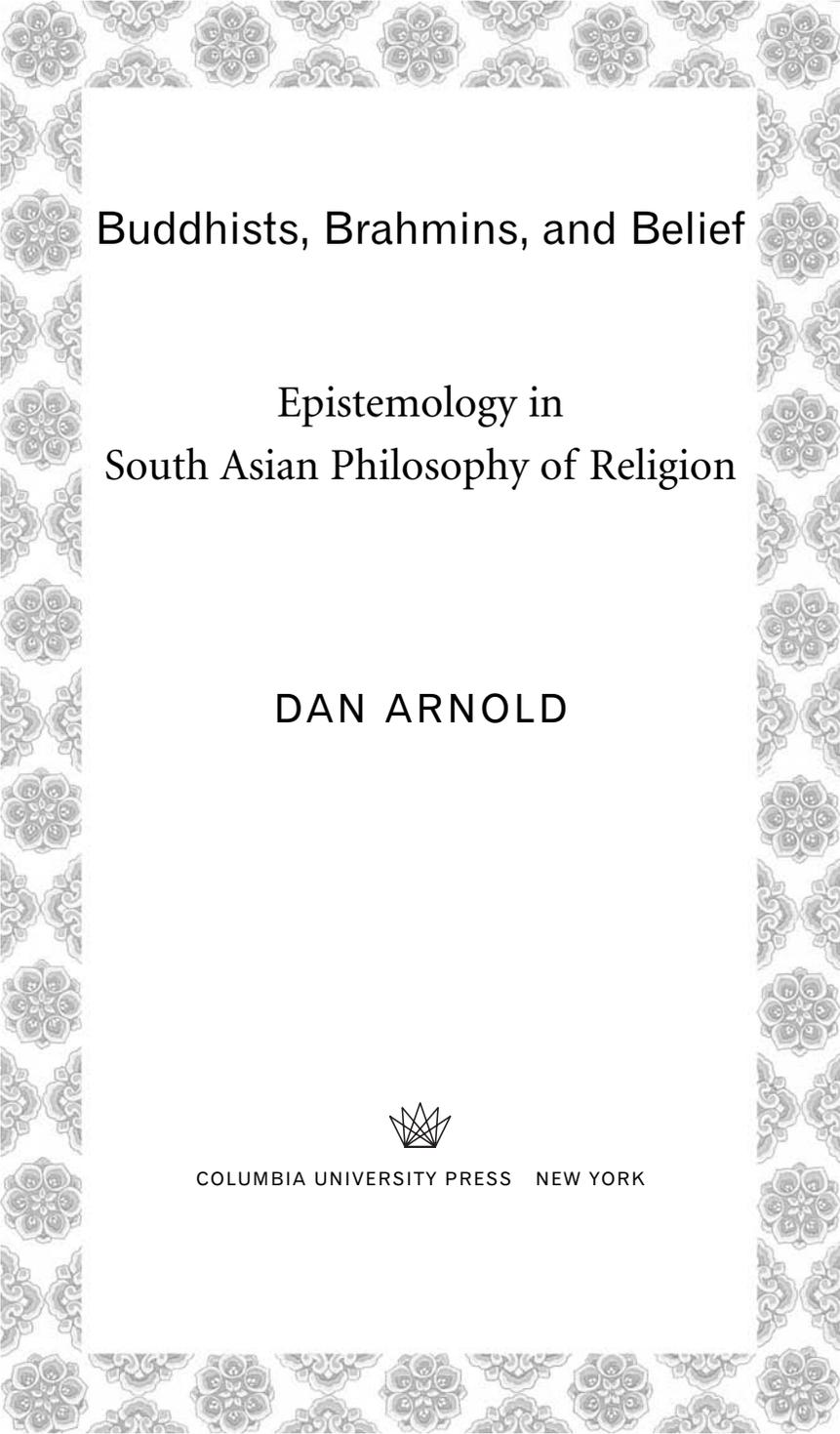# BUDDHISTS,

EPISTEMOLOGY IN

BRAHMINS,

SOUTH ASIAN PHILOSOPHY

AND BELIEF

OF RELIGION

DAN ARNOLD

BUDDHISTS, BRAHMINS, AND BELIEF

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Epistemology in
South Asian Philosophy of Religion

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The conventions peculiar to the genre of "acknowledgments" (a genre surely studied in some monograph or another) call for what amounts to a statement of humility in the form of expressions of gratitude to one's intellectual exemplars. I regret the extent to which this rhetorical gesture has, by its ritualized invocation, been emptied of meaning, for it has been my great good fortune to learn from some profoundly impressive and inspiring people, before whom I feel very humble indeed, and to whom I am quite grateful. Insofar as custom (together with a lack of imagination) constrains me, then, to express my gratitude in this ritual gesture, I feel moved at least to emphasize at the outset that my feelings of gratitude and humility are, if formulaically expressed, nonetheless genuine.

This book began life at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where I had the invaluable opportunity to work closely and regularly with all the members of the formidable committee of Paul Griffiths, Matthew Kapstein, and Sheldon Pollock. Their scholarly achievements—likely familiar to many prospective readers of this book (and much to be commended to those who are not)—are matched by their generosity in supporting my work. The emergence of this book was also facilitated, during my years as a student at the University of Chicago, by conversations and friendship with Mario D'Amato, Jonathan Gold, Larry McCrea, Rick Nance, Parimal Patil, and Rick Rosengarten.

Wendy Lochner, at Columbia University Press, supported this project from the moment my proposal first crossed her desk, recognizing in an unpolished manuscript the possibility of an interesting book. I hope that this book realizes that possibility at least to some extent and confirms her faith in it; insofar as it does, she deserves a great deal of credit (and I, of course, alone am responsible for the extent to which it does not).

The Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill University was a fine place to toil at reworking the original text upon which this book is based. There, I benefited not only from the environment of fabulous Montreal but also from conversations with Stephen Menn and the careful editorial eye of Philippe Turenne

On the Rational Reconstruction of South Asian Philosophy

The middle of the first millennium C.E. was a pivotal period in the development of Indian philosophy. Before that time, most of the Indic discursive practices characterized as "philosophical" were not particularly systematic in character, evincing little concern for the kind of formalization that might make philosophical arguments recognizable as such across party lines. Instead, many of the arguments developed in the early period tended to be largely analogical—that is, suggesting analogies that make it possible to imagine how the claims made could be true, without aiming at anything like demonstration of the claims. This was true not only of such proto-philosophical works as the earliest *Upaniṣads* but also of such Buddhist works as the Pali *Milindapañha.*[1]

To be sure, the foundational texts of many of the canonical philosophical *darśanas* (perspectives) were written in the early period, so that we can trace to the beginnings of the millennium such philosophical schools as Sāṃkhya, Nyāya, and Pūrva Mīmāṃsā (in addition to such non-Brahmanical schools as developed around the Buddhist and Jain perspectives).[2] The foundational texts particularly of these traditions present much of the conceptual vocabulary that would subsequently characterize Sanskritic philosophical discourse. This vocabulary was developed and occasionally deployed with awareness of the rival uses to which it was put. Thus, for example, the Buddhist Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī* (c. 150 C.E.) is typically taken to represent a characteristically Mādhyamika critique of the philosophical approach of Nyāya, and has also been shown to evince great familiarity by Nāgārjuna with the works of the grammarian Patañjali.[3] Indeed, one of the things that distinguishes the Indic traditions of philosophy throughout their history is a preoccupation with characteristically Sanskritic analyses of language—which may, indeed, be said virtually to constitute these traditions as recognizably a part of the same historical conversation.[4]

Nevertheless, the character of Sanskritic philosophical discourse changed significantly around the middle of the millennium. It was then that there emerged concerted efforts to systematize and formalize the conceptual vocabulary of the discourse, facilitating a largely shared sense of what, at least in principle, con-

stituted valid arguments.[5] Something important changes when philosophers develop conceptual tools and vocabulary that enable them to argue across party lines—to play the social game of "giving and asking for reasons" (in Robert Brandom's phrase) across the boundaries of specific traditions of inquiry. This made possible more fruitful debate among the different philosophical perspectives, which beginning particularly in this period developed their arguments in conversation with the claims and arguments of rival perspectives. When they thus anticipate and address the arguments of predecessors and contemporaries, writing the voices of interlocutors into their texts, the various schools of Indian philosophy quickly grow in subtlety and sophistication; philosophical problems virtually take on a life of their own when they are subjected to conceptual pressure, as they are when competing voices are pressing claims for their entailments.

This is not to say that "philosophical problems" are inevitably bound to work themselves out in the same way, regardless of the historical agents that happen to articulate them; it is only to agree with Robert Brandom that "we can talk about what still remains implicit in an explicit claim, namely, its inferential consequences. For in the context of a constellation of inferential practices, endorsing or committing oneself to one proposition . . . is implicitly endorsing or committing oneself to others which follow from it" (2000:18). With the refinement of a shared conceptual vocabulary for advancing arguments, then, it becomes possible for innumerable thinkers thus to work at showing what is entailed by any position—and, thus subjected to the pressure of dialectical scrutiny, philosophical positions quickly ramify in fruitful and interesting ways. Indeed, some would say that only at this period is there finally what can properly be called Indian philosophy.[6]

Among the key contributors to the refinement of Sanskritic philosophical grammar were the Buddhist thinkers Dignāga (c. 480–540 c.e.) and Dharmakīrti (c. 600–660 c.e.).[7] In his interesting and venturesome social history of "esoteric Buddhism," Ronald Davidson laments the influence of these figures, whom he characterizes as having led a "headlong rush into the Buddhist appropriation of epistemology" (Davidson 2002:102). In the course of his characterizing the context for the emergence of esoteric Buddhism as that of a Buddhist tradition "under duress," Davidson writes:

> Dignāga apparently could not verify the significance of the word of the Buddha simply by the standards of authenticity that had motivated Buddhists in the past. Because he was focused on the criteria that had been introduced by non-Buddhists, Dignāga came to vindicate the scriptures— and their forms of praxis—in light of commonly held Indian values, rather than verifying them through ideals such as dispassion, nirvana, and so forth. (2002:103)

Davidson further contends that Dignāga capitulated to the criteria of non-Buddhists in the hope of reversing the moral decline of Buddhism allegedly caused by the corrosive influence of Madhyamaka. Among the problematic aspects of this claim is the view of historical change in discursive traditions that it presupposes—a view according to which philosophical trends are causally related to specifiable sociohistorical trends. Although philosophical traditions develop, of course, in history, the view that we are entitled to inferences from specifiable social trends (as effects) to philosophical views (as the causes thereof) is much too deterministic.[8] As I suggested with reference to Brandom, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti can, like all philosophers, be seen to have effected their changes at least as much under the kind of strictly conceptual pressure that is natural to philosophical debate as under the pressure of such sociohistorical trends as Davidson contends.

Moreover, the balance of influence here is arguably in precisely the opposite direction; far from their simply "appropriating" (as Davidson suggests) the already constituted epistemological discourse of Brahmanical traditions, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti were instrumental in creating that discourse.[9] Dignāga's *Hetucakra* (Wheel of Reasons), for example, was an enormously influential account of the relations among the three terms of a validly formed inference, enumerating what Dignāga took to be all possible relations between any probative property (i.e., an inferential sign or "reason"), the property inferred therefrom, and the common locus of these properties.[10] This represents among the earliest attempts to state in formal terms what constitutes a valid inference, and Dignāga decisively shaped the course of Indian logic as thus presupposing a property-locus model.[11]

Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (Compendium of Reliable Warrants) was similarly influential in developing and deploying the language of *pramāṇaśāstra* (the discipline of reliable warrants), which conflates epistemological and logical discourse in ways that are virtually constitutive of later Indian philosophy.[12] Dignāga's text—which can and should be understood as naturally serving certain characteristically Buddhist commitments[13]—systematically canvasses the alternative deployment of common terms in all the important rival schools of Indian philosophy, thus exemplifying the new degree of intertraditional debate that I have suggested is a hallmark of mature Indian philosophy. Dignāga's influence was consolidated (if not eclipsed) by his "commentator" Dharmakīrti, whose *Pramāṇavārttika*—surely one of the most widely cited texts in the history of Indian philosophy—would go on to exercise considerable influence in Tibetan traditions of Buddhist philosophy.[14] The arguments of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti were engaged by Buddhist and Brahmanical philosophers alike for generations, and their characteristic approach is often taken (by traditional and modern interpreters alike) to be virtually co-extensive with "Buddhist philosophy."[15]

But, of course, the Brahmanical traditions of philosophy were not without their influential champions. Chief among these was Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (c. 620–680 c.e.), the progenitor of one of the two main trajectories of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā—arguably the most "orthodox" of the Brahmanical schools, constitutively concerned as it was with that portion of the Vedic corpus that particularly exalts Brahmins. According to one tradition of thought—rather antiquated, perhaps, but still alive among some Indian nationalists—the vanishing of Buddhism from India is to be attributed chiefly to the overwhelming dialectical successes of Kumārila and his near-contemporary Śaṅkara (fl. c. 710). Indeed, the Tibetan Buddhist historian Tāranātha generally corroborates the success of Kumārila, reporting a traditional view that Kumārila "defeated the disciples of Buddhapālita, Bhavya, Dharmadāsa, Dignāga and others" in debate (though he is not, of course, said to have defeated the named Buddhist luminaries themselves!)—and that the Buddhist Dharmakīrti therefore went in disguise to study with Kumārila, learning the secrets to his success and then besting him in debate, converting him and his followers to Buddhism.[16] As history, this view is surely as suspect as the view that Kumārila's dialectical successes brought about the demise of Indian Buddhism; nevertheless, this tradition confirms at least that Kumārila was a formidable philosophical opponent of his Buddhist counterparts—a view seldom much appreciated by modern scholars of Indian philosophy, who generally have not interpreted the epistemological contributions of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā very sympathetically.

Meanwhile, another Indian Buddhist thinker roughly contemporaneous with Dharmakīrti and Kumārila—the Mādhyamika philosopher Candrakīrti (fl. c. 600 c.e.)—seems not much to have influenced the subsequent course of Indian philosophy.[17] Candrakīrti significantly resurfaces, however, when his works are claimed by ascendant Tibetan traditions of Buddhism as uniquely authoritative—indeed, as advancing the definitive interpretation of Madhyamaka philosophy, which is almost unanimously thought by Tibetans to represent the pinnacle of Buddhist thought.[18] This fact has, in turn, been read back into much of the Indian historical record, by modern scholars whose primary (or at least initial) acquaintance with the Indian Buddhist philosophical tradition is through the Tibetan appropriations thereof.[19] Among other things, this has tended to obscure the extent of Candrakīrti's philosophical differences from his coreligionists Dignāga and Dharmakīrti;[20] it is characteristic of some of the most influential trajectories of Tibetan philosophical thought to wed Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka to the approach of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.[21] To the extent that we are interested in appreciating Candrakīrti's unique philosophical contribution, this is regrettable; Candrakīrti turns out to have been almost as strong a critic of Dignāga's philosophical project as was Kumārila, if on behalf of an altogether different agenda.

The subject of this book is the philosophical critiques of Dignāga that were ventured by Kumārila and Candrakīrti, and the foregoing thumbnail sketch introduces some of the thinkers that figure most prominently here. It is interesting to consider these critiques together not only because they represent something of the range of thought in classical Indian philosophy (even while being, alike, recognizably Indian) but because they are so different philosophically. Among the things to be appreciated from such a study, then, is the logically distinctive approaches that are exemplified within the broadly Sanskritic tradition of philosophical thought.

Part I argues that the philosophical trajectory initiated by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is aptly characterized as a version of empiricist foundationalism—an epistemology, that is, that particularly privileges perceptual cognition, which alone is thought to afford access to "really existent" things. Part II shows that such an approach threatens in particular the constitutively Mīmāṃsaka concern with the authority of Vedic injunctions—and that Kumārila and his interpreters mounted a cogent critique of epistemological presuppositions precisely like Dignāga's. Their alternative epistemology has particular affinities with the "reformed epistemology" of contemporary philosophers like William Alston and Alvin Plantinga, whose work provides a conceptually rich idiom for the elaboration and defense of the Mīmāṃsaka approach.

Part III considers an argument that, despite the resurgent interest in Candrakīrti generated by the current preoccupation with Tibetan Buddhism, is as underappreciated as those of the Mīmāṃsakas—specifically, a section of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* that (notwithstanding some Tibetan interpretations) should be understood as a critique of Dignāga in particular. Although Candrakīrti's argument, counterintuitively, has affinities with the Mīmāṃsaka arguments—specifically, sharing with the Mīmāṃsakas a characteristic deference to "conventional" intuitions about our epistemic experience—it nevertheless is to be understood not only as serving an altogether different agenda but also as representing a logically distinct kind of argument. I find it especially elucidating to characterize Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments—which means, among other things, that his arguments should be understood (in a sense detailed in Chapter 5) as a refutation of the constitutively epistemological approach of Dignāga and instead as exemplifying a constitutively metaphysical way of arguing. This characterization is meant to facilitate the understanding that Candrakīrti's arguments are not only logically distinct from Dignāga's (as also from Kumārila's) but—notwithstanding a great many modern interpretations of Madhyamaka—ventured in support of claims that are proposed as really true.

It is argued, as well—in contradiction to some prevalent modern interpretations—that the characteristically Mīmāṃsaka argument against the Buddhist foundationalists is compatible with what I characterize as a realist conception of

truth. It is widely accepted that Mīmāṃsaka epistemology represents a species of "naive" or "direct realism," crediting real existence to the objects disclosed in ordinary, precritical experience; but the Mīmāṃsaka account of justification, in particular, is often held to be viable only at the expense of settling for thinking merely that one's beliefs might be true. Counterintuitively, perhaps, this understanding of Mīmāṃsaka epistemology is advanced by those who translate the relevant Sanskrit texts as concerning the "intrinsically true" character of cognitions. I contend, however, that when the operative phrase (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*) is understood instead as concerning the intrinsic capacity of cognitions to confer *justification* (and thus rendered simply as "intrinsic validity"), the way is open to a realist conception of truth. But of course there is much more to it than that, and making the case for this claim will require a great deal of interpretive work on the texts of Kumārila and his commentators—specifically, on the texts of Uṃveka (fl. c. 710) and Pārthasārathimiśra (fl. c. 1075). The interpretation of the latter is both exegetically and philosophically most adequate to the arguments of Kumārila—showing which will involve the tools of both philology and philosophy.

My case for the proposed interpretation of Candrakīrti's arguments is in some ways more speculative than my engagement with the Mīmāṃsaka thinkers. This is perhaps the case in part to the extent that the idea of "transcendental arguments" is itself variously understood and contested. Surely, though, it is also because of the same features in virtue of which the Madhyamaka tradition of thought has long at once fascinated and baffled interpreters (traditional and modern); the texts of Nāgārjuna can seem alternately frustrating and pregnant with significance, and many would agree that the logic of his approach is elusive. Candrakīrti's texts are no different in this respect. The complexity and the persistent air of paradox go right to the core of the matter and crystallize around questions such as how we are to understand claims to the effect that one is making no claims. In this regard, at least, Madhyamaka clearly has affinities with the philosophy of ancient Hellenistic "Skepticism," the interpretive issues regarding which are often strikingly similar to the debates that preoccupy interpreters of Indian Madhyamaka.

My attempt to reconstruct Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments is guided chiefly by the view that Madhyamaka can (like Mīmāṃsā) be understood as compatible with a realist conception of truth—and by the belief, therefore, that Madhyamaka is best understood not as a species of "skepticism" (at least not on a widely prevalent understanding of the latter) but, rather, as making constitutively metaphysical arguments. If the reconstruction of Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga as deploying transcendental arguments at times seems a stretch, I think the proposed understanding nevertheless remains exegetically accountable to the texts of Candrakīrti—this is proposed, that is, as an inter-

pretation *of* Candrakīrti's texts.[22] I argue, then, that Candrakīrti's "own position contains the resources to reconstruct the justification [of the claims I take him to be making] . . . and that his own position can be better understood when it is [thus] reconstructed."[23]

It should already be clear from the foregoing that I regard the task of interpreting these various Sanskritic thinkers as, among other things, a philosophical one; that is, I understand the interpretation of these artifacts of Indian intellectual practice to involve understanding not only the Sanskrit utterances in which they are recorded but the logic and cogency of their arguments. Indeed, neither can finally be done without the other. Achieving a philosophical understanding of these texts is, then, a case study in the "hermeneutic circle"—in the sense that any act of interpretation necessarily involves a dialectical tacking between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the part and the whole. Thus, for example, anyone who has spent a significant period reading Sanskrit philosophical texts (or, indeed, the textual artifacts of any initially unfamiliar tradition of reasoning) will have had the experience of puzzling long over some recalcitrant passage, only to discover that what had seemed a grammatical difficulty turns out to have been a conceptual one—only to discover, that is, that one had all along "understood" what the sentence said, but had failed to see this insofar as its point remained obscure—with the point becoming clear only when the logic of the argument emerges.

More generally, even recognizing that one does not understand something, and that it therefore requires an effort at interpretation, is already to have understood something of it, to have recognized it as somehow unfamiliar. Any effort at interpretation must thus begin in terms of something with respect to which it is unfamiliar—the object of interpretation must, that is, be taken not as unfamiliar, *simpliciter,* but as an unfamiliar example of something relevantly similar, since otherwise there is no reason to desire understanding of it. And yet, properly interpreting the artifact in question is to allow the initial sense of familiarity to be called into question, to have one's initial sense of relevant concepts revised by what one learns about the object of interpretation.

Efforts at understanding are in this way necessarily dialectical: it is only because there are moments of interpretive clarity that further engagement is possible, while further engagement, in turn, can reveal that the initial clarity had been founded on misguided comparisons that are better abandoned. But the fact that one's initial points of comparison may thus be called into question does not mean it was wrong to have used them in the first place; our "preunderstandings" or "prejudices," as Gadamer called them, do not impede objective inquiry: they are part of what make it possible. My attempt to achieve the best rational reconstruction is, in part, simply a sound interpretive procedure—according to which, when trying to understand someone, we attribute the best

possible arguments to that person and accordingly assume that apparent failures in sense or coherence reflect our own failure to understand, rather than failings on his part.

This interpretive "principle of charity" is exemplified, in the service of a similarly venturesome rational reconstruction, by Jonathan Bennett (1984), who reconstructs Spinoza's doctrine of "substance monism" (i.e., the doctrine that there exists, in the final analysis, only one substance) in terms of the contemporary idea of a field metaphysic. Bennett is motivated in this respect by the desire to find Spinoza's thought interesting; Bennett is therefore concerned to attribute to Spinoza the best argument that he can—which involves, among other things, attempting to save Spinoza's argument wherever it appears to involve incoherence or contradiction. Thus, summarizing the advantages of the idea of a "field metaphysic" for understanding Spinoza, Bennett says that Spinoza's doctrine

> is doomed if it picks out some extended item from among the multitude: it must somehow pick out the totality of them. But there appears to be no way of doing that, while still maintaining that the one substance does not have "parts" in some damaging sense, except by supposing that that substance is not the whole assemblage of physical things but rather the one space which they occupy. And that seems to be Spinoza's view of the matter. (1984:103–104)

Here, then, what is striking is not only that Bennett has developed an understanding of Spinoza that makes the latter's counterintuitive and arcane doctrines seem at once interesting and relevant; also impressive is Bennett's eminently hermeneutic concern to keep from understanding Spinoza to have developed an argument that is "doomed."

The point of the exercise undertaken here is not to show that some Indian philosophers made arguments that happen to resemble arguments from William Alston, J. L. Austin, or Gottlob Frege; rather, the point is to use the works of these and other thinkers in order to understand the Indian texts, and the exercise is to be judged fruitful if the use to which they are put leads to the reframing of any interesting questions or to the characterization of arguments not sufficiently appreciated before. This point applies, moreover, with respect to all terms of the comparison. This, too, follows Gadamer; truly understanding these Indian philosophical works means that our own prejudices or preunderstandings have been changed by them. For example, in reconstructing Candrakīrti's arguments as transcendental arguments, it is reasonable to hope that we might learn something not only about Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka but also about the logic of transcendental arguments more generally. My concern to

develop philosophically viable reconstructions of these various arguments goes beyond the hope of arriving at a hermeneutically charitable reading; I also think that these Indian philosophical works can help clarify our thinking about, and make some novel contributions to, philosophical debates that are still very much alive today.

In developing generally sympathetic interpretations of the Mīmāṃsaka and the Mādhyamika arguments against Buddhist foundationalism, then, I hope to show that these are more worthy of serious consideration than they have yet received. I am interested, that is, in shifting attention to some of the other, fundamentally different, ways of thinking philosophically in India, and in characterizing these *as* different ways of thinking philosophically. I also hope more generally to advance a certain line of argument. Particularly when it comes to philosophical practices that are undertaken in relation to religious traditions, arguments will be understood very differently depending on whether one takes them to be proposed as demonstrating the truth of their claims (where that means something like "compelling the assent of all rational persons") or as showing only that the claims in question are justifiably believed.

Precisely by appreciating this distinction are we in the best position to describe the proponents of the arguments as rationally thinking their beliefs really *true.* That is, a realist conception of truth—which I regard as presupposed by the discursive and other social practices in which we all engage—virtually consists in the recognition that justification and truth are logically distinct. Understanding this makes it possible to affirm (with historians of religion) that the holding of all commitments is historically contingent and (to some extent) causally explicable; and (with would-be relativists) that many different (and even mutually exclusive) beliefs might alike be rationally held by their subjects— and yet to understand that many such beliefs are rationally regarded by their proponents to be really true (and, accordingly, to judge them false where they contradict the beliefs that we think really true).

The following explores how some of the arguments developed in India late in the first millennium can help us understand not only the commitments and reasoning of Buddhists and Brahmins but also our relationship to our own beliefs and those of others.
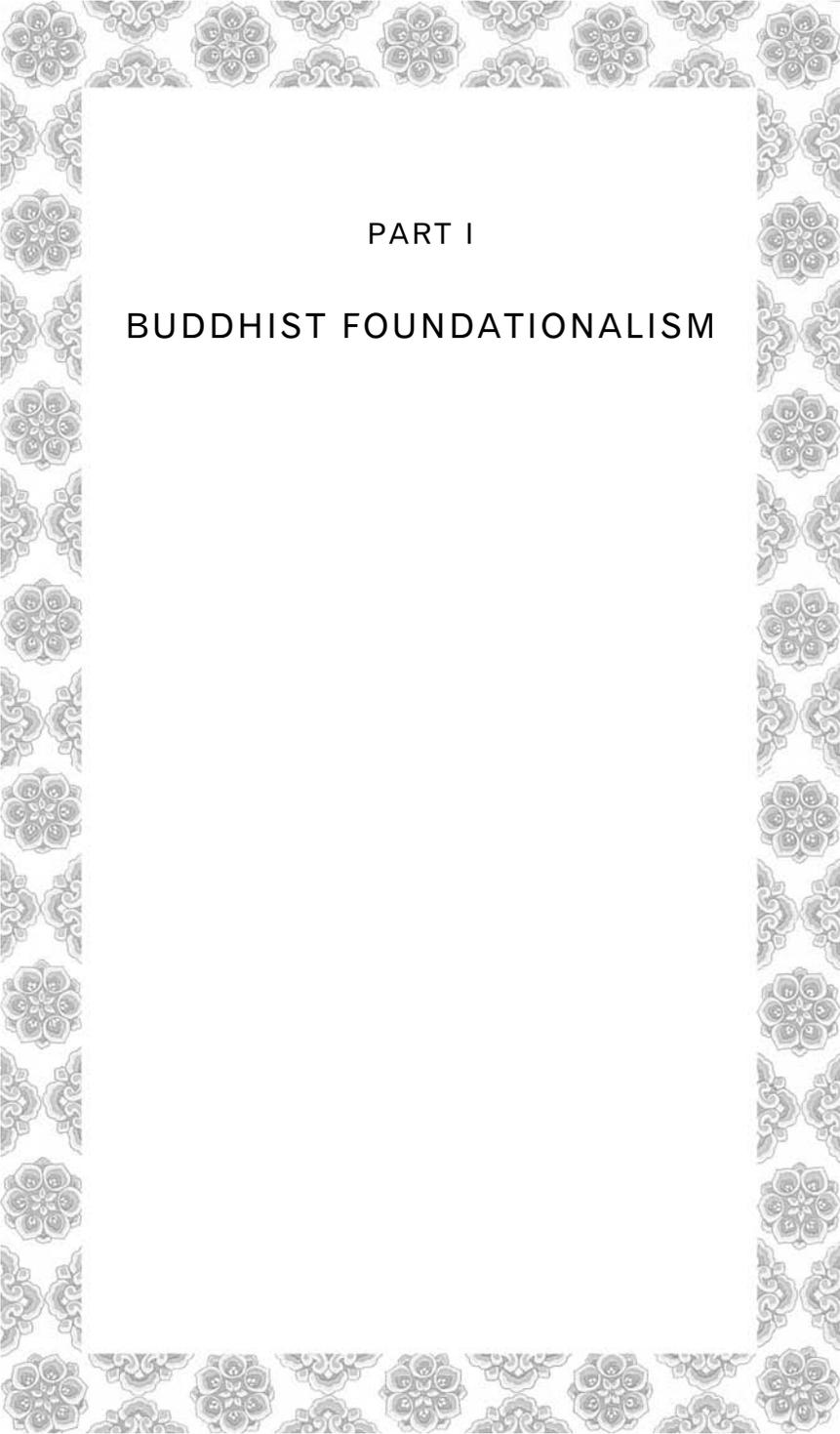
PART I

BUDDHIST FOUNDATIONALISM

Dignāga's Transformation
of Buddhist Abhidharma

The Context of Buddhist Foundationalism

The cardinal Buddhist tenet of *anātmavāda* (selflessness)—the claim that "persons" are causally continuous series of events, not enduring substances—is, as Buddhists recognized, profoundly counterintuitive; the phenomenological sense of personal identity is so compelling that (as Buddhists see it) deluded self-grasping represents an innate conviction that is uprooted only with considerable effort. Accordingly, Buddhist teachings were replete from the outset with attempts to explain how the phenomenological and other features of personhood could be possible in the absence of any substantial "person." This cause was advanced, in part, by the profuse proliferation of categories, with the five "aggregates" (*skandhas*) that are said to constitute any moment of experience representing, to the dismay of many budding students of Buddhism, only the tip of a veritable iceberg of different sets of psychophysical constituents. The earliest genre of more or less systematic Buddhist thought—that of Abhidharma literature—was concerned with the systematization and organization of these often prima facie divergent lists of categories.

There is a sense, then, in which the Abhidharma literature is aptly characterized as carrying on something like the project of ontology—as concerned, that is, with cataloguing what exists and explaining how what exists can account for such data of experience as any systematic philosophy must account for. For the Sanskritic traditions of Indian Buddhism, one of the touchstones in this genre is the *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu (fl. c. 360 C.E.), which consists in a verse portion (the *Abhidharmakośakārikās*) together with Vasubandhu's autocommentary (the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*). These two parts of the work are traditionally understood as carrying on a debate, with the verse portion reflecting the views of the so-called Vaibhāṣika school of Abhidharma and the commentary reflecting (Vasubandhu's own) Sautrāntika critique thereof. Following this traditional key to the interpretation of Vasubandhu's text, the Vaibhāṣikas may be characterized as ontologically promiscuous and the Sautrāntikas as ontologically

parsimonious. Throughout the course of Vasubandhu's massive work, as various Buddhist categories are introduced and considered, the Vaibhāṣikas characteristically assert (in conceptual terms discussed below) that they do belong in a final ontology; Vasubandhu the Sautrāntika invariably rejoins that, in fact, they do not belong there, inasmuch as they are reducible to those ontological primitives (here called *dharmas*) that alone can be said "ultimately" to exist.

Although it is not misleading to characterize the Abhidharma project as an ontological one, it might reasonably be asked whether Vasubandhu's work ought to be seen as an example of philosophical argument. Although this is not the place to take a position on whether such arguments warrant the normative descriptor "philosophical," it is important to note that the majority of Vasubandhu's arguments are essentially hermeneutical in character: Vasubandhu's arguments regarding how to reconcile the various lists of categories bequeathed by the Buddhist tradition typically take the form of arguments to the effect that his proposed allocation (and not his opponents') best squares with the traditionally transmitted utterances of the Buddha.

Whether or not we finally judge such argument forms as properly "philosophical," it is clear that the situation changes with Dignāga (sometimes written "Diṅnāga"). That Dignāga carried on basically Ābhidharmika intuitions is reflected not only in the traditional view that he was a disciple of Vasubandhu but also in the fact that Dignāga wrote a concise commentary on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*.[1] But Dignāga advanced this program in a fundamentally different way and, in so doing, decisively influenced the broader course of Indian philosophy. Specifically, Dignāga can be regarded as among the influential early exemplars of *pramāṇavāda* (discourse on reliable epistemic warrants)—a discourse that characteristically collapses what would be recognized by Western philosophers as the fields of logic and epistemology, though in such a way that the epistemological key predominates.

That these two fields should be conflated in Indian philosophy perhaps reflects J. N. Mohanty's observation that "the distinction, common in Western thought, between the causal question and the question of justification, was not made by the Indian theories" (2000:149). The aptness of Mohanty's observation is reflected in the fact that the Sanskrit word *hetu* (which means "cause," in the familiar sense of that word) also signifies, in philosophical discourse, the part of a formally stated inference that causes one to perform the stated inference— that is (one would now say), the reason. As discussed in part II, a widely shared presupposition of something like Mohanty's point has had the effect of occluding what I view as the chief insight behind the Mīmāṃsaka position under consideration. But Mohanty's observation has particular application to the tradition of epistemological thought initiated by Dignāga—and that, as suggested in the present work, is so much the worse for Dignāga and his followers.

Dignāga's decisive influence on Indian philosophy can scarcely be apprehended without some reference to Dharmakīrti, through whose commentarial reconstructions the basic points of Dignāga were transmitted to the broader tradition of Sanskritic philosophy (to such an extent that Dharmakīrti is the chief focus of later Indian philosophers). Among modern scholars, these two figures have been closely associated with one another ever since Th. Stcherbatsky's still useful study surveyed their works as exemplifying *Buddhist Logic,* the title of his 1932 work. Stcherbatsky, in turn, can be said to follow the lead of the Indo-Tibetan tradition, which similarly groups Dignāga and Dharmakīrti together as the paradigmatic exemplars of what the Tibetan polymath Bu-ston characterized as the "discipline of reasons" and what, in a doxographic vein, the Tibetan dGe-lugs-pa tradition (alluding to the origins of this trajectory of thought in the works of Vasubandhu) characterizes as the school of "Sautrāntikas who follow reasoning." This traditional association of the two finally reflects Dharmakīrti's own self-representation, according to which his most important works should be understood as commentaries on Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya,* which is the fountainhead for this trajectory of Buddhist thought—a trajectory of thought that I characterize as Buddhist foundationalism.[2]

Our survey of Buddhist foundationalism must, then, start with Dignāga's work, not only because this is where this tradition of thought begins but also because it is in the form of Dignāga's works that Buddhist foundationalism was known to the philosophers whose critiques constitute the subject of this book. According to the generally accepted relative chronology, the later figure of Dharmakīrti was roughly contemporaneous with both Kumārila and Candrakīrti. Thus, while Kumārila's commentators frequently refer to Dharmakīrti, Kumārila himself refers only to Dignāga,[3] and it will similarly become clear that Candrakīrti was acquainted with Dignāga's works but not with Dharmakīrti's.

Although an exegetical understanding of the critiques advanced by Kumārila and Candrakīrti requires attention to Dignāga in particular, this task presents significant interpretive difficulties. Unlike the case of Dharmakīrti (several of whose works survive in their original Sanskrit), Dignāga's works are currently available only in Tibetan translation. Moreover, in the case of the *Pramāṇa-samuccaya,* what survives are in fact two often divergent Tibetan translations, which reflects Richard Hayes's observation that the available translations "show signs of having been done by translators who were themselves not certain of the meanings of many passages in the original texts."[4] The available texts of Dignāga's works are thus more than usually indeterminate, and, to an even greater extent than is already the case for the characteristically elliptical works of Indian philosophers, a full understanding of Dignāga therefore requires recourse to his commentators. It is, then, not surprising that many modern scholars have followed Stcherbatsky's lead in reading Dignāga primarily through the lens of

Dharmakīrti, whose works are, after all, the earliest surviving "commentaries" on Dignāga.

Several scholars have, however, urged that Dharmakīrti is a commentator in name only and that his works in fact represent innovative departures from Dignāga's works. Radhika Herzberger has gone so far as to suggest that "Diṅnāga's thought is not encompassed by the greater depth of Dharmakīrti's, rather it is washed away by it."[5] More helpful in reading the *Pramāṇasamuccaya,* scholars such as Hayes believe, is the commentary of Jinendrabuddhi,[6] which hews more closely to Dignāga's text than does Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika.*[7] But not only does Jinendrabuddhi's commentary survive only in Tibetan translation; it is also the case that Jinendrabuddhi (800–850) postdates Dharmakīrti, so *Jinendrabuddhi* himself tends to read Dignāga through the lens of Dharmakīrti.[8]

With respect to the conceptual issues that are relevant here, it is not necessary to definitively disentangle Dignāga's contributions from Dharmakīrti's. My main philosophical contention is that the philosophical problems with Dignāga's project are just that: *philosophical* problems, that is, problems that arise for his approach in principle. Specifically, they are problems that arise because of the extent to which the trajectory of thought initiated by Dignāga remains wedded to a fundamentally causal account of knowledge and justification—which is the main feature in virtue of which it is apt to characterize this trajectory of thought as a variety of empiricist foundationalism. Thus, what chiefly characterizes this type of foundationalism is the conflation (noted by Mohanty) of causal explanation with the question of justification—of the question of how one comes to believe something, with the normative question of why one should believe it. As discussed below, the conflation of these amounts to an epistemic notion of truth—which is not the idea of truth that is presupposed in ordinary discourse.

The conceptual unfolding of this tradition of thought represents an ongoing attempt to resolve the tensions characterized here, while remaining within the basic parameters laid down by Dignāga. It may be that Dharmakīrti sharpens some of the distinctions first made by Dignāga and, in so doing, lays bare the problems that follow therefrom. And it is certainly the case that such later commentators as Dharmottara (c. 740–800) identified the problems noted here (and, in so doing, revised Dharmakīrti in conceptually significant ways). But even such significant revisions as were effected by Dharmottara emerge within what is recognizably the same trajectory of thought.

The philosophical trajectory of Buddhist foundationalism is thus characterized specifically so as to anticipate the Mīmāṃsaka and Mādhyamika critiques thereof that are the chief concern of this book—and the Mīmāṃsakas and the Mādhyamikas have reasons for thinking that trajectory of thought in principle problematic. From the perspective of these critics, the differences between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti do not significantly change this program of thought. To

the extent that the Mīmāṃsaka and Mādhyamika critiques can (in their logi-
cally distinct ways) be shown to hit their target, the entire trajectory of thought
initiated by Dignāga can be called into question.

Engaging these critiques of Buddhist foundationalism requires some under-
standing of what are, for Dignāga and Dharmakīrti alike, the closely correlated
notions of "perception" (*pratyakṣa*) and (as rendered here when these thinkers
are referring to it) "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇa*). One thing that character-
izes both thinkers is the fact of their having espoused a peculiarly parsimonious
ontology, to which corresponds a commensurately parsimonious epistemology.
For both thinkers, *svalakṣaṇas* represent one of the only two kinds of things that
exist (the other being *sāmānyalakṣaṇas* [abstractions]) and the only ontological
primitives, the only kind of thing that *ultimately* exists; and both understand
these as the unique objects of the epistemic faculty of perception, which is
admitted as one of only two *pramāṇas* (reliable warrants). In order to elaborate
Dignāga's often indeterminate statement of the program, I refer to Dharmakīrti
and Dharmottara, both of whom clarify, in different ways, the basic conceptual
contours of Dignāga's thought.

It is useful to begin with a look at the basically Ābhidharmika intuitions that
Dignāga advances—not only to appreciate the difference it makes for Dignāga
to transpose those arguments into an epistemological key but also to provide
some of the background particularly relevant to understanding the Mādhya-
mika critique, because Candrakīrti's problem with Dignāga is directly related to
the latter's exemplifying a specifically *Ābhidharmika* version of Buddhism. Let
us see particularly how Dignāga's category of *svalakṣaṇa* at once carries on and
transforms the ontological project of Vasubandhu.

Svalakṣaṇas in Abhidharma: "Defining Characteristics" in a Basic Ontology

According to standard Ābhidharmika systematizations of the many lists of cat-
egories posited in the development of the Buddhist doctrine of "selflessness,"
dharmas are those ultimately (though fleetingly) existent elements that alone
survive characteristically Buddhist reductionist analysis; *dharmas* are, in other
words, the elements to which existents (paradigmatically, persons) can be
reduced. A standard enumeration of these can be gleaned from Vasubandhu's
Abhidharmakośa. In the course of his largely hermeneutical arguments regard-
ing how to reconcile the many different category sets (*skandhas, dhātus, āyata-
nas,* etc.) transmitted by the Buddhist tradition, Vasubandhu enumerates some
seventy-five *dharmas* that constitute the ontological primitives upon which all
other, derivative existents are supervenient.[9]

The conceptual terms that recommend understanding Vasubandhu's enumeration as an exercise in basic ontology are in play in one of the most prominently recurrent debates between the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika perspectives represented in his text. The intuition that reductionist analysis can yield ontological primitives is here advanced in terms of a debate regarding what is *dravyasat* and what is *prajñaptisat*—that is, regarding, respectively, what "exists as a substance" and "what exists as a *prajñapti*."[10] Paul Williams, following Franz Brentano, renders these as (respectively) primary and secondary existence[11] and emphasizes that what is at stake here is not so much what exists, as *how* it exists. Thus, things that exist as *prajñapti* are invariably reducible to things that exist as ontological primitives (*dravyasat*); the latter, in turn, are defined by their irreducibility.

In Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa,* the most prominently recurrent debate concerns the question of precisely which things are to be admitted as being *dravyasat* (substantially existent). This debate is alluded to above in the characterization of the Vaibhāṣikas as "ontologically promiscuous" and the Sautrāntikas as "ontologically parsimonious." In the course of Vasubandhu's cataloguing of the Buddhist tradition's numerous category sets, the Vaibhāṣikas characteristically assert that these categories exist *dravyatas* (substantially) and the Sautrāntikas invariably rejoin that, in fact, they only exist *prajñaptitas* ("derivatively" or "superveniently," we might say).[12]

Vasubandhu's table of seventy-five *dharmas* represents something like a "basic ontology," a list of those ontological primitives to which all other existents can be reduced. Note, however, that this is not to say that only seventy-five unique particulars exist; rather, Vasubandhu has delineated seventy-five *categories* of ontological primitives—types of which there can be, presumably, innumerable tokens. That this is so is clarified by the notion of *svalakṣaṇa* that figures in Vasubandhu's text. In the *Abhidharmakośa,* the Sanskrit word *svalakṣaṇa* retains its widely attested sense of "defining characteristic" or "defining property"—that is, the "characteristic" (*lakṣaṇa*) that is, as the reflexive prefix *sva-* suggests, "unique" or "proper" to its bearer. Indeed, Vasubandhu explains, in a characteristically Sanskritic appeal to etymology, that *dharmas* (literally, "bearers") are so called "because they bear (√*dhṛ*) *svalakṣaṇas.*"[13] That is, what distinguishes something as exemplifying one of the seventy-five categories of ontological primitives (one of the *dharmas*) is the fact of its sharing the same defining characteristic that is common to all tokens of the type that is that *dharma.*

The *svalakṣaṇas* thus borne by *dharmas,* then, are *properties.* That is, this discourse speaks of *dharmas* as the irreducible remainder of reductionist analysis and speaks of these, in turn, as individuated or characterized by the defining properties that belong to them—as, for example, perceptual cognition (*vijñāna*) is definitively characterized by the property of being a "specific repre-

sentation of an object" (*viṣayaprativijñapti*) or as earth (*pṛthivī*) is definitively characterized by the property of "hardness" or "resistance" (*khara* or *kāṭhinya*).[14] There is an important sense in which the *svalakṣaṇas* in virtue of which *dharmas* qualify as such are, in fact, universals or abstractions; for example, the property of "being a specific representation of an object" is something that belongs to (and definitively characterizes) every instance of perceptual cognition—characterizes each, that is, as a token of the type of thing that belongs in a final ontology. The abstract nature of such "defining characteristics" figures particularly prominently in Sarvāstivādin arguments for the existential status of past and future moments of time. As Collett Cox explains,

> The term "intrinsic nature" [*svalakṣaṇa*] does not indicate a factor's [i.e., *dharma*'s] temporal status, but rather refers to its atemporal underlying and defining nature. Intrinsic nature thus determines the atemporal, existential status of a factor as a real entity (*dravya*). Nevertheless, it is precisely in this sense of intrinsic nature that factors can be said to exist at all times (*svabhāvaḥ sarvadā cāsti*); intrinsic nature, as the particular inherent characteristic, pertains to or defines a factor in the past, present, and future, regardless of its temporal status. (1995:139)

But even for Sautrāntikas who, following Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam,* reject this specifically temporal application of the point, it is nevertheless the case that the *svalakṣaṇas* that individuate existents as belonging to one or another dharmic category are fundamentally abstract. This is among the salient points that is transformed by Dignāga's use of the term.

Vasubandhu's talk of "defining characteristics" is, in turn, inflected by the more specifically ontological notion of *svabhāva*—which is not misleadingly rendered, according to translation equivalents that are preferable to the ungainly neologisms of "Buddhist hybrid English," as "intrinsic nature" or "essence."[15] That the notion of "defining properties" should be conflated with the more explicitly ontological idea of "essence" should not surprise readers primarily acquainted with the vicissitudes of the word "essence" in Western philosophy; as Michael Loux explains, "Aristotle's notion of an essence just is the notion of the ontological correlate of a definition" (1995:241). In a similar vein, Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam,* in the course of discussing the practice of "cultivating the foundations of mindfulness" (*smṛtyupasthānabhāvanā*), comments with regard to the various phenomena to be contemplated in this meditation: "Their defining characteristic is just their essence."[16]

The parallel with Aristotelian "essences" can not misleadingly be pressed a little further. Thus, Loux continues: "The term in [Aristotle's] writings we translate as 'essence' is the expression *to ti ein einai* (the what it is to be). Typically,

the expression is followed by a substantival expression in the dative case, so that the expressions denoting essences are phrases like 'the what it is to be for a horse' and 'the what it is to be for an oak tree.'"[17] Such expressions turn out to have a close parallel in the Sanskrit grammarians' conventional gloss of the Sanskrit abstractive suffixes *-tā* and *-tva,* which may be affixed to all manner of nominal forms (yielding terms that are often translated using English suffixes like "-ness," "-hood," etc.). Following the grammarian Pāṇini's explanation of these affixes, commentators typically gloss compounds ending in these suffixes with the expression *tasya bhāva* ("the state of that" or "its being [*x*]").[18] The fact that this conventional gloss thus echoes the word *svabhāva* is no coincidence; this is clear from Vasubandhu's commentator Yaśomitra, whose commentary on the passage adduced just above says: "What is essence [*svabhāva*]? The body's is *being made of the coarse elements,* feeling's is *being an experience,* thought's is *being an apprehension.*"[19] The *svabhāva* of a thing, then, is simply its being as it is. Much as for Aristotle, then, the "essence" of something here is the abstract state of its being defined as it is (having the *svalakṣaṇa* that it does)—which again reflects the fundamentally abstract character of *svalakṣaṇas* in this discourse.

To be sure, Vasubandhu's discussion of a certain meditative practice here attributes *svabhāva* to phenomena (the body, the aggregate of "feeling") that are not allowed by him to qualify as among the seventy-five *dharmas* of his basic ontology. But when it is *dharmas* whose essence-*cum*-defining-characteristic is under consideration, these abstract states of affairs are precisely what qualify *dharmas* as ontologically basic. As Cox explains,

> Intrinsic nature [*svabhāva*] not only provides the basis for a factor's abstract classification but also functions as the determinant of its existential status: any factor characterized by intrinsic nature is determined to actually exist as a real entity [*dravya*]; all other experienced phenomena exist as aggregations of these real entities and, as aggregations, are said to exist only provisionally [*prajñapti*]. Thus, the fivefold taxonomy of seventy-five factors represents a definitive list of all possible categories of entities recognized to exist as real entities.[20]

Thus, the defining characteristics (*svalakṣaṇa*) in virtue of which things can be examples of a *dharma* (that is, in virtue of "bearing" which Vasubandhu takes *dharmas* to be so called) serve to individuate Vasubandhu's seventy-five *dharmas* as properly irreducible. To bear the abstract "defining characteristic" or "essence" of a *dharma* is to be a token of a type that qualifies for inclusion in the basic ontology of Vasubandhu's Abhidharma.

The reason it matters so much, for Vasubandhu and other Buddhists, which

categories are so included is that this amounts to the enumeration of the set of all things that are "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*), while the set of macro-objects that can be reduced to these (and, of course, Buddhists are always chiefly concerned here with selves) constitute the set of things that are "conventionally existent" (*saṃvṛtisat*). I refer here to the characteristically Buddhist idea of "two truths," which is almost as old as the doctrine of selflessness itself. It stands to reason, given the counterintuitive nature of the basic idea of selflessness, that something like this idea would develop. Not only does the phenomenological sense of personal continuity seem prima facie incompatible with this basic thesis, but so, too, do many seemingly unavoidable features of language and interpersonal relations. That is, it is difficult finally to eliminate all reference to "selves." One of the moves that allows such reference to be retained, without compromising the claim that there is no real referent to the term, is to argue that there are reasons why such terms are conventionally or pragmatically useful (this is one level of description, or "truth"), but without their picking out anything ultimately real (with talk of what is "ultimately real" thus representing the other level of description).

The whole corpus of Abhidharma literature represents one way of elaborating this. As Rupert Gethin aptly says with regard to the systematizing project of this approach, "What is distinctive about the Abhidharma is that it is an attempt to give a comprehensive statement of the Buddha's teachings exclusively in ultimate terms."[21] On the characteristically Ābhidharmika view, then, the "two truths" can be said to consist in two sets of enumerable entities: the *saṃvṛtisat* (conventionally existent) is the set of all things that are reducible, by way of critical analysis, to what is ultimately real, while the *paramārthasat* (ultimately existent) is the set of irreducible ontological primitives.[22] This is usefully considered in terms of a contemporary idea associated with philosophers of the "critical realist" persuasion: What is conventionally real is things as they are ordinarily experienced, while what is ultimately real is things as they are under a scientific description.[23]

This idea that the "two truths" consist in two enumerable sets of entities is reflected in an often-quoted passage from Vasubandhu:

> There are also two truths, conventional truth and ultimate truth. What are the characteristics of these two? . . . The conventionally true is that with respect to which the concept does not arise when it is broken into parts, as for example a jar; for with respect to that, when it is broken into pieces, the idea of a jar does not arise. And that with respect to which, having excluded other *dharmas* by way of the intellect, the idea does not arise—that, too, should be known as conventionally true, as for example water; for with respect to that, having excluded, through the intellect, other *dharmas* such

as form, the idea of water does not arise. Everything else is ultimately true; with respect to this, even when broken, the idea still arises, even when other *dharmas* are excluded by way of the intellect—that is ultimately true, as for example, form.[24]

Cox elaborates:

> If the notion of a particular entity disappears when that entity is broken (e.g., a pot) or can be resolved by cognition into its components (e.g., water), that entity exists only conventionally. Entities that are not subject either to this further material or mental analysis exist absolutely. Thus, actual existence as a real entity (*dravyasat*) is attributed only to the ultimate constituent factors, which are not subject to further analysis.[25]

As an example of the latter, Vasubandhu has here adduced "form" (*rūpa*)—that is, the first of the five *skandhas*.[26]

According to the basic ontology to be gleaned from Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa,* there are thus two fundamentally different kinds of things: those that, insofar as they are (physically or analytically) reducible to more basic parts, should be judged to have merely "conventional" or "derivative" existence; and those more basic (because they are irreducible) parts to which the former can be reduced, which alone represent the set of "ultimately existent" things. The latter are *dharmas* and are individuated by their uniquely "defining characteristics" (*svalakṣaṇa*)—with their being (*tasya bhāva*) so defined said also to constitute their "essence" (*svabhāva*). But although these defining characteristics serve to individuate concrete and (given the Ābhidharmika view of impermanence) momentary tokens of the type *dharma,* the definitions themselves are abstractions, each delineating a *type* of such unique and momentary events.

Svalakṣaṇas in Dignāga's Epistemology: From "Defining Characteristics" to "Unique Particulars"

That important parts of the foregoing represent the basic set of intuitions inherited by Dignāga is perhaps most clear in Dignāga's *Ālambanaparīkṣā* (Examination of Intentional Objects). In this short text, Dignāga argues that cognition can be explained satisfactorily if we posit mental phenomena as the "objects" intended thereby—and, indeed, that we cannot coherently posit any nonmental, external objects as what is directly intended by cognition. The latter is true, for Dignāga, insofar as any account of external objects necessarily presupposes some version of minimal part atomism, which Dignāga argues

cannot be adduced coherently to explain our cognition of macro-objects. Dignāga's argument here clearly owes something to Vasubandhu's later Yogācāra work, the *Viṃśatikā*.[27] As with the latter work, there is considerable scholarly disagreement over whether Dignāga is best understood as arguing here for an idealist metaphysics or simply for something like a representationalist epistemology involving sense-data (which allows the possibility of bracketing the question of what might finally exist in the world).[28]

Nevertheless, what is most relevant here is a clear allusion by Dignāga to the passage from Vasubandhu (considered above) on the "two truths."[29] Arguing that there is an unbridgeable gap between atoms as the putative cause of cognition and medium-sized dry goods as the content thereof, Dignāga says: "Things like jars are [merely] conventionally existent, *because if the atoms are removed, the cognition that appears with respect to them is destroyed.* In the case of what is substantially existent, such as color, even when one has taken away what is connected with it, there is no removal of the cognition of the color itself."[30] Like Vasubandhu, Dignāga thus argues that what qualifies medium-sized dry goods (of which jars are a standard Indian example) as merely "conventionally existent" (*saṃvṛtisat*) is the fact of their being reducible, while the constituent aspects to which they can be reduced (such as "color") in turn exist "substantially" (*rdzas su*; Skt., *dravyataḥ*).[31] In the *Pramāṇasamuccaya,* Dignāga alludes to the same discussion, this time explicitly putting the issue in terms of what is "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*). Thus, arguing that a cognition cannot properly be named after the object that produces it, Dignāga says: "These individual [atoms], when aggregated, are the cause [of cognition], but it is not the aggregate [itself that is causally efficacious], since this exists only conventionally. . . . *if [a cognition be produced] from an object, that [object] must be [a real entity, and what is real is] ultimately unnamable.*"[32]

The specifically ontological point that Dignāga thus retains the basically Ābhidharmika notion of the "two truths" is clearly evident here. Let us, however, leave that point for the moment. Dignāga's text here affords an opportunity for elaborating the basically epistemological way in which Dignāga advances these ontological commitments. With regard to the text just adduced, one might ask: why must it be the case that a "real" entity is ultimately "unnamable"? And how does this relate to the question of causal efficacy, such that it is precisely a cognition's being produced from an object that entails its being unnamable?

The whole trajectory of thought initiated by Dignāga can be reconstructed by answering these questions. The approach is to argue that only those cognitions that can be known to have been caused by their objects (that are, as it were, constrained by something actually existent) can be judged inerrant—and, insofar as only "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*) things are causally efficacious, for a cognition thus to have been caused just is for it to stand in

demonstrable relation to what is ultimately the case (*paramārthasatya*). It then stands to reason that these truly existent causes of cognition are not themselves the referents of language (hence, "unnamable"); words, in order to be applicable in innumerable cases, necessarily designate relatively invariant types of things. It is constitutive of discursive thought not to remain constrained by specifiable causes.

Accordingly, Dignāga's specifically epistemological point is that there is a particular kind of cognition (viz., *pratyakṣa* [perception]) that is constitutively nonlinguistic and that therefore yields cognitions that are formed only by their causal interactions with unique particulars, and not by any unconstrained discursive activity. Dignāga begins his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* by asserting:

> Perception and inference are reliable warrants. There are only two, since *there are [only] two [kinds of] warrantable objects;* there is nothing warrantable other than *svalakṣaṇas* and abstractions. It is perception that has *svalakṣaṇas* as its objects, and inference that has abstractions as its objects.[33]

As for the "sphere of operation" (*gocara*) of the perceptive senses (*indriya*), Dignāga explains that it is the "indefinable form which is to be known in itself."[34] Later on, in contesting the Naiyāyika account of perception (according to which perceptual cognition is itself *avyapadeśya* [indefinable]),[35] Dignāga claims that this qualification is unnecessary because it is redundant: "It is not possible that a definable object be the object of a sense-cognition, since what is definable is [always] the object of inference. [Therefore,] there is no [possibility of a sense-cognition's] variance in regard to indefinability."[36]

Just what does it mean for *svalakṣaṇas* thus to be "indefinable"? Dignāga's account is indeterminate here, and the proper interpretation of his point is debatable. There is, in particular, some question as to whether Dharmakīrti represents a useful guide to the interpretation of Dignāga; among the concerns of those who press that issue is the question of whether Dignāga understood *svalakṣaṇas* in the way that Dharmakīrti does. The persistent view that he did, Richard Hayes suggests, is attributable to the influence of Stcherbatsky, who, reading Dignāga through the lens of Dharmakīrti, first "imputed" to Dignāga "the view of particulars as point-instances, which amounts to a commitment to a doctrine of radical momentariness (*kṣaṇikavāda*)."[37] What Hayes resists in particular is the idea that Dignāga understood *svalakṣaṇas* (as, he suggests, Dharmakīrti did) as something like the vanishingly small "atoms" of reality[38]—against which, one might want to view Dignāga as referring simply to any of the concrete particulars encountered in ordinary experience, insofar as even such macro-objects as jars are, when considered individually, irreducibly unique.

Dignāga's laconic characterization of *svalakṣaṇas* (as uncharacterizeable!) can, however, be reconstructed as advancing basically the same point that is at stake for Dharmakīrti. What is commonly at stake is best understood as a chiefly epistemological point, such that the question of the ontological status of *svalakṣaṇas* becomes largely secondary. Thus, the main philosophical work performed by the notion of *svalakṣaṇas* that is common to Dignāga and Dharmakīrti involves a basically representationalist epistemology. On this reading, the only "unique particulars" that can be the direct objects of knowledge are (as Dignāga had argued in his *Ālambanaparīkṣā*) finally something like internal sense-data—mental events (such as "representations") our acquaintance with which is uniquely immediate. What is philosophically problematic in this approach is the idea (again, largely independent of the ontological status of *svalakṣaṇas*) that there is an epistemic faculty that affords unmediated access to "unique particulars"—whose uniqueness means they are altogether uninterpreted.[39]

What is certainly clear from Dignāga's work alone is his insistence that *svalakṣaṇas* are uniquely the objects of perception—and correspondingly, his emphatic and recurrent insistence on the fact that perception (*pratyakṣa*) is definitively characterized by its being "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍha*). "*Perception is free from conceptual elaboration;* that cognition which is without conceptual elaboration is perception. And what is this which is called 'conceptual elaboration'? *Association with name, genus, etc.*"[40] The basic idea is that a bare perceptual event is constitutively nonlinguistic, with the subsequent addition of linguistic interpretation representing, among other things, the point at which cognitive error creeps in.

To be sure, the degree of error thus introduced is not always sufficient to render the results useless; indeed, some interpretation is necessary for extrapolating from perceptual cognitions to more general conclusions. For example, Dignāga exemplifies the steps of the inferential process in this way: "One [initially] apprehends the unique particular, which does not figure in conventional discourse (*tha snyad du bya ba ma yin*; Skt., **avyavahārtavyasvalakṣaṇāni*), and the abstraction 'being colored.' Then, by means of the operation of the mind, one relates [being colored] to [the universal] impermanence, and expresses [the resulting cognition in the judgment] 'colored things and so forth are impermanent.'"[41]

Although discursive elaboration in terms of abstractions is indispensable for the development of propositional knowledge, it is nevertheless the case that a part of Buddhism's "deep grammar" is the idea that our cognitive and soteriological defilements are adventitious to our basic epistemic faculties, such that the removal of these defilements would leave untrammeled perception free to register things as they really are.[42] And if discursive elaboration of our basic per-

cepts is necessary to yield propositional knowledge, it is also in some ways precisely the problem to be overcome by Buddhist practice. This epistemological point can, as we should expect, be understood to relate quite closely to the constitutive Buddhist concern with the doctrine of *anātmavāda* (selflessness); for Buddhists, the *self* always remains the prime example of a conceptually projected abstraction whose unreality we should recognize.

The most basic point of this specifically epistemological project therefore is finally to ensure that a "self"—and anything that does similar conceptual work—cannot be a proper object of knowledge but must, instead, be a misguided projection.[43] Conversely, the point is to ensure that all that *can* be a proper object of knowledge is those evanescent sensory events that we habitually misidentify as constituting our "selves." Dignāga advances this cause by identifying a particular epistemic faculty (viz., perception) that can, by the very fact of its occurring—because a perceptual cognition can, by definition, be produced only by something really existent—guarantee the ultimate reality of its object. To be perceived, in this view, is to be real.[44] And, given the episodic character of perceptions, only momentary events can thus count as "real."

That intuitions like these are in play is made clearer by Dharmakīrti, who revises Dignāga's account by adding that perception is not only "free of conceptual elaboration," but also "non-mistaken."[45] In this way, "conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanā*) is specifically implicated as the point in the cognitive process at which error enters in—and this because conceptual elaboration is not, as perception is, constrained by actually present causes. Moreover, Dharmakīrti also revises Dignāga's contention that conceptualization involves "association with name, genus, etc.," adding a significant (and illuminating) clarification: conceptualization need not involve any explicit reference to "name, genus, etc."; rather, it involves simply any idea that is suitable (*yogya*) for association with discourse.[46] With this emphasis, Dharmakīrti means to allow that conceptual activity is something that can be (and is in fact) found even in such pre- and nonlinguistic creatures as infants and animals—who must also be thought to be cognitively and soteriologically misled in the ways that appeal to "conceptual elaboration" is here meant to explain.[47]

Dharmakīrti's commentator Dharmottara fleshes out the picture on offer here, in the course of explaining how we can meaningfully distinguish those cognitions that are merely "suitable" for conjunction with discourse, from those that are actually expressed linguistically:

> If it is asked how there is ascertainment of suitability [for connection with words] when there is no [actual] mingling with discourse, [we answer:] because of [the cognition's] being one whose appearance is not constrained—and [its] being one whose appearance is not constrained is because of the

lack of a cause of constraint of the appearance. For an apprehendable ob-
ject producing a cognition can make it [one whose] appearance is con-
strained, in the way that form, producing a visual cognition, produces [a
cognition] whose appearance is constrained. But a conceptual cognition is
not produced from an object; hence, because of its lacking a cause of any
constraint on the appearance, [such a cognition is one] whose appearance
is unconstrained.[48]

Dharmottara here explicitly elaborates on the sense in which perceptual cogni-
tions are uniquely "constrained" (*niyata*)—because caused—by their objects,
with perceptual cognitions having a privileged status in virtue of their being
uniquely in direct (causal) contact with really existent things.[49]

Dharmakīrti's revision, as elaborated here by Dharmottara, has the effect of
clarifying that perceptual and inferential cognitions are distinguished by their
phenomenological content; for what appears to a perceptual cognition just is
the object that gives rise to it, whereas the phenomenological content of an
inferential cognition is any abstraction such as is "suitable for association with
discourse."[50] Dharmakīrti's revision here thus suggests that any abstract object
of knowledge—which is to say, any phenomenological content whose generic
character recurs in various contexts (like the image of a fire that appears to the
mind's eye whenever one hears the word "fire")—is, ipso facto, the kind of
thing that can serve as the referent of a word. What is unsuitable for association
with discourse, therefore, is unique particulars, insofar as it can (if language is
to function) never be, say, just *this* particular book that is picked out by the
word "book."[51]

In the view proposed by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, when one has a bare, per-
ceptual cognition of (say) a book, that cognition is a function of (because
caused by) nothing other than the uniquely particular object now before the
subject, who has no control over how the object presents itself;[52] the cognition
"that's a book," on the other hand, inevitably occludes that particularity by im-
porting a set of properties associated with the type of thing of which this par-
ticular object is now just a token. This claim that the two different kinds of cog-
nitions thus differ in their phenomenological content is tantamount to the
claim that perceptual cognitions are uniquely warranted. The phenomenologi-
cal content of a perceptual cognition, uniquely, is the same object that causes
it—which just is to say that the phenomenological content of such a cognition
represents its object as it really is.

An inferential cognition, in contrast, is one whose phenomenological con-
tent necessarily differs from the unique objects that alone are what really exist;
what distinguishes the phenomenological content of an inferential cognition is
its equal applicability to any number of examples. This, finally, is the point

advanced by Dignāga's claim, in the *Pramāṇasamuccaya,* that unique particulars are defined only by their being "indefinable" (*avyapadeśya*).[53] This commitment is both the hallmark of and the problem with empiricist foundationalism; it is the uniquely warranted (because uniquely caused) status of perception that affords it a foundational role in the epistemic process—but the impossibility of a perception's yielding any propositional content is, at the same time, arguably tantamount to the impossibility of its constituting knowledge.

At this point, let us summarize the trend of this epistemological line of argument and appreciate the transformation of the term *svalakṣaṇa* initiated by Dignāga (and the question of whether that is in turn transformed by Dharmakīrti), by recurring to the ontological question with which this survey began: that of this tradition's retaining a basically Ābhidharmika understanding of the "two truths." We can do so by quoting Dharmakīrti, who succinctly expresses the program surveyed above vis-à-vis the category of pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyā*): "Whatever has the capacity for pragmatic efficacy is said in this context to be ultimately existent; everything else is conventionally existent. These two [sets consist, respectively, in] unique particulars and abstractions."[54]

We can here see clearly—as we did in the first passage discussed from Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*[55]—that this foundationalist trajectory of Buddhist philosophy retains the basic intuition underlying Vasubandhu's approach: the idea that there are two fundamentally different kinds of things (the reducible and the ontologically basic) and that the "two truths" (or, emphasizing *sat* rather than *satya,* two kinds of existents) should be understood as consisting of two sets of enumerable entities. Now, however, it is not *dharmas* that are said to constitute the set of "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*) phenomena, but *svalakṣaṇas.* And where Vasubandhu had (in keeping with the conventional sense of the Sanskrit word) understood *svalakṣaṇas* as definitions individuating *dharmas* as *categories, svalakṣaṇas* are now viewed as the unique, discrete phenomena that are the direct objects of perceptual cognition—such that *svalakṣaṇas* here would correspond to what had been, for Vasubandhu, the potentially innumerable tokens of the type *dharma.* These ontological primitives are, moreover, here defined particularly by their being causally efficacious—which means (in terms of the epistemological concerns of this program) by their capacity in particular to cause perceptual cognitions.

What has changed, in terms of the ontological commitments, is that there are not (as there were for Vasubandhu) seventy-five different *types* of ultimately real phenomena; rather, there is now only one type, and the tokens of that type are "defined" precisely and only by their not admitting of any "definition," any direct relation with (as referents of) language. Dharmakīrti's commentator Manorathanandin (fl. c. 950), sketching a key list of the conceptually related terms underlying this project (and indexing it to a view of the two truths such

as Vasubandhu's), clarifies how this view of the irreducible particularity of ontological primitives relates to the question of language.

> Thus, the ultimately real is that which is unique, not an object of language, [that with respect to which] there is no cognition when there is the presence of other causes [i.e., causes other than the unique particular itself].[56] What is other than this, without capacity, similar [across various instances], and the object of an idea when there is the presence of other causes [i.e., such as a word and its conventional association]—that is said to be conventionally real, owing to its being customary as mere imagining.[57]

In other words, what defines an ontologically basic phenomenon is its unique capacity to produce a cognition under the right circumstances (e.g., contact between it and properly functioning sense faculties), and this is specifically in contrast to all abstract phenomena that are the objects of constitutively discursive cognitions, which are defined by their being similar across various occurrences, verbalizable, and such that cognitions involving them are unconstrained. Such objects are ipso facto unreal and, hence, cannot be causally efficacious.

We can appreciate the same point specifically with respect to Dignāga (and, thus, appreciate that his understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* may, after all, be not so different from Dharmakīrti's) by noting Hattori's translation of part of *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.2, where Dignāga first asserts that the number of admitted *pramāṇas* accords with the number of kinds of knowable objects (*prameya*).[58] Hattori translates: "They are only two, *because the object to be cognized has [only] two aspects*"—reading (with my emphasis) as though *mtshan nyid gnyis* (*lakṣaṇadvayam*) were a *bahuvrīhi* compound standing for *gzhal bya* (*prameya*).[59] Against such a reading, Shoryu Katsura makes exactly the right point about Hattori's translation: it "may suggest that the object to be cognized is a possessor of the two *lakṣaṇas* and [is to that extent] something different from them. . . . [But] I do not think that Dignāga admitted any bearer of the two *lakṣaṇas*."[60]

Katsura's point is as we should expect, given the foregoing observations about the claim that truly irreducible primitives cannot be thought even to have real properties; whatever metaphysical status Dignāga finally wished to allow for *svalakṣaṇas,* it is clear that their being "indefinable" (*avyapadeśya*) follows from the ideas that "properties" (expressed in the Sanskritic form "being *x*" or "being *y*")[61] are constitutively linguistic—and that whenever something has been brought under the rubric of such necessarily universalizing activity, it is no longer the unique particulars encountered in perception that are being grasped. Thus, for example, Dignāga recurrently emphasizes that the distinguishing of separate *viśeṣaṇa* (qualifier) and *viśeṣya* (qualificand) is a constitutively *conceptual* operation—in which case, perception can never itself register

such a distinction. In this vein, Dignāga faults the characteristically Sāṃkhya account of perception as one in which, counterfactually, "[the senses would,] like the mind, be endowed with conceptual construction regarding their object" (*Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.26) and explains: "Because of their apprehending different individuals (*viśeṣa*) as possessing the qualification (*viśeṣaṇa*) of [being in] the class that forms the peculiar object [of each sense], they [the senses] would be endowed with conceptual construction regarding their proper objects, as in the case of the mind's operation."[62] And that, for Dignāga, would not be an example of perception, since the mind's operation is not causally constrained in the way that perception definitively is.

In contrast to Vasubandhu's usage (according to which, *svalakṣaṇa* means "defining property"), Dignāga and Dharmakīrti alike now regard it as referring to those concrete particulars that, as irreducibly unique, cannot ever be brought under the heading of any definition (which is by nature a universalizing activity), because it can never be a particular that is picked out by a definition. The basically Ābhidharmika impulse to enumerate ontological primitives thus reaches its culmination in the insight that the irreducible ontological primitives in the system cannot be said themselves to have any properties; if they did, they would be reducible to *dharma* (property) and *dharmin* (property-possessor). In this regard, John Dunne says: "This is best illustrated by a genitive construction such as 'The nature of the infinitesimal particle [*svalakṣaṇa*].' Dharmakīrti maintains that in such expressions the *dharma* is actually identical to the *dharmin* itself. The apparent separation of the *dharma* from the *dharmin* is simply part of the exclusion process, and is hence conceptual" (1999:195). Thus, it is no longer the case that *svalakṣaṇas* are the "defining characteristics" *possessed by dharmas;* rather, *svalakṣaṇas* just are the ontological primitives in this view, and they are not characterized by any properties other than being themselves. In view of the nearly opposite sense that the word now has, Katsura rather understates things when he observes that "Dignāga accepted the Ābhidharmika's concepts of them at least in general. Nonetheless, he appears to have attached to them new significances."[63]

The point most significantly advanced by this transformation in the terms of the Ābhidharmika ontology, however, relates to the essentially epistemological way in which Dignāga first began to argue for those notions. Dignāga and Dharmakīrti clearly share, then, the characteristic epistemological claim that the epistemic faculty of perception (*pratyakṣa*) is constitutively nonlinguistic, and that it can, precisely in virtue of this, uniquely be in contact with something that really does exist (*paramārthasat*). This is the most important (and contentious) claim made here—and whether *svalakṣaṇas* are thought to have no properties insofar as they are the irreducibly small "atoms" of the doctrine of "radical momentariness," or simply insofar as "properties" are generic predicates con-

ceptually imputed to unique particulars, becomes secondary. In either case, we have the claim that perception yields altogether uninterpreted data—unique particulars under no description. And the eminently Buddhist point at stake is that our deluded experience of ourselves represents a demonstrably false description of what can really be known to be only series of evanescent sensory events.

The Problems with Buddhist Foundationalism

Perception, Apperception, and the Epistemological Role of *Svalakṣaṇas*

As discussed in the previous chapter, there turn out to be good grounds for viewing Dignāga's "indefinable" (*avyapadeśya*) *svalakṣaṇas* as not very different from Dharmakīrti's, after all[1]—or, more particularly, grounds for regarding the various possible readings of Dignāga's characterization as performing generally the same philosophical work as on the possibly different understanding of Dharmakīrti. The discussion in this chapter makes the case that Dignāga's "unique particulars" are, in fact, mental events on the order of sense-data, which is an important step toward establishing that this program is foundationalist. It will also provide some reasons for thinking that we should not be overly preoccupied with the possibly different metaphysical statuses accorded to *svalakṣaṇas* by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. This is because, whether it is an idealist ontology or simply a representationalist epistemology that is finally on offer, the specifically epistemological argument concerning sense-data is the most philosophically important part of the argument.

We can engage the question by entertaining a contrasting reading of Dignāga. In Jonardon Ganeri's trope-theoretical reconstruction of Dignāga's views, *svalakṣaṇa* denotes simply such "objects" of perception as the garden-variety macro-objects we typically take ourselves to perceive.[2] In Ganeri's reading, then, the "indefinability" (*avyapadeśyatva*) of these consists simply in their being unavailable to any *comprehensive* intuition. Thus,

> Properties are conceptual constructs. They are potential contents of conception because it is possible, in principle, to know everything about them. . . . Objects, on the other hand, are not potential constructs of conception because it is not possible, even in principle, to know everything about them. Again, on the trope-theoretic analysis, what this means is that one cannot know every member of a class of concurrent tropes—all the trope-constitutents of this vase, for example. (2001:106)

On this reading, the point appears to be that "objects" (as Ganeri translates *svalakṣaṇas*) are "indefinable" simply insofar as perceptual cognition can never exhaustively comprehend all facets ("tropes") of an object.

Note, however, that Ganeri's interpretation seems to be licensed by a reading particularly of Hattori's translation of Dignāga—and specifically, of *Pramāṇa-samuccaya* 1.5a-b, which Hattori renders thus: "a thing possessing many properties cannot be cognized *in all its aspects* by the sense."[3] Richard Hayes instead translates: "*no knowledge at all* of a possessor of properties that has many characteristics is derived from a sense faculty" (1988a:138; emphasis added). Noting his difference from Hattori, Hayes explains:

> Please note that the Tibetan translation construes the modifier "sarvathā" as governing the negative "na" and so renders the core of the sentence modally: "rtogs srid ma yin" or "knowledge is impossible." The point is that knowledge of a multi-propertied whole is impossible through the senses. Hattori's translation . . . implies [the] weaker claim . . . that while sensation can capture some of the aspects of a multi-propertied whole, it cannot know the whole exhaustively. But I think the point is clearly that the whole cannot be known at all by the senses, because the notion of a whole is superimposed upon a multiplicity of discrete data of sense.[4]

Thus, while Hayes is critical of those who follow Stcherbatsky in seeing Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* as the "point-instants" of Dharmakīrti, he nevertheless reads Dignāga's point about the "indefinability" of *svalakṣaṇas* as a strong claim that they are radically different from what is present to propositional awareness; moreover, in keeping with his emphasis on Dignāga's as a "phenomenalist" epistemology,[5] he reads Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* not as (macro-) objects themselves, but as the component sense-data out of which such are constructed: "individuals, which are the referents of singular terms, are regarded by Diṅnāga to be the synthesis of a multiplicity of cognitions and hence are treated as classes rather than as particulars" (1988a:189).

Hayes's point seems correct and not obviously incompatible with the kind of reading one might develop following Dharmakīrti; Dharmakīrti's idea that *svalakṣaṇas* have no spatial extension is compatible either with the sort of "radical momentariness" that takes them to be the vanishingly small "atoms" of reality or simply with the sort of representationalist epistemology that takes them as something like "sense-data"—in which case, their lack of spatial extension follows simply from the fact of their being finally *mental*.[6] The latter reading seems to be recommended by Dignāga's texts. As noted in Chapter 1, Dignāga's *Ālambanaparīkṣā* argued that cognition can satisfactorily be explained with reference only to *mental* phenomena as the "objects" intended thereby—

and indeed, that we cannot coherently posit any nonmental, external objects as what is directly intended by cognition. That text, however, chiefly follows Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikā,* arguing that any account of external objects necessarily presupposes some version of atomism, which Dignāga argues cannot coherently be adduced to explain our cognition of macro-objects. Such an argument does not, then, presuppose the specifically epistemological commitments of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya,* and that argument is not itself an expression of the sort of empiricist foundationalism I have been attributing to Dignāga.

The *Pramāṇasamuccaya* does, however, make a specifically epistemological case for the claim that the "objects" directly intended by cognition must be mental. That argument comes in the context of Dignāga's discussing a particular kind of "perception": *svasaṃvitti,* "self-reflexive cognition" or (as I think we can translate) "apperception"[7]—that is, the awareness we have of our own mental states. This is not typically regarded as an example of "perception," as that word is generally understood in English. It is important to recall, however, that Dignāga first defines *pratyakṣa* only as being definitively "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍha*); to say this much is not, ipso facto, to say that "perception" designates only sensory cognition, but only that it denotes any cognition that immediately (that is, without the mediation of any concepts) apprehends a uniquely particular object.[8] Dignāga argues, moreover, that in the final analysis, *svasaṃvitti* is the only really occurrent type of such unmediated cognition. This claim finally makes clear that Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* perform the same philosophical work as the "sense-data" of modern empiricism—and that they must, accordingly, be understood as internal representations.

Dignāga's expression of this move comes in his argument for a claim characteristically associated with all Buddhist thinkers in the philosophical tradition begun by Dignāga—specifically, the claim that the word *pramāṇa* should finally be understood as referring not (as for most Indian philosophers) primarily to such cognitive instruments as perception and inference but, rather, to those cognitions that result from the exercise thereof. (In the terms first stated by Dignāga, and associated with his tradition thereafter, this is the claim that the word *pramāṇa* chiefly denotes the *pramāṇaphala,* the result or "fruit" of a *pramāṇa.*) As the second half of *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.8 puts it (in characteristically laconic terms), "A *pramāṇa* is real only as a *result,* because of being comprehended along with its action."[9] Dignāga's autocommentary explains:

> In this regard, it is not the case, as for proponents of external objects, that a *pramāṇa* is something other than its result; rather, there arises a cognition, existing as the result, containing the representation of an object; and this very [cognition] is understood as comprising the action [of a putative *pra-*

māṇa]. Hence, the action is figuratively designated as being the *pramāṇa,* though [the latter is in fact] devoid of activity.[10]

The point, as Dignāga proceeds to make clear, is that when one has the experience (say) of seeing a tree, all that one can be sure has occurred is that a cognition has arisen having that phenomenological aspect or representation (*ākāra*); but that fact can (and, according to Dignāga's *Ālambanaparīkṣā,* ultimately can only) be understood as explicable without reference to contact with anything external. Thus Dignāga asserts, in regard to cognitions whose phenomenological content is an external object, that the only "cognitive instrument" (*pramāṇa*) in play is simply the fact of the cognition's having that phenomenological content: "The *pramāṇa* is its being of the appearance of an object."[11] Dignāga concludes: "Thus, [it should be understood that] the roles of the means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) and of the object to be cognized (*prameya*), corresponding to differences of [aspect of] the cognition, are [only] figuratively attributed to the respective [distinctive] factor in each case."[12] And again (in verse form): "That which appears is the object known (*prameya*), while the *pramāṇa* and its result are, [respectively,] the subjective aspect of [the cognition] (*grāhakākāra*) and the cognition [itself]; hence, these three are not separated."[13]

This, then, is the context in which Dignāga brings into play that type of "perception" (*pratyakṣa*) which is "apperception" (*svasaṃvitti*); thus, "Cognition arises as appearing twofold: [having] the appearance of itself [as subject], and the appearance of an object. In terms of these two appearances, the one that is apperception (*svasaṃvitti*) is the one that is the result."[14] To the extent, then, that "a *pramāṇa* is real only as a *result*,"[15] and to the extent that that "result" is (as Dignāga here says) *svasaṃvitti*, it turns out that the latter is the only really occurrent *pramāṇa* in any case—that, in other words, the only indubitably immediate cognition concerns the occurrence of our own mental states. It may be that Dignāga here tips his hand as finally upholding something more like a full-blown metaphysical idealism than simply a representationalist epistemology.[16] As in many of the Western philosophical discussions where idealism seems to lurk, however, it is an exegetically complex matter which of two claims is being made: the ontological claim that mental events are all that really exist or the strictly epistemological claim that mental events (such as representational "sense-data") are all that we can directly know. But we can assess the philosophical project here without being certain which of these claims is being made. In either case, it is at least the epistemological claim that is being made, insofar as the ontological claim comprises the epistemological claim (which then represents a first step in the argument for the stronger claim). Indeed, after one has argued that the only thing we can be sure of is the phenomenological contents of our

experience, it is a relatively small step to the (ontological) conclusion that such might therefore be all that exists.

Let us, then, suppose that Dignāga (and, following him, Dharmakīrti) is making only the epistemological claim that the direct objects of our cognition must be mental events and that the unique particulars (*svalakṣaṇas*) that give rise to perceptual cognitions should therefore be understood as something like sense-data. In that case, the causally constrained character of "perception" is simply a function of uniquely particular sensations, the bare fact of whose occurrence (which is causally explicable) cannot be doubted, even if what is represented therein can be.[17] Richard Hayes expresses the point advanced by this idea.

> At least one of the reasons that one might regard acts of awareness as sensa is that we are perfectly safe in saying that the fact of awareness itself cannot be denied. . . . It may be that "Tomorrow is Friday" is a false proposition at the time that it constitutes the content of a thought, but it is impossible to be in error regarding its being the content of the thought of which it seems to be the content. . . . Similarly, if one has an awareness of blue, blue is certainly the content of that particular awareness, even if there is in fact nothing blue outside the cognition for one to be aware of.[18]

In other words, the only knowledge that is invulnerable to doubt is the knowledge *that* we have some experience,[19] and that the phenomenological content of our experience is as it seems. Indeed, the latter way of putting the point makes clear that the degree of certainty here is such as attaches to a tautology; the phenomenological content of our experience can only be as it seems to us to be, because "how it seems to us" is just what we mean by "phenomenological content."

The foundational status of this immediate acquaintance is clear from its relation even to propositional judgments; for insofar as *all* instances of cognition have an "apperceptive" dimension, there turns out to be a sense in which even inferential (and hence, conceptual) cognitions are (as cognitions) themselves "perceived"—which is to say that our acquaintance even with the conceptual contents of our minds is itself alleged to be immediate (i.e., nonconceptual).[20] It is this point in particular that brings to mind the "myth of the given," as that was influentially characterized and attacked by Wilfrid Sellars:

> One of the forms taken by the Myth of the Given is the idea that there is, indeed *must be,* a structure of particular matter of fact such that (a) each fact can not only be noninferentially known to be the case, but presupposes no other knowledge either of particular matter of fact, or general truths;

and (b) such that the noninferential knowledge of facts belonging to this structure constitutes the ultimate court of appeals for all factual claims— particular and general—about the world.[21]

Robert Brandom expresses well Sellars's critique of this "myth": "the idea that there could be an autonomous language game, one that could be played though one played no other, consisting entirely of noninferential reports (in the case Sellars is most concerned with . . . even of the current contents of one's own mind) is a radical mistake."[22]

The tensions disclosed by Sellars are already evident in my suggestion, just above, that Dignāga's point concerns the foundational status simply of knowledge *that* we have some experience. Note that this construction already reflects a second-order, propositional attitude; indeed, this use of the word "that" is virtually definitional of such.[23] This is precisely what it would mean to characterize this relationship to the phenomenological content of experience as constituting knowledge. But that means that if it is to figure in the structure of knowledge, there must be some conceptual component even of our putatively immediate acquaintance with our own mental states.[24] This fact epitomizes the problems with regard to this trajectory of thought. Even if there is, then, a sense in which the content of our own mental states is uniquely indubitable—and even if, moreover, this indubitable knowledge could possibly provide the foundations for interesting higher-order claims—the fact remains that in order for it to be an instance of knowledge (in order for it to be the sort of thing to which propositional attitudes like "certainty" or "doubt" could possibly attach), it must already be, in some sense, conceptual.[25]

That Dignāga cannot, however, relate the outputs of perception to the eminently conceptual domain of propositional knowledge is clear from his own discussion of precisely such propositional attitudes as *niścaya* ("certainty," "conviction," "judgment," etc.). Dignāga repeatedly emphasizes, as we would expect, that the achievement of *niścaya* is an eminently conceptual function, which therefore can never attach to instances of perception. Thus, for example, in countering the Nyāya definition of perception (which includes the characterization of such as "essentially determinate" [*vyavasāyātmaka*]), Dignāga explains: "'Determination' [*zhen pa;* Skt., *vyavasāya*] means 'ascertainment' [*nges pa;* Skt., *niścaya*]. This cannot [attend a perceptual cognition], since it is not seen apart from imputation with respect to [macro-objects] such as cows, which [macro-objects] have to do with abstractions, etc."[26] That is, the objects of our propositional knowledge are macro-objects like cows and jars; and, as Richard Hayes rightly noted, Dignāga's view is that "the notion of a whole is superimposed upon a multiplicity of discrete data of sense."[27]

Hence, the propositional knowledge that can properly be said to be an object

of "ascertainment" constitutively concerns objects that are expressible (*vya-padeśya*); indeed, to form a judgment just is to give expression to something.[28] This point is advanced by Dignāga's citation of a passage to be found, for example, in Yaśomitra's *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*: "A man endowed [only] with visual cognition knows blue, but [he does] not [know] *that* it is blue."[29] Dignāga takes this passage as meant to draw a distinction between nonpropositional sensations (like the bare sensation of blue) and the propositional, "contentful" knowledge that is based on these (as reflected in the proposition "that's blue"). By viewing only the former as an example of "perception," Dignāga effectively posits a cognitive faculty that yields awareness with no propositional content.

There is, then, a profound tension built into this epistemology: perceptual cognitions are characterized by a privileged immediacy; yet perceptual cognitions themselves can never yield certainty, which will always be the result of a subsequent judgment.[30] Addressing this tension, Dharmakīrti's commentators resort to talk of "conviction that is obtained subsequent to perception" (*praty-akṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*).[31] According to this idea, the second-order ascertainment of a first-order perception is, it turns out, confirmed by an inference—specifically, an inference from the subsequently observed fact of pragmatic efficacy. As John Dunne explains in elaborating the commentator Devendra-buddhi's account of this process, "Devendrabuddhi does not wish to claim that [the initial] perception cannot be a *pramāṇa*. . . . [Rather, he must conclude that] that initial perception was a *pramāṇa;* one was simply unable to determine the [validity] of that perception at the time of the perception."[32]

Thus the idea emerges that bare percepts are the raw data of subsequent judgments and that only instances of the latter are available as propositional knowledge. But if perceptual cognition is, above all, defined by its independence from conceptual thought, and if the latter is seen as the point of ingress for cognitive error, then how could one ever be certain *that* the judgment that follows a perception is in fact properly related to the perception in question?[33] More precisely, if perception's privileged status is a function of its having been caused by its object, and if discursive cognitions are defined by their adding something (insofar as their content involves, by definition, some object that is not immediately present), then how can one ever be sure that what one is thinking *about,* when entertaining some proposition, is in any sense the same thing that was perceived?[34]

Causation, Intentionality, and Justification

One way to answer that question is to argue that the judgment that follows a perception is related to the perception in question in the only way that, for

Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, finally counts: such judgments are *causally* related to the perceptions upon which they are based. This is precisely what Dharmakīrti's commentators argue. Cognitions consisting of "conviction attained subsequent to perception" (*pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*) do indeed (and necessarily so) consist in conceptual thoughts; it is just that (in the words of Tom Tillemans) "their nonarbitrariness . . . [is] guaranteed by their causal connection with perception."[35] But this move begs the question, simply deferring the really important conceptual issue lurking here: that of intentionality.

I refer, in particular, to the notion of intentionality recently elaborated by Vincent Descombes (2001). In this view, "intentionality" is not understood in the narrowly phenomenological sense associated with Brentano and (following him) Husserl, but in a way more compatible with ordinary usage of the word "intention." Specifically, Descombes develops his position in the context of contemporary philosophy of action, recommending the view that the hallmark of mental phenomena (broadly understood) is the fact of their necessarily involving a teleological level of description; that is, intentionality for Descombes picks out the semantic and other perspectives from which diverse actions can be comprehended as serving the goals of some agent.

Above all, Descombes urges that intentionality is not a causal relation, at least insofar as causal relations are understood strictly on the model of efficient causality. Rather, causal language can in this context be retained only with something like Aristotelian "final causes" in view. This is in keeping with ordinary usage of the word: to intend to do something is, among other things, to comprehend a whole set of subsidiary actions and events in relation to some yet-to-be-realized goal. Thus, "An intentional phenomenon is at work whenever a disposition of things can be seen not as the result of the history of each of these things taken separately, but as the result of a thought that embraces an entire set of facts" (Descombes 2001:26). It is with this sense of Aristotelian final causes in play that Descombes distinguishes his view from exhaustively causal accounts of intentional action:

> For the causalist, the concept of intention is that of a mental cause of the actor's behavior: to know the actor's intentions is to know the internal causes of his action. For the intentionalist, an intention cannot be understood as the cause of an action or a mental event distinct from the movements and gestures of the actor and which would then be their necessary and sufficient antecedent. Instead, for the intentionalist, a practical intention is *nothing other* than the action itself described in its mental aspect, i.e., in its distinctive teleology. . . . the intentionalist sees an internal— conceptual or logical—relationship between the subject's intention and his action. But to speak of an internal or conceptual relationship between the two is

another way of agreeing with Wittgenstein: an intentional action is not an *effect* of the actor's thought, it is an *expression* of it. (Ibid., 20)

Descombes's point gains purchase from analyses of *meaning*, for semantic phenomena are particularly difficult to account for in strictly causal terms. Descombes follows Wittgenstein in observing that

> in general terms, the relation between thought and language is not one of efficient causality. When we read a book, we do not proceed from the printed signs to the author's thought as we would from an effect to its cause. Whatever causality is at work is *formal* causality. The expression of thought in language and in action is not a mere index of mental life or the starting point of a deduction. It is, rather, the paradigmatic example of mental life. (Ibid., 19)

Descombes develops a lengthy and nuanced argument in support of such observations, and it is not within the scope of this discussion to elaborate further on that argument. We can, however, at least note that these are among the most perennially vexed issues in modern philosophy. A fuller discussion of these issues would have to address the complex and sophisticated account of meaning and reference that is advanced, in the form of the *anyāpoha* (exclusion of other) theory, by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti—who, it is also worth mentioning, commonly argued against the criterial (*pramāṇa*) status of linguistic utterances precisely on the grounds that such cases are reducible to examples of inference to the speaker's intention.[36] For now, it suffices to say that Descombes can help locate the discussion in the context of what is well known to be conceptually problematic territory—with the example of semantics being particularly relevant since the goal here is an appreciation of the difficulty that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti face in accounting for the intentional (and eminently semantic) activity of justifying beliefs.

Following Descombes, we can say that the effort by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti to relate propositional judgments to foundational perceptions remains a finally *causal* account. For Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, perceptual cognitions are distinguished chiefly by the fact that they are causally constrained by the objects that produce them. It is, indeed, this fact that finally warrants such experiences—and, insofar as these thinkers want for that warrant to be transferable to higher-order beliefs (insofar, that is, as causally constrained perceptual cognitions are to constitute foundations for other beliefs), Dharmakīrti can retain this warrant only by claiming that subsequently derived judgments (*pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalab-dhaniścaya*) remain in causal relation to the perceptions upon which they supervene. But to argue, in this way, that even higher-order conceptual beliefs

are warranted only to the extent that they are specifiably caused is, in effect, to deny that the activity of justifying one's beliefs is in the end an intentional activity, in the sense characterized by Descombes.

That this is problematic is clear from the question-begging nature of the appeal to "conviction that is obtained subsequent to perception" (*pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*); the question putatively addressed by this is how the uniquely warranted status that goes with having been caused by a really existent particular can be transferred to a cognition that is not itself so caused. If this transfer is not guaranteed by a causal relation, then one forfeits the claim that causally describable cognitions (perceptions) are uniquely "inerrant"; if it *is* guaranteed by a further causal relation, then we have not yet explained what it is that requires explanation.

In thus characterizing the issue, I mean to suggest that the question of how to relate (definitively nonconceptual) perception and (constitutively conceptual) propositional judgments represents something problematic in principle for Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, to the point that they cannot coherently resolve the issue given their other commitments. One way to state this is to invoke John McDowell's diagnosis of the most discomforting philosophical "anxieties" bequeathed to contemporary philosophers by the tradition of post-Enlightenment philosophy. McDowell follows Sellars in wondering how experience could (as empiricists like Dignāga demand) function as a "tribunal" of knowledge, given that "experience" and "knowledge" seem to occupy fundamentally different "logical spaces."

Thus, Sellars characterizes "knowledge" as an essentially normative concept: "In characterizing an episode or a state as that of knowing, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says."[37] In contrast, "empirical description" of "experience" places events in the "logical space of nature."[38] That is, to the extent that we understand "experience" as consisting of causally efficacious "impingements by the world on a possessor of sensory capacities,"[39] we seem to be dealing with the lawlike phenomena of natural science. But as McDowell says,

> On these principles, the logical space in which talk of impressions belongs is not one in which things are connected by relations such as one thing's being warranted or correct in the light of another. So if we conceive experience as made up of impressions, on these principles it cannot serve as a tribunal, something to which empirical thinking is answerable.[40]

In other words, to the extent that first-order cognitive events are thought to consist simply in causal transactions between existents, it becomes difficult to

explain how the second-order *justification* of the resultant beliefs can consist in the deliberate adducing of reasons.

Of course, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti were not, as Sellars and McDowell were, writing in an intellectual context that presupposes a sharply distinct realm of "nature," which notion surely represents a part of the post-Enlightenment inheritance. The post-Enlightenment form of the problem is the question of how such mental events as the consideration of reasons can bring about (i.e., cause) the actions of one's body, given that the latter is surely a material object whose actions admit of nomothetic scientific description.[41] But if their form of the problem is not given to them by precisely this context, it is nevertheless the case that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti have tried to address an analogous problem and that their epistemology has deep affinities with the empiricist foundationalism critiqued by Sellars and McDowell. What is relevantly the same is the extent to which Dignāga and Dharmakīrti espoused a fundamentally causal account of knowledge—and, further, the extent to which they stressed the unique (because uniquely nonconceptual) character of the first-order cognitive events yielded by this process.

The acuteness of their problem is perhaps most clear in the self-referential incoherence involved in a defense of one of the basic presuppositions of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti; one might ask what reasons could be given, in their own account, to support the correlated beliefs that only causally efficacious objects are "real," and (what is putatively entailed by that claim) that only directly caused cognitions are finally veridical. It seems that their own epistemological commitments preclude Dignāga and Dharmakīrti from adducing "perceptual" reasons for the preferability of their own program; the injunction to appeal to causally constrained cognitions is not itself one that it is easy to imagine having been thus caused. The truth of their own statement of this claim is something that could be known only inferentially; but their whole epistemological set-up leads any inferential knowledge to be regarded as suspect.[42]

Dharmottara and Subsequent Attempts to Address the Problems

Problems like those characterized above were recognized by the commentator Dharmottara (c. 740–800), whose reconstruction of Dharmakīrti's work greatly influenced the subsequent course of Indian Buddhist philosophy.[43] The intractability of the problem can be clarified by looking briefly at Dharmottara; although he correctly saw what the problems are, the fact that Dharmottara attempts to address it from within the parameters first set down by Dignāga threatens to open an infinite regress and therefore demonstrates the depth of the problem.

Chief among Dharmottara's revisions is his attempt to qualify Dharmakīrti's exhaustively causal account of perception. That is, Dharmottara argues that useful knowledge consists in something more than the effects produced by specifiable causal factors. Dharmottara's concern is evident from the beginning of his commentary on Dharmakīrti's *Nyāyabindu,* the first sentence of which states that it is worth studying reliable warrants only to the extent that they are useful for the achievement of human ends.[44] Clearly, Dharmakīrti's point itself can be thought congenial to Descombes's emphasis on the "intentional" as constitutively involving a teleological level of description—though the possibility remains of understanding the pragmatic criterion of "achieving human ends" in strictly causal terms.[45] Dharmottara works from the outset to head off this reading. He is, for example, particularly concerned with what it means for Dharmakīrti's opening sentence to have claimed that the achievement of human goals "depends on veridical awareness" (*samyagjñānapūrvikā*). Accordingly, he dedicates some commentarial skill to the sense particularly of the term *-pūrvika* ("preceded by" or "dependent upon"). In what begins as a standard gloss of a *bahuvrīhi* compound, Dharmottara lays conceptually significant groundwork:

> That [the "achievement of human ends"] of which veridical cognition is the predecessor, i.e. the cause, is so described. Being prior to the effect, a cause is called "predecessor." But if the word *cause* had been used, it would be understood as directly the cause of the achievement of human goals. When, in contrast, the word 'predecessor' is used, its temporally preceding [the achievement of human ends] is all that is expressed. And there are two kinds of "veridical cognition": that whose phenomenological content is causal efficacy, and [that which] motivates one to engagement with respect to something causally efficacious. Of these two, that which is a motivator to engagement is the one that is here investigated. And that is simply prior; it is not directly a cause. For when there is veridical cognition, there is recollection of something previously seen; based on recollection, there is desire; based on desire, there is engagement; and it is [finally] based on engagement that there is achievement [of one's goal]. Thus, [veridical cognition] is not directly the cause. . . . Therefore, it is in order to show that veridical cognition is worthy for investigation [insofar as it is] not directly a cause that [Dharmakīrti] has foregone the word *cause,* and instead used the word *preceded.*[46]

Clearly, Dharmottara wishes to clarify that an episode of veridical cognition does not mechanistically cause the achievement of the relevant goals or simply act upon the agent in such a way as to yield this outcome; rather, something more is yet to be done with such cognition, some intentional *use* of it is to be

made. This is the process that Dharmottara sketches in terms of a sequence of recollection, desire, and engagement. More generally, however, Dharmottara stresses that the achievement of human ends is finally facilitated only by the kind of propositional knowledge that we have of medium-sized dry goods (and not simply by the causally describable production of momentary sensations). Dharmottara's point is that the appropriation of such propositional content must, if human ends are to be served by the process, be an active process; cognitions must, in other words, exhibit such intentional features as (following Descombes) comprehending the goal to be realized prior to its realization, such that our explanation of the achievement of a goal must include reference to (in the words of Descombes) "a thought that embraces an entire set of facts."

If Dharmottara's commentarial account of Dharmakīrti's choice of the word *pūrva* does not strain credibility as an exegesis of Dharmakīrti, it nevertheless becomes clear that his more general point requires significant revision of the basic account offered by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. This is particularly so when Dharmottara explains why (as for Dignāga and Dharmakīrti before him) the word *pramāṇa* should be understood as referring principally to the cognitive outputs of our epistemic practices. As discussed above, Dignāga's point in pressing this claim was to urge that it is finally only reflexive cognition or "apperception" (*svasaṃvitti*) that counts as a *pramāṇa*.[47] Dharmottara has different reasons for endorsing this characteristically Buddhist view that the word *pramāṇa* really denotes only the *pramāṇaphala,* taking this as the point at which to qualify the exhaustively causal account of perception that otherwise typifies this project. Dharmottara's point is that only the result of the completed process of cognition represents the kind of "knowledge" that can be thought pragmatically to further human ends (and that should therefore count as *pramāṇa*). Thus:

> It is intentional cognition that is a reliable warrant [*prāpakaṃ jñānaṃ pramāṇam*]. And the capacity for intentionality is not based only on invariable concomitance with the [causally efficacious] object [that produced the cognition]; for things like sprouts are not intentional even though [their production is] invariably concomitant with [causes] like seeds. Therefore, even given its arising [causally] from some object to be intended [*prāpya*], a cognition still has some intentional function [*prāpakavyāpāra*] necessarily to be performed, by doing which the goal is obtained. And that [function] just is the [final stage of the cognitive process, i.e., the] *result* that is the reliable warrant, because of the exercise of which a cognition becomes intentional.[48]

My rendering of *prāpaka* (literally, "leading to, conveying, procuring") as "intentional" is not, I think, tendentious; what Dharmottara has in mind surely

relates to the directedness or "aboutness" of cognition, its forward-looking character. More suggestively, note that Dharmottara here invokes the idea as specifically distinctive of *cognition*; for the whole point of his counterexample ("things like sprouts are not intentional even though their production is invariably concomitant with causes like seeds") is that whatever we mean by *prāpaka* is (a) not to be understood as exhaustively explicable in causal terms, and (b) not to be understood as exemplified by insentient things like sprouts. What he would thus seem to be proposing, then, is something like a "hallmark of the mental"; and his whole point here is that this criterion is to be distinguished particularly from those insentient phenomena that can be exhaustively described in causal terms.

Dharmottara subsequently drives home his point by repeatedly emphasizing that the causal description of perception does not exhaust the phenomenon and that only the *first* moment of a perceptual event is explicable in such terms. This repeated emphasis comes in the context of what is a dramatic revision of Dharmakīrti, and, in particular, of Dharmakīrti's strong claim (first made by Dignāga) to the effect that only unique particulars (*svalakṣaṇas*) can be the objects of perception. Clearing the way for the possibility that there is, after all, a basically conceptual[49] moment even in specifically perceptual cognitions, Dharmottara argues that Dharmakīrti cannot have meant that unique particulars are the *only* objects of perception; rather, what Dharmakīrti must have meant is that unique particulars are the objects *only of perception,* not of inferential cognitions. Dharmottara elaborates:

> For the object of a reliable warrant [*pramāṇa*] is twofold: that which arises as an appearance is to be apprehended [*grāhya*], and that which one ascertains [*adhyavasyati*] is to be intended [*prāpaṇīya*]; for one is to be apprehended, and the other is to be ascertained. It is a single moment that is to be apprehended by perception, while it is a *continuum* [of such moments] that is to be ascertained by a conviction based on perception [*pratyakṣa-balotpannena niścayena*]; *and it is precisely a continuum* that is to be intended by perception, since a [single] moment cannot be intended.[50]

Thus, an object of cognition in its *prāpaṇīya* aspect relates to the kinds of things that are present to propositional cognitions (as Dharmottara says, what one "ascertains"), whereas what is "to be apprehended" is, in contrast, what is immediately sensed.[51] And Dharmottara's claim—quite radical, in the context of Dharmakīrti's sharp distinctions—is that objects of perception can be cognized, in both of these aspects, by perception. Thus, Dharmottara takes Dharmakīrti's claim—"its object is a *svalakṣaṇa*"[52]—as meant to specify only that aspect of an object that is "to be apprehended" by a perception; the statement

is not, in Dharmottara's reading, meant to foreclose the possibility that there yet remains some other aspect of an object that is to be "intended" (*prāpaṇīya*) by perception—and that this other aspect is not a uniquely particular moment but is, instead, the kind of "continuum" of moments that we generally experience as medium-sized dry goods, such as jars. This is tantamount to claiming that perception may after all immediately yield some propositional (hence, conceptual) content.

Despite this significant revision of the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, Dharmottara remains sufficiently wedded to the epistemological presuppositions of his predecessors that he has difficulty expressing his point as a truly alternative option. Thus, while Dharmottara wants to posit an active role for cognition that is not exhausted by the causation thereof, at the same time he wants to retain something like Dharmakīrti's idea that the "conviction attained subsequent to perception" (*pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*) can still be thought to be causally constrained (and hence, warranted) by the perception upon which it is based. Thus:

> For a conception [*pratīti*] of "blue" is ascertained based on the same thing as that from which [there arises] a cognition whose phenomenological content is blue [*nīlanirbhāsaṃ jñānam*]; for a bare cognition [*vijñānam*] of it cannot be established as an awareness [*saṃvedana*] of blue on the strength of those same sense faculties from which the cognition arises; but the likeness of blue that is being experienced is established as an awareness of blue.[53]

In other words (if I understand this passage correctly), the phenomenological content (the appearing sense datum "blue") is causally related to the object perceived; the resultant judgment ("that is blue") consists no longer in the bare sensing of immediately present content but, rather, in the recollection of a similarity (*sādṛśyam*) between the currently sensed object and other things like it. Although that judgment is not directly caused by the same thing that causes the bare perception, it is nevertheless in some sort of relation thereto.

But what kind of relation? Dharmottara continues: "And here, the relation between what we want to know and how we can know it [*sādhyasādhanabhāva*] is not based on the relation of produced and producer, according to which there would be a contradiction within a single thing; rather, [these are related] as being *intended* and *intentional* [*vyavasthāpyavyavasthāpakabhāvena*]."[54] Here, the challenge is to translate Dharmottara's alternative terms (*vyavasthāpya* and *vyavasthāpaka*) in such a way as to avoid attributing to him precisely the sort of contradiction that he has set out to avoid; he clearly thinks it is not contradictory for his alternative terms to be simultaneously applicable to a single cognition, whereas he concedes that there would be a contradiction if one thought of

both the "cause" and "effect" roles as describing the same event. Thus if we think that a blue sense datum relates to the judgment "that's blue" as (respectively) cause to effect, then it would no longer be possible to claim, as Dharmottara wants to, that a single perceptual event can be described as involving both moments. That would be tantamount to claiming that the same event simultaneously exemplifies the mutually exclusive aspects of produced and producer (*janyajanaka*). Instead, Dharmottara argues that the relationship between these two aspects of a perception is to be understood as something other than a causal relation—which is precisely why we can read him as having in mind the relationship between the object intended (*vyavasthāpya*) and an intending (*vyavasthāpaka*) subject.

Interestingly, the later thinker Mokṣākaragupta borrows Dharmottara's formulation: "With respect to cognition, the property of knower in relation to what is known is not explained as being an object-agent [relation]; rather, [it is explained] as being an intended and intentional [relation]."[55] But Mokṣākaragupta deploys Dharmottara's formulation in a slightly different context: specifically, in order to meet one of the standard objections leveled at the Buddhist doctrine of *svasaṃvitti,* which is that this doctrine leads to an infinite regress if it is understood as the claim that a cognition must, in order to count as such, itself be the object of an additional cognition (one of the *svasaṃvitti* type).[56] Mokṣākaragupta responds to this objection by offering as authoritative the understanding of *svasaṃvitti* put forward by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, for whom this doctrine was not (as it can plausibly be said to have been for Dignāga) necessarily tantamount to a statement of Buddhist idealism. Rather, for Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla *svasaṃvitti* refers simply to the "subjective" aspect that defines cognition as subjective: "Cognition is distinct from insentient forms; it is just this self-cognizing which is its [cognition's] *not* being an insentient form."[57]

It follows, for Śāntarakṣita, that *svasaṃvitti* should not be analyzed as involving separable subject and object: "Its [cognition's] apperception [does not arise] as being in an action-agent relation, since the threefoldness of [cognition], whose form is partless, does not make sense."[58] That is, if *svasaṃvitti* referred to an action (to a particular kind of perception that can occur), it would have to admit of the kind of agent-instrument-object analysis that can (in the view of the Sanskrit grammarians) be given for any verbal construction. But for Śāntarakṣita, it simply refers to the constitutively subjective aspect that defines any cognition *as* a cognition—with this aspect being distinguished from those that can be described in strictly causal terms.

Whether or not this elaboration of Dharmottara's point can be made viable, it is clear that these various heirs to Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are commonly striving to explain that cognition must, if it is to play any role in the attainment

of human ends, exhibit something like the phenomenon of intentionality. That is, it must not only be passively precipitated by our interactions with the world but must represent some perspective on these—must be *about* them. Thus, Dharmottara, for one, concludes that "only in effecting some certainty does perception become a reliable warrant."[59] Here, the philosophical issues converge upon those pertaining to questions of free will; the point is that if cognitions are thought to be exhaustively produced by lawlike regularities, how we are to understand the seemingly voluntary adducing of reasons that we ordinarily view as constituting the act of justifying beliefs becomes an intractable question. In this regard, we would do well to note one of the ways that Brandom insightfully recasts Sellars: "The challenge behind calling *givenness* a myth is a question Kant taught us to ask: does the experience (or whatever) merely *incline* one (dispositionally)? Or does it *justify* one in making a claim, drawing a conclusion?" (2004:13).

Conclusion: Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, and Epistemic Conceptions of Truth

But even if, on the account first developed by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, sense can be made of the giving of reasons, a crucial question remains: given the epistemology of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, for *what* can reasons be given? In particular, would it be possible, in this epistemology, to adduce reasons for the likely truth of the beliefs defended? The views of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti in the end involve an epistemic notion of truth, and such a notion is at odds with what we can characterize as a realist notion of truth. Given these points, Buddhist thinkers in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are in a position only to give reasons for *why they believe* what they believe, not for the likely truth of their beliefs.

One might wish, at this juncture, for an exposition of what might be reckoned as Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's account of justification—that is, in the form of their account of what constitutes a formally valid (and, hence, warranted) inference. Indeed, along with their complex and sophisticated account of meaning and reference (the *anyāpoha* doctrine), such is surely among those contributions from these thinkers that most significantly influenced the terms of subsequent Indian philosophy. Dignāga's concise *Hetucakranirṇaya,* in particular, must be judged among the most influential of Indian philosophical texts, especially considering the extent to which that influence is disproportionate to the brevity of the work. With this concise account of the relations among the three terms of a validly formed inference—this attempt to enumerate all possible relations between a probative property (i.e., an inferential sign or "reason"), the property inferred therefrom, and the loci of these properties—

Dignāga decisively shaped the course of Indian logic as operating on a property-locus model.[60]

On that model, the form of question invariably answered by a valid inference is: given that the probative property (*hetu;* in a canonical example, "smoke") is present in the locus in question (*pakṣa;* in this example, "mountain"), are we entitled to infer that the property in question (the *sādhya;* in this example, "fire") is also present there? What would so entitle us would be the conjunction of both properties in at least one thing relevantly like a mountain (as, for example, a kitchen, which we know to be a locus of both smoke and fire), together with the fact of there being nothing in the world that is at once a locus of the probative property and a nonlocus of the property in question (nothing in the world, that is, which is a locus of smoke, but not of fire).[61] Clearly, knowledge of this last condition—knowledge to the effect that there is nothing in the world that is, say, fiery but not smoky—is a tall order, in principle impossible for any but an omniscient agent. Jonardon Ganeri considers this among the chief points at which Dignāga fails: "What we see here is Diṅnāga's adherence to a strictly inductivist model of extrapolation. . . . Diṅnāga, in spite of his brilliance and originality, could not quite free himself from the old model of inference from sampling" (2001a:120–121). One of the crucial differences between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti concerns this issue, with Dharmakīrti arguably having attempted to formalize the various property-locus relations as *necessary* relations, such that something more like deductive inferences would be possible.[62]

Surely in such discussions Dignāga and Dharmakīrti elaborated an account relevant to the justification of beliefs. Nevertheless, a full exposition of this discourse need not detain us; whatever the interest of such discourse for an understanding of Indian logic, it cannot finally address the fundamental epistemological problem with their program characterized above in terms of intentionality. Thus, while Dignāga's *Hetucakra* clearly has to do with the question of warranting relations, his estimable contribution here does not advance our understanding of what one is *doing* when one is (intentionally) adducing such warranting relations in order to justify beliefs. That is, Dignāga's statement of the conditions of validity for formally stated inferences does not touch on the question of how one's arguments in this vein can at once invoke the nonpropositional (and causally constrained) experiences that are yielded by perception and at the same time consist in the (intentional) *invoking* thereof.

In the epistemology of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the foundations of knowledge consist in beliefs whose justification does not derive from further beliefs and are, instead, justified by nonpropositional (perceptual) experiences. But precisely to the extent that it is the uniquely caused status of those nonpropositional experiences that gives them validity, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are left with no way both to retain that privileged status and intentionally to adduce

further beliefs as based on them. In view of the present analysis of the founda-
tionalism of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, their own account of justification is not
a part of their project to which we can look for a resolution of the tension char-
acterized here. Regardless of the view of truth finally expressible in terms of the
logic of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the exhaustively causal functioning of their
foundational, nonpropositional experiences makes intentional activity such as
justifying beliefs problematic—and in the end commits them to an epistemic
notion of truth.[63]

An epistemic notion of truth for present purposes means one that regards
the truth of beliefs as somehow related to the fact of their *being known*—and
this as contra a realist conception of truth. As William Alston puts it, the for-
mer consists in the idea that "the truth of a truth bearer consists not in its rela-
tion to some 'transcendent' state of affairs, but in the epistemic virtues the for-
mer displays *within* our thought, experience, and discourse. Truth value is a
matter of whether, or the extent to which, a belief is *justified, warranted,
rational, well grounded,* or the like" (1996:189–190). The precise way in which
truth relates to the fact of being known varies according to the particular
account of knowing that is held; so, one "would expect the details of an epis-
temic conception of truth to be dependent on the epistemology of the thinker
forging the conception, so that philosophers with different epistemologies will
differ correspondingly in their versions of an epistemic conception of truth. . . .
[for, e.g.,] foundationalist and coherence epistemologies have different stories
as to what would constitute an ideal epistemic situation" (ibid., 191).

Thus, for example, pragmatism can be considered among the basically epis-
temic conceptions of truth; with its characteristic attention to the difference
that beliefs make for action, what pragmatism really tells us is how it is that we
can know something is true, not what its being true consists in.[64] In this con-
nection, Dharmottara's strong statement of a clearly epistemic conception of
truth may be an example of such:

> There is no accomplishment of a goal, even accidentally, based on false cog-
> nition. Thus, if one gains an object that is disclosed, then there is accom-
> plishment of the goal based on that; it is only veridical cognition that is
> gaining what is disclosed, and false cognition that is not gaining what is
> shown. And how could what does not facilitate success be connected with
> accomplishment of a goal? Therefore, there is no accomplishment of a goal
> based on that which is false cognition; and that based upon which there is
> accomplishment of a goal just is veridical cognition.[65]

While it may well be the case that the successful achievement of one's goals is
good evidence of one's holding true beliefs, this is not itself a cogent analysis of

these beliefs' being true. This is clear when we notice the way in which this idea presupposes (rather than explains) the idea of truth; one can easily rejoin that only based on those beliefs that are true (in a sense not analyzed by this pragmatist statement) are goals achieved.

What commonly distinguishes any of various conceptions of truth as "epistemic" is the view that truth consists in the means of justification. Accordingly, what really differs in the various versions of this is what *justification* is thought to consist in. But, to the extent that such accounts of justification are proposed as being accounts of *truth,* this is the cognitive equivalent of the view that wishing something can make it so. What is lost, in such accounts, is the distinction between truth and justification. The same point can also be expressed by noting that Buddhist philosophers in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti in the end can be said, with their foundationalist emphasis on constitutively caused perceptions, to adduce not *reasons,* but only causes. This is a difference that makes a difference. It amounts to their being in a position only to indicate what (causally, psychologically) compels their assent, not why what they believe is likely true.

Comparable ideas of truth were criticized by Gottlob Frege as broadly "psychologistic." Accordingly, we can appreciate the kind of "realist" conception of truth that I see as opposed to an epistemic notion by considering briefly the epistemological significance of a Fregean example that is widely familiar, if more often regarded as significant particularly for the philosophy of language. I have in mind Frege's well-known distinction between "sense" and "reference" and one of his chief examples of the distinction: the expressions "morning star" and "evening star" have different senses, but the same reference. That is, the celestial body commonly designated by these expressions is the planet Venus, which is therefore the referent of both expressions regardless of what anyone understands them to mean.

To appreciate that it is chiefly an epistemological point being advanced by this example, we would do well to consider the larger context of Frege's work. Frege's philosophical program begins with his *Foundations of Arithmetic* (1959), the overarching concern of which was to argue that if arithmetical truths (such as $2 + 2 = 4$) are really a priori truths, then it ought in principle to be possible to derive all such truths simply from definitions—a notion that led Frege to undertake the astonishingly difficult project of trying to elaborate, without any appeal to empirical data, definitions of the concepts "number" and "one." Accordingly, Frege gave a great deal of attention to the question of what, precisely, it would mean to characterize any truth as a priori and, in particular, to the question of how any truth's putatively a priori status relates to the *discovery* of the truth in question. In this respect, Frege makes a crucial distinction: "the question of how we arrive at the content of a judgement should be kept distinct

from the other question, Whence do we derive the justification for its asser-
tion?" (ibid., §3).

Frege insisted, in other words, on the distinction between how we come to
know the truth of something and what it is in virtue of which it is true. Insist-
ing on the logically distinct character of these points enables the recognition
that if the former is inevitably an empirical matter (for the discovery of any
truth will necessarily be a contingent, historical event), that fact is nevertheless
independent of what we would say about why it is true. Thus, Frege can rightly
state: "If we call a proposition empirical on the ground that we must have made
observations in order to have become conscious of its content, then we are not
using the word 'empirical' in the sense in which it is opposed to 'a priori.' We
are making a psychological statement, which concerns solely the content of the
proposition; the question of its truth is not touched" (ibid., §8).

Frege's insistence on this distinction stemmed, in turn, from his overriding
concern for arguing against the widely prevailing view that logical laws should be
given psychological explanations—a view paradigmatically exemplified by
empiricist accounts of truth. The "psychologism" against which Frege railed in
particular took the form of views according to which certain (subjective) "rep-
resentations" are foundational, such that "thinking" consists in the relating of
such representations. In this regard, Locke may be regarded as paradigmatic, and
Locke's "Ideas" are antithetical to what Frege invariably means by "thought."[66]
Frege recognized that if we thus understand the "laws of logic" to consist in the
psychological description of our manipulation of subjective representations, it
becomes impossible to say of any thoughts that they are objectively *true*.

For Frege, in contrast, "objectivity" consists only in the kind of intersubjec-
tive availability that is a hallmark of language, which thus stands in contrast to
the eminently private and subjective status of "representations." "It is in this
way," Frege wrote, "that I understand objective to mean what is independent of
our sensation, intuition and imagination, and of all construction of mental pic-
tures out of memories of earlier sensations, but not what is independent of rea-
son; for to undertake to say what things are like independent of reason, would
be as much as to judge without judging, or to wash the fur without wetting it"
(1959:§26).

Frege's point here need not entail anything like a Platonic idea of "objectiv-
ity"; rather, it can simply be that regardless of the rules of reason or discourse
(and the question of whether such be universal can be bracketed), these rules
are, unlike subjective representations, intersubjectively available. Indeed (as
Wittgenstein recognized in arguing against the possibility of a "private lan-
guage"), such rules are not freely chosen by any particular agents. Instead, the
very possibility of discursive thought is already constituted by such intersub-
jective rules. Frege's point here thus seems compatible with the observation

(characteristic not only of Descombes but also of Brandom) that the activity of justifying beliefs is an eminently social activity: "the game of giving and asking for reasons," as Brandom characterizes it.[67] Among the conditions of the possibility of this social activity is an idea of "truth," and Frege's strikingly recurrent critique of psychologism (in the form of representationalist theories) is in the end developed in defense of what should be regarded as the common-sense understanding of that—according to which certain kinds of things can be true (if they are true) quite independent of whether anyone happens to know that fact. As Wolfgang Carl writes, "Frege is concerned with only one basic point: Acknowledging something as true doesn't make it true. Judgements do not generate truths. . . . To explain how someone comes to make a judgement is not, therefore, to explain why the judgement is true."[68]

This concern represents the context for appreciating Frege's appeal to the example of Venus as commonly referred to (despite their different senses) by the terms "morning star" and "evening star." What Frege is after here is a semantic analysis of these two expressions according to which it can be *true* to say that they both refer to the same thing and such that the truth of this can remain independent of whether anyone using these expressions happens to know that fact. To say that the two expressions have different *senses* is to say something about what the utterer of either expression might believe to be the case—something, for example, about what subjective representations are occurring. To say, in contrast, that the expressions both have the same *referent* is to say something about what is truly the case, independent of what the utterer of either of these expressions might believe to be the case—independent, that is, of the subjective representations that are occurring for the utterer of either expression.[69] The extent of Frege's adequacy to the common-sense understanding of "true" is captured well by this example; surely no one would want to argue that the fact that both terms refer to Venus is only a fact—that it only becomes true—for someone who happens to be aware of the relevant astronomical discovery. To say that this was "true" even before anyone realized it, and that its "truth" therefore obtains independently of anyone's knowledge, is simply to use these words as they are typically understood, whereas to say that this truth was actually brought into being by someone's awareness of it would be to do violence to that conventional understanding.[70]

In thus invoking Frege, I do not wish to be seen as endorsing everything about his semantics (much less his metaphysics) of truth; I simply borrow his example because it seems felicitous, both insofar as it well captures ordinary usage of the word "true" and insofar as the example is (in other contexts) sufficiently familiar (and often enough invoked) that it is instructive to be reminded of the finally epistemological point that the example is meant to advance. By a "realist" understanding of truth, then, I mean the understanding

that is reflected in the common-sense agreement that Frege's example ought to elicit[71]—the understanding that the truth of (at least some kinds of) beliefs is logically independent of the question of how (or even whether) anyone happens to hold them. Insofar as this can reasonably lay claim to being the common-sense understanding of "truth," it is the idea of truth that is typically being defended by discourse that occupies Sellars's "logical space of reasons"—the discursive space, in McDowell's words, in which "things are connected by relations such as one thing's being warranted or correct in the light of another" (and not only by causal relations).

In these terms, we can appreciate that, insofar as the *svalakṣaṇas* of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti should be understood as something like internal sense-data, theirs becomes, in effect, the claim that our knowledge has its foundations simply in what appears most clearly and distinctly to us. That is, the claim that perceptual cognitions have a uniquely determinate phenomenological content, and that we are immediately acquainted with such (i.e., in ways that presuppose no prior concepts, memories, etc.), amounts simply to the claim that these sense-data appear uniquely clear and distinct. In the view that perceptual cognitions constitute the final court of appeals, it turns out that what one is doing when one gives reasons to justify one's beliefs is simply adducing the things that have caused the cognition—internal representations, in their unique particularity and consequent clarity and distinctness. To do this, however, is not to explain why the belief is likely true so much as it is to explain why one believes it. John Henry Newman, making precisely the same point that preoccupied Frege, succinctly states the problem with this: "a proposition, be it ever so keenly apprehended, may be true or may be false" (1870/1979:80). The clarity with which something appears to one, then, may very well indeed be the reason for believing it, but it is not necessarily a good reason for thinking it likely true.

This, then, is the problem with the dichotomy at the heart of the philosophical project of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti: it ultimately asks that we adduce, in order to justify our beliefs, not reasons but causes. A nonepistemic (i.e., realist) notion of truth—such as we arguably all hold and attest to in our ordinary language, courts of law, etc.—is undermined by this, particularly insofar as the causes thus appealed to are ultimately always internal to the believer. In contrast, on what I view as a realist conception of truth, it is possible to claim that the contents of one's beliefs are things that are objectively true—"objectively," that is, in the only sense of any practical significance, namely, the Fregean sense of being intersubjectively available. This is not the chimerical kind of objectivity that is considered to consist in being "capable of compelling the assent of all rational persons" (for of course, it is a matter simply of empirical fact that there is no such thing or at least never has been up to this point). Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, in contrast, are perhaps after some truths (*paramārthasatya* [ultimate truth])

that do compel assent—and that insofar as such truths are regarded as being uniquely capable of causing cognitions (insofar, that is, as they are characterized as *arthakriyāsamartham yat* [that which has the capacity for causal efficacy]). But the price they pay is that they can, given their epistemology, appeal in the end only to what (causally, psychologically) compels their assent.[72] This is the point at which the project of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti can be said to have created an unbridgeable gap—one that is evident from the very beginning of the project, with the introduction of such a sharp distinction between (constitutively non-conceptual) perception and (necessarily conceptual) inference.

It is, to be sure, easy to appreciate how this epistemology can be deployed to warrant characteristically Buddhist claims if we recall that Buddhists take the paradigm case of something projected upon the given data of experience to be a *self*. In the earliest Buddhist discourses, we are told that if one carefully attends to the contents of one's experience, one will notice only a fleeting series of momentary sensations, none of which can be identified as what we "really" are. What Buddhist philosophers like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti have developed, in the form of a foundationalist account of justification, is the specifically episte-mological claim that such is all that we are *warranted* in believing really to exist. This whole approach can thus be understood as meant to warrant the claim that enduring selves do not really exist, only momentary sensory events. Note, though, that the very idea of being warranted in some belief is already a propo-sitional idea—if, in other words, we are talking only about the fleeting sense-data that are precipitated by the causal contact between sense faculties and their objects, we cannot be said to be talking about a belief.[73]

Recognizing something like this problem with the approach he took over from Dharmakīrti, Dharmottara realized that cognition, if it is understood as furthering human aims, must additionally do something with the data at its disposal—it cannot simply be exhaustively caused by it. The preceding dis-cussion has argued that among the things cognizing persons do is attempt to justify their beliefs, and they typically do so by engaging (with Brandom) in the socially governed "game of giving and asking for reasons." The intention-al "playing" of this game cannot, however, be accounted for only in the terms of McDowell's "logical space of nature"; the intentional and eminently semantic activity of giving reasons cannot coherently be explained as following the law-like regularities that govern (what McDowell characterizes as) the "impinge-ments by the world on a possessor of sensory capacities." But even if some coherent way is found to reduce the deliberate adducing of reasons to the causal processes of our sensory interactions with the world, one will not be able to play the game well; one will (like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti) not be able to give rea-sons that justify him in thinking his beliefs true, so much as explain why he believes them—which in the end will be, in the case of Dignāga and Dharma-

kīrti, because the only foundational (because uniquely indubitable) belief is simply to the effect that *there are sensations.*

The foregoing are what I take to be the problems with the philosophical project initiated by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. But the critique ventured here is not exactly like the two critiques to which we will now turn our attention: one elaborated in conversation with the Brahmanical Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā tradition and another developed following the Buddhist Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka. The arguments developed in relation to these two traditions of thought will, though, have in common with mine the fact of their being compatible with what I have characterized as a realist conception of truth and will thus consist in part in a refusal of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's epistemic notion of truth.
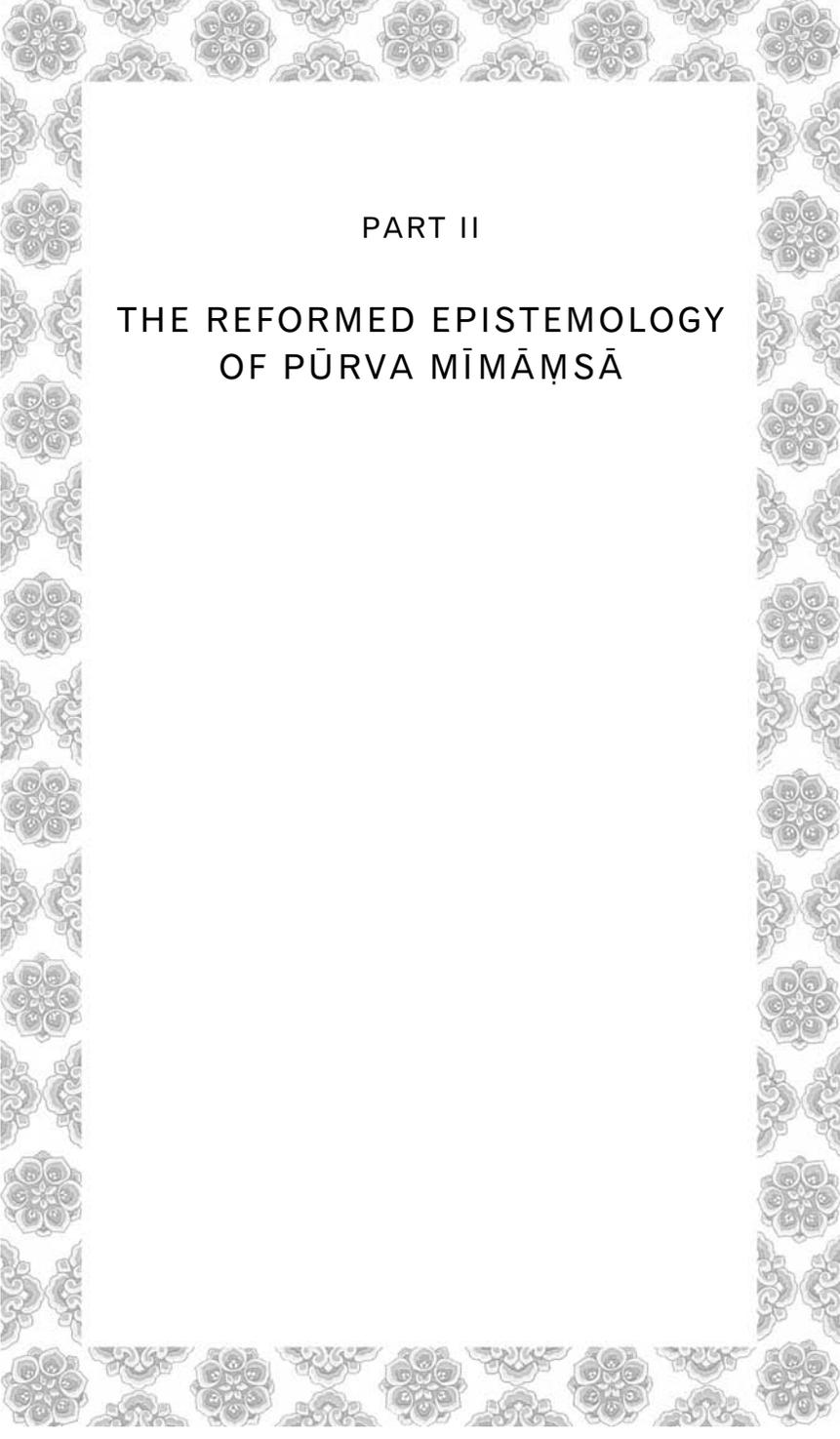
PART II

THE REFORMED EPISTEMOLOGY OF PŪRVA MĪMĀṂSĀ

Nobody Is *Seen* Going to Heaven

TOWARD AN EPISTEMOLOGY THAT SUPPORTS
THE AUTHORITY OF THE VEDAS

Prāmāṇya, "Truth," and the Underappreciation of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā

The constitutive concern of the school of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is the interpretation and application of the Vedic literature—in particular of the earlier part of that corpus (chiefly, the *Brāhmaṇas*) that relate to the performance of ritual sacrifice.[1] For adherents of this school, a stock example of a Vedic text whose claim is thus at stake is *svargakāmo yajeta:* "one desirous of heaven should perform [the *agnihotra*] sacrifice."[2] As Mīmāṃsakas understood well, the authoritative status of such an injunction does not fare well to the extent that perception is judged the final court of epistemological appeals; a perceptual verification of the truth of this injunction (in the form, presumably, of someone's being seen to ascend to heaven as a result of having performed this ritual) is unlikely to be forthcoming.

Buddhists were rightly thought to oppose Mīmāṃsā not only because Buddhists generally opposed the Brahmanical orthodoxy surely epitomized by Mīmāṃsā but also (and in a more specifically philosophical vein) because, as seen earlier, important Buddhist philosophers had elaborated an epistemology in which perception has precisely the privileged status that would most compellingly undermine such a Vedic injunction. Thus, although Mīmāṃsaka discourse is chiefly devoted to hermeneutical concerns (with sophisticated arguments brought to bear on such questions as how to decide when a text should be read figuratively), it also comprises the elaboration of an epistemology that can, most generally, be understood as undermining the claim that there is any privileged sort of cognition—as undermining, that is, the claim that any specifiable sort of cognition is capable of conferring a unique degree or kind of justification.

Perhaps insofar as it was deployed in defense of a worldview with few modern defenders, the epistemology elaborated by the tradition of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā has seldom been presented very sympathetically. Indeed, Mīmāṃsā's constitutive concern to demonstrate the authority of the Vedas prompts many modern

interpreters to characterize this tradition as virtually antithetical to truly philosophical inquiry. B. K. Matilal, though advancing a useful discussion of the doctrine considered here, at one point dismissively observes that "the scriptural way of knowing is by definition infallible! This is a sort of fundamentalism" (1986:32). What seems to inspire this dismissive attitude is, in fact, the cornerstone of Mīmāṃsaka epistemology: the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya,* or, as rendered here, "intrinsic validity," which figures crucially in their defense of the authority of Vedic injunctions.

The word *prāmāṇya* is a secondary derivative from the word *pramāṇa* and literally denotes simply the abstract quality "of or relating to *pramāṇa.*" There is, however, a systematic ambiguity in the Indian philosophical tradition regarding the word from which *prāmāṇya* is thus derived, with *pramāṇa* alternately referring to a reliable means of knowing,[3] and to an episode of veridical cognition such as results from the exercise thereof.[4] This ambiguity is preserved in the translation of *pramāṇa* as "reliable warrant": *warrant* can refer to the outcome of a cognitive episode, to what one *has* ("justification") in virtue of having formed a belief in a reliable way (so Plantinga 1993:3: "that, whatever precisely it is, which together with truth makes the difference between knowledge and mere true belief"); but it also conventionally denotes justification in the sense of the criterion or *grounds* of belief ("What is your warrant for thinking there was a fire?"; "I *saw* it," or "I saw smoke"). In the present context, as will be clear from many passages considered in this chapter, the word often has the sense that recommends translating *pramāṇa* as "veridical cognition."[5] *Prāmāṇya* refers, in any case, to whatever abstract quality it is in virtue of which a *pramāṇa* has the status it does—that is, to whatever epistemic desideratum is thought to make things like perception and inference "veridical cognitions" or "reliable warrants" (*pramāṇa*). Whatever that turns out to be, the characteristically Mīmāṃsaka claim is that this desideratum must be possessed or conferred "intrinsically" (*svataḥ*).

The view of Mīmāṃsaka epistemology as a fundamentalist exercise antithetical to authentic "philosophy" gains credibility from the frequently encountered translation of *prāmāṇya* as "truth." This is, for example, how the word is rendered in the studies of such influential scholars as B. K. Matilal and J. N. Mohanty.[6] Were we to follow their convention and regard Mīmāṃsaka epistemology as arguing that *truth* obtains intrinsically, we might well judge this doctrine among the less serious contributions to emerge from the Indic discourse on epistemology; we might then seem to be offered an argument for the virtually tautological claim that the Vedas are authoritative simply because they are intrinsically true, with no empirical evidence capable of falsifying them.

Even given the translation of *prāmāṇya* as "truth," we might still ask about the locus of this property; that is, would the epistemological claim then be that

the Vedas themselves are "intrinsically true," or that our cognitions (regarding the Vedas, but also regarding everything else, insofar as what Mīmāṃsā develops is a comprehensive epistemology) are such? Despite the generally unsympathetic reading of Mīmāṃsaka epistemology found in the works of Matilal and Mohanty, their dismissal is not based on the attribution to Mīmāṃsakas of so unhelpful a claim as the former. Rather, I see their reading of the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* as a version of the latter—informed by the presupposition of the kind of epistemic conception of truth succinctly expressed by Mohanty,[7] and as well by Matilal, who observes that "a *pramāṇa* in the Sanskrit tradition is conceived as a combination of both evidence and causal factor. . . . it is both a piece of evidence for knowing something and also a cause, in fact the most efficient causal factor . . . of the mental episode called knowledge."[8]

To the extent that this presupposition is understood to guide Mīmāṃsaka epistemology, we might well understand the intrinsically obtaining epistemic desideratum of the Mīmāṃsakas (viz., *prāmāṇya*) as "truth"—but, here, "truth" not necessarily in the sense of a property of some potential truth-bearer (such as a Vedic utterance) but specifically in the sense of the outcome or result of the epistemic process. That is, on the foundationalist view that collapses questions of justification and questions of causal explanation (and that thus involves an epistemic conception of truth), for the "truth" of a cognition to obtain intrinsically would simply be for the same thing that causes the cognition to be what makes it true.

On my reading, this should be understood as precisely what is called into question by the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity. Thus, rendering *prāmāṇya* as "truth" begs the very questions that Mīmāṃsakas mean to press in developing their epistemology—and the epistemic desideratum that must, on the Mīmāṃsaka view, be assumed to obtain intrinsically is, instead, something more like *justification.* But it is precisely by reading the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine as thus concerning not truth but justification that we are best able to appreciate how the Mīmāṃsaka position remains compatible with a realist conception of truth, in the sense elaborated in Chapter 2. That is, while the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* is best understood as an argument concerning the necessity of taking all cognitions to confer prima facie justification (or, at least, of so taking all cognitions that seem, phenomenologically, to do so), this nevertheless represents the best way for Mīmāṃsakas to argue that the beliefs thus justified are also likely *true,* in the realist sense reflected in ordinary use of that word.

This is the case, at least, given what I believe is the best account (both philosophically and exegetically) of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity, as that is developed by the "Bhāṭṭa" Mīmāṃsakas—that is, those who follow the commentator Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, who first elaborated an account of intrinsic

validity as the cornerstone of a comprehensive epistemology. The tradition of interpretation following Kumārila attests two main interpretations of this doctrine: those of Kumārila's commentators Bhaṭṭa Uṃveka (fl. c. 710) and Pārthasārathimiśra (fl. c. 1075).[9] In characterizing the distinctions between these two approaches, I refer to William Alston, whose book *Perceiving God* develops an argument that has some striking affinities with the Mīmāṃsaka arguments.[10]

Following Alston, I would characterize one interpretation of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity (that exemplified by Uṃveka) as a *causal* account, and the other (that chiefly exemplified by Pārthasārathimiśra) as a *doxastic* account.[11] Briefly, this is to say that Uṃveka's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* claims that *pramāṇas* are simply those cognitions that are caused by the same state of affairs that makes them true. This interpretation basically amounts to an epistemic conception of truth, such that the conditions that cause a cognition are at the same time held to be what cause the outcome that is its *prāmāṇya*—given which, "intrinsic truth" might indeed be an adequate rendering of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*. In Pārthasārathi's account, in contrast, it is not the production of any actually existent state of affairs that intrinsically characterizes cognition; rather, what is intrinsic is simply the necessity of assuming that we are prima facie *justified* by whatever cognitions seem, phenomenologically, to be credible.

With this interpretation in mind, I render *prāmāṇya* as "validity." In Pārthasārathi's interpretation, *prāmāṇya* chiefly picks out a phenomenological fact about how cognitions seem to us. Insofar as the specifically epistemological claim then concerns the justification that we are entitled to derive from that fact, it is important to render the word in such a way as to avoid prejudging the question of truth. It is, however, still important to render *prāmāṇya* in such a way as to avoid remaining *too* neutral with respect to the truth of the beliefs held to be intrinsically justified; there is still reason for thinking that Pārthasārathi's eminently epistemic sense of *prāmāṇya* involves its truth-conduciveness.[12] Indeed, it is only on this interpretation that it is possible finally to retain the kind of realist conception of truth according to which it would make sense to think that Vedic injunctions are really and objectively *true;* of course, Mīmāṃsakas will not want to settle for anything less than this with respect to the Vedas.

If we thus understand the doctrine of intrinsic validity as essentially a doxastic epistemology that derives its force from claims to prima facie justification (as opposed to claims to intrinsic truth), then critics like Matilal and Mohanty (not to mention such classical Indian critics of the doctrine as the Buddhists Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla) turn out to be pressing their case against it in terms of precisely the presuppositions the doctrine is meant to question—and to the extent that the Mīmāṃsakas are persuasive in showing those presuppositions problematic, the idea of intrinsic validity turns out to be rather more formidable than often supposed. To the extent that Uṃveka's interpretation

involves a basically epistemic conception of truth, it compromises the major insight of Kumārila's doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* and thus remains vulnerable to the kinds of objections brought against it both by its (mainly) Buddhist critics and by contemporary scholars. Pārthasārathi's doxastic account, by contrast, represents an effective challenge particularly to the epistemology of Buddhist foundationalists in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. Let us see how the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* develops, and how we should understand it.

Background to the Doctrine: Śabara's Commentary on the *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras*

The central text for the tradition of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is Jaimini's collection of aphorisms, the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* (c. 25 C.E.). Typifying the *sūtra* genre, the passages in Jaimini are so pithy as to be largely unintelligible without a commentary. The oldest (and most influential) extant commentary on Jaimini's text is that of Śabarasvāmin, the so-called *Śābarabhāṣya*.[13] Śabara's commentary is traditionally divided into sections (*pādas*) according to the general topic treated. The passages relevant to the elaboration of the epistemology of the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas are in the opening section of the commentary, the so-called *Tarkapāda* (Section on reasoning). In particular, it is the commentary on Jaimini's second sūtra that initiates the discussion. According to this sūtra, "*dharma* is a goal that is defined by [Vedic] injunction."[14]

This opens a discussion of epistemology insofar as Śabara's commentary takes this passage as telling us what means of knowledge (i.e., what *pramāṇas*) can and cannot serve to convey knowledge of *dharma,* which, as an essentially unseen quality, is not available to sense perception.[15] The burden of Śabara's commentary on this sūtra is to explain why the defining characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*) of dharma is its being available only by means of (Vedic) injunctions (*codanā*) and not by any other *pramāṇas.* Since such injunctions represent an instance of verbal testimony (*śabda*), this contention effectively raises the question of the status of language as a reliable warrant. Hence, the entire Mīmāṃsā project is launched, and the objective is to show that language as such is intrinsically valid and that such validity is compromised only by the agency or intentions of speakers—with the Vedas, as authorless, thus being invulnerable to charges of invalidity on this score.[16]

Thus elaborating on the validity of Vedic injunctions, Śabara anticipates and attempts to meet the obvious objection regarding a claim to the authority of testimony: we are all aware of many cases in which people speak falsely, and judgment regarding testimony therefore should be suspended until warranted on other (usually perceptual) grounds. Śabara's response to this imagined ob-

jection, insofar as it grounds the later development of the doctrine in question, is worth quoting at length. Referring to his imagined interlocutor's objection that "injunction could just as well express a point that is not so" (*nanv atathābhūtam apy arthaṃ brūyāc codanā*), Śabara rejoins:

> What was said [by the objector]—i.e., [both] "it says" and "is false"—is contradictory [*vipratiṣiddham*]; [for] by "says" is meant *causes one to be aware* [*avabodhayati*]; [an utterance, that is], becomes the cause of [someone's] being aware. Something can be said to cause one to be aware when, given its existence as a cause, one becomes aware. And if it is understood, given a Vedic injunction [to that effect], that "heaven occurs due to the *agnihotra* sacrifice," how could one say it is not so? How could one [ever] be aware that it is not so? It is contradictory to say one knows a goal that is not present [*asantam artham*]. And based on the sentence "one desirous of heaven should perform a sacrifice," it is not understood in an uncertain way that "heaven may or may not come about"; and, being understood as determinate, this could not be false. For a false conception is one that, having arisen, is overturned; but this one is not contradicted at any other time, nor with respect to any other person, any other situation, or any other place. Therefore, it is not false.[17]

It is largely on the basis of this passage that Kumārila proceeds to elaborate the doctrine of intrinsic validity as the cornerstone of a comprehensive epistemology.[18] Before turning to Kumārila, let us note the trend of Śabara's argument. The main point of Śabara's rejoinder is to emphasize that linguistic utterances engender some cognition (*avabodhayati*); that is, some cognitive event takes place as the result of one's being confronted with a sentence, some cognition or idea is produced. Śabara's point is that as long as the idea thus engendered is clear or "determinate" (*niścita*), one is entitled to accept it as a basis for action. Of a sentence such as "one desirous of heaven should perform a sacrifice," then, Śabara will mainly challenge us to answer the question: do you understand the sentence? If not, then the sentence is discredited by engendering a doubtful (*saṃdigdham*) cognition. But if we do understand it, then the cognition engendered by the sentence must be credited as essentially "determinate." The point is simply that if linguistic utterances are intelligible, then they impart some conceptual content and engender episodes of "knowledge"—not in the technical sense familiar in Anglo-American philosophy (according to which, "knowledge" consists in, say, justified true belief), but in the looser sense that they convey some unambiguous meaning.[19]

This much of Śabara's argument, in other words, does not argue from the putative *referent* of the cognition produced by a sentence (which, in the case of

dharma or heaven, is unseen), but simply in terms of its sense. To this Śabara then adds (what is the more important claim) that we are entitled to judge a prima facie unambiguous cognition false only when it has been explicitly *falsified*—when, for example, we have knowledge to the effect that someone has *not* gone to heaven as a result of having performed the *agnihotra* sacrifice. In other words, to the presumption that linguistically unambiguous utterances should be thought to yield useful knowledge Śabara adds the point that such knowledge should be retained as long as specific counterevidence is not forthcoming. Of course, Śabara is confident that one could never be in a position to *know* that this particular sentence is false. He has thus, in effect, challenged his opponent to adduce perceptual evidence that heaven is not, in fact, obtained as a result of properly performed Vedic sacrifices; but since heaven is, for Mīmāṃsakas, always understood as the future effect of present actions, it is never present in the way required for it to be available to perception.[20] Thus, the Vedic injunction ("one desirous of heaven should perform a sacrifice") should be presumed valid insofar as it is intelligible and insofar as it has not been falsified on other (perceptual) grounds.

Kumārila's Elaboration of a Comprehensive Epistemology

With this argument, all that Śabara has really said is "show me someone *not* going to heaven as a result of performing a Vedic sacrifice"—a rejoinder that has purchase only insofar as it is thought that the "determinate" cognition engendered by the Vedic injunction creates a reasonable expectation that going to heaven is something whose *im*-possibility would in fact require evidence. Clearly, this argument fails to address the intuition that most of those who are not already believers in Vedic sacrifice are likely to share: that someone's going to heaven is presumptively more in need of evidence than someone's *not* doing so. As long as it can be thought reasonable to demand perceptual evidence for either of these, the Mīmāṃsaka is not in a very strong position from which to turn the tables, and the burden of proof will be thought by most to remain with him. This burden could be shifted, however, by a general epistemological inquiry that challenges what is arguably the main intuition underlying the sense that it is the Mīmāṃsaka who here bears it. The question to ask, specifically, is whether it is reasonable to think that only perceptual evidence could decide the issue—or more generally, what confidence are we really entitled to have in perception?

Such is precisely the insight of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, the progenitor of one of the most influential schools of thought in the history of Indian philosophy. Typifying a basically scholastic mode of philosophy, the major works of Kumārila are all framed as commentaries on the foundational texts of his tradition—in

particular, on Śabara's *bhāṣya,* with each of Kumārila's works (the *Ślokavārttika,* the *Tantravārttika,* and the *Ṭupṭīkā*) addressing a particular *pāda* of Śabara's commentary. As the commentary to the *Tarkapāda,* it is the *Ślokavārttika* that is of concern here (and that is perhaps most widely taken up for discussion by other Indian philosophers). As we should expect of a commentary that is styled *vārttika,* there is here greater scope for criticism of the foundational text than is typical of other commentarial genres (*bhāṣya, vṛtti, ṭīkā,* etc.).[21] In this regard, Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* may be said to stand in relation to Śabara in something like the same way that Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* stands in relation to Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya.* It is therefore to be expected that Kumārila found in Śabara's discussion of *codanā* the need for better elaborating and defending a comprehensive epistemological doctrine.

Particularly relevant from the *Ślokavārttika* are verses 32–61 of the section corresponding to Śabara's treatment of Jaimini's *codanā* sūtra (which defines *dharma* as knowable only through Vedic injunctions).[22] This section begins by explicitly referring to Śabara's comments on the *codanā* sūtra. Recall that Śabara had said that it involved a direct "contradiction" (*vipratiṣiddha*) to claim that a sentence simultaneously *says* something (where that means "causes some cognition") and *is false.* Kumārila alludes to Śabara in making clear why this point calls for the elaboration and defense of a more comprehensive epistemology: "In this regard, the fact of its being contradictory [to hold this] applies also in the case of the Buddha's speech, since that produces cognition, too; therefore, this is a futile rejoinder."[23] Śabara's answer is not sufficient to the Mīmāṁsaka task (that of securing the unique authority of the Vedas) insofar as the criterion of intelligible communication of meaning manifestly applies in the case of numerous other scriptures, too. It is interesting (and significant) that it is particularly the validity of Buddhist utterances that is here adduced as the unwanted consequence of Śabara's statement of the argument; as seen below, the doctrine elaborated by Kumārila is best understood as particularly framed in opposition to the foundationalist epistemology of Kumārila's predecessor Dignāga (and, for Kumārila's commentators, in opposition to that Buddhist epistemology as further developed by Dharmakīrti, who wrote after Kumārila).

Having thus raised the obvious objection to Śabara's argument, and having signaled as well that it is, in particular, the possibility of Buddhism's being proved valid that must be averted, Kumārila continues, making clear that the issue calls for a comprehensive epistemology: "To start with, this [question], whose scope is all cognitions, should be investigated: are validity and invalidity intrinsic or extrinsic?"[24] In this way, Kumārila first introduces the second-order question of *prāmāṇya*—the question, that is, of how *pramāṇas* have whatever status they do. By noting that the scope of the investigation is all cognitions, Kumārila emphasizes that, although the Mīmāṁsakas are chiefly interested in

securing the authority of Vedic injunction (*codanā*) as a reliable warrant (*pramāṇa*), the best defense of such injunction is to be sought in an inquiry into the nature and status of all reliable warrants. The commentator Uṃveka explains why this is so: "Precisely in order to prove the validity of injunction, it is examined whether or not there is validity or invalidity in cognitions whose validity or invalidity is already certain."[25] In other words, the strategy is to look at less controversial instances of cognition and to ask what degree of confidence we are entitled to have with respect to those—and, more specifically, how we can think they have whatever status they do.

Because Kumārila raises the issue in terms of the possibility that both validity and invalidity are either intrinsic or extrinsic, four permutations are possible, and the next several verses spell out the first two of them. Kumārila addresses these first two possibilities (first, that both *prāmāṇya* and its opposite are intrinsic; second, that both are extrinsic), however, in fairly short order, as he considers them manifestly untenable.[26] Interestingly, Kumārila frames his consideration and rejection of these first two possibilities as coming from a Buddhist interlocutor, who introduces the Buddhist position by expressing the following conclusion: "Therefore, their intrinsic *in*-validity should be accepted, and validity [should be accepted] as based on something else. The reasoning [that supports this conclusion] is given [in the following verses]."[27]

Thus begins Kumārila's more lengthy consideration of the alternative that really interests him: the one according to which cognition, as such, is intrinsically presumed invalid, with its validity to be accepted only when proved by appeal to some criteria beyond the cognition itself. As discussed in Chapter 4, Kumārila has good reasons for thinking that Buddhists such as Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, in particular, uphold the view that he proceeds to sketch—although the reasons that he attributes to the holder of this position may not represent the most significant reasons for considering this a Buddhist account.[28] The Buddhist account of *prāmāṇya* is further discussed below; the Buddhist identity of the present interlocutor is mentioned here only to emphasize that the view now sketched is the one that is most antithetical to Kumārila's own view and the one that he will judge the most problematic.

Kumārila's imagined interlocutor presents the case for believing that cognition is intrinsically characterized by its *in*-validity, with demonstration of its validity requiring explanation: "Since it is not a positive entity [*vastu*], invalidity could not be based on defects in its cause; but since validity *is* a positive entity, it is produced by the efficacies of those [causes]."[29] The logic here is simple (though the commentary of Uṃveka, in particular, makes clear that the issue involves some complex disagreements between Buddhists and Mīmāṃsakas on the logic of negation and the nature of nonexistent objects): only validity is somehow *existent*, and invalidity is simply the absence thereof; hence,

it is only the production of validity that requires explanation, with the mere absence thereof not requiring any causal account. Apart from the arcane disagreements on the nature of nonexistent objects, what is perhaps most significant here is the extent to which Kumārila's interlocutor here raises an eminently ontological point. That is, the logic of this argument depends on seeing "validity" as significantly like *objects*—that is, as produced in the same way that, say, a pot is produced by a potter (with the mere absence of a pot not requiring any causal explanation). This way of framing the issue reflects the presupposition that the production of validity is best analyzed as an eminently causal process. According to the best reading of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine, this is chief among the presuppositions called into question.

The interlocutor continues: "For if validity [arises] naturally, and, on the other hand, its absence is produced, then how is validity in cognitions such as dreams avoided?"[30] Here, we see one of the characteristic concerns that drives the kind of causal account on offer here: proponents of such an account are likely to be impressed by examples of manifestly *in*-valid cognition (such as those occurring in dreams) and hence to seek an account that can explain the possibility of error. The appeal to causality is meant to provide just such an explanation; it seems clear that one thing that distinguishes dream-cognitions from, say, your present perception of this page, is the presence, in the latter case alone, of some object that may reasonably be thought to cause the cognition.[31]

In contrast to the case of dreams, Kumārila's interlocutor thinks that there is an obvious cause whose presence in perceptual cognition reliably distinguishes the latter from dreams: "The efficacies of the senses and so forth are the cause of that [i.e., of validity]. There are two kinds of absence of that [validity]: either because of the defectiveness of the senses, or given the absence of any among [the other causes of valid cognition]."[32] Thus, what waking consciousness has that dreams lack is causally efficacious sense faculties, whose function could be compromised either by defectiveness (e.g., ophthalmia) or by the failure of any cognition whatsoever to be produced (as, e.g., in the case of blindness). Hence, the validity of cognition is explained by appeal to properly functioning causes, with *in*-validity, as the mere absence of validity, considered, as it were, the "default setting." This, then, is the basic reasoning attributed to the Buddhists, whose imagined representative here concludes: "Therefore, purity of [its] cause is the cause of the validity of cognition; invalidity, defined as being the absence of this [i.e., validity], [obtains] intrinsically."[33]

The last words attributed to the interlocutor at this point indicate what is at stake here: "Thus, because of the absence of any person—or, [even] given the presence [of a person], because of the impossibility of purity [of cause]—the validity of [Vedic] injunctions doesn't make sense, because of its being without a locus."[34] This is a succinct summary of how this causal account of the epis-

temic desideratum that is *prāmāṇya* can be thought to rule out the possibility that the Vedas could warrant any truth claims. The point, moreover, is here said to be damning even if we grant (as the Buddhist, of course, would not) the Mīmāṃsaka stipulation that the Vedas are authorless. Insofar as the demonstration of validity requires appeal to some cause, the Mīmāṃsaka contention that the Vedas were not composed by any agent means that there is no author to serve as the locus for the kinds of qualities that could guarantee their validity.[35] Alternatively, if the Mīmāṃsaka were to concede that the Vedas were composed by some author, then, because no person (except, of course, a Buddha!) has flawlessly reliable perceptual faculties, the Vedas would have to be admitted to be the work of someone whose absolute epistemic "purity" (*śuddhi*) is impossible—with such disqualifying the Vedas insofar as their content would seem precisely to require an author of absolute epistemic purity (indeed, with omniscience).[36] Either way, this kind of causal account of validity is here held to rule out the Vedas as a reliable warrant (*pramāṇa*).

Having thus elaborated what he sees as the most problematic (and most threatening) account of *prāmāṇya,* Kumārila now turns to the elaboration of the preferred account, which is exactly the opposite of the foregoing. The first several verses of this section constitute the *locus classicus* for the doctrine of intrinsic validity:

> The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as intrinsic; for a capacity not already existing by itself cannot be produced by anything else.[37] For existents depend upon a cause for their coming-into-being [*ātmalābhe*], but the operation of already constituted existents [*labdhātmanāṃ*] with respect to their proper tasks is precisely intrinsic.[38] If, even though a cognition had already arisen, an object were not ascertained until purity of its [the cognition's] cause were known based on some other *pramāṇa,* then in regard to that [first cognition], the arising of some other cognition, based on some other cause, would have to be awaited; for purity is as good as nonexistent until it is decisively settled. [Similarly,] there would be validity in that cognition [only] given the pure cause of that [subsequent cognition], too, and likewise of *that* one, and [one] comes to rest nowhere.[39]

The argument is straightforward yet compelling: if it is thought that cognition is valid only after it has been demonstrated to be such (i.e., by appeal to a subsequent cognition of the causes of the initial one), infinite regress ensues; the subsequent, justifying cognition would, as itself a cognition, similarly require justification, and so on.[40] Or, as Kumārila expresses it, if the initial cognition is not credited with the "capacity" for validity, then no other cognition will be able to bestow that—unless, of course, the second-order cognition is

intrinsically credited with that capacity, in which case, why not simply allow this with respect to the initial moment? As Kumārila's commentators prefer to say, if it is thought that we must await second-order justification before considering first-order cognitions valid, then "the whole world would be blind."[41] These thinkers thus take it as axiomatic that, of course, the whole world is not blind—that, in other words, it cannot coherently be thought that *most* of our beliefs are unjustified. Given this, the task of epistemology is to show what must be the case in order for us to be generally credited with a good deal of knowledge. Their point is that this is possible only to the extent that at least some cognitions are thought intrinsically to confer justification.

As shown below, there are some interpretive difficulties in these passages, particularly in 47a-b ("The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as intrinsic"). For now, however, let us continue with Kumārila. In order for this critique to form the basis of a comprehensive epistemology—specifically, for it to include the possibility of a realist conception of truth such as might disqualify the Buddha's speech as a reliable warrant—it is necessary for Kumārila to flesh out the account of falsification. Accordingly, Kumārila takes up this issue: "When validity is intrinsic, then nothing else need be sought; for falsity is withheld effortlessly, based [simply] on noncognition of faults. Therefore, *the validity of cognition is obtained by virtue [simply] of its consisting of cognition,* and is set aside by cognition of faults included in the cause, or [by cognition] of [the first cognition's] being other than its object."[42]

Pārthasārathimiśra's commentary introduces the first of these two verses as meeting the possible objection that the Mīmāṃsaka's account, because it sees *in*validity as based on (awareness of) faults, is similarly vulnerable to the charge of infinite regress—and Kumārila's verse thus answers that one does not go *seeking* knowledge that one's cognitions are unjustified; rather, it is only when *presented* with overriding cognitions (cognitions brought about "effortlessly," i.e., based on no ostensibly justificatory search on the part of the subject) that one revises one's judgment. In contrast to the view proposed by the Buddhist interlocutor, then, it is not here being proposed that one must await knowledge of faults before arriving at a judgment; the point is, instead, that one's judgment is justified unless some specifically overriding cognition happens to be forthcoming.

This point relates, in turn, to the point of verse 53, the first half of which (italicized above) is noteworthy as an important text for the exegetical and philosophical disagreement between Uṃveka and Pārthasārathimiśra. The point of the passage is basically phenomenological; that is, Kumārila can here be understood (as Pārthasārathi understands him) as advocating that the status of cognitions relates simply to how they present themselves to us. As Kumārila here expresses it, it is simply in virtue of a cognition's *being* a cognition that it makes

a claim upon its subject—and that claim, these two verses are saying, should be suspended or set aside only when a specifically countervailing cognition is forthcoming; if such an overrider fails to emerge then we are justified in crediting the initial judgment. In other words, whether or not revision of a judgment is called for is a function simply of the degree of justification that our cognitions *seem to us* to confer, with a cognition's continuing to seem reliable until or unless some subsequent cognition seems to call it into doubt. This passage (which Pārthasārathimiśra adduces against Uṃveka) plays an important role in clarifying some of the interpretive difficulties in verse 47a-b of Kumārila's argument.

Kumārila continues: "Invalidity is divided three ways, according to falseness, non[arising of] cognition, and doubt; since two of these are positive entities [*vastu*], they can arise based on a defective cause." Here we have an important response to the contention (attributed by Kumārila to his Buddhist interlocutor) that invalidity requires no explanation insofar as it is not a "positive entity" at all, but merely an absence.[43] The response is that, in fact, two of the three kinds of invalidity that can obtain are "positive entities"; specifically, they are cognitive events (i.e., those of doubt and of overriding cognition, or "falseness" as the verse elliptically puts it). In other words, invalidity is something more than the mere absence of validity; rather, it qualifies some cognition, specifically, a second-order cognition to the effect that a prior cognition was false or that there are grounds for reconsideration. The third type of invalidity consists simply in the nonarising of any cognition whatsoever (as, for example, when an unintelligible utterance fails to engender any idea). With regard to this type, Kumārila is happy to concede: "But the operation of defects isn't posited at all when there's [simply] no [arising of] cognition; rather, it's based on the absence of any cause, and [invalidity, in that case,] is proven for us just as for you."[44]

But Kumārila remains sensitive to the charge that his appeal to defects (upon the subsequent cognition of which, an initial cognition is judged to be overridden) makes him vulnerable to the same kind of infinite regress that he said follows for the proponent of extrinsic validity. Thus, he continues:

And given that invalidity is based on defects, there does not follow, for the proponent of intrinsic validity, [any infinite regress] regarding defects, as [there does] in the case [where] cognition of efficacies [is held to be necessary for validity]. Rather, invalidity is easy [to ascertain], based on a directly contradictory cognition; *for the arising of a subsequent [cognition] is not accomplished except by negation of the prior.*[45]

This passage (on the italicized portion of which, more in a moment) can be read as concerning the logic of falsification. On this reading the point would perhaps be conceptually similar to Karl Popper's point about falsification and scientific

method: no matter how many supporting cases are adduced, a theory can never be proved and is retained as long as it is useful and avoids falsification; but it takes only one example to falsify a theory.[46] Similarly, Kumārila here claims that invalidity is "easy" to ascertain, being realized "directly." The reference to (or dependence on) epistemic defects does not open a regress, insofar as there is nothing "founded" on such defects; they function only to reopen the epistemic process by showing a need for revised judgment.

Although this may indeed capture an important part of Kumārila's reasoning, an emphasis on this comparison might obscure the extent to which it is an essentially phenomenological point being made. Such a reading represents the best way to understand the elliptical and obscure half-verse (italicized above) according to which "the arising of a subsequent [cognition] is not accomplished except by negation of the prior." This half-verse can be understood as addressing the question whether, on Kumārila's account, second-order cognitions of "defects" end up having a privileged status; that is, doesn't Kumārila effectively credit overriding cognitions of defects with a capacity for stopping the epistemic process such as he does not allow for the initial cognitions thus overridden (which, as with scientific hypotheses for Popper, are taken as never able to provide any definitive closure to the epistemic process)?

Pārthasārathi introduces the second half-verse as addressing precisely that question: "But why is there invalidity of the first owing to this? Why not the reverse?"[47] That is, might one not just as easily conclude, from the fact that two contradictory cognitions have arisen, that the second one is suspect and should therefore not be taken into consideration? Aren't we unjustifiably privileging the second cognition in regarding it as evidence of the failure of the first? Pārthasārathi explains Kumārila's obscure answer to that question ("for the arising of a subsequent [cognition] is not accomplished except by negation of the prior") thus:

> The preceding [cognition] arises without having overridden the latter, because of the latter's not yet having arisen. But once that [latter] has arisen, the preceding—since, overridden by the very one that is presently arising, it no longer obtains—is not an overrider of the latter; rather, the latter, [which obtains] when the preceding has already arisen, arising as the producer of something contradicting that, becomes an overrider of it.[48]

Pārthasārathi's prolix expression notwithstanding, the phenomenological point that I believe Kumārila is advancing can be gleaned from his comment: a subsequent cognition calls for the revision of a preceding one only if that is how it seems to us; this just is for the subsequent cognition to present itself as having, phenomenologically, the force of overriding the preceding. If that is not how it

seems, then its phenomenological content will simply not be that of an overriding cognition. Thus (and here I allude to the language of Kumārila's verse), the point is that the subsequent cognition would not even arise—would not arise, that is, *seeming, phenomenologically, as it does*—except by negating the preceding one. For the subsequent cognition's simply to present itself as it does is, ipso facto, for it to seem, phenomenologically, like the more credible of the two cognitions.

"Falsifying cognitions" do not, then, represent a special kind of cognition that invariably trumps those that are merely prima facie justified; rather, a cognition can present itself as falsifying a previous one just insofar as it is the subsequent one that seems more credible. And if that is not how it seems, then it will not appear, phenomenologically, as an overriding cognition! The point is not so much Popper's point about the capacity of falsifying cognitions uniquely to bring closure to a particular line of inquiry; rather, it is a phenomenological point about when we do and when we do not typically continue to have confidence in our judgments.

Moreover, Kumārila's claim that *in*-validity is dependent presents no systematic incoherence because potentially falsifying cognitions (*bādhakajñāna*) themselves have only the same prima facie validity as any cognition and can themselves be overridden. So, an overriding cognition will have credibility only as long as it is not itself called into question;[49] but when any of the possible overriders is found in what had prima facie presented itself as a falsifying cognition, the falsity of the latter obtains, and the validity of the first cognition may thereby be restored.[50] It remains the case, however, that the potentially falsifying cognition, in the absence of any compromising deficiencies, is (like the initial cognition on which it bears) itself intrinsically valid. Thus Kumārila's verse 60: "For in that case, too [viz., in the case of the second, overriding cognition], validity [obtains] intrinsically, provided there is no cognition of any defects; but when a cognition of defects has not arisen, invalidity is not to be suspected."[51]

Still, it might be objected that since any cognition is always, in principle, subject to future falsification, Kumārila's account of falsification leaves the epistemic process infinitely open, with something like an infinite regress of potential revisions—and that we therefore could never be entitled, on this account, to claim anything like knowledge. Regarding this objection, Kumārila and his commentators in the end fall back on an appeal to common sense, considering it unreasonable to encourage doubt where no specific cognition of any deficiencies explicitly raises one; otherwise, as the commentator Sucaritamiśra writes, "there would be the unwanted consequence of annihilating all worldly discourse."[52] In this vein, Kumārila concludes: "Thus, a conception stronger than is born from three or four cognitions is not sought; to that extent, [any] one [cognition] gains [its] validity intrinsically."[53]

Preliminary Assessment: Just What Kind
of *Capacity* Are We Talking About?

At this point, it is helpful to identify some of the interpretive problems with Kumārila's doctrine of intrinsic validity as it has so far been elaborated. Both exegetically and philosophically, the heart of the matter is Kumārila's *codanā* 47a-b, which I rendered thus: "The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted *as intrinsic.*" The italicized portion renders the first word in the verse, *svataḥ.* One of the interpretive difficulties (or opportunities, as the case may be) is that the word *svataḥ* is an indeclinable form, made by affixing the adverbial/ablative suffix *-tas* to the reflexive word *sva.* Thus, it is often rendered adverbially ("intrinsically"), in which case, its reflexive sense is obscured.

If, instead, we render *svataḥ* more literally in such a way as to disclose the word's reflexive sense, the same passage reads: "The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as *based on itself.*" But based on what itself? One natural option would be to take *svataḥ* as reflexive to *sarvapramāṇānām* (all veridical cognitions). In that case, the verse says that "the validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as based on [the *pramāṇas*] themselves"—in other words, that validity obtains intrinsically with respect simply to all veridical cognitions. The other possibility is that *svataḥ* is reflexive to something not explicitly stated in this verse—in particular, it is possible to understand *svataḥ* as reflexive to any cognition whose status as a *pramāṇa* is in question. In that case, the verse would state that validity obtains intrinsically with respect simply to any cognition whose truth-status is at issue.

This question might, in turn, be appreciated in terms of the "capacity" (*śakti*) that Kumārila mentions in the second half of verse 47, where he says that "a capacity not already existing by itself [*svataḥ*] cannot be produced by anything else." Just what kind of "capacity" is posited here? The answer relates to what we regard as the locus of this capacity, which is what is clarified by appreciating the reflexivity of *svataḥ.* This is clear when we consider the possibility that *svataḥ* is reflexive to *sarvapramāṇānām* and that Kumārila is therefore saying only that "the validity of all veridical cognitions is based on the veridical cognitions themselves." On this reading, the "capacity" in question would be the capacity for reliable warrants to be, well, *reliable.* But this is not an explanation; it is simply a restatement of what requires explanation. The circularity is especially clear if we render *prāmāṇya* in the indeterminate way that expresses only its reference to some abstract property "of or relating to *pramāṇa*"—in which case, the phrase reads: "the property of relating to *pramāṇas* [*prāmāṇya*] should be accepted as intrinsically belonging to *pramāṇas*"!

It is likely a mistake, then, to suppose that the "capacity" for producing validity is something like an occult "power" or metaphysical property intrinsi-

cally possessed by *pramāṇas,* which therefore intrinsically and objectively "bear" the means of producing whatever states of affairs make them valid. And yet, this is how some important Buddhist critics of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine wanted to understand the claim. Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, for example, attack the Mīmāṃsakas (in characteristically Mādhyamika fashion) for having introduced a causal entity that cannot coherently be posited as either the same as or different from its possessor. Thus, the *śakti* adduced by the Mīmāṃsakas amounts, says Kamalaśīla, to something *svābhāvikī* ("natural, "essential," etc.), and it must be asked whether this "essence" is the same as or different from the *pramāṇas* to which it belongs: "There are four possible positions: that [capacity] could be separate [from the *pramāṇa* to which it belongs], or it could be not separate, or it could have an essence that is both, or neither."⁵⁴

Kamalaśīla here follows Śāntarakṣita's lead, then, in assimilating Kumārila's word *śakti* (capacity) to the class of things regularly refuted by Buddhists under the heading of *svabhāva* (essence).⁵⁵ As expected, given the standard Buddhist presentation of a tetralemma (*catuṣkoṭi*), the point, for Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, is that none of these four options can coherently be sustained. In addressing these four possibilities, these critics of Kumārila follow Dharmakīrti's idea that there are only two possible relations between things: causal relations (*tadutpatti* [the relation of "arising from that"]) and what we might call categoreal relations (*tādātmya*).⁵⁶ Thus, the Mīmāṃsakas must mean *śakti* as some causally efficacious thing; for if it is not a thing, such that its relations to other existents could be explained, then it cannot do the explanatory work of showing what causes, in this case, the "desired effect" (*iṣṭakārya*) of a *pramāṇa,* which is presumably what Kumārila wishes to explain in his verse 47.

That the Buddhist critique here takes aim at a peculiarly occult and causal understanding of the "capacity" introduced by Kumārila is especially clear at the end of the long treatment of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine in the *Tattvasaṃgraha,* with some of Śāntarakṣita's concluding verses amounting to a caricature: "But, given the position of intrinsic validity, the Veda effects certainty by itself, simply given its own purpose and nature, and there's no possibility of mistake, etc. And hence, given that there is no room for ignorance, doubt, or misconception, a high-caste child needs no instruction at all."⁵⁷ In other words, the "capacity" in question, if it is really to count as such and if it is to be properly "intrinsic," must be able to do its work by itself—in which case, children should need no instruction in the Vedas, whose intrinsic capacity for validity should suffice to transmit the text. This is, of course, a caricature meant to show that the position has been reduced to absurdity. Nevertheless, it is clear that this caricature gains its force from the presupposition of a peculiarly causal understanding of what it would mean to speak of the "capacity" of *pramāṇas.* On this view, the doctrine of intrinsic validity amounts to the claim that reliable war-

rants (*pramāṇas*) themselves possess an occult capacity (*śakti*) that is, by itself, able to bring about actually existent states of affairs like the correspondence of cognition with its object—in this case, correspondence of cognition with the Vedas, even without instruction regarding the latter.

Uṃveka's Causal Account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*

Significantly, of the commentaries on Kumārila that are now extant, the only one that would have been available to Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla (mid- and late eighth century, respectively) was that of Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa (fl. c. 710), who is quoted by name in Kamalaśīla's commentary.[58] An awareness of the stock character of the critique advanced by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla should make us wary of accepting it as accurately representing the Mīmāṃsaka position. Nevertheless, there is some basis in Uṃveka's commentary on Kumārila for the kinds of objections pressed by these Buddhist critics; in particular, it is to the extent that Uṃveka's is an eminently causal account of the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*[59] that, in the end, Uṃveka remains vulnerable to these objections.

Uṃveka's commentary on the relevant passages in Kumārila is much longer (and, at several points, more difficult and obscure) than those of the later commentators Sucaritamiśra and Pārthasārathimiśra. Among the most noticeable differences between his commentary and the latter two is the lengthy excursus that precedes Uṃveka's interpretation of Kumārila's verse 47. This excursus begins by scouting what Uṃveka sees as alternative ways of reading Kumārila's verse. Among the (mis)readings is this: "Still others think: The fact of producing cognition is, by definition, *prāmāṇya* [*bodhakatvaṃ nāma prāmāṇyam*]; and that [fact] is simply intrinsic to cognition, it is not produced by efficacies, since there is also real existence [of the fact of producing cognition] in faulty cognition, which is lacking in efficacies; hence, validity is intrinsic."[60] This is interesting because if (as Pārthasārathimiśra does) we read Kumārila's verse 53—according to which, the validity of cognition obtains simply by virtue of the fact that it is cognition (*bodhātmakatvena*)[61]—as giving something like a definitive statement regarding *prāmāṇya,* then Uṃveka could here seem to be criticizing Kumārila's own understanding of the matter.

Uṃveka explains what is wrong with what we thus might reasonably view as Kumārila's own position: "This doesn't stand to reason, either, since validity isn't the fact of producing cognition, owing to the real presence [of the fact of being a cognition] also in the cognition of silver with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl, which is not a veridical cognition [*pramāṇa*]."[62] What drives Uṃveka's critique of this interpretation is his concern that it leaves us with no way of distinguishing veridical from erroneous cognitions, since the mere fact

of producing a cognition (*bodhakatva*) is common to cognitions that would be judged to be *apramāṇas* ("nonveridical cognitions" or "unreliable warrants") as well as those that are admitted as *pramāṇas.* For Uṃveka, the equation of validity (*prāmāṇya*) with "the fact of producing cognition" therefore has the unwanted consequence that, if one mistook the glint of mother-of-pearl for that of a piece of silver (a stock example of error in Indian philosophy), this erroneous cognition would have to be credited as a "veridical cognition" (*pramāṇa*). Thus, the direction of Uṃveka's argument will be, as it were, from *pramāṇa* to *prāmāṇya* (which, as seen below, is reversed by Pārthasārathimiśra)—explaining validity, that is, as what is possessed by those cognitions that are judged to be *pramāṇas.*

That this concern motivates Uṃveka's interpretation is abundantly clear from the several pages that follow this last passage; what Uṃveka now undertakes, before finally offering his own interpretation of verse 47, is a long digression on the topic of various possible explanations of error. This is not surprising, since Uṃveka, having written a commentary on Maṇḍanamiśra's *Bhāvanāviveka,*[63] was also familiar with Maṇḍanamiśra's *Vibhramaviveka* (Discernment of Error), an influential text on the topic.[64] This excursus seems meant in particular to support Uṃveka's intuition that *prāmāṇya* must be what is yielded at the *outcome* of the epistemic process—given which, it would indeed be absurd to think of its being credited to what turns out to be an erroneous cognition. Thus, when he concludes his lengthy digression and prepares for the topic at hand (i.e., commenting on Kumārila's verse 47), Uṃveka emphasizes that *prāmāṇya* must be defined in something like the way that we might define *truth:* "the validity of *pramāṇas* such as perception is understood, based on positive and negative concomitance, as their being nondiscordant from their objects, not simply their producing cognitions."[65]

The eminently ontological presuppositions that guide Uṃveka's thought are explicitly stated: "That is to say: there is invalidity in a case where there is no nondiscordance, even given the fact of being a cognition, as [in the case] of a cognition of silver with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl. There is, [in contrast,] validity in a case where there is nondiscordance with an object, *even without the fact of producing a cognition,* as [in the case] of smoke with respect to fire."[66] The last statement is particularly striking; for Uṃveka here makes "validity" an objective, ontological affair. Indeed, not only does Uṃveka not regard *prāmāṇya* as a matter of (subjective) justification (which is what represents the best reading of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine), but he takes it as completely detachable from anyone's knowing anything about it.[67]

This is surely among the places where it would seem clearest that Uṃveka means by *prāmāṇya* something much more like "truth" than "justification." Indeed, what might seem to be stated here is precisely a realist conception of

truth, in the sense elaborated in Chapter 2—that is, a conception of "truth" as obtaining independently of what any knowing subjects believe to be the case. But Uṃveka continues, first stating what John Taber rightly sees as his characteristic interpretation of the doctrine: "Its [*prāmāṇya*'s] producers are just the causes of the cognition."[68] That is, what causes a valid cognition is, at the same time, precisely what causes its validity. This idea, however, is virtually definitive of an epistemic (as contra a realist) conception of truth. That is, Uṃveka here proposes that the truth of a belief is in fact thought to relate to the question of how that belief came to be held—specifically, a belief is to be judged true when it is demonstrably caused by the same state of affairs whose truth is thus known. This is the sense in which validity turns out to be "intrinsic" for Uṃveka: insofar as the causal connection that ensures the "nondiscordance" (*arthāvisaṃvāditvam*) of cognition from its object is what distinguishes a cognitive episode as veridical (i.e., as a *pramāṇa*), that same causal connection, ipso facto, explains the validity (*prāmāṇya*) of that *pramāṇa*.[69]

Uṃveka's interpretation is thus reflected in his reading of Kumārila's verse 47:

> In this—i.e., [the verse that says] *svataḥ sarvapramāṇānām*—with the first half [of the verse, Kumārila] has put forth the thesis that the causes of cognition operate in regard to its validity, too; with the next [part of the verse], the reason [*hetu*] with respect to this [thesis] is explained to be the absence of any other collection of causal factors; "for a capacity not already existing by itself cannot be effected by anything else," *i.e., by anything over and above the causal factors relevant to cognition.* And in this verse, the word *sva-* is expressive of something belonging to the [cognition it-]self.[70]

There are several things of note here. First, Uṃveka's explicit restatement of Kumārila's verse in the recognized terms of a formally valid inference provides a useful way to appreciate what is being claimed; a formally stated inference requires that Uṃveka find in Kumārila's verse both a "thesis" (*pratijñā*) and a *reason* for accepting it—significantly, the word for the latter here is *hetu,* which literally means "cause" and is the same word Uṃveka uses to refer to the causes of cognition. In Sanskritic philosophical discourse, that is, the word *hetu* signifies the part of a formally stated argument that, as it were, *causes* one to perform the stated inference.[71] Uṃveka's commentary here can thus be said explicitly to collapse the causal and the logical senses of the word *hetu,* such that the *cause* of the cognition generated by his statement of this inference is, at the same time, the "cause" of its validity—that is, one might say, the *reason* for its being valid.

If it is perhaps tendentious to exploit this point in characterizing Uṃveka's argument,[72] it nevertheless seems usefully to disclose in Uṃveka's interpretation a notion that is typical of epistemic conceptions of truth: the idea that the

role of arguments is not so much to *justify* beliefs as to *produce* them—such that, for example, whether or not anyone is persuaded by an argument may be relevant to the question of the truth of its conclusion.[73] Such a presupposition is on display here; by using the word *hetu* (cause) to designate the part of Kumārila's argument that warrants his claim, Umveka's formal restatement of Kumārila's argument can be said itself to exemplify the point that Umveka takes Kumārila to be making: that the validity of a cognition is "intrinsic" only in the sense that the cause *of the cognition* is at the same time the cause of its truth.

That is, if we apply Umveka's understanding of the doctrine in question to the statement of the argument itself, we can see that the cause of the cognition generated by his statement of this inference—the part of the argument that is thought to compel the reader to perform the inference—is, at the same time, the "cause" of (in the sense of "the reason for") its validity. We can see the problem with this by considering another example: an inferential argument purporting to demonstrate the existence of God. In such an argument, the existence of a seemingly well-ordered world might be adduced as a reason that warrants belief in the conclusion (as the "cause," that is, of a certain disposition in someone receiving the argument). But surely we would not want to say that this is itself the cause of the *truth* of the belief, which is true (if it is) just in case God really exists. Umveka's account of the doctrine seems eminently to conform with—indeed, virtually to restate—Matilal's observation that "a *pramāṇa* in the Sanskrit tradition is conceived as a combination of both evidence and causal factor."[74]

Second, note (what is emphasized in the translated passage) how Umveka glosses Kumārila's "by anything else" (*anyena,* as in "for a capacity not already existing by itself cannot be effected by anything else"): he takes it as standing for "anything over and above the causal factors relevant to cognition" (*vijñāna-sāmagryatiriktena*). Whereas Kumārila's verse says only that a capacity not already existing by itself cannot be produced by *anything else,* Umveka reads him as meaning that *only* the causes of cognition can produce this capacity—in which case, our account of validity should retain some reference to these causes. This is, of course, precisely the point; Umveka's close reading of this verse has been preceded by a lengthy exposition on the nature of error, supporting Umveka's intuitions that "validity" ought to mean correspondence (*arthāvi-saṃvāditvam* [nondiscordance]) and that this can be guaranteed only by a causal account—such that, for example, what distinguishes a veridical cognition of shiny silver from mistaking mother-of-pearl for such is the fact that, in the former case alone, silver really is present as the cause of the cognition. Hence, "validity" (*prāmāṇya*) attaches uniquely to the former sort of episode. That it attaches "intrinsically" is then true simply by definition; for *prāmāṇya* (of or relating to *pramāṇa*) just is what characterizes *pramāṇas*—and it is by reference to the causes of our cognitions that we can know when a cognition is

a *pramāṇa.* "Validity," on this account, thus turns out to be the rather trivial result of our first distinguishing, by reference to causes, that a cognition is a *pramāṇa*—from which, *prāmāṇya* follows as a truism.

Finally, what about Uṃveka's reading of the reflexive sense of *svataḥ*? His commentary elliptically says that "the word *sva-* is expressive of [something] belonging to itself" (*ātmīyavācakaḥ svaśabda iti*). By itself, this is rather cryptic. We can, however, obtain some help from Pārthasārathimiśra. As discussed in Chapter 4, Pārthasārathi reads the word *sva-* as "expressive of [something] itself" (*ātmavācaka*), specifically contra Uṃveka's reading of it as referring to something *belonging to* itself. The point of these different readings is that Pārthasārathi regards the word as reflexive to cognition itself, while Uṃveka instead sees it as reflexive to something belonging to cognition—specifically, the right kind of causes. John Taber helpfully rephrases Kumārila's verse as it would read on the interpretation proposed by Uṃveka: "It is to be understood that the validity of all valid cognitions comes from the causes of the cognitions themselves (or, from the cognitions' *own* causes)."[75] Uṃveka thus predicates validity only of veridical cognitions (*pramāṇas*); what belongs to cognitions that are *pramāṇas,* what is their "own" (*ātmīya*), is just the right kind of causes. In contrast, nonveridical cognitions (*apramāṇas*) do not have such causes belonging to them as their "own."

Uṃveka's is a causal theory of justification in the respect that he believes that an episode of cognition is veridical (is a *pramāṇa*) just in case it has the right sort of causal connection to the fact on which it bears; and only having thus determined, simply by reference to its causes, that a cognition is veridical is it to be credited with validity. But validity ends up being extraneous on this account, and Kumārila's verse cannot be seen as explaining anything about *pramāṇas;* we can already obtain what we need (distinction between veridical and nonveridical cognitions) simply by appeal to causes, and "validity" becomes simply the value that is assigned to those cognitions that survive this discriminative appeal to causes. Uṃveka allows that *prāmāṇya* belongs intrinsically (but trivially) only to *pramāṇas* because he is concerned not with what may be the case prima facie (not with how cognitions may at first appear) but with what we end up with; validity is here the resultant *effect* of the causes that are veridical cognitions, and the real task is simply to determine, by appeal to causes, which cognitions are veridical. This is why Uṃveka can regard as an unwanted consequence of Kumārila's interpretation the fact that validity ends up being predicated of cognitions that are not *pramāṇas.*[76] On Uṃveka's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya,* "truth" turns out perhaps to be a plausible rendering of *prāmāṇya*—and it would indeed sound absurd to speak of something's being merely prima facie "true."

Despite attempting to support the kind of *prāmāṇya* that he hopes will

enable him to claim knowledge of what is really *true,* Uṃveka ends up sup-
porting an ultimately epistemic notion of truth; that is, the "truth" that obtains
intrinsically for Uṃveka is not a property of some potential truth-bearer such
as a Vedic utterance, but is "truth" only in the sense of the outcome or result of
the epistemic process. To be sure, this particular epistemic conception of truth
might not be vulnerable to precisely the critique made above with respect to
Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, for whom the appeal to uniquely indubitable sense-
data is tantamount to an appeal simply to one's *reasons for believing* (as opposed
to one's reasons for thinking a belief true). So, what is wrong with it? Among
other things, as Pārthasārathimiśra shows, it renders Kumārila's account of
falsification incoherent—a fact that is crucial to understanding its finally being
incompatible with a realist conception of truth. Pārthasārathi will not only
embrace (what is for Uṃveka) the unwanted consequence that even those cog-
nitions that turn out not to be *pramāṇas*, in Kumārila's doctrine, should be
credited with "intrinsic validity"; what is more, he rightly sees that this is in fact
the only viable route to precisely the sort of realist conception of truth that all
Mīmāṃsakas want to hold with respect to the Vedas. Before attempting to make
that case, it will be useful to take a short diversion to consider some conceptual
tools from William Alston, a contemporary interlocutor whose project can be
useful in understanding Mīmāṃsā.

William Alston's Doxastic Account of Justification

As should be clear, the argument that William Alston develops in *Perceiving God*
(1991) has affinities with the Mīmāṃsaka approach, at least as we have a general
sense of that from Kumārila. What is particularly helpful in Alston's project,
however, is a sophisticated conceptual apparatus that can help characterize the
difference between the interpretations of Uṃveka and Pārthasārathi. It is use-
ful to introduce Alston at this point not only because he will provide some of
the conceptual terms for my exposition of Pārthasārathi but also because the
elaboration of Alston's argument can serve as the occasion for a philosophical
assessment of Uṃveka's interpretation, which compromises the central insights
of Kumārila's idea.

   Alston's book aims to defend the claim that putative experiences of God are
significantly akin to perceptual experiences and, as such, are capable of justify-
ing beliefs about God in the same way, and to more or less the same degree, as,
say, perceptual experience of a tree justifies one in beliefs about a tree. To say
that experiences of God are significantly like perceptual experiences is, Alston
emphasizes, mainly to make a phenomenological point:

what I take to be definitive of perceptual consciousness is that something (or so it seems to the subject) *presents* itself to the subject's awareness as so-and-so—as red, round, loving, or whatever. . . . The agreement on my claim will be maximized if all parties are clear as to its purely phenomenological character. I am not saying at this point that this mode of consciousness is what perception *is.* (1991:36–37)

Thus, Alston sees putative experiences of God as like perceptual experiences largely insofar as they have a similarly *presentational* quality—insofar, that is, as their subjects experience themselves as having something intrude upon their faculties from without. It is significant that Alston here eschews a normative-explanatory approach in favor of a strictly phenomenological characterization—his reversal of the usual epistemological procedure will, in the end, allow him to make a stronger claim based on this phenomenological observation.

Of course, one important reason for comparing putative experiences of God with sensory perception in particular is that the latter is widely (if often implicitly) seen as setting the standard for providing justified belief—and Alston wants to argue that experiences of God can reasonably count as such partly because even sensory perception turns out not to be as self-evidently reliable as might be supposed. Alston's argument is that prima facie justification is the most that we are ever in a position to claim even with respect to sensory perception, since any attempt to lay claim to something stronger (any attempt, for example, to mount a second-order demonstration of the fact that first-order perceptual events are reliable) inevitably issues in "epistemic circularity." He explains:

For ascertaining contingent facts about the physical world we must either rely on sense perception or on some other source that we are entitled to trust only if we are entitled to regard sense perception as reliable. . . . Thus it is futile to try to assess the reliability of sense perception by a simple enumerative induction. . . . We must either use sense perception as the source of our premises, thereby already assuming that it is reliable, or else get our premises from some other source(s) that we would have reason to trust only if we already had reason to trust sense perception. Any such argument is infected by a kind of circularity. It is not the most direct kind of logical circularity. . . . Since this kind of circularity involves a commitment to the conclusion as a presupposition of our supposing ourselves to be *justified* in holding the premises, we can properly term it "epistemic circularity." (Ibid., 107–108)

Alston considers attempts to argue, to the contrary, that the reliability of sense-perception can in fact be demonstrated. Among these, for example, is the verificationist hypothesis proposed by the logical positivists. Alston notes that

this could be criticized (as it has been) by questioning the coherence of the very idea of factual meaningfulness; but his point here is specifically to show that the verificationist approach cannot demonstrate reliability without epistemic circularity. Given this, the relevant objection is that the very criterion invoked by verificationists "*presupposes* the by and large reliability of sense perception. What would be the point of requiring empirical *verifiability* or *confirmability* of p as a necessary condition of the factual meaningfulness of *p* unless it were possible to verify or confirm a hypothesis by relating it properly to the results of observation?" (ibid., 111). In other words, according to the verificationist's own account, only a corroboratory *perception* could be counted as confirming the reliability of perception. The point is not unlike one made by Kumārila's commentator Sucaritamiśra: "For if there is already cognition of a jar, what will one who is doubtful effect by *another* cognition of the jar?"[77] Alston has in effect noted here that we could regard ourselves as better justified by a second cognition of a jar only if we already presupposed that perceptual cognition grants justification; but to the extent that such is precisely what is in question, perceptual verification does not advance the case.

It is important to note (as Alston does) that he is "speaking in terms of epistemic *justification,* rather than in terms of *knowledge*" (ibid., 2). Thus, "knowledge" is often taken to mean something like "justified true belief." Such a notion seems to stipulate that one is entitled to claim knowledge only when one is both justified and capable of demonstrating (presumably on grounds other than those that provide the justification) that the belief thus justified is also true. It is precisely Alston's point that such a second-order demonstration cannot be mounted without presupposing the validity of the grounds that provided justification in the first place. In this regard,

> There is an important distinction between *mediate* or *indirect* justification and *immediate* or *direct* justification. To be mediately justified in believing that *p* is for that belief to be justified by *reasons,* that is, by other things one knows or justifiably believes. Here the justification comes via appropriate inferential or grounding relations. . . . To be immediately justified in believing that *p* is for that belief to be justified by something other than reasons.[78]

To say, then, that "knowledge" is characterized as "justified true belief," is to suppose not only that one can be justified in crediting a first-order cognitive event but that one can additionally know that the belief thus justified is also true—and that one can know this by adducing as reasons "other things one knows or justifiably believes." Alston's claim is that, insofar as these "other things one knows or justifiably believes" can only confer the same kind of justification that can be granted by the first-order event in need of warranting,

the adducing of such reasons cannot be thought to confer a unique degree or kind of justification.

Alston argues that we therefore have no choice but to assume that one can *be justified* even in cases where one is unable to provide justification—that is, first-order cognitive events can "immediately" provide a degree of justification that cannot (without epistemic circularity) be exceeded by the justification that is "mediately" conferred by the adducing of reasons, because such "reasons" can only ever amount to "other things one knows or justifiably believes"; and because it is not possible to know something independently of the ways in which we know things, these "other things one knows" must at some point presuppose the validity of the same kind of first-order cognition now thought to need warranting. As Alston expresses it,

> I will be working with the concept of a subject S's *being justified in believing that p*, rather than with the concept of S's *justifying* a belief. That is, I will be concerned with the *state* or *condition* of being justified in holding a certain belief, rather than with the *activity* of justifying a belief. . . . The crucial difference between them is that while to justify a belief is to marshal [*sic*] considerations in its support, in order for me to *be* justified in believing that *p* it is not necessary that I have *done* anything by way of an argument for *p* or for my epistemic situation vis-à-vis *p*. Unless I *am* justified in many beliefs without arguing for them, there is precious little I justifiably believe. (Ibid., 71)

Or, as Kumārila's commentators put it, unless it is possible to be justified in many without arguing for them, "the whole world would be blind."

However, some might object that Alston's argument—with its avowed focus only on justification and not on knowledge—entails that we cannot hold a realist conception of truth and that we must, instead, remain satisfied to claim only that what we justifiably believe *could* be true. But this is not necessarily so. Here, it is important to attend to the distinction between first-order and higher-order cognitive events. That is, the inescapability of epistemic circularity is not a problem if we realize that it obtains only at the level of second-order claims *about* knowledge; this recognition allows regarding the first-order beliefs as nonetheless reliable since, on Alston's theory of epistemic justification, "there are no 'higher-level' requirements for justified belief" (ibid., 87).

With respect, therefore, to the question of how Alston's epistemic reliability is related to the likelihood of a belief's being true, this important distinction between levels is what allows the assumption of our reliable practices as "truth-conducive." That is, Alston can acknowledge that "we have finally settled for an epistemic status for [perceptual awareness] (and derivatively for the epistemic

status of perceptual beliefs) that falls short of likelihood of truth"; and yet go on to emphasize that this reduced epistemic status "attaches to the *higher-level* claim that [perceptual awareness] is reliable, not to the particular perceptual beliefs that issue from that practice. As for the latter, what we are claiming is still the full-blooded (prima facie) justification . . . that involves likelihood of truth" (ibid., 181). And, as he adds in a footnote, "This does not, of course, imply that the higher-level claim is not justified in the truth-conducive sense. It is just that we have given up on *showing* that it is."

The question, then, is how we can be entitled to credit the *first-order* awarenesses as "truth-conducive." Here, it is important to understand Alston's characterization of his as a *doxastic* approach to justification. "Doxastic" simply means "belief-forming," and Alston refers to all the various ways of arriving at beliefs as "doxastic practices" (with, say, Christian practices for cultivating experience of God—or "Christian mystical practice," as he calls it—being, in this regard, on the same footing as "sensory practice").[79] In characterizing his as a "doxastic" approach to justification, Alston means to offer an alternative to causal accounts of justification. Causal approaches to justification, as Alston explains, are elaborated in order to confer justification by explaining how an external object could be related to a subject, with the demonstration that an object is causally related to a subject meant to satisfy us that the object in question is what is really perceived.

This question of the relationship between subject and object in particular emerged as a problem in the course of the history of modern philosophy. This is because the standard procedure in much post-Kantian philosophy has been to start with the knowing subject (this was Kant's "Copernican revolution") and to reason from the epistemic capacities of the subject to whatever one might be justified in believing. Accordingly, much post-Kantian epistemology has been concerned with bracketing the question of exactly what one is perceiving in any given case (since that is, presumably, precisely what is in question) and elaborating an epistemological account that remains neutral with respect to different possibilities for explaining what is perceived (neutral, e.g., with respect to sense-datum theories and other such representationalist epistemologies). But after one has elaborated an account that is, in principle, convincing, independent of what one takes to be the "direct object" of knowledge, it becomes difficult to explain how any external object could be related to the knowing subject; the latter can, it seems, be satisfactorily accounted for without any reference to external objects.

It is to address this seemingly intractable problem that causal epistemologies are elaborated. Of course, this is in significant ways similar to the problem that Uṃveka was trying to address by appealing to causes. Uṃveka elaborated his account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* on the assumption that one would have to retain

some reference to the causes of cognitions for there to be any hope of distinguishing veridical from erroneous cognitions (that is, *pramāṇas* from *apramāṇas*); surely, the difference between a veridical cognition of shiny silver and a mistaken cognition of mother-of-pearl as silver is that silver is actually present as the cause of the cognition in the former case. Thus, for Uṃveka, as for the thinkers against whom Alston argues, a true belief that *p* counts as "knowledge" only if it has the right sort of causal connection to the fact that *p*.

Alston effectively shows, however, the problem with the appeal to such causal accounts of justification: "By no means everything that figures importantly in the causal chain leading to a certain visual experience is thereby seen. The chain in question contains neurophysiological processes in the brain and elsewhere; but they are not seen."[80] The problem, in other words, is how to specify which causes of cognition can count as the ones that explain what it is about which we are justified in forming beliefs. This returns us to the situation of epistemic circularity, because we could be in a position to specify this only if we presuppose the reliability of our ways of picking out the relevant causes. To put the matter in terms of Uṃveka's example: given two phenomenologically indistinguishable cognitions whose objects seem to be silver, we could only know which one was really caused by silver if we presuppose the reliability of whatever awareness picks out the cause—but if we already knew that, then we would not have any problem in the first place. There is, then, no sustaining the claim that cognition yields "knowledge" or "validity" only when it has first been ascertained that it was appropriately caused; the knowledge that it was appropriately caused cannot be based on any fundamentally different *kind* of warrant than the initial cognition in question.

In contrast, Alston upholds a view that he designates the "Theory of Appearing." This, he says, "is a form of 'direct' realism, even 'naive' realism, in that it endorses our spontaneous, naive way of taking sense experience as involving the direct awareness of an object that is presented to consciousness, usually an external physical object."[81] Thus, "if we ask the question 'What must be added to a certain visual experience in order for it to be true that S sees a certain tree?,' the answer given by the Theory of Appearing is 'Nothing, provided that tree is what is appearing to S in that experience'" (ibid., 56). Alston may seem to beg the question with this last condition ("provided that tree is what is appearing to S in that experience"), since, presumably, it is whether or not there is a tree that is precisely what we wish to know. That he is not begging the question becomes clear when we note that he is again speaking phenomenologically; that is, the condition specifies only that it be a tree that is appearing to the subject.

But (and here is where we can find room for a realist conception of truth on Alston's account) the *phenomenological* fact that one is presented with a tree is, on Alston's doxastic account of justification, all that is required to be justified

in believing that the experience is one of a real, externally existent tree. In this regard, Alston has effected something of his own "Copernican revolution," reversing the procedure that is characteristic of empiricist foundationalism in particular. Thus, given the fact that epistemic circularity will inevitably attach to any attempt to demonstrate the reliability of a doxastic practice,

> the only way of arguing, from a standpoint outside any practice of forming beliefs . . . that people do genuinely perceive God is to argue for the episte-mological position that beliefs formed on the basis of such (putative) per-ceptions are (prima facie) justified. If that is the case, we have a good rea-son for regarding many of the putative perceptions as genuine; for if the subject were not often really perceiving X why should the experience involved provide justification for beliefs about X? This reverses the usual order of procedure in which we first seek to show that S really did perceive X and then go on to consider what beliefs about X, if any, are justified by being based on that perception. (Ibid., 10; cf. 68, 227)

In other words, Alston's procedure is to show that the subjects of religious expe-riences are prima facie justified in thinking that their experience is the experi-ence it seems, phenomenologically, to be; and, if one is thus justified, then the experience can, ipso facto, be taken as genuinely an experience *of* what seems to be experienced. Thus, a doxastic approach to epistemology relates subject and object not causally, but simply by holding that "what is seen by virtue of under-going a particular experience is what this experience generates beliefs about" (ibid., 57–58).

We can express this reversal of causal epistemologies succinctly (and return to the epistemology advanced by Umveka) if we express the point in Sanskrit terminology: whatever it is in regard to which one has *prāmāṇya* is what should be called a *pramāṇa*. Thus, while Umveka wants to explain *prāmāṇya* as the effect caused by (what we can otherwise know to be) *pramāṇas,* Alston's proce-dure would, instead, work backward from *prāmāṇya* and maintain that one may be said to have a *pramāṇa* in a case in which there is *prāmāṇya*—and the latter would obtain first. Indeed, Alston's whole point, in these terms, is that *prāmāṇya* is known *prima facie* (though it is subject to being overridden). This view has what Umveka considered the unwanted consequence that cognitive events that turn out not to have been veridical (that turn out, that is, to be *apramāṇas*) are credited, at least initially, with "validity." But Umveka could consider this a problematic consequence only because he focused on the con-clusion of the epistemic process; that is, he wanted us to *conclude* that we are in possession of validity, with this conclusion being the "effect" yielded by the causes that are *pramāṇas*.[82]

If, in contrast, all we are talking about is *prima facie* justification, then validity represents not the conclusion but the beginning of the epistemic process, with this *prima facie* validity providing the only way for us to proceed with anything (even to proceed, as in many cases, to conclude that the validity we had originally thought to obtain turns out to have been misleading). As Sucaritamiśra expresses it, "This is why it is only after cognition has arisen on the part of all subjects that the activity of communication is seen [to take place]. For even mistakenly cognized silver, just like correctly cognized silver, is seen conducing to effective action. This does not make sense on the part of a doubtful [cognition], so certainty [must be said to have] been produced. What else will validity be?"[83] What more justification could one desire than that on the basis of which any further inquiry (even epistemological inquiry!) must proceed?

This reversal of the usual procedure represents precisely the opposite of the kind of foundationalist approach exemplified by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, which would seek to ground justification in a causal story that takes the perceived object indubitably to have caused the perception—which, that is, withholds the judgment that one "knows" something until it has first been ascertained that the "something" in question is, in fact, present as the cause of the cognition under review.[84] The problem is that the latter can be ascertained only by adducing "other things one knows or justifiably believes"—which we can, in turn, only be justified in knowing based on the very same epistemic instruments now available as we seek to ascertain the presence of a cause.

In the end, this is Uṃveka's problem, too. Uṃveka wants an account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* according to which we can be certain that, for example, we will only ever credit with *prāmāṇya* a cognition of silver that really was caused by silver. This is why he concludes that validity is "intrinsic" to cognition only in the sense that what causes our cognition is, at the same time, what causes its validity. Thus, his account preserves the order of procedure that is reversed by Alston. On Uṃveka's account, that is, *prāmāṇya* turns out to be "intrinsic" only in the trivial sense that there is, by definition, *prāmāṇya* wherever one can first ascertain that a *pramāṇa* had been operative, with the latter to be determined by appeal to the causes of the cognition in question. But it can only be ascertained that it was "really" silver that caused the initial cognition if one already presupposes that one is in possession of valid ways of knowing this—which is precisely what was in question. Thus, Uṃveka's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* cannot ultimately explain anything about the functioning of *pramāṇas;* rather, he presupposes that we know one when we see one.

Are the Vedas Intrinsically *True*?
PRIMA FACIE JUSTIFICATION AND THE MĪMĀṂSAKA CRITIQUE OF BUDDHIST FOUNDATIONALISM

Pārthasārathimiśra's Doxastic Account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*

Let us turn now to the interpretation developed by Pārthasārathimiśra (fl. c. 1075), whose *Nyāyaratnākara* is the most often consulted commentary on Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika*. More interesting for our purposes, though, is Pārthasārathi's *Nyāyaratnamālā*, an independent work that addresses most of the important philosophical themes of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā.[1] The second chapter of this work is entitled "Svataḥprāmāṇyanirṇaya" (Determination of Intrinsic Validity).[2] Here, Pārthasārathi does not dedicate most of his attention to elaborating *svataḥ prāmāṇya* as contra Mīmāṃsā's Buddhist opponents (though he says some illuminating things in this regard); instead, he is particularly concerned with addressing the different understandings of the doctrine found within the Bhāṭṭa tradition of Mīmāṃsā. In this context, he advances a particular account of that doctrine as not only making the most sense philosophically but also as representing the best exegesis of Kumārila.[3] His interpretation, in particular, can usefully be expressed in terms of the conceptual vocabulary suggested by Alston.

Pārthasārathi begins this chapter by concisely laying out what he sees as the issues regarding which "commentators disagree": "Is the word *sva-* reflexive to [cognition] *itself,* or to [something] *belonging to itself*? Similarly, does validity intrinsically *exist* [*bhavati*], or does it [intrinsically] *appear* [*bhāti*]? Finally, is what we call 'validity' the quiddity of an object, or is it the fact of effecting certainty that an object exists as it [really] does?"[4] He provides a verse statement of the answers he will defend: "This word *sva-* is reflexive to [the cognition it-]*self*; validity intrinsically *appears*; and validity is set forth as the *being thus* of an object."[5] The trend of Pārthasārathi's argument is especially clear from the first two points: the reflexive term in Kumārila's verse is meant to refer to cognition as such, not to its causes; and that the validity thus attaching to cognition itself obtains only prima facie is suggested by the phenomenological language of "appearing" (as opposed to the ontological language of existing).[6] With the

third point (that validity concerns the "being thus" of an object, and not the "fact of effecting certainty" regarding that), Pārthasārathi evidently intends at once to emphasize the truth-conduciveness of his position and the fact that justification can be conferred immediately—that is, *prāmāṇya* does not consist only in the second-order *ascertainment* that one knows; rather, it is possible to be justified without having given any reasons for a belief.[7]

Before defending these answers, Pārthasārathi first elaborates and rejects alternative readings. The first interpretation that he considers is one like Uṃveka's, which he helpfully characterizes as motivated by a consideration that we have not so far encountered: "Therefore, validity, which is defined as [a cognition's] being like [its] object, is produced based on [cognition's] very own cause. It does not [simply] *appear* [intrinsically valid]; for cognition does not cause [one] to understand itself, nor its own validity, because of [cognition's] being exhausted in the mere illumination of its object."[8] The first sentence recognizably represents Uṃveka's interpretation. In attributing the second statement to his opponent (specifically, as Uṃveka's reason for rejecting Pārthasārathi's contention that validity merely appears intrinsically), however, Pārthasārathi has anticipated an important objection: specifically, that Pārthasārathi's interpretation of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* compromises the direct realism to which Mīmāṃsakas are committed.[9]

That point is here expressed as the claim that cognition functions only to disclose "objects"—a claim that reflects the Mīmāṃsakas' peculiarly strong reluctance to allow the possible involvement of anything like "sense-data." Thus, Pārthasārathi is here anticipating the objection that his reading of the doctrine of intrinsic validity has antirealist implications. It is important for Pārthasārathi to confront this objection insofar as the phenomenological character of his reading might seem to turn the focus too significantly toward the knowing subject. That is, the claim that "intrinsic validity" means only that cognition intrinsically "appears" (*bhāti*) valid may be thought to entail that everything other than cognition itself can finally be bracketed from the account[10]—in which case, we might seem to be left with no epistemic route to the external world that is, for Mīmāṃsakas, crucial as the locus of ritual action. As with the "apperception" (*svasaṃvitti*) posited by the Buddhist foundationalists, Mīmāṃsakas might thus see in Pārthasārathi's interpretation the claim that what is intrinsic is "an inherent quality of truth of the cognitions"[11]—making it a short trip (by way of the intuition that "truth" consists in *arthāvisaṃvāditvam* [nondiscordance from an object]) to the conclusion that the direct *object* of cognition is itself intrinsic to the knower. Given his Mīmāṃsaka commitments, Pārthasārathi clearly needs to refute this charge.

In the course of his engagement (which digresses a bit before specifically addressing this charge),[12] Pārthasārathi twice invokes against Uṃveka a passage

from Kumārila noted in Chapter 3: *codanā* 53, which begins "the validity of cognition obtains simply by virtue of the fact that it is cognition."[13] Pārthasārathi rightly sees this as a passage that Umveka cannot make much sense of—indeed, we saw that Umveka explicitly refuses something much like this as a definition of validity, insisting instead that we can predicate *prāmāṇya* only of those cognitions that we already know (on other grounds) to be *pramāṇas*.[14] This is, for Pārthasārathi, an example of the many verses that "do not cohere" given Umveka's interpretation.[15]

Pārthasārathi can, moreover, here accuse Umveka not only of contradicting Kumārila's text but of contradicting reason as well. Indeed, Pārthasārathi's critique of Umveka's interpretation of this verse provides an important part of Pārthasārathi's answer to the objection that his phenomenological reading has antirealist implications. Furthermore, Pārthasārathi can be said here to argue that in the end only his own account is compatible with a realist conception of truth. This argument can be gleaned from Pārthasārathi's statement of how Umveka would, given his interpretation, have to explain the second half verse 53, which says that the validity that thus obtains is set aside only "based on cognition of defects, or the [subsequently discovered] fact of being other than its object." On the view of Kumārila's epistemology proposed by Umveka, says Pārthasārathi, Kumārila's point about falsification would have to be understood thus: "the validity of a conception is produced intrinsically, [and] overridden subsequently; and this doesn't make sense, because of [the cognition's having been] a non-*pramāṇa* from the outset."[16]

In other words, on the view that validity is intrinsically *produced* (by the same causes that produce the cognition), any subsequent revision in judgment would have to consist in the actual transformation of the initially known state of affairs—what had been *true,* that is, would now be false. Pārthasārathi rightly contends, however, that if this is Kumārila's claim, then the provision for the subsequent falsification of initially "valid" cognitions must allow not merely the reversal of a judgment of merely prima facie validity but the veritable ontological transformation of what was known. Against such an absurd view, Pārthasārathi's rejoinder virtually amounts to the statement of a realist conception of truth: in cases where our initial cognition is overridden, the initial cognition was false (i.e., was a non-*pramāṇa*) all along; all that changes is our awareness thereof.[17] Pārthasārathi thus separates the (subjective, epistemic) state of justification from the (objective) fact of truth.

This point clarifies the basic problem with Umveka's essentially psychologistic conflation of the causes *of cognition* with the causes of its truth. Although, of course, causal factors produce cognitions, it is problematic to allow that these same causal factors are all that produce justification. This is precisely the point of Kumārila's verse 48, according to which, "existents depend upon a cause for

their coming-into-being [*ātmalābhe*], but the operation of already constituted existents [*labdhātmanāṃ*] with respect to their proper tasks is precisely intrinsic."[18] Thus, for example, a jar depends for its existence on such causes as clay and a potter's wheel; but we would not say that the action of carrying water with it is itself thus caused. In this example, the action of carrying water is thus adduced as something like an Aristotelian "final cause"—and the point is that a teleological description of the intended use of a jar does not make sense as the effect of the relevant efficient causes. So, too, for cognition: our cognitive experiences are surely caused by all manner of different efficient causes; but the intentional activity of justifying our beliefs cannot itself be said to be the effect of those causes and must instead be given something like a teleological description.

This is the case, at least, if we are to avoid compromising our typical idea of what it means for the beliefs thus justified to be *true*. The treatment of Kumārila's account of falsification thus becomes crucial to understanding what Pārthasārathi means by *prāmāṇya*—to put it in Sanskrit terms, this discussion clarifies that to say that all cognitions should be judged intrinsically to have *prāmāṇya* is not, for Pārthasārathi, to say that all cognitions are intrinsically *pramāṇas*. The latter status, then, concerns truth, which obtains independently of anyone's knowing it; *prāmāṇya*, by contrast, concerns what some knower judges to be the case. Because he understands these as distinct Pārthasārathi can coherently take the whole doctrine of intrinsic validity precisely to depend on what Uṃveka saw as an unwanted consequence: that all cognitions must be assumed intrinsically to confer prima facie justification.[19] Only thus is it intelligible to say that when a cognition is subsequently overridden, what one gains is further perspective with respect to questions touching on things that can be objectively true (such that we can talk of a prima facie justified cognition's having been "a non-*pramāṇa* from the outset").

This point is in play when Pārthasārathi then addresses more precisely the charge that his interpretation has antirealist implications—specifically, that its phenomenological focus simply on how cognitions "appear" (*bhāti*) entails the consequence (unwanted by Mīmāṃsakas) that the objects of cognition are themselves internal to the knower. Pārthasārathi is here worth quoting at length, as his response is crucial to a full appreciation of his position:

> In regard to this, it is explained: first of all, as for what you said— "Cognition doesn't apprehend itself, because of its consisting [only] in the disclosure of an object; and when [cognition] is not itself being apprehended, validity can't be apprehended as being connected to it"—if we were saying that cognition apprehends by saying "I am a *pramāṇa*," or "validity belongs to me," then we could be censured as you say. But this is not what we said.[20]

Pārthasārathi thus restates the objection, clarifying that his interlocutor thinks it absurd for the validity of a cognition intrinsically to appear as part of the *content* of the cognition.[21] His caricature of the position thus attributed to him contains the seeds of a rejoinder: the objection is credible only if it is presupposed that validity is the outcome of (what is already known to be) a veridical cognition—in which case, it would indeed be necessary, first, to distinguish which cognitions were already veridical (and, hence, entitled to have validity predicated of them). To the extent that Pārthasārathi is talking simply about the intrinsic appearance of validity, his would therefore have to be the phenomenological point that veridical cognitions simply announce themselves as such ("I am a *pramāṇa*")—that they wear their epistemic credentials on their sleeves, initially appearing in such a way that we already know from their content which cognitions are suitable for predication of validity.

Clearly, that would not be a phenomenologically accurate account of our epistemic experience, and Pārthasārathi emphasizes that he is not saying that. Rather, Pārthasārathi's point is that although the content of our cognitions involves states of affairs that are possibly true, that is logically distinct from the issue of justification; and *being justified* therefore does not require that we first know which cognitions are *pramāṇas*. Pārthasārathi presses this point by emphasizing again that we are thus prima facie justified whether or not the cognitions in question turn out to have been veridical. He further clarifies:

> What, then, [are we saying]? That which is actually the validity of cognition, that in virtue of which a cognition becomes a *pramāṇa*—that, which is what is expressed when the word *prāmāṇya* is used, *by virtue of its* [*prāmāṇya's*] *being the motivator of the concept and the word "pramāṇa,"* is said to be apprehended by cognition itself.[22]

Pārthasārathi here provides an account of the word *prāmāṇya* that suggests how he has, like Alston, reversed the usual epistemological procedure (has reversed, in his case, *Uṃveka's* procedure): veridical cognition (cognition that is a *pramāṇa*) is now explained by the prior, prima facie fact of validity (*prāmāṇya*), rather than the converse. Thus, while Uṃveka thinks we can credit *prāmāṇya* only to those cognitions that are determined on other, causal grounds to be *pramāṇas* (to be *true*), Pārthasārathi instead starts from the fact that we are prima facie *justified* in taking either of the cognitions in Uṃveka's example—the "genuine" cognition of silver or the one that mistakes mother-of-pearl for silver—to be veridical. If, absent the arising of any overriding cognition, the prima facie justification holds, then the initial cognition stands as veridical (as a *pramāṇa*) *in virtue* of the fact that it was valid. This is what it means for Pārthasārathi to say that the concept of *prāmāṇya* is "the motivator of the con-

cept and the word *pramāṇa*" (*pramāṇabuddhiśabdayor bhāvakatayā*) and that it is in virtue of this that a cognition becomes a *pramāṇa* (*yadvaśāj jñānaṃ pramāṇaṃ bhavati*). Thus, the phenomenological content of cognition need not include the second-order awareness *that* it is veridical (it need not announce that "I am a *pramāṇa*") in order for it nevertheless to justify the belief that it accurately discloses its object.

Pārthasārathi concludes this section by showing once again that his account nevertheless involves a realist conception of truth:

> And what is that [validity]? The quiddity of an object [*arthatathātvam*]; for it is precisely the fact of its object's really existing in this way [*arthasya tathābhūtatvam*] that is the validity of a cognition, i.e., because of the validity of a cognition whose object exists in that way. And it is precisely [a cognition's] being otherwise than its object that is its *in*-validity. Therefore, validity, in the form of the quiddity of an object, belonging to [the cognition it-]self, is ascertained based on the cognition itself. It is not to be understood based on cognition of efficacies, or of correspondence, or of pragmatic efficacy [*arthakriyā*]. But *in*-validity, in the form of [cognition's] being otherwise than its object, is not understood intrinsically, i.e., as belonging to [the cognition it-]self; rather, it is based on cognition of a defect in the cause, or directly, based on [a contradictory] cognition such as "this [thing I had previously perceived turns out to be] not so." This is how, in regard to this, it is settled.[23]

Pārthasārathi, like Alston, thus still thinks of the justification defended by his account as conducive to the realization of truth, understood in realist terms—here, in terms of something like correspondence (i.e., the fact that a cognition's object really exists in the way presented). The point is simply that we are justified in finding such correspondence to obtain whenever "the validity of cognition that obtains simply by virtue of the fact that it is cognition" is not falsified by any subsequent overriding cognition.[24] We do not, that is, require any second-order awareness to confirm the validity that we are thus prima facie justified in assuming and the prima facie justification can nonetheless be taken as truth-conducive. Higher-order awareness is, however, required in order to override such justification. Thus, despite having relinquished (because of its unsustainability) the view that one can be justified only given higher-order cognitions to the effect *that* one is justified, one can nevertheless be entitled to claim that the beliefs intrinsically justified are really true.

After adducing several passages from Kumārila's texts to show that the interpretation thus defended is really the one recommended by Kumārila, Pārthasārathi further clarifies some of the other issues that were left open by Kumārila's

statement of the doctrine in his verse 47. He starts by anticipating an objection that once again mistakenly presupposes the standard order of epistemological procedure:

> But if validity is understood at the time of the occurrence of a cognition, [then] that which does not appear as being a *pramāṇa* at the beginning is a non-*pramāṇa*; hence, at the very beginning, it can be ascertained by elimination, even without overriding cognitions or cognitions of defects in the cause; hence, there would be the unwanted consequence that *in*-validity, too, is intrinsic.[25]

This objection ignores Pārthasārathi's earlier point, and the interlocutor remains committed to the presupposition that we can only speak of the effect that is validity after we have ascertained the cause that is veridical cognition—in which case, the claim that validity intrinsically appears at the outset would be the claim that one has awareness, *ab initio*, of which are the veridical cognitions that are entitled to bear this judgment. Here, the particular form of the objection is that this idea would entail the conclusion (unwanted by Mīmāṃsakas) that *in*-validity, too, is intrinsic; for whatever does not initially appear as a *pramāṇa* is, "by elimination," a non-*pramāṇa*. And as knowable by elimination at the outset, invalidity, too, would effectively be intrinsic.[26]

We have already seen how such an objection mistakes Pārthasārathi's claim. In the present statement of the objection, though, Pārthasārathi finds the occasion for a compelling clarification of the last of the issues that I had said would require our attention. Thus, he concludes:

> Don't speak thus! For this word *sva-* is not used with *validity* as its referent, [in which case] validity [would] appear simply because of validity. Nor is it [used] with *pramāṇa* as its referent; for if it were thus, then, since validity doesn't appear in non-*pramāṇas*, invalidity would be proven by elimination. Rather, this word *sva-* is reflexive [simply] to cognition.[27] Validity appears simply because there is cognition. And thus, validity is experienced, even though itself nonexistent, even based on a cognition which is not a *pramāṇa*; hence, there is not proof-by-elimination of invalidity. But *in*-validity is experienced subsequently, by way of the form of a cognized exception to validity. And this reflection on whether the validity of *pramāṇas* is intrinsic or dependent is not [simply] with reference to cognitions that are *pramāṇas*; rather, those that are based on cognitions that are in contact with more than one mutually exclusive extreme, such as [cognitions whose content is indeterminate, like] "is this a post or a man?," and those that are redundant because of being memory cognitions,[28] and those whose forms are [certain,]

like "this is a jar, this is a cloth"—this reflection is with reference to all of these cognitions, because [Kumārila] begins [this whole project] by saying "This, whose object is all cognitions, is to be investigated."[29]

Here, then, in addition to concluding with another passage showing his exegetical adequacy to Kumārila, Pārthasārathi finally clarifies why in fact we must take the reflexive *sva-* in Kumārila's verse ("the validity of all reliable warrants should be understood as based on [cognition] itself") as reflexive to all cognitions—even those that turn out not to have been veridical. In this regard, Pārthasārathi here lists three options. According to the first, Kumārila's epistemology would be defending only the vacuous claim that "the validity of all reliable warrants should be understood as based on validity itself." More important, he considers the possibility that *sva-* is reflexive only to all *veridical* cognitions (only to *pramāṇas*). This, Pārthasārathi points out, is what is assumed by the objection he is here addressing (as by Uṃveka). Pārthasārathi thus tries, against his interlocutor's stubborn refusal to appreciate that Pārthasārathi has inverted the logic of conventional epistemology, to foreclose the possibility of any further mistaking of his point, which is clearly stated in this part of the foregoing: "Validity appears simply because there is cognition. And thus, validity is experienced, even though itself non-existent, even based on a cognition which is not a pramāṇa."[30]

Pārthasārathi could not state any more clearly his phenomenological claim that we generally experience our awareness as disclosing an accurately represented world—with our *justification* in that belief being, Pārthasārathi again emphasizes, logically distinct from the question of whether or not any particular awareness is a *pramāṇa* (whether, that is, it is *true*). In the terms suggested by Alston, we can say that this phenomenological point advances an essentially doxastic account of justification—which is to say that what it is that we are justified in believing, on Pārthasārathi's account, is not limited to what can be shown to have caused a cognition; rather, we are justified in forming beliefs about whatever appears in that cognition. And while this epistemological claim thus turns on a basically phenomenological point about how cognitions appear, it is nevertheless compatible with a realist conception of truth— compatible, that is, with the idea that the beliefs justified on this account *really are true*, independent of the fact of anyone's knowing so. Indeed, only on such a view is it possible to make any sense of Kumārila's account of the subsequent falsification of prima facie justified beliefs.

But Pārthasārathi's interpretation is not warranted only by its exegetical adequacy to Kumārila's account of falsification; his view also gains purchase from a more general consideration of the relationship between truth and justification— a consideration advanced by Pārthasārathi's point that *prāmāṇya*'s appearing

intrinsically does not mean the cognition in question is intrinsically a *pramāṇa*. A realist conception of truth, as characterized in Chapter 2, virtually *consists* in recognizing that these are distinct; nevertheless, justification regarding the truth of beliefs is all that we ever get here in this sublunary world—given which, the truth of justified beliefs is not something that is additionally known. That is, to be justified just is to be entitled to think that one's beliefs are really true. Nothing would be added by showing (what the Mīmāṃsakas are arguing we cannot show anyway) that one's justified beliefs were also true; for to be justified is already to be entitled to believe this! This is the sense in which this epistemology amounts to a critique of the view that "knowledge" consists in something like "justified true belief." This point is further developed below in discussion of the question (hitherto deferred) of the real project that is served by this whole epistemological doctrine (that of securing the uniquely authoritative status of the Vedas). First, however, the argument should be situated, more explicitly than has been done to this point, in terms of the foundationalist epistemology of Buddhist philosophers like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

"Mīmāṃsā Has Only One Real Enemy: Buddhism"

Now that we have considered a philosophical and exegetical disagreement among Mīmāṃsakas who claim to share a commitment to the doctrine of intrinsic validity, it remains for us to consider more closely how the doctrine explored here (especially on the Alstonian interpretation advanced with respect to Pārthasārathimiśra) can be read in particular as a critique of the foundationalist epistemology of Buddhists in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.[31] Mīmāṃsaka tradition (and the Sanskritic philosophical tradition more generally) leaves no doubt that it is the Buddhists who are thought to uphold precisely the opposite view (that it is *in*-validity that is intrinsic, while demonstration of validity requires appeal to something else), which is the one of the four possible positions on the subject that Kumārila elaborates at greatest length before turning to his own view.[32] Moreover, Buddhists (or, at least, those writing subsequent to Kumārila and Uṃveka) knew this attribution, too. Thus, Kamalaśīla's commentary to the *svataḥ prāmāṇya* chapter of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* lays out the same fourfold scheme[33]—and, while Kamalaśīla here presents the positions without attributing them, he subsequently makes clear that he knows it is the "extrinsic validity" position that is attributed to the Buddhists.[34]

To be sure, Kamalaśīla (and other Buddhist philosophers writing after him) refuses this attribution. Thus, with regard to this standard schematization, Kamalaśīla says:

But having laid out these four positions, with the predication of deficiency [particularly] rendered regarding the third [ostensibly Buddhist] position, there is nevertheless no harm whatsoever of the Buddhist; for not a single one of these four positions is accepted by the Buddhists, since they accept a position without restriction. That is to say, in some cases both are intrinsic, in some cases extrinsic, as was previously explained [elsewhere in the *Tattvasaṃgraha*]. That is why the presentation of the fourfold position doesn't make sense, since there is the possibility of a fifth, unrestricted position.[35]

Elsewhere in the same chapter, Kamalaśīla specifies which *pramāṇas are* thus accepted by Buddhists as intrinsically valid:

Some *pramāṇas* are admitted by the Buddhists as intrinsically [valid]; for example, apperception [*svasaṃvedanapratyakṣaṃ*], yogic cognition, cognition of pragmatic efficacy [*arthakriyājñānam*], inference, and habituated perception—[in the latter case], because this is ascertained intrinsically, since the [inherently] mistaken cause is mitigated by the force of repetition. Other [*pramāṇas*] are otherwise [i.e., extrinsically valid], such as the cognition engendered by injunction, whose authority is produced [only] by debate, as well as perceptions whose delusive causes are not set aside, since these are not pervaded either by cognition of pragmatic efficacy, or by repetition.[36]

Notwithstanding these Buddhist protests, there are good reasons for thinking that Buddhists (particularly those, like Kamalaśīla, who stand in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti) can aptly be characterized as holding that the validity of cognitions is extrinsic—though it requires a bit of reconstruction to see this, since Kumārila and his commentators do not seem to give the best reasons for so understanding the Buddhist position. Recall that Kumārila represents the Buddhists as arguing that *in*-validity is best understood as the mere absence of validity and that it is therefore only validity, as a positively existing "entity," that requires any special explanation—with its mere absence being, as it were, the default setting.[37] It is perhaps possible to relate this argument to the more important points, but the significant motivation underlying Buddhist accounts is more neatly captured by Pārthasārathimiśra. Although he devotes most of his attention to alternative interpretations of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* held by other Mīmāṃsakas, near the end of the chapter he turns to face the Buddhists, whose reasoning he summarizes thus:

Since we see that there is cognition of a jar that is [sometimes] based on a jar, and [sometimes] *not* based on a jar, a jar cannot be ascertained only by

that [i.e., by a cognition that seems to us to have a jar as its object]. Thus, it must be ascertained that the arising of a cognition of a jar [really is] based on a jar only after ascertainment that there is a jar which really exists as the cause of that cognition, [which ascertainment can be] based only on perception of pragmatic efficacy.[38]

It is easy to find Buddhists whose accounts reveal that Pārthasārathi's representation of their reasoning is basically on target—and in fact, indications of his accuracy are even forthcoming from the very passages (cited above) in which Kamalaśīla protests that Buddhists do not hold the view that validity is extrinsic! What is particularly significant here is Kamalaśīla's indication of the special role that is thought by Buddhists to be played by what Kamalaśīla refers to as "cognition of pragmatic efficacy" (*arthakriyājñānam*)—which is among the cognitions whose validity Kamalaśīla says obtains intrinsically. Thus, Pārthasārathi represents the holders of this position as affirming, with respect to a cognition of a jar, that ascertainment that there is a jar really existing as the cause of that cognition (*taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścaya*) can be based only on perception of pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyādarśanād eva*).[39] Pārthasārathi here expresses a claim typically made by Buddhists, and this shows that the characteristically Buddhist appeals to this notion in fact beg the question. Indeed, far from providing evidence that the Mīmāṃsaka characterization of the Buddhist position is inaccurate, Buddhist appeals to *arthakriyājñānam* can corroborate the judgment that the Mīmāṃsakas are basically right here.

The notion of "pragmatic efficacy" (*arthakriyā*), as shown to some extent in Part I, is central to both the epistemology and the ontology elaborated particularly by Buddhist philosophers following Dharmakīrti.[40] It is central to ontology insofar as it is held that capacity to perform some causal function is definitive of "existing." As Uṃveka says in characterizing this Buddhist conviction, "being a thing is defined by being causally efficacious"[41]—a statement that clearly echoes Dharmakīrti's contention that "whatever has the capacity for pragmatic efficacy is said to be ultimately real."[42] For these Buddhists, that is, to exist just is to be causally interrelated with other existents.[43] Causal efficacy as the criterion of existence has a parallel significance in the context of epistemology, where it seems apt to render the term *arthakriyā* as "pragmatic efficacy"; the epistemological claim is that one can know only that with which one comes into meaningful causal contact and that such causal contact as furthers one's aims represents the best (and finally the only) way of ascertaining anything. Thus, Pārthasārathi represents these Buddhists as holding that the only way to be sure that one's cognition of a jar was caused by a really existing jar is by appeal to pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyādarśanād eva taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścayapuraḥsaraṃ*)—by, for example, seeing whether one can successfully carry water with the thing perceived.

There is an important element in the Buddhist foundationalist approach that makes this appeal particularly important: namely, the contentious characterization, by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, of perception as definitively "free of conceptual construction." The trouble, as seen in Part I, is that second-order cognitions such as ascertainment (*niścaya*), as these same Buddhists insist, are eminently "conceptual" (*vikalpaka*). The idea of "cognition of pragmatic efficacy" then figures importantly in one of the traditional attempts to address this tension—namely, that of appeal to "ascertainment that is obtained subsequent to perception" (*pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*).[44] Thus, the second-order ascertainment of a first-order perception is, it turns out, confirmed by an inference—specifically, an inference from the subsequently observed fact of pragmatic efficacy. As the Buddhist Śāntarakṣita puts this, "The validity of perception, too, is by way of inference, as already explained and ascertained; that [perception] is [inferred to be] a *pramāṇa* by virtue of its being produced by pure causes, like other ones [i.e., perceptions]."[45] Hence, the commentator Devendrabuddhi's appeal to a subsequent *pramāṇa*—and specifically, to one "in which appears the accomplishment of one's goal" (*arthakriyānirbhāsam*), or, as we might render this compound, one "whose phenomenological content is action with respect to a goal."[46] Hence, the need to concede (on pain of infinite regress) that this subsequent *pramāṇa* has *its* validity intrinsically.

Whether we understand *arthakriyā* (with John Dunne) in terms of accomplishment of one's goal or instead in terms of action with respect to a goal—or, even more to the point, in terms of an abstract *capacity* for action with respect to a goal (as when Dharmakīrti speaks of the ultimately real in terms of "what has the capacity for pragmatic efficacy")—will have some bearing on how we understand the Buddhist claim here. Thus, there is an intuitively plausible interpretation of the Buddhist claim, according to which it might make sense to think that "pragmatic efficacy" does indeed represent a uniquely natural point of closure to the epistemic process. Specifically, one could take the point here to concern chiefly the accomplishment (*siddhi*) of one's aims.[47] Thus, to take the example of checking one's initial perception of a jar by trying to see if one can usefully carry water with it, the only point in doing so might be that one had wanted a drink—in which case, one gets the water and then drinks. At this point, the goal is accomplished. One might, of course, ask whether one really knows that one had really taken a drink, but what would be the point? To the extent that one's goal was just to get a drink, the accomplishment of that goal might really be questioned only in terms of whether that was the right goal to have.

But such "accomplishment" (*siddhi*) is not itself the sort of thing of which it makes sense to predicate *prāmāṇya*, which has to do instead with cognitions. For this reason, what particularly recurs in Buddhist discussions of this is reference to variations on the expression *arthakriyānirbhāsaṃ jñānam* ("cognition

whose phenomenological content is pragmatic efficacy").[48] But what we have in that case is talk of a privileged *kind* of cognition—one whose phenomenological content distinguishes it from, say, garden-variety perceptions and is such that this kind of cognition uniquely confers justification intrinsically. The problem with such an appeal is that the second-order awareness *that* the thing perceived is pragmatically efficacious is itself another cognition! How, then, can we be confident that, having seemed to carry water with the thing that we had judged to be a jar, we have now, as it were, reached epistemic bedrock?

The Mīmāṃsaka will rightly allow that a subsequent cognition concerning pragmatic efficacy can count as a potential source of falsification; the impossibility of carrying water with the thing in question would surely count toward overriding the previously justified belief that it was a jar. What the Mīmāṃsakas refuse, however, is the claim that the cognition of pragmatic efficacy provides a fundamentally different *kind* of justification than the initial cognition. Confidence, to the contrary, that pragmatic efficacy does provide something more—that it tells us, e.g., that an initially justified belief is also *true*— can be based only on the presupposition that "pragmatic efficacy" is somehow more immediately available to awareness than, say, a jar—which is just what Kamalaśīla and Manorathanandin have said when they claim that the second-order cognition of pragmatic efficacy is, uniquely, intrinsically valid. But this begs precisely the question at issue, and the Mīmāṃsakas can (and do) quite reasonably ask, as Alston would: if you're willing to credit the subsequent cognition as intrinsically valid, why not just credit the initial cognition as such?[49]

Of course, these Buddhists want to avoid thus crediting the initial cognition since this encourages the kind of direct realism favored by the Mīmāṃsakas. Against that, these Buddhists defend an epistemology that recommends wariness with respect to our naive intuitions (a wariness guided, above all, by the constitutively Buddhist concern to avoid warranting any putative experience of a *self*). Pārthasārathi rightly sees that this epistemology bases justification only on the right kind of relationship to the things known, with such a relationship being called for by the recognition that, as we are surely all aware, we sometimes seem to see a jar when, it turns out, there is no jar there to be seen—just as, for Buddhists, we typically think we experience our *selves,* when in fact there are only causally connected continua of fleeting sense-data. The Buddhist foundationalists thus quintessentially exemplify the standard epistemological procedure, according to which the relationship in question is understood as a causal relationship, with appeal to "pragmatic efficacy" ultimately being meant to show that there really is a jar that exists as the cause of our cognition of a jar.

It should be allowed, however, that the foregoing characterization of Buddhist foundationalism becomes more complicated if we try to account for the foundational role in particular of apperception (*svasaṃvitti*). Surely, it might be

thought that the incorrigible knowledge that we have some experience can, in virtue of its alleged immediacy, represent a uniquely logical terminus of any epistemic regress (in which case, it may indeed have a claim to being, uniquely, "intrinsically valid"). But, as seen in Chapter 2, there is a real question as to whether knowledge only to the effect *that* we have mental events can at once be immediate (read: nonpropositional) and still count as "knowledge," at all.[50] Moreover, there is also the question of what kinds of beliefs could be warranted by such knowledge; this appeal to subjective immediacy amounts in the end to an epistemic conception of truth. More basically, insofar as the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine depends (as on Pārthasārathi's interpretation) on taking *all* cognitions as intrinsically capable of conferring justification, what is finally problematic about the Buddhist approach (and what renders that vulnerable to the Mīmāṃsaka critique) is simply the claim that only certain kinds of cognition have this status. What the Mīmāṃsakas have shown to be problematic, in other words, is simply the view that one can specify that certain kinds of cognition are uniquely able to confer justification, simply in virtue of their being of that kind—with the question of which kinds are thus singled out ultimately being less significant.

Wedded as they are to an essentially causal approach to justification, the Buddhist critics of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity do not appreciate that their attempt to privilege causally explicable cognitions only presupposes precisely what is called into question by that doctrine (at least on Pārthasārathi's interpretation thereof). Thus, Śāntarakṣita's answer to the question of why we should credit the second-order cognition of "pragmatic efficacy" (but not the first-order cognition in need of being warranted thereby) is no answer at all:

> Therefore, so long as there has arisen no cognition whose phenomenological content is pragmatic efficacy, there can be doubt regarding the initial cognition's veridicality, owing to the [possibility of] causes of deception. In regard to the first cognition, there are various causes of deception, such as the non-perception of its effect, perception of similarity [with mistaken cognitions], dullness of the cognition, and so forth. But when there appears a cognition which apprehends the effect, there is no [cause of deception], because of the experience of action[51] that is directly related to the thing [perceived in the first cognition].[52]

This attempt to specify a kind of cognition that is uniquely invulnerable to doubt simply presupposes that the subsequent "experience of action" is reliable—which is, the Mīmāṃsakas have cogently argued, something that could itself be

known only by the same epistemic warrants that are here purportedly explained. Śāntarakṣita's conclusion, then, simply displays what Alston has aptly called epistemic circularity.

Justification, Truth, and the Question of Vedic Authority

By way of a concluding assessment of the Mīmāṃsaka project, let us consider Pārthasārathi's closing claim that if the governing Mīmāṃsaka goal (securing the authority of the Vedas) is to be served, the doctrine in question *must* be understood as concerning the justification conferred by all kinds of cognitions. Not only does this represent one of Pārthasārathi's strongest claims to have advanced an interpretation that is most adequate to the internal logic of the Mīmāṃsaka tradition, but it is at this point that we can best make the case that Pārthasārathi's interpretation of Kumārila's epistemology not only is compatible with a realist conception of truth (its phenomenological character notwithstanding) but in fact is the best route to such a conception. That is, to the extent that his interpretation specifically eschews the foundationalist presuppositions of his Buddhist opponents (and retained by Umveka), Pārthasārathi can successfully avoid an ultimately epistemic conception of truth—which he must do if the Mīmāṃsakas are to sustain their claim that the injunctions of the Vedas are really, objectively true.

Interestingly, Pārthasārathi's argument here represents one of the few points at which Pārthasārathi (or any Mīmāṃsaka, for that matter) follows the lead of a Buddhist philosopher—in particular, Dignāga, who first formulated for the Indian context one of the most basic principles of intertraditional philosophical debate: in order for one's inference to be probative for the other party to a debate, it must turn on a reason that is accepted by both parties, so that one cannot, for example, adduce as a reason something given only in the scriptures of one party.[53] Pārthasārathi thus invokes this principle to emphasize, contra Umveka, that validity must be understood as obtaining prima facie with respect to all cognitions, not only those that turn out to have been veridical:

> And if it were considered with only *pramāṇas* as object, then, since the object [has to] be established for both parties to the debate, all that would be conclusively shown would be the intrinsic validity of those [objects] that are [already] established as being *pramāṇas* for both [parties]. And thus, because of the Veda's not being a [possible] object of inquiry, since it is not a *pramāṇa* established for both parties, its intrinsic validity would not be established. In this matter, a reflection that is not conducive to [showing]

the validity of the Vedas would be [for Mīmāṃsakas] pointless, like an inquiry regarding a crow's teeth. But when intrinsic validity and dependent invalidity are being proven with respect to cognition, *simpliciter* [*jñānamātram*], [then] validity, in the form of the quiddity of an object, can be understood as intrinsically belonging to the Veda, too. Because of the absence of cognition of faults in [its] cause, it becomes established without exception; hence, [given my emphasis on the fact that we are concerned with the intrinsic validity of *all* cognitions, and not simply with those that turn out to be veridical], this reflection is purposeful.[54]

In what strikes me as the *coup de grâce* for his argument, Pārthasārathi here points out that Mīmāṃsakas cannot proceed on the assumption that what is at stake is only the validity of *pramāṇas* (i.e., the validity only of those cognitions that are already known to be valid); according to Dignāga's widely accepted rule for debate, such an assumption would effectively disqualify the Veda from coming under the purview of this discussion, insofar as non-Mīmāṃsakas will not grant that the Veda is a *pramāṇa*. Indeed, whether or not the Veda (and specifically, *codanā* [Vedic injunction]) should count as a *pramāṇa* is precisely the issue in question. Therefore, Pārthasārathi suggests, it would be to little avail to ask how it is simply that *pramāṇas* have the status they do, since it must first be ascertained that Vedic injunction is an example of one. And the only way to further this goal is to show that all cognitions (even those that turn out not to have been veridical) should, prima facie, be credited with validity; then the point is that, insofar as a cognition engendered by a Vedic injunction (simply in virtue of its *being* a cognition) has validity, the Vedic injunction first becomes a candidate for status as a *pramāṇa*. This again shows Pārthasārathi's reversal of the usual procedure (retained by Uṃveka), which would be to show that something has validity (*prāmāṇya*) insofar as it was caused by a *pramāṇa*.

Pārthasārathi rightly sees, then, that the only way for the argument to be mounted is instead to show that Vedic injunction is a *pramāṇa* because it has validity (and because its validity can never be overridden—on which, more below). Here is the most significant similarity with the governing logic of Alston's approach; Alston makes precisely the same point when he notes that the only way to argue, in such a way as to address those who antecedently reject the assumption that God exists, "that people do genuinely perceive God is to argue for the epistemological position that beliefs formed on the basis of such (putative) perceptions are (prima facie) justified. If this is the case, we have a good reason for regarding many of the putative perceptions as genuine; for if the subject were not often really perceiving X why should the experience involved provide justification for beliefs about X?" (1991:10). Similarly, Pārthasārathi can ask: if it were not really the case that one desirous of heaven should

perform a Vedic sacrifice (*svargakāmo yajeta*), then why would the experience of a Vedic injunction to that effect provide justification for that belief?

As in Alston's case, Pārthasārathi's reversal here remains compatible with a realist conception of truth, such that the beliefs in Vedic injunction thus justified can reasonably be thought really to be true. This is, as Pārthasārathi particularly stresses, because only on his interpretation can Kumārila's account of falsification remain coherent—with a subsequent cognition to the effect that an initially justified cognition was erroneous not altering the fact that said cognition was itself a non-*pramāṇa* from the outset. That answer, however, represents precisely the issue regarding which opponents of Kumārila and Pārthasārathi are apt to see them as vulnerable to a vicious regress of their own, such that they might be thought finally unable to claim a realist conception of truth. The concern of these opponents might be this: if, having had one cognition that overrides another, a person is justified in believing that the first one really was a non-*pramāṇa* from the outset (and that all that has changed is one's awareness of that fact), then what is one to say if the second, overriding cognition is in turn falsified? If what was known with the second cognition is supposed to have concerned what was really the case (that the initial cognition was a non-*pramāṇa* from the outset), then what does it mean to say that this cognition has now been falsified?

Kumārila's answer, as seen earlier,[55] consisted partly in the reiteration of a basically phenomenological point: whether or not a cognition overrides a previous one is simply a function of whether or not it seems, phenomenologically, to do so. But that answer is unlikely to satisfy the opponent who persists in thinking that there is no obvious relationship between what seems to be the case and what we are justified in believing—or who thinks, more to the point, that there is no obvious relationship between this kind of strictly phenomenological account of what it means to be justified and the possibility that the beliefs thus justified might really be *true*. What such an opponent (Uṃveka, like the Buddhists, is one of these) will think is that we must therefore determine not only whether we are justified in our belief but whether, in addition, it is true. This analysis of our epistemic situation appears tantamount to the familiar twentieth-century analysis according to which "knowledge" is defined as "justified true belief." This is, in other words, the claim that one is entitled to claim knowledge only when one is both justified (when, that is, one holds the belief for the right kinds of reasons) and capable of demonstrating (presumably on grounds other than those that provide justification) that the belief thus justified is also true—as in the procedure of Uṃveka, who argues that we must first know, by appeal to causal grounds, which cognitions are *prāmaṇas*, and only then credit just those with *prāmāṇya*.

But the whole point of Kumārila's epistemology is that there can be no other kind of grounds for demonstrating that a justified belief is also true than the

"kind" that provides justification in the first place. If that is right, though, then we cannot think that it is possible to know of any belief we hold that it is not only justified, but also true. The answer available to Pārthasārathi, then, is one of the lessons we can take from Alston and in the end has to do with the relationship between justification and truth. The point is the deceptively straightforward one that insofar as to be justified just is to be entitled to think one's beliefs really true, nothing would be added by showing that one's justified beliefs were also true; to be justified just is to be entitled to think this already. In this vein, the commentator Sucaritamiśra, asking what more justification one could desire than that on the basis of which any further inquiry must proceed, asks rhetorically: "What else will validity be? Even if there is correspondence or cognition of the virtue [of a source of cognition], there is only so much reality to the validity; there is no increase at all. So what's the use of [any further validation]?"[56]

This epistemology can usefully be understood, then, as a critique of the view that "knowledge" consists in something like "justified true belief." Of course, the latter expression does not occur in the context of Indian philosophy, being peculiar instead to twentieth-century Anglo-American philosophical debates centering on a brief (but much-discussed) article by Edmund Gettier (1963). Karl Potter (1984) has, however, already argued that Indian epistemology characteristically does not concern the idea that "knowledge" consists in "justified true belief." But Potter's reasons for contending that this idea of knowledge is not at stake in these debates seems to miss the point that Pārthasārathi in particular appears to advance. Potter remains focused on the essentially causal account of the doctrine of intrinsic validity and simply transforms this into a basically *pragmatist* conception of truth—one such that (as befits a basically epistemic conception such as pragmatism) "truth" becomes superfluous. Thus:

> The *svataḥ* theorist holds that, whatever causes us to be aware of [some awareness] J1 causes us to be aware that J1 can satisfy its purpose, i.e., can lead to successful activity of the relevant sort. The *parataḥ* theorist denies this, holding that in order to become aware that J1 can satisfy its purpose we need a further awareness, presumably inferential, which is over and beyond the awareness which causes us to be aware of J1 itself. . . . Notice that it doesn't matter to the *prāmāṇya* debate . . . whether [some initial cognition] J1 is true or false, or thought to be true or false. Whether a theorist holds that all awarenesses are true, or all are false, or that some are and some not, the *prāmāṇya* issue remains a real one. Nor does it matter whether a theorist thinks that only true awarenesses can lead to successful activity or, alternatively, thinks that some awarenesses capable of leading to successful activity can be false. The issue concerns whether, when one becomes aware that J1 is a potential purpose-satisfier, he does so through the same aware-

ness by which he became aware of J1's occurrence, or through some *other* awareness.[57]

But Pārthasārathi does not advance a reading in which truth is, in the end, superfluous; what he claims for belief in Vedic injunction is, rather, the full-blooded truth that characterizes a realist conception thereof (as he puts it, "the being thus of an object").[58] His novel and important epistemological point is simply that this is the kind of truth that we are justified in attributing to our beliefs so long as this is what our cognitions seem, phenomenologically, to justify us in believing. Contra Potter, then, it is not the idea of *truth* that is jettisoned on this account of Kumārila's argument; rather, what has been rejected is simply the idea that truth is something further that one could know, over and above the fact of being justified. It is precisely the point of Pārthasārathi's interpretation of Kumārila, then, that one cannot know anything more about the truth of one's beliefs than one already knows in being justified.

The view that is thus available to Pārthasārathi can be developed by referring to Mark Kaplan. Where Potter had argued that the "justified true belief" analysis of knowledge is not aptly taken as presupposed in Indian arguments concerning *prāmāṇya*, Kaplan argues that, notwithstanding the ubiquity of articles on "Gettier cases," such is not properly taken to be significantly at issue in Western philosophical discussion, either. Kaplan, whose philosophical sympathies are with such ordinary language philosophers as discussed in Part III,[59] identifies the same problem with the "justified true belief" analysis characterized here. Thus:

> Imagine that you have been engaging in an inquiry. Being a responsible inquirer, you have carefully weighed evidence and argument and have come to the conclusion that the weight of evidence clearly favors *P* and, so, you have concluded that *P* is true. Suppose you now ask yourself, "But do I *know* that *P*?" Notice that, on the justified-true-belief analysis of knowledge, there is nothing to find out, nothing to do. Having already satisfied yourself that *P* is true and that the evidence supports your contention that *P* is true, you have ipso facto already satisfied yourself that you have justified true belief. From where you sit, determining whether you believe *P* with justification and determining whether you know that *P* come to the same thing. But then, far from being integral to your pursuit of inquiry, distinguishing the propositions you know from those you don't know is, on the justified-true-belief analysis, a fifth wheel. "Knowledge" turns out to be nothing more than an honorific you may bestow on those of your beliefs which you consider justified should using the term "justified" alone seem tiresome. (Kaplan 1985:355)

Similarly, *prāmāṇya*, on Uṃveka's account, ends up being superfluous, insofar as it is simply what we predicate of those cognitions that we already know, on other grounds, to be *pramāṇas*. It adds nothing to our analysis, then, to call the outcome of the epistemic process *prāmāṇya*, and what we would have with Kumārila's epistemology would not at all serve to explain anything about what might and might not be credible candidates for the status of *pramāṇa*—and least of all, as Pārthasārathi has now compellingly shown, how the Vedas could be argued to qualify for that status.

For Pārthasārathi, in contrast, *prāmāṇya*, considered the prima facie justification that we are intrinsically entitled to take our cognitions generally to confer, does offer some explanation in this regard. Specifically, it is what launches the Vedas, as it were, as potential *pramāṇas*. That is, only by taking "validity" as what *starts* the epistemic process is there any chance that the Vedas might at the end of the day be judged to have the status of *pramāṇa*. But this procedure can be thought to compromise a realist conception of truth only if it is thought that the "truth" of one's beliefs were something that one could know over and above one's being justified; as Kaplan helpfully suggests, the incoherence of that idea is built into our conception of knowledge, according to which "knowledge is indistinguishable from the agent's point of view from merely justified belief."[60]

Moreover, this point need not be seen as condemning us to epistemological solipsism; we can appreciate the same point even if we adopt a third-person perspective on any truth-claim. In that case, the point to appreciate is that when someone else attributes "knowledge" to a subject—that is, when an observer not only allows that a subject is justified, but, moreover, affirms that what the subject believes is true—the observer is doing nothing more than endorsing the claim himself, not attributing any metaphysical "property" to it.[61] We are, then, entitled to conclude, with Kaplan, that "we must admit, on pain of denying that we know much of anything, that what distinguishes fallibly justified beliefs that constitute knowledge from fallibly justified beliefs that do not constitute knowledge is some feature of those beliefs which is undetectable by the agent."[62]

This point can just as well be framed in (recently much discussed) terms of the difference between internalism and externalism in epistemology. In these terms, one can suppose (untenably) that the epistemic desiderata (validity, justification, or whatever) that make for knowledge must be available to the knower, who must therefore be able at least in principle to demonstrate, by appeal to this internally available desideratum, that her beliefs are warranted. This is, as seen in Chapter 2, effectively what Buddhist philosophers like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are saying particularly in claiming a foundational role for the self-reflexive awareness or "apperception" (*svasaṃvedana*) that finally knows only that one has some occurrent mental events. The externalist, in contrast, holds that one need not always be thus able to justify her beliefs in order never-

theless to be justified.[63] To the extent that we favor these terms of debate, it should be clear that what Alston and Pārthasārathi are upholding is a basically externalist epistemology[64]—given which, the possibility of subsequent falsification is the main force behind revisions in belief, and positive "validation" is impossible if that is thought to consist in adducing reasons that are somehow thought to afford an essentially different kind of purchase than the initial grounds for justification.

This reading of Kumārila and Pārthasārathi as effectively countering something like a "justified true belief" analysis of knowledge is crucial, in turn, to appreciating how these thinkers undermine the consequence that their account leaves the epistemic process infinitely open, with there being no possible conclusion in the form of real certainty. By way of addressing this issue, Taber chiefly explicates Kumārila's verses 56 and 57, whose point he summarizes thus: "If, over the long run, the cognition is not shown to be false, then on the basis of its initial, intrinsic validity one is certainly justified in believing that it is not false, that it is really true."[65] While this is surely right, I find the argument to be a stronger one concerning the relationship between justification and truth: A realist conception of truth requires that we recognize these as logically distinct (just as Pārthasārathi argues that prima facie *prāmāṇya* does not necessarily mean that we have a *pramāṇa*); but insofar as the Mīmāṃsakas have shown that it is not something that can be known apart from being justified, truth is to be retained simply as a regulative ideal, and being justified in thinking one's beliefs really true is therefore all that is possible. In that case, to settle for something less than demonstrative certainty is not simply the only way to retain any knowledge at all (since otherwise "the whole world would be blind"), but just is to recognize that the truth of beliefs is logically independent of justification (since there is nothing whose truth compels assent, no cognition that announces "I am a *pramāṇa*").

Among the implications of this is that it cannot (contra Śāntarakṣita)[66] be thought reasonable to suppose that we must suspend judgment regarding all cognitions that are so much as potentially vulnerable to doubt. So Pārthasārathi: "Doubt is not reasonable owing simply to there being cognition, since doubt [itself] depends on certainty in regard to ordinary properties and the like. Thus, there necessarily occur *some* cognitions whose invalidity is not suspected, and there is not, therefore, doubt in regard to *every* [cognition]."[67] That is, it is incoherent to suppose that every cognition could be doubted, insofar as all our discursive interactions with the world—even the expression of doubt!—depend on our taking ourselves already to know a great deal.

It turns out that Śabara may not, after all, have been in such a weak position from which to turn the tables on an opponent who demands a perceptual verification of a stock Vedic injunction, challenging him to show us someone's not

going to heaven as a result of performing the *agnihotra* sacrifice. In Kumārila's fuller elaboration of a comprehensive epistemology (as interpreted by Pārthasārathimiśra), Śabara's turns out to be the nontrivial point that there cannot coherently be thought to be any special kind of cognition that, simply in virtue of its being of that kind, is uniquely capable of warranting all those other cognitions that constitutively lack this special capacity. Pārthasārathi is, then, making a philosophically significant point when he puts the matter conditionally: "If there is validity, it must be admitted as intrinsic."[68] That is, the necessity of assuming that cognitions intrinsically confer justification can be denied only by paying the high cost of denying that we know much of anything.

Should We All, Then, Perform the *Agnihotra* Sacrifice?

The argument as I have understood it seems formidable and expresses what are basically our common-sense intuitions about our epistemic practices. Still, we are entitled to ask whether the Mīmāṃsakas' deployment of this epistemological doctrine really does (as one might suppose that they would wish to conclude) positively compel agreement with the claim that the Vedas are uniquely authoritative. Should we, that is, all be persuaded to become Mīmāṃsakas? It would compromise a realist conception of truth to think so, since it is a hallmark of a realist conception that the truth of something obtains independently of whether or not anyone happens to believe it—and independently, therefore, of whether or not an argument supporting it happens to persuade anyone. In the interest of a more comprehensive assessment of the Mīmāṃsaka program, though, we can entertain a question that can arise from the use of Alston in interpreting the Mīmāṃsaka argument: Is the case of hearing a Vedic injunction really, as my comparison with Alston seems to require, precisely parallel to cases in which the presentational immediacy of an experience entitles us to characterize it as perceptual?

Recall that Alston's case for the essentially perceptual character of experiences of God centrally involved examples of subjects who reported finding themselves presented with something that impinges on their faculties.[69] In the Mīmāṃsaka example, by contrast, we are faced, in the form of a Vedic "injunction" (*codanā*), with a text—and it is not clear that this makes the same kind of claim on someone who hears it as does a perceptual experience; it seems that higher-order judgments must already have been made in order for its injunctions to be meaningful, such that it is not immediately clear that textual knowledge qualifies as what Alston calls a "doxastic practice." This question arises when one considers Śabara's claim that for an utterance to "say" something just is for it to "cause one to be aware."[70] But does a textual utterance really "cause

one to be aware" in the same way that a perception does? Is the experience of hearing a proposition precisely analogous to the experience of seeing a tree?

In this regard, it is relevant to consider Alston's answer to one objection that his project is likely to raise: surely, it is an absurd consequence of Alston's proposal that we are left with no choice but to credit the prima facie justified status of beliefs issuing from, say, the practice of astrology. Alston's answer to this objection turns on a clarification of what he means by "doxastic practice"; he contends that systems such as astrology represent not basic "belief-forming practices" but, rather, higher-order theories or conceptual frameworks that are used to interpret and order such beliefs as are more basically formed.[71] Whether Alston's distinction here can be sustained seems questionable, particularly such that we can still understand, say, "Christian Mystical Practice" as the properly basic sort of thing Alston seems to intend by "doxastic practice."[72] Regardless of whether it is tenable, however, Alston's point here suggests an important difference between his cases of "experience of God" and Śabara's case of the cognition produced by a Vedic injunction: Insofar as higher-order judgments (specifically, *hermeneutical* judgments) must already have been made in order for Vedic injunctions to be meaningful, surely participation in the Vedic practice would, on Alston's view, count as something more like the deployment of a higher-order theory or conceptual scheme than like a basic "doxastic practice." We can avoid putting this point in terms of Alston's possibly problematic distinction, though, simply by emphasizing that texts do not (as Śabara's example seems to require) simply and straightforwardly "produce" cognition.[73]

If, as Alston claims, perceptual awarenesses can be characterized by presentational immediacy, it is nevertheless the case that any involvement with textual practices (like entertaining the proposition *svargakāmo yajeta*) necessarily involves interpretive mediation—in which case, it is necessarily the case that we must already presuppose some conceptual background of prior understanding, what Gadamer calls a "preunderstanding" or "prejudice." Thus, this discussion elaborates a sympathetic characterization of some arguments that undermine not only the Buddhist foundationalists but also a great many modern versions of empiricist foundationalism. A complete picture requires that we also put forward a critique of certain notions of hermeneutics. Thus, we can (and would perhaps do well to) accept the Mīmāṃsakas' reformed epistemology and yet still hold, with Gadamer, that insofar as understanding always necessarily takes place in the context of some tradition, Vedic utterances could never be expected to make the same kind of claim on us (unless, perhaps, we are already Mīmāṃsakas) as sensory perception.

It is only fitting that we should confront questions of interpretation; as mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 3, the constitutive concern of the tradition of Mīmāṃsā is hermeneutical questions of Vedic interpretation. It is, in the

end, the fact that we cannot bracket matters of interpretation that can best help us to appreciate the limitations of the Mīmāṃsakas' deployment of the doctrine of intrinsic validity. Approaching the matter from this angle circumvents what many contemporary readers are likely to regard as the more pressing problem with the Mīmāṃsaka project: namely, the alleged "transcendence" (*apauruṣeyatva*) of the Vedas and the concomitant issue of falsifiability. Thus, in the last passage considered from Pārthasārathi, he advances the conclusion that Mīmāṃsakas uniformly want to uphold: once we allow that prima facie validity attaches to the Veda, the Mīmāṃsakas win the day, since, "because of the absence of cognition of faults in [the Veda's] cause, [the Veda] becomes established without exception."

It becomes, then, quite important that the Veda is characterized, for Mīmāṃsakas, by its *apauruṣeyatva*—that is, by its "authorlessness," its eternality and transcendence; what is believed to establish the Veda as uniquely authoritative ("without exception," Pārthasārathi said) is the fact that it is not dependent on any conceivable source of falsification. This is because the Veda is paradigmatically an instance of the *pramāṇa* known as *śabda* ("language" or "testimony")." And the source of potential overriders of cognition engendered by this *pramāṇa* is invariably the agent who is speaking, with defects (e.g., mendaciousness) in the agent being the only kind of thing our awareness of which could falsify the cognition initially produced by an injunction.[74] But since the Veda has no author, there is no agent behind it who can serve as the locus of potentially falsifying defects. Hence, it stands as the only producer of cognition that can never be falsified.

This claim is hardly incidental to the Mīmāṃsaka project, and any comprehensive assessment of their arguments would need to address it. Sheldon Pollock has aptly expressed the way that many contemporary philosophical readers are likely to understand the deployment of the doctrine of intrinsic validity as it is combined with this claim: "The commitment to falsifiability (*without Popper's corollary that what is not falsifiable cannot count as true*) renders the truth claims of a transcendent source of knowledge—revelation—inviolable."[75] I am certainly inclined to agree that this is a problematic move and that the absence of "Popper's corollary" may indeed be a problem for the Mīmāṃsakas.[76] It is, however, difficult to make the case that falsifiability is, in principle, necessary without sneaking any verificationist assumptions into the epistemology that Alston and Pārthasārathi have so effectively evacuated of such.

Moreover, it turns out that there is, in an important sense, still room here for falsification, after all; even one who allowed that the Vedas are in principle unfalsifiable would still be faced with the task of understanding them—in which case, the burden shifts back to the hermeneutical practices of the Mīmāṃsakas. That is, even if it is agreed that the Vedas cannot possibly be the source of any

error, problems may nevertheless ensue (and may falsify the human practices based on Vedic injunctions) due to human failures properly to understand what the Veda enjoins, with "falsification" thus taking the form of essentially hermeneutical debates about what, precisely, is enjoined by the Vedas in any case.

Even given characteristically Mīmāṃsaka assumptions about the eternal status of the Vedas, then, there remains an important distinction between the Veda-*an-sich* and how people understand it and how they implement that understanding. Given this distinction, there seem to be two main avenues (apart from the question of falsifiability, which I will set aside) available for arguing that even if the doctrine of intrinsic validity represents a formidable epistemology, we should not feel compelled by Mīmāṃsaka deployments thereof to assent to claims regarding the uniquely authoritative status of the Vedas. One of these involves noting that, in light of the need for correctly understanding Vedic injunctions, significant authority attaches to those charged with interpreting the Veda—that is, the Mīmāṃsakas!

Here, then, we see the pernicious aspect of Alston's requirement that only the religious practices in question can provide sources of potential falsification;[77] the individuation of doxastic practices that this requirement entails may turn out, in fact, to be effected simply by those with the power to do so. Thus, it seems that what qualifies a religious doxastic practice as one that can be individuated as the kind of "firmly established doxastic practice" that Alston considers valid is simply the power and authority thus to establish it. Even if Vedic practices (practices represented as executing what is enjoined by the Vedic texts) are subject to being overridden, they are claimed to be susceptible only to the outputs of the Veda itself—and only, moreover, as those outputs are certified by such authoritative interpreters of the Veda as the *Mīmāṃsakas*. One might therefore fault the Mīmāṃsaka position on the grounds of an ideology critique.[78]

The other main avenue of critique involves simply emphasizing what has already been suggested: contra Śabara, texts do not simply *produce* experience (*avabodhayati*); rather, they must first be interpreted and understood, and this will always and necessarily be against the background of some prior understanding. Specifically, understanding of the Vedic injunction as making a claim on one can in the end occur only against the background of a prior understanding of what Pollock has aptly characterized as the "essential a priori of Mīmāṃsā"; that is, the stipulative definition of *dharma* "as a transcendent entity, and so . . . unknowable by any form of knowledge not itself transcendent" (1989: 607). That is, in order to understand the injunction *svargakāmo yajeta* as making a claim on one, it must already be understood that, inter alia, heaven (specifically as understood by the Mīmāṃsakas) is the kind of thing that we should desire. Without a complex axiological framework already in place, then, Vedic injunctions will not have any purchase.

If a Buddhist philosopher does not have good reason for judging Vedic practices irrational, then, she still may not have good reason for *adopting* them. The doxastic epistemologies of Alston and Pārthasārathimiśra are effectively deployed to argue that religious beliefs are rationally held and religious activities rationally engaged in, insofar as there is no privileged class of cognitions that must invariably be sought as a higher court of appeals. These epistemological arguments do not (and probably cannot), however, give us sufficient reason for *choosing* these practices. This is not necessarily to deny that there might be other arguments to the effect that some axiological commitments are preferable to others—it is only to say that the epistemological arguments cannot accomplish this. If one were intent on pressing a critique of the Mīmāṃsakas, then, a promising way to do so would be on axiological grounds—on the grounds, for example, that heaven, as understood by Mīmāṃsakas, is not the sort of thing based on the pursuit of which we ought to structure our lives. However, we are entitled to conclude that the specifically epistemological critiques of Mīmāṃsā that have been ventured by critics traditional and modern—by, for example, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, Matilal and Mohanty—miss the mark and fail to appreciate what a formidable epistemological reform the Mīmāṃsakas have effected.

And in a way, this epistemological reform is one that the Buddhist Candrakīrti might himself have wished to endorse (were it not, of course, for the quite significant fact that it was historically deployed to defend the most orthodox of the Brahmanical schools, which by itself would surely make it anathema to Candrakīrti—who nevertheless concluded by endorsing the generally Naiyāyika approach to epistemology). This is true insofar as Kumārila's epistemology can credibly stake a claim to describing our ordinary epistemic practices; Candrakīrti similarly takes his guidance from what is ordinarily or (as Candrakīrti will typically say) "conventionally" the case. The next chapters explore what Dignāga's co-religionist Candrakīrti thinks is wrong with Dignāga's foundationalist epistemology and what he proposes instead.
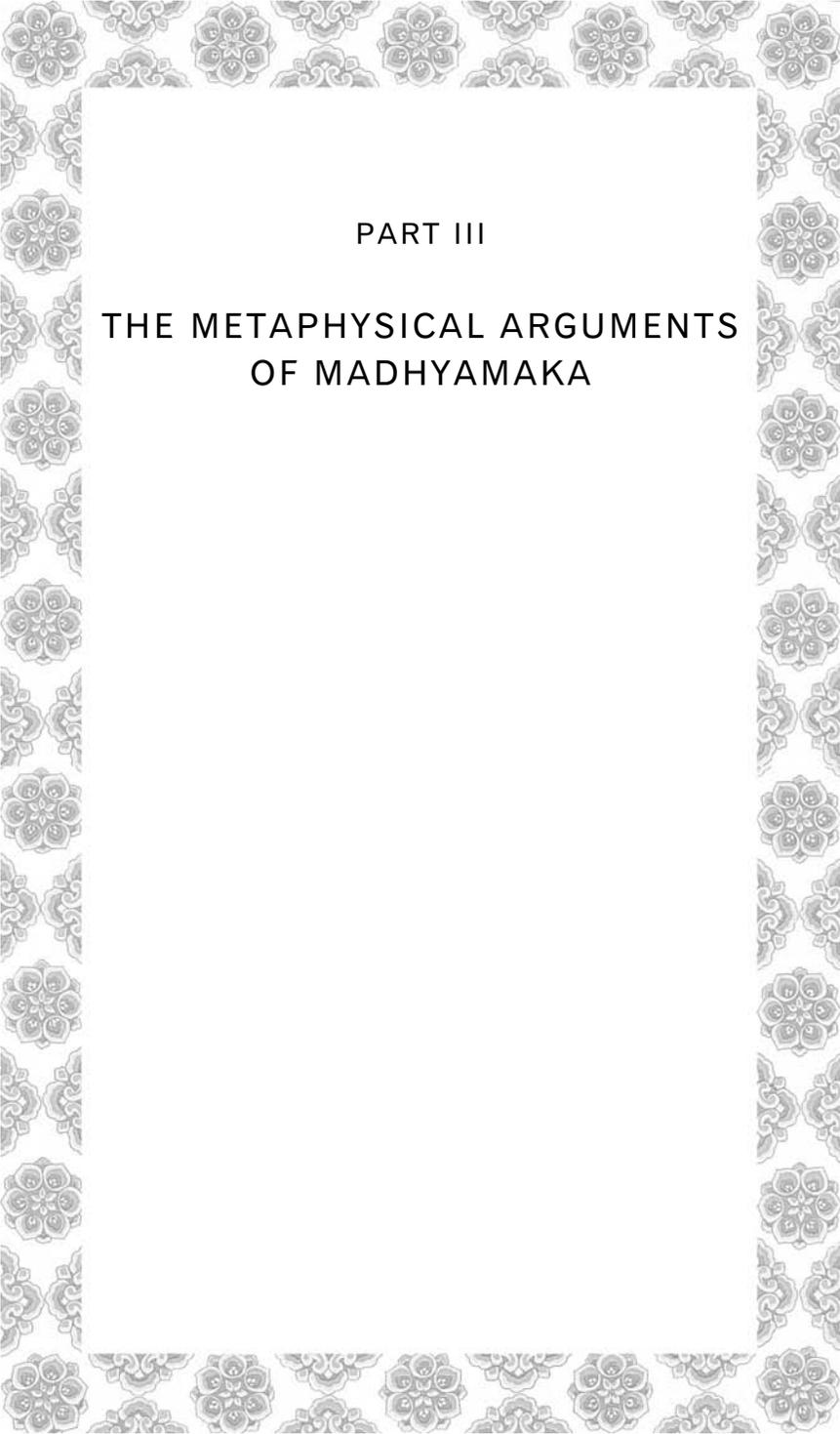
PART III

THE METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENTS
OF MADHYAMAKA

A Philosophical Grammar
for the Study of Madhyamaka

On the Basic Impulse of Madhyamaka

As mentioned at the conclusion of Part II, there is a surprising sense in which the Buddhist philosopher Candrakīrti might have been favorably disposed toward the epistemology developed by the Mīmāṃsakas (were it not, of course, for its having been deployed in defense of an arch-Brahmanical project). This is so to the extent that that epistemology can be understood as capturing something like our ordinary epistemic intuitions, to which Candrakīrti also claims to defer. Of course, Mīmāṃsaka philosophers like Kumārila and Pārthasārathi-miśra were committed to their epistemologically sophisticated elaboration of "direct" or "naive realism" not only because of their desire to defend (what is for them an ultimately metaphysical view) the authoritative status of the Vedas but also because of their characteristically Mīmāṃsaka desire to take the external world as the most significant locus of action (particularly of Vedic ritual action)—and, accordingly, their inclination to resist strongly any turning of epistemological attention toward the sort of subjective representations that (insofar as *svalakṣaṇas* are like "sense-data") are foundational for Buddhist philosophers like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

Candrakīrti, by contrast, has different and distinctively Mādhyamika reasons for deferring to the "conventional." His deference to ordinary intuitions is not (as one might say of the Mīmāṃsakas) a convenient step for him to take in defense of some other point that he chiefly wishes to argue; rather, there is a sense in which Candrakīrti's deference to the conventional *is itself the argument*. That is, Candrakīrti's is a principled deference that can be understood as meant to exemplify an ultimately metaphysical claim: that there is nothing "more real" than the world as conventionally described—or, more precisely, that there can be no explanation that does not itself exemplify the same conditions that characterize our conventions. This, then, is the most important question that we need to address in order to understand how Candrakīrti's position requires a cri-

tique of Buddhist foundationalism—that is, what motivates Candrakīrti, in contrast to the Mīmāṃsakas, to defer to the "conventional"?

We can usefully orient ourselves toward that question by starting with another: How does Candrakīrti's motivation make sense specifically as an elaboration of recognizably Buddhist insights? An argument will make sense as a specifically Buddhist one if it makes sense as a logical development of the idea of *selflessness,* which is the commitment whose elaboration and defense is arguably what all Buddhist philosophy concerns in the end. The converse of the idea of selflessness is the Buddhist doctrine of "dependent origination" (*pratītyasam-utpāda*); that is, the reason that we do not have enduring and unitary selves just is that any moment of experience can be explained as having originated from innumerable causes, none of which can be specified as what we "really" are. As shown in Chapter 1, the tradition of Ābhidharmika thought represents one way of developing this point: that of systematically redescribing our naive intuitions. That effort is thought to be called for insofar as we systematically mistake the basic data of our experience, erroneously projecting upon those data the sense that they are the properties of an enduring subject. Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, arguing epistemologically for something like the Ābhidharmika project, maintain that the basic or "given" data—that is, all that is warranted by perception—disclose, instead, a world of uniquely particular, fleeting sensations.

That our naive intuitions should effectively be replaced by this redescription is clear from the characteristically Ābhidharmika endorsement of the redescription as what is "ultimately existent" and the corresponding dismissal of the phenomena of our naive intuitions as merely "conventionally existent." Thus, we saw that the characteristically Ābhidharmika view is that the "two truths" can be said to consist of two sets of enumerable entities: the *saṃvṛtisat* (conventionally existent) is the set of all things that are reducible, through critical analysis, to what is ultimately real, while the *paramārthasat* (ultimately existent) is the set of irreducible ontological primitives.[1] Among the points developed by Dignāga and his foundationalist heirs is that the only things that can be ontologically basic are not categories (like the *dharmas* of Abhidharma), but unique particulars (*svalakṣaṇas*), whose irreducible uniqueness means that they are constitutively distinct from the kinds of things that can serve as the referents of words. On Dignāga's foundationalist version of the basically Ābhidharmika project, the set of "ultimately existent" phenomena comprises only uniquely particular moments of sensation, which alone are indubitably known by the one kind of cognition (viz., perception) that is directly caused by really existent things.

As indicated in the characterization of their project in Part I, the epistemology defended by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti makes sense as a philosophical elaboration of the Buddhist commitment to "selflessness"; the belief that our subjective experience consists of nothing more than a causally continuous series of

momentary sensations is precisely what is warranted by their epistemology. Given that we can recognize the foundationalism of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as naturally advancing Buddhist concerns, we can best understand how Candra-kīrti's Madhyamaka makes sense as a specifically Buddhist project by appreciating how Madhyamaka is framed with respect to such Ābhidharmika intuitions as were retained by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. In this regard, it is concerning the "two truths" in particular that Madhyamaka can be seen as rejecting the Ābhidharmika approach. The characteristic contention of the Madhyamaka school of thought, in contrast to the Ābhidharmikas, is that the set of "ultimately existent" things *is an empty set.*

This is because Mādhyamikas can be understood as thinking that the ontologizing impulse of Abhidharma compromises the most important insight of the Buddhist tradition—which is, on the Mādhyamika reading, that all existents are dependently originated. More specifically, Mādhyamikas can be said to have recognized that the ontological primitives posited by Abhidharma could have explanatory value only if they are posited as an exception to the rule that everything is dependently originated; that is, dependently originated existents would really be *explained* only by something that did not itself require the same kind of explanation. But it is precisely the Mādhyamika point to emphasize that there *is* no exception to this rule; phenomena are dependently originated all the way down, and it is therefore impossible to specify precisely *what* it is upon which anything finally depends. Hence, there can be no set of "ultimately existent" things.

Madhyamaka can be recognized as an eminently Buddhist project owing to its claimed consistency with the idea of dependent origination (and in its view that the characteristically Ābhidharmika project compromises that idea). Now we are in a position to ask whether there is anything about this overriding commitment to dependent origination that Candrakīrti can have thought required deference to the "conventional": the thought that such deference is, in principle, important (and therefore in some sense required) distinguishes Candra-kīrti's attitude toward the conventional from the characteristically Mīmāṃsaka appeal to our common-sense intuitions. The best answer is that Candrakīrti can believe that deference toward the conventional is required just insofar as any failure thus to defer could be regarded as contradicting what he sees as the universally obtaining fact of dependent origination—that is, insofar as any attempt to explain the conventional could itself be taken implicitly to constitute the claim that *not* everything is dependently originated. Candrakīrti is entitled to think this only to the extent that the fact of being "conventional" is itself equivalent to (or exemplifies or presupposes) the fact of being dependently originated; there would indeed be at least a performative self-contradiction involved in arguing that everything is dependently originated (where that is understood as exemplified by our conventions) and, at the same time, thinking that some

conventions could be explained by something that (if it is to have any explanatory purchase) must not itself be conventional.

This is precisely what Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti[2] are saying: the universally obtaining fact of "dependent origination" is, in some important sense, exemplified by the "conventional." This, then, is the point in saying that Candrakīrti is not chiefly interested in making some other point that happens to be well-served by deferring to our conventional epistemic practices; rather, his point is precisely that there can be no explanation that does not itself exemplify the same conditions that characterize our conventions. That this is a philosophically principled point—indeed, in the end, a metaphysical point—can then be appreciated if we consider the peculiar role of the idea of "ultimate truth" in Mādhyamika discourse. Although Madhyamaka refuses the characteristically Ābhidharmika idea that the ultimate truth consists of a set of enumerable existents, it is crucial to appreciate that Madhyamaka nonetheless speaks of ultimate truth. But the ultimate truth for Madhyamaka is no longer a set of ontological primitives; rather, it is the abstract state of affairs of there being no such set. The ultimate truth, in a sense, is that there *is* no "ultimate truth"—a fact, however, that is itself proposed as ultimately true.

Thus, Candrakīrti can be understood as arguing, contra Dignāga, that any attempt at systematic redescription could be guided only by (what is for Candrakīrti) the mistaken belief that we could ever more closely approximate what things are really like; insofar as Candrakīrti's characteristically Mādhyamika claim just is that there is no such thing as the way things "really" are (at least, not if we imagine that as the Ābhidharmikas do), he thinks that one will only be sidetracked by any inquiry that seeks to arrive at the underlying truth of the matter—and, indeed, that any such inquiry would itself be only another example of precisely the problem to be overcome. But this claim ("there is no such thing as the way things 'really' are") is itself a properly metaphysical claim. That is, the Mādhyamikas Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti should be understood as making a universally obtaining truth claim to the effect that the way things really are *really is* such that we can never identify something "more real" underlying existents and our experience thereof.

Among the obstacles to this interpretation of Madhyamaka as making a properly metaphysical claim, however, is the quintessentially Mādhyamika claim not to be making any claim at all—with Nāgārjuna himself having famously disavowed any particular "thesis" (*pratijñā*).[3] Given this evident paradox in characteristically Mādhyamika statements of their constitutive concerns, it should not be surprising to find that skepticism is often invoked by modern interpreters of Madhyamaka; the interpretive issues regarding Madhyamaka have some strikingly close parallels in the debate about the proper interpretation of

the writings of Hellenistic Skeptics. Given the philosophical complexity of these interpretive issues, we should defer any close reading of Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga and develop in this chapter some of the conceptual vocabulary that will be needed in the exposition thereof below.

"Epistemology" and "Transcendental Arguments"

Some time ago, Mark Siderits (1981) published what is, as far as I am aware, one of only a few studies of the argument that is the central concern of Part III: a lengthy debate between Candrakīrti and an imagined interlocutor whose thought resembles that of Dignāga. Siderits's study was published as the second of a two-part essay entitled simply "The Madhyamaka Critique of Epistemology." There is perhaps a sense in which Siderits was using the term "epistemology" here in a loosely doxographical sense—that is, as referring in particular to Dignāga and Dharmakīrti and their school, which is often referred to as the school of "Buddhist Epistemology."[4] To be more precise, we might ask what it would mean to critique "epistemology." I am inclined to characterize Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga as a complete and principled refusal of the entire discourse and enterprise of "epistemology." Jay Garfield, however, views this characterization as misleading, insofar as there is an important sense in which Candrakīrti can, instead, be seen as engaging in epistemology himself. That is, because "epistemology" refers simply to any theory of knowledge—and not only to specifically foundationalist theories—it might be suggested that Candrakīrti is addressing the same subject as his interlocutor, but is simply taking a different position on the matter, and that this fact is obscured if Candrakīrti is seen as simply rejecting epistemology.[5]

One response to this point is to note that Candrakīrti characteristically opposes avowedly "theoretical" projects—that is, any peculiarly technical (and putatively explanatory) description of what we ordinarily experience—and that "epistemology" is by definition such a theoretical undertaking. This response can usefully be developed with reference to two divergent understandings of the nature and task of epistemology, which we might characterize as normative and phenomenological.[6] Considered as a normative discipline, epistemology can be said to be concerned with what kinds of reasons one can adduce based on our cognitive faculties (as the latter are described by the epistemologist). That is, normative epistemology is concerned not simply with the nature and limits of our cognitive capacities but with which cognitive capacities can be thought to yield the best evidence. To the extent that this is how the task of epistemology is conceived, the philosopher engaged in this project is likely to consider the various

causal transactions that constitute our perceptual experience in particular as a sort of commerce whose currency is, in fact, not only causes but also reasons. Of course, this way of characterizing "normative epistemology" would make it basically co-extensive with what is characterized in Part I as empiricist foundationalism (as exemplified by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti). But the constitutively normative approach to epistemology can also be stated less tendentiously: the concern here is always to ask, in the course of considering our cognitive faculties, whether we are justified in some range of beliefs, and how or whether those faculties can be thought to confer such justification.

Particularly when the relevant range of beliefs is extensive (when, for example, the constitutive question of epistemology is: Are we justified in claiming any knowledge at all?), what is here called "normative epistemology" centrally relates to what is often called "skepticism."[7] Consider, for example, Michael Williams's recent *Unnatural Doubts: Epistemological Realism and the Basis of Scepticism* (1996). Williams argues against foundationalist epistemologies by attacking what he views as the guiding presupposition of these: the peculiar sort of "realism" that is presupposed by the thought that it is reasonable to ask whether we are entitled to any of our "knowledge," as such; "in attempting to assess our knowledge of the world as a whole, the sceptic must assimilate terms like 'our knowledge of the world' to natural kind terms like 'heat' or 'electricity'" (1996:xx).

The guiding presupposition of these approaches, in other words, is that it is meaningful to speak of our knowledge, as such, in abstraction from any particular context of inquiry or justification. This attribution to a certain kind of skeptic of a sort of "realism" with respect to the category of knowledge can be understood as advancing a point similar to the one made here in characterizing this approach to epistemology as normative; my point also concerns the question of whether certain cognitive faculties, simply because of of the kinds of cognitive faculties that they are, should be seen intrinsically as conferring a unique degree or kind of justification, as uniquely or particularly suited to providing justifying "evidence." Williams's argument attacks this presupposition: "in denying that there is such a thing as knowledge of the world, I am not agreeing with the sceptic but questioning the theoretical integrity of the kinds of knowledge he tries to assess." Williams elaborates:

> The only alternative to epistemological realism, hence to foundationalism, is a contextualist view of justification. This is because contextualism alone takes issue with foundationalism's deepest commitment, which is to the idea that beliefs possess an intrinsic epistemological status. . . . My contextualist view of knowledge explains the context sensitivity of the sceptic's results and threatens to convict him of a fallacy: confusing the discovery that knowledge is impossible under the conditions of philosophical reflec-

tion with the discovery, under the conditions of philosophical reflection, that knowledge is generally impossible. (1996:xx)

On this view, characteristically foundationalist approaches can be understood as intended to meet the challenge of the skeptic—intended, that is, to indicate the uniquely indubitable sorts of knowledge that, being putatively invulnerable to the skeptic's persistent doubt, are suitably regarded as foundational for the rest of our beliefs. Foundationalists can thus be understood as themselves advancing this sort of skeptical challenge, insofar as their attempt to meet the skeptical challenge itself validates the skeptic's demand for justification as reasonable. Alternatively, the point can be made in the terms suggested here: the foundationalist project that is the target of Williams's critique can usefully be understood as a paradigm exemplar of what is here called normative epistemology, insofar as that project is motivated by the view that we must first justify beliefs to which we are entitled—and (the problematic presupposition) that the way to do so is by appeal to that part of the structure of our knowledge whose status is uniquely indubitable, or otherwise intrinsically suited, independent of context, to confer justification.

This is the view according to which we are to find reasons for belief in the structure of our "knowledge" itself (and not, say, based on consideration of one's audience or context). Williams argues that the "skeptic's" demand for justification itself turns out to be problematic insofar as the very idea of "the structure of our knowledge" is itself problematic. By characterizing this demand as motivated by the view that epistemology is appropriately considered a normative discipline, I am hoping to facilitate the recognition that the most problematic presupposition is in play from the very beginning—in looking to the nature and limits of our cognitive capacities for reasons, this kind of epistemologist is virtually doomed to support an ultimately epistemic conception of truth.

In contrast to this understanding of epistemology, there is the project that we might characterize as a phenomenological sort of epistemology—where "phenomenological" here characterizes a basically descriptive approach, the "bracketing" of normative commitments. The narrow sense of this word should refer simply to discourse concerning how things seem to us, not to a particular tradition of philosophy stemming from Husserl. A project in phenomenological epistemology might thus aim to describe, for example, what must be the case (conceptually, psychologically, neurologically, etc.) in order that there can develop such knowledge as we generally believe ourselves already to be justified in claiming. The crucial distinction, in any case, is that this sort of project does not challenge the notion that we are (simply as a matter of empirical fact) already justified in believing a great deal.

To this extent, the Mīmāṃsaka epistemology developed in Part II might be

seen as reflecting this second understanding of epistemology. Integral to the Mīmāṃsaka arguments was the claim that if their point is denied, then we will turn out to be justified in very few beliefs ("the whole world would be blind," as Kumārila's commentators put it)—a claim that reflects their confidence that we are, as a matter of empirical fact, already justified in believing a great deal, the demands of foundationalists like Dignāga notwithstanding. This approach simply describes whatever kinds of epistemic factors are thought to be conditions of the possibility of our already being justified in claiming a good deal of knowledge—describes, in other words, what must be the case so that we can know the kinds of things that we manifestly know.

It is perhaps clear, given this reference to "conditions of possibility," that this approach can readily be understood as shading into a different sort of argument: one of the transcendental type, which are typically understood as framed against what is here characterized as normative epistemology (in particular the sort that is impressed by "skeptical" challenges). Such arguments are typically meant to show (in Coady's convenient formulation) that "some performances or concepts or capacities or whatever are deeply dependent upon others commonly considered to be not so related. So, it is claimed, we cannot identify states of mind in ourselves unless we can identify such states in others."[8] More precisely, the conclusion of such an argument is proposed as a condition of the possibility of what is supposed to be some indisputable fact about us and our mental life (such as that we have experiences, use language, understand one another, etc.).[9]

But, of course, such "indisputable" facts are often precisely what is most contentiously disputed by normative epistemologists, who typically press questions such as how or whether we can know that there are other minds—or whether, indeed, we have any knowledge at all. One of the cleverest and most characteristic moves made by proponents of transcendental arguments, however, is to argue that the opponent cannot coherently dispute what she claims to dispute, insofar as the very fact of her disputing it in some way attests to its being presupposed. A distinctive feature of such arguments, then, is their urging that one cannot argue against their claims without already presupposing them (hence, without contradicting oneself). In other words, if, (1) it is persuasively argued that the conclusion in question is indeed a condition of the possibility of some widely observed phenomenon and (2) the latter phenomenon is of sufficient generality that it must come into play even in the context of making any argument, then a condition of the possibility even of denying the transcendental argument would be the truth of its claims.

Transcendental arguments are, furthermore, often thought peculiarly to involve the mode of necessity; that is, one of the distinctive features of such arguments is often said to be that their conclusions, if true, are necessarily true—

with its being the mode of necessity that entails self-contradiction on the part of anyone who denies the claim in question. In this regard, these arguments can also be characterized in terms of a distinction between a posteriori and a priori modes of epistemic justification—that is, the distinction between justification based, respectively, on appeal to some kind of (contingent) experience and that based on some necessarily obtaining condition that can (so it is claimed) be discovered simply through the exercise of reason. Transcendental arguments typically involve appeal to the latter mode, functioning to cut short any appeal to experience by arguing that a condition of the possibility of any experience (any experience, that is, such as an empiricist might invoke to justify a belief) is precisely the state of affairs shown by the transcendental argument.

Such is, classically, the sort of argument framed by Kant, with whom transcendental arguments are particularly associated. Kant's transcendental arguments were developed specifically against the normative-epistemological challenge of Hume. We can consider, for example, Kant's argument for the "transcendental unity of apperception"—that is, for the perspectival unity that must be understood as a condition of the possibility of our having any experience (hence, as transcendental). Hume had famously argued that there was nothing more to a person than a "bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement."[10] For Hume, our erroneous convictions regarding the continuity and unity of such events were a function only of memory—of those causally produced states, that is, whose phenomenological content in some way "resembled" that of other such states.[11]

Kant rejoins with a compelling question: How could we even recognize two moments *as similar* without already presupposing the very continuity putatively explained by this recognition?[12] Accordingly, Kant develops the point that feelings of, say, hot or cold must always be *some subject*'s feelings of such; subjective states are not free-floating and unassigned, but are invariably experienced as ours. This is the point Kant is making when he argues: "It must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany all my representations. . . . the manifold representations, which are given in an intuition, would not be one and all *my* representations, if they did not all belong to one self-consciousness" (1787/1965: B131–132). Kant emphasized that he did not draw any inferences from this fact about, say, the empirical existence of a soul; rather, as transcendental, Kant's is the strictly formal point that a condition of the possibility of our having any experience at all is that our experiences (sensations, memories, fantasies) are unfailingly experienced from some perspective.[13] And Kant's point is that Hume cannot but presuppose this, such that, even in the course of denying the synthetic unity of subjectivity, Hume unwittingly attests to the point that Kant

uses against him. Kant's argument, in other words, consists of pointing out that Hume is begging precisely the question he claims to address.

While it is perhaps clear that the conclusion of Kant's argument here concerns something "transcendental" (that is, to the extent that the synthetic unity he argues for is at least plausibly reckoned as a condition of the possibility of experience), it is perhaps not immediately clear how Hume's denial of that fact can (as we should expect, given my characterization of transcendental arguments) be seen as entailing self-contradiction by Hume—which is to say, it is perhaps not immediately clear how the argument here can count as a transcendental argument in the sense stipulated here.[14] It is instructive, here, to consider John Passmore's reflections on the various kinds of self-contradiction that can be exploited in philosophical argument.[15] The most evident sort would be strictly logical, or, in Passmore's terms, "absolute": "Formally, the proposition *p* is absolutely self-refuting, if to assert *p* is equivalent to asserting *both p and not-p*" (1961:60).

In this regard, Passmore considers the possibility that the denial of Descartes's *cogito* argument can be regarded as entailing this sort of self-contradiction, plausibly rephrasing Descartes as having argued that "'I cannot think' is a self-refuting proposition" (ibid.). This statement of Descartes's argument turns out, on Passmore's reading, not necessarily to entail such "absolute self-refutation." Among other things, this statement presupposes certain commitments about what it means to "think" and about the necessity that that will come into play simply in the assertion of the proposition— commitments that turn out to be at least coherently disputable. It is better to say, then, that Descartes's argument, to the extent that it is successful, involves something more like pragmatic or performative self-refutation; that is, if it is granted that (say) "thinking" is appropriately defined in such a way that one must necessarily have first engaged in it in order to speak (despite the world's abundance of evidence to the contrary!), then the very fact of asserting "I cannot think" would, simply as an assertion, performatively (if not logically) contradict the claim it makes.[16] Similarly, we may say that, insofar as Hume's making his argument necessarily presupposes that he himself has some experience, his denial of what Kant thinks that he has shown to be a condition of the possibility of experience involves at least pragmatic or performative self-contradiction—a self-contradiction that is evident in Hume's begging the question of how a putatively nonsynthetic consciousness could recognize "resemblances" between different moments of experience.

As is perhaps clear from this example, it turns out to be very difficult to specify the sense in which the conclusions of such arguments are thus thought to obtain "necessarily." It seems clear, as Robert Stern notes, that "in claiming that *X* is a necessary condition for the possibility of experience, we are not taking this to be a matter of causal or natural necessity" (2000:8). What, then?

if we accept that our basis for asserting a transcendental claim can only "consist in certain ways of assembling facts about meanings" (making it analytic in the epistemic sense), must we also accept that its necessity is grounded only in what is logically possible (making it analytic in the ontological sense), or *can this form of conceptual analysis give us insight into modal truths that constitute neither natural nor logical constraints, but something in between, such as* metaphysical *limitations on what is possible?*[17]

Thus, to take the example of Kant contra Hume on the conditions of experience, it does not seem right to say that it is *causally* necessary that all subjective states must be experienced from one perspective or another. It is difficult to imagine how we could express this formal state of affairs as having any causal efficacy with respect to any instance of experience. At the same time, there would seem to be no strictly logical incoherence to the idea that experiences might be free-floating and unassigned, in the same way that (say) it would be incoherent to claim that "John, though a bachelor, is married" (or any other instance that amounts to the assertion of *p* and *not-p*).

But what does it mean to say that the necessity involved is, instead, metaphysical? Properly metaphysical considerations are in play whenever we are dealing with putatively transcendental claims that are universal in scope—which is in effect to say, whenever it can be argued that *being or doing anything at all* could be seen (as it were) "performatively" to contradict a denial of the claim in question. Consider, in this regard, the example of Aristotle's "Principle of Noncontradiction," which Stern thus adduces as a candidate for transcendental status:

> It is possible to argue that Aristotle's intention was to establish this proposition as one that must be accepted for any belief to rationalize any other, and thus for a coherent belief-system to exist at all. On this view, a transcendental argument is needed because the aim is to establish, not that the Principle is *itself* a reason for believing anything, but is something we are required to believe if what we believe is to be a reason for believing anything else . . . it is not because this belief figures *directly* as a reason for making such judgements . . . rather, it is arguably more like a necessary presupposition for making cogent the reasons we do use. (Ibid., 197)

To the extent that metaphysics is understood as being exemplified by such a point, the sense of "metaphysics" in play is such that *some* metaphysical commitments are always at least presupposed—metaphysics is not, that is, simply to be contrasted with, for example, science, because properly metaphysical commitments are necessarily presupposed by any project therein. The latter point has been well made by Vincent Descombes: "In general, the operational sense

of the technical term 'metaphysical' is to be found whenever a philosopher is required to fix in advance the possibilities for classification and explanation offered by a general conceptual system" (2001:80). Given this sense of the word, questions about the status of the sciences of the mind are not (as proponents of at least some such approaches would claim) simply questions of method, but always involve some specific metaphysical commitments that are, at least in principle, arguable. Thus, for example,

> Lying behind the reduction of the question of mind to questions of method, we find the old prejudice according to which scientific activity consists in the concoction of general theories compatible with the observed facts. This way of looking at the problem is flawed, however, for it is well known that one can always offer several theories that account for the same set of facts and that are equivalent from a logical point of view. How are we to decide among them? . . . In fact, theories differ in their *ontologies* . . . In other words, it is not logic that decides this question, it is metaphysics. (Ibid., 81)

Particularly given Descombes's reference to ontology here, this characterization of metaphysics perhaps leaves an ambiguity between what we might distinguish as *categoreal* and *transcendental* metaphysics.[18] The former approach warrants the term "metaphysics" because it is universal in scope, but it overlaps considerably with the project of ontology; that is, metaphysics in this sense involves arguments about the basic categories of existents, claims about what there is.[19] Clearly, it would be reasonable to regard metaphysics in this sense as exemplified by the Buddhist Ābhidharmika project, insofar as that may be said to consist in the enumeration of basic categories of existents (*dharmas*). In contrast, transcendental metaphysics can be said to be in play whenever the criterion of metaphysical truth is (in Schubert Ogden's words) "unavoidable belief or necessary application through experience. Those statements are true metaphysically which I could not avoid believing to be true, at least implicitly, if I were to believe or exist at all."[20]

R. G. Collingwood has characterized the task of metaphysics as involving the analysis of "absolute presuppositions." In contrast to "propositions" (which can always be understood as the answers at least to implicit questions), an absolute presupposition is defined by Collingwood as "one which stands, relatively to all questions to which it is related, as a presupposition, never as an answer" (1939/1972:31). That is, "absolute presuppositions" represent those points in any chain of reasoning at which it becomes unreasonable to ask any further questions. I follow Collingwood in thinking this idea useful at least in disclosing the points in any discourse at which constitutively metaphysical presuppositions

(of the sort intended by Ogden) are in play. A helpful example, in this regard, might involve the category of causation. With respect, for example, to a scientific inquiry that proceeds most basically by adducing prior states of affairs as having caused present states, one might ask: Why should these causal regularities obtain in the first place? why do such states of affairs interact causally as they do? *why*, in short, *is there something and not nothing?*

Although this has the form of an intelligible question, it will not be thought coherent by one whose frame of reference includes a metaphysical commitment to the idea that (say) reasons are not any different in kind from causes—that is, to the idea that a causal chain cannot be seen as requiring termination in something (logically or ontologically) distinct from the causes. In that case, we can say that it is an absolute presupposition (hence, a metaphysical commitment) of such a scientific approach that causal regularities cannot coherently be thought to require explanation. For some theists, by contrast, these questions are regarded as being not only intelligible but among the most important to ask—and it is thought reasonable to believe that explanation is not complete until reasons have been given, precisely because of a metaphysical commitment to the effect that reasons (in the form of the intentions of some agent) are (logically or ontologically) distinct from causes.[21] In either case, it is possible to imagine arguments to the effect that these different metaphysical commitments are such that one "could not avoid believing" them to be true—a possibility reflected in the locution "cannot coherently be thought to require explanation"—and appropriate, to that extent, to characterize these as "metaphysical" presuppositions.[22]

A project in categoreal metaphysics need not necessarily involve any particular style of argument. This is clear from the Buddhist case; as seen in Part I, Ābhidharmika Buddhists like Vasubandhu developed what can plausibly be characterized as a project in basic ontology (hence, in "categoreal metaphysics"), while developing their positions through basically exegetical arguments about adequacy to the task of interpreting Buddhist scriptures. Buddhist foundationalists like Dignāga, by contrast, developed recognizably similar positions through fundamentally epistemological arguments, attempting to show that our cognitive faculties are such as to warrant certain claims about what exists (and not others)—with philosophers like Dignāga thus likely to demand, of any claim regarding what is really the case, that we be able to adduce some finally perceptual evidence.

An exercise in transcendental metaphysics, in contrast, requires a distinctive sort of argument. Indeed, it is precisely in contrast to Dignāga's eminently empiricist approach that a "transcendental-metaphysical" approach needs to be defined. The sense in which there is a contrast is closely related to the extent to which transcendental arguments are (in contrast to those of the normative epistemologist) better able to support a realist conception of truth. Dignāga's

empiricist-foundationalist approach to the defense of a basic ontology takes us to be warranted by what our cognitive faculties seem to contact—which is to say, he views epistemological data as having evidentiary relevance. But, in fact (as indicated in Chapter 2), epistemological data should be understood as pertaining only to our epistemic situation (to the circumstances, e.g., of our being justified); they do not necessarily have any bearing on the truth of the beliefs thus justified.[23] To the extent that we understand "metaphysical" as describing a project not in categoreal metaphysics but transcendental metaphysics, it should be clear that Dignāga's normative-epistemological argument cannot be taken as having any properly metaphysical import.

Thus, to characterize Candrakīrti's argument against Dignāga as a transcendental argument in defense of a properly metaphysical claim is to recognize that Candrakīrti's argument is compatible with a realist conception of truth—and that his metaphysical commitment can reasonably be thought by Candrakīrti to require that he eschew an approach like Dignāga's. Candrakīrti's characteristic claims should, on this reading, be understood as *objectively true* (if true at all), and there are good reasons for thinking that the content of this truth positively requires an argument that is logically distinct from Dignāga's.

The point about the possibly "objective truth" of Candrakīrti's claims, in particular, should give pause. This is not only because Madhyamaka is often characterized as constitutively "antirealist" (and characterized, instead, as either upholding or presupposing a merely "coherentist" view of justification, which is often taken as the only alternative to foundationalism); it is also because of an aspect of Ogden's formulation of "metaphysical truth" not noted previously but worth mentioning now. Ogden characterized as metaphysically true those statements "which I could not avoid *believing* to be true, at least implicitly, if I were to believe or exist at all" (emphasis added). Here, Ogden betrays a point that is often held against transcendental arguments: that if they have any purchase, they nevertheless tell us only about what we *believe,* which may tell us nothing about *what is really the case.* Given this, it might be objected that such arguments are incompatible with a realist conception of truth, as construed here, and may, instead, entail only an epistemic conception thereof.

This criticism is serious particularly to the extent that transcendental arguments are thought to represent a logically distinct sort of move; the claim that transcendental arguments have purchase only with respect to belief is tantamount to the claim that they must, if they are finally to succeed in supporting the truth of beliefs, involve recourse to some other sort of argument. One could, in other words, grant that *S* (say, belief in other minds) is, in a sense, a condition of the possibility of *X* (say, language), but still insist "that it is enough to make language possible if we *believe* that *S* is true, or if it looks for all the world as if it is, but that *S* needn't actually be true."[24] It is then argued that if we

are to bridge the gap between merely needing to believe it is true and its really being true, it must be possible to determine the truth or falsity of *S*. Hence, in turn, there would be a need to fall back on, say, some version of verificationism. But if such recourse is really necessary, then transcendental arguments are superfluous. As Stern writes, "Verificationism has sufficient anti-sceptical strength to refute scepticism on its own; and verificationism is a highly contestable position, which the sceptic can easily question" (2000:45). Transcendental arguments are said inevitably to fail, then, to short-circuit the normative-epistemological demands in response to which they have typically been offered.

The reader persuaded by the arguments developed, in conversation with the Mīmāṃsakas, in Part II will perhaps have a sense of what response this objection might meet with. For now, let it suffice to have noted this standard objection. In the course of developing my reconstruction of Candrakīrti's argument against Dignāga as transcendental arguments, I work toward the conclusion that this standard objection is misguided and that Candrakīrti's arguments turn out, in fact, to be better able to support the *objective* truth of the beliefs justified than do Dignāga's. At this point, in what remains of this prolegomenon, let us speak a little more about *skepticism,* the idea of which lurks beneath much of the foregoing discussion: We have seen that "normative epistemology" effectively validates the challenge that many have understood as "skeptical"; in appealing to the idea of "transcendental arguments" as a way to reconstruct Candrakīrti's arguments against Dignāga, I invoke a style of argument typically represented as addressing "skepticism" understood in precisely this way.

In light of this convergence, it is perhaps not surprising that skepticism has often been invoked by contemporary interpreters of Madhyamaka, with the characterization of Madhyamaka as "skeptical" frequently supporting the notion that Madhyamaka must be understood as, in some sense, "antirealist." It is instructive, then, to frame our consideration of Madhyamaka in terms of two sharply divergent characterizations of Madhyamaka vis-à-vis skepticism—one of which develops this comparison only to refuse it and the other to embrace it. To complicate matters, it is not chiefly with regard to the question of whether Madhyamaka exemplifies skepticism that these interpretations differ; rather, the more significant interpretive differences relate to the altogether different understandings of "skepticism" that they presuppose. Therefore a brief digression on skepticism may help clarify matters.

Skepticism vis-à-vis Madhyamaka

As mentioned above, what most threatens the proposed interpretation of Madhyamaka (as making a properly metaphysical claim) is the quintessentially

Mādhyamika claim (!) not to be making any claim at all. In this regard, consider the following passage from Sextus Empiricus.

> When we say that Sceptics do not hold beliefs, we do not take 'belief' in the sense in which some say, quite generally, that belief is acquiescing in something; for Sceptics assent to the feelings forced upon them by appearances— for example, they would not say, when heated or chilled, "I think I am not heated (or: chilled)." Rather, we say that they do not hold beliefs in the sense in which some say that belief is assent to some unclear object of investigation in the sciences; for Pyrrhonists do not assent to anything unclear.[25]

Passages like this figure prominently in an interpretive debate concerning how best to understand and characterize the divergent views of the ancient Pyrrhonian and Academic Skeptics (sometimes characterized as advancing, respectively, "classical" and "dogmatic" skepticism) and whether either tradition developed a philosophically viable position.

Michael Frede has argued that there is philosophical value in the project of classical skepticism. Frede explores how specifically dogmatic strains of skepticism came to be taken as co-extensive with skepticism, *simpliciter*.[26] This conflation, for Frede, results in attributing to the Pyrrhonian Sextus the (dogmatic) view that "nothing can be known." But such a conclusion can be reached, Frede argues, only by ignoring the classical skeptic's own avowal that, unlike the dogmatic skeptic, he does not take the position that nothing can be known. Such avowals might be overlooked, however, precisely out of a desire to save the skeptic from what would otherwise appear to be self-reflexive incoherence. Thus,

> one has reason to believe that the classical sceptic, like the dogmatic sceptic, does have the view that nothing can be known; and thus one thinks that the classical sceptic only says that he does not take this position because he not only cannot consistently claim to know that nothing can be known, but cannot even take the position that nothing can be known, if he wants to preserve consistency with the main tenet of scepticism, namely the principle that one should not commit oneself to any position. (Frede 1997b:128)

This leads Frede to frame the following interpretive options:

> since I do want to take the classical sceptic's remark [viz., to the effect that it is not being claimed that "nothing can be known"] seriously, I have to argue either that the classical sceptic does in fact not have the view that nothing can be known or that there is a substantial difference between having a view, on the one hand, and taking a position or making a claim, on the

other. . . . I shall try to argue the latter by distinguishing, following the classical sceptic, two kinds of assent such that having a view involves one kind of assent, whereas taking a position, or making a claim, involves a different kind of assent, namely the kind of assent a sceptic will withhold. (Ibid.)

As will become clear, the characteristically Mādhyamika claim not to have any thesis forces a precisely similar interpretive choice: One can take it at face value and convict the Mādhyamika either of self-referential incoherence or of making a vacuous statement, or one can work to understand "thesis" as specifically referring to some particular kind of thesis. Frede's decision to pursue something analogous to the latter approach leads him to emphasize that the most salient point emerging from classical skepticism is that "the sceptic does not rely on any criterion for his beliefs" (1997a:23). This point, on Frede's reading, has implications chiefly with respect to the role that epistemological criteria are thought to play in justifying belief, and not necessarily with respect to *what is believed*: "As a sceptic, he no longer believes that the Stoic proofs of God's existence entail their conclusion; since, however, his belief was not induced by these arguments, nothing about his belief need change even when the arguments no longer carry conviction" (ibid.). To the extent that the "criteria" thus rejected are part of a specifically epistemological approach, we might say, in the terms proposed here, that on this interpretation the skeptic does not agree with the normative epistemologist that criteria derived from facts about our epistemic situation are invariably relevant to the truth of beliefs.

A different slant is provided by Myles Burnyeat, whose studies in the skeptical traditions of antiquity lead him to the conclusion that "Hume and the ancient critics were right. When one has seen how radically the sceptic must detach himself from himself, one will agree that the supposed life without belief is not, after all, a possible life for man" (1997a:57). Burnyeat rejects the kind of move made by Frede, characterizing the distinction between different "levels" or "kinds" of belief as presupposing a peculiarly "transcendental" sort of skepticism that emerged only after Kant. Burnyeat frames his point amusingly.

Nowadays, if a philosopher finds he cannot answer the philosophical question "What is time?" or "Is time real?," he applies for a research grant to work on the problem during next year's sabbatical. He does not suppose that the arrival of next year is actually in doubt. . . . [In this way,] he *insulates* his ordinary first order judgements from the effects of his philosophizing. (1997b:92)

This is, Burnyeat writes, in sharp contrast to the case of the Pyrrhonian skeptics, for whom skeptical philosophy was meant precisely to inform one's way of life.

What Burnyeat wants to know, accordingly, is when and how it became possible to separate these, and what sorts of philosophical consequences followed. For Burnyeat, the problem begins with Kant.

> It was Kant who persuaded philosophy that one can be, simultaneously and without contradiction, an empirical realist and a transcendental idealist . . . "The stove is warm," taken empirically, implies no philosophical view at the transcendental level where from now on the philosophical battle will be fought. Empirical realism is invulnerable to scepticism and compatible with transcendental idealism. In this way, with the aid of his distinction of levels (insulation *de iure*), Kant thought to refute scepticism once and for all. The effect, however, was that scepticism itself moved upstairs to the transcendental level. (Ibid., 121–122)

When Kant's characteristically modern version then gets read back into the historical record, we are, on Burnyeat's reading, encouraged to suppose that the Pyrrhonian skeptics meant only to question the merits of such peculiarly theoretical explanations as are exemplified in, for example, contemporary foundationalism; "So we reach the idea that there are two ways of understanding a statement like 'The stove is warm,' the plain way and the philosophical way, and it is only the philosophical claim to an absolute knowledge that the sceptic wants to question." But Burnyeat claims that "this sceptic has no historical reality. It is a construction of the modern philosophical imagination. . . . [Skepticism] becomes the name of something internal to the philosopher's own thinking, his alter ego as it were, with whom he wrestles in a debate which is now a philosophical debate in the modern sense" (ibid., 122). Thus, he concludes that the imputation to Sextus Empiricus of a "transcendental scepticism"—according to which, Sextus "insulates not between subject matters . . . but between an ordinary and a philosophical way of understanding statements such as 'The stove is warm'" (ibid., 123)—is not so much wrong as anachronistic.

It is, of course, well beyond the scope of the present book (not to mention my own competence) to weigh in on this debate regarding the interpretation of ancient Hellenistic philosophers. More to the point, there is nothing in the argument proposed here that depends on the outcome of that debate. The debate exemplified by the works of Frede and Burnyeat can, however, shed some light on the very different uses of "skepticism" made by some modern interpreters of Madhyamaka. Thus, for example, chapter 2 of David Burton's recent *Emptiness Appraised* (1999) is entitled "Nāgārjuna and Scepticism." Burton's chief aim here is to argue that Nāgārjuna's arguments should not be understood as "skeptical," insofar as Nāgārjuna does defend specific truth claims—and, further, that although Nāgārjuna does not intend for those claims to be nihilist, his argu-

ments nonetheless unwittingly entail nihilistic conclusions. Because he attributes to Nāgārjuna arguments in defense of specific truth claims, Burton finds it necessary to refute the interpretation of Nāgārjuna as a skeptic. Burton's chief claim in this regard is that Nāgārjuna is not a skeptic simply insofar as Nāgārjuna does, in fact, make a claim to knowledge. Thus,

> Nāgārjuna's assertions that he has no view/position/thesis must be seen in the context of his philosophy as a whole. One finds repeatedly throughout Nāgārjuna's works that his basic philosophical position is that entities (*bhāva*) lack *svabhāva*. . . . Emptiness is thus essentially an ontological doctrine, rather than an attack on all knowledge-claims. It states something about how things actually are. Namely, it states that all entities have a dependently arisen and conceptually constructed existence; an existence without *svabhāva*. (1999:34–36)

Burton's point here—to the extent that this selective quotation discloses his position—seems generally on target, and a central part of my own interpretation involves the claim that Madhyamaka is making a truth claim. The point that concerns us here is that Burton regards Nāgārjuna's making a truth claim alone as sufficient to counter the interpretation of Nāgārjuna as a "skeptic." Given this, we may say that Burton presupposes a characteristically modern sense of the word "skepticism," according to which skepticism consists simply in the disavowal of any knowledge;[27] that is, this most basically consists in the claim to have (in Burton's formulation) a "lack of knowledge whether *x* or ~*x*." On this usage (which many modern readers will likely find unproblematic), "skepticism" consists of a dogmatic sort of agnosticism—in the persistent urging that we cannot really know anything, because we can never be in a position to secure our beliefs against all possible doubts. Burton puts the matter thus when he offers the following characterization of "radical scepticism," which he sees as "scepticism *par excellence*":

> (a) {It is not known whether *x* or ~*x*} and (b) {it is not known whether or not it can be known whether *x* or ~*x*} [where *x* stands for any matter whatsoever]. Neither (a) nor (b) is a knowledge-claim. (1999:23)

It is skepticism in this sense that is often thought to impel foundationalism. The foundationalist can be understood as having set out to meet the skeptic's challenge and to find some sort of knowledge whose foundational status derives precisely from its being putatively indubitable.[28]

I will show the rest of Burton's position shortly. The point here is to note that it is precisely against such a view of skepticism that Jay Garfield (like Frede) has

emphasized that "skepticism" is properly understood as a constitutively moderate, antidogmatic position. Accordingly, Garfield regrets the extent to which "many modern writers—following Kant and earlier usage introduced by Berkeley, a usage muddied (though in constructive ways) by Hume—urge that a central task of philosophy is to 'answer the skeptic.'"[29] Emphasizing the non-dogmatic character of skepticism, Garfield interprets Nāgārjuna as exemplifying "skepticism" and expresses what he believes to be the quintessentially "skeptical" concern in a characteristically Mādhyamika idiom: The view that skepticism consists simply of the denial of any knowledge claims rests, according to Garfield, "on a confusion of skepticism with one of its extreme targets—typically what those Buddhists skeptics known as 'mādhyamikas' called 'nihilism'" (2002:4). Those who are unsympathetic to skepticism, and who think of it as offering a challenge that must be resisted, therefore tend, on Garfield's reading, to overlook "the opposition of extremes against which skeptical critical attacks are addressed" (ibid., 5).

On this view of skepticism, then, to characterize Nāgārjuna as exemplifying such is (*pace* Burton) not necessarily to say that he makes no truth-claim, since the claim that "it is not known whether or not it can be known whether x or $\sim x$" would in fact be an instance of precisely the dogmatism that, according to Garfield, skeptics (and Mādhyamikas) are keenest to refute. Rather, characterizing Nāgārjuna as this sort of "skeptic" chiefly says something about his characteristic method. To further complicate our account, though, we note that the most compellingly "Mādhyamika" statement of a properly "skeptical" method that Garfield mentions comes not from Sextus Empiricus but from Saul Kripke, interpreting Wittgenstein. Thus, Kripke:

> What is a "sceptical" solution? Call a proposed solution to a sceptical philosophical problem a *straight* solution if it shows that on closer examination the scepticism proves to be unwarranted; an elusive or complex argument proves the thesis the sceptic doubted. Descartes gave a "straight" solution in this sense to his own philosophical doubts. An *a priori* justification of inductive reasoning, and an analysis of the causal relation as a genuine necessary connection or nexus between pairs of events, would be straight solutions to Hume's problems of induction and causation, respectively. A *sceptical* solution of a sceptical philosophical problem begins on the contrary by conceding that the sceptic's negative assertions are unanswerable. Nevertheless our ordinary practice or belief is justified because— contrary appearances notwithstanding—it need not require the justification the sceptic has shown to be untenable. And much of the value of the sceptical argument consists precisely in the fact that he has shown that an ordinary practice, if it is to be defended at all, cannot be defended in a certain way. A sceptical solu-

tion may also involve . . . a sceptical analysis or account of ordinary beliefs to rebut their *prima facie* reference to a metaphysical absurdity. The rough outlines of Hume's sceptical solution to his problem are well known. Not an *a priori* argument, but custom, is the source of our inductive inferences.[30]

If this is what we are to understand by a "skeptical" approach, then I might largely concur with Garfield that Nāgārjuna's approach is aptly so called; I would agree that this passage from Kripke can, with some important qualifications, serve very well as a statement of what Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti are up to. But in that case, I have agreed with Burton that Nāgārjuna is not aptly characterized as a "skeptic," to the extent that Nāgārjuna does, after all, advance an important truth-claim; and I have also agreed with Garfield that Nāgārjuna *is* aptly characterized as a "skeptic," precisely to the extent that that truth claim is one to the effect that (in Kripke's words) "ordinary practice, if it is to be defended at all, cannot be defended in a certain way." The difference between the interpretations of Madhyamaka offered by Burton and Garfield should not, then, be stated simply in terms of the former's rejecting and the latter's embracing the characterization of Madhyamaka as "skeptical," because the two understand this characterization in such different senses.

Leaving aside, however, the question of what content we should give to the doxographical descriptor "skeptical," let us consider what is to be commended or rejected in these divergent interpretations. Burton is right to hold that Mādhyamika arguments are (apparent claims to the contrary notwithstanding) offered in defense of a particular truth-claim—that is, these arguments are not simply methodological or "therapeutic" exercises that are equally compatible with just any ontology or metaphysics; rather, they fundamentally aim to make a point about how things exist. Specifically, what must finally be understood as possibly true is the claim that "all existents are empty, which is just to say that they are dependently originated"[31]—a claim that clearly contradicts, for example, the claim (made by some theists) that at least one thing exists intrinsically or necessarily (and, therefore, is not "dependently originated"). And to say that the Mādhyamika claim contradicts a truth-claim proffered by some theists just is to say that the former claim, too, is proposed as *true.*

On my reading, however, the more salient point about Burton's interpretation of Madhyamaka is something significantly problematic—namely, a characteristically recurrent and undefended slide (evident even in the passage quoted above) from "dependently originated" to "conceptually constructed." Burton makes this leap more explicit:

emptiness (the absence of *svabhāva* of entities) appears to mean both that entities are dependently arisen (*pratītyasamutpanna*), and that they do not

have foundational existence (*dravyasat*). *Which is to say that all dependently arisen entities have merely conceptually constructed existence* (*prajñaptisat*). (1999:35–36; emphasis added)

Burton thus rightly situates Madhyamaka with respect to the earlier Ābhidharmika discussion, to which he here alludes with this point that Madhyamaka characteristically denies that anything at all exists "substantially" (*dravyasat*) and that things therefore only exist as *prajñapti*—with these being the terms that recommend characterizing the Ābhidharmika project as one in basic ontology.[32]

What is problematic here is Burton's retention of the characteristically Ābhidharmika presuppositions that alone give these terms their contrastive force— a contrast Burton sharpens by making the unwarranted assertion that existing as *prajñapti* means having "merely conceptually constructed existence." Burton's thus becomes a peculiarly idealist version of the claim (also frequently encountered) that, insofar as Madhyamaka characteristically eschews foundationalism, it must, ipso facto, uphold a basically coherentist (or otherwise antirealist) account of knowledge and justification. Burton's version of this reading would have it that Madhyamaka is (albeit unwittingly) committed to the view that, in the form of the "conceptually constructed" existents that alone can be found, only mental artifacts exist. On my reading of Madhyamaka, there are no such antirealist implications—and, indeed, this is precisely among the extremes that Madhyamaka most wants to avoid.[33]

It is, then, to the extent that Garfield takes skepticism as constitutively opposed to the sort of dogmatism evinced in this extreme that I would be inclined to agree with Garfield that Nāgārjuna might be characterized as a "skeptic." Recall Kripke's conclusion (commended by Garfield) that a characteristically "skeptical" approach would lead us to conclude that "ordinary practice, if it is to be defended at all, cannot be defended in a certain way." Garfield echoes this point when he characterizes Madhyamaka's approach as "taking conventions as the foundation of ontology, hence rejecting the very enterprise of a philosophical search for the ontological foundations of convention" (1995:122). This characterization is, in a sense, compellingly apt—but also, perhaps, apt to mislead; a great deal depends here on what we understand "conventions" to mean, and the implications of Garfield's characterization of Madhyamaka vary accordingly. It might, for example, be supposed that Garfield's statement here amounts to a version of Burton's idealist interpretation. One might reasonably wonder whether Garfield is here stating, in effect, a coherentist view of truth and justification—that is, the view (not so far from Burton's) that our conventions represent a closed system whose regularities need not involve any reference to a real world.

This is not how I understand Garfield's statement. But Garfield's interpreta-

tion can be more clearly distinguished from Burton's by emphasizing that, even if Garfield's expression of the project here is valid, Madhyamaka can nevertheless be understood in the end as making a metaphysical claim. It is to the extent that I take Madhyamaka's to be a constitutively metaphysical claim that, even appreciating the particular sense of "skepticism" presupposed by Garfield, I retain some reservations about his characterization of Madhyamaka in such terms—and that I propose, instead, a reconstruction of Mādhyamika arguments as transcendental arguments, which are typically represented as refuting skepticism (albeit "skepticism" in the peculiarly modern sense eschewed by Garfield).[34] The characterization of Nāgārjuna as exemplifying skepticism (even given Garfield's understanding thereof) underestimates the extent to which Nāgārjuna's is finally a point that, in light of his commitments, it is *in principle* important for him to make. In terms of Kripke's statement ("ordinary practice, if it is to be defended at all, cannot be defended in a certain way"), I take the Mādhyamika claim to be the stronger one that ordinary practice cannot coherently be thought to require defense— cannot be thought to require this, in particular, to the extent that any putatively explanatory "defense" must be thought not to exemplify the same constraints that characterize those practices (must be thought, that is, not itself to be dependently originated). The fact that our ordinary practices cannot be thought to require explanation, then, is proposed by the Mādhyamika as expressing something that is importantly *true*.

Consider, in this regard, an observation from Gisela Striker, who clarifies one of the allegedly problematic aspects of Pyrrhonian skepticism.

> Even the Pyrrhonists occasionally claim the right to find an argument or a thesis convincing; but this does not mean they think such a thesis, rather than its opposite, corresponds to the truth concerning the nature of a thing. Conviction is, for them, a state of mind, comparable to a physical sensation. And just as it is absurd to try to talk a hungry person out of his hunger, so they considered it absurd to try to persuade the skeptic that he's not convinced. And a counterargument would accomplish nothing at all, since after all the skeptic only takes his thesis to be convincing, not true. (1996:146)

This passage could be regarded as describing, as well, the implications of Kripke's idea that Hume concludes that "not an *a priori* argument, but custom, is the source of our inductive inferences" or of Garfield's idea that Madhyamaka takes "conventions as the foundation of ontology"; that is, such observations imply that one must give up talk of truth and must instead be content merely to defer to unfounded custom. But on my interpretation of Madhyamaka, Garfield's characterization should be seen as apt only with the proviso that it be understood as an essentially metaphysical claim—and, hence, proposed as really true.

Some observers might find this suggestion counterintuitive to the extent that one takes any reference at all to the "metaphysical" as, ipso facto, antithetical to the "conventional." That these two go together closely in this case follows, however, precisely from the *content* of Madhyamaka's metaphysical claim; that claim just is that "conventionally" (which is to say, for Madhyamaka, *interdependently*) is the only way that anything *can* exist. Another passage from Garfield is helpful in making this point. Recall, in this connection, the characterization advanced here of Madhyamaka as having recognized that the ontological primitives posited by Abhidharma could have explanatory purchase only if they are exceptions to the rule that everything is dependently originated—it is precisely the Madhyamaka point to emphasize that there *are* no exceptions to this rule. Garfield makes what seems the same point when he characterizes Nāgārjuna's as a "regularity view" of reality, according to which

> we should seek to explain regularities by reference to their embeddedness in other regularities, and so on. To ask why there are regularities at all, on such a view, would be to ask an incoherent question: The fact of explanatorily useful regularities in nature is what makes explanation and investigation possible in the first place and is not something itself that can be explained. (1995:116n)

This characterization lends itself to a metaphysical interpretation. Recall the suggestion that metaphysical commitments are disclosed at the point where (following Collingwood) we reach some account's "absolute presuppositions." Garfield's statement of Nāgārjuna's "regularity view" identifies precisely such a place. That is, it is incoherent to demand that causal regularities be explained insofar as any answer to the question must presuppose precisely the sort of regularities whose explanation is purportedly sought. Here, an interesting similarity with Kant suggests how we might take Garfield's characterization as stating a transcendental claim. Summarizing a central theme of the first *Critique,* Kant expresses in the *Prolegomena* basically the same point that Garfield makes in terms of "explanatorily useful regularities": "how this characteristic property of our sensibility itself may be possible, or that of our understanding and of the necessary apperception that underlies it and all thinking, cannot be further solved and answered, *because we always have need of them for all answering and for all thinking of objects.*"[35]

Kant similarly contended, then, that something like "explanatorily useful regularities" are a condition of the possibility of any explanation and so cannot themselves be explained. As we should note with respect to Garfield's interpretation of Madhyamaka, however, this is itself a metaphysical point. To be sure,

Kant's conclusions in this regard led him characteristically to reject any and all "metaphysical" projects of a certain kind—specifically, those that purport to yield knowledge of "things-in-themselves." But that is just to say that Kant eschews what is here called *categoreal* metaphysics. Kant's philosophical project, instead, aims to ground objectivity in the conditions of the possibility of (subjective) experience. But these claims regarding the putatively transcendental conditions are (as Kant thinks he has shown) *necessarily believed,* such that even any denial of the claims must itself presuppose their truth. Kant's claims thus meet the criterion for possibly "metaphysical truth" as construed by Schubert Ogden: "Those statements are true metaphysically which I could not avoid believing to be true, at least implicitly, if I were to believe or exist at all." This is why in the end those claims that are (like Kant's) "metaphysical" in a constitutively transcendental sense positively require a different kind of argument: The transcendental claims constitutively concern the kinds of conditions (e.g., "explanatorily useful regularities") that are necessarily presupposed by any other argument we could make—even one that claims to counter the transcendental argument.

All of this is just to emphasize that Mādhyamika arguments support claims that are proposed as *really true.* Mādhyamika talk of conventions turns out to be interpretable as not concerning only mental artifacts—which means it can be said to be really true that things are dependently originated ("empty"), quite independent of the fact that anyone says so. And the truth of that fact (if it is true) implies that our ordinary epistemic practices (our "conventions") cannot coherently be thought to require the kind of justification demanded by such normative epistemologists as Dignāga—cannot, that is, coherently be thought to require explanation by appeal to something that is not itself dependently originated; the idea that there could be any such thing is just what is shown by the Mādhyamika to be incoherent.

The fact that a particular sort of justification (viz., foundationalist justification) cannot coherently be demanded of the Mādhyamika claim does not change the fact that the claim can nonetheless appropriately be judged as possibly true—and indeed, as true in such a way as to express something important about the real nature of things, about what Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti do not shrink from calling the "ultimate truth." Theirs is not the kind of "ultimate truth" sought by Dignāga, who believes that there is a privileged cognitive faculty (perception) that puts us in contact with "really existent" (*paramārthasat*) things—namely, with the uniquely particular and fleeting sensations that alone are indubitably real. A desire to advance this understanding inclines Dignāga to favor the view that epistemology is a normative discipline and that our ordinary epistemic intuitions are in need of systematic redescription—with such rede-

scription meant to advance the view that what we are really warranted in believing is something entirely other than what we encounter in ordinary propositional experience.

Candrakīrti's aim simply to describe and defer to our conventional epistemic intuitions—his taking, in the terms proposed here, a basically phenomenological approach to epistemology—is meant, instead, to advance the insight that our conventions already exemplify the ultimately metaphysical point that he is making: There *are* no "ultimately existent" things, there is no privileged level of description that provides explanatory purchase on our conventions. Accordingly, the perennially vexed question of whether Madhyamaka has any "thesis" can be understood as concerning different kinds of justification. Candrakīrti's major contention contra Dignāga, then, is that a proper understanding of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claims does not require the kind of justification that Dignāga thinks is necessary (viz., warranting by some accredited *pramāṇa*)—and indeed that the very demand for this kind of justification already presupposes the truth of those claims. Indeed, to the extent that Candrakīrti can show that things only can exist dependently ("conventionally"), it is incoherent to think that dependently originated things could ever be *explained* by something that is not itself dependently originated ("conventional").

As noted in the Introduction, my engagement with Candrakīrti's arguments is rather more speculative than has so far been the case, with my elaboration of a "philosophical grammar" here reflecting the extent to which the proposed interpretation represents a rational reconstruction of Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka. I believe, however, that Candrakīrti's works contain the resources to reconstruct the justification for the position I take him to defend and that my interpretation therefore counts as an interpretation *of Candrakīrti*—that the interpretation is, in other words, constrained by the texts that preserve his characteristically Sanskritic arguments.

I will try, though, to help the reader remain attentive to what Tom Tillemans has characterized (following Imre Lakatos) as the distinction between "internal" and "external history"—between, that is, "logical deductions of what could have been said, given the key ideas of the philosopher in question, . . . [and] what was actually said, what actually took place."[36] The effort to tack back and forth between these is worthwhile if it helps us bring the underappreciated critique of Dignāga into relation with Candrakīrti's larger project and in a way that renders the larger project more coherent and intelligible.

Having sketched my proposed "internal history" of this argument, though, I will turn now to its "external history." Let us see, then, what this trajectory of argument looks like in the course of Candrakīrti's imagined engagement with Dignāga, as that is preserved in Candrakīrti's texts.

Candrakīrti Against Bare Particulars
AN EXPRESSION OF MĀDHYAMIKA METAPHYSICS

Are Mādhyamikas Defending a Claim?
Nāgārjuna on "Theses," Candrakīrti on "Certainty"

Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (*MMK*), the foundational text for the Madhyamaka school of Buddhist philosophy, is available in the original Sanskrit only as embedded in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā*, which is the only commentary on Nāgārjuna's text known to be extant in Sanskrit. Although Candrakīrti himself seems to have had little influence on the subsequent development of Indian philosophy, that fact alone suffices to draw attention to his work. But Candrakīrti's works came to be of central importance in the Tibetan appropriation of Indian Madhyamaka, and it can plausibly be argued that Candrakīrti is the most exegetically faithful of Nāgārjuna's interpreters. An assessment of Candrakīrti's thought, then, is clearly important to any comprehensive attempt to understand Indian Madhyamaka.

In this regard, the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* is recognized to be of particular importance, comprising Candrakīrti's most extensive engagement with what he considered alternative understandings of Madhyamaka, and of Buddhist thought more generally.[1] We can thus expect to find there a clear expression of how Candrakīrti understood the distinctiveness of Nāgārjuna's approach. Best-known, in this respect, is Candrakīrti's lengthy engagement with the works of Buddhapālita and Bhāvaviveka, two earlier commentators on Nāgārjuna whose works are now extant only in Tibetan translation. Buddhapālita had summarized Nāgārjuna's arguments as being strictly of the *reductio ad absurdum* type—that is, as showing only the unwanted consequences (*prasaṅga*) that follow from his opponents' own premises, without its being incumbent upon Nāgārjuna to adduce any premises of his own. Bhāvaviveka, in turn, had argued that Buddhapālita's approach was insufficient, faulting him for not also formally restating Nāgārjuna's arguments as inferences (*svatantra-anumāna*) whose conclusions Nāgārjuna affirmed. Much of the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* is devoted to defending Buddhapālita, with most of

Candrakīrti's polemical attention accordingly directed at Bhāvaviveka. The first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* has therefore become the *locus classicus* for what the Tibetan tradition came to emphasize as the split between the "Svātantrika" and "Prāsaṅgika" Mādhyamikas—that is, respectively, those who follow Bhāvaviveka in deploying the dialectical tools of formally stated inferences and those who follow Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti in thinking that that approach compromises Nāgārjuna's insights. Perhaps following the emphasis of the Tibetan tradition, most contemporary scholars have been principally oriented toward understanding this aspect of Candrakīrti's opening chapter.[2]

What has less often been appreciated is that the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* also includes a significant engagement with an unnamed interlocutor whose thought resembles that of Dignāga. In the standard edition of the *Prasannapadā*, this section spans some twenty pages.[3] Typical of the neglect of this section is the fact that, even though it thus constitutes more than a fifth of Candrakīrti's opening chapter, Cesare Rizzi's thirty-six-page summary of the chapter devotes a scant two pages to this "controversy with the Buddhist Logicians."[4] This neglect perhaps owes something to the fact that some influential Tibetan discussions of at least parts of this section treat Candrakīrti as continuing his attack on *Bhāvaviveka*, so that what is likely an engagement with Dignāga's epistemology gets subsumed in the *svātantrika-prāsaṅgika* discussion that has instead preoccupied most scholars.[5]

Candrakīrti's engagement with the aforementioned traditional thinkers comes in the course of his explicating the first verse of Nāgārjuna's text: "There do not exist, anywhere at all, any existents whatsoever, arisen either from themselves or from something else, either from both or altogether without cause."[6] Having devoted dozens of pages to the dispute between Buddhapālita and Bhāvaviveka about the dialectical tools appropriate to advancing this claim, Candrakīrti then anticipates an objection to Nāgārjuna's verse—one clearly coming from a proponent of "normative epistemology" (a *pramāṇavādin*), whose commitments take shape, in the course of the exchange, as those of Dignāga. Candrakīrti aptly represents Dignāga as wanting to know what *pramāṇas* (reliable warrants) provide the epistemic foundations for the Mādhyamika position: "At this point, some object: Is this certainty [*niścaya*] that existents are not produced based on a reliable warrant [*pramāṇa*], or is it not based on a reliable warrant?"[7]

The objection that Candrakīrti thus anticipates parallels one that Nāgārjuna had earlier entertained in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*.[8] In that work, which addresses several objections that might be raised regarding Nāgārjuna's characteristic claims regarding emptiness (with these objections boiling down mostly to the charge of self-referential incoherence), Nāgārjuna similarly considers a specifically epistemological objection: "If you [claim that you] refute [the essence of existents] having first apprehended [this fact] through perception, [we respond:]

There is no perception by which existents are apprehended."[9] As Nāgārjuna's auto-commentary makes clear, the interlocutor considers the second point ("There is no perception by which existents are apprehended") to follow, absurdly, from the fact that Nāgārjuna's own claims (if true) have deprived us of any reliable warrants, making it absurd for him to claim to know *anything*.[10] That is, the interlocutor charges that if Nāgārjuna's thesis (*pratijñā*) is correct, then he cannot possibly claim to know that fact by virtue of any reliable warrant (*pramāṇa*). According to that very thesis, no *pramāṇas* exist, insofar as they must surely be counted among "all existents." What completes this objector's satisfaction that Nāgārjuna's position has thus been shown incoherent is the epistemological claim implicit in this objection: We are not justified in crediting any claim for which we cannot adduce a posteriori justification in the form of some reliable epistemic warrant (paradigmatically, perception).

Nāgārjuna rejoins with an expression of what is often regarded as a characteristically Mādhyamika sort of "skepticism," where that is understood simply as the disavowal of any specific truth-claims: "If I could apprehend anything by means of things like perception, I would affirm or deny; [but] since that [which I might thus apprehend] doesn't exist, there is no reproach of me."[11] The object that Nāgārjuna "might" (counterfactually) thus apprehend (*artham upalabheyam*) is a *svabhāva*, an "essence" of existents. But because his point is that the very idea of such an "essence" is fundamentally incoherent, there could not possibly be anything answering to its description that might be "perceived" or "apprehended." Indeed, Nāgārjuna's point is that insofar as one is concerned to warrant claims regarding what is "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*), there is quite simply nothing at all to "perceive," since what is "ultimately existent" is not (as it is for Ābhidharmikas) a set of objects available to perception.

Thus, Nāgārjuna not only concedes but affirms that *pramāṇas* cannot "exist"—specifically, cannot exist as affording an independent, privileged perspective on existents (which is what Nāgārjuna must therefore take his interlocutor to presuppose). As Claus Oetke stresses, "Nāgārjuna wished to demonstrate the non-existence of *pramāṇas* on the *paramārtha*-level, as he had pointed out in the preceding section the nonexistence of (acts of) assertion on this level, so that the acknowledgment of both existence and validity of those items on the *saṃvṛtti*-level is not affected and no restriction of the scope of possible knowledge is entailed."[12] What Nāgārjuna thinks is problematic about his interlocutor's demand for justification, then, is the presupposition that justification could consist in cognitive contact with something "ultimately existent"—and this is problematic, for Nāgārjuna, just because his whole point is to argue that there is no such thing.

Like Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti clarifies that his interlocutor thinks the only justified belief is one based on a posteriori means of justification: "If [your cer-

tainty] is not based on a reliable warrant, this doesn't make sense, since understanding of a warrantable object [*prameya*] depends upon reliable warrants."[13] Otherwise, the interlocutor urges, belief is arbitrary, such that he would be entitled to rejoin: "It will be my [certainty] precisely that all existents exist, and that based upon the same thing as your certainty that existents are unproduced!" Candrakīrti's interlocutor then anticipates and dismisses what might be thought (following Nāgārjuna's claim to have no "thesis")[14] to be a characteristically Mādhyamika evasion: "Or [perhaps you will say] you have no certainty [to the effect that] 'all existents are unproduced.' In that case, since there's no persuading another of something of which one isn't oneself certain, it's pointless to undertake the treatise, and all existents stand unrefuted." However, despite thus having imagined an interlocutor who anticipates a rejoinder like Nāgārjuna's, Candrakīrti's initial response nevertheless parallels Nāgārjuna's claim not to have any "thesis" (*pratijñā*):

> If we had anything at all like certainty, then there would be [a question of its being] based on a reliable warrant, or not based on a reliable warrant. But we don't! How so? If there were the possibility of doubt here, there could be a certainty opposed to that and dependent upon it. But when we have no doubt in the first place, then how could there be a certainty opposed to it?[15]

Thus, Candrakīrti's initial response to his interlocutor trades on a point conceptually similar to Nāgārjuna's point about a "thesis" (*pratijñā*), with Candrakīrti here framing the issue in terms of *niścaya* and its opposite (*aniścaya*, "non-*niścaya*" or "absence of *niścaya*").

Dignāga, as Candrakīrti has here imagined him objecting, does not doubt that we have reliable warrants (*pramāṇas*) at our disposal. He doubts only that Mādhyamika claims can be justified by any of them. Candrakīrti's interlocutor cannot imagine how a claim can be justified except by those a posteriori criteria that render something (epistemically) "ascertained" (*niścita*): "If, as you say, you never have any certainty at all, then how is this expression of yours—which has the form of something ascertained, to wit, 'neither intrinsically, nor extrinsically, nor through both, nor causelessly, do existents exist'—apprehended?"[16] On my reading of Dignāga's challenge as a constitutively normative-epistemological one, this interlocutor thus understands Candrakīrti's claim as "having the form of something ascertained" specifically by some accredited *pramāṇa*—and what Candrakīrti rejects is the notion that *this kind* of justification needs to (or even can) be sought. Indeed, he will argue that it is incoherent to try, since the things to which the foundationalist looks for justification are themselves possible only given the truth of Candrakīrti's claim (that is, that everything is empty-

qua-interdependent)—a fact that must therefore be knowable *prior* to the exercise of any such epistemic factors.[17] This is the point of Candrakīrti's rejoining that there is no possibility of doubt with respect to his claim.

If, however, Candrakīrti's claims are not "ascertained" (*niścita*) by the foundationalist's a posteriori criteria of justification, then how does Candrakīrti represent them? There follows the characteristically Mādhyamika sort of discourse that might lead one to suppose that the Mādhyamika is simply disavowing any truth-claim: "This expression is ascertained by reasoning that is common-sensical only on the part of the world, not on the part of the venerable [*ārya*]. Does this mean the venerable have no reasoning? Who can say whether or not they do? For ultimate truth is a matter of venerable silence." Given this, says Candrakīrti, the venerable "do not expound reasoning according to business as usual. Rather, granting, for the sake of awakening others, only that reasoning which is well-established in the world, in that way they awaken the world."[18]

Candrakīrti thus seems to suggest that the "ultimate truth" (*paramārthasatya*) that he is after is not available to reasoning (*upapatti*) at all and that the conventional world of argumentation is therefore only provisionally deployed by the "venerable" ones (*ārya*) who have realized the status of full Buddhist insight. If this is a project in which the conventional world is to be superseded in the end by an "ultimate truth" that seems radically distinct therefrom, one might well understand Candrakīrti here to be suggesting that there is an important sense in which discourse as we know it is altogether false—and what could be more "normative" than thus to refuse the validity of everything that we thought we had known?[19] This goes to the heart of one of the most vexed aspects of Candrakīrti's project. The implications of this passage are more fully considered below, when it is argued that there is, on Candrakīrti's reading, a fundamental *identity* between these "two truths"—and that the statement of that identity amounts to a metaphysical claim.[20]

On "Reasoning That Is Familiar": a posteriori vs. a priori Justification

Before proceeding to a discussion of his substantive engagement with Dignāga, it is worthwhile to consider briefly an example that Candrakīrti adduces to show how the "venerable" deploy the reasoning that they provisionally adopt "for the sake of awakening others." This is useful because Candrakīrti's treatment of the example discloses the fundamentally a priori mode of his reasoning and thus can advance our reconstruction of his as transcendental arguments. He says:

> Now the venerable awaken them [ordinary people] to [the true nature of things] through reasoning that is familiar to them. For example, it's [gener-

ally] granted that there is no production of an [already] existent jar from the clay and so forth; in this way, it should be determined that there is no production, since what exists prior to production already exists. Or, for example, it's accepted that a sprout is not produced from the coals of a fire, which are other than it; likewise, it should be ascertained that [production] is not from the seeds and so forth, even though they are intended [as the cause of sprouts].[21]

The first argument shows, with respect to the first verse of Nāgārjuna's *MMK* ("There do not exist, anywhere at all, any existents whatsoever, arisen either from themselves or from something else, either from both or altogether without cause"), why the first horn of this tetralemma cannot be upheld: because the causation of something *from itself* would entail that the thing in question already exist, in which case, its coming-into-being would no longer require explanation.[22] It perhaps requires little persuading to accept that this could count as "reasoning that is familiar" to the ordinary person.

It is rather less clear, however, that "familiar" reasoning is in play in the case of the second example, which represents Candrakīrti's quick sketch of why the second horn of Nāgārjuna's tetralemma (which would hold that existents are caused by other existents) cannot obtain. The argument itself is not difficult to grasp, only its claim to represent "familiar" reasoning. Candrakīrti allows as much when he rejoins with an elliptically stated objection from the interlocutor: "But this is our experience."[23] This can be understood as making explicit a demand for a posteriori justification—a demand, that is, that our belief in this matter be justified by appeal to what we experience (and surely we just experience things to be caused by other things). A similar demand is less elliptically expressed in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, where Candrakīrti frames the objection in terms of an appeal to ordinary language and convention: "If someone accepts as authoritative the every-day world, which is based in direct experience, what is to be accomplished here by these demands for reasoned argument? Everyone thinks that one thing is produced from another. Therefore, there is 'birth from another,' so what need is there for reasoning with respect to this?"[24] As we will appreciate after we have seen the extent of Candrakīrti's commitment to ordinary language, it is important that he here imagines an interlocutor who might trump him in this regard; it is invariably *Candrakīrti* who charges his interlocutor with undermining the "conventional" and with needlessly introducing the demands that are peculiar to the technical context of normative-epistemological argument.

Candrakīrti clarifies that what is really under discussion here is the status of (what is for Dignāga and his foundationalist heirs the privileged faculty of) perception.[25] In elaborating the less elliptically stated version of the objection, Can-

drakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* specifically says that "perception" (*pratyakṣa*) is what chiefly informs our "experience" (*anubhava*). It is, the interlocutor there argues, evident simply on the basis of perception that existents are produced from other existents; and "appeal to reasoned argument is appropriate only with respect to things that are not perceptible, and not with respect to what is perceptible. Therefore, even without any argument, it must still be true that existents are produced from other [existents]."[26] In other words, insofar as perception is conventionally understood to trump other ways of knowing, our simply *seeing* things being produced from other existents is sufficient to establish this fact, and it is therefore *Candrakīrti* who undermines conventions by questioning what is obviously the case.

Clearly, this passage from the *Madhyamakāvatāra* elaborates the same objection that is expressed more elliptically in the *Prasannapadā* (where the interlocutor simply says that "this is our experience"). In his response to the rejoinder as stated in the *Prasannapadā*, Candrakīrti flatly dismisses the value of this appeal for a posteriori justification: "This [appeal to experience] doesn't make sense, either, since this experience is false, [simply] because it's experience—like the experience of two moons on the part of someone with cataracts. Therefore, by virtue of the fact that experience similarly requires proof, this objection doesn't make sense."[27] Thus, whereas Dignāga's account takes perception as providing privileged access to an unmediated "given" that alone is "really existent" (*paramārthasat*), Candrakīrti is here denying that *any* conventional practices thus give access to what is ultimately real. He expresses this even more compellingly near the end of the *Madhyamakāvatāra*'s sixth chapter: "[Only] the omniscient wisdom [of a Buddha] is accepted as endowed with the characteristics of perception; anything else, because of its being ephemeral, is not accepted as perception."[28]

Although the foundationalist's demand for a posteriori justification involves appeal to a privileged epistemic faculty, Candrakīrti rejoins that there are no such privileged faculties—only a Buddha's insight affords access to what is ultimately the case; the rest of us are blighted by the "cataracts" of ignorance, which prevent us from appreciating our epistemic and soteriological limitations. A posteriori justification, then, is of no use with respect to Candrakīrti's claim, insofar as it is precisely our experience of the world that Candrakīrti considers in some sense compromised; or, rather, Candrakīrti considers our experience itself already to exemplify the "empty" nature of reality—to exemplify, that is, the fact of being dependently originated. Therefore, it is incoherent to think that some component of our epistemic complement is not characterized by the conditions of the world; Candrakīrti's whole point is that there is nothing that is not so characterized.

But if that is the case, the most important fact about things (viz., their being

dependently originated) must become knowable in some other way. With his argument having dismissed the demand for a posteriori justification as an appeal to a criterion that itself merely exemplifies (rather than explains) the point he is making, Candrakīrti ventures an argument against *parabhāva* (arising from another) that can be said to gain its purchase instead from an a priori analysis. That is, Candrakīrti's argument—that if a sprout cannot be produced from the coals of a fire, then it cannot be said to be produced from a seed, either—short-circuits any appeal to what we experience to be the case by analyzing only the concepts presupposed in how we talk about experience. The point is to reduce to absurdity any argument that presupposes the independence of such concepts. The argument turns simply on the definition of "other": the general concept of "otherness" leaves no principled way for us to know *which* other things are relevantly connected to the thing whose arising we seek to explain. We are thus left to suppose that anything that is "other" than the latter (even the coals of a fire) could give rise to it.[29]

Candrakīrti's initially counterintuitive claim that the causal production of existents from other existents can be refuted by "reasoning that is familiar" in the world is, then, best understood in particular as rejecting a posteriori appeals to putatively justificatory experience and, instead, as deploying a priori analysis of the concepts presupposed thereby. Because this move involves a fairly straightforward notion (that the concept of *parabhāva* leaves no principled way to distinguish which "others" we should attend to), the argument turns out to have a plausible claim to representing "reasoning that is familiar." The equally familiar appeal to a posteriori justification has been rejected in favor of a straightforward appeal to a priori argument.

This typifies the entire Mādhyamika enterprise. Thus, for example, Nāgārjuna's critique of "motion" (in chapter 2 of the *MMK*, "An Investigation of Coming and Going") does not involve any inquiry into our experience of the phenomena of motion; rather, it trades entirely on analysis of the concepts at play therein. And the main point of such analysis, on Candrakīrti's view, is that such basic concepts are incoherent specifically insofar as they are attempts to *explain* our conventions. That is, Candrakīrti thinks that we must reject Dignāga's (or any other) claim to have access to something more "real" than what our conventionally understood epistemic practices yield—because Candrakīrti's properly metaphysical claim is that there *is* nothing that is not subject to the same constraints as our conventions, that is not dependently originated. This metaphysical claim cannot, in principle, be warranted by foundationalist justification because Dignāga's appeal to a peculiarly technical sense of "perception," on Candrakīrti's view, just is a demand for something more real than our conventions. Candrakīrti's chief claim can therefore be justified only by a logically distinct type of argument. This follows from the *content* of that claim,

which makes the foundationalist's demands an example of precisely the problem to be overcome. Candrakīrti's rejection of his interlocutor's elliptical appeal to experience, then, offers a glimpse of the a priori logic that runs through Candrakīrti's exchange with Dignāga, as throughout Candrakīrti's work.

Significantly, it is precisely at this point that Candrakīrti attributes to his interlocutor the protest that he is not, in fact, trying to get "behind" our conventions to something more "real"; rather, Dignāga is represented as claiming, "It is [simply] business as usual [*vyavahāra*] regarding warrants and warrantable objects which has been explained by us through [our school's] treatise."[30] Since nearly all Buddhists would maintain that the ultimate realization of a Buddha vastly exceeds our limited ability to talk about it, it is to be expected that even foundationalists like Dignāga, being good Buddhists, would claim that their doctrines represent conventional accounts. But in that case, Candrakīrti claims, it should be explained why the foundationalist's peculiarly technical project is called for at all, since surely we are already competent in the use of our conventions (which otherwise would not be conventional!). His interlocutor rejoins that the sense of our conventional usage "has been destroyed by sophists [*kutārkikaiḥ*], through their predication of a mistaken definition," and that he therefore wishes to restore its proper sense.

Candrakīrti's response to this claim is a transcendental argument in miniature:

> This doesn't make sense, either. For if, based on the composition of a mistaken definition by sophists, everyone were mistaken regarding what's being defined, [then] the point of this [proposed re-description of our epistemic practices] would be one whose effort was fruitful. But it's not so, and this effort is pointless.[31]

It becomes clear in the section of the *Prasannapadā* under discussion that Candrakīrti's interlocutor is here designating particularly the Naiyāyikas as "sophists" (*kutārkika*); Candrakīrti will conclude his engagement with Dignāga by endorsing the list of reliable warrants characteristically admitted in the Brahmanical Nyāya school, which defended the kind of direct realist epistemology that representationalists like Dignāga reject.[32] In this way, Candrakīrti effectively frames the dispute with Dignāga as concerning whether Nyāya epistemology adequately reflects our precritical intuitions, with Dignāga here represented as contending that some philosophical refinement is called for only insofar as Nyāya epistemology has compromised our understanding.[33] To this, Candrakīrti responds by suggesting that in fact Nyāya epistemology does adequately reflect our unanalyzed epistemic practices—in which case, an alternative to Nyāya epistemology could be the preferred account only if most people were wrong in their use of the ordinary words that express our epistemic prac-

tices. But it cannot be the case that most people are wrong in their use of ordinary language, since a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse (including Dignāga's!) is that most people generally use language correctly.

This is what Candrakīrti contends throughout. That is, Candrakīrti now turns to consider philosophical commitments recognizably specific to Dignāga, having first asked whether Dignāga can credibly claim to offer an account of conventional epistemic practices; from this point on, Candrakīrti aims only to show that he cannot. In other words, Candrakīrti has set up his survey of commitments specific to Dignāga in such a way that he will need only show that Dignāga's categories are not only not *used* conventionally, but cannot even account for conventional usage—and that, insofar as the conventional usage is what makes meaningful discourse possible, the project thus involves self-contradiction. The self-referential incoherence can be expressed more straightforwardly: What is conventionally true is just our conventions. Therefore, any project that purports to be "conventionally" valid while deploying words in something other than their conventional sense is contradicting itself.

In the end a metaphysical point is being advanced by arguments to this effect: Our epistemic conventions cannot be explained in terms that are not themselves conventional, any more than dependently originated events can ultimately be explained in terms that are not themselves dependent. The discussion now turns to Candrakīrti's critique of the conceptual heart of Dignāga's epistemology: the claim that uniquely particular (and "ultimately existent") sensations are the only objects intended by the privileged faculty of perception.

Candrakīrti on Dignāga's Category of *svalakṣaṇa*: Can "Particulars" Be Bare of Their Own "Defining Characteristics"?

Having framed his engagement with Dignāga as simply concerning whether the latter can coherently redescribe our epistemic practices, Candrakīrti now turns to the correlated terms of Dignāga's epistemology: "perception" (*pratyakṣa*), understood by Dignāga as constitutively nonconceptual; and "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇa*), understood by Dignāga as the objects intended thereby. Candrakīrti first considers the second of these, and his opening salvo against Dignāga's understanding of this exploits the idea that an act of "characterizing" (which is the root sense of the word *lakṣaṇa*) by definition involves a *relationship*—specifically, one between a "characteristic" (*lakṣaṇa*) and the "thing characterized" (*lakṣya*) thereby:

> And if you say there are [only] two reliable warrants, corresponding respectively to the two [kinds of warrantable objects, i.e.,] unique particulars[34]

and abstractions, [then we are entitled to ask,] does the subject [*lakṣya*] which has these two characteristics exist?[35] Or does it not exist? If it exists, then there is an additional warrantable object; how, then, are there [only] two reliable warrants? Or perhaps [you will say] the subject [which is characterized by these characteristics] does not exist. In that case, the characteristic, being without a locus, doesn't exist either, [and] how, [in that case,] are there [as many as] two reliable warrants? . . . [Perhaps you will say:] It is not that *lakṣaṇa* means "that *by which* [something] is characterized." Rather, [according to the rule that] "the *-ana* affix is variously applicable,"[36] taking the affix in the sense of an object (*karmaṇi*), *lakṣaṇa* means "*what* is characterized." [Response:] Even so, the same problem [still obtains], because of the impossibility of something's being characterized by itself; for that instrument by means of which a thing is characterized is something different from the object [that is characterized thereby].[37]

In this way, Candrakīrti stresses that Dignāga's *sva-* and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇas*, precisely because they are (considered etymologically) types of "characteristics," must be instantiated in some subject of characterization (something "to be characterized" [*lakṣya*])—which, Candrakīrti suggests, Dignāga cannot admit without compromising his commitment to the view that there are only two types of existents, since the subject in which these were instantiated would then represent an additional kind of existent.[38] However, it is incoherent to suppose that these are not the "characteristics" *of* anything, because the conventional understanding of the term constitutively involves the characteristic/characterized relationship.

Candrakīrti's style of argument here is distinctively Sanskritic: Sanskrit philosophical discourse is replete with arguments based on traditional etymologies of the terms under discussion and on traditional categories of grammatical analysis.[39] Thus, among other things, we see here the typically grammatical claim that the instrument by which something is effected (in this case, by which something is "characterized") is, by virtue of its *being* an instrument, something that cannot at the same time be an object—just as different case endings are required to express these components of any particular action. We can, however, appreciate the argument as having more generally philosophical relevance if we recall that Candrakīrti's overriding concern here is with how words are conventionally used. The argument here advances Candrakīrti's claim that any usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa* already presupposes the relational terms thematized by the grammarians, conventionally regarded as normative in the Sanskritic tradition. This is particularly clear when Candrakīrti has his interlocutor appeal to what amounts to an alternative gloss on the *-ana* suffix. Just as *pramāṇa* can be variously glossed as "that *by which* something is cognized" and "*what* is cog-

nized,"[40] so, too, does Candrakīrti anticipate that Dignāga might argue that the word *lakṣaṇa* picks out "what is characterized" (that is, the discrete objects that are the substrata of defining characteristics). Candrakīrti rejoins that this tactic will not help his interlocutor and for the same reason as before: Even if it is held that the word *lakṣaṇa* picks out an object, it still requires a connection to some "instrument" that does the characterizing (hence, to an additional kind of existent), "because of the impossibility of something's being characterized by itself; for that instrument by means of which a thing is characterized is something different from the object [that is characterized thereby]."

Candrakīrti now clarifies how Dignāga's understanding of *svalakṣaṇa* differs from what Candrakīrti takes as the conventional sense of the word:

> In this connection, that which is the unique, intrinsic nature [*svarūpa*] of existents is [what is conventionally referred to as] their defining characteristic [*svalakṣaṇa*]. For example, earth's [defining characteristic] is resistance, [that] of feeling is experience, [that] of perceptual cognition is the specific representation of an object. Therefore, taking [*svalakṣaṇa*] in the sense of "what is characterized,"[41] and [thus] disregarding the etymology that follows the familiar sense, [our interlocutor] takes it as denoting an object [*karmasādhanam*]. And by positing [at the same time] the instrumental nature of perceptual cognition, it is said [in effect] that one unique particular has the quality of being an object, and another unique particular has the quality of being an instrument. In that case, if the *svalakṣaṇa*[42] of perceptual cognition is an instrument, then it must have a separate object [*tasya vyatiriktena karmaṇā bhavitavyam*]. This is the fault [in your position].[43]

Here, the examples of the conventional usage—which can be found in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*[44]—are compared in particular with a usage that defines the word *svalakṣaṇa* as "denoting an object" (*karmasādhanam*).[45] This characterization of Dignāga's understanding of the term as "denoting an object" makes sense in light of Dignāga's using the word to denote those "unique particulars" that are the direct objects of perception. This understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* as objects requires them to be (as they are for Dignāga) the sort of things that one can encounter separately as ontologically "given" entities. It is precisely this requirement that is at odds with conventional usage of the word; *svalakṣaṇas* in the sense of "defining characteristics" are not discretely given entities, but simply the descriptions under which things are experienced.

It is interesting that Candrakīrti here reduces Dignāga's usage to absurdity by using an argument to the effect that any attempt by Dignāga to accommodate conventional usage will issue in infinite regress (with Dignāga's usage thus being

said to entail that "one unique particular has the quality of being an object and another unique particular has the quality of being an instrument"). Candrakīrti's argument here can plausibly be understood as similar to some contemporary arguments against the sort of "bare particulars" presupposed by "substratum theories" similar to the Ābhidharmika version of reductionism. The view that medium-sized dry goods are reducible to more basic parts often involves reference to a "bare substratum" in which various properties are instantiated, but that is itself without any properties. Such a level is posited to bring the exercise of reductionism to rest, explaining the numerical diversity of ontological primitives without presupposing that any reducible properties are themselves such primitives. It has been persuasively argued, however, that the idea of bare particulars as the "ultimate" (i.e., because themselves irreducible) exemplifiers of the properties of a whole is incoherent, insofar as putatively bare particulars can always be at least *essentially* characterized—that is, characterized by such "essential" properties as *being a substratum or a human being.*[46]

We can express this point more simply by noting that any particular must at least have the "property" of *being a unique particular.* The latter is an abstract state of affairs; the property "being a unique particular" is one that is shared by all unique particulars.[47] But in that case, the basic problem of how particulars are characterized (which is essentially the problem of how particulars are related to their defining properties) is not avoided by claiming that particulars are defined as such simply by their having only themselves as "characteristics"; this line of reasoning opens an infinite regress insofar as *this characterization itself* necessarily involves a relationship between characteristic and thing characterized (*lakṣaṇa* and *lakṣya*).

Candrakīrti's opening argument against Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* makes fundamentally the same argument. The point that Candrakīrti makes in terms of the "characterizing" relationship is that it is incoherent to think that anything without characteristics (any "bare particular") could in the end be all that really exists, insofar as any object (*karman*) that we encounter as possessing characteristics must be in relation to what characterizes it (*karaṇa*)—with the force of necessity here coming from the unavoidability of reference at least to "essential characteristics."[48] As with the argument regarding the necessity of essential characteristics, the logic of Candrakīrti's argument against Dignāga similarly charges that Dignāga's account involves an infinite regress. Such an argument gains its power insofar as it is precisely the point of Dignāga's project to bring the reductionist project to rest in something not further reducible.

It can, of course, be questioned whether higher-order properties (like the property *being a unique particular*) should be admitted as in any sense "real." Indeed, to the extent that Dignāga's entire project centrally involves the denial even of first-order property-universals, it might be thought that the adducing

of "essential characteristics" (which are basically second-order properties: the property of *being something with such-and-such properties*) will have little purchase against Dignāga.[49] But there is a nontrivial point at stake here, and we would do well to take seriously the problem raised by these cases. Candrakīrti has argued that the idea of a *svalakṣaṇa* (in the sense of "defining characteristic") necessarily involves a relationship between two things. I have proposed reconstructing this as an argument to the effect that even an irreducibly unique particular necessarily has at least the property of "being a unique particular." Such a reconstruction helps to make clear how Candrakīrti can plausibly argue that Dignāga's account of *svalakṣaṇa* (i.e., as neither *being* nor *having* any "characteristic") is self-referentially incoherent; it becomes impossible to say of any *svalakṣaṇa* even that it is one.[50]

Having thus argued that his interlocutor's account incoherently posits something essentially self-characterizing, Candrakīrti anticipates various lines of reasoning intended to salvage the possibility of precisely such a thing. This includes a consideration of Dignāga's account of *svasaṃvitti* (apperception), which is adduced as the unique example of something that is simultaneously both an object and a subject. Candrakīrti here refers to an argument developed in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*. We can, however, appreciate Candrakīrti's basic point without pursuing that reference. His interlocutor in the present text adduces *svasaṃvitti* chiefly as an example of something that is alleged to be self-characterizing. Whether or not Candrakīrti's critique of *svasaṃvitti* is finally convincing is therefore less significant here than Candrakīrti's basic argument that Dignāga's conception entails an infinite regress.[51]

Candrakīrti returns to the expressions that he has adduced as exemplifying conventional usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa*. Candrakīrti now attributes to his interlocutor the claim that, in fact, conventional usage *does* attest examples that are merely "self-relating," so that worldly convention might, after all, sanction Dignāga's understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* as discrete and independent (because not related even to any properties). Against this claim, Candrakīrti argues that the salient feature of the conventional usage ("resistance is the *svalakṣaṇa* of earth") is that what characterizes the relationship between "earth" and its "defining characteristic" is the fact of their being inseparable: "Resistance" is not an *object* that could be perceived apart from the "earth" that necessarily instantiates it. This is the principal point made by Candrakīrti in what is a notoriously complex exchange:[52]

[Objection:] Well, perhaps this could be [suggested]: Even when there is no possibility of qualifiers that are separate from a "body" or a "head"—as [in the expressions] "the body of a statue," or "the head of Rāhu"—there is [nevertheless] a relation of qualifier and qualified; just as [in that case],

here, too, there will be [a real relation] even when there is no possibility of any earth apart from its *svalakṣaṇa*, [so that we are, after all, in a position to make sense of the familiar expression,] "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*."[53]

[Reply:] This isn't so, because [these cases] are not the same. For the use of words like "body" and "head" depends on other associated categories, such as, [in the case of 'heads,'] intellect, etc., and, [in the case of bodies,] hands, etc. That being the case, the production of an idea based only on the words "body" or "head" creates a semantic expectation regarding the other associated categories, [such that one expects to be know] *whose* body? *whose* head? Another [person], with a desire to preclude connection with any other qualifiers, removes an interlocutor's semantic expectation by suggesting the qualifications that are statues and Rāhu—[a suggestion that] is in conformity with mundane convention [*saṃketa*]. This makes sense. But in the present case, where there is no possibility of earth and so forth apart from [defining characteristics] such as resistance, the relation of qualifier and qualified doesn't make sense.[54]

In this passage, Candrakīrti attributes to his interlocutor the claim that, in fact, conventional usage does attest cases where we talk *as though* there were a relationship between two things, when in fact there is only one real referent. Given that, Dignāga states, worldly convention does sanction his understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* as the only "real" referents of an expression like "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*"— that is, the understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* as the "unique particulars" that are the discrete and independent subjects of the properties we (erroneously) project and that are what is really apprehended when we "perceive" an instance of earth. Candrakīrti can expect his readers to know that the point of these examples is that a statue *just is* a "body,"[55] and that Rāhu—a celestial being who, having been beheaded, now exists only as the disembodied head whose "swallowing" of the sun and moon accounts for eclipses, with the sun or moon re-emerging when they pass below his neck—*just is* a head.[56] These examples are meant by Dignāga, then, to show that conventional usage might thus attest expressions like "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*,"[57] even though earth *just is* (reducible to) the "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇa*) that are what we really encounter in perception—and that the conventional expression "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*" does not, therefore, entail that the instances of "earth" disclosed in perception are invariably related to the "defining characteristic" that Candrakīrti takes *svalakṣaṇa* as denoting.

Candrakīrti rejoins that the examples of "the body of a statue" and "the head of Rāhu" are not, in fact, comparable to the case of "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*." This is because the conventional understanding of a "defining characteristic" (*svalakṣaṇa*) is not that it *qualifies* some particular example of the kind in question (e.g., "*red* earth") but, rather, that it makes something an example *of that kind* in

the first place. As (Candrakīrti notes) the Sanskrit grammarians say, adjectival "qualification" (*viśeṣaṇa*) is called for only when there is some syntactic "expectation" (*ākāṅkṣā*),[58] such that we need to know more in order to know precisely which token of some type is being picked out. When, for example, there is reference to a head, we expect to know whose it is; hence, the genitive relation here ("the head *of Rāhu*") is called for simply because we expect some qualification in order to know which of the countless possible heads is in question.

In contrast, since there cannot meaningfully be any earth that is not "earth" *by definition*—which is not, that is, possessed of the characteristic that makes it an instance *of* "earth"—we do not, when encountering some instance of "resistance," wonder what it belongs to. When one encounters an instance of "earth," one *just is* encountering an instance of "resistance." This is what it means for the latter to be a defining characteristic of the former. To be sure, we can separate a thing and its defining characteristic analytically, as we do when we specify which thing is being defined ("earth," the *lakṣya*) and which thing is adduced as its definition ("resistance," its *svalakṣaṇa*). But conventional usage involves no sense in which *svalakṣaṇa* is something discretely given to perception.

This point can be understood as counting against Dignāga's contention that perceptual cognition affords access to uninterpreted data. Candrakīrti's argument here advances the point that we invariably encounter things as they are defined. That is, tokens of the type "earth" are invariably encountered *under a description* (viz., as "hard" or "resistant"). It is, then, not possible to perceive some instance of earth without, at the same time, perceiving this property. Candrakīrti makes the point by claiming that "defining characteristics" are necessarily instantiated in some *lakṣya*, some "bearer" of the defining property in question. On Candrakīrti's reading, Dignāga cannot coherently concede this, since Dignāga's position requires that there be no additional *kind* of existent to which *svalakṣaṇas* could belong. And to the extent that Dignāga cannot concede this, Candrakīrti is ultimately (and above all) stressing, he cannot claim to mean by the word *svalakṣaṇa* what people conventionally mean by it—in which case, there is an important sense in which the philosophical problems that Dignāga is trying to address by appeal to this category turn out not to be real problems.

Must There Be a Basis for Our Conventions?

What is at stake throughout this section of the exchange is whether our conventions can be thought of as requiring a really existent (i.e., irreducible) *basis* in order to be possible. In this regard, it is useful to invoke a passage from Sthiramati's *Triṃśikābhāṣya*, which claims, particularly as opposed to the Mādhyamikas, that such is precisely the case; "for conventional [reality] without some

basis does not stand to reason."[59] The word rendered here as "basis" is *upādāna*, which has the sense of "appropriation" or, in many cases, "what is appropriated." The word figures prominently in the Buddhist context, occurring as the ninth member of the standard twelvefold chain of dependent origination, where it has the active sense of "grasping."[60] The word can also, however, have an objective sense, designating the causal or material basis of the action of appropriation. In this sense, the word often means "fuel," that is, what is consumed or "appropriated" by fire.[61]

Although, in many contexts, the word *upādāna* allows either reading, the latter, objective sense is most consistent with Candrakīrti's use. With the sense of this as "basis" in mind, we might propose that Buddhist foundationalists like Dignāga understand *svalakṣaṇas* as the really existent "basis" (*upādāna*) of our conventions. As Mark Siderits puts it (expressing something like the claim stated by Sthiramati), "The realm of the constructed requires a base of reals . . . and this role is played by the svalakṣaṇa" (1981:130). Candrakīrti's interlocutor has given examples like "Rāhu's head" to show that we often seem to refer to two things in cases where we know that there is only one "real" referent. He needs to show this because he wishes to accommodate the widely attested example of "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*"—a usage in which there seem to be two referents— while insisting that there is, ultimately, only one real referent (one *upādāna*): the "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇas*) that he claims are all that really exist.[62]

This disagreement can be framed in terms of the "basis" (*upādāna*) of our conventions in order to anticipate Candrakīrti's next move. He now transposes the discussion into precisely these terms, invoking permutations of the verbal root *upā-√dā* to emphasize that expressions like "Rāhu's head" should not be distinguished from "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*" because one has a "real" referent (and the other does not). Surprisingly, his argument initially seems to credit the various terms precisely with "real existence" (*sadbhāva*):

> Moreover, because of the real existence of the qualifier, familiar without analysis, which is a statue[63]—[conventionally described as] an appropriator [*upādātṛ*] whose appropriated basis [*upādāna*] is a body, [a relation] that is included in ordinary discourse—and because of the real existence of the [qualifier, familiar without analysis], which is Rāhu, [conventionally described as an] appropriator whose appropriated basis is a head—[because,] just as [in the case of] derivatively [existent entities] like the person, [these terms are all said conventionally to exist], this example doesn't make sense.[64]

Significantly, Candrakīrti adduces the case of "derivative" existents like persons (*pudgalādiprajñapti*) as relevant to the discussion—with his language thus

alluding to the Ābhidharmika ontological debate about what exists as *dravyasat* (substantially existent), and what exists as *prajñaptisat* (derivatively existent).[65]

Given the constitutively Buddhist desire to refute the ultimate existence of "persons," it is surprising that Candrakīrti seems clearly to credit persons with "real existence" (*sadbhāva*). But Candrakīrti's point here should be qualified—their existence is only as "real" as any referent *can* be. Thus, Candrakīrti immediately makes clear that the "real existence" thus attributed to these various referents is only the sort that is conventionally admitted:

> [Objection:] In fact, the example is established, since, because of the non-establishment of any other object apart from the body and the head, there is perception of merely those [i.e., simply of body and head]. [Response:] It is not so, because such critical analysis doesn't operate in ordinary communication, and because the existence of ordinary categories is not based on such critical analysis. Just as a self, critically considered, is impossible as [something] distinct from form and so forth, but nonetheless, relative to the aggregates [*skandhān upādāya*] conventionally has existence—so, too, in the case of Rāhu and the statue; hence, there is no establishment of the example.[66]

These have "real existence," then, only to the extent that they are unanalyzed. As Candrakīrti explains, "such critical analysis doesn't operate in ordinary discourse."[67] That is, what defines the conventional is precisely the absence of any analytic search for something more real than what meets the eye. The things thus credited with conventionally "real existence" cannot, however, withstand critical examination any more than the "self" (*ātman*) whose ultimate reality Buddhists are constitutively devoted to rejecting.

In saying that the existence allowed to these things is only what is precritically taken to be the case, Candrakīrti deploys another permutation of *upā-√dā*; thus, the conventional existence of the self is qualified as *skandhān upādāya*. Technically a gerund ("having appropriated"), *upādāya* also functions as a frozen form, meaning "with reference to" or "relative to." The adverbial phrase *skandhān upādāya*, then, means "relative to the aggregates" and can be understood as qualifying a way of existing. Candrakīrti's point is that conventions invariably require some *relationship* such as that reflected by this qualifier—and his point is that the same is true of *svalakṣaṇas*, as they are conventionally understood. Candrakīrti can, then, now make clear that what he finally means to stress against his interlocutor is simply the necessarily interdependent character of all of the terms in play.

> In the same way, even if, on the part of things like earth, there is no subject [when] being considered apart from [defining characteristics] like resist-

ance, and [even if the] characteristic, when separate from the subject, is without a locus—nevertheless, this is the convention. The teacher [Nāgārjuna] settled the matter by establishment [of all these categories] as simply being mutually interdependent [*parasparāpekṣāmātratayā*].[68]

Finally, Candrakīrti drives this point home vis-à-vis the "aggregates" (*skandhas*), which can here be seen as doing duty for the whole menagerie of Ābhidharmika categories that are candidates for what is *dravyasat*—that is, the categories, themselves held to be irreducible, to which derivatively existent entities like persons can be reduced. Having argued that the respective terms in expressions like "Rāhu's head" (the *upādāna* and *upādātṛ*) exist, like the self, only conventionally, Candrakīrti now says that the same is also true of the analytical categories of the Ābhidharmikas:

> And it is not [the case that] there is the impossibility only of things like *statues* when they are investigated by reasoning. Rather . . . there is no possibility of form and feelings and so forth, either; hence, their existence, too, like that of the statue, would have to be accepted as conventional. And this is not how [you accept them]; hence, [your position is] false.[69]

On Candrakīrti's version of the Buddhist project, then, *nothing* can withstand ultimate critical scrutiny. After we initiate a critical analysis, "there is no possibility of form and feelings and so forth, either"—no possibility, that is, that the *skandhas* (of which Candrakīrti here gives the first two from the standard list of five) will survive as an ultimately existent remainder.

That Candrakīrti thinks Dignāga believes otherwise is clear from the conclusion: Dignāga would have to admit that even existents like the *skandhas* (and *svalakṣaṇas*) cannot withstand "critical examination" (*vicāra*) any more than the self can; but he does not, and that is why his position is false (*asat*). This conclusion neatly captures the crucial difference between Candrakīrti and Dignāga. For the latter, entities are reducible to objective "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇa*) that are themselves irreducible—and that are thus an exception to the conditions that pertain with respect to the self. By contrast, Candrakīrti maintains that the only way to be consistent with the Buddhist commitment to dependent origination is to acknowledge that one can never "reach the bottom," insofar as anything posited as irreducible will itself turn out to be dependently originated.

This is the point that Candrakīrti has emphasized by assimilating the discussion of *svalakṣaṇas* to the example of "derivative existents like persons" (*pudgalādiprajñapti*)—an example that gains its purchase from Buddhist agreement that such things really exist only "relative to the aggregates" (*skandhān upādāya*).

Thus, the salient point about examples like "Rāhu's head" is not that there are two terms but only one "real" referent, but that there are two terms only because convention requires it. We can understand our use of expressions simply in terms of what convention requires; it is unnecessary for there to be something more "real" behind them that can be adduced as *explaining* our conventions. The impossibility of explaining such is exemplified by the case of "derivatively existent entities like the person"; conventionally existent things like these could be *explained* only by something that did not, like them, exist "dependently" or "relatively" (*upādāya*). Candrakīrti's point is that there is no such exception.

Given the importance, for Madhyamaka, of the expression *upādāya prajñapti*, it is interesting that Candrakīrti concludes this section by summarizing what he takes himself to have been discussing, and where to look for further discussion: "This presentation of *upādāya prajñapti* is also extensively taught in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, so that should be consulted, too."[70] Let us, then, see how these coordinated terms are unpacked in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*—and specifically, in *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.158–165, which I take to be the section to which Candrakīrti here alludes.[71] This provides the conceptual terms that we need to explicate the text that represents the clearest statement of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim.[72]

MMK 24.18 and Candrakīrti's Metaphysical Claim: "Relative Indication" as an Example of Dependent Origination

The discussion to this point has referred several times to Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim as being that there is nothing more real than our conventions, insofar as "conventionally" is the only way that anything can exist. The point has also been made that his metaphysical claim can be characterized in terms of the necessarily relational character of existents. These two statements may seem to reflect rather different sorts of claims: The former implies a specifically linguistic or coherentist sort of conventionalism, while the latter seems instead to imply a more properly ontological claim. That is, talk of "conventions" would seem to advance an epistemic point—a point about our subjective perspective *on* the world; the category of *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination), however, implies an ontological point—one about how things objectively are *in* the world.

On my interpretation, however, Candrakīrti's elaboration of the category *upādāya prajñapti* aims precisely to collapse these two senses, in favor of (what else?) a middle way between epistemology and ontology. That is, by identifying the seemingly epistemic category of *upādāya prajñapti* with the seemingly ontological category of *pratītyasamutpāda*, Candrakīrti follows Nāgārjuna in argu-

ing that the phenomena of our linguistic and other epistemic conventions do not represent an independent, internally coherent perspective *on* reality; rather, they constitute an *example of* (and are thus involved with) reality, with their necessarily interdependent functioning simply exemplifying the same conditions that obtain with respect to all existents. Our linguistic and other epistemic conventions are not only mutually interdependent for their meaning and function but also dependent on the world they describe—though this, in turn, exists only dependently or relatively.

What is significant for the reconstruction of Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments is that, understood as a properly metaphysical claim, this point is such as to *require* his rejection of Dignāga's demands for specifically a posteriori justification. That is, Candrakīrti's characteristically Mādhyamika claim is in the end (and most basically) a claim simply to the effect that things only exist in relationship—with any analysis of existents necessarily exemplifying that fact insofar as "knowing" consists, in the first instance, in a *relation* to what is known. On Candrakīrti's reading, Dignāga's demand that we redescribe our conventional epistemic practices, and his presupposition that we are warranted only in those beliefs for which such redescribed warrants can be adduced, just is a demand for something not implicated in such relations—for an explanation, that is, whose explanatory purchase derives from its being posited as an exception to the conditions putatively explained thereby. To the extent, then, that the whole point of the Buddhist project (as Candrakīrti sees it) just is to advance the claim that all phenomena are dependent, his interlocutor's project necessarily stands in contradiction to precisely the project that it should advance. More fundamentally, because Dignāga's demand for justification must itself presuppose the truth of the only claim that Candrakīrti is finally interested in justifying, Dignāga's demand for justification is self-referentially incoherent.

Our understanding of the logic of the argument thus summarized can be advanced by examining the expression *upādāya prajñapti*. As a first step, it is useful to consider the translation of *prajñapti*, rendered here as "indication." The word is most often translated as "designation" or "concept."[73] This suggests an exclusively epistemic notion—given which, the claim that everything exists in some way as a *prajñapti* may indeed be tantamount to the claim that *only mental artifacts exist.*[74] Although it is surely correct to understand Mādhyamikas as characteristically rejecting (to use the Ābhidharmika terms that inform their use of this expression) the notion that anything exists as *dravyasat*, and as arguing instead that everything exists only as *prajñaptisat*,[75] it is only a misleading and undefended rendering of *prajñapti* that supports the further claim that Madhyamaka thus amounts to a fundamentally antirealist sort of conventionalism—that supports, as it were, a *cittamātra* (mind-only) interpretation of Madhyamaka. In fact, the word—derived from the causative

stem of *pra-jñā* (to know), hence, to *cause* to know—simply denotes whatever causes one to know something, whatever informs us or brings something to our attention.[76]

Mental artifacts like concepts are, to be sure, examples of *prajñapti,* but it need not be the case that only these qualify. There are surely other sorts of phenomena that also "indicate" things to us. Consider, in this regard, Paul Grice's remarks on "natural meaning": "I cannot argue from 'Those spots mean (meant) measles' to any conclusion about 'what is (was) meant by those spots.' . . . I cannot argue from 'Those spots meant measles' to any conclusion to the effect that somebody or other meant by those spots so-and-so" (1989:213–214). Yet such examples clearly relate to what we typically mean when, say, we attribute intentions to speakers. As Grice concludes, "surely to show that the criteria for judging linguistic intentions are very like the criteria for judging nonlinguistic intentions is to show that linguistic intentions are very like non-linguistic intentions" (ibid., 223). This analysis applies as well for *prajñapti*: Because mental artifacts like concepts can "inform" us of things in a way similar to that of "natural" phenomena, mental artifacts can be seen simply as examples of the same kind of phenomena. Hence, I translate *prajñapti* as "indication," with both linguistic artifacts and "natural" phenomena possibly serving to "indicate" something.[77]

This rendering of the term *prajñapti* is not intended to obscure the fact that "concepts" or "designations" are chief among the things so identified, only to avoid a translation that—before it is clear what Candrakīrti has to say about the term—is weighted in favor of an idealist reading of his claim. This is particularly important because Candrakīrti's view is that our conventions represent a phenomenon of the same order as dependently originated existents, so that both kinds of phenomena similarly exemplify the ontological point that constitutes Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim. We would, then, do well to heed the caution of Paul Williams, who observes: "The word *prajñapti* as a technical term in Buddhist thought does not have the meaning of simple pragmatic value contrasted with objective or epistemic truth."[78]

What does Candrakīrti have to say about how to understand *upādāya prajñapti*? The relevant section of the *Madhyamakāvatāra* follows up on Candrakīrti's analysis of the seven possible relationships between a chariot and its parts.[79] Having rejected all seven possible accounts of this relationship, Candrakīrti proceeds to ask what remains. The answer, of course, is that only the *conventional* existence of chariots (and persons, etc.) remains. He says:

> If one searches in these seven ways, by the method [that is elaborated in the verse beginning] "It is not accepted that a chariot is different from its parts" [i.e., *Madhyamkāvatāra* 6.151], a chariot will not be established either ulti-

mately or conventionally;[80] nevertheless, in this case, abandoning analysis, from the worldly perspective [the chariot] is indicated relative to its parts—such as its wheels—just as [the person is indicated relative to the aggregates], such as color and so forth [i.e., *rūpa*] and feeling and so forth [i.e., *vedanā* and the rest of the subjective aggregates].[81]

The phrase translated here as "indicated relative to its parts" renders the Tibetan expression *"yan lag rnams la brten nas 'dogs pa,"* which in turn likely translates the Sanskrit *"aṅgāny upādāya prajñapyate."*[82] As seen above, the gerund *upādāya* suggests that we translate more literally as "having taken up its parts, it is indicated."[83] But the fact that *upādāya* merely means "depending upon" or "relative to" is made clear by what immediately follows, where Candrakīrti explains what makes this understanding of the proper analysis of a chariot a distinctively Mādhyamika one: "Therefore, *insofar as we assert relative indication simply to the extent that we assert the condition of dependent origination*, in our position there is not the consequence of annihilating worldly convention."[84]

This stipulated equivalence between "relatively indicated" (*upādāya prajñapyate*) and "dependently originated" (*pratītyasamutpanna*) recurs in Candrakīrti's *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*, where he adduces the gerunds *pratītya* and *upādāya* as synonymous, speaking of "entities, which are always precisely lacking in any established irreducible nature, functioning deceptively as a self, for foolish persons, *dependently or relatively*."[85] Again, he speaks of the mind and so forth being "dependently originated, or relatively indicated."[86] He chastises in particular the Buddhist foundationalists for abandoning "the excellent path known as dependent origination and relative indication."[87] The same equivalence is reflected in the convention among Tibetan translators, which was to render both *upādāya* and *pratītya* with forms of the same verbal root, *rten* (to depend)[88]—an equivalence further warranted by the evident synonymy of *upādāya* and *pratītya* in other Indian Buddhist texts.[89]

Candrakīrti believes that, by virtue of his recognizing this equivalence, his account manages to avoid "the consequence of annihilating worldly convention." How it does this becomes clear when the terms of analysis become recognizable as the same ones we have seen in the *Prasannapadā*. Thus, according to Candrakīrti, "In the same way [as with a chariot], according to what is well known in the world, the self is accepted as the appropriator, having appropriated the aggregates, the dhātus, and the six āyatanas."[90] He elaborates:

For example, relative to the wheels and so forth, it is indicated as a chariot; and in this chariot, the wheels and so forth are the appropriated basis [*nye bar len pa* = Skt., *upādāna*], and the chariot is the appropriator [*nye bar len pa po* = Skt., *upādātṛ*]. In the same way, *since worldly conventions are not to*

be totally annihilated, the self is, in terms of conventional truth, accepted as the appropriator, just like the chariot. The five aggregates, the six dhātus, and the six āyatanas are the self's appropriated basis. Since there is designation as "self" relative to the aggregates and so forth, just as the wheels and so forth are the appropriated basis of a chariot, in the same way, the aggregates and so forth are to be called the self's appropriated basis.[91]

As reflected in the italicized text, Candrakīrti believes that this reading is required because worldly conventions should not be eliminated. How is such elimination thus precluded? For Candrakīrti, this way of framing the issue allows the definitively Buddhist critique of the self to proceed, without that project's becoming *eliminativist*.[92] This critique might be thought a difficult balancing act for a Mādhyamika. Unlike the Ābhidhārmikas, Candrakīrti stresses not only the selflessness of persons (*pudgalanairātmya*) but also the fact that *things* (e.g., "aggregates") are similarly without essence (*dharmanairātmya*). Candrakīrti's radical point is, in a sense, that the Ābhidhārmika approach is not *sufficiently* "reductionist." In his eyes, the view that critical analysis of the self leaves an irreducible (*dravyasat*) remainder amounts to a failure to appreciate that both persons and the things to which they are reducible are without essence. This matters because the characteristically Ābhidharmika appeal to analytic categories (which is to say, its confidence in a privileged level of description) has the effect, on Candrakīrti's view, of *replacing* persons with the analytic categories that are thought ultimately to exist. Candrakīrti's recovery of the conventional is meant to undermine that impulse.

Candrakīrti can, then, reasonably think that the Ābhidharmika idea of "really existent" (*paramārthasat*) ontological primitives (and not Mādhyamika claims regarding emptiness) is nihilistic. Thus: "When it is completely based on relative indication, the self is not at all a support for fancies such as 'permanent' or 'impermanent.' Hence, fancies such as permanent and impermanent are easily rejected."[93] Again: "Because it is not a real existent, this [the self] is not permanent, nor is it impermanent; it is neither produced nor destroyed; in it there is no real permanence and so forth, no identity or difference."[94] The self does not have permanence, of course, because it lacks *svabhāva*—that is, the kind of "essence" in virtue of which it could exist independently of the world of manifestly changing entities and, instead, exists precisely as dependent upon such other entities. But it also lacks *im*permanence—for exactly the same reason. That is, the impossibility of reducing the self to anything fundamentally different (to anything that is itself irreducible) means that the characteristically Buddhist rejection of the self is no longer understood to consist in replacing the conventional self with something else that alone is credited with fuller, "real" existence—given which, the Buddhist claim regarding "selflessness" can

no longer be understood as the negation of something that might (but for its negation) have existed. "Therefore," concludes Candrakīrti, "it also does not stand to reason that this [self] is impermanent."[95]

Here, Candrakīrti introduces an apt sūtra quotation: "If there were substantially existent things, they would be counted as thoroughly perishable; [but] nonexistent things do not perish; hence, they are not said to be perishable."[96] "Substantially existent things" (Tib., *rdzas yod*) translates *dravyasat*, and the point is clear: If, as the Ābhidhārmikas urge, the language of *dharmas* were thought to represent a privileged level of description, the conventional understanding of persons as ethical agents would be undercut. If the cardinal Buddhist concept of impermanence were predicated of ultimately existent entities, that would be precisely an instance of "elimination." If, however, there is nothing irreducibly existent in the first place, then it becomes reasonable to say that the self has precisely and only the same sort of "existence" that anything *could* have—namely, *dependent* or *relative* existence. Or, if by "existence" one means independent, ultimate existence, then one would have to say (as Candrakīrti has said here) that neither the self *nor* the analytic categories of Abhidharma have any "existence" at all.

The same point is made in the section of the *Prasannapadā* under examination here: The self, conventionally speaking, "has existence relative to the aggregates." The aggregates represent the "appropriated basis" (*upādāna*), something in the world relative to which we experience ourselves *as selves*. And if, upon analysis, these do not finally withstand critical scrutiny any more than the self does, the point in thus concluding that they, in turn, are only "relatively" or "conventionally" existent is not to credit them with something less than full-blooded existence. Instead, insofar as relative existence is the only kind of existence anything *can* have, it is simply to say that, while the *skandhas* must remain part of the account, they do not constitute bedrock any more than the self does.

Just as the *skandhas* must remain in play as the "basis" of the relationship of existing "relatively" (*upādāya*), for Candrakīrti to allow that the self is, conventionally, the "appropriator" (*upādātr̥*) of the aggregates is thereby to say that the self cannot, in the end, be eliminated from the account. That is, because the analytic categories to which the self can be reduced are no more "really" existent than the self is, these analytic categories make sense (i.e., as *upādāna*, "what is appropriated") only relative to the (relatively real) self, which remains in play as their *upādātr̥*. For Candrakīrti, then, all that is real in the end is the fact of *relationship*: the abstract state of affairs of there being no existents that are not "dependently originated" or "relatively indicated." No part of that relationship can be held to have privileged status—all the elements of the relationship (*upādāna, upādātr̥*, etc.) are at once equally relative and equally indispensable, which means that none can be taken as the one thing that "really" exists. Unlike

the Ābhidharmikas, then, Candrakīrti has rejected the idea that there are any privileged levels of description. And when the (epistemic) phenomenon of relative indication is thus understood as exemplifying the (ontological) phenomenon of dependent origination, it becomes important to say of any "indication" of the self, too, that among the things it depends on is the *relative existence of the self*; as Candrakīrti puts it, it is always "relative to some basis" (*upādānam upādāya*) that any subject can be "made known" (*prajñapyate*).[97]

Recall, however, that the discussion in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* is preceded by Candrakīrti's dismissal of seven possible ways to see a chariot and its parts as related to one another. What he has elaborated in the passage discussed above seems to be simply another relationship. How, then, does the *upādāna/upādātṛ* relationship differ from the seven possible relationships already canvassed and dismissed by Candrakīrti? Candrakīrti appears to understand the other kinds of relationships that he considers as having been conceived in essentially static terms; the *upādāna/upādātṛ* relationship, in contrast, is represented as a process, its ongoing and dynamic character perhaps reflected in the gerund *upādāya*, which may connote a continuous "taking up" or "appropriating."

More speculatively, the relationship here could be characterized as similar to what Alfred North Whitehead termed "prehension." In Whitehead's event-based ontology, "prehension" refers to the perspective from which any event can be characterized as *subjective.* Thus, every event emerges as the apex of a specific trajectory of causal vectors. "Subject" and "object," on this view, denote not ontologically distinct substances but simply different temporal perspectives on the same events. Thus, all events can be seen as *objects* to the extent that they are objectified as "data" for present occasions of becoming, with (for example) all past moments of subjectivity available to memory only as objects in this sense. Considered as present moments, any event can be seen as a "subject" to the extent that it can be understood as dynamically "appropriating" or (as in Whitehead's term) "prehending" the objectified data that constitute the background for its emergence—to the extent, in other words, that any event can be regarded as representing a "perspective" on the past events that gave rise to it.[98]

Whitehead's idea clearly lends itself to Candrakīrti's language of "appropriation" (*upādāna*), and the terms of Candrakīrti's analysis can be understood in terms of the three factors that, for Whitehead, constitute any instance of "prehension." Thus, we could fairly easily substitute "appropriation" (*upādāna*) for "prehension" in Whitehead's definition with no obvious change in meaning: Candrakīrti's *upādātṛ* is "the 'subject' which is prehending, namely, the actual entity in which that prehension is a concrete element"; Candrakīrti's *upādāna* would be "the 'datum' which is prehended"; and Candrakīrti's *upādāya prajñapti* represents "the 'subjective form' which is *how* that subject prehends that datum."[99] On this reconstruction, a statue (to take one of Candrakīrti's exam-

ples) is the "appropriator" (*upādātṛ*, i.e., of the body it is conventionally understood to have) only in the sense that we are taking the statue's "perspective" as the relevant one for our discussion. Its "appropriated" body is the *upādāna* only relative to that perspective; the statue is made known or "indicated" (*prajñapyate*) as such only "relative" (*upādāya*) to these terms. If appeal to Whitehead's eminently speculative philosophy and its idiosyncratic terminology gives pause, this tentative reconstruction nevertheless has the virtue of giving an account of how the *upādāna/upādātṛ* relationship, here understood in constitutively process-oriented terms, might differ from the other kinds of relationships dismissed by Candrakīrti—with this emphasis on "subject" and "object" as different temporal perspectives rather than irreducibly different substances remaining faithful to Candrakīrti's intention.

What is clear, in any case, is that Candrakīrti here presupposes the terms of the earlier Ābhidharmika debate and that his deployment of the notion of *upādāya prajñapti* is meant to advance the point that there is nothing that is *dravyasat* and that things exist only as *prajñaptisat*. With this, we are now in a position both to return to the original context of Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga and to show how that critique can be related to Nāgārjuna's *MMK* 24.18. Insofar as the latter verse is often regarded as epitomizing Madhyamaka, this will help us appreciate how Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga can be seen to follow from the metaphysical claim that it states. It is precisely to the extent that this passage is so often misunderstood that the significance of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim (including the fact of its *being* a metaphysical claim) has gone unappreciated. The verse reads as follows.

Yaḥ pratītyasamutpāda śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe / Sā prajñaptir upādāya pratipat saiva madhyamā //.[100]

In Nāgārjuna's verse, we see the correlations that are key for Candrakīrti, with a further correlation between these (*pratītyasamutpāda* and *upādāya prajñapti*) and Madhyamaka's principal term of art, *śūnyatā* (emptiness). Despite the philological and conceptual resources in Candrakīrti for understanding *upādāya prajñapti*, though, particularly the third quarter-verse of this passage seems to have baffled previous translators, with the gerund *upādāya* apparently having given the most trouble.[101] This is regrettable, since it is precisely in this quarter-verse that Nāgārjuna makes the most novel correlation. Thus, this text correlates "emptiness" not only with *pratītyasamutpāda* but also with "relative indications" thereof—and by the transitive property of identity, thus correlates *pratītyasamutpāda* with "relative indications." Thus, I read: "That which is dependent origination we call emptiness. That [emptiness,] a relative indication, is itself the middle path."

This translation is just as our foray into Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* leads us to expect. But this threefold correlation has often been misconceived. One recurrent sort of misreading is exemplified by David Burton, who reads the passage vis-à-vis the Ābhidharmika debate regarding *dravyasat* and *prajñaptisat*.[102] But Burton—like Madhyamaka's traditional critic Sthiramati—retains the Ābhidharmika dichotomy, holding that "even second-order *prajñaptisat* entities must finally have a *dravyasat* basis. All construction—no matter how complex—is finally based on an unconstructed reality."[103] To retain this dichotomy, however, is to miss the point entirely: Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti are not arguing that existents *could* have the sort of "substantial" existence sought by Ābhidarmikas and instead happen to have the merely deficient sort that is "conceptually constructed"; rather, their point is that the very idea of *svabhāva* is fundamentally incoherent and therefore cannot possibly be exemplified, and that "dependently" or "relatively" is therefore the only way that anything *could* exist.[104]

Burton thus retains precisely the presupposition that Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti chiefly mean to undermine. In addition, Burton's interpretation exploits his undefended rendering of *prajñapti* as "concept" or "conceptual construct."[105] These presuppositions lead Burton to conclude that "the dependent origination of all entities means that all entities originate *in dependence upon the mind*" (1999:101; emphasis added). But the point is not that dependently originated things have been relegated to the status of mental constructs; rather, our mental constructs have been elevated to the status of examples of dependent origination—examples, that is, of the only kind of existents there can be.

This is as Candrakīrti's discussion in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* would have us understand. Candrakīrti's commentary specifically on *MMK* 24.18 makes the connection explicit, with his interpretation of Nāgārjuna's verse advanced in terms of the same examples familiar from our look at the *Madhyamakāvatāra*:

> And that which is this emptiness of essence is a relative indication; that *very same* emptiness is established as a relative indication. A chariot is indicated relative to the parts of a chariot, such as wheels and so forth. That indication of it [a chariot], which depends upon its parts, is without origination from an essence; and it is non-origination from an essence which is emptiness. That very same emptiness, whose characteristic is non-origination from an essence, is established as the middle path. For that which has no origination from an essence does not have existence; and since there is [also] no *cessation* of what is not originated from an essence, it [also] does not have *non*-existence. Hence, since it is free from the two extremes of being and non-being, emptiness—defined as everything's non-origination

from an essence—is said to be the middle path, i.e., the middle way. There-
fore, *dependent origination has these specific names: emptiness, relative indi-*
cation, [*and*] *middle path.*[106]

Just as in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, Candrakīrti here takes the point to be
that it is the *identity* of these—of *pratītyasamutpāda, śūnyatā*, and *upādāya*
prajñapti—that uniquely allows a proper recovery of the conventional. To say
that a person exists only as *upādāya prajñapti*, then, is no longer (as for Ābhi-
dharmikas) to say that she exists in a deficient sort of way that pales in com-
parison with what is "real"; it is to say that, as a dependently originated con-
vention, she is as "real" as anything *can* be, with nothing more real capable of
"explaining" her. Moreover, to emphasize that persons are (like all existents)
relative (*upādāya*) indications is to emphasize that the person him- or herself
must remain part of our account and, in the end, cannot be eliminated. Can-
drakīrti has made this point by emphasizing, in the *Prasannapadā* as in the
Madhyamakāvatāra, that persons exist as "appropriators" (*upādātṛ*) whose sub-
jective form (*upādāya prajñapti*) is always relative to some appropriated basis
(*upādāna*). In this way, it is stressed that our epistemic and other "indications"
(*prajñaptayaḥ*) should be understood as arising in relation to (and bearing on)
the world.[107]

This reading amounts to a (relatively!) realist reading of Madhyamaka.
Thus, I would agree with Mark Siderits that the Madhyamaka of Nāgārjuna and
Candrakīrti can be characterized as "a kind of conventionalism" (1989:239)—
but only if we understand such a characterization in light of Candrakīrti's col-
lapsing of *upādāya prajñapti* with *pratītyasamutpāda.* If Siderits's point is made
without due attention to this notion, one might well conclude, with David Bur-
ton, that these Mādhyamikas assert that "[i]f the mind's activity of conceptual
construction did not occur, there would be no entities."[108] Such a conclusion
sounds, however, more like a statement of the idealism that Sthiramati devel-
oped specifically *contra* Madhyamaka than like Candrakīrti's understanding.[109]
Against such an idealist reading, I take the point of *MMK* 24.18 (and of Candra-
kīrti's more fully elaborated identification of *upādāya prajñapti* with *pratītyasa-*
mutpāda) to be precisely that emptiness qualifies both "whatever is dependently
originated" (i.e., everything in the world) *and* verbal conventions, precisely
because the latter are examples of the dependently originated. Language is not
a closed system that is simply internally coherent and interdependent; rather, its
functioning is also interdependent with the world.

Such a reading represents the best way to save Madhyamaka from the kind
of incoherence to which it might otherwise be thought to be subject. The poten-
tial incoherence is similar to the problem that Candrakīrti's interlocutor raised

at the very beginning of our primary text (and similar, too, to the objections that Nāgārjuna addresses in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*): how can the Mādhyamika "truly" say that phenomena are empty (i.e., dependent, contingent, conventional) if any statement to that effect is itself "merely" conventional? This only appears problematic until it is appreciated that "empty" or "conventional" function, in these descriptions, ontologically. That is, to say that emptiness itself is "conventional" is not to say that it is *merely* conventional, as though there were some other, fuller mode of existence that it might instead enjoy; rather, since things only *can* exist dependently (relatively, conventionally), to say that emptiness is itself empty is, in fact, the only way to say that it is "real" at all.

On this reading, then, the counterintuitive but characteristically Mādhyamika conclusion that emptiness itself is empty[110] can be understood as making a move characterized by Frank Farrell in a different context: "The idea is that a metaphysical account can turn into a different one, not through being opposed from without, but through our pressing it to take to their logical outcome its own internal principles. . . . [Thus, an apparently relativist position] turns itself into a more realist one when we put pressure on it and demand that it display its consequences explicitly" (1996:22). So, too, for Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti: The possibly relativist claim that all phenomena—including this very characterization of phenomena—are empty turns itself into a more realist account to the extent that one recognizes (with Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti) that a logical consequence of an ontology of "dependent origination" is that our accounts of things, too, must be dependent—a fact that compels the recognition that our accounts of things depend on, among other things, the *reality of the things described.*

To be sure, the "reality" of the things thus described will be a relative, dependent reality. But, since "there exists no nondependently originated *dharma* whatsoever,"[111] this is the "fullest," the *only* reality that we can hope to find. Thus, the point of insisting on the "emptiness of emptiness" is to throw us back into the world and to compel the recognition that, although events are dependent, contingent, and conventional, they are, for all that, *real.* This is the point of Nāgārjuna's famous claim that "there is, on the part of *saṃsāra*, no difference at all from *nirvāṇa*."[112] That is, the "ultimate truth" (*nirvāṇa*) does not consist in something fundamentally different in kind from "conventional" reality (*saṃsāra*); rather, what is "ultimately true" is simply the fact that there *is* nothing fundamentally different from the world as conventionally described. More precisely, it is not possible to adduce (as explaining everything else) anything that does not itself display the one fact that Madhyamaka would have us appreciate about the way things are: that they are dependently originated. If (as implied by my appeal to the idea of transcendental arguments) there is something akin to Kant in Candrakīrti's arguments, then, it is not in the sense that we have here a

sharp distinction between conventional "appearance" and ultimate "reality."[113] On the contrary, it is precisely such a distinction that Candrakīrti has most significantly rejected.

With this in mind, we can see the sense in which Candrakīrti's view might even be characterized as something like "direct" or "naive realism"—provided that we understand that not as itself a metaphysical thesis but simply as an expression of our conventional epistemic experience. Indeed, this is precisely what is reflected in Candrakīrti's finally endorsing, contra Dignāga, the standard Nyāya list of *pramāṇas*.[114] However, although (as seen in Part II) the Mīmāṃsakas upheld a version of direct realism as a matter of metaphysical principle, Candrakīrti's realism is held simply in deference to what people conventionally say about their epistemic practices, with the qualification that the intuitions of direct realism do not correspond to anything that is *ultimately* the case. For Candrakīrti, the properly metaphysical thesis is that, while our conventions are in important senses erroneous, it is nevertheless the case that there is nothing *more real* than our conventions—nothing that is not (like our conventions) dependently originated.

As Candrakīrti stresses, however, there remains nevertheless some "basis" (*upādāna*) that is always "appropriated" from the perspective of some "subject" (*upādātṛ*). The point is that this, too, exists only relative to the fluid and dynamic relationship that Candrakīrti finally characterizes in terms of "relative indications." The Mādhyamika idea of *upādāya prajñapti* is thus precisely to reject the conclusion that we could ever account for our experience of the world by appeal to any privileged level of description—whether such takes the form of (say) "reality under a scientific description" or of a closed system of signs. And the point is that if (as is surely the case) the world depends in part on our conceptualizing activity, the latter depends on the former, as well. Here again, a remark from Farrell is to the point.

> To discover that getting the logical structure of a language right requires a commitment to individuals or events or times is to discover something about the world itself; it is not just to find our way about within the confines of our language. What appears in the overall character of our linguistic system and of our system of beliefs is, at least very roughly, the self-display of the world. . . . Just by using language, we all count as talking about roughly the same world of things, a world that has from the start, before all the detailed specifying we undertake, impressed itself on any language to make it meaningful. (1996:79)

So, too, for Candrakīrti: to discover that there is nothing but "indications" (*prajñaptayaḥ*) is not simply to "find our way about within the confines of our

language" (or anything else that we take as "indications"), but is, rather, to discover something about the world itself. Indeed, it is to discover the most important thing about the world: that there is nothing more "real" than the world as we experience it, nothing more "real" than the "indications" that exemplify the fact of dependent origination. Or, to return to the context of Candrakīrti's critique of foundationalism: properly to understand the metaphysical claims of Madhyamaka is to understand that our epistemic practices can only *exemplify* the nature of things; they cannot (contra Dignāga) provide an independent perspective *on* the nature of things.

Is It Really True That Everything Is Empty?

CANDRAKĪRTI ON ESSENCELESSNESS
AS THE ESSENCE OF THINGS

"Perception" and the "Perceptible":
Candrakīrti's Critique of Dignāga's Privileged Faculty

Chapter 6 showed Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga's "bare particulars" to be framed as concerning *upādāya prajñapti*—a notion central to Candrakīrti's characteristically Mādhyamika analysis of existents like the self. This discussion clarifies why Candrakīrti's vision of the Buddhist project *requires* that he reject Dignāga's demands for a posteriori justification and that he argue, instead, that this demand for justification itself is possible only given the truth of Candrakīrti's claims. The metaphysical claim attributed here to Candrakīrti is that there is nothing more real than our conventions. More precisely, nothing gives us explanatory purchase on our conventions, because there can be no explanation that does not itself exemplify the same fact already displayed by our conventions—there can be nothing, that is, that is not *dependently originated.*

We are, then, only misled by the putatively explanatory categories of the Abhidharma tradition (carried on by Dignāga), and we should instead attend to the world and the self as conventionally described. Not only does appeal to a privileged level of description *explain away* the persons who are the proper subjects of soteriological effort (and the proper objects of compassion), but conventional descriptions already exemplify the only truth that Madhyamaka would finally have us appreciate. The strictly metaphysical point here—the "absolute presupposition" that Collingwood takes to define such, and in virtue of which the Mādhyamika point can be said in the end to be a logical one— concerns the logic of *relations.* That is, to argue that "all existents are empty" just is to argue that all existents necessarily exist only in relation to other existents—a fact whose transcendental character is evident in the inevitability that any attempt even to *say* anything about this (even to deny it) necessarily involves relations among terms—relations between our analysis and the world. This is why Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti find it in principle important to defer, in the end, to what is "conventionally" true.

This principled deference is compellingly expressed in a passage summarizing the first stage of the engagement with Dignāga, just before Candrakīrti turns to address Dignāga's understanding of *pratyakṣa*. Having concluded the critique of Dignāga's account of *svalakṣaṇas* as "bare particulars," Candrakīrti again attributes to his interlocutor the claim that his epistemology does not purport to show our access to ultimate truth: "What's the use of this hair-splitting? We do not say that all transactions involving reliable warrants and cognizables are true; rather, what is familiar in the world is [all that is] established by this argument."[1] Candrakīrti's response casts his disagreement with Dignāga in specifically soteriological terms, making clear that Candrakīrti considers his interlocutor's incoherent redescription of the conventional problematic mainly for its undermining the soteriological *value* of the conventional:

> We, too, say, What's the use of this hair-splitting, which delves into ordinary discourse? Let it be! Until there is understanding of reality, the conventional—its existence [*sattākā*] come into being [*ātmabhāva*] as projected by nothing but error—is, for those who desire liberation, the cause of the accumulation of the roots of merit that convey [one] to liberation. But having introduced reasoning at some point, you incoherently [*anyāyato*] destroy it, because of being one whose intellect is ignorant of the distinction between conventional and ultimate truth. I am the one who, based on skill in settling conventional truth, situate myself in the ordinary perspective. Like a respected elder, I overturn one argument dedicated to the refutation of one part of the conventional by another argument—and, in so doing, I refute only you, who are deviating from the conduct of the world. But [I do] not [refute] the conventional. Therefore, if it is ordinary discourse, then there must also be a subject that possesses a characteristic [*lakṣaṇavallakṣyeṇāpi bhavitavyaṃ*]. And therefore just this is the problem [with your conception]. But in terms of ultimate truth, since there [ultimately] are no subjects (*lakṣyābhāvāt*), this pair of characteristics [i.e., *sva-* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*] does not exist, either; whence, then, [your] two reliable warrants?[2]

As when he earlier extolled the ultimate truth as something ineffable and seemingly distinct from the conventional,[3] Candrakīrti here appears to disparage the conventional, whose reality (he says) "comes into being as projected through mere error." The salient point of this passage, however, is his characterization of the conventional as nonetheless "the cause of the accumulation of the roots of merit that convey [one] to liberation," suggesting that the conventional is nevertheless to be retained for its soteriological value.[4] More strongly, Candrakīrti here argues against Dignāga that it is incoherent at once to replace

conventional terms with a putatively probative sort of discourse (*upapatti*) and, at the same time, senselessly (*anyāyatas*) undermine that very project by then trying to characterize it as itself an example of the "conventional."[5] Despite his apparent disparagement of the conventional world, then, Candrakīrti claims that his only quarrel is with his interlocutor, not with conventions[6]—with any replacement of the latter by technical usage compromising a soteriological project that, for Candrakīrti, necessarily depends on conventions.

Candrakīrti maintains this focus when he turns his attention to Dignāga's understanding of perception. As before, Candrakīrti begins by adducing a familiar expression that, he contends, makes no sense on his interlocutor's use of the term: "Moreover, because it doesn't accommodate instances of ordinary usage like 'a jar is perceptible,' and because of the acceptance of the discourse of ordinary people [*anārya*], [your] definition is too narrow; it doesn't make sense."[7] This expression ("a jar is perceptible") exemplifies the fact that the word *pratyakṣa* conventionally functions both as a noun (designating an epistemic faculty) and an adjective (characterizing the objects thereof as "perceptible"). Candrakīrti argues that the latter sense is conventionally primary—a point that undermines Dignāga's contention that the word picks out a privileged faculty.[8]

As in the consideration of *svalakṣaṇa,* Candrakīrti again anticipates an attempt by Dignāga to argue that his understanding of the word *pratyakṣa* can make sense of the conventional expression here adduced—specifically, by considering the adjectival usage derivative or "figurative." Thus, the interlocutor suggests that a jar might be designated as *pratyakṣa*[9] in the same way that, according to a well-known passage from the *Dhammapada,* "the birth of buddhas is bliss"—a stock example of "figurative reference to an effect with respect to its cause" (*kāraṇe kāryopacāra*).[10] That is, the birth of Buddhas is a *cause* of happiness for the suffering beings of the world, and it is really the *effect* of this occurrence that is indicated by the expression. Similarly, Candrakīrti anticipates that Dignāga might argue that the conventional example adduced by Candrakīrti is one in which people designate the "effect" or output of a perceptual cognition (a "perceptible") in terms of the epistemic faculty ("perception") that is its cause, so that Dignāga can retain his commitment to the view that *pratyakṣa* uniquely denotes the faculty whose sole function is to yield access to *svalakṣaṇas.*[11]

Candrakīrti rejoins that appeal to figurative usage makes sense only in certain contexts and that such a context does not obtain here. This point is informed by Sanskritic conventions in poetics, according to which a figurative usage is to be supposed whenever the primary or manifest meaning (*mukhyārtha*) of an utterance is contradicted (*bādhita*) by something else in the utterance.[12] Paul Grice has made a similar point in discussing what he calls "conversational implicature." Grice argues that we must presuppose certain things about

the intentions of our interlocutors if we are to stand any chance of recognizing when some implicature (e.g., irony), apart from the manifest meaning of the utterance, has been suggested. Thus, for example, if we presuppose (as we must) that our conversation partners intend to make contributions to the conversation that are "appropriate to the immediate needs at each stage of the transaction," then we are obliged to take any apparent failure to be "appropriate" as an indication that what is intended is some implicature (1989:28). So, too, for Candrakīrti: Insofar as it is widely held by Buddhists that the event of birth causes only suffering, Buddhists can be expected to realize that the primary meaning is contradicted (or, in Grice's terms, that a "conversational maxim" has been violated) when he or she is confronted with the phrase "the birth of Buddhas is bliss."[13] This, then, is the kind of case in which we are entitled to (indeed, we must) look for some figurative sense.

Candrakīrti denies, however, that the phrase "a jar is perceptible" similarly requires recourse to figurative usage in order for it to make sense: "But in the present case—'a jar is perceptible'—there is nothing at all called a jar which is imperceptible, [nothing at all] separately apprehended which could figuratively have perceptibility."[14] That is, recourse to *upacāra* requires that there be two terms (the thing figuratively described, and the thing appealed to so to describe it), with merely their *association* being incompatible given the primary meanings. We could, then, say that a jar is just figuratively "perceptible" only if we already know that there is, in fact, such a thing as a jar and that such a thing is not really perceptible, such that these two terms ("jar" and "perceptible") were, like "birth" and "bliss," unconnected. But the conventional usage has it that jars are perceptible, so there is no obvious contradiction that would require recourse to figurative explanation.

Anticipating a further attempt to argue in the same vein, Candrakīrti contends that an appeal to figurative usage that is based on its really being the *parts* of a jar that are perceived is even less promising for Dignāga, since that only opens the way for Candrakīrti's characteristic riposte to the reductionist version of Buddhism:

> Moreover, if it is imagined that a jar, which is included in ordinary transactions, has [only] figurative perceptibility since it doesn't exist apart from its color and so forth, then surely, that being the case, since things like color don't exist apart from things like earth, either, the [merely] figurative perceptibility of that color and so forth would also have to be posited.[15]

Thus, Candrakīrti will gladly concede that medium-sized objects like jars are analytically reducible—but, having opened the way for this kind of critical analysis, he will then press the point and argue that there is no irreducible

remainder, so analytic categories like sense-data must themselves be understood as dependent. Dignāga's attempted explanation of the adjectival use of *pratyakṣa* by appeal to figurative usage, then, cannot coherently be reconciled with his own account of the reductionist project. Therefore he must, once more, distort our conventional understanding. As Candrakīrti expresses it, his interlocutor's definition has "insufficient extension"—that is, it does not cover what are clearly attested usages of the word purportedly under definition. Dignāga's protests notwithstanding, it is no longer (what is typically understood by) *pratyakṣa* that is under explanation, but something else altogether.[16]

Candrakīrti pursues this point, transmuting it into an eminently Sanskritic exercise in *vyutpatti* ("derivation" or "etymology").[17] Throughout the course of this section, Candrakīrti's point is not only to invoke conventional usage against Dignāga but in doing so to undermine Dignāga's privileged epistemic faculty by trivializing *pratyakṣa* as merely characterizing (i.e., as "perceptible") a whole range of objects that are conventionally so characterized. When Candrakīrti concludes this characteristically Sanskritic sort of argument, we again see some basis for reconstructing his principled appeal to ordinary language as a transcendental argument—here, one with affinities to arguments advanced by some twentieth-century proponents of ordinary language philosophy. The argument now touches on what must be presupposed if discourse is to be possible at all and is again framed as a withering refutation of Dignāga's claim merely to be offering an account of our conventional epistemic practices:

> If [Dignāga rejoins by saying,] "Since the word 'perception,' in the sense intended, is well known in the world, and since the word 'with respect to an object' [*pratyartha*][18] is not well known, we rely upon the basis of the word's etymology precisely in terms of the locus [of the sense faculty]"—[if this is said,] we respond: This word 'perceptible' is indeed well-known in the world; but it is described by us [and not by you] precisely as it is in the world. But if, with disregard for ordinary categories as they are established, this derivation is being made, [then] there would also be disregard for the expression "well-known"! And based on that, what is [commonly] called "perceptible" would not be such.[19]

In this way, Candrakīrti argues that Dignāga's peculiarly technical account of the word *pratyakṣa* can be advanced only to the extent that ordinary usage turns out to be wrong—if Dignāga's account were appropriate, then what people ordinarily call "perceptible" would not be rightly so called. But how could we ever be in a position to assess Dignāga's account of being "perceptible" if what he is really explaining is something other than what everybody means by the word? More strongly, Candrakīrti suggests that it is not possible that people should thus

be generally wrong, for if they were, then there would be no possibility of the kind of meaningful discourse in which Candrakīrti and his interlocutor are now engaged. He makes this point vis-à-vis one of the cardinal tenets of Dignāga's epistemology: the characterization of *pratyakṣa* as "devoid of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍham*): "And because you accept that only that cognition that is devoid of conception is perception; *and since nobody's discourse is by way of that [kind of cognition];* and because of the desirability of explaining worldly discourse with respect to reliable warrants and cognizables—[your] conception of the reliable warrant which is perception becomes quite senseless."[20]

This final charge of incoherence—this charge, that is, that his interlocutor's account is "senseless" (*vyartha*)— completes Candrakīrti's transcendental argument against his interlocutor's normative contention that Candrakīrti's claims are unjustified if they are not warranted by the kinds of *pramāṇas* that Dignāga admits as uniquely conferring justification. Thus, in concluding the present argument, Candrakīrti says that his interlocutor's conception (*kalpanā*)[21] of perception is literally senseless. This is because Dignāga's account is really one of a narrowly and peculiarly conceived sense of the word *pratyakṣa*. But insofar as the word is conventionally used simply to characterize whatever is "not invisible" (*aparokṣa*),[22] the question of nonconceptuality is not involved in what most people mean by *pratyakṣa*—in which case, Dignāga's account can be the preferred one only if most people are wrong in their use of the word. As Candrakīrti says, no one transacts any discourse involving Dignāga's sense of the word (*tena lokasya saṃvyavahārābhāva*).[23]

We might also understand Candrakīrti's as a stronger point: his interlocutor's peculiar sense of the word would (incoherently) *entail* that there is a complete "absence of meaningful discourse on the part of the world."[24] That is, acceptance of Dignāga's usage would be tantamount to the conclusion that most of the discourse in the world must not be meaningful. Candrakīrti can rightly adduce this as a manifestly absurd entailment of Dignāga's project, giving this fact as the reason for the senselessness of his interlocutor's conception, for it is necessarily the case that most of the discourse in the world is meaningful. How could it be otherwise? Given the alternative, there would be no possibility of the very discourse in which Candrakīrti and his interlocutor are engaged.

Candrakīrti concludes by showing why the conventional, adjectival sense of the word undermines Dignāga's characteristic claim that bare particulars are the unique objects of perception: "Therefore, in the world, if *any* [*sarvam eva*] subject of characterization—whether it be a unique particular[25] or an abstraction—is not invisible, because of being directly apprehended, then it is said to be perceptible, along with the cognition that has it as its object [which is also called *pratyakṣa*]."[26] Thus, what is conventionally called "perceptible" includes both particulars and abstractions, so that, defined simply as that kind of cognition

that has perceptibles as its object (*tadviṣayajñāna*), *pratyakṣa* can (contra foundationalists like Dignāga) have "abstractions" as its object. As conventionally used, then, the word does not pick out a special epistemic faculty that, in virtue of being "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍha*), affords access to something ultimately real. And insofar as it is a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse that people similarly understand familiar words, Dignāga's attempt simultaneously to stipulate a peculiarly technical sense of the word and to claim that he is describing our conventions is simply "senseless."

On this reconstruction, Candrakīrti has argued in the same vein as some twentieth-century ordinary language philosophers, who similarly critique the kind of normative epistemology that motivates foundationalism. According to one reading of such foundationalist projects (J. L. Austin's reading of A. J. Ayer), a peculiarly technical sense of familiar epistemic terms advances the "wish to produce a species of statement that will be *incorrigible;* and the real virtue of this invented sense of 'perceive' is that, since what is perceived in this sense [i.e., introspectable sense-data] *has* to exist and *has* to be as it appears, in saying what I perceive in this sense I *can't be wrong.*"[27] This desire for incorrigible certainty is, in turn, based on the kind of normative epistemology that holds that we are not justified as long as it remains so much as possible that we could be wrong.

Against such a presupposition, Austin argues that there is an important sense in which that degree of doubt *cannot* really obtain: "But, perhaps more importantly, it is also implied, even taken for granted, that there is *room* for doubt and suspicion, whether or not the plain man feels any. . . . But in fact the plain man would regard doubt in such a case, not as far-fetched or over-refined or somehow unpractical, but as plain *nonsense;* he would say, quite correctly, 'Well, if that's not seeing a real chair then *I don't know what is.*'"[28] And the ordinary intuition of nonphilosophers is here to be heeded, since "it is important to remember that talk of deception only *makes sense* against a background of general non-deception" (1962:11). That is, a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse is that we generally believe in precisely the kinds of the things that the normative epistemologist claims we might not be justified in believing.[29]

Thus an attempt to explain our most basic epistemic practices, insofar as any such attempt must make use of the discursive rules that presuppose precisely such practices, can only succeed if the very things that it purports to explain do not, in fact, require explanation. If the possibility of meaningful discourse (including that which expresses the demand for justification) entails our presupposing the kinds of things that the epistemologist claims to doubt, then it is not our crediting basic epistemic conventions that is unreasonable; rather, what is unreasonable is the epistemologist's demand for justification. This entire line of argument is stated well by P. F. Strawson, who says of the foundationalist:

He pretends to accept a conceptual scheme, but at the same time quietly rejects one of the conditions of its employment. Thus his doubts are unreal, not simply because they are logically irresoluble doubts, but because they amount to the rejection of the whole conceptual scheme within which alone such doubts make sense. So, naturally enough, the alternative to doubt which he offers us is the suggestion that we do not really, or should not really, have the conceptual scheme that we do have; that we do not really, or should not really, mean what we think we mean, what we do mean. But this alternative is absurd. For the whole process of reasoning only starts because the scheme is as it is; and we cannot change it even if we would.[30]

Candrakīrti seems to be making a similar point. There is, however, an important difference: The transcendental character of Candrakīrti's similar argument is ultimately a function of its involving a properly metaphysical claim. Thus Candrakīrti finds it incoherent for his interlocutor to demand that we justify our conventional practices—that we adduce something not itself conventional to explain our conventions—precisely because there can be no discourse that does not itself exemplify the only point that Candrakīrti finally wants to make: namely, that our conventions are themselves just further examples of *dependently originated things,* which are the only kinds of things that exist.[31] Unlike the ordinary language philosophers of the twentieth century, then, Candrakīrti defers to conventional usage in the end because the content of his metaphysical claim requires that he do so.

Candrakīrti returns to this point in concluding his engagement with Dignāga. Having thus argued that his interlocutor's account of *pratyakṣa* contradicts the conventional usage, Candrakīrti effectively states—by endorsing (with typically Naiyāyika definitions) the list of *pramāṇas* admitted by Naiyāyikas—that the epistemology of the Brahmanical Nyāya school better describes our epistemic practices as they are conventionally understood.[32] His conclusion then highlights what Candrakīrti views as most significant about this fourfold scheme of reliable warrants.

And these are established in dependence upon one another: given reliable warrants, there are warrantable objects, and given warrantable objects, there are reliable warrants. But it is emphatically *not* the case that the establishment of reliable warrants and their objects is essential [*svābhāvikī*]. Therefore, let the mundane be just as it is seen.[33]

What Candrakīrti ultimately stresses is simply the interrelational character of reliable warrants (*pramāṇas*) and their objects (*prameyas*)—that is, their being (like everything) "relative indications" (*upādāya prajñaptayaḥ*). It now becomes

clear that what Candrakīrti chiefly objects to in Dignāga's account of *pratyakṣa* is its being offered as a somehow *independent* epistemic faculty, a privileged and autonomous perspective on what exists. Indeed, Candrakīrti here makes clear that his entire critique of Dignāga is ultimately motivated by his view that Dignāga's account of *pramāṇas* regards the establishment of these as "self-existent" or "essential" (*svābhāvikī*). It is specifically in opposition to the view that *pramāṇas* exist "essentially" that Candrakīrti stresses that perception is in no way privileged. That is, perception is not intrinsically better suited, independent of context, to confer justification; rather, what is "perceptible" is always relative to a perceiver: "But [illusions] like [that of] two moons do not, from the point of view of the cognition of one without cataracts, have the quality of perceptibility, while from the point of view of one with cataracts, [such illusions] have precisely the quality of being perceptible."[34] Candrakīrti's point is that, relative to the ultimate truth, *everyone* who has not realized ultimate truth for him- or herself (everyone, that is, who is not a Buddha) has "cataracts"—no one has an epistemic faculty that is in contact with anything "ultimately existent."

The idea that being "perceptible" is always relative to a perceiver is in keeping with Candrakīrti's most basic point: The epistemic situation is (like all existents) constitutively *relational,* necessarily involving the interdependence of subject and object. What Candrakīrti finally thinks is incoherent is Dignāga's demand that Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim be warranted by an epistemic instrument that is thought to be independent of our involvement with the world and that shows how the world "really" is, independently of any conceptualizing activity. This demand is incoherent insofar as Candrakīrti's claim just is that *nothing exists that way.* That is, nothing exists independently—which means, to be sure, that our experience of the world will always involve some dependence on our own conceptualizing activity; but it also means that such conceptualizing activity is itself dependent on the world.

Candrakīrti's Statement of "Nāgārjuna's Paradox"

Candrakīrti's idea that everyone has "cataracts" relative to the ultimate truth might, however, be reckoned among his recurrent expressions of disparagement for the "conventional." Such expressions are particularly clear when Candrakīrti is extolling the ultimate truth, apparently emphasizing its being radically different from the conventional. Thus, for example, he asks: "What is the use of speech, or of cognition, with regard to the ultimate? For the ultimate—which is independent of anything else, tranquil, to be individually realized by the venerable—completely exceeds all conceptual proliferation. It cannot be taught, nor can it be known."[35] The ultimate truth, as Candrakīrti said early in

his engagement with Dignāga, is "a matter of venerable silence." Expressions like these make it tempting to conclude (as John Dunne has) that "For Candra-kīrti . . . conceptuality is so broad in scope and buddhas are so non-conceptual that they have no thoughts or cognitive images at all. . . . Not only does such a buddha not see the ordinary things of the world, he does not even know ulti-mate reality because nothing at all occurs in a buddha's mind. Indeed, it would seem that Candrakīrti's buddhas do not know anything at all."[36]

I contend, however, that, for Candrakīrti, the only ultimate truth is that there *is* no ultimate truth—that the "ultimate truth," in other words, is the abstract state of affairs of there being no set of "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*) ontological primitives like the *dharmas* of Abhidharma. If this claim is to be re-conciled with the form typically taken by Candrakīrti's praise of the "ultimate"—and correspondingly, if we are to avoid a conclusion such as Dunne's—it is important to give some account of the idea of an "abstract state of affairs." In-deed, the idea of "metaphysical" commitments—on my view of which, meta-physical presuppositions are in play "whenever a philosopher is required to fix in advance the possibilities for classification and explanation offered by a gen-eral conceptual system" (Descombes 2001:80)—can be said constitutively to involve abstract states of affairs.

Paul Griffiths has advanced a similar point by invoking a theory of types. He does so in order to demonstrate that characteristically Buddhist claims con-cerning impermanence involve what he calls "metaphysical predicates"—more particularly, in order to make explicit the counterintuitive entailment, follow-ing from the truth of the claim "everything is impermanent," that *the fact that* everything is impermanent is itself permanent.

> Even if no specific existent is eternal, the causal process that links them must be if it is beginningless and endless. Putting matters in this way sug-gests that a theory of types is the best conceptual tool to explain what is going on here. Every member of the set of all existents has causal and tem-poral properties; these are first-type existents, bearing first-order properties. They are the reals, the dharmas. All these first-type existents have, among others, the first-order property 'being impermanent.' But the members of the second-type set of all universally applicable first-order properties of this kind, that is, the members of the set of first-order properties that apply to all first-order existents, do not themselves possess the properties that they are. So, for example, the property 'being produced causally' (*pratītyasamut-pannatva*) is not itself produced causally. This is quite normal; the property 'being a president of the United States' is not itself a president of the United States (though, of course, every possessor of it is). Simply put, for [the texts Griffiths considers,] *the universally applicable first-order properties through*

which the standard claims about impermanence are made are themselves atemporal states of affairs. They obtain, if they do, atemporally, which is to say permanently and everlastingly. (Griffiths 1994:177–178; emphasis added)

A full-blown "theory of types" represents the peculiarly technical sort of move that Mādhyamikas, in particular, would be loath to embrace. Such a theory was first elaborated to address the "property" version of what is known as "Russell's Paradox."[37] Kevin Klement (2001) helpfully states this version of the paradox.

> Some properties seem to apply to themselves, while others do *not*. The property of being a property is itself a property, while the property of being a cat is not itself a cat. Consider the property that something has just in case it is a property (like that of being a cat) that does not apply to itself. Does this property apply to itself? . . . from either assumption, the opposite follows.

Although it was Russell who first fully elaborated a theory of types as a way to resolve this paradox, Frege had already hinted at one with his insistence that "properties fall into different types, and that the type of a property is never the same as the entities to which it applies. Thus, the question never even arises as to whether a property applies to itself" (ibid.). It is the complex task of a philosophically adequate theory of types to explain *why* properties cannot themselves be of the same "types" as the objects in their extensions—why, for example, the property *being a president of the United States* cannot itself be what it refers to.

To the extent that the type-theoretical approach ends up entailing metaphysical commitments about the reality of eminently abstract objects like "second-order properties," it is not surprising that nothing like this approach is taken by Mādhyamikas. Notwithstanding its not being in the sprit of Madhyamaka, though, Griffiths's appeal here is helpful at least in appreciating what might be involved in thinking that a claim regarding impermanence or emptiness might be *true*. On this account, for a Buddhist to say that "all existents are dependently originated" is, ipso facto, implicitly to claim that there is an abstract state of affairs (viz., the dependently originated character of all existents) that is not itself dependent on anything[38]—or, at least, that is what a Buddhist might be thought to be committed to if the claim itself is possibly true, insofar as its concerning "all existents" necessarily entails its obtaining always and universally. This approach is adopted provisionally here in order to show at least *that* Candrakīrti's are properly "metaphysical" claims (though not necessarily to show what must be the case in order for them to be true).

Armed with such an approach, let us consider an important scriptural pas-

sage that Candrakīrti cites more than once: "Whether or not Tathāgatas arise, the nature [*dharmatā*] of existents [*dharmāṇām*] abides."[39] This famous utterance seems to say that the state of affairs rightly perceived by a Buddha obtains quite independently of anyone's (even a Buddha's) apprehension thereof—a reading that makes this passage virtually a statement of what is characterized in Part I as a realist conception of truth. Candrakīrti's invocation of this passage affords us an opportunity to take up the question of whether and how Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti can believe that their claims are really true.[40] Candrakīrti most strikingly adduces this text in the *Madhyamakāvatāra,* in the course of responding to the question of whether there is any sort of *svabhāva* (essence) that the Mādhyamika *does* admit.[41] Here, Candrakīrti explicitly assimilates what the scriptural passage calls the "nature" (*dharmatā, chos nyid*) of existents to *svabhāva,* adducing the quotation precisely to warrant his own claim that, in fact, all existents *do* in a sense have an "essence":

> "Whether or not Tathāgatas arise, the nature of existents abides"—the nature [*dharmatā*] here referred to by the Buddha exists. What is this that's called "nature"? The essence of things like the visual faculty. What is their essence? The essence—what is not fabricated and not dependent on anything else—which is apprehended by awareness that is free from eye disease.[42]

The "essence" referred to here is the (abstract) fact of "being without an essence" (*niḥsvabhāvatā, naiḥsvābhāvyam*). This is clearly indicated in a passage in the *Prasannapadā* that identifies this sense of *svabhāva* with a host of other standard Buddhist terms for the absolute.

> That very thing which is called the nature of existents is their own form. Then what is that nature of existents? The essence [*svabhāva*] of existents. What is this essence? Nature. And what is this nature? Emptiness. What is emptiness? Essencelessness [*naiḥsvābhāvyam*]. What is this essencelessness? Being thus. What is being thus? Existing in that way, being changeless, the fact of always abiding constantly. For the complete non-arising of things like fire, in virtue of its being independent of anything else and unmade, is called "essence." . . . The master [Nāgārjuna] established it as to be known in this way. And this essence of existents, which consists in their not arising, is precisely a *non*-essence, since, by virtue of its being nothing at all, it is a mere absence. Hence, there is no essence that is an existent.[43]

Rife with paradox, these passages seem prima facie to contradict the constitutively Mādhyamika rejection of anything and everything that can be characterized as an "essence." Certainly, it is paradoxical that, as Candrakīrti here

seems to say, "essencelessness" (*naiḥsvābhāvyaṃ, niḥsvabhāvatā*) is itself to be understood as the essence of things.[44] Jay Garfield and Graham Priest have characterized this as "Nāgārjuna's Paradox," which they state as follows: "all phenomena, Nāgārjuna argues, are empty, and so ultimately have no nature. But emptiness is, therefore, the ultimate nature of things. So they both have and lack an ultimate nature."[45] The inevitability of this paradox discloses the fact that Madhyamaka concerns a finally *metaphysical* point.

The theory of types introduced by Griffiths represents one way to see this and to dispel any suspicion of self-referential incoherence. Thus, if Candra-kīrti's reiteration of Nāgārjuna's claim ("There do not exist, *anywhere at all, any existents whatsoever,* arisen either from themselves or from something else, either from both or altogether without cause")[46] is to count as *true,* it can be thought to entail a claim involving "the second-type set of all universally applicable first-order properties"; the fact that it concerns "all existents" necessarily entails that it obtains always and universally. The *svabhāva* that is repeatedly denied by Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, then, would be of the first type, whereas the *svabhāva* that Candrakīrti affirms in the foregoing passages would be of the second type ("all universally applicable first-order properties")—the latter, in other words, is a second-order property, picking out the *abstract state of affairs* of there being no *svabhāvas* (of the first type).

This point is suggested by another interesting passage in which Candrakīrti raises the possibility that emptiness is itself the essence of existents—or, as he puts it in this passage, that it is a *property* (*dharma*) of such. Thus, in chapter 13 of the *Prasannapadā,* Candrakīrti entertains the following objection.

> That which is without essence is not an existent. And you accept that existents have the property called "emptiness." But if the property-possessor does not exist [i.e., since it's empty], it makes no sense that there be a property instantiated in that [*tadāśrito dharma*]; it doesn't make sense that there be some skin-color with respect to the nonexistent son of a barren woman. Therefore, existents *do* have an essence.[47]

This passage is part of a prominently recurrent sort of exchange in Mādhyamika literature. Like nearly all of the objections anticipated by Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, it turns on the mistaken interpretation of "empty" as meaning *nonexistent.* Thus, the imagined interlocutor here urges that existents must, after all, have some essence (*svabhāva*) since the "property" (*dharma*) of emptiness cannot coherently be predicated of a *nonexistent* "property-possessor" (*dharmin*).

The objector's claim here is not that incoherence follows from the fact that emptiness itself would be the essence of a thing;[48] rather, the interlocutor's point here is that existents must have an essence *other* than emptiness (they

must just have some essence, *simpliciter*)—and this because anything whose essence was emptiness would not (on the characteristic misreading of "emptiness") *exist* and hence would not be available as the kind of "property-possessor" (*dharmin*) in which this or any other property could be instantiated. Hence, the objection is that entities must, after all, have some essence, since only thus could it make sense to predicate *any* properties of them.

The response to this objection typifies Mādhyamika argumentation and represents what can very well be understood as a transcendental argument. Thus, Nāgārjuna turns the tables and urges that it is only *because* of emptiness that change is possible, thus positing emptiness as a condition of the possibility of the undisputed fact that things change; as he simply says, "how could anything change if an essence did exist?"[49] Far from rendering the predication of properties impossible, then, emptiness is a condition of the possibility of anything's having any properties.

Nāgārjuna's rejoinder here is part of a strikingly recurrent effort to stress that emptiness does not mean "nonexistence"; rather, emptiness characterizes a mode of existence—indeed, the only kind possible (viz., relational existence). It is just to the extent that things exist in relationship that change (or the predication of properties) is possible. Nāgārjuna famously makes the same kind of argument in chapter 24 of the *MMK,* where he claims, in effect, that emptiness is a condition of the possibility of everything that, for a Buddhist, is to be accepted as true—that is, of the Buddha's "Four Noble Truths." That chapter begins with the challenge (exhibiting the same misunderstanding as above) of an imagined interlocutor: "If all this is empty, then there's neither production nor destruction; it follows, for you, that the Four Noble Truths don't exist."[50] Nāgārjuna's rhetorically compelling rejoinder: It is only *because* everything is empty that the Four Noble Truths obtain.[51]

Claus Oetke's characterization of Nāgārjuna's strategy in answering the charges of self-referential incoherence anticipated in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* applies here as well: "The core of the solution . . . consists in the thesis that non-possession of a *svabhāva* is compatible with being causally efficient on the empirical (phenomenal, *saṃvṛtti*) level. Thus the opponent's objection is met by attacking the connection between lack of *svabhāva* and being causally inefficient which the adversary hypothesizes" (2003a:470). This point, however, should be made more strongly: "nonpossession of a *svabhāva*" is not only *compatible* with being causally efficient (or, indeed, with being anything at all); it is a *condition of the possibility* thereof.

That is (to put it in terms of the Four Noble Truths), the fact that existents come into being only in mutual dependence on one another (and are therefore "empty" of an essence) is all that makes it possible for suffering to arise—and, thus having arisen as a contingent and dependent phenomenon, to be caused to

cease. If, in contrast, suffering were the "natural" or "essential" (*svabhāva*) state of affairs, this (as Nāgārjuna sees it) would mean that it could not be interrupted, and the cultivation of the entire Buddhist path would be pointless.[52] So, the very quality that defines the conventional world as "conventional" (viz., its emptiness) is precisely what makes it work.[53] And if (as is manifestly the case) this state of affairs means that we suffer, it also means that something can be done about that.

Nāgārjuna is, to be sure, thus claiming that "emptiness" is the content of the Four Noble Truths—that Madhyamaka represents a true expression of what the Buddhist tradition should be understood always to have taught. But the properly transcendental character of emptiness can be appreciated if we emphasize the scope of the claims here; in light of passages like the ones considered here, it becomes appropriate to say that the Four Noble truths all along concerned emptiness just insofar as *any* statement must finally presuppose such. Any statement at all (any existents, any change, any analysis) necessarily presupposes relationship. This is why Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti can argue not only that a thing's having the "property" of emptiness is not incoherent but (more strongly) that it is a thing's *not* having this property that is incoherent: Everything must have the property of emptiness. That is, any talk of "property" and "property-possessor" (or "characteristic" and "thing characterized," or whatever) is already encompassed, already made possible, by the prior fact of emptiness—by the prior fact of its being both possible and necessary for things to exist in relation to other existents.

To understand emptiness is thus to see a finally logical point: "Emptiness," if it means simply the possibility and necessity of relationship, can be understood as a logical category as basic as the principle of noncontradiction.[54] Thus, emptiness is (like the principle of noncontradiction) a priori in the sense that any attempt even to imagine alternatives to it inevitably presupposes it. This is why it makes sense to say that existents can have any properties at all (and that we can only predicate them) only because they are already empty. This point is reflected by Oetke's observation that "emptiness does not relate to any internal feature of the empirical world but to its status as a whole."[55]

But—and this is the paradox that Candrakīrti embraces when he affirms that "essencelessness" is itself the essence of things—this is just to say that emptiness obtains (in a word) essentially. We can (to return to Griffiths) distinguish a first-order statement ("everything is empty"), whose subject is "everything," and a second-order statement *about* the first-order one: "*the fact that* everything is empty is permanent." The subject of the second-order statement is an abstract state of affairs ("the fact that everything is empty"). As William Ames says in making a similar point, the second type of statement refers not to "a quality of things, but a fact about qualities of things, namely, that none of them

are *svabhāva*" (1982:173–174). And it is because the first-order statement is universal in scope ("everything is empty") that the second-order statement can be thought *necessarily* to follow (at least if the first-order statement is to count as true). The type-theoretical approach to resolving the paradox is helpful, then, in characterizing Candrakīrti's *as* a metaphysical claim; it might be said that a constitutively metaphysical claim is one whose universal scope entails a second-order predicate that thus obtains *essentially*.[56]

The viability of the type-theoretical approach to resolving these paradoxical passages might, however, seem to be undermined by characteristically Mādhyamika claims regarding the "emptiness of emptiness."[57] Thus, the result of the approach employed so far is to conclude that any second-order metaphysical predicate—even where the first-order property in question is impermanence—must itself be permanent; and it is reasonable to think that this is precisely what is denied by the characteristically Mādhyamika claim that emptiness itself is empty. Against this, I suggest that the aim of statements concerning the "emptiness of emptiness" is to emphasize only that the second-order sort of *svabhāva* consists in a constitutively *abstract* state of affairs—that it is not itself an *existent,* not something that could conceivably be encountered empirically. This is what Candrakīrti means by saying the emptiness of emptiness "is explained for the sake of reversing attachment to the idea of emptiness as an entity."[58] The point in thus refusing that emptiness is a first-order existent is that emptiness is not (like other first-order properties) the kind of thing that could be predicated *of things that antecedently exist;* the argument is that there can *be* anything of which to predicate any properties only because of the dependent origination of existents (i.e., because of "emptiness").

Nor, however, is emptiness itself antecedent to the existents that it characterizes. This point advances Candrakīrti's finally ethical concerns: Emptiness is not (in the manner of the Ābhidharmikas) being proposed as "what there really is," that is, *instead of* our conventionally described selves; rather, it simply characterizes *the way* selves (like everything) *exist.* Here, recall Griffiths's point about the bearers of first-order properties: "They are the reals, the dharmas."[59] By contrast, the entire Mādhyamika point is that there *are* no "reals," no irreducible substrata of all other properties—only dependently originated existents. To say that emptiness itself is empty, then, is only to say that emptiness is not an independent property antecedent to which there could *be* existents—which are not, however, thereby said not to exist, but precisely to exist in the only way that anything can (viz., reducibly, dependently, relatively).

To the extent that Griffiths's appeal to a theory of types depends on its distinguishing as "real" existents the bearers of first-order properties, it cannot easily accommodate Madhyamaka. Moreover, it is surely unlikely that any self-respecting Mādhyamika would be complicit in the sort of multiplication of cat-

egories represented by a theory of types. This is, however, a point where there is some payoff from appreciating the transcendental character of the second-order "essence" in question—in particular, from appreciating the sense in which it is therefore distinct from the peculiarly ontological categories whose multiplication Madhyamaka surely resists.[60] There may be a useful parallel here with some of Heidegger's characteristic remarks concerning "being." Heidegger finds it problematic to consider "being" as something that itself exists, emphasizing that no *thing* answering to the description "being" could ever be found. Where, for example, is the "being" of a building? "For after all it *is.* The building *is.* If anything belongs to this existent, it is its being; yet we do not find the being inside it . . . being remains unfindable, almost like nothing, or ultimately *quite* so."[61] In other words, being is not an existent property that can be predicated of antecedently real existents, not itself a thing we could encounter; rather, it is something like the fundamental condition of the possibility of anything.[62]

Similarly, it is as an abstract condition of the possibility of existents that emptiness cannot itself be "found." Like Heidegger's "being," it is logically distinct from any other existents, any other properties that can be predicated. This point makes it intelligible to claim (many contemporary interpreters notwithstanding) that Candrakīrti should be seen as making a properly metaphysical claim—a claim, in other words, that is universal in scope and that is proposed as really true. But the truth of this claim does not consist in its reference to a specifiable range of objects. Indeed, the content of this claim is precisely such that its truth *could* not consist in such reference; the claim is that there is nothing *more real* than the world as conventionally described, nothing whose fundamental difference from the conventionally described world could be thought to give us any explanatory purchase thereon. Thus Mādhyamika analysis typically claims to demonstrate that any proposed explanatory terms are incoherent just to the extent that they are thought to provide an ultimately independent (*svābhāvika*) perspective on the phenomena they purport to explain, a perspective that is itself an exception to the conditions exemplified by the phenomena purportedly being explained.

This is not to say that Candrakīrti thinks our conventional descriptions of the world tell us what is *true;* the conventional truth is not itself ultimately true. The point is that what is really the case (the universally obtaining fact that everything is dependently originated) is already on display in the conventional world—and turns out, as well, to characterize any purportedly privileged level of description, any appeal to which thus becomes pointless. Indeed, preoccupation with putatively more basic existents insidiously leads us to suppose we have identified what really exists instead of the self, thus eliminating the subject of soteriological effort (and the object of compassion) from our account—which is why Candrakīrti can think that it is in the end this reductionist version of the

Buddhist project (and not his own demonstration of emptiness) that represents a nihilist conclusion. It is not that conventional descriptions of the world and of ourselves are to be judged true or that no other descriptions are possible;[63] rather, the point is that there is nothing that is not subject to the same constraints as our conventional accounts, nothing that is not itself dependently originated. There is no privileged level of description because the terms of any possible description will themselves exemplify the only condition that Candrakīrti believes that we must ultimately understand—namely, the fact of being dependently originated.[64]

But this claim is proposed as really true—it is the case "whether or not Tathāgatas arise." That is why Candrakīrti can suppose that Dignāga's demand for justification is misplaced; that demand compromises what is, for Candrakīrti, precisely the content of his metaphysical claim. The transcendental character of that claim is evident in its concerning a condition of the possibility even of any utterance—given which, the very demand for justification already presupposes the truth of the claim in question. This is, then, why Candrakīrti can make the argument with which he has concluded his engagement with Dignāga: that is, the progression from insisting that *pramāṇas* and *prameyas* are "established in dependence upon one another" (*parasparāpekṣayā sidhyanti*)—which is to say that "it is emphatically not the case that the establishment of reliable warrants and their objects is essential" (*no tu khalu svābhāvikī pramāṇaprameyayoḥ siddhir*)—to the conclusion that we ought therefore to "let the mundane be just as it is seen" (*tasmāl laukikam eva-astu yathādṛṣṭam*).[65] The latter conclusion follows naturally from the former precisely because Candrakīrti's properly metaphysical claim is that there *is* nothing more real than dependently originated conventions, no description not itself subject to the same conditions that it seeks to explain.

Can Candrakīrti's Arguments Justify the Claim That This Is Really True?

We have now surveyed several passages that recommend understanding Candrakīrti's as a properly metaphysical claim—a reading that bolsters Paul Williams's apt observation (ventured in a review of the postmodernist interpretation of Madhyamaka influentially developed by C. W. Huntington) that "it is clear that for Candrakīrti the *paramārtha* is real not just because it is liberating and is valuable, but because it is truly the way things really are."[66] We are better able to say this if we understand Candrakīrti to have been making transcendental arguments; on such a reconstruction, Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga in fact relates quite coherently to Candrakīrti's other, more characteristic argu-

ments concerning emptiness, such that the refusal of this interlocutor's de-
mands represents not (as many scholars seem to have assumed) a negligible tan-
gent in the *Prasannapadā* but, rather, an argument that is coherent with (and
possibly required by) Candrakīrti's more characteristic concerns—which turn
out to be properly metaphysical concerns that require transcendental arguments
for their justification.

But what about Candrakīrti's arguments themselves? If, that is, his claim is to
the effect that no proposed terms can afford any ultimately explanatory pur-
chase (that none can represent a privileged level of description), how can his
arguments themselves be thought credible with regard to that claim? That is,
even if it can coherently be thought that "essencelessness" is itself the essence of
things (and that "Nāgārjuna's paradox" is not evidence of vacuity)—and even
if we think, therefore, that claims regarding emptiness cannot coherently be
thought to require the kind of justification demanded by Dignāga—what would
entitle us to think that Candrakīrti's arguments are compelling? What, to put it
Sanskritically, is Candrakīrti's *pramāṇa,* what warrants his arguments?

If forced to choose among the *pramāṇas* admitted by Dignāga (or indeed, by
any other Indian philosophers), one might be inclined to say *inference*; surely
the idea of logically entailed consequences (*prasasaṅga*), which is what is chiefly
exploited by Mādhyamikas, is a basically inferential idea.[67] But the interpreta-
tion of Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments is supported by the recogni-
tion (made possible by asking this question) that his arguments (like Nāgār-
juna's) finally have purchase simply insofar as they presuppose basic *rules of
logic*.[68] The Mādhyamika argument is compelling just to the extent that any
attempt to imagine an alternative—indeed, any argument at all— can be shown
to presuppose the point being made. Of these basic "rules," the one most signifi-
cantly presupposed by any existents (or any analysis thereof) is emptiness—
that is, the possibility and the necessity that things exist in relation to one
another. Any purportedly "ultimate" description therefore exemplifies this fact
to just the same extent as our conventional descriptions must. Thus Dignāga's
demand that Candrakīrti justify his claims regarding emptiness already presup-
poses the truth of those claims.

There is, however, another way to question the weight of Candrakīrti's argu-
ments. As noted in Chapter 5, a standard objection to transcendental arguments
is that one can grant that *S* is in a sense a condition of the possibility of *X* (say,
language), but still insist "that it is enough to make language possible if we
believe that *S* is true, or if it looks for all the world as if it is, but that *S* needn't
actually be true"[69]—with transcendental arguments being rendered superfluous
by the need to employ another type of argument in order to show that the con-
clusion in question is not only a condition of the possibility of *our thinking*
such-and-such but that it really is true. In his monograph on transcendental

arguments, Robert Stern addresses this objection by arguing that transcendental arguments can be variously understood as truth-directed, belief-directed, experience-directed, or concept-directed (2000:10–11). Stern deploys this typology together with an examination of whether the challenges addressed by various examples of transcendental arguments are best understood as global challenges to the effect that we cannot have genuine knowledge of anything—or whether, instead, the challenge simply concerns our entitlement to some particular belief.[70] Stern allows that truth-directed transcendental arguments may well be the only kind that would, if valid, satisfy the more global challenge—but that these are precisely the versions most vulnerable to the standard objections; if the claim to be met is that we cannot really know the truth of any beliefs, then the difference between necessarily *believing* something and its necessarily being true makes all the difference.

The demand that we show our entitlement to some particular belief, by contrast, might adequately be met by transcendental arguments of one or more of the other three types. If, that is, one is challenged to show only that one's beliefs are (independent of whether we are in a position to know that they are true) rationally held, then it may indeed be compellingly argued that we necessarily hold the belief in question; if something can be shown necessarily to be believed, then surely it could be judged rational to believe it, even if it were impossible to know, in addition, that it is necessarily true. Accordingly, much of Stern's attention is devoted to arguing that the epistemological challenges famously addressed by transcendental arguments (e.g., the challenges of Hume, as answered by Kant) are, in fact, best understood as instances of what Stern calls "justificatory skepticism" (that is, as demanding only that we show our entitlement to some particular beliefs)—and that we are therefore entitled to read the transcendental arguments that address them as among the more "modest" sort whose goals make them less vulnerable to Stroud's objections. Stern concludes that "[t]he lesson from this investigation is therefore that only when used against normativist justificatory skepticism can a positive role for transcendental arguments of a modest kind be found."[71]

What is perhaps most interesting about the standard lines of objection to transcendental arguments is that they simply point out, in effect, reasons for the likely *dialectical* failure of such arguments—the likely failure, that is, of such arguments to persuade someone who does not already accept the truth of the conclusion.[72] This is apt to be thought a problem in particular for transcendental arguments; it may seem incumbent on a proponent of such arguments to achieve the kind of rhetorical success that is commensurate with the necessity claimed for their conclusions. Insofar, that is, as transcendental arguments characteristically trade on the mode of necessity, it would seem that we are

asked to believe that their conclusions, if true, are necessarily *persuasive*—that "if the person refuses to accept the conclusion, he *dies*."[73]

Clearly, transcendental arguments have not (any more than other arguments) achieved such coercive success. But Stroud's objection may really be only to the effect that, *if* it is such success that is desired, then something further is required.[74] What Stern's concession to Stroud amounts to is the view that transcendental arguments can at most aim to show that it is rational to believe their conclusions, but that they can never achieve the kind of dialectical success that would seem to be promised by an argument from necessity. Indeed, Stern moderates even this conclusion, saying with respect to some forms of transcendental argument that "if we treat transcendental arguments in a modest manner, and in particular if we take them to have a belief-directed form, some appeal to coherence as a legitimate ground for belief will be required, if any satisfactory response to the justificatory sceptic using a belief-directed transcendental argument is to be achieved" (2000:112).

To the extent that we are satisfied by this response to standard objections to transcendental arguments, we might attend to some passages from Candrakīrti that evince a striking degree of epistemic humility—passages suggesting that Candrakīrti himself understood his arguments as being of the more "modest" sort endorsed by Stern.[75] These passages in Candrakīrti's texts support an observation made by Paul Griffiths with respect to the assessment of transcendental arguments.

> [The] mistake lies not in offering such arguments (which may be valid, and may achieve what they essay, formally if not dialectically) but in the dialectical desires that accompany them. Anselm, perhaps, had it right: his ontological argument (a paradigmatically transcendental argument) is in the form of a prayer. And perhaps, too, Dignāga had it right by beginning his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* with a verse of praise and homage to Buddha as *pramāṇa,* as the giver and guarantor of knowledge, and only then passing to arguments about the nature of knowledge and its acquisition.[76]

However, while the importance and value of Griffiths's observation (and of Candrakīrti's expressions of epistemic humility) should not be denied, there is a stronger way to respond to the standard objection to transcendental arguments. It is important to develop this point particularly insofar as my characterization of Candrakīrti's arguments as transcendental has been meant to show that Mādhyamika claims are proposed as really true—given which, Stern's solution, while in some ways on the right track, may not finally satisfy.

The argument here involves points developed in Parts I and II. Recall, in par-

ticular, the characterization of a realist conception of truth, elaborated in Part I with reference to Frege. Among the important points from that discussion is that whether or not something is true (as our ordinary usage of the word "true" generally presupposes) is logically independent of whether and how anyone knows that fact; as Wolfgang Carl says in emphasizing the "one basic point" that Frege is thus most interested in advancing, "Acknowledging something as true doesn't make it true" (1994:18). This insight highlights what is not a trivial point, given that the standard objections to transcendental arguments chiefly concern their dialectical failure: whether or not anyone is *persuaded* by an argument (whether or not an argument compels the assent of its hearers) is logically independent of whether or not its conclusion is valid or true. It is, of course, a fair question whether the strictly "formal" validity that may obtain independent of persuasion is of any value; the logic of the distinction is nevertheless intelligible and, precisely to that extent, is presupposed even by one who questions its value (or, at least, if such a person would have her own claims considered "true").

The second point to recall from the discussion in Part I relates to what, on Frege's account, it could mean to speak of a belief's being *objectively* true. As seen earlier, Frege claimed, against the "psychologism" of which representationalism is an example, that objectivity involves "what is independent of our sensation, intuition and imagination, and of all construction of mental pictures out of memories of earlier sensations, but not what is independent of reason" (Frege 1959:§26). All that is essential to his point is that whatever the rules of reason or discourse may be (and the question of whether or not these are universal can be bracketed), these rules are, unlike subjective representations, intersubjectively available. Indeed, as Wittgenstein argued in rejecting the possibility of a "private language," the intersubjectivity of discursive rules obtains not simply in the sense that many persons have access to them but in the stronger sense that such rules constitute persons as discursive agents. That is, the linguistic and logical rules that determine, for example, what seems to be a good argument are not themselves freely chosen by us—we do not choose which arguments we will find compelling. In the matter of justifying beliefs, then, an argument to the effect that our discursive practices themselves presuppose the belief in question can be compelling; such discursive practices themselves necessarily involve rules that are objective in the only meaningful sense—"objective," that is, not in the sense of "likely to compel the assent of all rational agents" (since what compels belief is often psychological facts that are eminently subjective), but in the sense of intersubjectively available (and indeed, intersubjectively constitutive).

Recall as well the earlier discussion (in Part II) on the epistemology of Kumārila and Pārthasārathimiśra. Their doctrine of "intrinsic validity," as argued there, is usefully understood as a critique of the idea that "knowledge" consists

only in "justified true belief." On this reading, their argument is that the truth of a belief is not some mysteriously "additional" property that can be known over and above the fact of being merely "justified"; for this could not be known by any kind of cognitive instrument that is fundamentally different from those that provide the justification that we already have. Moreover, to be justified just is to be entitled to think one's beliefs really true. Nothing would be added, then, by showing (per impossible) that one's justified beliefs were also true; what it means to have been justified is to be entitled already to think this is the case. Thus, the Mīmāṃsaka claim—which is also the conventional understanding, without presupposing which no one could claim to "know" much of anything—is that one need not always be able to *justify* beliefs in order nevertheless to *be justified,* where this is just to say *entitled to think those beliefs are really true.*

But while the point is therefore that (in Mark Kaplan's words) "knowledge is indistinguishable from the agent's point of view from merely justified belief" (1985:361), we can uphold this notion even if we adopt a third-person perspective on any truth-claim. Thus, when someone else attributes "knowledge" to a subject—that is, not only allows that the subject in question is justified but, in addition, affirms that what the subject believes is true—the other person is doing nothing more than endorsing the claim himself, undertaking the same commitment; as Robert Brandom notes, "[u]ndertaking a commitment is adopting a certain *normative stance* with respect to a claim; it is not attributing a property to it" (2000:168). It is, then, not only to the extent that the Mīmāṃsaka position arguably describes our conventional epistemic practices that Candrakīrti might find that position congenial;[77] he can also obtain from the Mīmāṃsakas (as here understood) a cogent argument to the effect that if our conventions necessarily exemplify "emptiness"—if, that is, we necessarily *believe* that everything is dependently originated, insofar as our believing something is itself an instance of a dependently originated relation to what is known—that means we are entitled to think it really and objectively true that emptiness obtains.

It is precisely to the extent that this is correct that justification and truth turn out to be not so much sharply distinct as complexly related.[78] To be sure, a properly realist notion of truth requires that this distinction be recognized. Indeed, Brandom persuasively argues that such a distinction is *necessarily* presupposed: "no set of practices is recognizable as a game of giving and asking for reasons for assertions unless it involves acknowledging at least two sorts of normative status, *commitments* and *entitlements.*"[79] But as shown above in developing the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity, an appreciation of this point is compatible with the recognition that we can never be in a position to know that a belief is not only justified but also true. Thus, the intelligibility of a belief's *being* judged possibly "true" depends on our distinguishing truth from justification; to be justified nevertheless just is to be entitled to think a belief true. In light of

this, Robert Stern's distinction between "truth-directed" and "belief-directed" versions of transcendental arguments is misleading; one can characterize a transcendental argument as "belief-directed" (as chiefly concerned, that is, with showing only that a certain belief is rationally held) and yet argue forcefully that what it means for the proponent of the argument to be justified is that she is entitled to think the conclusion really true.

This broadly Mīmāṃsaka insight can, in turn, be reinforced by another transcendental argument—one, indeed, that develops a point made by Candrakīrti. As seen earlier, Candrakīrti argued (contra Dignāga) that a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse is that we use words in their ordinary senses—that, in other words, our discursive conventions cannot themselves be thought to require explanation, since we already need them for any explanation that we might give. We can now make the stronger point that chief among the discursive conventions thus presupposed in arguments are those involving talk of *truth;* that is, a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse is that we assume a difference between "what is said or thought and what it is said or thought *about*" (Brandom 2000:163).

We can develop this point by considering an argument made by Franklin Gamwell, who characterizes standard objections to transcendental arguments as mistaking, as it were, the *locus* of the "necessity" that is their hallmark. Thus, with respect to objections similar to those of Stroud, Gamwell states:

> But this argument against transcendental thought depends upon the claim that all such thought is a quest for certainty, and we may now ask whether this claim should be accepted. In response, it might be said that certainty is precisely the putative distinction of transcendental understanding. In contrast to factual or logically contingent claims, a priori claims are said to be logically necessary and, in that sense, invariable or certain. But the question is whether this logical meaning of certainty is the same certainty as that whose achievement is inconsistent with human fallibility. A defense of transcendental understanding might further distinguish between *logical* and *epistemological* certainty, such that understandings claiming to be logically certain are also epistemologically fallible, and only epistemological certainty is impossible. . . . I claim logical necessity, and I concede epistemological uncertainty. The affirmation of fallibility is not a statement about the condition that I take to be transcendental, namely, that it has an alternative; this affirmation is rather a claim about the claimer, namely, that I may be wrong. (1990:93, 107–108)

In other words, what the proponent of a transcendental argument is entitled to claim is justification, not certainty—but the belief thus justified is one to the

effect that something is necessarily the case; to be justified just is to be entitled to think that this is true.

Whatever necessity is in play, then, attaches to the *claim believed,* and not to the making of the claim—with its being precisely the point of a realist conception of truth to recognize that these are logically independent of one another. That point can itself become a premise of the argument. Gamwell continues: "Perhaps it will be objected that we can never get beyond what we think is conceivable in order to identify what is in truth conceivable. *But to say that this circumstance discredits the distinction is to say that there is no distinction between what we think and what is true*" (ibid., 106; emphasis added). The point here is that a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse is that we not only understand but presuppose that there is a difference between "what we think" and "what is true." This is precisely the distinction that is lost on an epistemic conception of truth; in thinking that the truth of a belief is somehow related to the question of how that belief came to be held, one is holding, in effect, that truth consists in the means of justification—that *what we think* has some bearing on *what is true.*

That Candrakīrti presupposes this distinction is the point of his contending that the true state of affairs discerned by a Buddha obtains quite independently of "whether or not Tathāgatas arise." Despite our necessarily presupposing this distinction, *what* one can be entitled to believe when one is justified is that the belief in question really is true. The crucial distinction between truth and justification is more like a regulative ideal than a metaphysical relationship—a distinction that is necessarily presupposed as a reminder of the finitude of our perspectives as knowers, but that is partly overcome in being justified.

Stern's emphasis on belief-directed (rather than truth-directed) forms of transcendental arguments indicates, in effect, that Candrakīrti's arguments will look different depending on whether we take them as meant to demonstrate the truth of their claims or as meant simply to argue for the rationality of his beliefs (as meant simply to show, contra Dignāga's demands, that they are justified). This is, as far as it goes, a useful observation. Candrakīrti's (eminently conventional!) expressions of epistemic humility should, however, be understood as rhetorical expressions of his epistemic situation and as thus reflecting the circumstantial character of his being justified—with facts, that is, pertaining to his formation as a Buddhist moral agent and intellectual. But such facts remain logically independent of whether the beliefs thus arrived at might nevertheless be true. And if Candrakīrti can cogently argue that emptiness is a condition of the possibility of the Four Noble Truths just insofar as it is a condition of the possibility of anything at all—if, in other words, the claim is that emptiness is necessarily what the Four Noble Truths were stating all along, insofar as emptiness (the fact of being related to other things) is finally the most important thing that

any statement at all must presuppose—then he may indeed have a compelling argument that his claims regarding emptiness are justified. If, in addition, it is part of his claim that a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse is that we presuppose the difference between "what is said or thought and what it is said or thought *about*," then he can also coherently claim that these beliefs really are true, "whether or not Tathāgatas arise."

What Kind of "Essences" Do People Really Believe In? A Possible Critique of Madhyamaka

But if all that is shown by the characteristically Mādhyamika arguments surveyed here is that everything necessarily arises in relation to other things (and if this is all that "emptiness," as a plausible condition of the possibility of all existents, really amounts to), it is reasonable to wonder whether these arguments can do anything interesting for us. Is there really anyone who thinks that having an "essence" is, ipso facto, to be altogether unrelated to anything?[80] To ask this is to ask, in effect, whether the *svabhāva* (essence) repeatedly rejected by Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti might really represent a straw man. This question discloses a difficult tension in the Mādhyamika line of reasoning.

The problem is that Candrakīrti claims (as, on my reading, he must) always to defer to the "conventional" and faults Dignāga for flouting convention by stipulating peculiarly technical senses of words. But there is one word even the conventional sense of which Candrakīrti is loath to let pass: *svabhāva*. Thus, in commenting on chapter 15 of Nāgārjuna's *MMK*, Candrakīrti anticipates the kind of objection that he himself might level and answers it with what seems an exceptional qualification of the conventional.

[Objection:] But that heat is the *svabhāva* of fire is well known [even] to cowherds and women. [Response:] We did not say it isn't well known; rather, we say that it is not entitled to be [called] an essence [*svabhāvo bhavitum arhati*], owing to its not having the characteristics of an essence. But by virtue of relying on the errors of ignorance, everyone accepts what has been brought into existence—which is really *without* essence—as being endowed with an essence. For just as one with cataracts, owing to the condition of cataracts, is fixed on the essence of hair, etc.—which is unreal—as being endowed with an essence; in the same way, owing to the condition of the sight which is judgment being afflicted by the eye disease of ignorance, the foolish are fixed on what has been brought into existence—which is without essence—as being endowed with an essence. They expound [their] definition [*lakṣaṇa*] according to this fixation, [saying that] heat is

the defining property [*svalakṣaṇa*] of fire, with it in mind [*iti kṛtvā*] that this is its very own characteristic owing to its being uncommon, since it is not perceived anywhere else. And the Buddha, according to what is familiar to the unenlightened masses, presented this [kind] of nature [*svarūpa*] as conventional in the Abhidharma.[81]

This reference here to what is taught "in the Abhidharma" alludes to precisely the kinds of examples of the conventional sense of *svalakṣaṇa* that Candrakīrti earlier adduced contra Dignāga[82]—and Candrakīrti's point here exploits an alternation between *svabhāva* (essence) and *svalakṣaṇa* (defining characteristic). That is, he readily allows that we conventionally speak of "defining characteristics," of which the heat of fire is indeed an example. What he here refuses to allow is that, despite their also being conventionally designated by the word *svabhāva,* such things are entitled (*arhati*) to be called *svabhāva.* This is because Candrakīrti's view (the conventional usage of *svabhāva* notwithstanding) is that the idea of *svabhāva* is by definition the idea of something "self-existent."[83] What Candrakīrti thus rejects is simply that the "defining characteristics" of anything are themselves self-existent entities. We are, however, entitled to ask what difference it makes for Candrakīrti to refute the idea of *self-existence* when he is confronted only with the idea of "defining characteristics" or (we might say) "identity."[84]

This question may raise serious problems for Candrakīrti's position. The point relates to one that Richard Hayes has raised specifically with respect to Nāgārjuna's arguments for Madhyamaka. Hayes contends that Nāgārjuna's arguments depend on their equivocating between *svabhāva* in the sense of "causal independence" and in the sense of "identity." This equivocation is most clear to Hayes at *MMK* 1.3, which I would render thus: "An essence of existents is not found among the causal conditions, etc.; [and] given that an essence does not exist, dependence / difference [*parabhāva*] does not exist, [either]."[85] Hayes stresses the different senses of *svabhāva* by thus restating the two points made here: first, "Surely beings have no *causal independence* when they have causal conditions"; second (and allegedly following from the first), "if there is no *identity,* then there is no *difference.*" Hayes concludes that "no matter how much sense statement 2 may make as an independent statement, it does not at all follow from statement 1" (1994:312–313). If Hayes is right in seeing an equivocation here, perhaps we can refine the point by saying (with the foregoing passage from Candrakīrti in mind) that it involves Nāgārjuna's using the word *svabhāva* in its (etymologically literal) sense of "self-existent" (*svo bhāvaḥ*) in the first statement and in the sense of "defining characteristic" (*svalakṣaṇa*) in the second.

Mark Siderits has helpfully stated what is at stake given the issue thus raised.

> In order to answer the criticism that Nāgārjuna is systematically equivo-
> cating on *svabhāva,* [one] needs to explain the source of the *svabhāva* crite-
> rion of dharmahood in Abhidharma . . . and then show how this represents
> a reasonable articulation of common sense realism. This would then allow
> [one] to explain why Nāgārjuna is justified in attributing to the opponent
> the view that any account of the ultimate nature of reality must involve
> things that bear intrinsically determinate essences that consequently cannot
> undergo alteration.[86]

In other words, we must ask whether any conventional descriptions of the
world really can be said to presuppose "self-existence" or whether, instead, "es-
sences" might reasonably and coherently be thought of in some other way (as,
for example, "defining characteristics"). Hayes is surely right that there is no
obvious connection between the two possibilities; and it is surely the idea of "de-
fining characteristics" or "identity" that is operating in the conventional usage
of the word *svabhāva*—reflected in the examples given by the Ābhidharmika
commentator Yaśomitra: "What is essence [*svabhāva*]? The body's is *being made
of the coarse elements,* feeling's is *being an experience,* thought's is *being an ap-
prehension.*"[87] The *svabhāva* of a thing, on this usage, is simply *its being* (*tasya
bhāva*) as it is—an idea that is not prima facie incompatible with the idea of
causal relations. But if the conventional sense of the word *svabhāva* does not
involve self-existence (and if "self-existence" is not, therefore, the basic presup-
position behind our ordinary intuitions), then the Mādhyamika seems to for-
feit the claim that *svabhāva* (in the sense of "self-existence") really is what is
presupposed by all the views that they reject. In that case, the *svabhāva* that
Mādhyamikas reject is a straw man.

The more intractable tension, however, is that if it is not a straw man, then
it is difficult to see how Candrakīrti can coherently claim always to defer to the
conventional while, at the same time, refusing to countenance the one conven-
tion that is (particularly given the Buddhist diagnosis of our situation) arguably
most central to our ordinary experience. To the extent that his is a Buddhist proj-
ect, we can understand why Candrakīrti would have in mind the idea of *sva-
bhāva* as "self-existence" (of which a "self" would then be the most important
instance); the idea that persons are individuated by independent selves is pre-
cisely what he is, as a Buddhist, chiefly concerned with rejecting. This is surely
what drives Candrakīrti to deny (in the passage above) that the conventional
sense of *svabhāva* as "defining characteristic" is really entitled to be considered
"self-existent."

But if the idea of "self-existence" *can* plausibly be said to be the basic pre-
supposition behind common-sense realism, then it would seem that Candra-
kīrti cannot reasonably claim (as he does) finally to defer to conventions; surely

his own analysis as a Buddhist commits him to the view that our innate grasping at a "self" is the most basic of all "conventions"—the very one owing to which Candrakīrti can think that all of us who are not Buddhas are beings "the eye of whose mind is afflicted by the ophthalmia that is ignorance" (to use one of Candrakīrti's favorite phrases). It is, then, reasonable to ask how Candrakīrti can endorse the idea that "the world disputes with me, I do not dispute with the world; what is admitted as existing in the world, that is agreed by me, too, to exist; that which is admitted in the world as not existing, that is agreed by me, too, not to exist"[88]—and, at the same time, be committed to a characteristically Buddhist rejection of the *ātman,* which is (if the Buddhist project is called for) thought by many in the world to exist.

This tension is perhaps mitigated by appreciating that Madhyamaka is constitutively opposed in particular to the Ābhidharmika version of Buddhist thought—in which case, we can recognize that what is more generally targeted by Mādhyamikas (under the heading of *svabhāva*) is simply the idea that there could be any privileged level of description. On a more charitable reading, then, we might not be too preoccupied with the precise significance of *svabhāva* and concede instead (with Oetke) that "the phrase '*x* has a *svabhāva*' probably has to be taken as an idiomatic variant for the concept of something's being constituted by or founded in entities of the *paramārtha*-level."[89] We might then focus on what Mādhyamikas see as the specifically ethical implications of their critique of this idea, noting simply that Candrakīrti takes the rejection of any privileged level of description—and the denial, accordingly, that we could ever specify what "really" exists instead of the self—to be what allows us to keep *persons* in play (as the subjects of soteriological effort and the objects of compassion). This is chief among the concerns that drives Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga, and we can reasonably take this to be what is at stake in the critique of *svabhāva.*

We can, in any case, appreciate that Candrakīrti's refusal of Dignāga's demands for justification does not represent a naive rejection of philosophically rigorous argument; rather, Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim (and the ethical point served thereby) requires that the *way* to argue for it is precisely to reject this interlocutor's demands. This is because Candrakīrti's is the metaphysical claim that there is nothing more real than our conventions; our epistemic conventions, rather, are themselves just examples of the dependently originated existents that are the only kind to be found. Given this commitment, it is necessarily the case that this metaphysical claim cannot be justified by Dignāga's philosophical approach; Dignāga's peculiarly technical usage of conventional categories *just is* an attempt to explain our conventions by appeal to something that is not itself conventional.

This cannot be done, Candrakīrti argues, any more than we can explain

dependently originated existents by adducing something not itself dependently originated; the only point to *be* explained is that no such thing exists. This is why, for Candrakīrti, there is ultimately no sharp distinction between ultimate and conventional truth; what is "ultimately" true is simply the fact that there exists nothing with ultimate explanatory purchase, since there is nothing that does not itself exemplify the only fact at issue for Candrakīrti—since, that is, there is nothing that is not itself dependently originated. As the *Large Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom* has it, "Worldly convention is not one thing and ultimate truth another. What is the Suchness of worldly convention, that is the Suchness of ultimate reality" (Conze 1975:529).

That Candrakīrti should argue thus is as we should expect from a Mādhyamika. Just as Candrakīrti invariably insists on the mutual interdependence of any dichotomous terms (hence, on the impossibility that any one will make sense without relation to its complement), so, too, with *paramārtha* and *saṃvṛti*: *Paramārtha* only makes sense in relation to *saṃvṛti,* since the ultimate truth of emptiness, too, is (as Nāgārjuna says at *MMK* 24.18) *upādāya prajñapti.*[90] More counterintuitive, perhaps, is the converse claim: How could it be that *saṃvṛti* makes sense only in relation to *paramārtha?* But this is precisely where the understanding of these as transcendental arguments is most helpful; on this reconstruction, the claim is that *saṃvṛti* is possible only because there is some abstract state of affairs that is its *svabhāva*—and that "essence" (*svabhāva*) is the abstract state of affairs of "there being no essence" (*niḥsvabhāvatā*).[91]

Given this, it is incoherent to require justification by appeal to something more "real" than what our conventional epistemic practices yield. Indeed, Candrakīrti can argue that Dignāga's own demand for justification itself presupposes the truth of Candrakīrti's claim. That claim is that the "ultimate" consists not in some radically "other" state of affairs but in the realization (radically transformative, to be sure) that there is nothing more real than this. On my reading, then, it would be wrong to say, as John Dunne does (1996:548), that one who realizes this (a Buddha) does "not see the ordinary things of the world." It seems that the ordinary world is *all* that such a Buddha would see.

CONCLUSION

Justification and Truth, Relativism and Pragmatism:
SOME LESSONS FOR RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Epistemology in South Asian Philosophy of Religion

This book has surveyed three broad strands of philosophical thought from first-millennium India: the foundationalist trajectory of Buddhist thought initiated by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, which decisively influenced the course of Indian philosophy—and which defined, for many traditional and modern interpreters alike, "the Buddhist position" in matters philosophical; the "reformed epistemology" of those Mīmāṃsakas who justified their constitutive concern with the Vedas through commentaries on the works of Kumārila; and the metaphysical arguments of the Mādhyamika Candrakīrti, particularly as they are elaborated against Dignāga's demand that Candrakīrti show his claims to be justified. All these traditions are recognizably a part of the same historical conversation and share not only a great deal of Sanskritic learning and conceptual vocabulary but a great many discursive strategies. All are concerned, for example, with questions relating to *pramāṇas* (reliable warrants): which cognitive instruments are to be admitted as such, how they have the status they do, and whether or not the only justified beliefs are those that can be shown to have been engendered by one of them. All are basically scholastic traditions of thought, their arguments developed and conceptual problems addressed within the framework of commentaries on the authoritative texts of a received tradition.[1] And all evince a preoccupation with characteristically Sanskritic analyses of language, with the arguments often turning on such matters as the definitions and etymologies of key terms, the rules of the Sanskrit grammarians, and the analysis of actions on the model of semantically complete verbal constructions.

These are, then, all recognizably Indic traditions of philosophy, and exegetical adequacy to the textual artifacts of these traditions is, to a large extent, a matter of Sanskrit philology. But understanding these is also a philosophical matter—and while they are all commonly shaped by the world of first-millennium Sanskrit learning, each of these trajectories also reflects commitments that are specific to a particular ethical and axiological framework. The arguments of

these various traditions should therefore be understood as logical developments of their framing commitments. Recognizing this does not, however, preclude our assessing the philosophical success of the arguments—which is to say, assessing the arguments in terms not only of their coherence with the traditional commitments they are meant to develop but also of other things that we know or believe. By doing so, we may learn more not only about these Indic traditions of thought, but also about our own philosophical commitments as scholars.

As seen here, for Dignāga and his philosophical heirs, the Buddhist doctrine of selflessness guides a systematic redescription of our epistemic practices. On this reading of the Buddhist program, we systematically mistake the basic data of our experience, erroneously projecting on our fleeting sensations the idea that they are the properties or states of an enduring "self." This tendency to think that our sensations inhere in our "selves" is a peculiarly powerful one, to which we have been habituated over innumerable lifetimes; we therefore cannot retain confidence in our ordinary epistemic intuitions, since these lead us to believe that we are warranted in thinking we are "selves." In order to advance the basic Buddhist insight on an epistemological front, it is not enough (on this view) simply to describe what must be the case in order that we can have such knowledge as we generally believe ourselves already to be justified in claiming (not enough, in the terms proposed in Chapter 5, to undertake a "phenomenological" sort of epistemological inquiry); rather, what is required is an epistemology that explains at once how we can so consistently be misled—namely, by mistaking the objects of our propositional awareness (the referents, in general, of language) as real—and how we might overcome this habit and cultivate the warranted belief that, in fact, only fleeting mental events really exist.

The normative goal of this approach is thus to facilitate the appreciation that what our cognition really warrants is something completely other than we typically take ourselves to be warranted in believing. The epistemology thus developed particularly privileges perception, understood as a uniquely immediate and preconceptual sort of cognition—perceptual cognitions alone, that is, are directly caused by really present objects, whether those are understood as things like jars and books or as fleeting sense-data. The only ultimately warranted beliefs, then, are those that are caused by these uniquely particular and evanescent events—which are, therefore, the only things we are ultimately warranted in believing to exist.

The problem, however, is that these causally precipitated moments of awareness are not themselves *beliefs* at all; to be a belief just is to be (in Dharmakīrti's phrase) "suitable for association with discourse"—and suitable, more precisely, for expression in a 'that'-clause ("I believe that *X*"). *Thought,* as Frege wrote, can be possibly *true* only to the extent that its medium is language—to the extent, that is, that it trades in something intersubjectively available, regardless

of whatever subjective "representations" may arise. "Thought," in this sense, must involve "what is independent of our sensation, intuition and imagination, and of all construction of mental pictures out of memories of earlier sensations, but not what is independent of reason."[2] Frege's struggle against broadly "psychologistic" accounts of thought thus took the form of a critique of empiricism that Wolfgang Carl summarizes thus: "If empirical knowledge includes or is even based on perceptual knowledge and if sense perception requires sensations, then there can be no empirical knowledge without something subjective. . . . [Thus, Frege] considers the judgement component of empirical knowledge as the real source or manifestation of its objectivity" (1994:192–193).

The "judgment component," in this sense, is an intentional matter—one involving inferential relations (the relation of "one thing's being warranted in light of another") that cannot be exhaustively described in causal terms. This, then, is the difference between the active justification of judgments and the causal explanation of their production.

> Even when it is concerned with thought and judgement, psychology is concerned not with their justification but, rather, with their "causes," which are "just as capable of leading to error as to truth; they have no inherent relation to truth whatsoever." A psychological theory excludes a consideration of the property 'true' from its investigation, because it is concerned with causal laws that explain the occurrence of mental processes or events, and it does not matter for such an explanation whether the processes themselves lead to results that are true or false.[3]

I made this point in Chapter 2 by characterizing Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's program as entailing an ultimately epistemic conception of truth; that is, their appeal to perceptions as uniquely "constrained" by reality is an appeal simply to what appears most "clear and distinct" to us—an appeal whose subjectivism is most evident to the extent that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti think that it is in the end only our acquaintance with our own mental events that is thus indubitable. But although the clarity and distinctness of a representation may be what brings it to our attention, it is just as likely to mislead; "a proposition, be it ever so keenly apprehended, may be true or may be false" (Newman 1870/1979:80). This insight, Wolfgang Carl argues, is the "one basic point" underlying much of Frege's program: "Acknowledging something as true doesn't make it true. Judgements do not generate truths" (Carl 1994:18).

To say that this approach entails an epistemic conception of truth is not, to be sure, to say that perceptual cognitions cannot count toward the truth of beliefs, that they cannot be among our reasons for believing. Indeed, if the Mīmāṃsakas (as I understand them) are right, perceptions must (lest the whole

world be blind) intrinsically confer justification to the same extent that any other *pramāṇa* does. It is surely a matter of empirical fact that we are justified in holding a great many beliefs about which we know nothing more than that we have them and whose occurrence can be explained causally. But Dignāga and Dharmakīrti cannot coherently claim that, in the end, it is only to perception that we must appeal in (actively) justifying beliefs. That is, we may be entitled to consider a great many beliefs (including perceptual ones) really true, but what we are *doing* when we try to show our entitlement is something other than merely showing how we happen to have arrived at the belief.

Indeed, if Frege is right, if there is any final court of appeals in thinking, it is not perception but inference. It is not because of the chimerical idea of a belief's being both "justified" and "true" that thought can be taken to involve knowledge, but because of (possible or actual) inferential expression—by virtue of reflection on what *else* one might know in virtue of knowing one thing and on whether it coheres with other beliefs. This represents a good way to distinguish human semantic behavior from the behavior of mere "stimulus-responders" (like thermostats and parrots); that is, what distinguishes our human relation to causally produced "sensings" from those of parrots and thermostats is our knowing *that* we are sensing. This use of the word "that" (as reflecting a propositional, semantic state)[4] can be given an inferential description: to know *that* one is seeing red just is to have, at least implicitly, some idea what else one is therefore committed to: that one is *seeing something*,[5] that one is seeing something *colored*,[6] and so on. This is arguably the only meaningful sense in which a perceptual cognition counts *as a cognition* and in which even the knowledge simply that we have some experience therefore turns out already to involve propositional attitudes.[7]

Dignāga's privileged appeal to perception, in contrast—his claim, that is, that the only warranted beliefs are those that can be shown to have been causally precipitated by really existent particulars—cannot in the end explain the eminently intentional activity of *thinking* (or cannot allow, at least, that thought could concern something objectively true). To the extent, for example, that Dignāga stresses in particular the kind of "perception" (that kind of immediate, preconceptual awareness) that we allegedly have of the contents of our own mental states, his claim is simply that we can always doubt whether the contents of our mental events adequately represent anything real, but we cannot doubt *that* there are mental events. The view that this "apperceptual belief" (if that is not an oxymoron) is uniquely warranted serves the basic Buddhist program by warranting only the belief that there are sensations, without also warranting the (inferential) belief that these must be the states of a "self." But if that is thought to be the only ultimately justified belief, then we could not know anywhere near enough even to think of this as a "belief"; the idea of beliefs makes sense only

in terms of other beliefs—only in terms, that is, of the inferential relations in terms of which any belief can be expressed as such.

Alternatively, thinkers in the tradition of Dignāga may stress that sort of allegedly immediate and preconceptual awareness "whose phenomenological content is action with respect to a goal" (*arthakriyānirbhāsaṃ jñānam*). The claim that such cognition is intrinsically better suited to terminate a justificatory regress (by showing, presumably, that one's *justified* beliefs are also true) represents one reason for thinking that this trajectory of Buddhist thought has affinities with that particular epistemic conception of truth known as "pragmatism." As the Mīmāṃsakas argued, however, this awareness, *as* another awareness, cannot coherently be thought to confer a *kind* of justification any different from that conferred by the cognitions allegedly warranted by it (though it can of course count as a potential overrider of them). Moreover, even if it could, this appeal would tell us only why something is believed, not what makes it true. This is, again, not to say that one may not be justified by some cognition "whose phenomenological content is action with respect to a goal"—only that it cannot coherently be thought that we are uniquely thus justified.

With such arguments in view, the Mīmāṃsaka and Mādhyamika critiques of Dignāga, unlike Dignāga's program, are characterized here as compatible with a realist conception of truth. In both cases, it is because of a suspicion specifically of Dignāga's privileged category of perception that these other Indian philosophers were led to critique his Buddhist version of empiricist foundationalism. Thus, the idea that we are uniquely warranted in those beliefs that can be explained as having been caused by their objects poses a particular threat to the Mīmāṃsaka vision of Vedic religion, according to which the most important activity in the world concerns a goal (viz., *dharma*, which "connects a person with the highest good") that is by definition always *bhaviṣyat* (going to exist) as opposed to *bhūtam* (existent)—that is, always the future result of present actions and never something already existent and ready to hand. The difference is especially clear with respect to a typical Vedic injunction like "one desirous of heaven should perform the *agnihotra* sacrifice"; this is not likely to generate much confidence to the extent that it is thought to require perceptual corroboration. Accordingly, for Mīmāṃsakas to advance their concerns on an epistemological front, it is important to undermine the view that perception is uniquely reliable—and, indeed, to argue generally that no kind of cognition can, simply in virtue of its being that kind, uniquely confer justification.

Kumārila and his philosophical heirs did this by taking precisely the sort of approach that is not open to someone (like Dignāga) who wants to conclude that most of our precritical beliefs are not warranted; that is, these Mīmāṃsakas make an argument about what must be the case so that we can have such knowledge as we generally believe ourselves already to be justified in claiming (what

must be the case, as Kumārila's commentators put it, if we are to avoid conclud-ing that the whole world is blind). On the persuasive interpretation of Pārtha-sārathimiśra, this means that Kumārila's doctrine of "intrinsic validity" must pertain to all cognitions, such that even those that turn out not to have been "true" (that turn out, that is, not to have been *pramāṇas*) are at least intrinsically capable of conferring justification (intrinsically have, that is, *prāmāṇya*). What Pārthasārathimiśra thus appreciates is that being justified is logically indepen-dent of whether the belief thus warranted is really true—that, in his idiom, hav-ing *prāmāṇya* does not necessarily mean that a cognition is a *pramāṇa*.

On this reading of Kumārila's epistemology, the claim is that justification is all the more that any cognition can confer—no cognition, that is, can coher-ently be thought to be shown not only justified but also true; all that might advance such a demonstration would be further cognitions. Nevertheless, to be justified just is to be entitled to think one's belief really true, and "settling for" justification therefore does not amount to a concession. Even if (counterfac-tually) one could demonstrate that one's justified belief was also true, nothing further would be added, since having been justified was already to be entitled to think so—unless, perhaps, it is thought that showing a belief to be "true" could consist in compelling the assent of all rational persons (and I take it as uncon-troversial to say that this does not occur).

These points can, in turn, inform the metaphysical arguments of the Mā-dhyamika Candrakīrti, enriching an argument to the effect that "emptiness" (understood as the fact that all things exist only in relationship) is a condition of the possibility not only of any *analysis* of the world, but of *anything at all* (of "things-in-themselves"). In thus characterizing Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments, I have tried to capture the logically distinctive character of his argu-ments and to facilitate an understanding that they are meant to serve claims that are proposed as really true. Thus, Candrakīrti argues that Dignāga's normative epistemology—his demand, that is, that Candrakīrti show his claims to be war-ranted by some a posteriori means of justification (some *pramāṇa*)— cannot co-herently be invoked with respect to Candrakīrti's claims regarding emptiness. This is because Dignāga's project gains purchase only given its peculiarly techni-cal use of ordinary words like *pratyakṣa*, with this transformation of conventions serving a systematic redescription of our cognitive practices—serving, that is, an attempt to explain conventions by terms that are not themselves conventional.

But the whole point of Madhyamaka is that there is nothing that is not itself subject to the same constraints as our conventions—nothing, that is, that is not dependently originated. To the extent, then, that Dignāga's demand for justifi-cation can reasonably be considered a demand precisely that we adduce some-thing that is not dependently originated, that demand is itself a further example of precisely the problem to be overcome. Hence, Candrakīrti argues, instead, by

showing that Dignāga's demand itself is incoherent, insofar as it must presuppose the very conventions that exemplify the truth of Candrakīrti's claims. Among the discursive conventions that Candrakīrti can thus think are necessarily presupposed is that there is a difference between "what we think" and "what is true." Despite our necessarily presupposing this distinction, it is one that is partially overcome—indeed, overcome to the only extent possible for those of us who are not Buddhas—in being justified. By arguing thus, Candrakīrti is better able than Dignāga to argue that the truths he is defending obtain "whether or not Tathāgatas arise."

These conclusions effectively counter some persistent presuppositions in the interpretation particularly of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and Madhyamaka, neither of which has often been said to exemplify any sort of realism. Thus, for example, when he briefly entertains Pārthasārathimiśra's interpretation of the doctrine of intrinsic validity, J. N. Mohanty characterizes it as holding that "every knowledge has an intrinsic *claim to truth*, that *prāmāṇya* for this theory is not truth but truth-claim, which has to be accepted unless and until it has been refuted. The Naiyāyikas on the other hand speak of *actual* truth and not of mere tentative truth-claim. . . . [But t]he *svataḥ* theory, I should think, is talking about truth and not merely of truth-claim." On Mohanty's reading of it, Pārthasārathi's interpretation cannot get us there since it "has in view all knowledge and not merely the right ones . . . [which is] in fact . . . one of the puzzling situations with which the *svataḥprāmāṇya* theory is faced."[8] But to be puzzled by this (and to join with Mohanty in preferring the interpretation of Uṃveka) is to miss precisely the point that Kumārila and Pārthasārathi are most concerned with advancing: that while justification regarding the truth of beliefs is all that finite knowers like we are in a position to obtain, we are no worse off for that; what more could we want than to be entitled to judge our beliefs true?

Madhyamaka, for its part, has often been characterized as a sort of global "skepticism" (in the sense of altogether disavowing any truth claims) or as "antirealist" (where this consists in eschewing the idea that "there is one true theory that correctly describes reality").[9] To interpret Madhyamaka thus is, however, to miss the importance of "Nāgārjuna's Paradox"—of the claim, that is, that "essencelessness" (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) is itself the essence of things. To embrace this paradox, as Candrakīrti clearly does, just is to say it is really true that "all *dharmas* are empty." My reconstruction of Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments in support of a constitutively metaphysical claim is aimed at advancing the intelligibility of saying this. This reconstruction facilitates the understanding that, as a condition of the possibility of all existents, emptiness is logically distinct from any of the first-order properties that can be predicated of existents. So, "Nāgārjuna's Paradox" may be understood as stating simply that existents are possible only given the abstract (and truly obtaining) state of

affairs of there being no first-order properties that are "essences." In that case, the difference between Dignāga and Candrakīrti is not best understood in terms of one's having beliefs and the other's not; rather, it is that the content of Candrakīrti's beliefs requires a different kind of justification—and that precisely in virtue of their being proposed as really true.

On the Context of This Inquiry: Some Lessons for Religious Studies

Attention to the distinction between truth and justification—the appreciation of which just is what distinguishes a realist from an epistemic conception of truth—is helpful not only in expressing some promising ways to think about the philosophical contributions of Madhyamaka and Pūrva Mīmāṃsā but also in situating this discussion within the larger context of the field of "religious studies." Clarifying this distinction can dispel some important confusions that surface recurrently in the field of religious studies (as in the humanities more generally). In the words of the pragmatists, the difference between truth and justification is one that makes a difference. In particular, many of the theoretical and philosophical projects that have influenced the field of religious studies should be understood as concerning only justification—and their possible contributions are compromised to the extent that they are viewed instead as concerning (often by arguing against the relevance or possibility of) *truth*.

    Thus, we can argue, with Bruce Lincoln, that constitutively "religious" discourse aims, above all, to efface its own origins in the interests of particular people, "giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal"[10]—and that we should therefore be alert to the ways in which religious discourse is eminently a matter of power relations. Alternatively, we can argue, with George Lindbeck (whose work owes much to Wittgenstein), that "the proper way to determine what 'God' signifies . . . is by examining how the word operates within a religion and thereby shapes reality and experience rather than by first establishing its propositional or experiential meaning and reinterpreting or reformulating its uses accordingly" (1984:114)—that, in other words, being religious cannot be thought to consist simply in assent to propositional claims, insofar as the latter are intelligible only to those who already know the "grammar" of the faith. Or we can ask, with Talal Asad, how "(religious) power create[s] (religious) truth," emphasizing St. Augustine's view that "coercion was a condition for the realization of truth, and discipline essential to its maintenance. . . . It was not the mind that moved spontaneously to religious truth, but power that created the conditions for experiencing that truth."[11] Or we can, as students of Indian philosophy should be commended for having begun to do, follow Pierre Hadot in appreciating that, for many if not most pre-

Enlightenment philosophers, the point of engaging in philosophical discourse was "not so much to inform the reader of a doctrinal content but to form him, to make him traverse a certain itinerary in the course of which he will make spiritual progress"—and that philosophical arguments will be understood rather differently if they are thus taken as the artifacts of a "way of life."[12]

All these theoretical projects can surely be thought helpfully to describe real aspects of the epistemic situations relative to which people have been and are apt to form their beliefs (and to be justified in holding at least some of them). They describe, that is, aspects of the nexus of power and contestation, psychosis and fear, love and hope that shape us as holding the beliefs we do and that give us (for better or for worse) our intuitions about what count as good reasons and arguments for belief. None of these projects, however, is rightly understood to preclude consideration of the possible *truth* of the beliefs thus formed—none of these, that is, renders unintelligible the distinction between "what we think" and "what is true." It may indeed be the case, for example, that the characteristically Mīmāṃsaka appeal to the "transcendence" (*apauruṣeyatva*) of the Vedas is meant to "naturalize" Brahmanical claims to authority and power—just as it may be the case that one must have ritually concluded a period of celibate study with a bath before one can properly have the "desire to know dharma" (*dharma-jijñāsā*),[13] or that Mādhyamika teachings regarding emptiness can in the end be understood only by those who have first wept at the thought of the Buddha's fathomless compassion.[14]

But these various facts (if such they be) concern only the justification of belief—only, that is, the various circumstances in which a person might be constituted as someone for whom certain beliefs are rationally held. How and why the beliefs in question were thus developed is, however, logically independent of whether or not they might be true—a distinction that is elided only at the cost of denying that we understand the difference between "what is said or thought and what it is said or thought *about*" (Brandom 2000:163). Just as acknowledging something as "true" does not make it thus, so, too, a belief is not necessarily false (and the question of truth not superfluous) simply because its acceptance is, in any of the ways described by these and other theories, historically contingent—otherwise, we could not be said to hold any true beliefs at all (not even the belief that any one of these theories is right), since, of course, the discovery of any truth can take place only in history.

It is important to note, however, that to say that the question of possible truth is not precluded is not to say that all the various beliefs that may be justified *are* true[15]—only that whether or not they are is a logically distinct question. To recognize these distinctions is not to forfeit the possibility of judging some beliefs true and some false or even of arguing that some are more rationally held than others. The importance of these points emerges from consideration of a

provocative article by Stanley Fish (2002). Characteristically venturing into the heart of controversy, Fish engaged the question of whether, as some had argued, the events of September 11 advanced any position in the "culture wars"—and whether, in particular, these events undermined the cogency of characteristically "postmodern" thought by showing the moral impossibility of relativism. Surely, that argument goes, here were events so monstrous that no one could ethically or reasonably judge them to have been guided by any sort of rationality.

Fish argues, among other things, that it is not useful to judge the perpetrators of such actions as simply "irrational" and that any condemnation of them necessarily issues from the perspective of some commitments. Significantly, Fish states his point in this regard conditionally: "if by 'a reliable condemnation' [of a rival perspective] you mean a condemnation rooted in values, priorities, and a sense of right and wrong that *no one would dispute and everyone accepts*, then there is no such condemnation, for the simple reason that there are no universally accepted values, priorities, and moral convictions. If there were, there would be no deep disputes."[16] Fish's point, though, is to deny the antecedent of this conditional—this is not something we can mean by "condemnation," which must, instead, be understood to presuppose commitments that are at least in principle disputable.

This can, however, seem like an expression of morally vacuous relativism only if we ignore this important clarification:

> I am not saying that there are no universal values or no truths independent of particular perspectives. I affirm both. When I offer a reading of a poem or pronounce on a case in first Amendment law, I do so with no epistemological reservations. I regard my reading as true—not provisionally true, or true for my reference group only, but true. I am as certain of that as I am of the fact that I may very well be unable to persuade others, no less educated or credentialed than I, of the truth so perspicuous to me. And here is a point that is often missed, the independence from each other, and therefore the compatibility, of two assertions thought to be contradictory when made by the same person: (1) I believe X to be true and (2) I believe that there is no mechanism, procedure, calculus, test, by which the truth of X can be necessarily demonstrated to any sane person who has come to a different conclusion (not that such a demonstration can never be successful, only that its success is contingent and not necessary). In order to assert something and mean it without qualification, I of course have to believe that it is true, but I don't have to believe that I could demonstrate its truth to all rational persons. The claim that something is universal and the acknowledgment that I couldn't necessarily prove it are logically independent of each other. (Fish 2002:34)

Fish's point, in the terms suggested here, is simply that truth is logically independent of justification—recognizing which, we can judge the beliefs of others to be false (and indeed, can condemn them strenuously), while nevertheless appreciating that their holding them does not, ipso facto, show them to be irrational—while appreciating, in other words, that we may fail to persuade them.

To think otherwise—to think, for example, that the "objectivity" of true beliefs consists in their compelling the assent of all rational persons—is to forfeit a realist conception of truth; this just is to think that what causes a belief is, at the same time, what makes it true. As Frege recognized, however, that way lies solipsism. All manner of subjective facts (psychological, socioeconomic, and neurological facts specific to the situation of the knower) engender beliefs. The objectivity of beliefs has to do, instead, with their being intersubjectively available—with their being, in other words, framed in language and at least possibly expressed and tested for their inferential consequences in the eminently social game of exchanging reasons.

It is, indeed, intersubjectivity that *constitutes* objectivity: the "conditions of the possibility" of being justified are, as Wittgenstein claimed in arguing against the possibility of a private language, never simply willed by individual agents— we do not choose which reasons will be found compelling (even by ourselves) in any context. But if we appreciate the distinction between truth and justification, there is room for recognizing that there is yet a further element of objectivity to our beliefs. The possibility that beliefs circumstantially and socially justified might also be true introduces something (truth) altogether objective (that is, independent of our perspective as knowers)—even though our epistemic situation in this sublunary world will allow nothing more than being justified in thinking our beliefs really true, and never "knowing" them to be so. But in that case, it is only reasonable to think that "knowing" consists in *justifiably thinking one's beliefs true*; otherwise, no one could be said to "know" anything, and we would be left without a use for a perfectly ordinary word.

These points have been lucidly developed by Jeffrey Stout, who appropriates the work of Robert Brandom particularly for its value in religious, theological, and ethical inquiry. Stout recognizes that justification is context-sensitive: "affirming that many of us are justified in holding some of the (nontrivial) moral beliefs we hold is not the same thing as affirming that somebody has established a set of (nontrivial) moral beliefs that any human being or rational agent, regardless of context, would be justified in accepting" (2004:231). Stout further recognizes, with Alston and the Mīmāṃsakas, that there is a crucial distinction "between being entitled to a belief and being able to justify that belief to someone else" (ibid., 87). He elaborates these points with particular reference to the American tradition of pragmatism, emphasizing the extent to which justifying a claim is an *activity*. As such, its success should be gauged in terms of the

difference it makes: "In what, then, does the success of a justification consist? In eliminating relevant reasons for doubting that *P*. What reasons for doubting *P* are relevant and what suffices for their elimination? That depends on context, in particular, on the people to whom the justification is addressed" (ibid., 234–235).

But Stout recognizes, with Brandom, that although it thus affords rich resources for explaining the circumstantial character of *justification,* pragmatism fails as a conception of *truth,* which is logically distinct from the question of how we may know it.

> Truth pertains to the conceptual content of a claim, not the epistemic responsibility of the person who accepts or asserts it. Truth, or accuracy, is an objective status as well as a normative one . . . whether our beliefs and claims actually enjoy the status of being true is not up to us. Believing that someone has a particular obligation, right, or virtue does not make it so. Truth-talk has a place wherever we take the subject matter under discussion—and not simply the evidence pertaining to it—as the object of our inquiry. By engaging in truth-talk, we implicitly view our subject matter as something we might get wrong, despite our best cognitive efforts.[17]

Recognizing this makes it possible to commend what is surely the honorable impulse behind relativism: the belief that there is no single way of looking at the world that is self-evidently more rationally held than all others. But this can now be rightly understood as a point about the circumstantial character of justification. We can retain the relativist's recognition that many different (even mutually exclusive) beliefs might alike be rationally held, but only if we also recognize that this point becomes incoherent if understood as concerning the truth of beliefs. A relativist conception of truth, Stout rightly states, "erases disagreement among groups rather than making it intelligible" (ibid., 238). Only by making disagreement intelligible is it possible to respect the beliefs of others enough to appreciate that they are considered *really true.* To appreciate this is, ipso facto, to disagree with them when they seem to us to contradict our own commitments.[18]

To claim that we necessarily have recourse to talk of "truth" is, however, not to claim to be in *possession* of the truth, which is something that committed relativists seem typically to suspect whenever the word "truth" so much as rears its head; indeed, quite the opposite. Thus, critiques of the idea of a "transcendental perspective" (of a "God's-eye view") can be recognized and acknowledged even, for example, by those who offer transcendental arguments—provided that we understand such critiques to pertain to our epistemic situation, to the circumstances of our being justified, and not to truth. Recognizing the validity of such

critiques—the validity, for example, of the pragmatist account of the context-sensitivity of justification—the proponent of a transcendental argument can acknowledge that the fact of her offering the argument is not understood to reflect her occupying a transcendental perspective. The argument is, rather, only a way of justifying the belief that such and such a condition really is true. The content of the most important beliefs thus credited as true may, indeed, itself be such as to relativize our perspectives as knowers; "the rhetoric of a higher law is little more than an imaginative embellishment of the gap between the concepts of truth and justification, between the content of an ideal ethics and what we are currently justified in believing."[19]

Recognizing the distinction between truth and justification provides the conceptual resources to describe religious people as (among many other things) thinking that their beliefs are really true (and correspondingly, of thinking that contradictory beliefs are really false)—and to appreciate, moreover, that the possibility that their justified beliefs are really true may never finally be eliminated, whatever other explanatory or theoretical interests we may have. What this distinction gives us more generally, as human persons with beliefs and commitments, is a way to explain the possibility of calling people wrong, without necessarily judging them to be irrational. Insofar as we can *understand* only those commitments that, as rational, are possibly intelligible to us, it is surely imperative that we be in a position to do this. It is, then, as we should expect that while the arguments of Kumārila and Pārthasārathimiśra, Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti represent cogent critiques of Dignāga's foundationalist demand for justification, they should not necessarily compel our acceptance of their beliefs. Certainly, it is indisputably the case that, as an empirical matter, no arguments in history have given all rational persons good reason to adopt their conclusions, at least if we are to judge by whether they have succeeded, rhetorically, in persuading all who have heard them.

But to say this is not to make a point that can properly be held against these (or any other) arguments. One can only fault arguments for failing to persuade people (or, conversely, fault believers for not having arrived at their beliefs as the result of assent to arguments) given the view that the purpose of arguments is to *produce* beliefs. Against this, we should understand arguments as meant, rather, to justify beliefs. We can then conclude without contradiction that Mīmāṃsakas like Kumārila and Mādhyamikas like Candrakīrti have cogently argued that their beliefs are rationally held and that they are, moreover, entitled to consider those beliefs true—and yet just as rationally choose not to adopt them as our own.

NOTES

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the present author.

Notes to Introduction

1. A feeling for some of this "proto-philosophical" literature can be gained from Edgerton 1965.

2. For the transition from the proto-philosophical literature to the more technical literature (styled *śāstra* in Sanskrit) of the early "schools" or *darśanas,* see Frauwallner 1973. This contains a useful overview of the commentarial history of one of the philosophical perspectives that will concern us here (that of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā); see Frauwallner 1973:2, pp. 9–11. Even though, for various historical and institutional reasons, it continues to be largely neglected in academic departments of philosophy, I consider it generally uncontroversial to say there is properly "philosophical" literature in Sanskrit—though I can, in this regard, add little to the perceptive remarks of Halbfass 1988 (who considers the ways in which Sanskritic categories like *darśana* may or may not map onto the category "philosophy") or Kapstein (1987:2–36; 2001:29–52).

3. Cf. Bhattacharya 1990:98, IIIn1.

4. Cf. Ingalls 1954; Staal 1965.

5. For a useful overview of the history of Indian philosophy with particular emphasis on this period of change, see Kapstein 2001:xv–xviii. On this way of telling the story of Indian philosophy, it stands to reason that Buddhist philosophers would particularly drive this change, for Kapstein believes that the emergence of important new schools "opposing the Vedic religion and the speculative traditions of the *Upaniṣads*" (2001:xv) were instrumental in transforming Indian philosophy.

6. Consider, for example, Franco, who clarifies his remark to the effect that he is "currently the only 'German scholar' who specializes in Buddhist philosophy": "I use 'philosophy' here in the technical sense as equivalent to *pramāṇaśāstra.* Some scholars may wish to consider Abhidharma or Yogācāra texts as philosophical texts. I cannot enter into this topic here; I merely want to make clear how I use the word 'philosophy' in the present context" (1999:430).

7. Dates per Frauwallner 1961. Dates not from this are generally from Karl Potter's online version of *The Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy,* vol. 1: Bibliography (http://faculty.washington.edu/kpotter/ckeyt/home.htm).

8. Or vice versa; among the shortcomings of Davidson's view of the relations between doctrine and history is that it licenses straightforward inferences in either direction. Davidson characterizes the thought of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as having been provoked by the even more lamentable influence of Madhyamaka, whose "agenda of skepticism" he considers corrosive of Buddhist institutions (2002: 99–105): "the unintended result was a validation of an ethical standard established by the lowest common denominator in Indian society and the restriction of vocabulary to a common-language assessment of reality. . . . It would be difficult to construct intentionally a doctrine more inhibitory to intellectual enquiry and ethical values. . . . Such a doctrine clearly had consequences for the religious institutions. . . . In undermining the idea that ethical statements were to be taken as veridical *as stated,* Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti clearly provided an avenue for those seeking a ready-made authoritative voice for the neglect of the Buddhist precepts" (ibid., 100–101). Whatever one thinks of Davidson's characterization of the ethical entailments of Madhyamaka thought (it will become clear, in due course, that I disagree), there is no basis for arguing that any specific social trends were the effects of its influence; the relationship between thought and action is far too complex for there to be any valid inference from some reported reality, to "holding Mādhyamika views" as the specific cause thereof.

9. Cf. Kapstein 2001:xviii.

10. On a canonical example, then, a mountain is commonly the locus of the properties "being smoky" and "having a fire," where knowledge of the former warrants inferential knowledge of the latter.

11. The introductory essay of Ganeri 2001b (which anthologizes the history of scholarly articles on the subject) illuminates well the history of interpretive efforts to determine whether Sanskritic formally stated inferences are examples of "syllogistic" reasoning. See in particular the essays of Staal and Matilal, which influentially argue for the "property-locus" analysis of formally stated Sanskritic arguments.

12. A sense of the development represented by this text can be gained by comparing Dignāga's deployment of this vocabulary with, say, that to be found at *Abhidharmasamuccaya* 2.4 (*sāṃkathyaviniścaya*), where an eightfold classification concerning *sādhana* (probative argument) interestingly collapses what are, on later accounts, the members of a formally stated inference (e.g., *pratijñā* [thesis]; *hetu* [reason]; *dṛṣṭānta* [example]), and the *pramāṇas* that warrant it. (See Rahula 1980:182.) The latter, moreover, are here said to include *pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference), and *āptāgama* (tradition of reliable authorities)—which, as seen below, differs significantly from what Dignāga will argue. On Asaṅga's views, see also Wayman 1958.

13. The naturalness of fit with constitutively Buddhist commitments is among the reasons for being suspicious of Davidson's characterization of these thinkers as having "appropriated" the approach of their non-Buddhist rivals; as shown below, the project of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti represents a perfectly logical way to develop Buddhist insights in a particularly epistemological way.

14. Dreyfus (1997) is particularly concerned with Tibetan interpretations of Dharmakīrti's thought, though it is also an outstanding study of Dharmakīrti's own works.

15. Thus, for example, even the *śūnyavāda* section of Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika*—the

section, that is, ostensibly concerned with the "doctrine of empti[ness]," which ought therefore to concern Madhyamaka— chiefly considers Dignāga's views (with Kumārila's commentators similarly citing Dharmakīrti).

16. Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya 1970:226, 230–232.

17. There is, to be sure, some interest in Candrakīrti early in the second millennium, as evident in such figures as Atiśa (982–1054) and Jayānanda (fl. c. 1050); nevertheless, Candrakīrti's influence was nowhere near that of Dharmakīrti, and one will generally look in vain for references to him not only in the works of Brahmanical philosophers, but even in the works of most subsequent Buddhist thinkers.

18. The rise of Candrakīrti's influence among Tibetans is, as far as I am aware, something of a puzzle. The scholastic traditions of Buddhist philosophy were directly introduced to Tibet by Śāntarakṣita (725–788) and Kamalaśīla (740–795), who both traveled to Tibet—and whose thought, though closely affiliated with the Madhyamaka tradition in which Candrakīrti stands, reflects the predominance of thinkers (like Dharmakīrti) whose approach is (on Candrakīrti's own view, at least) generally antithetical to Candrakīrti's. On the introduction of Candrakīrti's thought to Tibet, see Lang 1992.

19. A case in point is the *svātantrika-prāsaṅgika* division of Madhyamaka philosophy— which, though not without basis in the antecedent Indian texts, represents a particularly *doxographical* lens imposed by Tibetans. On this, see Dreyfus and McClintock 2003.

20. Candrakīrti seems only to have known the work of Dignāga (his predecessor) and not that of Dharmakīrti (roughly his contemporary); but to the extent that Candrakīrti's are principled differences with Dignāga, and to the extent that Dharmakīrti recognizably carries forward the basic philosophical approach of Dignāga, it makes sense to characterize Candrakīrti as I have here.

21. To be sure, Tibetan doxographical texts typically represent Madhyamaka as finally superseding the "Sautrāntika-Yogācāra" approach exemplified by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, and these approaches represent distinct parts of Tibetan monastic curricula. Nevertheless, from the perspective of Candrakīrti's own texts, it must be said that the Tibetans generally minimize the extent of the difference. Whether this is because of the historical fact that it was Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla who introduced Buddhist scholastic philosophy to Tibet (cf. n18) or because of a more narrowly philosophical concern to address problems in Candrakīrti's thought is an interesting question.

22. In terms favored by the Sanskritic commentarial tradition, my philosophical interpretation of Candrakīrti perhaps resembles something like the *vārttika* genre of commentary—where a *vārttika* is, in the context of grammatical discourse, a rule that clarifies "the meaning of what was said, what was left unsaid, or what was inadequately said" (uktānuktaduruktārthacintākāri tu vārttikam; cf. Apte 1957/1992:1417). For thoughts on the differing genres of commentary, following the *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* of the tenth-century thinker Rājaśekhara, see Griffiths 1999:112–113, where Rājaśekhara is quoted as offering the same expression as defining *vārttika* as a genre of commentary.

23. These are the words of Robert Pippin (1989:11), written in regard to a similarly challenging interpretive exercise—that of arguing that the philosophical project of Hegel is usefully understood as framed vis-à-vis Kant's "transcendental unity of apperception" (and this despite the relative paucity of clear discussions of Kant in Hegel's corpus).

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Cf., e.g., Tāranātha (translated in Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya 1970:182) for a traditional account of Dignāga's relation to Vasubandhu. For a bibliography of works attributed to Dignāga, see Hattori 1968:6–10.

2. A survey of scholarship on this tradition (with particular attention to the question of whether Dignāga should be interpreted vis-à-vis Dharmakīrti) is found in Hayes 1988a:9–32. My survey here has been informed by Hayes, as well as by the copiously annotated translation of Hattori (1968) and by the more recent works on Dharmakīrti by Dreyfus (1997), Dunne (1999; I have not yet been able to consider Dunne's revisions, 2004), and Jackson (1993). "Discipline of reasons" renders Bu-ston's *gtan-tshigs-rig-pa* (which in turn renders the Sanskrit *hetuvidyā*); cf. Obermiller 1931/1987:44 and 155n413. For the dGe-lugs-pas' doxographic characterization, see, e.g., the *Grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa rin po che'i 'phreng ba* of dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, which reports that there are two main types of Sautrāntika: "Sautrāntikas who follow scripture, and those who follow reasoning" (Mimaki 1977:84). As should be expected in light of the foregoing remarks, it is chiefly Vasubandhu who is regarded as exemplifying the former and Dignāga and Dharmakīrti who exemplify the latter. For thoughts on the aptness of characterizing Dignāga et al. as "foundationalists" (my own understanding of which is developed below), see Jackson 1989.

3. See, e.g., Iyenger 1927.

4. Hayes 1988a:6. Hattori (1968) gives editions of both Tibetan translations (that supervised by the Indian *paṇḍita* Vasudhararakṣita and that supervised by Kanakavarman). Both Hayes and Hattori base their translation on Kanakavarman (as I do). Randle (1926/1981) compiles such Sanskrit fragments of Dignāga as can be gleaned from the quotations of him in other extant works of Indian philosophy, with additional Sanskrit fragments found in Hattori's notes.

5. Herzberger 1986:241. Hayes agrees, adding that Dharmakīrti "also washed away much of the accomplishment of the Buddha as well" (1988a:310). Hayes's contention reflects his (problematic) view that authentically "Buddhist" trajectories of thought evince a sort of skepticism or agnosticism and that this is compromised by philosophical programs (like Dharmakīrti's) that seem to aim at something more like demonstrative certainty.

6. The *Viśālāmalavatīnāmapramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā*, which, like Dignāga's work, survives only in Tibetan translation (as the *Yangs-pa dang dri-ma med-pa ldan-pa shes-bya-ba tshad-ma kun-las-btus-pa'i 'grel-bshad*, in Tohoku 4268).

7. This is as we should expect from a commentary styled *vārttika*; cf. Introduction, n22.

8. Cf. Hayes 1988a:224–226, for comments on Jinendrabuddhi's being preferable to Dharmakīrti as a commentator on Dignāga.

9. For succinct presentations of the seventy-five *dharmas* found in Vasubandhu, cf. Cox 1995:12; Chaudhuri 1976:14(a). The character of Vasubandhu's arguments can usefully be appreciated particularly by considering chapter 1 of the *Abhidharmakośa*, a reliable translation of which is available in Hall 1983. The language of "supervenience" is borrowed from Kapstein (1987:90 ff.).

10. I leave *prajñapti* untranslated for the present because an important part of Candrakīrti's exegesis of Nāgārjuna involves this term. A standard translation is "concept" (cf., e.g., Warder 1971), but I argue in Chapter 6 that, particularly as deployed by Burton (1999), this translation is misleading.

11. Williams 1981, which provides an illuminating discussion of the conceptual motivation behind Ābhidharmika discussions of *dravyasat* and *prajñaptisat*. See also the discussion in Kapstein 1987:90 ff.

12. For example, in the first chapter we learn that the Vaibhāṣikas consider the five *skandhas* to exist "substantially," whereas Vasubandhu the Sautrāntika uses the *skandhas* simply as a rubric for enumerating the more basic categories that are *dharmas*. This is also the conceptual context for chapter 5's famous debate regarding the existential status of past, present, and future moments. The characteristically Vaibhāṣika claim is that all three "really" exist and that this reflects the proper interpretation of the Buddhist text (*sarvam asti* [everything exists]) that gives adherents of this school the name "Sarvāstivāda" (the "'everything exists'-affirmers"). Vasubandhu the Sautrāntika replies that he does not deny that these exist; he simply rejects the Vaibhāṣika claim regarding *how* they exist. Thus, "vayam api brūmo 'sty atītānāgatam iti; atītaṃ tu yad bhūtapūrvam, anāgataṃ yat sati hetau bhaviṣyati. Evaṃ ca kṛtvā-astīty ucyate na tu punar dravyataḥ" (We, too, say the past exists; but the past is what existed previously, and the future will exist given existent causes. And in this sense they are said to exist, *but not substantially* [*Abhidharmakośa* 299.1ff; emphasis added]). On this debate, see Williams 1981 and Cox 1995:*passim*; see also Kritzer 2003.

13. "svalakṣaṇadhāraṇād dharmaḥ" (Pradhan 1975:2.10).

14. The *svalakṣaṇa* of *vijñāna* is adduced at *Abhidharmakośa* 1.16a (Pradhan 1975:11) and that of *pṛthivī* at *Abhidharmakośa* 1.12 (ibid., 8). My rendering of *vijñāna* as "perceptual cognition" reflects my agreement with Hall's observation (1983:84n) that *vijñāna* in the *Abhidharmakośa* roughly corresponds to the sense of *pratyakṣa* (perception) recommended by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti and that the *Abhidharmakośa*'s usage of *saṃjñā* (conception) corresponds to their sense of *anumāna* (inference). (For more on the former parallel, see n42.) For *kāṭhinya* as synonymous with *khara*, cf. ibid., 24.3, 78.7–8. Vasubandhu's are the examples of the conventional usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa* that, as discussed in Chapter 6, Candrakīrti will adduce contra Dignāga. Of course, "earth" (*pṛthivī*) is not an example of a *dharma*, and we can note here something of the nonsystematic character of Vasubandhu's work. Thus, it is not uniquely with respect to *dharmas* that Vasubandhu invokes the idea of "defining characteristics" (*svalakṣaṇa*); nevertheless, *dharmas* are said to be so called in virtue of their being defined as they are. Cf. n20.

15. For a defense of the latter translation, see Garfield 1995:89n4. Garfield (with whom I agree) follows Cabezón 1992. The delightful phrase "Buddhist hybrid English" is from Griffiths 1981. Typical of such translations is the rendering of *svabhāva* as "own-being," which has the advantage of literally rendering the two parts of the Sanskrit word (the reflexive prefix *sva-* and the nominal form *bhāva* [being]), but the disadvantage of not being meaningful English.

16. "Svabhāva evaiṣāṃ svalakṣaṇam" (*Abhidharmakośa* 6.14c-d [Pradhan 1975:341.11–12]). This passage is adduced by Cox to support the following point: "Each such primary factor, or *dharma*, is determined or distinguished by an intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*),

which is itself defined as the particular inherent characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*), or distinctive characteristic, that can be applied to that factor alone and to no other" (1995:139). See also Cox 2004.

17. Loux 1995:241. Stephen Menn informs me that the Greek here should really be transliterated as *to ti ēn einai*.

18. See Pāṇini 5.1.119: "tasya bhāvas tvatalau" (the affixes -*tva* and -*tā* [denote] the being/state of that). Cf. Katre 1987:545.

19. "kaḥ svabhāvaḥ? kāyasya bhūtabhautikatvam, vedanāyā anubhavatvam, cittasya-upalabdhitvam" (Shastri 1998:2:709). As reflected in my translation of this passage, these abstract suffixes are (in keeping with Pāṇini's suggested gloss) often best rendered not, as they typically are, with the comparably abstractive affixes of English (-ness, -hood, etc.), but with the word "being"—which discloses, among other things, the fact that we should always expect these words to construe (as they do in Yaśomitra's passage) with a genitive. Thus, "*X's being Y*" is simply an alternative way of expressing what is basically a statement of identity: "*X is Y.*" This way of expressing a simple predicate typically makes explicit the predicate's inferential relations to other predicates (making it easy to say, for example, that "*X's being Y means that Z*"). This construction occurs most commonly in *śāstric* Sanskrit when a predicate is adduced as a reason for something else; in this case, the word in the "*Y*" position is put in the ablative case, yielding "*because of X's being Y.*"

20. Cox 1995:12. Recognizing that Vasubandhu identifies *svabhāva* and *svalakṣaṇa* in the course of discussing, *inter alia*, the body (which is, of course, not a *dharma*), Cox appropriately qualifies the point supported by that text (cf. n16) in the note adducing it: "However the particular inherent characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*) need not refer to a factor's distinctive intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) as a discrete real entity (*dravya*), but can, in certain contexts, refer to a factor's nature as belonging to a particular sense sphere (*āyatana*)" (1995:153n27). Cf., in this connection, Vasubandhu's commentary on *Abhidharma-kośa* 1.10d; addressing the point that the senses yield knowledge of *wholes* (and not of their really existent parts), Vasubandhu says: "āyatanasvalakṣaṇaṃ praty ete svalakṣaṇa-viṣayā iṣyante na dravyasvalakṣaṇam ity adoṣaḥ" (Pradhan 1975:7). This is a passage to which Dignāga appeals (cf. n63), and it can be translated so as to warrant Dignāga's usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa*—thus, "these (groups of cognition) are required to have particular fields with respect to (sense) spheres *as particulars* (<u>āyatanasvalakṣaṇa</u>), not things *as particulars* (<u>dravyasvalakṣaṇa</u>)" (Hall 1983:70; emphasis added). But Yaśomitra's comment may recommend understanding Vasubandhu here as retaining the sense of the word as "defining characteristic": "āyatanānāṃ svalakṣaṇam āyatanasvalakṣaṇam, cakṣurvijñānavijñeyatvādi rūpāyatanatvādi vā" ([The compound] "*āyatanasvalakṣaṇa*" [here is to be understood as a genitive *tatpuruṣa*, and hence read as] "the defining characteristic *of* the sense spheres"—like being the *form* sense sphere, [which is defined as] *being perceivable by ocular perception* [Shastri 1998:30]). As in the passage from Yaśomitra discussed in n19, this example of *svalakṣaṇa* again involves the -*tva* suffix in a way that reflects abstraction.

21. Gethin 1998:208. Invoking a dichotomy that roughly parallels the "ultimate / conventional" pair, Cox similarly observes: "In a practical sense, the Abhidharma functions as the standard (*pramāṇa*) by which one can distinguish between *sūtras* having explicit

meaning (*nītārtha*)—that is, those consistent with the Abhidharma—and those having implicit meaning (*neyārtha*)—that is, those that contradict the Abhidharma" (1995:7). See also Collins 1998:143.

22. Note, then, that the idea of "two truths" (*paramārtha-satya* and *saṃvṛti-satya*) is perhaps better expressed, in the context of Abhidharma, in terms of two categories of existent (*sat*)—with the derivation of the word *satya* (typically rendered as "truth") from the present participle *sat* (existent) making possible an easy move between these. It is therefore not surprising that it is as common to see the compound *paramārtha-sat* (ultimately existent) as *paramārtha-satya* (ultimate truth). For insightful reflections pertaining to this, see Kapstein 2001:211 ff.

23. Gethin comparably suggests: "A useful analogy, I think, for the relationship between the Abhidharma and the Sūtrānta [that is, Buddhist teaching as recorded in the *sūtras*] is that of the relationship between a grammar book of a language and the language as spoken and used" (1998:208).

24. "dve api satye saṃvṛtisatyaṃ parmārthasatyaṃ ca. Tayoḥ kiṃ lakṣaṇam? . . . Yasminn avayavaśo bhinne na tad buddhir bhavati tat saṃvṛtisat, tadyathā ghaṭaḥ; tatra hi kapālaśo bhinne ghaṭabuddhir na bhavati. Tatra ca-anyān apohya dharmān buddhyā tad buddhir na bhavati tac cāpi saṃvṛtisad veditavyam, tadyathā-ambu; tatra hi buddhyā rūpādīn dharmān apohya-ambubuddhir na bhavati. . . . Ato 'nyathā paramārthasatyam; tatra bhinne 'pi tad buddhir bhavaty eva; anyadharmāpohe 'pi buddhyā tat paramārthasat, tadyathā rūpam" (Pradhan 1975:333–334).

25. Cox 1995:138–139. Cf.: "Saṃghabhadra [the Vaibhāṣika whose *Nyāyānuśara*—now extant only in Chinese translation—offers a rejoinder to Vasubandhu's Sautrāntika criticisms] adds that the distinction between primary and secondary existence corresponds to that between ultimate and conventional truth (*paramārtha* and *saṃvṛtisatya*). This point is extremely important for it shows that in the Sarvāstivāda the distinction between *satyas* was not soteriological but primarily philosophical, in this case ontological" (Williams 1981:237).

26. It is thus the Vaibhāṣikas who are here represented as admitting the *skandhas* to be *dravyasat*. The Sautrāntikas, in contrast, deny that the five *skandhas* exist as *dravyasat*, instead favoring the view that what is *dravyasat* are the seventy-five *dharmas* into which, *inter alia,* the *skandhas* can be reduced. Thus, for Sautrāntikas the category of *rūpa-skandha* exists only derivatively (*prajñaptisat*) insofar as it comprises the first eleven in the standard list of seventy-five *dharmas* (specifically, the five bodily senses, together with their respective objects, plus the category of *avijñaptirūpa*).

27. On Vasubandhu's arguments against atomism in the *Viṃśatikā*, see Kapstein 2001:181–204.

28. Hayes opts for the latter characterization (with respect to both Dignāga and Vasubandhu), and calls the view "phenomenalism" (1988a:96–104, 173–178). As seen in parts II and III, both the Mīmāṃsakas and Candrakīrti would have problems even with the more modest epistemological claim, insofar as both may be said to espouse (for different reasons and with different consequences) versions of "direct" or "naive realism."

29. See n24.

30. Like Dignāga's other works, the *Ālambanaparīkṣā* survives only in Tibetan translation, which here (verse 5c–d with *vṛtti*) reads: "bum pa la sogs pa ni kun rdzob tu yod

pa nyid do / rdul phran yongs su bsal na ni / der snang shes pa nyams 'gyur phyir // rdzas su yod pa rnams la ni 'brel pa can bsal du zin kyang kha dog la sogs pa bzhin du rang gi blo 'dor pa med do" (Tola and Dragonetti 1982:121). (The part italicized in the text represents *kārikā* 5c-d. This convention is followed as well for citations from the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*.) For arguments similar to those of the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*, cf. *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.14 and *vṛtti* thereon (Hattori 1968:33–34 [Hattori's translation], 189–191 [Tibetan text]).

31. It is significant that Dignāga here gives as an example of something "substantially" existent a "secondary characteristic" like color; particularly in light of some of Dignāga's other commitments, the point would seem to be that it is the component sense-data (out of which we construct "wholes" such as jars) that are thus held to be irreducible. This issue is discussed in Chapter 2.

32. "de dag bsags pa na yang so so ba rgyu yin gyi de bsags pa ni ma yin te tha snyad du yod pa'i phyir ro. . . . gang las de ni don dam par / de la tha snyad du ma byas /" [1.15c-d] (*Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.15, in Hattori 1968:34–35; 189 [Tibetan, per the translation of Kanakavarman]. I have here followed Hattori's translation particularly of the *kārikā*, retaining his insertions; cf. ibid. (p.120nn2.24–25) for an elaboration, together with relevant Sanskrit fragments.

33. "mngon sum dang ni rjes su dpag / tshad ma dag ni gnyis kho na ste, gang gi phyir mtshan nyid gnyis / gzhal bya rang dang spyi'i mtshan nyid dag las gzhan pa'i gzhal bar bya ba med do / rang gi mtshan nyid kyi yul can ni mngon sum yin la spyi'i mtshan nyid kyi yul can ni rjes su dpag pa'o"(*Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.2, in Hattori 1968:177).

34. "svasaṃvedyam anirdeśyaṃ rūpam indriyagocaraḥ" (*Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.5c-d, in Hattori 1968:91n1.43, which also provides some useful elaboration; among other things, Hattori reports an alternative reading from another source: "svalakṣaṇam anirdeśyam").

35. Cf. : "indriyārthasaṃnikarṣotpannaṃ jñānam avyapadeśyam avyabhicāri vyavasāyātmakaṃ pratyakṣam" (cognition that is produced from contact between the senses and an object, [that is] indefinable, inerrant, [and] essentially determinate, is [what we mean by] perception) (*Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.4, in Hattori 1968:121n3.1).

36. "dbang po'i blo la bstan par bya ba'i yul nyid srid pa ma yin te, bstan par bya ba ni rjes su dpag pa'i yul yin pa'i phyir yo / bstan par bya ba ma yin pa nyid la yang 'khrul ba yod pa ma yin te" (*Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.17, in Hattori 1968:191). Cf. also *Pramāṇasamuccya* 2.2a: "rang gi mtshan nyid bstan bya min" (the *svalakṣaṇa* is indefinable).

37. Hayes 1988a:15; cf. Katsura: "[Dharmakīrti's view of] reality is characterized by momentariness, an idea which has no place in Dignāga" (1991:144).

38. Cf., in this respect, Dunne's contention that, in Dharmakīrti's understanding, *svalakṣaṇas* have no spatial extension (1999:131)—a point that could be compatible with (and required by) either "radical momentariness" or simply a representationalist epistemology which holds that the "sense-data" that are the direct objects of our cognition are mental.

39. That we can develop a philosophical assessment of the works of these thinkers while bracketing the ontological status of *svalakṣaṇas* is in keeping with what is a hallmark of the works of *both* Dignāga and Dharmakīrti: the fact that their arguments are developed almost exclusively in an epistemological key, such that most of their main points can carry conviction (if they do) whether or not Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are

thought finally to opt for specifically Yogācārin views. This is one reason traditional dox-ographic descriptions hold that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti exemplify the "Sautrāntika" school of thought (cf. n2)—even though, on both chronological and philosophical grounds, this characterization may be less apt than "Yogācāra."

40. Commentary with *vṛtti*: "mngon sum rtog pa dang bral ba / shes pa gang la rtog pa med pa de ni mngon sum mo / rtog pa zhes bya ba 'di ji lta bu shig ce na, ming dang rigs sogs bsres pa'o" (*Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.3 with *vṛtti*, in Hattori 1968:177).

41. "rang dang spyi'i mtshan nyid dag tha snyad du bya ba ma yin pa dang kha dog nyid dag las kha dog la sogs pa bzung nas, kha dog la sogs pa mi rtag go zhes mi rtag pa nyid la sogs par yid kyis rab tu sbyor bar byed do" (*Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.2c-d, in Hattori 1968:177). Here, I have basically followed Hattori's translation (p. 24), with some adjustments; cf. Hattori (p. 81n1.19) for extensive Sanskrit fragments from commentaries on Dharmakīrti (where *avyapadeśya* is again the word used to characterize *svalakṣaṇas*). For the Sanskrit antecedent to the Tibetan *tha snyad du bya ba ma yin*, I have taken *avyavahārtavya* from Chandra (1959–1961/1998:1010), who cites the Tibetan translation of Dharmakīrti's *Nyāyabindu*. In light of what is discussed in part III as Candrakīrti's characteristic concern with what is conventional (i.e., with *lokavyavahāra*), the equiva-lence here between *svalakṣaṇas* as *avyapadeśya* and as *avyavahārtavya* (not figuring in conventional discourse) is telling; for it reiterates the idea that *svalakṣaṇas*, so qualified, count as *paramārthasat*—and that the world as "conventionally" described, therefore, is sharply distinct therefrom.

42. For other Buddhist statements of basically comparable notions, see, *inter alia*, *Abhidharmakośa* 1.16; and Hall's note (1983a:84n1) thereon. Hall cites as a parallel pas-sage one from Dharmottara's *Nyāyabinduṭīkā*. To this we might add, *inter alia*, several passages from the *Madhyāntavibhāgaśāstra*; cf., e.g., verse 9c-d: "tatra-arthadṛṣṭir vi-jñānaṃ tadviśeṣe tu caitasāḥ" (perceptual cognition is the bare seeing of an object, while derivative mental events pertain to the qualification thereof) (Pandeya 1999:25; the translation of this in terms of "bare seeing" follows the gloss of Vasubandhu: "tatra-arthamātre dṛṣṭir vijñānam").

43. We might say, in this regard, that among the philosophical contributions of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is their explicit generalization of the idea that there is a whole class of things—"abstractions" or "universals" (*sāmānyalakṣaṇas*)—that perform the same conceptual work as the idea of a "self." Questions relating to the conceptual work performed by this class of things generally boil down to relations between wholes and parts—making it unsurprising that Buddhist arguments concerning not only the self, but also God, the abstract referents of words, and so on, all turn out to be fundamen-tally similar arguments concerning the incoherence involved in regarding such un-changeable "wholes" as related to manifestly changing "parts." This point is made well by Hayes (1988b:20–25).

44. Again, we can bracket the question of whether Dignāga would also make the con-verse claim (that to be real is to be perceived), which amounts to a fairly strong state-ment of idealism. In keeping with a revision introduced by Dharmakīrti (see n46), we can attribute to Dignāga the view that to be real is to be, at least in principle, perceivable (that is, in principle *capable* of causally producing a perceptual cognition)—a point, once again, that could apply either to concrete particulars, or to mental events.

45. "tatra pratyakṣaṃ kalpanāpoḍham abhrāntam" (*Nyāyabindu* 1.4, in Malvania 1971:40); cf. *Pramāṇavārttika* 2.123 ff., in Miyasaka 1971/72: 56 ff. Although the introduction of this as a definitive feature may represent an innovation by Dharmakīrti, consider also *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.17: Having said that the Nyāya definition of perception involves a redundant reference to *avyapadeśyatva* (cf. n35), Dignāga adds: " 'khrul ba'i yul nyid kyang srid pa ma yin te, 'khrul ba ni yid kyi 'khrul ba'i yul nyid yin pa'i phyir ro" (Nor is there a possibility of [perception's] having an erroneous object, since an erroneous cognition has as its object an illusion produced by the mind [Tibetan in Hattori 1968: 193; cf. ibid., 122n3.7).

46. "abhilāpasaṃsargayogyapratibhāsapratītiḥ kalpanā" (*Kalpanā* is a thought whose phenomenological content is suitable for association with discourse [*Nyāyabindu* 1.5, in Malvania 1971:47]). For a more detailed account of this idea, see Tillemans 2000:155–158.

47. The point that infants and animals can thus be said to exhibit "conceptual" thought is elaborated by Dharmottara; see Malvania 1971:48–49. The same point is made by Bhartṛhari, albeit to support a conclusion that is precisely the opposite of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's—specifically, the conclusion that all cognitions are inevitably shot through with language. Cf. Matilal 1990:135–137.

48. "asaty abhilāpasaṃsarge kuto yogyatāvasitir iti cet / aniyatapratibhāsatvāt / aniyatapratibhāsatvaṃ ca pratibhāsaniyamahetor abhāvāt / grāhyo hy artho vijñānaṃ janayan niyatapratibhāsaṃ kuryāt, yathā rūpaṃ cakṣurvijñānaṃ janayan niyatapratibhāsam janayati / vikalpavijñānaṃ tv arthān na-utpadyate / tataḥ pratibhāsaniyamahetor abhāvād aniyatapratibhāsam" (Malvania 1971:49). See Tillemans 2003:100, for remarks based on this passage.

49. We might also note, with regard to the ideas in play here, the even balder statement of the later Buddhist thinker Mokṣākaragupta (twelfth century), who explains why we should consider only cognition that is free of conceptual elaboration to count as "perception": "arthagrāhakajñānam arthasya kāryam; artho hi grāhyatvāt jñānasya kāraṇam. . . . kalpanājñānam artham antareṇa vāsanāmātrād eva-upajāyamānam, katham arthasya kāryaṃ syāt, arthena saha anvayavyatirekābhāvāt; na hi yad antareṇāpi yad bhavati tat tasya kāryam" (the cognition that apprehends an object is the *effect* of that object; for an object, by virtue of being apprehended, is the cause of a cognition. . . . How, [on the other hand,] could conceptual cognition be the effect of an object, [given its] arising simply from a latent disposition, without any object? For [this kind of cognition has] no positive or negative concomitance with an object. For that *X* which arises even without *Y* cannot be the effect of that *Y* [Singh 1985:21]). Note that the latter account of what is required for something to count as a cause figures also in Dharmakīrti's definition (at *Nyāyabindu* 1.13) of *svalakṣaṇa*: "yasya-arthasya saṃnighānāsaṃnighānābhyāṃ jñānapratibhāsabhedas, tat svalakṣaṇam" (That object whose appearance to cognition is different depending on whether or not it is present is a unique particular).

50. That Dharmakīrti should thus distinguish "suitability for linguistic expression" in terms of phenomenological content is in keeping with the broadly representationalist character of his approach; this is the claim that the contents of thought should be characterized according to what *appears* to the subject. Consider, in contrast, Robert Brandom's inferentialist account of the sense in which "we can talk about what still remains implicit in an explicit claim, namely, its inferential consequences" (2000:18). Considered

as an account of the difference between what is explicitly given linguistic expression, and what (with Dharmakīrti) is merely "suitable" for such (namely, for Brandom, any potential inferential consequence of what is explicitly held), Brandom's alternative formulation has the considerable advantage of making possible talk of the (objective) truth of beliefs, and not simply of what (subjectively) appears to a subject. This relates to the critique developed in Chapter 2.

51. Of course, given their characteristically Buddhist commitments, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti want to affirm that applying the word "book" has the effect not only of taking an irreducibly unique object instead as a token of some type but also that of taking what are different moments in a certain causal "continuum" (*saṃtāna*) as moments *of* the same thing. See Chapter 2, n50.

52. Again, this is so whether that finally be understood as an external object or a mental sense-datum.

53. All of the foregoing suggests what is problematic about Stcherbatsky's characteristically Kantian rendering of *svalakṣaṇa* as "thing-in-itself" (cf. Stcherbatsky 1932/1958: *passim*). For Kant, the latter term denotes something of which we cannot in principle have any knowledge (but which we must nevertheless presume to exist); whereas the *svalakṣaṇas* of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are precisely what is really known—and they are "indefinable" only in the sense that all that is really known is the kind of unique particulars that can never themselves be the referents of words. To be sure, Stcherbatsky seems less far off when we note that the apparent impossibility of our giving any propositional expression to the contents of perception makes it a real question whether we can really be said to *know* what we perceive—though this would represent a fundamentally different kind of limitation from that argued by Kant.

54. "arthakriyāsamarthaṃ yat tad atra paramārthasat / anyat saṃvṛtisat proktaṃ te svasāmānyalakṣaṇe" (*Pramāṇavārttika* 2.3, in Miyasaka 1971/72: 42). The notion of "pragmatic efficacy" (*arthakriyā*) as the criterion of the ultimately real is among Dharmakīrti's innovations.

55. Cf. n32.

56. For the sense of *anyanimittabhāva* here, cf. Manorathanandin's commentary on the immediately preceding verse; the point is that a discursive cognition requires such additional causes as the conventions regarding words and their associations, etc.

57. "evaṃ yad asadṛśaṃ śabdaviṣayo 'nyanimittabhāve jñānābhāvaś ca tat paramārthasat. Ato 'nyad aśaktaṃ sadṛśaṃ śabdaviṣayaḥ, anyanimittabhāve buddher viṣayaś ca tat saṃvṛtisat proktam, kalpanāmātravyavahāryatvāt" (Pandeya 1989:64). Note here the disparagement of what is merely conventionally real.

58. The Tibetan translation of the passage in question reads: "tshad ma dag ni gnyis kho na ste, gang gi phyir mtshan nyid gnyis / gzhal bya"; cf. n33. The translation is from Hattori (1968:24; emphasis added).

59. Cf. Katsura's Sanskrit reconstruction: "pratyakṣam anumānaṃ ca pramāṇe dve eva, yasmād lakṣaṇadvayaṃ prameyaṃ" (Katsura 1991:136n29).

60. Katsura 1991:136. Note that this point also cuts against a common translation of *svalakṣaṇa* as "specifically characterized phenomenon" (see, e.g., Dreyfus 1997:580 and *passim*)—which misleadingly suggests that the word refers to some discrete "phenomenon" *and* its "characteristic." As shown in Chapter 6, Candrakīrti exploits something

like Katsura's insight in pressing his critique of Dignāga's account of *svalakṣaṇa*, urging in effect that Dignāga cannot coherently think that the things denoted by *svalakṣaṇa* do not involve any relation between a "characteristic" (*lakṣaṇa*) and the thing "character-ized" thereby (*lakṣya*). That Candrakīrti sees this as an unwanted consequence for Dignāga suggests that Candrakīrti would agree with Katsura. On this point, cf. Arnold 2003.

61. Cf. nn18 and 19.

62. "don la yid bzhin rnam par rtog pa can / rang gi don rigs kyi khyad par can de'i khyad par 'dzin pa'i phyir, rang gi yul la yid kyi 'jug pa bzhin du rnam par rtog pa can du 'gyur ro"(Hattori 1968:215). Cf. *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.23, where Dignāga adduces the case of perception's registering the qualifier / qualified distinction as a counterfactual entailing problematic consequences: "If it were admitted that both [*viśeṣaṇa* and *viśeṣya*] were objects of the same [sense,] unaccepted consequences would follow" (yul mtshungs nyid du 'dod ce na / mi 'dod pa yang thal bar 'gyur// [Hattori 1968:207).

63. Katsura 1991:136. Despite his understating its magnitude, Katsura quite rightly identifies the change: "it is clear that *svalakṣaṇas* of Abhidharma, viz. *dharmas* which are actually named as *rūpa, vedanā*, etc., should be regarded by Dignāga not as *svalakṣaṇas* but as *sāmānyalakṣaṇas*. Consequently, Dignāga's *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* corresponds to both *sva-* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* of the Abhidharma, which cannot be regarded as real in Dig-nāga's system" (p. 137). For Dignāga's own claim not to contradict Ābhidharmika usage, cf. the commentary on *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.4c-d (translated in Hattori 1968:26–27; cf. 89–91nn1.39–1.41). In support of his point, Dignāga quotes Vasubandhu's *Abhidhar-makośabhāṣyam* on two different senses of *svalakṣaṇa* (cf. n20). But see Hattori (1968: 90–91n1.41) on whether Dignāga's point here coheres with apparently contrary statements from the *Ālambanaparīkṣā* and from elsewhere in the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. This contra the cautions of Katsura and Hayes; see Chapter 1, n37.

2. As an example of *svalakṣaṇas* as understood by thinkers in the school of thought initiated by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the Tibetan dGe-lugs-pa doxographer dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po (1728–1791) adduces a jar—which seems, prima facie, to sup-port Ganeri's reading. ("don dam par don byed nus pa'i chos de / raṅ mtshan gyi mtshan ñid / mtshan gzhi ni / bum pa lta bu" [Mimaki 1974:85].) But this example is compati-ble with the view either that it is *jars themselves* that are the direct objects of cognitions or that it is jars as sense-data ("jar-representations") that are thus perceived.

3. Hattori 1968:27; emphasis added. Ganeri apparently follows Hattori, modifying slightly: "A thing possessing many forms (*rūpa*) cannot be cognised in all its aspects by a sense-faculty" (2001a:101). For Kanakavarman's Tibetan see Hattori: "du ma'i ngo bo'i chos can ni / dbang po las rtogs srid ma yin" (1968:181). Hattori also gives the Sanskrit as quoted by Prajñākaragupta: "dharmiṇo 'nekarūpasya nendriyāt sarvathā gatiḥ" (1968: 91n1.43). For *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.5c-d, cf. Chapter 1, n34.

4. Hayes 1988a:170n20. This point is recommended as well by the Sanskrit.

5. See Chapter 1, n28.

6. See Chapter 1, n38.

7. I do not think the Kantian echo here is misleading. For Kant, a minimal condition

of the possibility of having any experience at all is the fact of its being the experience *of some subject;* thus, "It must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany all my representations. . . . the manifold representations, which are given in an intuition, would not be one and all *my* representations, if they did not all belong to one self-consciousness" (1781, 1787/1965:B131–32). As *transcendental,* however, Kant's notion does not necessarily counter the Buddhist denial of an abiding "self," and Kant emphasized that the unity of apperception gives us no *empirical* knowledge of ourselves (cf. B153–154). Much of this applies, *mutatis mutandis,* to the Buddhist understanding of *svasaṃvitti,* perhaps particularly as that is later developed by Śāntarakṣita; cf. nn56–58. I have further developed this point in Arnold 2005.

8. With this point in mind, Richard Hayes's rendering of *pratyakṣa* as "sensation" (1988a:*passim*) is perhaps to be recommended. In fact, sensory perception is one of only four kinds of cognition admitted by Dignāga and his heirs as species of "perception" (cf. *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.6).

9. The Sanskrit is: "savyāpārapratītatvāt pramāṇaṃ phalam eva sat" (Hattori 1968: 97n1.55).

10. "'di la phyi rol pa rnams kyi bzhin du tshad ma las 'bras bu don gzhan du gyur ba ni med kyi, 'bras bur gyur ba'i shes pa de nyid yul gyi rnam pa can du skyes pa dang, bya ba dang bcas par rtog pa de nye bar blangs nas, tshad ma nyid du 'dogs pa ste, bya ba med par yang yin no" (Hattori 1968:183). My translation is here adapted from that of Hattori 1968:28.

11. "yul gyi snang ba nyid de 'di'i / tshad ma" (Hattori 1968: 183); cf. Hattori's translation (1968:29). Dharmakīrti makes the same point at *Nyāyabindu* 1.20.

12. "de ltar rnam pa du ma rig pa'i shes pa nye bar blangs pa de lta de ltar tshad ma dang gzhal bya nyid du nye bar 'dogs pa yin te" (Hattori 1968:183); here, the translation is taken from Hattori (1968:29).

13. "yad ābhāsaṃ prameyaṃ tat pramāṇaphalate punaḥ / grāhakākārasaṃvittī trayaṃ nātaḥ pṛthak kṛtam" (*Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.10, in Hattori 1968:107n1.67); cf. Hattori's translation (1968:29).

14. "shes pa ni gnyis su snang bar skyes te, rang gi snang ba dang yul gyi snang ba'o / snang ba de gnyis la gang rang rig pa de ni 'bras bur 'gyur ro" (Hattori 1968:183); cf. Hattori's translation (1968:28).

15. See n9.

16. This seems to be the view of Hattori; cf., *inter alia,* Hattori 1968:107nn1.65, 1.67. Alex Wayman has long opposed the "idealist" reading of this and cognate schools. In an article specifically addressing the relationship between Dignāga and the Yogācāra school, for example, Wayman writes: "if indeed the Yogācāra school denies the reality of an external object, it would hardly be possible to find its position attractive to the Buddhist logicians who were to follow, since Dignāga and his successors . . . do not deny an external object; rather they call it a *svalakṣaṇa* (the 'particular') and even sometimes describe it as *paramārtha-sat* ('absolute existence'), to underscore the reality of this object of direct perception (*pratyakṣa*)" (1979:65). It should be clear, though, that none of these points self-evidently counts in favor of Wayman's conclusions; being "absolutely existent" and uniquely "particular" can just as well describe sensations as external objects.

17. On the sense in which "apperception" thus remains (like perception more gener-

ally) causally constrained, cf. McClintock, who suggests that in Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṃ-graha,* sense-data "*are* still causally produced, and as such they are still formed and restricted by their causes. Even though an image of a patch of blue does not arise from a group of causally functioning external blue particulars, it does arise from a causally functioning internal particular, namely an imprint for the arisal of an image of a patch of blue. The arisal of images in perception is thus not an arbitrary affair (and to that degree it is *real*); rather, it is rooted in karmic imprints and ignorance" (2003:143–144). But of course, moments of inferential awareness presumably could similarly be described as caused by "an imprint for the arisal" of such—in which case, perception would seem to lose its distinctive status. See in this regard n20.

18. Hayes 1988a:136. Brentano makes almost precisely the same point, in terms with striking affinities with Dignāga: "besides the fact that it has a special object, inner perception possesses another distinguishing characteristic: its immediate, infallible self-evidence. Of all the types of knowledge of the objects of experience, inner perception alone possesses this characteristic. Consequently, when we say that mental phenomena are those which are apprehended by means of inner perception, we say that their perception is immediately evident. Moreover, inner perception is not merely the only kind of perception which is immediately evident; it is really the only perception in the strict sense of the word. . . . [for] the phenomena of the so-called external perception cannot be proved true and real even by means of indirect demonstration. For this reason, anyone who in good faith has taken them for what they seem to be is being misled by the manner in which the phenomena are connected. Therefore, strictly speaking, so-called external perception is not perception. Mental phenomena, therefore, may be described as the only phenomena of which perception in the strict sense of the word is possible" (1973:91).

19. With this way of putting it, we are on the verge of an argument like that made by Descartes.

20. As much is conceded by Mokṣākaragupta, who anticipates an objection to this effect: "nanu sarvajñānānāṃ svasaṃvedanapratyakṣatve ghaṭo 'yam ityādivikalpajñā-nasya nirvikalpakatvaṃ, pītaśaṅkhādijñānasya-abhrāntatvaṃ ca kathaṃ na bhavet? ucyate: vikalpajñānam api svātmani nirvikalpam eva / ghaṭo 'yam ity anena bāhyam eva-arthaṃ vikalpayati, na tv ātmānam" (But if all cognitions are [instances of the kind of] perception that is apperception, [then] how would conceptual cognitions like 'this is a jar' not be *non*-conceptual, and how would the [mistaken] cognition of a yellow conch shell not be *non*-erroneous? We reply: even conceptual cognition is non-conceptual with respect to itself; [such cognition] conceptualizes the *external* object with [propositions like] 'this is a jar,' but [it does] not [conceptualize] itself [Singh 1985:24]). This conclusion surely follows from Dignāga's initial contention that our various cognitive instruments (*pramāṇa*) are only "figuratively" so called, insofar as there is finally only the fact of occurrent cognitions having various phenomenological aspects.

21. Sellars 1963:164. This passage is quoted by Tillemans (2003:97), who is chief among those modern interpreters of Buddhist foundationalism who have found it useful to invoke Sellars. Dreyfus (1996) has challenged the judgment that Buddhists in this tradition of thought subscribe to Sellars's "myth of the given."

22. Brandom 2000:49, *et passim.*

23. Indeed, this is among the points of Kant's contention that "It must be possible for

the 'I think' to accompany all my representations" (cf. n7). That is, any experience must, in order even to count as an experience, be expressible as the object of some propositional attitude. (Kant's is also the point that propositional attitudes invariably reflect some particular perspective.) This is why Lynne Rudder Baker can say: "Mental items that cannot be identified by 'that'-clauses at all have no claim to being beliefs or other propositional attitudes" (1987:19). Cf. Siderits 2004:376.

24. Recall that "conceptual" here means simply (with Dharmakīrti) "suitable for association with discourse"—and the possibility of a judgment's being expressed in a 'that'-clause would seem to be definitional of this. The thrust of Sellars's critique of the "given," then, is that even our acquaintance with our own mental states necessarily presupposes mastery of some concepts, etc.

25. These issues have recently been the subject of a debate between Chadha (2001, 2004) and Siderits (2004).

26. "zhen pa ni nges pa ste, de spyi la sogs pa dang ldan pa'i ba lang la sogs pa la ma brtags par ma mthong ba'i phyir mi srid do" (Hattori 1968:193).

27. See n4.

28. Or, following Dharmakirti's revision, it is at least to have a cognition whose phenomenological content involves things (viz., general kinds) that are in principle capable of serving as the referents of words.

29. "cakṣurvijñānasamaṅgī nīlaṃ jānāti no tu nīlam iti" (cited by Dignāga in his *vṛtti* to *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.4; cf. Hattori 1968:26, 179). I thus render "nīlam iti" (where the quotation marker *iti* might more literally be rendered "he does not know 'it is blue'") with a 'that'-clause in order to emphasize what I regard as a distinctive feature of propositional content; cf. n23. As seen below (Chapter 7, n20), Candrakīrti contests Dignāga's understanding of this quotation.

30. Interestingly, there is a similar tension in some contemporary physicalist accounts of cognition. Philosophers like Jerry Fodor have tried to specify a sort of "narrow content" that can be expressed by causally explicable "observation" sentences, while yet not being rich enough to count as inferential (since what they want to do is explain higher-order sentences in terms of basic "observation" sentences). For a critique of this attempt, see Baker 1987:63–84.

31. On this, see especially Dunne 1999:318 ff. See also Tillemans 2003:104; Katsura 1984:216, 228; and Katsura 1993. See also the discussion of this in Chapter 4.

32. Dunne 1999:320–321. As shown in part II, the privileged epistemic role particularly of cognitions of pragmatic efficacy represents the principal point at which Buddhist foundationalists are vulnerable to the Mīmāṃsaka critique.

33. This question is begged by Siderits, whose critique of Chadha (2001) thus invokes the distinction between perception and "perceptual judgment": while instances of the latter are technically inferential, they "are more directly tied to immediately preceding perceptions than is usual with most inferences" (Siderits 2004:369; cf. Katsura 1993). But it is how these are "tied" that is precisely at issue in this debate. To be sure, Siderits notes (ibid., 380n8) that *apoha* plays a role here (cf. n34); but that role is complex enough, and the question of *apoha*'s success is contentious enough (involving, as it does, significant metaphysical arguments), that Siderits's appeal to the distinction between perception and "perceptual judgment" is not by itself persuasive.

34. This way of putting the question makes clear that this is among the issues meant to be addressed by the doctrine of *apoha*—that is, the doctrine that words (and discursive thought more generally) do not have really existent universals as their referents; rather, thought constructs these referents by a process of exclusion. (See Dreyfus 1997:217–249; Ganeri 2001a:106–111; Hayes 1988a:183 ff.) As reflected in the title of his recent article on the subject ("On What It Is That Buddhists Think About"), Patil (2003) makes clear that *apoha,* though often treated only for its interest with respect to the philosophy of language, should more generally be understood as a mechanism for resolving this finally epistemological problem. Consideration of whether the doctrine of *apoha* can successfully answer this question is outside the scope of the present discussion; for now, I will have to be content with having clarified what the question is.

35. Tillemans 2003:104. Much of my discussion here is informed by this article.

36. Cf., e.g., *Pramāṇavārttika* 3.213, where Dharmakīrti argues against the possibility that words directly refer to (and, hence, for the impossibility that they establish) really existent objects: "nāntarīyakatābhāvāc chabdānāṃ vastubhiḥ saha / nārthasiddhis tatas te hi vaktrabhiprāyasūcakāḥ" (Since words have no inherent connection with things, there is no proof of objects based on them; for they [merely] express a speaker's intention [Miyasaka 1971/72:146]). Hayes has noted, however, that this understanding of the sense in which language is "inferential" misses Dignāga's point (1988a:253–254).

37. Sellars 1963:169; quoted by McDowell 1996: xiv.

38. McDowell offers this coinage as "Sellarsian at least in spirit" (1996:xiv).

39. Ibid., xv.

40. Ibid. This is, as McDowell rightly notes, simply another way of articulating the problem that motivated Kant—that of how freedom can fit into a scientifically described world (p. xxiii). Cf., as well, McDowell 1998.

41. On Descombes's cogent analysis, this is ultimately the problem being addressed by those empiricists who would reduce our "intentions" (in the broad sense proposed by Descombes) to such causally efficacious (and empirically identifiable) phenomena as brain states.

42. This parallels a problem famously pointed out with respect to the philosophical program of logical positivism; thus, if it is urged that the only meaningful statements are those that are empirically verifiable, it can be asked how that claim itself is to be verified.

43. Dharmottara's dates are per Krasser 1992. On Dharmottara as having significantly revised the commitments of Dharmakīrti, see Dreyfus 1997:354–64. The interpretation of Dharmottara that I propose is much the same as that of Dreyfus. For a useful introduction to the course of Buddhist philosophy after Dharmakīrti (with particular reference to the figures of Dharmottara, Ratnakīrti, and Jñānaśrīmitra), see Kajiyama 1998:1–13.

44. Thus, Dharmakīrti effectively glosses *pramāṇa* as *samyagjñāna* (veridical cognition) and says, in turn, "samyagjñānapūrvikā sarvapuruṣārthasiddhiḥ" (the achievement of all human ends depends on veridical cognition [Malvania 1971:1]).

45. Consider, in this regard, the extent to which Dreyfus's analysis of Dharmakīrti's possibly "pragmatist" approach in fact presupposes the peculiarly causal sort of pragmatism reflected in Quine's "naturalized epistemology" (e.g., 1997:310–311).

46. "samyagjñānaṃ pūrvaṃ kāraṇaṃ yasyāḥ, sā tathoktā / kāryāt pūrvaṃ bhavat,

kāraṇaṃ pūrvam uktam / kāraṇaśabdopādāne tu puruṣārthasiddheḥ sākṣāt kāraṇaṃ gamyeta / pūrvaśabde tu pūrvamātram / dvividhaṃ ca samyagjñānam: arthakriyānirbhāsaṃ, arthakriyāsamarthe ca pravartakam / tayor madhye yat pravartakaṃ tad iha parīkṣyate / tac ca pūrvamātram, na tu sākṣātkāraṇam / samyagjñāne hi sati pūrvadṛṣṭa-smaraṇam / smaraṇād abhilāṣaḥ / abhilāṣāt pravṛttiḥ / pravṛtteś ca prāptiḥ / tato na sākṣād hetuḥ /. . . . tasmāt parīkṣārham asākṣāt kāraṇaṃ samyagjñānam ādarśayituṃ kāraṇaśabdaṃ parityajya pūrvagrahaṇaṃ kṛtam" (Malvania 1971:27–29).

47. Cf. n9ff.

48. "prāpakaṃ jñānaṃ pramāṇam / prāpaṇaśaktiś ca na kevalād arthāvinābhāvitvād bhavati / bījādyavinābhāvino 'py aṅkurāder aprāpakatvāt / tasmād prāpyād arthād utpattāv apy asya jñānasyāsti kaścidavaśyakartavyaḥ prāpakavyāpāro, yena kṛtenārthaḥ prāpito bhavati / sa eva ca pramāṇaphalaṃ, yadanuṣṭhānāt prāpakaṃ bhavati jñānam" (*Nyāyabindu* 1.19, in Malvania 1971:79).

49. As a commentator who represents his work as interpretively adequate to Dharmakīrti, Dharmottara will, of course, eschew this word in this context, but it is clearly what his account entails.

50. "dvividho hi viṣayo pramāṇasya: grāhyaś ca yadākāram utpadyate, prāpaṇīyaś ca yam adhyavasyati / anyo hi grāhyo 'nyaś cādhyavaseyaḥ / pratyakṣasya hi kṣaṇa eko grāhyaḥ, adhyavaseyas tu pratyakṣabalotpannena niścayena saṃtāna eva; saṃtāna eva ca pratyakṣasya prāpaṇīyaḥ, kṣaṇasya prāpayitum aśakyatvāt" (Malvania 1971:71). See Kajiyama 1998:58 for a similar point.

51. Regarding this distinction, see Dreyfus (1997:359–360), which adduces a precisely parallel passage from Dharmottara's *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā*.

52. "tasya viṣayaḥ svalakṣaṇam" (*Nyāyabindu* 1.12).

53. "nīlanirbhāsaṃ hi vijñānaṃ yatas, tasmān nīlasya pratītir avasīyate / yebhyo hi cakṣurādibhyo vijñānam utpadyate na tadvaśāt tajjñānaṃ nīlasya saṃvedanaṃ śakyate 'vasthāpayitum / nīlasadṛśaṃ tv anubhūyamānaṃ nīlasya saṃvedanam avasthāpyate" (Malvania 1971:82).

54. "na ca-atra janyajanakabhāvanibandhanaḥ sādhyasādhanabhāvo, yena-ekasmin vastuni virodhaḥ syāt; api tu vyavasthāpyavyavasthāpakabhāvena" (ibid.).

55. "atra-ucyate: na karmakartṛbhāvena vedyavedakatvaṃ jñāne varṇyate / kiṃ tarhi vyavasthāpyavyavasthāpakabhāvena" (Singh 1985:23).

56. It is worth noting, apropos of the comparability of *svasaṃvitti* to Kant's "apperception" (cf. n7), that the post-Kantian history of Western philosophy attests precisely similar debates about whether Kant's "synthetic unity of apperception" is to be understood as a strictly transcendental-formal condition or whether instead it denotes a particular sort of cognition that accompanies any cognitive act—with the latter reading similarly occasioning the observation that this way lies infinite regress. (This is how Candrakīrti criticizes Dignāga's notion of *svasaṃvitti*.) Cf. Pippin 1989:16–24, 46–47 *et passim;* and Arnold 2005.

57. "vijñānaṃ jaḍarūpebhyo vyāvṛttam upajāyate / iyam evātmasaṃvittir asya yā-ajaḍarūpatā" (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 1999 [Shastri 1997:478]). For Mokṣākaragupta's quotation of this, see Singh 1985:23.

58. "kriyākārakabhāvena na svasaṃvittir asya tu / ekasya-anaṃśarūpasya trairūpyā-nupapattitaḥ" (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 2000). Cf. Singh 1985:23.

59. "tasmād adhyavasāyaṃ kurvad eva pratyakṣaṃ pramāṇaṃ bhavati" (Malvania 1971:84).

60. Cf. Introduction, n11. On the *Hetucakra,* see also Hayes 1988a:111–131.

61. Like Staal and Matilal, Hayes, too, appreciates the extent to which Dignāga's logic thus concerns the veritably spatial relation between properties and loci and has (like many expositors of Indian logic) found it useful to express the various possible relations in terms of Venn diagrams. Here, I follow Hayes 1988a:118–130.

62. On this development, see, *inter alia,* Dunne 1999:165–252; Ganeri 2001a:121–123.

63. It is reasonable to ask whether Dignāga and Dharmakīrti developed any theory of "truth" at all, and to think that their arguments finally concern only justification (cf. Tillemans 1999:6–12); what I am here arguing is that the conceptual resources provided by their thought constrain us to think about truth in this way.

64. This is, of course, a crude generalization. Nevertheless, it can be said that a concern to revise the pragmatist tradition in light of this point is one of the principal goals of Robert Brandom, whose comments on the pragmatists in this regard might just as well be addressed to Dharmakīrti and Dharmottara as they express themselves at the beginning of the *Nyāyabinduṭīkā:* "they equated the success of actions with the satisfaction of desires, and wanted to attribute to the beliefs that conduced to satisfaction and hence success a special desirable property: their successor notion to the classical concept of truth. In their sense, true beliefs were those that conduced to the satisfaction of desires. But the notion of desire and its satisfaction required by their explanatory strategy is fatally equivocal. It runs together immediate inclination and conceptually articulated commitment in just the way Wilfrid Sellars criticizes, for beliefs rather than desires, under the rubric 'the Myth of the Given'" (Brandom 2004:12–13; cf. Brandom 2000, *passim*).

65. "mithyājñānād dhi kākatālīyāpi nāsty arthasiddhiḥ / tathā hi yadi pradarśitam arthaṃ prāpayaty evaṃ tato bhavaty arthasiddhiḥ / pradarśitaṃ ca prāpayat samyagjñānam eva / pradarśitaṃ ca-aprāpayat mithyājñānam / aprāpakaṃ ca katham arthasiddhinibandhanaṃ syāt / tasmād yan mithyājñānaṃ na tato 'rthasiddhiḥ / yataś ca-arthasiddhis, tat samyagjñānam eva" (Malvania 1971:31–32).

66. Thus Locke writes: "Since *the Mind,* in all its Thoughts and Reasonings, hath no other immediate Object but its own *Ideas,* which it alone does or can contemplate, it is evident, that our Knowledge is only conversant about them" (1689/1975:525).

67. Brandom regards Frege as among the forerunners of the broadly "inferentialist" approach he commends—an approach that starts with Kant and finds influential expression in the twentieth century in the work of Wilfrid Sellars. Brandom develops a point comparable to the one I am making (2000:157–183).

68. Carl 1994:18. My general understanding of Frege (and my exposition thereof here) is particularly informed by Carl's work.

69. For a similar point, see Brandom 2000:167 and 169–178 (where Brandom's discussion of the expressive function of *de dicto* and *de re* modalities advances something like the same insight). Brandom frames the whole discussion as concerning the difference between "what is said or thought and what it is said or thought *about*" (ibid., 163).

70. Brandom offers another useful way to formulate the distinction between epistemic and realist conceptions of truth, noting that the course of philosophy changed significantly with the "replacement of concern with Cartesian certainty by concern with

Kantian necessity" (2000:80; cf. 163–164)—that is, from a preoccupation with such subjective, epistemic facts as how things seem to us ("certain") to a focus on what must be the case in order for this to be possible. Again, though, the idea that persons are necessarily constituted as rational agents by intersubjectively available rules does not necessarily imply (though it may) that, say, "rules of logic" are universal; it may yet be (in words that Brandom borrows from John Haugeland) that "*all transcendental constitution is social institution*" (ibid., 34).

71. And, of course, if this example fails to elicit such agreement, that fact would not, in light of Frege's insight, count against the likelihood that the point nevertheless is true!

72. This makes clear how Frege could think that empiricism leads inexorably to idealism (with the inevitability of this logic perhaps explaining why the philosophical projects of thinkers such as Dignāga and Dharmakīrti occasion so much controversy regarding the question of whether or not they are idealists). The observation of Wolfgang Carl is apt: "Frege was particularly opposed to empiricism and psychologism, which, according to him, are connected with each other and lead in the long run to idealism. His own philosophical position as it emerges from his criticism of empiricism and psychologism can be described as an epistemology devoted to maintaining the objectivity of knowledge founded on the human capacity for grasping thoughts, a capacity manifested by our use of language" (1994:186).

73. To put the point in terms of 'that'-clauses (cf. n23), it is not bare sensations that are the objects of such clauses, but judgments; one does not, that is, typically say, "I believe that [sensation of blue]" but, rather, "I believe that *it is blue.*" For a lucid development of the significance of 'that'-clauses specifically vis-à-vis perception, see, as well, Stout (2002:36).

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is thus distinguished from Uttara Mīmāṃsā ("Vedānta") by virtue of the latter's constitutive concern with the later portions of the Veda—that is, the *vedānta* (culmination of the Vedas), as the *Upaniṣads* are known. On the relationship between Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṃsā, see Clooney 1990:255–258, 1994; and Pollock 2004. Jha (1964) is still a useful survey of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā.

2. Various forms of this injunction are adduced by Mīmāṃsakas from various sources. Most common is this expression from the *Tāṇḍhyamahābrāhmaṇa,* 16.15.5. See Frauwallner (1968:16n) for variants.

3. That is, a cognitive instrument; according to the *Nyāyabhāṣyam*, "sa yenārthaṃ pramiṇoti, tat pramāṇam" (A *pramāṇa* is that by means of which one knows an object). I render *pramāṇa* in this sense as "reliable warrant," though William Alston's term doxastic practice (on which, more below) would also suffice. The belief-forming practices typically adduced as examples of such (perception, inference, analogy, tradition, testimony) are considered to represent "criteria" of valid knowledge, in something like the sense in play in Chisholm (1966:56–69).

4. The standard gloss of this sense (which amounts to an alternative gloss on the *-ana* suffix) is "pramīyate iti pramāṇam" (what is known is a *pramāṇa*). This sense of the word overlaps with the Buddhist contention that the result of a *pramāṇa* (i.e., a *pra-*

māṇaphala) is what the word refers to. (See Chapter 2.) Other Indian philosophers challenge the Buddhists on this point, but it should become clear that this sense is nevertheless frequently in play in the context of the present discussion.

5. This, at least, is the case when I do not simply leave it untranslated, as is convenient, for example, when the argument specifically trades on the etymological relationship between *pramāṇa* and *prāmāṇya*.

6. For example, in Mohanty (1966), a study and translation of the *prāmāṇyavāda* chapter of Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, *prāmāṇya* is rendered as "truth" throughout the book, without explanation. This begs some important questions.

7. See Chapter 1, p. 14.

8. Matilal 1986:135. See also Mohanty 1992:199.

9. I am indebted to Taber (1992) for much of my appreciation of this.

10. Alston 1991. Alston's argument has also been separately developed, without the constructive concern that predominates in the second half of *Perceiving God*, in Alston 1993. Taber has noted that Kumārila's epistemology has some general affinities with the "reformed epistemology" associated with Alvin Plantinga and William Alston (1997:378).

11. These terms are elaborated below.

12. Among the translation equivalents I have thus eschewed is "credibility"—which, although it nicely captures something of Pārthasārathi's idea, seems to convey the idea of truth-conduciveness insufficiently. Note that it is precisely *as* having an "epistemic" sense that Pārthasārathi's understanding of *prāmāṇya* is not captured by rendering it as "truth" (at least, not if Pārthasārathi is at the same time credited with a realist conception of truth, which is the position taken here). Thus, to characterize Pārthasārathi's as an "epistemic" conception of *prāmāṇya* is to say that it is a conception according to which this epistemic desideratum concerns the perspective of the knower—and it is precisely to the extent that his is nonetheless a finally realist conception of truth (such that truth is precisely independent of the knower) that Pārthasārathi must therefore mean by *prāmāṇya* something other than "truth." Dunne carefully considers the issues involved in translating *prāmāṇya* (including the problems with "validity" as a translation), settling on "instrumentality" (2004:223–229)—a rendering based exclusively on the sense of *pramāṇa* as cognitive "instrument" (n3). Regardless of whether this facilitates the interpretation of Dharmakīrti, it fails to capture the points at issue for Pārthasārathi.

13. Composed c. 400 C.E. Śabara's commentary comprises, however, significant extracts from an earlier commentary that is no longer extant: the *Vṛtti*, whose nameless author is referred to by Śabara simply as the *vṛttikāra* (author of the *Vṛtti*).

14. "Codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmaḥ" (*Jaiminisūtra* 1.1.2).

15. The stipulative definition of *dharma* as something unavailable to sense perception is, as Sheldon Pollock puts it, "the essential a priori of Mīmāṃsā" (1989:607). The introduction to this sūtra tells us only that *dharma* is what "connects a person with the highest good" (sa [i.e., dharma] hi niḥśreyasena puruṣaṃ saṃyunakti iti pratijānīmahe). Cf. Junankar: "What is conducive to happiness is dharma and what is not so conducive is adharma" (1982:51). It is not obvious that only a quality unavailable to the senses could answer to this description. For Mīmāṃsakas, though, *dharma* was always *bhaviṣyat,* as opposed to *bhūtam*—that is, always the future result of present actions, and never something already existent and at hand. This stipulation drives a great deal of Mīmāṃsaka

thought and is neatly captured in the maxim "bhūtaṃ bhavyāya kalpate" (what exists subserves what should be brought into being). Clooney offers illuminating insights on this set of commitments—and on why *dharma* therefore must always be, for Mīmāṃsakas, yet-to-be-realized (1990:131–161).

16. As we will see, the essentially transcendent character of the Vedas (their *apauruṣeyatva* [being beyond the human]) is a cornerstone of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine. This claim is revived in Chapter 4.

17. "Vipratiṣiddham idam ucyate—bravīti, vitathaṃ ca-iti. Bravīti-ity ucyate 'vabodhayati, budhyamānasya nimittaṃ bhavati-iti. Yasmiṃś ca nimittabhūte saty avabudhyate so 'vabodhayati. Yadi ca codanāyāṃ satyām agnihotrāt svargo bhavati iti gamyate, katham ucyate na tathā bhavati-iti? Atha na tathā bhavati-iti katham avabudhyate? Asantam artham avabudhyata iti vipratiṣiddham. Na ca svargakāmo yajeta ity ato vacanāt saṃdigdham avagamyate bhavati vā svargo na vā bhavati iti, na ca niścitam avagamyamānam idaṃ mithyā syāt. Yo hi janitvā pradhvaṃsate na etad evam iti, sa mithyā pratyayaḥ. Na ca-eṣa kālāntare puruṣāntare 'vasthāntare deśāntare vā viparyeti. Tasmād avitathaḥ" (Abhyankar 1930–1934/1976:16–17).

The text of Śabara's commentary on the first five of Jaimini's sūtras has also been edited (with a German translation) by Frauwallner (1968:16–18). See also the translation by Jha (1973–74:4–5).

18. Note, though, that Śabara's commentary comprises a lengthy extract from the commentary of the *vṛttikāra*, which covers (with some differences) much of the same ground. See Abhyankar (1930–1934/1976:47–51; alternatively, Frauwallner 1968:34–36; English translation in Jha 1973–74:17–18) for the earlier commentary's similar treatment of essentially the same objection. Nevertheless, it is Śabara's statement of the argument to which Kumārila alludes in developing the topic; see n23. This is perhaps due to the fact that Kumārila, "plainly by error, ascribes the major portion of the discussion to Śabarasvāmin, and not to the Vṛttikāra" (Keith 1921:7).

19. In fact, when the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* is understood as essentially concerning prima facie *justification*, the whole point of the doctrine just is, in a way, that a definition of knowledge such as "justified true belief" cannot be sustained. This point is developed in Chapter 4.

20. This is the significance of Jaimini's fourth sūtra, which says that perception can bear only on something "present" or "existent": "satsaṃprayoge puruṣasya-indriyāṇāṃ buddhijanma tat pratyakṣam" (when a person's sense faculties are in contact with something existent, the resultant cognition is [what we call] perception). But heaven is not *sat*, but always *bhaviṣyat*; cf. n15. Given this commitment, to characterize perception as bearing only on "existent" objects is not to privilege it, but to show its limited scope.

21. Cf. Introduction, n22.

22. The text of the *Ślokavārttika* can be found in the following editions (each of which includes the commentary of one of Kumārila's interpreters): Sastri 1971:42–59, with Uṃveka's *Ślokavārtikavyākhyā Tātparyaṭīkā* (henceforth, *ŚVTT*); Śāstrī 1913/1990:78–95, with Sucaritamiśra's *Kāśikā* (henceforth, *Kāśikā*); and Shastri 1978:41–49, with Pārthasārathimiśra's *Nyāyaratnākara* (henceforth, *Ratnākara*).

Reference is also made to the *Tattvasaṃgraha* of Śāntarakṣita—a Buddhist work whose penultimate chapter gives a lengthy treatment of the doctrine of *svataḥ prā-*

māṇya, comprising a significant number of quotations from Kumārila's no longer extant *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* (cf. Frauwallner 1962). Of course, it is not only for its preservation of fragments of Kumārila that the *Tattvasaṃgraha*'s treatment of this subject is significant; we will find in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* the occasion for more lengthy consideration of how the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine relates to Buddhist foundationalism.

23. *ŚV*, *codanā* 32: "tatra vipratiṣiddhatvaṃ buddhavākye 'pi yujyate / tato 'pi pratyayotpattes tasmāj jātyuttaraṃ tv idam //."

24. *codanā* 33: "sarvavijñānaviṣayam idaṃ tāvat parīkṣyatām [variant: *pratīkṣyatām*] / pramāṇatvāpramāṇatve svataḥ kiṃ parato 'tha vā //."

25. "codanāprāmāṇyasiddhyartham eva niścitaprāmāṇyāprāmāṇyeṣu jñāneṣu katham aprāmāṇyaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ vā-iti parīkṣyate" (Uṃveka, *ŚVVT*, p. 42). Uṃveka is here answering the objection that, insofar as the topic of this section is *codanā*, it is not relevant to introduce the question of other *pramāṇas* to the commentary on this part of Śabara's text.

26. The argument against the position (traditionally attributed to Sāṃkhya philosophers) that validity and invalidity are both intrinsic to cognition is that this incoherently involves predicating mutually exclusive properties of a single thing—or that (if the position be not that both are intrinsic to *every* cognition, but only that *one or the other* of these is intrinsic to any cognition) there is no way to determine which of the two obtains in any particular case. The argument against the position (traditionally attributed to the Nyāya school) that both are extrinsic is that this leaves cognitions without any nature whatsoever.

27. *codanā* 38: "Tasmāt svābhāvikaṃ teṣām apramāṇatvam iṣyatām / prāmāṇyaṃ ca parāpekṣam atra nyāyo 'bhidhīyate //."

28. But cf. Chapter 4, n41.

29. *codanā* 39: "Aprāmāṇyam avastutvān na syāt kāraṇadoṣataḥ / vastutvāt tu guṇais teṣāṃ prāmāṇyam upajanyate //." The word *guṇa* typically means "merit," "virtue," "quality," etc., but I prefer to render it as "efficacy" in this context, where epistemic "virtues" in particular are in play. Cf. n35.

30. *codanā* 40: "Prāmāṇyaṃ hi yadā-utsargāt tadabhāvo 'tha kṛtrimaḥ" [following the readings in *Kāśikā, Ratnākara*; *ŚVTT* incoherently reads "tadabhāvo 'py akṛtrimaḥ"] / tadā svapnādibodhe 'pi prāmāṇyaṃ kena vāryate //."

31. As seen earlier, this is the idea that perceptual cognitions are uniquely "constrained" (*niyata*) by the presence of the perceived objects that give rise to them.

32. *codanā* 42: "Indriyādi-guṇāś ca-asya kāraṇam, tadasad dvidhā / duṣṭatvād indriyādīnām [variant: *vendriyādīnām*], abhāve 'nyatarasya vā //." The commentators disagree about this second condition. Uṃveka (*ŚVTT*, p. 46) seems to read the first part of the verse as distinguishing between the senses and their efficacies and thus reads the second half-verse as saying "because of the defectiveness of the senses, or given the absence of either of these [i.e., of the senses or of their efficacies]." Pārthasārathi, in contrast, takes the point of the second half-verse to concern the absence of *guṇas* on the part of all *pramāṇas* and so glosses the reference to the "senses, etc." as concerning whatever it is, in *each* of the admitted *pramāṇas*, that serves as the "cause." Thus: "In cases such as dreams, etc., there is absence of efficacies owing to their being without locus, due to the absence of any among the senses, etc., [which is to say,] *of any of the causes of cognitions,*

[viz.]: of the senses [in the case of perceptual cognition], or of the [inferential] sign [in the case of inference], or of the others" ("svapnādiṣv indriyādīnāṃ jñānakāraṇānām anyatamasya-indriyasya liṅgasya vā anyasya vā-abhāvān nirāśrayatayā guṇānām abhāva iti" [*Ratnākara*, p. 44]). In Pārthasārathi's reading (which I have followed in translating the verse), the point is thus that dreams lack the operative parts of *any* of the *pramāṇas* admitted by the Mīmāṃsakas.

33. *codanā* 44: "Tasmāt kāraṇaśuddhatvaṃ jñānaprāmāṇyakāraṇam / svabhāvato 'pramāṇatvaṃ tadabhāvena lakṣyate [variant: *labhyate*] //."

34. *codanā* 46: "Tataś ca puruṣābhāvāt sati vā śuddyasambhavāt / nirmūlatvāt pramāṇatvaṃ codanānāṃ na yujyate //."

35. For Buddhists, the kinds of *guṇas* that could cause scriptures to be valid are, in particular, the characteristics of a Buddha, and *guṇa*, in this context, thus seems to connote something much more like its conventional meaning of "virtue," "merit," etc.; standard examples of the relevant qualities are the Buddha's compassion, etc. Sucaritamiśra alludes to such characteristically Buddhist "virtues" when he says: "ata eva asatsv api vaktṛguṇeṣu kāruṇikatvādiṣu vede doṣābhāvamātrād eva prāmāṇyaṃ sidhyati" (even given that the virtues of a speaker, such as being compassionate (*kāruṇikatva*) and so forth, do not exist in the Veda, the validity [of the Veda] is established simply by the absence of deficiency [*Kāśikā,* p. 90]). For an expression of a Buddhist view of the matter, cf. *Tattvasaṃgraha* 1501: "dveṣamohādayo doṣā yathā mithyātvahetavaḥ / kṛpāprajñādayo 'py evaṃ jñātāḥ satyatvahetavaḥ //" (Just as faults like aversion and delusion are causes of falsity, in the same way things like compassion and wisdom are known as causes of truth). Of course, Buddhist philosophers in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti would not hold that Buddhist scriptures *themselves* are reliable warrants, only that one can perform a valid inference (one from scripture as effect, to exemplary author as cause) regarding such.

36. Pārthasārathi regards the point of the second, concessive disqualification as concerning the characteristic content of Vedic injunctions; he says that, on the Buddhist view, an authored Veda (*pauruṣeyatve* [even given its personal origin]) would still lack validity because "[epistemic] purity is not at all possible in regard to points that wholly exceed the sense capacities of a person" (pauruṣeyatve puruṣasya-atīndriyārthe naiva śuddhiḥ sambhavati-ity [*Ratnākara*, pp. 44–45]). Many Buddhists (including, perhaps, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti) allow the possibility of omniscient agents—but it is argued that only Buddhas are examples of such, not any putative authors of the Vedas.

37. *codanā* 47: "Svataḥ sarvapramāṇānāṃ prāmāṇyam iti gamyatām [variant: *gṛhyatām*] / na hi svato 'satī śaktiḥ kartum anyena śakyate //." Schmithausen notes, apropos of *padas* c-d, that there is here some resonance with the Sāṃkhya doctrine of *satkāryavāda* (the doctrine that effects are already latent within their causes) (1965:196–197n122). And indeed, one could be forgiven for thinking that the reason given in the second half of verse 47 sounds very much like the reasoning attributed (in this very text!) to the Sāṃkhya defenders of the view that both validity and invalidity are intrinsic: "svato 'satām asādhyatvāt" (since what does not exist by itself cannot be brought about [*codanā,* verse 34a]). For a consideration of the possibility that Sucaritamiśra's interpretation of this doctrine has affinities with the *satkāryavāda* doctrine of Sāṃkhya, see Chapter 4, n12.

38. *codanā* 48: "ātmalābhe hi bhāvānāṃ kāraṇāpekṣitā bhavet / labdhātmanāṃ sva-

kāryeṣu pravṛttiḥ svayam eva tu //." There is a possibly significant variant here: the editions of *Kāśikā* and *Rathākara* read "ātmalābhe ca . . ." I have followed the editions of *ŚVTT* and the *Tattvasaṃgraha* (where *pada*s a-b of our passage occur as *kārikā* 2847a-b). This may be significant because, according to Taber (1992), one of the relevant differences between Umveka and Pārthasārathimiśra concerns whether to read vv.47–48 as continuous (as Pārthasārathi does) or, instead (with Umveka), to read v.48 as representing the answer to a different question. The reading *hi* (instead of *ca*) recommends the former interpretation—making it interesting that our edition of Umveka is one of those that preserves the reading *hi*, which seems not to recommend Umveka's interpretation.

The *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* (as preserved in *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2850) provides an example that clarifies the point of the verse under consideration: "Mṛtpiṇḍadaṇḍacakrādi ghaṭo janmany apekṣate / udakāharaṇe tv asya tadapekṣā na vidyate //" (A pot depends, for its production, on a lump of clay, a potter's stick, wheel, etc.; but for carrying water, it has no need of these). The same example is used by Sucaritamiśra in his comment on *codanā* 48 (cf. *Kāśikā*, p. 90), as well as by Pārthasārathimiśra (*Ratnākara*, p. 45).

39. *codanā* 49–51: "jāte 'pi yadi vijñāne tāvan na-artho 'vadhāryate / yāvat kāraṇaśuddhatvaṃ na pramāṇāntarād bhavet // tatra jñānāntarotpādaḥ pratīkṣyaḥ kāraṇāntarāt / yāvad dhi na paricchinnā śuddhis tāvad asatsamā // tasyāpi kāraṇe śuddhe tajjñāne syāt pramāṇatā / tasyāpy evam itītthaṃ [variant: *itīcchaṃś*] ca [variant: *tu*] na kvacid [variant: *kiñcid*] vyavatiṣṭhate //." The reading for 51a-b given in *ŚVTT* makes no sense conceptually: "tasyāpi kāraṇe 'śuddhe tajjñānasya-apramāṇatā" (there is invalidity of that cognition given the impure cause of that [subsequent cognition], too).

40. There is, from a Buddhist point of view, a somewhat similar argument in Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī* (*kārikā*s 31–33): "yadi ca pramāṇatas te teṣāṃ teṣāṃ prasiddhir arthānām / teṣāṃ punaḥ prasiddhiṃ brūhi kathaṃ te pramāṇānām //" (And if proof of all these objects is based on *pramāṇa*s, then how could you say there was proof of these *pramāṇa*s?). But Nāgārjuna concludes from this argument not (as the Mīmāṃsakas will) that we must therefore presume some epistemic warrants to be valid but, rather, that the whole discourse of epistemology is incoherent.

41. Cf., e.g., *Ratnākara*, p. 45 ("āndhyam eva-aśeṣasya jagataḥ prasajyeta"); *ŚVTT*, p. 56 ("āndhyam aśeṣasya jagata"). See also Pārthasārathimiśra's *Nyāyaratnamālā*, which gives "āndhyam eva-aśeṣasya jagato bhavet" (A. Subrahmanya Shastri 1982:52).

42. *codanā* 52–53: "yadā svataḥ pramāṇatvaṃ tadā-anyo naiva gṛhyate [variant: *mṛgyate*] / nivartate hi mithyātvaṃ doṣājñānād ayatnataḥ // tasmād bodhātmakatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā / arthānyathātvahetūtthadoṣajñānād apodyate //."

43. Cf. verse 39 (n29).

44. *codanā* 54–55: "aprāmāṇyaṃ tridhā bhinnaṃ mithyātvājñānasaṃśayaiḥ / vastutvād dvividhasya-atra sambhavo duṣṭakāraṇāt // avijñāne tu doṣāṇāṃ vyāpāro naiva kalpyate [variant: *vidyate*] / kāraṇābhāvatas tv eva tat siddhaṃ nas tvaduktivat //."

45. *codanā* 56–57: "doṣataś ca-apramāṇatve svataḥprāmāṇyavādinām / guṇajñānānavasthāvan na doṣeṣu prasajyate // sākṣād viparyayajñānāl laghvy eva tv apramāṇatā / pūrvābādhena na-utpattir uttarasya hi siddhyati //." The final half-verse is more literally rendered with a double negation: "for the arising of a subsequent [cognition] is not accomplished by non-negation of the prior." It will become clear why I render this as I have here and why this is not misleading.

46. On comparisons with Popper, see Chapter 4, n75.

47. "kim iti punas tadvaśena pūrvasya-aprāmāṇyam, viparītaṃ kasmān na bhavati?" (*Ratnākara*, p. 47).

48. "pūrvaṃ hi param abādhitvā-utpadyate, parasya tadānīm anutpannatvāt; upajāte tu tasminn upajāyamānenaiva tena bādhitaṃ pūrvam asattvān na parasya bādhakaṃ bhavati, paraṃ tu pūrvasminn upajāte tadviruddhārthopasthāpakam upajāyamānam eva tasya bādhakaṃ bhavatīti" (ibid.). Here, I read the underlined compound as in the earlier edition of Rāmaśāstri Tailaṅga (1898:62–63); Śāstri's edition mistakenly omits the first long "a" (1990:47).

49. According to *codanā* 59a-b, the subsequent cognition retains its validity only "if, in regard to it, there is neither cognition of a further defect, nor any other overriding idea" (tatra doṣāntarajñānaṃ bādhadhīr vā parā na cet).

50. Cf. *codanā* 59c-d: "tadudbhūtau dvitīyasya mithyātvād ādyamānatā" (when there is the arising of those [faults] on the part of the second, [falsifying cognition, then] because of the falseness [of the second], validity of the first [obtains once again]).

51. *codanā* 60, which I read thus: "svata eva hi tatrāpi doṣājñānāt pramāṇatā / doṣajñāne tv utpanne na śaṅkyā niṣpramāṇatā //." The text here is uncertain, with significant variants. For the first underlined passage, *ŚVTT* gives "doṣajñānāt amānatā" (based on *cognition* of defects, there is *in*-validity). As for the second underlined passage, both *ŚVTT* and *Kāśikā* read "nāśaṅkā niṣpramāṇikā," which, though ambiguous, should surely be read "there is no *doubt*, which is unwarranted [lit., "without a *pramāṇa*"]." The commentaries of Sucarita and Pārthasārathi do not seem to settle the issues decisively. The conceptual point is, in any case, clear.

52. *Kāśikā*, p.95: "śaṅkā tu na-utprekṣāmātreṇa kartum ucitā, sarvavyavahāroccheda-prasaṅgāt." Cf. Kumārila's *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* as preserved at *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2871: "Utprekṣyate hi yo mohād ajātam api bādhakam / sa sarvavyavahāreṣu saṃśayātmā kṣayaṃ vrajet //" (For he who, out of delusion, posits an overrider even when none has arisen—he, being doubtful in all his worldly transactions, would go to ruin.). Cf. also Alvin Goldman: "speakers do not *ordinarily* think of 'radical' alternatives, but are caused to think of such alternatives, and take them seriously, if the putative knower's circumstances call attention to them" (1976:778).

53. *codanā* 61: "evaṃ tricaturajñānajanmano nādhikā matiḥ / prārthyate tāvad eva-ekaṃ svataḥ prāmāṇyam aśnute //."

54. Shastri 1968:905–906. Kamalaśīla is here commenting on Śāntarakṣita's *Tattva-saṃgraha*, v.2816 (or 2817, per Krishnamacharya 1926/1984–1988 and Jha 1937–1939/1986): "Ity evam iṣyate 'rthaś cen nanu ca-avyatirekiṇi / śaktiḥ sarvapadārthānāṃ purastād upapāditā" (If the meaning [of the word *śakti* in Kumārila's verse 47] is held in the way described, then surely the capacity of all things is separate [from them], which was previously [*purastād*] demonstrated). Note that the epistemological discussion of Kumārila is here again assimilated to the case of "all things" (*sarvapadārtha*)—that is, it is again ontologized in a way that is problematic if we understand it as a strictly epistemological point.

55. "Iṣṭakāryasamarthaṃ hi svarūpaṃ śaktir ucyate" (For an essence [*svarūpa*] which is able [to produce] a desired effect is called a capacity [*Tattvasaṃgraha*, 2817]). Kamalaśīla glosses Śāntarakṣita's *svarūpa* as *svabhāva*: "kāryakaraṇasamarthā hi svabhāvaśak-

tis, tasya ca svabhāvasya bhāvātmatāyā abhāve sati, sa bhāvaḥ kārako na syāt" (Shastri 1968:906). Buddhist critiques of *svabhāva* are discussed further in Part III.

56. Often misleadingly translated as the relation of "identity," this is the relation that necessarily obtains (according to a canonical example) between being an oak (*śiṃśapā*) and being a tree (*vṛkṣa*). This canonical example shows what is wrong with taking the relation as one of "identity"; the relation must be asymmetrical, such that inference is valid in one direction but not in the other—just as it is necessarily the case that one can infer something's "being a tree" from its being an oak, but not the converse (since not all trees are oaks). The relation is "categoreal" in that the required asymmetry is preserved if these are seen as inferences from membership in a subordinate category to membership in a superordinate category.

57. "svataḥprāmāṇyapakṣe tu niścayaṃ kurute svataḥ / vedaḥ svārthasvarūpe ca tan na mohādisambhavaḥ // ataś ca-ajñānasaṃdehaviparyāsāspade sthite / na-upadeśam apekṣeta dvijapoto 'pi kaścana //" (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 3118–19).

58. *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* (Shastri 1968:912 ff.). Uṃveka is here referred to as "Uveyaka." Kamalaśīla's quotations are extensive and are all drawn from Uṃveka's commentary on *Ślokavārttika, codanā* 47 (with the passages quoted by Kamalaśīla in *ŚVTT*, pp. 53–54).

59. Schmithausen seems to agree with this characterization of Uṃveka, laconically remarking, "Die Maßgeblichkeit aus sich besagt für Umbeka unter dem 'kausalen' Aspekt" (1965:258). My understanding of Uṃveka owes much to Taber 1992.

60. "anye tu manyante: bodhakatvaṃ nāma prāmāṇyam, tac ca vijñānānāṃ svā-bhāvikam eva na guṇakṛtam, guṇābhāve 'pi viparyayajñāne sadbhāvād iti svataḥ prāmā-ṇyam" (*ŚVTT*, p. 50).

61. See n42.

62. "etad apy anupapannam, yato na bodhakatvaṃ prāmāṇyam, apramāṇe 'pi śukti-kāyāṃ rajatajñāne sadbhāvāt" (*ŚVTT*, p. 50). Significantly, Uṃveka elsewhere attributes exactly the same reasoning to the Buddhist interlocutor whose view is sketched at verses 38–46: "But validity is [a cognition's] being non-discordant from its proper object; it is not [the mere fact of] being a cognition, since that [i.e., being a cognition] is common to both veridical cognitions and their opposite" ("prāmāṇyaṃ tu svālambanāvyabhicāri-tvam, na bodhakatvam, tasya pramāṇetarasādhāraṇatvāt . . ." [*ŚVTT*, p. 45]).

63. Cf. Frauwallner 1938.

64. On the influence of Maṇḍanamiśra specifically on Uṃveka, cf. Schmithausen 1965:258–260. Schmithausen's work comprises an edition and translation of the *Vibhra-maviveka*.

65. "pratyakṣādīnāṃ pramāṇānām anvayavyatirekābhyām arthāvisaṃvāditvaṃ prāmāṇyam avagamyate, na bodhakatvamātram" (*ŚVTT*, p. 530).

66. "tathā hi saty api bodhakatve yatra-avisaṃvāditvaṃ nāsti, tatra-aprāmāṇyam, yathā śuktikāyāṃ rajatajñānasya; vināpi bodhakatvaṃ yatra-arthāvisaṃvāditvam asti, tatra prāmāṇyam yathā-agnau dhūmasya" (ibid.; emphasis added).

67. This is among the passages from Uṃveka quoted by Kamalaśīla, who refuses Uṃveka's apparent contention that no reference to a knowing subject is required in an account of *prāmāṇya*: "kintu jñānam iti viśeṣaṇopādānād dhūmāder ajñānasvabhāvasya mukhyataḥ prāmāṇyam na-iṣṭam ity arthāvisaṃvāditvamātraṃ prāmāṇyam asiddham"

(But since *cognition* is mentioned as the basis of the qualifier, validity, above all, is not accepted as belonging to smoke, etc., which do not have cognition as their nature; hence, it is not established that validity is *only* the fact of non-discordance [Shastri 1968:831; emphasis added]).

68. "tasya [i.e., *prāmāṇyasya*] jñānahetava eva-utpādakāḥ" (*ŚVTT*, p. 53, immediately following the passage given in n66). Cf. Taber 1992:208 *et passim*.

69. Uṃveka states this repeatedly over the course of a few paragraphs, emphasizing that, "based on positive and negative concomitance, given a properly three-fold inference, etc., the producer of cognition is seen to be [the very same as] the cause of [its] validity" (anvayavyatirekābhyāṃ tu vijñānotpādakam eva trairūpyānumānādau prāmāṇyotpādakaṃ dṛṣṭam ([*ŚVTT*, p. 54]). He argues that Kumārila says as much, too, though in different places: "[Kumārila] will show that the fact of being the cause of validity belongs precisely to the producer of cognition" (jñānotpādasyaiva prāmāṇyotpādakatvaṃ darśayiṣyati" [ibid.]). Uṃveka cites *Ślokavārttika* II.184–185a). And he claims that Śabara, too, "explains that the causes of cognition are the producers of validity" (bhāṣyakāro 'pi . . . vijñānahetava eva prāmāṇyasya-utpādakā iti kathayati [ibid.]).

70. "Tatra svataḥ sarvapramāṇānām iti pūrvārddhena vijñānahetūnāṃ prāmāṇye 'pi vyāpāra iti pratijñātam; uparitanena sāmagryantarābhāvas tatra hetur uktaḥ, na hi svato 'satī śaktiḥ kartum anyena vijñānasāmagryatiriktena śakyate iti. Śloke ca-ātmīyavācakaḥ svaśabda iti" (ibid.; emphasis added).

71. A point noted by Mohanty and Matilal.

72. This use of the word *hetu* to denote the inferential "cause," or "reason," in a formally stated inference is standard. It is worth noting, however, that there are other, equally standard words that Uṃveka might just as well have used to refer to this part of Kumārila's statement of the inference (such as *liṅga* [sign]; *sādhaka* [the "probative" element], etc.).

73. On the realist conception of truth sketched in Chapter 2, the question of whether or not anyone is persuaded by an argument would be logically independent of the question of whether its conclusion is true—though, of course, whether or not anyone is persuaded might be more important to the person making the argument (though it also may not be, and it should not be presumed that arguments are invariably offered chiefly in order to convince those who hear them).

74. Cf. n8.

75. Taber 1992:208. Cf. Pārthasārathi's gloss on Uṃveka (Chapter 4, n8).

76. Cf. n62.

77. "Saty eva hi ghaṭajñāne jātāśaṅkaḥ kiṃ ghaṭajñānāntareṇa kariṣyati" (*Kāśikā*, p. 89).

78. Alston 1991:71. Alston's terms here are perhaps particularly well suited to a reading of Sucaritamiśra's interpretation of Kumārila, which I have not undertaken in detail here. Cf. Chapter 4, n12.

79. Indeed, "doxastic practice" would do very well as a translation of *pramāṇa*, when the latter is meant in the sense of a means of knowing or cognitive "instrument"; cf. n3.

80. Alston 1991:57. See also Goldman 1976; Brandom 2000:97–122.

81. Alston 1991:55. Here, it is worth noting that Mīmāṃsakas are, in general, quite concerned about upholding a "direct realism" at all costs, particularly because they are averse to characteristically Buddhist forms of representationalism. Taber expresses this

aptly: "If 'innocent until proven guilty' sums up Mīmāṃsā theory of knowledge, then 'what you see is what you get' sums up Mīmāṃsā metaphysics" (1992:221).

82. I attribute to Uṃveka a fairly serious tension; in the course of elaborating the logic of the Buddhist position on the subject, Uṃveka says (quite rightly) that all the Buddhist seeks to establish is "validity's being an effect" (*prāmāṇyasya kāryatvam eva sādhyam* [*ŚVTT*, p. 45]). But his own position seems to involve the same logic—which should not be surprising, since, regarding Kumārila's definition of validity as having to do merely with the fact of producing cognition (*bodhātmakatvena*), Uṃveka attributes to the Buddhists precisely the same objection that he elaborates; cf. n62.

83. "jñānotpatter anantaram eva sarvapramātṝṇāṃ vyavahārapravṛttir upalabhyate. Bhrāntisaṃviditarajato 'pi hi samyagrajatabodha iva arthakriyāyai ghaṭamāno dṛśyate. Tadasya saṃśayānasya na utpannam. Ato jāto niścayaḥ. Kim anyat prāmāṇyaṃ bhaviṣyati?" (*Kāśikā*, p. 89). On Sucaritamiśra's interpretation of Kumārila, cf. Chapter 4, n12.

84. Of course, this characterization of the approach of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is complicated to the extent that it is, in particular, *svasaṃvitti* (apperception) that is taken as foundational; if, as Dignāga argued, such is finally the only real example of "perception," then the privileged status of perceptual cognitions results not from their being causally constrained by a "perceived object" but simply by the really existent (but causally explicable) moment of cognition that is said to have arisen. Cf. Chapter 2, n17.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. All references are to Shastri (1982). All translations are mine (with italics occasionally added).

2. This chapter's status as something like a definitive exposition is reflected in its being completely reproduced, under the heading *prāmāṇyavādārtha* (the point of the discourse on validity), in Kevalānanda Sarasvatī's monumental *Mīmāṃsākoṣaḥ* (1960:5:2860–2864). For a complete translation of this chapter, see Arnold (2002:345–370).

3. As he puts it, he wants to avoid both *nyāya*- and *grantha-virodha* ("contradiction with reason and with the text").

4. "Tatra vyākhyātāro vivadante: Svaśabdaḥ kim ātmavacanaḥ, ātmīyavacano vā? Tathā prāmāṇyaṃ kim svato bhavati, kiṃ vā bhāti; tathā prāmāṇyaṃ nāma kim arthatathātvaṃ, kiṃ vā tathābhūtārthaniścāyakatvam iti?" (Shastri 1982:43).

5. "Ātmavācī svaśabdo 'yaṃ, svato bhāti pramāṇatā / Arthasya ca tathābhāvaḥ prāmāṇyam abhidhīyate //" (ibid.).

6. Although I characterize this turn in the debate as essentially concerning prima facie justification, Taber effectively makes the same point when he observes that "*svataḥ prāmāṇya* is something essentially subjective for Pārthasārathi; it is a cognition's initial *appearance* or *manifestation* of validity" (Taber 1992:212).

7. Cf. Chapter 3, p. 83, for Alston's distinction between "mediate" and "immediate" justification. Pārthasārathi gives little attention to this third point.

8. "Tasmāt svīyāt kāraṇād yathārthatvalakṣaṇaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ jāyate, na tu bhāti; na hi jñānam ātmānam, ātmīyaṃ vā prāmāṇyam avagamayati, arthaprakāśamātropakṣīṇatvāt" (Shastri 1982:44). Cf. also Pārthasārathi's opening statement of this position, which

clearly alludes to Uṃveka's commentary on *codanā* 47: "Prāmāṇyaṃ nāma arthāvyabhicāritvaṃ, tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvam iti yāvat. Tac ca jñānānāṃ svata eva jāyate. Svaśabdo 'yam ātmīyavacanaḥ" [cf. *ŚVTT*, p. 54: "śloke ca-ātmīyavācakaḥ svaśabda iti"]. Svīyād eva kāraṇāt tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvaṃ jñānasya jāyete" (ibid., p. 43). Note, though, that in Pārthasārathi's representation of the position, these definitions of *prāmāṇya* (i.e., *yathārthatvam* or *tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvam*) are taken as qualifying *cognition,* notwithstanding Uṃveka's surprising suggestion that reference to cognition is completely unnecessary (cf. Chapter 3, nn66, 67).

9. More precisely, the objection concerns a specifically Mīmāṃsaka doctrine that represents a perhaps peculiar expression of the uncompromising realism of Mīmāṃsā: the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsaka contention that cognition is not "self-illuminating" (*svaprakāśa*)—a claim that expresses the Mīmāṃsaka rejection of the *svasaṃvitti* (apperception) posited by the Buddhist foundationalists. Wary of what they see as a slippery slope toward idealism, Mīmāṃsakas refused the Buddhist idea of *svasaṃvitti*, holding instead that one is aware *that* one is aware only by inferring this from the fact that something is known (inferring, that is, from *jñātatā*, the fact of something's "being known"). The possibility that *svataḥ prāmāṇya* compromises this commitment was noted by Saksena (1940). Following Saksena in addressing this charge, Taber summarizes the objection as being that if the validity of a cognition is known intrinsically, this "would appear to be to say that a cognition knows itself to be valid. In that case, it must *know itself*" (1992:213ff.). Taber rightly sees this as a misguided objection, though he does not give much attention to the matter.

10. Indeed, to characterize an argument as "phenomenological" just is to say that such other considerations are largely bracketed—which is why, as noted in Chapter 2, it is often difficult to distinguish phenomenological claims from idealist claims, and why it is not always clear when the former turn into the latter.

11. This is Saksena's expression (1940:27). As throughout this discussion, Saksena's translation of *prāmāṇya* as "truth" is significant, and his objection can be seen as misguided largely by this understanding.

12. For example, along the way Pārthasārathi considers an interpretation resembling that of the commentator Sucaritamiśra, whose reading might be characterized as falling between those of Uṃveka and Pārthasārathi. Sucarita's reading develops Śabara's contention that "what is understood as determinate could not be false" (cf. Chapter 3, p. 64), emphasizing that the resultant content of a cognition has "determinacy" or "certainty" (*niścaya*): "Na hi syād vā ghaṭo na vā iti indriyasannikṛṣṭaṃ ghaṭaṃ budhyāmahe, api tarhi ghaṭa eva-ayam iti niścayātmakam eva jñānam utpadyate. Ata eva jñānotpatter anantaram eva sarvapramātṝṇāṃ vyavahārapravṛttir upalabhyate. Bhrāntisaṃviditarajato 'pi hi samyagrajatabodha iva-arthakriyāyai ghaṭamāno dṛśyate. Tad asya saṃśayānasya na utpannam. Ato jāto niścayaḥ. Kim anyat prāmāṇyaṃ bhaviṣyati?" (We do not perceive a jar which has made contact with our senses [in such a way that we think,] 'this may or may not be a jar'; rather, cognition arises as essentially determinate, [such that we think,] 'this is a jar!' This is why it is only after cognition has arisen on the part of all subjects that the activity of communication is seen [to take place]. For even mistakenly cognized silver, just like correctly cognized silver, is seen conducing to effective action. This does not make sense on the part of a doubtful [cognition], so certainty

[must be said to have] been produced. What else will validity be? [*Kāśikā*, p. 89]). Pārthasārathi presents something like this interpretation, in a passage that begins: "anye tv āhuḥ: anadhigatatathābhūtārthaniścāyakatvaṃ prāmāṇyam, tac ca jñānānāṃ svata eva jāyate" (But others say that validity is [a cognition's] being the effector of ascertainment of a [previously] uncomprehended object's being-thus [Shastri 1982:45]).

While Sucaritamiśra's approach—which thus focuses on the possibility that *niścaya* can, in Alston's terms, arise "immediately," and therefore need not be thought to derive only from the mediated giving of second-order reasons (cf. Chapter 3)—is promising, he seems to me to compromise this position, in the end, by ontologizing it. For example, Sucarita adduces the example of medicine, which he argues can function only to help manifest a "capacity" for healing that was already present in the patient, since if the capacity were in the medicine, it ought to work equally for all who took it ("ata eva naṣṭaśaktīnāṃ bheṣajabhedair api na pratikāraḥ; asatī tu śaktis teṣām api janyeta-eva, aviśeṣā" [p. 90]). On this basis, he concludes with a veritably *satkāryavādin* flourish: "ataḥ sarve bhāvāḥ svahetubhyaḥ śaktimanto jātā eva" (Hence, all *existents* are produced, possessing capacity, by causes intrinsic to them).

13. Cf. Chapter 3, n42.

14. On Umveka's reading, the first half of the verse (which Pārthasārathi reads as authoritative, and as giving the subject of the second half of the verse; cf. my translation of the verse, p. 70) effectively states Umveka's familiarly unwanted consequence: "nanu yadi paricchittiḥ pramāṇakāryam, tad eva ca bodhātmakatvaṃ prāmāṇyam, tadā śuktikāyām api rajatajñānam pramāṇam prāptam ity āha tasmād iti" (But if the effect of a *pramāṇa* is ascertainment; and [if] that [ascertainment] is just validity, i.e., the fact of consisting in cognition—then it obtains that cognition of silver with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl is also a *pramāṇa*. Thus, [Kumārila] says, 'Therefore . . .' [*ŚVTT*, p. 57]). The question Kumārila is thought to answer with the verse is such that, for Umveka, only the second part of the verse (i.e., concerning falsification) matters—indeed, Umveka's statement of the objection suggests that he uses the second part of Kumārila's verse to disavow the first part.

15. "bahavaḥ ślokā asmin pakṣe na saṅgacchante" (many verses do not cohere given this position [Shastri 1982:45]).

16. "'Tasmād bodhātmakatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā, arthānyathātvahetūttha-doṣajñānād apodyate'—iti śloko 'pi bhavatā itthaṃ vyākhyeyaḥ—buddheḥ svato jātaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ paścād apodyata iti; tac ca-ayuktam, utpattāv eva-apramāṇatvāt" (Shastri 1982:46).

17. Cf. in this regard, Kumārila's verse 83: "pramāṇaṃ grahaṇāt pūrvaṃ svarūpeṇaiva saṃsthitam / nirapekṣaṃ svakāryeṣu gṛhyate pratyayāntaraiḥ //" (A *pramāṇa* is fixed in terms of its nature prior to the apprehension [of it]; it is [subsequently] apprehended by another conception, independent of its proper effects).

18. Cf. Chapter 3, n38.

19. Pārthasārathi also makes this point in his commentary on Kumārila's verse 54, which explains how overriding of a prima facie justified cognition takes place (cf. Chapter 3, n44): "ato duṣṭakāraṇajanyena jñānenātmanaḥ prāmāṇyaṃ viṣayasya-arthasya-atathābhūtasya-api tathātvam avagatam apy arthānyathātvajñānena doṣajñānena vā

apodyate" (Thus, *validity*—the being thus of an object [i.e., an object of cognition], *even though it is not [really] thus—even though apprehended intrinsically* by a cognition produced from a defective cause, is overridden by a cognition of being other than its object, or by a cognition of defects [*Ratnākara*, p. 46]). Pārthasārathi thus stresses that even a cognition "produced from a defective cause" may nevertheless present itself as phenomenologically credible, and that justification is conferred, in such a case, even though the object is not really as presented—and even though the latter fact already obtained (*atathābhūtasya-api*) prior to one's subsequent awareness of it. What overrides this prima facie justification, then, is either a subsequent (and phenomenologically more compelling) awareness to the effect that the object is not really as presented or one to the effect that the first cognition was compromised.

20. "atra-abhidhīyate: yat tāvad uktaṃ na jñānam ātmānaṃ gṛhṇāti, viṣayaprakāśātmakatvāt; na ca-ātmany agṛhyamāṇe tatsambandhitayā prāmāṇyaṃ śakyate gṛhītum iti: yadi vayaṃ jñānam ahaṃ pramāṇam ity evaṃ, madīyaṃ vā prāmāṇyam ity evaṃ gṛhṇāti-iti vadem, tadā-evam upālabhyemahi. Na tv evam asmābhir ucyate" (Shastri 1982:47).

21. This is why Uṃveka stresses that validity can obtain even in the absence of any cognition—in the same way, we saw him say, that "Where there is non-discordance with an object even without the fact of being a cognition, there there is validity, as in the case of smoke with respect to fire." Cf. Chapter 3, n66.

22. "kiṃ tarhi? Yad vastuto jñānasya prāmāṇyam, yadvaśāj jñānaṃ pramāṇaṃ bhavati, tat pramāṇabuddhiśabdayor bhāvakatayā labdhaprāmāṇyapadābhidhānīyakam ātmanā-eva jñānena gṛhyata ity ucyate" (ibid.).

23. "kiṃ punas tat? arthatathātvam. idam eva hi jñānasya prāmāṇyaṃ yad arthasya tathābhūtatvam. tathābhūtārthasya jñānasya prāmāṇyāt. idam eva ca-aprāmāṇyam yad arthasya-anyathātvam. Tena svata eva jñānād arthatathātvarūpam ātmīyaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ niścīyate. Na tu guṇajñānāt, saṃvādajñānāt, arthakriyājñānād vā tadavagantavyam. Aprāmāṇyaṃ tv ātmīyam arthānyathātvarūpaṃ svato na-avagamyate. Tat tu kāraṇadoṣajñānāt, sākṣād eva vā na etad evam iti jñānād avagamyata ity etad atra pratipādyate" (ibid.).

24. Here, of course, I quote Kumārila's verse 53a-b and paraphrase c-d.

25. "nanu yadi prāmāṇyaṃ jñānotpattisamaye 'vagamyate, yad utpattau pramāṇatayā na cakāsti, tad apramāṇam iti, utpattāv eva pariśeṣān niścetuṃ śakyaṃ vināpi kāraṇadoṣabādhakapratyayābhyām iti, aprāmāṇyam api svata eva-āpadyeta" (Shastri 1982:49).

26. In which case, the position would be reducible to the absurdity that is held to apply to the Sāṃkhya contention that both validity and invalidity are intrinsic to cognition; cf. Chapter 3, n26.

27. This, finally, is the point of Pārthasārathi's contention, contra Uṃveka, that *sva*- is reflexive to (cognition) itself (*ātmavācī svaśabdo 'yam*), and not to something belonging to (cognition) (*ātmīyavācaka*, as Uṃveka himself put it). Given the importance of this distinction, then, I cannot agree with Mohanty, who says, "Pārthasārathi Miśra in his Nyāyaratnamālā mentions two meanings of the word '*svataḥ*' which may mean either 'what is related to oneself' or simply 'from oneself.' . . . the distinction does not introduce anything new and so may be overlooked for our purpose" (1966:5).

28. It is a commonplace of Indian philosophy that a *pramāṇa* is defined, in part, by

its yielding novel information; hence, memory is not accepted as a *pramāṇa* by any Indian school of philosophy and thus here serves Pārthasārathi's purpose simply as an example of a cognition that no one accepts as a *pramāṇa*.

29. "maivaṃ vocaḥ. na hi svaśabdo 'yaṃ prāmāṇyaparatayā prayuktaḥ prāmāṇyād eva prāmāṇyaṃ bhāti-iti. nāpi prāmāṇaparatayā. yadi hi tathā syāt, tato 'pramāṇeṣu prāmāṇyānavabhāsāt pariśeṣasiddham aprāmāṇyaṃ syāt. vijñānaparas tv ayaṃ svaśabdaḥ. vijñānād eva prāmāṇyaṃ bhāti-iti. tataś ca-apramāṇajñānād api prāmāṇyam eva-ātmano 'sad api bodhyata iti, na-aprāmāṇyasya pariśeṣasiddhiḥ. aprāmāṇyan tu pratī-taprāmāṇyāpavādarūpeṇa paścād bodhyate. Na ca pramāṇajñānāny adhikṛtya cintā-iyaṃ prāmāṇānāṃ prāmāṇyaṃ, svataḥ parato vā-iti. kin tarhi, yāni tāvat sthāṇur vā puruṣo vā-iti parasparopamardakānekakoṭisaṃsparśijñānebhyaḥ, smṛtijñānebhyaś ca-atiriktāni ghaṭo 'yaṃ paṭo 'yam ity evaṃrūpāṇi jñānāni, tāni sarvāṇy adhikṛtya cintā-iyam. sarva-vijñānaviṣayam idaṃ tāvat parīkṣyatām ity upakramāt" (Shastri 1982:49). Pārthasārathi here concludes by quoting Kumārila's verse 33; cf. Chapter 3, n24.

30. Cf. n19, for Pārthasārathi's defense of the same point in the *Ratnākara*.

31. The epigraphical claim that Mīmāṃsā's "only real enemy" is Buddhism states the view of a "famous contemporary Mīmāṃsaka," as reported by Pollock (1990:342n).

32. A typical statement of the traditional attribution of these four positions is found in the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha* of Mādhava (fourteenth century): "prāmāṇatvāpramāṇatve svataḥ sāṃkhyāḥ samāśritāḥ / naiyāyikās te parataḥ saugatāś caraṃ svataḥ // prathamaṃ parataḥ prāhuḥ prāmāṇyaṃ, vedavādinaḥ / prāmāṇatvaṃ svataḥ prāhuḥ parataś ca-apramāṇatām //" (The Sāṃkhyas rely on validity and invalidity both being intrinsic, the Naiyāyikas [take] both as extrinsic; the Buddhists say the latter [i.e., invalidity] is intrinsic, and the first, i.e., validity, is extrinsic, and the proponents of the Vedas say that validity is intrinsic and invalidity is extrinsic [Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 1928:106–107]). Cf. also the comparable statement found in Vaidyanātha's eighteenth-century commentary on Śabara (the *Prabhā*), which is printed with Abhyankar's edition of Śabara (Abhyankar 1930–1934/1976:16). Various places in the commentaries of Umveka and Sucaritamiśra make clear the Buddhist identity of the *parataḥprāmāṇyapakṣin*—e.g., *Kāśikā* 86.5–6 (where, stating as a formal inference the argument attributed to the interlocutor at verse 39, Sucarita says: "prāmāṇyaṃ kāraṇavad vastutvād ghaṭavat / na ca-akāryaṃ nāma kiñcid *bauddhānāṃ* vastv asti" [validity has a cause, because of its being a thing, like a jar; and for the Buddhists, nothing at all exists that is a non-effect]); and *ŚVTT* 45.5 ("ayam abhiprāyaḥ vādino *bauddhasya* tucchābhāvo na vastvantaraṃ syāt" [the point is that for this speaker, who is a Buddhist, a mere absence could not be a further thing]).

With regard to this distribution of positions, G. P. Bhatt makes a familiar sort of comparison: "The Naiyāyika is like a judge who sees every man appearing in his court with an unprejudiced eye and the Bhāṭṭa [Mīmāṃsaka] is like one who believes that every man is innocent until his crime is proved. But the attitude of the Buddhist is just the opposite of the Bhāṭṭa [Mīmāṃsā] attitude. He is like a judge who takes every man to be a criminal until the proof of his innocence is available" (1962:145). Alston at one point invokes essentially the same image (1991:153).

33. Ad. verse 2811: "Tathā hi catvāraḥ pakṣāḥ sambhavanti: kadācid ubhe 'pi prāmāṇ-yāprāmāṇye svata eveti prathamaḥ, kadācit *parataḥ* eveti dvitīyaḥ, prāmāṇyaṃ parato 'prāmāṇyaṃ tu svata eveti tṛtīyaḥ, etad viparyayaś caturthaḥ" (Shastri 1968:903). For the

second *pakṣa*, Shastri follows the earlier edition of Krishnamacharya (1926/1984–1988) in reading *kadācid aparataḥ*, which must be incorrect.

34. Thus, he has his Mīmāṃsaka *pūrvapakṣin* ask him why he accepts *parataḥprāmāṇya*: "yadi bhavatāṃ na vivādaḥ kathaṃ tarhi parataḥprāmāṇyam abhyupagatam" (Shastri 1968:909).

35. "yat tu pakṣacatuṣṭayam upanyasya pakṣatraye doṣābhidhānaṃ kṛtam, tatrāpi na kācid bauddhasya kṣatiḥ; na hi bauddhair eṣāṃ caturṇām ekatamo 'pi pakṣo 'bhīṣṭo 'niyamapakṣasya-iṣṭatvāt. Tathāhi ubhayam apy etatkiñcit svataḥ kiñcit parata iti pūrvam upavarṇitam. Ata eva pakṣacatuṣṭayopanyāso 'py ayuktaḥ, pañcamasya-apy aniyamapakṣasya sambhavāt" (Shastri 1968:981).

36. "taiḥ [i.e., bauddhaiḥ] kiñcit svataḥ pramāṇam iṣṭam, yathā svasaṃvedanapratyakṣaṃ yogijñānam arthakriyājñānam anumānam abhyāsavac ca pratyakṣam; tad dhi svata eva niścīyate, abhyāsabalena-apahastitabhrāntikāraṇatvāt / kiñcid anyataḥ, yathā vivādāspadībhūtaṃ codanājanitaṃ jñānam pratyakṣaṃ ca-anapagatabhrāntinimittam, abhyāsārthakriyājñānayor anavāptatvāt" (ibid., 938).

See also, *inter alia*, Manorathanandin's commentary on Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* (ad. 1.3): "arthakriyānirbhāsaṃ tu pratyakṣaṃ svata eva-arthakriyānubhavātmakaṃ, na tatra parārthakriyāpekṣyata iti tad api svato niścitaprāmāṇyam; ata eva-arthakriyāparamparānusaraṇād anavasthādoṣo 'pi duḥstha eva" (But a perception whose object is pragmatic efficacy *intrinsically* consists in experience of pragmatic efficacy; there is not, in regard to this, dependence on the pragmatic efficacy of something else. Hence, this [kind of perception], too, has its validity ascertained intrinsically, which is why it is difficult to establish [the charge of] infinite regress based on following the series of pragmatic efficacy [Pandeya 1989:2]). For other Buddhist sources, see Krasser 2003.

37. Cf. *codanā* 39 (Chapter 3, n29).

38. "Ghaṭād aghaṭāc ca ghaṭajñānadarśanān na tanmātreṇa ghaṭo niścetuṃ śakyate. Tena-arthakriyādarśanād eva taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścayapuraḥsaraṃ pūrvasya ghaṭajñānasya ghaṭād utpattir niścetavyā" (Shastri 1982:51). Cf. *Ratnākara*, p. 43 (*ad. ŚV* 38–39) where the same point is attributed to the Buddhist interlocutor. We need only to substitute "silver" or "mother-of-pearl" for the similarly stock "jar" example here to appreciate that Uṃveka's epistemology is not, after all, so different from this.

39. This point can be considered valid whether it is a jar or a jar-sense-datum that is finally thought to cause the cognition.

40. Cf. Nagatomi 1967–68. See also Dreyfus 1997:299–315.

41. "arthakriyākāritvalakṣaṇaṃ hi vastutvam" (*ŚVTT*, p. 45). This represents one of the possible points of contact between the argument attributed to Buddhists by Kumārila and the position I am sketching in this section; the point that invalidity, as the mere absence of validity, is not an "entity" (*vastu*) reads a little bit differently if one primarily has in mind this point about an "entity's" being defined by its causal efficacy.

42. See Chapter 1, n54.

43. This is why, for example, God (*īśvara*), when defined as permanent and immutable, cannot coherently be thought to exist, since God's existing, in Buddhist terms, could consist only in God's being subject to the temporal constraints that accompany being causally related to such manifestly changing entities as ourselves. On such arguments, cf. Jackson 1985.

44. Cf. Chapter 2, nn31, 32.

45. "niścitoktānumānena pratyakṣasyāpi mānatā / śuddhakāraṇajanyatvāt tat-pramāṇaṃ tadanyavat //" (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 3090).

46. The first expression is Dunne's translation (1999:321n).

47. Something like this emphasis can be gleaned from Dharmottara's commentary on the opening section of Dharmakīrti *Nyāyabindu*, where Dharmottara spends a great deal of time explaining Dharmakīrti's opening claim that that an epistemological inquiry is warranted in the first place only insofar as "the achievement [*siddhi*] of all human aims depends on veridical cognition" (saṃyagjñānapūrvikā sarvapuruṣārthasiddhi). See, especially, Malvania (1971:27–34), where the word *siddhi* recurs frequently.

48. Cf., e.g., Manorathanandin, quoted in n36; n52 below; and Chapter 2, n46. Cf. also Pārthasārathi's expression *arthakriyādarśana* (perception of pragmatic efficacy) (n38). The expression also occurs in Dharmottara's lengthy discussion of the first verse of the *Nyāyabindu*—as, e.g., "arthakriyānirbhāse ca *jñāne* sati siddhaḥ puruṣārthaḥ" (and when there is a cognition whose phenomenological content is pragmatic efficacy, a person's goal is accomplished [Malvania 1971:29]). (I thus read *jñāne* instead of Malvania's *jñāte* [supported not only by Malvania's note, but by the Tibetan: "don byed par snang ba'i shes pa yod na ni"].) See also Krasser 1992:156.

49. Cf. Kumārila's *Bṛhaṭṭīkā*, as preserved in *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2905–2907: "sādhyā na ca-anumānena śabdādīnāṃ pramāṇatā / pratyakṣasyāpi sā mā bhūt tatsādhyaiva-aviśeṣataḥ // pramāṇānāṃ pramāṇatvaṃ yena ca-anyena sādhyate / tasya-apy anyena sādhyatvād anavasthā prasajyate // anyena-asādhitā cet syāt sādhakasya pramāṇatā / sādhyānām api sā siddhā tadvad eva bhavet tataḥ //"). (And the validity of language, etc., is not to be proven by inference, lest that of perception, too, need to be proven in the same way [*aviśeṣataḥ*]. And since [the validity] of that other one by which the validity of *pramāṇas* is shown would also need to be proved, infinite regress ensues. If the validity of the probative one were [proven] by another that is unproven, then that of the things to be proven could be [valid] in just the same way.) The same point is made at *Śloka-vārttika* II.81: "na ca-anumānataḥ sādhyā śabdādīnāṃ pramāṇatā / sarvasyaiva hi mā prāpat pramāṇāntarasādhyatā."

50. Cf. Chapter 2, n23.

51. The word here is *kriyā*, which clearly refers to *arthakriyā*.

52. "tasmād arthakriyābhāsaṃ jñānaṃ yāvan na jāyate / tāvad ādye apramāśaṅkā jāyate bhrāntihetutaḥ // anantaraṃ phalād dṛṣṭiḥ sādṛśyasya-upalambanam / mater apaṭutetyādi bhrāntikāraṇam atra ca // kāryābhāsivijñāne jāte tv etan na vidyate / sākṣād vastunibaddhāyāḥ kriyāyāḥ prativedanāt //" (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 2965–2967). Cf. also *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2835, 2956, 2958–2961, 2965. On the latter verse, see Tillemans (2003: 117–18n14), which succinctly expresses the foundational role played by this privileged cognition. That such passages are missing the point is clear if we recall that, as clearly stated by Pārthasārathi, *arthakriyā* is merely one of the Mīmāṃsaka examples of something "other" to which one might appeal to demonstrate validity; cf.nn23, 38.

53. The original Sanskrit of Dignāga's statement is recoverable from Pārthasārathi's *Nyāyaratnākara*: "bhavadvṛddhair eva hi Dignāgācāryair yo vādiprativādiniścito hetu sa sādhanam ity uktam" (for it was said by your very own teacher Dignāga that 'a proof is a reason that is ascertained by both parties to a debate' [Randle 1926/1981:28–29]). Cf. La

Vallée Poussin (1903–1913/1970b:35n2), where this passage is cited as crucial for the debate between the so-called *svātāntrika* and *prāsaṅgika* Mādhyamikas. Cf. in this regard Yotsuya 1999:73.

54. "yadi ca pramāṇāny eva viṣayīkṛtya cintyeta, tato viṣayasya-ubhayavādisiddhatvāt yāny ubhayoḥ pramāṇatayā prasiddhāni, teṣāṃ prāmāṇyaṃ svata ity etāvat siddhāntyeta. Tataś ca vedasya-ubhayavādisiddhaprāmāṇyābhāvena vicārāviṣayatvān na-asya svataḥ prāmāṇyaṃ sādhitaṃ syāt. Tatra vedaprāmāṇyānupayoginī cintā kākadantaparīkṣāvad akartavyā syāt. Jñānamātraṃ tv adhikṛtya svataḥ prāmāṇye, parataś ca-aprāmāṇye sādhyamāne, vedasyāpi svatas tāvad viṣayatathātvarūpaṃ prāmāṇyam avagataṃ syāt. Kāraṇadoṣajñānāder abhāvān nirapavādaṃ sthitaṃ bhavatīti prayojanavatīyaṃ cintā" (Shastri 1982:50).

55. Cf. Chapter 3, n45.

56. "Kim anyat prāmāṇyaṃ bhaviṣyati? Saty api saṃvāde guṇajñāne vā tāvad eva prāmāṇyasya tattvaṃ, na adhikaṃ kiñcid iti kiṃ nas <u>tadapakṣaṇena</u>" (emending the text from *tad<u>up</u>ekṣaṇena*) (*Kāśikā*, p. 89). Here, I simply borrow Sucarita's apt expression—which nonetheless accompanies an interpretation that differs significantly from that of Pārthasārathi; cf. n12.

57. Potter 1984:317–318. Potter's article is framed as a critique of Mohanty 1966. As suggested at the beginning of Chapter 3, both Mohanty and Matilal offer interpretations of Kumārila that retain the presuppositions that, on Pārthasārathimiśra's interpretation, Kumārila means to have challenged. See, for example, Matilal's eminently ontological characterization of the difference between the Naiyāyika and Mīmāṃsaka epistemologies (Matilal 1986:145–146)—which does not contradict Pārthasārathi's interpretation, insofar as the latter concerns simply the status of one's justification vis-à-vis what is true. Mohanty, for his part, presses against the Mīmāṃsakas precisely the kinds of objections that Pārthasārathi shows to be misguided and shares Uṃveka's sense that the applicability of Kumārila's point to all cognitions (and not simply to veridical ones) entails unwanted consequences: "It must be added that though [his definition of validity as the quiddity of an object] is meant to distinguish right knowledge from error, nevertheless—Pārthasārathi reminds us—when the Mīmāṃsaka seeks to establish the intrinsic truth of all knowledge, he has in view all knowledge and not merely the right ones. This is in fact . . . one of the puzzling situations with which the *svataḥprāmāṇya* theory is faced" (1966:11). Mohanty thus complains that Kumārila, in saying that the validity of cognition obtains simply in virtue of its being cognition (*codanā* 53), has not given a very "precise definition" of *prāmāṇya*, since this definition entails the absurd conclusion that "every knowledge is intrinsically true." Instead, he commends Uṃveka's refusal of this definition: "Umbeka, commenting on the Ślokavārtika, rejects the identification of *prāmāṇya* with *bodhakatva* on the plea that though the latter is intrinsic to all knowledge yet it does not serve to distinguish right from wrong knowledge" (1966:9; cf. Chapter 3, n65). Far from successfully dismissing the doctrine with these arguments, however, Matilal and Mohanty have, in effect, simply stated their commitment to precisely the presuppositions that Pārthasārathi's exegetically cogent version of the doctrine so effectively undermines.

58. Cf. n5.

59. See, in this regard, Kaplan 2000.

60. Kaplan 1985:361. Much the same point is made by Brandom (2000:118–120).

61. Cf. Brandom 2000:168.

62. Kaplan 1985:362. This point offers a compelling answer to the concern that Mohanty expresses when he entertains something like the interpretation of Kumārila's epistemology developed here. Thus: "It has been held by many that what the *svataḥ* theory says is that every knowledge has an intrinsic *claim to truth*, that *prāmāṇya* for this theory is not truth but truth-claim [the distinction Mohanty intends is clearly that between truth and justification], which has to be accepted unless and until it has been refuted. The Naiyāyikas on the other hand speak of actual truth and not of mere tentative truth-claim. This [Mohanty's syntax here obscures the fact that he is referring back to the Mīmāṃsaka position] is indeed a very ingenious device, but I think it is too simple to be true. The *svataḥ* theory, I should think, is talking about truth and not merely of truth-claim. . . . It has also been suggested that the *svataḥ* theory is concerned with truth in the unreflective sense, while the *parataḥ* theory with reflective confirmation or validation so that both the theories are correct. There is an unreflective acceptance which does not rule out the need for subsequent validation. I think this way of reconciling the theory fails to account for an important aspect of the *svataḥ* theory, namely for the fact that this theory has no room at all for subsequent validation" (Mohanty 1966:78–79). But, as I have been trying to show, the Mīmāṃsaka argument does concern the objective truth of the beliefs defended; it's just that the defense of this is by way of an argument from justification, with the argument being precisely that one cannot know anything more about the truth of one's beliefs than one already knows in being justified.

63. See, *inter alia*, Brandom 2000:98–100.

64. It might be objected that my recurrent characterization of Pārthasārathi's as a basically "phenomenological" point contradicts this characterization of his as an externalist epistemology. But Pārthasārathi's phenomenological point concerns only first-order cognitions; his point, in other words, is that we can (in Alston's sense of the word) be *immediately* justified by a cognition that is phenomenologically credible, without being aware of any reasons that could provide "mediate" justification. What the epistemological internalist claims, in contrast, is precisely that we are properly justified only when aware of the reasons that we might adduce in order to actively *justify* a belief—which is to say, when we have "internal" access to relevant second-order cognitions. This is the "KK thesis": the claim that *knowing* consists in knowing that one knows.

65. Taber 1992:216; cf. Chapter 3, n45, for the relevant verses from Kumārila.

66. Cf. n52.

67. "na hi jñānatvamātreṇa saṃśayo yuktaḥ, saṃśayasya sādhāraṇadharmādiniścayā-dhīnatvāt / tad avaśyaṃ kānicij jñānāny asandigdhaprāmāṇyāny eva-utpadyante / tasmān na sarvatra-āśaṅkā /" (*Ratnākara*, p. 48).

68. "prāmāṇyaṃ ced asti, svata eva-aṅgīkarttavyam iti" (*Ratnākara*, p. 46).

69. For a critique of this part of Alston's argument in particular, see Gale (1994).

70. Cf. Chapter 3, n17.

71. William Alston, personal communication.

72. It is surely the case that even allegedly "perceptual" encounters with God turn out to have been structured (if not constituted) by a great many higher-order beliefs. This is, moreover, not the only problem Alston's proposal raises. More problematic is

Alston's contention that different doxastic practices should be so sharply individuated that their "outputs" can only ever be subject to falsification according to criteria internal to the practices. Alston thus wants to maintain that we should count as significant overriders only those belief-outputs that are "appropriate" to the respective practices—which turn out to be the outputs that are generated within the practice in question (cf. Alston 1991:217, 220). The extent to which Alston's individuation of doxastic practices is empirically adequate thus becomes significant insofar as these analytic cuts provide not only the objects of our inquiry but also the criteria for evaluating them. That this is problematic is suggested by the "problem of religious diversity," as Alston recognizes: "But when practice boundaries are crossed in the exchange things become stickier. Now a question arises for the recipient as to whether the practice in question is an acceptable one, and that introduces additional possibilities for doubt, error and lack of justification" (ibid., 283). That is, even if we grant that we would be prima facie justified in regarding the outputs of "Christian mystical practice" (CMP) as reliable, the fact of religious diversity forces the question of whether this (the Christian and not, e.g., the Vedic) is the doxastic practice to which we should be committed. See, in this regard, Brown (1993) and Schellenberg (2000).

Mīmāṃsakas might themselves be said to have faced a comparable problem in their attempts to individuate the Vedas as authoritative with respect to dharma. This is clear in the commentarial literature stemming from the section of Śabara's *bhāṣya* dealing with *smṛti*, where Mīmāṃsakas addressed the status of the many texts classified as *smṛti* (i.e., traditionally passed down, as opposed to the Vedas, which are *śruti* [revealed]). Insofar as there was reluctance to disallow the authoritative status of all *smṛti* texts, it was argued in some quarters that *smṛti* texts derive their authority from some *śruti* text on which they are based. This gave rise to the further problem that not all the *smṛti* texts that Mīmāṃsakas might wish to retain had an obvious basis in any specifiable *śruti*. This occasioned claims that the category of "Veda" exceeds the received text of the Vedas; that is, we might sometimes be justified in inferring the existence of a *śruti* text as warranting some *smṛti* text, even where the former is no longer to be found in the Vedic corpus as that has come down to us. (Cf. Halbfass 1991:60. For related observations, see Pollock 1989, 1990.) The need to discuss this issue might be evidence of the problem I have identified in Alston—i.e., the problem of presupposing that the Vedas (or anything else) can be individuated as the uniquely relevant criterion for some specifiable range of concern. Thus, Śabara can reasonably claim that we do not require other, perceptual grounds for being justified in crediting a Vedic injunction, since perception cannot be shown to confer essentially greater justification than any other *pramāṇa*; it is, however, another thing to claim that no conceivable perception could count for anything with respect to this question.

73. It should be allowed, however, that Mīmāṃsaka intuitions regarding this question involve their characteristic views regarding language—particularly, their view that "the relation of a word with its referent is primordial" (which is as Jaimini puts it in the first part of the fifth *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*: *autpattikas tu śabdasya-arthena saṃbandhaḥ* . . .). Given this crucial intuition about the eternal and nonarbitrary character of language, the Mīmāṃsakas would surely be more confident in the directly communicative power of language than, say, Buddhists, for whom there is no possibility that words themselves

might directly express meaning, which must instead be inferred as a function of the speaker's intention. On these complex issues, see especially Matilal 1990:49–74. See also Matilal and Chakrabarti 1994 and Coady 1992.

74. This crucial (and contentious) axiom is explicitly stated by Kumārila at verse 62a-b: "śabde doṣodbhavas tāvad vaktradhīna iti sthitiḥ" (it is an axiom [*sthiti*] that the arising of defects with respect to language is dependent on the speaker). This seems effectively to discount the belief-outputs of any other *pramāṇa* as relevant to the revision of beliefs formed based on testimony—a claim that should not be accepted.

75. Pollock 1989:607 (emphasis added). Taber seems sympathetic to this way of characterizing the argument, noting that "it seems there could be no cause more defective than a non-existent one!" (Taber 1992:217; Taber here quotes Pollock). Pollock puts this more strongly elsewhere, saying that, for Mīmāṃsakas, the unique status of the Veda "rests on a Mīmāṃsā epistemology that ascribes truth to what is not falsified (*the embarrassment of unfalsifiability being ignored*)" (Pollock 1990:318; emphasis added). The comparison with Popper has also been ventured by Franco (1987:27–28).

76. Moreover, I suspect that Alston might concur, because he is committed to the view that among the things that qualifies perceptions of God as significantly like "sensory perception" is the fact that, like instances of the latter, the former is subject to being overridden (i.e., falsified), albeit, only by other outputs of the same practice. Thus, while I have faulted Alston (n72) for the sharpness with which he claims that he can individuate doxastic practices (and for his consequent confidence that we can know which outputs count as being from "within" the practices related to perceiving God), it is nevertheless significant that he provides for the possibility of overriding the very practices that he is interested in defending. If Alston is right to consider the provision of falsification significant (and I think he is), then the Mīmāṃsakas thus deprive Vedic injunction of one of the key features in virtue of which it might otherwise qualify as significantly like other *pramāṇas*.

77. Cf. n72.

78. Something like this might be said to be the line of argument advanced by the Cārvāka Bṛhaspati, who is represented in the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha* as arguing thus: "agnihotraṃ trayovedās tridaṇḍaṃ bhasmaguṇṭanam / buddhipauruṣahīnānāṃ jīvikā dhātṛnirmitā // . . . tataś ca jīvanopāyo brāhmaṇair vihitas tv iha /" (The *agnihotra*, the three Vedas, the [ascetic's] three staffs, smearing [of one's body] with ashes—all these are invented by a maker, producing the livelihood of those who lack vigor and intelligence . . . they have been introduced by the Brahmins as a way of making a living [Ānandāśrama edition, p. 5]). It is an interesting question whether an epistemological strategy such as the one advanced by the Mīmāṃsakas and by Alston is intrinsically more likely than not to be deployed in the service of a (socially, theologically, or ideologically) conservative program. While the fact that these are the thinkers whose development of the strategy we have explicated might lead one to suppose that it is, I am not sure that this is necessarily the case. Cf., in this regard, Stout, who recurrently supports Alston's principal point (and that of externalist epistemologies, generally): that there is "a distinction between being justified in believing something and being able to justify a claim to someone else" (Stout 2004:176 *et passim*). Nonetheless, Stout's program surely should be characterized as progressive.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Cf. Chapter 1, p. 21.

2. In the course of my engagement with Candrakīrti's Mādhyamika arguments, I occasionally refer rather indiscriminately to Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti, and "Madhyamaka," as though these names all refer to the same thing. Of course, there are many rival interpretations of the texts of Nāgārjuna (most notably, those of Bhāvaviveka and his philosophical heirs), all of which claim authentically to express the Mādhyamika perspective. For historical purposes, it would thus be preferable to understand "Madhyamaka" as designating a broad trend of thought and to distinguish among the many different interpretations attested within this tradition. (For a fine overview, see Ruegg 1981.) To the extent that mine is a sympathetic engagement with the philosophy of Candrakīrti, however, my presentation generally adopts Candrakīrti's perspective, according to which Madhyamaka just means *the thought of Nāgārjuna as accurately discerned by Candrakīrti.* This is the perspective reflected in my use of these terms.

3. Nāgārjuna most famously makes this point in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, considered in Chapter 6. Of course, insofar as the claim not to be making any claim is *itself* a claim, at such junctures in Mādhyamika discourse we are confronted with what can be understood as evidence either of its basic incoherence or of philosophically interesting interpretive possibilities. My proposed reconstruction of Mādhyamika arguments is based on seeing the latter and represents an attempt to save Madhyamaka from charges of self-reflexive incoherence with regard to precisely such points as the perennially vexed "thesis" question.

4. Siderits often refers to these thinkers with the traditional doxographical term "Yogācāra-Sautrāntika," though he also refers to Candrakīrti's interlocutor in this section simply as "the epistemologist." Note, however, that the first part in Siderits's two-part essay (1980, 1981) addressed Nāgārjuna's arguments in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, which Siderits (like most scholars) regards as addressing a Naiyāyika interlocutor.

5. "Rorty has certainly used 'epistemology' to refer to foundationalism and has spoken of philosophers such as Sellars . . . as attacking epistemology. But that is widely recognized by philosophers as a deliberately nonstandard and provocative use of the term, and few would regard it as successful. . . . [Characterizing Candrakīrti as simply rejecting epistemology] obscures the fact that Candrakīrti is a very skilled epistemologist. And, of course, Sellars was certainly self-consciously doing epistemology and is regarded by most philosophers as the last century's greatest epistemologist" (Garfield, personal communication, December 2002).

6. The distinction proposed here overlaps somewhat with a distinction, proposed by Coady, between "negative" and "positive" epistemology (1992:3). Cf., as well, Alston on "deontological" and "nondeontological" understandings of epistemic justification (1991:72–73). It is an interesting question where (or whether) the contemporary tradition of "naturalized epistemology" fits into my proposed schema. On this, see Kornblith 1985; Brandom 2000:110–112; Plantinga 1993:45–46.

7. Or (the British spelling) "scepticism." It would be convenient if the different understandings of this category were reflected in the choice of spelling, but this does not, alas, seem to be the case. Although I favor the spelling "skepticism," many of the scholars referred to here opt for the other; the variation is regrettable but unavoidable.

8. Coady 1992:3. Coady introduces this style of argument to shed light on the difference in philosophical concern between his "negative" and "positive" understandings of epistemology, though I do not completely understand how it does.

9. So, for example, Stern: "As standardly presented, transcendental arguments are usually said to be distinctive in involving a certain sort of claim, namely that 'For Y to be possible, X must be the case', where Y is some indisputable fact about us and our mental life (e.g. that we have experiences, use language, make certain judgements, have certain concepts, perform certain actions, etc.), but where it is left open at this stage exactly what is substituted for X" (2000:6). For a defense of the claim that "transcendental arguments" do not represent a logically distinct kind of argument, see Pihlström (2004), who also provides numerous bibliographic references on the topic.

10. Hume 1739/1978:bk. 1, sec. 6, 252.

11. Thus, "For as such a succession answers evidently to our notion of diversity, it can only be by mistake we ascribe to it an identity; and as the relation of parts, which leads us into this mistake, is really nothing but a quality, which produces an association of ideas, and an easy transition of the imagination from one to another, it can only be from the resemblance, which this act of the mind bears to that, by which we contemplate one continu'd object, that the error arises" (ibid., 255).

12. Kant 1787/1965:A100–108.

13. See, however, Pippin (1989:20 *et passim.*) on the different claims that Kant can be seen as making in the two editions of the first *Critique*.

14. But see Strawson for what is clearly a transcendental argument based on the same insight that underlies Kant's transcendental unity of apperception (1959:95–98).

15. See Passmore 1961:58–80.

16. Passmore suggests the term "pragmatic self-refutation," but also speaks of similar moves in terms of *ad hominem* self-refutation; I use instead the term "performative self-refutation." Although Passmore's discussion is generally illuminating, his parsing of Descartes's argument is somewhat unclear to me. For a characterization of Descartes's argument as a basically transcendental one, see Husserl (1950/1995:18–25). Husserl rightly sees that Descartes's argument is problematic precisely insofar as he compromises its essentially transcendental character—specifically, by introducing "the apparently insignificant but actually fateful change whereby the ego becomes a *substantia cogitans* . . . and [the] point of departure for inferences according to the principle of causality" (ibid., 24). Kant makes a similar point by adducing Descartes's argument as a paradigm case of what Kant called a "paralogism," in that there is an equivocation between "I" as grammatical subject ("I think"), and "I" as naming a substance ("therefore I am"); see Kant 1787/1965:A348 ff.

17. Stern:8–9; emphasis added. Stern is quoting Jonathan Bennett.

18. I owe this distinction to Schubert Ogden (personal communication). A basically parallel distinction is made by Strawson (1959), whose essay in "descriptive" (as opposed to "revisionary") metaphysics is essentially an exercise in what I am calling transcendental metaphysics.

19. This conception of metaphysics is advanced by Loux (1998, especially pp. 3–17).

20. Ogden 1975:47. Cf. the formulation of Gamwell, for whom "transcendental" properly characterizes "the conditions of human subjectivity or reason that are implied

or presupposed by every act of claiming truth or validity and that can themselves be explicated by statements every denial of which is pragmatically self-contradictory" (2003:567).

21. My example here is based on Swinburne (1991), which, despite its deployment of the probability calculus of "Bayes's theorem," seems in the end to come down entirely to the questions posed here, with Swinburne's proposed account of the difference between "scientific" and "personal explanation" doing by far the most important conceptual work in his argument. Theists are not the only ones to find compelling the question of why there is something and not nothing; Heidegger as well regarded this as the fundamental question of philosophy, "necessarily implicit in every question" (1959:6)—a fact that led Heidegger to pursue a philosophical project very different from Swinburne's.

22. It is, then, perhaps because we are thus dealing with *absolute* presuppositions that neither party to this particular debate is likely to be able to offer arguments that the other party finds compelling; there is an important sense in which neither party to this debate can even ask (much less answer) the questions that the other party considers primary.

23. Cf. Alston's comment that "[a] necessary condition of my having [a] belief at all (whatever its epistemic status) is not a necessary condition of the belief's being justified rather than unjustified" (1991:78).

24. This is the formulation (quoted by Stern 2000:44–45) of Stroud (1968), who influentially developed this objection. Cf. also Rorty 1971.

25. Annas and Barnes 2000:6.

26. Frede 1997a and 1997b. See also Striker 1996:135–149.

27. In Frede's reading, this is the view that conflates classical with dogmatic skepticism.

28. Cf. the remarks following Michael Williams, pp. 122–23, above. Burton refers to some of the same secondary literature on skepticism cited here, attempting on the basis thereof to give a historically sensitive account of skepticism. Nevertheless, he cites as the upholders of "skeptical" interpretations of Nāgārjuna not only Garfield (citing Garfield [1995:88–89], but not, more obviously, Garfield 1990) but also Richard Hayes (citing Hayes 1988a:53–62). Characterizing these interpreters as commonly exemplifying a "skeptical" reading of Nāgārjuna betrays a lack of nuance on Burton's part, insofar as Garfield and Hayes (like Garfield and Burton!) understand "skepticism" in such different ways. With regard to (often highly various) "skeptical" readings of Madhyamaka, note as well the interpretation of Ganeri (2001a:42–70) and, for a pointed critique thereof, Oetke (2003b:151–152), with whose point here I generally agree.

29. Garfield 2002:4. (This reprints Garfield 1990. References to the 2002 reprint are henceforth given in the text.)

30. Kripke 1982:66–67; quoted in part by Garfield 2002:6–7. It is worth noting, in this regard, that Wittgenstein himself seems to have understood "skepticism" in the way that Garfield eschews—a fact noted by Garfield: "Wittgenstein, of course, frequently denies that he is a sceptic: 'Scepticism is *not* irrefutable, but obvious *nonsense*.' . . . But I would argue that the position Wittgenstein denotes by 'scepticism' is what I am calling here 'nihilism'" (Garfield 2002:261n2, quoting Wittgenstein).

31. Here, I am paraphrasing Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 24.19: "apratītya-samutpano dharmaḥ kaścin na vidyate / yasmāt tasmād aśūnyo hi dharmaḥ kaścin na vidyate //" (since there exists no non-dependently originated existent [*dharma*] whatso-

ever, therefore there exists no non-empty existent whatsoever) (La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:505). This is among the many places where Nāgārjuna chiefly emphasizes that by "empty" he simply means "dependently originated." The strongly existential form of the claim makes this verse one of the quintessentially Mādhyamika statements that it is hard to describe as making anything other than a truth-claim. Many Tibetan interpreters of Madhyamaka (particularly among the dGe-lugs-pas) aver that, despite Nāgārjuna's claim not to be defending any "thesis," in fact a characteristically Mādhyamika "thesis" is found precisely in this identification of "emptiness" with "dependent origination" (cf. Matsumoto 1990:33).

32. Cf. Chapter 1, nn11ff.

33. In this regard, my interpretation of Madhyamaka differs not only from Burton's but also from one ably defended for many years by Mark Siderits. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

34. Cf. especially Stern 2000.

35. Kant 1783/1997: sec. 36, 72 (emphasis added); cf. Kant 1987/1965:A27/B43 and A63/B88. The "characteristic property of our sensibility" to which Kant here alludes is its constitution in terms of "the sum total of the rules to which all appearances must be subject if they are to be thought as connected in an experience"—with Garfield's "explanatorily useful regularities" capable of serving as a not misleading gloss of that.

36. Tillemans 1992:312. Tillemans follows Lakatos 1971. As Tillemans rightly observes, "In this light, there is no doubt that Tsoṅ kha pa, the great debater, was a specialist at internal history" (1992:312).

Notes to Chapter 6

1. The first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* was translated into English by Stcherbatsky (1927/1989), whose work, though dated and eccentric, remains useful. The partial translation of Sprung (1979) is the most complete available English translation of the *Prasannapadā*, but should be used with caution; cf. the reviews by de Jong (1981) and Steinkellner (1982). Other Western-language translations from the *Prasannapadā* (e.g., May 1959, Schayer 1931) do not include the first chapter. Ruegg (2002) has published an annotated translation of most of chapter 1 (specifically, the portion of Candrakīrti's chapter framed as commenting on the first verse of Nāgārjuna's root text). See also MacDonald 2000. All translations in the present chapter are, however, my own and are from the standard edition of Candrakīrti's text in La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b, as supplemented by the suggested revisions of de Jong (1978). (Vaidya 1960b, which cross-references the pagination of La Vallée Poussin, effectively reproduces that edition.) For my complete translation of the passage, see Arnold (forthcoming).

2. For good introductions to this discussion, see Yotsuya 1999 (a text-critical analysis of the relevant passages from the Indian sources of Buddhapālita, Bhāvaviveka, and Candrakīrti) and Dreyfus and McClintock 2003 (which compiles recent contributions to the scholarly discussion of the issues). Ames (1986, 1993, 1994) and Saito (1984) provide useful points of access to the relevant works of Buddhapālita and Bhāvaviveka.

3. La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:55.11 to 75.13 (all references to Candrakīrti's text are to page and line numbers of this edition); the entire first chapter totals ninety-one pages.

4. Rizzi 1987:47–49. The only sustained treatments of this section that I have located are Mookerjee (1957:42–58, basically paraphrasing Candrakīrti's text) and Siderits (1981), (who sees Candrakīrti's target as Dignāga). Tillemans (1990:1:41–53) offers insightful exposition of parallel arguments from Candrakīrti's *Catuḥśatakaṭīkā*. A summary of this line of argument (along with observations about some Tibetan interpretations thereof) is in Dreyfus (1997:451–460), chiefly following Siderits and Tillemans.

5. For the view that Candrakīrti is still addressing Bhāvaviveka in at least part of the section before us, cf. Thurman (1991:292–295), which translates a section of Tsong-kha-pa's *Legs bshad snying po* based on a discussion in *Prasannapadā* 66.1–68.4. Cf. also Eckel 1978; Huntington 2003; Yoshimizu 1996:49–94. There is a sense in which it may not matter, in the end, whether it is specifically Dignāga whom Candrakīrti has in mind or whether he is targeting the part of Bhāvaviveka's project that is informed by Dignāga; in either case, Candrakīrti is rightly said to have philosophical problems with Dignāga's project. There are, however, several points at which Candrakīrti seems clearly to have Dignāga's text before him, and these are noted here as they arise. Nevertheless, I will refer to Candrakīrti's interlocutor throughout as Dignāga chiefly because of my sense that there is some philosophical value in appreciating what it is about Dignāga's approach in particular that Candrakīrti rejects. Hattori's 1968 translation from Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* provides many cross-references to Candrakīrti, reflecting Hattori's judgment that Candrakīrti knows Dignāga's text. Yonezawa (1999, 2004) has been studying the **Lakṣaṇaṭīkā*, a Sanskrit manuscript of brief annotations on the *Prasannapadā* from around the twelfth century (Yonezawa et al. 2001:27). With respect to the section under discussion here, the anonymous author of these notes specifically identifies Dignāga as the interlocutor; cf. n31.

6. "na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāṃ nāpy ahetutaḥ / utpannāḥ jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kvacana kecana" (*MMK* 1.1, in La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:12.13–14).

7. "Atra kecit paricodayanti: Anutpannā bhāvā iti kim ayaṃ pramāṇajo niścaya uta-apramāṇajaḥ?" (*Prasannapadā* 55.11–12).

8. For a useful exegesis of the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, see Siderits (1980).

9. "pratyakṣeṇa hi tāvad yady upalabhya vinivartayasi bhāvān / tan nāsti pratyakṣaṃ bhāvā yena-upalabhyante" (*Vigrahavyāvartanī* 5, in Bhattacharya 1990:5).

10. "pratyakṣam api hi pramāṇaṃ sarvabhāvāntargatatvāc chūnyam; yo bhāvān upalabhate, so 'pi śūnyaḥ; tasmāt pratyakṣeṇa pramāṇena na-upalambhabhāvo 'nupalabh-dasya ca pratiṣedhānupapattiḥ" (for the reliable warrant which is perception, too, is empty, owing to [its] being included among 'all existents'; you who apprehend [this] are also empty; therefore, there is no existence of apprehension by way of the reliable warrant that is perception, and negation of something unapprehended doesn't stand to reason [ibid.]).

11. "yadi kiṃcid upalabheyaṃ pravartayeyaṃ nivartayeyaṃ vā / pratyakṣādibhir arthais tadabhāvān me 'nupālambhaḥ" (*Vigrahavyāvartanī* 30, in Bhattacharya 1990:15).

12. Oetke 2003b:144n. The "preceding section" of the text to which Oetke thus alludes comprises Nāgārjuna's well-known claim (at *Vigrahavyāvartanī* 29) not to have any "thesis" at all: "yadi kācana pratijñā syān me tata eṣa me bhaved doṣaḥ / nāsti ca mama pratijñā tasmān naivāsti me doṣaḥ" (If I had any thesis, then the fault would be mine; but I do *not* have a thesis, so I have no fault at all [Bhattacharya 1990:14]). The question of what it means thus to have no "thesis" exercised generations of Tibetan interpreters

of Madhyamaka, with many dGe-lugs-pa interpreters (who had a particular stake in defending the canons of dialectics and debate) typically qualifying Nāgārjuna's claim—for example, suggesting that the kind of "thesis" Nāgārjuna thus disavows is only that *kind* of thesis that is thought to presuppose the sort of "essence" (*svabhāva*) that it is Nāgārjuna's business to reject. Cf. Ruegg 1983; 2000:105–232. For a critique of Ruegg's focus on Tibetan interpretations, see Oetke 2003a.

13. "Atha-apramāṇajaḥ sa na yuktaḥ, pramāṇādhīnatvāt prameyādhigamasya" (*Prasannapadā* 55.13). Candrakīrti here alludes to Dignāga, the beginning of whose *Pramāṇasamuccaya* claims that "understanding of a warrantable object depends upon reliable warrants"; cf. Hattori 1968:76n.1.10. The translation of *prameya* as "warrantable object" is not unproblematic; it is *beliefs* that are warranted, not (what is typically characterized as *prameya*) *objects*. It is difficult, however, to find translation equivalents for this pair of words (*pramāṇa* and *prameya*) that avoid this problem while reflecting the fact that they are permutations of the same verbal root. One might, for example, render them as (respectively) "means of knowledge" and "knowable"—but that risks misleading in regard to the relationship between justification, truth, and knowledge. It is, then, my translation of *pramāṇa* as "reliable warrant" that informs the rendering of *prameya* as "warrantable," but the latter should, in this context, be understood as shorthand for the more cumbersome *object regarding which one might have a warranted belief*.

14. Cf. n12.

15. "Anadhigato hy artho na vinā pramāṇair adhigantuṃ śakyata iti, pramāṇābhāvād arthādhigamābhāve sati, kuto 'yam samyagniścaya iti? Na yuktam etad anutpannā bhāvā iti. Yato vā-ayam niścayo bhavato 'nutpannā bhāvā iti bhaviṣyati tata eva mama-api sarvabhāvāḥ santi-iti! Yathā ca-ayaṃ te niścayo 'nutpannāḥ sarvadharmā iti, tathā-eva mama-api sarvabhāvotpattir bhaviṣyati. Atha te na-asti niścayo 'nutpannāḥ sarvabhāvā iti, tadā svayamaniścitasya parapratyāyanāsaṃbhavāc chāstrārambhavaiyarthyam eva-iti, santy apratiṣiddhāḥ sarvabhāvā iti. Ucyate: Yadi kaścinniścayo nāma-asmākaṃ syāt, sa pramāṇajo vā syād apramāṇajo vā. Na tv asti. Kiṃ kāraṇam? Iha-aniścayasaṃbhave sati, syāt tatpratipakṣas tadapekṣo niścayaḥ. Yadā tv aniścaya eva tāvad asmākaṃ na-asti, tadā kutas tadviruddho niścayaḥ syāt?" (*Prasannapadā* 55.12–56.7). This section of Candrakīrti's text is translated by Huntington (2003:77–78), who identifies Candrakīrti's interlocutor as Bhāvaviveka. See also Arnold 2001a.

16. "Yady evaṃ niścayo na-asti sarvataḥ, kathaṃ punar idaṃ niścitarūpaṃ vākyam upalabhyate bhavatām? Na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāṃ nāpy ahetuto bhāvā bhavantīti" (*Prasannapadā* 57.4–5).

17. Nāgārjuna can be understood as making the same point in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* (v.31) when he asks how *pramāṇas* themselves are to be established; that is, *pramāṇas* cannot themselves *explain* how we know what we know, given that the very possibility of *pramāṇas* (which exist only in relation to their objects, *prameyas*) already presupposes (because the relation exemplifies) the most important point to be known: emptiness. Oetke favors this reading when he views as central to this part of Nāgārjuna's text the task of showing that "means of knowledge cannot be what they are, namely means of knowledge, without the existence of that for which they are means, whereas the objects of knowledge cannot be what they are, i.e. *prameyas*, if there are no *pramāṇas*" (2003b:144n).

18. "Ucyate: Niścitam idaṃ vākyaṃ lokasya svaprasiddhayaivopapattyā, na aryāṇām.

Kiṃ khalv āryāṇām upapattir na-asti? Kena-etad uktam asti vā nāsti vā-iti? Paramārtho hy āryas tūṣṇībhāvaḥ. Tataḥ kutas tatra prapañcasaṃbhavo yad upapattir anupapattir vā syāt? Yadi hy āryā upapattiṃ na varṇayanti kena khalv idānīṃ paramārthaṃ lokaṃ bodhayiṣyanti? Na khalv āryā lokasaṃvyavahāreṇopapattiṃ varṇayanti. Kiṃ tu lokata eva yā prasiddhopapattis tāṃ parāvabodhārtham abhyupetya tathaiva lokaṃ bodhayanti" (*Prasannapadā* 57.5–11).

19. Dunne (1996) adduces similar passages from the *Madhyamakāvatāra* to suggest that, while Dharmakīrti allows for some degree of human participation in the experience of Buddhahood, Candrakīrti instead posits an understanding of Buddhahood as radically "other." Characterizing the kind of Buddha that Candrakīrti thus presupposes, Dunne writes: "Not only does such a buddha not see the ordinary things of the world, he does not even know ultimate reality because nothing at all occurs in a buddha's mind. Indeed, it would seem that Candrakīrti's buddhas do not know anything at all" (1996:548). Griffiths (1994) has persuasively argued that something like this is in fact the case with respect to Buddhist discourse more generally—and indeed, particularly for the kinds of Yogācāra sources that are rather closer to Dharmakīrti's thought than to Candrakīrti's. Nevertheless, Candrakīrti, as seen below, can be read in precisely the opposite way. See, *inter alia*, Tillemans (2004) for what seems a similar view.

20. I concur, in this sense, with Tsong-kha-pa, for whom Nāgārjuna's equation of emptiness and dependent origination represents precisely "the uncommon thesis (*lugs*) of the venerable master" (quoted by Matsumoto 1990:33)—though I hope it will become clear that I think Tsong-kha-pa fails to appreciate Candrakīrti's point (particularly as developed in the engagement with Dignāga) regarding what this fact should entail about how we argue for that position.

21. "Tān idānīm āryās tatprasiddhayaivopapattyā paribodhayanti. Yathā vidyamānasya ghaṭasya na mṛdādibhya utpāda ity abhyupetam, evam utpādāt pūrvaṃ vidyamānasya vidyamānatvān, na asty utpāda ity avasīyatām. Yathā ca parabhūtebhyo jvālāṅgārādibhyo 'ṅkurasyotpattir na astīty abhyupetam, evaṃ vivakṣitebebhyo 'pi bījādibhyo na astīty avasīyataṃ" (*Prasannapadā* 58.3–6).

22. This basically reproduces the interpretation of Buddhapālita, which Candrakīrti cites at p. 14.1–3. (The Tibetan translation of Buddhapālita's entire commentary on *MMK* 1.1 can be found in Walleser [1913–1914/1970:11.8 ff.])

23. "Athāpi syād anubhava eṣo 'smākam iti" (*Prasannapadā* 58.7).

24. "gang gis rang lta la gnas 'jig rten tshad mar 'dod pas na / 'dir ni rigs pa smras pa nyid kyis lta ko ci zhig bya / gzhan las gzhan 'byung ba yang 'jig rten pa yis rtogs 'gyur te / des na gzhan las skyes yod 'dir ni rigs pas ci zhig dgos" (*Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.22, in La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:101).

25. The issues raised by following this avenue are ones that Candrakīrti elaborates in the section of the *Prasannapadā* that is under discussion here; see Chapter 7. On the basic equivalence, for Dignāga, of *anubhava* and *pratyakṣa*, see Dignāga's commentary on *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, 1.6ab, in Hattori (1968:27).

26. "rigs pa nye bar 'god pa yang dngos po mngon sum ma yin pa kho na la 'os kyi mngon sum la ni ma yin te / de'i phyir 'thad pa med par yang dngos po rnams gzhan las skye ba yod pa kho na'o" (La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:101). Cf. La Vallée Poussin 1907–1911:299; Huntington 1989:231.

27. "Etad apy ayuktaṃ, yasmād anubhava eṣa mṛṣā, anubhavatvāt, taimirikadvicandrādyanubhavavad iti. Tataś ca anubhavasyāpi sādhyasamatvāt tena pratyavasthānaṃ na yuktam iti" (*Prasannapadā* 58.7–9).

28. "rnam kun mkhyen nyid ye shes ni / mngon sum mtshan nyid can du 'dod / gzhan ni nyi tshe ba nyid kyis / mngon sum zhes byar mi 'dod do" (*Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.214, in La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:337).

29. Again, Candrakīrti's argument repeats that of Buddhapālita, who had similarly argued only by reducing to absurdity the opponent's account of "arising from another," without offering his own, alternative account of causal production. Thus, Buddhapālita: "gzhan las kyang skye ba med do / ci'i phyir zhe na / thams cad las thams cad skye bar thal bar 'gyur ba'i phyir ro" (Existents do not arise from something other. Why? Because it would follow that anything [can] arise from anything else) (Walleser 1913–1914/1970:11). Cf. *Prasannapadā* 36.11–12, where Candrakīrti approvingly quotes Buddhapālita's Sanskrit.

30. "Atha syād eṣa eva pramāṇaprameyavyavahāro laukiko 'smābhiḥ śāstreṇānuvarṇita iti" (*Prasannapadā* 58.14–15). Ruegg renders *vyavahāra* throughout as "transactional-pragmatic usage" (2002:102)—a cumbersome translation that obscures Candrakīrti's commitment to conventional discourse. My rendering ("business as usual") reflects the mercantile connotations that are part of the word's conventional range.

31. "Atha syād eṣa eva pramāṇaprameyavyavahāro laukiko 'smābhiḥ śāstreṇānuvarṇita iti. Tadanuvarṇasya tarhi phalaṃ vācyam. Kutārkikaiḥ sa nāśito viparītalakṣaṇābhidhānena. Tasya asmābhiḥ samyaglakṣaṇam uktam iti cet. Etad apy ayuktam. Yadi hi kutārkikair viparītalakṣaṇapraṇayanaṃ [according to the Tibetan available to La Vallée Poussin, *brjod pas*, = Skt. *praṇayanāt* . . . ; adopted by Vaidya 1960b, whose edition I here follow] kṛtaṃ lakṣavaiparītyaṃ lokasya syāt. Tadarthaṃ prayatnasāphalyaṃ syāt. Na ca etad evam iti vyartha evāyaṃ prayatna iti." (*Prasannapadā* 58.15–59.3).

It is here that the anonymous author of the *Lakṣaṇaṭīkā* (cf. n5) specifically identifies Dignāga as Candrakīrti's interlocutor: "laukika eva pramāṇaprameyavyavahāro yukto na pāramārthika ity asmin pakṣe āha / athetyādi / asmābhir Dignāgādibhiḥ / tadanuvarṇanasya phalaṃ vācyam ity atrāryaḥ, kutārkkikair iti Dignāgaḥ, sa iti vyavahāraḥ" (He says that on this view, it makes sense only [to speak of] the worldly convention regarding warrants and warrantable objects, not [what is] ultimate[ly the case]. [This is what is said in the passage] beginning '*Atha* . . . .' ['Its correct characteristics have been explained] by us' means by Dignāga, et al. It is the master [Candrakīrti] who says, at this point, 'the fruit of this intention should be explained,' and it is Dignāga who rejoins, '[It has been destroyed] by bad logicians.' 'It' [here] is business as usual) (Sanskrit text in Yonezawa 2004:142).

32. See *Prasannapadā* 75.6–9 (Chapter 7, n32). It might be wondered, in this regard, how Candrakīrti, as a Mādhyamika, could seemingly endorse the same epistemological project apparently rejected by Nāgārjuna in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*. This is typical of the situations in which Mādhyamikas characteristically invoke the "two truths." Thus, what Nāgārjuna rejects in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* is the possibility of Nyāya epistemology's providing an *ultimately* valid account of the world; and what Candrakīrti will endorse, contra Dignāga, is simply the adequacy of Nyāya as a description of our *conventions*.

33. Dignāga's engagement specifically with the Nyāya account of perception can be found in Hattori (1968:36–41, translation; 190–199, Tibetan text).

34. I render *svalakṣaṇa* as "unique" or "bare particular" when it is Dignāga's usage that is in play, for reasons explained in Part I. One of the difficulties in translating (and therefore in understanding) this section of Candrakīrti's text is that what is in dispute is the meaning of the word *svalakṣaṇa*; the same word thus has different senses, depending on whether it is Dignāga's usage ("unique particular") or what Candrakīrti regards as the conventional sense ("defining characteristic") that is in play. Although this leads to some alternation in translation equivalents, confusion can be avoided if it is recalled that Candrakīrti is challenging Dignāga to make sense of examples of the conventional use of the word, while retaining his definition. Cf. n53, for an example of the confusions that are possible here.

35. This could also be rendered: "is that which has these two characteristics a subject, or not?"; or, taking *lakṣya* more literally as a gerundive, "is that which has these to be characterized, or not?" On any of these readings, Candrakīrti's point remains substantially the same.

36. Citing Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* III.3.113 ("kṛtyalyuṭo bahulam"). See Katre 1987:303.

37. "Kiṃ ca yadi svasāmānyalakṣaṇadvayānurodhena pramāṇadvayam uktaṃ, yasya tallakṣaṇadvayaṃ kiṃ tal lakṣyam asti? Atha nāsti? Yady asti, tadā tadaparaṃ prameyam astīti, kathaṃ pramāṇadvayam? Atha nāsti lakṣyam, tadā lakṣaṇam api nirāśrayaṃ nāstīti kathaṃ pramāṇadvayam? . . . Atha syān na lakṣyate 'neneti lakṣaṇam. Kiṃ tarhi kṛtyalyuṭo bahulam iti karmaṇi lyuṭaṃ kṛtvā lakṣyate tad iti lakṣaṇam. Evam api tenaiva tasya lakṣyamāṇatvāsaṃbhavād—yena tallakṣyate tasya karaṇasya karmaṇo 'rthāntaratvāt—sa eva doṣaḥ" (*Prasannapadā* 59.4–60.3).

38. Katsura makes the same point vis-à-vis Hattori's translation of *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.2 (1991:136); I have discussed this in Arnold 2003. Cf. also Chapter 1, p. 29.

39. Cf., e.g., Bhattacharya 1980, 1980–81.

40. Cf. Chapter 3, nn3 and 4.

41. See n36.

42. Particularly in this section, it is often difficult to translate this word one way or the other, since it is precisely *what the word should mean* that is here in dispute. Cf. n53.

43. "Atha syāt: Jñānasya karaṇatvāt, tasya ca svalakṣaṇāntarbhāvād, ayam adoṣa iti. Ucyate: Iha bhāvānām anyāsādhāraṇam ātmīyaṃ yat svarūpaṃ, tat svalakṣaṇam. Tadyathā pṛthivyāḥ kāṭhinyaṃ, vedanāyā anubhavo, vijñānasya viṣayaprativijñaptiḥ. Tena hi tal lakṣyata iti kṛtvā, prasiddhyanugatāṃ ca vyutpattim avadhūya karmasādhanam [Tib., *las su sgrub pa*] abhyupagacchati. Vijñānasya ca karaṇabhāvaṃ pratipadyamānena-idam uktaṃ bhavati, svalakṣaṇasyaiva karmatā, svalakṣaṇāntarasya karaṇabhāvaś ceti. Tatra yadi vijñānasvalakṣaṇaṃ karaṇam, tasya vyatiriktena karmaṇā bhavitavyam iti sa eva doṣaḥ" (*Prasannapadā* 60.4–61.2).

44. Cf. Chapter 1, n14. Cf. also *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.202–3, where Candrakīrti trots out a similarly Ābhidharmika list of "defining characteristics" (*svalakṣaṇas*) of all of the *skandhas*: "gzugs ni gzugs rung mtshan nyid can / tshor ba myong ba'i bdag nyid can / 'du shes mtshan mar 'dzin pa ste / 'du byed mngon par 'du byed pa'o // yul la so sor rnam rig pa / rnam shes rang gi mtshan nyid do /" (Form has the defining property (*svalakṣaṇa*) of color and shape; *vedanā* has the nature of experience; *saṃjñā* grasps characteristics; *saṃskāras* fashion [things]; the defining property of perceptual awareness is a conception regarding any object [in La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:316]). It might be

argued that Candrakīrti's appeal to characteristically Ābhidharmika examples under-
mines my characterization of Madhyamaka as constitutively framed contra Abhi-
harma. But in taking his examples of such usage particularly from Ābhidharmika liter-
ature, Candrakīrti is just following good *prāsaṅgika* method—that is, using against his
opponent presuppositions to which he believes his opponent is committed. Consider, in
this regard, Dignāga's own attempt to show that his peculiarly technical sense of the
word *svalakṣaṇa* did not contradict accepted usage (cf. Chapter 1, nn20 and 63).

45. As indicated in n43, the Tibetan translation renders this as *las su sgrub pa* (estab-
lished as an object). But the sense of *-sādhana* as "denoting" or "expressive of" (cf. Apte
1957/1992:1666, meaning #4) comes from its being a synonym for *kāraka*—the Sanskrit
grammarians' category for designating the various components of an action. Cf. in this
regard, not only Abhyankar (1977:423, s.v. *sādhana*), but also Bhattacharya (1980, espe-
cially pp. 87–89), who cites similar uses by Candrakīrti of the term *sādhana* in the sense
of *kāraka*. See also Bhattacharya 1980–81. Here, then, Candrakīrti's argument is (in a
characteristically Sanskritic way) a *grammatical* one. In order to highlight the more gen-
eral philosophical relevance of his argument, however, my translation here casts Can-
drakīrti's peculiarly Sanskritic argument in more *epistemic* terms.

46. On this argument, see Loux 1998:116–117. Cf. Sellars 1963:282–283n.

47. To suggest that "bare particulars" must at least be capable of being "essentially"
characterized is basically to second David Armstrong's point that a truly bare particular
"would have no nature, be of no kind or sort" (1989:94); the argument is that this is self-
referentially incoherent insofar as saying something is a "bare particular" just is to say
that it is of some kind or sort. As Armstrong puts it: "Perhaps a particular need not have
any relations to any other particular—perhaps it could be quite isolated. But it must
instantiate at least one property" (ibid.) This basically metaphysical argument is com-
plemented by an epistemological argument like that of Chadha (2001), as summarized
in the critique thereof by Siderits: If (as for Dignāga) perception grasps particulars with-
out the use of concepts, "the cognizer must lack not only the ability to classify the par-
ticular as belonging to some kind or other but even the ability to grasp the particular as
an individual, that is, as distinct from other particulars. For such grasping requires the
ability to think of the particular as *this* individual as distinct from *those* individuals. . . .
There is thus no sense in which such a state could be said to be intentional" (2004:372).
A similar point is made by Goldman (1976).

48. Here my exegesis of Candrakīrti involves some rational reconstruction. Candra-
kīrti argues simply on the basis of standard Sanskritic grammatical analyses of the vari-
ous components of any instance of the action of *lakṣaṇa* (characterization). The *neces-
sarily* relational quality of any instance of "characterization" can be supported by appeal
to the unavoidability of saying at least that particulars can be "essentially characterized."

49. Note, however, that these second-order constructions ("being *X* or *Y*") in fact
neatly reflect one of the main ways of discussing universals in Indian philosophy. One
of the points at issue between *apohavādins* such as Dignāga and, say, Mīmāṃsakas, is
whether a word such as *go* (cow) works by referring to some universal abstraction
(*gotva*) that is common to all cows. In much of the secondary literature on such debates,
words like *gotva* are often rendered as "cow-ness." But, as noted in Chapter 1 (cf.
nn18–19), we are probably better off translating *gotva* as "being a cow." We are, then,

speaking here (as in Chapter 1) about the convergence of the categories of *svalakṣaṇa* and *svabhāva*. But while Candrakīrti is invoking the conventional usage of the former against Dignāga, Candrakīrti himself will apparently reject even the conventional sense of the latter. Here, then, there lurks the question of whether Mādhyamikas like Candrakīrti are guilty of a crucially problematic equivocation involving the word *svabhāva*. We will return to this question in Chapter 7.

50. Dignāga himself had perhaps meant to say as much in claiming that *svalakṣaṇas* are characterized only by their unspecifiability (their *avyapadeśyatva*); what Candrakīrti has shown, however, is the incoherence involved in saying of something that nothing can be said about it.

51. Candrakīrti's critique of *svasaṃvitti* (developed in particular at *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.72–78) is, to be sure, interesting and significant, and his apparent argument that *svasaṃvitti* is (not only not ultimately but) not even conventionally valid occasioned much discussion in the Tibetan context; cf. Williams 1998. Candrakīrti's critique specifically targets the view (arguably held by Dignāga) that *svasaṃvitti* is an intentional sort of cognition that accompanies any cognitive act, with Candrakīrti therefore charging that infinite regress ensues. But this critique may not have any purchase against the interpretation held by such thinkers as Śāntarakṣita and Mokṣākaragupta. (Cf. Chapter 2, p. 47.) This point is developed in Arnold (2005).

52. This is the passage discussed by Thurman (1991) and Eckel (1978), both of whom follow Tsong-kha-pa in regarding Bhāvaviveka as Candrakīrti's target; cf. n5. See also Siderits 1981:141–145.

53. I have left this occurrence of the word *svalakṣaṇa* untranslated in order to reflect the fact that Dignāga is simply reporting the attested example, while remaining neutral with respect to how we understand the word. Siderits says, "it should be pointed out that here the opponent has reverted to the traditional usage of 'svalakṣaṇa,' as meaning 'own defining characteristic'; this is made clear in his reference to hardness as the svalakṣaṇa of earth" (1981:142). But Candrakīrti's interlocutor should be understood as simply reporting the example that Candrakīrti has challenged him to account for. Dignāga's task is to show that the word can mean what he takes it to mean ("unique particular") and yet to make sense given this attested usage. Naturally, it favors Candrakīrti's point that the examples he adduces can be *translated* only using "defining characteristic." Cf. n34.

54. "Athāpi syāt: Yathā śilāputrakasya śarīraṃ rāhoḥ śira iti, śarīraśirovyatiriktaviśeṣaṇāsaṃbhave 'pi, viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāvo 'sti, evaṃ pṛthivyāḥ svalakṣaṇam iti, svalakṣaṇavyatiriktapṛthivyasaṃbhave 'pi, bhaviṣyatīti. Naitad evam, atulyatvāt. Śarīraśiraḥśabdayor hi buddhyādipāṇyādivatsahabhāvipadārthāntarasāpekṣatāpravṛttau, śarīraśiraḥśabdamātrālambano buddhyupajananaḥ sahacāripadārthāntarasākāṅkṣa eva vartate. Kasya śarīraṃ, kasya śira iti? Itaro 'pi viśeṣaṇāntarasaṃbandhanirācikīrṣayā śilāputrakarāhuviśeṣaṇadhvaninā laukikasaṃketānuvidyāyinā pratipattuḥ kāṅkṣām upahantīti yuktam. Iha tu kāṭhinyādivyatiriktapṛthivyādyasaṃbhave sati na yukto viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāvaḥ" (*Prasannapadā* 66.1–8).

We can understand why Tsong-kha-pa sees in this passage an engagement with Bhāvaviveka if we appreciate that on Tsong-kha-pa's view, the crucial distinction between the "Svāntrika" Madhyamaka of Bhāvaviveka and Candrakīrti's "Prāsaṅgika" Madhyamaka involves the concept of *svalakṣaṇa*. Specifically, Tsong-kha-pa thinks that

Bhāvaviveka must accept the existents posited by an opponent as "being established by virtue of self-character" (rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa = svalakṣaṇena siddha). But Tsong-kha-pa's understanding of this issue involves a sense of *svalakṣaṇa* that is not present in Candrakīrti. Thurman (translating Tsong-kha-pa) is right to see the present discussion as turning on different understandings of the word *svalakṣaṇa*: "the intrinsic identity (*svalakṣaṇa*) involved in (this sort of) intrinsically identifiable status is altogether quite different from the 'ultimate particular' (*svalakṣaṇa*) explained precisely as 'functional capacity' in the logicians' treatises, and from the 'defining characteristic' (*svalakṣaṇa*) explained as that which characterizes (something as) different from everything else, such as heat in the case of fire, in the *Abhidharma Scripture*, etc." (1991:292). But it is really only the latter two senses of *svalakṣaṇa* that are in play in our text from the *Prasannapadā*, with Tsong-kha-pa himself having introduced (in the first occurrence reflected in Thurman's translation) an additional sense. On this point, cf. Ruegg 2004: 338–339.

55. Most translators of this passage have followed Stcherbatsky in rendering *śilāputraka* as "statue" (1927/1989:158), though Thurman follows the Tibetan translation (*mchi gu*) in opting for the primary sense of the word as "pestle" (1991:292). (Cf. Ruegg 2002:115n206.) If we read it that way, the point of the example is less clear. It thus seems preferable to understand this as "statue," since in that case the point of the example is the same as that of the "Rāhu's head" example; both are adduced, that is, as examples of expressions that involve two terms, but refer to only one thing.

56. The expression "Rāhu's head" is commonly invoked in Indian philosophy; cf., e.g., the usage attributed, in the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*, to the (materialist) Cārvākas, who point out that expressions like "my body" should not be taken as evidence of a really existing subject of the genitive; rather, such expressions are, like "Rāhu's head," merely "figurative" ("mama śarīram iti vyavahāro rāhoḥ śira ityādivad aupacārikaḥ" [*Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*, p. 2]).

57. Cf. n53.

58. On the notion of *ākāṅkṣā*, see, *inter alia*, Matilal 1990:50, 109–110; Siderits 1981:142.

59. "na hi saṃvṛtir nirupādānā yujyate" (Lévi 1925:16.13–14). Cf. p. 170, for a strikingly similar contention from Burton (1999).

60. Here, *upādāna* is preceded by *tṛṣṇā* (desire), and in turn produces *bhava* ("being" or "existence"). Thus, it is in dependence upon desire that there is the "appropriation" (*upādāna*) of continued existence, which in turn leads to birth, etc. With this active sense of the word apparently in mind, Hayes notes: "[The word *upādāna*] names the action of clinging or being attached. What this means, then, is that as a result of one's attachments, one creates the objects of one's own experience" (1994:355). Such a notion is, no doubt, in play in this word, though it can be exploited to understand *MMK* 24.18 in the way that, for example, Burton (1999) does. *MMK* 24.18 reads rather differently if, instead, one stresses the sense of the word that Candrakīrti seems to emphasize; see below.

61. See, e.g., Rhys Davids and Stede (1921–1925/1995:149) and Edgerton (1953/1970:145), both of which give this as the primary meaning. Cf. Apte 1957/1992:471 (meanings 9 and 10). These different meanings of the word *upādāna* reflect the different glosses of the *-ana* suffix; cf. Chapter 3, nn3 and 4, as well as Candrakīrti's citation of Pāṇini's rule on this (n36).

62. This understanding of *upādāna* as concerning the underlying referents of expressions could perhaps be qualified vis-à-vis the theory of reference that Dignāga develops in the form of *apohavāda*. Thus, the point of the *apoha* doctrine (cf. Chapter 2, n34) is to avoid positing that really existent universals are the referents of words, while allowing that words do not themselves refer to unique particulars. It may be that Candrakīrti (who, as far as I am aware, nowhere addresses *apohavāda*) underestimates the subtlety of Dignāga's *apoha* doctrine. Hayes would likely think so; consider, for example, his explication of how Dignāga accounts for the question of whether different words are synonymous. He concludes: "But there is not necessarily a basis in reality for our conventions being as they are" (1988:208). If I understand the present section of the *Prasannapadā* correctly, Candrakīrti is, in effect, claiming that his interlocutor is committed to the opposite view.

63. The statue is here a "qualifier" because, in the genitive case, it qualifies the word 'body,' removing our semantic expectation to know *whose* body is being referred to.

64. "Api ca pudgalādiprajñaptivat, saśarīropādānasya śilāputrakasyopādātur laukikavyavahārāṅgabhūtasya viśeṣaṇasya-avicāraprasiddhasya sadbhāvāt, śira-upādānasya ca rāhor upādātuḥ sadbhāvād, ayuktam etan nidarśanaṃ" (*Prasannapadā* 67.3–5).

65. Cf. Chapter 1, p. 18.

66. "Śarīraśirovyatiriktasya-arthāntarasya-asiddhes, tanmātrasya-upalambhāt, siddham eva nidarśanam iti cet, na etad evaṃ, laukike vyavahāra itthaṃvicārāpravṛtter avicārataś ca laukikapadārthānām astitvāt. Yathaiva hi rūpādivyatirekeṇa vicāryamāṇa ātmā na saṃbhavati, api ca lokasaṃvṛtyā skandhān upādāya-asya-astitvaṃ, evaṃ rāhuśilāputrakayor apīti nāsti nidarśanasiddhiḥ" (*Prasannapadā* 67.6–10).

It might be thought counterintuitive that the self's existence *skandhān upādāya* is allowed as "conventional"; if the entire Buddhist critique of a "self" is to have any value, it would seem that the "convention" in the matter would really be that the self exists *ātmanā* or *svabhāvena* (that is, that it exists "in itself" or "essentially"). Perhaps this thought led Siderits to mistranslate this passage as follows: "but by worldly convention there is the reality of that, *not* depending on the skandhas" (1981:144; emphasis added)— as though, presumably (but impossibly), *skandhān upādāya* were to be construed as a compound: *skandha-anupādāya*. Candrakīrti's point here is not that the self's existing "relative to the aggregates" is the *content* of the convention, but that, given the aggregates as a basis of imputation, there can arise the convention that the self exists.

67. On this point, cf. n80.

68. "Evaṃ pṛthivyādīnāṃ yady api kāṭhinyādivyatiriktaṃ vicāryamāṇaṃ lakṣyaṃ nāsti, lakṣyavyatirekeṇa ca lakṣaṇaṃ nirāśrayaṃ, tathāpi saṃvṛtir eṣeti parasparāpekṣāmātratayā siddhyā siddhiṃ vyavasthāpayāṃbabhūvur ācāryāḥ" (*Prasannapadā* 67.10–12).

69. "Na ca upapattyā vicāryamāṇānāṃ śilāputrakādīnām eva-asaṃbhavaḥ, kiṃ tarhi vakṣyamāṇayā yuktyā rūpavedanādīnām api nāsti saṃbhava iti; teṣām api saṃvṛtyā <u>śilāputraka iva-astitvam āstheyam</u> syāt. Na caitad evam ity asad etat" (*Prasannapadā* 68.1–4; emphasis added).

The underlined portion here reflects a possible textual problem. I have made what seems to me the best sense of this passage by rejecting an emendation proposed by La Vallée Poussin, who follows some versions of the Tibetan ("de dag kyang mchi gu la sogs pa bzhin du kun rdzob tu yod pa ma yin pa nyid du khas blangs par 'gyur na") in sug-

gesting the reading: "teṣām api saṃvṛtyā śilāputrak*ādivan nāstitvam* āstheyaṃ syāt" (Vaidya [1960b:23] adopts La Vallée Poussin's emendation; de Jong [1978] does not comment). This gives the opposite of my sentence: "They, too, like statues and so forth, would have to be accepted as *not* existing conventionally." This is a conceptually possible reading, according to which Candrakīrti's point must be that even the conventional existence of such things would have to be disallowed *if it were thought* (counterfactually) that the conventional could be characterized by critical examination. It would, then, be the latter that Candrakīrti here means to deny; what cannot be doubted, in any case, is that the *skandhas* fail to survive critical examination.

The reading I prefer, though, seems more straightforwardly to follow what precedes it, as Candrakīrti's point is, instead, that the merely "conventional" existence of the *skandhas* is precisely what we have to accept. I take this as stated counterfactually, then, insofar as it is a conclusion that he thinks his interlocutor wishes to avoid. (For a conceptually similar passage, see Chapter 7, n15.) It is the optative here that gives pause; this makes the sentence counterfactual, but it is not immediately clear (given the characteristically laconic "na caitad evam ity asad etat" that follows) what is counterfactual about it. My reading is warranted, however, by all the manuscripts available to La Vallée Poussin (cf. his p. 68n3). Ruegg (2002:118, with n217) reads it as I do, noting some divergence among different editions of the Tibetan canon, with the sDe-dge edition not warranting La Vallée Poussin's emendation.

70. This sentence is not preserved in the available Sanskrit texts of the *Prasannapadā*, but can be found in the Tibetan translation of the text: "brten nas brtags par rnam par bzhag pa 'di yang dbu ma la 'jug ba las rgyas par bstan pas de nyid las yongs su btsal bar bya'o." (Cf. La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:68n4.) Given the frequency of Candrakīrti's reference to the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, there is little reason to think this sentence problematic—though it is not immediately clear how much of the foregoing discussion is to be included as having been concerned with a "presentation of *upādāya prajñapti*." Presumably, Candrakīrti refers back to where he first exemplifies what he sees as the conventional usage of *svalakṣaṇa* (p. 60.5), and it is quite possible that he means to characterize the entire discussion of *svalakṣaṇas* as concerning *upādāya prajñapti*.

71. In a footnote to Tsong-kha-pa's quotation of Candrakīrti's concluding sentence, Thurman (1991:295n19) refers us instead to *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.32ff. It will, I think, become sufficiently clear that the passages to which I will now attend concern the topic of *upādāya prajñapti*—though of course, given the absence of footnotes in Indian philosophy, one can never be sure precisely what Candrakīrti had in mind.

72. Interestingly, there is a text on the subject of *upādāya prajñapti* attributed to Dignāga, extant only in Chinese translation: the *Ch'ü-yin-chia-she-lun* (Taishō 1622) or *Upādāyaprajñaptiprakaraṇa*; cf. Kitagawa 1957. While I am not competent to consult the available Chinese text, Kitagawa's summary suggests that it says the opposite of what we would expect, given Dignāga's commitments: "Why is it . . . that only the elements of the universe are truly capable of being the objects of designation [as Kitagawa renders *prajñapti*]? The reason is that they are real in the strict sense of the word and, therefore, are in possession of the real *svabhāvas* (= independent natures)" (1957:133). What we would expect, though, would be for Dignāga's "abstractions" (*sāmānyalakṣaṇas*) to be the referents of "designation," insofar as *prajñapti* typically denotes the kinds of wholes

that are extrapolated, by way of conceptual elaboration, from parts. Kitagawa's warranted suspicions about the authenticity of this text's attribution to Dignāga make it all the more puzzling that Herzberger (1986) appeals to this text as evidence for her contention that, with the category of *upādāya prajñapti*, Dignāga effectively posits something intermediate between *sva-* and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇas*. The questionable authenticity of this text is only part of what makes Herzberger claim dubious. For more on this, see Katsura 1991.

73. For the latter, see, in addition to the works addressed below, Warder (1971). For an indication of the range of the term, cf., *inter alia*, Law (1969: ix), which gives several equivalents adduced in the commentary to the Pali *Puggalapaññatti*.

74. As suggested in Chapter 5, David Burton has argued that this is why, Nāgārjuna's intention notwithstanding, Madhyamaka ends up as a sort of nihilism: "If the mind's activity of conceptual construction did not occur, there would be no entities, and hence no true nature *of* entities" (1999:68). Burton's interpretation is discussed further below.

75. Hence, Williams's apt characterization (Williams and Tribe 2000:150) of Nāgārjuna's position as *prajñaptimātra* ("nothing but *prajñapti*")—a coinage that resonates with the similar word *vijñaptimātratā*, favored by Yogācāra Buddhists who argue for there "being nothing but representations." Williams has appropriately emphasized the Ābhidharmika background to the Mādhyamika usage. See Williams 1998:12–15n13; 2000 (especially pp. 150–152). This analysis grows out of Williams's earlier (1981) attention to the *dravyasat/prajñaptisat* distinction.

76. Thus, among the senses of the word in a non-Buddhist context is "information" or "informing"; cf. Apte 1957/1992:1063.

77. A similar point is made by Richard Hayes (1988a), the title of whose study of Dignāga (*Dignāga on the Interpretation of Signs*) reflects Hayes's emphasis on Dignāga as having treated the philosophy of language as simply a subset of the issue of inference in general.

78. Williams 1991:207. This remark comes in the context of a critique of Huntington's (1989) influential interpretation of Madhyamaka, which may said to attribute to Madhyamaka the extreme sort of "coherentism" that is characteristic of much postmodernist thought.

79. Thus, a chariot could conceivably be (1) different from its parts; (2) identical to them; (3) in possession of them; (4) in them; (5) they in it; (6) a composition of its parts; or (7) in the shape of the parts. Of course, it is Candrakīrti's objective to show that none of these relationships can be conceived coherently. See La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:271–272; Huntington 1989:176. For a good discussion of this section of the *Madhyamakāvatāra,* see Kapstein 2001:100–102.

80. Candrakīrti can make the surprising claim that the self is not even *conventionally* established in this case because, if one is searching by using this sevenfold analysis, then one is ipso facto performing the kind of analytical operation that is definitively characteristic of the nonconventional. That is, searching in this way is precisely what defines the search for ultimate truth, and the "conventional" can be said to be in play only when there is no such analysis. (Cf. e.g., p. 160.)

It is important to note, however, that Candrakīrti's project perhaps runs into problems to the extent that he defines "conventional" as equivalent to "lacking in critical

analysis." If one were to pursue a critique of Candrakīrti, this point would surely be important—and indeed, one could characterize the debate between Candrakīrti and Bhāvaviveka (that is, between the "Prāsaṅgika" and "Svātantrika" Mādhyamikas, respectively) as concerning precisely this point. That is, the "Svātantrika" critics of Candrakīrti can be seen as aiming precisely to allow for the ways in which we make distinctions, strictly at the conventional level, between "true" and "false" conventions. Svātantrikas like Jñānagarbha and Śāntarakṣita introduced precisely such a distinction with their notion of *tathya-* and *mithyā-saṃvṛti* ("true" and "false conventional"). See Eckel 1987: 54–55, 75, 111–112, 123; Ichigō 1989:160. As Mark Siderits once pointed out to me (personal communication), Candrakīrti's contrary notion of the conventional may be related to the fact that he was writing in a context lacking in the notion of scientific progress—a point also suggested by Williams: "[w]hat the 'world' considers to be the case changes, and the change does (often) embody greater accuracy" (1998:83n).

81. "shing rta rang gi yan lag las gzhan 'dod min zhes bya ba la sogs pa'i tshul 'dis de rnam pa bdun du btsal ba na, don dam pa dang kun rdzob tu shing rta 'grub par mi 'gyur mod kyi, de lta na yang di ni rnam par dpyad pa spangs te sngon po la sogs pa dang tshor ba la sogs pa ltar 'jig rten nyid las 'phang lo la sogs pa yan lag rnams la brten nas 'dogs pa yin no" (La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:277.9–14).

82. Cf. Negi (2000:2599; s.v. *'dogs pa*), which cites a comparable Tibetan translation ("phung po rnams rgyur byas nas gang zag tu 'dogs so") from the *Abhidharmako-śabhāṣyam*: "skandhān pudgala upādāya prajñapyate" (Pradhan 1975:461). (Note that the gerund *upādāya* is here rendered in Tibetan not as *brten nas*, but as *rgyur byas nas*, which amounts to the same thing. Both translation equivalents are attested in the Tibetan translation of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*.)

83. This expression might seem (in Sanskrit as in English) ungrammatical because it seems to involve a dangling participle. That the expression is not, in fact, problematic is perhaps a function of *upādāya*'s being, in effect, an indeclinable form (as in the Sanskrit quotation from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, in n82). Gillon (2003) may be relevant here; see pp.11–13 for some similar uses of gerunds that are prima facie nongrammatical.

84. "de'i phyir, rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba rkyen nyid 'di pa tsam khas blangs pa ltar brten nas brtags pa khas blangs pa'i phyir, kho bo cag gi phyogs la 'jig rten gyi tha snyad chad par thal bar mi 'gyur" (La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:277.14–17; emphasis added).

85. "sarvathāsiddhasvalakṣaṇā eva padārthā mūrkhajanasya visaṃvādakenātmanā pratītya vopādāya vā varamānā" (Sanskrit in Tillemans 1990:2:41; emphasis added).

86. "'byuṅ ba chen po bzhin du rten ciṅ 'brel par 'byuṅ ba 'am brten nas btags par ci ste" (Sanskrit no longer extant; Tibetan in Tillemans 1990:2:63).

87. "rten ciṅ 'brel par 'byuṅ ba daṅ brten nas btags pa zhes bya ba lam bzang po spangs nas mu stegs can" (Tibetan in Tillemans 1990:2:67). The context for these remarks is the section of *Catuḥśatakavṛtti* XIII in which Candrakīrti rejects Dignāga's understanding of *pratyakṣa*. (Cf. Tillemans 1990:1:176–178.) Here, Candrakīrti characterizes his interlocutor as a *rtog ge ba* (Skt., *tārkika* [logician]). This remark concludes a discussion of how best to etymologize *pratyakṣa*, and it is clear from this discussion (which closely parallels *Prasannapadā* 69.13–75.5, considered in Chapter 7) that Candrakīrti has Dignāga in mind.

88. See Das 1902:536–537; note that Das attests many nontechnical uses of the gerund *rten nas* (= Skt. *upādāya*) as having the same sense that it has in rendering the technical expression *upādāya prajñapti*. See also n82.

89. Cf., e.g., Kapstein 1987:99–100. Cf. also Warder (1971:190), which mentions the same observation from Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Kathāvatthu*. For the text referred to by Kapstein see Pradhan (1975:461); cf. n82. Another interesting gloss on *upādāya* is found in Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, which frequently uses the word in a way that Rahula appropriately renders *en raison de* (e.g., Rahula 1980:17, 174). At one point, Asaṅga's text reads: "ekadeśāśrayībhāvārtha upādāyārthaḥ" (the sense of *upādāya* is the sense of being dependent on a part [Gokhale 1947:31]).

90. "de bzhin 'jig rten grags pas phung po dang, khams dang de bzhin skye mched drug brten nas [= Skt. *upādāya*], bdag kyang nye bar len po [= Skt. *upādātṛ*] nyid du 'dod" (*Madhyamakāvatāra*, 162a-c, in La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:281.10–12).

91. "ji ltar 'phang lo la sogs pa dag la brten nas shing rtar 'dogs shing der 'phang lo la sogs pa dag nye bar len pa yin la shing rta nye bar len pa po yin pa, de bzhin du, bdag kyang kun rdzob kyi brten par 'jig rten gyi tha snyad kun tu mi bcad par bya ba'i phyir, shing rta ltar nye bar len pa por 'dod pa yin no. phung po lnga po dang khams drug dang skye mched drug ni bdag de'i nye bar len pa ste, phung po la sogs pa rnams la brten nas bdag tu brtags pa'i phyir ro, ji ltar 'phang lo la sogs pa dag shing rta'i nye bar len pa yin pa, de bzhin du phung lo la sogs pa rnams kyang bdag gi nye bar len pa'o zhes bya'o" (La Vallée Poussin 1912/1970a:281.13–282.282.5; emphasis added). Cf. "yaḥ skandhapañcakasya-upādānākhyasya-upādātā skandhān upādāya prajñapyate" (that which is the appropriator of the five aggregates, which are called the appropriated basis, is indicated relative to the aggregates [*Catuḥśatakavṛtti* XII, in Tillemans 1990:2:41]).

92. Cf. Siderits 1997a. Siderits is right to argue that Buddhist analyses of the self are best understood as generally "reductionist," but not "eliminativist"—and that attribution of the latter position to Buddhists neglects the importance of the "two truths" hermeneutic in Buddhism. Siderits, however, is considering *Ābhidhārmika* Buddhism, and Candrakīrti is arguing that the *Ābhidhārmika* understanding of the two truths (with its view that the "ultimate truth" represents a privileged level of description in comparison to which the "conventionally true" pales) is precisely what renders theirs an "eliminativist" project. Indeed, we might very well adopt "eliminativism" as a translation for *ucchedavāda* (nihilism), one of the two extremes constitutively eschewed by Madhyamaka.

93. "brten nas gdags pa la yang dag par brten pa na, bdag rnam pa thams cad du brtan pa dang mi brtan pa la sogs pa'i rtog pa'i brten ma yin pa nyid pas, rtag pa dang mi rtag pa la sogs pa'i rtog pa zlog pa sla bar 'gyur ro" (La Vallée Poussin 1912/1970a:282.9–12).

94. "dngos yod min phyir 'di ni brtan min zhing, mi brtan nyid min 'di ni skye 'jig min, 'di la rtag pa nyid la sogs pa yang, yod min de nyid dang ni gzhan nyid med" (*Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.163, in La Vallée Poussin 1912/1970a:282.14–17).

95. "de'i phyir 'di ni mi brtan pa nyid du yang mi 'thad do" (La Vallée Poussin 1912/1970a:283.15).

96. "gal te de dag rdzas yod na, de dag yongs su zad 'gyur grang, med pa de dag mi zad de, de phyir de dag zad med gsungs" (ibid., 285.17–20). The same point is also made specifically with respect to Dignāga's category of *svalakṣaṇa*: "gal te rang gi mtshan nyid brten 'gyur na / de la skur pas dngos po 'jig pa'i phyir / stong nyid dngos po 'jig pa'i rgyur

'gyur na / de ni rigs med de phyir dngos yod min" (If [an entity exists] in dependence on *svalakṣaṇas*, then through negation of those the entity would be destroyed, and emptiness would be the cause of its destruction. [That is, if "emptiness" were taken as negating really existent *svalakṣaṇas*, then it would be a nihilistic doctrine.] This is not the case, however, because entities do no [ultimately] exist [*Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.34, in La Vallée Poussin 1912/1970a:117]). Here, I have followed the translation of Huntington (1989:161).

97. Thus, when the "subject" in question is a person, such is said to be "made known" (*prajñapyate*) "relative to the aggregates" (*skandhān upādāya*). Note, in this connection, that Bhāvaviveka similarly glosses Nāgārjuna's "upādāya prajñapti" as "*upādānam upādāya*" ("nye bar len pa dag la brten nas gdags pa"; cf. Nagao 1991:261).

98. "Each actual entity is 'divisible' in an indefinite number of ways, and each way of 'division' yields its definite quota of prehensions. A prehension reproduces in itself the general characteristics of an actual entity: it is referent to an external world, and in this sense will be said to have a 'vector character'; it involves emotion, and purpose, and valuation, and causation. In fact, any characteristic of an actual entity is reproduced in a prehension" (Whitehead 1978:19).

99. Ibid., 23.

100. *MMK* 24.18, in La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:503. The Tibetan is, characteristically, quite close: "rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba gang / de ni stong pa nyid du bshad / de ni brten nas gdags pa ste / de nyid dbu ma'i lam yin no //."

101. Thus, for example, Inada: "We declare that whatever is relational origination is *śūnyatā. It is a provisional name (i.e., thought construction) for the mutuality (of being)* and, indeed, it is the middle path" (1970/1993:148; emphasis added). Inada misconstrues the gerund, and it almost seems as if he has read *upādāya* as a noun in the dative case; otherwise, there is no way to account for his "for the mutuality (of being)." Streng reads: "The 'originating dependently' we call 'emptiness'; *This apprehension, i.e., taking into account [all other things]*, is the understanding of the middle way" (1967:213; emphasis added). Streng sees the gerund, but seems not to see that *prajñapti* is its implicit subject or to appreciate its implicit accusative (per Candrakīrti, "upādānam upādāya"). Kalupahana misleads in a different way: "We state that whatever is dependent arising, that is emptiness. *That is dependent upon convention*" (1986:339; emphasis added). Kalupahana rightly takes *upādāya* in the sense of "dependent," but wrongly takes *prajñapti* as that *upon which* emptiness depends and, hence, misses the correlation of emptiness with *prajñapti*.

Garfield's recent translation from the Tibetan translation of Nāgārjuna's text best conveys the significance of this verse: "Whatever is dependently co-arisen, That is explained to be emptiness. That, being a dependent designation, Is itself the middle way" (1995:69). Garfield understands "that" to refer to "emptiness," and correctly sees this as being in apposition to *prajñapti* (designation), so that it is *emptiness,* itself being dependent, which is a *prajñapti*.

102. Cf. Chapter 5, pp. 137–138. As indicated there, Burton is right to understand the verse as alluding to the terms of the Ābhidharmika debate.

103. Burton 1999:92; cf. the passage from Sthiramati cited at pp. 158–159. This presupposition is the basis for Burton's claim that Nāgārjuna unwittingly espouses nihilism: "if there is nothing unconstructed *out of which* and *by whom/which* conceptually con-

structed entities can be constructed, then it is impossible that these conceptually con-
structed entities themselves can exist" (Burton 1999:4–5).

104. Cf. the succinct observations on *MMK* 24.18 by Claus Oetke: "because of the uni-
versality of the *pratītyasamutpāda* principle all *dharmas* whatsoever are merely *upādāya
prajñaptis* i.e. everything there is has only the status of what tradition described by the
term *prajñaptisat*. There is nothing which meets the necessary requirements for the sta-
tus of a *paramārthasat*-entity, and as the phrase '*x* has a *svabhāva*' probably has to be
taken as an idiomatic variant for the concept of something's being constituted by or
founded in entities of the *paramārtha*-level it follows that there is no *dharma* of which
it can be said that it possesses a *svabhāva*" (1991:323n).

105. The entirely cognitive sense of this rendering is similarly implied by Jacques
May, who translates "désignation métaphorique" (1959:161n494). Cf. also May 1978 (es-
pecially pp. 240–241).

106. "Yā ca-iyaṃ svabhāvaśūnyatā sā prajñaptir upādāya. Saiva śūnyatā upādāya pra-
jñaptir iti vyavasthāpyate. Cakrādīny upādāya rathāṅgāni rathaḥ prajñapyate. Tasya yā
svāṅgāny upādāya prajñaptiḥ sā svabhāvena-anutpattiḥ, yā ca svabhāvena-anutpattiḥ
sā śūnyatā. Saiva svabhāvānutpattilakṣaṇā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipad iti vyavasthā-
pyate. Yasya hi svabhāvena-anutpattis tasya-astitvābhāvaḥ, svabhāvena ca-anutpannasya
vigamābhāvān nāstitvābhāva iti. Ato bhāvābhāvāntadvayarahitatvāt sarvasvabhāvānut-
pattilakṣaṇā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipan madhyamo mārga ity ucyate. Tad evaṃ pratī-
tyasamutpādasyava-etā viśeṣasaṃjñāḥ śūnyatā upādāya prajñaptir madhyamā pratipad
iti" (*Prasannapadā* 504.8–15; emphasis added).

107. This clarifies in particular the problem with Kalupahana's translation (n101),
which has it that it is *upon prajñapti* (convention) that emptiness depends—when in
fact, the converse point is being made: it is *prajñaptayaḥ* (which are the same as "empti-
ness") that depend on something.

108. See n74. Siderits's point has not been thus qualified; indeed, he has long worked
to advance the interpretation of Madhyamaka as constitutively "antirealist" (though his
interpretation differs substantially from Burton's). See Siderits 1988, 1989; see also Chap-
ter 7, n63.

109. Sthiramati's commentary on Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā* clearly frames Vasuban-
dhu's project as particularly opposed to Madhyamaka, saying that "this treatise is under-
taken in order to refute the extremists who say that not only knowables, but also cog-
nition itself exists only conventionally and not ultimately" (vijñeyavad vijñānam api
saṃvṛtita eva na paramārthata ity. . . apy ekāntavādasya pratiṣedārthaḥ prakaraṇāram-
bhaḥ [Lévi 1925:15]). Against this, Vasubandhu urges (on Sthiramati's reading) that "no
knowables actually exist, because of their being only imagined by nature; but cognition,
because of its being dependently originated, is to be accepted as existing substantially"
(evaṃ ca sarvaṃ vijñeyaṃ parikalpitasvabhāvatvād vastuto na vidyate, vijñānaṃ punaḥ
pratītyasamutpannatvād dravyato 'stīty abhyupeyam [ibid., 16]). This idealist point
seems implied, as well, by Burton's claim that "[i]f the mind's activity of conceptual con-
struction did not occur, there would be no entities" (1999:68).

110. An idea that is taken up again in Chapter 7.

111. "apratītyasamutpanno dharmaḥ kaścin na vidyate" (*MMK* 24.19, in La Vallée
Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:505.2–3).

112. "na saṃsārasya nirvāṇāt kiṃ cid asti viśeṣaṇam" (*MMK* 25.19, in La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:535.2–3).

113. This is the kind of reading of Madhyamaka that Stcherbatsky (1927/1989) and Murti (1960) have ventured.

114. Cf. Chapter 7, n32.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. "Atha syāt: Kim anayā sūkṣmekṣiyā? Naiva hi vayaṃ sarvapramāṇaprameyavyavahāraṃ satyam ity ācakṣmahe, kiṃ tu lokaprasiddhir eṣāmunā nyāyena vyavasthāpyata iti" (*Prasannapadā* 68.5–6).

2. "Ucyate: vayam apy evaṃ brūmaḥ: Kim anayā sūkṣmekṣiyā laukikavyavahāre 'vatārikayā? Tiṣṭhatu tāvad eṣā viparyāsamātrāsāditātmabhāvasattākā saṃvṛtir mumukṣūṇāṃ mokṣāvāhakakuśalamūlopacayahetur, yāvan na tattvādhigama iti. Bhavāṃs tv etāṃ saṃvṛtiparamārthasatyavibhāgadurvidagdhabuddhitayā kva cid upapattim avatārya-anyāyato nāśyati. So 'ham saṃvṛtisatyavyavasthāvaicakṣaṇyāl laukika eva pakṣe sthitvā, saṃvṛtyekadeśanirākaraṇopakṣipt<u>opapattyantarāntaram</u> [emend to *upapattyantaram*] upapattyantareṇa vinivartayan <u>lokaṃ vṛddha</u> [emend to *lokavṛddha*] iva lokācārāt paribhraśymānaṃ bhavantam eva nivartayāmi, na tu saṃvṛtim. Tasmād yadi laukiko vyavahāras, tadā-avaśyaṃ lakṣaṇavallakṣyeṇāpi bhavitavyam; tataś ca sa eva doṣaḥ. Atha paramārthas, tadā lakṣyābhāvāl lakṣaṇadvayam api nāstīti, kutaḥ pramāṇadvayam?" (*Prasannapadā* 68.7–69.7).

3. Cf. Chapter 6, p. 147.

4. Cf. "vyavahāram anāśritya paramārtho na deśyate / paramārtham anāgamya nirvāṇam na-adhigamyate" (without relying on convention, the ultimate is not taught; without having understood the ultimate, nirvāṇa is not apprehended [*MMK* 24.10, in La Vallee Poussin 1970b 494.12–13]).

5. Cf. also, Candrakīrti's subsequent remark: "Atha śabdānām evaṃ kriyākārakasaṃbandhapūrvikā vyutpattir nāṅgīkriyate. Tad idam atikaṣṭam. Tair eva kriyākārakasaṃbandhapravṛttaiḥ śabdair bhavān vyavaharati, śabdārthaṃ kriyākaraṇādikaṃ ca na-icchatīti. Aho bata-icchāmātrapratibaddhapravṛttitā bhavataḥ" (Now perhaps it is not accepted [by you] that the derivation of words thus depends on a connection between action and agent. This is extremely problematic. You transact your business by those very words whose sense is due to a connection between action and agent, and yet you do not acknowledge actions and instruments and so forth as the meaning[s] of words. You fool! Your sense is bound to a mere fancy [*Prasannapadā* 69.8–10]).

6. Cf. the scriptural passage endorsed by Candrakīrti: "loko mayā sārdhaṃ vivadati, na-ahaṃ lokena sārdhaṃ vivadāmi // yal loke 'sti saṃmataṃ, tan mamāpy asti saṃmataṃ / yal loke nāsti saṃmataṃ mamāpi tan nāsti saṃmatam" (The world disputes me, I do not dispute with the world; what is admitted as existing in the world, that is agreed by me, too, to exist; that which is admitted in the world as not existing, that is agreed by me, too, not to exist [at *Prasannapadā* 370.6–8, and in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* 179.17–20]; cf. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* III.22.94). It seems difficult, however, to reconcile such passages with Candrakīrti's Buddhist rejection of the *ātman*, which is surely thought by

many in the world to exist! Here, we glimpse a crucial tension in Madhyamaka—a point developed in this chapter.

7. "Kiṃ ca ghaṭaḥ pratyakṣa ity evam ādikasya laukikavyavahārasya-asaṃgrahād, anāryavyavahārābhyupagamāc ca, avyāpitā lakṣaṇasya-iti na yuktam etat" (*Prasanna-padā* 69.13–14).

8. One might also (with Siderits [1981:148 ff.]; see also Arnold 2001a:259, where it is taken the same way) take the salient point of the example "a jar is perceptible" to be that it is wholes like jars that are perceptible, not the foundationalist's fleeting sense-data. This is, to be sure, as Candrakīrti would wish to argue, and it is clearly one implication of this conventional usage. But Candrakīrti's way of making the point is, in characteristically Sanskritic fashion, to emphasize the grammatical aspect. For a parallel argument, cf. chapter 13 of Candrakīrti's *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*, §15 (following the divisions of Tillemans), the Tibetan text of which is in Tillemans (1990:2:66–67, with Tillemans's translation in 1:178–179). See also Tillemans's remark on this (1990:1:44). In fact, *pratyakṣa* must be an adjective in the example adduced by Candrakīrti; the noun form of the word is neuter, and in Candrakīrti's example it has taken the masculine gender of the word (*ghaṭaḥ*) that it modifies. (The rule that explains this is cited by Dharmottara, who also criticizes Dignāga's etymology; see n17 for the reference.) That Candrakīrti has a good claim to expressing the primary sense of the word is reflected in Apte (1992:1085), who gives several adjectival senses first.

9. As before when discussing *svalakṣaṇa* (cf. Chapter 6, nn34 and 53), we here have an occurrence of the word *pratyakṣa* that is best left untranslated, since Candrakīrti's interlocutor is just reporting the conventional usage—though I cannot (as an English translation of the example requires) translate this as "perceptible," since that is the usage the interlocutor wants to minimize.

10. The same example is discussed in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* (*ad Abhidharmakośa* 1.10; Pradhan 1975:7). Cf. *Dhammapada* 14.16 (stanza 194).

11. Dignāga's appeal to *upacāra* in his account of *pratyakṣa* is much as Candrakīrti here represents it: "The word *pratyakṣa* is used with respect to three things: the reliable warrant, the awareness [that results from the exercise thereof], and the object [of this awareness]. With respect to these, [the usage designating] the reliable warrant is primary, and the others are secondary [*nye bar btags* = Skt., *aupacārika*]. In this regard an object is [figuratively] characterized as '*pratyakṣa*' since it is cognized by [the reliable warrant called] *pratyakṣa*" (*Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.41c-d; "mngon sum gyi sgra ni tshad ma dang shes pa dang yul gsum la 'jug go. de la tshad ma la ni gtso bo yin la, gzhan dag la ni nye bar btags pa yin te: de la yul la ni mngon sum gyi gzhal bya yin pa'i phyir mngon sum du btags pa yin no" [Hattori 1968:233]).

12. See, e.g., *Kāvyaprakāśa*, 2.8 ff. (Karmarkar 1965:39 ff.).

13. So Candrakīrti: "utpādo hi loke sukhavyatirekeṇopalabdhaḥ. Sa ca saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇasvabhāvatvād anekaduṣkaraśatahetutvād, asukha eva. Sa sukha iti vyapadiśyamā-no 'saṃbaddha evety; evaṃvidhe viṣaye yukta upacāraḥ" (For in the world, birth is perceived as separate from happiness. Indeed, because of [its] having as its nature the characteristic of [being] compounded, which fact is the cause of many hundreds of evils, it [i.e., birth] is precisely *un*happiness. With respect to the sort of object where what is

being expressed—'it [birth] is happiness'—is incoherent, figurative usage makes sense [*Prasannapadā* 70.4–6]).

14. "Ghaṭaḥ pratyakṣa ity atra tu, na hi ghaṭo nāma kaścid yo 'pratyakṣaḥ pṛthagu-palabdho yasya-upacārāt pratyakṣatvaṃ syāt" (*Prasannapadā* 70.6–7).

15. "Api ca, lokavyavahārāṅgabhūto ghaṭo yadi nīlādivyatirikto nāstīti kṛtvā tasya-aupacārikaṃ pratyakṣatvaṃ parikalpyate, nanv evaṃ sati pṛthivyādivyatirekeṇa nīlādikam api nāstīti, nīlāder asya-aupacārikaṃ pratyakṣatvaṃ kalpyatāṃ" (*Prasanna-padā* 70.10–12).

16. Candrakīrti thus makes a point similar to the one made by J. L. Austin in refuting A. J. Ayer's similar claim to be offering an account simply of our conventional epistemic practices: "is it not rather delicately hinted . . . that the plain man is really a bit naive? It 'does not normally occur' to him that his belief in 'the existence of material things' needs justifying—but perhaps it *ought* to occur to him. He has 'no doubt whatsoever' that he really perceives chairs and tables—but perhaps he ought to have a doubt or two and not be so easily 'satisfied.' . . . Though ostensibly the plain man's position is here just being described, a little quiet undermining is already being effected by these turns of phrase" (Austin 1962:9).

17. "Yas tv akṣam akṣaṃ prati vartata iti pratyakṣaśabdaṃ vyutpādayati, tasya jñānasya-indriyāviṣayatvā[d viṣayaviṣayatvā]c ca na yuktā vyutpattiḥ. Prativiṣayaṃ tu syāt pratyartham iti vā" (But the etymology of one who etymologizes the word 'percep-tion' as [what] is directed towards each sense faculty doesn't make sense, because of the cognition's not having the sense faculty as its object—rather, its object is an object. [Fol-lowing the etymology of Dignāga,] we should [counterfactually characterize the faculty that picks out perceptible objects like jars as] "occurring in connection with an object" or "occurring in connection with a thing" [*Prasannapadā* 72.1–3]). Hattori notes that Candrakīrti here critiques the etymology given by Dignāga in his **Nyāyamukha* (1968: 76–77n1.11). As Ruegg rightly notes (2002:125n233), Dharmottara also cites Dignāga's ety-mology, against which he proposes his own account of *pratyakṣa*—one that, interest-ingly, does explain the adjectival sense of the word (though the main objective of Dhar-mottara and his commentator Durvekamiśra is to argue for an etymology which makes it possible for *mānasa-*, *yogi-*, and *svasaṃvedana-pratyakṣa* to count as instances of *pratyakṣa*, whereas given the etymology of Dignāga, it only makes sense to think of *indriya-pratyakṣa* as properly an example of the genus). See Malvania 1971:38–39 (where Durvekamiśra specifically names Dignāga as the target of the critique).

18. Cf. n17. Ruegg crucially misunderstands much of this section, mistaking the view that Candrakīrti criticizes for Candrakīrti's *own* view (2002:124–132).

19. "Loke pratyakṣaśabdasya prasiddhatvād, vivakṣite 'rthe pratyarthaśabdasya-apratisiddhatvād, āśrayeṇaiva vyutpattir āśrīyata iti cet, ucyate: asty ayaṃ pratyakṣa-śabdo lokaprasiddhaḥ. Sa tu yathā loke, tathāsmābhir ucyata eva. Yathāsthitalaukika-padārthatiraskāreṇa tu tadvyutpāde kriyamāṇe, prasiddhaśabdatiraskāro 'pi syāt, tataś ca pratyakṣam ity evaṃ [na] syāt" (*Prasannapadā* 73.9–74.3).

20. "Kalpanāpoḍhasyaiva ca jñānasya pratyakṣatvābhyupagamāt, tena ca lokasya saṃvyavahārābhāvāt, laukikasya ca pramāṇaprameyavyavahārasya vyākhyātum iṣṭatvāt, vyarthaiva pratyakṣapramāṇakalpanā saṃjāyate" (*Prasannapadā* 74.6–8; emphasis added).

Candrakīrti immediately follows this by rejecting Dignāga's argument that percep-

tion's freedom from conceptual elaboration is warranted by scripture, challenging Dignāga's appeal to the traditional point that "A man endowed [only] with visual cognition knows blue, but [he does] not [know] *that* it is blue" (cf. Chapter 2, n29, for Dignāga's citation of this): "Cakṣurvijñānasamaṅgī nīlaṃ jānāti no tu nīlam iti-iti ca-āgamasya pratyakṣalakṣaṇābhidhānārthasya-aprastutatvāt, pañcānām indriyavijñānānāṃ jaḍa-tvapratipādakatvāc ca, na-āgamād api kalpanāpoḍhasyaiva vijñānasya pratyakṣatvam iti na yuktam etat" (Because this authoritative text does not have as its point the expression of a definition of perception, and because of [its instead] demonstrating [merely] the insensate-ness of the five senses [i.e., their inefficacy except when joined to conceptual thought], not on the basis of authoritative texts, either, [can it be said that] being perception obtains only of that awareness from which conception has been removed; hence, this [characterization of *pratyakṣa* as "devoid of conceptual elaboration"] does not make sense [74.8–75.2]).

21. A word used, no doubt, with irony, since it is precisely *kalpanā* that Dignāga's *pratyakṣa* lacks.

22. "Api ca-aparokṣārthavācitvāt pratyakṣaśabdasya, sākṣād abhimukho 'rthaḥ pratyakṣaḥ" (Moreover, because of the fact that the word "perceptible" is expressive of the meaning *not invisible*, an object which is plainly before us is [said to be] "perceptible" [*Prasannapadā* 71.10]).

23. Taking *tena* ("by that") to mean (as in my translation of the passage) "by that sense of the word favored by Candrakīrti's interlocutor."

24. That is, if *tena* is understood in the sense of "thus" and the remainder of the phrase is viewed as stating the counterfactual entailment. This is a plausible reading (cf. Ruegg [2002:130], where the phrase appears to be so taken)—indeed, one that surely serves Candrakīrti's argument—though the immediately ensuing clause does not follow as naturally from this reading as from the first.

25. Here, we can take Candrakīrti as adopting Dignāga's own use of the word *svalakṣaṇa* in order to make this point against him.

26. "Tasmāl loke yadi lakṣyam, yadi vā svalakṣaṇaṃ sāmānyalakṣaṇaṃ vā, sarvam eva sākṣād upalabhyamānatvād aparokṣam, ataḥ pratyakṣaṃ vyavasthāpyate tadviṣayeṇa jñā-nena saha" (*Prasannapadā* 75.2–4).

27. Austin 1962:103. Cf. Chapter 2, p. 36, on Dignāga's similarly exploiting the idea of *svalakṣaṇas* as sense-data.

28. Austin 1962:10. Apropos of the normative contention that such doubt *cannot* obtain, Cavell is helpful: "I am in no way hoping, nor would I wish, to convince anyone that certain statements cannot be made or ought not be made. My interest in statements is in what they do mean and imply. If 'cannot' or 'ought' are to come in here at all, then I confess to urging that you cannot say something, relying on what is ordinarily meant in saying it, and mean something other than would ordinarily be meant" (1979:212).

29. Cf. Austin's conclusion regarding the problem of other minds: "It seems . . . that believing in other persons, in authority and testimony, is an essential part of the act of communicating, an act which we all constantly perform. . . . But there is no 'justification' for our doing [these things] as such" (1979:115).

30. Strawson 1959:35. For related discussions, see also Cavell 1979 (especially pp. 191 ff.) and Williams 1996.

31. Given this, of course, the peculiarly technical terms of a foundationalist episte-mology, too, are "further examples of dependently originated things." But Candrakīrti's point is that such terms can have the explanatory purchase that Dignāga thinks they have only if that fact is denied and if they are, instead, supposed to pick out independent or "essential" factors.

32. "Parokṣaviṣayaṃ tu jñānaṃ sādhyāvyabhicāriliṅgotpannam, anumānam. Sākṣād atīndriyārthavidāṃ āptānāṃ tad vacanam, sa āgamaḥ. Sādṛśyād ananubhūtārthādhi-gama upamānaṃ, gaur iva gavaya iti yathā. Tad evaṃ pramāṇacatuṣṭayāl lokasya-arthādhigamo vyavasthāpyate" (But cognition which has as its object [something] invis-ible, [such cognition being] produced by a mark which has invariable concomitance with the thing to be proven, [is known as] inference. The speech of those who are accomplished, who know directly things which are beyond the senses—this is [known as] tradition. Understanding of a thing not [previously] experienced, based on [its] sim-ilarity [with something else is known as] comparison, as [when it is said,] 'a cow is like an ox.' Thus, everyone's understanding of objects is established [as being] based on this fourfold [scheme of[reliable warrants [*Prasannapadā* 75.7–9]). The fourth, of course, is *pratyakṣa*, Candrakīrti's conclusions regarding which immediately precede this passage. Ruegg misses this because he mistakes the preceding discussion of *pratyakṣa* as being in the voice of the *opponent*, not as stating *Candrakīrti's* preferred account thereof (2002: 131–132).

Cabezón, translating a quotation of this passage by the dGe-lugs-pa scholar mKhas-grub-rje, considers it "a conundrum why Candrakīrti chose to cite four types of valid cognitions (as the Naiyāyikas do, for example), and not the standard two of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti" (1992:454n). Cabezón sees the point of the passage, in the hands of mKhas-grub-rje, as that of "proving that the Mādhyamikas do not in general repudiate the notion of a valid cognition" (ibid., 118)—that is, that Madhyamaka can retain the project of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as at least *conventionally* useful. Candrakīrti's endorsement of this fourfold schema is indeed meant to be an endorsement of what he regards as an adequate account of our conventional epistemic practices—but specifically *contra* Dig-nāga's account, which Candrakīrti sees as (not only not ultimately but) not even *con-ventionally* valid. The characteristically dGe-lugs-pa fudging of this point serves their goal of taking Candrakīrti as normative, while at the same time retaining precisely the epistemological discourse that he so clearly dismisses. It raises interesting historical and philosophical questions that this Tibetan tradition should thus have melded what Can-drakīrti, at least, regarded as antithetical projects.

33. "Tāni ca parasparāpekṣayā sidhyanti: satsu pramāṇeṣu prameyārthāḥ, satsu prameyeṣv artheṣu pramāṇāni. No tu khalu svābhāvikī pramāṇaprameyayoḥ siddhir iti; tasmāl laukikam eva-astu yathādṛṣṭam ity" (*Prasannapadā* 75.10–12). Cf. Chapter 6, n17, for Oetke's characterization of Nāgārjuna's similar point in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*.

34. "Dvicandrādīnāṃ tv ataimirikajñānāpekṣayā-apratyakṣatvam, taimirkādyapekṣayā tu pratyakṣatvam eva" (*Prasannapadā* 75.4–5). This is precisely the sort of claim that is reversed by such later *svātantrikas* as Jñānagarbha and Śāntarakṣita. Consider, e.g., Ichigō's statement of the impetus behind the *svātantrika* distinction between "true" and "false conventional": "Śāntarakṣita owes one of his definitions of conventional truth . . . to Jñānagarbha's basic idea of conventional truth 'as it appears.' This being the nature of

conventional reality, should we then also regard as conventional truth the double moon that appears to those who have defective vision? Partly in response to this issue, Jñānagarbha distinguishes two types of conventional truth, namely true and false conventional truth" (1989:169). To the extent that Candrakīrti's point is to emphasize only how dramatically limited is our perspective relative to the ultimate truth, he is not simply saying that, on the conventional level, "anything goes." Indeed, Candrakīrti may posit something analogous to the *svātantrikas' mithyāsaṃvṛti* in the form of *alokasaṃvṛti* (non-worldly conventional); cf. *Prasannapadā* 493.2–4. With his characteristic stress that "conventional" means "lacking in critical analysis," though, Candrakīrti may invite some clarification such as the *svātantrikas* elaborated. We can nevertheless appreciate that Candrakīrti's basic point here is simply to relativize our epistemic instruments: None is intrinsically suited to confer justification, which will always be a matter of context.

35. "kutas tatra paramārthe vācāṃ pravṛttiḥ, kuto vā jñānasya? sa hi paramārtho 'parapratyayaḥ śāntaḥ pratyātmavedya āryāṇāṃ sarvaprapañcātītaḥ. Sa na-upadiśyeta, na cāpi jñāyeta" (*Prasannapadā* 493.10–11).

36. Dunne 1996:545, 548. Cf. Chapter 6, n19.

37. The more common statement of Russell's Paradox involves classes or sets; cf. Weiner 1999:126–128.

38. Note, however, that the characteristically Mādhyamika point regarding the "emptiness of emptiness" might be thought to contradict this; the Mādhyamika point in this regard may be to argue that impermanence is *dependent,* since it cannot exist in abstraction from impermanent things; no impermanent things, no impermanence. More on the "emptiness of emptiness" below.

39. "Utpādād vā tathāgatānām anutpādād vā tathāgatānāṃ sthithaivaiṣā dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā"; quoted in *Prasannapadā* 40.1, to which La Vallée Poussin (1970b) appends a note with relevant cross-references. Comparable passages occur, with variants, throughout Buddhist literature— cf., e.g., the *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (Vaidya 1960a: 135) and the *Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra* (Powers 1995:62). These passages have been discussed by, *inter alia*, Jackson, who adduces this as an example of a correspondence theory of truth among Buddhists (1993:48); Davidson (1990:295, 314), who reads the passage similarly; and Griffiths (1994:177).

40. For a useful list of modern interpretations to the contrary, see Napper 1989: 709–711n240. Paradigmatic is Huntington: "the Mādhyamika's statements are motivated by compassion (*anugraha*) and not by a desire to prevail or 'get it right'—to out-logicize the logicians. Their purpose is merely to serve as an aid to liberation by destabilizing the linguistic/conceptual grounds of attachment and aversion. This purpose is the sole and final aim of a very strict soteriological pragmatism that is radically incommensurable with Bhāvaviveka's logical method" (2003:81).

41. The context for Candrakīrti's citation of this in the *Prasannapadā* (see n39) is different; there, it is adduced by an imagined interlocutor who wonders whether it is right to say (with Candrakīrti) that Nāgārjuna's text is dedicated to denying that any characteristics at all can be predicated of *pratītyasamutpāda*. Thus, the text is there considered only as one that might be read as affirming the predication of properties, and Candrakīrti's response does not address the larger implications of the passage with respect to a general conception of truth; rather, he simply explains that the text is of

"provisional" meaning and thus requires interpretation. See *Prasannapadā* 40.7–41.3. As seen below, however, it is not inconsistent for Candrakīrti himself to cite this text in defense of the truth of his claims, while rejecting the notion that the text warrants the predication of any properties of dependent origination; his claim is one whose truth logically precedes (indeed, *makes possible*) any predication in the first place.

42. "de bzhin gshegs pa rnams byung yang rung / ma byung yang rung chos rnams gyi chos nyid 'di ni gnas pa nyid do zhes rgyas par gsungs pa chos nyid ces bya ba ni yod do / chos nyid ces bya ba 'di yang ci zhig / mig la sogs pa 'di dag gi rang bzhin no. de dag gi rang bzhin yang gang zhig ce na / 'di dag ni bcos ma ma yin pa dang gzhan la bltos pa med pa gang yin pa ste / ma rig pa'i rab rib dang bral ba'i shes pas rtogs par bya ba'i rang gi ngo bo'o" (La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:306.2–6). Passages like this are (appropriately) cited by dGe-lugs-pas in support of their characteristic claim that Mādhyamikas do (notwithstanding Nāgārjuna's famous claim to the contrary in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*) have some sort of "thesis." Cf., e.g., Cabezón (1992:126), for a translation of Candrakīrti as cited by mKhas-grub-rje; and Magee (1999:43), for a translation of Candrakīrti as cited by Tsong-kha-pa.

43. *Prasannapadā* 264.11–265.8 (omitting the reiteration, at 265.6, of *MMK* 15.2a-b): "yā sā dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā nāma saiva tatsvarūpaṃ. atha keyaṃ dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā? Dharmāṇāṃ svabhāvaḥ. ko 'yaṃ svabhāvaḥ? prakṛtiḥ. kā ceyaṃ prakṛtiḥ? yeyaṃ śūnyatā. keyaṃ śūnyatā? naiḥsvābhāvyaṃ. kim idaṃ naiḥsvābhāvyaṃ? tathatā. keyaṃ tathatā? tathābhāvo 'vikāritvaṃ sadaiva sthāyitā; sarvaśa-anutpāda eva hy agnyādīnāṃ paranirapekṣatvād akṛtrimatvāt svabhāva ity ucyate. . . . iti vyavasthāpayām babhūvur ācāryā iti vijñeyam. sa caiṣa bhāvānām anutpādātmakaḥ svabhāvo 'kiṃcittvena-abhāvamātratvād asvabhāva eveti kṛtvā nāsti bhāvasvabhāva iti vijñeyam."

The last phrase is more naturally read as "there is no essence *of* existents"—although it could also be rendered "*it is not* an essence of existents," or "it is not an essence *which is* an existent." The Tibetan ("dngos po'i rang bzhin du yod pa ma yin no") suggests (against the most natural reading of the compound as a genitive *tatpuruṣa*) "it is not existent as the essence of things." None of these readings diminishes the air of paradox here. I read this in such a way as to best express the immediately preceding idea of emptiness's being "a mere absence"—hence, not itself an "existent." This and the preceding passages are discussed by Ames (1982), which has influenced my discussion. Cf. also Huntington 1983 and Burton 1999:213–220.

44. Cf. also, *inter alia*, this from the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti*: "dngos po'i rang bzhin ni ngo bo nyid med pa yin" (The essence of things is their not having any essence [Scherrer-Schaub 1991:64; cf. p. 218n385]). Note, too, that Bhāvaviveka's *Tarkajvāla* (*ad. Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* 3.26), in the course of saying what Bhāvaviveka thinks Mādhyamikas should state formally, says, "our position is that the essence is emptiness, since that is the essence of existents" (kho bo cag gi phyogs la ni ngo bo nyid stong pa nyid yin te / chos rnams kyi ngo bo nyid ni de yin pa'i phyir [Iida 1980:88]; cf. Ames 2003:46).

45. Garfield and Priest 2003:16. Garfield and Priest emphasize that this paradox should not be taken to reflect a lack of rigor by Nāgārjuna; indeed, they rightly believe that he is very much a rationalist, with his arguments invariably gaining their purchase only given, e.g., the principle of noncontradiction. (Indeed, the eminently *prāsaṅgika* idea of the *entailment* of consequences positively depends upon this.) Thus Nāgārjuna

never *embraces* contradictions; rather, it is invariably the case that "Nāgārjuna himself rejects the contradiction and endorses the conventional claim whose negation entails the contradiction" (ibid., 7). For a glimpse of the tortured passages of Tibetan exegetes who try to resolve the paradox by systematically identifying different uses of the word *svabhāva*, see Magee 1999.

46. MMK 1.1; emphasis added. See Chapter 6, n6.

47. "Yo hy asvabhāvo bhāvaḥ sa nāsti; bhāvānāṃ ca śūnyatā nāma dharma iṣyate. Na ca-asati dharmiṇi tadāśrito dharma upapadyate; na hy asati bandhyātanaye tacchyā-matā-upapadyata iti; tasmād asty eva bhāvānāṃ svabhāva iti" (*Prasannapadā*, 240.9–11). This passage occurs as part of Candrakīrti's commentarial introduction to Nāgārjuna's *MMK* 13.4a-b, which Candrakīrti sees as expressing the challenge of an interlocutor: "kasya syād anyathābhāvaḥ svabhāś cen na vidyate" (If there is no essence, what could change belong to?).

48. The interlocutor here is not, in other words, charging that Mādhyamika claims entail the paradox noted above (n45)—which is a paradox that (on my reading as well as that of Garfield and Priest 2003) Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti embrace.

49. *MMK* 13.4c-d: "kasya syād anyathābhāvaḥ svabhāvo yadi vidyate" (La Vallée Poussin 1970b:241). This is the second half of the verse whose first half is given at n47.

50. "yadi śūnyam idaṃ sarvam udayo nāsti na vyayaḥ / catūrṇām āryasatyānām abhā-vas te prasajyate //" *MMK* 24.1 (p. 475.4–5).

51. "yady aśūnyam idaṃ sarvam udayo nāsti na vyayaḥ / catūrṇām āryasatyānām abhāvas te prasajyate //" (If all this is *not* empty, there is neither production nor destruction, and it follows for you that the Four Noble Truths do not exist [*MMK* 24.20 (p. 505.18–506.1]).

52. So: "na nirodhaḥ svabhāvena sato duḥkhasya vidyate / svabhāvaparyavasthānān nirodhaṃ pratibādhase // svābhāvye sati mārgasya bhāvanā na-upapadyate / atha-asau bhāvyate mārgaḥ svābhāvyaṃ te na vidyate //" (There is no cessation of suffering that exists essentially; by positing an essence, you prevent cessation. If the path is essential, cultivation doesn't stand to reason; if the path is to be cultivated, you cannot have an essence [*MMK* 24.23–24 (p. 507)]).

53. Cf. "sarvaṃ ca yujyate tasya śūnyatā yasya yujyate / sarvaṃ na yujyate tasya śūnyaṃ yasya na yujyate //" (Everything is possible for the one for whom emptiness obtains; nothing is possible for the one for whom emptiness does not obtain [*MMK* 24.14 (p. 500.3–4)]).

54. A related point is made by Sara McClintock, who writes that Śāntarakṣita's provisional appeal to the epistemology of Dharmakīrti gives way in the end before a constitutively Mādhyamika concern that she characterizes as follows: "The knowledge [finally] sought . . . is not empirical, but metaphysical, and its cornerstone is not the given, but is *reason* and the human ability to analyze reality. For while the given does not remain the same on all the levels of the sliding scale of analysis—and, at the highest level, it even disappears—the formal elements of reasoning do" (2003:152).

55. Oetke 2003a:470. This is presumably what Oetke has in mind when he states elsewhere, specifically contra characterizations of Madhyamaka as "skeptical," that "Nāgārjuna was a metaphysician (in a most genuine sense of the term) and that he presupposed that it is possible to employ rational means in order to prove something about ultimate

reality—though not in the sense that something is ascribed to ultimate reality as an object" (2003b:152).

56. It stands to reason that Candrakīrti should retain the same word, characterizing the second-order, abstract state of affairs as *svabhāva*; a universally obtaining, abstract state of affairs would be, by definition, noncontingent and independent of any other state of affairs, which is to say "self-existent" (*svabhāva*). Candrakīrti says as much when he states that the real essence of things (viz., their being without an essence) is "nonfabricated" (*akṛtrima*, Tib. *bcos ma ma yin pa*); cf. nn42 and 43.

57. This idea—which is implied, e.g., by *MMK* 24.18—is most clearly stated at *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.185–6 (see n58).

58. "stong nyid ces bya'i stong nyid gang / stong nyid stong nyid du 'dod de / stong nyi dngos pa'i blo can gyi / 'dzin pa bzlog phyir gsungs ba yin" (*Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.185c-d-186, in La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912/1970a:310–311). Burton adduces this passage as evidence for his interpretation of Madhyamaka, advancing that with an unwarranted gloss: "If the mind's activity of conceptual construction did not occur, there would be no entities, and hence no true nature *of* entities. I suspect that this is the meaning of Candrakīrti's declaration, in the *MA*, of the 'emptiness of emptiness' (*stong nyid stong nyid* = *śūnyatāśūnyatā*). As Candrakīrti says, the teaching of the emptiness of emptiness opposes (*bzlog*) the (wrong) apprehension of emptiness as a *dngos po* (= *bhāva*)—a *dngos po* being, in my judgment, here a 'mind-independent existent'" (1999:68). But the supposition that Candrakīrti must here intend a specifically "mind-independent" entity is unjustified, as the passage makes sense without any such qualification.

59. Cf. p. 184.

60. Recall, in this regard, the distinction (introduced in Chapter 5) between "categoreal" and "transcendental metaphysics."

61. Heidegger 1959:33, 35. I have taken the liberty of changing the translator's "essent" (which renders Heidegger's *Seiende*) to "existent."

62. Although I think that Heidegger's "being" is best understood as something transcendental to existents, Heidegger's ways of talking about it do not generally involve the kinds of arguments that I would characterize as "transcendental." Nevertheless, it can only be the case that it is as a precondition of all existents that the question of being is, as Heidegger says, "necessarily implicit in every question" (1959:6)—which is surely a transcendental sort of claim.

63. This is the sense of "realism" that Siderits (e.g., 1988, 1989) has in mind in characterizing Madhyamaka as "antirealist"—that is, Madhyamaka is "antirealist" in the sense that it eschews the view that "there is one true theory that correctly describes reality" (1988:311). I would argue that there *is* one universally true statement about reality: that there can be no description of reality that does not itself exemplify the most important characteristic of reality (viz., the fact of being dependently originated). The view that Madhyamaka can be straightforwardly characterized as simply "antirealist" misses the importance of "Nāgārjuna's paradox," which discloses the ultimately metaphysical character of Mādhyamika claims. Note, though, that I attribute to Madhyamaka simply a realist conception of *truth*—that is, Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti think it really is the case that there can exist no perspective that does not itself exemplify the dependently originated character of all existents. The difference between this and the sort of realism that

Siderits regards Madhyamaka as rejecting can be appreciated if we recall the distinction (introduced in Chapter 5) between categoreal and transcendental metaphysics. Thus, if (with Siderits) what we mean by "metaphysical realism" is that there is a *categoreal scheme* that "carves reality at the joints," then Madhyamaka is indeed antirealist; theirs is the claim that any such scheme must necessarily exemplify the interdependent nature of reality and that the scheme's categories must therefore fail to provide any ultimate explanation. But this is itself a metaphysical point: It is transcendentally true (true as a condition of the possibility of anything else's being the case) that no such scheme could provide any explanation. So while Madhyamaka is opposed (indeed, constitutively so) to the kind of "metaphysical realism" that is exemplified by the categoreal metaphysics of Ābhidharmika Buddhists and their foundationalist heirs, it is emphatically not the case that Madhyamaka is not making a truth claim (and indeed, a properly metaphysical one)—it is just that it is a transcendental-metaphysical claim.

64. There may, however, be some point to the putatively explanatory interests of the Ābhidharmikas, after all (and even from a Mādhyamika perspective). While Candrakīrti's point can be characterized as it has been here, it could nevertheless be said that one can have a transformatively deep understanding of that fact only *after* having entertained the philosophical project of Abhidharma. That is, in order to *experience* the conventionally described world as itself exemplifying the *ultimate* truth, one must first have "unsettled" one's confidence in the former - which is precisely what is effected by engaging in Abhidharma's systematic redescription of the world. Just as, for Madhyamaka, all existents and all statements are commonly examples of "relative indications" (*upādāya prajñapti*), Madhyamaka itself may thus be intelligible only relative to the project of Abhidharma. This insight is reflected in the kinds of systematic (as opposed to historical) presentations of Buddhist philosophical schools that are found in Tibetan doxographical (*grub mtha*'; Skt., *siddhānta*) literature, which characteristically represents Buddhist philosophical schools in an ascending hierarchy of progressively more refined positions, the thorough comprehension of each of which depends on comprehension of the preceding. (See Dreyfus [1997: 451–460] for discussion of a characteristically dGelugs-pa interpretation of how thus to situate Dharmakīrti's project vis-à-vis that of Candrakīrti.) Despite the obvious value of this way of presenting the matter, however, it is also clear that Candrakīrti himself never argues as though this were his perspective, but unequivocally claims that a project like Dignāga's is not even conventionally valid. (Thanks to Jonathan Gold for helping me appreciate this point.)

65. Cf. n33.

66. Williams 1991:205. Williams (who adduces several of the passages considered in the foregoing section) is here discussing Huntington 1989. Cf. also n40.

67. Further reflections in this vein are developed in the conclusion.

68. Cf. n45.

69. Cf. Chapter 5, n24.

70. In the terms introduced in Chapter 5, both kinds of challenge would be instances of normative epistemology—that is, both challenges concern the question, in the course of considering our cognitive faculties, of whether we are justified in some range of beliefs, and how or whether those faculties can be thought to confer such justification. For Stern (who takes transcendental arguments to be constitutively directed at varieties

of skepticism), the two different degrees of challenge are said to exemplify, respectively, *epistemic* and *justificatory* skepticism.

71. Ibid., 123. Among the "positive roles" he thus finds is the diagnostic role performed in having clarified just what kind of "skepticism" we are up against.

72. Thus, a radical skeptic is unlikely to be persuaded if her entire point is that she can concede that we may necessarily believe *X*, without thereby being entitled to say we *know X*.

73. This concludes Robert Nozick's caricature of the sort of thing that philosophical arguments are often thought to aim at and is quoted by Griffiths (1998:183).

74. I hope it is clear that, by thus rephrasing Stroud's argument conditionally, we have already considerably weakened its force; we have now seen several arguments (from Alston and Kumārila, Austin and Candrakīrti) to the effect that the antecedent of this conditional should not be accepted.

75. Most striking, in this regard, is a passage in which Candrakīrti insists that it is possible to have a "yogic" vision of the ultimate, such as exceeds even his own abilities: "we others who desire to gain the gnosis of yogins—while yogins are seeing things as they are—should believe in the *svabhāva* of dharmas as it is taught [i.e., as being *niḥsvabhāvatā*]. The way to explain the essencelessness of things is by appeal to what is understood by the gnosis of yogins, as [that is made clear] in the scriptures which say [what the *svabhāva* of *dharmas* is]; it is not by depending on our own awareness, since we are ones the eye of whose intellect is obscured by the cataracts of ignorance" (*Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya ad* 6.107 [pp. 218–219]). See Huntington (1983:90 *et passim*), for a discussion of this passage. Also to be considered in this regard would be the many passages in which Candrakīrti makes explicit the essentially ethical character of the Buddhist project—in which he emphasizes, that is, that Madhyamaka is not only not nihilist, but in fact represents the most ethically viable way to advance the Buddhist project. What such passages show is that Candrakīrti's arguments presuppose *that project* in particular.

76. Griffiths 1998:196. I do not share Griffiths's view that the arguments of Buddhist foundationalists (this article chiefly concerns Mokṣākaragupta) are aptly characterized as transcendental arguments—a view that Griffiths bases only in the idea (first developed by Dharmakīrti) that the inferences to which we are entitled are warranted by an allegedly necessary connection (*sambandha*); whether or not the idea of *sambandha* can rightly be said to involve necessity, this leaves out too many of the other features that I find distinctive of transcendental arguments.

77. Though, of course, no Buddhist would admit as much, given that this position was historically developed in the service of an arch-Brahmanical project no part of which someone like Candrakīrti would want to be seen as endorsing.

78. For an illuminating account of the relationship between these different "normative stances," see Brandom 2000:187–200.

79. Ibid., 190. For Brandom, the challenge, given a basically pragmatist account of justification, is therefore to retain the possibility of a realist conception of truth; cf. ibid., 196–198.

80. In fact, this form of the question is a live one particularly in discussions of the-

ism; consider, for example, the characteristically "process-theological" critiques of classical theism developed by Charles Hartshorne, who argues that a similar conclusion follows from "classical" conceptions of theism.

81. "Nanu ca gopālāṅganājanaprasiddham [de Jong, following the Tibetan, reads *agopālāṅga* . . . , but I don't see why] etad agner auṣṇyaṃ svabhāva iti. Kiṃ khalv asmābhir uktaṃ na prasiddham iti. Etat tu vayaṃ brūmo na-ayaṃ svabhāvo bhavitum arhati svabhāvalakṣaṇaviyuktatvāt, avidyāviparyāsānugamāt tu loko niḥsvabhāvam eva bhāvajātaṃ sasvabhāvatvena pratipannaḥ. Yathā hi taimirikās timirapratyayād asantam eva keśādisvabhāvaṃ sasvabhāvatvena-abhiniviṣṭāḥ. Evam avidyātimiropahatamatinayanatayā bālā niḥsvabhāvaṃ bhāvajātaṃ sasvabhāvatvena-abhiniviṣṭa yathābhiniveśaṃ lakṣaṇam ācakṣate, agner auṣṇyaṃ svalakṣaṇam, tato 'nyatra-anupalambhād asādhāraṇatvena svam eva lakṣaṇam iti kṛtvā. Bālajanaprasiddhyā ca bhagavatā tad eva-eṣāṃ sāṃvṛtaṃ svarūpam abhidharme vyavasthāpitam" (*Prasannapadā* 260.14–261.6).

82. As La Vallée Poussin rightly notes (1903–1913/1970b:261n5); cf. Chapter 1, n14; Chapter 6, n44.

83. Cf. "Iha hi svo bhāvaḥ svabhāva iti vyutpatter yaḥ kṛtakaḥ padārthaḥ sa loke naiva svabhāva iti vyapadiśyate" (Here [in the world], according to the etymology—[which has it that] a *svabhāva* is an existent by itself—whatever thing is made is *not* designated in the world as a *svabhāva* [*Prasannapadā* 260.4–8]).

84. The latter is clearly the sense that *svabhāva* has when (as is commonly the case) the word is basically synonymous with *svalakṣaṇa*. Cf., *inter alia*, Chapter 1, nn16 and 19.

85. "na hi svabhāvo bhāvānāṃ pratyayādiṣu vidyate / avidyamāne svabhāve parabhāvo na vidyate //" (La Vallée Poussin 1903–1913/1970b:78). Hayes, using the edition of Vaidya (1960b), cites this as verse 1.5, and translates: "Surely beings have no *svabhāva when they have causal conditions*. And if there is no *svabhāva*, there is no *parabhāva*" (Hayes 1994:312; emphasis added). Hayes's point depends in part on his here seeing, against what is surely the more straightforward reading, a locative absolute, as indicated in the italicized portion. On this point, see Taber 1998:215–216. See also Oetke on Madhyamaka's conflating several ideas under the term *svabhāva* (1990:98–101).

86. Siderits 1997b. Siderits notes that Hayes himself attempts such an account (1994:305–307).

87. See Chapter 1, n19.

88. Cf. n6.

89. Oetke 1991:323n. See also Tillemans 2001, 2004.

90. Cf. the apt comment of Huntington: "the dichotomy of *paramārtha* and *saṃvṛti* is, like all dichotomies, simply another aspect of conventional truth, and therefore the unqualified negation of *saṃvṛti* on any grounds whatsoever must necessarily constitute an equally unqualified negation of *paramārtha*" (1983:95).

91. In the end, then, there is a sense in which Candrakīrti may thus agree with Sthiramati that "the conventional does not make any sense without some basis" (na hi saṃvṛtir nirupādāna yujyate [cf. Chapter 6, n59]). For Candrakīrti, however, the "basis" (*upādāna*) is an abstract state of affairs (viz., that of its being the case that any basis will always turn out to be *upādāya prajñapti*) and not, as it is for Sthiramati, something *dravyasat*.

Notes to Conclusion

1. On "scholasticism" as a comparative category, see Cabezón 1998. Though based chiefly on his acquaintance with modern Tibetan institutions, Dreyfus (2003) is also relevant here.

2. Frege 1959: §26; cf. Chapter 2, p. 52, and Chapter 7, p. 196.

3. Carl 1994:29 (quoting Frege).

4. Cf. Chapter 2, n23.

5. This point can perhaps facilitate a reconstruction of Kumārila's prima facie peculiar idea of *jñātatā*—that is, the idea, invoked contra the Buddhist notion of "apperception" (*svasaṃvitti*), that one knows *that* one knows only by inferring this from the fact of some object's "being known" (*jñātatā*). (Cf. Chapter 4, n9.) Thus, Kumārila's point here can be understood as expressing only the inferential description that is to be given to our self-reflexive awareness—as expressing, in other words, the point that even knowing the contents of one's own mental states already presupposes propositional commitments and that this knowledge therefore cannot coherently be thought to be "immediate."

6. The inferential relationship between seeing something *red* and seeing something *colored* is a paradigm example of one of the only two kinds of "inferential" relationships admitted by Buddhists in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti—namely, the *tādātmya* (categoreal) relation, which grounds an inference from subordinate ("being an oak") to superordinate categories ("being a tree"). Cf. Chapter 3, n56.

7. My argument here follows Brandom 2000. The trajectory of argument here is succinctly expressed by Stout (2002:36).

8. Mohanty 1966:78–79. See Chapter 4, nn57 and 62.

9. Cf. *inter alia*, Chapter 5, n28, and Chapter 7, n63.

10. Lincoln 1989:5 (here quoting Roland Barthes). Surely, the Mīmāṃsaka project, in particular, lends itself to this kind of characterization, as well recognized by some of its traditional critics. See Chapter 4, n78.

11. Asad 1993:34–35. That Asad appreciates the distinction between truth and justification is suggested by his further remark that "[e]ven Augustine held that although religious truth was eternal, the means for securing human access to it were not" (ibid.).

12. Hadot 1995:64. For an illuminating appropriation of Hadot by a scholar of Indo-Tibetan philosophy, see Kapstein (2001:3–26).

13. A discussion of whether this is the case figures prominently at the beginning of the *Śābarabhāṣya*, where it is asked, with respect to the first of Jaimini's Mīmāṃsā Sūtras (*athāto dharmajijñāsā*; "now after that, there is the desire to know dharma"): *after what?* One of the possibilities raised is that one must thus have ritually completed the "stage" (*āśrama*) of a celibate student (*brahmacārin*).

14. Candrakīrti eloquently says as much at *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.4–5.

15. According to Schubert Ogden (1992:23–26, 53–78), this is the a priori view characteristically defended by theological "pluralists" like John Hick—against which, Ogden proposes the logically significant alternative view that more than one religion *may* be true, though whether or not this is the case cannot be known a priori. The position I am commending, moreover, does not commit us to the a priori view that all beliefs *are*

justified (justifiably held)—only to the view that whether they are is a complex and context-sensitive matter that need not require the various subjects of beliefs to have *shown* (or even to be able to show) that they are. It remains possible, however, to judge a belief not only false, but unjustifiably held.

16. Fish 2002:34. This point enables Fish succinctly to frame the issue here at stake: Only if there were such indisputable norms "could the question 'Is this a religious war?' be a real question, as opposed to a tendentious thesis pretending to be a question, which it is. That is to say, the question 'Is this a religious war?' is not a question *about* the war; it is the question that *is* the war" (ibid., 35).

17. Stout 2004:255; see also Stout 2002. Stout understands that this point is also useful in explaining something that Pārthasārathi thinks Uṃveka cannot explain: how our own beliefs can change (how, that is, we can judge some of our own earlier beliefs to have been overridden). Thus, one "can be justified in believing a moral claim at one point in his life and justified in rejecting precisely the same claim at a later point, whereas the truth-value of the claim has remained the same all along" (2004:240). This is the point that Pārthasārathi made in terms of a non-*pramāṇa*'s having been one all along, regardless of the initial cognition's having had *prāmāṇya*. This explanation of change in one's *own* beliefs is usefully invoked as an argument for respecting the possibly justified status of others with whom we disagree: "The line of reasoning that counsels humility with respect to our own beliefs also counsels charity toward strangers. . . . That is what we should expect if being justified in believing something is a contextual affair. Unless we are prepared to give up our own beliefs at the points of conflict, we shall have to say, on pain of self-contradiction, that some of their beliefs are false. But unless we can show that they have acquired their beliefs improperly or through negligence, we had better count them as justified in believing as they do" (ibid., 234).

18. It often turns out, though, to be difficult to be certain that this is so. The more deeply one delves into such highly ramified systems of belief as, say, "Buddhism," the more complex and in need of qualification any one of its claims turns out to be. This is the most compelling reason why Ogden (1992) is right to consider the possible truth of rival beliefs a necessarily a posteriori question. Some judgments in the matter may have to await the findings of a lifetime of inquiry.

19. Stout 2004:245. For further reflections on truth as something like a "regulative ideal," see also ibid., 248–256.

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