

epic's composers should choose to do so. This publication is a slight modification of Fuller's doctoral thesis (University of Lausanne), and perhaps falls victim to some of the natural shortcomings of that genre. It certainly displays the virtues of a thesis: an exhaustive, up-to-date bibliographical apparatus and a meticulous reading of the primary texts. Both qualities make this a useful reference for readers interested in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* or ancient Indian mythology. On the other hand, Feller's analysis grows speculative when she applies the universalist theories of Eliade, Dumèzil, and other comparative mythologists to explain the meanings of motifs within the myths. Some examples include her assertion that the Aśvins' gift of golden teeth are "the tokens of the immortality which Upamanyu gains by successfully undergoing his 'épreuve initiatique'" (p. 241), or her critique that Dumèzil's theory of Indra's 'sins of the warrior' neglects "this god's raining and fertilizing function" in the epics (p. 155). While admittedly a valuable exercise within a dissertation, such imaginative interpretations fail to address the more provocative historical question that Feller identifies in the book's final pages: why did the *Mahābhārata*, in the first place, feel the need to re-tell Vedic mythology "in a changing world" (p. 314)?

As a potential answer, Feller offers the reader Biardeau's argument that "the Epics were primarily composed as a reaction to the threat of Buddhism" (p. 314), but remains herself not entirely satisfied with this solution. Perhaps this is because Feller's fascinating study of intertextuality (though she does not use this term) points to an altogether different possibility — that the *Mahābhārata* played an active role in this 'changing world' by consciously creating an ideological distance (an 'inter-text') between itself and the Vedas. If we realize that the epics are not simply parroting Vedic myths, but performing them anew for specific audiences and specific purposes, it begins to make more sense to treat epic versions of Vedic myths as *revivals* rather than survivals of the older religious culture. Rethinking the monogenetic or unilinear model of textual development might be precisely the methodological shift needed to understand the unique and powerfully normativizing work of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* within the religious culture of ancient India.

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Gerhard Oberhammer, *Materialien zur Geschichte der Rāmānuja-Schule VIII: Zur Eschatologie der Rāmānuja-Schule vor Veṅkaṭanātha*, Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006, 174 Pp. € 44. (Paperback)

Outside India, the widespread notion still persists that Vedānta, if not Indian philosophy as a whole, culminated in the Advaita school of Śaṅkara, and that

subsequent developments in Indian thought do not merit the attention of contemporary foreign scholars to the same extent, because these developments are religious rather than philosophical in nature, with the increased prominence given in them to theism and *bhakti*. This unfortunately common attitude on the part of non-Indian researchers is, however, largely the result of historical developments in western philosophical and religious thinking, with its own specific interests, towards the end of the 19th century; it cultivates a very incomplete view of Indian intellectual history and effectively ignores the relevance of this history for living Indian culture. Vienna is one of the very few academic centres outside India where a concerted effort has been made to remedy this lop-sided state of affairs in Indian philosophical studies on a solid, philological basis, with recourse to authoritative writings of the important traditions that until now have been neglected. The Dvaita tradition of Vedānta, established by Madhva, has been treated in important works by Roque Mesquita, and the Viśiṣṭādvaita-Vedānta of Rāmānuja has been the subject of writings by Mesquita and, already over a period of many years, by Gerhard Oberhammer.

The work under review is the eighth volume in a series of studies by Oberhammer on Śrīvaiṣṇavism and Viśiṣṭādvaita (the “Rāmānuja-Schule”), the first of which (a study of the *Tattvaratnākara* of Parāśarabhaṭṭa, Rāmānuja’s immediate successor in the Tenkalai Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition) appeared in 1979. Subsequent volumes have dealt with topics such as the *antaryāmin*, *vibhūti* and *śaranāgati*, which are of particular significance for this tradition. The volume under review is an exploration of Rāmānuja’s eschatological views, with a few notes on how these have been further treated by some thinkers who soon followed Rāmānuja.

A large portion of this study consists in the tracing of Rāmānuja’s Upaniṣadic exegesis. The theological reason for this is understandable: Rāmānuja sees the liberating *vidyā* not as an insight into the nature of the *ātman* which, ultimately, agrees with the proper understanding of the words of the Upaniṣads (as, for instance, Śaṅkara sees it) but, on the contrary, as the respectful realization and contemplation that results from the grasping of the meaning of the words of the Upaniṣads (pp. 17-18). That is to say, Rāmānuja presents his world-view as a logical consequence of Vedic-brahminical orthodoxy, and argues that his exegesis correctly represents the religious intent of what is supposedly ‘the Vedic’ tradition. Oberhammer’s concern is to understand the theological views that form the basis of this living Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, hence one finds no discussion of purely academic, historical questions concerning the historicity and connectedness of Vaiṣṇavism vis-à-vis Upaniṣadic thought; hence also the focus of this study is the eschatology of this school of thought “before Veṅkaṭanātha”, since Veṅkaṭanātha (also known as Vedāntadeśika, 1268-1369) represents a point of consolidation in the history of this school. Occasionally, Oberhammer does point out where Rāmānuja imposes his own, new views on older texts on which he comments (e.g., p. 25, about the Brahmasūtra on the relationship between the individual *ātman* and *brahman*).

The inclusion of the text of a smaller work by Rāmānuja, the *Vaikuṇṭha-gadya*, along with a translation and short essay (pp. 105-118), forms a remarkable turn in this book. After the scholastic argumentations that constitute the larger part of the preceding section, the *Vaikuṇṭha-gadya* represents an entirely different view on the subject of salvation. Oberhammer himself states that this inclusion of a piece of religious poetry may appear “unnecessary, if not entirely out of place” (p. 112). But after all the discussion of Upaniṣadic exegesis, the *Vaikuṇṭha-gadya* is an interesting illustration of a very different element that has gone into the religious synthesis that is Śrīvaiṣṇavism, namely, the Pañcarātra. Three more shorter text fragments are included, with translations and discussion, as samples of how the eschatological thoughts of Rāmānuja were developed further in the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition: fragments from the *Nītimālā* of Nārāyaṇārya, the *Nayadyumāṇi* of Meghanādārisūri, and the *Prapannapārijāta* of Varadaguru.

Rāmānuja faced the common theological problem of reconciling his philosophical ideas with a scriptural authority that was put into words many centuries earlier. As a Vedāntin, he was bound to the Brahmasūtras of Bādarāyaṇa and to certain Upaniṣadic passages, such as the description of the *arcirādimārga*, the “way of the light etc.”, which is found in the Chāndogya and Br̥hadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads and depicts the way on which the soul of a wise person (*vidvat*) proceeds after death, as well as other mythical sources. Oberhammer sees in Rāmānuja a tendency towards demythification (“Entmythologisierung”, pp. 87, 152, 155 and elsewhere), which means a more abstract kind of thinking, a moving away from the sometimes all-too-concrete notions that have been handed down in the form of mythical imagery that is taken at face value by members of the religious community who claim to represent orthodoxy. Much of Rāmānuja’s exegetical exercise is a scholastic defence against such orthodoxy, but in the end some of this imagery remains also at the core of Rāmānuja’s elaboration of his ideas, because ultimately he is discussing an assumed reality which no human can know (pp. 165-166). The condition of the emancipated soul is described in clearly theistic terms (cf. also the *Vaikuṇṭha-gadya*): the soul experiences *aiśvarya* or sovereignty (“Herrlicherkeit”) in that it realizes its essential unity with God, lord of the universe, and therefore has no will of its own that is separate from God’s, which at the same time means that it has no lord over itself (it is *ananyādhipati*, pp. 74-75, 83-86, 92-94). The pious Vaiṣṇava, according to Rāmānuja, wishes to be “an eternal servant of God, whose only delight is to be a remainder [of God] without remainder” (*aśeṣaśeṣataikaratirūpanityakimkara*, p. 157), and this is achieved by the loss of all karma.

In view of the huge amount of Sanskrit text that is included in the book, the number of transliteration errors is quite small. Many of these do not seriously hamper a correct understanding of the text (e.g., where an *m* has taken the place of an *anusvāra*, such as thrice on p. 17, p. 110, many times on p. 111, and elsewhere); occasionally a macron has been placed over a vowel erroneously (*niratiśayapriyah* for *niratiśayapriyah* p. 21, *paramam dhāmā* for *dhāma* p. 56, *prākṛti* for *prakṛti* p. 97, *-ibhāvah* (in *śarīraśarīrbhāvah* and *śeṣaśeṣibhāvah*) for *-ibhāvah* pp. 86, 102, but correct on p. 116) or omitted (*kūṭasthah* for *kūṭasthah* p.

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55). The many Sanskrit passages throughout the book have been carefully selected for their relevance. In typical 'Vienna school' style, following the example of Oberhammer's predecessor Erich Frauwallner, the German translations, with a strict use of parentheses and square brackets, are so accurate that a reader who is somewhat familiar with this kind of writing can often correctly guess the wording of the original Sanskrit (always faithfully provided in lengthy footnotes). An eight-page index of quoted passages is given at the very end of the book.

The book contains a concise bibliography of relevant literature, which does not mention the most recent edition of Rāmānuja's *Śrībhāṣya*, brought out by the Academy of Sanskrit Research in Melkote, which perhaps has not been taken as the basis for the Vedāntic discussions in this study because earlier studies in the series appeared before this edition was produced and hence were based on the University of Poona edition by R.D. Karmarkar.

In its discussion of eschatology, the book briefly touches upon a number of metaphysical, historical and hermeneutical questions that merit further study. One hopes that such examples of research as are still being given by members of this now retiring generation of scholars will inspire younger researchers to realize that without such basic and meticulous research, the study of the immensely rich tradition of Indian philosophical and religious thought in all its diversity is doomed to be superficial, perhaps meaninglessly so. In order to properly evaluate such Indian contributions to philosophy for their historical and perhaps also wider contemporary worth, one must take them seriously, which means that one must go to the sources and actively and critically recreate in thought the inner dynamics of these world-views. The present reviewer hopes that Prof. Oberhammer will continue giving such examples to a world of scholarship where philological solidness is in danger of losing its central position.

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Stephen H. Phillips and N.S. Ramanuja Tatacharya, *Gangeśa on the Upādhi: The "Inferential Undercutting Condition"*, New Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 2002, x + 160 Pp. Sanskrit Glossary and Bibliography. Rs. 250. (Hardback)

The present book represents a great achievement in the study of the Navya-nyāya theory of inference: it offers a translation and explanation of the "Undercutting Condition Section" (*Upādhikṛakaraṇa*) of the "Inference Chapter" (*Anumāna-khaṇḍa*) of Gangeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi* (*TC*) along with an introduction of 30 pages. Thirty-six years have passed since E. Frauwallner first translated the same text into German: *Die Lehre von der zusätzlichen Bestimmung (upādhi) in*