

Genuine vs. Apparent Knowledge and Justification

॥ *om paramātmāne namaḥ* ॥

sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ |
sarve santu nirāmayāḥ |
sarve bhadraṇi paśyantu |
mā kaścid duḥkhabhāg bhavet ॥

bhadraḥ, mahodayāḥ, bahu-vyaya-prayatnena kutila-yukty-alamkṛtena
adbhūte 'pi prātīcya-darśane pramāṇa-śāstre spaṣṭatvam pramāṇa-viśaye
eva nāsti | pramā-tad-ābhāsayor viśeṣo na subodhitaḥ | bhāratīya-darśanād
iha anyatra ca bahu śikṣaṇīyam | nyāya-nātha-rathena ayam viśeṣo
mohita-buddhi-vināśī | śāntir bhavatu | tasmād āṅglī-bhāṣāyām |

My paper is in some ways narrower and in some broader than that suggested by the abstract on the web site. There is also a new title. The various schools and approaches of classical Indian epistemology are probably well known to most of you, and overviews are available. So I want to take you through the intricacies of Navya-Nyāya arguments. No, only kidding; we won't go that narrow. I would like to focus on a simple distinction within classical Indian epistemology, within the *pramāṇa-śāstra*, that between genuine and apparent (but false) knowledge, justification, etc., *sad-vastu-tad-ābhāsayor viśeṣaḥ*. I have

initially two reasons for taking this track, one concerning the state of anglo-american epistemology, the other about the right interpretation of the *pramāṇa-śāstra*. I'll begin by expanding on these reasons, first with respect to the Western controversy and then the interpretive point.

The rest of the paper hones in on the genuine and the apparent as distinguished in epistemology. The distinction is prominent in the writings of Gaṅgeśa and the later thinkers as they work out details of normative epistemology. But it is also made very early in metaphysical disputes; in particular, it is used in the *Nyāyasūtra* to refute Nāgārjuna or another illusionist who would deny the reality of the objects of common experience, claiming that things are unreal or not really existent. Vātsyāyana points out in the *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya* (4.2.34) that the concept of the apparent whatever (as an apparent person which is really a post misperceived in the distance) presupposes the concept of the genuine variety (formed from previous experiences of persons): the former derives from the latter. The apparently F could not be recognized without knowledge of things that are F genuinely. Sometimes this is called the parasitism argument concerning concept acquisition—the apparent is parasitic on the true—and it seems cogent. In the context of classical Indian metaphysics, the question is how far does it ramify.

Vātsyāyana's is only a certain kind of refutation of a certain kind of skepticism, in my view. It is not a refutation of the sophisticated subjectivism or non-realism—so Ram-Prasad argues (I think he's right)—proposed by Advaitins who maintain that the genuine-apparent

distinction proves not that things are unreal but the possibility that things are not as they seem. Thus there is room for *brahma-vidyā*. However, in my view Ram-Prasad's and Advaita's non-realism concedes too much, insisting merely on compatibility with Vaiśeṣika or whatever the current scientific or physical theory. Advaita fails to compete on the real issues and points of paradigm conflict. It does not provide a spiritual or mystic psychology, at least not one integrated into a spiritual or Brahman-centered metaphysics. I'm afraid that by the end of the paper we shall have gone quite a ways from the beginning as I come around to side with those who want closer ties between philosophy and yogic psychology. Let's move on to the *marma*.

Within current Anglo-American epistemology there is a divide between so-called internalists and externalists. The externalist is, generally speaking, a reliabilist; the internalist a Cartesian, to use philosophic shorthand. The externalist sees knowledge flowing out of causal connections, natural processes that generate true beliefs, paradigmatically perception. The internalist is concerned with criteria for warranted belief that hold whether or not a belief is actually true. Both the old foundationalists and their coherentist opponents are counted internalists today; the externalist is the newcomer. Internalists stress that as epistemic agents we have a duty to believe responsibly, checking our beliefs against the standards of logic and science. Whether our beliefs actually hit the facts is, so it is argued, not the main point. Remarkably, the externalist concedes that from a first-person point of view nothing is

sure. Cognitive processes are fallible. Reliability for a particular doxastic practice—belief-forming practice—is determined by its track record, but no process proves infallible. Mathematical proof gets separate treatment.

In the current literature, the two sides are at such loggerheads that internalists complain that externalists speak a different language or have different intuitions than theirs. Externalists, for their part, resort to their own *ad hominem*s. Now J. N. Mohanty in *Reason and Tradition in Indian Thought* (1992) shows that Indian logic stakes out middle ground between extreme oppositions characteristic of Western treatments: intentionalism versus extensionalism, psychologism versus platonism, inductive and deductive cogency of argument. My point is in much the same spirit: the distinction between the genuine and the apparent shows the way to cut through the opposition of internalism and externalism in epistemology.

First, Naiyāyikas, Mīmāṃsakas, Vedāntins, and others on the classical scene are genuine externalists, not reliabilists. Analytic philosophy's reliabilism leads with the wrong foot, with a kind of skepticism, from the Indian point of view. But in many respects, the Western externalist looks familiar to the Indian epistemologist. For both, the thesis that cognition is causally related to its objects is theoretically central. Nevertheless, reliabilism is not objective enough in its aspirations from the Indian point of view where standards for what counts as knowledge, justification, and truth, as with what counts as a cow or a tree, are set by paradigm cases conceived thoroughly objectively, that is to say, hitting the highest mark, truth and justification with a truth-tie. Results of genuine perception,

inference, or testimony—to mention three *pramāṇa* accepted by just about everyone—are never non-veridical. Only pseudo-knowledge, also pseudo-justification, could ever be false.

Of course, a particular subject S may not be able to tell at the moment whether a particular cognitive event of hers is the result of a genuine *pramāṇa*. People are subject to cognitive error of several types including logical error (*anumānābhāsa*)—including *hetv-ābhāsa*s, “apparent (but false) reasons or provers.” And there is of course illusion which is apparent (but false) perception (*pratyakṣābhāsa*). Understanding a false statement and being misled by the testimony of the deluded or of a deceiver, which is a form of *śabdābhāsa*, “apparent (but false) testimony,” will be treated separately below as I try to correct an interpretive error made by Mohanty and others. But I think the entire approach is easy to see with the example of perception: if a cognition that appears to be perceptual from a first-person point of view has *a* as an F when *a* is not an F in fact, then this is no result of perception as a genuine knowledge source, *pramāṇa*, but an imitator, perhaps a close imitator indistinguishable from the real McCoy at least by S at the time, *ābhāsa*.

The concept of the imitator, *ābhāsa*, in epistemology—apparent or pseudo- knowledge, apparent perception, apparent inference, apparent testimonial transfer of information—is crucial in classical Indian *pramāṇa-śāstra*. It is organizational with Gaṅgeśa in his (*Pramāṇa-*)*tattvacintāmaṇi*, and in the concept of *anumānābhāsa* and the sub-concept, *hetv-ābhāsa*, it dominates Indian logic across all schools—

integrating, by the way, logic into epistemology (another virtue of doing things in this fashion). It is presupposed in practically all epistemological investigation from specifying conditions of (legitimate) doubt (such as being faced with contradictory testimony) to concrete efforts of confirmation where determining genuine working of truth-hitting processes is crucial. A “knowledge source,” *pramāṇa*, is defined as the lawful connection between the fact that *p* and the belief that *p*. To repeat, deviant functioning of a process or “method” that is reliable in that it would normally result in a true belief does not count as a veritable “knowledge source” according to the *pramāṇa-śāstrins*; the usage is factive. You don’t really *see* a snake that is really a rope; you only think you see one. The classical project is to specify the connections between the world and cognizers that result nomologically in cognitions that are true. Thus all of what a Westerner epistemologist would call false perceptual beliefs, for example, beliefs based on perception but still false, would not be perceptual in the classical Indian scheme of things but rather *pseudo*-perceptual, *pratyakṣābhāsa*. However, in the concept of the apparent (but false) *pramāṇa* along with the distinction between objective justification and certification (or knowing not merely some fact but also that the cognition of that fact is true), there is room for the best internalist points. Let me try to lay out these ideas, at least their bare bones.

The concept of subjective justification so dear to the Western internalist is present in the objectivist Indian theories. That’s just not the whole story; it leaves out the first part, which is objective justification.

Objective justification is a cognition's being generated in the right way, by a *pramāṇa*. Objective justification can be explicit, as when we check to make sure—this is called certification—or implicit, as when, for example, in driving a car we simply act guided by sight without worrying about our cognitions' veridicality. Such a bit of perceptual knowledge is, we say, objectively justified for S in that S's cognition has been generated by a *pramāṇa*, but it is not for her *certified*. Certification is something else—the Western internalist is right to insist on the point. The perceptual cognition while driving is, though objectively justified, not certified, not known self-consciously by S to be true.

Of course, not all of the Indian theorists agree with every detail of this picture, especially concerning certification when it comes to certain topics such as self-awareness. Intricate exchanges occur on self-cognition and self-certification as opposed to apperception, a second-order awareness, and certification by another (*svasamvedana* and *svataḥ* as opposed to *parataḥ prakāśa* and *parataḥ prāmāṇya*). One set of theorists holds that whether or not certification is a second-order cognitive process, it amounts to inferential knowledge that a target cognition is true. Others hold that every cognition wears veridicality on its face—at least we assume veridicality as a default—decertification is the issue. And still others propose that a self that is essentially self-aware is the precondition of all cognition and experience. The realists are confused about self-knowledge though they may get the story about knowledge of the external world right, at least provisionally right. More about this controversy in the

second part of the paper.

Yet despite the complexity there is much in common. With certification, self-conscious confidence in a cognition's truth is central. In Nyāya, a knowledge source can be identified both by intrinsic features and in relation to a particular result. This is one way a cognition can be known to be veridical. There are two others according to Nyāya. The Nyāya approach is, by the way, the one I know best and I am prone to think it the most adequate. But in overview not only Nyāya but all the classical epistemologists who are logicians and concerned with normative epistemology and debate rules present causal paradigms whereby beliefs can be evaluated. The Buddhists Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, for example, work just as centrally with the causal notion of a "knowledge source," *pramāṇa*, as any Indian realist. In addition to the *pramāṇa* touchstone, a cognition can be certified with respect to its fruit, success of effort and action—a second way that is also tied to causal relations and practically universally accepted. A third procedure involves typing, according to Gaṅgeśa and Navya Nyāya at least. A cognition belongs to a type in virtue of its objecthood, its having, say, "*a* is F" as its indication or intentionality—a feature it can share, by the way, with other cognitions, such that two people, S and T, can have the same cognition in this sense. So once a cognition as specified by its objecthood has been certified, a later cognition known to be a token of that type would be certified, too.

Excepting Nāgārjuna and his school, which we will turn to in a moment, none on the classical scene takes issue with the causal

framework of the *pramāṇa* approach, though some, let me mention again, do subscribe to a kind of self-certification that rides piggy-back on apperception or whatever the way it is that a particular cognition is itself cognized. Also, Buddhists such as Dharmakīrti admit a form of inference that looks like a kind of *a priori* knowledge whereas Naiyāyikas view all inference as depending crucially on prior perceptions. Classical Indian epistemologists do not speak with a single voice. But the differences are not a major concern for my purposes since there is a common focus of analysis, the *pramāṇa*, the “knowledge source,” and common ideas about certification and its imitators which are sufficient to show the false antinomy of internalism and externalism in the West.

Let us look at the concept of pseudo-certification, certification that seems right from a first-person point of view but that is misleading in fact. This is part of the way the externalism/internalism opposition is bridged, or, better, avoided to start with. Apparent certification can be defeated (*bādhita*) by S’s coming to learn something that undermines or rebuts a putatively certificational pseudo-inference, but genuine certification requires that there be no ultimate defeater (*bādhaka*) in fact, i.e., that S’s evidence for regarding a cognition *C* as veridical would hold no matter what else she comes to know. Established positions (*siddhānta*) serve as winnowing devices, and what we already know can prevent wrong cognitions from arising. But we are not infallible. Just about any cognition, including an apparent certification, can prove to be wrong.

Further internalist features of classical Indian epistemology center on

the identification of special epistemic properties called *excellences* and *faults* (*guṇa* and *doṣa*). Given doubt or desire to know, these are said to be signs of knowledge sources, or of their mere semblances, *ābhāsa*, and thus key to certification and the establishing of right positions. Now these properties have to be cognized. They are labelled from an epistemic perspective; they are “excellences” and “deficiencies” from an epistemic point of view. For instance, one may make an inference and act on its basis, but to certify that the conclusion drawn is the result of inference as a knowledge source is to check the process to make sure that it is based on a *pervasion* of F-hood by G-hood, considering an inference from *Fa* to *Ga*, a fact confirmed with reference to positive correlations—other things both F and G—and negative correlations—things not-G and not-F. On the other hand, such epistemic excellences are themselves supposed to have causal relevance, even in inference. They are both properties figuring in causal laws and signs of knowledge sources. To repeat, people do not normally distrust their cognitions, nor need they be able to say why they have knowledge when they have it. But disagreement is one of several conditions leading to real doubt. Then identification of knowledge sources and “excellences” and “deficiencies” as epistemic properties becomes relevant, answering questions, restoring confidence, removing doubt, and ending dispute.

I turn now to the distinction between genuine and apparent testimonial knowledge, *sābda-bodha-tad-ābhāsayor viśeṣaḥ*. Mohanty and others have worried about how well the Indian theories of meaning, which are

mainly referentialist, handle the sense/reference distinction ironed out by analytic philosophy (*Reason and Tradition in Indian Thought*, 1992), and he has criticized Nyāya for, as he sees things, failing to recognize that we can understand a false statement. And Arindam Chakrabarti and a dozen others in *Samvāda* (1991), a volume of philosophic discussion, half in Sanskrit, concern themselves with how Naiyāyikas would view analytic philosophy's "propositions," whether, for instance, they could find a place in the realist ontology, or are already there, et cetera, including, of course, the nature of false propositions, which seem meaningful but fail to hit the facts.

Mohanty's criticisms and amendments are unnecessary. A prime example of *śābda-bodhābhāsa*, "apparent (but false) knowledge from testimony," is a false statement of a speaker that a hearer understands and accepts, having no reason not to. As with perceptual cognitions where there is no block, with testimony uptake and understanding are normally fused, unless, for example, the hearer knows in advance the opposite or knows the speaker is a liar or deluded, the statement is not well-formed, et cetera. The objecthood or intentionality of the false statement understood in normal conditions that a hearer takes to be true, i.e., the intentionality (*viśayatā*) of the hearer's comprehending and accepting cognition, which is false, is to be analyzed in much the same way as that of an apparent perception. The "mode" or "way," *prakāra*, F, that, paradigmatically, an object *a*, a qualificandum, has been cognized ("Fa") has its objecthood lie objectwise elsewhere than in *a*. So, as Jonardon Ganeri

also argues (along a different track) in *Semantic Powers* (1999), the mode-hood, to use a neologism, as specified in a particular cognitive occurrence, is roughly equivalent to analytic philosophy's "sense." A false testimonial cognition has its mode-hood specified by a qualifier that does not qualify what it is taken to qualify. Of course, the standard realist story about how modes or qualifiers, which are real-world realities, form memory-impressions, *saṃskāra*, through perception, and the misfiring of memory in all sorts of cases of wrong cognition is available here as with the other types of cognitive *ābhāsa*. Mohanty misses an opportunity to find in Indian traditions here as on other issues a middle way through a Western controversy and polarization of sides.

Next, let us move to metaphysics, or meta-epistemology, and the *Nyāyasūtra* argument I mentioned at the beginning. First, some context. Nāgārjuna in his *Vigrahavyāvartini*, "Warding off Strife," fends off an apparently Naiyāyika attack on the Buddhist Emptiness thesis, "All is without self-nature," *sarve bhāvā niḥsvabhāvāḥ*, which he interprets as everything's being related to everything else, interdependent origination. Now in Nāgārjuna's telling the opponent to the Buddhist message has demanded a proof with reference to a *pramāṇa*. How does the Buddhist thesis flow out of a "knowledge source?" The same question appears in the *Nyāyasūtra* (*NyS* 4.2.30). Indeed, whether or not Gautama, the *sūtra-kāra*, or Vātsyāyana actually connect with Nāgārjuna's text, and whether they connect in the right or wrong way (understanding Nāgārjuna's arguments or misunderstanding them), there is a long stretch

of text in the second *pāda* of the fourth chapter of the *NyS* where Nāgārjuna seems to be engaged. The presumption is that unless Nāgārjuna can spell out his *pramāṇa*, unless he can show how his thesis arises out of a *pramāṇa*, the Emptiness thesis is unacceptable. After all, the *pramāṇa* of perception, inference, and so on, attest to all sorts of different, positively existent individuals, some related to one another causally, some not. Nāgārjuna responds by counterattacking, by challenging the coherence of the *pramāṇa-prameya* relationship as understood by the Naiyāyika. This counterattack is complex, multifaceted, and I wish to take up only a part of it, that to which Vātsyāyana and Gautama appear to respond.

The attack, according to Nāgārjuna, is that the Buddhist Emptiness thesis cannot be transmitted and become knowledge on the part of another if the transmitting statement is itself “empty”—that is to say, if it does not have the “self-existence” that is entailed by being a cause. In that case, the *pramāṇa* of testimony could not operate since this like the others is a *generator* of knowledge, the statement of the speaker *causing* knowledge in a hearer to arise. To this, Nāgārjuna replies that his words have no such causal power, that they are like the imaginary words of an imaginary character. The *pūrva-pakṣa* at *NyS* 4.2.31-2 reads as follows, echoing his reply: “The conception of *pramāṇa* and *prameya* is like the false awareness of an object in a dream. Or, it is wrong like pseudo-perceptions due to magician’s trickery, images in clouds, or a mirage.” Vātsyāyana focuses on dream objects as things that seem to be perceived

but are not real or, as he says, not present and therefore not given perceptually. Vātsyāyana's response interprets the two *pūrva-pakṣa* sūtras as formulating an inference, namely, that cognition of the *pramāṇa-prameya* relationship (*a*, the inferential subject) is (F, the predicate to be proved) erroneous, *since* it is (since the inferential subject has the following prover property which stands in a pervaded/pervader relationship with the property to be proved, i.e., since it is) illusory, like (other things that exhibit both the prover and probandum properties), (a) the illusion produced by magician's trickery, (b) sky castles, (c) mirages, and (d) objects in dreams. A second step draws the conclusion that as these objects do not exist, the *pramāṇa-prameya* relationship does not exist. Formulated like this as an inference—or two inferences—the argument is subject to the rules governing genuine inference, and there is failure on three counts, first, concerning the pervasion presumed, second, concerning the step that would move from—let us admit for the sake of argument—a particular illusory cognition of a *pramāṇa-prameya* relationship to the conclusion that there is no *pramāṇa-prameya* relationship at all, and, third, concerning a meta-rule governing the employment of inferences, namely, as with testimony, to generate knowledge in another person.

Why should cognition of *pramāṇa-prameya* relationship be grouped with dreams and illusions, whose objects are not present at the time of the cognition? Why should it not be classified instead with veridical waking experiences whose objects are present? The Buddhist has identified no

feature of such cognition, such as leading to frustration of effort, to support his alleged *vyāpti* or concomitance. Second, dream objects, though not causing dream experiences immediately in the manner of perception, are not absolutely non-existent. One dreams of the distant friend, but the friend, while absent, presumably exists and would not have been dreamed of if not encountered previously. Dream objects are like the objects of longing (for something not present) and rememberings, in that they enter into dreaming through the *saṃskāra*, the memory impressions, formed by previous perceptions. Can the Buddhist provide an analysis of the content or objecthood of dreams without referring to and thus admitting the existence of real objects? Of course not. The deeper reason the Buddhist makes his argument seems to be the assumption that waking experiences in general, like dreams, lack real objects. But this is patently false. If waking experiences lacked objects like dreams, then they would be no different from dreams, and dreaming and waking experience would be epistemically the same. But if there is no epistemic difference between these, no ice is cut by saying that cognition of *pramāṇa-prameya* relationship is like a dream, since one might as well say that is like a waking experience. Thus the second problem is of the same type as the third, namely, that the Buddhist argument is self-defeating, undercutting conditions for its success. For, just as Nāgārjuna's own *pūrva-pakṣin* suggested, if all cognitions are equally false or even equally unrelated to the epistemic touchstone of a "knowledge source," then to classify cognition of *pramāṇa-prameya*

relationship as false says nothing, there being no basis for the distinction between truth and falsity, valid argument and its opposite, or, as the Naiyāyika would put it, between the epistemically genuine and its mere semblance (*ābhāsa*).

The concept of the illusory is parasitic on that of the veridical. It is its imitator. This holds both in general and in particular. Just as it is self-defeating to argue that all cognition is false (since that cognition too would come under indictment), so one cannot meaningfully assert that an apparent F is only apparently F and not genuinely F if one does not know what it would be to be an F genuinely. The concept of the former derives from that of the latter. So there is no reason to think that cognition of *pramāṇa* in relation to *prameya* is somehow in principle wrong, nor, then, is it wrong to look for *pramāṇa* when there is doubt and controversy. Thus, the Buddhist Emptiness thesis is not established.

However, is there more here than avoidance of a kind of skepticism? In other words, is there more here than the observation that any argument that would undercut the distinction between warranted assertion and the unwarranted has to be wrong? What is really at issue in the exchange between the Buddhist and the Naiyāyika? Vātsyāyana's reasoning sounds a lot like a famous argument for the self within Advaita Vedānta, a school whose overall message is not very different from the Buddhist's, namely, that the objects of this world are not as they seem, that they are really joined in something else, Brahman, a universal consciousness, absolute, a single self so interconnected as to be the only genuine existent, *sat*.

Śaṅkara and his followers argue that it cannot be denied that there is a self, for the denying presupposes a self who denies (*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* 1.1.1). Śaṅkara also repeats many of the realist criticisms of Buddhist subjectivism and skepticism including the parasitism argument outlined above (at *BSB* 2.2.28—indeed his commentary on this sūtra seems practically to plagiarize, so precisely does he make Vātsyāyana’s points and in the same order).

But the late Advaitins are very insistent, as Ram-Prasad in his new book shows (2002), that the realist conclusion that there is an external world bound together by causal laws is a cognition that is itself dependent on consciousness. The realist takes a step too far in holding that it is demonstrated—not merely assumed but proved—that there is an external causal network working independently of consciousness. The late Advaitins, whom I call compatibilists, say that so long as a person has not Brahman-awareness, the realists’ causal network is rightly to be assumed. Nevertheless, it is, they say, demonstrable that the epistemic status called *assumption* is all that the thesis deserves, surely not a *certainty* that would exclude the message of the Upaniṣads. This is that there is available awareness that shows self and world to be one in Brahman, which is of course a thesis that appearances tell against. Ram-Prasad uses the term ‘non-realism’ for the position that while a world of objects interacting independently of consciousness has to be assumed within the framework of ordinary, untransformed consciousness, such externality should be recognized as sublatale in mystic knowledge. In part, Śaṅkara buys into

the Buddhist dream polemic: dreams and other illusions show the possibility that the differences and oppositions presumed in everyday consciousness can be (as Ram-Prasad put it) “overruled” by some other consciousness.

My own view is that this is right. Dreams and illusion do cut the ice against uncritical realism. How can we be sure from our limited *pramāṇa* that *brahma-vidyā* is impossible? Such possibility is all that the compatibilist Advaitin maintains, and the dream polemic does, I think, show this. Things could be presented differently; what we believe depends on our consciousness. A similar point was made by Bertrand Russell who said that perhaps it is imaginable that there be a universe without consciousness but then all the suns would be dark. We surely cannot imagine our world without presupposing consciousness. And why just because our everyday consciousness has evolved and has utility for survival, should it not be sublatale by some higher, better consciousness, better in the sense of better revealing some important features of reality normally hidden? Illusion shows the possibility, as Śaṅkara himself insists (the dream analogy of course appears in several Upaniṣads, most prominently, perhaps, in the *Māṇḍūkya*). Mystic testimony gives the prospect some weight.

So where are we? The problem with Advaita non-realism is that it purchases compatibility with science too cheaply, any science, even science at the service of a thoroughly materialist metaphysics. Thus it loses the opportunity to connect its mysticism with new science, with

mystic psychology in particular. Advaita can tell no causal story about Brahman's reality giving rise to Brahman-knowledge, being, I think, confused by the possibility of an experience whose only content seems to be itself, or, possibly, by consciousness being a precondition for all experience. Or, the confusion lies in a misunderstanding of Brahman's unity, which would seem to make causal relations impossible (nothing is a cause of itself). The logic of the expression "gives rise to" implies a distinction between cause and effect; the causal relation is asymmetrical and irreflexive and thus is not identity. Everyone understands at least in rough terms how our senses and objects give rise to knowledge, and science provides considerable detail about the causal processes involved. But I cannot find any imaginable route from the reality of Brahman's characteristics (bliss, all-pervasiveness, omniscience, etc.) to their appearing as content or direct indication of a mystical experience—I mean I cannot presupposing the Advaitin understanding of Brahman. Certain Advaitins accept the *cakra* system of Tantrism, and others say a lot about the *adhikāra* necessary to make one fit and ready for *brahma-sākṣātkāra*. But Advaita cannot tie these up in a truly causal story even though the talk is all causal (*sākṣātkāra*, "making the object immediate"). Look at the long-espoused theory of purification of mind, the view that it needs to be rid of the lower qualities of nature, the *rajas* and *tamas*, which then brings about the clarity of mind, the *sattva*, necessary to *brahma-vidyā*. And there is the Vivaraṇa subschool's commitment to the efficacy of hearing statements of the Upaniṣads to bring about the supreme good. But the

Advaitin only appears to commit to a causal tale. By the way, the Viśiṣṭādvaitin Rāmānuja excoriates Śaṅkara here.

Advaitins cannot connect psychology or any science to *brahma-vidyā*; they suggest, then, that it could very well be that no causal story can be provided (*a-nirvacanīya*). But then there could be no way to differentiate veridical and non-veridical Brahman-experience, genuine enlightenment versus its mere semblance (*ābhāsa*), and no possibility of yoga science. We need a Brahman-centered philosophy that involves a richer reality than Advaita's non-dual Brahman in order to accommodate even India's—*a fortiori* the world's—traditions of mysticism and spirituality. We need a mystic psychology integrated into a spiritual world view in the way that brain and drug-based psychology is integrated into, or flows from, a wider materialist paradigm. We need to take a lesson from the classical Indian *pramāṇa* theorists and work towards a spiritual science founded on causal principles. It should not be hamstrung by any sort of anti-realism, no matter what its name or forebears.

Stephen H. Phillips

University of Texas at Austin