

Consciousness in Indian Philosophy

The Advaita doctrine of
'awareness only'

Sthaneshwar Timalisina

Routledge Hindu Studies Series

Consciousness in Indian Philosophy

This book focuses on the analysis of pure consciousness as found in Advaita Vedanta, one of the main schools of Indian philosophy. According to this tradition, reality is identified as Brahman, the world is considered illusory, and the individual self is identified with the absolute reality. Advaitins have various approaches to defend this argument, the central one being the doctrine of 'awareness only' (cinmatra). Following this stream of argument, what consciousness grasps immediately is consciousness itself, and the notions of subject and object arise due to ignorance. This doctrine categorically rejects the plurality of individual selves and the reality of objects of perception.

Timalsina analyzes the nature of consciousness as understood in Advaita. He first explores the nature of reality and pure consciousness, and then moves on to analyze ignorance as propounded in Advaita. He then presents Advaita arguments against the definitions of 'object' of cognition found in various other schools of Indian philosophy. In this process, the positions of two rival philosophical schools of Advaita and Madhva Vedanta are explored in order to examine the exchange between these two schools. The final section of the book contrasts the Yogacara and Advaita understandings of consciousness. Written lucidly and clearly, this book reveals the depth and implications of Indian metaphysics and argument. It will be of interest to scholars of Indian philosophy and Religious Studies.

Sthaneshwar Timalsina is Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies, San Diego State University, US. His research interests include Tantric traditions, literary theory, and ritual studies. His first book, *Seeing and Appearance*, was published in 2006 by Shaker Verlag.

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Preface

The Routledge Hindu Studies Series, published in collaboration with the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, intends primarily the publication of constructive Hindu theological, philosophical, and ethical projects. The focus is on issues and concerns of relevance to readers interested in Hindu traditions in particular, yet also in the context of a wider range of related religious concerns that matter in today's world. The Series seeks to promote excellent scholarship and, in relation to it, an open and critical conversation among scholars and the wider audience of interested readers. Though contemporary in its purpose, the Series recognizes the importance of retrieving the classic texts and ideas, beliefs and practices, of Hindu traditions, so that the great intellectuals of these traditions may as it were become conversation partners in the conversations of today.

Philosophical idealism, in a weak version that there can be no account of the world independent of human consciousness and in a strong version that the world is identical with consciousness, has been a strong feature of Indian philosophy. In this book Sthaneshwar Timalsina develops an account of 'awareness only' in the Advaita tradition. He describes the two views entailed by the idea, firstly that the essence of everything is pure consciousness and secondly that the myriad appearances of the world are identical with consciousness. On the one hand we have a pure non-dualism on the other we have an emanationist view that the world is a manifestation of consciousness. The author traces how the first view predominates in Śāṅkara's philosophy while later texts exemplify the world as a manifestation of consciousness. The book deals with these issues both in terms of philosophical argument and as the history of ideas which grounds these arguments in particular texts and traditions.

There is a great depth of scholarship in this book and the author draws on a wide range of sources, presenting Advaita arguments and dealing with the encounter with rival schools such as the mind-only, Yogacara school of Buddhism. The view that consciousness is never divided in its true nature and that to understand consciousness in terms of subject and object is an ignorant mode of understanding, is the central philosophy of non-dualistic

Vedanta, expounded and developed with great lucidity here. This is a welcome addition to the Hindu Studies Series and an important contribution to Indian philosophy.

Gavin Flood
Series Editor

Acknowledgements

This book focuses upon the stream of Advaita philosophy that establishes the existence of non-dual awareness-in-itself. In the process of bringing distinct models of Advaita as identified by the classical Indian philosophers, I have worked on both the historical and philosophical aspects of *Dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi*, the doctrine that advocates that creation is identical to awareness. The published volume, *Seeing and Appearance*, addresses the historical and exegetical issues pertinent to this doctrine. This current study examines the logical argumentation developed in later classical India and adopted by the proponents of Advaita philosophy. Without the guidance and encouragement of Professors Walter Slaje and Alexander von Rospatt, it would not have been possible for me to initiate this project. I am humbled by the support of my mentors and lack the words to adequately express my gratitude.

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Despite all the support that I have received, any unnoticed mistakes are my sole responsibility. During the period of my research and writing, relocation and my work-habits have caused great difficulty for my family. I am thankful to my wife Gayatri Devi and my children Nitya and Ishan for their forbearance and understanding my difficulties and limitations.

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Abbreviations

AiU	<i>Aitareyopaniṣad</i>
ĀP	<i>Ātmapurāṇa</i>
ARR	<i>Advaitaratnarakṣaṇa</i>
AS	<i>Advaitasiddhi</i>
ĀTV	<i>Ātmatattvaviveka</i>
BĀU	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad</i>
BĀUBh	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad</i> – Śaṅkara's commentary
BĀUBhVā	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣadbhāṣyavārttika</i>
BS	<i>Brahmasiddhi</i>
BSū	<i>Brahmasūtra</i>
BSūBh	Śaṅkara's <i>Bhāṣya</i> on <i>Brahmasūtra</i>
CU	<i>Chāndogyopaniṣad</i>
CUBh	<i>Chāndogyopaniṣadbhāṣya</i>
DS	<i>Drṣṭisrṣṭi</i>
DSE	<i>Drṣṭisrṣṭi</i> under <i>ekajīva</i>
DSr	<i>Darśanasarvasva</i>
EJ	<i>Ekajīva</i>
GC	<i>Gurucandrikā</i>
GK	<i>Gauḍapādīyakārikā</i>
GKBh	<i>Gauḍapādīyakārikābhāṣya</i>
IS	<i>Iṣṭasiddhi</i>
JMN	<i>Jñānaśrīmitranibandhāvalī</i>
KāUBh	<i>Kāṭhākopaniṣadbhāṣya</i>
KU(P)Bh	<i>Kenopaniṣad-padabhāṣya</i>
KU(V)Bh	<i>Kenopaniṣad-vākyabhāṣya</i>
KU	<i>Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad</i>
KhKh	<i>Khaṇḍana Khaṇḍakhāḍya</i>
LAS	<i>Laṅkāvatārasūtra</i>
LC	<i>Laghucandrikā</i>
MUŚ	<i>Mokṣopāyaśāstra</i>
NA	<i>Nyāyāmṛta</i>
NM	<i>Nyāyamakaranda</i>
NP	<i>Nayanaprasādinī</i> (commentary on TP)

NS	<i>Naiṣkarmyasiddhi</i>
NSC	<i>Naiṣkarmyasiddhicandrikā</i>
NyC	<i>Nyāyacandrikā</i>
PP	<i>Pañcapādikā</i>
PPV	<i>Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa</i>
PS	<i>Pāṇinīya-sūtra (Aṣṭādhyāyī)</i>
PV	<i>Pramāṇavārttika</i>
SAD	<i>Santānāntaradūṣaṇa</i>
SB	<i>Siddhāntabindu</i>
SBhVā	<i>Sambandhabhāṣyavārttika</i>
SLS	<i>Siddhāntaleśasaṅgraha</i>
SLSK	<i>Siddhāntaleśasaṅgraha-Kṛṣṇālaṅkāra-Ṭīkā</i>
ŚP	<i>Śāstraprakāśikā, commentary on BĀUBhVā</i>
SŚ	<i>Saṅkṣepaśārīraka</i>
TaiU	<i>Taittirīyopaniṣad</i>
TC	<i>Tattvacintāmaṇi</i>
TP	<i>Tattvapradīpikā</i>
TŚ	<i>Tattvaśuddhi</i>
US	<i>Upadeśasāhasrī</i>
VMS	<i>Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi (Viṃśikā)</i>
VMST	<i>Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi (Triṃśikā)</i>
VPS	<i>Vivaraṇaprameyasaṅgraha</i>
VSM	<i>Vedāntasiddhāntamuktāvalī</i>
YS	<i>Yogasūtra</i>
YV	<i>Yogavāsiṣṭha</i>

Introduction

Central to the arguments of this book is the Advaita doctrine that there exists only awareness, free from any difference or modality. This book continues the investigation of my previous book, *Seeing and Appearance*, with a focus on philosophical issues. The previous study has explored Advaita not as a single stream of thought, but rather, as multiple threads that all coexist within the overarching philosophy of nonduality. The early exegeses of Śaṅkara and Maṇḍana demonstrate subtle differences that become more visible in the commentarial literature of Padmapāda and Vācaspati Miśra. The *Vārttika* of Sureśvara, who was the direct disciple of Śaṅkara, already demonstrates inclinations to a particular model of Advaita, in his case, the doctrine of Ābhāsa. The two commentarial traditions of Padmapāda and Vācaspati found in the *Vivaraṇa* and the *Bhāmatī* are identified respectively with the Advaita models of counter-image (*pratibimba*) and limitation (*avaccheda*). These arguments identify Brahman as singular in nature, identical to the self, and addressed as pure being (*sat*), awareness (*cit*), and bliss (*ānanda*). This Brahman, following the first model, assumes manifoldness through appearing as counter-images of a single image, just as the sun reflects in manifold forms, and following the second model, the manifoldness of the self is similar to that of a single space being confined within various objects, such as a pot or a mansion. The Advaita model of Sureśvara, identified as Ābhāsa, equates manifoldness with dream and compares the self-awareness found in the stage of bondage to false identity, as that of a prince who has lost his identity and is convinced that he is a hunter.

My previous study, *Seeing and Appearance*, grounds yet another doctrine of Advaita called Dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi that identifies ‘creation’ (*sr̥ṣṭi*) with ‘seeing’ (*dr̥ṣṭi*), conceptually relating this model of Advaita to the Ābhāsa model, propounded by Sureśvara. The lengthy examination of the occurrences of the terms related to ‘*dr̥ṣṭi*’ in the previous study has also established that the primary Advaita understanding of *dr̥ṣṭimātra* or ‘seeing only’ is synonymous with *cinnmātra* (consciousness only). Furthermore, the study of Dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi has also highlighted that this doctrine concurs with that of Ekajīva, which is a type of Advaita solipsism that accepts the existence of a single individual, empirical self, or *jīva*. This introductory synopsis cannot identify the

breadth and depth of thought covered in that earlier discussion. My purpose here is only to indicate that this work is a product of the process that was initiated with the previous study.

In the above-mentioned study of *Dṛṣṭisṛṣṭi*, I addressed the historical development of this particular stream of Advaita and analyzed the creative aspect of its exegetical tradition, examining select terms that are widely interpreted and contextualized in the changing philosophical scenario of classical India. However, the central tenet of Advaita, the idea that Consciousness is the sole reality, was not analyzed in the previous work. The current volume, therefore, completes the prior study with an examination of the concepts crucial to understanding what is the core of Advaita thought.

The heart of this study is an examination of the Advaita doctrine that *cinnmātra* or 'awareness only' is the sole reality (*sat*). When pure consciousness, identified as Brahman, is understood as the true nature of immediately experienced awareness itself, the Advaita philosophers being scrutinized argue that, since this awareness is not experienced in plurality, it confirms the doctrine of Ekajīva. The history of Advaita, like that of any other philosophical school, is dialogical, developed in the process of discussion occurring between multiple proponents of a position and their opponents. The doctrine of 'awareness only' with its adherence to a single *jīva*, is the consequence of the classical debate of the Advaitins against the ritual philosophy of Mīmāṃsā and the Sāṅkhya dualism in the early phase, the Buddhist Yogācāra and Madhyamaka philosophies in the exegetical period, and the Mādhva dualists during the later classical period. It is therefore not possible to study one single stream of Advaita without touching upon contemporaneous philosophies.

The Sāṅkhya philosophers hold that bondage is a consequence of the union of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, and that final release is possible with the isolation (*kaivalya*) of *puruṣa* from its engagement with *prakṛti*. They advocate the plurality of *puruṣas*, each separately demonstrating birth and death, bondage and release. The model under consideration in this book challenges the Sāṅkhya concept of the plurality of the self, arguing that the self-experience is singular. The Mīmāṃsakas argue that the self is endowed with the property of action. Rejecting this thesis, Advaitins argue that action is possible only by entities that are confined within time and space. The self, according to the Advaitins, is free from all limitations such as that of subject and object and is devoid of sense-organs to carry out actions. Consciousness or 'seeing' of the Advaitins, therefore, needs to be understood as identical to the self, free from dualities and modifications.

The Advaita doctrine of *Dṛṣṭisṛṣṭi* is the result of this classical debate that was reconfigured after the emergence of various theological schools of Vedānta, the prominent one being the dualism of Mādhavācārtha. Along the lines of these philosophers, what Advaita propounds is not significantly different from the Buddhist doctrine of 'consciousness only' (*Vijñānavāda*) or the doctrine of emptiness (*Śūnyavāda*). Although the actual instances of

debate between the Advaitins and the Buddhists may have been rare, those between the Mādhva dualists and the Advaitins in this historical period occur frequently, and these actual dialogues have shaped these schools permanently. The writings of Udayana, a Nyāya philosopher, and Śrīharṣa, an Advaitin, define the categories and the logical structure of this period. With a new theological twist, the debate between the Mādhva thinkers and the Advaitins established new ground. Vedānta Deśika's *Śatadūṣaṇī* is an exemplary text representing the Mādhva refutation of Advaita categories. The *Nyāyāmṛta* of Vyāsatīrtha extends the arguments found in the *Śatadūṣaṇī*. Madhusūdana's *Advaitasiddhi* (AS) exemplifies the attempt of Advaitins to reestablish their doctrine by categorically rejecting the arguments of Vyāsatīrtha. The sections found in this text on Ekajīva (Chapter 3) and the refutation of difference (Chapter 6) synthesize the Advaita arguments that emerged in this classical debate.

Advaita can be approached from various angles. Not only are there multiple interpretations of Advaita, there are different starting points from which one can arrive at the conclusion of non-duality. Advaita can be approached as the doctrine that establishes the existence of a single principle, Brahman, embracing all entities that exist, including individual selves. Again, the truth of Advaita can be argued for by close exegesis of key *Upaniṣadic* passages or through logical analysis of reality. Advaita can also be studied as an investigation of what is really cognized in the so-called instances of cognition. This approach eventually establishes non-dual Consciousness-in-itself as the essential reality of all cognitive modes. In yet another way, Advaita can be understood as a method (*upāya*) that teaches how to realize that the individual self is the very Brahman. The specific approach of this study is not the first one, as the focus of analysis here is not the examination of ontological arguments. Neither is this study an effort to identify the esoteric aspects of non-dual experience or explore Advaita as an *upāya* for self-realization, although the findings of this investigation may strengthen such studies. The scope of this study, rather, is to examine a particular Advaitic method of analyzing what is really known when we know something. Considering in detail the arguments of eminent classical exponents of Advaita such as Sureśvara, Vimuktātman, Śrīharṣa, Citsukha and Madhusūdana, this study focuses upon the epistemological aspects of the arguments that these authors advance to establish the truth of Advaita.

Except for Advaita, other schools of Vedānta have an explicitly theistic agenda. Various Vaiṣṇava schools of Vedānta, ranging from qualified Advaita (*viśiṣṭādvaita*) to the dualism followed by the Mādhvas, all have God-centric interpretations of the *Upaniṣads*, identifying lord Viṣṇu with Brahman. The Śaivite schools of thought similarly read the *Upaniṣads* in light of their own theistic inclinations. The approach of *Kevalādvaita* – 'monistic Advaita,' as the tradition of Śaṅkara is sometimes termed – identifies the empirical self with the supreme, or *para*, Brahman, the ultimate as free from

attributes (*nirguṇa*) and devoid of any form. The Advaita doctrine addressed in this study brings theistic positions into crisis by challenging the establishment of 'God,' the authority of the Vedic testimony, and of the enlightenment of gurus from the perspective of the doctrine of a single individual self.

Most Advaitins accept Īśvara as a category separate from *para* Brahman. The Lord is active, possesses attributes, and acts powerfully in creating and contracting the world. None of these attributes are found in the non-dual Brahman. Some Advaitins accept Īśvarahood as the product of Brahman conditioned by *māyā*. The Lord, so constituted, is able to create, but he nonetheless longs for liberation. Other Advaitins contend that Īśvara is the self that collectively encompasses the instances of individual self-awareness at the level of their experience of deep sleep. The Advaitins examined in this study have somewhat different positions. Some of these Advaitins argue that the supreme Brahman, under the influence of *māyā*, assumes a kind of cosmic *jīva*hood, addressed as Prajāpati or Hiraṇyagarbha, and that only this single, universal *jīva* exists, the rest being an appearance (*ābhāsa*) of this single, cosmic entity. Others hold that the localized self immediately experienced in the form of self-awareness is singular in nature, and this is the *jīva*. Following this second alternative, the individual self is the source of imagined duality. These perspectives emerge when the non-duality of 'seeing' (*dṛṣṭi*) is recognized in various ways.

What is clear in these two tendencies is that the first one is akin to theology, accepting the Lord as the single living being with the rest as its fiction. This approach limits the individual self to imagination and one's subjectivity to a projection of this Hiraṇyagarbha. The second approach, on the contrary, reduces God to merely a fiction of self-awareness. The arguments that have been closely examined in this study follow the second approach, the model that considers the existence of the immediately experienced self. Reality that is not immediately given to experience, therefore, is not reality at all.

There is yet another major distinction found within the single doctrine of 'awareness only' (*cinmātra*), which can be interpreted in two different ways, 1) the essence of all that is seen is pure consciousness, which is non-dual in its nature, or 2) all that appears is the very Brahman manifest in myriad forms. While the scholastic Advaita that closely follows Śaṅkara's lines conforms to the first interpretation, the second understanding can be traced in texts such as *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, and also those of some Advaitins following Śaṅkara's line who appear to have adopted this position. This volume, together with the previous text, *Seeing and Appearance*, identifies the historical contexts and philosophical foundations for the rise of a particular stream of Advaita. The issue of God brings Advaita into crisis by either reading this as a theology establishing the monism of Brahman or interpreting it as a phenomenological approach to reality by examining what really exists, indicating two distinct foci. In both cases, Advaitins develop an epistemology that establishes non-duality.

The scope of Advaita is the self. This knowledge of the self is considered to liberate from false assumptions about the self and the other. This approach, however, cannot be reduced to the contemporary phenomenological approach of reading consciousness. The Advaita confirmation of the singular self or the doctrine of Ekajīva differs from solipsism, for instance, in the sense that its confirmation of the single self is an approach, a method or *upāya*, for self-realization. And, the term 'self-realization' does not refer to a single phenomenon, as this has been interpreted in various ways even within a single Advaita school of thought.

The broader assumption of the Indian philosophical traditions is that reality is not beyond the scope of human knowledge, and realization of the truth results in liberation. Suffering is commonly shared by all sentient beings, and these traditions generally agree that this suffering is caused due to not knowing reality. Keeping this broader assumption in mind, when we read Citsukha for instance, who advocates both the doctrines of Ekajīva (single self) and Nānājīva (many selves), we do not find a contradiction. Two distinct approaches are applicable to different levels of aspirants. When the proponents of the doctrine of Dṛṣṭiṣṭi posit that their particular view is applicable only to highly qualified aspirants, this confirms the same position that recognition of the reality is what matters. The argumentation given in order to establish different positions is *upāyic*, rather than a logical trick used to defeat opponents.

This proposition of reading Advaita as *upāya* also fits with the interpretation of the term *darśana*, often identified with the term philosophy. The term is etymologically analyzed to mean 'through which [the reality] is perceived' (*dṛśyate 'nena iti darśanam*). For some Advaitins, 'knowing' does not require any other repetitive meditative activity. For example, when we know a pot, we do not keep repeating our knowledge of pot. For other Advaitins, knowing the self requires repetitive confirmation of the identification of the individual self with the real nature of the self, as a single flash of knowing is not sufficient to erase the false notion of the self. This is the same reason that distinguishes some Advaitins who posit that hearing the proper instruction about the self is adequate for generating true knowledge from those who argue that other aspects such as repetition (*manana*) are necessary to confirm the true identity of the self. The approach examined in this study does not advocate the repetitive reflective mode of awareness. When one realizes that a rope is not a snake, the Advaitins that are being examined in this study argue, one does not require repetition of the understanding, 'this rope is not a snake.'

Indian philosophical traditions also differ in their understanding of valid means of knowledge. Most Hindu philosophies have adopted *śabda* or 'word' as a valid means of knowledge, although the term 'word' can be interpreted both as verbal confirmation or the word of the Lord, referring to Vedic testimony. What is undeniable for almost all schools of thought is the validity of two means of knowledge, direct perception and inference. This

study relies upon these two means of knowledge to synthesize the Advaita position and to demonstrate contradictions in other positions.

The establishment of 'awareness only' also relies on the Advaita formulation that awareness is self-confirmed. Central to this position is the argument that awareness does not depend upon any other means for its confirmation. That awareness is confirmed by itself is a concept shared among Advaita Vedāntins, Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas, Trika Śaivas, and the Yogācāra Buddhists. However, these philosophies do not define awareness in the same way. This distinction will come under scrutiny when we compare the concepts of *cinmātra* and *cittamātra* in Chapter 8 of this study. Contrary to the position that awareness is confirmed by itself, the dualist Vedānta philosophers come closer to the Naiyāyikas in arguing that a second order of awareness confirms the existence of the first.

It is noteworthy that the term *jñāna* is not understood as having the same meaning in these two streams of thought that debate upon intrinsic or extrinsic confirmation of awareness and the means of knowledge. Those defending intrinsic confirmation define *jñāna* as true knowledge, whereas those adopting extrinsic confirmation of *jñāna* interpret it in a sense that includes erroneous cognition and doubt as well. Although all the Advaitins follow the concept of intrinsic validity, select Advaitins adopting 'awareness only' lead this argument to its most radical form by propounding that 'awareness' is the only entity that is confirmed, and its difference or its corresponding object is not immediately cognized. Following these Advaitins, inference cannot confirm something that cannot be confirmed through direct perception, explaining that inference relies upon the concomitance that is confirmed through direct perception. This line of argumentation demonstrates that only perception is independently valid in confirming reality.

Explaining perception strictly following the lines of Advaita engenders several contradictions. If perception confirms reality, then, what is perceived, the objective world, has to be real. One can also argue that the reality of the means of knowledge constitutes duality, one being the reality of Brahman and the other, the reality of the means of knowledge. Advaitins assert that what is really cognized in the modes of cognition is pure awareness alone, whereas it is ignorance that constitutes duality. Analyzing perception receives prominence when reality itself is identified as 'seeing' (*dṛṣṭi*). With this understanding, 'seeing' also includes other modes of perception, such as hearing or smelling. Following this non-dual understanding of perception, the self is not distinguished from the immediate mode of consciousness found in various sensory modes such as 'seeing.' When self-realization is recognized as the realization of awareness-in-itself, Padmapāda's explanation that 'hearing' (*śravaṇa*) is capable of providing self-realization becomes more comprehensible.

The Advaitins claim that existence is knowable, arguing that something cannot be confirmed as existing and also outside of the domain of knowledge. This ultimately brings the Advaitins to the position that what essentially exists

is pure consciousness alone. Advaita, along these lines, examines the scope of consciousness, which is self-aware and can project its own reality, in the form of both subject and object, inside and outside. Knowing Brahman, Advaitins argue, grants the realization that manifoldness is constituted in this very non-dual nature. This present study of the confirmation of awareness and rejection of difference by elaborating upon the role of ignorance adopts the same logic developed by the classical Advaitins.

Following the assumptions hinted at in this short introduction, this study is segmented into four sections. The first section investigates what really exists. This analysis of *sat*, which is identified with *cit* or consciousness, is an examination of the arguments the classical Advaita philosophers provided to define the scope and nature of consciousness, the concept of the single self (*ekajīva*), and the position that advocates ‘the existence of only that what is cognized’ (*jñātaikasattā*). The scope of this section thus becomes an analysis of what really exists, although the confirmation that only immediately cognized awareness-in-itself exists, opens the possibility of explaining this *sat* as mere consciousness (*cit*), which is instantaneously experienced.

The second category of our analysis is ‘what exists relatively.’ Advaita philosophers interpret ignorance (*avidyā*) as something that cannot be confirmed either as existing (*sat*) or not existing (*asat*). This puts *avidyā* in a category which exists, if seen through one perspective, and does not exist, if perceived otherwise. *Avidyā*, the Advaitins argue, exists for those who are suffering from ignorance, but not for those who have freed themselves from it.

Advaitins cannot interpret the world that is perceived without accepting any additional category other than Brahman. Accepting *avidyā* as a category allows the Advaitins to explain that it is due to *avidyā* that duality is perceived. This position, however, has brought the strongest criticism from the dualists. The first systematic criticism to the adherence of *avidyā* as a category comes from Rāmānuja, the proponent of qualified non-dualism (*viśiṣṭādvaita*). He demonstrates seven categorical challenges. He maintains that the nature (*svarūpa*) of ignorance is hard to define, finding it untenable that *avidyā* can be simply defined as indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*). He examines the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) that is presented in defense of *avidyā* and categorically rejects it. He addresses another significant problem in defining the substrate (*āśraya*) of *avidyā*, finding it problematic to identify it as either Brahman or the individual selves (*jīvas*). He also finds untenable the position that ignorance somehow overpowers and obscures Brahman. Rāmānuja argues, if Brahman were somehow to be obscured by *avidyā*, it would be impossible to remove it by knowing Brahman. He also finds the concept of the cessation of ignorance logically problematic.

The second section of this study deals with the issue of *avidyā*. The aforementioned challenges brought forward by Rāmānuja are promulgated with greater elaboration in the later classical debate between the Mādhva dualists and the Advaitins. Advaitins confront these challenges while formulating

multiple positions. Advaitins make two distinct arguments in addressing the most prominent among the issues, whether the substrate of *avidyā* is Brahman or the *jīvas*. Śaṅkara himself appears to adopt the position that the very Brahman is the substrate of *avidyā*. Maṇḍana, on the contrary, is explicit about the position that *jīvas* are the substrate of ignorance. The concept of *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi* can arise while adhering to either of these positions. The concept of the singularity of *jīva*, however, arises only when adopting the position that the very Brahman is the substrate of ignorance and it is due to ignorance that the singular Brahman assumes *jīva*hood. The analysis of *avidyā* in this study closely examines the challenges inherent to the position that Brahman is the substrate of ignorance.

After analyzing the absolute of Advaita, and the indeterminable nature of ignorance, it becomes necessary to demonstrate what does not exist (*asat*). Advaitins posit that the phenomenal world cognized in the form of subject and object is merely a projection of ignorance that does not exist in reality. The core of Advaita argumentation can be demonstrated in two subsections, one analyzing the arguments that reject difference, and the other examining the object of knowledge. Difference is refuted following a wide range of arguments, while the section examining 'object' primarily demonstrates complexities in its definition.

In essence, this is the study of the Advaita argument for the establishment of *sanmātra*, or 'existence only' identified with *cinnmātra* or 'consciousness only.' These arguments allow one to explore the logical aspect of classical Advaita that defends pure consciousness as the singular reality. This inquiry also demonstrates the tension between the streams of Advaita that, although reaching the same conclusion, nonetheless have different exegetical approaches due to their focus on theological or philosophical issues. The eighth Chapter of this study explores the parallels and differences between the Advaita concept of *cinnmātra* and the Yogācāra understanding of *cittamātra*.

The correspondences found here between *cinnmātra* (awareness only) and *cittamātra* (mind only), between the self-aware nature of consciousness as examined in Advaita Vedānta and Yogācāra Buddhism, between the concepts of *Ekajīva* and *cittasantāna*, or the similar notion of ignorance found in these traditions are preliminary. Most of the arguments refuting difference can be shared by both the Advaita and Yogācāra traditions. However, the objective of refuting difference in the Yogācāra tradition is to establish identity between external objects and their concepts, whereas Advaita tradition argues against establishing identity. While examining the definition of an object, this study includes the Sautrāntika Buddhist definition as examined by Śrīharṣa. Since Indian philosophical tradition has evolved by reading and constantly arguing against other positions, a closer look into one tradition is not possible without a basic understanding of the opposing tradition. Therefore, these comparisons need to be understood in their own context as a means of clarification rather than as a broader examination of the parallel concept.

Part I

Sat

1 Establishment of ‘awareness only’

***Cinmātra* (awareness only)**

The Advaita school grounded upon *Upaniṣadic* tradition and advocated primarily by Śaṅkara and his disciples can be studied in many different ways. It can be a study following the exegetical tradition of the *Upaniṣads* or a philosophical inquiry of essentially what exists, based on arguments. It can be a guide for liberation, or an approach to the nature of reality. Furthermore, the study of Advaita can reconcile logical investigation with the authority of the texts. Realization of the self as Brahman identified as being, awareness, and bliss, the goal of Advaita, can also result through the analysis of perception and immediate experience. This essay relies on the latter method by exploring the essential nature of awareness through analyzing one stream of Advaita that propounds ‘awareness only’ and defends the existence of a single *jīva*, the immediately experienced self.

Advaita philosophy rejects duality on many grounds. This rejection of duality can be interpreted in terms of the ontological perspective that there is ultimately no essential plurality in what exists. Through the epistemological lens, what is cognized is essentially non-dual awareness only. Through the soteriological perspective, essentially there is no difference between Brahman and the individual self. What makes Advaita Vedānta drastically different from other classical Indian philosophies is its acceptance of pure consciousness as the singular reality. This concept is essentially compatible with all Advaita approaches. Following this understanding, the self identical with Brahman is the immediately cognized awareness. This awareness must be felt, as this philosophy rejects the reality of awareness out of the domain of self-experience. This non-dual consciousness is what is actually cognized in different cognitive modes. The duality that is perceived, in the self-experience of different subjects, or in cognition of different objects, is the very pure consciousness manifested in various forms due to the state of not knowing reality.

‘Awareness only’ existed as a concept as early as Auḍulomin.¹ When analyzing the elaborate discussions of Sureśvara, it becomes clear that Bhartṛprapañca’s position on consciousness within his system of ‘identity in

difference' (*bhedābheda*) influenced the arguments that led to *dr̥ṣṭimātra*. Advaitins apparently utilized Bhartṛprapañca's system in establishing their own philosophy, while rejecting the categories not congruent with their system.² This process of philosophical debate influenced a circle of Advaitins to utilize a coherent logic that consequently led to the establishment of 'seeing' as the only reality. Having emerged from the chain of arguments establishing *cinnmātra*, the Advaita position shifted from a monistic standpoint of consciousness as the fundamental principle to the epistemological theory of 'what is perceived is consciousness alone.'

The establishment of 'awareness only' primarily relies upon the analysis of perception. The question, 'What is directly perceived?' precipitates a series of arguments concluding with the establishment of 'consciousness only,' free from difference. The arguments in this discussion rely on the thesis that what exists has to be known by means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). The first step leads to the thesis that knowledge, independent of an object, can be established, demonstrating that the self, identical with awareness, is self-evident. The inherent nature of this self is 'seeing only.' In this very step, the singularity of awareness cognized in the form of the self (*jīva*) is established with the presumptive argument that self-awareness has never been experienced as many. The second step analyzes 'what appears,' with an investigation into the nature and function of ignorance. Advaitins have contrasting positions on the nature and scope of ignorance, and the model that supports our thesis does not rank ignorance, nor does it consider a categorical difference between ignorance (*avidyā*) and illusion (*māyā*). The third step in these arguments demonstrates that a difference between knowledge and its object cannot be proved, on the ground that difference as such cannot be established. The arguments presented in this study are gleaned from the writings that establish the Ābhāsa model of Advaita philosophy, traditionally credited to Sureśvarācārya. The stream of arguments analyzed in this study is found in a model distinctly identified in the later classical period as *Dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi* (DS), the philosophy that identifies creation with seeing.

The sets of arguments that emerged from this foundation lead to 'awareness only,' independent of other means to reveal itself. Awareness alone is the intrinsic nature of the self, and nothing other than awareness can be proved. The awareness of pain or the awareness of blue is dependent upon awareness for its validity, and what can be confirmed as existing is what is validated by means of knowledge. The logical structure through which this is established is twofold:

- 1 analysis through affirmation, proving the *svaprakāśatā* of awareness, that awareness is illuminated by itself and does not require anything else, including a second degree of awareness, in order to illuminate the first awareness, and
- 2 analysis through negation, refuting all entities that are supposedly presented to be other than solitary awareness.

The sequence of this argument begins with challenging the validity of an object that is dependent upon another for its own affirmation. The advocates of DS argue that something valid does not require another entity for its confirmation. Inquiry into the nature of knowledge reveals that awareness-in-itself does not depend upon another means of knowledge for its confirmation and so it is confirmed. This is not the case with the objects of knowledge, because these depend upon knowledge for their confirmation. This logical necessity confirms the singularity of awareness that is established by itself. Since the subjective experience does not occur in plurality, the singularity of the self relies upon what is directly known. These arguments consequently establish Ekajīva (EJ), the doctrine that is often identified with the doctrine of DS.

The thesis of solitary awareness, which in itself is the self, is based on the following concepts:

- 1 Awareness manifests itself;
- 2 Difference is not the nature of awareness, and so difference is not *svaprakāśa*;
- 3 This non-dual awareness is the very nature of the self.

In this way, the Advaita philosophy defending the model of EJ posits that, since awareness is the self and there is no *svaprakāśatā* in anything other than what is immediately experienced, all that is immediately experienced is the self of the character of non-dual awareness alone.

'Awareness only,' therefore, is the conclusion of a sequence of epistemological arguments. This conclusion is grounded in the analysis of perception, focusing on what is immediately known. This pure consciousness, nonetheless, is not generated by a means of knowledge, because the scope of the means of knowledge is only to reveal what is real, not to invent its own reality. Furthermore, 'means of knowledge' are confirmed as valid by relying on awareness, and if awareness depends upon the means of knowledge, that would lead to circularity. However, what appears to our conventional knowledge is duality. Therefore, the notion of duality arising from perception requires analysis.

Awareness as non-dual 'seeing'

This awareness-in-itself is the constant seeing. All the cognitive modes, including the cognition of the absence of objects, are revealed by the witnessing consciousness which is the never-interrupted 'seeing.' This 'seeing' is not the act of some subject. If it were, it would not be constant, nor would it be non-dual awareness identical to the self. It is instead the foundation upon which the duality of subject and object is imagined. Even 'seeing' that is mentally constructed is revealed by this very non-dual seeing. This is Brahman.

'Seeing only' is the culmination of the series of arguments in defense of the Advaitin's premise that what is actually perceived is solitary consciousness, free from difference. This position is often identified with the monistic argument that the world is of the form of awareness itself. However, the approaches by which non-duality is established differ drastically. The first alternative negates the perception of duality, whereas the second alternative propounds consciousness alone as the singular nature of the world. The second interpretation tallies more closely with the Advaita theology, often identifying this single reality with the divinity. The understanding that rejects the dichotomy between awareness and cognition was common to the early non-dualists and the later scholastic writers on *Ābhāsa*. Within this line of argumentation, what is immediately cognized is awareness-in-itself, and not the momentary instances of cognition. Terms such as *jñāna* or *bodha*, in light of this doctrine, refer to the solitary awareness-in-itself. While confirming 'awareness only,' identical with 'seeing only,' the *Ābhāsa* doctrine also embraces a second degree of reality to interpret appearance. In other words, to assert that something is falsely appearing is also to confirm that, whether momentarily or falsely, something other than what is real has been perceived. This argument results in the second model of DS, with an interpretation of 'seeing only' as 'perceiving only momentary and illusory instances of cognition.' The underlying doctrine that embraces both these interpretations of 'seeing' is the negation of the ontological being of external entities and the confirmation of the awareness that is self-aware and identical with the self. In this way, these models are not contradictory, but rather, interpret the same doctrine in two different ways: one identifies what is real with confirmative knowledge, while the other demonstrates what is false with knowledge derived through negation. Both of these rely upon the analysis of direct perception; however, the first model rejects the possibility of perceiving objective phenomena, whereas the second accepts momentary instances of cognition.

The discussion leading to the establishment of 'awareness only' or 'seeing only' begins with the view that the difference between cognition and its object is apparent. 'What is perceived' appears in the form of an object, identified in terms of 'this;' consciousness, on the contrary, does not appear in such a form. To establish difference between two objects, both objects being differentiated need to be cognized. Since cognition of an object is neither independent of an object nor identical with the object itself, and since there is nothing except for its knowledge to confirm x , x and the cognition of x cannot be confirmed as two separate entities. This refutation of the perception of difference is part of a larger chapter on Advaita that negates the existence of difference. The ensuing argument is that seeing a form is not dependent upon its counter-positive. Therefore, difference is not inherently proved.

The argumentation that leads to the Advaita position of 'awareness only' is congruent to that found in defending the model of DS. The philosophy

of DS first needs to tackle the question, 'What is meant by saying that creation (*śṛṣṭi*) exists simultaneous with experience?' There are two possibilities:

- 1 *Dṛṣṭi* is the only reality, or
- 2 Creation exists independent of *dṛṣṭi*.

Proponents of the DS doctrine reject the second alternative. The first can be analyzed in two different ways:

- 1a The world exists inseparable from experience. In other words, there is a simultaneous arising of the entities of experience (internal entities such as pain-experience, pleasure-experience, and external entities such as blue-experience) and experience itself, and
- 1b Reality is not divided into the triad of subject, object, and experience; what essentially exists is 'experience (*anubhūti*) only.'

The first assumption is generally understood as DS by its opponents, whereas the DS doctrine itself defends the second alternative.

This 'seeing' can be interpreted, along the lines of Vimuktātman, as 'seeing by itself' (*svayaṃdṛṣṭi*), in which 'seeing' is aware, with no object other than itself to be cognized.³ This 'seeing' not only rejects the possibility of cognizing difference, but also negates perceiving 'identity.' Therefore, this is seeing in itself, free from the modifications that appear in the form of objects. As self-awareness is the true nature of this 'seeing,' it is self-confirmed. There are two possibilities: either there exists no difference but 'seeing only,' or there exists no 'seeing,' only non-existence. The question that arises with the second position is, how will this non-existence be cognized?⁴

Since the counterpositive of 'seeing' cannot be confirmed, it cannot be proved that there are any differences between an object and cognition of that object. This line of argument leads to the confirmation that existence is immediately experienced. This is self-awareness. This consciousness in itself is equated with terms such as *upalabdhi*⁵ or *anubhūti*,⁶ both referring to experience. This 'experience-in-itself' is not cognized by any other means, but rather, is self-confirmed. The absence of this 'experience' cannot be proved, as by definition there can be no experience that is not known.

Even though 'seeing' is not an object of any other consciousness, it is established by its own self-awareness. The entities that are considered as separate from seeing-in-itself cannot be validated, either on their own, or by any extrinsic means.⁷ That which is not self-aware cannot validate its own absence, and that which is self-aware cannot validate its absence. This being the case, one cannot prove the nature of knowledge even if one accepts the absence of self-awareness. If knowledge is self-aware, there is no possibility of it confirming its absence.

A problem can arise in this context: seeing and what is seen will be identical, and the object of seeing will be seeing itself. In this way, 'seeing' belongs

to the same category as the object of seeing. Establishing the identity of cognition and its object is problematic in two ways:

- 1 if there are external objects, difference is established, not identity;
- 2 if there are no external objects, there is no counterpositive of difference.

Furthermore, to establish identity is counterproductive, because the establishment of identity presupposes the existence of difference. The main problem with the 'identity' of 'awareness' and its 'object' is that seeing and what is seen are not grasped by one single cognition that proves identity or difference.⁸

The establishment of 'awareness only,' identified with 'seeing only,' can be understood in two ways, first in the affirmative, in which all that is known is identified with consciousness only, and second in the sense of negation, where nothing exists other than awareness. Exegetes have adopted both interpretations in establishing Advaita, as neither approach contradicts the fundamental principle that ultimately all that exists is Brahman alone. Both recognition through affirmation, with sentences such as 'all of this is Brahman,' and through negation, 'not this, not this,' have remained the ways of instruction since the *Upaniṣadic* times. The Advaita doctrines of Ābhāsa and Dr̥ṣṭiṣṭi adopt both of these methods in propounding the central concept of awareness only.

Ābhāsa and Dr̥ṣṭiṣṭi

The fundamental principle of the Ābhāsa doctrine is that there is no creation as such, because what 'appears' is 'consciousness,' which is free from change. While establishing this changeless nature, the philosophy of Ābhāsa advocates that consciousness-in-itself is 'what is perceived as real' in all instantaneous cognitive modes. Sureśvara vigorously defended the doctrine that it is only consciousness that exists, or is perceived. Adopting an epistemological argument, he incorporated the basic idea of 'being only' (*sanmātra*) as what is perceived. According to this criterion, 'awareness only' (*cīnmātra* or *dr̥ṣṭimātra*) is the only entity that is perceived. The establishment of the thesis that what exists is consciousness alone is a consequence of the arguments that 1) what exists is only what is cognized, and 2) only the instances of awareness are cognized. This development of consciousness only (*cīnmātra*), a fundamental distinction from the ontological argument which essentially posits 'existence alone' (*sanmātra*), brings the doctrines of Ābhāsa and Dr̥ṣṭiṣṭi closer.

This historical congruence of concepts suggests that two different philosophers had developed the doctrines of *sattādvaita* and *cīdādvaita*, with each of them focusing on different aspects of 'reality.' In other words, it is not *sat* that is the determining factor, rather it is *cīd* that not only determines *sat*, but also its own existence.

Vimuktātman, an Advaita philosopher who closely follows the Ābhāsa model of Advaita, systematically refutes 'difference,' 'identity,' and 'identity in difference,' as an object of perception confirms that no 'means of knowledge' establishes these. Only 'seeing-in-itself' functions to establish their existence. This position is strongly defended by Śrīharṣa in *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā* (KhKh), with the establishment of 'awareness only.' Advaitins vigorously refute the perception of difference in order to confirm 'awareness only.' The core of this argument is that although consciousness appears in myriad forms as the plurality of subjects, assuming a difference between subject and object, and in the form of various objects, it never assumes the dichotomy of subject and object. Distinction is made due to illusion.

The arguments of Ābhāsa that have provided the epistemological ground of 'consciousness only' can be traced back to the ontological arguments of Gauḍapāda. Adopting the Gauḍapādiyan argumentation, the Ābhāsa line of reasoning that results in establishing 'seeing only' equates entities of the waking state with dream entities. Reality, for entities of the waking state, exists only prior to self-realization. Before coming to the waking state, even dream entities are accepted as real; nonetheless, this does not confirm their reality. Equating the world with appearance (*pratibhāsa*) not only aligns with the doctrine of Ābhāsa, but also supports the central component of DS, that whatever is perceived is 'appearance only.'⁹ The select examples discussed above illustrate two distinct features:

- 1 These illustrations exemplify a specific illusion perceived even while knowing their falsity;
- 2 These suggest the possibility of perceiving something as illusory even after knowing its falsity. This position admits two categories of 'knowing falsity' and 'knowing it correctly.' The first refers to the illusion of movement seen by someone on a boat where the surroundings are perceived as moving in the opposite direction, whereas the second, correct knowledge, refers to the awareness that the surroundings are not moving in reality.

Vimuktātman refutes 'origination' by pointing out that the acceptance of origination would lead to infinite regress.¹⁰ This negation of origination, in the context of IS, disallows 'seeing' as originating momentarily within each instance of cognition. This inquiry resulting in the negation of origination is epistemological: no cognition is originated when something is perceived. The argument concludes with the thesis that 'seeing' neither suffers from origination nor collapses. In this particular sense, the establishment of 'consciousness only' or 'seeing only' is identical with the Gauḍapādiyan argument that no entity is ever originated. In either case, whether in the sense of non-origination, or in the sense that all the instances of cognition are essentially of the character of awareness-in-itself, the establishment of non-duality relies upon ignorance to ground duality.

Ignorance (*avidyā*)

According to Advaita, creation, agency, *karma*, and bondage are all caused by ignorance alone. Nonetheless, ignorance does not always have the same role in different Advaita models. Advaita philosophers explain the character and the role of ignorance in various ways. The positions that 1) illusion (*māyā*) projects the world with little emphasis on ignorance, 2) ignorance identical to illusion gives rise to the notion of the phenomenal world, 3) *māyā* and *avidyā* are two different categories with the different functions of respectively projecting false entities and veiling reality, and 4) two tiers of *avidyā*, root ignorance (*mūlāvidyā*) and fictitious ignorance (*tūlāvidyā*), although identical in the sense that they all ultimately propound the non-duality of Brahman, are distinct approaches. The method utilized in this analysis is not merely a synthesis of the thesis of Advaita, but rather an examination of the contradictory positions that exegetes adopted while defending their thesis of the singularity of the awareness identical to Brahman. Philosophers such as Gauḍapāda primarily focus on the role of illusion (*māyā*). Sureśvara identifies *māyā* with *avidyā*, but Padmapāda and Prakāśātman assume a dichotomy between them. Exegetes such as Vācaspati Miśra propound a two-tier *avidyā*. One of the core issues that resulted in the rise of multiple and sometimes-contradictory Advaita positions is the substrate of ignorance. Some Advaitins consider Brahman as the support of ignorance, whereas others identify *jīvas* as its ground. Some highlight the role of *māyā* in projecting illusory entities, again focusing upon ‘what substantially exists.’ Other Advaitins hold that ignorance is the cause for the rise of the notion of duality.

The philosophers propounding Advaita also hold different positions in analyzing reality. Some interpret reality in three degrees, with *paramārtha* as the highest reality, followed by *vyavahāra* or convention, and *pratibhāsa* or appearance. Others acknowledge two degrees of reality, rejecting a fundamental difference between illusory appearance and conventional reality. The Advaita philosophy under investigation rejects the dichotomy of ignorance and illusion while adopting two degrees of reality. Essentially, this is the position that culminates in the establishment of ‘seeing only.’

Maṇḍana advocates a power of ignorance¹¹ that projects duality or gives rise to difference. While endorsing this, he also accepts that what is immediately perceived is not difference, but rather, existence in itself. Hence, even Maṇḍana would agree that it is only Brahman that is perceived in reality, and that the perception of difference is due to ignorance. However, his argumentation differs slightly from the later writers on DS; he makes existence the starting point of his analysis, whereas subsequent writers focus on awareness.

There is no disagreement among all the sub-streams of Advaita that it is only Brahman that is real. Differences among these subschools rest upon the epistemological and hermeneutical approach applied by each author to

interpretation of this thesis. Immediately after Śaṅkara, the Advaita doctrine separated into different streams. The fundamental ground of these differences concerns the issue of the locus of ignorance. Ekajīva (EJ) and DS emerged from the line of arguments that favored the phenomenal subject (*jīva*) as the locus of ignorance. This most radical form of the analysis of 'self,' based upon the Advaitic teachings, favors the very self as both the foundation and object of ignorance. This model is closer to Ābhāsavāda, while the Avaccheda doctrine differentiates between the substrate and object of ignorance, respectively relating this to the empirical self and the Absolute. Both Maṇḍana and Sureśvara agreed on the self as the locus of ignorance; however, Maṇḍana categorized the self into two: the supreme self, or *Brahman*, as the object of ignorance and the phenomenal self, or *jīva*, as the locus. Sureśvara rejects this dichotomy of locus and object, as well as the distinction between the supreme self and phenomenal self. Whether ignorance is one, or whether there is a plurality of ignorance, bears on this discussion. Since Maṇḍana's argumentation favors a plurality in the locus of ignorance, his doctrine supports the plurality of ignorance as well. Following Sureśvara, Brahman itself is the imposed locus, with no context of a plurality in Brahman as such, except for illusion. There is, then, not even a plurality of ignorance. Manifolddness, generated by the perception of difference, is the product of ignorance.

Difference (*bheda*)

The Advaitins adopting the position of Cinmātra contend that immediate awareness is non-dual, with no distinction between object and its cognition, subject and object, or the plurality of the self. The arguments of the Advaitins reject difference as a category. If difference (*d*) exists as an independent entity (*x*), then *d* is *x*, and the acceptance of *x* alone suffices. If the thesis is that *d* differs from *x*, this cannot be proved. Difference has not been proved, even with regard to *x* and *y*, and so it is not logical to establish difference between *x* and *kx*. This 'seeing in itself' is validated by the self-aware nature of consciousness.

These arguments negating the existence of difference and confirming the self-aware nature of 'seeing-in-itself,' primarily advocated by those following the Ābhāsa model of Advaita, are the same as those adopted by Prakāśānanda in establishing Dṛṣṭimātra. Another significant aspect of this stream of argument is accepting that no object is required in order to have different cognitive modes. According to this doctrine, the validity of knowledge is not dependent upon an object, because what validates the existence or absence of an object is not intrinsic to the object itself, but rather, to the knowledge of that object. The opponents hold that *k(k)* does not presuppose knowledge of the universal that qualifies the particular knowledge. However, in the context of *kx*, the existence of *x* is presupposed. If there is no differentiating factor, such as a qualifier, how would knowledge be

known? The Advaita position is that since awareness is self-aware, it does not depend upon another entity in order to differentiate one cognition from another.

The Naiyāyikas hold that universals do not require further universals to differentiate one from the other. In the same way, a cognition does not require further cognition to distinguish one from another. If cognition depends upon difference for its origination, it would then be momentary. If cognition prior to the rise of an object can be free from difference, why would this not be the same when there are objects? If the contention is that the existence of an object is required for cognition, then any knowledge about past and future objects would not be possible. And, if a real object, rather than its cognition, is required to differentiate one from another, no difference should be apprehended in a dream. Differentiation of the cognition of x from the cognition of y is not caused by external factors, x and y ; rather, awareness itself differentiates one from another. Hence, knowledge does not require an object for its establishment; what exists is knowledge, and nothing else.

There is no universal concomitance of cognition with an object corresponding to that cognition. Cognition and its object, according to the realists, are in different loci. Cognition lies in the self whereas the object is outside, so there is no question of having the same substrate. Since the substrates of cognition and its object are not the same, there is no co-referentiality (*sāmānādhikaraṇya*). In other words, there is no identity of cognition with its object. Furthermore, neither is there co-referentiality in terms of time, since the cognition of past or future does not have a corresponding object at the moment of cognition.

Thus, the difference between two cognitions, kx and ky , is not confirmed; consequently, the solitary nature of awareness is confirmed. If it is argued that the cognition of x and the cognition of y are different, then this difference is identical with the difference perceived in dream entities. As a cloth is nothing more than thread in its substance, in the same way, the world is nothing more than appearance. The world appears and dissolves in awareness alone, which is, in its essence, the very self, 'awareness only,' or 'seeing only.'

Cinmātra and cittamātra

Advaita Vedānta is often compared by scholars and criticized by its opponents using parallels with Buddhism. Although most of the classical philosophers criticizing Advaita do not pinpoint the parallels between the Advaita and Buddhist philosophies, there are multiple nuances that align these two philosophies. Scholars have pointed out the mutual influence of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra Buddhist philosophies with Advaita Vedānta. The writings of Gauḍapāda show an unmistakable influence from Buddhist literature in his philosophy. The specific model of Advaita later identified as DS possesses many nuances that make this comparison possible. It is

nonetheless hard to confirm that the opponents of Advaita were aware of specific distinctions among multiple Advaita positions while making their comments. For example, an opponent of DS, Vyāsātīrtha argues that the DS doctrine aligns with the doctrine of momentariness.¹² There is some truth to his claim, in that DS and Madhyamaka resemble each other in their interpretation of the truth structured in the two tiers of phenomenal and absolute realities. Nonetheless, the doctrines of *Śūnyatā* and Brahman cannot be reconciled as one based upon some resemblance.¹³ Existence of 'consciousness only' can be interpreted in both ways:

- 1 There exist momentary and essentially false instances of consciousness, and
- 2 There exists non-dual and eternal awareness.

A broad generalization of classical Indian idealistic thought can be made on exegetes' wide acceptance of awareness as *svaparakāśa*. This term can be understood in multiple ways. At its core, this concept can be understood as a premise that, whenever there is a cognition, this cognition does not require another cognition for its confirmation. The Yogācāra Buddhists,¹⁴ the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas,¹⁵ and the Trika Śaivas¹⁶ all posit that a secondary knowledge is not necessary for knowledge to be cognized, even though their approaches to the establishment of self-aware consciousness greatly vary. The Advaita argument of establishing self-aware consciousness differs from other philosophical schools accepting similar concepts, primarily in Advaitins' acceptance of witnessing consciousness (*sākṣicaitanya*) as the true nature of consciousness, discrediting mental modifications as the *svaparakāśa* consciousness in reality. When the Advaitins propound the self-luminosity of consciousness, they are not exactly proposing that the mental imprints of external objects are aware in themselves. Neither does this position confirm that the triad of subject, object, and cognition is revealed in an act of cognition.

Both Advaita and Mahāyāna apply negative terms to interpret their respective understanding of the truth. However, not only the conclusion of negation, but also the very understanding of negation itself drastically differs in these two philosophies. From the Advaita perspective, the negation of *x* confirms a positive entity other than *x*.¹⁷ Centered on the instruction of Brahman, the Advaita method that confirms 'truth only' is regarded as the higher instruction, whereas the method that interprets 'appearance' (*pratibhāsa*) to be false does not refer to any degree of reality in whichever object is appearing. Instead, negation of appearance does not create a category other than what is the truth. The Ābhāsa method of instruction focuses on the rejection of whatever is phenomenal, and so can be compared to the Madhyamaka method of two truths (*saṃvṛti* and *paramārtha*), even though the Madhyamaka understanding of the absolute truth (*paramārtha*) differs from the Advaita understanding. Since *dr̥ṣṭi* is interpreted in the Advaitic context in both the absolute and phenomenal sense, the method of negation

can still apply even if *dr̥ṣṭi* means 'phenomenal appearance.' In other words, reality is confirmed with the negation of these instances of awareness, which essentially do not exist independent of self-awareness, free from modifications. Nonetheless, the main focus of the philosophy of Ābhāsa/DS has remained the confirmation of 'consciousness only.' Nothing other than the truth can be known, or is ever known. In this model, no negation is possible, since there exists nothing to be negated.

In the course of establishing 'seeing only,' Advaitins also refute the Dharmakīrtian doctrine of *sahopalambha* that identifies x and kx as the same. The Advaitin's main argument against this doctrine is that mutual appearance is possible only if an object and its cognition exist together. However, the existence of cognition and an object of cognition have not been established independent of each other. Therefore, there is no possibility of the mutual existence of cognition and its object. Consciousness in itself cannot be both consciousness and its object: neither at the same time, nor in succession, nor in part (*Iṣṭasiddhi* (IS) 16). Following this line of argumentation, the origination or destruction of awareness in the form of kx and ky is refuted. The thesis of momentariness cannot prove difference as immediately perceived, since kx in one moment does not exist in another moment. There is neither a cognition corresponding to two distinct moments with kx and ky as their objects, nor is there the perception of difference having each other as counterpositive. Vimuktātman rejects difference in consciousness itself, with the additional argument that a single entity cannot have multiple forms.¹⁸ Thus, seeing is free from modifications, difference, or even identity.

In the same way, one and the same consciousness cannot be both object and object-bearer at the same moment. The arguments against difference lead to the same conclusion, that there is no difference in the cognition of one object and the cognition of another. This results in 'awareness only' or 'seeing only,' since any difference in awareness cannot be proved. Nor is the object of cognition proved to be different from awareness. Furthermore, kx cannot validate ky . Difference in awareness is not likely, because even when difference is imposed, it depends upon an object of knowledge, and when the difference of kx from ky is to be accepted, difference in knowledge needs to be proved independent of the object of knowledge. This is not the case. Therefore, difference in cognition cannot be proved.

The refutation of 'identity' in cognition and its object does not contradict the Advaita doctrine of non-duality. The argumentation that establishes identity needs to prove that x and kx are identical. When Advaita rejects difference and identity, it results in the thesis that kx and ky have no independent existence. Therefore, the knowledge of Brahman does not lead to the cognition of identity.

The categorical rejection of 'difference' and 'identity' applies to the refutation of *bhedābheda*, the doctrine that there exists identity in difference. This thesis was promulgated by Bhartṛprapañca, whom Sureśvara heavily criticizes.¹⁹ Identity in difference, following the Advaitins, cannot be the

primary meaning of a sentence. When the existence of x is verbally confirmed, this gives rise to a negation of the existence of whatever is not x . The problem with identity-in-difference being the sentential meaning is that this cannot apply in sentences such as 'you are that,' which, according to the Advaitins, establishes only non-duality. If identity-in-difference is the sentential meaning in this context, difference will remain even after self-realization.

Neither difference nor identity can be confirmed in awareness and objects. If seeing and the entities of perception are distinct from the self-nature, then the self would be confined, contradicting non-duality. On the other hand, if the self is identical with seeing and what has been cognized, the self cannot be confirmed, because this (seeing) would be an object of perception, which is not self-proved. However, seeing in itself is not dependent upon another cognition for its confirmation. On the basis of this argumentation, the very self is confirmed as the nature of solitary seeing.

2 *Svaprakāśatā* (self-awareness)

Preliminary remarks

Broadly speaking, Indian philosophers demonstrate two trends when discussing the nature of consciousness. Those who identify consciousness as a property of the self develop a theory that a mode of consciousness is revealed by a second order of consciousness. The Nyāya philosophers and the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas belong to this category. They also accept that consciousness does not constitute its own conditions for it to occur (*utpatti*) or to be grasped (*jñapti*). The others, the Advaita Vedāntins, the Yogācāra Buddhists, the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas, and the Trika Śaivas, claim that consciousness is not dependent upon any other factor, including a second order of consciousness, for it to be revealed. Understood in many different ways, the self, in these philosophies, is not endowed with the property of consciousness, but rather, consciousness itself somehow assumes selfhood. For those who accept that consciousness is self-aware or self-reflexive, reality can be reduced to consciousness alone, whereas this is not the case for those who follow that consciousness requires another order of consciousness for its manifestation. Furthermore, those who adhere to the position that a mode of consciousness requires something other than itself for its manifestation also accept that there is the intentionality of the subject in knowing its modes of consciousness. For those accepting the self-aware nature of consciousness, instead of intentionality, it is the reflexive nature of consciousness that makes it immediately given to itself.¹

Further distinction can be made between the Advaitins and the Naiyāyikas, where the first school accepts pure consciousness as free from contents (*nirviṣayaka*), whereas the second school does not confirm it, saying that there is no means of knowledge that can be proposed in its defense. The application of the term, *nirvikalpaka*, in these two schools can be misleading: Advaitins follow an interpretation similar to the way Patañjali understands it, denoting consciousness free from mental modifications, whereas for the Naiyāyikas, *nirvikalpaka* refers to the first flash of cognition when the distinction in the triadic form of an entity, the universal that qualifies that entity,

and the inherence (*samavāya*) that relates the universal and the entity, is not grasped separately.

The distinction made between the two schools, wherein one accepts consciousness as self-reflexive (*svaparakāśa*) and the other adheres to a second order of consciousness and intentionality for manifesting the first order of consciousness, appears flimsy when we investigate closely the nature of consciousness accepted in these two rival positions. The term *jñāna*, as used in Nyāya, is cognition that corresponds to the externals. The application of the term *jñāna* is not consistent in the Advaita literature: sometimes it is synonymous to *prajñāna*, or to *caitanya* where it describes the absolute Brahman of the character of consciousness singular in nature, and at other times, it denotes mental modifications or concepts, with frequent use of the synonymous term *pratyaya* or *vṛtti*.

This brings us to an intriguing question, then, what is it that is meant by *svaparakāśatā* of awareness? In a general sense, as Ram-Prasad describes, luminosity is 'the manifestedness of consciousness to the conscious subject' or 'the rendering of an event as subjective.'² Following the Buddhist understanding of *svasaṃvedana*, Paul Williams describes self-awareness as 'consciousness aware in some sense of itself.'³ These understandings are crucial in order to facilitate the discussion on the issue of self-awareness as found in different streams of Advaita.

Advaitins interpret the term *svaparakāśatā* in multiple ways. Some accept that there exists a single cosmic consciousness identified as Brahman and the rest being its appearance, while others hold that what is immediately grasped in the mode of perception is awareness itself, singular in nature and identical to the self. The self-aware consciousness identical to Brahman, according to the Advaitins, undergoes manifoldness due to ignorance (*avidyā*). This singular and self-manifesting consciousness, following the Trika Śaivas, is divine and embodies powers for assuming manifoldness. Yogācāra Buddhists, in turn, adopt the position that there exists only momentary instances of consciousness, and the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas adhere to the position that when a mode of consciousness is revealed, there is simultaneous revelation of the subject, cognition, and its object. These differences can be pinpointed with proper insight into *svaparakāśatā* as understood in their distinctive traditions.

Advaitins generally agree upon the concept of witnessing (*sākṣin*) consciousness, which, without being involved in the events of perception, becomes aware of itself. However, when we investigate the nature of this witnessing consciousness, and particularly the nature of the modification of consciousness in terms of cognitive modes, Advaita positions vary. The fundamental differences among the Advaita doctrines of Ābhāsa, Pratibimba, and Avaccheda rely upon distinctions made between the nature of the cognitive modes and their relationship to pure consciousness. Śaṅkara, while explaining the Upaniṣadic passage, 'Brahman is awareness' (*prajñānam brahma* AiU 3.2.3), utilizes the example of the counter-image (*pratibimba*) of the sun appearing in different waters in order to describe manifoldness.

This *prajñāna* is subsequently explained by Vidyāraṇya as that by which perception occurs, or in simple terms, that by which one is capable of seeing, hearing, smelling, speaking, and tasting, is *prajñāna*.⁴ In these interpretations, Advaitins maintain the absolute nature of awareness, while dealing with its phenomenality.

Consciousness is *svaparakāśa*

The Advaita perspectives on *svaparakāśatā* warrant close examination, with internal differences emerging as early as Śaṅkara himself. The approaches of Maṇḍana-Vācaspati, Padmapāda-Prakāśātman and the thesis of Sureśvara-Vimuktātman-Śrīharṣa differ significantly when explaining the nature of consciousness. Furthermore, though conclusively non-dualistic, the propositions found in Yogavāsiṣṭha (YV) differ from the aforementioned models within scholastic Advaita. Interpretation of the *Upaniṣadic* passages is at the core of this diversity of understandings.

The *Upaniṣadic* passages, ‘the very self is its light’ (BĀU 4.3.6), or ‘here [in deep sleep], the self (*puruṣa*) becomes his own light’ (BĀU 4.3.9, 14), are the crucial citations that paved the way for Advaitins to accept awareness as self-aware (*svaparakāśa*). The term found in the passage, *svayaṃjyotis* (of its own light), in scholastic Advaita, appears as *svaparakāśa*. This passage alone is not sufficient for Advaitins to posit that consciousness is revealed by itself, because what is described here as ‘manifested by its own light’ is the self and not awareness. However, when this passage is read in light of other *Upaniṣadic* passages that identify the self with Brahman⁵ and describe Brahman as having the character of consciousness (*prajñāna*, *jñāna*),⁶ logic leads Advaitins to the doctrine of the self-aware or self-luminous nature of consciousness. Dovetailing with this description, the sequence where the self is described as manifested by its own light, is also described in terms of *viññānamaya* (comprised of awareness).⁷ Before entering into a broader discussion of how this ‘self-aware’ (*svaparakāśa*) nature is explained in scholastic Advaita, we must clarify that the *Upaniṣadic* support for the concept of awareness as *svaparakāśa* extends only to the awareness that is identical with the self. The Advaita doctrine cannot accept anything other than the self being confirmed on its own, to avoid the establishment of duality.

Since the Advaita doctrine of *svaparakāśatā* does not establish the self-confirmation of instances of cognition that are addressed as *vṛtti-caitanya*, these instances of cognition, following the Advaita stance, are actually not self-revealing, but instead, are revealed by the self that is identical to awareness. However, the argument that instances of awareness (*viññāna*) are ‘not self-revealing’ can be brought into crisis by adopting the Advaita position that accepts a single degree of reality, that all that exists or has been ever known is Brahman alone. Now the problem is, an Advaitin admitting that instances of cognition are self-revealing would also mean asserting that these instances of awareness are identical to the self. This stance, however, is not

acceptable to Advaitins. On the other hand, if the thesis of *svaprakāśatā* does not envelop all instances of cognition, the Advaita defense of *svaprakāśatā* shrinks to solitary self-awareness. Advaitins have defended the doctrine of self-luminosity using different strategies. The brief analysis presented here, based on select readings of the Advaita literature, demonstrates those approaches.

The understanding of the *svaprakāśatā* or self-aware nature of both knowledge (*pramā*) and the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) is deeply controversial in the history of Indian philosophy.⁸ On one hand, the nature of knowledge as self-aware is debatable; on the other hand, those accepting that knowledge is aware by itself do not explain their understanding in a consistent way. Even Advaita philosophy does not adopt a single definition of the term *svaprakāśatā*, such that multiple understandings are possible within the same school. The doctrine of Dṛṣṭiṣṭī, the most radical among the Advaita doctrines, holds that the singular self-manifesting and self-validating awareness is the only reality. This alone is considered as the true nature of the self, accepting that in all instances of cognition, the witnessing consciousness that is found everywhere is identified as the self.⁹ The following sequence of arguments leads to this conclusion:

- 1 Knowledge is *svaprakāśa*. In other words, the essential nature of knowledge does not require another category of knowledge in order to exist or to be experienced.
- 2 Except for consciousness, nothing else exists.
- 3 Difference is not perceived in reality because it is not *svaprakāśa*. The argument is that consciousness, while being cognized, does not manifest anything other than itself, as the objective world or mental construction is due to ignorance, and difference which is not known cannot be established.
- 4 Mental modifications are caused by ignorance and so are false.
- 5 This self-revealing awareness manifests these mental modifications (*vṛttis*), which are, in reality, only the appearance of objects conditioned by ignorance.

In order to understand the concept of the self-luminous or self-aware nature of consciousness as interpreted in Advaita, it is necessary to historically analyze some essential features of this concept as presented by eminent Advaita philosophers of the scholastic period such as Śaṅkara, Ānandabodha, Śrīharaṣa, and Citsukha. The position of the later Advaitins Prakāśānanda and Madhusūdana needs to be read in light of these proponents' doctrines.

Śaṅkara

As previously discussed, the concept wherein the self is revealed by its own light is an ancient one, found as early as the *Upaniṣads*. As the concept that

consciousness is *svaprakāśa* is found in the Yogācāra literature as well, the terminology of Śāṅkara describing consciousness, discussed below, can be shockingly similar to Yogācāra terminology. Advaitins also contend that consciousness simultaneously arises in the form of the knower (*pramātṛ*) and what is known (*prameya*), moving this concept even closer to the Yogācāra philosophy. However, according to the Advaitins, the self is the foundation whereupon these modes of knower and known arise, and when the term *viññapti* or even *viññaptimātra* are used, these describe non-dual self-awareness and not momentary consciousness as advocated by the Yogācārins.¹⁰

Śāṅkara posits that the term *bodha* (knowledge) refers to *pratyayas* (concepts). The self, according to Śāṅkara, perceives all *pratyayas*, which are, fundamentally 'only the essential power of consciousness' (*cicchaktisvarūpamātra*).¹¹ The self is essentially the light of never-collapsing consciousness (*nityāluptaviññānasvarūpajyotir ātmā*).¹² The light of consciousness within the self's nature is eternal.¹³ What is significant in this description is that the *pratyayas* or mental modifications are manifested by the self and are not described as self-revealing. This self-nature is the never-collapsing 'seeing' (*dṛṣṭi*).¹⁴

Śāṅkara's description of consciousness parallels the Yogācāra terminology. If not closely analyzed, the similarity can lead to an erroneous conclusion. Śāṅkara explains that the self is of the nature of *viññāna*. This is *svaprakāśa*. In his opinion, there is no *viññāna* second to the self.¹⁵ Other comparable terms that he has used include *viññapti*,¹⁶ *viññānadhātu* (BSūBh 1.3.19), *viśuddhaviññāna*,¹⁷ *viññaptimātra*,¹⁸ *prajñaptimātra*,¹⁹ and *viññānamātra*.²⁰ Arguably, Śāṅkara might be under the influence of Yogācāra literature in adopting these terms when describing consciousness. However, while reading Śāṅkara, these terms differ in meaning from those used in the Yogācāra literature: the *viññaptimātra* for an Advaitin is the non-dual self-manifesting awareness identical to the self, which is constant and free from modifications.

Śāṅkara applies the term *viññāna* inconsistently, sometimes using it, as in the above description, to refer to non-dual awareness, and at other times to describe mental modifications. He posits that momentary awareness (*viññāna*) appears within this very constant consciousness (*cit*).²¹ Following Śāṅkara, these instances are pervaded by the awareness of the self-nature.²² Clearly distinct from the position that there is no modification of consciousness, this stance thereby accepts the dichotomy between consciousness-in-itself and consciousness manifest in the form of concepts. This position, however, does not contradict the position that only non-dual awareness exists, as the Advaitins use ignorance to describe how the very awareness of the character of the self appears in these mental modifications. The self, according to Śāṅkara, is of the nature of 'consciousness only'.²³ This description is somehow different from the commonly found Advaita description of the self as *satcidānanda*, with the three terms describing the self as of the character of existence, consciousness, and bliss. If compared with the above description,

Śaṅkara sometimes describes the self as of the 'light' or 'power' of consciousness whereas at other times, as consciousness only.

Śaṅkara more or less consistently applies the term *pratyaya* (concept) or *vṛtti* (mental modification) when describing instances of consciousness which are manifested by the self that is of the nature of eternal awareness.²⁴ Furthermore, consciousness is described as of the nature of 'mind' (*citta*) and 'mental properties' (*caittya*).²⁵ This usage of *citta* and *caittya* resonates with the Yogācāra application of *citta* and *caitta*.²⁶

In summary, these passages confirm Śaṅkara's position, wherein he advocates consciousness-in-itself as self-manifest, and *pratyayas* (concepts) as 'appearance' and the products of ignorance. Śaṅkara and Vācaspati explicitly state that knowledge of an object is not *svaprakāśa*, since it is manifested by the witnessing consciousness (*sākṣin*).²⁷ This analysis of awareness essentially recognizes the nature of awareness as the non-dual self, and its appearance in the form of *pratyayas* that presuppose subjective consciousness, described in the Advaita literature as *pramāṇ* or cognizer. Essentially, Śaṅkara is arguing that the self-nature is unceasingly manifest, even when it is cognized in the form of momentary instances of mental modification. Nothing found in his writing contradicts with this 'self-nature' explained as the nature of awareness itself.

Ānandabodha

The inclusion of Ānandabodha's thought is crucial to this investigation, since he is one of the earliest figures to refute the plurality of *jīvas*, although his term for the empirical self is *kṣetrajñā*.²⁸ Following the lead developed by early Advaitins such as Vimuktātman, he also refutes 'difference' in objects of cognition (*jñeya*).²⁹ His position concerning the self-luminosity of consciousness needs to be understood in light of these two premises.

Ānandabodha defends the concept of *svaprakāśatā* with the argument that a person does not doubt his own cognition of whether or not he knows something after being aware of it.³⁰ The terminology used here, *viññāna*, does not exclusively refer to the witnessing self-awareness, but rather, includes instances of awareness, such as of blue or yellow. The very syllogism proposed by Ānandabodha suffices to confirm this: what is being rejected is doubt about an instance of awareness after the rise of that instance. When Ānandabodha rejects this doubt, he is not referring to the non-dual self-awareness. In addition to this, his rejection of one *viññāna* in order to cognize another *viññāna*, demonstrating the consequence of infinite regress,³¹ supports the argument that the awareness being addressed here is the common-sense awareness of blue or yellow instead of the absolute awareness.

Ānandabodha argues that if a sequence of cognition is necessary to give rise to a single concept, then, instead of awareness being self-aware, this process would delay cognition.³² This argument shows on one hand that 'awareness' is instantaneously known. On the other hand, it also demonstrates that

Ānandabodha is discussing the subject's cognition of objects when he is establishing the *svaprakāśatā* of awareness.

It is noteworthy that Ānandabodha, while defending the self-aware nature of consciousness, at one point describes awareness (*viññāna*) as *svasaṃvedana* (self-aware).³³ In the Advaita literature, using *prakāśa* to describe the nature of consciousness has resulted in some confusion, since the term *prakāśa* primarily signifies light. The application of *prakāśa* in Ānandabodha's writings clearly demonstrates that he does not use *prakāśa* as 'light,' as he argues that 'if something is unconscious, that should not illuminate' (*tac cej jaḍaṃ na prakāśeta* (NM. Mandalika 1901, 142:5). Explicitly, 'light' in the ordinary sense of illumination does not refer to something conscious.

Finally, Ānandabodha argues that instances of cognition, such as of blue or yellow, do not establish the momentary nature of consciousness, since the existence of the essential form of awareness cannot be rejected even in the absence of an awareness of blue or yellow. The moment when nothing is cognized, 'nothing' is cognized. In essence, the existence of the absence of awareness cannot be confirmed. What is remarkable is that Ānandabodha denotes 'cognition' or 'objective' awareness by the term *viññāna*, which he recognizes as self-aware. Furthermore, he does not see a contradiction in accepting this as self-aware, as for him, the very awareness appears either in the form of objects (while cognizing objects) or resides in its true nature (when no object is cognized). Although this position appears to be defending self-aware instances of awareness, this argument applies only on the phenomenal level. On the ultimate level, difference does not exist.

Śrīharṣa

A close analysis of the sequence of arguments utilized by Śrīharṣa in establishing the *svaprakāśatā* of awareness reveals that this description is a synthesis of the Yogācāra position.³⁴ As Śrīharṣa finds no problem in accepting this concept, he concludes his argument by saying that this is 'well-established' (*supratipadā*). He opens his discussion on *svaprakāśatā* with a reference to 'others' (*apare*). His concluding remark, 'adopted by you' (*tvadaṅgīkṛta*) also suggests that the description of self-awareness is not Śrīharṣa's own position, although he finds this position acceptable. Then a question arises, 'What is the position of Śrīharṣa?' The concluding remark,

svasaṃvedanabalād eva svataḥsiddharūpaṃ viññānam

(KhKh. Dvivedi 1990, 69:7)

awareness is of a self-confirmed nature on the strength that it is self-aware

demonstrates that he understands awareness to be self-confirmed (*svataḥsiddha*) rather than arguing for its self-luminous nature. Here, he is in agreement

with Ānandabodha in using *svasaṃvedana* (self-awareness) to describe the self-confirmation of awareness and *viññāna* (awareness) to describe consciousness. In this way, Śrīharṣa on one hand, accepts the formulation of awareness as self-manifest, while on the other hand, he differs from the position of accepting difference in cognitive modes by advocating this awareness as the non-dual self devoid of difference.

Although Śrīharṣa's treatment of *svaprakāśatā*, following his own statement, synthesizes the Yogācāra position, several of the arguments he has used can be found in the writings of his Advaitin predecessors. Śrīharṣa argues that if someone knows kx , he does not doubt or misunderstand kx .³⁵ This argument is earlier utilized by Ānandabodha. Another of Śrīharṣa's arguments, that if kx is revealed by another k , this leads to infinite regress, is also found in Ānandabodha's writing, as addressed above.³⁶

Śrīharṣa presents one argument to opponents who hold that, if knowledge is *svaprakāśa*, a relationship between action (*kriyā*) and the object of that action (*karma*) will not be possible. Śrīharṣa's reply is that it is not necessary that action be an effect of its object, because in the case of the knowledge of a future object, there would be no action, since there is no previous knowledge of that object.³⁷ This argument first appears in Śaṅkara's writings.³⁸

Śrīharṣa's arguments in defense of *svaprakāśatā* need to be read in light of these points in which he synthesizes and challenges the positions of his predecessors and contemporaries. In sum, the self-aware nature of consciousness acceptable to Śrīharṣa is the non-dual self which in essence has the character of awareness. Śrīharṣa does not utilize the argument found in Ānandabodha's NM that *viññāna* is constantly present both in the existence and absence of objects.

Some exchanges with the Naiyāyikas found in Śrīharṣa's writing defend instances of awareness as self-aware. The Naiyāyikas accept that a type of knowledge, specifically the knowledge of knowledge, knows itself independent of any other cognition. This $k(kx)$ is, in the Nyāya terminology, *anuvyavasāya*.³⁹ Countering this, Śrīharṣa urges the Naiyāyikas to explain yet another type of knowledge: the experience of pain and pleasure. The common reply that pain and pleasure exist independently of knowledge and are only objectified by knowledge, is weak, for outside of the context of the assumption of the existence of knowledge, pain and pleasure cannot be proved to exist.

The Naiyāyikas argue that, in accepting that knowledge manifests itself, there will be a *viṣayaviṣayībhāvavirodha*, or the contradiction of being both an object and perceiver of an object. However, this problem exists even in the Naiyāyika doctrine that incorporates the category of *anuvyavasāya*. The major difficulty Śrīharṣa finds in accepting k_1 is in knowing that k determines the relationship of $k(x)$ to $k_1\{k(x)\}$. To escape from such an inconsistency, Naiyāyikas argue that knowledge does not require a second category, because knowledge results in action. Nyāya realists do not accept the possibility of having knowledge without the agent of knowledge motivated by certain actions, as the knowledge of x leads to an effort to acquire or abandon x . According

to this, all activities presuppose knowledge. There is no purpose in knowing how the first knowledge is revealed and so forth. Śrīharṣa's rejoinder is straightforward: the issue is not whether there is the intention of knowing $k_1, k_2, \dots k_n$, but that, if knowledge in itself is not valid, then there is no other knowledge to validate such knowledge. It will be impossible even to prove the existence of $k(x)$ as such, since this cannot be self-proven, and there is then no reason to have $k_1 \dots k_n$.

Furthermore, there can be no doubt as to whether $k(x)$ exists or not, since this would be a second grade of knowledge, having knowledge itself as an object. In other words, to doubt the existence of $k(x)$ is $k(k(x))$, because 'doubt' is a type of knowledge. If there is no validity to the first level of knowledge, then as a consequence this very knowledge will be non-existent. If knowledge exists without being known, then the very premise that the establishment of an object is dependent on the means of knowledge (*pramāṇādhiṇā vastusiddhiḥ*) crumbles.

This leads to another type of argument: whether the object of knowledge is pervaded by the means of knowledge or not. If *jñeyatva* is a property common to all categories, then knowledge pervades the entities of knowledge, because to have something as 'an object of knowledge' (*prameya*) implies that there is something to be pervaded by a means of knowledge (*pramāṇavyāpta*). Śrīharṣa argues against this: if *prameya* is to be proved without the means of knowledge, that which does not exist will be proved as well.⁴⁰

Naiyāyikas have one strong argument, namely, that if knowledge is *svaprakāśa*, this should be the case in all cognition. Moreover, they assert, the subject of cognition should be constantly aware, not simply of knowing an object, but also of knowing the knowledge. The objection that would follow is that it is not commonly experienced that, when a person knows x , he also necessarily knows the knowledge of x . Śrīharṣa replies that even though a person may not be aware of kx at the moment of cognizing k , the desire with regard to x – such as acquiring or abandoning x which requires the knowledge of kx – is observed in another moment. If k was not revealed in the moment (m_1) of kx , then a person should not have either certainty, doubt, or desire with respect to x in m_2 .⁴¹ Basically the reflection, thought, and desire in m_2 concerning x , presupposes that the subject of kx is aware of his kx given in m_1 . Otherwise, desire of something does not exist as long as the subject does not have any idea about the object desired.

Śrīharṣa argues that the moment an object is revealed, knowledge of that object is revealed. But this does not require another knowledge to confirm the awareness of kx . If self-validation of this knowledge kx is not accepted, or if, in knowing that knowledge such as ' x exists,' inference or any other means of knowledge is applied, then the acceptance of this second category of knowledge leads to infinite regress. The straightforward solution is, while there is kx , the very k in kx reveals kx .

Śrīharṣa cites Dharmakīrti, pointing out the impossibility of knowing an object if cognition is not accepted as *svaprakāśa*.⁴² This common ground for

both Advaitins and those following Dharmakīrtian arguments, nevertheless, is the need to solve the problem with regard to the possibility of liberation while admitting that a cognition is revealed by itself. The problem is, if a series of instances of cognition run in the mind, a yogin never liberates, having no break in the chain of knowledge *ad infinitum*. Furthermore, if all $k_1 \dots k_n$ is accepted as revealed when $k(x)$ is established, this confirms that the series of instances of cognition requires a further means for cognition to be revealed. However, if knowledge is known by itself, by accepting the position that knowledge is *svaprakāśa*, subjective non-dualism is proved.

While criticizing the Mādhyamaka position that rejects the constant nature of awareness, Śrīharṣa advocates the constant nature of knowledge, using as an example the common experience that no one doubts, or argues against, their own experience. Even when one states 'I do not know,' knowledge is revealed. The conclusion drawn by implication (*arthāpatti*) is that knowledge is not an object of any other knowledge; rather it is known by itself, and thus does not have another means of knowledge to challenge its self-validation. Knowledge in itself is self-validated. This being the case, notions such as an object of knowledge (*meva*) or the means of knowledge (*māna*), are falsely imposed.

Śrīharṣa analyzes 'reality' from two possibilities:

- 1 Both x and kx exist only in ignorance and are sublated by knowledge;
- 2 There exists only *svaprakāśa* knowledge, with no second to be sublated.

The second position is from the perspective of 'reality.' Śrīharṣa further advocates that there is no relationship between action and an object.⁴³ In this statement, Śrīharṣa explicitly admits only a single degree of reality which is called *paramārthasat*. The implication is that something that does not exist in 'reality' appears to be existing only due to ignorance (*avidyāvidyamāna*). This statement can be interpreted in terms of 'appearance' and 'reality,' but cannot be used to categorize 'truth' in various degrees.

In sum, Śrīharṣa's defense of 'awareness' (*saṃvid*) does not exclude the objective awareness of everyday experience. Nonetheless, this *saṃvid* is both singular in nature and immediately perceived. Thus, Śrīharṣa's radical approach in confirming only the self as self-aware does not contradict with the position of Ānandabodha. Reading the subsequent Advaita philosopher Citsukha in light of these scholars further clarifies the Advaita position.

What is meant by *svaprakāśatā*?

Following the doctrine of *svaprakāśatā*, consciousness does not require another instance of consciousness in order to reveal itself. This concept of 'revealing on its own,' however, is understood in different ways by different schools of Indian philosophy. By the time of Citsukha, the possibility of

interpreting the term *svaprakāśatā* had become so varied that he gives eleven possible definitions, although he defends only the last one.

The position of Citsukha is significant with regard to understanding *svaprakāśatā*. Having examined the definitions of *svaprakāśatā* that were otherwise taken for granted, he explicitly categorized knowledge in terms of ‘knowledge to be pervaded by modifications’ (*ṛttivyāpya*) and ‘knowledge to be pervaded by the conclusive meaning’ (*phalavyāpya*), i.e., pervaded by absolute consciousness. He clearly advocated that modifications or concepts are not *svaprakāśa*. Śaṅkara has also addressed this distinction in his exegesis of the *Upaniṣads*. Nonetheless, in the context of philosophers explicating Ābhāsa, the issue of *svaprakāśatā* does not create a dichotomy, because a dichotomy requires difference and no difference is ever perceived.

Citsukha analyzes the following eleven definitions of *svaprakāśatā*, indicating that ten of the eleven definitions are not tenable even from the Advaita perspective. Nonetheless, he defends the eleventh:⁴⁴

- 1 Definition: *svaś cāsau prakāśaś ca*
Luminosity, which is itself its own nature.⁴⁵
Problem: The knowledge of the form of an object (*vedyajñāna*) will also be *svaprakāśa*.

Comments: If the word *svaprakāśatā* is a *karmadhāraya*-type of compound, the term then parses as *svaś cāsau prakāśaś ca*, or that which has ‘selfness’ (*svattva*) and ‘luminosity’ (*prakāśatā*). Citsukha’s objection to this definition is that even the knowledge of the form of object (*vedya jñāna*) will then be *svaprakāśa*. And, this position would equate with the Buddhist position of *svaṣaṃvedana*. But, since according to Advaita, awareness in itself does not correspond to the illusory instances of knowledge manifest by the witnessing self, this definition is not tenable.

- 2 Definition: *svasya svayam eva prakāśaḥ*
[Being] its own (*svasya*) light all by itself (*svayam eva*).⁴⁶
Problem: Knowledge is simultaneously both the subject and object, which is self-contradictory.

Comments: The exposition of ‘luminosity by and of itself’ (*svasya svayam eva prakāśa*) is *svaviśayatā-viśiṣṭa-prakāśatā*, or luminosity which is qualified as an object of itself. The problem with this definition is that there will be the contradiction of *karmakartṛbhāva*, which means that an agent will also be an object of the action of the very agent. For instance, in an act of eating, the subject A differs from the object of the act, a fruit, for instance, and A is not ‘eating’ himself.

- 3 Definition: *sajātīyaprakāśāprakāśyatva*
That which is not illumined by homogeneous light.

Problem: Neither a lamp nor a pot is manifest by homogeneous light, and so should be *svapra \acute{c} āsa*.

Comments: A pot is not illuminated by that light which is qualified by 'potness,' as there is no such light that is qualified by 'potness.' If *svapra \acute{c} āsatā* refers to that which is not illuminated by homogeneous light, even a pot should be *svapra \acute{c} āsa*.

4 Definition: *svasattāyāṃ pra \acute{c} āśavyatirekavirahitatvam*
The absence of exclusion from light contemporaneous to its existence.⁴⁷

Problem: This is wide, since it applies to pain and pleasure, which are manifest at the moment they are felt.

Comments: This definition can be mentioned in positive terms as '*svasattāyāṃ pra \acute{c} āśaniyatatā*' or the inextricability of illumination while in its existence. Even pain and pleasure are inextricably illuminated in their existence, and such an instance cannot be proved in which there is a pain or pleasure sensation that is not illuminated.

5 Definition: *svavyavahārahetupra \acute{c} āsatvam*
Luminosity that causes its conventional usage.

Problem: Too wide; it covers all entities of conventional usage.

Comments: This definition can be elaborated as *svavyavahārahetutāviśiṣṭapra \acute{c} āsatā*, or luminosity qualified by the property that qualifies the conventional use of itself. For example, even a lamp is a cause for its conventional use, and is also luminous. If the conventional use refers to knowledge, then even the prejudgemental knowledge (*anuvyavasāya*) will fall under this definition, because prejudgemental knowledge is the cause of the conventional use of judgemental knowledge (*vyavasāya*). Even though prejudgemental knowledge is a known object (*vedya*), it still is a cause for the use of conventional knowledge and has luminosity in that sense. Furthermore, in the conventional use of 'this is the knowledge of light,' the light is the cause and so follows this definition.

6 Definition: *jñānāviśayatvam*
That which is not an object of knowledge.

Problem: This is impossible, because there exists nothing in the world which is not an object of knowledge.

Comments: The only category that could be out of the domain of knowledge is Brahman, because Brahman is considered as that which cannot be objectified. However, this is not the case, because if it were so, there would be no possibility of reflection upon Brahman.

7 Definition: *jñānāviśayatve saty aparokṣatvam*

That which is immediately cognized, while not being an object of knowledge.

Problem: Impossible. Nothing exists which is not an object of knowledge.

Comments: This definition, in essence, is ‘*jñānāviśayatāviśiṣṭāparokṣatā*,’ or to be immediately cognized while being qualified as that which is not an object of knowledge. The aspect, ‘not an object of knowledge,’ is already refuted, since there exists nothing as such. If object-hood (*viśayatā*) is interpreted as ‘to be an action’ (*karmatva*), this will embrace even the definition of the self as proposed by the Prābhākaras, who accept that there is no *karmatva* of knowledge in the self; however, the self is the support of knowledge, and so knowledge is immediately cognized. But the self, for the Prābhākaras, is not of the nature of consciousness and so is not *svaprakāśa* either.

8 Definition: *vyavahāraśayatve saty jñānāviśayatvam*

That which is not an object of cognition while being an object of conventional usage.⁴⁸

Problem: Impossible. Nothing exists which is not known by knowledge.

Comments: The above definition, in its modified form, is:

vyavahāraśayatāviśiṣṭajñānāviśayatā

That which is not an object of cognition, while being qualified as an object of conventional usage.

This has the same aforementioned problems, whereby this is not applicable to the self in the state of liberation because the liberated self is not an object of conventional usage. Furthermore, there exists nothing which is not an object of knowledge.

9 Definition: *svapratibaddhavyavahāre sajātīyaparānapekṣatvam*

That which, in its confined conventional usage, is not dependent upon another homogeneous entity.

Problem: This definition is too wide, as it includes lamps, etc., since a lamp does not require another lamp for illuminating itself.

Comments: A lamp does not require another lamp in order to illuminate its objects.

10 Definition: *avedyatve saty aparokṣavyavahāraśayatvam*

That which is an object of immediate conventional use while not being an object of cognition.

Problem: If *svaprakāśa* cannot be known, there is no use thinking about it. This leads to the conclusion that the self cannot

be known. It also excludes the states of deep sleep and liberation.

Comments: There is a contradiction in the statements:

- a *Svaparakāśa* is not an object of knowledge (*avedya*);
- b The self is immediately cognized and still is not an object of knowledge (*avedya*).

- 11 Definition: *avedyatve saty aparokṣavyavahārayogyatvam*
 The fitness (*yogyatā*) to be an object of immediate conventional usage while not being an object of cognition.
- Problem: If this 'fitness' is a property of *svaparakāśa* that does not exist in the state of liberation, if it is the essential nature (*svarūpa*), then even the self will be an object of conventional usage.

Citsukha defends the last definition. He interprets 'fitness' as a property, though not constantly lasting in the self. While doing so, he is closely following Padmapāda, who maintains that bliss, experience, and eternity are properties of the self.⁴⁹ In his version, when liberated, the self cannot have properties such as knowing objects; nonetheless, these properties are not totally non-existent in the self since these exist in the stage of bondage.⁵⁰ Madhusūdana modifies this definition as *tadyogyatvātyantābhāvānadhikarāṇatva* (being not the substrate of an absence of the fitness of 'immediate conventional use' {*tat*}).⁵¹ Apparently, Madhusūdana recognizes the validity of the objection that the self in the state of liberation cannot be a substrate of qualifying properties.

This description demonstrates the complexity encountered in interpreting the term *svaparakāśatā*. The defense of the last definition clarifies that the concern for Advaitins such as Citsukha or Madhusūdana when interpreting this term remained the absolute nature of consciousness identical with the state of liberation where there is no object to be cognized. This also shows that the interpretations that could defend instances of cognition as self-aware do not hold weight with these classical scholars. The objective here appears to be to defend the self-aware nature of the self that is identified with pure awareness, free from difference.

Svaparakāśatā of knowledge implies validation of the self

The Advaita position is the establishment of 'consciousness only,' free from modifications, manifesting itself and validated by itself.⁵² The self is confirmed by itself, because it is the very awareness that confirms the existence or non-existence of everything. This Advaita stance challenges its opponents, primarily the dualists. Advaitic texts, however, adopt two different attitudes concerning *svaparakāśatā*: 1) the *svaparakāśatā* implies the

svaparakāśatā of knowledge, or 2) the *svaparakāśatā* implies the *svaparakāśatā* of the self. Jñānaghana,⁵³ Ānandapūrṇa,⁵⁴ and Madhusūdana⁵⁵ prefer the second model, whereas Vimuktātman,⁵⁶ Śrīharṣa,⁵⁷ Ānandabodha,⁵⁸ and Citsukha⁵⁹ prefer the first model. Śaṅkara and Sureśvara focus on the second model, while analyzing the aforementioned *Upaniṣadic* passage (BĀU 2.4.14).⁶⁰

All Advaita models accept that the self is confirmed by itself. When the argument addresses the premise that 1) consciousness is confirmed by itself, and 2) consciousness equals the self, this sequence of arguments tallies with Ābhāsa and DS. After establishing *svaparakāśatā* of consciousness, Citsukha argues, ‘this has explained even the *svaparakāśatā* of the self’ (*etenātmano ‘pi svaparakāśatvaṃ vyākhyātam* | TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 38:5).

One of the syllogisms Citsukha uses, referring to Prābhākaras, runs as follows:

ātma saṃvidrūpaḥ saṃvitkarmatām antareṇāparokṣatvāt saṃvedanavat |
(TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 39:1)

The self is of the nature of consciousness, because it is immediately experienced without being an object of any cognizing activity, like consciousness.

This is a modified version of Prakāśātman’s fifth argument to establish that the self is validated by itself.⁶¹

Exegetes have exploited the *Upaniṣadic* references to bolster their support of the self-validation of consciousness. A recurrent argument in the writings of Advaita philosophers holds that the self is the subject of all, and that whatever is considered to be other than the self is an ‘object’ to this self. Validating the subject objectifies the self, which is impossible.⁶²

The Advaita method of argumentation that is particularly favorable to DS rejects the possibility of the establishment of anything by means of knowledge. This stance can turn against Advaita itself, with regard to the existence of the self. Advaita therefore holds that the self is not proved by means of knowledge, but rather it is confirmed by itself. ‘Seeing’ or ‘awareness,’ which is proved to be *svaparakāśa*, is itself the self. The positions that 1) it is only the self that exists, 2) it does not depend upon any means of knowledge for its confirmation, and 3) the self is awareness itself, are the arguments that confirm the doctrine of ‘awareness only.’ Whether for confirmation or for negation, subjective awareness is required. Even if an agent confirms an absence of the self, that agent remains the very self under discussion. It is absurd to say that there exists no agent to confirm the non-existence of the self and to still maintain that the self does not exist. This argument embodies a fallacy called *vyāghāta* (contradiction).⁶³

Ānandapūrṇa points out the fallacy of infinite regress in the context in which the self is not confirmed by itself. The argument is the same with regard to the self-validation of consciousness. The refutation of another argument, that the self of one moment is confirmed by the self of another moment, also derives from the arguments concerning consciousness.⁶⁴

The Advaitic argument is that if there is no existence of the self, then this non-existence needs to be confirmed by knowledge. The problem is, how would the self know its very non-existence? It is contradictory to say that the self knows its non-existence at the moment of its existence. Furthermore, how could the self know something that does not exist? In the second case, [wherein the self knows its non-existence at the moment of its non-existence], the question arises: how could the self know something if that very self does not exist? If it is argued that the self knows the non-existence of the self in another moment, different from the moment of its existence, then this leads to the consequence that the self exists and is transitory. That which does not exist cannot come into existence except through delusion, and that which exists cannot be non-existent without the existence of a factor that causes delusion. This debate leads to the consequence wherein that which exists is unproven, while that which does not exist is proved.⁶⁵

The final argument raised in this sequence addresses the fact that the scope of the means of knowledge is neither to bring the entities into existence nor to prevent them from existing. Rather the means of knowledge merely confirms the existence of entities by bringing the entities into the realm of knowledge. 'Awareness' must remain outside such a model, because awareness cannot be an object of one of the modifications of awareness. The self, whose nature is constant awareness (*bhāna*), is not an object of any of the means of knowledge. Awareness is the presupposition for the functioning of the means of knowledge. Prakāśānanda presents an *Upaniṣadic* passage which demonstrates that the experience of whatever exists presupposes the existence of the experience itself: due to the existence of experience, all objective phenomena are known.⁶⁶

Vidyāraṇya derives his conclusion by utilizing Sureśvara's arguments that awareness itself is the self. Sureśvara's argument is that there is no absence of awareness of the form of an 'absence of *x* before it is originated,' or antecedent absence (*prāgabhāva*), because even that absence, if it were in existence, presupposes awareness of its validity.⁶⁷ Vidyāraṇya uses this argument to prove that knowledge itself is the self, since that which is eternal is the self, and awareness is always eternal. The reason is that the absence of awareness cannot be proved.⁶⁸

Thus even the arguments to disprove the self result in its affirmation. What is immediately perceived is 'awareness only,' and this is not momentary. The validation of momentariness presupposes an agent perceiving this momentariness, following the same logic as other arguments for the existence of the self.

Knowledge is independent of the object of knowledge

The Nyāya school strictly rejects the possibility of knowledge having no content. Similarly, the Yogācāra Buddhists hold that *viññāna* has an object, or more precisely, a cognition is the cognition of something. Dharmakīrti demonstrates the reciprocal relationship between cognition and the sense

organs.⁶⁹ However, the Advaita position is that knowledge in its nature is free from content or form, and that this formless/contentless knowledge is expressed in terms of *cinmātra*, *viññānamātra*, or *dr̥ṣṭimātra*. The doctrine of *sahopalambha* seems to have influenced even the Vedāntic doctrine of ‘consciousness only,’ or at least that doctrine which accepts the existence of entities as long they are experienced, the doctrine of ‘the existence of world simultaneous with experience’ (*pratītisamakālīnaṃ sattvaṃ jagataḥ*).⁷⁰ However, the first model of DS rejects such a possibility of simultaneity on the basis of the fact that to accept something contemporaneous implies the acceptance of two separate entities and if this were the case, ‘seeing only’ would not be established. Establishing *dr̥ṣṭimātra* requires the validity of formless and contentless knowledge.

‘Rejection of difference’ remains the main argument for rejecting the possibility of the existence of an object independent of knowledge. The Advaita position, however, differs from the Yogācāra perspective that identifies consciousness and its object, based on the thesis of *sahopalambha*. ‘Seeing only’ is established with the rejection of identity (*abheda*) in *x* and *kx* as well.⁷¹ This Advaita strategy of refuting the possibilities of difference (as defended by the Naiyāyikas), identity (as defended by the Buddhists advocating *sahopalambha*), and identity-in-difference (as defended by Bhartṛprapañca) leads to the conclusion that what actually exists is that immediately cognized awareness, which in reality is free from difference.

Prakāśānanda opens the discussion by presenting a *prima facie* view: knowledge is not known independent from its content. Therefore, *k* implies *kx*, and the establishment of *k* implies the establishment of *x*. The *probans* used is that the knowledge that appears is endowed with form. A moment of knowledge free from its content is never experienced. If objectless (*nirviṣayaka*) knowledge does exist, then it should have been experienced, but this is not the case. Furthermore, there cannot be another qualifier, except for its object, to differentiate one knowledge from another. It is the necessity of common experience that one experience distinguishes itself from another, and the differentiating factor is its object.

Prakāśānanda replies to this in negative terms, that it is not the case that knowledge free of content is unestablished. He questions, while rejecting *k* free from *x*, whether the origination of *k* is refuted or the existence of *k* as such is refuted. Is this a rejection of knowledge independent of an object, or a rejection of knowing (*k_i*) knowledge (*k*) in an absence of the content of that knowledge (*kx*)?

Prakāśānanda refutes each of these arguments, systematically addressing the issues of origination, existence, and knowledge of knowledge. He argues that knowledge in itself does not come into existence.⁷² The major difference between Advaita and many other schools is that, according to Advaita, awareness – in itself – is not originated. Prakāśānanda is aware of the opponent’s position that accepts the origination of knowledge, and, from this premise, he proceeds with his argument that knowledge can be derived from *pramāṇa*

(means of knowledge) and *pramāṇābhāsa* (appearance of knowledge) (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 51). This distinction between *pramāṇa* and *pramāṇābhāsa* was held even by Sureśvara.⁷³ It applies to correct knowledge and to the false appearance of knowledge. Following from this, knowledge in its true form is not false, but it appears false to ignorant persons.

The argument for establishing knowledge independent of objects is based on inferential knowledge, wherein the object known is not known by cognition born of sensory perception, when there is no external object to be directly perceived. The same argument applies even to the knowledge of past and future objects. There is knowledge of a past and future object, but there is no object outside of, or external to, knowledge.

Another thesis concerns the duration of knowledge independent of an object. The argument given is that the object is not the locus of knowledge. If objects were the locus of knowledge, then knowledge could not possibly exist independently of objects. The self is the locus of knowledge, not an object, even for the Naiyāyikas.

A further argument by the Naiyāyikas is that knowledge of the knowledge of an object cannot be derived separately from the knowledge of an object, and so one cannot establish knowledge devoid of an object. To the question whether knowledge reveals itself while knowing an object, or whether another knowledge is required to reveal the first knowledge, Advaitins reply that knowledge is *svaprakāśa* and so does not require another knowledge. Nyāya accepts *anuvyavasāya*, knowledge of the form of knowledge, which is a second degree of knowledge; this is unacceptable in the Advaita tradition.

A problem with the Advaita position that *svaprakāśa* knowledge is free from attributes such as *jñeyatva* or *prameyatva* is that whenever the meaning of a word is understood, it is known with the knowledge of its universal: i.e., a cow is known with the knowledge of 'cowness' that qualifies all cows. Furthermore, the type of awareness defended by the Advaitins has no qualifying universals. The Advaita position is that the self-validated knowledge is not proved by means of knowledge, and so it is not an object of knowledge as these qualifiers do not continue to exist in awareness itself.

Advaitins argue that the Nyāya position is also flawed from a perspective that concerns the omniscience pertaining to God. If God is considered omniscient, does the person who considers this also know the meaning of omniscience? If he knows what the term means, then he would be omniscient himself. As this is not the case, it would follow that one has to agree that some kinds of knowledge emerge from language, and others, from experience. The meanings of such terms as 'all-pervasive,' 'eternal,' and so on are understood in the same way. For instance, 'all-pervasive' is that which is not limited by space; 'eternal' means that which is not limited in time; *sanmātra* means 'that which is free from characteristics.' This being the case, all these terms signify some form of absence and so the imposition of characteristics does not add an attribute.

3 Ekajīva: the doctrine of solitary self-awareness

Introduction

The fundamental claim of Advaita Vedānta is that the individual self and Brahman are ultimately the same. The apparent difference between these at the phenomenal level is credited to *avidyā*, or ignorance, defined as that which conceals what is real and displays illusion in its place. The question then is, who is it that is really suffering if there is nothing other than Brahman? In other words, to whom does ignorance – the cause of suffering – belong? Is it the individual self or Brahman? If there is ultimately nothing other than Brahman, how can there be ignorance and the resulting process of transmigration?

Advaitins have multiple replies to this question. Generally, the various positions fall within two categories: the first follows the experience of the enlightened being whose perspective can be considered as ultimately real. The second follows the view of those who are deluded. The view that has gained prominence in reading Advaita is actually not the view the Advaitins consider as ultimate. But the problem is, can Advaita be studied following its ultimate position? In reality, Advaitins would argue that, just as there is no bondage, neither is there liberation. Bondage and liberation, along with instructions for liberation, are valid only within the phenomenal realm. The issue then, of who is suffering, makes sense only at the phenomenal level.

The discussion of bondage and liberation, therefore, needs to be understood as the relative position that Advaitins adopt. The discussion that makes sense only on the conventional ground, nevertheless, does not emerge through a single question. The persistent question that Advaitins have had to face, from the very beginning of the Advaita doctrine, concerns ignorance. Once ignorance, somehow indeterminable on its own, is taken for granted as that which plays a role in manifesting the world, the question is, what is the substrate of this ignorance? If the response is that this is the very Brahman, this position necessarily tallies with that cited by Maṇḍana, *brahmaiva saṃsarati brahmaiva mucyate*, (the very Brahman transmigrates, the very Brahman liberates).¹

This position is not acceptable to Maṇḍana. But before examining Maṇḍana's comments concerning this position, it is relevant to evaluate the prospects of this proposition. If it is the very Brahman that is suffering, assuming the form of *jīva* or the individual self, then it is essentially one. As the ignorance that has conditioned Brahman is one, the *jīva* cannot be many. The consequence of this position is the Ekajīva doctrine. The contrasting doctrine favored by Maṇḍana and Vācaspati, along with several other Advaitins, would be the position of Nānājīva, or the doctrine that there is a plurality of individual selves.

Before entering into the specific issue of the singularity or plurality of *jīva*, it is essential to determine what exactly is meant by this term. If we examine the Advaita literature closely, we find numerous ways in which the category *jīva* is recognized. I have explained elsewhere that, in each of the Ābhāsa, Pratibimba, Avaccheda, or Dṛṣṭiṣṭi (DS) models of Advaita, *jīva* has been identified differently.² There are contrasting positions with regard to the understanding of *jīva*: *jīva* is the self conditioned by and identical with cognition; *jīva* is the consciousness reflected upon ignorance, which in turn is conditioned by the inner sense (*antaḥ-karaṇa*); it is the consciousness reflected upon cognition; *jīva* is the consciousness limited by ignorance with consciousness remaining the locus of ignorance; *jīva* is the consciousness conditioned by ignorance which in itself is the material cause of the world. These various views cannot be reconciled within a single stream of Advaita. Among these varied understandings of *jīva*, the position that accepts *jīva* as the material cause of the world is attributed to the DS model which is also consistent with the EJ doctrine. A fundamental distinction can be made to categorize two varieties of *jīva* concepts. One essentially considers *jīva* as the consciousness conditioned by ignorance (*avidyā*). The other considers it as consciousness conditioned by inner sense (*antaḥ-karaṇa*), including mind (*manas*) with the aspects of determination (*saṅkalpa*) and imagination (*vikalpa*), cognition (*buddhi*), reflective mind (*citta*), and I-sense (*ahaṅkāra*). The doctrine of Ekajīva arises when adopting the first position. Since Brahman is one and ignorance is one, the single Brahman, conditioned by ignorance and assuming *jīva*hood, is therefore also one.

The position of Vimuktātman

The above description clarifies that when Maṇḍana advocates the plurality of *jīva* or when Vimuktātman posits that 'in liberation of one, there is just the liberation of one, as there exists not many,'³ the individual self that is under discussion is not the same. The problem of recognizing the liberation of the self, at this point, becomes hermeneutical rather than ontological. The issue is not whether an individual *jīva* is liberated but rather it is what is meant when the term *jīva* is used by different philosophers in the Advaita tradition.

The starting point for those advocating the plurality of *jīva* is that Brahman, eternally free, does not transmigrate and cannot be suffering

from ignorance. Therefore *jīva*-hood already exists from beginningless time. The fundamental problem that leads to the doctrine of EJ, on the other hand, is that the ignorance that manifests the plurality of *jīvas* cannot belong to the *jīva* that has itself been imagined by ignorance. There can be no liberation from this ignorance, for the unconscious cannot have the cognition that 'I am Brahman.'⁴ The heart of this argument is that the ignorance pertaining to *jīva* is not what constitutes plurality. Instead, the ignorance that causes suffering belongs to the one who is not a projection of ignorance. In essence, the diverse positions with regard to *jīva* derive from varying views of the locus and object of ignorance.

With this background, it is relevant to examine the development of the EJ concept. First, the instances to be examined do not utilize the term EJ, but nonetheless share the same arguments that are subsequently used by advocates of the EJ doctrine. Although the later exegetes exploit passages from the writings of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara in order to defend their position, the explicit reference that can confirm this model can be found in the writings of Sureśvara and subsequent philosophers. The example that is credited to Draviḍācārya,⁵ a story of a prince raised by a hunter who imagines himself as a hunter before discovering his princehood, is what allows Sureśvara to argue that the world is actually a projection of the transmigrating self. Sureśvara's argument is that although 'there can be several perceivers in perceiving an external object, it cannot be the case with regard to the self, as the self is not experienced by various subjects.'⁶ This example leads to the core of the EJ argument that a single *jīva* exists as the immediately experienced self-awareness. The awareness of the self, following this stream of argument, is always singular, as the subjective experience is never found in plurality. Other elements that align the EJ doctrine with the philosophy of Sureśvara are his assertions that the world is the product of an individual self,⁷ that the world dissolves in Brahman in the deep sleep state, and that all that exists in that state is Brahman alone.⁸

The problem, though, is that Sureśvara does not explicitly utilize the term *ekajīva* as such while explaining his concept concerning self-awareness. On this ground, it can be argued that Advaita exegetes from the classical period have proposed arguments that are later distilled in the EJ model. In light of these arguments, it is pertinent to examine Maṇḍana's criticism with regard to the position that considers Brahman itself transmigrates and is liberated.⁹

The problem that Maṇḍana identifies in adopting this position is that all individuals will be liberated in the liberation of one person.¹⁰ This argument is subsequently utilized by opponents of Advaita to refute the doctrine of EJ. The statement of Vimuktātman, 'the consequence of liberation of all in the liberation of one will be in your position; in my position, in turn, there is the liberation of one in liberation of one, as there is an absence of many,'¹¹ appears to be a direct response to Maṇḍana. Maṇḍana advocates the plurality of *jīvas*. This discussion points to the role of Vimuktātman in the subsequent development of the EJ doctrine.

Several components of Vimuktātman's argument have already been addressed above. The alternative to adopting Vimuktātman's position, that Brahman itself is bound and is liberated by means of knowledge, is to embrace the position that *jīvas* are imagined due to ignorance and that this ignorance belongs to the *jīvas*.¹² This position, proposed by Vimuktātman, is unmistakably that of Maṇḍana.¹³ Vimuktātman is quick to point out that, in adopting this position, there is a mutual reliance (*anyonyāśraya*), and ignorance belongs to the individual selves, which, in turn, are imagined due to ignorance.¹⁴ What is unacceptable to Vimuktātman is the position that the individual self (*jīva*) is essentially 'devoid of knowledge' (*jaḍa*) and is the product of imagination, such as the snake perceived in a rope. The problem is, how can something equal to a snake imagined in a rope be considered 'ignorant'? Explicitly, only the one who is conscious can become 'unconscious,' while one who is endowed with knowledge can have his knowledge veiled. The line found in Maṇḍana's writing that provokes Vimuktātman's criticism is that '*jīvas* do not have innate knowledge, but that ignorance is natural.'¹⁵ A further contradiction Vimuktātman identifies in accepting Maṇḍana's position is that the error (*bhrama*) constituting difference cannot be beginningless, whether it be the difference between *jīva* and Brahman, the difference among the *jīvas*, or that between cognizer and cognized. He argues that all that is an effect has a beginning, and since all errors are effects, they are not beginningless.¹⁶

An explicit reference to *ekaḥjīva*, found in Jñānottama's commentary on IS, appears when he explains the passage, *anekābhāvāt*, 'because there is an absence of many.'¹⁷ The arguments Jñānottama is making unmistakably lead to EJ. Jñānottama is either the one to coin the term '*ekaḥjīva*' or this term had been in use during the period between Vimuktātman and Jñānottama.

Other arguments found in texts criticizing EJ appear in IS and adopt the same critique: that in adopting this position, there will be liberation of all in one's liberation, there will be no distinction between liberated and bound, or between a master and his disciple.¹⁸ In response to these objections, Vimuktātman asks whether this distinction is sought in reality or in illusion. Here, Vimuktātman contends that distinction in the real sense is not acceptable to his opponent either. If his opponent holds that a plurality of *jīvas* is found only in the phenomenal realm (*vyavahāra*), then this would be the position of another Advaitin, arguably, Maṇḍana.

The arguments discussed above address the issues that concern the scope of ignorance, explaining bondage and liberation as the consequence of the relationship between ignorance and Brahman. Although accepting Brahman as the substrate of ignorance can result in the model of EJ, the resulting position does not directly arise from the doctrine that affirms the singularity of self-experience. Since *Iṣṭasiddhi* does not utilize the term EJ, the discussion above can be understood merely as a non-dual interpretation of the Brahman. The passage supporting the conclusion that Vimuktātman favors the singularity of self-experience can be found in the seventh chapter

of IS, using the terminology of *puruṣas*, a synonym of *puruṣa*. The use of the term *puruṣa* instead of *jīva* is consistent with the early Advaita position that has time and again been recognized as *Puruṣavāda*.¹⁹

Vimuktātman counters the argument that 'selfhood' (*svatva*) is unique to each body with a resulting plurality of *puruṣa*. He rejects the argument that one does not cognize, act, or experience pain and pleasure occurring in another's body,²⁰ which is the main argument found in the literature criticizing the singularity of *jīva*. He argues, 'this diversity of the self is not perceived.'²¹ What is perceived are bodies and not the self. The problem he points out in perception of the self being perceived is that if the self were perceived, that would be not-self and would be unconscious, like the body.²²

Unmistakably, the 'self' that has been accepted by Vimuktātman is the subjective experience. This awareness is immediately felt and is personal. The plurality of this self-awareness is not experienced. One can argue that, although the plurality of the self is not directly experienced, this can nonetheless be established on the ground of inference. Vimuktātman argues that the plurality of self-awareness cannot even be confirmed through inference. The scope of an inference is to confirm a *probandum* (*sādhya*) on the basis of a *probans* (*hetu*). For something to be accepted as a *probans* to confirm its *probandum*, there needs to have a confirmation of concomitance (*sāhacarya*). And, this depends upon the perception of the *probandum* at one point. In the case when fire is inferred from the perception of smoke, the concomitance (*sāhacarya*) of fire and smoke is already established. The scope of inference is the entity that can at one point be cognized directly and does not rely permanently upon inference for its existence. Even the argument that the experience of pain and pleasure found in other bodies cannot confirm the plurality of the self-experience, because in order to establish the plurality of subjective experience, the experience of pain and pleasure is utilized as a *probans*. In order to establish pain and pleasure in other bodies, the *probans* used is the existence of 'self' in other bodies. This mutual reliance (*anyonyāśraya*) is considered a fallacy in logical argumentation. Something cannot be confirmed by a faulty inference.²³

This position leads to the rejection of intersubjective experience. The common acceptance of other selves, for instance, as found in considering one as a master and the other as a student, cannot be denied on the ground that this cannot be perceived through the senses or cannot be inferred due to the lack of a perceived *probans*. Vimuktātman addresses this problem by saying that this common assumption is grounded on erroneous perception, like a dream prior to awakening.²⁴ The problem that has not been seriously considered by the opponents is the character of the self: the self is considered to have the nature of awareness only. This immediate awareness found in the form of 'self-experience' is not cognized in plurality.²⁵

Vimuktātman concludes his argumentation by citing Sureśvara's verse:

nehātmaṁ madanyo 'sti na matto 'jñāo 'sti kaścana |
ity ajānan vijānāti yas sa brahmavid uttamaḥ || . . . (NS 4.53)

No one other than myself is here to know the self, nor is anyone else ignorant. One who realizes this who has not been knowing, he is considered as the best among those who realize the Brahman.

This reference supports the argument that the position of Sureśvara comes closer to the concept of EJ. The commentarial tradition interpreting Sureśvara's texts eventually developed this stream of Advaita thought, although advocates of EJ may not have explicitly identified Sureśvara's writings when establishing the concept.

Vimuktātman counters the argument that instruction is not possible if there is only one self by asking, If individuals are different and unique to each other, how can one who has realized 'his' self-nature be able to explain the self-nature of the other?²⁶ If it is maintained that there is no essential difference in the character of the self, Vimuktātman argues, then why is the difference between the master and student accepted? To the response that it is the master who recognizes the essential non-difference and not the disciple, Vimuktātman counter-argues that if there is essential non-difference between the selves of the master and disciple and the master realizes this non-difference, this should also be realized by the disciple because they both are essentially identical.²⁷

Vimuktātman's position has addressed most of the nuances of EJ, highlighting both the defensive arguments and the arguments criticizing the position that considers the plurality of the individual self. Although most of these arguments appear to have been developed within the context of the classical Sāṅkhya–Advaita logical debate, they also can be found in the writings of one Advaitin refuting the position of another Advaitin, as this study has demonstrated that not all Advaitins accept the singularity of *jīva*. In the later classical period, the debate is not between Sāṅkhya and the Advaitins, but rather, between the Mādhva among other dualists and the Advaitins.

Defense of the doctrine of EJ appears in several other Advaita writings. These texts primarily gloss on the arguments addressed above. While Jñānaghana defends the concept of EJ, he does not defend it under the topic of *Ekaḥjīva*, but rather under *aikātmya* (oneness of the self).²⁸ Rāmānuja points out the consequences of following EJ.²⁹ This criticism is one of the earliest of the kind that appears in the Vaiṣṇava theological tradition. In the later era, the Mādhva Vaiṣṇavas are more vigorous in their criticism of the doctrine of EJ. We will address this while analyzing the position of Vyāsaśrītha and Madhusūdana.

The defense of EJ found in various Advaita texts has also led some opponents to assume that Advaitins commonly advocate this philosophy. On the contrary, Maṇḍana's model does not fit with EJ. This is the same case with Vācaspati, whose thinking is more in alignment with Maṇḍana than

with other contemporaneous Advaita philosophers. Ānandānubhava, while defending EJ (*Nyāyaratnadīpikā* 349–372), refutes the view that ignorance resides in *jīvas* (Ibid, 345), which is the view explicitly held by Maṇḍana and Vācaspati. Several Advaita philosophers regard EJ and the plurality of *jīvas* as equally valid aspects (*pakṣa*) of the Advaita doctrine. Citsukha, for instance, defends EJ (*Tattvapradīpikā* 581–587) while accepting the plurality of *jīvas* (Ibid, 590–598). This fluidity with regard to the singularity or plurality of *jīvas* has been addressed by later doxographers who nonetheless acknowledge this inconsistency as valid within Advaita. This synchronistic approach seems to be prevalent in Advaita after Ānandagiri and Vidyāraṇya. The same tendency is also explicit in Madhusūdana's writings.

Within the context of Advaita, the position of EJ emerges when the substratum of ignorance is accepted to be Brahman, instead of *jīvas*, the position that Maṇḍana rejects. Although the inherent issues in the Ābhāsa and Pratibimba schools evolved differently, the model of EJ can be traced in the writings of both Sureśvara and Padmapāda. It is nevertheless easy to trace the concept of DS, the concept that has been time and again identified with EJ, in the literature that aligns with the doctrine of Ābhāsa.

Vyāsaśrītha and Madhusūdana on EJ

Vyāsaśrītha's writings synthesize the criticism of EJ, including those found in the *Śatadūṣanī* of Vedāntadeśika, which demonstrates the problems inherent to this position. In defending the Advaita position, Madhusūdana read and closely criticized Vyāsaśrītha's *Nyāyāmṛta* (NA). Therefore by reading this text in light of Madhusūdana's *Advaitasiddhi* (AS), one encounters most of the arguments that emerged in the logical debate between the dualists and non-dualists concerning the issue of EJ.

Vyāsaśrītha points out that in accepting a single *jīva*, the world will not be experienced when the single *jīva* is asleep. His next argument is that in accepting the doctrine of a single *jīva* that tallies with DS, even impressions (*saṃskāra*) are illusory and not really there, and so that when the single self is asleep, there will not be the reawakening of this same self. The other argument found in this sequence – that the distinction between master and student and liberated and bound will not be possible – is the same one that Maṇḍana identified. Vyāsaśrītha further argues that none of the common experiences, such as 'I am bound,' 'I am in pain or experience pleasure,' or 'I slept,' can be confirmed following this position.³⁰

Madhusūdana, in the beginning of his response to these arguments, utilizes the term *draṣṭṛ* (perceiver) instead of the term *jīva*. The significance of this shift in terminology is that the two sides, the non-dualists and the dualists, are focusing upon two different aspects: the Advaitins are referring to the subjective awareness by using the term *jīva*, and consequently that no one has a pluralistic subjective awareness. This led Advaitins to adopt EJ. However, the *jīva* of the dualists is the ontological substance identified as unique to each person. Advaitins find it problematic to accept something

as the 'self' if it is not immediately experienced. Madhusūdana distinguishes two types of experience in which the self is identified: one, in the form of 'I,' which he considers as the experience that is endowed with *jīva*, and the next, in the form of 'this,' which is how the self in another body is identified. If the person indicated by 'this' does not embody self-experience and is not self-aware, then it is devoid of *jīva*.³¹

What is explicit is the way the Advaitins have recognized the self. To them, the self is immediately experienced and is experienced in the form of 'I,' not 'this.' If the self is experienced as 'this,' then that is not the self but merely an appearance or an illusion of the 'self.' Advaitins further argue that the self residing in other bodies is not experienced as 'I,' and the pleasure and pain in other bodies is not felt as 'I experience pain or pleasure.'³²

This defense of EJ on the basis of the singularity of subjective experience tallies with that found in Vimuktātman's IS as addressed above. What appears to be more systematically outlined in the later period, for instance in the writings of Madhusūdana, is the ontological aspect that concerns the existence of the self. In order to defend the arguments that the world would not be experienced when the single *jīva* is sleeping, he categorizes the self into two: one, the main self (*mukhya-jīva*), the collective self which does not sleep even when the individual selves sleep, and the appearance-of-the-self (*jīvābhāsa*) which is defined as the consciousness conditioned by the inner sense (*antaḥ-karaṇa*). This hierarchy also accepts two levels of creation, the creation of the collective self which is not cognized when the collective self sleeps and there is no awareness of the phenomenal world, and the projection of an individual self which does not continue when this individual self is sleeping and is not aware of his mental projection.³³

Vyāsātīrtha points out the contradiction inherent in the instructions for liberation. The very action of giving instruction confirms the existence of the other self. The position of the Advaitins that instruction is for an illusory self, according to Vyāsātīrtha, is similar to the spoken statement 'I am mute.'³⁴ Madhusūdana counters this argument with his categorization of the self: 1) the higher self that embodies all the individual subjective experiences such as Caitra, Maitra, and 2) the individual self identified as Caitra or Maitra. The approach to the question of the singularity of the subject shifts somewhat with the acceptance of the *jīva* endowed with the collective I-sense (*sarvābhimānin*).³⁵ These arguments demonstrate the rise of two different models of the EJ doctrine.

Vyāsātīrtha points out a further problem in asserting that Brahman assumes itself to be *jīva* – somewhat similar to the son of Kuntī imagining himself as the son of Rādhā.³⁶ This position contradicts the *Upaniṣadic* passages that confirm that Brahman is never bound. Madhusūdana counters this argument by explaining that this position does not accept that Brahman is bound, but rather, that it simply confirms bondage and liberation as mental constructions experienced while one is ignorant. The distinction between these two positions is that Vyāsātīrtha interprets the sentence to read 'Brahman is bound due to ignorance,' whereas Madhusūdana interprets it as 'it is ignorance to consider

Brahman as bound.’ As the water perceived in a mirage does not soak the naturally dry desert, Madhusūdana argues in the same way, the suffering perceived in Brahman due to ignorance does not make Brahman suffer.³⁷

Madhusūdana relies upon the model of EJ that accepts the singularity of the *jīva* in all bodies, accepting inner-sense (*antaḥ-karaṇa*) as the faculty that both provides the notion of the self in each body and the experience of pain and pleasure. Responding to the question, why not accept the liberation of each ‘self’ constituted by the inner-sense instead of accepting the position that bondage and liberation are of the single *jīva*, Madhusūdana replies that *jīva*hood is constituted due to the root-ignorance (*mūlāvidyā*) and the liberation is not that of the inner-sense but of the *jīva*.³⁸

The negotiated position of EJ, in which *jīva* refers to the collective rather than the individual self, also accepts the hierarchy of ignorance. With this position, the problem concerning the omniscient Lord (Īśvara) is somehow resolved, as this collective awareness is considered to be the Lord. Following the model that accepts immediately experienced self-awareness as the *jīva*, the concept of the Lord is merely a mental projection of this individual self. In both cases, Īśvara does not exist separate from the individual self.

The problem, however, in accepting this single ‘self’ in all bodies is that when Caitra has the awareness as ‘other’ corresponding to Maitra and has awareness as ‘self’ corresponding to himself, Maitra should not have self-awareness. This Maitra-awareness is found as ‘other’ and not as ‘self’ by Caitra, and there exists only a solitary self-awareness. In response to this argument raised by Vyāsatīrtha, Madhusūdana responds that the self (*pratyak*) and the other (*parāk*) are falsely imposed, relying upon the inner-sense unique to each person.³⁹

Vyāsatīrtha finds any instruction problematic when accepting the singularity of the self, for the additional reason that, when the single *jīva* imagines someone as the master endowed with knowledge, this *jīva* is already aware of the liberating knowledge that he imposes upon the imagined master, and so should be liberated prior to instruction. Madhusūdana responds to this argument by saying that when a master is imagined, he is imagined as a speaker of specific words and not as someone aware of reality. This response, however, cannot satisfy the objection being made, because a teacher is expected to have knowledge. Madhusūdana further replies that, although the teacher is imagined as knowledgeable, he is not imagined as someone with specific knowledge. When someone asks for instruction, he may expect the master to be knowledgeable, but he would not know the details of what particular knowledge the master has.⁴⁰

Although this reply may satisfy the perspective of the disciple who imagines himself as bound, strives for liberation, and seeks knowledge through a master who is merely a fiction of his own imagination, this supposition fails if analyzed from the perspective of the master. Why would the master who has obtained knowledge and has realized that there is no other self but

himself be instructing his own fictional character? Madhusūdāna's response does not come through the perspective of the master. He says that there can be no argument made about the Guru as he is imagined due to ignorance and is similar to a master seen in a dream.⁴¹

Vyāsātīrtha points out another problem that results from adopting the EJ doctrine, namely that there is only one self in this model who can be either bound or liberated. If liberated, then the instruction for liberation is meaningless, and if bound, then the instructions found in various texts, including the *Upaniṣads*, cannot describe reality, as these are composed by an ignorant self. Madhusūdāna says that, although the instructions are not based on someone's experience, they are nonetheless valid, as they explain something that cannot be sublated.⁴²

In accepting that there is a single *jīva* who is not yet liberated, the consequence is that there is no absence of a lineage of liberated beings. As liberation has never occurred, there is no point in believing that there can be liberation. Madhusūdāna argues that the occurrence of liberation is not what confirms the possibility of liberation. If only past occurrence predicts possibility, then nothing new can happen.⁴³ It is, in Madhusūdāna's opinion, the absence of the cause of liberation that results in not having liberation.

This discussion clarifies that the EJ position defended by Madhusūdāna confronts all the same issues that were addressed by Vimuktātman. The core of the arguments, for Madhusūdāna as well, lies in accepting Brahman itself as the substrate of ignorance, as this is the position that constitutes Brahman as *jīva* and thereby allows for the possibility of the rise of the EJ doctrine. Madhusūdāna's categorization of the self as individual and collective fits with the model of EJ that accepts Hiraṇyagarbha as the collective self. This position allows for the possibility of Advaita theology, with its acceptance of the collective awareness as God. In both cases, what has not been compromised is the illusory nature of God, as even that cosmic awareness experienced in the form of the collective self is a product of ignorance and is not a liberated perspective.

What is further confirmed is the connection of this line of argument with the doctrine of DS. When the existence of only that which is experienced is confirmed, and when the plurality of the self is denied, then the existence of phenomenal reality is recognized as based upon the experience of this singular self. This is how the singularity of the self culminates with the doctrine of DS. Congruent with this argument is the position of Prakāśānanda, who, although he is considered the founder of DS doctrine, does not mention DS but only utilizes the terminology of EJ.

Prakāśānanda's defense of EJ

Fewer additions to the EJ concept can be found in Prakāśānanda's text than in Vimuktātman's IS, the pioneering work that formulated the EJ-concept in a complete form. As IS is a text on Ābhāsa, it further bridges DS and

Ābhāsa doctrines. Even though the arguments leading to EJ also lead to DS, EJ appears historically much earlier than the texts explicitly dealing with epistemological issues within the Advaita doctrine that consequently lead to an alternative model of DS.

The first issue to be raised in this discussion concerns the locus of ignorance. The Bhāmatī-path accepts a plurality of *jīvas*, and the locus of ignorance, according to this model of Advaita, is not established in Brahman, but in *jīvas*. This position was not acceptable to Prakāśānanda, who denied any distinction between Brahman and *jīva*.⁴⁴ Brahman itself is the locus of ignorance. Since Brahman is one, *jīva* is just a manifestation of that very Absolute in the mode of ignorance.⁴⁵ Prakāśānanda introduces the doctrine of the singularity of the self as:

*ajñānasya jīvopādhivāt tasya ca ekatvāt tadupādhika ātmā jīvo bhavann
eka eva bhavatīti ekajīvavādinō vadanti* |⁴⁶

(VSM. Śāstri 1936, 16:3–5)

The advocates of the singularity of *jīva* claim that, since ignorance is the limiting adjunct to *jīva* and since ignorance {*tasya* = *ajñānasya*} is one, the self, having ignorance {*tat*} as the limiting adjunct, is just one when turning into *jīva*.

The above argument reveals that EJ was the most widely accepted doctrine in this later classical period. Using the example of reflection, a subsequent question is, ‘When many reflections of one single prototype are seen, why are not many *jīvas* asserted?’ The solution from the EJ perspective is that, when there are many limiting adjuncts (*upādhi*), even a single prototype has many reflections. But when both the prototype and limitor are one and the same, there cannot be many reflections.

Prakāśānanda addresses the same issues confronting EJ: how can there be both bondage and liberation? He accepts that no world would be experienced after liberation, since the issue of experiencing the world concerns the mind (*karana*), which is a product of ignorance. Since minds differ, due to the imposition of a different mind within each body, a difference in experience is due to the difference in minds. His defense thereby accepts the perception of difference as illusion.⁴⁷

The scriptures mention the liberation of Vāmadeva. An argument emerges: if there exists a single *jīva*, either no one has been liberated, or if anyone has, then the single *jīva* has already been liberated. This question counters those passages that mention the liberation of Vāmadeva. Vimuktātmkan does not find a contradiction in this passage, even when admitting that no plurality of *jīvas* exists.⁴⁸ The position that someone achieved liberation and the others remain bound would be possible only if there were a plurality of *jīvas*.⁴⁹ The experience of the plurality of *jīvas* in the world is the same as the experience of the plurality of *jīvas* in a dream. As only a single dreamer is real and all

the beings seen in his dream are imagined, in the same way, a single subject, upon awakening, is real. Logically, the remaining subjects are products of his imagination.⁵⁰

One's ignorance and its limitations cannot be experienced by another; therefore, there is no point in removing unexperienced ignorance along with its product.⁵¹ This very stance reveals that there is no question about removing another's bondage, which is never experienced by the liberated one. On the subjective level, since bondage is merely a false experience, if one experiences another's bondage, it is he himself who experiences that he is bound, not the one upon whom he projects the bondage. Now it could be asked, who is it who imagines bondage and the knowledge that provides release from ignorance, the master or the disciple? Prakāśānanda replies that everything is imagined only from the perspective of one who is ignorant. Both imagining oneself as bound and trying to become liberated, and thinking of oneself as liberated are only illusions accepted by one suffering from ignorance.

Remarkably, Prakāśānanda aligns this EJ concept with the yogic experience of *kāyavyūha*, in which a yogin, based on his *karma*, imagines many bodies with multiple experiences of different kinds of enjoyment and suffering. That there is only a single yogin as a single *jīva* projecting all this,⁵² suggests that the DSE model received inspiration from tenets of the Yoga school.

Thus, it is a single self that attains *jīva*-hood under the influence of ignorance. Due to residual karmic impressions, this single *jīva* obtains various bodies ranging from plants, insects, human beings, to the various deities. As long as he has affliction in any of his bodies, he is bound, and the moment he is free from affliction, he is liberated. This is explicit in Jīvaṭa's narratives, wherein a yogin experiences himself in a multitude of bodies, and when he realizes the truth, he knows that he was never in a body at all. Realization, thus, is the knowledge that the self was never bound and cannot be bound. The experience of oneself as bound is mere ignorance. In this realization, one experiences oneself as identical with Brahman. One experiences correct knowledge when the person is not in the state of ignorance. DSE describes the yogic experience as no longer being in the state of ignorance (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 25–26).

Even in the context of explaining erroneous perception, Prakāśānanda follows the same argument, where knowing someone's error as either true or false or even as experienced by others, cannot be determined by someone else.⁵³ Erroneous experience is subjective. When a person is in the state of illusion, another person cannot ascertain the individual's particular erroneous perception. This argument conclusively leads to the characterization of all types of experience as personal.

Parallels: *jīva* and *cittasantāna*

The Advaita defense of EJ and the issues faced by the Yogācāra Buddhists have several parallels. As the Buddhist terminology used in discussions is

explicitly about mind (*citta*), the Advaita term *jīva* needs further explanation before comparing these two concepts. Vasubandhu makes it clear that, for him, terms such as *citta*, *manas*, *viññapti*, and *viññāna* are essentially identical.⁵⁴ This information allows us to identify ‘mind’ (*manas*) with awareness (*viññapti*), although unlike the Advaita Vedāntins, the awareness accepted by the Buddhists is momentary. What is noteworthy in reading Advaita is that the term *jīva* refers to multiple concepts. However, none of these characterizations of *jīva* are similar to Nyāya/Mīmāṃsā thought which understands the individual self (*jīva*) as the substrate of knowledge not identical with awareness. According to Advaita, *jīva* is not the ontological substance endowed with the property of awareness. When the Advaitins defend the singularity of *jīva*, this should not be understood as a defense of some cosmic self other than what is immediately experienced as self. This interpretation of *jīva*, however, does not tally with the model of EJ that accepts Hiraṇyagarbha as the single *jīva*. Therefore, when comparing the concepts of EJ with the similar concept of *cittasantāna* found in the Yogācāra school, the model of EJ needs to be understood, not as accepting Hiraṇyagarbha or the cosmic self, but interpreting *jīva* as immediately experienced self-awareness.

There are some passages found in Vasubandhu’s writings that can lead to an understanding that there exists only a single mind. The intention of this study is not to determine the original contention of Vasubandhu, as scholars have long debated over it. The only claim being made here is that certain passages from Vasubandhu’s writings can be interpreted as defending the singularity of mind. Particularly, when all that is cognized is ‘mind-only,’ the difference, if cognized, between the mind of oneself and the other, is nothing other than mind itself. The following stanzas, if read in this light, can support the argument for the singularity of mind:

paracittavidāṃ jñānam ayathārthaṃ kathaṃ yathā |
svacittajñānaṃ ajñānād yathā buddhasya gocaraḥ ||
 (VMSV 2)

The knowledge of those cognizing other minds does not [correspond to] the object as it is. Why? [It is] like knowing one’s own mind. [This is] due to ignorance. [This is], for instance, within the domain of the knowledge of the realized one.

yadā tv ālaṃbanaṃ jñānaṃ naivopalabhate tadā |
sthito vijñānamātratre grāhyābhāve tadagrahāt ||
 (VMST 28)⁵⁵

When knowledge does not find a support then it is situated in the essence (*-tva*) of awareness only, because in the absence of the object of knowledge even that [i.e., the subject] is not cognized.

The approach here is not to establish that Vasubandhu propounds the singularity of mind, but rather to read Dharmakīrti, Ratnakīrti, and Jñānaśrīmitra in their historical contexts. It is known that Dharmakīrti defends the existence of other streams of mind in his *Santānāntarasiddhi* (SAS) while Ratnakīrti refutes the arguments of Dharmakīrti in his *Santānāntaradūṣaṇa* (SAD). Jñānaśrīmitra's *Sākārasiddhiśāstra*, for instance, supports the arguments of Ratnakīrti. What is noteworthy is that these texts follow the Yogācāra school of thought. Clearly, classical Buddhist philosophers have recognized and interpreted Yogācāra in different ways. The pertinent distinction being addressed here is the singularity or plurality of mind, both of which have remained valid approaches in Yogācāra Buddhism. And, all three of these philosophers have unmistakably been influenced by Vasubandhu.

In order to distinguish the two different ways of understanding the *pariṇāma* (transformation) of consciousness, it is important to explore some aspects from Xuan-zang's interpretation of Vasubandhu's writings. According to Xuan-zang, the notion of the externality of an object is falsely produced.⁵⁶ This denial of externality can also be extended to other streams of mind. This position, however, is not acceptable to Xuan-zang. Therefore he responds: 'if there were only a single consciousness how could the ten directions, sages and ordinary folk, causes and effects, and so on, be distinguished? Who would look for [the teachings] and who would espouse them? What [would differentiate] the Dharma from its seeker?'⁵⁷

The arguments pointed out here in defense of other streams of mind (*cittasantāna*) parallel those raised against the doctrine of EJ, particularly the examples of cause and effect and that of the instructor and student. These arguments against the possibility of a single mind demonstrate that, although Xuan-zang does not agree with this understanding, he was aware of such a possibility. The problem, then, is how to establish the existence of other minds? In response to this question, Xuan-zang posits:

Who says that the other's consciousness is not a perceptual-object for one's own consciousness? We only refuse to say that it is an 'immediate *ālambana*.'⁵⁸

This understanding supports two schema of perception. One is immediate, such as that of one's own body, while the other is an indirect perception where something is perceived as distinct but not separated from consciousness. For Xuan-zang, perception of another mind is similar to the perception of blue, for instance, which, although not separate from the mind, nonetheless exists independently.⁵⁹ This defense of other streams of mind displays the understanding of the position of Vasubandhu as understood by Xuan-zang. Having the parallel between form and the other mind, and the categorization of perception, placing the perception of other minds in a different category, remains open for further argumentation. This problem is solved by Dharmakīrti in a different way.

Inami presents the syllogism Dharmakīrti used to establish the existence of other minds as follows:

Observing that the appearance of our bodily and verbal actions is preceded by our minds, we infer the existence of other minds from the appearance of other persons' bodily and verbal actions.⁶⁰

The application of inference distinguishes the approach of Dharmakīrti from that of Xuan-zang. By adopting inference to establish the existence of other minds, that inference cannot provide knowledge of a particular. Rather, the knowledge gained by inference of something is only acquired in generic or universal form. When fire is inferred by observing smoke, one cannot specify whether the fire is a kitchen fire or a sacrificial fire. In the same way, when 'other mind' is inferred on the basis of the appearance of intelligent action or speech, this inference can only establish the existence of other minds in general. So the mind in particular, along these lines, is never cognized.

Dharmakīrti posits that 'other mind' is not perceived even by a yogin. This is significant since Indian philosophy in general considers the perception of a yogin beyond the reach of ordinary perception. With regard to perceiving 'other mind,' Dharmakīrti contends that a yogin perceives similarity between his own mind and the mind of others; on the basis of this resemblance, the yogin acquires knowledge of 'other minds.'⁶¹

This application of inference has not addressed all the problems that have surfaced when establishing the existence of other minds. Following the Yogācāra doctrine, the universal (*sāmānya*) is determined to be unreal. In this way, Dharmakīrti adopts the Yogācāra position that 'other mind' can be inferred and that inference can provide only the knowledge of a universal and not of a particular. Additionally, this position has also left unanswered the argument of those following a single mind in which perception of other intelligent action is similar to perception in a dream. Furthermore, a question can also be raised on the basis of intelligent speech and action in the case of artificial intelligence. However, there is no invariable concomitance (*sādhacarya*) perceived between the intelligent action and speech with 'other mind,' when the existence of 'other mind' is established through inference. A fallacy also exists in assuming that when acts or speeches are perceived, they are perceived as 'intelligent' or 'non-intelligent,' because actions in themselves are not 'intelligent.' Rather, some actions or speeches are identified as intelligent.

Ratnakīrti, another scholar of Yogācāra Buddhism, comes to the conclusion that the other mind does not exist at all (*paracittam nāsty eva*).⁶² He finds the inference used to establish another mind, most likely as presented by Dharmakīrti,⁶³ to be unreliable. The problem lies in establishing intention (*icchā*). While characterizing other intelligent acts on the basis of another's intention, the intention, which has been used as a *probans* to

establish 'other mind,' has not been perceived. Although there is a concomitance between action and intention in one's own case, this does not establish intentionality in general as the cause behind acts that are considered to be intelligent.⁶⁴

Ratnakīrti, utilizing the argument of Jñānaśrīmitra, further argues that the distinction between one's own mind and other minds is not perceived when one's own mind is cognized.⁶⁵ This argument – that the limiting factor in distinguishing one's own mind from the other mind is not perceived by perceiving one's own mind – parallels the Advaita arguments that the difference between objects *x* and *y* is not cognized when cognizing the object *x*.

There is a problem in adopting 'difference' between one's own mind and other minds, while rejecting the difference between the cognition of an object and the object itself. Yogācārins, particularly those who adopt the doctrine of *citrādvaita*, argue that there is no difference between blue and the idea of blue. This is the same problem faced when some Advaitins advocate that there is no external reality other than Brahman itself and also advocate a plurality of the *jīvas*. The way to solve the problem of the acceptance of other minds in instruction at the conventional level (*saṃvṛti*) also fits with the arguments that advocates of the EJ doctrine give. The teachings or the common acceptance of other minds occurs on the *pratibhāsa* level, which does not correspond to reality.

A problem yet to be addressed involves the similarities between EJ thought in both Advaita Vedānta and Yogācāra Buddhism as well as western solipsism. Interestingly, some arguments found in contemporary writings on Yogācārins or the Advaita Vedāntins reject the doctrine of 'other minds' in order to distinguish Advaita Vedānta or Yogācāra Buddhism from Western solipsism. I argue, these instructions are presented at the *upāyic* level and are supposed to allow the aspirant/reader to develop this vision in order to achieve liberation/enlightenment. Consequently, realization is expected to liberate one from the ignorance, attachment, and suffering caused due to not knowing reality. If, in a yogic state, one experiences the state of consciousness that is free from mental construction, the dilemma of whether or not there is another mind becomes irrelevant. On this ground, the establishment of one's own mind or the rejection of other minds needs to be studied in its own *upāyic* context.

This approach becomes even more relevant when Ratnakīrti concludes that his rejection of other minds should not be read as an establishment of one's own mind. As emptiness (*śūnyatā*) is the ultimate reality advocated by the Buddhists, Ratnakīrti's rejection of other minds cannot be read outside of the meta-principle of the doctrine of emptiness. The approach of the Advaita Vedāntins differs from that of the Yogācāra Buddhists in the sense that the rejection of other *jīvas* by the former is merely meant to establish the singularity of the self identical to Brahman.

4 Existence and awareness

In the beginning, dear, this world {*idam*} was just Being (*sat*), one only, without a second.

(ChU 6.2.1)¹

Degrees of reality

Advaitins hold that there exists only Brahman, of the character of being, awareness, and bliss. The literature now known as Advaita embodies the early *Upaniṣads* with their ample citation of monistic thought,² the Advaita of Gauḍapāda and Śeṣa with the unmistakable influence of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra Buddhism that describes Brahman as the absolute reality and compares the world with dream,³ and the scholastic Advaita after Śaṅkara that sets out the paradigm of threefold reality, with empirical and illusory bearing separate degrees of reality. Parallels to the concept of three degrees of reality can be found in Vasubandhu's analysis of three natures.⁴ Although Advaitins have various exegetical approaches in describing what exists, they all agree in conclusion that it is only the self of the nature of awareness-itself that exists. A question arises, does that make the world utterly non-existent like the horns of a rabbit, or illusory like a mirage? Or can there be any other interpretation concerning empirical experience following Advaita Vedānta? The treatment here addresses one specific model of Advaita, in which there exists only what has been cognized, or in other words, existence and awareness of it bear invariable concomitance.

Advaitins such as Maṇḍana propose that Brahman is the highest universal, *mahā-sāmānya*, that permeates all other universals.⁵ As the term *sat* has been used since the *Upaniṣadic* times to describe the highest reality, Maṇḍana's exposition makes it clear that for Advaitins, existence, shared by all entities, is the very nature of Brahman. Covering the wide range of Advaita positions concerning reality, Hacker analyzes 'the hierarchy of being' in three categories: the first consists of *sat* and *asat* or *satya* and *asatya*; the second consists of *sat*, *asat*, and *sadasad* or *anirvacanīya*; and the third

series includes the categories of the second with the addition of a fifth type (*pañcamaparakāra*). In this, the elimination of ignorance is considered out of the fourfold realms of being, non-being, being and non-being, and neither being nor non-being. This position is attributed to Vimuktātman.⁶ Once again, the influence of the Buddhist interpretation of reality is unmistakable, in this case of the fifth category out of the fourfold realms of possibility, the influence of Nāgārjuna.⁷

Advaitins as early as Draviḍācārya have used the term *paramārtha* to describe the absolute truth.⁸ This term, along with the terms to describe illusory appearance such as *pratibhāsa* or *ābhāsa*, is frequently found in Śeṣa's *Paramārthasāra*. Application of *vyavahāra* (conventional) as a separate category for analyzing truth became common after Śaṅkara's application of *loka-vyavahāra*.⁹ The categorization of what exists found in Advaita exegesis is also connected to the analysis of *sattā* found in Mīmāṃsā schools. Prābhākara consider that, even in erroneous perception, what exactly is perceived is real: the erroneous cognition results from the collision of two real instances of awareness. In this discussion, the experience of *sat* in erroneous cognition is identical to the valid cognition of something else.¹⁰ The concept that *sat* is perceived in both valid and erroneous cognitions is congruent with Maṇḍana's understanding that perception grasps only 'existence.'

The Advaita position of 'awareness only' unfolds in two different forms: appearing early is the monism of Brahman that leads to non-dual consciousness as a singular reality, whereas subsequent scholastic Advaita develops a specific model of radical idealism, arguing that all that exists is what has been cognized. The arguments defending this later position are found primarily in the writings of Sureśvara and Vimuktātman, the authors following the Ābhāsa model of Advaita. Sureśvara argues that the modes of mind presuppose the existence of awareness, whereas external entities presuppose the existence of mental modes (NS 2.115). In order to confirm the existence of entities, it is assumed that they have to be cognized. The supposition, 'in an absence of awareness,' is a hypothesis that can never be proved, since there is no instance in which the absence of awareness is cognized or proved by means of knowledge. This stream of argument allows, on one hand, the defense of Ekajīva, in which there exists only one immediately cognized self, and on the other hand, the self-aware nature of consciousness, finally identifying the self with awareness-in-itself.

The argument is that consciousness permeates all modes of cognition, and entities cannot be perceived independent of mental modes. On this ground, the independent existence of entities cannot be confirmed.¹¹ This awareness, in terms of Śaṅkara and Vimuktātman, is 'experience itself' (*anubhava*), and so, even the 'means of knowledge' does not validate experience; rather, the validity of the means of knowledge presupposes experience (Comans 2000, 351). Sureśvara postulates that perception presupposes awareness, establishing awareness as self-confirming.

The Advaita perspectives on *sattā*

Advaitins argue that something that really exists cannot be an object of sublation. The water 'seen' in a mirage or snake experienced in a rope is sublated after the recognition of sand or rope. With this subsequent awareness, one does not experience that the snake and rope are both equally real, arguing that they have been experienced in two different modes of time. This is the same case with a dream: when one wakes up, the world experienced in the dream vanishes. Advaitins extend this argument and propound that the only experience that cannot be sublated is the knowledge of the self. The duality experienced in the world disappears with this knowledge, like darkness with the rise of the sun. Although Advaitins adhere to different positions concerning degrees of reality, the tendency to describe reality among them is the same: the analysis of existence relies on the nature of experience, taking for granted that existence out of the realm of awareness is utterly non-existent like the horns of a rabbit.

This Advaita position explicitly correlates existence (*sattā*) with awareness (*cittva*). This approach deviates from the classical Vaiśeṣika understanding of *sattā* as the highest universal shared commonly among the first three categories. Vyomaśiva of the school of classical Vaiśeṣika defines *astitva* as the status of affirmation, or that which is applicable for linguistic usage (*śābdavyavahārayogya*) (Halbfass 1992, 154). Advaitins, on the other hand, do not consider *astitva* and *sattā* as different denominators, where *sattā* describes Brahman. This difference in interpreting 'existence' results often in a conflict of ideas where for one, there exists an ontological entity even in the absence of our awareness, and for the other, what really exists is what is directly experienced and what can never be sublated by another mode of awareness.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika position is that *astitva* (beingness), *abhidheyatva* (nameability), and *jñeyatva* (knowability) are properties common to all categories. Instead of knowability, the Advaitins under discussion postulate that it is 'knownness' (*jñātatva*) that is shared by all entities. Sureśvara proclaims: 'there is no entity that is not known' (*na vastv ajñātam asti hi*).¹² His understanding of *sattā* is saturated with this view:

prakṛtyarthātirekeṇa pratyayārtho na gamyate |
sattety atra tataḥ svārthas taddhito 'tra bhavan bhavet ||
 (BĀUBhVā 4.3.1688)

The meaning of the suffix cannot be comprehended when excluding the meaning of the base. Therefore, here, in the term *sattā*, the meaning of the secondary derivative (*taddhita*) [such as the rope-snake or two moons] is merely *svārtha* [the meaning of the primary derivative], [which means] to continue to exist (*bhavan*).

However, not all Advaitins postulate that only what has been cognized exists. The differences can be broadly synthesized in two groups: one admits three

degrees of reality and interprets empirical and illusory as two separate categories, and the other interprets reality in two degrees, identifying the empirical with the illusory.

The Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika understanding is that existence (*sattā*) is a universal and beingness (*astitva*) is a property. Vyomaśiva elaborated upon three abstract properties, *astitva* and so on, thereby denying that these properties could be separate attributes or additional categories.¹³ However, the *astitva* of Vyomaśiva seems to be an object of verbal conversation: that which can be verbally communicated has a sort of being or existence (*astitva*) (Halbfass 1992, 154). Śrīdhara's explanation of *astitva* is 'that which belongs to a thing as its unique nature is its objectivity.'¹⁴ This interpretation deviates from establishing a linkage of the affinity of existence with knowability. Udayana's thesis closely relates knowledge to existence by defining *astitva* as 'being the object of affirmative awareness' (*vidhimukhapratyayaviṣayatva*). Whether understood in terms of knowability (*jñeyatva*) of the Nyāya–Vaiśeṣikas or 'knownness' (*jñātatva*) of the radical Advaita Vedāntins, what is shared by these philosophers is that existence is not out of the domain of awareness.

The later Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika position that all categories have objectivity (*astitva*), knowability (*jñeyatva*), and nameability (*abhidheyatva*) as the common denominators clearly differentiates *astitva* (objectivity) from *sattā* (existence).¹⁵ Here, one needs to keep in mind that, even though *astitva* and *sattā* are derived from the same root *√as*, *astitva* is regarded as the common denominator, whereas only three of the Vaiśeṣika categories – *dravya* (substance), *guṇa* (qualities), and *karma* (actions) – share the universal identified as *sattā*. Praśastapāda is one of the earliest philosophers to accept that these three denominators are common to all six categories, except for absence which is an additional category in subsequent Vaiśeṣika.¹⁶ Halbfass points out that Praśastapāda used *astitva* only once, without any concrete definition; commentators have acted upon this lack of specificity, giving rather different, and somewhat personal, interpretations of *astitva*.¹⁷

Some arguments concerning the existence of absence found in Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika thought frame the Advaita understanding of *avidyā*, to be discussed later. Absence (*abhāva*) is not within the domain of 'knowables' in Praśastapāda's ontology; however, subsequent Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika philosophers consider it to be knowable.¹⁸ The difference can be illustrated by pointing out Śrīdhara's position that there exists nothing knowable or speakable apart from the six positive categories,¹⁹ whereas Viśvanātha includes knowability within the denominators shared by all seven categories.²⁰ The Advaitins under consideration, however, extend the horizon of consciousness by proclaiming that nothing exists out of the domain of awareness.

Jñātaikasattā

Sureśvara's proclamation that 'there exists nothing that is not cognized' can be found in the later scholastic Advaita concept of *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi*, defined by

Madhusūdana as 'the existence of only what has been cognized' or 'the absence of the existence of what has not been cognized.'²¹ Sureśvara reaches this conclusion by negating two possibilities of non-existence as either the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) or the objects of knowledge (*prameya*).²² *Pramāṇa*, the means of knowledge, is supposed to bring something unknown with it into the domain of awareness. A means of knowledge, in turn, does not require another means of knowledge, following the doctrine that 'the means of knowledge is validated by itself' (*svataḥ-pramāṇatā*); *pramāṇa*, therefore, cannot be not known.²³ It is not logical, Sureśvara argues, to propose non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) as the means of knowledge to confirm non-being, because this will lead to infinite regress. Neither is it logical to say that absence as the means of knowledge confirms entities without itself being confirmed.²⁴ He argues, 'means of knowledge' is identified for its ability to remove what is (-*tva*) unknown (*ajñātatva*). If what is unknown becomes known by means of knowledge, then that which is unknown (*ajñātatā*) is not a result of *māna* (means of knowledge).²⁵

Sureśvara finds it problematic to establish the entities out of the domain of awareness. He argues, is an entity in the world definitely known, like an idea (*buddhi*) is definitely known?²⁶ The entities of experience are not self-confirmed, like ideas. One does not require another idea in order to confirm one, but the entities out in the world are not self-confirmed. He explains that just as a lamp is not illuminated by another lamp, so is awareness, but it is not the case with regard to the object of cognition.²⁷

The Advaita understanding of *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi* invokes the same concept, that existence of entities parallels awareness of them: *dr̥ṣṭisamakālasattva*. This inability to confirm the existence of entities in the absence of knowledge allowed Advaitins to develop the idea that existence and awareness are simultaneous. Those adhering to the position that there exists empirical reality out of the domain of knowledge are identified in later scholastic Advaita as followers of *sr̥ṣṭidr̥ṣṭi*, the doctrine that there exists creation out of the domain of knowledge and that independent creation gives rise to awareness. Because of these two opposing viewpoints, the exegesis of existence found in Advaita literature often varies.

If it is accepted that existence is simultaneous to awareness of it, what exactly is known are only ideas. This leads to the position that awareness gives rise to awareness, a tautology.²⁸ If another awareness is required for the rise of awareness, this leads to infinite regress. This leads to another supposition that entities of knowledge are self-confirmed. This supposition requires the definition of the entities of knowledge (*meva*).²⁹ Sureśvara addresses this problem: 'since it is incumbent upon the subject to have or not have a particular cognition, this falls under memory, and so is not a valid means of knowledge.'³⁰ The basis of the argument is that 'being known' or 'being unknown' are not conditions independent of the entities of cognition, but rather, these are contingent upon the subject of cognition. On this ground, Sureśvara points out that whether some entities are called 'known' or are

negated to be known, this identification is contingent upon knowing or not knowing the fact, and this factor of 'not knowing' resides in the knower.³¹

This Advaita position emerges in a stream of arguments that confirms the self-validation of both the self and the means of knowledge.³² Sureśvara argues on this ground that even the means of knowledge is validated by this very self-nature or consciousness.³³ Awareness is a presupposition of both knowledge and the absence of knowledge. Even the means of knowledge presupposes awareness. Sureśvara demonstrates that the triad of the entity to be known, that which is not-known, and having the means of knowledge to give rise to awareness, presupposes consciousness, which, conversely, does not presuppose any other entity for its confirmation. However, in an absence of awareness, there exists no possibility for validation of any constituent of the triad.³⁴ Essentially, the arguments for the self-confirmation of awareness are utilized in order to establish that the modes of awareness in the forms of 'being known,' knowing, and the knower do not exist out of the domain of awareness.

Mīmāṃsakas accept non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) as an independent means of knowledge by which the absence of something is cognized. Sureśvara rejects the possibility that this 'being not known' can be cognized by this means of knowledge while at the same time disallowing a direct perception of non-cognition, arguing that these both depend upon self-awareness.³⁵ In response to the question, 'how can this absence be accepted as located in consciousness?' Sureśvara presents two strata of knowledge, one knowing in the form of being (*bhāvarūpa*), and another, knowing in the form of absence. He posits, following these strata, that when an entity is known to exist, three elements come into awareness: the form of the entity known, the cognizer of that form, and the witness who is aware of the perceiver who is cognizing form. On the other hand, when absence is known, there is knowledge of the witnessing self (*sākṣin*) alone.³⁶

The Mīmāṃsā position is that the means of knowledge reveals what has not been already cognized. Awareness of already existing knowledge is classified under memory, and is not considered to be a part of the means of knowledge. Sureśvara rejects this definition of a means of knowledge, arguing that the moment an entity becomes a *probandum*, it becomes known as a *probandum*, since nobody endeavors to establish something that is absolutely non-existent.³⁷

The arguments that lead to 'the existence only of what is cognized' (*jñātaikasattva*) depend upon another maxim of the Advaitins, that sensory perception reveals only what is there and not the absence of something in some substrate. Naiyāyikas argue that, whatever entity is to be revealed by whichever sense-organ, both the universal that qualifies that entity and the absence of that entity are revealed by the same sense-organ.³⁸ Sureśvara states that even inference cannot confirm what does not exist, because if it were known, it will be 'knowable' (*meya*).³⁹ For those who accept absence as one of the categories to be known, it needs to be determined whether or not absence

is known as being qualified, since in all instances of cognition, there is at least one qualifier that is also known. For instance, the color of a pot is cognized when cognizing the pot. The problem in perceiving absence is, what is such a qualifier or a property that can be perceived in perceiving absence? If sense-organs are considered the qualifiers for perceiving absence, the consequence is that it can no longer be considered as absence. Inference, on the other hand, cannot confirm the absence of something non-existing.⁴⁰ Furthermore, if absence is considered as cognized without any qualifier, this leads to another consequence that even an absence of what is knowable (*meyābhāva*) will come to be known. This is the position of the Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika philosophers, that the property of being known (*meyatva*) belongs to all categories and that there exists nothing that is not an object of knowledge (*meya*). Therefore, there is no possibility of accepting entities such as an absence of what is knowable. Furthermore, if the absence of what exists has its own existence, then absence exists, and to acknowledge an existing absence is similar to accepting a rabbit-horn or a round-square. However, if the absence of *x* is considered to be *y*, then absence in itself is a positive entity. This position is acceptable to the Advaitins.

These arguments of Sureśvara demonstrate that he considers only awareness itself as what is confirmed. These are the same arguments that allow the later-scholastic Advaitins to introduce the concept of *jñātaikasattva*, an argument that is applied to defend the doctrine of *dṛṣṭisṛṣṭi*. The analysis of *sattā* found in Advaita literature, particularly in the texts propounding the doctrine of Ābhāsa, needs to be read in light of this discussion. Apparently, the early Vaiśeṣika position, in which absence is not considered as an independent category, can come closer to the arguments championed by Sureśvara. What exists, or what is known in reality, following this Advaita position, is awareness-in-itself, free from the apparent duality of subject and object.

Conventional truth (*vyāvahārikatva*)

Advaitins, however, do not adhere only to the position discussed above, that there exists only what has been cognized. One stream of Advaita attributes three degrees to reality, accepting ‘conventional’ as a separate category while analyzing what really exists. Following this perspective, the reality perceived in the empirical world is not dream-like, but rather, it consists of a higher degree of reality that is sublated only upon the rise of the knowledge of the absolute, Brahman. Adding this as a separate degree of truth emboldened Advaitins in logical confrontation with both the Nyāya school of classical Indian philosophy and with the dualistic school of Mādhva Vedāntins.

Madhusūdana proposes multiple meanings of this ‘conventional reality’ in his text, *Advaitaratnarakṣaṇa* (ARR). These definitions give a clear understanding of what exactly the Advaitins mean by *vyāvahāra*, which adds one additional category of reality to their exegesis. These definitions follow:

- 1 *anādhībhāvarūpājñānatadadhīnānyataratvam eva vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴¹
To be conventional is either beginningless substantial ignorance [or] to be dependent upon that.

It is not reasonable to say that this makes ‘conventional’ identical to unidentified, because this distinguishes it as ‘removable by the knowledge that gives rise to liberation.’⁴² As this definition covers all the entities of the empirical world and excludes Brahman, this definition is neither too wide nor too narrow.

- 2 *bhramamātraviṣayatvaṃ vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴³
To be conventional is to be an object of mere error.

It can be argued that there is a consequence in this definition by pointing out that Brahman is considered as the foundation for all that appears, in the sense that ‘existence’ is derived from the very Brahman in all experiences. This being the case, the term ‘conventional’ is limited to not only empirical experience, but also the experience of Brahman. The reply is that, although Brahman is considered to be the substrate of erroneous knowledge, it is not only the object of error, because Brahman is identified also as the object of the mental modification of the character of immediate awareness that arises by knowing the meaning of the sentences such as ‘you are that.’

- 3 *bādhitatvam eva vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴⁴
To be conventional is to be sublated.

This definition is identical to the definition of ‘falsity’ and also of ‘indeterminacy.’

- 4 *abādhyatvenāśakyāvasthānatvam eva vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴⁵
To be conventional is to be [an entity] that cannot be determined as something that cannot be sublated.

- 5 *alīkatvam eva vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴⁶
To be conventional is to be utterly non-existent (*alīka*).

The above three definitions in this sequence identify ‘conventional’ as an object of sublation. The fifth definition goes further, accepting this to be utterly non-existent, comparable to rabbit-horn. These definitions are introducing the same doctrine of two truths by replacing *pratibhāsa* with *vyavahāra*.

- 6 *amokṣātmakatvam eva vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴⁷
To be conventional is to be contrary to liberation.

This definition can be also acceptable to the Naiyāyikas, who define liberation as the destruction of suffering. The Advaita understanding concerning

liberation is different: it is not of the character of the ‘destruction’ of suffering, but rather, of the manifestation of natural bliss, the inherent nature of the self.

7 *mokṣopāyajiñānāviśayatvam eva vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴⁸

To be conventional is not to be an object of the knowledge [that is the] means of liberation.

The problem in this definition concerns the character of awareness that confirms the self as Brahman. If this awareness establishes ‘difference’ between the body and the self, there would be a consequence that even the knowledge of the self would fall under ‘conventional.’ This, however, is not acceptable to the Advaitins, who consider that bondage is due to ignorance of the identity of the self with Brahman, and removal of this ignorance gives rise to self-realization.

8 *muktenāvedyatvam eva vyāvahārikatvam* |⁴⁹

To be conventional is not to be an object of the awareness of a liberated one.

According to the Advaitins, this absence of the awareness of duality does not correspond to the lack of awareness. To support this, Madhusūdana cites the Upaniṣadic passage confirming that there is no cessation of the seeing pertinent to the seer.⁵⁰

Madhusūdana is aware that these definitions do not distinguish ‘illusory’ and ‘conventional,’ as explicitly demonstrated in the case of definitions 3–5. He proposes the following definition that separates ‘illusory’ from ‘conventional’:

*sati pramātari bādhyatvaṃ savikalpakajñānabādhyatvaṃ
mokṣasādhanaetarajñāna bādhyatvaṃ vā prāṭīkatvam avidyopādhikam |
pramātrā saha bādhyatvaṃ mokṣahetujñānamātrabādhyatvaṃ
māyopādhikam vyāvahārikam* |⁵¹

‘Illusory’ is having ignorance (*avidyā*) as its *upādhi* that can be sublated while the subject of cognition [is] existing, or that [which] can be sublated by the cognition endowed with *vikalpas* (*savikalpaka jñāna*), or that [which] can be sublated by the knowledge that is distinct from the means of liberation. ‘Conventional’ is having illusion (*māyā*) as its *upādhi* that is sublated simultaneous to [the sublation of] the subject of cognition, [or] that [which] is sublated only by the knowledge that gives rise to liberation.

It is explicit that the distinction made by Advaitins between ‘illusory’ and ‘conventional’ relies upon the distinction between *māyā* and *avidyā*. This distinction is made following the understanding that ignorance is pertinent to individual selves and illusory appearance is the construction of ignorance,

whereas illusion is considered as the cosmic force, attributed to the collective awareness identified as the Lord (Īśvara). This makes it easier to analyze the Advaita position that rejects conventional reality which is related to the exegesis of *avidyā*. We will discuss in the next chapter the particular understanding of *avidyā* that is congruent with the doctrine of ‘awareness only.’

Rejection of conventional truth

The above definitions of ‘conventional reality’ proposed by Madhusūdana demonstrate that subtle differences exist between what has been identified as ‘conventional’ and as ‘illusory.’ Madhusūdana states that the diverging interpretation of reality as having either two or three degrees of reality is a ‘conflict within the clan,’ indicating an eventual agreement on major issues.⁵² The Advaitins rejecting that ‘conventional’ maintains a separate degree of reality rely upon the arguments propounding the existence of only the entities that are cognized (*jñātaikasattā*). Prakāśānanda synthesizes the arguments adopting the doctrine that there exists only one truth and that there is no difference between conventional and illusory.⁵³ The discussion here is between two different streams of Advaita: one adopting three degrees of reality and the other rejecting it. Prakāśānanda argues: is duality real or unreal? The first option is not tenable because no Advaitin holds that position. The argument of the Advaitins holding that ‘conventional’ bears a separate degree of reality is that it is ‘indeterminable’ (*anirvacanīya*). Prakāśānanda argues: is this ‘indeterminability’ somewhere confirmed or not? If it is said to be unconfirmed, it cannot establish a separate degree of reality for the empirical world. If the argument is that it is confirmed in illusions such as rope-snake, then the reality of the empirical world is similar to that of a rope-snake. On this ground, he questions whether the reality of the empirical world is illusory, or does it exist outside of the domain of knowledge.⁵⁴

Against the rejection of conventional reality, or in accepting only *jñātaikasattva*, one can argue that one should lament the loss of something the moment they are not cognized, because then they do not exist. Prakāśānanda replies that there is no means of knowledge to sublimate (*bādhā*) the previous knowledge of something at that point, and in the absence of sublation, erroneous cognition is not removed.⁵⁵ Since the stream of awareness that something exists is not sublated by a contrary stream of awareness, there is no aforementioned consequence.

One can argue that, in adopting the concept of *jñātaikasattā*, recognition of something will not be possible. Following this concept, entities do not exist when they are not cognized. This being the case, there is no duration of an entity for the person in deep sleep. Therefore there would be no recognition upon awakening. Prakāśānanda responds to this question by comparing recognition to mass hallucination, where multiple people identify the object of their illusion to be the same.⁵⁶ It is not possible to be aware of someone

else's illusion, and to identify one's illusion with the other's. If conventional reality is established on the basis of the rise of sensory awareness, there is the consequence in a dream that, in the absence of sense-object contact, there is nonetheless awareness. There is also a consequence in illusion that even in sense-object contact, there is not an awareness of the object 'out there.' These arguments rely on the role of ignorance in describing both illusion and the conventional world. This discussion makes it necessary to investigate the nature and scope of *avidyā* in order to clarify the Advaita understanding of the self, and the nature of existence as interpreted by the Advaitins. The next chapter addresses the Advaita understanding of *avidyā*.

Part II

Anirvacanīya

5 *Avidyā*

Preliminary remarks

Avidyā, generally translated as ‘ignorance,’ one of the central categories in Hindu and Buddhist philosophical traditions, plays a vital role in describing bondage and liberation in Advaita. According to the Advaita position under discussion, it is due to ignorance that the world is perceived. It is this very cosmic or personal force that keeps one bound and suffering in the world. The question, ‘What is this *avidyā*?’ is more complicated to answer than it might appear. Contemporary studies have identified certain aspects of the Advaita position on *avidyā*. In order to confine this discussion to the central theme of *cīnmātra*, we must address these nuances before entering into the classical discussion defining the scope of *avidyā* that divides Advaita into multiple streams. Central to this discussion are the following issues:

- 1 The problematic translation of the term *avidyā*. The terms ‘ignorance’ or ‘nescience’ cover only aspects of this concept as understood by the various schools of classical Indian philosophy.¹
- 2 The term *avidyā* can be interpreted in various ways. If interpreted as a *tatpuruṣa*-type of compound, the negation ‘*a*’ confirms something other than *vidyā*, without simply rejecting *vidyā*. If interpreted as an *avyayībhāva*-type of compound, this term rejects the existence of *vidyā*.²
- 3 *Māyā* is the term preferred by Gauḍapāda to describe the cosmic principle that gives rise to [the notion of] duality. Both Śaṅkara and Maṇḍana favor *avidyā* over *māyā*.³ Although later scholastic Advaita often differentiates between *māyā* and *avidyā*, classical Advaitins, such as Śaṅkara, Maṇḍana, Sureśvara, and Padmapāda, do not follow this distinction.⁴
- 4 Vācaspati Miśra identifies two kinds of *avidyā*: *mūlāvidyā* (root-ignorance), and *tūlāvidyā* (derivative ignorance).⁵ The Vivaraṇa school interprets the peculiar powers (*viśiṣṭaśakti*) of ignorance that tie each and every individual separately, with *avidyā* remaining one. Vimuktātman, in contrast, posits that there are as many *avidyās* as there are *vidyās*. These instances

- demonstrate how Advaitins differ among themselves in their attempts to describe the nature and scope of *avidyā*.
- 5 Apparently, Śaṅkara and other early Advaitins did not propound *avidyā* as *bhāvarūpa* or something substantial.⁶ Śaṅkara explained *avidyā* as *adhyāsa* (superimposition).⁷ I will separately address the specific school of Advaita that does not adopt the pedagogical method of interpreting *avidyā* as *bhāvarūpa*.
 - 6 The early Advaita position, specifically that delineated by Śaṅkara with regard to the indeterminable or inexplicable nature of *avidyā*, appears as *tattvānyatvābhām anirvacanīya* (indeterminable in terms of ‘that’ or the ‘other’) and not as *sadasadbhyām anirvacanīya* (indeterminable in terms of existing and not existing).⁸
 - 7 Crucial to the rise of different Advaita models, Advaitins separate into different camps concerning the issue of the substrate and object of ignorance. Maṇḍana and Vācaspati agree on this issue, accepting *avidyā* as located in individual selves (*jīva*) and making Brahman its object (*viśaya*). Both Sureśvara and Padmapāda agree that Brahman itself is both the substrate and object of *avidyā*. Later in this chapter, I will separately address the specific arguments of Brahman itself as both substrate and object of *avidyā*.

The nature of *avidyā*

Avidyā is of the form of bhāva

One of the points listed above concerns whether *avidyā* is of the nature of being (*bhāvarūpa*). No matter what the response is to this issue, linguistic, ontological, epistemological, and soteriological concerns arise. The linguistic issue has been briefly addressed above, i.e., whether ‘negation’ found in the term *avidyā* is a *paryudāsa*-type of negation in which negation actually affirms something else instead of simply negating. This contrasts with a *prasajya*-type, where negation does not confirm something else but simply negates the existence of that which is being negated.

The ontological issue concerns the establishment of non-duality while accepting ignorance. *Avidyā* (ignorance) is an essential category used by the Advaitins to defend non-duality: although ultimately only Brahman exists, duality is perceived due to ignorance. In the absence of ignorance as a category, it is not possible to defend non-duality while grappling with common-sense experience. This ignorance, once accepted as a category, can be understood in different ways. It is the ontological entity through which Brahman assumes manifoldness; it is an epistemological category that allows duality to be perceived; it is the category that keeps one bound in the world, causing the individual to transmigrate and liberate. However, if *avidyā* exists, then duality exists, as this *avidyā* cannot be considered as identical to Brahman.

Advaitins generally agree that this *avidyā* is not like the Brahman that is *sat*, or that which essentially exists. However, it is not like the impossible ‘horn of a rabbit,’ or a ‘round-square.’ The animal known as a rabbit does not have a horn. A square cannot be round and that which is round is not called a ‘square.’ This is to say that it is not *asat*, absolutely non-existent. It is therefore considered as *anīrvacanīya*, that which can be neither identified as existing nor non-existing.

Later scholastic Advaita admits that *avidyā* is of the character of being (*bhāvarūpa*).⁹ This *bhāvarūpa* can be understood in two different ways:

- 1 *Avidyā*, in essence, is of the form of *bhāva*. This is a positive ontological or cosmological principle; and
- 2 The negation found in the term *avidyā* confirms its substrate, a positive entity. In other words, an absence of *x* is a relative term that presupposes the locus of *x* in space and time. This being the case, the absence of a pot on a floor is of the form of the floor itself. This substrate essentially shares being, or is of the form of *bhāva*, and so *avidyā* is of the form of *bhāva*.

The first understanding emerges from the didacticism of Advaita. If there is something that is called *avidyā* covering the essential nature of beings, then it makes sense to endeavor to remove it. Although the *Upaniṣads* allow for the possibility of interpreting *vidyā* and *avidyā* as two distinct and independent categories,¹⁰ it is the Buddhist sources that explicitly identify for us the substantial nature of ignorance. Matilal has pointed out that:

- 1 ‘The notion of *Avidyā* arises in the *Abhidharma-kośa* mainly in two different contexts. First, it is listed as one of the six principal *anuśayas* or *kleśas*, “defilements or taints.” Second, it is listed as the last member of the chain of conditions in the dependent origination theory.’ (Matilal 1985, 327).
- 2 *Avidyā* is synonymous with *moha* (confusion). *Avidyā* is the cause of all other defilements (*kleśa*) (Matilal 1985, 329).
- 3 Vasubandhu held the position that *avidyā* should be considered as a positive *dharma* (Matilal 1985, 330). In other words, it is not merely an absence of *vidyā*, but rather, it exists as a mental entity on its own.

The first explicit reference in the Brāhmaṇic tradition that parallels the above Buddhist Sautrāntika–Yogācāra position can be found in the *Yogasūtras* (YS 2.5), along with the elaboration on the commentaries of Vyāsa by Śaṅkara and others. The application of *avidyā* in YS appears as one of the *kleśas*, while remaining the primary defilement and causing the existence of other defilements. Arguably, the application of *avidyā* in Advaita as a cosmic principle and a major defilement comes from YS.¹¹

Another approach to explaining *avidyā* depends upon its linguistic analysis, which, in either case, (whether by confirming a positive substrate, or

by simply negating its being), does not establish *avidyā* as a separate category. The Advaita position that establishes singular self-awareness as the single reality does not depend upon the establishment of the phenomenal being of *avidyā*. There is also a pedagogical consequence to this position. The model of Ekajīva does not support meditative efforts as part of the process of self-realization. If *avidyā* never existed, there is no need to remove it. The self is eternally free, and due to ignorance, we do not realize this. Although some later classical Advaitins uncritically apply these terms and concepts, others such as Appayya and Madhusūdana do treat these conflicting nuances separately. In the following paragraphs, I will address two sides of *avidyā*: its non-substantial nature, and pure-consciousness as its substrate.

Whether in terms of ‘that’ or the ‘other,’ or in terms of existent or non-existent, *avidyā* is identified as indeterminable.¹² The consequence of either understanding is explicit: early Advaita does not consider the indeterminability of *avidyā* as having or not having *sattā*. The establishment of pure consciousness as a singular reality rests primarily upon the analysis of *avidyā* as a non-existent entity. This interpretation comes closer to the position of Gauḍapāda¹³ and Sureśvara,¹⁴ and also tallies with the position of *Yogavāsiṣṭha* (YV).¹⁵

This position reinforces the Advaita stance that only Brahman is real, with all else being false. Significant to this discussion is the very notion of ‘falsity’ as interpreted in different Advaita schools. Appayya, while giving a gloss on *Dṛṣṭisṛṣṭi*, points out that *avidyā*, along with the entities of mental construction, does not exist independently of the subject that imagines it.¹⁶ In making this argument, he demonstrates his knowledge of the other position advocating the beginninglessness (*anādi*-nature) of ignorance (SLS, Shastry 1989, 351–352).

Appayya explains that the ‘falsity of the world’ can be found in three different terms:

- 1 *jñānaikanivartyatvam*,¹⁷
of the character to be cancelled only by knowledge;
- 2 *sadasadvilakṣaṇatvam*,¹⁸
[that which is] distinct from both being existent and non-existent;
- 3 . . . *pratipannopādhigatatatraikālikaniṣedhapratīyogitvam*,¹⁹
to be the counterpositive of negation in all three modes of time in the locus in which it appears.

In addition to these three definitions, Madhusūdana has presented two further definitions of falsity,²⁰ one of which is ascribed to Citsukha and the other to Ānandabodha (Bhattacharya 1992, 141–174). This wide range of interpretations of falsity with multiple understandings of *avidyā* allows Advaita to emerge as a philosophy with clearly distinct approaches to interpreting appearance.

To ascertain whether or not congruence exists between the aforementioned Advaita position concerning *avidyā* and the DS/EJ doctrine that culminates in establishing pure-consciousness as a singular reality, it is necessary to highlight the position of later scholastic Advaitins such as Prakāśānanda and Madhusūdana concerning the nature of *avidyā*. Among three central aspects of the self – existence, awareness, and bliss – Prakāśānanda explains that the first two are partly revealed even in bondage, while the aspect of bliss is mostly concealed.²¹ Following the Advaitins, just as the two aspects of awareness and existence are inseparable from the self, so also is bliss. It is due to ignorance that we do not experience bliss as the nature of the self. On the basis that the awareness and being aspects of the self are found in all the states of the self, the self is never fully veiled by ignorance.²²

As listed above, one of the crucial issues dividing Advaitins concerns the ‘number’ of *avidyā*: Is there a single *avidyā* that is veiling reality, are there two *avidyās*, or are there many *avidyās*? Essentially, if pure consciousness or Brahman itself is the substrate as well as the scope of ignorance, there is just one *avidyā*. On the other hand, if *avidyā* is located in individual selves, there have to be as many *avidyās* as there are *jīvas*. The establishment of the doctrine of Ekajīva relies on the thesis that the very Brahman is the substrate as well as the scope of *avidyā*. Congruent with this position, Prakāśānanda advocates the singularity of ignorance, upholding the position of the singularity of the individual self (*ekajīva*).²³

How can fictitious *avidyā* construct the world?

Advaitins argue that that duality comes into being due to *avidyā*. However, not all Advaitins advocate ignorance as the material cause of the world. Following the position that considers the single degree of existence (*ekasattā*), neither the world nor its cause, ignorance, bear any degree of reality. Brahman alone exists as a singular reality. Along these lines, ignorance and its product, the phenomenal world, are both equated with error, dream, or magic. This doctrine of *ekasattā*, a single degree of reality, relies upon negating any degree of existence pertinent to ignorance. The early Advaita position is found in these citations:

- 1 *brahmaiva saṃsaratī brahmaiva mucyate*²⁴
the very Brahman transmigrates, the very Brahman liberates, and
- 2 *avidyopādānabhedavāda*²⁵
the doctrine [that advocates] ignorance as the material cause for duality.

Congruent with this *ekasattā* doctrine, the concept of the single degree of reality is also traceable in later scholastic Advaita with slight modifications:

- a . . . *jagato ’vidyāhetukatva* . . . (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 17)
The world is caused by ignorance.

- b *brahmātiriktaṃ kṛtsnaṃ kāryajātaṃ jñānaṃ jñeyarūpaṃ tat sarvaṃ āvidyakam eva* | (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 38)

The entire effect other than Brahman, [perceived as] knowledge in the form of cognizable objects, all is caused by ignorance alone.

Prakāśānanda cites the verse ‘*avidyāyonayo bhāvā*’ in this context, identifying ignorance as the origin of all entities (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 38). He stresses this idea by using the phrase, ‘of the world mentally constructed due to ignorance’ (*avidyākalpitasya jagataḥ*) (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 43).

One may misinterpret this Advaita position by saying that there indeed is a world that is caused by ignorance. ‘Ignorance is the cause of the world’ is the response to someone who takes duality for granted. If someone takes the world for granted and asks for its cause, the Advaitin merely responds that ‘it is your ignorance.’²⁶

In this discourse, erroneous perception is equated with the appearance of the world. Prakāśānanda, borrowing the terminology *avidyāyonayo bhāvāḥ*, states that erroneous perception is caused by ignorance alone (*bhramajñānasya avidyāmātrayonitva*).²⁷ In the above phrase, which links *avidyā* with *yonī* (origin), and entities (*bhāva*) with error (*bhrama*), Prakāśānanda concludes that there is only a single degree of reality.

Prakāśānanda also demonstrates that other problems ensue when one admits the principle of causation within this line of argumentation. Ignorance cannot be both cause and effect, because this leads to the fallacy of circularity (*ātmāśraya*). Brahman cannot be the cause of ignorance, because causality does not pertain to Brahman. If Brahman were the cause, then the consequence would be that no liberation would be possible. If the world has an independent existence without being caused by anything else, it will never cease to exist, being itself the eternal entity, like Brahman. The world cannot be postulated as an imagined entity without having its cause imagined.

The above description grounds the Advaita doctrine of *Ekaḥ* in the singularity of *avidyā*, aligning it with the later Advaita concept of DS. A comparison of Prakāśānanda’s VSM with Sureśvara’s writing demonstrates that this specific strand of Advaita emerges while adopting the Ābhāsa doctrine. For example:

- 1 *avidyā ca na vastv iṣṭam*

(BĀUBhVā 1.1.181)

Ignorance is not accepted as something existent.

svata eva tasya vastutvābhāvāt |

(VSM. Śāstri 1936, 125)

Because ignorance {*tasya* = *ajñānasya*} by itself is not existent.

- 2 . . . *avidyāyā avidyātvā idam eva tu lakṣaṇam |*
mānāghātāsahiṣṇutvam asādhāraṇam iṣyate ||
 (BĀUBhVā 1.1.181–82)

The unique characteristic that defines ignorance as ignorance is that it does not withstand the scrutiny of the means of valid knowledge.

alaṅkāro hy ayam asmākaṁ yad yuktipramāṇābhyāṁ durghaṭatvam |
 (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 125)

The non-establishment [of ignorance] by reason and means of valid knowledge is our ornament.

- 3 . . . *avidyaikaiva yujyate |*
 (BĀUBhVā 2.4.199)

A single ignorance fits [for reason].

. . . *ajñānam . . . ekam eveti vadāmaḥ*
 (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 14)

We say that ignorance is only one.

The problem, then, is how to explain the perceived duality? Advaitins following this stream of argumentation align more closely with the Ajāti doctrine of Gauḍapāda, that no origination exists. For the following specific reasons, this is not identical to Gauḍapādiyan illusionism: 1) this position emerges from the analysis of *avidyā* and not specifically of *māyā*; 2) this doctrine rests on Ekajīva and DS concepts, with no clear reference for these concepts found in Gauḍapāda's writings; 3) this position relies on *cinnmātra* or pure consciousness as the foundation of the perception of duality, whereas Gauḍapāda does not stress *cinnmātra*. The Advaitins being addressed here explain *avidyā* in terms of error, fantasy, or verbal construction that does not require something more substantial than the individual perceiving self to exist for duality to arise.

Error, fantasy, or verbal construction

Advaita exegetes have illustrated their thesis with multiple examples to demonstrate the falsity of the conventional world. Philosophers writing in Advaita indiscriminately use these examples, making it difficult to ascertain in what particular sense they are applied. For example, at the end of the arguments establishing 'seeing only' (*dṛṣṭmātra*), Vimuktātman selects examples that compare conventional activities in the world to illusion, mirage, *fata morgana* (*gandharvanagara*), two moons, and the delusion of direction, as in the context of someone riding a boat.²⁸ Careful consideration of the

materials at hand shows us that throughout the history of Advaita, philosophers have interpreted these examples in radically different ways, in accordance with the model of Advaita that they propound. These examples can be categorized as 1) waves and ocean, 2) rope-snake, 3) hair-bundle, and 4) dreams.

The 'waves and ocean' category incorporates entities that are mentioned as different without actually being different, such as bracelet and gold, or clay and pot. This category also includes the entity that is simply a linguistic construction with no actual referent, as commonly identified by the example, 'the head of the eclipse' (*rāhoḥ śiras*).²⁹ Most likely, this example was introduced by Bhartṛprapañca in order to establish his doctrine of identity-in-difference. The existing Vedānta literature uses this illustration to defend Śaṅkara's school of Advaita. In explaining this category of analysis, Advaita thinkers frequently employ words such as bubbles (*budbuda*), foam (*phena*), and salt (*lavaṇa*) (Slaje 2001). These examples support the establishment of the doctrine of DS, and Madhusūdana does utilize one of these, the example of ocean and bubbles in this process.³⁰ This analysis is congruent with the general thesis that there exists a singular reality of Brahman alone.

In the second type of erroneous perception, there exist two distinct entities, a rope and a snake. When a rope is cognized as a snake, there is a perception of something 'out there,' but that is merged with memory, the mental impression of snake. This is therefore clearly distinct from both first type of examples. Examples such as a shell appearing as silver (*śukti-rajata*) can be placed within the rope-snake (*rajju-sarpa*) category. The entities falsely perceived are no longer seen as soon as ignorance with regard to that entity is removed and the real object is cognized.

The third type of illusion, where one perceives a bundle of hair due to a cataract, is clearly distinct from both previous categories. This is not an error where perception merges with memory. In this example, the one favored by Vasubandhu, the perceiver may very well know that there is no such bundle of hair except for his own eye problem, but he will still perceive the entities falsely. Further examples that can be included here are: perceiving two moons (*dvicandra*), the yellow color (*pītimā*) perceived by one having jaundice, the illusion of trees moving seen by one aboard a boat (*nau-yāna*), perception of pollution in the sky (*talamalinatā*),³¹ or reflection (*pratibimba*). In this category, the contrary perception or the mistaken perception is not just due to ignorance. Even after the removal of ignorance, these things are perceived as long as one does not have clear vision.

The fourth category illustrates the instances in which perception occurs without an ontological entity. Dreaming is a common example found in Advaita literature to describe this illusion. Except for the impression in the mind of a dreamer, there is nothing else to materialize. Examples such as *fata morgana* (*gandharvanagara*), yogic construction (*nirmāṇa*), and a magic show can be added to this list. The examples of imagination (*kalpanā*),

hallucination, or any appearance seen in an altered psychological state are also included in this list.

There is a clear resemblance in the illustrations found in Advaita literature and those from Mahāyāna literature. However, the underlying philosophical difference makes a distinction in the target meaning of the metaphors applied in these two systems. Illustrations from the Mahāyāna literature suggest that the example of a 'dream' is often used to explain the non-substantiality of phenomenal entities and the self.³² The *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra* excludes the example of '*fata Morgana*' (*gandharvanagara*) from the list of illusory entities (Hattori 1982, 236). Hattori suggests that the application of a dream simile in the Yogācāra school has an important implication to its philosophy, in the sense that the entities, pleasure, and pain experienced in a dream are untrue, whereas the dream consciousness is undeniably true (Hattori 1982, 238).

Praśastapāda, while categorizing incorrect cognition, distinguishes between an error and a dream (Matilal 1977, 66). This twofold distinction is utilized in the *Nyāyasūtra* while refuting a specific Buddhist doctrine.³³ The fourfold category as presented above is closer to the structure given by Patañjali, who divides false mental constructions into four types: error (*viparyaya*), verbal construction (*vikalpa*), objectless mental construction (*nidrā*), and memory (*smṛti*).³⁴ Gauḍapāda differentiates between *nidrā* and *svapna*, with the first being 'to not know the truth,' while to know it otherwise is explained as *svapna*.³⁵ In the fourfold categorization I have suggested above, I have not included *nidrā*, because the discussion here does not include all the modes of ignorance, but only those that can be considered as erroneous cognition and illusion.

A question then arises: why do the Advaita texts not reduce the multiple categories of illusion to one single illusion that contains them all? Even though these texts do not utilize a single model to demonstrate the illusory nature of the world, one can see the tendency of specific philosophers to gravitate towards one or another example. Gauḍapāda fundamentally supports the dream example. Śaṅkara begins his text, BSŪBh, with the analysis that imposition of one object onto another is possible, and his examples are of the second category, like that of the rope-snake. The philosophy of Bhartṛprapañca is from the Vedānta school that advocates identity-in-difference, exemplified by the 'wave and ocean' example.³⁶ This seems to be the foundational example, even for MUŚ. Vimuktātman favors this as well, as is evidenced by his discussion on the possibility of viewing false entities in which he cites the examples of the perception of a jaundiced person who knows that what he is perceiving is not real. This example facilitates an interpretation of the possibility of perceiving the world while liberated.

The examples included in the fourth (dream) category fit in the Gauḍapāḍian model of subjective illusionism. If DS is interpreted following this perspective, then *dṛṣṭis* are psychological, and their removal can be

compared with the waking state. This supports Madhusūdana's interpretation of *dṛṣṭi* as consciousness conditioned by mental modification (*vyrtti*).

In order to demonstrate how a single epistemological structure can bring all of these examples within a single category of error, we must investigate Maṇḍana's position in his *Vibhramaviveka*. Schmithausen points out that Maṇḍana defines an 'object' of error in such a way that all forms of erroneous and illusory perceptions can be categorized as that type of error which has a single support (*ālambana*) (Schmithausen 1965, 225). It is, in short, the category of rope-snake.

Maṇḍana distinguishes a dream from the type of error having an external object for its support, and so, according to him, a dream is a 'supportless' (*nirālambana*) error. However, for Maṇḍana, both errors, whether they have external support or not, fall under the same *anyathākhyāti* doctrine. Following this doctrine, one entity appears as another in erroneous cognition. In order to fit a 'dream' within the doctrine of *khyāti* proposed by him, he advocates that a 'dream' entails seeing impressions. So the appearance of that (in this case, memory) in relation to this (in this case, a dream) is *anyathākhyāti*, and all the erroneous knowledge can be defined within the single doctrine of the appearance of one as another. For Maṇḍana, hallucinations, including psychic disturbances, fall under the same category of *anyathākhyāti* (Schmithausen 1965, 226).

Although I have analyzed erroneous cognition using four different categories, they can be synthesized into two groups. In one, there is something other than perceiver himself that is perceived in different ways, and in the other, the illusion has no external support, but relies solely on the mind of the perceiving self. This fits with the distinction made by Praśastapāda. Some Advaitins fall into the first category. They describe the perception of duality as an error and consider that the individual selves are conditioned by ignorance. Due to this, they perceive Brahman in manifold ways. The other type of Advaitins advocate that Brahman itself is the substrate and object of ignorance. The category in which there is no distinction between the individual self and Brahman prior to Brahman being conditioned by ignorance, falls under the second group, comparing the world with dream. In order to understand the Advaita position that advocates pure consciousness as the singular reality, it is essential to address the scope of *avidyā* in light of their differing positions.

The scope of *avidyā*

Whether *avidyā* that gives rise to the notion of duality belongs to the *jīvas* or to Brahman is a question that has divided Advaitins into different camps. One additional position that can be found in later scholastic Advaita concerns the substrate of *avidyā* as the omniscient Lord (*Īśvara*). The position that culminates with DS/EJ is that the self is both the locus and object of *avidyā*. Later Advaitins who defend DS/EJ, such as Prakāśānanda, fall

under this category. To describe how pure consciousness becomes both the locus and object of ignorance, Advaitins give an example of darkness (*tamas*). Darkness in a house makes the house dark but it is not the case that the darkness in one house makes another house dark. In the same way, Advaitins argue, ignorance brings the very object to obscurity.³⁷

There are serious logical consequences in following either of these positions. The establishment of *cimṃātra* in early Advaita and the establishment of DS/EJ in later scholastic Advaita both depend upon the position that pure consciousness is the substrate of ignorance. Thus I will examine only the arguments that support this position. Furthermore, since the essential arguments of this discussion developed after Śaṅkara and prior to the time of Madhusūdana are glossed in his *Advaitasiddhi* (AS) and the pertinent questions raised by Mādhva opponents can be found in Vyāsatīrtha's *Nyāyāmṛta* (NA), I will further limit this investigation to these two texts.

Vyāsatīrtha cites Vivaraṇa and a passage from Sarvajñātman that articulate the position that pure consciousness is the substrate of *avidyā* (NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 563). He then demonstrates four consequences of adopting this position:

- 1 *virodha* (contradiction): There is a contradiction in saying on one hand that consciousness is pure and of the character of luminosity (*prakāśa*), and on the other hand that it is this very pure consciousness that is conditioned by ignorance.
- 2 *dharmigrāhakaḥ* (*pramāṇa-virodha* (contradiction with the knowledge of property-bearer): To say that ignorance is located in pure consciousness contradicts the knowledge that 'I am ignorant,' where ignorance is conceived of as being located in the I-sense (*ahaṅkāra*).
- 3 *śruti-virodha* (contradiction of the Vedic testimony): The *Upaniṣadic* passages confirm that Brahman is *niravadya* (free from faults) and *nityamukta* (eternally liberated).³⁸ The position that the very Brahman is suffering from ignorance contradicts this *Upaniṣadic* understanding.
- 4 *bhrānti-sāmānādhikaraṇya* (having the same substrate as error): Error and knowledge should be of the same substrate. It is not reasonable to state that the substrate of error is one entity (Brahman) and the knowledge of the reality (*tattvajñāna*) belongs to the other, *jīva*. How can the knowledge gained by *jīva* remove the ignorance that belongs to Brahman?

Madhusūdana defends the position that pure consciousness is the locus of ignorance by categorically refuting all of the above-mentioned objections. His response to the first objection, that there is a contradiction in accepting pure consciousness as conditioned by ignorance, is that pure consciousness (*śuddha caitanya*) is not contrary to ignorance, but only to the consciousness that is reflected (*pratibimbita*) in concepts (*vyṛtti*). A question can be raised, if pure consciousness is not contrary to ignorance, why is it not considered

to be lacking self-awareness (*aprakāśa*), like a pot? Madhusūdana says that a pot, for instance, is intrinsically not contrary to ignorance. But this is not the case with pure consciousness, because this very consciousness removes ignorance when conditioned in the form of concept (*vr̥tti*). Just as sunlight only illuminates objects, but when filtered by solar panels, it can also burn objects, such is also the case with consciousness. Naturally, this consciousness only reveals ignorance and its product. But when conditioned in the form of consciousness itself (*caitanya-vr̥tti*), it removes ignorance and its product (AS. Śāstri 1982, 577).

With regard to the second objection, that there is a contradiction with the experience 'I am ignorant' while accepting pure consciousness as the locus of ignorance, Madhusūdana replies that this experience relies on the superimposition (*adhyāsa*) of a property onto the property-bearer. If a rock heated by fire burns someone, he says, 'the rock burns.' Burning, actually, is not the property of rock but of fire, but due to superimposition of the property of fire onto rock, one experiences the rock as burning. In the same way, I-sense has been superimposed upon pure consciousness and is the substrate of ignorance. Thus one experiences that I-sense is endowed with ignorance.

Vyāsatīrtha is not comfortable with this solution. The problem in this suggestion is that pure consciousness as the foundation of ignorance has not yet been established. To propound another position, that ignorance in I-sense is superimposed upon pure consciousness, results in the fallacy of circularity. Vyāsatīrtha points out the logical fallacy of mutual reliance (*anyonyāśraya*), in which the establishment of the illusoriness of the experience that 'I am ignorant' depends upon the establishment that pure consciousness as the substrate of ignorance, and the establishment of pure consciousness as the locus of ignorance depends upon the illusoriness of the experience that 'I am ignorant.'

Madhusūdana rejects the aforementioned fallacy. He argues that, due to *avidyā*, Brahman assumes I-sense (*ahaṅkāra*), and I-sense is therefore not beginningless. Since *avidyā* is considered beginningless, it cannot be located in something that has a beginning and is caused by itself. The experience that 'I am ignorant' is based upon superimposition, just like the experience, 'the rock burns.' The scope of the indeterminacy of ignorance does not include all types of indeterminacy, but only indeterminacy in terms of existing (*sat*) or non-existing (*asat*), as the Advaitins posit that the locus of ignorance is not indeterminate.

The third objection Vyāsatīrtha has pointed out is the contradiction of the Vedic testimony in accepting that Brahman is defiled by ignorance. Madhusūdana states that the defilement *avidyā*, while being located in Brahman, does not pollute Brahman, but only pollutes the *jīva*, which is the counter-image (*pratibimba*) of Brahman. This response which relies on *pratibimba* is closely aligned with the Vivaraṇa stream of Advaita. In order to align this position with Vedic testimony, Madhusūdana cites a *Upaniṣadic*

passage, 'māyā is *prakṛti*, and the one endowed with *māyā* is Maheśvara, i.e., Brahman' (*Śvetāśvatara*, 4.10). Madhusūdana identifies the fallacy of mutual reliance (*anyonyāśraya*) in the position that *jīva* is the substrate of *avidyā*, as *jīva*-hood is found due to ignorance and ignorance is the substrate of *jīva*.

The fourth objection to the theory, that the very Brahman is the substrate of *avidyā*, is that error and removal of error should occur on the same substrate. Madhusūdana replies that the 'knowerhood' (*jñātṛtva*) is found in the very Brahman of the nature of pure consciousness, due to the superimposition (*adhyāsa*) of the inner-sense. The objection that the substrate of ignorance and the substrate of its removal are different is not valid, because Brahman itself is the knower, having the inner sense superimposed.

Madhusūdana also rejects the fallacy of mutual dependency (*anyonyāśraya*) pointed out above. He argues that the subject of knowledge (*jñātṛ*) is not a given precondition for *avidyā* to be present. While it is true that ignorance and removal of ignorance both are on the same substrate, this does not mean that the subject of knowledge is presupposed in order to establish ignorance. Here, the Advaita position relies on the theory of superimposition (*adhyāsa*). One can argue that, just as the subject of knowledge is superimposed on Brahman, so is it superimposed on the body. So why not accept the body as the substrate of ignorance? Madhusūdana counters this argument by saying that, although the subject of knowledge is not presupposed in order to establish Brahman as the substrate of ignorance, nonetheless, two attributes are required for something to be the substrate of ignorance. These are to be qualified by awareness (*prakāśatva*) and not to be dependent upon ignorance (*ajñānānāśritatva*). Only consciousness is endowed with these attributes and not the body.

Vyāsatīrtha points out that if the Advaita position accepting the very Brahman as the substrate of ignorance also accepts even the properties such as being the subject of knowledge (*jñātṛtva*), or being the subject of enjoyment (*bhokṛtva*) with Brahman as the substrate, this position does not differ from the position that accepts *jīva* as the substrate of ignorance.

Madhusūdana replies that the superimposition of the subject of knowledge (*jñātṛtva*), following the model of Advaita that accepts pure consciousness as the substrate of ignorance, concerns the very pure consciousness and not the consciousness conditioned by ignorance (*avidyāvācchīna*). The contradiction is, if the very ignorant *jīva* eventually becomes endowed with knowledge, pure consciousness cannot be the subject of knowledge, and so the substrate of ignorance and knowledge will be different. Madhusūdana's reply is that although the consciousness that is conditioned and the consciousness free from conditions are different due to the qualifier, the consciousness-in-itself in both the conditioned and unconditioned states does not differ, because the property-bearer, i.e., consciousness, is the same in both. Therefore pure consciousness can be the substrate of both ignorance and knowledge in the same way as the counter-image and image are identified,

although there is pollution in the counter-image due to the pollution on the surface of the mirror (AS. Śāstri 1982, 578).

There is yet another consequence in rejecting that *avidyā* is located in the I-sense or in the consciousness conditioned by inner-sense (*antaḥ-karaṇa*). For example, the ignorance of 'shell' that is the material cause for the misconception of silver should be considered as located in the consciousness conditioned by the shell (*śuktyavacchīna-caitanya*), because the foundation for the superimposition of silver is the very consciousness conditioned by shell. In the same way, in the experience that 'I am ignorant,' ignorance is experienced in the I-sense or the consciousness conditioned by inner-sense.

Madhusūdana responds to this objection with the position that there are two types of ignorance: 1) *abhānāpādaka* (the ignorance that confirms 'not appearing'), and 2) *asattvāpādaka* (the ignorance that confirms 'not existing'). The first type of ignorance is located in the consciousness conditioned by shell, for instance. This type of ignorance gives rise to the immediate error (the experience of silver), and is removed by the direct knowledge of the form of shell-awareness. The second type of *avidyā* gives rise to the indirect error, and is removed by the knowledge that is generic to both direct and indirect awareness, having shell as its object. This second type of *avidyā* is found in the awareness conditioned by inner-sense. In other words, the scope of one type of ignorance is an object, whereas the object of another type of ignorance is the subject of awareness. In the experience 'I am ignorant,' the object of experience is the ignorance located in the subject of experience. Therefore, even when there still is ignorance concerning an object, in an absence of the second type of ignorance, one does not experience 'I am ignorant.'

As previously mentioned, Madhusūdana's defense of the Advaita position that pure consciousness is the substrate of *avidyā* rests upon the Advaita doctrine of *pratibimba*, where *jīva* or individual self-awareness is considered as the counter-image of Brahman, the pure awareness. Vyāsātīrtha finds it difficult to establish the doctrine of *pratibimba*. He argues that it is not logical to say that the *upādhi* (cover) influences only the counter-image and it does not impact upon the image itself. How can it be that only *jīva* undergoes ignorance due to the ignorance located on pure-consciousness, while consciousness does not get polluted? He demonstrates six consequences of following this position:

- 1 Pure consciousness is not perceived by sight. As taste or smell cannot have a counter-image since these are not perceived with the eyes, consciousness cannot have a counter-image.
- 2 In accepting *jīva* as a counter-image, it will not be beginningless.
- 3 The reflection of the sun is seen in water and not in a mirage. Therefore, entities can have a reflection only in objects bearing an equal degree of reality. However, since ignorance and pure consciousness do not have an equal degree of reality, ignorance cannot be an adjunct (*upādhi*) for the counter-image of consciousness.

- 4 Only clear objects such as a mirror can be the surface for reflection. Ignorance is considered dark, and so it does not have the quality to reflect something.
- 5 An image is reflected only in the mirror facing towards it. It is not possible for the entire consciousness to face towards ignorance.
- 6 Following the Advaita position, the very root-ignorance (*mūlājñāna*) transforms into the forms of sky, air, and so forth. If consciousness is reflected in these objects, it will be naturally removed, just as the reflection of trees in water disappears when the water transforms to vapor or ice (NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 570–573).

Madhusūdana's response to the first objection is that even a formless entity can be considered as having a reflection, as the reflection of the sky which has no form nonetheless appears in water. Madhusūdana states that the support of the Vedic testimony establishes that the very Brahman appears manifold due to reflection.³⁹

Madhusūdana counters the second objection by saying that the position that pure consciousness is the substrate of ignorance for the rise of self-awareness (*jīva*) does not cause *jīva* to have a beginning. Since the relationship of Brahman and *avidyā* is beginningless, so is the rise of the nature of *jīva*.

Madhusūdana rejects the third objection with the argument that it is not necessary to have the same degree of reality to have something reflect upon another. For example, the redness reflected in a crystal can be reflected in a mirror. When one object is reflected in another, they both share the same degree of reality, for example the sun and the water where the sun is reflected. But when a reflection reflects, the substrate of the reflection and the object of reflection do not share the same degree of reality.

Madhusūdana rejects the fourth objection by saying that the 'clearness' of the surface for reflecting something is not determined. Following the Vedic testimony, '*jīva* and *tā* are performed due to *ābhāsa*,'⁴⁰ *avidyā* is accepted as capable of reflecting Brahman. In this context, Madhusūdana proposes an *ābhāsa* example in order to establish the thesis on *pratibimba*, which indicates that he is using these terms synonymously.

The next objection is that, although one can face a mirror to see one's reflection, Brahman cannot face ignorance in order to generate its counter-image. Madhusūdana challenges this objection by asking: is the problem in Brahman facing ignorance in totality, or is the problem in Brahman facing ignorance? He finds the first position not tenable because like Brahman, ignorance is omnipresent. Even if *avidyā* is considered limited in relation to pure consciousness, it can still reflect Brahman, just as a small pond can reflect the sky or immense mountains. The second objection is also not tenable, because Brahman is all-encompassing and so there is no problem in Brahman being reflected in *avidyā*.

The sixth objection is that reflection of the transformation of ignorance is not possible. Madhusūdana says that the transformation of *avidyā* does

not preclude causing a counter-image. However, this point is not discussed further. Apparently, it is crucial to this discussion to establish that *avidyā* can have a counter-image. Once the position of *pratibimba* is maintained, this particular objection does not bear much relevance.

Vyāsaśrīrtha argues that, except for image and counter-image, a third 'pure' object which is neither image nor counter-image cannot be found. For example, there is either the face or its reflection. Nothing exists as such that can be considered as the unqualified 'face' (*mukhamātra*) separate from both image and counter-image. In the same way, he argues, there exists either consciousness or its counter-image. There is no third entity that can be considered as unqualified consciousness (*cinnmātra*) that is neither image nor counter-image. Therefore the argument that *avidyā* is related to unqualified consciousness distinct from image or counter-image, as a mirror is related to an unqualified face that is neither image nor counter-image, is not tenable (NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 572).

Madhusūdana clarifies the Advaita position by stating that as the sky is considered threefold – the sky conditioned by a pot (*ghaṭākāśa*) that is in a monastery, the sky conditioned by a monastery (*maṭhākāśa*), and the sky itself (*mahākāśa*). So there are three entities: the pure object, its image and its counter-image. Although image and counter-image are different, they cannot be distinguished from the object itself. In absence of this identity, there can be no superimposition. The difference between image and counter-image is explicit. The third category accepted here, *vastumātra* or the unqualified object, is something whose distinction from image and counter-image has not been cognized. In the same way, consciousness that is not distinguished either as image or as counter-image is called unqualified consciousness (*cinnmātra*). This is the consciousness that is considered the substrate of ignorance (AS. Śāstri 1982, 579–580).

Vyāsaśrīrtha finds it problematic to accept that Brahman is the substrate of ignorance and it is the *jīva* who experiences transmigration (*saṃsāra*). He demonstrates two conditions, one a general invariable concomitance (*sāmānya vyāpti*) in which all *upādhis* condition the counter-image, and the other, a particular invariable concomitance (*viśeṣa vyāpti*) whereby ignorance produces error only in its substrate. The particular concomitance here contradicts the general concomitance. Consequently, that duality will not rest on *jīva* but on Brahman. Madhusūdana replies that the foundation for establishing *vyāpti* is the knowledge of co-occurrence. And the knowledge of *sāhacarya* rests on something that is commonly accepted by all. For example, the concomitance of smoke and fire is generally accepted, ('Where there's smoke, there's fire'), therefore the inference of fire on the basis of smoke is possible. In our context, there is no *sāhacarya* of the particular *vyāpti* that ignorance produces its effect only in its substrate. The particular *vyāpti* that is not determined cannot contradict the general *vyāpti* that has been determined. The particular consequence that occurs when bondage resides in *jīva* and liberation is in Brahman has already been discussed above.

The concept that Brahman is the substrate of ignorance and its effect is seen in *jīva* relies upon the maxim that the effect of an *upādhi* (cover) belongs to the counter-image. The example given is that the dirt on the mirror does not make the face polluted but only affects its reflection. Vyāsātīrtha points out the consequences of interpreting the phrase, *pratibimbapakṣapātitva*, as falling under the side of counter-image, in all four alternative ways:

- 1 *svadharmapratibhāsakatva* (having the character of revealing its own properties): Following this interpretation, an *upādhi* reveals its own properties in the counter-image. Vyāsātīrtha argues, if this interpretation is valid, than all the rest of the properties other than consciousness found in *jīva* should be considered as the properties of *avidyā*. However, this is not the case. Numerous properties found in *jīva* are not pertinent to *avidyā* and vice versa. Properties such as being conditioned by ignorance, or being a counter-image projected upon *avidyā* are those found in *jīva* whether in the waking, dreaming, or in deep sleep states. These properties are not found in *avidyā*. Other properties, such as impressions of *dharma* and *adharma*, are found in *jīva* but are not found in *avidyā*. *Jīva* is bound by *avidyā*, but *avidyā* is not bound by itself.
- 2 *svakāryapratibhāsakatva* (having the character of revealing its own effect): Following this explanation, an *upādhi* reveals its effect in the counter-image. Vyāsātīrtha argues that the *upādhi*, for example, water that reflects the sky, does not only constitute ‘difference’ in the counter-image from its image, but it also constitutes difference in the image, because ‘difference’ is mutually shared by both the constituents that are distinguished. In other words, the difference between image and counter-image depends on the *upādhi*, in this case, water that reflects the sky. This difference, however, does not reside in the counter-image alone. Logically, ‘difference’ is a property that qualifies both entities that are being distinguished. If the argument is that only the properties pertinent to the counter-image are caused by the *upādhi*, then the consequence is that the properties found in the image of the real object, the image of the pure consciousness, such as omniscience, will not be possible. However, Advaita doctrine relies on the concept that *upādhi* constitutes bondage in *jīva* and omniscience in Brahman.
- 3 *svakāryagatatdharmaabhāsakatva* (having the character of revealing the properties belonging to its effect). Following this interpretation, an *upādhi* reveals the properties that are pertinent to its effect. Vyāsātīrtha argues with the example of a mirror as an *upādhi* that does not reveal the properties inherent in the counter-image, just as a pot, an *upādhi* confining the sky, does not reveal the property of the sky confined within the pot.
- 4 *pratibimbaṃ prati svaviśayācchādakatva* (having the character of concealing its object [Brahman] from [its] counter-image [*jīva*]). According to this interpretation, an *upādhi* conceals its object in relation to or from its

counter-image. Vyāsatīrtha says that this is also not possible for the same reason that an *upādhi*, either a mirror or a pot reflecting or limiting its object, does not conceal its object in relation to its counter-image (NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 574–575).

Madhusūdana, in response to the above consequences of the position that *upādhi* falls under the side of counter-image, redefines his position. He says that the *upādhi* effects both image and counter-image, with the difference most pronounced in the counter-image. Therefore, the effect of an *upādhi*, such as difference, is inherent to both image and counter-image. Further specific properties, such as deformation of the image in convex, concave, or broken mirrors, are seen only in the counter-image and not in the image. In the same way, properties such as being an agent of action or being an enjoyer, are found in *jīva* due to ignorance. As this position does not negate the effect of *upādhi* upon the image, there is no contradiction in the understanding that Brahman is omniscient.

However, this position contradicts the Ekajīva doctrine. If there is a distinction between image and counter-image, and also a plurality of counter-images, then this concept is not congruent with the Ekajīva doctrine. Madhusūdana responds by saying that this establishment of plurality is subordinate (*gauna*), and therefore this does not contradict the main doctrine, that is, the doctrine of Ekajīva (AS. Śāstri 1982, 580).

The final question raised by Vyāsatīrtha in this sequence is whether the *avidyā* addressed in pure consciousness as beginningless is intrinsic (*svābhāvika*) or is it due to *upādhi*. If it is intrinsic, no removal of it is possible, as something that is intrinsic will be similar to the self, and cannot be removed. If this is due to *upādhi*, then clarification is needed, what is an *upādhi* of *avidyā*? There are consequences to both views: if *avidyā* makes itself an *upādhi*, then it will be making itself as its support, leading to a fallacy of *ātmāśraya*, and if *avidyā* requires another *avidyā* to be its *upādhi*, it then leads to infinite regress (NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 578).

Madhusūdana replies that although *avidyā* is due to *upādhi* in the pure Brahman, it does not require further *upādhi* for its being. It is the nature of *avidyā* itself that rests upon Brahman as the substrate, endowed with the property of being an *upādhi* of the character of ignorance. As difference (*bheda*) not only establishes difference between the entities of its substrate, it also distinguishes itself from the objects. No other difference is required for difference to be distinguished from objects. In the same way, *avidyā* does not require another *avidyā* for it to have an *upādhi*.

Madhusūdana also disagrees with the position that natural properties cannot be sublated, nor does he accept that intrinsic properties are everlasting. He gives the example of the form of pot and the absence of pot before its existence (*prāgabhāva*), which are considered as intrinsic. These properties, although inherent, do not remain after the destruction of the pot (AS. Śāstri 1982, 584).

Most of the arguments found in this discussion are shared by various streams of Advaita and are nonetheless congruent with the doctrine of *cinnmātra*. The specific addition by this later-scholastic discussion is the understanding of *cinnmātra* that distinguishes pure consciousness from image consciousness, Brahman from its counter-image, and the *jīva* from *jīvas*, where *cinnmātra* is distinct even from the image consciousness necessary for it to be reflected in *avidyā*.

Part III

Asat

6 A critique of difference

Historical background

There are two ways Advaita can be established: by confirming the existence of a singular reality, or by rejecting the existence of duality. In the first part of this book, we have contemplated the first approach wherein Advaitins endeavor to establish non-duality. In this section, we will examine how the Advaitins argue that duality cannot be proven. To do so, we have selected two significant aspects, the rejection of difference and the rejection of the existence of objects. Rather than confirming the existence of the self and establishing ‘singularity’ (*aikya*), the approach of refuting difference establishes ‘non-duality’ (*advaita*), as the proponents have correctly identified their doctrine. Maṇḍana deserves the credit for developing this stream of arguments, particularly for devoting the second chapter of his *Brahmasiddhi* (BS) to rejecting difference.¹

Refutation of difference found in the Advaita literature must be read in light of the parallel history of other streams of thought in classical India. When rejecting difference, the *prima facie* position for Advaitins is that of the Nyāya school of Vātsyāyana and the philosophers such as Udayana who adopt this stream of thought. Advaitins such as Vimuktātman, however, do not stop with simply rejecting difference, but rather, they also refute ‘identity’ (*abheda*), and this argument is directed against the Buddhist philosophers such as Dharmakīrti. The refutation of difference found in Advaita literature therefore reflects the contemporaneous philosophical conflict.² The arguments found in the texts of subsequent philosophers such as Prakāśānanda are only a synthesis of the writings of these thinkers. The fundamental Advaita argument that there exists only non-dual ‘awareness-in-itself’ is founded on the logical ground of the rejection of difference. This issue, therefore, requires close examination.

Advaitins from Maṇḍana to Madhusūdana rely on the rejection of difference as their primary argument in confirming non-duality. If closely analyzed, there is a subtle difference among the philosophers in the application of their arguments. For the Advaita philosophers such as Maṇḍana, the rejection of difference is ontological: it supports the singularity of the self

and also reaffirms the singularity of the essential being (*bhāva*), leading ultimately to the existence of Brahman alone. Thrasher, synthesizing the position of Maṇḍana, states that:

[Maṇḍana] attempts to show that *bheda*, difference, is not given in perception, but is a mental construction, a *vikalpa*, a relative concept that follows the direct apprehension of the bare object (*arthamātra*). It is the form of being (*sad-rūpa*), which is perceived everywhere, that is the true nature of objects, not their difference.

(Thrasher 1993, 77)

In Maṇḍana's own words, '[immediate] perception, free from mental constructions, is primary, having "an object only" as its scope (*viśaya*). The mental constructions coalesce [lit. plunge] into particulars, having been preceded by immediate perception.'³

For philosophers such as Ānandabodha, rejection of difference first supports the Advaita argument that there is no difference between the 'field' and the 'knower of the field' (*kṣetrajñā*). This argument is then applied to deny difference between the entities of cognition (*jñeya*). For Vimuktātman, the rejection of difference emerges on the premise that the difference between seeing (*dṛk*) and the object of perception (*dṛśya*) cannot be confirmed. The conclusion of 'awareness only' primarily relies on the epistemological argument that difference is not directly grasped through perception. The arguments of the rejection of difference are applied by Advaitins such as Madhusūdana to also establish the singularity of *jīva*, advocating that the confirmation of plurality requires the establishment of difference.

This brief treatment demonstrates that the Advaitins place the stream of arguments that refute difference at the core of their logical investigation. They first utilize the categorical analysis found in Nyāya and argue that difference (*bheda*) cannot be confirmed as any of the proposed categories. The possibilities explored are difference as substance (*dravya*), as quality (*guṇa*), and as absence (*abhāva*).⁴ The arguments refuting difference to be *svarūpa* or the very essential nature of the entity focus on refuting difference to be a substance on its own. The arguments that refute difference as 'distinctness' (*prathaktva*), a separate quality, also establish that difference cannot be confirmed as the second category which had been adopted by the Vaiśeṣikas. By refuting difference to be of the character of non-being, difference is disproved to be the final category among the Vaiśeṣikas, namely, absence (*abhāva*).

Advaitins must then confront two issues: 1) rejection of difference as a category,⁵ and 2) rejection of the perception of difference. In order to distinguish the cognition of *x* from its reference, it is required that these two are established as two distinct entities, and also that their difference is established by means of knowledge. Vimuktātman proposes the *prima facie* view that an entity is cognized as 'this,' whereas awareness is confirmed as

‘not-this.’⁶ Following the Advaita position, awareness is confirmed by itself. In this *prima facie* position, what is assumed is that the awareness of *x* is self-confirmed and *x* is cognized by means of knowledge and therefore, their difference can be confirmed. In order to refute this position, Advaitins first endeavor to criticize the position that difference is directly perceived.

In essence, the examination of difference found in Advaita literature responds to extant rival positions that explain difference either as absence (*abhāva*) or as a property identified as distinctness (*prthaktva*). In the first case, where difference is considered as absence (*abhāva*), the reply is that the meaning of absence is understood only through what is existent, and so knowledge of the existent is a precondition to the confirmation of difference. The second alternative is even easier for non-dualists to argue against: difference, because it is a property, requires a positive entity for its support; hence, to establish difference, one needs first to confirm a positive entity. Whether difference can be perceived or not is an issue emerging from the debate whether or not the acceptance of difference is a category. Nyāya philosophers accept difference as reciprocal absence, and count absence (*abhāva*) as a separate category. Advaitins argue that only a positive-entity can be perceived, refuting the possibility of perceiving absence. The main proponents of this doctrine are Maṇḍana and Sureśvara. Although their arguments are directed against difference, Maṇḍana’s approach leads to ‘existence only’ (*sanmātra*), while for Sureśvara, awareness is the fundamental ground of all that appears.

Perceiving difference

Advaitins hold that what is immediately known is awareness-in-itself, free from the conditions of subject and object. Difference is construed with the rise of mental modifications (*vṛtti*), occurring due to ignorance and mental imprints (*vāsanā*). Rejection of difference, on this ground, follows the argument that difference cannot be confirmed between something that is cognized or is an object of cognition, and the other that is not cognized, in this case, awareness itself which is not an object of cognition.⁷ Something that is not cognized cannot be confirmed either as a property-bearer or as a counter-positive.⁸

The Advaita position that the awareness of external entities arises through mental modifications requires further investigation. If the *vṛttis* originate through the functioning of sense organs, then consciousness is perceptual.⁹ There are two ways the rise of *vṛttis* can be explained: 1) *vṛttis* are the imprints of externals, a stance that makes the rise of *vṛttis* dependent upon external entities, or 2) *vṛttis* rise due to ignorance and mental imprints. Advaitins favor the second alternative. This position, however, does not negate that there is indeed the rise of awareness when cognizing something. What is really known in the first flash of awareness before the rise of mental imprints, following the Advaita doctrine, is pure awareness, or the self that is identical to

Brahman. Following this position, the perception of *ṛttis* presupposes awareness, which in turn is self-revealed.

If what is cognized in reality is non-dual awareness-in-itself, this awareness can neither be interpreted sequentially, nor can a distinction be made between subject and object, internal and external. Following this position, *ṛttis* are the product of ignorance, and the foundation of *ṛttis* is always free from *ṛtti* itself. If *ṛttis* are perceived by *ṛttis*, there will be infinite regress. If the foundation of *ṛttis* is *ṛtti* itself, then the support, as a consequence, will be unproven (*āśrayāsiddhi*). This being the case, the self is the support of the *ṛttis* that arise and collapse due to ignorance. Even the statement that *ṛttis* manifest and dissolve due to ignorance is merely a *vikalpa* or verbal construction that has no referent. According to this argument, there cannot be any origination caused by ignorance, as this doctrine holds that ignorance has no existence in reality. The Nyāya position differs drastically from this, with the argument that there exists no cognition devoid of object.¹⁰ Since, according to Nyāya, there is no consciousness that is *svaprakāśa*, as even pain or pleasure is known by another mental modification. The fundamental difference here is that the school of Advaita holds that knowledge is pure and independent of objects, and accepts this as what is immediately known, whereas the Nyāya school accepts quite the opposite.

The non-establishment of difference propounded when discussing the nature of perception also reveals what is not perceived. In other words, perceiving 'difference' is not real perception, and therefore, is an error. The Advaita stance is propounded in the doctrine of the indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*) nature of erroneous perception, which cannot be distinctly assigned to the category of either 'existent' or 'non-existent.' However, the Nyāya school accepts error as the knowledge in which the existence of *x* is perceived in the existence of *y*. Naiyāyikas posit that existence is common to both perceptions. Since *sattā*, the highest universal (*mahāsāmānya*), is commonly shared by all entities, this is perceived in any mode of perception, whether *x* is perceived as *x* or as *y*.¹¹

In the exegesis of Vimuktātman, there is no categorical difference between the terms *dṛṣṭi* and *drk*. From the epistemological perspective, when the terms 'knowledge' (*jñāna*) and 'experience' (*anubhava*) express the identical meaning, or when no categorical distinction is made between pure awareness and mental modifications, this position confirms non-dual awareness as the singular reality.¹² From the Nyāya perspective, 'valid experience' (*yathārthānubhava*), or 'veridical knowledge' (*pramā*) is the only knowledge. Although, following this school, the intuitive knowledge of the yogins is considered valid, it is identified as a type of direct perception.¹³ When the distinction between perceptual knowledge and self-knowledge is addressed, *ṛtti* is the general Advaitic terminology used to express 'consciousness modified in the form of an object,' with '*jñāna*' referring to self-awareness.

The direct approach of Advaita that confirms awareness-in-itself as the singular reality depends fundamentally upon the stream of arguments that

difference between x and y , as well as the difference between x and kx , cannot be confirmed. In adopting this model, there is no hierarchy of consciousness as pure and conditioned, where the second is found in the form of mental modifications. Following this model, consciousness, which is the true nature of the self, is manifest in all modes of reality, and to accept this as other than the self is ignorance. Madhusūdana's defense of the doctrine of *Dr̥ṣṭiśr̥ṣṭi* relies on the interpretation of *dr̥ṣṭi* as consciousness conditioned in the form of *vr̥tti*. This understanding emerges following the Advaita exegesis found in the Vivaraṇa school that adopts a hierarchy of consciousness in the form of self-awareness and the knowledge of objects identified as *vr̥ttis*. Following this schema, the first category of awareness is foundational, whereas the next is subject to change, and depends for its rise upon the triad of cognizer (*pramātr̥*), knowledge (*pramāṇa*), and object (*prameya*).¹⁴

All Advaitins reject difference in the absolute sense. The direct approach of the Advaita under discussion, however, rejects the schema of awareness found in all instances of cognition. What is immediately experienced, along these lines, is the non-dual awareness-in-itself, which appears in the forms of subject and object due to ignorance. This rejection of difference found in Advaita texts relies on the arguments that the nature of difference cannot be confirmed. These arguments fundamentally reject difference to be either the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of an entity or a separate category identified as *bheda*.

A critique of *svarūpa*¹⁵ and *bheda*

The essence of the arguments discussing *svarūpa* is that 'difference' is the very essential nature of an entity. The rejection of difference in this argument, then, is to articulate that an entity is not of the nature of difference, since the entities are considered as being (*bhāva*), while difference is identified as a type of non-being (*abhāva*). To say that direct perception grasps difference, following the concept that difference is the essential nature of an object, is the same as saying that there are no entities, but what is immediately grasped and what essentially exists is only difference. When difference as the very nature of a positive entity is not proved, difference itself, free from the objects of difference, is not tenable. Even to assert the difference of x as the essential nature of y reveals further complexities.

Advaitins lead this debate to the conclusion that difference is neither a property nor the nonbeing of one entity in another. The basic logical structure of the second conclusion is analogous to the arguments raised against the establishment of 'relation' as a separate category. Following this argument, if x is related to y by R , what relates R to x or to y ? If another relation R_1 is assumed to relate R with y , then the question emerges, what relates R to R_1 ? This leads to infinite regress. To avoid this consequence, realists of the Nyāya school introduced the term, *svarūpa*, or self-relating. In other words, R is related to itself by itself.

In the context of difference, the issue raised is: what makes difference different from x and y ? If another difference, D_1 (where D = difference, and D_1 = the difference that differentiates D from x), is accepted, this leads to infinite regress. This compels the Nyāya philosophers to accept difference as the very *svarūpa*, or the very form of x , leading to the conclusion that difference differs by itself. The issue remains the same, whether concerning relation or difference: both relation and difference need to be different from their own relata.¹⁶ In the context of absence, the *svarūpa* relation identified by Naiyāyikas is *abhāvīyaviśeṣaṇatā*,¹⁷ a qualifier that modifies absence.

In essence, the argument is that if cognition and its object are two different entities, then there exists another category of cognition that cognizes this difference.¹⁸ In this sequence of arguments, Śrīharṣa contends that it is impossible to establish that kx itself knows the difference between k and x , k being the experience of the difference between x and y .¹⁹

The issue here is embedded within the classical Indian understanding of the nature of awareness. The above objection is not applicable to those who consider awareness as self-revealing that, when revealing itself, also cognizes its difference. Prābhākaras as well as some Jains hold this position.²⁰ Proponents of Advaita argue that while difference in knowledge and object, or difference as such in all contexts is refuted, there will not be any such differentiating factor to validate $kx \text{ D } ky$. Advaita philosophers argue that k should either reveal its D or there should be another k to reveal D , leading to infinite regress. The first alternative is not tenable, because this leads to the fallacy of circularity (*ātmāśraya*). The second alternative, whether qualified knowledge, i.e., knowledge that has an object to particularize it, is dependent upon the knowledge of the qualifier, requires closer examination. There are two basic ways the process of cognizing something being qualified is analyzed in the Nyāya doctrine. Following the first understanding, it depends upon knowing the qualifier, whereas following the second understanding, it relies upon the knowledge of kq , kx , and $k\{q(x)\}$ in knowing something being cognized.²¹

If the first position is adopted, as discussed above, this leads to the fallacy of circularity (*ātmāśraya*). In order to analyze the second position, the process of cognizing difference needs further elaboration. There are two ways of cognizing difference:

- 1 'x is different from y.' In this statement, D merely qualifies x and y .
- 2 'There is a difference of x from y .' In this, difference, in the nominative case, is primary in the sentential meaning. Following the maxim that the knowledge of a qualifier causes knowledge of 'a qualified',²² the knowledge of difference in this case will require the knowledge of x and y .

The following two sentences demonstrate that difference can be expressed in two somewhat similar, but semantically different sentences: The first is 'a pot and cloth are different' (*ghaṭapaṭau bhinnau*), and another is 'there is a

difference between a pot and a cloth' (*ghaṭapaṭayor bhedaḥ*). When *D* becomes known as a property according to the first alternative, difference is generated by its own knowledge, since $q(x)$ is accepted as generated from the knowledge of q . In this way, the knowledge of *D* is dependent upon being aware of this knowledge, which amounts to circularity (*ātmāśraya*), a fallacy.

From a linguistic viewpoint, 'the difference between x and y ' (*ghaṭapaṭayor bhedaḥ*) can be discussed in another way. When expressed in the genitive, is 'the knowledge of x ' understood as $(k = x)$ or $(k \text{ of } x)$? If, in the statement *ghaṭapaṭayor bhedaḥ*, *D* is qualified by x and y , then in the similar statement, 'there lies a difference between x and kx ' (*ghaṭajñānayor bhedaḥ*), x becomes a qualifier, because it is in the genitive case.

There is a fallacy in the second equation. If *D* is accepted as a property-bearer, (x) being the property, this leads to the consequence of circularity (*ātmāśraya*). When the knowledge of $q(x)$ is accepted as depending upon kq , kx , $k\{q(x)\}$, the knowledge of $k\{q(x)\}$ is dependent upon $k(x)$, with x being difference. This being the case, the knowledge of *D* is dependent upon itself, that is, upon the knowledge of *D*, which again is circularity (*ātmāśraya*). It can be argued that, before the rise of the knowledge of difference (kD), since it (kD) does not exist, how can it be an object? If kD is known by k_1 , then the difference between k and k_1 will be known by k_2 , leading to infinite regress. But if kD is known by itself, the fallacy of circularity arises once again. And this is not even possible at all, because, prior to origination, there is the absence of x . If kD implies the existence of *D* by itself, this will contradict the common agreement of antecedent absence (*prāgabdhāva*).

When knowledge is the property-bearer and x and y are properties qualifying knowledge, and when difference is the property-bearer and the difference of x and y is asserted, the same consequence of second-level argumentation follows. One of the understandings of difference in the Nyāya system is that difference is a reciprocal absence (*anyonyābhāva*). The problem is that reciprocal absence has not been defined in a single way, and the ways that reciprocal absence are understood impact the entire understanding of the form of difference of x and y . Reciprocal absence is generally denoted in two ways: x is not y , and x is different from y . The second expression presupposes the knowledge of difference, and the same problems of circularity occur in this explanation. The first interpretation of difference which excludes x is vague. This definition allows the negation of x in y , but the type of negation needs to be clarified, since there are six ways of understanding negation.²³ And when the meaning of negation accepted in this context is difference, the same problem of circularity occurs here as well.

Vimuktātman points out that, if difference is considered as the very essential nature of the entity, the perception of difference will not rely upon the cognition of its counter-positive.²⁴ This objection requires further analysis of both its linguistic and epistemological aspects. In the case of absence and in the case of relation, there is another similar issue, which concerns their counter-positive (*pratīyogin*). In accepting the absence of x in y , y is

the counter-positive of the absence of x . The term used for this counter-positive, *pratiyogin*, has a prefixal meaning of ‘counter’ (*prati*), with ‘connection’ (*yoga*), and a possessive suffix ‘+in.’ The ‘difference’ under discussion is also a form of absence, and so is understood, in terms of Nyāya, in the form of its counter-positive. The problems defining the counter-positive led the later classical Nyāya philosophers to accept that the counter-positive exists in a type of *svarūpa* relation, which links itself to itself.²⁵

Problems yet to be addressed emerge from this very issue. For instance, how are we to understand ‘difference’ as revealed by its linguistic structure? In the statement, ‘ x and k differ,’ there is a difference in x and k , when both x and k are in the nominative case. In the ablative case, ‘ k differs from x ’; difference of k from x is confirmed.

If both x and k are accepted in the nominative case, then this leads to the consequence that both x and k exist independent of each other. The foremost problem in accepting the independent being of k is that of infinite regress, with k being dependent upon k_1 for its validation. The reason given is that knowledge of difference cannot be independent of the knowledge of its counter-positive (*pratiyogin*).²⁶ The argument in favor of the imagination of k_1 is the same, even in the case when the syntactic structure accepted to analyze difference is ‘ x differs from y .’

To accept mere difference as the content of perception is to accept that *bheda* alone is the nature of an object. This leads to the thesis that the existence of difference is independent of x and y . However, difference is always described in terms of another object. The object of difference cannot be difference itself. The followers of the *svarūpabhedavāda* argue that difference is the very nature of an entity. This doctrine theorizes that the difference, having y as its counter-positive (*y-pratiyogikabheda*), is the nature of x .²⁷

Bheda, anyonyābhāva, and prthaktva

There are problems in the position that difference is a separate category. Fundamentally, the absence or mutual non-being (*anyonyābhāva*) of awareness cannot be confirmed by itself, because, in that case, what is cognized would be similar to awareness that is confirmed on its own.²⁸ This absence or non-being cannot be confirmed by means of knowledge either. It is not possible to perceive the absence of awareness. As it has already been mentioned, it is not reasonable to establish difference between entities when only one of them can be perceived.

This issue revolves around the exchange of arguments between Nyāya and Advaita philosophers. According to the Naiyāyikas, when a particular cognition is illuminated by another cognition, this is tantamount to kx being known by k_1 . A problem then emerges, namely, whether or not k_1 is known independently of the entities that it qualifies. In other words, is k_1 pure knowledge, or is $k_1\{k(x)\}$? If k_1 cognizing D has no counter-positive, this cannot be knowledge in the form of difference, since difference is not cognized, as

there is neither a counter-positive nor a property-bearer. This twofold qualification of difference as having a counter-positive or being a property-bearer covers both aspects of accepting difference as reciprocal absence (*anyonyābhāva*) or distinctness (*prthaktva*).

In this type of difference, which has the counter-positive as a qualifier (*pratiyogivyavacchedabheda*), the flaw already noted is the assumption that $Dx = y$, which consequently leads to $x = y$. The consequence is that difference cannot be separated from its counter-positive, as it is a qualifier, and 'that which is qualified' cannot be separated from its qualifier. This being the case, the knowledge manifesting difference would also reveal identity, leading to a consequence that two opposite premises are proved to be in the same locus. Likewise, difference is accepted by its proponents as located within both entities that are being distinguished. In other words, the delimiters of Dx and Dy are different, so $Q(Dx)$ is not the same as $Q(Dy)$, which eliminates the contradiction of $x = y$.²⁹ This entire thesis is revised after Śrīharṣa's argumentation, and the problems concerning the definition of the counter-positive are crucial issues in this discussion. A counter-positive (*pratiyogin*) can refer to both the counter-positive that defines nonbeing or the one that defines relation.³⁰

Clearly, knowing difference implies knowing its counter-positive, so $kD(x)$ implies $k(y)$. This presupposition can be understood when the syntactic form of the difference under consideration is in the ablative case, resulting in the knowledge that x differs from y . However, if the premise is that of the given equation, then this leads to the thesis that kDy implies kx . This, however, is not acceptable.

Another issue can be summed up as xDy . This is an assertion that the reciprocal absence (*anyonyābhāva*) of x and y is qualified by D . When difference is accepted as counter-positive, this new equation leads to an acceptance of a qualifier as counter-positive. In the case of reciprocal absence, since both x and y are qualifying, then D is a qualifier, and simultaneously the locus of the qualifier.

If it is argued that difference is perceived independent of the perception of its counter-positive, there are problems in both situations:

- 1 If another perception is required to perceive exclusion, this leads to infinite regress.
- 2 If exclusion (*bheda* as a property) excludes itself for its own establishment, this leads to circularity, *bheda* being the substrate of *bheda* itself, necessary for its own exclusion (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 47).

This strategy to exclude the counter-positive by the very definition of difference precludes the equation where $x = y$. However, when exclusion is inserted into the definition, we need to explain how exclusion is cognized. There may be two options for formulating the cognition of exclusion, whether by the very knowledge of difference, or by another kind of knowledge. This again

leads to the chain of infinite regress. Alternately, if by the perception of difference even exclusion is accepted, then this again leads to the same position that knowledge is its own support. This position again results in the fallacy of circularity (*ātmāśraya*).

As explicitly demonstrated above, the analysis of difference has led both Advaita and Nyāya philosophers to the analysis of perception. The disagreements in their positions emerge from their divergent understandings of what has been perceived. This discussion initiates an even deeper exploration of Indian classical epistemology into the analysis of the first flash of awareness before the rise of mental imprints. This mode of perception is identified as *nirvikalpa-jñāna*.

Difference and ‘prejudgemental awareness’ (*nirvikalpa-jñāna*)

The difficulty in defining the nature of perceiving difference leads to another option, to accept that difference is confirmed by a different category of perception, namely, a non-judgemental or non-constructive (*nirvikalpaka*) category of perception.³¹ A basic introduction to this concept is that, before the rise of concepts, there is perception of the object itself. This can be explained in terms of ‘a mere intuition of an unidentified something.’³² At this immediate flash of awareness, what appears is the entity, free from any qualifiers, revealing its existence alone.³³

This Nyāya concept, developed in defense of Dinnāga’s criticism of the Nyāya theory of perception,³⁴ finds support in unlikely quarters, most prominently, in Maṇḍana’s Advaita epistemology.³⁵ The concept of *nirvikalpa* perception provides Maṇḍana with an ample opportunity to establish that Brahman is immediately experienced in the first flash of awareness, prior to the rise of concepts. Brahman is described in terms of *sanmātra*, or *sattā*, the highest universal. Since this highest universal is what is experienced in the first flash of awareness, Brahman is directly perceived.

Thrasher proposes that this *nirvikalpa* of Maṇḍana is verbal in nature.³⁶ This understanding allows us to distinguish the Advaita view of the *nirvikalpa* category of perception from the Nyāya understanding. Following Naiyāyikas, this awareness is never revealed or apprehended by inner perception or reflective awareness (*anuvyavasāya*).³⁷ According to this school, this prejudgemental awareness can be better explained in terms of a non-qualificatory (*niṣprakāra*) category of perception.³⁸

What the later-classical Advaitins find in confirming their position is that ‘difference is not directly perceived.’³⁹ Prakāśānanda refutes difference on the ground that perception grasps only the entity, and it is not aware of difference.⁴⁰ The question is, does the awareness that confirms difference belong to the *nirvikalpa* category? Naiyāyikas cannot propose that difference is perceived in this preconstructive flash of awareness when the pure object is cognized. This limits the possibility of perceiving difference, because it is not an object of the perception that is free from mental constructs.

Besides epistemological concerns, there are soteriological aspects encircling this concept of perception. For the Advaitins, *nirvikalpa* is the awareness of the essential nature of the self not polluted by ignorance. In the background is the Advaita understanding that self-awareness arises through understanding the meaning of sentences such as 'you are that,' and so this awareness is not necessarily free from linguistic understanding. This is to say that perception is not limited to sensory-awareness alone.⁴¹ Following these arguments, the immediate flash of awareness is linguistic in nature, although it is free from mental constructs and therefore free from the perception of difference.

Inferring difference

Another alternative to confirm difference can be through inference. A proposed syllogism follows:

Thesis: Knowledge is different from its object.

Probans: Since it is knowledge.

Example: The knowledge of difference between x and y .⁴²

Prakāśānanda demonstrates another possible syllogism:

Thesis: Objects differ from knowledge.

Probans: Since these are the support of contrary properties.

Example: As x and y , which have different properties to qualify.⁴³

The problem in following this syllogism is that x and kx have different properties, implying the establishment of difference, which is not yet established. Difference itself needs to be established before establishing the difference of x and the knowledge of x . Since difference cannot be proved without proving its counter-positive, to establish the difference of x from y , y first needs to be established. To prove the difference of x and kx , kDx must first be confirmed. This type of fallacy is called *āśrayāsiddhi*, the non-establishment of a substrate on the very ground where the *probans* is given. If it is argued that difference is proved since distinctness is seen in properties of knowledge and the object of knowledge, the Advaita rejoinder is that universal concomitance (*vyāpti*) cannot be proved, because the example given is not established, and an unconfirmed example cannot be given in logical discussion.⁴⁴ As long as difference is not proved, difference in x and y cannot be used as an example.

Śrīharṣa argues against the proposed syllogism that, in this argument, the quality to be proved is itself the locus, consequently the argument leads to circularity (*ātmāśraya*). For Śrīharṣa, the establishment of the absence of difference between objects and knowledge of those objects is based on the postulation (*arthāpatti*) where, if x is different from y , then y as well should

be different from x . Here, Śrīharṣa shows *bādhitaviṣaya* (having a sublated object as a *probans*), to be a logical flaw (Granoff 1978, 158). According to this, if kx is different from x , then x also is different from kx . Nonetheless, as long as difference itself is not confirmed, these arguments cannot be valid, because they suffer from the fallacy of relying upon an assumption which is not yet confirmed.

Śrīharṣa proposes another thesis: $kxDy$, with y being an object of ky . In this, he shows that y , being an object of ky , leads to $kxDky$, which in turn leads to kDk . This results in saying that knowledge is different from knowledge, a tautology. The opponent's stance is that the qualifiers x and y are different, and so the equation is not self-contradictory. For Śrīharṣa, however, since the difference in x and y is not established, this cannot be valid. In the process of establishing difference between k and kx , the argument given, that all knowledge is different from all its objects, is not tenable, since k can be an object of k_1 while having the property that defines knowledge (*jñānatva*) (Granoff 1978, 159). When asked how language can function to signify different entities that have no difference in reality, Advaitins argue that a linguistic application does not require real objects to correspond to language. Instead, it depends upon the concept of that object. Within the Advaita doctrine, a plurality of concepts is caused by ignorance. Hence, Advaita does not face this challenge in linguistic application.

Knowing difference through *anupalabdhi*

Mīmāṃsakas propose that absence is known neither by perception nor by inference, but rather it is cognized by a separate means of knowledge called 'non-cognition' (*anupalabdhi*). The problem Vimuktātman identifies with this is, there exists no cognition other than awareness, in absence of which non-being could be confirmed.⁴⁵ If non-cognition gives rise to the knowledge of absence, knowing the absence of awareness will not be possible. If it is argued that non-cognition does not give rise to the knowledge of absence but it is simply presumed, this will parallel the knowledge of the absence of awareness. If the absence of awareness is confirmed even when there is no non-cognition, then the consequence is that there will be the absence of awareness even when it is being cognized.⁴⁶

It can be argued that, in the case of awareness (*dr̥g*), since it is itself cognition (*upalabdhi*), the absence of awareness is confirmed simply by its absence, whereas in the case of knowing the absence of objects, a separate cognition is supposed. Vimuktātman rejects this by asking, is the awareness considered to be identical to its absence? He questions, when there is a positive entity, does another awareness cognize this absence?⁴⁷ There are problems in either of the options. If there is another awareness, there must be a cause for its rise, as nothing arises without a cause. Due to the same reason that there exists no cognition other than awareness, to cognize the absence of cognition is not tenable.

Furthermore, what is this non-cognition? If it is the very absence of cognition, then there exists no entity other than this non-cognition to be its object. Neither is there any means of knowledge to be found in confirming this non-cognition. It cannot be argued that awareness exists in parts where one part cognizes another, as in that case, all the entities will be the parts of awareness. These arguments demonstrate problems in accepting that the absence of awareness is cognized through non-cognition, a separate means of knowledge.

A critique of *abheda* and *sahopalambha*

The Advaita critique of difference, however, does not confirm identity (*abheda*) between cognition and its object. The Advaita criticism of difference deviates upon the issue of identity: the ontological approach of Maṇḍana is not uncomfortable in establishing identity, as ultimately all that exists is the very Brahman.⁴⁸ However, the epistemological approach of Vimuktātman used to refute difference does not accept identity, as this would establish cognition and its object as identical. Furthermore, this position would make the Advaita doctrine the same as the Buddhist concept of *sahopalambha*.

This is not the place to discuss the doctrine of *sahopalambha*.⁴⁹ To contextualize Vimuktātman's criticism of the concept of *sahopalambha*, it is sufficient to demonstrate the way this concept has been understood: there is identity between awareness and its object because these occur simultaneously. In other words, whenever there is an object, there is also an awareness of that object.

If the rejection of difference leads one to establish identity, the consequence is that there will be no difference between cognition and its object: the object will be cognition and vice versa.⁵⁰ The fundamental problem for Advaitins on this issue is that awareness would then be confined by time, space, and objects, and consequently will be momentary. For the Advaitins, non-dual awareness is free from all these limitations. Vimuktātman argues that the refutation of difference does not confirm identity, as this cannot be confirmed by means of knowledge.⁵¹ What is striking here is the argument that the establishment of identity is contrary to common-sense experience, because difference is also refuted by Advaitins on the ground that it contradicts perception. Vimuktātman defends his position by saying that the rejection of difference only rejects its validity, but it does not reject its experience. This is comparable to the appearance of two moons, where, even after knowing that this vision is erroneous and caused by eye-disease, the perception continues for as long as one cannot see the object as it is.⁵²

The first problem in establishing the identity of awareness and its object is that awareness is confirmed by itself whereas objects are confirmed by external means, and so these are not even known by the same means of knowledge. How can two entities identified by two different means of

cognition be confirmed as identical? Furthermore, if the object of perception is identical to awareness, it will be awareness itself and not an object. At the heart of these problems is the concept of *svasamvedana*, accepted by those who advocate *sahopalambha*. Following this concept, awareness is revealed by itself and is therefore cognized independent of any other means of knowledge. This, however, is not the case concerning the knowledge of objects, as they are known either through perception or through inference.

It is also not possible to accept an object and its cognition as property and property-bearer. A single entity, whether considered as object or awareness, cannot simultaneously be both. Neither can it be argued that awareness in part becomes property and in part, a property-bearer. Furthermore, this relationship cannot be cognized by itself, because in that case, there will be no difference between property and property-bearer, and in the absence of this difference, the very relationship cannot be confirmed.

Another set of questions emerges concerning the awareness of identity between object and its cognition: is this the identity of two existing and manifesting entities, or of only one entity existing and manifesting, or of only one entity manifesting while both object and cognition have existence? If both awareness and its object are existing entities, identity cannot be confirmed. Following another alternative, if it is said that, although both manifest but only one exists, the question emerges: is the awareness of identity possible only of the objects of the awareness of difference, or is it also possible elsewhere? In the first case, the awareness of identity and the awareness of difference will both be identical. If the awareness of identity is possible elsewhere, the awareness of difference will not lead to the awareness of identity. If it is said that there exists only one entity, either awareness or object, establishing identity is not possible, because there is only one that exists and is manifest. Neither can it be argued that there exists both object and awareness but only one manifests, as in that case it is not possible to establish identity because the second entity does not even manifest while existing. Difference between two entities is confirmed only of those that are manifest.

Vimuktātman examines the argument of *sahopalambha* while criticizing the thesis that there is identity between object and its cognition. His first objection is that if there exists this proposed identity, the object and its cognition would not appear simultaneously.⁵³ The proposed identity is not of awareness with awareness itself or of an object with itself, but rather of an object and its awareness. This very application of simultaneity presumes difference.

It can be argued that two different entities, x and y , are cognized separately in two different modes of cognition, and as this is not the case concerning kx and x , there is therefore identity between these two. This, however, contradicts perception. If it is argued that the Advaitins have refuted the perception of difference, then it is also the case with regard to perceiving identity.

Vimuktātman examines the definition of *sahopalambha*, questioning whether this is the law of being cognized simultaneously or is it simultaneous

awareness? It cannot be the first, because awareness is not an object of cognition. Neither can it be the second, because the object of cognition is not awareness.⁵⁴ Vimuktātman rejects the understanding of *sahopalambha* in which the cognition of awareness and its object are simultaneous, arguing that objects are not experienced in the absence of awareness, and awareness exists even in the absence of any object. It is therefore not the case that these can appear only simultaneously.

In adopting *abheda*, the fundamental distinction between the Advaitins and Yogācārins is that Advaitins adhere to the awareness that is not conditioned by time, space, or object, whereas the *abheda* proposed by Yogācārins is that of a momentary awareness and its object. Vimuktātman rejects the position that, when there is *kx* there is no *ky*, and so awareness is only momentary. He argues that when there is *ky*, is there an absence only of *x* or also of *k*? It cannot be argued that there is an absence also of *k* at the moment of *ky*.

The entities *x* or *y* qualify cognition. Awareness exists even in the absence of these qualifiers. If what appears at the moment of *ky* is not awareness but an object, then it is not reasonable to argue that awareness does not appear due to the absence of cognition of an object. If, on the other hand, *kx* is not the nature of awareness but is what is cognized, this will lead to infinite regress. If *kx* is not cognized, it will not be confirmed. However, if it is self-aware, the knowledge of *x* will not be separate from awareness itself. On these grounds, Advaitins propose that there is neither identity nor difference. So what is confirmed when something is cognized is awareness alone that is free from modifications. The Advaita understanding of an entity and non-dual awareness fundamentally relies upon the arguments discussed above.

Vastu and anubhūti

An entity (vastu)

The essence of the arguments that difference is not perceived when perceiving an entity is that difference is not a *vastu*. Our senses, however, grasp only the entities that exist. We do not perceive what does not exist, such as a rabbit-horn or a round-square. *Vastu*, etymologically that which posits (*vasati*), refers to something that exists. The position of Maṇḍana that ‘the essential nature of an entity is not difference, since [otherwise there will be a consequence that an entity will be] an absence of itself,’⁵⁵ and the position that ‘existence-only is experienced in all [cognitions]’⁵⁶ supports the argument that difference is not perceived because perception reveals the essential nature of an entity, which is not difference but rather, existence itself.

The argument that only *vastu* is what is immediately perceived, followed by Advaitins, does not after all support the concept that there actually are external entities that are grasped by sense-organs. Advaitins hold that the very Brahman is the *vastu*. This understanding of *vastu* dissociates it from

having ontological being of empirical categories, identified as self-awareness alone. Sureśvara's rejection of the perception of difference primarily relies on his understanding of perception:

vastusvarūpasamsparsicakṣurādibhya utthitam |
bhedaspr̥ṇ nākṣajādy evaṃ na tenaikātmyabāadhanam ||
 (SBhVā 920)⁵⁷

Perception [lit. originated of sense organ (*akṣaja*)] is arisen with eye etc. that contacts [lit. touches (*sam+spr̥ś*)] the essential nature of an entity. This is how [it] does not contact difference. Because of this, perception {*tena*} does not sublate the oneness of the self.

This position of Sureśvara is congruent with the arguments of other Advaitins that perception does not confirm difference. His next verse in this passage further clarifies this issue:

prameyaviṣayaṃ mānaṃ vastunaś ca prameyatā |
na ca bhedasya vastutvaṃ vastutattvānapekṣaṇāt ||
 (SBhVā 921)

Means of knowledge has *prameya* as its object (*viṣaya*), and an entity (*vastu*) is what is known (*prameya*). Difference is not an entity because [an entity] does not depend upon [another] entity [for its being].

Sureśvara concludes on the basis of these arguments that:

nāto vastuni sambhedo vastuno 'bhedarūpataḥ |
na pramāṇād bahir vastu na mānaṃ vastuno bahiḥ ||
 (SBhVā 924)

Because an entity is not of the character of difference, there is no difference [inherent to] an entity. An entity [does not exist] out of the realm of the means of knowledge, neither [is there] cognition (*māna*) out of the realm of (*vahiḥ*) entity.

This analysis of Sureśvara agrees with the basic premise of Maṇḍana's argument that perception reveals mere being (*sanmātra*). Sureśvara explicitly mentions that direct perception or other means of knowledge objectify 'only that which exists.' This being the case, the absence of what exists is not what is revealed by any means of knowledge; rather, an absence of *x* only confirms the existence of *y* or *z*.⁵⁸

Whether found in the form of the concept of 'awareness only' or of *dṛṣṭisr̥ṣṭi*, the essential logical proposition of the Advaitins is that plurality, presupposing difference, cannot be logically established since it is not confirmed by means of knowledge. This is consistent in Prakāśānanda's statement

that 'a pot is never a not-pot.'⁵⁹ Adopting the arguments of Maṇḍana and Sureśvara, Prakāśānanda posits that 'perception corresponds to [lit. plunges into] mere entity, and does not grasp [lit. cognize] even the account (*vārtā*) of difference.'⁶⁰ This statement can be compared with Maṇḍana's position that 'mere being is experienced everywhere.'⁶¹

Awareness (*anubhūti*)

Advaitins such as Vimuktātman advocate that whatever exists (*vastu*) is awareness (*anubhūti*) alone. Rejection of difference in this case serves not only to refute the differences perceived out in the world, but also cognitive and linguistic difference. This approach is identical to that establishing 'seeing' (*dṛṣṭi*), with only a shift in language. Following Vimuktātman's terminology, 'immediate experience' or *anubhava* is the very nature of the self. It is the only reality, free from objects or forms. This is the awareness that reveals itself independent of any external means.⁶²

Application of the term *anubhava* or *anubhūti* for describing non-dual awareness pre-dates Vimuktātman. Halbfass points out that Śaṅkara himself applies this term in the absolute sense:

... *anubhava* is used in an absolute sense, as 'experience,' 'immediate awareness,' 'self-presenting' *per se*; we hear about a 'seeing' (*dṛṣṭi*) which has the 'nature of immediate awareness' (*anubhavātman*), about the absolute or *brahman* as *anubhavātmaka*, or simply about *anubhava* as such in a sense which commentators unanimously paraphrase as *sākṣin*, 'absolute witness' or 'self.'⁶³

Vimuktātman's refutation of difference needs to be read in this light. Particularly, this application of *anubhūti* dismantles the conceptual hierarchy between two modes of subject and object, discards the difference between object and its awareness, and discredits the assumed difference between two cognitive modes. These differences, although appearing, are not really experienced in the immediate mode of awareness, but arise only after the rise of ignorance. This immediately cognized or experienced awareness (*anubhūti*) is non-dual in nature, and it is not error but awareness-in-itself that is directly experienced.⁶⁴ This is the most uncompromising form of non-dualism propounding that duality is never perceived.

The refutation of difference-in-awareness rests upon the argument that the establishment of 'difference' *per se* relies upon the object of awareness, which in turn is not of the character of awareness.⁶⁵ Following the argument that the essential nature of an entity is not 'difference,' difference-in-awareness cannot be confirmed. Furthermore, if there is a meta-awareness to cognize difference-in-awareness, the first awareness that has been cognized will be an object and not awareness itself.⁶⁶ Neither can the rise and collapse of awareness be proposed as the *probans* to confirm difference-in-awareness,

because without confirming difference, the rise and collapse of awareness cannot be confirmed. This leads to the fallacy of circularity.

Vimuktātman's conclusion that there exists only awareness rests upon the arguments that neither difference nor identity is logically viable between awareness and its object. This being the case, there exists either awareness (*dṛg*) or that which can be perceived (*dṛśya*). If it is only the object of perception that exists, it cannot be confirmed in the absence of awareness. This establishment of *dṛg*-only depends upon the analysis of perception: the awareness that is confirmed as the absolute and non-dual is not something 'esoteric' and unique to specific enlightened beings. It is rather the most fundamental experience that all sentient beings share, and this 'awareness' breaks down all hierarchies, including that of 'felt' and 'experienced.'

7 A critique of ‘object’

Background

Advaitins reject duality while establishing the existence of the immediately experienced self, identifying it with Brahman or pure awareness. One way to reject duality is through the negation of the objects of cognition. This refutation of external objects, on the ground of the problems defining an object, is primarily found in the writings of Śrīharṣa and Citsukha. With the common understanding that an object is established by definition and through the means of knowledge and not merely by a proposition, Advaitins challenge the philosophers who reject non-duality to define an object of knowledge. This logical approach determines the facts on the ground of the valid means of knowledge, assuming that whatever exists can be determined. This Advaita position should not be interpreted as questioning the existence of all entities. They do accept the existence of pure consciousness, which is self-aware. The scope of the rejection of objects includes both external as well as mental objects. In essence, the arguments utilized to refute the existence of an object can be compared with those used against the establishment of difference, the difference between the entities x and y , or the difference between an object x and its cognition (kx).

Two problems facing Naiyāyikas and others in accepting an object are that 1) the object in question requires definition, and 2) the relationship between the object (*viśaya*) and object-bearer (*viśayin*) needs to be defined. Here, this relationship is the relationship between an object and its cognition.

The rejection of objects that have been established on the ground of extrinsic means (*parataḥ*), and the confirmation of awareness-only (*cinmātra*) on the basis that this is intrinsically confirmed (*svataḥ*), both rely upon two established modes of argumentation used in classical India to confirm something in question. Although the self-confirmation of awareness is not commonly acceptable to both sides of the debate, the thesis that entities are confirmed by extrinsic means (*parataḥ*) is commonly shared. In order to establish an object, the relationship between an object and object-bearer (*viśaya viśayibhāva*) needs to be confirmed.

Entities can be established on the grounds that they are either directly perceived or that they are confirmed by inference. Although other means of knowledge are accepted, such as analogy or the testimony of the Vedas endorsed by several schools, these are the two most commonly accepted means of knowledge. To refute that entities cannot be confirmed merely on the ground of sense-object contact, the Advaitins identify multiple problems.

The first set of problems in defining an object of cognition emerges from rather uncommon types of perception, such as the intuitive and extra-sensory perception pertinent to the yogins.¹ The position that yogins can perceive entities at a distance independent of sense-object contact, including the entities of past and future, is acceptable to most of the philosophical schools of classical India. This is the same case with the knowledge of God. If the knowledge of God were to rise through sense-object contact, then God's knowledge would not be beginningless, as there cannot be a cognition arising through sense-object contact that is not originated.

Naiyāyikas can argue that the concomitance (*sāhacarya*) between cognition and sense-object contact does not cover the yogic perception or the knowledge of God, and therefore both are beyond the scope of investigation. Keeping this argument in mind, Citsukha identifies another type of cognition, namely, 'recognition' (*pratyabhijñā*), in order to demonstrate the absence of concomitance between an object and sense-object contact in perception. *Pratyabhijñā* is a Sanskrit term that means to 'understand, remember, or recognize;' it has an extensive history of usage among philosophical schools that gives it a much deeper meaning than such words as 'recognize' or 'remember' regularly have in contemporary English. The issue here is not to address the deeper philosophical significance of this term. However, it is relevant to acknowledge that even for Advaitins, this mode of awareness is a separate category of cognition. In this understanding, cognition blends the aspects of memory and direct perception, giving rise to a knowledge that relies on both.

In the case of 'recognition' (*pratyabhijñā*), two modes of awareness constitute an integral cognition. Using the common example found in Sanskrit literature, 'this is that very Devadatta,' recognition unites the awareness of that (*tat*) and the awareness of this (*idam*). Although in the part of 'this,' the cognition of Devadatta is through direct perception, the part 'that,' the Devadatta of memory, nonetheless constitutes an integral part of this recognition, corresponding to the memory of an object perceived in the past and not occurring in the present through sensory perception. However, recognition as such is considered to be a direct perception.²

An argument can be made that recognition is unlike other forms of knowledge or apprehension. Apprehension that connects memory of past objects with perception of a present object is governed by a property that qualifies the contact (this relationship is called *saṃyuktaviśeṣaṇatā*). Inferential knowledge is acquired through this relation. When fire is seen on a hill, the sense-object contact lies on the hill, and the fire is considered as

qualifying the hill.³ Recognition, Naiyāyikas argue, is known in the same way. The problem here, though, is that direct perception cannot be considered as arising through this relationship, *saṃyuktaviśeṣaṇatā*, because in that case, even the past qualifying the object of recognition, addressed as 'that' (*tat*), would be directly perceived. If this relation gives rise to direct perception, then, the fire qualifying the mountain that has been directly perceived would be directly cognized. The consequence is that there will be no distinction between direct perception and inference.⁴ Therefore, it is more reasonable to accept that only the properties that are immediately cognized are considered to be causing direct perception.

This discussion demonstrates that an object of knowledge cannot be simply taken for granted, and therefore it needs to be defined. In fact, classical Indian philosophers have recognized this challenge and have developed multiple definitions, with even a single philosopher sometimes providing alternative definitions. This study utilizes two primary sources, Śrīharṣa's KhKh and Citsukha's TP, in order to examine how Advaitins refute the definitions used to establish the reality of an object.⁵ The strategy of the Advaitins is to show an inherent logical fallacy in accepting an object by definition alone, demonstrating that definitions cannot confirm an object of knowledge.⁶

Examining the definitions of an object

The following definition of an object is based on the 'result' of the act of knowing:

jñānājanyaphalādhāratvam viśayatvam, viśayaniṣṭhaphalajanakatvañ ca viśayitvam |⁷

To be an object is to be the substrate of the result caused due to knowledge, and to be an object-bearer is to cause result that is located in an object.

This definition is apparently synthesized from Vātsyāyana's position.⁸ In this definition, the meaning of the suffix *cha*→*īya* with the term *jñāna* is interpreted as something that is the product of knowledge.⁹ The term *tadvat* (*tat*+*vatup*), or 'endowed with that,' is interpreted as 'causing that.'¹⁰ Citsukha identifies problems in accepting this definition, asking what is to be understood by the term 'result' (*phala*). If the 'result' is 'to be known' (*jñātatā*), the interpretation that is also acceptable to the Bhāṭṭas,¹¹ then, in the case of the past objects, they cannot be a substrate because they do not exist at the time they are being known. Furthermore, there is nothing to determine that cognition gives rise to the result [i.e., being known] that corresponds to an object that is considered to be the substrate of the [specific] result in the [specific] substrate and not elsewhere.¹² In plain words, there is no guarantee that awareness of *x* arises only where there is *x* and not otherwise.

If, on the other hand, the term ‘result’ (*phala*) means activities such as holding an object in the hand, then this meaning or activity could not belong to the self, as the omnipresent (*vibhu*) self cannot carry out such activities. However, if by the term ‘result,’ intention (*icchā*) is understood, then only the self can be the substrate of intention and the rest will not be the substrate. The first definition of ‘an object’ fails because it is illogical; i.e., the preceding objections demonstrate that such a definition cannot be confirmed on logical grounds.¹³

Modified definition on the basis of functioning

When concluding his arguments for the definition of an object that depends upon the act of knowing, Śrīharṣa examines another definition of an object that relies upon functioning. The definition runs as:

yatpratibaddhavyavahārānukūlasvabhāvaṃ yadvijñānaṃ tat tasya viśayaḥ |
(KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 658:2–3)

That is the object of that [specific cognition] which has cognition of that [particular] of the essential nature of causing (*anukūla*) functioning (*vyavahāra*) being related to that [object].

This definition encounters the same flaws as the ones discussed previously. There is no simple or unambiguous way to define ‘functioning’ in this context. All possible interpretations of the term result in the same problems of circularity and paradox.

Udayana’s definition of object

There are three possible types of relationship between an object and object-bearer, namely, 1) between cognition and its object, 2) between intention (*icchā*) and its object, and 3) between action and its object. The relation being examined in the context of defining an object corresponds to the first category.

Śrīharṣa presents the following definition as supported by Udayana:

prakāśāsya satas tadīyatāmātrarūpaḥ svabhāvaviśeṣaḥ |
(KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 650)

A particular self-nature of an entity (*sat*) of knowledge of the character of ‘belonging to an object’ {*tadīya*} alone.

This definition is paraphrased for closer analysis as:

*prakāśatve satī viśayasambandhitvaṃ viśayaviśayībhāvaḥ |*¹⁴

The relation of object and object-bearer is to be related to an object while being of the character of knowledge.

The first clause in this definition, according to Śrīharṣa, is problematic, because, if an object is defined as something of the character of knowledge, this definition will not include the objects of intention (*icchā*). In the absence of the first clause, even inherence (*samavāya*), for instance, belongs to an object and so the definition will be too broad. Furthermore, the definition of an object of knowledge with the clause 'to be related to an object' is faulty, as this definition suffers from the logical fallacy of *siddhasādhana*tā, or, to rely on something not yet established in order to establish something else.

Furthermore, the term *svabhāva* (self-nature), in this definition, requires explanation. This compound can be interpreted in two ways, as the term *sva* can refer to both 'self' and 'something belonging to self.' If interpreted as a *tatpuruṣa* type of compound, the term *svabhāva* will refer to the second alternative: *svasya bhāvaḥ* (the essence belonging to itself). Following this interpretation, the two parts in this compound are not identified, and the fallacy of *siddhasādhana*tā ensues. However, if analyzed as a *karmadhāraya* type of compound, *svaś cāsau bhāvaś ca* (that which in itself is an essence), this term is self-explanatory, identifying the first part with the second part. The first option leads to the understanding of a property belonging to itself (*sva*), whereas the second option results in *svabhāva* as *svātman* (self-nature).

In the first case, when *svabhāva* is understood as *svadharma* (its own property), this can be understood either as 1) a common property qualifying knowledge, or 2) a property qualifying a particular. Again, the question is, how to interpret the term *svadharma* even when it is identified as a *tatpuruṣa* type of compound? If interpreted in this way, only the generic type of knowledge can arise and not the knowledge of a particular.

Following the second alternative of interpreting the term *svadharma* while accepting it as a *tatpuruṣa*-type of compound, if it is understood as the property qualifying particulars, there will be the consequence that the relationship between an object and object-bearer will always refer to particular properties. This is to say that if the relationship between object and object-bearer is understood as a property such as the property qualifying the cognition of a pot (*ghaṭajñānatva*), or the property qualifying the cognition of a cloth (*paṭajñānatva*), the property qualifying the cognition will also include external objects. In other words, only the properties qualifying the particular cognitions are confirmed, and not the external objects. This position resembles that of the Yogācāra Buddhists. If this position is defended by saying that, when referring to knowledge, the object has to be external, Śrīharṣa argues: is *viśayitva* (the property that qualifies an object-bearer) of the form of a limiting adjunct (*upādhi*), a universal (*jāti*)?¹⁵ In the first case, there are two possibilities: 1) the limiting adjunct (*upādhi*) is other than the specific object of knowledge, and 2) the adjunct (*upādhi*) actually refers to the object of knowledge itself.

If the property that qualifies the object-bearer is understood as an *upādhi*, it needs to be further clarified as to whether the qualifier (*nirūpaka*) of this *upādhi* is something other than an entity such as pot, or is this qualifier the

very entity itself? If this qualifier is something other than an object such as a pot, then, in order to cognize 'pot,' the property that qualifies the object must be known. For example, when a person is cognized as a stick-bearer, the stick that is an *upādhi* of this cognition is necessarily known. In other words, in a cognition $k\{s(p)\}$, the cognition k is a constitutive element and cannot rise in the absence of its qualifier.

The problem cannot be solved even by accepting that the very object is the *upādhi*. By definition, the term *upādhi* requires a relationship between itself and its qualifier. And this cannot be the relationship of object and object-bearer, since this is the very relation that is being established. Once again, there is the fallacy of *siddha-sādhana*.¹⁶

These problems lead the realists to accept another alternative, i.e., the property that qualifies the object-bearer is a universal (*jāti*). Nevertheless, this position is not free from problems. In the case of knowing a pot, the property that is qualifying the pot as an object (*paṭaviṣayatva*) can be the property that qualifies the object-bearer. But when there is the rise of a single awareness of two entities in a single moment, such as $k(xy)$, there will be two distinct universals qualifying a single cognition. The problem in having two different universals qualifying the same substratum is that of *sāṅkaryā*, an intermixture of different universals.¹⁷

This objection of *sāṅkaryā* can be resolved by adopting two alternative positions: 1) to not accept a complex knowledge of two different objects, or 2) to accept *sāṅkaryā* as not obstructing, and endorse a complex (*citra*) universal.

The first alternative fits with that accepted by the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas. According to them, there is no single awareness such as $k(xy)$, and $k(x)$ and $k(y)$ that are separately cognized. In light of this argument, a complex cognition having the qualifier itself being qualified, as in the case of knowing a stick-bearer, does not exist as a single cognition. This type of cognition consists of two independent cognitions mistakenly unified. Prābhākaras argue that even that which is considered to be erroneous perception, such as seeing silver in a shell, is not erroneous, but rather, there are two separate and real cognitions, and the cognition of shell and the cognition of silver are merged.

There is yet another way to analyze this cognition, namely, considering this as an integral cognition. Instead of analyzing this as kx and ky , this proposition considers $k(xy)$ as the cognition of a single entity. For example, if a faun or a centaur is known, it is not known with two distinct, qualifying universals but rather as a single faun with two different properties. The example given in the *Vidyāsāgarī* commentary is that of a deer-man.¹⁸ A deer-man is not cognition of two separate entities, deer and man, but rather, it is cognition of a single entity.

The problem inherent to this proposed argument is that the aforementioned example does not deal with other possibilities, such as that of knowing two different entities like 'pot and cloth' (*ghaṭapaṭau*) in a single cognition.

When Mr. and Mrs. Devadatta are cognized in a single flash of perception, this cognition cannot be considered similar to that of seeing a deer-man or faun.¹⁹ The problem here is not one of cognizing a single entity with two distinct features, but rather that of an integral cognition of two separate entities. As a result, this thesis leads to the assumption that all cognitive modes are complex, requiring by definition a qualifier. Naiyāyikas consider pre-judgemental cognition (*nirvikalpakajñāna*) to be a mode of cognition where an object, the universal qualifying the object, and the faculty of inherence that relates the object with its universal, are cognized at a single moment. This is not the cognition of an entity with a universal qualifying it, but rather, all three are cognized independently, the object, its qualifier, and the relationship between them.

These problems emerge when the property that qualifies knowledge, such as 'being qualified by pot' (*ghaṭaviṣayitva*) is considered as a universal when a pot is cognized. The consequence is the fallacy of *sāṅkarya*, which is the intermixture of two different universals. However, if *sāṅkarya* of different universals qualifying a single entity is not considered a problem, then an object will not be required in order to have its cognition, as it would be sufficient to produce cognition merely by accepting these universals.²⁰

Naiyāyikas may reply that when an object is cognized, the existence of that cognized entity is confirmed as external, because external entities cannot be reduced to concepts. However, as long as the relation between cognition and its object is not proven, it is not possible to define the cognition of an object. If this relation is taken for granted, a problem arises. Whenever there is a cognition, whether to accept this as a single relation that relates two entities, in this case relating object and object-bearer, or to accept multiple separate relations, the relation qualifying an object (*viṣayatva*) in the case of the object of knowledge, and the relation qualifying an object-bearer (*viṣayitva*) in the case of cognition. If the relationship between the object and object-bearer is confirmed as a single relation, then, in addition to the aforementioned problems, there will also be the consequence that the object will have the property that qualifies object-bearer and the object-bearer will have the property that qualifies the object. For instance, when the relation 'contact' (*saṃyoga*) is cognized, both of its substrates, for instance *x* and *y*, are related by the same relationship of contact. In the same way, when the relationship between object and object-bearer is confirmed, both object and object-bearer will be the referents of contact, with nothing to determine an object and its cognition separately.²¹

If the suggestion is that these are two separate relations, namely, the relation in which being an object of knowledge lies in the object, and the relation where being an object-bearer occurs in cognition, then this position leads to another consequence. Namely, this object cannot be considered as substance (*dravya*), one of the seven categories of the Vaiśeṣikas, since even inherence (*sāmānya*) can be an object of cognition. Neither can this be considered as absence, because even absence is an object of cognition.

This leads only to the option that this relation is a property qualifying the object of cognition (*jñātata*).²² This position tallies with that of the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas, and will be addressed separately while examining the Mīmāṃsaka position.

These problems are observed while interpreting the term *svabhāva* as *svadharma*, accepting this term as a *tatpuruṣa*-type of compound. An alternative way of interpreting this term is by identifying it as a *karmadhāraya* type of compound and understanding this as *svarūpa* (self-form).

However, even this second alternative is not free from contradictions. As the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of *x* and *y* are different from each other, the cognitions of *x* and *y* are essentially of a different *svarūpa*. The consequence in accepting this position is that the self-nature of *kx* is different from *x*, and, this being the case, one cannot establish *x* on the ground of *kx*. If the reply is that although the self-nature (*svabhāva*) of *x* and *kx* are different, *kx* still confirms *x*, then, the Advaitins argue, even *kx* should confirm *y*. There is nothing to rule out the possibility that, although of a different self-nature, *kx* can confirm *x* but cannot confirm *y*.²³

Furthermore, part of the statement that the character of cognition is 'to correspond to its object' requires further explanation. The term *tadīya*, interpreted as 'corresponding to an object of cognition' {*tat*}, has two parts: the base, *tat*, and the suffix, *cha*→*īya*. The base, *tat*, refers to an object, whereas the meaning of the suffix is relation, identifying common referents (*sambandhisāmānya*).²⁴ Now the consequence is that, since the term *tadīya* refers simultaneously to cognition and its object, the terminal meaning cannot be reduced to cognition alone. Otherwise, the object of knowledge will be reduced to cognition, with no external objects being confirmed. Consequently, the effort to establish an external object separate from cognition will fail, and the positions of Naiyāyikas and Vijñānavādins will be identical.

It can be argued that the term *tadīya* refers to the relation designated by *tat*. This interpretation defends the aforementioned objection that the object of cognition is the self-nature (*svarūpa*) of knowledge by equating cognition with relation. However, this suggestion is not tenable because if an object that qualifies relation is isolated from relation, then, since there is no particular object to be necessarily related, the relation of all objects will be of the character of cognition, leading again to the position of Vijñānavāda.

It can be further argued that, as there is no specific qualifier, the relation is autonomous. Therefore, although no particular referents are specified, all the entities will be related, and an object and its cognition will not be identical. However, this is not tenable either. Relation cannot exist independent of its referents. In this case, an object is qualifying its relation, and if what is qualified can be isolated from its qualifier, there will be no specific referent. To accept a relation that is not related to any specific entity is, consequently, to not accept relation at all.

In order to preclude the aforementioned consequences, if the relation is accepted as corresponding to an object, there will be the same consequence of identity between the relation and its object. Furthermore, if an object in general and not particular is accepted as corresponding to relation, there will be nothing to determine the relation as corresponding to a specific object.

The Nyāya position with regard to this objection is that the determining factor (*niyāma*) for relation is something that causes specific cognition. However, this position needs to justify what the function of such a determining factor is.

If the scope of such a determining factor is to cause 'the property qualifying cognition of pot' (*ghaṭīyatva*) in the relation caused by pot, the question is, whether this *ghaṭīyatva* is of the character (*dharma*) of the relation of the self-nature of cognition, or is this a property (*viśeṣaṇa*) exclusive to the self-nature of cognition? There are problems in both positions.

This can be explained as:

<i>tat</i> →	... <i>ghaṭa</i> →	<i>viśeṣaṇa</i> →	<i>viśaya</i>
<i>tadīya</i> →	... <i>ghaṭajñāna</i> →	<i>viśeṣya</i>	
<i>tadīyatva</i> →	... <i>ghaṭajñānatva</i> (<i>ghaṭīyatva</i>) →	<i>viśeṣyatva</i> →	<i>dharma</i>

The issue here is, whether *tadīyatva* is of the character of a relation or not.

If this *tadīyatva* is of the character of the relation of the self-nature of cognition, then, again, that which is referred to by *tat*, an object, is a part of this self-nature and so the consequence will be same, that there will be no difference between cognition and its object.²⁵

In other words, 'relation,' in this context, refers to the relationship between object and object-bearer. If this relation cannot be separated from an object while being equated with cognition, this leads to the same consequence that external objects will be reduced to cognition alone. However, if it is argued that 'pertaining to *x*' is not a relation, but rather, it is another property, then that property will be identical to the object *x*. Because the meaning of the suffix, 'pertaining to,' is qualified by the base, and since a qualifier cannot be separated from what is being qualified, this leads to the same consequence that a property and the object corresponding to that property will be identical.²⁶

If the property of the character of 'corresponding to an object' {*tadīya*} is identical to the object, it needs to be explained whether or not this property is still related by the relation identified as self-nature (*svabhāva*). If the reply is that this property is not related, then that cognition will not correspond to anything, as it is not related to any specific object. However, if there is another relation to relate this property which is already related to self-nature, then that other relation will require further relation to relate, leading to the consequence of infinite regress.

If it is argued that this property is not related by another relation but rather by the very relation identified as self-nature, then the consequence is that in

the qualified meaning, 'related by the relation of the character of cognition' (*jñānātmakasaṃbandhasaṃbandhīya*), there is 'cognition' as a qualifier. This will again reduce external objects to cognition alone.²⁷ On the ground of these arguments, Śrīharṣa claims that self-nature (*svabhāva*) cannot be considered as relation.

As long as the relationship between object and object-bearer is not defined, it is not possible to confirm an object, because the confirmation of an object presupposes the knowledge of that object, and it is necessary to define the relation between an object and its cognition in order to establish relation as such. The problems inherent in defining an object as discussed above result in demonstrating that something considered to be an object of knowledge cannot be grounded upon logic. Śrīharṣa extends this approach of refuting the definition of 'object' to other possible definitions, specifically focusing upon Udayana's position.

Examining another definition of an object proposed by Udayana

Śrīharṣa presents another definition of an object proposed by Udayana in *Kiraṇāvalī* as follows:

vinā saṃbandhāntaram yadvīṣeṣaṇaṃ jñānaṃ sa viśayaḥ |²⁸
(KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 662:1)

That is an object of which cognition is qualified independent of any other relation.

This definition can be presented as:

sambandhāntaram antarā jñānavīṣeṣaṇakatvaṃ viśayatvaṃ |²⁹
To be qualified as an object is to have cognition as the qualifying property independent of any other relation.

In statements such as 'a pot is known,' knowledge is considered as a qualifier of the pot. In the above-mentioned definition, the qualifier 'independent of any other relation' is mentioned so that there is not an unwarranted extension of definition (*ativyāpti*) in examples such as 'I am endowed with knowledge.'³⁰ In qualified knowledge, the question is whether the object of such a qualified cognition is 'pure object' or not. In other words, when a 'blue-lotus' is cognized, is the object of this cognition qualified by any other property? Following the lines of Udayana, the property 'blue' given in this example does not refer to blue being qualified by blueness, but rather, it refers to the blue that is distinct from that which is not blue (*anīlabhinna*). Lotus, the property-bearer in this example, on the other hand, is cognized as being qualified by its own nature, here, lotusness.

Here, the property of something considered as qualified is understood by a separate category identified as property-bearer (*viśiṣṭa*).³¹ There are two ways of understanding this interpretation of something that is qualified (*viśeṣya*). By the term 'property,' the problem is, whether to accept a specific property, or to accept 'property in general.'

There are problems in both positions. If by the term property, 'property in general' is understood, then in examples such as 'stick-bearer' (*daṇḍin*), where the person is qualified by a stick, even 'stick' will be considered as 'qualified,' because it has 'stickness' as a qualifying property. There will not be this extension of definition (*atīvyāpti*) if the second option is followed, because by the term property all properties, including stickness, will be excluded as qualifier of 'stick-bearer.' However, there will be another consequence in adopting the second option. The problem is, how to cognize something with multiple qualifiers, if the definition precludes cognizing something endowed with a specific property. For instance, if smoke is considered as qualified by a property of 'lacking concomitance with fire' when occurring in the sky, and the property of 'being uninterrupted from its origin' when seen on the mountain, the smoke that is qualified by two different qualifiers will not be known. Hence, when the smoke is cognized with the first qualifier, it will not be cognized with the second qualifier.

Consequences follow from considering that the same smoke has both of these properties and so both properties can be simultaneously cognized. The smoke qualified by the first property contradicts the smoke qualified by the second qualifier: the smoke seen in the sky is not concomitant with fire, as there is no fire in the sky; whereas the uninterrupted smoke rising from the hill has concomitance (*sāhacarya*) with fire.

It cannot be argued that only the property that is anticipated will be accepted and the second qualifier, uninterrupted smoke which is concomitant with fire, does not correspond to that which is qualified by the first qualifier, the smoke in the sky that is not concomitant with fire. The reason is simple: all of these qualifiers belong to the same smoke that is free from all qualifiers. Furthermore, it cannot be argued that to lack concomitance is a property but that it does not qualify the property-bearer (*viśeṣya*), because the property-bearer has not yet been defined.

Furthermore, the term *tadviśeṣaṇa*, 'the property of that,' found in the definition of an object, requires further explanation. This term, a *ṣaṣṭhī-tatpuruṣa*-type of compound, with *tat* in the genitive case and *viśeṣaṇa* in the nominative, can be interpreted in two different ways: the genitive referring to 'relation' in general, or the genitive in the compound referring to a specific relation in the form of a property.

If the genitive in this compound refers to 'relation in general,' then, even 'designation' (*upalakṣaṇa*) will be understood by the qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*). On the other hand, if by 'relation' a specific relation of the character of the property is understood, there will be a consequence of mutual dependence (*anyonyāśraya*). This occurs because a qualifier is presupposed in order to

define what is qualified, and in order to define a qualifier, that which is qualified is presupposed.

A completely different consequence arises from accepting this definition. If what is qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) also refers to the property that qualifies a property-bearer (*viśeṣya*), even what is not a property-bearer, i.e., the qualified (*viśiṣṭa*), also will be a property-bearer. However, if it does not refer to the property qualifying a property-bearer, then this position will not be in agreement with the definition.

Naiyāyikas consider knowledge (*jñāna*) as one of the properties belonging to the self and consider the self (*ātman*) as the substrate of this property. In the example, 'knowledge has inherence in me,' knowledge is a property of my inherence (*matsama-vāya*) independent of any other relation. However, this inherence is not an object in this example but rather it is considered as a relation of knowledge. So this inherence will have the property that qualifies the object and an over-extension of the definition (*ativyāpti*) exists.

It can be argued that the above objection does not apply to the Naiyāyika definition. In an example, 'a pot is known,' knowledge is a qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*); however, it does not have the relationship of property and property-bearer (*gunaguṇibhāva*). In the example, 'the self is endowed with knowledge,' (*jñānavān ātmā*), knowledge is a qualifier. However, in this example, there is also a relationship of property and property-bearer between knowledge and the self. In the first example, where 'pot' is qualified, there is the property to be qualified in 'pot,' because there is no other relationship except for that of qualifier and qualified necessary to determine the properties qualifying the qualified (*viśeṣya-tā*) and qualifier (*viśeṣaṇatā*). However, in the second example, the self, although it has been qualified by knowledge, is not considered to be endowed with the property qualifying the object of knowledge. In the case of the example, 'the self is endowed with knowledge,' inherence, a different relation than that of property and property-bearer, is what determines property and property-bearer.

If there is no qualifier, specifically the clause, 'independent of any other relation,' in the definition of an object, there will be over-pervasion. This applies even to the self, in the example in which the self is endowed with knowledge. In the same way, in the example, 'knowledge has inherence with me' (*matsamavāyo jñānasya*), additional inherence can be rejected for the same reason that the definition of object has the clause, independent of any other relation.

Advaitins do not agree with this proposition. These two examples, the self being endowed with knowledge, and knowledge having inherence in me, are different. In the first, the relation 'inherence' causes the self to be qualified (*viśeṣya*). In the second example, inherence is not causing something else to be endowed with the property of being qualified (*viśeṣya*), but rather, inherence itself is what is being qualified. In this second example, inherence

cannot be considered as another relation. It is too broad to have inherence as the relation in the definition of an object.

In the same way, in the case of an absence of knowledge (*jñānābhāva*), where absence is qualified by knowledge, the absence will be an object of knowledge. This is because, in an absence of knowledge, the property in knowledge to qualify absence exists independent of any other relation. If the argument is made that the same inherence is the relation that has been identified here as self-essence (*svatūpa*) in the case of the absence of knowledge, one can reply that the relation here is the same: this is the relation of property and property-bearer (*viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*).

In the case of 'a pot is cognized,' one can argue that the relation identified as the relationship of qualifier and qualified (*viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*) is not distinct from its referents, knowledge as the qualifier and the pot as qualified. However, this is the same case even with 'knowledge has inherence with me,' because inherence is the referent and this is the very relation identified as self-nature (*svatūpa*). This discussion demonstrates that the consequence of over-pervasion (*ativyāpti*) is not solved.

Modifying the definition

To defend the definition of an object, for example, existing independent of any other relation, we can add a clause:

saṃyogasamavāyātirikto vinā sambandhāntaraṃ jñānaviśeṣyo viśayaḥ |
(*Vidyāsāgrī* on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 666:7)

An object is that which is distinct from contact and inherence and is qualified by knowledge independent of any other relation.

With this definition there can be no consequence in the case of 'knowledge has inherence in me,' because in this case, the very relational inherence is the relation of self-essence. In some instances there may be the relation of contact between a qualifier and what is qualified. Therefore, contact is excluded by this very definition.

However, this definition is not free from the consequence of the over-pervasion as demonstrated above in the case of 'the absence of knowledge.' In this example, knowledge is qualifying absence. However, the qualifier that qualifies the property (*viśeṣaṇatā*) and knowledge are related neither by contact nor by inherence. Therefore, the absence of knowledge will be an object of this very knowledge.

An argument can be made that the relation of property and property-bearer is possible only among co-existing entities, and that knowledge and its absence do not co-exist. Therefore, in this case, knowledge is not a qualifier of its absence, but it should be considered as a designator (*upalakṣaṇa*).

However, this cannot be the case. If the relation of property and property-bearer is limited only to co-existing entities, for past or future objects of knowledge, as in the examples ‘there was a rainstorm,’ ‘it will rain again,’ the knowledge of such objects will not have a qualifier, and so the definition will not be valid in the case of future or past objects. If, instead of a qualifier, knowledge is considered in these examples as a designator (*upalakṣaṇa*), and the absence of knowledge is also designated by knowledge, there is the same consequence of over-pervasion.

We can solve this problem, if the definition includes only categories that share being (*bhāva*), and exclude non-being (*abhāva*); there will be an under-pervasion (*avyāpti*) in the case when absence is cognized. Furthermore, this definition cannot limit the causal factors of cognition from the definition of object accepted in Nyāya epistemology, such as the contact between object and mind, or mind with the self. So these instrumentals necessary for the rise of knowledge must be objects of cognition.³²

Examining Śālikanātha’s definition of object

Śālikanātha, one of the prominent Mīmāṃsakas closely aligned with the Bāṭṭa sub-school, defines an object of knowledge somewhat differently than Udayana. According to him:

atra brūmo ya evārtho yasyām saṃvidi bhāsate |
vedyaḥ sa eva nānyad dhi vidyād vedyasya lakṣaṇam ||
*(Prakaraṇapañcikā 48)*³³

Here, we say, the specific meaning (*artha*) that appears in a particular {*yasyām*} awareness, that very meaning {*sa*} is the object of cognition. One should not know anything else as the character of the object of cognition.

Ānandapūrṇa, in his commentary *Vidyāsāgarī*, expands upon this definition by saying that something which does not appear in a specific cognition is not an object of that particular cognition. In this way, while defining an object of cognition, even that which is not an object of cognition is defined.

However, there are problems, even following this definition. The term *saṃvidi*, the locative form applied to the term *saṃvid* (awareness), can be interpreted in three ways: 1) the locative refers to substrate (*adhikaraṇa*) of awareness, 2) the locative refers to an object of awareness, or 3) this refers entirely to referents (*sambandhimātra*). A fourth alternative is that ‘the locative referring to dependent clause’ (*satī saptamī*).³⁴

The locative found in this definition cannot be interpreted following the first alternative, namely, the locative referring to the substrate of awareness. A pot, for instance, will not be an object of cognition when ‘pot’ is cognized,

as knowledge is not the substrate of 'pot.' If, by imagining a relation 'causing its appearance' (*svabhāsa-janakatva*), cognition is considered as the substrate of 'pot,' there will nonetheless be over-pervasion (*ativyāpti*) in the qualifiers such as the property qualifying knowledge (*jñānatva*) or the property qualifying a property (*guṇatva*), because knowledge is considered as the substrate of these qualifiers as well.

Neither can this be interpreted following the second alternative, with the locative here referring to an object. What constitutes an object is not yet defined, and if the definition presupposes an object, this will lead to the same consequence of *siddhasādhana*tā, the establishment of a thesis that relies on presumptions not yet confirmed. Furthermore, if knowledge is considered as the object of 'pot,' this will contradict the common understanding that a pot is an object of its cognition.³⁵

Following the third alternative, that is, where the referent in general is the meaning of the locative, even an instrument such as a stick will be an object of the knowledge of 'pot,' because the stick is an instrument for making a pot and is therefore a relata (*saṁbandhin*). If this over-pervasion is solved by suggesting that objects such as a stick are not revealed by the knowledge of 'pot' and so are not an object of this specific cognition, there will be the same consequence of *siddhasādhana*tā. It is because, on one hand, what is being revealed has not yet been established while, on the other hand, the definition presupposes what is being revealed in order to defend the definition of object.

There is a consequence even in understanding this locative as referring to reliance. Following this understanding the definition will be:

yasyāṁ saṁvidi prakāśamānatāyāṁ yaḥ prakāśate |
(KhKh. Yogindrānanda 1979, 659:5)

that which appears in an appearance of a specific awareness.

According to this interpretation, a pot is revealed when there is an awareness of 'pot' and therefore the pot is an object of the awareness of 'pot.'

The consequence of adopting this interpretation is the same *siddhasādhana*tā. The meaning of 'being revealed' (*prakāśamānatā*) is 'to be an object of cognition' (*prakāśaviśayatā*). What is an object has not yet been defined, and to presuppose an object in the clause while defining an object leads to the same consequence.

An argument can be made that there are two types of object: 1) objects in general (*sāmānya*), and 2) objects in particular (*viśeṣa*). Although 'object in particular' is what is being defined, 'object in general' is commonly known and by relying upon the commonly considered object, this definition is established. However, without knowing the object in particular, an object in general cannot be known. For instance, if one does not know any particular tree, one cannot know the forest in general. Furthermore, the effort

to define an object cannot rely upon a common assumption if that is not grounded on logic.

Another definition of object

Śrīharṣa presents another definition of object that accepts cognition as an act, such as going. The definition is:

jñānakarmatvaṃ [viśayatvaṃ] |

(KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 661:5)

[To be an object is] to be in accusative case (*karma*) in relation to cognition.

According to this interpretation, the verb to know, like the verb to go, is a transitive verb (*sakarmaka*). Following this argument, even the act of knowing accepts something in the accusative case, and the entity that is in the accusative is an object of knowledge.

Śrīharṣa finds this definition hard to accept, as the relationship between cognition and the object that is in the accusative must be defined.³⁶ This cannot be the relationship of object and object-bearer, because this is the very relation that is being examined. There cannot be a contact (*saṃyoga*) between these two, because the act of knowing is not considered as ‘substance’ (*dravya*) to be related by this relation. As the Naiyāyikas consider knowledge to be the property of the self, it cannot be their position to accept inference as this relation. Neither can this relation be identity (*tādātmya*). This cannot be a relation called *śakti* (potency), as this relation, like contact, relates substances.

The relation between the act of knowing and its *karma* also cannot be the relation of determining and determined (*nirūpya-nirūpaka*), because, in the absence of the primary relation that relates the act of knowing with its *karma*, the acceptance of this relation will be too broad, leading to the consequence of over-pervasion (*ativyāpti*). Neither can the relation between knowing and its *karma* be ‘being an object’ (*viśayatva*), since ‘object’ has not yet been defined. This relation cannot be the relation of cause and effect (*janyajanakabhāva*), because the omniscience of God is considered to be eternal and not caused, so this definition will therefore not be valid.³⁷

This definition of *jñānakarmatva* as an object of knowledge is an extension of the definition of object-in-general as ‘an object is that which is the locus of the fruits of an activity which inheres in something else.’³⁸ In the example, ‘Devadatta goes to a village,’ the village, in the accusative, is the locus of the fruit of action of going performed by Devadatta. The consequence of this definition is that, in examples such as ‘a leaf falls from a tree,’ the fruit of the action of falling is in the leaf but it is still not in the accusative case, but rather, it is in the ablative.

Examining the definition of Dharmakīrti

Among the Buddhist philosophical sub-schools in India, it is not easy to align Dharmakīrti with one particular section. Historians have generally identified him as a Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka philosopher. The definition of object provided by Dharmakīrti that often appears in classical Hindu philosophical texts follows:

jñānākārārpaṇakṣamo hetur eva viśayaḥ |³⁹

An object is the cause capable of offering [its] form in cognition.

However, the problem is, what offers the form to cognition has not yet been determined. It is not possible to preclude the contact of sense with object in offering form to cognition, and to determine that only an external object can do so.

There are further problems in accepting this definition of object. This definition distinguishes form (*ākāra*) as distinct from cognition. In fact, there is no distinction between cognition and the form (*ākāra*). This argument is particularly unacceptable to both the Sākāravāda school of Buddhist epistemology and the Nyāya philosophers.⁴⁰

The problem here is, what is to be understood by the term 'the form of knowledge' (*jñānākāra*)? Is it the very self-essence of cognition, or is it a property (*dharma*) that is qualifying the cognition? In the first case, all causal factors of cognition are offering the form of knowledge, and therefore, each of these should be an object of knowledge. This is too wide. If, following the second alternative, the term is understood as 'property,' then, with the removal of such a property, the definition will not be applicable. Furthermore, while accepting the property implied in cognition, if this property is considered as having the character of being (*bhāvarūpa*), this contradicts the thesis acceptable to the Vaibhāṣikas as well. On the other hand, if this property has the character of non-being, that which is of the character of non-being cannot be the cause.⁴¹

It can be argued that although all other causal factors can be identified in this definition, what is intended by the term 'cause' is only that which has the *anvaya-vyatireka*, the law that determines that *x* exists if there is *y*, and in the absence of *y*, *x* does not exist. In this case, the *anvaya-vyatireka* intended is that between form and external object: if there is form, there is an external object, in the absence of an external object, there is no form. As with other causal factors, there is no *anvaya-vyatireka* as such.

However, this *anvaya-vyatireka* is the same even in the case of sense-object contact. Whenever an object is cognized, there is sense-object contact, and in the absence of this contact, there is no cognition of an object. With this understanding, a suggestion can now be made, that although all other causal factors share the law of *anvaya-vyatireka*, they are not explicit (*sphuṭa*). Only by adding this extra qualifier can the external object be understood.⁴²

The consequence of adding this extra qualifier to the definition is that this 'being explicit' (*sphuṭatva*) can be interpreted in two different ways, 1) as explicit in general, or 2) explicit in the sense that it is directly being perceived (*dṛśyamāna*). Neither proposition is free from flaws.

If by *sphuṭatva* anything that is explicit is understood, then there is the same *anvaya-vyatireka* even of a sense-organ, for instance, the eye, in perceiving a pot. So even the sense-organ will be an object of the specific cognition of pot. Following the second alternative, if what is directly being perceived is understood by the term *sphuṭa*, then the consequence is that there are multiple causal factors in perception, such as light that accommodates perception. It is not only the external object that can be considered as the explicit cause in perception, and so this definition remains too broad. Furthermore, what is being defined is the object that is directly being perceived (*dṛśyamāna*), and to have this clause in the definition leads to the same fallacies mentioned above.

Conclusion

This examination of the definition of an object of cognition primarily relies upon KhKh, TP, and the commentaries found in these texts. The rejection of difference as well as the rejection of object on the ground that it cannot be defined, both are the approaches developed after Śaṅkara, primarily in the texts such as KhKh and TP. The influence of Maṇḍana in this approach is visible with his focus on rejecting difference. These texts, while rejecting difference, also reject 'identity' between cognition and its object, a position that clearly differentiates Advaita from Yogācāra Buddhism. This approach of Advaita clearly differs from the monistic approach found in the *Upaniṣads*. What is radical in this approach is to rely solely on the epistemological analysis in order to establish Advaita, claiming that the immediate mode of perception is non-dual in nature, and it is when awareness knows itself. This analysis does not depend upon *Upaniṣadic* passages, but rather, it examines the scope of perception and grounds non-duality through investigating what is perceived.

This approach, while rationalizing non-dual experience, also brings this from the scope of spiritual experience to the realm of commonly shared experience. When Advaita is considered as a *upāya* (method) for self-realization, this rejection of difference and object of perception parallels the tendency to establish self-aware consciousness and the singularity of the self. In the immediate mode of awareness, along the lines of these arguments, neither the phenomenal world nor the plurality of the subject is cognized.

As consciousness in its true nature is never divided in the form of subject and object, there is never bondage. With the rise of *vāsanās* (mental impressions) there is the rise of these notions that parallel the rise of the external world. This approach of establishing Advaita confirms Advaita as a *upāya*. As the authority of the scriptures or of masters relies on self-experience and

while these are not intrinsically confirmed, this approach of Advaita confirms that non-dual awareness is inherent to the self and is not generated through scriptures or through instructions. Along these lines, non-dual experience is the only single reality which is not revealed through any external means. The moment when awareness does not constitute the external world with the rise of subject and object, it is liberation, and the world with the establishment of subject and object is bondage.

Two examples found in Advaita literature provide further support to the Advaita position that describes perception of duality as 'ignorance' or 'illusion.' These two are the illustrations of painting and of the ocean. Following the first example, the canvas and the colors give rise to the notion of specific form and a name is imposed upon this form. The form of the painting and the name given to it does not exist in absence of color and canvas. When we perceive canvas and colors, Advaitins argue, our impressions arise and give notion to specific form. The next is the illustration of waves and ocean. Although waves do not refer to something else independent of the ocean, however, our language constitutes a distinction between waves and ocean. Perception of difference and the rise of duality rest upon our mental impressions, emotions, and linguistic constructs. Nevertheless, this does not constitute a real distinction in the reality that exists independent of our projections.

Part IV

Comparisons

8 *Cinmātra* and *cittamātra*: the Advaita critique of Yogācāra

Background

This study has brought to the forefront several parallels between Advaita Vedānta, specifically the doctrine of ‘awareness only’ (*cinmātra*) and the Yogācāra doctrine of ‘consciousness only’ (*cittamātra*). Similarities and differences between these two apparently similar terms have been briefly addressed in the first chapter of this book. The second chapter has demonstrated how the Advaita concept of self-awareness (*svapraśāśatā*), parallels the Yogācāra concept of self-reflexivity (*svasaṃvedana*). The Buddhist philosopher Ratnakīrti conceives of only a single stream of mind, which is parallel to the concept of Ekajīva. Similarly, the Advaita position examined in the fourth chapter, that awareness permeates existence, can be found in the Vijñānavāda texts with similar terminology. The concept of *avidyā* aligns these two philosophies even more closely, as both describe the phenomenal to be the product of ignorance. Since both these philosophies reject difference as a category and reduce the existence of the external object to the absolute whether identified as Brahman or as Śūnyatā, one can easily be misled to the conclusion that Advaita Vedānta and Yogācāra are essentially identical philosophies.

The negation of what is perceived comes to the forefront in both Mahāyāna and Advaita Vedānta conceptions of reality. The application of the examples of dream, illusion, or mirage is at the center in the writings of Gauḍapāda, Sureśvara, or Prakāśānanda. Texts such as *Yogavāsiṣṭha* also utilize these illustrations in their rejection of the reality of commonsense experience. This pedagogical approach of describing reality through the negation of what is not real is common to both these traditions.

Additional Advaita concepts that are hardly distinguishable from the Madhyamaka and Yogācāra doctrines include the absence of origination (*ajāti*), the idea that everything perceived is appearance only (*ābhāsa*), the concept that creation corresponds to perception (one of the understandings of *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi*), and the understanding that entities do not exist apart from the domain of knowledge (*jñātaikasattā*). In describing the degrees of reality, similar terms used by both traditions are *pratibhāsa* and *paramārtha*.

Advaita Vedāntins and the Yogācāra Buddhists share additional terminology. Terms such as *viññānamātra*, *jñānamātra*, or *viññaptimātra* are commonly found in both traditions, describing what really exists. To make the case further intriguing, these traditions have the terminology of *svapṛakāśatā* and *svasaṃvedana* to describe the self-reflexive nature of consciousness. The concept of 'consciousness only' shared in these various terms becomes even more problematic when some Advaita texts such as *Yogavāsiṣṭha* (YV) describe what is perceived in terms of *manomātra*, or *māyāmātra*. Terms such as non-origination (*ajāti*), appearance (*ābhāsa*), or seeing (*dṛṣṭi*) to describe the phenomenal world occur frequently in the Advaita literature. One could argue on this ground that Advaita and Viññānavāda are not categorically different.

This conceptual intimacy between the two traditions has exposed Advaita to criticism: the Hindu theological schools have often accused Śaṅkara of being a pseudo-Buddhist.¹ Advaitins, on the other hand, often credit Śaṅkara for refuting the Buddhist doctrines. This tendency is manifest even in contemporary scholarship, with some scholars such as Stcherbatsky maintaining that there is hardly any difference between Buddhism and Advaita Vedānta, while others, such as Ram-Prasad, demonstrate that distinctions do exist.² Studies highlighting similarities primarily focus upon the Advaita writings of Gauḍapāda, whereas those establishing differences rely on the subsequent analysis of Śaṅkara and Śrīharṣa.³ Although it is not possible to provide a comprehensive comparison of Buddhism and Vedānta in one small chapter, it is essential for the purpose of the present work to closely examine the apparent similarity in the concepts of *cinnmātra* and *cittamātra* as well as the apparent distinctions in the two traditions drawn by scholars.

Two major sources for studying the doctrine of *cinnmātra* are the philosophical writings of Śaṅkara and the exegeses following his stream of thought, and the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, which, while presenting the identical doctrine, nonetheless differs significantly in presentation. Although the terminology of *cinnmātra* is comparatively frequent in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, this text synthesizes multiple and sometimes contradictory doctrines and is therefore not brought into this discussion that addresses differences between Advaita and Yogācāra. The arguments found in the school of Śaṅkara are rather exclusive and therefore pertinent to this comparative study.

Śaṅkara's criticism of the Yogācāra doctrine in his *Bhāṣya* to the *Brahmasūtra* provides the basis for subsequent Advaitins in their evaluation of the Yogācāra doctrine. Before evaluating Śaṅkara's critique, we should make a general observation concerning paraphrases of opposing philosophical schools and classical Indian treatises. Classical Indian philosophers confronted similar challenges and hurdles as those faced by contemporary scholars in disciplines of comparative studies. When paraphrasing the view of an opponent's philosophical system, a philosopher will inevitably apply terms and concepts that are suitable in his or her own philosophical context, but alien to that under consideration. Philosophical systems are fluid creations, and the arguments used to refute an opposing system should not

be taken as the final view. Commonly, these represent expedient counter-arguments, which are provisional stages of a larger philosophical exposition. This is to say that Śaṅkara's criticism may not synthesize the range of other philosophers' positions, and any comparative study of his philosophy must take into account its specific historical context. In order to expedite their refutations of opposing philosophical systems, all classical Indian philosophers borrow the arguments from other opponents, even though those arguments are not consistent with their conclusive philosophical synthesis. The criticism of Yogācāra as presented by Śaṅkara needs to be read in light of these observations.

Evaluation of Śaṅkara's criticism

Śaṅkara identifies three distinct Buddhist philosophical viewpoints to be refuted in his commentary upon the *Brahmasūtra*: those of the Sarvāstivāda, Vijñānavāda, and Śūnyavāda.⁴ Among the Sūtras identified by Śaṅkara as the criticism of the Buddhist positions, four of them primarily relate to the criticism of the Yogācāra position.⁵ At a certain level, many of these arguments can also be directed against the Advaita position of Dṛṣṭisrṣṭi, the doctrine considered in this study.

In his criticism to Vijñānavāda, Śaṅkara presents select arguments as the *prima facie* position that can be identified as those of Vasubandhu, Diñnāga, and Dharmakīrti. They are:

- 1 Entities cannot be confirmed either as 'part,' in the form of atoms, or as 'whole,' composed of atoms.⁶
- 2 Entities are determined due to cognition. This position, as summarized by Ingalls, is that "the particularization need actually be only of the cognition, not of the thing."⁷
- 3 Since cognition and their correspondents are simultaneous, there exists no difference between them.⁸
- 4 Just as dreaming does not require the external existence of the dream objects, so also are the entities of the waking state.⁹
- 5 Consciousness can arise due to the rise of various 'impressions' (*vāsanā*).¹⁰

Śaṅkara initiates his response to the above arguments with the statement that an external entity cannot be denied because it is cognized in every act of knowledge.¹¹ If this criticism were to confirm the reality of the objects of perception independent of Brahman, that would repudiate the very Advaita doctrine that something exists other than Brahman. Advaitins respond to this objection by adopting two or three degrees of reality, wherein the reality of external entities applies only to conventional (*vyavahāra*) or illusory (*pratibhāsa*) states of consciousness and is not applicable to the highest state of non-dual awareness.

The stark contrast between Śaṅkara's Advaita and Yogācāra becomes clearly apparent during an examination of their respective doctrines of perception: the Advaitins understand Brahman to be the highest universal (*mahāsāmānya*), and to be directly apprehended in the first flash of perception, whereas the Buddhist epistemology developed by Dīnāga determines that the particular (*svalakṣaṇa*) is the object of perception and that the universal (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*) is the object of inference.¹² It is noteworthy that these two philosophies interpret the universal (*sāmānya*) differently. For the Advaitins this is a universal generalization, whereas for the Yogācārins, it is a mental construct. Dīnāga identifies perception as the act that is free from conceptual construction. According to Advaita, only the realization of Brahman is free from conceptual constructs.¹³

It is also noteworthy that Śaṅkara criticizes the Yogācāra position that is compatible to the doctrine of momentariness. It is not necessarily the case that all the Yogācārins adopt this position. For instance, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (LAS) of the Yogācāra tradition stands apart from the Aśaṅga/Maitreya position in maintaining that the *ālayavijñāna* is non-momentary insofar as it is pervaded by undefiled factors.¹⁴

The second objection of the Vijñānavādins, that it is actually cognition and not an object that is particularized in the mode of awareness, raises the issue of the self-reflexive nature of consciousness. Just as the doctrines of *cinnātra* and *cittamātra* appear similar, so also do the concepts of self-awareness (*svaparakāśatā*) of the Advaitins and self-cognition (*svasaṃvedana*) of the Yogācārins. Śaṅkara, however, rejects the Yogācāra concept of *svasaṃvedana*. This rejection is crucial to understanding the distinctions between the nature of consciousness as recognized in these two schools of thought. Although there are subtle inner differences, all the Advaitins agree that the awareness that is identical to the self is *svaparakāśa*. Śaṅkara's rejection of *svasaṃvedana*, therefore, requires a closer examination.

Śaṅkara raises multiple arguments against the concept of *svasaṃvedana*. He finds it problematic that the momentary nature of consciousness as recognized in the doctrine of *cittamātra* can be self-cognizing. He argues, the consciousness that lasts for one moment collapses by just cognizing itself and it cannot find itself in the forms of the subject and object of cognition.¹⁵

Śaṅkara's next argument against the self-cognizing nature of consciousness compares consciousness to the flame of a lamp. Śaṅkara argues that there is a contradiction in accepting the cognizing act itself as the object of cognition. To cognize is a transitive action; it is to be aware of something. Śaṅkara finds it problematic to accept this action to also be the object of cognition. He demonstrates this contradiction with the example that 'fire burns itself.'¹⁶ What is identified as *vijñapti* in the Yogācāra school and also identified as self-cognizing, is explicitly not the Advaitins' consciousness (*cit*) that is self-aware. The *vijñapti* that is being criticized by Śaṅkara to be self-cognizing is synonymous to *pratyaya*, *vikalpa*, *buddhi*, *vṛtti*, or *buddhi-vṛtti* in the philosophy of Śaṅkara.¹⁷ And following the Advaitins, *pratyayas*

are not considered to be self-aware. The awareness that is self-aware in the Advaita doctrine is not the momentary consciousness identified by the Buddhists.

Śaṅkara replies to the Vijñānavāda argument that accepting consciousness being revealed by another consciousness leads to infinite regress, with a statement that the witnessing self is not an object of perception and so it does not require another subject to be perceived.¹⁸ Śaṅkara further argues that the self is self-evident and is not dependent upon any means of knowledge for its confirmation.¹⁹ Śaṅkara also rejects the argument that the consciousness that is momentary is also reflexive. The example he provides is the comparison to a lamp, suggesting that in the absence of a conscious self, a lamp cannot reveal anything.²⁰ This objection relies on the difference between Advaita and Vijñānavāda: According to the Advaitins, there exists a permanent self that witnesses the rise and collapse of mental modifications, whereas following the Vijñānavādins, there is no self as substrate, apart from the very consciousness that is simultaneously grasped as subject and object.

The concept of self-cognition, with its terminology of *svasaṃvedana*, is attributed to Dīnnāga, and most of Śaṅkara's arguments appear to encounter Dīnnāga's position. Hattori's translation of the passage from Dīnnāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* that addresses *svasaṃvedana* follows:

There is also mental [perception, which is of two kinds:] awareness of an [external] object and self-awareness of [such subordinate mental activities as] desire and the like, [both of which are] free from conceptual construction.²¹

The self-cognition, as identified here by Dīnnāga, includes desire, anger, ignorance, pleasure, pain, etc., that are mental states. This passage does not explicitly address the self-cognizing nature of all instances of cognition. Another passage, explicitly the passage from the *Vṛtti*, makes the broader claim of *svasaṃvedana*:

Or [it can be maintained that] the self-cognition or the cognition cognizing itself (*svasaṃvedana*) is here the result [of the act of cognizing].

Every cognition is produced with a twofold appearance, namely, that of itself [as subject] (*svābhāsa*), and that of the object (*viṣayābhāsa*). The cognizing of itself as [possessing] these two appearances or the self-cognition (*svasaṃvitti*) is the result [of the cognitive act].²²

Both the arguments of Śaṅkara, 1) that the momentary nature of cognition cannot be self-cognizing while manifesting itself in the forms of *grāhya* and *grāhaka*, and 2) that there is a contradiction in accepting a single cognition to be both action and object, can be considered to be the Advaita response to Dīnnāga's position cited above. Śaṅkara refutes the argument that there is infinite regress in accepting a higher order consciousness that

is aware of cognitions. This objection is raised by Diñnāga in this very sequence.²³

Some of the objections Śaṅkara raises concerning *svasaṃvedana* already appear earlier within Buddhism itself. For instance, Bhavya points out that Diñnāga's assumption that cognition manifests as both subject and object contradicts Diñnāga's very own theory that the resulting cognition is self-cognition.²⁴ Similar to Śaṅkara's argument that cognition revealing itself would identify action with its object, Vaibhāṣikas refute the argument of self-cognition, saying that this is similar to a finger-tip touching itself, or knife-blade cutting itself.²⁵ When commenting upon the self-cognizing nature of consciousness, Śaṅkara cites the example of a lamp. This example, found early in *Mahāvibhāṣā* in the process of presenting the Mahāsāṅghika view,²⁶ appears in the context of explaining *svasaṃvedana* in Vinitadeva's commentary on *Nyāyabindu*.²⁷ Śaṅkara's critique of this example resonates with the Vaibhāṣika objections that a lamp is made of material particles whereas consciousness is not, that a lamp cannot make something as its object, and that awareness is a faculty of a sentient being.²⁸

Śaṅkara's refutation of the definition of 'object' while countering Vijñānavāda is explicitly the position of Diñnāga. The definition under consideration is:

antarjñeyarūpaṃ tu bahirvad avabhāṣate so 'rthaḥ |²⁹

The object [of cognition] is that which appears as if outside [although] is inside, in the form of knowable.

The objection of Śaṅkara to this definition is, what is it that is referred to by 'as if outside' (*bahirvad*)? The heart of the objection is that, if there are no real externals, how can there be something that is 'as if' external? This objection of Śaṅkara can be compared to that of Bhavya, who says that there is no valid example (*dr̥ṣṭānta*) in Diñnāga's rejection of external objects.³⁰

The third argument of Vijñānavādins examined by Śaṅkara is the concept of *sahopalambha*. In refutation of this concept, Śaṅkara argues that the simultaneity of cognition and its referent is determined due to the relationship of sense-object and its concept as cause and effect, and not because of the identity between cognition and its referent.³¹ Jñānottama's refutation of 'identity' (*abheda*) addresses the subsequent Advaita arguments criticizing *sahopalambha*.

Although Śaṅkara does not distinguish between Sākāra and Nirākāra doctrines of Vijñānavāda, the arguments he has criticized up to this point are primarily those of the Sākāravādins, who held that perception does not grasp the object directly but through the intermediary of image (*ākāra*). On the contrary, the Vijñānavādins adopting the Nirākāra position held that cognition is free from image.³² The prominent philosophers such as Diñnāga, Dharmapāla, and Dharmakīrti are identified with the first school, whereas philosophers such as Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, and Sthiramati are identified

with the second school.³³ Although the two objections that Śaṅkara subsequently raised and are discussed below represent the position shared by all the Vijñānavādins, these primarily represent the philosophy of the Nirākāravādins.

Śaṅkara's rejection of the identification of the waking state with dream relies on two arguments. One, the contents of the dream state do not exist in the waking state whereas the entities of waking state are not negated the same way. Next, he argues that perception and memory are two different faculties of consciousness, and he compares dream to memory, and consciousness in the waking state to perception.³⁴ Just as the analysis of dream is crucial to understanding Śaṅkara's own Advaita system, it is equally important in knowing the distinction between the application of dream in the systems of Advaita and Yogācāra.³⁵ In refuting the dream analogy of Vasubandhu, Śaṅkara's critique relies on the notion of 'externality,' that if there were no externals as such, any denial of such experience would be implausible.³⁶ While maintaining the existence of only Brahman in the absolute sense, Śaṅkara posits that the experience of the world is not invalid at the time of that experience.³⁷

The problem here is that although Advaitins such as Śaṅkara may have a different stance from that of Vasubandhu and may make a distinction between 'external' and 'internal' experiences and analyze dream as distinct from the waking state, it is difficult to make the same distinction for the Advaitins adopting the doctrine of Dr̥ṣṭiṣṭi (DS), as they are explicit in denying the existence of the entities out of the domain of cognition. Śaṅkara himself is in a dilemma. On one hand he rejects the dream analogy of Vasubandhu, and on the other, he accepts Gauḍapāda, who is explicit in utilizing dream to reject the reality of the external world, as an authority on Advaita.³⁸ When additionally considering texts such as *Paramārthasāra* of Ādiśeṣa or the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, and the school of Ābhāsa, all of which indiscriminately apply dream analogy in their establishment of Advaita, Śaṅkara himself may be in the minority in rejecting such an analogy.

The distinction between the analyses of dream found in these two systems can be made on the ground that the arguments found in Advaita texts are *Upāyic*, in a sense that they are meant to instruct one in the reality of Brahman. 'Rejection of the world' found in the Advaita literature is not rejecting the world *per se*, but is meant only to allow one to realize the true nature of the self. Just as the objective of Vasubandhu is not to merely analyze dreams but to confirm the 'nature of *dharma* that is devoid of essence' (*dharma-nairātmya*),³⁹ the goal of such analysis found in Advaita texts is to confirm the Brahman. The linguistic difference at the absolute level in these two systems is explicit: Advaitins utilize the language of negation in order to confirm Brahman as a positive entity, whereas this negation culminates with the negation of *dharma*s in the Yogācāra context.

The exalted meaning of *dr̥ṣṭi* found in the concept of DS does not refer to the consciousness that is conditioned by ignorance. The *dr̥ṣṭi* of the

Advaitins refers to the essential nature of awareness that is the foundation of the duality of subject and object. This 'seeing' of the Advaitins, therefore, is the changeless substrate upon which concepts, the products of ignorance that last momentarily, are imposed.

The final objection that Śaṅkara raises concerns the Vijñānavāda response that although there are no externals, it is due to impressions (*vāsanā*) that dreams or concepts arise.⁴⁰ Śaṅkara argues that impressions (*vāsanā*) cannot rise in the absence of external objects, as these are their imprints.⁴¹ He then argues, if impressions (*vāsanā*) are independent of external entities for generating impressions, this will lead to infinite regress. Śaṅkara adheres to the existence of external objects in this sequence for the reasons that impressions (*vāsanā*) cannot arise in the absence of external objects whereas external entities can be perceived even in the absence of impressions (*vāsanās*).⁴² According to Śaṅkara, impressions are properties that require the property-holder, the substrate, for them to exist.⁴³

Śaṅkara is aware of the Vijñānavāda response to the criticism of the momentary nature of consciousness that *ālaya* consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) functions as the substrate for the rise of functioning consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*). Śaṅkara argues that the *ālaya* consciousness that in itself is momentary cannot be the foundation for impressions (*vāsanā*).⁴⁴

It has been pointed out that the concept of *ālaya*-consciousness arises in the yogic context. To the question, when mind enters through absorption into the cessation of all thought, how can it not be withdrawn from the body, the Yogācāra response is, there is no cessation of *ālaya*-consciousness and this is what gives rise to the functioning consciousness (*pravṛtti-vijñāna*).⁴⁵ The concept of *ālaya*-consciousness does not initially appear in order to reject external entities. In the words of Schmithausen, 'the sense-faculties are not only not taught to be mere images in *ālaya* consciousness but, on the contrary, *ālaya* consciousness is expressly taught to stick in the material sense-faculties.'⁴⁶ The arguments raised by Śaṅkara rest upon the Vijñānavāda interpretation of *ālaya*-consciousness found in Vasubandhu's *Trīṃśikā*.⁴⁷

The critique of *vijñapti* in subsequent Advaita

Advaitins after Śaṅkara primarily centered their criticism on Dharmakīrti's position of *sahopalambha* in a broader critique of Vijñānavāda. The arguments of the Advaitins against *sahopalambha* can be gleaned from the writings of Vimuktātman, Vācaspati, and Śrīharṣa. Many of these arguments are borrowed from Kumārila's or Udayana's writings. This trend of evaluating Vijñānavāda is consistent in Advaita texts of Śaṅkara to those of contemporary writers, such as Śaṅkara Caitanya.⁴⁸ Some of these arguments compare the concept of DS with the concept of *Vijñapti*-only, a development in the Advaita exegesis subsequent to Śaṅkara.

For the Advaitins, the Brahman is not indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*), but rather, it is the world that cannot be defined in terms of existing or

non-existing. The world, comprised of *avidyā*, and being its transformation (*pariṇāma*), according to the Advaitins, cannot be determined in any definite way. Along these lines, the first argument of the Advaitins is that as objects cannot be defined independent of cognition, it is also not possible to establish them as having the character of cognition. Advaitins also reject the relationship of object (*viśaya*) and object-bearer (*viśayin*) between the object and its cognition. This rejection silences the argument that, if an object is not of the character of cognition, it should not be the object of cognition. This is proposed to reject the Vijñānavāda argument based on *sahopalambha* that while being identical, there is also a relation of object and object-bearer between object and its cognition.

The next argument against the Vijñānavāda thesis that all that is cognized is consciousness only is that it is not possible to have a *vyatireka* type of inference, or to have an invariable concomitance between the *probans* and the *probandum* (*vyāpti*) in this case, since it is not possible to argue that in absence of consciousness there is no object, because this contradicts the Vijñānavāda maxim that all that exists is consciousness only. This argument relies on one assumed Yogācāra syllogism: a pot, for instance, is of the character of consciousness, because it is an object of consciousness.⁴⁹ If the 'object of consciousness' is understood as 'identical to consciousness,' there will be an identity between the *probans* and *probandum*, a fallacy identified as *siddhasāadhanatā*.

The Advaitins face a challenge in raising this objection, as the problem pointed out, the absence of invariable concomitance between consciousness and its object, is the same in the doctrine of DS, where the existence of an entity out of the domain of knowledge is not accepted. The Advaitins respond to this objection by questioning the assumed relation of 'identity' (*tādātmya*) between consciousness and its reference, a topic that requires its own extensive treatment. Following the doctrine of DS, what is immediately cognized is the very non-dual awareness in itself and it is not considered to be 'identical' to the external entity.

Advaitins interpret the '*abheda*' of Dharmakīrti as something related by 'identity' (*tādātmya*): to say that there is *abheda* between *x* and *kx* is the same as to say *x* and *kx* are related by *tādātmya*. Following this argument, the identity between cognition and its object is similar to the example of 'a pot is a substance,' or 'all is cognizable.' In the first case, the identity of the pot with substance is confirmed, and in the second, the object of cognition is confirmed through identity. In adopting this understanding of identity, to say that *x* is identical to *kx* is similar to the statement that 'a pot is an experience.' However, this statement contradicts the commonsense experience, such as 'I experience a pot,' wherein the object is not identical to its experience.

Furthermore, if 'identity' (*tādātmya*) is confirmed as an independent relation between cognition and its reference, the relation of object and object-bearer (*viśayaviśayibhāva*) will not be required. As this position is not

acceptable to the Vijñānavādins, Advaitins propose a different relation, saying that, let there be identity-in-difference (*bhedābheda*) between consciousness and its reference, if the relation of *tādātmya* is not confirmed. The problem pointed out is, if there is absolute identity, there is no means of knowledge to confirm this relation either. On the basis of this supposition, the Vijñānavādin proposed by Viṭṭhaleśa adopts the position that the object is considered to be identical to, while being different from, its consciousness.⁵⁰

This would be the case if the supposed identity-in-difference were acceptable to the Vijñānavādins. Since this criticism relies on the assumption of the Advaitins and does not represent the position that confirms *abheda*, the Advaitins, therefore, continue their arguments against the position that there is identity between cognition and its reference. In this position, the question is: in the experience 'this is a pot,' is something qualified by 'this' and supposed to be distinct from cognition, existent or non-existent? If the pot qualified by the property 'thisness' (*idantva*) is non-existent, the argument extends, then there cannot be identity between something non-existent, the pot qualified by 'thisness,' and something existing, the 'cognition.' If, following the second option, something qualified by 'thisness' is considered to be existent, this is not, by its very definition, identical to cognition and so would be contradictory to the thesis.

This discussion unfolds on two different fronts. Following the Sākāravāda, consciousness itself somehow assumes forms through which externals are cognized, while the example of a lamp aligns most closely with the Nirākāravāda position, wherein consciousness, amorphous in nature, does not change in nature but merely illuminates objects, as does a lamp. In the Sākāra model, the difficulty is to explain the relation between the external and its image (*ākāra*). Are there separate images in cognizing one multi-colored object to correspond to each of the colors? If this were the case, a unitary cognition of that object would be difficult. As perception is interpreted from the time of Dīnnāga as the act that touches particulars and not universals, the unitary cognition cannot be the case either, that the multi-colored object is cognized with a single unitary image.

Advaitins, taking advantage of the above situation, argue that what is considered to be external and distinct from cognition is itself of the character of cognition. The anticipated objection to this argument is that something other than cognition is considered to be utterly non-existent (*alīka*), and there is therefore no consequence in having it not established. This position considers that something even utterly non-existent such as the 'horns of the rabbit' can be an object of cognition. The objection that there is no ability to perform a function (*arthakṛyākāritva*) in the horns of rabbit, like there is potential for a pot to carry water, is also inapplicable because the common utility, such as one giving rise to a particular concept, exists in the cognized entities whether existent or non-existent. Advaitins consider the cognition such as 'the horns of rabbit do not exist' as indeterminable and equate it with the erroneous cognition of a shell as 'this is silver.'

Vijñānavādins also reduce motions in various forms to the category of cognition alone. Motions occur in sequence. This sequential motion exists in collection only in cognition, and therefore is merely conceptual. Vijñānavādins find the establishment of action as conceptual less challenging compared to the first thesis that all external entities are 'consciousness only.'⁵¹

Following the same argument, the Sākāravādins propose that the collection of individual entities cognized as 'whole' is also cognition alone. They argue, there is no real forest other than individual trees collectively cognized. There is no question however, following the aforementioned arguments, that the cognition such as 'forest' is also endowed with form (*sākāra*).

Advaitins propose a scenario in which Vijñānavādins adopt difference between an object and its concept and raise a question: if the difference between cognition and its reference is considered to be true, in the syllogism, 'all is of the character of cognition, since it is the object of cognition,'⁵² the locus of inference, i.e., 'all,' cannot be 'cognition.' On the other hand, if the difference between cognition and its reference is considered to be false, the cognition of difference itself in consequence will be an erroneous cognition and the inference that presupposes difference that in itself is false will crumble. The response of a supposed Vijñānavādin is that although difference is true in the form of cognition, the imagined aspect of that difference is similar to externality that is considered to be false.⁵³ The objection that there cannot be inference in identity between externals and their concepts is rejected with the argument that the relationship of cause and effect can be confirmed due to difference in forms. Therefore there is difference in a cognition 'whether this is a man or a stump' from the cognition, 'this is a stump.' In response to the objection, the concepts 'this is stump' and 'this is man' are contradictory when applied to the same entity and they should not rise simultaneously, Śaṅkara Caitanya cites a passage to present the Vijñānavāda position that supports the simultaneous rise of multiple concepts, depending upon various *pravṛtti-vijñānas*.⁵⁴

Another possible response of the Vijñānavādins to the objection against *vijñāna* having multiple images (*citrākāra*), such as in the case of the cognition of 'man-lion,' follows the Nirākāra argument that a single consciousness can manifest in multiple forms. The apparent contradiction between the simultaneous oneness and manifoldness of consciousness is resolved by accepting plurality as having the character of particular cognitions (*buddhi*). In order to maintain this position, the distinction between consciousness and cognitions is proposed. As the Advaitins argue that the knowledge pertaining to another person or the pain and pleasure of the next person is considered to be conceptual, not in fact as that experienced by the other person but imposed by the cognizing subject to be pertinent to the other, externality and the number of externals are considered to be imagined while adopting the position that consciousness is inherently endowed with multiple forms.

The problem in accepting a single consciousness manifesting in the form of multiple cognitions is that it requires either externals, or needs mental

impressions (*vāsanās*) to cause plurality. This is resolved by saying that in the absence of mental modes, there will not be the rise of particular cognitions even in acknowledging the existence of the externals. Mental modes do not rely upon external objects for giving rise to concepts.

One of the key objections of Advaitins to the Vijñānavādins is that, in the absence of an eternal self (*ātman*), there should not be any functioning based on cognitions of the past, because the memory of an entity cannot be identical to cognition itself and without an eternal self, there is no substrate for the past instances of cognition. This is where the concept of *ālaya*-consciousness comes into play. The momentariness and non-substantiality of *ālaya*-consciousness cannot be reconciled with the Advaita understanding of consciousness that never goes through real modifications and is free from functions.

In accepting externals as illusory (*māyika*), following the doctrine of *Drṣṭisrṣṭi*, there is no cause-and-effect relationship pertinent to the externals. This doctrine does not contradict the Yogācāra position in which externals are rejected and a real relation of the cause and effect of external objects is denied. Even in accepting indeterminacy (*anirvacanīyatā*) of the externals, there is no real contradiction between these two positions, as they both refute external objects. On these grounds, these two doctrines appear similar once again. A distinction, however, can be made based on the Advaita understanding where externality and 'objecthood' (*viśayatva*) do not exclude concepts, as for the Advaitins, all that is considered to be other than witnessing consciousness is external to it, and so is an object. It is therefore not the case that cognition bears some higher degree of reality in relation to the objects of perception.

The Advaitins agree upon the thesis that all that exists is consciousness only, while insisting on defining this consciousness as non-dual and non-transformatory. In this way, Advaitins maintain the position that consciousness is self-aware, while distinguishing *cid* from the scope of mental modification (*vytti-jñāna*). The syllogism proposed to establish identity on the ground of *sahopalambha*:

vimataṃ jñānābhinnam jñānāviśayakapratītyaviśayatvāt |

(DSr, Śāstri 1990, 79:4)

the entity under consideration {*vimata*} is not different from [its] cognition because [it is] not the object of awareness without being object of cognition.

relies on the assumption that whatever is not an object of the cognition of the form other than having itself as its object (*tadaviśayaka-pratīti*), is considered to be identical to that very entity. Advaitins argue, let this cognition be identical to 'awareness' (*jñāna*), singular, eternal, and free from transformations. Vijñānavādins reject this proposition on the ground that

formlessness of cognition is contrary to commonsense experience. They argue that this cognition cannot exist independently of time, as only the entities considered to be non-existent (*alīka*) are out of the domain of time. Furthermore, if this awareness is considered to be linked to a moment in the past, there will be a contradiction in its being linked also to a moment in future. It is not possible to have a cognition in the present that is qualified by the past moment, since two different moments of time do not exist simultaneously.

The *viññāna* of the Yogācārins, as depicted by the Advaitins, is real (*pāramārthika*). What constitutes something as real, in this understanding, is its efficacy (*arthakriyā-kāritva*). In the instances where there is erroneous cognition (*sāṃvṛta*), these cognitions do not have efficacy. In response to the argument that if the momentary cognitions are considered to be real, which contradicts the central Buddhist thesis of emptiness (*śūnyatā*), it is replied that the non-substantiality of cognition in terms of subject and object is considered non-substantial only in its imagined nature and not in its indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*) nature.⁵⁵ This response, adopted from the position of Vasubandhu, implies the concept of two truths, wherein realities are construed by adopting various perspectives.

Following these arguments, entities that are held to be independent of cognition are merely 'mental formations' (*vikalpa*). In other words, there are no entities as such and what exists is only cognition of the character of mental formation. Therefore, the entities such as cognized object and cognizing subject are mental formations alone. Following this doctrine, the nature of cognition is indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*), and is of its own character (*svalakṣaṇa*). Advaitins do not identify self-aware consciousness as indeterminable. Furthermore, even the self is considered to be indeterminable, particularly following the lines of Vātsīputrīyas. This indeterminacy and non-substantiality of consciousness that is identical to the self is not compatible with the Advaita interpretation of consciousness.

These particularities, including the momentary nature of cognition endowed with form, the character of cognition as indeterminable, the self as indeterminable, efficacy as the category to determine something as real, and the considered *kalpita-paramārtha* of cognition, are the central elements that do not tally with the Advaita Vedāntins, even those adopting the doctrine of Dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭi.

Following the citation of Vasubandhu, Śaṅkara Caitanya demonstrates how the Viññānavāda doctrine views categories such as self as a supposition of the self (*ātmopacāra*), and consciousness and its field as the supposition of *dharma*s (*dharmopacāra*).⁵⁶ This thesis rejects the Advaita assumption of the permanent awareness of the character of the self. The cognition considered in Viññānavāda is not everlasting, but rather, it is the transformation of previous cognition.⁵⁷ The most explicit difference lies in their understanding of the nature of the self. The difference in terminology, *jīvātman* in Advaita and *puḍgala* in Buddhism, specifically following the Vātsīputrīya viewpoint,

underlies philosophical difference between the Advaitins, for whom the essential nature of the *jīvātman* is the very Brahman, and the Vātsīputrīyas, for whom this is indeterminable in terms of real or unreal.⁵⁸

The Vijñānavāda criticized by the Advaitins explicitly considers that there exists only the *viññāna* that is endowed with images. Along these lines, the *ālayaviññāna* that gives rise to I-sense (*aham*), the *manoviññāna* that gives rise to mental formations, and the *pravṛtti-viññāna* that gives rise to the cognition of objects, all of these are therefore endowed with images (*sākāra*), and not devoid of them, a position that is not acceptable to the Advaita Vedāntins. This is the position adopted by Vasubandhu.⁵⁹ Advaitins consider this as the criticism to the Advaita position that considers awareness as free from its content [lit. support] (*ālambana*) and form (*ākāra*).⁶⁰

Advaita and Vijñānavāda

The above discussion concerning the nature of consciousness allows us to make some broader distinctions between Advaita and Vijñānavāda. Through the *upāya* perspective, the *viññapti* that is often criticized by the Advaitins as endowed with *ākāra* is not the final goal for the Yogācārins. In subsequent synthesis of Vijñānavāda-Madhyamaka, the teaching of *viññapti*-only appears to be in the level of *neyārtha*, and needs to be interpreted in terms of the Madhyamaka position of emptiness as the highest reality. The instruction of *cit* in the Advaita literature, while being *upāyic*, is not to be interpreted in light of some other doctrine, as *cit* alone, often identified with *anubhūti* or *jñāna*, is the absolute reality.

The Advaita criticism of difference has been presented in this study in the sixth chapter. With the rejection of difference, Advaitins posit that the awareness that is the foundation of perception is non-dual. The *ālaya*-consciousness of the Vijñānavādin is also considered to be the foundation for the rise of subject and object and is also addressed as *advaya*. However, the *ālaya*-consciousness of the Yogācārins is impermanent and undergoes modifications, something not acceptable to the Advaitins.

In the Vijñānavāda of Dinnāga and Dharmakīrti, the doctrine of *sahopalambha* is the central argument to establish identity between cognition and its object. Advaitins, particularly Jñānottama, reject the concept of identity (*abheda*) with equal vigor. For the Advaitins, the establishment of identity presupposes the existence of difference.

Relying on the criticism of identity, Advaitins such as Citsukha or Śrīharṣa argue that the definition of the object of cognition is not tenable. The seventh chapter of this study has examined various definitions of object through the perspective of Advaita. Advaitins problematize two possible definitions of object that are likely to be considered the Vijñānavāda definitions. One, to say that the object of cognition is identical to cognition while being different from it (*jñānabhinnābhinnatva*) cannot be the definition, as it presupposes identity and difference. Two, the object of cognition cannot

be identified as something generated by the instruments of cognition (*jñānasāmagrījanyatva*), since defining the limiting factor inherent to the effect of origination (*janyatva*) is problematic.

Advaitins utilize the arguments that reject difference and identity to refute the fundamental thesis that consciousness is endowed with images (*sākāra*). The argument is presented with three options to define the statement, 'all cognition is endowed with images.' This cognition can be recognized either as valid cognition (*pramā*), or as error, or as mental construction (*vikalpa*). Following the first alternative, the 'image' that qualifies cognition cannot be considered as non-existent (*alīka*), since it is the object of valid cognition. It also cannot be of the character of image itself or that of cognition itself, since an entity cannot be an object of valid cognition being qualified by itself (*tannirūpita*), or being substrated in itself (*tanniṣṭha*). This being the case, Advaitins argue, in order to designate a particular cognition, there should be the usage of 'cognition of cognition,' (*jñānaṃ jñānam*) instead of 'cognition of something'.

If, on the other hand, following the second alternative, the statement that cognition is endowed with images is considered to be erroneous, the consequence will be that consciousness will be free from images (*nirākāra*). There is a distinction between the Advaita understanding of *nirākāra* and its Vijñānavāda interpretation. For the Advaitins, awareness itself, free from mental constructions that include imaginations such as subject and object, can also be addressed as awareness free from images (*nirākāra jñāna*). However, for the Nirākāravādins, what it means to say that *vijñāna* is *nirākāra* is that cognition does not assume images in the process of cognizing external objects.

If the third alternative is considered, all cognitions will be of the character of mental construction (*vikalpa*), and will not be of the character of veridical knowledge (*pramā*). Following this position, even the statement that all cognitions are of the character of mental construction (*vikalpa*) and therefore are not of the character of veridical knowledge will be of the character of mental construction and being itself false, will not confirm anything.

Advaitins argue that their criticism of the refutation of external entities as postulated by the Vijñānavādins does not establish duality. Advaitins categorize degrees of reality mainly in two ways:

- 1 There are three degrees of reality. *Pratibhāsa* refers to the illusory appearance that covers dreams, illusions, erroneous cognition etc. *Vyavahāra* refers to the conventional reality. *Paramārtha* refers to the absolute reality of the self, identical to Brahman, of the character of being, awareness, and bliss.
- 2 There are only two degrees of reality: *pratibhāsa* and *vyavahāra*. In this alternative, conventional and illusory appearances are not distinguished in terms of reality.

Following either of these alternatives, the external entities are rejected only in the absolute sense and not in their conventionality.

For the objection that the doctrine of DS is identical to the doctrine of momentary *vijñāna*, Advaitins have a range of responses. The first alternative is to adopt the most radical stance and consider a single degree of reality of Brahman alone, and maintain that it is only the self of the character of awareness that is experienced in reality in all instances of cognition. The next alternative is to adopt the above second categorization in analyzing reality and state that the self-awareness is the absolute reality as it is immediately experienced and the experience of the external is 'appearance' (*pratibhāsa*) alone, and since it is not real, it does not pose duality. These both are following the strong thesis of DS.

There are other more moderate positions of DS that can be considered as weak theses. Following one option, six categories are considered to be beginningless. These are the individual self (*jīva*), the Lord (*īśa*), pure consciousness, the distinction between individual self and the Lord, ignorance, and the relation of ignorance with pure consciousness. The scope of DS is considered to be out of the domain of these six beginningless categories. Following the next alternative, the Advaita position of non-origination (*ajāti*) follows the perspective of Brahman free from modifications. *Dṛṣṭiṣṭi*, following this compromised interpretation, explains the perspective of the Lord (*Īśvara-dṛṣṭi*), and the commonsense perspective is that there are externals independent of perception. This interpretation supports the argument of *Sṛṣṭidṛṣṭi* with the interpretation of reality in three degrees.⁶¹

The crucial problem for Advaitins in accepting DS is the sublation of erroneous cognition. As there is no distinction in terms of the reality of both cognitions, how can erroneous cognition be sublated? Which is real, knowing the shell as a shell or knowing the shell as silver? Advaitins respond by saying that both of these cognitions are false because their sublation cannot be established. Following this response, something that cannot be determined in terms of existing or not existing is identified as unreal.⁶²

Finally, the pure awareness of the Advaitins is of the character of bliss (*ānanda*). The momentary *vijñāna* of the Vijñānavādins is not considered to be of the character of bliss that transcends phenomenality. The bliss that is experienced in the world, along the lines of the Vijñānavādins, is endowed with passion (*rāga*), and is of the character of affliction (*kleśa*), and is, therefore, negligible in the path of awakening. Advaitins adopting the position of Cinmātra identify bliss as the nature of awareness and claim that this awareness is the only entity that exists in reality.

Awareness is identical to bliss

The discussion above demonstrates that awareness as understood by Advaitins is free from difference or identity, is devoid of forms or modifications, and is not conditioned by time and space. The Advaita approach to the establishment

of this non-dual awareness has been through the negation of alternative positions, primarily by rejecting difference. While the Advaita understanding of eternal and formless awareness distinguishes it from the Yogācāra position, the identification of this awareness as of the character of being (*sat*) and bliss (*ānanda*) distances the awareness (*cit*) of the Advaitins from consciousness (*viññāna*) of the Vijñānavādins.

The Advaitins distinguish between pleasure that is experienced through sense-object contact and the innate bliss devoid of objects and of the character of the self. Advaitins face various logical problems in defending the position that the self, identical to awareness, is of the character of bliss. First, the experience of bliss presupposes sense-object contact and this is not acceptable to the Advaitins. Next, there is a degree of bliss explained in the *Upaniṣads*, and something explained in relative terms cannot be absolute bliss as recognized by the Advaitins. The response of Vimuktātman to these objections is that origination and relativity experienced in bliss is similar to that in awareness: as awareness is free from difference, origination and cessation, so is bliss. Although experienced as arising and collapsing, it is nevertheless uninterrupted and free from objects in its essential nature.⁶³ Vimuktātman continues:

as limiting factor (*upādhi*), origination and destruction, difference, [the degree of] less and more, purity and impurity, or to be an object of cognition, are imposed upon consciousness which in itself is free from these [modalities], so are these [imposed upon] bliss which in itself is free from desire.⁶⁴

Vimuktātman maintains that, as the awareness experienced in the form of objects is in its essence the very non-dual awareness, so also is bliss the very self, experienced in the world in various forms. He utilizes the metaphor of a mirror that reflects the observer's face if its surface is clean to claim that the very bliss of the nature of the self is experienced in different forms, being conditioned by various mental modifications of a pleasant nature. The rise of these mental modifications relies upon the rise of good *karma*.⁶⁵ As discussed in previous chapters, Vimuktātman's understanding of experience (*anubhūti*) begins from commonsense experience, propounding that, at the ultimate level, this experience is of the nature of the self, free from the distinction between subject and object, and free from the limitation of objects. By placing bliss (*ānanda*) parallel to experience, he is holding that the experience of bliss, in all instances, is the very bliss of the character of awareness identical to the self, non-dual in its nature. To the question, as there is always the experience of the self, if bliss is the very self, why is it not experienced at all times, the response of Vimuktātman is that this experience is hindered by pollution in the inner sense (*antaḥ-karaṇa*). In essence, although the bliss-nature of the self is eternally being revealed, it is due to pollution in the inner-sense that it is not experienced as uninterrupted at the phenomenal level.

Vimuktātman categorizes two degrees of bliss, primary and subordinate. The very self of the nature of awareness, in his exposition, is the primary bliss. The commonsense experience of bliss, following Vimuktātman, is the modification in the inner sense comparable to the misconception of awareness in the modification of cognition.⁶⁶ Vimuktātman utilizes the *Upaniṣadic* passage that rejects consciousness after death and the passages propounding the eternal nature of awareness in order to justify his categorization of subordinate and primary awareness and bliss: the awareness that is rejected is the subordinate one, and the bliss that is experienced in commonsense experience is comparable to this.⁶⁷

This brief presentation of bliss facilitates an understanding of the Advaita doctrine of awareness as distinct from the doctrine of Vijñaptimātra. Although the Advaitins consider awareness to be the singular reality, their awareness is categorically different from that recognized by the Vijñaptivādins. Not only is this awareness free from difference and not identical to externals but it is also non-dual and permanent. Advaitins describe this immediate mode of experience as bliss in itself, not recognized due to defilements in the inner sense, is what confirms the ontological distinction between *cittamātra* and *cinnmātra*. As addressed in the beginning of this book, different viewpoints in Advaita evolved as various *upāyas*, and the distinction of the viewpoints relies not only on ontological or epistemological constructs, but also on methodology. This second tendency allows these philosophies to remain as methods for recognizing reality and achieving release from bondage and transmigration.

Reading Advaita as *upāya* is crucial to the study of 'consciousness only,' as this concept is embedded within the practice of yoga. The concept that there exists only consciousness (*citi*) in the state of liberation appears in BSū as the view of Auḍulomin and is described in the exegetical texts while referring to the philosophy of Draviḍa. The *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali is a direct link of the concept of pure consciousness with the yogic system. This concept proliferates in the system of the YV as well as in the Trika Śaiva texts, in both cases as a method (*upāya*) to teach the highest state of mind. The rise of the Yogācāra, in the same way, parallels the concepts of *cittamātra* in the Sūtra texts such as LAS, in subsequent Yogācāra treatises, or in the form of *vijñaptimātra* in Vasabandu's writings. *Cittamātra* is a concept rooted in yogic practices. The development of *cittamātra* under the Vaibhāṣika influence gives rise to the epistemological concept that entities are directly grasped in perception without any image to mediate the process (*nirākāravāda*), or with the influence of the Sautrāntika, the concept that perception is mediated with images (*sākāravāda*). This is to demonstrate that neither of the understandings of *cittamātra* or *cinnmātra* remains one single concept. Diverse philosophical positions are embedded within the concept of 'consciousness only' with their intrinsic differences, although they may appear alike in a cursory reading.

Notes

1 Establishment of ‘awareness only’

- 1 Auḍulomin is one of the early Advaitins cited by Bādarāyaṇa. See *Brahmasūtra* 4.4.6. For a discussion on Auḍulomin, see Nakamura 1983 (1990) 382–384.
- 2 For a discussion upon the philosophy of Bhartṛprapañca, see Timalisina 2006, 154–170.
- 3 *na hi dṛśaḥ svayaṃdṛṣṭeḥ pratiyogyapekṣadṛṣṭyantaradṛśyaṃ rūpāntaraṃ svayaṃ samasti, svayaṃdṛṣṭitvahānāt* | IS. See Sagar 1986, 5:7. Page and line numbers are shown in this order.
- 4 *athābhāva eva – tadābhāvasya dṛśaś cābhede yady abhāva eva dṛk tadā dṛiṇ na syāt tathā dṛśyaṇ ceti śūnyaṃ syāt | tad api na prakāśeta, dṛṣo 'bhāvāt* || IS. See Sagar 1986, 6:8–9.
- 5 *na ca dṛṣo 'nyopalabdhir asti*. IS. See Sagar 1986, 8.
- 6 The first verse in the first chapter of the *Iṣṭasiddhi*, ‘yānubhūtir ajā . . .’ explicitly demonstrates Vimuktātman’s regard for this term.
- 7 *dṛgātmā svayaṃprakāśatvād aviśayo 'pi siddhyati, anyas tv atyantāviśayo dṛṣṭo 'dṛṣṭo 'pi na siddhyet* | IS. See Sagar 1986, 12.
- 8 Vimuktātman, while refuting both identity and difference, also indicates that awareness and its object cannot have the relation of property and property-bearer: *tasmān nābhedo dṛgdṛśyayoh, nāpi dharmadharmibhāvaḥ* (IS. See Sagar 1986, 14). The general analysis of knowledge as ‘knowledge qualified by a pot’ (*ghaṭaparakāraṇaṃ jñānam*), or ‘knowledge qualified by cloth’ (*paṭaparakāraṇaṃ jñānam*), is utilized in Advaita to establish the singularity of knowledge, with difference imposed by qualifiers.
- 9 . . . *prapañcatadvavahārapratibhāsasya* IS. Sagar 1986, 34:13; . . . *pratibhāsamātaranimitāḥ* . . . IS. Sagar 1986, 34:15.
- 10 *na cākartṛkā janiḥ, kriyātvāt gamivat . . . ato janma nāma na kiñcit kasyacid upapannaṃ paśyāmaḥ* | IS. See Sagar 1986, 25–26.
- 11 For details concerning the philosophy of Maṇḍana on ignorance, see Thrasher 1993, 51–75.
- 12 For instance, Vyāsātīrtha in the DS chapter on NA.
- 13 The Advaitic critique of *śūnyatā* as an opposite of Brahman fits with Kamalaśīla’s understanding of the *śūnyatā* in which *śūnyatā* is, epistemologically, ‘a negation or absence, a particular sort of *abhāva*,’ Williams 1998, 64.
- 14 ‘. . . refutation of *svaṣaṃvedana* in Madhyamaka sources always occurs within the context of a refutation of *Cittamātra* . . .’ (Williams 1998, 188). Williams, however, clarifies the issue of assigning the notion of *svaṣaṃvedana* to a particular school of Buddhism in his subsequent discussion. The second model of self-awareness that Williams categorizes belongs to Śāntarakṣita, and is visible in the writings of a later Tibetan philosopher, Mi pham. It was also used by the

- Yogācāra-Svātantrika-Mādhyaṃika (ibid, 190). Mi pham, for instance, is a Prāsaṅgika Mādhyaṃika; however, he defends the self-reflexive nature of awareness.
- 15 Chatterjee points out that for Prabhākara, *saṃvid* is self-revealing, and *jñāna* is inferred; see Chatterjee 1979, 267–276. This structure is based upon the distinction that knowledge (*jñāna*) refers to inferential knowledge whereas awareness (*saṃvid*) is directly perceived. Śālikanātha does not seem to differentiate knowledge into these two tiers. For further discussion of the nature of self-manifesting knowledge in the school of Prabhākara, see Hiriyanna, 1932, 307; Radhakrishnan, 1940, 395; Dasgupta, 1975, I:384 (Volume is shown as roman numeral:page or roman numeral:section:page). While criticizing the Prabhākara epistemology, Jayarāsi recognizes the distinction that Prabhākara accepted, however, in terms of *jñāna* and *avabodha*. Franco 1987, 274–285.
 - 16 *Īśvarapratyabhijñānī*, *Āhnika* 5 discusses the *svaprakāśa* nature of knowledge according to the Trika doctrine. See Pandey 1986, 54–85.
 - 17 For the Mādhyaṃika hermeneutics of negation, with regard to the *Svātantrika* and *Prāsaṅgika* methods, see Yotsuya 1999, 24, 40; Huntington 1989, 34–35; and Dreyfus 1997, 455–458. The *Paryudāsa* type of negation confirms a similar ‘other,’ whereas the *prasajya* type confirms only the absolute absence of the entity being negated. For the Mādhyaṃika analysis of negation, see Huntington in Dreyfus 2003, 52–56; Tauscher in Dreyfus 2003, 236–255; and Santina 1986, 150–151.
 - 18 *ekasyānekarūpāyogāc ca* IS. See Sagar 1986, 17.
 - 19 A cursory survey of BĀUBhVā indicates the possibility of reconstructing Bhartṛprapañca’s philosophy. References where his concepts are discussed, based upon identification by Ānandagiri, a commentator upon the text, and Subrahmaṇya Śāstri, the editor of the volumes (See *Upaniṣadbhāṣya*, Vol. III) follow: BĀUBhVā 1.1.378–436, 1.3.378–389, 1.4.947–972, 1.4.1123–1165, 1.4.1273–1283, 1.4.1659–1678, 1.4.1692–1779, 1.5.27–38, 1.5.137–142, 1.5.173–177, 1.5.302–312, 1.5.340–346, 1.6.46–93, 2.1.21–43, 2.1.195–204, 2.1.248–256, 2.3.58–76, 2.3.90–111, 2.4.329–335, 2.5.14, 2.5.65–89, 3.2.62–130, 3.3.24–142, 3.4.176–189, 3.5.15–25, 3.8.30–53, 4.2.19–33, 4.2.67–77, 4.2.102–109, 4.3.423–443, 4.3.831–836, 4.3.1088–1155, 4.3.1537–1682, 4.3.1759–1789, 4.4.392–427, 4.4.495–502, 4.4.586–597, 4.4.706–795, 4.4.965–972, 4.4.1032–1038, 5.1.59–130. For a treatment of the fragments of Bhartṛprapañca, see Hiriyanna 1972, 6–16; and Nakamura 2004, 128–152. Svāmī Saccidānandra Sarasvatī’s *Vedāntaparakriyā-pratyabhijñā* contains one chapter on the philosophy of Bhartṛprapañca, which is also available in Alston’s translation. Alston 1989.

2 Svaprakāśatā

- 1 For a comprehensive and analytical analysis of the theories of consciousness in classical Indian philosophies, see Ram-Prasad 2007, 51–99.
- 2 Ram-Prasad 2007, 54.
- 3 Williams 1998, 3.
- 4 *yenekṣate śṛṇotīdama jighrati vyākaroti ca | svādvasvādu vijānāti tat prajñānam udāhṛtam || Pañcadaśī* 5.1.
- 5 *ayam ātmā brahma* BĀU 2.5.19.
- 6 *prajñānam brahma* AiU 3.3; *satyaṃ jñānam anantaṃ brahma* TaiU 2.1.
- 7 BĀU 4.3.7.
- 8 The term *svaprakāśa* or *svayaṃprakāśa* is translated in various ways. Granoff translates it as both ‘self-aware’ (Granoff 1978, 110–115, 119, 121–123, 126), and ‘self-revealed’ (ibid, 135). Matilal translates it as ‘self-cognition’ (Matilal 1985, 237–238) and also as ‘self-consciousness’ (Matilal 1985, 236–237). Gupta trans-

lates it as 'self-revealed,' 'self-knowing,' 'self-evident' 'self-luminous' (Gupta 1995, 62–63), and later translates it as 'self-manifesting' (Gupta 1998, 99). Phillips translates this as 'self illumining' and 'self-illumination' (Phillips 1997, 78–81). Williams, when dealing with the Bodhicaryāvatāra and its commentaries, translates the Tibetan term *rang gi rig pa* (which is itself a translation of the Sanskrit term *svasaṃvedana*) as 'awareness of itself' (Williams 1998, xi), or as 'reflexive awareness' (ibid, xi), 'reflective awareness' (ibid, 10), or 'reflexive nature of consciousness' (ibid, 19). For Williams, 'reflexivity' is equivalent to 'self-awareness' (Williams 1998, xiv, xv, 16, 31; this is used in the title of chapter 2 as well). He primarily favors 'self-awareness' as the translation for *svasaṃvedana* (ibid, 1, 24–30). Williams explains that 'self-awareness,' in the sense of translating *svasaṃvedana*, is not 'consciousness aware of a self,' but rather 'consciousness aware in some sense of itself' (ibid, 3). He takes 'self-luminous' as a synonym of 'self-aware' (ibid, 26). Roodurmun and Balasubramaniam chose to stay with 'self-luminous' (Roodurmun 2002, 111, 185, 196, 210, 221, 225, 230, 254; Balasubramanian 1994, 40, 61). Murti and Trivedi favor 'self-luminosity' as a translation for *svaprakāśatā* (Murti in Coward 1983, 101–111, Trivedi 1987, 115–123). Chatterjee, dealing with Prabhākara's notion, translates *svayaṃprakāśa* as 'self-manifesting' or 'self-revealing' (Chatterjee 1979, 267–276). Another Sanskrit equivalent term used in this school is '*svataḥ-prakāśa*.' Dreyfus translates *svasaṃvedana*, a Buddhist term, as 'self-cognition' (Dreyfus 1997, 339–340, 397–398, 402–415). If these aforementioned translations are closely analyzed, they lack a clear demarcation between the terms *svaprakāśa* and *svasaṃvedana*. Even if a single term, *svaprakāśa* is addressed, none of these translations capture the multiple understandings etymologically derived by subsequent Advaita exegetes.

- 9 From the Advaita perspective, Sureśvara, Vimuktātman, and Śrīharṣa are the foremost thinkers who discuss this topic. See *svayaṃprakāśatvapratipādana* (chapter 33) in the *Tattvaśuddhi* of Jñānaghana, the *svaprakāśatvanirūpaṇa* section in the first chapter of TP. (Yogīndrānanda 1956, 1–46), and the *svaprakāśatvalakṣaṇopapatti* and *svaprakāśatvopapatti* chapters in AS. Prabhākara also accept the self-luminosity of knowledge, but in a slightly different sense. The Nyāya school rejects *svaprakāśatā* of knowledge, accepting *anuvyavasāya* as that knowledge which cognizes knowledge. For a comprehensive analysis, see Matilal 1986, 141–179. From the Advaita perspective, see Granoff 1978, 110–137; Sinha 1983, 34–60; Trivedi 1987, 115–123; Murti in Coward 1983, 101–111. For a Buddhist perspective, see Williams 1998, Dreyfus 1997, 400–415.
- 10 Śaṅkara refutes the Yogācāra views, mainly in the passages: 1) BĀUBh 4.3.7; and 2) BSūBh 2.2.28–32.
- 11 *bodhaśabdena bauddhāḥ pratyayā ucyante | sarve pratyayā viṣayībhavanti yasya sa ātmā sarvabodhān pratibuddhyate sarvapratyayadarśi cicchaktisvarūpamātrah pratyayeṣv aviśiṣṭatayā lakṣyate ||* KU(P)Bh 12–4.
... *atyantaviśuddhāt kevalāc cinmātrātmavarūpāt* ... KāUBh 2.3.6.
- 12 *nityāluptavijñānasvarūpajyotiḥ ātmā brahmety ayam arthaḥ*. KUBh 12–4; *sthitām caitan nyāyato nityam caitanyajyotiṣvatvam ātmanah |* BĀUBh 4.3.21; *svayaṃ-jyotiṣtam nāma caitanyātmavabhāvatā |* BĀUBh 4.3.23; *vijñānamayaḥ svayaṃ-jyotiḥ ātmā svapne pradarśitaḥ |* BĀUBh 4.3.34.
eka ātmā svayaṃjyotiḥ ... BĀUBh 4.3.34.
- 13 *ātmacaitanyajyotiḥ nityasya kenacid abhibhavaḥ saṃbhavaty asaṃsargitvād vyomna iva dṛṣṭavirodhāc ca | dṛṣṭīśrutimativijñātayo hi jīvasya svarūpam || tac ca śarīrād asaṃutthitasyāpi jīvasya sadā niṣpannam eva dṛśyate |* BSūBh 1.3.19.
- 14 *atas tayā 'viparilūptayā dṛṣṭyā svayaṃjyotiḥsvabhāvayā paśyann eva bhavati suṣupte |* BĀUBh 4.3.23.
- 15 *idaṃ tu vijñānānapekṣaṃ kasmād vijñānasvarūpatvāt . . . na caivam ātmano 'nyatra vijñānam asti yena svarūpavijñāne 'py apekṣate |* KU(V)Bh 1.3.

- 16 *param paramātmalakṣaṇaṃ vijñaptisvabhāvaṃ jyotir . . .* CUBh 8.3.3.
- 17 *sadekarasam ātmānaṃ viśuddhavijñānarūpaṃ* KāUBh 2.2.13.
- 18 *viśuddhavijñaptimātrasattādvaya . . .* GKBh 2.17. See also *Svarūpanirūpaṇa* 7.
- 19 *antaḥkaraṇavṛttayaḥ prajñaptimātrasyopalabdḥur upalabdhyarthatvāc chuddhapra-
jñānarūpasya brahmaṇa upādhibhūtāḥ . . . sarvāṇy evaitāni prajñaptimātrasya
prajñānasya nāmadheyāni bhavanti . . .* AiUBh 3.2.
- 20 *paramārthasadvijñānamātrāviśeṣāt* || GKBh 2.30.
- 21 *nityacitsvarūpātmāntaḥsāro yatrānityaṃ vijñānam avabhāśate* | KU(V)Bh 1.3.
- 22 *yadi nāma jñaptir jñānam iti bhāvarūpatā brahmaṇas tathāpy anityatvaṃ pra-
sajyeta pāratantryaṇ ca . . . tasmād ātmavijñānāvabhāśās ca te vijñānaśabdavācyaś
ca dhātvarthabhūtā ātmana eva dharmā vikriyārūpā ity avivekibhiḥ parikalpyante*
| TUBh *Brahmavallī*, *Anuvāka* 1.
- 23 *tad yat satyaṃ sa ātmā caitanyamāstrasvarūpaḥ . . .* BSūBh 1.3.19; *kūṭasthanit-
yadrksvarūpaṃ ātmānaṃ . . .* Ibid; *parasya hi brahmaṇas caitanyasvarūpatvam
āmnātam* | BSūBh 2.3.18; *nityacaitanyasvarūpa evātmēti niścinumaḥ* | BSūBh
2.3.18.
- 24 *pratyayair āvīrbhāvatirobhāvadharmakair vijñānābhāsarūpair anityair anityavijñāna
ātmā sukhī duḥkḥīty abhyupagato laukikair ato 'nyo nityavijñānasvarūpād ātmanaḥ*
| KU(V)Bh 1.3.3; *bauddhā hi sarve pratyayās taptalohavan nityavijñānasvarūpāt-
mavyāptatvād vijñānasvarūpāvabhāśās tadanyāva-bhāśās cātmā tadvilakṣaṇo 'gnivād
upalabhyata iti . . .* KU(V)Bh 2.12.
- 25 *bāhyas cakṣurbuddhyādisamāhārasantānāhanikāramamatvādiviparītapratyayapraband-
hāvicchedalakṣaṇo nityaśuddhabuddhamuktavijñānātmēśvaragarbho nityavijñān-
āvabhāśās cittacaityabijabjīsvabhāvaḥ kalpito 'nityavijñāna tīśvaralakṣaṇaviparīto
'bhyupagamyate* | KU(V)Bh 3.14.
- 26 For references on the Yogācāra usage, see Lusthaus 2002, 144–50, 465–467,
473–474, 499–500, 528–532.
- 27 *sākṣipratyayayoś ca svabhāvavaiśamyād upalabdhruṣalabhyabhāvopapatteḥ, svayaṃ-
siddhasya ca sākṣiṇo 'pratyākhyeyatvāt* | BSūBh 2.2.28, and Vācaspati's *Bhāmātī*
thereon.
- 28 See *Kṣetrajñābhedanirāsa* section of NM.
- 29 See *Jñeyabhedanirāsa* section of NM.
- 30 The syllogism runs as: *vijñānam arthaprakāśanasamayē prakāśate, tadutpattyan-
taramaṃ sandehāyogād arthavat* | *Nyāyamakaranda, svaprakāśatā* chapter. For
secondary reading, see Dasgupta 1975, 1:70–71.
- 31 *yadi vijñānānarādḥīnam asya prakāśanaṃ tadaiva tatrāpi vijñānāntaram avaśyaṃ-
bhāvīty anavasthā prasajyeta . . . saṃvidāḥ svaprakāśatvavyavasthāpanam* (NM.
Mandalika 1901, 138:7–139:1).
- 32 NM. Mandalika 1901, 140.3–141.3.
- 33 *svātmāni vṛttivirodhān na svasaṃvedanaṃ vijñānam iti ced, maivaṃ, vṛtṭyanabhy-
upagamād, ālokavat* | NM. Mandalika 1901, 142:9–10.
- 34 The section on *saṃvitsvaprakāśatā* starts with the line, *apare punaḥ cetaso 'pi
śūnyatāṅgikāre manāḥpratyayam anāsādayantaḥ sarvaṃ idam asad eva viśvaṃ
ity abhidhātum sahasaivānūtsahamānā manyante – vijñānaṃ tāvat svaprakāśaṃ
svata eva siddhasvarūpaṃ . . .* See KhKh. Dvivedi 1990, 45. Śrīharṣa concludes
this section by saying, *tad itthaṃ tvadanāṅgīkṛtasadvicāralakṣaṇopapannair
evaṃvidhair vicāraiḥ svaprakāśatā bhavatā supratipadā, asmābhis tu svasaṃ-
vedanabalād eva svataḥsiddharūpaṃ vijñānam āsthīyata iti* | KhKh. Dvivedi 1990,
69:6–7.
- 35 *Na khalu vijñāne sati jīñāsor api kasyacit jānāmi na veti saṃsayāḥ na jānāmīti
vā viparyayao vyatīrekapramā vā* | KhKh. Dvivedi 1990, 45:3–4. See Granoff
1978, 110.
- 36 *yadi hi vijñānaṃ parataḥ siddhyet, tadānavasthā syāt* | KhKh. Dvivedi 1990,
47–48; Granoff 1978, 113.

- 37 KhKh. Dvivedi 1990, 59. Granoff 1978, 126–127.
- 38 *yadi nāma jñaptir jñānam iti bhāvarūpatā brahmaṇas . . . ata eva ca na jñānakartr, tasmād eva ca na jñānaśabdavācyaṃ api tad brahma* | TUBh, *Brahmavallī* 1.1.
- 39 In a general sense, *anuvyavasāya* is a Nyāya term that refers to the knowledge that confirms knowledge, the absence of knowledge, or doubt about something. Dreyfus and Phillips translate *anuvyavasāya* as ‘apperception,’ using Kantian terminology (Dreyfus 1997, 400–415; Phillips 1997, 131–133); Potter translates this as ‘aftercognition’ (Potter and Bhattacharyya 1993, 150–155); Ingalalli translates it as ‘after-knowledge’ (Prasad 1992, 148); Bhattacharya translates it as ‘introspection’ (Bhattacharya 1993, 78); Gupta as ‘a cognition of cognition’ (Gupta 1995, 137); Matilal one time translates this as ‘reflective awareness’ (Matilal 1985, 211–212), and at other times as ‘knowledge of knowledge’ or ‘perception of that knowledge’ (Matilal 1986, 160–167). This gives a glimpse of the problems in translating this term.
- 40 Śrīharṣa’s particular example on this is the seventh taste. Nyāya advocates the existence of only six types of tastes. If no proof is required, Śrīharṣa argues, why not assert the existence of a seventh taste?
- 41 Śrīharṣa calls this *jijñāsā*, as applied by Udayana in *Pariśuddhi*. Granoff 1978, 117.
- 42 ‘*apratyakṣopalambhasya nārthadṛṣṭiḥ prasiddhyati*’ is attributed to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* of Dharmakīrti by Jñānaśrīmitra. See JMN. Thakkura 1987, 478.
- 43 *asty eva hy avidyāvidyamāne ghaṭatajjñāne bādhyatvam, paramārthasati tu svaprakāśe pāramārthikatvam iti dvayor ananugame ‘pi na doṣaḥ | athavā svātmanā saha kriyākarmabhāvo viṣayaviṣayibhāvo vā svaprakāśārtham iti nābhyyupeyam eva* | KhKh. Dvivedi 1990, 65.
- 44 Gloss of *svaprakāśatvanirūpaṇe pūrvapakṣa*, TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 1–15. For detailed treatment in the secondary literature, see Trivedi 1987, 115–123; Dasgupta 1975 II:148–151; Murti in Coward 1983, 101–111.
- 45 The translation of *prakāśa* [not *prakāśatva*] as ‘luminosity’ relies on Pratyagrūpa’s interpretation of this as: *svatve sati prakāśatvam*. *Nayanaprasādinī*. NP on TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 4.
- 46 This translation is based upon the commentary NP on TP: *svaviṣayatve sati prakāśatvam*. Ibid, 4. This understanding also tallies with that of Trivedi. See Trivedi 1987, 116.
- 47 The interpretation of the locative (*adhikaraṇa*) as ‘contemporaneous to’ relies upon the exposition found in NP: *yāvad asya sattā tāvat prakāśenāvīyogaḥ* | NP on TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 5.
- 48 Yogīndrānanda, in his Hindī translation, interprets the locative indicated by *–sati* as ‘qualified,’ or, ‘*x sati y*’ as ‘*y* qualified by *x*.’ See Hindī commentary of Yogīndrānanda, TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 5–11. I have understood this in the same way.
- 49 *ānando viṣayānubhavo nityatvam iti śanti dharmāḥ, aprthaktve ‘pi caitanyāt prthag ivāvabhāśanta iti na doṣaḥ* | PP. Śāstri 1992, 41:5–42:1.
- 50 *mokṣadaśāyām ca vivakṣitādharmaḥbhāve ‘pi kadācitsattvena tadatyantābhāvān-adhikaraṇatvasya guṇāśrayo dravyam itivat siddhe* | TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 17:5–6.
- 51 AS. Śāstri 1982, 768.
- 52 Without a doubt, the passage BĀU 2.4.14, ‘*vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt*,’ mentions the lack of means to reveal the self. Śaṅkara has explicated this passage, confirming that the self is not to be confirmed by any means of knowledge. However, it was Sureśvara who elaborated on the arguments in the *Vārttika* literature while discussing the above-mentioned passage. Both Vimuktātman and Śrīharṣa have utilized the arguments of Sureśvara, with additional defense of specific arguments that have been challenged by the opponents.

- 53 *svayaṃprakāśatvapratipādanam trayastrīṃśam* | TŚ. Sastri and Radhakrishnan 1941, 55–67.
- 54 *avirodhpariccheda, Ātmasvaprakāśatvaparakaraṇam ṣaṣṭham* | NyC. Sastri 1959, 463–478.
- 55 *brahmaṇaḥ svaprakāśatvalakṣaṇopattiḥ* | AS. Śāstri 1982, 768–783.
- 56 IS 1.1. Auto-commentary thereon.
- 57 *Samvitsvaprakāśavāda* KhKh. Dvivedi 1990, 45–60.
- 58 See NM. Mandalika 1901 (130–136 for the *svaprakāśatā* of the self and 137–145 for the *svaprakāśatā* of awareness). Ānandabodha is very explicit that the self-aware nature of awareness is one of the *probans* used in establishing *svaprakāśatā* of the self: *svaprakāśaṃ ca vijñānam iti kathaṃ tadrūpasyātmano nātmaprakāśatā?* NM. Mandalika 1901, 137.
- 59 *Svaprakāśatvanirūpaṇa*. TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 1–46.
- 60 These two positions can be summarized as:
 1st position: *ātman* \supset *svaprakāśa*; *ātman* = *saṃvid*, therefore *saṃvid* \supset *svaprakāśa*.
 2nd position: *saṃvid* \supset *svaprakāśa*; *saṃvid* = *ātman*; therefore *ātman* \supset *svaprakāśa*.
- 61 The five syllogisms Prakāśātman proposes are:
- 1 *svayaṃprakāśo 'yam ātmā, svasattāyāṃ prakāśavyatirekābhāvāt, pradīpasamvedanavat* |
 - 2 *ātmā svayaṃprakāśaḥ, viśayaprakāśakartṛtvāt, pradīpavat* |
 - 3 *ātmā svayaṃprakāśaḥ, viśayaprakāśāśrayatvād, ālokavat* |
 - 4 *ajānyaprakāśaguṇaś cātmā, prakāśagunatvād, ādityādivat* |
 - 5 *ātmā svayaṃprakāśaḥ anindriyagocaratve saty aparokṣatvāt, saṃvedanavat* |
- PPV. Śāstri 1992, 500:6–501:1.
- 62 *atha pramāṇaṃ pramāṇāntaranirapekṣam eva svaṃ svaprameyaṃ ca sādhayat . . . tathā ca śrutir vijñātāram are kena vijānīyād iti* | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 59:4–60:4.
- 63 *kiñ cātmāno 'sattvaṃ kim ātmanā jñāyate 'nātmanā vā? nāntyaḥ, anātmano jñātṛtvābhāvāt | nādyo vyāghātāt* | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 62.
- 64 This issue has been addressed while gleanings Śrīharṣa's position. The passage from NyC runs as: *kiñ cātmātmāntareṇa vedyate? Svātmanā vā? . . . dṛśyābhāve draṣṭur abhāvāt* | NyC. Sastri 1959, 467–468.
- 65 *tathā hi kim ātmā svasattākāle svāsattāṃ jñāti, svāsattākāle vā? . . . tarhi sann eva ātmānityaḥ paran tac ca kṛtāhānyakṛtābhyāgamaprasaṅgena parihṛtam* | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 62.
- 66 *sata eva vastuno bhānam pramāṇādhīnam iti cet . . . tasya bhāsā sarvaṃ idaṃ vibhātīti* | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 64.
- 67 *kāryaṃ sarvaṃ yato dṛṣṭaṃ prāgabdhāvapuraḥsaram* | *tasyāpi saṃvitsākṣitvāt prāgabdhāvo na saṃvidāḥ* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.338.
- 68 *tad evaṃ svaprakāśānubhavaśya nityatvād ātmasvarūpatvaṃ aviruddham* | VPS. Śāstri 1996, 58. Vidyāraṇya addresses this issue in *Pañcadaśī*, *Tattvavivekaprakaraṇa* 3–8. Whether *Pañcadaśī* was completely written by Vidyāraṇya has been debated. Some scholars speculate that some chapters of the text had already been written by Bhāratiṭīrtha and compiled in the form of a text with fifteen chapters by Vidyāraṇya. Mahādevan 1969; Mahādevan 1976.
- 69 *yady apy akṣair vinā buddhir na tāny api tayā vinā | tathāpy anyo 'nyaheturvaṃ tato 'py anyo 'nyahetuke* || PV 1.44.
- 70 The very opening of Prakāśānanda's argument in this discussion provides refutation of this concept of contemporaneousness. However, it is generally credited to the followers of Maṇḍana, mainly to Vācaspati Miśra and Amalānanda.
- 71 The refutation of *bhedā* by Vimuktātman and Śrīharṣa mostly follows the arguments of Maṇḍana. Nonetheless, for Maṇḍana, what is immediately perceived is *abheda*, (Thrasher 1993, 77–78), whereas for Vimuktātman, the acceptance of

abheda consequently leads to the acceptance of *bheda*, as the first presupposes the second. (IS 13.3–23.11). *Abheda* is defined differently by Maṇḍana than it is understood in the Yogācāra school. For Maṇḍana, ‘*sattā* “being” and *abheda* ‘non-difference,’ presented in *pratyakṣa* are identical with Brahman.’ (Thrasher 1993, 78.13–14); ‘*abheda*, is *sattā*, being . . .’ (Thrasher 1993, 78.32–33). Vimuktātman’s refutation of *abheda* is not only directed against the Buddhists, but also includes the notion of identity in the Brahman nature. IS. See Sagar 1986, 19:14–23:11.

72 *jñānasya svarūpata utpattiyabhāvāt* VSM. Śāstri 1936, 51:5.

73 BĀUBhVā 2.1.552–553.

3 Ekaīva: the doctrine of solitary self-awareness

- 1 BS. Sastri 1937, 12:4.
- 2 Timalisina 2006, 30–34.
- 3 *ekamuktāṁ ekamuktir evānekābhāvāt* | IS 6.19, auto-commentary thereon.
- 4 *avidyākālpitasya cej jīvasyāvidyā, nāsyā vidyayā nivr̥ttiḥ | na hi jaḍasyājaḍam brahmāsmṛti dhīḥ* | IS 6.16, auto-commentary thereon.
- 5 Discussed in Timalisina 2006, 59.
- 6 BĀUBhVā 2.4.135. See the discussion in Timalisina 2006, 80.
- 7 BĀUBhVā 2.1.442–443. See the discussion in Timalisina 2006, 81.
- 8 BĀUBhVā 2.1.452. See the discussion in Timalisina 2006, 82.
- 9 *atha brahmaiva saṁsarati brahmaiva mucyate, ekamkutaṁ sarvamuktiprasaṅgaḥ* | BS. Sastri 1984, 12:4.
- 10 *ekamuktau sarvamuktiprasaṅgaḥ, yato bhedadārśanena brahmaiva saṁsarati, abhedadarśanena ca mucyate, tatra sarvavibhāgapratyastamaye yugapat sarvamo-kṣaprasaṅgaḥ* | Ibid, lines 4–6.
- 11 . . . *ekamuktau sarvamuktis tvatpakṣa eva; matpakṣe tu ekamuktāṁ ekamuktir eva, anekābhāvāt* | IS 6.19, auto-commentary thereon.
- 12 IS 6.1–2.
- 13 *yat tu kasyāvidyeti, jīvānām iti brūmaḥ* | BS. Sastri 1984, 10:3.
- 14 IS 6.2–3.
- 15 *na hi jīveṣu nisargajā vidyāsti; avidyaiva hi naisargikī* . . . BS. Sastri 1984, 12:8–9.
- 16 *sarve ca bhramās sādayaḥ, kāryatvāt* | IS 6.5, auto-commentary thereon.
- 17 IS 6.19, auto-commentary thereon. The commentary of Jñānottama on this passage states: *ekaīvāvidyākālpitānekaīvābhāvāt* |
- 18 IS 6.19, auto-commentary thereon.
- 19 For instance, See the *Puruṣavāda* section in the *Dvādaśāranayacakra* of Mallavādin.
- 20 IS 7.24–25, and the auto-commentary thereon.
- 21 *syād etad evaṁ yadi puṁbhedo dṛśyeta | na tu sa dṛśyate kenāpi* | IS 7.24–25, auto-commentary.
- 22 *puṁsām taddṛśyatte ’nātmataījñatve stām dehādivat* | IS 7.24–25, auto-commentary thereon.
- 23 IS 7.26 and the auto-commentary thereon.
- 24 *mama sā bhrāntiyā svapnavat siddhyati ā bodhāt* | IS 7.29, auto-commentary thereon.
- 25 *ātmaikaḥ kūṭastho ’jo bodhamātravigraho ’dvyayaḥ* . . . IS 7.29, auto-commentary thereon.
- 26 IS 7.30. The auto-commentary thereon, ‘*svalakṣaṇajñāne ’py anyalakṣaṇajñānāt*’ (even if one’s own character is known, the character of the other is not known) further supports the understanding in the form of ‘self’ and the ‘other.’
- 27 IS 7.36–37, and the auto-commentary thereon.
- 28 *aikātmyanirūpaṇaṁ śattriṁśam*. TŚ. Sastri and Radhakrishnan 1941, 81–89.

- 29 Buitenen 1992, 99.
- 30 *Ekajīvabhaṅga* section, NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 470–471.
- 31 *svāpnaśarīre 'yaṃ sukhī ayaṃ duḥkṛtī eva yatra buddhir na tv ahaṃ sukhītyādi, tat tu nirjīvam | yatra tv ahaṃ ityādi tat sajīvam | Ekajīvavādicāra* section in AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 470.
- 32 *jāgraccharīrāntare 'haṃ iti pratītyavacchedake sajīvatoktir na dvitīyena jīvena sajīvatvam ity abhipretya, tatra mānābhāvāt | Ekajīvavādicāra* section in AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 470.
- 33 *na caivaṃ tasminn ekasminn eva jīve supte samastajagadapratītyāpātaḥ, samaṣṭy-abhīmānīno mukhyaīvāsyaśūptatvāt | tasmīn layakāle prasupte jagadapratīteḥ | antaḥkaraṇāvacchinne jīvābhāse tu supte tam eva prati jagadapratītiḥ, na tv anyān api prati | AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 471.*
- 34 AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 471.
- 35 *Ekajīvavādicāra* in AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 472.
- 36 This refers to a character in Mahābhārata, Karna, who was abandoned by Kuntī and was raised by Rādhā, who is of a lower caste. Kuntī later reveals to Karna that he is her son. This example parallels the example of the prince who is raised by a hunter and conceives himself to be a hunter.
- 37 *na hi mṛgaṭṛṣṇikākalpitodakena svabhāvaśuṣkāpi marubhūmīr ādrībhavati | AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 472:15–16.*
- 38 *Ekajīvabhaṅga* section in NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 473–474; and *Ekajīvavādicāra* in AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 474.
- 39 AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 473:10–11.
- 40 *Ekajīvabhaṅga* section in NA. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 476:5–478:1; and *Ekajīvavādicāra* in AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 477:7–13.
- 41 *svapnaguruvat kalpitatvena guror aparyanuyojaytvāt | AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 479:5.*
- 42 *pramāmūlakatvābhāve 'py abādhitaviśayatvena śāstraprāmāṇyopapatter . . . AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 480:12–13.*
- 43 *na hy asāṃpradāyikatvam utpattivirodhi, apūrvajātīyānutpattiprasaṅgāt | AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 481:12–13.*
- 44 *brahmātmanor vibhinnatve bhedaḥ svābhāviko yadi | aupādhiko 'thavā bhedaḥ sarvathā 'nupapattikaḥ || VSM, verse 7.*
- 45 VSM opens this issue at the very beginning of the text. Verses 3–6 concern the locus of ignorance, and ignorance is discussed throughout the entire text. Advocating the Vivaraṇa position that accepts Brahman alone as the locus and object of ignorance, Prakāśānanda cites Sarvajñātman's *Śaṅkṣepaśārīraka*, (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 14). VSM deals with the causation of ignorance (Śāstri 1936, 37–38), and with the establishment of ignorance (Śāstri 1936, 123–141).
- 46 VSM. Śāstri 1936, 16:3–5.
- 47 *antaḥkaraṇāder yathāyatham āvidyikasya svīkārāt karaṇānupapattiyabhāvāt | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 19:9–20:1.*
- 48 *veda eva vāmadevāder jñānaṃ śrūyata iti cet, satyam; tasya jīvabhedāpratīpādatvat | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 21:1–2.* This passage refers to AiU 2–5. Vāmadeva, an *Upaniṣadic* character, is exemplified as someone liberated; see BSū 1.1.30.
- 49 *ekajīvapakṣa ekamuktyā sarvamuktiprasaṅga iti cen na; ekatvavādinam prati sarvatvasya nirūpayitum āśakyatvāt | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 21:3–5.*
- 50 *tathāpi bahavo jīva anubhavasiddhā iti cet? bhavatu tarhi svapnavad vyavasthā | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 21:5–6.*
- 51 *na hi parājñānāvacchinnaḥ parasya pratyakṣo bhavitum arhati | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 23:1–2.*
- 52 *ekenāpy anekadehaceṣṭhopapatter naiyāyikānām kāyavyūhadaśāyām yogidehavat | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 23:3–4.* *Kāyavyūha* is simply 'the composition of body' in YS:

- nābhicakre kāyavyūhajñānam* | YS 3.29. This aspect of a yogin is addressed in YS as *nirmāṇacitta*, see YS 4.4.
- 53 *anyabhramasiddhasya anyena jñātum aśakyatvāt anyabhramasya ajñānāt* | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 31:1–2.
- 54 See Vasubandhu's *Vṛtti* on *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*, *Viṃśatikā* 1.
- 55 As the writings of Vasubandhu have been understood by different translators and commentators in different ways, a few examples of the translation of this passage bear scrutiny:
 'But when consciousness no longer recognizes an object, then it rests in representation-only, because when there is nothing to grasp, there is no grasping.' See Robinson in Lusthaus 2002, 302.
 'If the knower doesn't directly apprehend the objective-condition (*ālambana*) of this perceptual-object, then neither of the two (i.e., the knower or the object) appears. At this moment the practitioner is said to have entered consciousness-only. This is called "nothing is attained . . ." See Paramārtha in Lusthaus 2002, 302.
 'If, at [some] moment, of objective conditions (*ālambana*) nothing whatever is attained/acquired by a cognition (*jñāna*), you, at that moment, abide in "consciousness-only," since you have detached from the characteristics of the two attachments.' Xuanzang in Lusthaus 2002, 302.
- 56 See Lusthaus 2002, pp. 484–495 for a discussion of externality.
- 57 Cited in Lusthaus 2002, 487:29–32.
- 58 Cited in Lusthaus 2002, 490:11–12.
- 59 See Lusthaus 2002, 491. Particularly note the citation: 'Other mind is this sort of condition; *rūpa*, etc. are the same case.' Ibid.
- 60 Inami 2001, 465–483.
- 61 See Inami 2001, 468; Wood 1994, 110, 130–131.
- 62 Concluding line in the SAD. For secondary literature, see Wood 1994, 149–159, 223–230; Kajiyama 1989, 1293–1295; 401–416.
- 63 Inami (2001, 469) draws a similarity between the inference of Ratnakīrti and that of Dharmakīrti.
- 64 See SAD. Thakur 1975, 145:12–146:25; Inami 2001, 469.
- 65 Inami (2001, 470) points out that this citation in SAS is from the *Sākārasiddhiśāstra* of Jñānaśrīmitra.

4 Existence and awareness

- 1 The translation follows Hume 1921.
- 2 For discussion on *Upaniṣadic* monism, which Walter Slaje identifies as a type of hylozoism, see Slaje 2001, 2002, 2005.
- 3 For a comparative study on Gaudapāda, see Bouy 2000.
- 4 *Trisvabhāvanirdeśa* of Vasubandhu. See Anacker 1984, 464, 466; Tola and Dragonetti 2004, 189–244.
- 5 For discussion, see Thrasher 1993, 77–83.
- 6 Halbfass 1995, 137–151.
- 7 For Nāgārjuna's technique of argumentation, see Bhattacharya, Johnston and Kunst 1990.
- 8 Nakamura 2004, 675. Nakamura dates Draviḍācārya around 500 CE.
- 9 BSūBh. See Joshi 1981, 17:1.
- 10 For rejection of threefold existence in Advaita Vedānta, see NC. See Sastri 1959, 426:3–430:3.
- 11 Sureśvara repeats this in NS 2.99, by showing pervasion of the self in all instances of awareness, and of mind in instances of cognitive modes.
- 12 SBhVā 1.1.340.
- 13 Halbfass 1992, 154.

- 14 *yasya vastuno yat svarūpan tad eva tasya astitvam* | Halbfass 1992, 155.
- 15 Halbfass translates *astitva* as both 'is-ness' and 'objectivity.' He translates *sattā* as 'is there.' See Halbfass 1992, 144.
- 16 *saññām api padārthānām astitvābhidheyatvajñeyatvāni. Padārthadharmasamgraha* 3.11.
- 17 Halbfass 1992, 154.
- 18 *saptānām api sādharṃyaṃ jñeyatvādikam ucyate* | *Kārikāvalī* 1.13.
- 19 *ṣaṭpadārthebhyo nānyat prameyam asti* | *Nyāyakandali*. Jhā 1963, 230.
- 20 Halbfass 1992, 167.
- 21 Timalšina 2006, 188–194.
- 22 *mānābhāvasya meyatvaṃ meyābhāvasya meyatā* | *nyāyaṃ na saḥate 'tīva yathā tad adhunocyate* || BĀUBhVā 1.1.938.
- 23 *bodhakaṃ yad abuddhasya tan mānam iti hi sthitiḥ* | *na ca pramāṇatāstitvam idṛk tasmān na yujyate* || BĀUBhVā 1.1.939.
- 24 *mevābhāvaḥ pramāṇānām yady abhāvena gamyate* | *pramāṇānām abhāvasya gamakaḥ ko bhaviṣyati* || BĀUBhVā 1.1.940.
- 25 *ajñātataḥsatīṃ kurvan mānam mānatvam āsṇute* | *mānād ajñātataḥ cet syān na sā tatphalam āsṇute* || BĀUBhVā 1.1.989.
- 26 *jagaty artho hi yaḥ kañcij jñāta eva sa buddhivat* | BĀUBhVā 1.4.224.
- 27 *mānānīrekāsaṃsiddher meya eva tathā na kim* | *na hi dīpāntarād dīpo bhāvarūpaṃ prapadyate* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.225.
- 28 *jñātarūpātirekeṇa nānyad rūpaṃ samīkṣate* | *evaṃ cen mānato meyo vijñāta iti kā pramā* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.226.
- 29 *svata eva prasiddhaḥ cet prameyo 'rthas tathāpi na* | *ananyāyattasamīdher meyatvaṃ kiṃnibandhanam* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.228.
- 30 *jñāto 'yam artho 'jñāto vā dhīr iyaṃ kartṛsaṃśrayā* | *smṛtiḥ sā na yathāvastu tenāsāv apramoditā* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.283.
- 31 *na hi vastvamurodhy etaj jñātājñātavalakṣaṇam* | *rūpaṃ vastvaparijñānasamuttham jñātsaṃśrayam* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.284.
- 32 For validation of the means of knowledge, see Mohanty 1989, 5–51.
- 33 *Jñātājñātavibhāgo 'taḥ svataḥsiddhātmamātrkaḥ* | *saṃvidā jñātātāsiddhir miter api na mātmanā* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.285.
- 34 *yato jñātatasamīdhir ajñātatasvāpi cāñjasā* | *tata eva ca mānatvaṃ saṃvidarte na tattrayam* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.287.
- 35 *ṣaṣṭhagocaravan nedam ajñātataṃ samīkṣate* | *na ca pratyakṣavat siddham svānubhūtiśamāśrayāt* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.288.
- 36 *yatheha ghaṭavijñāne ghaṭākāro 'nubhūyate* | *jñātrtatsākṣiṇau caivaṃ nāñjāne sākṣiṇo 'param* || BĀUBhVā 1.4.294.
- 37 *avijñātaḥ pramāṇānām viśayo vādinām mataḥ* | *na tasya mānataḥ siddhis tatsiddheḥ prāk pramāgamāt* || BĀUBhVā 1.1.987.
- 38 A common Nyāya Vaiśeṣika understanding is that by whichever sense organ an object is cognized, the universal qualifying that particular object and its absence can be cognized only by that specific sense organ. However, the process in which absence is perceived is complex. For a glimpse of this diversity, Viśvanātha gives a brief account of perceiving absence in distinct ways: *abhāva-pratyakṣe samavāyapratyakṣe cendriyasambaddhaviśeṣaṇatā hetuḥ . . . evam anyad apy ūhyam* | *Muktāvalī* on *Kārikāvalī* 1.62.
- 39 *nākṣādīpañcakaṃ tasya bodhakaṃ satsamīkṣaṇāt* | *nayatas tadabhāvo vā meyatvenaiva tatsthiṭeḥ* || BĀUBhVā 1.1.941.
- 40 *nīlādivad abhāvasya yady akṣādiviśeṣaṇam* | *viśeṣaṇena tadvyāptes tadabhāvaḥ kuto miteḥ* || SBhVā 942.
- 41 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 20:3.
- 42 *na cānanugamaḥ* | *ananugatasyaiva lakṣatvān mokṣahetujñānanivartyatvenānugamāca* | ARR. Śāstri 1982, 20:3–4.

- 43 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 21:19.
- 44 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 22:8.
- 45 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 22:12.
- 46 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 23:3.
- 47 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 23:9.
- 48 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 23:37.
- 49 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 23:43.
- 50 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 24:1–2. The passage cited by Madhusūdāna is: *na hi draṣṭur dṛṣṭer viparilopo vidyate 'vināśitvāt* | BĀU 4.3.23.
- 51 ARR. Śāstri 1982, 24:4–5.
- 52 *Svagoṭrakalaha*, ARR. Śāstri 1982, 21:15.
- 53 VSM, verses 10–23, and the auto-commentary thereon.
- 54 VSM, verse 11 and the auto-commentary thereon.
- 55 . . . *bādhakapramāṇasyāpṛavyatvatvenābhāvaniścayānāṅgīkārat* . . . VSM. Śāstri 1936, 29:1–3.
- 56 VSM, verse 12 and the auto-commentary thereon.

5 *Avidyā*

- 1 For further discussion, see Matilal 1985, 319–321.
- 2 Ibid 322–323.
- 3 For Śāṅkara's position, see Halbfass 1995, 78. For Maṇḍana's position, see Thrasher 1993, 60.
- 4 For Maṇḍana's position, see Thrasher 1993, 59. For Śāṅkara's position, see Halbfass 1995, 82. For Padmapāda's position, see Comans 2000, 255.
- 5 See Potter 2006, 8.
- 6 See Halbfass 1995, 64.
- 7 For Śāṅkara's position, see Halbfass 1995, 58; Thrasher 1993, 64.
- 8 See Halbfass 1995, 71.
- 9 For a systematic treatment of *avidyā*, see Thrasher 1993, 1–38, 51–75; Hacker in Halbfass, 1995, 57–100; Solomon 1983, 57–81; Solomon 1985, 79–99; Malkani *et al.* 1933; Mahadevan 1985, 18–75.
- 10 For instance, see *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* 11.
- 11 Hacker points out that the attribute for *avidyā*, *bhāvarūpa*, is found in Advaita only after Jñānottama. Halbfass 1995, 64.
- 12 For a systematic treatment of *anirvacanīya*, see Thrasher 1993, 1–38. Śāṅkara explicitly mentions this in the following phrase: *avidyākālpiteṇa na nāmarūpalakṣaṇena rūpabhedenā vyākṛtāvyākṛtātmakena tattvānyatvābhyām anirvacanīyena brahma pariṇāmādisarvavyavahārāspadatvaṃ pratipadyate* | Śāṅkara on BSūBh 2.1.27.
- 13 . . . *sā ca māyā na vidyate* || GK 4.58. See also: . . . *dvaitavikalpabhrāntir avidyā na satyam idam* || *Paramārthasāra* 28.
- 14 *ajñānaṃ hi nāma jñānābhāvas tasya cāvastusvābhāvīyāt kutaḥ saṃsāra-kāraṇatvaṃ na hy asataḥ saj janmeṣyate* . . . NS. Jacob 1980, 112:8–113:2.
- 15 *vidyābhāvad avidyākhyā mithyaivodeti kalpanā* | YV 6a. 9. 22. *nāmaivedam avidyeti bhramamātram asad viduḥ* | *na vidyate yā sā satyā kīdr̥g rāma bhavet kila* || YV 6a. 49. 14.
- 16 *avidyāyā api kalpanīyatvena tatkalpanāt prāg eva kalpakasiddher vaktavyatvāt* || SLS, Śastry 1989, 351:3–4.
- 17 Appayya has borrowed this definition from PPV. For a detailed treatment on this definition, see Bhattacharya 1992, 111–137. Prakāśātman has developed this definition on the basis of PP: *ajñānasya svakāryeṇa pravīlīnena vartamānena vā saha jñānena nivṛttir bodhaḥ* | Compare this with Sureśvara's statement: *tattvamas-yādivākyoṭhasamyagdhijñanmamātrataḥ* | *avidyā saha kāryeṇa nāśid asti bhaviṣyati* || BĀUBhVā 1.1.183. After the term *jñāna*, *eka* (only) is inserted by Appayya.

- 18 This is Padmapāda's definition. Madhusūdana presents this as: *sadasadanad-hikaraṇatva*. For a detailed discussion, see Bhattacharya 1992, 1–34.
- 19 This definition is also borrowed from Padmapāda. See Bhattacharya 1992, 37–107.
- 20 AS. Śāstri 1982, 48–206.
- 21 *advayānandarūpeṇa eva tasyājñānaviśayatvāt, caitanyamātrasyaiva bhāsamānatvāt, tasya cājñānaviśayatvād, anyathājñānasyāpy asiddhyāpatteḥ* | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 10.
- 22 *svayaṃprakāśapariṣṭānandasvarūpeṇa bhāsamāne 'py ātmani mithyaiva bhedaṃ parikalpyādvayānandasvarūpasya viśayatvābhidhānam, caitanyamātram eva bhāsatē, nānandasvarūpam iti bhrāntapratītyanurodhāt* | VSM. Śāstri 1936, 10.
- 23 It is difficult to reconcile Arthur Venis' translation of *ekajīva* as a 'unity' of *jīvas*; this conceals the sense of the falsity of many selves, and the very term 'unity' implies multiplicity.
- 24 BS. Sastri 1937, 12:4.
- 25 BS. Sastri 1937, 10:13.
- 26 *kiṃ jagataḥ kāraṇam iti prṣṭe 'jñānam kāraṇam . . .* VSM. Śāstri 1936, 123.
- 27 VSM. Śāstri 1936, 36 reads *bhramajñānasyāvidyāmātrayonitva*.
- 28 *. . . māyāmarīcyudakagandharvanagaradvicandradīnmohādīpratibhāsānām mithyātve 'vagatē 'pi prākṣamyagbodhād anivṛttidarśanāt* | IS. Sagar 1986, 34:9–10.
- 29 This example needs to be understood in light of Indian myth, where the eclipse is envisioned as a beheaded body. The head part, following this myth, is called Rāhu, and the torso part, Ketu. There can be no distinction made between the head and Rāhu, if what is meant by Rāhu is the head itself.
- 30 AS. Yogīndrānanda 1984, 469. For Śāṅkara's example of bubble and waves, see: *. . . kadaṭṭigarbhavad asārān māyāmarīcyudakagandharvanagarākārasvapnaja-ludbudaphenasamān pratikṣaṇapradhvaṃsān . . . Māṇḍūkyopaniṣadbhāṣya* 1.2.12. Nonetheless, Śāṅkara is aware that the example of bubbles and waves and water actually fits with the philosophy of Bhartṛprapañca. While criticizing the *bhedābheda* doctrine, he once cites the following example: *. . . yathā kila samudro jalataraṅgaphenabudbudādyātmaka eva . . . evaṃ sarvaṃ idaṃ dvaitaṃ paramārth-asatyam eva jalataraṅgādīsthānīyaṃ samudrajalasthānīyaṃ tu paraṃ brahma* || BĀUBh 5.1.1. See also *Svarūpanirūpaṇa* 26.
- 31 Śāṅkara's example in BS 1.1.1. Śāṅkara uses the example of the imposition of surface and dirt onto the sky to demonstrate that even formless entities are subject to imposition.
- 32 For an analysis of examples from *Prajñāpāramitā*, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, and *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, see Hattori 1982. Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva utilized the dream simile to demonstrate the duration of non-substantial entities. Hattori 1982, 235–236.
- 33 *svapnaviśayābhimānavad ayaṃ pramāṇaprameyābhimānaḥ, māyāgandharvanagaramṛgaṭṭṣṇikāvad vā* | *Nyāyasūtra* 4.2.31–32. There is no separate *Bhāṣya* on these two *Sūtras*. Uddyotakara follows the model of the *Bhāṣya* in his *Vārttika*. He recognizes that these *Sūtras* criticize the Yogācāra doctrine, as he states: *cittavyatirekiṇām asatve hetuḥ khyatīḥ svapnavad iti . . . cittavyatiriktā . . . yadi copalabhyamānaṃ jāgradavasthāyāṃ svapnāvasthāyāṃ viśayaṃ asantaṃ manyase atha cittam astīty atra ko hetur iti* | *. . . na cittavyatirekiṇo viśayāḥ grāhyatvāt . . . Nyāyadarśana*. Nyaya-Tarkatīrtha and Tarkatīrtha 1985, 1077–1078. This identification is further confirmed by Vācaspati Miśra in his *Tātparyāṭkā*: *atra vijñānavādī svapakṣe pramāṇam āha . . . Nyāyadarśana*. Nyaya-Tarkatīrtha and Tarkatīrtha 1985, 1077–1078. Sudarśanācārya wrongly identifies these *Sūtras* with the *Sarvaśūnyavādin*: *. . . sarvaśūnyatvaṃ vijñeyam iti sūtrānvayaḥ* | *. . . siddhāntī śūnyavādaṃ nirākaroti*

... *śūnyavādasya, sarvaśūnyatvasya siddhir na saṁbhavati* ... *sarvaśūnyavāde 'nupapattiyantaram āha* ... *sarvaśūnyavāde svapnānām* ... *sarvaśūnyatvasvikārāt, kāraṇavaividhyasvikāre ca sarvaśūnyatvānupapattir ity arthaḥ* ... The commentary *Prasannapadā* on *Nyāyabhāṣya*. Sastri 1986, 406–408.

- 34 YS 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10. *Nidrā*, as defined by Patañjali, is not dreaming; it is only the state of deep sleep in which there is no object, but still there is mental mode.
- 35 *anyathāgrhṇataḥ svapno nidrā tattvam ajānataḥ* | GK 1.15.
- 36 Timalisina 2006, 156–169.
- 37 *avidyā svāśrayābhinnaviṣayā syāt tamo yataḥ* | *yathā bāhyaṁ tamo dr̥ṣṭaṁ tathā ceyaṁ tatas tathā* || VSM, verse 6.
- 38 The passage cited as '*niraniṣṭo niravadyaḥ*' runs parallel to the BĀU passage, *śokaṁ moham jarām mṛtyum aty eti* ... BĀU III.5.1.
- 39 Although Madhusūdana does not cite the passage in this context, the passage he is referring to, when he states '*śrutibalāc ca*' or 'also due to the support of the *Śruti*,' he is referring to the passage: *eka eva hi bhūtātmā bhūte bhūte vyavasthitaḥ* | *ekadhā bahudhā caiva dr̥ṣyate jalacandravat* || *Brahmabindūpaniṣad* 12.
- 40 *Nṛsiṃhatāpiniyopaniṣad* 9.3.

6 A critique of difference

- 1 See *Tarkakāṇḍa* of the *Brahmasiddhi*. Sastri 1984, 47–73.
- 2 For select Advaita literature refuting *bheda*, see *Iṣṭasiddhi* of Vimuktātman, Ch. 1, verse 1, and the auto-commentary thereon; the *Nyāyamakaraṇa* of Ānandabodha, sections *Kṣetrajñābhedanirāsa* and *Jñeyabhedanirāsa*; the *Tattvapradīpikā* of Citsukha. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 281–297; *Nyāyacandrikā* of Ānandapūrṇa, '*bhedasya durnirūpatvam*' section (Sastri 1959, 452–462); and the *Advaitasiddhi* of Madhusūdana, sections '*Sāmānyato Bhedakhaṇḍana*,' '*Viśeṣato Bhedakhaṇḍana*,' '*Viśeṣakhaṇḍana*,' '*Bhedapañcake Pratyakṣapramāṇabhaṅga*,' '*Jīvaśāstrābhedaṇumānabhaṅga*,' '*Jīvaśāstrābhedaṇumānabhaṅga*,' '*Jīvaśāstrābhedaṇumānabhaṅga*,' '*Bhedapañcake numnabhaṅga*,' '*Bhedaśruter Anuvādatvopapatti*,' '*Bhedaśruter Vyāvahārikabhedaaparātvyopapatti*,' '*Bhedaśruteḥ Ṣaḍvīdhatāparyāliṅgabhaṅga*.' AS. Śāstri 1982, 787–829.
- 3 *vastumātraviṣayaṁ prathamam avikalpakam pratyakṣam, tatpūrvās tu vikalpabud-dhavo viśeṣān avagāhante* BS, 71.1–2. This identification is confirmed even by the commentator on *Prakaraṇapañcikā*: *avikalpaśabdena nirvikalpakaṁ ucyate Nyāyasiddhi* 161. For detailed analysis of the Prābhākara, see Dwivedi 1994; Hirianna 1972, 49–59.
- 4 *abhāva* is generally translated as 'absence,' see Ingalls 1951, 54–71; Matilal 1968, 99–100; Phillips 1997, 49–51, 137–142, 154–155; Potter and Bhattacharyya 1993, 46–48, 127–128, 133–142; Potter 1977, 141–146, 352–354, 523–25). Halbfass translates this as 'non-being;' see Halbfass 1991, 175; Halbfass 1992, 52, 158. Halbfass identifies *asat* and *abhāva* as synonymous, which is problematic; see Halbfass 1992, 149. Matilal categorizes the two types of negation as absence and difference: see Matilal 1985, 116, accepting negation as the general term for all types of *abhāvas*; see Matilal 1985, 161. Thakur uses 'negation' as the translation for *abhāva*; see Thakur 2003, 429, 433. Hattori translates *abhāva* as 'negation,' which is the sixth means of knowledge, accepted by the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas and the Advaitins. See Hattori 1968, 78, 1.12.
- 5 The notion of *bheda* as a category is refuted by numerous philosophers; however, the perspectives of the grammarians, of Dharmakīrti, of the upholders of Prābhākara and of the Advaitins essentially differ. See VāP, *Vṛttisamuddeśa* 570–572, where Bhartṛhari accepts that difference is caused by cognition; nonetheless, the scope of his analysis is purely linguistic. Similarity in the logical argumentative structure among these philosophers has caused confusion in assigning

- the arguments to the respective schools. Varadachari identifies Udayana's refutation of difference in ĀTV (Dvivedin and Dravida 1986, 561–568) as directed against the Buddhists. See Potter 1977, 540–541. These arguments, however, exactly resemble the arguments Vimuktātman presents in IS, 4–7. They also match with those of the Prābhākaras, who refute the possibility of establishing difference as either reciprocal non-being (*anyonyābhāva*) or the essential form (*svarūpa*). See Potter and Bhattacharyya 1993, 139–140. For a refutation of the Advaitic criticism of difference from the Nyāya perspective, see *Bhedaratna*, summarized in Potter and Bhattacharyya 1993, 398–407.
- 6 *idantayā cetyaṃ bhāty anidantayā tu cid atas tayoṛ bhedaḥ prasiddhatro loka itaretarābhāvaś ca* | IS. Sagar 1986, 3:8–9.
 - 7 *na hy adṛṣṭasya dṛṣṭād dṛṣṭasya vādṛṣṭād bhedo draṣṭuṃ śakyo dharmapratītyo-gyapekṣatvād bhedadṛṣṭeḥ* | IS. Sagar 1986, 4:5–6.
 - 8 *na hy adṛṣṭo dharmī pratītyogī vā, sarvasya sarvato yugapadbhedadrṣṭiprasaṅgāt* | IS. Sagar 1986, 4:6.
 - 9 See the chapter, 'Perception as a Criterion for Truth' in Gupta 1995, 137–165.
 - 10 *nirviśayasya jñānate mānābhāvāt*. 'Because there is no means of knowledge [to prove] that [something] without an object can be knowledge.' See *Muktāvalī* on *Kārikāvalī* 1.49. For the Nyāya critique of conception-free awareness, see Matilal 1986, 339–356. For a treatment on *jñāna* from the Nyāya perspective, see Potter in Matilal 1985, 215–219; Matilal 1985, 373–391.
 - 11 For extensive treatment on *sattā*, see Halbfass 1992, 21–46, 139–168. For the Navya-Nyāya theory of abstraction, see Bhattacharya in Matilal 1985, 189–202. From the grammarian's perspective, existence is the foundational meaning of all words; see Iyer 1974, 5. The verb *√as* is always understood when any word is pronounced; see Iyer 1974, 6. For treatment on universals, see Bhattacharya in Matilal 1985, 189–202; Dravid 1972.
 - 12 *anubhava* is used in Advaita texts with three distinct meanings: 1) *anubhava* as sensory perception, acceptable to Nyāya, 2) *anubhava* as the experience of Brahman, 3) *anubhava* itself as the final reality. The current discussion concentrates on the third meaning of this term, in which *anubhava*, commonly used in earlier two meanings, signifies the ultimate reality in itself. For a discussion of *anubhava* in the Advaita context, see Halbfass 1988, 387–394.
 - 13 *Kārikāvalī* 63–66 and the *Muktāvalī* thereon.
 - 14 Gupta 1998, 58. This distinction goes back to Śaṅkara (Gupta 1998, 113), with this fundamental division outlined in *Kenopaniṣadbhāṣya* (KUBh). See Gupta 1995, 61–62.
 - 15 *svarūpa* is not interpreted in a single way in Nyāya. Śrīdhara thinks that *svarūpa* (own nature) characterizes the distinctive properties of an entity *x*, and this is equated with *astitva*; see Potter 1977, 142. Varadarāja understands *svarūpa* as an individuator (*viśeṣa*), while the individuators have no *svarūpas*; see Potter 1977, 143. In this doctrine, *svarūpa* is grasped by *nīrvikalpakajñāna*. Potter 1977, 165.
 - 16 *ata eva sambandhasya sambandhibhinnatvena pare dūṣayanti* | TC, *Āloka* of Pakṣadharamiśra 715.
 - 17 For a detailed treatment of *svarūpa*, see Matilal 1968, 41–44.
 - 18 *tatra ghaṭo 'yam iti yat pratyakṣam idam eva svasmād ghaṭasya bhedaṃ viśayīkaroti pratyakṣāntaraṃ vā?* VSM. Śāstri 1936, 44.
 - 19 For a discussion, see Granoff 1978, 150.
 - 20 Granoff 1978, 150.
 - 21 Gaṅgeśa presents the positions with regard to determinate perception: *gaur iti pratyakṣam viśeṣajñānanyam viśiṣṭajñānatvāt anumitivad iti | atha viśeṣajñānanyam viśeṣajñānagrāhakaḥ sākāṅkṣobhayaviśayam ekam viśiṣṭajñānam || Nīrvikalpakavāda*. Bhattacharya 1993, 9; . . . *viśiṣṭajñānamātraṃ prati viśeṣajñānam hetuḥ* | Ibid 25.

- 22 *viśiṣṭabuddhau viśeṣaṇajñānasya kāraṇatvāt* || *Muktāvalī* on *Kārikāvalī* 58.
- 23 Similarity, relational absence, reciprocal absence, smallness, impropriety, and contrariness are the meanings of negation. For detail, see Matilal 1968, 148–170. For ‘double negation in Navyanyāya,’ see Matilal 1985, 145–164. To compare the meaning of a sentence as explained in Advaita and Nyāya, see Shaw 2000, 273–293.
- 24 *svarūpaṇ ced bhedaḍṛṣṭeḥ pratiyogyapekṣā na syāt* | IS. Sagar 1986, 4:9–10.
- 25 Matilal 1968, 52–61. For a discussion of *svarūpasambandha*, see Potter 1977, 52–54; Potter and Bhattacharyya 1993, 15–17, 126–129, 562–64, 601–602; Matilal 1968, 40–44; Potter 1991, 128.
- 26 The general Nyāya position is that the knowledge of absence is dependent upon the knowledge of *pratiyogin* (*abhāvajñānam pratiyogijñānapūrvakam*), and *bheda* is accepted as *anyonyābhāva*: this requires the knowledge of its *pratiyogin* prior to knowing its difference.
- 27 Granoff 1978, 174. See ĀTV. Dvivedin and Dravida 1986, 568–582 for detailed treatment of this issue from Udayana’s perspective.
- 28 *tau cet svayaṇmānau na dṛṣyadharmau dṛgvad ekajñānāgamyatvāt* | IS. Sagar 1986, 8:1–2.
- 29 In problems of identity, for instance, in the case of a tree perceived today and a tree perceived in the past, Raghunātha proposes the delimitor as the defining factor; for instance, a tree delimited by a branch is different from a tree delimited by a root, since the delimiting factor is different. The same argument can be raised here. For a detailed discussion of *tādātmya*, see Matilal 1968, 45–51.
- 30 The problems in Gaṅgeśa/Raghunātha’s attempt to define the counter-positive arise when the *svarūpa* relation is not fixed; since in all other definitions, Raghunātha himself finds difficulties; in the case of the fourth definition proposed, *svarūpasambandha* is a presupposition, and if *svarūpasambandha* cannot be proved, this definition cannot be tenable. For details, see Matilal 1968, 52–61.
- 31 Matilal (1985, 210–212) translates *nirvikalpaka* knowledge as ‘non-qualificative perception’ in one context, and ‘immediate perception’ in another; see Matilal 1986, 321. Translating an Advaita text, *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, Gupta renders it as ‘indeterminate perception;’ see Gupta 1995, 226. Bhattacharya, translating Gaṅgeśa’s chapter on *Nirvikalpakavāda*, gives the meaning of this term as ‘indeterminate perception;’ see Bhattacharya 1993; Phillips, within the context of Nyāya, uses the same term ‘indeterminate perception;’ see Phillips 1997, 195. Potter translates it as ‘nonpropositional awareness;’ see Potter and Bhattacharyya 1993, 24–25, 94–95, 389–390; however, elsewhere he translates it as ‘nonpropositional judgement;’ see Potter 1977, 165. Within the same context of Nyāya, Halbfass translates this term once as ‘mere intuition;’ see Halbfass 1991, 365; and another time as ‘pre-predicative perception;’ see Halbfass 1992, 101. Mohanty classifies it within the same category as ‘intuitive knowledge’ and ‘non-intuitive knowledge.’ To understand *nirvikalpaka* knowledge as ‘intuitive’ is problematic, because the term ‘intuition’ does not include the prefixal meaning of *nir* and the meaning of *vikalpa*, as understood in multiple ways in various schools. See *Tatvaśūddhi* p. 5, ll. 9–14; Thrasher 1993, 77–100; Bhattacharya 1993; Iyer 1992, 127, 213; Williams 1980, 1–45. Schmithausen translates this term, within the context of Yogācāra philosophy, as ‘transconceptual;’ see Schmithausen 1987, 202. For Diñnāga’s position on *nirvikalpaka jñāna*, see Hattori 1968, 76: 1.10, and p. 169: 6.33.
- 32 Halbfass 1992, 102.
- 33 Although Praśastapāda is not explicit about the highest universal, *sattā* (existence), Śrīdhara points out that *nirvikalpaka* perception grasps *sattā*. See Halbfass 1992, 102.
- 34 Matilal 1985, 210.
- 35 For specific treatment on Maṇḍana’s treatment of *nirvikalpa* awareness, read, Chapter IV, ‘Nirvikalpa Jñāna,’ in Thrasher 1993, 77–100.

- 36 Thrasher 1993, 88.
 37 Matilal 1985, 210–11.
 38 Matilal 1985, 213. For a detailed analysis of the Nyāya treatment on *nirvikalpa-jñāna*, see Bhattacharya 1993; Phillips and Tatacharya 2004, 609–640. For comparative understanding of the concept of *nirvikalpa-jñāna*, see Chakrabarti, Arindam, ‘Perception, Apperception and Non-Conceptual Content,’ in Chatterjee 2003, 89–107.
 39 *nirvikalpakam . . . vastumāstrasvarūpam . . .* VSM. Śāstri 1936, 69:5–6.
 40 *vastumātrāvagāhi pratyakṣaṃ na bhedavārtam jānāti . . .* VSM. Śāstri 1936, 47:5–6.
 41 Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra gives a concise treatment of a later-scholastic understanding of *nirvikalpa-jñāna*. He states: *nirvikalpakam tu saṃsargānavagāhi jñānam yathā so 'yaṃ devadattas tattvamaśītyādijñānam | nanu śābdam idaṃ jñānam na pratyakṣam indriyājanyatvād iti cen na | na hīndriyājanyatvam pratyakṣatve tantram, dūṣitatvāt | kin tu yogyavartamānaviśayakatve sati pramāṇacaitanyasya viśayacaitanyābhinnatvam ity uktam | Vedāntaparibhāṣā*. Mīśra 1985, 77–79. See also Gupta 1995, 226–237.
 42 This syllogism follows Śrīharṣa’s arguments. See Granoff 1978, 157.
 43 This syllogism follows Prakāśānanda’s arguments. In explaining this argument, commentators on VSM have taken *svaprakāśatā* and the absence of awareness as contrary properties related to knowledge and its object. The notable difference in their respective syllogisms is that Śrīharṣa understands *jñānatva* to be the factor differentiating knowledge from its object (Granoff 1978, 157), whereas Prakāśānanda understands the support of contrary properties (*viruddhadharmāśrayatva*) (VSM. Śāstri 1936, 47) as the *probans* that establishes the difference between knowledge and its content.
 44 In Indian logical debate, ‘an example’ (*dṛṣṭānta*) needs to be agreeable to both the proponents and opponents of the debate. Matilal 1985, 91–93.
 45 *na ca dṛṣo 'nyā upalabdhir asti yadabhāvād abhāvo jñeyaḥ |* IS. Sagar 1986, 8:14–9:1.
 46 *atha tayā vinā 'py abhāvajñānam dṛṣi syāt sphurantyām api syāt |* IS. Sagar 1986, 9:3–4.
 47 *nanu dṛṣas saivopalabdhir . . . kiṃ vā tadviśayaṃ jñānam api bhāvarūpaṃ kiñcid asti |* IS. Sagar 1986, 9:5–7.
 48 Maṇḍana applies *abhedavāda* and understands this term as identical to *advaitavāda*. See BS 2.22, and his commentary thereon, particularly, ‘*aṃśānuvṛtṭyā vā vastvanugame 'dvaitavādaḥ |* BS. Sastri 1984, 67:8. For *abhedavāda* of Maṇḍana, see also Nicholson 2003, 590.
 49 For treatment on the doctrine of *sahopalambha*, see Iwata 1991.
 50 *nanv evaṃ dṛgdṛśyayor abhedā itaretarabhāvaś ca prasajyate |* IS. Sagar 1986, 13:3.
 51 *nanu bhavataivokto'bhedo bhedaṃ nirākurvatā | nāham abhedam vacmi pramāṇābhāvād bhedaprasiddhivirodhāc ca |* IS. Sagar 1986, 13:7–8.
 52 *nāham api prasiddhiṃ bādhe kin tv asyā mānamūlatām | tadbādhe 'pi na prasiddhir naśyed dvicandrādiprasiddhivat, yathāvastudarśanāt prāg avināśopapatteḥ |* IS. Sagar 1986, 13:11–12.
 53 *abhede sahabhānāyogāt |* IS. Sagar 1986, 15:15.
 54 *kaś cāyaṃ sahopalambhaniyamo nāma | na tāvat sahopalabhyatvaniyamaḥ, dṛṣo 'nupalabhyatvāt | nāpi sahopalabdhitvam dṛśyasyānupalabdhitvāt |* IS. Sagar 1986, 16:7–8.
 55 *na bhedo vastuno rūpaṃ tadabhāvaprasaṅgataḥ |* BS 2.5 ab.
 56 *saṃmātrarūpe sarvatra pratīyamāne . . .* BS. Sastri 1984, 58:20.
 57 This numbering here follows Mahadevan 1972. The Śāstri edition of the Vārtika numbers this verse as 919.

- 58 *satparicchedakair nāpi pratyakṣādyair graho bhavet | yāvṛtter anyato 'bhāvamātrāyāḥ kenacit kvacit || dvaitagrāhi yathā mānaṃ na kiñcid api vidyate |* BĀUBhVā 2.1. 594–595.
- 59 *na hi ghaṭaḥ kadācid aghaṭa iti syāt |* VSM. Śāstri 1936, 46:3–4.
- 60 *vastumātrāvagāhi pratyakṣaṃ na bhedavārtam jānāti |* VSM. Śāstri 1936, 45:5–6. This is very close to Maṇḍana's line: *na hi vastumātravyabhicaraḥ kvacij jñāne dr̥ṣṭo 'sti |* BS. Sastri 1984, 71:13.
- 61 *saṃmātrarūpe sarvatra pratīyamāne* BS 58.19. See also BS 2.27–28 and the auto-commentary of Maṇḍana thereon. For Maṇḍana's position on *nirvikalpa jñāna*, see Thrasher 1993, 77–109 (Chapter IV: '*Nirvikalpa Jñāna*').
- 62 SBhVā 151, 189, 190, 1001, 1002, 1058. This '*anubhava*' differs drastically from other schools of Indian thought. See footnote 12 in this chapter. For Dharmakīrti's position, see 'The Ambiguities of the Concept of Existence,' Dreyfus 1997, 73–82. A common tendency, in classical Indian and Tibetan Buddhist studies as well as in contemporary scholarship, is to reject Dharmakīrti's idealistic philosophy. For a proper treatment on this aspect of Dharmakīrti,' see 'Yogācāra in Dharmakīrti's Thought,' Dreyfus 1997, 428–433, 'The Importance of Yogācāra in Dharmakīrti's Thought,' Dreyfus 1997, 436–438. For the Nyāya treatment of conception-free awareness, see Matilal 1986, 339–354.
- 63 Halbfass 1988, 389–390. Halbfass, however, deviates from this aspect of *anubhūti* when he summarizes the Advaita understanding of this term, stating that '*anubhava* as a state of awareness is only temporarily present' (Halbfass 1988, 392, line 16). Halbfass's understanding is apparently influenced by Nyāya.
- 64 Following Prabhākara, there is no erroneous perception, but rather, perception of only that which exists. This thesis is called *akhyāti* or *satkhyāti* or *vivekakhyāti*. Matilal interprets *akhyāti* as 'no illusion,' *satkhyāti* as 'only the existent (real) appears in our awareness,' and *vivekakhyāti* as 'the distinction between past experience and present experience is "missed" (in illusion).' See Matilal 1986, 193. However, the Advaita doctrine drastically differs from Prabhākara's theory of 'no illusion.' Knowledge in Prabhākara's thesis is not constant pure awareness; instead, it is revealed within the triad of the subject, object, and knowledge. For a treatment of Prabhākara's view, see Siderits in Matilal and Shaw 1984, 253–297; Chatterjee 1979, 267–276; Hiriyanna 1972, 49–59; Hiriyanna 1995, 144–146; Granoff 1978, 47–48, 162–164.
- 65 *ata eva na saṃvido 'pi bhedāḥ sarvasyaiva bhedasya saṃvedyāśrayatvāt saṃvedyatvāc ca, saṃvedyasya cāsaṃviddharmatvāt |* IS. Sagar 1986, 18:10–11.
- 66 *saṃvidantarābhyupagame ca teṣāṃ saṃvidviśayatve ghaṭādivad asaṃvittvāt |* IS. Sagar 1986, 18:11–12.

7 A critique of 'object'

- 1 *na ca karaṇasambandhād eva saṃbandhopapattih, īśvarajñāne 'karaṇajanye 'pi viśayānāṃ sphuraṇāt; karaṇajanyeṣv api yogijñāneṣu yuktāvasthāyām antaḥkaraṇasambandhānām atītānāgatānām bāhyārthānām ca sphuraṇāt |* TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 74.
- 2 *asmādādi pramāṇajanye 'pi jñāne so'yaṃ devadatta ityādaḥ tattāmśasya karaṇāsambaddhasyāpi pratyakṣatābhyupagamāt |* TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 75.
- 3 This follows the commentator of TP, Pratyagrūpa: *cakṣuṣā saṃyuktaḥ parvatas tasya viśeṣaṇam agnir ity arthaḥ |* Nayanaprasādinī on TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 76.
- 4 *na ca tattāyām apīndriyeṇa saha saṃyuktaviśeṣaṇatālakṣaṇaḥ sannikarṣaḥ, samavāyetarabhāvasyendriyasamprayogam antareṇāpi pratyakṣatāyām ayaṃ parvato 'gnimān ityatrāgnimattvasyāpi saṃyuktaviśeṣaṇatayā pratyakṣatvāpatteḥ pratyakṣadharmikānumānamātrocchedaprasaṅgāḥ |* TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 75.

- 5 TP does not examine separate definitions. While KhKh analyzes eight definitions, TP presents five definitions. The primary definition of both philosophers differs from the other.
- 6 Ānandapūrṇa, in his *Vidyāsāgarī* commentary on KhKh, identifies the fallacy referred to as *sādhyaśama*. See KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 650:9. In this counter-questioned fallacy, the *probans* is equal to (*sama*) the *probandum* (*sādhya*) in the sense that both are unconfirmed. Naiyāyikas consider five logical fallacies, one of which is *sādhyaśama*. For a discussion of *sādhyaśama*, see Matilal 1974, 211–224.
- 7 This is found in Citsukha's gloss. See TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 76. This definition is slightly changed from the one that is presented by Śrīharṣa: *jñānyaphalādhāratvaṃ viśayatvaṃ, tadvattvañ ca viśayitvam . . .* | KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 656:7.
- 8 See: *pramāṇena khalv ayaṃ jñātā artham upalabhya tamartham abhīpsati jihāsati vā, tasyepsā jihāsā prayukasya samithā pravṛttir ity ucyate* | *Nyāyabhāṣya* 1.1.1.
- 9 See KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 656; TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 76.
- 10 *tadvattvam iti tajjanakatvam iti yāvat* | *Vidyāsāgarī* on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 656:20.
- 11 This identification follows Pratyagrūpa's comment, *jñātātā prākṛtyaṃ, etac ca bhāṭābhiprāyeṇa* | TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 76:11–12.
- 12 This follows Pratyagrūpa's exposition: *yatphalaṃ pratyādhāratvaṃ viśayasocyate tatphalaṃ tatraiva janayati vijñānaṃ* (*Nayanaprasādinī* in TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 76:14) that follows Citsukha's objection: *phalajanane 'py anugataniyāmākāyogāt* | TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 76:5.
- 13 Elsewhere it has been argued that overlooked objects cannot be the objects of cognition. This follows the opinion that considers only abandonment (*hāna*) and receiving (*upādāna*) as actions but not overlooking (*upekṣā*). When one cognizes grass while walking, or in the process of seeing something else, then, the object that has been overlooked could not be an object of cognition. This example comes from the grammarian's utilization of *karma kāraka* to *anīpsita* to have the accusative case. See, *tathāyuktaṃ cānīpsitam* PS 1.4.50.
- 14 See Yogīndrānanda's Hindi translation of KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 650.
- 15 *jāti* is the universal that qualifies an object bearing it whereas *upādhi*, not being universal, simply qualifies the entity. For instance, *ghaṭatva* is the property regarded as universal, whereas the property qualifying *ghaṭatva*, i.e., *ghaṭatvatva* is only *upādhi*.
- 16 Vidyāsāgarī elaborates upon this as: *jñānagatāsādhārāṇadharmātirekeṇa ghaṭa-tajjñānāyor anyasambandhānirūpaṇāt* | KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 651.
- 17 For a detailed analysis of *sāṅkara*, see Matilal 1985, 172–176.
- 18 The commentator uses *mṛgapuruṣa*, (deer-man) as an example, which is different from *mṛga* (deer) or *puruṣa* (man).
- 19 *puruṣamṛge puruṣādipratīniyatavyavahārābhāvavad ihāpi ghaṭādipratīniyatatalāh-araṇādīvyavahāro na syāt pravṛttijñānāyor ekagocaratvaniyamād ity arthaḥ* | *Vidyāsāgarī* commentary on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 652.
- 20 *Viśaya* in Śrīharṣa's line is for external *viśaya*, which is not proved. The commentator clarifies this: *jñānagataviśeṣasya tajjñānatvavyatirekeṇānyasyānirūpaṇāt ghaṭākāratvarūpa eva ghaṭajñānasya viśeṣas tenaiva bāhyārthaprayuktavyavah-āropapatter jñānavyatiṛiktajñeyāsiddhiḥ* | *Vidyāsāgarī* commentary on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 652.
- 21 The commentator elaborates: *viśayaviśayibhāvasyaikatvāt tasya ca jñānajñey-asvarūpatvāt jñānajñeyayor dvayor api pratyekaṃ viśayatvaṃ viśayitvañ ca pratīyeta saṃyogasyaikatve saṃyogidvaye'pi saṃyuktapratibhāsavat* | KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 653.
- 22 *arthe viśayatvam eva jñāne viśayitvam pratīyate tathāpi dvayoḥ sambandhas-yopacāras tadvayanirūpyatvād ity arthaḥ* | *tadviśayabhāvasya na dravyāntarbhāvaḥ*

sāmānyādivūttitvān nābhāve'pi abhāvasyāpi viṣayatvād anantarbhāvo 'pi siddhāntavirodhūti viṣayatā jñātataiveti pariśiṣyate . . . Vidyāsāgarī on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 653.

- 23 This exposition primarily relies upon Ānandapūrṇa's in *Vidyāsāgarī: jñānājñeyasvarūpāṇām vyāvṛttatvād ghaṭapaṭajñānādau sarvatra viṣayaviṣay-ibhāvānugatabuddhivyavahārānupapattir ity arthaḥ* | *Vidyāsāgarī on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 653.*
- 24 According to Pāṇini, the Sūtra *tyadādini ca* (PS 1.1.74) identifies *tat* as *vṛddha* and the Sūtra *vṛddhāc chaḥ* (PS 4.2.114) implies the suffix *cha*. The suffix *cha* is changed to *īya* following the Sūtra *āyanyinīyīyaḥ phaḍhakhachaghām pratyayādīnām* | PS 7.1.2.
- 25 According to the grammarians, if both base and suffix simultaneously express meaning, there is the prominence of the meaning expressed by the suffix. This is following the definition: *prakṛtipratyayau saharthaṃ brūtas tayoh pratyayārthas-yaiva prādhānyam*. This prominence, however, does not limit meaning only to the suffix.
- 26 Ānandapūrṇa elaborates this as: *tasya chapratyayenocyamānasya tadīyattvākh-yadharmāntarasya svaviśeṣaṇībhūtacchabdārthaviṣayeṇābhedaḥ syād ity arthaḥ* | KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 655. Why this turns out to be the conclusive meaning is explained in the commentary *Vidyāsāgarī* as: *tacchabdārthasya ghaṭādes tadīyatvalakṣaṇaviśiṣṭarūpe viśeṣaṇatayā praviṣṭasya svaghaṭītatadīyat-varūpapraviṣṭasya svīkṛtadharmāntarasvarūpatayā tvayaiva niruktatvād ity arthaḥ* | *Vidyāsāgarī on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 655.*
This position of Śrīharṣa rests upon Udayana's thesis found in *ĀTV: svabhāvatvād eva ca nopakārāntaram apekṣate, tanmātrīyatvād eva ca nānyadīyaḥ* |
- 27 *tadetadanyo 'nyaviśiṣṭam ubhayaṃ jñānasvabhāva iti pūrvoktanyāyas tacchab-dārthasya tadīyatvaviśiṣṭe viśeṣaṇatayā praveśa ity evamrūpo'dhukoktanyāyaḥ* | *Vidyāsāgarī on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 656.*
- 28 Citsukha presents this position as: *saṃbandhāntaram antareṇa jñānasya yad viśeṣaṇaṃ sa tadviśayo viśeṣyaṇ ca tena viṣayī . . .* (TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 79:5–6). The actual line found in *Kiraṇāvalī* of Udayana runs as: *saṃnādhikaraṇam avacchedakaṃ viśeṣaṇaṃ tatpratyāyavyavacchityadhikaraṇatayotpalaṃ viśeṣyam anīlavavyāvṛttam utpalaṃ viśiṣṭapratyayasya viṣayaḥ, kevalajñānasya tūtpalaṃ* | *Kiraṇāvalī* 453–455.
- 29 This paraphrasing relies upon Yogīndrānanda's Hindi commentary on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 662.
- 30 This example follows *Vidyāsāgarī* commentary on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 662:8.
- 31 Following the *Vidyāsāgarī: viśiṣṭanāmakatattvāntaram yadgataṃ dharmaṃ grhṇāti tad viśeṣyam* | *Vidyāsāgarī on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 662:11.*
- 32 This objection follows the lines of Jñānaśrīmītra: *yenaiva janitam iti cet, ātmamanokṣasamyogādāyo 'pi grāhyā iti nātiprasaṅganivṛttiḥ* | JMN. Thakkura 1987, 350.
- 33 This verse is a slight modification of the version found in KhKh. Following the lines of Śrīharṣa: *athocyate ya evārtho yasyāṃ saṃvidi bhāṣate | tadvedyaḥ sa prthak neti vedyavyasya lakṣaṇam* || KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 658.
- 34 See TP. Yogīndrānanda 1956, 78:3–4; KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 659:5–6; and the commentary of Ānandapūrṇa thereon. KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 659:14–21.
- 35 *tadviṣayajñāne yo'rtho bhāti tasya lakṣaṇam uktaṃ syād evaṃ ca sati viṣayapadārthāniruktau na tena lakṣaṇanirūpaṇam ātmāśrayādiprasaṅgād ity arthaḥ* | Ānandapūrṇa in *Vidyāsāgarī on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 659.*
- 36 He cites another work, *Īśvarābhisandhi*, the *Jñātātāvāda* chapter, in this context.

- 37 The examination of the alternative relations in this section relies on the Vidyāsāgarī commentary upon KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 661:18–662:6.
- 38 Granoff 1978, 128. According to Granoff, this is the definition developed by Vācaspati Miśra.
- 39 This line is paraphrased by Śrīharṣa, following Dharmakīrti's citation. Both Śrīharṣa's *jñānākārpaṇakṣamo hetur eva viṣayaḥ* and Citsukha's *jñānākārpaṇako hetur viṣayaḥ* are based on Dharmakīrti's text: *bhinnakālaṃ katham grāhyam iti cet grāhyatām viduḥ | hetutvam eva yuktijñā jñānākārpaṇa-kṣamam || Pramāṇavārtika* 2.247.
- 40 For instance, see the position of Jñānaśrīmitra: *nākārabhedam avadhūya dhiyo 'sti vṛttiḥ | JMN*. Thakkura 1987, 386.
- 41 This is a gloss following Ānandapūrṇa in *Vidyāsāgrī*, KhKh: *jñānākāro jñānasvarūpam, uta dharmah? ādye jñānajanakamātrasyaiva tadarpakatvenātivṛtyāptir dvītye tasya vyāvṛtau lakṣaṇavyāvṛttir anugatatve tasya bhāvarūpatve siddhāntavirodho 'bhāvarūpatve tajjanakatvam eva na kāraṇasyety asiddhir ity arthaḥ | Ānandapūrṇa in Vidyāsāgrī* on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 660:9–12.
- 42 *sphuṭānuvidhānatve saty ākārasamarpaṇako hetur viṣaya | Ānandapūrṇa in Vidyāsāgrī* on KhKh. Yogīndrānanda 1979, 660.

8 Cīnmātra and cittamātra: the Advaita critique of Yogācāra

- 1 For Rāmānuja and Mādhava's criticism of Śāṅkara as a crypto-Buddhist, see Sharma 1981, 64, 145.
- 2 Stcherbatsky, cited in Murti 1998, 311. Ram-Prasad 2002, 38–92.
- 3 For Gauḍapāda and Buddhism, see Bhattacharya 1992; King 1995.
- 4 The *Bhāṣya* of Śāṅkara on the *Brahmasūtra* II.2.18. The section of the *Brahmasūtra* II.2.18–32 is dedicated to the criticism of various Buddhist positions.
- 5 *Brahmasūtra* II.2.28–31. Murti has presented a brief analysis of Śāṅkara's criticism of Vijñānavāda. See Murti 1998.
- 6 Compare this position with that of Vasubandhu in VMS 11–15.
- 7 Ingalls 1954, 300. Compare this position with that of Vasubandhu in VMS 16.
- 8 This point is closer to Dharmakīrti's position of *sahopalambha*.
- 9 This is found repeatedly in Vasubandhu's VMS. See VMS 3 for the example of dream. For causal efficiency in dream, see VMS 4. The particular argument presented here is closer to the description of perception of entities without them actually existing out, found in VMS 16. The analogy of dream is found further in VMS 17–18.
- 10 This position is more explicit in Vasubandhu's VMST. Although the application of the specific term *vāsanā* is found only in VMST 19, the inner conditions for the rise of 'externals' is discussed throughout the text in VMST. For discussion in detail of Śāṅkara's criticism, see Murti 1998, 311–317; Darling 1987, 305–308.
- 11 *upalabhyate hi pratipratyayaṃ bāhyo 'rthaḥ stambhḥ kuḍyaṃ ghaṭaḥ paṭa iti | BSūBh* II.2.28.
- 12 The *Pramāṇasamuccaya* of Dīnnāga, section 1 verses 2–3. See Hattori 1968, 24.
- 13 The definition of *pratyakṣa* as '*kalpanāpoḍha*' appears in Dīnnāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, section 1, verse 3.
- 14 Rospatt 1995, 82–84.
- 15 *api ca dvayor jñānayoḥ pūrvottarakālayoḥ svasaṃvedanenaiva upakṣīṇayor itaretaragrāhyagrāhakatvānupapattiḥ | BSūBh* II.2.28.
- 16 *atha vijñānaṃ prakāśātmakatvāt pradīpavat svayam evānubhūyate na tathā bāhyo 'py artha iti ced atyantaviruddhāṃ svātmani kriyām abhyupagachasi agnir ātmānam dahatītivat | BSūBh* II.2.28.
- 17 For discussion on Śāṅkara's application of these terms, see the second chapter of this text.

- 18 Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.28.
- 19 *svayaṃsiddhasya ca sāksīno 'pratyākhyeyatvāt* | BSūBh II.2.28.
- 20 Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.28.
- 21 *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, 1:6. Hattori 1968, 27.
- 22 *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, 1:9 ab, and the *Vṛtti* thereon. Hattori 1968, 28.
- 23 *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, 1:12, and the *Vṛtti* thereon. Hattori 1968, 30.
- 24 *Madhyamakaratnapradīpa*, section IV.3.4. See Lindtner, Christian, 'Bhavya's Critique of Yogācāra in the *Madhyamakaratnapradīpa*, Chapter IV,' in Matilal and Evans 1986, 243.
- 25 See Yao 2005, 52–55.
- 26 *Mahāvibhāṣā* passage cited in Yao, 2005.
- 27 *Ṭīkā* of Vinītadeva in the *Nyāyabindu* 1.10.
- 28 Yao 2005, 53–55.
- 29 This passage is cited in *Tattvasaṅgrahapañjikā* and is identified as that of Dīnāga by Hattori. See Hattori 1968, 102.
- 30 See Lindtner, Christian, 'Bhavya's Critique of Yogācāra in the *Madhyamakaratnapradīpa*, Chapter IV,' in Matilal and Evans 1986, 243.
- 31 *ata eva sahopalaṃbhaniyamo'pi pratyayaṇīyayor upāyopeyabhāva hetukaḥ nābheda hetuka ity abhyupagantavyam* | Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.28.
- 32 For Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda distinction, see Dreyfus 1997, 100–103, 254–57, 335–39; Yao 2005, 121–25.
- 33 Yao 2005, 122.
- 34 Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.29.
- 35 Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad's analysis of dream in two chapters, 'Śāṅkara, Vasubandhu and the idealist use of dreaming,' and 'Śāṅkara, dreaming and non-realism,' (Ram-Prasad 2002, 38–92) is the most extensive one to my knowledge.
- 36 For a systematic analysis of the logical failure demonstrated by Śāṅkara, see Ram-Prasad 2002, 56–58.
- 37 Ram-Prasad 2002, 89.
- 38 The *Āgamaśāstra* of Gauḍapāda is full of dream analogy. The most important passage is the verses 1–10 of the second section, *Vaitathyaprakaraṇa*.
- 39 See the *Vṛtti* of Vasubandhu in VMS 10.
- 40 Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.30–31.
- 41 *na bhāvo vāsanānām upapaddyate tvatpakṣe 'nupalabdher bāhyānām arthānām* | Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.30.
- 42 Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.30.
- 43 *api ca vāsanā nāma saṃskāra viśeṣaḥ | saṃskāraś ca nāśrayam antareṇāvakalpante | evaṃ loke dṛṣṭatvāt | na ca tava vāsanāśrayaḥ kaścid asti pramāṇato 'nupalabdheḥ* | Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.30.
- 44 Śāṅkara on BSūBh II.2.31.
- 45 Schmithausen 1987, 18.
- 46 Schmithausen 1987, 32. Italics mine.
- 47 VMST 2 is the explicit reference for *ālayavijñāna*.
- 48 Besides reading Jñānottama's IS and Śrīharṣa's KhKh, this gloss follows the *Śāradā* commentary on KhKh by Śāṅkara Caitanya and his independent treatise, *Darśanasarvasva* (DSr).
- 49 *ghaṭādikāṃ sphuraṇātmakam sphuraṇaṇīyayatvāt* | *Rājahamṣa* on DSr. Śāstri 1990, 12:23–24.
- 50 *ghaṭādikāṃ viśayatāsthānīyo jñānadharmo jñānād bhinnābhinnatayā baudhdhair ucyate* | *Laghucandrikā*, Cited in DSr. Śāstri 1990, 24:2.
- 51 This understanding fits with the definition of action by Bhartṛhari:
*guṇabhūtair avayavaiḥ samūhaḥ kramajanmanām |
buddhyā prakalpito 'bheda kriyete vapadiśyate* || *Vākyapadīya* III.8.4.

- 52 The format of the syllogism in Sanskrit is: *sarvaṃ jñānātmakaṃ jñānaviśayatvāt |*
 53 *bhedasya svaviśayakajñānātmakatayā satyatve 'pi bahiṣṭvavadevāsatyatvakāl-*
panikatvādyabhīdhānāt | DSr. Śāstri 1990, 40:1–2.
- 54 DSr. Śāstri 1990, 42:1–8.
- 55 *yo bālair dharmāṇāṃ svabhāvo grāhyagrāhakādīḥ parikalpitas tena kalpitenātmanā*
teṣāṃ nairātmyaṃ na tv anabhilāpyenātmaneti | The *Vṛtti* of Vasubandhu on VMS
 10.
- 56 The verse '*ātmadharmopacāro hi vividho yaḥ pravartate | vijñānapariṇāmo 'sau*
 . . . (VMST 1) is cited by Śaṅkara Caitanya in DSr. Śāstri 1990, 96:5.
- 57 Śaṅkara Caitanya cites a passage from *Trimśikā* in order to confirm this
 Yogācāra standpoint: *pūrvakān niruddhāt tajjātīyavijñānāt vijñānam utpadyate |* The
 commentary of Sthiramati on VMST, 17. Cited in DSr. Śāstri 1990, 99:6.
- 58 *te vācyāḥ pudgalo naiva vidyate pāramārthikaḥ |*
tattvānyatvādyavācyatvān nabhaḥkokanadādivat || Tattvasaṅgraha. Ātmaparīkṣā,
 verse 338. Cited in DSr. Śāstri 1990, 96:2–3.
- 59 *na hi nirālaṃbanaṃ nirākāraṃ vā vijñānaṃ yuḥyate | naiva tan nirālaṃbanaṃ*
nirākāraṃ veṣyate kiṃ tarhy aparicchinnālaṃbanaṃ nākāraṃ iti | Vasubandhu
- 60 DSr. Śāstri 1990, 100:2–3.
- 61 Rājhaṃsa on DSr. Śāstri 1990, 280:7–9; 341:16–344:22.
- 62 DSr. Śāstri 1990, 280:6.
- 63 *kūṭasthātmasvarūpatve 'py ānandasyānubhavasyevea bhrāntyaiva janyatvādi prasid-*
dhyupapatteḥ | IS. Sagar 1986, 16–17.
- 64 *yathā hy upādhijanmanāśabhedālpavamahattvaśuddhyaśuddhivedyatvādayo bodhe*
taddhīne 'vivekāṭ kalpyante, yathā cākāma evaṃ ānande 'pīti na kaścīd virodhaḥ |
 IS. Sagar 1986, 17–19.
- 65 IS. Sagar 1986, 29:19–21.
- 66 *antaḥkaraṇavṛttiviśeṣa ātmasukhābhivyañjake 'vivekāṭ sukhavabhramo lokasya*
buddhivṛttāv iva bodha-bhramaḥ | IS. Sagar 1986, 31:6–7.
- 67 IS. Sagar 1986, 31:12–17. The *Upaṇiṣadic* passage cited here that rejects aware-
 ness after death is, '*na pretya sañjñāsti*' BĀU 2.4.12–13, and the passage to confirm
 everlasting awareness is, '*na hi draṣṭur drṣṭer viparilopo'sti*' BĀU 4.3.23.

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