work, the authors' analyses are broadly consistent with Bhate's in the cases for which she provides *prakriyā* detail (leaving aside stylistic variation). The extent to which they agree with other modern authors (Joshi and Roodbergen, and R.N. Sharma, for example, also give explicit *prakriyā*s) I have not yet determined.

The present volume, like the previous ones, ends with useful indices that enable the researcher to trace back to the examples not only *sūtra*s, but also *vārttika*s, *gaṇasūtra*s, and *paribhāṣā*s; suffixes with their various meanings; and technical terms. These cross-references are wonderfully useful not only for grammarians but also (as Hanneder mentions) for "all non-pāṇinīyas", including intellectual historians and those tracing intertextualities: What did Bhaṭṭoji gain (or lose) by reordering the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*? When do examples essentially flow from Pāṇini, by virtue of his special mention? When are they picked up from a well-known poet, or used by one? Of course we should keep in mind that, as Haag et al. have shown, the evidence suggests that examples in the Sanskrit grammatical tradition are less likely, compared to the base text, to be stably transmitted.

The book could be shorter. Certain *sūtra*s are used for every *taddhita* derivation, and these receive a few lines in each of the 3,000+ entries. The advantage thereto is that each *prakriyā* stands on its own. Still, a bit more explanation in the introduction could have saved many pages.

Virtually all the Sanskrit in the book appears in the Devanāgarī script. The ability to read technical Sanskrit is necessary in order to extract maximum benefit from the *ṭippaṇī*s. However, there is great value even to scholars without much Sanskrit, so long as they keep nearby a reliable translation of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, say Katre's or Böhtliṅgk's.

Jo Brill
University of Chicago

NAAMA SHALOM:
Re-ending the Mahābhārata: The Rejection of Dharma in the Sanskrit Epic.
(SUNY Series in Hindu Studies.) xvii, 248 pp. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2017. $85. ISBN 978 1 4384 6501 2.
doi:10.1017/S0041977X18000022

This interesting and informative book concerns one particular dramatic moment in the *Svargārohaṇaparvan*, the last of the *Mahābhārata*'s 18 *parvan*s (books).

After the Pāṇḍavas kill their Kaurava cousins in battle, Yudhiṣṭhira reigns for decades as king. He is the last Pāṇḍava to leave the mortal world. When he does so he is taken to heaven, but his cousin and antagonist Duryodhana, the *Mahābhārata*'s main villain, is seated there in glory, and his own brothers and wife are absent. Disgusted, he says he wants to go wherever they are. So an envoy takes him into a foul realm of darkness and pain. Realizing his brothers and wife are suffering the tortures of hell, he rails against this injustice, angrily denounces the gods and *dharma* (virtue, propriety, duty), and declares he will remain there with his brothers. The gods then arrive en masse, and hell turns into heaven. God Indra explains that Yudhiṣṭhira's experience of hell was a result of his misdeeds, but that he has passed his final test and may now bathe in the celestial Gaṅgā.

Shalom's particular interest is in Yudhiṣṭhira's denunciation of *dharma*. Yudhiṣṭhira is the god Dharma's genital son, and is a principled and dutiful character

throughout (when king he is called King Dharma), so this is a powerful and paradoxical dramatic moment. The main strength of Shalom's book is that it stays focused on this moment, while viewing it from a different perspective in each chapter, and so the book is simultaneously very specific and very broad. Shalom's central hypothesis is that Yudhiṣṭhira's denunciation of *dharma* is the *Mahābhārata*'s culmination and conclusion, but that it has been downplayed or erased by interpreters ancient and modern, to the detriment of the text's appreciation.

The five disparate chapters are arranged in approximately chronological order depending on their focus. Chapter 1 sites the denunciation scene in the context of the whole *Mahābhārata*, exploring the text's use of the verbs *garh*, *nind*, and *kṣip*, and discussing various scenes that feature the verb *garh* (denounce) in different ways. The mongoose scene at Yudhiṣṭhira's horse-sacrifice, discussed repeatedly in recent scholarship, is a particular focus (pp. 38–51). The chapter shows that Yudhiṣṭhira's denunciation of *dharma* is culminatory in terms of the thematics of the narrative.

Chapter 2 surveys early *Mahābhārata* adaptations in Sanskrit to see how they handle this scene. Shalom focuses especially upon three adaptations that purportedly cover the whole story, namely the *Bhāratamañjarī* of Kṣemendra Vyāsadāsa and the *Bālabhārata*s of Amaracandra Sūri and Agastya Paṇḍita. She shows that these authors either omit the scene, or dilute its effect by having Yudhiṣṭhira denounce something other than *dharma*.

Chapter 3 discusses the views of three Sanskrit literary theorists: Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, and Kuntaka. These theorists discuss the *Mahābhārata* in terms of its evocation of the ninth *rasa*, the *śāntarasa* (feeling of serenity). The *Svargārohaṇaparvan*'s disquieting events are seen as a means to this end, but Shalom finds that none of these theorists discuss the denunciation scene with the requisite specificity or thematic focus.

Chapter 4 turns to modern *Mahābhārata* scholarship, comparing various schemes of the text's development to see when they place the *Svargārohaṇaparvan*, and drawing also upon the Spitzer manuscript that has sometimes been cited in support of such schemes. Shalom argues that although such schemes include the *Svargārohaṇaparvan* at an early developmental stage, nonetheless scholars have usually sidelined the *Svargārohaṇaparvan* as relatively late. Shalom also surveys scholars' summaries of the *Mahābhārata*'s narrative: these typically omit Yudhiṣṭhira's denunciation of *dharma*.

Chapter 5 revisits the subject of *Mahābhārata* adaptations in Sanskrit, focusing upon the *Bhārataprabandha*, a hitherto neglected Keralan retelling that, exceptionally, features Yudhiṣṭhira's denunciation of *dharma*. Shalom introduces this text, discusses its possible authorship by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa (*c*. 1550–1650 CE), and outlines its faithful narration of Yudhiṣṭhira's final scenes. Thus, despite the negative results of chapters 2–4, Shalom finally finds confirmation for her hypothesis that the denunciation is crucial.

Shalom's argument is a careful balance of positive and negative judgements. Chapters 2–5 showcase admirably broad and sensitive research and contain passages that will interest various specialists, but chapter 5 might seem to counterweigh chapters 2–4, leaving chapter 1 as the book's main positive contribution to the *Mahābhārata*'s interpretation. Indeed, the rich material in this chapter might potentially have formed a book of its own. This chapter is more dense, convoluted, and heavily annotated than the others, and raises more questions. Regarding secondary literature, one might have wished for more discussion of recent work on the *Svargārohaṇaparvan* by Emily Hudson, Tamar Reich, and others (work mentioned in n. 26, p. 178).

Regarding primary literature, Shalom does not mention the pre-story of Vidura (*Ādiparvan* 101), which may contain the *Mahābhārata*'s closest analogue to

Yudhiṣṭhira's denunciation of *dharma*. The relatively innocent sage Māṇḍavya suffers a hideous drawn-out punishment, and when he hears god Dharma's supposed explanation he curses Dharma to be born from a *śūdrā* (Vidura's mother). Māṇḍavya suffers from his own pain while on earth (his afterlife is not mentioned), Yudhiṣṭhira from the pain of his brothers and wife in his afterlife. But after hell has disappeared, Indra explains that "those whose good deeds are greater than their bad actions first experience *naraka* and then ascend to *svarga*" (p. 63), and so Yudhiṣṭhira's impression that the gods are unfair is ultimately false. If the *Svargārohaṇa* scene pivots on the power of Indra's *māyā*, then King Dharma's denunciation of *dharma*/Dharma, while certainly neat, might not be as momentous as Shalom implies.

Shalom repeatedly asserts that the *Svargārohaṇa* scene is the *Mahābhārata*'s ending, with all associated interpretive implications. But although this is the ending of the Pāṇḍava story, the *Mahābhārata*'s ending is the ending of the *Harivaṃśa*, so perhaps Shalom re-ends the *Mahābhārata* as much as the writers she critiques. Considering the whole *Mahābhārata* might bring one closer to Ānandavardhana's position, whereby the text promotes perfection through love of Kṛṣṇa. But Shalom's book has certainly opened up the space for some crucial interpretive discussion, and is to be commended for its range and rigour.

Simon Brodbeck
Cardiff University

JOHANNES BRONKHORST:
How the Brahmins Won: From Alexander to the Guptas.
(Handbook of Oriental Studies.) xviii, 572 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2016. ISBN 978 90 04 31519 8.
doi:10.1017/S0041977X18000228

This book can be viewed as the last of a trilogy by Bronkhorst, the other two being *Greater Magadha* (2007) and *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* (2011). Its presupposition is that Brahmanism underwent a period of profound disruption for several centuries following the incursion of Alexander. The twin aims of the book are to uncover the causes of this disruption and to delineate the path that Brahmins took to reinvent their tradition and finally to emerge victorious.

The book is divided into three main chapters. The first is devoted to the first aim, and also to signal "new departures" pointing to the creation of novel institutions and texts. The second deals with the newly invented tradition of "Brahmanism" and its principal features, and the third with the "external influences" on the emergent Brahmanism, influences from other Indian traditions and external cultures, especially the Greek. The final chapter is an all-too-brief conclusion in which Bronkhorst attempts to provide an explanation for his title: "How the Brahmins won".

In a brief review it is impossible to engage seriously with the rich array of topics and the often daring and controversial views. I will select a few that are central to Bronkhorst's argument and significant to the study of ancient Indian history. Bronkhorst's central thesis is that Brahmanism went through a severe crisis during the centuries immediately before the common era. Some of the major pieces of literature produced during this period were aimed at restoring its lost prestige, centrality, and patronage. That much is clear and uncontroversial, and has been pointed out by numerous scholars. Bronkhorst, however, has dealt with this period in greater detail and depth than anyone else, and this is a great service to the scholarship on