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Wordtrade Reviews: Modernity Cloud Paths

Contents: Modernity Cloud Paths

Editorial Appraisals:

Some qualified reviewers offer their own brief evaluation of the book. Otherwise, most of our content represents the authors'-editors' own words as a preview to their approach to the subject, their style and point-of-view. <>

Buddhism and Modernity Sources from Nineteenth-Century Japan edited by Orion Klautau, and Hans Martin Krämer [University of Hawaii Press, 9780824884581]

Japan was the first Asian nation to face the full impact of modernity. Like the rest of Japanese society, Buddhist institutions, individuals, and thought were drawn into the dynamics of confronting the modern age. Japanese Buddhism had to face multiple challenges, but it also contributed to modern Japanese society in numerous ways. Buddhism and Modernity: Sources from Nineteenth-Century Japan makes accessible the voices of Japanese Buddhists during the early phase of high modernity.

The volume offers original translations of key texts—many available for the first time in English—by central actors in Japan's transition to the modern era, including the works of Inoue Enryō, Gesshō, Hara Tanzan, Shimaji Mokurai, Kiyozawa Manshi, Murakami Senshō, Tanaka Chigaku, and Shaku Sōen. All of these writers are well recognized by Buddhist studies scholars and Japanese historians but have drawn little attention elsewhere; this stands in marked contrast to the reception of Japanese Buddhism since D. T. Suzuki, the towering figure of Japanese Zen in the first half of the twentieth century. The present book fills the chronological gap between the premodern era and the twentieth century by focusing on the crucial transition period of the nineteenth century.

Issues central to the interaction of Japanese Buddhism with modernity inform the five major parts of the work: sectarian reform, the nation, science and philosophy, social reform, and Japan and Asia. Throughout the chapters, the globally entangled dimension—both in relation to the West, especially the direct and indirect impact of

Christianity, and to Buddhist Asia—is of great importance. The Introduction emphasizes not only how Japanese Buddhism was part of a broader, globally shared reaction of religions to the specific challenges of modernity, but also goes into great detail in laying out the specifics of the Japanese case.

Contributions by Orion Klautau, Hans Martin Krämer, Micah Auerback, James Baskind, Nathaniel Gallant, G. Clinton Godart, Seiji Hoshino, Mami Iwata, Jason Ananda Josephson Storm, Mitsuhiro Kameyama, Stephan Kigensan Licha, Michel Mohr, Fabio Rambelli, Erik Schicketanz, Jeff Schroeder, James Mark Shields, Jacqueline I. Stone, Jolyon Baraka Thomas, Dylan Toda, Ryan Ward, Garrett L. Washington

Review

Buddhism and Modernity is a snapshot of influential Buddhist voices during the nineteenth century, but also offers analysis from leading English-language scholars of Japanese religion in the twenty-first century. . . . It is argued that translated works should be valued much more in academia than they currently are. I certainly agree with that argument, as translations unlock primary sources for the wider scholarly community. I would also extend the argument to include periodically returning to primary sources with a modern, more critical eye—another of this book's contributions to the field. -- Chad Kohalyk — *Books on Asia*

Buddhism and Modernity is an excellent source book that offers translations of texts written by twenty-two Japanese Buddhists and organizations in the nineteenth century who actively engaged with the issues of modernity. . . . These original translations were translated by a team of twenty-one international scholars and experts in the field of Japanese Religions, many of whom have authored groundbreaking monographs on the Japanese Buddhists featured in this volume. is without a doubt, an extremely welcomed contribution to the growing field of modern Japanese Buddhism and the study of religion and modernity in general. -- Daigengna Duoer, University of California, Santa Barbara — *Global Intellectual History, 8:2* (*2023*)

CONTENTS

Buddhism and Modernity in Japan, An Introduction by Orion Klautau and Hans Martin Krämer

The challenges faced by Japanese Buddhists since the middle of the nineteenth century were in many respects homegrown. The iconoclastic movement to “abolish the Buddha and smash Sakyamuni” (haibutsu kishaku) was certainly a local phenomenon, as was the particular configuration of state and religion during the early Meiji period, when the new government still grappled with a religious policy for the young nation-state. Yet, Japanese Buddhism also shared many of the difficulties modernity brought to religions worldwide. Perhaps the most fundamental of these was the new type of secularism that went along with Enlightenment. This was not necessarily an objective process of secularization, but certainly brought with it a change in attitudes toward and expectations from religion(s), primarily from the modern natural sciences and philosophical materialism. None of the major religious traditions around the world remained unaffected by this new challenge. The type of reaction that took place in each religion—internal reform, conservative reassertion, creation of eclectic new religions, or religious universalism—varied, as did its timing.

While this new secularism may be seen as an indirect effect of the ascent of industrial capitalism, another of its consequences, the imperialist encroachment upon the rest of the world by the West, made possible a new solution to the threat felt by Christianity at home: reaching out globally through missionary efforts. It was through this—mainly Protestant—mission that Asian countries including Japan first met religious modernity head-on. Asian religions such as Japanese Buddhism had to react to the competition posed by Protestant Christianity, which came with the market advantage of representing modernity. Debates about the reconfiguration of the relations between state and religion were heavily tinged by the question of what to do with Christianity.

Japanese Buddhists—or at least some of them—were acutely aware of the changes around them. Since the 1850s, Buddhist authors had addressed the new threat posed by Christianity, and some sects even introduced "enemy studies" into the curricula of their academies. Buddhist authors were among the first in Japan to write about evolutionary theory and the particular problems this new scientific theory implied for revealed religion. Buddhist authors also introduced modern historiographic methods into the writing of religious history. Although different sects adjusted in different ways, there was a general mood of readiness for reform almost unparalleled in other major religious traditions around the world, where conservative attempts at reassertion usually played a much larger role—be it in South Asian Hinduism and Islam, Southeast Asian Islam, European Christianity, or Middle Eastern and North African Islam—where reform attempts frequently entailed a split from the mainstream religious institutions and the creation of new religious movements. In contrast to these cases, Japanese Buddhists enthusiastically embraced the changes necessitated by the modern age, which they interpreted as new possibilities.

Japanese Buddhism as we know it today was formed in this era of tremendous change. The modern period, largely the decades between the middle of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, has nonetheless received scant attention in historical research on Japanese Buddhism. In Japan, it has been dwarfed by doctrinally oriented sectarian studies and the towering attention devoted to the late ancient and medieval periods, supposedly the time when Buddhism in Japan flourished and engendered its most original innovations under the great reformers of the Heian (Saichõ and Kükai, the founders of the Tendai and Shingon, sects, respectively) and Kamakura periods (Hõnen, Shinran, Dõgen, and Nichiren the founders of the Jõdo, Jõdo Shinshü, Sõtõ Zen, and Nichiren sects, respectively). Together with the niche subjects of early modern Buddhism (i.e., that of the Tokugawa period) and contemporary Buddhism (since 1945), modern Buddhism has only slowly taken ground as an accepted field within Buddhist Studies since Yoshida Kyüichi Ámat^ (1915–2005) pioneered work on the Meiji period, emphasizing its "modernity," in the late 1950s. In Western-language scholarship on Japan, the transformative era of the nineteenth

century has taken even longer to catch on, despite the importance of the Meiji period more generally in European and North American scholarship on Japan since the early postwar period. In the following sections, we will first trace the major transformations Buddhism underwent at an institutional level in nineteenth-century Japan, especially in connection with the broader religious policy of the Meiji state. With those factors in mind, we will move to an overview of how scholarship on the topic developed in both the West and in Japan, before identifying the major issues that Japanese Buddhists faced in the nineteenth century, which will also inform the makeup of this volume.

Buddhism in Nineteenth-Century Japan: An Overview

Before we enter into the history of scholarship on modern Japanese Buddhism proper, it will be useful to gain a general insight into the main institutional changes experienced by the Japanese schools of Buddhism after the Meiji restoration of 1868. Historian of religion Hayashi Makoto (b. 1953) has recently proposed, in response to an earlier division by Yoshida Kyüichi, a new periodization for the history of modern Buddhism in Japan. Diverging from the more Marxist-influenced classification of Yoshida, Hayashi asserts the need to understand the history of nineteenth-century Japanese Buddhism not only as the making of something new—or in other words, of the "modern" itself—but also as the gradual process of dismantling a centuries-old religious system with its own intrinsic rationale.3 That is, we can only begin to comprehend the "modernization" of Buddhism in Japan if we take into consideration the adaptational struggles that came with the sudden abolishment of Tokugawa institutions, then indissociable from the Buddhist establishment itself. From that perspective Hayashi divides the history of post-Restoration Buddhism into three periods, which will function as a guide for the brief historical overview below.

The Age of Negotiation (1868–1872)

In 1868, after over a decade of complicated internal debates among the political elites and a few years of actual military conflict, the young Mutsuhito ^^ (1852–1912) was crowned emperor of Japan. Although fighting against Tokugawa forces would continue in northern Japan well into the following year, in areas already under Imperial

authority the process of "restoring" institutions of the ancient ritsuryõ state—or rather, idealized versions thereof—had begun. This meant, of course, the abolition of social and legal structures then considered by different factions within the new government as being both impediments to the "restoration" of Imperial power and "former evil practices" associated with the Tokugawa regime. The Buddhist institution was, unmistakably, one such structure, and for Meiji ideologues it had to be dealt with accordingly. The government thus issued the many individual directives that became known in later historiography as the shinbutsu bunri {edicts). These, as John Breen explains, were aimed at putting "an end to all state privileges" enjoyed by Buddhism and transferring those social functions to "Shinto." While their most immediate objective seems to have been to prompt all involved parties to "clarify" (hanzen, i.e., distinguish between the worship of bud-dhas and kami at a mostly material and ritual level), they eventually led to the sometimes violent outbursts known as the haibutsu kishaku move-ment.6 However, the foremost preoccupation of Buddhists was that the Meiji state, seeking friendly relations with Western countries, would now allow the free practice of Christianity in Japan. The social role of keeping Japan a "Jesus-free" land was perceived by many late-Edo Buddhists as the main raison d'être of their institution, a trend readers can verify in several texts included in this sourcebook.

The way Buddhists reacted to these policies was, however, not as one would at first expect: although some of the government actions could be read as unmistakably anti-Buddhist, the most representative part of the clergy did not act with contempt nor did it engage in direct protest. Rather, they proceeded to acknowledge their "past mistakes" and proposed a renewed relationship with their new secular leaders. During the early months of 1869, clerics representing different Buddhist schools— a number of them included in this volume—came together and founded the League of United Buddhist Sects (Shoshü dõtoku kaimei), the first supra-sectarian Buddhist association of modern Japan.

They drafted a joint document in which they declared the “inseparability of secular law and Buddhist law,” the “critique and proscription of heresies” and, most significantly, the “sweeping away of the past evils of each sect,” among other items.

The proposal set forth by the League of United Buddhist Sects was not to set themselves against the new government, but to assert that the Buddhist institution,

enriching the country and strengthening the army (fukoku kyõhei) and, as we will see below, to the emperor-centered national promulgation campaign.

The Age of Kyõdõshoku (1872–1884)

In order to eliminate Buddhism from the public sphere and transfer its social functions to Shinto, the government had promulgated, in early 1870, the Imperial decree on the Great Promulgation Campaign (Taikyõ senpu no mikotonori). This edict asserted the unity of ritual and government (saisei itchi), and established the office of senkyõshi (propagandists), who were supposed to elucidate to the nation the "Great Way of obedience to the gods." Nativist and Confucian scholars were recruited for the position, while Buddhist priests were deliberately excluded from participating. However, for a number of reasons, which included lack of consensus regarding what these officials should in fact "propagate," by mid-1872 the senkyõshi had been abolished; now under a different ministry, the Kyõbushõ their role was reformulated and incorporated into the newly created office of doctrinal instructor (kyõdõshoku). The latter now included not only Nativist and Confucian scholars, but also Buddhist priests and whoever else was considered to have experience with audiences, such as haiku poets and rakugo storytellers.

The main role of the kyõdõshoku was to preach to the population based on the "Three Standards of Instruction" (sanjõ kyõsoku) which were as follows: "To embody reverence for the deities and love of the country," "To clarify the principles of heaven and the way of humanity," and last, "To revere and assist the emperor and obey the will of the court." These aimed at inculcating into the population the ideal of a new tennõ-centered Japan. With a few notable exceptions, most of the Buddhist world revealed a rather positive attitude toward these standards, even contributing to the formation of an entire exegetical genre surrounding them. This national proselytization plan focused on the Three Standards was further expanded in the following year, with the opening of the Great Teaching Institute (Daikyõin), set up on the grounds of Zõjõji temple in Tokyo. One should note that 1872 was also the year of the promulgation of Japan's first Code of Education (gakusei). At this early stage, there was not yet a clear differentiation

between kyõka ^^, which would be a duty of the Kyõbushõ, and kyõiku, which would be the responsibility of the Monbushõ (Ministry of Education).

Nevertheless, this relationship did become an issue after 1873, when Monbushõ officials returned from Europe at least partly convinced of the ideal of separating religion and education.13 From around this time, Monbushõ bureaucrats began advocating a clear distinction between the roles of proselytizers and schoolteachers, which eventually led to the exclusion of Buddhist priests from public education. This ban was later relaxed, and then ultimately lifted in 1879, when it became clear that the Buddhist clergy was essential in terms of persAonnel for the Monbushõ enterprise. Note that although the Daikyõin had been dissolved in 1875 (and the Kyõbushõ itself abolished in 1877), the kyõdõshoku system itself continued well into the following decade. This meant that the time between the late 1870s and early 1880s was one of accommodation for Buddhists, who now had to find their role amid this new division between "education" and "religion." In fact, while kyõdõshoku members of the Buddhist clergy still had a public role, the office also increasingly lost importance, making it clear that it was just a matter of time until it was abolished altogether. In the "enlightened" environment of Meiji Japan, asserting themselves vis-à-vis the old "enemy" of Christianity as a positive force for the state became the highest commitment for most Buddhists.

From the early 1880s, as Japan embarked on the journey to become a constitutional state, Buddhists strove at the intellectual level to adapt to the myriad new discourses required by current times. Besides the abovementioned concept of "education," the concepts of "science" and "religion" also posed their challenges, as did those of "individual" and "faith." Another important development at this time was the rise of lay Buddhist movements. Whereas until the early Meiji years nonclerical persons in positions of leadership in Buddhist institutions were virtually unheard of, laypeople began playing a major role around this time, as we can observe in the work of individuals such as Õuchi Seiran (1845–1918) and Nakanishi Ushirõ (1859–1930). Their less directly engaged position—or in other words, the fact that they were not as committed to institutional demands—was also important in overcoming, when

necessary, the sectarianism so characteristic of Japanese Buddhist schools. This in turn became an essential tool for reframing Buddhism as a "religion."

Establishing the Modern Buddhist Institution (1884–1900)

Between the late 1870s and early 1880s, as the Freedom and People's Rights Movement (Jiyü minken undõ) gained strength, so did the demand for a constitution. The idea of a constitutional environment—and the possibility of Japan adopting a state religion—provided Buddhists with a new type of awareness, which can be observed, for instance, in the work of Shaku Unshõ (1827–1909) included in this sourcebook. At the same time, the realm of religious policy also experienced its own crisis. With the demise of the Daikyõin in 1875— due mainly to the lack of cooperation by Jõdo Shin priests prompted by Shimaji Mokurai (1838–1911)—a new Shinto-centered bureau took over much of its role. A dispute arose between the chief priest of the Ise Shrines, who had been appointed the head of this new Office of Shinto Affairs (Shintõ jimukyoku), and the chief priest of Izumo Shrine over which deities to enshrine in the office. As a consequence of this "Pantheon Dispute" (saijin ronsõ), which could only be solved by the arbitration of the Imperial court, in 1882 the government forbade priests working in national and Imperial shrines (kankoku heisha) from serving as kyõdõshoku. They were also forbidden to perform funerals. The dissatisfied factions went on to establish their own institutions, giving rise to the distinction between "Shrine Shinto" and "Sect Shinto."

This internal dispute, intrinsically related to the very issue of Imperial authority, constituted the final blow to the already moribund kyõdõshoku system. Between March and April 1884, Inoue Kowashi (1844–1895), one of the architects of the Meiji Constitution, proposed the elimination of the office. He emphasized the ideal of religious freedom alongside a legal framework for regulating religious corporations. Indeed, a few months later in August 1884, the Council of State promulgated a directive abolishing the position of kyõdõshoku, an event of utmost importance for Buddhism. The proclamation not only ended the twelveyear existence of the office, but also reformulated the sectarian administrator system (kanchõ seido), giving religious

institutions the autonomy to appoint and dismiss their own clergy. Furthermore, it also stipulated that Buddhist schools had to prepare, according to the principles of their own foundational doctrines (rikkyõ kaishü no shugi), a sectarian constitution (shüsei), laws for governing temples (jihõ), and rules for appointing clerics for various positions. These would be submitted to the minister of home affairs (naimukyõ), who would then authorize the sects' provisions.

This right to self-determination affected Buddhist sects in very different ways. Some sects had to come up with solutions for long-term internal rivalries, such as the centuries-old friction between the Sõjiji and Eiheiji temples in Sõtõ Zen, or even give consideration to what would, in essence, be their "foundational doctrine." Others had relatively little trouble developing a centralized administration based on the tenets of modern bureaucracy. This newly gained autonomy, albeit limited by the boundaries set by the home minister, introduced yet another sense of crisis for Buddhists—they needed a clear "doctrine," which, as per contemporary requirements, had to accord with ideals such as "science" and "rationality." That is, in a context in which the influence of Christianity grew each day, Buddhists emphasized that their "religion," despite its many flaws, was still in harmony with the moral goals of the Japanese nation and could, therefore, contribute to uniting people's spirits. Buddhism, they held, was a better aid than Christianity for the national enterprise not only because it had been in Japan for longer, but because "rationally," it made sense.

The 1890s, however, brought yet new developments. The Meiji Constitution of 1889 and Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890 both settled the idea of religious freedom alongside the understanding of emperor worship as civic duty. The 1891 lèse-majesté incident involving Uchimura Kanzõ (1861–1930), who as a Christian had hesitated to fully bow during a ritual reading of the Rescript, provided the Buddhist world with further ammunition to question the role of their old enemy in the new constitutional framework. Could Christians uphold their beliefs without compromising their duties as subjects? The Buddhist answer was obviously "no." This became a still more pressing issue in 1894, when the government signed, just before the outbreak of the Sino-

Japanese War, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation (Nichiei tsüshõ kõkai jõyaku). By the terms of the agreement, scheduled to come into force five years later in July 1899, British nationals in Japan would be subject to local laws, which implied an end to the system of extraterritoriality and the enactment of what the Japanese referred to as "mixed residence" (naichi zakkyo). At a time when Japan was becoming more aggressive in its colonial enterprises, the new system meant that foreigners were no longer limited to inhabiting specific settlements such as Kobe or Yokohama, but could now live anywhere in Japanese territory as long as they complied with the law. The idea of Christians roaming around as they wished felt like a threat to many, which prompted the government to begin considering a law of religions.

Into the Twentieth Century

Such a law of religions was proposed in 1899, the same year in which the mixed-residence system was scheduled to begin. It established somewhat equal regulations for Sect Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity, but as scholars have pointed out, failed to satisfy any of the representatives of the different groups. While it did find some advocates among Buddhists, most schools united against the law,20 claiming that Buddhism, as the religion of the majority of the Japanese, should be granted a special legal status, akin to what Catholic and Protestant churches experienced in France and Germany, respectively. They were successful in their lobbying efforts, as in early 1900 the law, which had been approved by the (lower) House of Representatives, was rejected by the (upper) House of Peers. This caused the government to revise its plans and establish, in April 1900, two new offices within the Home Ministry: the Shrine and Religion Bureaus. The latter was supposed to oversee all "religions" (including Sect Shinto), whereas the former would be in charge of official "Shrine Shinto" (jinja shintõ) affairs. This division, which in a sense formalized the influential discourse of Shrine Shinto as "non-religious," is considered by scholars as a major turning point in the establishment of what we now refer to as "State Shinto" (kokka shintõ).

The late nineteenth century was, as seen above, a time of rapid change not only for Buddhism, but for the entire Japanese religious landscape. For Buddhist schools, in

particular, it was a time of adaptation and negotiation, a time of finding new justifications for their existence vis-à-vis the state and in relation to each other. Indeed, although Hayashi Makoto mentions the years between 1900 and 1945 as the last stage of his periodization, he does imply that the impact of the above challenges continued to influence the way Buddhists acted and thought well into the twentieth century, a point readers can confirm in several of the texts included here. In the following section, we will provide a brief history of how scholarship has dealt with this complicated period, after which we will provide an overview of how this volume relates to some of these questions.

the first years of the Meiji period, and the early years of the global spread of Japanese Buddhism.

This groundbreaking work has since then been complemented by more specialized studies in a number of important subfields. One of these has been the introduction of individuals imptant to the sto o-5.3(y of)-6.5(m).7(od)-7.3(e)5.6999998o9(r)-5.4(no-5.3( )8.899999618(within the context of the Japanese ultranationalism and fascism of the 1930s. More

from Shinto shrines. The challenge was more than symbolic, as the livelihood of priests largely depended on the funerary business. In his 2006 Modern Passings, Andrew Bernstein has looked into how Buddhism weathered these difficulties in the early Meiji period. Richard Jaffe has researched the other great change imposed upon Buddhist priests by the new government in 1868, namely the rescission of the prohibition of marriage that had been upheld by the state until then. This is also one of the few works in English that has taken up the question of monastic rules, the future of which was a hotly contested issue in Buddhist circles in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

One of the major topics pioneered by Ketelaar's Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan was the beginnings of the propagation of Japanese Buddhism in Europe and North America, especially through the participation of Japanese priests in the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. The Japanese activities at the Parliament have been the subject of two monographic studies, Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West by Judith Snodgrass and Mahayana Phoenix by John Harding. In contrast, the introduction of Japanese Buddhism to Europe has not been a central object of scholarship so far and has mostly been treated either marginally within the framework of the introduction of Buddhism overall or within Japanese religions more broadly, such as in the case of Frédéric Girard's book on Émile Guimet and Japanese religions.

Surprisingly, despite the groundwork laid by Kathleen Staggs, the vicissitudes Buddhist thought underwent in modern Japan have not been the central subject of monographic studies, although they do play some role in many of the studies mentioned already. Galen Amstutz's diachronic study of Pure Land thought in Japan includes a substantial chapter on the modern period. Similarly, Clinton Godart's recent study of evolutionary theory in modern Japan includes an in-depth consideration of how Buddhists situated themselves vis-à-vis this specific challenge of the modern natural sciences.

Another subject that until very recently was marginal is the connection that emerged, since the 1890s, between Buddhism and progressive politics. While some scholarship on the later twentieth-century movement of Engaged Buddhism had been available for some time, two recent English-language monographs have now advanced our

understanding of this movement's Meiji-period precedents. While Melissa Curley's Pure Land, Real World focuses on the Jõdo Shinshü, James Mark Shields's Against Harmony casts a slightly wider net to include Zen as well as Nichiren Buddhism. Both works only partially deal with the Meiji period and include events up to 1945 and even the early postwar period. Equally marginal, but perhaps even more important, is the subject of Japanese Buddhism in relation to "Asia." Although, as we will see in the section below, a number of volumes on that subject have been published in Japanese in recent years, there is still very little work on it in other languages. Notable exceptions are Micah L. Auerback's unpublished PhD dissertation and Hwansoo I. Kim's Empire of the Dharma, both focusing on the role of Japanese Buddhism in colonial Korea. Although Richard Jaffe's recent Seeking Šãkyamuni addresses the issue of Japanese connections with South and Southeast Asia, there is, other than in Japanese, still no monograph-length study in English (or any other European language) of the position of Japanese Buddhist schools in either continental China or colonial Taiwan, for instance.

Lastly, a number of recent studies are already beginning to have great impact on the field of the history of modern Japanese Buddhism, despite being of a more synthetic character. The most important to mention in this context is Jason Ã. Josephson's 2012 monograph The Invention of Religion in Japan, the first work to take up the question of how the concept of religion was "invented" in modern Japan and what consequences its appropriation yielded, including its effects on modernizing Buddhism. A similar work with a greater focus on the relationship between religious groups and the state is Trent Maxey's 2014 monograph The "Greatest Problem." Finally, there is Isomae Jun'ichi's Religious Discourse in Modern Japan of the same year, which also sets its main focus on the complicated consequences of the introduction of the modern concept of "religion" into Japan, but this time with a focus on its effects within the academy, especially the emerging field of religious studies in Japan.

Almost all of the studies mentioned above stand in close relationship to Japanese scholarship on the same subject, in that they were prompted by or developed in close cooperation with Japanese scholars of modern Buddhism. In fact, although relatively

marginal within Japan, Japanese scholarship on the history of modern Buddhism predates that in Western languages by several decades and may be thought crucial for the agenda setting of the latter.

History of Research of Modern Japanese Buddhism in Japanese

Domestic considerations of the post-Restoration development of Buddhist history began during the 1890s and became both more frequent and robust around 1930. For instance, in 1894 the journal Bukkyõ (Buddhism) published a call for papers on historical sources of "Meiji Buddhism," which was followed, from the next issue, with contemporary accounts by important figures such as Nanjõ Bun'yü (1849–1927) and Maeda Eun (1855–1930). Ten years after this early attempt, Õuchi Seiran would publish, in the pages of the journal Shin Bukkyõ (New Buddhism), an article titled "Lectures on the History of Meiji Buddhism," which in a vein similar to the papers mentioned above, relied on the contemporary eyewitness character of its author.46 The establishment of the journal Bukkyõ shigaku (Studies in Buddhist history) in 1911 meant yet another important step in the historical study of Buddhism, and served as a catalyst to the gathering of sources that would, in the following decade, culminate in the Meiji ishin shinbutsu bunri shiryõ (Historical sources on the separation of Shinto and Buddhism during the Meiji Restoration), a true tour de force in five volumes published between 1926 and 1929.

Although important works on the Restoration's impact on Buddhism were published from the mid-1920s, the following decade saw far more important developments in terms of monographic studies on the topic. For instance in 1933, Tomomatsu Entai (1895–1973), encouraged by French orientalist Sylvain Lévi (1863–1935), established in Tokyo the Historiographical Institute for Meiji Buddhism (Meiji bukkyõshi hensanjo, which, despite being only a minor influence at the time, did help pave the way for a whole generation of scholars focusing on the modern history of Buddhism, and revealed the then increasing preoccupation to save as many primary sources from the Meiji period as possible.

After 1945, the postwar generation would build upon this documentary groundwork and, based on a new interpretation of the meaning of "modernity," turn the study of "Meiji Buddhism" on its head. The generation of scholars represented by Yoshida Kyüichi and Kashiwahara Yüsen (1916–2003), who had lived through the Pacific War as male adults in their late twenties and were influenced by Marxism, presented a narrative of modern Japanese Buddhism critical to the role of religious institutions in the formation of the so-called Emperor System (tennõsei). This group of scholars, active mostly between the 1950s and 1980s, understood the collaborationist attitude of Buddhist schools in the modern war efforts as marks of a "feudal character" that somehow survived into the Meiji period. They saw an exception to this affirmative position only in the few instances when Buddhists openly defied the state or, rather and more frequently, proposed alternatives to what these postwar scholars perceived as a totalitarian system.

In this sense, to the point that they served to affirm state ideology, the majority of Buddhist activities was criticized as "feudal," whereas innovative and sometimes "anti-establishment" movements such as Kiyozawa Manshi's (1863–1903) Seishinshugi (Spiritualism) or Sakaino Kõyõ's (1871–1933) Shin Bukkyõ (New Buddhism) were deemed worthy of the rubric "modern," or kindaiteki. These early postwar scholars followed the mainstream of non-Marxist social science and historiography in Japan. Associated with names such as Maruyama Masao (1914–1996) or Õtsuka Hisao (1907–1996), the concern with Japan's modernity—or rather its lack thereof—dominated those disciplines well into the 1970s and even 1980s.

Despite this modernist view of history, scholars such as Yoshida and Kashiwahara, alongside their junior Ikeda Eishun (1929–2004), produced important works that remain authoritative in the field to this day, and were responsible for encouraging a new generation of younger students of modern Buddhism. Indeed, while these earlier scholars saw the history of modern Japanese Buddhism as the process of the realization of their own postwar ideal of modernism—and criticized everything that was not part thereof as "feudal"—the following generation, represented by Okada Masahiko (b.

1962), Fukushima Eiju (b. 1965), Moriya Tomoe b. 1968), and Õtani Eiichi (b. 1968), would take yet a different stance. Influenced by the discursive approach that had a decisive impact upon the Japanese humanities from the 1990s onward, this generation of scholars was less interested in the issue of war responsibility and more focused on understanding the strategic self-styling of the historical actors—that is: what did it mean, in the context of modern Japan, to be a "Buddhist"?

The research results presented by those younger scholars need to be understood in connection with the handful of studies on the establishment of the modern concept of "religion" (shükyõ) published after the mid-1990s. Despite some earlier works on the topic, monographs such as those by Haga Shõji, Yamaguchi Teruomi, and Isomae Jun'ichi, as well as the edited volume Reconsidering "Religion" by Shimazono Susumu and Tsuruoka Yoshio, showed that issues of self-identification were as much at the core of the so-called modernization process as were institutional changes. The attention to identity formation included a new focus on how Japanese national identity was shaped vis-à-vis Asia, and this translated into new studies focusing on cultural aspects of Buddhist proselytization in China and Korea. Moreover, research into the activities of Japanese Buddhists on the mainland, and other aspects of accommodation of sectarian institutions with the wartime state, now aimed less at facile criticism of these instances of "collaboration," but rather at identifying the inner logic behind it.

By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, enough works had been published that the first critiques of the field itself started to appear. Spearheaded by the abovementioned Hayashi Makoto—who also served for several years as president of the Society for the Study of Modern Japanese Buddhist History (Nihon Kindai Bukkyõshi Kenkyükai the main hub for scholars in the field)—these critiques sometimes pointed to how the field had changed in terms of self-identification, in the course of the 1950s and 1960s, from Meiji Buddhism to Modern Buddhism, and how the actual contents of these studies had shifted along with our very understanding of "modernity." He alluded, for instance, to the lack of studies on the transition between

the Edo and Meiji periods, on the early Shõwa period, and on the transition into the postwar period.

Consciously or not, more recent scholars have produced studies that, in many ways, fill in at least some of the gaps pointed out by Hayashi. Having experienced graduate education in an environment where the dialogue with non-Japanese scholarship was already the norm, studies by Tanigawa Yutaka (b. 1973), Hoshino Seiji (b. 1973), Õsawa Kõji (b. 1975), Iwata Mami (b. 1980), Shigeta Shinji (b. 1980), Kondõ Shuntarõ (b. 1980), and Õmi Toshihiro (b. 1981) have more explicitly connected Buddhism and its institutions with other areas of social activities, thus expanding the narrower traditional "History of Buddhism" into broader historiographical inquiries. For instance, what was the role of Buddhism in the development of modern education or the modern disciplinary institutions? How did the idea of "Buddhism" function in the establishment of "religion" or "art" as modern discourses? What was the ideological and practical role of Buddhism in the formation of Pan-Asianism? How did Buddhism connect with the reception of Marxist theory in modern Japan? How did Japanese Buddhism negotiate the role of women within the emerging modern gender relations? These are, obviously, not simple questions to be answered in a single monograph; nonetheless, they show us that in terms of both perspective and scope, the field is now thriving as never before.

Major Issues of Modern Japanese Buddhism

As already emphasized, during the nineteenth century Japanese Buddhists faced a number of challenges, ranging from their identity as Buddhists (i.e., the very reconception of Buddhism as a "religion") to their role as subjects of an increasingly larger empire. With that in mind, and for the purposes of this volume, we have divided the voices of nineteenth-century Japanese Buddhists, represented by the twenty-two chapters of this book, into five sections. These sections reflect major issues they faced, as identified in the scholarship summarized above, namely: 1) sectarian reform; 2) the nation; 3) science and philosophy; 4) social reform; and 5) Japan and Asia. The bulk of non-doctrinal writing by Japanese Buddhist authors was in one way or the other

devoted to one or several of these themes, which also came to inform their identity, be it primarily sectarian or more integrally Buddhist. Furthermore, none of these issues can be analyzed in a national vacuum; the role of Western precedent, competition, or cooperation is prominent throughout.

Sectarian Reform

The role of comparisons to the West is clear even with regard to the most inward of the five themes, that of sectarian reform. Undoubtedly, the most important trigger of inner reform was the severe criticism Japanese Buddhism faced from a variety of quarters. Confucian-inspired critique had been a mainstay of Tokugawa-period elite discourses since the early seventeenth century. Confucianists attacked the clergy as corrupt and the Buddhist teaching as otherworldly, a distraction from the paramount concerns of real life, that is, ethics. From the eighteenth century onward, the Nativist school of Kokugaku added to the mix with its vitriolic emphasis on the foreignness of Buddhism, supposedly unsuited for Japan. There was not much that was substantially new in the movements of the Late Mito School and Restoration Shinto, which sprang up in the first half of the nineteenth century. They were, however, important conduits for transporting and amplifying older critiques of Buddhism and translating them into action, such as the anti-Buddhist policies of the late Edo period.

A number of these points of criticism were grudgingly accepted by members of the Buddhist clergy, and a precept revival movement, aimed at rooting out the most widespread degenerations that had become the target of criticism, emerged from the mid-eighteenth century, associated with the names of Jiun Onkō (1718–1804) and Fujaku (1707–1781), among others. This movement was prominently continued in the Meiji era by the Pure Land priest Fukuda Gyōkai (1809–1888). Indeed, the concern with monastic rules and the interference of the government into priestly life is the main concern of the first text introduced in this volume, Gyōkai's 1876 "Questions and Answers from Beneath a Snowy Window" (part I, chapter 1), which includes a pointed critique of the contemporary focus of Buddhist priests on conducting funerals for securing their livelihood, a very appropriate object for reform in his eyes.

Institutional reforms were spurred on by the haibutsu kishaku policies and the disestablishment of Buddhism immediately following the Meiji Revolution of 1868. An early example was the establishment of a new regional school for priests by a reform group of the Jõdo Shinshü in Yamaguchi in 1866. The older academies also slowly took up the cause of reform, such as the Takakura Gakuryõ of the Õtani branch of the same sect, which established a Department for the Protection of the Dharma (gohõjõ) in 1868, where for the first time texts from other religions, especially Christianity, were studied.

These early reform initiatives, however, were dwarfed by the inner changes the sects underwent during the course of the Meiji period, which some observers have called a "Protestantization" of Japanese Buddhism. Among the observable transformations were standardizations and unifications (such as of the Zen rituals for school founders or of koan phrasebooks) and simplifications and abridgements (such as those rituals in the esoteric schools now deemed too superstitious, or making Shugendõ into a distinct institution). Many of these concrete reforms were notionally based on a new understanding of Buddhism as a "religion," that is, a social system of action fairly clearly delimited, no longer encompassing all walks of life, but restricted to the spiritual dimension. It was by living up to its full potential as an "ideal religion" that Japanese Buddhism might also prove its superiority to the rival Christianity, as Nakanishi Ushirõ argued in his 1889 On Religious Revolution (part I, chapter 2). While this rethinking of the nature of Buddhism by Buddhists themselves began in the early Meiji period, it gained considerable momentum with the formation of the The Fraternity of Puritan Buddhists (Bukkyõ Seito Dõshikai) in 1899 and establishment of its journal Shin Bukkyõ in the following year. As the editorial from the inaugural issue of that journal introduced in this volume (part I, chapter 3) shows, the "New Buddhists" literally derided the "Old Buddhism" as superstitious, while calling for the "improvement of inner character through religious faith."

A genuinely new element of anti-Buddhism had come into play when Christian missionaries began proselytizing and publishing in Japan. They mainly took aim at

Buddhist cosmology, rituals, and elements of faith that they viewed as superstitions. A potent weapon they employed in doing so was the historicization of what used to be elements of revelatory religion, following recent trends of liberal theology in Europe and North America. It took Japanese Buddhists until the 1890s to come to grips with this challenge, and only then did a historical approach to scriptural commentary and interpretation begin to take hold. As the authors—it is attributed to Kiyozawa Manshi—of an 1897 editorial for the journal Kyõkai jigen argued (introduced in this volume as part I, chapter 4), the independent study of scripture, unmediated by traditional commentaries, actually aided in understanding the core meaning of sacred texts.

In this way, Japanese Buddhist reform in the Meiji period pervaded both form and content. Institutional reform, educational reform, and the reform of the idea of and scholarship on Buddhism were intimately intertwined. Reform also had from the very beginning an eminently political dimension, which will be explored in the next section.

The Nation

The early modern period in Japan has been characterized as an era of budding nationalism. First articulated as the call for emancipation from Japan's "unforgettable other," China, the incursions by Russia and other Western powers into Japanese territory from the late eighteenth century onward markedly accelerated articulations of proto-nationalism. From the 1830s onward, tracts on national defense appeared, and religion also became a prominent topic in writings on national independence, as a Christian infiltration was seen as a first step toward conquest by the Western nations. Japanese Buddhists were not part of this discourse until the 1850s, when some of them began portraying Buddhism as the ideal bulwark against the spiritual onslaught of Christianity. More than anyone else, it is the Jõdo Shinshü priest Gesshõ who is associated with this movement that sought to protect both the dharma (gohõ) and the nation (gokoku). In his On Protecting the Nation through Buddhism, posthumously published in 1858 and introduced in this volume (part II, chapter 1), Gesshõ explained how Buddhism, and the Jõdo Shinshü in particular, was the best means to provide

spiritual guidance in order to repel the Westerners whose strategy it was to weaken Japan spiritually through the introduction of Christianity.

Efforts at proving the utility of Buddhism in the face of national crisis were prominent in, but not limited to, the Jõdo Shinshü. Given its historically strong rhetorical emphasis on saving the nation, it is no wonder that similar positions could be found in the Nichiren sect in the years immediately preceding the Meiji Revolution. A good example of this is the tract "Upholding Faith in the Buddhadharma and Repaying the Nation" penned by the layman Ogawa Taidõ (1814–1878) in 1863 (part II, chapter 2). He traced the origins of the contemporary political crisis in Japan, its existence threatened by foreign powers, to a "neglect of the Buddhadharma." Tellingly, the way to protect the nation for Ogawa lay in correct practice, which first meant internal reform. This was necessary given the dismal situation Ogawa thought much of current Buddhism to be in.

However, as we have seen above, much to the chagrin of the Japanese Buddhist establishment it was to Shinto that the young government turned as the main building block of post-Restoration religious policy. The separation of the Tokugawa-era link between state and temples and the turmoil in religious policy in the first few years of the Meiji period prompted some of the more perceptive among the clergy to fundamentally rethink the relationship between religion and state, or indeed, to think through this relationship in those terms for the very first time, given that the conceptual framework to do so was just emerging in the Japanese language. It was in particular the Three Articles of Instruction that prompted debate and invited criticism by Buddhists who felt that it was time that Buddhism was recognized as a vital force by the new Meiji state. An already very senior scholar priest joining the debate over the Three Articles of Instruction was Higuchi Ryüon. (1800–1885) of the Jõdo Shinshü. In his 1873 "Lectures on the Three Articles of Instruction" (part II, chapter 3), he argues that the hearts of the people need to unite in order to form a strong nation. Just as the Western nations were built on Christianity, the Japanese nation needed a religious foundation. Concurrently with Higuchi, the idea that Shinto is unsuitable for this task

was spelled out most aggressively and most prominently by his fellow Jõdo Shinshü cleric Shimaji Mokurai. This mostly intra-Buddhist discussion coincided in the early 1870s with the debates among the secular intellectuals of the Meiji Six Society (Meirokusha). Although these intellectuals agreed in principle that religion might be useful for uniting the nation, they also saw that a situation of religious plurality might best be dealt with by establishing the separation of religion and state and the freedom of religion. Given the tendency of the early Meiji state to prefer Shinto, this position was attractive to Buddhists, since it promised the protection of their creed, if not as a state cult, then at least as a private religion. This status came to be enshrined in the Meiji Constitution of 1889.

Throughout these early years of the Meiji period, the other predominant political issue that religious groups in Japan were faced with was the question of Christianity. Pressure by the Western imperialist nations to lift the ban against Christianity had grown since the first unequal treaties had been signed beginning in 1854. Finally, its practice was permitted generally since 1873. For most Buddhists, the question was not whether to repel Christianity or not, but how to do so most effectively. A prominent representative of Buddhist intellectuals devoted to the antichristian cause was Ugai Tetsujõ (1814–1891), who (under the pseudonym Kiyü Dõjin) published his textbook for Buddhist priests Laughing at Christianity in 1869 (part II, chapter 4). Ugai largely relies on the old Sino-Japanese tradition of anti-Christian pamphlets dating back to the seventeenth century, which is visible both in the items of Christian doctrine he singles out for attack as well as in his positive advocacy of a cooperation between Buddhism, Shinto, and Confucianism, which would soon be replaced by a more self-confident stance arguing on the basis of the strength of Buddhism alone.

Refutations of Christianity remained acute for Buddhist scholars well into the Meiji period. They were frequently articulated within a political argument for the predominance of Buddhism, especially before the compromise of the Meiji Constitution. The Shingon priest Shaku Unshõ (1827–1909), for instance, argued that Buddhism had always been the main religion of the Imperial house and was thus fit to

be the national doctrine of Japan. In his 1882 work "On the National Doctrine of Greater Japan" (part II, chapter 5), Unshõ, like many of his contemporaries, stressed the need for moral reform of Buddhists themselves before Buddhism could serve as the religion of the nation.

The emphasis on the need for inner reform receded somewhat after the 1880s and was replaced by a more openly articulated support of the new nation-state. A further self-confident Buddhism also began to engage in social reform of society at large. The most pressing concern of Buddhist intellectuals in the 1880s, however, was the commensurability of Buddhism with modern forms of thought, especially modern academic philosophy. This ushered in a debate that was to dominate Buddhist writing in Japan in the 1880s and 1890s, which will be taken up in the next section.

Science and Philosophy

No scholar of religion is a stranger to the old adage that "Buddhism" is a religion compatible with "Science." As Donald S. Lopez Jr. has repeatedly pointed out, the history of this relationship overlaps, in many ways, with the very story of how we came to understand ourselves as "modern."68 In Japan, in particular, this is certainly the case, as both concepts of "science" and "philosophy" were only established in the archipelago through the mediation of a type of "Buddhism" that was, more than a mere "religion," also both "scientific" and "philosophic."

As explained in the previous section, the nineteenth-century (re-) encounter with Christianity functioned for Buddhists everywhere in Japan as a call to arms of sorts. Although earlier critiques such as those by Ugai Tetsujõ had been based on late medieval anti-Christian tracts, and even later works by the likes of Shaku Unshõ still grounded themselves on a highly idealized primeval relationship between Buddhism and the Imperial court, several Buddhists began dabbling in what they regarded as far more sophisticated methods for criticizing Christianity, which in the mid-Meiji context now "threatened" Japan in yet a different way.

With the establishment of European-inspired political institutions in the 1870s and into the 1880s, the question was always present as to which religion Japan should adopt as a nation—or whether it should do so at all. Japanese Christians emphasized that if Japan were to follow in the footsteps of Euro-American nations, it needed Christianity, which was the very ethical cornerstone of those regions. Buddhists, on the other hand, naturally rejected this idea, but the gist of their argument now was no longer Christianity's belligerent character, but its philosophical unsoundness in terms of "science." Sada Kaiseki (1818–1882) (in part III, chapter 1), argued for a uniquely Japanese idea of progress that did not rely on things Western, which led him to dispute the very core of Christian cosmology, suggesting it presented a demiurgical idea of God. Although in some respects disparate even for contemporary eyes, Sada's text does pose questions related to theodicy that, in essence, are meant to convince the reader of the usefulness of Buddhist science as an alternative to the Christian paradigm of modernization.

Although not yet explicitly present in Sada, the recurrent issue of whether Buddhism is a "religion" or "philosophy" was considered in depth by one of his contemporaries, fellow cleric and University of Tokyo instructor Hara Tanzan (1819–1892) (see part III, chapter 2). In the late 1880s this author would claim that, to the extent it cares little about the existence of "ghostly realms" and rather focuses on the elimination of affliction and sickness, Buddhism is not a "religion" but a "philosophy." Influenced by the Japanese translation of Henry S. Olcott's Buddhist Catechism (orig. 1881), Tanzan's statement was a clear reaction against the type of faith-centered concept of "religion" that was starting to take root at the time. That is, in the sense that it is essentially a scientific endeavor, Buddhism was not supposed to be even considered in the same framework as Christianity, a system based entirely on what he regarded as blind belief.

Having attended Tanzan's classes at the University of Tokyo, Inoue Enryõ (1858–1919) (see part III, chapter 3), would take the above discussion one step further and claim that Buddhism was indeed a "religion," albeit a "philosophical" one. In a context in which it was common knowledge that a constitution was in the works—and it was still

unknown whether a political system with a state religion would be adopted—attempts to assert Buddhism as superior to Christianity became all the more frequent. The latter was but a "religion" based on emotion, whereas Buddhism, in turn, did share that aspect but went beyond, also constituting what Enryõ dubbed an "intellectual religion" (chiryokuteki shükyõ). He did acknowledge, however, that the Buddhism present in his time was not Buddhism as it should be, and for it to actually function as the true religion of Japan, it needed to be appropriately "revived." What Enryõ argued for, then, was the (re)construction of a Buddhism rooted in reason, which unlike Christianity could guide the nation on the path of modernity.

The issue of constructing Buddhism as a sound "religion" was, therefore, one of the most pressing of Meiji Japan. However, the question also arose of what was, precisely, the scope of this religion: while Christianity was, in the late nineteenth century, presented to the Japanese as a more or less well-defined system, Buddhists still struggled in that regard. Amid the myriad schools and sects of Buddhism, there was no historical consensus as to what should be the core of their teachings, a fact that prompted Meiji Buddhists to distill their canon(s) and produce textual compilations reminiscent of the Christian Bible.

This contemporary demand to present Buddhism as a single religion was, however, not a struggle solely devoted to finding common doctrinal grounds, but also in terms of convincingly presenting the internal consistency of these teachings. It is precisely this issue that Murakami Senshõ (1851–1929), professor of Buddhist Studies at the then Tokyo Imperial University, attempted to address in the intended five volumes of his Discourse on Buddhist Unity, published from 1901. Murakami's work is also, in many senses, a response to contemporary European Buddhologists who presented as most authoritative a version of Buddhism centered on the Pali Canon, dismissing Mahãyãna developments as latter-day corruptions. Murakami, therefore, not only endeavored to produce a synthesis of Buddhist thought, explicating the connection between contemporary Japanese forms and their purported Indian past, but also, as the text

by Seiran, in which he emphasizes, from the perspective of a Buddhist, the "spiritual" values of "Eastern Civilization" vis-à-vis its then overestimated "Western" counterpart.

Another early form of social engagement was the establishment of schools. Building on both the early modern heritage of running temple schools and experiences with institutions of priest training, individual Buddhist clerics as well as sects started establishing general schools, as opposed to schools geared toward training the clergy, from as early as the 1870s. As in so many other instances in Meiji-period Buddhist history, the Christian challenge again looms large in the background: Christian missionaries in Japan had founded general purpose non-theological schools since the 1870s. Many of these were schools for instruction in English at first (such as Channing Moore Williams's [1829–1910] English School in Osaka [1870] and Niijima Jō's [1843–1890] Dōshisha English School in Kyoto [Dōshisha eigakkō, 1875]), but the net was soon cast wider. Women's education, perceived as lacking by Christian missionaries and converts, was targeted especially. Schools such as Meiji jogakkō (1885) were set up with Protestant backing, albeit without Christian ceremonies on campus or even overtly Christian educational content.

Given the experience of Buddhist institutions in the field of education, it did not take long before similar institutions with a Buddhist background appeared, such as in the field of women's higher schools. An early example of the latter was Joshi bungei gakusha, founded in 1888 by Shimaji Mokurai. The former Buddhist academies were gradually transformed into modern universities, many of which are still in existence today. Their role for training the future clergy diminished while an increasing majority of students enrolled in general degree programs.

Another Jōdo Shinshü school, the Futsü kyōkō had opened in 1885 and would be, through new media in general, the breeding ground for several other influential Buddhist social reform organizations in the realms of temperance and outreach to society. Indeed, the proliferation of Buddhist journals—in the 1890s, over a hundred of them existed—points toward the trend of Buddhism interacting with society in this era. Created by Futsü kyōkō members, one of these journals, the Hanseikai zasshi (see

part IV, chapter 2), made temperance, but also a more general humanism, its goal. Avoiding alcohol was just one step toward moral improvement, this time not aimed at priests, but rather as a movement aimed at society broadly defined.

The conceptual—and practical—jump from reforms of the clergy, to those of laypeople, and eventually those of society at large had to include a reconsideration of the role of women within Buddhism. In a time when universal education became the norm, a number of Buddhists felt the need to address the issue of (in)equality between the sexes, a phenomenon of which the 1888 text by Shimaji Mokurai included in this volume is a clear example (see part IV, chapter 3). Also intended as a critique of the idea that the type of equality between men and women observed in the West was a result of Christian values, Shimaji's text asserted that for Buddhism (and Confucianism) true equality lay in accepting the different roles of both genders. The question of women was also addressed by Tanaka Chigaku, himself a lay follower of Nichiren Buddhism who developed his own organization after having broken with orthodoxy. Tanaka's 1894 On Buddhist Marriage (part IV, chapter 4) not only argues for the marriage of clerics, but more broadly aimed at "correcting the image of Buddhism as unworldly, emphasizing its connectedness to life, society, and the modern state."

By the turn of the century, Buddhist social outreach had multiplied. In theoretical terms, Buddhist thinkers began to grapple seriously with the profound social change wrought by industrialization and with the major political schools already developed in reaction to this in Europe, such as social democracy or state socialism. The Western-educated Shinshü priest Chikazumi Jõkan (1870–1941) situated Buddhism within these trends in his 1904 text The Problem of Faith (part IV, chapter 5). He argued that the historical Buddha had been a social reformer, preaching the equality of people regardless of caste. Among the Buddhists of contemporary Japan, Chikazumi continued, social justice should not remain theoretical but translate into social activism, and he clearly enumerated "workers' education, illness insurance, family assistance, and so on" as fields of action.

Indeed, by the turn of the century, Buddhists had reached out to society in numerous ways. They had founded hospitals and other welfare institutions, employed prison chaplains, sent out military chaplains (see also part V, chapter 2), and engaged heavily in mission work in (mostly) other Asian countries, especially China and Korea. This was part of a more general turn toward Asia, as will be taken up in the next section.

Japan and Asia

Since the Heian period (794–1185), people on the main islands of the Japanese archipelago understood the world as being constituted of three "nations" or "realms." This cosmology is obviously connected to a narrative of how Buddhism reached Japan and can be traced back at least as far as to the works of Saichō (767–822). This idea was, for the inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago, an essential element in the ingraining of traditional Buddhist cosmology that placed Mt. Sumeru (Shumisen) at the center of the universe. Humankind would reside on a continent located in the southern part of this mountain, of which Tenjiku (which included, but was not necessarily limited to, the Indian subcontinent) occupied the center. Neighboring Tenjiku was Shintan (that is, China) and far in the periphery, almost falling off the edge of the world, was the realm of Japan, or Honchō *fl. The story of Buddhism, which had its origins in Tenjiku, spread through Shintan, and was then propagated into Honchō, was itself, in this sense, a narrative of global history.

Although the arrival of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century— and consequently of modern European cartographic knowledge—did bring new developments to this cosmology, the essential narrative of Buddhist history remained. That is, far before the Western idea of "Asia" spread throughout Japan in the course of the Edo period, the story of how Buddhism came to the Japanese islands was already intrinsically connected to imagined versions of the continental mainland. The bakufu's isolationist policy meant, however, that Buddhists in Japan were not allowed more than the imagining of India and China, save perhaps for sporadic contact with visitors from the continent in limited quarters of cities such as Nagasaki. With the "reopening" of the country in the 1850s, along with the easier access to transoceanic transportation,

however, Buddhists could now experience the mainland themselves, without the textual filter imposed thus far. That is, besides the encounter with "religion" and a new sense of their role within society, Japan's relationship with "Asia" was one of the issues that would (re)define the character of Buddhism in modern Japan.

The first case of a Japanese Buddhist priest visiting China was that of Ogurusu Kõchõ (1831–1905), who traveled not long after the ratification of the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty in June 1873. However, contrary to the vigorous practice he might have expected, he found Chinese Buddhism to be decadent, a reality that prompted him to draft the text partially translated here (part V, chapter 1), meant to revive Chinese Buddhism on his terms. Calling for cooperation against the common Western enemy, On Protecting the Dharma in Beijing is an essential text that represents the transformation of a theretofore subservient relationship: Japan is no longer the student, but now the teacher, who can save the Chinese dharma from its downfall.

This self-representation as the leader of East Asia was ideologically fundamental for the colonial enterprise, in which Buddhists were to play an important role. With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Buddhist priests were sent to the continent in order to serve as chaplains, an activity they would continue to perform over the course of all Japan's modern wars. Yamagata Genjõ (1866–1903), whose The Iron Scepter is partly translated here (part V, chapter 2), was one such chaplain. A scholar-priest within the Shingon tradition, Yamagata recorded his accounts of the battlefield in diary form, which reveal cooperation with Chinese Buddhists in what he then regarded as "new Japanese territory." A clearer picture of how Buddhist rhetoric was used in order to justify Japan's colonial enterprise can be seen in Shaku Soen's (1860–1919) "The Japanese People's Spirit," a talk given in Manchuria but two years after Japan's 1910 annexation of Korea (see part V, chapter 3). The lecture, obviously aimed at a Japanese audience, presents Japanese superiority in racial overtones that would become all the more frequent over the course of the following decade, alongside discourses on the nation's kokutai.

Yet, the Asian experience was also important in a doctrinal sense. The appropriation of European buddhological knowledge during the late nineteenth century helped to conclusively establish in Japan the idea that Chinese was not the "original" language of Buddhism, and that Sakyamuni's "golden words" were to be found elsewhere. This led Rinzai priest Kawaguchi Ekai (1866–1945) to leave Kobe in 1897 in search of these authentic texts, becoming the first Japanese to enter the "hermit nation" of Tibet in 1901. He recorded his impressions in A Travelogue in Tibet, partly translated in part V, chapter 4. A widely popular text at the time, it shows that, besides his will to garner the "sacred texts" of his tradition, Kawaguchi also saw Tibet as a somewhat inferior nation in terms of civilization, which could again be "illuminated" by the wisdom of his native Japan.

The increasing contact with the Asian reality ultimately changed the way Japanese clergymen and laypeople alike understood their own selves as "Buddhists," in terms not only of their role as leaders of an imagined Asian coalition, but also in the sense of refashioning "Buddhism" as the most essential Pan-Asian construct.

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Many of the chapters below actually concern several of the five dimensions that we have presented and which inform the structure of the book. Anxiety about the nation could fuel sectarian reform; social reform measures were taken up within the framework of the mission in mainland Asia; through educational efforts, the pursuit of new trends in science and philosophy were thought to contribute to sectarian reform. Moreover, the challenge posed by the encounter with the (Christian) West was a contributing factor in all of the instances discussed here, so it will be treated as present within and throughout the five chapters instead of dealing with it separately. We hope that the diversity of the challenges of modernity and of Japanese Buddhists' answers to these challenges becomes palpable in the volume, thus leading to a better understanding of where Japanese Buddhism stands today and how it arrived there. <>

The Tradition of Everlasting Bön: Five Key Texts on Scripture, Tantra, and the Great Perfection translated by J. F. Marc des Jardins [Library of Tibetan Classics, Wisdom Publications, 9780861714483]

An annotated translation of five key texts of the Everlasting (Yungdrung) Bön school selected by the late H. H. Menri Trizin Rinpoché that includes scriptural teachings, a root tantra based on revealed teachings of the unconditioned absolute, a canonical commentary on the root tantra, an exposition of the Yungdrung tantric system, and the oral instructions on Bön meditation practices associated with experiencing the nature of the mind, the Great Perfection systems.

This authoritative annotated translation of five key texts of Everlasting (Yungdrung) Bön by Marc des Jardins opens up a relatively unknown tradition that, since the arrival of Buddhism in Tibet, has undergone great transformations in its philosophy, doctrinal teachings, and meditative practices. Each text represents an important aspect of the tradition. The first text, by Drogön Azha Lodrö Gyaltsen (1198–1263), presents the grounds and paths of the Greater Vehicle of the Bön tradition and represents the philosophical ideology of its teachings based on the scriptures contained in the Bön canon. The second text is a short root tantra attributed to revealed teachings from Kuntu Zangpo, the personification of the unconditioned absolute. The third text is a commentary on this root tantra attributed to Drenpa Namkha (fl. eighth century), a Bönpo sage contemporary with Padmasambhava. The fourth text, by Nyamé Sherap Gyaltsen (1356–1415), presents a general exposition of the tantric system according to Yungdrung Bön. The final text, by Drutön Gyalwa Yungdrung (1242–90), pertains to the oral instructions on the meditation practices of Bön, especially on the cycle of practices associated with experiencing the nature of the mind, the Great Perfection systems. All five texts have been selected by the late H. H. Menri Trizin Rinpoché, Lungtok Tenpai Nyima (1927–2017), the thirty-third abbot of Menri Monastery, the central institution of the Yungdrung Bön school.

CONTENTS

The Everlasting Bon Tradition

The texts comprising this volume are key representatives of the Tibetan religious tradition known as Yungdrung Bön (g.yung drung bon), or Everlasting Bön. This school is presently the most prominent among the traditions in Tibet that portray themselves as heirs to the pre-Buddhist religious practices known under the generic title of Bön. Therefore, Everlasting Bön is an indigenous movement that can be traced at least to the beginning of the eleventh century when Shenchen Luga (996-1035) discovered a cache of non-Buddhist texts in 1017 and began to transmit their practices to a host of disciples. The discovery in 913 of the collection of scriptures titled the Hundred Thousand Verses on the Water Spirits (Klu 'bum) supports earlier beginnings or, at least, definite traces of ancestry. This collection contains many elements that characterize Bön as we know it today as well as myths and their associated practices from the imperial period (seventh—ninth centuries)?

The word Bon was used initially as a generic name for disparate systems of cultic and religious practices and beliefs that were current through the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet in the reign of Songtsen Gampo (604-649/50). For Buddhist apologists, the term Bön became synonymous with all non-Buddhist competing religious practices. Identifying the latter referent with exactitude remains a difficult task. Early documents from Dunhuang indicate some purposes for which these rites were conducted. They mention royal funerary practices and other forms of funerals (shid, rman, mdad),

healing liturgies, calling for good fortune (g.yang), divination (mo, phya), diagnosis of inauspicious occurrences (dpyad), ritual strategies for counteracting baleful influences, ransom rites (glud), and other miscellaneous rites (gto) involving different types of spirits and deities. Examples of treatises on these rites still form parts of the current available literature of the Bön canon.

Sources from Dunhuang mention two main classes of indigenous Tibetan priests or ritual specialists, the Bon (also named Bonpo) and the Shen (gshen). Their respective functions are not clear but there are indications that these priests used a variety of ritual techniques and means for their trade. Initially they may have been specialists in different cultic practices or part of different family and religious lineages. In some texts, the Bönpos appear to be competing with the Shen; however, in other early documents, distinctions between them seem nominal, for both were occupied with similar activities for their patrons.' The methods used to perform various rites were varied and involved a wide range of strategies and objectives. Indigenous priests used any appropriate ritual tool to make their trade more successful and competitive. Hence, for example, Bonpos and Shen used Buddhist spells and mantras to control the theu (the'u) rang and other spirits.

The composite nature of Bon is certain, particularly in Everlasting Bön, which shows the most prevalent Buddhist elements. The wide use of external methods is apparent in all available written material of this tradition from early on. After all, Bön sources themselves credit widely different geographical regions as the sources of their different practices. These regions include China, India, Gilgit (bru sha), Zhangzhung, Tazik (stag zig), and others.

Today, Bön is represented in the majority by members of the Everlasting Bon school, whereas other schools, such as New Bön (bon gsar ma), Sipé Bon (srid pa'i bon), Leu Bön (le'u bon), and others are now found mostly in the periphery areas of the Tibetan cultural world such as Nepal, Sikkim, North-Western Yunnan, Western Gansu, Inner Mongolia, the neighboring Karakoram range, Gilgit, and other connected areas. The lineages of these ritualists are disappearing due to the growing ban on blood sacrifices

that many of them still perform, as well as changing cultural practices and geographical environments due to immigration, modernization, and climate change. Given these conditions, some have opted for adapting their practices to current realities. For example, the Yolmo (also Hyolmo) shamans, whose ritual activities stem directly from the type of Bon represented in some of the oldest scriptures of the Bon canon, recently joined forces with the Bon monastery of Triten Norbutsé in Kathmandu and adjusted to Everlasting Bon doctrines. These Yolmo shamans stopped performing blood sacrifices and began using ritual cakes (gtor ma) instead, while still maintaining their characteristic spirit-possession rites.

The Foundation of Yungdrung Bon

A key moment for this lineage is the foundation of Yeru Bensakha by Dru Namkha Yungdrung in 1072. For the following 314 years, this establishment became the main center of learning for Bönpo lamas. From the start, it was the nexus from which many key lineages spread. The meditation lineages of Atri (A khrid), the Zhangzhung Oral Transmission from Zhangzhung zhang zhung snyan rgyud), and the Great Perfection (rdzogs chen) were all at some point transmitted from its eminent masters. This religious center orchestrated its activities in four colleges created for the study of philosophy (mtshan nyid), the tantras (gsang sngags), and monastic vows (sdom gtsang), the latter considered by contemporary historians to be a new trend among Bonpos of the twelfth century. Bonpo masters have established hereditary lineages from early on and there is ample evidence that celibacy was not a strict norm. Since many meditation lineage holders, including our three authors, spent some time there, Yeru Bensakha must have devoted part of its curriculum to meditation training and practice despite not having a college dedicated to this per se.

Yeru Bensakha was built on the northern bank of the Tsangpo River in Central Tibet. It is important to note that by 1240, when Mongol troops invaded Tibet and established control of the region, this Bön center in particular was surrounded by no less than nineteen Buddhist establishments. At least fourteen of these were representatives of the Kadam tradition, which was in full expansion at that time and specialized in the study of Buddhist logic and philosophy." This might help us to understand the presence

of Buddhist elements in Everlasting Bon teachings and writings. This school of Bön entirely espouses Buddhist soteriological and ontological worldviews. It reinterpreted these in its own "indigenous" ways, adopting many cultural elements from surrounding Indian, Chinese, Mongolian, and possibly Central Asian cultures. Its scriptures, teachings, and practices are vast and complex and have not yet been fully investigated. Therefore, one should be very careful to not adopt a reductionist stance or a simplistic definition that moves toward generic typologies such as shamanism, Buddhist heterodoxy, or plagiarism.

Buddhist dogma and philosophy are most prevalent in Yungdrung Bön. It is not known exactly when Buddhist dogma and philosophy were first adopted. There are clear indications that this occurred early on, possibly as early as the time of Azha Lodro in the thirteenth century. Bonpo lamas intent on philosophical studies often spent time in Buddhist centers of learning, where they studied logic, Madhyamaka, the Perfection of Wisdom literature, and other subjects. Upon graduation, they would go to Menri Monastery and later to Yungdrung Ling (f. 1834) or other satellite institutions to perfect their knowledge of Bön. Sherab Gyaltsen (1356-1415), the founder of Menri, is reported to have studied Buddhist philosophy with the famed Sakya master Rongtön Sheja Kunrik (1367-1449) before starting his teaching career at Yeru Bensakha in 1386.

By the time our first author, Azha Lodrö Gyaltsen, became the eighth abbot of Yeru Bensakha" sometime in the mid-thirteenth century, Yung-drung Bön already had in its curriculum of studies well over a hundred scriptures, including several well-developed Tantric corpora. The standardization of indigenous cults rearranged into tantric pantheons with uniform ritual templates was well underway. This continued until the last century, when charismatic Bonpo lamas such as Kundröl Drakpa (b. 1700), Sangyé Lingpa (1705-35), Sangnak Lingpa (b. 1864), Tashi Gyaltsen (1859-1933/35), and others further developed the curriculum of practices. For instance, they added prayers, sections, and sometimes introduced new versions to older tantric cycles and other aspects of Bön in general." However, it is fair to mention here that Bönpos consider their traditions to consist in practices that preexisted even the Yarlung dynasty (c. 600-c. 842).

The emic view of Bon credits its manifestation on Earth to the enlightened being Tonpa Shenrab Miwoché (mi bo che, lit. "the great important man," gshen rab, "the excellent priest" who is the "teacher," ston pa). The earliest hagiographies of Shenrab, the Collected Discourse (Mdo dus) and the Eye of the Needle (Gzer mig), can be dated to the tenth—eleventh centuries, as they are mentioned in the writings of three Bonpo lamas of the eleventh—twelfth centuries." Both are cited extensively in the texts presented in this volume. The Collected Discourse is the first life story of Shenrab for the Yungdrung Bön movement. It is the most concise of the three extant hagiographies available. Critical studies of this scripture show how the account partly reappropriates themes from the life of the Buddha in its earliest Tibetan version, the Gyacher Rolpa, and from the Buddhist Jataka tales. It also recontextualizes Chinese myths with uniquely Tibetan content.

With the middle-length Eye of the Needle, the narrative becomes more Tibetan despite using a variety of events from previous lives of Sakyamuni. Shenrab's life begins in heaven, where he studied the teachings of Bon, after which he undertook reincarnations and manifestations on Earth and elsewhere and transmitted the teachings through various feats. Here Shenrab is no longer just a saint but also a mediator between non-humans and denizens of this plane of existence." This Bön scripture must have been important and widespread, since research indicates that it might have served as the basic template from which the life of Padmasambhava was constructed."

However, it was not until the last and voluminous hagiography, the Stainless Splendor (Gzi brjid), delivered to Loden Nyingpo (b. 1360) sometime during the fourteenth century, that Shenrab becomes the initiator of the twelve rituals (cho ga bcu gnyis), now a universal feature of Bön rites. In the context of the Bön tantras devoted to tutelary deities and protectors, Shenrab became the single source of all transmissions and manifestations of Bön, a cosmic principle, emanating himself through avatars such as Sangwa Dupa, Takla Mebar, and other ancient masters.

Through the lens of Everlasting Bön, the teacher Shenrab is seen as the epitome of realization and is made a historical personage. Dates are forwarded (2021 celebrated his 18,039th birthday) and conflicting locations of fabled lands and fallen kingdoms, such as the Kingdom of Zhangzhung and its province of Tazik (stag zig, lit. "the land of tigers and leopards"), continue to puzzle scholars. However, many of these Bon traditions are solidly attested from the tenth century onward, and there are clear indications that various cultic systems having direct affinities, if not direct transmission links, were extant before and during the Yarlung dynasty. For instance, from this historical period, five early Bönpo clans, still enduring today, are traditionally linked to religious specializations in Bön. These are the Zhu, early specialists on funerary rites; the Mushen (dmu gshen), credited as direct descendants of Shenrab and holding the lineage of the Magyu Tantra; the Dru (bru), who came early to Tibet from Drusha (bru sha, i.e., Gilgit) and were early exponents of philosophy; the Pa (spa), who were masters of the tantric teachings; and the Me'u (rme'u), to whom are credited several scholarly studies. &epos over the centuries established new hereditary lineages with prestigious families. An example is the Khyung clan that is linked to the famous treasure-text discoverer from Nyakrong, Sangnak Lingpa (b. 1864), whose Walkhyung (dbal khyung) Monastery in the 1980s was the discovery site of the last complete set of the Bön canon. Other now prominent families are the Japhur (bya phur), the Böngya (bon brgya), and so on. Most are now using religious materials that were either produced or edited by hierarchs of the Everlasting Bön school, to which they add their own lineage particularities. <>

World of Worldly Gods: The Persistence and Transformation of Shamanic Bon in Buddhist Bhutan by Kelzang T. Tashi [Series: Religion, culture, and history, Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780197669860]

In World of Worldly Gods, Kelzang T. Tashi offers the first comprehensive examination of the tenacity of Shamanic Bon practices, as they are lived and contested in the presence of an

invalidating force: Buddhism. Through a rich ethnography of Goleng and nearby villages in central Bhutan, Tashi investigates why people, despite shifting contexts, continue to practice and engage with Bon, a religious practice that has survived over a millennium of impatience from a dominant Buddhist ecclesiastical structure. Against the backdrop of long-standing debates around practices unsystematically identified as 'bon', this book reframes the often stale and scholastic debates by providing a clear and succinct statement on how these practices should be conceived in the region.

Tashi argues that the reasons for the tenacity of Bon practices and beliefs amid censures by the Buddhist priests are manifold and complex. While a significant reason for the persistence of Bon is the recency of formal Buddhist institutions in Goleng, he demonstrates that Bon beliefs are so deeply embedded in village social life that some Buddhists paradoxically feel it necessary to reach some kind of accommodation with Bon priests. Through an analysis of the relationship between Shamanic Bon and Buddhism, and the contemporary dynamics of Bhutanese society, this book tackles the longstanding concern of anthropology: cultural persistence and change. It discusses the mutual accommodation and attempted amalgamation of Buddhism and Bon, and offers fresh perspectives on the central distinguishing features of Great and Little Traditions.

Reviews

"World of Worldly Gods: The Persistence and Transformation of Shamanic Bon in Buddhist Bhutan is an extraordinarily rich engagement with village ritual practices in Bhutan framed in the encompassing religious dynamics of contemporary Bhutan. Kelzang Tashi has produced by far the best ethnographic work we have on Bhutan and it stands out as one of finest ethnographic accounts of ritual practice across the Himalayas. Conceptually sophisticated and ethnographically grounded well beyond ritual, this work stands to become a classic in the anthropology of the Himalayas." -- David Holmberg, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, Cornell University

"This unique study combines rich ethnographic detail about religious practices in Central Bhutan with fascinating stories of on-the-ground social and political maneuverings for religious authority. Kelzang Tashi shows us religious change not as the outcome of some vague "modernization" process, but as the product of specific local conflicts, and specific histories of engagement between local villagers and the state. This is a valuable contribution

to the emerging anthropology of Bhutan." -- Sherry B. Ortner, Distinguished Research Professor of Anthropology, UCLA

"Based on research into the rituals of bon specialists in the village of Goleng in central Bhutan, the book records bon ritual traditions anchored in the rapidly changing social hierarchy of the villagers. It impartially describes the patterns of increasing control by lay Buddhist specialists. With insight and new information, it is a must-read for those interested in the real life of communities in the Himalayan region and ethnographic Tibet." -- Daniel Berounsky, Associate Professor of Tibetology, Charles University, Prague

CONTENTS

Without Buddhist priests, dharma protectors will be displeased;
without Bon priests, local deities will be angered.
—Local adage

Before the coming of Buddhism to Bhutan in the seventh century, Bon was the only prevalent religious practice, and it continues to survive down to the present day. This is surprising because Bon religiosity has been looked down on by Buddhists due to the

practice of animal sacrifice and its alleged association with black magic rituals that are antithetical to core Buddhist values. Moreover, unlike Buddhism, Bon does not offer enlightenment to sentient beings and accordingly has no salvific function. Despite many centuries of Buddhist opposition, including ongoing censure today, Bon beliefs and practices continue to play a role in the lives of people in Bhutan through annual celebrations and everyday engagement in Bon healing and protective rituals.

This book is an exploration of the relationship between Bon and Buddhism through an ethnography of Goleng village (also spelled as Goling) and its neighbors in Zhemgang district in central Bhutan, which are a stronghold of Bon practices and beliefs. I am interested in why people, despite shifting contexts, continue to practice and engage with Bon rituals while recognizing that what they are doing is antithetical to the civilizing mission of the Buddhist masters from Tibet and, of course, against the religious prescription of the Bhutanese state, which made Drukpa Kagyu— a branch of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism— its state religion in the seventeenth century. Against the backdrop of long- standing tensions between Buddhism and Bon, which go back to the eighth century, this study investigates the failure to eliminate Bon, and why Buddhists felt it necessary to reach a rather awkward accommodation not only with some Bonpos but also with their own mission of illuminating the so- called uncultivated country with the universalizing light of Buddhism. Zhemgang is particularly relevant to addressing this question as Buddhist institutions came very late to some areas of the district, indeed, only in the 1960s. Although the majority of Bhutanese people identify as Buddhists, Bon is widely practiced across Bhutan, with people taking part in a range of Bon practices through everyday rituals and annual rites. Some villages in western Bhutan, for instance Haa, have shared annual Bon rites, in which live- animal sacrifices were made until recently. Yet I have chosen Zhemgang in central Bhutan as my field site because it is the region where the surviving nobilities, despite officially not existing, thrive, and the annual Bon rite is the most intense.

What follows is not simply a study about the relationship between a local religious practice, Bon and Buddhism, a world religion; it is also a study of the ontological orientation of villagers in the contemporary Bhutanese society. At the heart of the book

lies the question of cultural persistence and change: what explains the tenacity of pre-Buddhist Bon beliefs, as they are lived and contested, in the presence of the invalidating force— Buddhism. Framed in long- standing debates around practices unsystematically identified as "Bon" by Tibetologists and anthropologists, and how they relate to what anthropologists refer to as religious syncretism, my analysis lays bare deeper forces that operate under the veneer of Buddhism's civilizing mission.

The study reveals that the reasons for the tenacity of Bon practices and beliefs amid censures by the Buddhists are manifold and complex. One explanation for the persistence of pre- Buddhist religious beliefs in Goleng and Shobleng villages is their remoteness and small population so that no official Buddhist institutions were actually established in the area until the mid- twentieth century. Buddhism itself was never as strong as in other areas that are home to the major Buddhist centers of the country, and hence, Bon has managed, despite the odds, to be seen as more relevant to villagers' everyday concerns and local problems. Nevertheless, the villages of this area have been well aware of Buddhism for centuries through their contacts with Buddhist masters and practitioners from elsewhere whose religious traditions, though official, are unaffiliated with the state- sponsored school of Buddhism, which is mainly concentrated in the state- based institutions found in district (dzongkhag) and subdistrict headquarters (drungkhag).

Given the long history of Buddhist antagonism toward Bon, it was very surprising to learn that there has been an appointment of the first official Bon priest (hereafter Bonpo) of Zhemgang proper1 by the district office in the 1990s in an effort to restrict and marshal Bon practices in the region.

Similarly, the appointment of a local Bonpo to the official Bonpo role in Goleng by the district office is another case in point. This was, however, against the will of the people of Goleng (Golengpa hereafter) and historically unprecedented not only in Goleng, or for that matter in Zhemgang, but in the country as a whole. While Bon in general and Bonpos in particular have been denigrated by the Buddhists for centuries, this

particular scheme is aimed to crack down on the former by designating a specific Bon priest as the "official Bonpo" in the hope of discrediting the others.

Two Buddhist temples have recently been established in Goleng: the first temple construction was in the 1960s and antedated the appointment of the official Golengpa Bonpo, while the second temple was established in 1994. In addition to it, there have been several occasions in Zhemgang proper and Buli villages in which the local Bonpos were subject to religious validation. All the active Bonpos from the neighboring villages were summoned to the village centers, and their Bon practices were then systematically scrutinized, reviewed, contested, and judged by Buddhist clergies and high- ranking officials. It was on one such occasion that Bonpo Karma of Pam village was singled out from the pool of Bonpos for the newly created position of the official Bonpo of Zhemgang proper. Currently, a monthly honorarium of Nu 500 ($8) is provided by the district office for his religious services at the courtyard of the district office. Bonpo Karma, who boasts about his role by calling himself the state or official Bonpo (zhung-gi bonpo), emphasizes that the Buddhist clergies and high- ranking officials were affiliated with the state-funded school of Buddhism and came all the way from the capital, Thimphu, to organize the selection of the official Bonpo.

Slowly and methodically, the district office's interests in certifying Bonpos have extended beyond its headquarters, particularly to Bon stronghold villages such as Goleng. While their mission is guided by Buddhist logic, the designation of an official Bonpo of Goleng was the corollary of a lawsuit filed by three Golengpa plaintiffs against a Bon priest who was believed to be practicing a form of Black Bon (bon nag) involving live- animal sacrifices and black magic rituals as opposed to White Bon (bon kar)— which by the same token is denuded of animal sacrifices and black magic rituals. It should be, however, noted bon kar and bon nag are both retrospective labels given by Buddhists, but they are now accepted and employed by the Bonpos themselves to refer to their specific forms of ritual. It was this legal process that culminated in Bonpo Chungla's appointment as the first official Golengpa Bonpo— the vocation that he embraced until he stepped down from his formal role due to his age and medical condition in the early 2000s. However, except for Chungla, who embraces bon kar, the

district court issued a written order in the early 1990s prohibiting more than six active Golengpa Bon priests, including the current de facto village Bonpo, from performing destructive rituals and engaging in Bon divinations and burnt offerings (sur). The surveillance of Bon by the district office is still in place, but it only becomes active when people complain about the Bonpos or their Bon rituals.

While the Bonpos who resort to black magic ritual and live- animal sacrifice were reprimanded and indefinitely banned from performing their rituals by the court, the handful of Bonpos who adhere to the Buddhist ethics and moral status of any sentient being have continued to be recognized by the Zhemgang district office. Chungla of Goleng and Karma of Zhemgang proper both belong to this latter category. On the other hand, Bonpo Pemala, who was originally banned by the district court from performing any forms of Bon rituals, was made a de facto "official" Golengpa Bonpo by the villagers themselves following his predecessor's retirement in the early 2000s. Although the appeal of the decision of the district court was made by a group of village elite (goshé nyenshé) in 1993, Bonpo Pemala's candidature for the position of the second official Golengpa Bonpo was dismissed in line with the first court ruling. Nonetheless, Bonpo Pemala has been officiating at the annual Bon rituals, thereby contradicting the court ruling, and of course, it was against the wishes of lay Buddhists, including Lopön Pema Wangchuck, who is the head of Golengpa lay Buddhists. Despite the fact that the court can impose a penalty of up to Nu 1,000 ($16) and a six- month jail sentence for the breach of its orders, these unofficial Bonpos, while desisting from the acts of animal sacrifice and black magic rituals practice their art— from basic sur offerings to advanced shamanic ritual healings— and more than 99% of Golengpas continue to have recourse to Bon rituals to this day…

The primary aim of the book has been to investigate the reasons for the persistence of Bon practices and beliefs in the face of systematized censure from Buddhist priests since the eighth century. The subsidiary aims have been to ethnographically illustrate the extent to which Bon beliefs are embedded in the village social life. In so doing, I have examined the experience of Bon as practiced by the villagers today, and how Bon through its contemporary manifestations shapes their everyday life.

Previous studies of Bon in Bhutan have been conducted predominantly by Buddhist scholars and historians who often discounted it as the religious practices of preliterate and backward communities that require religious upgrading to Buddhism. Central to the Buddhists' portrayal of Bon as divergent, antithetical religious practices is the ubiquity of the world-view rooted in shamanistic and animistic beliefs. While Bon has been studied by anthropologists elsewhere in the Himalayas, the existing literature on Bhutanese Bon rituals is written largely from the Buddhist and Bhutanologicalı perspectives and has received limited anthropological attention. This anthropological inquiry into the persistence of Bon is thus an ethnographic record of the prevailing Shamanic Bon in Bhutan, rather than of the specific localized ritual or festival of certain isolated Bhutanese communities. The theological, historical, and philosophical studies of Bon, which are mostly polemical, are mainly concerned with its soteriological problem, and by extension the role of Buddhism in taming and humanizing its believers. Contextualizing the study within a village ethnography, which is where such practices and beliefs have a stronghold, means the focus has been on the pragmatic aspects of Bon, rather than its transcendental elements.

The reasons for the persistence of Bon practices and beliefs amid censures by the Buddhist priests are multilayered, manifold, and complex. One obvious reason why Bon has persisted in Goleng is not just the recency of Buddhism but that Goleng has a weak Buddhist presence with only a handful of lay chöpas today. It is also owing to the sheer lack of what I have called "philosophical Buddhism" in many parts of Bhutan, as Buddhism entered the country in close contact and engagement with, as well as in opposition to, Bon, and hence intertwined with the complex Bhutanese religious history as a result of the encounters between the two traditions. The present- day form of Buddhism in the current religio- political milieu of Goleng is characteristic of what many anthropologists elsewhere have called village or pragmatic Buddhism. In this book, it is referred to as "village Buddhism" for its attributes are more cultural and syncretistic than philosophical Buddhism per se. In other words, rather than a core Buddhists doctrinal position, the emphasis is on what might be called the "Tibetan

Buddhist culture," which itself emerges as an assemblage of both philosophical Buddhism and Shamanic Bon.

In a typical community where village Buddhism is in vogue, the ordinary people, including the monks and lay chöpas, are less concerned with the notion of enlightenment or transcending the realms of samsara because achieving nirvana in this life is simply seen as beyond their scope or outside the bounds of possibility. The karmic and pragmatic concerns2 are representative of the interest of wider Bhutanese society as people strive to accumulate merit (gewa) so as to escape the cyclicity of this samsaric life— not because of the realization but because of the merit accrued in this life. For instance, rather than studying literary texts, a large section of monks and lay chöpas are engaged in performing Buddhist rituals for others, thereby gaining merits that are necessary for higher rebirths. Likewise, the recitations of sutras and other core Buddhist rituals at the village temple are regularly sponsored by the laities, for so doing, they can also accrue merits commensurate with good acts. Such meritorious deeds are spiritually beneficial to both the ritualists/ sponsors and self/ others, and are seen as the favorable alternative for achieving at least higher rebirth in their next life. In this sense, village Buddhism is to great extent cultural and pragmatic as well as karmic, while philosophical Buddhism is predominantly transcendental and soterio-logical in its orientation.

While Buddhism is believed to have arrived in proto- Bhutan as early as the eighth century, the first Goleng temple was constructed in the late 1960s to reform village Buddhism and not Bon per se. It was only after the construction of a second temple that Bonpos have come under increasing scrutiny from their Buddhist counterparts, thus marking the new religious order in the village. Given that the people are largely practitioners of the Peling subschool, the underrepresentation of the state- sponsored Drukpa— a subschool of the Kagyu school— at the village level should be taken into consideration in understanding how Buddhism operates. It is also important to note that Bon in Bhutan is a vastly different religious practice from the later Yungdrung Bonpos' construct of the term. Today, Bon in Bhutan and the Himalayas is not the same as in Tibet (Yungdrung Bon) and vice versa, as the label means different things to

different religious groups, and Bon takes different forms of practice in interaction with the state religion— Buddhism.

In Shobleng, there are not many lay Buddhist priests, and for the most part, they are dependent on Golengpa chöpas who usually spend weeks in Shobleng during the ritual season. The majority of these existing handful of Golengpa chöpas are qualified in pragmatic aspects of Buddhism, in the sense that none of them has undergone a sustained solitary retreat (tsam) or formal study and training at higher scholastic institutions. Furthermore, except for the chief lay chöpa, the rest of them are part-timers who are mostly engaged in nonreligious careers during the offseason. The rituals of the lay Buddhist priests or for that matter of village Buddhism are characterized by syncretic assemblages and networks, with a strong base in the confluence of philosophical Buddhism and Shamanic Bon, which more often than not activate the Bonpos' shamanic worldviews even though they present themselves as antagonistic to Bon practices and Bonpos.

Bon remains viable, Buddhist censure notwithstanding. The lack of celibate, scholastic Buddhist monks and reincarnate lamas who are trained in philosophical Buddhism, or even pseudo- tulku, who are otherwise quite common in Bhutan, on the one hand, and the accessibility of Bonpos to ordinary people, on the other, make the Bon priests all the more handy and their rituals more prominent. As strange as it may seem, most of the reincarnate Buddhist masters appear to now be more interested in teaching the non- Bhutanese populace— somewhere in foreign and industrialized countries rather than the insiders of regional Bhutan— who lack understanding of the fundamental ideas of the pure or philosophical Buddhism. In stark contrast to the Buddhist conception of Bon, Bon rites are generally viewed by the villagers as a precursor of, or complement to, biomedicine and Buddhist rituals, particularly when the sickness is believed to be associated with the notion of loss of la— a phenomenon largely overlooked by biomedicine. These Bon rites, akin to what Sax (2009) has shown among the healing ritualists of Garhwal, are oriented toward addressing certain needs, whether of individual person or of family or community, that are unfulfilled by biomedicine (242– 245) as "even the most advanced medical knowledge has its limits"

(Pigg 1996: 191). The idea of complementarity between Bon and Buddhism is, however, the view of the villagers, as opposed to chöpas and Bonpos who are seen as never sharing a ritual altar.

This study has demonstrated that the persistence of Bon is inherent in the deep- rooted syncretic worldview of the centrality of ever- fluctuating five life elements, particularly the la. This is a belief that has wide circulation not only in rural Bhutanese communities but in the urban areas as well. Declining la requires Bonpos' interventions, and even more so when there are no parallel Buddhist rituals or no lay Buddhist expert in the villages for such spiritual phenomena caused by various classes of untamed supernatural beings. People are exposed to the cosmological conception of five life elements from birth, and it remains with them the rest of their life; hence this permanently internalized worldview transcends religious, social, class, and familial boundaries. In most case, while Bhutanese profess to be Buddhist, they are attracted to Bon aesthetics and beliefs because of the incorporation of the local deities in village Buddhism and of the shamanic rituals that are seen as effective in dealing with certain everyday misfortunes.

The centrality of the five life elements in Golengpas' world is also reinforced by the immediacy of the natural environment, which is believed to be shared with a great many nonhuman beings. In their worldview, these autochthonous agents are palpable and are generally viewed in a negative light: as the primary abductors of their la, as the cause of misfortunes and sufferings, and finally as destructive forces capable of exhausting all other life elements that are central to their vitality and prosperity. These notions derive from the shamanic worldview of a tripartite division (i.e., upper: lha, middle: tsen, and lower: lu) in which the autochthonous beings are often as not regarded as the original owners of the land (nepo) and humans as mere guests (jonpo) in the middle realm of tsen beings. Because of their proximity to human guests, these supernatural beings are prone to harm humans by abducting their la, especially when people desecrate their abodes, and nonhuman entities and their agents no longer receive regular offerings. Hence, in the annual rites such as rup the higher gods are invoked to shield villagers from the malevolency of the local numina who demand

regular offerings but deliver limited blessings on humans, and also from the crop-wrecking pests and wild animals who encircle their villages.

Because there are always senior persons, some of whom have recently returned from urban areas, to fulfill the needs of the people by becoming a Bonpo, there has never been the expectation that the younger generation will remain in the villages to become Bon priests. This indicates that although Bhutanese people, with the exception of some Hindu followers, have been long converted to Buddhism, they have not stopped believing in these Bonpos and Bon deities. The same applies to Golengpas, Shoblengpas, and other nearby villages who self- identify as Buddhists, yet the majority of whom are also engaged in Bon rituals to increase their luck and protection from the volatile beings who cohabit with them. The Bonpos' intervention is particularly significant when their la is believed to be abducted by malicious beings since, apart from the general *tsekhug lalug* ritual, there is no parallel Buddhist ritual or adequate healthcare at the village level to deal with the illness seen to be precipitated by spirits who are accused of abducting people's *la*. It is only the Bonpos who possess all the necessary tools to tackle the plethora of local deities and spirits who are, while independent of Buddhists, never really appeased once and for all.

Bon is also deeply embedded in the village economy and its social organization. While the majority of everyday Bon rituals are oriented toward reinvigorating one's vitality, fertility, and longevity, the annual *rup* is primarily concerned with boosting the collective harvest and increasing livestock productivity. What is interesting is that such annual Bon rites are celebrated among the string of villages where there are surviving nobilities or their remnants connected with the certain nobilities of past, that is, the Yarlung kings of Tibet. I have shown that the *rup* rite in which the primordial Bon god Odé Gungyal is invoked is central to the ongoing status of the dung nobility who in turn have become central to Golengpa identity. In celebrating this annual Bon rite, the Golengpas affirm the link between the god Odé Gungyal and the dung family, and the importance of *rup* to the latter. The centrality of rup and other Bon practices to Golengpas is reflected in the district office's realization that it has to make concessions to them by recognizing Bon through the appointment of an official village Bonpo. In

this sense, the Bon practices are sustained not only by the village structure, history, and declining influence of the old feudal hierarchy but also by the regional government.

Like many other pragmatically oriented religions, Bon also continue to survive by reason of its doctrines, which are concerned not only with supporting the vitality of people but also with increasing and sustaining the prosperity of the community. In other words, Shamanic Bon is what Leach (1968) has called "practical religion" that is "concerned with life here and now" (1– 3). Following the omission of the annual rup rite in 2018 which was triggered by the indifference of the prominent people toward rup, Golengpas took matters into their own hands and organized what they called a very "successful' rup by inviting the de facto official Bonpo from Gelephu. This undertaking was stimulated particularly by the unusual economic decline that the community experienced that year as a result of a poor harvest, pest infestation, and wild animal incidents, all of which Golengpas attribute to the failure to perform the annual *rup* rite, and by extension propitiate god Odé Gungyal along with his complex local pantheon.

Although the connectedness of Golengpas to mainstream urban Bhutan is improving, Zhemgang district itself is reckoned to be one of the least developed districts of the country. This status is perpetuated by the recent conversion of the region into protected areas that are now teeming with wildlife. Consequently, the district has endured limited development plans because of the circumscribing of developmental projects by the state. Hence, due to their environmental situation, the hazard of economic misfortune is conspicuous as one descends into the hinterlands of southern Zhemgang. The Bon practices are more common among the remote villages that are rife with economic inequality where philosophical Buddhism has not yet penetrated every layer of their social life.

With that being said, Bon cannot be discounted as simply a village religious practice since it is Shamanic Bon that, as an all- pervading religious practice, has rather penetrated village Buddhism, which in turn pervades every aspect of Bhutanese society. Rather than civilizing, eliminating, or even transcendentalizing Bon, philosophical Buddhism ended up absorbing some of the worldviews of Bon, thereby, through an

inadvertent synergy between Buddhism and Bon, giving rise to a syncretic form of Buddhism: village Buddhism. This form of Buddhism in Bhutan perpetuates Bon not just through its borrowed shamanic worldview but by incorporation of Bon deities into, and replacement of various Bon rites with, Buddhist rituals, all of which are saturated with positive valance as opposed to their Bon counterparts.

The Bon beliefs are tied to the places, which in turn influence and shape Golengpas' everyday lives. While the appearance of homogeneity is ever present in rural Bhutanese social structure, Goleng is unique, and its localized ritual practices are essential for local identity formation. The local system of descent and family lineage houses with their own deity and rituals associated with propitiation of local deity to safeguard against everyday obstacles form an important part of local history and identity. The fact that villagers present themselves as Buddhists does not make them nonbelievers in Bon. Along with Bon, which reflects ordinary people's everyday lives, the Peling subschool is popular in Goleng, but the lack of presence of state- sponsored Buddhism, Drukpa Kagyu of the Kagyu school, means that there is no unified, centralized system. In other words, the weak Buddhist presence cannot sustain a coherent cultural system, thereby enabling Bon as a local culture to continue to remain more relevant to villagers' everyday concerns and local problems.

In addition to the common Buddhist versions of mitigating rituals for increasing the five life elements, it is not entirely uncommon to encounter urban Bhutanese consulting a Bonpo shaman, or the latter surviving in the cities and towns. This study, therefore, questions the common notion of Bon beliefs as declining in the face of globalization, as the continuing relevance of Bon practices in the life of villagers contradicts it. At the same time, the shift in religious opposition from the centralized state religion to the autonomous lay chöpas suggests that religious change is not always provoked by the process of modernization but rather by the interests of the state and local religious actors and the histories and ideologies of their religious practices.

While the villages in Zhemgang district are still developing, it is clear that Goleng is quite a prosperous community that is connected by a farm road, and its farming

systems are enhanced by electric fences jointly funded by two NGOs: the Rotary Clubs of Thimphu and Handa, Japan, for containment of wild animals. Golengpas are familiar with the market economy through sales of red rice and organic vegetables to nearby towns, and they do receive a monthly in- village health checkup from the Yebilaptsa hospital in Trong county.

Yet with a small population, the lack of accessible and reliable medical facilities in the village, and above all Goleng village's sacred geography, the Bonpos remain one of the alternative point of contacts in times of ill- health and misfortune, and act as the conduit for ritually regulating the social problems that continue to trouble people's lives, regardless of their education and status. While the Bonpos' roles seem somewhat fragmented due to constant opposition from the lay chöpas, their utility to the villagers has, nonetheless, not declined at all. It is evident that these villagers see no fundamental opposition between great tradition, Buddhism, and little tradition, Bon, because of the latter's efficacy in, and influence on, their everyday lives. <>

The Buddhist Tantra: A Guide by David B. Gray [Guides to Sacred Texts, Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780197623831]

The tantric Buddhist traditions emerged in India beginning in the seventh century CE and flourished there until the demise of Buddhism in India circa the fifteenth century. These traditions were disseminated to Central, East, and Southeast Asia, and continue to be practiced, most notably in Nepal, Tibet and Japan, as well as in the numerous Tibetan traditions disseminated around the world by Tibetan masters living in diaspora. The central scriptures for these traditions were generally designated by the term *tantra*. Tantras are works that purport to relate secret teachings of the buddhas that enable awakening in as short as one lifetime. As such they are understood by their advocates to be the inspired speech of a buddha, and hence worthy of

inclusion in the canons of Buddhist traditions.

Over the past twenty years there has been considerable growth in the study of tantras as well as translations of these works into Western languages. This volume provides a detailed introduction to the Buddhist tantras. It addresses their development in India, their dissemination to Central, East and Southeast Asia, and their reception in these contexts. It introduces the key teachings in the tantras, as well as the history of their interpretation, and their connection to traditions of ritual, and contemplative practices.

It also introduces the classification of the tantras and their place in Buddhist scriptural canons. It concludes with a look at the transgressive rhetoric that characterizes many of the tantras, the impact this had on their dissemination and translation, and the ways in which Buddhists explained this. It suggests that transgressive rhetoric and practices served an important role in Buddhist tantric traditions, which may be why they persist despite the challenges they have presented to the dissemination of these traditions.

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Introducing the Buddhist Tantras

The Buddhist tantras are one of the least understood bodies of scripture—with good reason: they are deliberately obscure to maintain the secrecy that traditionally surrounds the teachings and practices of tantric Buddhist traditions. Tantric Buddhist traditions are conceived as a distinct path to awakening, the goal of Buddhist traditions, and it is usually termed either the "adamantine path" (vajrayana) or the "mantric path" (mantrayana), the latter highlighting a key feature, that is, mantras, or sacred formulas, which are recited in tantric ritual and contemplative practices. While they are part of the larger "Greater Path" Mahayana Buddhist tradition, the Buddhist tantric traditions are, more accurately, offshoots of this larger tradition. They accept the basic premises of Mahayana Buddhism but claim to possess secret teachings that enable awakening in as short as one lifetime.

This volume will attempt to introduce this genre to interested readers, and it presupposes no prior understanding of Buddhism. As a result, the volume will use the English language whenever possible, translating and explaining Buddhist titles and technical terms when they are first introduced, excepting only those Buddhist terms that have entered English and are generally well understood, such as buddha, mantra, karma, and so forth. To best introduce the tantras, many passages from tantric scriptures and commentaries will be included and translated into English in the clearest manner possible. On rare occasions Buddhist terms from other languages, such as a Sanskrit, are used, due to the ambiguity of their meaning in context, but the reason for this and the possible range of the term's meanings will be explained.

The first chapter of the volume begins by defining terms, indicating what is meant by terms like "tantra" and "tantric Buddhist traditions." It then moves

on to introducing them, focusing on their emergence in India during the seventh century CE. The chapter traces two main sources for the development of these traditions. One, the gradual development of traditions of magic and ritual practice in Buddhist traditions, and, two, the tantric traditions that appear to have emerged first among the Saivas, namely, the Hindus who take the god Siva to be the supreme creator god. Following this historical overview, the chapter explores the two main types of origin myths for the Buddhist tantras and looks closely at the narratives produced by Buddhists from the seventh century to explain the emergence of the tantras.

The second chapter provides an overview of the contents of the Buddhist tantras. It begins with the background verse that traditionally opens Buddhist scriptures, which relate the contexts in which the texts are taught. These opening passages establish that the work is the speech of an awakened one, the traditional Buddhist understanding of scripture. As this entails a lineage claim, the importance of lineage in tantric Buddhist traditions are also introduced. The chapter also covers the language and style of the tantras, as well as overviews their contents, which are typically ritual and contemplative practices, focusing on the mandala, the circle of awakened beings that features prominently in tantric practices as well as art, iconography, and architecture. The chapter concludes with a brief look at tantric ritual magic.

The third chapter summarizes the dissemination of tantric Buddhist traditions, via maritime routes to Southeast Asia and China, and thence to Korea and Japan, as well as overland from India and Nepal to Tibet and eventually the ethnic Mongolian regions of Central Asia. The chapter argues that tantric Buddhist ritual and magical practices were a major appeal that facilitated their transmission in Asia. The chapter concludes with a look at

tantric Buddhism in the contemporary world. It summarizes the travails to which tantric Buddhists were subjected in Tibet and Mongolia, under communist rule in China and the Soviet Union, as well as the global spread of tantric Buddhism from the 1960s onward, facilitated by the diaspora of Tibetan and Mongolian lamas.

The fourth chapter looks closely at tantric literature. It introduces the different genres of tantric literature, including different types of tantras as well as commentaries and ritual texts and meditation manuals. It surveys attempts to classify the tantras and to distinguish them from exoteric Buddhist works, which were developed in India, Tibet, and East Asia. It then relates the attempts to develop canons of tantric literature and how these canons were organized.

The final chapter addresses the unmistakable "red thread" that runs throughout the rest of the chapters, which is the presence of transgressive rhetoric in the tantras, particularly the description of sexual and violent rituals.1 This is a notable feature of the tantras from their first appearance in the seventh century, and it became more prominent over time. This was a serious issue since Buddhist identity was traditionally defined in terms of nonviolence, and spiritual authority was associated with monastic celibacy. The chapter explores how transgressive content affected the reception of the tantras. It compares their translation in the Tibetan and Chinese contexts, and it argues that it affected how they were received, which led both to efforts to block the transmission and translation of tantras, as well as influenced the translation style, with transgressive passages far more likely to be creatively translated to mitigate the impact of this content. It explores the sophisticated exegetical strategies that Buddhist commentators developed to explain this content. In conclusion, it suggests that

transgressive rhetoric in the tantras may have had the effect of challenging Buddhist constructions of identity to facilitate the transformation in self-identification that is required for success in tantric Buddhist contemplative practices. If so, this represents a very risky strategy, given the challenges this rhetoric posed to the dissemination and survival of these texts and associated practice traditions.

While this volume makes a small contribution toward our understanding of what is a vast and complicated body of thousands of works, it will hopefully give the reader with no prior study of Buddhist tantras a solid understanding that can serve as the basis for further study if so desired. Those who have studied them may find that the broad range of topics covered and texts translated will open their eyes to aspects of these traditions they were previously unaware of. Hopefully it will inspire further study of the fascinating array of religious literature, most of which remains unstudied and untranslated in Western-language contexts.

Since this volume is oriented toward readers interested in Buddhist tantras but without specialized training in their study, as mentioned, English translation will be used as much as possible. For technical terms, the equivalent in the original language will also be given in parentheses when first used. The titles of tantric works will also be given in English translation, with their title in the original language also given in parentheses when first introduced. Sanskrit terms will be given in roman transliteration with diacritics, except for terms that have entered the English language, hence “mandala” and “sutra” rather than “mandala” and “sutra.” The only exception is when relating the names of Sanskrit texts; in this case, diacritics are provided for all terms in the title. Tibetan terms will be given using Wylie transliteration. Chinese characters are used for the sake of clarity. <>

The Classical Upaniṣads: A Guide by Signe Cohen [Guides to Sacred Texts, Oxford University Press ISBN 9780197654156]

The Upaniṣads are central Hindu philosophical and religious texts, composed in Sanskrit from the eighth century BCE onward that focus on the identity between a person's inner self, *ātman*, and the cosmic divine force, *brahman.* According to the Upaniṣads, the knowledge of the mystical identity between *ātman* and *brahman* can lead to immortality and liberation from rebirth. The Classical Upaniṣads: A Guide is an accessible guide to the older Upaniṣads, written both for college students and for a general audience with an interest in Indian religion, philosophy, and culture. This volume explores the historical, geographical, and social context of the classical Upaniṣads; discusses issues of dating, authorship, and transmission of the texts; and analyzes central ideas in the Upaniṣads, such as *ātman*, *brahman*, *karma*, reincarnation, *mokṣa*, knowledge, and sacred sounds (*mantras*). This book also discusses the importance of the Upaniṣads for Hinduism and Indian culture, as well as the reception of the Upaniṣads in the West.

What is a Sacred Text?

What is a sacred text? The Oxford English Dictionary offers a definition of "sacred" as "Set apart for or dedicated to some religious purpose, and hence entitled to veneration or religious respect." The definition is necessarily vague. What does it mean to be "set apart?" What constitutes a "religious purpose?" How formal is "veneration?" Does minimal "religious respect" qualify? The sphere of meanings surrounding the word "sacred" will depend on the religion involved. For that reason, "sacred texts" in this series is a term conceived broadly. All of the texts covered by this series have held

special regard—they have been “set apart”—in a religion either ancient or modern. Such texts are generally accorded more serious attention than other religious documents. In some cases the texts may be believed to be the words of a deity. In other cases the texts may be part of an atheistic religion. This breadth of application indicates the rationale behind Guides to Sacred Texts.

This series offers brief, accessible introductions to sacred texts, written by experts upon them. While allowing for the individuality of each text, the series follows a basic format of introducing the text in terms of its dates of composition, traditions of authorship and assessment of those traditions, the extent of the text, and the issues raised by the text. For scripture that continues to be utilized, those issues will likely continue to generate controversy and discussion among adherents to the text. For texts from religions no longer practiced, the issues may well continue to address concerns of the present day, despite the antiquity of the scripture. These volumes are useful for introducing sacred writings from around the world to readers wanting to learn what these sacred texts are.

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What Are the Upanisads?

The Upanisads are philosophical and religious texts, composed in Sanskrit from the eighth century BCE onward, that focus on the identify between a person's inner self, atman, and a cosmic divine force, brahman. According to the Upanisads, the knowledge of this mystical identity can lead to immortality and liberation from rebirth.

There are several hundred texts called "Upanisads." The late medieval Muktika Upanisad contains a list of 108 Upanisads (including the Muktika itself), while a 1657 translation of the Upanisads into Persian contains 48Upanisads (as well as two older Sanskrit texts that are not Upanisads at all). But there are also other many other texts called Upanisads not included in these collections, such as the seventeenth-century Allah Upanisad that identifies the inner self, atman, with the God of Islam (Allah), and the late Khristopanisad, which identifies atman with Christ. Other Upanisads identify atman/brahman with the gods (Visnu and Siva and various forms of the Goddess). In total, over 200 texts calledUpanisad are known to us today.

The focus of this book will be the thirteen "Classical Upanisads" generally regarded as the oldest ones: Bahadarakyaka, Chandogya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Isa, Kena, Kasha, Mundaka, Svetasvatara, Mandukya, Prasna, Kauitaki, and Maitri Upanisad. These texts are many centuries older than the other Upanishads, and many ideas expressed in these texts are central to much of later Indian thought. This does not mean, however, that these Upanishads contain a unified system of thought; rather, they are varied explorations into the nature of reality. There is no cohesive "philosophy of the Upanisads"; the texts are teeming with colorful characters who make many and often contradictory observations on the nature of the self and the world. Not only

does each Upanisad contain ideas at odds with those of other texts; parts of a text may contain ideas at odds with other passages in the same text. Although later commentators attempted to build coherent philosophical systems on these texts, the older Upanisads themselves are not systematic; rather, they are exuberant wanderings through varied ideas and images, drawing on the languages of metaphor and myth.

What does the word Upanishad mean? Upanisad is a feminine noun in Sanskrit, derived from the verb sad, which means "to sit," with the preverbs upa- ("near") and ni- ("down"). Upanisad is therefore often translated as "sitting down near (the feet of a teacher)" and thought to be related to the ancient Indian practice of a student sitting at the teacher's feet to receive their wisdom. The transmission of teachings from teachers to students is central in the texts called Upanisads. But teachers and students also play significant parts in many other ancient Sanskrit texts, so it is not clear why these particular late Vedic texts would be characterized as the teachings received while sitting at a teacher's feet. Some scholars have proposed alternative explanations for the term Upanisad, such as "secret doctrine" (Deussen 1919, 15), "hidden connection" (Olivelle 1998), "two things being placed in relation to each other" (Gren-Eklund 1984, 117), "effective power" (Falk 1986, 80–97), or "formula of magical equivalence" (Witzel 2004, xliii).

The inquiries into Ātman and Brahman and the declaration of their identity in the Upanisads has vital implications for Advaita which Śankara's commentators completely miss and misunderstand. While the Ātman-inquiry into the inner essence of man used a device of exclusion (like the body is not Ātman etc.), the Brahman-inquiry into the source of the universe did not use it. But yet, whatever was being excluded from Ātman (like the body, senses, mind, etc.) in the first inquiry went on being included under

Brahmanin the second, so that ultimately these two inquiries brought under themselves just everything existing in the universe. Therefore when their identity was discovered, non-duality emerged as the only truth. But, missing this completely, the commentators hypostatize ignorance into a beginningless "second entity" and create every possible problem within a perfect doctrine of non-duality.

The Upanisads as a Genre

Who composed the Upanisads? The texts are in all likelihood the literary products of scholarly collectives, rather than individual authors. The oldest Upanisads, like the older Vedic texts before them, were transmitted orally within closed groups of Brahman priests who were trained religious specialists. These schools of transmission are called sakhas, "branches" or "schools." Each sakha is responsible for the accurate oral transmission of one of the Vedas, the oldest textual collections of India (originally the Rigveda, Yajurveda, and the Samaveda; later Atharvaveda sakhas also sprung up; see chapter 2). The late Vedic Caranavyuha by Saunaka lists all the known sakhas at the time. This list includes five schools of the Rigveda, forty-four schools of the Yajurveda, twelve of the Samaveda, and nine of the Atharvaveda. Many of these schools are now only known by name, while others have become extinct. A few still exist today; the Madhyandina school of the White Yajurveda is still popular in North India, the Kava school of the White Yajurveda is kept alive by Kannada-speaking Brahmans in Karnataka in southwestern India, the Taittiriya school of the Black Yajurveda is present in South India, and the Jaiminiya school of the Samaveda is found among Nambudiri Brahmans in Tamilnadu in South India.

Over time, each sakha began adding different texts to the oldest textual collection (Samhita) that they transmitted: ritual texts called Brahmanas,

Aranyaka devoted to particularly dangerous or esoteric rites, and eventually Upanisads that explained the connection between a person's inner self (atman) and the cosmic force (brahman). Many Upanisads are formally affiliated with a particular Veda, such as the Rigveda or the Black Yajurveda. This is not merely an arbitrary classification, but a statement of origin: the Upanisad originated within the scholarly and priestly communities that were responsible for transmitting that particular Veda. The Upanisads emerged as the intellectual products, not of individuals, but of schools of intellectuals who had specialized in one particular ancient Vedic textual collection. Thus, the Aitareya and Kaunitaki Upanisad were composed by priests who specialized in the transmission of the Rigveda, the Taittiriya, Katha, and Svetasvatara Upanisad by specialists in the Black Yajurveda (a version of the text that includes commentary), the B?hadaranyaka and Isa Upanisad by specialists in the White Yajurveda (the version without embedded commentary), the Chandogya and Kena Upanisad by specialists in the Samaveda, and the Mundaka, Prasna, and Mandukya Upanisad by priests trained in the tradition of the Atharvaveda.

Each sakha must have regarded the texts they transmitted and composed as their own collective property, as indicated by the frequent warnings in the Upanisads against teaching the text to someone who is not one's son or student:

> So a father should teach this formulation of truth only to his oldest son or to a worthy student, and never to anybody else, even if he were to offer him this whole earth surrounded by waters and full of wealth, for this formulation is greater than all those things! (Chandogya Upanisad 3.11.5)
> This highest secret was proclaimed in a former age in the Vedanta. One would not reveal it to someone who does not have a calm disposition, or to one who is not one's son or student. (Svetasvatara Upanisad 6.22)

Over time, however, Upanisads were gradually detached from their Vedic sakhas and began to assume a life of their own. By the time Sankara composed his commentaries to ten (or eleven, if we accept his commentary on the Svetasvatara as genuine) of the oldest Upanisads in the eighth century, the sakha affiliation of an Upanisad had become a mere formality, an archaic remnant from a former age.

Later Upanisads, such as the medieval Upanisads devoted to gods like Siva, Visnu, or the Goddess or to the practice of Yoga or the renunciation of all worldly goods, still claim sakha affiliations, but at this point, these associations with particular Vedas no longer tell us anything about the texts' authorship. Instead, these later Upanisads were composed by people who felt a strong affection for a particular deity, or by groups who embraced a specific lifestyle. Interestingly enough, even the later Upanisads are still anonymous. The ideas they promote are far more important than their authorship.

In the oldest Upanisads, the concerns of the sakha that composed it still resonate throughout the texts. The Rigveda Samhita consists of hymns to the various Vedic deities, the Samaveda Samhita of chants to be sung during the Vedic rituals, and the Yajurveda Samhita of sacrificial formulas and specific instructions for how to perform the elaborate Vedic rites. The hoti, or Rigveda priest, was in charge of invoking the gods during the Vedic ritual; the udgatr, or Samaveda priest would chant; the adhvaryu or Yajurveda priest was responsible for any ritual actions—and later a fourth priest, the brahman, associated with the Atharvaveda, was in charge of supervising the ritual as a whole. This ritual specialization is reflected in the texts each type of priest transmitted in his sakha, including the Upanisads composed within that school. The Upanisads of the Rigveda include more references to Vedic

gods and to the creation of the world than the Upanisads of other sakhas, while the Upanisads of the Samaveda are preoccupied with songs and chants and sacred sounds, the Upanisads of the Yajurveda deal with actions (karma) and their results, and the Upanisads of the Atharveveda dwell on understanding the mysterious brahman. These sakha-specific concerns can be seen in all the oldest Upanisads but are largely absent from the later Vaisava, Saiva, Sakta, Yoga, or Sannyasa Upanisads. These later Upanisads are still formally affiliated with particular sakhas, but the Vedic associations are no longer any indications of the text's themes; they seem to be more claims to ancient Vedic authority than anything else.

The oldest Upanisads are still deeply rooted in the older Vedic worldview. Although the Upanisads introduce significant new ideas (atman, brahman, salvation through knowledge, karma, reincarnation) that are not found in the Vedas, many Vedic ideas and references to the old Vedic gods and sacrificial rituals still linger in the oldest Upanisads.

What are some of the characteristics of the Upanisads as a genre? In addition to their thematic preoccupation with atman and brahman, there are also other features that characterize the texts that came to be identified as Upanisads and make them stand out from other religious and philosophical texts composed by Brahmans in ancient India.

The Upanisads are anonymous literature. Only one of the classical Upanisads, the Svetasvatara Upanisad, is attributed to an individual author, and even this attribution is often taken as a pious fiction. In general, the Upanisads are believed to be collective compositions, formulated by schools of Vedic recitation (sakhas), who have compiled the texts over centuries, rather than by individual authors. This form of authorship often results, as

we will see, in texts that are more loosely structured than philosophical treatises authored by individuals.

The Upanisads often present philosophical and abstract ideas through dialogues. The dialogue partners may be teachers and students, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, kings and sages, or rival wisdom teachers. By presenting specific ideas relating to atman and brahman, not just as abstract ideas, but as the teachings of particular authoritative teachers, theUpanisads illustrate an essential feature of oral societies: texts and ideas cannot exist separately from people, and new ideas are introduced by named teachers who speak them out loud, rather than by texts that are read.

The Upanisads are composed in late Vedic Sanskrit, a rich and grammatically complex language that is often challenging to render adequately into modern English. To complicate matters, the Upanisadic authors also introduce many puns and others forms of wordplay that are impossible to recreate in English; the best a modern translator can do is usually to put a lengthy footnote to explain the double meaning in the Sanskrit word or expression. But these puns are not used to add whimsy or humor to the Sanskrit text; rather, they hint at "hidden connection" between two things designated by similar terms. In previous generations, Western scholars have often complained that there is a large number of "false etymologies" in the Upanisads. The texts often "explain" one word in terms of another. The name of the Vedic god Indra is explained in the following way in the Aitareya Upanisad, for example: "He saw this person, the all-pervading brahman, and he said: 'I have seen this (idam adarsam).' Therefore, he is called Idandra. Idandra is his name. But cryptically, they call him who is called Idandra, Indra. For the gods are fond of the cryptic" (1.13–14). From the perspective of modern linguistic scholarship, the text's

etymology of Indra is incorrect; the name is not at all derived from "this" (idam) and some form of the verb "to see" (das). But the Upanisadic authors were not composing a treatise on etymology; they were composing a religious text. Ancient Indian grammar and etymology were highly developed fields, and learned authors certainly knew that the name Indra was not derived from the verb "to see." But the point of this textual passage is not to make a claim about the historical etymology of a divine name, but rather to express a significant truth about the Vedic god Indra himself. Indra is often regarded as a paradigmatic wisdom seeker in the Upanisads, and connecting his name to the perception of the highest reality of brahman therefore makes perfect theological sense. While it is not accurate that "Indra" is derived from the verb "to see," it is nevertheless true, from an Upanisadic perspective, that Indra is connected with perception of the highest reality.

How Many Upanisads Are There?

The medieval MuktikaUpanisad lists 108Upanisads, broken down into several categories:

(1) "Principal" (mukhya) Upanisads: Isa, Bahadara?yaka, Katha, Taittiriya, Svetasvatara, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Kena, Chandogya, Maitrayari (=Maitri), Kaunitaki, and Aitareya.

(2)"General" (samanya) Upanisads: Subala, Mantrika, Niralamba, Paingala, Adhyatma, Muktika, Sarvasara, Sukarahasya, Skanda, Sariraka, Garbha, Ekakchara, Akai, Pranagnihotra, Surya, Atma, Vajrasuci, Maha, Savitri, Atmabodha, and Mudgala.

(3)"Ascetic" (Sannyasa) Upanisads: Jabala, Paramahamsa, Advayataraka, Bhiksuka, Turiyatita, Yajñavalkya, Samyayaniya, Brahma, Tejobindu,

Avadhuta, Katharudra, Naradaparivrajaka, Parivrajaka, Parabrahma, Aru?eya, Maitreya, Sannyasa, Kukika, and Nirvana.

(4)Yoga Upanisads: Hamsa, Trisikhi, Mahalabrahmaha, Amatabindu, Amatanada, Kaurika, Dhyanabindu, Brahmavidya, Yogatattva, Yogasikha, Yogakunaklini, Varaha, Saamilya, Pasupata, Mahavakya, Yogacunamani, Darsana, and Nadabindu.

(5)Upanisads devoted to the Goddess (Sakta Upanisads): Sarasvatirahasya, Sita, Annapurna, Devi, Tripuratapini, Bhavana, Tripura, Saubhagyalak?mi, and Bhavana.

(6) Visnu Upanisads (Vaisnava Upanisads): Tarasara, Narayana, Kalisantarana, Nasithatapani, Mahanarayana, Ramarahasya, Ramatapaniya, Gopalatapaniya, Krsna, Hayagriva, Dattatreya, Garuda, Vasudeva, and Avyakta.

(7)Siva Upanisads (Saiva Upanisads): Kaivalya, Kalagnirudra, Dakainamurti, Rudrahadaya, Pañcabrahma, Atharvasikha, Bahajjabala, Sarabha, Bhasma, Ganapati, Rudrakali, Jabala, and Akiamalika.

The “principal” Upanisads in the Muktika Upanisad are, with two exceptions (Maitraya?i and Kaunitaki), texts to which the famous eighth-century commentator Sankara composed commentaries. These “principal” Upanisads are often regarded as the oldest ones, and for many Hindus, these are theU panisads that define the genre. There are many more texts called “Upanisad” than the 108 named in the Muktika Upanisad, but it is likely that precisely 108 texts were listed because the number is sacred in India. What all these texts have in common is a preoccupation with the mystical identity

between atman and brahman. In 1965, the Indian Christian theologian Dhanjibhai Fakirbhai even published his own text under the name Kristopanishad ("The Upanisad of Christ"). While this is hardly an Upanisad in the traditional sense, it blends Upanisadic ideas with Christian theology. Fakirbhai describes the Christian God in the same way as the classical Upanisads characterize atman/brahman, as saccidananda, "being," "consciousness," and "bliss" (Fakirbhai 1965). The invocation of the genre name Upanisad in the title of the Kristopanishad and the use of Upanisadic rhetoric become an assertion of ancient authority.

New Types of Upanisads

While the earliest Upanisads contain little hints of theism here and there, a systematic identification of the cosmic force brahman or the inner atman with a personal god is not encountered until the Svetasvatara Upanisad. In identifying the atman with the god Siva, the Svetasvatara Upanisad marks the beginning of a theistic trend in the Upanisads that continued for many centuries.

Saiva Upanisads, or Upanisads devoted to the god Siva, began to flourish after the composition of the Svetasvatara Upanisad. These Upanisads identify atman and brahman with Siva himself, or extol one of Siva's two sons, Skanda or Ganesa, as the highest reality. These Saiva Upanisads, composed during a time period that began shortly after the composition of the Svetasvatara Upanisad and concludes around the sixteenth or seventeenth century of the Common Era, are a testament to the gradual rise of Siva worship in India, as well as to the enduring presence of Upanisadic ideas.

In this time period, we also see a gradual rise of Vaisnava Upanisads, texts that identify atman/brahman with the god Visnu or with one of Visnu's

avataras (incarnations). The worship of Visnu has ancient roots in Indian religion, and there are three hymns in the Rigveda (ca. 1500 BCE) devoted to Visnu. In the Rigveda, Visnu is depicted as a benevolent figure, possibly a sun god. He is a friend and ally of the thunder god Indra and helps him slay the chaos monster Vetra. Even though Visnu is a minor figure in the Vedas, he becomes one of the most central gods in later Hinduism. In classical Hinduism, Visnu is a cosmic protector, and he helps maintain the world through a series of avataras. Mythological texts often list ten or twenty-two avataras of Visnu. Some of Visnu's best-known and most popular incarnations include Krsn, the warrior prince Rama, and the Man-Lion (N?si?ha). Krsn is one of the main characters in the Bhagavadgita ("The Song of the Lord," ca. third–second century BCE), perhaps the best-known Hindu text today. In the Bhagavadgita, which is a part of the larger Mahabharata ("Great Story of India") epic, Krsn gives advice to the anguished warrior Arjuna on the eve of a great battle. The other great epic Sanskrit poem, the Ramayana (ca. third century BCE), tells the story of Rama's heroic struggle to rescue his kidnapped wife and slay a ten-headed demon. There are also numerous other mythological texts detailing the deeds of Visnu and his incarnations. The medieval Muktika Upanisad lists fourteen Vai??ava Upanisads, devoted either to Visnu himself or to one of his incarnations. In these texts, Visnu is identified with the cosmic brahman and/or the inner atman.

From around the twelfth century of the Common Era, a new kind of Upanisad began to flourish. These texts, often called Sakta Upanisads ("Upanisads of Power") or Devi Upanisads ("goddess Upanisads"), were devoted to goddesses, who were seen as manifestations of the cosmic power, sakti, and identified with brahman itself. There is no authoritative list of Upanisads that have been designated as Sakta or Devi Upanisads, but some

of the most commonly mentioned ones include the Sita Upanisad, the Devi Upanisad, the Tripura Upanisad, the Tripuratapini Upanisad, the Bhavanopanisad, the Bahvacopanisad, and the Saubhagyalakami Upanisad.

Many of the Sakta Upanisads contain Tantric ideas. Hindu Tantra is an esoteric tradition that focuses on the cosmic power (sakti) and its ritual channeling, goddess worship, mantras (sacred utterances), ma??alas (sacred diagrams), and occasionally transgressive ritual actions. Goddess worship, mantras, and ma??alas all play a significant role in the Sakta Upanisads. Significantly, by calling these texts "Upanisads," the authors of these texts align them with the older Upanisads, which are again grounded in the Vedic tradition. This appeal to the orthodox tradition serves to establish the goddess worship these texts argue for within the established and respected tradition of the classical Upanisads.

There are about twenty Upanisads that can collectively be designated as Sannyasa Upanisads, or "Upanisads of Renunciation." These texts explore the idea that abandoning certain aspects of ordinary life, such as marriage, sex, having children, and living in a permanent abode, will help the renouncer is the quest for religious liberation. As Patrick Olivelle points out, however, "Sannyasa Upanisads" is not a native Indian category, unlike such classifications as "Saiva Upanisads" or "Sakta Upanisads," which originate in the Sanskrit tradition itself (Olivelle 1992, 5). The term "Sannyasa Upanisad" is first used by the German Sanskrit scholar Paul Deussen in his German Upanisad translation from 1897. Olivelle includes an English translation of all twenty of these texts in his definitive work on the Sannyasa Upanisads (Olivelle 1992).

The idea of renouncing the world is quite alien to the earliest Vedic religion, which instead emphasizes the importance of having many children,

especially sons, and on amassing wealth through one's own efforts and the generosity of the gods. In the Vedic worldview, immortality means living on through one's children and grandchildren. The Upanisads' shift away from the ritual worship of the gods toward inner contemplation and knowledge is accompanied by ideas of a different form of ideal of immortality. This immortality is defined as escape from the cycle of death and rebirth (samsara) and can be achieved through the knowledge that one's inner self (atman) is identical with the cosmic divine force (brahman). Having a family is not at all necessary to achieve this knowledge; in fact, several of the older Upanisads suggest that it is better to rise above the desire to have children and lead the life of a renunciant in order to achieve liberation.

By the time of the composition of the Dharmasutras ("Aphorisms on Law"), composed a few centuries after the very oldest Upanisads, the tension between having children to ensure one's immortality and renouncing family life to devote oneself to a quest for the ultimate truth was resolved through a compromise: the four stages of life (puruharthas). According to this doctrine, a man would pass through four different life stages after his childhood. The Dharmasutras are male-centered and invariably present the default human person as male, although some of these stages could also apply to women. First, the man would be a chaste student (brahmacarin), devoting himself to his studies of the sacred texts. Next, he would become a married householder (gahastha), and during this stage, he would have sex with his wife and become the father of children. When the children are grown, he would move into the forest with his wife and become a forest hermit (vanaprastha), living a simpler life with fewer possessions, but not yet abandoning all worldly ties. The fourth and final stage is sannyasa, or renunciation. If he reaches this stage, a man will leave his family and all his possessions behind and become a homeless beggar, devoting himself

exclusively to his spiritual pursuits. Thus, a man can have a family at one point in his life, and still become a full-time ascetic later on when his family obligations have been completed.

The Sannyasa Upanisads focus on this final life stage and describe the life of an ascetic in great detail. The date of the Sannyasa Upanisads is difficult to determine. Sprockhoff dates the older prose Sannyasa Upanisads to the last few centuries before the Common Era and the later verse Sannyasa Upanisads to the medieval period. Olivelle, however, argues that even the oldest Sannyasa Upanisads may be as late as the first centuries of the Common Era (Olivelle 1992, 5).

The Muktika Upanisad classifies twenty texts as Yoga Upanisads. These texts are considerably later than the classical Upanisads to which Sankara wrote his commentaries, and most of them appear to have been composed in the Middle Ages. While the union of atman and brahman is still a central theme in these Upanisads, they also incorporate a great deal of material concerning the philosophy and practice of Yoga.

According to the system of Yoga elaborated in Patañjali's Yogasutras (second–fifth century CE?), there are two eternal principles in the world, purusa and prakiti. Purusa ("the person") is pure consciousness, while prakiti ("nature") encompasses everything, physical and psychological, that is different from purusa. The elements that make up the physical world are parts of prakiti, as are psychological factors such as a sense of self, thought, and intellect. The goal of Yoga is the liberation of purusa, which takes place when a person realizes the absolute difference between purusa and prakiti. The closely affiliated Samkhya school of philosophy teaches that this liberating insight can be obtained without any external aids, through knowledge (jñana) alone, while the Yoga school maintains that a rigorous

system of breath control, physical postures, and meditation is necessary in order to truly grasp the fundamental difference between purusa and prakiti. Additionally, Yoga differs from the atheistic Samkhya school in postulating that there exists an eternally liberated purusa, Isvara ("The Lord"), who can play a part in the liberation of the individual. In the Yoga Upanisads, this deity is often identified with other popular deities, such as Visnu or Siva.

Early proto-Samkhya and Yoga concepts can be traced back to some of the classical Upanisads, such as the Svetasvatara Upanisad. It is even possible that Yoga itself grew out of Upanisadic ideas. The classical Upanisads do not, however, contain any sort of systematic presentation of Yoga or Samkhya ideas. The Yoga Upanisads, on the other hand, include a great deal of information that must have been derived from the Yogasutras, as well as other related speculation. They represent an interesting stage in the historical development of the Upanisads; we can see in these texts an expansion of the genre to include new ideas and systems of thought that move far beyond the original focus on the identity of atman and brahman. The Yoga Upanisads are also a valuable resource for those who want to understand the historical development of Yoga.

The Yoga Upanisads are, unfortunately, very difficult to date with any precision. They are composed in classical Sanskrit, without any Vedic grammatical or metrical variants, and linguistically, they can be dated to almost any time after the fifth century of the Common Era. <>

Light of Samantabhadra: An Explanation of Dharmakirti's Commentary on Valid Cognition by Gorampa Sonam Senge Translated by Gavin Kilty, Foreword by His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin Ratna Vajra [The Khenpo Appey Collection of Sakya Classics, Wisdom Publications, ISBN 9781614297512]

An illuminating gateway to Indian philosophy and its explication in Tibet.

Among the many works produced in the rich philosophical tradition of India's classical age, few have had more impact than **Dharmakirti's Commentary on Valid Cognition (Pramanavarttika).** Composed in India in the seventh century, it became the cornerstone for the study of logic and epistemology in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

An important addition to any collection for the Sakya practitioner, **Light of Samantabhadra** translates the work of one of the premier scholars of the Sakya school, Gorampa Sonam Sengé (1429–89). Gorampa here illuminates the first two chapters of Dharmakirti's treatise, those on using inference to enlighten oneself (*svarthanumana*) and on establishing valid cognition (*pramanasiddhi*), both to determine the authority of the Buddha as a valid teacher and to eliminate the cognitive obstacles to awakening. The root text is composed in compact verses, and these are translated here along with Gorampa's word-by-word commentary that reveals their often-veiled meanings. These chapters explore key issues in the philosophy of language and the nature of conventional designation, the way to employ sound reasoning, the proof of past and future lives, and the way to eliminate the view of self. In the skilled hands of translator Gavin Kilty, these insights are made accessible to contemporary readers.

Light of Samantabhadra is the first volume in a new academic series from Wisdom and the Khenpo Appey Foundation. ***The Khenpo Appey Collection of Sakya Classics*** aspires to fulfill Khenchen Appey Rinpoche's vision of making important and authoritative Sakya works accessible to English-speaking audiences. This series, conceived by the Khenpo Appey Foundation and published by Wisdom Publications, will contain translations of texts central to Tibetan Buddhist study composed by influential Sakya masters to provide a holistic and comprehensive presentation of Buddhist thought and philosophy.

Reviews

"Gorampa's **LIGHT OF SAMANTABHADRA** is fundamental reading for anyone wishing to understand pramāṇa, or valid cognition. Kilty's translation of the first two essential chapters of the Tibetan text affords contemporary English readers access to this important work for the first time."—**Khenpo Jorden**, director, International Buddhist Academy, Kathmandu

"**LIGHT OF SAMANTABHADRA** is a groundbreaking success for introducing in a learned and comprehensible way the amazing realm of Indo-Tibetan logic and epistemology as the indispensable basis of spiritual progress on the path to the scientific omniscience that is the Buddhist awakening. Studying this book is like climbing a high mountain: hard to scale but with a life-changing view from the summit! I highly recommend it." —**Robert Thurman**, Jey Tsongkhapa Professor Emeritus, Columbia University

"It is said that successful practice of the Buddhist path cannot come simply from faith, however admiring and devoted. It requires conviction that can only come from faultless reasoning. In this endeavor, Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* has been studied and commented on by generations of Tibetan scholars to probe such important topics as the reliability of the Buddha and of his teaching and the logical justification of past and future lives. We are fortunate that Gavin Kilty has provided us with a translation of the first two chapters of a commentary by the celebrated Gorampa Sönam Sengé, which upholds the position of the great Sakya Paṇḍita, who revised the translation of the *Pramāṇavārttika* and interpreted it in line with the Nālandā tradition of his master Śākyaśrībhadra." —**Wulstan Fletcher**, Padmakara Translation Group

"**LIGHT OF SAMANTABHADRA** is an astoundingly clear presentation and translation." —**Jeffrey Hopkins**, emeritus professor, Tibetan and Buddhist studies, University of Virginia

Editorial Review

Here is a table that summarizes the key differences between Dharmakīrti, Aristotle, and Plato views on epistemology [Pramana]:

Dharmakīrti	Perception and inference	Immediate and infallible	Not immediate, but reliable if the premises are true	Not real entities; conceptual constructs	Real entities that exist independently of our minds
Aristotle	Perception, memory, introspection, scientific knowledge, and art	Not infallible; can be affected by our own biases and expectations	More reliable than perception; based on universals	Real entities; the foundation of our knowledge of the world	Simply bundles of universals
Plato	Forms	Not direct awareness of an object; rather, a recollection of the Forms	Not possible; the Forms are not accessible to the senses	Real entities; the only true reality	Mere shadows of the Forms

Contents

The Importance of Knowing

Knowing is essential in Buddhist practice. Its faith is built on knowing, its path is built on knowing, and its practices are built on knowing. But why should that be, and what is "knowing"? Moreover, how can we be sure that what we know is valid and reliable?

Base reality

Buddhist doctrine can be divided up into base reality' path, and result. Base reality is the actuality of our existence—of our being, our mental and physical form, and the external world. It is the natural state of affairs, without exaggeration, deprecation, or deception. Therefore knowledge of this base reality is not a judgment or an evaluation based upon a predetermined and embedded religious or political ideology but an unbiased and nonpartisan knowledge resting on a sound foundation. Buddhism is a religion, and its only reason for existing is to provide its followers with a path to happiness and a freedom from suffering. Therefore, in Buddhism, the pursuit of knowledge is a means to an end that aids and supports us in the achievement of these goals. Otherwise, the pursuit of knowledge would be endless because it is simply not possible to know everything. Therefore the concept of omniscience expressed in some traditions of Buddhism does not literally mean knowing everything that exists. Buddhism is necessarily selective in what it says we need to know.

What is the base reality that is intimately connected with our search for peace and happiness? Answering this involves looking at our state of being, our place in the world, our mind, our sense of who we are, and so on. Is our natural state one of happiness, suffering, something in between, or a blend of both?

Do the world and ourselves actually exist as they appear to us? Will what we perceive as happiness bring us happiness? Is there anything in the world that endures? What is this little life that "is rounded with a sleep"? What is achievement when death comes to us all?

These investigations are soteriological insofar as they are followe d with a salvation from suffering in mind and are not the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. They provide the impetus for a spiritual pursuit, whether based upon an established religion or not. The pursuit of a religious path based only upon fascination, fashion, or some prevailing culture will not be driven by these big questions, and enthusiasm can easily dissipate or be lost in a sterile repetition of ritual or creed.

Therefore a knowledge of base reality is as pragmatic as knowing how to drive before you turn the ignition key, realizing that you are unwell and then going to the doctor, or knowing that the world is threatened with environmental disaster before becoming an activist to try and prevent that. It is the driving force or motivation for a spiritual quest. Therefore, for Buddhist practice, the knowledge of base reality is essential.

In Buddhism, base reality includes the nature of suffering, the types of suffering, and the causes of suffering. It involves asking, for instance, whether we recognize suffering for what it is, and whether suffering has deeper levels we don't recognize. It also involves asking whether the causes of suffering are inside us, external, or a combination of both. Base reality in Buddhism also includes the ultimate nature of existence. Is the way the world appears its final reality, or is there something deeper? Is our experience of life valid in the sense that we can rely upon it? The most important base reality in Buddhism is the mind. What is consciousness? What is the function of mind? What are the types of mind? Is it one with or separate from the physical body? Can it continue without its physical support after death?

Base reality, therefore, as its name implies, forms the basic building block of our world of experience. It is heavily focused on the inner world of mind. To know it is to gain valid and unmistaken knowledge, which will yield conviction and enthusiasm for pursuing a path leading to relief from all unsatisfactory states.

Path

Buddhism speaks of paths leading to destinations. In essence these paths are new and unvisited states of mind, and the way we achieve them is through practice. To travel these paths, therefore, means to transform our minds from harmful and unproductive attitudes and states into those that are beneficial.

Any journey to new places requires a map, or advice from someone who has been there. While it is perfectly adventurous to set out without either and with no concern for where the journey will lead, such a trip is only fun if it is not dangerous and the destination unimportant. The spiritual path is of great importance because it is a journey to happiness—something we all want—and there is limited time to

accomplish it. It is also a journey that should be treated with caution because the mind is uncharted territory for us and its exploration is not without risk.

Therefore, a knowledge of the base reality may spur us to travel our path, but before we set out, we need knowledge of the path. In Buddhism, knowledge of the path is gained by study and by listening to teachers with experience. When we talk about a great guru, a true master, and a highly realized lama, it is the experience of the spiritual path they have walked that gives them that title, not their lineage, fame, charisma, or words. Just as we need a GPS or a guide when we drive somewhere new, we need a guide on our spiritual path, and the best guide is our knowledge accumulated from reliance on study and qualified teachers.

The result

Having a sense in advance of the final result of our spiritual endeavors gives us an aim. Knowing how far away it is gives us perspective and helps to regulate practice. In Buddhism the goals can be called nirvana or enlightenment, and knowing that they can be attained is a great inspiration. The final result of Buddhist practice is produced through the causal process of the path. Therefore, if you know the path and what its potential is, you know the result, and you know that it is attainable.

Faith

Faith essentially means "belief " or "trust." Generally, faith by definition focuses on something not immediately apparent to the senses and has no doubt of its existence. Is faith therefore blind? Being convinced of the existence of something without knowledge, good reason, and evidence is blind faith, but according to Buddhism that is a lower kind of faith. Knowing produces faith because knowing produces certainty. This "knowing" is not always the direct experience of the senses or some kind of extrasensory intuition, but it can be a conceptual cognition and what Buddhism calls a valid cognition (pramana). The reason why it is valid is a focus of Buddhist epistemology and is a primary topic of this book.

Buddhist faith therefore is produced—or should be produced—by way of knowledge, and that knowledge in turn springs from penetrative analysis of basic reality and the

path based upon that reality, as taught by the Buddha. If in our examination of basic reality we discover that we are being deceived, that what we always took for a flawless comprehension of the nature of life, the way it appears, does not really correspond to the way it exists, then we need to change that. We need to correct that wrong cognition and build a life and a way forward based upon that corrected view. This leads to a path based upon that knowledge, a journey with the goal of complete transformation of the mind. Since such an undertaking is dependent upon knowing, what then is this knowing?

What Does It Mean to Know?

On a basic level knowing can just mean to be conscious or aware. If we have a mind, we are aware of whatever is presented to that mind. The animate world of living beings is differentiated from the inanimate world of stones and rocks by the presence of an awareness that can be described as a consciousness. Living beings know, while stones do not. There may be an ongoing debate about whether plants and trees have consciousness, but the general Buddhist view is that they do not.

Knowing in this basic sense is not necessarily correct or valid knowing. Someone with a high fever who hallucinates a wind blowing outside is conscious of "wind." There is no wind, but there is a conscious experience of it. However, this is not the kind of knowing described above. The knowing of base reality and so forth is a knowing that can be relied upon and, more importantly, acted upon. It is a knowing not deceived by the object that appears to it or by internal mental and physical factors present at the time. The "wind" is hallucinatory, and the feverish experience of it cannot be relied upon to produce a valid certainty that there is a wind blowing outside, even though the fever-possessed patient may not immediately recognize that.

Therefore valid knowing cognizes its object without the distortion that deceives the cognizer. In other words, the object appears to the cognition as it is conventionally and consensually accepted to exist. Such a cognition will be a reliable support for subsequent action. Knowing can take place through the senses, as in the case of seeing an object, or conceptually, as in the case of understanding or comprehending

something, but in either case, if that knowing is undeceived about its object, it becomes a knowledge that can be relied upon. To validly know something is to comprehend its reality.

Therefore this kind of knowing is incontrovertible, undeceiving, reliable, authoritative, and trustworthy. The Tibetan term for such reliability (mi bslu ba) is used in other contexts to describe a good friend who will not let you down. It is this kind of knowing that is referred to in the opening paragraph above. Validly knowing the reality of our state of being, our minds, the causes of suffering, the causes of happiness, the true nature of existence, of our experience, of self, and so on provides the basis for any kind of spiritual path we follow. The pursuit of such a path will be backed up by this knowledge, which has become a conviction and will stand strong in the face of adversity. On the other hand, spiritual paths that lack such knowledge—motivated only by attraction toward a doctrine, a goal, or a teacher—may have no foundation to sustain them if doubts surface later.

Ways of Knowing

Knowing can take place through the senses. Consciousness is aware of objects such as sounds, forms, tastes, smells, and physical sensations by way of the sensory faculties of the ears, eyes, tongue, nose, and body. Such knowing is experience. In Buddhism this experience is a case of these objects appearing to the sensory consciousness in the way that an object appears to a mirror. The consciousness takes on the aspect of that object in the same way as a mirror takes on the reflection of the object in the form of an image. Our everyday experience is testament to this kind of knowing!

For much of the time sensory experience is valid and understood as valid, and we act upon it with more or less success. The sight of smoke induces the comprehension of fire, and we react accordingly. We see dark clouds approaching, and we reach for the rain gear. However, as noted above, sensory experience can be deceiving. Looking out the window of a moving train, the scenery appears to rush by. Every day the sun appears to rise, move across the sky, and set in the west. Mirages appear as water, colors change when we put on sunglasses, and so on. Most of the time we self-correct

and are aware of the deception because of acquired knowledge, contextual clues, and past experience. But not always. Children and animals can be foxed by an image in a mirror. People used to believe the sun moves across the sky. Sensory experience can mislead us. It will need the confirmation of discernment or acquired knowledge, which of course is not direct sensory experience.

Buddhism accepts two ways of validly knowing. The first is the sensory experience described above. The other is conceptual. Conceptualization, as used here, is cognition that is not a direct experience by one of the senses. It may have direct, sensory experience as a concomitant cause, but it does not have direct contact with an external object such as a sound or a visible form. Therefore it does not directly rely upon the sensory faculties of the ear, eyes, and so on. It is mental. For example, when we think and analyze, we may conclude or recognize that this is this and that is that. When we look at something or listen to some sound, we discern that it is this or that. Such cognition is conceptual because the object or conclusion of such thought is a mental construct. It has been conceived. When I think of chocolate, the mental construct of chocolate that appears within that thought is not actual chocolate. I can't taste it or eat it. It is a conceptualization of chocolate. In the language of Dharmakirti, the author of this work, it is a universal,' one that in this case corresponds to an actual bar of chocolate that I can eat.

But not every mental construct corresponds to a reality or existent that can be verified by a valid cognition. The conception of a self that is separate from and in charge of our body and mind, Buddhists say, is a concept with no corresponding real existence. Buddhism does not generally assert that self does not exist whatsoever; it is not a nihilist doctrine. However, the mental construct of a separate, self-existing I that sometimes appears when we think of ourselves has no counterpart in reality.

With conceptualizing, therefore, the object that appears has been conceived from within. However, Buddhism accepts that conceptual thought—especially inference—can be a valid means of knowing. Direct experience and conceptual cognition make up the two ways of knowing. There is no third way of knowing, and as explained above,

knowing is essential in Buddhism. The task therefore is to be able to separate valid cognition from erroneous cognition. Erroneous cognition cannot be a successful support for subsequent action or practice, and it can even be destructive.

Knowing the Unknown

Much of the base reality that needs to be comprehended as a support for faith and practice is not immediately accessible to the direct experience afforded by direct sensory perception (pratyaka). The deeper nature of self, the deeper nature of happiness and suffering, and the deeper nature of existence in general do not naturally arise to our senses like the full moon rising in the sky. Direct sensory experience, as mentioned above, is akin to a mirror reflecting the image in front of it. If we have sight, we see. If we have hearing, we hear. On its own sensory perception does not seek out or analyze. Those tasks are carried out by mental factors such as the ability to analyze, concentrate, discern, remember, and so on, which occur while the sensory faculty is engaged in reflecting its image. Therefore, to know any deeper realities that lie beyond the realm of the senses, we must rely on conceptual knowledge. Buddhism divides existence into the evident and the hidden. It is these hidden phenomena that are to be accessed, verified, and understood. In so doing, erroneous misconceptions are recognized and discarded. Therefore, in the beginning, valid conceptual knowledge is more important than direct valid experience, even though the latter is often the starting point for the former.

Buddhism, like other religions, posits phenomena that are inaccessible to the senses, but to accept the existence of these hidden phenomena on faith alone is not sufficient. Such blind trust is not valid cognition. The only pathway to validate or repudiate these phenomena involves a penetrative mental process that arrives at ascertainment one way or another. Because this process does not have any final ascertainment of the hidden phenomenon in its immediate purview, it must begin with something accessible and, at least conventionally, accepted. Therefore the process of conceptually knowing something often begins with evident sensory phenomena.

When Buddhism speaks of these hidden phenomena, they often refer to the deeper nature of our immediate world. Therefore, in the Buddhist doctrines of emptiness or ultimate truth and impermanence, it is evident phenomena within our experience that are deemed to be empty and impermanent. When non-Buddhists speak of a primordial nature or substance that pervades all existence, it is evident phenomena that are said to possess this deep nature. Therefore it is said that reasoning begins with evident phenomena.

Analyzing

Sensory perception does not analyze. It does not conceptually dissect the evident phenomenon that appears to it into its constituent parts and examine them. The human ability to analyze and investigate is a process of reasoning. The beauty of reasoning is that it can isolate the more abstract facets of an evident phenomenon for the purpose of evaluation. To use the phenomenon of a pot—which is often used as an illustration in Buddhist epistemological works—a pot is a product, it is transient, it is a cause, it has parts, and so on. These facets, or features, can be isolated out during the process of conceptual investigation. In Buddhism they are known as isolates (vyatireka, ldog pa).

A single phenomenon like a pot can have multiple isolates. In pramana this is known as "the one becoming many."

The purpose of isolating is to learn more about evident phenomena than meets the eye. It is a way into their deeper nature. In reality these isolated features or aspects possess the same nature because, outside of the conceptual arena, they cannot be separated. The pot as a cause and the pot as an effect are aspects of the same pot. As said above, that which appears to conceptual cognition is conceived from within; they were not created by the potter. However, such conceptual separation is valid as long as every aspect has correspondence with the real world of pots. If that is the case, this analytical process can be used to gain valid knowledge of the pot's deeper nature. This is especially true when one aspect of the pot is understood and ascertained to exist but another is not. For example, it is possible to comprehend that the pot is a product. It is

reasonable to conclude that anything produced is also transient. Therefore, because it is a product, the pot must be transient. The transience of the pot is inferred through reasoning that relies upon another of its aspects, such as its being a product.

In the conceptual world, not only does one become many, but many become one. The many specific and individual instances of phenomena that qualify as trees" cannot all appear at once to the direct visual consciousness. However, the innate human ability to conceptualize means that all such phenomena can be conceived under a single universal "tree." As noted above, this kind of universal (samanya, spyi) is accepted by Dharmakirti, and much of his first chapter is spent validating it. This "tree" universal is conceived by conceptual cognition and has no substantial reality because it is a mental construct encompassing all instances of actual trees.

Therefore, when someone says "tree" or "trees," a listener who knows the language and the main characteristics of a tree will understand what the other is referring to, and thus communication takes place. This communication happens because a conceptual cognition and verbalization of "tree" eliminates everything that is not a tree, thereby reducing it to an isolate or a universal that subsumes instances or specifics of trees. This "elimination of other," or exclusion (apoha, gzhan sel), is a conceptual way of validly knowing because knowing means that an object of knowledge conceptually appears in perfect correspondence with the reality. The reality of trees does not include non-trees, and the conceptual knowing eliminates phenomena other than trees. The topic of exclusion is dealt with in Dharmakirti's first chapter, and is the topic with the largest number of verses. It is treated as a distinct topic in monastic studies, but for Dharmakirti it is a continuation of the explanation of the indispensable same-nature relationship that exists between reason and predicate. Therefore this topic and others, such as universals, are given their own chapters and headings in the translation, but such division is not always replicated by Gorampa.

Logic

How can we know if our reasoning and analytical process is tainted with error, thereby resulting in an erroneous conclusion? By using logic. The conclusion we seek is not self-

evident, and any hidden existence or lack of existence must be revealed through cognition that is in essence inference. Logic leads us to conclusions that are inescapable, where there can be no other possibility, and thus produces conviction. If we are certain that what we see is smoke, and we know smoke is necessarily produced by fire, we will be convinced that fire exists somewhere in that place, even though it is hidden from view.

Therefore logic is all about relationships among phenomena—more specifically between an evident phenomenon and a hidden phenomenon. Dharmakirti states that this relationship is either one of being the same entity or one of cause and effect. For the first of these, a single phenomenon, as mentioned above, can be conceptually isolated into features that are conceptually distinct even though they are one entity in reality. The heat of the flames of a fire and the luminosity of those flames can be distinguished by the analytical mind. Conceptually, they are distinct features of individual characteristics. But they are features of the same phenomenon and cannot in reality be separated. Where one is, the other will be also. Of course, heat may remain after the flames have died away, but that heat is the heat of the coals and not the heat concomitant with the flames themselves. Therefore, in this type of logic, where there is the one phenomenon, the other will be too, even if it is not directly cognized via sense perception. We do not need to put our hands in a flame to see if it is hot.

Dharmakirti states that making use of this natural relationship among features sharing the same entity is logic that establishes the existence of hidden phenomena. The example he uses is of the subtle impermanence of sound. He first conceptually isolates the feature of sound as something that has been produced. This feature of sound—that is, it arises from the coming together of certain causes and conditions—is evident to a discerning mind. A phenomenon that is produced must also be subject to destruction. It has a period of duration, after which it will cease to exist.

Dharmakirti points out that this transient nature is not something that only comes into play when some outer force causes the destruction of that phenomenon, as when a hammer destroys a pot. It is a feature inseparable from a phenomenon at all times of its

existence because it came into existence through production. These two features of "being a product" and "transience" are inseparable even though they are distinguished conceptually. Where one is, the other will be. This is a relationship where either feature is "indispensable" as Dharmakirti calls it. They are mutually inclusive.

Therefore, with the natural existence of this relationship within phenomena, hidden features can be inferred by the presence of other, more evident features of the same entity. In higher Buddhist philosophy the subtle and hidden existence of the "no-self" of phenomena, including persons, can be inferred by the more evident existence of the dependence innate in a phenomenon by way of its dependence upon its causes, its parts, and its apprehension by cognition.

Conversely, the nonexistence of a particular feature will imply the nonexistence of another feature that shares its entity. For example, if I do not possess the full range of cognitive powers to know that something is not present, I cannot be certain of its nonexistence. Lack of appearance does not prove nonexistence. However, if there is a situation in which all conditions for something to necessarily appear are present and complete, and yet that something does not appear, its nonexistence can be inferred. The present Dalai Lama used this latter type of reasoning to refute the existence of Mount Meru, the huge cosmic mountain at the center of our world according to ancient Buddhist and Hindu mythology. According to that cosmology, daytime and nighttime are determined by the sun's passage around Meru. When traveling behind Meru it is nighttime for the part of the world in front of Meru on the other side. This is because Meru blocks the light of the sun and nighttime is the shadow cast by this giant mountain. Therefore Meru must be coarse form of the type visible to the naked eye. If that were so, it must appear to those whose vision is unhindered, but it does not. Therefore it cannot exist. Generally, nonappearance does not prove nonexistence, but in the particular circumstance where logic determines that it should appear, it does prove nonexistence.

The second kind of relationship that occurs within the phenomenal world is that of cause and effect. Cause and effect is a natural law; it is not exclusive to Buddhists.

Nothing arises from no cause or from itself. If the effect is present, a cause must have preceded it. The cause can be inferred by the effect, as with smoke and fire. We "know" we have great grandparents even if we have never actually seen them, by the logic of cause and effect. This logic is put to great effect by Dharmakirti in his second chapter where he uses effects, such as deeds of the Buddha, to infer causes hidden within the mind of the Buddha, and to infer prior causes of the enlightened mind of the Buddha. The same logic is often employed in Buddhist philosophy to infer the existence of a past life or past-life instances of consciousness.

However, some religious philosophies use the presence of an effect to infer the existence of a divine creator. How could the beautiful rose with its unique aroma arise without a divine creator? Does its very presence not indicate the existence of an intelligent design? The world itself is an effect and must have an efficient cause. Creation is the movement of particles, which on their own do not move. The world is sustained, and the world is destroyed. Unintelligent causes can do none of these. There are moral laws governing the universe. These must be divine and have divine causes (see Sharma i997,209-Jo). Even though they subscribe to the logic of a cause being inferred by an effect, Buddhist logicians reject the logic of divine creation. In ancient India logicians from opposing religious philosophies would debate each other, each using logic to assert their contrasting positions. Therefore logic on its own is not enough. Even in Tibet it is said that a skilled debater can prove anything. Logic must be flawless and not tainted with erroneous proofs if it is to produce a valid outcome. Logical thought must be free from distorted deductions. Otherwise, though they may be held with conviction, conclusions reached will be wrong.

In his first chapter Dharmakirti sets out how the process of logical thought can be pure and free of error. There is a subject or phenomenon about which something must be proved or disproved. These form the subject and predicate of a thesis. Then there is the reason that does just that. For the reason to produce a correct inference, (I) the reason itself must be validly known or proven to be within the subject itself. In the argument "Sound is impermanent because it is a product," it must be known and accepted by the person considering the argument that sound has the feature of being a product. In

other words, sound must be a product, and in reality it cannot exist without that feature. Sound as the possessor of features can be conceptually cognized as possessing the feature "being a product." Sound and product, as mentioned above, can be conceptually isolated but are of one entity in reality.

(2) The reason of being a product must be known as being inseparable from being impermanent. Wherever impermanence exists, or in every instance of impermanence, being a product will be concomitant. (3) Likewise, it must be known that in every instance of non-impermanence, being a product will not be present. If these latter two are established, it can be validly asserted that whatever is a product must be impermanent. It is not enough to just not see it. It must be validly established. Saying that sound is impermanent because it exists is faulty logic because it is not the case that in every instance of non-impermanence existence will be lacking. Some existence is permanent.'

These three processes must be gone through and validly established in order to make the process of logical thought pure and free of error. These are the three modes or criteria (trairupya, tshul gsum), and Dharmakirti spends most of his first chapter describing them.

Inference

Buddhist philosophy asserts that there are two ways of validly knowing. One is direct perception, and the other is valid conceptual knowledge. Inference belongs to the latter. Logic that follows the correct path of the three criteria induces valid inference. This is because throughout the process of logical thought, great care is taken to ensure that the process does not fall foul of erroneous conclusions and assertions in establishing convictions within the three criteria. If this is done, a valid conviction must arrive. Sound is impermanent. This conviction ascertains the thesis with no room for error, and this is valid cognition (pramana, tshad ma). It is valid cognition because it apprehends without being deceived as to the object that appears to it. It can therefore be trusted and relied upon, even though that object does not appear to the perceiver nakedly. If we need convincing, we should use reasoning.

Reasoning is like shining a light on an apparent reality, one that until that moment we took to be true and self-evident. It does not in itself dispel our habit to conceive that untruth, but it does illustrate the contradiction between apparent reality and actual reality. It is a knowledge that supports progress on the path by way of meditation, which is the actual dispeller of the appearance of that falsity. Therefore reasoning must be applied to the mind. Logic is ineffective if not applied.

Such a process of logical thought can also be a kind of meditation because it is in essence a pursuit of hidden and profound existence, vital for progress along the path. As mentioned above, much of what constitutes basic reality is not evident to the senses and must be comprehended by other means. In Buddhist philosophy, the root cause of suffering is the ignorance of the true nature of self and other phenomena. Therefore that ignorance must be made known. This is done by revealing the reality of self and phenomena. However, that reality is covered or veiled by that very ignorance and is therefore difficult to recognize. Logic and its resulting inference is employed in meditation to conceptually cognize that reality. Eventually this conceptual cognition is burned away by the fire or experience, and the practitioner gradually eradicates the causes of suffering. Such a process when completed is nirvana.

All the above is the subject matter of chapter 1 of Dharmakirti's Commentary an Valid Cognition. It is considered by many in the Tibetan tradition to be the most important chapter because it is the basis and source material for the logical medium by which the great classic Buddhist works are comprehended in the monastic curriculum.

The Soteriological Quality of Logic

The above establishes the soteriological function of reasoning. Nevertheless, there were many in Tibet, and many today, who hold that logic is not part of the process of becoming free from suffering and gaining lasting happiness. David Jackson in The Status of the Pramana Doctrine describes the debate in twelfth-century Tibet on whether the pramana genre was secular or had soteriological utility. Logic is often regarded as being abstract, divorced from reality, and lacking the embodied passion needed to advance on the spiritual path. Of course, logic pursued solely for self-

aggrandizement produces nothing but foolish pride, but when pursued in the search for the truth that will set you free, it is invaluable. The user must be aware to keep the process of logical thought applied to a soteriological goal. This is logic that confronts and challenges one's own established views and positions. No other person is involved in this solitary analytical meditation. Appearances are challenged; especially the appearance that seems to be one and the same as actuality. Even scriptural authority is not submissively accepted but is put under the microscope of logical reasoning to test its validity. In this sense logic can be life-changing, because it can reshape how we view the world. Rather than living under the sway of prevailing views and attitudes, or by various ideologies and emotionally charged prejudices thrust into the public domain, pure logic can become our guide.

Nevertheless, logic does sometimes take the form of a public debate with opponents. Such debates took place in ancient India, with one philosophy pitted against another. These were contests and, as such, followed rules. They were not arguments that driven by emotion and anger, and if one side tried to prevail with irrational or deceptive assertions, they were soon snuffed out with rational argument. Listeners to these debates could be swayed toward one side or the other. Winning, therefore, was important for promoting a particular philosophy, and for Buddhists at least, the authority of scripture was not sufficient to accomplish this.

In Tibet, except during the early transmission of Buddhist teachings, Buddhism had no opponents. Tibet was a Buddhist country. Therefore a system of monastic debate developed in which the questioner tested the knowledge of the respondent using a stylized formula of logical presentation designed to produce contradiction in the other's position. These debate sessions focused on whatever topic was being studied in the monastic classroom at that time. They were designed to sharpen the mind and to ensure that students knew the philosophical content from all sides.

Therefore the expression of logical thought takes place in the private arena of the mind and in the public arena of formalized debate. These two uses of logic are encapsulated

in the first and fourth chapters of Commentary on Valid Cognition—"Inference for Oneself" and "Inference for Others." <>

THE SIGNLESS AND THE DEATHLESS: ON THE REALIZATION OF NIRVANA by Venerable Bhikkhu Analayo, Foreword by Bhante Gunaratana [Wisdom Publications, 978-1614298885]

An insightful examination of the end of suffering that draws much-needed attention to two overlooked factors of Nirvana: signlessness and deathlessness.

Nirvana is a critical part of the Buddhist path, though it remains a difficult concept to fully understand for Buddhist practitioners. In **THE SIGNLESS AND THE DEATHLESS: ON THE REALIZATION OF NIRVANA**, scholar-monk Bhikkhu Analayo breaks new ground, or rediscovers old ground, by showing the reader that realizing Nirvana entails "a complete stepping out of the way the mind usually constructs experience."

With his extraordinary mastery of canonical Buddhist languages, Venerable Analayo first takes the reader through discussions in early Buddhist suttas on signs (Pali *nimitta*), the characteristic marks of things that signal to us what they are, and on cultivating concentration on signlessness as a meditative practice. Through practicing bare awareness, we can stop defilements that come from grasping at signs—and stop signs from arising in the first place.

He then turns to deathlessness. Deftly avoiding the extremes of nihilism and eternalism that often cloud our understanding of Nirvana, Venerable Analayo shows us that deathless as an epithet of Nirvana "stands for the complete transcendence of mental affliction by mortality"—ours or others'—and that it is achievable while still alive.

Advanced practitioners and scholars alike will value the work for its meticulous academic expertise and its novel way of explaining the highest of all Buddhist goals—the final end of suffering.

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Foreword by Bhante Gunaratana

The Buddha's teachings on Nirvana, the ultimate goal of the Buddhist path, are subtle, and understanding them can be quite challenging. The meaning of Nirvana is often completely misunderstood and misinterpreted, particularly in the West, where it has become a cliche for something ultimately desirable and pleasant in the mundane realm. In the East, on the other hand, while synonymous with liberation from samsara, it remains connected in people's minds with the notion of the immortality of a permanent soul or self. Therefore, a clear exposition on this profound subject is of utmost importance.

In this book, renowned scholar and teacher Venerable Anãlayo sheds welcome light on this topic by offering a new perspective: that the descriptions of Nirvana in the early Buddhist texts convey a complete "stepping out," as Venerable Anãlayo puts it, of our usual modes of the construction of experience. In doing so, he skillfully corrects a tendency in the West to view Nirvana in terms of the extremes of eternalism and nihilism. In addition, Venerable Anãlayo shares valuable insights into the concept of deathlessness as laid out in the scriptures—and presents it as a state of total freedom from suffering that can be attained in this very life.

Venerable Anãlayo is a brilliant scholar whose works exhibit a profound precision and clarity. His extensive knowledge of early Buddhist literature and logical exposition of the Buddha's teaching make this book an invaluable asset for all Dhamma seekers.

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In the following pages I survey selected passages from the early Buddhist texts in order to provide a perspective on the significance of the realization of Nirvana.' My attempt to do justice to this topic is based on what—to the best of my knowledge—is a new approach. Said simply, this approach considers descriptions of the breakthrough to

Nirvana to convey a complete stepping out of the way the mind usually constructs experience.

The first part of this book serves as a preparation for the type of perspective I intend to present, by way of examining indications offered in the early discourses on the topic of the construction of experience.' In order to approach this matter from a practice-related viewpoint, a central concern in my exploration is the notion of the signless (animitta), in particular its meditative development as a form of concentration, which appears to have a counterpart in some later traditions in the cultivation of nonattention (amanasikara).

The second part of my exploration then turns to the deathless. As an epithet of Nirvana, the idea of the deathless in its early Buddhist use can be understood to involve a departure from notions of immortality held in the ancient Indian setting, instead offering the promise of complete freedom from being afflicted by mortality while still alive.

The two main parts of my study fall into twelve subsections each, with a summary of the basic points at their respective ends. In the conclusion that follows these two main parts I apply the idea of a transcendence of the construction of experience to a textual description of the awakening of the Buddha's son, Rahula.

Whereas the topic of signlessness does not seem to have garnered much scholarly attention so far, the realization of Nirvana and passages related to this topic have been taken up in a vast number of publications, both scholarly and popular. Although I have tried my best to take into account a fair range of these, I have not been able to do that in a fully comprehensive manner. To do so properly would require a book in itself.4 Moreover, any attempt at comprehensive coverage would need to take up not only relevant scholarly assessments but also the different positions and perspectives on Nirvana that have emerged in the course of time in the various Buddhist traditions, which would require another book in itself.

Rather than attempting such broad coverage, the present book has the much humbler purpose of formulating my current understanding of selected early Buddhist passages in the hope of offering a meaningful perspective. For the time being, I have minimized critical observations, except for a few remarks in my Kotes.' As a result, what I propose here comes with no claim of superseding previous discussions and presenting the final word on the matter. Instead, what I present is simply a new way of approaching the topic of Nirvana, based on the viewpoint of the construction of experience as recognized in early Buddhist thought. The resultant perspective is therefore just one out of many, although hopefully being at least internally coherent and relevant to actual meditation practice.

In order to make my exploration as accessible as possible to readers from various backgrounds, I have tried to refrain from referring to texts by their Indic names and instead provide references to reliable translations of the relevant Pali versions in inline quotation for passages that I do not translate myself! Although the main text of my exploration is geared toward a general audience, my annotations in turn are meant to cater to readers with a more scholarly inclination; hence, I provide quotations of the relevant originals and some further discussions. When translating from any of these originals, although in general I attempt to be fairly literal, I tend to change singular verb forms to plural in order to maintain a gender-inclusive writing style. <>

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Stages of the Path, Volume 1: Guidance for the Modern Practitioner by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Compiled by His Eminence Loden Sherab Dagyab Kyabgön Rinpoche, Translated by Gavin Kilty [The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Stages of the Path, 1, Wisdom Publications, ISBN 9781614297932]

Discover His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advice for finding happiness, helping others, and applying insights from Buddhist thought to everyday life—for a life of greater harmony, meaning, and joy, for ourselves, others, and in our world.

This first volume of The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Stages of the Path shares His Holiness's teachings on specific topics of vital relevance to contemporary life:

- how kindness and compassion are the foundation for individual happiness and world peace;
- how we can solve manmade problems;
- how Buddhism does not conflict with modern science and can actually contribute to its advancement;
- how gender equality is fundamental for a decent and just society;
- and much more.

His Holiness's messages on these topics will be of value to all readers, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. These teachings embody the Dalai Lama's generous warmth and humor, his expertise in presenting important Buddhist ideas, and his ability to inspire us toward greater kindness and happiness.

About the Author

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, and a beacon of inspiration for Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. He has persistently reached out across religious and political lines and has engaged in

dialogue with scientists in his mission to advance peace and understanding in the world. In doing so, he embodies his motto: "My religion is kindness."

His Eminence Loden Sherab Dagyab Kyabgön Rinpoche is the founder of the Tibet House Germany. Rinpoche was born in East Tibet in 1940 and at the age of four was recognized as the Ninth Kyabgön (patron) of the Dagyab region. In 1959 Rinpoche fled to India with His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. In 1966, he accepted an invitation from the University of Bonn in Germany to work there as a Tibetologist at the Institute of Central Asian Studies. In the 1980s he was asked by a group of Germans interested in Buddhism to become a spiritual teacher. Since that time, he has taught the full range of Tibetan Buddhism in Germany and many other countries in Europe, North and South America, and Asia.

Gavin Kilty has been a full-time translator for the Institute of Tibetan Classics since 2001. Before that he lived in Dharamsala, India, for fourteen years, where he spent eight years training in the traditional Geluk monastic curriculum through the medium of class and debate at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics. He has also received commissions to translate for other institutions, such as the Foundation for the Preservation of Mahayana Teachings, Tibet House Germany, The Gelug International Foundation, and Tsadra Foundation.

Editorial Review

This two-volume work, The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Stages of the Path, provides a precis of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s overview of the Buddhist path to Enlightenment as integral to the modern world’s problems as we face global catastrophe. It is a precise vision of how Buddhism offers ways people of goodwill of all Faiths and Secular viewpoints may benefit from these teachings that derive from the Buddha himself. Highly recommended.

Contents

The first volume of this work is a fairly detailed explanation of general points related to Buddhist concepts. It includes an introduction for today's Buddhists on the important and fundamental points of the philosophical tenets of Sakyamuni Buddha, explanations on the reality of base existence presented by Buddhism and modern science, and ways to integrate the essence of Buddhism into daily life.

The second volume, composed by way of analysis of modern-day realities, consists of supplementary annotations to the wonderful work Oral Transmission of Manjusri—an exegesis on the Lamrim, or stages of the path treatise, by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, which is included in the classification known as the eight great works on the stages of the path.

I would like to talk a little about the reasons for this approach. In this twenty-first century the ongoing economic betterment of conditions for the peoples of this world has meant the overcoming of various immediate difficulties. By means of our human intellectual capabilities, alliances have been forged, great strides have been made in education, and, with the huge efforts expended by scientific research, great advances have been made in measurable understandings of the workings of the quantifiable external world. However, up to now, similar quantifiable understandings of the workings of the inner world of mind and experience have not been possible. Nevertheless, the ongoing search for ways to do so, fueled by an increasing interest in these areas, is an excellent sign.

However, at the same time there is the unprecedented phenomenon of climate change, epidemics, environmental problems, health issues, and so on. Moreover, new troubles, such as terrorism, are continuing to beset the world. The reality is that these problems are manmade. Many governments, communities, and individuals, driven by the energy of anger, desire, and wrong concepts, focus on their immediate needs without any thought for the long-term damage that might arise. Additionally, beset by intense sectarianism, they focus shortsightedly on the benefits to the individual or their own groups, not thinking of the effect their actions will have on the global community. There is no other way of resolving and improving these situations than to transform human thinking and conduct.

For such a transformation to take place, we can engage in the trainings of the views and conducts existing in religious traditions. In particular, we should work to benefit others by wholesome secular acts not necessarily linked with religious traditions, such as love, mindfulness, consideration, contentment, and patience, which are the basic attitudes for a conduct of accepting and discarding. These wholesome ways of behavior are found within all religious traditions, but they do not depend upon a particular religion for their existence, nor do they arise from those religions. In general, they arise by virtue of their being the very foundations of society [viii] For example, abandoning the ten unvirtuous acts was adopted into Buddhist practice because these ten actions—such as killing and lying—did not bring about peace, harmony, and happiness within

society. They were not newly decreed by the Buddha as being harmful. Therefore, abandoning these can be categorized as wholesome acts not specifically linked with any religious tradition. There are many such activities, and it is helpful to recognize them as such.

Whether we follow a religious tradition or not, I see it as incumbent upon us all to recognize the common goal of short and long-term happiness and to see that this is our common responsibility as individuals and communities. Many people have no liking for religious traditions and tend to shun a particular training as if it were a contagious disease simply because it comes from a religious tradition. These people, when working for their own happiness, should try to recognize these fundamental trainings as practical methods for bringing about peace and happiness and apply them to their minds. If these trainings are allowed to disappear, ultimately it will be a loss to humanity. It is worth experimenting to see if this is true or not.

Human beings of all kinds, without differentiation, whether they have faith in religion or not, are young or old, traditional or progressive, whether they believe in change or not, are all united in wanting to live happy lives in a well-ordered and decent society. And, keeping in mind that working for the benefit of all beings is essential for this endeavor, we should consider it our responsibility to help as best we can all those who show an interest. Therefore, because we hold that the teachings of the Buddha are reality-based and verifiable by experience, a general introduction to Buddhism in eight chapters has been included in this two-volume work.

VOLUME 1

For many years, wherever I am in the world, I have worked hard to promote three beneficial commitments to be of benefit. The first of these commitments is to attempt to develop the intrinsic and fundamental qualities of goodness that exist in human beings. The second commitment is to increase harmony among world religions. The third is the commitment to the welfare of Tibet. These three are the focus of the first volume, and are the context of the presentation of the general and specific points of Buddhism together with various historical narratives. In this general explanation are

chapters on Buddhist philosophy on the reality of base existence, the relation between Buddhism and modern science, and how certain Buddhist trainings can be put into practice in tune with the necessities of daily life.

I will explain briefly the fundamental issues on which the contents of these eight chapters are based. [ix] The conditions that give rise to our manmade troubles are due to the failure to value the wholesome qualities such as love and kindness, which are innate in human beings, and to not recognize them as being fundamental for the welfare of humanity. Not valuing these qualities, we make no effort to develop their potential.

These qualities are like seeds. If seeds of flowers are provided with the right external conditions of soil, fertilizer, warmth, water, and so on, and are nurtured and cared for, the full glory of the flowers' beauty, with their wonderful aromas, can blossom. If not, those seeds remain as potential only, unable to produce their results. Similarly, in order to manifest the potential of the love and kindness innate in each of us, we must nurture the right inner conditions of our attitudes, such as being compassionate, content, disciplined, and conscientious. Our happiness depends solely on others being happy, and therefore, if we alleviate the suffering of others, our own happiness will naturally and inevitably arise. When we understand this, these attitudes of love and kindness will develop unhindered and the innate potential within human beings can emerge.

We must recognize that among the numerous troubles that have occurred in the world over the past thousand years or so, some have involved groups that follow religious traditions. These followers have shown little interest in taming their minds through reliance upon their religion, and they hold their religious views to be supreme and misuse their religion so that it becomes a cause for increasing anger and desire. This is such a tragic situation and it continues today.

The result of such abuse of religious teachings has been a widespread opinion that no religion can be effective in real-world situations. Followers of the major religious traditions that teach practices for taming the unruly mind have a responsibility to counter this unfortunate situation and to bring about the short- and long-term welfare

of individuals and communities. A single religious tradition lacks the methods for fulfilling all the hopes and wishes of all living beings, because such hopes are as numerous as the varied dispositions of living beings. I believe that followers of diverse religious traditions should willingly act to shed any resentment, apprehension, expectation, and competitiveness between them, fueled by attachment or dislike. Setting aside their history of hostility and distrust, they should work to foster harmonious relations by cultivating respect and a genuine appreciation of other religions.

Furthermore, it is important that we Tibetans who have faith in Buddhism understand that all the philosophical positions of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions and their subsects are ultimately of one intent. If we had some familiarity with the historical accounts of where and how these traditions developed, it would without doubt act as nourishment for the respect and pure perception of each of them. [x] Therefore, it is worth having some interest in studying their histories.

The philosophical view of Buddhism is dependent origination, and its conduct is one of nonharming. Relying upon Buddhism can exert a beneficial influence on the way we spend our lives. In Buddhism we recognize that all actions operate solely within the process of cause and effect. On that basis, we devote ourselves to the antidotes to karma and mental affliction, which are phenomena to be abandoned, and we strive for the resultant phenomena, which are factors to be adopted and which bring happiness now and in the long term. To begin we need an introduction to the essence of Buddhism by way of a presentation on the four truths.

In this book it is possible that there is some repetition over the two volumes, but this is because of the particular emphasis of the way of explaining the subject matter. It is not necessary to become a Buddhist in order to put the fundamental philosophy of Buddhism and its stages of training into practice. All can comprehend these worthy qualities and use them to enjoy a good life blessed with short- and long-term happiness for oneself and others; this is something we all have to do. This does not mean that you should have faith in Buddhism or that you must definitely practice it. We should

respect the individual's right to have or not have faith in a religion. It goes without saying that it is acceptable to practice religion and also acceptable not to. However, given that we desire happiness and have no desire for suffering, if a religious tradition's practices for taming the mind and abandoning hurting others are sincerely brought into daily life, they will definitely be beneficial in bringing happiness to oneself and others. I consider it important to try to show that.

Concerning an actual practice of Buddhism, at the very heart of the Dharma of the Buddha is a presentation of karma, or cause and effect. The proposition that "if this is done, that arises" is held to be a fundamental truth. By adhering to the reality of all phenomena existing in a state of mutual dependence, Buddhism must be practiced in harmony with the principle of seeking truth from facts. Buddhism is not a tradition that adheres solely to scripture; it is one in which reason is paramount. Any doctrine that contradicts evidence or sound reasoning, or that contradicts that which is validated by direct experience, should not be accepted and should be discarded. New ways of explaining phenomena that emerge from the investigative skills of modern research and do not accord with traditional explanations found in Buddhist texts of the past should be willingly accepted.

Even the words of Sakyamuni Buddha himself should be practiced having first examined them as one would examine the purity of gold through burning, cutting, and polishing. [xi] This the Buddha himself advised us to do. His instructions are not to be held as objects of veneration, nor followed simply because they are the words of our teacher. This independence of thought decreed by the mighty Buddha is the central pillar and peerless feature of this tradition. Those religions that determine what is and what is not allowed on the basis of the controlling decrees of a creator or of a founding saint, do not accord, in this aspect, with this fundamental tenet of Buddhism. Therefore, when we actually apply ourselves to religious practice, except in those areas of working to benefit others, we cannot simultaneously engage in different traditions, like having a foot in each camp, because of these fundamental differences in the path. Nor would it be of any benefit.

These days, in the conspicuous race of the human intellect to investigate fields of knowledge, competitiveness has increased accordingly. Because of this,, many open-minded people, including those who propound modern scientific views, are convinced that Buddhist philosophy and its related trainings stand up to scrutiny. Non-Buddhists are recognizing that Buddhism can provide practices for developing happiness and eradicating suffering, practices that are therefore effective in bringing peace and well-being to society. Such voices are becoming more pronounced. For those who seek out new fields of knowledge and who have taken on the responsibility of promoting the welfare of our human society, Buddhism has become a new area of interest. This clearly illustrates the unique prestige of this tradition. It continues to receive much praise from all quarters that not only is it not a poison, but it can be substantiated by verifiable evidence and experience that it is medicine. This inspires limitless and joyous confidence.

VOLUME 2

Volume 2 is a translation of Oral Transmission of Manjusri: Instructions on the Stages of the Path, a Buddhist presentation comprising, for a person who seeks liberation, the essential ways to practice in a single meditation session. It is an example of the stages of the path genre, one of the many condensed and extensive stages of the path works composed by the great masters of the past. It was composed by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, whose work was an unparalleled kindness for both the modern religious and secular systems of Tibet and for its people. He was genuinely a great being endowed with learning and accomplishment. This text takes as its foundation the unrivaled work Extensive Exposition of the Stages of the Path, composed by the all-knowing Tsongkhapa Losang Drakpa (1357-1419), and excellently summarizes the main points of practice.

I have taken Oral Transmission of Manjusri, which was held in great esteem by many masters of the past, as a basis for the teachings in volume 2 and I have provided, with great respect and service, a somewhat expanded explanation in the form of a supplement.

The explanation in these volumes does not just follow the traditional modes of the past. It is in accordance with these changing times and follows the great ocean waves of beliefs and dispositions of the beings of this world, however they live. It is aimed at those who have a liking for religion in general, or specifically for Buddhism, and at those who are monks and nuns, lay men and women, Tibetan and non-Tibetan, who out of faith have entered this doctrine. It is also for those who have hostility toward religion, or have no particular feeling toward it, and for those who hold various political views. It is a work compiling the wisdom of different valuable philosophies and the great ways of the bodhisattvas.

This work is a small gift for the discerning people of this vast world and is offered with the pure motivation that it will reveal the excellent path of immediate and permanent happiness by opening new eyes of wisdom in all those of unbiased minds.

The Buddhist monk and propounder, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Ten-zin Gyatso, Thekchen Choling, Dharamsala, India, the sixth day of the tenth month of fire monkey year of the seventeenth cycle, corresponding to December 5, 2016. <>

THE FOURTEENTH DALAI LAMA'S STAGES OF THE PATH, VOLUME 2, An Annotated Commentary on the Fifth Dalai Lama's Oral Transmission of Mañjuśrī commentary by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Compiled by His Eminence Loden Sherab Dagyab Kyabgön Rinpoche, translated by Sophie McGrath [The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Stages of the Path, 2, Wisdom Publications, ISBN 9781614297949]

Central to Buddhism is knowing our own minds. Until we do, we are driven by unconscious, often destructive desire and aversion.

THE FOURTEENTH DALAI LAMA'S STAGES OF THE PATH: AN ANNOTATED COMMENTARY ON THE FIFTH DALAI LAMA'S ORAL TRANSMISSION OF MAÑJUSRI is the second volume of the Dalai Lama's outline of Buddhist theory and practice. Having introduced Buddhist ideas in the context of modern society in volume one, the Dalai Lama turns here to a traditional presentation of the complete path to enlightenment, from developing faith in the Dharma to attaining the highest wisdom. This book, compiled by the revered Tibetan lama Dagyab Rinpoché, comments on the Fifth Dalai Lama's stages of the path titled Oral Transmission of Mañjusri. The volume will appeal to all readers interested in the Dalai Lama's works, both those new to Buddhism and those looking to deepen their understanding of the Tibetan presentation of the Buddhist path.

Editorial Review

This two-volume work, The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Stages of the Path, provides a precis of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's overview of the Buddhist path to Enlightenment as integral to the modern world's problems as we face global catastrophe. It is a precise vision of how Buddhism offers ways people of goodwill of all Faiths and Secular viewpoints may benefit from these teachings that derive from the Buddha himself. Highly recommended.

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See review of volume 1 for precis of volume 2. <>

THE CLOUD OF LONGING: A NEW TRANSLATION AND ECO-AESTHETIC STUDY OF KĀLIDĀSA'S MEGHADŪTA translation and commentary by E.H. Rick Jarow [Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780197566633]

A full-length study and new translation of the great Sanskrit poet Kalidasa's famed *Meghaduta* (literally "The Cloud Messenger,") *The Cloud of Longing* focuses on the poem's interfacing of nature, feeling, figuration, and mythic memory. This work is unique in its attention given to the natural world in light of the nexus of language and love that is the chief characteristic (*lakshana*) of the poem. Along with a scrupulous study of the approximately 111 verses of the poem, *The Cloud of Longing* offers an extended look at how nature was envisioned by classical India's supreme poet as he portrays a cloud's imagined voyage over the fields, valleys, rivers, mountains, and towns of classical India.

This sustained, close reading of the *Meghaduta* will speak to contemporary readers as well as to those committed to developing a more in-depth experience of the natural world. *The Cloud of Longing* fills a gap in the translation of classical Indian texts, as well as in studies of world literature, religion, and into an emerging integrative environmental discipline.

- ❖ Offers a radically new way of looking at the natural world
- ❖ Provides classical Indian perspectives on the powers of language and how they relate to love
- ❖ Acts as an examination of cross-cultural mythology, the universal patterns of literature, and the aesthetics of love

Reviews

"Jarow has done justice like none other to the *Meghadūta*, a masterpiece of world literature that casts its shadow and rings in echoes throughout all subsequent Sanskrit works. Jarow's elegant translation is followed with insights not only into the delicate versification of Kālidāsa's work but observations on its message: 'The lovers sees the beloved everywhere.' 'What if... the poetic perception of reality is closer to what actually is than the calculating, measuring one?' Borrowing from William Carlos Williams, Jarow suggests that the poet makes meaning 'not in ideas, but in things.' Bravo!" -- Christopher Key Chapple, Doshi Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology, Loyola Marymount University

"Every generation requires literate translators capable of capturing the subtlety of a classic and bringing it into synchrony with the times. Jarow has accomplished this brilliantly for Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* or *Cloud Messenger*, often considered the apogee of Sanskrit poetry. Depicting the world from the perspective of a cloud asked by a benevolent nature-spirit (*yak=.sa*) to deliver a message to his wife in the high Himalayas, the Meghadūta was composed in Ujjāyinī, present day Ujjain, in central India, around 375 CE. Here Jarow describes the *rasa* or aesthetic flavor that permeates the poem. With this message, as if transmitted on a cloud, the sensitive and appreciative reader (*rasika*) will enter into deeper connection with Kālidāsa's world, into his vision of the mysteries of the unity and multiplicity of the self within the natural world." -- Frederick M. Smith, Professor, Sanskrit and Classical Indian Religions, University of Iowa

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Why Kalidasa, Why Now?

There are two post- Kalidasa narratives that I know of about a person going into a deep state of ex-stasis at the sight of a cloud. I use the Greek "ex-tasis," as opposed to the English "ecstasy" in order to tune both the word and the situation to a somewhat different pitch; it is not clear exactly what emotions and contexts are at play. The first belongs to Madhavendra Purï, an associate of the 1500s saint Caitanya, who was considered by his followers to be an incarnation of Krishna, in the mood of his premiere devotee and manifestation of his "bliss- energy" (hlãdinï šakti), Radha.

Madhavendra Purï saw the rain cloud as blue- black, as šyãma, having the same color as Krishna, and thus fell into a swoon of remembrance. A few hundred years later, a young Gadadhar Chatterjee (later known as Ramakrishna) fainted at the site of a dark storm cloud, whether it was from its beauty or from pure remembrance is not clear, but the Welsh poet Robert Graves's commentary on the incident may be telling. Graves, in his opus, The White Goddess, sees Ramakrishna as a pure ecstatic who was colonized by the Brahminical hierarchy to further cement its authority and influence, noting, like William Blake did before him, how the purity of poetic genius can become entrapped in theologies and their power- based structures.

A number of winters ago, I gave my first public presentation at an annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion held in San Francisco (speaking of poetic cities). I gave a paper on Hanuman's ("Voyage by the Mind through a Sea of Stars") journey to Šrï

Laika in the Ramayana of Valmïki. The designated respondent commented, not in an outright derogatory tone, that I was seemingly "transported" while reciting what he considered to be another version of Eliade's "Magical Flight" archetype (the voyaging, shamanic Hanuman being compared to a shape- shifting cloud). I responded, "If one is not transported by this material, what is the point in working with it?"

Perhaps this anecdote exemplifies how the overwhelming scholarship on India tends toward the prosaic, for this arena has been the Western area of strength and understanding (as well as colonization). The poetic and aesthetic darshans, or viewpoints, of India have been catalogued and classified, but there almost seems to be an embarrassment around their ex-tasis, their "hyperbolic" emotion (as the prominent Sanskrit scholar, A. A. Macdonell put it when he spoke of the "lovelorn damsels in Sanskrit literature"). My charge here is to open and intrinsically explore this aesthetic dimension, this experience of rasa, the liquid mellow of aesthetic ex-tasis, which from the beginning of the classical Indian tradition was said to be the goal of any valuable work of art. This work is neither a history nor a critical study of the vast arena of Indian aesthetics; rather, it is a journey into the experience of rasa through one classical Sanskrit poem. It is written for lovers of literature in general (as opposed to Indologists or Sanskritists) and seeks to claim a place for Sanskrit aesthetics and its variant sensibilities in the arena of world literatures. In addition to this, and perhaps most importantly, it seeks to articulate a vision of nature that can add depth, richness, subtlety, and even transformation to our culture's habitual way of viewing and experiencing the natural world.

At the center of this project is the remarkable experience of rasa, a flow of expanded feeling— envisioned not merely as a spontaneous outburst of expression but also as a sensitive- hearted response that could be cultivated through caring discipline. Kalidasa's Meghaduta, an entire poem whose protagonist is a cloud, has long been considered a major work capable of engendering such an aesthetic experience in someone who has taken the time and energy to work with it. Let us therefore open to a text and a tradition that is not only formally intricate and grand but that can be savored

in the here and now as well, for such is the intention of this volume. With all respect to the tremendous work that has been done in cataloging and exploring the immense field of Sanskrit literature, I specifically focus here on a sustained close reading of the Meghaduta in order to share how it may speak to contemporary readers as well as to concerns about the experience of the natural world.

We hold traces of Kavya (classical Indian court poetry) through manuscripts, printed books, and in digital archives. The way and context in which these genres were produced are not fully clear to contemporary scholars or to residents of South Asia. There are varieties of conjectures about Kavya based on manuscript evidence (not minimal, but not overwhelming) that do make some sense, but it is sobering to realize how little actually remains from the classical tradition. From this, contemporary scholars and critics have identified a skeletal canon of authors and their poetic and dramatic works, depicting classical India through a combination of received epic narratives, mythic compendiums (Purana), and court poems of linguistic virtuosity (Kavya). Periodic attempts to revive traditions of Sanskrit drama in India come and go; the great film versions of epic and dramatic literatures on television and in cinema, however, have had significant mass impact and may now be primary vehicles for the transmission of classical Sanskrit texts.

The fact remains, however, that we do not fully know what Sanskrit poetry and drama might have been in their day. That is, the historical and social context of their creation and performance is obscure. The majority of historians and scholars do generally agree, however, that Kalidasa was active during the reign of Chandragupta II, who ruled most of northern India from circa 375 ce to 415 CE. Kalidasa is believed to have been a court poet, receiving royal patronage and articulating the “high- cultural” Sanskritic norms of his epoch. The earliest actual references to the poet are found in a Sanskrit inscription dated 473 CE, at Mandsaur’s sun temple in Madhya Pradesh, with verses that imitate both the Meghaduta and Tsukahara. An inscription on the shrine of Aihole (634 CE), praising him as a “great poet,” establishes his latest possible date.

The evolution of Kavya through later languages can certainly be (and has been) documented, and we can make relatively educated suppositions about their contexts and functions. As the tradition developed, the texts of Kalidasa were considered "classics." Such a label already indicates a significant contextual shift from previous interpretive communities as the texts morphed through time and space.

Kalidasa traveled West through the translations and writings of Sir William Jones, H. H. Wilson, and Goethe, becoming known as the "Shakespeare of India"— an emblem of an imagined high culture, an icon. Such "great works" now appear in a new context: required reading for Indian literature courses, and occasionally, perhaps, in a "world classics" compendium.

Kalidasa serves as a standard of literary virtuosity and depth, but the world he wrote about has faded into the shadows of collective memory (or rather, forgetfulness). This world may have been portrayed as an ideal one, and perhaps it never existed at any time. Kavya, like the bear- hunting ritual described by Jonathan Z. Smith, may in fact depict more of a paradigmatic vision of how things could or should be than one with any phenomenological accuracy.

My mentor, from Banaras Hindu University, Bishvanath Bhattacharya, once remarked that one cannot find the "fine stuccoed roofs of Ujjain" described in the Meghaduta no matter how hard one looks for them.

Nevertheless, Kalidasa's world lives on and morphs through one context after another. Hence, when I use the word "Kalidasa," I am not referring to an individual but rather to an emblem on a series of texts that may reflect a collective integration of Indian classical culture. Indeed, there are some scholars of Indian literature who have put forth theories of "multiple Kalidasas."

The later commentaries, and much later theories of literature that make extensive use of verses from Kalidasa, may also fall— if not under— certainly alongside this label. The way in which such ideals live and morph is crucial to this project, for it is not so much that I may be taking Kalidasa out of context— his works are already out of

context— as that I am taking them out of their currently accustomed frames of discourse in order to establish what I believe to be one of significant relevance. All of this, then, leads to the question, "Why Kalidasa, why now?"

I would be most disingenuous if I professed the academic project to be free of its times and concerns; be it history, politics, or economies. The early Orientalists who dug into the mine of Sanskrit literature had their agendas, as have the following generations of Indologists, scholars of Sanskrit, and contemporary scholars of religion and literature. In most of these cases, Indian poetics and drama have been left in the background, with philosophy, religion, linguistics, and social ethnography occupying the foreground. So, why pay attention to this Kavya, and why now? After all, the Meghaduta of Kalidasa is not unknown or new. It is most likely a fourth- century work and has been translated numerous times into English and other languages. There is H. H. Wilson's poetic flight in the 1800s; M. R. Kale's chock- full of notes edition for students first published in 1916; Franklin Edgerton's literal translation in the 1940s; S. K. De's scholarly critical edition of the text in the 1950s; and, in the 1970s, Leonard Nathan's credible and poetically breathtaking version, which is the most figuratively if not literally accurate translation I know of. Lately, one can find some really good, and some not so good, versions of the text on line. These translations have been preceded by scores of Sanskrit commentaries from Dakiavartanatha, to Mallinatha, to a most unusual Bengali commentary, the Tãtparyadïpikã, attributed to the Vaishnava theologian Sanatana Gosvamin. Most recently, the industry of translating classical Indian texts has been inspired by competing publishing companies, who want their version of the current "Great Books of the East" or now "Asia" to spread. Perhaps the recent work of Sheldon Pollock and others to translate and present a much larger corpus of Indian literatures may be a major departure from this. My focus, here, will be solely on the Meghaduta as an icon of the classical aesthetic sensibility. Still, Kalidasa's work rarely makes it onto anyone's short list. Rather it sits like most Kavyas on bookshelves as some sort of quaint curio, a beautiful but irrelevant artifact of an aristocratic culture that is generally out of favor with both the left- leaning hallways of the academy and the right- leaning government institutes of Sanskrit studies. While it is used as a text to study in some Sanskrit classes

(because of its sheer beauty and manageability of volume) its figurative detail and extended metaphorical complexity reward sustained retroactive reading. Moreover, working with the text requires a more than basic knowledge of Sanskrit, as well as a familiarity with the Indian epics and the cultural mythos that produced them.

I doubt that anyone can claim to be cognizant of their complete agenda in engaging such materials, but I think it is incumbent upon one to give an open and serious account of the why and wherefore. I believe one can make a contemporary case, if not for Kavya in general, then for Kalidasa and the Meghaduta in particular. Hence let me outline the rationale of this study. I go back to the fourth century because the poetry of Kalidasa remains unparalleled; because there has been little critical work published on Kavya outside of the commentarial traditions (much more work has been done on drama or Naya than poetry and poetics); and because it offers a vision of the relationships between language, emotive feeling, and the natural world that can speak to and even educate contemporary sensibilities. Kavya, which may be thought of as literature as art, predates and postdates Kalidasa, of course, and appears in a number of languages as well as regions. Likewise, critical discussions on poetics both predate and continue as a part of the process of engaging Kavya. Kalidasa, however, resides in the middle of all this, almost like a fulcrum that balances a very particular sensibility.

The study of and attention given to the Meghaduta need not be then a part of a quaint Orientalism that wants to laud an India of old or exalt the beauty and wisdom of the past. Such projects have their own rationales and arenas of function. If one pays attention to classical Indian categories, however, it is understood that what was, comes around again. This is arguably the case with the Meghaduta, and perhaps with the Dtusahara and Kumarasambhava (other poetic works of Kalidasa) as well, for the darshans (daršanas, or visions) of nature offered in these texts are extraordinary in their breadth and sensibility. The Meghaduta in particular, envisions the natural world as something much more than a backdrop for human subjects to live out their lives. Its sense of nature, moreover, is more integrated than in romantic notions of paradisiac beauty or of abject terror projected onto landscapes. Rather, nature, as experienced

through Meghaduta, is a tapestry of myth, memory, substance, feeling, form, and space. The landscape is simultaneously the mindscape, meteorology is metaphor, and neither psyche nor soma is absolutely apart from one another. In, around, and throughout this, as Barbara Stoler Miller astutely remarked, is the "unmanifest cosmic unity" of Šiva. While this "unity" is rarely depicted literally (a doctrinal impossibility in any case), its presence pervades the landscapes, mindscapes, and mythscapes of the text. Let me say, at the outset, that this mytho-cosmic sensibility that pervades the poetic realms of Kalidasa is not an exception but the rule. To call it "religious" or even "spiritual" would reduce the wondrous complexity and interweaving of imagination, epic history, and immanent divinity that make up this narrative.

For those not familiar with the text, the Meghaduta, or Cloud Messenger, is a short lyric poem (Kavya-Kavya) about a lovelorn Yaksha (a somewhat minor spirit being) living in a mountainous exile separated from his mate. In a fever of emotional anguish, he spies a floating cloud and asks it to deliver a message to his beloved. Addressing the Cloud as a person, the Yaksha then describes, in amazing detail, the route the Cloud will have to take to get to his home, the city of Alaka; the abode of Kubera, keeper of the wealth of the gods and lord of the Yakshas. The first and longer part of the poem describes the various landscapes that the Cloud will travel through, while the second part of the poem describes the city of Alaka itself and the imagined delivery of the message to his beloved.

The poetic envisioning of the landscapes, as well as its amazing integration of feeling and form, is my prime reason for reintroducing this work of Kalidasa (whom it has been my pleasure and privilege to read for decades) into the conversations of the literary humanities. In a world that has moved toward cultural connectedness, a contemporary person educated in the Western humanities, who has read Homer, Shakespeare, and Milton, should ideally also have read Kalidasa.

The Meghaduta, however, has significance beyond being a major work of classical India's most iconic literary figure. It offers more than a lyrical look at the life and times of a poet or of a culture; it also offers a way of looking through nature that can inform

and inspire our efforts to reorient ourselves in the natural world. This is a primary value and focus that will be explored in detail in this volume.

As a contemporary Western reader, I have no choice but to filter my reading of Kalidasa through a postmodern lens, but I have done my best to not use the work of the poet to prove any particular contemporary contention. The translations are done scrupulously and thoroughly. The major Indian commentators have been consulted in every instance, and more obscure commentaries have been consulted as well. I do reserve the right, however, to translate in a less than literal way when necessary. To my mind, this preserves and transmits the sensibility of the text much more than choppy literal translations that do not read well in English. On the other hand, any place where I have taken license can be clearly justified by and found in the actual text (and discussed in the notes). This is translation, not transcreation, although a good argument can be made that any serious translation is a transcreation.

Still, my intention here is not to present Kalidasa as he was heard in the royal courts of the Guptas, for I do not think that is possible, and it holds no more than academic interest for me. Rather I present Kalidasa because he speaks to me in a way that very few Western poets have. Through the Meghaduta, I have learned to look at and experience the natural world in a radically different way, and this is what I seek to convey in this translation and reflection. For its sheer beauty; for its remarkable discourse on ecological poetics; for its instruction in integrating sound, cadence, sense, and sensibility; and for its "tantric" perspective, the Meghaduta may be unparalleled. I will discuss the "tantric" perspective in detail later on. Let me briefly explicate what I mean by this much used (and often maligned) Indian word that has entered the contemporary lexicon.

The "tantric" sensibility (versus a particular lineage of practice) is one of transcendence within immanence. It does not privilege a disembodied consciousness existing beyond the phenomenal world. Rather it weaves (to weave, tan, being at the root of the word tantra) a vision of the world and awareness as non- different. And yet difference

remains. When I first began to read and study the Meghaduta with Bishvanath Bhattacharya, he remarked about the text one day, “How can you deny multiplicity?”

Indeed, the weaving of unity and multiplicity, presence and absence, may be the great triumph of the Meghadu^ta. There have been numerous Indian philosophical positions that declare the non- duality of duality, from the Madhyamika’s rüpa šünyataiva šünyataiva rüpam (form is emptiness, emptiness is form) to Gauïya theologian Jïva Gosvamin’s acintya-bhedãbhedatattva (inconceivably one and different), but Kalidasa puts meat on these bones. He illustrates and demonstrates the interpenetration of awareness and phenomena and, in doing so, exposes many of the pitfalls of falling to one side of this notion. One may argue that Kalidasa’s world is fundamentally dualistic, but figuration of any kind already begins to bend categories of separateness. Moreover, the fact that Kalidasa explicitly challenges the reality of literal representation places him in the rasa-dhvani aesthetics camp, one which offers aesthetic rapture, to borrow Masson and Patwardhan’s term, as a way through realms of temporality and incompleteness. To be clear, I am not claiming any particular spiritual agenda or formal affiliation for Kalidasa (even though Šiva is clearly the dominant divinity in his work). He is writing as a poet, not as a philosopher or spiritual teacher. It is just this, however, “the aesthetic,” that has been chronically and characteristically shortchanged, and the point of rasa theory is to exalt the aesthetic and acknowledge its spiritual dimensions. Citra-kãvya, or “ornamentation for its own sake,” or for the sake of virtuosity, is constantly disparaged by the Sanskrit poeticians as inferior. Rasa, on the other hand, is seen as the central transformation of emotion to sublime heights, and, in this sense, it carries on the Vedic trope of rasa as immortal nectar.

In any case, one can say from the invocation at the beginning of Šakuntala that Kalidasa was a worshipper of Šiva, in his manifest forms; and one can say from the denouements of his plays that the redeeming presence of Šakti, of the feminine, is ubiquitous in his work, but Kalidasa’s tantric sensibility exceeds arguments of linear history or textual content because they are largely stylistic: the collapsing of contraries through sustained metaphor; the thrill of the sights, sounds, tastes, and touches of the

sensory world; the depiction of mountains and rivers in erotic congress; and the awareness of nature in divinity, as well as divinity in nature, all point toward tantric leanings. Here is where literary studies and intrinsic literary studies in particular can make a contribution to discussions of oneness and difference. They can combat the dominance of unqualified historicism and the concomitant assumption that its chronological logic stands above, or informs, other forms of discourse. While the question of when the plays were written, under what dynasty, and the like are not unimportant, they are ultimately extrinsic to the work, which operates through an associative trans- textual logic. This sense also allows one to understand the way such a text may morph through different interpretive communities in different times and places. Just as Harold Bloom can declare that, ultimately, there is only an oral Torah, prevailing notions of just what is intrinsic or extrinsic may depend on how a particular community receives a text. Rawson's popular work on tantra speaks to this when he discusses the tantric view of time as one that openly faces the maw of dissolution rather than seeks some separated vantage point of observation. Hence, the method I argue for here is to read Kalidasa closely as a "you" versus an "it" to borrow Martin Buber's terminology.

Most importantly perhaps, Kalidasa's poetic sensibility offers a specific vision of the natural world that we may do well to revisit. It is one that does not separate the word from the tongue, la parole from la langue. It does not seek to de- shroud the word of its mystery to reveal "meaning." Rather, mystery, erotic mystery in particular, is at the very core of language, which is at the very core of the natural world. To separate language from love is to move from the poetic to the prosaic; and while works of this kind are necessarily prosaic, I try to frame this one in a way that least violates the precincts of the poetic.

After all, this is the crux of the Meghaduta's argument. Those afflicted by love no longer distinguish the animate from the inanimate, no longer consent to the atrophy of the imagination. Their world flows through the heart, as well as through the mind, and their words consequently are to be "tasted," not interpreted. The idea of language as

purely conventional could only occur to someone like Descartes; that is, to someone living locked away in a room. From a tantric point of view, the movement to withdraw from the senses is not any different than being captivated by them, for ultimately, the world we see is the world we are.

The Meghaduta sees a world at play, but it is not necessarily free play. The text is well aware of the tug of the opposites. There is fear and danger as well as openness and freedom; there is display as well as shame, flights of fancy, and flights away from predators. Because all of this is moving in time, nothing stands still; no vision of the natural world is ultimate, just as no season can last forever. Moreover, the entire landscape of the Meghaduta is imagined; it is seen through the mind of the protagonist, an exiled Yaksha.

On the one hand, the imprint of nature is extraordinary. How could someone have such a finely tuned memory where every detail of sight and sound— the dew drops in the wind, the rumbling of different types of thunder, throngs of birds floating by on their way— are perfectly remembered? Maybe there is a faculty of seeing here that we are generally not accustomed to. The twentieth- century magician Aleister Crowley is said to have trained his visualizing capacities by playing two games of chess with two different people at once, thus learning to envision every piece on the two boards without his physical presence. This is again, however, assuming the primacy of matter. What if, as from the Platonic perspective, the ideas are primary? What if the imagined tree is just as substantial as the physical tree? Texts like the Yoga Vasistha, in India, constantly challenge the notion that physical reality is fundamentally different than imagined reality. From the point of view of death, both a dream and a life are said to be qualitatively similar. All this is to iterate the aesthetic perspective that imagination is not necessarily a detour or a modality to help enforce moral truths. And the language of the Meghaduta is not as much about something (representation) as it is, itself, something— working with meter, sonoric and semantic figuration to incarnate a powerful and prevailing mood that can transport the sensitive heart (suh^daya). Let us begin this pilgrimage of imagination by traveling through the poem itself and then

looking into the rich theoretical discourse of Sanskrit poetics to have some frame of reference for Kalidasa's project.

What follows is a translation of 111 verses of the Meghaduta. There may indeed be more (or less) verses, as S. K. De enumerates in his critical edition of the text. I am following the lineage of Western translators here (Edgerton, Nathan) for the sake of consistency. Some versions of the text separate the pürva and uttara Megha, "early" and "later" sections. I have (again following recent translators) kept one unified work. Each verse of Kavya is sometimes referred to as a flawless pearl, and I have done my best to convey this sense in the translation. Here, I offer the Meghaduta, the voyage by a cloud over landscapes of India, as imagined by a lovelorn Yaksha in the anguish of separation from his beloved. <>

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