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Controversy

Stephen H. Phillips

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- 6 – Siderits may complain that this is question-begging since the thesis is in question in our discussion. Perhaps it is so at this early stage, when I have not answered all his objections, but by the end of the discussion the point will stand.
- 7 – See Chakrabarti, “Non-Particular Individuals,” p. 141.
- 8 – In the foregoing discussion I admit that non-particular individuals are given to us in indeterminate perception, and thus Siderits may spare me for disrespecting the realist intuitions that are so dear to the Naiyāyikas.
- 9 – Both the assumptions reveal the characteristic Buddhist position defended by Siderits in this article and elsewhere.
- 10 – The preferred Yogācāra-Sautrāntika formulation of this assumption would replace the term “individuals” with “ephemeral particulars.” I think Siderits himself would prefer to use the term “individuals” given his hesitant agreement with my positive thesis. He writes that “there is something odd about the notion of perceiving a pure particular as such. There may well be good reasons for dismissing this as just one more version of ‘the myth of the given.’”
- 11 – It is possible that reality contains particulars and facts; however, the epistemological considerations discussed here cannot offer any support to these metaphysical claims. There may be independent considerations to support the claim that reality displays propositional structure in addition to non-propositional structure. But that is not my concern in this discussion.

Perceiving Particulars Blindly: Remarks on a Nyāya-Buddhist Controversy

Stephen H. Phillips

Philosophy Department, University of Texas at Austin

Introduction

The discussion by Mark Siderits in this issue—“Perceiving Particulars”—and two pieces by Monima Chadha—the first her article “Perceptual Cognition: A Nyāya-Kantian Approach” (Chadha 2001) and the second her reply to Siderits in this issue—have taught me much.¹ I have little to add beyond agreeing on the whole with Siderits and making a few tweaks concerning Nyāya. Chadha astutely captures the insight of Gaṅgeśa, the fourteenth-century Naiyāyika cited by her (and by Siderits): indeterminate perception does not have a “particular as such” as its object (*viśaya*), but only, as she says, a non-particular individual such as a universal or another qualifier that is in principle recurrent (recurrent out in the world), perceiv-

able again, and thus expressible by a (repeatable) word. Nevertheless, the holism of Wilfred Sellars and Kant and the attack on the “given” are not in the spirit of the Nyāya approach to epistemology, which is thoroughly externalist, as Siderits suggests. In several places (one presented below), Gaṅgeśa shows us controversy within Nyāya about indeterminate perception, including a rival Naiyāyika opinion that bare particulars *are* indeterminately grasped. This is not his own view, which is that positing indeterminate perception of qualifiers and not also of qualificanda is all that we need. But all in all the issue is not such a big deal, since perception does generate *determinate* knowledge of particulars, although these are always at least barely clothed.

The notion of a “bare particular”—that is, the qualificandum thought about as distinct from all of its qualifiers—is an abstraction from what we directly perceive. We know it only by inference (specifically, by an inference of the *sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭa* type). Indeterminate perception is also known only by inference. Even in Navya Nyāya, the big deal is what is known determinately in perception, which is the principal way we know anything (the *jyeṣṭha pramāṇa*). And, clearly, determinate perceptual awareness is often of a particular—“The pot is blue” and “That’s a pot,” for instance. The particular known—indeed, the bare particular—is an intrinsic part of the *viśayatā*, “intentionality,” which is the relation between the knowing cognition and the world known.²

Contrary to what Chadha says in her first article, “seeing as” does not require mental construction, according to Nyāya. The property bearer (*dharmin* = *viśeṣya*, “qualificandum”) is grasped by the sense organ and is known directly in determinate perception as well as the qualifier and the qualificative relation. In two subtypes of perceptual awareness, (a) recurrent experience and (b) the recognition of something perceived previously, Chadha is right: the mind is operative, responsive to the firing of *saṃskāra*, “memory impressions,” and fusing previous perceptual data into a current perceiving: (a) “A cow,” “Another,” “Another,” and (b) “This is that Devadatta (I saw yesterday).” But hardly all cases of determinate perception require the mind (in Chadha’s sense). The object known is minimally a complex of a property bearer (the particular as such), property, and an ontological relation tying them up, a-*inherence*-pothood (where “a” designates the pot as bare particular, “the subject of qualification”); the determinate perception, “That’s a pot,” makes that particular as qualified known.

So, you say, I am agreeing with Chadha, whose argument is directed against the particular *as such* being known (either determinately or indeterminately) in perception. Yes, but the point is that the particular *is* known in perception; the particular-as-such is known in perception, although it would be fantasy to think it even possible that we could ever see her, this property bearer, well, not so much bare as disembodied. A rough analogy is seeing a door. We say we “see the door” when we see only one side of it, not the back. We see the thing as a door without grasping everything about the door that its being a door entails.

Indeterminate perception of qualifiers is a controversial posit that does various work for Gaṅgeśa and other Naiyāyikas. But it is not meant to show that perception

invariably requires a role for the mind in synthesizing intuitions under a concept. No one before Vācaspati (ca. 900) even countenanced two forms of perception. Having Nyāya sympathies, I would like to thank Professor Chadha for attacking the Buddhist position—against Buddhists all is fair, says the *Nyāyasūtra* (4.2.50, on the appropriateness of tricky arguments, “like thorny branches protecting seedlings”). But it seems to me that, from the Buddhist perspective, the indeterminate perception of *svalakṣaṇas*, “particulars as such” (well, not just “as such,” since each seed-moment has causal power to produce either another seed-moment or a sprout), is also posited for systematic reasons. The Buddhists do not claim to have conscious, expressible access to the “self-characterized particulars,” except in the abstract way that we Naiyāyikas claim to know a qualificandum, that is, as presupposed in perceptual awareness.

Thus, the issues here *are* metaphysical, not restricted to epistemology.³ Or, if we can isolate a crucial epistemological issue, it seems to me that the most crucial issue is that of internalism versus externalism and the question of whether perceptions and other cognitions can have intentionality (*viśayatā*) of which the subject is in a sense unaware (not being able to verbalize it). This is a deep and difficult divide in contemporary epistemology as well as on the classical Indian scene, and I propose to show some of Gaṅgeśa’s thought on the matter. (Apperception is the kind of perception, in the Nyāya view, that has an internal object—cognition, desire, effort, etc.—and that serves in Nyāya for what others call self-awareness, *svasamvedana*, introspection, or awareness of awareness. We shall look at the role of indeterminate perception in apperception.) But first just a few words on the conclusion of Siderits’ discussion and his effort to show that any realist position needs indeterminate awareness of bare particulars.

The mistake, evident in Siderits’ penultimate paragraph, seems to lie in a misreading of the Nyāya view of illusion. For Nyāya, qualification is an asymmetrical relation obtaining in the world between a qualifier such as flowerhood and a particular flower in hand. Through a causal process in which the flower has a major part there is shaped (*ākāra*) a veridical perception that has it as its object, to wit “(That’s a) flower.” The mind does not integrate flowerhood and the flower; there is no “putting together of antecedently given individuals”; having-as-object-an-entity-as-qualified is not combination. This goes for illusion, too. Illusion involves the mind’s fusing into a current perception of a piece of mother-of-pearl, for instance, information triggered by the firing of a *saṃskāra*, “silverhood,” such that the thing is perceived as qualified by something that does not qualify it in fact: “It’s silver” (when in reality the thing is mother-of-pearl). The fusing is like the case of a recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) where the mind fuses the information of yesterday’s perception of Devadatta into the current perceptual recognizing, “This is that Devadatta.” Devadatta is, in fact, qualified by Devadattahood, a repeatable property that is perceived, as Chadha points out, simultaneously with other parts of the relational complex, Devadatta-*inherence*-Devadattahood. Devadattahood is also indeterminately grasped, triggering the fusion of the information from memory into the verbalizable, determinate perception “This is that Devadatta.”

Illusion is not genuine perception, unlike any veritable recognizing, which is veridical by definition. In illusion, something goes awry (there is an epistemic *doṣa*, “fault”), and the qualifier portion of the intentionality of a cognition of an entity as qualified gets filled (unbeknownst to the subject, at least in some cases) by a *mere* remembering, not, as in recognition, by perception *in conjunction* with remembering. But the structure of the cognition in both cases is provided by the world, not by the mind—as it is, too, with perceptual cognitions where there is no role for retrieval by the mind of information from previous experiences—for example, a person’s first perception of, to use Gaṅgeśa’s example, a cow, “It’s a cow.” Naiyāyikas have a term for combinative perception, *samūhāmbana-jñāna*, “cognition of a group of things,” where the sense organ takes in several things in a swoop—for example, three pencils on a desk, all at once. Here we could say that the “mind” *combines*, if you like. But plain old perceptual cognitions, such as “It’s a pot,” require no role for the mind as envisioned by Siderits, or, indeed, by Chadha, in her Kantian notion of synthesis of a sensory manifold under a concept. There is a big difference between catching up all three pencils in a “heap” and seeing any of them as a pencil. Counting is not the qualification relation evident in any determinate perception’s intentionality.

Now on to Gaṅgeśa’s views about apperception and indeterminate cognition. Can the externalist explain the meaning of the conventional statement “I am cognizing a pot” (such *vyavahāra* suggesting that there is immediate self-consciousness)? If I know I am cognizing a pot, the cognition and knowledge would seem to be accessible to me. The internalist would say that I know that I know that I am seeing a pot. Gaṅgeśa denies this. So, what is his explanation of why we do say such things as “I am cognizing a pot” (or even “I know I am cognizing a pot”)?

The following is from Gaṅgeśa’s *Tattvacintāmaṇi* (Jewel of Reflection on the Truth about Epistemology), the end of the section on “apperception,” *anuvyavasāya*, and the beginning of the section on “indeterminate cognition,” *nirvikalpaka*.⁴

Translation

OBJECTION: If a cognition is cognized through the mediation of the *manas*, the internal organ, how could the cognition “I am cognizing (a pot)” arise as a cognition of an entity as qualified? The (qualifier) cognitionhood, which would be indeterminately grasped, would produce (according to you) the cognition (the apperceptive perception). Cognitionhood at the time of the (later, apperceptive) cognition would be without a (locus or) qualificandum (since the previous cognition would be gone). Thus, no such perception could arise.

GAṄGEŚA: No. Even though the (target) cognition has been destroyed at the time (of the apperception), a cognition of an entity qualified by cognitionhood can occur because that qualificandum (the cognition that is apperceived) exists at the (immediately) preceding moment. For it would be cumbersome to hold that a qualificandum not existing at the (precise) time of a perception could not be a cause of

the perception (as in general it would be cumbersome to require a cause to exist at the same time as its effect, as opposed to immediately before).

(Furthermore) the present time that figures in “I am cognizing” (with the verb in the present tense) appears as a “thick” time interval (to be broadly construed), not as the precise current instant (*kṣaṇa*). For the latter is beyond the range of what can be sensed.

After that (after a first apperception, a second, i.e.,) a cognition of an entity (a self) qualified by (the first apperception, i.e., by) a cognition occurs, because cognition (the first apperception) of the qualifier (viz., the original, non-apperceptive cognition) exists in the self (immediately) previously. And the qualifier (the original, non-apperceptive cognition with its objecthood) is not a cause of the (second apperceptive) cognition of an entity as qualified, as that would be a cumbersome view. Rather, cognition (the first apperceptive cognition) of the qualifier is a cause, since it is required.

Thus, indeed, even without a thatness (as a cause), recognition of a that occurs (as in “This is *that* Devadatta I saw yesterday”) through a *cognition* of the that (as a cause).

Comments. A cognitionhood qualifier could not have the requisite grounding in something cognized, says the objector, because an indeterminate cognition, on the Nyāya view, would stand between a supposedly apperceived cognition and an apperception. Cognition is momentary, and only one cognition occurs at a time. So there would be no target cognition available to be apperceived—other than the indeterminate cognition, which, Nyāya holds, is the one type of cognition that cannot be apperceived. In other words, since even an apperception begins as an indeterminate cognition—as a direct awareness of a qualifier, to wit, cognitionhood—the problem is that there would be no qualificandum available to be cognized, no locus of the cognitionhood. The determinate cognition can arise only after the indeterminate cognition.

But a time-lag in perceptual processes is acceptable, Gaṅgeśa responds. With causal relationships in general, an effect does not require its causes to exist at the same time it does but only immediately before. Thus, there is no rule that an object of a perception, which is one of its causes, and the perception itself have to occur at exactly the same time. Moreover, cognition endures for more than a point instant: a target cognition passes away as an indeterminate cognition arises, with an instant of overlap. The apperceived and the apperception do not overlap, but they are contiguous. In sum, there is no causal problem.

Again, the momentariness of cognition is not to be interpreted literally. For, a point instant of time, *kṣaṇa*, is an imperceptible interval, whereas a cognition can be perceived (i.e., apperceived). There is, so to say, cognitive spread. Nevertheless, perception is immediate. It occurs in the present. But in saying this, we refer not to a point instant but to what is termed gross or “thick” time, as Gaṅgeśa has now many times said.

Then our author announces a rather surprising thesis. Such an apperception as “I am cognizing such and such” is, Gaṅgeśa implies, dependent on a prior *ap-*

perception that, strictly speaking, would take the form “Such and such is being cognized” (with no *I* as explicitly an object). “*I* am cognizing such and such” expresses a second apperception. Thus, there would be the following series: first, a non-apperceptive cognition, “A pot”; second, an indeterminate cognition of its cognitionhood; third, an apperception of the original, non-apperceptive cognition as a cognition qualified by its object, “A pot is being cognized”; and fourth and finally, a second apperception with a self as explicitly its object, “I am cognizing a pot.” The qualificandum portion of the objecthood (or “intentionality,” *viśayatā*) of the first apperception would be the original, non-apperceptive cognition, and the qualificandum portion of the objecthood of the second would be a self, an entity that endures, the locus of the entire cognitive stream.

But now there are two cognitions standing between the final apperception and that part of its objecthood that is the original, non-apperceptive cognition of, for example, a pot. This problem is resolved by a view of the causal sequence that is much like the story told with recognition. Recognition is prompted in its “thatness” portion not by the reality that is the qualifier but by a cognition of the qualifier; similarly, an original target cognition, although destroyed, would be a qualifier cognized by a first apperceptive cognition that gives rise to a second and becomes its object complete with its objecthood, carrying along its objecthood, so to say. Thus the fourth cognition, “I am cognizing a pot,” is able to present the objecthood of the first, the original non-apperceptive cognition, “A pot,” by means of a cognitive intermediary.

Translation

OBJECTION: (The problem of the perceptual availability of cognitionhood is to be solved differently, since, as you imply, a cognition lasts for two instants.) Given another first-level, non-apperceptive cognition, produced at the moment of the destruction of a (prior) non-apperceptive cognition, then there can occur (with an indeterminate cognition intervening, overlapping the last instant of the first non-apperceptive cognition and the first of the second) a cognition of an entity qualified by cognitionhood.

GAṄGEŚA: Wrong. For, one of the causes of such a cognition would be absent (namely, cognition of the qualifier). And, with respect to the apperception, “*I infer* (such and such),” or the like, there would be no inferencehood (available to be apperceived).

Or (according to some) a cognition and cognitionhood are (both) presented in an indeterminate awareness (without their relationality being presented, at a second instant, immediately following the target cognition). Thereafter (at a third instant), qualificative relationality to the cognitionhood is presented in an (apperceptive) cognition as well as a self’s qualificative relationality to the cognition (such that a self, a cognition, and its object would all appear in a first apperception, “I am cognizing such and such,” as opposed to a second apperception being required). A qualifier (a target cognition as a cognition) appears as occurring in a qualificandum (a self), and another qualifier (the objecthood of the target cognition) appears in the

qualifier (the target). For thus, indeed, would we have the meaning of a qualified entity as again qualified.

Comments. The objector's picture would have the virtue of an immediately preceding non-apperceptive cognition—presumably identical to a first non-apperceptive cognition except for its place in the series—standing as the required locus for the cognitionhood that is grasped. Gaṅgeśa's response is brief but telling. He finds a cognitive stream, running: target cognition₁ (C₁), indeterminate cognition₂ of C₁'s cognitionhood, apperceptive cognition₃ of C₁, and apperceptive cognition₄ of C₃ as a qualifier of a self as qualificandum. There is a thick temporal link analyzable as a first instant of C₃ overlapping the last instant of C₂ and contiguous with C₁, whose last instant overlaps the first instant of C₂. Both C₁ and C₂ are causes of C₃. A similar story is to be told for C₂ through C₄, except that C₃, being an apperception with C₁ as object, preserves, so to say, the presentational objecthood of C₁ into C₄. The main problem with the objector's proposal is that such objecthood would be lost, since there would be no apperceptive link in a series that ran from C₁ to C₄.

A second refutation trades on a distinction between perception and inferential awareness. A series of perceptions of the same thing, "Pot," "Pot," "Pot," and so on, are each veridical cognitions, according to Nyāya. There is, however, no similar series of veridical inferential cognitions, "Fire on the mountain," and so on, since the second concluding would commit the fallacy of "establishing what is already proved." (One does not want to waste one's time or another's. And one does not need to make a second inference to proceed to act.) The second rejoinder that Gaṅgeśa makes in the passage at hand is that the objector's cognitive picture would not allow apperception of an inferential awareness, "I am inferring such and such," because the second non-apperceptive cognition could not be an inferential awareness, unlike the case with perception. Thus, having another first-level cognition available might help for the availability of cognitionhood, also of perceptionhood, but not of inferencehood.

Just how Gaṅgeśa himself looks at the matter of apperception of an inferential awareness is, however, not clear. And he himself asserts, in the next passage, the unavailability of inferencehood.

The alternative view presented in the last paragraph does not receive Gaṅgeśa's endorsement, but neither is it refuted (at least not explicitly). An indeterminate cognition would grasp a prior cognition itself as well as its cognitionhood, but the qualificative relationality—of the prior cognition's cognitionhood to the cognition itself—would not be cognized until a following apperception arose. Thus, the verbalization of a first apperception, occurring as the third member of a series, not the fourth, would appropriately include a reference to an I, as in "I am cognizing such and such."

Translation

(Gaṅgeśa continues:) But in fact a cognition (as identified by its objecthood), like an absence, can only be an object of a cognition of an entity as qualified (i.e., it

cannot be the object of an indeterminate cognition). An apperception is produced by a non-apperceptive cognition (enduring for two instants) whose object is (for the apperception) the cognition's qualifier taking the form of the object (of the non-apperceptive cognition) inasmuch as the causal complex sufficient to produce such a qualificative cognition includes it. Cognitionhood is also presented there (in the apperception), in that an (indeterminate) cognition of cognitionhood is among the causes in the complex sufficient to produce the (determinate) cognition of it. In part, an apperception's object is (determinate in that it is) possessed of predication content, and (in part) it is (indeterminate in that it is) lacking predication content (as simply an occurrent cognition grasped as a cognition). Thus, it is (dual in nature as though it were) in form the man-lion (manifestation of Viṣṇu). There, indeed, in the (apperceptive) cognition of (a cognition as) a qualified entity a qualificative relationality with cognitionhood appears. But regarding such (apperceptions) as "I am inferring (such and such)," the case is different. In such apperception (there would be no such cognition of inferencehood because) inferencehood would be unavailable.

Comments. An absential perception may be fed by an indeterminate cognition of a qualifier, such as *on-the-floor*, but there is no indeterminate cognition of an absence itself. The absence, for example, of a pot on the floor would be, properly speaking, the qualificandum that the absential perception determined. (The mind converts "on-the-floor" from qualifier to locus.) Similarly, the qualificandum determined by an apperception—namely, the thing it cognizes, a determinate cognition—is not cognized indeterminately although its cognitionhood is cognized indeterminately.

The cognitionhood, which is not an object of the cognition itself, appears in the apperception along with the original cognition's objecthood. Thus, an apperception is dual in nature, having a target with its objecthood as apperceptive object, and having the same target simply as a cognition as apperceptive object as well. Gaṅgeśa suggests the criticism of a confusion of kinds ("cross-sectioning") when he uses the image of the "man-lion" form of Viṣṇu. But apparently that is not a fault when a dual nature is arrived at, as here, by cogent reasoning. The point gets elaborated at the end of the next section, on indeterminate cognition.

However, there is an outstanding problem, which is mentioned in the last line of the text. Consider the cognitive series where an original cognition₁ is an inferential awareness (C₁), "Fire on the mountain": C₁, then indeterminate cognition₂ of C₁'s inferencehood, and then apperceptive cognition₃ of C₁. But, unlike the case with perception and its perceptionhood or any cognition and its cognitionhood where there can be a perceptual or cognitive stream, a second inference would commit the fallacy of "proving what is already established." So, by the time we got to C₄, which could be verbalized as "I am inferring fire on the mountain," C₁ would have passed away entirely and could not be grasped. As we saw just above, the qualificandum that would be determined by C₄ would be a self, an entity that endures. But whereas C₃, which is the qualifier that C₄ would cognize as belonging to a self, would be a cognition such that its cognitionhood could stand in for the cognitionhood of C₁, C₃

in an inferential apperceptive series would not be another inferential awareness but just a cognition, indeed a perception, a mental perception of an inferential awareness. The original inferential awareness' objecthood could be passed on through the apperception, C₃. But the nature of the cognition as an inferential awareness, which would appear to be an object of C₄ ("I am *inferring* such and such"), would be simply unavailable. Probably the brief remark on inferencehood here at the end should be read as an acknowledgement of the problem with no solution implied.

Here ends the section on apperception. The next section is on "indeterminate cognition," the *nirvikalpaka prakaraṇa*.

Translation

GAṄGEŚA: And perception is of two sorts, indeterminate and determinate.

Of the two, the indeterminate does not have (as object) the tie to name, universal, and so on (having which a perception is determinate); it does not grasp a qualificative relationality; and it is without predication content.

Comments. In wide perspective, the purpose of the theory of indeterminate perception seems to be to maintain the position that, despite illusion (and the arguments of Buddhist subjectivists), there are perceptual instances where *all* the information presented comes from the object perceived, that nothing comes from the side of the subject, such that the view of cognition as "having form of itself" (*sākāra-vāda*) is clearly wrong. To find an instance of this for purposes of refutation of subjectivism, we cannot turn to recognitions ("This is that Devadatta") or to complex perceptions ("The person is a staff-bearer") where, although the perceptions are veridical, a prior determinate perception (of Devadatta or the staff) provides content through the workings of memory or of a special cognitive relationality. For we, too, admit that recognitions are infused with content by activation of a latent memory-impression, *saṃskāra*, which is something seemingly "subjective," on the side of the subject. And complex perceptions (including illusions or errors) also, we admit, require subjective elements to be explained. But with a first-time perception of, for example, a cow, nothing on the side of consciousness could provide the object. Cowhood is provided by a direct sensory connection with the thing as it is in the world. Cowhood causes an indeterminate perception that has it as its object.

There is, however, no direct, apperceptive evidence for *nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa*. Rather, by force of the following inference as the first step of a two-step argument, it is to be *postulated*: "The perceptual cognition, 'A cow' (for example), is generated by a cognition of the qualifier, *since* it is a cognition of an entity as qualified (by that qualifier appearing), like an inferential awareness." The second step takes a person's first perception of an individual (Bessie, let us say) as a cow (i.e., as having some such property) as the perceptual cognition figuring as the inference's subject such that the cognizer's memory not informed by previous cow experience could not possibly provide the qualifier, cowhood. The qualifier has to be available, and the best candidate is its perception in the raw, a qualifier (cowhood), that is to say, not

(as some are wont to misinterpret the point) as divorced from its qualificandum (Bessie) but rather as neither divorced nor joined, and, furthermore, not as qualified by another qualifier (such as being-a-heifer) but rather just the plain, unadorned entity. In the particular example, the entity is the universal, cowhood, or being-a-cow, although, again, it would not be grasped as a universal or as anything except itself.

Gaṅgeśa's argument would maintain a causal uniformity among *pramāṇa*-generated cognitions of an entity as qualified. A law strikes us as we survey veridical cognitions and the processes that generate them: a cognition of an entity as qualified has a prior cognition of the qualifier counting among its causes, among the conditions individually necessary and together sufficient for bringing it about. But this presents a problem: if anything that is known through a qualifier presented as predication content requires a prior cognition of the qualifier, will there not be a vicious regress of prior cognitions required? The answer is no. Indeterminate perception blocks such a threat. The qualifier itself is not known through another qualifier, *ad infinitum*, but is grasped directly. In indeterminate perception, the qualifier is not cognized as a qualifier. Indeterminate perception is not a cognition of an entity as qualified, where a qualificandum is cognized as qualified by a qualifier. It has no predication content.

Finally, we may mention a distinct line of reflection that, although not much developed by Gaṅgeśa in this section, feeds the view that determinate perception is a cognizing of a qualificandum qualified by a qualifier where the qualifier is provided by a prior cognition: things have multiple properties some of which normally go undetected on any given occasion of experience. If I can touch what I saw, for example, then when I am only touching the thing, I normally will not be aware of the thing's color perceptually. If the ontological layering of things and their qualifiers were not reflected in the causal ordering that has the qualificandum known through knowledge of one or more of its properties, properties that are already known, then perception of a qualificandum should entail that the "thick" particular be presented, the thing with all of its properties, and, as Gaṅgeśa points out in the section on inherence, a blind person in touching a yellow piece of cloth would know its yellow color.⁵

These considerations notwithstanding, indeterminate perception is acknowledged by Gaṅgeśa to be a theoretical posit for which the evidence is indirect and systemic. It is worth repeating that it is not itself perceptible; indeed, it is the only type of cognition that cannot be apperceived. This section is consumed by examination of the reasons for the posit, against the backdrop of a *pūrvapakṣin* rejection of it. Apparently, all perception is, in this opponent's view, determinate, that is, of an entitied as qualified (*savikalpaka-jñāna* = *viśiṣṭa-jñāna*).

Translation

PŪRVAPAKṢIN: What is the evidence that a cognition can be anything other than determinate? It is not perception, for it is not established that perception can do that,

and your own position is that indeterminate perception is beyond the range of the senses.

Moreover, it is not the way we talk (that establishes indeterminate perception), since that (verbalization) is accomplished through determinate awareness (alone).

Also, the (common introspective) experience, “I now discern distinctly this (feature) not previously discerned (by me just previously),” which shows two cognitions (in succession), is no evidence that there is a bare looking at and then a determinate perception. For that (introspective datum) can be explained by cognition or non-cognition (of a particular qualifier) of something with many qualifiers.

Comments. According to Nyāya, indeterminate cognition is a posit made for systemic reasons, as mentioned, and it is held that perceptually founded verbalization requires determinate perception. So, indeterminate perception is founded neither in perception nor in everyday speech.

The last argument rejected is not obviously a failure. Something perceived—for example, a pot—has properties that go unnoticed on any given occasion. Without a change in perception—without new sensory activity—one notices a property not previously distinctly discerned. This suggests that the property was formerly perceived indistinctly, that is, indeterminately. The *pūrvapakṣin* rebuts the argument by pointing out that not all properties of a thing are perceived. That is, the phenomenon of previously unnoticed information can be accounted for by the fact that no (determinate) cognition grasps all the properties of an object. That there is non-cognition of one property belonging to an object is compatible with cognition of another property belonging to the same object. Other causes are to be identified for changes in the sensory flow of information, such as attention and focus.

Translation

OBJECTION (by a Naiyāyika proponent of indeterminate perception, against the *pūrvapakṣin*, in the form of an inference that Gaṅgeśa accepts): The perceptual cognition, “A cow,” is generated by an (indeterminate) cognition of the qualifier, *since* it is a cognition of an entity as qualified, like an inferential awareness.

PŪRVAPAKṢIN: (No.) Cognition of an entity as qualified—which comes about as the result of the totality of causes of cognition of the qualifier and what it qualifies—is single and unified, and has as object both (the qualifier and what it qualifies) in a relation of mutual expectancy (each requiring the other). Concerning it (i.e., concerning subtypes of cognition of an entity as qualified), perception arises from a sensory connection with an object that is fit (to be perceived). Inferential awareness arises by force of an (inference-provoking) property possessed by (a locus that is) the subject of the inference—predication content that is specified by being pervaded (by another property, namely that which is to be inferred). Knowledge acquired from trustfully understood words involves a qualifier, not previously cognized (as qualifying a particular object), being made manifest by force of semantic fitness and so forth (present in a speech act), as specifying the meaning of the words. And ana-

logical comprehension as well involves such, indeed (i.e., both a qualifier and what it qualifies). Nowhere is there an (independent) cognition of a qualifier that is generative (of a cognition of an entity as qualified by that qualifier, and thus nowhere a preceding indeterminate perception).

Moreover, experience of thatness in the case of a recognition (as in “This is *that* Devadatta”) is not so (i.e., does not have an indeterminate perception as a cause). Since a recognition does not arise if the memory-impression is not awakened or if it is destroyed even though an experience of thatness has occurred, the awakened memory-impression is the sensory connector and a causal auxiliary coordinate with the sense organ (an indeterminate perception does not play this role).

Also in the case of such cognitions as “Fragrant sandalwood” (known by vision alone), the requirement that there be cognition of the qualifier is (satisfied by) a cognition of that (the fragrance, without, however, an indeterminate perception); the cognition (itself) would function as the operative connection; it would be an auxiliary cause aiding the sense organ.

(Finally,) error is not a cognition of an entity as qualified at all (but rather a failure to cognize two cognitions as distinct).

Comments. The *pūrvapakṣin* contends that the causal complex that gives rise to a cognition of a cow as an individual property-possessor is the same causal complex that gives rise to cognition of cowhood. And this surely seems plausible on Naiyāyika premises: a sense organ would be in contact with an individual in which cowhood inhered. Furthermore, the *pūrvapakṣin*’s analysis of the qualification relation seems tidier than Gaṅgeśa’s own. That is, both the predication content and the qualificandum portions of a cognition carry “expectancy” (*ākāṅkṣā*). Neither can be independently cognized since each requires a complement, like a transitive verb that requires a direct object to convey meaning.

Another good argument is that no other type of veridical cognition has an indeterminate cognition as a cause. In fact, not just all varieties of veridical cognition conform to the (Prābhākara) *pūrvapakṣin*’s analysis; all cognitions do. Error, or illusion, may appear to be an exception, since the qualifier and qualificandum portions being divorced—their objecthoods residing in no single qualified entity—the two would seem to be cognized separately (with no “expectancy”). But error is not a cognition at all—in the Prābhākara view. It is a certain type of failure to cognize.

Translation

GAṆGEŚA: We answer. Inferential awareness and so on (verbal knowledge, analogy, and recognition) have causes (severally) in a familiarity with a probandum (as pervading a prover given perceptually), memory of the meaning of words, cognition of significance, and experience of thatness. For without familiarity with a probandum and so on, inferential awareness and so on would be impossible. Moreover, the probandum and so on stand as the qualifier (through which a qualificandum is cognized throughout this entire range of cognition). Therefore, a cognition of that (the

qualifier) is a cause of inferential awareness and so on (and thus we expect this regularity to occur with perception, too). Cognition of the probandum and so on as the qualifier (through which a qualificandum is known) need not be taken as a cause of inferential awarenesses and so on (when such cognitions are known or regarded in some other way than as a cognition of an entity as qualified, to wit, when they are known simply as occurrent cognitions). Nevertheless, concerning precisely (an inferential awareness and so on regarded as) cognitions of entities as qualified, a cognition of the qualifier is a cause. For, there are no counter-considerations prevailing.

Comments. All cognition of an entity as qualified by a qualifier (F) is generated, in part, by a cognition of the qualifier (F). The examples that Gaṅgeśa clearly means to include, in addition to (1) the inferential cognitions that he mentions, are (2) recognitions (which are a kind of perception), (3) bits of knowledge based on trustfully understood words, and (4) analogical comprehensions. In each case, a prior cognition of the qualifier (F) appearing as predication content is required and thus is identified as a causal factor, a condition that although insufficient in itself to bring about a later determinate cognition with F as predication content is needed for the determinate cognition to occur. “For,” as Gaṅgeśa says, “without familiarity with a probandum and so on, inferential awareness and so on would be impossible.”

But non-veridical cognitions, too, have a cognition of the qualifier presented as a cause. Indeed, every determinate cognition is found to have a cognition of the qualifier as one of its causes. Sometimes in veridical experience memory clearly informs the perception such that the memory-forming prior experience would be a causal factor, such as when we see a piece of distant sandalwood as fragrant without the involvement of the organ of smell. Similarly, in the case of an illusory experience of a rope as a snake (“a is a snake”), the snakehood is furnished by memory and previous experience of snakes. In the case of recognitions, too, there is a cognitive causal factor in a remembering of the thing now experienced again. Indeterminate perception of the qualifier is to be posited to maintain causal uniformity in a case when nothing else is able to make the qualifier available. As will be indicated below, an experience of something a as an F for the very first time requires indeterminate perception of the qualifier F. Much perception is informed by memory but not all.

So, as a second step in Gaṅgeśa’s argument that begins with the observation that a (determinate) perception is a cognition of an entity as qualified, we expect a first-time perception (“[That’s a] cow”) to be both caused by a preceding cognition of the qualifier and to differ from the other types of veridical cognition in the precise role the preceding cognition has in the determinate perception’s characteristic causal complex. An indeterminate perception of the qualifier provides the qualifier that emerges in the determinate perception as its predication content in some cases. Perceptions of entities as doubly qualified, it will be brought out, also have a cognition of the qualifier as a cause, a determinate cognition. But a perception of a singly qualified entity not previously known in that way requires a prior indeterminate cognition of the qualifier.

In the last paragraph of the passage, Gaṅgeśa makes a disclaimer. Just as an individual may be rightly cognized through any of many diverse properties, one and the same cognition may be viewed differently. And it makes a difference how one is viewed if we are interested in what causes it. As cooked rice viewed as food has different causes than the same rice viewed as a substance, so also an inferential awareness, for example, viewed as a cognition of an entity as qualified will have a cognition of the qualifier as a cause, while the same cognitive event viewed differently—as a cognition exhibiting cognitionhood—need not be conceived of in this manner.

Notes

- 1 – Monima Chadha, “Perceptual Cognition: A Nyāya-Kantian Approach” (Chadha 2001); Mark Siderits, “Perceiving Particulars: A Buddhist Defense” (this issue), and Chadha, “Perceiving Particulars-as-such Is Incoherent: A Reply to Mark Siderits” (this issue).
- 2 – More precisely, a cognition’s “intentionality” would be *viṣayitā*, a relation that has the cognition as its first term and the object known as the second, whereas *viṣayatā* is a relation between the object as the first term and the cognition as the second, a relation that is determined (*nirūpita*) by the cognition, so it is said.
- 3 – The Buddhist arsenal includes at least one weapon of mass destruction, the argument from causal efficiency: the seed in the granary has to be distinct from the seed that produces the sprout just by virtue of the fact that the one does, and the other does not, have sprout-causal-efficiency. The best counterforce, it seems to me, among a dozen or so counterarguments on the Nyāya side, distinguishes necessary from sufficient causal factors and isolates the criteria for everyday usage with the former: not all seeds have to produce right away. Tell us, dear Buddhist, why in your view we call the seed in the granary a seed, if it does not, right there, before being placed in the ground, have sprout-causal-efficiency. It does, in our view, have such causal power that gets triggered *later* by causal auxiliaries, other necessary but individually insufficient factors, such as water and earth. Seedhood is *pervaded* by sprout-causal-efficiency. Such exchanges, however, cannot be dealt with adequately in a long book, much less in a short discussion.
- 4 – This translation is a collaboration with N. S. Ramanuja Tatacharya with help from Arindam Chakrabarti. It is part of our rendering of the whole of Gaṅgeśa’s perception chapter (forthcoming from the American Institute of Buddhist Studies in conjunction with Columbia University Press and Motilal Banarsidass). The Sanskrit text is *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, vol. 1 (Tirupati, 1972), pp. 854–858.
- 5 – See the translation of the *Tattvacintāmaṇi* section on inherence in my *Classical Indian Metaphysics* (1995), p. 251.

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