AN APPRAISAL OF ANNAMBHATTA'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract: The widespread fame and recognition of Annambhaṭṭa (1575-1650) rests on his excellent work tarkasaṅgrahaḥ and his auto-commentary dīpikā on that. He also produced several other works of philosophical importance. General readers are not aware of his other lucid works on other orthodox systems of Indian philosophy. In this article, we have sought to shed light on Annambhaṭṭa's Advaitic orientation, providing a broader picture of his philosophical stance. While discussing his realistic affiliation, we touch on prāmāṇyavāda (veridicality) by considering his siddhāñjanam, a commentary on Jayadeva Mishra's tattvacintāmaṇyāloka, published in 2006. The Annambhaṭṭa style draws on standard texts and presents them with lucid explanations. Annambhṭṭa remarks that even those who fear approaching tattvacintāmaṇi in the light of the jewel's light can easily enjoy it through siddhāñjana. In this way, we have tried to highlight Annambhaṭṭa's contribution from a broader perspective to better understand his philosophical orientation.

I. Annambhaṭṭa's Period

The available materials are insufficient to determine the exact dates of Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa's birth and death, yet his literary activities certainly spanned much of the seventeenth century. R.B. Godbole, in his Dictionary of Modern History of India, held that his life and works belonged to the fifteenth century. But this view seems false in light of the available facts. Two views seem nearer to the truth: the first view is maintained by M.R. Bodas (1918). He fixes the lifespan of Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa from 1625 to 1700; the second view is based on the facts mentioned by M. V. Sastry (2006) that Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa and the author of Rasagaṅgādhara were students of the same teacher, Pt. Śeṣavīreśvara. It is well known that Pt. Rāja Jagannātha served in the court of Shah Jahan from 1628 to 1658. With these facts in view, we can safely assign Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa a probable lifespan of 1575 to 1650.

II. Early Life and Education

Advaita-vidyācārya Tirumala was Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa's father. As M.R. Bodas notes, his father appears to have been a Ṛgvedīya smārta Brāhmin learned in Vedānta philosophy and a descendant of a great man named Rāghava, who performed a soma sacrifice. He belongs to the Kauśika Gotra. He was born in a village in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh, near the Krishna River. Bodas imagines that Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa is either a contraction of his real name, Ananta Bhaṭṭa, or a Sanskritized form of Aṇṇa Bhaṭṭa. I think Annambhaṭṭa is a Sanskritized form of either 'Annā' in Telugu or 'Aṇṇā' in Kannaṇa. Both terms mean 'elder brother', though Telugu is closer to the sound. It may be that Annambhaṭṭa, at a very early age, showed signs of scholarship, astonishing his teachers and fellow beings, who began addressing him as elder brother (Annā). Annambhaṭṭa is more likely a Sanskritized version of the Telugu word 'Annā'. Annambhaṭṭa spent most of his life learning and teaching in Varanasi and returned to his native place later in life. After returning, he established his own school and started teaching the texts of orthodox philosophy. He was a prolific writer and had written commentaries

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on most of the major systems of orthodox philosophy.

III. Works

Annaṁ Bhṭṭa has produced several commentaries on different systems of orthodox philosophy. The following eleven works are attributed to the author by Shri P.S.Rama Sastri (1950):

1.*Tarkasaṅgrahaḥ*;
2.*Tarkasaṅgrahadīpikā;*
3.*Subuddhimano-harā* (a gloss on the commentary of Raghunātha Śiromaṇi's *Dīdhitiḥ*);
4.*Tattvacintāmaṇyālokasiddhāñjanam*;
5.*Mahābhāṣya pradīpo- dyotanam*;
6.*Mitākṣarā (*notes upon sūtras of Pāṇini);
7.*Rāṇkojjivanī* (*Nyāyasudhāvyākhyā*);
8.*Subodhin* (*Tantravārttikaṭīkā*);
9.*svaravivekaḥ*;
10.*Brahma-sūtravṛtti-mitākṣarā*;
11.*Tattvavivekadīpanam*.

The first four deal with the topics pertaining to Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems, the second two with vyākaraṇa, the third three with topics pertaining to Pūrva-mīmāṁsā, and the last two deal with Vedānta. These works show that he was a great scholar of orthodox philosophical systems. Most of his works still remain unpublished. His gloss on the prāmāṇyavāda section of *Jayadeva Miśra's Āloka includes* only the jñaptivāda section in published form because the manuscript of Utpattivāda, according to the editor, is mostly destroyed. These misfortunes could not affect his widespread fame as the author of Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ and Tarkasaṅgraha-dīpikā.

IV. Advaitic Affiliation

Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa was a great devotee of Lord Śiva, especially Lord Viśveśvara of Varanasi. He also greatly respected Advaita-vedānta, like his father, as is evident from the auspicious verse in his gloss on Kaiyaṭa's *Mahābhāṣya-pradīpa*. His *Brahmasūtravṛtti-mitākṣarā* promises, in its opening verses, to explain the meaning of the sūtras in light of Bhāmatī, etc. His gloss is a good reflection on the doctrines of Vivaraṇa as well of Bhāmatī schools.

V. Two definitions of Brahman

Commenting on Brahma-sūtra,1.1.2. he observes that there are two definitions of Brahman-accidental(taṭastha) and essential(svarūpa). The sūtra, in asserting Brahman as 'the cause of origination, sustenance and dissolution of the world,' gives the accidental one. An accidental definition is that definition which distinguishes the definiendum without describing its essential nature (svarūpabhinnatve sati vyāvartakatvam). One could argue that this could be accomplished simply by mentioning Brahman 'as the cause of the origination of the world'. What is point in mentioning other effects like sustenance and dissolution? In answer to this question, it may be said that in such a case, Brahman could be considered only as an efficient cause. But Brahman is also the material (upādāna) cause of the world. The property of dissolution implies that he

is also the ground of dissolution. Brahman is not only an efficient cause like a potter. Potter is not supposed to absorb the destroyed pot by becoming its ground. Potter is not the material cause. Brahman, as the ground of dissolution, functions as the material cause. In the same way, if we consider him only as "the cause origination and sustenance," he could be very well regarded only as the instrumental cause, like a potter who is responsible only for making and sustaining the pot but helpless in producing the material for making. The mentioning of Brahman as 'the cause of origination, sustenance, and dissolution' implies that Brahman is efficient as well as a material cause of the world. The essential definition states that Brahman is 'Truth, Consciousness, and Infinite.' The problem is: how can Truth, Consciousness, and Infinite, which are different from each other, refer to the undifferentiated reality (Brahman)? If these terms are taken to be synonyms, then one term is enough. The remaining terms are redundant. In reply, Annambhaṭṭa states that they do not negate the same feature in each case: Truth negates falsity, Consciousness negates unconsciousness, and Infinity negates limitation. Because the negatum differs in each case, the terms of essential definition are non-redundant.

The Mīmāṁskas (Bhāṭṭas) are not satisfied with this reply. They argue that a sentence's meaning is always relational. How can a sentence refer to any non-differentiated entity? Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa replies by drawing on Amalānanda's Kalpataru (thirteenth century), a commentary on Bhāmatī. Sentences are of two types: there are sentences in which terms refer to separate meanings and the meaning of the sentence is derived by relating these meanings; there is also another type of sentence in which sentential meaning refers to a single indivisible meaning (akhaṇdārtha) by blocking the separate meanings of the terms. Someone asks: Which is the moon among shining lights (in the night)? To answer this question, we may say that 'the most shining light' is the moon. Here, 'most shining' is relevant because it excludes the dim light of fire, etc., and 'light' excludes darkness. Both terms ultimately refer to the moon by excluding other meanings. Similarly, 'Truth, Consciousness and Infinite' refer to a single, indivisible reality: Brahman. The terms are not redundant in the essential definition of Brahman, as they are not synonyms and refer to the same undifferentiated reality, Brahman, like the moon (upāyastu vaiśiṣṭyam akhaṇda candra pratipattau).

VI. Knowledge as sole means of Liberation

The question arises: What is the path of liberation? Is it only knowledge or action, or a synthesis of action and knowledge? In the Pre-Śankara period, we find many Advaitins who advocate a particular synthesis of knowledge and action. Among all these thinkers, Mandan Mishra's views propounded in Brahmasiddhi seem more convincing. Mandana's views on the activity prescribed in the karmakāṇda portion of the Vedas are bifunctional, because besides producing the fruits of action, they also help realize the self. He quotes the Brahmasūtra,3.4.26 (sarvāpekaṣā ca yajñādiśruteraśvat). He explains the sūtra as follows: one can attain the goal by plodding on without a horse, yet a horse is sought to save time or avoid inconvenience.

Brahmsūtra, 3.4.16 (upmardam ca) cuts the very roots of action so that it can be combined with knowledge in a non-dual domain. Knowledge destroys duality and plurality. Ācarya Śaṅkara maintains that this sūtra proves complete independence of knowledge from action (tasmādapi svātantryam vidyāyāḥ). It not only implies the uselessness of action as part of knowledge, but also that it is destroyed; it ceases to have the potency to be fit as part of knowledge. Annambhaṭṭa vṛtti mitākṣrā on the Bahmasūtra summarizes Śaṅkara's view without modification (p. 213). It means that he agrees with Bhāṣyakāra that knowledge is an independent means of liberation.

VII. Self-Realization and Liberation

It is a fundamental doctrine of Advaita vedānta that the individual self is non- different from Brahman. False knowledge of jīva is the source of all his/her sufferings. Because the distinction between the highest self and the individual self is rooted in false knowledge, we overcome it through true knowledge. Liberation is a matter of direct realization, existent from eternality, though hidden from our point of view. The figurative attainment of Brahman is evident in scriptural texts such as "being already Brahman, he attains Brahman." For self-realization, symbolic meditative practices (na pratīke na hi saḥ-4.1.4) are not conducive. Sūtrakāra and Ācārya Śaṅkara demonstrate the fruitlessness of such practices, taking Manopāsanā as upāsanā of Brahman. These practices keep us far from the true goal of parā-vidyā, by which the eternal and indecaying knowledge of the supreme self is apprehended; thus, the realization of the true goal of Advaita-vedānta, "This self is Brahman," remains unattainable. Annambhaṭṭa in Mitākṣrā follows Ācārya Śaṅkara here in every respect. We have seen that Annambhaṭṭa has promised to follow Bhāmatī and Vivaraṇa at the beginning, but here and there he follows Ācārya Śaṅkara directly without the mediation of Bhāmatī or Vivaraṇa.

VIII. Realistic Affiliation

Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa has a great love for realistic systems of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. His works on these systems are commendable. He wrote a gloss, *Siddhañjanam* (2006) on Āloka of Pakṣadhara Miśra (thirteenth century), a commentary on *Tattvacintāmaṇi*. *Siddhāñjanam* is published only on the jñaptivāda portion of the prāmāṇyavāda section of *Āloka*. Gaṅgeśa begins by pointing out that attaining the highest good depends heavily on understanding the valid sources of cognition, and that apprehension is itself the function of valid cognition (pramā-tattva). We act in many cases without prior certainty. A doctor may prescribe some medicines without knowing the final outcome, yet sometimes that is true. But it cannot be denied that there are cases where certainty, or absence of doubt, is an indispensable prerequisite for activity. The cases may be found in experience. If an object tries to break free from Earth's gravitational pull, it must reach an escape velocity of approximately 11.2 km/sec. Similarly, in cases of the supreme end or puruṣārtha, certainty and absence of doubt are very much necessary.

We have observed that prāmātva-niścya is very much necessary for doing an activity without hesitation (niṣkampapravṛtti). Naiyayikas establish extrinsic validity and invalidity of cognition by refuting mīmāṁskas 'theory of intrinsic validity(svataḥprāmāṇyavāda). Indian philosophy has discussed this problem from the viewpoints of origin (utpatti) and ascertainment (jñapti) of cognition. We limit ourselves to the discussion of the ascertainment of cognition. Cognition is called self-valid if we need no factor other than the governing causal factors for the apprehension of cognition to ascertain its validity (jñāna-grāhakātiriktānapekṣatvam). Cognition is called non-self-valid (parataḥ) if we need factors other than the governing causal factors for the apprehension of cognition to ascertain its validity (jñāna-grāhkātiriktāpekṣatvam). Naiyāyikas hold that cognition becomes valid because of extrinsic factors related to both its origin and ascertainment. The cognition is neutral. It becomes valid due to the presence of some excellence. Similarly, it becomes invalid due to defects. An artificial jewel may appear to be gold. To determine its true nature, we need to perform certain tests. Successful performance marks validity. Failure is the mark of invalidity. Had cognition been intrinsically valid, we would not have taken measures to test it.

The Mīmāṁskas agree with the Naiyāyikas regarding the extrinsic invalidity of

cognition. Nevertheless, they do not accept their view regarding validity. There is no neutral cognition. Cognition is either valid or invalid. Cognition is false due to extrinsic conditions. The three schools of Mīmāṁskas disagree on certain points. But they all agree regarding the intrinsic validity of cognition. Prābhākaras uphold the first view. They maintain that cognition is self-luminous. It reveals itself as well as the subject and object of cognition. This means the validity of cognition is apprehended not by any cognition other than primary cognition (vyavasāya). Primary cognition also apprehends its own validity (svasmāt grāhyam) in the form 'I cognize the pot'. According to Murāri Miśra, primary cognition occurs in the form "this is pot," but reflective cognition (anuvyavasāya) cognizes it. This reflective cognition apprehends the primary cognition along with its validity (svakīyāt-grāhyam). According to Bhāṭṭas cognition is imperceptible, and it is inferred through the mark of know-ness (jñātatā) carried by the object of cognition. In both latter cases, validity is apprehended by another cognition related to the primary one (svakīyāt), along with its validity. However, all three schools agree that validity is apprehended along with cognition.

The fundamental issue Gaṅgeśa raises here is: is the validity of cognition grasped, without exception (yāvat), through the causal aggregate that produces the cognition without grasping non-validity? The affirmative answer presents the position of Mīmāṁskas, while the negative answer presents the position of Naiyāyikas. Gaṅgeśa begins the defense of the Naiyāyikas' position by arguing that validity is possible only when the causes of apprehending validity differ from the causes of apprehending cognition. If the cognition were intrinsically valid, doubt would not have arisen just after the apprehension of validity. This is the most important seed of the arguments Gaṅgeśa presents against the Mīmāṁsakas to refute their position on ascertaining the validity of cognition, and to defend the Naiyāyikas' position in this regard. What Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa calls an exceptional situation in Siddhāñjanam is not the absence of valid cognition. However, the absence of validity in cognition is marked by successful activity in similar cases (2006, 75). Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa asks whether cognition is apprehended before doubt. If we accept the second alternative, it completely rules out the possibility of doubt. However, doubt is an experiential fact. If we accept the first alternative, it again raises the question of whether validity is apprehended along with cognition. Accepting the first alternative renders doubt impossible; accepting the second contradicts the doctrine of cognition's self-validity.

The Naiyāyikas hold that cognition's validity is apprehended through inference. Here, Mīmāṁskas raises the question: how can inference be formulated without the apprehension of validity? The Naiyāyikas reply that it is established out of fear of contradiction (vyāghāta daṇḍa bhayena). The very denial of validity proves its awareness. If validity is entirely fictitious, then, as Udayana remarks, says Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa, there would be no difference between affirmation and denial (idam asti idam nāsti iti nirūpayitumaśakyatvāt maunameva śaraṇam, 2006, 135). Even if we accept familiarity with the notion of validity, the question remains how validity is apprehended in the first place. The traditional Naiyāyikas explain it as relying upon the traces of past lives. Gaṅgeśa suggests that it is established first in the sense of the absence of invalidity through negative inference (vyatireki), i.e., wherever there is absence of validity, there is also absence of successful activity. But once the validity is established, we can use both positive and negative inferences in similar cases because examples are now available.

X. Popular Contribution and Recognition

The widespread fame and recognition of Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa rest primarily on his excellent work, Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ, and his auto-commentary, Dīpikā. Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa belonged to an age when it was common to write a treatise covering topics discussed in both Nyāya

and Vaiśeṣika. This treatise aims to teach the doctrines of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika in a way that pleases children. By children, he means not infants, but those capable of apprehending and retaining lessons from the teacher. In traditional learning, it is a compulsory treatise for beginners in Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy. It is also part of the philosophy curriculum in graduate or postgraduate programs at many Indian universities. Two other treatises can be compared with this work in terms of popularity and depth. The first is *Tarka-bhāṣā* (thirteenth century) by Keśava Miśra, and the other is Viśvanātha Nyāyapañcānana's *Bhāṣā-pariccheda* or *Kārikāvalī*, with the author's auto-commentary, Siddhānta-muktāvalī (17th century). These are also popular works, but they do not affect the usefulness and relevance of Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ and its commentary, *Dīpikā*. Keśava Miśra mostly uses old Nyāya terminology. Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa uses older definitions alongside definitions of major topics in Navya-Nyāya, especially those given by Gaṅgeśa. For example, Keśava Miśra defines valid cognition as 'awareness matching the object (yathārthānubhavaḥ). Gaṅgeśa has refuted this definition in *Tattvacintāmaṇi*. He argues that 'yathā' means similarity, and that the object and its cognition share no similarity. Moreover, similarity is also evident between the object and its invalid cognition. Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa also defines valid cognition similarly to Keśava Miśra. However, he adds that "yathārtha-anubhava" means a cognition whose qualifier belongs to the object (tadvati tat-prakārkao-anubhavaḥ). Gaṅgeśa accepts this definition. In this way, Annam Bhaṭṭa interprets popular definitions in light of Navya-nyāya. Viśvanātha's *Kārikāvalī* is also very popular for its roots in Navya-nyāya and its poetic character, but he uses his own language to define the major terms. Secondly, it is mostly based on reflections on Navya-nyāya materials, so it is useful for students who are slightly advanced in understanding the tenets of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy. So, *Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ* with *Dīpikā* remains relevant despite similar works by others.

The popularity of the *Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ* is reflected in the host of commentaries written on it. S. C. Vidyabhusana (1921) mentions 35 commentaries. Among all these commentaries, the best guides to Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ, apart from the auto-commentary Dīpikā, are Nyāya-bodhinī by Goverdhana Miśra, padakṛtya by Candraja Siṅha, and *Tarkasaṅgrahadīpikā-prakāśa* or *Nīlakaṇṭhī* by Neelkaṇṭha Bhaṭṭa. The latter also includes the commentary *bhāskarodayā* by Śrilakṣmīnṛsiṅha Bhaṭṭa, the son of Neelkaṇṭha Bhaṭṭa. All these works belong to the end of the 17th century or the beginning of the 18th century.

Scottish orientalist James R. Ballantyne published one of the earliest translations of Tarka-sangrahaḥ into Hindi and English (1849). He mentions that this work was popular as *Bāl-Gādāhharī*. *Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ* and *Dīpikā* have many good commentaries in Hindi, English, and other Indian languages. A good English work on Tarka-saṅgrahaḥ is Mahadev R. Bodas (1918). It is a good translation with useful explanatory notes. Gopinath Bhattacharya has done a good English translation of Dīpikā. Its Hindi translations by Ācārya Ānanda Jhā and Ācārya Kedāra Nātha Tripāṭhī are also commendable. These works are more than translations and may be considered commentaries on Dīpikā in English and Hindi. The term 'Tarka (reasoning)' is not used in the usual sense in the book's title. It refers to the seven categories of Vaiśeṣika philosophy. Reasoning is taken in the *Nyāya-sūtra* (1.1.40) in the sense of reflective thought(ūha) (consistent) with valid means of cognition for the purpose of ascertaining the real character of a thing whose real character remained (not completely) unknown. Vātsyāyana remarks that the object of reasoning is not completely unknown. It is known in general, but particular features remain to be ascertained. That is the term used in the sūtra: "avijñāte," not "ajñāte". Reasoning cannot be defined merely as reflective thought, as reflective thought is possible about known objects, too.

Nyāya philosophy also understands tarka as a kind of invalid cognition. It is a type of hypothetical reasoning that proceeds by imposing pervasion (vyāpaka) through the assumption of pervaded (vyāpya) counter to facts. It removes doubt about a valid inference, such as "the hill is fiery, because of the smoke." The reasoning takes the form of a hypothetical inference: "if there was no fire on the hill, there would not have been smoke," to remove doubt about the valid inferential cognition above. In this way, hypothetical reasoning, though false, helps remove doubt about valid inference.

In the title of the book, the meaning of the term "Tarka" is the category (padārtha) which will be elaborated through reasoning (consistent) with valid means of cognition. By "saṅgrahaḥ," he means "a brief elaboration of the nature of categories." He defines padārtha etymologically as "that which can be spoken of (abhidheyatvam)." He maintains that all Nyāya categories fit within these seven. The seven categories are: substance, quality, action, universal, particular, inherence, and absence. He discusses the concepts of self and mind (mana) under the category of substance, and intellect (buddhi) under the category of quality. Here, he has an opportunity to discuss the whole epistemology of Nyāya philosophy, which covers most of the text. The cause of all behavior, intellect (buddhi), is cognition, a quality (of the self). It has two types: remembrance and experience (anubhava). Experience is of two types: valid and invalid. Valid experience is of four types: perceptual, inferential, analogical, and verbal. The four means are also perception, inference, analogy, and word. Invalid cognition is divided into three types: doubt, misapprehension, and reasoning. In this way, the Nyāya epistemology is elaborated. In Dīpikā, he briefly elaborates on the remaining categories of the Nyāya system. Liberation is attained through the knowledge of categories propounded in Nyāya philosophy. Like Advaita-vedāntins, he rejects the synthesis of action and knowledge as a means of liberation. Action is a means to attain knowledge. It does not directly lead to liberation. Knowledge directly leads to liberation.

Annaṁ Bhaṭṭa is well known among scholars as the author of *Tarka-saṅrahaḥ* and *Dīpikā*. He has produced many useful works on other systems of Indian philosophy. Their publication and scholarly study will make him more popular in the future.

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