

Part Two

Fact, Fake, and Fiction in Historical Interpretation

Prologue

I

The overarching objective of the present essay does not merely consist in substantiating the contention that the scope of potential goals of explorations of intellectual traditions, such as Greek or Indian philosophy, essentially transcends the aim of identifying individual views and accounting for historical changes and developments of ideas and beliefs. An equally important purpose resides in demonstrating that certain prevailing traditions of research concentrating on historical investigations are not only exposed to the risk of unwarranted imbalance, but are even disposed to fall victim to a neglect of significant differences and even confusions in pertinent regards. In so far as the position is advocated that investigations concerning historical traditions must not be narrowed down to the detection of thoughts entertained at certain times it implies the thesis that studies of traditions of thought are not restricted to the ascertainment of facts *if* this term is taken as pertaining to historical incidences or to relations between them. Given that such a restricted understanding of the term tallies with popular conceptions it would be apposite to characterize the fundamental goal of investigations concerning theoretical traditions of the past as consisting in the ascertainment of truths, in a sense of

this term which permits to speak of truths of mathematic or (formal) logic.

It is easy to show that there are truths pertaining to theoretical constructs of the past involving reference to items which could be characterized as fictions in the specific sense that they are not or need not be objects whose existence has ever been envisaged in some previous tradition of thought. For example, it is in principle possible to ascertain about some given system of grammatical rules that it permits — or does not permit — the derivation of correct or incorrect linguistic forms, and, given that the system in question is sufficiently specific and explicit, the ascertainability of the pertinent truths does not depend on the question of whether or not the pertinent linguistic items have ever been considered by the creator of the system or by those who accepted it in the past. To be sure, if the theory in question lacks the required degree of explicitness, a definite verdict might be impossible. But even in such cases a lack of determinateness can be established as an objective truth, provided that certain matters of interpretation or exegesis have been definitely settled. It emerges that an awareness of the difference between issues of exegesis on the one hand and other tasks pertaining to truths which are not historical facts on the other hand matters even for specialists who are engaged in studies on intellectual history. Thus the consideration of ‘fictitious objects’ does not, for that reason alone, amount to a contemplation concerning fakes. As those scholars who — intentionally or unintentionally — suggest the contrary are guilty of promoting developments which can lead to the inferiority of an academic discipline, it is imperative to clearly expose their fault.

It would be a mistake to derive from the preceding exposition that the relevance of a strict separation between tasks of interpretation and tasks of assessing theoretical truths is confined to ‘formal systems’, such as certain varieties of grammatical theory. Also with respect to studies on systems and theorems of philosophies not couched in formal terms the difference is important. It

might happen, though, that for a clear and definite ascertainment of theoretical truths it is unavoidable — or advisable — to (at least partly) reformulate expressions of natural language by resorting to devices of formal languages. In such cases it can occur that even after a most perspicuous consideration of matters of (philological) exegesis different options of formal explication persist among which one cannot single out one particular alternative as the only legitimate one. Nevertheless, as long as the nature of situations of that kind is truthfully assessed, one must not discard the pertinent enterprise as illegitimate. On the other hand, however, a practice, sometimes suggested in studies, is definitely objectionable which consists in depicting some conceivable alternative as corresponding to (real) intentions of some historical figures portraying the remaining options as ‘idle possibilities’. It is precisely this habit which implies a fatal transgression from the realm of ‘fiction’ to the realm of fakes and needs to be contested on that account.

Analyses of positions in games of chess need not be restricted to a registration of moves or game-stages which actually occurred subsequently in a pertinent game or in the preceding history of playing the game. It can, and presumably will, (equally) take into consideration alternative possible moves and game-stages and conceivably evaluate actual moves and positions in the light of such alternative possibilities. Obviously the circumstance that unrealized possibilities come into consideration does not render the undertaking of analysis arbitrary or capricious. For the rules of the game restrict and determine (the sets of) possible subsequent moves and game-stages. Accordingly, one can distinguish between two in principle legitimate categories of assessment which could be indicated by the terms ‘historical’ and ‘analytical (type of account)’. Whereas the former (mainly) confines itself to registering (subsequent) courses of games that actually occurred and perhaps evaluating (preceding) moves and courses of game against their background, accounts of the latter type are characterized by a readiness to take into consideration unrealized, but

possible moves and courses of events whenever this is indicated. The distinction can be generalized beyond the realm of analyses of games. Bringing up this matter is not inapposite. One is entitled to affirm that till the present day the mainstream of scholars dealing with Indian traditions of the past have not clearly grasped this elementary type-difference. Consequently it should not come as a surprise if serious, and maybe comparative, investigations concerning the relevance of those two varieties of assessment can hardly be found. The thesis, however, that need for such inquiries exists deserves to find approval.

II

One can distinguish between three approaches of investigating theoretical traditions and their sources. They differ in accordance with the particular way of understanding subject matters which are concerned, such as linguistic theory, issues of metaphysics, ontology, semantics etc.

- A) An approach which aspires to re-enact as faithfully as possible the understanding of the subject matter which some writer of a textual source or a particular tradition of reception had attained during some period in the past.
- B) An approach which aims at understanding and analysing a theoretical subject matter that has been investigated in the past against the background of theories which are current at the time and in the (cultural) milieu of the person who studies the tradition.
- C) An approach which pursues the goal of achieving maximal depth of insight and thoroughness of knowledge about a topic which had been dealt with in traditions of the past by exploiting any sources potentially relevant for this purpose without attaching critical importance to matters of provenance. According to this stance it would be in principle legitimate to

exploit thoughts, teachings or theories concerning e.g. literature from any part of the world, including even a researcher's own considerations not derived from elsewhere, and, *mutatis mutandis*, the same holds good if views and theories developed in some, possibly non-Western, tradition pertaining to other areas than literature constitute objects of study.

An unprejudiced view intimates that all three portrayed approaches are warranted in principle, albeit particular contexts or overarching objectives can justify specific choices among the alternatives. If someone pursues the aim of portraying extensive historical connections an adoption of A) can appear preferable because in this manner the danger of failure due to overloading of tasks is reduced. On the other hand, interest in cultural self-criticism can prompt the attribution of relevance to comparative research. Against this background one could, for example, pursue the aim to ascertain whether theories developed in the framework of generative linguistics or rather grammars of the Paninian tradition could present a more elegant or comprehensive account of a range of syntactic phenomena; or whether philosophies created in the tradition of Kant or the later Wittgenstein permit a more insightful assessment of problems debated in India during the first millennium A.D. concerning the existence of a self, etc. It should be evident that investigations of type A) cannot fulfil purposes of this sort by themselves, but an approach of type B) or even a combination of the two approaches could be appropriate.⁶⁰ It might seem that approaches of the last type, viz. C), possess significance

⁶⁰ Approaches of the category B) do not need to satisfy the strict requirement that an understanding must be achieved which exactly reflects the understanding of an original author; it should only be free of relevant misunderstandings. On the other hand, even interpretations which are not completely faithful, particularly readings which render a position stronger than it actually was, can perform a most useful function in contexts of cultural self-criticism, if they reveal that contemporary theories cannot deal with pertinent issues in an optimal manner.

only under a purely theoretical perspective. To be sure, if someone desires to investigate the problem of semantic compositionality and, among other things, wants to ascertain which kinds of meaning or content might comply with a compositionality-principle and which types do not, or if somebody wishes to attain as many insights about the nature of truth paradoxes as possible, he will be well-advised to embark on investigations of this category. But presumably it is a mistake to suppose that studies of type C) are bound to be irrelevant under historical aspects. By achieving optimal competence in some particular subject-matter one is optimally qualified for recognizing facts of absence or of deficiency with respect to traditions of the past; one is enabled to ascertain decisively more than what actually happened in the course of history by realizing that aspects of some subject matter had been ignored or neglected whose discovery would have entailed significant improvements and which presumably possess relevance even under the perspective of the concerned specimens of tradition themselves. The detection of 'missed opportunities' can acquire potential significance on account of the discovery of specific novel problems and questions, such as the question of the factors responsible for pertinent omissions.

A proper implementation of the C-type approach can require the identification of theoretical connections which, in the field of philosophy, might even link different areas, such as ontology, metaphysics and semantics. For example, as long as we have not previously clarified the issue of whether predicates stand to (specific types of) objects in the same way as proper names stand to their bearers, we are not in a position to ascertain whether a tradition advocating an ontology on the basis of presupposing an affirmative answer to this question without considering matters of semantics thereby omitted inquiries concerning an aspect of a problem which is relevant on the tradition's own premises. If one has not examined whether an identification of possible bearers of absolute (not relativized) truth possesses potential relevance for

dealing with the problem of truth paradoxes, one is not entitled to contend that traditions touching on issues of truth paradox failed to address questions which were pertinent to themselves. Viewed against this background it emerges that investigations of the last type can be confronted with special and exacting requirements. It follows that for similar reasons as in the case of studies of type A) investigations of category C) are preferably exempted from some of the liabilities which are binding for inquiries of the former sort to avoid failure because of overload of tasks. This desideratum can be implemented, e.g., by assigning to undertakings of the concerned type an obligation to focus in the first place on intensive explorations concerning shorter textual segments, substituting the ideal of historical breadth by the ideal of analytical depth. It is not unreasonable to expect that by practicing 'division of work' the different approaches might fruitfully complement each other in the longer run.

It seems, however, that this view of the matter is not commonly shared — or perhaps it would be more correct to say that certain people are reluctant to see the matter in this way. Phenomena exist which intimate the opinion that, at least if foreign traditions of thought are concerned, approaches of the types B) and C) are improper, not because of irrelevance but on account of general methodological principles. Usually this stance is propagated in rather ambiguous and vague terms, relying often on slogans, such as:

One must interpret traditions in their own terms.

Let traditions speak for themselves!

One has to understand textual sources in their own historical context.

etc. The crucial point is that dictums apparently endorsing approaches of type A) can be interpreted in a number of different ways and that some but by no means all readings amount to wayward demands. There is one particular explication which deserves serious consideration: It implicates the postulate that

textual sources should be interpreted, so to speak, ‘from inside to-wards outside’. This means that primary attention ought to be devoted to the intertextual context, sometimes called ‘co-text’, preferably in a way which takes properties of sequence, such as order of thoughts or of argumentative steps, into account, attributing distinguished relevance to the most immediate co-text. Considerations relating to other works of the same writer occupy the second major rank in the order of priority. Subsequent to those core elements the pre-existing historical and social environment in which some work originated is to be considered for purposes of controlling the plausibility of the obtained results and assigning orders of preference between alternative readings whenever more than one interpretation is licensed according to the previous criteria. Such a postulate would not be pointless because it can be observed that interpreters sometimes fail to pay due attention to intra-textual connections compensating this omission by alleging historical parallels or by directly relating individual textual passages to putative properties of the historical context. On the other hand, it should be obvious that a methodological procedure of the described sort is most congenial to investigations of type A) as well as to undertakings aiming at the identification of communicative intentions of some original speaker or author. The thesis, however, that one thereby provides an exhaustive methodological account which must be binding for all varieties of textual analysis implies an all too sweeping dismissal of other approaches apart from A). A problematic by-effect of this ‘historical’ stance is in addition that it puts those in an advantaged position who lack the capacities to go beyond a ‘traditional understanding’.

III

In a recently published article⁶¹ a more aggressive version of the postulate of accounting for ‘historical context’ has been propagated which does not merely suffer from the defect of undue vagueness. As far as one can see, it disallows *any* explication which could render it acceptable. On the one hand, the paper shares the deficiency of lacking an elucidation of the idea of ‘historical context’, failing to differentiate between pertinent conceptual varieties corresponding to alternative explications and omitting needed clarifications regarding their specific methodological functions. On the other hand, it advocates a position which implies that statements to be found in the ‘tradition of reception’ (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) of teachings, theories or arguments or of textual sources where they are articulated possess the same criterial relevance as the methodological devices highlighted in the previous paragraph. To be sure, the pertinent thesis could be understood as involving a stronger or a weaker claim. In the first case, it would amount to the bold contention that for matters of exegesis opinions of individuals representing a history of reception need to be treated exactly like intra-textual properties. In the second case it would mean that views articulated in the *Rezeptionsgeschichte* deserve to be treated as a default-criterion in the sense that, whenever pertinent intra-textual evidence is absent and other sources harking back to an identical author are not available, one must treat a history of reception as equivalent to intra-textual evidence. Since the concerned article does not aspire to higher levels of sophistication in this respect, one cannot make a definite decision between the two alternative interpretations. Anyway, what matters is the fact that on both readings the contention is unacceptable and the reasons will be exposed in the first part of this essay.⁶²

⁶¹ E. Franco 2016.

⁶² One ought to realize that the fact that interpreting teachings in the light of their subsequent tradition of reception inevitably involves the risk of imputing

It might be objected that the alleged lack of plausibility and subtlety exhibited by the above portrayed position should render its criticism unnecessary and inappropriate. Against this demur the following response deserves to be given: One must at all cost — and not only in the field of politics — resist the temptation to be fooled into underestimating something, believing that perceptible implausibility, lack of sophistication or oversimplification prevent acceptance. Furthermore, in view of phenomena occurring in the past one cannot blindly rely on the effectiveness of quality control in academic disciplines.⁶³ In the present context it deserves to be considered in addition that the recent attempt to underpin exaggerated contentions concerning the relevance of history of reception by a rudimentary account of meaning makes it worthwhile to subject semantic issues to a rigorous inspection.

The second essay dedicated to a detailed survey of a previous debate concerning a specific topic in the area of Indian theoretical

distorted pictures concerning the recognition of problems is not exclusively due to the possibility of an increase of *awareness* of problems, i.e. the phenomenon that certain teachings involve objective problems which had not been realized by their originators but were detected later. More significant is the danger of even distorting the ‘spirit’ of a teaching or the attitude of a thinker because originally adopted views entail the irrelevance of problems highlighted in a subsequent tradition. This problem does not amount to a merely theoretical possibility. If it is true that the founder of the Madhyamaka-school advocated the non-existence of all physical and mental entities on a level of ultimate truth, he accepted a tenet suggesting an outlook according to which any attempt to *explain* the nature of illusion or the possibility of the occurrence of acts of illusion (given that they are themselves merely illusory) must amount to a futile enterprise impeding the attainment of salvation. — It should be plain that only the methodological point of the threat of underestimating the fallibility of interpreting doctrines against the background of later developments matters in the present context so that here the question as to whether the envisaged interpretation of the original Madhyamaka-teaching is correct possesses at most secondary importance.

⁶³ Due to the apprehension that too undifferentiated views on not unimportant general issues could still be accepted it has been preferred to even bring up matters which could be taken for granted in other circumstances.

philosophy has been added not merely in order to complement criticisms presented in the first essay. It should demonstrate that the preceding discussions are suited as a starting point leading to deeper theoretical contemplations. Furthermore, the explorations in this section are geared to clarifying the roots of particular, presumably quite wide-spread, preconceptions and prejudices and should thereby help for structuring and evaluating controversies in general.

As it is a central purpose of the present treatise to evaluate by contrast the three above depicted approaches in particular and to promote the appreciation of explorations not confined to the ascertainment of historical facts in general, it can hardly suffice to merely characterize pertinent varieties without reflecting on their possible relevance. A reason for granting room for a short exposition of some issues of truth paradoxes in the first chapter of the present essay, although the topic has been investigated in the previous part, lies in the aspiration to make the potential relevance of type C-investigations more transparent. If, by touching on issues of truth and meaning in different contexts and in various ways, the subsequent presentations work up an interest in these notions among scholars studying intellectual traditions, and if they promote the readiness to acknowledge that the relationship between them possess significance for the humanities in general, this effect should be welcomed.

The Delusions of ‘Historical Interpretation’

Abstract

Primary purposes of the present treatise are: 1) to show that detailed textual investigations where focus on historical connections is replaced by focus on conceptual and theoretical relations and where understandings of later interpreters need not be (explicitly) thematised are not only legitimate, but also unduly neglected and needed at present; 2) to disclose that arguments against this view, which might find wider approval than they deserve, are faulty and deserve to be rejected; 3) to corroborate these tenets by displaying the need to distinguish between different approaches of assessing philosophical traditions and highlighting some disregarded consequences entailed by this distinction. A secondary aim lies in displaying on the basis of not only empirical but also theoretical and methodological considerations the absolute untenability of a contention intimated by the title of a recently published paper claiming a final verdict concerning a debated issue in the area of theoretical Indian philosophy and to employ various details of that article for the illustration of relevant general points. The most overarching objective is however to cast doubts on the opinion that, since one has to deal with a philosophical tradition under the aspect of ‘history of ideas’, or ‘*Geistesgeschichte*’, one can dispense with the need to strive after a deeper understanding of the concerned theoretical subject matter — an understanding which does not merely mirror the understanding of the writer of some textual source — and to criticize a practice harmonizing with that belief.

I

It can be tiresome to have to write on issues which have been discussed a number of times before. However, a recent paper published by E. Franco (F) on the so-called *Sadvitīyaprayoga* (SP) titled ‘Final Notes on the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*’ (FN)⁶⁴ has shifted the focus from the SP, which was the original topic, to matters of methodology. The circumstance that the article exhibits both a failure of understanding a criticized position as well as a significant discrepancy between apodictic claims and substantial support is not the only thing which matters. Decisively more important are a) that several fallacies which do not specifically affect discussions about the SP could remain unnoticed due to more prevalent misconceptions about the role historical considerations are able to play in principle, b) that the issues which are at stake concern studies of texts and traditions in general and that a disentanglement of truths and untruths in this matter appears to be needed, c) that certain highly questionable tenets concerning the appropriate way of dealing with philosophical traditions suggested in FN are equally intimated in articles written by other authors and d) that F defends his case in an unacceptably irresponsible manner by undermining vital ingredients of scientific integrity. This has created a situation which makes a rigorous contestation unavoidable. All the main points expounded below possess implications which definitely transcend the topic of the SP.

It deserves to be made clear from the outset that, as far as the SP is concerned, no contention exists on my part to the effect that some particular interpretation, advocated by me, can claim exclusive legitimacy. It is precisely a major purpose of the subsequent exposition to indicate that and why on account of principal theoretical reasons *nobody* could maintain such a prerogative not

⁶⁴ *Journal of Indian Philosophy* (2016) 44:525–535. Published online: 16 May 2015. DOI 10.1007/s10781-015-9273-8.

only in the case of the SP but also in all other cases which are similar.⁶⁵ What will be attempted to show, however, is that important matters threaten to fall into oblivion, if a critical inspection of various issues which are brought up in FN were omitted. For the primary problem is not due to the mere circumstance that this essay exhibits various pieces of reasoning not complying with standards of strictness required for acceptable solutions of questions even in the area of traditional philologies. Decisively more important is the fact that *de facto* — whether intended or not, can be left open — FN amounts to an attempt to discredit the insistence on more

⁶⁵ In view of the possible allegation that the thesis suffers from insufficient novelty because it could be regarded as a version of the renowned doctrine of the under-determination of theories by data the following points deserve to be remarked: First, something which could be regarded as a truism by certain philosophers is not necessarily a commonplace for everyone. Second, advocating some theorem on the one hand and illustrating that and why some version of it holds true in some particular area on the other hand are different matters. Third, the sort of indeterminateness which possesses primary relevance in the present connection is *not* the same as the indeterminacy pertaining to the interpretation of a language; it mostly arises due to contingent circumstances and affects the interpretation of linguistic tokens and not of types as elements of a linguistic system. Accordingly it is on the one hand theoretically less fundamental but on the other hand practically more relevant than the sorts of underdetermination discussed in the context of linguistics and philosophy. Fourth, the pertinent view is connected with tenets concerning meaning and content which are by no means commonly acknowledged, in particular the theses that different types of meaning and content exist and that textual exegesis is regularly concerned with types of meaning and content which are most crucially underdetermined by available data. Although those matters are not the primary topic here, it is apposite to at least bring them up at this point. They are, among others, important for recognizing the crudeness of FN's rhetorical question (p. 534) as to how it is possible to 'understand' something's 'meaning without considering it in its historical context'. The truth is rather that the identification of *particular types* of meaning or content requires considerations of (certain varieties and features of) context. Last but not least, it is quite astonishing that someone who ought to have heard of the thesis that there are different sorts of understanding with respect to linguistic and related items completely ignores this tenet or takes its falsity simply for granted without argument.

demanding standards of rigor, and it is this precarious peculiarity which explains the focusing on FN for purposes of illustration.

II

The main points are as follows:

1.

It is true that the tenet is supported by me that at present an urgent need exists to complement studies dealing with historical developments in the area of Indian (and presumably also other non-Western) philosophies by detailed enquiries concerning individual texts and textual passages and that investigations of this sort do not *need* to make sources belonging to later historical periods a subject of discussion — which does not rule out that their knowledge is implicitly taken into consideration. The postulate is based on the view that textual analysis calls for a degree of depth and intensity which is not achieved by merely historically oriented studies and surveys. It is a major mistake to claim that this manner of excluding the history of reception makes matters of textual exegesis arbitrary. There are different criteria which restrict the acceptability of interpretations in the area of theoretical treatises. They can be subdivided into three main subcategories, viz.

- (a) grammatical criteria
- (b) pragmatic criteria
- (c) theoretical criteria.

Among those

- (a) relates to rules valid for specific natural languages as well as conventions generally obeyed in some linguistic community.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ This provides the foundation for a kind of understanding which can be achieved even with respect to isolated sentences or constituents of possible sentences occurring e.g. in the form of quoted examples in the context of

It is to be noted that, although the circumstance that some interpretation implies a violation of such rules or conventions generally diminishes the probability of its correctness to a significant degree, it is in the first place the indisputable occurrence of failures of linguistic performance which forbids to consider this criterion as absolutely decisive.

- (b) comprises (at least) two components, viz. (i) maximal suitability of some existing formulation to be interpreted for the communicative goals implied by the hypothesized interpretation or exegesis and (ii) intra-textual context, sometimes designated by the technical term ‘co-text’. Due to (i) the mere circumstance that relative to an existing formulation an alternative exists which would be better suited for the realization of the hypothesized communicative goals provides a relevant reason for decreasing the acceptability of an interpretation.⁶⁷ As far as (ii) is concerned, (by default) primary relevance needs to be attributed to the preceding co-text in comparison to the subsequent co-text as well as to other textual passages written by an identical author.⁶⁸ The reason is that

linguistic studies. For this sort of understanding it is immaterial whether or not the pertinent expressions contain indexical elements as constituents. On the other hand it yields a valid basis for assessing what a competent user of an expression could, and presumably will, but not must (!), mean under possible circumstances.

⁶⁷ It must be admitted that if languages come into play which are not native tongues of an interpreter this methodological tool tends to become less powerful. But precisely this circumstance sustains the contention that even for a classical philologist acquisition of a certain amount of active competence in a foreign language possesses relevance.

⁶⁸ It can be presumed that neglect of this point arises out of a failure to clearly and consistently discriminate between two different tasks (corresponding with two separate senses of the expression ‘mean’), namely i) the task of ascertaining communicative intentions connected with particular utterances on the one hand and ii) the task of identifying pertinent totalities of beliefs held by an individual speaker or author on the other. — The principle of the priority of preceding over subsequent co-text must surely not be taken in an excessively restricted manner so that it would militate against the fact that the

somebody who writes a text usually attempts to practice a linguistic behaviour which (as far as possible) enables potential addressees to correctly grasp his communicative intentions without having to rely on information not provided before.⁶⁹

- (c) encompasses (at least) the following two elements: (i) The theoretical situation at the time in which some textual passage has been written, (ii) the objective theoretical tenability and significance. (i) is pertinent for diminishing the peril of accepting ‘anachronistic’ interpretations. Usually (but not necessarily always!) the plausibility of an interpretation is

question of the — pragmatic or pragmatic and theoretical — relevance of immediately subsequent remarks can sometimes provide a most important methodological tool for the determination of the import of some earlier linguistic unit. To some extent the producer of a sequence of utterances can legitimately demand and expect that addressees will be disposed to revisit and reconsider his remarks, and this holds good in particular, if acts of communication take place in the written medium. Thus in the final analysis the most decisive criterion lies in the possibility to preserve the presumption that a speaker or writer exhibits an adequate linguistic behavior.

⁶⁹ Considering the fact that linguistic formulations often do not reveal by themselves the topic of the context of their occurrence, the priority of previous co-text attains special significance whenever textual sources are concerned which deal with a multitude of topics, as e.g. the *Nyāyasūtras*: It is the immediately preceding co-text in particular which should provide clues for the identification of the pertinent subject matter. The criterion is relevant even in cases where one must reckon with the possibility that an existent textual source contains later insertions so that its application serves the purpose of settling questions concerning the import envisaged by the subject who inserted a formulation, whereas questions concerning the import intended by its original creator would need to refer to different criteria, such as details of formulation. It is even conceivable that the criterion attains relevance in the field of textual criticism: If in an existing version of a text a passage occurs implying a substantial determination (not necessarily distortion) of the meaning of some fairly distant preceding segment, this fact can provide a clue for the identification of later insertions. — One must not misunderstand those statements as militating against the possibility that a writer, realizing that he had not expressed himself with sufficient clarity before, adds clarifying remarks later, maybe even in the form of another work.

enhanced by the circumstance that it helps to explain *why* some writer has said something by showing that he can have considered his saying as relevant in some socio-historical context.⁷⁰ (ii) possesses significance not only due to the fact that if an interpretation entails the attribution of blatant errors it deserves to be met with scepticism, but also because fairness to a tradition and its representatives demands that one looks for the theoretically most insightful stance compatible with the criteria of the categories (a) and (b).⁷¹

In contrast to the aforementioned aspects consideration of how a textual passage or theorem has been understood by later interpreters can only possess a heuristic significance. The reason should be patent: Other person's *beliefs* of what something means or somebody else has meant are principally unsuited as a *criterion* for supporting or even deciding what something or someone actually means. The opposite view contradicts the sound intuition that there is neither an entailment

⁷⁰ Strictly speaking there is an overlap between the categories (b) and (c) in this regard.

⁷¹ Those criteria come into play for the derivation of some content from a linguistic formulation. Once a content is established as being supported by relevant criteria, one can pose questions of a different sort pertaining to objective properties of the content in question, such as what is entailed by it, what is incompatible with it, what would be probable or improbable if it represented a truth, which theoretical position is supported, refuted or called into question etc. Issues of the latter type are relevant for the assessment of the theoretical significance of theorems or arguments like the SP. One cannot attribute much value to any criticism which, instead of keeping clearly apart the different components pertinent for the subject matter, muddles them up. — It is a well-known fact that, as a rule, human beings do not recognize all properties of abstract objects and, in particular, everything which is objectively implied by some content. Moreover, something which one subject perceives as a consequence need not be discerned by others too. Hence — pace F and FN — the mere circumstance that certain textual sources do not exhibit an awareness of particular consequences implied by some content or theoretical item cannot disprove the supposition that ideas entailing the pertinent consequences might be much older than the sources in question.

between being true and being believed to be true nor between being believed to be true and being in fact true.⁷²

To be sure, it is not seldom impossible to employ the above portrayed criteria for uniquely determining some particular interpretation. This problem is particularly virulent in the case of the SP where one cannot even rely on criteria of co-text. But it is nothing else than a matter of fidelity to clearly acknowledge indeterminateness instead of feigning decidability by (mis)using the authority of opinions held in some later tradition. To be sure, precisely the frequent under-determination of meaning by linguistic rules and knowledge about context bestows a certain amount of relevance of taking into account how something has been understood in a tradition of later interpreters. This relevance is nonetheless of a purely heuristic nature: It derives from the fact that taking opinions into account can assist us in recognizing possibilities of interpretation which otherwise could be easily overlooked. The importance of paying attention to traditions of exegesis could be somewhat higher if it presented not only opinions but also reasons for the concerned opinions. But even under such circumstances the mere fact that opinions have been accompanied by reasons cannot license definite verdicts about interpretations. It is mandatory to first assess the validity of the reasons themselves so that in any case the role of considering traditions of interpretation remains heuristic: Its relevance is rooted in the fact that it potentially diminishes the danger of neglecting reasons which can be pertinent for making decisions in matters of interpretation. Hence for vindicating that a tradition of exegesis has been unduly neglected it would be necessary to show that either

⁷² Against this one cannot validly object that a belief can serve as a criterion whenever its very existence is due to the circumstance that its content represents a fact. In such special cases it is strictly speaking not the belief itself which could function as a criterion but only the combination of the existence of the belief plus the circumstance that the truth of its content provides the only plausible explanation of its existence.

specific significant possibilities of interpretation or relevant reasons for deciding exegetical issues have been disregarded due to such neglect.

F's paper does not only fail to give evidence for any presentation of exegetical reasons in the tradition subsequent to the first presentation of the SP, but it also omits the chance of introducing a slightly higher degree of sophistication and differentiation into the discussion by drawing attention to the above-mentioned difference. This is surely deplorable. One must moreover regret that the article completely ignores the question whether it can be expected that later interpreters criticizing the SP intended to do justice to it. My own surmise — which had been expressed earlier — is that this expectation must not be taken for granted. Therefore the position which appears to be advocated in FN is not only fallacious, but potentially pernicious: It invites one to practice unfairness to individual writers and works by too uncritically accepting verdicts of persons who intended to criticize them.

For demonstrating that the surmise that later critics failed to do justice to the SP is more than an empty speculation, a brief inspection of Dharmakīrti's criticism in the *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV) IV, 34–39, taking into account remarks in the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (PVin), another work of the same author, suffices. The vital feature of the criticism lies in rejecting as sufficient for the validity and acceptability of an argument a compliance with the requirements a) that a quality employed as a reason = *probans* (or *hetu*) is in fact exhibited by a substratum of inference = *pakṣa* and b) that in the domain outside the *pakṣa* it holds unfailingly true that everything exhibiting the *probans* also exhibits the quality to be proven = the *probandum* (or *sādhya*), if the *probandum* consists in the disjunctive property of possessing as a second counterpart, i.e. differing from, either a body manifesting consciousness, i.e. a conscious body, or that which, as a matter of fact, functions as a *pakṣa*, which is in the pertinent case an individual pot or collection of pots.

In principle such a refusal could be based on the view that disjunctive qualities are generally inadmissible as *sādhya*. This is presumably not presupposed by the writer of the text. Another possibility would be an adoption of the weaker tenet that disjunctive qualities are admissible only if i) at least one object instantiates all the members of the disjunction or ii) all members of the disjunction are instantiated by at least one item, such that the fact of their instantiation is indisputable.⁷³ No matter whether or not Dharmakīrti accepted these propositions, any criticism which vitally depends on such a questionable premise can hardly do justice to the SP.⁷⁴ A further possible basis can lie in the consideration that a hypothetically assumed proponent employing the SP would, by employing the argument, intend to establish the contention that material bodies as substrata of consciousness exist. In that case the refutation of the SP would crucially depend on the supposition that users of the SP must be materialists and that the only (realistically) conceivable function of the SP lies in

⁷³ To be sure, the SP relies on a dismissal of this demand, but there is no sound reason to regard this circumstance as fatal for the SP-argument.

⁷⁴ Let us suppose that from some town T an older route A and a newly built route B leads to some city C and that there is no other way from T to C. Suppose further that we know that some person P will travel from T to C. Intuitively the argument: 'P will come to C either by route A or by route B because he starts from T' is stronger than the argument: 'P will come to C by route A because he starts from T'. At least one can definitely ascertain that the first reasoning is not more unsecure than the second alternative. This holds even good in a situation in which P has never travelled before from T to C on the route B and where it is doubtful whether he or anyone else will ever travel on this route to C. This shows that not only i), but even the postulate ii) is pretty implausible. It demonstrates in addition the dubiousness of the requirement of (positive) 'examples'. In this connection the circumstance attains importance that at least the argumentation of the PV could be most naturally interpreted as vitally relying on ii). — Note that ii) differs from the requirement that all members of a disjunction must represent *possibilities*, so that it needs to be both conceivable that P reaches T via A and conceivable that P reaches T via B. (We will revert to this point later).

establishing a tenet advocated by materialists.⁷⁵ Even if the assumption that the SP should be used for establishing a materialistic tenet were taken for granted, the demand that a materialist is *obliged* to prove his thesis by a form of argument in which the (non-disjunctive) quality of (something's) possessing as a counterpart a body endowed with consciousness functions as *probandum* is quite peculiar, because this is apt to provoke the question: What entitles Dharmakīrti to dictate to the materialist the manner in which he has to demonstrate the truth of his proposition? The reply that Dharmakīrti's own theoretical outlook does not allow for any alternative way is hardly convincing. In this case the materialist could confront the author of the PV with the answer: 'All the worse for your philosophical theory!'

A most interesting possibility of criticism is provided by a crucial feature of the SP which the author of the PV (and of the PVin) could have exploited and (implicitly) recognized: The reason why the exhibition of the disjunctive property is guaranteed in the domain apart from the subject of proof (the *pakṣa*) lies precisely in the fact that the items belonging to that domain are different from it; all (existing) items which differ from the *pakṣa* exhibit the property of having a pot (functioning as *pakṣa*) as a different counterpart and thereby exemplify the disjunctive quality of having either a pot or a conscious body as a counterpart exactly because they do not belong to the domain of the *pakṣa*.⁷⁶ Hence an *anvaya* restricted to the domain outside the *pakṣa* can exist only for that reason. It is nothing else than this fact which forbids the transfer or extrapolation of a feature

⁷⁵ These are, as a matter of fact, questionable presuppositions. Since this issue will be addressed later it is not further explored in the present context.

⁷⁶ This is not a consideration explicitly expressed in the PV (or the PVin) but a fact which is exploited for the purpose of criticism, particularly by the — interesting but unconvincing — argument that, given that the existence of conscious bodies is a matter of doubt, no example conclusively establishes the connection between the *probans* and the disjunctive *probandum* by exemplifying one member of the disjunction which could be equally exemplified by the substratum of inference, i.e. the *pakṣa*.

exhibited in the entire non-*pakṣa* realm to the *pakṣa* itself. But by exploiting this peculiarity for criticizing the SP Dharmakīrti misrepresents its significance which consists in the following problem: How can we be assured that it is not the case that a regularity in some domain holds unfailingly good only because the domain in question differs from another domain? How can we be confident that even if we possess strong evidence for an unviolated regularity in a particular realm we do not go astray if we infer some fact in a way whose validity crucially depends on the premise that the same regularity holds good in a different realm or under different circumstances? What guarantees, for example, that law-like regularities which are in fact never violated in situations where the relative movement of different bodies is relatively low cannot be violated in situations where the velocity of movements is extremely high, or that dispositions always exhibited by certain kinds of objects under conditions of normal temperature are also exhibited by objects in situations of extreme heat or extreme cold? The problem which is at stake does not merely concern the application of a law-hypothesis to novel instances but the possibility of extrapolating law-like connections themselves to different kinds of situations. It is a problem which vitally affects Dharmakīrti's idea of *svabhāvavapratibandha* and the role which can be attributed to it.⁷⁷ The crux is that the relevance

⁷⁷ As far as one can see, Dharmakīrti has never discriminated the idea of an absolute relation of cause and effect, represented by propositions of the form 'A is cause of B' or 'A-s are causes of B-s', from relativized concepts of cause-effect relation, represented by propositions of the form 'Under the circumstance C, an A causes B' or 'In the situation S A functions as a cause of B'. This is relevant in so far as any demonstration to the effect that it can be definitely established by some test that in particular (sorts of) situations some specific feature, such as the occurrence of fire, functions as a causally relevant (and indispensable) factor for the occurrence of some (kind of) event, such as occurrence of smoke, does not *eo ipso* vindicate the contention that there is a possibility to establish in a categorical form that the existence of the concerned feature is always a necessary prerequisite for the existence of the pertinent event so that one can safely infer on the basis of a perception of smoke that some fire occurs somewhere. By seeing this matter clearly one is

of a framework condition must not be always immediately obvious.⁷⁸ It is not justified to argue that the possible circumstance that in the tradition of Dharmakīrti neither this problem nor its derivability from the SP has been articulated establishes that the problem does not exist and that one cannot legitimately distil it from the SP. This is as if one would contend that the circumstance that a contradiction in a mathematical theory has not been detected (up to a specific time) establishes that it does not exist.⁷⁹

There are also other regards in which the account presented in the PV (and elsewhere) fails to throw into relief vital aspects of the theoretical significance of the SP, if it (viz. the formulation of the SP) is interpreted in accordance with (c)(ii): A derivation of the pertinent ‘materialist’ tenet would involve *two* components. The first step consists in the establishment of the exemplification of a disjunctive quality in accordance with criteria of *anumāna*. The second step consists in the elimination of the possibility that some particular item exemplifies one of the disjuncts, and the validity of this step is *not* a matter of complying with such criteria, specifically the criteria stipulated in the doctrine of *trairūpya*, but possesses entirely different

enabled to recognize that inferences based on hypotheses of causal relations are always by nature probabilistic. It is the formal property of ‘If P, then if/whenever A then B’ which furnishes a relevant link between invariable regularities like in the case of the SP on the one hand and the idea of domain-specific causal connections on the other; in the first case ‘P’ is replaceable by expressions such as: ‘If something is not the *pakṣa*’ and in the latter case by expressions, such as: ‘If a temperature above X degrees prevails’ etc. By failing to distil this abstract feature Dharmakīrti missed an opportunity to inspect his own outlook with a more critical eye.

⁷⁸ Therefore a significant issue is the question as to whether such a theory could ever be suited in areas such as linguistics or economics.

⁷⁹ One wonders, by the way, whether the recommendations advocated in FN imply that, instead of investigating a mathematical theory itself, one must first of all examine whether the existence of a contradiction has been asserted in sources representing the mathematical tradition of the subsequent ten, fifty or hundred years. — Anyhow, the objection that examination of the tradition can be important as an aid for finding out the truth of the matter rests again on a confusion between heuristic devices and criteria.

theoretical roots. In this regard the SP transcends the framework of theories of ‘means of valid knowledge’ (*pramāṇa*), in particular the version which is adopted by the author of the text.

The SP can be most naturally integrated in an argumentative context directed against a theory or against proponents of a theory supposing that certainty concerning the impossibility of the occurrence of a *probans* without the *probandum* in some (large) domain licenses the presumption of the same regularity in any (smaller and) specific domain. Such an argument could run as follows:

It is assumed (by you) that the following principle is valid: Whenever we are (absolutely) certain that in the whole domain which remains, if we disregard some specific object or realm of objects (about which we desire to know more), it holds good that everything which exhibits some feature H also exhibits some particular feature S, then we are entitled to derive that objects belonging to the specific domain will exhibit S, given that they exhibit H. But let us consider any of the following pieces of reasoning:

‘The pot (which is in front of us) is such that it either numerically differs from this pot (which is in front of us) or numerically differs from at least one conscious material body because it is not a lotus, as e.g. a wall’

or:

‘The collection of all pots (of the world) is such that each element either numerically differs from all pots (of the world) or from at least one material body which is a substratum of consciousness because it is (such that each of its elements is) not a lotus, as e.g. a wall.’

In both cases we can be absolutely certain that in the non-specific realm all items exhibiting the probans (H) must also exhibit the probandum (S). However, (given that the pertinent principle is

truth-preserving and thus) supposing that this circumstance guarantees the truth of the pertinent conclusion it follows that the proposition that the pot which is in front of us differs either from itself or from at least one conscious material body, or, alternatively, the proposition that every pot either differs from every pot (including itself) or from at least one conscious material body, needs to represent a truth. But a possibility of preserving truth could only exist if pots numerically differ from conscious material bodies, which means that (at least some) material body which is a substratum of consciousness must exist. This is surely not something which you (or we) want to accept.

The crucial point is that according to this reconstruction the primarily derived consequence is *not* the existence of conscious bodies but the corollary that pots are such that they *either* differ from themselves *or* from some conscious body. Since this proposition is at least a *possible* truth one cannot simply discard the relevance of the argument by stipulating that a piece of reasoning must not attempt to establish a thesis whose falsity is indisputable.⁸⁰ The crucial point is rather that a possible truth is derived that itself implies consequences which are regarded as unacceptable by certain persons and that for those who regard the entailed corollary as true a parallel argument can be construed simply by replacing ‘is different from’ by ‘is never different from’ possessing an implication which they could not accept as true.

Against this background the objective need not to be seen in the establishment of some or the other ‘metaphysical’ tenet but in the demonstration of the fallacious nature of a certain principle of reasoning. The decisive point is the following: It is not the case that that which appears *within* the SP as a thesis, or technically as *pratijñā*,

⁸⁰ Precisely the *combination* of the features of being necessarily satisfied by all items in the domain outside the *pakṣa* (and specifically in the subsection of that domain where the *probans* is instantiated) and of being possibly, i.e. conceivably, satisfied by the *pakṣa* (or by items constituting the realm of the *pakṣa*) bestows on the *sādhya*-predicate the peculiar character which is responsible for the significance of the SP.

is meant to be established as true by that which appears as a reason, or technically as a *hetu*. Rather the entire reasoning (consisting of *pratijñā*, *hetu* and *drṣṭānta*) is presented as an example (in the usual sense, and not in the technical sense of the term *drṣṭānta*), so that the presentation *as a whole* should demonstrate the vulnerability of particular standards of inferential reasoning, and this contention is established in a fairly convincing manner. Under these circumstances it would be inappropriate to characterize the argument as a ‘sophism’ in any defensible sense of the word. To be sure, the writer of the PV does obviously not consider the SP under this perspective. But one should be entitled to ask: Was he (or F) justified to neglect this aspect of the matter?

Under the perspective of cross-cultural comparison, the fact that the SP appears to exploit a familiar logical intuition can prove to be significant: It is the intuition which lies behind a renowned rule designated by the terms ‘disjunction introduction’, ‘disjunction addition’ or ‘or-introduction’ and which licences the derivation of any disjunctive proposition of the form ‘P or Q’ from a proposition ‘P’ as an assumption. With respect to the realm of predicates the same intuition supports the view that if some predicate ‘Fx’ is true of some object then a disjunctive predicate of the form ‘Fx or Gx’ must equally be true of the same object, no matter what ‘Gx’ stands for. It is by no means eccentric to suppose that the proponent(s) of the SP were guided by similar intuitions and implicitly acknowledged rules which are fairly familiar to us. Hence there is an objective reason which *could* have caused the author of the PV and the PVin to raise the question of the legitimacy of the concerned intuitions and of the validity of the corresponding rules or theorems in a general and explicit form. This has, however, not happened and, presumably, did not happen in the tradition after Dharmakīrti either. If that is true, a phenomenon of absence can be ascertained whose dismissal as insignificant even under the aspect of intellectual history or *Geistesgeschichte* would require quite a narrow(-minded) view on the matter. On the other hand it is true that certain remarks made by the writer of the PVin intimate

an implicit rejection or at least reservations regarding the principle of disjunction addition. Those are, however, presumably based on considerations pertaining to the *appropriateness of using* disjunctive sentences or predicates rather than on facts relating to properties of their (semantic) contents and are in this manner reminiscent of the phenomenon that expressions of the form ‘It is possible that P or Q’ are commonly employed and understood in the sense of ‘It is possible that P and it is possible that Q’ in contrast to a theorem acknowledged in various systems of Modal Logic, according to which expressions of the first form are equivalent to expressions of the form ‘It is possible that P or it is possible that Q’.

With respect to Dharmakīrti’s philosophy in particular, the critical potential that inheres in the SP could be depicted as follows:

It might be granted that, *if* there are essential connections in the sense of *svabhāvapratibandha*, *then* secure inferences transferring state-of-affairs from some (previously explored) realm to a different (not explored) realm, must be possible, at least in theory. But the crucial problem lies in the question as to how it can be vindicated that essential connections in the pertinent sense really exist.

It is neither necessary nor appropriate to go deeper into details here, because in the present context only the following observations matter: 1) Given that the above portrayed questions and problems are not explicitly articulated in textual sources representing the history of reception of the SP, they cannot be discerned and assessed merely on the basis of taking specimens of its criticism into consideration, but require analyses which go decisively beyond those which are exemplified by current varieties of text-interpretation in the framework of historical studies. 2) Nobody who wants to ensure that the future tradition of study of Indian philosophies will not persist in a state of inferiority relative to other

disciplines can permit that F's contentions in FN furnish a sufficient motivation for discarding the legitimacy of problem-oriented explorations in the field.

Recognition of the above ascertained facts is not provided by a verbal understanding of a textual passage representing a criticism of the SP (an understanding which is required for achieving an acceptable translation) but only by a theoretical understanding of a pertinent subject matter, which is an entirely different, and in some regards more demanding type of understanding. This is comparable with the understanding of a mathematical proof, something which is not ensured by either perceptual understanding (recognition of sounds or graphic symbols) or verbal understanding (understanding of the meaning of expressions, in particular the words employed by somebody who presents a proof). It is perhaps the combination of propagating verbal understanding and simultaneously discrediting theoretical understanding which represents one of the most perverted ingredients of FN.⁸¹ One ought to note in addition that the pertinent passage of the PV does not offer relevant help for a better *verbal* understanding of the SP.

The preceding remarks must not be taken as entailing an absolute separation between the levels of verbal and theoretical understanding in the sense that any form of interdependency, and

⁸¹ The above presented exposition intimates that the reception of theoretical items in a tradition can be an interesting topic of study. Hence one should have agreed to F if he had confined himself to asserting that this subject matter should not be neglected. What deserves strong opposition are however F's apodictic claims concerning the necessity to bring opinions of later interpreters into play irrespective of the context and the aims of an investigation. What matters most in the final analysis is not how many but *how* primary or secondary sources are read. (There is a certain parallelism with the priority of 'internal understanding' in the field of arts: Knowing that a certain sequence of intervals in a theme of a Beethoven sonata equally occurs in some work of Wagner must not contribute to a better interpretation of the sonata; rather the contrary could be an outcome).

in particular dependence of (understanding of) meaning on (understanding of) theory (even in a narrow sense of the term ‘theory’), is precluded. Despite the emphasis on the difference, the possibility should be admitted that theories can determine the meaning of terms in more than one sense of the word ‘determine’. They should in particular permit us to subscribe to the tenet that ‘understanding the technical language of a subject requires that we understand its theories, and to understand its theories we need to understand the language’ and that ‘we understand both by looking for the problems which the theories solve by using’ a ‘modified language’.⁸²

Although in the present connection it is not intended to go deeper into the concerned questions of linguistic change and innovation, it ought to be pointed out that they possess relevance for some more general aspects of the criticism put forward in the following section, in particular the problem of extrapolating semantic assessments concerning linguistic tokens from certain contexts to others.

FN does not submit a single argument against the contentions 1) that detailed textual investigations not aiming at describing historical developments are needed at present and 2) that the — one should think elementary — distinction between criteria and heuristic devices cannot be ignored. The article does not even reveal the slightest awareness of those points. Thus the most plausible conclusion is that its author has not adequately understood the position he attempts to criticize.

2.

The first contention, viz. the relevance of investigating immanent properties of individual textual passages and of respecting individual characteristics, can be substantiated by taking a closer look at the issue which, according to the abstract of FN, constitutes the second major

⁸² Cf. Hattiangadi 1987:12. In the present connection it is legitimate and even appropriate to abstain from discussing the question whether (perhaps not unimportant) additions would be needed to account for the circumstance that linguistic change and innovation as well as significance for language learning do not exclusively pertain to declarative sentences.

topic of that article, in particular at the way in which F argues for the affirmation that the expressions *sapakṣa* and *vipakṣa* must be interpreted as ‘collective terms’. This thesis is combined with the claim that those words have to be rendered with definite articles. First, the argument offered in FN to the effect that ‘[i]f the word *vipakṣa* were not used as a collective term, the formulation *vipakṣe ’sattvam* would not be adequate because it would leave open the possibility that the reason exists in another *vipakṣa*’ (p. 532) is pretty useless. This is because an indefinite noun phrase in the singular can easily be used for conveying a universally quantified proposition, as evidenced by

In a Swedish supermarket there is no alcohol to be sold.

In einem schwedischen Supermarkt kann man keinen Alkohol bekommen.

etc.⁸³ It is instructive to consider the pertinent issue against the background of an example. In the well-known *Nyāyapraveśa* the following passage occurs:

⁸³ It remains, moreover, unclear, why the same ambiguity should not exist if the expression *vipakṣe* (in formulations without *eva*) refers to collections, groups or realms of particulars. It deserves to be equally noted in passing that F’s contention (FN, p. 532) to the effect that in the terms *sapakṣaikadeśavṛtti* and *vipakṣaikadeśavṛtti* the constituents *sapakṣa*- and *vipakṣa*- must be understood as referring to an entire domain is doubtful. The reason is that in non-final members of compounds markers of number (singular, dual or plural) do not occur so that the conclusion that their compositional sense amounts to ‘presence in a part of (the domain of) *sapakṣa/vipakṣa*’ is not compelling. One can say, either

The sabre-toothed tiger is extinct.

Die Säbelzahnkatze ist ausgestorben.

or

Sabre-toothed tigers are extinct.

Säbelzahnkatzen sind ausgestorben.

Similarly, one could attribute to the expressions *sapakṣaikadeśavṛtti* and *vipakṣaikadeśavṛtti* as compositional meanings ‘presence in a part of the *sapakṣas*’ and ‘presence in a part of the *vipakṣas*’ — or, supposing that the surface-forms are not fully explicit, ‘occurrence at one [particular] place [in

*hetus trirūpaḥ | kiṃ punas trairūpyam | pakṣadharmatvaṃ sapakṣe
sattvaṃ vipakṣe cāsattvaṃ iti || kaḥ punaḥ sapakṣaḥ | ko vā vipakṣa
iti || sādhyadharmasāmānyena samāno 'rthaḥ sapakṣaḥ | tad yathā |
anitye śabde sādhye ghaṭādir anityaḥ sapakṣaḥ || vipakṣo yatra
sādhyam nāsti | yan nityam tad akṛtakam dṛṣṭam yathākāśam iti |
**tatra kṛtakatvaṃ prayatnānantarīyakatvaṃ vā sapakṣa evāsti vipakṣe
nāsty eva | ity anityādau hetuḥ ||***
(page 1,8 in the edition of A.B. Dhruva 1968)

Here the most relevant segments are written in bold and can be rendered as follows:

(“But what is *sapakṣa*? Or what is *vipakṣa*?”) *Sapakṣa* is a thing which is similar by the similarity of the *dharma* [which is] to be proven.⁸⁴ For example: If sound has to be proven as non-eternal the non-eternal pot etc. is *sapakṣa*. (Since) therefore producedness or [the quality of] ensuing upon effort is only in *sapakṣa* and never in *vipakṣa* (it is a correct reason with respect to [something’s being] impermanent etc.).

A most natural reading of the first segment containing the explanation of *sapakṣa* suggests a concept according to which (being) *sapakṣa* characterizes individual objects, like pots, which are non-eternal.⁸⁵ —

the domain of] *sapakṣas*’. For ruling out this alternative possibility and vindicating F’s contention one would need to rely on the claim that the pertinent expressions can *never* be used in the sense of nouns in the plural. Even admitting that textual evidence establishes that *sapakṣa*- and *vipakṣa*- can occur in the singular or even supposing that they ordinarily appear as singular nouns, it is questionable that pieces of textual evidence can license such far-reaching conclusions about linguistic possibilities. One ought to relentlessly insist on the postulate of a willingness to reflect upon those matters irrespective of the question as to what conception individual people might have regarding the character of their discipline.

⁸⁴ Or: ‘A thing which , is (a) *sapakṣa*’.

⁸⁵ The situation would be completely different if the text would read: *sādhyadharmasāmānyena samānā arthāḥ sapakṣaḥ*. In this case, it would be most natural to interpret the sentence in the sense of: ‘[The collection of all] the objects which are similar by the similarity of the *dharma* [which is] to be

This means that *sapakṣa* can occur in the syntactic position of a predicate meaning ‘is a *sapakṣa*’. — A similar interpretation is possible (though not mandatory) regarding the remarks that producedness etc. is only in *sapakṣa* and that *vipakṣa* is (something) where the quality to be proven never exists (or occurs). — Even if the words occur as nouns here, they are equivalent to ‘that which is a *sapakṣa/vipakṣa*’. — On the other hand the last two remarks can (perhaps) be most easily brought in line with the idea that the expressions designate groups or realms of particular objects.⁸⁶ But, even if this contention would be granted, one should be entitled to pose the question: Why is it imperative to assimilate either the reading of the first segment to the perhaps most natural reading of the second segment or the reading of the second segment to the most natural reading of the first? Why is it compulsory to posit any homogenization at all instead of admitting that the manner of employing the words is not uniform and that the most natural readings are to be accepted in all

proven are/constitute the *sapakṣa*’ or: ‘The *sapakṣa* is/is constituted by (all) the objects which’. But precisely this wording is not found in the text. Although F, in FN p. 532, refers to the *Nyāyapraveśa*, he writes as if he had not critically read the pertinent textual source.

⁸⁶ Nonetheless, it is important to pay due attention to the circumstance that the phrase *sapakṣa evāsti vipakṣe nāsty eva* can be consistently interpreted in the sense of: ‘occurs only in a *sapakṣa* (= in something which is a *sapakṣa*) and does exclusively not occur in a *vipakṣa* (= never occurs in something which is a *vipakṣa*)’. The mere *possibility* to obtain an acceptable interpretation of the entire sentence also on the basis of a ‘collective interpretation’ of the word(-token)s *sapakṣa* and *vipakṣa* can merely yield a fallacious argument for the necessity of this reading, because it is not an uncommon phenomenon that differences on some lower syntactic level are ‘neutralized’ on some higher level. This can not only be caused by particular features exhibited by the content of the context in which an expression is embedded but can also be due to the circumstance that one and the same surface-structure masks differences on some deeper underlying level. It seems that at least in the field of Sanskrit philology a widespread ignorance or neglect of the latter possibility, which provides, among others, an explanation for the neutralization between ‘and’ and ‘or’ or its equivalents of other languages in various contexts, still constitutes a major methodological shortcoming.

cases? If however even within a single textual passage there is no need to hypothesize a completely uniform and consistent manner of using expressions there should be even less reason to dogmatically presuppose that the employments of the expressions *sapakṣa* and *vipakṣa* are exactly identical in all texts and contexts.⁸⁷

As a matter of fact, F spends much energy in establishing that a considerable number of authors employed the pertinent terms as devices for the designation of 'groups' or 'classes'. There is not the slightest need to dispute any of those claims themselves. For the decisive aspect of the matter lies in the query of what follows from the (hypothetical) supposition that all those claims are correct. To be sure, a relevant implication *would* exist if it could be taken for granted that the expressions must *always* be used in exactly the same way. But one has to fear that the underlying principle of imposing readings on textual passages from other passages is the outcome of a crucial lack of reflection on matters of linguistic practice.⁸⁸ An uncritical acceptance of the principle cannot be excused by the allegation that it corresponds to a common practice among scholars. For this circumstance would make the situation even worse. On the other hand, it appears to be a fairly widespread feature of natural languages that the same linguistic items which can designate individuals can also designate groups of individuals, and that terms used in certain contexts for denoting species, genera or types are used in other contexts for referring to particulars,

⁸⁷ It appears that F does not completely ignore the fact that different tokens of identical linguistic types can refer to different types of objects, but he does not allow that this takes effect in the framework of the pertinent topic.

⁸⁸ This possesses general importance because the distinguishing feature of a genuine science does not primarily lie in the mere presentation of reasons and arguments but rather in a basic readiness to embark on higher-order reflections concerning the validity of arguments.

individuals or tokens.⁸⁹ Not less important is the fact that the same words can occur in different syntactic positions in different contexts.⁹⁰ This observation is specifically relevant for the debated issue. First F imputes to me the thesis that ‘the term *sapakṣa* must refer to an individual thing that possesses the property to be proved’ (p. 531). This allegation is definitely wrong precisely because it is exactly this underlying stereotyped presupposition which is rejected by me. For a sufficiently precise account of the pertinent tenet one would need to say that it means the following: *if* one would characterize the content of a particular argument which has been termed *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument by using the expression *sapakṣa* in its formulation, *then* one cannot (or should not) use the wording: ‘Sound is permanent because it is either the *pakṣa* or the *sapakṣa*’ but rather ‘Sound is permanent because it is either the *pakṣa* or a *sapakṣa*’. The motivation for this contention is intimately connected with the criterion of the category (c)(ii) mentioned above: Given that *sapakṣa* refers to a group or realm of objects it becomes extremely hard to reconcile the content of the argument with the assumption — advocated by F himself in an earlier article — that it complies with the second condition of the doctrine of *trairūpya*, because it is difficult to maintain the truth of the proposition that some particular permanent object is (identifiable with) the group or the realm of all items exemplifying the quality to be

⁸⁹ Interestingly F refers (p. 533) among others to a statement in Dignāga’s *Nyāyamukha*, where the author seems to clarify that in characterizations of the reason and so on certain words in the singular, among them also the word *sapakṣa*, do not refer to specific individuals, but to a ‘class’ or a ‘collective’ (*jāti*). Apparently F has not realized a crucial ambivalence of this remark: The very act of clarifying that certain expressions are employed for the designation of collectives in particular contexts intimates that the pertinent expressions as types are considered as *not* always possessing such an import.

⁹⁰ The very fact that FN treats the issue in terms of the conventional query regarding the meaning of a word instead of raising a question concerning the import of the syntagma ‘is *sapakṣa*’ and trying to establish that this item always relates to (= is predicated of) groups or collections, signifying among others ‘is (identical with the collection which is) the *sapakṣa*’, consorts with a lack of proficiency in the pertinent field.

proven, i.e. the realm of all permanent objects. As far as one can see, F does not even refer to this problem to say nothing of dissolving the difficulty. If this is correct then the author of FN is not only guilty of an irresponsible simplification of the tenets of others. His faith in dubious principles of equalization makes him disregard problems of content.⁹¹

Originally I did not attribute major weight to the observation that F's way of rendering the term *sapakṣa* in the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument with a definite article seems unsuitable, presuming that it was merely the outcome of a momentary inadvertence.⁹² In the light

⁹¹ To be sure, if one took into account what is merely theoretically conceivable one could consider the possibility that the *sapakṣa*-collection of all eternal particulars is to be itself regarded as an eternal object and might therefore function as a 'positive example'. But is it plausible to assume that the proponent of the argument not only accepted this view but *presupposed* its truth in the argument itself? Should we suppose that he simply ignored the fact that teachings and schools existed which explicitly refused to acknowledge the existence of collections as genuine entities? Moreover, are we obliged to believe that the arguer, conflating groups or collections with universals or classes (in the sense of *jāti*), took for granted that *sapakṣa*-domains are eternal objects belonging themselves to them? Should one presume that the proponent of the argument completely overlooked the problems inhering in the ideas that groups or collections are elements of themselves or that there are infinite hierarchies of eternal universals among which most of them do not inhere in particular objects but in universals? As a matter of fact, all these difficulties do not arise if one drops the supposition that the import of the so-called *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument must be equivalent to: 'Sound is permanent because it is either *pakṣa* or the collection of *sapakṣa*'.

⁹² It might not be superfluous to point out that the constituent 'a *sapakṣa*' in the formulation 'Sound is permanent because it is either (the) *pakṣa* or a *sapakṣa*' must not be explicated in the sense of 'a *sapakṣa* in some or the other context of inference', but in the sense of 'a *sapakṣa* relative to the actual context of inference'. (This clarification was already earlier provided by me in view of the circumstance that F had mistakenly hypothesized the first explication). On the other hand it deserves to be mentioned that *if* F had employed the wording 'Sound is permanent because it is either (the) *pakṣa* or an element of the (realm of) *sapakṣa* (relative to the present context of inference)' his account would have been unobjectionable: The equivalence of the global contents of

of the remarks of FN it appears however that the original assessment was far too mild and sympathizing.⁹³ Anyhow, the most decisive aspect of the present issue lies in the fact that detailed analytical textual investigations are urgently needed not only because they open the possibility to weigh more meticulously the pros and cons of exegetical particulars, but also because they are apt to diminish the danger of distorting matters as a result of illegitimate imputations by paying more attention to individual features of context and co-text as well as to objective properties of content and by extending the scope of semantic investigations beyond considerations pertaining to surface level. In view of the conjecture that fundamental principles of natural languages provide for linguistic change and innovation against the background of theoretical understanding this issue possesses particular relevance.

3.

It has been contended in FN (p. 528) that the assumption that the SP predates Dignāga is ‘improbable’ due to the circumstance that if the SP deals with the “extrapolation principle” it ought to be later than Dignāga. If on the other hand, the SP would have been composed before Dignāga, it is highly improbable that it dealt with the

the alternative formulations is the result of a neutralization of a difference pertaining to the level of sentence constituents on the level of the sentences containing them.

⁹³ There should be no need to discuss the ‘qualities’ of a principle which reads as follows: If the majority of tokens of some linguistic type T possesses the meaning M1 and not the meaning M2, then each time one encounters in a textual passage a token of T one must interpret it in the sense of M1. To be sure, matters of statistic frequency can support default rules of interpretation which could assist in speeding up one’s reading in a language. But any philologist who invests only a minimum of self-reflection could easily realize that a major source of initial misunderstandings lies in implementations of unsuitable default rules and that the resultant errors are eliminated by updating information concerning a pertinent textual passage.

“extrapolation principle”.⁹⁴ Moreover, the SP should be dated to the time between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti because it ‘presupposes a theory of *trairūpya* as we know it from Dignāga’s writings, and it also presupposes that the *trairūpya* theory had been accepted widely or even established as a norm, in order for it to be worthwhile to compose sophisms directed against it’. It looks as if F had deluded himself by deriving from the fact that the SP complies with the requirements of *trairūpya* the consequence that it was directed against this doctrine.⁹⁵ Anyhow, such a reasoning amounts to a fatal fallacy. The same would equally hold good if one based the contention that the SP was directed against *trairūpya* on the supposition that several authors — who were not historians of philosophy after all — took it in this sense.⁹⁶ For the circumstance that writers for which this doctrine had been accepted or even ‘established as a norm’ brought the SP in connection with it must

⁹⁴ As the faultiness of this type of argument has been expounded earlier it will not be further considered here. In this connection it should be added, nevertheless, that assessments concerning dates or relative chronology in the area of ancient philosophies must pay due attention to the fact that transmission of information at those times must have been extremely slow in comparison with what would be expected nowadays.

⁹⁵ To be sure, a satisfaction of all the requirements of *trairūpya* would be problematic if the existence of examples exhibiting both the absence of the quality to be proven (the *sādhya*) and the absence of the proving quality (the *hetu*) were taken as an essential ingredient of this doctrine. But first, it is not compelling to consider this element as an integral part of *trairūpya* itself. Second, *if* it were an integral element, *then* its non-satisfaction by the SP would support the hypothesis that SP was *not* ‘directed’ against *trairūpya*, but against a theoretical account of inference where the question of the existence of examples for the so-called *vyatireka* had not (yet) become a problem. — In this context the fact is significant that the existential commitment in question is *not* an integral part of the idea of ‘inseparable connection’. One can however ascertain that the SP furnishes a possible motivation for an adoption of the postulate of the existence of ‘negative examples’.

⁹⁶ It should be noted in this connection that F’s own contention that the SP was directed against *trairūpya* clearly disaccords with textual sources where it is supposed that the SP-argument was designed for the proof of a materialist tenet.

be expected in any case, irrespective of whether or not its original proponent intended it in this way.⁹⁷

A major reason for questioning the alleged connection between SP and *trairūpya* lies in the existence of two textual passages which have been attributed to Vasubandhu's *Vādaśāstra*. The crucial passages read as follows:

tādṛgavinābhāvidharmopadarśanaṃ hetuḥ

The reason is the pronouncement of a property which does not occur without a such (= which is inseparably connected with the quality to be proven).

nāntarīyakārthadarśanaṃ tadvido 'numānam

Inference is the observation of an object not occurring without [the *probandum*] for someone who knows that.

Considering those passages together one obtains the following account:

Somebody presents a valid argument if he points out some quality [as being exhibited by some particular or plurality of particulars] if he knows that⁹⁸ [in the entire realm which remains if one leaves the

⁹⁷ This could be of course different, if plausible reasons existed for the hypothesis that some of the writers were personally acquainted with the original proponent of the SP (and intended to present a faithful account of something which was communicated). In the absence of such reasons, and considering the extreme unreliability of hearsay evidence, it is difficult to take seriously F's allegation (p. 527) that the supposition that the SP need not be directed against the validity of the *trairūpya* criteria 'is contradicted, explicitly or implicitly, by all the authors who discuss' the SP. — Note that FN does not even attempt to substantiate this contention by evidence.

⁹⁸ It deserves to be noted in passing that the SP could also be plausibly understood as being specifically 'directed' against the ingredient of knowledge pertaining to the inseparable connection between *hetu* and *sādhya*. The point is that the requirement of *knowing* the connection cannot increase the degree of cogency of an argument or even guarantee its validity because in the SP-argument the satisfaction of this postulate is most evident due to the fact that the exhibition of one of the qualities of the disjunction in the *entire* non-

items which are the objects of debate and doubt out of consideration] every item exemplifying the pertinent quality also exemplifies the quality to be proven [and that there is no exception to this rule].

Here all the essential ingredients of the *trairūpya*-doctrine are already present; the latter (viz. *trairūpya*) merely represents a further explication of the underlying idea, mainly by laying down a) that the subject of inference must in fact exhibit the proving quality or be known as exhibiting it and that mere belief that this is the case does not suffice and b) that the knowledge that the proving quality must always occur together with the quality to be proven is supported by the fact that the pertinent qualities occur together at least in some case(s). As far as the satisfaction of the criterion of the category (c)(i) is concerned it does not make a major difference whether one interprets the SP as aiming at *trairūpya* or at the underlying principle of arguing or inferring on the basis of an ‘inseparable connection’.⁹⁹ It amounts moreover to a crude

pakṣa-realm is immediately obvious. This is relevant not only because the falsity of the *thesis* is not obvious and because one could *not* argue that the thesis violates the postulate (which need not have been explicitly laid down at the time the SP was created!) of avoiding fallacious theses (*pakṣābhāsa*). A special strength of the SP lies also in the fact that it does not involve any explicit reference to the *concepts* of *pakṣa*, *sapakṣa* or *vipakṣa* and cannot be easily dismissed as relating to notions which do not stand for ‘genuine qualities’ in an intuitive sense. Historians of Indian philosophy seem to be too easily put out by the fact that they must think of so many ‘possibilities’, if they wanted to do their work properly.

⁹⁹ In view of the obvious fact that textual sources provide most immediate evidence at best for settling the latest, but not for settling the earliest possible date at which some thought has been envisaged, one must have regard to the possibility that — within reasonable limits — the origination of the concept of an inseparable connection and its exploitation for reasoning and arguing pre-dates its first manifestation in any of the existent textual sources. Considering, moreover, the intuitive simplicity and naturalness of the idea the supposition of its dating back to fairly ancient times is not eccentric. It is particularly in the context of *historical* considerations where taking such possibilities into account is important.

misrepresentation of the actual facts if one scorns the accompanying attitude as ‘anti-historical’. The truth of the matter is that, in a similar way as in the context of attribution of relevance to features of co-text, an essential difference regarding significance between prior and posterior historical context is being presumed.¹⁰⁰ It is only the consideration of *preceding* or *contemporary* historical context that can play the role of controlling the acceptability of interpretations under the aspect of furnishing explanations for the existence of texts or of particular formulations against the background of the premise that a writer aspires to comply with the maxim of relevance in his (linguistic) behaviour.

The term ‘extrapolation principle’ had been employed with the purpose to allude to the underlying idea manifested both in texts like the *Vādavidhi* and, among others, in the doctrine of *trairūpya*. Hence a major reason for saying that the SP calls into question the extrapolation principle — instead of saying that it was directed against *trairūpya* — does not only lie in the purpose of bringing to light the theoretical depth of its critical potential; not less important is the circumstance that in the absence of more information one cannot simply prejudge a decision about the question as to whether or not SP

¹⁰⁰ In the case of preceding and subsequent co-text one can maintain that (at least by default) an interpretation should be compatible with all remarks that occur in the subsequent co-text of one and the same text and that it should preferably agree with remarks to be found in other texts of one and the same author. This represents an analogy to a methodological principle applicable in situations where, as in the case of e.g. Nāgārjuna or Śāṅkara, the authorship of certain works is uncertain: One draws a distinction between active and passive support so that any acceptable interpretation *must* possess some evidence furnished by works whose authenticity is taken for granted (in some context of investigation) whereas other works whose authenticity is (regarded as) debatable are considered under the aspect of whether or not they *would* disconfirm or shake some pertinent hypothesis *if* it were supposed that they are authentic. To that extent subsequent co-text is in principle capable of performing a criterial function. In contrast, not even this concession is permissible with respect to opinions of later interpreters (if they do not provide reliable ‘insider information’ provided by an original author).

originated before or after the development of *trairūpya*, in particular whether or not it was created earlier or later than the composition of Dignāga's works.

It remains incomprehensible why such caution and restraint amounts to an idle play with 'mere possibilities'.

4.

The largest part of FN is dedicated to polemics against an allegedly 'anti-historical' and futile play with possibilities contrasting it with the writer's own performances as specimens of serious scholarship, or at least insinuating such a difference. In the light of the preceding clarifications and the final remark of the last paragraph one can anticipate that the recklessness inhering in F's exposition might go beyond the presentation of fallacious arguments. This suspicion proves to be correct. It is, or should be, a fundamental principle of any science that it attempts to detach its results as far as possible from all presuppositions and premises which cannot be definitely established as true.¹⁰¹ A device for enhancing the chances of truth consists in a method which can be called 'conditionalization'; this means that instead of making categorical statements resting on disputable assumptions one asserts conditional propositions where the questionable propositions occur as antecedent clauses. Here a principle is operative which underlies the rule of conditional proof in (Classical) Logic. In actual fact, that which F stigmatizes as 'play with possibilities' possesses an analogous function. In the natural sciences consideration of possibilities occurs as a vital ingredient. If, for example, certain experimental results appear to threaten some particular hypothesis or theory it is a legitimate practice to investigate all possibilities which could have caused the threatening outcome,

¹⁰¹ Therefore — at least at present — interpretations of the SP must be carefully designed in such a way that its results do not vitally depend on any particular decision about its date, which means that they account for *all* (sufficiently reasonable) possibilities in this respect. Everything else amounts, from the viewpoint of the consequences, to the same as scientific fraud.

possibly causing the consideration of the possibilities that the apparently observed phenomena had been interpreted in a wrong manner, that the observations themselves were defective, that faults of measurements have occurred etc.

The reluctance to accept the method of basing decisions concerning interpretation on ways in which pertinent items were understood by later interpreters derives from the approval of the tenet that belief does not entail truth and the acknowledgment of its validity in the context of textual exegesis.¹⁰² To be sure, the implementation of this maxim renders textual interpretation much harder and painstaking than reliance on authorities of a tradition. But in this connection something else is equally important: Purposes of theoretical analysis make it mandatory to transcend the realm of precedent intentions.

Previously two alternative versions of the SP were considered by me. They differ with respect to the extension of the domain playing the role of a *pakṣa*: Whereas in the first case the pertinent domain contains only one particular object, in the other case it is constituted by a plurality of items of the same sort. It had been assumed that not only both alternatives correspond to possible readings of the existent formulation of the SP but that a definite verdict regarding the question as to which of them represents the originally intended import is not possible under the present circumstances. Nevertheless, in some important respect the truth of those two suppositions is irrelevant. For even if it were otherwise, i.e. if at least one of the assumptions were false, the consideration of the different alternatives possesses noteworthy significance: It serves the purpose of examining whether the exhibition of relevant properties pertaining to questions of validity and

¹⁰² It should not be concealed that the actual state of affairs is a little more intricate. One could rightly object that belief is indirectly linked up with truth due to the circumstance that the occurrence of some belief indicates (the probability of) the existence of some evidence. The decisive point is, however, that the mere existence of some evidence does not imply anything about its quality. An additional argument is required for establishing a proposition to the effect that some pertinent evidence is conclusive or highly compelling.

argumentative function of the SP rely on any particular choice among the different possibilities, and in the present case of showing that the relevant results do not depend on any particular choice among them. Under these premises, and *only* under such premises, could it be legitimate to contemplate also about the consequences of other varieties which appear linguistically less natural and presumably do not correspond to some originally intended import of the formulation, in particular a variant, propagated by F, which results by substituting the concept of numerical difference by the notion of qualitative difference.¹⁰³ Thus it emerges as a result that the SP, whatever the exact import of its original formulation might have been, is representative of an entire family of closely related variants. It is difficult to see the merits of a perspective for which such issues lie far beyond the horizon.

Primarily in the context of theoretical criticism explorations of alternatives which are not confined to previously envisaged variants can be indispensable. A most pertinent example is provided by the question of the connection between truth paradox and self-reference. The phenomenon of truth paradoxes can be used for illustrating also other aspects of the project of interpreting a theoretical tradition and is apposite to go at this point slightly deeper into this matter — touching on some issues which have not been highlighted in the preceding essay.

¹⁰³ A problem is that that if one would read the SP in the sense of ‘The pot is unlike a pot or numerically differs from a material body endowed with consciousness, because ...’ one must attribute to the expression *-sadvitīya-* two different readings at the same time, and if one would instead understand it in the sense of ‘The pot is unlike a pot or unlike a material body endowed with consciousness, because ...’ it becomes difficult to discern a relevant point in the SP, at least as long as one does not suppose that constructions of the form ‘A is unlike a B’ necessitate an existential commitment with respect to the second term of the relation. Moreover, a reference to a merely qualitative difference appears fairly improbable in view of the compositional meaning of *sadvitīya* in combination with the circumstance that other words could have been used which are far better suited for clearly signaling qualitative difference.

The conjecture that truth paradoxes are inextricably linked with self-reference can be most naturally induced by the consideration of examples involving an explicit self-reference to a linguistic item, such as

The sentence which is uttered by me just now expresses an untruth.

A little reflection suffices however for recognizing that such explicit self-reference cannot constitute a necessary requirement in view of examples like:

The subsequent sentence expresses a truth. The preceding sentence expresses an untruth.

or the (renowned) example of a sheet of paper where it is written on the front side:

The sentence on the reverse side says something true.

whereas on the reverse only one sentence appears which reads:

The sentence on the front side says something false.

etc. It turns out nevertheless that even indirect self-reference as in the above considered examples cannot play a decisive role. This is vindicated by the following case: Assume that there is a group G of two or three or more people such that each of them says at the same time:

At least one member of G expresses an untruth just now.

To be sure, even here one could contend that some sort of self-reference is involved. However, since the concerned linguistic tokens contain only terms referring to groups of persons in the scope of quantifiers, the type of self-reference markedly differs from the specimens of self-reference in the previously considered situations. But this is not all: The predicament affecting the utterances produced by members of G would similarly arise if assertions with the same verbal content were made by other subjects not belonging to the pertinent group. The same holds good for statements saying for example that all the pertinent utterances made by members of G express a truth or for statements ascribing truth

or untruth specifically to the utterances of any particular member.¹⁰⁴ In addition to it the so-called ‘Yablo-paradox’, where an actually infinite sequence of linguistic items expressing that all subsequent elements fail to express a truth is considered, poses a challenge to the contention that self-reference is a prerequisite of truth paradox.¹⁰⁵ No matter whether or not the tenet that paradoxes of truth depend on self-reference should be correct in the final analysis, one thing is absolutely certain: Any treatment of the problem which takes only the first explication of self-reference into account would exhibit a degree of superficiality which could never be justified, not even by the allegation that some thinker of

¹⁰⁴ To give just one example. Let us suppose that *A*, *B* and *C* belong to the pertinent group *G* and that *D*, which does not belong to *G*, expresses a truth-denial regarding *A*. A common reasoning would run as follows: If *D* expresses a truth then *A* does not express a truth by saying that at least one member of *G* fails to express a truth. Consequently, all members of *G* must express a truth and therefore *A* expresses a truth, which contradicts the assumption that *D* expresses a truth by saying that *A* fails to express a truth. Supposing that *D* fails to express a truth it follows that *A* expresses a truth; then at least one member of *G* must fail to express a truth by saying that at least one member of *G* fails to express a truth. Accordingly, all members of *G* express a truth, because otherwise no sentence could express an untruth by saying that at least one member of *G* fails to express a truth. Hence even the assumption that *D* fails to express a truth involves a contradiction.

¹⁰⁵ A consideration of all varieties of truth paradox is needed for critically assessing the appropriateness of calling into question a principle that can be formulated as follows:

If some (declarative) sentence *S* (which does not contain indexical elements as constituents) unequivocally expresses that *p*, then *S* expresses a truth if and only if (it is the case that) *p*

This in turn possesses relevance for evaluating a contention saying that, in defiance of the high intuitive plausibility of this theorem, only a weaker principle which reads

If some (declarative) sentence *S* (which does not contain indexical elements as constituents) unequivocally expresses that *p*, then *S* expresses a truth only if (it is the case that) *p*

can be accepted without reservation. — It deserves to be emphasized that thereby the validity of the principle ‘It is true that *p* if and only if *p*’ is *not* disputed.

the past omitted a consideration of additional possibilities. What matters in this context are not intentions connected with formulations created in the past but the question as to whether for some particular theoretical tenet an explication can be found which would render it true.¹⁰⁶

It deserves to be noted in addition that, strictly speaking, the phenomenon of truth paradox encompasses at least three major subcategories. The first type, illustrated by the above considered examples, involves a direct threat of logical contradiction or inconsistency. The second variety is distinguished by the fact that inconsistency appears to be avoidable only at the cost of admitting assignments of deviant truth values on a purely arbitrary basis which provides no rationale for the deviance (except the avoidance of inconsistency itself). It can be illustrated by cases like the utterances of two colleagues saying about each other nothing else than that not a single truth is uttered about him by his counterpart or the situation in which all members of some group G say at the same time that nothing true is said by any other member of G at that time etc. A further major variety exhibits the characteristic that from assumptions, involving some sort of reference to matters of truth, consequences appear to be derivable regarding which it is (intuitively) extremely difficult to believe that they should be entailed by them. They in turn comprise different subspecies.¹⁰⁷ This confronts us with the tasks 1) of identifying the pertinent principles that are involved, 2) of examining which

¹⁰⁶ Even under a purely historical perspective this sort of question is not necessarily irrelevant. For someone who studies the history of some philosophical or other theoretical tradition of thought it could be significant to ascertain whether certain sources reveal the occurrence of insights which were not (yet) fully explored by those who discerned them.

¹⁰⁷ There are examples where on the basis of hypothetical assumptions, pertaining to contingent (historical) facts concerning utterances having (allegedly) been made, the existence of different assertions is derived. An illustration is provided by deriving on the basis of the assumption that some Cretan has (once) said that nothing true is ever asserted by a Cretan the conclusion that there is at least one different proposition asserted by a Cretan which is not false. Although this conclusion is presumably actually true it is

of them might be assailable and 3) of finding plausible justifications for the abandonment of those assumptions which are deemed untenable. Thus it can be quite a long way from the initial detection of a problem to its satisfactory treatment, and it should be legitimate to pose the question of how long a tradition has advanced on this path.

The problem of the relationship between self-reference and truth paradox affects all variants. If such different aspects of a theoretical issue need to be taken into consideration for obtaining a deeper understanding of the nature of problems and for assessing the potential significance of any specimen of some tradition, it cannot matter, at least in principle, whether a Western or non-Western tradition of thought is concerned. A further notable ingredient of the enterprise of relating specific facets of problems and particular ways they have been addressed by individual authors or in certain segments of a tradition of thought to a more comprehensive framework consists in the potential to enrich our own conceptual resources. In the realm of truth paradoxes there are specimens which intimate that it is a critical mark of truth paradoxes that they exhibit conclusions which involve some reference to the idea of truth. As soon as one considers those specimens in a broader context it emerges however that this feature is by no means essential. Only against the background of the broader perspective a suitable verdict concerning the question of whether some problem has been satisfactorily treated in the past could be given.

In the present connection the fact is important that one can never proceed on the assumption that some tradition of thought has discovered all the variants of some phenomenon which can be detected in principle and even less can it be expected that it presents explicit accounts of relevant variances. Given, however, that an awareness of

hard to believe that the two historical facts should be related in a manner that the second follows from the first. On the other hand, one can conceive examples where even false conclusions pertaining to contingent historical matters — in fact any arbitrary true or false proposition — appear derivable from true premises which refer solely to what certain linguistic items mean or express. An illustration is given in the Appendix of this essay.

the existence of objective differences and an ascertainment of their nature can be significant even if an earlier tradition has not explicitly recognized them, a stance rejecting their identification as illegitimate merely on account of the circumstance that it does not reflect some previous awareness, and that it deals with formerly unrealized ‘possibilities’, is suited to hamper important progress in a field. Attention merits also the fact that it is the background of considerations like the above presented ones which permits us to assess the degree of justification and, as a matter of fact, the extremely low plausibility of a contention advocated by certain scholars to the effect that Bhartṛhari’s *Sambandha-Samuddeśa* section of the *Vākyapadīya* (or *Trikāṇḍī*) should provide us with ‘the key to an interesting and elegant solution’ to the family of paradoxes to which the Liar Paradox belongs.¹⁰⁸ Achieving a better understanding of the nature of some problem or subject matter possesses even potential relevance with respect to ‘traditional’ varieties of interpretation aiming at the identification of intentions of foreign subjects: By recognizing in this perspective shortcomings in the treatment of some presumed topic one can realize that originally hypothesized suppositions regarding intentions and goals of language users, such as authors of a text, are questionable. This is by no means a merely theoretically conceivable possibility.¹⁰⁹

The author of the PV is surely not the only philosopher who does *not* subscribe to the view that soundness of criticism deserves to be sacrificed for the sake of harmony with some original intention. Presumably the distinction which has been envisaged in PV IV, 34 and is indicated by the particle *atha* relates to the difference between a reading according to which the disjunction implicit in the SP connects whole sentences or propositions on the one hand and on the other hand a reading according to which this operator, in modern terminology, maps non-complex predicates onto complex predicates standing for

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Houben 1995:382, and elsewhere.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Oetke 2012:45ff and 2013:9–39.

some (more general) disjunctive property. Only in the first case it can be argued that at least one of the individual propositions must be supported by a reasoning complying with the acknowledged requirements for the acceptability of individual inferences, whereas a rejection of the SP on the basis of the second alternative requires additional (and questionable) premises relating either to identity- and discriminability-conditions of universals¹¹⁰ or to adequacy-conditions of using disjunctions. To be sure, other ways of understanding the nature of the envisaged alternatives have been proposed in the literature and it is neither possible nor necessary to weigh the pros and cons of the different interpretations regarding the PV in the present connection.¹¹¹ For the following contention appears to be defensible at

¹¹⁰ The contention that universals instantiated in exactly the same particulars are indistinguishable is apt to suggest the idea that general properties can be understood as disjunctions of individual features, that for example the property of being perishable amounts to the same as the property of being a perishable sound or a perishable non-sound / a perishable pot or a perishable wall etc. The subsequent discussion in the PV intimates, however, that the author of the text did not believe that this possibility could endanger his own theoretical outlook.

¹¹¹ The mere existence of different views regarding the content of the pertinent alternative is far more significant than the doubtfulness of F's specific opinion articulated in Franco 2012:222–223, according to which the contrast should lie between an inclusive interpretation of the disjunction and some other (unspecified) reading. For this circumstance brings home to us the disadvantage of intermingling the task of interpreting some theoretical item on the one hand and that of interpreting its interpretation in a tradition on the other. The relevant danger lies in an accumulation of mistakes. The first source of possible mistakes lies in the fact that an item is assessed in the light of a context which is definitely not its own original context. The second source lies in the possibility of misinterpreting the context which presents its interpretation and criticism. The danger is virulent because not only the PV but texts representing the Indian philosophical tradition in general exhibit a considerable degree of linguistic ambiguity and vagueness. Here — as well as in many other contexts of argumentative reasoning — the previously mentioned methodological tool of assessing the relevance of a(n immediately) subsequent co-text with respect to the content of a preceding linguistic unit attains importance: The interpretation of the pertinent disjunctive alternative brings into play the

any rate: The author of the PV did not consider the two alternatives because he believed that both of them represent original intentions of the inventor of the SP but because he regarded their consideration as an indispensable requirement for the soundness of his own criticism. Instead of dismissing this attitude we ought to appreciate it as the most appropriate stance in the context of philosophical criticism. It is definitely not on *this* account that Dharmakīrti's treatment of the matter deserves to be regarded as defective; if it is nevertheless unsatisfactory, then the reason would rather lie in Dharmakīrti's omission to carefully explore whether the object of his criticism possesses the potential of throwing a critical light on the author's own philosophy.

In principle it *could* be argued that *nowadays* philosophical criticism concerning theoretical elements in the Indian philosophical tradition is improper because the teachings are outdated or too uninteresting or for other reasons, so that one might evade the obligation to consider possibilities which possess at most theoretical relevance. But the justification of this contention is disputable. One can at least definitely ascertain that FN does not even present the preliminary of an argument establishing that (at least) Indian philosophical theorems are not worth being assessed under the aspects of truth or objective significance. Should it be welcomed that because of the failure to clearly acknowledge different components of dealing with philosophical traditions the level of studies pertaining to Indian philosophies drops far behind the standards of parallel explorations pertaining to Western philosophical traditions, such as Greek philosophy or the philosophy of the Middle Ages?

It appears indeed improbable that F should be the only one who tends to belittle studies on (specimens of) foreign philosophical

question of whether or not the subsequent remarks referring to it can be regarded as providing a relevant and adequate answer to some proposed argument or objection. It is on this account that the above suggested understanding appears most appropriate. Anyway, the failure to employ this criterion of pragmatic and theoretical relevance for the purpose of exegetical explication in an explicit and systematic manner is a fairly pervasive phenomenon not confined to articles dealing with the SP.

traditions under other perspectives than ‘history of thought’ (*‘Geistesgeschichte’*). Such an attitude is intimated e.g. by a number of remarks made by W. Halbfass 1997, in particular 1997:237, where it has been said, among other things, that

the pursuit of an ideal of precision — which is (allegedly) imposed by modern logic but not by some author’s, such as Dharmakīrti’s, ‘own orientation and its historical context’ — leads to a free play with conceivable possibilities which are not concerned with the way in which some author ‘really thought’, but rather with the question as to how he could or rather should have thought

and that

whoever wants to understand a thinker who orientated himself by practical and soteriological aims must try to understand his intentions, which are not purely of a theoretical and analytical character.

Since this critique has been reviewed by me earlier in more detail — Oetke 2007:571ff — only the following remarks deserve to be made in this connection:

Halbfass’ criticism pertains to an undertaking that exhibits affinities with certain studies made in recent times in the field of Ancient Greek philosophy, namely of identifying premises or presuppositions implicit in particular specimens of philosophical theorizing or argumentation. Those premises are characteristically not explicitly stated in textual sources — otherwise the task of identification would be rather trivial and uninteresting. Moreover, the concerned premises and presuppositions need not be identical with thought-contents which the author of some text explicitly entertained or grasped. They could, however, be interesting on other accounts, for example because they represent propositions which, if added to the explicitly presented argumentative steps, would render the argumentation as a whole more convincing or compelling or, in the limiting case,

even yield a formally valid derivation of a conclusion from assumptions. In the particular case of the analysis of Dharmakīrti's attempts of establishing universal momentariness by means of proof the project was guided by the idea that identifying 'logically relevant' premises and presuppositions of proofs aiming at vindicating theorems contradicting ordinarily accepted opinions opens a chance of detecting presuppositions underlying our common-sense views, such as the belief that there are objects (of the physical world) which persist for some time. A number of those presuppositions would presumably correspond to the negation of some of the premises which would be required for establishing the 'counter intuitive' tenets.¹¹² In principle, an analysis of this type can equally serve the purpose of ascertaining whether a theoretical argument in combination with certain assumptions would be suited to establish some tenet which, although differing from the one which its original proponent intended to demonstrate, is either significantly related to the envisaged one or possesses some independent (theoretical) significance. Against the background of an attempt to prove universal momentariness a theorem satisfying this criterion would be represented by the proposition that *at least some* entities possessing a momentary nature must be found in the realm of objectively existing items. This is definitely not, but merely a weaker variant of, the thesis which Dharmakīrti intended to establish, and one might presume that the (theoretical) possibility that the world is occupied by various sorts of objects, such that the (relatively) permanent ones can exhibit causal efficiency only because momentary particulars *also* exist, was not propagated in the tradition following Dharmakīrti.¹¹³ But if it could be shown that arguments presented for

¹¹² This does, however, not hold good for all of them. Noteworthy is the circumstance that certain presuppositions of common sense seem to be equally acknowledged in the context of Dharmakīrti's argumentations for the tenet of momentariness, for example a proposition which could be characterized as the theorem of the homogeneous nature of time.

¹¹³ This alternative would have deserved some consideration because, as it seems, the contention that existing items must actually produce (numerically

the establishment of a stronger thesis contain ingredients providing support for some weaker variant, then the mere fact that a certain tradition ignored this possibility is significant in itself.¹¹⁴

To be sure, it is in principle possible that the project of identifying presumptions of common sense remains unsuccessful, for example because it is implemented in a manner which lacks some required degree of rigor or for other reasons. It could even be argued that resorting to philosophical tradition for detecting fundamental presuppositions of common-sense is inappropriate because, maybe, a systematically orientated critical analysis of ordinary views is a more efficient means to this end. But critical considerations of this sort which would have been at least relevant for the pertinent subject matter are not raised by Halbfass. His remarks in this connection are immaterial because they hypothesize aims which were neither intended nor relevant for the concerned issue.¹¹⁵ The very nature of the pursued analysis entails that concern with the way in which Dharmakīrti 'really thought' cannot be the ultimate goal. It is moreover definitely untrue that this circumstance

different) effects at any time of their existence could be equally well explained by the hypothesis of a causal collaboration between momentary and relatively persistent entities.

¹¹⁴ It is true that, as far as one can see, nobody up to now has thoroughly explored the question as to whether arguments for the tenet of universal momentariness presented by Dharmakīrti or others are apt to support a weaker variety of thesis than the intended one. One must also admit that it is impossible to ascertain *a priori* whether investigations of this kind would yield results which are significant and interesting. On the other hand, however, it is legitimate to assert that a discipline which rejects questions of this type as irrelevant from the outset can hardly command much respect.

¹¹⁵ Apart from the points a) whether aims which had been pursued really merit to be pursued as well as b) whether the pursuit of the intended aims was actually successful, also the queries c) whether efforts and expenditures for the achievement of the envisaged goals were in fact worthwhile or d) whether the same aims could have been achieved by alternative and less arduous means could have been legitimate questions. As it seems, a biased preconception of the nature of investigations on traditions of thought is responsible for the failure to pinpoint those problems which are most pertinent to some subject matter.

implies a completely free play with conceivable possibilities.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, the contention that wanting to understand a particular thinker who (allegedly) orientated himself by practical and soteriological aims necessitates understanding his intentions which are not of a theoretical and analytical character lacks relevance inasmuch as it takes for granted that understanding of a person, specifically the personality of an author, *must* constitute an ultimate aim of textual analysis. Persons, however, are not the only admissible objects of understanding: Apart from linguistic items like words or sentences, argumentations, teachings and theories are equally legitimate objects. By analysing them in particular one does not *eo ipso* disclaim the possibility of ‘practical’ or even ‘soteriological’ intentions. In the present context the allegation of the existence of intentions of the latter kind could obtain relevance at most on the understanding that persons are concerned who did not pursue theoretical aims at all. Hence it would have been incumbent on the author of the above quoted remarks to prove such a contention in the first instance.¹¹⁷ As might be expected, such a proof is nowhere presented.

It could be deemed appropriate to abstain from further critical investigations about FN because nothing else could discredit the article more than the crude and unsophisticated manner in which it deals with the issue of ‘possibilities’.

¹¹⁶ A most important restriction is imposed by the requirement that the additional hypotheses should license a pertinent conclusion only in combination with the arguments which are explicitly advanced in a textual source. After all, every argumentation could be transformed into a valid derivation of a conclusion from assumptions in a trivial manner simply by adding the conclusion itself to the set of premises. A violation of the maxim to consider only additional hypotheses that are significant in the explicated sense would be certainly detrimental to the undertaken project of analysis. By not even perceiving this facet of the matter Halbfass misses from the outset a further possibility to embark on some potentially relevant critical investigation.

¹¹⁷ It would be a serious mistake to raise the objection that theoretical practice is an exclusively Western phenomenon. In the present connection one needs to sharply differentiate between pursuit of theoretical aims and pursuit of theoretical aims for the sake of theory.

However, at least the following two points deserve to be brought up too. They equally possess implications that go beyond the particular topic of the SP.

5.

FN contends (p. 527) that one must address the question whether the Lokāyata tradition, with which the SP is affiliated, was concerned with the “extrapolation principle”. Why should we assume that the Lokāyata tradition is ‘affiliated’ with the SP? Perhaps because the conclusion of the SP represents a Lokāyata tenet? That would amount to a further specimen of fallacy.

Arguing against a fundamentalist Christian I could be easily motivated to present an argument showing that *if* one accepted his ways of reasoning then one could equally establish tenets propagated by the Salafists. Do I thereby become a Salafist? At any rate, lines of reasoning uncritically deriving an affiliation of an (original) proponent of some argument from the character of the conclusion should be preferably avoided in any discipline which desires to be taken seriously. Reliance on explicit attributions on the part of a posterior tradition — there are in fact (much) later sources (e.g. the *Pramāṇavārttikavṛtti*) attributing the SP to the ‘Cārvākas’ — does by itself not improve the situation to a relevant degree. For the crucial question is: What were the (original) reasons for the pertinent ascriptions? — By not taking for granted that the SP was (originally) designed by a proponent of Cārvāka I am disposed to deviate from opinions of various other writers who wrote on the topic, even if this should relativize my previous contentions concerning the potential significance of ‘marginalized’ traditions, such as that of the ‘materialists’.

Accordingly one cannot simply take for granted that the doctrinal affiliation of the inventor of the SP was different from that of e.g. the originator of the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument. Perhaps both items go even back to one and the same person, someone who intended to show, that in the framework of a *Vāda*-type theory tenets held by different schools are equally derivable, and illustrated this fact by

various examples. If one accepted the line of argument of FN (see in particular the section beginning with: ‘Given that the work where the sp was expounded for the first time’, p. 526) it should be possible to validly object: ‘But there is no textual evidence for this assumption’. Here we are again confronted with the threat of a criticism which would exhibit a lack of elementary scientific reflection. Whenever one deals with a supposition for which textual evidence of some particular sort cannot be found, one is obliged to address the question: ‘How probable is it that if the supposition *were* true then textual evidence of the pertinent kind *would* exist?’ If the probability is high then absence could certainly yield a sound objection. But if this is not the case one cannot legitimately derive that the supposition must be false or could be completely ignored. The only sober consequence to be drawn is to clearly acknowledge that, at least for the time being, the matter must be treated as undecided and to take care that all future conclusions do not depend on either a positive or a negative verdict.

6.

Cases might exist where *both* parties had not reached a proper understanding of each other. For example, FN contends (p. 530) that the *sādhya* in the SP amounts to ‘either not being a pot or not being a conscious body’, which the author represents by ‘ $(\neg P) \vee (\neg Q)$ ’, where ‘P’ should stand for something’s being a pot and ‘Q’ for something’s being a conscious body. Accordingly the *vyatireka* should read: ‘whatever is a pot and a conscious body is a lotus’. This in its turn should, according to FN, amount to ‘whatever is a conscious body is a lotus’, if one wants to exclude the *pakṣa* from the *vyāpti*. It is the last step to which I cannot attribute the slightest plausibility. At least I can say that when I on my part speak of an exclusion of the *pakṣa* in the *vyatireka* or *vyāpti*, or whatever else, I never contend that this affects in any way the identity of the qualities to be proven (*sādhya*) and the qualities which function as the reason (*hetu*) but only the question of the domain where exemplification or non-exemplification of the pertinent qualities matter for validity. My own account of the *vyatireka* would be entirely different and could be, in a fully explicit

form, paraphrased by: ‘(In the domain outside the *pakṣa* it holds true that:) Everything which neither possesses a (second = different) counterpart in the form of a man characterizable as a body where consciousness is manifested nor a (second = different) counterpart in the form of the/a pot which functions as *pakṣa* is (not) a (non-)lotus’. The truth of this proposition is guaranteed by the impossibility of something’s not being *pakṣa* and at the same time not differing from it, as long as one does not hypothesize some existential commitment to the effect that there are (actual) things exhibiting absence of *sādhya* and *hetu*. (Here the formulation ‘everything which is’ abbreviates the phrase ‘everything is such that, if it, then’ — where ‘if then ...’ possesses the import of a material conditional. This reading is appropriate because the *vyatireka* ought to be equivalent to the *anvaya*).

What matters for the present context of argumentation can only be the import which I assigned to the notion of an exclusion of the *pakṣa* and not anything which F might associate with that idea because the pertinent issue must pertain to an allegation on the part of F concerning something stated by me. Moreover, as far as the purely systematic aspect of the topic is concerned, it can be clearly ascertained that the SP contains the potential for posing a valid problem for any theoretical framework containing an exclusion of the *pakṣa* in the above portrayed sense as an ingredient. Apart from this it is however, pace F and FN, also maintained by me that a framework of this sort possesses historical significance inasmuch as its existence can have provided a motivation for propagating the SP. — It should be noted in passing that textual or other historical support for F’s alternative conception of exclusion of a *pakṣa* has not (yet) been presented. — On the one hand the fact that F has patently distorted the import intended by me dissolves possible apprehensions to the effect that absence of major dissent might annihilate the relevance of the previously given remarks and clarifications concerning the SP. After all the position originally advocated by me, according to which the SP was (at least also) meant as a criticism of particular accounts of inferential reasoning and was not, as suggested by a number of earlier authors, exclusively designed

for proving a materialistic tenet by resorting to fallacious and 'sophistic' arguments, essentially amounts to a corroboration of a view advanced by F himself. On the other hand, however, the circumstance that a subsequent debate, instead of unveiling some basis of commonly shared principles, brings only divergences and (mutual?) misinterpretations to light, intimates that the area of studies on Indian philosophies is affected by a deeper subjacent defect.

III

FN itself diminishes the credibility of the tenet that reliance on what interpreters believe and say furnishes a useful basis for making decisions in matters of interpretation by showing that at present criticism without proper understanding in fact occurs.¹¹⁸ There is no reason to suppose that this phenomenon is confined to the milieu of present Western scholars. F's complaints to the effect that he himself has been misunderstood cannot eliminate the self-defeating ingredient of his paper. On the contrary, even if his allegations should be really founded and not merely pleaded, it would only all the more follow that interpreting something in the light of its reception by others is a dubious enterprise.¹¹⁹ F has surely a right to demand that he should be interpreted in a fair manner. But the same right which he claims for himself should also be conceded to others, including those who wrote texts in the remote past.

¹¹⁸ An essential source of F's deficiency of understanding lies also in his failure to recognize the existence of different alternative *questions*: Without disputing the importance of identifications of actual intentions in general it can be asserted that in cases where reliable information about an original context is deficient the query of what was *really* intended by someone tends to be less fruitful than the question as to what somebody could have *reasonably* intended by something.

¹¹⁹ It should go without saying that this does in no way affect the question of the legitimacy of investigating a history of reception for its own sake, not only in the form of its description, but particularly in the form of its critical evaluation.

Appendix

Let (S) be a sentence(-token) which reads:

That which (S*) linguistically expresses is true.

and (S*) a sentence(-token) which reads:

If that which (S) linguistically expresses is true then Napoleon Bonaparte was born in Athens.

Let 'N' be an abbreviation for 'Napoleon Bonaparte was born in Athens'.

Now let us further suppose that both (S) and (S*) comply with a principle (P) which reads:

For any declarative sentence s: If s linguistically expresses that p, then that which s thereby expresses is true if and only if p.

This would license the following two propositions:

If (S) linguistically expresses that that which (S*) linguistically expresses is true, then that which (S) thereby expresses is true, if and only if, that which (S*) linguistically expresses is true.

If (S*) linguistically expresses that if that which (S) linguistically expresses is true then N, then that which (S*) thereby expresses is true, if and only if, if that which (S) linguistically expresses is true then N.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Although formulations, such as:

If (S) (linguistically) expresses that (S*) is true, then (S) is true, if and only if, (S*) is true.

If (S*) (linguistically) expresses that if (S) is true then N, then (S*) is true, if and only if, if (S) is true then N

or

If (S) means that (S*) is true, then (S) is true, if and only if, (S*) is true.

Let us hereafter employ ‘express’ instead of ‘linguistically express’, such that the shorter expression possesses the same import as its longer counterpart. Moreover, let us employ ‘T x’ as a shorthand for ‘that which x (linguistically) expresses is true’, ‘&’ in the sense of ‘and’, ‘ $\leftrightarrow$ ’ in the sense of ‘if and only if’ and ‘ $\rightarrow$ ’ in the sense of ‘if ... then ...’, ‘v’ in the sense of (inclusive) ‘or’ and ‘ $\neg$ ’ in the sense of ‘It is not the case that’. Now we can present the following sequence of derivational steps:

1	(1)	(S) expresses that $T(S^*) \rightarrow [T(S) \leftrightarrow T(S^*)]$	A(ssumption)
2	(2)	(S^*) expresses that $[T(S) \rightarrow N] \rightarrow [T(S^*) \leftrightarrow [T(S) \rightarrow N]]$	A
3	(3)	(S) expresses that $T(S^*)$	A
4	(4)	(S^*) expresses that $[T(S) \rightarrow N]$	A
1,3	(5)	$T(S) \leftrightarrow T(S^*)$	(From) 1,3 (by) Modus Ponendo Ponens
2,4	(6)	$T(S^*) \leftrightarrow [T(S) \rightarrow N]$	2,4 Modus Ponendo Ponens
7	(7)	$T(S)$	A
1,3,7	(8)	$T(S^*)$	5,7 Modus Ponendo Ponens
1,2,3,4,7	(9)	$T(S) \rightarrow N$	6,8 Modus Ponendo Ponens
1,2,3,4,7	(10)	N	7,9 Modus Ponendo Ponens
1,2,3,4	(11)	$T(S) \rightarrow N$	7,10 Conditional Proof
1,2,3,4	(12)	$T(S^*)$	6,11 Modus Ponendo Ponens
1,2,3,4	(13)	$T(S)$	5,12 Modus Ponendo Ponens
1,2,3,4	(14)	N	11,13 Modus Ponendo Ponens

(The leftmost numbers refer to the assumptions on which the respective lines depend; assumptions are treated as depending on themselves. It ought to be kept in mind that the above portrayal is a condensed representation of a derivation where instead of expressions of the form

If (S^*) means that if (S) is true then N, then (S^*) is true, if and only if, if (S) is true then N

would be more convenient, they exhibit a deficit of explicitness which entails relevant shortcomings in certain connections. Nevertheless, in the present context it would not cause damage if the original formulations were taken in the sense of one or another of the simplified variants.

' $A \leftrightarrow B$ ' expressions of the form ' $(A \rightarrow B) \& (B \rightarrow A)$ ' occur and where accordingly the rule of '&-Elimination' comes into play too).

The only substantial premises on which the conclusion that Napoleon Bonaparte was born in Athens depends relate to what certain linguistic units mean or express. It is easy to see that 'N' could symbolize in principle any proposition whatsoever. Accordingly, any arbitrary true or untrue proposition can be established on the basis of appropriate assumptions relating merely to what linguistic items mean or (linguistically) express. The sequence of derivational steps could be extended by adding a deduction leading from the assumption of the negation of 'N', or any proposition represented by this symbol, to the conclusion that at least one of the assumptions pertaining to the meaning or verbal content of linguistic expressions must be untrue. It appears, however, legitimate to refrain from a detailed exposition of this aspect here.

To be sure, a crucial role for the whole derivation is played by the above specified principle (P). If this principle were given up, or more specifically, excluded from truth value attributions to other truth value attributions the basis for deriving the paradox would lapse.

A similar role is played by a postulate connecting meaning with asserted content in a manner according to which the asserted content exactly mirrors the linguistic meaning (or verbal content) of a declarative sentence not containing any indexical elements. If it cannot be tacitly supposed that from the supposition that a Cretan utters words linguistically expressing that no truth has ever been uttered by a Cretan it follows that he has asserted precisely that which his words mean, the derivation of paradoxes which seem to be licensed otherwise loses its conclusiveness. This implies that there is a concept of assertion which needs to be detached from that of a speaker's or writer's intention.¹²¹

Intuitively, a principle which reads:

¹²¹ There are things which a speaker cannot assert even if he intended to assert them because by trying to assert them he is (possibly without knowing it) bound to assert something in addition.

For any speaker U and any sentence s: If U asserts or says by (using) s that p, then that which s thereby asserts or says is true if and only if p.

appears incontrovertible and one could indeed acknowledge its legitimacy. The crucial point is, however, that *if* one admits its validity, one is obliged to critically reflect on the question of what (type of content) ought to be regarded as that which a speaker (or writer) by assertively uttering a linguistic unit thereby asserts or says.

A more detailed exposition of the topic is presented in the first essay.

Retrospection

I

The article with the title ‘Final Notes on the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*’ (= FN) is the fifth member of a series of interrelated papers which deal with a particular piece of reasoning whose inventor(s) and advocates are usually believed to be affiliated to the tradition of Indian ‘materialism’ and which is associated with the denomination *Sadvitīyaprayoga* (= SP). The pertinent list consists of the following papers:

- (A) A Note on the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 40, 2012, pp. 219–224 [F]
- (B) A Brief Appraisal of the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 41, 2013, pp. 43–55 [O]
- (C) Further notes on the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 41, 2013, pp. 665–670 [F]
- (D) Additional Notes on the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 44, 2016, pp. 507–523 [O]
- (E) Final Notes on the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 44, 2016, pp. 525–535 [F]

—The symbols ‘[F]’ and ‘[O]’ indicate articles written by E. Franco and C. Oetke respectively.

The significance of (A) derives in the first place from the fact that it advocates the thesis that in the SP the purpose of the original proponent of this inference, who is supposed to be a Cārvāka, ‘was probably not primarily to establish that a person is nothing but a body in which consciousness is manifested but to show a serious deficiency in the structure of inference that allows any odd thesis to be established, and consequently that inference should not be considered a reliable means of knowledge, especially not for establishing

metaphysical entities such as God and Soul' (p. 223). This implies an important deviation from views intimated by earlier writers on the topic of the SP where it was supposed that the inference should demonstrate the truth of a tenet held by the 'materialists'. The very idea that the overriding function of the SP is of a critical nature deserves serious consideration and there are good reasons to believe that it is also true. Accordingly the objective of (B) was not to cast doubts on this conjecture, but on the contrary to enhance its plausibility by segregating the essence of the pertinent tenet from ingredients which were deemed less essential and could diminish its credibility, especially in view of the circumstance that it contradicts opinions of authors representing the tradition of the reception of the SP, such as Dharmakīrti and others. For achieving this goal (B) has focused on objective properties of the SP inasmuch as they can be safely inferred from the mere wording of that specimen of reasoning. In this manner one is enabled to recognize

- (a) that the critical potential inhering in the SP reaches deeper than making apparent 'the bankruptcy of the *trairūpya* doctrine', as suggested in (A), and
- (b) that its potential relevance extends even beyond any account of inferential reasoning which could be supposed to have existed prior to the time of its original creation, whereas
- (c) it is, from an objective viewpoint, inept to license the bold conclusion that inference cannot be considered a reliable means of knowledge.

II

This way of considering the matter possesses both historical and a-historical strands which call for an exact identification because their confusion proves to be fatal:

1.

The investigation employs a procedure of content-determination whose essential trait could be characterized as ‘contextual suspension’ or ‘contextual bracketing (ἐποχή)’ on account of the fact that it exclusively exploits linguistic (lexical, syntactic and compositional) data, leaving considerations of possible contextual features out of consideration. There are countless linguistic items, particularly declarative sentences lacking indexical constituents, for which this method of content-identification is legitimate and widely practiced in ordinary life. For sentence(-token)s, such as

There is exactly one prime number which is greater than 5 and smaller than 11.

Water can evaporate if it is heated.

etc. it is obviously possible to determine a kind of content relevant for questions of truth responsible for logical properties, such as entailment, without embarking on prior investigations concerning place, time of utterance or biographical details of the utterer. Nothing but recognition of this fairly trivial fact is needed for comprehending with respect to the SP the nature of the pertinent content-determination as well as the basis of its legitimacy. There is no need to deny that the SP brings in its wake some intricacies not involved in the above cited example-sentences, such as the vagueness regarding the definiteness of nouns and noun-phrases. The decisive point is, however, that once some wording is accepted,¹²² the questions can be suitably handled without definitely settling queries concerning original context. For abstaining from prejudging questions of context is certainly not

¹²² In the pertinent context of discussion the formulation

*abhiviyaktacaitanyaśārīralakṣaṇapuruṣaghaṭānyatarasadvitīyo
ghaṭaḥ, anuṭpalatvāt, kudyavat*

is taken as basis, assuming that variants, such as *-ghaṭayor anyatareṇa sadvitīyo* (instead of *-ghaṭānyatarasadvitīyo*), which might possess significance in the context of textual criticism, may be disregarded in view of the relevant purposes of investigation

tantamount to disregarding semantic indeterminacies: Those are and *need* to be accounted for by acknowledging, as in linguistics, alternative possible readings and interpretations. Although actual mental processes of disambiguation in ordinary linguistic interactions might often follow other patterns, it is a viable methodological device — which might even be implemented in computer-programs — to subdivide processes of interpretation into a) a component of linguistic disambiguation yielding (linguistically) possible readings as outputs and b) a component of determination where in the light of contextual information, if available, decisions between the alternative possibilities are achieved. Against the possible reproach that an account bringing only the first component into play is a-historical inasmuch as it disregards the fact that (presumably) there *was* a historical context in which the SP originally occurred, a clear and blunt answer is appropriate: There is no other legitimate alternative than presenting possibilities *as* possibilities.

Notwithstanding the a-historical aspect resulting from suspending certain judgments about historical context and the a-temporal nature exhibited by considered logical properties of identified contents, the pertinent contemplations concerning the SP possess historically relevant implications: The fact, that the objective critical potential of the SP reaches deeper than questioning the *trairūpya*-doctrine in combination with the fact that it cannot validly license the ‘bold contention’ that no sort of inference can function as a source of (fairly reliable) knowledge, implies that somebody who employs the SP for establishing those claims would act less reasonably than somebody who uses this device for demonstrating instead that some particular account of inference cannot be adequate and fails to perform the function which it should perform. Given a) that one can think of accounts of inference which are, as a matter of fact, affected by the criticism inhering in the SP and which need not refer to *trairūpya* and given in addition b) that it is quite probable that such accounts actually existed, it is legitimate to presume that the SP was invented for casting doubts on the accounts concerned. The decisive point does not rely on

a requirement to the effect that thereby the hypothesis envisaged in (A) is definitely refuted. What matters most is rather the illumination of the argumentative situation: It has become manifest that a defender of the position advanced in (A) would need to provide additional arguments for vindicating the contention that either the inventor or some advocates of the SP linked it up with a goal which is theoretically less appropriate than alternative objectives. On the other hand, any demonstration to the effect that the SP can *also* be associated with alternative objects of criticism, which are at least not less plausible, provides support for the primary tenet according to which the reasoning embodied in the SP possessed a critical function.

A dissociation of the SP from the problem of ‘negative examples’, which in (A) (p. 222) had been mentioned in connection with it, leads to similar results. As a matter of fact, the theoretical basis of the requirement of ‘negative examples’ illustrating absence of the *probandum* in combination with absence of *probans* is pretty questionable. Whoever sees a problem due to the absence of (actually existing) negative examples is bound to see a problem in the legitimacy of any inferences establishing the instantiation of a universally instantiated property in some particular case or domain. Apart from a lack of intuitive plausibility for any sweeping dismissal of such inferences it matters also that in both the Buddhist and the non-Buddhist traditions views are attested which definitely imply their acceptability. Consequently the behaviour of an advocate of the SP acknowledging the postulate of negative examples would be decisively less reasonable than the behaviour of somebody who does not recognize it as valid. In this connection it does not even matter whether the SP was employed for purposes of criticism or for the purpose of proving a materialistic tenet. Those facts taken together vindicate the hypothesis that the SP has at some time performed a critical function directed against some theoretical account of inference which did not (yet) contain the doctrine of *trairūpya* and which did not (yet) consider the absence of (actually existing) negative examples as a relevant problem has good chances of being true.

2.

The link between a-historical considerations and consequences pertaining to matters of history exists because, by identifying contents corresponding to linguistically possible readings under ‘contextual suspension’ and assessing reasonability-relations between acts of expressing the pertinent contents and possible functions of expressing them, one obtains a basis for probability-evaluations of possible historical courses. In situations where reliable information about details of context is missing this method provides a most important tool for purposes of exegesis. In addition to this, deliberations about reasonability-connections of the described kind constitute a suitable tool for comparing probabilities with respect to alternative contents whenever they are equally licensed by linguistic criteria, and they can be used for controlling the legitimacy of assigning preferences between alternatives. On the other hand, the view that a-historical considerations pertaining to properties of and relations between contents are only justified in so far as they possess more or less direct consequences for matters of history is highly problematic. In genuinely theoretical disciplines surprising discoveries of consequences entailed by axioms, theorems or tenets that have never been recognized before tend to possess highest significance. At present the question to which extent investigations of philosophical traditions might lead to such discoveries can be left open.

3.

One could think that assessments of historical courses in accordance with their implications concerning reasonability of personal behaviour are appropriate at best as a stopgap compensating for lack of pertinent empirical knowledge. However, a stance on this issue is tied up with one’s conceptions about history of thought or ‘*Geistesgeschichte*’. On the one hand one might see the goal of investigating ‘*Geistesgeschichte*’ in identifying actual historical courses and finding explanations for individual historical events. This contrasts with a conception according to which actual occurrences are considered against the

background of unrealized alternatives and evaluated under aspects such as relative adequacy of means to specific goals or the relative reasonability of pursuing particular aims or of adopting certain kinds of behaviour etc. One might use the terms ‘descriptive history of ideas’ — ‘*deskriptive Geistesgeschichte*’ — and ‘critical history of ideas’ — ‘*kritische Geistesgeschichte*’ — for signalling the pertinent difference of conception.

The possible objection that, by approving the latter variety of ‘*Geistesgeschichte*’, one permits subjective ingredients to be brought into play is valid at best to a limited extent: It might be indeed true that, if matters of everyday practice or areas which constitute the subject matter of political and social sciences are at stake, it can be pretty difficult to assess alternative possibilities as more or less adequate or reasonable only on the basis of objectively sound considerations. But there are also areas where things are different. For example the question whether some linguistic theory provides a materially adequate account of certain kinds of data, e.g. in the fields of morphology or syntax, and whether or not there could be alternative theories equally adequately accounting for the pertinent data in a manner which employs a smaller set of rules, should be (in many cases at least) decidable without referring to subjective prejudice. It is a privilege of theoretical ‘hard’ sciences, to which parts of linguistics and philosophy belong, that they provide numerous occasions for evaluating alternatives under aspects, such as adequacy and reasonability, without having to rely on subjective bias or prejudgments.

In answer to the demurrals that the mere viability of a sort of investigation does not vindicate their relevance and utility the following deserves to be said:

1. If the question of relevance and utility poses a problem for ‘critical *Geistesgeschichte*’ it is only fair to confront ‘descriptive *Geistesgeschichte*’ with the same problem. The mere consideration that, as far as the exploration of Indian philosophies is concerned, the presently prevalent practice tallies more with the descriptive than the critical variety can hardly yield an objectively valid argument

— even if it could serve as a means of promoting personal interests or offer subjective relief for those who cannot do anything else.

2. In view of the circumstance that critical *Geistesgeschichte* contains the descriptive variant as an integral part it is unlikely that the variety which is orientated by a relatively narrower perspective possesses more significance.
3. Critical *Geistesgeschichte* encompasses as a possible task the detection of absences which (usually) lie beyond the scope of descriptive accounts. There is no compelling reason to believe that discoveries to the effect that certain kinds of phenomena do *not* occur in some area must be less significant than observations of existing items.
4. Contrasting actual with possible alternative happenings or courses of events provides a means of discerning characteristic features in a conceptually richer and more differentiated descriptive framework.
5. Evaluating actual occurrences in the light of alternative possibilities is apt to shed light on the contextual background in which they are embedded. This holds good for evaluations under the aspect of adequateness and reasonability in particular. For example, the circumstance that Dharmakīrti did not exploit specific formal properties of the SP for scrutinizing his own theory of *svabhāvavpratibandha* and in particular his views on causality, justifies the verdict that under a perspective of pure theoretical interest his attitude was not completely adequate. Given that recognition of problems represents a dominant goal in theoretical philosophy and that negligence of problems constitutes a defect, it would be reasonable to pose the question whether the discovery that even indisputable knowledge of an invariable regularity in a domain cannot guarantee its inviolability in another domain disconfirms the view that the ascertainment of the causal character of some regularity offers a secure protection against the analogous danger that genuine causal laws operative in a domain under

specific framework-conditions — which are causal laws inasmuch as they licence subjunctive conditional propositions — fail to be operative in other domains. The circumstance that (as far as one can see) the SP did not produce such an effect in the tradition of Buddhist philosophy intimates that the philosophical environment was not particularly conducive to such critical self-reflection. This can be partly explained by the absence of a theoretical framework helping to identify formal properties of propositions, which, the other way around, highlights the significance of logical theories. On the other hand, it can be vindicated that recognition of the probabilistic nature of inferences from effects to causes as well as the idea of a restricted validity of causal laws were apt to unsettle central ingredients of Buddhist and non-Buddhist ideologies prevailing at the time, in particular the conception of means of salvation. The omission of raising radical doubts harmonizes with a conservative attitude, which *we* should preferably avoid if we are interested in theoretical and scientific progress.

At this place it can be said in passing that considerations of objective adequacy and reasonability are not merely capable of providing a basis for assigning evaluations to abstract possibilities licensed by purely linguistic rules or conventions and of controlling the legitimacy of choices among alternative readings. There are instances where a diagnosis of lack of reasonability given some envisaged interpretation(s) provides a suitable motivation for searching for novel interpretations which are free from similar defects. As mentioned before, a section of the so-called *Sambandha-Samuddeśa* contained in Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* (*Trikāṇḍī*) had been interpreted in a manner which entails that its author must have treated a significant philosophical problem in a fairly inadequate manner. By taking this deficiency as a reason for seeking after some alternative exegesis one is able to establish that a reading exists which allows one to regard the entire section as furnishing a consistent and plausible argumentation for a

reasonable tenet.¹²³ Under such premises it should be unjustified to discard the suggestion on no other account than its deviance from traditional interpretations represented by commentaries.

It is easy to anticipate the objection that something which appears to us (most) reasonable need not appear to others (most) reasonable and that evaluations under the aspect of reasonability can lead to distortions due to ‘impositions’ of rationality-concepts cherished by an interpreter to subjects whose works and creations are to be interpreted. There should be no need to dispute this truism. A fairly judicious reader must have recognized that the preceding remarks do not amount to the recommendation to adopt only interpretations which make appear foreign subjects most reasonable according to our standards. Nevertheless, a presumption to the effect that something which we regard as reasonable can also be deemed reasonable by others is certainly not illogical, and the attitude to hypothesize, without special evidence, standards and rankings of reasonability which run contrary to our standards and rankings is quite perverse. Accordingly, as long as specific arguments are not presented, one should never accept a contention to the effect that the SP should be *preferably* understood as an attempt to refute the validity of *any* kind of inferential reasoning by demonstrating that a doctrine of *trairūpya* where the postulate of ‘negative examples’ occurs as an integral part ‘goes bankrupt’, an attempt which quite obviously confronts the proponent with the problem of avoiding the threat of self-contradiction — which can be eliminated only by providing a restrictive delimitation of the term ‘inference’. Also demurrals resorting to allegations concerning putative differences between Western and non-Western conceptions of rationality — or even the (bizarre) contention that rationality is a specific Western phenomenon — could not essentially alter the situation. Supposing that Western and non-Western standards of rationality are absolutely ‘incommensurable’ causes the problem of showing that acquisition of reliable knowledge about non-Western traditions of

¹²³ A presentation of this reading has been given in Oetke 2016.

thought is possible at all. Otherwise it could be supposed that standards of rationality are not fundamentally different, that there are areas of overlap or that even a commonly shared core exists which only needs to be detected. In that case embarking on projects of ‘critical *Geistesgeschichte*’ could perform the significant function of purifying our present conceptions of rationality and reasonability from parochial ingredients.

III

Among other points of dispute which *could* be regarded as dispensable in view of the circumstance that they do not concern central issues of the original topic there are some which still deserve to be considered because they possess interest in other regards.

The main objective of the present section is to expose the fallacious character of deriving from the fact that a term does not exhibit linguistic ambiguity the conclusion that it must represent precisely one concept.

Vehement objections are raised both in (C) and (E) against the contention formulated in (B), p. 47, to the effect that ‘raising the question of whether or not the advocates of the *sadvitīyaprayoga* attempted to establish a concomitance or *vyāpti* can be misleading’. The contention was directed against remarks in (A), p. 221, such as: ‘the unfounded assumption in the above-mentioned studies is that the Cārvāka attempts to establish a *vyāpti*’, ‘[i]n fact, there is no concomitance between the reason and the property to be proved’.¹²⁴ In (C), p. 666, it is said, among other things:

¹²⁴ The continuation, which reads:

This is clear in the formulation of the vyatireka: Wherever there is no *sadvitīyatva* with a pot or a person (e.g., in *ākāśa*), there is no *anutpalatva*. But that is not true because *ākāśa* is not a lotus. If one objects, however, that the relationship between *ākāśa*, assumed here to be an unreal entity, and the absence of the property “not being a lotus” is open to various interpretations and is problematic, one can observe that the *vyāpti* is doubtful in the *anvaya* too,

precisely because the pot is not accompanied by a pot and it is doubtful whether it is accompanied by a person as defined above.

confronts a careful reader with several problems:

1) Why did the author say that the composite phrase ‘Wherever there is no *sadvitīyatva* with a pot or a person (e.g., in *ākāśa*), there is no *anutpalatva*’, i.e. ‘Anything which is neither different from the/a pot nor a person (conceived as a conscious body), is not a non-lotus’ is not true *because* the ether (*ākāśa*) is not a lotus? One should think that, *if* the ether were taken as some existing entity, then, due to the fact that the ether would be something different from a pot it could not hold true of it that it *neither* differs from the/a pot *nor* from a person (or anything else), so that this example cannot present a counter-instance to the complex proposition. The only item which is apt to render the *vyatireka*-phrase false, provided that persons conceived as conscious bodies do not exist, would be a pot which functions as a subject of inference (*pakṣa*), given that it is not a lotus, i.e. it is not true of it that it is not a non-lotus.

2) If ether (*ākāśa*) were not acknowledged as a really existing item it could not function as an instance contradicting the content of the *vyatireka*-proposition. One might maintain that, since it cannot be truly said of ether as a non-existing item that it is either different from a pot or a person, one might suppose that ether is neither different from a pot nor a person. But what could under those circumstances justify the assumption that it is not true that there is no *anutpalatva* in ether, i.e. that, as a matter of fact, some property or universal of being not a lotus is exemplified by or inheres in ether? Unfortunately, the author of the above quoted passage does not tell us, which possible ‘interpretation’ of ‘absence of the property “not being a lotus” ’ he has in mind. The best guess seems to be that, given that (the existence of) absences (in the sense of the technical term *abhāva*) presuppose some real substratum where they are instantiated or occur, it cannot be supposed that ether might function as a substratum for the absence of the property of not being a lotus, or any other absence, and that accordingly ether might on the one hand satisfy the requirement implicit in the antecedent of the *vyatireka*, viz. that it is not different either from a pot or a person, whereas, on the other hand, it does not satisfy the requirement of being a substratum of absence of the property ‘not being a lotus’. But in this case the (alleged) non-compliance with the *vyatireka* is a result of its *formulation* in terms of absences. Hence it cannot be maintained that non-compliance with the *vyatireka* discredits the *anvaya* or the *vyāpti* in the *anvaya*, because a statement saying that any item which is a non-lotus is either different from the/a pot or a person as a conscious body does not necessitate that its corresponding contraposition is conceived in terms of absences. To suppose, however, that the advocates of

I am not aware, however, of a discussion whether a *pakṣa* should be excluded from a *vyāpti* (or *avinābhāva* or similar terms for invariable concomitance).¹²⁵

In (E), p. 529, it is again emphasized that ‘not a single text passage’ has been produced ‘as evidence for such a discussion’.

First of all, it should be a triviality that non-existence of a discussion about the usage of a certain term does not imply anything about the actual way of employing it. That speakers of a language use expressions without discussing the way they use them corresponds to a most common practice. As the contention that the *probans* and the *probandum* in the SP are connected in a manner which can be characterized by expressions, such as ‘(invariable) concomitance’ or ‘pervasion’, does clearly not involve a claim to the effect that there were discussions about words designating the pertinent connection, it remains unclear what the author of (C) and of (E) wants to prove by his remarks. Against the background of the avowal on the part of the writer of (C), p. 666, that he ‘had in mind ... a *vyāpti* as in Dharmakīrti’s works’ it appears most natural to extract from the statements an argument to the effect that

the SP subscribed to such a view, could amount to a serious ‘anachronism’. Hence the only basis for casting doubts on the ‘*vyāpti* in the *anvaya*’ lies in the supposition that a pervasion = *vyāpti* between the properties functioning as *probans* and *probandum* must hold good in an unrestricted domain of which the substratum of inference (*pakṣa*) is a member.

¹²⁵ The continuation reads:

But independently of that, it seems unlikely that the postulate of an invariable concomitance of the kind favoured by Oetke is satisfied by the *sadvitīyaprayoga*. Consider the *vyatireka* (while putting all pots aside): Whatever is not different from a person (in the materialistic sense) is not a non-lotus (i.e., is a lotus). But a person, whether it exists or not, is not a lotus.

The reason for characterizing this statement as ‘surprising’ and ‘puzzling’ in (D), p. 511, was that the *vyatireka* presented there in (C) neither reflects a concomitance ‘favoured’ by me nor anything which should be expected, given the fact that the corresponding *anvaya* must exhibit a disjunctive component since the *probandum* of the SP is disjunctive.

- a) Dharmakīrti (and some others) employed *vyāpti* in a sense which prohibits its application to the relation between *probans* and *probandum* in the SP, presumably because in the SP the connection can be taken for granted merely with respect to the realm outside the substratum of inference (*pakṣa*), and
- b) that this represents the only legitimate way of using the expression *vyāpti* or related terms.

In the present context it is b) which deserves to be challenged, as shown in the following.

There is ‘textual evidence’ sustaining the view that terms denoting relations of invariable concomitance are ‘domain-neutral’ in the sense that they can be applied to pairs of items I_1 and I_2 for which it holds true that with respect to some domain everything exhibiting item I_1 also exhibits item I_2 without imposing any general restrictions concerning the concerned domain, and particularly no limitations to domains which contain the *pakṣa* as an element. In the *Nyāyapraveśa* the terms (edition Dhruva 1968:4,2 and 4,10) i) *sapakṣaikaśaḍāvṛttir vipakṣavyāpī* and ii) *vipakṣaikaśaḍāvṛttiḥ sapakṣavyāpī* appear, denoting fallacious reasons which i) occur in at least one instance of the *sapakṣa*-domain and in all instances of the *vipakṣa*-domain, as e.g. in: ‘Sound arises without previous effort because it is non-eternal’, ii) occur in at least one instance of the *vipakṣa*-domain and in all instances of the *sapakṣa*-domain, as e.g. in: ‘Sound arises after previous effort because it is non-eternal’. The expression *vyatireka-mātravyāpti(ka)*, to be found even in later texts, such as the *Tarkasaṃgraha* and its commentaries (see, e.g. M.R. Bodas 1974:40ff) refers to indicators (*liṅga* = *hetu*) of the so-called *kevala-vyatirekin*-type, where in the realm outside the substratum of inference, such as ‘earth’ (*pr̥thivī*) there are instances exhibiting both absence of the *probans*, such as having smell, and the *probandum*, such as being different from all substances which are not earth, and where everything exhibiting absence of *probandum* exhibits absence of *probans*. In Uddyotakara’s *Nyāyavārttika* on *Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.5 and

the corresponding section of the *Nyāyabhāṣya* it is said, in the context of a criticism of Buddhist *trairūpya*-doctrines, that, given that one wants to communicate nothing but the mere occurrence of the reason in the realm of similar instances, i.e. instances which are like the *pakṣa* inasmuch as they exhibit the property which the *pakṣa* is claimed to possess (= the *probandum*), this mere occurrence is recognized (by implication) in the form of an occurrence which is undetermined with respect to pervasion or non-pervasion, i.e. which can be either an occurrence in some or in all instances of that realm, on the hypothesis of the satisfaction of the requirement that the reason does not occur specifically in the realm of dissimilar instances.¹²⁶

In the present connection it is the following proposition which possesses primary significance: The supposition

- 1) that terms for invariable concomitance like *vyāpti* and others do not include any general specification concerning domains

and the supposition

- 2) that Dharmakīrti adopted a concept of *vyāpti* according to which exemplification of the *probandum* on the part of the substratum of inference (*pakṣa*) functions as a necessary requirement of the applicability of the term *vyāpti* or related words

are compatible. Even if one grants the contention that a usage of terms of concomitance which do not comply with that concept is legitimate one can still maintain that Dharmakīrti (and some others) employed *vyāpti* in a *meaning* or *sense* which prohibits its application to the relation between *probans* and *probandum* in the SP. The reason can be discerned by considering some more familiar phenomena.

Concerning the concept of the term ‘word’ the usual distinction between type and token is not the only difference which potentially matters. There are evidently in principle various ways of complying

¹²⁶ *tattulye ca saṁbhavamātraṁ vivakṣitam iti | saṁbhavamātraṁ ca vyāpty-avyāptibhyāṁ* (as in J instead of *vyāptiyavyāptibhyāṁ* in A. Thakur 1967:301) *aniyatena saṁbhavena labhyate*.

with the demand of ascertaining the number of word(-token)s on a page. A most straightforward method consists in counting as individual words all units separated by a space. On the other hand, one could also legitimately attempt to fulfil the request by using criteria which take certain grammatical properties into account, such as the possibility to attach markers of inflection, number etc., which could justify the verdict that e.g. ‘member care assistant’ or ‘take off’ are to be treated as one unit. Moreover, it could be appropriate to try to comply with some pertinent semantic considerations supporting the decision that, say German ‘*Pflasterstraße*’ counts as a compound of two words as its English equivalent ‘cobbled street’ disregarding the circumstance that it appears in orthography as a unit without space and that the plural marker ‘-n’ can only be added after the final member. The Spanish expression ‘*del*’ could be regarded as a single word, considering the fact that no internal space occurs in orthography and possibly the circumstance that its meaning could be grasped even without prior consideration of any compositional properties. On the other hand, one might deem relevant that ‘*del*’ is supposed to represent a merger of ‘*de*’ + ‘*el*’ in combination with the fact that the expression possesses a counterpart occurring before feminine nouns which reads ‘*de la*’ so that on the basis of considerations pertaining to linguistic system a treatment of ‘*del*’ as a syntagma could be preferred. Accordingly one could even defend the claim that a word ‘*del*’ does not exist as an element of the (basic) vocabulary of the Spanish language. The upshot is that we should be prepared to accept, apart from the type-token-distinction, a plurality of possible concepts associated with the expression ‘word’ as well as a plurality of legitimate meanings or senses of that word. In principle, both practical and theoretical considerations should be allowed to come into play, if decisions between different ways of employing the expression need to be made. In accordance with this maxim theoretical innovations constitute a legitimate basis for semantic innovations. In ordinary contexts the word ‘sound’ is closely associated with the quality of being audible. But presumably theoretical insights into the nature of acoustic

phenomena are responsible for a conceptual change permitting expressions, such as ‘ultrasound’, breaking or at least loosening the previous link between ‘sound’ and ‘audibility’.

Despite the dependence of ways of using expressions on contextual factors in the above considered cases one must not conflate them with other phenomena where meaning is or has been supposed to be affected by context. This holds good first and foremost for a phenomenon where a distinction between two (or more) lexical items is ‘contextually neutralized’, which has been discussed in J. Lyons 1968:452¹²⁷ and (mis)led the author to hypothesize a ‘context-dependent synonymy’. As a matter of fact, the apparent ‘neutralization’ between the marked term ‘bitch’ and the unmarked term ‘dog’ in a context like

My ____ has just had pups.

is plausibly explained by the hypothesis that ordinary knowledge enables competent speakers to immediately recognize that if ‘My dog has just had pups’ expresses a true proposition then ‘My bitch has just had pups’ would in the same context equally express a true proposition and vice versa. There is no need to assume any context-induced change of meaning or concept regarding ‘dog’ or ‘bitch’ here.

The previously described examples of conceptual change or innovation differ also clearly from cases where expressions containing ‘context-sensitive’, in particular indexical, elements determine a concept on the basis of contextual factors, such as ‘today’s TV-programme’ etc. Expressions of this sort possess some intuitive content that appears to remain invariable in different contexts, but which, by itself, is inapt to determine an extension. The content discernible by a mere linguistic understanding does not enable one to decide which particular TV-programme should be denoted. Accordingly one might distinguish between a ‘notional content’ and a ‘conceptual content’ or differentiate between the terms ‘notion’ and ‘concept’,

¹²⁷ J. Lyons, *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics*, Cambridge 1969.

such that the former relates to the relatively invariable component and the latter to a content that is determined, among others by time of utterance, place of utterance and possibly identity of speaker, so that on the basis of those factors information about intended date, country or even channel (first programme, second programme etc.) can be derived. Since even here no compelling need exists to hypothesize changes of meaning, the situation differs from that in the previously considered cases.

It is not merely possible to attribute to Dharmakīrti a *concept* of invariable concomitance which would disallow its applicability to the case of the SP — and to this extent agree to the author of (C) and (E) — but even feasible to provide an explanation for this conceptual innovation that intimately connects it with Dharmakīrti's idea of essential connection, *svabhāvavapratibandha*. For someone who has adopted this idea it was natural to suppose that knowledge of the inviolableness of the connection between *probans* and *probandum* could be derived from knowledge about the nature of this connection, viz. that a pertinent relation belongs to the categories of *tadutpatti* or of *tādātmya*. A consequence is that not only the role of 'examples' becomes unessential but that also the need to base the presumption of a general unexceptional concomitance between *probans* and *probandum* on observations to the effect that in some realm the concomitance is nowhere violated is, at least in principle, dispensable. Thus the door is opened for accepting the tenet that a finite being can acquire knowledge to the effect that absolutely every instance of a *probans* must also be an instance of a *probandum* even without having examined a totality of potentially relevant items, i.e. the totality of all objects of the universe where the *probans* is instantiated. In this manner the idea of an absolutely unrestricted pervasion or *vyāpti* attains a completely new status due to the fact that such a connection can be plausibly conceived as an object of possible knowledge on the part of humans or other finite beings. Therefore one can ascertain that thanks to the notion of *svabhāvavapratibandha* the theoretical innovations introduced by Dharmakīrti provided a basis for a novel concept

of pervasion or *vyāpti*. Without the possibility of referring to *svabhāvapratibandha* any claim to know that an unrestricted invariable concomitance holds good amounted to nothing else than megalomania or hubris. In a framework of earlier theories like that of Vasubandhu one could at best claim that due to a definite ascertainment of an invariable connection in some examined domain one possesses good reason to presume that the connection is never violated in the entire realm apart from the substratum of inference and on the basis of that presumption to suppose a non-violation of this regularity with respect to the *pakṣa*. Hence a concept of unrestricted *vyāpti* is not congenial to the older framework inasmuch as it cannot be plausibly conceived as an object of possible knowledge.

In response to the possible objection that no (textual) evidence exists to the effect that theoreticians before Dharmakīrti carried out contemplations along the above portrayed lines and developed a concept of pervasion optimally fitting their own theoretical framework the following deserves to be said:

1. There is, as far as one can see, no similar evidence with respect to such contemplations on the part of Dharmakīrti either, so that even contentions concerning Dharmakīrti's concept of *vyāpti* must rely on other sources than explicit considerations or discussions about the most suitable shape of the idea.
2. In the light of the deliberations of the previous paragraph it must be deemed improper to dismiss from the outset assessments pertaining to suitability and reasonability as irrelevant.
3. The thesis advocated in the present connection does not entail that a specific and determinate concept of pervasion or invariable concomitance had been elaborated before Dharmakīrti. To be sure, it does not militate against this assumption. On the other hand, however, it seems quite probable that authors alluding to a knowledge of invariable concomitance like in Vasubandhu's

illustrious definition of inference¹²⁸ left room for a certain amount of indeterminateness regarding the nature of the pertinent knowledge: Whereas it can be safely ruled out that knowledge of an infallible connection between *probans* and *probandum* should not be a knowledge resting, among other things, on the observation that both items are exemplified by the substratum of inference — because of the supposition that inferences ordinarily lead to the acquisition of new knowledge — it is easily conceivable that no definite view had been developed regarding the query of the extension of the domain where an invariable concomitance is to be definitely ascertained, leaving room for the alternatives a) that the ascertainment pertains to some or the other (finite) domain, b) that the ascertainment pertains to the entire domain outside the substratum of inference, c) that the ascertainment pertains to the entire domain in so far as it *can* have been scrutinized before by someone who undertakes an inference. Given that an author has not, at least for himself, explicitly differentiated between the different options, his statements containing references to some knowledge can only be treated like ‘templates’ confronting an interpreter with the task of filling the blanks in such a way that an explication is obtained which i) possesses the best chances of representing a truth or ii) renders the making of the statement most reasonable against the background of the attitudes adopted by the proponent, specifically his beliefs and desires. This is a situation which often occurs if linguistic items containing vague terms are to be assessed.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ *nāntarīyakārthadarśanam tadvido 'numānam.*

¹²⁹ Situations of this kind are frequent because items containing vague expressions as constituents can be used in a way which implies a demand directed at addressees or potential interpreters to identify themselves some explication which yields a content that can be assessed as true and which renders a pertinent linguistic act most reasonable against the background of its context. Someone who utters in an assertive mode the sentence

Tom is rich.

The connection between quantifiers, in particular universal quantifiers, and domain-restrictions is a well-known phenomenon. It is easy to see that a sentence like

(I) All adults pay income tax.

can be used to state various things in accordance with specific domains constituting the topic of a discourse, such as some group of workers, working people in general, citizens of a particular country or group of countries, human-beings living in present-day societies etc. On the other hand, it is not inconsistent with the meaning of quantifiers like ‘every’ or ‘all’ to employ them without any domain-restriction at all. Presumably more often in theoretical than in everyday contexts universal statements occur which could be properly represented by using variables whose range pertains to types or categories of objects like physical events or other physical objects, natural numbers or numbers in general and in a limiting case even to entities of any category. It is this fact which permits to convert even ordinary statements embodying domain-restrictions into statements represented by more complex formulations allowing to dispense with the original restrictions, such as:

will presumably not intend to make a demand on the addressee that he should accept his statement as true without further consideration. However — at least as long as the addressee is not supposed to be a linguist or (analytic) philosopher of language — the communicative intention goes usually far beyond the question of the truth of the item considered in isolation. Presuming rationality on the part of the speaker an interpreter possessing suitable information about context can ascertain that the communicatively relevant goal consists in imparting, for example, the message that the person referred to in the utterance is rich enough to buy an apartment in the city of London, or that under prevailing circumstances no need exists to provide financial help or that an attitude of arrogance exhibited by a person called ‘Tom’ can be explained etc. If the linguistic content of the uttered sentence is embedded in such contexts the vagueness inherent in the lexical meaning of ‘rich’ becomes irrelevant and focusing on the complex communicative content an interpreter might assess it as definitely true or untrue, in accordance with the circumstances.

All adults working in the YMCA pay income tax.

All adults, if/in so far as they work in the YMCA, pay income tax.¹³⁰

etc. Thus one can ascertain the existence of a contrast between a) a linguistic meaning of linguistic items containing quantifiers as constituents which is completely indeterminate with respect to domain-restrictions not merely regarding the identity of the relevant domain but even with respect to the existence or absence of a domain-restriction at all¹³¹ and b) a content which is specified either by reference to some specific domain or by the absence of any domain-restriction. As far as assessments of truth or untruth are concerned, it is evidently the second variety which matters. Presumably — and some persons might say, hopefully — (I) represents a falsehood if the quantification is interpreted without domain-restriction. Given that the linguistic meaning of items containing quantifiers due to its neutrality with respect to domain-restriction is not assessable in terms of definite truth or untruth although it plays a palpable role in the process of mapping linguistic units to contents which are assessable in this way, one is entitled to characterize the relatively invariant content

¹³⁰ These statements can be completely appropriate, given that in the pertinent organization also non-adult persons perform jobs which are by law exempt from taxes.

¹³¹ One could be tempted to assimilate the two varieties of universal quantifications with domain-restrictions and quantifications without them by hypothesizing references to domains in their (underlying) general form, i.e. by analysing ‘every’ as ‘every in (domain) D’, ‘all’ as ‘all in (domain) D’ etc., and to interpret non-restricted quantifications as quantifications resulting by universal quantifications over domains. The crux is, however, that in this way novel quantifications appear on the scene which themselves raise issues of domain-restriction. — Compared with this account even the supposition of an ambiguity between quantifications with and quantifications without domain-restrictions appears preferable. However, in the present context those details can be disregarded.

associated with the (standing) meaning of sentences like (I) by the term ‘propositional template’.¹³²

Considering against this background the relationship between a concomitance or pervasion which is determined with respect to the inclusion of a substratum of inference and a kind of pervasion that is not determined in this regard one can ascertain that the former relates to the latter as a proposition to a proposition-template. A concept of pervasion implying an absolutely unrestricted concomitance between *probans* and *probandum* contrasts with an idea of infallible concomitance permitting restriction to some particular domain in the manner in which a linguistic meaning of an item containing quantifiers as ingredients contrasts with a proposition which definitely rules out

¹³² This is not the only option to account for the pertinent facts. An alternative possibility is to correlate with linguistic meanings of items containing universal quantifiers universal propositions not restricted to any domain. Considering the circumstance that it is not reasonable for a speaker to assert such propositions under given circumstances (under which they are blatantly false) one disregards their truth-evaluation and assesses the concerned statements exclusively with respect to domain-restricted correlates which can be identified by taking contextual features into account. Consequently, apart from a propositional content that is definitely false another propositional content is communicated which might turn out to be true or untrue according to the actual circumstances. Presuming that it is only the latter content whose truth a speaker intends to claim interpreters will consider its truth or untruth for deciding whether they should agree or disagree with an assertion. Two points matter in the present connection: 1) Preferring the second account with respect to (complex) linguistic units containing explicit universal quantifiers is in principle compatible with adopting the first alternative with respect to units where universal quantifications occur as integral components of the meaning of individual words; accordingly it could still hold good that expressions, such as *vyāpti* and other related terms, possess a standing linguistic meaning which exhibits indeterminacy with respect to domain-restriction or, as elements of the linguistic system, stand for concept-templates that can be implemented by concepts where the neutrality regarding domain-restriction is abolished, like, supposedly, by Dharmakīrti’s concept of *vyāpti*. 2) Even under the second alternative view it holds good that identical linguistic items are to be correlated with different contents and types of meaning at the same time and for the derivation of contents which matter for verdicts about truth or untruth considerations of reasonability must play a vital role.

any domain-restriction. Accordingly one is entitled to make an analogous distinction between ‘concept’ and ‘concept-template’, so that even the hypothesis that Dharmakīrti or others adopted some concept of pervasion or *vyāpti* disallowing its application in the case of the SP is compatible with the supposition of a corresponding concept-template that does not exhibit this feature and which is more intimately linked to the lexical or linguistic meaning of pertinent terms. It is, however, neither necessary nor appropriate to content oneself with this result. One can go much further, as the following shows.

A concept of pervasion implying an unrestricted pervasion between *probans* and *probandum* can be plausibly regarded as the outcome of a specific ‘semantic enrichment’ resulting from a replacement of the idea of a pervasion by the idea of a pervasion which can be definitely ascertained. Given the presupposition of an ascertainable essential connection, i.e. a *svabhāvapratibandha*, a basis existed for the supposition that compliance with an unrestricted pervasion can be definitely ascertained even without surveillance of the entire universe. To be sure, the question of whether or not Dharmakīrti was objectively entitled to adopt this belief in the way he did is an entirely different matter. Anyhow, in the framework of theories lacking the idea of essential connection no similar ground existed for deriving such a bold conclusion, but on the other hand, there was a solid basis for the tenet that infallible concomitance relations can be definitely ascertained in specific domains that do not include the substratum of inference, the so-called *pakṣa*. It is a specific ‘merit’ of the SP that it makes evident on the one hand, that a definite ascertainment of compliance with an infallible concomitance is not merely possible with respect to some or the other domain but even with respect to the entire domain apart from the substratum of inference and that an argument, despite of exhibiting this feature, might nevertheless fail. There is no reason to call into question the assumption that the creator(s) of the SP *intentionally* designed the example in such a way that the infallible connection between *probans* and *probandum* in the entire non-*pakṣa* domain is absolutely undeniable. This holds good not only on the assumption

that the SP was meant to perform a ‘critical’ function but also on the supposition that it should establish a ‘materialist’ tenet.

It is precisely this important fact which had been concealed in the portrayal of (A), and in particular by the remarks that it is an ‘unfounded assumption ... that the Cārvāka attempts to establish a *vyāpti*’, that ‘there is no concomitance between the reason and the property to be proved’ as well as recommendations to the effect that we should not attribute ‘to the Cārvāka unconvincing attempts to establish a concomitance where there is none’ and that we ought to ‘stop looking at the Cārvāka inference through *vyāpti*-glasses’ (p. 221). On the other hand it turns out that the statement made in (B) that ‘raising the question of whether or not the advocates of the *sadvitīyaprayoga* attempted to establish a concomitance or *vyāpti* ... can be misleading’ because ‘in some sense at least, the postulate of an invariable concomitance should be satisfied by arguments of the *sadvitīya*-type’ requires an explication, which could read as follows:

There is a linguistically conveyed notion or concept-template of invariable concomitance which a) permits an application to the SP and b) whose implementation by a concept of *vyāpti* supposedly adopted by Dharmakīrti disallows an application to the SP. The latter concept can be understood as being developed against the background of a theory that attributes to *svabhāvavapratibandha* a function for the ascertainment of an invariable concomitance between *probans* and *probandum* via a semantic enrichment replacing the notion of invariable concomitance by a notion of ascertainable invariable concomitance. On the other hand, concepts of *vyāpti* are applicable to the SP, such that the advocates of the SP intended their satisfaction. They exhibit the following qualities: i) they implement the notion or concept-template of invariable concomitance, ii) they are mediated by a similar semantic enrichment as in the former case and iii) they accord with a theoretical framework where *svabhāvavapratibandha* and its ascertainment do not possess any function. Those conditions are met by α) an invariable concomitance between *probans* and *probandum* in some

domain outside the *pakṣa* or β) an invariable concomitance in the entire non-*pakṣa* domain.

This explication is admittedly intricate. However, against the contention that the complexity discredits the account, the following deserves to be retorted: The series of claims advanced in (A) require a complex explication too, if they should represent an acceptable tenet. Such an explication could run as follows:

The creator(s) of the SP did not intend that the relation between the *probans* and *probandum* in the SP should comply with a concept of invariable concomitance. This concept is identical with the conception of *vyāpti* that had been adopted by Dharmakīrti. It results by an implementation of the notion corresponding to the linguistic meaning of the term against the background of a theory attributing to *svabhāvapratibandha* a function for the assessment of an invariable concomitance between *probans* and *probandum* via a semantic enrichment replacing the notion of invariable concomitance by a notion of ascertainable invariable concomitance.

Both explications are more complex than any of the corresponding formulations appearing in (A) or in (B), but they make manifest that there is no imperative necessity to assess positions as incompatible which can appear irreconcilable. Among the consequences which might be drawn from the above presented assessment of the situation two deserve to be mentioned in the first place:

1. Increase of explicitness tends to entail the disadvantage of increasing complexity and a corresponding loss of economy of expression. However, the gain of economization in the short run can be counterbalanced by a loss of economy in a longer run. Dedicating more space to the exposition of a subject matter in the first article could have prevented the composition of subsequent treatises dealing with the topic. If the authors of (A) as well as of (B) had in the very beginning exposed their views with more clarity and explicitness the feeling of a need to correct misunderstandings might not have arisen

at all. Even if members engaged in a dispute might themselves fail to discern the actual state of affairs, explication is conducive to a better assessment on the part of impartial observers. It is appropriate to highlight this truism because it appears that ideologies as well as prevailing institutional conditions do not facilitate expositions revealing the complexities of a matter.

2. Irrespective of whether or not concepts of concomitance or *vyāpti* had been adopted at certain times which could not be correctly applied to the argument of the SP, the fact persists that a distinction between linguistically imparted contents on the one hand and concepts on the other hand needs to be taken into consideration. To be sure, the difference is most patent with respect to linguistic items containing indexical elements as constituents. But it appears erroneous to suppose that the existence of this disparity is confined to that realm. The parallelism is significant enough even to justify the employment of the terms ‘notion’ and ‘concept’ for signalling differences in the domain of expressions not containing overt indexical elements, notwithstanding the circumstance that they entered the scene in connection with syntagmas, such as ‘today’s TV-programme’. But there is an important difference too: In the case of determinations of various contents in accordance with variations of contextual features due to the ‘context-sensitivity’ of linguistic elements no plausible basis exists for hypothesizing any divergences of sense or meaning; there is on the one hand a stable linguistic sense and on the other hand a plurality of contents determined by relevant qualities of context. The situation is different in the case of implementations of notions or ‘conceptual templates’ by diverse concepts; a possibly invariant meaning imparted by linguistic conventions contrasts with possibly¹³³ diverse meanings

¹³³ The expression ‘possibly’ is added here to account for the theoretical possibility that in the history of a language a notion or concept-template has been implemented only once by a concept; if, for example, the only concept of concomitance apt for the precise determination of extensions had been elaborated by Dharmakīrti as it is represented by *his* conception of *vyāpti*.

corresponding to various concepts. Presumably this conception of a meaning that is on the one hand linked up with a lexical meaning of linguistic expressions although it cannot be uniquely derived from it (not even in combination of contextual features) and on the other hand uniquely associated with concepts is closely related to the idea of 'restricted meaning' as explained in Hattiangadi 1987:62ff.¹³⁴

It might be demurred that the idea is not entirely novel and that it had been anticipated even in the field of traditional philologies, as evidenced by titles of studies of the form 'the concept of X in Y', 'der Begriff von X bei Z', where 'X' is replaced by the designation of a linguistic expression, 'Y' be the name of a text or work and 'Z' by the name of a person. Nevertheless the contention that those observations vindicate an insight in the matter is at best a half-truth. On the one hand titles of this kind intimate the absence of an awareness of the facts i) that expressions can possess different 'restricted meanings' for one and the same person in different contexts and ii) that even different occurrences of identical terms in one and the same text might be associated with different concepts and that such situations are by no means exceptional.¹³⁵ On the other hand an intuitive awareness of the phenomenon does not guarantee a clear recognition of the consequences which can be validly derived from its occurrence in individual cases. The latter point possesses special importance. It is true that even without a theoretical background it might be feasible to ascertain that, say, Dharmakīrti adopted a concept of pervasion requiring the actual

¹³⁴ J.N. Hattiangadi 1987.

¹³⁵ The previously considered example of determining word-units in diverse ways by different criteria is apt to bring this point home. Applied to standard examples of vague expressions, such as 'bald', 'tall', 'rich', 'heap' etc., the account implying a contrast between relatively invariant lexical meanings as well as concept-templates on the one hand and a plurality of restricted meanings and concepts on the other is apt to offer an explanation of the fact that, as far as one can see, all natural languages are replete with vague terms. The explanation reads as follows: It is advantageous for a linguistic system if it provides the possibility to generate a countless number of concepts by means of a limited vocabulary.

exemplification of a *probandum* by a substratum of inference which would not permit its correct application to the argument of the SP, as long as the existence of bodies possessing consciousness is not established. The crucial point lies however in the question as to what can be deduced from this fact. The problem lies in the validity of arguments derived from possibly correct observations. It is relevant specifically for the contention that the advocates of the SP did not attempt to comply with *any* form of concomitance given that they could not satisfy a concept of pervasion adopted by Dharmakīrti. Disclaiming the importance of higher-order reflections on the soundness of conclusions to be drawn from observations destroys the fundament of any science. If the lack of self-criticism favoured by this attitude affects a larger group in a field, a collective self-aggrandizement standing in sharp contrast to the actual state of affairs is a most probable outcome.

IV

The author of (E) claims, p. 531, that if his works would be read attentively, one would never think that he considered the word *anyatara* to refer only to an exclusive disjunction and presents as reason the fact that he had before written a passage which reads as follows:

However, when Dharmakīrti says *sāmānyena* ('in general') as in *sādhyam sāmānyena saṃmatam* (PV 4.34), *sāmānyena sādhyam iṣṭam iti na viśeṣāpekṣaḥ* (Pvin III 14.9) or similar expressions, he probably simply means that the disjunction should be taken as inclusive 'or', i.e., is considered true if the one, the other or both its members are true, disregarding whether it is the one or the other 'particular' (i.e., the person or the pot).

This is an odd argument. The writer of (E) obviously thinks that his statement that Dharmakīrti believes that the disjunction (represented by *anyatara*) should be taken as an inclusive 'or' provides conclusive evidence for the fact that he himself believes that the disjunction

should be taken as an inclusive ‘or’. This is extremely odd because statements of the form ‘B believes that C means D’, or ‘B says that C means D’ made on the part of A suggest, by conversational implicatures à la Grice, that the utterer, i.e. A, does himself *not* believe that C means D or regards such a supposition as questionable. To be sure, if ‘B’ is substituted by ‘the bible’ and ‘A’ stands for an expression denoting a devout Christian, it might be indeed appropriate to draw from a corresponding statement of the form ‘B says that C means D’ the conclusion that A himself believes that C means that D. But unfortunately the writer of (E) did not disclose beforehand that he had become a Dharmakīrti devotee. Nevertheless, it is not needed to pursue the issue further because there are other things which matter more in the present connection.

In (C), p. 669, the following passage occurs:

Both authors (of the *sadvitīyaprayoga* and *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva* argument) used what one may call an “alternating disjunction.” The word *anyatara* means “(only) one of the two”, but the trick in their usage of the word is that it is not always the same one (this use of the disjunction gets lost in Oetke’s annotations and formalizations). In the latter case, when the first *trairūpya* condition is examined, the left side of the disjunction holds true, when the second condition is examined, the right.

To this a footnote is added which reads as follows:

In the *sadvitīyaprayoga*, on the other hand, the alternation is between the *sādhyadharma* and the *sapakṣa*. Note, however, that the alternation occurs only for the opponent. For the proponent, the disjunction in the *sapakṣa* is not exclusive, since he accepts the existence of both the pot and the materialistic person.

Although the quoted passage follows immediately after some statements about Dharmakīrti’s intentions and concerns, its topic evidently relates to the import of *anyatara* as used by the advocates of the *sadvitīyaprayoga*- and of the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-arguments.

In the light of the last sentence of the quoted passage of the main text, viz. ‘In the latter case’, one can ascertain that the so-called ‘*pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument’ exhibits the characteristic feature that it employs a disjunctive *probans* whose individual members cannot be instantiated together by any object (of the universe). For, given that the domains of *pakṣa* and of *sapakṣa* are separate, the *pakṣa* can only exhibit the property of being *a*the *pakṣa* (in the pertinent context of inference), whereas all remaining entities of the universe can at most, provided they exemplify the property of being eternal (since being eternal is supposed to constitute the *probandum*), exhibit the property of being (a) *sapakṣa* (relative to the context of inference). All other items must be neither *pakṣa* nor *sapakṣa*. Hence the first *trairūpya*-condition stipulating that the substratum of inference = *pakṣa* is satisfied by the fact that the *pakṣa* exhibits precisely the first member of the disjunction. The second requirement, according to which in the realm of ‘similar instances’ = *sapakṣa* at least one item exists that exhibits both *probans* and *probandum*, is satisfied by the existence of any entity which is both eternal and *sapakṣa*, but no item that is both eternal and *pakṣa* can fulfil this function, given that the realms of *pakṣa* and *sapakṣa* are separate. For that reason the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument possesses validity by the criterion of *trairūpya* only on condition that eternal objects exist at all. The remaining requirement, that every object exhibiting the *probans* exhibits the *probandum* too, is trivially satisfied in the *sapakṣa*-realm because relative to the pertinent context of inference this realm is determined as a realm of objects whose members exhibit the quality of being eternal without any exception. Nevertheless, the proposition that the *pakṣa* exhibits the quality of being eternal too is not automatically guaranteed by the circumstance that every item belonging to the *sapakṣa*-domain must be eternal. Therefore a compliance with the conditions of *trairūpya* can never entail the truth of the thesis, at least as long as *pakṣa* and *sapakṣa* are considered as constituting separate realms.

In the light of the final sentence of the corresponding footnote, viz. ‘For the proponent’, it can be recognised that an advocate of the *sadvitīyaprayoga*-argument who takes the existence of material bodies endowed with consciousness for granted, would believe that both constituents of the disjunctive *probandum* are exhibited by members belonging to the *sapakṣa*-realm, such as chairs, trees, mushrooms or even computers, all of which differ both from pots and from conscious bodies. But for everybody who does not take the existence of material bodies endowed with consciousness for granted the situation is different: All objects of the *sapakṣa*-realm are bound to exhibit the second component of the disjunction, viz. being different from a/the pot, given, as before, the separateness of the *pakṣa*- and *sapakṣa*-domains, whereas the exemplification of the remaining member is open to doubt. On the other hand, the *pakṣa* can evidently not exhibit the quality of being different from *pakṣa*, so that it can at most exhibit the other member of the disjunction; but given that the existence of conscious bodies is not taken for granted, not even this can be regarded as certain. So far there is no problem.

A first, but perhaps not decisive, difficulty arises due to the contention that ‘[i]n the *sadvitīyaprayoga* the alteration is between the *sādhya*dharmā and the *sapakṣa*’. The difficulty is not merely due to the circumstance that it has not been made explicit what, in the eyes of the writer, should be considered as *sādhya*dharmā and as *sapakṣa* respectively. The crux is rather that a disjunction between something which could be identified as *probandum* = *sādhya*dharmā on the one hand and something which could be plausibly considered as *sapakṣa* nowhere occurs in the SP. Given that the *sādhya*dharmā consists itself in the disjunctive quality of being different from (a) conscious body or being different from (a) pot, it can hardly be a member of any ‘alternating disjunction’ and thus even less a constituent of an alternating disjunction between *sādhya*dharmā and *sapakṣa*. The *sapakṣa*, on the other hand, should be a realm to which all objects belong which are (either) different from conscious bodies or different from certain pots and it remains unclear why this realm — or any realm

of objects at all — are to be considered as an ingredient of an alternating disjunction. Up to now, at best the following conjecture can be offered: Presuming that the SP is advocated by a materialist, the writer of the above quoted passages considered exclusively the property of differing from conscious bodies as the ‘genuine’ *probandum*; and considering that differing from a pot is a necessary condition of being a (member of the) *sapakṣa*-(realm) the expression *sapakṣa* has been employed for referring to this property. Be this as it may, it is hardly disputable that the properties of differing from a conscious body and the property of differing from a pot are the only items which could, in the context of the SP, play a role which is analogous to the role played by the properties of being *pakṣa* and of being *sapakṣa* in the context of the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument, so that further deliberations concerning the peculiar way of designating them might be dispensable.

The crucial question is: Why did the writer claim that the authors of the SP and of the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument used a disjunction which might be called ‘alternating disjunction’ and why is it remarked that this use of the disjunction gets lost in particular formalizations? One should think that if somebody utters in an assertive mode:

(II) Everybody in this area owns a BMW or a Mercedes.

he uses the disjunction in exactly the same manner irrespective of whether or not the actual situation happens to be so that some of the residents in the concerned area own both a BMW and a Mercedes. One might demur that in the cases of the SP and the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument the members of the disjunctions do not merely happen to be satisfied by different items; rather it is possible to ascertain in advance that no object can satisfy both members together, at least under certain presuppositions. But in cases, such as

(III) All numbers in the set consisting of 6, 9, 12 and 15 can be divided by 3 or 5.

on the one hand and

(III*) All numbers in the set consisting of 6, 9, 10 and 12 can be divided by 3 or 5.

on the other hand, it is equally obvious that, whereas in the first case one of the numbers can be divided by both 3 and by 5, in the second case all numbers can be divided by either 3 or by 5 but no number exists which is divisible by both 3 and 5. Why should it be claimed that in (III) and in (III*) the disjunctions are used in different ways and that (III*) is distinguished by the use of an alternating disjunction? One can leave aside the query, what the writer of (C) has in mind when he speaks of 'formalizations' and whether it would refer to formalizations in a genuine sense of the term or rather to representations of some content by means of expressions taken from Symbolic Logic. In either case the question must be raised as to why some use of a disjunction 'gets lost' in particular formalizations and why it is significant to register this alleged loss. Does not, for example,

All numbers in the set S can be divided by X or Y.

provide a suitable formalization for both (III) and (III*)? Even considering the fact that identical items usually permit different formalizations representing different ways or levels of abstraction, no plausible reason exists to treat (III) and (III*) differently in this respect. For the difference between those units does not pertain to their syntactic or semantic form but to the circumstance that different substitutions for 'S' yield items which are true or false under different circumstances. If, on the other hand, (explicating) paraphrases employing devices borrowed from Symbolic Logic are at stake, it would be appropriate to render both (III) and (III*) by a formulation, such as:

$(\forall x)(x \in \{6, 9, 12, 15\} \rightarrow (x \text{ can be divided by } 3 \vee x \text{ can be divided by } 5))$

for (III) and

$(\forall x)(x \in \{6, 9, 10, 12\} \rightarrow (x \text{ can be divided by } 3 \vee x \text{ can be divided by } 5))$

for (III*) would be permissible. The only difference pertains to the specification of the members of the pertinent sets. This is sufficient for providing the information needed for a recognition of the fact that in contrast to (III) the members of the set in (III*) can all be divided by either 3 or 5 but no member could be divided by both numbers. Both a genuine formalization and a ‘symbolic paraphrase’ would call for a reflection of a difference with respect to the nature of disjunction only if the meaning or sense of the disjunctive terms, i.e. the occurrences of ‘or’ in the two sentences, were different.

On the other hand however, the supposition that the disjunctive term in (III*) should not be taken in the sense of an inclusive disjunction and that (III) and (III*) might be represented by different kinds of disjunctions is not absurd. For if the disjunction of (III*) would be interpreted in the sense of a disjunction currently termed ‘exclusive disjunction’ (III*) would express a truth too.

One could indeed argue that, since i) in the above quoted passage instead of the usual term ‘exclusive disjunction’ the expression ‘alternating disjunction’ appears and ii) it was remarked that the alternation occurs only for the opponent and not for the proponent, one ought to conclude that no different type of disjunction had been envisaged. But in view of the facts

- a) that the text speaks of a use of ‘alternating disjunction’
- b) that it intimates that annotations and specific ‘formalizations’ relying on the assumption that the SP as well as the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument employ an inclusive disjunction do not impart what they ought to impart
- c) that the immediately preceding sentence expresses the assertion that ‘Dharmakīrti’s arguments concern mainly the nature of the disjunction’, in combination with the circumstance

- d) that an interpretation of *anyatara* as signalling an exclusive disjunction appears to represent the only possibility to justify the assumption that the SP as well as the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument employ a special type of disjunction where the disjunctive operator does not possess the sense of an inclusive ‘or’

a circumspective interpreter has hardly any other choice than to consider as a realistic possibility the intention to contend that the disjunctions in the concerned arguments possess an exclusive nature. Even if the question of intention were disregarded it would be unwarranted to omit a critical inspection of the query as to whether an employment of exclusive disjunctions in the pertinent arguments could be a reasonable option. Maybe, the examination yielding as a result that by using an exclusive disjunction in the SP a satisfying argument is not obtainable was irrelevant inasmuch the writer of (C) never intended to claim that the disjunction is exclusive. But if that is the case the pertinent point has been depicted in an inappropriate manner. A portrayal of the situation in a form that is decisively more suitable could read as follows:

Both the *sadvitīyaprayoga* and the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument exhibit the characteristic that, at least under certain presuppositions, no object can instantiate both terms of the disjunctions. For in the case of the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument the *probans* can be exhibited by the *pakṣa* only due to the circumstance that it exhibits, and even must exhibit, the first member of the disjunction, viz. the property of being *pakṣa*, whereas an exemplification of the other member of the disjunction is impossible (given that the domains of *pakṣa* and *sapakṣa* are separate). All the remaining objects of the universe can at most exemplify the second member of the disjunction, which they in fact exhibit if they instantiate the property of being eternal. Hence the first condition of *trairūpya* is satisfied because the *pakṣa* must exhibit the first member of the disjunction, whereas the second condition of *trairūpya* can be satisfied at best due to the exemplification of the second member on the part of

an eternal item that is not the *pakṣa* itself. All this can be ascertained beforehand, without investigating contingent matters of the world. In the case of the *sadvitīyaprayoga* the *probandum* is such that its exhibition on the part of the *pakṣa* as well as its exhibition by some items belonging to the *sapakṣa*-realm would be guaranteed if the existence of physical bodies endowed with consciousness were taken as granted. The disjunctive property would be exhibited by the *pakṣa* due to the fact that it exhibits the property of being different from some conscious body; a number of items in the *sapakṣa*-domain would exhibit both properties because they differ both from some pot or some collection of pots (functioning as *pakṣa*) and from some conscious body. If, however, the existence of physical bodies of consciousness were not taken for granted or if it is even denied (as an opponent would presumably do), then the exemplification of the second member on the part of certain elements of the *sapakṣa*-realm would be guaranteed due to the fact that they must be different from any pot that functions as *pakṣa*; but regarding the *pakṣa* itself an exhibition of the second member of the disjunction is impossible and an exemplification of the other member is at best doubtful. This state of affairs can be equally assessed in advance without investigating contingent circumstances. Although the pertinent characteristic peculiarities are not and should not be made manifest in formalizations of the arguments they were regarded as fatal flaws by Dharmakīrti.

In answer to the possible criticism that the recasting is considerably longer than the original depiction presented in (C) the following facts deserve to be pointed out:

- 1) The rewritten portrayal shines a light on additional details due to its greater explicitness.
- 2) It does not suggest that in the SP and the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument a special type of disjunction enters the scene.
- 3) It does not intimate mistaken conclusions concerning the function of formalizations or explications employing symbolic notations.

- 4) It provides a palpable indication of the presumable ground in virtue of which Dharmakīrti considered the two pieces of reasoning reproachable and permits to clearly identify a maxim postulated for acceptable pieces of inference or proof. The relevant maxim is: Whenever a specimen of inference or proof contains a disjunctive *probans* or *probandum* it must not be ascertainable from the outset that one (or more) members of the disjunction cannot be instantiated by the substratum of inference, i.e. the item that functions as *pakṣa* in the pertinent context. Thereby it is tacitly admitted that in a wider field of inferences, where qualities functioning as *probans* or *probandum* might exhibit (among others) a disjunctive form, the canon of *trairūpya* can only work if the doctrine is complemented by additional restrictions. It is against the background of this novel postulate that one could address further questions regarding the justifiability of Dharmakīrti's stance.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ A problem is caused by the fact that the complex character of a predicate is not necessarily exhibited by its linguistic form. Dispositional qualities represented by atomic adjectives like '[x is] brittle' or '[x is] (water-)soluble' are sometimes claimed to be equivalent or even 'reducible' to properties representable by complex expressions, such as '[x] dissolves if [x were] put in water'. But even most ordinary words or predicates like '[x is a] child' can be regarded as being equivalent to words or predicates exhibiting a disjunctive form, such as '[x is a] boy or [x is a] girl'. Should accordingly an inference using being a child as a *probandum* be illegitimate in situations where it can be ascertained from the outset that the 'substratum of inference' must be male — or female, as the case may be? If this consequence would be accepted, it would become imperative to accept a postulate according to which a *probans* or a *probandum* of an inference must always be the most specific property in the sense that it cannot be considered as equivalent to a disjunctive quality of the form '[x is] Q or Q*', where it could be ascertained in advance that one member of the disjunction — 'Q' or 'Q*' — is not exhibited by the substratum of inference. Against the possible demurrals that the adoption of such a theorem is not attested in texts written by Dharmakīrti or by writers of the subsequent tradition, the following reply deserves to be given: Does not precisely this circumstance vindicate that a fatal impoverishment results from the precept 'to understand a tradition in its own terms' if this implies the

It emerges again that increase of elaborateness and explicitness can be conducive to economy in the longer run by making disputes rooted in unclarities about interpretation dispensable. For the same reason the relevance of paying more attention to accuracy in matters of formulation deserves to be emphasized. Such points possess particular importance in disciplines which due to peculiarities of their definition and delimitation are affected by an immanent propensity to favour communicability and convenience at the expense of precision and depth.

V

(D) is affected by two shortcomings which deserve to be revealed. Since the concerned matters have not yet been properly clarified and the possibility that they fall into oblivion is not unrealistic, this self-criticism appears apposite. Initially the first issue could seem peripheral considering the circumstance that it pertains to a relation between the SP and some other doctrinal element. But due to the existence of implications relating to potential argumentative functions of this specimen of reasoning it cannot be justified to pass the point over in silence.

In (D), p. 509, it had been contended that it has not (yet) been conclusively refuted that ‘to establish the “materialist” tenet that persons are nothing but bodies manifesting phenomena of consciousness’ was ‘an originally intended purpose’ of the reasoning presented in the SP and that ‘the mere circumstance that ... the argument must be regarded as faulty because it can be ‘counterbalanced’ by a parallel argument establishing the very opposite fulfilling exactly the same criteria of validity’ cannot disprove this supposition, viz. the hypothesis that the SP was originally connected with the intention to establish a central tenet of

maxim to disregard all properties of a teaching which had not been recognized by its creator or the subsequent tradition of its reception?

materialism. To support the contention it was remarked that ‘there is no conclusive evidence showing that the original proponents were acquainted with the concept of *viruddhāvyabhicāra*’ and that the doctrinal element of *viruddhāvyabhicāra* could have even been created as a reaction facing the problem of the SP. The major fault does not lie in the contention itself but in the manner in which it had been endorsed by a consideration pertaining to the *viruddhāvyabhicāra*.

Against the supposition that some creator of the SP, who was not acquainted with the idea of *viruddhāvyabhicāra*, wanted to prove a tenet of materialism by the piece of reasoning which the SP represents, the writer of (E) = FN quite rightly objects, p. 528, that ‘even if the author of the sp were not aware of the concept of *viruddhāvyabhicāra*, it would still be ludicrous to assume that he believed that he could actually prove the materialistic Lokāyata tenet with it’. The reason is that ‘it is obvious that if the sp is valid, the following is equally valid: The pot is accompanied by a pot or by an eternal soul, because it is not a lotus, etc.’ Nevertheless, this treatment of the issue fails to get to the root of the matter.

First, any satisfactory identification of the exact nature of the relationship between the situation of counterbalancing the SP by a parallel argument attempting to establish a contrary tenet and the situation envisaged in the *viruddhāvyabhicāra* is nowhere presented in the entire dispute represented by (A)–(E). For there are striking differences. The pertinent situation in the case of the *viruddhāvyabhicāra* is characterized by a presentation of pairs of reasoning trying to incompatible *probanda* with respect to the same substratum of inference (*pakṣa*), such that each of which employs a different *probans*. In the *Nyāyapraveśa* the situation is illustrated by the two pairs: ‘Sound is impermanent because it is produced like a pot; sound is permanent because it is audible like [the universal] sound-ness’.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ *viruddhāvyabhicārī yathā | anityaḥ śabdaḥ kṛtakatvād ghaṭavat | nityaḥ śabdaḥ śrāvaṇatvāt śabdatvavad iti | ubhayoḥ saṃśaya hetutvād dvāv apy etāv eko 'naikāntikaḥ samudītāv eva |* (Edition Dhruva 1968:4,21–5,2).

Notwithstanding possible uncertainties of interpretation in detail it can be definitely ascertained that the *viruddhāvyabhicāra* relates to cases where conflicting results are licensed (to the same degree) by pieces of reasoning resorting to different specimens of *probans*. Those cases are evidently connected with the phenomenon of ‘conflicting evidence’. In the case of the SP, however, a situation is envisaged which is *not* characterized by an exploitation of conflicting evidence. It is rather supposed that one-and-the same *probans* is employed for establishing different *probanda* which are ‘logically compatible’ in so far as there are entities which could exemplify the pertinent *probanda* at the same time: Obviously items which are not pots themselves could exhibit both the quality of differing from some pot or differing from conscious bodies as well as the quality of differing from some pot or differing from bodies endowed with souls which (i.e. the souls) alone are bearers of consciousness (granted that the disjunction is inclusive). Only the idea of attributing both *probanda* to a pot, functioning as *pakṣa*, creates difficulties — *provided* it is hypothesized in addition that it cannot be true that some entities exist whose physical bodies are endowed with consciousness and some other entities exist too which possess unconscious bodies as well as conscious souls. Considering the fact that the *viruddhāvyabhicāra* relates to an independent and serious problem, it is by no means eccentric to even suppose that this doctrine had been developed by persons who were well acquainted with the SP but did not deem it worthy to take it into consideration, precisely because they, like the author of (E), thought that it would be ‘ludicrous to assume’ that this way of reasoning could validly establish any conclusion at all. It is hardly possible to concur with the suggestion in (E), p. 528, that, given that the SP was probably closer to Dharmakīrti’s time ‘the doctrinal element of *viruddhāvyabhicāra* was well known to its author’. Considering in addition that the transmission of information in those days must have been far slower than in the modern era and that even in most recent times various cases of plagiarism had been remained unnoticed for quite a long period and were detected merely with the help of advanced electronic devices, it has to be deemed ‘ludicrous’ to suppose

that serious conclusions pertaining to relative chronology can be obtained by the available data. Accordingly, the only sober stance which can be taken (at present) is to confine oneself to assessments of theoretical relations between the SP and other doctrinal elements such as the *viruddhāvyabhicāra* in order to prevent unwarranted deductions concerning questions of dating.

The manner of treating the contention that the SP could have had (among others) the objective to establish a tenet of materialism is defective also in other respects. The criticism in (E) supports at best the conclusion that it is very improbable that its creator(s) or proponent(s) believed that they could prove the thesis of the existence of physical bodies endowed with consciousness by the reasoning contained in the SP alone. In this connection the propensity of the writer of (E) to take only those possibilities into account which come to his mind immediately or most easily turns out to be detrimental. It is well known — and attested in fairly old sources like the *Nyāyasūtras*, the *Nyāyabhāṣya* and the *Vaiśeṣikasūtras* — that in ancient times the view was current that the existence of an individual soul cannot be established by perception but by inference. In this situation it would not be inappropriate to argue for the tenet that phenomena of consciousness should be explained by the hypothesis of physical bodies manifesting them rather than by the postulation of souls by employing the strategy to invalidate *any* inferential proof for the existence of souls in combination with the conclusion that the pertinent issue can be decided *only* on the basis of perception — assuming that perception supports the materialist view. Since the SP, by showing that a form of reasoning complying with accepted standards of inferential validity can be made subservient for the derivation of any arbitrary tenet it serves the central purpose of discrediting at one blow all arguments trying to establish the thesis of the existence of souls.

The phenomenon that individual pieces of reasoning fulfil some overriding objective in the context of a more complex argumentative context is presumably not exceptional. For example, the individual pieces of reasoning employed in the first chapter of the

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā for refuting alternative possibilities of origination with the aim of establishing the possibility of origination in general exemplify an analogous embeddedness in a complex argumentative structure, and similar observations can be made elsewhere too. Thus it proves to be a plausible supposition that the SP incorporated from the very beginning a double function, i) a negative one of invalidating any inferences trying to prove the existence of souls and ii) a positive one of supporting a central tenet of materialism. There is admittedly no conclusive evidence vindicating this particular interpretation. But there is equally no conclusive evidence for the view adopted by Dharmakīrti according to which the SP should by itself provide a direct proof for the existence of bodies exhibiting consciousness. Exclusive acceptance of the latter alternative would need to resort to faith. To be sure, espousing the first option entails the admission that the SP can be connected with a criticism of inference, as it had been advocated in (A). However, the legitimacy and significance of this hypothesis has never been denied.

The second shortcoming of (D) is more important. The article has not merely failed to clearly point out the fact that the (customary) ascription of the SP to the ‘materialists’ is doubtful, but it was even contended, p. 507–508, that ‘the piece of argument which is designated by the term *sadvitīyaprayoga* possesses considerable relevance for the assessment of the philosophical significance of schools of thought which were marginalized in the Indian tradition’. To be sure, the aim of emphasizing the potential relevance of ‘marginalized’ traditions is justified. But the presentation of the state of affairs as if the prejudice that the advocates of the SP were affiliated to the Cārvāka or Lokāyata tradition deserves to be uncritically accepted is definitely a major defect. It would have been appropriate to present the thesis explicitly in a conditional form by saying that if the proponents of the SP were representatives of some ‘non-orthodox’ tradition of thought then the SP vindicates the potential significance of those traditions and sustains the postulate to pay more attention to them than before.

The supposition that the inventor of the SP was not an adherent of some materialist or other non-orthodox school represents more than a mere conceivable possibility. For, if the conjecture that the SP was designed to throw a critical light on current accounts of inference is true, then the assumption that its conclusion represents a proposition that is not accepted in the milieu of its creator is at least as probable as the supposition that the conclusion is deemed to be true. After all, a criticism trying to establish that some variety or form of reasoning proves to be unreliable or invalid is most efficiently accomplished if it demonstrates that by employing the pertinent type of reasoning consequences are derivable which are patently unacceptable, i.e. either unacceptable for everybody or unacceptable for oneself and for those who share similar views.

To be sure, studies on Indian philosophies are apt to evoke the impression that exponents of that tradition are primarily concerned with criticizing other teachings but extremely reluctant to question themselves or critically analysing their own tradition. Nevertheless, the precept that criticism should not be interpreted as self-criticism can at best correspond to a fallible default-rule. Its indiscriminating application is extremely pernicious because it generates images of homogeneousness with respect to traditions or even entire cultures which are not grounded in objective facts but in methodological deficiencies. Even if one follows the suggestion advanced in (A) to the effect that the inventor(s) and proponent(s) of the SP intended to aim at a criticism of inference, the conclusion that he or they desired to 'show a serious deficiency in the structure of inference' and thereby to establish that 'inferences in general are unreliable' is not mandatory. As a matter of fact, there are at least three options:

- a) The protagonist(s) of the SP intended indeed to argue for the thesis that 'inference should not be considered a reliable means of knowledge', as suggested in (A), p. 223.

- b) The proponent(s) of the SP intended to show that some particular account of inference — such as the account presented by Vasubandhu — is (still) deficient and needs to be improved.
- c) The originator(s) of the SP did not possess any clear awareness of the difference between a) and b), possibly presupposing that criticism of some particular account of inference amounts to criticism of inference in general.

The same exposition could be given *mutatis mutandis* with respect to the *pakṣasapakṣānyataratva*-argument. Among those options a) would imply that the inventor(s) of the SP failed to see that their argument was an inappropriate means to establish a far-reaching contention, b) would imply that they adopted a(n objectively) most reasonable stance and c) articulates a possibility which is quite realistic.

Thus it could be objected that the position advocated in (A), (C) and (E) according to which the SP was i) invented by an adherent of Lokāyata ii) created at a time between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti and iii) was meant to establish the thesis that inference should not be considered a reliable means of knowledge represents a possibility. But the crux lies in the circumstance that a possibility is passed off as a fact. It is problematic to endorse such a method which harmonizes with phenomena observable in the social media at present. Whereas (D) was guilty of paving a way for an uncritical acceptance of the prejudice that the SP possesses its origins in the milieu of the Cārvākas or Lokāyatas, (E), p. 527, goes much further by undertaking even the ‘ludicrous’ attempt to pass off this prejudice as an incontrovertible dogma, demanding that the SP *must* be assessed against the background of the ‘Lokāyata tradition, with which the sp is affiliated’. Instead of circumspect consideration of possibilities the attitude of treating possibilities as facts deserves to be relentlessly repudiated. Fabrications of fake facts and pronouncements of exorbitant claims are in themselves less fatal than the consequences which they promote. By combining several premises of this sort the prospects of manufacturing complex webs of illusions are enhanced.

Postscript

At the end of FN a note occurred which read:

[With the publication of this paper we hope to end this debate here. The Editor.]

Notwithstanding the circumstance that FN explicitly and extensively refers to (D) and indirectly relates to a discussion represented by four preceding articles concerning the topic of the *sadvitīyaprayoga* (= SP), the quoted remark failed to account for the fact that FN was not a mere continuation of the former debate, but shifted the topic to a different level of general matters of methodology. As it appeared apposite to inspect the legitimacy of the claims pertaining to new issues, an article was drafted by me taking a critical stand on a number of points articulated in FN, referring in various places to the topic of the SP for purposes of illustration. The first chapter of the present essay with the title “The Delusions of ‘Historical Interpretation’ ” is a slightly extended version of that treatise.

Due to the circumstance that in this study the main focus lies on the general issues raised in FN, whereas the debate concerning the SP plays a subordinate role, a publication in the organ where FN as well as (A)–(C) had appeared would have been a natural option. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that — after almost a year of silence — the editor of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* insisted on the standpoint articulated in the above cited quotation one is entitled to conclude that it had been decided from the outset that FN must not be exposed to further criticism. It is not even eccentric to surmise that the writer of FN could have chosen the specific presumptuous formulation for the title of his article in knowledge of this intention.

The query as to whether some individual article deserves to finalize particular discussions possesses only secondary importance relative to the general question regarding possible obligations entailed by the decision to terminate debates at some specific point. In this connection

the following maxim amounts almost to a truism: A choice fixing an endpoint must not rely on quantitative considerations alone (such as number or length of articles devoted to some subject-matter) but needs to take into account qualitative aspects too. This implies that, whenever someone decides that some particular contribution to a topic should finalize its exploration for the moment, he must verify that the concerned contribution is suited to play this role also under qualitative aspects and if that is not the case see to it that it assumes a character which makes it suitable for that purpose. There can be hardly any doubt that those requirements have not been met in the present case.

As far as the specific study of the SP is concerned FN is badly suited for terminating investigations on that issue. But even if that were otherwise, the circumstance that FN raises bold claims relating to issues of methodology calls for critical opposition. In the second part of the present monograph, viz. in the segment with the title 'Retrospection', it has been attempted to demonstrate that notwithstanding the high implausibility of central contentions advanced in FN the article could be exploited as a suitable starting point for deeper explorations. One is entitled to presume that the identification of problematic aspects of previous discussions concerning the SP is apt to yield profits for structuring future debates concerning other topics too. If it has been envisaged that FN should mark the endpoint of previous discussions it would have been most appropriate to subject it to a careful review in order to achieve optimal improvements before publication. There can be no doubt that in this manner FN could have benefitted considerably. Even without being familiar with the specific topic of the SP a critical reviewer might, for example, have recognized the dubiousness of the dogmatic assumption that the SP *must* have been originated in the milieu of the Cārvāka or Lokāyata and pointed out that in this manner possibilities are passed off as facts. It could equally have been detected that observations to the effect that certain terms can be used to denote groups, collections, types or genera provide inconclusive evidence for the thesis that they must always be employed in this manner, since it is a pervasive phenomenon in natural languages that expressions denoting individuals or particulars can also

denote groups, types or genera, and vice versa. Accordingly, with respect to specific tokens of linguistic types of this kind one must consider the plausibility of the resulting sense of the complex linguistic units containing them for making decisions concerning the actual import.¹³⁸ Far more significant is however the circumstance that FN is apt to induce serious confusions pertaining to different issues connected with investigations based on textual sources. Within the framework of a critical review it would have been apposite to call attention to the fact that the identification of some content and the assessment of various properties exhibited by a content constitute related but in principle different types of tasks. This is important because FN is not the only article revealing the absence of a clear awareness of the pertinent differences. The first task can be subdivided into a) textual criticism assessing some relevant wording and b) exegesis determining some or the other sort of sense, meaning or import connected with the pertinent wording as two components. Tasks of the second type can be guided by interests of philosophical analysis. But this is not necessarily so: Focus on properties of content could be equally motivated by an interest to find out what kind of thoughts were conceived by people at certain times, what strategies have been or could be used for persuading other people or using them for one's own interests etc.

¹³⁸ This can be easily seen with the help of the following very simple example. Let us suppose that somebody says:

‘The following sentence
Wine is not wine.
contains four words.’

Presuming reasonability on the part of the speaker one will interpret the expression ‘words’ as relating to word-tokens, whereas one would, on the same basis, assume that the expression ought to refer to word-types if ‘three’ had occurred instead of ‘four’.

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