

Review Article:

TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF RATNAKĪRTI'S ONTOLOGY

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The book, *Against a Hindu God: Buddhist Philosophy of Religion in India* by Parimal G. Patil in 2009, offers a clear picture of the entire philosophical system of Ratnakīrti (ca. 1000-1050), a Buddhist master who was active during the latest period of Indian Buddhism. Although his theoretical works have been available in Sanskrit since 1957 (2nd edition 1975) when A. Thakur from the K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute published the collected works of Ratnakīrti under the title *Ratnakīrtinibandhāvali*, such a comprehensive study of Ratnakīrti's philosophy has not been done before Patil. Of the 10 works included in the edition, Patil's monumental study primarily focuses on three works: "The Refutation of Arguments for Establishing Īśvara" (*Īśvarasādhana-dūṣaṇa*), "An Inquiry into Inference-Warranting Relations" (*Vyāptinirṇaya*, VN), and "A Demonstration of Exclusion" (*Apoḥasiddhi*). By examining these texts together with selected passages from Ratnakīrti's other works, such as "The Doctrine of Multifaceted Nonduality" (*Citrādvaitaprakāśavāda*, CAPV) and "The Proof of Momentary Destruction" (*Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi*), the author provides a detailed analysis of Ratnakīrti's religious philosophy, theory of language, and Buddhist ontology, together with their mutual relations. The contents of Patil's well-organized book are as follows.

Introduction

Chapter 1: Comparative Philosophy of Religions

Part 1: Epistemology

Chapter 2: Religious Epistemology in Classical India: In Defense of a Hindu God

Chapter 3: Against Īśvara: Ratnakīrti's Buddhist Critique

Part 2: Language, Mind, and Ontology

Chapter 4: Theory of Exclusion, Conceptual Contents, and

Buddhist Epistemology

Chapter 5: Ratnakīrti's World: Toward a Buddhist Philosophy of Everything

Conclusion:

Chapter 6: The Values of Buddhist Epistemology

As Patil emphasizes in Chapter 1, the purpose is to find a trans-disciplinary space among studies of religion, philosophy, and South Asia. In addition, Patil's insightful analysis of Ratnakīrti's refutation regarding the proof of Īśvara's existence (from a comparative viewpoint with Christian theology) provides a new perspective for scholars, especially those interested in how logic and epistemology are used in theological arguments under various religious contexts. Moreover, if one reads Chapter 4 with Patil's other book, *Buddhist Philosophy of Language in India: Jñānaśrīmitra on Exclusion* co-written with Lawrence J. McCrea, one can obtain accurate information concerning the most sophisticated discussions on Buddhist semantics by Jñānaśrīmitra and Ratnakīrti. The same comment might also be made for Chapter 5 in which Patil summarized Ratnakīrti's ontology by examining selected discussions from his CAPV and other texts. However, the present reviewer, who has translated CAPV into Japanese, holds a slightly different opinion of Patil's brilliant presentation of Ratnakīrti's ontology.

Of the two main streams of Indian Buddhism, namely, Madhyamaka and Yogācāra, Ratnakīrti belongs to the latter tradition. From the earlier stage of this tradition, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu have maintained that everything that we assume as external objects is nothing but mental objects/images (*ākāra*) that appear in our awareness. Starting with the fundamental thesis of Yogācāra idealism, Ratnakīrti explains how the primary existence of mental images is, in turn, transformed into other types of objects; i.e., what is manifest or determined to be perceived or inferred in our everyday activities. According to Patil's reading of Ratnakīrti's CAPV and other related texts, these objects are classified into the following four types.

O ₁	The direct objects of perception	The manifest particular*
O ₂ [O _{2.1}] [O _{2.2}]	The indirect objects of perception	The determined universal* [The vertical universal or individual token] [The horizontal universal or type]
O ₃	The direct objects of inferential/verbal awareness	The manifest universal*
O ₄	The indirect objects of inferential/verbal awareness	The determined particular*

* I follow Patil's translations: "particular" (*svalakṣaṇa*), "universal" (*sāmānya*), "manifest" (*grāhya*), and "determined" (*adhyavaseya*).

As is well known, Dignāga, the founder of the tradition of Buddhist epistemology, classified cognizable objects into two types: the particular (*svalakṣaṇa*) and universal (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*) according to two types of means of valid cognition: perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*). Subsequently, Dharmottara, a Buddhist philosopher in the 8th century, introduced another dichotomy for dividing these objects into two types: those to be directly grasped (*grāhya*) and those to be determined (*adhyavaseya*).¹ Under the influence of such previous discussions of Buddhist epistemology, Mokṣākaragupta, one of the latest Buddhist philosophers in India, summarizes the Buddhist ontology depending on four kinds of objects.

The object of means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*) is two kinds: The grasped (*grāhya*) and [2] the determined (*adhyavaseya*). Of the two [kinds of objects], [O₁] the grasped [by perception] is a particular [entity] that appears to [one's] perceptual awareness, [namely,] a momentary [entity]. On the other hand, [O₂] the determined [by perception] is nothing but a universal that appears to [one's] conceptual cognition that arises immediately after the perceptual awareness. And the universals are [also] two kinds: [O_{2.1}] the vertical (*ūrdhvatālakṣaṇaṃ sāmānyam*) and [O_{2.2}] the horizontal (*tiryaksāmānya*). Of them, the vertical [universal] is the continuum that lasts over several moments, in the form of one single, concrete thing (*vyakti*) such as a [certain] pot, which is different from [other things] of the similar class (*sajātīya*, e.g., other pots). [This is] the object of perception of the prover (*sādhana*, e.g., smoke in the inference of fire). On the other hand, many concrete things (e.g., many pots) are different from [their] different classes (*vi-jātīya*, e.g., table, chair, etc.). The horizontal universals [such as pot in general] are the object of perception that grasps the pervasion (*vyāpti*, i.e., the necessary relation

¹ Cf. NBT 71.1-4.

between fire and smoke). On the contrary, for inference, whereas [O₃] the grasped is the universal, [O₄] the determined is nothing but the particular.²

The basic elements of Patil's classification regarding the four kinds of objects are embedded in the aforementioned quotation from Mokṣākaragupta's TBh, where the cognitive process is described as a sequence that begins with the perception of a particular and ends with the determination of a particular through inference. In addition, there are two more intermediate steps: the perceptual determination of the two kinds of universals and the inferential awareness of a universal from which one determines its particular. In this manner, Mokṣākaragupta's exposition harmonizes the four kinds of objects with the Buddhist theory of means of valid cognition. Following such exposition, Patil offers a more sophisticated account of Ratnakīrti's ontology of which the four kinds of objects are connected by a causal link from the primary objects (O₁/O₃) to the secondary objects (O₂/O₄), as shown in the following steps.

- Step 1:** Start with some object *p* with identity conditions **I**, where **I** is the set of (causal) conditions that individuate *p*—the “manifest-content” of awareness.
- Step 2:** Take **S**—a subset of **I**—to define the set of “selection” conditions. This set of selection conditions is the basis for the construction of a dissimilar class, non-**P**—the set of objects that do not *satisfy* **S**; that is, the set of objects that we take to be “non-*p*'s.”
- Step 3:** Finally, construct the similar class like-**P** by the *exclusion* of the dissimilarity class non-**P**. The similarity class, like-**P**, consists of objects that *satisfy* **P**; that is, it consists of all “*p*'s.” Here, the construction process is described in terms of an exclusion, which is akin to constructing the complement of non-**P**. Like-**P** is the “determined-content” of awareness. (p. 28)

If the object *p* is O₁, which is manifest in perceptual awareness, then from it, the determined contents, O₂, and two kinds of universals, can be constructed through exclusion and determination. Similarly, if

² Cf. TBh 21.18-22.7: *dvividho hi pramāṇasya viśayaḥ, grāhyo 'dhyavaseyaś ca. tatra pratyakṣasya pratibhāsamānaṃ svalakṣaṇaṃ kṣaṇa* (em. in Kajiyama [1998: 58, fn. 134]: *kṣaṇa om. ed.) eko grāhyaḥ. adhyavaseyas tu pratyakṣaprṣṭhabhāvino vikalpasya pratibhāsamānaṃ sāmānyam eva. tac ca sāmānyam dvividham, ūrdhvatālakṣaṇaṃ tiryaglākṣaṇaṃ ceti. tattraikasyām eva ghaṭādivyaktau sajāṭīavyāvṛttāyām anekakṣanasamudāyaḥ sāmānyam* (em. : *sāmānyam ed.) ūrdhvatālakṣaṇaṃ sādhanapratyakṣasya viśayaḥ. vijāṭīavyāvṛttāś tv anekavyaktayaḥ tiryak-sāmānyam vyāptigrāhakapratyakṣasya viśayaḥ. anumānasya tu sāmānyam grāhyam, adhyavaseyas tu svalakṣaṇam eva.* For another translation, see Kajiyama [1998: 58-59].

the object p is O_3 , which is manifest in inferential awareness, then the determined particular, O_4 , can be constructed from it through exclusion and determination. By providing a more detailed analysis for the causal connection, Patil succeeds in explaining how to bridge the gap between a mental image (p) and its corresponding actionable object (like-P) or between the particular and the universal. In the present reviewer's opinion, however, there are at least two questions regarding some elements of the aforementioned procedure. First, is it true, as Patil strongly maintains, that O_1 is a mental image as an object of reflexive awareness (*svasaṃvedana*)? In other words, if one accepts the reflexive awareness as the ultimate means of valid cognition, then should we always consider O_1 as the ultimate reality? Second, when the universal appears in inferential awareness, is its reduction to the particular caused by the determination of difference (*bhedāvasāya*)? The following section will discuss these two questions in detail.

The first question is concerned with O_1 , which is, according to Patil, identical with a sensible image that appears in reflexive awareness. Since the image is inseparable from cognition itself, these manifold images are also essentially undistinguishable from one another. As a typical instance, the following is presented in the CAPV (cf. Patil 2009, p. 254, fn. 15):

[*Vyāpti*.] Whatever is manifest [in awareness] is single, just as the image 'blue' that exists in the midst of a collection of diverse images.

[*Pakṣadharmatā*.] And this collection of diverse images, namely, white, the note 'ga,' sweet, fragrant, soft, happiness and its opposite, etc., is manifest³.

Whereas such sensible images are absolutely single, they are distinguishable from a different perspective. Patil refers to these sub-images as " O_{1S} ," which are the basic components for constructing two kinds of universals: the vertical ($O_{2,1}$; e.g., a pot, smoke, or cow tokens) and the horizontal ($O_{2,2}$; e.g., kinds of properties or classes).

In this context, O_{1S} , the objects from which $O_{2,1}$ and $O_{2,2}$ are constructed, are

³ CAPV 129.22-24: *yat prakāśate tad ekam, yathā citrākāracakramadhyavartī nīlākārah. prakāśate cedam gauragāndhāramadhurasurabhisukumārasātetarādivicitrākāradambakam iti svabhāvahetuḥ*. Cf. Moriyama [2011: 57].

referred to by a number of different terms. They are said to be parts (*deśa*), pieces (*bheda*), special properties (*viśeṣa*), and also particulars (*svalakṣaṇa*). According to Ratnakīrti, particulars are conceptually different from universals in that they are neither just excluded from those that belong to the same class nor just excluded from those that belong to a different class. Although Ratnakīrti never describes them in this way, a particular may be thought of as an object that is excluded from those that belong to the same class and those that belong to a different class (*sajātīya-vijātīya-vyāvṛtta*). Ratnakīrti understands such particular objects to be the basic objects from which determined objects are constructed. In the context of perceptual states of awareness, it is clear that the individual moments of a continuum and the individual components of a collection are also O_{IS} . (p. 260)

The question here is whether Ratnakīrti really considered such mental images in reflexive awareness as particulars (*svalakṣaṇa*). In the previous quotation, Patil clearly accepts the equation. According to Footnote 36 (cf. also p. 251, fn. 7), it is the following passage from the VN (109.16-17) in which he assumes Ratnakīrti's reference of *svalakṣaṇa* in the sense of mental images.

This is because the grasped (*grāhya*) is what is manifest in a certain awareness; the determined (*adhyavaseya*) is [an object] because of which one undertakes to act [towards it]. Of them, the grasped in a perceptual awareness is the particular (*svalakṣaṇa*); the determined is the universal (*sāmānya*) that has the nature of the particular that is excluded from those that do not have its form. In the case of inference, [the grasped and the determined] come to be inverted.⁴

This argument appears in response to Trilocana's criticism of the Buddhist manner of determining the causal relationship. If perception only grasps momentary entities, then it does not help establish a universal relation of a certain kind of cause with a certain kind of effect. Conversely, if any conceptual cognition operates for the determination, then it will lose the basis of reality. Trilocana's criticism sharply points out the difficulty of Dingāga's dichotomy of cognizable objects in regard to *svalakṣaṇa* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*.

Concerning such criticism, Ratnakīrti replied using the division of *grāhya* and *adhyavaseya* for each perception and inference. As a result,

⁴ Cf. VN 8*12-15 (RNA 109.15-18): *yad dhi yatra jñāne pratibhāsate tad grāhyam. yatra tu yataḥ* (Ms, Lasic ed.: *tad* Thakur ed.) *pravartate tad adhyavaseyam. tatra pratyakṣasya svalakṣaṇam grāhyam, adhyavaseyam tu sāmānyam, atadrūpaparāvṛttasvalakṣaṇamātrātmakam. anumānasya tu viparyayaḥ*. For a German translation, see Lasic [2000: 63-64]. The translation of Patil [2009: 251, fn. 7] follows the reading of *tad* in Thakur's edition.

there are four kinds of objects, similar to Mokṣākaragupta's classification. However, what does the term *svalakṣaṇa* indicate in the aforementioned passage? Is it equivalent to a mental image that appears in reflexive awareness? To examine this point, we focus on the following discussion in which Ratnakīrti presents an example of the relations regarding the first two types of objects (O_1 and O_2).

And therefore, by depending on the conventional means of valid cognition (*sāṃvyaḥārikapramāṇā*), even when one grasps a mere color (*rūpamātra*) of a pot as the collection of a [certain] color, a [certain] taste, a [certain] smell, and a [certain] touch, by perception, [at the same time], it is determined that the collection (*samudāya*, i.e., a certain pot) is established. In the same manner, even when one grasps a [certain pot] that is excluded from its different entities (i.e., other pots), it is correct that one [also] grasps the pervasion between the property to be proved (*sādhyasāmānya*) and the prover-property (*sādhanaśāmānya*), both of which have the nature of mere entities (*vastumātra*) that are excluded from their different kinds, and both of which are objects [of perception] because of the exclusion of non-connection (*ayogavyavaccheda*).⁵

According to the above quotation, Ratnakīrti describes O_1 using the term “mere color” (*rūpamātra*). When we perceive the color of an object, we simultaneously determine the object as a collection of sensible qualities (*samudāya*), which is probably identical with its vertical universal. In addition, when we perceive a certain object, we simultaneously also perceive its horizontal universal. In this manner, the “mere color” in visual awareness is the basis for determining two kinds of universals. However, what is “mere color”? If we remember that the argument is based on the conventional means of valid cognition, then it seems almost impossible to consider “color” as a mental image in reflexive awareness. In fact, in another part of the CAPV, Ratnakīrti provides a clear distinction between the object of sensory perception and that of reflexive awareness.

If an external object is to be cognized, its mental image (*ākāra*) is the means of [its] valid cognition. And in the same manner, the difference of images should be treated. Otherwise, the difference of external objects would not be

⁵ Cf. VN 8*.16-9*3 (RNA 109.18-21): *tataś ca sāṃvyaḥārikapramāṇāpekṣayā rūparasagandhasparśasamudāyātmakasya ghaṭasya rūpamātragrahane* (Ms, Lasic ed.: *rūpabhedamātragrahane* Thakur ed.) *'pi pratyakṣataḥ samudāyasiddhivyavasthā. tathāikasyāṭadrūpaparāvṛttasya grahane 'pi sādhyasādhanaśāmānyayor atadrūpaparāvṛttavastumātrātmanor ayogavyavacchedena viṣayabhūtayor vyāptigraho yukta eva.* Cf. Lasic [2000: 62]; Patil [2009: 258, fn. 27; 262-263].

established. On the other hand, when only the collection of mental images is the object to be cognized and when the reflexive awareness (*svasaṃvedana*) is the means of valid cognition, how would a careful person state the difference of [mental images] that are unified with the [awareness] that has the indivisible nature and that becomes the nature of the blue, etc.⁶

As Ratnakīrti discusses here, for an external object, its corresponding mental image becomes the means of its valid cognition. Moreover, for the mental image itself, reflexive awareness becomes the means of valid cognition in which the image and its awareness are essentially indivisible. Since two ontological levels (one that presupposes external objects and the other that is independent of external objects) are clearly distinguished, “color” in the previous quotation from the VN is better understood as an external object, which corresponds to visual perception. Thus, O_1 , which constructs two kinds of universals, is not identical with mental image. Certainly, this does not indicate that Ratnakīrti did not accept any mental images as objects of perception. In the present reviewer’s opinion, however, such mental images unified with reflexive awareness should be located outside the four kinds of objects, all of which are based on the conventional means of valid cognition. This is in contrast to reflexive awareness as the ultimate means of valid cognition.

The second question is concerning the notion of “two kinds of determination (*adhyavasāya*).” The two kinds, namely, the “determination of singularity” (*ekatvādhyavasāya*) and the “determination of difference” (*bhedāvasāya*), are explained by Patil (p. 257, fn. 25) as follows.

The determination of singularity results in the construction of an individual/token from different moments. The determination of difference results in the construction of an individual/token, by abstracting it out from its universal/type.

⁶ CAPV 143.8-11: [...] *bāhye 'rthe pratyetavye buddhyākāraḥ pramāṇam. tathā cākārabhedo vyavahartavya eva. anyathā bāhyabhedo na sidhyet. yadā punar ākārācakram eva prameyam svasaṃvedanaṃ ca pramāṇam, tadā tenaiva nīlādīnāṃ svabhāvabhūtenākhaṇḍātmanā ekīkṛtānāṃ katham apramādī bhedaṃ ācakṣīta.* For Japanese translation, see Moriyama [2012: 158].

Of the two kinds, the latter seems problematic when examining Patil's other expositions (p. 279f., p. 281):

Objects/images are labeled as “particulars” or “universals” only in relation to a subsequent determination. Thus for Ratnakīrti “particular” and “universal” are not really ontological categories at all. Instead, they are defined contextually. Objects/images are categorized as either one or the other depending on the role that they are made to play by subsequent acts of conceptualization. A particular is something that is made into a universal – regardless of whether that particular is a component/property of an individual or an individual – by the determination of singularity. A universal is something that is made into a particular by what Ratnakīrti once calls the determination of difference (*bhedāvasāya*). Thus O_3 is a “universal” not in the sense that it is constructed, but in the sense that it will be deconstructed or particularized.

Unlike the determined object of perception, however, O_4 is said to be a “particular” and, more accurately, a “determined/excluded particular.” As mentioned above, a “particular” is an object that is constructed from a universal – in this case, O_3 – through exclusion and determination.

As shown in these quotations, Patil regards the role of the determination of difference (*bhedāvasāya*) as abstracting O_4 (i.e., the determined particular as an actionable object) from O_3 , namely, the universal, which is almost similar to the horizontal universal. For instance, when one infers an object (e.g., fire) from a reason (e.g., smoke), the notion of fire that appears in one's awareness is O_3 , and a particular fire on a mountain (which is determined to exist there) is O_4 . Although the procedure of determining a concrete object from the universal that is directly inferred is convincing, Ratnakīrti does not refer to the term *bhedāvasāya* in the procedure. According to the present reviewer, in the entire RNA, there is only one reference to the term, which Patil also mentions elsewhere (p. 257, fn. 25):

For a vertical universal there is, because of ignorance, a determination of singularity, even though different moments are known through sense perception. In the same way, for a horizontal universal as well there is, just on the basis of ignorance, a determination of difference, even though what is known through reflexive awareness is a non-difference in images.⁷

⁷ CAPV 143.13-14: *yathordhvam indriyapratyaksatah kṣaṇabhede pratīte 'py avidyāvaśād ekatvādhyavasāyah, tathā tiryak svasamvedanapratyaksenākārābhede 'dhigate 'py avidyāvaśād eva bhedāvasāyah.*

Except for Patil's translations of *ūrdhvam* and *tiryak*, the rest of his translation provides a clear contrast between the two determinations. That is, while the determination of singularity (*ekatvādhyavasāya*) helps to construct a particular object as a temporal continuum that consists of several momentary entities grasped by sensory perception, the determination of difference (*bhedāvasāya*) functions to differentiate each mental image from their total unity in reflexive awareness. In this case, the determination of difference seems to bridge over the ultimate viewpoint of non-duality and the conventional, imagined world of duality. Thus, it is impossible to determine any references to its function of abstracting the particular (O_4) from the universal (O_3).

Patil's misconception is based on two terms, *ūrdhvam* and *tiryak*, which lead us to associate them with the two kinds of universals, as mentioned in Mokṣākaragupta's TBh. Whereas the vertical universal is a temporal continuum that consists of momentary entities, the horizontal one is a non-temporal concept of class that is formed by the exclusion of different classes (*vi jātīya*). Ratnakīrti's aforementioned exposition is, however, irrelevant to the horizontal universal since, in the above passage, he simply explains how manifold images can be distinguished from the state of their complete unity in reflexive awareness. If one uses Patil's classification, then the function represents the emergence process of O_{15} from O_1 , namely, sub-images from the total image in reflexive awareness.

Specifically in the context of the CAPV, Ratnakīrti's primary concern lies in presenting an account for the distinction between multiplicity (*citra*) and singularity (*eka*) or difference (*bheda*) and non-difference (*abheda*), in accordance with reflexive awareness as the ultimate means of valid cognition and sensory perception and others as the conventional ones. He also states that, whereas one accepts sensory perception as grasping various objects (*bheda*) from a standpoint that presupposes external objects (*bāhyārthavāda*), one only accepts reflexive awareness as the single means of valid cognition from an idealistic standpoint (*vi jñānavāda*).⁸ In a sense, the role regarding the determination of difference is to connect the two standpoints, and only after it creates the fictional world of duality can we introduce Patil's classification of the four kinds of objects (with some minor changes).

⁸ CAPV 143.20-25.

The ultimate level		
O ₀	The objects that appear reflexive awareness, which are inseparable from the awareness itself*	
The conventional level		
O ₁	The direct objects of sensory perception**	The momentary particular
O ₂ [O _{2.1}] [O _{2.2}]	The indirect objects of sensory perception	The determined universal [The vertical universal or individual token] [The horizontal universal or type]
O ₃	The direct objects of inferential/verbal awareness	The universal
O ₄	The indirect objects of inferential/verbal awareness	The determined particular

* The objects (O₀) in the unity of reflexive awareness are differentiated to different objects by the force of the determination of difference (*bhedāvasāya*). However, the overlap between O₀ and O₁ is uncertain in Ratnakīrti's texts.

** Since Ratnakīrti does not mention *mānāsapratyakṣa* and *yogipratyakṣa* and their objects, the direct means of valid cognition is represented by sensory perception.

Most likely, Patil himself also maintained a similar view, especially when examining O₁ as the only one; i.e., ultimate existence (pp. 298-299). In addition, he also knew that Ratnakīrti introduced two different criteria for determining existence: illumination (*prakāśa*) and causal efficacy (*arthakriyāsāmarthyā*). Needless to say, following Dharmakīrti's discussion, the latter is well known as the criterion for determining an object to be existent when one presupposes external objects. Conversely, the former, which is not as popular in Dharmakīrti's tradition, can be applied to the existence of any cognitive events as long as they include the nature of reflexive awareness (pp. 294-296). Thus, the basic idea of the aforementioned revised schema has already been explained by Patil. Nevertheless, we can imagine two possible reasons he did not use the schema; his preference for summarizing different types of ontology into one compact schema, or his acceptance of reflexive awareness in presupposition of external objects. With regard to the second reason, it is possible that such reflexive awareness is compatible with external objects, particularly in Dharmakīrti's exaggeration.⁹ However, similar usages in Ratnakīrti's works cannot be found. Nonetheless, it is

⁹ For Dharmakīrti's interpretations of reflexive awareness, see Kellner [2010] and Moriyama [2010].

important to realize another way to summarize Ratnakīrti's ontology, albeit in a slightly different manner than Patil's version.

This paper has briefly examined *Against a Hindu God*, with particular focus on Chapter 5. As shown earlier, Patil's skillful examination provides a detailed picture of Ratnakīrti's world view. In particular, he effectively clarified the complex linkage between mental images and actionable objects through careful reading of Ratnakīrti's CAPV and other related texts. According to his thoughtful analysis, in one's mental awareness, a certain image emerges as an "object" by excluding its different images and associating with its similar images. If Patil's analysis is correct, then it can provide helpful material for future research, especially comparative approaches to Buddhist epistemology based on modern arguments of phenomenology and philosophy of mind. Moreover, we should not forget that Patil's study also offers a new perspective for re-examining the ontological arguments of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. Dharmakīrti, that is, their dealing of the relationship between mental images and other objects (or between reflexive awareness and other kinds of perception). As a scholar of Buddhist philosophy, the present reviewer is strongly convinced that we can no longer neglect *Against a Hindu God* as an excellent model for future Buddhist studies, especially those based on a fine balance among philosophy, philology, and theology.

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RNĀ: *Ratnakīrtinibandhāvaliḥ*, A. Thakur (ed.), Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975 [2nd edition].

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