

# Śāntarakṣita on Defense of the *Apoha* theory

---

In the preceding chapter, I examined Dignāga and Dharmakīrti theories of meaning as presented in the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and *Pramāṇavārttika* texts. Now in this chapter, I delve into the radical criticism advocated by Bhāmaha (*Kāvyālaṃkāra*), Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (*Ślokavārttika*), and Uddyotakara (*Nyāyavārttika*) against the *apoha* theory. Their criticism gave an incentive to the Buddhists to modify the *apoha* theory. The thought that a word has as its direct import a positive image is found clearly expounded by Śāntarakṣita in the *Śabdārthaparīkṣā* of his *Tattvasaṃgraha*. Here, I just clearly state these opponent's objections and Śāntarakṣita's response to them with special reference to his *Tattvasaṃgraha*. For this, my procedure will be the following: I will first probe into Bhāmaha's objections and Śāntarakṣita response to it, and then Kumārila's objections and Śāntarakṣita defense on it. And lastly, I will mention Uddyotakara's objections and Śāntarakṣita reply to it.

### **Bhāmaha's objections can be summarized as follows:**

1. If the word 'cow' connotes nothing but the negation of opposite, i.e., a purely negative concept, then how do we account for the positive concept of cow? In this case we need to search for some other word which can communicate the positive idea of cow.<sup>1</sup>

2. The same word cannot connote two opposite meanings simultaneously, one positive and the other negative. That is, no single word can have two fruits of affirmation and negation, at one and the same time.<sup>2</sup>
3. If the word ‘cow’ means ‘negation of non-cow’, then we should have the cognition of non-cow firstly. That is, the first idea in the mind of the hearer would be that of the non-cow, but this does not happen, therefore *apoha* (negation of others) cannot be the import of words.<sup>3</sup>

In Bhāmaha’s objections there is something what we comprehend about *apoha* in the very first stage. It is a very common understanding of this theory which is bound to result in such objections. Nevertheless, his criticism deserves to be taken note of because understanding of this theory is shared by many people. There is some fundamental misconception in Bhamaha’s comprehension of this theory. He has interpreted the phrase ‘*anyāpohena*’ as mere negation and nothing else.<sup>4</sup>

This is a misleading view and it has been countered by Śāntarakṣita in the chapter on *Śabdārthaparīkṣā* of his *Tattvasaṃgraha*.

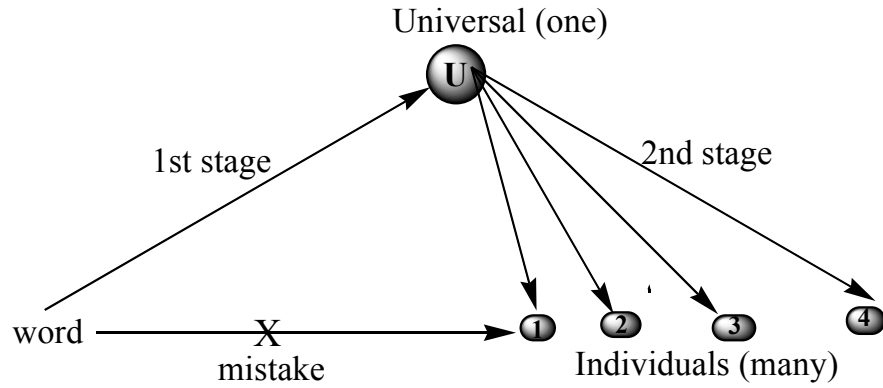
*Śāntarakṣita’s response to Bhāmaha’s objections*

Regarding the first objection, Śāntarakṣita replied that words mean something positive, and only afterwards the notion of its negation from others arise in our knowledge. That is, it is the idea of the ‘cow’ itself which is produced by the word, because the cognition of cow is produced when the word ‘cow’ is uttered. So far as its exclusion from others is concerned, it is comprehended in a secondary manner by implication.<sup>5</sup> For the second objections, Śāntarakṣita replied through the popular illustration of *arthāpatti*: ‘The fat Devadatta does not eat during the day’. This denies that Devadatta eats during the day as its direct denotation but it also implies the

taking of food at night. Similarly the positive and negative aspects of the denotation of the word can be explained. That is, the idea of affirmation is the direct resultant, and the idea of negation is the indirect resultant due to implication. And the reason for this is that, there is no affirmation without negation. Thus there is nothing incongruous in a single word having two fruits. Moreover, the two aspects are not contradictory to each other but complementary to each other. Further, the word does not directly brings about both the aspects, negative and positive at the same time.<sup>6</sup> Finally, the third objection that ‘on hearing the word cow uttered, the first idea that one should obtain would be that of the non-cow’, this also is rejected by what has been first said above. Thus, these two aspects of a single entity qualify each other by means of identification and differentiation. So, Buddhist position is valid.<sup>7</sup>

### **Kumārila’s objections**

As a Mīmāṃsaka, Kumārila maintains that a word is denotative of the universal (*jāti, ākr̥ti*)<sup>8</sup>, which, according to him, is a real entity and is directly perceived. To disprove the apoha theory, he lays stress on the fact that, on hearing the word ‘cow’ we have the notion of ‘cow’ and not that of ‘not non-cow’. Actually what happened can be explained with the help of the following diagram:



In this diagram, according to Kumāriḷa, word refers to universal in the 1<sup>st</sup> stage. But, because of functional aspect and because universal is exemplified in the individual (without individual the universal loses its meaning as then nothing demonstrate it), they have to accept individual. But, it is only in the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage that universal is manifested in the individual through implication, i.e., ‘one is manifested in many’. For example, when we utter a word ‘cow’ we mean cow in general (universal) not a particular cow. But, we mistake that word refers to individual possessing universal. Further, in the process of his close examination of Dignāga’s and Dharmakīrti’s arguments, he points out the following inconsistencies:

1. *Apoha is just another name for universal*

Kumāriḷa has opened his attack against the theory of *apoha* by saying that *apoha* is nothing more than another name for universals. If Buddhist accepts universal, then ‘negation of non-cow’ is the universal itself. The Buddhist concept of universal consists in the negation of non-cow. It is not different from the universal in the form of cowhood denoted by the word ‘cow’. So the dispute is only in regard to the name of the universal. Thus, it is concluded that what is denoted by the word ‘cow’ is the universal in the

shape of the negation of the non-cow. If that is the meaning of apoha, Buddhists have said nothing new.<sup>9</sup>

2. What is the locus/substratum of the 'negation of non-cows'?

Neither it is a unique particular, nor genus, and nor the totality (samudāya)? According to Kumāriila, apoha is nothing other than abhāva (non-existence, absence), and abhāva is not complete nothingness, but signifies a certain kind of existence.<sup>10</sup> So, in all there are four kinds of negation/non-existence/abhāva. It is shown that something positive exists i.e., non-existence must be an entity and not non-entity. Thus, non-existence being only a form of existence, what is that non-existence which is meant by you (Buddhist) to be the 'negation of the horse', etc? Because, according to them, besides the class 'cow', there can be no other positive entity that could be the substratum of the negation of non-cow? Thus, it is concluded that, in order to prove the point that 'words' refer to something positive and not only negation, Kumāriila mentions the four kinds of negation/abhāva, that is, even in negation there is something affirmative. Thus, Kumāriila questions the locus/substratum of the 'negation of non-cows' (ago-nivṛtti, vyavṛtti, apoha), that is, the locus of the 'non-existence of non-cows', denoted by the word 'cow'.<sup>11</sup> Its, locus he says, cannot be a unique particular (svalakṣaṇa), because it is undefined, abstract and unqualified i.e., nirvikalpa, free from conceptual construction whereas the 'negation of the opposite is a conceptual construction. Nor can it be a genus such as the black cow or the spotted cow, since the word 'cow' is applied to all cows. Again, if it had as its locus the totality (samudāya) of all cows, the 'negation of non-cows' would not be comprehended as long as all cows were not known. On the basis of this enquiry, Kumāriila concludes that the 'negation

of non-cows' is nothing but another way of referring to the universal 'cowness' (gotva).<sup>12</sup>

3. *Apoha is only a subterfuge to express a 'void'*

Kumārila further says that, if the import of a word consists in mere negation (*niṣedha*/absolute or total negation), then in that case the outward appearance of the world will be *śūnya* or void and it is only another kind of void then the void postulated by the Buddhist, under the chapter on 'Idealism', *Vijñānavāda* of the *Ślokavārttika*. So, if void is what is denoted by the words, then in that case, it would be useless to posit the '*apoha*', because in the void itself there would be an apprehension of the form of cognition (image) of horse and other things, which would be a positive entity (universal), independent of all tinge of anything external, as the import of words. Thus, it was an useless effort on your part to have assumed an '*apoha*', as forming the denotation of objects, and yet independent of any external (real and positive objects).<sup>13</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita reply to these objections by saying that the mental universal is acceptable to them. The physical object is a projection of that mental universal, and words do mean such universal. But this universal is unreal because it is a construction of our mind (*vikalpa*) and thus this position is different from that of the opponent who advocates a physical real universal. As regards its 'externality' that also is spoken of as such only by persons under illusion it is not real. Thus, Śāntarakṣita says that we do accept externality of things as a mental construct which is nothing but illusory perception in a flash like the conception of two moons, generated by the force of our *vāsanās* i.e., due to internal aberration or distortion. Further, in

*apoha* no question of mere negation emerges and hence there is no fear for the emergence of any 'void'. As no such assumption is made by us, it does not affect our position. *Apoha* is not different from the form of cognition but yet it is apprehended as externally, due to illusion only. Moreover, *apoha* is not entirely independent of the external object as was alleged by Kumāriila, because it is made available through implication (i.e., there is an indirect concomitance with the object, even though the conception is primarily mistaken and illusory). Like the cognition of jewel on account of the luster of the jewel. Hence independence of the external object is something not admitted by us.

Finally to the argument that 'the cognition that is produced in regard to the denotation of words is in the form of positive entity', Śāntarakṣita replied that even though the cognition is in the form of positive entity (object), yet it is not real in terms of ontological reality (i.e., the positive character that belong to it is not in the form of something external) as well as in the terms of another cognition. (The cognition of horse, etc.). Thus, it is proved that the *apoha* as meaning is not wholly independent of external object.<sup>14</sup>

4. *Apoha theory is inconsistent with the idea of pratibhā, therefore it is useless*

Kumāriila says, even in the absence of the corresponding external object there is intuition (*pratibhā*) in the mind of a man immediately after his hearing a sentence, which *pratibhā* is recognized by you as the meaning of the sentence, similar may be the case with what is expressed by the word also, why should the *apoha* be postulated at all?<sup>15</sup> Kumāriila considers it hard to maintain that the two units of language, namely: Sentence (*vākya*)

and word (*śabda*), express their respective meanings in different manners. From his view point, it is inadmissible for Dignāga, who admits that a sentence generates *pratibhā* which is of positive form (*vidhirūpa*), to deny a word the faculty of producing a positive knowledge.

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita replied the above objection by making the following statement that ‘The *apoha* of the nature of reflection/image (*pratibimba*) is brought into an existence by the word also, as brought into an existence by the sentence. The same *apoha* as intuition (*pratibhā*) constitutes the meaning of a word on our view. Thus, there being no difference of opinion between us, so the complaint against us is not right.<sup>16</sup> Evidently, *pratibhā* and *pratibimba* (image) are regarded by Śāntarakṣita as synonymous with each other. According to him, both the sentence and the word function to produce immediately in the mind of the listener a positive image, which is expressed by the term “*pratibhā* or *pratibimba*”. This image is also named as “*Apoha*”, since it is differentiated from the image generated by the other sentences or words.<sup>17</sup> Kumāriḷa, further objected that the cognition does not carry with it, apart from its own form, any other portion that might be characterized as the “Differentiation from the other cognitions”.<sup>18</sup> Śāntarakṣita replied that, since the cognition generated by the utterance of a word is unique in itself in so far as it has its own form its content, it naturally stands distinguished or excluded from others cognition.<sup>19</sup>

*5. Apoha cannot be applied to the sentence meaning*

For the purpose of proving that the *apoha*-theory does not hold well with the meaning of a sentence, Kumāriḷa contents that it is impossible in respect to the meaning of a sentence, to indicate the counter-correlate (*Apohya*)



which is to be excluded. Sentence meaning is not an established entity; it is yet to achieve its accomplished form, because it is composed of the meanings of the words used in the sentence. The meaning of which we are going to comprehend. Hence *apoha* can not specifically is said to be applied to it, because the meaning of it comes into existence after every part of speech used in a sentence has conveyed its meaning. Thus, it is not right to assert that the sentence, for example ‘Caitra Bring the cow’ (*Caitra gāmanaya*), Functions to exclude *a-caitra*, etc., because the exclusion of *a-caitra* is the meaning of the word and not that of the sentence.<sup>20</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita’s reply*

In answer to Kumāriḷa’s criticism, Śāntarakṣita states: ‘A certain number of word-meanings which are conjoined with each other are called the meaning of a sentence. It is quite clear that those which are dissimilar (*viĵāṭīya*) to the word-meanings are the counter-correlates of the word-meanings as well as of the meaning of the sentence, because there is no meaning of the sentence apart from the word-meanings (Different from Dignāga, who in concert with Bhartṛhari maintained that the meaning of a sentence is not dissolvable into the meanings of the component words and close to the Kumāriḷa’s *abhihitānvayavāda* in holding that the sentence meaning is nothing other than the conjunction of the individual word-meanings). And when the meaning of the sentence ‘Caitra Bring the cow, is comprehended, the exclusion of the other agents (non-caitra), the other objects etc. is understood by implication.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the ground for advancing this view was prepared by Śāntarakṣita through the new interpretation of the *apoha*-theory, according to which the positive images are directly produced by the words constituting the sentence.

6. *Synonymity of words*

Kumārila further says that, if *apoha* is the import of word, then all the words whether they refers to universal (like cow, horse, etc.) or particular (like the black cow, etc.) would be synonymous, as there is no difference in their meaning, because *apoha* is an ‘non-entity’ according to the Buddhist.<sup>22</sup> And such conception as related, one, and many are possible only in regard to an entity and not to a non-entity.<sup>23</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita’s reply*

Kumārila’s objection regarding the synonymity of all words would be valid only if their meanings were identical. But *apohas*, which are signified by words, being neither identical nor different, and the objection, has no foundation at all. Words, according to Śāntarakṣita, can not legitimately be characterized either as synonymous or as non-synonymous, because their meanings are neither identical nor different. This same idea can be explained more clearly in the following manner: If non-difference consists in being of one and the same form, how can it exist in formless *apoha*. Consequently, there can’t be any synonymity. Since the possibility of synonymity exist only when there is uniformity (identity) of meaning i.e., words become synonymous only when what is denoted by them is one and the same. Kumārila may argue that, though there is no identity of form in the formless *apohas* yet, it can have an imagined identity. The incongruity of synonymity would be crop in. The contingency of synonymity can be dismissed or removed or done away with by imagining the difference in the same manner as imaginary identity was taken recourse to. There is no logical fallacy in it.<sup>24</sup> The point to be noticed is that, one might ask the following questions:

- (i) How can there be in this theory, any restriction regarding words being synonymous and non-synonymous i.e., with regard to the use of words?
- (ii) What would be the basis of naming process?
- (iii) How can a single name be ascribed to a number of things, without a single persisting property (universal)?

Śāntarakṣita answered the following questions mentioned above in the *kārikās*. 1034-1044 in his *Tattvasaṃgraha*. Śāntarakṣita explains that the said restriction becomes possible because the usage of words is based on the identity of causal functions of particular things. Things perform various functions by their very nature. These functions are classified by us under various concepts and names for our convenience. For example, when the combination of color, form, etc. perform the function of carrying water, milk, honey etc., it is given the name 'jar', through the super-imposition of single property. This argument can be extended to the principle of synonymity also like, when two or more words are applied to the combination of form, color, etc., performing the same function, they can be called synonymous.<sup>25</sup> Thus, it is concluded that, even without there being any commonality/universal, there is restriction regarding the application of a common word to a number of things and the basis of such application depends entirely upon the whim of people<sup>26</sup> and in the fact of several things performing the same fruitful function.

Further, one might ask: On the view of momentariness, the function of carrying water etc., differentiates itself every moment, and thus assumes manifoldness. Then, how can a single name be given to an object on the basis of such a manifold functions? Moreover, the cognition of manifold

functions is construed as different on account of the latter i.e., manifoldness of the objects.

Śāntarakṣita concedes this point that they are different (i.e., the function/action and the cognition of the things) but on account of the unitary nature of diverse cognition, the cognition is called one. It is this oneness of cognition which imparts oneness to its contents. Moreover, the oneness of the comprehensive conception is not attributed to the performance of a single function, it is based upon the fact of its apprehending the same thing. So that there will be no infinite regress. Because all comprehensive conceptions by their very nature apprehend one and the same thing.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, sometimes a single entity is given several names on the basis of different functions performed by it.<sup>28</sup> For example, 'color' is spoken of an 'obstacle' (when it prevents the appearance of another color in its own place) and also 'visible' (because it serves to bring about visual perception). Similarly, 'sound' is known as 'cognized' (when it is generated by the effort of the speaker) and 'auditory' (when it is perceived by the hearer).<sup>29</sup> These are the examples of functional exclusion. In some cases, the word is applied also on the basis of the diversity of other causes (causal exclusion). For example, the honey produced by large black bee is different from that produced by small bees.<sup>30</sup> Thus, it has been shown that diverse words are applied to the same thing, on the basis of multiplicity of causal and functional exclusion and even on the basis of the exclusion of a particular function or a particular cause. For example, color as 'inaudible' and 'lightning' as 'effortlessly produced'.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, with the preceding discussion, Śāntarakṣita comes to the conclusion that words can be named on the basis of exclusion and there is

no possibility of the incongruity of all words becoming synonymous.<sup>32</sup> But, how can there be the difference between words denoting universals and those denoting particulars, unless there are universals and particulars?

Śāntarakṣita explains this on the basis of two grounds: Firstly, when the word denotes many (larger number of things) it becomes the basis for the inference of denotation of the universal. Secondly, when the word denotes a single entity (smaller number of things), it becomes the basis for the inference of the denotation of the particular. And both these grounds are based on convention. For example, the word 'tree' denotes a 'tree' in general and at the same time excludes non-tree (hence, as appertaining to a larger number of things, what is denoted by the word is spoken of as the 'universal' commonality) and when we utter the word '*khadira* tree' it denotes a particular tree and at the same time excludes all other tree of the same class (hence, what is denoted by it is said to be a particular).<sup>33</sup>

#### 7. *Diversity of apoha*

Kumārila argues that, there can be no distinction between the meanings of words. Only an entity is distinguishable. Since *apoha* has no character, it can not be applied to *apohas* which are devoid of all determination.<sup>34</sup> For this, he presents a dilemma that, 'If Buddhist believes that there is a differentiation in *apoha*, then *apoha* is an entity, just like *svalakṣaṇa* is an entity. Further, if it is an entity, then the meaning is positive. And, if on the other hand, *apoha* be held to be non-entity, then there is an absence of difference (plurality) and the state of being synonymous can not be avoided. In this way, the proposition of the *apohist* is annulled by inferential reasoning.

Moreover, neither we could have a difference among *apohas* on the ground of difference among the objects negated by such *apohas*<sup>35</sup>, nor on the mere ground of the diversity of relationship. Regarding the first alternative, Kumāriḷa assert that there is no natural difference among *apohas*, and if difference is posited in it by virtue of something else it becomes secondary imposition (*bhaktā*). Therefore, when even the internal characteristic of the individual can not make *apoha* possess difference then, how can external entities like horse etc. can render *apoha* differential? Further, he explains this in the *kārikās* 53-57 of his *Ślokavārttika*, with the help of an example. In the case of ‘negation of non-cows’, the non-cows (the object of negation) corresponds to horses, elephants, lions, tigers and so on, and in the case of ‘negation of non-horse’, the non-horse (the object of negation) corresponds to cows, elephants, lions, tigers, and so on. Non-cows and non-horses each encompass an infinite number of species, only one of which differs (horse and cow), and they share all other species (elephant, lion, tiger etc.). Since one species among an infinite number of species is equivalent to null there can be no distinction between non-cows and non-horses. Therefore, one is still left with the irrational conclusion that the ‘cow’ and the ‘horse’ which denote the ‘negation of non-cows’ and the ‘negation of non-horse’ respectively are synonymous. And regarding the second alternative, Kumāriḷa says that on the basis of the diversity of relationships no difference be accepted even among positive entities; how then could it be declared with regard to a negative entity (*apoha*), which is neither definitely cognized, nor related (to anything), nor differentiated, from other things, nor endowed with any definite specific form.<sup>36</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

According to Śāntarakṣita, if the diversity of *apoha* were held by us to be real and based upon the diversity of 'excluded things' or upon the diversity of the 'substratum', then the objection urged would have been applicable. But, in fact it is merely conceptual and not ontological/real i.e., created by mere assumption.<sup>37</sup> The externality that is attributed to these exclusions is only assumed (imaginary) not real and the difference and the non-difference subsist only in real things in reality.<sup>38</sup> Further, according to Śāntarakṣita, this conceptual diversity of *apohas* arises from three sources: (i) The constructive power of thought, (ii) The unique nature of things, and (ii) The convention established by tradition. Thus, what differ among themselves are the conceptual contents apprehending the said exclusions. For instance, the *Dhava* and other trees don't become, unified in the form of the universal 'Tree', nor do they become diversified in parts, in the form of the momentary individual trees, all that varies is the conceptual content.<sup>39</sup>

*8. Inference and verbal cognition would be impossible without vyāpti*

Universal is perceptual in individuals. The cases where it is seen are taken as belong to one class and where it is absent then those things don't belong to that class of things. But negation cannot be perceived, it can either be inferred or can be known through words.<sup>40</sup> But, inference and words can work only when they correspond with something. When a word does not correspond with an object it is meaningless. According to the Buddhists there is nothing to which words correspond. Thus, they would become meaningless. The point to be noted according to Kumāriila is that, since, inference and verbal cognition depend on the knowledge of positive relationship between the sign and the signified and this relationship being

general in nature; it obtains between universals in the case of inference and between a word and a universal in the case of verbal cognition. These universals are independently established by perception prior to the knowledge of the said relations.<sup>41</sup> Now, in the Buddhist view, universals being replaced by *apohas*, these latter must be independently established and their relations apprehended in order to make inference and verbal knowledge possible.

But, now the question arises: How are the *apohas* established? Not by perception, because they are non-entities, nor by inference or verbal cognition as that would involve circularity. Thus, *apohas* being themselves not established, their relations too can not be apprehended. Consequently, then the validity pertaining to word and inference would become infructuous.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, nor on the mere ground of non-perception (of the contradictory), could there be any conclusion arrived at by means of these two (inference and verbal testimony).<sup>43</sup> The sense of the reply is that, when a positive relationship is not perceived, and (according to you) its contrary too is not perceived, then in that case, nothing of the relationship being perceived (either in the positive or in the negative form), how could word and inferential indicative in such a case, lead to any conclusion? For instance, just as the word 'cow' not perceived in connection with non-cows (horse etc.) signifies a negation of these later; so in the same manner the same word, having never before been perceived in connection with the cow itself (according to the alleged basis of the inference of your *apoha*) could also signify the negation of both, the cow and the non-cow, the word as well as the indicative based upon a non-perception, would lead to the cognition of nothing.



*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Further, as opposed to the realists, Śāntarakṣita maintains that inference and verbal cognition can be explained without assuming real universals. The concomitant relation (*vyāpti*) between the proban and probandum (*hetu* and *sādhya*) required for inference has its basis in the conceptions of things (i.e., specific individuality) as different from unlike things.<sup>44</sup> Thus, words and inference corresponds with unique particulars. The reason behind this is given by Śāntarakṣita in the *kārikās*. 1053-1054. At the place where the unique particular (*svalakṣaṇa*) in the form of something different from 'non-smoke' is present, at that same place, a *svalakṣaṇa* which is different from non-fire is also present (i.e., whenever, there is not non-smoke, there is not non-fire also). For example, just as in the kitchen as well as in the hill, there is the specific individuality differentiated from non-smoke, hence the specific individuality differentiated from non-fire also must be there. So, not non-smoke and not non-fire do coincide and found together. Thus, inference is possible. The meaning may be that all the five factors of the inferential process may be shown by indicating the concomitance in connection with specific individualities. Moreover, words correspond with these unique particulars in the sense that those particulars are different from non-existent particulars (like man's horns, etc.) and also different from eternal objects/permanent things and to these particulars words correspond.<sup>45</sup>

Further, it leads to the question: If there is concomitance with the specific individuality only, then how is there inference in regard to things partaking of the nature of the universal?

Śāntarakṣita holds that the particulars themselves, with their peculiarity (distinctive feature) unapprehended, serve the function of the universal in inference.<sup>46</sup> And, as regard to Kumāriḷa's question: How is *apoha* known? Śāntarakṣita answers that it is self-cognized like all other cognitions. It does not depend either on inference or on verbal knowledge for its own cognition. Hence, the charge of circularity leveled against *apohavāda* by Kumāriḷa is not valid.

9. *What would be the basis of class-distinctions?*

X, Y, and Z are three terms. The difference of X is in Y and Z and the difference of Z is in X and Y. This difference is not something positive like universal existing in terms. Then, how are we able to say that Y and Z are different from X or X and Y are different from Z? This can be said only when there is something positive in X and which is not found in other terms.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, negation is negation of something and when there is nothing like that the negation is futile (i.e., *apoha* can neither be ascertain through words, sense-perceptions as it is an non-entity and sense-organs operate only upon entities, nor through inference because *vyāpti* can not be established as already discussed in *kārikās*. 934-936).<sup>48</sup> Again, 'cow' means not non-cow but when one does not know the cow itself, how can one be expected to know non-cow? i.e., how would you know the meaning of the word non-cow?<sup>49</sup> Kumāriḷa's further objections is that if it is your opinion that the word 'cow' can not apply to anything except the one that was perceived at the time of the apprehension of the convention then everything else, even the black and other cows would have to be excluded by the word 'cow' and in that case it would not be established that any commonality is denoted by the word.<sup>50</sup> Negation presupposes affirmation, thus one first

knows cow as something positive and then one knows it as different from non-cow.

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita meet the above objection of Kumāriila by raising the counter-question that, 'If the difference of the spotted cow from the black cow and the horse is same, then how is it that the universal 'cowness' subsist in spotted and other cows only, and not in the horse? Śāntarakṣita says, those who accept universal maintain that cowness cannot be found in horse because horse by its very nature is unable to manifest cowness. It can only be found in X, Y, or Z which are particulars. X, Y, and Z are different from each other but they alone are able to manifest cowness and not A, B, or C. If such be the case, then it is only the spotted cow and not the horse which is capable of conveying the similarity of cognition with the black cow. (i.e., even when there is diversity and there is no commonality the spotted and other cows alone not the horse would have the capacity to bring about the determinate judgment, even though this judgment would be the same. This view of ours also would not be incompatible.<sup>51</sup> Thus, the upshot of all this according to Śāntarakṣita is that, wherever a cognition of that type occurs, like 'this is a 'cow', 'that is a cow', etc., even in the absence of the universal 'cow', as a positive entity, the exclusion of the non-cow (*apoha*), in the form of the reflection becomes applied. Thus, the negation of the other is facilitated.<sup>52</sup>

Regarding the objection that, 'If one does not have the notion of cow, how one can consider it as not non-cow'. Śāntarakṣita says, every object is by its nature different from others.<sup>53</sup> People have their convenience, arbitrarily introduced words to mean them. People know these

things through words. They need not know anything except words to mean things. In those things where that word is not applicable, one knows difference. That thing where the word 'cow' is not applicable is non-cow. For that a third thing is not necessary. To know non-cow one is not expected to know cowness. Words themselves produce the notion of otherness where they are not applicable. Non-cow is that where the word 'cow' is not applicable.<sup>54</sup>

10. *Circular reasoning (It involves the fallacy of mutual interdependence)*

Kumārila further alleges that the Buddhist theory of meaning involves the fallacy of mutual interdependence. If the meaning of 'cow' depends on that of 'non-cow' and the meaning of 'non-cow' depends on that of 'cow', there will be a vicious circle in the argument (i.e. since the concept of non-cow is premised on an understanding of cows, the thesis that 'cow' denotes the 'negation of non-cows' result in circular reasoning).<sup>55</sup> Consequently, the meaning of neither term can be established definitely. And, if the meaning of the terms 'cow' is already known, it is unnecessary to search for the meaning of 'non-cow'. This predicament can be avoided, according to Kumārila, only if the Buddhist accepts the positive meaning of words independently of the 'negation of the contrary'.<sup>56</sup> As regards the fallacy of interdependence of meaning alleged by Kumārila, Śāntarakṣita holds that it constitutes no objection to his theory. The 'cow' and the 'non-cow' are both well-established, as there are distinct determinate judgments in regard to both. It is only the word that is not well-established and hence it is applied according to the speaker's whim. In other words it means that, every concept, being relative, is comprehended only in contrast with its opposite. The direct apprehension of particulars alone is free from such

interdependence. Conceptual knowledge being relational by nature, such inter-dependence is unavoidable. Thus, according to Śāntarakṣita, meanings of words are not absolute. They are born of arbitrary convention and depend for their understanding on their contraries. Concepts, in his view, are nothing but intellectual patterns devised to give articulation to what is exclusively an object of immediate consciousness.<sup>57</sup>

11. *No real relations (like the relation of qualification and qualified, conjunction, inherence, etc.) subsist between two negations*

Kumārila further alleges that between two negations, there can't be any relation of the qualification and the qualified. And for the purpose of proving this he takes the help of the example of 'Blue Lotus' in the following manner: When between two things, a real relationship is known to exist, then it may be correct to say that one is qualified by the other. But in the case of the 'Blue-Lotus', when *apoha* is applied it means 'negation of non-Blue' and 'negation of non-Lotus', which are mere negation and devoid of any form, hence there can't be any such relation of the qualification and the qualified.<sup>58</sup> So, one *apoha* can't be qualified by another.

Nor can it be asserted that the unique particular (*svalakṣaṇa* or specific individuality) may be qualified by the *apoha*. *Apoha* is non-existence and a unique particular is something which exists. How are they united? Existence cannot qualify non-existence. Thus, there can not be any relation between them, because relation always exists between two entities.<sup>59</sup> Again, if even any relation between them is granted, even then *apoha* can not be granted as the qualifying factor, because by its mere existence it can't qualify any thing. For example, the Blue does not become a qualification of the Lotus by its mere existence, only when it becomes the

content of our cognition, then through that cognition Blue qualifies the thing outside like, Lotus. Thus, it is maintained that, since the unique particular are not cognized, they can not be affected (colored) by the idea of any thing and as such, they can not have any qualification.<sup>60</sup> Further, the process of qualification, as mentioned above is not possible in the case of *apoha*. Because it is a non-entity, therefore it can not become the object of cognition and without being cognized it can't qualified the other thing. And moreover, it can't be held that non-entity is known and something positive (entity) is qualified i.e., there can never be cognition of the qualified thing of which the qualification is not apprehended.<sup>61</sup>

Nor can a qualification of a certain character bring about an idea of different character. For instance, the cognition of Blue can't give rise to the cognition of redness in the Lotus. Hence, when the object has been cognized to be a certain character, how can a qualification, which is of an opposite character, be said to belong to it?<sup>62</sup> If for the sake of an argument, we accept that, a qualification of the different character be asserted to belong to an object of opposite character, then any qualification would belong to any object i.e., then the Blue color means any thing and there would be no restriction at all. Thus, the negation can not be a proper meaning of words.<sup>63</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

To this objection Śāntarakṣita replied that, really there is no such thing which is qualified by negation. Words do not touch objects. Words mean only mental objects and there is no harm in saying that really there is no object which is ever qualified by negation.<sup>64</sup> There are two types of objects, one is external and the other is mental (imposed upon the cognition). In

regard to the external thing, there is no denotation by words, and it is only on account of words bringing about the conceptual content pertaining to them that it is said, figuratively that 'the word denotes things'. There mental object can be qualified by negation and there will be no harm.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, if the 'exclusion of other things' were meant to be something positive qualifying the thing, then all the objection urged would be applicable. As a matter of fact, however, the 'exclusion of other things' which is held to be the qualification is in the form of the thing itself (i.e., negation qualifies a thing from the very beginning of the existence of that thing). Negation of other is observed in the very nature of a thing. There is no difference between qualification and that which is qualified. For instance, when one speaks of the 'exclusion of the cow' from the non-cow, this 'exclusion' is only of the nature of the 'difference of the cow from the horse and other things', and not any thing else. Hence, even though the exclusion of the cow from the non-cow is mentioned in the negative form, yet in reality it forms the very essence of the cow itself.<sup>66</sup>

*12. Negation cannot be negated*

Kumārila argues further, what would be the object of 'exclusion', is it an individual or a universal? It can not be an individual because according to the Buddhist, its being indeterminate it can not be denoted by words and thus can not be excluded. Then, what would be 'excluded' obviously it would be the universal and because of its exclusion it must be an entity.<sup>67</sup> Further, mere negation can not be the object of 'exclusion' because if it were, then it would lose its negative character of a negative word must be something positive, because the negation of negation is positive. It can not be negative and thus *apoha* of a negative term would affirm something

positive.<sup>68</sup> Kumāriḷa, possesses a dilemma to the Buddhist: ‘If the negation of the contrary is different from the contrary, then it is a positive universal; and if it is not different, then the contrary and its negation would be identical (i.e., cow and non-cow)’. In the former case, the Buddhist has to admit the universal, and in the latter case, the Buddhist theory of meaning will completely collapse, since a word might mean anything and everything.<sup>69</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita’s reply*

Regarding the contention that when individuals, not being denoted, can not be ‘excluded’, then what would be ‘excluded’ would be the universal. Śāntarakṣita says that, the reason ‘because individuals are not denoted’ is not accepted by us. Because the ‘non-denotability’ of words that we have asserted is only in view of the real aspect of things, not in regard to the illusory aspect. We must notice the distinction between what is ‘perceived’ (external thing in the shape of *svalakṣaṇa*) and what is ‘fancied’ (imaginary, the reflection that figures in determinate conception). And under the illusory aspect, it is only individuals that are denoted.<sup>70</sup> And, being denoted by words, they are also capable of being excluded. So, as regard the universal, there can be no exclusion and even if there were, it could not have the character of the entity. Thus, this exclusion can not provide a valid reason for accepting universals.<sup>71</sup>

Further, regarding Kumāriḷa’s contention that negation can not be negated, Śāntarakṣita says that this is admissible only in the sense that the negative character of negation can not be negated, as that would be a self-contradiction. But, one can legitimately assert that a positive entity is not negative. In this sense a negation may very well be negated?<sup>72</sup> Again, one



thing is said to be the negation of another when the two are of different natures, but this does not make the thing negative. In the same way, when a positive thing is asserted to be not negative, the negation does not become positive. Thus, Śāntarakṣita rejects Kumāriḷa's contention that negation of negation is positive.<sup>73</sup> Kumāriḷa has argued that 'if the negation of the contrary is different from the contrary, then it must be positive. Śāntarakṣita replies that if by 'the negation of non-cow' what is meant is the unique particular cow, and then it is positive and different from non-cow. So, the contingency of cow and non-cow becoming identical would not arise at all.<sup>74</sup>

*13. Being and non-Being would be meaningless*

Kumāriḷa points out that, the Buddhist explanation that 'the negation of the contrary' is not the negation of negation, but that of the positive things comprehended under the contrary, does not hold good in all the cases. In the case of the word 'being' (entity or *sat*), it will be absurd to maintain that its meaning is the negation of positive things comprehended under its contrary 'non-being'. This would make non-being positive, i.e., there will be no non-being. Consequently, there will be no being too, since according to the Buddhist, being is the negation of non-being. This would make both the terms 'being' and 'non-being' meaningless. These absurd consequences, Kumāriḷa argues can be avoided only if positive meanings of words are recognized.<sup>75</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita in order to meet this problem of 'being' used his theory of negation, as mentioned above. He says, since negation of negation is possible, as explained above, 'being' can be said to be the negation of 'non-

being'. It is not denying the negative character of 'non-being' which is the negation of 'being' existing in its own right; it is only denying that 'being' is 'non-being' or negative. This denial, according to Śāntarakṣita, does not make the negation of 'non-being' positive.<sup>76</sup>

14. *Vāsanā* (innate beginningless disposition/impressions) can not pertain to negation

Kumārila rejects the Buddhist theory of *Vāsanā* as the source of difference or positive character of the *apoha* (object negated). Because, *Vāsanā* is produced only by perception, and as perception belong to positive entities alone, no *Vāsanā* can belong to a negative entity.<sup>77</sup> Its uses lies only in remembering or recalling the objects perceived in the past.<sup>78</sup> Further, Kumārila says that, just as we have discarded *apoha* as the 'denoted' (*apoha artha*) in the same manner, we discarded it as 'denotative' (*apoha śabda*). Because the word which we grasp through auditory sense-organ is not the same as it was at the time of the usage of the convention. Moreover, difference is a property of positive entity and according to the Buddhist the only positive entity is the undefined specific individuality. But, it can not be cognized, hence the Buddhist can not base the difference between words and the objects denoted by them, upon *Vāsanās*.<sup>79</sup> Thus, then the denoted word, must be universal, which is the same throughout its use at different times. But, this too is in the form of a negative entity, so diversity among words would be admitted.<sup>80</sup> Further, in the Buddhist theory both words and their meanings being non-entities (*apohas*), there can be neither the diversity of words nor the diversity of meanings.<sup>81</sup> Also there can be no real difference between a word and its meaning. Nor can there be any

denotation, since the relation of denotation can not be said to exist between non-entities.

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita repudiates Kumāriḷa's contention that 'Vāsanā can not pertain to the non-entity'. Even in regard to the non-entities there is Vāsanā created by the mind cognitions, just as in the case of imaginary things. Moreover, the diversity of *apoha*, the diversity of word, as well as their felt positive character, are all due to our Vāsanās, as is the case with regard to imaginary things.<sup>82</sup> Śāntarakṣita agrees with Kumāriḷa's view that words are universals, but their universality, like that of their meanings, is only conceptual. And both being only conceptual, their mutual differences are self-cognized.

15. *The relation of denotative and denoted does not subsist between apoha artha and apoha śabda*

Kumāriḷa further objected that the relation of denotative and denoted can not lie between *apoha artha* and *apoha śabda* just like the 'sky flower' and the 'horse's horn' being non-entities.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, if Buddhist assert that they can perceive the said relation between the non-existent rain and the non-existent cloud, then also they are not right. Because, according to Kumāriḷa, even in this case there is an entity present in the shape of the 'clean sky', as for us negation is an entity. But, for the Buddhist how could it be possible?

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

As regards Kumāriḷa's criticism that there can be no relation of denotation between non-entities, Śāntarakṣita says that this is not an objection to his theory. All relations, in his view, are only conceptual, not real. In as much

as the meanings of words are regarded as external things, they are not empirically non-entities. So, a word may well be said to denote its meaning.<sup>84</sup> In reality, however, nothing can be said to denote or be denoted. All things being momentary, it is impossible to apprehend concomitance between words and things. That is to say, the specific individuality can not be concomitant with present at the time of the making of the convention and that of the using of the word. Such relationship presupposes duration and stability which are possessed only by concepts.<sup>85</sup> The point to be noted is that, Śāntarakṣita is not denying the real relation of denoted and denoter, but only the illusory relation of same which is based upon the real fact of the two *apohas* being non-entities; so that their reason is not not-admitted, nor is their conclusion open to the defect of being superfluous.

*16. If positive character of import of word is not accepted, then negative character is also impossible*

The Buddhist contention that the import of words, though negative, is apprehended as positive is rejected by Kumāṛila on two grounds: Firstly, there can be no negation without affirmation i.e., negation is always preceded by affirmation and it is only the positive character of an object that is negated by its negation.<sup>86</sup> Secondly, there can be no positive apprehension of what is negative, or a non-entity. We can have a negative conception of what is positive but not vice versa. We can always say that the cow (a positive thing) is not something else, but we cannot have a positive conception of a non-entity.<sup>87</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Kumāṛila's contention that 'negation always presupposes affirmation' is accepted by Śāntarakṣita. Hence, he admits the felt positivity of the

meanings of words, though he holds them to be ultimately illusory. As a matter of fact, it is admitted by them, that the word produces the ‘mental condition’ (cognition) which ultimately provides the idea of thing, so that in their opinion also what is denoted by the word is a positive entity which is illusory in character. In reality however, there is nothing that is denoted by words; hence it is only the real positive character of things that is denied by them and only the illusory positive character of thing denoted by words being accepted by them. Moreover, according to them, the direct meaning of a word is always positive and the negation of contrary is apprehended only by implication<sup>88</sup> (we will discuss this at greater length in the next chapter on Śāntarakṣita’s theory of meaning). Thus, Kumāriila’s criticism on this point is absolutely irrelevant.

*17. Neither Sāmānādhikarāṇya nor Viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva holds true in apoha theory*

If a word means only negation of other (*apoha*) then, how can adjectives and nouns be meaningful in language, because there is nothing to be qualified by that adjective. The point made by Kumāriila is that, neither the relation of qualification and qualified (*viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva*), nor of the co-ordination (*sāmānādhikarāṇya*) is possible in a verbal expression ‘Blue Lotus’, which have a mixed denotation (i.e., neither Blue only nor the Lotus only, but the combination of both is denoted). Because, on the negation (exclusion) of the non-Blue, there is no negation of the non-Lotus, nor vice-versa. What is meant is that these two do not stand in the relation of container and contained, because both are featureless. Hence, the relation of

*Viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva* is impossible.

Moreover, nor would the said relation be possible between the words (Blue and Lotus) themselves, independently of their denotation. Because it is only through the latter, that the said relation is attributed to the former.<sup>89</sup> Further, Kumāriila made contention that the relation of co-ordination is not possible between two *apohas* of the words i.e., blue and lotus. Because, it is only when two words are applied to the same object (directly or indirectly), that is co-ordination. Where as in the case of Blue-Lotus, what are denoted by them are the exclusion of the non-Blue and the exclusion of the non-Lotus respectively and these two are distinct.

Kumāriila further assert that, even if we accept for the sake of an argument that the said relation stands between them, then in what manner can they contained in any one substratum in order to be co-existence? i.e., what sort of subsistence they would have? That is to say, there can be no real subsistence in these, because they are formless like the ‘son of the Barren Woman’.<sup>90</sup> Again, if we accept that some sort of subsistence in the above case, it could not be expressed by words. That is, no uncommon (specific entity) thing in the shape of the Blue Lotus and the like is ever apprehended through words because all conceptions are absent there in and any entity besides this the Buddhist does not admit (*svalakṣaṇa* can’t be the locus/substratum for the Blue *apoha* and Lotus *apoha*). Under such circumstances when the thing which is the substratum is not known, how can the subsistence of the *apohas* subsisting therein be cognized? In simple words it means: The co-ordination between Blue *apoha* and Lotus *apoha* can not be said to be existing in a locus which refuses to be identified i.e., not known and when the locus is not known, then how can it be used in

language word, or experience.<sup>91</sup> Further, if it is said that what is denoted is the entity along with the exclusion, then also the said relation is unattainable, as it would be dependent upon something else.<sup>92</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

The searching eyes of the Buddhists do not leave these objections unanswered. Where adjectives are used they combine with nouns to form one whole. The negation is the negation of both of them taken together. The point made by Śāntarakṣita is that, what the term 'Blue Lotus' expresses is not mere negation, but the single reflection of the object as excluded from the non-Blue and the non-Lotus. Consequently, in the case of words like Blue Lotus, there certainly is the denotation of things of mixed character, which has to be admitted on the strength of actual cognition appearing in that form and on the basis of this the necessary co-ordination becomes quite possible.<sup>93</sup>

Regarding the Kumāriḷa's contention that the relation of *Sāmānādhikarāṇya* is not possible, Śāntarakṣita asserts that, when the word 'Blue' is pronounced, there appears the conceptual reflection (the image) of a doubtful form, in as much as it serves to exclude the 'yellow' and other colors and things having these things an envisages all Blue things, such as the Blue Bee, the Cuckoo and so forth. When the word 'Lotus' is added to the word Blue, the same reflection becomes apprehended as differentiated from the Cuckoo and the rest and particularly restricted to the thing excluded from the non-Lotus. Thus, in relation to the said conceptual reflection, there is a mutual relation of differentiation between the two words 'Blue' and 'Lotus'. Thus, there is nothing incongruous in their being related to each other as qualification and qualified. Moreover, both the word

together express the thing in the form a single reflected image excluded from the ‘non-Blue’ and ‘non-Lotus’. So, that both referring to the same thing, there is co-ordination between them.<sup>94</sup> Further, Śāntarakṣita assert that if there is any difference between the thing excluded and exclusion (*apoha*) of other things, then there would be the possibility of the incongruity that both has been urged against the said view. As a matter of fact however, there is no difference between the two i.e., it is the excluded thing itself that is spoken of as exclusion. Hence, the objection that, it is dependent upon something else is not applicable to the denotation of words.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, from the *kārikās*. 1105-1121, in his *Tattvasaṃgraha*, Śāntarakṣita says that all the explanation mentioned above, would be impossible in the case of the opponents theory.<sup>96</sup>

18. *Connection between Gender, Number, Action, Time and so forth and Apoha would be impossible*

Words meaning negation and not things cannot be used in gender, number, action, time, etc, as these depend upon things and not upon non-existence. The point made by Kumāriḷa is that, the relation of gender, number, etc. can not be predicated of *apoha* being a non-entity, while the factors mentioned are all properties of entities. Nor can the word ever denote anything devoid of the said gender, etc. What is meant is that in this way the proposition of the *Apohist* is contrary to experience. If to avoid the contingency mentioned above, Buddhist postulate an entity with exclusion (*apoha*) that two can not be justified. As already explained, because *svalakṣaṇa* (particular individual/*vyākti*) cannot be expressed through words i.e., being indeterminate. And the entity inexpressible cannot have any relation of gender, number, etc.<sup>97</sup>



*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Regarding the Kumāriḷa's contention, Śāntarakṣita replied that, the gender, number, action, time, etc. are the properties of words themselves and does not belong to things. All these are purely conventional set up at people's whim.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, if gender really belonged to things, then on account of the three words: Masculine (*taṭaḥ*), Neuter (*taṭam*), and Feminine (*taṭī*), in three genders being applicable to the same thing, then the thing would have three forms. Moreover, it is not possible for one and the same thing to have the three forms, because if it did, it would cease to be one thing and would have to be variegated in character.<sup>99</sup> From *kārikās*. 1124-1141, in his *Tattvasaṃgraha*, Śāntarakṣita gives a detailed explanation of the concept of gender, number, etc.<sup>100</sup> and at the end conclude by saying that: Even granting that these (gender, number, action, time, etc.) belong to things, in as much as the *apoha* in the form of the 'reflected image' is apprehended by deluded persons as something external, through this apprehension, connection with gender, number and the rest would be there through the individual. Hence, what is objected by Kumāriḷa is all inconclusive.<sup>101</sup>

19. *Apoha is not applicable in all cases like, verbal forms (cooks, goes, etc.), double negation (na-na), injunctions (invitation, etc.), conjunctions (and, etc.), nameable, knowable, predicable, and so forth*

Kumāriḷa further argues that, *apoha* is not all embracing i.e., not applicable to all words. We will discuss this one by one in detail in the following manner:

(i) *Verbal forms*

Regarding verbal forms with conjugational endings, like *pachati* (cooks), *gachchati* (goes), and the like, where in action forms the predominant factor; no exclusion of other is apprehended. Because, in their case there is nothing which can be excluded (no well established counter-entities are ever apprehended), like the expression ‘*na pachati*’ means the absence of the action of cooking and not the prohibition of the action.<sup>102</sup>

(ii) *Double negation*

Even when the double negation (*na-na*) is used with reference to ‘*pachati*’ (action of cooking) it means *pachati* (affirmative) it affirms the act of cooking and no sense of exclusion is met with. Because, according to the classical law, two negatives always denote an affirmation (i.e., - - means +). Moreover, the double negative *na-na* (that he cooks not is not) only serves to deny the negation of the action of cooking; the verb ‘cooks’ by itself in its own pristine positive form remains free from negation.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, an action (cooking) is cognized as something in process and it is also associated with temporal sequence like past, present and future. Since ‘*apoha*’ is in an already accomplished fact, therefore there is no such process or temporal sequence in it.<sup>104</sup>

(iii) *Injunctions*

In the words like injunctions (invitation, addressing, etc.) *apoha* cannot be applied, because in it there is a positive command. Moreover, again according to the classical law, in expression ‘*na na-pachati devadattaḥ*’ (Devadatta is not non-cooking), where one negative is coupled with another negative, what sort of *apoha* could

be possible? None at all; since two negatives always imply the affirmative.<sup>105</sup>

(iv) *Conjunctions*

Further, *apoha* can not be applied to the particles like *cha* (and) i.e., conjunction or conjunctive words because they are *nipāta* (the words belonging to the group of *chaita* are called *nipātas*, when they do not denote substance). Moreover, there is no connection with the negative, in such expressions as ‘*na cha*’, and what is not connected with the negative can not be negated or excluded. Hence, in this case no *apoha* is possible.<sup>106</sup>

(v) *Knowable and Nameable*

Further, according to Kumāriila, knowable and nameable being co-extensive with reality, they exclude nothing from their denotation. The meaning of the word ‘knowable’ can not be said to be ‘the negation of the unknowable’, since such an assertion would be self-contradictory. Similarly with ‘nameable’, hence *apoha* can’t be applied to them.<sup>107</sup> Moreover, Kumāriila asserts that, If all that is ‘knowable’ is assumed to be excluded as ‘knowable’, then it is better to postulate an positive entity then to arrive at a positive entity through the negation of a negative entity through the negation of a negative entity, because as such you will not have to postulate an unseen entity and deny an entity which has become an object of perceptual cognition.<sup>108</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita’s reply*

Regarding the Kumāriila’s contention, that in the case of verbs the exclusion of other things is not apprehended, can not be admitted. Because, the word

is used only for the purpose of bringing about the cognition of the thing intended, desired to be known. Consequently, when the derived thing is apprehended, the exclusion of the undesired thing also becomes apprehended by implication.<sup>109</sup> As a matter of fact, all things can not be desired because then there could be no restriction regarding the denotation of words.<sup>110</sup> Further, Śāntarākṣita shows how the said exclusion of the unintended is expressed by implication. When the verb '*pachati*' (cooks) is uttered by the speaker, what is understood is that 'He is not doing nothing, nor is he eating or gambling and the like'. Thus, what is excluded is 'doing nothing' and also other acts, through relative negation. Hence, the assertion that there is nothing that is excluded is false.<sup>111</sup>

In order to explain the concept of 'double negation', Śāntarākṣita uses four negatives only for the purpose of making things clearer. He says, when 1<sup>st</sup> negative is associated with 2<sup>nd</sup> negative, the result is something positive. And when 3<sup>rd</sup> negative added to it, it expresses the negation of absence of that positive result and when further 4<sup>th</sup> negative is used, what is denoted by it is the 'exclusion of another'.<sup>112</sup> Śāntarākṣita makes the same idea clear by means of an example: It is not that (1<sup>st</sup> negative) he does not cook (2<sup>nd</sup> negative) means that 'He cooks' (positive result). And when 3<sup>rd</sup> negative is added, it means either that 'He is doing nothing' or that 'He is doing something other than cooking'. Finally, when 4<sup>th</sup> negative is added, it denotes something differentiated from the last i.e., 'He is cooking'. Hence, the 'exclusion of another' is similar to affirmative sentence.<sup>113</sup>

Regarding the Kumārila's assertion that, 'the cooking remains un-negated in its own form', involves self-contradiction. Because, the words 'in its own form' can only mean that there is negating of the form of other

acts, otherwise the emphasis that the Kumāriḷa lied upon the above mentioned phrase would be meaningless.<sup>114</sup> Further, *apoha* being accomplished fact, without any temporal sequence in it, Śāntarakṣita replied that, what sort of ‘accomplishment’ could there be of featureless *apoha*, just like sky lotus?<sup>115</sup> And if for the sake of an argument, you say that even though *apoha* is featureless in reality but by deluded persons it is conceived with features, then you should not say that all this becomes baseless.<sup>116</sup>

Further, Kumāriḷa’s contention regarding the impossibility of injunction and conjunction in the *apoha* theory, Śāntarakṣita replied that in the case of injunction, non-existence is excluded indirectly through implication.<sup>117</sup> And in the case of conjunction, which means combination, connection, probability, etc. there would be exclusion in the form of option and the like.<sup>118</sup>

With reference to Kumāriḷa’s objection that, knowable, nameable, etc., which are all inclusive, would be ‘meaningless’ in *apoha* theory, Śāntarakṣita replies that, words are meaningful only in a sentences and not independently.<sup>119</sup> If Kumāriḷa’s objection asserts that the word ‘knowable’, on the Buddhist theory, can not be meaningful by itself because it has no contrary to be differentiated from, then it is pointless. In common discourse words are significantly used for conveying information, removing doubts etc. Obviously these functions can be performed only by the sentences. Even in the cases where apparently a single word is used meaningfully, other words making up the sentence are implicitly conveyed.<sup>120</sup>

#### *20. Image theory of Buddhist is not possible*

Kumāriḷa also rejects the image theory of cognition advocated by the Buddhist. According to this theory, words produce mental images,

differentiate them from others and signify them. Kumāriḷa denies that cognitions have any form. Form, according to them, is the property of external things, not of mental facts. The form apprehended in verbal cognition belongs to the external things, not to the cognition itself.<sup>121</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Referring to Kumāriḷa's rejection of 'form' of cognition, Śāntarakṣita remarks that it is the denial of a self-evident fact.<sup>122</sup> We do become aware of appearances in dreams and illusions, which are pure mental forms devoid of all externality. Similarly, all determinate cognitions have forms pertaining to the specific objects apprehended by them. These forms which are the very natures of cognitions have been variously called by the Buddhist as *ākāra* (form), *pratibimba* (reflection or image), *tadābhatā* (appearance), and so on.<sup>123</sup> In the absence of these forms there would be no determinate cognition at all. There would be nothing to distinguish one cognition from another. These forms, though mental constructions constitute the very peculiarity of cognitions.

21. *Apoha is without any characteristics*

Kumāriḷa, further remarks that the *apohist* attempt to characterize *apoha* with oneness, eternality, and subsistence which is featureless is like trying to weave cloth without yarns. It is absurd to hold that *apoha*, a non-entity according to the Buddhist himself, possesses any of the characteristics mentioned above. These characteristics can be said to belong to positive things alone.<sup>124</sup> However, Kumāriḷa does not wholly deny the negation of others as part of the meaning of sentences. He admits its presence in the meaning of expressions in which such a negation is explicitly stated, example, in such injunctions as 'the domestic pig is not to be eaten'. In all

other cases, he maintain, the positive meaning alone is expressed by words.<sup>125</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Replying to Kumāriḷa's criticism, Śāntarakṣita says that the attributes of one-ness, eternality, etc., were not regarded by Dignāga as real attributes of *apoha*. On the contrary, they were regarded as purely imaginary and have been mentioned by him only in view of the common misconceived notions. So, Kumāriḷa's criticism on this point is without any foundation.<sup>126</sup> Also the other contention of Kumāriḷa that, negation is cognized only where it is explicitly stated by a negative term is rejected by Śāntarakṣita. The negation of the other, he asserts, is cognized even in the absence of a negative term. For example, when it is said that 'thing itself is the import of word', the emphasis on 'itself' means nothing but that 'others' are negated. Hence, all propositions, whether they include the negative term or not, include 'the negation of others' as an element of their meaning.<sup>127</sup>

In this way, the criticisms urged by Kumāriḷa have been answered by the Śāntarakṣita. Similarly, the Naiyāyika Uddyotakara raises a number of extremely technical objections against the *apoha* theory in his *Nyāyavārttika* on II.2.63, pp. 332-33, (that are important for understanding later developments) which are also answered by Śāntarakṣita in his *Tattvasaṃgraha*.

**Uddyotakara's objections**

Uddyotakara, the author of the *Nyāyavārttika*, has elaborately criticized the *apoha* theory in the following manner:

1. *Apoha is not possible in the case of 'All'*

In the case of ‘all’ (*sarva*), the theory utterly fails, because there is possibly nothing to be excluded. ‘All is not non-one’ or ‘not non-two’, etc. Because, the Buddhists themselves accept that whole (*samudāya*) is nothing but collection of parts (*samudāyin*). If they negate parts, it would lead to the negation of whole. So, ‘all’ becomes self-negatory in character. Further, two, three, etc. words which convey the sense of collection (*samūha* or group) would also be denial, if we deny one, because the number two for example, is derived from the sum of two ones.<sup>128</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita’s reply*

Śāntarakṣita replied to the above objection by saying that, a man uses a word in language in some context. It is not used at random. There is some purpose for the use of words. No one uses the word without using any other word with it. It is always used with some otherword. When one says ‘all men have gone’, he means that only the men in question have left the place and not all men from this world have left this world. Moreover, the concept ‘all’, it is not constituted of numerical like, one, two, and three or so forth. If we proceed in this direction, it will lead us to innumerability but even then we would not be able to say what is ‘all’ in positive terms. The question is not even that of the negation of counter-correlates. And counter-correlate of ‘all’ is ‘some’, etc. which is definitely negated.<sup>129</sup>

2. *Whether apoha is positive or negative?*

Uddyotakara continues if the word cow means not non-cow, then, whether it is positive, and moreover, then it is cow or non-cow, which is positive? If it is ‘cow’, then there is no problem, because denotation involves positive character, but if it is non-cow, then it shows a wonderful insight in to the meanings of words. And if cow is negative, then it can’t be an object of



injunctive command, as no body normally understands a negative sense on hearing the word 'cow'.<sup>130</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Regarding this contention, Śāntarakṣita replied that in reality, it does not exist in the form in which it is apprehended: hence it cannot be positive. Nor it is negative, because it is apprehended as an entity.<sup>131</sup>

3. *Whether apoha is identical or different?*

Uddyotakara point that, if we say that the denotation of cow is in the form of not non-cow, then what would be the entity from which it possibly be excluded.<sup>132</sup> And moreover, by whom has this tag of 'non-cow' being attributed to the word cow, which is to be excluded. Further, whether, apoha is different or identical with cow?<sup>133</sup> If it is different, then is it dependent (does abide) or without any substratum (doesn't abide)? If it is dependent or has a substratum, then it becomes a property and ceases to be substance (propertied).<sup>134</sup> If the word 'cow' denotes only a property, then there would be no stance of co-locatedness between cow and its acts of moving and standing i.e., there would be no co-ordination in such expressions as 'The cow moves', 'The cow stands' (because action has a relation only with a substance).<sup>135</sup> If it does not have any substratum (doesn't abide), then in what sense of the term could it be used for its exclusion from non-cow?<sup>136</sup> And lastly, if not non-cow is identical with cow, then you accept our position or subscribe to our view.<sup>137</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita replied that, what has been urged would have been true only if the word had expressed 'the negation of others' primarily. But, as a matter of fact, the word produces first of all only the reflected image of the thing

and it is only after that through implication the exclusion of others' is comprehended.<sup>138</sup> Further, the notion of identity or difference arises only when things are existent. But, when they are non-existents the question of identity of cow with 'not non-cow' and 'non-cow' is futile.<sup>139</sup>

4. *Whether apoha is one or many?*

Is *apoha* one or several (many) with reference to each and every entity? If it is one with reference to many, then it means universal and if it varies with each entity, then it incurs the contingency of being infinite (endless) like so many individuals. In the latter case, the function of denotation does not reach its consummation.<sup>140</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita says that, like the above objection this objection is also groundless on similar grounds that there can not be the notion of oneness or difference in the case of non-existent entities. Thus, Śāntarakṣita declared that, *apoha* is neither positive nor negative, neither diverse nor same. It is neither subsistent nor non-subsistent, neither one nor many.<sup>141</sup>

5. *Whether apoha is denoted or not denoted?*

Uddyotkara argues does an *apoha* forms the denotation of a word or it does not? If this not non-entity (*anyāpoha*) is the denotation, then two alternatives comes up: Whether it is positive or whether it is the form of negation? If it is positive, then there is no difference between the Buddhist and opponents. If it is negative in character, then it incurs the contingency of infinite regress. If it does not form the denotation of a word, then the vary position of the Buddhist that the word excluded the meaning of others becomes untenable.<sup>142</sup>

*Śāntarakṣita's reply*

Śāntarakṣita meets the above objection of Uddyotakara, by raising counter-question: Is it, denotability by the word 'apoha' or 'jar' and the rest? If it is urged in regard to the former, then that we have already explained above. If it is urged with reference to words 'jar' and the rest, then what these words bring about directly is the *apoha* in the shape of the reflected image, which is denoted by these words in the positive form, and the idea of the 'negation of others' is obtained by implication, so that there is no undesirable contingency for us. And, as regards the alternative of *apoha* not being 'denotable' that we do not accept and hence there can be no room for those incongruities that have been urged against that view.<sup>143</sup>

**Concluding Remarks**

In this way, Śāntarakṣita answers to the issues and objections raised by the opponents, succeeds in clarifying the nominalistic stand on many important logical and epistemological questions. Moreover, the inconsistency found by the opponents in Dignāga and Dharmakīrti views, is thus dissolved by Śāntarakṣita with the new interpretation of the *apoha* theory, which we will examine in the next chapter at greater length.

**Notes and References**

1. *TS*, k. 912.
2. *Ibid.*, k. 913.
3. *Ibid.*, k. 914.
4. *Kāvyaḷamkāra*, Chapter. VI, 16-19.
5. *TS*, k. 1018.
6. *Ibid.*, 1019.
7. *Ibid.*, 1020.
8. The Mīmāṃsā view that a word denotes *ākṛti* is established in the *Mīmāṃsā Sūtra*, I.3.30-35 (*Ākṛtisaktyādhikaraṇa*) Moreover, he takes the term *ākṛti* as synonymous with *jāti* and *sāmānya*, *SV*, *Ākṛtivāda: jātiṃ evākṛtṃ prāhur vyaktir ākṛiyatā yayā/ sāmānyam tav ca piṇḍānām eka buddhinibandhanam//*
9. *TS*, k. 915/*SV*, k. 1
10. *SV*, *Abhāva*, k. 2cd.
11. *SV*, k. 2/*TS*, k. 916.
12. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 3 and 10/*Ibid.*, *kk.* 917-918.
13. *Ibid.*, *kk.*36-39/*Ibid.*, *kk.* 919-922.
14. *TS*, *kk.* 1022-1025.
15. *SV*, k. 40/*TS*, k. 923.
16. *TS*, k. 1028.
17. Relation between *apoha* and *pratibhā* is also discussed by Dreyfus (1997), p. 215 and M. Hattori (1979), pp. 61-73.
18. *SV*, k. 41/*TS*, k. 924.
19. *TS*, k. 1029.

20. *SV, k. 143cd/TS, k. 977.*
21. *TS, kk. 1160-1162.*
22. *SV, k. 42/TS, k. 925.*
23. *Ibid., k. 45/Ibid., k. 926.*
24. *TS, kk. 1030-1032.*
25. *Ibid., k. 1034.*
26. *Ibid., k. 1035.*
27. *Ibid., kk. 1036-1037.*
28. *Ibid., k. 1039.*
29. *Ibid., k. 1040.*
30. *Ibid., k. 1041.*
31. *Ibid., k. 1042.*
32. *Ibid., kk. 1043-1044.*
33. *Ibid., k. 1045.*
34. *SV, k. 45/TS, k. 926.*
35. *SV, kk. 47-48/TS, kk. 927-928.*
36. *SV, kk. 48-49/TS, kk. 929-931.*
37. *TS, k. 1046.*
38. *Ibid., k. 1047.*
39. *Ibid., kk. 1048-1049.*
40. *SV, kk. 71-72/TS, k. 933.*
41. *Ibid., k. 73/Ibid., k. 934.*
42. *Ibid., k. 74/Ibid., k. 935.*
43. *Ibid., k. 75/Ibid., k. 936.*
44. *TS, k. 1052.*
45. *Ibid., kk. 1055-1056.*

46. Ibid., *k.* 1057.
47. Ibid., *k.* 77/Ibid., *k.* 938.
48. Ibid., *kk.* 78-79/Ibid., *kk.* 939-940.
49. Ibid., *k.* 80/Ibid., *k.* 941.
50. Ibid., *k.* 81/Ibid., *k.* 942.
51. *TS*, *k.* 1059.
52. Ibid., *k.* 100.
53. Ibid., *k.* 1014.
54. Ibid., *kk.* 1061-1062.
55. *SV*, *k.* 83/*TS*, *k.* 943.
56. Ibid., *kk.* 84-85/Ibid., *k.* 944.
57. *TS*, *kk.* 1063-1065.
58. *SV*, *k.* 85/*TS*, *k.* 945.
59. Ibid., *k.* 86/Ibid., *k.* 946.
60. Ibid., *k.* 87/Ibid., *k.* 947.
61. Ibid., *k.* 88/Ibid., *k.* 948.
62. Ibid., *k.* 89/Ibid., *k.* 949.
63. Ibid., *kk.* 1066-1067.
64. *TS*, *kk.* 1066-1067.
65. Ibid., *kk.* 1069-1070.
66. Ibid., *kk.* 1075-1077.
67. *SV*, *k.* 95/*TS*, *k.* 955.
68. Ibid., *k.* 96/Ibid., *k.* 956.
69. Ibid., *k.* 97/Ibid., *k.* 957.
70. *TS*, *kk.* 1078-1079.
71. Ibid., *k.* 1080.

72. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1081.
73. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1082.
74. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1085. Moreover, if 'the negation of non-cow' means the concept of cow, as it does in the Buddhist view, then 'cow' is not qualitatively different from 'non-cow'. Obviously, the argument of the Śāntaraksita rests on the distinction of the conceptual and real. The latter alone is really positive; the former is essentially negative or relative, although it is felt as positive. For the Buddhist, the concept of cow and that of non-cow are of the same order, i.e., both are negative and relative. This dichotomy of the conceptual and real is not admitted by the realist, and therefore, he does not consider the Buddhist explanation as satisfactory.
75. *SV*, *kk.* 98-99/*TS*, *kk.* 958-959.
76. *TS*, *kk.* 1084-1085.
77. *SV*, *k.* 100/*TS*, *k.* 960.
78. *SV*, *k.* 101.
79. *SV*, *k.* 102/*TS*, *k.* 961.
80. *Ibid.*, *k.* 104/*Ibid.*, *k.* 962.
81. *Ibid.*, *k.* 105/*Ibid.*, *k.* 963.
82. *TS*, *kk.* 1086-1088.
83. *SV*, *k.* 108/*TS*, *k.* 964.
84. *TS*, *k.* 1088.
85. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1090.
86. *SV*, *k.* 110/*TS*, *k.* 966.
87. *SV*, *kk.* 113-114.
88. *TS*, *kk.* 1089-1090.

89. *SV*, *kk.* 115-117/*TS*, *kk.* 967-969.
90. *Ibid.*, *k.* 118/*Ibid.*, *k.* 970.
91. *Ibid.*, *k.* 119/*Ibid.*, *k.* 971.
92. *Ibid.*, *k.* 120/*Ibid.*, *k.* 972.
93. *TS*, *k.* 1098.
94. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1102-1104.
95. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1099-1101.
96. For detail, see Jha's *TS*, *kk.* 1105-1121, pp. 573-579.
97. *SV*, *k.* 135/*TS*, *k.* 973.
98. *TS*, *k.* 1122.
99. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1123.
100. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1142-1143.
101. For detail, see, Jha's *TS*, *kk.* 1124-1141.
102. *SV*, *k.* 1391/*TS*, *k.* 974.
103. *Ibid.*, *k.* 140/*Ibid.*, *k.* 975.
104. *Ibid.*, *k.* 141/*Ibid.*, *k.* 976.
105. *Ibid.*, *k.* 142/*Ibid.*, *k.* 977.
106. *Ibid.*, *k.* 143/*Ibid.*, *k.* 978.
107. *Ibid.*, *k.* 144/*Ibid.*, *k.* 979.
108. *Ibid.*, *k.* 145/*Ibid.*, *k.* 980.
109. *TS*, *k.* 1144.
110. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1145.
111. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1146-1147.
112. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1154-1156.
113. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1157-1158.
114. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1148-1149.
115. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1150-1151.



116. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1152.
117. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1153.
118. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1159.
119. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1166.
120. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1167-1168.
121. *SV*, *k.* 146/*TS*, *k.* 980.
122. *TS*, *k.* 1181.
123. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1182-1183.
124. *SV*, *k.*163/*TS*, *k.* 1001.
125. *Ibid.*, *k.* 164/*Ibid.*, *k.* 1002.
126. *TS*, *k.* 1200.
127. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1201.
128. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 982-985.
129. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1185-1188.
130. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 986-988.
131. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1190.
132. *Ibid.* *k.* 989.
133. *Ibid.*, *k.* 990.
134. *Ibid.*, *k.* 991.
135. *Ibid.*, *k.* 992.
136. *Ibid.*, *k.* 993.
137. *Ibid.*, *k.* 994.
138. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1192-1194.
139. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1191.
140. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 995-996.
141. *Ibid.*, *k.* 1189.
142. *Ibid.*, *k.* 997-1000.
143. *Ibid.*, *kk.* 1195-1199.