

BOOK - REVIEWS

I

CHINCHORE, (DR.) MANGALA R.; *DHARMAKĪRTI'S THEORY OF HETU-CENTRICITY OF ANUMĀNA*; DELHI, MOTILAL BANARSIDASS, 1989; pp. xvii + 196; Price Rs. 125/- (HC).

Dr. Mangala Chinchore's book under review is a solitary attempt to present in sufficient detail important points of the theory of *Anumāna* of Dharmakīrti, an important Buddhist philosopher. It basically derives its inspiration from and centres around his valuable work called *Hetubindu* and two commentaries thereupon. It is, nonetheless, not neglectful of Dharmakīrti's other works available in Sanskrit and various commentaries to them. The book, thus, is as close to the extant appropriate original sources as one could rightly expect. This sort of proximity to the original sources is an important asset of the book, a feature which seems to be becoming progressively rarer especially because many an author are either ignorant of Sanskrit or else too slothful to do the pains-taking work that such an exercise obviously requires. Fortunately, Dr. Chinchore has not distanced herself from the extant original sources in this way, for whatever reason it may be.

There is a fairly, although erroneously, wide-spread view that the theory of *Anumāna*, which was developed by adherents of various schools of Indian philosophical thought, is in agreement with the minimum structure of it as it was outlined by

the adherents of *Prācīna Nyāya*, and that the modifications or innovations introduced in it by others are of slight and, at the most, academic importance. Secondly, it is also held that there are no major differences concerning the discussion of the basic framework of *Anumāna* among the adherents of either *Prācīna Nyāya* or those of Buddhism. The views prevalent in this way seem either to pre-empt significance and importance of inter-school or intra-school debates and controversies, or else partially or completely overlook variant attempts made by such logicians as Dīnāga or Dharmakīrti and importance of them. The book under review is, again, fortunately, not only not blind to this sort of consideration and its importance but is also quite transparently open to it. This, therefore, seems to be another important asset of the book.

The authoress seems to be quite right in holding that perhaps Dharmakīrti's theory of *Anumāna* is the only one articulated in Indian subcontinent wherein every significant aspect of it revolves basically around one or the other important consideration concerning *Hetu*. The title of the book seems to be squarely indicative of it, and every worthwhile aspect of the theory of *Anumāna* is shown, in the book, to be in this way centering around *Hetu*. This is good enough as far as it goes, and her enterprise on this count seems to deserve careful attention of the concerned. There can be difference of opinion regarding the principal point she has laboured all through the book to put forth. But it can hardly be held, it seems, that it is not backed by evidence from original sources and advanced with the help of cogent arguments in its support.

In the first chapter she has attempted to present a sketch of the conceptual framework of Dharmakīrti's philosophy and situate significance of such work of his as *Hetubindu* in it. The starting point is well taken in so far as it orients the prospective

readers and researchers, and presents a trailer of the sort of issues one would have to grapple with in careful consideration of Dharmakīrti's philosophy in its important aspects. But here itself twofold danger seems to loom large and calls for further prolonged and intensive research. First, two important treatises of Dharmakīrti, viz., *Santānāntarasiddhi* and *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, are still unavailable in Sanskrit, although fragments of two chapters of the latter have been placed at the disposal of the concerned, thanks mainly to the pains-taking researches of Profs. Steinkellner and Vetter. But this is inadequate. The two works of Dharmakīrti just referred to seem to be important in their own way, although for different reasons. Whereas *Pramāṇaviniścaya* is supposed to present Dharmakīrti's own philosophy in outline, the *Santānāntarasiddhi* seems to be a landmark in intra-school controversy with reference to Buddhism. Given this, their non-availability in Sanskrit seems to highlight a hurdle in one's being able to present a comprehensive sketch of the conceptual framework of Dharmakīrti's philosophy. Secondly the present as well as the previous work of the authoress seem to have a major bearing upon the inter-school controversy so far as *Pracīna Nyāya* and Buddhism are concerned. But Dharmakīrti's conceptual framework seems to have been shaped by three major pillars of it : (a) his philosophy considered in the light of inter-school controversy, (b) intra-school debates, and (c) his own contribution and innovation. For one's being able to say something really worthwhile on the latter two counts one would be required to devote oneself to the careful and concerted study of *Santānāntarasiddhi* and *Pramāṇaviniścaya*. It is perhaps only after one has dedicatedly worked for a decade or more on these works and combined the contours of Dharmakīrti's conceptual framework they provide with those which his extant works in Sanskrit provide that one would be able to present a comprehensive sketch of the conceptual framework of Dharmakīrti's philosophy.

kīrti's philosophy. One may perhaps hope that Dr. Chinchore can make some worthwhile contribution along these lines in years to come. Till such a time, however, the conceptual framework of Dharmakīrti's philosophy presented by her in the first chapter of her present work has to be held to be provisional in character. This point needs carefully to be noted and borne in mind at the present juncture of Dharmakīrti scholarship, for otherwise misplaced sense of self-complacency on this count would be highly dangerous and intellectually ruinous. The authoress, fortunately, is humble enough not to have fallen in the trap of this kind of self-complacency.

There seems to be a similar limitation at stake so far as her attempt to study implications of Dharmakīrti's theory of *Hetu*-centricity of *Anumāna* with reference to not only Dharmakīrti's philosophy but also Buddha's thought. Here, too, a two-fold danger seems to lurk. First, our incomplete knowledge of Dharmakīrti's philosophy, especially because his two important treatises are not available in Sanskrit. Secondly, Dharmakīrti's philosophy cannot be considered in complete isolation from the philosophy of his predecessors from the camp of Buddhism, although it is true that he markedly differs from many of them on several major counts. Nevertheless, a comprehensive study of the implications of Dharmakīrti's theory of *Anumāna* has also to wait till fairly reliable data and its appropriate interpretation are made available on the two above-mentioned counts through concerted researches carried over a prolonged period of time and in face of whatever hurdles one may have patiently to overcome. Even on this count the authoress does not fortunately seem to be oblivious of the importance of the point we have made.

Lastly, those important aspects of Dharmakīrti's theory of *Anumāna* which she has quite cogently discussed in her book-

say, consideration of *Svārthānumāna* as epistemic condition of *Anumāna*, *Pakṣa*, *Sādhya* and *Hetu* as structural, and *Vyāpti* and *Pakṣadharmatā* as regulative conditions of *Anumāna*, or classification of *Anumāna* into *Svabhāva*, *Kārya* and *Anupalabdhi*, or distinction between determiners of validity and those of soundness of *Anumāna*, or ultimately the nature and significance of the kinds of *Hetvābhāsa* considered by Dharmakīrti – are certainly very important and her scholarly discussion of them has made a significant contribution to Dharmakīrti scholarship the world over. However, an important rider needs to be added to it. Many of these issues have also been found discussed in Dharmakīrti's work so far unavailable in Sanskrit, viz. *Pramāṇaviniścaya*. Reinforcing and strengthening the discussion – even modifying it if the need be – of these points in the light of evidence furnished in this work of Dharmakīrti in years to come would immensely enhance the intellectual worth of the work and mark a major contribution to Dharmakīrti scholarship.

The three points we discussed above are not in any way meant to cast any aspersion on the work under review. They are meant primarily to bring to the notice of the concerned the lines which Dharmakīrti scholarship would have to take in future and the kind of hurdles it would be required to cross courageously. At the present juncture we have unfortunately to make do with and make appropriate use of whatever information that is at our disposal and present cogently satisfactory account of various aspects of Dharmakīrti's philosophy, including his theory of *Anumāna*, however provisional and tentative it may be. On this count the authoress seems to have done a laudable work and therefore she deserves to be congratulated, notwithstanding whatever difference of opinion on the count of interpretation of certain concepts in Dharmakīrti's philosophy that there may be.

The book has been provided with requisite indices and a fairly comprehensive bibliography. Errors of printing are negligible.

In sum, the book is scholarly, well-written and deserves to be carefully studied by anybody interested in the philosophy of Dharmakīrti and its importance.

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II

ALSTON, (Dr.) A. J. (tran.) *THE METHOD OF THE VEDĀNTA : A CRITICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ADVAITA TRADITION* (translation into English of Śrī Swāmī Satchidānandendra's *VEDĀNTA PRKRIYĀ PRATYABHIJÑĀ*), London, Kegan Paul International, 1989; pp. xxx + 975, Price £ 65-00 (HC).

There is a rampantly prevalent view, perhaps unintentionally pioneered chiefly by the introductory work entitled *Sarvadarśana-saṁgraha* of Mādhavācārya which came unfortunately to be adopted later on as a model of writing history of Indian philosophy by many historians like Radhakrishnan, Hiriyanna, Dasgupta etc., according to which the only way to study contributions made by different philosophical trends which flourished in the Indian subcontinent, especially up to the close of 17th or 18th century, is to take into account their very general features under the banner of a particular school like Jainism, Buddhism, Nyāya, Vedānta etc., giving the impression that various adherents of the same school of thought, who appeared on the intellectual horizon at different times, merely further and further elaborated the tenets of the particular trend, given that once it was pioneered, due to whatever contingency it may be. We are continuously being bull-dozed and subjected by the view under consideration to such an extent that we have lost sensitivity not only to inter-school and intra-school debates and controversies which went on for thousands of years between adherents of different trends of philosophical thought in the sub-continent, but also to the contribution made by various philosophers to the trends to which they subscribed—both from the point of view of their growth and development as well as decay and degeneration; especially the latter to such an extent that they came almost to be fossilised and converted into museum-pieces, to be observed and forgotten

as quickly as one can simply because they have lost contact with our present life and its aspirations, and, thus, serving only the interest of historical scholarship. In course of time the philosophical trends under consideration remained an exclusive concern of Pandits, and such Pandits also isolated themselves from common people as well as legitimate aspirations they should cherish in this lives.

The voluminous book under review is perhaps a solitary exception to the above-mentioned view of considering any trend of Indian philosophy, especially with reference to *Advaita Vedānta*. The principal point of the book as well as its comprehensive treatment is backed by copious and elaborate quotations from the original sources and cogent arguments marshalled in its support, notwithstanding difference of opinion that may exist. The whole book is very scholarly, quite comprehensive—especially since it takes into its compass the development of *Advaita Vedānta* spread over at least one thousand years brought about through dozens of scholarly works—forceful and well-reasoned, and vividly exemplifying pains-taking research carried over years. The work is laudable and both the late Swāmī as well as the translator deserve to be congratulated, although for different reasons. Any concerted and serious student of *Advaita Vedānta* should be thankful to the late Swāmī for clarity in his thought and lucidity in exposition backed by sincerity of conviction which emerged as a result of critical study of various texts carried over decades. The translator, too, has done his job, on the whole, quite well, although it would have been not only less misleading but immensely beneficial as well if he would have refrained from using such terms as Absolute (*Brahman*), superimposition (*adhyāsa*), consciousness (*cit*), bliss (*ānanda*), meditation (*upāsana*), modification (*vikāra*), presumption (*prithāpatti*) etc. and retained the original Sanskrit expressions,

as he has done in the case of such expressions as *Hiraṇyagarbha*, *Māyā*, *Prājña* etc. This is especially because although the expressions used by the translator are current in English while discussing themes relating to Indian philosophy, nonetheless they do not cease to be misleading, no matter whether they are used by a foreigner or an Indian. Sometimes the translator falls prey to the temptation of literal translation as — “continual remembrance of the holy feet of the most venerable” (p. 943), forgetting or overlooking the fact that certain expressions in a certain language — say, Sanskrit — are a matter of stylistic flourish and when translated literally become so hackneyed that one is hardly in a position to make any sense of it in the language in which translation is executed. By the same token *Hiraṇyagarbha* should have been translated as golden-foetus! Thank heaven the translator did not do so, and the over-all number of such hackneyed translations in the entire book is fortunately negligible.

The central thesis of the book, which is at once a history, a reference book and a reader of *Advaita Vedānta* rolled in one, is that the teaching of Gaudapāda, Śaṅkara and Sureśvara—the three taken together comprising what is known as the *Bhāṣya-prasthāna* of the *Advaita Vedānta*—alone is coherent concerning central tenets of the contention of the school, while the contention of the adherents of the *Bhāmatīprasthāna*—pioneered by Vācaspati Miśra—and that of the adherents of the *Vivaraṇa-prasthāna*—founded by the *Pañcapādikā* of Padmapāda—introduces one or the other deviance and departure from and distortion of this or that important point put forth by some or the other member of the *Bhāṣya-prasthāna*, although the former claim to be presenting and explicating tenets of Śaṅkara's *Advaita Vedānta*. This, again, they do under the impact and influence of Mīmāṃsaks, Naiyāyikas, or even such opponents of Śaṅkara as Bhāskara. The book also shows how significance and

importance of *Anubhava*, so characteristically emphasised by Upaniṣads, came progressively to be diluted, ignored or dismissed altogether and something else came to be naively and unwittingly substituted for it. This sort of tendency at the hands of such writers like Śrī Haṛṣa, Chitsukha, Madhusūdana Saraswati etc. takes such a topsy-turvy turn that logic-chopping and hair-splitting alone came to be reckoned as the sole means of knowing Brahman !

The entire book relies only upon the data carefully gleaned from original sources totally bereft of drawing upon any secondary source, inclusive of the numerous publications of the late Swāmī himself. What a remarkable, patient and perseverant mode of sticking to the original sources on the one hand and non-deviance from the principal point at issue on the other ! It is an illustrious example of doing any profoundly worthwhile research—worthy of being emulated by any serious-minded researcher. We wholeheartedly recommend that anybody interested in *Advaita Vedānta* must make the work under review object of his concerted and repeated study.

The book is provided with index and bibliography. Instead of seeking to exact exorbitant price which individuals as well as number of institutions in India can hardly afford to pay, it would be better if a cheaper Indian edition of it is brought out as early as possible to make it accessible to as large number of interested readers as possible.

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