye bhāṣante śava iti. nirukte tv evaṃ pathyate – vikāram asyāryeṣu bhāṣanta iti* („A dead person is a modification of a living one, which is the original. ‘Dead’ means ‘gone to destruction’. Or the modification of going is the cessation of going. With regard to someone whose activity has ceased they speak of ‘a corpse’. In the *Nirukta*, on the other hand, it is read: „They use the modification [of the verbal root *śav*] among the Āryas” [...]).”

of Kambojas, among others groups, as fallen descendants from the same forefathers as Āryas<sup>24</sup>, and often paired with Śakas and – significant in the context of this article – Yavanas<sup>25</sup> (see below).

The situation might be different with the gap (more current, from the perspective of the TV) between Āryas' and (other?) *mlecchas*' languages. This is precisely what Kumārila recalls in his preferred interpretation of Śabara's commentary, emphasizing that the actual problem meant in the MS 1.III.8–9 is the divergence in the understanding of words between Āryas and *mlecchas* (*ārya-mleccha-prayogajā*), and the criteria for the hierarchy between them. With this Kumārila announces the proper analysis of the *mleccha* languages' position against Sanskrit, which he undertakes in the following MS 1.III.10 (cf. above, II.1). His *pūrva-pakṣin* there recalls a whole set of social and ritual rules for dealing with *mlecchas*, argues that their tongues are *a-saṃskṛta* and corrupted (*mlecchâpabhāṣaṇe*), with distorted meanings, and underlies that with *mlecchas* being foreign to *dharma*, there is no point in accommodating their meanings of any vocabulary. And one of the reasons for distrusting linguistic usages and for undermining the semantic reliability of *mlecchas* is the sheer size and great number of their territories – their habitats are endless (*ananta-mleccha-deśās*). In this context, Kumārila's *pūrva-pakṣin* demonstrates through the example of a few Dravidian words the futility of the application of Sanskrit etymology and grammar to identify the meanings of even these terms, which, as the text implies, happened to be used most probably next to the *ārya* language (see below)<sup>26</sup>. The proximity of Dravidian speakers is contrasted with other languages by the rhetorical question: if *nighantu-nirukta-vyakāraṇa* are of no help in terms of the identification of meanings even of the Drāviḍa words, what would be the point of their application „towards such languages as the ones of Pārasika, Barbara, Yavana, Raumaka, etc.”<sup>27</sup>. Therefore, the *pūrva-pakṣin* concludes that *mlecchas*' terms, when in use by Āryas, should never be trusted with regard to their meanings (*na kaścitra viśvāso yuktaḥ*)<sup>28</sup>.

In his *siddhānta*, Kumārila follows the position of Śabara, advises to accept rather *an-ārya* derivations for *an-ārya* words, than to stretch Sanskrit etymologies and grammar rules, if only the *mleccha* explanations and understandings in question are not against the Vedas. He also (rather famously, cf. Halbfass, *op. cit.*, p. 185) reminds his opponents that the problem of establishing the meaning of *an-ārya* words being part of the Vedas might be at least in some cases not so serious, as some *ārya* language speakers happen to be bilingual (*dvaibhāṣika*). Kumārila does not find it

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Deshpande, *Mīmāṃsā on...*, p. 137–139.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Karttunen, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>26</sup> This is the passage mentioned above, in part I. Introduction, and discussed by various authors, most recently, to repeat, by Deshpande, *Mīmāṃsā on...*, and Nowakowska, *op. cit.*

<sup>27</sup> *tad yadā drāviḍādi-bhāṣāyām idṛṣī svacchanda-kalpanā, tadā pārasika-barbara-yavana-raumakādi-bhāṣāsu kiṃ vikalpya, kiṃ pratipatsyanta iti na vidmaḥ.*

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Nowakowska, *op. cit.*

problematic to conclude that in the case of *pika*, *nema* and similar words forming part of Vedic injunctions, if their meaning cannot be known from the Vedas or the usage of *āryāvarta-nivasins*, it has to be accepted from *mlecchas*.

Thus, in the context of Vedic exegesis, in his close analysis of various semantic difficulties related to the questions of polysemy or homonymy, and, possibly of an (un)common ground among languages, Kumārila refers to at least three categories of non-Āryas and their languages, suggesting also some gradation among them. There are Kāmbojas, counter-positioned to Āryas by ancient sources (the *Nirukta*); Drāviḍas, not understood or misunderstood by some Āryas, and subjected to some attempts at linguistic Sanskritization procedures, who yet live nearby or in a place not so distant that direct contact with Āryas would be impossible; and, finally, some extremely remote, culturally and probably geographically distant groups, such as Pārasīkas, Barbaras, Yavanas, Raumakas, and others, whose languages Kumārila considers very foreign.

### III. FROM KAMBOJAS TO YAVANAS

The third group of foreign peoples, collated by Kumārila's *pūrva-pakṣin*, may appear to be a list of arbitrary names (though all are from some regions north-west of *āryāvarta*), considered alien at the time of Kumārila (or earlier, if we yet learn about the exact source of these opinions he presented in his *pūrva-pakṣa*). They are grouped together possibly on account of their common exoticism, degree of foreignness, and remoteness. It is, however, interesting, in the light of the traditional Sanskrit perspective on the common links between Kāmbojas and Yavanas<sup>29</sup>, to see Yavanas as members of another, separate list. As Karttunen (*op. cit.*, p. 345) reminds us – „The Kāmbojas represent an early Iranian population in present-day Afghanistan, which was already known in the late Vedic period. Beginning from the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE at least, with Alexander's foundation in Bactria and the further Seleucid colonization there, they came to have Yavanas as neighbours. Thus, they appear together in Indian sources in the mid-third century BCE (Aśoka)”.

We should, then, first note that at the time of Kumārila (or his *pūrva-pakṣin*) the Kāmbojas were not of a rank similar to the Yavanas, as they once were, for example, in the light of the *Mahā-bhārata* (cf. Karttunen, *op. cit.*, p. 7, 10, 11), or with the Yonas in Aśoka's inscriptions or Buddhist sources (Karttunen, *op.*

<sup>29</sup> Cf. the information about earlier records of Yavanas: „Most often, the Yavanas are mentioned together with other north-western peoples. [...] In 23 cases they appear together with the Kāmbojas (as the dvandva *yavanakāmboja*), which is an earlier connection already found in Aśoka's inscription and in the Buddhist *Majjhimanikāya*. It is commonly accepted that Kāmbojas, already mentioned in Vedic texts, were an ancient Iranian people living west of the Indo-Aryans. Moreover, there are no less than six early cases where Yavanas are located directly between Śakas and Kāmbojas.” (Karttunen, *op. cit.*, p. 344f.). The TV records the version „Kamboja”, not „Kāmboja”.

*cit.*, p. 202, 240). In a way, though the Kambojas were presented by the earliest authorities as related to Āryas, in the TV they appear distant. It may be for chronological reasons (ancient sources of the information quoted from the *Nirukta*), but their absence otherwise in Kumārila's discussion could be also motivated by their physical distance from him. The second issue is their disconnection from the Yavanas, evident in the TV, who in turn are categorized as a group even more culturally and linguistically distant from Āryas than Kambojas. In between comes a group of the languages of Drāviḍas and others who also supply new exemplary material for linguistic deliberations. This indeed suggests that for Kumārila Drāviḍas were closer than Kambojas, not to mention Yavanas and others, even though all three ethnonyms might be found in earlier sources, set together in lists of foreign warriors, fallen tribes of *kṣatriyas*, etc.<sup>30</sup>

Who then might Kumārila mean by this ethnonym – Yavanas, unless he used the chain simply of *mlecchas'* names, not distinguishing their ethnicities and not seriously considering who exactly they were at the time? Karttunen (*op. cit.*, p. 383–384) tried to identify on the basis of the whole collected material the references of the *mleccha* names in the TV, too, settling for „Persian” (Pārasīkas), „Greek or Arabic” (Yavanas), „Latin or Greek?” (Raumakas) and „perhaps Turkish” (Barbaras). And he argues: „The contact between India and Rome had always been mainly through the Greek-speaking eastern part of the Roman Empire, and there is no clear evidence at all of any knowledge of the Latin language in India. In the time of Kumārila in the 7<sup>th</sup> century [...], Rome already belonged to the distant past. Both in Greece and the Near East, the name was commonly used for Byzantium. Therefore, it seems natural to take the *raumaka* language here to be Greek, which leaves only Arabic as the meaning of *yavana*. This is very well possible. Frequent contact with Greeks (the original Yavanas) had subsided as early as the fourth century and there were close commercial relations with Arabs even before the rise of Islām.” From the perspective of some later literature, Karttunen (*op. cit.*, p. 398) points out also that „Kṣemendra in the 11<sup>th</sup> century applied the old idea of the barbarian rule of the Kali Age to the contemporary situation, listing Yavanas together with Turks and Afghans among the barbarians [...]. They were no longer fallen Kṣatriyas or not-excluded Śūdras, but entirely unclean barbarians with whom one was not allowed to eat or marry, and preferably not even converse”. The list in the TV suggests that already at the time of Kumārila people called Yavanas might be perceived, at least by some, as indeed distant and culturally very foreign.

<sup>30</sup> Some representative examples and sources in: Deshpande, *Mīmāṃsā on...*, p. 138-139; see also Killingley, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

Mīmāṃsā discusses these issues in the very broad context of the Vedas as *śabda-pramāṇa*: the Sanskrit / Vedic language in its injunction (*codanā / vidhi*) faculty as the only direct source of information on *dharma*. Therefore, it tries to control the language and its components, to rule on all its functions and to delineate its boundaries. Unsurprisingly then, it comes to look at quite a number of various linguistic usages and terminology that could come into the awareness of *āryāvarta-nivasins*' up to the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> C.E. Although the order of analyzed data in the TV is governed by the structure of argumentation and sources, the examples from other languages referred to by the TV appear there in some graded distance from Sanskrit speakers. At the same time, the TV discussion presents a rich and not a mono-linguistic picture of the earlier and contemporaneous life and culture in their part of the Indian subcontinent. In addition, the Kambojas case suggests some (at least historical) Aryan awareness of their proximity to and relationship with Āryas, while the tongues of Drāviḍas etc. are presented as not so historically related, unnecessarily Aryanized in terms of etymology and grammar, and yet as the languages that are not so distant, semantically even quite accessible thanks to the presence of bilingual Āryas. Only far on the geographical and / or cultural horizon there appear the languages of such alien peoples as the Pārasīkas, Barbaras, Raumakas, and Yavanas.

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PĀRASĪKA-BARBARA-YAVANA-RAUMAKĀDI-BHĀṢĀSU... VERSUS KAMBOJEṢU –  
KUMĀRILA-BHAṬṬA ON (VERY FOREIGN) LANGUAGES

Abstract

The tradition of Vedic ritual exegesis which evolved into the philosophical school of Mīmāṃsā focused on the problems of the language of Vedas, especially in its deontic aspect related to *dharma*, i.e. ritual duty. As a result, it also developed some general linguistic theses and tried to accommodate in its analyses the phenomenon of the existence of other, not Sanskrit, languages. This is apparent in the works of Kumārila-bhaṭṭa (6-7<sup>th</sup> C.E.), one of the most important Mīmāṃsā authors. In his commentary *Tantra-vārttika* (1.3.8-10), in the course of typical argumentative exchange, he looks at three different categories of foreigners and their languages. This article follows his line of reasoning, pointing out the possible textual and socio-geographical factors shaping this linguistic differentiation.

Keywords: āryas, Kumārila, languages, Mīmāṃsā, mlecchas, Yavanas