

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The English translation of *Upadeśasahasrī* was contributed to the original edition although unpublished. It was later made in book form under the title of *A Thousand Teachings the Upadeśasahasrī 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The English translation of *Samkṣepaśārīraka* was contributed by T.M.P. Mahadevan from an unpublished manuscript.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

Indian Culture. His far-ranging activities in both fields have won him an international audience. *Leaves* is based on notes from a series of lectures on Indian cultural history that he gave in Canada. Each chapter handles a specific topic from an iconological viewpoint by focusing on figurative expressions related to that theme. The result is a book that can serve as an introduction to the history of Indian culture and thought. The wealth of color plates — a number of them, for example, reveal the diversity of the images latent in the *pipal* leaf — is designed to make it easier for the foreign reader to fathom the depths in the history of India's culture and thought.

The majority of the 150 color plates are from Dehejia's personal collection, and they offer an eloquent testament to the passion with which he has sought Truth and Beauty. The patchwork of paragraphs that accompany them make the reader feel as if he is being guided through a gallery of ancient Indian art by a generous docent, though at times the explanation can grow wordy, and a newcomer — especially a foreign one — may feel overwhelmed by the vast classical knowledge that is strewn throughout the narrative.

By way of introduction Dehejia writes:

India is a civilisation of many images, a culture of many visual feasts, a tradition where the visible and the palpable are as important as the oral and the occurrent, where our highest truths are embodied in our *kathas* and *gathas*, our songs and stories, where our temples are not only places of worship but equally a gallery of beautiful forms and figures, where myth is as important as doctrine, where ancient memories are full of cherished narratives, where mythic beings are real in many different ways and we enrich our lives by festivals which celebrate events from the lives of our mythic gods and goddesses, and where knowledge is gained as much from itinerant performers as it is from learned discourses (p. 10) and, where when the wind blows through the Pipal tree it is as if we hear the hymns of the Vedas. (p. 7)

Explicating the cultural history behind the chosen themes by drawing on pictorial material, the book itself serves as a good example of the Indian tradition of narration accompanied by illustrations.

While the importance of Indian images and symbols has often been pointed out by scholars, this work is particularly effective in linking up the twelve main themes — the *pipal* tree, Ganesh, Nayika, Krishna, Kama, Shiva, Shakti, Sesayi Vishnu, Rangamandapa, objects, vessels, Adbhuta Rasa — and each chapter builds upon the previous ones. The rich diversity of the content is not simply due to an abundance of pictorial material being presented; rather, the overall effect is comparable to a symphonic poem that provides the reader with comfort and pleasure.

Moreover, the book abounds with flashes of insight that cast an incisive light on aspects of Indian culture and thought with a novelty and originality rarely found in works on iconology..

Leaves is not a systematic treatise that elaborates a single theme, but an anthology in which each chapter can stand alone as a complete work. Yet just as “the words of the Vedas lie dormant in each of the *pipal* leaves,” the chapters of this book blend to form an organic whole, something that may be likened to a vital “Tree of Wisdom.”

The many Buddhists among Japanese readers are likely to assume that the *pipal* tree is the sacred “bodhi” tree under which Shakyamuni reached Buddhahood, or a sacred icon that symbolizes the Buddha’s enlightenment. But contrary to these preconceptions, there is not a single line about Shakyamuni’s enlightenment in the first chapter, which is entitled “The *Pipal* Tree.” All the more reason for us to gaze through the *pipal* leaf to learn more about the fertile womb of Indian culture, that vast matrix in which even Buddhism is swallowed up as but one among many great phenomena.

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Patrick Olivelle, *Dharmasūtra Parallels: Containing the Dharmasūtras of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana and Vasiṣṭha*, Delhi: Motilal Banar-sidass, 2005, IX+ 230 Pp. Rs. 695. (Hardback)

Into and throughout the 1990’s, Professor Patrick Olivelle published many books and articles about renunciation and asceticism in ancient India and about the later Vedic literature. More recently his research has focused on the Dharmasāstras, and he has published several critical editions and English translations of the *Manusmṛti* and Dharmasūtras.

The study of the Dharmasāstra genre was begun during the earliest phases of Indology. Important texts were published in critical edition form and also translated into modern languages. Great scholars such as G. Bühler and G. Jhā paid much attention to comparisons with parallel passages in the Dharmasāstras, chiefly those in the *Manusmṛti*, though lists compiled by Bühler and Jhā do not include the Sanskrit text itself. In contrast, the *Dharmakośa* (1937-) is a comprehensive collection of Sanskrit passages from many fields: the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Dharmasūtras, Dharmasāstras, Epics, Purāṇas, etc. They are arranged mainly according to subjects presented in Dharmasāstra. Of course, the digitization of Indic texts have made searches for words, phrases, and sentences markedly easier than before, but this does not diminish the importance of the book form, if for no other reason than the portability and sense of context relative to the parts or whole of a text that the latter provides.

Subjects treated in the Dharmasūtras and Dharmasāstras did not change greatly over the generations in which they were compiled. We can therefore compare passages written in different eras on the same subject, which allows us to