

## Between theology and grammar: Udayana on the meaning of the Vedic injunctions

Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya take opposite views on the status of the Veda: for Mīmāṃsakas it is authorless and eternal, for Naiyāyikas it does have an author and a beginning in time. In the vast array of arguments presented to prove these positions, the arguments from language hold a central place. Particular attention is given to injunction, held to be the core of the Vedic text.

In a detailed investigation, Udayana shows in the *Nyāyakusumāñjali* that injunction is what makes the hearer infer that the enjoined action is the means to attain the desired end. The resultant activity is not due to the mere existence of injunction, but to the cognition of injunction. To justify his view, Udayana comprehensively proves that injunction is neither the property of the agent accomplishing the action enjoined, nor of the action, nor of the instrument, but of the person who enjoins. Injunction is, more precisely, the intention of the speaker with respect to the performance or the prohibition of the action expressed in the injunctive statement. This principle, applied to the Veda, leads to the conclusion that the Vedic injunctions are the expression of the will of Īśvara. And proving the existence of Īśvara by means of a rigorous logical reasoning is precisely the declared aim of the *Nyāyakusumāñjali*.

Udayana builds his theology of injunction on linguistic foundations, for examining injunction means dealing first with the meaning of the injunctive forms (mostly the optative) and accounting for the cognition of sentence meaning. While his position is basically construed as a critique of the Mīmāṃsā view, Udayana must confront specific grammatical arguments as well, for his interpretation of the meaning of the verbal form (and thereby of the sentence meaning) is in direct opposition with certain Pāṇinian rules. This paper, part of an ongoing research on Udayana's theology, analyses how Udayana argues his case and what principles underlie his justification in this śāstric debate.

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