Selected Bibliography on Indian Logic and Ontology. First Part: A - L

BIBLIOGRAPHY


"The meanings in which the word 'word' can be taken, the interpretations that the relevant meanings would necessitate of the 'word-equals-world' thesis, and the extent to which Bhartrhari can be said to be aware of or receptive to these interpretations are considered. The observation that more than one interpretation would have been acceptable to Bhartrhari naturally leads to a discussion of his notion of truth, his perspectivism, and his understanding of the nature of philosophizing as an activity in which language pays a basic role and epistemology and ontology are interdependent. The difference of Bhartrhari's thinking from that of the Vedantins of Sankara's tradition is identified, and a brief comment on the history of vivarta and parinama as philosophical terms is offered."


"The article seeks to introduce to the students of philosophy the concept of contradiction in Indian philosophy. contradiction and contrariety fall under the common class of opposition called "Virodha". the former means "pervasion of mutual negation by two predicates," the latter means "pervasibility of two predicates by their mutual negation." Vontradiction is a purely logical relation, while contrariety is semilogical. The author suggests that contradiction and contrariety should better be called, respectively, "absolute contradiction" and "relative contradiction", both being based on contradiction of identity. Some formidable Indian philosophers argue that contradiction (including contrariety) is a purely logical category, for contradiction of facts is impossible."


"The translation of the Nyaya terms, 'Visesya' and 'Prakara' as 'subject' and 'predicate' is mistaken. This mistake is the progenitor of the philosophical mistake that a particular can possibly be a predicate. In 'ram is possessed of a stick', the stick is the 'Prakara', but being possessed of a stick is the predicate. This inclusion of relation in the predicate is alleged to lead to an infinite regress, for the predicate's relation to the subject should be included in it ad infinitum. There is, however, a tie and not a relation between the subject and the predicate. A relation, being a universal, is a prediate of particulars whereas a tie binds together entities of heterogeneous types."


   "It is argued against the claim that there exist in the concept of "Vyapti" and "Paramarsa" the two notions of implication and entailment in the Navya-Nyaya logic. Also, it is suggested that the "Pancavaya-Vakya" form of "Anumana" does not represent the deductive model of inference."


   Two volumes edited by Gopinath Bhattacharyya


   "Navya-Nyaya developed a technical (non-symbolic) language tied to a realistic ontology, but this became the language of all serious discourse in India -- of all philosophies, grammar, law, medicine. The problem is primarily to explain how this was possible. The answer suggested is that Navya-Nyaya developed a language for 'describing' cognitions by stating not merely the objects recognized, but also the 'mode of cognition of the object'. This necessitated the development of special concepts like the concept of limitor (Avacchedaka). in ontology, Navya-Nyaya made extensive use of Occam's razor to decide which abstract terms stood for abstract entities, and which, though abstract grammatically, still denoted entities identifiable as concrete objects."

   "The technical language of Navya-Nyaya uses concepts like limitor, determiner, etc., to deal with sentences expressing cognition like perception, inference, memory, belief, doubt, supposition. As such
sentences are not extensional, Navya-Nyaya distinguishes between what is cognised and the mode under which what is cognised is cognised. Limitor, in the technical language, determines the mode of cognition and is also used to express quantity of cognition, universality, particularity, etc. The concept of determiner is used to show what predicate is asserted of what subject in the same cognition.


"The thrust of this paper is to investigate the relative difference between "Jnana" and "Prama", two crucial concepts in Indian epistemology, since more recent treatment of them would seem to be confused. Utilizing the framework developed by Nyaya and Advaita, it is argued that the former describes a wide range of cognitive processes, such as 'cognition', 'judgment', 'remembering', 'doubting', etc., while the latter defines the bounds of cognition in respect of its truth-value. A theory of knowledge is developed that accounts for the rise of 'true' knowledge in terms of the 'psyche-activity' involved and the set of criteria ("Pramanya") that renders a "Jnana" as a "Prama". The intensional structure of such a judgment, it is argued, involves a complex qualified-qualifier relation in conformity with the property-content relation of the objective correlate."


"In part I of the article the author explains how the problem of negation has led the Jains to accept non-existence as well as existence as constituents or 'Dharmas' of every real object in the world and to formulate the first dialectical principle of the "Anekanta-vada" doctrine: 'Sad-asad-rupam vastu' or 'every real object possesses a mode as an existent and as a nonexistent'. In part II of the article the author explains, using mereology as a logical tool, how Haribhadra Suri defends the Jain viewpoint in his 'Anekanta-jaya-pataka'."


"Bhartrhari was not only a clever and well-informed philosopher but also a conservative Brahmin who maintained his own tradition's superiority against the philosophies developed in his time. He exploited a problem that occupied all his philosophical contemporaries to promote his own ideas, in which the Veda played a central role. Bhartrhari and his thought are situated in their philosophical context. As it turns out, he dealt with issues that others had dealt with before him in India and suggested solutions to existing problems. Indeed it becomes clear that he was both a philosopher who dealt with current problems and challenges and a traditionalist who used the philosophical debate of his time to gain respectability for his own Vedic tradition."


See the Appendix: "The problem of the nonexistent in Indian philosophy of logic and language" pp. 211-245.
"Besides seeing a rabbit or seeing that the rabbit is grayish, do we also sometimes see barely just the particular animal (not as an animal or as anything) or the feature rabbitness or grayness? Such bare, non-verbalizable perception is called "indeterminate perception" (nirvikalpaka pratyaksa) in Nyaya. Standard Nyaya postulates such pre-predicative bare perception in order to honor the rule that awareness of a qualified entity must be caused by awareness of the qualifier. After connecting this issue with the Western debate concerning the "myth of the given," seven distinct arguments are presented showing that the very notion of such indeterminate perception is epistemically otiose and that the Nyaya theory of perception is better off without it."


"Primary titles in the area of Jaina philosophy are identified, focusing on English-language materials published in the Twentieth century. Included is a brief survey of individual books and book series, with more extensive commentary on two important books published within the past five years: Nathmal Tatia's translation of Umasvati's "Tattvarthasutra" (that which is) and Nagin J. Shah's translation of Nyayavijayaju's "Jaina Darsana" (Jaina philosophy and religion)."


"The mainstream Western logico-linguistic assumption that wh-words ("who", "when",...) in constituent questions manifest a wh-quantifier reflects features of Western languages, which position wh-words clause-initially. Languages like Sanskrit, Hindi, and Bangla form indefinite expressions systematically by adding an existential element to interrogative K-words, suggesting that K expresses a variable and not a quantifier. Further probing indicates that existential and universal quantifiers are based respectively on free and bound variables. Independent linguistic arguments show that these proposals work better than the quantifier theory of questions even for Western languages. Frege and Felix Cohen have, on logical grounds, already argued for a variable theory."


"Following H. T. Colebrooke's 1824 'discovery' of the Hindu syllogism, his term for the five-step inference schema in the Nyaya-Sutra, European logicians and historians of philosophy demonstrated considerable interest in Indian logical thought. This is in marked contrast with later historians of philosophy, and also with Indian nationalist and neo-Hindu thinkers like Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan, who downgraded Indian rationalist traditions in favor of 'spiritualist' or 'speculative' texts. This article traces the role of these later thinkers in the origins of the myth that Indian thought is spiritual and a-rational. The extent to which Nineteenth-century European philosophers were aware of Colebrooke's 'discovery' is documented, and then their criticisms of the Hindu syllogism and its defense by orientalists like Ballantyne and Muller are examined."


"Vyadi, a celebrated Indian linguist, endorses a version of the realist theory of meaning, that the meaning of a word is the object for which it stands. As applied to generic nominals like "(the) cow", Vyadi's thesis faced two much rehearsed objections: 1) if, for each token utterance, a separate meaning rule must be given, then the number of such rules will be "limitless", and the word will be radically homonymous; 2) if only some finite set is given, use of the word to refer outside this set will be "aberrant". These arguments significantly resemble certain Davidsonian constraints on a theory of meaning. The application of Vyadi's theory to proper names is also examined."


"In another paper, I discussed the grammarian Vyadi's realist theory of meaning, and showed how its failure to distinguish between the concepts of meaning and reference laid open his theory to a series of powerful objections. Later grammarians and Naiyayikas were forced to seek new, more sophisticated, accounts of the semantics of proper names and nominals, and in doing so introduced important innovations in the theory of meaning. I would like in this paper to discuss the contributions of these authors, especially to our understanding of the relation between the meaning of a term and its reference, and to the semantics of context-sensitive expressions."


"Negative facts have perplexed Western philosophers ever since the time of Plato.' But the philosophers of Europe and America have not been the only philosophers to have been perplexed by them; classical Indian philosophers too have pondered their nature. My interest here is to explore how the reflections of these classical Indian philosophers, transposed into the contemporary philosophical idiom, might enrich current metaphysical thinking about negative facts; and what I shall conclude is that at least one of these philosophers has a view of negative facts and knowledge of them, which, when so transposed, is very plausible indeed.

I shall begin by asking the fundamental ontological question of whether or not negative facts exist and then sketch various replies which European and American philosophers have given to it. Since these replies have not led to any decisive answer to the question, I shall then ask two other questions: the more specific ontological question of whether or not absences—surely paradigmatic examples of negative facts—exist; and the related epistemological question of what is known when the absence of something is said to be known. Answers to these questions comprise an important part of classical Indian philosophy; and I shall outline their answers to them, concluding that the most plausible answers to these questions are those of Jayanta Bhatta, who maintained that absences do indeed exist and that they are known not only by inference but also by perception."


"In this paper an attempt has been made to show that the Vaisesika concept of "padartha" as 'a type of object in this world' is not properly applicable to the sixteen terms mentioned by Gautama in Nyaya-Sutra III. Traditionally "artha" (in Gautama's list of "prameyas") was identified with "padartha" of Vaisesika's. But identification of Gautama's "prameya" or "artha" with Vaisesika "padartha" is misleading. The sixteen terms of Nyaya are also not 'categories' in the technical sense. Gautama's definition of 'padartha' has linguistic import rather than ontological."


Albany: State University of New York Press.

New and revised edition 1996.


"The first part of the paper examines the "Hetvabhasas" of the Nyaya school. The second part analyzes the differences between Indian and Western conceptions of fallacy and deals with the question whether the Indian account of the "Hetvabhasas" is totally devoid of the notion of formal fallacy as it is understood in the West. I have suggested that though the "completed" Nyaya inference includes the properties of formal validity, the notion of "Hetvabhasa" presents only the necessary conditions for satisfactorily completing such an inferential process. Thus, while the Nyaya inference adequately accounts for the validity of the final "product" of inference, the Nyaya "Hetvabhasas" account for the inferential process leading up to a sound product of inference."


Vol. 1


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