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On the Alleged Indebtedness of the Vedanta Paribhasa Towards the Vedanta Kaumudi: Some Considerations on an Almost Forgotten Vivarana Text (Studies in Vedanta Kaumudi I)

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3 **On the Alleged Indebtedness of the *Vedānta Paribhāṣā***
4 **Towards the *Vedānta Kaumudī*: Some Considerations**
5 **on an Almost Forgotten Vivaraṇa Text (Studies**
6 **in *Vedānta Kaumudī* I)**

7 **Gianni Pellegrini**

8

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10 **Abstract** Dharmarājādhvarīndra's (middle XVII CE) *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* (VP) is a
11 well-known introduction to Advaita Vedānta, targeted to beginners who are already
12 trained in Navya Nyāya. According to Dasgupta (1942), the VP is so heavily
13 indebted to Rāmādvaya's *Vedānta Kaumudī* (VK), which was composed in the
14 middle of the 14th Century and is today almost forgotten, that the VP's "claim to
15 originality vanishes". The VK was, however, only edited in 1955 and then again in
16 1974. In the light of this improved textual basis, what is our judgement about
17 Dasgupta's hypercritical statement? Did actually the VP ever claim to be original?
18 Was this originality somehow superimposed on the VP later? Is the VP really so
19 much indebted to the VK? This paper aims at comparatively analysing the textual
20 background of these questions. I will start from the analysis of one Advaita's
21 epistemological tenet, namely the valid knowledge (*pramā*), in the VK and then
22 compare it to the corresponding parts in the VP.

23

24 **Keywords** Advaita Vedānta · Vivaraṇa · Rāmādvaya · *Vedānta Kaumudī* ·
25 Dharmarāja Adhvarin · *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* · Valid knowledge

26

27 **0 Introduction**

28 In this essay I shall develop a preliminary study of an almost forgotten Vedānta text
29 affiliated to the Vivaraṇa school of Advaita, namely Rāmādvaya's *Vedānta Kaumudī*.

30 While mention is rarely made of this text, we do find some pages devoted to it in
31 Surendranath Dasgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy* (1991: 204–214 [vol. 2, I ed.
32 1931]).

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33 In this essay, I shall recall a statement made by Dasgupta and, in developing my
34 analysis on its basis, I shall discuss the first issue proposed by the *Vedānta Kaumudī*,
35 that is the discourse on valid knowledge (*pramā*), and consequently I shall present
36 some comparative considerations with Dharmarāja Adhvarin's *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*.

37 The *Vedānta Kaumudī* is a long and complex work, written in a difficult style and
38 almost forgotten by both traditional and western scholars. It is a fact that, apart from two
39 very similar short articles written by Subrahmanya Sastri,¹ an analysis proposed by
40 Dasgupta and very sporadic references often dependent on these sources, we hardly find
41 any mention of it. On the other hand, the *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* is a well-known
42 introduction to Advaita Vedānta, targeted on beginners who already have some training
43 in Navya Nyāya and other disciplines. Even in the contemporary traditional teaching of
44 Vedānta, the *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* is taught as a standard primer of Advaita epistemology.

45 I think it is important to deal with this preliminary analysis because, after
46 Dasgupta (1931, 1942), apart from Subrahmanya Sastri (1955, 1968) and Caturvedī
47 (1973),² other scholars who have treated *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* could have understood
48 it in the shadow of the *Vedānta Kaumudī* which, in turn, has usually been looked at
49 through the eyes of Dasgupta without truly examining it further.

50 I Why Compare These Two Texts? Dasgupta's Statement

51 I have chosen to compare the *Vedānta Kaumudī* (hereafter VK) and the *Vedānta*
52 *Paribhāṣā* (hereafter VP) because of the following statement, which appeared in
53 S.N. Dasgupta's foreword to Mādhavānanda's English translation of the VP (1942):

54 The *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* is an epistemological work on Śaṅkara Vedānta as
55 interpreted in the Vivaraṇa school. The epistemological implications of the
56 Pañca-pādikā of Padmapāda as interpreted in the Vivaraṇa, had already been
57 collected and worked out by Rāmādvaya in his *Vedānta Kaumudī*. The work has
58 not been published. When we compare the contents of the *Vedānta Kaumudī* with
59 those of the *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* of Dharmarājadhvarīndra, the indebtedness of the
60 latter appears to be so colossal that its claim to originality vanishes.

61 In this paragraph Dasgupta leaves no room for any doubt regarding the "colossal
62 indebtedness" of Dharmarāja towards Rāmādvaya or, about Dharmarāja's mere
63 reuse of the concepts and contents developed by Rāmādvaya.

64 On the other hand, Dasgupta himself, a few years earlier (1931 [hereafter 1991])
65 in the second volume of the *History of Indian Philosophy* (pp. 204–214), definitely
66 underlines the differences between the VP and the VK, highlighting the greater
67 clarity and more cogent logic of Rāmādvaya's work. However, at the time of
68 Dasgupta, the VK was still awaiting publication, so the illustrious scholar seemed to
69 leave the final word to the next generations of scholars.

¹ Please note that Subrahmanya (1955) and Subrahmanya (1968) (reprint 2003) refer to the same scholar, but with two different transliterations used in the originals, so I do follow those transliterations accordingly.

² The latter work, although useful to some extent (some information in the long introduction and the inclusion of the *Bhāvaprakāśikā*), it is not at all accurate or useful in the translation and textual analysis.



70 Later on, the VK was edited (not-critically!) twice: in 1955 by Subrahmanya
71 Sastri and again in 1973 by Rādheśyāma Caturvedī (along with a Hindī translation)
72 with a gloss composed by Rāmādvaya himself. Are we now able to support or to
73 contradict the hypercritical statement of Dasgupta? Are there actually any claims to
74 originality in the VP, or has this been in some way superimposed? How did they
75 develop and express their thought? Do their texts, ideas and expressions really
76 overlap so colossally?

77 I do not think that the situation is at all an easy one. In fact, neither Rāmādvaya
78 nor Dharmarāja are original, insofar as they make massive reuse of previous
79 material, but at the same time, they are both original, since each of them has a
80 distinct personal contribution to offer. I suspect that Dasgupta misunderstood the
81 real purport of VP, or perhaps he was not careful enough when he addressed it as a
82 mere reproduction of the VK on a minor scale (Pellegrini, forthcoming b). On the
83 contrary, I think that the VP's reuse of earlier materials corresponds to its very
84 destination and nature, which are inserted in a specific historical period: it is a
85 primer of Advaita epistemology written in the Navya Nyāya style.³

86 I.1 Other Scholars on Rāmādvaya and the VK

87 Before entering into the issue more deeply, it might be appropriate to mention those
88 scholars who have in some ways treated or quoted the VK on selected issues.

89 *In primis*, it is interesting to note that Caturvedī mentions VP just a few times in
90 the introduction (1973: xvi and fn. 2; xxvi fn. 1; xii fn. 1; lx and fn. 8), for example
91 in order to draw attention to Rāmādvaya's different understanding of *pramā* (1973:
92 xvi and fn. 2). Nevertheless, Caturvedī does not even mention any indebtedness of
93 VP towards VK, but only deals with VK's contents and Rāmādvaya's contribution
94 to Advaita literature and thought. On the other hand, neither does Subrahmanya
95 Sastri's short introduction (1955, partially reproduced in 1968 [hereafter Subrah-
96 mania 2003: 171–173]) make any reference to the VP.⁴ Another "authority" on the
97 VP, S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri, who published the text some months after (May–
98 June 1942) Mādhavānanda's edition and translation—prefaced by Dasgupta—
99 (April 1942), does not even mention VK, perhaps because his short introduction
100 focuses only on the historical-philosophical framework of the VP.

101 Further, the other scholarly works dealing with Advaita epistemological tenets
102 are usually heavily dependent on VP's treatment, but never mention Rāmādvaya or
103 his VK. In fact, we would expect to find some mention of the VK in works such as:
104 D.M. Datta (*Six Ways of Knowing*, 1936 [hereafter 1998]), A. Bhattacharya Shastri's

³ The style of the VP involves, with respect to that of the VK, a marked change in the basic language of expression, decidedly codified according to the techniques of Navya Nyāya and definitely specific addressees. In fact, the historical period is pivotal to understanding the concept lying behind any reuse: the reuse of the Vivaraṇa textual tradition, to which the VK also belongs, is adapted to the historical period dominated by the Navya Nyāya's technical idiom (see forthcoming b). For a more thorough treatment of some examples of the knowledge of Navya Nyāya terminologies and techniques required to understand VP see Pellegrini forthcoming a.

⁴ We should not forget that the aim of Subrahmanya Sastri is to introductorily present a work that, by that time, was almost unknown.



105 *Post-Śaṅkara Dialectics of Advaita Vedānta* (1936), or Swami Satprakashananda's
106 *Methods of Knowledge according to Advaita Vedānta* (1965), or even, in the more
107 recent times, Bina Gupta's *Perceiving in Advaita Vedānta* (1991 [hereafter 1995]).

108 Moreover, I suspect that when other works mention VK (for example Bilimoria
109 2008: 25, 266), they are more or less dependent on Dasgupta's or Subrahmanya
110 Sastri's (1955: 1–6) treatments. There are also some (rare) references scattered
111 throughout secondary sources, which mention VK, inserting it in a broader
112 discussion: Bhattacharya (1937 [hereafter 2001: 264, 270 and 275–276]), Diaconescu
113 (2012: 270), Gotszorg (1991: 37), Freschi (2013: 92), Nachane (2000: 302),
114 Pandey (1972: 26), Potter (1995: 1404), Śarmā (1998: 23, 156, 184 and 225),
115 Sundaram (1984: 3, 5, 8, fn. 7, 8, 10 and 11) and Thangaswami (1980: 136, 236 and
116 387).⁵ Among these, it is worth mentioning Bhattacharya (2001: 264), who surely
117 presents a more thorough judgement on VK, and carefully states that “later
118 epistemological developments, which are found in *Vedāntakaumudī* of Rāmādvaya
119 (A.D. 1300) and in *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* of Dharmarājādhvarīndra (A.D. 1600), have
120 their foundation and starting point in the writings of Padmapāda and Prakāśāt-
121 man...” In addition, Bhattacharya (2001: 274–275) celebrates Rāmādvaya's work
122 and its epistemological tenets, interestingly connecting it with VP in these words:

123 Later in the seventeenth century, Dharmarājādhvarīndra wrote his *Vedānta-*
124 *paribhāṣā* with similar epistemological discussions, which differed from
125 Rāmādvaya's on some points. In defining right knowledge (*pramā*)
126 Rāmādvaya has accepted the theory of correspondence. A cognition which
127 corresponds to its objects is a right one. This is quite different from the
128 definition given by Dharmarāja, with whom right knowledge must have for its
129 object what was previously unknown and what cannot be contradicted. Thus,
130 Rāmādvaya's definition is more realistic than that of Dharmarāja.⁶ The pure
131 consciousness limited or conditioned by the *antaḥkaraṇa* (mind) is the knower
132 (*pramātr*), and it, being connected with the object through mental modification
133 (*vṛtti*), becomes one with the object consciousness (i.e. consciousness limited
134 by the object). Thus both the subject and the object, being connected in the
135 same cognitive function (*vṛtti*), are revealed in the cognitive consciousness
136 connected as “This is known by me”. *Vṛtti* (cognitive operation) breaks
137 thorough the veil of *avidyā* which covers every object superimposed on
138 consciousness by *avidyā*.

139 Despite these very important words of D.C. Bhattacharya (written before
140 Dasgupta's statement), it seems that, on one hand, those scholars who touched the

⁵ Potter, in his *Bibliography* (1995: 1404), refers to a PhD thesis discussed in 1975 (29-07-1975) by Manashi Banerji at the University of Burdwan (West Bengal) “*A Study of Rāmādvaya's Vedāntakaumudī*”, which I was unable to consult. Some early information are also given by Aufrecht (1891, vol. I: 410, 502 and 605; 1896, vol. II: 122). In fact, he mentions Rāmādvaya or Rāmapaṇḍita as the author of VK quoted by Appaya in *Siddhāntaleśasamgraha* and individuate another work of the same author under the title *Bhāṣyadīpikā* (1891, vol. I: 410). See also Pellegrini (Pellegrini 2014b: III.3).

⁶ It is a matter of fact (Caturvedī 1973: lx) that Rāmādvaya is more inclined to the *pramā* definition as formulated by *Nyāyasūtra* I.1.4. In fact, he goes further, refuting also the definition of *pramā* given by Śrīharsa in *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā* (“*tattvānubhūtiḥ pramā*” see the long and complex discussion therein 1992: 207–248; see also fn. 28).



141 issue of the originality or sources of the VP somehow took for granted the words of
142 Dasgupta or, on the other hand, other scholars did not even take into consideration
143 Dasgupta's strong statement or, at best, cursorily quoted the VK for other purposes.

144 Thus, my analysis has a double-side purport: trying to free—as far as possible—
145 the field of any “dogmatic” presuppositions which misrepresent a textbook like the
146 VP, as well as attempting to bring some light—introducing specifically its contents
147 —to an almost forgotten text like the VK, which surely deserves greater attention. If
148 an “authority” on Indian philosophy—as Dasgupta was—somehow questioned the
149 importance of the VP referring it to the VK, it is worth beginning a more thorough
150 study of the VK, which is the counterpart of the comparison proposed by Dasgupta.

151 In order to accomplish this task, along with a short presentation of both texts, I
152 shall investigate whether the indebtedness of the VP—postulated by Dasgupta—
153 towards the VK is really “colossal” or simply an alleged one, analysing—in this
154 article—only the first issue presented in both the texts, namely the definition of valid
155 knowledge (*pramā*).

156 II Rāmādvaya

157 Since Rāmādvaya is even today a lesser known, although important, author, I think
158 it useful to dedicate a few lines to briefly present him.

159 The information we have regarding Rāmādvaya is scarce. From the colophons of
160 his works, we learn that he was the pupil of a certain ascetic called Advayāśrama, of
161 the Āśrama order of the śaṅkarian school. Besides the VK, he wrote a gloss on it,
162 the *Bhāvaprakāśikā* (or *Bhāvadīpikā* [hereafter BP]).⁷ And, it seems, he did not
163 compose any other work.⁸

164 In order to give a date for Rāmādvaya, we must analyse two kinds of evidences: (1)
165 *internal*: the names of the authors and the works mentioned in the VK and BP; (2)
166 *external*: the authors who quote Rāmādvaya and are in some ways influenced by him.

167 Regarding internal evidence, it is noticeable that authors quoted by Rāmādvaya
168 can be placed before the 14th century. Let me just mention—beside authors like
169 Kumārila, Śaṅkara and Sureśvara—a few of the later authors—quoted or named in
170 VK: *tātparyapariśuddhikāra* Udayana (10th cent.), Vādivāgīśvara (mid-11th cent.),
171 Vimuktātman (11–12th cents.), Śrīharṣa (12th cent.), and others (see the appendix to

⁷ According to Dasgupta (1991: 205) the title of the commentary on the VK given in a manuscript conserved at the Government Oriental Manuscript Library (Madras) is *Vedāntakaumudīvyākhyāna* (see also Bhattacharya 2001: 274). Unfortunately, this *Vedāntakaumudīvyākhyāna* is not mentioned in the Catalogue of the Government Oriental Manuscript Library (IX and other volumes). Neither is anything said about it in the 31st volume of *New Catalogus Catalogorum* (Dash 2013: 185–186). Despite this incongruence, this seems a general appellation for Rāmādvaya's auto-commentary on the VK, whereas the title *Bhāvaprakāśikā/Bhāvadīpikā* is transmitted by other manuscripts and seems to be the real title (see again Dash 2013: 185–186).

⁸ In the fourth *maṅgala* verse Rāmādvaya gives a geographical reference, which might make us think to his residential area. While describing Sarasvatī, he addresses her with an adjective (in the vocative) *kaśmīrodhbhavarāgacumbitakucadvandve* (VK.1 1955: 1; VK.2 1973: 7) “whose couple of nipples is kissed by the pigment born in Kaśmīra”. However, I think rather unlikely that this territorial specification is meant to say something about the homeland of Rāmādvaya.



172 VK.1 1955: xii–xiii). In the BP Rāmādvaya quotes: *prakaṣārthavivaraṇakāra* (12th–
173 13th cents.),⁹ Amalānanda (13th cent.), Citsukha (13th cent.), Janārdana¹⁰ (second
174 half of the 13th cent.), etc.

175 While reading the VK, we easily comprehend Rāmādvaya’s intellectual adherence
176 to the Vivaraṇa school of Advaita Vedānta, mainly based on Prakāśātman’s
177 *Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa* (11–12th cents.). Nonetheless, the author shows his own
178 personal and independent views on certain problems or, at times, he is even very near
179 to some positions expressed by Vācaspati Mīśra in the *Bhāmatī*.¹¹

180 It is also interesting to note that Rāmādvaya never quotes Vidyāraṇya, one of the
181 most influential Vivaraṇa authors, who lived in the latter part of the 14th century.¹²

182 Among the external evidence, in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* Appaya Dīkṣita
183 (16th cent.) refers to VK’s author four times.¹³ Moreover, the VK is also mentioned
184 and its positions defended from the attacks of Vyāsa Tīrtha in Madhusūdana
185 Sarasvatī’s *Advaitasiddhi* (Pellegrini 2014b: III.3).¹⁴

186 Bringing together both these bodies of evidence, it seems likely to place Rāmādvaya
187 not before the second half of the 13th century and no later than the first half of the 14th
188 century (Subrahmanya 1955: 1–6; Subrahmanya 2003: 171; Caturvedī 1973: i–iii).¹⁵

⁹ Rāmādvaya’s treatment concerning perception and inference is influenced by the *Prakaṣārthavivaraṇa*, even though he does not clearly mention the name of this author (who according to some scholars is Anubhūtiśvarūpācārya), but merely repeats his sentences slightly elaborating on them (Dasgupta 1991: 205–206; Bhattacharya 2001: 270). See *Prakaṣārthavivaraṇa* (Chintamani 1989 [I ed. 1935]: 32–34) and also Pellegrini (forthcoming b) on *pratīkarmavyavasthā*. Moreover, the date of the *Prakaṣārthavivaraṇa* can be fixed between Prakāśātman (11th–12th cents.) and Rāmādvaya (mid-14th cent.). The *Prakaṣārthavivaraṇa* is an independent commentary on Śaṅkara’s *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* (hereafter BSBh) formulated according to the tenets of Vivaraṇa and in order to render crystal-clear the difficult points of the *Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa*. See Chintamani (1989: x–xi).

¹⁰ It seems that Janārdana was no other than Ānandagiri/Ānandajñāna before taking the ascetic name (Subrahmanya 2003: 172). Thangaswami (1980: 387) affirms that the *terminus post quem* Ānandagiri cannot be placed is 1320.

¹¹ It should be emphasised that in an age in which the Bhāmatī–Vivaraṇa contrast was very keen, Rāmādvaya stands out as an independent thinker, in fact he does not refrain from accepting even Vācaspati’s views, as elaborated by Caturvedī (1973: lvi–lvii, lxi–lxv), whose considerations can be compared with *Bhāmatī* (*ad* BSBh I.1.1, I.1.2, I.1.4, I.4.3, I.4.23, II.1.21, III.2.19, III.2.41).

¹² Caturvedī (1973: liv) points out that Rāmādvaya refutes Vidyāraṇya’s position about “undivided meaning” (*akhaṇḍārtha*) of the upaniṣadic great sentences (*mahāvākya*), but this cannot be confirmed by reading VK (see VK2 1973: 538).

¹³ VK and its author are mentioned by Appaya three times in the first section of the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* (“*kaumudīkārāḥ*”, *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* 1894: 43, “*kaumudīkṛtāḥ*”, *ibid.*: 120, “*kaumudyām tu*”, *ibid.*: 159) and once in the second section (“*rāmādvayācāryāḥ*”, *ibid.*: 311). See also Gotszorg (1991: 37).

¹⁴ Caturvedī (1973: iii–v) reports that a manuscript of the first chapter of BP which, is conserved at the Royal Asiatic Society of Calcutta, claims to be a copy of the original made by a certain Śeṣaṅgī in 1440 of the *śaka* era (= 1518 AD). According to Thangaswami the same manuscript is dated 1512 (1980: 387). Unfortunately, I have been unable to find any manuscripts of the BP in the Descriptive Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Collections of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (vol. X). However, Rāmādvaya ought to be dated between the 1320 and the 1512 but, more precisely, between 1300 and 1400. Bhattacharya (2001: 264) gives as a possible date 1300 A.D., while Sastri–Sastri (1959: 81–82) accept 13th cent.

¹⁵ Potter (1995: 1404) in his *Bibliography* dates Rāmādvaya 1340, which could be quite a sensible solution.



189 II.1 The VK and the BP

190 The VK is divided into four chapters, each of them respectively based on one of the
191 four initial aphorisms (*catuḥsūtrī*) of the *Brahmasūtra*. In the first chapter, following
192 the opening of Śrīharṣa's *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhāḍya* (hereafter KKK), Rāmādvaya
193 first establishes the eligibility of an Advaitin, who looks upon the world as false, in
194 taking part to a philosophical debate and then he engages in some epistemological
195 considerations concerning valid knowledge (*pramā*) and the means by which it can
196 be reached (*pramāṇa*). The VK's lexical choice is unusual and its philosophical
197 style difficult: unusual terms are preferred to more common ones; on several
198 occasions, without the commentary, it is difficult to comprehend where an objection
199 starts or where a reply begins. Aware of these difficulties, Rāmādvaya himself wrote
200 the BP: a lucid and accurate gloss, the aim of which was to smooth out the intrinsic
201 difficulties of the root text (see also Subrahmanya 2003: 172).¹⁶

202 The greater effort of the author was accomplished while glossing the first chapter
203 of the VK. This section does indeed appear to be much longer and more detailed
204 than the remaining three. In the first chapter, along with his deep vedāntic
205 knowledge, Rāmādvaya shows his erudition in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, which is only
206 hinted at in the VK. In the following chapters this modality becomes less
207 meticulous, possibly due to the fact that the more intricate Mīmāṃsā issues are
208 treated in the first chapter. In the BP, Rāmādvaya's effort to collocate enigmatic
209 words used in the VK within a precise context is evident. He tries to complete all the
210 incomplete quotations; in order to simplify some passages he quotes similar
211 contexts and paraphrases difficult words with straightforward ones. It is also worth
212 noticing that wherever in the VK Rāmādvaya makes no reference to the authors or
213 schools he quotes, he recalls them in the gloss. At any rate, on many issues even the
214 gloss is not sufficient to clarify the text entirely (Caturvedī 1973: iii–vi).

215 III Dharmarājadhvarin's VP

216 Since I have dealt with the VP elsewhere (Pellegrini forthcoming a), here I will limit
217 myself to a rapid overview of Dharmarāja Adhvarin or Adhvarīndra and his work.¹⁷
218 The VP is divided into eight sections (*pariccheda*). Alongside the introduction
219 dealing with valid knowledge (*pramā*) and its definition, in six chapters Dharmarāja
220 focuses on each of the six means of knowledge accepted by Advaita Vedānta, in

¹⁶ In the future, it may also be puzzling to investigate the reasons of the almost total disappearance of the VK. I suspect that Rāmādvaya's acceptance of certain of Vācaspati's views and the greater clarity and impact of Vidyāranya's writings within the Vivaraṇa school, might have been principally responsible.

¹⁷ S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri claims (1984: xiii), on the basis of the colophons of three manuscripts (nn. 4586, 4756 and 4764, vol. XIII, Sastri 1931: xxvii–xxviii) conserved at the Sarasvatī Mahāl Library of Tanjavur, that Dharmarāja was born in the village Kandramanikkam in the Tanjavur district. The reference given by Sastri is not confirmed in the catalogue of the Tanjore Mahārāja Serfojī's Sarasvatī Mahāl Library. In addition, in the same volume of the catalogue of the library (Sastri 1931) are described 6 manuscripts of VP (nn. 7595–7600; another 5 manuscripts—nn. 7601–7605—containing Rāmākṛṣṇa Adhvarin's *Vedāntaparibhāṣāvyākhyā Śikhāmaṇi* are just listed), but the information given by Sastri is not confirmed by their colophons.



221 accordance with Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā (Pellegrini forthcoming a, fn. 43), while in the
222 last two he deals respectively with the subject matter (*viśaya*) and the ultimate goal
223 (*prayojana*) of the school.

224 In the opening stanzas, Dharmarāja immediately informs the readers about his
225 scholarly background and competence, showing that he is not only a remarkable
226 Advaitin, but he is well-trained in Nyāya, too. This is witnessed by the following
227 stanzas:

228 *yena cintāmaṇau ṭikā daśaṭikāvibhañjinī /*
229 *tarkacūdāmaṇir nāma vidvanmanoramā // 4 //*
230 *ṭikā śāśadharasyāpi bālavayutpattidāyinī /*
231 *padayojanayā pañcapādikā vyākṛtā tathā // 5 //*

232 He who has compiled a gloss on *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, named *Tarkacūdāmaṇi*,
233 which annihilates ten [earlier] glosses, fascinating for the learned (4),¹⁸
234 moreover [he has written] a gloss on Śāśadhara,¹⁹ which warrants the
235 understanding of beginners, and has also commented upon *Pañcapādikā* with
236 the *Padayojanā* (5).²⁰

237 This is a sort of *visiting-card* for the author, where he also declares the secondary
238 purpose (*avāntaraprayojana*) and the addressees of his work:

239 *tena bodhāya mandānām vedāntārthāvalambinī/*
240 *dharmarājādhvarīndreṇa paribhāṣā vitanyate//*

241 For the comprehension of the slow-witted [students] that [same] Dhar-
242 marājādhvarīndra has composed the “Elucidation” grounded on the meaning
243 of Vedānta [= Upaniṣads].

244 From this verse, it becomes clear that the VP is meant for the “comprehension of
245 the slow witted” (*bodhāya mandānām*) where “slow-witted” is in my opinion a
246 synonym for the vedāntic *bālas* “beginners”, not to be intended literally as
247 “children” or “infants”.

248 An easily traceable characteristic of the period is the composition of primers
249 meant as the introduction to different disciplines (Pellegrini forthcoming a). For
250 this reason, many of these texts are addressed to beginners. In fact, the definition of
251 *bāla* in the sense meant by the VP should be constructed in accordance with the
252 standard one presented by Candrajasiṃha in the *Padakṛtya* gloss upon the
253 *Tarkasaṃgraha* (2007: 2): *bāleti atrā 'dhītavyākaraṇakāvyaakośā 'nadhītanyāya-*
254 *śāstro bālaḥ* “*bāla*: a beginner is here someone who has already studied grammar,
255 poetry, lexicons, but has not studied logic”.²¹ Analogously, the *manda/bāla* of the
256 VP might be: “a beginner is someone who has already studied logic, grammar,

¹⁸ More precisely *Tarkacūdāmaṇi* is a commentary on Rucidatta Miśra’s *Prakāśa* (mid-15th cent.), which is a commentary on *Tattvacintāmaṇi*.

¹⁹ Śāśadhara’s *Nyāyasiddhāntadīpa* is an important precursor of *Tattvacintāmaṇi*. Śāśadhara acts as a connecting author between Udayana (10th cent.), the real founder of Navya Nyāya, and Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya (13/14th cents.), the organizer of Navya Nyāya (Matilal 1977: 102–103).

²⁰ This verse is not included in many editions of VP. See Pellegrini (forthcoming a).

²¹ See also the *Dīpikā* on *Tarkasaṃgraha* (2007: 6): *grahaṇadhāraṇapaṭur bālaḥ na tu stanandhayaḥ*.



257 ritual exegesis,²² poetry, lexicons, but has not studied Vedānta” (*adhītanyāyavyā-*
258 *karāṇādhvaramīmāṃsākāvyaakośānadhītavedāntaśāstro bālāḥ*).

259 IV Textual Examples

260 Compared to the VK, the VP is a synthetic text and, apart from the last two mainly
261 ontological chapters, it is entirely devoted to epistemology. On the contrary, the VK
262 is an extremely analytical text, which develops many philosophical issues, but
263 where epistemology occupies a small part of the work. Both texts are affiliated to
264 the Vivaraṇa interpretation of Advaita, which, within the school was the first to
265 develop a specifically epistemological discourse.

266 Although in this contribution, of comparative nature, I shall analyse only a single
267 epistemological issue common to both texts, in the following table I have selected a
268 series of the other main epistemological subjects common to both²³:
270

272	Subject	VK1 (1955)	VK2 (1973)	VP (1992)
273	1. <i>pramālakṣaṇaṃ pramāṇāder</i>	9	24–36	9–14
274	<i>vāstavatvasthāpanaṃ ca</i>			
275	2. <i>pramāṇalakṣaṇaparīkṣā</i>	10–11	36–39	9–14
276	3. <i>vṛtter nirgamaṇaṃ tayā</i>	11–13	39–43	15–21, 22–23, 23–25,
277	<i>āvaraṇabhaṅgaś ca</i>			34–36, 41–42
278	4. <i>jñānaṃ nātmaguṇaḥ,</i>	13–15	43–51	Debate inserted in
279	<i>nāpi kriyā, api tu manovṛttiḥ</i>			previous passages
280	5. <i>ghāṭādyabhāvasya</i>	177–178	562–564	159–164
281	<i>pratyakṣatvaṃ nāsti (abhāvasya</i>			
282	<i>pramāṇāntaratvam)</i>			
283	6. <i>arthāpattiḥ</i>	89	297	139–144
284	7. <i>svataḥprāmāṇyavādaḥ</i>	15–18, 178–180	54–59, 564–570	145–158
285	8. <i>pramālakṣaṇam</i>	243	730–733	9–14
286	9. <i>anumānanirūpaṇaṃ</i>	247–249	742–746	81–85, 87–95
287	<i>vibhajaṇaṃ ca</i>			
288	10. <i>upamānanirūpaṇam</i>	249	746–747	102–105
289	11. <i>śabdanirūpaṇam</i>	249–251	747–751	106–138

²² At least an introductory knowledge of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is compulsory in order to understand the topics treated in *āgamaparicheda*, *arthāpattiparicheda* and *anupalabdhiparicheda*.

²³ It is not clear whether Rāmādvaya accepts *arthāpatti* or not. However, he does insert a stanza quoted by Sucaritaśāstra in his commentary on *Ślokavārtika* (*ad pratyakṣasūtra* 118) where *arthāpatti* is used as a means of proof. According to Caturvedī (1973: lx), Rāmādvaya accepts five *pramāṇas*, including *arthāpatti* and excluding *anupalabdhī*. By contrast, I think that Rāmādvaya is not at all clear about *arthāpatti*, but definitely accepts *anupalabdhī* as a *pramāṇa*.



291 On these issues, for example, even though they have already been established
292 by Padmapāda, Prakāśātman, *prakaṭārthavivaraṇakāra*, etc. (Dasgupta 1991:
293 205–206), we find some points in common between the VK and the VP.²⁴ Even
294 so, roughly speaking, some differences do exist between them: (1) the order of the
295 subjects is different; (2) although Rāmādvaya seems to accept *anupalabdhi*, he
296 treats it only to exclude its capability to grasp *brahman*. Also Dharmarāja accepts
297 *anupalabhi* and, in addition, defines it and defends its status of independent means
298 of knowledge; (3) the order in which the *pramāṇas* are presented is different; (4) in
299 the VK the treatment of inference is expressed in terms closer to the old Nyāya or
300 Sāṃkhya—*pūrvavat*, *śeṣavat* and *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*—, while in the VP the analysis
301 does not even mention this kind of older threefold division; (5) since the VK freely
302 uses the fivefold syllogism he seems to accept it, but the VP accepts merely a
303 threefold syllogism (see VP 1992: 95); (6) Rāmādvaya seems to accept also the
304 threefold division of *anvayavyatirekin*, *kevalānvayin* and *kevalavyatirekin* inference,
305 while Dharmarāja maintains only the *anvayin*; (7) there are differences between the
306 VK and the VP concerning important definitions, such as those of *pramā*,
307 *svataḥpramānya*, *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, *vyāpti*, *upamāna*, *āgama*, where Rāmādvaya
308 is sometimes nearer to Naiyāyikas' positions or, more frequently, formulates his
309 own definitions.

310 In the following pages, I shall deal with one issue (no. 1 of the table): the
311 discussion relating to valid knowledge (*pramā*).

312 IV.1 Valid Knowledge (*pramā*)

313 As already anticipated, and shown by Bhattacharya (2001: 274–275) only, the
314 discussion about *pramā* can be viewed as an example of a common pattern in the
315 VK and the VP epistemological discourse and, I shall add, the first point of
316 disagreement between the two authors concerned. In fact, while Rāmādvaya
317 adhered to the Naiyāyika theory according to which valid knowledge is that kind of
318 cognition whose content corresponds to the nature of the cognized object, on the
319 contrary, according to the definition accepted by Dharmarāja in order for knowledge
320 to be called valid, its object must be previously unknown and subsequently not
321 sublated. Hence, as for Bhattacharya (2001: 275), “Rāmādvaya's definition is more
322 realistic than that of Dharmarāja.”²⁵

323 Let us now see some textual instances.

²⁴ I believe the internal distinction operated by Dharmarāja between the perceptual character of knowledge (*jñānagatapratyakṣatva*, VP 1992: 22–34 and Pellegrini forthcoming a) and the perceptual character of the object (*viśayagatapratyakṣatva*, VP 1992: 35–41 and Pellegrini forthcoming a) to be an innovation.

²⁵ On that occasion it will be shown that, also with regard to this problem, the positions of the VK and the VP are doctrinally different.

324 *IV.1.1 Rāmādvaya on pramā*

325 The VK begins with a few Mīmāṃsakas' objections according to which Vedānta
326 has not the preliminary fourfold requirement (*amubandhacatuṣṭaya*)²⁶ necessary to
327 begin a philosophical treatise. In fact, its message and purport are entirely obtained
328 (*gatārtha*) from the ritual section of the Vedas (*karmakāṇḍa*). Therefore, there is no
329 point in setting forth such a discussion.

330 Thus, while echoing the *incipit* of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* (hereafter BSBh),
331 where Śaṅkara presents the purpose (*prayojana*) from which the entire Vedānta
332 reflection proceeds,²⁷ the VK somehow begins like Śrīharṣa's KKK (1992: 5–22),
333 where in order to start a dialectical dispute (*kathā*) there are certain rules and
334 regulations that have to be accepted (Pellegrini 2014a: 7–8). The dispute is based on
335 clear and solid evidence, which permits a common ground of discussion for debaters
336 (*kathaka*), the proponent (*vādin = siddhāntin*) and the opponent (*prativādin =*
337 *pūrvapakṣa*). Nevertheless, these means of knowledge have an empirical level of
338 reality (*vyāvahārikasattā*), so they cannot be considered absolutely real (*vāstavi-*
339 *ka = pāramārthika*). As a consequence they cannot be intended as a constitutive
340 part of the dispute.

341 In the opening passages, Rāmādvaya hints at the fact that the subject matter of a
342 Vedāntic treatise is absolutely independent of any other scriptural section and is
343 none other than the direct realisation of the Self (*ātmasākṣātkāra*), a sort of valid
344 knowledge (*pramā*) which has the Self as its content (*ātmaviśayiṇī*). But, of course,
345 valid knowledge (*pramā*) becomes such when it is produced by valid means of
346 knowledge (*pramāṇa*) and, consequently, is endowed with validity (*prāmāṇya*).
347 Without these requirements there is no chance of discussing any kind of ontological
348 level of reality, be it apparent (*prātibhāsika*), empirical (*vyāvahārika*) or even
349 absolute (*pāramārthika*, see Pellegrini 2009: 79–81). This is why the *pūrvapakṣin*
350 objects (VK.1 1955: 6; VK.2 1973: 24):

351 *atha pramāṇāder avāstavikatvād anaṅgatvenānārambhaḥ kathāyāḥ.*

352 Now, since the means of knowledge and other [tools of reflection] are not
353 [absolutely] real, and since they are not auxiliary [to the dispute], then the
354 dispute cannot begin.

355 In fact, in the *incipit* of the VK, Rāmādvaya presents the general definition
356 (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*) of valid knowledge (*pramā*) commonly accepted by Naiyāyikas,
357 together with its application in the general definition of the means of knowledge
358 (VK.1 1955: 6; VK.2 1973: 24). This definition was earlier formulated and defended

²⁶ These are the well-known four requirements: the qualified person (*adhikārin*), the subject matter (*viśaya*), the reason leading to beginning the work (*prayojana*) and the relationship (*sambandha*) between the subject matter (*viśaya = pratipādyā/bodhya*) and the text (*pratipādaka/bodhaka*). For an introduction see the *Vedāntasāra* (2004: 1–2), more specifically VK.1 (1955: 3–4) and VK.2 (1973: 10–22), but also the *Pañcapādikā* and the *Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa* (1992: 459–472), as well as the *Prakaṭārthavivarāṇa* (1989: 20–21).

²⁷ Here the VK hints at a passage of Śaṅkara's *adhyāsabhāṣya*, where the true purpose of Vedānta is clarified, namely the total eradication of the undue superimposition, and the realisation of the real nature of the self (BSBh 2000: 25–26): *asyānarthahetoḥ prahāṇāya āmaikatvavidyāpratipattaye sarve vedāntā ārabhyante.*



359 by Udayana in *Tātparyapariśuddhi* (*ad Nyāyasūtravārttika* I.1.1) and *Nyāyakusumañjalī* (IV.7):²⁸

361 *yathārtho 'nubhavaḥ pramā, tatsādhanam ca pramāṇam ācakṣate.*
362 [Philosophers] claim that valid knowledge is an experience in accordance with
363 the [nature of the] object, and its instrument is the means of knowledge.

364 Then, having presented the definition of *pramā*, Rāmādvaya discusses each of its
365 key elements, underlining that it has two: *yathārthatva* and *anubhavatva*
366 *anubhūtitva*.

367 As is also commonly found in Advaita texts, Rāmādvaya does not intend
368 knowledge and its qualification *yathārthatva* only in an epistemological way, as
369 Naiyāyikas do, but the primary meaning of knowledge is metaphysical, as suggested
370 also by Rāmādvaya himself while explaining the concept of “validity”. In fact, he
371 points out (VK.1 1955: 6; VK.2 1973: 24):

372 *yathārthatvaṃ ca durvaitaṇḍikenāpi pariśeṣāt svapakṣasiddhim abhisandhatā*
373 *pariśiṣṭatattvānubhavasya nāpalāpam arhati. atas tatsvarūpakhaṇḍanā*
374 *nākhāṇḍalasyāpi śakyānuṣṭhānā... sāmvyāvahārikī pramā bhramān nātiricy-*
375 *ate, bhedaḥbhedayor iva pramātvāpramātvayor ekatra niveśyogāt.*

376 Even the wicked sophist (*durvaitaṇḍika*), who aims to establish his own point
377 of view by exclusion (*pariśeṣāt*) [of all the untenable positions], is unable to
378 negate the validity of the experience of reality lying behind all sublations.
379 Hence, not even Indra is able to confute its essential form... In addition, if this
380 validity were empirical, then it would not be different from the illusion
381 [= apparent reality],²⁹ because, as for difference and non-difference, it is not
382 possible for validity and invalidity to coexist in a single instance.

383 According to Rāmādvaya, the definition of *pramā* as direct experience, which
384 does not give a flawed representation of the objects (*yathārthānubhava*), cannot be
385 found faulty because, according to Vedānta, all dual experiences of the world are
386 false; but, although ultimately illusory, direct experience has an empirical existence
387 for all practical purposes.³⁰

388 After defining validity, Rāmādvaya determines his idea of experience (*anubhūti/*
389 *anubhava*, VK.1 1955: 6, 244; VK.2 1973: 24, 735):

²⁸ More precisely it is contained in the auto-commentary of Udayana on the *Nyāyakusumañjalī ad IV.7: evaṃ tāvad yathārtho 'nubhavaḥ pramā. tatsādhanam ca pramāṇam iti*. See also the refutation proposed by Śrīharṣa's KKK (1992: 207–208) on Udayana's definition of valid knowledge as *tattvānubhūtiḥ pramā* “valid knowledge is the direct experience of reality”. It is noteworthy that Rāmādvaya does not accept Śrīharṣa's confutation (VK.1 1955: 242–246; VK.2 1973: 730–736; see also *supra* fn. 6).

²⁹ Even though here the gloss (BP 1973: 24–25) is not particularly helpful in disclosing the text, it presents a double option for interpreting the ontic status of validity (*yathārthatva = pramāṇya*): empirical (*vyāvahārikī*) or absolute (*tattvāvedana*). An analogous division is also present in the VP (1992: 165). See also the VK.1 (1955: 6) and the VK.2 (1973: 24–25). Bhattacharya (2001: 274–275) states that another point of disagreement between the VK and the VP is the conception of *pramāṇya*.

³⁰ For a similar passage see also the VP (1992: 12–14).



390 *tātkālikāsādhāraṇakāraṇaviśiṣṭasāmagrjanyam ca jñānam anubhavaḥ.*
391 Experience is that knowledge produced by the causal complex qualified by an
392 immediate specific cause.

393 In this definition, Rāmādvaya differentiates direct experience (*anubhava*) from
394 memory (*smṛti*), highlighting that the specific cause (*asādhāraṇakāraṇa*) of memory
395 is the residual impression.³¹

396 Then Rāmādvaya refutes another definition, which includes novelty as a criterion
397 for the validity of knowledge. This point, only hinted at in the Vivaraṇa tradition of
398 those times, might have represented Rāmādvaya's personal choice to reuse and
399 reject an already well-established debate on a criterion of validity (VK.1 1955: 7;
400 VK.2 1973: 26–27):

401 *yad āhuḥ—ajñātajñāpanam pramāṇam iti, tad asāram cirasthāyīṣv anadhiga-*
402 *tatvāyogāt.*

403 *yadi neha janmani janmāntare 'pi, yadi na pratyakṣeṇa, anumānopadeśābhyām*
404 *api prāyaśa upalabdhānām evopalambhāt. (anyathā) pratyabhijñānam datta-*
405 *jalāñjali syāt. tataś ca svarūpato 'nadhigatatvaṃ bahv ākulayet. prakārato 'pi*
406 *bhūyobhūyas stambhādiṣv anubhūyamāneṣu na kaścid guṇaparakārah pra-*
407 *tikṣaṇalabdhanmāpavargah paribhāvyate. karmāpi tato 'py āsutaravināsi na*
408 *pratikṣaṇāpūrvam. na ca catuḥpañcakṣaṇāvasthāyīny api tasminn ekam eva*
409 *vijñānam janayitvendriyādikam anyakarmādijanmāpeksate.*

410 *nanu yady api svarūpasya prakārasya vā tathāvidhasya tādavasthyam tathāpi*
411 *pratyakṣajñānadhārāyām vartamāna evārthaḥ pariṣphurati. na ca kramabhāvinām*
412 *eka eva vartamānaḥ kālo viśeṣaḥ, jñānāyugaḥpadyaprasaṅgāt. ekasyāpi nānāpra-*
413 *mātrvat pratyabhijñānānupapatteḥ. jñānānekatve 'pi ekakālāvasthānākalanāt.*
414 *tasmāt pūrvajñānair anākalita eva vartamāno 'rtha uttarottarair avasīyata ity*
415 *anadhigatārthatvam iti.*

416 That [definition] they formulated “the means of knowledge is what makes the
417 unknown known” is also without foundation, because the property of being
418 previously not cognised (*anadhigatatva*) is not tenable in the long-lasting entities.
419 Usually, there is a cognition of those entities which are already known, if not
420 in this existence in another one, if not by direct perception by inference or by
421 verbal testimony, (otherwise) recognition would not be possible anymore.
422 Hence, the property of being previously unknown by inner nature (*svārūpataḥ*)
423 will be very much in trouble. Neither can it [= the property of being
424 previously unknown] be understood by qualification (*prakārataḥ*), [because]
425 when columns or similar [qualified] entities are perceived many times, then
426 there is no type of attribute at any time being born [in them] or at any time
427 departing [from them]. Action too is even more quickly destroyable and,
428 [anyway,] is not always novel. Neither can it be stated that in that [action]
429 lasting for four or five moments the sense faculties etc., having generated a
430 single cognition (*vijñāna*), [then] need the birth of another action.

³¹ In fact, since the Self, the internal organ and other constituents are common causes of other kinds of knowledge too, they cannot be specific causes of memory. In the text this discussion continues in quite a complex way. See the VK.1 (1955: 6–7) and the VK.2 (1973: 25).



431 It might also be asked: although such an inner nature (*svarūpa*) of that property
 432 [of being previously unknown] or such a qualification (*prakāra*) of that same
 433 property remain as they are, nevertheless, in the flux of perceptual cognitions
 434 only the present (*vartamāna*) object shines forth. Moreover, it cannot be affirmed
 435 that the entities arising in succession have only one time/duration—that is the
 436 present—as specification, because [if it is so] the undesired event of the
 437 simultaneous co-presence of all cognitions will occur. And, as in the case of the
 438 many knowing subjects of one single thing, the impossibility of recognition will
 439 result. And, even if cognitions were multiple, they could not, however, be
 440 considered present in the same moment. Therefore, an object present but not
 441 grasped by previous cognitions is ascertained by successive ones. This is the
 442 property of having an object not being previously cognised.

443 Here Rāmādvaya is dealing with *pramā* through the magnifying glass of its
 444 instruments, the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*).³² To Rāmādvaya novelty,
 445 represented by the word *anadhigatatva*, is not acceptable as an essential condition
 446 of the validity of knowledge, because against such a definition some difficulties
 447 arise that concern the undue inclusion (*ativyāpti*):

- 448 1. of the continuous cognition of the same object (*dhārāvāhikabuddhi*),
 449 2. of recognition (*pratyabhijñā*).³³
 450

451 Starting with recognition, it might be pointed out that according to Rāmādvaya it
 452 is often the case that we know things previously experienced and this is what makes
 453 recognition possible. For, if we deny that these are cases of valid knowledge, we
 454 shall have to exclude much of what is universally acknowledged as right
 455 knowledge. Rāmādvaya also adds that time cannot be an object of direct perception
 456 (*atrābhīdhīyate—na kālaḥ pratyakṣagocaraḥ*, VK.1 1955: 7; VK.2 1973: 27).
 457 Perception of time is only the perception of the succession of cognitive acts. The
 458 present time is only the fusion of successive moments into a concrete duration.
 459 These moments fused together are successive cognitions.³⁴ This is why the clause
 460 referring to the present time is not included by Rāmādvaya in the definition of
 461 perception.³⁵

³² In order to begin a dispute the necessity of the means of knowledge is unavoidable. The means of knowledge is that kind of tool through which the doubt regarding the reality of *brahman* is sublated. Even though all the objects of this empirical world are ultimately false, passing through the examination of the means of knowledge appears as real. According to some orthodox philosophers, the definition of *pramāṇa* is *ajñātārthajñaptiḥ pramāṇam* “means of knowledge is what makes known an unknown object”. See VK.1 (1955: 7) and VK.2 (1973: 26).

³³ See VK.1 (1955: 7) and VK.2 (1973: 28): *pratyamānetaraniṣṭhopādheś ca jñānāntaraviśayatve dhārāvahanabuddhyanudayaprasaṅgāt*.

³⁴ See VK.1 (1955: 7) and VK.2 (1973: 28): *pramāṇāntareṇa indriyāntareṇa vā tenaiva vā taddharma-parityāgena dharmyantare 'nubhūyamāne kālopādhi-grahaṇāya vivakṣitaikārthaviśayabuddhidhārāyā asambhavana stambhādir eva prāgabdhāvanivṛttipradhvamsānutpattirūpo vartamānas tadavacchinnaḥ kālo 'pi vartamānaḥ. sa ca tathāvidho 'nekajñānasādhāraṇa eva. na caitāvatā jñānayaugapadyāpattiḥ, sūkṣmakālāpekṣayā kramasambhavāt*.

³⁵ Since it is not totally related with the topic under examination, I will avoid the long and difficult discussion on time proposed by Rāmādvaya (VK.1 1955: 7–8; VK.2 1973: 26–29).



462 Further, if it is insisted that novelty (*anadhigatatva*) be an essential condition for
 463 validity, then a difficulty concerning the continuous cognition of the same object arises.
 464 In fact, the second instant of the cognition of the same object does not have a novel
 465 content, and so, the definition will be invalid. In this view, all cognitions subsequent to
 466 the first are only memories of the first cognition, which previously grasped the object
 467 and, in this context, novelty has nothing to do with memory. *Ergo*, there is no
 468 justification for introducing *anadhigatatva* as a condition of valid knowledge.³⁶

469 I have been unable to trace in the *Pañcapādikā* or in the *Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa*
 470 the notion of novelty as a characteristic of valid knowledge,³⁷ to which Rāmādvaya
 471 refers in *pūrvapakṣa*. In fact, when Rāmādvaya writes *yad āhuḥ* (VK.1 1955: 7;
 472 VK.2 1973: 26) he is indicating someone else, who perhaps could be traced back to
 473 the Mīmāṃsā tradition.³⁸ Nevertheless, the general notion of *pramā* as new
 474 information is not present in Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* (Kataoka 2003: 95–96),³⁹ but
 475 seems to be present in Kumārila's *Bṛhat Ṭīkā*.⁴⁰

476 Thus, it is, indeed, a fact that this approach to valid knowledge as characterised
 477 by novelty was not new in Indian philosophy and was originally found in Pūrva
 478 Mīmāṃsā, reused also by Buddhist *pramāṇavādins* (Dignāga, Dharmakīrti,⁴¹ etc.),
 479 and later on shared by other philosophers.⁴²

³⁶ In the VK (VK.1 1955: 242–243 and VK.2 1973: 727–730) we find another section connected with the topic: *nyāyamatanirūpaṇam pramātvalakṣaṇakhaṇḍanam ca*. In this section, Rāmādvaya presents the point of view of the logicians regarding valid knowledge and then confutes it. According to Naiyāyikas, *pramā* is an independent entity (*svatantrā*) different from recollection (*smṛter anyā*) and not deviating (*avyabhicārī*), because this is people's common verbal usage (see also *supra* fn. 6). Rāmādvaya objects that if the qualification "different from recollection" (*smṛtyanyatva*) is established through a means of knowledge (*pramāṇatvena*), then there will be a vicious circle (*cakraka*): the establishment of valid knowledge as different from recollection takes place through a particular *pramāṇa*, which is to be established by means of *pramā*; and since *pramāṇa* is the instrument of *pramā*, through *pramā* there will be the establishment of the generality of *pramāṇa* (*pramāṇasāmānya*) and then the establishment of a specific *pramāṇa*. Or this defect, seen from another perspective, will lead to a mutual dependence (*anyonyāśraya*): through *pramā* there will be the establishment of *pramāṇa* and, through *pramāṇa* the establishment of *pramā*. On the other hand, if the establishment is presented through what is not a means of knowledge (*apramāṇatvena*), then this will prove useless. This kind of debate is not included in the VP.

³⁷ Apart from a hint in the PPV (1992: 459).

³⁸ The notion of novelty (*apūrvatva*), usually attached to injunction (*vidhi*) but, as established by Kataoka (2003), used also for epistemological issues, is already present in the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*: I.2.19, I.4.2, I.4.17, III.3.21, III.4.3, III.5.21, V.3.12, VI.5.5, VI.8.3, IX.2.43, IX.4.11, IX.4.45, X.4.22, X.5.14, X.7.27, X.7.33, X.8.11; XI.1.10; XI.1.46.

³⁹ Even so, Kataoka (2003: 96) remarks that Kumārila in the *Ślokavārttika* also has the idea that a *pramāṇa* should be a source of new information, even though he does not include novelty in the definition. See also Ratié (2011: 25–26, n. 30) who refers to Jayaratha *ad Tantrāloka* III.89: *anadhigataviṣayaṃ pramāṇam, ajñātārthaprakāśo vā*.

⁴⁰ This comes from a quotation in the *Ratnakīrtinibandhāvalī* (106.9–11): *tathā bṛhatṭīkāpi—tatpūrvārthavijñānaḥ niścitaḥ bādharvājitaḥ/ aduṣṭakāraṇārabdhaḥ pramāṇam lokasammataḥ//*, where also the notion of the novelty of cognition (*apūrvārthavijñāna*) is included (Kataoka 2003: 96).

⁴¹ See Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* II.5c: *ajñātārthaprakāśo vā* (Kataoka 2003: 89).

⁴² In the words of Kataoka (2003: 98): "In the Mīmāṃsā tradition the notion of novelty has its own long history of development. Though the notion is originally seen from a ritualistically pragmatic viewpoint, it is later more closely connected with the independence of the *Veda*, having its own unique scope, and

480 IV.2 Dharmarāja on *pramā*

481 An instance analogous to Rāmādvaya's treatment of *pramā* is found at the
482 beginning of the VP, where Dharmarāja deals with the valid knowledge rising from
483 direct perception (*pratyakṣapramā*). While recalling the scriptural passage *yat*
484 *sākṣād aparokṣād brahma* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* III.4.1), he clearly points out
485 that in Advaita Vedānta there is no other direct and valid knowledge apart from
486 supreme consciousness (VP 1992: 14; Pellegrini forthcoming a):

487 *pratyakṣapramāyāḥ karaṇaṃ pratyakṣapramāṇam. pratyakṣapramā cātra*
488 *caitanyaṃ eva "yat sākṣād aparokṣād brahma" iti śruteḥ.*

489 The instrument for perceptual valid knowledge is the means of knowledge
490 [consisting] in direct perception; and here [= in Advaita Vedānta] valid
491 knowledge is Consciousness alone, as [stated] by *śruti*: "What is direct and
492 immediate is *brahman*" (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* III.4.1).

493 In addition, we have the VP's definition of valid knowledge. It is interesting to
494 note that Dharmarāja synthetically touches all the points refuted in *pūrvapakṣa* by
495 Rāmādvaya and, by contrast, the VP presents novelty as a basic criterion for the
496 validity of knowledge (VP 1992: 9):

497 *pramākaraṇaṃ pramāṇam. tatra smṛtivyāvṛttaṃ pramātvam anadhigatābādhitārtha-*
498 *viśaya[ka]jñānatvam. smṛtisādhāraṇaṃ tv abādhitārthaviśaya[ka]jñānatvam.*

499 The instrument of valid knowledge is the means of knowledge. There [= in
500 the definition], excluding memory, valid knowledge is the cognition whose
501 content is not earlier cognised and [subsequently] not sublated; conversely,
502 [the definition of *pramā*] common to memory is the cognition whose object is
503 not [subsequently] sublated.

504 Like Rāmādvaya, Vivaraṇa followers do not usually consider memory a valid
505 type of knowledge (*pramā*). Therefore, the second definition proposed by
506 Dharmarāja, after the broadly accepted one, seems to reflect his own understanding
507 of *pramā*. Ergo, here there is a difference with Rāmādvaya, who argues against
508 impression—a specific cause of memory—as a specific cause of valid knowledge.

509 There is another clear divergence with Rāmādvaya owing to different views on
510 time, which Rāmādvaya does not accept as an object of perception. Rāmādvaya's
511 definition of valid knowledge does not include time as a separate element, as an
512 entity standing apart from the object: in fact, he denies that time is an objective
513 entity and regards it only as a mode of the cognitive process. On the contrary,
514 Dharmarāja accepts time to be perceivable through the changes that occur in an
515 object at every instant.

516 Thus, the following explanation of Dharmarāja proves to be compulsory in
517 avoiding the flaw of the lack of pervasion in continuous cognition. Nevertheless,

Footnote 42 continued

hence its authoritativeness. For scholars in the seventh century, Dharmakīrti's introduction of novelty must have appeared as having the same background and implication as in the Mīmāṃsā tradition."



518 although we do not find this objection clearly expressed, it is easily recalled from
519 the earlier philosophical debate related to this very problem (VP 1992: 10–11):

520 *nirūpasyāpi kālasyendriyavedyatvābhyupagamena dhārāvāhikabuddher api*
521 *pūrvapūrvajñānāviśayatattakṣaṇaviśeṣaviśiṣṭaviśayatvena na tatrāvyāptiḥ.*
522 *kiṃ ca siddhānte dhārāvāhikabuddhisthale na jñānabhedah, kintu yāvad*
523 *ghaṭasphuraṇam tāvad ghaṭākārāntahkaraṇavrttir ekaiva, na tu nānā,*
524 *vṛtteḥ svavirodhivṛtyutpattiparyantam sthāyitvābhyupagamāt. tathā ca*
525 *tatpratiphalitacaitanyarūpaṃ ghaṭādijñānam api tāvatkālīnam ekam eveti*
526 *nāvyāptiśamkāpi.*

527 Even though time has no colour/form, we accept it as graspable by sense
528 faculties. Therefore, there [= in continuous cognition] there is no lack of
529 pervasion [of the definition], because continuous cognition also has a content
530 qualified by a specific moment, which is not the content of any of the previous
531 cognitions. Moreover, in the [Advaita] doctrine, in the continuous cognition
532 there is no differentiation of knowledge, but as long as there is perception of a
533 pot there is just one modification of the internal organ of the pot, but not many,
534 because the stability of the modification is accepted until the dawn of an
535 opposite modification. Therefore, also the cognition of the pot and other
536 objects, as an aspect of consciousness reflected (*pratiphalita*) on that [= *vṛtti*],
537 is only one for all that time-duration. So there is not even the doubt of the lack
538 of pervasion [of the definition].

539 Hence, according to the VP in the case of continuous cognition of the same object
540 (*dhārāvāhikābuddhi*, doctrinally not accepted by Advaita), there are no different
541 successive and repeated cognitions, but just an unchanged continuous *vṛtti* of the
542 internal organ and no different *vṛttis* removing different *ajñānas*. In fact, the
543 cognitive stream cannot be divided into separate moments. The cognition of the pot
544 is a single *vṛtti* of the internal organ: once the *vṛtti* arises, it continues unhindered
545 until the rise of another *vṛtti* opposes to it. Thus, it is not proper to sunder the single
546 cognitive process into distinct single moments, one succeeding the other
547 discontinuously.

548 V Conclusions

549 In the textual instances analysed we have seen that the position on valid knowledge
550 presented in a *pūrvapakṣa* of the VK and consequently rejected by Rāmādvaya, later
551 on becomes the accepted doctrine of the VP (see Pellegrini forthcoming b).
552 Nevertheless, I have even found some similarities between the two authors who, I
553 would like to remind, are basically both followers of the Vivaraṇa school of Advaita
554 Vedānta. In fact, an unexpected similarity between the two authors is their
555 willingness to express their own ideas and, what is more striking, their acceptance of
556 non-Vivaraṇa views. In fact, if Rāmādvaya had accepted some of Vācaspati's
557 positions (see Pellegrini forthcoming b and fn. 11), the Vivaraṇa adherent
558 Dharmarāja, too, did the same on several points (VP 1992: 71, 214, 215–216,
559 219–220, 226, 230).



560 I think, however, that Dasgupta did not mean to say that the VK and the VP are
561 similar—when compared with other texts of their respective periods—in matter of
562 “originality”. The “colossal indebtedness” assumed by him might be seen as a *total*
563 overlapping of themes, ideas and lexical choices. Nonetheless, Rāmādvaya and,
564 later on, Dharmarāja follow a main stream of philosophical debate linked with
565 Vivaraṇa which, in any case, is taken from earlier texts and, therefore, cannot be
566 referred to a specific relationship between these two texts. I would prefer to
567 generally consider it an established philosophical trend or dialectical path, which
568 freely uses pre-existent material even without acknowledging it. But, these
569 similarities are shared by a broad network of Advaita texts (see Pellegrini
570 forthcoming b). In addition, it must be said that in the VP there is no trace of any
571 claim to the originality postulated by Dasgupta. In my opinion, it was never in
572 Dharmarāja’s mind to write an “original” work, but a useful primer for Advaita
573 beginners already trained in other disciplines.

574 In fact, in the case of the VP we are confronted with a re-semanticization of old
575 doctrines in a new idiom and style, where a specific change is available in the
576 secondary purpose (*prayojana*) of the text and, along with that, also a change in
577 addressees: while in both cases the main purpose (*mukhyaprayojana*), i.e. final
578 liberating knowledge, remains the same, on the contrary, the VK’s secondary purpose
579 (*avāntaraprayojana*) – although not expressed – seems to be the confutation of rival
580 view and triumph of Advaita, while the VP’s secondary one (1992: 6) is the easy
581 instruction for beginners (see also Pellegrini forthcoming a and b).

582 In *primis*, in order to examine Dasgupta’s statement, I have tried to isolate in both
583 the texts the epistemological issues, the only themes where an overlap can be
584 verified. The first and perhaps the pivotal issue treated by both authors is *pramā*.
585 Thus the definitions and the problems concerning *pramā* influence all the other
586 treatments related with the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), which are useful as far
587 as they bring about *pramā*. And *pramā* is where we find the first fundamental
588 disagreement between the VK and the VP. Hence, if the understanding of *pramā* in
589 both the texts is antithetical, then the consequent treatments concerning *pramāṇas*
590 will keep the two authors’ positions distant: so, the presupposition of the “colossal
591 indebtedness” collapses (see Pellegrini forthcoming b). This is the reason why in
592 this first and preliminary survey on the VK, I have chosen to treat only *pramā*. But,
593 what I have noticed, is that the treatment of *pramā* in the two texts shows other basic
594 conceptual differences, such as: the perceptibility of time, the acceptance of
595 continuous cognition of the same object (*dhārāvāhikābuddhī*), divergent attitude
596 towards recognition (*pratyabhijñā*), novelty (*anadhigatatva*) and, of course, validity
597 or authoritativeness of knowledge (*prāmāṇya*) and the acceptance of *saṃskāra* as
598 specific cause of *pramā*. These points lead to basic divergences concerning direct
599 perception (*pratyakṣa*), and are specifically related to the outgoing of the *vṛtti*
600 (*vṛttinirgamaṇa*) and the consequent *pratikarmavyavasthā*.⁴³

601 This examination of *pramā* is an attempt to throw some light on the issue as well
602 as showing that there is no “colossal indebtedness” of the VP to the VK but

⁴³ See also *supra* paragraph IV. Here too I can’t help referring to another article (Pellegrini forthcoming b) where I deal with these two issues.



603 probably their conception of *pramā* seems to bear witness to two clearly different
604 positions within the Vivaraṇa school of Advaita Vedānta.

605 In conclusion, I have briefly observed that there is, however, a certain conceptual
606 overlap between the epistemological parts of the VK and the VP. By contrast, I have
607 been unable to identify any really clear overlap of forms, or any *verbatim*
608 quotations. Moreover, at the present stage of the research, I can reasonably claim
609 that the originality spoken of above has been in some ways superimposed on the real
610 purport of the author of the VP by Dasgupta⁴⁴ himself the only early scholar who
611 seriously and extensively dealt with the text.

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624 *sātirhādīyupalakṣitaśrīmadudāśīnapravarasvāmīyogīndrānandakṛtena saṭīppanabhāṣāṃuvādena ca*
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630 *vardhamānopādhyāyapraṇīṭena 'prakāśena' nāyāyikaśīromāṇisīrīmeghaṭhakkurapraṇīṭayā 'prakā-*
631 *śīkayā' (jaladena) mahopādhyāyāśrīrucīdattopādhyāyapraṇīṭena 'makarandena' sarvatantṛasva-*
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⁴⁴ Dasgupta (1991: 209), however, admitted that the VK's point of view on direct perception is heavily based on the PP and, on a more developed level, on the PPV, so it is not at all an original treatment.



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