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Frontispiece: the calligraphy in seal
script by Shi Weimiao, translated into
Chinese by Shi Liaocan, reads:

*The mindful exert themselves.
They do not delight in a house.
Like geese leaving a pool,
they leave their various homes.*

Dhammapada VII, v.91 (tr. K.R. Norman)
© 1997 Pali Text Society

AN EARLY MAHĀYĀNA TRANSFORMATION OF THE STORY OF KṢĀNTIVĀDIN – ‘THE TEACHER OF FORBEARANCE’¹

ANDREW SKILTON

The subject of this paper is a story. In one sense a single story, that of the Kṣāntivādin, the Teacher of Forbearance – in another sense several stories, the ‘tellings’ of this Kṣāntivādin story, as found in various Buddhist texts. The starting point of this paper, the causal starting point if not the actual beginning, is the version of this tale told in the *Samādhirājasūtra* (SRS), and my invitation was to address this conference on some aspect of my work on this neglected text. To orient those of us not familiar with the SRS, I should preface my further remarks by pointing out that this is a large Mahāyāna sūtra that survives in several recensions in Sanskrit. It is probably a relatively early Mahāyāna text, i.e. in existence from at least the second century CE, although I shall not be rehearsing in any detail any arguments for this attribution today.² It is one of the *navadharmas* of Nepalese Buddhism and for this reason two of the surviving recensions are preserved in a wealth of manuscripts from the Kathmandu valley, c.38.³ It has been the focus of research I have conducted since 1990 and I am engaged in a long-term project to edit and translate the complete text.

The story of the Kṣāntivādin is a popular tale that may have been absorbed into Buddhist narrative literature from the broader religious and ascetic milieu of early India. My main interest here is to comment on two versions of this story, one from the SRS and another from the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya (MSV), but I intend to reach that point via some comment on the story in its more

¹ This is a revised version of a paper read at the annual conference of the UK Association of Buddhist Studies, 3 July 2001.

² See Skilton, ‘The Dating of the *Samādhirājasūtra*’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27 (1999), pp.635-55.

³ See Skilton, ‘Four Recensions of the *Samādhirājasūtra*’, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 42 (1999), pp.335-56.

widely known recensions.

In broad terms the Kṣāntivādin story tells of a person who exemplifies the virtue of forbearance, *kṣānti*, and who, as a result of this, is mutilated and tortured by a wrathful king. This gory tale, of which I shall give a fuller account shortly, was evidently popular and circulated in a number of recensions, of which three are surely better known than either of those I have already mentioned. The first version to be known to European scholarship was a treatment in full *kāvya* style by the poet Āryaśūra, entitled *Kṣāntijātaka*, found as story 28 in his *Jātakamālā* (JM).⁴ The next version to be known in the West was that in Pāli, story 313 in the *Jātaka* collection and known as the *Khantivādijātaka*.⁵ There is also an untitled Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit version in the third volume of the *Mahāvastu* (Mv).⁶ Of these three, Āryaśūra's treatment is the longest, taking over ten full pages of Kern's edition, while the *Mahāvastu*'s is the shortest – not filling four pages in Senart's edition.

However, I should also point out that these by no means exhaust the list of known recensions. There are also two versions recounted by Ksemendra in his *Avadānakalpalatā*,⁷ and a précis account of the story is offered by Prajñākaramati in his commentary on Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 8.106.⁸ In his study of the story literature of the MSV, Panglung mentions around a dozen Chinese translations or references to it.⁹ I myself have noted a

⁴ H.Kern (ed.), *The Jātaka-mālā: Stories of the Buddha's Former Incarnations*, Cambridge (MA) 1891, pp.181-92; J.S. Speyer (trans.), *The Jātaka-mālā: Garland of Birth Stories of Āryaśūra*, London 1895, pp.253-68, and P. Khoroché, *Once the Buddha was a Monkey*, Chicago and London 1989, pp.193-204.

⁵ V. Fausbøll (ed.), *The Jātaka together with its commentary being the tales of the anterior births of Gotama Buddha*, Vol 3, London 1883, repr.1990, pp.39-43; H.T. Francis and R.A. Neil (trans), *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, London 1895, repr.1981.

⁶ É. Senart (ed.), *Le Mahāvastu*, 3 vols, Paris 1882-97, pp.356-61; J.J. Jones (trans), *The Mahāvastu*, vol.3, London 1956, pp.354-8.

⁷ Stories 38 and 29, the latter based on that also told in the MSV.

⁸ P.L. Vaidya (ed.), *Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva*, Darbhanga 1988, pp.166-7.

⁹ J.L. Panglung, *Die Erzählstoffe des Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya analysiert auf Grund der tibetischen Übersetzung*, Tokyo 1981, pp.92-3.

second Pāli version in the *paccuppannavatthu* of the *Mātaṅga-jātaka*, and it is referred to by name in the *Vajracchedikā*, *Raṣṭra-pālaparipṛcchā* and the Pāli *Sarabhaṅgajātaka*.¹⁰ Clearly, this was a story well loved by the Buddhists of India.

Each recension of the story shows its own emphases, doubtless reflecting the immediate purposes as well as the broader religious and social climate of its redactor, but the fundamental premisses and components of the story are as follows:

- There is a hermit who teaches and practises forbearance, and hence he is known as the Kṣāntivādin, 'the teacher of forbearance'. He is powerful through his religious attainment – i.e. he has supernatural powers.
- He visits a royal city, where he enters the royal park.
- The king, who is of a somewhat choleric disposition, visits this park with his women and eventually falls asleep.
- While the king is asleep, the women wander and come upon the Kṣāntivādin, by whom their attention is engaged and from whom they receive teachings.
- The king wakes, misses his women and searches for them.
- The king finds them in the company of the Kṣāntivādin and angrily demands an explanation.
- The reply from the hermit, that he teaches *kṣānti*, only further enrages the king who decides to test this person's forbearance with physical torture.
- Gradually the fingers, hands, feet, nose and ears of the Kṣāntivādin are cut off.
- Having failed through this treatment to make the Kṣāntivādin recant, the king leaves.
- A third party seeks assurance from the Kṣāntivādin that he will only wreak revenge upon the king and not upon them or his subjects.
- The Kṣāntivādin assures them that he still feels no anger towards even the king, let alone anyone else.
- The king is swallowed by the earth and goes to hell, and the Kṣāntivādin dies.
- The characters are identified: the Kṣāntivādin is, of course, Gautama Buddha in a previous existence.

¹⁰ I am indebted to Justin Meiland for the reference in the *Sarabhaṅgajātaka*.

These are the basic components of the story, but each version presents them with variations, and some differ in major aspects of this summary account, which I have otherwise tried to make universally applicable.

In terms of its overall concern, we should note that this story well-illustrates the conflict between what Graeme MacQueen calls internal and external mastery – a conflict that was of great concern within both the Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions.¹¹ Since the story is composed from the ascetic point of view, MacQueen argues, the outcome favours internal mastery and the superiority of the ascetic is demonstrated. Thus, he analyses the Pāli *Khantivādijātaka* as a drama in which the external, political power of the king is pitched against the internal, ascetic mastery of the hermit – while the king controls the external world, including even the Kṣāntivādin's body, the latter has control over his internal psychological world. He is thus the more powerful of the two. The supernatural power resulting from this internal control allows him, if he so wishes, to punish even the king and his entire people. This is clearly an important dynamic of the original Kṣāntivādin story, albeit not one that concerns me here. Each account of our story reveals other concerns, and while it is not feasible to exhaust the fascinating and often subtle differences in each telling of the story here, I do wish to give some idea of the major characteristics of each.

The Mv seems to me to be the most primitive account, being both the shortest and in a way the crudest.¹² Here the story is untitled. The king, named Kalabha, is introduced as 'fierce by nature'. Almost one third of this account is devoted to a repetitive description of each body part being severed, in this case by the king himself. The king gruffly asks the Kṣāntivādin, 'What do you teach?', *kimvādī bhavān*, to which the sage replies, 'I am a teacher of forbearance, may it please you', *ksāntivādī smi nandatām* – whereupon the king's sword falls again.¹³ In an otherwise summary re-

¹¹ G. MacQueen, 'The Conflict Between External and Internal Mastery: an analysis of the *Khantivādi Jātaka*', *History of Religions* 20 (1981), pp.242-52.

¹² I am, of course, well aware that crudity, if not length, is a subjective judgement; nor do I imagine that I have established a chronology with this comment.

¹³ Translations are my own, unless otherwise stated.

counting of the tale, this preoccupation with gory details seems rather crass, and in this sense is not different from many of the more 'populist' *jātakas*. Other features also suggest that this version is relatively less well assimilated to the Buddhist milieu: no reason is given for the sage's presence in the park; here the Kṣāntivādin is a sage, a *ṛṣi*, rather than the Bodhisattva or a Buddhist monk; and when the Kṣāntivādin teaches the women in the park, he gives them a general, rather clichéd, exhortatory discourse on generosity, good conduct, heaven, merit, renunciation and the ten wholesome actions (*daśakusalakarmapatha*) with no explicit reference to *ksānti*, forbearance. The final words of the sage inform the devas and other divine beings in attendance that the crops of that community *will* fail as a result of this event, in flat contradiction to the previous assurance to the human bystanders that they will come to no harm. Thus, the story is slightly incoherent in its Buddhist framework, and little is made either of the psychology and drama of the situation or of its didactic potential. All these features suggest to me that, in contradiction to Winternitz's judgement, the Mv version clearly does reflect the 'ascetic poetry' that in a number of cases was absorbed into Buddhist literature via the *jātaka* genre.¹⁴

Despite these considerations, I am not about to argue that the Mv offers us an 'original' version of our story, not least because its account of the tale concludes with the following verse comment:

'Bitter was the ripened fruit of this cruel deed since, as you know,
that king of Kāśī was consigned to hell'.¹⁵

This remark is clearly a part of the frame of the story, despite

¹⁴ See M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol.II, Delhi 1933, p.145, who sees this as a *jātaka* that embodies a distinctively Buddhist theme in contrast to pre-Buddhist ascetic poetry that expounds the qualities and characteristics of brahmanical Indian asceticism. In addition to the details mentioned above, the story suggests a not specifically Buddhist origin through two of its characteristics: its description of the powers of a non-Buddhist sage and the dangers of interfering with them; and its fascination with torture, dismemberment and human death. In regard to the latter it is 'little more' than a piece of populist story telling.

¹⁵ Jones, *op. cit.*, p.358.

some confusion in the typographic layout of Jones' translation, and can only mean that it was already well known to its audience in at least one other version.¹⁶ Probably of similar significance is that the Mv shares two of its final verses with the Pāli version, to which I would now like to turn.

As with the Mv account, the Pāli redactor is also attracted to the gore, devoting one third of the story to describing the mutilation, but he also develops the basic components of the story in distinctive and subtle ways. The prehistory of the sage is given: he is the educated son of a wealthy Brahmin family who gives up his inherited wealth to live a life of solitude in the Himalayas. The Kṣāntivādin comes to town looking for supplies and is befriended by the king's general, the *senāpati*, who accommodates him in the royal park (*paṭiññam gaḥetvā tatth' eva rājuyyāne vasāpesi*) – implicitly, without the king's consent. The king himself is introduced as 'inflamed with strong drink' (*surāmadamatto*), rather than angry by nature, and enters the park accompanied by dancers. The king falls asleep with his head in the lap of his favourite, at which the other ladies wander off to enjoy the park. When they have found the 'Bodhisatta', the term used here for the Kṣāntivādin, he relates 'the teaching' to them (*tāsam dhammam kāthesi*). The king is awakened by the twitching of his favourite's lap – one cannot ignore the implication that she is jealous at being left out of their fun and this is why she so readily tells him exactly where the others have gone.

The king runs off sword in hand to find them, but when the ladies see him coming, a few manage to confiscate the weapon and calm him a little. Nevertheless, the same question is produced for the sage: *kiṃvādī tvam samana?*, and the same answer given, *khantivādī maharāja*. But here, in his responses, the Bodhisatta also offers a definition of *khanti*: 'It is not being angry, when men abuse you and strike you and revile you (*akkosantesu paharantesu paribhāsantesu akujjhanabhāvo*)' – certain provocation in dramatic terms. The king calls his executioner (*coraghātaka*) and orders him to scourge the Bodhisatta and finally chop off his

¹⁶ Jones' translation suggests that, rather than being a part of the *pratyutpannavastu* offering summary comment by the redactor, this is a direct remark by the Kṣāntivādin to his audience.

limbs. The lengthy mutilation scene is, however, utilised skilfully to allow the Bodhisatta to assert that his teaching is deep seated, not superficial or insincere – not located in his hands and feet or ears and nose, but in his heart. The king is frustrated and has no recourse but to kick the mutilated Bodhisatta scornfully in the heart and walk away. At this point the *senāpati* reappears, tends the Bodhisatta's wounds and asks him to take revenge only upon the king – here our two verses shared with the Mv. The Bodhisatta dies the same day and the king is swallowed by the earth just as he leaves the sight of the Bodhisatta. Curiously, the redactor adds that those who relate the story with the Bodhisatta surviving and returning to the Himalayas have got it wrong. These last two points add further confirmation, to my mind, of the ascetic origin of the story. The last is clear acknowledgement of another version of the story and, moreover, one in which the fundamental Buddhist point, that a bodhisattva sacrifices limbs and life in his perfect practice of forbearance, would be contravened. The account finishes with the *samodhāna* in which the king is identified with Devadatta, the *senāpati* with Sāriputta and the Bodhisatta with the Buddha. The whole of the Pāli version, despite what may be some archaic survivals, is presented in the fluid narrative style typical of the *Jātaka* prose, and shows a range of embellishments and psychological insights that make it in literary terms somewhat more sophisticated than the Mv version.¹⁷

So far we have looked at two versions of the story: one is from a vinaya context, since the Mv is a section of the Mahāsaṃghika Vinaya. It is related there specifically to illustrate how the Buddha has on a previous occasion preached to a mixed audience of gods and humans – in my view a singularly feeble excuse for incorporating what I assume was seen as 'a good yarn'. Being vinaya, the Mv version is therefore explicitly *buddhavacana*, the word of the Buddha. By contrast, the Pāli version comes from the *Jātaka* collection, an extensive compilation of 547 such 'good yarns'. There the story as such is related by the prose text, which is not canonical and functions as a commentary to the canonical portion,

¹⁷ In particular we can note the emphasis of motifs found also in the epic and *kāvya* literature concerning the bad behaviour of kings: drunkenness, sleeping during the day, etc.

the verses. For *Jātaka* 313, this canonical portion consists solely of the two verses that happen also in this case to be shared with the Mv. The commentary explains that the *Khantivāḍijātaka* was related by the Buddha on this occasion to a monk prone to anger, but the story as such is commentarial and therefore not *buddhavacana* in the full sense.

We now come to our third version. Āryaśūra's account is the only version that I wish to discuss that is not anonymous, and is therefore the only one that is explicitly not *buddhavacana*, the word of the Buddha. Perhaps for this reason, I should therefore give it an even less detailed treatment than the rather summary one just dealt to the Pāli *Jātaka* and the *Mahāvastu*. Without doubt, however, this third version is also the most self-consciously sophisticated literary treatment of the story. Here we have an elegant relation of the tale, exemplifying the canons of court poetry, replete with psychological insights and also offering a rich and learned account of the virtue of *ksānti* – something missing in large part from the two already considered, as well as the two yet to be.

A lengthy introduction places the Bodhisattva as a *muni*, or sage, in a forest hermitage and explains his name, Kṣāntivāḍin, in the light of his practice and teaching of that virtue, especially to those many visitors that he receives. The king is brought to the Kṣāntivāḍin's forest by the heat of summer and the desire to play cooling games in water, and is described delighting in the picture of his ladies amongst nature – adorned with flowers, alarmed by bees, all to the lascivious cries of cuckoos and the music created by the group itself. Overcome by tiredness and intoxication, he lies down to sleep in a pretty arbour. The ladies at this point wander wantonly, followed by the royal insignia no less (*chattravālavya-janāsanādyaiḥ ... eśvāryacihṇair anugamyamānaḥ*¹⁸), and eventually come upon the Kṣāntivāḍin, whose spiritual aura subdues them, and they sit respectfully. Their overseers do not dare prevent their attending upon the Kṣāntivāḍin for fear of his 'penance-power and high-mindedness'¹⁹ (*tapaḥprabhāvamahātmya*) and that he might resent their preventing his visitors.

¹⁸ Kern, *op. cit.*, p.183,15-16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.183,22-3.

The Kṣāntivāḍin now delivers a profound discourse on the virtue of *ksānti*, easily able to hold its own against other such discourses in learned Buddhist literature.²⁰ The king meanwhile awakens refreshed but still slightly inebriated and, hearing from his female servants that his wives have wandered off to enjoy themselves, follows the trail of discarded blossoms they have left eager to join the fun. His mood turns as soon as he sees the Kṣāntivāḍin. Āryaśūra explains that this is due to several causes, including his remaining drunkenness, the jealousy that overwhelms him at the sight and, cryptically, 'because he was long since his enemy and bore him a grudge',²¹ a remark that Speyer links to the Pāli tradition that identifies the king with Devadatta. We are treated to a splendid, if formulaic, description of the angry countenance and demeanour of the king, who denounces the Kṣāntivāḍin as secretly interested in the royal wives and thus a confidence trickster and hypocrite. The eunuchs warn their master of the sage's power, but the king only arms himself with his sword and advances upon the sage; the wives intercept him and similarly defend the Kṣāntivāḍin, but this only convinces the king that they are already in the sage's power and he rebukes them with a tirade addressed politely to the eunuchs. Seeing the hopelessness of the position, the wives withdraw, blaming themselves for drawing the wrath of the king upon the Kṣāntivāḍin. Only at this point is reference made to the king's disposition to anger and resistance to persuasion. Every step in the following dialogue between the king and the sage further ensures the inevitable result – as the king approaches he exclaims, with splendid irony, 'How skilled he is in playing the holy one, that he looks even at me as if he were a Muni, persisting in his guileful arrogance!' The Kṣāntivāḍin, ever polite but perhaps not assessing well his attacker, delivers an eloquent argument that he himself is blameless and that kings above all should exercise forbearance. The king accuses him of duplicity, in begging for safety under the pretence of lecturing him on forbearance. The sage answers that he was arguing not for his own

²⁰ The *ksānti* chapters of the *Pāramitāsamāsa* and *Bodhicaryāvatāra* come to mind here. See C. Meadows, *Āryaśūra's Compendium of the Perfections: Text, translation and analysis of the Pāramitāsamāsa*, Bonn 1986, and K. Crosby and A. Skilton (trans.), *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Oxford 1996, respectively.

²¹ Speyer *op. cit.*, p.260.

benefit but for the king's. The king cuts off the Kṣāntivādin's gesturing hand.

The Kṣāntivādin concludes from this last action that the king is beyond reasoning and decides to hold his peace. Thus the JM dispenses with the dialogue and likewise with the gore. Receiving no further answers to his questions, the king dismembers the sage, the whole process being dealt with, in the best possible taste, in a single line of Sanskrit.

Āryaśūra concentrates on the psychological and didactic drama of the interaction, and minimises the sensationalist potential of the tale. The Kṣāntivādin reflects dispassionately upon the inevitable demise of the machinery of his body (*śarīrayantra*) and his forbearance is unshaken, but he grieves for the fate of the king. Here too the king is swallowed by the earth, his ministers intervene to ask for mercy on the population, and the Muni replies, 'long live the king, may no evil befall him', with further assurances that it is not for such as he, the sage, even to conceive thoughts of revenge – thus Āryaśūra elegantly rephrases the two verses known from the Mv and Pāli versions. After further reflections on forbearance, the Kṣāntivādin politely dies. The whole composition reflects Āryaśūra's sophisticated social and intellectual background.

So much, then, for my resumé of these three versions. I have treated them according to my perception of their increasing literary accomplishment, but wish to make it clear that I do not thereby understand there to be a literary influence between them, in the sense that any single redactor or author necessarily knew one or the other or both of the others, although such knowledge may not have been impossible. Nor do I wish to propound a linear relationship between these three versions – the assumption of such linear relationship with its implicit assumption of a monolithic literary environment is surely naïve. Unfortunately, even chronological considerations do not offer us a very sound structure on which to arrange our texts. While Āryaśūra appears to have been dated to the fourth century CE, there is only the most general dating available for the Mv, it being relegated to the 'black box' that rests across the centuries either side of the beginning of

the Common Era.²² As far as I can tell, there is no established date for the *Jātaka* prose.²³ Von Hinüber, however, does point out that some parts of the *Jātaka* prose refer the reader to Buddhaghosa's commentaries, indicating that parts at least of this text post-date the great fifth-century commentator.²⁴ Von Hinüber also describes the style and structure of the *Jātaka* prose as 'modernized' by the Theravādins, and so we are probably safe in regarding the Pāli version as the most recent of the three that we have looked at so far, a conclusion not inconsistent with its internal evidence.²⁵

What is of interest for my present purpose is that these various recensions of the story, while not necessarily relinquishing the concern over the conflict between internal and external mastery, can also be seen as reflecting other concerns or circumstances of the redactor, either intentionally or otherwise. With this in mind, I will now move on to the two versions that are perhaps less familiar to us.

The first of these is that found in the MSV.²⁶ This version is some seven pages long in Gnoli's edition, although these pages are rather more closely printed than in other versions and thus it is rather similar to Āryaśūra's text in length, if not in literary merit. Like the Mv version this too is part of a vinaya text, but unlike the Mv it is not yet translated into English to my knowledge. In this particular example we are provided with a prehistory for our hermit, itself possibly an ironic redrafting of the early life of the Buddha – he is the first son of a king, who, seeing his father rule justly and unjustly, decides he would prefer to go forth from home

²² On Āryaśūra's date, see Meadows, *op. cit.*, p.4.

²³ The problems implicit in establishing the latter are such that none of the authorities even admit the date of the *Jātaka* prose as an issue, e.g. K.R. Norman, *Pāli Literature*, Wiesbaden 1983, and O. von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, Berlin 1996.

²⁴ Von Hinüber *op. cit.*, p.132. The Theravāda tradition attributes the *jātaka-atthakathā* to Buddhaghosa, but this is disputed by some modern scholars.

²⁵ Here I absolutely disagree with MacQueen, who makes the unsubstantiated claim that the Pāli is the earliest version, MacQueen, *op. cit.*, p.244.

²⁶ R. Gnoli (ed.), *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu*, Part II, Rome 1978, pp.4-11. I am grateful to Gregory Schopen for supplying me with a copy of the Sanskrit text at short notice.

and enter the religious life in the forest. Being a dutiful son, he asks permission of his father who refuses it. The son therefore goes on hunger strike, and the king engages in a lengthy process of dissuasion – firstly he himself and then, at his request, his advisers and then their sons, all go to the prince in turn, and yet fail to convince him of the foolishness of his plan.

It is surely significant that slightly over one-fifth of the text is taken up by this process of unsuccessful dissuasion. This passage is made up of the arguments of the three sets of figures I have just mentioned, and these are effectively repetitions of the same arguments. I would therefore like to suggest that the content of this ‘charter for dissuasion’ was of some interest to the redactors of the MSV. The arguments can be summarised as follows, in my paraphrase: ‘You know nothing about suffering. The religious life is hard. Isolation is difficult. Being alone is horrible. Full and complete awakening is difficult for those who are forest anchorites (*durabhisambudhāny aranyavanaprasthāni*). You spend the rest of your life living with animals, living off other people’s food and unable to have any fun’.²⁷ Now, the *dramatis personae* here are explicitly lay people, and just as the story unfolds we are still dealing with forest sages, *ṛsis*, i.e. they are explicitly Buddhist, but I think it highly significant that we see expressed here a common theme in the MSV – a disparaging, if not hostile, view of religious life in the forest – a theme that has been identified by Gregory Schopen in work based on the MSV.²⁸ The picture he offers is one in which the redactors of the MSV, as representatives of established mainstream monastic institutions in India, looked askance at those ‘enthusiasts’ who rejected this form of settled urban religious establishment in favour of religious practice pursued in the forest.

To return to our story, eventually the king relents. The son therefore leaves home and, living amongst the sages, attains pre-eminence in the practice of *ksānti* – so much so that he comes to see himself as a teacher of this virtue. During this time, his father

²⁷ Gnoli, *op. cit.*, p.6, 14-16.

²⁸ Most recently in an article dealing with the *Maitreyasīmaṅgala Sūtra*, see G. Schopen, ‘The Mahāyāna and the Middle Period in Indian Buddhism: Through a Chinese Looking-glass’, *The Eastern Buddhist* XXXII, 2 (2000), pp.1-25.

dies and is succeeded by the younger brother, Kalibhu, who, like his father, rules justly and unjustly. Some time after this, the Kṣāntivādin’s food and drink supplies run out. He goes to his *upadhyāya* and asks permission to return to association with town folk. The *upadhyāya* agrees without argument, pointing out that a sage has to protect his senses whether living in town or forest (*grāme vāraṇye vā vasato ṛṣiṇo rakṣitavyāny evendriyāṇi*), and on a practical note suggesting that he tries the Vārāṇasī area.²⁹ This is how, eventually, the Kṣāntivādin ends up in the royal park there. Note that here again we have further evidence for the actual Buddhist context and for the low esteem the redactor has for the forest vocation – the *upadhyāya* has no objection to the Kṣāntivādin returning to association with town and city folk. He even volunteers the observation that religious practice is the same wherever you are, implying that preferences for one locale or lifestyle over another are superfluous. Again the difficulty of forest life is illustrated – the Kṣāntivādin exclaims: ‘I cannot live on forest herbs! (*na śaknomi āraṇyakābhīr oṣadhībhīr yāpayitum*)’.³⁰ Most surprising of all, this sage has an *upadhyāya* – a title that in the Buddhist context denotes a monastic instructor.

I have so far given attention to a number of details of what we might call the introductory section of the story, and want now to pass quickly over the central details – the story unfolds much as we have already seen it, except that the mutilation scene here is very brief, a mere three lines. The deed done, we hear no more of the king for the meantime, but move directly to the intervention scene in which a deity who has faith in the Kṣāntivādin appears before him and declares his intent to destroy the king and his countrymen. As with the other versions, here the Kṣāntivādin declares that his forbearance is still intact, but nevertheless the *devatā* wreaks a terrible return on Vārāṇasī, stopping the rain so that the king’s subjects begin to die. As such, this is a clear attempt to reconcile the traditional but non-Buddhist ending, in which destruction falls upon the community, with the Buddhist theme that *ksānti* should triumph. The redactor of the story in the MSV, I suggest, clearly felt this tension. At this point the king seeks the

²⁹ Gnoli, *op. cit.*, p.7, 28-9.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, line 27.

counsel of his astrologers who divine the cause and advise him that he should propitiate the deity with offerings and seek the forgiveness of the sage. The king does so, but is only convinced of the firmness of the sage's *kṣānti* after the latter performs the miracle of returning his body to its previous wholeness. The story ends with the king and his people, astounded, falling in reverence at the sage's feet. Such is the story in the MSV. The conclusion identifies the sage as, of course, Gautama Buddha in a previous lifetime, and the king, Kalibhu, as Kauṇḍinya.³¹

I want now to move on to give a brief outline of the SRS version and then make some comments on these last two versions together. The SRS version of the Kṣāntivādin story is to be found in Chapter 35 of this sūtra, where it is called *Supuṣpacandra-parivarta*, 'The section on Supuṣpacandra'.³² Without doubt the 35th chapter of the SRS offers us the lengthiest treatment of our story, 'weighing in' at a hefty twenty-two pages of relatively fine Devanāgarī in Vaidya's edition and fifty-five pages in Dutt's original and less closely printed edition. In part this great length can be explained by the fact that the entire story is repeated three times – twice by the Buddha and once by the king within the story itself. This is a feature that I suspect could tell us something about the origins and composition of this recension.³³ While figures such as these page numbers only give us a rough idea of the comparative extent of each recension of our story, in this case they nevertheless establish that it stimulated the literary efforts of the

³¹ Kauṇḍinya was the first disciple of the Buddha to be awakened, and the initial reluctance of the king to believe the sage appropriately mirrors the initial reluctance of Kauṇḍinya to listen to the teachings of the freshly awakened Buddha.

³² In the printed editions of this work (N. Dutt and V.S.N. Sharma, ed., *Gilgit Manuscripts* II, part 3, Calcutta 1954; P.L. Vaidya, ed., *Samādhirājasūtra*, Darbhanga 1961), this is the 35th chapter. It should be pointed out that the Gilgit and Chinese recensions of the SRS do not have numbered chapters. The subject matter and story of this section are, however, common to all recensions. See A. Skilton, 'The Gilgit Manuscript of the *Samādhirājasūtra*', *Central Asiatic Journal* 44 (2000), pp.67-86.

³³ I have in mind the possibility that the redactor may have felt saddled, as it were, with three tellings, none of which he was prepared to discard.

redactors of the SRS far in excess of those of our other authors and redactors. The *Supuṣpacandra-parivarta* has only been accessible in printed edition since the publication of Dutt's third volume of the SRS in 1954 and, as far as I know, it remains untranslated.³⁴

Clearly I must précis this version even more drastically than I have the others. Our hero, now an idealistic monk, is called Supuṣpacandra. He lives during an evil time, in which Mahāyāna sūtras are criticised, non-Buddhist *mantras* are very popular and there are numerous natural disasters. He is one of 7,000 bodhisattvas who have been expelled (*nirvāsita*) from the cities and towns and who live in the forest – in other words are *araṇya-vāsins*.³⁵ Supuṣpacandra is a *dharma-bhāṇaka*, a preacher of the teaching, and he teaches *dhāraṇīs* to his forest-dwelling companions. In seclusion one day, he also sees by his divine eye that there are beings in the cities and towns who could benefit from his teaching and attain *bodhi*. He therefore decides that he should go to the city to preach. He tells his companions, who immediately set out to dissuade him – we should note that we now have the inverse of the situation described in the MSV version, where the dissuasion was to stop someone going to the forest. Again, some considerable space is given to this dissuasion – almost three pages of mixed prose and verse. The companion bodhisattvas argue that Supuṣpacandra will be putting his life in danger, both from jealousy inspired by his own physical presence (a clear premonition of his ultimate fate in this story) and from conceited, town-dwelling monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen (*tam āyuṣmantam jīvitād vya-varopayisyanti*).³⁶ In particular, they emphasise that previous Buddhas have always resorted to the forest in order to attain

³⁴ Four English précis of various degrees of reliability have been published: R. Mitra, *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, New Delhi 1981 (orig. 1882), pp.217-18 (where, due to frailties of the single ms. from which Mitra worked, the SCP is numbered as Ch.32); Dutt, *op. cit.*, pp.vii-xix; Thrangu Rinpoche, *The King of Samadhi Commentaries on the Samadhi Raja Sutra & The Song of Lodrö Thaye*, Hong Kong 1994, pp.127-30; and Crosby and Skilton, *op. cit.*, p.177.

³⁵ Vaidya, *Samādhirājasūtra*, *op. cit.*, p.233,16.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, line 27.

Awakening.³⁷ His reply is that if he is concerned to protect his body then he will not be able to protect the teaching, but also that previous Buddhas have taught in the world for the sake of saving living beings. He exhorts his companions to give the teaching, protect their *kṣānti*,³⁸ stay in the forest and cultivate their gentleness and their skill in *samādhi* – a neat agenda for forest living.

He departs, and eventually arrives at the royal capital, Ratnāvātī, where he spends the days fasting and preaching and the nights sleepless at a *nakhastūpa*. He does this for six days, having entered the royal apartment and converted 80,000 women in the irreversible path to Buddhahood on the fifth day, and on the sixth day converting 1,000 princes. On the seventh day he sees the royal procession entering the royal park. Five hundred royal daughters in the entourage, on seeing Supuṣpacandra, also become irreversible, place their ornaments on the bodhisattva, bow to him in reverence and shower him with verses of high praise. The king, Sūradatta, is afraid and angry at the sight of this performance, and later thinks that the monk is looking at his female household with lustful eyes. He orders his sons to murder the monk, but they refuse (they have, after all, been converted by him) and so he sends for his executioner, Nandika, and persuades him to do the task.³⁹ Thereupon Supuṣpacandra is despatched, in less than two lines, although we are given the additional information that Nandika pops his eyes out too. The monk is dead.

At this point we are just eight out of twenty-two pages into this recension of the story. There follows a very extended dénouement, in which there are interesting variations from the features of the other recensions. I cannot go into all these variants, but here is a brief survey. The king leaves the scene, but when he returns to his park a week later, he cannot enjoy himself and, when he finally sees the monk's body parts lying where they had been left, still as fresh as they were on the day he was murdered, he is stricken with remorse. He describes afresh all the incidents leading up to the murder of the monk at his command; he bemoans the fate of

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.235, v.10.

³⁸ One of the few explicit references to forbearance in this version.

³⁹ Persuasion and dissuasion, the efforts required to instigate action, could be seen as a significant secondary theme of the SRS version.

Supuṣpacandra's bodhisattva companions, who are now bereft of their teacher; he goes for refuge to the Buddhas of the three time periods. The deities of the place take the news of the murder to the bodhisattvas in the forest, who in turn come to the city and remonstrate at considerable length with the king. Curiously, the story appears to come to an end after these twenty or so verses of remonstrance, because at this point the Buddha, who is after all narrating the story to Ānanda, suddenly identifies himself not as Supuṣpacandra but as the jealous king Sūradatta. Once again the entire story is narrated in full by the Buddha. This time in his remorse Sūradatta builds over Supuṣpacandra's remains a *stūpa* which he and his family worship three times a day and to which they confess their sins on a regular basis.

There are several things to notice about this version of the story. Firstly, the SRS version is no longer explicitly a Kṣāntivādin story and so, both in name and in content, all but passing association with *kṣānti* is abandoned by the redactor. I would add that the theme of the conflict between internal and external mastery does not appear in this version – it has become a murder story instead. Secondly, I have not yet mentioned that the rationale for the narration of the story is that Ānanda has asked the Buddha why some bodhisattvas lose their limbs and undergo all sorts of bodily suffering in the course of their bodhisattva career. The Buddha explains that some bodhisattvas whose morality is absolutely perfect never lose limbs or undergo bodily suffering in their bodhisattva career. Such sufferings are therefore indications that a bodhisattva's morality is imperfect. This in its turn may be connected with the very curious conclusion, in which remarkably the Buddha identifies the evil king Sūradatta as himself in a previous existence.⁴⁰ Thirdly, there is no calamitous result for the populace – this being, I suspect, a feature of the original tale that is retained not without difficulty in the other versions. Here this awkward feature has been dropped altogether. Instead,

⁴⁰ This aspect of the story surely relates to debates concerning the purity of Śākyamuni Buddha's *karma*, *buddhakṣetra*, etc. On the former, see J. Walters, 'The Buddha's Bad Karma: a problem in the history of Theravāda Buddhism', *Numen* 37 (1990), pp.70-95. The latter concern is addressed in, for example, the *Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka Sūtra*.

everyone realises the enormity of the misdeed almost from the moment it is committed. Only the king lags behind in this realisation, but even he is shown suffering a bad conscience and, once he has become fully aware of what he has done, he is voluble with his remorse. In fact, there is, I suggest, an implicit emphasis here on the value of confession, or *pāpadeśanā*, and on the appreciation of another's merit, *puṇyānumodanā*, because most of the last thirteen pages of the story are devoted to heartfelt reflections on the appalling character of the king's action, amongst which those of the king himself are the most intense, as well as reflections on the extraordinary virtues of Supuṣpacandra. The latter's *stūpa* becomes the institutional focus for these activities.

Most of all, however, I want to draw attention to the interesting symmetry between this account and that in the MSV. In the latter I have suggested that we can see indications of some disapproval of the forest vocation – a disapproval that is typical of the MSV as a whole. In contrast, in the SRS we see a strong case for the forest vocation, here explicitly a Buddhist forest vocation. In fact, the story as a whole acts as an object lesson in the value of the forest life because, besides the advantages it gives to your religious practice, there you are also free from the threat of bodily danger – whether from hostile Buddhists or jealous rulers. Supuṣpacandra ignored the warnings and sure enough came to a sticky end – also demonstrating presumably that his morality was at least a little imperfect, if the logic of the frame story is to be applied rigorously. This contrast between these two texts is at its sharpest on the subject of awakening, the subject that we tend to assume is the concern of most Buddhist literature. The MSV says, 'It is difficult for forest anchorites to become Awakened', while the SRS clearly favours the forest vocation. The 7,000 companions of Supuṣpacandra all point out that previous Buddhas have always resorted to the wilderness to achieve Awakening. Supuṣpacandra, they say, should follow in the footsteps of those previous Buddhas, not risk his life mixing with urban Buddhists or secular rulers.

Is this symmetry, as I have called it, 'significant'? This may be an unanswerable question. However, to my mind, it is suggestive. This is particularly so if we reflect for a moment on chronological issues. I have minimised this sort of calculation in relation to the other stories, not because it is uninteresting, but because in their

cases there is so little to go on. However, for the SRS and the MSV there may be a little more. I have myself argued elsewhere that there is solid, conclusive evidence for the SRS being in existence in the fourth century CE. I have also argued that, while it is not amongst the first Mahāyāna sūtras to be translated into Chinese in the second century CE, nevertheless we can push this date back at least to the second century CE, both on the grounds of internal evidence, by which I mean the understanding of *samādhi* in this text, and on the grounds of the possible authenticity of citations of it by Nāgārjuna. For my part, I am confident that the SRS was in existence in the second century CE.

Meanwhile, we should also note that there has been over the last few years some serious re-evaluation of the date of compilation of the MSV. Lamotte in his *History* suggests that this Vinaya was in fact rather late and probably dates from the fifth century at the earliest, and this view has been the subject of almost universal agreement since that time.⁴¹ However, contemporary scholars led, I think, by Schopen, have begun to reconsider this date and have now suggested that the MSV was probably redacted between the Kuṣāṇa period and the fifth century, i.e., dates possibly from the second century.⁴²

If these chronological considerations are valid, and I take them to be so, then in our last two examples of the Kṣāntivādin story we have been looking at roughly contemporary versions of the same tale. If this is the case, then their apparent symmetry is perhaps more significant than it might otherwise be. I do not mean to suggest here that the redactors of these versions knew each other, but I do think it possible that the redactors of each knew the type of community from which the other came. Thus I think that the

⁴¹ É. Lamotte (trans. S Boin-Webb), *History of Indian Buddhism, from the origins to the Saka era*, Louvain-la-neuve 1988, p.657.

⁴² The date of the MSV has been addressed by Schopen in a number of articles, since at least his 'Two Problems in the History of India Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit', *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1985), pp.9-47, but most recently, to my knowledge, in 'The Good Monk and his Money in a Buddhist Monasticism of "The Mahāyāna Period"', *The Eastern Buddhist* XXXII, 1 (2000), pp.85-105, here p.86.

redactors of the MSV knew of communities of Buddhists who found their vocation in the forest life and, furthermore, that they disapproved of that vocation and that disapproval was inevitably reflected in the vinaya that they redacted. On the other hand, I also think that the redactors of the SRS knew of urban monastic communities, such as perhaps are reflected in the rules and narratives of the MSV, and that they too, for their part, disapproved of such a life style and that this disapproval, too, inevitably came to show in their newly compiled sūtra text.

By way of conclusion, the last point I want to make is that this opposition very possibly has great significance for our understanding of a key historical problem that is linked to this period in the history of Buddhism – that is the problem of the origins of the Mahāyāna. There are enormous difficulties in our understanding of its origins – far too many even to begin to enumerate here, since this would require a paper in its own right. We have no coherent comprehensive account of the origin of the Mahāyāna – at least not one based on any conclusive evidence – and modern scholarship has barely begun to grapple with those sources of data which may help us resolve some of the most intractable problems here. Now, the single problem in the origins of the Mahāyāna that seems to me almost overwhelming in its significance can be summarised by saying that ‘everything originates within a context’. Yet we have no context for the early Mahāyāna. Many pseudo-historical accounts of this historical process contextualise the Mahāyāna in an account of the *śrāvakayāna* that is derived from a study of the Pāli Canon and modern Theravāda. This anachronistic treatment is remarkably persistent, perhaps because in fact we have so little idea what Buddhism or Buddhists were like in the period to which we assign the origins of the Mahāyāna. There is not even consensus on what chronological period covers its origins, although most attention focuses on the period from the first century BCE to the second CE.

Now, many people might say that early Mahāyāna sūtras (however this early status is established) tell us much about what the early Mahāyānists were doing and also much about those who did not share their Mahāyāna vocation. This is probably true, but to a limited extent. The limits are that these texts, these new sūtras, are rhetorical documents and if we look at them on their own we have

no sense of where the rhetoric begins and ends. Thus all explicit statements in such texts are potentially untrustworthy hyperbole only loosely reflecting the social and religious circumstances of their day.⁴³ One of the problems with existing histories of the Mahāyāna is that all too often they have taken the so-called evidence of Mahāyāna sūtras at face value and have constructed a vibrant, successful, dominant Mahāyāna movement in existence from the beginning of the Common Era. As has been shown, the archaeological evidence from India suggests that there may have been nothing like this, if ever, until at least the sixth century.⁴⁴ What is desperately needed, therefore, is evidence of this earlier period from the other side, from those who did not share the Mahāyāna vocation.⁴⁵ We might only end up comparing antagonistic rhetorical documents, but under the present circumstances, this would still be a step forward. As we all know, there is virtually nothing to help us with this in, for example, the Pāli Canon – but that is anyway surely the wrong place to be looking for it.

However, despite these and other problems, in the work of people such as P.M. Harrison (working on the Lokakṣema corpus), J. Nattier (working recently on the *Ugradattapariṣcchā*), G. Schopen (various) and J. Silk (on the *Raṣṭrapālapariṣcchā*), we are beginning to see a new picture of the early Mahāyāna emerging.⁴⁶ This picture has been emerging for some while, is still largely incomplete, but it is becoming firmer and clearer as it

⁴³ As a result, scholars have begun to interpret historically valid testimony through their inadvertent or implicit statements, a strategy fraught with difficulty.

⁴⁴ G. Schopen, ‘Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions’, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21 (1979), pp.1-19.

⁴⁵ The need for this has been highlighted in Schopen, ‘The Good Monk and his Money ...’, *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ This work of Harrison has been in the public domain for some time; see, for example, his ‘Who Gets to Ride the Great Vehicle? Self-Image and Identity Among the Followers of the Early Mahāyāna’, *JLABS* 10, 1 (1987), pp.67-89; ‘The Earliest Chinese Translations of Mahāyāna Buddhist Sūtras: Some Notes on the Work of Lokakṣema’, *BSR* 10, 2 (1993), pp.135-77. Nattier and Silk submitted papers on these matters at the Asilomar conference on early Mahāyāna, April 2001.

survives the uncovering of further evidence for this important period. This is a picture that eschews outdated ideas of lay and/or female involvement, and instead concentrates on what Schopen and Silk have called the 'conservative' attitudes of early Mahāyāna texts, particularly their advocacy of the monastic life and therein the performance of the *dhūtagūnas*, the permitted asceticisms, and the pursuit of the forest life. The SRS as a whole reflects this same picture, and in our story we should note that, having left his forest vocation, Supuṣpacandra, once he enters Ratnāvati, spends his days fasting and sitting sleepless through the night. The latter of these at least is one of the *dhūtagūnas*. Indeed, the entire Supuṣpacandra story is suffused with an intensely idealistic aspirational quality that I have not really communicated so far, and this too contrasts sharply with the cooler legalistic tone of the Mūla-sarvāstivāda Vinaya. Of course we would expect a legal text, i.e. a vinaya, to be cooler in tone, but perhaps we might not be far wrong to consider the possibility that each text reflects a certain kind of religiosity and maybe even a different kind of community.

Thus I hope we can begin to see that both in chronology and in preoccupation, these two texts, the MSV and the SRS, both appear to be located in the frame for the early Mahāyāna. All I have done here is suggest the parallel between them on grounds that have been cleared by others. But if this parallel is valid, here and elsewhere, then we at least begin to have rationally established sources for a study of the character of the early Mahāyāna in relation to its contemporary religious context. Without such sources, much of our theorising about the origins of the Mahāyāna remains speculation. I hope also that this paper serves to remind us of the value of narrative literature even for illuminating historical problems that are often construed largely in doctrinal terms.

Andrew Skilton
(Cardiff University)

AN ANTINOMIAN ALLEGORY

ANDREW HUXLEY

Over the last ten years I have tried to think about how ideas of *law* and *state* fit into the Pāli Buddhist tradition. And that has necessarily involved thinking about how *antinomy* and *anarchy* fit into the Pāli Buddhist tradition. One approach I have tried was to ask whether Vinaya is law. The Buddha draws on legal rhetoric in the Vinaya, but he also draws on medical rhetoric. That does not make the Vinaya either a legal or a medical text.¹ This approach finally petered out when I realised that there is no *a priori* reason why *law* and *medicine* (categories taken from a tradition that knows nothing about meditation) should fit a Buddhist tradition that recognises meditation as one of the mental capacities. My next approach was via the *Aggañña Sutta* and the *Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta*. Steve Collins and I collaborated to trace how this 'Buddhist social contract' developed through the Pāli Canon and Pāli Commentary into the subsequent history of Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.² Collins subsequently wrote his book *Nirvana and other Buddhist Felicities* which says most of what is needed to be said about *state* and *anarchy*.³ Which leaves the *legal* and the *antinomian* sitting reproachfully on my desktop.

Here, then, is my latest approach to the problem. This time, instead of looking at texts, I want to look at people. I want to look at the *Vinayadharas*, that is, the monks who specialise in the

¹ Andrew Huxley, 'The Vinaya: Legal System or Performance Enhancing Drug?', *The Buddhist Forum* 4 (1996), pp.141-63.

² Andrew Huxley, 'The Buddha and the Social Contract', *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 24 (1996), pp.407-20; Steven Collins, 'The Lion's Roar on the Wheel-turning King, a reply to Andrew Huxley', *ibid.*, pp.421-45; S. Collins and A. Huxley, 'The post-canonical adventures of Mahāsammata', *ibid.*, pp.623-48;

A. Huxley, 'When Manu met Mahāsammata', *ibid.*, pp.593-621.

³ Steven Collins, *Nirvana and other Buddhist Felicities: Utopias of the Pali imaginaire*, Cambridge 1998.

theory and practice of the Pāli Vinaya.⁴ I have an interest in the publications of Burmese Vinayadharas from the sixteenth through to the twenty-first century. I have met a Vinayadhara or two, and I have corresponded with others. All of this tints the way I read the earliest texts in the Pāli tradition. Because I came to Asokan-era Elders' Buddhism having first learned about eighteenth century Burmese Buddhism, I assume a certain continuity in attitudes. Whatever is original in my view of early Buddhist developments stems from my willingness to assume that Buddhist institutions which existed recently in Burma must also have existed in fourth century CE Lanka and third century BCE North India. No doubt whatever is mistaken can be traced to the same source. Specifically, the people I want to talk about are three monks who were contemporaries of the Buddha. I shall treat each of them as representing an abstract legal or antinomian idea. I am, in other words, offering you an allegory – an allegory in which Ānanda, Upāli and Devadatta act out a theoretical quarrel about Buddhist attitudes to law.

The tradition preserves two different ways of thinking about Vinaya, which I shall label Vinaya-as-a-social-practice and Vinaya-as-a-text. When the tradition treats the Buddha as the author of the Pāli Vinaya it emphasises the Vinaya-as-a-text. When it treats him as the Pāli Vinaya's exemplary interpreter, it emphasises the Vinaya-as-a-social-practice. 'Why insist on the distinction?' you will object. 'You have already distorted the Buddha's message by dividing Vinaya off from the more inclusive *dhamma-vinaya*'. I find it worthwhile to draw the distinction because I am interested in comparative discussion. How should we fit the Vinayadharas into a cross-cultural taxonomy of specialist ethical consultants? They are monks, of course, which itself suggests many Chinese, African and European analogues. But how do we label the Vinayadharas as a distinct specialism within the community of monks? Are they more like scholars or lawyers? By scholars I mean people who preserve ancient texts by teaching them to the next generation. By lawyers I mean people who inter-

⁴ I mean by this particularly the *Khandhaka* (meaning 'Heaps of Stuff') and the *Suttavibhanga* (meaning 'Rule Analyser') written around 75 BCE in the language we now call Pāli.

pret and apply written codes of behaviour. The scholars teach a text; the lawyers perform a social practice. The Buddhist Canon does not specifically tell us whether Vinayadharas are nearer to being scholars or lawyers. (Nor, as I have complained elsewhere, does it tell us whether the Buddha used a Wintel PC or an Apple!) But there is a surprising amount of discussion of this issue in the Canon. At least there is, if you are prepared to adopt my allegorical reading of Ānanda, Upāli and Devadatta: Ānanda symbolises the Vinaya-as-a-text; Upāli symbolises the Vinaya-as-a-social-practice; Devadatta symbolises the antinomian strand in Buddhist thought.

Let us start with Ānanda, the Buddha's cousin and 'twin' (they were born on the same day). Some years after the Enlightenment, Ānanda became the Buddha's aide-de-camp, with special responsibility for preaching the Dhamma and memorising the text of most of the Buddha's Dhamma-talks. Some passages from G.P. Malalasekera's biography mention these responsibilities:

It is said that the Buddha would often deliberately shorten his discourse to the monks so that they might be tempted to have it further explained by Ānanda ... Sometimes Ānanda would suggest to the Buddha a simile to be used in his discourse, e.g. the *Dhammayāna* simile; or by a simile suggest a name to be given to a discourse, e.g. the *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta*; or again, particularly wishing to remember a certain Sutta, he would ask the Buddha to give it a name, e.g. the *Bahudhātuka Sutta*. It is said that he could remember everything spoken by the Buddha, from one to sixty thousand words in the right order, without missing one single syllable.⁵

Let us think about the text of the Pāli Vinaya. Compared with the seven other extant Vinayas which survive in whole or part, the Pāli recension of the *Khandhaka* has certain unique features. The Pāli text, at 950 pages, is shorter than the others and, unlike them, is divided into the Greater and Lesser Chapters. Whereas the others treat the first two Councils either as appendices or not at all, the Pāli Vinaya upgrades them into fully-fledged chapters.⁶ The Pāli

⁵ G.P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, 2 vols, London 1937 (repr in 3 vols, PTS 1997), I, pp.253-4, 262.

⁶ Charles S. Prebish, *A Survey of Vinaya Literature*, Taipei 1994, p.83. This is

Vinaya, being a very self-reverential text, tells us why its *Khandhaka* is different from the others. It does this at a rather prominent spot. The final words of the Lesser Chapters of the *Khandhaka* read as follows:

'This legal dispute is ended, your reverences. What is settled is well-settled. Any more questions?'

Such were the ten issues as Revata put them, and the venerable Sabbakama's answers. Because there were exactly seven-hundred monks present, this speaking-together of vinaya subsequently became known as the *seven-hundred monks text* [V II 307].

The venerable Sabbakama is not a major figure in the Canon, but he has the great virtue of being the last monk alive who shared a cell with Ānanda. This passage constitutes a chain of transmission. The Vinaya-as-a-text was handed down from the Buddha to Ānanda, to Sabbakama, to the seven-hundred monks chaired by Revata, to the Elders. The Elders passed it on to the Mahāvihāra monastery in Lanka, and they passed it on to countless monks around the Bay of Bengal and the Gulf of Thailand. This collective effort has preserved a particular recension of the Vinaya, a speaking-together that happened at a particular time and place. On the authenticity of this transmission rests the validity of the entire Pāli monastic tradition: a 'monk' who, however inadvertently, gets Vinaya practice wrong is not a true monk. Ānanda is implicated in transmitting the Vinaya-as-a-text, and ultimately it is faith in the accuracy of this text that underpins faith in one's Vinaya orthopraxy.

Let us turn to Upāli, the barber's son from Kapilavatthu who became *Vinaye agganikkhitto*, the chief repository of the Vinaya. Malalasekera tells us that:

Various instances are given of Upāli questioning the Buddha about the Vinaya regulations ... The monks seem to have regarded Upāli as their particular friend, to whom they could go in their difficulties ... Buddhaghosa says that while the Buddha was yet alive Upāli drew up certain instructions according to which future Vinayadharas should interpret Vinaya rules, and that, in conjunction with others,

rather like putting the *Acts of the Apostles* on the same footing as the *Gospel*. It makes an authority-claim about the generation that outlived the Buddha.

he compiled explanatory notes on matters connected with the Vinaya.

His last sentence bears repeating: the Great Vinaya Commentary says that the earliest commentarial texts were spoken by Upāli. Upāli, we might say, authorises the commentaries as Ānanda authorises the canonical text. In the Pāli Vinaya we have seen that the last words of the Lesser Chapters refer, tangentially, to Ānanda. The last words of the Greater Chapters refer, directly, to Upāli, the spokesman for Vinaya-as-a-social-practice. After hearing a discourse by the Buddha on how to distinguish the letter and spirit from the letter alone [V I 357] Upāli replies with a character sketch of the archetypal Vinayadhara, the *beau idéal* of Vinaya-as-a-social-practice:

What kind of man do we most need to lead our Order's business?
What virtues equip a monk for leadership?
First he must be moral, a paragon of self-restraint,
One against whom accusations will not be credible.
Second, he shall not be shy to speak in public:
Without stutter or digression, he will get his point across.

He is able to respond to objections:
He knows when to speak, when to let others speak.
He respects the Elders, while standing by his own Teachers,
He shows judgement, knows his lines, and can join in debate.

Master of dialectic and teacher of multitudes,
He wins the debate without hurting opponents.
As ambassador on our Order's behalf
He follows his brief without conceit.
He knows whether what you've done counts as an offence:
If it is, he knows how to remove your stain.

He can analyse the grounds for probation and restoration.
He shows equal esteem within each generation –
The elders, seniors, the middle-aged, the youth.
Our leader should be clever and a helper to many [V I 358].

A mere two lines describe the external ethical standards a Vinayadhara should set himself, while the remaining lines describe his

⁷ Malalasekera, I, pp.409-10.

social role, both within the monastery and in the world outside. Upāli's job-description suggests that a Vinayadhara spends most of his time talking to people, rather than sitting in meditation or reading books or judging people. Neither lawyer nor scholar it would seem, but closer to a Chief Executive Officer, or village headman.

The *Suttavibhaṅga* paints a rather different picture. It shows Upāli judging people (or rather, expressing his opinion as to how the Vinaya should be applied to a specific case). At the end of the chapter on theft is a ten-page interpretation of precedents. It contains forty-nine difficult cases touching on the interpretation of *taking what has not been given*, and their resolution. The first forty-five of these were decided by the Buddha himself. Thus case number forty-six inaugurates the post-Gotaman Buddhist law reports. It records a case in which Upāli's opinion (that a monk is innocent of theft in his dealings with his lay-patron) prevails over Ānanda's [V III 66]. Thus the Canon. My allegorical reading of the Canon sees this as a victory for Upāli's Vinaya-as-a-social-practice over Ānanda's Vinaya-as-a-text. Such a victory would prefigure more than two millennia of Pāli interpretative tradition. The tradition has, in fact, always looked to Upāli rather than to Ānanda in such matters. It was Upāli who knew which Vinaya questions needed to be elaborated, Upāli who had frequent question-and-answer sessions on Vinaya with the Buddha. It is Upāli, not Ānanda, who stands at the head of the lineage of Vinayadharas. Upāli handed all his knowledge on to Dasaka, who passed it to Sonaka, who taught it to Siggava, who ... and so to the monk who ordained you, and to the monks that you will ordain.

The third of our monks is Devadatta, the prince from Kapilavatthu, Suppabuddha's son (and thus the Buddha's maternal cousin). In Malalasekera's words:

When the Buddha visited Kapilavatthu ... Devadatta was converted together with his ... (five friends) and their barber, Upāli ... In one passage he is mentioned in a list of eleven of the chief Elders ... About eight years before the Buddha's death ... he conceived the idea of taking the Buddha's place as leader of the Saṅgha ... As his end drew near, he wished to see the Buddha, though the latter had declared that it would not be possible in this life. Devadatta, however, started the journey on a litter, but on reaching Jetavana,

he stopped the litter on the banks of a pond and stepped out to wash. The earth opened and he was swallowed up in Avīci, where, after suffering for one hundred thousand kappas, he would be reborn as a Pacceka Buddha called Aṭṭhissara ...

This is a dramatic story, and nowhere is it told more dramatically than in the Lesser Chapter VII on Schism. This epic is structured around the intertwined biographies of Upāli and Devadatta. Devadatta was the prince, the five friends were his entourage and Upāli was their barber (or valet, or personal servant). When it came time for them all to be ordained, Devadatta, to teach himself humility, nobly asked that Upāli be ordained first. The epic tells how Devadatta tried to split the Saṅgha, and how Upāli ultimately healed the division within the Saṅgha. That is to put it in lineage, or social-practice terms. To put it textually, Devadatta wanted to add new rules to the Vinaya, while Upāli retorted: 'nothing to be added, nothing left out'. Ānanda makes a guest appearance in the scene where Devadatta plots to send the giant elephant Nālāgiri amok to trample the Buddha to death:

Ānanda, seeing the animal rushing towards them, immediately took his stand in front of the Buddha. Three times the Buddha forbade him to do so, but Ānanda, usually most obedient, refused to move, and it is said that the Buddha, by his *iddhi*-power, made the earth roll back in order to get Ānanda out of the elephant's path.

But, the Chapter on Schism is mainly Upāli's story – indeed Homer would have called it the *Upaliad*. And other parts of the Canon endorse the triumph of Upāli over Devadatta. In the Vinaya debate over Kumāra-Kassapa's mother's pregnancy Devadatta and Upāli give conflicting Vinaya interpretations, but the Buddha endorses Upāli's opinion [Th 200].

Devadatta's dramatic end is an important demonstration of instant kamma, the doctrine that some actions are so heinous that they attract kammic consequences during this very lifetime. That is kamma's judgement on Devadatta. The Buddha's judgement on Ānanda has been recorded:

⁸ Malalasekera, I, pp.1106-10.
⁹ *Ibid.*, p.251.

Say not so, Udāyī; should [Ānanda] die without attaining perfect freedom from passion, by virtue of his piety, he would seven times win rule over the devas and seven times be King of Jambudīpa. Howbeit, in this very life shall Ānanda attain to nibbāna [A I 228].

Judgement on Upāli, to round off all three characters, has been delivered by the generations of monks who have learnt their lineage off by heart, reciting the pupillary succession from Upāli to Dasaka to Sonaka and so on. Since Upāli symbolises the Vinaya-as-social-practice, and since Devadatta is his antithesis, I take Devadatta to represent the strand within the Buddhist tradition that is hostile to the Vinaya. I shall label this strand 'antinomian', despite it begging the question of whether we should regard the Vinaya as *nomos*. This will enable us to compare Buddhism with other traditions.

Many religious traditions are capacious enough to contain both a legalistic and an antinomian strand. Seventeenth-century England, for example, had legalistic Protestants like William Perkins (1558-1602), who took a close interest in what contemporary lawyers such as Francis Bacon and Edward Coke were up to: 'Divines must take lawyer's advice concerning extremity and the letter of the law; good reason then that lawyers take divine's advice touching the equity of which is the intent of the law'.¹⁰ And there were antinomian Protestants such as the Ranters who moved from a premise that faith is enough *without* the deeds of law to a conclusion that faith should be *against* the law. The Mahāyāna monks deployed a similar antinomian stance in their arguments with the Elders. They insisted that Buddhism should taste of liberation, rather than musty legalisms. Vinayadharas, they implied, were liable to get so wrapped up in disciplinary technicalities that they forget to achieve enlightenment. An early Mahāyāna text extols Vimalakīrti as the greatest of the Buddha's generation.¹¹ It contains a series of anecdotes in which Ānanda, Śāriputta and other monks tell of the spiritual lessons Vimalakīrti gave them. Upāli narrates that Vimalakīrti came by one day while

Upāli was engaged in some Vinaya-as-a-social-practice. Two monks had broken the rules, and Upāli was telling them how to express repentance. Vimalakīrti reminded all three of them that sin and repentance are merely a delusion:

All phenomena derive from false views and are like a reflection in water or the mirror. He who understands this is called a keeper of Vinaya and he who knows it properly is called a Vinayadhara.

There is a respectable body of opinion within Buddhism which thinks of the Vinayadharas as an unwholesome specialism. Should we agree with these Buddhist antinomians?

Buddhism contains arguments on both sides. The Vinaya-ṭīkā as a whole constitutes a weighty argument for the legalists. However, the antinomians can cite the dialogue between Bhaddali and the Buddha [M I 437-47]. One of Bhaddali's questions cuts at the root of the whole Vinaya enterprise:

What is the reason, your Reverence, why there were formerly fewer Vinaya rules and more monks who were established in profound knowledge? And why is the opposite now the case?

The Buddha accepts the factual basis of Bhaddali's question and attempts to explain it:

The answer, Bhaddali, is that the preponderance of rules and the scarcity of enlightened monks are both symptoms of the general deterioration in true dhamma and in life itself.

When things get worse, we get more law. If 'Jesus was all virtue, and acted from impulse, not from rules',¹² this was partly, the Buddha would say, because he lived in simpler, older times than we do.

Back to my allegory. If Devadatta stands for antinomian Buddhism and Upāli stands for the Vinaya, then an allegorical reading of the Schism Chapter and the Kumāra-Kassapa case suggest total victory for Upāli. Such a one-sided conclusion would be uncharacteristic of the Pāli Canon. A passage from the Sutta-ṭīkā neatly

¹⁰ William Perkins, 'Epieikeia or a treatise of Christian equity and moderation', in Ian Breward, ed., *The Works of William Perkins*, Abingdon 1970, p.491.

¹¹ Charles Luk, *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, Berkeley 1972, pp.30-2.

¹² William Blake, from his annotations to Francis Bacon's *Essays*. Quoted in E.P. Thompson, *Witness against the Beast: William Blake and the Moral Law*, Cambridge 1993, p.19.

undermines Vinaya triumphalism by attributing an antinomian element to Upāli himself. Devadatta's downfall was his ambition to lead the Saṅgha. He exemplifies the spiritual pride that forever threatens the cardinal, ayatollah and reincarnate lama. Upāli, says the Sutta-pitaka, had the opposite ambition. Early in his monastic career, Upāli asked the Buddha for permission to leave human society altogether to become a solitary forest meditator. In reply, the Buddha advised him to remain in monasteries, where he could split his time between learning the Vinaya and meditating [A V 207; Mp I 172]. We might call this 'the Groucho Marx paradox in reverse': ambition for the job should count as disqualification for the job. As Groucho would not want to join any club that would have him as a member, Vinayadharas should not admit anyone to membership who asks them for admission. This episode in Upāli's life can be allegorised thus: there is a character trait associated with those who want to become Vinayadharas which gets in the way of enlightenment. To that extent, the antinomian critique of Vinaya is acknowledged by Upāli himself.

My antinomian allegory must end here. We have established that Devadatta is too antinomian, while Upāli is quite antinomian enough. Yet Upāli and Ānanda have both attained Nibbāna, and one day in the far future even Devadatta will become a Pacceka-buddha. Perhaps there is just one truth. Certainly there are different roads to it.

Andrew Huxley
(SOAS)

NON-SELF NONSENSE

COLIN EDWARDS

DEFINITIONS

SELF: *Collins English Dictionary*

1. the distinct individuality or identity of a person
2. a person's usual or typical bodily make-up or personal characteristics
3. philosophy (usually preceded by 'the') that which is essential to an individual, esp. the mind or soul in Cartesian metaphysics

ATTAN: *Pali-English Dictionary* (= PED)

4. the soul as postulated in the animistic theories held in N. India in the 6th and 7th c. B.C.
5. oneself, himself, yourself

PERSONALITY/BEING: *Sutta Piṭaka*

6. ... these five aggregates affected by clinging are called personality (MLDB, p.396)
7. this is a heap of sheer formations. Here no being is found (CDB I, p.230)

Translators say the Pāli Buddha says there is no 'self'.¹ We often use 'self' to refer to the sum of a person's attributes including 'bodily make-up' (definition 2). Does Gotama think human beings do not exist? In the Suttas he talks to people as if they are real, and he perceives the all-too-reality of a person's 'make-up', a body-consciousness interdependence:

... This body of mine has form, it is built up of the four elements, it springs from father and mother, it is continually renewed by so much

¹ I do not mean to imply that the association of the 'non-self' idea with the Buddha originates from modern translations. Buddhaghosa, writing in the fifth century and believed to be following earlier commentaries, makes the association when he writes, '... "as to void": in the ultimate sense all the truths should be understood as "void" because of the absence of any experiencer ...' (Vism, p.521), though what he means by 'in the ultimate sense' and 'experiencer' is debatable.

boiled rice and juicy foods, its very nature is impermanence, it is subject to erosion, abrasion, dissolution and disintegration; and therein is this consciousness of mine, too, bound up, on that does it depend (DB I, pp.86-7).

Does the translator's 'self' refer to the 'distinct individuality' (definition 1) of a person? Does Gotama think we are all the same? In the Suttas he distinguishes between people he talks to and clearly is aware of physical differences, so is 'self' confined to non-bodily 'individuality'? Gotama often refers to basic character traits, most often in his frequent distinction between a good man and a bad man. Not surprisingly he has little to say about individual psychology; his Path leads to 'cessation of personality' (MLDB, p.397) rather than investigation of it. But he does not deny its existence and agrees with a bhikkhuṇī's definition of it (definition 6).²

² This definition has its problems for a Western reader. By definition all definitions are abstractions, but this one sounds strangely so to a modern Western ear because it ignores what many Westerners value as the most important aspect of personality, its individual uniqueness. Gotama defines it as if people's aggregate-defined experiences are all the same, and for him 'ultimately' (see n.1.) they are. They are the aggregates. This does not mean that he cannot tell the difference between people, but it does mean that the differences are not to be valued. His teaching is religious in the sense not confined to religion that it is presumed to be applicable to all people at all times on a level where personality is envisaged as hopefully irrelevant. For Gotama personality is important only negatively, as an obstruction in the Path. See below, the section on 'strategy'.

Also, the definition is ambiguous in one respect. Is Gotama saying that personality – and *dukkha* (defined in the First Noble Truth as *pañcūpādāna-kkhandā*, the 'five aggregates of clinging') – consist of the aggregates and that the aggregates are always affected by clinging, or is he saying that personality and *dukkha* exists only when the aggregates are affected by clinging and that the aggregates may exist without being affected by it? The Gotama-approved explanation that 'clinging is neither the same as the five aggregates affected by clinging, nor is clinging apart from the five aggregates affected by clinging' (MLDB, p.397) does not clarify. The first nine words suggest, but do not necessarily mean, that clinging exists separately from the aggregates and therefore may suggest, but do not necessarily mean, that the aggregates exist without clinging, but the addition of 'affected by clinging' to both instances of

What does Gotama deny? The Pāli word is *attan*. PED gives as first definition 'soul' and tells us that *attan* is the equivalent of Vedic *ātman*. It adds a note: 'A "soul" according to general belief was some thing permanent, unchangeable ...'. It is common (academic) knowledge that in Gotama's time there was a belief that postulated *Ātman* (individual soul) and Brahman (world soul) and their equation; the quest for Brahman was the quest for *Ātman*. *Ātman* is an 'essence',³ unchangeable, and therefore cannot be identical with the Christian concept of 'soul'; something that can be 'saved' cannot be an essence. Part of Gotama's radicalism is to deny *Ātman*. However, you do not need to know anything about Brahman-*Ātman* to realise that the *attan* Gotama denies is something unchanging because he repeatedly makes it obvious, for instance in an over-and-over iterated sequence, almost a refrain, in the *Samyutta*:⁴

'Now what think you, Sonā? Is body permanent or impermanent?'

'Impermanent, Lord.'

'And what is impermanent, is that woe or weal?'

'Woe, Lord.'

'And is it fitting to hold such views as "this is mine", "this am I" 5 or "this is the self of me", about that which is impermanent and unstable?'

'aggregates' may suggest, but does not necessarily mean, that the aggregates are always clinging-affected. The same thing may be suggested by 'nor is clinging apart from the five aggregates', but this clause could mean merely that clinging always operates through the aggregates. The next Gotama-approved statement – 'It (clinging) is the desire and lust in regard to the five aggregates affected by clinging' – is ambiguous in the same way. Because every person experiences the aggregates, does every person inevitably cling? Can clinging be transcended only by transcending the aggregates?

³ The word 'essence' is used by Richard F. Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, New Delhi 1997, p.16. Gombrich points to the difference between *ātman* and the Christian 'soul'. I use the word 'soul' in this essay in the sense ascribed to it in PED's note.

⁴ The sequence first appears in its full antiphonal form at KS III, p.43, and recurs at pp.59, 88, 89, 91, 107, 116, 125, 129, 141, 151, 152, 153, 154. It continues to resurface after these instances. It is found outside the *Samyutta*, for instance at MLDB, p.232; see below.

'Surely not, Lord.'

'Is feeling ... perception ... the activities ... is consciousness permanent or impermanent? (as before) ...'

10

'Surely not, Lord.'

'Wherefore, Sona, whatsoever body there be, whether past, future or present, inward or outward, gross or subtle, low or lofty, far or near ... every body should thus be regarded as it really is by right insight. Thus "this is not mine", "this am not I", "this of me is not the self (*attan*)'.

15

And also with regard to feeling, perception, the activities and consciousness. (KS III, p.43)

The meaning of this unreligious antiphon is transparent, but it needs to be pointed out because translators of *attan* ignore it. Gotama's rhetorical questions get their rhetorical answers and we are told that the aggregates – body, feeling, perception, the activities⁵ – are impermanent, and since by implication they are all of a person's experience in *Samsāra*, there can be no *attan*. For this to make sense, *attan* has to refer to something permanent, and no-one today, with the possible exception of Jehovah's Witnesses and other sects I do not know about, would say that 'self' (definitions 1 and 2) is permanent.

That there is no *attan* because there is nothing unchangeable is the simple, core statement of Gotama's *anattā* doctrine, and translating *attan* as 'self' makes it a nonsense. It makes Gotama say that things which are part of 'self' (definitions 1 and 2) are not part of self:

... form is nonself, feeling is nonself, perception is nonself, volitional formations are nonself, consciousness is nonself. (CDB I, p.869)

Why this long non-self nonsense? It stems from the fact that Pāli *attan* does mean 'self' in everyday (if Pāli ever was an everyday language) pronominal usage (definition 5). Gotama seems to use it with this meaning in the uneveryday conversation of the antiphon in the phrases 'the self of me' (line 6) and 'of me ... the self' (lines 15-16). Bodhi translates 'myself' in both cases (CDB I, p.888), but in the immediate context of impermanence-denial *attan* must at the very least carry associations of its 'soul' meaning

(quite possibly it carried these, however faint, generally), and the older Woodward translation may give a clue to the way it is being used. Gotama says that if something is impermanent it should not be called 'mine' (lines 5 and 15). It is a statement that challenges the listener's intellect. Why should it not be called 'mine'? (5 and 15)? Answer: because you cannot really own any thing that does not last. He then stretches the challenge further by saying nothing impermanent should be seen as 'I' (5 and 15). Why not? The answer is given immediately: 'because this is of me is not the (*attan*)' (16), in Pāli not *me attā*. *Me attā* means 'myself' (unlike the 'oneself, himself, yourself' of definition 5, 'myself' in Pāli needs the first person genitive) or the '*attan* (soul) of me' (alternatively, 'a soul of me' – there is no definite or indefinite article in Pāli). It is a pun, probably not a very original one; in a language having the same word for pronominal 'self' as nominal 'soul', a pun on the word is likely to have been commonplace (and easily picked up by an alert bhikkhu). By using the pun Gotama simultaneously continues and ends the challenge. On one level, he makes it more emphatic by moving from the 'I' to 'myself'; on another, he ends it by explaining the hyperbole involved in 'I'. Something impermanent should not be seen as 'I' because it is not 'my soul'. This is the real meaning of the hyperbolic 'I' conceit.

The Buddha's doctrine is 'non-soul' not 'non-self'. There is nothing new in saying so; PED glosses *anattā* as 'not a soul, without a soul'. Can it be so simple?

There are times when Gotama seems to be saying something much more difficult, for instance when he approves of another bhikkhu's remarks (definition 7). 'A heap of sheer formations' does not add anything very significant to the *Samyutta* refrain, in which 'impermanent' is coupled with 'unstable' (lines 6-7) to imply that the aggregates are not only death-limited but impermanent on a moment-to-moment basis. The idea of compoundedness – a 'heap' – and the idea of impermanence are linked in Gotama's thought, and neither constitutes a denial of self. 'Individuality' and 'identity' (definition 1) do not predicate an unchanging 'essence'. But Vajirā does not merely define: she denies – 'Here no being is found'. Inescapable 'non-self'. Except that PED tells us that the word translated by 'being', *satta*, can, like *attan*, also mean 'soul'. Māra tries to stop Vajirā concentrating by making her afraid:

⁵ In CDB, Bodhi translates *sankhārā* consistently as 'volitional formations'.

By whom has this been created?
 Where is the maker of this being?
 Where has the being arisen?
 Where does the being cease? (CDB I, p.230)

Theoretically, *satta* here could refer to 'soul' and theoretically Māra could be saying that 'soul' exists beyond contingency, unmade by parents and beyond place and time, but it is an unlikely idea for him to push, and it is only through an understanding of Gotama's 'non-soul' doctrine that he would have been able to work out that the possibility of 'soul' might make a Gotama-follower afraid for her 'non-soul' belief. Would he have been given such insight? The obvious purpose of his words is to make Vajirā afraid of the insecurity of her own 'being'. He alludes to the fact that she is a human 'being' and as such exists (without the refuge of the Dhamma) in a frightening ignorance of her other than human origin – 'By whom has this being been created? – and of her other than bodily location at death – 'Where does this being cease?' – perhaps of her bodily location too. On the other hand, Vajirā's response makes little immediate sense if we take her *satta* as 'being':

Why now do you assume 'a being'?
 Māra, is that your speculative view?
 This is a heap of sheer formations:
 Here no being is found. (*ibid.*)

Telling Māra she is not to be found as a 'being' when she is sitting there in front of him? Her words make complete sense if we take her *satta* as 'soul'. Part of the (serious) joke is that she calls his physically undeniable assumption of her 'being' a 'speculative view'. It is one only if *satta* means 'soul'. She puns, and verbally defeats Māra by turning what he has said into the theoretically possible but Māra-wise unlikely meaning mentioned above. She is there all right as 'being' but not as 'soul', and her belief in Gotama's 'non-soul' doctrine means that 'non-soul' causes her no fear. She accepts that there is no 'essence'. This is not to say that the 'being' meaning does not have its effect. If *satta* is taken as 'being', 'Here no being is found' is a forceful hyperbolic expression. The linguistic possibility that Vajirā might be denying her own existence shocks the listener into realisation of unavoidable, all-engulfing death-impermanence. Hyperbolically she does

not exist because she is 'non-existent eternally' (MLDB, p.230). Both levels of meaning pertain.

'Non-self' nonsense is the result of ignoring Sutta-hyperbole⁶ and the 'soul' meaning of *attan* and *satta*. However, there is an area, a very important one, in which *anattā* literally means 'non-self'. It has been pointed to and evidenced by Thanissaro Bhikkhu in his article 'The Non-Self Strategy'.⁷ Alongside 'non-soul' Gotama advocates not a doctrine but a behavioural recipe for the course leading to Nibbāna; a bhikkhu should try to live as if he is 'non-self', that is, without connecting any experience to himself. In the undated Suttas any possible chronological development between doctrine and strategy is not available for examination, and generally Gotama does not engage in defining the link between the two. He does touch on the link during a comparatively long 'non-*attan*' sequence (MLDB, pp.229-36) in the 'Simile of the Snake' Sutta, in which he explains why a bhikkhu needs to adopt 'non-self'. First he concentrates on 'non-soul' doctrine. He says that an 'untaught' (*ibid.*, p.229) person who thinks of material form and thought as 'This is mine, this I am, this is my (*attan*)' (*ibid.*), the words of the *Samyutta* refrain, is mistaken because his thought is based on the erroneous viewpoint that 'This is (*attan*), this the world; after death I shall be permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change. I shall endure as long as eternity' (*ibid.*) – straight 'non-essence'. Then he is asked by a bhikkhu whether agitation about 'what is non-existent eternally' (*ibid.*, p.230) can be avoided. He has already mentioned that the 'non-soul' doctrine is in itself anxiety-preventive, but he answers the monk in terms not of doctrine but of strategy. Anxiety may be avoided by eschewing the thoughts 'Alas, I had it! Alas, I have it no longer! Alas, may I have it! Alas, I do not get it!' (*ibid.*) The 'it' here may refer back to 'what is non-existent eternally', which may refer not just to 'soul' but to anything and everything. Gotama then specifies the reason for this strategy and doctrine. A person

⁶ Hyperbole is a regular element in the Sutta register. See my article, 'The Buddha, Friendship and Beauty', in *BSR* 17, 1 (2000), pp.56-8.

⁷ Available on the internet, 1993, revised 1998. Thanissaro's view is that the Buddha teaches no *anattā* doctrine whatever, only a strategy for the attainment of Nibbāna.

who has the ‘soul’ view will be anxious for self-preservation (by implication, because he looks for himself to survive but fears he will not); a person with the ‘non-soul’ view will not be anxious (by implication, because he knows and accepts he will not survive). Of the ‘soul’ believer Gotama says:

He hears the Tathāgata or a disciple of the Tathāgata teaching the Dhamma for the elimination of all standpoints, decisions, obsessions, adherences, and underlying tendencies, for the stilling of all formations, for the relinquishing of all attachments, for the destruction of craving, for dispassion, for cessation, for Nibbāna. He thinks thus: ‘So I shall be annihilated! So I shall perish! So I shall be no more!’ (*ibid.*, pp.230-1)

The link between doctrine and strategy is that doctrine facilitates ‘non-self’ reaction. Belief in ‘soul’ leads to anxiety for self-preservation and anxiety for self-preservation obstructs the adoption of Dhamma discipline because that discipline leads to destruction of personality. With the ‘non-soul’ doctrine a bhikkhu is capable of adopting the ‘non-self’ strategy and with this strategy he is capable of following the self-destructive discipline. For him, ‘self’ contains no ‘soul’ but only the *dukkha*-bound aggregates: loss of self is no loss.

Even in this sequence, where connections are suggested, the tight interconnectedness of doctrine and strategy is apparent – both facilitate non-anxiety. The link is even tighter in the great majority of ‘non-*attan*’ sequences because there is no explanation of it. Doctrine and strategy emerge in close togetherness, simultaneity in puns, and it is often not possible, or right, to draw a simple straight line between them in Gotama’s teaching. *Attan* and *satta* are each involved in both strategy and doctrine and their shifting between doctrinal ‘soul’ and strategist ‘self’/‘being’ makes a translator’s work well-nigh impossible. There is no word in English that means ‘soul’ and ‘self’ (unless it is ‘soul’ in the archaic nonce-usage ‘Upon my soul’), and the translator has to choose one of the two in linguistic situations where both are relevant. Frequently, the two meanings do not vibrate strongly enough (what ‘enough’ is has to be decided subjectively) for the word to be called a pun, but one carries meaningful echoes of its alternative. When the whole of the *Samyutta* refrain is reproduced within the ‘Simile of the Snake’ sequence, its *attan* may carry strategic implications. Almost immediately before its introduction Gotama

says that no view, not even the anxiety-preventive ‘non-soul’, would sustain a person if taken as a support, in other words, if relied on for oneself. So in the refrain here the avoiding of ‘This is mine, this I am, this is my (*attan*)’ may include the avoiding not only of the ‘soul’ view but of the ‘self’ attitude to that view (and all views), and on a secondary level *attan* may carry the strategist ‘self’ meaning. Just as in a non-linguistic context a person’s life-informing ideas are fused with the person’s living – the ideas are lived – so in the linguistic context of this instance of the refrain, doctrine is part of strategy. And the same may be said of the Sona-participating instance of the refrain cited above. That instance also comes after a heavily strategist Buddha statement in which Gotama says that any ascetics who ‘regard themselves’ (CDB I, p.889) on the basis of the aggregates as superior, equal or inferior to any other are not ‘seeing things as they really are’ (*ibid.*). So, in this instance, even the aggregate-delineation may be connected to strategy when Gotama says that ‘whatsoever’ aggregate ‘there be’ it ‘should be regarded as it really is ... “this is not mine”, “this am I not”, “this of me is not the (*attan*)”’ (KS III, p.43).⁸

As things go for a translator, this is a minor problem! In the refrain Gotama’s aggregate-illustrated insistence on ‘non-essence’ means that *attan* has to be translated ‘soul’ and its important secondary implication abandoned. But when it comes to *satta* in Vajirā’s Māra-defeating verses, the problems are major. Here is the whole of her speech:

Why now do you assume ‘a being’?
Māra, is that your speculative view?
This is a heap of sheer formations:
Here no being is found.

⁸ There is possibly also a slight movement within the refrain between doctrine and strategy in connection with its two *attan* structures. Woodward’s KS translation moves from ‘to hold such views (6) to ‘to be regarded as’ (18), but the Pāli has no equivalent of ‘views’ in this context. The first structure uses the verb *samanupassati*, a word associated with abstract thought, whereas the second uses the colourless *dassati* (hypothetical present). Bodhi preserves the difference by translating ‘Is what is impermanent ... fit to be regarded thus: “This is mine ...”’ as against ‘Any kind of feeling whatsoever ... should be seen as it really is ... thus: “This is not mine”’.

Just as, with an assemblage of parts,
The word 'chariot' is used,
So, when the aggregates exist,
There is the convention 'a being'.

5

It's only suffering that comes to be,
Suffering that stands and falls away,
Nothing but suffering comes to be,
Nothing but suffering ceases. (CDB I, p.230)

10

In her initial punning response, as we have suggested, a translator would have to choose 'soul' for Vajirā's *satta* if he or she were to get near to the idea referred to in 'speculative view'. But 'soul' would create even more confusion than 'being' because in translation Māra has had to talk about 'being' without any 'soul' echo, so for the reader it would seem that Vajirā is taking him up on something he has not said. The meaning of *satta* is on the move, and in line 3 it has three levels. We have already seen that with its 'soul' meaning Vajirā's words are a statement of 'non-essence' and with its 'being' meaning they are a hyperbolic, impermanence-thrusting conceit. With the 'being' meaning they are also a statement of strategic success – Vajirā has ceased to relate experience to a self. There may be a problem if we think of this third meaning as primary and conscious because, if we see Vajirā as an actual rather than a representative figure, she may be committing a *pācittiya* offence by reporting her superior state to an unordained person.⁹ Problem or not, no single-word translation of *satta* can reflect the poetic richness of this line. In her second verse, Vajirā reverts to a single, doctrinal level, but this does not make things any easier for a translator. What is he or she to do with the *satta* of line 8? It cannot be translated as 'soul' because 'soul' is not a conventional usage for a person, and 'being' completely misses the 'non-soul' doctrinal element in the double-meaning, that *satta* (being) does not mean *satta* (soul). In the last verse the expression of doctrine and strategic success is simul-

⁹ See Thanissaro Bhikkhu, *The Buddhist Monastic Code*, 1994, rev. ed. 1996, freely available from the Metta Forest Monastery, PO Box 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082, USA. On pp.285-7, Thanissaro lists the factors to be considered in Vajirā's, or any other, case in deciding on the existence and category of any such possible offence.

taneous. Vajirā does not use *satta*, but without an awareness of the word's meaningful ambiguities in the first two verses, a reader is unlikely to experience the layering of this verse. Doctrinally it represents the Gotama negative: there is nothing in Samsāra beyond the aggregates of suffering. Strategically it is positive: Vajirā transcends suffering by becoming it, by being herself (without 'self') 'nothing but suffering' (12).

In this translator's (beautiful) nightmare, one thing remains clear. The Buddha does not deny the existence of 'self' except in the very specialist sense of definition 3. It has to exist for him to advocate its destruction. The only way to stop the spread of 'non-self' nonsense would be to cull all translations of *attan* and *satta*, retain the Pāli words in the English text and provide PED definitions. In the meantime, any suggestions to a reader have to be rough-and-ready. For the translator's 'non-self' be prepared to read varying ratios of 'non-self' and 'non-soul'; if you think the statement is strategist, accept 'non-self'; if you think it is doctrinal, read 'non-soul' for 'non-self'. 'Non-essence' would be more accurate, but since (Gotama-rightly) it may refer to things as well as people, it would link less easily with the strategist 'non-self'. Also, in a has-been-Christian society, 'non-soul' has a more familiar and therefore more comforting, less exacting ring and, except for Buddhas and arahants and exceptional selves, 'Human kind cannot bear very much reality'.¹⁰

Colin Edwards

- CDB = *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, tr. of *Samyutta* by Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2 vols, Boston 2000
- DB = *Dialogues of the Buddha*, tr. of *Dīgha* by T.W. Rhys Davids, 3 vols, Pali Text Society, 1899-1921, repr. 1995
- KS = *Kindred Sayings*, tr. of *Samyutta* by C. Rhys Davids/F.L. Woodward, 5 vols, PTS, 1917-30, repr. 1993-95
- MLDB = *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, tr. of *Majjhima* by Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli and Bodhi Bodhi, Boston 1995

¹⁰ T.S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral*, London 1950, p.69.

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ocbs@iopec.org

IDENTIFYING BUDDHISM IN EARLY ISLAMIC SOURCES OF SIND*

M. L. BHATIA

During the course of the conquests beginning from the seventh century, the image of the Arabs has usually been linked with force and violence. However, following these conquests the spread of Islam reflected in the peaceful manner of Sufi zeal produced some positive results. The inherent connection between the Sufi tradition and the response of the indigenous population in mediaeval India has recently become a subject of renewed historical investigation. To this has also been added the question of the possible conversion of the conquered population to Islam. Within this broad theme an attempt has been made to explore the nature of the Arabs' conquest of Sind in the early eighth century and to determine their relationship with the local people, including Buddhists, during their rule in this region for over two and a half centuries. The paucity of source material to demarcate clearly between various segments of society, especially Hindu and Buddhist, coupled with complications involved in the Arabs' social relations with the indigenous population of Sind, has limited the scope for definitive data on interrelationships. In preparing this hypothesis a few contemporary and near contemporary Arabo-Persian sources, geographical accounts and travellers' narratives of the pre-Mughal period have been examined and where no direct evidence is available help has been taken from later Persian chronicles relating to Sind under the Mughals.

The *Chachnama* is perhaps the oldest history of Sind written in Arabic and is now extant only in a literal Persian translation by 'Alī ibn Ḥamīd al-Kūfī (1216-21).¹ It contains a chronicle of pre-

* This paper is a modified version of the original presented by the author at the XIIth Conference of the International Association of Buddhist Studies held in Lausanne, Switzerland, 23-28 August 1999.

¹ The *Chachnama* was at one time thought a romance but ever since Mountstuart Elphinstone, after comparing with other contemporary sources, rehabilitated its real character in his work, *The History of India*, London 1851,

Arab Sind and a compilation of mostly contemporary narratives of the Arabic conquest during 710-14. In order to draw a comprehensive picture to determine Arab relations with the indigenous population, the *Futūḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhurī (d.892)² has been added to the *Chachnama*. These two works combined give a succinct account of Arab raids, the conquest of Deybul port and other areas, as also their government in Sind. The textual information indicates in the first place that, in addition to the all-pervasive Brahmanical society, Buddhism was still an existing religion in Sind as the word *samani* (originally (*śramaṇa*)) occurs several times.³ References to a Buddhist temple, Buddhist monasteries and a section on Buddhist followers, who asserted that their religion did not permit them to take up arms even in their own defence against the Arab Muslims, have been noticed.⁴ Again, mention has been made of a place which is 'a district coterminous with that of Sīwistān in the North'.⁵ The author of the *Chachnama* describes the sub-divisions of Sind at the time of the Rac Stharas who ruled

Allahabad 1966, to its being a history, the *Chachnama*, popularly known as *Tārīkh-i-Hind O-Sind*, has been profusely used as a source for the study of the history of Sind. The Persian translation of this important historical work has been edited by Umar bin Muhammad Daudpota, Delhi 1939; for an English translation (from the Persian) see Mirza Kalichbeg Fredunbeg, *Chachnama, An Ancient History of Sind*, Delhi 1900, 1979. The scholars of Sind have depended heavily on this translation of the *Chachnama*. Also see Y. Friedman, 'The Origins and Significance of the Chach Nama', *Islam in Asia I*, Jerusalem 1984.
² Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, ed. M.J.De Goeje, Leiden 1906; F.C. Murgotten (tr. from Arabic), *Origins of the Islamic State II*, New York 1924. Also see H.A.R. Gibb, *The Arabic Conquest in Central Asia*, London 1923, and H.M. Elliot and John Dowson, *The History of India as told by its Own Historians I*, London 1867, repr. Kitab Mahal, Allahabad n.d., pp.113-30. The reprint edition has been used throughout.

³ *Chachnama*, pp.34, 36. The word used for monk is *nasik*, while for hermit it is *rahīb*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.35, 92-6; S.M. Jaffer, 'End of Imaduddin Muḥd. ibn Qāsim, The Arab Conqueror of Sind', *Islamic Culture* 19, Hyderabad 1945, p.58. The author refers to Samanis, monks, and a royal white elephant which were conspicuously absent at the time of the Sind invasion by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna at the beginning of the eleventh century.

⁵ M.R. Haig, *The Indus Delta Country*, London 1804, p.57.

in the middle of the sixth century as those including the town of Sīwistān together with Buddhiya, Jangal and the hill country of Dunghan as far as the borders of Makrān. Chach also crossed the west bank of the Indus in Upper Sind into Buda or Buddhiya and captured Sīwistān.⁶ It is also noted that despite a change of ruling dynasty from Buddhist to Brahmanical, with conflicting ideas and differences, both the Buddhists and the Brahmans lived in compulsive amity assimilating several features of each other.

Politically, the reign of Chach was preceded by the Buddhist monarch (rāi) Sahasi who died in 652. In fact, Chach was his Brahman minister and usurped the throne leading to resistance by various tribes of Lohana, Sama, Kaka, Channa, Buddh and certain Jats, but Chach was successful in curbing their activities. Thus, in his reign the frontier of Sind probably extended up to Kashmir with the borders of Kirman and included some portions of Makrān. It is said that Chach also captured Jitru, which in the course of translation has been regarded by Daudpota as Chittor, which means that some Rajasthan areas were also included in Chach's kingdom. However, H.M. Elliott maintains that the place was Jitru, only without giving any distinct geographical location. By the time of the Arab conquests in the early eighth century Makrān and most of the western hills had already come under their domination. Later, Arab travellers and geographers mention the kingdom of Mansūra for Sind as extending up to Al-Rur (Alor) in the north, Tarun (Jhalwan) and Buddha (Kachh-Gandava) to the west and in the east the frontier extended up to the river Shakira (Sind Sagar) and Famhal (also Amhal).⁷ Much later Minhāj al-Sirāj speaks of areas such as Multān, Makrān and Mansūra as parts of Sind.⁸ Among the travellers who visited Sind and Multān, al-Mas'ūdī has left a brilliant account of the con-

⁶ *Chachnama*, pp.30-2.

⁷ According to a geographical account, *Al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik* by Ibn Khurdādhbih (820-912), dealing with routes and distances among the towns of al-Sind, we find mention of al-Qiān, Makrān, Qandābīl, al-Rur, Thara, Daybul, river of Mihrān, etc. See S. Maqbool Ahmad (tr. from Arabic), *Arabic Classical Accounts of India and China*, Shimla 1989, p.4; M.R. Haig, *op. cit.*, p.57; *Chachnama*, pp.30-2; Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I, p.13.

⁸ *Ṭabaqāt i-Nāsiri*, ed. Abdul Hayy Habībī, II, Kabul 1963, p.492.

ditions in the Indus Valley from Wai-Hind in the north to Deybul in the south.⁹ Ibn Hawkal, who also visited the region later, is in agreement with al-Mas'ūdī that the principal Arab colonies were at Maṣūra, Multān, Deybul and Nirun (Nirvan): all of which had *jāmic* [i.e. central or main town] mosques. These Arab travellers refer to non-Muslims including Hindus, Brahmans and Buddhists as *dhimmīs* and not *kāfirs*, an expression used later by the chroniclers of the Sultanate period.¹⁰ It is also reported that the killing of cows was banned in Sind and Multān, perhaps motivated partly for cattle wealth and possibly out of regard for local Hindu sentiments. Incidentally, we find that in 886 a Hindu rāja in the region is reported to have commissioned an Arab linguist from Maṣūra to translate the Qur'ān into the local Sindhi language.¹¹

The ancient trading route to Sind comprised (a) north Iran along the Hindu Kush and round to Sind, (b) lower Mesopotamia skirting the southern mountain ranges of Iran running along the coast to Sind, and (c) the ancient maritime route starting from the Arabian southern coast passing along Sind's littoral. The region of Sind was a junction of land and sea routes and possessed overland connections with the northern route. It afforded an easier and better means of access to the fertile lands of Punjab and Gujarāt which invariably attracted hordes of land- and pasture-hungry émigrés throughout the ages. These routes exposed Sind to external influences both from the sea and overland connections, making it on the one hand a meeting point of different cultures and, on the other, a bridge between western and central Asia and India. Since Sind with its limited resources and arid climate could not afford to live in isolation, the local elements assimilated the

⁹ Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab* as quoted in Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.* I, pp.21, 454-55.

¹⁰ These travels relate to the second half of the tenth century. See J.H. Kramers (ed.), *Kitāb Šūrat al-arḍ*, Leiden and Leipzig 1938-9, p.316; S.H. Hodivala, *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, 2 vols, Bombay 1939, pp.33, 81, 166. For geographers' accounts of the ninth and tenth centuries see translated narratives in Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I; G. Le Strange, *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, London 1905, Cambridge 1930.

¹¹ S.A.A. Rizvi, *The Wonder that was India II* (1200-1700), London 1987, repr. Calcutta 1993, p.12.

foreign influences over a period of time.

While interpreting early India from the sixth century, Romila Thapar draws the picture of the Indus river bank where, in the low marshes, there used to live several hundred Buddhist families rearing cattle and sometimes killing animals.¹² They supposedly existed without a government and observed no social distinctions. They shaved the head, wore bhikṣu garb, looking like bhikṣus and yet living in the world. These people were literally adhering to their narrow views and reviled 'the Great Vehicle'. Such a practice perhaps refers to the institution of married monks, leading to the surmise that the rules of celibacy among Buddhist monks had been greatly relaxed during this period. Such a position has been corroborated by the author of *Chachnama*.¹³ It is reported that the ruler of Sind at the time of the invasion of Brahmanābād by Chach was under the influence of a samani (*śramaṇa*) named Buddha-rakū (Buddharakṣita) who was an expert in magic and led a family.¹⁴ References are also found in other contemporary sources, viz. to the Mahāvihāra at Sawandist and to an old damaged Buddhist temple. In Mulasthanpura (modern Multān) on the eastern side of the river Sindhu, there were a few who still believed in Buddhism while Buddhist monasteries were mostly in ruins and there were only a very few monks. It is also noted that in the westernmost frontier beyond the Indus and near the bay of the sea was the province of Lang-ka-lo, and in this region there were more than 5,000 monks belonging to both the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, living in over 100 Buddhist monasteries.¹⁵

Pre-Islamic Sind has been presented as primarily a civilisation characterised by an all-inclusive Hinduism, whereas the reality perhaps lies in looking at it as a cluster of specific sects and cults observing various distinctive but sometimes supplementary

¹² Romila Thapar, *Interpreting Early India*, Oxford 1992, p.40.

¹³ *Chachnama*, p.34.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.33.

¹⁵ B.D. Mirchandani makes Lang-ka-lo synonymous with Makrān in his paper, 'On Hiuen Tsiang's Travels in Baluchistan', *Journal of Indian History* LXV (1967), pp.330-1, 335. Also see Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (AD621-645)*, 2 vols, Vol.II repr. Delhi 1961, p.252; R.Thapar, *op. cit.*, pp.40-1.

symbols, with their own beliefs and rituals ranging from atheism to animism, and a variety of religious organisations identifying themselves by location, language and caste.¹⁶ Even the sense of religious identity seems to have been related more closely to various sects under the broad concept of the Brahmanical community. Buddhism, although on the decline, boasted a considerable following whom Muḥammad ibn Qāsim confronted. The guild artisans as donors to Buddhism continued to exist. In fact, Buddhism by that time had almost completely transformed itself from an intellectual to an agrarian community, due to its branching out into various sects from monastic to travelling life. While trade and city life was monopolised by non-Buddhist diaspora groups, mostly Hindus, surprisingly Buddhism slowly became involved in agriculture. Buddhism, originally considered as a 'religious technology' of wandering intellectually-schooled mendicant monks¹⁷ travelling along the trade routes in the Sind region, was already showing a tendency towards fusion and gradual assimilation with other communities.

One of the main factors that influenced Arab relations with India was the topographical peculiarities of the region, viz. the existence of the Arabian Sea. Trade had become the determining factor in these relations. Various historical documents confirm that the Arab civilisation flourished largely on Indian trade.¹⁸ The major problem concerning knowledge of maritime activities in the Arabian Sea at the beginning of the eighth century lies in our inability to distinguish between mediaeval trade from what had

¹⁶ R.C. Majumdar, *History and Culture of Indian People I: The Vedic Age*, Bombay 1965, p.193; *The Cambridge Shorter History of India*, ed. H.H. Dodwell, Cambridge, repr. 1964, p.4; Sir Mortimer Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization*, Cambridge 3rd ed., 1968, pp.79-80. Sind's tribes considered themselves independent, free of masters and paid their allegiance to Buddhist śramaṇas. Irfan Habib, 'Jatts of Punjab and Sind', in A. Singh and N.G. Barrier (ed.), *Punjab, Past and Present: Essays in Honour of Dr Ganda Singh*, Patiala 1976, pp.94-5.

¹⁷ Max Weber, *The Religion of India*, New York/London 1967, pp.205-6.

¹⁸ W.H. Siddiqi, 'India's Contribution to Arab-Civilization', in Lokesh Chandra (ed.), *Indian Contributions to World Thought and Culture*, Madras 1970, pp.580-1.

preceded it. Secondly, in the absence of any known Indian source material, we are forced back on European archives which have their own limitations and, thirdly, there is no satisfactory study on the history of the Indian Ocean, unlike that of Fernand Braudel's classic work on the Mediterranean. Hourani makes the point that the Arabs' predominant interest in the Arabian Sea was commerce rather than the spread of Islam.¹⁹ Nonetheless, a recent useful compilation on the archaeology of the Indian Ocean helps us to locate some important ports and their utility, especially those of Deybul, Bandar Lahori and Thatta, for Arab and later Turkish conquerors.²⁰

The Arabs had lost the lucrative trade routes between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea before the advent of Islam. With the renewed Islamic fervour they had become the sole power to convert the Indian Ocean into an Arab Mediterranean and dominate commerce between Europe and South Asia. Although resisted by Indian seafarers, especially the Medes of Sind who were backed by the merchants of Deybul, the conquest of Sind had become essential for the Arabs if they were to control the seaports and maritime trade routes of Asia. The first Arabian attempt included the use of their fleet to establish power during the caliphate of 'Umar (634-44). Naval expeditions were sent repeatedly by the Arabs from Oman to Thana near modern Bombay and from Bahrain to Broach in Gujarāt, and to Deybul in Sind. However, these expeditions ended in virtual failure as, in al-Balādhurī's words, 'in Sind water is scarce, the fruits are poor and the robbers are bold. If few troops are sent they will be slain and if many they will starve'.²¹ Subsequently, the untiring zeal of the caliphs, coupled with the receipt of positive reports relating to trade and the wealth of this region, prompted the Arabs again and again to explore the frontiers of Sind.

¹⁹ G.F. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in the Ancient and early Medieval Times*, Beirut 1963, p.39; V.M. Jha, 'The Artless Pirennian', *Indian Historical Review* XVIII, No.1-2 (1990-91), pp.93-103.

²⁰ Himanshu Prabha Ray, ed., *Archaeology of Seafaring: The Indian Ocean in the Ancient Period*, New Delhi 1999, pp.70-153.

²¹ Muhammad Yusuf Abbasi, 'Muḥammad ibn Qāsim's Conquest of Sind: a military appraisal', *Journal of Central Asia* 2 (1979), pp.159-88.

A major naval expedition was launched in 636-7 from Bahrain through the governorship of 'Umān in the direction of India under the command of Mugharish, father of Sakifi or al-Thaqāfi, which landed successfully at Thana and Broach and from thence it attempted to conquer Deybul, a city port which was in the Sind region under the domination of Chach's successors.²² The people of Deybul were mostly merchants and one, Sama son of Dewaji, governed the place on behalf of the Chach dynasty. It is alleged that a certain fort near or around Deybul served as a rescue shelter for Indian pirates who were used to conducting raids on the Arab coasts, plundering cargo and passengers. Our chroniclers suggest that Chach's son Dahir had given shelter and also a position to one Muslim army rebel, 'Abd al-Rahmān (ibn) al-Hāshimī, who was declared an enemy of the caliph.²³ It is also alleged that Dahir was encouraging piracy which involved some Muslim women being sent by the king of Sila to Hajjāj to allow them to rejoin their families.²⁴ However, Qureshi believes that it is wrong to attribute Muḥammad ibn Qāsim's invasion to penalise the offenders.²⁵ The immediate specific grievance against piracy was used as a cover for a powerful Arab attack on Deybul in 711 which finally resulted in the conquest of Sind.²⁶ The city and port of Deybul find repeated references not only at the time of the Arab conquest but even later around the tenth century when it is designated the big port at the mouth of the Indus. In Deybul Muḥammad ibn Qāsim confronted temples and received news of his support from the local ruler of Nirūn who was a *samani* or Buddhist priest. The location of Deybul on the Indus and at the edge of the ocean is derived from certain repetitions of topographical elements endorsed in the passages of literature. Makrān, Sind and Deybul formed a political division under Sasanian

²² *Chachnama*, p.11. Thana is near Mumbai [Bombay] while Broach was an important sea port on the coast of Gujarāt.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.62-3.

²⁴ Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, *op. cit.*, pp.435-6.

²⁵ I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, The Hague 1962, p.35.

²⁶ *Chachnama*, p.74; N.A. Baloch (ed.), *Fatḥnāmāh-i-Sind*, Islamabad 1983, Persian text, pp.64-5. Also see Muhammad Habib, 'Arab Conquest of Sind', *Islamic Culture* 3, Hyderabad 1929, pp.77-95, 592-611.

domination, in particular during the reign of Bahram V (421-38). One reads in *Hudūd al-'alam* (982) that 'Daybul' is a city to the south on the coast of the Big Sea. It is the habitat of merchants. The products of Hindustan to the sea are brought here in large quantities.²⁷ Muqaddisī in the same period gives a specific detail on the location of the city and says that 'the Mihran falls beyond it where the sea reaches its wall'.²⁸ Al-Bīrūnī, at the beginning of the eleventh century, twice mentions 'the southern frontier of India is formed by the ocean. The Indian coast begins with Tiz, the capital of Makrān, and stretches to the southeast in the direction of the region of Deybul for a distance of 40 forsakhs'.²⁹

The co-ordinates in the chronicles are not sufficiently precise. The indication as given in a number of sources of the location of Deybul at the beginning of the ocean is unacceptable because, with the exception of Karachi which developed in a cove and was

²⁷ V. Minorsky (tr. with annotations), *Hudūd al-'alam*, Gibb Memorial Series, London 1937, p.372; Monique Kervran, in her article on 'Multiple Ports at the mouth of the river Indus', in H.P. Ray (ed.), *Archaeology of Seafaring*, *op. cit.*, p.87, argues that Karachi itself represents Debal (Deybul) while Lt. R.F. Burton, a British civil servant who wrote about the legends, stories, climate and geography of Sind in the mid-nineteenth century, quoted in his works, *Unhappy Valley I*, p.128, and *Scinde*, p.380, that 'Thatta of the Delhi Sultanate period occupies the ground of ancient Dewal (Deybul) on account of a product, Shal-i-Debali, which is still known as *shal* (shawl) of Thatta manufacture'. These shawls were made of cotton in Thatta in the sixteenth century and were very popular from Thatta to Hyderabad. Printed black, red or indigo blue on a red or white base, they were worn as turbans by village menfolk and as veils by the women; Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I, at p.307 on the authority of Tuhfat-al-Kiram of Ali Sher Khan, assert that 'what is now Bandar Lahori was in former times called Bandar Debal'. Also see S.Q. Fatimi, 'The Twin Ports of Daybul: a study in the Early Maritime History of Sind', in Hamida Khuhro (ed.), *Sind through the Centuries*, OUP, Karachi 1981, p.100, n.10; N.A. Baloch, 'The Most Probable Location of Daibul, the first Arab Settlement in Sind', *Dawn*, Karachi, Feb. 4, 18 (1951).

²⁸ Al-Muqaddisī, *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm fī Ma'rifat al-aqālim*, ed. M.J.De Goeje, Leiden 1966, pp.479-82.

²⁹ Edward C. Sachau (tr.), *Alberuni's India*, London 1910, repr. Delhi 1964, I, p.208, II, p.320.

naturally protected by a littoral cordon, all the other ports of Sind and Gujarāt were on the western coast of the India peninsula. It is, therefore, logical to consider that Deybul port on the ocean signified that this was in direct relation to the Indian Ocean and received boats for trade. Idrisi gives further details about the existence of the island of Deybul in proximity to the city of the same name.³⁰ Deybul was later replaced by Bandar Lahori during the Delhi sultanate due to the silting up of the connecting river at that time. However, it was not abandoned altogether and continued with the same name.

It has been argued by André Wink that Buddhism disappeared from those parts of South and South East Asia which were overrun by the Muslim armies in the mediaeval period and henceforward became subject to Muslim rule.³¹ It is also alleged that a mass conversion of Buddhists to Islam in Sind and later in Bengal occurred due to escalating political pressure, because Buddhists saw in Islam a means of escape from the Hindu caste system and Brahmanical oppression.³² This is probably the reason why Buddhism survived in those areas that did not suffer from the largely destructive Islamic impact, i.e. in the Himalayas and beyond in the north and Sri Lanka in the south. This argument, though valid, is too general in nature. Although life in the Buddhist monasteries and the organisations which sustained it were adversely affected in the wave of Muslim conquests and as some of the populations in many areas fled or were enslaved or in some instances massacred, yet after the war fever, assimilation was bound to take place and in many cases conversions proceeded but in a very gradual manner and under different circumstances. There is no evidence to sug-

³⁰ A. Jaubert (ed.), *Géographie d'Edrisi I*, Paris 1836, p.161, as quoted in M. Kervran (see n.27); Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.* I, p.77; John S. Deyell, *Living without Silver*, OUP, Delhi 1990, p.44. The location of Deybul is still a challenge for historians and archaeologists.

³¹ André Wink, *Al Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World I: Early Mediaeval India and the Expansion of Islam 7th to 11th centuries*, Leiden 1990-91, p.6.

³² For a comparative study, see Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier (1204-1760)*, London 1993; 'The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid', in B.D. Metcalf (ed.), *Moral Conduct and Authority: the place of adab in South Asian Islam*, London 1984, pp.33-6.

gest that the Arabs had formulated any state policy to convert Buddhists and Hindus into Muslims en masse. Only the conversion of politically important persons who rebelled or proved disloyal was actively encouraged. There are, unfortunately, very few studies on conversion and historical truth is still hidden within the veils of legend. Some historical data might be tucked away in literature, yet its essence is myth and allegory.

In line with André Wink, it is generally believed that by the time the Arab Muslims conquered Sind in 711 on behalf of the Umayyad caliphate, Buddhism had already disappeared in this region and hence there was not and could not be any assimilation between Islam and Buddhism as it had occurred in other parts of the Middle East and North-West around that time. It has also been suggested, on the contrary, that the disappearance of Buddhists in Sind could be attributed to their possible conversion to Islam. Maclean makes the point that Buddhists were converted to Islam rather than the Hindus.³³ This analysis is implausible since it is obvious that Buddhism was already in a state of transformation. Even Johnson's critique that new Buddhists had rejected Hinduism in India and sought a new identity as converts to Islam does not carry much weight because the process of large-scale conversion on a mass level could not be as simple as it is supposed to be. It is also argued that in Sind the Buddhist population was in an organised state and it sympathised with the Arab invaders because of the growing influence of Brahmanical orthodoxy where they were placed in an enigmatic, helpless situation. However, a careful scrutiny of contemporary Islamic sources, which have remained neglected by scholars primarily due to deliberate periodisation in history, does not substantiate either of the above views. Undoubtedly Brahmanical domination in North-Western India had reduced Buddhist influence considerably, yet a segment of the Buddhist population still existed in Sind and in the lower Punjab. Archaeologists inform us that in Mirpur Khas, 42 miles from Hyderabad, a brick stūpa with a terracotta plaque depicting the Buddha was discovered, while Buddhist seals and votive tablets of the eighth century are reported to have been found along with 36 Arab

³³ D.N. Maclean, *Religion and Society in Arab Sind*, Leiden 1989, p.24.

coins.³⁴ The Buddhist seals had become valuable tablets useful and revered by the Buddhists for the protection of their Dharma between the fifth and eleventh centuries. Similarly, an image of the Buddha has been found in the excavation at Devnimori in Sind. Long before the Muslims came into contact with the Buddhists, a form of idol worship was reported to have existed side by side with the moral teachings of the dynastic Gautama. Aghum, the chief against whom rāi, Chach, marched had a monk friend whose name was Samani Budgami, also referred to as Buddh-raku, and who was supposed to have led a charmed life and owned an image house or temple (monastery) which was called Buddha Nava Vihāra containing several images.³⁵ He was the chief monk of the place, well known for his devotion and piety, and the local people respected him. Again we find this Samani cooperating with his friend in the conquest of the fort but refusing to fight for him as he was busy reading his books: a duty which he considered more important than actual fighting in the battlefield. Samani reportedly believed in sorcery, enchantment, magic and wonders and practised these in Brahmanābād.

It is relevant to mention that some time before the conquest of Sind by Muḥammad ibn Qāsim, the Arab Muslim army had advanced on Kabul and ten years later crossed the Āmū Daryā (Oxus) to Bukhara and from there marched on Samarkand with a large following. These conquests and subsequent Arab settlements at Khorassan were extended further with Basra as their base. In these regions the Arab Muslims came into contact with the seden-

³⁴ For the Buddha's images, see Plates VIII and IX in J.E. van Lohuizen, 'The Pre-Muslim Antiquities of Sind', in *South Asian Archaeology 1975*, Leiden 1979. Also see H. Cousens, *The Antiquities of Sind*, Archaeological Survey of India, Imperial Services XLVI, Calcutta 1929, p.26. As late as in the times of the Samanids, fairs were held twice a year in Bukhara, where heathen images (probably Buddhist) were sold; V.V. Barthold, *Turkistan down to the Mongol Invasion*, 3rd rev. ed., London 1968, p.107. For a comparative study on images of the Buddha and stūpas, see A.H. Dani, *Recent Archaeological Discoveries in Pakistan*, Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies (UNESCO), 1988; Umayyad silver *dirhams* were in circulation in Sind as per recent excavations of Debal, John S. Deyell, *op. cit.*, pp.44, 46.

³⁵ *Chachnama*, pp.33, 85, 98-9, 156.

tary world of small states, at times mixing with Turkish tribes.³⁶ They were fully acquainted with the Buddhist academic tradition of high learning, their stūpas, monasteries, occasional contact with Buddha images and wandering monks. The mixture of people in these regions led to exposure to various religions, whether it was the pre-Islamic shamanism of the Turks, Christianity, Zoroastrianism or Buddhism. Even the Barmakids were supposed to have acquired their names from the office of *parmak* (*pramukha*) at the Buddhist monastery of Nava Vihāra (Nau-bahar) to which Bukhara owes its name. Again, the Barmakid vazirs of the caliphate who had invited Hindu and Buddhist scholars to Baghdad traced their origin to Balkh, which was an important centre of Buddhism.³⁷ Thus for the Arabs Buddhism had already become a known factor.

Undoubtedly Muslim culture had built up voluntary but powerful institutions with different sects in Islam that possibly encouraged conversion and Islamic assimilation with the indigenous population. The Sufi orders and a network of charitable institutions were at work along with the political conquests of new areas by Muslims but here, also, their hagiographic literature can at best reveal (a) the Muslim attitude towards non-Muslims, (b) the degree to which crucial Buddhist and Hindu practices and beliefs could be accommodated, and (c) the reaction of the classes affected. There is perhaps no positive evidence in Sufi literature of mass conversions of the indigenous population to Islam. This may be attributed to the fact that no systematic policy of conversion appeared to have been adopted by the rulers or by voluntary missionaries, nor did any ruler force Islam upon the sizeable population. In the initial stages, even the formal status enjoyed by the *dhimmi*s or non-Muslims in the Islamic polity and the range of

³⁶ Gurbux Singh, 'Arab challenge to the Turkshahis', in *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, Patiala 1968, pp.58-70.

³⁷ Sulayman S. Nadvi, 'Barmacides', in *Islamic Culture* 6 (Hyderabad 1932), pp.19-28; H.W. Bailey, 'On the word Barmak' *BSOAS* XI (1943), p.8; *Encyclopaedia of Islam* I, ed. H.A.R. Gibb, J.H. Kramers, J. Schacht, new ed., Leiden 1960, q.v. on Barmakids or Barmika, p.1033; also see *ibid.*, s.v. Balkh, Bamiyan, Bukhara. The Barmakids who had accepted Islam originally belonged to the Indian Buddhist community heading the monastery at Balkh.

social roles they were able to play was debated upon.³⁸

A logical corollary is evident in early Arab rule in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Iran where non-Arab and non-Muslim officers continued to serve their new Arab masters long after the Umayyads arabised the state administration. Indeed, throughout Arab history a large number of non-Muslims were employed in governmental service, especially in Fatimid and Mamluk Egypt: a state of affairs which occasionally resulted in tensions. In the central lands of the Umayyad empire, Greek and Persian bureaucrats helped their Arab masters to adapt to the imperial rhythms of government. The indigenous people were often found to be more congenial for employment than Arab Muslims whose tribal attachments made them prone to internecine rivalries causing serious embarrassment.³⁹

In Sind, too, Arabs found the minor component of Buddhist inhabitants a submissive community owing unwilling allegiance to Brahmanism in politics. As actual events unfolded, they were understandably prone to welcome anyone who could supplant their erstwhile supplanters, i.e. the unrelenting dominant Brahmans. The *Chachnama* reveals that the Buddhist governor of

³⁸ Muhammad Al-Faruque, 'Jizya in Early Islam', in Muhammad Taher (ed.), *Encyclopaedic Survey of Islamic Culture VIII*, New Delhi 1997, p.107 (originally publ. in *Islamic Culture* 3, Hyderabad 1929); Daniel C. Dennett, *Conversion and Poll the Tax in Early Islam*, Cambridge (MA) 1950, p.118; A.S. Tritton, *The Caliphs and their non-Muslim Subjects*, repr. London 1970, pp.2, 229-33; Abdul 'Aziz Duri, 'Notes on Taxation in Early Islam', in *Journal of Economic & Social History of the Orient* 17, Leiden 1974, pp.136-44; C.E. Bosworth, 'The Concept of Dhimma in Early Islam', in Benjamin Braudel and Bernard Lewis (ed.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: the functioning of a Plural Society I*, pp.37-51, as quoted in R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: a framework for Enquiry*, rev. ed., London 1991, p.297. Also see N.P. Agnihides, *Muhammadan Theories of Finance*, New York 1916; F. Lokkegaard, *Islamic Taxation in the Classic Period*, Copenhagen 1950; M.A. Shaban, *Islamic History, AD600-750: A new Interpretation*, Cambridge 1971, p.48 (he states that measures including *jizya* were taken on an *ad hoc* basis in the most haphazard manner to meet unexpected situations).

³⁹ Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period*, Cambridge 1994, pp.89-90; U.T. Thakur, *Sindhi Culture*, University of Bombay 1959, p.15.

Nirūn (Hyderabad)⁴⁰ had entered into secret negotiations with al-Hajjāj and surrendered the town to the Arab military commander without any serious conflict. It is also stated that from Nirūn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim marched southward and captured Dahir's stronghold in the Buddhist town of Sehwan and Buddhiya territory, where a Buddhist chief with his capital at Kakaraj concluded peace. The Buddhist followers of the town had threatened to surrender to the Arabs whom they considered faithful to their word. *Samanis* identified as Buddhists refused to fight for the local ruler at Siwistān with one kākā (the ruler of Buddhiya) having acted as an advisor to the Arab commander.⁴¹ Buddhist loyalty not only saved them from harsh treatment but also prevented the forced conversion of their leaders to Islam. The *Chachnama* states that the Brahmans had also argued that, since they had given their allegiance, they should be allowed to maintain their image temple (Butkhāna-i-Budd) and receive offerings and charities as before.⁴² Muḥammad ibn Qāsim accepted their viewpoint and sent it for the approval of the caliph who declared them *dhimmīs* like the Zoroastrians of Iran and the Jews and Christians of Iraq and Syria. Al-Balādhurī also confirms this kind of agreement.⁴³ The surrender terms clearly indicate the protection of local people including Hindus and Buddhists, their temples and their reinstatement in earlier positions if they agreed to pay the *jizya* (a poll tax), although for the Arabs the meaning and connotation of *jizya* was in a very nascent stage and was practised according to their will. During this period *jizya* on the *dhimmīs* was used interchangeably with *kharāj*, or land revenue tax, and the phrase '*jizya* on the head and *kharāj* on the land'⁴⁴ was given specific meaning only during the 'Abbasid period. Three conspicuous anomalies in the imposition of *jizya* by the Arabs on non-Muslims in Sind are worth noting: (a) the tax was to be collected by Brahmans on behalf of

⁴⁰ Nirūn was a hill fort, 25 farsangs from Deybul, halfway between Deybul and Mansūra. See Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I, p.308.

⁴¹ *Chachnama*, pp.35-6.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp.162-3, 165. According to André Wink, *op. cit.*, pp.149-51, the term *budd* was used to denote virtually anything religiously revered, i.e. men (monks), idols, statues, shrines, temples.

⁴³ Al-Balādhurī, p.439.

⁴⁴ Al-Balādhurī also confuses it with *kharāj* at p.170.

other people, (b) the Brahmans who had been associated with families or Buddhist monks who had income should also be taxed, a measure which was later repealed, and (c) that even *zakāt* (a Muslims-only tax) was to be collected from the newly-converted Muslims.⁴⁵ It is obvious that the collection of *jizya* was motivated more by economic considerations than religious.

Arab rule over Sind extended over two and a half centuries and was replaced by the Sunni Ghaznavids at the beginning of the eleventh century. This shows that the Buddhists had perhaps compromised with Arab rule, due both to the Muslim impact and to the increasing influence of a dominant Brahmanical orthodoxy. Although the documentary evidence does not always draw a specific line between Brahmanism and Buddhism, yet from the indication of Buddhist terminology used over a long period, it was suggested that the majority of the Buddhists were not immediately converted. Rather they continued exerting their hold in varying degrees until the tenth century. It was perhaps a class-based transformation wherein some of the persecuted and socially disadvantaged Buddhists gradually applied for free entrance into the new social organisation of Islam. Some of the conversions might have been motivated by missionary Ismailism or Fatimid Da'wa⁴⁶ which

⁴⁵ *Chachnama*, pp.37, 40. In the Persian text there is a reference to *ahd-i-wasiq* which was a bond for the fulfilment of mutual promises.

⁴⁶ Farhad Daftary, 'A Major Schism in the Early Ismaili Movement', in *Studia Islamica* 77 (1993), pp.123-9 (see *Index Islamicus* 1993 preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford); M. Brett, 'The *mīm*, the *'ayn* and the making of Isma'ilism', in *BSOAS* 57, 1, 1994, pp.25-9. Also see Farhad Daftary, *The Isma'ilis, Their History and Doctrines*, Cambridge 1990; Ismail K. Poonawala, *Bibliography of Ismaili Literature*, in *Studies in Near Eastern Culture and Society*, Univ. California, Los Angeles 1977; W. Ivanow, *A Guide to Ismaili Literature*, London 1933. Mercantile groups easily came under the influence of Ismailism, whether they were Sindhis or Gujarāti Bohras.

In the Ismaili social world the *dā'īs*, in the absence of the Imam who is unseen, becomes the highest functionary. He is empowered to resolve internal disputes, teach the community and also nominate his successor in accordance with divine inspiration. He has almost unquestioned authority among his followers. This was perhaps one reason why the *dā'īs* of the Ismaili Bohras in Gaujarāt were not liked by the Sunni rulers. The branch of knowledge which

played an important role in the mediaeval history of the Arab peninsula. Incidentally, Sind and Multān were ruled by the Ismailis for a long time and, although they were independent of each other, they experienced a closer confederacy cemented by Ismaili doctrines. In their propaganda we find a similar affinity of parallel gods with the pivotal role of miracles which was perhaps intended to win over Hindu and Buddhist converts to Islam.⁴⁷ The Ismailis devised the art of conveying doctrine in symbolic terms so as to camouflage it within the heterogenous fabric of Indian society. By not being able to win converts as openly as possible, the Ismaili missionary organisation responded with a reformulation of doctrine in which the ideals were acclimatised to the local environment appealing to the converts. Thus the process of conversion was very slow: beginning under the impact of the Arabs and continuing through the relentless efforts and possible manoeuvring of the Ismaili Da'wa and later by the popularity of the Qādirī, Suhrawardī and other Sufi *silsilas* [continuous chain of spiritual descent] in Sind.

As religious schism in Islam began early, often resulting in parallel political decisions, the two principal sects of Shia and Sunni confronted each other. While all the Shia or Shi'at 'Alī (the partisans of 'Alī) hold that 'Alī should have succeeded the Prophet, they were subdivided into two branches in India: the 'Twelvers' or Ithnā 'asharīs and the 'Seveners' or Ismailis.⁴⁸ The latter played a

treats of Ismaili Imams and *dā'īs*, including those of the Fatimid caliphate in relation to the Ismaili following whether they are Gujarāti Bohras or Khojas or even Nizaris, is usually termed *da'wa* (the word has the Arabic root meaning 'to call' [to the true faith], inseparably linked with the *dā'īs*. In India the word is also used for demand in a lawsuit). See W. Ivanow, *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ The first major Ismail pīr is Shams buried at Multān. According to Ivanow his centre of activities was Kashmir and Sind and the work attributed to him is *Dus Avatar* (Ten Incarnations). No force was exerted to win converts and conversion consisted of a journey along with the known religious beliefs of the converts. Such tactics assimilated local religious practices. After the Sunni onslaught, the Ismailis in Sind moved closer to Hindu ideas. See Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, Oxford 1964.

⁴⁸ The 'Seveners' believed that the seventh Imam Ismail had disappeared around 760. Much later, they brought newly-converted Bohras and Khojas on

more important role in the early history of Islam than they did later. Ismailism, in fact, added a new dimension to the political history of Sind. The first Ismaili missionary who came to Sind in 883 started secret propaganda in favour of the Ismaili Imam, and Multān was captured through a *coup d'état* indirectly caused by the Egyptian ruler, and thus Ismaili doctrines were now adopted as the official religion under the Sumras.⁴⁹ Since Ismailism seems to have been supported by local dynasties of Hindu origin, continuing contacts with the Egyptian Fatimid Da'wa were inter-

the western coast of Gujarāt within their fold. The 'Twelvers' believed that their twelfth Imam Muḥammad Mahtazar disappeared around 873 and the community known as the Shias are mostly centred in Iran and some other parts of the world. See S.T. Lokhandwala, 'Islamic Law and Ismaili Community (Khojas and Bohras)', in *Indian Economic and Social Theory Review* IV, 2 (Delhi 1967), pp.155-76; G.E. von Grunebaum (tr. Katherine Watson), *Classical Islam: a history, AD.600-1258*, London 1970, pp.213-14.

⁴⁹ The Sumras appear to claim descent from the Arabs of Samarra who arrived in Sind, served as 'Abbasid governors and had been sent with a number of other tribes to counteract propaganda against the 'Abbasids. The opposition was contained but, taking the opportunity of declining caliphate power, a number of Arab tribes and native chiefs seized power in different parts of Sind in the later half of the ninth century and carved out independent principalities of their own. The migrant Sumras got possession of parts of Sind on the left bank of the Indus, from which they expelled the original inhabitants, the Sammas, who took refuge in Kutch (the *Chachnama* mentions Jats and Sammas as the original tribes of Sind). The Sumras took over Maṣūra in 1010, and then Multān. A section of the Sumra tribe had affiliated itself to the Ismailis in the eleventh century. It is possible that many new converts were made at this time. Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna, in an outward bid to curb Ismailism, was satisfied with tribute from the Ismaili rulers of Multān. The Sunni campaign against the Ismailis forced them to seek shelter in Maṣūra. The Sammas subsequently struck back from Kutch and became so powerful that they founded a dynasty in lower Sind, ruling from 1338 to 1524, with independent status due to Sufist intervention and the inaccessibility of the region. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa could not distinguish between the Sumras and Sammas and wrote that their ancestors came with the army of Muḥammad ibn Tughluq. H.T. Lambrick, in his *Sind: a General Introduction*, Hyderabad 1964, p.188, states that the Sammas were successors to the Sumras who had established their capital on the western delta, probably due to its capability for defence.

rupted. The Ismailis in Sind may have partially drifted back to local Pīrs (Muslim saints) as also Hindu practices and beliefs. This is the reason why we find the emergence of the Yemenite Ismaili Da'wa in Gujarāt, whose followers are today called Bohras.

In Islamic history in mediaeval times, Muslims perhaps saw more conflicts within their own community. These conflicts, known as *fitna*, occurred even during the ideal period of al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn, first between 'Alī on the one hand and two leading companions of the Prophet on the other: the Ismailis, an offshoot of such conflicts, began their propagandas in Sind in the ninth century and established an independent state with Multān as its capital in the later tenth century. Multān became an Ismaili stronghold where the *khutba* [prayer in the name of the sovereign] was read in the name of the Fatimid caliph. This success probably strengthened the Fatimid cause in the neighbouring regions, viz. Makrān, Siwistān and Kirmān. The Ismaili state in Multān lasted until 1010-11, when Maḥmūd of Ghazna annexed the town, took its ruler prisoner and massacred the Ismailis.⁵⁰ The Mongol invasion forced a fresh wave of Ismaili refugees into India as a safe haven.⁵¹ Their amalgamation with the older Ismaili community and subsequent development in doctrines formed a 'link' between Ismailism, Sufism and Hinduism which considerably widened their influence by increasing numbers. The Ismailis seem to have been actively propagating their ideas for a long time, as we find Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq trying to suppress them and burn their books.⁵² Modern criticism has shown that behind religious persecutions conflicting class interests also played a significant role.

The Buddhists were also attracted by the cult of Sufism because they found in it a similarity of ideas. In fact, Buddhism was neither expelled from India nor disappeared on its own, but was to a great extent assimilated by Hinduism and to a lesser degree by

⁵⁰ S.M. Stern, 'Ismaili Propaganda and Fatimid Rule in Sind', *Islamic Culture* 22 (1949), pp.298-307.

⁵¹ *Tabaqāt-i-Nasirī*, pp.213-14; W. Ivanow, *A Brief Survey of the Evolution of Ismailism*, Leiden 1952, pp.19-20. Some publications of the Ismaili Society are preserved in Bombay.

⁵² Futūḥāt-i-Fīrūzshāhī, *Islamic Culture* 5 (1941), pp.451-63. See also *Tārikh-i-Fīrūzshāhī* of Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf.

Sufist propaganda. The various schools that have evolved in Buddhist history reflect different conceptions about the nature of the Buddha, the path of sanctification, the problem of metaphysics and the interpretation of monastic discipline. Along with the two major traditions of Theravāda and Mahāyāna, a third tradition of Tantrayāna, or Buddhism of the Tantras, usually considered as part of the Mahāyāna, appeared in an organised form around the seventh century and has at different times and places played an important role in various religious schools. Tantrism found a parallel in Sufi miracles with an element of magic. It is by the sixth century that Buddhist scholarship was in rapid decline and orthodox Buddhism was slowly losing its grip on the populace. Some of the Tantric *siddhacāryas* were slowly emerging as dignified scholars. With its mystic songs saturated with Buddhism, the Tantrayāna system became a popular movement. Tāranātha, the Tibetan historian, corroborates it while Hsüan-tsang also reports it. Since a part of the Tantric *sadhana* dealt with materialism, viz. wine, women and sex, all the Tantrayāna texts emphasised the fact that no *sadhana* should be carried out without the physical presence and guidance of a well-qualified preceptor. The importance of a guru was a prime factor, a parallel of which can be drawn from the *nath siddhas* of Hinduism who were charmed with the Tantric miraculous effect. Similarly in Islam, Sufi saints, especially the founders of the *dargāh*, were known for their nearness to God and were reportedly gifted with the miraculous power of healing and remedying sorrow. The hagiographical literature on the Sufis amply supports this. How and when Tantra emerged in Buddhism is not easy to answer, but by the time the Arab Muslims came it was very much part of Buddhism and Hinduism. The spread of Tantra beyond the Indian borders would not have been possible without a flourishing activity in India. The mystical formulas called *mantras* and *dhāraṇīs* gained a central role, although everything remains clouded in legends. The specialisation of Muslim Sufis in certain areas known as 'Islam-Pir-cults' or Pīrism – their power in winning popular belief – aided by state economic benefits to converts possibly account in part for the rapid spread of Islam in Sind.⁵³ The marginal nature of Sind in political terms dur-

⁵³ It is quite possible that while narrating the importance of a situation, especially healing the sick or some other wonder that is rendered for its own sake, the

ing the tenth to fifteenth centuries created conditions in which the institution of the *pīr* or Pīrism was bound to flourish.

However, Sind built up the foundations of Indo-Islamic culture under Arab rule, as it was indirectly connected with Damascus and Baghdad, the centres of Islamic civilisation. The Arab governors not only encouraged the exchange of trade and commerce but also promoted scientific and literary thought through the exchange of scholars. The compilation of *Dīwān* [collection of poems] of Abū 'Atā' of Sind in 780 (discovered by De Slaine and written by Ibn Khalīl Khan, the biographer) is an example in point.⁵⁴ Many of the Islamic institutions can possibly trace their origin from Buddhist practice. It is believed that the Islamic *madrassa* probably owes its origin to a Central Asian Buddhist monastery while it is interesting to note that as late as the thirteenth century there was a brief renaissance of Buddhism in Merv, which is of particular value as the account comes from the pen of a Muslim writer.⁵⁵

sūtras were sometimes saturated with wonder stories of Buddhist indulgence in mystic formulas as a wonderful force in Tantrism. Every form of worship, including the circumambulation of a stūpa, offering flowers to it, giving food to the monks, was considered useful. Such wonder stories or miracles have been intimately associated with the Sufis and various customs practised at the *dargah*. In Sind and Bengal some of the Sufi *dargahs* have been located in the religious places of converted people, possibly to keep the flock, including converted people visiting those places on pilgrimage. U.T. Thakur, *Sindhi Culture*, *op. cit.*, pp.17-18; H.T. Sorley, *Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit: His Poetry, Life and Times*, repr. Karachi 1966, pp.68-9. For other parts of India, see N.K. Dikshit, *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, Delhi 1938, p.38; S.S. Tripathy, *Buddhism and Other Religious Cults of South-East India*, Delhi 1988, pp.82-3; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in Bengal (Medieval Period)*, Delhi 1985, pp.77-8; Asim Roy, *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition of Bengal*, New Delhi 1983, p.208.

⁵⁴ Anonymous, tr. Ibn Khalīl and De Slaine, *The Dīwān of Abū 'Atā' of Sind (c.775 AD)*, (referred to in M. Taher (ed.), *Encyclopaedic Survey of Islamic Culture IV*, Delhi 1997, pp.245-8). Also see Edward C. Sachau (tr.) *Alberuni's India*, *op. cit.* I, p.xxxi, for exchange of scholars under Caliphs Mansur (753-774) and Harun al-Rashid (786-808); U.T. Thakur, *op. cit.*, pp.14-15.

⁵⁵ W. Barthold, *Oriental Studies in Honour of Cursetji Erachji*, London 1933, pp.29-31; A. Wink, *Al-Hind*, *op. cit.*, p.43. For the possible linkage of Vihāra

Long before western India was won over to Buddhism, the new religious movement had already brought Sind closer to the sub-continent and further strengthened socio-economic and cultural links between the two. As such, Sind had long served as a bridge for the extension of Buddhism to the trans-Hindu Kush regions. The acquisition of Sind indirectly secured Arab navigation along the coast of South Asia, opening the valuable ports of Deybul and Maṣūra for trade between the Persian Gulf and China, bringing them a stage closer to the Far East. Traditional links with Mesopotamia and Central Asia were revived, while the rich cultural traditions of Greece and Byzantium were new additions to Sind. The region was opened up for repeated ethnic and cultural drifts, i.e. the arrival of the Arabs, Turks and Iranians on the one hand, and the Ismailis and Sufis with their heterodox and syncretic doctrines on the other. All these influences and trends became part of Sind's socio-economic and religious life, affecting political institutions, and were further assimilated over a period of time.⁵⁶ The author of the *Tārīkh-i-Maṣūmī* refers to the orientation of Sindhi culture towards Islamic lands, especially from Sind to Baghdad.⁵⁷ Later al-Bīrūnī and Gardizi mention Arab commercial activities whereby Muslim belief and practice on the popular level were manifestly mixed with local Hindu and Buddhist forms of belief and worship.⁵⁸

with Madrasa, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (q.v.) Madrasa, wherein the results of recent excavations at Buddhist sites in Afghanistan, as also in Central Asia, prove the point (p.1136, new edition); also see J. Pederson. 'Some Aspects of the History of Madrasa', *Islamic Culture* 3 (1929), pp.525-37; A.S. Tritton, *Materials on Muslim Education in the Middle Ages*, London 1957.

⁵⁶ The Sindhi population spoke both Arabic and Sanskrit. The contribution of Sindhi scholars to the development of Islamic sciences such as *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* is impressive. I.H. Qureshi speaks of the Kufah [Iraqi] leather workers who trained the Makrān and Sind tanners.

⁵⁷ *Tārīkh-i-Maṣūmī*, Mir Muḥammad Maṣūm Bakhārī, ed. Khan Baloch, Hyderabad 1959, pp.31-2. It is also stated that the Channa tribe at Sahwan accepted Islam en masse. The author depended much on the *Chachnāma* for information on Sind. The work has also been printed in Sindhi with the same title by Sindhi Adabi Board, Karachi 1903. Also see *Encyclopaedic Survey of Islamic Culture* IV, New Delhi 1997, pp.248-9.

⁵⁸ V. Minorsky, 'Gardizi on India', *BSOAS* 12 (1948), pp.625-40; E. Sachau

The possibility is that a component of the Sind population, including the Buddhists, Vaiṣṇavaites, Saktipanthis and Daryapanthis,⁵⁹ were gradually won over to Islam by the end of the fifteenth century. However, some sections of the population, viz. Lohanas and Sudhas, still accepted the status of *dhimmis* and stuck to their religion, and a little later we find Nanakpanthis⁶⁰ becoming quite popular in Sind. It is suggested that the strong beliefs of the Saktipanthis, Daryapanthis and Nanakpanthis positively served as a counter force to check the missionary activities of the Ismailis and Sufis of other *silsilas* for the spread of Islam.

M. L. Bhatia
(University of Delhi)

(tr.), *Alberuni's India*, op. cit. I, pp.xxxi, 160-9, 353-5, II, pp.27-61; Warwick Ball, 'The Buddhists of Sind', *South Asian Studies* 5 (1989), pp.119-31.

⁵⁹ Daryapanthis were river cultists worshipping the Indus. Well before the spread of Guru Nanak's message this cult was popular in Sind. The river was called Darya Shāh or āb-i-Sind, sometimes nahr-i-Mihrān, with the river king riding a horse having a sword in his right hand. Uderolal (Jhulelal) is represented in two forms: one sitting with crossed legs on a fish and the other a warrior or king of the river riding a horse. He is supposed to have performed the miracle of entering the Indus at Nasarpur and emerging from it at Sukkur, while the reverse was done by a Muslim hero, Daryā Pir Khwāja Khijr. The Lohana and Arora communities of Sind, primarily cultivators, attached importance to the river cult. Later Aroras reportedly migrated to the Punjab from Sind.

⁶⁰ Nanakpanthis were the followers of Guru Nanak who reacted favourably to his message in Sind. Persian writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries referred to the followers of Guru Nanak as Nanakpanthis or Nanakshahis. Mubid Zulfiqar Ardistani, a Zoroastrian and the first non-Sikh chronicler, has left an account of Guru Nanak and the Nanakpanthis during the middle of the seventeenth century in his work, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, describing the five religions, viz. Magis, Hindus, Jews, Nazareans and Muslims. Another work, *Risala-i-Nanak Shah-i-Darvesh*, written in Persian in 1780 by one Budh Sing Arora at the request of Major James Browne and preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, also mentions Sikh followers as Nanakpanthis. However, during the nineteenth century, the word lost its popularity and was broadly replaced by the word Sikh. The followers of Srichand and the Udasi cult are sometimes linked as Nanakpanthis. See Ganda Singh, *Contemporary Sources of Sikh History (1469-1708)*, Calcutta 1962.

EKOTTARĀGAMA (XXX)

Translated from the Chinese Version by
Thích Huyên-Vi and Bhikkhu Pāsādika
in collaboration with Sara Boin-Webb

Twelfth Fascicle
Part 21
(The Triple Gem)

1. 1 'Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in Śrāvastī, at Jetṭ's² Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍada's Park. Then the Exalted One said to the bhikkhus: There are three [kinds of] virtue (*guṇa*) pertaining to taking refuge (*svayaṃ śaraṇam*√*gam*) of one's own accord. Which are the three? The first [kind of] virtue pertains to taking refuge in the Buddha, the second to taking refuge in the Dharma³ (T2, 602a) and the third to taking refuge in the monastic Community.

What does virtue pertaining to taking refuge in the Buddha mean? Among all sentient beings – bipeds, quadrupeds, those with many feet, those with form or without form, those with perception or without perception and finally the gods [belonging to the sphere of] Neither-Perception-Nor-Nonperception (*naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatana*)⁴ – the Tathāgata is superior (*adhika*), he is foremost (*agrya*) and without equal. [Just as] from a cow one gets milk (*kṣīra*), from milk curds (*dadhi*), from curds [butter, from butter] ghee (*sarpis*) and from ghee the skimmings of melted butter (*sarpirmaṇḍa*)⁵, and just as the skimmings of melted butter are superior, foremost and without equal,⁶ – even so among all sentient beings – bipeds, qua-

1 See T2, 601c24 ff.; Hayashi, p. 190 ff.

2 For 給樹 read with Hayashi 祇樹.

3 Here it seems preferable not to translate *dharma* because, according to the context, rather than 'Teaching' the meaning of 'existential constituents, facts' is implied. This latter meaning is fully borne out in the Pāli parallel given below.

4 Cf. BHSD, p. 313a; Nyanatiloka, p. 98.

5 Soothill, p. 115b (醍醐, *sarpirmaṇḍa*): for 'ghee' read 'skimmings of ghee'; cf. Karashima, p. 442: 醍醐燈, "a ghee lamp"... 酥燈 – for 'dhrta-' read 'ghrta-...'

6 As for this simile occurring, though, in another context, cf. A II, p. 95: *Seyyathāpi bhikkhave gavā khīraṃ, khīraṃhā dadhi... sappimhā sappimaṇḍo tatha aggam akkhāyati...*; F.L. Woodward, *Gradual Sayings* II, PTS, 1933, p.

drupeds... and finally the gods [belonging to the sphere of] Neither-Perception-Nor-Nonperception – the Tathāgata is superior, foremost and without equal. [When] there are sentient beings that have faith⁷ in the Buddha, this is called virtue pertaining to faith in what is the best (*agra*). [Those who] are possessed of virtue pertaining to [faith in] what is the best, will have the good fortune to be [born] among gods [or] as the most splendid (*śreṣṭha*) among human beings; this is what is called virtue pertaining to [faith] in what is the best.

What does taking refuge of one's own accord in the Dharma mean? As for that which signifies the existential constituents, there are the *dharmas* under the sway of the malign influences (*sāsrava*), the *dharmas* free from the malign influences (*anāsrava*), the conditioned (*saṃskṛta*) and the unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*) *dharmas*, that which is free from greed (*vigatārāga*) and undefiled (*akliṣṭa*), cessation (*nirodha*), Nirvāṇa. It is the [unconditioned] *dharma* Nirvāṇa which, among all existential constituents, is superior, foremost and without equal. [Just as] from a cow one gets milk... and just as the skimmings of melted butter are superior, foremost and without equal, – even so among the so-called existential constituents – the *dharmas* under the sway of the malign influences and those free from them, the conditioned and unconditioned *dharmas*, that which is free from greed and undefiled, cessation, Nirvāṇa – it is the *dharma* Nirvāṇa which, among all *dharmas*, is superior, foremost and without equal. [When] there are sentient beings that have faith in the Dharma, this is called virtue pertaining to faith in what is the best. [Those who] are possessed of virtue pertaining to [faith in] what is the best, will have the good fortune to be [born] among gods [or] as the most splendid among human beings; this is what is called virtue pertaining to [faith] in what is the best.

What does taking refuge of one's own accord in the Saṃgha of the Noble Ones mean? As for that which is referred to as the Community of the Noble Ones (*āryasaṃgha*), among [all] forms of monastic communities and [all] kinds of assemblies in society the Tathāgata's Saṃgha is superior, foremost and without equal. [Just

104 f.: 'Just as, monks, from a cow comes milk... from ghee the skimmings of ghee, and that is reckoned the best...'

⁷ 承 here in the sense of 'to confess, acknowledge'; 承事 rendering *prasanna*, 'rejoicing, full of faith', seems peculiar to EĀ.

as] from a cow one gets milk... and just as the skimmings of melted butter are superior... without equal, – even so as for that which is referred to as the Community of the Noble Ones, among [all] forms of monastic communities and [all] kinds of assemblies in society the Tathāgata's Saṃgha is... without equal. [When there are sentient beings that have faith in the Community of the Noble Ones,] this is called virtue pertaining to faith in what is the best. [Those who] are possessed of virtue pertaining to [faith in] what is the best, will have the good fortune to be [born] among gods [or] as the most splendid among human beings; this is what is called virtue... what is the best.

Then the Exalted One uttered the following verses:

The first object of faith is the Buddha, foremost and Without equal; the second object of faith is the Dharma which is free from greed and attachment; Reverence and offerings [are due to] the Saṃgha of Men of truth (*satpuruṣa*) who are the most excellent Field of merit (*puṇyakṣetra*). Those who know what is The best, will gain outstanding merit: Having been [Re]born as gods [or] human beings, it will go well for Them wherever they will be; to them, moreover, will be Offered the highest seats of honour and, as a matter of Course, they will partake of ambrosia (*amṛta*); they will Wear garments adorned with the seven kinds of jewels⁸, Being respected by everyone. [Those who know what is the best,] will be most conscientious in their moral Training; they will not be wanting in any of the spiritual Faculties⁹ and will realise an ocean of insight-knowledge And wisdom. In due course they will reach the sphere of Nirvāṇa¹⁰. [Whoever] takes this threefold refuge will Make good progress on his way without difficulty. –

After listening to the Buddha's words, the bhikṣus were pleased and respectfully applied themselves to practice.¹¹

⁸ Cf. BHSD, p. 450b (*ratna*, 'seven precious substances').

⁹ Cf. BHSD, p. 115a (s.v. *indriya*); Nyanatiloka, p. 61.

¹⁰ BHSD, p. 283b (s.v. *nirvāṇa-dhātu*).

¹¹ Cf. A II, p. 34 f.: *Cattāro 'me bhikkhave aggappasādā. Katame cattāro? Yāvata bhikkhave sattā apadā vā dipadā vā... Tathāgato tesam aggam akkhāyati... Ye... Buddhhe passanā agge te passanā agge kho pana passanāna-*

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in Śrāvastī, at Jetṭ's Grove... Then the Exalted One said to the bhikṣus: There are three [kinds of] meritorious actions (*punya-kriyā*). Which are the three? a) The meritorious action consisting in generosity (*dāna*), in b) equilibrium (*samatā*) and in c) [wise] reflection (*manasi-kāra*).

What does meritorious action consisting in generosity mean? When there is someone, happily making donations to ascetics and brahmins, to the poorest of the poor, to the bereaved and uprooted; who, when food is needed, provides food, and when encouragement is needed, gives encouragement; who [offers] robes¹², alms-food, lodging, medicine for treating the sick¹³, fragrant substances, flowers (*gandhapuṣpa*)¹⁴ and temporary accommodation unstintingly, contenting himself with what he has on the body – this is what is called the meritorious action of generosity.

What does meritorious action consisting in equilibrium mean? When there is someone who does not deprive of life, does not steal and is always possessed of modesty and conscientiousness (*hrīvyapatrāpya*); who does not take delight in evil thoughts, is not a thief,

maggo vipāko hoti... Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 38 ff.: 'Monks, there are these four best faiths. What four? Monks, as compared with creatures, whether footless, bipeds... a Tathāgata... is reckoned best of them... They who have faith in the Buddha have faith in the best: of those who have faith in the best the result is best...'

As Woodward notes (*ibid.*, n. 4), this discourse is included in the sutta at A III, p. 35 f. and also occurs at It, p. 87 ff. Whilst in the two places of A 'four best faiths' (/ best activity) (faith in the triple gem and in the 'Ariyan eightfold way' (*ariye aṭṭhaṅgike magge*) / perfecting oneself in the moral training cherished by the Noble Ones (*ariyakantesu silesu paripūrakārino*)) are explained, in It – as in EĀ – 'three best faiths' are dealt with.

In Vasubandhu (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, ed. P. Pradhan, Patna 1975, p. 23, l. 5-6) is found a short quotation from SA which is a parallel to the corresponding passage in EĀ: *ye kecid dharmāḥ saṃskṛtā vā saṃskṛtā vā virāgas teṣāṃ agra ākhyāyate*. The same quotation also occurs in the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* (for references – to which should be added: AN II, 34 and EĀ, T2, 602a12-13 – see Bh. Pāsādika, *Kanonische Zitate im Abhidharmakośabhāṣya des Vasubandhu*, Göttingen 1989, p. 44 [125]).

¹² Cf. BSR 18, 2 (2001), p. 219, n. 5.

¹³ Cf. *ibid.*, n. 6.

¹⁴ Cf. Karashima, p. 493, s.v. 香華.

much given to generosity towards people¹⁵ and who is no miser¹⁶; whose speech is conciliatory, refined and not offending anybody; who, living the holy life (*brahmacarya*), does not practise sexual intercourse; who is content with [just keeping] his own¹⁷ frame [going]; who does not tell lies, always paying attention to being absolutely honest, without cheating and lying; who is neither elated nor dejected [because of] that which the worldling esteems; who, not taking intoxicants, never fails to avoid stupefaction; who, furthermore¹⁸, suffuses one quarter [of the cardinal points] with friendliness (*maitrī*), two quarters, three, four quarters, and also the quarters of the intermediate points of the compass¹⁹, the zenith and nadir, who suffuses the whole [world], boundlessly, without limits and absolutely beyond measure; who causes with a heart [full] of friendliness everything to be enveloped and [thus] realises peace of mind (*kṣema*); who, moreover, suffuses one quarter [of the cardinal points] with a heart [full] of compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity²⁰, two quarters...; who suffuses the whole [world] with a heart [full] of compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity – this is what is called the meritorious action of equilibrium.²¹

What does the existential constituent 'meritorious action consisting in [wise] reflection' mean? When there is a bhikṣu who, given to practice, is intent on recollection (*smṛti*) and perfect awakening (*sambodhi*); who does not succumb to attachment and with whom deliberation has ceased; who relies on giving up (*prahāna*)

¹⁵ Particularly this tautology and this discourse as a whole are striking examples of unsystematic text and of free paraphrasing in marked contrast to the editions of the parallel Pāli Nikāya.

¹⁶ I.e. 吝, after CBETA.

¹⁷ Read, after CBETA, 己 for 巳 (T, Hayashi).

¹⁸ As for the following, cf. A II, p. 128 (125): ... *Idha bhikkhave ekacco pug-galo mettāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharivā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ...*; Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 132 f.: '... Herein, monks, a certain person lives irradiating one quarter (of the world) with a heart possessed of amity; so also as to the second...'

¹⁹ Lit.: 'eight quarters'.

²⁰ 護 (lit. 'protecting' – *sc.* equilibrium) rendering *upekṣā*, seems peculiar to EĀ.

²¹ Cf. A III, p. 415, where action is defined as intention (*cetanā*); cf. also Mahāvīyut. 148-50: *kāya-karman, vāk-karman, manaḥ-karman* (bodily, verbal and mental actions).

and on what necessarily leads to [ultimate] release (*nairyāṇika*); who, practising the *dharma* 'being intent on perfect awakening', is intent on recollection and perfect awakening, on perfect awakening [by means of] an exclamation²², on perfect awakening [by means of] the absorptions (*dhyāna*) and [by means of] restraint (*saṃvara*); who does not succumb to attachment... relies on... what necessarily leads to [ultimate] release – this is what is called the meritorious action of [wise] reflection. These are, bhikṣus, the three [kinds of] meritorious action. – Then the Exalted One uttered the following verses:

Generosity and equilibrium – friendliness... – and
Nurturing [wise] reflection – these are the three basics;
The wise set great store by them; here and now they
Reap the rewards which, of course, [ensure] heavenly
Existence. By means of these three basics one will,
Beyond any doubt, be born among the gods.

Therefore, bhikṣus, one should be intent on skill in means as a [guide-] rope to these three basics. Thus, bhikṣus, you should train. After listening to the Buddha's words, the bhikṣus were pleased and respectfully applied themselves to practice.²³

Additional Abbreviation

BETA = revised T edition of the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association, Taiwan 2000.

²² Tentatively rendering the very interesting 猗覺. Could this be related to the extraordinary Mahāsāṃghika teachings described by Bareau? See André Bareau, *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit véhicule* (EFEO), Paris 1955, p. 65: 'Dire «O douleur (*duḥkha*)!» peut conduire à la Voie (*mārga*)... Dire «O douleur!» peut être une aide (*upakāra*)...'.

²³ According to T2, 602, n. 13, Hayashi, Akanuma and Lancaster, the verses of this discourse are related to A II, p. 32: *Cattār' imāni... saṅghavatthūni...*; Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 36: '... there are these four bases of sympathy..' In spite of some thematic similarities (in Woodward's words: 'charity, kind speech, doing a good turn and treating all alike'), it is difficult to see any real parallelism between the A and EĀ verses; the simile of the 'linchpin of a moving car', for instance, is not found in the EĀ verses, ending with the 'rewards ensuring heavenly existence' which, it seems, is not at all congruent with the preceding description of 'wise reflection', viz. the intention to realise 'perfect awakening' and 'ultimate release'.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Casket of Medicine (Bhesajjamañjūsā Chapters 1-18). Trans. Jinadasa Liyanaratne. Pali Text Society, Oxford 2002. xviii, 197 pp. £12.10. ISBN 0 86013 4003 2.

An edition of Chapters 1-18 of the *Bhesajjamañjūsā*, by Dr Liyanaratne, was noticed in an earlier number of the journal (*BSR* 15, 1 (1998), pp.106-7). It is a pleasure to record a translation, by the same scholar, of that portion of the only known medical work written in Pāli.

In his introduction (pp.i-xv) the translator comments on the importance of the *Bhesajjamañjūsā* and draws particular attention to problems arising from the correct identification and translation of many of the plant names included in it. Here and in the List of Abbreviations (pp.xvii-xviii) he gives valuable information about publications which have helped him in this task.

The translation (pp.1-173) comprises the introductory chapter of the text, followed by chapters giving a general consideration of drugs, etc., good living and the prevention of disease. There are sections on food and food preparations, liquid drugs, toxic food and antidotes, different kinds of indigestion, groups of drugs, major and minor therapeutics, and various unfavourable things: signs of messengers, signs met on the way, dreams and prodromes. The final chapter deals with fatal diseases and the general treatment of diseases.

In the introduction to his edition of the *Bhesajjamañjūsā*, Liyanaratne has already pointed out the contribution which this text makes to the study of Pāli lexicography. At the end of this translation he emphasises this in the glossary (pp.175-97) of nearly 850 selected medical and pharmacological terms, many of which are not found in existing dictionaries.

K. R. Norman

Buddhist Critical Spirituality: Prajñā and Śūnyatā. Shohei Ichimura, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi 2001. xvii, 435 pp. Rs 795. ISBN 81-208-1798-2

This book is a collection of fifteen articles written between 1989 and 1999, eleven of them presented at different international seminars and conferences. Two of these eleven were already published: article three ('Buddha's Love and Human Love with Focus of Kuan-Yin Bodhisattva') in *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 13 (Taipei 2000), pp.195-254; article fifteen ('Buddha-Dharma and Natural Law Towards a Transcultural Universal Ethics') in Charles Wei-hsun Fu and Sandra A. Wawrytko (ed.), *Buddhist Ethics and Modern Society, An International Symposium*, 1991, pp.383-405.

There are only four articles that were not presented at international seminars: article seven ('Structural Linkage between Nāgārjuna's Dialectic and Logic') which is a composite of three minor papers published in the *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 45, 2 (1997), 46, 2 (1998), 47, 2 (1999); article nine ('The Chinese Mādhyamika Sēng-Chao's Paradoxical Method of Argument') published in the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 19 (1992), pp.51-71; articles four ('Nāgārjuna's Dialectic Analyzed in Terms of Advaya-Vyatireka') and twelve ('Buddhist Critical Spirituality in India and the World Today') published respectively in the felicitation volumes devoted to P.V. Bapat (*Amalā Prajñā. Aspects of Buddhist Studies*, Delhi 1989) and Sandhong Rimpoche (*In Search of Truth*, Sarnath 1999).

The fifteen articles are the result of cross-cultural studies of Buddhism based on scriptural sources in Sanskrit, Pāli and Chinese. Some of them refer only to Indian and South Asian Buddhism while others deal with Chinese and East Asian Buddhism.

The articles are arranged in four main sections irrespective of their chronological order. The first section is entitled Buddhist Critical Spirituality in History and Culture, the second Nāgārjuna and Mādhyamika Dialectic of Critical Spirituality, the third Chinese Buddhist Critical Spirituality and Its Culture, and the fourth Buddhist Critical Spirituality and the Contemporary World. Since it is impossible to discuss the content of each and every article, I will limit myself to highlighting what I consider the

main thesis of each section.

In the first section the author claims basically two things: 1) the Indian cult of Avalokiteśvara and the Chinese Buddhist cult of Kuan-yin were culturally and spiritually different; while the former may have been an assimilation and metamorphosis of the potency ascribed to the Hindu deity Brahmā and therefore influenced by Hindu spirituality, the latter is squarely based on the insight of the Four Noble Truths in terms of *anātman* and *śūnyatā*. 2) Nāgārjuna lived from the middle of the first century to that of the second and was associated with Śātavāhana kings as well as the Śaka Satrap Rudradāman of Ujjayinī, for whom he wrote respectively the *Suhrlekha* and *Ratnāvalī*.

In the second section the author contends that: 1) the use of positive and contrapositive exemplifications (*anvaya* and *vyatireka*) typical of classical Indian syllogism is also the fundamental underlying principle of the Nāgārjunian method of refutation. 2) Nāgārjuna and other Buddhist logicians intended to resolve theoretical disputes between Abhidharmikas or between Hindu adversaries by shifting both the mental process and the logical meaning to a different plane from that of logical laws, that is, the subliminal, transcendent, trans-empirical and non-linguistic domain of human consciousness. 3) The *Upāyahrdaya-śāstra* (*Fang-pien-hsin-lun*) is a logical text written by Nāgārjuna which prescribes rules for debate and advocates a three-membered syllogism rather than a five-membered one.

In the third section the author argues that: 1) Indian and Chinese forms of syllogistic inference as developed by the Mohist school are fundamentally the same, reflecting the universal nature of logic and language. 2) The *reductio-ad-absurdum* method introduced by Nāgārjuna in India and the paradoxical method introduced by Sēng-chao in China are authentic Mādhyamika methods, both share the same structural basis of inferential logic which, like the insight of *śūnyatā*, is trans-cultural. 3) The dominant cultural force of Early Medieval China was motivated by two major sources of spirituality, the Prajñāpāramitā insight of emptiness and Kuan-yin's love and compassion depicted in the Lotus Sūtra.

In the fourth section the author asserts that: 1) Buddhist spirituality is based on the insight of non-self, this spirituality should be distinguished from that of Hinduism as well as from any other spirituality based on the doctrine of self or *dhātu-vāda*. 2).

The cult of Kuan-yin bodhisattva and Pure Land faith as evolved in China are of the nature of Buddhist spirituality. 3) The Buddhist concept of Dharma is compatible with the rational concept of natural law and it can serve as a trans-cultural basis for universal human ethics.

In sum, *Buddhist Critical Spirituality* is full of thought-provoking discussions of a wide range of questions difficult to assess in a single review. Sometimes Buddhist studies are too compartmentalised into four major groups limited to their literary sources, namely, Pāli, Sanskrit, Tibetan and East Asian languages (Chinese, Korean and Japanese). The main contribution of Ichimura's book is to counteract that tendency in Buddhist studies showing that the Sino-Indian cultural interaction through Buddhism is a somehow neglected area that ought to be fully focused in future Buddhist studies.

On the critical side, at times I found the book very difficult to follow, too technical for the common reader and plenty of unnecessary repetitions. Such criticisms aside, this is a stimulating work for anyone interested in Buddhist philosophy and spirituality.

Abraham Velez
(Georgetown University, Washington DC)

Der Buddha und seine Lehre. Elf Beiträge zur rechten Anschauung. Herausgegeben von Raimund Beyerlein. Verlag Beyerlein und Steinschulte, Stambach-Herrnschrot 2002. 235 pp. ISBN 3-931095-26-6.

This collection of essays is intended as an illumination of the 'original' teaching of the Buddha, which could serve as an introduction as well as a vehicle for deeper understanding of its finer points, and also includes hints about its practical application for followers. One of the contributors is Paul Debes, a prolific speaker and writer and the founder of the Buddhistisches Seminar für Seinskunde, widely influential in Germany; others are his collaborators, readers or pupils and three are Western-born Theravāda monks. The 'right view' of the subtitle is for them the one which can be elaborated from the earliest Pāli sources,

particularly the Sutta-pitaka, viewed by them as more or less the authentic record of the historical Buddha's utterances.

The first article, 'The Teaching of the Buddha in the West', is by Hellmuth Hecker, two of whose books have been reviewed in this journal (14,1 [199], and 15,1 [1998]). He stresses at the outset the affinity of Buddhist teachings with modern scientific theories about the nature of the material world, Buddhism's independence of blind religious beliefs and the absence of coercion in its history, and goes on to outline in pregnant, precise and easily followed contemporary terms the teaching and its methodological application for the realisation of the ultimate goal. Bhikkhu Bodhi, the well-known successor of Nyanaponika Thera as head of the Buddhist Publication Society in Kandy, follows with an outline of the Dhamma in more traditional fashion, but finishes on a pragmatic note when he points out that spiritual liberation and social harmony spring from the same inner source when it has been mastered. Alfred Weil, a social scientist, writer on Buddhism and activist in German Buddhist organisations, tackles the notoriously difficult subject of the chain of dependent origination, skilfully using descriptions of events in the Sutta-pitaka which occasioned its exposition – when Sāriputta met Assaji, when Vipassi, the Buddha of a past world period, pondered the question prior to his Enlightenment and when the Buddha dampened down Ananda's overconfidence in having fully understood this profound teaching. But do we understand it better after reading this article? Some of the terminology used in it is certainly debatable. Bhikkhu Akiñcana, of Swiss origin, narrows down his exposition to just one link in the chain of dependent origination, the concept of *upādāna*, limiting it further to its traditional fourfold division, thereby demonstrating the inexhaustibility of the theme as a whole as well as in parts. Kay Zumwinkel, a translator of Pāli texts and founder of a Theravāda-orientated group in Nuremberg, regards our habitual identification with and clinging to all or one or the other of the five *khandhas* as the basis of personal existence to be a dilemma; he sees the first step towards its solution in dropping the search for absolutes in this world.

Fritz Schäfer, known to readers from the review of his voluminous work addressing lay practitioners of the Dhamma, *Der Buddha sprach nicht nur für Mönche und Nonnen* (BSR 17, 1(2000), pp.89-96), gives his contribution the title 'Reality' and

precedes it with verse 11 from the *Dhammapada*, translating the expressions *sāra* – *asāra* as ‘real – unreal’, rather than by their basic meaning ‘essential – non-essential’. This infuses a pragmatic flavour into the notion of reality and virtually rules out any theoretical inquiry into ‘objective’ reality, quite in keeping with the true essence of the Buddha’s teaching which is liberation. The criterion of what is true is the capacity for enhancing the process of liberation (*Heilstauglichkeit*). Reality is what works, either towards liberation or in the context of ordinary experience of ourselves and the world. In either case it is fully of our own making (through the karmic effect of our thoughts, words and deeds); beside it there is no other reality. This is a bold statement, but it expresses well the basic stance of the Buddhist and most other Indian approaches: to ponder reality, or a world, devoid of anyone experiencing it, makes no sense. However, there are wider questions involved here; for a start, our experiences of reality (yours and mine), though not exactly identical, overlap, so there is a measure of intersubjectivity at play when we experience our self-created reality. However, pursuing this line would mean embarking on a philosophical enquiry which can lead only to theories, views and beliefs and therefore away from reality. Schäfer is disciplined enough to avoid this pitfall, guided by the message of the Buddha’s four liberating Truths, which represent the only effective way to the goal.

The question of the existence of an objective world in time and space also preoccupies Horst J. Neubauer, a professor of geodynamics at the University of Bonn. He found agreement between the Buddha’s teaching of unsubstantiality and emptiness of experienced phenomena and the relativity of scientific knowledge which stems from projected assumptions made in the face of the absence of stability or fixed points in the observed world. It is the observer who creates in it seeming certainties and constitutes a world system which he then inhabits and further explores. And so the author finishes with the quotation of the first line from the *Dhammapada*: ‘Mind precedes phenomena. Mind is their ruler and originator’. This sophisticated article is followed by two contributions from ‘ordinary housewives’. Ilse Karnotzki decided in her 49th year to survey her life and found it had been, at bottom, an unconscious search for certainty and safety. Needless to say, she did not find them in life on a lasting basis. Acquaintance with

the Buddha’s teaching, however, eventually showed her the way. Annemarie Schoolmann understands the teaching in simple terms as a follower of the Buddha’s injunctions, which she appears to know comprehensively, the most important of them being never to lose sight of the goal.

The collection culminates in the contribution by Paul Debes, entitled ‘Can we guide “ourselves” “back” to the Absolute (Nirvāṇa)?’ He lives now, aged 96, in seclusion near Bayreuth, looked after by his lifelong secretary who later became his wife. He is no longer in full command of his once masterly intellectual capacities, so his contribution is presumably a little older than the other ones. He took the title from a letter of a reader of his, which gave him the opportunity to refute two fallacies: 1) that ‘we’ can reach Nirvāṇa and then be ‘in’ it, and 2) that it is a return to where we once were and from where we might in future come out again. He then shows in the course of consistent argumentation, supported by quotations from the Sutta-pitaka, that Nirvāṇa is reached only when the elusive ‘we’ or ‘I’, whose existence is bound to the five *khandhas*, fall away with their dissolution, i.e., when the notion ‘I’ (*asmimāna*), which the author characterises as ‘belief in personality’ (*Personlichkeitglaube*), has been abandoned. When these obstructions have been removed, then that which is not conditioned by anything and has never been created, the imperishable, the lasting, the eternal, the unchangeable, is what remains. Nobody and nothing can be ‘in’ Nirvāṇa, it is not a place; it is eternal peace. This is certainly consistent with the Buddhist teachings, provided the author’s notion of ‘belief in personality’ concerns the empirical personality bound to the *khandhas* with which the individual normally identifies himself. If he means by dissolution of the *khandhas* the disappearance of the personality structure altogether, questions can be asked, such as: What about the personality of the Tathāgata and arahats who are above *asmimāna*? The Sutta-pitaka, of course, does have an answer (MN 72): the Tathāgata (which applies also to arahats) is ‘deep, immeasurable, unfathomable as is the great ocean’. Final truth (*dhamma*) ‘is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, beyond discourse, subtle, intelligible to the wise’. This formulation does leave scope for some kind of unfathomable continuation of liberated personalities. Otherwise, the whole of the Mahāyāna tradition with its plethora of Tathāgatas and accomplished bodhisattvas

would be invalidated as a deviation from the original teaching. This may indeed be the stance of some Theravāda circles, although it is not proclaimed by them too loudly, perhaps in the interest of harmony within the international Buddhist organisations which bring together all Buddhist schools. As to the author's position, it is not unequivocally spelled out, which may be only wise. It is in the spirit of the quoted pronouncement by the Buddha to leave this question unanswered and concentrate on practice in order to achieve the goal of liberation. A Buddhological scholar, however, has to ponder the whole elaborate body of Buddhist teachings. The second point is easily answered. There is no ground in the Buddhist tradition for regarding Nirvāṇa as the originator of Samsāra, including the beings in it who would then struggle to return 'home'. This would be the emanation philosophy promulgated, for example, by the Upanisads or the Neoplatonism of Plotinos. Debes uses a skilful comparison with stillness and noise to explain the relation between Nirvāṇa and Samsāra. Stillness is unconditioned and uncreated and does not generate noise. Noise can only overlay stillness, but stillness persists underneath and, as soon as noise ceases, it is again there, unaffected. Stillness and noise are two categories which do not influence or produce each other. One could use this comparison (perhaps to the displeasure of its author?) to illustrate even the Mahāyāna thesis about Samsāra and Nirvāṇa coexisting as two sides of a coin. The transition from one to the other is a matter of shifting one's consciousness, which explains the accomplished bodhisattvas' moving freely in both dimensions. An advanced practitioner can experience stillness even in the noisiest of situations by shifting his consciousness into a deep state of meditation and move from one state to the other at will.

The collection finishes with four evocative poems by the German-born Bhikkhu Dhammavira who lives in Thailand. The whole collection makes for uplifting and stimulating reading. One can only admire the earnestness of the contributors matched by their knowledge of sources, secondary literature and congenial works by Western men of learning. I hope to have demonstrated that some contributions can even stimulate academic discussion or suggest a theme for a research paper. The book is immaculately produced by the publisher who is also its editor.

Karel Werner (SOAS)

Ludwig Alsdorf, Kleine Schriften (2nd ed.). Ed. Albrecht Wezler. (Glasenapp Stiftung 10), Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2001. xxiii, 750 pp. €86.00. ISBN 3-515-07737-5.

Ernst Windisch: Kleine Schriften. Ed. Karin Steiner, Jörg Gengnagel. (Glasenapp Stiftung 41), Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2001. xxvii, 717 pp. €116.00. ISBN 3-515-07120-2.

When I read or re-read this second reprint of the minor works of the late Ludwig Alsdorf (1904-78) I was, again and again, pleasantly reminded of the unusual acumen of a German scholar who always stood on the 'firm ground of philological research' (to use one of his own formulations). 'As Editor-in-Chief of *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*, I still recall from the office in Copenhagen how Alsdorf showed a rare aptitude for nosing out problems, and for suspecting from a brief quotation and reference in a contributor's article that the commonly accepted meanings of a word did not apply in this particular case' (K.R. Norman in the Obituary, CPD II, fasc.11, Copenhagen 1981, p.xvii). Norman quotes Alsdorf for this explanation: 'It is in the nature of things that we have rather often to weigh possibilities and alternatives. And I am convinced of the truth of what my great and revered Guru Lüders told me more than once; what makes a philologist is above all a feeling for what is probable ('Ein Gefühl für das Wahrscheinliche')'.

The reprint contains five articles on Vedic exegesis, fifteen on Jainism, seven concerning Buddhism, five about the Edicts of Aśoka, four contributions to Middle Indic philology, three to the history of Indian literature, culture and art, one about Indian mathematics, one on the origin of modern Indian languages, two on modern India, and one about the history of Indology in Berlin from 1821 to 1945. Finally, there are three reviews, a bibliography but no indices.

Without going into details, I can only state my general impression that none of these papers is outdated. Now and then one may be left with the impression that Alsdorf's textual criticism over-relied on requirements of metrical regularity.

The Foreword to the second reprint contains a curious 'defence' of Alsdorf against an attack launched by a certain Sheldon Pollack, who finds fault with Alsdorf for having once quoted from Alfred Rosenberg's *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Wezler

admits that Alsdorf was a member of the Nazi Party but insists that he was no Nazi by persuasion. But does this 'defence' not leave the reader with the impression that Alsdorf was an opportunist? Is this a fair defence? What is worse: to be an honest Nazi, or to pretend that one is a Nazi? Germans, of course, still have problems with their past. Wezler relates an anecdote about his own teacher, Paul Thieme (d.2001), who, under the influence of alcohol, would criticise the régime in public. But Thieme (as far as I am aware) suffered no sanctions from the régime as a result of his open critique. What does this prove?

May I suggest something that my German colleagues would perhaps never dare to dream of, namely, that they try to study Rosenberg in an objective way and in historical context without feeling they have to go to extremes of condemnation. Why not admit the simple fact that Rosenberg himself studied the works of Paul Deussen and took a deep and serious interest in Indology, and that he (to the best of my knowledge) was a tolerant and serious protagonist of academic freedom? From Rosenberg's *Letzte Aufzeichnungen* (Göttingen 1955, p.69), written in the shadows of the gallows, we learn of his Indological studies in the State Library of Munich, of his profound admiration of ancient India's aristocratic philosophy, the beauty of its Sanskrit poetry, and of his own plans for a revised edition of Böthlingk's *Indische Sprüche* – to this day a great desideratum. What is so reprehensible about that?

In a sense it is a good thing that a foreigner has raised this embarrassing issue, and that a German Indologist has tried to respond. Alsdorf is not the only German Indologist who has been accused of 'heresy'. There are other excellent German scholars who carried the Party badge with the swastika. An open debate is needed, and German scholars must try to deal with the difficult issue with more courage, decency and objectivity. Such a debate should be conducted on a broad scale, not only in the interest of historical truth but also in the more narrow interest of the future of Indology in Germany.

German scholars – as shown so clearly by the numerous reprints of their valuable papers by Glasenapp Stiftung – have made absolutely indispensable contributions to the field. German Indology is now on the decline, as is Indology in all other European countries. This is a great pity for, ideally, in our time of

unprecedented spiritual impoverishment, knowledge of the philosophy and culture of ancient India could serve as a welcome source of inspiration in many ways. Germany still has many fine philologists, but whatever became of the spiritual force justifying public support of their studies? Philology in Germany is no longer a *Geisteswissenschaft*. Why?

Ernst Windisch (1844-1918) too was an excellent philologist of the old school, and there can be no doubt that his papers (even if some are now very much outdated) deserve to be reprinted.

The edition and translation of parts of Hemacandra's *Yogaśāstra* (pp.3-81) serve as an excellent introduction to classical Jaina philosophy. The text can now be improved in the light of Muni Jambuvijayaji's 1981-82 edition, and so can the translation, as I myself experienced when preparing my partial Danish version for *Gads religionshistoriske tekster* (Copenhagen 1984, pp.164-9). Very important still is the long paper on the Greek influence on Indian drama (pp.98-201), with which I concur, and the study of the *Nyāyabhāṣya* (pp.312-52) remains fundamental. Students of Pāli will benefit from Windisch's study of the *saṃdhi*-consonants found in that language (pp.488-505).

In his rectorial speech from Leipzig in 1895, Windisch reminds his audience of the general significance of the study of ancient India. In particular he refers to the Sanskrit language, to the fables and legends, and to Buddhism. Windisch himself did not belong to those who placed Buddhism above Christianity – on the contrary (p.525). He was, in fact, closely associated with the Collegium der Evangelisch-lutherischen Mission in Leipzig (p.viii). It is good to keep his preference, or bias, in mind when one studies two of his most important papers, unfortunately *not* reprinted here, namely, *Māra und Buddha* (1895), and *Buddhas Geburt und die Lehre von der Seelenwanderung* (1908). In both books, Windisch denies the influence of Buddhism and Christianity on each other (cf. Valentina Stache-Rosen, *German Indologists*, New Delhi 1990, p.102). However, his comparative studies are still valuable even though his conclusions were, in the opinion of this reviewer, quite wrong.

From the comparative point of view, the careful 1909 study of the composition of the *Mahāvastu* (pp.644-88) is still valuable. Windisch finds that the last parts of the *Mahāvastu* depend on the *Mahāvagga*, as does, to some extent, the *Lalitavistara* which, on

the whole, seems to be later than the *Mahāvastu*. I am not fully convinced that Windisch's arguments are conclusive. Today it would be rewarding to conduct a similar comparison on a broader basis, taking, above all, the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (unknown to Windisch) into consideration.

More convincing is the final paper (pp.687-99), in which he points out the Brahminical background of celebrated Buddhist legends about Maudgalyāyana and Asita Devala. Much more could be added here, so much in fact that one could speak of 'Buddhist syncretism'.

The Green Glasenapp Series has proved its great usefulness ever since the *Kleine Schriften* of Hermann Oldenberg inaugurated it in 1967. The *Kleine Schriften* of Kielhorn, Jacobi, Thieme, Geiger, Lüders, Kirfel, Zachariae, Schubring, Cappeller, Hacker, Lommel, Franke, Schrader, Simon, Neisser, Frauwallner, Strauss, Stein, Weller, Caland, Hillbrandt, Waldschmidt, Winternitz, Sieg, Oertel, Kirste, von Roth, Leumann, Jolly, Müller and Scherman are now also available among the 51 volumess of this series, and it is to be hoped that further collections of *opera minora* will be added. Personally, I would be delighted to see a reprint of some of the minor works of Ernst Kuhn, Leopold von Schröder, Max Walleser, Johannes Nobel and, lest we forget, Walther Wüst and Richard Schmidt.

Chr. Lindtner

Absolute Delusion, Perfect Buddhahood: The Rise and Fall of a Chinese Heresy. Jamie Hubbard. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2001. xvii, 333 pp. Hbk \$45.00, pbk \$22.92. ISBN (pbk) 0-8248-2345-1.

It is always a pleasure to welcome a new monograph that is both clearly the result of many years of devoted scholarship and also a substantial contribution to our understanding of an aspect of Buddhism long clouded with misconceptions. The Sect of the Three Stages was little known until the discovery of the Dunhuang manuscripts at the start of the twentieth century, which allowed in due course for the publication of one of the pioneering monuments of Japanese scholarship on Chinese Buddhist history by Yabuki Keiki.

Now that the time has come to look once more at the materials brought forward by Yabuki, and at other sources unearthed since his time, the results are in many ways surprising. For though Jamie Hubbard still uses the word 'heresy' to characterise the movement, he shows plenty of reasons for supposing that it was actually much closer to the mainstream than many have supposed. In order to do this he deliberately chooses a 'doctrinal' focus on the materials he examines, paying less attention to external factors than to inter-relationships within Buddhist traditions of learning themselves, even if on p.17 he alludes briefly to the dark times in which Xinxing (540-94), founder of the movement, lived and worked. The results certainly justify this procedure, for it is conclusively shown how unimportant the rhetoric of decline is to Xinxing's movement – the well-known East Asian scheme of Buddhist decline in three stages is simply almost entirely absent from the writings of the Sect of the Three Stages – rather, the name of the movement refers to Three Levels of spiritual capacity, and Hubbard prefers therefore to translate accordingly. Of course, whatever the attitude of the Three Levels movement to Buddhist history (and it would not have been the only Chinese group to see the history of the Buddhadharmā as essentially a subjective experience), the clearly pessimistic analysis of the human condition contained in its doctrinal writings may still be related to historical circumstance. It is evident that China in the sixth century, at least in the south, started with a period of considerable optimism, cultural productivity and, above all, security. Indeed, in the account of one rebellion that eventually broke out in 541, as the *Zizhu tongjian* of Sima Guang, 158 (Beijing 1946), p.4910, explicitly states, 'the people of the south had long been unused to warfare'. It may be that these troubles were symptomatic of wider climate change, rather than of any specific persecution of Buddhism, since we find a darkening mood widespread throughout Eurasia at this time, with outbreaks of epidemics not only in the Byzantium of Justinian, but also in Japan.

However, having shown that Xinxing's response lies well within the bounds of tradition, Hubbard is concerned to show further that the suppressions that it encountered were not the result of its doctrine, but rather due to specific political difficulties caused by its adherents or patrons. This is entirely credible: when Paramārtha started to translate Yogācāra texts in the late sixth

century, he ran into the condemnation of jealous and influential court monks who caused his translations to be banned for some time, according to *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 1, p.430b4-7 in the Taishō edition – and it seems improbable that they were actually able to show that Yogācāra thought as such was, as they claimed, politically subversive. On the other hand, Hubbard's account of the various incidents of suppression give the impression of less than conclusive research into the labyrinthine complexities of Chinese court intrigues. Take, for example, the emperor Xuanzong and the Three Levels movement. On pp.214-15 we are told that 'the fact that he waited some nine years after assuming power to act against them seems to argue against strictly ideological motivation'. The underlying argument is probably correct, but there are clear grounds for believing that Xuanzong was politically in too delicate a position for a number of years at the start of his reign to enforce policies that he would have preferred for either ideological or political reasons, thus leaving his failure to act as a matter of no particular relevance to his possible motivation. Some of these I have touched upon in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series Three, 1.2 (July 1991).

It is possible, therefore, that Hubbard's thorough and painstaking study, with its generous selection of translated materials in its final part, will not remain quite the last word in studies of this interesting movement, any more than Yabuki's massive tome. But future corrections to his work are unlikely to be as wholesale as his own careful and scholarly reassessment of what we thought we knew. This volume will therefore no doubt stand as essential reading for any students of Chinese Buddhism for a long time to come.

T. H. Barrett
(SOAS)

Society and the Supernatural in Song China. Edward L. Davis. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2001. xi, 355 pp. Hbk \$60.00, pbk \$29.92. ISBN (hbk) 0-8248-2398-2, (pbk) 0-8248-2310-9.

This wide-ranging and richly-documented monograph may purport to focus on the forms of religion practised in China in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, but in fact it challenges our entire

view of China's religious history at many points, especially with regard to the relationships between the ostensibly separate religious traditions, and so deserves to be read by anyone working within the broader field of Chinese religions, historical or contemporary. The annotation in particular is far more informative than one would normally expect, and contains miniature essays on important topics extending over several pages – one can only regret that the index does not begin to provide access to these, nor even to all the themes treated in the main text.

Most of these have more to do with Taoism and its broader environment than to Buddhist studies as normally conceived (though this, of course, begs several major questions) and therefore it would take us rather far afield to discuss the whole volume to the extent that it deserves. Rather, let us simply say that one major preoccupation of the core chapters is spirit mediumship in local society and in the established traditions of China, ranging from Taoist and other rites of exorcism to the reintroduction into Confucian rites of the notion of possession by the dead ancestors in funerary contexts. Chapter Six, therefore, on 'Tantric Exorcists and Child Mediums', reveals in some detail how the use of child mediums as described in Tantric texts originally translated, it would seem, in Tang times, flourished in the everyday village life of the subsequent Song period. In line with the findings of one or two earlier pioneers, following for the most part the bibliographical leads given by Michel Strickmann, Edward Davis lays to rest for good the notion that the Tantric works available in Chinese simply sat in the Buddhist Canon as part of little disturbed monastic holdings and played no real part in Chinese life.

It must be said, however, that tracing back the origins of this situation is a far from simple task. There are some grounds for believing that the Taoist rituals for interrogating spirits were influenced by Buddhism at quite an early date: the account given on pp.102-4 of an apparently purely Chinese exorcism in Tang times must date, to judge from the surviving fragments of the text from which it is excerpted, to circa 800 CE at the latest, but the author turns out from his other surviving stories to have had an interest in Indian Buddhist themes. The article on 'Abisha' (using the Japanese term for the Tantric practice) cited rather misleadingly at the top of p.281 – the citation should be from fascicle One (Tokyo 1929), p.7, of the encyclopaedia named – does moreover

point out that one of the Tang translations clearly refers to the Sanskrit term for 'interrogation' later adopted for the Taoist practice. But the best early source for interrogating spirits, unfortunately overlooked here, is the twenty-second section of the final (thirtieth) fascicle of the *Qianjin yifang* of the seventh century physician Sun Simiao, which gives details of how a child medium may be used as a diagnostic device. Though as far as I know the textual integrity of this work has never been questioned – we are, after all dependent on a Song dynasty print for our current text of the work – even so it might be wise to remember that Sun makes frequent reference to Buddhist materials throughout his work, and for all his readiness to make use also of incantations of apparent Taoist origins, seems to have been regarded in his own day as someone with strong Buddhist interests.

There is, then, some room for further exploration of the roots of the situation so effectively uncovered by Davis, despite his own commendable efforts to extend his reading on Chinese religion (unlike some commentators on religion in Chinese society) backwards in time in order to explain what he finds as the outcome of long-term processes of change. One notices that he has somehow missed Strickmann's 1993 *Asia Major* article entitled 'The Seal of the Law', which touches on Tang sources for a cult he describes in some detail for the Song, but otherwise his background reading leaves little to be desired: it is the experts on the earlier period that need to push their research further forward to match the advances in evidence here. Most later materials are also very thoroughly covered here, though the twin gods of Harmony and Unity mentioned on p.284 are surely their vagabond disguises most frequently identified today with the hermit poets Hanshan and Shide. Naturally, this book is not completely immune from minor errors, either: the great travel record of Xuanzang is unaccountably transliterated *Xihuo ji* rather than *Xiyu ji* on p.287, for example. But such errors would not appear to obtrude to any great extent, and certainly not enough to detract from one's enjoyment of a vigorously argued and thoroughly documented piece of very creditable – and, one hopes, influential – research.

T. H. Barrett

Chinese Religions: Publications in Western Languages, Volume 3: 1991-1995. Compiled by Laurence G. Thompson, edited by Gary Seaman. Association for Asian Studies, Ann Arbor 1998. xxi, 147 pp. ISBN 0-924304-39-1.

Laurence Thompson's bibliographies of Chinese religion have already established themselves as the best source of reference for secondary works in the field in English, French and German, so the appearance of a third volume covering another half-decade is much to be welcomed. Welcome, too, is the tentative innovation of including some reference to reviews, even if not as yet systematically, since the only other widely circulated bibliography that allows reviews of works on Buddhism to be traced to any extent is that produced for all Asian Studies on an annual basis by Kyoto University.

Chinese Buddhism here occupies some thirty pages at the end of the main section of classified listings, and as ever comes as close to comprehensiveness as one might reasonably expect. One notes, for example, that Ch. Willems's contribution to the *Festschrift* for J. May in *Asiatische Studien* 46.1 (1992) is correctly identified as a contribution to the study of Buddhism in China, rather than Buddhism as preserved in Chinese, a much larger bibliographical category for which no convenient volume as yet exists. One hopes, too, that of the other European languages in which scholarship on Chinese religion is published, at least Italian is accorded a like treatment soon for, with scholars such as A. Forte active in the field who do not invariably choose to publish in English, French or German, there is a risk that significant publications may be missed, and especially re-publications, such as one I have seen of a pioneering monograph by Carlo Puini. To have reviewers speak of what has not been included is, however, always the fate of every bibliographer, no matter how industrious. The true value of Thompson's indispensable work should nevertheless emerge soon enough for anyone who puts this volume to use; to try to anticipate this in any review is entirely superfluous.

T. H. Barrett

Buddhism in Taiwan: Religion and the State, 1660-1990. Charles Brewer Jones. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 1999. xviii, 259 pp. \$46.00. ISBN 0-8248-2061-4.

Holmes Welch's pioneering studies on the institutional history of Chinese Buddhism in the twentieth century have existed in splendid isolation for more than thirty years (*The Buddhist Revival in China*, Cambridge [MA] 1968; *Buddhism under Mao*, Cambridge [MA] 1972). While concentrating on 'men, organizations and events', Welch deliberately chose not to discuss intellectual history or doctrinal innovation at any length. Now, Charles Jones' path-breaking work pursues similar lines of investigation. *Buddhism in Taiwan* is the first study to appear in any Western language on the institutional and political history of Chinese Buddhism on the island. Jones successfully demonstrates that there are indeed plenty of reasons, historical, geographical, doctrinal and socio-cultural which justify such a regional focus. Beside having conducted most of the research for his books on the island, Welch clearly never set out to study *Taiwanese* Buddhism as a discrete topic, which on the other hand is Jones' goal.

The object of *Buddhism in Taiwan* is *Chinese* Buddhism. In fact, Jones' volume does not cover in any depth the activities of Japanese Buddhist missionaries during the colonial period (1895-1945), or the more recent developments in Taiwanese religious life, such as the 'popularity of Tibetan esoteric Buddhism' and the 'small but growing presence of Theravāda Buddhism' (p.xiii). Even within these self-imposed limitations, the scope of the book is still fairly broad, especially considering the temporal framework of little more than three centuries.

The book is divided into three parts. Part One, which is the shortest and consists of only one chapter, deals with the introduction of Buddhism in Taiwan during the Ming-Qing period (1660-1895). In this chapter, there is an interesting section on *zhaijiao*, the lay-based quasi-Buddhist form of religious practice, a topic that has been unduly neglected by scholars of Chinese religions and anthropologists alike. It is most unfortunate that once again, after having made the case for its study, Jones does not pursue further the analysis of *zhaijiao*.

Part Two consists of two chapters and focuses on the fifty years of Japanese colonisation. Here, Jones describes the struggles and

negotiations of Chinese Buddhist clerics with the colonial administration and touches on the significant, and historically unique, alliance between 'orthodox' and 'popular' forms of Chinese Buddhism. He shows that, despite a rather aggressive politics of Japanisation, only a fraction of Taiwanese people converted.

Part Three, on the post-retrocession period until the early 1990s, is the lengthiest (three chapters and a conclusion) and more complex. It touches on a plethora of themes and events, from the arrival of many 'eminent' (and less-eminent) monks from the mainland when the Nationalist government fled to Taiwan in 1949, to the activities of the *Zhongguo Fojiao Hui* (Buddhist Association of the Republic of China), to the approach to Pure Land teachings and practices of leading Buddhist reformers such as Yinguang (1861-1940) and Yinshun (1906-). In Chapter Six, Jones deals with one of the most significant phenomena of modern Chinese Buddhism: the establishment of powerful and socially very influential national and international Buddhist organisations such as Fo Kuang Shan and the lay-based *Fojiao Cifi Gongde Hui* (Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Association). During the last ten years, these have become more politically active, as the work of the researchers at the Taipei Ricci Institute demonstrates.

I enjoyed reading *Buddhism in Taiwan*, and recommend its classroom use. The book is an important contribution to our understanding of the continuities and discontinuities within modern Chinese Buddhism. This said, while waiting for the paperback edition, I feel that some epistemological issues and a few technical points may be worth mentioning. First of all, I would have appreciated some discussion, possibly in a cross-cultural perspective but at least with reference to China and Japan, of the notions of 'state' and 'religion'. It seems to me that, during the period under treatment, not only the forces in power changed many times, but the cultural and ideological framework behind the notions of 'state', 'citizenship', 'civil society' and even more so 'religion', were constantly contested and renegotiated. On a more technical note, I found the Index not very useful. It is too short (little more than a page) and it is not a good gateway into the book, as it does not include many of the topics discussed, such as 'Baisheng' or 'liturgy', to mention but two examples. The Bibliography has no Chinese characters. Moreover, Buddhist Journals

are only listed, again with no Chinese titles and without any indication as to publication dates, editors, etc. In general, I felt that there was plenty of scope for some methodological and historiographical considerations. In particular, a more detailed treatment of the primary sources, including data derived from interviews, and many of the secondary sources, especially the Taiwanese ones, would have improved the already very good scholarly standard of this volume.

Francesca Tarocco
(SOAS)

The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism. Edited by Steve Heine and Dale Wright. Oxford University Press, New York 2000. xii, 322 pp. £30.00 (hbk), 13.95 (pbk). ISBN (hbk) 0-19-511748-4, (pbk) 0-19-511749-2.

Anyone obliged to teach the history of Zen Buddhism will welcome this book even though the editors were apparently unable to find a press prepared to print any Chinese characters at all – though all the eleven pieces included are useful as they stand, several would have been improved had even a modicum of East Asian script additions been possible, a shortcoming which shows up Oxford University Press as alarmingly insular in an increasingly global market. Pretending that the English language now reigns supreme is short-sighted at best, and in any case every single one of the papers collected here refers primarily to the past, even if some have half an eye on the present too. Several of the essays, such as those by Griffith Foulk, Michel Mohr and Victor Hori, comment explicitly on the differences between contemporary understanding of Zen and the past understanding that may yet be recovered from the copious written records of the Zen tradition. But all contributors open up fresh ground in documenting that historical record, from China over ten centuries ago through mediaeval Japan up to the twentieth century, and the inclusion of some of the superb scholarship of Ishii Shūdō, one of the greatest scholars of Zen currently teaching, is a particular bonus.

Though a number of typographical errors rapidly become apparent, substantial misunderstandings would seem to be remarkably rare. At the worst, occasionally one feels that the

scholarship does not advance us much further than the point we had reached already, as with the translation on pp.21-2 of a key discussion by Chung-feng Ming-pen (1264-1325) of the meaning of the term *kung-an* (i.e. *kōan*). This is not much more extended than that already published (as one of the other contributors notes, p.269) on pp.4-7 of Isshin Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, *Zen Dust* (New York 1966), and a full English rendering of this classic (though not definitive) source has yet to appear; however, a close comparison of both with the original shows that, while this new version strives to reflect the Chinese more faithfully, at one or two points Miura and Sasaki are plainly closer to the original meaning. Elsewhere, too, one notices, if only occasionally, failures to grasp the point. On p.161 at n.59, for example, a translation from the *Pi-yen-lu* (*Hekiganroku*) concerning a very interesting (and well elucidated) item on the Wu-t'ai Mountains, goal of many devout pilgrims both then and now, asks, 'What about the master of Mount Qingliang?' The word 'master' is not that normally used of a Zen master but of a master of textual commentary, so the reference must be to Ch'eng-kuan, the Hua-yen commentator who had been an earlier denizen on Wu-t'ai: cf. p.137. The answer to the question, incidentally, is that 'Not a single sentence (sc. in his vast oeuvre) found time for Wu-cho's question'.

Finally, just in case anyone is interested to know exactly what source John McRae is referring to on p.71, where he cites me as suggesting that the circulation of stories about Zen resembled in some particulars the circulation of jokes, I believe that the reference is to a paper on (if memory serves) 'Anecdote and Allusion from Ch'an to Zen' solicited by one John McRae for inclusion in a possible conference volume rather a long time ago. Something of the concerns raised there may be seen, however, in *Li Ao: Buddhist, Taoist, or Neo-Confucian?* (OUP, 1992), Chapter Two, though I have not made explicit comments on this matter there or elsewhere, save in the aforementioned paper. While publishers seem happy to flood the market with books about Zen containing little or nothing that adds to our knowledge, volumes seeking to improve our understanding of how this rich and fascinating tradition has evolved are evidently much harder to see through the press. The editors are therefore to be congratulated on going against this trend and bringing such a wealth of fresh research into the public domain. One only regrets that the index, a

mere five and a half pages long, does not begin to provide access to the copious and detailed information to be found between the two covers – though here, once again, it may be that the constraints imposed by the publishers frustrated their intentions.

T. H. Barrett

Saichō: The Establishment of the Tendai School. Paul Groner. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2000. 337 pp. Pbk \$35.00. ISBN 0-8248-2371-0.

When Paul Groner first undertook his study of Saichō (767-822) and the beginnings of Tendai in Japan, virtually no Western scholar had published research specifically upon this topic, save for a brief review article by his teacher Stanley Weinstein. As a result, the bibliography here is heavily weighted towards Japanese studies, and the emphasis of the book is very much towards Saichō in the role for which he is most famous in Japanese Buddhist history, the importer of what he saw as a Mahāyāna system of ordination and the creation of a new Buddhist order. Unfortunately, perhaps because the original publishers produced the work in Korea, it was virtually impossible to get hold of a copy in the British Isles, and the very least that Hawai'i has done is to make it available to the much wider readership it deserves in paperback.

However, even those who were able to find copies of the initial version of this study might well consider paying out the paperback price in order to be able to make use of the new preface that Groner has added for the occasion. In a sense it tells us that we have all wasted our money, in that one day he intends to return to the topic of Saichō and rewrite his study on the basis of a lifetime's knowledge, thus making even this re-publication out of date. But in the meantime he has been detained by studies (soon to be published also) of the later Tendai figure Ryōgen. This has, however, allowed him to sketch in for the first ten pages of this work a quick revised portrait of Saichō seen more in the round, thanks not only to Groner's own further work on subsequent Tendai history, but also to the one or two other scholars writing in English who have added to our knowledge of the period – Chen Jinhua, for example, on the authenticity of some of the documentation associated with Saichō, or Ryūichi Abé on Saichō's equally great contemporary,

Kūkai – to say nothing of recent Japanese scholarship, which remains essential. Given that Saichō not only occupies a crucial place in the development of Japanese Buddhism but also draws at first hand on continental Buddhist traditions, thanks to his brief but significant stay in China, the new version of this monograph can be commended without reserve to all who are working on East Asian Buddhism in the late first millennium. Though no doubt Paul Groner will be able to produce a definitive study in due course, for the moment this readily available volume will give plenty of assistance to other researchers and students interested in the period.

T. H. Barrett

Beyond Personal Identity. Dōgen, Nishida and a Phenomenology of No-Self. Gereon Kopf. Curzon Press, Richmond (Surrey) 2001. xx, 298 pp. 40.00. ISBN 0-7007-1217-8.

In a famous page of *Ficciones*, Jorge Luis Borges imagines a present-day writer, Pierre Menard, devoted to the task of re-writing, and not banally copying, Cervantes' *Quixote*, by *becoming* the Spanish author. However, the result is unexpectedly different from the original, even when he manages his task, because the very same words used by the baroque writer, once used today, are full of contemporary implications. This story helps me to introduce one of the problems which puzzled me in reading this book: is it philosophically appropriate to compare Nishida, Dōgen and contemporary phenomenologists on the basis of the assumed similarities? What does it mean that, for example, '[Dōgen's] conception of "the mind that cannot be grasped" echoes in some sense the elusiveness of Sartre's *being-in-itself*, which permanently escapes the grasp of its own positional awareness' (p.60)? Being, for the most part, not a matter of historical relation, then what is it? If it is something which belongs to us as interpreters, more than to the object of study, we should be aware that it is we who find similarities and create taxonomies. This would require a preliminary discussion about the historical and hermeneutical limits of our categories. Otherwise, strained interpretations and anachronisms become inevitable. Kopf's book often suffers from these limitations.

The explicit aim of the author is to 'relate the Zen Buddhist notion of no-self as it is elaborated by Dōgen and Nishida to the problem of personal identity and to the theories of self developed in twentieth-century phenomenology and existentialism' (p.ix). The book, containing seven chapters, deepens one related issue per chapter, considering at the same time many Western philosophers (e.g. Husserl, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Parfit, Buber, Heidegger, Jung), as well as Dōgen (with his Buddhist background) and Nishida. After an introduction to the general concept of personal identity in the West (Ch.1), Kopf analyses the notion of Selfhood (Ch.2), clarifying its associations with the theories of the Other (treated in Ch.3), Continuity and Temporality (respectively, Ch.4 and 5). In the last two chapters, the author sketches a general 'phenomenology of no-self', starting from its Buddhist background. His analysis offers interesting hints about some alternative conceptions of the Self, which radically differ from the idea of Self-as-substance as it was conceived in modern Western philosophy: the Self as *genjō* ('realised', or as Kopf translates 'presencing') taken from Dōgen, or the dialectical conception of Self (*benshōhōteki jiko*) borrowed from Nishida.

Despite these hints, Kopf's analysis often seems to suffer from one of the common limits of comparative philosophy: the tendency to be too independent from historical context and philological precision (and incidentally, I found some inaccuracies in the transliterations of Japanese names and some character mistakes in the glossary, especially among Nishida's technical terms). In particular, the book seems to underestimate the phenomenon of Modernity and its dramatic significance for Japanese culture. As is known, since the beginning of the Meiji Period (1868), Modernity had a massive impact on Japan: the process of her transformation into one modern nation and the creation of a standardised Japanese tradition can hardly be underestimated, as many recent contributions point out (e.g. Stephen Vlastos (ed.), *Mirror of Modernity. Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, Berkeley 1998). In the field of thought, Modernity brought along a new way of thinking and new problems to be answered. Accordingly, a new rhetoric and new discourses had to be moulded to face the new challenge, to the extent that the same everyday language underwent radical changes: besides the *genbun itchi* movement, which aimed at unifying the written and spoken

Japanese language, the very terms 'religion' (*shūkyō*), 'society' (*shakai*), 'human rights' (*kenri*), 'person' (*jinkaku*), etc., had to be invented. Other words, as important as 'consciousness' (*ishiki*), 'self-awareness' (*jikaku*), etc., were radically transformed in their meaning, under the pressure of Western science, thought and literature. It is then essential for any cross-time discussion to consider the philosophical significance of this process. Therefore, it is odd that Kopf, who reconstructs the development of many Western or Buddhist ideas, such as the conceptions of 'person' (Ch.1), 'Other' (pp.83-98), or 'impermanence' (pp.132-44), did not consider the philosophical importance of the modern conception of Subject in Japanese culture.

The lack of historical consciousness is particularly significant in the analysis of Dōgen, giving rise to many patent anachronisms. *This* Dōgen speaks about the epistemological problems of the self as a contemporary phenomenologist (Ch.2), or about time as an Heideggerian (Ch.5), or about human psyche as a Jungian (Ch.3). The book is much more convincing where the author does not mix Western modern and Eastern pre-modern categories and this occurs, for example, in the analysis of the idea of 'dharmic position' (*hōi*) in Dōgen (Ch.4).

Minimising the impact of Modernity means to engender many methodological problems in the approach of Buddhism: is it historically correct to elaborate a 'Zen Phenomenology of Experience', as Kopf asserts? Some scholars (e.g. R. Sharf, 'Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience', in *Numen* 42 [1995], pp.228-83) have criticised the quite common trend to overestimate the category of an extraordinary *experience* (be it non-personal) as *the* foundation of the entire religious life in Buddhism. Sharf has traced back this idea to its Western, modern origins, showing that it was especially (not only Japanese) Buddhist Modernism that made use of this rhetorical strategy. Sharf's analysis has also questioned that the Buddhist *mārga* literature may be interpreted as a *phenomenological description* of experiential states, suggesting rather its *prescriptive* and *ritual* value.

This criticism, however, does not apply to the case of Nishida's thinking. We could rather assume that Nishida would bridge the gap between modern philosophy and pre-modern Buddhism, or at least that it could be a good starting point for this effort. In fact, he is a modern philosopher influenced by many Western thinkers:

from Hegel to Husserl, from Kant to Bergson, while, on the other hand, his Buddhist inspiration is very profound. However, in Kopf's interpretation Nishida's intricacy is simplified.

What is significant is what Kopf states about Nishida's relationship with Buddhism. Although incidentally recognising the density of the matter, he first assumes that the Japanese thinker provides 'Zen Buddhism with a philosophical form and explanation' (p.xv) and he exemplifies this statement, equating the notion of 'pure experience' – the key-concept of Nishida's maiden work 'A Study of the Good', 1911 – with 'Dōgen's formulation of *satori* as "casting off body and mind" (Jap.: *shinjin datsuraku*)' (*ibid.*). As far as I know, this equivalence is not based upon any evidence. Moreover, it is all too simple to say that Nishida 'philosophized' Zen. To be sure, nobody is going to deny Nishida's germination from a Buddhist branch. However, can we consider Nishida Buddhist *in the same way* as Dōgen is? Or should we be more cautious in simply equating them? Did Modernity, to which Nishida undoubtedly belongs, have no effect on the Buddhist world? In the case of Western philosophy, we could probably say that Thomas Aquinas and Hegel share common Christian roots, but how many differences among them?

As far as Nishida's relationship with Western philosophy is concerned, Kopf's rendition is again a bit too simple. Nishida's restless movement from the initial concept of 'pure experience' (*junsui keiken*) to 'self-consciousness' (*jikaku*), 'place' (*basho*) and finally 'historical world' (*rekishiteki sekai*) is not taken into account and its meaning seems minimised. This is a pity, because such an aspect would have been very useful to Kopf's analysis: it would have articulated Nishida's rejection of different kinds of subjectivism, while at the same time exploring his ambiguous relationship with Idealism (Hegelian dialectics and, for a more limited period, Fichtean *Tathandlung*). In fact, even if the Japanese philosopher criticised Idealism, nonetheless he used its premises to develop his philosophy. If this relationship is not recognised, the fundamental ambiguity of Nishida's philosophy remains unsaid. This is exactly what happens in this book, where concepts like *hyōgen* ('expression') and *zettai* ('absolute') lack their historical relationship respectively with the modern idea of *Ausdruck* and the Romantic conception of *Absolute*. Certainly, they were transformed by Nishida, but much of their Western modern origin

is still there, in his thought. This multi-faceted side of his philosophy does not emerge from Kopf's study, which on the contrary seems to assume that these conceptions have Buddhist origins, rendering them more (classical) Buddhist than they are. For example, Kopf translates *zettai* as 'non-relative', in order to emphasise the 'non-positional realm' of human being (p.76), while a better rendering would have been the classical *metaphysical* 'Absolute'.

Despite the importance of the theme considered, this book unfortunately shows many limitations, due to the lack of debate about Modernity and its categories, even if at times some issues are interestingly synthesised.

Matteo Cestari
(Università Ca' Foscari, Venice)

Philosophers of Nothingness. An Essay on the Kyoto School. James W. Heisig. (Nanzan Studies in Religion and Culture), The University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2001. xi, 380 pp. ISBN (hbk) 0-8248-2480-6; (pbk) 0-8248-2481-4.

This is a long-awaited work, the very first in Western languages to offer a book-length presentation of the most important thinkers of the Kyōto School (Nishida Kitarō, Tanabe Hajime and Nishitani Keiji) and their central philosophical arguments. In fact, in spite of the importance of the subject and its growing popularity among both scholars and the general public all over the world, an interpretation of these themes from the point of view of the history of ideas was still lacking. Besides the old, general presentation of Gino Piovesana (*Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought 1862-1962. A Survey*, Tokyo 1963), the only available Western volumes were two anthologies (F. Franck (ed.) *The Buddha Eye. An Anthology of Kyōto School*, New York 1982; and Ōhashi Ryōsuke (Hg.), *Die Philosophie der Kyōto-Schule. Texte und Einführung*, Freiburg/Munich 1990) and a collection of essays specifically dedicated to the political and ideological aspects of Japanese Buddhism during the War, which reserved an important section to the Kyōto School, edited also by the same Heisig (J.W. Heisig and J.C. Maraldo (eds.), *Rude Awakenings, Zen, the Kyōto School, & the Question of Nationalism*, Honolulu 1995). It is not chance that a volume about nationalism appeared before a philosophical pre-

sentation of the School. Both in America and Japan, this is still a much more thought-provoking issue. However, no matter how important it is, the problem of nationalism cannot be a pretext to minimise the importance of the Kyōto School in the field of philosophy. This study, also available in the original Spanish version, of which the English version is a rendition, is written by a scholar who was for many years the director of the renowned Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture of Nagoya, as well as one of the most prolific and competent scholars in the field of the Japanese intellectual scene. Heisig tries to apply the difficult task of evaluating the Kyoto School within the broader perspective of the Japanese history of ideas, world philosophy and the dialogue between religions.

At first glance, it is clear that the book's structure is thought to fit both the specialist's and non-professional reader's needs. Every scholar of Japanese philosophy will surely appreciate the *apparatus criticus* which, instead of being conceived as a comment on the main text, forms a parallel but essential set of information and technical details, which testify an extensive work of reading and evaluation of primary and critical sources, both in Western languages and Japanese. Where I found the book particularly precious is in the succinct but pregnant discussions about the critical debates on the Kyōto thinkers, which provides scholars with a constant and useful orientation among a vast bibliography. In this sense, it is probably one of the best books available at the moment, for it takes into lucid account the most recent, as well as the classical, contributions. The non-professional reader, on his part, will be captured by the light, intriguing prose of the main text, which avoid technicalities, is always able to find the thread of many complex philosophical scenarios, evokes the intellectual atmosphere of the period and transmits Heisig's own sincere and passionate search for truth.

The book, after an initial 'orientation', is divided into three sections, each of which deals with one philosopher: Nishida, Tanabe and Nishitani. Every section contains many paragraphs, each of which concerns a particular theme: from the philosophers' career and style to their most dense philosophical and (inter-) religious perspectives. At the end, a 'prospectus' attempts a final evaluation of their philosophical enterprise, indicating some important hints for further investigation. The main text is then

followed by an authentic mine of information: the notes and a selected, but still extensive, bibliography.

From Heisig's analysis of the Kyōto School, many interesting topics materialise. One of the most important is their relationship with Buddhism. It emerges that their identification with Buddhism is not that simple, even if their belonging to Buddhism is never questioned (p.270). Nishida's conception of the Self is such a case. Many critics often trace it back to Buddhism. On the contrary, Heisig shows quite a careful attitude about this matter. 'He [Nishida] did not see the idea of awareness of the true self either as a Buddhist contribution to western philosophy or as corresponding to one or the other western readings of traditional Buddhist ideas' (p.52). Against any culturist assumption, Heisig then points out that Nishida found this idea 'in both worlds' and therefore 'there was no need to assume its strictly Buddhist quality or adopt a more properly Buddhist vocabulary' (*ibid.*). The same could also be affirmed about Tanabe's idiosyncratic and demythologised interpretation of the Amidist tradition (pp.164-5; 322-3), or Nishitani's complex definition of his own religious identity (pp.245-55), even if he surely could be considered the most clearly professed Buddhist thinker among the three. No surprise, then, if Heisig concludes that 'theirs is not a derivative contribution but something original and revolutionary' (p.260), and that 'they have positioned themselves in a place as unfamiliar to the eastern mind as it is to the western' (*ibid.*).

This is actually another good point of the book, which never falls into Orientalist or reverse-Orientalist rhetoric. On the contrary, Heisig clearly rejects such statements. For example, he correctly associates the alleged 'primacy of experience' in 'eastern thought and religion' with the wider context of the eclipse of authority in the modern world culture (p.263). He also recognises the artificiality of the notions of 'east and west' as used by the Kyōto School. As their *West* was a 'highly selected one', and 'assumed to be radically different from the living culture of Japan', so 'the "east" that the Kyoto philosophers set up against the "west" they had constructed for themselves was also something of an invention' (p.271).

Finally, Heisig explores the philosophical problems raised by the Kyōto thinkers. In this regard, he identifies three major limitations which should be considered further: the problem of the moral implications of their concept of no-self; the question of the

ambiguous definition of God (half-personal, half-impersonal) and, finally, the problem of anthropocentrism, which Heisig sees as one possible and fatal pitfall of the Kyōto School's philosophical conception (pp.263-9). The author is certainly right in indicating this anthropocentric view of philosophy as an unexpected result of the Kyōto critique of the Western conception of Subject. In fact, even if criticising it, the Kyōto School does not entirely break free from its dependence on a pure, non-subjective (but firmly human) consciousness which becomes the unconfessed centre of their philosophy (p.266). However, I wonder if Heisig has fully considered the indications expressed in his last philosophy by Nishida, who saw in the historical body (*rekishitekishintai*) an alternative way of considering human being. This conception, according to me, is at least potentially able to overcome the dominant interest in Pure Consciousness, for it reflects upon the relationship that human being has with and within the world. Nishida has clearly identified this as a shift from an interiority-centred theory (*homo interior*) to an exteriority-centred one (*homo exterior*) (see, e.g., Nishida's Complete Works, vol.XII, pp.18-30). This point seems to be essential in order to consider the weight of anthropocentrism in Nishida's philosophy, even if it would probably be a point which Heisig would not be willing to concede, for he admittedly does not recognise any stage of development in Nishida's intellectual history (p.104). Of course, much depends on the meaning of the term 'development'. Even if, as Heisig states, in Nishida's philosophy there are no dramatic turning points and the treated problems always remain nearly identical, a slow but incessant modification of the viewpoint seems to me at work in Nishida's philosophy and this is important also concerning the question of anthropocentrism.

As a conclusion, I would like to draw attention to the fact that to write in a clear style about such a difficult argument, without becoming banal or simplistic, is much more difficult than to use an abstruse, esoteric exposition. Heisig succeeds in doing this. Also, thanks to its transparency, Heisig's book is certain to remain a reference point for future studies, not only about Japanese intellectual history, but also about the vast and heterogeneous phenomenon of interreligious dialogue, as well as the history of world philosophy.

Matteo Cestari

The Inner Kālacakratantra: A Buddhist Tantric View of the Individual. Vesna A. Wallace. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001. x, 273 pp. £45.00. ISBN 0-19-512211-9.

This book is the first published volume of Vesna Wallace's ground-breaking research on the Kālacakra tradition. The Kālacakra is a vast repository of knowledge incorporating diverse literary genres such as yogic, gnostic, prophetic and medical, which have various religious, social and political implications. The *Kālacakratantra*, which was composed in the last phase of Buddhism's development in India (eleventh century), constitutes an intriguing example of the way the Vajrayāna reformulated common Mahāyāna Buddhist tenets.

Wallace's Ph.D thesis presented a translation of the second chapter of the *Vimalaprabhā*, the main commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*. The *Vimalaprabhā*, like the *Kālacakratantra* itself, is divided into five chapters: the first deals with the world ('Outer Kālacakra'); the second deals with the individual ('Inner Kālacakra'); the third with initiation, the fourth with *sādhana* and the fifth with gnosis (*jñāna*). These three chapters, which designate the path of realisation between 'outer' and 'inner', constitute what is termed 'other Kālacakra'. In her dissertation Wallace translated the inner chapter, using Sanskrit, Tibetan and Mongolian sources.

The present volume is an elaboration of the introductory section of her original thesis. Although the main focus of this new work is the inner chapter, Wallace's in-depth acquaintance with the Kālacakra literature and the *Vimalaprabhā* in particular (she has also translated the fourth and fifth chapters but has not yet published the translations) is reflected throughout the work in the detailed and illuminating cross-referencing which she provides. In her analysis she shows how the described fragility and impermanence of the body which is, in the Kālacakra view-point, 'a psycho-physiological map of society, suggests the fragility of society and the impermanence of the existing social order' (p.216).

After placing the Kālacakra within its broader context, Wallace takes an illuminating broad thematic approach, relating to issues which are central to the inner chapter, but which also have their resonance throughout the *Vimalaprabhā*. She deals with the concept of science in the *Kālacakratantra* (Chapter 4) and illustrates why the Kālacakra system views the knowledge of science as highly

relevant to one's spiritual maturation and liberation. Disciplines such as astronomy, cosmology, medicine and pharmacology are either directly or indirectly incorporated into the Kālacakra system. Within the Kālacakra literature, these disciplines are seen as providing a systematic analysis of the natural world, which is to be provisionally viewed as an object of purification. In the section on the 'Cosmic Body' (Chapter 5) she analyses the various correlations between the individual and the cosmos as they are presented in the *Kālacakratāntra* and the *Vimalaprabhā*. These correlations are manifested in the processes of origination and dissolution of the cosmos and the individual, in the configuration and the various measurements of them and in the various manifestations of the 'wheel of time' (*kāla-cakra*), both within the cosmos and the individual. The Kālacakra correlates between the twelve links of dependent origination and the solar passage through the twelve zodiacal signs. It teaches that 'wherever there is corporality, there is time, for everything material, which is characterised by the origination and cessation, is temporary' (p.103). Wallace illustrates the goal of the Kālacakra practice in this respect 'to transform this corporeal wheel of time into the transcendent wheel of time, which is devoid of matter and free of origination and cessation' (*ibid.*).

In the section on the 'Social Body' (Chapter 6) Wallace demonstrates how, whilst incorporating arguments of the earliest Buddhist systems against Brahmanic social discrimination (as other Buddhist Tantras did), the Kālacakra tradition provided its own interpretation of social relations with multiple goals and practical applications. In each of these presentations, Wallace gives the Kālacakra perspective as it related to the general Tantric perspective as well as to the broader Buddhist ones.

Wallace's immaculate work is outstanding not only in providing a broad outlook on the Buddhist context of the themes she explores, but also where the discussion takes her into other religious traditions. Such, for instance, is her fascinating discussion on the Kālacakra as a Gnostic system (Chapter 7). Relating to sources such as the Nag Hammadi Codices discovered in Upper Egypt and the Manichaean texts discovered in Inner Asia, she places the *Kālacakratāntra* and the Buddhist Gnostic system as a whole, within the context of the contemporary view of Gnosticism, i.e. not merely in its Christian aspect but also as a cross-religious

phenomenon. In this context, as in her discussion of the nature of syncretism in the Kālacakra (Chapter 3), her approach is well beyond any previous discussions of the issue (such as Hoffman's), which ranged from the totally rejectionist (seeing the Vajrayāna as 'deformed' Buddhism) to the apologetic, (analysing where these alien elements came from). Wallace shows how the so-called 'foreign' elements of Kālacakra are not only a part of its conversion strategy (a point which is probably related to the Kālacakra's popularity today), but also have their inherent theoretical basis within the Kālacakra's viewpoint.

This book, which is the first scholarly overview of the Kālacakra to appear in a Western language, is an essential source not only for scholars of the Vajrayāna, but for any scholar of Buddhism. Though written at the highest scholarly level, it is very readable, making it also an ideal source for practitioners who wish to extend their knowledge of the Kālacakra system.

Ronit Yoeli Tlalim
(SOAS)

Innovative Buddhist Women, Swimming against the stream. Edited by Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Curzon, Richmond 2000. xviii, 354 pp. Hbk £45.00, pbk £15.99. ISBN (hbk) 0-7007-1219-4, (pbk) 0-7007-1253-4.

This collection of twenty-seven conference papers offers a great variety of subjects, so no single reviewer can do it justice. The authors belong to different schools of Buddhism, different ethnic groups and different academic disciplines; some are nuns and some are laywomen. The shortest article is three pages long, the longest, on the International Full Ordination Ceremony in Bodhgaya, covers 31 pages. The first few papers are concerned with the Buddha's time, a few describe historical periods of different span, but most authors are interested in the present and events of the last decade or two. It is mostly a running commentary on recent happenings in the world of Buddhist women and their efforts at gaining full ordination, some more successful than others. But the book is also interested in the achievements of laywomen in various spheres of life. Some articles consist mostly of biographies of prominent practitioners, others take a wider view. The great variety means that every reader can find something of interest.

The Introduction gives a précis of all the contributions, and the volume provides information about all the authors, a glossary of terms used, bibliography and index.

Milada Kalab

Christianity for Buddhists. Frederick Farrar. The Saint Austin Press, London 2002. 105pp. £7.95. ISBN 1-901157-23-7.

This small book's title is not very apt for, while criticising the Dharma in some ways, it tries, unsuccessfully to this Buddhist's mind, to show that Christianity, or rather the Roman Catholic Church, has the true answer. According to extracts from reviews it seems that Catholic authorities have found that it 'shows great metaphysical flair' and is 'enormously intelligent', though to this Buddhist it is a faulty account of the Buddha's teaching combined with a rather idiosyncratic account of Christianity.

The author tells us that he studied as a lay Buddhist with teachers from the Kagyu and Nyingma lineages, but it does not seem that he had understood the Dharma to be the many inter-related means to transform the ordinary ego-driven person. And meditating and reading, which he claims to have done much of, do not guarantee such a transformation, in fact these can fuel the fires of wrong views and not reach the root of the trouble. Only wisdom (*prajñā*) will do that, but our author calls this 'so-called "wisdom"'. Considering that the wisdom tradition of the Dharma concerns realisation that all conditioned things are impermanent (are Christians exempt from this?), that all conditioned things are *duḥkha* (who could say this is untrue?) and that all *dharma*s are not-self (well, this would be a hard one for a God-believer) – it is meaningless or at least obscure to try to refute it in the following sentence: 'I do not believe that life is the result of ignorant self-clinging and I do not believe that so-called "wisdom" has the right to manipulate life in the way that I think in Buddhism it does'. Besides being poor English, it is meaningless to talk about a so-called wisdom which manipulates life!

This also raises the point of belief. We have already noted that this work has 'metaphysical flair' and now we come to two 'I do not believe's' in one sentence. Although Christianity is certainly about believing (in the contents of various Creeds, for instance),

the Dharma is not primarily concerned with this. In fact the Buddha points out how beliefs imply that one does not know. When one considers the propositions put forward on the various Creeds, it is clear that most of them could not be known by personal verification. By contrast, the Dharma is 'to be seen here and now, not a matter of time, inviting one to come and see, leading inwards, to be known by the wise for themselves'.

Moreover, to believe is to have a view, a standpoint to which one adheres. Others, of course, may have quite different views. As holding views is an egocentric activity of the mind, it is quite possible since 'my' views/beliefs are indubitably right and 'yours' no doubt completely false, that we shall come into conflict over them. Many disasters which have befallen humanity – among whom there are many believers – through holding views are clearly displayed in history: Christians and Muslims fighting for Palestine, Protestant Christians fighting Catholic Christians, Hindus fighting Muslims in India, Greek Orthodox fighting Muslims in Cyprus ... and on and on. Oceans of blood have been spilt over 'I believe' and the believers with their views are still at it in Indonesia, the Philippines, Northern Ireland and Israel. The Catholic Church has vast amounts of blood upon its hands – could this signify the true religion? Muslims have killed millions in the name of Allah – is this any better recommendation to be a Muslim? But Buddhists have mostly lived in peace with each other and their battles have been verbal ones, in debate. No Buddhists have persecuted those of other religions, because knowing and seeing the truth in one's own heart conduces to loving-kindness, gentleness and compassion.

Throughout the book there are sentences which show that the author really has understood nothing of the Dharma. Take, for instance, this of the Buddha's experience of Nirvāṇa, '... attainment of the world of Brahma and Nirvana'. Nirvāṇa in Buddhist texts is never described as a world (*loka*) but always mentioned as *lokottara* – beyond worlds. Though he has understood nothing of the Dharma, yet he shows his learning in Appendix A where he enjoys juggling the views (yes, these are Buddhist views, also to be let go of) of the Gelugpa Prasaṅgikas and Kagyu Shetongpas. Though he spouts this information gained as a result of his lay Buddhist study, yet he comes nowhere near the Dharma. He has seized upon words and certainly not let go; he lacks the wonderful

fruit which surely he could not taste.

Although I could go on filling pages with criticism, the book really is not worth so much space. There are misunderstandings or deliberate distortions of the Dharma on nearly every page so, rather than take them one by one which would be tedious, I propose to mention only two things, the first of them a fantastic attempt to write into Christianity a kind of Four Noble Truths!

Dharma	The author's 'Bible' truths
1. <i>Dukkha</i> , mental and physical in all living beings.	1. God's creation is good and to be enjoyed.
2. <i>Cause</i> – craving and ignorance.	2. Man created in God's image and having dominion over creatures.
3. <i>Cessation</i> of dukkha Nirvana attained.	3. Not good for man to live alone so woman was created for him.
4. <i>Path</i> – Noble Eightfold Path and other formulations.	4. Man's freedom with the power to act wrongly: Adam, Eve, the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

And the author goes on to add a 'fifth noble truth'!

5. Man can be saved by Jesus.

While the Buddha's Four Truths are to be understood first with the intellect and after practice penetrated and known for oneself, the author's are matters of mere belief: God and his Creation, Man created by him, a woman laid on for man's comfort, Man's freedom to act and choose, and being saved by Jesus. All these things may be believed but that does not make them true. A Buddhist would certainly say that it is necessary to eat the fruit of the tree of good and evil: it is necessary to know what these fruits taste like – the bitter fruits of evil-doing and the sweet ones of good and noble actions.

The second thing to remark upon is the illustrations in this book: two crucifixions and a tortured saint. On the front cover below crucified Jesus there sits a golden Tibetan-style Buddha, which should indicate to Buddhists the author's opinion of their relative positions. Another figure of Jesus in agony is found

towards the book's end. As a religious symbol, it is for Buddhists a sickening one. That a saviour should die such a tortured death and then be depicted seems to glory in sorrow and pain. Jesus, they say, saved by being killed: bodhisattvas liberate by living. When I arrived in Australia and was asked to teach in a Catholic monastery after many years spent among the resplendent, calm and compassionate golden Buddhas of Thailand, not to speak of the wonderful teachers there, I was revolted, physically sickened, by this image hung everywhere on the premises. Jesus died because he was a Jewish political agitator who tried to revolt against the Romans and suffered the penalty then prescribed for sedition: how could this be an inspiring symbol of religion?

Perhaps a Buddhist response to the crucifix would be that it illustrates quite well the terrible things that human beings (mostly men) do to each other. It is a symbol of the bloodiness of Samsāra. But it could not be a symbol of liberation from the bondage of holding views, indulging desires and increasing the sum total of sufferings.

Laurence Mills

The Greeks in India. A Survey in Philosophical Understanding. Demetrios Th. Vassiliades. Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt, Ltd., New Delhi 2000. xvi, 261 pp. Rs750.00. ISBN 81-215-0921-1.

It is a vast and significant task the author – a Greek born in 1958 – has taken up in this beautifully produced monograph, namely 'to prepare a concise survey of the history of the ideological presence of the Greeks in India' (p.x). His book, accordingly, consists of five papers, the first about the pre-Alexandrian era, the second begins with the arrival of Alexander in India and ends with the inter-religious contacts that took place between the two nations during the Middle Ages. The identity of the Yavanas is discussed in the third paper, and the fourth is a description of the life of the first and foremost Greek Indologist, Demetrios Galanos (1760-1833). The final paper includes a survey of Indological studies in Greece and related matters.

In addition, there are appendices on the travels of Greek philosophers to India, their doctrines and counterparts in Indian

philosophy; on the Oriental origin theory; on the views about the Brāhmaṇas and Sramaṇas which appear in early Greek and Indian literature; lastly, on the Ph.D. theses submitted by Greek scholars to Indian universities. The book, which also includes 28 pages of illustrations, ends with a detailed comparative chronological chart.

Vassiliades style is fluent and full of facts. It is a mature book, archaeological, textual, linguistic and numismatic evidence being well combined.

The first paper discusses topics such as: the prehistoric civilisations, Greece and the Orient, Indo-Iranians and Indo-Āryans, Greek and Vedic gods, the Proto Indo-Europeans, mythical contacts, and the first historical contacts. The similarities, both thematic and grammatical, between Homeric Greek and Vedic Sanskrit are quite amazing. It is difficult to distinguish between external borrowings and internal growths in this early period. In the middle of the sixth century BCE folk tales were brought to Samos from the East by the Phrygian slave, Aesop. Neither Scylax nor Ctesias seem to have discovered any treasures of wisdom in India. The earliest Indian reference to *yavana* is still to be found in Pāṇini's grammar. Already Sophocles (496-406 BCE) knows of 'the gold of India'.

It is valid to claim that a new era in the relations of the Greek and Indian peoples began in 327 BCE with the campaign of Alexander Magnus. The Greeks did not know much about Indian philosophy – if there was such a thing at all. Greeks must have played a great role in the Mauryan empire. If it is true, as reported, that Greek statues holding lamps were used as decoration by the Sākyas in Kapilavastu, the home town of Gautama Buddha (p.56), this fact would also suggest that early Buddhism may well have been influenced by Greek ways of thinking. Early Buddhist texts also refer to Yonakas – perhaps meaning 'Greeks'. A unique coin of Agathocles, the predecessor of Menander, suggests that some Greeks were familiar with Buddhist symbols, in this case a stūpa. Alexander, the pupil of Aristotle, is reported to have said (p.64): 'I am neither interested in the origin of the citizens nor concerned with the race into which they are born. I classify them with only one criterion, Virtue'. This is also the essence of Aśoka's message about Dharma. There is much truth in Plutarch's remark that by the efforts of Alexander Asia was civilised and Homer was read there. Derrett (p.69) was probably right,

in my opinion, when he pointed out that: '... the Homeric hymns (were) a source of Buddhist inspiration and embellishment'. Very important also is the observation of Burnet that (p.70): 'No one now will suggest that Greek philosophy came from India, and indeed everything points to the conclusion that Indian philosophy arose under Greek influence'. Early Christians also knew about India and Buddhism. Clement of Alexandria is the first to mention the name of Buddha (p.80). 'The New Christian faith combined Hebrew ethics, Greek philosophy, and Oriental mysticism' (p.82).

Vassiliades points out that Basilides, like the Buddhists, believed that suffering is the fundamental principle of all existence and that human personality is a complex consisting of the five elements (p.82). Let me add that Basilides was not the first Christian author who knew of the *pañca-skandāḥ*. John 4:18 contains an excellent pun on the Sanskrit *pañca-skandāḥ*. Jesus oddly says to the woman: 'For you had five men', in Greek *pente gar andres eskhes*. The *pente* translates the Sanskrit *pañca-*, and *gar andres* is a pun on *skandhās*. Thus, John 4:16-18, otherwise obscure, makes nice sense if one catches the pun. The woman does not have a man, i.e., an *ātman* = *purusa*; she only has the five *skandhās*.

Appendix 1 (pp.196-212) discusses Thales, Pythagoras, Demokritos, Plato, Pyrrho and Plotinos, and their Indian counterparts. Past research has had much to say about this topic, and future research will have more to say. Let me point out just one new example. In Buddhist texts we often find the technical term *catuskoṭi(s)*. I am amazed that no one seems to have recognised that this term renders the Greek (Pythagorean) *tetra-ktys*, just as, for sure, Greek *diametron* becomes Sanskrit *jāmitra*, etc. (p.135, n.165). Vassiliades' remark that (p.69) 'certain educated Indians were familiar with the Hellenic epics, poetry, mythology and drama, which inspired them to introduce Greek religious ideas into their own', also applies to Greek philosophy and science, quite possibly to a far greater extent than has hitherto been surmised.

Appendix 3 (pp.221-8) takes up the question of Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas in Greek and Indian literature. The distinction is old, it was already observed by Megasthenes, Aśoka refers to it and so does Clement (Brahmanae and Sarmanae). Here, again, I would add references to the *New Testament*. Frequently, 'Jesus' refers to the 'scribes and Pharisees', and their *dikaioynē*, i.e. Dharma. In

many cases a direct Buddhist source can be pointed out. The two groups appearing together were originally the Sramāṇas and Brāhmaṇas, in other cases they were originally called Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas.

Demetrios Vassiliades also writes about the Greek Indologist Demetrios Galanos, and the works of contemporary Greek scholars and diplomatic representatives in India. He is to be congratulated for having produced this important book and I hope he will go on with his research since there is room for an expanded version of this excellent book.

Chr. Lindtner

Thundering Zeus. The Making of Hellenistic Bactria. Frank L. Holt. (Hellenistic Culture and Society XXXII), University of California Press, Berkeley and London 1999. xviii, 221 pp. ISBN 0-520-21140-5.

Frank L. Holt, from the University of Houston, is already well known as the author of the monograph *Alexander the Great and Bactria: The Foundation of a Greek Frontier in Central Asia*, Leiden 1988. His new book is intended as the first thorough study of the history of Hellenistic Bactria since Tarn's epochal *The Greeks in India and Bactria* (1938, 1951 and 1966). Much work and many new discoveries have been made since then.

The ancient literary sources (Aelian, Arrian, Athenaus, Strabo, etc.) are well known and can be supplemented by fragmentary inscriptions, etc., found at places such as Ai Khanoum, Dalverzin, etc. They are all translated as Appendix D (pp.175-84). The written sources are combined with the evidence provided by modern archaeology and numismatics, which is quite considerable (as is to be seen from the Select Bibliography, pp.193-207). The illustrations following p.222 mostly show coins of Agathocles and Diodotus I and II. Much of the book, then, is based on numismatic material, and a catalogue of the relevant silver, gold and bronze coinage of the two Diodoti is provided in appendices (pp.119-71). Modern forgeries are not unknown (pp.172-3).

Alexander died in Babylon in 323 BCE. His successors were numerous, over a dozen new dynasties, more than two hundred kings and queens. Their titles suggest what they thought of

themselves, their ideals: Nikator, Soter, Aniketos, Euergetes, Dikaios, Theos and Philhellene. Bactria was remote, its civilisation incorporated elements from Greece, India, Iran and China; here a peaceful union, a melting pot of Greek and barbarian culture emerged. From about 295 BCE, Antiochus I, son of Seleucus I Nikator, had issued royal coinage, established or refounded cities and brought order and stability to the region. The origin of Bactria as an independent state can be traced back to Diodotus I and II, father and son, who broke free from the Seleucid empire around 250 BCE. Holt claims that they, more than Alexander, deserve credit for taking decisive measure to provide Bactria with something more than imported currency.

Ai Khanoum, founded between 280 and 250 on the banks between Oxus and Kochba, was a typical Greek polis. It had a propylaeum, a gymnasium, a theatre, storehouses with olive oil imported from the West, a palace library (with books, of course); the inhabitants bore Greek names, worshipped Hermes and Heracles, Apollo and Zeus, etc. Barbarians who were exposed to Greek *paideia* did not have to travel to Greece. Greece was now everywhere. In Bactria there must have been many poleis like Ai Khanoum.

The origins of Diodotus I remain obscure. Based on coins found in recent decades, and nothing else apart from his own imagination, Holt tries to reconstruct some of the history of 'the shadowy Diodotids of Bactria', and to assign them a place among the ambitious heirs of Alexander. 'We know only that these two Greeks, father and son, transformed a Seleucid satrapy into a powerful sovereign state and that their revolution was later remembered by western writers as one of the defining events of the age' (p.48). Even after reading Holt's new analysis of the numismatic evidence, I do not feel that we, even today, know much more for sure about the two Greeks than did Tarn, etc. There are simply too many may-have-beens and might-prefers, etc., in his reasoning to allow us to draw any certain conclusions. In spite of Holt's great efforts, the 'mystery of the kingdom's origins under Diodotus I and II' remains, as it has (perhaps not) always been, 'one of the most difficult historical problems in all of ancient studies'. Still, Holt's book is an important contribution to this fascinating field of research.

Chr. Lindtner

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