

half-met. In most of the stories, the low-caste-woman is shown as the victim of caste oppression; in such stories more than caste it is gender that becomes the central concern. Each story records the transformation of woman into a witch or a devi or a motivating leader. This has more to do with 'translating gender' than 'translating caste' as such. This is not to say that woman-caste interface is less significant, its dominance however is unwarranted.

The middle castes are more or less missing from the narratives reducing thus the enormous caste-heterogeneity into the usual convenient frame of the upper versus the lower. In post-independence India much before the rise of dalit politics of late, it were the middle castes that appropriated the political space in the name of peasant-politics. The localized nature of middle castes as against the national presence of upper and lower castes perhaps stands in the way of their representation in the narratives that seek to cater to an all-India audience. Jats, Marathas, Rajputs, Kurmis etc. are middle castes that are too provincial to interest the national constituency.

There are other omissions that cannot be brushed aside as mere inevitable lapses in any anthology of such a range. For instance one fails to understand as to why should the anthology not include a story on intra-caste collisions and hierarchies within a caste. The interesting dynamics of communalization of politics on one hand and caste-politics on the other also remain un-represented. The continuation of caste-identities even after conversion to Christianity, Islam or Buddhism is one interesting aspect that has been left totally untouched in the essays as well as stories. More importantly there is not a single story or argument that brings

out any positive significance of caste system in India. Caste, as historians and social scientists, have repeatedly told us has not only saved Indians from being totally Westernized, it has also provided an inner defence mechanism to stand pressures of change from outside.

The essays do provide an extended and well-researched bibliography on the issue of caste. Sisir Kumar Das's essay 'The Narratives of Suffering: Caste and the Underprivileged' is a mind-boggling piece of research on caste-literature across various Indian languages before 1947 – a period hardly documented ever before. Tapan Basu's 'Narratives of Suffering: Dalit Perspectives' complements Sisir Das's effort in the sense that it furnishes an account of Dalit writings in the post-47 phase particularly. As an editor also, Tapan Basu in his 'Introduction' makes an effort to provide an over-arching view of various discursive configurations of caste from historical, social, ideological and political perspectives. But unfortunately the emphasis is more on information and bibliographic details.

An essay or two on "Dalit Aesthetics" could have provided a befitting ideological context for an anthology of stories that revolve primarily around low-caste characters. One reason that caste-stories are often run down is their so-called lack of aesthetic sophistication; it is held that most of the stories are propaganda-statements doled out in racy, passionate narrative forms. An essay on Dalit Aesthetics could have dispelled all such a priori notions of aestheticism and realism; it would have definitely sensitized the reader to alternate activist aesthetics. An essay by a Gopal Guru or Kancha Illiah or for that matter by any Dalit ideologue would not have been out

of place in the over-all scheme of the anthology. Urmila Pawar's interview with its focus on the role of women in Dalit movement, once again stands out for its honesty and conviction.

The four critical essays included in the anthology should have been dispensed away with. Except expressing anxiety about translations, these essays do not add significantly to critical awareness. One wonders how long do we need to be doubtful about our translations. The stories read well in their translated version, and should find a ready all-India audience. Over all 'Translating Caste' is a valuable literary contribution to the on-going interrogations on caste. The anthology is an evidence enough of the unflinching activist proclivities of contemporary Indian writers.

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Dharmakīrti's Theory of Inference : Revaluation and Reconstruction, by RAJENDRA PRASAD, Oxford University Press, 2002; Rs. 625.

Dharmakīrti's Theory of Inference: Revaluation and Reconstruction by Rajendra Prasad is a substantial contribution to the study and understanding of Indian theory of Inference in general and Dharmakīrti's theory of Inference in particular. The book is of added value because here one gets a comprehensive act picture of the theory of Inference. The author has identified the salient issues in the Western theory of Inference and has considered opinions and attitudes of scholars, trained in Western Logic, towards Indian theory of Inference

in general and that of *Dharmakīrti* in particular and has given his own judgment without any prejudice of any kind. The book reveals vast experience of the author.

Each page of the book is the reflection of a mature mind. As the author records (pp.ix-x), he spent several years on the theme of this book, to understand the nature and function of *Dharmakīrti*'s Theory of inference and the present monograph is the result of that continued thinking.

There is another aspect worth-mentioning about this book. The author has taken care to see that all his observations, judgments, and comments are based on primary sources. This has added to the authenticity of the book.

Similarly, in the true spirit of an academician, the author has examined the opinions of modern scholars too and has offered his frank opinions even in the case of disagreement.

Clarity in thought and expression is another point I would like to mention about this book. I wholeheartedly recommend this book for reading to any reader seriously interested in grasping *Dharmakīrti*'s theory of Inference.

The book contains fifteen chapters followed by a Glossary of important Sanskrit terms and a select Bibliography.

Chapter I is an introduction and points out that the author has based his studies on the *Nyāyabindu* of *Dharmakīrti* and its commentary *Nyāyabinduṭīka* of *Dharmottara* for reconstructing *Dharmakīrti*'s theory of Inference. Here he makes it clear that he is using the term inference for the term *anumāna* and has answered convincingly the objections raised by DM Datta in his book *Six Ways of Knowing* (Calcutta

University 1972). I agree with Rajendra Prasad's answer.

Rajendra Prasad has also taken note of a very recent (1985) objection for translating *anumāna* as 'inference' raised by Douglas D. Daye. In my understanding Daye's observation is in conformity with the Indian position in which it is believed that *anumāna* is a process in which one cognition produces another cognition. As a matter of fact *anumāna* is a *pramāṇa* and a *pramāṇa* is a process (instrument) of knowing. Thus *vyāptijñāna* 'cognition of invariable concomitance' produces *anumiti* 'inferential cognition'. This is an accepted fact for all systems of Indian Philosophy.

Moreover, in the *Nyāya* system a sentence is considered to be a verbalised cognition. 'The bearers of truth-values', are indeed 'the cognition's' and not 'the sentences' in Indian Philosophical traditions. If, however, in the Western traditions a sentence is treated as a verbalized cognition, there is no problem in saying that sentences are the bearers of truth-values. But, I am afraid, it is not the case in the Western tradition. Hence, Daye is right.

Another ground of displeasure for Daye for paraphrasing *anumāna* as inference is that "a logically acceptable inference, in accordance with Western logic, has to be only formally valid. However, a formally valid inference, for example, one in which one or both the premises are false, would be called a fallacious or pseudo-*anumāna* (*anumānābhāsa*) in accordance with the Indian concept of *anumāna*".

This common cry by the Western-trained logicians that Western Logic is formal and only Formal Logic is logic worth its name and Indian Logic is no logic because it is not formal in the Western Sense has

been convincingly replied by Rajendra Prasad. He says;

"The fact of the matter is every inference is not an *anumāna*, but every *anumāna* is an inference, a case of saying something on the ground of having said something else . . . *anumāna* denotes a sub-class of those inferences in which a set of true propositions entails another true proposition. Inference, on the other hand, includes all those cases in which a set of propositions entails another, no matter whether the set itself is true or false. Therefore, there is nothing wrong in saying that *anumāna* is inference if we bear in mind that it is a specific kind of inference, just as we say that a syllogism is a kind of inference while admitting that every inference is not syllogistic."

I agree with this. A false proposition cannot be a premise in *anumāna*, but it can be in *anumānābhāsa*. Rajendra Prasad is absolutely right when he says, "As the premises of an *anumāna* entail their conclusion, any *anumāna* in which they do this is formally valid. As the premises have to be true, the conclusion must also be true because a set of true propositions can entail only a true proposition. A classical Indian Logician, like *Dharmakīrti*, would call Potter's example ill-formed or a pseudo-*anumāna*, though it is formally valid according to Aristotelian logic, not because the notion of formal validity is missing in his logical theory, not even because he attaches no importance to this notion, but because the example violates his rule about what can and what cannot be a premise in an *anumāna*."

Chapter II deals with 'Knowledge and Human Ends'. It is pointed out here that knowledge is an instrument to achieve human ends according to

Dharmakīrti. It is also true with other systems of Indian thought.

Chapter III presents classification of *anumāna* as *svārtha* and *pasārtha* and critically examines how far this distinction is logically tenable.

Chapter IV presents the form of *svārthānumāna* and chapters V to VIII discuss different forms of reason or *hetu* . It has been concluded that *Dharmakīrti's* theory of Inference is complete for "the limited zone of deductive inferences with a positive or negative, singular existential proposition as the conclusion."

Chapter X takes up the discussion of the nature and function of *parārthānumāna* and Chapter XI discusses the role of 'example' in an inference.

Chapter XII attempts a comparison of *parārthānumāna* with Aristotelian Syllogism and examines all prevalent views.

At the end of the XIth Chapter, Rajendra Prasad poses a dilemma and examines the solutions offered by different scholars in the next two Chapters XII and XIII. The discussions here are distinct contributions of the author to understand Indian theory of inference.

Chapter XII discusses the idea of permissible and impermissible inferences. All types of *hetvābhāsas* are discussed here in detail.

Chapter XV is the concluding chapter wherein the author takes an overview of the discussions advanced so far in the previous chapters. In his opinion *Dharmakīrti's* Theory of inference is a simple but elegant theory. Of course, he does not fail to point out the limitations of this theory keeping in line with the classical Indian intellectual traditions.

Rajendra Prasad is critical in his approach not only with the views held by modern scholars but he is equally critical of the views of the

traditional interpreter. In Chapter III he frankly concludes that the traditional distinction between inference for one's own knowledge (*svārthānumāna*) and inference for other's knowledge (*parārthānumāna*) is not tenable at all. Similarly, in Chapter IX while showing the limitations of *Dharmakīrti's* theory of inference, Prasad points out in clear terms how this theory is applicable only with a three-membered conjunctive proposition and not elsewhere.

In this way at a number of places Rajendra Prasad has demonstrated his laudable approach of a free and frank investigator of truth without carrying any unacademic burden.

His clarity in thought is matched with the simplicity of medium of expression. Since the author is a western-trained philosopher he has freely used idiom of Western Philosophy and Logic which has made the reading of the book under review most enjoyable.

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Dalit aur Ashwet Sahitya : Kuchh Vichar [Dalit and Black Literatures: Some Thoughts], edited by CHAMAN LAL, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 2001, pp. 142, Rs. 240.

Dalit literature is perhaps unique in the sense that it has sprung out of lived, intensely felt experience. Beginning in the 1960's in Marathi, it has steadily been growing in variety and strength and has taken on the character of a movement that has spread over to other languages and regions. And within the space of four decades, it has emerged as an important voice in the orchestra of literacy voices in India. It has also

entered the courses of study in several universities, particularly in Maharashtra. Dr Gangadhar Pantawane, the editor of the Dalit literary journal, *Asmitadarsh* , goes so far as to call dalit literature as *the* authentic voice of Indian literature, capable of vocalizing the consciousness of those who did not have the freedom to think and express themselves earlier. Although things move slowly here yet there are unmistakable signs that this literature is the harbinger of a slow and silent revolution in the country.

It is therefore appropriate that a premier institution like the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, devoted its academic time and resources to discussing the dalit (and the black) literature and later published the papers presented at a seminar held at Shimla in 1997.

Most of the papers on black literature were in English and have been published separately. This volume on dalit literature contains 15 papers, 14 of which were presented in Hindi. There are some deliberations on dalit literature and thought and also on dalit literature in Marathi as well as in Hindi. Among the contributors are dalit intellectuals, writers and editors and non-dalit critics and scholars committed to the dalit cause.

To this reviewer the book is an exciting anthology because it deals with a literature on the anvil, as it were, a literature that is in the process of realizing itself and because it raises some questions that keep troubling dalit and non-dalit writers. What is dalit literature? Can non-dalits also write dalit literature? What are the sources of its inspiration? In which direction is it moving? What about its aesthetics?

It is also a deeply disturbing book because it challenges some of our most cherished notions and estab-