

The Transformations of Mīmāṃsā in the Larger Context of Indian Philosophical Discourse
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In Mīmāṃsā, as in most Indian philosophical text traditions, it is often difficult to precisely identify points of historical rupture and transformation. Given the loss of what may have been key work of Mīmāṃsā literature, as well as the typical uncertainties regarding both relative and absolute chronology, it is hard to determine when and how, much less why, significant theoretical and discursive changes take place. Still, some changes are deep and broad enough to be charted and, at least in some measure, explained. The seventh century seems to mark one such turning point. It was in this period that Mīmāṃsā divided into the two sub-schools that would define it throughout its later history, that of Kumārilabhaṭṭa and Prabhākara. Each of these authors' work consists entirely of commentaries on the *Mīmāṃsābhāṣya* of Śabara (the only earlier Mīmāṃsā text which survives, apart from the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* itself), yet each, through these commentaries, radically transformed the doctrines, the modes of argument, and the discursive practices of Mīmāṃsā. In this paper I will argue that this transformation of the tradition cannot be explained simply as an intra-Mīmāṃsā development, but was crucially shaped by developments in the wider field of Sanskrit philosophy. In particular, I will attempt to show that the seminal work of the Buddhist epistemologist Dīnāga, and the revolution in Sanskrit philosophical discourse and methodology ushered in by it, were a major catalyst for many of the key innovations of Kumāriḷa and Prabhākara. Sometimes even their positions on arcane matters of Vedic interpretation seemingly quite unrelated to Mīmāṃsā-Buddhist polemics can be shown to be shaped in part by their responses to Dīnāga's intellectual revolution.