

## Book Review

Ratna Dutta Sharma: *Theory of Argumentation: Tradition and Modern*, Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, in collaboration with Maha Bodhi Book Agency, 2015, pp.xii+256, Price:550/-

### I

The book under review is divided in to six parts- Preface, Different Chapters, Note and Reference, Bibliography, Index and Corrigendum. In the Preface the author justifies the title of the book: *Theory of Argumentation: Traditional and Modern* following the line of *Carakasamhitā* based on Indian medical sciences (*Āyurveda*). Earlier I had an idea that only the texts based on logic are grounded on arguments and critical thinking. This is the first time I came to know that even the book on medical science called *Carakasamhitā* in the portion of *vimānasthāna* which is the eighth chapter of the same. It is necessary for the physicians, as Caraka observes, to know the list of *padārtha*-s to make a successful and argumentative dialogue with the patients. To him argumentation is needed not only for argument's sake but to save the life of someone and to do well-being of others.

### II

In the first chapter i.e., Introduction the author tries to explain that argumentation or dialogue may happen between a physician and a patient and also among fellow-physicians. This argumentation may be of sweetest way (friendly way) or in a hostile way. Former is called *sambhāṣā* meaning *sandhyāya sambhāṣā* (friendly argumentation or dialogue) while the second one is called *vigṛhya sambhāṣā* i.e., dialogue depending on hostility. First one, according to Caraka, is obviously preferable. To him all are not eligible for involving in argumentation, but an individual physician becomes eligible to participate in the discussions if he attains efficiency in the following like *vāda*, *pratijñā*, *sthāpana*, *pratisthāpana*, *hetu*, *dṛṣṭānta*, *upanaya*, *nigamana*, *anumāna*, *saṁśaya*, *prayojana*, *savybhicāra*, *jijñāsā*, *nigrahasthāna* etc., which have got much affinities with the Nyāya Logic. Professor Dutta Sharma has made a comparative study between Caraka and Gautama regarding these tools of argumentation and has shown the specific method adopted by Caraka, which is highly praiseworthy and appreciable.

The second chapter is the result of her concentration to the two types of debate as told earlier called *sandhyāya sambhāṣā* i.e., friendly debate and *vigṛhya sambhāṣā* i.e., hostile debate. The process of argumentation involved in these two types of debate is discussed in a very analytic manner. Like Nyāya system Caraka also discussed on the methods of argumentation in two types of debates (*kathā*) called *jalpa* and *vitaṇḍā*

apart from *vāda*. It is interesting to note that Caraka is very much clear with whom and when the friendly debate can be undertaken. 1. A) Friendly debate may be undertaken with an inferior opponent in a friendly learned or ignorant body. B) Friendly discussion with an equal opponent in a learned or ignorant body. C) Friendly debate with a superior opponent in a friendly or ignorant body. 2. A) Friendly debate with equal opponent in a neutral learned or ignorant assembly. B and C) Friendly interaction with a superior opponent in a neutral learned or ignorant assembly. 3. A) Friendly interaction with an inferior opponent in a prejudiced or ignorant body. B) Friendly argumentative encounter with an equal opponent in a prejudiced or ignorant body. C) Friendly argumentation with a superior opponent in a prejudiced or ignorant body. In the like manner, other steps we shall get if there is an argumentation with the opponent in a hostile manner.

The third chapter is concentrated to the language of argumentation as found in *Āyurveda* particularly in *Carakasamhitā*. In this context the author has made a comparative estimate between the language adopted by Caraka at the time argumentation and also the Nyaya language of argumentation. Afterwards, the similarities and dissimilarities have been shown between two traditions. The modern theory like Pragma-Dialectic theory on the nature of language in Argumentation has been taken into account for consideration. In this chapter what the author wants to establish is, according to Caraka, the language of argumentation is nothing but the syllogistic language like *parāthānumāna* and its different constituents. That is why, Caraka says that to him  *anumāna* is *yuktyapekṣastarkaḥ* (p.95) i.e., attainment of right cognition being corroborated by reasoning.

The conclusive chapter gives us a detailed analysis of the essence of argumentation through which a physician interacts with another physician or with patient. Caraka thinks that such argumentation should be error-free or free from *pseudo*-probans (*hetvābhāsa*). If an argument is vitiated by *hetvābhāsa* then it prevents the goal of discussion. Fallacies are the violation of the corresponding rules of discussion leading to the humiliation of the discussant. These are called *nigrahassthāna*-s (points of defeat) and Caraka calls it *nigrahaprāpti*. The author has given a detailed account of *hetvābhāsa*-s and *nigrahassthāna*-s according to Caraka, Gautama, Vātsyāyana, Śāṅkara Miśra, Varadarāja etc. Defect involves in a word called *padadoṣa* and in a sentence called *vākyadoṣa*. Caraka has offered one *nigrahassthāna* called *ahetu* which is three types- *prakaraṇasama*, *saṁśayasama* and *varṇyasama* discussed latter in details. The author has concentrated to the rules of critical discussion admitted in the Pragma-Dialectic theory of argumentation and their violation. The rules are a follows- Freedom rule, Burden of proof rule, Standpoint rule, Relevant rule, Unexpressed

premise rule, Starting point rule, Argument-scheme rule, Validity rule, Closure rule, Usage rule etc. and the situations under which they are violated. Professor Dutta Sharma is of the opinion that most of the realistic schools in India refuse to accept interpretation of the scripture that goes against *lokānubhava* (experience of the public) (p.107). In this context, I personally cannot agree with the author. For, even the non-realistic or idealistic schools sometimes admit the usage or experience of the public (*lokānubhava* or *lokavyavahāra*) as evidence of certain *pramāṇa*. It may be argued whether *arthāpatti* can be reduced to inference or *anumāna* or not. The followers of *arthāpatti* as *pramāṇa* like Advaita Vedānta etc. admit the non-reducibility of *arthāpatti* to *anumāna* and hence it is considered as a different source of knowing valid cognition. The Advaitins have already forwarded a few arguments in favour of non-reducibility of *arthāpatti* to *anumāna*. In spite of this, there is a custom to quote public usage (*lokavyavahāra*) in favour of justifying certain conclusion. In this context evidence is given from the public usage. The process involved in inferring fire on the mountain from smoke is completely different from that involved in assuming the consumption of food at night so far as Devadatta is concerned in the case – ‘*pīno devadattaḥ divā na bhūṅkte*’ (i.e., the strong and stout Devadatta does take food at the day time). When it is assumed, it is customarily described as ‘assuming’ (*‘kalpayāmi*’), but not ‘inferring’ (*‘anuminomi*’). Had it been the same, the usage would have been as ‘inferring’ instead of ‘assuming’. Such *lokānubhava*, even if goes against the interpretation of scripture, can be accepted as a *pramāṇa* (*Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, *Arthāpatti Parichheda*).

### III

So far as the credit side of the book is concerned, it may be said that the book is written basing on the original texts without distorting their appropriate meaning. Secondly, a successful comparative study has been made between Caraka in one side and Gautama, Vātsyāyana, Śaṅkara Mīśra, Varadarāja etc. on the other and pointed out the value of Caraka’s argumentation in the context of the science of medical treatment. Thirdly, the analysis and elucidation of the texts are very much faithful and intelligible. Fourthly, the English-rendering of the Sanskrit texts in a lucid and precise language is not an easy task, which has been easily accomplished by Professor Dutta Sharma. Fifthly, while substantiating her own standpoint, she has respectfully reviewed the views of the modern scholars like Jonardon Ganeri (p.96), Prodeep P Gokhale (p.98), Ernest Prets (p.94), Piotr Balcerowicz and Marck (p.94) etc., which is the generosity of a great scholar. Lastly, the book has got a lot of methodological value. For any type of research, theoretical, practical, medical or scientific, such method of argumentation is of great value.

#### IV

On the debit side of the book, I would like to point out some mistakes or inconsistencies so that it is corrected in the next edition. First, the author says in p.95- “According to Caraka, *anumāna* is ‘*yuktapekṣa tarka*’”. The correct text should be ‘*yuktyapekṣastarkaḥ*’ or ‘*yuktyapekṣaḥ. tarkaḥ*’ by virtue of the fact that the term *yukti* is conjoined with *apekṣaḥ*. Secondly, the term ‘*avijñāte opi*’ (p.95) is incorrect, as the correct form should be ‘*avijñāte’pi*’. Thirdly, the third step A and B, the fourth step A and B are printed **as the same** (p.81), which are incorrect. The third step A would be – ‘Friendly discussion with inferior opponent in a prejudiced /ignored assembly’ and B would be- ‘Friendly discussion with **equal** opponent in a prejudiced /ignorant assembly’. In the same manner, the fourth step B should be- ‘Friendly discussion with **equal (not inferior)** opponent in a friendly learned assembly. Lastly, the book contains many typographical mistakes and errors in diacritical marks, viz, ‘joutnal’ p.197 (instead of **Journal**), Pitor Balcerowicz p.94 (instead of **Poitr** Balcerowicz), ‘śravanādīpātavaḥ’ p.34 (instead of *śravaṇādīpātavaḥ*), ‘drṣtānta’p.100 (instead of ‘*drṣṭānta*’), Jonerdon p. 96 (instead of **Jonardan**), Varadrāja p.136 (instead of **Varadarāja**) etc.

#### V

In spite of these the book is a pioneer one in so far as the methods of argumentation in Indian Philosophy are concerned. There are subtle differences among *vāda*, *jalpa* and *vitaṇḍā*, among *uddeśa*, *lakṣaṇa* and *parīkṣā*, and among different types of fallacies (*hetvābhāsa*) etc., which are analytically, critically and logically highlighted by the author in a simple and lucid English language. The job is very difficult due to the intricacies of the technical terms. If it is at all possible, it needs Herculean labour which has been undertaken by her. I hope our future generation and present scholars will highly be benefitted from the book. In philosophical research methodology is very much important in classical and modern philosophical research. The author has undertaken both the traditions and the methods are beautifully shown in this book. Methodology is a kind of radar which serves as a guide to take us in proper or right path of research. That is why, the theory of argumentation is very much important in each and every field of research.

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