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**Śālikanātha on what Counts as Knowledge and  
as Sense Perception in the Pramāṇapārāyaṇa.  
A Propos of *La Prakaraṇapañcikā de Śālikanātha*.  
Chapitre 6 by Jean-Marie Verpoorten**

Śālikanātha is the main philosopher of the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā school after Prabhākara himself.

In some sense, one could even say that he is more important than Prabhākara himself, since he is far more systematic than Prabhākara and explores through his various thematic essays almost all topics commonly dealt with in philosophical works of premodern South Asia written in Sanskrit. Moreover, he is certainly more influential than Prabhākara, since his works are regularly read and cited instead of the terse statements in Prabhākara's only extant work, the Bṛhatī.

The present article discusses Jean-Marie Verpoorten's recent annotated translation of a key chapter of Śālikanātha's "Complete Investigation about the Instruments of Knowledge" (*pramāṇapārāyaṇa*) in his *Prakaraṇapañcikā* (PrP).<sup>1</sup> All scholars of Mīmāṃsā are grateful to Verpoorten for his *History of Mīmāṃsā Literature* written for the series "History of Indian Literature" conceived and edited for many years by Jan Gonda. Many of us also admire him because he continued to work as a first-class scholar despite not being formally part of academia. His devotion to academic research is reflected also in the learned footnotes of the book under review, which show how he has continued to read recent literature also by younger colleagues. The book focuses on a very important topic, as will be shown in the following. A last word of admiration should be reserved for Christophe Vielle, who edited the book, possibly investing an inordinate amount of time and energy when compared to the small academic recognition one earns from having assisted someone else in a publication.

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<sup>1</sup> *La Prakaraṇapañcikā de Śālikanātha. Chapitre 6, section 1. Le moyen de connaissance valide et la perception. Traité Mīmāṃsaka d'épistémologie présenté, traduit et commenté par Jean-Marie Verpoorten* (Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Peeters, 2018). I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers of this review article for their helpful and insightful comments and Karin Preisendanz for revising its final form and prompting me to clarify several points. Among other things, I owe to her the introduction of the category of "philosophical works of premodern South Asia written in Sanskrit" (I generally prefer speaking of "Sanskrit philosophy") and the translation of the term *avisamvādin*.

The book is structured as follows: After a short introductory essay (23p.), the book offers an annotated translation of the chapter on perception of the Pramāṇapārāyaṇa in the PrP. The text is divided into small portions of unequal length (usually a few lines), which are introduced, then reproduced in Roman transliteration and subsequently translated. The introduction and the translation have footnotes which offer specific insights. Since Verpoorten works in a rather atomistic way, e.g., in focusing on specific elements of Śālikanātha's optical theory, a reader who looks for an overall picture may be missing something here. Hence I allow myself to add some information here on the value of Śālikanātha's work, and on the trajectory followed by him in the chapter under consideration.

## 1. SOME BACKGROUND ON ŚĀLIKANĀTHA

### 1.1 Chronology

Similar to the relation between Kumāriḷa and Prabhākara, Śālikanātha's position in the history of Indian philosophy needs further investigation. Śālikanātha's systematisation of Prābhākara philosophy, through which he answers (or is trying to answer) all challenges coming from the Bhāṭṭa camp, is so thorough that no philosopher after him went back to Prabhākara's work without taking into account his explanations. For instance, no philosopher turned to Prabhākara's account of postulation based on cogent evidence (*arthāpatti*) independently of Śālikanātha's reinterpretation. Furthermore, all of Kumāriḷa's interpreters and commentators have been influenced by Śālikanātha and at times borrowed their positions from Śālikanātha's *prima facie* expositions of Kumāriḷa's ideas and arguments. However, there is one author who refers directly to Prābhākara ideas without taking Śālikanātha's points into account. This is Jayantabhaṭṭa, who is also among the few authors whose dates are relatively well-established (ca. 870–950). Śālikanātha's approach to Prābhākara philosophy is in many respect revolutionary, and Jayanta could not have known and simply decided to ignore it. Therefore, while other proofs *e silentio* may be debatable, the fact that Jayanta does not refute Śālikanātha's interpretation of the way sentence-meaning is understood (namely, by way of remembered word-meanings) or Śālikanātha's arguments against the postulation of a missing linguistic unit based on cogent evidence (*śrutārthāpatti*) are a clear indication of the fact that he did not know Śālikanātha's work. Thus, either Śālikanātha was a contemporary of Jayanta, or he was not yet known in Kaśmīr at Jayanta's time. Other important points that may help us to date Śālikanātha are the fact that he refers to Maṇḍanamiśra (660–720), is possibly ignored by Bhaṭṭoṃveka (740–795) and is referred to by Sucaritamīśra and Vācaspatimīśra (950–

1000).<sup>2</sup> Kataoka (2011) dates Śālikanātha to “800–900.” Verpoorten possibly gives more weight to the *terminus ante quem* when he dates Śālikanātha to “fin 8e-début 9e s.” (p. 3), but no rationale has been added for this dating.

## 1.2 Śālikanātha’s Agenda

As hinted at above, Śālikanātha tried to systematise Prabhākara’s thought by presenting an all-encompassing Prābhākara philosophy. In other words, he tried to stretch Prabhākara’s views far beyond what was more important to Prabhākara himself, such as deontic and hermeneutic issues, and to cover also ontology, etc. He further tried to rise to the challenge presented by Kumārila by reinterpreting Prabhākara’s theory in a way apt to answer Kumārila’s objections. For instance, he reconsiders the role of the “unprecedented force” (*apūrva*), bridging Prabhākara’s emphasis on what has to be done as the meaning of Vedic sentences and Kumārila’s concern for the problem of the temporal gap between a sacrifice and its result. Similarly, he introduces the intermediate step of the recollection of word-meanings<sup>3</sup> between the grasping of words and the understanding of sentence-meaning in the process of signification, in order to address Kumārila’s emphasis on the role of word-meanings. A further example is Śālikanātha’s discussion of the cognitive aspect in the cognition of absence, although Prabhākara had reduced it to the mere cognition of another thing being cognised instead of the absent thing.<sup>4</sup>

The above points are just some of the reasons that make it relevant and necessary to read and study Śālikanātha’s work. Other reasons include his being (a) a philosophically intriguing author, as acknowledged even by his opponents inasmuch as Kumārila’s commentators reused his works, as already addressed above, and (b) an enjoyable and elegant writer.

## 2. THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE PRAMĀṆAPĀRĀYAṆA

### 2.1 Śālikanātha’s Definition of a Source of Knowledge (*pramāṇa*)

Śālikanātha discusses the definition of a source of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) at the beginning of his Pramāṇapārāyaṇa and analyses various defining criteria.

First, he discusses the criterion of *avisamvāditva*, “being something that does not belie its promise”, used by Dharmakīrti and his school (Sastri 1961: 115–

<sup>2</sup> All dates are according to Kataoka 2011.

<sup>3</sup> More precisely, word-meanings are said to be *smārīta* (“caused to be remembered”) by words.

<sup>4</sup> See Freschi 2021 for further details.

116; Verpoorten pp. 36–40). Śālikanātha refutes it on the ground of the fact that this does not exclude memory (*smṛti*), which may also not deviate from truth and be, in this sense, *avisamvādin*. At this point, various Buddhist voices try to fix this possible flaw of the definition. It is not clear to me how many of their arguments are historically attested and how many were concocted by Śālikanātha as logically possible responses. Some of these voices claim that memory is excluded from the scope of the definition because it is a conceptual construction (*vikalpa*), but this is a dangerous move, since Śālikanātha can immediately reply that, based on that, also inference (*anumāna*) should be refuted as a source of knowledge, since inference is conceptual too.

The next suggestion, again from Dharmakīrti's school, is to use causal efficacy (*arthakriyā*) as a criterion (Sastri 1961: 117; Verpoorten p. 38). But could memory be excluded from the sources of knowledge in this way? One might say that the object of memory is always something past and that it therefore cannot lead one to attain any present object. However, this is also true, in some sense, for inference: it should be remembered that in the case of inference one usually infers the cause from its effect whereas inferring an effect from a cause is not a valid inference. One might correct the previous point by suggesting that in an inference the inferential reason is connected – Śālikanātha uses the term *prati-baddha* – to the probandum, which can therefore be said to be the object of efficacious activity based on an inference. However, this, again, holds true also for memory, since in the case of memory too there is a connection with the object by way of mnemonic traces (*saṃskāra*). Why should this be so different from the case of inference?

A new attempt is made by the opponent who says that something is identified as a source of knowledge inasmuch as it leads one to know something unknown (*aprāptaprāpaka*), which is a criterion typical of Kumārila's position on the definition of a source of knowledge.<sup>5</sup> A variant thereof is to say that a source of knowledge causes people who were previously inactive to act (*pravartaka*), but this would lead to the undesired consequence that non-conceptual (*nir-vikalpa*) cognitions would not be sources of knowledge, given that they cannot promote any action.

<sup>5</sup> See Sastri 1961: 117; Verpoorten p. 41. As frequently the case within Mīmāṃsā, terms that have a ritualistic origin (like *apūrva* and *prāpti*) are re-semanticised to fit an epistemological context. In the present case, *pra-√āp-* indicates the acquisition of something within one's awareness. The ritual background suggests that the new thing which is being known is also useful and what is obtained is not only a meaning, but also a purpose (both words being translations of *artha*). I am grateful to Karin Preisendanz for having prompted me to clarify this point.

There is a further reason why one should not use the fact of leading to the knowledge of something previously unknown (*aprāptaprāpakatva*) as criterion: this would not apply to the case of continuous cognitions (*dhārāvāhikajñāna*) (Sastri 1961: 117; Verpoorten pp. 41–44). These are cognitions like the ones that originate from continuously looking at the same object. Such cognitions count, according to Śālikanātha, as sources of knowledge, but would not be such if the above criterion were to be the defining one.

What about being sure (*dr̥ḍha*) as criterion, then (Sastri 1961: 119–120; Verpoorten pp. 47–49)? Here Śālikanātha can give voice to the Prābhākara theory of knowledge. First of all, he asks what kind of cognition would be excluded by this criterion. If it serves to exclude doubt, it is useless, since there is no doubtful cognition at all. What we call “doubt” is actually the sum of two distinct cognitions.<sup>6</sup> When, for instance, one sees in the dark something upright and is unsure whether it is a tree trunk or a motionless person, one does not have, Śālikanātha says, a unified doubtful cognition, but rather two memories. As for erroneous cognitions, these also do not need to be excluded from the definition of sources of knowledge because there are no erroneous cognitions. What looks like an erroneous cognition is at most an incomplete cognition. In more detail: First of all, we are here in the world of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ prāmāṇyam*) where all cognitions are deemed valid unless and until they are invalidated. Second, according to Śālikanātha’s interpretation of Prabhākara’s theory (to which from now on I will just refer to as Śālikanātha’s position) there is no genuine error. Errors can always be explained as something else, typically as incomplete cognitions. In the chapter on perception, Śālikanātha discusses the case of a white conch that looks yellow for someone who suffers of jaundice (Sastri 1961: 120–122; Verpoorten pp. 54–55). Would this not be a case of erroneous cognition? No, it is not, because both the conch and the color yellow are correctly represented. The only problem is the incompleteness of the cognition: one fails to grasp that the yellow color is on one’s cornea, not on the object. Thus, there is *stricto sensu* no error, only an incomplete cognition. What about the case of believing a shiny object to be silver although it is just mother-of-pearl? Against the mainstream approach to take this kind of cognition as a single, erroneous cognition, Śālikanātha thinks that in the cognition that has the form “This [is] silver” (“*idaṃ rajatam*”) two parts can be clearly identified and separately analysed, and that this is the correct procedure. The “this” part of the cognition “This is silver” is correct – one does have some object in front of oneself –, whereas the “silver” part is not incorrect but merely reproduces

<sup>6</sup> It should be recalled that for the Nyāya school, doubt is a cognition in which two alternatives are exactly equally probable.

something from memory, namely, the silver one has seen in the past which is evoked by the shiny aspect of the present object. The only problem is the failure to recognise its being remembered. In short, whereas according to Śālikanātha's theory of language connected words denote a single sentence-meaning, he also believes that cognitive events could be better assessed if one analysed them in detail. He does the same with doubt (*saṁśaya*), which is also not a single doubtful cognition, but just two cognitions. Accordingly, doubt does not need to be excluded from the definition of a source of knowledge by means of the criterion "being sure".

In his conclusion Śālikanātha presents a minimal definition of a source of knowledge: *pramāṇam anubhūtiḥ* "a source of knowledge is experience."<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2 Śālikanātha's Definition of Sense Perception

Next, Śālikanātha moves on to the correct definition of sense perception. Here he deems it correct not to add any further element to the definition of a source of knowledge, given that sense perception is one among the sources of knowledge. He consequently only needs to add – after long discussions with various speakers – that sense perception needs to originate from the sense faculties, thus excluding super-sensory perception (*yogipratyakṣa*) from it. Inner perception of pain or pleasure through the inner sense faculty called *manas* is also considered a case of sense perception.

We have already seen that Śālikanātha is a minimalist when it comes to definitions. He does not like redundant elements to be included. Thus, he thinks that the definition of sense perception in the Nyāyasūtra is wrong, because, besides saying that sense perception has "originated out of a contact between the sense faculty and the object" (*indriyārthasannikarṣoṭpanna*), it also speaks of sense perception as being "non-erroneous" (*avyabhicārin*), "determined" (*vyavasāyāt-maka*) and "not expressible in language" (*avyapadeśya*) (Sastri 1961: 128ff.; Verpoorten pp. 91–92). The first qualification (*avyabhicārin*) is useless, as discussed in the section on the definition of sources of knowledge (Sastri 1961: 136; Verpoorten pp. 93–94). The second qualification (*vyavasāyāt-maka*) is already part of the definition of instruments of knowledge in Nyāyasūtra 1.1.4 and should not be repeated (Sastri 1961: 136; Verpoorten pp. 93–94). The final qualification (*avyapadeśya*) is redundant because in the definition sense perception has already been spoken of as originated from a contact of the sense faculties and there is no linguistic activity in the operation of the senses. Śālikanā-

<sup>7</sup> Sastri 1961: 124; Verpoorten pp. 61 and 66. See below, n. 20, on this Sanskrit passage and its partial misinterpretation by Verpoorten.

tha also discusses the various categories of “contact” (*sannikarṣa*) and recognises only three of the six types of contact suggested by his Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika opponents.

Next comes Śālikanātha’s analysis of the Buddhist definition of sense perception as “devoid of conceptualization” (*kalpanāpodha*) and “non-erroneous” (*abhrānta*) (Sastri 1961: 137; Verpoorten pp. 97–98).

Then Śālikanātha turns to Jaimini’s definition of sense perception<sup>8</sup> which he considers faulty because it does not cover all instances (*avyāpaka*) inasmuch as it does not comprise the aspect through which cognitions are directly perceptible to themselves. In fact, the Prābhākara school diverges from the Bhāṭṭa one inasmuch as it accepts that within a sense perception one grasps an external object, but also the cognition itself. This aspect is not covered by Jaimini’s definition.

What is the accepted definition of *pratyakṣa*, then? Sense perception is just a direct cognition (*sākṣātpratīti*) generated from the connection of the sense faculties with the knowable items, i.e., substances, universals and qualities, with or without conceptualisation:

*sākṣātpratītiḥ pratyakṣam meyamāṭṛpramāsu sā |*  
*meyeṣv indriyayogothā dravyajātiguṇeṣu sā ||*  
*savikalpāvikalpā ca pratyakṣā buddhir iṣyate |*  
 (Amṛtakalā v. 4–5ab)<sup>9</sup>

Since a definition should not contain anything redundant, let us analyse each of its elements and their purpose according to Śālikanātha:

- *sākṣātpratītiḥ* (“a direct cognition”): This excludes inference, etc., something agreed upon by all schools (Sastri 1961: 146; Verpoorten p. 128).
- *meyamāṭṛpramāsu sā* (“it is about object, knower and knowledge”): According to the Prābhākara school, each perception allows one to grasp three aspects, namely, an object, the cognising subject and the cognition itself. This is specific to Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā, against the position of Dharmakīrti’s school which would not accept that a perceiver is cognized, but also

<sup>8</sup> A definition of sense perception is derived from the fourth aphorism of the Mīmāṃsāsūtra, which reads as follows: *satsamprayoge puruṣasyendriyāṇām buddhijanma tat pratyakṣam animittam vidyamānopalambhanatvāt* “When there is a contact of the sense faculties with something existing, perception is the arising of a cognition for a conscious subject. This is not a suitable condition [for knowing dharma], because it grasps [only] present things.” This aphorism has been variously interpreted in the tradition; hence the preceding translation is only meant to provide a first orientation.

<sup>9</sup> The Amṛtakalā is a work by Śālikanātha, currently incorporated in the PrP. See below, p. 190, on the observation that the Pramāṇapārāyaṇa actually serves as a commentary on it.

against that of Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā according to which only the object is known (Sastri 1961: 147; Verpoorten p. 128).

- *meyeṣv indriyayogotthā* (“it arises from a contact of the sense faculties with regard to the objects”): This is directed against the idea of super-sensory perception in which there is no contact between a sense faculty and an object, something agreed upon by Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, but directed against Dharmakīrti’s school and Nyāya (Sastri 1961: 147; Verpoorten p. 128).
- *dravyajātiguṇeṣu sā* (“it is about substances, universals and qualities”): Besides substances, sense perception can also grasp qualities and even universals, something agreed upon by Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā and denied by Dharmakīrti’s school (Sastri 1961: 154; Verpoorten pp. 140–142).
- *savikalpāvikalpā* (“it is conceptual or non-conceptual”): This is agreed upon by Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, but denied by Dharmakīrti’s school (Sastri 1961: 160; Verpoorten p. 145).

After having explained how the definitions of the Nyāya philosophers and of those of Dharmakīrti’s school are flawed, Śālikanātha discusses with the latter the issue of what may count as perception. According to Dharmakīrti’s school, Śālikanātha reports, there are four types of perception, namely,

1. sense perception (*indriyapratyakṣa*)
2. self-awareness (*svasaṃvedana*)
3. mental perception (*mānasapratyakṣa*)
4. super-sensory perception (*yogipratyakṣa*).

The first type is clearly accepted by Śālikanātha.

The second type is, surprisingly and against Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, accepted by him.<sup>10</sup> All cognitions are therefore immediately accessible to self-awareness, and each cognitive event consists of an awareness of an object, a cognising subject and the cognition itself.<sup>11</sup>

The third type of sense perception is not accepted by Śālikanātha. The precise determination of this subcategory is slightly difficult since the Dharmakīrtian speaker in the PrP does not define the mind (*manas*) as done in Nyāya and Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, namely as the inner sense faculty which can grasp pleasure and pain. He rather succinctly defines mental perception (*mānasapratyakṣa*) as

<sup>10</sup> See the brief discussion about *meyamātrpramāsu sā* immediately above.

<sup>11</sup> See Sastri 1961: 144; Verpoorten p. 121. For more on this theory, see Chatterjee 1979. For the differences between this theory and Dharmakīrti’s idea that there are different aspects within the single reality of a cognition, see Kyuma 2010.



“produced by a cognition through the sense faculties assisted by the instant immediately following the instant (*kṣaṇa*) in which the cognition’s content has been cognised (by the sense faculties)”.<sup>12</sup> The commentator of the PrP, Jayapuri Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, explains that it is therefore produced by the object and its cognition together.

Śālikanātha refutes this understanding of mental perception, explaining that it is not different from continuous perceptions (*dhārāvāhikajñāna*), like the ones we have when staring for a long time at the same object. By contrast, the so-called mental perception that continues once the contact with the sense faculties has ceased is no longer a case of knowledge, Śālikanātha explains. For him, mental perception is just perception through the inner sense faculty, i.e., the perception of pleasure and pain. His opponent in the PrP claims, instead, that pleasure and pain are not objects of perception at all, but rather themselves cognitions and therefore known through self-awareness (*svasaṃvedana*).<sup>13</sup>

The fourth and final type of sense perception is also refuted by Śālikanātha. What the perceiving subject thinks they are grasping directly but without the instrumentality of the sense faculties, e.g., the four noble truths during deep meditation, is nothing but their memory presenting them with some content they are already acquainted with. There is no new knowledge that derives from meditation itself. If one were to claim the opposite, one would do so for apologetic reasons, but without any epistemological basis.

### 3. VERPOORTEN’S TRANSLATION

Verpoorten has prepared an almost word-by-word translation, using brackets to enclose added words and parentheses for the addition of the corresponding Sanskrit words. This means that a francophone student or scholar can easily reconstruct what exactly Verpoorten understood and translated. Moreover, he

<sup>12</sup> *mānasam tv indriyajñānena svavijñeyakṣaṇānantarakṣaṇasahakāriṇā janyate* (Sastri 1961: 139; Verpoorten p. 99). Dharmakīrti also seems to have stressed the fact that *mānasapratyakṣa* occurs immediately after sense perception; see Kobayashi 2010. For the understanding of *svavijñeya-* in the above compound as *svaviśaya*, see the parallel sentence in the Nyāyabindu referred to in Kobayashi 2010: 234, n. 1.

<sup>13</sup> The different approaches may be better understood through an example. If our knee aches and we get distracted from the pain by a nice shoulder massage, we are just not focusing on the pain which nevertheless remains. This would be the opinion of Śālikanātha, according to whom pleasure and pain are perceived through mental perception by means of the inner sense. His Dharmakīrtian opponent in the Pramāṇapārāyaṇa, however, claims that pleasure and pain are not objects of perception, but a kind of cognition and therefore, as all cognitions, known through self-awareness. This implies that at the time of the pleasant massage there is no pain at all in the knee. In other words, unexperienced pain does not exist.

has been as honest to his readers as to explicitly state whenever he was unsure about the meaning of a passage. Further, even though Verpoorten does not explain systematically how he had made use of the commentary by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa and of other available translations and paraphrases, especially Pandurāṅgi 2004 and Bandyopadhyay 2003, he notes whenever they significantly diverge from his own interpretation.

One thing a reader may miss, however, is a clear demarcation of the passages to be assigned to different speakers and thus a clear presentation of the dialectical structure of the translated text. Whenever an opponent starts to present his argument, introduced with the word *nanu*, Verpoorten translates the latter with “pardon”, but otherwise there are no clear markers that indicate the change of speakers.

The fact that Verpoorten decided to translate the whole chapter on perception makes the book even more valuable than indicated at the beginning of this review article. However, whenever one translates a large amount of text, occasional slips will inevitably occur. I therefore allow myself to alert the readers to some of them.

On p. 36, Verpoorten analyses the position of Dharmakīrti’s school on what counts as knowledge and how its proponents risk the charge that knowledge would also include memory if its definition should include inference. The text reads: *api ca, avastubhūtaṃ svaviśayaṃ vastutayādhyavasyac chuktikārajatabodhavat katham anumānam avisaṃvādi?* Verpoorten translates as follows:

En outre, si l’inférence identifie son propre objet (*sva-viśaya*) qui consiste en du non-concret (*avastu-bhūta*) au moyen d’une réalité concrète (*vastutā*) — comme dans la connaissance de la nacre et l’argent — comment se divergerait-elle pas [de son objet]? [emphasis added by Verpoorten; E.F.]<sup>14</sup>

However, the point is not that inference identifies something not concrete “through a concrete reality”, a translation that forces Verpoorten to present a complicate explanation in a footnote. Rather, inference takes an unreal thing as its object mistaking it *as a real one*, as when we mistake mother-of-pearl for silver.

On p. 44, Verpoorten discusses the following passage: *atha ucyeta [...] tad ayuktam. loke teṣu pūrvasmād aviśiṣṭatvāt pramāṇabhāvasya, laukikaṃ ca prāmāṇyaṃ parīkṣakair apy anusaraṇīyam*. It says that in everyday life each

<sup>14</sup> “Moreover, if the inference identifies its own object (*sva-viśaya*), which consists in something non-concrete (*avastu-bhūta*) through a concrete reality (*vastutā*) – like in the case of the cognition of mother-of-pearl and silver –, how will it not diverge [from its object]?”

moment of a continuous cognition (*dhārāvahikajñāna*) counts as knowledge,<sup>15</sup> because the subsequent moments do not differ from the first one, which definitely has the nature of knowledge, and because what is commonly accepted as knowledge should be accepted as such also by experts (unless they have valid reasons to oppose it). Who is speaking here? Clearly Śālikanātha himself: *tad ayuktam* (“this is incorrect”) usually introduces his reply to an opponent’s position. Moreover, the depicted position matches the Mīmāṃsā view of knowledge and intrinsic validity. However, Verpoorten attributes this view to “le bouddhiste”, which interpretation he attempts to justify in n. 76.

On p. 50, Verpoorten discusses doubt (*saṃśaya*) and insists on its being a “connaissance contradictoire (*vimarśa*).” Apart from the questionable translation of the term *vimarśa*, is doubt really a case of contradiction? In fact, the often adduced example of seeing a shape that could either be a tree trunk or a man rather points to an uncertainty that cannot be settled, because further specific properties, such as the lack of legs, cannot be cognized. The definition of doubt in Vaiśeṣikasūtra 2.2.19 (ed. Jambuvijayaḥ 1961) connects the arising of doubt with the missing perception of a particular property when there is a perception of some common property. This is what Nyāyasūtra 1.1.23 refers to when it says that doubt is a cognition that “looks out for something specific” (*viśeṣāpekṣah*), an attribute Verpoorten translates as “à propos d’une particularité” in his note 85.

Moving on to the discussion of sense perception, Verpoorten introduces a passage stating that it is “obscur et *donc* très peu paraphrasé par N” (emphasis added by Verpoorten).<sup>16</sup> The passage deals with the way cognitions appear as having a content. The Dharmakīrtian opponent claims that the issue as such amounts to an error, since there is no ultimate distinction between cognition and cognition-content. Śālikanātha replies that this is incorrect (*ayukta*) and that the duality of cognition and cognition-content is not just a postulated one, but has its correspondence in reality. He then adds a reason for this position: *nirākārāṇām api vṛttinām svabhāvata eva viśiṣṭārthasambandhitayā sphuraṇāt*.<sup>17</sup> That is, “because cognitions, although they are in themselves devoid of a form, appear as connected with a specific object just by themselves.” In other words, the connection between a cognition and its content occurs automatically and is not conceptually construed *a posteriori*. Verpoorten, by contrast, interprets *sphuraṇa* differently and translates as follows: “[...] même pour les modes [de pensée] (*vṛtti*) sans formes [propres] (*nirākara*), l’apparition (*sphuraṇa*) [de l’idée?

<sup>15</sup> See above, p. 183.

<sup>16</sup> See p. 115: “Obscure and *therefore* not much commented upon by N [= Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa; E.F.]”.

<sup>17</sup> Verpoorten’s text reads *viśiṣṭārthasambandhitāya*, which is just a typographical error.

s'opère] naturellement (*svabhāvatas*) par corrélation (*sambandhitā*) avec un objet différencié (*viśiṣṭa*)."<sup>18</sup>

In the following, I am presenting a few examples of cases in which I disagree with Verpoorten's interpretation of specific terms. In a passage following the one mentioned above, the Dharmakīrtian opponent explains that the contents appearing in cognitions do not correspond to their (alleged) external objects, because the only things that ultimately exist are atoms, whereas what appears to us in cognition are mid-sized (*sthūla*) objects: *arthasārūpyam [...] asiddham, sthūlābhāsivāj jñānānām aṅurūpatvāc cārthasya*, i.e., "It is not established [...] that the content of a cognition has the same form as the [alleged] external object, because cognitions appear as being about mid-sized [objects], whereas the external object is atomic." Verpoorten interprets the term *sthūla* differently: "La ressemblance à l'objet [...] n'est pas prouvée (*asiddha*), puisque les connaissances apparaissent globales (*sthūla-avabhāsitva*) tandis que l'objet est constitué d'atomes."<sup>19</sup>

On p. 124, Śālikanātha discusses the definition of sense perception found with Jaimini himself. He says: "This is not a [correct] definition, because it does not cover [some cases of sense perception]" (*tad apy avyāpakatvād alakṣaṇam*). Next he refers to what is not covered, namely that each cognition is immediately perceptual to itself (*sakalapratiṭīnām ca svarūpaṃ prati pratyakṣatābhimatā*). Verpoorten, by contrast, translates *avyāpaka* as "trop large" (too broad).

A further, more general point is worth adding here: Verpoorten notes in a series of footnotes how Śālikanātha refers to his verses on knowledge in the *Amṛtakalā*, another work that was later subsumed in the *Prakaraṇapañcikā*. In fact, through these footnotes a reader comes quickly to the conclusion that the portion of the *Pramāṇapārāyaṇa* under examination is articulated as an auto-commentary on the *Amṛtakalā*, whose quoted verses are regularly introduced by variations of the phrase *tatrāha* ("on this topic he says"). Verpoorten notes the presence of these "auto-citations" (e.g., on p. 6), but does not realise, or at least does not communicate to his readers, that the chapter under examination analyses verse by verse the *Amṛtakalā* and that it can therefore be interpreted as a running commentary thereon. On several occasions he rather highlights the fact that the quotations are not traceable in Prabhākara's works (pp. 6 and 61) and repeatedly notes in his footnotes that a quoted passage could not be found in

<sup>18</sup> See p. 116: "Even for the modes [of thought] (*vṛtti*) that do not have a[n own] form (*nirākāra*), the appearance (*sphuraṇa*) [of the idea? occurs] naturally (*svabhāvatas*) by the correlation (*sambandhitā*) with a differentiated (*viśiṣṭa*) object."

<sup>19</sup> See p. 117: "The similarity to the object [...] is not proven, since cognitions appear global, whereas the object is made of atoms."

Prabhākara's preserved oeuvre. For example, he states that "[I]a source de la citation de Ś qui suit (laquelle correspond au śl 1c-d de l'*Amṛtakalā*) n'est pas repérable chez Prabhākara."<sup>20</sup> In other words, Verpoorten seems to be concerned with the absence of the verses in Prabhākara's works rather than with highlighting the underlying structure of the chapter.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, each occasion to read more of Śālikanātha's oeuvre is a great chance to engage with an amazing scholar and is by itself valuable. Thus, publications that are not just generic studies on "Indian philosophy" but closely engage with the words of such powerful thinkers are always welcome, all the more so if their authors, like Verpoorten, are as courageous as to cover a rather long stretch of text in a translation, thus allowing their readers to obtain a picture of a philosophical issue together with its multiple facets. In the case of the present book, one can engage also with the book's author and his interpretations, profit from the latter – be it because one agrees with them, be it because they prompt one to think further about the topic –, and take advantage of the cross-references and references to primary and secondary literature he generously shares with his readers.

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<sup>20</sup> "The source of the following citation by Ś (which corresponds to v. 1c-d of the *Amṛtakalā*) is not found with Prabhākara." See Verpoorten's n. 122; see also his nn. 128, 131 and 150, and p. 127. Connected to the above issue is a minor point that shows up on p. 62 of the book. There, the text as found in Verpoorten's book as well as in Sastri's edition (p. 124) reads as follows: *idānīm svābhīmatam pratyakṣalakṣaṇam āha: pramāṇam anubhūtiḥ*. Verpoorten translates: "À present, il [= Ś; E.F.] énonce (*āha*) sa propre définition de la perception" ("Now, he states (*āha*) his own definition of perception"). However, the quotation from the *Amṛtakalā* and the context require the reading *pramāṇalakṣaṇam*, i.e., "definition of sources of knowledge", instead of *pratyakṣalakṣaṇam*, i.e., "definition of sense perception". The text as first printed in the Chowkhamba edition (Shāstri 1904) just reads *tatrāha*, instead of *idānīm svābhīmatam pratyakṣalakṣaṇam āha*, as in all other lines that introduce verses quoted from the *Amṛtakalā*. Sastri possibly emended the text because of the presence of the term *anubhūti* ("experience"), which evokes sense perception (unless this is just a typographical error). Verpoorten is aware of the reading in the Chowkhamba edition, and I do not understand why he does not emend the text accordingly.

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