

Mesquita, Roque: *Madhva und seine unbekanntenen literarischen Quellen. Einige Beobachtungen*. [Publication of the De Nobili Research Library, Vol. XXIV]. Wien: Sammlung De Nobili, 1997. 151p. öS 400,– (ISBN 3-900-271-29-1).

The mysterious sources often quoted by Madhva in order to substantiate his innovative Dvaita doctrine(s) have puzzled modern scholars for decades and have been subject to diametrically opposed interpretations.

On the one hand, scholars like A. VENKATASUBBIAH (*The Indian Antiquary* 62 [1933] 190, n. 24) claimed that Madhva's sources could not be authentic, for "[t]he only alternative is to believe that copies of these works existed in a library to which Madhva had access, that these copies were unique, and that no other writer except Madhva (whether anterior, posterior or contemporary to him) had access to that library. This is impossible, and hence one cannot but conclude that Madhva fabricated evidence on a large scale".

On the other hand, scholars like HEIMANN, GLASENAPP and SIAUVE could not believe that Madhva would dare to claim to know a large number of scriptures that no one else did. In her fundamental work on Madhva, S. SIAUVE attempted to explain this intriguing state of affairs by assuming that Madhva was able to consult and memorize unknown works while travelling, and that shortly after

Madhva's time these works were destroyed. "Peu de temps après Madhva, le Nord de l'Inde subissait bien des destructions" (quoted by M., p. 21, n. 19). This diversity of opinion among modern scholars reflects, in fact, an ongoing debate in traditional Vedānta circles. While Madhva's followers would obviously never admit that he made up his sources as he went along, other Vedāntins such as Appayadīkṣita did not hesitate to criticize Madhva for quoting false passages everywhere (*dūṣyasthalāni sarvatra sūcyante* [p. 25]) and to assert that they had been made up by no one but Madhva himself (*svamātrakalpita* [ib.]).

The present monograph constitutes the first attempt to solve the riddle of Madhva's sources in a systematic and methodic manner. After presenting the previous scholarship on this matter, M. investigates the theological background which may have allowed Madhva to fabricate in all honesty Śruti and Smṛti sources. M. shows that the dilemma scholars felt caught in believing they had to choose between either assuming that Madhva had access to otherwise unknown texts or considering Madhva to be a liar is a false one. Rather Madhva's belief that he was the third *avatāra* of Viṣṇu (after Hanumān and Bhīma) and his doctrine of *avatāra* as being absolutely identical to the deity it incarnates blur and sublate the distinction between the "author" of the (in the case of Śruti, eternal) text and its "reader".

M. then proceeds to consider "redaktionskritische" arguments for Madhva's authorship. He formulates (p. 79) three criteria for deciding whether a quotation from an unknown work, or one from an otherwise unknown passage of a known work, or an anonymous quotation has been penned by Madhva: (1) if it appears only in Madhva's writings and reflects the teaching of the Madhva school; (2) if it is attributed by Madhva to Viṣṇu; (3) if it relates to or repeats verbatim passages from known works of Madhva. None of Madhva's disputed quotations seems to fulfill all three criteria. However, the first two criteria apply to quoted passages which belong, according to Madhva, to no less than eleven works (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, *Śabdānirṇaya*, *Bṛhattantra*, *Prakāśikā*, *Tattva-viveka*, *Guruvṛtta*, *Sattattva*, *Tattvanirṇaya*, *Ṛgvedasaṃhitā*, *Svādhyāya* and *Bhaviṣyatparvan*). Further quoted passages can be attributed to Madhva on the basis of the third criterion alone, specifically to those works of Madhva that reinterpret (by the simple elimination of a *daṇḍa*) the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad's famous doctrine *tat tvam asi* as *atat tvam asi*.

M. could not deal in this short work with all the passages quoted by Madhva whose authenticity is disputed. However, any further discussion of Madhva's sources will be enormously indebted to M.'s work. Although the book is relatively short and transparent in structure, an index of Sanskrit terms and an *index locorum* would be welcome.

E. Franco