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METHODS OF UPANIṢADIC INTERPRETATION
IN ŚAṄKARA'S VEDĀNTA: THE CASE OF
VINIYOGAKĀRAṆĀNI AND ṢADVIDHALIṄĀNI

I. Introduction

Although secondary literature dealing with Śaṅkara is vast, and his work has been studied quite thoroughly by various scholars, some aspects of his thought still deserve some further elaboration¹. This is to be expected, bearing in mind the depth and immensity of Śaṅkara's intellectual enterprise. Here I shall attempt to shed some light on the exegetical aspects of Śaṅkara's works, the majority of which are composed in commentary form. Śaṅkara's thought and Advaita-Vedānta has been widely-known and well represented in secondary literature from Deussen's epochal work *Das System des Vedānta* (1883) to more recent works of scholars such as Daniel HH Ingalls, Paul Hacker, Tillman Vetter, Sengaku Mayeda, Hajime Nakamura, Richard De Smet and others². It should be said that some themes, such as the relationship

¹ At the International Seminar on the Contribution of Sanskrit to World Thought, held in January 2012 in Śringeri, Prof. Vempaty Kutumba Sastry was kind to present me his, at the time yet unpublished, article *Hermeneutical principles and techniques as found in the Sanskrit text "Śārīrakanyāyasaṅgraha": A lesser-known work of Vivaraṅcārya Prakāśātmayati*. The content and some of the conclusions of the article are remarkably similar to the ideas I wanted to express in this article, as well as to my earlier article "*Aspects of Early Upaniṣadic Exegesis*". As Prof. Kutumba Sastry presented his paper at the 14th World Sanskrit Conference in Kyoto, which I did not attend, I was unfortunately unaware of his work until the Śringeri conference. I am very grateful to Prof. Kutumba Sastry for his article and for the remarks on my conference paper, which helped me significantly to understand the problem of *Viniyogakāraṇāni*.

² As secondary literature on Śaṅkara is quite extensive, I have mentioned only a few authors whose impact on our understanding of Śaṅkara's philosophy is strong.





between reason and revelation in Śaṅkara's philosophy, are well studied in works by K.S. Murty (1959) and Halbfass (1983)³, and the relationship between reason and revelation is philosophically deeply connected with Śaṅkara's exegetical enterprise. Here I shall try to examine some technical tools employed by Śaṅkara in order to interpret Upaniṣadic texts. Two sets of rules for interpretation will be described in this article together with examples of their usage. These might tell us also something of the history of Vedānta and its relation to the rival school of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. The first set of six rules, *Viniyogakāraṇāni*, were taken from Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and reemployed by early Vedāntins in a peculiar way, to be described later. The second set of six rules are solely used in Vedāntic textbooks and never in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā; for this reason they could be regarded as originally Vedāntic. Traditionally they are called *Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni*⁴. As I have already described *Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni* in my previous article "Aspects of early Upaniṣadic exegesis" I shall elaborate here in some detail the usage of *Viniyogakāraṇāni* in Śabara's commentary on *Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras* and in Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahma-Sūtras*. *Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni* will be mentioned only briefly with some additional elaboration of the rule of concordance of beginning and end (*upakrama-upasaṃhāra*) and its connection to *Viniyogakāraṇāni*. Although it could be said that this approach is more a historical and philological one than a philosophical one, a reemployment and hermeneutical reinterpretation of these rules will also tell us something about the nature of the Vedāntic philosophical enterprise and emphasise its hermeneutical substance. Setting the stakes so high (perhaps too high), I shall begin with an elaboration of *Viniyogakāraṇāni*, the first set of rules for interpretation, originally conceived and employed in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā but later reemployed in Vedānta philosophy.

³ More on the problem of reason and revelation and on other authors writing about it, see in Halbfass (1983: 27 – 84). It should be noted that Śaṅkara's methods of interpretation from both a philosophical and some technical aspects were studied also by Clooney (1992, 1994), Rambachan (1992) and Modi (1943).

⁴ The term *Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni* is used in *Vedāntasāra* [(ed.) K. Sundararama Aiyer (1911: 97)].





2. *Viniyogakāraṇāni* in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā

The first set of rules for interpretation is a set of six rules called *Viniyogakāraṇāni*, which was conceived in the ritual philosophy of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. These six means are enumerated in *Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra* 3.3.14 and they are: 1. direct assertion (*śruti*), 2. indicative power (*liṅga*), 3. syntactical connection (*vākya*), 4. context (*prakaraṇa*), 5. place (*sthāna*) and 6. name (*samākhyāna*). Śābara⁵ (commentary on *MimS* 3.3.11, *MimS* 3.3.12, *MimS* 3.3.13 and *MimS* 3.3.14) calls them *Viniyogakāraṇāni*, or means for establishing application (usually of the verse in ritual, however rules are employed mostly in establishing the connection of subsidiaries to main ritual action). Jha translates the term *viniyogakāraṇa* differently. In *MimSBh* 3.3.11 (Jha 1973 [I]: 445) he translates it first as “the means of determining the connection of subsidiaries”, and second, on the same page, as “the means of determining the use of *mantra*”⁶. The translation is actually almost the same as the usage of *mantra* is subsidiary to the main ritual act. In Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā (*MimSBh* 2.1.5) a general law is established that every act enjoined in Vedas brings a transcendental result which is unseen at first (*apūrva*). In *MimS* 2.1.6 rites are divided into Primary (*pradhāna*) and Subsidiary (*guṇa*). A Primary Act directly leads to a transcendent result (*apūrva*) while the Subsidiary helps the Primary⁷. Throughout Śābara’s commentary on *MimS*, *Viniyogakāraṇāni* are mostly used as a tool for establishing which parts of sacrifice are subsidiary and how the subsidiaries should be used in ritual. On the other hand, Śaṅkara calls them valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) in *BSBh* 3.3.25. He employs them exclusively as tools for interpretation of the Upaniṣads (and sometimes Brāhmaṇas, as will be shown) in some parts of his commentary on *Brahma-Sūtras*. *BSBh* 3.3 is where Śaṅkara uses *Viniyogakāraṇāni* with greatest regularity, and no wonder, since *BS* 3.3 (*Upasaṃhāra*) deals mostly with establishing which meditations from Upaniṣadic or Brāhmaṇa texts are the same in order to combine and use them in meditation. *Upasaṃhāra*, or the combination of texts, is in a way similar to

⁵ Śābara’s commentary, dated by Nakamura (2004: 153) at around 550 AD, is the oldest preserved commentary on *MimS*.

⁶ Later on in the text Jha translates *viniyogakāraṇa* again as the “means of determining the connection of subsidiaries” (1973 [I]: 447, 448, 449 [*MimSBh* 3.3.12, 13, 14]).

⁷ *MimS* 3.1.2: *śeṣaḥ parārthatvāt* / (“The auxiliary is an ‘auxiliary’ because it serves the purposes of another.” Tr. Jha 1933[I]: 337)





the procedure described in *Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras* 2.4.8 – 32 where the question arises of what to do with the same sacrifices appearing in different recensions of the Veda. *MimS* discusses the basic principle that the same act in different recensions of text is truly one and the same, despite belonging to different branches of Vedic learning.

MimS 3.3.14 determines the hierarchy among the six principles of determining the connection of subsidiaries if more than one of such means appears in the same textual passage. *MimS* 3.3.14 reads: *śruti liṅgavākya prakaraṇasthānasamākhyānām samavāye pāradaur balyam arthaviprakaśāt*⁸. When more than one of these principles are present in the same text, the strongest is *śruti*, or direct assertion. If there is a direct statement about the nature of the passage, this should be recognised as the correct meaning. *Liṅga* or indicative power is weaker, followed by syntactical connection, context and place, while name (of the text or sacrifice) is the weakest principle. Śābara, in his commentary on *MimS* 3.3.14, describes all possible conflicts with examples of usage of the text in ritual. This part of Śābara's commentary is invaluable for understanding how these principles were used in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. Śābara in his commentary on *MimS* 3.3.14. takes the example of an injunction from *Maitrāyaṇī-saṃhitā* 3.2.4 which says: *aīndryā gārhapatyam upatiṣṭhate* / (“One should worship *gārhapatya* [householder's fire] with *aīndrī* verse.”). Here we have a direct statement that the fire should be worshipped with *aīndrī* verse. However in the word *aīndrī* there is an indication (*liṅga*) that the god Indra should be worshiped with this verse together with the householder's fire. Since direct assertion (*śruti*), – which is understood upon the mere hearing of the word – is stronger than indicative power, Śābara takes the interpretation that the fire should be worshipped with *aīndrī* verse as correct. The same hierarchy is present in the conflict between indicative power (*liṅga*) and syntactical connection (*vākya*) where indicative power is stronger. Further in his commentary on *MimS* 3.3.14 Śābara describes the principle of syntactical connection (*vākya*) in two possible conflicts: that with indicative power (*liṅga*) when syntactical connection is weaker, and that with context (*prakaraṇa*) when syntactical connection is stronger. In the situation where indicative power is stronger than syntactical connection, Śābara

⁸ Sandal (1980 [I]: 114) translates the *sūtra* as: “In the common applicability of *śruti*, *liṅga*, *vākya*, *prakaraṇa*, *sthāna* and *samākhyā*, the weakness of the latter is by reason of the distance of the sense.”





takes the example of a passage from *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa*: *syonām te sádanam kṛṇomi / (TB 3.7.5.2.[10.]) ghṛtásya dhārayā suśévaṃ kalpayāmi / (TB 3.7.5.3.[1.])*⁹ and *tásmīnt sīdāmṛte prátitiṣṭha / (TB 3.7.5.3.[2.]) vṛihñám medha sumanasyámānaḥ / (TB 3.7.5.3.[3.])*¹⁰. In following indicative power, the first part of this verse (*TB 3.7.5.2.[10.]* and *TB 3.7.5.3.[1.]*) should be used in the ritual of preparing the seat and the second part (*TB 3.7.5.3.[2.]* and *TB 3.7.5.3.[3.]*) for placing the corn cake on the seat because the words *tásmīnt sīda* (“Sit on it”, meaning the cake) have the power to indicate (*liṅga*) the act of placing the cake. Regarding the syntactical connection, the verse should be taken as a whole because there is a syntactical connection between the two parts, as the phrase *tásmīnt sīda* in the second part can be syntactically constructed with the sentence ending with *suśévaṃ kalpayāmi*. Śabara reconstructs this as “*yat kalpayāmi tasmin sīda*” (“Sit on what I am preparing”). In this case, the entire mantra should be used as a whole at both acts (the act of preparing the seat and placing of the cake). So, according to indicative power, the first two mantras should be used in the act of preparing the seat and the other in the act of placing the cake. According to syntactical connection, all four mantras should be used together in both acts because they form one syntactical whole. This is due to the concordance of the predicate *kalpayāmi*, which is constructed with the adverbial modifier of place *tásmīnt sīda*, making it a subordinate clause of place.

Describing the conflict between syntactical connection and context, Śabara takes again an example from *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (*TB 3.5.10.3. [4 – 7]*): *agnīśómāv idám havír ajuṣetām / (TB 3.5.10.3.[4]) ávīvr̥dhetām máho jyáyo ‘krātām / (TB 3.5.10.3.[5]) indrāgní idám havír ajuṣetām / (TB 3.5.10.3.[6]) ávīvr̥dhetām máho jyáyo ‘krātām / (TB 3.5.10.3.[7])*¹¹. Śabara says that sentences where two sets of deities (Agni and Soma, Indra and Agni) occur are not syntactically connected. So, according to indicative power, the first sentence (*TB 3.5.10.3.[4 – 5]* with Agni and Soma) should be used in *Paur̥ṇamāsī* sacrifice, while *TB 3.5.10.3.(6 – 7)* should be used in *Amāvāsya* sacrifice. The question arises as to whether

⁹ I am preparing you a comfortable seat and I am making it comfortable with a stream of ghee.

¹⁰ Sit on it gleefully and stay, o essence of rice.

¹¹ Agni and Soma are pleased by this oblation, they both have grown in might and become superior; Indra and Agni are pleased by this oblation, they both have grown in might and become superior.





only the names of Agni and Soma should be withdrawn from *Amāvāsyā* sacrifice, and, accordingly those of Indra and Agni from *Paurṇamāsī*. The rest of the sentence (*āvīṛdhetāṃ máho jyāyo 'krātām /*) should then be recited at both sacrifices whenever they appear. According to syntactical connection, this sentence should be connected to the names Agni and Soma or Indra and Agni, and should be recited only together with them as a subsidiary to given act. According to context, the rest of the sentence (*āvīṛdhetāṃ máho jyāyo 'krātām /*), with the names Indra and Agni removed should be used in *Paurṇamāsī* ritual (also the sentence with Agni and Soma removed should be used in *Amāvāsyā* ritual) because the same sentence is found in the context of both rituals.

Śabara defines context in a rather complicated way: *kartavyasyeti kartavyatākāṅkṣasya vacanaṃ prakaraṇam / prārambho hi sa tasyā vacanakriyāyāḥ, na eṣa vidhyādir vidhyantāpekṣaḥ /* In Jha's (1973 [I]: 448) translation: “*Prakaraṇa* (context) is the declaration of what is to be accomplished and which stands in need of the procedure; it is the beginning (*'pra'*) of the action (*'kriyā'*) of declaring; – this is also called '*vidhyādi*' (Beginning of Injunction) standing in need of (and taken along with) '*vidhyanta*' (End or Sequel of Injunction).”

So, Śabara continues, the principle of syntactical connection should be followed in the case of *Paurṇamāsī* and *Amāvāsyā* offerings because it carries more authority than context. This is because of the remoteness of context to *artha*¹² (*arthaviprakaṣāt*). Śabara distinguishes syntactical connection from context so that the completeness of a sentence is perceived directly when words are syntactically connected into one whole, while such a unity is not directly perceived in the case of context. Context is when a detail of a ritual act is found in close proximity to the main act which lacks this detail and is connected to it. Only then can the main act become complete. What is directly perceived is that the main act is incomplete and the detail is to be added. Therefore, syntactical connection is nearer to direct assertion (*śruti*) than context¹³. Both

¹² Sandal (1980 [I]: 114) translates *artha* as “sense”, Jha (1973 I: 449) as “final objective”.

¹³ *MīmSBh* 3.3.14: *ity evaṃ prāpte brūmaḥ – prakaraṇād vākyam balīyaḥ / katham? arthaviprakaṣāt / ko 'trārthavipra – karṣaḥ? vākya ekaikaṃ padaṃ vibhajyamānaṃ sākāṅkṣaṃ bhavati, kṛtsnaṃ paripūrṇaṃ bhavati, tatra pratyakṣa ekavākyabhāvaḥ, prakaraṇe tv apratyakṣaḥ / katham? iti kartavyatākāṅkṣasya samīpa upanipatitaṃ pūrṇam iti tasya prakṛtasya sākāṅkṣatvam avagamyate, naikavākyabhūtam ity anumīyate / ekavākyatayā cābhidhānasāmartyam avakalpyābhihito 'yam evaṃ bhavati parikalpanā / eṣo 'trārthaviprakaṣaḥ, yad vākyasya samāsannā śrutiḥ, prakaraṇasya viprakaṣā /*





in Śabara and Āpadeva, key words to understanding the usage of the context principle are *samīpa* (proximity) and *ākāṅkṣā* (need to supply a word or period for the completion of the sense) because words which enjoin auxiliaries which need to be supplied to the main act are to be found in proximity to it and connected to the main act¹⁴.

3. *Viniyogakāraṇāni* in early Vedānta

After we have shown an example of the usage of direct assertion, indicatory power, syntactical connection and context in Śabara's commentary on *MimS*, we shall move on to Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras* to see how these principles were adopted in Vedānta.

The importance of Upaniṣadic interpretation in Vedānta is well known. The first of the four chapters of the *Brahma-Sūtras* is solely devoted to the reconciliation of Upaniṣadic teachings. This procedure of reconciliation is called *samanvaya*, and it represents the cornerstone of Vedāntic philosophical enterprise. *Samanvaya* is not the only exegetical part of the *Brahma-Sūtras*, as different exegetical portions are scattered throughout the whole text. Another important exegetical portion of the *Brahma-Sūtras* is the third *pāda* of the third chapter (*BS* 3.3). The method of *upasaṃhāra*, which comprises principles of combinations of Upaniṣadic texts, is employed here. In *BS* 3.3, it is established which text portions from the Upaniṣads and Brāhmaṇas are the same and as such can be combined for the purpose of meditation. Throughout the chapters devoted to reconciliation (*BS* 1, *samanvaya*) and combination (*BS* 3.3, *upasaṃhāra*), exegetical tools are employed both by the author(s) of the *Brahma-Sūtras*¹⁵ and by Śaṅkara. These tools served in

¹⁴ Kutumba Sastry (forth.) mentions Prakāśātman's definition of *prakaraṇa* as "the capability of two sentences, objects of which are contextual, on the basis of either mutual expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*) or expectancy on the part of any one of the two sentences". (*anyatarākāṅkṣayā itaretarākāṅkṣayā vā vākyadvayasāmartyam ārabhyādhītaviṣayaṃ prakaraṇam* / tr. Kutumba Sastry)

¹⁵ Traditionally Bādarāyaṇa is considered to be the author of the *BS*. It is an old tradition, since Śaṅkara most probably considered him the author. This is seen in his commentary on *BS* 4.4.21, where he introduces the last *sūtra* with these words: *ata uttaram bhagavān bādarāyaṇa ācāryaḥ paṭhati* / ("To this objection the reverend Bādarāyaṇa replies in the following *sūtra*." Tr. Thibaut part II, 1896: 418). Today we are more inclined to consider the *Brahma-Sūtras* to be the work of oral transmission, passed down and changed in Brahmanical circles for generations. Nevertheless, some kind of redaction must have taken place around the 5th century AD





Vedānta as a means to correctly understand the texts. Here I shall try to present them together with an overview of their meaning, usage and history. I have chosen an example from Śāṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras* 3.3.44 – 52, the so-called *liṅgabhūyastva-adhikaraṇa*.

In Śāṅkara's commentary, *sūtras* are grouped into topics according to the theme upon which they supposedly¹⁶ elaborate; these topics, comprising one or more *sūtras*, are called *adhikaraṇas*. As already mentioned, our *sūtras* occur in *BS* 3.3, which is, besides the first chapter, the second great exegetical portion of the *Brahma-Sūtras*. The method of *upasaṃhāra* is presented in this sub-chapter, where different text portions from the Upaniṣads and Brāhmaṇas are discussed in order to establish which text portions are the same or compatible for combined use in meditation¹⁷. The procedure of *Upasaṃhāra* is modelled on the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā example of *MimS* 2.4.8 – 32. This is seen in *Brahma-Sūtra* 3.3.1 which reads: *sarvavedāntapratyayaṃ codanādyaviśeṣāt* / ([The cognitions] intimated by all the Vedānta texts [are identical], on account of the non-difference of injunction and so on¹⁸). The words *codanādyaviśeṣāt* are a reference to *MimS* 2.4.9, which reads *ekaṃ vā saṃyogarūpacodanākhyaviśeṣāt* / (In reality, the Act is one only, because of there being no difference in [1] connection, [2] form, [3] injunction, and [4] name¹⁹). The parallelism here is striking: in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, the same rites described in different recensions which belong to a particular Vedic branch of the same text are one and the same, and in Vedānta the same meditations in different Upaniṣads are one and the same and can be combined. Here we can see the parallelism of the usage of rites in PM and meditations in Vedānta and a similar methodology of establishing their proper usage. It should also be stressed that the same acts are described with minor differences in different recensions of the same ritual literature, while in different Upaniṣads there are similar texts and teachings in which the differences

according to Nakamura (1983: 436 – 437), who also claims that the oldest parts (*BS* 1.1 – 3 and 3.3) must be pre-Christian era.

¹⁶ The *Brahma-Sūtras* are usually so brief that they verge on incomprehensibility. Even Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja interpret some *sūtras* like 3.3.43(44) in a completely different fashion, also placing them in different *adhikaraṇas*. Modi (1943) tried to interpret the original meaning of *sūtras* 3.2 and 3.3. using philological methods. In this way he came to a radically different interpretation from the ancient interpreters.

¹⁷ For a further elaboration of *upasaṃhāra*, its philosophical and hermeneutical implications, the relation between PM and Vedānta, see Clooney 1994.

¹⁸ Transl. Thibaut part II, 1896: 184.

¹⁹ Transl. Jha 1933[I]: 324.





are much greater. This is because of independent oral transmission of the same stories by different Brahmanical communities out of which the final text versions of the Upaniṣads were later established. Because of this, the method of *upasaṃhāra* had to be employed by later Vedāntic interpreters in order to establish which meditations are the same and which are not. Another important parallelism of Vedāntic and PM exegesis can be seen in *BS(Bh)* 3.3.5, where a combination of meditations is to be effected where there is no difference in application in the same way as subsidiaries described in different text are combined if they belong to the same rite.

As *upasaṃhāra* is employed throughout whole sub-chapter I shall refer to *BS* 3.3 as *Upasaṃhāra*; in the same manner, I shall refer to the first chapter of the *Brahma-Sūtras* as *Samanvaya* according to the method of *samanvaya* or reconciliation of the Upaniṣadic passages employed there. It can be preliminarily said that the procedures followed in *Upasaṃhāra* are reminiscent of the procedures followed in *MimS*. The texts used in the *Brahma-Sūtras* 3.3 as a template for meditation are reminiscent of the usage of ritual subsidiaries and their connection to the main ritual act in *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*.

Upasaṃhāra, with its 66 *sūtras*²⁰, is the most voluminous *pāda* in the entire text. According to Nakamura (1983: 436), *Upasaṃhāra* belongs to the oldest textual strata of *BS*²¹. The third chapter (*adhyāya*) elaborates upon spiritual praxis (*sādhana*). Different concepts (*vidyā*) of *Brahman* from the Upaniṣads are used as a template for meditation. These concepts (*vidyās*) are considered in *BS* as a template for contemplation on their object²². For such conceptions, *BS* uses several terms such as *vidyā* (knowledge), *viññāna* (reflection), *upāsana* (worship), and *dhyāna* (meditation). According to *BS*, *vidyā* is a dedication of the mind²³ to *Brahman*. This can be understood, at least in some contexts, as “meditation”. For Śaṅkara, the term *vidyā* holds the same meaning as *upāsana*. Śaṅkara claims that the verbal roots \sqrt{VID} (2) and $upa\sqrt{ĀS}$ (3) are used in the same way in the Upaniṣads²⁴, and cites examples from *ChU* 4.4.4, 4.2.2 and 3.18.1 to prove this. Śaṅkara also defines *upāsana*

²⁰ Śaṅkara's and Bhāskara's redaction have 66 *sūtras*, while Rāmānuja's has 64.

²¹ According to Nakamura (1983: 436), the first three *pādas* of the first chapter alongside with third *pāda* of the third chapter were compiled prior to the Christian era.

²² That object is usually Lord, Īsvara (*BSBh* 3.3.59).

²³ *BS* 1.1.25 (...) *ceto' rpaṇanigadāt tathā hi darśanam /*

²⁴ *BSBh* 4.1.1 *vidyupāstyoh ca vedānteṣu avyātirekeṇa prayogo dṛṣyate /* (pp. 460, 14f)





(*BSBh* 4.1.7²⁵) as “setting up a current of similar thoughts”²⁶.

3.1. Principles of *śruti*, *liṅga*, *vākya* and *prakaraṇa* in *BS* 3.3.44 – 52

BSBh 3.3.44 – 52 comprises nine *sūtras*. These form the 29th *adhikaraṇa*, called *liṅgabhūyastva-adhikaraṇa*, or topic, which deals with the account of the abundance of indicatory marks. *Adhikaraṇa* discusses *Agni-rahasya*, the fire-altar-mystery, from the 10th book of *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*. Śaṅkara quotes parts of *ŚB(M)* 10.5.3.1 – 3, where it is described how in the beginning there was only mind (*manas*)²⁷. This mind beheld thirty-six thousand *Arka*-fires out of its own Self. These fires are composed of mind, and they are built up by mind. A doubt (*saṃśaya*) is expressed as to whether these mental fires are to be used as subsidiaries to rites or whether they exist only for meditation (*vidyā*). Śaṅkara claims that, according to the context (*prakaraṇa*), it could be explained that mental fires are to be used in sacrificial rite because they appear in ritual context. But there is, according to Śaṅkara, an abundance of indicatory marks (*liṅga*) according to which the *Arka*-fires are meant for meditation (*vidyā*). As indicatory power (*liṅga*) is more authoritative than context (*prakaraṇa*), the fires should be used as mental acts not connected to the sacrificial act, but rather to meditation (*vidyā*). For Śaṅkara, the indication that the text is meant for meditation and not for ritual can be seen in sentences like the one in *ŚB [M]* 10.5.3.3: *tadyatkīṃcemāni bhūtāni mānasā saṃkalpāyanti tēsāmeva sā kṛīḥ*²⁸ and in *ŚB [M]* 10.5.3.12: *tān haitān evaṃ vīde sarvadā sārvaṇi bhūtāni cinvanti āpi svāpate vidyāyā haivaitā evaṃ vidaścitā bhavanti*²⁹. *Liṅgas* in these sentences seems quite obvious, and Śaṅkara probably does not feel that it is important to elaborate upon them further. Later, follow-

²⁵ *BSBh*. 4.1.7 *upāsānaṃ nāma samānapratyayapravāhakarāṇam*/ (pp. 470, 9)

²⁶ Tr. Gambhirananda (1965: 831)

²⁷ *ŚB(M)* 10.5.3.1 – 2 actually interprets *RS* 10.129, the famous *Nāsadīya-sūkta*, where it is said that in the beginning It was neither existent nor non-existent. *ŚB* claims that *manas* was that which was neither existent nor non-existent.

²⁸ “And whatever it is that (living) beings here conceive in their mind that was done regarding those (mental Agnis)”. (Tr. Eggeling 1897: 376)

²⁹ “...and all beings at all times build them for him who knows this, even whilst he is asleep...” (Tr. Eggeling 1897: 380)





ing *BS* 3.3.49³⁰, he finds even a direct statement (*śruti*) in the sentence *te haite vidyācīta eva*³¹ (*ŚB[M]* 10.5.3.12), which says directly that fire altars are built by knowledge. Next, Śaṅkara sees a syntactical connection³² in the sentence *vidyayā haivaita evaṃvidāś citā bhavanti ŚB* 10.5.3.12 (“by knowledge alone these fires [altars] are indeed built for him who knows this.” [Tr. Eggeling 1897: 380]).

In this example, we can see how Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā ritualistic technical rules are used in a completely different fashion. In Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā they are used in establishing the connection of the subsidiary parts to the main rite, but in Vedānta they are used in an entirely opposite fashion. They are used in order to establish that the building of fire altars in *Śatapatha-Brahmaṇa* is not a subsidiary to any rite, but that it is rather a part of Vedāntic spiritual practice (*sādhana*). These fire altars actually must be built mentally as a part of meditation. This is a good example of how Vedāntins used Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā rules to fight their philosophical ideas.

It is interesting to note that Rāmānuja does not place Śaṅkara's *sūtra* 3.3.44 (3.3.43 in Rāmānuja's version of the *Brahma-Sūtras*) in the *adhikaraṇa* on *Agni-rahasya*, but rather considers it to form a separate *adhikaraṇa* discussing *Daharavidyā* from the *Mahānārāyaṇa-Upaniṣad*. Rāmānuja's commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra* also contains *adhikaraṇa* on *Agni-Rahasya*, but it begins with the next *sūtra* and ends with the same *sūtra* with which Śaṅkara's commentary ends. According to Faddegon (1923), Rāmānuja's commentary on *BS* 3.3 better preserves the old structure of *Upasaṃhāra*, which in his opinion originally dealt with the nine principal *vidyās* from the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, which appear in the commentary texts of both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in the same succession in which they appear in the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*³³ (*Udgūtha-Vidyā* [*ChU* 1.2], *Śāṅḍilya-vidyā* [*ChU* 3.14], *Puruṣa-Vidyā* [*ChU* 3.16], *Upakosala-Vidyā* (*ChU* 4.10), *Prāṇa-Vidyā* [*ChU* 5.1], *Pañcāgni-Vidyā* [*ChU* 5.10.1ff], *Vaiśvānara-Vidyā* [*ChU* 5.11ff], *Sad-Vidyā* [*ChU* 6] and *Dahara-Vidyā* [*ChU* 8.1ff]). The rest of the *sūtras* served, according to Faddegon, as auxiliaries to the main *vidyās*. Ac-

³⁰ *Sūtra* 3.3.49 reads: *śrutyādibalīyastvāc ca na bādhaḥ*. Because of the words *śrutyādi* and *balīyastva* it is obvious that *sūtra* refers to *MīmS* 3.3.14.

³¹ “These fires (altars), in truth, are knowledgebuilt” (Tr. Eggeling 1897: 380)

³² *tathā vākyam api 'vidyayā haivaita evaṃvidāś citā bhavanti' iti*

³³ In the same way as *Chāndogya* and other Upaniṣadic passages appear in their regular succession in *Samanvaya* as discovered by Deussen (1883: 129 – 131).





According to Faddegon's analysis, it can be deduced that *sūtra* 3.3.44 (3.3.43 in Rāmānuja's edition), which mentions the *liṅga* principle, originally served as an auxiliary discussion to *Dahara-Vidyā*, as it serves in Rāmānuja's commentary.

It can be said that the context rule (*prakaraṇa*) is used quite often in both *BS* and Śāṅkara's commentary. The word *prakaraṇa* occurs seven times in the *Brahma-Sūtras*, three times in *Samanvaya* (1.2.20, 1.3.6, 1.4.5), two times in *Upasaṃhāra* (3.3.7, 3.3.45) and two times in the last chapter (4.4.3³⁴ and 4.4.17). In all cases except the last (*BS* 4.4.17), *prakaraṇa* is used in a strict exegetical context and can be understood as one of the six *Viniyogakāraṇāni*. Śāṅkara uses the word *prakaraṇa* around 109 times³⁵ in his commentary on *BS*. It occurs around 40 times in *Samanvaya* and 30 times in *Upasaṃhāra*. In other cases, the word occurs mostly in exegetical contexts or in the context of discussion with Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā as in *BSBh* 3.4.3. There Śāṅkara fights the idea that the Self (*ātman*) is subservient to ritual (*karmaśeṣa*). Śāṅkara claims that *ātman* is never mentioned in the texts in the context of rites. A similar claim is made by Śāṅkara in *BSBh* 3.4.9, where he says that neither context nor others' *Viniyogakāraṇāni* are discernible in the text, which might prove that knowledge of *Brahman* may be subsidiary to rites.

3.2. *Liṅga* in *BS(Bh)*

The principle of indication (*liṅga*) occurs very often both in the *Brahma-Sūtras* and in Śāṅkara's commentary. In *BS* it is used six times in *Samanvaya* (*BS* 1.1.22, 1.1.31, 1.3.15, 1.1.35, 1.4.17³⁶, 1.4.20) and nine times in other parts of the text (*BS* 2.3.13, 2.3.15, 3.2.26, 3.3.44, 3.4.34, 3.4.39, 4.1.2, 4.3.4, 4.4.21). According to ancient commentators, the word *liṅga* is not used as an indicatory mark only in *BS* 3.2.11³⁷. Śāṅkara uses the principle of the indicatory mark in two ways in commenting

³⁴ Although this chapter is not exclusively exegetical, *sūtra* 4.4.3 discusses *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* 8.12.3.

³⁵ According to a word search. In certain cases, as with two occurrences in *BSBh* 3.3.7, Śāṅkara simply cites the *sūtra* when he mentions *prakaraṇa*.

³⁶ Here, the opponent uses the *liṅga* rule according to which *KsU* 4 speaks about the individual soul because of the indicatory marks present in the words *jīva* and *mukhyaprāṇa* found in the text.

³⁷ This *sūtra* also contains the word *sthāna*. However, commentaries do not regard both of the words *sthāna* or *liṅga* as referring to *Viniyogakāraṇāni*.





on these *sūtras* — sometimes in a strictly exegetical context in discussing some problem in the text, and sometimes in a discussion on some topic important to Vedāntic philosophy. In such cases, he uses *liṅga* to interpret Upaniṣadic statements he uses as valid means of knowledge in discussion.

I shall start with one example of the latter kind of usage, where Upaniṣadic exegesis is used to provide evidence for certain Vedāntic philosophical teachings. For instance *BS(Bh)* 4.4.17 – 22 (the last *adhikaraṇa*, so called *jagadvyāpara-adhikaraṇa*) discusses whether those who attend conditioned *Brahman* (*saguṇa-brahman*) acquire unlimited power (*niravagraha-aiśvarya*) or not. Following *sūtra* 4.4.21, Śaṅkara claims that in *Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad* 1.7³⁸ and in *BAU* 1.5.20 (“All beings favor that divinity, so to him who know this all beings show favour³⁹” [Transl. Hume 1921: 90]) and 1.5.23 (“Thereby he wins complete unity with that divinity and residence in the same world⁴⁰”. [Transl. Hume 1921: 91]) one can find indicatory marks that the one attending *saguṇa-brahman* does not possess powers equal to him. According to Śaṅkara, these citations provide indications that those who know conditioned *Brahman* attain only enjoyment equal to conditioned *Brahman*.

A second example of the use of the indicatory mark comes from *BS(Bh)* 1.1.22, where *liṅga* is used in strict textual exegesis. *BS(Bh)* 1.1.22 forms an *adhikaraṇa* (*ākāśa-adhikaraṇa*) discussing whether Space (*ākāśa*) from *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* 1.9 is *Brahman* or something else. *The sūtra* reads only “Space, because of the indicatory mark of that⁴¹”. According to Śaṅkara and all other commentators, the *sūtra* actually states that the Space from *ChU* 1.9 is *Brahman*, since the text contains indicatory marks supporting such a claim. The principal Upaniṣadic sentence that proves such a mark can be found in *ChU* 1.9.1 (“Clearly, it is from space that all these beings arise, and into space that they are finally absorbed; for space indeed existed before them and into space

³⁸ Śaṅkara actually cites: *tam āhāpo vai khalu mīyante loko sāv iti /*. According to the Limaye-Vadekar edition, *KsU* 1.7 reads: *tam āha āpo vai khalu me lokam / ayaṃ te 'sāv iti /* The text in the Limaye-Vadekar edition does not contain the indication mark which Śaṅkara's quotation provides.

³⁹ *BAU* 1.5.20: *yathaitāṃ devatāṃ sarvāṇi bhūtāny avanty evaṃ haivaṃvidam sarvāṇi bhūtāny avanti /*

⁴⁰ *BAU* 1.5.23: *teno etasyai devatāyai sāyujyaṃ salokatāṃ jayati /*

⁴¹ *BS* 1.1.22: *ākāśas tal liṅgāt /*





they finally end⁴²”. [Transl. Olivelle 1998: 181]). As it is known that all beings originate from supreme *Brahman*, it is clear that the Space from which all beings originate must be the supreme *Brahman*. This example makes it quite clear what *liṅga* is and how it is used. It is not a direct statement, which would say clearly that Space is *Brahman*. By rather ascribing *Brahman*’s qualities to Space, it is clearly indicated that *Brahman* is Space. This usage is in accordance with Śābara’s definition of *liṅga* as the “power or capacity of a word to denote a certain thing”⁴³. These examples are interesting, as they show clearly how Mīmāṃsā tools of ritual interpretation are used by Vedāntin and applied to textual exegesis in order to find the real meaning of the text.

3.3. *Liṅga* and *vākya*(?) in *BS* 1.4.19 – 20

An interesting example of possible Vedāntic usage of *Viniyogakāraṇāni* is seen in *Brahma-sūtras* 1.4.19 – 20, where words *vākya* and *liṅga* occur in the *sūtras* themselves. The so-called *Vākyaṅvayād-adhikaraṇa* consists of four *Sūtras* discussing whether *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* 2.4 and 4.5, the famous conversation of Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī, speaks of supreme Self or lower, cognising Self. *Brahma-Sūtra* 1.4.19 reads only *vākyaṅvayāt*, in Thibaut’s (part I, 1890: 274) translation: “(The Self to be seen, to be heard &c. is the highest Self) on account of the connected meaning of the sentences⁴⁴”. In Śāṅkara’s commentary on the opening *sūtra* (*BS* 1.4.19), the opponent makes the objection that *Maitreyī-Brahmaṇa* of *BAU* speaks of the lower cognising Self (*viṅṅānātman*) and not of the supreme Self (*paramātman*), saying that lower Self is indicated by the word dear (*priya*) (*BAU* [K] 2.4.5/4.5.6) which also indicates enjoyment.

Answering to this objection, Śāṅkara describes how mutually connected Upaniṣadic passages refer only to the supreme Self. This is the part where he likely uses the principle of *vākya*. He claims that if the

⁴² *ChU* 1.9.1: *sarvāṇi ha vā imāni bhūtāny ākāśād eva samutpadyanta ākāśam pratyastam yanty ākāśo hy evaibhyo jyāyān ākāśaḥ parāyaṇam /*

⁴³ Jha 1933: 450; *MimSBh* 3.3.14: *yat tāvac chabdasyārtham abhidhātuṃ sāmartyam, tal liṅgam...*

⁴⁴ In Gambhirananda’s translation (1965: 282): “(The Self to be realized, heard of, reflected on, and profoundly meditated upon is the supreme Self), because (this is meaning gathered) from the correlation of the passages.”, Deussen (1887: 237): “Wegen des Zusammenhanges der Stelle.”





entire section is seen as connected, it must refer to the supreme Self only. The passages should not be seen as disconnected parts, but as syntactically connected. This can be seen from the Yājñavalkya's claim that there is no hope of immortality through wealth (*BAU [K] 2.4.2, 4.5.3: amṛtatvasya tu nāśāsti vittena /*). Maitreyī asks for knowledge about immortality (*BAU [K] 2.4.3, 4.5.4: yenāhaṃ nāmṛtā syāṃ kim ahaṃ tena kuryām / yad eva bhagavān veda tad eva me brūhi /*). As the question is about immortality, the answer must be the teaching that gives immortality, and it must be only a teaching of the supreme Self. Next, he quotes other sentences like “all that is nothing but the self” (tr. Olivelle [1998: 69,129])⁴⁵ and the illustration with the drum (*BAU [K] 2.4.7/ 4.5.8*) by which the Upaniṣad shows the non-difference of all aggregates of things from the Self⁴⁶. Also, passages like “*R̥gveda... all this are the exhalation of this Immense being*” (tr. Olivelle [1998: 69,129])⁴⁷ show that when the Upaniṣad speaks of the Self which is the source of the manifoldness of name, form and action, it can only be referring to the supreme Self⁴⁸.

As all these passages come in regular succession, it can be understood that ancient Vedāntic exegetes saw them as being syntactically connected. However, in Śaṅkara's exegesis, we do not see such a detailed analysis of concord as in Śābara. Here, we see a looser connection based on purport and not so much on syntactical relations in the sentence extended to the whole passage. The best presumption is that Śaṅkara understands *vākya* as the connection between the question of immortality and the answer, which must be about something that brings immortality. That something must necessarily be the supreme Self, because other scriptures speak of the supreme Self as an entity through which one attains immortality.

On the other hand, the *vākya* might refer only to the “sentence”, and *vākyaṅvayāt* might mean only a correlation of sentences in the sense that the question of immortality necessarily produces a correlated answer concerning immortality. This is actually more reminiscent of the use of the principle of context in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. Śaṅkara further

⁴⁵ *BAU [K] 2.4.6/4.5.7: idaṃ sarvaṃ yad ayam ātmā /*

⁴⁶ *sarvasya vastujātasyātmāvyatirekam... p.170,7*

⁴⁷ *BAU [K] 2.4.10/4.5.11: asya mahato bhūtasya niḥśvasitam etad yad ṛgvedaḥ.../*

⁴⁸ *prakṛtasyātmano nāmarūpakarmaprapañcakāraṇatām vyācakṣāṇaḥ paramātmānam enaṃ gamayati / p.170,10f*





states: “If we consider the different passages in their mutual connexion, we find that they all refer to highest Self⁴⁹.” (Thibaut part I, 1890: 275). It can be said that if the *vākya* principle was used here, it was used in a somewhat loosened style, more similar to the context defined in the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā as the mutual expectancy of different passages in the text. This expectancy can be seen in the question of immortality’ expectancy of an answer concerning immortality. One indication that the word *vākya* may refer to *Viniyogakāraṇāni* is the usage of the *liṅga* principle in the following *sūtra*, which refers to the ancient teacher Āśmarathya⁵⁰. The *sūtra* dedicated to his interpretation says that the fulfilment of the declaration is an indicatory mark (*liṅga*) that the passage is about the supreme Self. Most probably, it refers to the promise that everything will be known when the Self will be known, as Śāṅkara claims. Bhāskara also claims that the beginning of *BAU* 2.4 and 4.5 refers to the individual Self, which is an enjoyer, but on account of the connection with the next passage, which refers to the same Self bearing the properties of the supreme Self, the purport of the passage is a teaching about the supreme Self. Otherwise the passages would be lacking in continuity and the promise would not be fulfilled.⁵¹

3.4. Concluding remarks on the usage of *Viniyogakāraṇāni* in early Vedānta

The last two *Viniyogakāraṇāni*, place (*sthāna*) and name (*samākhyāna*), are used neither in the *Brahma-Sūtras* nor in Śāṅkara’s commentary. Only three *Brahma-Sūtras* contain the word *sthāna* (1.2.14, 3.2.11 and 3.2.34), but these words most probably do not refer to *Viniyogakāraṇāni*. Ancient

⁴⁹ *vākyaṃ hīdaṃ paurvāparyeṇāveksyamāṇaṃ paramātmānamprati anvitāvayavaṃ lakṣyate |*

⁵⁰ Āśmarathya appears along with Ālekhana in *ApŚS*, *BharŚS* i *HirŚS*. Auḍlomi and Āśmarathya also appear in the *Bhāradvājapariśiṣṭa-Sūtras*. Because of this, Parpola (1981) concludes that they are Yajurvedic teachers belonging to the *Bhāradvāja* and *Āpastamba* schools. What is interesting is the appearance of the same quotations attributed to Āśmarathya and Ālekhana in *BharGS* 1.20 in the *Hiraṇyakeśagṛhya-Sūtras* (1.25.3 – 4) under the names of Ātreya i Bādarāyaṇa. The same quotations appear in the *Baudhāyanagrhya-Sūtras* (1.7.47 – 48) under the names of Baudhāyana and Śālikhi. The quotations of Āśmarathya and Ālekhana from *ApŚS* appear in the *Sāmavedic Lāṭyāyanaśrauta-Sūtras* 1.4.13 – 15 as the teachings of Gautama and Śāṅḍilya. From this, it is clear that the same sentences and teachings are attributed to certain teachers authoritative for certain branches of Vedic learning.

⁵¹ *vākyaṃ asambandhaṃ syāt pratijñā ca na siddhyet | BSBh(Bh) p. 81, 2f.*





commentators on *BS* confirm such a claim. The word *samākhyaṇa* does not even appear in *BS*. However, in *BS* 3.3.8, there is a discussion as to whether the *Udgītha-vidyās*⁵² from *ChU* 1.2 and *BAU* 1.3 are the same or not. Śaṅkara's commentary claims that they are different. One of the arguments that they are different is the difference in the context (*prakaraṇa*) in which these texts appear. Śaṅkara claims that there is a difference at the outset, since *Chāndogya* begins with the claim that one should venerate *Udgītha* as the syllable *om*⁵³. According to Śaṅkara, the purport of the *Udgītha-Vidyā* in *ChU* is that breath (*prāṇa*) should be regarded as the syllable *om*, which forms a part of *Udgītha*, so the term *Udgītha* in *ChU* means only *om*, the initial part of *Udgītha*. On the other hand, in *BAU* 1.3.2 the one who sings a *Sāman* chant is identified as breath (*prāṇa*), which means that breath is singing the *Udgītha*, while in *ChU* breath is *Udgītha*; also, in *BAU*, *Udgītha* means the whole *Sāman* chant, not only the chanting of the syllable *om*. In the next *sūtra* (*BS* 3.3.8), there is an objection that, owing to the same name, the *vidyās* should be the same. However, this is overruled by Śaṅkara, not only because the context is stronger, but with the strong argument that the name “*Udgītha-Vidyā*” is not originally found in the text, but that common people had applied this name to it at a later time. This remark by Śaṅkara's might be an indication that the principle of *samākhyaṇa* was used by the opponent. There is something interesting worth noting in this discussion. Vedāntic meditation (*vidyā*) in *BS* 3.3 shows some clear parallels to the role of rites in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. One clear analogy to the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā sacrificial act in this *adhikaraṇa* can be seen in Śaṅkara's commentary on *BS* 3.3.8 where he says that *Darśapūrṇamāsa* (Vedic rites performed on the occasion of new and full moons) and *Agnihotra* (morning and evening libations) are sometimes called *Kāṭhaka* because they are described in texts belonging to the *Kāṭhaka* branch, however they are not considered by anyone to be the same sacrifices. This is a clear reference to *MimS* 2.4.11, where it is said that *Darśapūrṇamāsa*, *Agnihotra* and *Jyotiṣṭoma* may be called *Kāṭhaka*, but that this does not mean they should be treated as same act. Śaṅkara's argument that the name “*Udgītha-Vidyā*” cannot be used as proof that both are same meditations because the title “*Udgītha-Vidyā*” was later applied by humans is also grounded in the *Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras*. *MimS* 2.4.12 actually claims that *Darśapūrṇamāsa*,

⁵² *Udgītha-Vidyā* is meditation on *Udgītha*, the second part of a ritual chant, *Sāman*. *Udgītha* is sung by an *Udgātr* priest, and is introduced with the chanting of the syllable *om*.

⁵³ *ChU* 1.1.1: *om ity etad akṣaram udgītham upāsīta |*





Agnihotra and *Jyotiṣṭoma*, although called *Kāṭhaka*, cannot be considered to be the same act since the name *Kāṭhaka* is not found in the original texts dealing with sacrifice, but was later applied by people.

A clear analogy of meditation in Vedānta and ritual in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā can be seen in Śaṅkara's⁵⁴ remark in *BSBh* 3.3.7 that the *Udgītha-Vidyās* differ because of the difference in their contexts in the same manner that sacrifices *Abhyudayeṣṭi* and *Paśukāmeṣṭi* from *MimS* 6.5.1 – 9 differ due to their contexts. These sacrifices, described in *Taittirīya-Saṃhitā* 2.5.5.2, show some similarities. However, *Abhyudayeṣṭi* belongs to the context of *darśapūrṇamāsa* (new and full moon sacrifices) while *Paśukāmeṣṭi* is a *kāmya* rite (optional sacrifice, performed in order to obtain something desirable) performed in order to acquire cattle. *Paśukāmeṣṭi* is an independent rite with its own results, while *Abhyudayeṣṭi* is performed in order to abolish the mistake of wrongly calculating the date when to sacrifice milk in *Darśapūrṇamāsa* sacrifice. Another clear analogy of the usage of rites in PM and meditation in Vedānta can be seen in *BS(Bh)* 3.3.5, where it is said that the same meditations are to be combined in the same way that subsidiaries described in different ritual texts are to be combined if they belong to the same rite. To establish if Upaniṣadic texts are the same, Vedāntins have sometimes, as described, used PM devices originally used to establish connections of subsidiaries to the main ritual act.

From these examples, one can see parallels between *vidyā* in early Vedānta and the role played by ritual in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. Just as in *MimS*, there are discussions as to whether some rites are the same or not, and in *BS* there are similar discussions about meditation. This argument might be used in favour of Bronkhorst's ideas on the relation of early Vedānta to Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, which will be briefly described in the conclusion of this paper.

⁵⁴ Same example one can find in Rāmānuja and Bhāskara.





4. *Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni*, or means of establishing the meaning of the text

As I have already described the six principles of *Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni* in some detail in my earlier article “Aspects of Early Upaniṣadic Exegesis”, I shall only note some of their basic traits and say something more than in the previous article on the principle of *upakramopasaṃhāra*, which bears some similarities to *prakaraṇa* (context).

Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni are: beginning and end (*upakramopasaṃhāra*), repetition (*abhyāsa*), novelty (*apūrvatā*), result (*phala*), explanation of meaning (*arthavāda*) and fitness/analogy (*upapatti*). It is not plausible to claim that these are also borrowed from Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, as some authors have claimed⁵⁵. These rules are used in *BS*, but also in Śāṅkara's commentaries on the *Brahma-Sūtras* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*. As far as I know, the earliest text where *Ṣaḍvidhaliṅgāni* are enumerated together is Madhva's commentary on *BS* 1.1.4 (*BSBh[M]* vol. II, pp. 2), where Madhva quotes an untraceable verse from *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*⁵⁶ (*uktaṃ ca bṛhatsaṃhitāyām*):

*upakramopasaṃhārāvabhyāso 'pūrvatāphalam /
arthavādopapattī ca liṅgaṃ tātparyanirṇaye //*

In determining the theme, the indications are: beginning and end, repetition, novelty, result, explanation of meaning and fitness/analogy.

The next text where these six means are enumerated is the 16th century *Vedāntasāra*, where the same verse is quoted as an introduction to

⁵⁵ Rambachan (1992: 41) claims that these principles were borrowed from Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. As I have as of yet been unable to locate any of these principles in *MimS*, *MimSBh* of Śābara, and the works of Kumārila, we have no reason to claim that they came from Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. Even if such principles appear in later Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā texts, it would not be right to claim that they are taken from there, as Śāṅkara and the *Brahma-Sūtras* predated these authors.

⁵⁶ I was unable to find this verse in GRETEL's electronic text of *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* http://iin-dolo.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretel/1_sanskrit/6_sastra/8_jyot/brhats_u.htm (last visit 25th February 2012). Mesquita (2008: 534) enumerates 11 untraceable quotations from *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* in Madhva's *Brahmasūtra-Bhāṣya* (*BSBh[M]*). As Mesquita used an edition of *BSBh(M)* which was unavailable to me, I was unable to establish if one of these 11 quotations was the one discussed above using the edition available to me. For a detailed study of Madhva's fabricated quotations, see Mesquita (2000, 2008).





a detailed analysis of all six means. Here is a brief description of the six principles:

- a) *Upakramopasaṃhāra*: unity of the meaning of a passage follows from the concord of its beginning and end⁵⁷.
- b) *Abhyāsa* (repetition rule) occurs both in *BS* and Śaṅkara's *BSBh*. For example, *BS* 1.1.12, *BSBh* 4.4.
- c) *Phala* is the rule according to which the purpose of the text establishes its purport. For instance, *BS* 3.3.59 prescribes that different meditations can be combined if they have the same result.
- d) *Apūrvatā* (*apūrvatva*) can be found in *BS* 3.4.21 in the context of the discussion about *Udgītha* in *ChU* 1. There, it is proven that the text, because of its novelty, cannot be the only explanation of the meaning (*arthavāda*), which is a subsidiary to the sacrifice.
- e) *Arthavāda*, explanation of meaning or eulogy.
- f) *Upapatti* occurs in *BS(Bh)* 1.2.2, 1.2.13, 1.3.9, 3.1.4, 3.1.22, 3.2.34, 4.1.6, 4.3.8, 4.15.5, 3.2.38, 4.4.13. It is hard to decide whether it is used in the technical or normal sense of the word. However, it occurs regularly in an exegetical context.

In Śaṅkara's works under consideration here, the most widely used rule is *upakramopasaṃhāra* (beginning and end), which presents the sense of what has to be explained in the passage at the beginning and end of the passage. Śaṅkara uses *upakramopasaṃhāra* in his *BSBh* 12 times⁵⁸. In *BSBh* 1.1.31, Śaṅkara defines *upakramopasaṃhāra*, saying that the unity of the meaning of a passage follows from the concord of its beginning and end.⁵⁹ Śaṅkara also uses the principle of beginning

⁵⁷ *vākyasyopakramopasaṃhārābhyām ekārthatvāvagamāt prāṇaprajñābrahmaliṅgāvagamācca / tasmād brahmavākyametaditi siddham / (BSBh 1.1.31)* In Thibaut's translation (part I, 1890: 106): "...from a comparison of the introductory and concluding passages we infer that the subject-matter of the whole chapter is one only, and as, on the other hand, we meet with characteristic marks of *prāṇa*, *prajñā* and *Brahman* in turns. It therefore remains a settled conclusion that *Brahman* is the topic of the whole chapter."

⁵⁸ *BSBh* 1.1.31 (3×), 1.3.42, 1.4.14, 1.4.17 (2×), 2.4.20, 3.1.5 (although he uses here the words *ādi* [beginning] i *avasāna* [end]), 3.3.36 (2×), 3.3.44.

⁵⁹ *vākyasyopakramopasaṃhārābhyām ekārthatvāvagamāt prāṇaprajñābrahmaliṅgāvagamācca / tasmād brahmavākyametaditi siddham / (BSBh 1.1.31 pp. 62, 15ff)* In Thibaut's translation (part I, 1890: 106): "...from a comparison of the introductory and concluding passages we infer that the subject-matter of the whole chapter is one only, and as, on the other hand, we meet with characteristic marks of *prāṇa*, *prajñā* and *Brahman* in turns. It therefore remains a settled conclu-





and end in *BAUBh* 1.4.10⁶⁰ and 2.1.20. However, neither in Śāṅkara nor in *BS* can we find all six principles enumerated together. Some of these words appear in *BS*,⁶¹ but it is quite difficult to decide whether these denote the principles of interpretation or whether they are used in the normal sense of the word. So it is unclear whether they were used as a six-member system of interpretation or as independent indications of correct interpretation.

Here I shall briefly comment on the usage of *upakramopasaṃhāra* in *BS(Bh)* 3.3.7, where its usage is very close to the context principle of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. *Sūtra* 3.3.7, as described earlier, says that *Udgītha-Vidyā* in *ChU* 1.1 and *BAU* 1.3 are different because they appear in different contexts. Describing the context, Śāṅkara uses the rule of concord of beginning and end to claim that the *Udgītha* from *ChU* 1.2.2 (“So they venerated the High Chant as the breath⁶²” [Tr. Olivelle 1998: 171]) is not the whole *Sāman* but only the syllable *oṃ* (which is a part of *Sāman*). This is because it is said in the beginning of *ChU* that “*Oṃ* – one should venerate the High Chant as this syllable⁶³” (Tr. Olivelle 1998: 171). As there should be concordance between the beginning and the end, in the sentence “So they venerated the High Chant as the breath” from *ChU* 1.2.2, it should be understood that the High Chant (*Udgītha*) is only the syllable *oṃ*. If it were the whole *Sāman*, then the beginning should be interpreted metaphorically, which is not plausible. Śāṅkara says that in one sentence (*vākya*) the beginning should be in accordance with the end⁶⁴. So, if the beginning clearly refers to *Udgītha* as a part of *Sāman*, one should then interpret the end of chapter where it is not said directly whether the Gods venerated *Udgītha* as the whole *Sāman* or only as the syllable *oṃ*. This whole discussion is held in the commentary where context (*prakaraṇa*) is discussed, so it is clear that *upakramopasaṃhāra* are used to describe the textual context

sion that *Brahman* is the topic of the whole chapter.”

⁶⁰ *tathā ca śāstram upakramopasaṃhārayor virodhād asamañjasaṃ kalpitaṃ syāt / (BAUBh pp. 671, 26f)*

⁶¹ *Phala* in *BS* 3.3.42, *apūrvatva* *BS* 3.4.21 *upapatti* in *BS* 1.2.2, 1.2.13, 1.3.9, 3.1.4, 3.1.22, 3.2.34, 4.1.6, 4.3.8, 4.15.5, 3.2.38, 4.4.13. Śāṅkara uses *upakramopasaṃhāra* quite frequently in his commentary. In this example, the principle is used by the objector, but in a number of cases it is also used by *siddhāntin*.

⁶² *ChU* 1.2.2: *te ha nāsikyaṃ prāṇam udgītham upāsāmcakrire /*

⁶³ *ChU* 1.1.1: *om ity etad akṣaram udgītham upāsīta /*

⁶⁴ *BSBh* 3.3.7: *upakramānurodhena caikasmin vākya upasaṃhāreṇa bhavitavyam / (pp. 380, 21f)*





in which the *Udgītha-Vidyās* occur. However, the word *vākya* also appears in Śaṅkara's claim that the beginning of a sentence should be in accordance with its end. This is interesting, since *upakramopasaṃhāra* appears in close proximity to *vākya* in one other place. This is *BSBh* 1.4.19, which has already been discussed above. Here, the rule of beginning and end is used by Śaṅkara's opponent, claiming that *BAU* 2.4 and 4.5 refers to lower Self, indicated by the word dear (*priya*) at the beginning (*BAU* [K] 2.4.5 and 4.5.6⁶⁵) and by doership (*BAU* [K] 2.4.14, 4.5.15⁶⁶) of the Self at the end of the text. That which is indicated at the beginning and at the end should be the purport of the passage. Śaṅkara fights this idea with a *sūtra* which claims *vākyānvayāt* ("On account of the connected meaning of the sentences." [Tr. Thibaut part I, 1890: 274]). According to Śaṅkara, as already described, the connected meaning of sentences indicates the supreme Self. If we can go so far as to say that in this *sūtra* "*vākyānvayāt*" means Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā principle of *vākya*, and that beginning and end mean the context, Śaṅkara's commentary is in accordance with the rule from *MimS* 3.3.14 that *vākya* (syntactical connection) is stronger than *prakaraṇa* (context). One further indication that context has something to do with beginning and end can be found in Śabara's definition of context, when he says that context is a declaration of what is to be accomplished and which stands in need of the procedure. He plays with etymology in saying that *prakaraṇa* means the beginning (*'pra'*) of the action (*'kriyā'*) of declaring. This is also referred to as the beginning of injunction (*'vidhyādi'*) standing in need of the end or sequel of Injunction (*'vidhyanta'*). If it is possible to interpret this passage of Śaṅkara's commentary in this manner, this only corroborates the example from *BSBh* 3.3.7 from which is clear that both systems of interpretational principles are combined in Vedānta.

⁶⁵ *BAU* (K) 2.4.5 and 4.5.6: *na vā are patyuh kāmāya patih priyo bhavaty ātmanas tu kāmāya patih priyo bhavati...*

⁶⁶ *BSBh* 1.4.19 citing *BAU* (K) 2.4.14 and 4.5.15: *vijnātāramare kena vijānīyāt...*





5. Conclusions

The six principles of *Viniyogakāraṇāni* are taken from Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and transferred to Vedānta. They are transformed in the *Brahma-Sūtras* from the principles of determining the usage and connection of subsidiaries to the main ritual act into tools for establishing the correct interpretation of Upaniṣadic text. This clearly shows a shift from Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā ritual exegesis and hermeneutics to Vedāntic textual exegesis. This is because *Viniyogakāraṇāni* are used in establishing the “correct” meaning of the text. In our first case (*BS[Bh]* 3.3.44 – 52), they are used to answer the question of whether the text should be used for ritual or for meditation. In other cases, they are used to establish whether the text refers to supreme or lower Self in the case of *BS(Bh)* 1.4.19 – 22, or whether the *Udgītha-Vidyās* from *BAU* and *ChU* are the same and as such may be combined for meditation. Bronkhorst (2007a: 308), criticising Parpoka’s claims (1981 and 1994) that Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta (and *MimS* and *BS*) were originally one, claims that Vedānta attached itself to an older school of Vedic interpretation. Bronkhorst (2007a: 306) thinks that the *Brahma-Sūtras* and its early commentaries lend the respectability of serious Vedic interpretation from Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, which is seen in the borrowing of the names of respectful ritual teachers from the *Kalpa-Sūtras* and *Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras*, such as Jaimini, Auḍulomi and Āśmarathya mentioned here, and others mentioned in other parts of *BS*⁶⁷. They were originally ritual teachers remembered as such in the *Kalpa-Sūtras* and *MimS*. As they were never mentioned in any Upaniṣadic context in ancient Indian literature besides in the *Brahma-Sūtras* (where they sometimes appear in ritual context), Bronkhorst (2007a: 302) implies that their names were most probably borrowed by the newly-emerging Vedāntic school of Upaniṣadic exegesis in order to establish itself as a form of Mīmāṃsā, but still remain part of the same Vedic tradition⁶⁸. Vedānta surely borrowed the tools for Vedic interpretation originally used for ritual exegesis, then using them to speculate upon *Brahman*. One of the indications in favour of Bronkhorst’s claims that Vedānta attached itself to Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā can

⁶⁷ For analysis of teacher quotation in *Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras* and *Brahma-Sūtras* see Bronkhorst (2007b: 62 – 77, 2007b: 295 – 307).

⁶⁸ Bronkhorst (2007a: 302 – 303) formulated this idea with some precaution mainly because of incomprehensible style of *Brahma-Sūtras*.





be seen in *BS* 3.3.1 (which is modelled upon *MimS* 2.4.9), where meditations take on the role played by rites in Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. Bronkhorst did not analyse the tools for ritual interpretation, but our study might corroborate his conclusion that “...using these instruments to solidly anchor Vedāntic ideas into the eternal Veda was an aim that gave rise to a new – or perhaps better: supplementary – school of Vedic interpretation: the Uttaramīmāṃsā” (Bronkhorst 2007b: 77). Here we must be careful and bear in mind that Vedāntic speculation on the Upaniṣads can be traced very early. Even in the Upaniṣads themselves one can find different aspects of textual interpretation, from etymologies to full prose commentaries on some verses such as those in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (*K* and *M*) 1.5.5⁶⁹, 1.2.28 and 5.14.3. These commentaries were obviously composed and inserted before the final redaction of the text was established. When the Upaniṣads were closed for further interpolations, Brahmanical circles most probably began to compose independent treatises on Upaniṣadic exegesis. Such efforts can be seen in *BS* 1.1 – 3 and 3.3, attributed by Nakamura to the pre-Christian era. The culmination of early speculations on *Brahman* and Upaniṣads must have been the *Brahma-Sūtras*. This is most probably when the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā rules and names of ritual teachers were employed. It is better to say that the rules for interpretation were reinterpreted in order to serve the Vedāntic main purpose — knowledge of *Brahman*. This also fits into Nakamura’s thorough investigation of the appearance of Vedāntic teachings in different types of ancient Indian literature (Nakamura 1983: 131 – 366). Nakamura’s conclusion is that Vedānta as a distinct philosophical school appeared gradually and comparatively later than other schools of ancient Indian philosophy. This only means that, in the beginning, Vedānta was most probably restricted to closed limited Brahmanical circles, and that it gradually gained prominence. It could be argued that in this process Vedānta acquired some elements of the already established and respected school of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. Of course, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā is a closer philosophical system to Vedānta than other schools, and it is legitimate to borrow, but also to build a whole new structure, setting the aim as high as one can imagine: to know *Brahman*.

⁶⁹ It can be noted that Śaṅkara calls this prose commentary “vyākhyāna”.





Abbreviations:

ApŚS.....	Āpastamba-Śrauta-Sūtra
BAU(K).....	Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad (Kāṇva)
BAU(M).....	Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad (Mādhyamdina)
BAUBh.....	Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣya (Śaṅkara)
BharGS.....	Bhāradvāja-Gṛhya-Sūtra
BharŚS.....	Bhāradvāja-Śrauta-Sūtra
BS.....	Brahma-Sūtra
BSBh.....	Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya (Śaṅkara)
BSBh(Bh).....	Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya (Bhāskara)
BSBh(M).....	Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya (Madhva)
ChU.....	Chāndogya-Upaniṣad
HirŚS.....	Hiraṇyakeśa-Śrauta-Sūtra
MimS.....	Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra
MimSBh.....	Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra-Bhāṣya (Śabara)
PM.....	Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā
ŚB.....	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa
TB.....	Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa



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