

RESPONSE TO AN EDITORIAL NOTE

A recent issue of this journal (*Indian Philosophical Quarterly* 21)(1), 1994, pp. 87-96) contains a review of the *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Bhartṛhari*, which constitutes vol. 47 part 1 of the *Asiatische Studien/Etudes Asiatiques*. This review is followed by a most curious editorial note, in which the editors, or some of them (the note is signed 'editors') complain about the fact that some papers that were read at the conference and submitted for publication in the *Proceedings*, were not included in the volume.

This note creates the impression that the editorial policy of the *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* is to accept everything that is submitted for publication. Not all journals follow this policy. Many editors see it rather as their task to apply more or less strict criteria of selection to the articles that are submitted to them, and to reject those articles which they consider unsuitable for publication in the volume concerned. Since the quality of a journal depends on its editorial decisions, editors have, and must have, a rather free hand in such matters. They should certainly not be called to task by editors of other journals who apply other criteria of selection, or none at all.

As it so happens, the editors of the *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* have appended their note to a *review* which illustrates the extent to which the quality of a journal can be compromised when its editors fail to keep an eye on what they publish. The review, which is written by a certain Mr. J. Ouseparampil, can hardly be called a *review*. It is an accusation of the most unusual kind. Mr. Ouseparampil blames the organizers of the Bhartṛhari conference for not structuring the conference around his (i.e., Mr. Ouseparampil's) views on the *Vākyapadīya*. Without reference to his over-all interpretation of the *Vākyapadīya*, Mr. Ouseparampil claims, the contributions to the conference are "out of context". Mr. Ouseparampil fails to explain how the organizers and participants of the conference could have

used his views as "context", given that no published presentation of these views seems to exist. The idea that other Bhartrhari scholars might not agree with his overall interpretation, does not seem to have occurred to Mr. Ouseparampil.

The less said about the "review", the better for all concerned. This episode may or may not influence the editors of the *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* to change their policy and to introduce some measure of editorial control and responsibility. It should at least stop them from preaching to editors of other journals about how to run their business.

Section de langues et
civilisations orientales
Université de Lausanne
BFSH 2
CH-1015 Lausanne.

JOHANNES BRONKHORST