

A good account is given of the doctrine and the Order, of the social, economic and also spiritual surroundings of the Buddha. The author has well placed the Buddha against the background of the Vedic sacrificial cult, against which his teaching was a reaction.

However, a misunderstanding of the difficult Upaniṣadic doctrine of *ātman* and the Buddha's equally difficult doctrine of *anātman* (Pāli *anattan*) has led him to identify a 'foolish doctrine' mentioned in the *Alagaddūpama-sutta* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (*Sutta* 22) as the Upaniṣadic doctrine (p. 139). Many well-known scholars before him did so, but there is no doubt that the doctrine in question belongs rather to the Brāhmaṇas (see K. Bhattacharya, *Some Thoughts on Early Buddhism with special reference to its relation to the Upaniṣads*, Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1998 [Acharya Dharmananda Kosambi Memorial Lectures, Post-graduate and Research Department Series No. 41], pp. 9 ff.).

In our days when there is a strong tendency to attribute to the Buddha social ideas more progressive than they actually were, I particularly appreciate the author's very objective treatment of 'the Buddha and caste' (pp. 191 ff. On the Buddha's discourse on 'the true nature of Brahmanism,' consisting not only of a 'pure and virtuous life,' but also of 'a good knowledge of the Veda,' p. 61, see K. Bhattacharya, *L'Ātman-Brahman dans le Bouddhisme ancien*, Paris, 1973, p. 86, n. 3).

The last chapter, 'Afterwards,' deals with the Councils that followed the death of the Buddha, and the formation of the Canon. There are good maps and illustrations, a bibliography and an index.

Dr. Schumann is to be congratulated upon this beautiful intellectual achievement amidst important diplomatic occupations.

Paris

Kamaleswar BHATTACHARYA

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Étienne Lamotte, *Opera Indologica*, [1] *Notes sur la Bhagavadgītā* (1929) avec une Préface de Louis de La Vallée Poussin [2] *Bouddhisme et Upanisad* (1932) par Jean Przyluski avec la collaboration d'É. Lamotte, Avec une nouvelle Préface de Minoru Hara, Publications de l'Institut de Louvain 53, Louvain-La-Neuve: Université catholique de Louvain 2004, XIV + 201 Pp. € 25. (Paperback)

In the field of Indology, like in any discipline of the humanities, there are a number of different scholarly cultures, that mainly seem to have developed under the influence of the languages through which most manifestations of culture are expressed. The principal strands of the humanities are normally identified as being expressed by an Anglo-Saxon, a German or a French discourse. Of course, theories and approaches are also pursued in other linguistic and cultural idioms,

and, as far as Oriental languages are concerned the Russian and Japanese scholarly worlds are particularly significant. Looking back on the history of scholarship at different points of time it may be possible to observe more or less of interaction between different scholarly cultures, debates between them and interest in common efforts to approach and understand any theme focused upon by humanistic research.

In any event, the linguistic diversity of scholarship first arose in the 18th century after the decline of the hegemony of the Latin language. During certain periods there have certainly been ambitions for wider language abilities. In our time, however, following on developments within natural sciences we are also witnessing a return in the humanities as well to one dominating discourse, the Anglo-Saxon, which is going hand in hand with the educational preference of practical training English all over the globe.

Given this present situation, one basic question must be asked about the work under review, even though it might be seen as an offence to the French language, and especially to the very lucid and pleasant style of Lamotte. For the benefit of scholarship, would it perhaps have been more appropriate that this seminal contribution to the study of the most ancient texts of Hindu culture and their relation of Buddhism should have been presented in English translation? The doctoral thesis by Lamotte, which is the chief part of the book under review, would have been particularly pedagogically suited for spreading his ideas and results due to its being exhaustive, lucid and at the same time a matter-of-fact interpretation of the *Bhagavadgītā* text.

This question about the language used is, however, merely caused by a slight doubt about whether the valuable re-edition under review will find a wide audience in the scholarly world. Of course from the perspective of history of scholarship there is a fundamental value in publishing and re-reading Lamotte's texts in its original language. Reading the original text is a pleasure, and there is no doubt whatsoever about the worth of the enterprise in itself, nor of the general value of returning to older scholarly texts on indological topics. Moreover, reading this work evokes certain questions of principle concerning the approach to ancient texts of the kind discussed.

It is a fact that at least the first and most extensive part of the book, *Notes sur la Bhagavadgītā*, should even nowadays be known and consulted by anyone working in the field. The introduction by Minoru Hara to this re-edition to a certain extent diminishes the objection raised above, as it aims to guide the reader through both the French texts.

After the publication of Lamotte's thesis and the article on Buddhism and Upaniṣads now re-published, certain developments have naturally taken place in the field of Indology, in particular with regards to such core Sanskrit texts as the *Bhagavadgītā* and the Upaniṣads. In the preface to the thesis on the *Bhagavadgītā* in 1929 Lamotte mentions the already then rapidly growing body of writings on the text — scholarly and otherwise. Lamotte himself starts from certain contemporary ideas about the text and its composition. The different scholarly discourses on Indology were rather close, without any hindrance from language,

and since Indology had one of its centers in the German-speaking world, Lamotte found his adversaries there. In particular he presents ideas about the *Bhagavad-gītā* that deviate from what Garbe and other outstanding Indologists had maintained for some decades. Against their view on the *Bhagavad-gītā* as a composite text, he advocates that it is instead homogenous as regards its composition and doctrines, and issued from a living discussion of its time. Lamotte is more argumentative in the appendix (p. 149, p. 133 in the original edition) against the spokesmen of interpolation theories about the text. In the Preface, Hara uses the expression “syncretic attitude” (p. VIII) and also reminds the reader of the concept “Inklusivismus”, introduced some decades later.

Later discussions on the *Bhagavad-gītā* normally point in the same direction as Lamotte argued about of the coherence of the text, even if they represent different ideas. This discussion still stands, but Lamotte may be seen as a predecessor of a moderated view on its composition. Hara calls the warning made by Lamotte about an extreme analysis “a remark” that was “prophetic” (p. IX). In reality the text has predominantly been perceived as rather coherent both by Indian and Western readers, and the alternative reading that stresses *Bhagavad-gītā*'s composite character belongs instead to philological discussions.

Lamotte's standpoint about the coherence of the text is philological and founded on a deep analysis and close interpretation of certain themes in the text. His main idea was that a coherent reading does not exclude that various features and various ideologies are discernable in the text. On p. 153 (p. 137 original edition) he states that it is necessary to accept the contradictions in the text, but that it is important not to arbitrarily construct theories about their incoherence. Also, it is necessary to be conscious of what the interpretational problems are based upon. Thus Lamotte also treats the sectarianism of Bhāgavata, preclassical Sāṃkhya, and Yoga, as well as a number of topics from the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta traditions.

In his view the background of Kṛṣṇa is an essential thread of the text, and its original basis lies in different texts. The relation between Kṛṣṇa and Bhāgavata is noted, which gives a historical turn to the appreciation of one of the foremost themes of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, while also putting the whole into the brahmanistic framework. Already at the outset Lamotte contends that, in spite of an essential difference, the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads all in fact arose within the closed setting of the brahmanic schools (p. 41, original edition p. 23), to which he also traces a source of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

On p. 38 in the present edition (p. 22 in the original one) Lamotte discusses in more detail the interaction of contemporary brahmanic thoughts and points at “la genèse des doctrines de la *Bhagavad-gītā*”. He finds a clue in the fact that “le Brahmanisme n'est ni une philosophie, ni une théologie, mais un assemblage heteroclite et souvent illogique d'éléments les plus disparates” — which would logically lead to a certain primary compositional nature also of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

However, in spite of the modulated picture Lamotte provides of the philosophical ideas and paths underlying the *Bhagavad-gītā* there is still a slight trace of him identifying something like dogmatism in the text, and a contention

that there should be some real possibility to label different philosophical systems — if only calling them “les Darśanas en préparation”—, a tendency in earlier studies that many modern indologists are aware of and oppose. One idea, however, that came to be more or less undisputed, was Lamotte’s establishment of a “pre-Sāṃkhya” as part of the setting of the *Bhagavadgītā*. In accordance he also points out (p. 130, p. 114 in the original edition) how the more ancient form of Sāṃkhya in the *Bhagavadgītā* is not opposed to Yoga (as contended by others). Such ideas imply the wholesome insight that the tradition, any tradition, might be viewed as a continuum — tradition in itself living and changing.

On the question of possible adherence to ‘systems’, anyhow, Lamotte establishes (p. 49f., p. 33f. in the original edition) that the *Bhagavadgītā* is a Vedānta text in as far as it continues the Upaniṣads, with strains of Sāṃkhya, a philosophy in development (Übergangsphilosophie); it is on this basis that he sets out to define the pre-classical Sāṃkhya.

Of course, within the vast resources of keywords in the text Lamotte actually appears to be conscious of the impossibility of establishing some fixed border-line between different, labeled, special concepts of philosophical value — only a definitive switch of terminology along a series of changes could result in a fixed point of demarcation. For pre-Sāṃkhya vs. Sāṃkhya he notes such a switch in the shift from *mahān* to *buddhi*.

In the second part of the thesis Lamotte attests his ideas by close surveys of passages in the text. He focuses in particular ‘*bhagavat*’ in all its senses, and to this notion of the divine he links up *Kṛṣṇa*, *brahman* and *iṣṭadevatā* for what he mentions as the Bhāgavata sect (p. 57, p. 41 in the original edition). In the thorough discussion he also considers views upon matter and soul in terms of *prakṛti*, its properties, the *guṇas*, and *puruṣa* as the individual, as well as the implications of morality through *yoga* and *karman*. In spite of placing the survey of the concept of *bhakti* at the end of his exposition he mentions as “le centre de gravitation de tout le poème”, also according it “son caractère plutôt mystique que philosophique” (p. 132, p. 116 in the original edition).

It is important that the *Bhagavadgītā* is seen as an open text providing possibilities for different readings. In this, Lamotte is a precursor.

In the conclusion he also shows his fine scholarly judgment by saying that (p. 143, p. 127 in original edition) “[i]l serait faux de croire que nous puissions tirer des conclusions certaines en matière de philosophie et de littérature hindoue”.

The final judgment on the *Bhagavadgītā* by Lamotte reads (p. 147, p. 131 original edition) “un chef-d’oeuvre d’habilité et de bon sens”.

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To the reprint of Lamotte’s dissertation a shorter piece of work has been added, an article originally published 1932 in BEFEO entitled “Bouddhisme et Upaniṣad”. This appears to be the real starting point of Lamotte’s lifelong involvement in Buddhist studies. The approximately 29 pages are presented by Jean Przyluski in co-operation with Étienne Lamotte, the latter seeming to have

mainly contributed the texts and translations interspersed for the sake of discussion of various topics.

The contention of Przuluski's presentation of views upon upaniṣadic texts and certain concepts is:

1. That the upaniṣadic ideas, as well as Buddhism originally, are about ritual means to attain *mokṣa*.
2. That the Upaniṣads and early Buddhism share their view of the cosmos in general and on our world with regard to three cosmological realms, three mental conditions, and three stages on the path towards *mokṣa*. The view on *svarga* and immortality also shows affinities.
3. That there is a change from triadic concepts to tetradic ones, at the same time as the Buddhists deviated from the concept of *svarga* towards the notion of *nirvāna*.
4. That the development leads towards greater complexity with the stages counted as seven in number.

A highly essential notion in the Upaniṣads is the verb *upās* with its derivatives. This topic is treated in section I of the article. The initial interpretation by Senart was "having knowledge" as opposed to Deussen's by then in German history of religions established interpretation as "verehren". The discussion has of course continued after the publication of the article, but the important issue here is rather the use of the word *upāsaka* in Buddhism, where it seems to have been frozen at some early point and functions as a more or less technical term for the devotees, with reference to their contemplative conduct, which probably could agree with the meaning "celui qui rend homage".

Section II of the article concerns the idea of the three worlds (lieux) in the Upaniṣads. Przuluski also tries to connect the concept of *nirvāna* with the idea on the topic of "deep sleep" in the Upaniṣads, which to me seems just a little too strained. To this Przuluski also connects the Buddhist idea of the four stages of *mokṣa* (by *dhyāna*: *śrotāpanna*, *sakṛdāgāmin*, *anāgāmin*, *arhat*) and these are discussed in the third section, with reference to Yoga. In the *Māṇḍukya-Upaniṣad*, three phases of sleep have been changed to four (wakedness/dream/deep sleep/ 'fourth stage' = *turīya* or *caturtha*), now compared with the Buddhist *rūpadhātu*, *arūpadhātu*, *nirodhadhātu* plus *kāmadhātu* as an addition). In my view the idea of 'four' might as well be grounded in ancient thought about *catuspad*.

The final fourth section concerns *bhūmi* as it appears in the special, and obviously late *Akṣy-Upaniṣad*, and it is compared to the steps towards *mokṣa* in Buddhism. The quoted Upaniṣad then speaks of the seven "terres", and a sun god, which Przuluski compares with Chaldean astrology.

Renewed discussion of certain important indological matters is encouraged by this re-issue volume for which we can only be grateful.

Uppsala University  
Sweden

Gunilla GREN-EKLUND

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