



Review of the monograph- Gerhard Oberhammer: Indologist and Philosopher- Part II

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Abstract

This paper is a review of the second part of the collective monograph "Gerhard Oberhammer: Indologist and Philosopher". The monograph is a reflection of the scientific work of the Austrian philosopher, Indologist and Sanskrit scholar, who plays an important role both in the philosophy of religion in general and in the Indology especially within the tradition of Vedānta studies. In the monograph all the most important concepts of G. Oberhammer's philosophy described, such as the Encounter, the Transcendent (Heil), Mythization, etc., as well as the project of transcendental hermeneutics, which is the core of the scientist's thought coverage, is illustrated. The review contains an overview of the main articles presented in the monograph, where a part is devoted to the study of the philosophical thought of G. Oberhammer, part is the translation into Russian of the papers of the Austrian Indologist, and part is the development of the formation of the school of G. Oberhammer, presented in the form of scientific work of one of the most outstanding Polish scientist Galina Marlevich.

Keywords: Transcendental hermeneutics, G. Oberhammer, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, Rāmānuja, Advaita Vedānta, philosophy of religion

Introduction

Philosophical Indology contains the names of prominent scientists and researchers, thanks to which the most important concepts and aspects of the systems of ancient and medieval India are comprehended and revealed, which is a significant historical heritage. One of these representatives is Gerhard Oberhammer (b. 1929), an Austrian scientist, Indologist, Sanskritologist, author of numerous works on the study of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. The second part of the monograph "Gerhard Oberhammer: Indologist and Philosopher" (Paribok, A.V. & Pskhu, R.V. (eds.), 2021), presented to the reader includes a study of the author's philosophy, translations into Russian language of a number of his own works, as well as the further development of his thought in the scientific school of G. Oberhammer.

The monograph reviewed here contains about 20 publications written by different authors, each of which strives for the most complete coverage of the G. Oberhammer's philosophical thought in terms of its Indological (interpretation of the heritage of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta in particular, the work of Rāmānuja) and philosophical orientation (issues of religious hermeneutics, in particular in the context of Western European philosophy and theology, etc.).

The presented monograph was divided into three parts, where the first part includes historical and philosophical studies that explore the key terms of G. Oberhammer's philosophy in the field of religious hermeneutics. The second part of the monograph contains translations into Russian of the scientific works of the Austrian Indologist. The third part is devoted to the school of G. Oberhammer and is represented by the Polish researcher Galina Marlevich, where a number of her articles are translated into Russian.

Overview

Let us consider the most typical issues highlighted by the authors of the articles in this monograph.

First of all, the central project of G. Oberhammer - the project of Transcendental Hermeneutics and its key aspects is shown up in the monograph. An excursion into the history of the formation and transformation of hermeneutics itself is presented, as well as a phased reconstruction of the fundamental concept of religious hermeneutics by G. Oberhammer - the concept of transcendental experience. The articles reflect the most important features of G. Oberhammer's transcendental hermeneutics, where the central point is the "relationship" and the possibility of a meeting of existence and transcendence, which is a clear rethinking of the main question of the Christian teaching about the ways of possible "interaction" between God and human. Another key point of transcendental hermeneutics is the openness to the outside, to the Other, which allows a person to turn from "in-itself-existing" to "with-itself-existing", to know oneself and the world. Openness is not accidental, it is always intentional, aimed at meeting with something else that is beyond the real - transcendent. The comprehension of the transcendental does not imply concepts, but is possible only in the act of direct grasping of transcendence, along with a person, shows openness. Also, here two central foundations are presented that guide the religious hermeneutics of G. Oberhammer: the first is the interpretation of established everyday and philosophical concepts in terms of the acquisition of a specific meaning by them in the context of talking about religion, the second is the idea of "reconciliation" of religious traditions on the basis of hermeneutics.

The concept of "Mythization" introduced by G. Oberhammer is also reflected in the monograph. According to G. Oberhammer, the language of mythical reality and mythization make it possible to express and convey the experience of the "Encounter" of the transcendent and human, Mythization leads to a variety of religious traditions and the formation of religious tolerance. Mythization occupies a very important role in the aspect of the formation of a philosophical idea, being, as it were, a continuation of the process of inclusiveness, which is illustrated by the example of the formation of the philosophical basis of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta - the concept of the relationship between God and the world śārīra-śārīribhāva sambandha. It also illustrates an attempt to analyze the concept of myth and mythological thinking, which is ambiguous in its interpretations, based on the works of two researchers of religion based on sacred texts of different traditions: G. Oberhammer and P. Tillich.

In addition, the monograph presents works devoted to the analysis and interpretation by G. Oberhammer of such a philosophical concept as "Inclusivism", introduced by the German historian of Indian philosophy P. Hacker (1913-1979). Inclusivism is considered within the framework of the project of transcendental hermeneutics, G. Oberhammer's inclusivism does not take the form of a confrontation of various teachings, but rather becomes the internal logic of the formation of the development of the ideology of a particular religious doctrine, inclusivism appears as a typical Indian way of thinking, which consists in the openness of assimilation of someone else's experience of meeting with the transcendent.

The second part of the monograph presents translations of G. Oberhammer's works concerning his main teaching of transcendental hermeneutics. Here the category "Encounter" introduced by the Austrian Indologist is consecrated, the main provisions of the transcendental hermeneutics are formulated, a discussion is given about the essence and possibility of transcendental experience, the reflection of the early G. Oberhammer on the religious and philosophical system of yoga, based on quotations from the Yoga-Sūtra and Yoga-Bhāṣya, as well as G. Oberhammer's interpretation of the idea of spiritual practice bhakti is presented in the philosophy of Rāmānuja is given.

The third part of the monograph, as mentioned earlier, consists of translations into Russian of the works of one of the most prominent representatives of the G. Oberhammer school, the Polish researcher and philosopher Galina Marlevich. Three translations presented to the reader contain an analysis of the concept of aikāśāstrya as the principle of the unity of the teachings of two Mīmāṃsā: Pūrva and Uttara-Mīmāṃsā, in particular, the interpretation of this concept by the philosopher and theologian Rāmānuja of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta tradition, which as a result justifying the nature of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, which presupposes orthopraxy, including the doctrine of karma-yoga; analysis of Rāmānuja's views on the concept of bhakti, based on his comments on verses 18.64-66 of the Bhagavadgītā; interpretation of the Key-Statements of the Upaniṣads in the tradition of Advaita Vedānta on the example of fragments of the works of Śaṅkara and his student Sureśvara, including a comparison of the hermeneutics of Advaita Vedānta with the idea of the Mythization of Transcendence by G. Oberhammer.

Conclusion

In conclusion of the review of the monograph dedicated to the work of the prominent Austrian philosopher and Indologist Gerhard Oberhammer, the following points should be noted.

First, the scientific work of G. Oberhammer, focused mainly on religion as such, is excellently covered within the framework of the works included in this monograph. All the most important concepts are described, such as "Encounter", "Transcendent", "Mythization", etc., and the project of transcendental hermeneutics is illustrated, which is the central component of G. Oberhammer's philosophy.

Secondly, it should be noted the importance and relevance of his research in the field of Indology, namely the application of a new methodology to the study of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta tradition, where the scientist relies mainly on his own translations of primary sources from Sanskrit.

In addition, the reader can see the further development of G. Oberhammer's thought on the example of the works of his students, in particular one of the outstanding scientists of the Polish researcher Galina Marlevich, who uses the methods of transcendental hermeneutics as part of further research into the Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā traditions of various directions.

Thus, the philosophy of religion and methodology of G. Oberhammer, as well as his contribution to the development of Indology, in particular, to the study of the traditions of Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā, are well covered in this monograph.

Works Cited

Paribok, A.V. & Pskhu, R.V. (eds.), Gerhard Oberhammer: Indologist and Philosopher. Part II: Monograph. scientific ed. A.V. Paribok. Responsible ed. R.V. Pskhu — M. : LLC Sadra, 2021.

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