

SILVER AND MOTHER-OF-PEARL: SOME COMMENTS ON PERCEPTION AND DOUBT  
IN PREMODERN SOUTH ASIA

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## ABSTRACT

This paper addresses two primary topics, South Asian epistemology and intellectual history. It focuses on the epistemological theory of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*) of cognition presented by the 7<sup>th</sup> century South Asian philosopher Kumāriḷa Bhaṭṭa and presents an intellectual historical account of some developments in the history of pre-modern South Asian epistemology. It attempts to present a historical account of this theory in relation to its own intellectual milieu—i.e. in relation to the tradition to which Kumāriḷa belonged—as well as in relation to its opponents—i.e. to the 10<sup>th</sup> century Kashmirian philosopher Jayanta Bhaṭṭa. Additionally, this paper is committed to the presupposition that innovation does not occur in a vacuum and that only by paying close attention to texts and textual traditions can we gain a more nuanced understanding of the developments in pre-modern South Asian thought and philosophical traditions in particular.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Nils Seiler received a B.A. in Religious Studies and a minor in History from the University of New Mexico in December 2014.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BhG</i>	<i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>
<i>MD</i>	<i>Mīmāṃsādarśanam Ed. by K.V. Abhyankar</i>
<i>MS</i>	<i>Mīmāṃsāsūtra of Jaimini</i>
<i>MSBh</i>	<i>Mīmāṃsāsūtrabhāṣya of Śabarāsvāmin</i>
<i>NB</i>	<i>Nyāyabindu of Dharmakīrti</i>
<i>NBP</i>	<i>Nyāyabinduprakāraṇa Ed. By Swami Dwarikadas Shastri</i>
<i>NBṬ</i>	<i>Nyāyabinduṭīkā of Dharmottara</i>
<i>NBṬṬ</i>	<i>Nyāyabinduṭīkāṭippaṇa</i>
<i>ND</i>	<i>Nyāyadarśanam Edited by Taranatha Nyayatarkatirtha</i>
<i>NM</i>	<i>Nyāyamañjarī of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa</i>
<i>NS</i>	<i>Nyāyasūtra of Gotama</i>
<i>NSBh</i>	<i>Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya of Vātsyāyana</i>
<i>NV</i>	<i>Nyāyavārttika of Uddyotakara</i>
<i>ŚBh</i>	<i>Śabarāsvāmi's Bhāṣyam zu den Mīmāṃsāsūtren I.1,1-5 Ed. by Erich Frauwallner</i>
<i>ŚV</i>	<i>Ślokavārttika of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa</i>

Both ignorant and faithless, the one who is disposed to doubt is utterly lost.  
Neither this world, the next, nor happiness exist for them.<sup>1</sup>  
—*Bhagavad Gītā*

## 0. INTRODUCTION

Such a problematization of doubt serves as a religious admonition; the assertion is clear, an individual who is inclined to doubt is without both faith and knowledge and enjoys neither life, heaven, nor happiness. In part it seems that such a declaration is underpinned by the commitment that a lack of faith in conjunction with capricious doubt will effectively disqualify a particular individual from even the most basic of human aims, e.g. happiness. But how does South Asian philosophy address the concept doubt? More specifically, what status does doubt have and what, if any, purposes does it serve in South Asian epistemology? This paper attempts to provide an answer to these questions as well as present an historical account of some epistemological developments in South Asia. As will be shown at greater length later on, the epistemic mobilization of doubt plays an important role in the discursive engagements this paper discusses. It will be shown, contra the aforementioned admonition, that doubt plays an essential role in South Asian discussions of inquiry as such and even underlies, according to one of our theorists, our ordinary engagements with the world. At the most fundamental level it can be argued that the increased interest in the conceptualization as well as expanded domain of doubt is at the heart of what this paper attempts to discuss.

Primarily this project is intellectual historical; it attempts to explain the development of a particular epistemological theory in its own philosophic tradition as well as its reception by a rival theorist. It takes as an essential presupposition the commitment that innovation does not occur in a vacuum and that by paying close attention to the commentarial and polemical

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1. The translations of all primary material presented in this paper are my own unless otherwise noted.  
ajñāś cāsraddadhānaś ca saṁśayātmā vinaśyati /  
nāyaṁ loko 'sti na paro na sukhaṁ saṁśayātmanaḥ // *BhG* 4.40.

traditions of Sanskrit texts we can gain more in-depth understanding of the intellectual climates which encouraged particular writers and their intellectual production.

Using textual exchange—an expression that I use to cover commentarial, polemical and intra-traditional borrowing across texts—as a method to trace the development of philosophical thought is an essential part of my project. In part one of my paper the two texts under discussion are intra-traditional in character—i.e. they are both established in the same philosophic tradition while the second is an explicit commentary on the first—and are characterized by a commitment to certain fundamental assumptions and aims which include them in this tradition. In Part II the exchange is inter-traditional and expressly polemical. This section will examine the arguments established in Part I not as part of a single system but instead through another rival tradition. The last section will attempt to move beyond the domain inter-traditional polemical engagements and instead focus on mutual influence and borrowing, specifically in relation to Part II. It will take a wider scope and attempt to show that while intra-traditional exchange and intra-traditional polemics are valuable tools for assessing intellectual engagement in South Asia, ultimately the climate of a given author’s textual activity is underpinned by much more complicated social and cultural interactions.

Broadly speaking my project focuses primarily on two traditions of South Asian philosophy: Mīmāṃsā, the tradition of Vedic interpretation or hermeneutics, and Nyāya, a prominent tradition of South Asian logic and epistemology.<sup>2</sup> More specifically it will focus on the epistemological theory of the intrinsic validity (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*) of cognition espoused by

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2. By Vedic I simply mean the seminal corpus of South Asian brahmanical traditions and so what is frequently referred to as orthodox South Asian scripture. This body of literature is frequently discussed in opposition to the scriptural traditions of those who fall outside of the Vedic fold, e.g. Buddhist or Jain traditions, which is sometimes termed heterodox, although it seems this terminology is somewhat antiquated and does not seem to be used widely to discuss these terms today.

the 7<sup>th</sup> century Mīmāṃsā philosopher Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, according to which the validity of every accurate awareness innately belongs to the awareness itself and so does not require external verification processes in order to justify belief in the awareness' content. This discussion will be presented via an intra-traditional examination of Kumārila and his predecessors and pay particular attention to how pre-Kumārila Mīmāṃsā dealt with epistemological issues. Next it will address the critique and response to this epistemological theory levelled by the 9<sup>th</sup> century Nyāya philosopher Jayanta Bhaṭṭa. In this section I will discuss Jayanta's inter-traditional response by examining how essential assumptions made by Kumārila are rejected and responded to by Jayanta. Lastly, I will look at how particular arguments formulated by Jayanta are influenced by other philosophic traditions.

## 1. MĪMĀMSĀ EPISTEMOLOGY

### 1.1. Śabara & the Vṛttikāra on Mīmāṃsā Methodology & Epistemology

In the past twenty odd years there has been sustained interest in the epistemology of Kumārila; primarily these publications have attempted to address his thought through his own text as explicated by one of three of its commentaries.<sup>3</sup> While this methodology is commendable in many respects it also has the potential to yield a somewhat incomplete picture of Kumārila as a philosophical innovator in his tradition. Primarily this is due to the comparative lack of attention paid to the genre of Kumārila's *Critical Commentary in Verse* (*Ślokavārttika*), the text

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3. The primary publications I am referring to here are John Taber, "What Did Kumārila Mean By Svataḥ Prāmāṇya?" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 112.2 (1992), Dan Arnold, *Buddhists, Brahmins, and Belief: Epistemology in South Asian Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), Elisa Freschi & Alessandro Graheli, "Bhāṭṭamīmāṃsā and Nyāya on Veda and Tradition" in *Boundaries, Dynamics and Construction of Traditions in South Asia*, ed. by Federico Squarcini (London: Anthem Press, 2011)—esp. 310-311.—and Lawrence McCrea, "Justification, Credibility and Truth: Sucaritamīśra on Kumārila's Intrinsic Validity." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens/Vienna Journal of South Asian Studies* (Forthcoming). The one significant exception to this is Freschi & Graheli 2010, which attempts to trace trends in the traditions of both Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya through a number of writers in each tradition but this study deals less explicitly with Kumārila's epistemology but instead has other concerns.

in which the theory of intrinsic validity is formulated. The *ŚV* itself is framed as a commentary on a preexisting Mīmāṃsā text known as *The Commentary on the Aphorisms of Mīmāṃsā* (*Mīmāṃsāsūtrabhāṣya*) which provides the opportunity to look, not forward to Kumāṛila's commentators for insight into the interpretation of the theory of intrinsic validity, but backwards for its foundations.<sup>4</sup> That is to say, through the investigation of earlier Mīmāṃsā literature it is possible to assess and identify Kumāṛila's sources as well as his putative innovations. Such an approach will yield a more robust understanding of the theory of intrinsic validity and of the historical developments in epistemology of the tradition itself.

Kumāṛila's entire *ŚV* is a critical commentary on the first section (*pāda*) of the first chapter (*adhyāya*) of the *MSBh*, the only extant pre-Kumāṛila commentary on the *Aphorisms of Mīmāṃsā* (*Mīmāṃsāsūtra*), which is the foundational text of the tradition.<sup>5</sup> The *MSBh* was written by the 5<sup>th</sup> century Mīmāṃsaka Śabara who systematically comments on the entire *MS* which is primarily concerned with scriptural interpretation.<sup>6</sup> The first section of the first chapter of Śabara's *MSBh*, referred to as the Section on Reasoning (*tarka-pāda*), serves as the philosophical preface to the tradition of scriptural interpretation as such and encompasses the most extensive philosophical discussions presented anywhere in the *MSBh*.<sup>7</sup> For this reason the *ŚV* exhibits an analogous philosophical bent insofar as it is a commentary of precisely this section, i.e. on the *tarka-pāda*. While the critical genre in which Kumāṛila formulates his

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4. It should be noted that Arnold does address the *MSBh* in his discussion as well but does not present an exhaustive enough picture of the state of epistemology pre-Kumāṛila in my opinion. Arnold, esp. 63-65.

5. The tradition of *sūtra* texts is used to present concise memorizable tenets of a tradition and so consist of short declarations outlining the tenets and commitments of a given tradition. Thus the *MS* consists of short statements, i.e. *sūtra*, outlining the principles of exegesis it employs which are then commented upon by later members of the school.

6. The word Mīmāṃsaka simply refers to a member of the tradition of Mīmāṃsā.

7. McCrea, "The Hierarchical Organization of Language in Mīmāṃsā Interpretive Theory," *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 28.5 (2000): 430.

commentary does allow him more flexibility in his assessment of Śābara than other commentarial styles, it would be inaccurate to say that Kumārila dismisses Śābara entirely; the *MSBh* and its arguments stand prominently in the background of Kumārila's text and the mere stylings of criticism should not be taken as being entirely dismissive of this earlier commentary.<sup>8</sup> With this fact in mind it remains to be seen where and how Kumārila is critical of Śābara and to what extent the *MSBh* can be seen as providing, if not the full-fledged epistemology that Kumārila will elaborate, at least the conceptual framework for it. For this reason close attention should be paid to the *MSBh* as an historical text, encapsulating its own concerns and antecedents, as well as to it as a moment in the trajectory of Mīmāṃsā philosophy. The section that follows will employ this method of investigation drawing attention to important trends in the tradition which are clearly instrumental in the development of Kumārila's epistemology. Once the *MSBh* has been discussed, the topic of Kumārila's own arguments will be taken up paying particular attention to where and to what extent they are influenced by this earlier commentary.

As previously mentioned the tradition of Mīmāṃsā is essentially exegetical in character, it attempts to establish a method of Vedic interpretation that will always yield accurate sacrificial instruction. In this respect the tradition is entangled from the very outset in epistemological concerns and the question of how to best account for the validity of Vedic testimony is an essential topic of the first section of the *MSBh*, i.e. of the *tarka-pāda*. But, as we shall see, two slightly different epistemological solutions to this problem are provided in the *MSBh* which presents the opportunity to approach each as a potential forerunner to the theory of intrinsic validity. Additionally, these epistemologies presuppose the articulation of a conceptual and

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8. For example, it is said that a Critical Commentary (*vārttika*) should explain what is said (*ukta*), supply what is left out (*anukta*) and correct what is said poorly (*durukta*) in the text it comments upon. Vaman Shivaram Apte. *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Revised & Enlarged Edition (Kyoto: Rinsen Book Company, 2003), 1417.

methodological framework which can support them, which includes assumptions and conceptual commitments that span both the *MSBh* as well as the *ŚV* and inform many methods of argumentation in the tradition. This process begins with marked commitment to language as a means of communicating information. And is coupled, as John Taber has correctly pointed out, with a clear predilection toward a kind of anti-fideism or empiricism.<sup>9</sup> The empiricist tendencies under consideration are most obviously disclosed in philosophic debate by Kumāṛila and are frequently reinforced by the dictum that things have always been as they are now.<sup>10</sup> Thus, for Kumāṛila, this presupposition in conjunction with the fact that all valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*) are based on perception effectively entails that all people equally rely on sense experience in the formulation of their knowledge claims, if only indirectly in the case of inference, etc. More generally this tendency also features prominently in the style of argumentation and hermeneutic methodology pursued in pre-Kumāṛila Mīmāṃsā as well. This second point, while somewhat patently obvious from the text itself, has not yet been taken up with respect to early Mīmāṃsā epistemology. Once this empiricist methodology is taken seriously it is clear that the epistemology of the *MSBh*, which Kumāṛila takes as the basis for his argumentation, shares tendencies and presuppositions which are essential to the theory of intrinsic validity.

The assessment of epistemology and its conceptual framework in the *MSBh* will be presented through a close reading of the text; two sections will be assessed, one expressing the opinions of Śābara while the other represents the position of another commentator, referred to

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9. Taber, 205.

10. For a very good discussion of how these principles play out in other arguments formulated by Kumāṛila see McCrea ““Just Like Us, Just Like Now”: The Tactical Implications of the Mīmāṃsā Rejection of Yogic Perception” in *Yogic Perception, Meditation and Altered States of Consciousness*, edited by Eli Franco in collaboration with Dagmer Eigner. (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 55-70.

simply as the maker of the commentary (Vṛttikāra), whom Śābara paraphrases at length. It is interesting to note that this long excursus on the views of the Vṛttikāra provides the most consistently philosophical content found anywhere in the *MSBh* and that it is openly admitted to be the work of another writer. For this reason a distinction can be drawn between arguments found in Śābara and those found in the Vṛttikāra. Additionally, one can assume that any argument that is found in both sections was first presented in the Vṛttikāra, or at least in the tradition preceding Śābara, and so is borrowed from the Vṛttikāra. In the discussions that follow the opinions of these two thinkers will be addressed separately in order to make clear where and how potential influences on Kumāriḷa are presented originally.

In order to firmly ground the discussion of the epistemology of the *MSBh* it is important to briefly outline the theory of intrinsic validity presented by Kumāriḷa. The theory of intrinsic validity as formulated in the *ŚV* states that the validity of all accurate cognitions is intrinsic to them, i.e. it is not produced from some other factor external to the cognition. This epistemology effectively emphasizes validity such that it becomes the central function or inclination of cognition; it claims that for something to be an accurate cognition is for it to be valid. However, this theory has important implications for cognition in general since, according to Kumāriḷa, one's ability to invalidate or disprove a given cognition comes after the cognition has arisen and from things extrinsic to that cognition. Thus, while only accurate cognitions are intrinsically valid in reality we have no way of knowing whether a given awareness is invalid until it has been overturned and so there is no phenomenological difference between the way accurate and inaccurate cognitions appear to us. This forces one to accept at face value the validity of all cognitions as they are experienced. On this account even cognitions which are later overturned were intrinsically valid when they first arose, i.e. they are innocent until proven guilty, or at least

we were justified in believing that they were. As such, the theory reflects Kumāṛila's, but also Mīmāṃsā's, tendency to "adhere strictly to appearances" since it is claimed that it is our natural inclination to accept each cognition as it arises as if it were true, whether it turns out to be so or not.<sup>11</sup> As I will argue this theory, as it is found in the *MSBh*, bears some similarity to the concept of presumptive justification presented by Nicholas Rescher and as such I will make some use of his discussions in what follows. Additionally, as I present Kumāṛila's account of intrinsic validity, especially as it diverges from what precedes it, I will rely on some discussion of Michael Huemer's presentation of phenomenal conservatism. While I will present some discussion of the similarity and divergence of the two texts at length later on it is important to keep in mind, as previously indicated, that it is the concern for Vedic authority which motivates the discussion of epistemology in Mīmāṃsā to begin with and it is in this respect that Śābara and the *Vṛttikāra* can first be seen propounding their epistemologies.

The principle task of Mīmāṃsā is the development of a set of interpretive principles which allow one to correctly approach and understand Vedic texts. Primarily what is at stake in these discussions is what is termed Vedic duty (*dharma*) which consists of proscriptions and prohibitions to perform certain, principally sacrificial, acts.<sup>12</sup> Thus, Mīmāṃsā is concerned with *dharma* in terms of sacrificial and religious action which is proscribed by the Veda. Naturally the question arises what *dharma* actually is and how it can be ascertained by individuals and it is in this context that Śābara presents his epistemology. It should be stated at the outset that insofar as the topic under consideration is only *dharma* and not, for example, the observable world, the

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11. Taber, 207.

12. A prime example of the type of action or duty, i.e. *dharma*, that the Veda proscribes is the injunction that "one who desires heaven should sacrifice." *svargakāmo yajeta*. Thus, Mīmāṃsakas understand that this statement prescribes the action of sacrifice for one who wants to reach heaven and the question of how we know that sacrifice leads to heaven is where epistemological considerations are undertaken.

project that Śābara presents does not provide a comprehensive epistemology but rather a somewhat restricted examination of the *dharma* and how it can be known. That is to say, Śābara and the Mīmāṃsakas who preceded him were concerned with a unique kind of action (*dharma*) that was exclusively presented in religious texts, i.e. Vedic scripture. Proceeding in the framework of South Asian epistemology, Śābara does not pursue the question of knowledge in the Western sense as justified true belief or some variant thereof but rather presents his argument through the discussion of the various valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*), which for the tradition of Mīmāṃsā include perception, inference, testimony, comparison, supposition and proof from non-existence. In accordance with this method of approaching epistemology Śābara begins his discussion by examining which *pramāṇa* is capable of presenting information about *dharma*.

This discussion is officially undertaken following *sūtra* 1.1.3 of the *MS* which states that “the investigation of the means of knowing *dharma*” is to be initiated, but Śābara tips his hand on the issue early on in his discussion of *sūtra* 1.1.2.<sup>13</sup> Śābara takes this as an opportunity to deny that *dharma* is amenable to inference, comparison, supposition or proof from non-existence stating: “nor are inference, comparison or supposition causes [of the knowledge of *dharma*] because of the fact that they are preceded by perception. Also there is no proof from non-existence [for it].”<sup>14</sup> In other words, the inability of the other *pramāṇas* to communicate *dharma* is purely based on the fact that they all presuppose perception for their function. But what about perception? Why does it fail to measure up to the task? The answer is stated in *sūtra* 1.1.4 which maintains that it is inadequate because perception is only capable of apprehending existing

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13. *MS* in *MD*, 21.1. tasya nimittaparīṣṭiḥ. *sūtra* 1.1.3

14. *MSBh* in *MD*, 22.5-6. pratyakṣapūrvakatvāc cānumānopamānārthāpattīnām apy akāraṇatvam. abhāvo 'pi na asti. *MSBh*, 22.

entities.<sup>15</sup> As Śābara assess this argument the difficulty lies in the character of *dharma* and he argues as follows:

When there is an existing connection between the object of awareness and the sense faculty the awareness produced is perception. And [*dharma*] is a purpose to be accomplished *which does not exist at the time of cognition*. Additionally perception apprehends existing things and not that which does not yet exist. Thus perception is not a means [of knowing *dharma*]. [emphasis mine]<sup>16</sup>

The argument here emphasizes the exceptional or unique character of *dharma*. Thus, since *dharma* does not exist at the time of action but rather is brought about by the correct performance of sacrificial duties it cannot be perceived when one hears or reads a particular Vedic proscription to perform a particular sacrifice. So the unique character of *dharma* places it firmly outside of the scope of perception according to Śābara. In light of this argument the inadequacy of inference etc., is clear insofar as none of them has the capacity to ascertain something outside of the domain of perception either.

It is important at this point to inquire why *dharma* is awarded such unique and restricted character. Indeed it appears that the status it is claimed to possess in the tradition is entirely unprecedented in actual experience and so is not justifiable using the usual Mīmāṃsā empiricist style of argumentation which will be discussed at length later on. However, the answer that can be provided from the tradition itself is assumptive in character. Firstly, it is claimed that no portion of a Vedic text can be useless and secondly, that, at least for the most part, the Veda is the only source of knowledge about *dharma*.<sup>17</sup> Given this special character of *dharma* it remains to be seen how any *pramāṇa* could function with regard to it. According to Śābara it is only

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15. *MS* in *MD*, 21.6-7. satsamprayoge puruṣasyendriyāṇām buddhijanma tat pratyakṣam animittam, vidyamnānopalambhanatvāt. *sūtra* 1.1.4

16. *MSBh* in *MD*, 21.8-22.3. sati indriyārthasambandhe yā puruṣasya buddhir jāyate, tat pratyakṣam. bhavisyamaś ca eṣo 'rtho na jñānakāle 'sti. sataś ca etad upalambhanam, na asataḥ. ataḥ pratyakṣam animittam.

through language, or more specifically injunctive statements as communicated in the Veda, that knowledge about *dharma* can be ascertained. In commenting on *sūtra* 2, which reads “*dharma* is a purpose [conducive to the highest good] which is indicated by an injunction,” Śabara explains that an injunction (*codanā*) is an expression which impels one to engage in a particular action.<sup>18</sup> But does the claim that *dharma* is characterized by the injunction to perform particular actions amount to the assertion that the only *pramāṇa* capable of communicating *dharma* is injunctive statement? According to Śabara it does. In his discussion of the terms of the *sūtra* he glosses the word ‘indicated’ (*lakṣaṇa*) as follows: “a *lakṣaṇa* is the thing by which something is indicated. Since people say [with regard to an inference] that the smoke is the indicator of fire.”<sup>19</sup> The comparison to inference is important here. Firstly, it establishes clearly how Śabara conceptualizes the role of injunctive language in the *sūtra* and secondly, it does so via an example which uses another *pramāṇa*. Śabara’s comparison of an injunction to the function of smoke as the indicator of fire in an inference solidifies the point that Śabara is trying to make; in the same way that the observation of smoke on a distant mountain warrants the inference that there is fire on that mountain an injunctive statement warrants the conclusion that the injunction pertains to *dharma*. Therefore, for Śabara the only *pramāṇa* suitable to the communication of *dharma* is testimony, or more specifically Vedic injunctions. Additionally, Śabara asserts that the unique character of *dharma*, namely that it is to be accomplished or brought into existence, is

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17. *MSBh* in *MD*, 5.12-6.3. tad ucyate: atikramiṣyāma imam āmnāyam. anatikrāmanto vedam arthavantaṃ santam anarthakaṃ avakalpayema. dṛṣṭo hi tasya arthaḥ karmāvabodhanaṃ nāma. na ca tasya adhyayanamātrāt tatrabhavanto yājñikāḥ phalaṃ samāmananti. Also McCrea, “Hindu jurisprudence and scriptural hermeneutics,” In *Hinduism and Law: An Introduction*, edited by Donald Davis Jr., Jayanth Krishnan, and Timothy Lubin. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 124-125.

18. *MS* & *MSBh* in *MD*, 11.4 & 12.1. codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmah. *sūtra* 1.1.2 codanā iti kriyāyāḥ pravartakaṃ vacanam.

19. *MSBh* in *MD*, 12.2-3. lakṣyate yena, tallakṣaṇam. dhūmo lakṣaṇam agner iti hi vadanti.

unproblematic when it comes to Vedic injunctions insofar as they are able to teach what is past, present and future, subtle, distant etc.<sup>20</sup> That is to say, Vedic injunctions have the unique capacity to communicate information about those objects which perception, and therefore the other *pramāṇas*, cannot. It is important to note that Śabara and the other Mīmāṃsaka are aware of the inconsistent reliability of testimony in ordinary practice, but in the case of the Veda they argue that the text is both eternal and authorless and so provides no opportunity for the type of testimonial failure that ordinary testimony is susceptible to. Taking the foregoing discussion into account it appears that Śabara's claim amounts to the assertion that *dharma* is a purpose which is ascertained through Vedic injunctions.

The role of injunctive language is of essential importance to a text whose sole purpose is the communication of ritual minutiae since in the tradition of Vedic sacrifice the strict details of how and when to perform a particular ritual are of the utmost importance. As it stands, and as previously mentioned, Mīmāṃsā theorists claim that the status of the Vedic texts in relation to *dharma* is exclusive in this regard; there is no other source for the knowledge of *dharma* and, as Śabara formulates the framework, this is guaranteed by the fact that the injunctive language of the Veda itself, as sub-branch of testimony, is the only *pramāṇa* for it. But the opponent asks:

Isn't it the case that an injunction could also relate a purpose which is not of such a kind [as previously mentioned]? As, for example, sometimes common expressions such as 'there are fruits on the bank of the river,' happen to be true while sometimes they are false.<sup>21</sup>

That is to say, what safeguards Vedic injunctions from communicating purposes which are useless insofar as they are verbal expressions and verbal expression turnout to be wrong all the

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20. *MSBh* in *MD*, 13.2-3. codanā hi bhūtaṃ bhavantaṃ bhaviṣyantaṃ sūkṣmaṃ vyavahitaṃ viprakṛṣṭaṃ ity evaṃjātīyakam arthaṃ śaknoty avagamayitum, nānyat kiṃcanendriyam.

21. *MSBh* in *MD*, 13.4-5. nanv atathābhūtaṃ apy arthaṃ brūyāc codanā, yathā yatkiṃcana laukikaṃ vacanaṃ nadyās tīre phalāni santi" iti. tat tathyam api bhavati, vitatham api bhavati iti.

time? Śabara's response to this objection is worth taking some time to consider insofar as it is closely modeled on an argument that is formulated by the Vṛttikāra which will be discussed further on. Śabara responds as follows:

It is said [by us]: the declaration, '[an injunction] both speaks and is false,' is a contradiction. Since it is said 'it speaks' means it causes one to know, i.e. it becomes a means of knowledge for one engaged in the act of knowing. And if there is knowledge when a particular thing is a means of knowledge, that thing causes one to know. Moreover, when there is an injunction it is understood, 'heaven arises from the *Agnihotra* sacrifice,' how is it said, 'this is not so?' And if it actually were not so, how could it become known? [The claim that] 'a non-existing object becomes known,' is a contradiction.<sup>22</sup>

The argument as it is presented here emphasizes the fact that a Vedic injunction produces awareness and for Śabara it seems to be implied that the very fact that an awareness is produced entails that there is knowledge. That is to say, Śabara maintains that the content of a Vedic injunction is determinate in character. When it is heard that someone desirous of heaven should sacrifice one does not, according to Śabara, suspect that heaven may not result from such a sacrifice and insofar as they do not, the awareness produced by the injunction is determinate and so cannot be wrong.<sup>23</sup> But how can this claim possibly be substantiated? Since one could argue, in much the same way as the opponent already has, that this is no different from ordinary expressions. For example, it could reasonably be asserted that the awareness produced upon hearing the declaration "there are fruits on the river bank" possess the content "there *are* fruits on the riverbank." Śabara's response to this hinges on the status of what can be communicated in ordinary testimony and by the Veda.

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22. *MSBh* in *MD*, 14.1-5. ucyate: vipratīṣiddham idam abhidhīyate "bravīti ca vitatham ca" iti. bravīti ity ucyate 'vabodhayati, budhyamānasya nimittam bhavati iti. yasmimś ca nimittabhūte saty avabudhyate, so 'vabodhayati. yadi ca codanāyām satyām "agnihotrāt svargo bhavati" ity avagamyate, katham ucyate na tathā bhavati" iti. atha na tathā bhavati, katham avabudhyate. asantam artham avabudhyata iti vipratīṣiddham.

23. *MSBh* in *MD*, 15.1-3. na ca "śvargakāmo yajeta" ity ato vacanāt saṃdigdham avagamyate "bhavati vā svargo na vā bhavati" iti. na ca niścitam avagamyamānam idaṃ mithyā syāt.

As we have seen, the special character of *dharma* is that it is a purpose to be accomplished and so is not amenable to perception and the other *pramāṇas* but this is not the case where ordinary expressions are concerned. To begin with Śābara fundamentally rejects the possibility that common expressions of the type presented earlier produce determinate awareness. Rather, he states:

The awareness produced from a human assertion possesses the content ‘this person considers it to be so and so’ and not ‘this thing actually is so and so.’ So some awarenesses produced from human assertions certainly go astray but there is no *pramāṇa* for the proof of the falsity of the Veda.”<sup>24</sup>

From this argument it seems that the ontological status of *dharma* functions both positively and negatively. Through its character as a purpose to be accomplished it is effectively removed from the domain of perception both as something to be ascertained and to be disproved. Śābara bolsters this point with an observation that appears, once again, to be borrowed directly from the Vṛttikāra; he claims that the only awareness which is false is one that is produced and then destroyed by the thought that it is not accurate.<sup>25</sup> But it seems that the picture is not complete. How does falsification actually function? Since it appears that without a strict theory of falsification in place Śābara’s account of how *dharma* is ascertained is rather inadequate.

In regard to how exactly falsification takes place Śābara is rather terse. Thus, whether this is because he does not care to get into the topic or whether he simply accepts the arguments of the Vṛttikāra, which are more detailed, is something that should be considered. Śābara recapitulates a more in-depth theory of falsification in the *vṛttikāra-grantha*, which is presented after Śābara’s commentary on *sūtra* 1.1.5, includes the Vṛttikāra’s alternate explanation of *sūtras*

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24. *MSBh* in *MD*, 16.6-17.3 *api ca pauruṣeyād vacanād "evam ayam puruṣo veda" iti bhavati pratyayo, na "evam ayam artha" iti. viplavate khalv api kaścit puruṣakṛtād vacanāt pratyayaḥ. na tu vedavacanasya mithyātve kiṃcana pramāṇam asti.*

25. *MSBh* in *MD*, 15.3. *yo hi janitvā pradhvaṃsate "na etad evam" iti, sa mithyāpratyayaḥ.*

3-5 and so also begins with epistemological considerations. Before presenting the Vṛttikāra's account of invalidation and falsity it is important to examine how he begins his alternate explanation of this section. The Vṛttikāra explains, contra Śabara, that in fact the various *pramāṇas* do *not* need to be investigated insofar as they are already known.<sup>26</sup> This assertion entails an understanding of the *pramāṇas* which seems to differ significantly from Śabara's. For example, in responding to the objection that the *pramāṇas* *do* need to be investigated since people experience perceptual error the Vṛttikāra claims that accuracy is entailed by the term perception itself and so any awareness which deviates cannot have been perception as such. The Vṛttikāra explains "when there is contact of the sense faculties of an individual with the very [same] object that is the content of the cognition, an awareness arises and that awareness is true perception."<sup>27</sup> Thus, only accurate perception counts as perception on the Vṛttikāra's account.

This would seem to raise phenomenological issues insofar as erroneous awarenesses are frequently experienced as accurate. Thus, the opponent asks how this is understood in cases of perceptual error where the individual actually believes that what they are seeing is true? The answer is simple and familiar. If an erroneous awareness is being entertained as true it is the fact that it is overturned by another cognition which establishes its falsity.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, there is a distinct difference between accurate and inaccurate awarenesses which pre-exists the occurrence of a blocking cognition on the Vṛttikāra's account. The difference between accuracy and inaccuracy is as follows:

When the mind is afflicted by things like hunger, or the sense faculties by things like eye disease, or the external object by such things as being very minute, then

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26. *MSBh* in *MD*, 25.6-26.1. na parīkṣitavyaṃ nimittam. pratyakṣādīni hi prasiddhāni pramāṇāni tadantargataṃ ca śāstram.

27. *MSBh* in *MD*, 26.7-27.1. yadviṣayaṃ jñānaṃ, tenaiva saṃprayoge indriyāṇāṃ puruṣasya buddhijanma sat pratyakṣam.

28. *MSBh* in *MD*, 27.5-6. bādhakaṃ hi yatra jñānam utpadyate na etad evaṃ, mithyājñānam idam " iti.

the cognition is false. But, there is accurate cognition when there are no perceptual impediments, because the cause of cognition is the contact of the object, the mind, and the sense faculties.<sup>29</sup>

Thus on the Vṛttikāra's account of awareness the validity that results from a particular cognitive event is simply the representation of the object as such and it is only through defects or impediments that false awareness results. Here the Vṛttikāra outlines an important point about the presence and categorization of defects which Kumāriila picks up on. Namely, he emphasizes that defects are both internal since they can belong to the knower and external since they can belong to the object or external world in some way. Therefore, sometimes mistaken awarenesses are produced because of errors in the perceptual apparatus while other times they are the result of the object or external factors such as insufficient light, etc. But how is the absence of defects ascertained on this account? The Vṛttikāra's response is distinctive and, as I will argue, provides some insight into Śābara's discussion of injunctive language. As he describes it:

If carefully searching for a defect we do not perceive one we should think 'there is no defect because there is no means for acquiring one.' Thus, only that awareness is incorrect, whose *cause is defective* on the one hand and *where there is the idea "this is false"* on the other; no other. [emphasis mine]<sup>30</sup>

Such an explanation of how cognitive events take place is fundamental to a clear understanding of the background to Kumāriila's theory of intrinsic validity and as such resembles the model of presumptive justification as outlined by Nicholas Rescher. For Rescher, presumptive justification "does not proceed through the evidential meditation of previously justified grounds but directly and immediately" and such presumption simply requires that there be no standing rationally justified reason against it.<sup>31</sup> As such, we experience a certain phenomenon and assent to its

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29. *MSBh* in *MD*, 27.8-28.1. yadā kṣudādibhir upahataṃ mano bhavati, indriyaṃ vā timirādibhiḥ, sauḥkṣmyādibhir vā bāhyo viṣayas, tato mithyājñānam, anupahateṣu saṃyagjñānam. indriyamanorthasaṃnikarṣo hi jñānasya hetuḥ.

30. *MSBh* in *MD*, 28.4-6. prayatnena anvicchanto na ced doṣaṃ upalabhemahi, pramāṇābhāvād aduṣṭaṃ iti manyemahi. tasmād yasya ca duṣṭaṃ karaṇaṃ yatra ca mithyeti pratyayaḥ, sa eva asaṃcīnaḥ pratyayo nānya iti.

31. Nicholas Rescher, *Epistemology: An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge* (Albany: State

probative force almost immediately and as long as the resulting belief is not contradicted we are presumptively justified in holding it. Or as Rescher says:

When, after a careful look, I am under the impression that there is a cat on the mat, I can (quite appropriately) base my acceptance of the contention “There is a cat on the mat” not on certain pre-established premisses, but *simply on my experience*—on my visual impression. [emphasis mine]<sup>32</sup>

The emphasis on direct visual impressions is striking and the importance of similar intuitions in Mīmāṃsā cannot be overstated. Additionally, Rescher’s concern for perceptual diligence in the belief forming process is directly represented in the Vṛttikāra’s formulation. That is to say, one is not presumptively justified in their beliefs until at least some investigation of the situation is undertaken. On both accounts one must simply not have any rational reason to suspect that the belief one forms is false and until that belief is contradicted or overturned it is presumptively justified.

The Vṛttikāra’s analysis of validation, as I have already claimed, also provides insight into Śabara’s assertions regarding falsification. Since it is through this scheme that Śabara’s claim, “that the awareness is false which having arisen is destroyed by the notion ‘this is not so,’” makes sense. On the Vṛttikāra’s account, the exceptional character of the Veda is that it cannot conceivably be disproven by anything since he will argue that its cause is not defective and it can never be overturned.<sup>33</sup> The claim that the Veda cannot be false is supported by the assertion that the relation between words and their meanings for the Vṛttikāra is authorless which he explains as follows:

If it were the case that the relation of words with their meaning were authored one could expect the falsity of the awareness they produce because then the cognition

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University of New York Press, 2003), 94.

32. Ibid, 86.

33. Admittedly, some of these points are made by Śabara in his commentary on *sūtra* 5 but there also he fails to provide any argument over and above the *sūtra* for his claim that the Veda is never seen to be false.

would be in need of something else for its truth. But, when words speak, how is the cognition they produce false? Since then the awareness produced by the words does not come down from another person. With regard to the claim "the word speaks" it is said, "it causes one to know, i.e. it becomes the cause of understanding." And when word is the cause one knows by one's self.<sup>34</sup>

This argument provides an account of ordinary testimony which requires corroboration for its truth. Insofar as ordinary testimony is not accepted as true always and without exception there must be some means, outside of testimony itself, to validate a given assertion. But, as the Vṛttikāra explains, this is not so when it comes to the Veda since the relation between what it communicates, i.e. *dharma*, and the means of its communication, i.e. language, is already and always established and was not authored by any individual. For this reason the Vṛttikāra asserts that knowledge of *dharma* can be established by the Veda alone. The Vṛttikāra is here espousing an epistemological precursor to the theory of intrinsic validity insofar as, on the Vṛttikāra's account, we are justified in thinking that there are no defects in a given cognition until we have reason to suspect them. Importantly this does not guarantee that we are not mistaken. However, the Veda does not function in this way. Instead the Vṛttikāra maintains that it is the fact that there is no means of disproving it which makes it intrinsically valid, i.e. because one could never cognize defects with regard to it and the awareness that it is false never arises. This method of Vedic validation attempts to provide "gap-filler for the informational void," it is a presumption "that remains in place until something better comes along."<sup>35</sup> That is to say, it takes *dharma* as a topic for which some knowledge is required and presents an account of it which is presumptively justified.

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34. *ŚBh*, 34.17-21. pauruṣeḥ hi sati sambandhe yaḥ pratyayaḥ, tasya mithyābhāva āśaṅkyeta. parapratyayo hi tadā syāt. atha śabde bruvati katham mithyeta? na hi tadānīm anyataḥ puruṣād avagamaḥ. "bravīti" ity ucyate "avabodhayati, budhyamānasya nimittam bhavati" iti. śabde cen nimittabhūte svayam avabudhyate.

35. Rescher, 81.

Śabara presents a similar argument, as previously discussed, concerning the Veda's veridical nature but there is some difference between the way this is accounted for by Śabara and the Vṛttikāra. Importantly, Śabara does not assert that the relation between words and their meanings is authorless, instead he claims that it is natural.<sup>36</sup> Thus, the dichotomy between authored and authorless testimony is not included in his account of the testimonial accuracy of the Veda. Rather he seems to claim, as already noted, that the simple fact that a Vedic injunction causes knowledge is evidence that it cannot be false. As it stands the method used to account for the Veda as a *pramāṇa* is instrumental to our understanding of Kumāriḷa's theory of intrinsic validity as well as pre-Kumāriḷa Mīmāṃsā epistemology.

The argument for Vedic injunctions is clearly underpinned by a division of testimony which is a point clearly stated by Śabara in the following explication of his argument. After presenting his account of Vedic testimony Śabara discusses ordinary testimony in opposition to the Veda. And he says:

As for an ordinary assertion, it is only accurate if it is heard from a trustworthy person *or* has a content which is amenable to the senses. But, if it is heard from an untrustworthy person *or* does not have a content which is amenable to the senses, that assertion which is the cause of the cognition of the individual who heard it is not a *pramāṇa*. For, its [content] is unable to be known by an individual, except from a sentence itself. [emphasis mine]<sup>37</sup>

Śabara's emphasis on the role of perception in validating testimony should not be unfamiliar. As we have already seen Śabara clearly states the other *pramāṇas*, besides testimony, are founded on perception. Additionally, the Vṛttikāra makes the same claim but more explicitly. Namely,

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36. *MSBh* in *MD*, 23.3. *autpattika iti nityaṃ brūmaḥ*.

37. Importantly Kumāriḷa criticizes this assertion and claims that it should be taken non-disjunctively so that ordinary assertions require a trustworthy person *and* a content which is amenable to the senses for their validity. *ŚBh*, 18.3-6. *yat tu laukikaṃ vacanaṃ, tac cet pratyaḷitāt puruṣād indriyaḷiṣayaṃ vā, avitatham eva tat. atha apratyaḷitāt puruṣād anindriyaḷiṣayaṃ vā, tat puruṣabuddhiprabhavam apramāṇam. aśakyaṃ hi tat puruṣeṇa jñātum ṛte vacanāt.*

that “the means of acquiring accurate knowledge, such as perception and so forth, are well known, and instruction (*śāstra*) is included in that group.”<sup>38</sup> This tendency is indicative of Mīmāṃsā empiricist methodology broadly speaking and the primary aim here is to explicate how assertions are judged in everyday contexts and to emphasize our capacity and inclination to assess such assertions directly and empirically. Just how a particular writer in the tradition makes use of this methodology is important for understanding how her or his epistemology functions. As we have already seen, both Śābara and the Vṛttikāra primarily use the exceptional status of the Veda and *dharma* to substantiate their accounts of the Veda, but I will argue that the mobilization of empiricist methodology is an essential precursor to the theory of intrinsic validity.

In order to show this increased utilization of empiricism it will be useful to look at a few instances in which a kind of empiricist methodology is employed in Śābara and the Vṛttikāra. To begin with Śābara’s comments on *sūtra* 1 provide a good introduction to how empiricism is employed throughout his text. In discussing the general tenets of interpreting the *MS* as well as Vedic language, Śābara claims that:

Words are well known to have particular meanings in worldly discourse and when appearing in the *sūtras* those very same meanings should be understood. And these words’ meanings should not be assumed by supplying elliptical language or be defined in some technical sense. In this way Vedic statements alone are to be explained by this method. Otherwise both Vedic statements as well as the *sūtra*’s own words would have to be explained, which would result in excessive effort.<sup>39</sup>

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38. Here *śāstra* is the Vṛttikāra’s testimonial *pramāṇa*, or at least that is how I take it. Whether this implies that he does not believe that ordinary testimony (*śabda*) is a *pramāṇa* or that he simply doesn’t explicitly state it is unclear but at the very least it does not seem to be what he is concerned with. *MSBh* in *MD*, 25.6-26.1. *pratyakṣādīni hi prasiddhāni pramāṇāni tadantargataṃ ca śāstram.*

39. *ŚBh*, 10.3-7. *loke yeṣv artheṣu prasiddhāni padāni, tāni sati sambhave tadarthāni eva sūtreṣv iti avagantavyam. na adhyāhārādibhir eṣāṃ parikalpanīyo 'rthaḥ paribhāṣitavyo vā. evaṃ hi vedavākyāny eva ebhir vyākhyāyante. itarathā vedavākyāni vyākhyeyāni svapadārthāś ca vyākhyeyāḥ. tad yatnagauravaṃ prasajyeta.*

Such an interpretive declaration is not patently empiricist but does provide some insight into Mīmāṃsā methodology broadly speaking. It involves two essential commitments in Mīmāṃsā methodology. Firstly, it illustrates the Mīmāṃsā concept of what I will call a practical version of the principle of economy of hypothesis (*kalpanā-lāghava*). This principle dictates that if postulation is necessary to account for some phenomenon one should avoid, as far as possible, the postulation of unseen entities.<sup>40</sup> The practical version of the principle simply explicates the superiority of simplicity over complexity in method, i.e. that if it is possible to account for the language of the *sūtras* by appealing to accepted usage one should not attempt to do so using other more complicated techniques. The argument states that what we see in the world, as far as common expressions are concerned, should dictate the parameters of interpretation for both the *MS* as well as the Veda.<sup>41</sup> A similar claim is explicitly appealed to by Rescher in his discussion of the assumptions underlying the function of presumptive justification. Among other points he emphasizes that:

The concept of *simplicity* affords a crucial entry point for plausibility considerations. The injunction “Other things being anything like equal, give precedence to simpler hypotheses over complex ones” can reasonably be espoused as a procedural, regulative principle of presumption.<sup>42</sup>

That is to say, that between a simple and complex solution one can plausibly claim that the simpler is preferable and more likely to accord with the actual state of affairs. This brings to light the second trend, which clearly shows Śābara’s conceptual reliance on the observable world which I will argue is constitutive of Mīmāṃsā in general and is instrumental in the development of the theory of intrinsic validity specifically. Most frequently this trend is deployed

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40. McCrea, “The Hierarchical Organization of Language in Mīmāṃsā Interpretive Theory,” 447-448.

41. Govinda V. Devasthali, *Mīmāṃsā: The Ancient Science of Sentence Interpretation* (Bombay: 1959; reprint, Delhi: Sri Satguru, 2011), 1.

42. Rescher 88.

comparatively, that is to say when entertaining a particular objection or formulating an argument, the empirical world is often addressed comparatively as a means to reject or maintain a particular assertion.

This tendency is explicitly entailed in the series of arguments employed throughout the *vṛttikāra-grantha*. Principally this can be explained through the Vṛttikāra's formulation of a kind of empiricism as it functions for Mīmāṃsā. As emphasized throughout his discussions, the observable world is the foundational basis from which arguments should be explicated as well as analyzed. This is evident through his declaration that “for [Mīmāṃsā] observation is always a *pramāṇa*.”<sup>43</sup> This principle firmly grounds the Vṛttikāra's mode of argumentation in sensory input for the formulation of his epistemology and basic method of argumentation. Even the hierarchy of *pramāṇas* implicit in the Vṛttikāra's comments on disagreement between *pramāṇas* favors perception as the foundational source of knowledge.<sup>44</sup> It is important to note that in the case of epistemology this reliance on the world of appearances does not take on a rigorous form in which every awareness must be perceptually investigated and corroborated but rather takes the awareness, more or less, at face value.

### 1.2. Kumārila's Theory of Intrinsic Validity

The emphasis on empiricism is not restricted to the *MSBh* and its philosophical engagements and as Kumārila presents the full-fledged theory of intrinsic validity it is clear that his arguments also presuppose this empirical foundation. While Kumārila's strict articulation of the theory will be discussed at length shortly it is important to first point out how Kumārila addresses the question of validity to begin with. Firstly, as Rescher has discussed, one tendency

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43. *MSBh* in *MD*, 44.2. sarvatra no darśanaṃ pramāṇam.

44. *MSBh* in *MD*, 56.9. na ca pratyakṣe pratyarthini kalpanā sādhvī.

in an epistemological theory which is concerned with presumptive justification is to rely on a ‘this-or-nothing’ outlook on knowledge. That “if we want answers to factual questions, we have no real alternative but to trust in the cognitively cooperative disposition of the natural order of things.”<sup>45</sup> As I will argue, Kumāriḷa’s epistemology should be differentiated from his predecessors and their presentation of presumptive justification in some important ways. Unlike Śabara and the Vṛttikāra, who principally seem to present a theory of intrinsic validity which is, at least in some respects, comparatively careful and diligent, Kumāriḷa attempts to present an epistemology which effaces the need for such care and instead champions the justificatory force of our experiences *sans* the Vṛttikāra’s careful search for defects. That is to say, Kumāriḷa can be seen presenting an epistemology which is similar to the presumptive account that preceded him but with some important modifications. For this reason I choose to read Kumāriḷa’s later, more robust, version of intrinsic validity not as an account of presumptive justification but as consonant with Michael Huemer’s theory of phenomenal conservatism which also concerns itself with justification but somewhat differently than what we have seen so far. It is important to note at the outset that Kumāriḷa, like Huemer, believes that his epistemological account of our ordinary epistemic practices is constitutive of all epistemology and so provides the only account which is available to us for describing how we form belief and ultimately arrive at knowledge.<sup>46</sup> For this reason it is important to emphasize the negative character of Kumāriḷa’s epistemological argument for intrinsic validity at the outset.

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45. Rescher, 96.

46. Interestingly, as I see it, the two writers address this issue in somewhat different terms. As we shall see Kumāriḷa will attempt to demonstrate that all other epistemic accounts fail to escape some form of epistemic regress. However, Huemer attempts to do so by showing that all epistemological accounts which do not accept phenomenal conservatism are self-defeating since phenomenal conservatism is the only viable option for describing how appearances confer justification on our beliefs. “Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism.” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 74 (2007): 31.

From the very outset of Kumāriḷa’s discussion of epistemology in the *ŚV* it is quite clear that he is attempting to be theoretically exhaustive as well as negative in his arguments. As Kumāriḷa outlines the problematic he hopes to address, which represents a rather different approach to epistemology when compared to previous discussions of the subject, he emphasizes that what is under consideration is the question “are the validity and the invalidity [of a cognition] intrinsic or else extrinsic?”<sup>47</sup> From this inquiry Kumāriḷa provides an exhaustive outline of what he perceives as the potential options for answering this question: either both validity and invalidity are intrinsic, they are both extrinsic, validity is extrinsic while invalidity is intrinsic, or validity is intrinsic while invalidity is extrinsic. From this framework Kumāriḷa presents each in turn pointing out where they fail in their account of epistemology. It is important to note that Kumāriḷa does not present the theory of intrinsic validity as the best option out of the four but rather as the only possible option to resolve the dilemma. The first two positions are allowed to be dispensed with in the voice of the primary opponent of intrinsic validity, namely the upholder of the theory that invalidity is intrinsic while validity is extrinsic.<sup>48</sup> Verse 34 reads as follows:

Some say both [validity and invalidity] are intrinsic because things which do not independently exist cannot be brought about. Others [say the opposite] because validity and invalidity are ascertained from good qualities and defects produced from their causes [respectively].<sup>49</sup>

This verse provides the two reasons for claiming that both validity and invalidity are intrinsic and that both validity and invalidity are extrinsic with regard to a particular cognition. The first

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47. *ŚV*, 79. *pramāṇatvāpramāṇatve svataḥ kiṃ parato 'tha vā* / verse 33cd.

48. It is interesting to note that when Jayanta later refutes this theory he does not present this theory as being the primary opponent of Kumāriḷa but rather represents his own theory, i.e. that both validity and invalidity are extrinsic, as being Kumāriḷa’s primary opponent.

49. *ŚV*, 80-82. *svato 'satām asādhyatvāt ke cid āhur dvayaṃ svataḥ / apare kāraṇotpannagūṇadoṣāvadhāraṇāt* // verse 34.

argument claims that validity and invalidity do not exist by themselves but only as attributes of existing awarenesses and so cannot be produced while the second claims that validity and invalidity are produced from good qualities or defects in the cause of the awareness and so are extrinsic to the cognition. The opponent rejects both these claims stating:

To begin with both [validity and invalidity] are not intrinsically existent because of contradiction [between them] and they both are not extrinsic since then there would be the unwanted result that the form of the awareness would be without any character.

Since, [on the first view] how is it possible for something which does not depend on anything else to have a character which is self-contradictory. And [on the second view] what character could that [cognition] have other than the character of those two (i.e. either validity or invalidity).<sup>50</sup>

The argument as presented here is quite simple and relies on the assumption that something must have a character and that it cannot be contradictory, e.g. a cognition cannot be both valid and invalid at the same time. However, one could argue that validity and invalidity both belong to cognition as such but not to one and the same cognition so that the intrinsic nature of both could be maintained without self-contradiction. But according to the opponent this also is insufficient insofar as there would be no way to determine an invalid cognition from a valid one insofar as they are totally independent.<sup>51</sup> Thus the only viable options that can be resorted to are that validity is extrinsic while invalidity is intrinsic or vice versa.

As it stands Kumāriila implicitly accepts the arguments just put forward and the only move left to Kumāriila is to show how and why our cognitive enterprise cannot be explained by the theory of extrinsic and validity intrinsic invalidity. To quote the opponent:

Therefore let it be accepted that the cognition's invalidity is inherent and that its

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50. *ŚV*, 83-84. svatas tāvad dvayaṃ nāsti virodhāt parato na ca /  
niḥsvabhāvatvam evaṃ hi jñānarūpe prasajyate //  
kathaṃ hy anyānapekṣasya viparītātmasambhavaḥ /  
kimātmakaṃ bhavet tac ca svabhāvadvyavarjitam // verses 35-36.

51. *ŚV*, 84-85. vijñānavyaktibhedena bhaved ced aviruddhatā /  
tathāpy anyānapekṣatve kiṃ kveti na nirūpyate // verse 37.

validity depends on something else. The reason [for this assertion] is stated: because invalidity is not an actual thing it cannot [arise] from defects in the cause but since validity is an actual thing it is produced by the good qualities in the cause.<sup>52</sup>

The argument proceeds from an ontological position concerning the status of invalidity and validity respectively. On this view invalidity is not an attribute at all but rather an absence. An invalid cognition is not one that has arisen from defects in the perceptual apparatus etc., but rather the mere absence of good qualities which establish its accuracy in a positive sense.

Kumārila asserts, however, that such an account of our cognitive enterprise would clearly lead to an epistemic regress. He explains that on this account the ascertainment of the object, through a cognitive event, depends on the cognition of good quality in the cause and that the cognition of these good qualities cannot be carried out by the first cognition. Thus, the cognition of good quality of the cause requires another *pramāṇa* which in turn produces another cognition from yet another cause. This perpetual validation would then lead to an infinite cycle of cognition and so is not tenable. Additionally, the accuracy of each following cognition would then rely on the accuracy of the cognitions which preceded it.<sup>53</sup> It seems possible that Kumārila is committing what William Alston calls a level-confusion here insofar the fact that a cognition's validity depends on good qualities in the cause should not be confused with higher-level epistemic claim that we must know or be able to relate how this dependence functions. Thus, it could be argued that Kumārila seems to be committed to a confusion about how mediate justification functions in

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52. *ŚV*, 85-87. tasmāt svābhāvikaṃ teṣāṃ apramāṇatvam iṣyatām /  
prāmāṇyam ca parāpekṣam atra nyāyo 'bhidhīyate //  
apramāṇyam avastutvān na syāt kāraṇadoṣataḥ /  
vastutvāt tu guṇais teṣāṃ prāmāṇyam upajanyate // verses 38-39.

53. *ŚV*, 90-91. jāte 'pi yadi vijñāne tāvan nārtho 'vadhāryate /  
yāvat kāraṇasuddhatvaṃ na pramāṇāntarād bhavet //  
tatra jñānāntarotpādaḥ pratīkṣyaḥ kāraṇāntarāt /  
yāvad dhi na paricchinnā śuddhis tāvad asatsamā // verses 49-50.

also Kei Kataoka, *Kumārila on Truth, Omniscience, and Killing. Part 2. An Annotated Translation of Mīmāṃsā-Śloka-vārttika ad 1.1.2 (Codanāsūtra)* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2011), 126.

ordinary practices and so mistakenly claims that a given knower must be able to always provide evidence for a given belief which is extraneous to that knowledge if one accepts the opponents position.<sup>54</sup> In assessing this difficulty it is important to note the style of Kumāriila's presentation once more. While the genre of Kumāriila's text presents some interesting opportunities for comparative analysis insofar as it is a commentary on an earlier text. It also, however, presents some difficulty when addressing what is not found in the commentaries which preceded Kumāriila. Kumāriila's rather terse style in this case effectively obscures just how he conceives of the kind of regress he presents and thus it is very difficult to address how appropriate it might be to charge Kumāriila with committing a level-confusion. In effect it is precisely this type of innovation which often requires the elaboration of Kumāriila's commentators to shed some light on the issue. Which cannot be addressed here. Let it suffice to say that it is not clear that Kumāriila does not conceive of some way in which this difficulty can be resolved, e.g. by connecting the two levels in some way. Nevertheless, with all this in mind it is interesting to note that this argument seems to be the only, or at least the primary, argument Kumāriila deems necessary to refute the theory of extrinsic validity, leaving only option four, that validity is intrinsic while invalidity is extrinsic.

Kumāriila's method of argument as outlined so far is rather negative in character but it results in an epistemological account which allows individuals to avoid an epistemic regress as he sees it while also maintaining the possibility of knowledge in some respect. As already mentioned this clears the way for his presentation of intrinsic validity as a form of phenomenal

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54. For example, Alston explains that if someone states the restriction for mediate justification that "if S's belief that  $q$  is to constitute an adequate basis for S's belief that  $p$ , not only must  $q$  be appropriately related to  $p$ , but S must *know*, or at least justifiably believe, that this is so," then they are committing a level-confusion. "Level-Confusions in Epistemology." *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 5.1 (1980): 143. For mediate justificatory level-confusions see esp. 143-145.

conservatism. Kumārila begins his theory as follows:

Let it be understood that the validity of all accurate cognitions is intrinsic, since a capacity which does not exist innately cannot be produced by something else. For, let things depend on causes for their origination but once they have attained themselves they function totally independently in their own functions.<sup>55</sup>

The claim here is that validity is a capacity of accurate cognitions as such and so it is their natural inclination to present things validly. Additionally, Kumārila claims that things, the classic example being a pot, require causes, e.g. a potter, clay, etc., for their production but no longer require their cause when they are used for any of their various functions, e.g. to carry water. Taking accurate cognition as the example, presumably Kumārila is claiming that it is clear that the cognition should require a sense faculty, object, etc., for its production but that once it has arisen it presents its content independently, intrinsically. It is in the context of this assertion that it becomes clear just how Kumārila effectively removes his theory of intrinsic validity from a larger epistemic framework which preceded him. The question of how the Veda and intrinsic validity relate to the larger epistemic framework is a difficulty which has already been presented in the case of the *MSBh* and as I will argue, the Vṛttikāra's inability to remove his version of intrinsic validity from the wider epistemic framework is what ultimately leads Kumārila to articulate his more robust epistemology wherein intrinsic validity does not need to be articulated in terms of truth but rather is itself as close as we can get to truth in Kumārila's opinion. Thus the role of intrinsic validity is markedly different in these two writers. While the Vṛttikāra's, and to some extent Śabara's, articulation can be viewed as an account of presumptive justification used as an epistemic 'stop-gap' or 'filler' meant to account for a circumscribed domain, i.e. Vedic

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55. *ŚV*, 89-90. svataḥ sarvāpramāṇānāṃ prāmāṇyam iti gamyatām /  
na hi svato 'satī śaktiḥ kartum anyena śakyate //  
ātmalābhe ca bhāvānāṃ kāraṇāpekṣatā bhavet /  
labdhātmanāṃ svakāryeṣu pravṛttiḥ svayam eva tu // verses 47-48.

*dharma*, which cannot be accounted for otherwise, Kumāriila's theory represents a more nuanced claim about the nature of cognitive appearances which applies to the entire domain of knowledge, as already stressed.

By attempting to destabilize all other methods of accounting for the validity and invalidity of cognition Kumāriila sees himself being left with one plausible account of the process, i.e. that all valid cognitions are intrinsically valid. This theory effectively, according to Kumāriila, avoids every difficulty involved in the other epistemic accounts, perhaps the most pernicious being the epistemic regress. In explaining how intrinsic validity secures epistemic stability Kumāriila says:

When validity is intrinsic then nothing else whatsoever is sought after.  
For, falsity ceases effortlessly because there is no cognition of defects.<sup>56</sup>

This argument should bring to mind what the Vṛttikāra already stressed in the *MSBh*, namely, that if we have a cognition and do not perceive any defects in the cause etc., we can conclude that there are no defects. Importantly, it seems, Kumāriila does not emphasize the active search for defects for a given cognition. Instead he explains that if we have a cognition and do not perceive defects upon its origination the cognition is true, i.e. that doubting too must be justified.<sup>57</sup> I take Kumāriila's lack of interest in perceptual care or diligence as one important indication of his divergence from his predecessors and which provides some evidence for reading Kumāriila's epistemology as being consonant with Huemer's phenomenal conservatism. For example, as we have already seen both the Vṛttikāra and Rescher state that the careful search for

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56. *ŚV*, 91. yadā svataḥ pramāṇatvaṃ tadānyan naiva gr̥hyate /  
nivarṭtate hi mithyātvaṃ doṣājñānād ayatnataḥ // verse 52.

57. *ŚV*, 95. doṣājñāne tv anutpanne na śaṅkyā niṣpramāṇatā // verse 60cd.  
As I will discuss at length later on I take Kumāriila's lack of interest in the search for defects as one important shift in his articulation of the theory of intrinsic validity which I believe brings it in line with Huemer's phenomenal conservatism.

defects is one important precursor to presumptively justificatory accounts of epistemology while, I would argue, both Kumārila and Huemer agree that the requirement of perceptual care “would provide a basis for discriminating against perceptual experience *only if* for some reason, we were unable to or universally failed to exercise adequate care in making perceptual judgments” which neither writer endorses.<sup>58</sup>[emphasis mine] The idea is that the natural capacity of our perceptual apparatuses, and our bodily mechanisms in general, tend to do their job without such restrictions to begin with. Thus, since the resting state of our awarenesses tends to present things as they are we are justified in assenting to their contents.

In conjunction with this intuition Kumārila claims that cognitive corroboration is not necessary for the validation of any awareness. The fact that perception is a *pramāṇa* indicates that it is able to produce an ascertainment of its object by itself.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, only one cognition is required for the accurate communication of its object, others may arise which present the same content but these additional awarenesses in no way add to the original cognitions validity and so are basically pointless reiterations.<sup>60</sup> Thus, awareness is valid by its very nature and it is only susceptible to doubt if defects are cognized. And Kumārila explains those defects as follows:

Therefore, the validity of an awareness which obtains from the fact that it is an awareness is [only] cancelled through the cognition of a defect in the cause or [through the cognition] that the object is otherwise.<sup>61</sup>

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58. Michael Huemer, “Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism.” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 74 (2007): 34.

59. *ŚV*, 99-103. Verses 71-81 esp. 73

*ŚV*, 100. anyasyāpi pramāṇatve saṅgatir naiva kāraṇam /  
tulyārthānām vikalpyatvād ekaṃ tatra hi bodhakam // verse 73.

60. *ŚV*, 104. pramāṇam grahaṇāt pūrvaṃ svarūpeṇaiva saṃsthitam /  
nirapekṣaṃ svakāryeṣu grhyate pratyayāntaraiḥ //  
tenāsya jñāyamānatvaṃ prāmāṇye nopayujyate /  
viśayānubhavo hy atra pūrvasmād eva labhyate // verses 83-84.

61. *ŚV*, 91-92. tasmād bodhātmatkatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā /  
arthānyathātvahetūtthadośajñānād apodyate // verse 53.

This articulation of defects bifurcates them in much the same way as the Vṛttikāra does; either a cognition is false because the cause which led to its production was somehow defective, in the way that defects of the eye could yield inaccurate representations of an object, or because a later cognition overturns the first. The important distinction here is between those defects which produce cognitions that cannot be apprehended differently because the cause is permanently defective and those defects which are temporarily defective which are overturned by later awarenesses to the contrary. If someone is prone to see double due to a disorder or disease of the eye the knowledge that one’s perception of two objects, when there is really only one, does not, strictly speaking, get overturned by an accurate awareness that there is only one object—such an individual can only see double—but rather by the awareness that the eye is defective, e.g. by being told so by a specialist.

Kumārila’s own articulation of defects is also motivated by a different understanding of invalidity. As the opponent previously asserted invalidity must be intrinsic to cognition because it is not an actual thing. However, Kumārila rejects this assertion claiming that:

Invalidity is divided three-fold into false cognition, non-cognition and doubt. Of these two are able to [arise] from a cause which is defective because they are actual things.<sup>62</sup>

The division of invalid cognitions is clear: one may misapprehend, doubt what one apprehends or have no apprehension at all. Implicit in the second half of the verse is that the only invalid cognition which is not an actual thing is non-cognition, since it has no cause whatsoever, while the other two are real and so arise from defective causes.<sup>63</sup> In effect Kumārila’s restructuring of the epistemic process from one of validation to one of invalidation as method, as Arnold has

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62. ŚV, 92. aprāmāṇyaṃ tridhā bhinnam mithyātvājñānasamśayaḥ /  
vastutvād dvividhasyātra sambhavo duṣṭakāraṇāt // verse 54.

63. According to Kei this division is already implicit in the Vṛttikāra. *Kumārila on Truth, Omniscience, and Killing. Part 2. An Annotated Translation of Mīmāṃsā-Ślokaṅgīkāra ad 1.1.2 (Codanāsūtra)*, 127.

pointed out, involves a reversal of the norm of South Asian epistemology. In more classical accounts of epistemology—indeed this seems to be how both Śābara and the Vṛttikāra approach the problem—one begins by discussing the *pramāṇas* by attempting to articulate how they function and effectively produce valid cognition, but on Kumāriḷa’s account we start with the question of validity and then move on to the *pramāṇas*. Thus, “whatever it is in regard to which one has *prāmāṇya* [validity] is what should be called a *pramāṇa*.”<sup>64</sup> At this point it is important to note how Kumāriḷa’s assertion that the validity of all valid awarenesses effectively expands to include all forms of awarenesses, even invalid ones. To begin with, while Kumāriḷa only believes that accurate awarenesses are intrinsically valid he does not foresee any way of determining whether a given awareness is valid or invalid before it arises. This fact leads to justification in entertaining any awareness in the absence of counter evidence and Kumāriḷa is seen explicitly outlining how this process takes place when one putatively valid awareness is blocked by a later cognition. For example, Kumāriḷa says:

Since, in that case too, validity is intrinsic by itself because of the absence of a cognition of defects [in the cause] and where the cognition of defects has not arisen doubt [about that awareness] is unwarranted. Thus, no additional awarenesses are required other than the three or four cognitions already produced since in the course of just this many awarenesses one attains intrinsic validity.<sup>65</sup>

Here Kumāriḷa is articulating how a process of multiple overturned awarenesses settles over time. Thus, according to him the first awareness is intrinsically valid through the absence of defeaters but should some awareness arise the original awareness is stripped of its validity and the second awareness becomes intrinsically valid. According to Kumāriḷa we can conceive of

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64. Arnold 87.

65. ŚV, 95-96. svata eva hi tatrāpi doṣajñānāt pramāṇatā /  
doṣajñāne tv anuṭpanne na śaṅkyā niṣpramāṇatā //  
evaṃ tricaturajñānanmano nādhikā matiḥ /  
prārthyate tāvataivaikaṃ svataḥ prāmāṇyam aśnute // verse 60-61.

this awareness also being overturned which would reinstate the original awarenesses validity. Thus, validity is simply dependent on the absence of blocking awarenesses and applies to all awarenesses until they are overturned, the difference being that those awarenesses which Kumārila deems valid are simply those which have not yet been overturned. Additionally, Kumārila seems to be claiming that in general this kind of oscillation between awarenesses and counter awarenesses tends to level out after three or four cognitions so that we are not suspended in a state of uncertainty about all appearances. This formulation is in keeping with the principle of phenomenal conservatism which states that “if it seems to *S* that *p*, then, in the absence of defeaters, *S* thereby has at least some degree of justification for believing that *p*.”<sup>66</sup> On this account Kumārila can be seen asserting that the relevant variation in a given appearance of an awareness is whether a defeater has arisen or not and that in the absence of such a defeater we are justified in our belief that *p*.

It is here that we see Kumārila’s innovation, although informed by the *MSBh* in its foundations, most clearly. Kumārila introduces an account of justification as the *only* epistemic project with purchase. It is his goal to present an formulation of justification which accounts for the natural inclination of how things appear to us and as a result concludes that we are intrinsically justified in our assent to each and every awareness by the ordinary character of the awareness itself. Thus, Kumārila is not presenting an account presumptive justification as a stop-gap in the epistemic framework but rather is attempting to describe how appearances justify our beliefs generally. This is not to say that things cannot turn out otherwise, that a given belief cannot be falsified later, but rather that, given the limits of what can be seen and the uselessness of validating procedures, we can be confident in what presents itself to us until we have reason to

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66. Huemer, 30.

suspect it. The similarity to Huemer here is striking. For example, Huemer is committed to the idea that “epistemic justification is conferred by appearances of all sorts, whether sensory, intellectual, mnemonic, or introspective” and that “all species of appearances [are] equally valid sources of justification.”<sup>67</sup> Endorsing justification of appearances in this way allows one to argue that, as well as explain how, a “detailed hallucination provides the same sort of justification for believing its content that a normal perceptual experience does.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, both Kumāriila and Huemer are attempting to describe the features or character of appearances, or awarenesses in Kumāriila’s case, which enable them to naturally confer some form of justification on the knower entertaining their content.

The simplicity of this argument relies on Kumāriila’s lack of interest in accounting for how one moves from sense experience to knowledge which, as I have tried to show, is the principle difficulty Śābara and the Vṛttikāra seem to face in their epistemologies. We do not have to search for defects, as the Vṛttikāra claimed, but rather are justified in trusting perceptual experience until it has been disproven. Thus, as Kumāriila articulates the situation, not only the Veda but all knowledge is correct until proven otherwise, however, it is still the special character of the Veda which safeguards it from falsification.

## **2. JAYANTA’S REJECTION OF INTRINSIC VALIDITY & HIS THEORY OF DOUBT**

### *2.1. Jayanta’s Account & Refutation of Intrinsic Validity*

As I have argued so far there are a number of methodological similarities between Mīmāṃsā epistemology and some accounts of justification in the West but in some sense I have obscured

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67. By appearance Huemer explains that he means “a kind of propositional attitude, different from belief, of which sensory experience, apparent memory, intuition, and apparent introspective awareness are species.” Huemer, 30 & 31.

68. Ibid, 33.

part of the difficulty in analyzing or interpreting Kumāriḷa’s discussion of the topic. Primarily I am referring to the usage of the word *prāmāṇya* which, following Taber, I have chosen to translate as validity.<sup>69</sup> This term does not unambiguously translate as such and is not used by Kumāriḷa in one obviously clear sense. Instead his discussion encourages us to make certain judgements about how the term is employed and what precise sense it carries in his philosophy. What is of primary concern here is whether the validity of all cognition should be taken to mean the truth of all cognitions, i.e. in the Western sense of justified *true* belief, or as something else. Once again, I have tried to show that there is good evidence to suggest that it means something more like justification but this is not how all of his commentators, critics or even modern interpreters have understood the term and so some time should be taken to unpack the concept. This will prove invaluable for the following discussion of Jayanta’s critique of the theory and help to show how it motivates him to make some of the more innovative epistemological moves that he does.

The primary difficulty concerning the term is its relation to the word *pramāṇa* which I have suggested can be translated as a valid means of knowledge, e.g. perception or inference. But the term can also be used to apply to the knowledge event produced by a *pramāṇa* and so can be translated as an accurate cognition. It is in this second sense that the term is used in the locus classicus of Kumāriḷa’s theory of intrinsic validity, i.e. that “the validity (*prāmāṇya*) of all accurate cognitions (*pramāṇa*) is intrinsic.” This formulation could easily lead one to conclude that *prāmāṇya* in this sense must mean something like truth insofar as it is specifically stated that the cognitions under consideration are those that are accurate and not just cognition in general, but given some of Kumāriḷa’s later comments it becomes clear that this interpretation is not quite

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69. Taber, 207.

correct, at least not when we consider how Kumārila actually uses the term. This is made clear by the fact that Kumārila believes that we are justified in claiming intrinsic validity for cognitions *pro tem* even if they are later overturned. Thus, the validity of a given cognition results from the very fact that it is a cognition, that it appears in the same way ordinary awarenesses appear, nothing else, and that it can only be rejected by being overturned at some later date.<sup>70</sup> If the term *prāmāṇya* is taken to mean truth, it is quite difficult to explain such a formulation on Kumārila's part and we would somehow have to account for truth which is quite different from how the term is usually employed.

The terminological slippage of the term *prāmāṇya*, while difficult to account for in Kumārila's tradition—especially as discussed by his commentators—also presents one convenient avenue for critique of the theory. Since, by simply taking the term to mean truth instead of justification, the entire epistemology loses what Kumārila clearly articulates are its most compelling features, i.e. its ability to easily account for the justificatory nature of perception, or experience, and the lack of need for validation procedures. It is in precisely this way that Jayanta criticizes the theory of intrinsic validity. Unlike Kumārila, Jayanta defines the term *prāmāṇya* explicitly, stating: “since it is said that a valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*)

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70. With this point in mind it is interesting to look at the four kinds of awareness Kumārila mentions explicitly in his discussion of the theory in the *ŚV*, i.e. accurate awareness, inaccurate awareness, doubt, and non-cognition. With respect to these four, we have already seen, in fact Kumārila has explicitly stated, how the first two function with regard to intrinsic validity. For example, all awarenesses are intrinsically valid unless or until they are blocked or overturned and then become inaccurate awarenesses. But how would Kumārila articulate the situation with respect to doubt? It seems that two obvious options are available to him: first, he might claim that the occurrence of doubt is a later development or effect of an originally intrinsically valid awareness whereby the content is not outright contradicted or overturned but rather called into question, second, he might claim that awarenesses such as doubt are the exception to the rule of intrinsic validity. It seems that the former option accounts for Kumārila's theory more adequately and is more obviously in keeping with what I have presented so far but since he does not address the topic one can only suspect how he would deal with the problem. It is also worth noting that the opponent could also respond to the first hypothetical answer I have provided by saying that while it is the case that some doubts occur in this way there are also some doubts which appear to us as doubtful from the very beginning which would seemingly undermine this account.

discloses an object as it actually is, [so] this thing called validity (*prāmāṇya*) is the non-deviation concerning the very object of a valid means of knowledge.”<sup>71</sup> This definition definitively shows that Jayanta interprets validity not in the justificatory sense outlined previously but instead as being the accurate representation of the object as it really is, i.e. excluding all invalid cognitions. From this basic interpretive move Jayanta proceeds to demonstrate how validity on this account cannot be accepted intrinsically.

It is important to note at the outset that Jayanta is also concerned with establishing the validity of Vedic texts and so sees his own tradition directly at odds with Kumāṛila’s. This fact features prominently in many of Jayanta’s arguments against the tradition of Mīmāṃsā and his primary aim in his engagements with the tradition is to demonstrate how and why Mīmāṃsā should be limited in its scope to the analysis of scriptural passages only.<sup>72</sup> This is especially evident in Jayanta’s epistemological concerns where he asserts that the tradition should restrict itself to interpretive theory and refrain from engaging in epistemology at all. In part it seems that Jayanta views the theory of intrinsic validity as being too epistemically weak when applied to the Veda and so begins by refuting this theory before defending his own epistemology which he believes uniquely establishes, with certainty, the validity of the Veda. Jayanta’s presentation of the epistemological discussion addressed here is presented in the third chapter (*tr̥tīya-āhnika*) of his magnum opus, known as *The Cluster of Blossoms of Nyāya (Nyāyamañjarī)*, which addresses testimony as a valid means of knowledge.

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71. *NM*, 232.7-8. arthatathātvaprakāśakaṃ hi pramāṇam ity uktam. tasya svaprāmāṇyavyabhicāritvaṃ nāma prāmāṇyam.

72. See esp. Kataoka, “Bhaṭṭa Jayanta on the purpose of Nyāya.” *South Asian Classical Studies* 1 (2006): 147-174.

At the most basic level of Jayanta's critique of Kumāriḷa's epistemology it is clear that he maintains that the theory of intrinsic validity simply cannot be accounted for as a process. At the very outset of his critique Jayanta asks what the expression "validity is intrinsic" even means and presents four potential solutions: is it that validity is grasped by the accurate cognition itself? or that the validity of the cognition arises from itself? or that validity does not depend on any other factor when determining its object? or that validity is determined independently? It appears from Jayanta's analysis of the expression that he feels he has exhaustively supplied all possible answers to the question and proceeds to show how each in turn fails to account for the intrinsic nature of validity.

Kumāriḷa's epistemology, for Jayanta, cannot coherently be analyzed in terms of the cognition's *grasping* its own validity. Jayanta begins by attempting to show that there is no possible way to account for the cognitions grasping its own validity since for him validity can only be established by things extraneous to the cognition. Jayanta explains:

To begin with the grasping of validity by [the cognition] itself is not possible, since it is unprovable. To explain: perception is busy presenting that blue thing as blue and perception, which is produced from the connection of an object and the sense faculty, is just a valid means of knowledge for that blue thing. This is what we know.<sup>73</sup>

The point here is rather clear; perception, in keeping with *pramāṇa* theory in South Asia, is an instrument of acquiring knowledge and so it is busy presenting the awareness of its object and so cannot also grasp its own validity. That is to say, perception of a particular object produces a awareness of the object as blue and perception is only a valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) for that blue object and so cannot also be a valid means of knowledge for its validity, i.e. it cannot

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73. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 東洋文化研究所紀要/*The Memoirs of Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia*, 169 (2016) 523(40).4-6. na tāvat svayam eva prāmāṇyagrahaṇam upapannam, aprāmāṇikatvāt. tathā hi yadetannīlaprakāśane pravṛttam pratyakṣam tannīlam prati tāvat pratyakṣam pramāṇam indriyārthasannikarṣotpannam iti jānīma evaitat.

produce both the cognition of blue and the cognition that the cognition of blue is valid.

Additionally, Jayanta explains that according to the tradition of Mīmāṃsā cognitions cannot be perceived at all since they are outside the scope of perception and their existence can only be inferred based on the fact that the object is presented to us.<sup>74</sup> This fact effectively situates the validity of cognition outside of the domain of perception for the Mīmāṃsaka and so rules out the possibility that it is perception that grasps the validity of a cognition. Further still, Jayanta claims that perception also cannot grasp the validity of a judgement that is derived from the original cognition insofar as the validity of that judgement depends on the actual state of affairs and not on the sense faculties.<sup>75</sup> That is to say, since perception is produced from the connection between an object and the sense faculty, at least according to Jayanta's tradition, the resulting judgment formed from the original cognition is also not amenable to the senses and so cannot be perceived.

While it is true that Mīmāṃsakas maintain that cognitions cannot be perceived directly they do not claim that cognitions cannot be ascertained at all but rather that they are cognized inferentially. For example, Kumāṛila in particular asserts that from the fact that an object is cognized we are able to infer that a cognition has taken place.<sup>76</sup> So, Jayanta asks, can the validity of the cognition be grasped inferentially? The difficulty with this method of grasping validity, according to Jayanta, is that there is no inferential sign which would warrant an inference of

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74. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 522(40).13-522(41).1. tatra jñātrvyāpārātmano jñānasya bhavanmate nityaparokṣatvāt pratyakṣataḥ svataḥ paricchedānupapattau tatprāmāṇyasyāpi katham pratyakṣeṇa grahaṇam?

75. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 522(41).4-6. phalasya apy arthaprakāśanākhyasya saṃvedanātmano na indriyasamsargayogyatā vidyate, yena tadgatam api yathārthatvalakṣaṇam prāmāṇyam indriyavyāpāralabdhanmanā pratyakṣeṇa paricchidyeta.

76. Bimal Krishna Matilal, *Logic, Language & Reality*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. reprint. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1997) 243.

validity and so he answers in the negative.<sup>77</sup> However, he explains what options the opponent might entertain in order to respond to this question nevertheless. He begins by explaining:

The resultant [judgment], which is the effect of a cognition which consists in the function of the knowing agent, is itself the inferential sign which is able to cause one to infer the mere existence of the nature [of that judgement] because of grasping the pervasion of the resultant [judgment] by mere activity, [but] it is not able to cause one to infer the validity [of that judgement] which is characterized by the state of being in accordance [with the state of the world]. Since the validity of that which is its cause (i.e. the cognition) which is the function of the knower could be caused to be inferred either by a resultant [judgment] which is not qualified [by correspondence] or by a resultant [judgement] which is qualified by correspondence.<sup>78</sup>

As I have here interpreted Jayanta's point, the only thing that we can infer from the judgement formed from the original cognition is its mere existence by reason of the fact that it occurred, not its validity. But what does Jayanta make of his last two points? On the first account, i.e. if we were able to infer validity from a resultant judgement—which here serves as the inferential sign—which is not qualified by correspondence to the actual world, then we could infer validity from any inferential sign at all and there would be no such thing as invalidity, which is simply not correct. On the second account, according to Jayanta, there is no method for determining that the resultant judgement is qualified by accuracy and so cannot be used to infer the validity of the cognition.<sup>79</sup> Even if the Mīmāṃsaka claims that our experience simply presents the resultant

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77. An inferential sign is something that is connected to the thing to be proved, in this case validity, which has to be present in the subject of the inference, in this case the resultant judgement. For example, the inference of fire on a distant mountain is warranted by the presence of the property smoke which is invariably connected with fire. So in this case, for Jayanta, the inference of validity on the part of the resultant cognition cannot be inferred because we do not know of any property present in the resulting cognition which is invariably connected with validity.

78. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 521(42).3-6. jñātrvyāparātmano jñānasya tu svakāryaṃ phalaṃ bhaved api liṅgam phalasya kriyāmātravyāptigrahaṇāt svarūpasattāmātram anumāpayitum utsahate, na yathārthatvalakṣaṇaṃ prāmāṇyam. tad hi phalaṃ nirviṣeṣaṇaṃ vā svakāraṇasya jñātrvyāpārasya prāmāṇyam anumāpayet yathārthatvaviśiṣṭaṃ vā.

79. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 521(42).8-9. ādye pakṣe yataḥ kutaś cana phalāt tatprāmāṇyānumāne nedāniṃ kiñcid apramāṇaṃ bhavet. uttaro 'pi nāsti pakṣaḥ phalagatayāthārthyaparicchedopāyābhāvād ity uktam.

judgement as valid, Jayanta explains that this solution cannot account for cases of perceptual error, since in the case of perceptual error also we are presented with an awareness as accurate which actually is not.<sup>80</sup> The difficulty of accounting for how validity could be grasped by the cognition it belongs to provides justification for Jayanta's rejection of this possible explanation of the meaning of the expression, "validity is intrinsic."

The need to exhaustively refute the theory of intrinsic validity is motivated by Jayanta's concept of certainty, and this fact is evident in the method of attack he employs in critiquing the theory. This is also reflected in Jayanta's discussion of the possibility that validity *arises* intrinsically. In his assessment of this explanation of intrinsic validity Jayanta refers back to his analysis of what validity (*prāmāṇya*) is and he explains as follows:

If the view that validity arises by itself is resorted to [by the Mīmāṃsakas] this too is unsuitable because the production of effects depends on their causes and validity is an effect. Since validity exists, i.e. is an actual thing, and not eternal, thus it is an effect. And an effect cannot be produced by itself precisely because it is an *effect*. [emphasis mine]<sup>81</sup>

As he sees it, validity is the result or effect of a belief forming process, i.e. the functioning of a valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), and so depends on its cause for its production. This fact necessarily prevents the possibility that validity could be produced independently and so refutes this method of accounting for intrinsic validity.

At this point we might point out that Kumāṛila seemingly already admitted this fact by stating that while causes are necessary for the production of their effects they are no longer relied

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80. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 521(42).15-520(43).2. nanu svānubhava eva atra upāyaḥ. tad dhi nīlasaṃvedanatayā phalaṃ svata eva prakāśate. nīlasaṃvedanatvam eva ca asya yathārthatvam, nānyat. yady evaṃ śuktikāyām api rajatasamvedane samāno nyāyaḥ. na hi rajatasamvedanādanya yathārthatvasamvittir iti.

81. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 515(48).15-18. atha svataḥ prāmāṇyaṃ bhavati ity eṣa pakṣa āśrīyate so 'py ayuktaḥ, kāryāṇām kāraṇādhiṇajanmatvāt, prāmāṇyasya ca kāryatvāt. asti hi prāmāṇyaṃ, vastu ca tat, na ca nityam iti kāryam eva tat. kāryam ca kāryatvād eva na svato bhavitum arhati iti.

upon when their effect preforms its particular function. As we saw previously the paradigmatic example here is a clay pot which depends on the clay, potter, etc. for its fabrication but does not depend on them for its use once it has been created. How does Jayanta refute this claim? In the case of validity Jayanta states the following potential solutions:

What was said, [namely that] a valid means of knowledge does not depend on anything else in performing its own function, that should be explained. Does [the statement] “the valid means of knowledge is independent in performing its own function” mean that the totality of causal factors [which led to that valid means of knowledge] are independent, or that one member of that totality of causal factors is independent, or that the cognition which is produced from that totality of causal factors is independent?<sup>82</sup>

If the independence of a valid means of knowledge amounts to the claim that the totality of causal factors which led to the production of that knowledge event are independent then Jayanta claims this is true.<sup>83</sup> To begin with, Jayanta defines a valid means of knowledge as the totality of causal factors, both conscious and unconscious, which bring about an awareness of an object which is both invariant and indubitable.<sup>84</sup> Thus, if the Mīmāṃsaka is saying that the totality of causal factors which produced the awareness are independent of anything else then according to Jayanta’s definition of a valid means of knowledge this is necessarily true. The concept of the totality of causal factors is articulated to account for all the necessary elements which produce an effect, no more and no less, i.e. they are all that is necessary to produce the effect and so are independent of anything else. But this does not mean that validity is intrinsic since validity

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82. Kataoka, ed. “A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*,” 513(50).6-8. yad api ca svakāryakaraṇe pramāṇasya parānapekṣatvam ucyate tad api vyākhyeyam. kiṃ pramāṇaṃ svakāryakaraṇe nirapekṣam sāmagrī vā tadekadeśo vā tajjanyaṃ vā jñānam iti.

83. What I have translated as the totality of causal factors (*sāmagrī*) is a term that is used to describe all the relevant causal factors which lead to the production of an effect. E.g. the necessity of a seed, sunlight, water, etc. for the production of a sprout.

84. *NM*, 20.11-12. tad ucyate. avyabhicārīṇīm asandigdham arthopalabdhiṃ vidadhatī bodhābodhasvabhāvā sāmagrī pramāṇam.

requires something extraneous for its demonstration.<sup>85</sup> How exactly we should interpret this point is unclear insofar as it does not seem to show that validity is extrinsic but instead seems to presuppose that it is. However, as I have interpreted the argument the point seems to be that the totality of causal factor independently produces a valid means of knowledge whose content is valid but this only implies that validity is present, not that it is reflexively demonstrable. In accordance with this presentation of what the totality of causal factors actually are, Jayanta points out that a single member of the totality of causal factors cannot be independent insofar as it is dependent on the other factors by definition. That is to say, the fact that they are the set of causal factors means they are interdependent and so one of them cannot be independent of the others.<sup>86</sup> Lastly, Jayanta explains that the cognition that results from the set of causal factors is itself an effect and so has no effect of its own with respect to which it could be considered dependent or independent. Additionally, in actual practice, according to Jayanta, it turns out people engage in particular actions based on their desire to achieve specific aims and so do not do so independently.<sup>87</sup> Once again Jayanta's argument hinges on the commitment that validity is both capable of demonstration and necessary which, as I have already suggested, may not represent the actual intention of Kumārila's epistemology.

In many of Jayanta's arguments his obvious unwillingness to accept the type of epistemic account Kumārila presents is quite evident and it is clear that, unlike his opponent, Jayanta

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85. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 513(50).10-11. tatra sāmāgryāḥ satyaṃ svakāryajanmani nairapekṣyaṃ asti. na tu tāvatā svataḥ prāmāṇyam, tatparicchedasya parāyattatvāt.

86. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 513(50).13-14. sāmāgryantargatakārakasya svakārye parāpekṣatvam aparihāryam, ekasmāt kārakāt kāryanirvṛttysambhāvāt.

87. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 513(50).16-512(51).2. jñānaṃ phalam eva na pramāṇam iti uktam. na ca phalātmanas tasya svakāryaṃ kiñcid asti, yatra sāpekṣatvam anapekṣatvaṃ vā asya cintyeta. puruṣapravṛttyātau tu tadicchādyapekṣatvaṃ vidyata eva iti yatkiñcid etat.

believes that we can successfully validate our awarenesses extrinsically and so obtain a higher level of confidence in our cognitive practices and in the Veda in particular. This is patently obvious in Jayanta's final critique of the theory of intrinsic validity. As we have seen Jayanta does not believe that validity can be grasped intrinsically and he ends his critique by explaining the extraneous character of determination as he conceives of it. He explains that,

To begin with it is said that there is no determination of validity at the time of the first impression which motivates [one to act]. Since at that time validity is not able to be determined by the *pramāṇa* which is grasping blue just as it cannot determine the nature of blue. However, it is true that there is the determination of validity at another time, but in such a case it is not independent, because the determination of validity depends on the capacity for activity.<sup>88</sup>

Here Jayanta is attempting to demonstrate that there is no method which can account for how the determination of validity could take place by itself and in this context he emphasizes the fact that the determination of validity simply cannot be coterminous with the cognition in question. Instead, determination must arise later as a result of our successful action for a particular purpose or as a result of our failure in the case of determining invalidity of the original cognition retrospectively. The assessment of how our awarenesses are verified situates the verifying process outside of the domain of the cognition itself and so shows, for Jayanta, that validity cannot be intrinsic in the end.

At this point it is important to stress two main points about Jayanta's critique of Kumārila's epistemology. The first point, which has already been pointed out, is that there seems to be an essential difference between the way Kumārila and Jayanta approach the problem of knowledge. As we have already seen Kumārila does not emphasize a verifying process in which

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88. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 512(51).7-11. tatra prathamapravartakapratibhāsaprasavasamayā tāvan nāsty eva prāmāṇyaniścaya ity uktam. na hi nīlagrāhiṇā pramāṇena nīlasvarūpam iva prāmāṇyam api tadānīm niścetum śakyata iti. kālāntare tu prāmāṇyaniścayaḥ satyam asti, na tu tatra nairapekṣyam, pravṛttisāmarthyādhīnatvāt tanniścayasya.

the burden of proof rests on the knower. Instead he seems to believe that false beliefs will eventually be found out and that all cognitions, after a certain amount of time, level out in accordance with our regular experience and that any attempt to validate knowledge through corroboration is both useless, i.e. it adds nothing to the process, and is epistemically circular. As I have argued Kumāriila can be seen presenting an account of justification which is conferred by all awarenesses in the absence of defeaters. Jayanta, on the other hand, asserts that to the extent that we are concerned with the truth of our cognitions certainty about those cognitions must be demonstrated and that the only way to do this is to appeal to factors outside of the cognition in question and the time of its occurrence. Using this assumption Jayanta addresses Kumāriila's epistemology through the very same scheme that Kumāriila seems to reject, or at least shied away from. This is most evident in Jayanta's concern for the character of validity which, as I have suggested, seems to differ from how Kumāriila employs the term. While it is true that Jayanta does not return to the traditional *pramāṇa* based discussion of epistemology, it is evident that he simply does not accept Kumāriila's belief that all other attempts to account for validity fail. The second point is that Jayanta sees the need for validation emanating from the commitment that there are such categories as valid and invalid cognition. As far as he is concerned the fact that this dichotomy exists gives rise to a kind of uncertainty about each and every cognition up until it is verified and so verification is necessary.

## *2.2 Jayanta on Epistemic Objectives & Doubt*

It is Jayanta's concern with epistemic certainty that encourages him to attack the Mīmāṃsā account of knowledge in general and Vedic validity in particular. As we have just seen this is motivated by the belief that the theory of intrinsic validity is epistemically weak, and as such insufficient as a proof for scriptural knowledge, and inadequate as an account knowledge

generally. Jayanta makes this clear through his conceptualization of our cognitive enterprise in relation to the type of object we are investigating. That is to say, Jayanta claims that our epistemic attitude and constraints vary based on the object of inquiry, i.e. on what is at stake and the context in which we are operating. As I will try to point out this epistemological innovation shares some interesting similarities with the kind of substantive, or subject, contextualism espoused by Michael Williams and so I will be drawing some comparisons between these two theories in what follows.<sup>89</sup> At the most basic level Jayanta divides epistemic concerns into two categories: the everyday, worldly, domain which is perceptible by ordinary people (*dr̥ṣṭa*) and the transcendent, religious, domain which is only communicable through extraordinary means (*adr̥ṣṭa*). In accordance with Jayanta's contextualist inclinations each domain has different standards for what counts as knowledge and those standards are dictated by the inherent stakes entailed by the knower's epistemic success or failure. As Jayanta explains:

Moreover, the two-fold path of the aims of people is divided into worldly [purposes] and transcendent [purposes]. In the first case, people who have not consulted scripture act with respect to those worldly objects whose means [of attainment], such as eating etc., are obtained through co-presence and absence of what is established by the practice of innumerable elders, since scripture is not employed [to communicate] that those who are dirty should bathe and those who are hungry should eat.<sup>90</sup>

In this passage Jayanta makes the distinction between these two domains clear and appeals to insights similar to those outlined by Mīmāṃsā already. Namely that there are desirable objects outside the ken of ordinary humans, which are not accessible via perception etc., and that they

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89. It is important to note that the claim is mostly limited to the kind of contextualism Williams presents because it lacks the concern for the semantic form that the majority of contextualists are concerned with today. That is to say, Jayanta is concerned with contextual factors in relation to the knowing subject and not to the person attributing knowledge to that subject.

90. *NM*, 6.11-14. *dr̥ṣṭādr̥ṣṭābhedena ca dvidvidhaḥ puruṣātrhasya panthāḥ. tatra dr̥ṣṭe viṣaye suciraprārūḍhavr̥ddhavyavahārasiddhānvayavyatirekādhigatasādhanabhāve bhojanādāv anapekṣitaśāstrasyaiva bhavati pravṛttiḥ. na hi 'malinaḥ snāyāt', 'bubhukṣito vā 'śnīyāt' iti śāstram upayujyate.*

are to be communicated by scripture. As such Jayanta is relying on similar methodology to Kumārila but with the addition of the important division just put forward. While Mīmāṃsā also commits itself to the idea that scripture conveys information beyond our everyday experience it attempts to explain how the method and function of that communication is no different from any other knowing process and so seeks to legitimize scripture as the general epistemic rule and not the exception. Jayanta, on the other hand, is wholly unsatisfied with this move and instead attempts to explicate how and why our investigative procedures should differ when applied to extraordinary spheres of knowledge and it is in this context that he draws the explicit distinction between the two domains.

The variation of practices and purposes to be achieved through human actions and procedures is essential to the development of Jayanta's contextualist insights. At the most fundamental level this is indicated by his decision to draw a distinction between the two domains to begin with but it is also evident in other epistemological commitments on Jayanta's part. To begin with Jayanta explains the transcendent domain of knowledge as follows:

However, with respect to transcendent aims whose domain is liberation and heaven scripture alone shows for people whose sight is impaired by the intense darkness of innate delusion. When observing a means to all true things only scripture is appropriate for such people who have eyes like ours, unlike Yogis for whom there are other means such as the awareness produced from yogic meditation.<sup>91</sup>

The unique character of heaven and liberation coupled with the limitations of ordinary peoples' perceptual apparatuses prevents knowledge of such transcendent objects and so scripture is required for communication of their character and for instruction on how to attain them.

Underlying much of what Jayanta wants to say is the belief that ordinary people are, at least for

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91. *NM*, 6.15-17. *adr̥ṣṭe tu svargāpavargamārge naisārgikamohāndhatamasaviluptālokasya lokasya śāstram eva prakāśaḥ. tad eva sakalasadupāyadarśane divyaṃ cakṣur asmadādeḥ na yoginām iva yogasamādhijajñānādyupāyāntaram api iti.*

the most part, practically rational and so can be cited as evidence whenever and wherever necessary.<sup>92</sup> That is to say, Jayanta's discussion of how people tend to conduct themselves in both worldly and transcendent domains is structured around the belief that these people are reasonable knowing agents who, when pursuing certain ends, conduct themselves in advantageous and reasonable ways.

The concept of two domains of knowledge in combinations with the commitment that there are rational people to use as examples for the procedures relevant to each domain allows Jayanta to establish a pattern of practically rational behavior in both spheres. Thus, rational people engage in everyday behavior without consulting technical literature, principally scripture, and do *not* perform sacrifices, etc., without doing so. This observation also allows Jayanta to make a more robust claim concerning the epistemic practices of rational people in these two domains. Jayanta explains as follows:

Insofar as, with regard to the *pramāṇas* such as perception etc., whose objects are perceptible, [our] everyday practices are accomplished without determining their validity, so, for us, there is no purpose in the consideration of whether validity is intrinsic or extrinsic [since] uncertainty is preferable in such cases. However, with regard to transcendent matters it is inappropriate for practically rational people to act without accurately determining the validity of those acts since Vedic action must be accomplished through costly procedures such as the expenditure of excessive wealth.<sup>93</sup>

By appealing to the epistemic behavior of practically rational people Jayanta is able to present his own assessment of the relevant contextual factors present in both domains of knowledge.

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92. The phrase 'practically rational' is borrowed from Vincent Eltschinger and is a translation of the relevant Sanskrit term *prekṣāvāt*. Eltschinger, "Turning Hermeneutics into Apologetics. Reasoning and Rationality under Changing Circumstances" In *Scriptural Authority, Reason and Action. Proceedings of a Panel at the 14th World Sanskrit Conference Kyoto, September 1st–5th 2009*, edited by Vincent Eltschinger & Helmut Krasser. (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2013) esp. 103-105.

93. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 524(39).8-12. *pratyakṣādiṣu drṣṭārtheṣu pramāṇeṣu prāmānyaniścayam antareṇa eva vyavahārasiddhes tatra kiṃ svataḥ prāmāṇyam uta parataḥ iti vicāreṇa na naḥ prayojanam anirṇaya eva tatra śreyān. adṛṣṭe tu viṣaye vaidikeṣu agaṇitadraviṇavitaraṇādikleśasādhyeṣu karmasu tatprāmāṇyāvadhāraṇam antareṇa prekṣāvātām pravartanam anucitam iti.*

Whether or not we should consider Jayanta as committing himself to two different meanings of the word *know* or *valid* in worldly and transcendental domains is unclear and worth consideration but for the time being it is important to note that Jayanta does clearly align himself with what Williams has called economic factors of justification and knowledge. In this context Jayanta can be seen as claiming that “how much reason we require fixes the severity of our epistemic standards or level of scrutiny,” that depending on whether we are concerned with everyday objects or matters of religious duty we are held to different standards of truth.<sup>94</sup> While it might suffice for rational people to conduct their business *sans* pre-action verification in their daily life it is not reasonable to do so in contexts that require higher level of certainty, e.g. in religious sacrifice. It is clear that at least one motivating factor for this innovation is Jayanta’s awareness of the role that epistemic stakes play in our activity. As Williams explains:

If it is important to reach some decision, and if the costs of error are fairly low, or if we gain a lot by being right and lose a little by being wrong, it is reasonable to take a relaxed attitude to justificational standards. If the costs of error are high, more demanding standards may be in order.<sup>95</sup>

Thus it is fair to say that for Jayanta the high monetary stakes necessitated by religious practice are of some serious concern but it also seems likely that he is aware of the possible negative results that might incur if one fails to observe their religious duties properly. On the other hand, in matters of everyday life, the stakes are frequently relatively low and so less rigorous verification processes are typical. Additionally, it seems plausible that there are even differing standards for certainty even within everyday mundane engagements. For example, monetary stakes are relevant in both sacrificial procedures as well as the daily practices of almost all people. For this reasons, I would argue that, while Jayanta does not explicitly state it, monetary

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94. Michael Williams, *Problems of Knowledge: A Critical Introduction to Epistemology*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 161.

95. *Ibid.*

factors should also play a significant role in the worldly domain.<sup>96</sup> There is some evidence that Jayanta considers conditioned awarenesses to require less rigorous verification standards as well insofar as the repeated experience of their occurrence adds to their stability.<sup>97</sup>

What does it mean for us to interpret Jayanta's division of transcendent and worldly domains as involving more and less rigorous standards of verification respectively? And how can this interpretation of Jayanta's epistemology account for the fact that Jayanta explicitly states that uncertainty is preferable to verification in our everyday practices, since this claim seems to imply that the standards for verification are not lower in worldly affairs but instead non-existent? In order to explain the apparent inconsistency it is important to recall that Jayanta, as previously discussed, insists that validity can be determined in our daily practices but by our success or failure to achieve our objectives. The important thing, as he sees it (especially in relation to Kumāriḷa's theory) is that validity is not determined as the cognition is arising but rather at a later time when we can retrospectively judge the original cognitions content against our success

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96. One further consideration is how Jayanta might address social factors in reference to different standards of justification. For example, how standards of justification can be seen to change in circumstances when one is engaged in discussion with experts as compared to non-experts in a particular field.

97. Jayanta addresses this point under his preliminary assessment of how pragmatically effective behavior validates our awarenesses which will be discussed at length later on. Let it suffice to say that Jayanta sees the increased experience of the results we expect from certain occurrences in the world as bolstering their stability and in turn our trust in their occurrence. To quote: "It could be the case that activity is of two types: initial and repeated. As an example of initial activity [consider] activity which takes the form of sowing a certain number of seeds in a dish which is filled with smooth earth and sprinkled with water in order to test the potency of seeds such as rice. After this farmers who have observed the regular capacity of those [seeds] to produce sprouts sow those seeds in their fields without hesitation and this is repeated activity. Thus, in the present case also some intelligent people having begun common worldly behavior on account of some awareness whose status as a valid cognition was not carefully examined first ascertain the validity of that awareness through the cognition of its result and further still those same people will not be sullied by doubts in their performing common behavior such as action with regard to awarenesses of the type under discussion which have arisen and exist." tatra etat syāt dvidvidhā hi pravṛtṭiḥ ādyā ca ābhyāsikī ca. tatra ādyā yathā vinihitasālilāvasiktamasṛṇamṛdi śarāve śālyādibījaśaktiparīkṣaṇāya katipayabījakaṇāvāparūpā. tatas teṣām aṅkurakaraṇakauśalam avikalām avalokayantaḥ kīnāśā niḥśaṅkaṃ kedāreṣu tāni bījāny āvapanti iti seyam ābhyāsikī pravṛtṭiḥ. evam iha api prathamam aparīkṣitapramāṇabhāvād eva jñānāt kutaścit kaścid vipaścid api vyavahāram ārabhya phalajñānena tasya prāmāṇyam avagacchan punas tathāvidhe jāte sati sukham eva pravṛtṭyādivyavahāram aśaṅkitakāluṣyaḥ kariṣyati iti. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 535(28).13-534(29).8.

or failure and so determine whether it was valid or not.<sup>98</sup> With this point in mind Jayanta's preference for uncertainty in our daily lives over questions of intrinsic or extrinsic validity should be taken as uncertainty *pro tem* and not absolute.<sup>99</sup> On this account, the rigor with which the validity of our everyday awarenesses should be judged is quite minimal when compared to those concerning transcendent matters.

As we have already seen, Jayanta is committed to the idea that once the distinction between validity and invalidity is admitted verification is necessary and so absolute uncertainty in our everyday practice cannot be endorsed by him. What then is Jayanta's account of our worldly epistemology and how does he differentiate it from our transcendent epistemology? Jayanta begins by explaining why we should not accept the argument that validity is determined as the cognition is arising as follows:

If we were to determine the validity of a cognition right as it is being brought forth then we, as we are acting, could never be deceived but we are deceived [sometimes]. Thus we should think [instead] that validity is not determined as the cognition is being brought forth, [and so] we carry out our action on the basis on suspicion exclusively.<sup>100</sup>

For Jayanta it is not right to claim that validity is intrinsic or even that validity is determined as the cognition arises. Thus validity in our daily lives can only be certified as a result of our success when we act on the basis of the awareness in question. This analysis of verification removes the possibility that cognitions can be counted as valid as they arise, since then there

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98. As discussed earlier on p.p. 44 n88. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 512(51).9-11. *kālāntare tu prāmāṇyaniścayaḥ satyam asti, na tu tatra nairapekṣyam, pravṛttisāmarthyādhīnatvāt tanniścayasya.*

99. As I have just discussed on the preceding page and footnote, even this formulation may be too strict since Jayanta seems to accept a somewhat more aloof stance with regard to the situation than he openly expresses. That is to say, it is obvious that some ordinary occurrences are not uncertain for Jayanta because they are consistently reestablished by our practical success in dealing with them, e.g. seeds.

100. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 520(43).14-519(44).1. *yadi prasavasamaya eva jñānasya prāmāṇyaṃ niścinyāmah, tarhi tataḥ pravartamānā na kvacid api vipralabhyemahi, vipralabhyāmahe tu. tena manyāmahe – "na niścitaṃ tadā prāmāṇyaṃ, saṃśayād eva vyavaharama iti.*

would be no such thing as perceptual error, but they also cannot be counted as invalid as they arise, since then action would be impossible. Instead, as Jayanta explains in the last sentence, we carry out action on the basis of suspicion. But wouldn't this account of cognition be contradicted by the phenomenology of experience. Since, as the opponent points out, in the case of accurate perception and perceptual error the first awareness of the object is not experienced as being suspicious or doubtful but instead just presents its object in the form 'this is x' even if it is not actually x.<sup>101</sup> Jayanta unequivocally rejects this claim. For him, there are only three possible characters that a cognition could have and, as far as he is concerned, two of them have already been shown to be inappropriate at the time a cognition arises, i.e. validity and invalidity, and so the only option is that they are suspicious or doubtful. Thus, Jayanta explains:

This awareness which grasps one of two alternatives falls into the category of suspicion by force because there is no way to determine [its] validity [at that time]. In the same way that the Buddhists think "there is water in the well" so the perception "there is silver," which grasps one alternative is, at that time, in fact just a suspicion.<sup>102</sup>

As Jayanta points out the character of suspicion has nothing to do with the way that the cognition seems to the knower. Rather it is postulated by two simple facts: firstly, by the fact that there is no way to determine whether or not the cognition is valid at the time it arises and secondly, by

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101. Here I have chosen to render the term '*saṁśaya*' as both suspicion and doubt in order to address the similarity and ambiguity of the term. As the term is developed in the Nyāya tradition preceding Jayanta it is clear that the term means something more like doubt insofar as they frequently express the content of a doubt as being of the form 'is that x or not x?' but as I will suggest Jayanta's usage would probably be better rendered as suspicion since it is not negative in character but rather investigatory. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 519(44).3-4. *nanu saṁśayo 'pi tadā na anubhūyata eva* "kim idaṁ rajatam uta na rajatam" iti. *api tu "rajatam" ity eva pratītiḥ.*

102. The reference to Buddhism here is striking and seems to come from an anonymous commentary on the *Nyāyabinduṭīkā*, known as the *Nyāyabinduṭīkāṭīppaṇa*, which is no longer extant in Sanskrit and only exists in Tibetan. The point here is to emphasize the status of awarenesses that are not confirmed by action but that one has good reason to suspect are correct. For example, that there is water in a well which has not had water drawn from it. Thus, these types of awareness seem to fall into the domain of probabilistic knowledge. We will have occasion to return to the *NBT* in Part III. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 519(44).7-9. *ekataragrāhy apy ayaṁ pratyayah tanniścayopāyavirahāt saṁśayakoṭīpatita eva balād bhavati yathā asti kūpe jalamiti bhiksyavo manyante.*

the fact that the relevant productive factors of suspicion or doubt are present.<sup>103</sup> Thus, the situation the knower finds herself or himself in is as follows: the knower must verify their awareness but cannot do so at that time and so, even if the awareness seems accurate or does not seem suspicious, the awareness is actually a suspicion which motivates the knower to verify its content according to Jayanta.

Jayanta is here echoing earlier discussions of doubt found in his tradition, although he does so somewhat innovatively. Jayanta, building on the two situational factors just outlined, i.e. the inability to verify and the presence of the proper conditions for suspicion, explains that since the thing under consideration is an awareness we know that it can be either valid or invalid and if the specific features which demonstrate its validity cannot be perceived, which Jayanta has repeatedly claimed is impossible at the time the cognition arises—even if the awareness is presented to us as being a certain way—it necessarily brings to mind the alternate character and so becomes a doubt or suspicion. To provide an example, the perception of an object in the distance which is of the right height and shape to be either a man or a post produces a doubt in our minds about its identity if we cannot perceive any of the particular characteristics which would rule out one of the alternatives. This is even the case if our first awareness feels definitive, e.g. if it has the content “there is a man in the distance.”<sup>104</sup> What Jayanta has done here is worth noting. At the most fundamental level he has taken one type of doubt articulated by his

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103. Kataoka, ed. “A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*,” 518(45).2-4. niścayanimitṭasya tadānīm avidyamānatvāt saṃśayaajananaheṭoś ca sāmagryāḥ sannihitavāt.

104. Kataoka, ed. “A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*,” 518(45).4-8. tathā hi yathārthetarabodhasādharāṇo dharmo bodharūpatvam ūrdhvatvādivat tadā prakāśata eva. na ca prāmāṇyāvinābhavi viśeṣaḥ kaś cana tadānīm avabhāti. tadagrahaṇe ca samānadharmādhighamaprabodhyamānavāsanādhīnatatsahacaritaparyāyanubhūtavīśeṣasmṛtir api sambhavaty eveti ṛyam sā saṃśayaajanāni sāmagrī sannihitā eva iti katham tadjanyaḥ saṃśayaḥ na syāt. Also for doubt in Nyāya, excluding Jayanta, see Prabhal Kumar Sen, “Saṃśaya” In *Philosophical Concepts Relevant to Sciences in Indian Tradition*, Vol. 1. Edited by Pranab Kumar Sen. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2006) 243-256. Esp. 245 for what I have referred to here. And J.N. Mohanty, “Nyāya Theory of Doubt” In *Phenomenology and Ontology*. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970) 198-219.

predecessors and applied it to cognition itself instead of to the object of that cognition, as his predecessors do. That is to say, by understanding the inability to validate our cognitions *pro tem* as the inability to ascertain the particular characteristics which differentiate accurate from inaccurate cognition Jayanta is able to explain how even seemingly accurate awarenesses are actually doubtful until they are verified. The example used by Jayanta is employed to show that the character of the awareness ‘there is silver’ really is the same as the cognition that ‘there is water in the well’. This point is used to reflect our regular epistemic practices. People have cognitions of this variety all the time but until the cognition’s validity is substantiated by, for example, drawing water from the well the cognition is not actually valid according to Jayanta and instead remains doubtful or suspicious. Thus, for Jayanta all cognitions in the worldly domain are naturally doubtful or suspicious until they are proven or disproven.

The ability to prove cognition in the worldly domain is accomplished by our capacity for action (*pravṛttisāmarthya*) according to Jayanta. As already pointed out, this method of verification is meant to reflect the ordinary behavior of practically rational individuals and in discussing this theory Jayanta refers to an earlier commentary in his tradition to explicate the term. He explains:

By Vātsyāyana, the writer of the commentary, saying “it is said that action (*pravṛtti*) means striving after, while the capacity (*sāmarthya*) for striving after is the connection with the result,” he means that the capacity for action is just the cognition of the result called pragmatic effectiveness (*arthakriyā*).<sup>105</sup>

In this short passage Jayanta has glossed an established term in his tradition with one borrowed from the Buddhism. The concept of pragmatic effectiveness (*arthakriyā*) maintains that an awareness is valid “if any activity that we undertake on the basis of it could, in principle, lead us

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105. Kataoka, ed. “A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta’s *Nyāyamañjarī*,” 510(53).5-7. bhāṣyakṛtā eva “samīhā pravṛttir ity ucyate, sāmarthyam punar asyāḥ phalenābhisambandhaḥ” iti vadatārthakriyākhyaphalajñānam eva pravṛttisāmarthyam iti.

to results consistent with the expectations we form on the basis of it.”<sup>106</sup> The fact that Jayanta unabashedly borrows this term is of interest and will be addressed in the final part of this paper but for the time being it is important to examine how this concept works in Jayanta’s epistemology. Jayanta explains the character of verification in worldly affairs as follows:

Since it is seen that the first cognition of water incites action with respect to mirages even though there is no water present thus people doubt in such instances. But for someone who is in the middle of water the cognition of pragmatic effectiveness arises which is inseparable from the water and thus there is no doubt. [Additionally] there is no examination of the validity of the cognition of pragmatic effectiveness because there is no doubt and examination is preceded by doubt.<sup>107</sup>

As already outlined, the occurrence of suspicion or doubt is the result of an awareness which perceives a similarity or common property in its object while failing to ascertain the particular characteristics which distinguish one of the possible objects which possess that common property from the others. Thus, the fact that we have been motivated to act by cognitions which were false produces the need for verification. But, as Jayanta explains, this need for verification is absent when the object or purpose we hope to attain is already satisfying our pragmatic needs. Additionally, the satisfaction of our intentions amounts to the apprehension of the particular characteristics of validity and so suspicion does not arise and as a result neither does the need, or even opportunity, for examination.

Jayanta’s theory of verification concerning worldly objectives reflects the lower, indeed extremely low, epistemic standards of truth dictated by the relatively low stakes of most of what

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106. Lawrence McCrea & Parimal Patil, *Buddhist Philosophy of Language in India: Jñānaśrīmitra on Exclusion*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 12. Also I have borrowed the expression ‘pragmatic effectiveness’ from McCrea & Patil.

107. Kataoka, ed. “A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta’s *Nyāyamañjarī*,” 509(54).7-11. pravartakaṃ hi prathamam udakajñānam avidyamāne ‘pi nīre mihiramarīciṣu dṛṣṭam iti tatra saṃśerate janāḥ. arthakriyājñānaṃ tu salilamadhyartināṃ bhavat tadavinābhūtam eva bhavati iti na tatra saṃśayaḥ. tadabhāvān na tatprāmāṇyavicāraḥ, vicārasya saṃśayapūrvakatvāt.

we do on a day-to-day basis. However, this form of verification clearly cannot be used when the concern is for religious purposes where the stakes are very high and once we are able to resort to the experience of our success or failure in such practices it is already too late. So how does Jayanta account for the validity of the Veda? For Jayanta, as well as for the Mīmāṃsakas, the Veda embodies a kind of verbal testimony. As we saw, Mīmāṃsā attempts to establish this by explicating its non-difference from the other instruments of knowledge, perception etc. That is to say, insofar as all cognition is accepted as intrinsically valid, verbal testimony is included in that category. Thus, the Veda is valid because it produces awarenesses and cannot, according to Mīmāṃsā, ever be overturned. Jayanta takes another approach to the analysis of testimony and instead claims that testimony is valid because it is communicated by an exceptionally reliable authority, i.e. God. Jayanta claims that the unique character of God as the creator of the world and so forth provides him with direct experience of supersensible objects, such as *dharma*, and so warrants his authority with regard to such things.<sup>108</sup> Thus, the validity of the Veda depends on Jayanta's proof of God. Jayanta begins by stating that God is unique in the following ways:

The individual creator of the Veda is not just anyone, but rather the highest lord capable of creating the triple world. He is God, he is the highest, he is the knower, whose bliss is eternal, who is compassionate, [and] free from the touch of the ripening of bad action and so forth.<sup>109</sup>

Jayanta here is describing the type of extraordinary divinity which he believes is capable of creating the diverse world. As with many arguments for the existence of God, Jayanta basically presents a type of argument from intelligent design.

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108. Kataoka, "Critical Edition of the Īśvarasiddhi Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī," 東洋文化研究所紀要/*The Memoirs of the Institute of Oriental Culture* 148 (2005): 357(58).

109. Kataoka, "Critical Edition of the Īśvarasiddhi Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī," 348(67).4-7.  
vedasya puruṣaḥ kartā na hi yādṛśatādṛśaḥ /  
kintu trailokyanirmāṇanipuṇaḥ parameśvaraḥ //  
sa devaḥ paramo jñātā nityānandaḥ kṛpānvitaḥ /  
kleśakarmavipākādiparāmarśavivarjitaḥ //

While Jayanta will emphasize that the complex structure of the world is very important in his inference for God's role as the creator, he also relies heavily on the pre-established theories of inference in South Asia to do this. In his first articulation of his inference for the existence of God Jayanta states:

But, we say that the inferential sign with respect to the existence of God is generalized from everyday occurrence (*sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*)—[for example] the property bearer, such as earth, is an effect, and the property to be proven is the fact that it is preceded by an intelligent creator who had a purpose in the kind of production of it, because of being an effect like a pot.<sup>110</sup>

Here Jayanta is employing traditional Nyāya type of inference known as *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa* which is “said to work on the basis of knowledge of common characteristics... [and] has a conclusion that is in fact not known by current perception, like all inferences, but also, unlike the other varieties [of inference], an imperceptible conclusion.” For example, according to the tradition, the inference that the sun moves because we perceive that its position has changed on the basis of the observation that things generally change places by moving is a *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa* inference.<sup>111</sup> For this inference to be *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa* it must have a conclusion that is imperceptible and so we must assume that the Naiyāyika, a follower of the Nyāya tradition, asserts that the movement of the sun is imperceptible. Thus, the world has an intelligent creator because it is an effect and effects are created like pots. The imperceptible conclusion here is the intelligent creator, i.e. God, and the common characteristic is the fact that effects are created by intelligent creators.

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110. Kataoka, “Critical Edition of the Īśvarasiddhi Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta’s Nyāyamañjarī,” 336(79).4-7. *sāmānyatodṛṣṭam tu liṅgam īśvarasattāyām idaṃ brūmahe—pṛthivyādi kāryam dharmi, tadutpattiprakāraproyojanādyabhijñākartṛpūrvakam iti sādhyo dharmah, kāryatvāt ghaṭādivat.*

111. Stephen Phillips, *Epistemology in Classical India: The Knowledge sources of the Nyāya School*. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 157 n28.

For Jayanta the paradigm example is a pot since they are effects they are created and we never see them arise without an intelligent creator, i.e. an intelligent creator is part of a pots totality of causal factors. But more importantly for Jayanta’s inference to hold all effects must have an intelligent creator as their cause since otherwise, someone could simply state the counter example that the world is not created because it is an effect which would nullify both inferences. This critique amounts to the logical fault in South Asian inference theory known as deviation (*vyabhicāra*) which indicates that the inferential sign, in this case being an effect, is not always pervaded by being created by an intelligent creator and so fails.<sup>112</sup> For example, in the inference “there is a fire on the mountain because there is smoke there,” smokiness is pervaded by fieriness such that there is no instance of smoke without fire. The 6<sup>th</sup> century Buddhist philosopher Dignāga further developed this intuition by claiming that the inferential sign or reason must conform to a three-fold scheme or test (*trairūpyahetu*) to warrant valid inferences: it must exist in the locus of the inference (*pakṣa*), it must exist in *at least one* similar case (*sapakṣa*), and it must not exist in *any* counter-cases (*vipakṣa*).<sup>113</sup> Thus, the inference that there is fire on the mountain is valid if and only if there actually is smoke on the mountain, smoke exists in at least one similar instance where there is fire, e.g. in a kitchen, and smoke never exist where there is no fire, e.g. under water. When this three-fold test is applied to Jayanta’s inference a problem arises since there are other instance of effects which are not created by an intelligent agent and so the inferential reason, i.e. being an effect, deviates from the thing to be proved, i.e. being created by an intelligent agent.

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112. Ibid, 171.

113. Richard Hayes, *Dignāga on the Interpretation of Signs*. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988) 145-148. Esp. 146-147.

According to the requirement that the inferential reason meet the three-fold test Jayanta's inference fails. In order to understand how Jayanta tries to escape this problem we must return to Dignāga. In Dignāga's formulation of inferential reasoning he was highly influenced by what might be called the social or argumentative side of inference, that is to say inference used in debate with others.<sup>114</sup> According to this tradition it is a logical requirement that the thing to be proven by the inference and the inferential reason used are accepted by both parties in a debate.<sup>115</sup> Thus, one cannot use disputed cases as evidence, i.e. examples which are in the *pakṣa*, for an inference. Thus, if the opponent points out that there are things which are effects which we see are not created by an intelligent agent, e.g. trees etc., in an attempt to establish the existence of the inferential reason, i.e. being an effect, in a dissimilar case (*vipakṣa*), i.e. where there is effect-hood without having an intelligent creator, then how can Jayanta respond? Jayanta here makes use of the argumentative character of debate and claims that this is not an appropriate counter example (*vipakṣa*) because he includes such examples in the property he hopes to prove (*sādhya*) and so it is part of the domain of dispute (*pakṣa*) and cannot be used as evidence against him.<sup>116</sup> Additionally, one cannot deny this by resorting to perception since, for Jayanta, one of the qualities of God is in-corporeality and so the example of trees etc., which are effects which are not seen to be created by an intelligent agent but are seen to grow, simply cannot be used as a counter example.<sup>117</sup> Accordingly, for Jayanta, there is no effect whatsoever which is not created

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114. Ibid.

115. A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*. 2nd Edition. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), 461.

116. Kataoka, "Critical Edition of the Īśvarasiddhi Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī," 331(84).13-14. yad api vyabhicārodbhāvanam akṛṣṭajātaiḥ sthāvarādibhir akāri, tad api na cāru, teṣāṃ pakṣīkṛtatvāt.

117. Kataoka, "Critical Edition of the Īśvarasiddhi Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī," 330(85).11-13. adṛśyasya ca kartur anupalabdhitō nāstitvaniścayānupapatteḥ na akṛṣṭajātavanaspātīnām akartṛkatvam iti na vipakṣatā.

by God and so every effect for him is part of the property to be proved and so cannot be used as evidence against his inference.

The type of framework this type of dispute-based-inference produces seems to be excessively strong, since presumably we could put any piece of counter evidence into the domain under dispute and so infer anything. This clearly cannot be accepted by Jayanta so the question arises, how can Jayanta delimit how and when a disputant is warranted in subsuming a piece of counter evidence into the domain under dispute? His answer is as follows:

If you can [definitively] demonstrate [something's] existence in a determined counter example, who could include that in the domain of dispute? Since when [someone] is urging [that there is the logical fault of] deviation for masculinity with respect to Brahmin-hood or for being cognizable with respect to eternity even the creator cannot accept the counter example as [being within] the domain of dispute, since the world does not align with the desires of the disputant. But in this case it is not definitively demonstrated that there is no creator with respect to such things as plants so it is said.<sup>118</sup>

Here Jayanta is presumably appealing to supposedly indubitable facts about reality. For Jayanta these are facts that even the creator cannot call into question. Thus, the fact that being a man does not inconclusively imply Brahmin-hood seems to be one fact that Jayanta believes is constitutive of the way the world is and so can always be appealed to as counter evidence.<sup>119</sup>

Presumably, Jayanta is saying that there are some men in the world who we unequivocally know are not Brahmins and that this is a fact even God cannot doubt. If this interpretation is correct Jayanta seems to rely on at least some foundational truths which are meant to ground inference in reality as such. However, this move seems less than convincing. To begin with, Jayanta gives us

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118. Kataoka, "Critical Edition of the Īśvarasiddhi Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī," 329(86).11-328(87).1. yadi hi bhavān niścite vipakṣe vṛttim upadarśayet kaś taṃ pakṣe 'ntarbhāvayet. na vipratve puṃstvasya nityatāyāṃ vā prameyatvasya vyabhicāre codyamāne vedhasā api vipakṣaḥ pakṣikartuṃ śakyaḥ, vādicchayā vastuvyavasthāyā abhāvāt. iha tu sthāvarādau kartrabhāvaniścayo nāsti ity uktam.

119. Brahmins are one of the four traditionally recognized social castes in pre-modern South Asia and are frequently said to be the most spiritually and physically pure. Thus, Brahmins serve particular purposes in South Asian society which is more prestigious than the other three castes.

no reason to accept his assertion that these facts are indubitable but instead simply stipulates it. Also, as previously discussed, Jayanta's worldly epistemology functions on a verification scheme which requires one to act before verification is attained. For this reason it seems like Jayanta will have some difficulty moving from the pragmatic verification behavior he sees in our day-to-day lives to the type of certainty he wants to grant the Veda inferentially. It seems as though Jayanta must offer some explanation of how this is possible but he seems to be mostly silent on the topic. One point of reference which may help to support his trust in certain ordinary perceptual inputs as foundations for stable valid inferences is Jayanta's belief that conditioned regular perceptual occurrences are more well founded for the knower than ones that have never been perceived or have been but only once or twice. With this point in mind we might say that Jayanta could conceivably introduce some level of stability into his theory of inference but I would argue this would still not produce the pedigree of inference Jayanta both wants and needs for his inference of the existence of God.

Jayanta's difficulty accounting for how these two distinct domains of epistemology can be related to one another and thus connected encourages the consideration of his success in securing the higher-level epistemic certainty he demands of Kumāṛila. As I have argued it seems that there is an essential difference in the way that Kumāṛila and Jayanta conceptualize the needs and requirements of the knower and apparently fundamentally diverge in their understanding of the term validity (*prāmāṇya*). In some respects the essential difference between the two writers concerns the relative weight they place on the possibility of error and defeaters in their epistemologies. While Kumāṛila sees the occurrence of error and defeaters as always possible he asserts that this fact does not undermine the everyday justification of our experiences and so claims that the burden of proof, or more appropriately disproof, does not belong to the knower.

Conversely Jayanta asserts that the possibility of error and defeaters necessitates the determination of the accuracy of our beliefs, whether this comes in the form of pragmatic effectiveness in the case of most worldly engagement or in the form indubitable testimony underpinned by inference in the case of transcendent domains of knowledge, and so sees the burden of proof resting on the knower. The most significant difficulty Jayanta's account of scriptural authority presents is solely dependent on his seemingly under-developed articulation of how exactly we move from the rough-and-ready epistemic practices of daily life to the absolutely certain testimony of God via scripture. As we have seen there are at least two relevant points that indicate how Jayanta might conceive of this process—i.e. the higher-level stability of conditioned occurrences and the supposed indubitability of certain facts, e.g. that not all men are of the Brahmin caste—but neither of these points are significantly developed by Jayanta and are simply mentioned in passing. Thus, Jayanta's overarching epistemology is left in need of further articulation and development which does not seem to be present anywhere in his discussion of the topic.

### **3. DOUBT BEYOND JAYANTA**

#### *3.1. Nyāya Articulations of Doubt & Inquiry*

So far I have attempted two things in this paper: firstly, I have tried to take up one philosophical position as articulated in its tradition and examine how that position was interpreted, attacked and dismissed, secondly, I have tried to draw attention to the intellectual historical dimension of these developments and engagements in the broader context of South Asian philosophy. From what has been discussed up to now the second objective is most readily apparent in Part I's discussion of how the theory of intrinsic validity was developed and refined over time but it is also present in Jayanta's assessment and critique of the theory itself. I would

now like to examine Jayanta's epistemology somewhat retrospectively by drawing attention to how Jayanta relates to his own tradition of Nyāya and builds on another South Asian philosophical tradition, namely Buddhism. Specifically, I am interested in Jayanta's deployment of doubt or suspicion as an epistemic category at the foundation of all worldly behavior and where and how he is influenced and innovative in this respect. In the following discussion I will draw attention to pre-Jayanta discussions of doubt found in Nyāya, focusing on how doubt is conceived of as well as how it relates to what we have seen in Jayanta. Next I want to address how the 8<sup>th</sup> century Kashmirian Buddhist Dharmottara employs the concept of doubt as a potential source for Jayanta's later discussion of the same topic. Broadly I will argue that while Jayanta's presentation of doubt bears some similarity to both Nyāya and Buddhist discussions of the term his articulation is ultimately more consistent with those of found in the Buddhist tradition.

Jayanta, as part of the brahmanical tradition of Nyāya, is concerned with the attainment of liberation from cyclic existence and so builds on his tradition and predecessors in this respect.<sup>120</sup> According to the source text of the tradition, *The Aphorisms of Nyāya (Nyāyasūtra)*, Nyāya is concerned with the following:

Leading to achievement of the supreme good is knowledge according to reality: 1) of the means of right knowledge (*pramāṇa*), 2) of the objects of right knowledge (*prameya*), 3) of doubt (*saṃśaya*), 4) of motivation (*prayojana*), 5) of example (*dr̥ṣṭānta*), 6) of established doctrine (*siddhānta*), 7) of the members of inference (*avayava*), 8) of hypothetical reasoning (*tarka*), 9) of definitive ascertainment (*nirṇaya*), 10) of [loyal] debate (*vāda*), 11) of diatribe (*jalpa*), 12) of quibbles (*vitandā*), 13) of fallacious logical reasoning (*hetvābhāsa*), 14) of deliberate distortion [of contrary theses] (*chala*), 15) of futile rejoinder (*jāti*), 16) of the points of immobilisation [*sic*] (*nigrahasthāna*).<sup>121</sup>[Torrela]

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120. By cyclic existence I mean the belief in birth, death and rebirth which is shared by most intellectual and religious traditions in pre-modern South Asia.

121. Rafaella Torrela. *The Philosophical Traditions of India: An Appraisal*, translated by Kenneth Frederick Hurry. (Varanasi: Indica Books, 2011) 41.

As even a cursory glance at this rather dense and technical *sūtra* will show the tradition of Nyāya is concerned broadly with the science of inquiry and its relation to liberation. While the topics Nyāya is concerned with include epistemological as well as ontological ones, and especially the categorization of debate, what is of particular importance for our purposes are the first three topics: the valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), their objects (*prameya*), and doubt (*saṃśaya*). It is relatively easy to understand the inclusion of the first two members of the list when considering the purpose Nyāya hopes to achieve—indeed it seems rather straightforward that a tradition attempting to articulate a framework of inquiry which culminates in liberating knowledge would make some mention of both how knowledge is gained and those entities which fall under its purview—but the mention of doubt in this list is somewhat less clear. Primarily, the inclusion of doubt provides two functions in the tradition preceding Jayanta and in the following pages an attempt will be made to explicate both.<sup>122</sup> The first is the role that the proper understanding and articulation of doubt as a kind of awareness plays in understanding the different types of awareness and the second is the role that doubt plays in the act of inquiry generally.

In the characteristic style of the *NS* the discussion of the topics under consideration in the entire text generally follows, only with some special exceptions, the same pattern of presentation of the 16 categories that was found in *sūtra* 1.1.1 just quoted, i.e. first, the valid means of knowledge will be discussed followed by their objects etc. Thus, after the first 22 *sūtras* in the first book which cover the valid means of knowledge and their objects the definition of doubt is presented. *Sūtra* 1.1.23 states:

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122. Actually, according to Vātsyāyana, the writer of the oldest extant commentary on the *NS*, the inclusion of doubt in this list is *the* defining feature of Nyāya which sets it apart from scriptural texts which also teach the means to liberation, i.e. the Upaniṣads which are a subsection of the Veda. Kataoka, “Bhaṭṭa Jayanta on the purpose of Nyāya,” 151-153.

Doubt is that wavering judgment in which the definite cognition of the specific character of any one object is wanting, and which arises either—(A) from the cognition of the character common to the objects concerned, or (B) from the cognition of the characters that serve to distinguish an object from diverse objects, or (C) from the presence of contradictory opinions;—and the appearing of such wavering judgments is due to the uncertainty attaching to perceptions and non-perceptions.<sup>123</sup>[Jha]

This *sūtra* differentiates doubt from other forms of awareness and explains that there are three varieties of doubt.<sup>124</sup> While the types of doubt receive significant discussion in the tradition and are a topic of disagreement between authors, for our purposes only the first type of doubt will be discussed. As it should be readily apparent, it is this type of doubt which Jayanta applies to cognition itself in order to claim that all awareness, even though it does not seem so, is really doubtful in character. Since our awarenesses always arise from the cognition of the common character of awareness, i.e. the fact that it has the form of an awareness (*bodharūpatva*), and because we are unable to ascertain the specific characteristics of awareness which would differentiate those awarenesses that are valid from those that are invalid before we act, therefore, all awareness is doubtful at the outset. As I have already mentioned, while this type of doubt is already addressed by Jayanta's predecessors it is not applied to awareness itself. For example, in the earliest extant commentary on the *NS*—*The Commentary on the Aphorisms of Nyaya* (*Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya*)—the author Vātsyāyana only discusses this type of doubt in terms of external objects, e.g. when someone doubts whether the object in the distance is a human or a post.<sup>125</sup> Thus, Vātsyāyana's account of this type of doubt emphasizes different factors which

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123. Ganganath Jha. *The Nyāya-Sūtra of Gautama with the Bhāṣya of Vātsyāyana and the Vārttika of Uddyotakara*. Volume 1 reprint. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984) 299.

124. This is the most natural reading of the *sūtra* even though historically there was some discussion and argument about exactly how many types of doubt there are. For example, Vātsyāyana claims there are five while Uddyotakara claims three. For a discussion of this see esp. Sen, 244-248.

125. *NSBh* in *ND*, 235.4-240.2. samānadharmopapatter viśeṣāpekṣo vimarśaḥ saṁśaya iti. sthāṇupuruṣayoḥ samānaṁ dharmam ārohapariṇāhau paśyan pūrvadṛṣṭaṁ ca tayor viśeṣam bubhutsamānaḥ kiṁsvit ity anyataram

contribute to the production of a given awareness and not to the mechanism of awarenesses irrespective of external factors. For this reason I would like to suggest that Jayanta is presenting an introspective kind of doubt which is distinct from the more ordinary experiential types of doubt discussed by his predecessors. This allows us to explain why Jayanta's discussion of doubt need not feel doubtful to the person having the doubt while all previous discussion of the topic clearly emphasize this feature.

Two interesting differences between Jayanta's articulation of doubt in our everyday epistemic practices and, for example, Vātsyāyana's discussion of the first type of doubt is the role played by memory in the process and the phenomenology of doubt. That is to say, we can ask two questions of Vātsyāyana that we have already implicitly addressed in Jayanta, what is the role of memory in the production of this type of doubt and is it still doubt if it is not experienced as doubtful to the person having the experience? As we have already seen, Jayanta claims that the fact that we know or have experienced that there are accurate and inaccurate awarenesses necessitates verification and the search for verification is instigated by doubt, even if a particular awareness is not experienced as doubtful in character. But on Vātsyāyana's account, is the fact that we have experienced a common characteristic enough to produce doubt or does one have to recollect that experience in each individual case? According to Vātsyāyana recollection is essential to the production of doubt since without it one simply apprehends the object incompletely albeit confidently. That is to say, if someone fails to recollect the specific characteristics that would differentiate the potential objects of the awareness then doubt does not arise. For example, if someone perceives an object of a particular height and width in the

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nāvadhārayati, tadanavadhāraṇaṃ jñānaṃ saṃśayaḥ. "samānam anayor dharmam upalabhe viśeṣam anyatarasya na upalabha" ity eṣā buddhir apekṣā—saṃśayasya pravṛttikā vartate, tena viśeṣāpekṣo vimarśaḥ saṃśayaḥ.

distance and fails to recollect the specific characteristics which differentiate humans from posts then the doubt “is this a human or a post?” does not arise according to Vātsyāyana. This is because doubt is “a wavering judgement of [something] which possesses a common characteristic [which is produced] from the apprehension of the common characteristic which depends on the recollection of particular characteristic.”<sup>126</sup> While there is some divergence in the opinions of Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara—Uddyotakara being the author of the only extant commentary on Vātsyāyana’s text, i.e. *The Critical Commentary on Nyāya (Nyāyavārttika)*—on the exact mechanism and types of doubt, both agree that recollection plays an important role in doubt’s production and that doubts are experienced as doubtful.

The emphasis on how doubt arises as well as its character presents the first indication of how pre-Jayanta Nyāya conceptualizes the role of doubt or suspicion in inquiry. This discussion turns on the understanding of doubt as a kind of wavering or oscillating judgement. As we have just seen doubt is explicitly glossed as a wavering judgement in *sūtra* 23 and, while Vātsyāyana does not discuss the term in this section of his commentary, Uddyotakara explains that “a wavering judgement (*vimarśa*) considers various objects, [since] it is as if doubt, i.e. uncertainty, touches both [its] objects.”<sup>127</sup> Thus, doubt involves at least two alternatives and oscillates between them in such a way that each is entertained in turn but not accepted until the particular characteristic which decides the state of affairs has been ascertained. As such, Nyāya claims that doubt holds an important position in the framework of inquiry. For example, Vātsyāyana claims

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126. Here Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara disagree on the meaning of the compound ‘*viśeṣāpekṣa*.’ Uddyotakara takes in the sense translated in the *sūtra*, i.e. judgment in which the definite cognition of the specific character of any one object is wanting, while emphasizes that doubt depends on the recollection of the particular characteristics. The term ‘wavering judgement’ is a translation of ‘*vimarśa*’ borrowed from Jha, 299. *NSBh* in *ND*, 255.1-2. *samānadharmādhigamāt samānadharmopapatter viśeṣasmṛtyapekṣo vimarśa iti*.

127. *NV* in *ND*, 239.12-13. *nānārthāvamārśaṇam vimarśaḥ. ubhau arthau mṛśati iva samśītiḥ samśayaḥ.*

that “Nyāya does not function with regard to things that are not known or with regard to things that are already known, rather it functions with regard to those things that are doubtful.”<sup>128</sup>

Here we get the first indication of how doubt figures in the larger picture of Nyāya, that is to say Nyāya is concerned only with those topics that are doubtful in character.

The theory and function of doubt is at the heart of Nyāya’s investigative methodology; the correct articulation of doubt as a kind of awareness and its role in inquiry is essential to the purpose of Nyāya. But how exactly this investigative doubt arises and what type of inquiry is at stake in the more traditional accounts of investigation need to be addressed at greater length. The concept of hypothetical or suppositional reasoning (*tarka*) is essential to the presentation of a more exhaustive account of doubt as it features in Nyāya’s methodology.<sup>129</sup> To begin with, after presenting the first 7 topics of Nyāya articulated in *sūtra* 1, *sūtra* 1.1.40 turns to the discussion of how hypothetical reasoning (*tarka*) is involved in inquiry, stating:

When the real character of a thing is not well known, there is put forward, for the purpose of ascertaining that real character, a reasoning (in support of a certain conclusion) which indicates the presence of proof (showing the undesirability or absurdity of a contrary conclusion);—and this is called ‘hypothetical reasoning.’<sup>130</sup> [Jha]

As hypothetical reasoning is presented here, it is a method of analysis applied to an uncertain topic, e.g. the proposition “everyone has a persistent soul.” According to Phillips, hypothetical reasoning “is called for in order to re-establish a presumption of truth in favor of one thesis that has putative source support against a rival thesis that also has putative source support.”<sup>131</sup> Thus,

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128. *NSBh* in *ND*, 35.5. tatra nānupalabdhe na nirṇīte 'rthe nyāyaḥ pravartate, kiṃ tarhi saṃśayite 'rthe.

129. The translation of *tarka* as “hypothetical reasoning” is Jha’s, 37, while some more contemporary writers prefer the translation “suppositional reasoning.” e.g. Jonardon Ganeri. *Philosophy in Classical India: An Introduction and Analysis*. (London: Routledge, 2001) Esp. 151. & Phillips, 170.

130. Jha, 445-446.

131. Phillips, 30-31.

when entertaining a particular thesis hypothetical reasoning is employed to draw out or examine the implications of different accounts of that thesis. According to Vātsyāyana, when something is not understood fully we have a desire to know it and “then one considers (*vimṛśati*) the two contradictory characters [ascribed] to the thing being investigated separately [thinking] ‘is this thing like this or not?’”<sup>132</sup> To provide the traditional example, hypothetical reasoning is used in Nyāya to demonstrate that there is a persistent soul (*ātman*). According to Vātsyāyana, somebody investigating whether the soul exists or not should entertain each option, i.e. the soul’s existence and non-existence, and draw out their implications in turn in order to see which is more consistent with the general understanding of the world, etc. On this account Vātsyāyana determines that the existence of a persistent soul should be accepted since one cannot account for how cyclic existence functions otherwise.<sup>133</sup> Thus, hypothetical reasoning is the “drawing out of implications of opposed views and testing them against mutually accepted positions (*siddhānta*), according to, broadly speaking, criteria of coherence but also of simplicity.”<sup>134</sup> Essential to this understanding of hypothetical reasoning is the motivation to consider (*vimarśa*), in turn, the mutually contradictory characters attributed to the same object.

This type of oscillating consideration is also reflected in the next *sūtra*, *sūtra* 1.1.41, where definitive ascertainment (*nirṇaya*) is defined as “the clear determination of a thing having considered (*vimṛśya*), in turn, the case for that thing and the case against it.”<sup>135</sup> This *sūtra* builds on the last one and explicates the result of hypothetical reasoning. In explaining how this statement should be interpreted Vātsyāyana explicitly brings our attention back to the role of

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132. *NSBh* in *ND*, 320.5-321.3. *atha jijñāsitasya vastuno vyāhatau dharmāu vibhāgena vimṛśati, “kiṃsvīd ittham āhosvin netham” iti.*

133. *NS & NSBh* in *ND* 1.1.40, 321.4-322.5.

134. Phillips, 31.

135. *NS* in *ND*, 329.2. *vimṛśya pakṣapratipakṣābhyām arthāvadhāraṇam nirṇayaḥ. 1.1.41*

doubt in the process of inquiry. He begins by claiming that “here [in *sūtra* 41] consideration (*vimarśa*) means doubt (*saṃśaya*)... and doubt [in the form of the expression] “is this so?” is an uncertain awareness which merely considers a thing.”<sup>136</sup> Thus, the essential role played by consideration in Vātsyāyana’s understanding of both hypothetical reasoning and definitive ascertainment should be understood as directly expressive of motivating doubt. As we have already seen the role of doubt was already tacitly mentioned in the previous *sūtra* following the desire to know the object and now we have a better sense of how doubt functions in investigation in general. Doubt is seen as the first step in inquiry since when someone resolves to gain understanding of some topic it is implied that there is the possibility that the thing under consideration could be a number of different ways and this fact produces the doubt or suspicion about which way it actually is. Thus, here doubt is not only essential to hypothetical reasoning but also to definitive ascertainment.

At this point it is profitable to ask whether it is the case that doubt is integral in all definitive ascertainment. Importantly both Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara clearly explains that it is not. For example, Vātsyāyana says:

The *sūtra* ‘definitive ascertainment (*nirṇaya*) is the clear determination of a thing having considered (*vimṛśya*), in turn, the case for that thing and the case against it’ is not a restriction in [all] definitive ascertainment. For instance, definitive ascertainment in perception, which is produced from the connection of the object and the sense faculty, is [just] the clear determination of the object [without doubt figuring in the process.] But with regard to the topic under consideration (i.e. in the case of hypothetical reasoning) definitive ascertainment is the clear determination of a thing [only after] having considered, in turn, the case for that thing and the case against it.<sup>137</sup>

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136. *NSBh* in *ND*, 35.7-8. *vimarśaḥ, saṃśayaḥ... sa ca “ayaṃ kiṃsvīd” iti vastuvimarśamātram anavadhāraṇaṃ jñānaṃ saṃśayaḥ.*

137. *NSBh* in *ND*, 330.13-15. *na cāyaṃ nirṇaye niyamo vimṛśya eva pakṣapratipakṣābhyām arthāvadhāraṇaṃ nirṇaya iti, kiṃ tv indriyārthasannikarṣotpannapratyakṣe 'rthāvadhāraṇaṃ nirṇaya iti, parīkṣāvīṣaye tu vimṛśya pakṣapratipakṣābhyām arthāvadhāraṇaṃ nirṇayaḥ.*

Thus, doubt or consideration motivated by suspicion is restricted to some forms of definitive ascertainment but not all. The mention of perception is important here, especially in relation to Jayanta. The kind of definitive ascertainment Nyāya is concerned with is broadly conceived and includes, for example, both the results of perceptual awareness and the conclusions which result from more hypothetical discussion and argumentation. But it is not the case, according to Vātsyāyana, that perception requires the kind of procedural doubt just outlined. Here Jayanta can be seen diverging from his predecessors once again. For Jayanta, all perceptual awareness is doubtful before it is validated by pragmatic success and so he explicitly disagrees with Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara. However, Uddyotakara clarifies Vātsyāyana’s point in an important way, namely that “it is true that [being preceded by doubt] is not a restriction in [all] definite ascertainment. [But] it certainly is a restriction in investigation. Definite ascertainment may be [preceded by doubt] and it can be otherwise, [but] investigation is always preceded by doubt.”<sup>138</sup> Uddyotakara is concerned that Vātsyāyana’s articulation of the situation obscures an important point that both authors want to stress, namely the necessary role of doubt in investigation, i.e. in the belief forming process. According to Uddyotakara, doubt is included in the *NS* precisely because it is a primary component in inquiry.<sup>139</sup> Thus, the presentations of doubt and inquiry found in early Nyāya bears some similarity to Charles Peirce’s understanding of the role of doubt in the formation of belief. For example, Peirce claims that doubt “stimulates us to inquiry until it is destroyed” and that “the irritation of doubt causes a struggle to attain a state of belief.”<sup>140</sup> While the former point is explicitly stated by early Nyāya authors, as we have just

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138. *NV* in *ND*, 407.9-408.8. na nirṇaye niyamaḥ. vicāre hi niyamaḥ. nirṇayaḥ evam ca anyathā ca. vicāraḥ saṁśayaḥ pūrvakaḥ eva.

139. *NV* in *ND*, 255.14-256.8. saḥ ayam evambhūtaḥ saṁśayaḥ vicārāṅgatayā upādīyate.

140. Peirce, Charles S. “The Fixation of Belief” In *The Pragmatism Reader: From Peirce Through the Present*, Edited by Scott F. Aikin & Robert B. Talisse. (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 41.

seen, the latter is more instructive for our interpretation of what has already been said about Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara. To explain, we can understand doubt as articulated in the framework of hypothetical reasoning as a struggle to attain definitive ascertainment, not in the sense of knowledge, but rather in the sense of firm belief which is consistent with other pieces of knowledge. For this reason doubt can be seen as the initial step in incorporating a given proposition into a pre-existent set of beliefs which form a coherent system. It seems that this emphasis of belief also tracks with Peirce's restriction that doubt is never the end goal, that it is destroyed once belief is attained. Additionally, it is important to note that inquiry, on both Vātsyāyana's and Peirce's account, does not produce knowledge, i.e. true belief, instead it merely produces beliefs that are, for the most part, consistent with our other beliefs.<sup>141</sup> In fact this is the primary claim of hypothetical reasoning. It is a method of restoring beliefs which have been temporarily stripped of their putative source support and so demonstrating their coherence in the network of beliefs.

### *3.2 Dharmottara & Role of Doubt in the Opening of a Scientific Treatise*

As has been shown so far, Jayanta's understanding of doubt differs from that of his predecessors. Although the claim that doubt is the exclusive topic of Nyāya precedes Jayanta and so grounds his discussion of the subject in important ways he can also be seen breaking with the tradition as already mentioned. It is interesting to note that while such an intricate understanding and articulation of doubt pre-dates Jayanta in his own tradition he frequently refers to texts outside of the domain of Nyāya when discussing doubt. Primarily Jayanta relies on the discussion of doubt presented by the 8<sup>th</sup> century Buddhist philosopher Dharmottara in his

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141. Peirce, 42.

*Commentary on the Drop of Reasoning (Nyāyabinduṭīkā)*.<sup>142</sup> While the *NBT* is a commentary on an epistemological text the relevant section for our discussion of doubt actually takes place outside of the official presentation of epistemology and instead is meta-textual in character. That is to say, Dharmottara's discussion of doubt is developed in his presentation of the text he is commenting upon and not on its content *per se*. Such an activity, growing out of the complex tradition of commentary in pre-modern South Asia, over time became rather standard in many texts and as Toru Funayama explains:

When a treatise (*śāstra*) of great significance for the development of a philosophical system was composed in ancient India, each word of that treatise was read, digested and then often commented upon by its followers for centuries. Commentaries were not just elucidations of the passages of the *mūla*-texts (i.e. root text) but were records of theoretical expansion, interpretation and development at later periods. More often than not, commentaries were commenced by explaining the significance of the opening sentence (*ādivākya*) of the treatise. In that case, what was clarified first was the answers to the following questions: What is the subject matter (*abhidheya*) of the treatise?, What is the aim (*prayojana*) of the treatise?, What is the relation (*sambandha*) between the treatise and its aim?, and so on.<sup>143</sup>

Thus, it is in Dharmottara's discussion of the opening sentence (*ādivākya*) of Dharmakīrti's *NB* that he articulates his understanding of doubt in relation to inquiry. It should be noted at the outset that Dharmottara's presentation of doubt is also directly linked to its role in the process of inquiry and so bears some similarity to that of Nyāya, but it also should be noted that there are some important differences. As I have already noted, it is not the significant divergence between the two articulations of doubt which is of most interest here, but rather that, in spite of the fact that Jayanta had a pre-existing theory of doubt at his disposal, he clearly presents his own discussion of doubt with Buddhist texts in mind and not Nyāya ones.

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142. The *Drop of Reason (Nyāyabindu)* is a text composed by the great 7th century Buddhist philosopher Dharmakīrti.

143. Toru Funayama. "Arcaṭa, Śāntarakṣita, Jinendrabuddhi, and Kamalaśīla on the Aim of a Treatise (*prayojana*)." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens/Vienna Journal of South Asian Studies*, 39 (1995): 181.

Dharmakīrti's *NB* is modeled on the *sūtra* style of composition and so consists of a series of succinct statements outlining his presentation and understanding of the types of perception and inference. As previously mentioned the entirety of what will be discussed in the following is Dharmottara's exhaustive presentation of the opening aphorism of the *NB* which states that "the establishment of all human aims is preceded by accurate cognition [and] thus accurate cognition is taught."<sup>144</sup> The sentence, according to Dharmottara, states both the purpose of the composition as well as its content.<sup>145</sup> Thus, the subject matter of the *NB* is accurate cognition and the purpose of the text is its communication. According to Dharmottara the very fact that the composition of a scientific treatise is undertaken implies that the content of that text has a particular purpose "since, because there is no purpose for the teeth of a crow, the investigation of those teeth is not undertaken by a practically rational person (*prekṣāvata*)."<sup>146</sup> As we have previously seen the emphasis on the behavior of practically rational people (*prekṣāvat*) is a point Jayanta relies heavily upon in his epistemology, a method noticeably absent in the discussions of his predecessors. Additionally, Dharmottara explains that "all practically rational people act having set their sights on a [particular] purpose for that action."<sup>147</sup> That is to say, people act purposively according to Dharmottara and in connection with the *NB*, or with any scientific text generally, there are two distinct but relevant purposes.<sup>148</sup> First there is the purpose of the writer of the text who hopes to instruct or teach and second there is the purpose of the student who will learn from

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144. *NB* in *NBP*, 4.1. samyagiñānapūrvikā sarvapuruṣārthasiddhir iti tad vyutpādayate. 1.1.

145. *NBT* in *NBP*, 4.6. samyagiñānapūrviketyādinā asya prakaraṇasya abhidheyaprayojanam ucyate.

146. *NBT* in *NBP*, 6.8-10. abhidheyam tu yadi niṣprajānam syāt, tadā tatpratipattaye śabdasaṅgārahā 'pi nārambhaṇīyaḥ syāt. yathā kākadantaprayojanābhāvāt na tatparīkṣā ārambhaṇīyā prekṣāvata.

147. *NBT* in *NBP*, 7.12. sarve prekṣāvantaḥ pravṛttiprayojanam anviṣya pravartante.

148. The term I am rendering as 'scientific text' is the Sanskrit term *śāstra* which should be distinguished from scripture, fiction, etc.

the text after it is composed.<sup>149</sup> It is in respect to the second purpose, the purpose of the student, that Dharmottara formulates his discussion of doubt.

According to Dharmottara the natural state of affairs when addressing a text seems to build on earlier theoretical discussions of inquiry and knowledge in South Asia generally, since it is often stated in commentaries on South Asian scientific literature that we are frequently confronted with a paradox of inquiry. That is to say, we are confronted with a fundamental dilemma when inquiring after something, namely that if the topic is not known it cannot be approached at all and if it is already known there is no point in investigating it.<sup>150</sup> Thus, even if the content and the purpose of the text are stated at the outset of the treatise, no one, no rational agent, Dharmottara argues, would read that text since they could not know that it achieves its purpose until they had finished it.<sup>151</sup> As such the dilemma of inquiry is reflected in Dharmottara's understanding of how people proceed in investigation and action since, on this account, no rational person would proceed to read a treatise which they did not know served a particular purpose and it would be purposeless for them to do so if they already knew. So how does one proceed according to Dharmottara? Firstly, he explains that it is true that one cannot know the contents of a text without reading it "but when a [particular] content, purpose, etc. are stated, even though they are not [yet] authenticated, a suspicion (*saṃśaya*) arises, and

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149. *NBT* in *NBP*, 7.10-11. *prayojane cātra vaktuḥ prakaraṇakarāṇavyāpārasya cintyete, śrotuś ca śravaṇavyāpārasya*. I have amended 'cintyate' 3rd, sg. to 'cintyete' 3rd, dual to apply to 'prayojane' (two purposes) which I take to be dual going with both the 'vaktṛ' (teacher) and the 'śrotṛ' (student).

150. To some extent this point was already made by Uddyotakara in the beginning of his discussion on *NS* 1.1.40 but it is more clearly presented in Śabara's commentary on *MS* 1.1.1. when the opponent claims, "dharma should be either well known or not well known. If it is well known, it need not be investigated. [While] if it is not well known, it cannot be investigated at all. Thus this treatment of the desire to know *dharma* (i.e. the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*) is useless." *MSBh* in *MD*, 10.1-2. *dharmah prasiddho vā syād aprasiddho vā. sa cet prasiddho, na jijñāsyah. athāprasiddho, natarām. tad etad anarthakaṃ dharmajijñāsāprakaraṇam.*

151. *NBT* in *NBP*, 9.1-2. *nanu ca prakaraṇaśravaṇāt prāg uktāny api abhidheyādīni pramāṇābhāvāt prekṣāvadbhir na gṛhyante, tat kimetairārambhapradeśa uktaiḥ?*

[practically rational people] act because of that suspicion.”<sup>152</sup> Thus, Dharmottara avoids the dilemma by claiming that, in such cases, people do not act because of the knowledge concerning the object, or lack thereof, but rather because of doubts or suspicions that something is a particular way. Here Dharmottara makes a point which has implications beyond what is reflected in pre-Jayanta Nyāya articulations of doubt, namely, that doubt is not simply a necessary forerunner of investigation but that it is also necessary for action. “Since, [according to Dharmottara,] suspicion (*saṁśaya*) about a desired purpose is a subordinate element for action for practically rational people, while suspicion (*saṁśaya*) about an undesired purpose is a subordinate element for abstaining from action.”<sup>153</sup> According to this understanding of the action of ordinary people it behooves the writer of scientific treatise to relate the content and purpose of their composition at the very outset, i.e. in the opening sentence (*ādivākya*), of their work. Accordingly, the rational person who sees some point in learning about the texts content will have a suspicion as to whether or not the text succeeds and so begin reading the text.

While Dharmottara’s discussion of doubt in this context bears some similarities to the Nyāya presentation of instigating doubt or suspicion already addressed there are also important differences. These divergences are invaluable for our discussion of Jayanta and his potential sources for the deployment of doubt at the heart of all perceptual cognition and action. As already addressed both Jayanta and Dharmottara appeal to the concept of practically rational agents in the development of their arguments, a method of argument tellingly absent in both Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara. As we have previously seen the overriding argument made by both Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara concerning the role of doubt in the tradition of Nyāya is that

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152. *NBT* in *NBP*, 9.3-4. satyam aśrute prakaraṇe kathitāny api na niścīyante. ukteṣu tv apramāṇakeṣv api abhidheyādiṣu saṁśaya utpadyate, saṁśayāc ca pravartante.

153. *NBT* in *NBP*, 9.4-5. arthasaṁśayo 'pi hi pravṛtṭyaṅgam prekṣāvātām, anarthasaṁśayo 'pi nivṛtṭyaṅgam.

doubt is an essential starting point in the practice of inquiry. However, Dharmottara makes the stronger claim that doubt is essential not only as a forerunner to inquiry but also to action generally. Jayanta's presentation of the role and nature of doubt clearly aligns him with the latter understanding of the term. For example, Jayanta claims that

with regard to worldly objects, even though their validity has not been ascertained, people are seen engaging in the behavior of action because of suspicion (*saṃśaya*) about a desired purpose [and] in the behavior of abstaining from action because of suspicion (*saṃśaya*) about an undesired purpose.<sup>154</sup>

As such Jayanta is building on Dharmottara's understanding of doubt or suspicion as the foundation for all behavior. That is not to say that Jayanta does not uphold the Nyāya articulation of doubt that preceded him although he does build on and expand it. He does not limit the scope of doubt to the domain of investigation but rather understands it as the motivating factor in all activity.<sup>155</sup> Additionally, Jayanta sees his understanding of doubt as the resting state of all perceptual awareness as being consistent with the Buddhist categorization of probabilistic knowledge as we have already seen.<sup>156</sup> It is interesting to note that Jayanta is rather unabashed about his reliance on Buddhist sources. As such there is a definitive sense of acceptance in what Jayanta wants to say about his epistemology and his tradition in general. We may recall Jayanta's incorporation of the Buddhist concept of pragmatic effectiveness (*arthakriyā*) as one particularly overt instance of this tendency but from what has been said so far it is clearly not the only piece of evidence we could appeal to. At this point one might be encouraged to ask whether this

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154. Kataoka, ed. "A Critical Edition of the *Prāmāṇya* Section of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*," 511(52).7-9. *dr̥ṣṭe viṣaye hyanirñītaprāmāṇya evārthasaṃśayāt pravṛttirūpam anarthasaṃśayāc ca nivṛttyātmakam vyavahāram ārabhamāṇo dr̥ṣyate lokah.*

155. We could also adequately account for the change by saying that Jayanta expands what counts as inquiry such that action is subsumed under the heading but this does not change the situation drastically, especially since Jayanta gives no hint that he sees action as inquiry while he does see doubt as preceding action.

156. As already mentioned in Part II, this concept already seems to be reflected in the anonymous commentary *NBT* on Dharmottara's *NBT* and so can be seen as further evidence of Jayanta's reliance on this group of Buddhist texts. Part II, 52 n102.

marked proclivity to rely on non-Nyāya, particularly Buddhist, sources reflects a trend in Jayanta's thinking towards a more accepting form of philosophy which moves beyond the more traditional sectarian proclivities. It is quite clear from much of what Jayanta says elsewhere in his text that the answer to this question should be in the negative. For example, Buddhism features prominently as an opponent in Jayanta's text, so much so that he is willing to reconcile himself to the views of Mīmāṃsā in order to attack the tradition.<sup>157</sup> Instead I would like to suggest that such open borrowing reflects Jayanta's identity as a member of the intellectual milieu of Kashmir, of which Dharmottara was also a part, albeit somewhat earlier, and that this fact adequately accounts for his treatment of Buddhist sources.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This project began with a brief presentation of how the concept of doubt is discussed in the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The problem of doubt as we saw is not presented lightly. Doubt is an impediment in the path to liberation and happiness. It is clearly not a good attribute in the religious person and certainly should not play a role in our daily lives. The philosophic presentations of doubt we have addressed here are quite different. As we have seen doubt is the forerunner of all inquiry and, in the hands of Jayanta, the resting state of perceptual awarenesses. Doubt for these writers is not something to be avoided, at least not entirely. It is conceived of as a mundane, although sometimes important, factor in our engagements with the world and each other. And in the context of epistemology can provide a rather instructive role in both theorizing about knowledge as well as accounting for it.

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157. Elisa Freschi & Kei Kataoka. "Jayanta on the Validity of Sacred Texts (Other than the Veda)." *South Asian Classical Studies*, 7 (2012): 5.

The concept of doubt is also instrumental in the trajectory of this paper; as we have seen it is essential to Jayanta's rejection of Kumāriḷa's epistemology and effective, for our purposes, as a point of departure from which both Nyāya and Buddhist discussions could be assessed. As I stressed at the outset of this project it is my goal to be both philosophically engaged as well as historically conscious in my discussion of these texts and the theories they present. In this regard I have tried to show how the methodological commitment of Mīmāṃsā to adhere strictly to the way things seem in the world is essential to our understanding of Kumāriḷa's epistemology and the discussions of epistemology which preceded him. It is important, however, not to over-emphasize the role of this methodology in determining what a follower of Mīmāṃsā could and could not commit themselves to. That is to say, we might be encouraged to see the tenets of a particular tradition in South Asia as having more influence on the members of that tradition than they actually did if we are not alive to the possibility of such an over-determination. In practice we have seen how Mīmāṃsā methodology featured differently in Śabara, the Vṛttikāra and Kumāriḷa and how each employed some kind of empiricism in the formulation of their epistemological theories.

A similar situation is also evident in Jayanta's case, but even more instructively. As we have seen, Jayanta openly borrows from Buddhism in his discussion of epistemology on multiple accounts. Jayanta's development of new methods of analysis and philosophical presentation indicate the rather banal fact, albeit an instructive reminder, that he is part of a complex tradition which includes its own philosophic, cultural, social and religious antecedents and contexts. As I have suggested, in Jayanta's case it seems likely that he is more significantly influenced by his own historical and local context than his tradition and that this does not somehow exclude him from being a member of the philosophic tradition of Nyāya. This suggests that being a particular

member of a given tradition is not as strictly delineated as some contemporary writers have maintained. But we are only able to appreciate this fact by drawing out the implications of his discussions as well as by taking his reliance on other texts and traditions seriously. By and large this is the methodology that I have employed throughout this project.

While it is obvious that different methodologies are useful for different objectives it is my most pressing concern to present these writers, insofar as I can, in their own right. It is blatantly obvious that South Asian intellectual traditions had their own standards and methods of analysis and to such an extent that these methodologies can be addressed they should be taken seriously as guidelines for approaching South Asian thought. Furthermore, it is important to recognize the complexity and rigor of pre-modern South Asian intellectual traditions in part as a means of appreciation but also as a means of instruction. Although South Asian thought, especially philosophy, is frequently dismissed as being theoretically soft or disproportionately interested in religious topics, it is my contention that the undue emphasis on the religious or metaphysical commitments of South Asian writers has deprived Western scholars of the opportunity to engage with different modes of knowledge, novel approaches to some of the classic questions of philosophy and the opportunity to recognize the intellectual rigor with which these writers engaged in theoretical discussion.

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