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itive awareness supervenes, akin to poetic insight. As Heine more colloquially expresses it in the title of chapter 5, it is “Seeing the Forest, but Not Missing the Trees.” He goes on to show how one can employ this adage to resolve conflicts, to settle crises, to turn defeat to one’s advantage, and to develop powers of diplomacy.

Throughout this book, Heine balances recondite allusions to Eastern philosophy with frequent references to sports, jazz, films, and Bob Dylan lyrics. Though it is difficult to make this work, Heine does. Especially persuasive is Heine’s portrayal of Phil Jackson, the legendary professional basketball coach. Jackson, combining the best of the Hermit and the Warrior, has a mental agility that allows him to create complex strategies and to coax cooperation out of incongruent and difficult personalities.

Philosophers in the Western tradition may find it interesting to see how the concerns of Zen address their own concerns, albeit in a different idiom. Even if one disagrees with the tenets of Zen Buddhism about, say, the subversive quality of all emotions, the futility of desire, or the inconsistency of reality, it is hard to disagree that Zen has tremendous adaptive value in the workplace. In fact, in its practical advice, *White Collar Zen* sounds much like Plato’s guide to the good life. Plato’s philosophy, however, is rationalistic, non-holistic, and absolute in its commitment to the reality of time, identity, and the impossibility of contradiction. That it is non-Zen at its philosophical core is an irony that would not be wasted on Heine’s Senpai.

Epistemologies and the Limitations of Philosophical Enquiry: Doctrine in Madhva Vedanta. By Deepak Sarma. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005. Pp. xiii + 101.

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Epistemologies and the Limitations of Philosophical Enquiry: Doctrine in Madhva Vedanta, by Deepak Sarma, purports to discuss the possibility of philosophical evaluation of a tradition of thought and practice, in this case the Dvaita school of Vedānta to which the author belongs, that upholds a “strict insider epistemology.” (Although the work bears the subtitle “Doctrine in Madhva Vedanta,” for information about beliefs and epistemology the reader would be better advised to consult Deepak Sarma’s *An Introduction to Madhva Vedanta* [Ashgate, 2003].)

The present reviewer is not privy to the “insider-outsider debate” apparently current in some centers of Religious Studies, and I state at the outset that I cannot see what all the fuss is about. If one is not a member of a private club, one probably doesn’t care about what goes on within its walls. If a tradition is closed to nonmembers, successfully concealing its beliefs and practices (in the manner of some versions of Freemasonry), that’s the end of the matter. If texts are really not accessible (p. 6), the activities that the philosopher can pursue are not just “severely restricted”! If what a tradition involves is public (even allowing for esoteric elements revealed only to initiates and for rituals of restricted participation), there are still “outsiders,” but they are not debarred from appreciation, discussion, and critical philosophical

analysis of its truth claims. Albeit a middle-aged male member of the Church of England, I can understand (in the conventional sense of the term, which is the only one it has) the Dvaitin adoption of the unusual reading “*atat tvam asi*” (*Chandogya Upanishad* 6.8.7 et seq.).

What is meant by “insider epistemology”? Sarma says:

[T]here are two kinds of communities that uphold insider epistemologies. One is centred around experiential data and claims that outsiders can neither know nor understand what it is like to be an insider. The other simply does not permit outsiders to access root texts. Though actual communities are likely to lie somewhere between these two, or combine elements from each, this bivalent taxonomy is useful as a heuristic device [*sic*]. (p. 9)

The Madhvas, insofar as they deny noninitiates access to some of their basic texts, belong to the second group. (Members of the first are what can politely be called eccentric.) Madhvāchārya, the founder, prohibited outsiders from reading certain texts and from learning from teachers. These restrictions on eligibility, it is claimed, “insulated his position from criticism and evaluation.”

Even if outsiders’ views of core Madhva school doctrines are deemed irrelevant by insiders, Sarma’s assertion that Madhvāchārya’s views are immune to rational consideration by people who do not belong to the same tradition will astonish anyone familiar with medieval Vedāntic debates. The second chapter describes the historical context in which Madhvāchārya’s “insider epistemology” was established. The problem here for the author’s insistence on some particularly exigent sort of Dvaitin exclusivity is that there is nothing strikingly un-Vedāntic about that tradition’s claims where eligibility for hearing and understanding Scripture (*shruti*) is concerned. As the author makes clear, Vedāntic theological enquiry, the systematic elucidation of the Upanishads and Brahma-sūtras in the context of dialectic between rival schools, was the preserve of males born into the higher three castes who could understand Sanskrit. This constraint is sometimes intensified by sectarianism, where cultic initiation is additional to caste-based qualification. In the latter respect, the Madhvas are comparable to Shrī Vaishnavas and sundry Shaiva cults. But none of this impeded a plethora of rational disputation! Had the Madhva school prohibited outsiders from “accessing its texts altogether,” argument could never have gotten off the ground. But it certainly did. Moreover, the restrictions on eligibility or qualification (*adhikara*) to study Scripture amount to the claim that there are moral and intellectual preconditions for a proper understanding of some subject matter. At its most obvious, this means that you cannot read Sanskrit texts if you have not taken the trouble to learn Sanskrit. This might have restrictive consequences, but it has nothing to do with secrecy.

Some traditions may preserve esoteric formulas couched in a coded language, but this in itself raises no substantive philosophical problem. The expression, “esoteric schools of Vedanta” (p. 17) is, to say the least, wide of the mark. The author’s enthusiasm about occultism leads him to say that “the elusive nature of the Brahma-sutras lends itself to concealment.” Those aphorisms, summarizing Upanishadic

topics, were used as *aides-memoires* by teachers and pupils. Their necessary brevity made for ambiguity and susceptibility to differing exegeses. But there's nothing remotely esoteric here.

The third chapter lists the families of texts recognized as authorities by the Madhva tradition. The canonical material presented here is extensive and all is the "public-property" of twice-born Hindus. While the tradition might have its secrets, Madhva's restrictions on eligibility of access do not appear to be such that his doctrines could neither be questioned nor refuted by adherents of other traditions.

It would appear that esotericism as a "heuristic device" for the appreciation of medieval Vedānta leads to a dead end.

One misses a discussion of Roque Mesquita's *Madhva's Unknown Literary Sources: Some Observations* (Aditya Prakashan, 2000), in which consideration is given to the way in which Madhva's understanding of himself as a human form of Vishnu allowed him to invent scriptural authorities with a good conscience. Such fictions come under what librarians call "restricted access," and it is unsurprising that the tradition similarly keeps them from public view.