Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers

Volume 16 | Issue 4

Article 4

10-1-1999

The Existence of God, Reason, and Revelation in Two Classical Hindu Theologies

Francis X. Clooney S.J.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy>

Recommended Citation

Clooney, Francis X. S.J. (1999) "The Existence of God, Reason, and Revelation in Two Classical Hindu Theologies," *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*: Vol. 16 : Iss. 4 , Article 4.

DOI: 10.5840/faithphil199916443

Available at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy/vol16/iss4/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers by an authorized editor of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD, REASON, AND REVELATION IN TWO CLASSICAL HINDU THEOLOGIES

Francis X. Clooney, S.J.

This essay introduces central features of classical Hindu reflection on the existence and nature of God by examining arguments presented in the *Nyāyamañjarī* of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa (9th century CE), and the *Nyāyasiddhāntajñāna* of Vedānta Deśika (14th century CE). Jayanta represents the Nyāya school of Hindu logic and philosophical theology, which argued that God's existence could be known by a form of the cosmological argument. Vedānta Deśika represents the Vedānta theological tradition, which denied that God's existence could be known by reason, gave primacy to the revelatory texts known as the Upaniṣads, and firmly subordinated theological reasoning to the acceptance of revelation. Jayanta and Deśika are respected representatives of their traditions whose clear, systematic positions illumine traditional Hindu understandings of "God" and the traditional Hindu debates about God's existence and nature. Attention to their positions highlights striking common features shared by Hindu and Christian theologies, and offers a substantial basis for comparative reflection on the Christian understanding of God's existence and nature, and the roles of reason and revelation in knowledge of God.

The Arrival of the Question of God as a Subject of Debate in Hindu India

Before turning to Jayanta Bhaṭṭa and Vedānta Deśika, it is important first to understand how the existence and nature of God became an urgent question in India. Let us therefore first consider a few features of the intellectual climate in which the Nyāya and Vedānta theologians (henceforth, respectively, the Naiyāyikas and Vedāntins) had to expound their views on God. Nyāya and Vedānta theologies and arguments about the existence of God develop within a complex religious environment which had as its most prominent established feature a worldview rooted in the authority of the Sanskrit-language Vedas and the ritual practices closely connected with the Veda. In the ritually-described world of the Vedas, many gods were recognized and invoked and no one god could be said to reign supreme and unchallenged. In this environment, two challenges to the tradition were key in helping to provoke explicit debate about the existence of God, one theistic and the other its opposite.

On the one side there was the persistent and growing tendency in the wider Hindu culture, popular and intellectual, toward theism and even de facto monotheism, in particular the worship of major deities such as Śiva

and Viṣṇu (who was worshipped as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa in particular). Even as the older pantheon of gods related to the Vedic rituals lost favor, at least in the wider popular imagination, these new major deities were increasingly figures of substance, whom intellectuals had to take into account. The issue was not solely the achievement of a higher or more refined religious discourse. The ritual system itself was highly sophisticated, while a key alternative to the primacy of ritual practice had already developed in the Vedic tradition, i.e., in the Upaniṣadic discovery of *brahman* as the pervasive spiritual power underlying all reality, and of *ātman* as the innermost self of all living beings; this focus on the Self took a potent intellectual form in the schools of Vedānta, particular with the great theologians Bādarāyaṇa (5th century CE) and Śaṅkara, the articulator of Nondualist Vedānta (7th-8th century CE).

In this context where both ritual practice and the discovery of self would be recognized as coherent and sufficient centers for religious world-views, it would not be obvious or uncontested that there should be a God posited at and as the center of religious intelligibility. Yet theism – as the focus on a single, supreme God – proved itself to be a strong competitor to the ritual and nondualist alternatives, and texts like the *Bhagavad Gītā* (2nd century BCE) stated the case for theism in a compelling fashion. Intellectual systems like Nyāya and Vedānta – which could function without such theism – nevertheless had to find ways of addressing theistic concerns and incorporating theistic values.

But at the same time this tendency to theistic reconstructions of religion were counterbalanced by strong forces tending toward atheism or, at least, rejections of the idea that positing the existence of a supreme God is necessary in order to render the world intelligible. Here, as in many other areas of Hindu thought, the Buddhist arguments are crucial. Thinkers like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti brought a wide range of epistemological, logical, and linguistic issues into sharp focus, and their writings highlighted the intellectual bases for their fundamental religious concern – the identification of Gautama, the Buddha, as the omniscient, gracious savior. Since the Buddhist positions are amply discussed elsewhere in this issue of the journal, I will not rehearse them here, and will emphasize only that to understand properly the earlier (pre-1000 CE) Hindu understandings of God one must keep in mind the Buddhist critiques of the idea of God and the Buddhist alternatives to God-language.

The other major strand of critique against explanatory theism and the project of formulating an induction of God's existence came from within the orthodox world. The school of ritual analysis and interpretation known as Mīmāṃsā, which dates back at least to the early centuries BCE, presents us with an orthodox brahmanical rejection of the idea of a God who is world-maker and Veda-author. Although the Mīmāṃsā thinkers (henceforth Mīmāṃsakas) were pragmatists who argued for the intelligibility and coherence of the ritual worldview and were disinclined to debate cosmological and theological issues, they could not control the discussion about religious issues in ancient India. In the face of competing candidates for ultimate religious meaning, they too had to take up and discuss ideas about God – God as the author of the Vedic scriptures, creator of the

world, recipient of all worship – even if such issues and the discussion itself were not really amicable to the Mīmāṃsā system. To elude the advent of a God as the guarantor of meaning, the Mīmāṃsakas grudgingly dealt with more extended layers and levels of theological reasoning, taking up the question of God in a variety of intellectual settings, beginning with the ritual and linguistic, and continuing to the cosmological and logical. In all these intellectual contexts, Mīmāṃsā resisted conceding to theism an intellectual and explanatory role.

The earliest Mīmāṃsā position on God was simple disinterest. The *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* of Jaimini (2nd century BCE) and the first commentary on the *Sūtras*, the *Bhāṣya* of Śabara (1st century CE), stand at the start of the textual tradition of Mīmāṃsā. They seem to have been largely uninterested in cosmology and cosmogony and the clarification of meta-physical presuppositions. Neither elaborates a theory about how the world came to be, and neither addresses the issue of whether there is or needs to be a God. Jaimini and Śabara give only minimal evidence for what will become, later on, the developed Mīmāṃsā position on God. At various points in the *Sūtras*, however, the claims they do make serve implicitly to undercut the attribution of substantial reality to either gods or God, by constructing complete explanations which do not require the postulation of a Being outside the closed ritual world. Their counterposition was put forward largely in terms of how language works; the coherence of the Vedic system is justified internally according to the dynamics of language learning and interpretation, such that external appeals are judged unnecessary.

On the basis of Śabara's views there developed two important schools of Mīmāṃsā, one traceable to the teachings of Prabhākara Miśra (7th-8th century), and the other to those of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (7th century). Thinkers in the less influential though perhaps more traditional Prabhākara school defended the self-sufficiency of sacrifice and the non-necessity of positing a God largely on linguistic grounds: language-learning is simply a process of juniors learning from their seniors, and there is no need to posit a maker of the relationship between words and meanings; analogously, there is no need to posit a world-maker.

In the more dominant school of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, the non-theistic position is developed on linguistic grounds and also in regard to cosmological issues. In elucidating Śabara's commentary on Jaimini's *sūtra* 1.1.5, Kumārila devotes a series of sections of his *Ślokavārtika* to topics directly or indirectly related to language, word, and referent. He engages a series of positions — including Buddhist arguments — which threaten the Mīmāṃsā understanding of linguistic reference and the nature of reality (the referent). He defends Mīmāṃsā's realist understanding of the world as a self-sufficient whole.

In a key section known as the *Sambandhākṣepaparihāra* ("The deflection of the criticisms of the [innate] relationship [between words and meanings]"), Kumārila refutes the view that the word-meaning relation is conventional. He seeks to show that there is no convincing way to explain the beginning of that relationship; rather, it is simply given, knowable and usable, without having been created by any particular maker. Kumārila devotes the middle part of the *Sambandhākṣepaparihāra* to refuting the

idea of a supreme God, since such a God, were one to exist, would also be the prime candidate for the roles of guarantor of language in general and of composer of the Vedic scriptures in particular. But Kumāṛila rejects the idea of God also for a series of more philosophical reasons, including these: a. the idea of a world-maker is not viable, since one cannot conceive how such a person would make a world, or why; b. the widely accepted idea that creations and dissolutions are periodic is hard to reconcile with the idea of a perfect, divine maker – who should have been able to settle things once and for all; c. the maker of a material world would need a material body — and therefore would be susceptible to the problems suffered by material beings, as well as requiring some other maker for that body; d. systems which posit a higher, controlling consciousness (such as Vedānta and Sāṃkhya) fail to explain how this consciousness could relate to a changing, finite world. The conclusion for Kumāṛila, as for all Mīmāṃsakas who took up this line of argument, is that the idea of a maker is complicated, problematic, and unnecessary. Given their lack of interest in the project of establishing a Lord, the Mīmāṃsakas had no interest in deciding in favor of the credibility of inductions and other arguments supportive of the existence of a God.¹

The intellectual context for Nyāya and Vedānta, then, is one in which there is an impetus toward a theistic reformulation of religion, but also a tradition of severe critiques of the plausibility and usefulness of positing the existence of God. The challenge to the Naiyāyikas such as Jayanta and Vedāntins such as Vedānta Deśika is to formulate positions on God that are both intellectually and religiously credible. Let us begin with the Nyāya, first by way of some general considerations, and then by way of some particular observations on Jayanta Bhaṭṭa himself.

God in Early Nyāya Discourse

The early discussions of religious topics in the Nyāya school of logic were not focused on the question of God; even the oldest Nyāya discussion of the topic of God, found in the *Nyāya Sūtras* 4.1.19-21, seems only gradually and reluctantly to have been turned into a serious theological discourse about God by commentators. The question is raised in the midst of a longer consideration, in Books 3 and 4 of the *Nyāya Sūtras*, of the set of “twelve realities” listed in *sūtra* 1.1.9. The six primary realities (soul, body, sense-organs, objects of perception, apprehension, mind) are treated in book 3, while in book 4, the six dependent realities (activity, defect, rebirth, fruition, pain, release) are examined in detail.² *Nyāya Sūtras* 4.1.11-43 discuss the topic of the origins of the six dependent realities. In 4.1.11-13 it was determined that manifest things are generated out of other manifest things, and then, in 4.1.14-43, eight alternative explanations are considered and, it seems, rejected: production from a void (*sūtras* 14-18), or by God (*sūtras* 19-21), or due to chance (*sūtras* 22-24); the notions that all things are evanescent (*sūtras* 25-28), or eternal (*sūtras* 29-33), or that there is only diversity (*sūtras* 34-36), or that nothing exists (*sūtras* 37-40), or that the exact number of things can actually be known (*sūtras* 41-43).

Sūtras 19-21 contain a terse argument about whether God is required to

ensure the fruitfulness of human action:

- 4.1.19 The Lord is the cause, since we see that human action is fruitless.
- 4.1.20 This is not so since, as a matter of fact, no fruit is accomplished without human action.
- 4.1.21 Since that is efficacious, the reason lacks force.

This is the earliest Nyāya treatment of the topic of God; in context, amidst a series of proposed reasons which are rejected, the point of the obscure 21st sūtra is most likely to *reject* the need for a God who will be the guarantor of the efficacy of human activity. If there is no need for a certain kind of being, that being should not be introduced, so the suggestion made in sūtra 19 has no force. Since human action can be explained without positing a God, it is better to avoid this postulate; a more common, empirical postulate — the contingent arises from the contingent — is sufficient to account for reality. *Sūtra* 21 can thus be interpreted as a criticism of the postulation of theism, as is clearer in this amplified version:

- 4.1.21 Since that [action] is efficacious [only due to human effort], the reason [put forth in 4.1.19, regarding the need to posit a Lord] lacks force.

But thereafter the situation changes, perhaps due to the need to provide a more definitive account of how the perceived world began, and perhaps, as we have seen, due to the rise of theism as a central criterion in the developing Hindu orthodoxy. The Nyāya tradition seems then to change its apparent argument against God into a defense of God's existence, as the Nyāya commentators took the argument in the theistic direction. *Sūtra* 21 was then interpreted quite differently:

- 4.1.21 Since that [human effort] is efficacious [only with divine help], the reason [put forth in 4.1.20, regarding the idea that a Lord is superfluous] lacks force.

To defend the interconnection between the postulation of God and the practical intelligibility of the world, the Naiyāyikas had to develop increasingly complex discussions of God's existence, introducing a theistic explanatory hypothesis into a system that previously was thought to work neatly without such considerations. At first, the goal was less a defense of the existence of God than the search for a satisfactory explanation of the data of ordinary and empirical experience. But once they had seemingly reluctantly entered upon this debate, the Naiyāyikas pursued it with great vigor, as Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's exposition shows.

*The Existence and Nature of God according to Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's Nyāyamañjarī*³

Tradition has it that Jayanta Bhaṭṭa lived in Kashmir during the reign of King Śaṃkaravarman, in the 2nd half of the 9th century CE. Jayanta was a

well-respected teacher who, according to one old tradition, suffered persecution under Śaṃkaravarman, and actually wrote his *Nyāyamañjarī* ("Bouquet of Reasoning" or "Bouquet of Nyāya") while in prison.⁴ Little else is known about Jayanta, and his *Nyāyamañjarī* has not received wide attention even among Nyāya scholars, in part since it was eclipsed by later, ever more systematic works such as Udayana's *Nyāyakusumāñjali*. But in the *Nyāyamañjarī* Jayanta offers us an excellent, full exposition of the key questions related to God as seen from the Nyāya point of view. Although it follows the order of the oldest Nyāya text, the *Nyāya Sūtras*, and thus resembles a commentary, the individual sections of the *Nyāyamañjarī* are complete treatments of topics selected from the *Sūtras*. Part One of the *Nyāyamañjarī* considers the means of right knowledge (*pramāṇa*), with an emphasis on the nature, kinds, and epistemological value of perception, induction, and verbal communication. In this context a range of epistemological and theological issues are treated. Part Two analyzes both the objects of right knowledge (*prameya*) and also the rhetorical strategies useful in valid argumentation, as well as the flaws in argumentation to be avoided. The discussion of whether there is a God (Lord, *īśvara*)⁵ is found in Part One, in the course of the discussion of the authority underlying verbal — and scriptural — testimony. Jayanta adheres to a realist view of the world and a theological view which allows for definite, reasoned statements about God. The world is real but finite, so it requires some explanation; God is knowable at least insofar as he is the world-cause; upon consideration, some further attributes are necessarily included in this minimal definition of God as world-maker.

Jayanta begins his discussion of the existence of God by listing a series of objections to the theistic position, which can be summarized as ten: i. God cannot be perceived; ii. therefore, God cannot be known based on a specific or general inference drawn from something perceived;⁶ iii. the earth is not "something made," an effect; iv. there is no need to postulate a maker beyond all the various causes; v. a maker must have a body, and so would suffer the various limitations that bodies impose; vi. it cannot be shown that there is just one maker; vii. it is not possible to imagine a purpose for God's making the world; if God has made this unhappy world simply because he wanted to, he is cruel, and beings are subject to divine whims; viii. if there is a determining divine will which is not subordinate to rules, the merits and demerits of beings will not necessarily matter (as they would if reward and punishment were a matter only of cause and effect), and even liberation might not be permanent since this God could reverse it; ix. just as perception and induction therefore do not work, so too other possible sources of authoritative knowledge (e.g., verbal testimony [*śabda*] and comparison [*upamāna*]), do not succeed in making known the existence of God; x. popular beliefs are surely no basis on which to claim certainty regarding God's existence.⁷ Except for the first and the last, these arguments are aimed at problematizing induction and undercutting the likelihood of drawing any definite conclusions about God by induction. Vii and viii mark special problems on the basis of which the fact of a God known by induction would lead to new and difficult questions, and most of Jayanta's defense is aimed at showing that induction does work.

When Jayanta takes up and systematizes the Nyāya argumentation about God in the third part of the *Nyāyamañjarī* – the section on verbal knowledge – he mentions three opposing groups by name: the materialists (Cārvākas), the ritual theorists (Mīmāṃsakas), and the Buddhists (Śākyas). According to Jayanta, the materialist goal is to undercut the Veda by denying that it is eternal and by positing instead that it has merely human authors, while yet also arguing that the world, though finite, has no maker. Like other scholars who mention the materialists, Jayanta deals with them only briefly. He charges them with inconsistency: either the Veda and the world both have agents behind them (as Nyāya prefers), or neither does; if the Veda has an author, then so too the world should have a maker.

The second group of Jayanta's named opponents are the Mīmāṃsakas who, as we have seen, were orthodox ritual theorists. They were vehement opponents of both the Cārvākas and Buddhists but also, since their system requires no God or world-maker, key opponents of the Naiyāyikas too. As Jayanta presents their position in this context, their quarrel is with the idea of establishing the world as an "effect" depending on some particular cause. Jayanta rejects their view by arguing that if the world is perishable – as it evidently is – one must also admit its status as an "effect" in need of a cause.⁸ Jayanta rightly recognizes that the challenge posed by the Mīmāṃsakas raises problems similar to those raised by the materialists and the Buddhists, though with Mīmāṃsā there is the added weight of the charge that one need not posit a God even to be a good, orthodox Hindu.

Third, Jayanta introduces the Buddhists as those who deny that the term "effect" ("something made") is appropriately applied to what we observe around us. The word "world" is just a label superimposed on the flux of reality, without telling us anything important about that reality.⁹ Against their views Jayanta must argue in favor of the possibility of real reference for terms like "world" and "effect," while also presenting a persuasive case for identifying causes based on the recognition of effects.

Against these three opposing perspectives and in response to the ten objections listed above, Jayanta's primary challenge is to show how it is possible to affirm that there is a God who is the guarantor of the Veda and maker of the world. Since the Veda was a universally accepted source of knowledge, and since God is not actually perceived, neither perception nor a specific induction from perception proves anything. If God is to be known, then, God's existence has to be established by a more general induction, based on noticing the pattern of things as they usually occur and on making a judgment about a particular case which exemplifies a general rule. Thus, "things that are temporary are things that are made, and we can assume that such artifacts have makers." The major part of Jayanta's presentation on God is devoted to getting this general induction straight and establishing that it does afford certain knowledge that there is a God. Since the world is ever changing and evidently not permanent, it requires a maker with the proper characteristics, and this maker we name "God." Jayanta likewise aims at warding off proposed counterexamples which would undercut the induction by showing that "making the world" and "being maker of the world" are not like "making a pot" or "being a pot-maker, potter."

Much of the debate proceeds according to a lively sense of the relative weakness and strengths of particular inductions, the possibility of exceptions and alternate explanations. He says that if an induction is strengthened by pointing to analogies with other inductions that are not controversial, the adduced analogous cases do not have to be exact. Smoke on a hill usually indicates a fire, but not always; a clay pot is obviously made by the potter, but one cannot say that everything made of clay has a maker. Thus, an ant-hill is made of clay, but there is no single maker for the hill, rather only the contributing actions of many ants. Some things, even if finite, have no evident makers; no one argues that the generation of a sprout from a seed is caused by an intervening maker. So too, some very large things, such as mountains, ought not to be counted as "made" in the same sense that pots are made. The claim that the world is made is itself controversial, since "world" is not a clearly named single referent known from experience in the way "pot" is known.

At the heart of Jayanta's response is his insistence that, variables not withstanding, induction remains epistemically informative. Of course, no observed event — e.g., the production of an effect — is identical to another, and questions inevitably arise about the appropriateness of any particular induction drawn on an analogy with some other, easier induction. Nevertheless, the fundamental plausibility of an induction is undercut only if it can be shown that the differences between cases — e.g., between making a pot and making the world — are so great as to deprive the novel induction of all plausibility. If any observed difference would serve to defeat an induction, then the very practice of induction would become impossible. While the inductively known world-maker is not exactly the same as a pot-maker, nothing we learn from the comparison essentially undercuts the idea of a world-maker or suggests some other, better way of explaining the world. In Jayanta's view, the underlying insight stands firm: the world is something made; things that are made require makers; the world has a maker; this maker is what we mean when we say there is a God.¹⁰

Specifically, then, his responses to the ten criticisms of explanatory theism (stated above) are as follows:

- i. *Criticism: God cannot be perceived*; response: true, God cannot be perceived;
- ii. *Criticism: therefore, God cannot be inferred based on perception*; response: it is true that God cannot be inferred specifically on the basis of some specific perception, but God can be inferred on a more general basis;
- iii. *Criticism: the earth is not "something made;"* response: materialists, Mīmāṃsakas, and Buddhists all agree, in other contexts, that things are impermanent; but things that are impermanent are made — by some maker;
- iv. *Criticism: there is no need to postulate a maker beyond all the various causes*; response: whatever the various causes, there still must be an intelligent maker;
- v. *Criticism: a maker must have a body, and so would suffer the various limitations that bodies impose*; response: there is no need to infer an

- embodied maker; we can say that God makes though not embodied, just as the self guides the body without being embodied;
- vi. *Criticism: it cannot be shown that there is just one maker*; response: a hypothesis asserting that there is more than one God would be confusing, since these 'Gods' would be in competition, etc.;
 - vii. *Criticism: it is not possible to imagine a purpose for God's making the world*; response: he makes out of compassion, or out of divine play;
 - viii. *Criticism: the merits and demerits of beings may no longer matter, and liberation may or may not be permanent*; response: none of this is a problem, since the integrity of the working of dharma can be coherently shown to depend on the work of God;
 - ix. *Criticism: just as perception and induction therefore do not work, there are no other authoritative means of knowledge*; [apparent response: induction does work and does suffice].
 - x. *Criticism: popular beliefs are surely no basis on which to claim certainty regarding God's existence*; [apparent response: this is true].¹¹

Like other Naiyāyikas, Jayanta thinks that observation of the world, and the requirement that one explain the origins of the world, are legitimate starting points for an inferential knowledge of God. The defense of the viability of inference – induction – is also a defense of a fundamental analogical knowledge of God. This knowledge is minimal but, as we shall see in the next section, indicative of certain claims about the nature of God.

The Nature of God according to the Nyāyamañjarī

Although the argumentative context of the debate with atheists does not require Jayanta to develop ideas on the nature of God – that God exists suffices – nevertheless certain claims about the divine nature are implicit in the argument about God's existence.¹² First, the induction of a world-maker entails a minimal list of qualities which are essential to any maker (*kartṛ*): intelligence (*jñāna*), because he must know what is available and how to use it; will (*icchā*), because he must have an intention regarding what is to be done; and effort (*prayatna*), the ability to act, since the making of things requires the effort to bring them about. In the course of discussion these three minimal qualities are shown to be unlimited perfections in the special case of the world-maker, since it is clear that no ordinary maker would be capable of making the world. God is omniscient and possessed of a comprehensive and eternally present knowledge, and thus does not need the apparatus of memory. As the world-maker, God must have unrestricted knowledge and power; he cannot have a body, since bodies, as material, are impermanent, limited, and in need of makers. One can also posit that this God is never in want and is always satisfied, because he is omnipotent and always succeeds in whatever he intends and undertakes. It also follows, Jayanta says, that there can only be one such God, since it would not be possible for there to be several — potentially competing — omnipotent Lords.

Second, once Jayanta has (to his own satisfaction) shown that it is plausible to infer that there is a God who is the maker of the world, he must also show that it is plausible to claim that this divine maker is the maker of the

world in which humans actually live — a world that is temporal, contingent, imperfect, a mixture of sadness and joy. He argues against the view that a perfect maker should have made a perfect world without the possibility of development or decay, by suggesting that there is an important distinction between God's inherent perfection and God's guidance of finite objects in an imperfect, changing world.¹³ Since God is free and not impelled to act out of need, when he does act he acts in play, or out of compassion.

Jayanta also addresses objections related to the expectation that the merits and demerits of conscious beings — *karma* — form the only reliable basis on which to account for the world morally, so that an appeal to a deity would interfere with religious and moral probity.¹⁴ This issue also arises in Vedānta, for there too the omnipotence of God has to be balanced with a respect for the invariable advance of the karmic process. In both Nyāya and Vedānta the solution is similar, as the moral order is simply designated to function as in the older non-theistic tradition, but now dependent on God's will. This is a divine choice which indicates neither divine subordination to a higher law nor capricious disregard for *karma*.

Third, Jayanta's argument in favor of God's existence is part of his wider quest to establish and defend the authority of the Veda in the context of broader cosmic intelligibility. After he has established the induction in the 3rd part of the *Nyāyamañjarī* and thus determined that there is a God who can be the author of the Veda, in the 4th part he goes on to discount competing rationales in explanation of the authority of the Veda, and states that the same Lord who is the maker of the world is also the author of the Veda. This is known by much the same inferential reasons: words and combinations of words are impermanent and require some maker who synthesizes them and makes them reliable tools for coherent speech. It also makes no sense merely to postulate that the world has one maker while the Veda has another maker, nor to suggest that there are numerous makers all working in harmony composing the Veda. It is more economical to say that both the world and the Veda are made by the same maker, the Lord.¹⁵

Fourth, since Jayanta recognizes the authority of the Veda but does not claim that it is the only basis for deciding that there is a God, he denies that it is a circular argument to claim that God is the author of the Veda and that the Veda gives reliable information about God. Those who admit the reasonability of the theistic position and the reasonability of the idea of an authoritative textual tradition expect to find in the Vedic scriptures reinforcement for what is known about God rationally. In accordance with his religious "realism" and view that there is a God who is real (and really "outside" the text), Jayanta disagrees with the Mīmāṃsā view that the Vedas only give information leading to the proper performance of rituals; rather, the Veda also gives reliable information on various topics, including God.¹⁶

Fifth, if we can judge from the clues Jayanta gives us, it seems that he is an adherent of the Śaiva tradition of devotion to Śiva as supreme Lord. At the beginning of the *Nyāyamañjarī* he makes a customary obeisance to God — and addresses God as Śiva (Śambhu, Bhava), along with his consort Parvatī, and Ganeśa (usually taken as their child):

Salutations to Śambhu, the self composed of eternal bliss, conscious-

ness and lordship, who by his simple intent creates everything from the inanimate to Brahmā [the creator god];
 I bow down to the wife of Bhava whose hair is adorned by the crescent of the moon and who is verily the river of nectar, the extinguisher of the burning due to existence,
 I tender my salutation to the lord of hosts Ganeśa whose feet are illumined by the rays of the jewels on the foreheads of gods and demons, and who is the sun removing the darkness of obstacles.¹⁷

At the end of his defense of theism in part 3 of the *Nyāyamañjarī* he says,

Reverence to the one by whose will alone the worlds arise and endure and dissolve at the end of the age, who distributes among all creatures the experience of the fruits of their actions, who is eternally awake and joyful — Śiva.¹⁸

It is thus reasonable to assume that Jayanta belongs to a Śaiva tradition, even if the bulk of the *Nyāyamañjarī* is neutral with respect to sectarian affiliation and potentially inclusive of a variety of sectarian positions. His logical analysis contributes to piety by undergirding the plausibility of faith and by ruling out competing theories of the nature of the world or religious traditions. In his system faith and reason are independent but mutually supportive, reaching compatible, complementary conclusions.

Sixth, an interesting corollary of the preceding two points is that the several Vedas and various traditional texts are therefore recognized to be in harmony, except if there is some reason which compels one to rule out a particular sectarian text as unacceptable. As in other orthodox schools, most notably Mīmāṃsā, the criteria for acceptance or rejection pertain primarily to orthopraxis or, at least, to whether or not a tradition is inimical to Vedic orthopraxis. Traditions are not excluded on the basis of wrong ideas or theories about the nature of God but in terms of the behavior that accompanies the ideas. According to Jayanta's explanation, the behavior at issue is social and moral. Although Buddhist texts are excluded from the canon of those which merit respect, the exclusion is argued not on doctrinal grounds but due to practical moral complaints against Buddhists. In general, Jayanta's Nyāya is strikingly inclusive: agreeing that there is a God does not commit one to a particular naming of God nor to some particular form of worship. Further specifications of the divine identity cannot be achieved by reasoning alone. But as we shall now see, although Vedānta too adheres to a view of God that is founded in reason and in scripture, the dynamics of this knowledge of God work out differently there and distinctions arise.

*The Existence and Nature of God in Vedānta Deśika's Nyāyasiddhāṇjana*¹⁹

In regard to the doctrine of God, the most notable ally and competitor of Nyāya in the Sanskrit language traditions are the theistic schools of Vedānta.²⁰ Vedānta Deśika (1268-1369) was an important theologian of the Viśiṣṭādvaita. This school of Vedānta roots its theology in the teachings of the 11th century theologian Rāmānuja, whose theology is in turn explicitly

rooted in the Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Uttara Mīmāṃsā Sūtras*, etc., and implicitly in the Tamil-language devotional songs of the 7th-9th century saints known as the ālvārs. Rāmānuja's Vedānta is known as the Viśiṣṭādvaita or "Qualified-Nondualist" Vedānta since, unlike the strict nondualist position of the Advaita ("Nondualist") School, it insisted on the distinct and enduring reality of sentient and insentient beings within Brahman, the Lord.

Vedānta Deśika was born in the town of Tuppil, near Conjeevaram (today's Kanchipuram) which was a great center of learning for several religious traditions. Writing in Sanskrit, Tamil, and a mixture of the two, and composing independent treatises, commentaries, and songs, Deśika expounded the faith of the Śrīvaiṣṇavas, that there is one ultimate reality, who is the Lord Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu)²¹ with the Goddess Śrī, and who at the same time is Brahman, the Reality described in the ancient Upaniṣads.

Two of Deśika's treatises, the *Nyāyapariśuddhi* (*The Purifying of Reasoning*, 1324) and *Nyāyasiddhāṇjana* (*The Healing of Reasoning*; 1334-5), together comprise a thorough defense of the Viśiṣṭādvaita system of Vedānta according to the norms of a rational discourse he shared with the Naiyāyikas. In the *Nyāyapariśuddhi*, Vedānta Deśika takes up the topics of the *Nyāya Sūtras* and discusses four primary means of correct knowledge (*pramāṇa*): perception (*pratyakṣa*), induction (*anumāna*), verbal knowledge (*śabda*), and tradition (*smṛti*).

The *Nyāyasiddhāṇjana* builds on the corrective work of the *Nyāyapariśuddhi* by focusing on the objects of right knowledge (*prameya*) and considering seven topics: i. inert material reality (*jaḍa dravya*); ii. the individual, dependent self (*jīva*); iii. the supreme Lord (*īśvara*); iv. the eternal spiritual/material abode of the Lord (*vaikuṇṭha*); v. understanding (*buddhi*); vi. that knowledge which is essential to conscious beings and not adventitious (*dharmabhūtajñāna*); vii. qualities, which are real but not material (*adravya*).²² Our examination of Deśika's work will highlight two points: first, the rationale for and implications of his (and Vedānta's general) objection to the induction of God's existence, and second, his description of God compared and contrasted with Jayanta's.²³

The Existence of God According to the "Īśvarapariścheda" Section of Vedānta Deśika's Nyāyasiddhāṇjana

Deśika offers an explanation of his position about God in the third section of the *Nyāyasiddhāṇjana*, a section entitled "Īśvarapariścheda" ("Delimiting the meaning of 'Lord'.") In the "Īśvarapariścheda" Deśika sets forth his understanding that there is a single such reality, who is Nārāyaṇa, the God of his particular tradition (and some allied traditions); he defends this view against a series of opposing positions introduced by way of various objections.

The "Īśvarapariścheda" is argumentative, devoted to a defense of the common but controverted Vedānta positions about the nature of Brahman, the self, and the world as a single integral reality, and also a defense of specifically Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta themes regarding the nature of Viṣṇu, the Lord (= Brahman). Deśika is aware that all these points are argued at

length both inside and beyond Vedānta circles, and he defends them vigorously. Most of these points bear philosophical defense even if, like other Vedānta theologians, Deśika's primary strategy is to insist that the truth of the Vedic scriptures must be acknowledged first; scripture is the only source of sure knowledge about God, since the arguments put forward by the Naiyāyikas and others must remain always controverted and can never provide the required certainty. The Buddhists and Mīmāṃsakas are right in questioning the induction, but they are wrong in discarding the idea of God on that basis. The Naiyāyikas are right in asserting that there is a God, but they are wrong in arguing that an induction can make it known with certainty that God exists.²⁴ Here is a summary paraphrase of the major points defended in the "Īśvaraparicheda:"

- i. the Lord is everywhere perfect and complete, and not subject to restrictions such as would specify him mythologically as one of a series of deities, each possessed of some but not all lordly qualities;
- ii. contrary to the view of the Nondualist Vedāntins, Brahman (i.e., the Lord) is not devoid of qualities that can be expressed in positive language;
- iii. the material evolute (prime matter) is not merely superimposed on Brahman in a seeming creative interchange, as some Nondualists hold in hopes of defending Brahman's changeless perfection;
- iv. the nondualist position held by Śaṅkara and others is not compatible with the position that Brahman is the material source of the world;
- v. it is not tenable to say that Brahman and the world are both different and non-different, as some Vedāntins hold;
- vi. the sevenfold position of the Jainas is linguistically complicated and subtle, but it does not tell us anything decisive about the nature of the reality to which language refers, a reality which has objective, definite features;
- vii. Brahman is not limited by space, time, or things;
- viii. it cannot be proven by induction that Brahman is the efficient cause of the world, as the Śaivas hold, while holding in suspension the question of whether Brahman is also its material cause;
- ix. contrary to the Nyāya view, it cannot be proven by induction even that the Lord exists (as the necessary efficient cause of the world);
- x. The Lord is eternally accompanied by his eternal divine consort, Śrī.

Deśika had two major disagreements with the Naiyāyikas, one suggested indirectly by iv and viii, and the other directly, by ix. First, as we see in his argument against the Nondualists at iv. and against the Śaivas at viii., Deśika did believe that God was the material as well as instrumental cause of the world, and agreed with the Nondualist Vedāntins on this; but Deśika thought that the Nondualists could not properly defend the distinctions required to invest "making" with meaning; he likewise thought that the Śaivas and Naiyāyikas were both wrong in attributing only efficient

causality to God without also accepting God's material causality (which is known from the Upaniṣads).

The argument with Nyāya is positioned as subordinate to the debate about induction. As we see at ix., Deśika denies that a necessary divine causal function, and therefore the divine existence too, can be known conclusively by reasoning. While Jayanta and other Naiyāyikas thought that the Lord's existence – as the required efficient cause could be inductively known, Deśika believed that divine causality — simultaneously efficient and material — could be known only as a single efficient and material causality. In order to *begin* with the belief that God is both the material and efficient cause, Deśika has to undercut the confidence that reasoning, prior to faith in the Vedic scriptures, gives certain knowledge about God. Consequently too, he rejects the view that it is reasonable, apart from scripture, to assert that God is the efficient cause of the world.

Deśika's critique of the Nyāya induction about God's existence is directed against the later Naiyāyika, Udayana, whom he quotes, but the basic charges are pertinent to Jayanta's position too.²⁵ For the most part, his skepticism echoes the earlier Mīmāṃsā criticisms mentioned earlier in this essay. Observation of the nature of the world does not lead to a convincing induction that there is a world-maker, since a limited and ever-changing world does not give the impression that it has an omniscient and omnipotent maker as its efficient cause. A perfect God would make a flawless and perfectly complete world, not the imperfect and gradually evolving world we actually observe. Nor is it possible to describe just how this alleged perfect maker is supposed to have made the world; were he unlimited in every way, he would not have the specific and limited knowledge, desire, and effort required to make this specific world.

Even if one agrees with the Nyāya thinkers that the earth has a cause because it is clearly something made, one cannot jump to the conclusion that there is a single maker. There are plausible alternative explanations for the evolution of non-conscious realities — e.g., simply a series of causes — which serve just as well to satisfy the mind, so one is not compelled to conclude that any particular created thing — especially "world" — must depend on one conscious maker. Even if one were to postulate that things which are made must have not only causes but also makers, this generalization leaves one without any specific insight into the nature of a particular world-maker. It would not even be possible to prove that the maker has perfect knowledge, since even a non-omniscient person, or group of such persons, could have fashioned so imperfect a world. The only maker the Naiyāyikas could succeed in proving would be one with a body, since the physical world would be most plausibly explained as made by a physical maker — for where are there other examples of makers without bodies making material things? Ultimately, there is no satisfactory way to prove both that this physical universe has a maker who does not have a physical body, and it is only by a kind of wishful thinking that the Naiyāyikas end up with the perfect maker they argue for. So induction gives no reliable knowledge about God.

One can only speculate on the Nyāya response to Deśika's arguments. Since both the Nyāya and Vedānta thinkers are theists who agree substantially about the nature of God (see below), there is no urgency on the

Nyāya part to respond to Vedānta in particular. The non-theistic Mīmāṃsakas and Buddhists receive the brunt of the Nyāya attacks, but certainly many of the same arguments would serve well in response to Vedānta skeptics too. Moreover, if we keep in mind the consonance of Śaiva and Nyāya positions, one can speculate that the Nyāya response would be to show first that the induction does work, and second that faith in Śiva and trust in reasoning can go together. For a Naiyāyika, it is useful and in keeping with scripture to conclude by reason that there is a God who is the efficient cause of the world, even if from other sources (such as scripture) one will want to fill in the portrait of God later on.

The Nature of God according to the Nyāyasiddhāṇjana

In arguing against Nondualists, Buddhists and Jains, and against other theists who think of God differently (holding for instance that God is the efficient cause but not the material cause of the world) Deśika is implicitly giving us a great deal of information about this God who is the source of all, who is perfect, omniscient, the spiritual source of all things material and spiritual, etc. At the beginning of the "Īśvarapariccheda," though, he explicitly identifies eight features of "Lord:" i. The Lord is ruler over all; ii. he is conscious and all-pervasive in knowing; iii. everything is totally dependent upon him; iv. he is propitiated by all religious actions and gives all the fruits [accruing to worship]; v. he is the foundation for everything; vi. he is the generator of all things that are made; vii. he has all things, other than his own knowledge and own self, as his body; viii. all that he wishes comes true, due simply to himself. The presupposition seems to be that a being deserving the name "Lord" must be possessed of these eight features.²⁶ Although this list may be original to Deśika, each of the eight features is familiar from the older Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta understanding of God, already in Rāmānuja's works, and they can be traced to the Upaniṣads. The features are not fully explained in the "Īśvarapariccheda," although their reasonableness is presupposed.

The list can be filled out a bit by brief further reflection on the doctrinal implications of Deśika's arguments with his opponents in the body of the "Īśvarapariccheda:" God is perfect, complete, one Lord beyond sectarian distinctions such as the trinity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva; he is the all-encompassing reality who bears all as his own body, yet both conscious and non-conscious realities remain distinct within him; he is the material and efficient cause of the world; although beyond human comprehension, language is not entirely useless regarding him, and he can be spoken of in positive terms; his eternal consort is the Goddess Śrī, Lakṣmī. In most of these statements, Deśika is echoing the beliefs of his Śrīvaiṣṇava community, beliefs elaborated elsewhere in Sanskrit and Tamil sources. What is distinctive in the *Nyāyasiddhāṇjana* is the terse, logical form in which such positions are put forward as defensible on reasonable grounds and as superior, similarly on reasonable grounds, to competing views.

Confessing Viṣṇu as the One True God

In practice, Deśika shares a common theistic and even monotheistic worldview with the Naiyāyikas. He agrees with Jayanta that there is one Lord, a perfect, omniscient being who is the cause of the world, author of the Vedas, giver of liberation. As we have seen, though, they disagree on the source of this correct knowledge. For the same reason, Deśika is also more vehemently sectarian than Jayanta who seemed comfortable with the implication that there is a God whose reasonably identified features should be agreeable to all thinking theists. By contrast, Deśika is intent on arguing for a specific identification of who God is. The first and last of Deśika's major assertions in the "Īśvarapariccheda" (after his definition of "Lord") test the boundary between what is accessible to reason and what is known only by faith. In the first section, Deśika claims that it is true that Nārāyaṇa alone is the Lord, and not any other sectarian god; in the last, he states that the Lord is eternally one with his consort, Śrī, who is equal to him, and the world depends on both Śrī and Nārāyaṇa, together. Even in the *Nyāyasiddhāṇjana*, so reasonable a treatise, such arguments are sectarian in a way that the Nyāya arguments generally are not; the assertions regarding Viṣṇu go well beyond the claims Jayanta is willing to make regarding Śiva.

It will not be surprising to learn that Deśika offers a less inclusive view of the texts and traditions of other communities than does Jayanta. In the *Nyāyapariśuddhi*, the companion volume to the *Nyāyasiddhāṇjana*, Deśika engages in a discussion of traditions and texts (*āgamābhāṣa*, *smṛtyābhāṣa*) which do not deserve the respect of full authority. He lists kinds of defective traditions, as marred with lesser or greater moral and intellectual defects. It is only the important Vaiṣṇava texts, of course, which are free of these defects – and therefore only they are truly authoritative in their teachings on God and the world.²⁷ Jayanta was willing to respect traditions insofar as they contributed to right moral practice, even if his standard was flexible enough to allow him to exclude the Buddhists, while downplaying sectarian rivalries among Hindus. Deśika makes no such allowances, and calls into question the authority even of Śaiva texts; texts which do not testify to the correct scriptural positions can be shown to be rationally and even "genealogically" deficient.

Theology and Theologies, Hindu and Comparative

Jayanta Bhaṭṭa and Vedānta Deśika have much in common regarding the major characteristics of their portrayals of God, even if they reach this common ground from opposite directions. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa derives his theology, insofar as it is an intellectual project, from an original, minimal claim that it can be known by induction that God exists; Vedānta Deśika sees theology first of all as a reasoned elaboration of what is found in the scriptures. As we have seen, on occasion Jayanta Bhaṭṭa the logician is comfortable with citing the Upaniṣads, and Vedānta Deśika the exegete is a master of dialectic. In most respects their theological conclusions are the same: God is ruler over all; he is conscious and all-pervasive in knowing; he has everything totally dependent on himself; he is propitiated by all religious

actions and gives all the fruits [of worship]; he is the foundation for all things; he is the generator of all things that are made; he has all things, other than his own knowledge and own self as his body; all that he wishes comes true, due simply to himself. The differences reduce largely to one important difference regarding the nature of the dependence of the world on God: since Jayanta does not hold the Vedānta view that God is the world's material cause, he therefore interprets differently the nature of the dependence of finite realities on God.

In turn, the difference about causality is presented primarily as having to do with the sources of knowledge of God and how faith and reasoning are to be ordered and balanced. The argumentation that has been traced here in Jayanta Bhaṭṭa and Vedānta Deśika, with some attention to other Hindu and Buddhist positions, illumines the sources of knowledge of God — perception (which both deny), induction (which Jayanta accepts), and scriptural revelation (which Deśika makes the unique source, and which Jayanta accepts as a source) — and differences regarding what can be known about God by reason, before revelation, and regarding what might be known in a “public” discourse not tied to any particular sectarian revelation, and instead as available to all reasoning persons.

Jayanta's position allows for a series of (imperfect) analogies with other acts of making things and things coming into existence or changing form; observation of the world as such should give people some idea of the needed maker. Knowledge of God, it seems he would agree, is not entirely unlike other acts of knowledge, regarding either the object or the process. Deśika seems more inclined to say that we will not “read” our world correctly, and must *begin* to know God properly by relying on an extraordinary act of revelation. Implicit in his view is that if one begins otherwise, one can at best do as the Naiyāyikas do, but more likely will fall into the errors of Buddhism, Jainism, and nondual Vedānta. Both Deśika and Jayanta are willing to argue with a whole range of opponents, but Deśika, in the “*Īśvarapariccheda*” and other such texts, adopts a kind of defensive strategy; since he concedes from the start that he cannot prove to unbelievers what he believes, his point is in part that his opponents cannot prove their views, nor disprove his, nor show that their positions are more satisfactory than his. Beyond that, he must make a confessional appeal. Jayanta too is not willing to tolerate extreme positions, such as those of atheists, but he dismisses these on moral grounds. Likewise, he gives no indication of expecting all good and clear-thinking readers to come to embrace specifically Śaiva beliefs.

Jayanta benignly seeks a wide common ground; there is one God who is the author of all the sacred texts, and these many texts, even if they differ, can all be acceptable to good people. Deśika is willing to concede inklings of truth in other positions, but ultimately he sees only his own tradition as possessed of the full and fully coherent version of the truth, and thus has no room for the idea of a broader common ground in which sectarian truth issues are simply bracketed.

Theirs are developed theological positions which can be compared in both structure and content with those of Christian theologians. Noticing this offers us an opportunity to consider how rational claims about the

existence of God, along with the minimal set of characteristics which must be attributed to a world-maker, can further be traced in their affiliations to the faith, piety, and practices of particular communities. Issues which have been debated at great length in the Western and Christian contexts — the proof of God's existence, what can be known about God's nature by reason, the balance between reason and revelation, the benefits and costs of establishing a rational, common ground for discourse on religious topics — have interesting and highly developed counterparts in other traditions, where they are articulated in frameworks defined by distinguishing factors and circumstances.²⁸ Although important differences among religions — e.g., between the Christian and Hindu traditions — remain, it should also be clear that on many issues of theological and philosophical importance — pertaining to the nature of induction, the intelligibility of the world, the attributes of God, the balance between reason and revelation, etc. — the lines of difference cannot be drawn simply between "the Christian view(s)" and "the Hindu view(s)," since each issue finds defenders and critics on both sides of the Hindu-Christian divide. A more complex theological differentiation of theologians and their positions is therefore required, depending on the particular theological issue involved and how any particular Hindu or Christian theologian locates himself or herself in regard to that particular issue.²⁹

Boston College

NOTES

1. An interesting later case is the position taken by Khaṇḍadeva (17th century CE) in his *Bhāṭṭadīpikā*. There, in the course of a very extensive treatment of the nature of the Vedic gods, Khaṇḍadeva explains at length why these gods are not real beings who "live" outside the ritual and textual realm of the Veda; but he ends his treatment with an apology, explaining that while it was his task as a Mīmāṃsaka to expound such a view, his real refuge is the feet of Kṛṣṇa. See my essay, "What's a God? The Quest for the Right Understanding of *devatā* in Brahmanical Ritual Theory (Mīmāṃsā)," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 1.2 (August, 1997): 337-385.

2. As explained in G. Jha's introductory note to Book 4, *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gautama with the Bhāṣya of Vātsyāyana and the Vārtika of Udyotakara*, translated by G. Jha (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984), p. 1429.

3. The first part only of the *Nyāyamañjarī*, on the means of right knowledge (*pramāṇa*), is available in English translation: *Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's Nyāyamañjarī [The Compendium of Indian Speculative Logic]*, translated by Janaki Vallabha Bhaṭṭacharyya (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978). Wherever possible, I have used this translation, with minimal adjustments. The Sanskrit edition I have used is *Nyāyamañjarī*, edited with notes by Surya Nārāyaṇa Sukla (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1971, 2 volumes; Kashi Sanskrit Series 106).

4. According to J. V. Bhaṭṭacharya, in the introduction to his translation of the *pramāṇa* portion of the *Nyāyamañjarī* into English.

5. God — the Lord, *īśvara* — is treated as male in both Nyāya and Vedānta. In their more devotional statements, scholars in both traditions link him with a Goddess, his divine consort.

6. A specific induction would be, for example, the induction that there

must be rain clouds, because it is raining; or that it have been raining somewhere upstream, because the water is higher than usual. A general induction would be, for example, the induction that a pot requires someone to have made it.

7. These objections can be found on pages 175-178 (Sanskrit), 401-406 (English) of the *Nyāyamañjarī*.

8. Two citations indicate that Jayanta is familiar with the *Sambandhākṣepaparihāra* section of the *Ślokovārtika*, which we examined above. One cited text (*vārtika* 75) argues that the fact of intelligent involvement in the running of the world does not translate into the view that there is a single, supreme intelligent world-ruler; the other (*vārtika* 113) dismisses the belief that there must be a creation and a destruction of the whole world, as such.

9. Since the *Pramānavārtika* is the only Buddhist work which Jayanta cites, Dharmakīrti is probably his key Buddhist arguing partner. Jayanta cites *vārtikas* 13-14 from the *Pramānasiddhi* section, where the question is whether the alleged conjunction of parts from which the world is made is really a verbal construct (as Dharmakīrti prefers), or in fact a reality from which one might construe a real maker of the world, as the Naiyāyikas prefer. See Jackson's essay elsewhere in this issue.

10. As for the objection that "something made" (*kārya*) already smuggles in the idea of a maker (*kartr*) as well as cause (*kāraṇa*), Jayanta insists that the act of combination is evident, and that the arranger of such a combination is indeed a true maker. He implies, it seems, that one can legitimately move to the level of abstraction on which "everything" can be labeled all at once as impermanent, "something made."

11. These responses can be found in the Sanskrit text, pp. 178-188, and in the English translation, pp. 406-426. There is no explicit response by Jayanta to the last two objections; we may presume that he agrees, without conceding any detriment to his own position.

12. The following six points are gleaned from Jayanta's treatment of God in the 3rd section of the *Nyāyamañjarī*, which we have been considering, and also the 4th section, where the authority of religious traditions is examined.

13. God's "will *per se* is eternal because it is not produced by the contact of the internal organ with the soul. But it conforms to objects, e.g., at one time the creation of the universe and at another time the destruction of the universe. During the interval between the creation of the universe and its destruction, while the universe persists, the creator of the universe wills that this particular effect should follow from this particular action. The [divine] effort is a particular specification of his intent." (Sanskrit p. 185; translation, p. 421.)

14. See also, "Evil, Divine Omnipotence and Human Freedom: Vedānta's Theology of Karma," *Journal of Religion* 69 (1989), 530-548.

15. See Sanskrit 218-19; translation 496-7.

16. Jayanta quotes from the *Muṇḍaka*, *Śvetāśvatara* and *Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣads*, and the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and argues that these texts confirm what he has elaborated in his rationally derived terminology. One interesting correlation, for instance, is his gloss on the Upaniṣadic phrase, "the self whose desires are true (*satyakāma*), whose intentions are true (*satyasamkalpa*), that self you should try to discover..." (*Chāndogya* 8.7.3); he says, "Desire (*kāma*) here means will (*icchā*), and intent (*samkalpa*) means effort (*prayatna*)." I.e., the Upaniṣadic terms point to the same reality as the terms reasonably derived just on the basis of examining what is meant by a "maker."

17. Sanskrit, p. 1, translation, p. 1.

18. Sanskrit, p. 188; translation, p. 426. So too, at the end of part 3, he says, "Enough of this overly learned talk; this theory of the eternity [of words] must

be discarded; those who understand reasoning must accept that words are made; since words are made, their maker is the ancient maker, in whose power is the fullness of poetic brilliance, and in whose hair is the moon." (Sanskrit, p. 213, translation, p. 483.) At the very end of the entire work, he says, "Reverence to the one whose splendid hair is like the ten million rays of the moon, who is the wish-fulfilling tree for those who surrender, Śambhu." (Sanskrit, vol. 2, p. 208)

19. The *Nyāyasiddhāñjana* has not been translated into English. Throughout, I use the edition of the *Nyāyasiddhāñjana* which includes the *Ratnapetīkā* of Sri Kanchi Tatcharya and the *Saralaviśada* of Sri Rangaramanuja (Madras: Ubhaya Vedānta Granthamala, 1976).

20. Though not exclusively: even some writers in the Nondualist Vedānta tradition make room for a provisional theism and, in some case, for a theism that is sublated only in the final, irreversible unification of all reality. The 16th century *Advaita Dīpikā* of Nṛsiṃhāśramin is an excellent example in this regard; its third part incorporates close analyses of theistic language, especially from the Vaiṣṇava tradition.

21. Although the historical sources for the cults of Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu would differ, the piety and theology of the Śrīvaiṣṇavas identify the two.

22. The three constituents of reality, lucidity (*sattva*), passion (*rajas*), inertia (*tamas*); the five senses, conjunction (*saṃyoga*), and potency (*śakti*).

23. Other works of Deśika, such as the *Paramatabhaṅga* (*The Breaking of Other Views*), *Śrīmadrahasyatrayasāra* (*The Essence of the Three Mysteries*), and most importantly the *Tattvamuktakalāpa* (*The Necklace of Complete Truth*), consider the same topics (including the nature of the Lord as Ultimate Reality), but the focus on logical issues evident in the *Nyāyapariśuddhi* and *Nyāyasiddhāñjana* gives this pair of works a clear and systematic shape.

24. An extended critique of the Nyāya induction of God's existence is found in Rāmānuja's *Śrībhāṣya*, section 1.1.3; for a translation, see *The Vedānta Sūtras with the Commentary of Rāmānuja*, translated by G. Thibaut, Sacred Books of the East, volume 48 (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976).

25. Sanskrit, pp. 325-357.

26. All things are the Lord's body, because the body and soul relationship is the best metaphor or analogy available to understand the mysterious interconnection between the Maker, who is both the efficient and material cause of the world, and the world itself. To say that all his wishes come true is to affirm that the Lord is capable of volition, and it is also to ward off the implication that the Lord is subject to desire, or experiences need, or suffers from only partial fulfillment of his wishes, etc.

27. *Nyāyapariśuddhi*, Sanskrit, pp. 226-229.

28. But even if these are two very important theologians, their works cannot be taken as representing the full range of Hindu theological positions. I conclude by indicating just two of the ways in which the materials presented here need to be complemented. First, of course, the complexities of Nyāya and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta deserve fuller treatment, even with respect to the works of Jayanta and Deśika, and then also with respect to other significant figures in each school. Second, even if we stay with systems that are properly theistic (and thereby exclude systems such as Mīmāṃsā and Advaita Vedānta which hold for some transcendent realities or values, but not for a God), there are comparable theological systems which deserve attention and which would introduce positions both interestingly similar and interestingly different. For instance, there is the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition, which we looked at briefly, and also Madhva's so-called Dualist (Dvaita) Vedānta, which takes one step further some of the theistic claims made by Deśika. Third, and here too excluding a

wide range of materials — in the epics, in poetry, art, etc. — which certainly implies specific theologies but does not formulate them as such — special attention is due to the Goddess traditions, even in schools such as Vedānta but particularly in Tantric traditions, wherein full understandings of the Goddess are articulated, though not in the same way, nor with the same standard questions adopted by both Jayanta and Deśika. How Goddess theology is articulated is a project which is important for a more complete understanding of Hindu thinking about the divine. But even those alternative discourses now function only in a wider context in which the Nyāya positions and the supporting and critical positions of others in response to Nyāya dominate the Hindu discourse on God.

29. On the comparative theological implications of the Nyāya reasoning about God, see also my essay, "The Interreligious Dimension of Reasoning about God's Existence," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 46:1-16, 1999.