

historical guises of *vīrāṅganā* (female hero), *satyāgrahī* (nonviolent protester), and *sant* (saint) (200).

Part Three, “Locations: the Politics of the Icon,” links iconic instability to corporeal volatility, which is key to Ghosh’s argument. The chapters here present specific historical contexts in which the consumer is “opened” by affect into the volatility of a larger social body—moments in which “ordinary mass commodities” (Phoolan Devi, Mother Teresa, and Roy) become powerful signifiers and consumers actually become agents. Such moments include the assassination of Phoolan Devi, both Devi’s and Mother Teresa’s funerals (the latter of which was interrupted by large crowds which threatened the decorum of a politically charged, Vaticanized, staged procession), and Roy’s self-reconstructed body from writer-to-activist. Roy-as-activist, who made her own body “soft” (as Ghosh puts it) and vulnerable to disciplinary actions of the state, motivated other actors to do the same, via fasting, standing in water for hours, hugging trees, and so on. “Her ‘green activism,’” Ghosh notes, “draws its auratic charge from a long history of struggle against resource extraction on the subcontinent, best known in Gandhian corporeal idioms of the body deployed against the colonial state” (277).

Lest the reader misunderstand, Ghosh warns in her introduction, “This is not a book about South Asia” (17). Rather, it is a book that asks us to reverse the usual direction of our gaze: to engage with the reception of global icons in specific historical locations in South Asia, in order to understand the role of the mass media in constituting global modernities here, there, and elsewhere—whatever our location.

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Tamal Krishna Goswami, *A Living Theology of Krishna Bhakti: Essential Teachings of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Edited with Introduction and Conclusion by Graham M. Schweig*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. 296 pages.

This book attempts a recontextualizing and redirecting from A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda as the founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) to Prabhupāda as the theologian. Tamal

Krishna Goswami identifies the main currents which feed into Prabhupāda's theological stream of thought. He argues that the ebb and flow of this theology exists within and across the geographical, cultural, and linguistic boundaries of the original tradition. The volume is a detailed consideration of the theological reasons behind why Krishna Consciousness à la Prabhupāda continues outside of India and how Prabhupāda's two *mahāvākyas*, or great utterances—Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the interpretation and translation of the concept and practice of *bhakti yoga* as devotional service—are responsible for the success of ISKCON and the Krishna Consciousness movement outside India and for reinventing traditional Vaiṣṇava practices in the latter half of the twentieth century both in the West and in India.

Goswami's volume is the academic representation of two elements of his life work and religious focus: first, to enable Hare Krishna practitioners to shed some of their theological and practical rigidities; and second, to present academic scholars with the possibility to take ISKCON more seriously as a mainstream expression of Hindu faith and practice. The book's editor, Graham M. Schweig, Goswami's friend and collaborator over the duration of Goswami's academic career, writes the first and the final chapters. The manuscript, which developed into this book, was an uncompleted doctoral dissertation. The degree was never awarded because Cambridge University, where Goswami studied, does not award doctorates posthumously. This fact is important: without Schweig's editing and sensitive completion, Goswami's work would likely never have been published.

Chapter One, "In Search of the 'Theological' Prabhupāda," is a sharp polemic defending Prabhupāda's theology within the Gauḍīya tradition and other relevant philosophical modes of thought. Obviously not in the ilk of the "pious accounting" (25), from which he distances himself, Goswami establishes a gap in the academic appreciation of Prabhupāda's theology, one he proposes to fill. The required hagiographical background regarding Prabhupāda's life and eventual missionization of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism and Goswami's questioning of the saint's philosophical motives are both well poised and show some insight of an objective reading by a disciple of his master's philosophical position.

The second chapter offers a well-weighted insider and outsider appraisal of the philosophical reasoning behind ISKCON and some of Prabhupāda's

actions and writings. Some of the more intricate details of ISKCON, many of which Goswami was personally privy to as a senior member, and their relationship to secular interpretation by writers and social scientists, are poignant. Historian Robert D. Baird's summary of Prabhupāda's theology is particularly pertinent: it demonstrates Prabhupāda's ability and inability to represent his ancient tradition within the society and time where he began proselytizing in the West—the mid 1960s.

This leads to Chapter Three where Goswami sketches a historical argument for the universalist, uncompromising, and pessimistic attitude of Prabhupāda's theology towards Western philosophy, religion, and lifestyle. A description of Prabhupāda's past brings us to his development as an authoritative commentator in his own right—a prolific writer and promulgator of what became his own brand of Gauḍīya philosophy and even worldview, in part represented by the vehicle for carrying forth this philosophy—ISKCON. Goswami's final two chapters detail the philosophical concepts of *sambandha* (relationship) and *abhidheya* (execution), with Schweig's conclusion on *prayojana* (the goal of love of Kṛṣṇa) succinctly summarizing and problematizing the possibility of a universal theology of the Caitanya School.

Although apparently arguing against his teacher—"Yet I dare to disagree. Why? I make for Prabhupāda no maverick claim of doctrinal inventiveness" (122)—in much of Goswami's argument it is unclear what position he takes on Prabhupāda's theology. While laboriously and painstakingly offering historical description of this theology, there are large sections, especially in Chapter Three, where Goswami does not present his critique at all strongly enough for the purposes he intended. Perhaps like the tradition Prabhupāda espouses, at times Goswami's elegant prose comes at the cost of stating his own opinions and interpretations of his teacher's philosophical perspective.

What results is a work caught between a rock and a hard place: a scholar attempting to present in a small volume a theological interpretation of a religious teacher's mammoth corpus, and a devotee-disciple offering both an academic justification of his *guru's* philosophical life work, which I interpret as a softening of some misdemeanors of the ISKCON institution's past, coupled with a light preaching of the now silenced voice of Prabhupāda—his theology remains although he is now unable to speak. This latter perspective is directed mainly at social scientists who

have focused on the anticult aspect of ISKCON's proselytizing—what Goswami considers the negative aspects of the ISKCON institution—rather than what Goswami purports is necessary for an appreciation of Prabhupāda's living theology: an Indological, South Asianist interpretation of Prabhupāda's philosophy.

The posthumous completion of any unfinished text is obviously never without its problems, as editor Schweig concedes. And there is a lot at stake with Schweig's editing: legacy, friendship, and what is intended to be an initial academic retrospective of Prabhupāda's theological thought which should ideally lead to and invite further similarly focused scholarship. While I do not believe this book successfully lives up to its aim, with Schweig's intelligent editing and reworking and Goswami's candor and enthusiasm, a foundation has been laid for more philosophical sojourns into Prabhupāda's religious thought. For this, Goswami's contribution is admirable and the work should hold and stimulate the interest of South Asianists and Indologists until more detailed works in this field are available.

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Ute Hüsken and Axel Michaels, eds., *South Asian Festivals on the Move*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013. 431 pages.

The essays contained in this edited volume, Volume 13 of the "Heidelberg Studies in South Asian Rituals" series, are loosely organized around the theme of "movement" with each essay handling one particular festival of South Asian derivation: the (mostly) Hindu and Buddhist festivals detailed are performed in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Germany, and Canada. The theme of movement is taken rather literally in many essays that deal with processions that delineate the boundaries of particular geographical units and more metaphorically in others that describe the virtual movement of festivals in cyberspace and the crossing of national boundaries as festivals move—or, in some cases, do not move—abroad to the South Asian diaspora. Among the many ritual theorists invoked throughout this volume are William S. Sax, whose 2002 *Dancing the Self: Personhood and Performance in the Pāṇḍav Līlā of Garhwal*, wrestles with the ways that