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The Significance of Behaviour-Related Criteria for Textual Exegesis—and Their Neglect in Indian Studies

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Abstract Against the background of the fact that speakers not seldom intend to convey imports which deviate from the linguistically expressed meanings of linguistic items, the present article addresses some consequences of this phenomenon which appear to still be neglected in textual studies. It is suggested that understanding behaviour is in some respect a primary objective of exegesis and that due attention must be attributed to the high diversity of behaviour-related criteria by which interpretations of linguistic items are to be evaluated. Although we intimate in addition that individual (meaningful) sentences occurring either in oral conversations or in written documents generally exhibit a multiplicity of contents of diverse types and that the circumstance that sometimes only a content equalling the linguistic significance of a pertinent unit matters for purposes of interpretation is caused by a material coincidence of different varieties of content, the tenets advocated in the paper do not essentially depend on that view. On the other hand, the following assumptions are relevant in the present connection: (a) A number of deviances between imports conveyed by linguistic utterances and literal meanings of expressions occur due to maxims of linguistic behaviour that are quite independent of lexical and syntactic features of individual natural languages. (b) It is by no means an exceptional phenomenon that imports not derivable by grammatical rules of a particular language alone possess primary importance for interpretation and textual exegesis. In view of significant affinities between understanding of sentences and of texts it is argued that the consideration of *diverse* aspects of behaviour possesses relevance for textual exegesis at least in the following respects: (1) By delivering a heuristic device for discerning problems affecting adopted interpretations it encourages searches for alternatives. (2) It provides means for evaluating the degree of acceptability of particular textual exegeses and possibly rejecting them on a more rational basis than mere intuition. (3) It offers possibilities

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for critically assessing the validity of explicit arguments advanced in favour of or in opposition to some interpretation. (4) It furnishes a background for assessing certain disputes about translation. The dimension of linguistic behaviour also attains importance in connection with questions of exegesis which are not concerned with assessments of (propositional) contents intended to be communicated, such as the ascertainment of the function which some argument possesses in a context. For substantiating the thesis that omission of raising relevant questions concerning behaviour is not an isolated phenomenon two examples will be employed: (1) A discussion concerning the exegesis of a crucial passage of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and the *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti*, (2) a critical appraisal of a recent publication dealing with the interpretation of the second chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*-s.

Keywords Philosophy · Textual exegesis · Linguistics

I

It is not uncommon to say that an interpreter understands or tries to understand an utterance or a text. It is however seldom mentioned in this connection that it is by no means obvious what this precisely means and involves. As a matter of fact, understanding an utterance potentially encompasses at least the following components in accordance with the differences of types of entities which constitute possible objects of understanding. Among those the following are most pertinent:

- (a) understanding or trying to understand a linguistic expression occurring in the utterance or text(ual passage)
- (b) ascertaining or trying to ascertain the type of act which the utterance or the production of a text(ual passage) exhibits, e.g. identifying it as a promise, a threat etc.
- (c) understanding or trying to assess the behaviour of making the concerned utterance or of producing the concerned text(ual passage)¹
- (d) understanding or trying to understand the speaker who has made an utterance or the author who has (the authors who have) written a text(ual passage).

Those varieties can comprise sub-varieties. For example, the notion of understanding uttered or written expressions is equivocal due to the distinction between linguistic types and linguistic tokens. As far as understanding of linguistic tokens is concerned there is a variety of understanding which does not require that the object of understanding has been produced by a person or any subject possessing a mind. In present days it might occur that one hears a chain of words coming from a navigator like:

Now take the first exit to the right.

One can not only attribute a linguistic significance to such items but also meaningfully assign a reference to constituent expressions analogous to the manner

¹ In the present connection no need is recognized to divorce understanding of actions from understanding of behaviour so that the former can be treated as a special variety of the latter.

references are assigned to the corresponding tokens of ‘now’ and ‘the first exit to the right’ if sentences of the same type are uttered by a person, such that the references of indexical expressions are determined by contextual features in a similar manner as in normal utterances. This suggests that there is a way of attributing contents to linguistic items that does not essentially rely on the condition that they are produced by a subject to which we ascribe sophisticated attitudes and intentions or a capability to have particular communicative goals or objects ‘in mind’. However, in spite of this it would be unwarranted to rush to the conclusion that assessments of the types specified in (b)–(d) must be always irrelevant for the allocation of a content to linguistic tokens occurring in the spoken or written medium. First it can be hardly denied that the expression ‘understand’ and its correlates in several other languages are employed in a manner according to which persons as well as behaviour of persons are possible objects of understanding. Sentences like

After I heard how poor he was I understood him better.

Till now I cannot understand her behaviour at the party last night.

are by no means semantically anomalous and the supposition that the different varieties of understanding are interrelated in manifold ways is at least not eccentric. Second, the possibility to attribute meaning, content and reference to items produced by machines in a similar way as to items produced by persons is not a proof for the contention that understanding of expressions uttered by persons is in every respect like understanding of expressions produced by non-persons and that the method of assessing a content which linguistic units express is exactly the same in both cases. Third, in view of the fact that the notion of understanding a linguistic expression is not fully determinate it cannot be assumed from the outset that inasmuch as such understanding is targeted on the identification of content there can be at most one type of content which constitutes a possible object of that understanding. If it is however admitted at least in theory that identical linguistic items can possess several contents it cannot be categorically ruled out that they differ with respect to the way in which they depend on the items that are objects of understanding according to (b)–(d), and in particular to the objects of the variety of understanding specified in (c). In principle dependence of content on behaviour could be conceived in mainly two different ways: (1) Aspects of behaviour of the producer(s) of a linguistic item have an effect on the determination of some variety of content. (2) Aspects of behaviour of the producer(s) of a linguistic item have an impact on the (exegetical) relevance of some variety of content, for example whether the content in question matters for the attribution of truth or untruth. It is moreover conceivable that both (1) and (2) are alternatively pertinent for different varieties of content. The presented portrayal suggest a rejection of an equation between the concepts of content and the notion of what a speaker intends to say. We in fact discard this view not merely because the admission of a plurality of contents of various kinds militates against the supposition that there is always just one content, namely that which a speaker intends to say, given that she does not intend to say different things at the same time. The decisive reason lies rather in the presupposition that in the present connection content ought be conceived in the first

place as a possible object of understanding of the variety specified in (a)—which does not rule out other content-concepts.² But in so far as content of an expression is identifiable as something which a linguistic item means (in some non-eccentric sense of ‘mean’) and whose grasp is connected with the correctness of an understanding of a linguistic token it needs to be strictly dissociated from anything which a speaker or writer might have in mind. If some speaker is mistaken regarding the (conventional) meanings or functions of words used by him it ought to be admitted that interpreters who by assigning correct meanings to the expressions misidentify the speaker’s intention have nevertheless correctly understood the pertinent linguistic token(s).³ Even if such interpreters are mistaken in some respect their error need not pertain to anything which expressions actually mean in the relevant context; it can rather affect an altogether different type of interpretation and understanding aiming at the ascertainment of psychological facts on the basis of some linguistic understanding. It can be presumed that this dimension of understanding is vital exclusively with respect to linguistic items produced by human beings. But even as far as the intuitive notion of linguistic understanding is concerned items which are produced by human beings bestow relevance on

² In this way it is conceded that the term ‘content’ can relate to something that meets the following descriptions:

- (a) being something which an expression E means;
- (b) being something which a speaker or writer who employs the expression E means;
- (c) being something which a speaker or writer means by employing the expression E.

This permits further sub-classifications in accordance with different possible imports of ‘expression’ and ‘mean’.

³ A similar assessment can be provided with respect to a situation envisaged sometimes in discussions on interpretation: Two interlocutors *A* and *B* sit opposite to each other at a table with a bottle of salt and a bottle of pepper. As a reply to *A*’s question where the pepper is to be found *B* says that it is in the bottle on the left. *A*, wrongly supposing that *B* has given his answer from his, *B*’s, perspective, draws the false conclusion that the pepper is to be found on the right from his own, *A*’s, perspective. Given that there are no established conventions stipulating whether the expressions ‘right’ and ‘left’ are to be given from the perspective of the speaker or that of the addressee, it can be asserted, against the background of the exposition given above, that in the envisaged case *B* has not necessarily misinterpreted *A*’s utterance. If the interpreter has committed a linguistic mistake it ought rather to be seen in the failure to recognize that the linguistic data do not allow for a definite assessment of the intended reference. A claim of the contrary could be seen as the result of a conflation between the different tasks of finding a correct interpretation of expressions on the one hand and of finding a correct explanation of some linguistic behaviour on the other. Thus room is provided for the possibility that intentions to refer to something can be unsuccessful for other reasons than failure to produce intended effects with respect to other people. Against this assessment one might object that it is easily conceivable that *A* after hearing *B*’s remark makes great efforts to ascertain which perspective and which object *B* has had ‘in mind’. This censure appears to be invalid because it rests on the unwarranted supposition that a motivation for making those efforts must lie in a desire to ascertain a correct interpretation instead of a wish to detect a truth relating to non-linguistic matters, in the present case regarding the question which of the bottles contains pepper. It is important to keep this in mind because texts are also read for other purposes than finding correct interpretations, e.g. for detecting historical truths. Such ulterior aims can provide a rational basis for attaining correct explanations of linguistic behaviour. Attention to these differences is also needed for the prevention of possible confusions between different topics involved in the present article one of which concerns the question of relevance of considering aspects of behaviour for purposes of linguistic interpretation.

particular differences which are immaterial in other cases.⁴ The acknowledgment of a fundamental difference between linguistic understanding and understanding exploiting linguistic understanding does however not disprove the proposition that in methodological respect the latter possesses relevance for the former. The idea that correct linguistic understanding of expressions of higher complexity, such as sentences, should in the vast majority of cases permit the attribution of fairly reasonable attitudes and understandable ways of acting on the part of a subject employing them suggests rather the contrary. Thus it should not be eccentric to conjecture that lack of plausibility of consequences with respect to attitudes and behaviour of a speaker or writer induced by a particular linguistic understanding is apt to diminish its credibility and increase the probability of its incorrectness. Hence acknowledgement of methodological relevance of understanding pertaining to higher levels—in particular those of the levels (c) or (d)—for understanding pertaining to lower levels—specifically level (a)—must not be restricted to exceptional situations of interpretation.⁵ In any case, as far as the term ‘understanding an utterance’ is concerned, understanding of type (a) and understanding of type (c) correspond to two equally legitimate explications of its import.

These deliberations are admittedly theoretical. On the other hand it can be discerned that, if they are mainly correct, then reliance on grammatical rules and established linguistic conventions cannot suffice for all purposes of interpretation and exegesis first because varieties of understanding exist which transcend the realm of linguistic facts and second because it can be presumed that those varieties possess methodological relevance for linguistic understanding.

II

The thesis that considerations pertaining to grammatical rules and conventions valid for individual languages are insufficient for the determination of interpretations of linguistic utterances could appear like a truism. The fact that it need not amount to a mere truism emerges, however, if one considers the question of why it is true—given that it is in fact true—and what follows from its truth, in particular concerning

⁴ This presupposes in the field of linguistic understanding a distinction between the idea of what expressions mean (in a context), the idea of what expressions mean ‘in the mind of a speaker’ and the idea of something which somebody using linguistic items intends to express. Thus one could even account for—admittedly exceptional—situations in which a speaker or writer adapts his way of using expressions to his anticipation of deviant ways of understanding them on the part of his addressee(s). Acknowledging that those differences do not always matter in contexts of textual interpretation is compatible with the supposition that all of these ideas possess significance in principle. One could make a terminological distinction between ‘linguistic understanding’ and ‘communicative understanding’ such that only the latter expression refers to identifications of what speakers or writers intend to convey by linguistic items, whereas the first term would specifically relate to the first variety. In the following exposition this option will not be adopted. Accordingly ‘linguistic understanding’ as well as ‘linguistic interpretation’ will be employed as general terms encompassing all varieties supposing that in view of this elucidation no misunderstandings should occur.

⁵ Disambiguation is a most salient specimen of this category. Yet there are reasons to suppose that this species does not exhaust all varieties where ascertainment of particular imports regularly connected with linguistic expressions relies on considerations pertaining to higher levels of understanding. We will revert to this point in the next paragraph.

the probability of the correctness of interpretations of linguistic units either in the oral or written dimension. The potential significance of some aspects of behaviour is indicated by the fact that (a) the very existence of some content deviating from a literal linguistic significance is frequently signalled by the circumstance that a hypothesis to the effect that only an import corresponding to the linguistic meaning should be conveyed entails imperfections of linguistic behaviour and (b) the plausibility of assuming some content as an intended one is in proportion with the degree of adequacy of behaviour entailed by the pertinent assumption.

As regards the question of the possible reasons for the insufficiency of language specific grammatical criteria for interpreting linguistic utterances or assessing their probable correctness or incorrectness there is at least one factor which is presumably valid for all natural languages, namely the circumstance that acts of linguistic communication often presuppose a capability on the part of potential interpreters to identify relevant communicative goals on the basis of considerations which transcend the realm of language specific rules and conventions. This implies an obligation of cooperation not only on the part of interpreters but also on the part of speakers or writers. Whenever a producer of an utterance intends to convey an import which cannot be determined by conventional meanings alone she is obliged to provide also the non-linguistic clues permitting a determination of the intended import at least in principle. In this connection considerations of reasonability comprising considerations of reasonability of behaviour as a component (among others) enter the stage. Hence, provided that a community possesses shared standards of rationality, it can employ linguistic devices, in particular pronouns, whose semantics incorporates those standards enabling interpreters to control whether or not the criteria they employ for the purpose of an identification of references intended by a speaker complies with linguistic conventions.⁶ It is on this basis that properties of behaviour do not merely deliver criteria for interpretation but can also constitute means for the expression of thoughts.

⁶ Thus it could be possible in principle that natural languages possess a device whose way of employment could be elucidated by the rule that the item is used to refer to that object or those objects which it is most reasonable to refer to in the light of contextual (or co-textual) circumstances as well as other features of the content of expressions within which the unit occurs as a constituent. As a matter of fact it seems, however, that pronouns of actual natural languages do not exemplify this extreme possibility. Rather they exhibit also other semantic ingredients concerning matters like location of objects (e.g. proximity or remoteness) or temporal relations (with respect to time of utterance) etc., so that considerations of maximal reasonability of reference play determining roles at best in combination with additional aspects. Even patterns of phonemes or graphemes exhibited by linguistic items can constitute pertinent factors. Against the background of rules of the form 'N designates an object which is linked by acts of designation-fixing to the pattern (of phonemes/graphemes) which is exhibited by the present token of N', leaving room for the possibility that the link is mediated by deviating patterns in other languages, successful acts of communication can be performed by employing proper names without existence of knowledge permitting fully determinate decisions regarding their reference or without even knowing whether the expression designates some specific object at all. This is a situation which is not atypical in discourses about historical figures. Due to considerations of relevance or other aspects of reasonability of behaviour the circumstance that different items can be bearers of identical names need not obstruct communicative success. In contrast the supposition that any natural language contains a device complying with the rule that it is used to refer to whatever object a speaker has in mind, though not inconsistent, is quite unrealistic, except for communities of Buddhas endowed with supernatural capacities.

There is, on the other hand, also a factor that possesses particular significance for interpretations of linguistic items belonging to languages spoken in the past. In this realm modern interpreters usually rely on so-called 'descriptive grammars' for determining whether or not a particular way of understanding is compatible with linguistic rules or conventions. The crux is that descriptive grammars often permit assessments of the degree in which individual formulations are suitable means for the realization of particular communicative goals at most to a limited extent. Various reasons are responsible for this limitation. First, although descriptive grammars of dead languages permit fairly reliable verdicts about possibilities of expression, the circumstance that they crucially rely on observations about a limited corpus of, mostly written, documents impedes the feasibility of making definite decisions about linguistic impossibilities; i.e. the fact that pertinent linguistic data cannot be augmented *ad libitum* by confronting native speakers with questions tailored for a more exact determination of the appropriateness of certain linguistic forms relative to specific communicative purposes hampers the prospect of basing on a safe foundation judgements ascertaining that certain things *cannot* be formulated in certain ways. Second, as conventional descriptive grammars typically depict and analyse phenomena related to a unit which is considered as a unitary (natural) language, like Latin, Ancient Greek or Classical Sanskrit, finer grained distinctive features pertaining to particular historical periods, specific sorts of texts or individual authors tend to be neglected. This happens partly even on account of sound methodological principles, such as the requirement to ground generalizations on a fairly extensive basis. Moreover, a number of linguistic conventions are not absolutely fixed but rather permit adaptations to specific situational requirements. This holds true in particular in the realm of lexical semantics. Presumably it holds good for all natural languages that in this dimension established conventions often provide rough and vague guiding lines for individual employments of linguistic tokens in so far as excessive deviance from previous practice threatens to thwart the communicative intentions of being understood by others. However, to the extent that the danger of completely preventing a possibility of understanding does not exist, adaptations of the import of linguistic units to specific situations on the part of a language user need not be irrational. This means that we need to reckon with the possibility that the producer of an utterance employs an expression in a novel meaning that has no parallel in any previous usage and whose identification might even require some efforts on the part of potential interpreters. This implies for linguistic products in languages of the past in particular that there cannot be any *a priori* reason to reject as illegitimate assignments of imports to words which do not possess any exact parallel in any other document. But arbitrariness of attribution of meanings can be ruled out precisely on account of considerations of general maxims of linguistic behaviour, in particular the principle that a language user must attribute novel imports in such a way that interpreters can identify them with the help of their knowledge of previously established conventions of usage in combination with the rule that a producer of a linguistic item (usually) intends to be correctly understood by (at least some) other people. Accordingly the assumption appears plausible that bringing aspects of linguistic behaviour into play is relevant in special ways whenever the interpretation of documents in languages of the past is at stake.

The preceding considerations suggest the proposition that compliance with grammatical rules as a criterion for the interpretation of linguistic products is secondary relative to the criterion of adequacy of linguistic behaviour. The vital reason for the validity of the expectation that linguistic tokens in a natural language should not violate grammatical rules as they are stipulated in descriptive grammars or other linguistic conventions which have been identified as pertinent in some community of language users lies in the circumstance that violations of such rules or conventions tend to diminish the efficacy of language use for communicative purposes. This entails, however, that the principle that some given linguistic document, such as an oral utterance or a written text or textual passage, is free of violations of language specific rules and conventions possesses only the status of a default. Under specific circumstances this principle can be suspended. Language is not exclusively employed for conveyance of information. Purposes such as mimicking the linguistic behaviour of other people who possess limited command of a language, imitations of incorrect utterances or malformed formulations as well as various kinds of playful employment of language can generate even grammatically deviant items. Therefore the maxim that the interpretation of a linguistic product must be rejected if it implies some non-compliance with grammatical rules or established conventions might be usually accepted as valid in practice. It is however theoretically faulty if it were taken as a fundamental and invulnerable principle of interpretation and exegesis.⁷ It can be postulated, nevertheless, that anybody advancing an interpretation that presupposes non-compliance with language-specific rules is obliged to explicitly specify reasons which could motivate such deviant behaviour and make plausible, as far as this is possible, that such motivations were operative in the pertinent case.

The implementation of the tenet that compliance with language-specific conventions yields merely a deficient guiding line for the interpretation of linguistic items possesses some non-trivial consequences for exegetical practice. Specifically with respect to the (reflective) assessment of the plausibility of interpretations which have been offered or envisaged (either by others or oneself) we claim that at least the following parameters need to be taken into consideration:

- (1) Hypotheses concerning relatively persistent dispositions and attitudes of the producer(s) of the (linguistic) token that is to be interpreted.
- (2) Suppositions pertaining to communicative goals connected with items occurring in the context of the token that is to be interpreted.
- (3) Considerations of the degree of adequacy of the token to be interpreted relative to its communicative goals whose existence the envisaged interpretation entails against the background of the hypotheses and suppositions specified in (1) and (2).

In so far as dispositions and attitudes coming into play in connection with (1) possess a content they deserve to be assessed concerning their plausibility at least in two regards: (a) under the aspect of objective properties of their content, such as

⁷ Accordingly we consider the comparison between language and a game as misleading as far as matters of semantics are concerned, whereas the analogy with a tool appears more appropriate in this regard.

truth, support by objective evidence etc., (b) under the aspect of the probability of the existence of the pertinent dispositions and attitudes relative to the content in question on the part of the producer(s) of the token to be interpreted. This means specifically regarding hypotheses about beliefs held by a producer of a token to be interpreted that one ought consider both the question of whether or not the content of the belief is (in the eyes of the interpreter) objectively true or plausible and whether, irrespective of its objective truth or plausibility, the probability is high that the producer of the token has adopted such a belief. For whenever the content of a belief is (in our eyes) false or doubtful we do not possess independent reasons for ascribing the pertinent belief to some foreign subject; we can do this only if special evidence for the existence of the belief is available, perhaps in the form of explicit statements expressing the relevant belief or considerations pertaining to other dispositions or attitudes in the light of which the existence of the belief is probable.

Regarding suppositions pertaining to communicative goals connected with linguistic objects occurring in a context, those which concern items appearing in the preceding context possess particular significance. The reason is that in acts of linguistic communication a subject usually acts on the basis of the expectation that potential interpreters will 'update' their assumptions concerning overarching presuppositions and purposes against the background of units which have been uttered in the same communicative situation. It is true that it conforms to a prevalent practice to assess interpretations of textual segments in the light of other textual units either occurring later in the same text or in different texts of a (supposedly) identical writer and sometimes even in the light of sources produced by different authors. Possibly the danger of making erroneous assessments on this basis is unduly underestimated.⁸ At any rate it must be considered as a methodological flaw to equate a preceding context, or 'co-text',⁹ of an item to be interpreted with other textual passages regarding their roles of assessing the import of a textual unit.

The relevance of (3) is only partly due to the circumstance that certain types of goals connected with linguistic utterances, such as e.g. the performance of particular speech acts or effects like asserting, promising, threatening, consoling other people or making them frightened etc. are usually not explicitly signalled. The need to

⁸ This supposition appears realistic in view of several remarks which are to be heard. On the other hand, the relevance of taking into account later passages of a text or even different sources is closely connected with the circumstance that texts are not exclusively read for the purpose of (any form of) linguistic understanding. It does in fact repeatedly happen that producers of linguistic items fail to fully comply with objective requirements of linguistic cooperation by not providing the cues enabling interpreters to identify an intended import or reference. In such situations an interpreter might nevertheless desire to ascertain intentions with the aim of acquiring pieces of knowledge transcending linguistic understanding. For such reasons it can become important not to confine oneself with the acknowledgment that due to the objective absence of pertinent indicators, such as contextual relevance, accompanying gestures and the like, queries of linguistic understanding cannot be definitely settled and to resort instead to other means like biographical data, individual habits etc. for making conjectures regarding a speaker's or writer's mental states.

⁹ The differentiation between 'context' and 'co-text' alludes to a distinction sometimes drawn in textual linguistics between non-textual ('context') and textual ('co-text') elements in the 'environment' of an individual linguistic token which could be relevant for interpretation. In cases where there is no need to draw attention to the difference only the more common expression 'context' will be used.—Sometimes 'co(n)text' will appear if it seems apposite to hint at the distinction.

bring non-language-specific criteria into play pertains also to determinations of propositional content.

We will borrow the term ‘semantic enrichment’ from current linguistics for referring in general to different varieties of phenomena where deviances between some import potentially relevant for interpretation and a linguistic, conventional or standing meaning of expressions exists or can be plausibly supposed to exist. It must be kept in mind that, notwithstanding the possibility of different legitimate views about the question of what should be called ‘semantic’, it is not only not contended that the present employment harmonizes with a legitimate conception of the area of semantics but it is even presumed that in a number of cases it is at odds with any legitimate conception of ‘semantic’. The main reason is that the overriding purpose lies in accounting for a vast range of phenomena which, even if they might be connected by ‘family-resemblance’, have in common only the feature that they involve deviances between different contents among which there is one variety that can be correlated with a literal, linguistic or conventional meaning. A secondary reason lies in the circumstance that the relevant area of phenomena comprises cases where the deviant contents share a feature which is typically connected with the ideas of a semantic content and of a literal or conventional meaning, which could make their characterization as ‘standing meaning’ acceptable.¹⁰ It should be equally noted that by using the formulation ‘semantic enrichment’ it is not intended to imply that something which might be considered as a semantic content of a linguistic item is modified under certain conditions. The term ought rather relate to a number of phenomena which could be viewed as situations where apart from some semantic content additional types of content are discernible which may well possess even more significance for interpretation. If those contents possess a propositional nature they can, and typically do, deviate with respect to truth value. This concept of ‘enrichment’ differs from the one which is pertinent below. The preceding elucidations should diminish the danger of making a misleading or even irresponsible use of words.

There are various phenomena which harmonize even with a natural reading of ‘semantic enrichment’. Regarding examples (which are often referred to in discussions), such as

(1) The ham-sandwich wants to pay.

one can view a ‘semantically enriched content’ as a content which appears intuitively ‘richer’ than anything which the sentence literally expresses. This verdict is induced by the circumstance that a pertinent import is specifiable by employing an expression which results by filling the blank in

The ... ham-sandwich wants to pay.

by additional word-material, such as ‘the person who has ordered a’, ‘the person who looks like a’ etc. In the present connection it is apposite to note the fact that two ingredients are involved in examples of the considered sort. On the one hand, there is an aspect which is relatively stable and invariably associated with occurrences of

¹⁰ This holds good for a regular understanding of the word but could even comply with technical uses. (Cf. Pagin and Westerståhl 2010, p. 260).

(1) because one should expect that the sentence is hardly ever employed to convey a content which corresponds to its literal meaning. It can be supposed in addition that in the vast majority of cases there is an import intended to be communicated which results by filling the blank specified above. On the other hand, however, a variable ingredient is identifiable too, due to the circumstance that contextual factors seem to have an impact on the issue of whether some or the other substitution of the blank yields an appropriate explication. If it were assumed (at least for the sake of argument) that considerations of reasonability of linguistic behaviour induce both the relatively stable ingredient and the possibility to make the variable element more determinate one is forced to assume that two different aspects of reasonability are pertinent in the present connection. Obviously the first one is connected with a maxim of avoidance of untruth whereas the second one can be plausibly connected with some notion of contextual relevance.¹¹ If it is true, however, that aspects of truth and of relevance can come into play in the interpretation of one single sentence it should be all the more imperative to pay due attention to both aspects together whenever interpretations of larger units and in particular texts are concerned.

Consideration of the preceding example could induce the wrong impression that aspects of adequateness of behaviour come into play at best if some deviance can be discerned between a standard conventional meaning and some content that varies in accordance with context. This consequence should not be drawn and one ought abstain from equating the ideas of linguistic meaning, conventional meaning and standing meaning from the outset.

Sentences of the form:

It is not possible / It is impossible that P or Q.

are employed for asserting an impossibility with respect to both mentioned alternatives, i.e. they are used for expressing a propositional content equivalent to:

It is not possible that P, and it is (also) not possible that Q.

This outcome would be predictable—against the background of the DeMorgan's laws—if it were assumed that non-negated counterparts of the form:

It is possible that P or Q.

are equivalent to:

It is possible that P or it is possible that Q.

On the other hand the observation that sentences of the form of 'It is possible that P or Q' are usually employed for conveying the idea that all mentioned alternatives are possible is by no means a novelty. The correspondence between the above cited sentence-form and that of:

It is possible that P and it is possible that Q.

¹¹ That the two ideas are nevertheless related is suggested by the circumstance that (knowledge of) truth possesses relevance for success.

has on the one hand intra-linguistic parallels in the realm of various expressions of epistemic possibility and related modalities and on the other hand possesses parallels across languages involving languages of different families. As one should expect, the same phenomenon is detectable regarding expressions containing three or more members conjoined by disjunction, i.e. expressions of the form:

It is possible that P or Q or R (or ...).

By dissociating the idea of the meaning of a sentence from the idea of its ordinarily conveyed import the compulsion disappears to deny standard systems of Modal Logic (such as the system T, S4, etc.) the capacity of giving an account of the semantics of natural languages, or more precisely to derive this conclusion alone from observations concerning disjunctive phrases. Thus it can be maintained that there is a content complying with the following suppositions:

- (1) the expression ‘possible’ and synonymous words are in accordance with the following formal rules:
 - (a) ‘It is Φ that P or Q’ equals ‘It is Φ that it is true that P or Q’
 - (b) ‘It is true that P or Q’ equals ‘P or Q’
 - (c) A clause of the form ‘P or Q’ expresses a truth precisely if either ‘P’ or ‘Q’ or both ‘P’ and ‘Q’ express a truth.
- (2) the expression ‘or’ is not equivocal and does not—at least in so far as expressions of the pertinent forms are considered—require a semantic specification deviating from the one given in (c) above.

Given that a language user who employs an expression of the form of ‘It is possible that P or Q (or ...)’ for conveying the thought that some of the mentioned alternatives are possible and others not, would (under ordinary circumstances) exhibit a misleading and thus deficient linguistic behaviour, the intra- and inter-linguistic analogies can buttress the view that in the cases under consideration a literal or compositionally induced sense is superseded by a pragmatically induced import.¹² Accordingly there are cases where a pragmatically induced import is

¹² Even if the defence of this view given earlier (in Oetke 1981, 103 ff) should be inadequate I am still inclined to maintain that the very existence of inter-linguistic concordances decreases the plausibility of explaining ambiguities exhibited by individual sentences or (apparent) coincidences of meaning between different sentences of an identical language by lexical equivocations. To be sure, this outlook relies on the assumption that total agreement between ranges of possible meanings of lexical items is a relatively uncommon phenomenon in comparison with inter-linguistic correspondences of syntactic transformations as well as maxims of linguistic behaviour. If this premise is accepted, however, preferability can be attributed to the view that the apparent possibility of substituting ‘or’ by ‘and’ in examples like

All handicapped persons or mothers with young children will get preference.

is not due to the fact that the word ‘or’ possesses in addition to a disjunctive meaning equally a conjunctive import but results rather from the circumstance that sentence-pairs of the concerned sort are derived from different syntactic structures possessing (logically) equivalent imports. Similarly pertinent ambiguities exhibited by sentences of the form ‘All F or G are H’ might be considered as outcomes of differences of (underlying non-equivalent) sentence structures. Inter-linguistic considerations could also (additionally) support the tenet that the usual ‘existential commitment’ involved in sentences of the form ‘All F are G’ to the effect that there are F’s is not an ingredient of the linguistic sense of the concerned sentence-forms but rather an outcome of ‘semantic enrichment’ (in the above specified sense of the term).

indistinguishable from the standing meaning of an item. The decisive point is however that, no matter whether or not this account is embraced, a basis for drawing a distinction between standing and linguistic meaning emerges only if compositional aspects are taken into consideration. These can pertain either to the internal structure of an expression or to the effects which embedding a given item in larger contexts produces. It is in view of items of higher complexity that the example considered above is apt to indicate a distinction between linguistic meaning and conventional, and possibly pragmatically induced, import. But there are numerous other specimens which intimate a similar difference in view of their internal structure. It is easy to see that

(2) All Singaporeans drive imported cars.

and analogous examples insinuate interpretations according to which a restricted domain of the quantifier has to be hypothesized. The phenomenon that (2) can be explicated by a paraphrase, such as

(2E) All Singaporeans who drive a car, drive imported cars.

could be explained against the backdrop of a ‘conversational maxim’ of avoiding statements of patent untruths.

The cases considered so far could provoke the conclusion that relations between linguistic or compositionally induced meanings and other imports are always related in a way that the latter ones are richer than the former ones in accordance with a natural understanding of the word ‘rich’.¹³ Therefore it deserves to be pointed out in passing that the correctness of this assumption is by no means certain. It can be observed that for the interpretation of certain sentences in which noun-phrases occur within sentence-phrases embedded under verbs like ‘believe (that)’, ‘assert (that)’ etc. only their reference and not their sense is taken as relevant. Examples like

(3) Paul’s grandmother believed that his/Paul’s grandfather was a philanthropist.

are usually understood as conveying an import equivalent to

(3*) Paul’s grandmother regarded his/Paul’s grandfather as a philanthropist.

On the one hand it appears that the paraphrase of (3*) preserves a habitual meaning-ingredient of (3) in so far as it is difficult to imagine that (3) should be employed in a way which renders a paraphrase in the sense of (3*) inappropriate. On the other hand, however, it can be easily discerned that sentences of the form ‘A believes that B ...’ cannot be generally paraphrased in this manner. There are numerous examples in which noun-phrases within clauses embedded in belief-sentences are to be read as representing an aspect of the belief-content ascribed to the subject. A plausible explanation for the fact that this possibility does not become virulent in the case of (3) lies in the low probability of the supposition that somebody’s

¹³ This holds good even for sentences containing disjunctive clauses in the scope of possibility operators because one could surmise that sentences of the form ‘It is possible that P or Q’ engender as pragmatic imports contents representable by sentences of the form ‘It is possible that P or Q, and it is possible that P, and it is possible that Q’.

grandmother believes something about her own husband under the perspective of her grandson or that of his contemporaries. Accordingly it is not eccentric to hypothesize for (3) a linguistic meaning corresponding to an opaque or non-referential reading with respect to the embedded noun-phrase, viz. ‘Paul’s grandfather’, and attribute to the import corresponding to the referential reading the status of another type of pragmatically induced content. If this assessment were generalized it would amount to the claim that the difference between referential and non-referential readings of one and the same sentence is not the outcome of a linguistic ambiguity.¹⁴ In the present connection there is no need to examine the appropriateness of this view because the decisive point is merely that in contexts of interpretation it ought not be taken for granted that linguistic meaning must always be regarded as a ‘minimal import’ and that one should be disposed to consider the possibility that one and the same item possesses non-equivalent contents such that one of them does not matter at all for common purposes of interpretation although it does not deserve to be discarded as non-existent on that account.¹⁵

Since the primary objective of the preceding exposition lies in the detection of facts possessing potential relevance for interpretations of linguistic tokens of higher order, such as sentences or sequences of sentences which could be encountered in texts, it is apposite to point out three issues among which one is particularly relevant for problems of exegesis of documents written in dead languages:

- (1) Considerations of rationality and reasonability of behaviour can determine even the way individual sentences are usually interpreted in a community. Therefore it cannot be expected that any standard grammar of an individual language will or should provide all the information which is required for an ascertainment of standard meanings or established ways of interpretation. The decisive point does not merely lie in the circumstance that certain maxims like the postulate of avoiding the assertion of propositions believed to be untrue regulates behaviour. It is not even sufficient to invoke the idea that the very existence of conversational principles of this sort can be regarded as an outcome of rationality due to the consideration that it is an advantage for a community of speakers if it endorses such maxims. Reasonability possesses also a dimension pertaining to individual language users: If some postulate pertaining to linguistic behaviour is established in a community then it is at least in general reasonable for every individual speaker to comply with this postulate given that he intends to be properly understood.
- (2) In view of the fact that the import ordinarily conveyed by phrases of the form ‘It is possible that P or Q’ represented in isolated sentences does not even permit correct predictions of the import expressed by items containing them as constituents—at least not as long as one supposes that rules of ‘Classical

¹⁴ The predominant significance of referential readings in several cases could be regarded as the outcome of a tacit convention to disregard stricter standards of rigour of expression whenever the context of a discourse does not demand them.—It appears that such principle is usually operative in our practice of specifying measures.

¹⁵ The suggestion that phenomena exhibited by double (as well as multiple) *oratio obliqua* are assessable against this background has been made in Oetke (2012, pp. 19–20).

Logic' are operative in natural languages—it is not expectable that imports of textual units containing several sentences can be assessed on the basis of their conventional meanings. If the conventional meanings should be 'pragmatically' induced it must be examined whether in cases under consideration they need to be 'cancelled' in view of the specific context in the same manner as conversational implicatures can be cancelled. Even otherwise it must be admitted that imports of larger conversational units are not necessarily derivable by compositional principles so that their assessment has to rely on considerations of adequacy of behaviour.

- (3) Given that a linguistic meaning must not always coincide with an ordinarily conveyed import the problem emerges as to how the former can be assessed in a number of instances. In principle a consideration of different, but related, expressions, in particular modifications of expressions, can furnish a methodological device for detecting deviances between linguistic meaning and conventional import. This possibility is provided in the case of phrases of the form 'it is possible that P or Q (or ...)' by examining their occurrence in isolated declarative sentences and in other contexts separately. If, however, languages spoken in the past are concerned, we cannot be confident from the outset that the discovery of items permitting verdicts about coincidences or deviances between the different types of content depends only on our efforts and ingenuity. The predicament is aggravated by the fact that pertinent deviances of content between related expressions could be subtle and difficult to verify. In contrast to (2) the sentence

- (2*) If all Singaporeans drove imported cars, the state would be less prosperous than it is.

would rather be taken as envisaging a counterfactual situation in which every inhabitant of Singapore without exception (not necessarily excluding children) drives some imported car. (This is most natural against the background of the presumption that cars are not produced in Singapore.) To be sure, it could be argued that also the latter example permits a reading on which only car drivers are taken into account so that the difference pertains at most to the degree in which some or the other interpretation is insinuated. But this underscores all the more the limitation affecting explorations about non-living languages, in particular languages attested only in written documents, where tools like appraising intuitions of native-speakers and assessing intonation-patterns are not available. Thus the prospects of providing a semantics of languages of the past can be diminished on this account and the impediments could become crucial if they entail a substantial curtailment of possibilities of making predictions concerning the linguistic meanings of arbitrary sentences of a language. It might be objected that as long as items to be interpreted possess a compositional structure their meaning should be identifiable on that basis. The problem is, however, that even if this method of ascertainment is possible in principle it need not be feasible in practice. The supposition that a full grasp of compositional properties of languages of the past cannot be achieved does not

represent a mere theoretical possibility. There are reasons to believe that even for major languages like Sanskrit this lack can become virulent. Thus it might be difficult to make definite predictions about possible linguistic meanings by employing standard grammars even under the supposition that current dictionaries provide sufficient relevant information about the meanings of individual words or particular idiomatic phrases. Later we will encounter such a problem.

At this point it could be objected that in the absence of explicit rules specifying all ways in which meanings of complex linguistic units depend on meanings of (meaning-constitutive) constituents the linguistic intuitions of the philologist should come into play. But the decisive problem is that even if the philological interpreter had some correct intuitions about contents which expressions ordinarily convey it is by no means safeguarded that his intuitions pertain to the correct sort of meaning. The example of phrases of the form 'It is possible that P or Q' demonstrates that correct knowledge about the import usually conveyed by isolated sentences exhibiting this form is apt to induce even wrong predictions regarding the imports of units where such phrases occur as constituents. It deserves to be noticed that the question of how the phenomena observable in connection with such sentences should be assessed from a linguistic perspective is absolutely irrelevant for the problem. To be sure, if an interpreter encounters in some foreign text a construction which, in view of word-meanings given in standard dictionaries and syntactic rules specified in descriptive grammars, ought to be correlated with 'It is not possible that P or Q' in English, it would be most natural for him to attribute to the foreign correlate exactly the same import, or range of possible imports, as to its counterpart in his native tongue. But the confidence to have correctly assessed the meaning vitally rests on the assumption that the compositional mechanisms are identical in the different languages. Even if this presupposition should be correct, as a matter of fact, any responsible scholar should be interested, at least in principle, to control whether the pertinent assumptions *are* correct. In this connection the phenomenon ascertained in connection with (1) that reasonability of behaviour comprises various aspects attains significance. If the philologist puts himself in the place of a 'radical interpreter' he is not restricted to any particular dimension of assessment, e.g. contextual relevance. Rather he should avail himself of the possibility of ascertaining whether his meaning-hypothesis accords with all conceivable aspects under which reasonability of behaviour could be assessed. This entails that an interpreter must not confine his investigation to an assessment of e.g. contextual relevance, but ought consider also whether other ways of behaviour exist which would be a more suitable means for attaining relevant goals, whether the occurrence of beliefs or other attitudes whose existence is suggested by the hypothesis conforms to what one (supposes to) know about other attitudes etc. One can anticipate the complaint that in doing this an interpreter 'imposes' his own standards of rationality on foreign communities of language users and takes uncritically for granted the existence of universal standards of rationality. Against this it should be retorted first that even admitting deviances in detail it is not disproven that a substantial core of shared standards exists and second that a confrontation of

meaning- and interpretation-hypothesis does not take coincidences of reasonability for granted. The task is merely to ascertain whether the pertinent-hypothesis would accord to the interpreter's own standards of rationality and reasonability as a heuristic devise for identifying problematic components of his presuppositions.—In the final analysis an interpreter cannot completely refrain from bringing his own standards of reasonability into play if he endeavours to make intelligible to himself the linguistic behaviour of foreign subjects.

It can be presumed, nonetheless, that even as far as interpretations of documents written in extinct languages are concerned incomplete knowledge about linguistic properties exhibited by them is not the primary reason for the restricted relevance of expedients in the form of descriptive grammars and current dictionaries; the decisive factor lies rather in the type of understanding which textual exegesis usually involves. For interpretation aiming at ascertaining what speakers or writers intended to express by linguistic items to be interpreted—the third variety of linguistic interpretation according to the exposition of the first paragraph—mainly three types of consideration are relevant:

- (1) How probable is the existence of such and such mental attitudes on the part of other producer(s) of a linguistic item?
- (2) How probable is, given the existence of certain attitudes, that the speaker(s) or writer(s) intended to manifest them in the present context and under the prevailing circumstances?
- (3) How probable is, given the existence of particular communicative goals, the employment of the actually occurring linguistic unit as a means of realizing the pertinent aims?

It is in connection with the third type of consideration that linguistic rules and established communicative habits attain relevance. But also the other types involve a high degree of complexity. In the case of assertions it can, for example, not suffice to vindicate that a subject would believe something true if he had adopted some particular belief whose content could be asserted in principle. It is plain that, specifically in connection with readings of past documents, neglect of the question of the probability of adopting a (true) belief given the writer's own presuppositions and other propositional attitudes is conducive to 'anachronistic' interpretations. On the other hand, even the actual existence of some belief does not guarantee that its manifestation has been intended. In this connection it deserves to be noted that irrelevance or attribution of irrelevance is by no means the only factor able to inhibit manifestation. It can occur that even some relevant belief is not manifested precisely because it is relevant in such a way that its manifestation would entail sanctions or other undesired consequences. This suffices to disclose why descriptive grammars and lexical resources possess a limited function in the context of linguistic understanding of the concerned variety irrespective of the familiarity or unfamiliarity of a pertinent language. In some respect their limitation is not merely contingent but lies in their very nature.

Against this background we can assess the objection that issues concerning the relationship between some literal content and contents generated by any sort of 'semantic enrichment' do not deserve to be explicitly addressed in the context of

questions of textual exegesis. One can hardly deny that in ordinary discourse identifications of those imports could be achieved without reflections on the topic. A native speaker who is confronted with a sequence of sentence-phrases as in:

- (4) As soon as Susan heard a queer noise from her neighbour's house she ran out without closing the door and saw that the basement window was broken.

will immediately recognize that the expression 'the door' should refer to the door belonging to Susan's house, whereas the expression 'the basement window' ought refer to a window in her neighbour's house. Since, however, tokens to be interpreted do not always belong to the native language of an interpreter and since difference between native tongue and language of an *interpretandum* is a most common phenomenon in the area of textual exegesis, an argument saying that the intuitive competence of a native speaker must generally suffice for correct identifications of pragmatically conveyed contents vitally rests on the premise that the principles by which semantically enriched contents are generated on the basis of linguistic meanings are universally operative in all linguistic communities. Apparently the prevailing practice in textual studies takes its truth simply for granted. If possible success or appearance of success of such practice in a number of cases is interpreted as a vindication of the underlying premises a fatal error would be committed because the nature of the basis permitting derivations of 'enriched' imports is pretty heterogeneous.

If one considers sentences, such as

- (5) Susan reads Goethe.
 (6) Susan translates Goethe into Sanskrit.

the recognition that those expressions should not be used to affirm a relationship of reading or of translating into Sanskrit between two persons, called 'Susan' and 'Goethe' can be derived from the mere existence of a mismatch of category which would follow from such an assumption. But if one takes into account examples like

- (7) Susan loves Goethe.

the situation is different. Maybe some interpreters would spontaneously suppose that even here an import should be conveyed which would be explicitly conveyed by replacing 'Goethe' by 'the works of Goethe' or something similar. Little reflection suffices, however, to detect that this assumption is not mandatory, at least not mandatory to the same degree and not vindicable on the same basis as before. Here we need at least the assumption that 'Goethe' relates to an individual who flourished centuries before the lifetime of the person, called 'Susan', for establishing that (5) *should not* be intended to express what sentences of the form 'A loves B' mostly express. Moreover, for deriving that the sentence *cannot* be meant in such a sense we require in addition the premise that the producer of the token to be interpreted cherished more or less the same views concerning the lifetimes of the pertinent individuals. This supports the contention that as long as textual exegesis regards as a pertinent task the identification of imports which are intended to be communicated

by the creators of written documents it ought not exclusively appeal to the uncritical intuitions of an interpreter.

The preceding considerations did not address the possibility that language users might employ expressions in ways which markedly deviate from ordinary ways of using them. The assumption that this occurs at best as a result of failures of performance or deficiency of linguistic competence is, however, unrealistic. This holds good with respect to modern Western linguistic communities and others alike. In the case of ‘technical’ discourses, such as in philosophy, it happens that common expressions possess a standard significance which markedly differs from the import they convey in ordinary contexts. In ordinary contexts a sentence like

(8) Some guests at the party yesterday drank whisky.

can be understood as conveying that at some festivity guests were present who drank whisky, but that it does not hold true of all the guests who were present at the pertinent meeting that they chose whisky as a drink. The same observation could be made for other sentences of the form ‘Some F’s are G’. Yet according to the teaching of the traditional ‘Square of Opposition’ a relation of entailment is assumed between the so-called ‘*A*-propositions’ and corresponding ‘*I*-propositions’, which on the basis of the explication of the former ones as ‘All S is/are P’ and of the latter ones as ‘Some S is/are P’ means that expressions of the form ‘Some F’s are G’ are implied by corresponding expressions of the form ‘All F’s are G’. This would not be possible if it were supposed that sentences of the former kind possess a meaning which rules out the possibility that both ‘Some F’s are G’ and (corresponding sentences of the form) ‘All F’s are G’ express true propositions. Accordingly any use of ‘Some F’s are G’ in the pertinent context must be taken in a sense which could be explicated by: ‘Some and possibly all F’s are G’, which stands in contrast to the above specified way of employing expressions of this form in most ordinary contexts.¹⁶ The detection of this deviance is by no means a novelty and it has been indicated on various occasions.¹⁷

Considerations of reasonability of behaviour come into play at least in so far as the assumption that a deviance from ordinary ways of usage occurs cannot be substantiated without invoking the idea that it is more reasonable for a speaker to comply with conventions established for a particular realm of discourse than violating them. This alone would suffice to establish that in some discourses identifications of a relevant significance cannot be achieved by reliance on common linguistic intuitions, or ‘Sprachgefühl’ as one would say in German, alone. In the above considered example ordinary ‘Sprachgefühl’ is rather apt to suggest wrong

¹⁶ It should go without saying that if the exclusion of the truth of universal propositions should conform to a standard way of employing expressions of the form ‘Some F are G’ it cannot be validly derived that this ingredient belongs to their literal linguistic meaning. In the present context providing support for the opposite thesis is not needed because the issue is not relevant for the pertinent point.

¹⁷ See e.g. Copi (1982, p. 179):

For the sake of definiteness, although this may depart from ordinary usage in some cases, it is customary to regard the word “some” as meaning “at least one.”

Cf. also Strawson (1952) [1974], p. 178.

predictions about the import. Thereby the problematic nature of invoking the ‘reading expertise’ of a philologist is equally highlighted. But the matter of particular contexts of discourse involves also other issues. There are cases where in contrast to the previous example it is not immediately obvious that some deviant import pertinent to some discourse is relevant at all. However, deliberations concerning the degree of reasonability of accepting some view or the other are suited to substantiate the hypothesis that contents are relevant which could be gathered on the basis of existing formulations only by attributing unusual imports to them.

At the beginning of the *Nyāyapraveśa* (NP) the following textual passage occurs:

*hetus trirūpaḥ / kiṃ punas trairūpyam / pakṣadharmatvaṃ sapakṣe sattvaṃ vipakṣe cāsattvaṃ iti // ... vipakṣo yatra sādhyam nāsti / yan nityam tad akṛtakam dṛṣtam yathākāśam iti / tatra kṛtakatvaṃ prayatnāntarīyakatvaṃ vā sapakṣa evāsti vipakṣe nāsty eva / ity anityādau hetuḥ //*¹⁸

This can be rendered as follows:

A [valid] reason has three forms. What is its threefold character? [It is] its being a quality of the substratum of inference (*pakṣa*), its occurrence in the *sapakṣa* and its non-occurrence in the *vipakṣa*. ... *Vipakṣa* is that where the property to be inferred (the *probandum*) does not occur. [As if one says for example:] ‘That which is permanent is observed as being not produced, like the ether’. There being produced or being the immediate result of an effort occurs only in the *sapakṣa* and is in the *vipakṣa* only not occurring (i.e. it is never occurring); such is a [valid] reason for impermanence etc.

On the basis of an intuitive reading of this passage one could surmise that the author of the NP intends to stipulate, among other things, that an indicator in a piece of valid inferential reasoning must fulfil the requirement that it never occurs in the domain of all objects which do not exhibit the property to be proven (the *probandum*). Accordingly it must hold good that a) there are certain objects, or more specifically at least one object, which lack(s) the *probandum* and b) no object which exhibits the indicator—at least inasmuch as objects (numerically) different from the substratum of inference (the *pakṣa*) are concerned—fails to exhibit the *probandum*. This harmonizes with the statement that—given that being non-permanent functions as a *probandum* and being produced functions as the reason or indicator—everything which is permanent is observed (*dṛṣṭa*) as being not produced. On the other hand, the text explicitly communicates that being produced as well as being the immediate result of an effort represent valid reasons if non-permanence functions as *probandum*. Now, it is not only a fact that certain teachings prevalent at the time when the NP was written advocated the tenet that everything is impermanent and that accordingly no object exists which is permanent (= everlasting), but it is even assumed that the author of the text was affiliated to a school that adopted the concerned tenet. Hence, given the author’s own doctrinal premises there should be no object which lacks the pertinent *probandum*, viz. non-permanence, and

¹⁸ See Dhruva (1968, p. 1).

this clearly contradicts the requirement a) hypothesized above. At this point it could be retorted that the attribution of validity to an inference establishing non-permanence on the basis of being produced with respect to e.g. sound (*śabda*) rests on the proviso that the reasoning is presented in the framework of a debate in which the opponent acknowledges the existence of permanent objects. Hence the above specified requirement would be satisfied against the backdrop of the doctrinal tenets of an adversary who believes that there are everlasting objects, whereas they would fail to be satisfied, if the same argument were presented against an adversary who disclaims the existence of permanent objects. After all, a remark occurring later in the same text, referring to fallacious indicators (*hetvābhāsa*) implies that the acceptability of an argument requires that the existence of an object exhibiting the property functioning as *probans* (and the latter's occurrence in the *pakṣa*) is assumed at least on the part of an adversary in a debate.¹⁹ But is this view plausible?

To be sure, the mere circumstance that the NP does not contain an explicit statement to the effect, that the attribution of validity to an argument establishing impermanence (of sound) on the basis of (its) being produced or being an immediate result of effort depends on the circumstance that it is presented in a debate against a proponent acknowledging that permanent objects exist, cannot suffice for repudiating the objection. But there are also other factors impairing its credibility. Should we attribute to the writer of the NP the tenet that, if the Buddhist employs an argument against the permanence of sound, he must resort to a piece of inferential reasoning which lacks validity against the background of his own premises, no matter what he might employ as a reason? This means that a Buddhist *cannot* establish a tenet like the impermanence of sound by an inference meeting the standards stipulated in the doctrine expounded in the text if they are related to the background of his own assumptions. In the same manner any attempt to vindicate the Buddhist tenet of the impermanence of all objects by inferential means would be doomed to be affected by the same predicament. Moreover, given the constraint that objects lacking a *probandum* must exist, the requirement would generally rule out any possibility to establish with inferential means propositions relating to properties which, as a matter of fact, are exemplified by all objects. Shouldn't it be reasonable to attribute even to the writer of the NP a doctrine of validity of inferential reasoning and proof which is not subject to this restriction? This would mean that the condition (a) specified before would be dropped and that the above quoted passage would be associated with a content which clearly deviates from the import suggested by the initial intuitive reading. Since the requirement of the non-occurrence of the property functioning as *probans* given the non-occurrence of the *probandum* correlates with a concept designated by the technical term *vyatireka* and since the latter concept is closely associated with the idea of a conditional to the effect that whenever the *probandum* does not occur the *probans* does not occur, it follows that the pertinent content of the *vyatireka* must be represented by an expression of the form:

¹⁹ Cf. Dhruva (1968, p. 3) *kṛtakatvād iti śabdābhivyaktivādinam prati anyatarāsiddhaḥ*.

For all objects x (such that x is numerically different from the *pakṣa*) it holds true that if x does not exhibit S , then x does not exhibit H

where the letters ‘ S ’ and ‘ H ’ are reminiscent of the technical terms *sādhya* (= *probandum*) and *hetu* (= *probans*). The consequence is that the involved conditional needs to be interpreted exactly as the material conditional, represented often by ‘ \rightarrow ’ in contemporary logic. This means that the conditional property of the form ‘if Fx then Gx ’ instantiated by ‘if x does not exhibit S , then x does not exhibit H ’ in the present case is satisfied by every object which fails to satisfy the antecedent, irrespective of whether or not it satisfies the open sentence occurring after ‘then’. Accordingly the proposition that all objects which do not exhibit S do not exhibit H , would be guaranteed to be true by the mere circumstance that there are no objects which do not exhibit S . The fact that this feature is reminiscent of the phenomenon often designated by the term ‘paradox of material implication’ indicates that the above presented formulation of the *vyatireka*-requirement must be connected with an import which does *not* accord with an intuitive reading of the formulation. The relevance of this import emerges however as soon as one reflects on the theoretical basis which presumably underlies the *vyatireka*-requirement. We contend that this lies in the intuitive notion that the credibility of the supposition that some object exhibits S , given that it exhibits H , is significantly increased by a presumption to the effect that (a) H and S are exemplified together in a (relevant) number of cases and that (b) there is (objectively) no object disconfirming the proposition that whenever H occurs S occurs too—or *if* there should be such an object then it could be at most the pertinent object itself, which would be designated by the technical term *pakṣa*. Against this background it is easy to see that the only theoretically sound basis for the *vyatireka*-requirement lies in the fact that no object must exist where lack of *probandum* and occurrence of *probans* are instantiated together, and this holds good exactly if the above universal statement containing a conditional ingredient possesses an import equivalent to:

There is no object x such that (x is numerically different from the *pakṣa* and) x exhibits H and x does not exhibit S

By supposing that the content of the first formulation in no way exceeds the content of the second one, not only the basis for the requirement of the existence of objects lacking the *probandum* is eliminated but also any motivation to hypothesize the existence of any specific link between *probans* and *probandum* vanishes. This contrasts with the way conditionals are usually understood in everyday contexts, where it is presumed that the items so connected must have ‘something to do with each other’. The lack of such ‘internal connection’ makes ordinary speakers reluctant to attribute truth to statements like

If roses fall from the moon, days are longer in winter than in summer.

or to admit that predicates (open sentences), such as

if x is a palm growing on the moon, then x is eaten by a dinosaur

should be true of every object (existing at present). But presumably the detachment of conditionals from the presupposition of an ‘inner connection’ is a vital prerequisite for grasping the most essential point of certain statements encountered in textual sources. This holds good in particular for the so-called *Sadvitīyaprayoga*, which has been an object of debate in recent times. Here the point is that, given that *probans* and *probandum* need not be ‘internally connected’, the requirement that no object exemplifies both *probans* and lack of *probandum*—together with other pertinent requirements—can be too easily satisfied permitting the derivability of queer consequences by intuitively sound principles. This entails that *if* one supposes that the *Sadvitīyaprayoga* should meet a condition of *vyatireka*²⁰ then any formulation representing its content with the help of a conditional requires a reading which violates ordinary principles of linguistic behaviour. However, as soon as one reflects on the possible theoretical motivation which is apt to bestow relevance on the concerned statement one can clearly discern that it is suited to address a problem which is a consequence of the intuitive notion lying at the root of doctrines of Indian theories of inference and the way in which the notion had been implemented at the time when the *Sadvitīyaprayoga* was made public.—It can be even presumed that it raises a much deeper issue than the considerations which were the starting point of *Navya-Nyāya*.—Thus any attempt to hypothesize for the example provided by the *Sadvitīyaprayoga* a satisfaction of a requirement of *vyatireka* formulated with the help of a conditional is doomed to thwart a grasp of the most essential point from the very outset if the pertinent formulation were assessed on the basis of ordinary ‘Sprachgefühl’ alone instead of bringing theoretical considerations into play.

One can easily anticipate the objection that an identification of a content with the help of theoretical considerations must be detrimental to the project of disclosing the import which the writer of a text or textual passage ‘intended to say’. Against this it can be retorted, first, that identification of a content with the help of theoretical considerations is not tantamount to a complete disregard of linguistic facts. It does not even exclude the consideration of assessments suggested by linguistic intuitions. It is merely postulated that ‘Sprachgefühl’ must never become the overriding criterion in the context of interpreting theoretical discourses. Second, the tenet that identification of what a writer actually intended is the only legitimate aim of exegesis can be questioned and it is not even universally acknowledged. Thus we can read the following remark in connection with an elucidation of a prominent doctrine of the Western logical tradition:

To avoid misunderstanding I must add one point about this proposed interpretation of the forms of the traditional system. I do not claim that it faithfully represents the intentions of its principal exponents ... We have yet to

²⁰ It deserves to be kept in mind that in the absence of sources presenting formulations of a *vyatireka* on the part of proponents of the *Sadvitīyaprayoga* the relevant question cannot be how their remarks concerning this issue should be interpreted but only what the content of a *vyatireka* should be if it were formulated.

consider how far the account here given of certain general sentences of common speech is adequate for all generalizations.²¹

The abstention from providing a faithful representation of intentions is not tantamount to introducing uncontrolled speculation. On the one hand the elucidation is committed to account for acknowledged theoretical connections, such as relations of entailment, incompatibility etc. assumed in doctrines which are the object of investigation. On the other hand, an assessment of the connections between the results of the analysis and ordinary usage is not completely left out of account. Rather such connections possess the potential of controlling the adequacy of the propagated interpretation even if it is not committed to the demand that imports attributed to expressions must exactly reflect ordinary usage. Instead of a decrease rather an increase of relevant types of criteria of control is the consequence in so far as verdicts suggested by ordinary usage and common intuitions are complemented by verdicts intimated by theoretical facts. Not interpretation which is not exclusively orientated by established linguistic usage is objectionable but at most a confusion between different issues and aims of interpretation.

It is, on the other hand, not imperative to completely sever the connection between the kind of exegesis exemplified above with respect to the import of the third condition in the canon of the so-called 'three marks of a reason' (*trairūpya*) as well as regarding the significance of *vyatireka* on the one hand and the objective of accounting for intentions on the other. First one cannot definitely discard the possibility that the writer of the *Nyāyapraveśa* actually intended to convey by the above quoted textual segment itself the thought that non-occurrence in any object lacking the *probandum* constitutes a requirement for the acceptability of an indicator no matter whether or not such objects exist. Thus the formulation would only exhibit a deficiency of explicitness. But even if it were supposed that this is not the case, it could be surmised that the envisaged elucidation reflects an intention because the notion of 'intention' permits several conceptions. Among those the idea of a disposition (at the time of writing a particular text or textual passage) to assent to an interpretation or at least to the truth of its content in the light of the writer's own views on a subject matter and other attitudes adopted by him represents a possible alternative. This would mean that, notwithstanding features of the formulation suggesting different conclusions, the creator of the text would be disposed to agree to the statement that his views would have been faithfully represented if instead of the actual wording a formulation were employed which expresses the envisaged content, e.g. the proposition that non-existence of an object exhibiting at the same time absence of *probandum* and existence of the *probans* constitutes an acceptability-requirement, in a completely non-equivocal manner. Maybe, a similar assessment could also be given for accounts as the one provided by Strawson for the traditional system investigated by him. In this case behaviour comes into play under the aspect of potential agreement or disagreement and the reasonability of agreeing or disagreeing under certain circumstances. At any rate, a more sophisticated implementation of the notion of 'intention' appears urgently

²¹ Strawson (1952) [1974], p. 179.

needed and the current idea of identifying what an author really thought is definitely too crude and unsuited for a delimitation of exegetical objectives because it involves unwarranted restrictions and confusions at the same time.²² Possibly the relevance of more refined concepts of intention is higher in contexts of textual interpretation than in connection with interpretation of isolated sentences, and this could signal a distinctive feature of textual exegesis in contrast to interpretation in ordinary life.

The contention that the need to postulate some or the other non-literal import is a pervasive feature of linguistic practice leaves undecided the question whether the principles of deriving a semantically enriched content from some linguistic meaning of a linguistic item are specific for specific linguistic communities. In the following we will attempt to substantiate the thesis that even granting that those principles *might* be exactly the same for all languages one cannot accept the thesis that explicit assessments of ways in which communicated contents are related to meanings, in as much as they are identifiable by current dictionaries and descriptive grammars, possess at best marginal relevance. For this purpose we will first reconsider the topic of previous discussions concerning a problem of exegesis of a crucial short passage in Dinnāga's *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti* and subsequently inspect a most recent publication dealing with the second chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*-s.

III

The distinctiveness of the issue which will be examined below resides in the circumstance that it concerns a question of interpretation on the sentence level, as in

²² The preceding remarks must not induce the impression that in the realm of interpretation there are no other potentially relevant aspects external to grammatical facts apart from considerations pertaining to the dimension of linguistic behaviour. On the contrary we are inclined to assert that for the determination of truth-conditions non-linguistic circumstances come into play even if concerned sentences should not contain (either overt or covert) indexical elements. We can safely assume that anybody asserting a sentence with the meaning of

It is night (now).

would assert a truth only if it is night within some particular region of the earth, which would usually comprise the place where the utterance of a pertinent sentence-token is made and that this holds good for any language and any speech-community in the world. But then the rule must be equally valid for sentences uttered by Indians of the Vedic period or by members of any communities of speakers who totally lacked the idea of a difference of time zones and were absolutely unaware of the circumstance that if night prevails in some, specifically in their own, area this does not hold true for many other regions at the same time. Although it appears odd to claim in view of this fact that speakers uttering sentences under the pertinent conditions 'really intended to convey' the thought that at the time of utterance it is night in their own region and accordingly equally problematic to assign to the concerned sentences a linguistic meaning containing some space-related indexical parameter, it might not be eccentric to assert that at least in *one* legitimate sense of 'mean' the pertinent utterances, or their producers, 'really meant' that it is night in some particular region at the time of utterance. Anyhow, it is plain that if we desire to assess the ('real') truth-conditions of such statements we need to take into account external circumstances not pertaining to linguistic behaviour or linguistic knowledge. This example belongs to a larger group of linguistic tokens permitting divergent answers regarding the question as to what should be considered as the content expressed by a sentence. As long as it cannot be definitely proven that similar situations cannot arise in the context of interpretations of texts dealing with theoretical subjects like grammar, philosophy or other sciences any sweeping rejection of bringing external aspects into play must be regarded as a major methodological fault.

the cases considered before, but on the other hand does not consist in a substantiation of a claim to the effect that some non-standard import should be attributed to a linguistic item. Rather the vindication of the contrary thesis that *no* deviant import should be hypothesized is at stake. This reveals a noteworthy difference between ordinary contexts of interpretation including many tasks of linguistic investigation and textual exegesis. It might even indicate that a philologist is more obligated to take rationality of linguistic behaviour explicitly into account than a linguist. Moreover, the following investigation will touch on a point which has been alluded to in the preceding paragraph only in a concealed manner: Different linguistic communities might adhere to deviant ideals of linguistic practice. Given that it is generally reasonable to adjust one's linguistic behaviour to norms and preferences prevailing in the group to which acts of communication are addressed we have to take into account possible deviances regarding the implementation of the principle of reasonability of linguistic practice. A remarkable facet of the matter is, however, that the advocated thesis implies that an author contravened in some regard an ideal which was (allegedly) acknowledged in the milieu in which he wrote, in the present case the ideal of maximal conciseness of expression.²³ The reason why no decisive weight is attributed to a possible objection based on this consideration is that the general idea of an ideal practice generates a plurality of ideals pertaining to various dimensions so that sometimes choices need to be made between different particular ideals. For the practice of textual exegesis this has the consequence that an interpreter advocating a thesis implying non-compliance with some ideal on the part of a writer acts irresponsibly if he discards as irrelevant the task of identifying alternative ideals which could have overridden a violated standard. It should be kept in mind that this obligation is more pertinent for exegeses of written documents than for interpretations of oral utterances.

A short section in the *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti* (PSV) which represents a commentary on Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (PS), presumably written by the same writer as the work commented on, has been a topic of debate on account of its presumed relevance for the interpretation of Dignāga's doctrine of the 'three marks of a correct reason' (*trairūpya*). The relevant passage of the PSV refers to PS 2.5cd. It was originally assessed on the basis of its translation into Tibetan, but with the help of secondary sources its wording in Sanskrit could be reconstructed with a pretty high degree of reliability. A reconstruction which has been presented not long ago in Lasic (2009, p. 19) reads as follows:

trirūpāl līngata iti yad uktam, tad vyākhyeyam.

anumeye'tha tattulye sadbhāvo nāstitāsati // 2.5cd //

anumeyo hi dharmaviśiṣṭo dharmī. tatra darśanaṃ pratyakṣato 'numānato vā uttarakālaṃ dharmasya sāmānyarūpeṇa. tajjātīye ca sarvatraikadeśe vā sadbhāvaḥ. kuta etad iti cet, tattulya eva sadbhāva ity avadhāraṇāt, na tattulye

²³ One might presume that the ideal of conciseness of expression in texts is related to a (conversational) maxim of avoiding prolixity in ordinary discourses. The crucial point is, however, that a conception and practice of conciseness prevailed in certain discourses which cannot be licensed by any ordinary maxim of conversation.

sadbhāva eva iti. na tarhi vaktavyam asati nāstitā iti. etat punaḥ asaty eva nāstitā, nānyatra, na viruddha iti niyamārtham.²⁴

The segment written here in bold letters represents the most crucial part in the present context of investigation.

The quoted passage might be rendered as follows:

That which has been said [before in the first verse, namely:] ‘through an indicator that possesses three characteristics’ has to be explained [now]. [Those characteristics are:]

Presence in the *anumeya* [i.e. the substratum of inference] and in that which is similar to it, non-presence in that which is not [this].

[This definition is appropriate], for²⁵ the *anumeya* is a property-locus qualified by a property. [Mark of a proper indicator is] its ascertainment there by perception or inference at a later time in the general form of the property, **and the presence in that which is of the same kind either everywhere or in a part of it. [If one asks:] ‘Why [is] this [so]?’ [the answer is:] ‘because it is ascertained that [its] presence [occurs] only in that which is similar, but not that only its presence [and not its non-presence] [occurs] in that which is similar. Thus it has not to be said ‘non-presence in that which is not’. This, however, has the purpose to determine that its non-presence [occurs] just in that which is not [this], not in that which is different [and] not in that which is contrary.**

In view of the quoted passage it has been contended that the writer of the text intended that the phrase which explains the second characteristic is to be understood in the sense of a phrase where the particle *eva* is inserted after the expression *tattulye*. In Lasic (2009, p. 10) a series of pertinent quotations are mentioned expressing this view:

... it is “easy to see that Dignāga meant to supply *eva* at least in the formulation of the second rūpa” (Katsura 1983, p. 16) ...

... “although the above verse formulation of *trairūpya* does not contain any *eva*-restriction, his own commentary [...] supplies *eva* at least in the second formula” (Katsura 1985, p. 163) ...

... “these passages clearly support our assumption that Dignāga had the restrictive particle *eva* in the second and third formulae” (Katsura 1985, p. 167) ...

... “we should read the restrictive particle *eva* into both the second and the third characteristics of the *trairūpya*” (Katsura 2000, p. 242) ...

²⁴ The concatenation symbols signalling *saṃdhi*-connections in Lasic’s text have been omitted here.

²⁵ The circumstance that the particle *hi* has been rendered here by ‘for’ ought not be understood as a reflection of the view that the expression *must* be understood in the sense which the word usually possesses in prose passages of philosophical treatises. For the subsequent discussions this question is irrelevant.

... “although Dignāga does not mention *eva* with reference to the third rūpa, it must be supplied” (Katsura 1983, p. 17).

The precise import of the cited passages and of formulations, such as ‘Dignāga meant to supply *eva* at least in the formulation of the second rūpa’, is not fully clear. For it has been acknowledged that in the pertinent segment of the PS which constitutes the object of the commentary the particle *eva* nowhere occurs. The quoted remarks surely do not advocate the view that the wording of the relevant section of the PS need to be amended. But it could be nevertheless surmised either (1) that some occurrence of *eva* has been intentionally omitted and that the phrase

tattulye sadbhāvo

possesses exactly the same literal meaning as

tattulya eva sadbhāvo

or (2) that the occurring formulation of the second characteristic has been meant to convey exactly the same import as the corresponding phrase with the particle *eva* and that this identity of import is generated by semantic enrichment or something similar to it. To be sure, omission of word material due to ellipsis is a pretty frequent phenomenon. It most typically occurs if expressions occur either in the same sentence or in some immediately preceding co(n)text which are not repeated but could be repeated without change of meaning, such as:

(9) Mary is healthy and happy = Mary is healthy and Mary is happy.

(10) Who came to the party last night?—Alfred and Mary = Alfred came to the party and Mary came to the party.

In the case of PS 2.5cd it appears, however, impossible to detect any occurrence of the particle *eva* whose occurrence in the surrounding co(n)text could have triggered a similar omission and it is not easy to discern any linguistic principle which would permit one to explain the non-occurrence of *eva* as the outcome of linguistic ellipsis. Hence it might be more appropriate to interpret the claims to the effect that *eva* should be supplied in the formulations of the second—and the third—mark of *trairūpya* as contending that the pertinent phrases possess some ‘pragmatically induced’ import which could be explicitly rendered by inserting the particle *eva* behind the expression *tattulye*—or behind *nāstitā*.

An issue which calls for clarification is due to the circumstance that the particle *eva* is employed in manifold ways, some of which can be represented in translations into English or some other languages by the employment of expressions synonymous with ‘only’ and others not. Without giving detailed evidence it can be presumed here that the proponents of the view that *eva* ought to be supplied believe that the relevant occurrences of *eva* are used in ways that could be rendered by ‘only’, or similar expressions, in English. But the word ‘only’ is itself used for conveying different imports. This holds true also for correlates in other language like German.²⁶ A distinction which needs to be observed in the subsequent

²⁶ See e.g. Altmann (1976).

discussion could be characterized as a difference between ‘quantifying’ and ‘scaling’ uses—or perhaps ‘meaning-ingredients’—of the word.²⁷ It can be illustrated by the following examples:

(11) Only Sieglinde came with us to Malaysia.

(12) Only *féw* students attended the lecture.

The distinctive trait of the quantifying variety is that its point could be explicated by a reference to a negated existential quantification like in the following paraphrase:

(11*) Sieglinde came with us to Malaysia, and there is nobody else than Sieglinde who came with us to Malaysia.

In contrast, the employment of ‘only’ in (12) highlights a relatively low value relative to a presupposed dimension of scaling or grading items, such as quantity or significance. One can presume that the two aspects of meaning are closely related and possibly the scaling notion is the most fundamental one. Anyhow, there are many sentences where both ingredients become virulent or where, even if one could suppose that only one of them is relevant, decisions between the different alternatives are almost impossible. These peculiarities are responsible for the fact that indeterminacies inhering in sentences containing *eva* can be transferred to target languages like English, German or others by employing ‘only’, ‘nur’ etc. What matters in the present connection is that the advocates of *eva*-supplementation seem to have only the quantifying import in mind, whereas linguistically no compelling need exist to attribute to the particle exclusively this significance. Since the correctness of the assumed hypothesis is not self-evident one could expect some justification for this assumption. As far as one can see, however, this question has not been addressed by the advocators of the thesis of *eva*-addition. Hence it is incumbent upon us to examine whether the presupposition is in fact justified. In this connection it has to be observed that the sense of sentences not containing expressions synonymous with ‘only’ generally differs from that of units containing such words with a quantifying import. Only special contextual factors permit one to derive that a speaker intends to convey a propositional content that could be represented by items containing ‘only’ implying a quantification. For example as an answer to the question:

(13) Who came with you to Malaysia?

a sentence like

(14) Sieglinde came with us to Malaysia.

could be interpreted as conveying that someone, called ‘Sieglinde’ went to Malaysia with the person who is asked, and that nobody else did. The crux is, however, that

²⁷ Albeit the given characterization is rather sketchy we assume that the present context of argumentation does not call for a deeper linguistic analysis of the phenomenon. It needs to be observed nonetheless that in the subsequent exposition ‘quantifying’ and ‘quantification’ are used to relate exclusively to first-order quantification (pertaining to objects).

with respect to PS 2.5 it is difficult to see, which contextual factors could induce a corresponding ‘semantic enrichment’ with respect to the clause in which the second condition of *trairūpya* is formulated. It might be objected that it is precisely the subsequent co-text in the form of the formulation of the third condition which furnishes the required basis. This argument is, however, fallacious. To be sure, if one is confronted with the sequence:

- (15) Sieglinde came with us to Malaysia, and nobody else came with us to Malaysia.

it can be gathered from the sequence *as a whole* that the producer of the pertinent linguistic token intends to state a content which could be formulated by (11). But this justifies neither the contention that the first phrase in the sequence is linguistically synonymous with (11)—in the pertinent reading—nor that this segment conveys an import which entails the truth of the import of the subsequent clause. Thus any allegation to the effect that the second element of the conjunction in (15) is or might be redundant is absolutely unjustified—*except* on condition that other co(n)textual factors induce a corresponding interpretation concerning the first clause, if, for example, a context makes plain the truth of the conditional proposition that *if* Sieglinde came to Malaysia then nobody else came to Malaysia too. But it is exactly the issue of a redundancy of the formulation of the third condition of *trairūpya* which triggers a controversy.

The proponents of the thesis of *eva*-addition admit that the formulation of the second mark of *trairūpya* is to be interpreted in a way which implies the information that the quality that functions as the *probans* in an inference does not occur anywhere in the domain of entities which do not exhibit the quality that has to be inferred. They assume, on the other hand, that the formulation of the third characteristic of *trairūpya* is not superfluous on another account, namely that of clarifying the intended import of the formulation of the second characteristic. In Lasic (2009), the following passages represent this view:

It might be argued that not only his writing “*nāstitāsati*” is admissible, but that indeed it can be regarded as indispensable for a proper understanding of “*tattulya eva sadbhāvaḥ*.” Without it, one cannot know with certainty how to interpret the intended *anyayogavyavaccheda*. (pp. 14–15)

Considering that Dignāga’s whole justification for giving a description of the third characteristic is based on the fact that it prevents possible misunderstandings of the dissimilar cases, which are expressed by the negation of the word for similar cases, ‘*tattulya*’ in PS 2.5 and ‘*sapakṣa*’ in PS 3.9, it is most convincing that one must supply the expression ‘*tattulye*’ to the last part of PS 2.5cd. (p. 15)

A problem arises due to the fact that the writer of the PS and PSV clearly acknowledges a distinction between occurrence of the indicator in some instances exhibiting the *probandum* and its non-occurrence in any instance lacking the *probandum*. This complies with the distinction which would be expressed if the

second characteristic were read without any *eva*. In Lasic (2009) an attempt to cope with this difficulty is outlined:

... whereas Katsura understands the *Vṛtti* as stating that one should read the particle ‘*eva*’ into the description of the second characteristic, he, at the same time, seems to prefer to understand the corresponding description of the verse without ‘*eva*’. This double reading is his attempt to solve the problem hinted at by Kitagawa, namely, that “while illustrating pseudo-*liṅgas* in *PSV* II. 6cd-7, Dignāga considers the cases when *liṅga* has the second *rūpa*, but not the third, and vice versa, which would be impossible if he regarded the two *rūpas* as logically equivalent” (Katsura 1983, p. 18). Katsura’s solution is that the reading without ‘*eva*’ reflects an earlier stage in the development of the *trairūpya*, and the reading with ‘*eva*,’ a later stage. (pp. 16–17)

Lasic considers—presumably rightly—as problematic the supposition that one and the same author in the same text should advocate on the one hand a position that merges the conditions two and three into one and on the other hand a position which requires a definite difference between them, even if the latter stance should correspond to a view which the writer held at a previous time and gave up later. On the other hand it is suggested in Lasic (2009) that this predicament could be surmounted by drawing a distinction which is depicted in the following passage:

Part of the difficulties we encounter when trying to understand *PS* 2.5cd together with its prose commentary and verses 2.6cd and 2.7 together with commentary is produced, I would think, by not neatly distinguishing between linguistic expressions on the one hand and the states of affairs they are meant to refer to on the other. If we understand the phrase “*tatulya eva sadbhāvaḥ*” as referring to the state of affairs that consists in the logical mark’s occurrence in the *sapakṣa*, and that this phrase at the same time gives some additional information concerning the logical mark’s absence in the *vipakṣa*, we may seem justified in holding that a separate phrase referring to the state of affairs that consist in the logical mark’s absence in the *vipakṣa* is redundant. Nonetheless, the fact that under certain conditions a single linguistic expression can somehow refer to two states of affairs does not necessarily prevent one from viewing these two states of affairs as distinct from one another ... Therefore, Dignāga can speak of pseudo-marks that are endowed with the second characteristic and lacking the third characteristic and *vice versa* in *PS* 2.6cd and the prose commentary thereon, without this necessarily contradicting his own explanation of verse 2.5cd. (pp. 17–18)

Despite the circumstance that certain formulations—such as the remark concerning the omission of ‘neatly distinguishing between linguistic expressions on the one hand and the states of affairs they are meant to refer to on the other’—are slightly opaque one can conjecture that Lasic has the following idea in mind: The fact that a linguistic item constitutes a single unit on the syntactic level, that it is, for example, a sentence phrase without sentence-connectors like ‘and’, ‘or’ etc., does not preclude that on the semantic level it corresponds to a concatenation of sentences.

This would merely reflect the view—and an observation that has been made long before²⁸—that expressions of the form

Only A is F

are equivalent to a conjunction expressible by a sentence of the form

A is F and there is nothing different from A which is F

provided that ‘only’ possesses a quantifying import.²⁹ Hence, given that a formulation, such as

The indicator occurs only in some similar instances

expresses a content which is in some way equivalent—or even identical (against the background of certain criteria of content-identity)—to the content of a formulation like

The indicator occurs in some similar instances and it is not the case that there is anything which is not a similar instance and in which the indicator occurs

it could be consistently supposed that single sentences containing an element synonymous with ‘only’ in its quantifying sense can represent two distinct requirements for the acceptability of an indicator. If this is a correct explication of the idea underlying the above quoted passage, it presumably highlights a most significant point and the difficulty which has been outlined in the preceding quotation (Lasic 2009, pp. 16–17) appears to be solvable on this basis.

Nevertheless, the account presented in Lasic (2009) does not address any of the four problems which I regard as the most decisive ones, namely:

- (1) The basis on which an import corresponding to the content of the formulation *tattulya eva sadbhāvo* could be derived either as the result of an ellipsis or as the outcome of ‘semantic enrichment’ remains unclear.
- (2) Supposed that the formulation in PS 2.5cd should convey an import which equals one that would be expressed by formulations exhibiting occurrences of *eva*, it remains difficult to understand why a corresponding less equivocal formulation has not been adopted.
- (3) The insertion of an explanation clarifying the way in which a formulation specifying a particular characteristic of a proper indicator should be understood is rather misplaced in a definition of the canon of the requirements which an acceptable indicator must fulfil.
- (4) It is extremely hard to see how the presentation of the third characteristic can actually perform the explanatory function which the proponents of the thesis of *eva*-addition hypothesize.

²⁸ This claim is supposed to go back to the work of Peter of Spain in the 1200s. I owe this information to an anonymous reviewer.

²⁹ A relatively early reference is represented by Horn (1969). The existence of a vast literature on this subject and of a multitude of views concerning the relationship between ‘Only A is F’ and ‘A is F’ as entailment, semantic or pragmatic presupposition, conventional or conversational implicature (or none of those), has been pointed out by an anonymous reviewer.

As regards (1) it could be objected that failure to identify any basis for deriving some enriched content does not necessitate the consequence that there *is* not such basis. This is true, but on the other hand, as far as one can see, the proponents of the thesis of *eva*-addition have not undertaken any serious effort to point out any possible basis which could satisfy the relevant demand. This criticism remains valid even if it were acknowledged as a possibility that the author of the PSV was careless inasmuch as he postulated an import whose existence cannot be vindicated on any objective ground. Moreover, the very threat of redundancy, admitted by the advocates of *eva*-addition, is potentially apt to block the derivation of the postulated content. If somebody utters e.g. the sentence

(16) Francis gave only a bottle of wine as a present and nothing else.

the fact that, supposed that ‘only’ possesses exclusively a quantifying import, the component ‘and nothing else’ could be regarded as redundant under the aspect of conveyed information is suited to induce a different interpretation assigning to the expression ‘only’ merely a scale-related significance. Thus the sentence is easily interpreted as communicating that in the pertinent situation the presentation of something additional or something more valuable than a bottle of wine ought be expected.—This deserves to be noted because it is by no means certain that *eva* in the context of *tattulya eva sadbhāvo* must convey a quantifying import. (We will revert to this point later.)

Regarding (2) it might be objected that ‘metrical constraints’ could have prevented a formulation in which *eva* explicitly occurs. But is it probable that the writer of the PS and PSV in the context of a definition of a central term acquiesced himself with presenting a wording that conceals his intentions in some important respect? And might not a formulation, such as

anumeye 'tha tattulya eva bhāvo na cāsati

or something similar have been suited for communicating the intentions which should be most essential according to the thesis of *eva*-addition?

The consideration which has been presented in Lasic (2009, pp. 17–18) according to our explication can provide a solution of the problem that the author of the PS acknowledged three major components of the canon of *trairūpya* and that he classified faulty reasons in accordance with violations of either the second or third requirement. It can hardly make intelligible, however, why the writer of the PS in the segment in which he explicitly declares his intention to explain the threefold nature of a valid indicator includes a phrase which should merely possess the function of explicating the intended import of some other phrase occurring in the definition. This weighs even more in view of the supposition that the particle *eva* which should be supplied possesses a quantifying import so that the content of the phase resulting by an addition of *eva* is equivalent to a conjunction to the effect that a proper indicator occurs in similar instances and does not occur in instances which are not similar to the *anumeya*. For it is exactly a conjunction of those propositions which the actual formulation most naturally conveys without any addition of *eva*. Hence the deliberation articulated in Lasic (2009) cannot suffice for dispelling the problem posed by (3).

Let us suppose that the formulation

tattulya eva sadbhāvo

in fact exhibits a relevant equivocation in so far as it does not allow for a decision of whether (i) the existence of a valid indicator must be excluded from instances which do not exhibit the *probandum* or whether (ii) it must be excluded from instances which are not similar in the sense of being dissimilar in some respect or the other or (iii) in the sense of being dissimilar in all respects or in as much as the concerned instances exhibit contrary properties like black and white. Then it remains mysterious how by an addition of the words

nāstitāsati

the crucial equivocation can be removed. For, as pointed out before, according to a most natural reading of the phrase, it would express the proposition that a valid indicator does not occur in some instance which is not that what a similar instance is, i.e. it is not a similar instance. Thus any equivocation pertaining to the import of ‘similar’ is transferred to the import of a term that is determined as its negated counterpart. If it were supposed, however, that the notion of similarity embodied by the term *tulya-* within *tattulya eva sadbhāvo* does not exhibit an indeterminacy in the pertinent respect, then it becomes difficult to understand why any additional elucidation of the intended relevant import is required at all. Here it could be objected that this does not disprove the possibility that the words *nāstitāsati* could perform the required function if they were associated with some other reading. But this manoeuvre possesses little value. For if the intended import of an expression should be explained by an expression which is itself equivocal then the practice of elucidation is definitely flawed. Therefore even the suggestion that the expression *asati* might include a concealed reference to the very first expression of the definition, viz. *anumeya-*, would not entirely disperse the inadequacy, if that expression possessed the import of *probandum*, so that the idea of non-occurrence of the indicator when the *probandum* is absent could be embodied by the expression *nāstitāsati*. As a matter of fact, however, the PSV explicitly stipulates that this is *not* the relevant import of the pertinent token—despite the fact that the lexical type *anumeya-* could designate a quality which has to be inferred. As the proposition that a proper indicator must not occur in objects different from the item which is technically called *pakṣa*—i.e. the property-bearer regarding which it should be ascertained by inference that it exhibits the quality to be inferred—is definitely untenable in the eyes of the writer of the PS and PSV, the supposition of a reference to the initial occurrence of the word *anumeya-* leads to the attribution of an utmost defective and incoherent linguistic behaviour to the writer of the text. All such problems would not even arise if one hypothesized an *eva*-free reading of the formulation specifying the second requirement of a valid indicator and thereby remove the very basis for a threat of redundancy.

One can anticipate, however, that the advocates of *eva*-addition might object that the passage of the PSV which reads

(*kuta etad iti cet,*) *tattulya eva sadbhāva ity avadhāraṇāt, na tattulye sadbhāva eva iti. na tarhi vaktavyam asati nāstitā iti*

vindicates their contention. This claim depends on doubtful premises. To be sure, if the sentence

tattulya eva sadbhāva ity avadhāraṇāt, na tattulye sadbhāva eva iti

ought express a proposition implying that the formulation *tattulye sadbhāvo* in the verse expresses that a valid indicator occurs only in similar instances then the affirmation of the proponent of *eva*-addition should be accepted. But precisely this supposition is questionable. If it were presumed that the formulation should furnish a comment regarding the wording of PS 2.5cd it is by no means compelling to assume that it must relate to the phrase *tattulye sadbhāvo* in particular, instead of the segment *tattulye sadbhāvo nāstitāsati* or even the entire second half of PS 2.5., i.e. *anumeye 'tha tattulye sadbhāvo nāstitāsati*. This would mean that the pertinent remark ought clarify that the parts relating to the question of the occurrence of an indicator in the domain outside the substratum of inference stipulate that a valid indicator must occur only in similar instances, but not necessarily in all similar instances. But it is not even mandatory to make the concession that the relevant sentence of the PSV embodies a comment on the wording of PS 2.5.cd at all. They could be equally well meant to present a general remark about the pertinent requirement in the domain outside the substratum of inference. According to current dictionaries the word *avadhāraṇa-* need not be used in the specific sense of 'restriction', but can also possess the import of 'ascertainment', 'determination', 'affirmation', 'emphasis'. But we can even grant that the token *avadhāraṇāt* in the PSV has been employed in a sense that involves a restriction. Thus it can be assumed that the above quoted segment could be employed for conveying a thought which would be explicated by the following paraphrase:

If one asks why the formulation *tattulye sadbhāvo* should be interpreted as saying that an indicator occurs either everywhere or in some part of the domain of similar instances, then the reply is that the occurrence (in the realm outside the *pakṣa*) of a valid indicator is to be determined in such a way that it occurs only in similar instances, but not in the way that it exclusively *occurs* in similar instances, i.e. that it must occur in all similar instances.

Apparently the advocates of *eva*-addition presuppose a particular 'semantic enrichment' differing from the above explication without demonstrating that they hypothesize the only possible reading or at least one that possesses decisively more plausibility than any other alternative. It is, however, difficult to see why this presupposition should be correct.

It might be thought that at least the occurrence of the subsequent phrase

na tarhi vaktavyam asati nāstitā iti

establishes the conclusion that the formulation *tattulye sadbhāvo* in PS has to be read in the sense of *tattulya eva sadbhāvo*, because under this assumption the possibility of a redundancy of the formulation which follows this segment in PS

2.5cd is intelligible. This argumentation is, however, equally faulty. First it deserves to be noticed that the threat of a redundancy could be equally discerned on the basis of an *eva*-free reading. If somebody utters the sentence

(17) Wild tigers can be found in Africa and Asia.

it is not unnatural to interpret him as conveying that Africa and Asia are the only continents where wild tigers can be found (at present). This results as a consequence of ‘semantic enrichment’ on the basis of the assumption that the speaker intended to impart a complete specification concerning the question of the existence of wild tigers in the world (at present). Now, since PS 2.5cd is explicitly characterized as embodying a remark specifying the conditions of validity of an indicator and since even without this explicit characterization it would be most natural to suppose that it should perform this function, it can be easily gathered that the statement ought provide a *complete* specification of the relevant conditions. Accordingly an omission of the component *nāstitāsati* is suited to induce the interpretation that a logical indicator has to occur in the substratum of inference as well as in similar instances and nowhere else. This holds good precisely because the second—and possibly also the first—requirement stipulate merely that an indicator must occur in some instances of the pertinent realm(s). On the premise that, for example

(18) Subways can be found in cities which have more than 100,000 inhabitants.

should not involve the claim that all cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants possess subways, and only then, it is derivable that the employment of the sentence ought convey that it is only in cities having more than 100,000 inhabitants where subways can be found at all. Thus it is false that the possibility of conveying redundant information on the part of the expression *nāstitāsati* exists only if the formulation *tattulya sadbhāvo* itself expresses that a valid indicator occurs only in similar instances. The reason why we do not presume that the writer of the text intends to refer to a possible redundancy of the subsequent expressions due to their dispensability on account of the circumstance that their content could be conveyed in the form of a pragmatically enriched import lies in the third and the fourth problems mentioned above. This possesses, however, the remarkable consequence that *if* the friends of *eva*-addition would succeed in making plausible that the assumption of secondary explanatory ingredients in a definition is not problematic and that by the addition of *nāstitāsati* the required elucidation of import can be successfully performed, *then* they undermine the support for their own contention that *eva* needs to be supplied.³⁰

It is apposite to consider the question of the possible advantages or disadvantages which additions of the particle *eva* to the actual wording of the PS could entail. On the one hand it seems that with respect to the formulation of the second

³⁰ Somebody might be tempted to object that if the formulation *anumeye 'tha tattulye sadbhāvaḥ* used for specifying all pertinent requirements of validity could convey that a valid indicator occurs in the *pakṣa* = *anumeya* as well as in some similar instances and nowhere else then the formulation *anumeye 'tha tattulya eva sadbhāvaḥ* should also be a possible means of conveying the same thought presupposing that the complex noun-phrase *anumeye 'tha tattulya* constitutes the ‘focus’ of *eva*. Against this it ought be retorted, first, that the advocates of *eva*-addition apparently have not envisaged this possibility but rather

characteristic an increase of cognitive content is achievable by adding *eva* immediately after *tattulye*, like in the wording which appears in PSV. This is the case if the particle possesses a quantifying import and this is the condition which causes the alleged threat of redundancy of the words *nāstitāsati*. It is doubtful, however, that those are the only consequences which an addition of the particle would entail. It has been presupposed up till now that the formulation

tattulya eva sadbhāvo

would have to be interpreted in the sense of

existence only in that which is similar to it

and not in the sense of

existence in that which is only similar to it

To be sure, as far as one can see, current descriptive grammars of the Sanskrit language do not address the question of whether or not the focus of the particle *eva* can lie in a constituent of a compound. Hence the assumption of the existence of this possibility cannot be authorized by reference to standard school grammars. But the supposition that a final element of a compound can constitute a focus of an immediately subsequent occurrence of *eva* is not implausible. Anyhow, if this possibility is realistic, then it must be equally possible that in the syntagma *tattulya eva sadbhāvo* the particle *eva* possesses a grading, scale-related import corresponding to the second paraphrase presented above. This would imply that the pertinent phrase could convey an import which would amount either to

existence in that which is exclusively similar to it, i.e. which is such that in every possible respect it is only similar and not dissimilar, i.e. which is similar in every respect

or to

existence in that which is merely similar to it, i.e. which is similar at least in *some* respect, such that it does not matter in which particular respect it is similar

This means that the domains that are complementary to that which is specified by the expression *tattulya eva* would be either a domain of all entities which differ from the substratum of inference in at least some respect or a domain of entities which are, so to speak, absolutely dissimilar, differing in every regard and thereby in some sense of the word ‘contrary’ to the item technically called *pakṣa*. As those two possibilities must be definitely ruled out because it ought not be stipulated that a

Footnote 30 continued

assumed that *eva* should be exclusively connected with *tattulye* in PS 2.5. Moreover, the suggestion that *anumeye'ha tattulye sadbhāvaḥ* should be read in the sense of *anumeye'ha tattulya eva sadbhāvaḥ* hypothesizing the alternative view concerning the focus of the particle equally generates the problem of redundancy whereas this difficulty does not arise at all as long as it is supposed that the phrase *anumeye'ha tattulye sadbhāvaḥ* in its actual context does not convey a sense which equals that of a formulation with *eva*.

valid indicator is not instantiated by items which merely differ from the substratum of inference or only by objects which are absolutely dissimilar a clarification of the intended import and interpretation would be urgently needed. Under the pertinent circumstances an addition would be necessary if it should be safeguarded that the phrase *tattulya eva* is understood in the appropriate sense of

existence only in that which is similar to it

The argumentative point of such a clarification could lie in the demonstration that the intimated idea that one could dispense with the words *nāstitāsati* by amending the existent formulation in PS 2.5cd by an insertion of the particle *eva* does not essentially improve the situation because even in this case a clarification would be mandatory to the effect that a valid indicator can occur, apart from the substratum of inference, only in similar instances, which are similar inasmuch as they exhibit the quality functioning as the *probandum*. The consequence is that an advocate of *eva* addition who assumes that the addition of the words *nāstitāsati* is a suitable means for making the relevant import clear undermines his own position even more by a rejection of the relevance of the difficulties (3) and (4) above.

The thesis of *eva* addition relies on the assumption that the formulation

na tarhi vaktavyam asati nāstitā iti

represents an objection to the effect that the existent formulation renders the remaining words of the verse redundant and that the subsequent passage in the PSV constitutes a reply to this objection by affirming that those words are by no means superfluous because they clarify the import of the immediately preceding words. Now, it is easy to see that the supposition that the above quoted words represent an objection is from a merely linguistic point of view absolutely unwarranted.³¹ For the expression *iti* occurring as the final element need not signal an objection—as it admittedly sometimes does—but is at any rate required for signalling that the expressions subsequent to *vaktavyam* refer to the content of that which allegedly should or could be said. Moreover, due to the fact that the expression *vaktavya-*embodies a modal ingredient the sequence *na tarhi vaktavyam asati nāstitā* exhibits a scope-ambiguity regarding the negation. This means that on the one hand the expression *could* be read in the sense of

Thus/Under these circumstances it is obligatory not to say *asati nāstitā*

but in can equally well be read in the sense of

Thus/Under these circumstances it is not obligatory to say *asati nāstitā*

If one supposes the latter reading the basis for viewing the formulation as representing an objection completely vanishes. As it had been clarified in the immediately preceding remark that the relevant determination of the occurrence of a valid indicator in the realm apart from the *pakṣa* merely requires that the *probans* occurs exclusively in the similar instances without requiring in addition that it occurs

³¹ Thereby a presupposition is withdrawn which I myself shared in an earlier discussion of the topic on the basis of the (presumably misleading) Tibetan translation—cf. Oetke (1994, 55 ff).

everywhere in that realm, it can be immediately gathered that precisely this import could be conveyed by a formulation which lacks the words *asati nāstitā*, namely

tattulya eva sadbhāvo

understood in the sense of

occurrence only in that which is similar

This means that the writer of the PSV frankly acknowledges that the same relevant purpose which is envisaged by using the words

tattulye sadbhāvo nāstitāsati

in PS 2.5cd could be equally realized by a formulation where the words *nāstitāsati* do not appear and instead *eva* occurs after the first expression. This contention is unassailable if the above mentioned explication of the content of sentences in which a noun-phrase occurs in the focus of ‘only’ possessing a quantifying import is correct—and, of course, given that *eva* can possess the same import. Thus one can also excellently explain the occurrence of the subsequent remark to the effect that the expression *nāstitāsati* stipulates that a valid indicator does not occur especially in the realm of objects which are not similar, but not that a valid indicator is not exemplified by objects which merely differ or are absolutely dissimilar. The point is that the circumstance that the words *nāstitāsati* should not convey a more specific import vindicates the affirmation that the formulation occurring in the verse could be adequately rendered by a formulation with *eva*. The consequence is just the opposite of that which the advocates of *eva*-addition suppose: Instead of claiming that in the actual formulation of PS 2.5cd some hidden element must be supplemented or that the expression by which the second requirement of *trairūpya* is presented must be interpreted in a sense corresponding to a formulation with the particle *eva*, the writer of the PSV intends to make plain that the formulation by which the occurrence of a valid indicator in the realm outside the *pakṣa* is specified could be also replaced by a formulation exhibiting an occurrence of *eva* without necessitating a deviance of cognitive content. Thus there is not the slightest basis for facing a possible reproach of redundancy. It is true that the author of the text does not tell us in the above quoted passage of the PSV why he prefers his formulation to an alternative exhibiting some occurrence(s) of *eva*. Given that he did not fall victim to the obsession that the worth of a formulation is always strictly proportional to the economy of word-material, one can suppose that the writer of the PSV considered his formulation at least as good as the possible alternative envisaged by him. But we can even go a step further and affirm that there is an objective reason to prefer the wording

tattulye sadbhāvo nāstitāsati

to

tattulya eva sadbhāvaḥ

For in contrast to the latter variant the former one immediately reveals that two different components are involved. In this way the claim that a valid indicator possesses a ‘threefold’ nature is put into relief by the formulation of PS 2.5cd. This

advantage is independent of the possible benefit of avoiding complications on account of non-quantifying readings of *eva*.

This must not imply that the author of the text regarded his own formulation as free from any equivocation. Presumably the circumstance that he undertook the effort to clarify the import of the third requirement represented by *nāstitāsati* in PS 2.5 indicates that he did not make this assumption. But if the above delineated account is accepted it follows that Dignāga did not employ a part of the definition for clarifying the sense or import of other parts within the same definition. Any kind of exegetical clarifications are relegated to the presumed auto-commentary which the author may have written after completion of the PS. This appears more plausible than the rival alternative embraced by the proponents of *eva*-addition.

It may be unavoidable to admit that the formulation of the present section in the PSV fails to be fully explicit. But otherwise the linguistic behaviour as well as the thoughts conveyed can be assessed as entirely consistent. Regarding underlying presuppositions the only belief which is particularly relevant for the above delineated account lies in the supposition that sentences of the form

Only that which is F is G

are—at least according to a most natural reading—equivalent³² to

That which is F is G and nothing which is not F is G

As this assumption is most plausible also in our eyes we are not obliged to find some specific explanation of why the writer of the text might have adopted the pertinent belief.

There is no need to insist that the thesis of *eva*-addition is definitely refuted. What matters is rather that an uncritical supposition of its truth or even inevitability depends on a neglect of linguistic phenomena (no matter how they are analysed from a linguistic perspective) which transcend the scope of language-specific descriptive grammars. The pertinent question which any interpreter of passages like PS 2.5 needs to address is:

What would one have to say about the behaviour of the author if the advocated interpretation were true.

It is the omission to raise this question at all which weighs more than having perhaps a wrong opinion about the matter. By explicitly focusing on differences between features of content assessable on the basis of purely syntactic and lexical criteria on the one hand and aspects requiring considerations of different sorts on the

³² The affinity between the two sentence-forms is surely stronger than material equivalence. Although the expressions 'logical equivalence' or 'cognitive equivalence' could be used to provide more specific characterizations of the relationship, given suitable explanations of those terms, we abstain from going into further details. In the pertinent argumentative context a more exact specification is in fact superfluous as long as it can be presumed that the writer of the text adopted a fully reasonable stance by regarding the actual formulation without supplementation of *eva* as a most suitable means for accomplishing the aim of providing an explanation of the relevant three validity-conditions in their actual context of occurrence, viz. PS 2.5.

other one can lay the foundations for a clearer identification of potentially relevant problems of textual exegesis.

In contrast to other situations the function of paying regard to aspects of reasonability in the present case does not lie in a *detection* of particular communicative goals. The decisive issue consists rather in assessing whether some non-obvious communicative goal exists at all. It is the circumstance that any stance on this question should be based on a justification which renders raising the above formulated question in an explicit manner mandatory and at the same time forbids to base any specific opinion about the matter on personal intuitions. Therefore the argument that communicative interactions can be successful without questioning linguistic intuitions is completely misplaced here.

We attribute importance to the circumstance that in the above advanced precept of textual exegesis the word 'behaviour' ought be taken as representing a broad concept which does not exclusively encompass linguistic behaviour, although the preceding exposition could evoke the impression that only the question of adequacy of employed means to intended purposes matters. For assessing with more clarity the correctness of this view it is appropriate to turn attention to interpretational issues which do not merely pertain to individual sentences. The very thought that compositional mechanisms are not effective in the same way on the level of units consisting of sequences of sentences as they might be operative on the level of individual sentences intimates that processes of understanding and criteria of assessing interpretations are not completely identical in both cases. Nevertheless, giving *a priori* verdicts in this regard is hardly acceptable and the conjecture that interpretation of sentences and exegesis of larger textual units exhibit significant similarities is surely not eccentric. Therefore an attempt to cast some additional light on the matter by investigating problems of exegesis of larger textual units should be apposite here.

IV

The wish to achieve a clearer picture about the role linguistic intuition and information provided by standard (descriptive) grammars plays for the exegesis of larger textual units, in particular in fields like philosophy, is not the only motivation for the subsequent investigation. To be sure, the initially outlined question of the methodological relevance of higher levels of understanding for (some or the other variety of) linguistic understanding is a persistent issue. But for the selection of the present topic a different circumstance is decisive.

It is a recurrent phenomenon in studies on Indian traditions of thought to relate them with contemporary topics of discussion. In the field of Indian philosophies, and Madhyamaka in particular, a significant amount of studies has attempted to establish that the writers of investigated texts dealt with philosophical problems which are in the focus of interest nowadays in the West. It is tempting to sweepingly dismiss those approaches as irrelevant on the ground that they are anachronistic. One ought in fact pay due regard to the fact that authors of the past did surely not intend to address their writings to a modern Western audience and that there need to

be at least one level of understanding which disregards contemporary ideas in so far as it aims at reconstructing the manner in which a work has been understood or could have been understood by individuals with which its author intended to communicate. Nevertheless, arguments dismissing the apparently anachronistic approaches on that account neglect two vital points: (1) There is not always a sharp boundary between intended and non intended addressees of communicative acts. In this respect oral communication deviates from communication in the written medium. Although in everyday oral conversations the range of addressees can be often exactly determined, this possibility does not usually exist if texts are concerned. (2) Unlike in ordinary discourses it must be presumed that authors of philosophical works intend to deal with topics which possess major relevance not confined to ephemeral occasions. Moreover the contention that some basic philosophical issues have retained their significance for centuries is not unfamiliar.

Seen in this light it appears that the approach of connecting ancient teachings and treatises with contemporary philosophical topics has an important point in its favour. By recognizing some subject-matter whose significance is not limited to a specific historical situation one is better legitimized to ascribe reasonability to the behaviour of a writer of the past in so far as he attributes relevance to his enterprise. If some question which appears relevant in the eyes of a modern interpreter were equally dealt with by some writer of the remote(r) past his attitude could be reasonable because the topic *is* relevant. But even if this were not the case the legitimacy of attributing reasonability is enhanced on account of the fact that if we, as interpreters, believe that something is relevant we can hardly classify as unreasonable the same attitude with respect to other people *except* on condition that their network of propositional attitudes is so different that it would not be warranted to take up the same stance on the basis of their presuppositions. But it should go without saying that the mere circumstance that some stance *could* be reasonable can by no means provide a sound basis for deriving the conclusion that some particular individual actually adopted the concerned stance. Moreover, even if it were assumed that somebody actually adopted an attitude or possessed dispositions conducive to its adoption it cannot be validly derived that he manifested this attitude at all, and even if its existence should be discernible in some way or the other it does definitely not follow that it has been propagated in some particular text.

The dubiousness of evaluating interpretations by the mere yardstick of affinities with familiar philosophical problems is indicated by the circumstance that the teaching of Madhyamaka as well as representative texts of this school have been connected by different Western scholars with various philosophical topics, such as epistemology, semantics, metaphysics, and with various prominent authors of the Western tradition like Kant, Wittgenstein, Derrida etc. Similar observations can be made regarding individual textual passages or chapters, in particular the section which will be investigated below. Obviously the postulate of relating pertinent texts to the Western tradition of thought can be satisfied in various ways leaving room for mutually incompatible assessments. Consequently one has to make a choice between the following alternatives: (1) One admits that a plurality of incompatible interpretations possesses the same degree of legitimacy although it is highly improbable that all of them are correct. (2) One attempts to search for additional criteria which together

permit at least a ranking in terms of relative preferability and in the ideal case an elimination of all alternatives except one. In view of the observation that rationality of behaviour can be implemented in different regards and ascertained in different dimensions the expectation that the realm of alternative interpretations might be assessed in a more differentiated manner appears realistic. However, the prospects of success in this regard depends on the readiness of broadening the conception of reasonability and of employing a comprehensive concept of behaviour which is not restricted to linguistic behaviour in particular. On the other hand, linguistic behaviour even in the form of its specific variety of the adequacy of formulations relative to communicative goals does not lose its relevance.

This permits to establish a link between interpretations of individual sentences and exegeses of texts without completely reducing the latter to the former. The connection exists partly due to the circumstance that identical mechanisms and criteria are operative even if their status can deviate. In the case of interpretations of philosophical or other scientific treatises consideration of the reasonability of regarding certain propositions as true in the light of the network of the remaining beliefs and experiences of an individual plays a role which deviates in some respect from the function such considerations play for interpretations of individual sentences. A distinctive feature of the former is that their relevance for linguistic disambiguation is less prominent. Nevertheless their role for the ascertainment of (possibly) intended imports is similar. On the other hand, exegetical tasks can be performed by employing devices which are not identical but analogous to tools usable for assessing imports on the sentence level. Whereas on the latter level the concept of the suitability of means to ends is naturally implemented as a suitability between employed formulations and communicative goals, exegetical undertakings can make avail of a different but analogous criterion in the form of the suitability of certain ways of reasoning for establishing particular tenets. It will become manifest in the framework of the subsequent investigation that this aspect can attain highest importance.

The preceding remarks are suited to corroborate the contention that linguistic intuitions as well as information provided by dictionaries and common grammars are even less apt to base interpretations on a reliable basis if exegetical undertakings pertain to more comprehensive units like texts or chapters of texts. Hence it should be expected that they are equally deficient means for evaluating explicit arguments which could be brought forward in favour of or in opposition to textual interpretations. A demonstration to the effect that this conjecture is in fact true constitutes an additional objective of the following investigation. Nonetheless, we are inclined to attribute higher significance to the circumstance that the subsequent considerations intimate that reading experience in some area alone offers extremely little help for settling most relevant problems of exegesis, at least in the field of philosophy.

Recently an article has been published by Dan Arnold (DA) which advances a novel interpretation of the second chapter of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā-s* (MMK).³³ Apart from offering a translation of the second chapter of the MMK together with Candrakīrti's commentary thereon the author of the paper intends to establish the contention that regarding the concerned chapter 'there is really just one

³³ Arnold (2012).

straight-forward kind of argument on offer' and that he himself presents an interpretation of the pertinent text which is more straightforward than other competitors, including an exegesis of the text which I advocated on several occasions. It can be established beyond any doubt that DA's claim that he proposes a 'straightforward' exegesis is untenable and it appears also improbable that his reading is more straightforward relative to other competitors. This alone cannot, however, refute the assumption that the interpretation offered in Arnold (2012) is correct. The circumstance that lack of straightforwardness does not entail lack of correctness holds good on account of various reasons:

- (1) Being straightforward or being not straightforward or being more or less straightforward is a quality which is in principle relative to an individual interpreter. Existence or lack of information is, among others, a relevant factor determining whether some way of understanding is assessable as straightforward or not or as more or less straightforward compared to other alternatives. Thus somebody who does not possess particular pieces of information which are pertinent in a context of utterance will be forced to consider some possibility of interpretation as not straightforward for him, whereas a different verdict would be possible for an individual who possesses more relevant information.
- (2) Being straightforward is a property that is relative to some particular dimension or set of dimensions. Thus a way of understanding might be straightforward in some respect on account of the circumstance that it hypothesizes for particular linguistic units readings which they usually convey and might be not straightforward in some other respect due to the circumstance that the content of the linguistic item containing those units as parts is highly unfamiliar or most difficult to assess—such as in the case of a difficult mathematical proof. It goes without saying that the same can also hold good the other way around, that is to say that an interpretation implies that a familiar or simple thought content is conveyed presupposing highly unusual readings for certain linguistic items.
- (3) The rule that a producer of a (written or oral) linguistic token possesses a content which can be in a most straightforward manner derived from its conventional (linguistic) meaning has at best the status of a default. Most important factors which can prevent the achievement of an optimal compliance between conventional meaning and intended import even on the part of somebody who uses his native language are (a) failures of performance (not finding an appropriate word at some time, mispronunciation or mistakes of orthography, syntactic or semantic mismatches due to inadvertence etc.), (b) impossibility of realizing an ideal of straightforwardness on account of objective reasons, such as objective unfamiliarity of the content intended to be conveyed, objective imperfections of the employed language relative to the pertinent content (lack of appropriate terminology, pervasiveness of linguistic ambiguities etc.), (c) need or (felt) obligation to comply with different ideals at the same time (for example employing ways of expression which are not only suited for conveying some intended content but also satisfy aesthetic demands or special conventions such as a particular metre), (d) non existence of an

intention to communicate at all in a most straightforward manner (for example due to the wish of being *not* easily understood by subjects who are considered as ‘outsiders’).

- (4) Straightforwardness is a matter of context. If one considers the sequence of sentences

(19) Paul went to a symphony-concert yesterday evening. He said that the conductor is a young promising talent.

a reading according to which the expression ‘the conductor’ should refer to the person who conducted the orchestra at the concert which Paul attended on the previous day is surely most straightforward. If we consider, however, a sequence like

(20) A: What did Paul do yesterday, and, by the way, what did he say the other day about the new conductor of his orchestra?

B: Paul went to a symphony-concert yesterday evening. He said that the conductor is a young promising talent.

it is presumably more straightforward to interpret the occurrence of ‘the conductor’ as relating to the conductor of the orchestra in which Paul plays himself, and this is, presumably, a different person than the conductor in the concert which he attended.³⁴ Hence the validity of principles which determine most straightforward ways of understanding might themselves possess the status of defaults.³⁵

³⁴ Sentence (19) has been adapted with slight variations from an example that has been presented in a talk (given by P. Schumacher) in the linguistic department at the university of Stockholm. The phenomenon of the contextual relativity of such context-induced interpretations has, however, not been addressed there.

³⁵ In addition to this one must pay proper attention to the appropriateness of the criteria by which degrees of ‘straightforwardness’ are assessed. One can plausibly suppose that in the area of argumentative treatises the degree of plausibility and ‘straightforwardness’ of a particular exegesis tends to diminish in proportion to the number of controvertible premises on which tenets would have to rely if the concerned interpretation should be correct. On the other hand it would be faulty to suppose that *every* increase of the number of assumptions which are considered in some context as (formally) relevant for the derivation of a proposition entails a decrease of straightforwardness regarding an interpretation. In this connection one must strictly differentiate between properties of an interpretation and properties of its analysis and its exposition. A conclusion *C* might be presented alternatively as a consequence of the two assumptions *A* and *B* or as a consequence of the single assumption *A & B*. This difference of presentation need not reflect any substantial difference regarding the logical connections between the concerned propositions. Moreover, and this is even more decisive, the number of assumptions deserving to be taken into consideration in an explicit form depends on the specific purposes of an analysis. In particular contexts of analysis it is appropriate to take into consideration both controversial and non-controversial assumptions which support a conclusion or even make it logically derivable (according to certain standards of logical derivability). A possible objective can lie in identifying the most problematic premises on which a particular tenet would depend if it were established in some way or the other and in segregating those premises from other less controvertible assumptions. The ensuing increase of premises coming into play is under those circumstances not an effect of particular features of the textual exegesis that is being advocated but rather an outcome of the context of analysis. Hence it cannot be validly concluded that such qualities pertaining to the *depiction* of a subject-matter affect the issue of the degree of straightforwardness of some particular textual exegesis. It appears that DA did not duly acknowledge the differences outlined above.

A ‘straightforward’ consequence of the above presented considerations is that not only interpretations could be correct which are not straightforward, at least in some respects, but that also the other way around a straightforward interpretation can be false. It follows that the truth of the interpretation presented in Arnold (2012) would not be conclusively established even if it were assumed—at least for the sake of argument—that it presupposes a reading that is more ‘straightforward’ than any other (real or imaginable) competitor. As a matter of fact, however, there are strong reasons supporting the supposition that the exegesis advocated in Arnold (2012) fails to do justice not only to the author of the MMK but to the commentator Candrakīrti as well.

Some difficulty is presented by the circumstance that certain characterizations given in Arnold (2012) concerning the ‘straightforward kind of argument’ allegedly presented in the second chapter of the MMK do not permit a straightforward interpretation. This holds good in the first place for the portrayal to be found in the ‘Abstract’ according to which the ‘basic argument ... essentially has to do with whether a *personal* level of description will admit of an exhaustively impersonal explanation’ (Arnold 2012, p. 553). Nevertheless, in the introductory chapter of the article several more specific descriptions occur which could clarify the issue. It is asserted that:

In particular, Nāgārjuna is consistently arguing simply that any attempt to *explain* the phenomenon of motion—any attempt to give us an “ultimately real” (*paramārthasat*) explanatory grip on this eminently familiar and basic action—turns out itself to be intelligible only insofar as we already understand motion. (Arnold 2012, p. 555)

and:

More specifically, with respect to such questions (which must be answered if we are to understand what motion “really is”) as *where* motion takes place, Nāgārjuna invariably argues simply that any attempt to individuate such a space will turn out to make reference to (what we’re supposedly trying to explain) motion. (Arnold 2012, pp. 555–556)

Moreover it is said that:

... the significance of Nāgārjuna’s arguments against motion (as those are to be understood according to Candrakīrti) similarly comes down to the question of how we are to understand the relation between two sides of any supposedly explanatory statement regarding motion. The governing question of *MMK* 2, then, is simply this: *where does motion take place?* What the arguments of this chapter show, with respect to all of the candidate answers—such as (chiefly) that “motion takes place in a space presently being traversed”—is just that whatever figures, as explanation, on one side of such a statement cannot, in fact, give us an ultimate explanatory grip on the other side. (Arnold 2012, pp. 562–563)

and:

Candrakīrti will develop this point by showing that any such statement will be intelligible only insofar as *both* sides thereof involve some reference to an

“act expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ ” (*gamikriyā*)—which is simply to show that a non-question-begging explanation of motion cannot be given. (Arnold 2012, p. 563)

The author regards the arguments of the second chapter of the MMK as a part of a more general and comprehensive project. For it is also affirmed that:

‘Going’ is only used as an example to demonstrate the general impossibility of action (*kriyā*).” This can be taken to recommend the conclusion that in arguing that a non-question-begging explanation of motion cannot be given, Nāgārjuna is above all advancing the case for thinking more generally that non-question-begging explanations of personal phenomena cannot be given. (Arnold 2012, pp. 559–560)

I think the significance of such arguments is evident if they are understood in light of the question (always overriding for Mādhyamikas) of how (and how not) to understand the Buddhist doctrine of selflessness. Thus, on my reading the guiding question for Nāgārjuna is always whether it could make sense to think the *conventionally real*—which, I take it, most significantly picks out what we can characterize as a *personal* level of description—might be explained by any of the essentially impersonal categories proposed by other Buddhist Ābhidharmikas as “ultimately real.” And to show that constitutively *personal* phenomena cannot finally be explained in exhaustively *impersonal* terms is to show, I take it, something of great philosophical interest. (Arnold 2012, p. 557)

... Rather similarly, the characteristically Buddhist reference to “two truths” can be taken to consist, in its basically Ābhidharmika iterations, in the idea that two fundamentally different kinds of existents can be enumerated: the set of “conventionally existent” (*saṃvṛtisat*) things is the set of temporally enduring macro-objects (paradigmatically, *persons*) that figure in ordinary experience and in the common-sense view of the mental (in what the cognitive-scientifically inclined often call “folk psychology”); the set of “ultimately existent” (*paramārthasat*) things is the set of *dharmas*—the impersonal ontological primitives that alone “really exist.” The characteristically Ābhidharmika claim (at least on Nāgārjuna’s understanding thereof) is that causal interactions among these exhaustively explain all conventionally real phenomena; a complete account of persons can therefore be given with reference only to impersonal *dharmas*.

With regard to this, Nāgārjuna can be said to have recognized that the ontological primitives posited by Abhidharma could have explanatory purchase only if they represent an exception to the rule that everything is dependently originated; dependently originated existents would be ultimately explained only by something that does not itself require the same kind of explanation in turn. But it is precisely the Mādhyamika point to emphasize that there is no exception to this rule; phenomena are dependently originated all the way down. Chief among the senses in which this is so, I want to emphasize, is that proposed explanatory categories invariably turn out to be

dependent, for their intelligibility, *on the phenomena they are invoked to explain*; the explananda, that is, can never be thought finally to drop out of any explanation. For all explanations to be (as Nāgārjuna is most concerned to emphasize) themselves dependently originated is, then, for them to depend particularly upon *the perspective from which any explanation must be offered*—and the perspective from which even putatively “ultimately true” explanations are offered is, necessarily, itself that of “conventionally” described experience.

It makes a significant difference, then, that the conventionally described phenomena paradigmatically in view are *persons* or *selves*; indeed, the difference this makes is just what I want to bring out by suggesting that we understand “conventionally real” here to refer, above all, to a *personal* level of description ... (Arnold 2012, pp. 558–559)

If one combines the different quotations one arrives at the conclusion that the author presumably intends to ascribe two major claims to the writer of the MMK—or at least to this writer as seen by the commentator Candrakīrti, namely

Thesis 1: Items occurring on the ordinary, non-ultimate level cannot be exhaustively explained by items on the ultimate level because even the latter ones are dependently originated.

Thesis 2: Items on the ultimate level must be dependently originated because for their intelligibility they depend on the phenomena they are intended to explain.

It is important to keep those theses strictly apart because if thesis 1 should be correctly ascribable to any proponent of Madhyamaka it could still hold good that thesis 2 cannot be correctly ascribed. In view of certain remarks to be found one *could* presume that the second thesis amounts to a fairly uncontroversial claim and should therefore be safely attributable to Nāgārjuna and his followers. This would be indeed true if thesis 2 embodies only the following idea:

If one entertains the thought that some phenomenon on some non-ultimate level can be *explained* by the supposition of events or states-of-affairs of items pertaining to some other, more fundamental level, one is committed to acknowledge (at least in a certain sense of the word) the existence of the explained phenomenon. Otherwise it would be inconsistent to hold that the latter provides an *explanation* of it. Moreover, the notion of something’s providing an explanation of some phenomenon requires some grasp or understanding about what the concerned phenomenon is because otherwise we could not possess the very idea of the phenomenon as something which can be explained. In this sense it might be said that our understanding of the concept of an explanation of a particular phenomenon supposedly occurring on some level requires some assessment from the *perspective* under which the *explanandum* can be identified and thus some grasp about the level on which the phenomenon is supposed to occur.

The crux is that if it were supposed that the writer of the MMK merely intended to point out certain conceptual issues regarding explanation it would be extremely

difficult to understand why he wrote this text and why he addressed the topic of motion as well as items such as origination, substance and attribute, perceptual faculties and many others. Therefore it appears also little probable that Candrakīrti, who wrote a long commentary explaining and defending a host of complicated arguments, shared the assumption that Nāgārjuna's treatise boils down to this single issue. It is probable, however, that even DA does not think that the argumentative goal of the text lies in an elucidation of the idea of explanation as an *explanandum* of conceptual analysis. Several remarks intimate rather that the issue of giving explanations of phenomena, in particular of persons, constitutes the topic of the text and that situations are at stake where persons and other items, specifically motion, function as *explananda*. Especially the first of the above presented quotations seems to rule out any other view.

It remains nevertheless unclear which concept of 'explanation' DA has in mind. For one can easily recognize that there are at least three types of explanation which are potentially relevant even with respect to Buddhist thought. They can be illustrated regarding the phenomenon of motion, the undisputed topic of the investigated chapter of the MMK. We could refer to the first two varieties by the terms 'conceptual explanation' and 'theoretical explanation' respectively and illustrate their difference. Concerning the former one an explanation of motion could read as follows:

(EC1) Motion (of an object O) is a change of position (of O) relative to some other objects (different from O) during the course of time.

or

(EC2) An object O moves from A to B in some interval T exactly if in any pair of intervals t_1 and t_2 which do not overlap and are intervals within T it holds true that whenever t_1 is located earlier in time than t_2 , then O is closer in space to A in t_1 and closer to B (and less close to A) in t_2 [and it holds good that there is a temporal segment immediately prior to any initial segment of T during which O persists in A and there is a temporal segment immediately posterior to any final segment of T during which O persists in B]³⁶

In contrast an explanation on the basis of the Buddhist theory of momentariness might read as follows:

(ET1) Motion (of an ordinary object O) is (in reality) the causation of a collection of momentary entities (due to whose existence O appears to exist and persist) by another collection of momentary entities (due to which O appears to exist at a prior time) at some different place.

or

An (ordinary) object O moves from A to B in some interval T exactly if in any pair of subsequent minimal temporal units t_1 and t_2 within T it holds true that

³⁶ The additions in squared brackets account for a stronger concept of motion from one place to some other which, in contrast to the weaker notion, rules out that an object merely transverses a space between two points.

a collection of momentary entities occurring in t1 causes the origination of a different collection of momentary entities (due to which O appears to exist and persist) in t2 at some different place closer to B and farther from A than before [and it holds good that there is a temporal segment immediately prior to any initial segment of T during which a collection of entities occurring in A causes the origination of another collection of momentary entities in A and there is a temporal segment immediately posterior to any final segment of T during which a collection of momentary entities occurring in B causes another collection of momentary entities in B, such that due to the pertinent collections O seems to exist and persist]³⁷

A third type, which can be termed ‘causal explanation’ could be illustrated by:

(EU) O moves because it has been pushed by A. / A movement of O occurs because O has been previously pushed by A.

Presumably this variety is not relevant in the present context.

It is not required to analyse the explanations in more detail and possibly with greater precision. This could merely lead to additional complications which are irrelevant because the basic ideas lying behind the distinctions should be sufficiently clear. If the contention in Arnold (2012) should be correct, then the purpose of the second chapter of the MMK—and similarly in other chapters of this work—should lie in the demonstration that either a conceptual or theoretical or both types of explanation must exhibit the property that the phenomena or ‘categories’ to be explained ‘turn out to be constitutively dependent upon the very phenomena they purportedly explain’ (cf. Arnold 2012, p. 559), *provided* the author of the article does not have some altogether different—not explicated—type of explanation in mind. Since the truth of this contention is surely not self-evident—and since one would rather think that the opposite should be true—it must be conceded that the result of the concerned chapter of the MMK would be philosophically relevant, if it succeeded in establishing this outcome. The crucial question is, however, whether the second, or any other chapter, of the MMK successfully proves that contention and whether it is at all envisaged by the author of the text.

In the introductory section of the article DA attempts to demonstrate that his analysis is corroborated by other chapters of the MMK, specifically by the third chapter of the MMK and certain parts of Candrakīrti’s commentary, the *Prasannapadā*. However, no convincing evidence is provided by those references. DA points out that much of the discussion in the third chapter parallels arguments occurring in the second chapter of the MMK and writes:

So, in *MMK* Chap. 3, where he considers the explanatory value of the sense faculties (*indriyāni*), Nāgārjuna argues that it makes sense neither that a sense faculty called *sight* (*darśana*, from the verbal root $\sqrt{dṛś}$) is the agent of seeing, nor that something that is *not* sight (*adarśana*) is such. Much of the discussion

³⁷ It might be noted in passing that the above delineated explication faces the problem of providing an account of the identity and difference of spatial units relative to different times without presupposing the existence of (at least some) objects persisting in time.—But this issue is certainly not addressed in the MMK.

parallels arguments we will see in chapter two; with respect, for example, to verse 3.5's claim that neither sight nor non-sight could be what sees, Candrakīrti thus explains the reasons for this: "Nāgārjuna's point is that it doesn't make sense, first of all, that there be—on the part of an eye whose essence is *sight*, and which is connected with an act expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{dṛś}$ —an additional connection with an expression like 'it sees'; this is because there's the entailment of two acts expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{dṛś}$, and hence the entailment of two *seeings*. Nor does *non-sight* see, because of its being, like a finger-tip, devoid of any act of seeing." (Arnold 2012, p. 560)

Here the quotation at the end of the cited segment relates to a passage in Candrakīrti's commentary on MMK 3.5ab. This reads as follows:

Vallée Poussin 1970 (LVP) 115,14 *darśanasvabhāvasya tāvad dṛśīkriyāyuktasya bhūyaḥ paśyatīyādīnā saṃbandho nopapadyate / dṛśīkriyādvayaprasaṅgāt, darśanadvayaprasaṅgāc ca / adarśanam api na paśyati, darśanakriyārahitatvād aṅgulyagravad ity abhiprāyaḥ*

Apparently the commentator says here that the correlating segment of the MMK means that for something possessing the 'own-nature' of seeing (*darśana*) that is (already) equipped with an action of sight a connection with the expression 'it sees' and thus the postulation of a connection with an additional seeing is not appropriate because the existence of two acts of sight and two 'seeings' would result as an unacceptable consequence; on the other hand something that does not possess the nature of seeing cannot see either because it lacks any action of seeing like a finger-tip. This supports indeed the contention that considerations occurring in the second chapter possess parallels elsewhere. It does not show, however, that the third chapter 'considers the explanatory value of the sense faculties' (cf. Arnold 2012, p. 560) or that Candrakīrti believed that this is the issue here. That assumption is not even warranted by the subsequent context which is considered in the article and regarding which the following is said:

Here, though, it's relevant for us to note especially that Candrakīrti goes on to anticipate an objection just such as an Ābhidharmika might press: "Others think that this is merely dharmas, originating as inactive, that have originated; hence, no one at all sees any object at all, since there's simply no action. Therefore, what you've established—that 'sight doesn't see'—is already established." That is, Nāgārjuna's claim isn't novel or interesting for an Ābhidharmika, who will simply yawn and say that *of course* there's not really any agent who "sees"; after all, the whole point of Ābhidharmika analysis is to show that what we experience as *persons who act* really consist simply in impersonal ontological primitives (*dharmas*), the causally describable occurrence of which effectively explains away all of the things (such as *action*) that are thought to obtain at a personal level of description.

To this objection, Candrakīrti responds in a way that's consistent with the characterization of Madhyamaka that I have ventured here: "If there were no action (which is integral to the common-sense view), then there could not be

‘mere dharmas,’ either, since, like flowers in the sky, they would be devoid of any action; how could mere dharmas be devoid of action? So, if we’re talking about commonsense reality (*vyavahārasatyam*), action would have to be accepted just as much as ‘mere dharmas’; if, on the other hand, there is consideration of the real (*tattva*), then you have to accept that mere dharmas don’t exist any more than action does.” (Arnold 2012, pp. 560–561)

These remarks are again related to a passage in Candrakīrti’s text which reads as follows:

LVP 116, 4 *ye tu manyante nirvyāpāraṃ hīdaṃ dharmamātram utpadyamānam utpadyata iti, naiva kiṃcit kaścid viṣayaṃ paśyati kriyāyā abhāvāt tasmād darśanam na paśyatīti siddham etat prasādhyata iti / atrocyate / yadi kriyā vyavahārāṅgabhūta na syāt, tadā dharmamātram api na syāt, kriyāviraहितatvāt khapuṣpavad iti kutaḥ kriyārahitaṃ dharmamātram bhaviṣyati / tasmād yadi vyavahārasatyam dharmamātravat kriyāpy abhyugamyatām, atha tattvacintā tadā kriyāvad dharmamātram api nāstīti bhavatābhyupagamyatām*

It is true that the author here refers to an objection which could be raised by proponents of Buddhist Abhidharma saying that in their (i.e. the Ābhidharmika’s) opinion a mere *dharmā* possessing no action arises so that it never holds true that somebody sees something, so that the consequence expressed by the words ‘a seeing does not see’ is perfectly compatible with their assumptions. But from Candrakīrti’s reply it can be gathered that if no action (or operation) (*kriyā*) existed³⁸ then a mere *dharmā* could not exist either, because it would be without action (or operation) like a flower-sky. Hence if a non-final level of truth, a level of ordinary transaction (*vyavahārasatyā-*) is at stake then an action (or operation) should be accepted in the same manner as a mere *dharmā*.³⁹ If a level of ultimate reality is considered, however, then the opponent should acknowledge that neither act (or operation) nor a mere *dharmā* exists.

The argument that someone who advocates the existence of mere *dharmā*-s is obliged to recognize the existence of actions or operations might, and probably does, rely on the consideration that even a *dharmā* must possess some causal efficacy and thus some action or operation (*kriyā*) because the supposition of a *dharmā* possessing no action and no causal efficiency is tantamount to supposing its non-existence. After all a central tenet advocated by various Buddhist philosophers is that causal efficacy is the hallmark of (physical) existence. Thus the expression *kriyā* in the present passage could be a mere variant of the term *arthakriyā* which occurs, among others, in the context of proofs of momentariness propagated by Dharmakīrti and others. Hence it is unwarranted to presuppose without any argument that the word *kriyā* has been used in the present context in the ordinary

³⁸ The import of the expression *vyavahārāṅgabhūta-* in *yadi kriyā vyavahārāṅgabhūta na syāt* is not completely clear. It might have been employed in order to convey that acts (or operations) must be acknowledged at least (and at most) on the level of *vyavahāra*, i.e. on that level of reality where particulars are assumed to occur.

³⁹ Or: If the level of truth of worldly transactions should possess mere *dharmā*-s then also an action or operation should be equally admitted (?)

sense of ‘action’ or that it must designate a concept whose application is restricted to the level of everyday experience. Neither the contention that the existence of persons and actions performed by personal subjects need to be acknowledged nor the assumption that any explanation must at least implicitly refer to objects recognized in ordinary life finds support in the pertinent textual passage. Nevertheless, DA continues by adding the following remark:

Action (kriyā), then, is “integral to the common-sense view” (*vya-vahārāṅgabhūtā*); it must therefore remain in view if we are so much as to think it’s the common-sense view that we are explaining or understanding. Moreover, insofar as it’s only *from* the common-sense point of view (from, that is, a first-person perspective) that even such actions as *understanding or explaining the common-sense view* make sense, there can be no making sense of the idea that such actions might “really” consist only in impersonal dharmas. If, then, there is a point of view somehow beyond the person-level of description (if there is “consideration of the real”), it cannot coherently be specified as really consisting in something altogether different (or autonomously intelligible apart) therefrom. (Arnold 2012, p. 561)

It deserves to be noted that the segment beginning with ‘moreover’ does not possess any parallel in the text and it is not even attempted to show that it could be corroborated by any remarks to be found elsewhere in the MMK or Candrakīrti’s commentary. Instead DA contends that ‘Candrakīrti elaborates the same point with particular clarity in his commentary on MMK 9.5’ and writes:

Here, something (called a *sprout*) is brought into view (*abhivyajyate*) by a cause known as a *seed*; and, some cause (called a *seed*) is brought into view by that effect—such that we say ‘this is the one’s cause, this is the other’s effect.’ In the same way, something (having the nature of a *self*) is brought into view by any impersonal basis (*upādāna*) such as sight; this is the latter’s *appropriator* (*upādātṛ*). And, some impersonal basis (such as sight) is brought into view by any self; this is the latter’s *impersonal basis*. In that case, there can be establishment of impersonal basis and appropriator only as mutually entailing. But if it’s accepted that an impersonal basis like sight is separately constituted, without any appropriator, then that, being without a basis, is *unreal*. Therefore, there’s no establishment of either one of these; neither does it make sense that an appropriator is established separately from such impersonal bases as sight. (Arnold 2012, p. 561, footnote 29)

This is declared as a translation of a passage of Candrakīrti’s commentary *Prasannapadā*, which in the original reads as follows:

LVP 194, 3 *iha bījākhyena kāraṇena kiṃ cit kāryam abhivyajyate ’ṅkurākhyam, tena ca kāryeṇa kiṃ cit kāraṇam abhivyajyate bījākhyam asyedaṃ kāraṇam idam asya kāryam iti // evaṃ yadi kenacid darśanādikenopādānena kaś cid ātmasvabhāvo ’bhivyajyate, asyāyam upādāteti / kenaccātmanā kiṃ cid upādānaṃ darśanādikam abhivyajyate, idam asyopādānam iti / tadānīṃ syāt parasparāpekṣayor upādānopādātṛoḥ siddhiḥ // yadā tūpādātāraṃ vinā*

*prthag-siddham darśanādikam abhyupagamyate, tadā tan nirāśrayam asad eva /
tasmān nāsty ubhayaḥ api siddhiḥ / iti na yuktam etad, darśanādibhyaḥ prthag
avasthitaḥ upādāteti //*

The crux is that the rendering presented by DA almost certainly rests on a mistaken syntactical analysis of the passage beginning with *evaṃ yadi*. It appears hardly deniable that the conditional clause reaches till *idam asyopādānam iti*. Thus the import of the quoted segment can be (freely) paraphrased as follows:

In the case of a cause like a seed some effect, called ‘sprout’ is manifested and also the other way round a cause called ‘seed’ is manifested (as such) by this effect, so that one can say: ‘This is its cause [and] this is its effect’. *If* in the same manner something possessing the nature of a self is manifested by some object of appropriation like seeing etc., so that one can say ‘this (i.e. this self) is its appropriator’, and [if] by some self some appropriated object, such as seeing, is manifested, so that one can say ‘this is its object of appropriation’, *then* there could be a basis for assuming the existence of both an appropriator and an appropriated object as something depending on each other. If, however, seeing etc. are acknowledged as something separately existing without an appropriator then that [seeing etc.], being without a substratum, is [in fact] nothing but non-existent, and consequently there is no basis for both of them, i.e. neither for the self as an appropriator nor for something appropriated by it; and for this reason it is not appropriate to suppose that an appropriator occurs separately from seeing or other possible objects of appropriation.

Thus the pertinent passage does not render any support for the contention that the writer of the text might have acknowledged the existence of a Self as something which is related to some object of appropriation in the same manner as a seed and a sprout, admitting that those items necessarily depend on each other. It is merely the rendering presented in Arnold’s text which could wrongly evoke such an impression. There is equally no basis in the text either for the thought that ‘it does not make sense’ that an appropriator is established separately from impersonal bases, if this should mean that a Self as an appropriator cannot be *explained* without reference to some ‘impersonal basis’ or for the contention that the ‘impersonal bases’ for a Self cannot be explained without referring to the notion of a Self.⁴⁰ The

⁴⁰ It should be noted in particular that in DA’s rendering of *tadānīm syāt parasparāpekṣayor upādānopādātroḥ siddhiḥ* by ‘in that case, there can be establishment of impersonal basis and appropriator only as mutually existing’ the expression ‘only’ does not possess any explicit correlate in the original text. Thereby a thought which harmonizes with DA’s general outlook is intimated by surreptitiously adding a semantic ingredient which is not traceable in the wording of the textual source. Moreover, the paraphrase of *iti na yuktam etad ... iti* by ‘neither does it make sense that ...’ is in no way supported by the original formulation. Accordingly the view that the text propagates the tenet that a relation of ‘mutual entailment’ between an appropriator, specifically a Self, on the one hand and objects of appropriation in the form of actions of seeing etc. on the other hand needs to be acknowledged as the only acceptable alternative is completely unwarranted.—In consideration of the context it can be safely assumed that the argumentative aim of the passage consists in disproving the possibility that a *pudgala* as an ‘appropriator’ exists prior to all the objects which he ‘appropriates’, such as (acts of) seeing, hearing etc., and appropriates (at some particular time) those entities as items which themselves possess independent existence.

wording of Candrakīrti's text intimates rather that seeing and other acts or faculties cannot *exist* without some substratum and that the assumption that those items might occur without an appropriator or possessor is not tenable. However, this does *not* vindicate the contention that in the eyes of the writer of the *Prasannapadā* a Self needs to be acknowledged (as an indispensable basis of explanation).⁴¹ Since, as far as one can see, the introductory section in Arnold (2012) does not contain any textual evidence that problems of explanation are an issue in the third or some other chapter of the MMK or anywhere in Candrakīrti's commentary, support for this contention could at best be obtained from the examination of the chapter dealing with motion which is the focus of the article as a whole.

The claim that Nāgārjuna, and following him Candrakīrti, argue that a non-question-begging explanation of motion is impossible, appears in DA's elucidation of the initial segment of Candrakīrti's comment on MMK 2.1. The pertinent section of the MMK plus Candrakīrti's commentary reads as follows:

MMK 2.1 (LVP 92, 7)

*gataṃ na gamyate tāvad agataṃ naiva gamyate /
gatāgatavinirmuktaṃ gamyamānaṃ na gamyate //*

LVP 92, 9 *tatparatagamikriyam adhvajātaṃ gataṃ ity ucyate / āviśyamānaṃ
vartamānagamikriyayā gamyata ity ucyate / yad gataṃ uparatagamikriyaṃ tad
vartamānagamikriyāyogavācīnā gamyata ity anena śabdenocyamānaṃ asambadd-
ham iti kṛtvā gataṃ tāvad gamyata ity na yujyate / tāvac chabdena ca
pratiśedhakramaṃ darśayati //*

Regarding this it is said in Arnold (2012, p. 565):

The expression “act expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ ” renders Candrakīrti's compound *gamikriyā*, which might also (reasonably and less clumsily) be rendered simply as “act of motion.” Insofar, however, as *gami* is the Pāinian meta-linguistic term for referring to “the root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$,” I have rendered this expression (recurrent throughout Candrakīrti's commentary on the chapter) in such a way as to disclose the explicitly semantic key in which Candrakīrti reconstructs much of this chapter's argument. On Candrakīrti's interpretation, then, Nāgārjuna's basic argument—viz., that a non-question-begging explanation of motion cannot be given—is expressed in terms of conditions of the intelligibility of the words that must be used in any proposed explanation; the main point, then, will be that an *act expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$* must show up in any supposed explanation thereof. That an act of the same kind we're supposed to be explaining thus shows up on *both* sides of any explanatory sentence just means that any such sentence must finally presuppose (and hence cannot explain) precisely what is at issue.

⁴¹ This conclusion could only be derived under the premise that the writer of the text attributed to the objects of appropriation (*upādāna*)—in DA's terminology ‘impersonal basis’—the status of entities existing on a level of final analysis. But precisely that assumption is contentious.

Obviously the above quoted passage in Candrakīrti's commentary contains merely an explanation of the import of the first three (four) words of MMK 2.1, viz. *gataṃ na gamyate (tāvad)*. According to this elucidation the expression *gata-* designates a space where an action of movement has come to an end and the expression *gamyate* is predicated of something which is affected by an ongoing (present) act of motion; it is not suitable to say that something which has been traversed before (*gata-*) is being traversed (*gamyate*) because it is incoherent that something where an action of movement does not occur any more is characterized by a word expressing a connection with some movement in progress; (the expression *tāvad-* signals the order of refutation). This does not contain the slightest indication of the idea that 'a non-question-begging explanation of motion cannot be given', that 'an act expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ must show up in any supposed explanation thereof' that 'an act of the same kind we're supposed to be explaining thus shows up on both sides of any explanatory sentence' and that accordingly any sentence purporting to give an explanation 'must finally presuppose (and hence cannot explain) precisely what is at issue'. To be sure, Candrakīrti attempts to explain the import of the initial words of the verse and obviously tries to show why they express something true. But ought we suppose that by explaining the meaning of words or demonstrating the truth of some statement one advocates the thesis that non-question-begging explanations are impossible? Or should we assume that the proposition that an act expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ must show up in any supposed explanation thereof or something of this sort is conveyed in the above quoted passage as the outcome of some semantic enrichment? Then it must be fair to ask, how this 'enriched' import is derivable from the words (and their conventional meanings) in a manner that is not absolutely capricious.

Neither the remarks explaining the contention that a space not yet traversed can be traversed, corresponding to *agataṃ naiva gamyate* in the verse,⁴² nor Candrakīrti's comments pertaining to the second half of MMK 2.1, concerning *gatāgatavinirmuktaṃ gamyamānaṃ na gamyate*, provide any support for the 'enriched' reading propagated by DA. The elucidations explaining the second half of the verse, which read

LVP 93, 4 *gamyamāne 'pi nāsti gamanaṃ yasmāt*

gatāgatavinirmuktaṃ gamyamānaṃ na gamyate //

iha hi gantā yaṃ deśam atikrāntaḥ sa tasya deśo gato, yaṃ ca nātikrāntaḥ so 'syānāgataḥ / na ca gatāgatavyatirekeṇa tṛtīyam aparam adhvajātaṃ paśyāmo gamyamānaṃ nāma / yataś caivaṃ gamyamānaṃ na gamyate, gamyata iti na prajñāyate, tasmān nāsti gamyamānaṃ / ato na tadgamikriyayā āviśyate na gamyata iti nāsti gamyamāne 'pi gamanaṃ //

⁴² This passage of Candrakīrti's commentary reads as follows:

agataṃ api na gamyate / agataṃ hy anupajātagamikriyam anāgatam ucyate, gamyata iti ca vartamānaṃ, ato 'nāgatavartamānayoḥ atyantabhedād agataṃ api gamyata iti na yujyate / yady agataṃ kathaṃ gamyate 'tha gamyate na tad agataṃ iti //

have been translated in Arnold (2012, p. 566) as follows:

Motion isn't present in a space *being traversed*, either, since (as Nāgārjuna says) "nor is the *being-traversed* (as distinct from the first two options) traversed." For in this case, that space which an agent of motion has crossed is *traversed* by him, and that which he hasn't crossed is *not-yet-traversed* by him. But we don't see any third space (as distinct from the already-traversed and the not-yet-traversed) which could be characterized as "*being traversed*." And since, that being so, a space *being traversed* is not traversed—i.e., it isn't known of this that "it is traversed"—therefore it is not *being-traversed*. Hence, not being affected by an act expressible by the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$, it is not traversed; there is, then, no motion in a space *being-traversed*, either.

It deserves to be noted that the sequence

yataś caivaṃ gamyamānaṃ na gamyate, gamyata iti na prajñāyate, tasmān nāsti gamyamānaṃ

appears to possess an import which could be paraphrased as follows:

And since in this manner something which is being traversed is not gone/discerned, 'gone' is/means is not discerned, therefore something which is being traversed does not exist.

Thus the phrase *gamyata iti na prajñāyate* would serve to clarify that in the phrase *gamyamānaṃ na gamyate* occurring in the verse the constituent expression *gamyate* is interpreted as conveying (in combination with the negation *na*) that something, and in the pertinent case something which is being traversed, is not discerned (*prajñāyate*). If this reading should be correct then the rendering

And since, that being so, a space *being traversed* is not traversed—i.e., it isn't known of this that "it is traversed"

appearing in Arnold (2012) would not convey the decisive point in a suitable manner. Anyhow, Arnold's translation of

tasmān nāsti gamyamānaṃ

by

therefore it is not *being-traversed*

clearly manifests that the expression *asti* has not been understood as possessing an existential import by him, but rather as a copula. One might wonder, why this analysis has been preferred although a reading of the phrase in the sense of

therefore something that is being traversed does not exist

seems to be most 'straightforward'. The circumstance that Arnold has not even envisaged this possibility appears to lie in his general outlook concerning the argumentative import of the second chapter of the MMK and of Madhyamaka-teaching in general. For if the overriding aim of the discussion about movement should lie in the establishment of the tenet that movement cannot be explained away

in a non-question begging way and that accordingly common-sense phenomena deserve to be acknowledged, then the supposition that Nāgārjuna or Candrakīrti claim the non-existence of something which is being traversed threatens to undermine the cherished interpretation. But an existential interpretation of *asti in tasmān nāsti gamyamānaṃ* is not merely most natural in itself but possesses also the advantage of harmonizing with the subsequent context.⁴³ For the point of the subsequent remarks in Candrakīrti's commentary is obviously that an objection could be raised to the effect that the existence of an item which is being traversed must be acknowledged because it can be identified precisely with the space covered at some particular time by the foot of somebody who walks. This objection is rejected on the basis of the argument that a foot is 'in reality' only an aggregation of its constituent parts, such as the atoms of which it consists, and furthermore any part, as for example atoms consist in their turn by other constitutive parts, so that neither a foot nor any part of it can exist as independent items whose existence could be admitted in the final analysis and accordingly a space or region which is covered by some foot or its part cannot exist either. Thus any space covered by the foot itself or any part of it has to be considered as being simultaneously traversed and not yet traversed. To be sure, the sequence

LVP 93, 10 *naivam, carañayor api paramāñusāṃghātavāt / aṅgulyagrāvasthitasya paramāñor yaḥ pūrvo deśaḥ sa tasya gate 'ntargataḥ / pārṣṇyavasthitasya caramaparamāñor ya uttaro deśaḥ sa tasyāgate 'ntargataḥ*

has been rendered in Arnold (2012, pp. 566–567) by

But this isn't so, since the foot, in turn, is reducible to atoms. That space which is in front of an atom situated at the tip of the toe is included in what is *not-yet traversed* by the foot; that space which is behind the atom situated at the back of the heel is included in what is *already-traversed* by it.

Presumably, however, the words *pūrva-* and *carama-* should relate to the temporal dimension so that the expression *pūrvo deśaḥ* designates the space which has been already traversed previously, i.e. the space lying behind the tip of the toe, and the expression *uttaro deśaḥ* the space to be traversed later, i.e. the space lying in front of the backmost part of the heel.⁴⁴ In this manner the entire region covered by the foot is simultaneously a prior and a later region and thereby both included in that which has been already traversed and that which is not yet traversed (at any arbitrary time), and Candrakīrti's objective is to point out that the adversary's proposal leads to this

⁴³ Even considered in isolation the formulation

a space *being traversed* is not traversed—i.e., it isn't known of this that "it is traversed"—therefore it is not *being-traversed*

appears pretty odd. Should we suppose that the writer of the *Prasannapadā* wanted to derive the proposition that a space *is* not being traversed from the premise that it is not *known* of space that it is traversed, where the formulation 'it is not *known* of space that it is traversed' ought amount to the same as the formulation 'a space being traversed is not traversed'?

⁴⁴ An equivalent way of looking at the matter is to suppose that the space to be traversed is envisaged under the aspect of the direction of movement, so that *pūrva-* corresponds to 'previous' and *uttara* to 'following'—which represent possible translation-equivalents according to standard dictionaries.

consequence. If this is correct then Arnold's rendering obliterates a major point of the argument. Anyhow, it appears very probable that Candrakīrti intends to establish here that (ultimately) nothing exists which possesses the quality of being something that is being traversed—or rather that something that is being traversed cannot exist without being at the same time something already traversed as well as not yet traversed (which would account for the expression *gatāgatavinirmuktaṃ* in MMK 2.1).

MMK 2.2, which reads

(LVP 93, 17)

*ceṣṭā yatra gatis tatra gamyamāne ca sā yataḥ /
na gate nāgate ceṣṭā gamyamāne gatis tataḥ //*

is interpreted by DA in accordance with Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* as formulating an objection. Though this reading is not mandatory, as far as MMK 2.2 itself is concerned, it is not implausible and apparently no major distortions are threatening with respect to the exegesis of the chapter as a whole if this understanding is accepted. Apparently the content of the verse is that motion and the activity (*ceṣṭā*) of somebody who moves must be located at the same place and b) this activity (*ceṣṭā*) has to take place in that which is presently being traversed and not in something already traversed or to be traversed later.⁴⁵ The segment of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* relating to this verse is fairly short and reads as follows:

LVP 94,1 *tatra ceṣṭā caraṇotkṣepaparikṣepalakṣaṇā / yato vrajato gantur yatra deśe ceṣṭā gatis tatraiva deśe, sā ca ceṣṭā na gate 'dhvani sambhavatī nāpy agate kiṃ tu gamyamāna eva, tataś ca gamyamāne gatiḥ / yatra hi gatiḥ upalabhyate tad gamyamānaṃ, tac ca gamikriyayā āviśyate / tasmād gamyamānaṃ eva gamyata iti // eko 'tra gamir jñānārthaḥ, aparas ca deśāntarasamprāptyartha iti //*

In this connection crucial importance pertains to the circumstance that DA renders the segment

tasmād gamyamānaṃ eva gamyata iti // eko 'tra gamir jñānārthaḥ, aparas ca deśāntarasamprāptyartha iti

Therefore, a space *being-traversed* is, in fact, understood; here, *one occurrence of the verbal root √gam has the sense of awareness, and the other has the sense of acquisition of a different place.* (Arnold 2012, p. 568)

and derives far-reaching conclusions from this. Among others the following comments are given by DA:

⁴⁵ If therefore MMK is taken as representing an objection it could be considered as an attempt of invalidating the (previously expounded) argument to the effect that a region that is being traversed cannot exist. The thought would be that since it is (allegedly) an indubitable fact that activities of movement pertain to regions which are being traversed, such objects, i.e. regions which are qualified as being traversed, must also exist. It is a pervasive feature in Candrakīrti's commentary to present individual verses as objections or as presupposing objections against preceding pieces of reasoning to the effect that certain sorts of objects cannot exist.

... we have here (in the concluding phrase that I've italicized) the only point in his commentary on *MMK* 2 where Candrakīrti explicitly suggests that *gamyate*, as it occurs in the last quarter of Nāgārjuna's first verse, might be understood not as "is traversed," but instead in the epistemic sense that the same root not uncommonly has. While Candrakīrti may, however, thus seem to provide warrant for the Tibetan translation of 2.1d, it would be a mistake to conclude that Candrakīrti himself therefore endorses this—as suggested by Bhattacharya, who says, apropos of the first verse: "Perhaps because of Nāgārjuna's qualification of *gamyamānam* as *gatāgatavinirmuktam*, the early commentators interpreted *na gamyate* at the end of the fourth *pāda*, as 'it is not perceived,' 'is not known.' Candrakīrti follows this interpretation."

As against Bhattacharya's conclusion, it matters that Candrakīrti here invokes the different senses of this verbal root *in stating the view of an objector*; that is, the voice here represented as exploiting the distinction is that of someone who is trying, *contra Nāgārjuna*, to salvage the idea that the locus of motion *can*, in fact, be individuated. The imagined objector's point in equivocating on *gamyate*, moreover, would seem to be to circumvent precisely the problems that will be raised by the immediately ensuing verses—to avoid the problem, that is, of vacuously making reference to "motion" on both sides of the proposed explanatory statement. Candrakīrti and Nāgārjuna will rejoin, though, by arguing precisely that uses of the verbal root \sqrt{gam} , as those must figure in any proposed explanation of motion, have whatever purchase they do only insofar as they refer to acts of motion; the present interlocutor's evasion is therefore unsuccessful. The present appeal to the verbal root's different senses is not, then, to be taken as something Candrakīrti himself endorses; indeed, the immediately ensuing argument makes sense as refuting precisely the equivocation his imagined objector has just introduced ... (Arnold 2012, pp. 568–569)

DA's understanding of the above quoted segment affects even his interpretation of *MMK* 2.3, which reads (according to LVP 94,6)

gamyamānasya gamanaṃ kathaṃ nāmopapatsyate /
*gamyamāne dvigamanaṃ yadā naivopapadyate //*⁴⁶

Commenting on this verse DA writes:

... Nāgārjuna's point here is that "some individual can be said to have a property only if it is at least conceivable that it lacks that property." (Arnold 2012, p. 570)

⁴⁶ DA's rendering of this verse by:

How in the world could it make sense that motion belongs to a space *being-traversed*, when it makes no sense at all that there be a space *being-traversed* that is yet without motion?

presupposes the reading *gamyamānaṃ vigamanaṃ* instead of *gamyamāne dvigamanaṃ*, which occurs in LVP. Even if the former reading might be preferred as representing the original wording of the verse more faithfully, it is by no means certain that it accords with the reading hypothesized in the *Prasannapadā*. Since this issue is not relevant in the present context, it need not be discussed further.

and further

Note especially, in this regard, that the concessive phrase with which Candrakīrti introduces verse 3—“Even if it’s conceived that way” (*evam api parikalpyamāne*)—immediately follows the equivocation on the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ that’s introduced at the end of Candrakīrti’s commentary on the preceding verse; it’s clear, then, that it’s particularly *the appeal to the equivocal sense of $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$* that Candrakīrti now takes to be targeted by verse 3. Thus, Candrakīrti now adds that *even if* it makes some sense to say, in virtue of the presence of motion in the same place where there is the *activity* of moving, that “it is understood” that a space being-traversed is the locus of motion, there is nevertheless a problem with taking that proposal to give us an ultimate explanatory grip on the phenomenon of motion.

The problem, Candrakīrti now suggests, is that the subject on the left-hand side of the clause (“the space *being-traversed*”) is only *explained* by the predicate on the right-hand side if the latter tells us something about what “motion” is. Insofar, however, as the imagined objection of verse two depends on the right-hand side’s using the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ in a different sense, the predicate clause (“is understood,” on that reading) turns out to tell us nothing about the locus of motion; only a usage of the root in its primary sense of “motion” could do so—but the opponent’s proposal in verse two deprives us of just this possibility. It doesn’t help, then, to think there might be only one reference to an act of motion in the sentence. If there is a real reference to motion *only in individuating the subject-side of the clause* (only in individuating, that is, the space *being traversed*), then nothing can be added to our understanding of *motion* by the right-hand, predicate side of the expression; the predicate *gamyate* (“is traversed”/“is understood”) says nothing at all, in other words, if it doesn’t also make reference to motion—if this usage, Candrakīrti says, is one from which reference to motion has “disappeared.” It can’t be the case, then, that the candidate answer to the question of where motion takes place—“the space *being-traversed* is traversed/understood”—makes reference to motion only on the subject-side of the expression.

This characterization of the argument has the advantage that it makes good sense of the immediately ensuing verses (as Candrakīrti understands them) ... (Arnold 2012, pp. 570–571)

If one joins the different remarks to be found in Arnold (2012, pp. 568–571) one is driven to the conclusion that DA understands the sentence *tasmād gamyamānam eva gamyata iti* in Candrakīrti’s commentary on MMK 2.2 in the sense of

that which is being traversed is understood

where the term represented by ‘that which is being traversed’ should function as an *explanandum* and the term represented by ‘is understood’ as its *explanans*. Maybe DA has been induced to adopt this reading by a particular understanding of the expression *iti*, supposing that the pertinent phrase expresses a thought which amounts to:

that which is being traversed is that which the expression ‘it is understood’ expresses

If that should be the case then the entertained supposition would be surely odd. For, if the concerned phrase should express a definition, then a plausible result would be obtainable at best, if the expression *gamyate* were taken in its more usual sense, so that the sentence would express a content equal to

that which is being traversed is that which the expression ‘it is traversed’ expresses

As it is assumed in DA that the relevant sentence occurs within an objection this must mean that a strange argumentative move has been attributed to a possible adversary. Therefore it could be presumed that this *cannot* correctly reflect DA’s intentions. On the other hand, however, DA’s translation of the subsequent phrase

eko ‘tra gamir jñānārthaḥ, aparas ca deśāntarasamprāptyarthaḥ iti

intimates that he understands the remark as attributing to the expressions *gamyamānam* and *gamyate* within the phrase *gamyamānam eva gamyata* divergent meanings, such that, in the light of the later remarks, a meaning in the sense of ‘that which is being traversed’ is assigned to *gamyamānam* and a meaning in the sense of ‘is understood’ to *gamyate*. Even on the hypothesis that the two expressions related to the verbal root \sqrt{gam} possess different meanings corresponding to different senses of the verbal root itself, the circumstance that the import of ‘traverse’ should be assigned to the root in *gamyamānam* and the import of ‘understand’ to the root in *gamyate* and not the other way round is surprising because the order of the two phrases *eko ‘tra gamir jñānārthaḥ* and *aparas ca deśāntarasamprāptyarthaḥ* would fit the latter alternative assignment, and it is difficult to detect a reason, why the writer of the *Prasannapadā* has in fact chosen this order if he really intended to convey the assumed import. Anyway, the supposition that the expressions *gamyamānam* and *gamyate* in the crucial sentence have to be taken in different senses is, to put it mildly, doubtful. First it deserves to be noted that the addition of ‘occurrence of’ does not possess any equivalent in the original formulation. Thus it could be surmised that the final sentence in the comment on MMK 2.2 expresses merely the general remark that one meaning of the root \sqrt{gam} is knowledge and the other acquisition of a different place. On the other hand, it could be argued that due to the occurrence of the expression *atra* (‘here’) a basis for hypothesizing a corresponding ‘semantic enrichment’ exists. Even if this is admitted the interpretation assigning different imports to *gamyamānam* and *gamyate* in the immediately preceding phrase is not obligatory. It cannot be presupposed that the expression *atra* relates to the immediately preceding sentence instead of referring to the preceding context as a whole. In view of the fact that the considerations in the *Prasannapadā* pertaining to the second half of MMK 2.1 are obviously meant to establish the contention that something which is being traversed is not known, i.e. does not exist—as clarified by the phrase LVP 93,8 *gamyata iti na prajñāyate*—or at least does not exist separately from that which has been traversed and that which will be

traversed later, it is not improbable that Candrakīrti intends to convey that the expression (*na*) *gamyate* in the last quarter of MMK 2.1 should be interpreted, or has been interpreted by him, in the sense of ‘is (not) known’, whereas the usual sense of ‘go’ or ‘traverse’ must be attributed to expressions derived from the root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ in other contexts. The formulation does not imply that there is exactly one occurrence of a word derived from this root possessing the latter sense. It is, however, not unlikely that according to the writer of the *Prasannapadā* the expression *gamyate* in the phrase LVP 93, 16 *gamyata eva gamyamānam*, which is used by Candrakīrti for formulating the thesis of the adversary whose objection is presented in MMK 2.2, as well as all words related to this root within MMK 2.2 and the correlating remarks in the *Prasannapadā* should be understood in this sense. Thus the contention that Candrakīrti ‘invokes the different senses of this verbal root in stating the view of an objector’, that the ‘imagined objector’s point in equivocating on *gamyate*’ is ‘to circumvent precisely the problems that will be raised by the immediately ensuing verses’, namely the problem of ‘vacuously making reference to “motion” on both sides of the proposed explanatory statement’ would be unwarranted and DA’s criticism of Bhattacharya’s view is completely unjustified. The reason why Candrakīrti—or even other commentators—have envisaged the possibility that *gamyate* in the second half of MMK 2.1 has been employed in the sense of ‘is not known (to exist)’ presumably lies in an attempt to distil a more subtle argumentative structure by assuming that the expression *vinirmuktaṃ* embodies a restrictive qualification, so that the argument runs that something which is being traversed cannot be known as existing independent of that which is already traversed as well as that which is not yet traversed and that moreover even if the impossibility of an independent existence of something presently traversed were not taken into account it would still hold good that something which is being traversed cannot be traversed (at the same time by the same subject). Whereas the first impossibility is accounted for in the second half of MMK 2.1 the second impossibility constitutes the topic of MMK 2.2 and the subsequent verses—according to Candrakīrti. To be sure, it is not mandatory to attribute this intention to the author of the MMK himself because a consistent sequence of thoughts could be even conveyed if the last word in MKK 2.1 were taken in its more ordinary sense. But on the other hand the idea suggested by Candrakīrti—or other commentators making a similar assumption—is not implausible either.

It is also noteworthy that according to DA’s own translation of MMK 2.2⁴⁷ this verse does not contain any reference to some different import of the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ except the ordinary meaning ‘go’, ‘move’, ‘traverse’. Why should it be supposed that Candrakīrti does not attempt to explicate the correct import of the commented verse? Moreover, the content which the phrase *gamyamānam eva gamyate* possesses if both *gamyamānam* and *gamyate* instantiate the root $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ in the meaning of ‘move’ follows in a most plausible manner from the immediately

⁴⁷ DA’s rendering is:

There is motion where there is activity; and since activity is present in a space *being traversed* (but not in one *already-traversed* or in one *not-yet-traversed*), there is therefore motion in a space being traversed.

preceding context of the *Prasannapadā* itself. After it has been said that a motion-activity does not occur in a region which has been previously traversed or will be traversed later because a region that is presently traversed is precisely the region where movement is observed to occur and which is affected by a movement-activity, it is most natural to draw the conclusion that only something which is something presently traversed is being traversed and to express this by the formulation *tasmād gamyamānam eva gamyata iti*. Here the expression *iti* can be plausibly taken as indicating the end of the explanation referring to the objection formulated in MMK 2.2 so that the subsequent phrase clarifying the different imports of the verbal root *gam* should *not* be seen as constituting an integral part of the objection, but rather as a, so to speak, second-order comment regarding the entire elucidation that has been presented before in Candrakīrti's text.

If the interpretation regarding those verses which I advocated in the past should be correct, then Candrakīrti would present a fully correct account of the original import of the pertinent verses by endorsing the tenet that *only* something which is actually traversed at some time is being traversed at that time. For the vital idea involved in this tenet is that the predicability of the expression 'is traversed' (*gamyate*) requires the existence of some object which is determined as something that is presently traversed. Given that verbs like 'move' or 'traverse' are related to some action of movement or traversing as their 'inner object' in a similar manner as 'dance' is inseparably connected with some action of dancing of some or the other variety like a tango, a waltz or a foxtrot, one can not unnaturally adopt the supposition that the existence of some action of movement of some or the other variety constitutes a necessary condition for the possibility of rightly predicating a verb possessing the sense of 'is (being) traversed'. The upshot is that for some action of movement it holds true that it is the requirement of something which in its turn possesses the existence of some action of movement as its requirement. On the hypothesis that relations of requirement possess the relational properties of asymmetry and non-reflexivity—so that 'a R b', 'b R c' and 'c R a' cannot hold good together—it follows that there is one movement-action which possesses some movement-action as requirement which must not possess the former movement-action as its requirement and which needs to be numerically different from it. Thus one would be driven to the conclusion that establishing the existence of an object qualified as something that is being traversed as a requirement of the predicability of a verb meaning 'moves' or 'traverses' entails the existence of at least two different movement-actions. Precisely this consequence is displayed in the subsequent verse MMK 2.3 according to the reading exhibited in the text of LVP and which is presumably also presupposed by Candrakīrti's commentary.⁴⁸ On the other hand, the argumentative situation would not be different if the alternative reading, viz. *gamyamānaṃ vigamaṇaṃ*, were adopted because the decisive point lies in the requirement of two numerically different movement-actions which play respectively the two roles of an 'inner object' and of a determining factor regarding some spatial region as a possible object of traversing.

⁴⁸ This is suggested by the occurrence of the phrase *dvigataṃ gamanaṃ dvigamaṇaṃ* in LVP 94,14, which does, however, not occur in the Tibetan translation.

It is easy to see that exactly the same considerations are transferrable to actions of movement as inner objects and as factors determining a subject of movement as such. Accordingly the argumentations represented by the verses of MMK 7–11 could rely on the same basic principles. As far as one can see, there is no indication in the *Prasannapadā* suggesting that Candrakīrti saw the matter differently. To be sure, the pertinent arguments presuppose that actions of traversing cannot occur without the existence of some region which is traversed or without the existence of somebody who—or something which—performs that action or operation. But these assumptions are pretty self-evident. Those who think otherwise should be invited to entertain the thought experiments of imagining the occurrence of some movement without some object (whether personal or non-personal does not matter in the final analysis) which moves or of imagining the occurrence of a movement, in a non-metaphorical sense of the word, that occurs without any change of position in space. Thus the suggestion that those assumptions are in accordance with certain views adopted in specific traditions of thought, such as the Indian grammarians, is at best absolutely irrelevant. Why should Nāgārjuna or Candrakīrti need to rely on particular doctrinal tenets where only sound intuitions are needed?

It must be admitted that a demonstration to the effect that a reading of the phrase *gamyamānam eva gamyate* in the sense of ‘Only something which is (presently) traversed is being traversed’ can account for relevant facts of the subsequent context does not by itself rule out the possibility that the words (*tasmād*) *gamyamānam eva gamyata iti* represent an explanatory definition in the sense of

something which is traversed is ‘[it is] being traversed’

But apart from the fact that this sounds queer as a definition an utterance of this thought is obviously unmotivated by the preceding remarks in the *Prasannapadā*. At any rate DA does not even attempt to show that from considerations to the effect that any movement-activity must be located in a region that is being traversed one can plausibly draw the conclusion that being traversed *explains* what something that is (presently) traversed is or means. Even if this proposition should amount to a trivial truism, supposing that it is an infelicitous formulation of

being something which is traversed is the same as being traversed

it is hard to explain why the remark occurs in the present context because there should be no need to derive this truism as a consequence from considerations about the location of movement-activities. (Perhaps this is the reason why DA prefers to attribute to the pertinent token of *gamyate* a deviant sense.) Irrespective of whether an explanation of a space that is being traversed—presumably envisaged by DA as something which itself is conceived as giving a possible explanation of motion⁴⁹—

⁴⁹ This is explicitly intimated in Arnold (2012, p. 573) in a passage dealing with MMK 2.5 which reads:

... Candrakīrti here reads Nāgārjuna as now anticipating the claim that it *also* shows up on the left-hand side. The resultant problem in that case is that the attempt to individuate the space where motion occurs—which is proposed, recall, as *explaining* motion—now amounts to a vacuous tautology. Thus, if it’s accepted both that a space *being-traversed* can be individuated only with reference to motion, *and* that there is reference to motion in saying of this that it “is traversed”—if, in other words, there is reference to motion *on both sides of the supposedly explanatory statement*—

as something which is expressed or indicated by the verb *gamyate* in its ordinary sense or in the sense of ‘know’ or ‘understand’, in both cases is the uselessness of a pertinent explication so obvious that it becomes mysterious why Candrakīrti took the trouble to exhibit the inappropriateness in an excessively prolific way. Should we assume that the writer of the *Prasannapadā* undertook such a foolish undertaking merely because he realized that his venerated predecessor who composed the MMK did the same?

There is no basis for attributing to Candrakīrti the conviction that Nāgārjuna intended to make the point that ‘some individual can be said to have a property only if it is at least conceivable that it lacks that property’. The preceding investigations support rather the contrary. First it deserves to be noted that, at least according to certain possible readings of ‘conceivable’, the above quoted sentence represents an objective falsehood, given that not all properties which an object or an individual possesses are contingent. If the author of the *Prasannapadā* were acquainted with ingredients of Dharmakīrti’s philosophy, in particular with the notion of a *svabhāvahetu*, he would certainly not have uncritically subscribed to that view. But there is even immanent evidence for the supposition that Candrakīrti did not adopt that stance. It had emerged before that presumably the writer of the *Prasannapadā* maintains that a *dharma* as postulated in Abhidharma-teaching must necessarily possess some causal efficacy and it is not improbable that he regarded possession of this feature as an indispensable quality of any physically existent object. Moreover, as pointed out above, the arguments against motion rely on the premise that the occurrence of motion requires the existence of some region which is potentially traversed and of some item which performs a motion. Thus it should be supposed that motion is an entity regarding which it cannot be conceived that it occurs without some agent of movement and without some region where it takes place. As long as it is assumed that the writer of the MMK held the same views in this regard, it should be equally doubtful that the founder of the Madhyamaka-school took the tenet that all properties are contingent as axiomatic.⁵⁰ To be sure, it is possible in theory that writers of texts are inconsistent by presupposing in some context principles which they reject in other contexts. But as long as no conclusive evidence for inconsistencies is available one ought abstain from their attribution.

Since the subsequent segments of the second book of the MMK can be explained without the assumptions hypothesized in Arnold (2012) without any loss of plausibility, there is no need for examining in detail DA’s appraisal that his characterization possesses the advantage ‘that it makes good sense of the immediately ensuing verses’. Even if it were granted, at least for the sake of argument, that DA’s way of explaining the segment of MMK 2.4 ff is acceptable

Footnote 49 continued

the proposed explanation now quite clearly presupposes precisely the point at issue, and therefore explains nothing. Indeed, the proposed explanation now amounts simply to this: *motion takes place where motion is happening*—which is, I submit, all that it means for Nāgārjuna to say that we now have two acts of motion.

⁵⁰ It should be noted that the supposition that Nāgārjuna or Candrakīrti or both took the tenet that all properties are contingent as axiomatic would not merely imply that they did not question the tenet but that they derived far-reaching conclusions from this dubious premise.

this fact would not justify his contentions as long as the questionable issues inherent in DA's account which were considered above are not vindicated. There is, nevertheless, one passage, which still deserves some investigation.

MMK 2.22 possesses special significance because it seems to be the only verse of the chapter where the possibility is envisaged that an action implied as an 'inner object' of a verbal expression is identical with an action which determines a performer of the action as someone performing an action of the pertinent kind. With respect to movement this means that the question is at stake whether the movement-activity whose existence is required if a finite verb like 'moves' should express something that is true or correct is (numerically) the same as the action whose existence is required for correctly qualifying some individual as someone who moves or as something which moves. The relevant verse reads as follows:

*gatyā yayājyate gantā gatim tām sa na gacchati /
yasmān na gatipūrvo 'sti kaś cit kiṃ cid dhi gacchati // 22*

corresponding to LVP 105,15–116, 6, where *yayōcyate* occurs instead of *yayājyate*.

The [action of] going on account of which a goer is characterized [as such] this traversing he does not traverse because prior to the [action of] going he is not [specified as such].⁵¹ For somebody goes something.⁵²

It might come as a surprise that the identity of the action, by which a subject of movement is characterized or determined as such with the action which is performed by him is denied, whereas one would *prima facie* suppose that the contrary should be the case. We assume, however, that the dismissal of identity is based on a piece of reasoning and that the argument against the identity rests on two premises, namely:

- (a) being determined as a goer requires an action of going (by which he is determined as such)
- (b) performing an action of going requires someone who is determined as a goer

On the hypothesis of irreflexivity and asymmetry for the pertinent relation of requirement it follows that an action of performing an activity of going must be different from at least some action of going by which someone (or something) is qualified as a goer. Whereas a) is indicated by the formulation (*yasmān*) *na gatipūrvo 'sti* conveying that without an action of going one cannot be determined

⁵¹ Or: 'because [it is] not [the case that] he [as being] before [any action of] going exists [as a goer]'

⁵² If one translates the pertinent verse in isolation it is preferable to render *gati-*, *gantā* and *gacchati* by '[action of] going', 'goer' and 'goes' instead of '[action of] traversing', 'traverser' and 'traverses' because in this manner it is made clearer that the item, whose identity with the action by which a subject of movement is manifested as such is at stake, must be an action which the subject performs, i.e. the 'inner object' inhering in the verbal expression, and not a space which is being traversed. In Arnold (2012, p. 588) the following translation is given:

He does not move that motion owing to which he is called
an agent of motion
since he isn't an agent of motion before moving
for someone moves something

as a goer, b) is indicated in a succinct manner by the formulation *kaś cid kiṃ cid (hi) gacchati*, conveying that something can be ‘gone’, i.e. performed in an activity of going or traversing, only by some subject of going, who is, we should suppose, determined as a goer. The latter remark is not irrelevant because it *could* be supposed that the item which is implied by the finite verb is nothing but the occurrence of an event which does not require some substratum, in the manner in which for example rain, whose occurrence is implied by the supposition that someone truly says ‘it is raining’, does—we would say—not imply some particular object possessing rain as a quality or performing rain as an action.⁵³

It seems that DA attributes to the latter formulation a different function, for in Arnold (2012, p. 588, footnote 118) the following is said:

The last quarter-verse thus gives a reason for why “that motion owing to which he shows up as an agent of motion” *could* be the “object” of *gacchati* (“moves”)—could be so, that is, *if it made sense* that he could in the first place be constituted as an “agent of motion” prior to any motion; Candrakīrti’s main point will then be to deny the antecedent of this conditional.

If the writer of the quoted remark means what he says we should suppose that in his eyes the phrase *kaś cid kiṃ cid hi gacchati* serves to justify why the possibility of an identity is considered as realistic at all. This point could be brought out by the following paraphrase:

The [action of] going on account of which a goer is characterized [as such] this going he does not go, i.e. this going-action he does not perform, because prior to the [action of] going he is not [specified as such], and the preceding remark is relevant and taken into consideration here because someone goes something.

The idea is admittedly ingenuous because it points out a possibility for accounting for the particle *hi* which, as far as one can see, had not been envisaged before.⁵⁴ It is not certain, however, that the interpretation is also correct. The crux is that if it were supposed that the denial of the identity between the movement-actions depends alone on the premise that a subject of motion is not determined as such before the performance of a motion then a denial of this premise cannot yield a valid reason for a denial of the identity-hypothesis—because from ‘If P then Q’ one cannot validly infer ‘If not P then not Q’. Thus also Candrakīrti would have made such a problematic move, if it were true that he derived the denial of the conclusion from a

⁵³ It is easy to see that the piece of reasoning expounded in the present verse is suited as a model for dealing with the suggestion that (i) the activity of movement whose existence is required for the circumstance that a certain space is determined as something which being traversed and (ii) the performance of movement which is required for the existence of precisely this movement-activity might be one and the same item and that no further movement-activity is required.

⁵⁴ I myself had assumed that the particle *hi* in the verse signals a ‘second-order’ reason for the validity of the reason presented by *yasmān na gatipūrvō 'sti* so that the verse conveys a thought-sequence of the form ‘A because B. And ‘B’ is a valid argument for ‘A’ because of C’. Seen from an argumentative perspective this is equivalent to deriving ‘A’ from ‘B’ and ‘C’ as premises.

denial of the antecedent. It could be supposed, of course, that the underlying conditional connection is not

If a goer (= an agent of motion) is determined as such prior to any motion, then the performed motion–action is identical with the determining motion–action.

but rather

Only if a goer (= an agent of motion) is determined as such prior to any motion, then the performed motion–action is identical with the determining motion–action.

The problem is then that the truth of the conditional

If the performed motion–action is identical with the determining motion–action, then a goer is / must be determined as such prior to any motion.

is not plausible without additional premises. Anyhow, Candrakīrti’s comment of the verse does not manifest that he intends a denial of any antecedent of a conditional. For the pertinent passage is short and reads as follows:

LVP 106, 7 *kaś cid devadattaḥ kiṃ cid arthāntarabhūtaṃ grāmaṃ nagaraṃ vā gacchatīti dr̥ṣṭam / na caivaṃ yayā gatyā gantety ucyate tasyāḥ pūrvam siddharūpo gatinirapekṣo gantā nāmāsti yas tāṃ gacchet //*

It is observed that somebody [say] Devadatta goes to something [say to some] village or town which is an object different [from him]. But it is not the case that in a similar manner there is some so-called goer who is independent of an action of going as something that is established prior to that action of going by which [he] is called ‘goer’.

From this remark it is difficult to see, how the writer of the *Prasannapadā* re-constructed the argumentation of the verse which is the object of his comment and how he viewed the connection between his own reconstruction and the individual segments of MK 2.22.⁵⁵ It is indubitable, nevertheless, that Candrakīrti’s explication does not license the account which is delineated in Arnold (2012, p. 589, footnote 119), which reads as follows:

... What’s at issue, then, is whether the ordinary, person-level use of verbs of motion (“Devadatta moves”) could ever represent an *explanation* of motion; Candrakīrti’s claim here is that it can’t—and the reason (again) is that we can only take things like personal names to individuate *agents of motion* (and hence, can only suppose reference to Devadatta might *explain* motion) insofar as we already have the idea of him as moving. (The considerations here recall those in play in Candrakīrti’s comment on 2.11; see footnote 90, above.)

⁵⁵ On the other hand it is not implausible to suppose that Candrakīrti intended to argue that if and only if a subject of going existed as such it could become possible that he accomplishes the role of the performer of any movement-activity. Given that—in Candrakīrti’s eyes—the existence of a subject of movement who is determined as such requires the (prior) existence of an activity of movement his explanation could be brought in line with the argumentative reconstruction advocated by us.

It can be safely presumed that the first sentence in the quoted passage of Candrakīrti's commentary, viz. 'It is observed that somebody [say] Devadatta goes to something [say to some] village or town which is an object different [from him]' is not meant to present some instance of explanation. Therefore it is pretty improbable that with the words *na caivaṃ* = 'not thus' / 'not in the same manner' the author of the *Prasannapadā* intends to contrast two sorts of explanation. On the other hand the fact that the subsequent sentence expresses that an agent of movement is not independent of any movement-action prior to the movement-action due to which he is called (*ucyate*) 'goer' does not support the assumption that the issue lies in the question of whether 'the ordinary ... use of verbs of motion could ever represent an explanation of motion'. It is even difficult to see, how MMK 2.22 or any consideration concerning the identity or non-identity of particular actions of movement could be relevant for that issue because it seems, *prima facie* at least, beyond any question that an ordinary use of verbs of motion *cannot* yield an explanation of motion. Thus no argument should be required at all to establish that result. If, on the other hand, some representatives of Madhyamaka should have thought that this impression is unjustified, one should expect that somewhere at least some consideration is presented showing that motion might be in fact explainable by the 'ordinary, person-level, use of verbs of motion'. As regards the question whether personal names 'individuate agents of motion insofar as we already have the idea of them as moving' an affirmative answer should not require any argument if it should mean that whenever one uses a personal name in order to individuate someone as an agent of motion, i.e. attribute to him the quality of being an agent of motion, we must possess the concept of motion and that we are entitled to say of someone that he is an agent of motion only if we think that the pertinent individual is in fact moving. For vindicating his interpretation of MMK 2.22 or of Candrakīrti's comments in this regard, DA would need to show that there is some non-trivial issue of explanation which can be settled by the considerations which are to be found in the text—or regarding which it could at least seem that they can be settled in this way.

It deserves to be considered in addition that the final remarks in the *Prasannapadā*—before the quotation of passages found in texts of Buddhist literature—read as follows:

LVP 107,13 *yataś caivaṃ gantrgantavyagamanāni vicāryamāṇāni na santi,*

tasmād gatiś ca gantā ca gantavyaṃ ca na vidyate //

And since one who traverses, something that is to be traversed and an action of traversing examined in this manner are not,

Therefore [the triplet of] traversing, traverser and that which is to be traversed is not found.

One should expect that those remarks indicate the result of the preceding discussions. If the quoted passage is interpreted in a most straightforward way, it ought communicate that activity of movement as well as any subject of that activity or an object in the form of something which is traversed turn out to be non-existent if critically examined. Not the slightest allusion to any problem of

explanation can be detected here. It might be true that a denial of the existence of those items possesses an objective consequence for the issue of explanation. For if movement does not exist on any level of final analysis then movement cannot function as an *explanans* and accordingly it must be inappropriate to explain ordinary phenomena by hypothesizing that there are entities exhibiting motion. But this consequence is opposed to DA's contention according to which motion is investigated in the second chapter of the MMK as *explanandum*. It must be admitted that the circumstance that the above considered passage of the text does not reveal any reference to explanation cannot by itself definitely refute DA's interpretation. For it is indeed possible, at least in principle, that the import which DA attributed to the text can be obtained as the result of some 'semantic enrichment'. In our analysis of MMK 2.22 it has been assumed after all that the existent formulations do not reveal their relevant import by their conventional meaning alone. But since it can be supposed that *every* exegesis of this verse will have to hypothesize an import that can be generated only by 'semantic enrichment' if any argument should be distillable from the remarks, the situation does not completely equal that which exists in the present case. The final remarks of the explanatory section on the second chapter of the *Prasannapadā* do not contain any detectable clue indicating that the remarks should not be read in their straightforward sense. Moreover, there is no reason to hypothesize any enriched reading for making relevant argumentative connections intelligible. If it were otherwise, then the chances for vindicating DA's interpretation would be better, even if it would still be undeniable that its proponent cannot maintain his claim that it represents a 'straightforward' reading.

It is in addition difficult to understand why proponents of Madhyamaka should have seriously believed that the pieces of reasoning presented in the second chapter of the MMK are suited to demonstrate that 'a non-question-begging explanation of motion cannot be given'. For establishing this result it would be needed to show that for any possible *explanans* of motion as an *explanandum* it holds good that it in some way relies on the concept of motion. But it should have been evident to Nāgārjuna as well as to Candrakīrti and others that the considerations of the second chapter of the MMK can impossibly achieve this aim. For this purpose it can never suffice to select particular items, such as a subject of movement, or a space that is traversed, and show that with their ideas a 'non-question-begging' explanation cannot be achieved. The reason is not simply that the actually selected items are particularly unsuited to yield an explanation of what motion is and also fairly unfitted for explaining what 'motion' means. The decisive point is rather that any argumentation which relies on some or the other selection of candidates is in principle an unsuitable means for the envisaged purpose.

Only if the main ingredients of the exegesis presented in Arnold (2012) were obtainable without entailing various 'pragmatic' defects regarding linguistic and argumentative behaviour as well as the way of adopting beliefs, could that account be a serious competitor as an interpretation of the second chapter of the MMK and Candrakīrti's commentary on it.

V

The approach of the article examined in the previous paragraph is not atypical for textual investigations on the Indian tradition of thought and of Madhyamaka-studies in particular. To be sure, Arnold (2012) is free from absurdities such as interpreting Tibetan translations disregarding the original despite its availability and making the identification of the train of thought impossible. But his translation suffers nevertheless from, at first glance minor but in fact relevant, alterations which are not discernible as such without considering the original wording. For example, LVP 99, 4 reads

athobhayatrāpi gatiyoga iṣyate gantā gacchatīti

and has been rendered in Arnold (2012, p. 581) by

Perhaps you'll allow that in the phrase "an agent of motion moves" there is a connection of motion in the case of *both* sides of the expression.

The wording of the original licenses at best the conclusion that in an expression, such as 'the/a goer goes', both terms, i.e. both the subject, 'goer', and the predicate 'goes' are connected with actions of going according to the proposal. By saying that there is a connection of motion in the case of both sides of the expression it is illegitimately intimated that the linguistic item under consideration represents a definition or an explanation; after all DA explicitly declares that 'the significance of Nāgārjuna's arguments against motion ... comes down to the question of how we are to understand the relation between two sides of any supposedly explanatory statement regarding motion' and the author repeatedly refers to the two sides of explanatory statements corresponding to *explanandum* and *explanans*. To be sure, the rendering given by him could appear adequate on the basis of the author's own conjecture regarding the import and purpose of the second chapter of the MMK and the *Prasannapadā* as a whole. But by offering the translation he misleads the readers feigning that a reference to explanatory statements is a feature of the original text itself.

Possibly more significant is a general reluctance to critically examine the relationship between the literal wording of a text or textual passage and the enrichment of import which has been hypothesized in an interpretation. In this regard diversities between individual scholars and scholarly traditions are often only differences of degree. DA's criticism of the employment of brackets in translations—see Arnold (2012, p. 556, footnote 15)—seem to be symptomatic for a widespread attitude. As a matter of fact, the employment of round and square brackets which is current mostly in the 'continental European tradition of Sanskrit philology' is an attempt, or should be seen as an attempt, to make transparent at least to some degree divergences between standard, literal, linguistic or 'compositional' meaning⁵⁶ and outcomes of 'semantic enrichment' which the interpreter regards justified.⁵⁷ However,

⁵⁶ It was indicated previously that those concepts must not amount to the same.

⁵⁷ Against the background of the exposition presented in the first two paragraphs of this paper it can be ascertained that the 'traditional' device of using (different sorts) of brackets does not account for all types

even the implicit acknowledgment of the existence of such differences does not guarantee a due acknowledgment of its nature and significance. Even less does it ensure a clear conception of the principles by which the diverse varieties of meaning and content are related as well as a disposition to critically examine relations between wording and hypothesized import in individual cases.

The preceding investigations have pursued, among others, the objective of substantiating the claim that from the phenomenon that in ordinary discourse imports generated by ‘semantic modification’ are often grasped intuitively and correctly one cannot infer the irrelevance of examining the basis of validity of such deductions in areas outside linguistics or philosophy of language. The circumstance that the common practice often serves current needs merely shows that one can be confident of making *some* headway in matters of exegesis by relying on intuition. But it does surely not prove that unconsidered intuition is always a reliable tool. Nevertheless, the non-reliability of basing interpretations exclusively on ‘Sprachgefühl’, possibly supported by or combined with information provided by dictionaries and grammars, is not the only issue that matters. The thesis might be uncontroversial anyway. More significant is the contention that questions of textual exegesis and problems of its methodology ought be dealt with under a perspective which takes understanding and interpretation of utterances of individual sentences into account. It can be gathered from several previous remarks that this claim is not made under the presupposition that exegesis of more comprehensive units is in every respect like interpretation of individual sentences. Accordingly it was a major concern of the present chapter to make the relationship between the two sorts of interpretation clearer, at least implicitly. In view of the observations which have been made it is assumed that apart from deviations also significant affinities exist due to which methodological questions concerning textual exegesis are more fruitfully assessed if they are combined with problems of understanding individual sentences, most particularly with the issue of how understanding of behaviour and of persons affect linguistic understanding. Nonetheless, the intimation that thereby phenomena which are dealt with in the field of linguistics ought be taken into consideration could appear problematic. We advocate a stance of taking a middle course with respect to regard and disregard of issues discussed in the fields of linguistics and philosophy. It cannot be denied that this option involves certain risks. On the one hand excessive regard can cause pursuit of issues which are irrelevant for pertinent problems or appear to be so and on the other hand excessive neglect entails the danger of ignoring issues which are in fact relevant. Such hazards might have deterred many who work in the field of textual studies. But to evade them is presumably harmful for the matter itself and one of the major purposes of the present study lies in substantiating that tenet. This calls for some more clarification.

It could be pointed out that for the problem of interpretation dealt with in the third chapter the question whether the relationship between ‘Only A is F’ and ‘A is F’ should be considered as an entailment, semantic or pragmatic presupposition,

Footnote 57 continued

of semantic modification. It does, for example, not signal whether some constituent of an embedded sentence is to be interpreted in a referential manner or not.

implicature etc. is absolutely irrelevant. This appears indeed undeniable inasmuch as the case at issue is concerned. But it is quite obvious that thereby the thesis is not proven that issues dealt with in linguistics have no relevance for problems of exegesis. First, it is as a matter of principle problematic to generalize from particular examples. Second, one must at all costs observe in this connection the distinction between linguistic phenomena and their linguistic analysis. Even if questions pertaining to the latter domain do not help to settle questions of understanding or exegesis it cannot be deduced that due consideration of linguistic phenomena themselves is unimportant. If individual observations have been made in the field of linguistic research in connection with settling theoretical issues of linguistics it does not follow that their relevance is restricted to their original context. Should not one postulate a division of labour between work in linguistics and exegesis in so far as in the latter field linguistic phenomena are assessed specifically under the aspect of their significance for questions of understanding no matter how they might be most appropriately accounted for under a theoretical linguistic perspective? This could allow for reference to linguistic phenomena for purposes of illustrating aspects of linguistic understanding, as it happened in certain contexts before. At any rate, a certain degree of 'abstraction' with respect to linguistic topics appears imperative in so far as assessments of phenomena for treating questions of linguistic understanding should not rely on premises which are debatable under the perspective of researchers in linguistics. On the other hand, precisely this postulate disallows a complete disregard of linguistic analysis. It is particularly important to avoid drawing conclusions on the basis of assumptions which are doubtful due to the fact that they merely represent particular alternatives among other possibilities. Hence the range of all acknowledged possibilities must be accounted for at least implicitly. To some extent the employment of linguistic analyses for settling questions of exegesis is comparable to the employment of mathematical tools in linguistics.

A similar differentiating outlook is also called for regarding matters of terminology. On the one hand it could be argued that terms need not or even should not be adjusted to established uses in other areas. After all, words like 'synonymy', 'cognitive equivalence' etc. are used in different fields, not only in linguistics, but also in philosophy or other branches of the humanities, and they are often employed in different ways in different contexts. Why should it be mandatory to treat one particular variety as authoritative? Does not the existence of deviant uses of identical terms evince that only the specific objectives pursued in some individual field or context of research matter so that it would be best to ignore how the same words are employed elsewhere?⁵⁸

This objection is justified inasmuch as it disputes that any particular area deserves to be regarded as authoritative from the outset. It does however not establish that complete disregard of different areas is appropriate. First taking previously established uses at least implicitly into account appears desirable for the avoidance of terminological confusions. As long as areas are concerned among

⁵⁸ This was, after all, the reason why we took the liberty of employing the term 'semantic enrichment' in a way permitting its application to features which are (in our own eyes) neither semantic nor specimens of enrichment in any natural sense. Given the existence of an explicit explication it was regarded as unnecessary to signal the peculiarity by using a hyphenated form, such as 'semantic-enrichment'.

which fruitful cooperation is conceivable at least as a possibility mutual disregard in matters of terminology cannot be considered as advantageous. Far more important is however the point that technical terms can involve conceptual distinctions whose significance transcends their traditional context. It is considered as a distinctive feature of 'conversational implicatures' that they are 'cancellable' either in the sense that a formulation possessing them in many contexts does not exhibit them in other, mostly rather exceptional, contexts, or in the sense that conjoining a formulation with their negation does not generate a contradiction (in a strict sense of the word). As pointed out previously, assessment of non-living languages can be inhibited by the fact that certain types of sentences and possibly even certain syntactic structures are scarcely documented although we believe to know what the individual instances were meant to express. In this situation we might rightly suppose that we know something about the meaning of the items in question. But what precisely do we know about their meaning? Do we really know exactly those features whose knowledge is sufficient for making adequate predictions about the meaning of arbitrary other occurrences of the same sentence-type or sentences exhibiting the same syntactic characteristics? Do we possess the knowledge which could permit us to determine the meaning of sentences in documents which have not yet been discovered but might be discovered in the future? Moreover, the question of what we find out about the meaning of words or expressions of higher complexity if we consult current dictionaries or grammars is by no means as clear as we might think. Consideration of topics dealt with in linguistics and philosophy of language make us aware of this fact. As indicated above those issues possess potential relevance for evaluating more fundamental questions of translation. As soon as it is realized that the intuitive notions of meaning and content with respect to linguistic units might incorporate various ingredients it emerges that the postulate that translations should—in general—preserve the meaning of the original does not possess a fully determinate import. Against this background it can be easily recognized that the question of whether a particular translation represents the content of the original does not permit a definite answer without specifying the type of content which is at stake.

The thought that we cannot be even assured to know everything of potential relevance about meanings of words and sentences underscores the potential relevance of higher levels of understanding for the exegesis of larger units of discourse. It is said sometimes, that no 'algorithm' exists by which all imports which are intended to be communicated can be obtained on the basis of linguistic data. If this should be a true contention about understanding on the sentence-level it should all the more hold good regarding understanding of texts or larger segments of texts. There is no general pattern of procedure by which the sort of content whose truth or untruth is most relevant in the context of studies on the history of thought can be derived from the linguistically expressed meanings of words and sentences. Thus the kind of import which possesses primary importance for the exegesis of texts of any philosophical tradition is affected by under-determination in at least two respects: Firstly, many linguistic items rely on context for their identification of propositional content. Secondly, even the linguistic content in combination with all objectively existing contextual data does not permit the derivation of all imports

which are most interesting in actual contexts of study on the basis of some generally, automatically applicable procedure. The previous investigations partly reveal why this is so and why it should be expected that under-determination affects interpretation of texts even more than interpretation of individual sentences. On the other hand, no general guarantee exists that there *is* exactly one interpretation which optimally fits the data, so that the possibility of the existence of diverse interpretations which can be legitimized to the same degree cannot be ruled out in principle.⁵⁹ But it would be unjust to demand of considerations of behaviour that they must entitle interpreters to vindicate precisely one alternative of interpretation. If this were a valid reason for discarding this dimension as irrelevant for exegesis it should be also a valid reason for regarding dictionaries and grammars as irrelevant because they cannot perform this function either. The most reasonable stance should

⁵⁹ The impossibility of making justified choices between non-equivalent alternatives is especially crucial with respect to the attribution of argumentative functions of individual remarks occurring in theoretical treatises. Apparently this is mainly due to the fact that linguistic utterances in the same manner as other kinds of objects can in principle perform different functions in one and the same context in combination with the circumstance that suitability to a goal is sometimes the only aspect under which various grammatically acceptable readings can be ranked regarding their relative preferability. Here it ought suffice to illustrate this point only by one example. Even granted that the formulation:

[With the words:] “Everything [which I speak] I speak falsely” this sentence is not intended to be meant. For if it is said falsely the intended object is not attained.

represents a linguistically faithful translation of a unit that appears as verse 25 in the *Sambandha-Samuddeśa* chapter of Bhartṛhari’s *Vākyapadīya* (*Trikāṇḍī*), which reads:

*sarvaṃ mithyā bravīmīti naitad vākyam vivakṣyate /
tasya mithyābhīdhāne hi prakrānto ’rtho na gamyate //*

it seems unavoidable to consider at least three non-equivalent assessments regarding the argumentative function of the remark as feasible. Those can be characterized as follows with respect to the tenets which ought be established:

Interpretation 1:

It *cannot* be maintained that expressing a general affirmation regarding some sort of objects needs to imply an identifying reference to every particular item of the concerned sort.

Interpretation 2:

A possibility of correctly ascribing some property to an item differing from the unit by which this ascription is made does not entail the possibility of correctly ascribing the very same property by a unit that does not differ from the item to which the relevant property is ascribed.

Interpretation 3:

Expressing a general denial regarding some type of items to which the unit expressing the denial itself belongs cannot be taken as implying a denial of the expression of the pertinent denial.

All the above portrayed specifications of the argumentative goal of the remark happen to satisfy the requirement of implying a rationally justified reaction aiming at defending the consistency of advocating a thesis entailing that it holds true for every linguistic item that if it expresses some content (or some class of contents) it does not express, at least not in the same sense of the word, the very fact that it expresses the pertinent content (or class of contents).—This thesis is a consequence of a theorem saying that if some object *o* stands in a relation *R* to some object *x* and *o* does not stand in a relation *R** to some object *y*, then either *x* is (numerically) different from *y* or *R* differs from *R**. (This means that the nature of a relation is essentially dependent on the identity of the related items.)—It should go without saying that if the assumed hypothesis concerning the overriding goal, a goal which has been supposed as pertinent in Oetke (2012, 132 ff), were called into question, then the exegetical indeterminacies would increase even more.

be that the resources provided by traditional dictionaries and grammars as well as linguistic analysis are combined with the devices which would be used in radical interpretation. One can realistically expect that this opens the possibility for an effective restriction of admissible specimens of exegesis or of a ranking between various alternative interpretations on the basis of rational arguments. If this forces a community of scholars to admit that the range of admissible alternatives cannot be completely restricted or that mutually incompatible interpretations must be ranked alike, this should not be regarded as a flaw but rather seen as an indication that a higher level of reflection has been achieved. Nevertheless, it is definitely a fundamental mistake to conclude, the other way round, that any situation of indecision indicates a high degree of rationality in assessing questions of exegesis. We contend that the present state of indecision in areas like Madhyamaka-studies is the outcome of a failure to raise pertinent questions and that the fundamental reason lies in the circumstance that the dimensions of understanding of behaviour and understanding of persons are brought into play in excessively biased ways. Although the consequences of this flaw are most salient in treatments of larger textual units the investigation of the third chapter intimates that the same deficiency is also operative in assessments of individual sentences and outside the realm of Madhyamaka-studies. A major corollary of this result is that attempts of linguistic understanding—corresponding to the category (a) in the exposition of the first chapter—cannot be detached from other varieties of understanding, in particular understanding of actions and behaviour—corresponding to the category (c). Hence certain linguistic phenomena ascertainable with respect to individual sentences attest a pervasive property of interpretation and understanding in general. Apparently the consequences of this fact are often disregarded or underestimated in exegetical practice.

The overarching topic of the present study concerns the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic understanding. A major aim was to illustrate and substantiate the thesis that some variety of linguistic understanding exists for which non-linguistic understanding possesses vital relevance. It should be obvious that any support for the truth of this contention does not automatically vindicate the claim that non-linguistic understanding possesses relevance for textual exegesis because a derivation of the latter from the former tenet requires the additional premise that the pertinent type of linguistic understanding matters for exegesis. Hence it is appropriate to point out that we in fact agree to this proposition and to the view that ascertaining what authors of texts and textual segments intended to communicate by them constitutes an integral and important component of textual exegesis.

Specifically in the area of investigations on the MMK attempts to attribute to the author of the text insights related to issues which are in the focus of present-day discussions in the area of philosophy have become quite popular. DA's article, where parallels with views expressed by John McDowell are extensively drawn, exhibits affinities with this tradition of exegesis. It might be argued that binding textual investigations to matters of exact wording and real communicative intentions of an author of the past is conducive to sterility and hampers the detection of interesting issues. Against this the following deserves to be said: (1) Critically examining the relationship between actual wording and hypothesized import against the backdrop of consequences regarding behaviour does not *eo ipso* rule out that

other issues are equally addressed. In principle bringing a broader perspective into play is possible even in the context of an investigation which in the first place pursues the goal of identifying a content that an author actually intended to communicate. (2) It cannot be uncritically assumed from the outset that the ideas of a modern interpreter are also more interesting than those of a thinker of the past. Why are we obliged to assume that scholars who have studied Sanskrit for a couple of years and perhaps read a number of modern books in philosophy have more interesting things to say than Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti? (3) If it is nevertheless supposed that nothing of relevance can be obtained by merely identifying thoughts of past thinkers then giving up the study of their texts could be a consistent consequence. Under those premises writing new treatises would be more appropriate than interpreting works of the past.

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Additional References

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