

reader. Certainly, I can assure every scholar of classical Indian philosophy of finding much here to be read with profit and pleasure.

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Eliot Deutsch and Rohit Dalvi (eds.), *The Essential Vedānta: A New Source Book of Advaita Vedānta*, Delhi: New Age Books, First Indian Edition, 2006, ix + 421 Pp. Rs. 450. (Paperback)

This is a revised edition of the reputed Advaita book *A Source Book of Advaita Vedānta* (Eliot Deutsch and J.A.B. Buitenen, Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1971). The editors, in the Preface, state that there are several differences from the original edition stressing that the strength lies in its retention of the tradition of Advaita Vedānta. Because of its strong overtones of Advaita Vedānta, it is thoroughly and to its core an Advaita book.

The book consists of three parts and each part constitutes an introduction and selections of English translations of original Sanskrit texts. As the collection of English translations of the Advaita works presented in this book is the most valuable point, I think a discussion regarding the merits of the translations is necessary.

In Part I most of the translations are done by the editors. In Part II, where the only Sanskrit text is the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, the translation is taken from *Sacred Books of the East* (50 vols.) by George Thibaut, considered one of the most authoritative figures in the field. The selections in the Advaita texts in Part III might be considered the climatic point as it includes previous texts that have never been translated, stressing the increasing importance of Advaita texts since the original version was published nearly four decades ago. The translations and the authors of Part I, Part II and Part III are the following:

Part I: Translations from Veda and Upaniṣads: the *Rgveda*, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, and the *Bhagavadgītā*

Part II: Translation of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* by Śaṅkara (trans. by G. Thibaut)

Part III : Translations from the Advaita Vedānta School:

Kārikās on the *Maṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (Gauḍapāda) (trans. by E. Deutsch)

Upadeśasāhasrī (by Śaṅkara) (trans. by Sengaku Mayeda)

Brahmasūtrabhāṣya (by Śaṅkara)

Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣadbhāṣya (by Śaṅkara) (trans. by Swāmī

Mādhavānanda)

Bhagavadgītābhāṣya (by Śaṅkara) (trans. by A. Mahādeva Śāstrī)

Naiṣkarmyasiddhi (by Sureśvara) (trans. by A.J. Alston)

Brahmasiddhi (by Maṇḍana Mīśra) (trans. by R. Balasubramanian)

- Pañcapādika* (by Padmapāda) (trans. by D. Venkataramiah)
Bhāmātī (by Vācaspati Mīśra) (trans. by S.S. Suryanarayan Sastri *et. al.*)
Samkṣepaśārīraka (by Sarvajñātman) (trans. by T.M.P. Mahadevan)
Iṣṭasiddhi (by Vimuktātman) (trans. by P.K. Sundaram)
Pañcadaśī (by Vidyāraṇya) (trans. by Hari Prasad Shastri)
Vedāntakalpalatikā (by Madhusūdāna Sarasvatī) (trans. by R.D. Karmarkar)
Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā (by Śrīharaṣa) (trans. by Ganganatha Jha)
Vedāntasāra (by Sadānanda) (trans. by Swami Nikhīlananda)
Vedāntaparibhāṣā (by Dharmarāja) (trans. by S.S. Suryanarayan Sastri)
Siddhāntaleśasamgraha (by Appaya Dīkṣita) (trans. by S.S. Suryanarayan Sastri)

As previously stated, the book is divided into three main parts with each part consisting of several chapters totaling 21. The book is organized in such a way that each part lays the foundations that help the reader better understand the process it took to establish the Advaita Vedānta school and the other schools that followed. Part I shows us initial concepts of Advaita tradition, and Part II is a more in-depth discussion on the establishment of Advaita School of Vedānta. Owing to the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* by Śaṅkara, i.e. the commentary on the *Brahma Sūtra*, Advaita Vedānta was recognized as a school.

Part I is titled *Background in Tradition: The Three Departures* and is principally made up of selections of *Prasthānatraya*, i.e. Veda-Upaniṣad, the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Brahmasūtra*, in which a variety of fundamental ideas of Advaitic teachings are described, though they are retained scattered throughout the literature regarding *Prasthānatraya*. The philosophical underpinnings of Vedānta doctrines, found anywhere within the *Prasthānatraya*, were being preached coherently and without any contradictions, based on the same Vedānta texts found in other literary sources. Chapter 1 is reserved for Veda and Upaniṣads, and chapter 2 is for the *Bhagavadgītā*. Last, chapter 3 is reserved for the description of the synoptic contents of the *Brahmasūtra*.

Part II is titled *Philosophical and Cultural Background* and chapters 4, 5 and 6, which make up the format of Part II, are titled *Early History and Cultural Values of Vedānta*, *Common Philosophical Problems*, and *Criticisms of Rival Systems*, respectively. Chapter 5 presents a philosophical discussion of Vedānta beginning with 'What is the Brahman?', and the allied metaphysical problems, 'What is the status of the self in relation to the Brahman?', 'How may the Brahman be known?' and 'How may man obtain liberation?'. These problems are more deeply explored in discussions in Part III, while presenting post-Śaṅkara Advaitins. The last chapter (chapter 21 in Part III) offers a concise and appropriate summing up of the philosophical threads in Part III.

Part III is titled *Sources of Advaita Vedānta* and is composed of 15 chapters (7-21), each consisting of a short profile including the histories and philosophical contributions each made to Advaita Vedānta in a chronological order from the earliest works of Gauḍapāda (chapter 7), to a lengthy discussion of Śaṅkara (chapter 8), and finishing with the translation of Appaya Dīkṣita's *Siddhānta-*

leśasamgraha in chapter 20. From the inclusion of such a complete body of work related to Advaitic teachings, philosophy and study, several salient points emerge. (i) The *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* itself left some problems and issues unattended. Therefore, the beginning of Part III, in addition to texts by Śaṅkara himself, both his work and the work of his direct disciples are introduced to address some of those problems. (ii) Maṇḍana Mīśra is a controversial figure but is indispensable as a contemporary and a discussant as well. (iii) The later partition into Vivaraṇa school and Bhāmatī school is taken into consideration through the editor's selection and inclusion of the Advaitins and their works. (iv) Sureśvara's lineage, though not being named, is also included. (v) The *Prakarāṇa Granthas*, 'books of introduction to Advaita Vedānta for upcoming students' are an appropriate addition here. These were actually used while instructing beginners of the Advaita doctrines in later times of Advaita tradition. *Summary* (chapter 21) then concludes Part III, as previously stated.

In 1971, under the circumstances of scarcity of texts and translations, students of Advaita Vedānta depended on history of Indian philosophy based on Dasgupta or Sinha, particularly in pursuit of post-Śaṅkara Advaita Vedānta. Therefore, this book was widely accepted and specifically intended for study by non-Sanskrit learners. They were able to study Advaita Vedānta without any knowledge of Sanskrit. Today, after nearly four decades since the 1971 edition was published, it has unarguably become a core reference book for beginners of Indian philosophy and non-Sanskrit learners. Though the book has its strengths in the availability to budding researchers and philosophers, some faults do remain.

That being said, the editor's lack of any inclusions of research devoted to Advaita Vedānta within the past four decades, might have supported the claim that this was a revised edition. The lack of scholarly references to Advaita Vedānta could be seen in the bibliography, which could have included more sources, particularly in the area of Major Primary Sources of the English Translations. Several recent research works contained in secondary sources on Advaita Vedānta might have been separately listed from the editor's original list. This acknowledgment might have indicated a more inclusive bibliography related to Advaita Vedānta's contributions to the study of Indian philosophy.

Lastly a few of comments on several translations:

Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā in Part III is an excellent addition, as its importance had been recognized by Dasgupta and other scholars, which was not included in the original 1971 edition. The description at pages 369 and 402 of the book, in which credit was given to *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā of Śrītharṣa* (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1986) shows that the translation was actually done by the well renowned translator Ganganatha Jha, whose original translation was accomplished in the early 20th century. Accordingly, the original book (1971) at page 314 noted that the translation did in fact exist.

We have Four Siddhi in Advaita tradition and understanding the Siddhi's importance, the editors have included three of them; *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, *Brahmasiddhi* and *Iṣṭasiddhi*. However, they fail to refer to the *Advaitasiddhi*, though it is considered the *magnum opus* of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. Furthermore, other

translation works and research on the *Advaitasiddhi* have been done since the first edition of the book nearly four decades ago, which justifies a more comprehensive discussion of this major work. In the forty year time span, advances in the research of Advaita traditions have been successfully completed and should have been included in the reference section. This surely would have been a notable improvement over the 1971 edition.

The English translation of *Upadeśasāhasrī* was contributed to the original edition although unpublished. It was later made in book form under the title of *A Thousand Teachings the Upadeśasāhasrī of Śaṅkara* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1979). The English translation of *Iṣṭasiddhi* was likewise published under the title of *Iṣṭasiddhi of Vimuktātman* (Madras: Swadharma Swaarajya Sangha, 1980). Both the authors had contributed their manuscripts to the original edition. The readers should be aware of this acknowledged in either the footnotes or in the bibliography.

The English translation of *Samkṣepaśārīraka* was contributed by T.M.P. Mahadevan from an unpublished manuscript. And in 1972, N. Veezhinathan, who was a lecturer at the Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, published the translation work *The Samkṣepaśārīraka of Sarvajñātman* (Madras: University of Madras) with a Foreword by the aforementioned Mahadevan, who was the director of the Centre at that time. The work of Veezhinathan was not included in the revised edition's bibliography, which I expected to find. This is just another minor flaw that the editors should have considered.

The book has been undoubtedly a welcome contribution to the study of Advaita Vedānta. Yet, the inclusion of a deeper discussion, sources and scholarly translations related to Advaita Vedānta within the past four decades, the book might have been more useful to aspiring students of Advaita as an educational resource.

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Harsha V. Dehejia, *Leaves of a Pipal Tree: Aesthetic Reflections on Some Hindu Myths and Symbols*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2005, 186 Pp. Rs. 2400. (Hardback)

Harsha V. Dehejia is able to get a symbolic grasp of certain easily overlooked phenomena, explaining the images condensed therein with a deep yet delicate touch, with a skill that does not come easily to us Japanese. The very title, *Leaves of a Pipal Tree*, is sufficient to convey the richness of the author's conceptions and the cultural soil in which they are rooted.

Dehejia holds two doctorates, one in Medicine and the other in the History of