1 Introduction

This book is primarily about the philosophy of Vyāsatīrtha (1460–1539[1]), an intellectual and religious leader who lived in South India at the beginning of what is now widely referred to as the "early modern" period (*ca.* 1500–1800). Also known as "Vyāsarāja" or "Vyāsayogi", Vyāsatīrtha was by birth a member of the Mādhva tradition of Vedānta, a movement which had originated approximately two hundred years earlier. Better known in the West as the "Dvaita" ("Dualistic") tradition of Vedānta, the Mādhva movement was founded by the philosopher and religious reformer Madhvācārya (1238–1317), in India today variously called "Madhva", "Ānandatīrtha", or "Pūrṇaprajña". Madhva was born into a family of brahmins near the town of Udupi, on the western coast of what is now the state of Karnataka. While Madhva's teachers initially attempted to train him in the philosophy of the Advaita ("Nondualist") tradition of Vedānta, he rejected this philosophy and went on to establish his own school of theistic Vedānta, called Mādhva in reference to its founder.

Philosophical Advaita Vedānta is usually traced back to the work of Śaṅkarācārya and Maṇḍana Miśra, philosophers who probably flourished towards the turn of the eighth century. Advaitin philosophers argue that the *brahman* referred to in the Upaniṣads is an immaculate, self-reflexive consciousness that is eternal, unchanging, and free from qualities of any kind. According to them, the empirical world is a vast illusion mistakenly superimposed on this changeless reality. For Advaitin philosophers, although the world does have a provisional, practical "existence" (*vyāvahārika-sattva*), it does not enjoy ultimate reality. This practical existence persists until it is "sublated" by the deeper realisation of the non-dual *brahman*.

The Advaitins' interpretation of the Veda remains the most widely known outside of India today, and Advaita philosophy continues to exert a deep influence on modern scholars in their interpretation of Vedānta texts. Yet the Advaitic interpretation was vigorously contested from the earliest stages in India. For example, the Vedāntin Bhāskara (*fl.* 750) gave a vitriolic critique of Śaṅkara's arguments in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*, rejecting Śaṅkara's illusionism, and comparing his arguments to the Yogācāra Buddhists. By contrast to Śaṅkara, Bhāskara claimed that the world is a genuine "evolution"/"development" (*pariṇāma*) of *brahman*, and that individual souls are truly distinct from one another.

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1 Unless stated otherwise, dates for Navya-Nyāya and Advaita philosophers in this book are drawn from the online version of Volume 1 of Karl H. Potter's *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*: Bibliography: http://faculty.washington.edu/kpotter/ (accessed February 6, 2022). Dates for Mādhva philosophers are mostly drawn from Sharma (1981).

From roughly the tenth century onwards, Vaiṣṇava theistic schools began to write critiques in Sanskrit of the Śāṅkara-Advaita tradition. In South India, the Viśi-ṣṭādvaitin philosophers Yāmunācārya (1016–1040) and Rāmānuja (1017–1137) gave a theistic interpretation of the Upaniṣads, identifying *brahman* with the Vedic god Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa. In subsequent centuries, religious thinkers from a number of other Vaiṣṇava traditions in different parts of India wrote their own interpretations of the *Brahmasūtra*, including Nimbārka (*fl.* 750), Vallabha (1479–1531), and the scholars of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition.

Of all these traditions, the Mādhva movement is the most staunchly anti-Advaita. Like Bhāskara and Rāmānuja, Madhva rejected the illusionism of the Śāṅkara-Advaita tradition and proclaimed that the Advaitins are nothing more than Buddhists masquerading as brahmins. Madhva argued that the *brahman* referred to in the Upaniṣads is not the attribute-less consciousness of Advaita philosophy, but the personal god Viṣṇu, a flawless being of infinite perfections. According to the Mādhvas, Viṣṇu takes on a variety of earthly descents (*avatāra*s), including Gopāla Kṛṣṇa, the Rāma of the Rāmāyaṇa, and the compiler of the Vedas, Veda-Vyāsa. The ultimate goal of all Vedānta traditions—liberation from transmigratory existence—can only be obtained through devoted worship of Viṣṇu.

Madhva argued that while the world of conscious and unconscious beings is profoundly inferior to god and depends on him in every way, it nevertheless enjoys the same "existence" (*sattva*) as god does. The innumerable conscious and uncon-scious beings that constitute this world are permanently distinct from both god and one another, and the distinctions between the individual souls persist even in libera-tion. This pluralistic realism put Madhva squarely at odds with the Advaita tradition. And while he also debated with other traditions of Indian philosophy, the Advaitins were always the leading target of Madhva's critiques. He toured India to present his ideas to leading scholars from other traditions, eventually converting some to his cause.

By the end of his life, Madhva had succeeded in establishing a firm basis for his tradition in the Kanara region of South India. Yet for around two centuries after his death, the established religious traditions in the South largely ignored the new movement. During the sixteenth century, however, the Mādhvas were propelled into the centre of the power-politics of the Vijayanagara Empire, which was founded in 1336. In this period the Mādhva religion expanded its base considerably, spread-ing from its heartland to Tamil and Telugu speaking regions of South India, and ulti-mately as far north as Bihar. This expansion was accompanied by new recognition of the movement in the Sanskrit intellectual world. By the turn of the seventeenth century, Mādhva philosophical work had attracted critical responses from some of the leading minds of the Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita traditions.

As the most influential leader in the Mādhva tradition during this period, Vyā-satīrtha was at the heart of the Mādhvas' rise to prominence. Among specialists to-day, he is widely regarded not only as being the most outstanding Mādhva thinker, but also a leading philosopher in India's intellectual history. His relationship with the emperors of the Tuḷuva dynasty at Vijayanagara helped him to win new re-sources for his tradition and expand its sphere of influence considerably. He also acted as a preceptor to the leading figures of the Haridāsa movement, who popu-larised Mādhva philosophy through their devotional hymns written in the Kannada vernacular.

The main subject of this book is Vyāsatīrtha's critique of the Advaita school of Vedānta in the first of his three major works, the "Nectar of Reasoning" (*Nyāyāmṛta*). The text was primarily written as a comprehensive critique of Advaita philosophy, although later chapters of the work touch on Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy as well. Mea-sured in terms of the quantity of literature that was written on it, the *Nyāyāmṛta* was clearly one of the most important philosophical works in India from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. After Vyāsatīrtha's death, it became a kind of governing text which helped set the intellectual agenda of the early-modern Vedānta philoso-phers. Leading Vedānta philosophers in India wrote scores of commentaries on the work. These commentarial texts were written not only by Mādhva philosophers, but also by Advaitin intellectuals, who found Vyāsatīrtha's work important enough to write line-by-line critical commentaries on it. To date, only a small number of the commentaries on the *Nyāyāmṛta* have been published in printed editions. Vyāsatīr-tha's two other major works, the *Tātparyacandrikā* and the *Tarkatāṇḍava*, did not prove as influential outside of the Mādhva tradition as the *Nyāyāmṛta*. Neverthe-less, Mādhva philosophers continued to study them, and Vyāsatīrtha's arguments in those texts reshaped Mādhva epistemology and metaphysics in the centuries af-ter his death.

Vyāsatīrtha's ideas were deeply influenced by the works of Madhva and Ma-dhva's leading commentator Jayatīrtha, yet he was no slave to his tradition. All of his works were philosophically innovative, and Vyāsatīrtha makes substantial intel-lectual modifications to the philosophical arguments of his predecessors in the Mā-dhva lineage. Sharma (1981: 294) went as far as to describe Vyāsatīrtha as a "second founder" of the Mādhva tradition. The originality of Vyāsatīrtha's work stemmed to a great extent from his engagement with specialist disciplines outside of the Mādhva tradition. Vyāsatīrtha's work shows a deep engagement with the ritual science of the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsākas as well as Sanskrit grammatical science (*vyākaraṇaśāstra*), and these aspects of his work influenced the Mādhva philosophers who followed him.

However, it was possibly Vyāsatīrtha's study of Navya-Nyāya that exerted the greatest influence over his thought. One of the central themes of this book is Vyā-satīrtha's critical engagement with the work of the epistemologist Gaṅgeśa Upād-

hyāya (*fl.* 1350), who is usually regarded as the originator of the "New Reason" (Navya-Nyāya) tradition. Gaṅgeśa is taken to have been born in Mithila, probably in the early to mid-fourteenth century.[2] His *Tattvacintāmaṇi* became the basis for the entire tradition of Navya-Nyāya, including the work of Raghunātha Śiromaṇi (*fl.* 1510) and the Bengal school of Navya-Nyāya. Navya-Nyāya ideas and terminology were adopted by diverse traditions of thought in India, including the Mādhvas and the various schools of Vedānta.[3] Vyāsatīrtha was apparently the first South Indian philosopher to write a detailed response to Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, and his work exerted a deep influence over the reception of Gaṅgeśa's ideas by Vedānta philosophers.

1.1 Reception of Vyāsatīrtha's work in modern times

There has been a continuous tradition of interpreting Vyāsatīrtha's works within the Mādhva tradition since his death in the sixteenth century. Today, Mādhva scholars live primarily in the south of India, particularly in the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. Scholars in these networks continue to participate in a lively world of philosophical debate, and their knowledge is largely transmitted from teacher to student in private brahmin households. Many Mādhva scholars hold positions in the different *maṭha*s and traditional institutions that support Mādhva learning, and some have taken up positions teaching at modern universities that focus on Sanskrit learning. These scholars continue to study the medieval philosophical works of the Mādhva tradition and to write on them in Sanskrit, as well as in Kannada and English. At the heart of the Mādhva curriculum taught at these institutions is Jayatīrtha's magnum opus, the *Nyāyasudhā*. The study of Vyāsatīrtha's works is reserved for more advanced students.

While Deepak Sarma (1999 and 2004) has argued that there might be limits to what Mādhva scholars are prepared to teach outsiders to the tradition, they are often happy to share at least certain aspects of their knowledge with non-Mādhva scholars. This book is based partly on collaboration with leading Mādhva scholars. In 2010, I worked with D. Prahladachar in reading the opening chapters of Vyāsatīrtha's *Nyāyāmṛta* and its commentaries that are translated in this volume. At the time, Prahladachar was based at the Pūrṇaprajñavidyāpīṭha in Bengaluru; he is currently head of the Vyāsarāja Maṭha. In 2018, I further worked with Veera-

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2 See Phillips (2020a: 2–3) for a recent discussion of Gaṅgeśa's dates.

3 A recently published special edition of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* (David and Duquette, 2021) deals with the impact of Navya-Nyāya on different intellectual traditions in South India, including the Mādhvas and the Advaitins.

narayana Pandurangi, Professor at the Karnataka Samskrit University, Bengaluru, in reading the *Tarkatāṇḍava* and the Navya-Nyāya *Tarkasaṅgrahadīpikāsarasva*.

Mādhva scholars led efforts to publish Vyāsatīrtha's works in the twentieth century, in particular the scholar Krishna Tatacharya Pandurangi, who was responsible for leading a broad-ranging initiative to publish key Mādhva works. Many of these were republications of older editions that had fallen out of print, but Pandurangi also produced new editions of previously unpublished Sanskrit texts. In 2014, just after his death, the Vidyādhīśa Snātakottara Saṃskṛta Śodhakendra in Bengaluru published a new edition of the *Nyāyāmṛta*, which contains two previously unpublished Mādhva commentaries on the text. The leading Advaitin scholar Anantakrishna Sastri also published editions of Vyāsatīrtha's works alongside responses to them written by Advaitin philosophers.

In the twentieth century, scholars in India worked to present Vyāsatīrtha's philosophy to a wider public. Bhavani Narayanrao Krishnamurti Sharma, whose work on the history of the Mādhva school remains standard on the subject, introduced Vyāsatīrtha's works to English speakers by writing summaries of their contents. Sharma (1994) wrote a detailed summary of the *Nyāyāmṛta* and the response of the Advaitin Madhusūdana Sarasvatī (*fl.* 1570) to Vyāsatīrtha's arguments in his *Advaitasiddhi*. He further summarised the contents of Vyāsatīrtha's *Tarkatāṇḍava* and *Tātparyacandrikā* in his *History of the Dvaita School of Vedānta and its Literature* (Sharma, 1981). The scholar Surendranath Dasgupta also published detailed explanations of Vyāsatīrtha's philosophy in his wide-ranging studies of Indian philosophical thought. Dasgupta praised Vyāsatīrtha's work, judging that he and Jayatīrtha "present the highest dialectical skill in Indian thought" (Dasgupta, 1949: viii). In the early years of the twentieth century, the scholar Venkoba Rao published an edition and study of the leading biography of Vyāsatīrtha's life, the *Vyāsayogicarita*, thus helping to open up Vyāsatīrtha's life and historical significance to modern scholarship.

There was very little interest among Western scholars in Vyāsatīrtha's work in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the early years of the twenty-first have witnessed a surge of interest in his work among scholars both in Europe and North America. This new research on Vyāsatīrtha has been driven largely by interest in his historical role at Vijayanagara and his intellectual influence over the Advaita tradition. Focusing on Vyāsatīrtha's role as a state-agent at Vijayanagara, Valerie Stoker (2016) published a detailed study of Vyāsatīrtha's role as a monastic leader at the Vijayanagara court. Stoker's work focuses particularly on the complex dynamic between Vyāsatīrtha and the Advaita/Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedāntins at Vijayanagara. She drew together Vyāsatīrtha's philosophical work with extensive biographical, inscriptional, and monumental records that give us a detailed picture of his life and historical influence.

Research published by Lawrence McCrea (2015) has highlighted Vyāsatīrtha's influence over the intellectual development of the Advaita philosophical tradition. Jonathan Duquette (2019) has highlighted the role that Vyāsatīrtha's work played in drawing the Advaitin Appayya Dīkṣita into Navya-Nyāya learning. My own research (Williams 2014, 2020a, and 2020b) has contributed to the study of Vyāsatīrtha's work by examining the influence that Gaṅgeśa and his followers in the Navya-Nyāya tradition had over Vyāsatīrtha's thought. Meanwhile, Deepak Sarma (1999, 2004) has discussed Vyāsatīrtha's contribution to the debate about access to Sanskrit texts in the Mādhva tradition, and recent work by Amit Chaturvedi (2020) has highlighted Vyāsatīrtha's critique of Gaṅgeśa's theory of raw/immaculate perception.

1.2 The scope and purpose of this volume

Works like the *Nyāyāmṛta* were undoubtedly written as polemical interventions, and, as Stoker's studies show, they can be fruitfully situated in the historical context in which Vyāsatīrtha created them. Yet they are also masterpieces of philosophical argumentation. While I sometimes discuss the historical questions surrounding Vyāsatīrtha's work, this volume approaches Vyāsatīrtha primarily as a philosopher whose work has the potential to substantially enrich the growing cross-cultural conversation in philosophy. I have not attempted to undertake the considerable task of drawing comparisons between Vyāsatīrtha's work and Western philosophy. However, this volume should help lay the basis for this larger project by opening up Vyāsatīrtha's arguments to wider philosophical research.

The book primarily gives a philosophical reconstruction of the opening chapters of the *Nyāyāmṛta*. It is based largely on my own translations of relevant parts of the Sanskrit works of Vyāsatīrtha, Jayatīrtha, Madhva, Madhusūdana, Gaṅgeśa, and their many commentators. In most cases, this is the first time these works have been translated into English. The book began life as a doctoral thesis which explored particularly a part of the *Nyāyāmṛta* known in modern editions as the "Refutation of the First Definition of Illusoriness" (*Prathamamithyātvabhaṅga*), which is translated with a commentary in Chapter 9 of this book. In this short, yet dense, part of the *Nyāyāmṛta*, Vyāsatīrtha critiques the Advaitins' doctrine of "indeterminacy" (*anirvacanīyatā*). Under one analysis, the "illusoriness" (*mithyātva*) that Advaitin philosophers ascribe to the world is indeterminacy. In this context, the claim that the world is indeterminate is not so much a statement that it is somehow ineffable or beyond description, but the more specific claim that it cannot be definitively shown to be either existent or nonexistent.

The thirteenth-century Advaitin philosopher Ānandabodha Yati presented a series of formal inferences to establish that the world has the quality of being inde-

terminate. Ānandabodha drew on the logical theory of the early Nyāya tradition to certify his inferences by showing that they were free from a range of formal fallacies. The early chapters of the *Nyāyāmṛta* are concerned with showing that these inferences are irredeemably fallacious, and that the world our perceptual faculties reveal to us must truly exist. Thus in practice, this book focuses on reconstructing the complex intellectual background to the *Prathamamithyātvabhaṅga*.

One of the central themes of this book is how Vyāsatīrtha used and applied Navya-Nyāya works in the *Nyāyāmṛta* and *Tarkatāṇḍava*. As is well known to specialists, the opening chapters of the *Nyāyāmṛta*, including the *Prathamamithyātvabhaṅga*, show extensive reuse of texts written by Gaṅgeśa. The Mādhvas and the Naiyāyikas have much in common intellectually. Both traditions defended the reality of the sensory world against the critiques of the different anti-realist philosophies in India. Both are brahmanical traditions and they defend, in their own way, the main pillars of Brahminism, particularly the validity of the Veda and the social structures of the four castes and life-stages (*caturvarṇāśramadharma*). Both traditions defend in different ways the existence of god against sceptics. Moreover, Mādhva theories of knowledge and metaphysics were from the earliest stages based on a deep engagement with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy.

Yet, as I will discuss in this volume, the two traditions disagree strongly about a range of philosophical issues. Thus, while Gaṅgeśa presented Vyāsatīrtha with a range of new ideas and terms he could apply to his own work, Gaṅgeśa's arguments also presented a sophisticated challenge to Madhva and Jayatīrtha's theory of knowledge. It was left to Vyāsatīrtha to show that his predecessors' arguments could be vindicated in the light of Gaṅgeśa's new defence of Nyāya thought. The *Tarkatāṇḍava* was written as a comprehensive critique of the thought of Gaṅgeśa and commentators from his birthplace Mithila. Vyāsatīrtha's followers in the Mādhva tradition continued to critically engage with Navya-Nyāya ideas, frequently travelling to Varanasi to study the texts of Gaṅgeśa and his followers.

1.3 Overview of Vyāsatīrtha's philosophy

If we were to use modern terms to introduce Vyāsatīrtha's work, we might fruitfully describe him as an "analytic theologian". Indeed, it is reasonable to describe Vyāsatīrtha's work as theology. The main purpose of the *Nyāyāmṛta* is to understand the true nature of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa through the authoritative texts of Vedānta/Vaiṣṇava tradition. The *Nyāyāmṛta* is supposed to contribute to this overall task critically by ruling out the Advaitins' interpretation of scripture.

Mādhva philosophers were consistently sceptical of the ability of inferential reasoning to prove ultimate truths, such as the existence of god or the true meta-

physical status of the world. The first chapters of the *Nyāyāmṛta* itself were written to show that attempts by Advaitin philosophers to prove the "illusoriness" of the world are hopelessly flawed. Likewise did Vyāsatīrtha and his followers reject Gaṅgeśa's own attempts to prove the existence of god using formal inferences, accusing the Naiyāyikas of being "rationalists" (*haituka*s) with insufficient regard for the Veda. Nevertheless, all Mādhva philosophers accept the validity of inference and ascribe it an important role in reaching a true understanding of scripture. Throughout the *Nyāyāmṛta*, Vyāsatīrtha attempts to prove his claims using logical reasoning, most frequently in the form of critical argumentation directed against the Advaitins.

Elsewhere (Williams, 2020a: 109–110), I gave the following list of features of Vyāsatīrtha's work that warrant describing it as "analytic":

1. a deep attention to the conceptual analysis of the key terms involved in the philosophical discussions;
2. the use of new logical terms borrowed from Navya-Nyāya such as "determiner" (*avacchedaka*), "describer" (*nirūpaka*), and "pervasion" (*vyāpti*) to quantify relations precisely;
3. the extensive use of concepts from the Mādhva and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theories of the natural world in philosophical discussions;
4. the ubiquitous use of formal inferences (*anumāna*) to prove philosophical theories;
5. the evaluation of these inferences using a stock list of formal fallacies.

From this point of view, the work of Madhva and Jayatīrtha (and Indian philosophers in general) could also be described as "analytic". However, in the works of Vyāsatīrtha, who was writing under the influence of Gaṅgeśa and his followers, these tendencies become more pronounced, to the point that we are warranted in speaking of a new, highly analytical style of doing philosophy in his works.

Vyāsatīrtha used this style of argumentation to give a new voice to Madhva and Jayatīrtha's arguments against the Advaitins. All Mādhva philosophers reject the Advaitins' claim that texts like the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra* teach that the world is a virtual effect of *brahman*. Instead, they hold that the world of our senses "exists" in the same way that *brahman*/god does, even if it is in every other way profoundly inferior to god. Like the other realist schools, Mādhva philosophers reject the idea that the external objects making up the world are somehow reducible to conscious states, as was proposed by the Yogācāra Buddhists for instance, as well as in some tendencies within the Vivaraṇa school of Advaita philosophy.

According to Madhva and his followers, conscious beings remain eternally distinct from one another, and stand in an immutable ethical hierarchy. The Mādhvas place "difference" (*bheda*) at the centre of their ontology, arguing that it is the very nature of things to be differentiated from one another. They further eschew the idea

that there are repeatable properties/universals (*jāti*s), arguing instead for a pluralistic ontology in which we group distinct things together only because of their innate similarity to one another.

In the *Nyāyāmṛta*, Vyāsatīrtha argues that it is primarily perception that discloses the reality of the world to us, and that inference and scripture are powerless to contradict this fundamental insight. Sophisticated arguments cannot dispel the deep sense that perception gives us of the reality of the world. In fact, the truth of such perceptions is guaranteed by the nature of consciousness itself. We may test the validity of certain judgments through critical reasoning, but ultimately truth is "intrinsic" to knowledge. It is in the nature of our consciousness to detect the truth of our judgments, and our sense faculties are innately disposed to produce true judgments about the world. Errors occur, of course, but they are exceptions that stand in need of special explanation. And such episodes are very easily explained—they pose to us no mysteries or riddles, as the Advaitins claim.

The *Nyāyāmṛta* is a vast text that discusses practically every issue that had occupied the minds of Indian philosophers until the sixteenth century. Philosophically, the primary subject matter of the present book are problems having to do with the nature of being—about the nature of existence (*sattva*) and nonexistence (*asattva*), and their relationship to one another—as they were discussed by Vyāsatīrtha and the philosophers who were influenced by his work. These issues dominate the discussion in the opening chapters of the *Nyāyāmṛta*, and Vyāsatīrtha returns to them time and again in his critique of Ānandabodha's inferences.

As is well known, problems having to do with nonexistence or empty terms were at the heart of some of the most influential work in analytic philosophy in the early twentieth century. The philosopher Alexius Meinong argued that every denoting phrase must refer to a thing that is, in some sense, part of reality. Fictional entities such as "golden mountains" must have at least some sort of "being" in order to serve as truth-makers for judgments about them. In his famous article *On Denoting*, Bertrand Russell argued that descriptive phrases have a logical form very different from the one that their grammatical structure might suggest. By analysing descriptive phrases as collections of logical quantifiers and propositional functions, Russell believed that he had solved many of the philosophical problems associated with empty terms. Russell's work inspired new philosophical approaches to the relationship between language and reality and, to many, pointed to a new way of doing philosophy altogether.

Indian philosophers, too, were puzzled by the "riddle of nonexistence". They discussed pertinent problems in two contexts particularly. The first was their treatment of perceptual illusions. How can we explain perceptual errors, cognitions that seem to be about things that do not exist? When in poor light I form the mistaken belief that what is really a length of rope is a cobra, what exactly is the "cobra" part

of that judgment *of*? Do all the components of our judgments need to exist, or is it possible to imagine a conscious state that is directed towards something that simply does not exist?

Indian philosophers also explored these issues when analysing empty terms, such as "sky-flower" (*khapuṣpa*) or "the son of a barren woman" (*vandhyāsuta*). Philosophers of the Nyāya school particularly tended to refer to these as "unestablished" or "unexampled" (*aprasiddha*) terms. In many ways, the problems that occupied medieval Indian philosophers on this subject ran along similar lines to those that concerned analytic philosophers like Russell. Can statements involving empty terms be said to be meaningful at all? Are negative existential judgments that seem to be about such terms (e.g. "The golden mountain does not exist") true, and if so, how? Can formal definitions include unestablished terms, and can we legitimately make inferences that involve them somehow?

These issues were also at the heart of much of the work done on Indian philosophy in the twentieth century. Questions of existence and nonexistence were discussed extensively by Bimal Krishna Matilal, who read the works of the classical Nyāya philosophers in the light of developments in analytic philosophy in the twentieth century. In his *Perception: An Essay on Classical Indian Theories of Knowledge*, Matilal discussed the Nyāya approach to perceptual illusions/empty terms primarily in the context of the Naiyāyikas' debate with the Buddhists, comparing the Nyāya position with Russell's approach to empty terms. Arindam Chakrabarti (1997) also gives an overview of these discussions in his work. The Advaita Vedānta view of being has been explored by Ram-Prasad (2002), who gave a reconstruction of what he calls Advaitic "non-realism" in the works of philosophers like Śrīharṣa (*fl.* 1140) and Vācaspati Miśra (*fl.* 960).

Jonardon Ganeri's (2011) work on metaphysics in the Bengali Navya-Nyāya tradition in the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries focuses on the work of the philosopher Raghunātha Śiromaṇi (*fl.* 1500). According to our best calculations, Raghunātha was almost an exact contemporary of Vyāsatīrtha. Raghunātha's demolition of classical Vaiśeṣika metaphysics in his "Determination of the Truth about the Categories" (*Padārthatattvanirūpaṇa*) prompted Navya-Nyāya philosophers to reappraise the foundations of their tradition's thought, including their theories of being and non-being, or existence and nonexistence. Whether, like the philosopher Veṇīdatta (1695–1795), they accepted the radical spirit of Raghunātha's critique, or, like Jayarāma Pañcānana (1620–1700), continued to defend the classical Vaiśeṣika system of categories, Navya-Nyāya philosophers writing from the sixteenth century onwards were deeply influenced by Raghunātha's critical work on metaphysics.

As Raghunātha was shaking the foundations of Vaiśeṣika thought in North India, Vyāsatīrtha was drawing on the same intellectual resources of the Navya-Nyāya tradition to catalyse changes in Vedānta philosophy. Unlike Raghunātha, who was

an unapologetically iconoclastic critic of established doctrines, Vyāsatīrtha consistently presented himself as a conservative thinker, going to great pains to show that his philosophy was part of an unbroken line following the works of Madhva and Jayatīrtha. Nevertheless, his work threw into question many of the foundational doctrines of the Mādhva and Advaita traditions, forcing their followers to critically re-evaluate their philosophy in the light of his arguments. All subsequent thinkers in the Mādhva tradition incorporated Vyāsatīrtha's insights into their works. Moreover, his work on Navya-Nyāya inspired Mādhva intellectuals such as Satyanātha Tīrtha (*fl.* 1670) and Mannāri Kṛṣṇācārya (latter half of the eighteenth century) to engage critically with Raghunātha and the Bengal school of Navya-Nyāya. And while Advaitin philosophers publicly poured scorn on Vyāsatīrtha's arguments, his work helped draw the Advaitins into the world of Navya-Nyāya learning and forced them to reappraise many of the central arguments of the medieval Advaita tradition.

1.4 Overview of this volume

In Chapter 2, I first outline the major historical facts about the *Nyāyāmṛta* and the large body of literature that has been written on it. In addition, I offer some observations on the historical context of Vyāsatīrtha's work and its influence over later philosophers belonging to the Mādhva and Advaita traditions. The first part of the chapter also presents the lives of the early commentators on the *Nyāyāmṛta*, many of whom hailed from the town of Puntamba in what is now the state of Maharashtra.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I present the background to the *Nyāyāmṛta* in Mādhva and Advaita philosophical texts. Together, these chapters are intended to give a precise formulation of the scope of the disagreement between the two traditions. Chapter 3 outlines the Mādhva side of this disagreement. I draw mainly on Jayatīrtha's commentaries on Madhva's works to reconstruct the Mādhva epistemological and metaphysical positions that are pertinent to Vyāsatīrtha's discussion.

Chapter 4 then turns to Advaita philosophy. I begin by giving an overview of relevant passages of the works of the classical Advaitins, particularly Vimutkātman (*fl.* 950), Prakāśātman (*fl.* 975), and Citsukha (*fl.* 1220), all of whom loom large in Vyāsatīrtha's critique. The first half of the chapter largely discusses how these philosophers analyse the concept of "illusoriness" (*mithyātva*), which is the property that Ānandabodha's inferences should prove of the world. The larger part of the chapter focuses on Vyāsatīrtha's own analysis of Advaita philosophy in the "preliminary position" (*pūrvapakṣa*) that he gives for the Advaitins in the *Nyāyāmṛta*. Vyāsatīrtha gives a detailed reconstruction of the Advaitins' case in this part of the text. Chapter 4 also introduces the three inferences that Ānandabodha gave to establish that the world is illusory.

Chapters 5 and 6 give a reconstruction of Vyāsatīrtha's case in favour of realism against Ānandabodha's inferences. In the *Nyāyāmṛta*, Vyāsatīrtha is first and foremost a critic of Advaita philosophy, yet I here attempt to show that his case against Ānandabodha hangs on a number of positive propositions about knowledge and the world. I begin the chapter by giving a map of Vyāsatīrtha's critique of Advaita which shows how these different positions hang together to make a case against Ānandabodha.

One of Vyāsatīrtha's most significant contributions to the debate in the *Nyāyā-mṛta* lies in his analyses of "existence" and "nonexistence". I begin my reconstruction in Chapter 5 by examining Vyāsatīrtha's theory of existence and nonexistence against the backdrop of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory that existence is a special sort of universal/natural kind. Vyāsatīrtha rejects the theory that existence is a universal. Instead, he defines existence in terms of spatio-temporal instantiation. To exist is simply to be connected with some part of space and time.

Vyāsatīrtha argues that existence, in the way he defines it, is a property we can perceive directly in the objects of our experience, and thus argues that Ānandabodha's inferences are ruled out by perception. The second half of Chapter 5 examines how Vyāsatīrtha uses the arguments of Madhva and Jayatīrtha to show that perception has the power to undermine Ānandabodha's inferences. Vyāsatīrtha argues that perception is innately stronger than inference, and that we must consequently abandon any inference that denies the existence of the objects of our perceptions.

It is in this part of the *Nyāyāmṛta* that Vyāsatīrtha gives his most detailed defence of the Mādhva doctrine of the witness (*sākṣin*). He draws on the work of Madhva and Jayatīrtha to argue that the witness—the essence of the self and the faculty responsible for introspective perceptions—allows us to be certain that these judgments are true and will never be defeated even in future times, thus ruling out the universal "sublation" of the world's existence anticipated by the Advaitins.

Chapter 6 continues this analysis of Vyāsatīrtha's critique of Ānandabodha, focusing more on philosophical problems surrounding nonexistence. Advaitin philosophers argue that perceptual error furnishes us with a familiar example for inferring the illusoriness of the empirical world. In response, Vyāsatīrtha argues that there is nothing inexplicable about perceptual illusions. They are simply cases where our perceptual faculties conspire with our memories to synthesise a new individual that does not correlate to any particular piece of reality. The things we seem to see in such illusions simply do not exist, and there is therefore no reason to reject our deeply held conviction that existence and nonexistence are exhaustive states.

In the second half of Chapter 6, I examine how Vyāsatīrtha argues that the doctrine of indeterminacy is actually a disguised contradiction. Vyāsatīrtha takes it that, in the way he has defined them, existence and nonexistence are "jointly-exhaustive"

qualities. As such, any attempt to prove that something lacks both ends up establishing that that thing possesses them both, which is a contradiction. I consider Vyāsatīrtha's arguments in favour of this charge, along with Madhusūdana's response to them in his *Advaitasiddhi.*

The bulk of the *Prathamamithyātvabhaṅga* is concerned with showing that Ānandabodha's inferences violate a number of formal constraints placed on inference by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophers. Chapter 7 focuses mainly on giving the background to Vyāsatīrtha's arguments in Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi.* The pith of Vyāsatīrtha's case is clearly taken from the works of Madhva and Jayatīrtha, yet in the *Nyāyāmṛta* he rejuvenates their arguments by drawing on Gaṅgeśa's work on inference. Vyāsatīrtha draws particularly on Gaṅgeśa's discussion of "universal-negative" inference to justify accusing the Advaitins of these formal fallacies. As I show in this chapter, Gaṅgeśa's discussion there touches on philosophical questions about inference that are especially relevant to Vyāsatīrtha's critique of Ānandabodha's inferences, particularly about when an inference can be dismissed as redundant, or when we must rule out an inference because some of its terms are not established for us.

The discussion in Chapter 7 thus provides the background in technical Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory necessary to understand the *Prathamamithyātvabhaṅga.* Chapter 9 then contains a translation and commentary of this chapter of the *Nyāyāmṛta* as well as of some of its Mādhva and Advaita commentaries. It begins with an overview of the key terms borrowed from Navya-Nyāya by Vyāsatīrtha and his commentators, along with some observations on how Vyāsatīrtha's commentators use them in their analysis of the arguments in the *Nyāyāmṛta.* The chapter then concludes with a translation of the relevant parts of the *Nyāyāmṛta* and the *Advaitasiddhi*, along with extracts from the Mādhva commentaries by Vyāsa Rāmācārya (1550–1620), Ānanda Bhaṭṭāraka (1535–1605), and Śrīnivāsatīrtha (1560–1640).

1.5 Conventions used in this volume

All punctuation found in Sanskrit texts given in this volume is my own and does not necessarily reflect the punctuation used by the editors of the editions I am quoting from. Throughout this volume, I use forward slashes to indicate versification found in Sanskrit texts. Sanskrit commentators often coordinate their remarks on the texts they are commenting on by giving brief extracts from the root text in question (*pratīka*s). I have indicated the *pratīka*s found in the works of these commentators using inverted commas, placing the Sanskrit text of the *pratīka* after its translation to help the reader locate the relevant part of the root text. In many cases I have given vari-

ant readings found in editions in footnotes. I have coordinated these readings with the Sanskrit text using superscript numerals.

When referencing editions of Sanskrit texts, I have used the abbreviations that are given in the Bibliography of this volume. If quoting from a commentary on the root text found in the edition in question, I have given the full title of the relevant commentary before the abbreviation for the edition itself. Thus the reference: "*Nyāyāmṛtataraṅginī*, NA_B, 1:110" would mean that I am quoting from the text of the commentary *Nyāyāmṛtataraṅginī* as it is found on page 110 of the first volume of the Bengaluru edition of the *Nyāyāmṛta.*