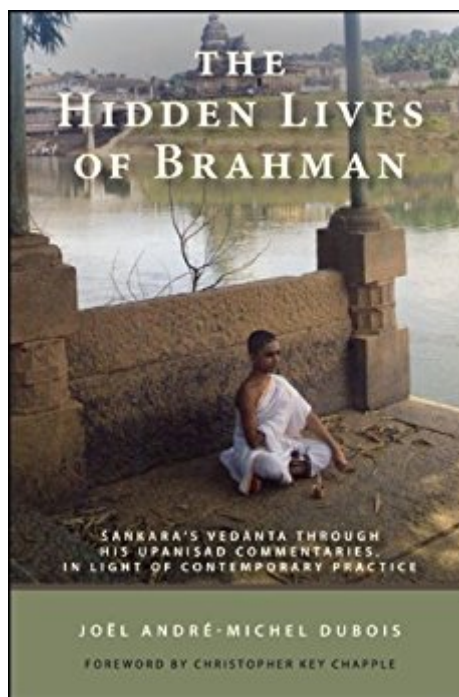


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The Hidden Lives Of Brahman: Sankara's Vedanta Through His Upanisad Commentaries, In Light Of Contemporary Practice (SUNY Series In Religious Studies)



Synopsis

Uses both textual and ethnographic sources to demonstrate that in Āśā ...kāra's vedānta, brahman is an active force as well as a transcendent ultimate. Āśā ...kāra's thought, advaita vedānta or non-dual vedānta, is a tradition focused on brahman, the ultimate reality transcending all particular manifestations, words, and ideas. It is generally considered that the transcendent brahman cannot be attained through any effort or activity. While this conception is technically correct, in *The Hidden Lives of Brahman*, Joël André-Michel Dubois contends that it is misleading. Hidden lives of brahman become visible when analysis of Āśā ...kāra's seminal commentaries is combined with ethnographic descriptions of contemporary Brāhmin students and teachers of vedānta, a group largely ignored in most studies of this tradition. Dubois demonstrates that for Āśā ...kāra, as for Brāhmin tradition in general, brahman is just as much an active force, fully connected to the dynamic power of words and imagination, as it is a transcendent ultimate. The central idea of a multifaceted brahman in Āśā ...kāra's thought is original and will be well received. Frederick Smith, coeditor of *Modern and Global Ayurveda: Pluralism and Paradigms* The author's detailed descriptions of the actual pedagogical practices of contemporary Brāhmin training is a welcome contribution. One gets a real sense of the teacher-student relationship from this book. Andrew O. Fort, author of *Jñānvanmukti in Transformation: Embodied Liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedānta* [Dubois] captures the sounds, sights, and tastes of India's Brāhmin schools and centers of study, conveying a sense of what he calls the "hidden lives" of young people who later emerge to carry on the tradition of advaita vedānta. In elegant, descriptive language, Dubois evokes the mood and energy of the daily life followed by these young men as they prepare for highly specialized careers. from the Foreword by Christopher Key Chapple Joël André-Michel Dubois is Professor of Humanities and Religious Studies at California State University, Sacramento.

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