

Zeitschrift: Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie
Herausgeber: Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft
Band: 53 (1999)
Heft: 3

Artikel: Avta and vta
Autor: Franco, Eli
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-147468>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 12.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

AVĪTA AND ĀVĪTA*

Eli Franco, Hamburg

In his admirable study “Die Erkenntnislehre des klassischen Sāṃkhya-Systems”¹ FRAUWALLNER has attempted to reconstruct the beginning of the *Śaṣṭitantra* of Vārṣagaṇya² by combining the evidence from Jinendrabuddhi’s *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā* and Simhasūri’s *Nyāyāgamānu-sārīṇī*. In this connection he referred to two modes of reasoning called *vīta* and *āvīta*, which technical terms he rendered as “direkte [Begründung]” and “indirekte [Begründung]” respectively.³ FRAUWALLNER must have known, of course, that the indirect proof usually appears in Sāṃkhya and Nyāya texts (notably in the *Yuktidīpikā* and *Nyāyavārttika*)⁴ with the designation

* As usual I wish to express my indebtedness to Prof. K. PREISENDANZ. The arguments presented here were developed in the course of several very long breakfasts.

1 Reprinted in *Kleine Schriften*, ed. G. Oberhammer and E. Steinkellner (Glasenapp-Stiftung Band 22, Wiesbaden 1982), pp. 223-278. [Originally published in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens* 2, 1958, pp. 84-139.]

2 FRAUWALLNER has tacitly reconstructed the name of the author of the *Śaṣṭitantra* as Vārṣagaṇa; he took his clue probably from the fact that his followers are often called *vārṣagaṇāḥ* in the *Yuktidīpikā*. However, as Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI has pointed out, *vārṣagaṇa* may also mean a follower of Vārṣagaṇya (cf. also *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.2.111), and CHAKRAVARTI’s arguments in favour of Vārṣagaṇya being the name of the Sāṃkhya teacher referred to in the *Yuktidīpikā* seem more convincing to me. Cf. P. CHAKRAVARTI, *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, repr. Delhi 1975 (originally published Calcutta 1951), pp. 135-138.

3 Cf. FRAUWALLNER, *op. cit.*, pp. 228, 229. These two terms are also used by FRAUWALLNER as qualifying “inference” (Schlussfolgerung) and “proof” (Nachweis); cf. *ibid.*, p. 267.

4 Most of the passages that deal with these terms have been collected by K. KANO in a paper presented at The Third International Dharmakīrti Conference (Hiroshima, 6.11.1997): “On *anyathānupapatti* and *avīta/āvīta*.” To these one may add *Ślokavārttika*, *Apohavāda* 166 and the commentaries there on (cf. below); *Nyāyavārttikatātparyapariśuddhi of Udayanācārya*, ed. A. Thakur (Nyāyacatur-granthikā Vol. IV, Delhi 1996), p. 456.5 (... *vītāvītasādhāraṇatvāt*); Abhayatilaka, *Nyāyālankāra*, eds. A. Thakur and J.S. Jetly (Gaekwad’s Oriental Series 169, Baroda 1981), p. 265.7 (*ete trayo hetavo darśanāntare ’pi prasiddhā iti darśayati – vīta iti*); Vācaspatimiśra II, *Nyāyatattvāloka* in K. PREISENDANZ, *Studien zu Nyāyasūtra III.1 mit dem Nyāyatattvāloka Vācaspatimiśras II*. (Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien 46, Stuttgart 1994), Vol.1, p. 128.10 (... *ity avītahetoh* ...; variants: *iti vītahetoh* and *iti na*

avīta, but his paper contains no discussion of this variant; in fact, he does not even mention that the variant exists. FRAUWALLNER's silence may be explained by assuming that he has accepted Muni JAMBUVIJAYAJI's opinion, expressed in his edition of the *Nyāyāgamānusāriṇī*⁵, that “even though for the most part throughout the works of the philosophical systems of Sāṃkhya etc., the use of the word *avīta* alone is observed, whereas throughout the *Nayacakravṛtti* the use of the word *āvīta* alone is apprehended, nevertheless the usage of *āvīta* is indeed understood to be the correct one”⁶ However, the only reason provided by the revered Muni does not seem to be decisive. He merely points out that only *āvīta* appears in Kumārila's *Ślokaṽrttika* quoting *Apohavāda* 166.⁷

pakṣikuryād yadā sarvāms tadāpy āvītahetubhiḥ /
*anaikānto virodhaś ca sarvalokaprasiddhitāḥ //*⁸

vītahetoh); in Kishore Nath Jha (ed.) *Nyāyatattvāloka, A Commentary on Nyāyasūtras of Gautama by Vācaspati Miśra (Junior)* (Ganganatha Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapitha Text Series 33, Allahabad 1992), p. 323.17: *na vītahetoh*. This is, of course, not an exhaustive list; cf. also *Nyāyakośa*, s.v. *vīta*.

⁵ Jambuvijayaji's edition (cf. next note) bears the publication date A.D. 1966. Yet FRAUWALLNER already refers to it in the above mentioned paper that was published in 1958 (cf. FRAUWALLNER, *op. cit.*, p. 231, n. 5). Further dates that appear on the title page of Jambuvijayaji's edition are: Vīra samvat 2492, Vikrama S. 2022 and Ātma(?) S. 70. Vīra 2492 and Vikrama 2022 correspond to 1964/65, unless the dates are given in expired years (cf. A.L. BASHAM, *The Wonder that was India*, Repr. Calcutta/Allahabad/Bombay/Delhi 1991, p. 496) in which case the correspondence to 1966 is possible. Barring the possibility of time-travel, one can reasonably assume that Jambuvijayaji's edition was set for print much earlier, at least to some extent before 1958. FRAUWALLNER's preface to this edition (p. 6) is dated 15th September 1958; on the other hand, Jambuvijayaji's notes (e.g., *bhoṭapariśiṣṭam* p. 137, n. 1) refer to FRAUWALLNER's “Erkenntnislehre des klassischen Sāṃkhya-Systems.”

⁶ Cf. *Dvādaśāraṇa Nayacakram of Ācārya Śrī Mallavādi Kṣamāśramaṇa with the commentary Nyāyāgamānusāriṇī of Śrī Simhasūri Gaṇi Vādi Kṣamāśramaṇa*, ed. Muni Jambuvijayaji, (Śrī Ātmānand Jain Granthamālā 92, Part 1, Bombay 1966), p. 314, n. 2: *yadyapi prāyaḥ sarvatra sāmṁkhyādidarśanagranthesv avītaśabdasyaiva prayogo dṛśyate nayacakravṛtau tu sarvatrāpy āvītaśabdaprayoga evopalabhyate tathāpy āvītaśabdaprayogaḥ śuddha eva pratiyate ...*

⁷ Cf. the continuation of the quote in the previous note: ... *kumārīlabhaṭṭaviracite mīmāṃsāślokaṽrttike 'py āvītaśabdasyaiva prayogāt, tad yathā – ...*

⁸ Cf. *Ślokaṽrttikaṭikā (Śarkarikā) of Bhaṭṭaputra-Jayamiśra*. Ed. C.K. Raja, (Madras University Sanskrit Series 17. Madras 1946), p. 75.7f.

For his quotation of this verse Muni JAMBUVIJAYAJI has used the edition by C.K. Raja, published in Madras in 1946. However, the same verse appears in Dvārikādāsa Śāstrī's edition of the *Nyāyaratnākara* with a variant *tadāthāvētahetubhiḥ* that leaves the reading ambiguous:⁹

pakṣikuryād yadā sarvāms tadāthāvētahetubhiḥ /

According to HONDA's word index to the *Ślokavārttika*, this is the only occurrence of *avīta* in the *Ślokavārttika*; the word *āvīta* has no entry in this index.¹⁰

The two available commentaries on this verse also do not help us to decide between the two variants, for it is clear – at least if the printed editions are to be trusted – that Jayamiśra has read *āvīta*,¹¹ whereas Pārthasārathimiśra has read *avīta*.¹²

It is interesting to note that there is a strong resemblance between the two commentaries on this verse,¹³ which to the best of my knowledge has not been noticed so far. If the dating of Jayamiśra by C.K. RAJA as

⁹ Cf. *Ślokavārttika of Śrī Kumārila Bhaṭṭa with the Commentary Nyāyaratnākara of Śrī Pārthasārathi Miśra*, ed. Dvārikādāsa Śāstrī, (Varanasi 1978), p. 433.

¹⁰ Cf. Megumu Honda, Index to the *Ślokavārttika*, (*Dōhō-Daigaku-Kiyō* Vol. 7, 1993), pp. 33-148 = (1)-(116). This undoubtedly very useful index, however, is reputed to be not entirely reliable.

¹¹ Cf. *Śākarikā* p. 74.5-6: *tato 'py āvētahetubhir anaikāntika iti ...*

¹² Cf. *Nyāyaratnākara* p. 433.19: *avītā hetavo nāma vipakṣavyāvṛttimukhena ye sādhyam gamayanti, ...*

¹³ Cf. *Śākarikā* p. 75.9-12: *ye hi vipakṣavyatirekeṇaivārtham pratipādayanti te 'trāvētahetavo 'bhidhīyante. yathā prāṇādayo nirātmakebhyo ghaṭādibhyo nivṛttā jīvaccharīre drśyamānās tadvyavacchedenaiva sātmakatvam avagamayantīty arthaḥ. kiṃ ca nañyoginaḥ śabdā nānyavyavacchedenārtham pratipādayantīti lokaviruddho 'py ayam pakṣa(h).*

Nyāyaratnākara p. 433.20-22: *avītā hetavo nāma vipakṣavyāvṛttimukhena ye sādhyam gamayanti, yathā prāṇādayaḥ. te hi nirātmakebhyo ghaṭādibhyo vyāvṛttā jīvaccharīrasya nirātmakatvāpohena sātmakatvam gamayanti. lokaviruddham ca nañyoginām anapohakatvam iti.*

Of course the exact relationship between the two commentaries needs to be investigated in a systematic manner. It is not impossible that both commentaries draw here on a common source, for the above example for the *a/āvīta* argument appears already in the *Nyāyavārttika*.

belonging to the period before the 11th century is correct,¹⁴ then we may tentatively conclude that Pārthasārathimiśra relies on Jayamiśra's commentary. I would like to take this opportunity to draw attention to Jayamiśra's commentary which has been hitherto almost completely ignored in Mīmāṃsā-studies.

To come back to our subject matter, it seems that the only unambiguous evidence for the reading *āvīta* is Siṃhasūri's work (ca. 600?). To this one may add the later evidence of *Mahāvyutpatti* no. 4578 which renders *āvītaḥ* with *gsal te 'oṅs pa*¹⁵ and has no entry for *avīta*. In view of this scanty evidence WEZLER and MOTEGI decided to follow the majority of the manuscripts and to retain, albeit with some hesitation, the reading *avīta* in their recent critical edition of the *Yuktidīpikā*.¹⁶

Yet the reading *āvīta* receives unexpected support from a fragment of one of the earliest Turfan manuscripts. This manuscript is among the most precious finds of the Third German Turfan expedition.¹⁷ It was found in the so-called "Rotkuppelraum" in Qizil on the Northern Silk Road. The manuscript was transferred recently from the East German Academy of Sciences to the State Library, Berlin. Officially it is classified as SHT-810, but it is better known under the name that Dieter SCHLINGLOFF gave it, namely, "the Spitzer manuscript," in homage of the German Jewish scholar Moritz SPITZER who was the first to work on this manuscript in 1927.

SPITZER was unable to complete his task. In the thirties, as I was told by his son Amitai Spitzer, he worked for the Schocken publishing house and made a narrow escape from Berlin to Jerusalem in 1939. Fortunately he took his transcripts with him, and they miraculously survived in a small plastic bag in his son's attic in Abu Tor, Jerusalem. I had the chance and

¹⁴ Cf. RAJA's introduction to the *Śāṅkarikā* p. XIII: "Thus we know definitely that Jayamiśra must have lived before the eleventh century." RAJA's argument for this date, however, is not cogent, for it relies on a reference to Jayamiśra by Śrīdeva (i.e., Vādideva Sūri) who, according to RAJA himself, lived "in the end of the eleventh and the first half of the twelfth centuries."

¹⁵ Sasaki's edition p. 305. *gsal te* has to be corrected to *bsal te*; cf., e.g., *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti* quoted by FRAUWALLNER, *ibid.*, p. 229.

¹⁶ Cf. A. WEZLER and Sh. MOTEGI, *Yuktidīpikā*, (Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien 44, Stuttgart 1998), e.g., p. 89.1 (underlined as an uncertain reading).

¹⁷ In the following I repeat and summarize parts of my paper "The Spitzer-Manuscript – Report on a Work in Progress," forthcoming in J. Kato Felicitation Volume (ed. T. Wada *et al.*) Tokyo 1999(?).

privilege to meet Amitai Spitzer in 1995, and he graciously gave me his father's Nachlass, which, as I discovered later on, contained also materials that SCHLINGLOFF sent to SPITZER in the sixties in the hope that the latter would resume his work after some forty years of interruption. These additional materials consist of black and white photographs of the fragments that occasionally record a better state of preservation of the manuscript. A considerable number of the photographs are accompanied by SCHLINGLOFF's own preliminary transcriptions. Upon my receipt of the materials Professor WEZLER showed interest in the manuscript and its history, and kindly applied for a research project with the German Research Council to enable me to publish the Spitzer manuscript. The project was finally approved last year, and if all goes well it will be completed by the end of the year 2000.

The original manuscript probably contained some 420 leaves of which only about one thousand, mostly small fragments remain. It is written in Kuṣāṇa-Brāhmī script and accordingly dated by LÜDERS to ca. 200 A.D.,¹⁸ and by Lore SANDER to the 2nd to 3rd century.¹⁹ I tend to assign the manuscript to a slightly later date, that is, as belonging to the late Kuṣāṇa period, but in any case the paleographical evidence does not allow us to

¹⁸ Cf. the *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1928, p. LVIII, quoted in D. SCHLINGLOFF, "Fragmente einer Palmblatthandschrift philosophischen Inhalts aus Ostturkestan (Ms. Spitzer)," in *Beiträge zur Geistesgeschichte Indiens. Festschrift für Erich Frauwallner*, ed. G. Oberhammer, Wien 1968 (= *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens* XII-XIII, 1968/1969), pp. 323-328, at p. 323.

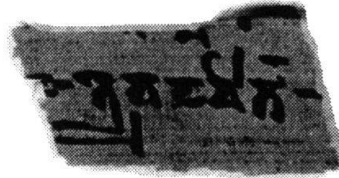
It is interesting to note that WALDSCHMIDT, in his quotation of the *Sitzungsberichte* in *Sanskriithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden*, Vol. I, Wiesbaden 1965, p. XXI, has omitted the sentence that dates the manuscript "etwa um 200 nach Chr." This, however, seems to be due to a simple oversight rather than to doubts concerning the dating of the manuscript. The omission has been pointed out by SCHLINGLOFF, *ibid.*, p. 323, n. 2.

¹⁹ Cf. L. SANDER, "The earliest manuscripts from Central Asia and the Sarvāstivāda mission", in *Corolla Iranica. Papers in honour of Prof. Dr. David Neil MacKenzie on the Occasion of his 65th birthday on April 8th, 1991*, ed. R.E. Emmerick and D. Weber, (Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York/Paris 1992), pp. 133-150, at p. 147.

assume that it could be later than the 3rd century.²⁰ Thus, we are dealing here with the earliest philosophical Sanskrit manuscript that survived.²¹

Although the Spitzer manuscript contained in all probability a Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma work, or even more than one such work,²² one of its most remarkable features is frequent references to non-Buddhist literature and topics, e.g., the Mantras, Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads, *arthaśāstra*, *kāmaśāstra*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, the sixty-four arts (*kalā*), etc. In his outstanding study of the *Parvan*-list of the *Mahābhārata*²³ Schlingloff has shown what a spectacular potential the fragments of the Spitzer manuscript have and how far-reaching inferences can be drawn even on the basis of a single, not very large fragment.

Among the non-Buddhist philosophical doctrines that are referred to in the Spitzer manuscript one clearly recognizes references to Sāṃkhya, Vaiśeṣika and Lokāyata. These seem to be the only non-Buddhist philosophical systems known to the author, and perhaps indeed are the only ones that existed in 3rd century in India. It was my hope to present here today all the fragments that deal with Sāṃkhya thought, but this task will have to be postponed for another occasion. Instead, let me present just a single fragment that bears on the topic of *avīta* and *āvīta*. The fragment, frame 286 (1.9 x 3.6 cm), reads:



/// ity etad āvītaṃ ///

²⁰ It should be noted, however, that none of the early Turfan manuscripts is dated in colophons, etc. The dating of these manuscripts is based on the similarity between their script and dated inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇa period.

²¹ For a masterful short survey of the Kuṣāṇa manuscripts and the secondary literature thereon cf. SANDER's paper referred to in note 19.

²² SCHLINGLOFF suggested that the manuscript contained two works, the one divided into *āhnikas*, the other into *prakaraṇas*; cf. SCHLINGLOFF, "Fragmente ...", p. 325. Further, one can discern at least three, possibly more, different hands, and at least one fragment is written in a Gupta script.

²³ Cf. D. SCHLINGLOFF, "The oldest extant Parvan-List of the Mahābhārata," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 89, 1969, pp. 334-338.

We can assume that the statement that preceded *iti* contained an example of the *āvīta* mode of reasoning, but even if this assumption is correct, the example itself seems to be irretrievably lost, and so far I was not able to determine anything meaningful about the original context of the fragment. The size of the *akṣaras* seems to indicate that the fragment does not belong to the middle portion of the manuscript, nor to its very end. The only thing that we know for certain about the context are the few syllable written on the other side of the fragment. We can merely gather that something unknown is separated from something else, equally unknown, that is referred to by a word ending in *ṣa*:



/// ṣaviyuktam ity e///

SCHWARTZ and PFEIFFER's *Rückläufiges Wörterbuch* – that indispensable tool for working with Sanskrit fragments – lists more than a thousand words (including compounds) ending in *ṣa*,²⁴ and this is more than enough to dissuade us from any further speculation on the subject.

Nevertheless, important information can be gained from our fragment. So far, our earliest primary references to *āvīta* date to ca. 600, namely, the references in the *Nyāyāgamānusāriṇī* and possibly in the *Ślokavārttika*. Our earliest secondary reference is from the Tibetan translation of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti*. Similarly, the earliest references to *avīta*, namely, in the *Nyāyavārttika* and the *Yuktidīpikā*, are not older than the 6th century. Thus, the reference to *āvīta* in the Spitzer manuscript precedes the hitherto earliest known references by some three centuries. From this reference we can also conclude that the mode of reasoning called *āvīta* was well known at least a century²⁵ earlier than the *Ṣaṣṭitantra*, because FRAUWALLNER

²⁴ Cf. W. SCHWARTZ and O.E. PFEIFFER, *Rückläufiges Wörterbuch des Altindischen. Reverse Index of Old Indian*. Wiesbaden 1978.

²⁵ Of course, the distance in time between Vārṣaganya and the Spitzer manuscript need not be a full 100 years. On the other hand, there is no reason to assume that the author

ascribed Vārṣagaṇya's work to the beginning of the 4th century, and as far as I can see this dating cannot be challenged at the present.²⁶ By the same token we also conclude that Vārṣagaṇya was not the first to use this mode of reasoning, but only adopted it to his purpose. FRAUWALLNER himself, let me hasten to add, must have been of the same opinion: although he says in a rather sweeping manner that "Vṛṣagaṇa's epistemology is thus his own achievement and his own merit,"²⁷ when he refers specifically to *āvīta*-reasoning he says: "Valuable and innovative was finally the way in which Vṛṣagaṇa made use of the indirect proof and incorporated it in his system of inference."²⁸

Thus, the variant *āvīta* has now acquired a pedigree that is significantly older than that of *avīta*. Can we decide which of the two variants is the correct one? Before we attempt to answer this question it would be presumably not out of place to ask what the terms *vīta*, *avīta* and *āvīta* actually mean.

While perusing the secondary literature on the topic I was surprised to find out that – with one notable exception – no one seems to have translated *vīta*, *avīta* or *āvīta* literally. FRAUWALLNER's rendering (cf. above) of *vīta* and *āvīta* as "direct" and "indirect" was, of course, not meant to be a literal rendering of the two terms, but rather a contextual translation or a descriptive conveyance of the way these two modes of reasoning function. The fact that this translation is purely contextual is clearly seen from the fact that even publications that do not follow FRAUWALLNER's preference for *āvīta* use "direct" and "indirect" for *vīta* and *avīta* respectively. The first scholar to have used "direkt" and "indirekt" for *vīta* and *avīta* is probably Albert BÜRK in his study of inference in the *Sāṃkhya*-

of the work preserved in the Spitzer manuscript was the first to use the terms *vīta* and *āvīta*.

²⁶ Cf. FRAUWALLNER, *ibid.* [n. 2], pp. 274, 276. Seyfort RUEGG argued that the beginning of the fourth century is the terminus ante quem for Vārṣagaṇya on the basis of a reference to the latter in the *Yogācārabhūmi*; cf. "Note on Vārṣagaṇya and the *Yogācārabhūmi*," (*Indo-Iranian Journal* 6, 1962), pp. 137-140.

²⁷ Cf. FRAUWALLNER, *ibid.*, p. 274: "Vṛṣagaṇa's Erkenntnislehre ist somit seine eigene Leistung und sein Verdienst."

²⁸ Cf. FRAUWALLNER, *ibid.*, p. 276: "Wertvoll und neuartig war schliesslich, wie Vṛṣagaṇa die indirekte Beweisführung verwertete und in sein System der Schlussfolgerung eingliederte." Note the distinction between *verwerten* and the more neutral *verwenden* that is lost in the translation.

tattvakaumudī.²⁹ This translation was later adopted by GARBE himself.³⁰ JACOBI, on the other hand, who first drew on the parallel materials from the *Nyāyavārttika* and the *Tātparyatīkā*, is implicitly critical of these translations; he leaves the terms untranslated and seems to favour “positive” or “affirming” and “negative” or “negating” as their original (pre-Uddyotakara) meaning.³¹ Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI renders *vīta* and *avīta* as “*modus ponens*” and “*modus tollens*.”³² Whether one considers these terms to be appropriate or not, it is clear that CHAKRAVARTI did not intend them to convey the literal meanings of *vīta* and *avīta*. KUMAR and BHARGAVA translate *vīta* and *avīta* in the *Yuktidīpikā* as “direct inference” and “inference by elimination.”³³ JHA, in his translation of the *Sāṃkhyatattvakaumudī*, sometimes leaves the terms untranslated (on *kārikā* 5) and sometimes translates *avīta* as “negative inference” (on *kārikā* 9);³⁴ similarly, he translates *avītahetubhiḥ* in the *Ślokavārttika* “with a view to negative arguments.”³⁵ In his translation of *Nyāyavārttika* on 1.1.35 *vīta* and *avīta* appear as “affirmative” and “negative,” and later on (on 3.1.54) as “positive” and “negative” proofs.³⁶ LARSON and BHATTACHARYA use “positive inference” and “exclusionary inference”.³⁷ Finally one may also

- 29 Cf. A. BÜRK, “Die Theorie der Schlussfolgerung (*Anumāna*) nach der Sāṃkhya-tattva-kaumudī des Vācaspati-miśra,” (*Vienna Oriental Journal* XV, 1901), pp. 251-264.
- 30 Cf. R. GARBE, *Die Sāṃkhya-Philosophie*. 2nd edition Leipzig 1917, pp. 219-220. He does not mention *vīta* and *avīta* in the first edition of 1894.
- 31 Cf. H. JACOBI, “*Vīta und Avīta*,” in *Kleine Schriften*, ed. B. Kölver, (Wiesbaden 1970), Teil 2, pp. 613-621 (= *Aus Indiens Kultur. Festgabe für Richard v. Garbe*. Erlangen 1927, pp. 8-16), esp. p. 618.
- 32 Cf. P. CHAKRAVARTI, *op. cit.*, [n. 3] pp. 190-191.
- 33 Cf. Sh. KUMAR & D.N. BHARGAVA, *Yuktidīpikā*, (Delhi 1990) Vol. I, pp. 1, 169, etc.
- 34 Cf. *The Tattva-Kaumudī. Vācaspati Miśra's Commentary on the Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*. Trans. by G. JHA with Introduction and Critical Notes by H. D. Sharma, Revised and Re-edited by M. M. Patkar, (Poona 1965), pp. 24-25, 48. In the critical notes, p. 8, *avīta* is referred to as “negative reasoning.”
- 35 Cf. G. JHA (trans.), *Ślokavārttika*, (repr. Delhi 1983), p. 327 (= *Apohavāda* 166).
- 36 Cf. G. JHA, *The Nyāya-Sūtras of Gautama. with the Bhāṣya of Vātsyāyana and the Vārtika of Uddyotakara*, (repr. Delhi 1984), Vol. I, p. 396. Cf. also Vol. III, p. 1233 (on 3.1.54 = 3.1.56 in the Calcutta edition): “negative proof” and “positive proof” (for *avīta* and *vīta*).
- 37 Cf. G.J. LARSON and R.S. BHATTACHARYA (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*. Vol. IV: *Sāṃkhya, A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy*.

mention NAKADA's rendering of *vīta* as "parallel to *pakṣa-dharmatva*".³⁸

As mentioned above, so far I was able to find only a single attempt to translate *vīta* and *avīta* literally. In *Der Mondschein der Sāṃkhya-Wahrheit*, published in 1891, GARBE translates *vīta* and *avīta* with "geradezu gehend" and "nicht geradezu gehend."³⁹ It is interesting to note that BÜRK's translation of *vīta* and *avīta*, which has become the standard translation of these terms, is based on this rather inappropriate translation which he accepts uncritically. "*Avīta* means 'not going straightforward'; and 'indirect' means indeed precisely the same thing."⁴⁰ Even though one has to disagree with GARBE's literal translation,⁴¹ it has an advantage over all other translations inasmuch as it makes clear that the translator has understood the term *vīta* to be the past participle of the root \sqrt{v} with the *upasarga* *vi*, which is not at all obvious. GARBE's interpretation of the term is further endorsed by Vācaspatimiśra who analyses the term while commenting on Uddyotakara's *Nyāyavārttika*.⁴²

Delhi/Varanasi/Patna/Madras 1987. The index refers to pp. 32, 96-103, 230, 243-244, 304-305, 490-493; *āvīta* has no entry in the index.

- ³⁸ Cf. N. NAKADA, "On the Three Aspected Logical Reason in Asaṅga's Madhyāntānugama-śāstra," in *Science and Human Progress. Professor D.D. Kosambi Commemoration Volume*, (Bombay 1974), pp. 164-166. Nakada follows on this point a previous study by H. HADANO, "Suron gakuha no ronri setsu, vīta avīta ni tsuite". *Bunka* 1944, XI/3 pp. 177-219, XI/4 pp. 306-326. In another paper, however, NAKADA translates *vīta* and *āvīta* as "direct" and "indirect." Cf. N. NAKADA, "Three Kinds of Inference in the Commentaries on Sāṃkhyakārikā (Part II)". *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* XV/1, 1966, pp. (38)-(48) = pp. 437-427 [esp. pp. (47)-(48)].
- ³⁹ Cf. R. GARBE, *Der Mondschein der Sāṃkhya-Wahrheit. Vācaspatimiśra's Sāṃkhya-tattva-kaumudī*, (München 1891), p. 32 = (548). In a different context (p. 47 = [563]), on *kārikā* 9) he attempts a formulation that stands half way between a literal translation and a paraphrase: *-sāadhanāny avītāni* is rendered "die von negativer Betrachtung aus beizubringenden Beweise."
- ⁴⁰ Cf. BÜRK, *ibid.*, [n. 29] p. 255: "Avīta heisst 'nicht geradezu gehend'; und 'indirekt' bedeutet ja genau dasselbe."
- ⁴¹ GARBE, BÜRK (in following GARBE), F.M. MÜLLER, etc., ignore the simple fact that *vi* + \sqrt{v} cannot mean "going straightforward," but rather "going apart," etc.
- ⁴² Cf. *Nyāyavārttikatātparyāṭikā* p. 291.18 (on 1.1.53) in *Nyāyadarśanam. With Vātsyāyana's Bhāṣya, Uddyotakara's Vārttika, Vācaspatimiśra's Tātparyāṭikā & Viśvanātha's Vṛtti*. Ed. Taranatha Nyaya-tarkatirtha and Amarendramohan Tarkatirtha. Culcutta Sanskrit Series 18. Calcutta 1936.

vividhena prakāreṇa itaḥ prāpto vītaḥ, pakṣavyāpakatve sati sapakṣa-vyāptyāvyāptyā ca; tasmād anyo 'vīta iti.

vīta [means] 'has gone,' [i.e.] 'has obtained,' by various ways, [i.e.] by pervasion and non-pervasion of the *sapakṣa* while it pervades the *pakṣa*. What is different from it (i.e., from *vīta*) is *avīta*.

If I understand correctly, Vācaspati interprets *avīta* as a *kevalavyatireki-hetu*, i.e., a reason characterized merely by negative concomitance because there is no *sapakṣa*; *vīta* could be either a regular reason that pervades the *sapakṣa* wholly or partially, or a *kevalānvayi-hetu*, i.e., a reason that also pervades the *sapakṣa* wholly or partially, but is characterized merely by positive concomitance because there is no *vipakṣa*.⁴³ Whatever the case may be, Vācaspati's interpretation reflects a more advanced stage of logical development and could hardly be taken as representing the original meaning of *vīta* and *avīta*.⁴⁴ This in itself does not discredit the etymological interpretation of *vīta* as derived from the root \sqrt{vi} with the *upasarga vi*. However, a serious problem in this interpretation is that it renders the well-attested old variant *āvīta* difficult to account for. In my opinion, any reasonable solution of our problem, even if it eventually favours the variant *avīta*, must account at least for the *possibility* of *āvīta* as well. For if any one of the two variants made no sense to begin with, how could one explain that such a variant persisted for centuries? Furthermore, it seems *prima facie* advisable to attempt to derive both *vīta* and *a/āvīta* from the same verbal root.

Now, the term *avīta* poses no serious problem. However, the combination $\bar{a}+vi+\sqrt{vi}$ does not seem to exist in the Sanskrit language; at least none of the dictionaries at my disposal records it, and one may add that the combination of the two *upasargas* $\bar{a}+vi$ is extremely rare.⁴⁵

This leaves us with two ways to interpret *āvīta*, namely, as a past passive participle either of the root \sqrt{vi} or of the root \sqrt{vye} . Among the two, the alternative of $\bar{a}+\sqrt{vye}$ is less than satisfactory. The basic meaning of the

⁴³ Cf. Vācaspatimiśra's similar formulation with regard to Uddyotakara's two *anvayin* reasons in *NVT* p. 365.26-27: *daśamaikādaśau sapakṣavyāptyavyāptibhyām anvayīnau hetū*.

⁴⁴ Cf. also E. SOLOMON, *Indian Dialectics*, (Ahmedabad 1976), Vol. I, p. 382.

⁴⁵ The *Monier Williams* records only three verbs with the combined *upasargas* $\bar{a}+vi$: *ā-vi-tan* (also in APTE), *ā-vi-bhā*, and *ā-vi-han*.

root is “to cover, to wrap, to conceal,” while the *upasarga ā* functions in a reflexive sense (i.e., “to cover oneself,” especially with the sacred thread which was originally probably a larger piece of garment). Neither this meaning nor the other meaning recorded only by APTE, namely, “to sew,” seems to apply to an inference or a mode of reasoning. I for one fail to make any sense of an inference or a reasoning that is covered or concealed (by what?) or an inference that covers or conceals itself.

This leads us by elimination, that is by an *āvīta* mode of reasoning, to the last alternative, namely, *āvīta* as derived from the root $\sqrt{vī}$ and the *upasarga ā*. The basic meaning of this root is “to have in view, to approach, to strive for,” and this meaning can easily be construed as qualifying an inference or a mode of reasoning. Moreover, the Tibetan translation of *āvīta*, namely, *bsal te 'ons pa*,⁴⁶ seems to support this interpretation, for *'ons pa* could well translate *vīta* as derived from the root $\sqrt{vī}$. Whether *bsal te* represents an attempt to translate the *upasarga ā*, however, is a more difficult question. So far I have come across no evidence to suggest that this is the case, and I assume that the Tibetan translation represents a mixture of literal and contextual elements. Literally it can be rendered as “[an inference/reasoning that] has come [to its object] after/inasmuch as it has excluded [all other alternatives].” The problem with this interpretation of *āvīta*, however, is that it does not seem to allow for a meaningful distinction, not to say opposition, between *āvīta* and *vīta*, if both are derived from this root. If *vīta* means “had in view, approached,” etc., then *vīta* and *āvīta* mean pretty much the same thing.⁴⁷

Therefore, our attempt to explain *vīta* and *āvīta* as derived from the same verbal root has failed, and we have to conclude, again by an *āvīta* mode of reasoning, that if *vīta* cannot be derived from the roots $\sqrt{vī}$ or $\sqrt{vyē}$, then it must be derived from the root \sqrt{i} . This conclusion is also

⁴⁶ The *Mahāvīyutpatti* reads *gsal te 'ons pa*, but, as mentioned above, this has to be emended; *gsal* (to be clear, distinct, bright, visible, etc.) does not make sense in the present context, whereas *bsal*, the perfect stem of *sel ba* (to remove, to reject, to refute), fits perfectly with the definition of *āvīta* as arriving at its object by elimination (*pariśeṣa*) or by criticizing – and thereby excluding the possibility of – the position of the opponent (*parapakṣapratīṣedha*), etc.

⁴⁷ Cf. also W.P. SCHMID, “Die Wurzel *Vī-* im *R̥gveda*,” in *Mélanges d'Indianisme à la mémoire de Louis Renou*, (Publications de l'institut de civilisation indienne 28. Paris 1968), pp. 613-624, at p. 618: “*vī-* erlaubt den Zusatz von Richtungsadverbien *ā*, *upa*, *pra*, *prati*, ohne dass die Handlungsrichtung des Verbums sich änderte.”

supported, at least to some extent, by the Tibetan translation of *vīta* as *rnam par ldan pa*. For *rnam par* is the usual translation of the *upasarga* *vi*. Thus, the Tibetan translators and lexicographers seem to have understood *vīta* as derived from *vi+√i* even though their translation does not contain a representation for the root *√i* itself. With this we have now come full circle and returned to our starting point, Vācaspatiśra's analysis of *vīta*. Of course, we should not accept his interpretation as to the varieties of *vīta*,⁴⁸ but we can accept that *vīta* reasoning is a reasoning that has various modes, perhaps the five modes that are mentioned in the *Śaṣṭitantra*. This interpretation is certainly compatible with the literal meaning of the term in the sense of "going apart, going in different directions."

Our interpretation of *vīta* and *āvīta* as being derived from different verbal roots can also explain the origin of the variant *avīta*. When one encounters the compound *vītāvīta* it is indeed most natural to assume that both words are derived from the same verbal root. And when one fails to make sense of the two words *vīta* and *āvīta* derived from either *√vī* or *√i*, it is also most natural to read the compound as comprising *vīta* and *avīta* derived from *√i*.⁴⁹

Thus, I would like to conclude that the reading *āvīta*, as preserved in the anonymous Central-Asian fragment, the *Nyāyāgamānusāriṇī* and probably in the *Ślokaṣārttika*, and as reflected in the Tibetan translations, is the original reading of the term. In the final analysis we can therefore endorse the statement by OBERHAMMER *et alii* that *avīta* is probably only a "secondary simplification."⁵⁰ This, however, does not mean that we have to correct *avīta* to *āvīta* wherever the term appears. It is entirely clear that at

⁴⁸ In this sense it can be said that we revert to DEUSSEN's position in *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, Vol. I, part 3, (Leipzig 1920³), pp. 367, 418, which was severely criticized by SUALI; cf. L. SUALI, *Introduzione allo Studio della Filosofia Indiana*, (Pavia 1913), p. 415, n.1; cf. also GARBE, *Sāṃkhya-Philosophie* [n. 30] p. 219, n. 2. However, what DEUSSEN considered as "getting lost in subtleties" ("da ... Vāc. sich in Subtilitäten verliert") we consider as an attempt to harmonize the position of the Sāṃkhya with that of the Nyāya and bring both traditions up-to-date.

⁴⁹ The theoretical possibility of understanding *vīta* and *avīta* to be both derived from *√vī* can be discarded because it would imply that an *avīta* reasoning has not had in view/approached its object.

⁵⁰ Cf. G. OBERHAMMER unter Mitarbeit von E. PRETS und J. PRANDSTETTER, *Terminologie der frühen philosophischen Scholastik in Indien*, (Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 9, Wien 1993), Band I, p. 123, s.v. *āvītaḥ*.

some point two traditions concerning this term began to exist side by side. Even if one or the other of these traditions has come into existence by mere misunderstanding, misreading or miscopying, once it has been established it continues to exist in its own right. It is obvious, for instance, that Vācaspatimiśra has read and understood *avīta* as containing an *alpha privativum* when he explains *avīta* as that which is different from *vīta* (cf. above *tasmād [vītād] anyo 'vīta iti*). To emend *avīta* to *āvīta* in such a case would be nonsensical.

Vācaspatimiśra's reading and interpretation of *avīta* may have exercised an influence on the manuscript tradition of the *Yuktidīpikā*. The *Sāṃkhyatattvakaumudī* has become by far the most popular commentary on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, and because all the available manuscripts of the *Yuktidīpikā* are younger than the *Sāṃkhyatattvakaumudī*, one may well imagine that some manuscripts were "corrected" accordingly. Basically we have only two manuscripts for the relevant sections of the *Yuktidīpikā*,⁵¹ one of which consistently reads *āvīta*. Furthermore, most of the occurrences of *a/āvīta* are ambiguous, i.e., the word appears either as the second member of the compound *vītāvīta* or is preceded by *ca*, *na* or *tadā*.⁵² I was able to find only four occurrences in the entire work where the reading is unambiguous.⁵³ Thus, if someone is convinced, due to Vācaspatimiśra's influence or some other reason, that *avīta* is the correct reading, he may reasonably conclude that the few cases that read otherwise are simply scribal mistakes, and may therefore be tempted to correct them. This scenario is not a pure speculation, because we have some evidence that the manuscript was tampered with at some stage. Fortunately this tampering has left some meager but telling traces. One of the four cases, on p. 89.1, reads: *vīta avīta iti*. This is not simply a case where the sandhi rules were not applied (as one could conclude from Pandeya's edition that reads *vītaḥ avīta iti*⁵⁴), but clearly a case of wrong sandhi. Therefore, I tend to assume

⁵¹ That is, manuscripts A and K. Manuscript B covers only pp. 224-270, and manuscripts D and P are derived from K.

⁵² Cf. *Yuktidīpikā* pp. 1.3, 71.13, 71.15-16, 84.19-21, 89.10, 92.25, 96.22, 97.12, 106.17-19, 107.3-4.

⁵³ Cf. *Yuktidīpikā* 89.1, 89.12, 90.23, 97.6 (twice). Of course, it is possible that I have missed some occurrences. This statement will have to be re-examined when the promised Index to the *Yuktidīpikā* will have been published by Wezler and Motegi.

⁵⁴ Cf. R.C. PANDEYA (ed.), *Yuktidīpikā* (Delhi 1967), p. 40.22.

that the statement originally – and correctly as regards the sandhi – read *vīta āvīta iti*, as in manuscript A, the *ā* was changed to *a*, but *vīta* was not changed to *vīto*, and the new *a* was not omitted or replaced by an *avagraha*. If this assumption is accepted, then the original reading in the *YD* must have been *āvīta*.

One final observation in this connection. The terms *vīta* and *a/āvīta* are usually associated with the Sāṃkhya, and they are indeed typical for that system. However, it would go too far to claim that they are exclusively Sāṃkhya terms or that the terms are recorded only for the Sāṃkhya tradition.⁵⁵ Uddyotakara has attempted to prove the existence of an *ātman* using an *avīta* argument;⁵⁶ in the *Ślokavārttika* (cf. above) it is a Buddhist opponent⁵⁷ who attempts to justify his *apoha*-theory by having recourse to *āvīta* mode of reasoning; Bhāsarvajña interprets *Nyāyasūtras* 1.1.34-35 as referring to *vīta* and *avīta* respectively,⁵⁸ and these are not *pūrvapakṣa-sūtras*, but clearly represent the opinion of the Sūtrakāra.

Vīta and *āvīta*, therefore, were not originally associated with a specific philosophical school. They seem to have been part of the *vāda*-tradition in general, the tradition of public philosophical debate in which the beginnings of Indian logic in the early centuries of our era can be located. It is probably because Sāṃkhya logic did not change significantly after the fourth century that the expression *vītāvīta* remained closely associated with it. In the other schools the developments in the theory of inference that occurred after Dignāga and Dharmakīrti rendered these terms archaic and somewhat obsolete; consequently they are only occasionally, indeed rarely, used or mentioned. Yet the Naiyāyikas have never quite forgotten that their *sūtras* were associated with these terms although they are not mentioned explicitly in them. This tradition has never quite disappeared. It is recorded at least as late as the 15th century, and in one form or another it probably continues up to the present day.

⁵⁵ Cf. OBERHAMMER *et al.*, *op. cit.*, [n. 50] p. 123, col. 1: “Der nur für die Sāṃkhya-Tradition belegte Terminus [*āvīta*] ...”

⁵⁶ Cf. *Nyāyavārttika* [in *Nyāyadarśanam* see n. 42] 538.19f.

⁵⁷ The opponent may be an imaginary one, of course, but the fact that Kumārila attributes the use of *āvīta-hetu* to a Buddhist defending the *apoha* theory indicates that he did not consider this mode of reasoning to be exclusively Sāṃkhyistic.

⁵⁸ Cf. Bhāsarvajña, *Nyāyabhūṣaṇa*, ed. Yogīndrānanda, (Varanasi 1968), p. 308.2: *sādharmyād iti vītasya lakṣaṇam vaidharmyād ity avītasetyeto dvividha eva hetuḥ*.

