

# ABHĀVAPRAMĀṆA AND ERROR IN KUMĀRILA'S COMMENTATORS

Elisa FRESCHI

## 1. Background

The starting point of the following study is a passage of the ŚV (Nirālambanavāda 117cd-118) on erroneous and negative cognitions. Apart from the interest of the subject itself, this passage constitutes an intriguing opportunity to compare some of the main commentators on the ŚV on a controversial issue. After a short introduction on cognition of absence and on error according to the Bhāṭṭamīmāṃsā, this study will focus on the interpretations offered by Kumāriḷa's classical commentators and by his modern interpreters.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 The role of *abhāvapramāṇa*

The Bhāṭṭa school of Pūrvamīmāṃsā is the only philosophical school in classical India which accepts absence as an instrument of knowledge. Keeping in mind the stock-example "There is no pot on the floor" all other schools understand absence either as the sheer perception of something else (so Nyāya, Prābhākaramīmāṃsā, Śāntarakṣita,<sup>2</sup> etc.), or as an inferential judgement (so the Buddhist

---

<sup>1</sup> I feel indebted to Dr. Yasutaka Muroya and to Prof. Francesco Sferra for their valuable suggestions, to Prof. Kei Kataoka for having explained to me the conclusions of Kataoka [2003] written in Japanese, and to Dr. Alessandro Graheli for having accepted to discuss with me some of the issues of this paper. I am also deeply grateful to Prof. Lambert Schmithausen, Prof. Arindam Chakrabarti and Dr. Birgit Kellner, whose comprehensive works on error and absence allowed me to focus on their relation. Finally, without the encouragement and help of Prof. John Taber, this paper would not have ever been written.

<sup>2</sup> See TS 1669-1676, and in particular TS 1673-5, discussed in Kellner [1996: 158, fn 30]. See also TS 1682, translated and discussed in Taber [2001: 81], and, on Śāntarakṣita's treatment of the seizing of absent entities as a case of *pratyakṣa*, Kellner [1997: 99-102] and Taber [2001: 80-1]. Interestingly, Śāntarakṣita does not follow the position of the Buddhist epistemological school, although "he is known to have been influenced by Dharmakīrti [...] on whose *Vadanyāya* he wrote a long commentary, the *Vipañcītārthā*" (Ruegg [1981: 88]). It is, however, likely, that Śāntarakṣita's remark is rather a paradoxical one, intending to say that, if *abhāva* should be

epistemological school).<sup>3</sup> The reasons for the different stance of Bhāṭṭamīmāṃsā are still debated.

According to Birgit Kellner, though there are some grounds to argue for the assumption of absence as a distinct instrument of knowledge, none of them is really compulsive (Kellner [1997: 70-72]). Kellner closely considers the many dissimilarities among the instances regarded by Mīmāṃsakas to be applications of absence as an instrument of knowledge and argues for the inconsistency of absence as an instrument of knowledge in the Mīmāṃsā before Kumāriḷa: “Why did Kumāriḷa accept the Non-present-being as a separate instrument of knowledge? The apparent answer would be that such acceptance was at his time already widely admitted — Prabhākara, in fact, calls it after all a *prasiddhi*”.<sup>4</sup> She then examines Kumāriḷa’s dealing with this instrument of knowledge and underlines his effort to build out of such dissimilar instances a single theoretical frame which he then applied also to other, similar, problems:

The fact of gathering together such disparate cases under a single epistemological ‘umbrella’ leads to the conclusion that Kumāriḷa clearly updated the range of problems to which one should, in his view, apply the form of *abhāvapramāṇa* he inherited. In this way, he drastically widened the sphere of application of the *abhāvapramāṇa*.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, Taber notices how absence as an instrument of knowledge fits into the general picture of Kumāriḷa’s philosophy, insofar as it constitutes a further instance of trusting cognitions as they appear: “[T]he well-known doctrine of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*) [...] is conducive to accepting the reality of the things we cognize; for to say that a cognition is true is to say that its object is real. [...] Thus it seems natural for Kumāriḷa to want to hold that the

---

thought as a separate category, then it should be perceptible. I hope to be able to go into further details about Śāntarakṣita’s position in the future.

<sup>3</sup> Dharmakīrti explains cognitions such as “there is no pot on the floor” as inferred through the logical reason that he calls *anupalabdhi* (non-perception).

<sup>4</sup> “Die offensichtliche Antwort auf die Frage, weshalb Kumāriḷa überhaupt ein eigenes Erkenntnismittel Nichtvorhandensein annimmt, wäre, dass diese Annahme zu seiner Zeit in der Mīmāṃsā schon weit verbreitet war — Prabhākara nennt sie ja immerhin eine *prasiddhi*”. Such is the beginning of the chapter *Wozu überhaupt ein eigenes abhāvapramāṇa?* in Kellner [1997: 78].

<sup>5</sup> “Die Zusammenfassung solch disparater Fälle unter einem einheitlichen erkenntnistheoretischen ‘Dach’ deutet darauf hin, dass Kumāriḷa die tradierte Form auf offensichtlich aktualisierte Problembereiche anwendete und damit den Anwendungsbereich des *abhāvapramāṇa* entscheidend erweiterte.” (Kellner [1997: 80])

cognition that something is not must apprehend a real entity” (Taber [2001: 76-77]). Kumārila, maintains Taber, admits absence as an instrument of knowledge within his epistemology chiefly because it cannot be reduced to either inference or direct perception (Taber [2001: 76, fn 13]). At this point it is worth remembering that Bhāṭṭa-mīmāṃsā, like Nyāya, acknowledges a category called “absence”, and that this can be grasped only by absence as an instrument of knowledge according to Kumārila’s school (whereas in Nyāya it is grasped by perception). Absence is not an ontologically distinct *entity*, as this would be paradoxical, it is instead a “category” like, for instance, quality or inherence, that is, a modality of reality. Hence, absence as an instrument of knowledge has no ontologically distinct object although it is the only instrument of knowledge which can grasp objects according to their absent aspect, that is, according to the aspect of what they are not. Perception or inference can know a bare floor, but only absence can know it according to the absent aspect of its non-being a pot.

### 1.2 A few words on the Bhāṭṭa analysis of perceptual error

Perceptual error has been often used in classical Indian philosophy as an argument against realism. Since in the case of perceptual error, it is argued, cognitions are found to have no external object supporting them, why should one assume the existence of an external world according to the way we seem to perceive it? So, Kumārila’s analysis of error primarily attempts to refute the possibility of a support-less cognition. In the words of one of Kumārila’s main commentators, Pārthasārathi Miśra:

In every case [of perceptual error] the connection appears in fact to be non-existing, but the connected elements do exist.<sup>6</sup>

Let us consider one of the standard examples of perceptual error, the mother-of-pearl mistaken as silver. Though they are falsely connected, both connected elements are real. Mother-of-pearl is real, although it is perceived just vaguely as something bright and lustrous. Silver is also real, although not directly perceived in this case. Another commentator on the ŚV, Sucarita Miśra, deals with the case of water

---

<sup>6</sup> *sarvatra saṃsargamātram asad evāvabhāsate. saṃsargiṇas tu santa eva (Śāstradīpikā ad 1.1.5, Pūrvavijñānavādakhaṇḍanam p. 58).*

appearing in a mirage as follows:

But that [water] does exist elsewhere. In fact, the real existence of water, which is grasped in the external world, is not invalidated, even by means of the succeeding invalidating cognition [in the form “this is not water (but a mirage)”]. In fact the [succeeding] opinion is not “that water does not exist [at all]”, but “*this* is not water”. What does [this amount to] say? “*Here* there is no water”. Therefore, only the connection *here*, that is, of a certain place, with water, is negated, [and] not water [itself].<sup>7</sup>

Thus, the content of erroneous cognition is the non-existing relation of two existing items, while that of cognition of absence is the non-existing aspect of an existing item. Apart from this parallel, in the Bhāṭṭa epistemology there is no direct link between them. In answering those Buddhist objections that use both instances as evidences of the unreliability of direct realism, however, Kumāriḷa has dealt with arguments relating to erroneous cognitions and arguments relating to absence-cognitions close to each other in the same section of the ŚV. His commentators have further speculated on this topic, but as far as I know no one of them has clearly defined each other’s boundaries. This could depend on their awareness of the two cases as altogether heterogeneous (and, thus, not in want of any further distinction). In fact, no classical commentary seems to imply that error consists in a misapplication of absence as an instrument of knowledge. On modern scholars’ opinions diverging from this view, see § 5.

## 2. The root text: Kumāriḷa’s ŚV Nirāḷambanavāda 117cd-118

In this section I will try to translate Kumāriḷa’s text as neutrally as possible, so that just the questions it raises can be noticed. Their possible solutions will be examined in the next paragraphs, dealing with Kumāriḷa’s commentators. Kumāriḷa’s relevant statement reads as follows:

*tasmād yad anyathā santam anyathā pratipadyate ||  
tan nirāḷambanaṃ jñānam abhāvāḷambanaṃ ca tat |  
bhāvāntaram abhāvo ’nyo na kaścīd anirūpaṇāt ||*

<sup>7</sup> *asti ca tad deśāntare. na hi bādakenāpi bahir vidītas toyasadbhāvo bādhyate. na hi tat toyam nāstīti bhavati matih. kin tu idaṃ na toyam iti. kim uktaṃ bhavati. iha toyam nāstīti. tad iha kvacīd eva toyasaṃyogo vāryate na toyam (Kāśikā ad ŚV Nirāḷambanavāda 116).*

(ŚV Nirāmbanavāda 117cd-118).

A preliminary translation will now be given, only for the sake of reference:

Therefore, a cognition that knows something to be other than what it is, is supportless, and that has an *abhāva*-support.

Absence is just another being, nothing else, because it is not discerned.

The textual problems I will deal with in the next pages are the following ones:

(i) *The preceding context*

The initial “therefore” should sum up the whole preceding discussion on illusory cognitions, etc.

(ii) *The odd mention of nirāmbanam*

The oddity of Kumārila’s mention of “supportless” (*nirāmbanam*), which should instead be altogether denied by him.

(iii) *Do the two tads share the same referent?*

Do *tad* ... *tad* in 118a and 118b refer to the same cognition that is described in 117cd as cognising something to be other than what it is?

(iv) *Is the ca copulative?*

Connected with the above is the question about the meaning of *ca* in 118b; is it copulative or adversative<sup>8</sup>?

(v) *The meaning of abhāva in 118b*

Does it mean “absence” or “non-existing”?

(vi) *anirūpaṇāt*

The final *anirūpaṇāt* could have more pregnant a meaning than expected.

### 3. Uṃveka Bhāṭṭa’s commentary

Uṃveka is believed by some scholars to be a direct disciple of

<sup>8</sup> I thank Prof. Daniele Maggi for having pointed out this problem. Examples of *ca* as an adversative are commonly found in śāstric Sanskrit, as exemplified by the frequent alternation of *ca* and *tu* in manuscripts. As for the ŚV, let me just mention ŚV Codanāsūtra 20. In ŚV Codanāsūtra 19ab an objector states that linguistic expressions are understood only if their relationship with a meaning has been previously ascertained. Replies the *siddhāntin* that this applies to words and not to sentences (19cd), “But a sentence does not express [a meaning], but the word-meanings are the cause of the meaning of the sentence independently of the taking into account the relationship, [as] will be established” (*vākyasyāvācakatvaṃ ca padārthānām ca hetutā | sambandheṣānapekṣāṇām vākyārthe sthāpayiṣyate || 20 ||*).

Kumārila. He must have lived in the 8th century, before Kamalaśīla, who happens to mention him.<sup>9</sup> His is the oldest extant commentary on the ŚV. Nevertheless, this does not mean that it is necessarily the most reliable. As regards, for instance, the crucial topic of the self validity of cognitions, Taber has argued that Uṃveka's understanding should be rejected in favour of Pārthasārathi's one (Taber [1992]). More in general, it can be suggested<sup>10</sup> that Pārthasārathi's very distance from Kumārila allowed him to reconsider his philosophy with the help of some centuries of reflections and hermeneutic efforts. Moreover, Pārthasārathi's commentary is a line-to-line one and this ensures for it a privileged position as an introductory tool into the ŚV. Uṃveka's *ṭkā*, on the other hand, is often characterised by a terse and complex style.

As for our present subject, let me mention an instance of the gap between Kumārila and his first commentator. One of the main problems in appraising the role of absence as an instrument of knowledge in Kumārila's epistemology consists in understanding its range of application. Kumārila possibly borrows from the Vaiśeṣika system the distinction among four different kinds of absence (previous, posterior, reciprocal and absolute absence, see ŚV Abhāvavāda 2-4<sup>11</sup>). Strangely enough, the standard example of absence, the absence of a pot on the floor, does not fit properly in this scheme.<sup>12</sup> In fact, the pot's absence could be interpreted as previous or posterior absence, but what about a floor where a pot has never been placed? This could not either be thought as a case of absolute absence (*atyantābhāva*), since it does not fit with the stock examples of absolute absence, where, e.g., horns are supposed to be necessarily absent from a hare's head. The scheme, hence, seems to have been conceived to deal with cases different to the one which later became the standard one. Unfortunately, no intermediate stage in this development can be traced, since Uṃveka already mentions the pot as if it were the

<sup>9</sup> See Verpoorten [1987: §50]. A detailed discussion of Uṃveka's date can be found in Thrasher [1979: 138-9].

<sup>10</sup> As with Taber, personal communication in Vienna, 2nd November 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Four kinds of absence are listed already in the Vaiśeṣika Sūtra (see *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* 9.1-11), and its commentators state that they refer to this same group, though the Sūtra text does not appear to support this claim. See Kellner [1997: 50]. Due to the many lost texts during the pre-classical period of Indian Philosophy, one could also suggest that the Vaiśeṣika list derives from a Mīmāṃsaka one, or that both were driven from a common source, now lost.

<sup>12</sup> The "pot" problem has been first suggested to me by Birgit Kellner, see Kellner [1996]. On the same theme, see also K.K. Chakrabarti [1978: 138].

obvious example. The following is his commentary on Nirālabanavāda 117cd-118:

How then is it that, although the fact of having an external support is common [to all cognitions], dreaming cognitions, etc.,<sup>13</sup> are said to be supportless and having a support which is not [there] (*asat*°)? In reply to this doubt he said: “Therefore” etc. (ŚV Nirālabanavāda 117cd-118ab). Even you (Buddhist opponent) must admit only this (cognition) in which something appears differently [as it really is] as the “cognition having a support which is not [there]” (*abhāva*), but not the cognition like “here in this place there is no pot”. Since this is admitted to have an existing thing (*bhāva*) as support, as it is supported by the surface of the floor devoid of a present pot. This is what he says with the hemistich beginning with “Another being” (ŚV Nirālabanavāda 118cd).<sup>14</sup>

That is, Uṃveka interprets 117cd-118ab as answering an implicit question, and reads *kārikās* 117cd-118 as follows (more details below):

Therefore, a cognition that knows something to be other than what it is (,that is, an erroneous or illusory cognition), is supportless, and it has a support which is not [there].

Absence [instead] is another being, nothing else [hence, cognition of absence is not supportless], because it is not discerned [as such, i.e., it is never ascertained independently of what exists].

Let us now look for Uṃveka’s answers to the questions listed above.

(i) *The preceding context*

The initial “therefore” is not explicitly commented upon by Uṃveka, but it fits nicely in his interpretation of 117cd as answering an implicit question. More in general, Uṃveka’s mentioning “dream cognitions, etc.” shows he understands these verses as closely related with the preceding ones.

(ii) *The odd mention of nirālabanam*

<sup>13</sup> In *kārikās* 107-114 Kumārila discusses several cases of apparent supportlessness; fire-brand-circles (caused by the rapid whirling of a fire-brand), imaginary cities (imagined in the sky because of a particular shape of clouds), mirage (originated by the sand heated by the sun), hare’s horn, etc. For more details, see *infra*, §§ 4 and 5(i).

<sup>14</sup> *kathaṃ tarhi samāne ’pi bāhyālabanātve svapnādipratyayānām nirālabanātvaṃ asadālabanātvaṃ cocyata ity āśaṅkyāha — tasmād iti. bhavatāpy etad evābhāvālabanavijñānam abhyupagantavyam, yatrānyathā pratibhāsate, na punaḥ iha pradēse ghaṭo nāsti iti jñānam etasya sannihitagaḥāvaviktabhūpradeśālabanātvena bhāvālabanātvaḥhyupagamād ity āha — bhāvāntaram ity ardhena* (ŚVTT ad ŚV Nirālabanavāda 117cd-118).

Uṃveka does not deny that dreaming cognitions, hallucinations, error, etc., are “supportless”. In doing so, he possibly follows the Vṛttikāra, who also did not reject the objector’s assumption that dreams are supportless, but rather focused on confuting the possible consequence of *all* cognitions being devoid of support.<sup>15</sup> In spite of this similarity, Uṃveka builds his confutation of the Buddhist conclusion that all cognitions have no external object on a different basis. As we will see also in Sucarita Miśra’s and Pārthasārathi Miśra’s commentaries, he understands *nirālambanam* as a kind of *paryudāsapratīṣedha* (implicative negation). In this way, he can state in the same sentence that dreaming cognitions are “supportless” and that they do have an external support. In fact, their being “supportless” does not depend on their not having a support, but rather on their having an improper support.<sup>16</sup>

[Question:] The supportless-ness (*nirālambanatva*) we have been talking about in regard of dreaming cognitions, etc., is it caused by the absence of an external support, or by the fact that the image [appearing in those cognitions] is [in reality] an empty one (, that is, it does not correspond to the cognition’s external support), or by [its] being without cause?

[Answer:] The supportlessness of dreaming cognitions, etc., is surely not caused by the absence of an external support, since an external support is present in all cases.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See Schmithausen [1965: 140, §17b].

<sup>16</sup> According to the Indian grammar, the negative particle can have two meanings, *prasajya-pratīṣedha* and *paryudāsapratīṣedha*. The latter is generally found when the negative particle is compounded with a noun (e.g., *abrāhmaṇam ānaya*), whereas the former is generally found when it is used independently with a verbal form (e.g., *anṛtaṃ na vaktavyam*). *Prasajyapratīṣedha* is described as a case where the negative sense predominates (“in any case, one should not say an untruth”), whereas in *paryudāsapratīṣedha* the negation is not absolute, but rather qualifies something else. In fact (as explained by Patañjali and Kaiyaṭa, ad *MBh* 2.2.6) *abrāhmaṇam ānaya* does not mean “one should not bring a brahmin”. Rather, what one intends to say is that one should bring someone *qualified by his not being* a brahmin, namely, a *kṣatriya*, etc., who is similar to a brahmin though not being one. Apart from similarity, other five senses are listed (see Vasu [1988: 258] ad *Ā* 2.2.6, and Abhyankar [1977: 213, sub voce *nañ*]). In our present case, understanding *nirālambanam* as a *paryudāsapratīṣedha* could have the sense of *aprāśastya* (“having an improper support”). This would not contradict the grammatical understanding of *nirālambanam*, since according to the main stream in the Pāṇinian school, prefixes such as *nis-* (in *nir-ālambana*) qualify the meaning of the subsequent noun or verb and do not have by themselves a fixed meaning. *Paryudāsapratīṣedha* and *prasajyapratīṣedha* are commonly used as explanatory devices since Patañjali (see, e.g., *MBh* ad *Ā* 1.1.43 and ad *Ā* 2.2.6). In spite of that, the term *paryudāsapratīṣedha* is not present in any of the ŚV’s commentaries ad loc.

<sup>17</sup> *svapnādipratyayānām nirālambanatvam ucyamānaṃ bāhyārthālambanābhāvād vā prati-bhāsaśūnyatvena vā, kāraṇābhāvād vā? na tāvad bāhyārthālambanābhāvena svapnādipratyayānām nirālambanatvam, sarvatra bāhyālambanatvasya vidyamānatvāt* (ŚVVTI ad *Nirālambanavāda* 107cd. Obviously, Uṃveka rejects also the third option, see his commentary ad



(iii) *Do the two tads share the same referent?*

The two *tads* are read by Uṃveka as referring to the same sort of erroneous or illusory cognitions.

(iv) *Is the ca copulative?*

Consequently, what follows the *ca* is read as elaborating on the preceding *nirālambanam*: “it is supportless and (“that is”) it has a support which is not there”.

(v) *The meaning of abhāva in 118b*

Uṃveka interprets *abhāvālambanam* as “having a support which is not [there]” (*asādālambanatva*), as highlighted in his introductory remark, where he substitutes *abhāvālambana* with *asadālambana*. For this interpretation, he relies on his interpretation of ŚV Nirālambanavāda 108ab:

Although the fact of having an external support is common [to all cognitions], dreaming cognitions, etc., are not pieces of knowledge, since there is a succeeding invalidating cognition. Hence says [Kumārila]: “[In every case there is an external support], which [, however, exists] in another place or time”.<sup>18</sup>

So, 117cd-118ab refer in Uṃveka’s interpretation only to erroneous or illusory cognitions (and not to cognitions of absence), as the external object grasped (e.g., silver), though existent somewhere else, is not present at the time such cognitions arise:

Since that, by which [the erroneous cognition] is supported, is not there (*abhāva*), this (erroneous cognition) is not a piece of knowledge.<sup>19</sup>

(vi) *anirūpaṇāt*

*anirūpaṇāt* is not commented upon by Uṃveka. My rendering of it in the above translation of Nirālambanavāda 117cd-118 according to Uṃveka’s interpretation relies on my general understanding of the verse and of Uṃveka’s commentary thereon.

The deflationary interpretation of *abhāva* in 118b as just meaning ‘non present’, and not defining the specific aspect of a knowledge

109cd. The exact meaning of *pratibhāsa* according to Uṃveka is still to be investigated.

18 *samāne 'pi bāhyālambanatve bādhakapratyayāt svapnādipratyayānām aprāmānyam ity āha — deśakālānyathāmakam iti.*

19 *yad anenālambitam tadabhāve nedaṃ pramānam (ŚVVT ad Nirālambanavāda 108).*

content that can only be known through absence as an instrument of knowledge, makes the further step of *kārikā* 118cd less natural. If indeed the *abhāva* mentioned in 118b has nothing to do with absence as a category, then why is absence mentioned in the succeeding hemistich? Uṃveka must in fact add an adversative particle to make sense of it.

#### 4. *Sucarita Miśra's commentary*

Sucarita Miśra's time is still unsettled, although he is generally held to belong to the 12th century.<sup>20</sup> However, a terminus ante quem is given by Ratnakīrti, who happens to mention him, and this seems to support an earlier date (something like 900-950).<sup>21</sup> His commentary resembles in many respects Pārthasārathi's one, but, their relative chronology remains an open question. As far as the present issue, at least, Sucarita's *Kāśikā* is shorter but more philosophically engaged than Pārthasārathi's *Nyāyaratnākara*. Unfortunately, Sucarita does not quote fully the verses he is commenting upon. So, one cannot be totally sure about the text he is reading.

The verses 117cd-118 appear in a section of the *ŚV* dedicated to the refutation of the Buddhist assumption that, since there is no external referent, all cognitions are in reality supportless. Kumārila<sup>22</sup> rejects the Buddhist syllogism "all cognitions are devoid of support, because they are cognitions, like dreaming cognitions",<sup>23</sup> in various ways. Beginning from *ŚV* Nirālambanavāda 107cd he shows how the syllogism's illustration (*dr̥ṣṭānta*), cannot demonstrate the supportlessness of cognitions, insofar as even dreams, etc., are not devoid of support. In Sucarita's words:

Since there is no absolute (*sarvathā*) absence of support (*nirālambanatva*), even of dreaming cognitions, etc., the example does not include what it

<sup>20</sup> See Verpoorten [1987: 38].

<sup>21</sup> On Sucarita Miśra's time, see Kataoka [2003: 18 and fn 64]. Ratnakīrti was active "between 1000 to 1050" (Kajiyama [1998: 5]).

<sup>22</sup> In what follows, with "Kumārila" I will just refer to Kumārila as interpreted by Sucarita. Hence, expressions like "maintains Kumārila" should be understood as "Sucarita thinks that Kumārila maintains", etc.

<sup>23</sup> See *Kāśikā* ad *ŚV* Nirālambanavāda 11: *api ca svapnāvagatā apy arthāḥ kecic chokaharṣādīvyavahārahetavo dr̥ṣyante, atas te 'pi sāmṛtā eva. tadvac ca bāhyārthābhyupagame svapnādibhogatulya eva śubhāśubhakarmaphalopabhogo bhavet. atas tannivṛttyartham api paramārthasatyē bāhye prayasyate ity āha — svapnādīti.*

ought to demonstrate. [...] In regard to whatever cognition, there exists indeed a support, in another place or [time]. The fact of having a non-[adequate]-support (*anālambanatva*) is just this, that one grasps in a different place [or time] what one has seen in a certain place or time. It is not the absolute absence of what one seizes.<sup>24</sup>

In Sucarita's interpretation, Kumārila first (vv. 107cd-108ab) shows how dreams, that is, purely mental cognitions, are not supportless. Then (vv. 109cd-112a), he turns to erroneous cognitions depending on the external (*bāhya*) sense faculties, and shows how even the latter are not devoid of support. Among them, Kumārila mentions the case of the cognition of a hare's horn (vv. 111cd-112a). In this passage, this looks like an instance of erroneous cognition, but the same example is employed by Kumārila in ŚV Abhāvavāda 4 in order to illustrate a sort of absence (namely, *atyantābhāva*, absolute absence). Indeed, Sucarita, like Pārthasārathi, employs it as the bridge between the two topics of erroneous cognitions and cognitions of something absent. In fact, although the illusory cognition of a hare's horn may have as support the hare and a horn seen elsewhere, in Sucarita's commentary a hypothetical objector states that the very cognition "there is no hare's horn" is supportless. In reply to that, Sucarita explains (ad v. 112bd) that we do not seize the absence of the hare's horn independently of any existing support.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, concludes Sucarita, in every cognition emptiness always refers to something, so that the cognition has as support that of which there is emptiness.<sup>26</sup> In dealing with this topic, his commentary makes it clear (ad vv. 112b-114ab) that those (see infra, §5) referred by Kumārila after v.112a are all instances of absence-cognitions. As examples, he mentions typical instances of absolute absence (*atyantābhāva*), like the world being empty, that is, devoid, of the son of a barren woman. Thereafter (ad vv. 114cd-116), he deals with the central issue of ŚV Nirālambanavāda 107-118, that is, whether a

24 *svapnādijñānānām api sarvathā nirālambanatvābhāvāt sādhyahīno dr̥ṣṭāntaḥ. [...] asti hi sarvajñāneṣv eva deśāntarādīṣṭam ālambanam. yad eva hi kvacid deśe kāle vā dr̥ṣṭam tad eva deśāntarādau praṭīyata ity etad evānālambanatvam. na tu sarvathā grāhyābhāva iti (Kāśikā ad ŚV Nirālambanavāda 107cd-108).* For my translation of *anālambana* as distinct from *nirālambana*, see infra, §4(ii).

25 *na vyaṃ śaśaviṣānaṃ nāstīty ukte svatantram abhāvam avagacchāmaḥ. ato 'vaśyam ātmālambanam evedaṃ nāstīti jñānaṃ vaktavyam (Kāśikā ad ŚV Nirālambanavāda 112bd).*

26 *na svatantraṃ śūnyajñānam utpadyate kiñcid dhi kenacit śūnyam avastyate (Kāśikā ad ŚV Nirālambanavāda 112bd).*

non-present object can give rise to a cognition. This is, indeed, the main feature common to both absence-cognitions and erroneous cognitions. Sucarita explains that a non-present object cannot have other kinds of causal efficacy (water in a mirage, for instance, cannot calm thirst), but it can arouse cognitions. In fact, explains Sucarita, a non-present rain, that is, a future or past one, can be inferred through the heaviness of the clouds or through the wet ground. Hence, it can be instrumental in the arising of a cognition.<sup>27</sup> While discussing this issue, he carefully avoids the ambiguity of the term *abhāva* and speaks instead of non-present (*avartamāna*) items. Indeed, the riddle of ŚV Nirālambanavāda 114cd lies in the apparent contradiction of stating that an absent/non-existing object can give rise to a cognition of its absence/non-existence. Sucarita's standpoint reduces the issue to the capacity of an existing, though non-present, object to arouse a cognition. In this way, a remembered piece of silver can stimulate the erroneous cognition of silver (when before one's eyes there is mother-of-pearl), and the absent pot one expected to see on the floor, can give rise to the cognition of its absence. On the other hand, maintains Sucarita, an absolutely (*ekāntam*) non-existing item does not produce any cognition. What exactly he means by "absolutely non-existing", as different to the *atyāntābhāva* of a hare's horn, etc., which do raise cognitions, remains open to further enquiry.<sup>28</sup> For sure, Sucarita tries to meet the Mīmāṃsaka need for accommodating among what is able to raise cognitions "entities" such as the Vedic prescriptions, and, consequently, has to understand "existent" (*sat*) in a broader sense.<sup>29</sup>

As for the passage 117cd-118, the following is Sucarita's commentary:

[Objection:] Do you then maintain that there is nothing having no support (*anālambana*)?

[Reply:] If so, there would not be any distinction between truth and falsity. Thus, he (Kumārila) says "Therefore, that cognition [which grasps

27 *avartamānaḥ hy arthakriyāntareṣv asamarthaḥ dṛṣṭaḥ, jñānaḥ tu janayaty eva. bhūta-bhaviṣyantyor api vṛṣṭyor anumānodaye kāraṇābhāvāt* (Kāśikā ad ŚV Nirālambanavāda 115cd).

28 Perhaps, a hare's horn or the son of a barren woman are not "absolutely non existing" because they are just the non existing combination of two existing items. An "absolutely non existing" item, then, would be something like the "flostrophobous goose" mentioned by Chakrabarti [1997: 230].

29 On the different acceptations of "existent" according to Mīmāṃsaka, see Halbfass [1986-92: 34-35].

something in a way different to how it actually is, is without an [adequate support]”. We call a cognition perceiving what is indeed an external [object] in a way different to how it [actually] is, ‘having no [adequate support]’ (*anālabhana*). What is grasped is not non-existing [instead such a cognition grasps something existing, but in a false way], so this [cognition] is said to be false.

[Objection:] Then, what is the support of a cognition having absence as support? Not existence, as this would be contradictory. Not absence, because this (absence) does not appear independently, i.e., as distinct from existence. Therefore, it ends up necessarily (*balād*) by having no support (*anālabhana*).

[Reply:] Hence, he (Kumārila) says “[and that cognition] has absence [as support]”. [Then] he states the reason for that: “[Absence is another] being [, nothing else]”. It is true that an independent absence is not ascertained, for how could this (absence), which is a characteristic of a being, be independently extracted from [it] (*apanī-*)? Hence, because of the very reason mentioned by you (objector), that is, “because it is not” independently “ascertained” (*anirūpaṇāt*), the cognition that arises in the case of, e.g., a cow — which is existing according to its true nature (*ātman*) — through the nature of another absent [thing],<sup>30</sup> that [cognition] is said to have absence as support. This has been stated also before (in 118ab) and is now (in 118cd) ascertained. This is the difference.<sup>31</sup>

As for the questions we asked above,

(i) *The preceding context*

The initial “therefore” concludes the preceding discussion denying the existence of cognitions with no external support, and introduces the question in this vein: ‘therefore, since all cognitions are proved to have an external support, ...’.

(ii) *The odd mention of nirālabhanam*

In his commentary ad vv. 107cd-117ab, Sucarita states that all

<sup>30</sup> Sucarita refers here to the standard example of reciprocal absence, that is, the reciprocal absence of a horse in a cow and vice versa.

<sup>31</sup> *kim idāntm anālabhanam nāma, na kiñcit tatrābhavatām, yady evam apahnutāḥ satyamīthyātvavibhāgaḥ. ata āha — tasmād iti jñānamantena. bhāyam evānyathāsantam anyathāpratīpadyamānam anālabhanam jñānam ācaḥṣmahe. nāsad grāhyam. tad evaṃ mithyocyate iti. abhāvālabhanasya tarhi jñānasya kim ālabhanam, na tāvad bhāvaḥ, virodhāt. nābhāvaḥ, tasya bhāvād viviktasya svatantrasyānirbhāsāt\*. ato balād anālabhanam evāpatitam ata āha — abhāveti || 117 || atra kāraṇam āha — bhāveti. satyam na svatanthro 'bhāvo 'vastyate, bhāvadharmo hy asau katham svatanthro 'pantiyeta. atas tvaduktād eva svatantrānirūpaṇāt kāraṇāt sadātmanāvasthite gavāḍau vastvantarābhāvātmanā yaj jñānam utpadyate tad abhāvālabhanam ucyata iti, idaṃ ca prāg apy uktam adhunopapādītam iti vivekaḥ. \*I am reading viviktasya svatantrasyānirbhāsāt instead of viviktasyāsvatantrasyānirbhāsāt found in the edition. See a few lines below satyam na svatanthro 'bhāvo 'vastyate and svatantrānirūpaṇāt.*

cognitions have an external support, though some of them have a non-present one. Hence, as he explicitly states while commenting ad 117cd-118, the *nirāmbanatva* he admits does not contradict *bāhyāmbanatva*. But how is this possible? Sucarita systematically glosses *nirāmbana* with *anāmbana*.<sup>32</sup> This might be understood as a *paryudāsapraṭiṣedha*<sup>33</sup>, that is, “having a non-support”, “having a non-[adequate] support”, namely, a support which does not appear in the cognition according to its own form, since such *anāmbana* cognitions are not supported by the same object appearing in the cognition. They do have an external support, since they do not grasp an *asat*, but they grasp it otherwise, e.g., they grasp mother-of-pearl just as something bright and mistake it for silver. A false cognition is in this way to be distinguished from a true one. Thereafter, Sucarita considers whether the same holds true for cognitions of absence. At first sight, the latter ones could be defined *nirāmbana*, since they are caused by, say, the bare floor, although what appears in the cognition is instead the absence of the pot. The bare floor cannot, in fact, appear in the absence-cognition, since otherwise this would not differ from perception. It is for this reason, according to Sucarita, that Kumārila has stated in v. 118b that “[cognition of absence] has instead absence as support”. The reason is added, in Sucarita’s interpretation, in the next 118cd. The absence of something is indeed an attribute of another existing item, and hence a cognition of absence is supported by, say, the bare floor, which is grasped by it according to its absent aspect, i.e., the pot. Better, in Sucarita’s words, the cognition of absence of a horse in a cow is supported by the cow, which is grasped through its absent aspect, the horse. In fact, Sucarita (unlike Uṃveka) does not introduce the pot as the standard example of absence. This may suggest that his interpretative school adhered more closely to the ŚV classification of *abhāva* than Uṃveka’s one.

(iii) *Do the two tads share the same referent?*

The reference of *tad ... tad* in 118a and 118b in Sucarita’s interpretation is quite complicated. He possibly reads Kumārila as follows: *tasmād yad anyathāsantam anyathā pratipadyate, tan nirāmbanaṃ jñānam. [abhāvajñānam] ca abhāvāmbanam*. Like Pārthasārathi, also Sucarita justifies the shift of subject in v. 118b as an answer, but

<sup>32</sup> Although, as hinted at above, it is not completely sure that Sucarita read the same ŚV text we have.

<sup>33</sup> On the concept of *paryudāsapraṭiṣedha*, see fn 16.

the objection present in Sucarita's text is sharper.

(iv) *Is the ca copulative?*

*ca* is slightly adversative. In fact, it coordinates two different cases, although absence cognitions are implicitly included also in the initial *tasmād*.

(v) *The meaning of abhāva in 118b*

As for the meaning of *abhāva* in 118b, Sucarita links it surely to cognitions of absence, as it is proved by his mentioning the example of the reciprocal absence of a horse in a cow.

(vi) *anirūpaṇāt*

As we shall see also in Pārthasārathi's commentary, Sucarita is convinced that absence cannot be ascertained independently of what exists (in his commentary ad v. 112b he writes: "Although absence is not grasped independently, the existing support is, instead, grasped".<sup>34</sup> Accordingly, Sucarita glosses the *anirūpaṇāt* as *svatantrānirūpaṇāt*, "because it cannot be discerned independently [of something existing]".

What made Sucarita propose his interpretation? Splitting v. 118ab, is surely not the easier way to interpret it, but Sucarita may have felt the split as not too broad because of the preceding discussions paralleling absence cognitions and erroneous ones.<sup>35</sup>

##### 5. Pārthasārathi Miśra's commentary

Pārthasārathi Miśra lived some generations after Uṃveka, between the 10th and the 13th century.<sup>36</sup> His commentary has become the most used one among both middle-age and modern scholars, because of its clarity and because it closely explains Kumāriḷa's text. Pārthasārathi comments as follows ŚV 117cd-118 (Kumāriḷa's *kārikās* are printed in bold):

Then, would not there be any supportless cognition (*nirālambanaṃ jñānaṃ*) at all? If so, then [this conclusion] is opposed to common belief (*loka*). Therefore he (Kumāriḷa) said in the following three hemistichs:

<sup>34</sup> *yady api svatanthro 'bhāvo na praṭīyate, bhāvāśrayas tu praṭīyate* (*Kāśikā* ad ŚV Nirālambanavāda 112b).

<sup>35</sup> See also, *infra*, end of §5 for my comments on Pārthasārathi's grounds for splitting v. 118ab.

<sup>36</sup> For bibliographical references on Pārthasārathi's time, see Verpoorten [1987: 41].

**Therefore that which seizes a certain [object] in another way [different to the real one] || 117 || that is a supportless cognition.** Since in this (explained above) way there is in every case an external [support], therefore only the cognition that grasps a certain object, e.g., mother-of-pearl, in a different way, e.g., as silver, is a supportless cognition, not the one which has its own [nature] (be it its existing aspect or its non existing one)<sup>37</sup> as its support.

[Objection:] Then, the cognition of absence (*abhāvajñāna*), like “here there is no pot”, “this is not silver” and so on, what support has it? Indeed, [a support] called “absence” does not exist!

[Reply:] Therefore he (Kumārila) said: **and that [cognition of absence] has absence as its support !**

The [cognition] which “seizes a certain [object] in another way [different to the real one], that is a supportless cognition”, [and] that alone [out of the two cognition of absence and erroneous cognition] has existence as its support (that is, the existence of something else). It has been said: “Every object, indeed, is both existing and not-existing in nature (*sad-asad-ātmaka*)”.<sup>38</sup> Among those [erroneous cognitions and cognitions of absence], the cognition, e.g., of mother-of-pearl as silver, which seizes an existent thing (*bhāva*) called mother-of-pearl — whose real form [should be grasped] as a mother-of-pearl form — through the real silver form of another existent thing, namely silver, is erroneous. On the other hand, the absence-cognition, “this is not silver”, which seizes a thing really existing insofar as [its] mother-of-pearl form through the non-existing form of silver itself, [that cognition] has absence as its support, and is not erroneous. Therefore, both erroneous cognition and cognition of absence seize a certain object in another way. Among them, error seizes something through the existing aspect of something else; cognition of absence, instead, seizes something through the absent aspect of something else<sup>39</sup>. This alone is the difference.

[Objection:] But cognition of absence has non-being only as its support and not another being.

[Reply:] Therefore he said: **Absence is another being, nothing else, because it cannot be perceived [independently from another being] || 118 ||**

The meaning [of the verse] is: That aspect of an existing [object], like

<sup>37</sup> See below *yad asadrūpaṃ tenātmanā grhṇāt*, and the corresponding passage of Sucarita Miśra ad v. 118cd.

<sup>38</sup> Paraphrase of Kumārila, ŚV Abhāvavāda 12b. See also Pārthasārathi’s commentary thereon.

<sup>39</sup> The author is here referring to the sort of absence-cognition called *anyonyābhāva*, reciprocal absence. Silver, e.g., does not exist in mother-of-pearl (and vice versa). Therefore, when one looks at a piece of mother-of-pearl and says ‘it is not silver’, she is seizing something existing (mother-of-pearl) through the absent aspect of something else (silver). In an erroneous cognition, instead, one seizes something (mother-of-pearl) through the existing-aspect of something else (silver) and, therefore, mistakes mother-of-pearl for silver.



silver, called absence is not independent, because it cannot be perceived [independently]. Rather, it is another being, i.e. it is a property of that.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, also absence-cognition has another being, like mother-of-pearl, as its external support. Thus, it has not its own aspect (i.e. absence) as support. As for “and that [cognition of absence] has absence as its support”, in this case with the word “that” this alone is reflected upon: a cognition, even if it has absence as support, that very cognition has verily an existing external support.

[Objection:] But how can something which appears as an absence have an existing support?

[Reply:] Therefore it has been said — “[Absence is] another being [...]”.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> One cannot perceive absence as such, therefore it is only something existent, e.g., mother-of-pearl, which is endowed with both a being and a non-being character (the being mother-of-pearl aspect and the non-being silver aspect mentioned above).

<sup>41</sup> *kim idāntiṃ nirālabanam jñānam nāsty eva, tathā cel lokaviruddhaḥ syāt. ata āha pādtrayaṇa — tasmād yad anyathā santam anyathā pratipadyate || 117 || tan nirālabanam jñānam, yasmād evaṃ sarvatra bāhyam asti, tasmād yad eva vijñānam, anyathā śuktikādirūpeṇa santam artham anyathā rajatādirūpeṇa grhṇati, tad eva nirālabanam jñānam, na tu yad ātmālabanam iti. yat tarhi iha ghaṭo nāsti, idaṃ rajatam na bhavati ityādikam abhāvajñānam, tasya kim ālabanam, na hy abhāvākhyam astīty ata āha — abhāvālabanam ca tat | yad evānyathāsantam anyathā pratipadyate tan nirālabanam, tad eva bhāvāvalambanam\*. tad uktaṃ bhavati — sarvaṃ hi vastu sadasadātmakam. tatra śuktikārajatādirajāntam śuktikakhyam bhāvam śuktikārūpeṇa sadrūpaṃ bhāvāntarasya rajatasya yat sadrūpaṃ rajatarūpaṃ tena rūpeṇa grhṇad bhrāntam\* bhavati. nedaṃ rajatam iti tv abhāvajñānam śuktirūpeṇa santam eva bhāvam rajatasya yad asadrūpaṃ tenāntam grhṇad abhāvāvalambanam abhrāntam bhavati. tena bhrāntijñānam abhāvajñānam cobhayam anyathāsantam artham anyathārūpeṇa pratipadyate. tatra bhrāntir anyasya sadrūpeṇānyat pratipadyate, abhāvajñānam tv anyasyāsadrūpeṇānyat pratipadyata ity eva viśeṣa iti. nanv abhāvamātram evābhāvajñānasyālabanam, na bhāvāntaram ata āha — bhāvāntaram abhāvo 'nyo na kaścid anirūpaṇāt || 118 || rajatāder bhāvasya yad abhāvākhyam rūpaṃ tan na svatantram, anirūpaṇāt, kintu bhāvāntaram eva tat taddharma ity arthaḥ. tenābhāvajñānasyāpi śuktikādirajāntaram bāhyam evālabanam iti na svāmśālabanam iti. yad vā “abhāvālabanam ca tat” ity atra tacchabdenaitad eva parāmrśyate — abhāvālabanam api jñānam tādṛśam eva bāhyabhāvālabanam eveti. nanv abhāvāvalambanam katham bhāvālabanam ity eva viśeṣa iti? ata uktaṃ — bhāvāntaram iti. (NR ad ŚV Nirālabana-vāda, 117-118). \*I have been mainly following the 1993 edition of the NR, which closely follows the 1978 one. However, the other two editions available to me, that is, the 1979 and the 1898 one, diverge here on two important points. The 1898 and the 1979 editions, in fact, read *abhāvālabanam* instead of *bhāvāvalambanam* and *bhrāntam* instead of *abhrāntam*. The reading *bhrāntam* is obviously the correct one, as the context unmistakably demonstrates (I thank Prof. Taber for having suggested me this emendation before knowing about the 1898 and 1979 editions). As for *bhāvāvalambanam/abhāvālabanam*, instead, I believe the reading of the 1978 edition to be the correct one. The 1979 edition is probably mainly based on the 1898 one (whose graphic peculiarities it thoroughly repeats, see, e.g., the “=” in *anyathā = rajatādirūpeṇa* and *anyathā = śuktikādirūpeṇa* in the above text), though in the *prāstavikam* (preface) the editor declares he has consulted several other (non better specified) manuscripts (p. [2]). The 1898 edition, on the other hand, has no preface and it is hence difficult to judge how soundly based it is. The 1978 edition is based on the 1898 one, which has however been improved by the editor through an old (*prācīna*) and a recent (*arvācīna*) manuscript, both held in Varanasi, Sarasvatī Bhavana Library, and through a comparison with related Mīmāṃsā and non Mīmāṃsā works (see ŚV 1978 p. 27). As for the context, the reading *abhāvālabanam* seems to me a banal repetition of the content of the ŚV verse. Moreover, Pārthasārathi intends exactly to demonstrate that the verse *tan nirālabanam jñānam abhāvālabanam ca tat* refers to two different sorts of cognitions. So, the reading *abhāvālabanam* referring to *nirālabana* cognitions collides strongly with the context. Other*

Thus, Pārthasārathi reads Kumāriḷa's text as comparing erroneous cognition and cognition of absence. Those have something in common, since they both seize something according to the aspect of something else. If one considers again the example of the mother-of-pearl mistaken for silver, together with the subsequent cognition that "this is not silver", their difference can be grasped in the following scheme:

Erroneous cognition: Invalid cognition, grasping an (existing) mother-of-pearl, according to its [non-existing] aspect of silver (, which however exists elsewhere).

Cognition of absence: Valid cognition, grasping an (existing) absence of silver, according to its aspect of mother-of-pearl (, which exists in this instance).

But why does one in both cognition of absence and erroneous cognition grasp something according to the aspect of something else? In the case of absence-cognitions it is obvious that, if one were not to look for, say, a pot, one would not grasp anything but the bare floor. This is what Kumāriḷa calls the *jighrksā* element in absence-cognition, that is, the "desire to grasp", leading the cognitive process (one grasps the absence of the pot, because one desires to grasp the pot and one is stricken by its absence). In the case of erroneous cognitions, this willing aspect is not (as far as I know) explicitly postulated. Nevertheless, one could easily imagine that, at least in case of mother-of-pearl mistaken for silver, one's desire to find some silver has played a leading role in the cognitive process. Apart from this "desire to grasp", Kumāriḷa mentions another factor accounting for cognitions of absence, that is, *udbhūti*, "emergence". This could explain the succeeding cognition, as one realises that "this is not silver". This absence-cognition is indeed not lead by any desire to grasp, but by the compelling emergence of the silver's absence.

So, Pārthasārathi's answers to the above mentioned questions are as follows:

(i) *The preceding context*

The initial "therefore" (*tasmāt*) is glossed thus: "Since (*yasmāt*) in this (explained above) way there is in every case an external [support], therefore (*tasmāt*) only the cognition that grasps a certain object, e.g., mother-of-pearl, in a different way, e.g., as silver, is a supportless cognition". Pārthasārathi refers to the preceding verses; since v. 107cd

---

minor differences between the 1978 and the 1898 editions have not been mentioned here.

Kumārila<sup>42</sup> is trying to deny the opponent's syllogism "every cognition is devoid of any external support, because it is a cognition, like dreaming cognitions". On the contrary, maintains Kumārila, even dreaming cognitions do have an external support. Pārthasārathi explains:

An external [support] — which, after having been really experienced in another place or in another time, is presently remembered in the dream — is understood, due to a fault, as proximate in time and space. Hence, even in this case there is no lack (*abhāva*) of external [support].<sup>43</sup>

And so do all other odd types of cognitive experiences, like hallucinations. More in detail, Kumārila refers to dream (vv. 107cd-109ab), to the seeming fire-circle one perceives when a torch is moved rapidly and circularly (v. 109cd), to the illusory buildings one might see in the sky because of the shape of clouds (v. 110ab), to mirage (v. 110cd-111a), to the illusion of seeing a hare endowed with horns (111cd-112a). The latter example is of much interest, insofar as the hare's horn is the example mentioned in ŚV Abhāvavāda 4 as instance of "absolute absence", *atyantābhāva*. The connection is further underlined by Pārthasārathi's terminology; in his commentary on that verse, Pārthasārathi describes absence cognition in terms of the non-existing form (*asadrūpa*) of the absentee,<sup>44</sup> and the same term is used also in ad vv. 117-118. Next comes v. 112ab, which Pārthasārathi interprets as referring to the negation "there is no hare's horn". Thus, the hare's horn case could be seen as the bridge between erroneous cognitions and cognitions of absence. Indeed, both erroneous cognition and cognition of absence share the same nature of seizing something according to the nature of something else. In this way, "therefore" in 117c can sum up both verses 109cd-112ab and verses 112cd-117ab. The latter are interpreted by Pārthasārathi as instances of cognition of absence. In this way, cognitions of emptiness (in the form "the house is empty of Caitra", i.e., "Caitra is not in the house"), cognitions of something impossible ("there is a hundred

<sup>42</sup> In what follows, with "Kumārila" I will just refer to Kumārila as interpreted by Pārthasārathi. Hence, expressions like "maintains Kumārila" should be understood as "Pārthasārathi thinks that Kumārila maintains", etc. Since Pārthasārathi's interpretation closely resembles Sucarita's one, the following lines almost repeat the corresponding ones in §4.

<sup>43</sup> *bāhyam eva deśāntare kālāntare vānubhūtam eva svapne smaryamāṇam doṣavaśāt sannihitadeśakālavattayāvagamyate, ato 'trāpi na bāhyābhāva iti* (NR ad ŚV Nirāmbanavāda 108ab).

<sup>44</sup> I owe this translation to Arindam Chakrabarti. See, e.g., Chakrabarti [1997].

elephants on top of my finger”), and cognitions of something which could never be experienced (like the Sāṅkhya primordial Nature) are all interpreted as having to do with cognitions of absence. In the latter two cases absence-cognitions makes its entrance as a succeeding invalidating cognition, like “there is not a hundred elephants on top of my finger”, and “there is nothing like primordial Nature”. Such a succeeding step is not explicitly mentioned by Pārthasārathi whilst commenting on vv. 113ab-117ab, nevertheless he hints at it whilst dealing with v. 118b (“it is not silver”), and he mentions it in the hare’s horn case (“there is no hare’s horn”). Elsewhere, Kumārila speaks of absence as the only instrument of knowledge which can seize the content of some unacceptable thesis held by an opponent, like the Buddhist emptiness one. He (or Pārthasārathi following him) could have meant the hint at the Sāṅkhya primordial Nature in the same vein. So, Pārthasārathi’s interpretation of Kumārila’s *kārikās* is:

Therefore, [among] that which seizes a certain [object] in another way  
[different to the real one] || 117 ||  
that is a supportless cognition, and that has absence as support.

The first line can indeed be read as regarding erroneous cognition, but also absence cognitions, as Pārthasārathi explains in his commentary on 118b.

(ii) *The odd mention of nirālambanam*

*Nirālambanam* is admitted only as regards erroneous cognitions, whereas absence cognitions do have an existing support. Pārthasārathi seems to differentiate between cognitions which grasp an object as it is — i.e., according to its existing aspect if they grasp the object as, say, “a piece of mother-of-pearl”, or according to its absent aspect if they grasp the object as, say, “something which is not silver” —, and cognitions which grasp the object in a way different to the way it is. Thus, Pārthasārathi’s admission of *nirālambana* is not meant to favor his Buddhist opponent, as he clearly explains that supportlessness is only stated in regard to false cognitions. The target of such an admission could instead be those Naiyāyikas who upheld that all cognitions have a real support, thus postulating a special contact between the sense faculties and the silver appearing in an erroneous cognition, or between the mind and such silver.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> For a historical analysis of this position, see Schmithausen [1965: 171-176]. An overview of

(iii) *Do the two tads share the same referent?*

The two *tads* in 118ab refer to two different kinds of cognitions. See (i). This constitutes the main disadvantage of this interpretation, since at first sight it postulates a break within hemistichs a and b of v. 118. The mention of absence as an instrument of knowledge is explained by Pārthasārathi as the answer to an implicit question. However, as a matter of fact, both absence and erroneous cognitions can be, according to this commentary, implied by the definition of v. 117cd, and by its initial “therefore”. So, following Pārthasārathi, there is no major split in the argument (although a split in 118ab cannot be denied).

(iv) *Is the ca copulative?*

Consequently, *ca* is read as an adversative coordinating two different cases.

(v) *The meaning of abhāva in 118b*

*Abhāva* is read as referring to absence. Nevertheless, Pārthasārathi deliberately employs the ambiguity of this term in order to disprove the opponent’s thesis. He makes the opponent uphold *a-bhavā-lambanatva*, which in the opponent world-view means “the fact of non-having an existing support” and replies that, indeed *abhāva* exists and can play the role of a support (commentary on v. 119).

(vi) *anirūpaṇāt*

Unfortunately, Pārthasārathi does not comment on *anirūpaṇāt*. The context of his commentary seem to implicate an understanding of it as “since [absence] is not [independently] ascertained”.

Pārthasārathi’s interpretation has the disadvantage of postulating many extra words to be added to Kumārila’s verse (see, e.g., the explanation of *nirālambanam*, and the complex reference of *yad* and *tad*, *tad* in 117c-118b). This point can be rephrased as follows: Is Pārthasārathi interpreting Kumārila or is he offering him the best way-out of a difficult trap? This does not mean that Kumārila has defined by mistake erroneous cognition *nirālambanam*, thus not considering that he was giving his very opponents a powerful weapon against his arguments. Kumārila’s preceding *kārikās* in the *Nirālambana* Chapter rule out such an hypothesis. Nevertheless, Pārthasārathi may have thought that Kumārila’s *nirālambanam* needed a further specification, and the same may have happened as for

---

it can be found also in the chapter on Nyāya in Rao [1998].

the splitting of the verse. Pārthasārathi may have chosen to split the verse in order to eliminate what he thought was a weak point in Kumārila's argumentation.

#### 6. Contemporary scholars on ŚV Nirāmbanavāda 117cd-118

No contemporary study is entirely dedicated to this passage, but several authors have offered a translation of it within their accounts of Kumārila's theory of absence or of error. As, apart from Gaṅgānātha Jhā's translation of the ŚV, they did not translate but the relevant *kārikās*, they did not take into account the possible role of "therefore" as connecting them to the preceding verses.

G. Jhā's translation, to begin with, closely follows Pārthasārathi's commentary in interpreting 117cd-118:

Therefore it is only that (cognition), which comprehends an object otherwise than in the form it exists in, that can be said to be "devoid of substratum"; and that Cognition which has 'negation' for its object is, in fact, one that has a real substratum; because this 'negation' too is not an independent entity by itself; for it is not so comprehended.

On the other hand, in his illuminating study on the theory of error in Indian philosophy, L. Schmithausen offers an original interpretation of this passage:

So, when in an instance of error a thing appears according to the specific aspect of something else, this actually means that a non-existing [item] — that is, an existing [item], which is not concretely identical with the thing actually available — manifests itself. [...] Through the remarks given in this paragraph, our hope is that we are adequately interpreting Kumārila's mind when he says: "Therefore, a cognition which grasps something differently from the way it is, that is objectless, and that is what has a non-existing [item] as its object. [For,] the non existing [item] is the other thing, nothing else, because [another non-existing [item]] cannot be established" (ŚV Nirāmbanavāda 117c-118d).<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> "Wenn also im Irrtum etwas unter dem besonderen Aspekt eines anderen Dinges erscheint, so bedeutet das in der Tat, dass ein Nichtseiendes erscheint, nämlich ein mit dem vorhandenen Ding nicht konkret identisch Seiendes. [...] Wir hoffen, mit den Ausführungen dieses § adäquat interpretiert zu haben, was Kumārila meint, wenn er sagt: "Deshalb ist diejenige Erkenntnis objektlos, die etwas anders erfasst, als es ist, und sie ist es, die ein Nichtseiendes zum Objekt hat. (Denn) das Nichtseiende ist das andere Ding, sonst nichts, da sich (ein anderes Nichtseiendes) nicht feststellen lässt." (ŚV Nirāl. 117c bis 118 d)". (Schmithausen [1965: 204])

That is, Schmithausen would answer as follows to the questions asked above:

(ii) *The odd mention of nirāmbanam*

*Nirāmbanam* is attributed to Kumāṛila and not to the opponent.

(iii) *Do the two tads share the same referent?*

The two pronouns *tad* refer to the same entity, namely “cognition”. This makes this interpretation smoother than Pārthasārathi’s and Sucarita’s ones.

(iv) *Is the ca copulative?*

Schmithausen’s rendering of the *ca* is probably the easiest one, as this coordinates two statement about the same entity (and is hence copulative). Nevertheless, his comment on this passage presupposes a more complex reading of *ca*:

Error consists, hence, in the apprehension of something as different than it actually is, [...] In every instance [of erroneous cognition] the object [of error] consists (at least also) of something which is not present. Error is also distinct from valid cognition insofar as it can be defined “objectless” in the sense that, as regards the particular element [being the object of error], it has no present object. It can *also* be defined as “having a non-being as its object”.<sup>47</sup>

Here, error is said to be possibly defined as “objectless” and *also* as “having a non-being as its object”. Does the above statement mean that Schmithausen interprets *ca* in 117d as meaning rather “also”, that is, a cognition grasping something in a different way is said to be objectless and also having a non-existing [item] as object? Yes, but, the “also” seems to coordinate two different nuances of a plausible definition of erroneous cognition.<sup>48</sup>

(v) *The meaning of abhāva in 118b*

*Abhāva* is understood as the absence of, say, silver in the case of mother-of-pearl. Erroneous cognition is, hence *nirāmbana* because it grasps an object which is not present. Moreover, Schmithausen

<sup>47</sup> Irrtum besteht somit darin, daß etwas anders erfasst wird als es in Wirklichkeit ist, [...]. In allen Fällen ist — zum mindesten auch — etwas Objekt, was nicht gegenwärtig ist. Der Irrtum unterscheidet sich also von einer richtigen Erkenntnis dadurch, daß er als “objektlos” in dem Sinne bezeichnet werden kann, daß er — zum mindesten hinsichtlich des bestimmten Elementes — kein gegenwärtiges Objekt hat. Er kann auch als “ein Nichtseiendes zum Objekt habend” bezeichnet werden [...] (Schmithausen [1965: 203, §76], emphasis mine).

<sup>48</sup> This is, by the way, also my personal understanding of *ca* in the context of this verse of Kumāṛila. See Freschi [forthcoming].

interprets differently *bhāvāntaram* as “the other being” instead of “another being”. Erroneous cognition of silver grasps an object which does not exist, because the absent object is nothing but the other one, that is, the silver which is only present elsewhere.

Explicitly following Schmithausen, Kellner goes a step further in the identification of what is the content of an erroneous cognition. In fact, since an erroneous cognition grasps a non-existing object, she interprets it as an instance of absence-cognition, although invalid:

The erroneous cognition of a mirage is corrected when one determines the heated ground as distinct from water. However, Kumāṛila describes the erroneous cognition itself as the cognition of a non-being, since it has an object that is not available at the present time and in the present place. Obviously, this cannot be a valid cognition, since it does not determine its content as it actually is. If such cognition were valid, then it would determine its object — water — as non-existing (or it would determine the heated ground as distinct from water) and error would not occur. This means that error can be analyzed as the cognition of a non-existing [item], but not as a valid negative cognition. In this way, an invalid negative cognition — whose invalidity is established by a latter, valid and negative cognition — would be responsible of the arousal of error.<sup>49</sup>

In terms of the silver example, what is grasped is the absence of silver. Hence, erroneous cognition of silver is an instance of invalid absence-cognition. Absence-cognition would in this way cover a range of cognitions from “cognition of an absence” (in the form “there is no yogurt in milk”, as described in ŚV Abhāvavāda 2) until “invalid cognition of something which does not exist”.

In a succeeding article, however, Kellner analyses closely ŚV 117cd-118 and proposes the following translation:

Therefore, the cognition which is [as the opponent claims to be] without

---

<sup>49</sup> Die irrtümliche Erkenntnis einer Fata Morgana wird dadurch korrigiert, dass man den erhitzten Boden als von Wasser verschieden bestimmt. Nun beschreibt Kumāṛila aber die irrtümliche Erkenntnis selbst als Erkenntnis eines Nichtseins, weil sie ein Objekt hat, das jetzt und hier nicht da ist. Dabei kann es sich natürlich nicht um eine gültige Erkenntnis handeln, weil sie ja das Erkannte nicht so bestimmt, wie es wirklich ist. Wäre diese Erkenntnis massgeblich, so würde das Erkenntnisobjekt das Wasser als nichtseiend bestimmen (oder den erhitzten Boden als von Wasser verschieden), und der Irrtum käme gar nicht erst zustande. Das heißt, daß die Irrtumssituation zwar als Erkenntnis von Nichtseiendem analysiert werden kann, aber nicht als gültige negative Erkenntnis. Somit wäre eine nichtmassgebliche negative Erkenntnis für den Irrtum verantwortlich, deren Unmassgeblichkeit durch eine nachfolgende massgebliche negative Erkenntnis festgestellt wird (Kellner [1997: 79-80]).



an objective basis cognizes something that exists in one way as existing in another. And this (cognition) has (indeed) an objective basis which is not real (*abhāva*); but this unreal object is simply another real object (*bhāvāntara*), and nothing else, for (any other object) is undifferentiated (*anirūpaṇāt*) (Kellner [1996: 155-6, fn 27]).

Here, Kellner would answer as follows to the questions above-mentioned:

(ii) *The odd mention of nirālambanam*

*Nirālambanam* is attributed to an objector. If I am rightly understanding her, according to Kellner, Kumāriḷa's statement can be rephrased as follows: "You (Buddhist opponent) think that erroneous cognitions are supportless. They have indeed an unreal support, but such an unreal support is nothing but another real object".

(iii) *Do the two tads share the same referent?*

The two pronouns refer to the same cognition.

(iv) *Is the ca copulative?*

Yes, *ca* coordinates two statement about the same cognition.

(v) *The meaning of abhāva in 118b*

*Abhāva* is understood as just meaning "not real". Kellner refers in this regard to similar instances of a non-technical use of *abhāva*, like *ŚV* *Abhāvavāda* 48, and concludes: "In this way, the necessity of pressing *abhāva* into a framework encountered in discussions of cognitive error does not arise and, in turn, need not give rise to any of the confusions mentioned above" (Kellner [1996: 156, fn 27]).

(vi) *anirūpaṇāt*

I am afraid I cannot understand Kellner's rendering of *anirūpaṇāt*. So, the addition of an initial adversative particle ("but") seems to me not justified.

Summing up, I am not fully convinced by Kellner's leaving apart absence as an instrument of knowledge, against Sucarita and Pārthasārathi and notwithstanding the preceding *kārikās*. It is possible, however, that this choice is mainly due to her principal aim, that is, showing that Schmithausen is not justified in stating that absence is a relative concept, since Schmithausen's understanding mainly depends on these verses (see Kellner [1996: 156-157, fn 27]).

In his review article of Kellner [1997], which however does not take into account Kellner [1996], Taber deals with the same verses:

I interpret these difficult lines as follows:

“Therefore, a cognition that knows something to be other than what it is, is ‘without an object’, but that [cognition, in reality] has non-being as its object [i.e. the non-being of silver; so it is not really objectless].

And non-being is just another being [i.e., the non-being of the silver is the being of the mother-of-pearl], nothing else [hence, it is something real], because it is not discerned [as such, i.e., it is never ascertained independently from what exists].”

The idea of 118cd (*bhāvāntaram abhāvaḥ...*) must be understood in light of the doctrine of the unitary nature of being [...] (Taber [2001: 77 fn 20]).

As for the above questions:

(ii) *The odd mention of nirālambanam*

*Nirālambanam* is understood as just a provisional admission, immediately denied by the succeeding *abhāvālambanam*.

(iii) *Do the two tads share the same referent?*

Taber’s rendering of the two *tads* is smooth, as it does not postulate two different referents.

(iv) *Is the ca copulative?*

Taber’s interpretation relies on his reading of *ca* as an adversative.

(v) *The meaning of abhāva in 118b*

*Abhāva* is interpreted as referring to non-existence as the cognition content to be grasped exclusively by absence as an instrument of knowledge.

So, Taber postulates an initial stage in which one cognises through absence as an instrument of knowledge, although one does not become aware of it, that “this is not silver”. This absence of silver is later mistaken as presence of silver. This complex structure aims, in Taber’s view at supporting Kumārila’s realism:

The reality of non-being, in turn, enables him to develop a realist analysis of perceptual error. When I mistake mother-of-pearl for silver I do not cognize something that doesn’t exist in any sense. Rather, I apprehend the absence of silver in regard to mother-of-pearl — which is real insofar as it is identical with the mother-of-pearl — incorrectly, as the being or presence of silver. (Taber [2001: 77])

Does the instance of mother-of-pearl mistaken as silver fit into Kumārila’s own depiction of absence-cognition? The question cannot be easily answered, since the very definition (if it is a definition) of

absence-cognition in ŚV Abhāvavāda 11 is by itself not non-controversial.<sup>50</sup> Surely the cognition of silver in case of mother-of-pearl lacks the essential character of an absence-cognition, that is, the form “it is not”. As already hinted at, on the other hand, John Taber implicitly proposes to split the silver-cognition into two and defines absence-cognition only the first step of this cognitive process, that is, the knowledge that there is no silver in mother-of-pearl. Cognitions are not self manifest according to Mīmāṃsā, and thus this first step cannot be rejected just because one is not aware of it. This first passage, however, is not mentioned in any commentary and I am afraid it somehow contradicts the very *raison d’être* of absence as an instrument of knowledge. If indeed absence is not an ontologically separate entity, then absence as an instrument of knowledge is essentially qualified as an awareness that, say, *x* is absent in *y*.

### 7. Conclusions

Although Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa has been the first commentator on the ŚV, his readings have not been universally accepted. This can be possibly explained by his views on Kumāṛila, which seem often indebted more to his own philosophical understanding than to a close and word-by-word reading of Kumāṛila. On the other hand, Sucarita Miśra and Pārthasārathi Miśra represent an alternative interpretative school. Although the question of their relative chronology cannot be settled by a limited comparison such as the present one, their differences in the passage under question show that Sucarita deals with the same themes treated by Pārthasārathi by displaying a deeper philosophical interest.<sup>51</sup> As for the specific issue at stake, all Sanskrit commentators agree in denying supportlessness in the case of cognitions of absence and in accepting it in the case of erroneous cognitions, hallucinations, etc. The inconsistency of such an acceptance could be solved (as with Kellner [1996]) with the assumption that the commentators provisionally borrow the term *nirālamabana* (“supportless”) from their Buddhist opponents. Nonetheless, I rather think that all commentators propose to interpret *nirālamabana* (“supportless”)

<sup>50</sup> See, again, Kellner [1997].

<sup>51</sup> My personal feeling, as shown also by the pot example, is that Sucarita wrote his commentary before Pārthasārathi’s one. The latter looks indeed like the important work of a thinker who decided to clarify, with a commentary closer to Kumāṛila’s text, some of the issues which had not been neatly explained by Sucarita’s glosses.

as *anālabhana* (“having a non-support”) and *anālabhana* as an instance of implicative negation (“having a non adequate support”). In this way, they show how the opponent’s terminology can be better explained and justified within a Mīmāṃsaka perspective.

Whatever the case, it is difficult to tell who is right in representing Kumārila’s original meaning of 117cd-118, as both Uṃveka and Pārthasārathi/Sucarita have to somehow force the reading of the verse. How this is due mainly to the complexity of the theme is shown by the fact that also contemporary scholars acknowledge that the passage is, to say the least, awkward.

#### REFERENCES

##### A. Texts and Translations

- Ā: *Āṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini, edited and translated by Śrīśa Chandra Vasu, Benares: Sindhu Charan Bose, 1891 (rpt. 1988).
- Kāśikā* of Sucarita Miśra, edited with *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa by K. Sāmbaśiva Śāstrī, Trivandrum: Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, 90, 99, 150, 1926, 1929, 1943.
- MBh*: *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, edited with the commentary *Bhāṣyapradīpa* of Kaiyaṭa Upādhyāya and the Supercommentary *Bhāṣyapradīpoddyota* of Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa by Bhargava Sastri Bhikaji Josi, Delhi: Caukhamba, 1992.
- NR*: *Nyāyaratnākara* of Pārthasārathi Miśra, edited with *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa by Svāmī Dvārikadāsa Śāstrī, Varanasi: Tara Publications, 1978.
- NR*: *Nyāyaratnākara* of Pārthasārathi Miśra, edited with *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa by Ganga Sagar Rai, Varanasi: Ratna Publications, 1993.
- NR*: *Nyāyaratnākara* of Pārthasārathi Miśra, edited with *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (the editor’s name is missing), Benares: Caukhamba, 1898.
- NR*: *Nyāyaratnākara* of Pārthasārathi Miśra, edited with *Śābarabhāṣya* of Śābara Svāmin and *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa by Gajānana Śāstrī Musalgaonkar, Varanasi: Bhāratīya Vidyā Prakāśan, 1979.
- Śāstradīpikā* of Pārthasārathi Miśra, tarkapāda, edited with the commentary *Yuktisnehaprapūrāṇi* and with *Gūḍārthavivarāṇa* by Rāmakṣṇa by Dharmadatta Jhā, Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar press, 1915.
- ŚV*: *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, translated with extracts from the commentaries *Kāśikā* of Sucarita Miśra and *Nyāyaratnākara* of Pārthasārathi Miśra, by G. Jhā, Calcutta: the Asiatic Society, 1900-1908 (rpt. 1983).
- ŚV*: *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, see also *NR*, *ŚVVT*, Sucarita Miśra’s *Kāśikā*.
- ŚVVT*: *Ślokavārttikavyākhyā Tātparyāṭkā* of Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa, edited by S.K. Ramanatha Sastri, revised by K. Kunjunni Raja and R. Thangaswamy, Madras: Madras University Sanskrit Series 13, 1971.
- TS*: *Tattvasaṅgraha* of Śāntarakṣita, edited with the commentary of Kamalaśīla and with an introduction in Sanskrit by Embar Krishnamacharya, Baroda: Central Library, 1926. (rpt. 1984 and 1988).

##### B. Studies

- Abhyankar, Kashinath Vasudev  
1961 *A dictionary of Sanskrit grammar*, Baroda: Oriental Intitute.
- Chakrabarti, Arindam  
1997 *Denying Existence. The Logic, Epistemology and Pragmatics of Negative Existentials and Fictional Discourse*, Dordrecht/Boston/ London: Kluwer (Synthese Library, vol. 261).
- Chakrabarti, Kisor Kumar  
1978 “The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Theory of Negative Entities”, *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 6:

- 129-144.
- Freschi, Elisa and Alessandro Graheli  
 2005 "Bhāṭṭamīmāṃsā and Nyāya on Veda and Tradition", in F. Squarcini (ed.), *Boundaries, dynamics and construction of traditions in South Asia*, Firenze/New Delhi: FUP/Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Freschi, Elisa  
 Forthcoming "Facing the boundaries of epistemology: Kumārila on error and negative cognition", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*.
- Halbfass, Wilhelm  
 1986-92 "Observations on the Relationship between Vedic Exegesis and Philosophical Reflection", *Journal of Oriental Research Madras* LVI-LXII: 31-40.
- Kajiyama Yūichi  
 1999 *The Antaryvāptisamarthana of Ratnākaraśanti*, Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology.
- Kataoka, Kei  
 2003 "Experience and Reflection: Historical Development of the Argument on the Means of Grasping Invariable Concomitance", *Nanto Bukkyo* (or *Journal of the Nanto Society for Buddhist Studies*) 83: 1-32. (In Japanese)
- Kellner, Birgit  
 1996 "There are no pots in the *Ślokavārttika*. Kumārila's definition of the *abhāvapramāṇa* and patterns of negative cognition in Indian Philosophy", *Journal of the Oriental Institute Baroda* XLVI(3-4): 143-167.
- Kellner, Birgit  
 1997 *Nichts bleibt nichts: Die buddhistische Kritik an Kumārilas abhāvapramāṇa: Übersetzung und Interpretation von Śāntarakṣitas Tattvasaṃgraha vv. 1647-1690 mit Kamalaśtikas Pañjikā. Mit einem Anhang zur Geschichte der negativen Erkenntnis in der Indischen Philosophie*, Wien: Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde.
- Rao, Srinivasa  
 1998 *Perceptual Error: The Indian Theories*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Ruegg, David Seyfort  
 1981 *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Schmithausen, Lambert  
 1965 *Maṇḍanamiśra's Vibhramavivekaḥ: Mit einer Studie zur Entwicklung der indischen Irrtumslehre*, Wien: Hermann Böhlau Nachf.
- Taber, John  
 1992 "What did Kumārila Bhaṭṭa mean by *svataḥ prāmāṇya*?", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 112: 204-221.
- Taber, John  
 2001 "Much ado about nothing: Kumārila, Śāntarakṣita, and Dharmakīrti on the cognition of non-being", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121(1): 72-88.
- Thrasher, Allen Wright  
 1979 "The dates of Maṇḍana Mīśra and Śaṃkara", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 23: 117-139.
- Vasu, Ś.C., see Ā.
- Verpoorten, Jean-Marie  
 1987 *Mīmāṃsā Literature*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

University "Sapienza" Roma