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# SCRIPTABLE

A Bispectral Review of Recent Books



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## EDITORIAL

[Scriptable](#) is an irregular review of what was once called the belles-lettres, where we essay upon a wide assortment of current books and articles with an eye open for “the beautiful jumble of discordant congruencies” derived from the authors and titles under discussion. We cast a wide academic net through the social sciences and humanities, with a strong orientation toward current events, social theory, religious and cultural studies.

With this number we move away from simple reportage of current scholarship to something more ambitious. The body of each issue includes editorial essays examining themes inspired by the works under consideration. The sum of our reviews are carefully pruned excerpts from the books themselves so as to preview the style and technicality of the text itself.

Our purpose is to inform and entertain. Through the review essays we hope to visit new and timeworn places through unsettled ideas in currency newly minted. Perhaps to see the outlandish as intimate and to show up the familiar as stranger than before thought. Each issue should surprise.



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## **TIBETAN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF MIND AND NATURE** by Douglas S. Duckworth [Oxford University Press, 9780190883959]

This book offers an engaging philosophical overview of Tibetan Buddhist thought. It shows the way that Buddhist theory informs Buddhist practice across various Tibetan traditions in ways that integrate competing and complimentary perspectives on the nature of mind and reality. The book draws upon a contrast between phenomenology and ontology to highlight distinct starting points of inquiries into mind and nature in Buddhism and to illuminate central issues confronted in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. It argues that these starting points share a common ground and can be seen to be actually inseparable. This thematic study raises some of the most difficult and critical topics in Buddhist thought, such as the nature of mind and the meaning of emptiness, across a wide range of philosophical traditions, including the “Middle Way” of Madhyamaka, Yogācāra (a.k.a. “Mind-Only”), and tantra. This book provides a richly textured overview that explores the intersecting nature of mind, language, and world depicted across Tibetan Buddhist traditions. It also puts Tibetan philosophy into conversation with texts and traditions from India, Europe, and America, exemplifying the possibility and potential for a transformative conversation in global philosophy.

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There is a tension between two contrasting readings of Buddhist thought, and both are viable and widely attested interpretations of Mahāyāna Buddhist literature and practice. One reading is commonly found in the works of academic philosophers attuned to ontological analyses and the

Madhyamaka tradition of the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism. Another interpretation is a phenomenological reading that appeals to the irreducibility and inexpressibility of the lived world as experienced. The term “phenomenology” is used here to represent this latter trajectory of interpretation, and while it may not be a perfect fit, the style of doing philosophy in phenomenological traditions clearly resonates, and it certainly shares a family resemblance with an important dimension of Mind-Only, as will be highlighted in this introduction.

This book is a thematic survey of Tibetan Buddhist thought. It provides a theoretic framework to introduce a wide range of intersecting ideas. With many informed studies and translations of Tibetan traditions now available in English, I feel that the time is right to survey the intellectual terrain of Tibetan Buddhist thought with a wide-angle lens. What follows is my attempt to provide this lens and to map the terrain both descriptively and creatively. I do not base my framework around particular schools or sectarian traditions, but attempt to focus on issues and themes that structure the philosophical conversations within and among the schools. While doing so, I draw freely from European and American philosophical traditions to engage with and elaborate upon Buddhist thought and practice in Tibet. A central theme of Tibetan philosophy I draw out is the intertwining of mind, language, and world.

Understanding Buddhism in India is fundamental to understanding Buddhism in Tibet. Tibetan Buddhists played an essential role in preserving Indian Buddhist culture, not only by carrying on the traditions of study and practice from India into the present, long after their demise in India, but also by preserving Indian Buddhist texts in translation. Most Buddhist texts of the mature era of Indian Buddhist literature (fifth to eleventh centuries) are no longer extant in any language other than in Tibetan translation. Buddhist texts and traditions entered the Tibetan plateau from India from the eighth to eleventh centuries, just before living Buddhist traditions died out on the Indian subcontinent under the weight of Muslim incursions. After the eleventh century, Buddhist monastic institutions in India were left in rubbles, and Buddhist popular traditions came to be assimilated into Hindu traditions.

Given the importance of the Indian subcontinent for Tibetan Buddhism, I begin with a fair amount of discussion of Indian sources. The first chapter begins by looking to Nāgārjuna, an influential second-century Indian Buddhist thinker, and his articulation of emptiness and interrelation. Emptiness is the ultimate truth in Mahāyāna Buddhism: the truth which, when known, sets you free. I highlight how the ultimate truth in Mahāyāna Buddhism comes to be interpreted along two main lines: as indicative of an inconceivable reality or as an absence of intrinsic nature. The former interpretation characterizes what comes to be known as “Mind-Only” in Tibet (or Yogācāra), while the latter characterizes Madhyamaka, “the Middle Way.” These two traditions represent competing interpretations of the ultimate truth and the Perfection of Wisdom (prajñāpāramitā) Sūtras. Further, Tibetans hold Mind-Only and Madhyamaka to represent two main schools of interpretation elucidated within the two “great chariot traditions” (shing rta chen po) of Mahāyāna Buddhism. While Tibetans use these terms to characterize distinct strands of interpretation of the meaning of the Buddha’s message, we should keep in mind that these terms do not refer to individual schools or bounded canons of texts.

Also, what Tibetans refer to by the terms “Middle Way” and “Mind-Only” can be quite different, with usages that are highly charged within specific contexts of sectarian traditions and preferred interpretations of one’s own school. In order to dislodge these terms from a single tradition’s interpretive claims, for the purposes of this book I will use them differently. In my usage, “Mind-Only” highlights a particular phenomenological style of interpretation and orientation to contemplative practice. I use Madhyamaka, “the Middle Way,” to highlight a critical orientation and deconstructive ontology. These terms, and the “schools” associated with them, are highly contested

and polysemic, yet I appropriate them as a heuristic and to convey an intimate relationship between two intertwined trajectories of interpretation. I feel that the problems I create by continuing to use these terms, with the distinctive meanings I have assigned them, are less severe than the problems of avoiding them altogether or narrowly constraining them to definitions tied into a single sectarian tradition's interpretation.

With the interplay of these two trajectories I attempt to sustain a tension between two contrasting readings of Buddhist thought, as both are viable and widely attested interpretations of Mahāyāna Buddhist literature and practice. One reading is commonly found in the works of academic philosophers attuned to ontological analyses and the Madhyamaka tradition of the Geluk (dge lugs) school of Tibetan Buddhism. Another interpretation that I keep in play is a phenomenological reading that appeals to the irreducibility and inexpressibility of the lived world as experienced. I use "phenomenology" to represent this latter trajectory of interpretation, and while it may not be a perfect fit, the style of doing philosophy in phenomenological traditions clearly resonates here, and certainly shares a family resemblance with an important dimension of Mind-Only, which I shall highlight in chapter 1.

The relationship between these two orientations, of Madhyamaka and Mind-Only, or ontology and phenomenology, reiterates some of the problems and popular associations of a contrast between stereotypical "analytic" and "continental" ways of doing philosophy. That is, these two modalities are imperfect and simplistic caricatures of a complex and internally diverse relation of ideas. I take them to be co-constituted, like the first- and third-person perspectives on the world and the methodologies that grow out of these ways of reflection. In other words, what I characterize as ontological and phenomenological orientations are two dimensions of how a single individual relates to what is meaningful and true.

In chapter 2 I consider the ways that Madhyamaka and Mind-Only can be seen to offer distinct depictions of the world, framed in terms of a relationship between ontology and phenomenology. I suggest that the perspectives offered by ontology and phenomenology can be understood as taking their starting points in object-oriented and subject-oriented modes of inquiry, respectively. Mind-Only highlights the subjective orientations to a world; Madhyamaka undermines the finality of any object-ive world picture by highlighting the contingency of all object-ifying constructions. I show how these perspectives are mutually entailed, and thus can be seen to share a common ground.

I have struggled with how to convey these two orientations, for "Madhyamaka" and "Mind-Only," along with its closely allied "Yogācāra," are problematic and polysemic terms. Another alternative I considered was to represent the two orientations I aim to convey exclusively with the terms "ontology" and "phenomenology." Yet since this book is primarily rooted in Buddhist thought, rather than discuss Buddhist ideas solely in foreign terms imported from another culture, I opted to keep Buddhist terminology. Also, "phenomenology" is just as polysemic as Yogācāra, so it does not solve the dilemma in the end. I have also thought about this issue with another pair of terms, "constructivism" and "realism." While these terms are relevant to this topic, they both fall into ontological orientations, and both trajectories of thought I am concerned with participate in each side of a constructivist-realist dichotomy; they are not actually distinct, but intertwined. For these reasons, rather than introduce a neologism, I continue to use "Madhyamaka" and "Mind-Only," following the Tibetans, to flag two orientations of interpretation that are entangled in such a way that each one supplements the other.

After aligning the axis of this book around these two orientations, in the next three chapters, I touch on mind, language, and world as a loose thematic framework. I begin with a theory of mind and a closely paired notion—self-awareness (*svasaṃvedana*)—in chapter 3. I show that the status of self-awareness is a wedge issue between the descriptive ontology of Madhyamaka and the



phenomenological orientation of Mind-Only. Awareness can be understood as Janus-faced; it does “double-duty” as subject and object, as internal and external. This hybrid structure sets the stage for what I call objective idealism—a world in which perceiver and perceived take place in an internal relation. With the term “objective idealism” I aim to represent how subject and object are simply polarities within a higher structure that transcends (and includes) this duality. While the language of substance and idealism is anathema to Madhyamaka, the interrelation of perceiver and perceived I wish to convey is not an ordinary subjective idealism; here there is no internal subject reigning over objects, the relata are not separate and relation itself is internal and not a real (external) relation. Thus, without an external world, there can be no internal world either (nor a world in between). The nonduality I seek to convey is not only the stuff of metaphysics, but also exemplifies the creative interplay of inner and outer worlds.

Chapter 4 turns to language. I show how many philosophical disputes revolve around linguistic disputes, prompted by competing conceptions of language. I also discuss the relation between concepts and percepts. Here again we can see the collapse of yet another dichotomy—like the one between ontology and phenomenology, subject and object—as percepts and concepts are interdependent. While a dichotomy of percepts and concepts is central to the epistemological edifice of proponents of Yogācāra such as the seventh-century Indian, Dharmakīrti, I show how this dichotomy falls apart in two main ways: conception collapses into perception (with nondual self-awareness in Mind-Only) and perception collapses into conception (with the thoroughgoing conceptuality of radical contingency and universal mediation emphasized in Madhyamaka). In both cases, we see the collapse of a percept-concept dichotomy, and language plays an important role in shaping both sides of this apparent divide.

In chapter 5 I consider the contemplative traditions of tantra. While mind (gnosis) and speech (mantra) are undoubtedly important in this context, too, here we also turn to the body (deity). The body, like speech and mind, exemplifies another intertwining, as it too is both perceiver and perceived. The body is the organ of the universe, the flesh of the world, and the dynamic substance of objective idealism. The objective idealism I have in mind here is not a simplistic notion of subjective idealism, but the irreducibility of the relationally constituted whole. This nonduality is a dynamic unity that comprises everything—the uni-verse (one and many). It is not a static, metaphysical absolutism, but one that is participatory; it is enacted in the contemplative practices of tantra, as well as Mahāmudrā and the Great Perfection (rdzogs chen), the culmination and transcendence of Tibetan tantric traditions. These traditions can be seen as performances of this nonduality, fostering freedom through re-cognition and creative enaction, while undermining sedimentary, reified conceptions of mind and nature (that delimit and/or superimpose the way the world is and must be).

In four appendices I include translated excerpts from Tibetan texts that illustrate and expand upon some of the issues I raise in the chapters of this book. Each translation represents a distinctive tradition and genre of philosophical writing and demonstrates to some extent the diversity and complexity of Buddhist philosophical literature. It is also noteworthy that all four of these texts represent a part of a living Buddhist culture; each of these texts can be found among texts currently studied and practiced in different Tibetan Buddhist communities across Asia today. This goes to show that the Tibetan Buddhist philosophy represented here is not only a vibrant and diverse tradition, but a living one, too.

In what follows, I take a broad view of what I see to be some of the most important philosophical issues at stake across Tibetan traditions and try to avoid getting too bogged down within an exegesis on any particular tradition. This approach is admittedly ambitious and invites real dangers of overgeneralization (when fine-grained particularities are ignored) and superimposition (when

personal preference overshadows an impartial description). Yet a thematic overview like this also can enable some insights into Tibetan forms of Buddhism that may not be visible when any single tradition is considered in isolation.

It is needless to mention that my interpretation of Buddhism is inflected by the European and American traditions I have inherited, but I should also acknowledge that the interpretation I offer here is influenced by the legacy of a nineteenth-century tradition stemming from eastern Tibet that has been called the “Gemang (dge mang) movement,” named after the place where it flourished.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to an allegedly “non-sectarian movement” (ris med) that is antagonistic toward the Geluk tradition or incompatible with it, the Gemang movement is marked by an integration of Geluk and Nyingma (rnying ma) traditions of scholarship and practice in a way that they are configured to be mutually illuminating. That is to say, this Gemang tradition is neither tied to Geluk sectarianism nor to a sectarian identity built upon what is incompatible with the Geluk school. Rather, it is characterized by hybridity and integration, with an eye on practice.

While I try to steer away from adopting a single sectarian voice on Buddhist thought in this book, to a certain extent the “Gemang movement,” like my academic training, has shaped the way I represent this subject matter. I acknowledge that the kind of hybrid tradition that informs my interpretation and methodology may be no more objective or value-free than any other; nevertheless, I believe (with Gadamer) that the influence of some tradition is necessary when any standpoint is taken on a subject matter. That said, contortions, distortions, and creations inevitably take place when a methodological lens is used to convey a domain of knowledge. It is my hope that what is enabled by my approach outweighs the problems that this methodology introduces.

In this book I aim to communicate important facets of Tibetan tradition neither by parroting it nor by standing over it with domineering academic hubris. Rather, my agenda is to convey a way to think about (and with) Tibetan Buddhist philosophy of mind and nature. In outlining these aspects of Buddhist thought, I do not censure my own perspectives on the material and also draw freely from a range of Indian, European, and American philosophical traditions to explain and elaborate key issues in Buddhist Tibet. To date there is no such overview of Tibetan philosophical culture, as most scholarly texts and translations of Tibetan thought are embedded within the structure of a particular sectarian tradition. I aim to provide an alternative way to access the subject matter so scholars and interested nonspecialists can relate to Tibetan thought outside the confines of a single sectarian voice or a one-dimensional philosophical stance. This book is intended as a bridge, both for Buddhists who seek to enrich their knowledge in conversation with Northwestern European and American philosophical traditions, and for those more familiar with these philosophical traditions to engage with Tibetan Buddhist thought.

Nonspecialists can use this book to gain a perspective on Tibetan philosophy, a place from which to find points of departure and threads of conversation from the intellectual worlds they inhabit. Specialists, on the other hand, can use this book to contextualize their particular areas of expertise. They may also feel compelled to highlight places that fall out of this frame, fill it out, or provide alternative frameworks to challenge or supplement the one I offer here. This book is a first step, not the last, to framing Tibetan Buddhism philosophically, and I hope readers will dig further into studies on topics that I outline here in broad strokes.

The relationship between Madhyamaka and Mind-Only is configured in different ways among Tibetan traditions, and how their relationship is configured informs the shape of the distinct contemplative practices there. The conclusion here reiterates how understanding the interplay of these two traditions, in conversation with the discourses of ontology and phenomenology, can illuminate some of the issues at stake in Tibetan thought and connect them to contemporary issues. Like Mind-Only and Madhyamaka, ontology and phenomenology represent divergent modes of thought and practice

that can be seen to offer unique lenses on the world, yet they can also be seen to overlap, or even mutually entail each other.

We began by looking at two trajectories of interpretation of Mahāyāna Buddhism that stem from India: Madhyamaka and Yogācāra. These trajectories of thought were transposed in Tibet as the two “great chariot traditions” of Madhyamaka and Mind-Only. A distinct contribution of Madhyamaka is its critical ontological analysis and formulation of two truths, the ultimate and the conventional. A distinctive contribution of Mind-Only is a phenomenological analysis oriented toward subjectivity and the lived dimensions of knowledge. These competing and complementary approaches have shaped the face of Buddhist theory and practice in Tibet.

The relationship between Madhyamaka and Mind-Only is configured in different ways among Tibetan traditions, and how their relationship is configured informs the shape of the distinct contemplative practices there. I have described the interplay of these two traditions in conversation with the discourses of ontology and phenomenology with the aim to clarify some of the issues at stake in Tibetan thought and connect them to contemporary issues, in order to enrich a more global philosophical conversation. Like Mind-Only and Madhyamaka, ontology and phenomenology represent divergent modes of thought and practice that can be seen to offer unique lenses on the world, yet they can also be seen to overlap, or even mutually entail each other.

The story of Tibetan philosophy I seek to convey is one of interconnectivity, intertwining, and entanglement. We can see this not only in the relationships between theory and practice, ontology and phenomenology, or Madhyamaka and Mind-Only, but also in how each of the three “doors of action”—body, speech, and mind—is entangled with the others; and how neither body, speech, or mind are what they seem. The body is not inside nor is it outside. Speech, or language, is not a private affair either. It is not only physical or simply mental—neither inside nor outside. Mind, too, is not inside. It is not outside either. With nothing inside or outside, the only place left is in/between (and without boundaries, no-thing is really in/between, either).

This book is my attempt to probe this in/between space in dichotomies like Mind-Only and Madhyamaka to highlight the hybrid nature of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy—an array of interpretations held together loosely by a collective challenge to rigid dichotomies like subject-object, appearance-emptiness, mind-matter, self-other, inside-outside, and so on. Tibetan Buddhist philosophy is not monolithic or static; nevertheless, it can be characterized as a set of concerns that shapes and transgresses borders and boundaries, boundaries of the unconditioned and the contingent, the one and many, the nonconceptual and the conceptual, the real and the constructed. A central theme here is the entangled nature of (false) dichotomies, and the creative freedom within and without them. <>

## **BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF CONSCIOUSNESS: TRADITION AND DIALOGUE** edited by Mark Siderits, Ching Keng, and John Spackman [Series: Value Inquiry Book Series, Cognitive Science, Brill, 9789004440890]

**BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF CONSCIOUSNESS** brings Buddhist voices to the study of consciousness. This book explores a variety of different Buddhist approaches to consciousness that developed out of the Buddhist theory of non-self. Topics taken up in these investigations include: how we are able to cognize our own cognitions; whether all conscious states involve conceptualization; whether distinct forms of cognition can operate simultaneously in a single mental

stream; whether non-existent entities can serve as intentional objects; and does consciousness have an intrinsic nature, or can it only be characterized functionally? These questions have all featured in recent debates in consciousness studies. The answers that Buddhist philosophers developed to such questions are worth examining just because they may represent novel approaches to questions about consciousness.

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Recent decades have seen something of a scramble to either give an account of, or else decisively refute the possibility of ownerless consciousness. But this sort of thing has happened before: Buddhist philosophers engaged in a centuries-long debate with their non-Buddhist opponents over whether the Buddhist doctrine of non-self could be joined with a plausible theory of cognition. Current interest in non-egological approaches to the study of the mind has been largely fueled by attempts to reconcile folk psychology with new knowledge in neurophysiology and cognitive psychology. Not so Buddhist theorizing concerning mental phenomena, which grew out of soteriological concerns. Despite this important difference, it is not just scholars of Buddhist thought but also researchers in areas like cognitive science and the philosophy of mind who are interested in finding out more about Buddhist approaches to consciousness. This volume attempts to address that interest.

Buddhist philosophy of mind begins with the Buddha himself (5<sup>th</sup> century bce) and continues to develop to this day, both in Asia and in the West. Many distinct approaches have grown out of these efforts to understand the mind in a way that is compatible with the core Buddhist teaching of non-self. The scholars whose essays appear here all have expertise in some part of this long and complex tradition. But like scholars in every field, they sometimes present their findings in ways that presuppose familiarity with the disciplinary context, thereby making it challenging for those from

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/ph. 9195425719 /fax 91986916430

outside the discipline to fully grasp the significance of their research. This introduction is meant to provide a framework that should help non-specialists better understand the particular theories and debates discussed in these essays, by locating those discussions in the larger project of understanding consciousness.<sup>2</sup> Readers who are knowledgeable about the Buddhist philosophical tradition may be tempted to skip over this part and go straight to the essays. But we shall also use the framework we develop here to indicate connections between Buddhist debates and recent controversies in cognitive science and the philosophy of consciousness. We hope that what we say here will prove useful to all readers regardless of disciplinary background.

One more word of warning is in order concerning the essays. While all discuss some aspect of Buddhist theorizing about consciousness, some are more concerned with matters Buddhological than with general questions concerning consciousness. There is much that we still do not know about the classical Indian Buddhist philosophical tradition and its receptions in China and Tibet. Many of the scholars working today in different areas of Buddhist philosophy are mainly focused on trying to fill in the gaps in our knowledge. While many of the essays collected here attempt to bring Buddhist theorizing about consciousness into dialogue with current consciousness studies, others are principally devoted to simply trying to get clear about particular Buddhist authors or texts. The non-specialist may find the focus of such essays narrow and difficult to penetrate. This introduction is meant to help smooth the way for such readers. But we would also point out that the effort invested may be amply rewarded. Sometimes seeing familiar problems discussed in novel ways can spark important insights.

Dates for major figures mentioned below:

Asaṅga 4<sup>th</sup> c  
 Vasubandhu 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> c  
 Dignāga 6<sup>th</sup> c  
 Dharmapāla fl. mid–6<sup>th</sup> c  
 Dharmakīrti 7<sup>th</sup> c  
 Candrakīrti ca 700–750  
 Śāntarakṣita 725–88  
 Kamalaśīla 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> c  
 Dharmottara 8<sup>th</sup> c  
 Kuiji 632–682

## Early Buddhist Roots of Buddhist Views of Consciousness

Buddhism originates out of a concern to diagnose the source of existential suffering and bring it to an end. The Buddha agreed with other thinkers of his day that the sense of meaninglessness and despair that afflicts most thoughtful people grows out of a mistaken view concerning our identity. Where he disagreed with others is over what the mistake comes to. Others thought, perhaps predictably, that where we go astray is in taking the wrong sort of thing to be the self: our mistake consists in identifying with something other than our true self. The Buddha claimed instead that the mistake consists in identifying with anything at all: it is the false sense of a persisting “I,” routinely identified as subject of experiences and agent of actions, that he thought must inevitably lead to existential suffering. He then proposed a path designed to extirpate the “I”-sense and thereby bring about the cessation of suffering.

The Buddha called his teachings a “middle path” between two extremes, but different pairs of extremes are named on different occasions. One pair that is important for our purposes is the pair of views called eternalism and annihilationism. The former is the view that since persons have selves that endure, death does not end the existence of the person. The latter is the view that death is the end. The middle path between these extremes is not a compromise position; it would be hard to

find a middle ground between “I shall exist after my death” and “I shall cease to exist at death.” (Perhaps: “I shall be gone but live on through my children”?) Instead the Buddha articulates his middle path using what is called the 12-fold chain of dependent origination. This is a list of sequential factors, each serving as cause of the next, that are said to together constitute the continued existence of a person over several lives. What is interesting about this list is that the factors are given in completely impersonal terms. When the Buddha uses it to explain how he can reject both “I shall survive my death” and “I shall be annihilated at death,” it is clear that he is rejecting the presupposition common to both eternalism and annihilationism: that there is an “I,” something through relation to which events in this life take on meaning and value. The Buddhist doctrine of non-self is central to the project of overcoming existential suffering.

The Buddha classifies the constituents of persons in three distinct ways. One such taxonomy is the *skandha* or aggregate classification, according to which there are five aggregates or kinds of psychophysical element: the material (*rūpa*), hedonic states (*vedanā*), perceptual identifications (*saṃjñā*), mental forces (*saṃskāra*), and the consciousness (*viññāna*) aggregate. Each of the five aggregates is in turn broken down into subtypes; *vedanā*, for instance, is said to be made up of three kinds of hedonic state: pleasure, pain and the neutral state. In time Buddhist scholastics would compile lists of all the distinct entities, called *dhammas*, that were thought to make up the five aggregates. Of importance here is that consciousness aggregate consists of not one but six distinct varieties of consciousness *dharma*: one for each of the five external sense faculties, plus a sixth for the so-called “inner sense” (*manas*). (The last is the faculty of cross-modal synthesis, memory, conceptualization, and of introspection; we will have much more to say about it below, but the essay by Sharf (Chapter 1) contains a general overview.) These six kinds of consciousness are said to be distinct because each comes into existence in dependence on a different set of causes and conditions: visual consciousness arises in dependence on contact between vision and an occurrence of color-and-shape in the presence of light; auditory consciousness arises in dependence on contact between auditory faculty and sound, etc. Given the impermanence of the conditions on which consciousnesses depend, it is thought to follow that no consciousness endures for very long. Consciousness is thus not a self. The sense of an “I” as an enduring subject of experience is an illusion fostered by an unbroken succession of discrete consciousnesses, each lasting just a moment. The analogy used to illustrate this is the illusion of a wheel of fire produced when a torch is whirled rapidly.

## The Development of a Buddhist Philosophy of Mind

What the example of the wheel of fire brings out is the extent to which early Buddhism uses causal relations among impersonal events to develop its alternative to the folk-psychological understanding of mentality. But it was left to later scholastics of the various schools known collectively as “Abhidharma” to develop these ideas in systematic ways. The task they set themselves was to forge an account of mental processes that was consistent with the Buddha’s teachings, and would also explain both how an illusory “I”-sense is fostered and perpetuated and how it might be extirpated. But inevitably, controversies arose. This is partly due to the fact that different schools operated with different recensions of the Buddha’s teachings (which were preserved only in oral form for some time after his death). But it is also due in part to unclarity in those teachings.

It is not, for example, at all obvious what was meant by “consciousness” as the fifth element in the aggregates classification. One of the earliest attempts to spell this out gives the analogy of the person atop the watch-tower at the center of the city, who is said to see those approaching the city from all directions. Such a watcher is said to be aware that a person is approaching, though they cannot say who; presumably, identifying the person is the job of the guards at the city gate. The suggestion is thus that consciousness merely presents the object as a bare “this”; it is a quite different mental element, one belonging to the aggregate of perceptual identifications, that is said to perform the



function of basic categorization of the perceived object. But one wonders how categorization can be carried out in the absence of consciousness. The task for Ābhidharmikas (members of the different Abhidharma schools) was to sort out this and other puzzles concerning the nature and role of consciousness.

For instance, one response to the early Buddhist characterization of consciousness was to take the cognition of a simple percept to be a temporally extended process, with distinct consciousnesses occurring at each moment and each accompanied by mental concomitants that perform such functions as perceptual identification and registration of hedonic valency. Consciousness is thus affirmed as a necessary component in all cognitive functioning. But if cognition of a single percept, such as the color of the mango, involves a series of successive consciousnesses, the argument for the impermanence of consciousness from its dependence on sense-object contact loses some of its force. If only the first moment in the 17 moments of consciousness said (by Theravādins) to be involved in cognition of yellow color is produced by sense-object contact, why suppose that the cognition involves 17 distinct consciousnesses rather than a single enduring state? <sup>5</sup> And if a single enduring state can accompany many distinct mental functions, why could it not be a single enduring consciousness that serves as subject of experience across sensory modalities?

These were the sorts of challenges facing Abhidharma scholastics as they tried to articulate a theory of the mental that was consistent with the Buddha's teachings. Developments in other areas of Buddhist philosophy shaped their efforts. One result that changed the nature of the discussion is the doctrine of momentariness. The Buddha claimed that all existents are impermanent. But Abhidharma philosophers went much further, formulating arguments meant to show that everything is momentary, i.e., ceases to exist immediately upon coming into existence. This would put pressure on direct realist accounts of perception. If the object of a perceptual consciousness is among the causes of that consciousness, then it must exist before the arising of the consciousness that takes it as object. And if everything is momentary, then that object must also have gone out of existence before the arising of the consciousness. But awareness of something that no longer exists would seem to count as memory, not perception. A representationalist about perception holds that what one is directly aware of in perception is not the object that impinges on the sense organ but a mental representation that is caused by that impingement. The doctrine of momentariness thus makes representationalism about perception seem more plausible. Among Abhidharma schools it was the Sautrāntikas who embraced representationalism, which they formulated as the thesis that a perceptual consciousness arises bearing the form of the object with which the sense faculty interacts. No longer is consciousness to be thought of as a bare awareness that illuminates whatever it happens to fall on. Consciousness of blue is now understood as a single state that is in some sense both blue and its illumination.

A second development that played an important role in Abhidharma theorizing about consciousness is the embrace of mereological nihilism, the view that strictly speaking there are no composite objects, only the impartite entities that we think of as their parts. The Buddha had said that persons are "mere names," and he also allegedly accepted the claim that the word "chariot" is no more than a convenient designator for the constituent parts when assembled in the right way. Generalizing from this stance, Abhidharma philosophers developed arguments to show that strictly speaking, no partite entity may be said to exist. (The strategy involves looking at all the ways in which a real whole might be related to its constituent parts.) The upshot is an ontology containing only entities that are neither composite nor qualitatively complex.

Momentariness and mereological nihilism both lead to highly counter-intuitive results, such as that substances are merely bundles of tropes, and that persistence can at best be perdurance and not endurance. Ābhidharmikas sought to mitigate the counter-intuitiveness with their doctrine of the



two truths. This involves distinguishing between two ways in which a statement may be said to be true – ultimately and conventionally – and two ways in which an entity may be said to exist – as ultimately real and as a mere conceptual construction. The ultimate reals – what the tradition calls *dharma*s – are those non-composite entities that enter into causal relations. Ultimately true statements are those that correctly represent how such entities are arranged; these arrangements are the truth-makers for ultimate truths. To say of an entity that it is not ultimately real but merely a conceptual construction is to say that it is conventionally taken to be real due in part to our use of a convenient designator. A convenient designator is a term that is used to denote a collection of ultimately real entities when arranged in a particular way. Our use of such terms reflects our interests and cognitive limitations; we would be hard pressed to describe how things are in the world without their employment. Statements containing such terms may be conventionally true or false, depending on how the ultimate reals happen to be arranged. The upshot is that while no statement about enduring substances, such as persons or chariots, can be ultimately true (or ultimately false), such statements can be conventionally true. Mereological nihilism rules out the existence of chariots. And momentariness rules out the endurance of any of the atoms making up the supposed chariot. Still it can be conventionally true that this is the same chariot as the one we saw earlier. What grounds this conventional truth is the fact that the collection of many atoms arranged chariot-wise that was seen earlier is part of a causal series that extends to the present collection of atoms arranged chariot-wise: each momentary atom causes a similar successor to arise in the next moment.

Use of this last tool helps Ābhidharmikas answer some of the more common objections to a non-egological account of cognition. Take the objection based on appeal to cross-modal synthesis, which may be expressed in terms of the situation where one says about the mango, “I touch what I saw.” How, the opponent asks, can there be the cognition that what one is now touching is the object one first saw and then reached out for, if there is no enduring subject of experience serving to bring visual and tactile consciousnesses into coordination? The Buddhist can respond that just as our use of the convenient designator “mango” fosters the illusion that there is a single enduring object of both vision and touch, so the use of the convenient designator “person” creates the sense that there is a single enduring subject of both vision- and touch-consciousnesses. The general strategy here is to supply causal processes among the ultimately real *dharma*s in order to ground conventionally true descriptions of our mental lives. Two thoroughly impersonal causal series of momentary events are usefully given the shorthand designation of, on the one hand a piece of fruit, and on the other an enduring cognitive agent.

Still, the constraints imposed by mereological nihilism create challenges for this approach. Because mereological nihilism is thought to rule out qualitative complexity, it is difficult to see how there can be the simultaneous awareness of both visual and tactile data. In the case of the mango, the visual cognition is of a yellow ovoid color-and-shape occurrence, while the tangibility consciousness is of an occurrence of smoothness. There can be no sensory consciousness that takes both objects simultaneously. So how does one arrive at the awareness that the two sensory objects are somehow connected? Here is where the sixth sense-faculty, *manas* or “inner sense” gets brought in. This, it will be recalled, is not just the faculty of introspection – what grasps such “inner” states as emotions – but also that of conceptualization. Presumably, past experience has led to formation of a disposition, in the file labeled “mango,” that triggers certain mental states, given sensory stimulation having a certain profile. (This file will include information from all relevant sense modalities.) The perceptual identification associated with the visual consciousness outputs a “yellow-ovoid” categorization, which in turn triggers activation of the “mango” mental file. This in turn causes desire, which brings about action, resulting in the tangibility consciousness. And as with the example of the whirling torch that is seen as a circle of fire, the rapid succession of these states generates the illusion of a single persisting consciousness aware of all the distinct contents.

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### Some Abhidharma Controversies Involving Consciousness

This approach to cognition fosters any number of controversies among Buddhist philosophers seeking to resolve some of the issues that result from its application. For instance, there is the question whether shape is perceived by *manas* in the same way in which color is perceived by vision. This question grows out of the point that for some Abhidharma philosophers, shape is not ultimately but only conventionally real. Some schools claimed that since one never perceives a color without a shape, color-and-shape is a single type of material *dharma*. Others, though, said that since shape supervenes on an array of many atoms, shapes are mere conceptual constructions; awareness of shape is awareness of a many masquerading as a one, something that requires superimposition of a concept. Moreover, color and shape seem to be qualitatively distinct, so making color-and-shape a single ultimately real entity violates the prohibition on qualitative complexity. Yet the awareness of shape seems to be just as direct and immediate as the visual awareness of color.

One proposed solution involves the assumption that *manas* functions simultaneously with one or another form of external sensory consciousness. This would represent an extension of the view discussed earlier that each moment of consciousness is accompanied by occurrences of various mental functions. Since *manas* is said to perform the function of conceptualization, this would seem consistent with that approach. But insofar as *manas* is understood as a sixth sense faculty, its operation is said to involve its own distinctive kind of consciousness. So invoking *manas* to explain cognition of shape would require that visual consciousness and *manas* consciousness occur simultaneously. The general question involved here is whether two or more sorts of consciousness can arise simultaneously in a single subject (or, to put it more strictly, within a single mental stream of causally connected mental events). The assumption among non-Buddhist Indian philosophers is that a subject can be in no more than a single conscious state at any moment. Attention is one of the functions said to be invariably concomitant with consciousness, and attention is generally understood to be a limited resource. Some Abhidharma schools agree. The difficulty they confront is that the Buddha seems to have held that perceptual identifications, along with certain other mental functions, occur simultaneously with sensory consciousness. This is the source of that (unhelpful) analogy of consciousness as the watcher atop the watch-tower; the idea seems to be that it is other mental events that perform functions like perceptual identification (e.g., seeing the object *as* yellow). The difficulty is that these look like functions that involve consciousness. Perceptual identifications, for instance, seem to involve the use of concepts, and it is mental consciousness that is said to be involved in conceptualization. The claim that there can be multiple consciousnesses occurring in a single mental stream simultaneously looks like one way around the difficulty. But the overarching question behind all this is the extent to which consciousness can be thought of as a single simple event, and not as the aggregate of a variety of distinct modular processes. Is consciousness itself ultimately real, an impartite and qualitatively simple entity? The Buddha seems to have thought so, but can that claim be made fully coherent?

This question grows particularly pressing in the Abhidharma debate over meta-cognition. Indian philosophers generally agree that at least some cognitions are themselves cognized. Not only can one cognize yellow, one can at least sometimes cognize one's cognizing yellow: we attribute mental states to ourselves as well as to others. Various theories were developed to account for this, roughly corresponding to what are today known as first-order (reflexive) and higher-order accounts, the latter consisting of the higher-order perception (hop) and higher-order thought (hot) accounts. Having a theory to explain the possibility of meta-cognition was particularly pressing for Buddhists for the following reason. The Buddha's path to the cessation of suffering involves extirpating the "I"-sense, and this is said to depend on coming to see that all of the aggregates are characterized by the three marks of impermanence, suffering and non-self. Suppose I were to survey all the aggregates constituting this psychophysical complex and conclude that all are characterized by the three marks.

What of the cognition that is involved in this surveying? Does it cognize its own state of having the three marks? That would seem to violate the intuitively plausible principle of irreflexivity: just as a fingertip cannot touch itself, so it would seem a cognition cannot cognize itself. This might seem like a quibble, in that the cognition that performs the survey can always be surveyed retrospectively. But this is thought to be inadequate to the soterial task of extirpating the “I”-sense. Buddhist doctrine has it that while one can have theoretical knowledge of the impermanence, etc., of the aggregates, final extirpation of the “I”-sense requires a direct and immediate awareness of all the psychophysical elements as having the three marks. (This is supposedly achieved through meditational practice.) The consciousness involved in this cognition is included in this totality.

Some Ābhidharmikas bit the bullet and accepted the resulting violation of irreflexivity. (We have more to say about this below.) Others would reject the requirement of direct and immediate awareness, taking a hot approach to the question how the crucial cognition is cognized. But some took advantage of the possibility opened up by the hypothesis that there can be multiple consciousnesses operating simultaneously: the hypothesis that conscious concomitants perform their functions simultaneously with consciousness, and that these functions can be tantamount to consciousness. The idea is that one can be aware in a single moment of the impermanence, etc., of all the elements because at the same time that a single consciousness cognizes all of the elements save one (viz. itself), some of the concomitants of that consciousness take it as object of cognition. It is, once again, far from clear just what the nature and function of consciousness are thought to be in this discussion.

Another issue that looms large in Abhidharma is the boundary between perception, considered to be non-conceptual, and thought, which is understood as necessarily requiring the use of concepts. Sharf's essay (Chapter 1) discusses the Abhidharma controversy over how this line is to be drawn. But the same controversy erupts with even more force following the development of Dignāga's system, to which we are about to turn.

### The Yogācāra School and Dignāga

We have so far been speaking of Abhidharma schools, but there is one important development in Buddhist philosophy of consciousness that involves a school not typically classified as Abhidharma (though there is much overlap in both approach and concerns between it and classical Abhidharma). This is the Yogācāra school, which is best known for its espousal of subjective idealism or consciousness-only (*cittamātra*). Its idealism can be seen as the natural outgrowth of the representationalist view of sense perception discussed earlier in connection with the doctrine of momentariness.<sup>7</sup> It is with Yogācāra that the notions of multiple simultaneous consciousnesses, and of unconscious mental states, are fully developed. The latter development comes by way of the posit of something called a “storehouse consciousness” (*ālaya-vijñāna*), which serves as the repository of the karmic traces that are said by idealists to be what generate sense-perception. (The storehouse consciousness thus plays one of the roles that Berkeley reserved for God.) The posit of this repository, which was originally invoked in order to account for continuity of memory and other mental functions over periods of apparent lack of consciousness (such as some meditational trance states), opened up the possibility of explaining sensory experience in wholly immaterial terms. Yogācāra took up that possibility for an interesting reason: it was felt that if it could be shown that there is no external world, then the very idea of an inner subjective realm becomes less than fully intelligible. For this reason, Yogācāra metaphysics might better be called “subjectless idealism.”

But it may be worth pausing to consider the following anomaly: the “storehouse consciousness” Yogācāra uses to explain the origins of sensory experience in the absence of external objects is among the unconscious mental states accepted by that school. What this brings out is the role sometimes played by considerations of Buddhist orthodoxy in theory construction. Four of the five

aggregates (viz. all but the first) are immaterial. Of these, the second, third and fourth aggregates are said to occur only in the presence of the fifth, consciousness (*vijñāna*). Thus when early Yogācāra resorted to the notion of mental traces, which belong to the fourth aggregate (that of the *saṃskāras*), to account for memory continuity over periods of unconsciousness, it felt compelled to posit another sort of consciousness in addition to the traditional six. It is not clear just what work this storehouse consciousness is doing if it functions during periods of unconsciousness. Yogācāra holds that one has no access to the karmic traces deposited in storehouse consciousness until they are activated and give rise to one of the six traditionally acknowledged kinds of consciousness. But if storehouse consciousness does not provide access to the traces, and the traces are what cause conscious experience, just what does the storehouse do? It is not clear that the word “consciousness” in “storehouse consciousness” marks anything more than the fact that the traces all belong to a single mental stream. Recent attempts at theorizing consciousness are sometimes criticized for failing to make clear exactly what it is that is being investigated. Given that most people take themselves to have unmediated access to their own conscious states, we can see how this situation might arise: it is assumed that we all have an intuitive grasp of what it is we are talking about. In any event, the same difficulty seems to have arisen in the Buddhist tradition as well.

Among the most important Yogācāra philosophers is Dignāga, founder of the Yogācāra-Sautrāntika school. The name of this hybrid school has an odd sound to it, given that Yogācāra is idealist while Sautrāntika espouses representationalist realism. But Dignāga’s aim was not to reconcile the metaphysics of the two schools. His aim was to develop an epistemology that could be used by Buddhists, regardless of their metaphysical commitments, in debates with their non-Buddhist opponents. In the Indian tradition, an epistemological theory is a theory of the number and nature of the epistemic instruments, those processes that invariably cause veridical cognitions. The central claim of Dignāga’s epistemology is that there are just two epistemic instruments, perception and inference. This follows, he claims, from the fact that there are just two sorts of cognizables: pure particulars, which are the objects of perception; and generalized objects, which are cognized by inference. The difference may be illustrated by the contrast between seeing a fire before one’s eyes, and inferring the existence of an unseen fire after perceiving smoke. Suppose that all fires are known to be red. The red that one cognizes by perceiving a fire is a particular hue, and that hue will vary in dependence on the fire seen. The red that one cognizes when one infers the existence of a fire is of a generic hue, and that hue does not vary with variation of the hue of the inferred fire. Moreover, strictly speaking there is no such thing as generic redness. If there were universals such as redness, they would be permanent, and every existing thing is impermanent. What one cognizes through inference is not ultimately but only conventionally real. Entities that are merely conventionally real are also said to be conceptual constructions. This is because all conceptualization involves the use of universals. As such, conceptualization falsifies the nature of the real, although in ways that prove by and large useful for creatures like us. This is why when I see smoke and say there is fire, what I say is conventionally true.

Dignāga thus draws a bright line between perception and thought, thereby reigniting an earlier debate between conceptualist and non-conceptualist accounts of cognition in Abhidharma. Already in classical Abhidharma there were difficulties in explaining the transition from perception to thought if perception is understood as non-conceptual. Buddhist philosophers usually discuss the distinction between perception and thought in terms of the contrast between “one cognizes blue” (*nīlam vijānāti*) and “one cognizes that it is blue” (*nīlam iti vijānāti*). The *iti* in the second sentence is a quotation device, making it clear that the cognition in question involves the use of language and thus of concepts. The first sentence is meant to describe visual consciousness, the second to describe the achievement of *manas*-consciousness. The question is how one gets from the first state to the second if the first is non-conceptual. The perceptual identification accompanying a visual

consciousness will output the basic category *blue*, which is of course a concept. There is no special mystery as to how a particular stimulus can evoke a stereotyped response. The smoke detector sounds the same alarm regardless of the specific properties of the smoke (or, for that matter, steam from the shower). There is no need to endow the senses with conceptual capacities in order to explain how perception might make its content available to *manas* for reflection. What the debate over the transition concerned was how veridical perception can give rise to cognitions that are thought to distort reality. For it is, after all, conceptualization that makes possible the identification of the many constituents of the causal series of psychophysical elements as an “I.” Vasubandhu’s response is that the output of perceptual identifications is a natural-kind concept such as *blue*, something that is not inherently falsifying. The mischief occurs downstream from this function.

It is Dignāga and his commentator Dharmakīrti who change the parameters of this dispute. This is because they fully recognize the involvement of universals in all concept deployment. The theory of *apoha* they develop as a radical nominalist alternative to realism about universals brings out the dependence of concepts on the interests and cognitive limitations of the individual or species that employs them. This may still leave room for the possibility that conceptualization plays a role in guiding us to effective action in everyday life. But their soteriological project seems to demand access to how things are independently of the concepts we happen to employ. Dignāga’s account of the epistemic instruments has perception playing that role, but not inference. This is how the Dreyfus-McDowell debate comes to be anticipated in the Buddhist tradition.

The non-Buddhist Nyāya school of classical Indian philosophy holds that perceptual cognitions involve two distinct phases: an initial non-conceptual phase in which the subject is aware of the individual constituents of a perceptual judgment; and a subsequent conceptual phase in which those individual constituents are cognized as constituting a relational complex. Thus in the visual perception of a patch of blue color one is first aware of a blue trope, the universal blueness, and the relation of inherence (the relation whereby blueness may be said to be *in* the blue trope). Only after this does one come to be aware of the state of affairs, blue-inhered-in-by-blueness. This account is defended on the grounds that one can only cognize a relational complex if one has first cognized the relata. Nyāya adds that since verbal expression necessarily involves a subject-predicate form, the initial phase of perceptual cognition is inexpressible.

This account is mirrored in Dharmakīrti’s theory of perceptual judgment. On his account, the perception of blue involves two distinct, successive cognitions: first a perception of a unique particular (a trope occurrence on the standard Yogācāra-Sautrāntika ontology); then a judgment that may be expressed as “blue.” The judgment is driven by the initial perception: it involves the production of a mental image that is at once a copy of the perceptual representation, and also something grasped as what is common to all members of the exclusion class *not non-blue*. But where Nyāya has a single two-phase perceptual cognition, Dharmakīrti has two distinct cognitions, only the first of which counts as perception. This difference is partly driven by a difference in ontologies: where Nyāya has both tropes and universals, plus inherence as the glue that holds universals to individual tropes, Yogācāra-Sautrāntika has only the unique tropes. But the spartan ontology in turn reflects the radical nominalism of the system. There being no universals, there are no real resemblances either. That the many particulars we call “blue” seem similar to us is the result of species-relative interests that generate affordances for cognitive systems with those interests. Perceptual judgments are inferences, and the concepts they deploy are not as benign as Vasubandhu’s notion of natural kind concepts would suggest. Still Dharmakīrti’s story does begin to explain how the transition from raw perception to concept-laden thought might be possible.

The clarity does not last long though. The waters are muddied in several discussions having to do with transitions between perception and thought. The question of the transition from a non-



conceptual state to a conceptual mode of cognition arises in connection with the soteriologically important phenomenon known as “subsequent cognition” (*prṣṭhalabdhajñāna*). What such cognition is subsequent to is a sort of trance state induced through advanced meditation practices and regularly described as non-conceptual. Entry into this state is said to mark the initial attainment of cessation of suffering (i.e., *nirvāṇa*). The difficulty is that its being nonconceptual would seem to mean that any content it had cannot be communicated to others. In that case, how are buddhas and bodhisattvas to exercise their characteristic virtue of compassion, by teaching to others what they have thereby learned? Hence the need for a subsequent state that does involve conceptualization, making communication possible. But once again, it is unclear how a non-conceptual state might have communicable content. The difficulty is only compounded when, as in some texts, the prior trance state is identified as the cessation absorption (*nirodha samāpatti*), which is said to be utterly devoid of consciousness.

Equally puzzling is the claim made in later Yogācāra-Sautrāntika concerning what is called habituated perception. Suppose that observation conditions are less than ideal, so that one cannot rule out either of two competing hypotheses as to what one observes: that might be water in the distance, or it might just be shimmering sunlight. On further investigation one concludes that what one saw is water, since one’s thirst is slaked. The claim is that after many such episodes, the step of gathering confirming evidence can be skipped: through a process of habituation one now sees the water in the distance. Now this may seem like a perfectly valid description of the process whereby skilled perception is developed: the trained jeweler can tell “just by looking” whether a given stone is natural or synthetic, whereas the layperson must perform various tests. The difficulty lies in fitting this phenomenon into Dignāga’s strictly dichotomous scheme. Habituated perception is classified as a kind of perception, based in part on its phenomenal character of vividness, but also on the speed with which the trained expert carries it out. This should make it non-conceptual in nature. But this is hard to reconcile with Dharmakīrti’s claim that the infant’s seeing the breast as a source of nourishment is evidence that the infant has conceptual resources gleaned from experience in prior births. For a radical nominalist like Dharmakīrti, the “seeing as” phenomena of affordances can only be explained in terms of processes of mental construction. The skilled jeweler’s ability must be understood as involving “unconscious” inference. And this is precisely what is denied when that ability is classified as habituated perception.

These difficulties led another Buddhist school, Madhyamaka, to reject Dignāga’s dichotomy and insist that all perceptual cognition involves concepts. (Some later Naiyāyikas likewise questioned their school’s claim that perception involves a non-conceptual phase.) This rejection may reflect the fact that Madhyamaka is less concerned than other Buddhist schools to claim a certain sort of epistemic privilege for insights allegedly attained through meditation. The Buddhist soteriological project is crucially dependent on its promise to end our ignorance about the ultimate nature of reality. Once Dignāga had proclaimed all conceptualization to be distorting, it became tempting to look to the altered states of consciousness produced through various yogic practices as a source of purified perception. We see this not only in the case of “subsequent cognition” but also in the theory of habituated perception, which was used to explain how focused concentration might yield veridical cognition of a totality (as in the cognition that all dharmas are impermanent). Madhyamaka’s core claim, however, is not that the ultimate nature of reality transcends all conceptual capacity and is only accessible through a kind of non-dual consciousness. Its core claim is rather that because the supposedly ultimate reals can be shown to be empty of intrinsic nature (and thus fail to meet the accepted criterion of ultimate reality), the very idea of the ultimate nature of reality turns out to be incoherent. Our best theories will inevitably be built around our interests and cognitive limitations, and it is a mistake to suppose that they require grounding in something that prescind from those facts about us. It is a mistake to suppose that consciousness is something ultimately real with its own

intrinsic nature. Our best theory of perception will characterize it along functionalist lines. And that requires that perception be seen as performing basic categorization. Non-conceptual perception is a myth.

There is, we might add, another way of resolving the non-conceptuality problem that is not discussed in any of the essays in this volume, but is at least hinted at in the work of the Yogācāra-Sautrāntika commentator Dharmottara. The basic idea is that there is a levels distinction involved in the nonconceptual/conceptual dichotomy, so that it is a mistake to look for a way of understanding the transition from one sort of state to the other. More specifically, it might be that when we look at consciousness events at the scale of the momentary, none can be appropriately called conceptual. It is only when we ascend to the scale of cognitions, understood as sequences of consciousness events and so temporally thick, that the use of patterns and regularities becomes visible. It may then be that perceptual cognitions are inextricably bound up with conceptuality, but that this is so only because of the level at which it makes sense to speak of cognitions as either perception or thought.

### Buddhist Accounts of Meta-cognition

The controversy over meta-cognition also takes on new life after Dignāga, who developed arguments for the reflexivity thesis, the thesis that every cognition cognizes itself. His commentator Dharmakīrti provides the example of a light as a way of refuting the principle of irreflexivity: just as a light may illuminate not only the other objects in a room but also itself, so a cognition may cognize not only its intentional object but also itself as cognizer. The main arguments for the reflexivity thesis are two. The first, Dignāga's argument from memory, attempts to show that the alternative higher-order perception account of meta-cognition runs afoul of the principle that one only remembers what was previously experienced. It is agreed that after perceiving blue, one can come to cognize one's cognizing blue: meta-cognition can be achieved through introspection. But since all cognitions are momentary, the introspective awareness must involve memory: the visual cognition no longer exists, and one is aware of things that no longer exist only by means of memory. Since we only remember that which we previously experienced, it follows that there must have been an earlier cognizing of the seeing of blue that is now being remembered. And since the only time at which that earlier cognizing would not once again involve memory is the time of the seeing of blue, it follows that the cognition of blue also involved the cognition of the cognizing of blue. The cognition of blue is also the cognizing of the cognition of blue. Cognitions are reflexive in nature.

The second proof, arguably formulated by Dignāga but clearly developed by Dharmakīrti, is meant to show that any higher-order account of meta-cognition (whether *hop* or *hot*) generates a vicious infinite regress. The idea is that the higher-order cognition posited by any *ho* approach will require a yet higher-order higher-order cognition in order to count as the cognition of the first-order target cognition. Dharmakīrti's argument begins with the point that blue and the cognition of blue are never experienced separately. (Dharmakīrti is here presupposing a representationalist account of perception.) This may be put as: it is not the existence of blue but the cognition of blue that leads to effective action (such as successfully picking blueberries). Dharmakīrti takes this to show that one is aware of the object of a cognition only if one is aware of the cognition whereby one comes to be aware of the object. Since cognitions are by nature the means whereby one is capable of action with respect to objects, it follows that every cognition must itself be cognized. But taking the *ho* approach to meta-cognition would mean that it is a distinct cognition that cognizes the cognition of blue. And unless this higher-order cognition were reflexively self-cognizing, it would in turn require yet a higher higher-order cognition to perform its function. Since the series thus generated has no clear terminus, one must conclude that every cognition cognizes itself.

The careful reader will have noticed that there is a slide at a crucial step in Dharmakīrti's argument. One can agree that it is not the existence of blue but the cognition of blue that leads to effective



action. But one can still reject the claim that it is not the existence of the cognition of blue but the cognition of the cognition of blue that leads to effective action. A blueberry-picking machine need not reflect on its blue-detecting representation in order to successfully pick blueberries. Only the refrigerator light illusion (the light is always on whenever I look) can justify this step in Dharmakīrti's argument.

This gap opened the door to Madhyamaka's espousal of the rival hot account of meta-cognition. A hot account need not involve memory, so it is immune to Dignāga's argument from memory. And the hole in Dharmakīrti's argument returns the situation to the *status quo ante*, with meta-cognition once again understood as not mandatory but optional. Mādhyamikas reject the alleged counter-example to irreflexivity, the light that supposedly illuminates itself as well as other objects. As Nāgārjuna pointed out, light could properly be said to be illuminated only if it were possible for light to also be in the unilluminated state, which it cannot: there is no light in the dark. So there is reason to think that the reflexivity account cannot possibly be right. And an alternative is possible: meta-cognition might be explained as the deployment of a theory of mind that posits mental states in order to explain behavior, such as saying "blue" or reaching for a blueberry.

Two additional points should be mentioned concerning the reflexivity thesis. The first is that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti were well aware that attributing two forms to cognition threatens the status of cognition as an ultimately real dharma. Mereological nihilism would dictate that an entity that has both the form of the object and the form of a cognition must be construed as a conceptual construction – a bundling together of two distinct reals for purposes of conceptual economy. They are thus quite insistent on the point that object-form and cognition-form are strictly speaking identical. They naturally recognize that it is quite difficult to say just what that would mean: how can an image or representation of blue be identical with an occurrence of illumination or "presencing"? They claim, though, that this difficulty stems from the fact that all conceptually mediated representation is structured by the subject-object dichotomy. Since the identity of object-form and cognition-form is affirmed as the ultimate nature of cognition, and the ultimate is held to transcend that dichotomy, it should come as no surprise that the identity of the two forms is inexpressible and so not fully comprehensible to minds still deluded by conceptual superimpositions.

The second, related point concerns the question of the existence of other minds. This question was raised early in the development of Yogācāra. A realist opponent wonders how the idealist Yogācāra can defend the claim that there are other minds, given that minds are ordinarily individuated in terms of the bodies with which they are thought to be associated. Vasubandhu's reply is that mental streams may be individuated in terms of the number and nature of causal connections among mental events. We have reason to suppose there are other mental streams to which we do not have unmediated access because under the right circumstances, events in those streams may cause events in our own, as when we hear the utterance "blue" without having a prior intention to speak.

A complicating factor here is the claim that buddhas directly perceive mental events in other mental streams. Vasubandhu concedes that he cannot say what it would be like for a buddha to be aware in this intimate "first-personal" way of all mental events everywhere. But he blames this on his own cognitive limitations. The potential for embarrassment here is substantial, since solipsism is incompatible with the Buddhist ideal of a buddha (or a bodhisattva) as someone who seeks to relieve the suffering of others. In the absence of other minds, what room is there for the exercise of compassion? So one needs some reassurance that the claim that buddhas are directly aware of mental events in other mental streams does not lead to solipsism.

The situation grows worse for Yogācāra after Dignāga and Dharmakīrti claim that the two forms of a cognition are ultimately identical. Dharmakīrti argues for the existence of other minds along the

same lines as Vasubandhu. But a later Yogācāra-Sautrāntika, Ratnakīrti, argues that a Buddhist idealist must be a solipsist. His argument turns on the point that if a cognition's two forms are ultimately identical, there can be no difference between first-person and third-person attributions of mental states like pain. If the cognition of pain is just pain's self-presentation, what can it mean to say that there is pain that I don't feel?

### East Asian Buddhist Discussions of Consciousness

Our focus so far has been on developments in Indian Buddhist philosophy of consciousness. But the East Asian Buddhist tradition has interesting things to say on the topic as well. And since this part of Buddhist thought has not been as widely discussed, some historical background is necessary. We earlier described Dharmakīrti as Dignāga's commentator, but in fact his commentaries soon supplanted Dignāga's pathbreaking work, so that the Yogācāra-Sautrāntika tradition in India and Tibet consists primarily of commentaries on Dharmakīrti's work. The situation is reversed in East Asia, where Dignāga and Dharmapāla, but not Dharmakīrti, hold center stage. By examining the East Asian Buddhist reception of Dignāga's theories, we may obtain an interesting perspective on their content.

The reception of Dignāga in East Asia begins with the translation, attributed to Paramārtha (499–569), of *Ālambanaparīkṣā*, Dignāga's argument for Yogācāra idealism. Xuanzang (602–664) provided a second translation of this text, as well as translating Dignāga's *Nyāyamukha* together with Jīnaputra's commentary *Nyāyapraveśa*. After Xuanzang, Yijing (635–713) translated Dharmapāla's commentary on the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*, which is now incomplete, together with Dharmapāla's extensive commentary on Vasubandhu's *Viṃśikā*, which is also incomplete. These two commentaries attributed to Dharmapāla are extant only in Chinese translation, but they are quite conservative in the sense that Dharmapāla does not provide much original interpretation beyond what is found in the root texts.

In addition to translating Dignāga's texts, Xuanzang also compiled the *Cheng weishi lun* ("Establishment of [the thesis that everything is] merely consciousness and mental representations," henceforth abbreviated as *cwsl*). According to the tradition, the *cwsl* is a selective compilation drawn from the ten commentaries on Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā*. In this text, we find very sophisticated views and debates among the Buddhist thinkers after Vasubandhu, including Dignāga, Sthiramati and Dharmapāla. This text has long been regarded as the authoritative text in the East Asian Yogācāra tradition, known as the Faxiang School (*faxiang zong* 法相宗) in China and Hossō School [*hossō shū* 法相宗] in Japan. Chief figures in this tradition include Xuanzang's two disciples: Kuiji (632–682; aka Master Ji) and Korean monk Wŏnch'ŭk (613–696).

Now a careful study of the legacy of Xuanzang could potentially contribute to a better understanding of Indian Buddhist philosophy between Vasubandhu and Dharmakīrti for two reasons. First, we have scant extant sources from the Yogācāra tradition during that period. The works of the so-called ten masters during that time, with the exception of Sthiramati, do not survive at all. Even the works of Dharmapāla are extant only in Chinese translations. We can peer into Yogācāra philosophy only through the narrow window of those translations and commentaries written in Chinese.

Second, in contrast to the Indo-Tibetan epistemological tradition that was heavily influenced by Dharmakīrti, the East Asian Yogācāra tradition does not receive any influence from Dharmakīrti. Recently, scholars have increasingly come to realize the differences between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. So, the East Asian Yogācāra tradition may provide a vantage point from which we can reconstruct a pre-Dharmakīrti reception of Dignāga.



A case of interest in this connection is the notion of mental consciousness (i.e., consciousness produced by the functioning of the inner sense faculty, *manas*) simultaneous with the five sensory consciousnesses (henceforth abbreviated as msf for Mental consciousness Simultaneous with Five). This is an intriguing notion that only rarely made its appearance in Indian and Tibetan texts. The idea is that, in addition to the mental consciousness that arises subsequently to one of the five kinds of sensory consciousness, there is another kind of mental consciousness that arises simultaneously with the arising of a sensory consciousness. Now it is intriguing to note that the commentaries written in Chinese construe this as representing what Dignāga has to say about his mysterious notion of mental perception (*mānasa-pratyakṣa*). In contrast, Dharmakīrti left this notion out of his epistemology, and the whole post-Dharmakīrti tradition actually had a hard time making sense of Dignāga's mental perception. After Dharmakīrti, most of the commentators on Dignāga simply treated this notion as being devoid of any genuine philosophical significance. According to them, Dignāga's stipulation was merely due to his respect for scriptural authorities. Here we see a clear case where the East Asian Yogācāra tradition and the post-Dharmakīrti Indo-Tibetan tradition give very different interpretations of Dignāga.

On the other hand, however, there are also doubts about the faithfulness of the accounts offered by the East Asian Yogācāra tradition. For example, Kuiji in his commentaries often attributes certain doctrines to Śhīramati and Dharmapāla, which however are not found in currently extant works of those authors. An interesting case in this connection is the "four-fold division of cognition" schema. Dignāga had claimed that a cognition may be understood in terms of a three-fold analysis: the object-aspect, the aspect of the cognition as such (as something that grasps its content), and reflexive cognition. Insofar as Dignāga holds that the first and second aspects are ultimately identical, he also holds that the third state of reflexive awareness is actually just what we think of as the cognizing aspect apprehending what we take to be the object aspect. Kuiji attributes to Dharmapāla the claim that there is a fourth element in cognitions, the awareness of reflexive awareness, but this "four-fold division" schema is more likely to be of Chinese origin.<sup>11</sup> If so, this would be interesting evidence concerning how the reflexivity thesis might be received in the absence of the sustained discussion of meta-cognition that took place in the Indian context. For this move looks like the beginning of precisely the infinite regress that Dharmakīrti warned would follow from a higher-order account of meta-cognition. The "four-fold division" schema seeks to avoid that regress by making reflexive awareness and awareness of reflexive awareness mutually dependent. Still this does look more like the sort of higher-order perception model championed by the non-Buddhist Nyāya school in India, than the first-order account of Dignāga. Perhaps the East Asian commentators found the violation of irreflexivity incurred by the reflexivity account simply too difficult to swallow.

To conclude, the Yogācāra tradition in East Asia established by Xuanzang may prove useful for constructing a picture of Indian Buddhist philosophy before Dharmakīrti, one that might be very different from what we have reconstructed based largely on the currently available Indian and Tibetan sources. But reliance on the Chinese sources may also be dangerous; we have to be cautious when resorting to them. The papers in this volume aim to provide interesting case studies, as well as encouragement for further study of the Chinese sources.

The essays in this collection represent the current state of play in the scholarly examination of Buddhist philosophy of consciousness. As we have tried to bring out, there are any number of connections between what the Buddhist philosophical tradition has had to say about the nature and functioning of consciousness, and recent work in the philosophy of mind. For readers new to the investigation of an Asian philosophical tradition, we hope fresh insights will be triggered from looking at the issues from a new perspective. And for readers who are already familiar with Buddhist

thinking on the question of consciousness, we hope the essays included here suggest new and fruitful ways of looking at the tradition.

The essays have been arranged in three clusters, each representing a particular focus, and each of the three sections is introduced by a brief preface laying out some of the common themes of the papers in that section. First is a group of three papers on the conceptualist/non-conceptualist debate in Buddhist philosophy of mind. The second section consists of five papers addressing the problem of meta-cognition. Finally there are three papers discussing the distinctive treatment in East Asian Buddhist philosophy of what is known as mental consciousness. All deal specifically with the claim found in that tradition that one kind of consciousness caused by the inner sense (*manas*) operates simultaneously with the consciousnesses brought about by operation of the five external sense faculties (the so-called *msf* thesis).

## LOSING OURSELVES: LEARNING TO LIVE WITHOUT A SELF by Jay L. Garfield [Princeton University Press, 9780691220284]

**Why you don't have a self—and why that's a good thing**

In **LOSING OURSELVES**, Jay Garfield, a leading expert on Buddhist philosophy, offers a brief and radically clear account of an idea that at first might seem frightening but that promises to liberate us and improve our lives, our relationships, and the world. Drawing on Indian and East Asian Buddhism, Daoism, Western philosophy, and cognitive neuroscience, Garfield shows why it is perfectly natural to think you have a self—and why it actually makes no sense at all and is even dangerous. Most importantly, he explains why shedding the illusion that you have a self can make you a better person.

Examining a wide range of arguments for and against the existence of the self, **LOSING OURSELVES** makes the case that there are not only good philosophical and scientific reasons to deny the reality of the self, but that we can lead healthier social and moral lives if we understand that we are selfless persons. The book describes why the Buddhist idea of no-self is so powerful and why it has immense practical benefits, helping us to abandon egoism, act more morally and ethically, be more spontaneous, perform more expertly, and navigate ordinary life more skillfully. Getting over the self-illusion also means escaping the isolation of self-identity and becoming a person who participates with others in the shared enterprise of life.

The result is a transformative book about why we have nothing to lose—and everything to gain—by losing our selves.

### Reviews

"Wise, useful, and surprising, this is a remarkable and brave exploration of selflessness and personhood by the brilliant Buddhist scholar and philosopher Jay Garfield. It is a book for our time, when the author opens for the reader the ethical implications of selflessness, and, to quote him, 'what it means for our understanding of our place in the world.' A wonderful book." -ROSHI JOAN HALIFAX, Zen Buddhist teacher and author of *Being with Dying*

"**LOSING OURSELVES** exemplifies cross-cultural philosophy at its very finest, bringing seminal insights from both Western and Asian thinkers to bear on a single vexed but pressing issue—the nature of the self. In spite of the complexities of the topic and the source texts he adduces, Garfield's writing is unfailingly accessible and lively. And equally important, **LOSING OURSELVES** is a testament to the rewards gained by, and indeed the urgent need for, the pursuit of philosophy in a

more cosmopolitan mode." -ROBERT SHARF, chair of the Center for Buddhist Studies, University of California, Berkeley

"Jay Garfield stages a skillful and imaginative discussion around Buddhist notions of how the self appears and whether it actually exists, bringing together a wide-ranging cast of thinkers from different periods, cultures, and disciplines. This debate is not carried out in the abstract for amusement—the thrust and parry culminate in important conclusions about how viewing ourselves as interdependent persons rather than independent selves is not only more realistic, but crucial for leading an ethical and meaningful life." --BHIKSUNI THUBTEN CHODRON, Buddhist teacher and author of *Open Heart, Clear Mind*"

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This book is a reflection on selflessness, that is, on what it is to be a person, but not to be a self. My initial focus will be metaphysical: an exploration of what kinds of things we are, and of what kinds of things we are not. But the real point of this exploration will emerge towards the end of the book, when we turn to the ethical import of the nonexistence of the self, and what it means for our understanding of our place in the world. I will be arguing explicitly for a position that many may think flies in the face of common sense, viz., that we are not selves, nor do we have selves. I will not argue that we do not exist. That would be madness. But I will argue that we exist not as selves, but as persons. I hope that my argument, to the extent that it is convincing, also persuades you that too often what masquerades as common sense is in fact nonsense. It follows from this that any philosophical program that takes our commonsense intuitions for granted, and then takes as its task to defend them by elucidating them, or by making them more precise, may simply ramify confusion instead of generating clarity.

Some may react to this discussion by thinking that I am drawing a purely verbal distinction that reflects no real philosophical difference, and so think that I am devoting too much ink to making a trivial lexical point; that I am merely arguing for the substitution of one of a pair of synonyms for the other. Others might think that in arguing against the view that we are, or have, selves, I am arguing against a straw man, a position that nobody in fact believes. I hope to convince you that neither is the case, that these terms have very different meanings, that many people—whether professional philosophers or not—take themselves to be selves and not persons in the relevant sense, and that they are wrong to do so. That is, the distinction to which I will draw your attention is a real one, and the position against which I am arguing is no straw man.

The ideas that I will develop are inspired by my long engagement with two philosophers, one Indian and one Scottish: Candrakīrti (c. 600—650 CE) and David Hume (1711-1776 CE). Candrakīrti was a Buddhist scholar and a partisan of the Middle Way School of Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy. He was distinctive in his defense both of the robust reality of the world we inhabit, and of the view that despite—or more accurately, because of—the fact that that it is real, our own existence and that of the objects and institutions that surround us is merely conventional, dependent upon the way we think, and the way we talk. He argued that although we might take ourselves to be selves that exist independent of and prior to these conventions, this is an illusion; instead, he argued, these practices constitute us as persons. All of this might sound a bit incoherent and even mystical, but as we continue our investigation, its plausibility—and, I hope, its correctness—will emerge.

Just over 1,000 years after Candrakīrti's death, David Hume, in Scotland, defended strikingly similar views. He, like Candrakīrti, argued that we must take the reality of the world around us for granted; he also argued that we are systematically confused if we take our own existence, and that of the world around us, to be prior to and independent of our conventions—our ways of acting, talking, and thinking. Hume also argued that although we have a persistent illusion of being selves, we are

instead constituted as persons in the context of our interactions with one another and of the practices that enable those interactions. Although many have thought of Hume's position as interesting only as a straw man to attack, I again hope that as we proceed, its plausibility and indeed its correctness will emerge.

The fact that although Candrakīrti was a Buddhist monk and Hume was a persistent critic of religion in a Christian country, they developed strikingly similar accounts of personhood as well as strikingly similar critiques of the idea of the self is probably no accident: it is highly likely that each account originated in a shared skeptical tradition, with roots both in the classical Greek Pyrrhonian tradition and in Indian Buddhism, traditions that were in contact with one another.<sup>1</sup> But my aim is neither to compare Hume's and Candrakīrti's ideas and arguments, nor to present a systematic analysis of their views. Nor is this an exposition of Buddhist positions on the self. I have undertaken these tasks elsewhere. Instead, my aim is to develop and to defend the idea of personhood on its own terms in the absence of any self, and to explore its ramifications. I will do so in dialogue with both classical and contemporary discussions of this issue. I will draw freely on Indian and Euro-American texts, arguments, and ideas. I think that this is the right way to do philosophy: we should find ideas and conversation partners in every one of the world's intellectual traditions, and we should resist even the implicit parochialism that is reflected in attention only to our own cultural context. But this is not meant to be a book on the history of philosophy, and still less a text in comparative philosophy; it is merely the exploration of an idea in conversation with a wide range of partners. I will therefore not spend much time doing textual work, except where necessary to make that conversation clear. I do hope, though, that this discussion demonstrates in part the value of entering into conversation with multiple traditions when we ask philosophical questions.

I take the topic of what we are to be one of the first importance for at least two reasons. First, I think that a central part of the human project—as Socrates and Plato emphasized in classical Greece, and as the authors of the Upanisads emphasized in classical India—is to know ourselves. That is, we think philosophically in order to come to know what kinds of things we are, and how we fit into the social and biological world around us. Second, we are hyper-social animals—animals who recognize and respect norms, including moral norms. Indeed, our moral commitments are at the very heart of who we take ourselves to be.<sup>3</sup> We are unable to countenance immorality, and we each feel a demand to conduct our lives in ways we recognize as ethical. We therefore require a self-understanding that makes our moral life comprehensible. I believe that the illusion that we are selves undermines ethical cultivation and moral vision, and that coming to understand ourselves as persons

facilitates a more salutary, mature moral engagement with those around us. For this reason alone, it is important to shed the illusion of the self and to come to terms with our identities as persons.

My goal in this short book is to defend what I take to be a correct position, or at least an interesting one. I cannot provide a complete survey of the issues relevant to this question, let alone definitive solutions to any philosophical questions. In particular, there are fascinating and important questions about how to extend these ideas in order to understand the role of such phenomena as race, gender, and sexuality in the construction of our identities; these will have to be addressed on another occasion. Nor will I venture a careful history of thought about the self and the person, either in Asian or in Western traditions. Others have done that well. There is a vast literature to explore

if one is interested in the self and in our identity. I will nod towards some of that literature in the course of this discussion, but I will try to keep the account as uncluttered as possible, so as to make this an easy read. Professional philosophers know where to find more. I include references that will guide those not already immersed in this literature to some of the most important work of my interlocutors. And I hope that this short book stimulates some of my readers to go deeper into this question in conversation with the texts—both classical and contemporary—to which I refer.

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### Getting Over Yourself: Drawing This All Together

It is now time to draw this all together. We have identified Candrakīrti's serpent, and we have shown why we need not fear it. There is no snake in the wall; there is no self at our core. To believe that we have selves is to succumb to a natural illusion, just as we succumb naturally to optical illusions. We are neither substantial subjects who take the world as object, nor free actors who intervene in an otherwise law-governed natural world. Instead, we are persons: hyper-social organisms embedded in the world, in open causal interaction with our environments and with each other; complex causal continua who play complex social roles.

We have seen that while there is a powerful psychological drive to reification that results in the self-illusion, and while that drive has been sublimated into sophisticated accounts of that self and arguments for its reality, we can resist the pull both of that drive and of those arguments. Even the best of those arguments establish only our reality as persons, not as selves, and everything that we might have thought could only be accomplished by a self can be handled just fine by persons.

But we have established more than that. One might have thought that the discovery that we have no self, no ātman, no psyche, would be the discovery that we are somehow less than we thought we were, that we are diminished in dignity, in freedom, in moral worth, or that our lives are less worthwhile than they would be were we selves. But we have seen that this is wrong. Just as our homes are safer with no snakes hiding in the walls, our lives are better for the fact that we are selfless persons than they could ever have been were we selves. That is, the self you might have thought you were would only get in the way of leading a flourishing life; thinking that you have a self does not enhance but instead impoverishes your life.

This is true, we have seen, for several reasons. First, the kind of self-consciousness that arises from thinking of ourselves as selves gets in the way of fluid expert performance. And even though we might not all be virtuoso pianists, or virtuoso tennis players, we are each capable of being virtuoso friends, virtuoso parents, virtuoso colleagues, or virtuoso citizens, persons who play our respective roles well. We do better at these things when we give up our self-illusion than when we focus on that self. Giving up the self, that is, facilitates spontaneity.



Second, to the extent that I think of myself and others as selves, I undermine my ethical life and my ethical engagement with others. The self-illusion distorts our own sense of agency, and distorts our attribution of agency to others. It leads us to see ourselves and others as free actors instead of embedded agents, leading to reactive attitudes that fail to reflect reality, and that do nobody any good. To see ourselves as interacting persons allows us to consider the causes and reasons for our own behavior and attitudes, as well as those of others, and encourages us to resolve problems rather than to recriminate, to ameliorate situations rather than to punish, and to cultivate attitudes that make everyone more effective and happy.

Finally, to see ourselves as persons rather than as selves allows us a richer, more nuanced understanding of who we are, of how we become who we are, and of the importance of our development and social context to our identity. We are not isolated individuals who happen to choose to live together; we are social animals who only become the individuals we do in social contexts that scaffold our flourishing. We can only make sense of our lives and see them as meaningful when we understand our personhood and when we give up the fantasy of independence encoded in the idea of a self.

When people first hear about the idea of selflessness, they often find it disturbing. They think that this is the nihilistic idea that we don't really exist. But that only makes sense if you think that to exist is to be a self. Once we see that the self is illusory, we see that that can't be right. The fact that a dollar is not a piece of paper does not mean that dollars don't exist, and the fact that we are not selves doesn't mean that we do not exist. Instead, for beings like us, to exist is to be a person—a socially constituted being embedded in a rich and meaningful world—just as for things like dollars, to exist is to be a unit of currency embedded in an economic system. To deny that we are persons would be to deny that we exist. So, the self-illusion, although it seems to confer a greater reality on us than would mere conventional personhood, in fact undermines the very reality that makes us who we are. To accept that you have no self is not to reject your identity; it is to reclaim your humanity.

The finer the hair, the more important it is to split it. -SANDY HUNTINGTON <>

## **TEXT, HISTORY, AND PHILOSOPHY: ABHIDHARMA ACROSS BUDDHIST SCHOLASTIC TRADITIONS** edited by Bart Dessein and Weijen Teng [Series: Brill's Indological Library, Brill, ISBN: 9789004316669]

**TEXT, HISTORY, AND PHILOSOPHY. ABHIDHARMA ACROSS BUDDHIST SCHOLASTIC TRADITIONS** discusses Abhidhamma / Abhidharma as a specific exegetical method. In the first part of the volume, the development of the Buddhist argumentative technique is discussed. The second part investigates the importance of the Buddhist rational tradition for the development of Buddhist philosophy. The third part focuses on some peculiar doctrinal issues that resulted from rational Abhidharmic reflections. In this way, an outline of the development of the Abhidharma genre and of Abhidharmic notions and concepts in India, Central Asia, China, and Tibet from the life time of the historical Buddha to the tenth century CE is given.

Contributors are: Johannes Bronkhorst, Lance S. Cousins, Bart Dessein, Tamara Ditrich, Bhikkhu Kuala Lumpur Dhammajoti, Dylan Esler, Eric Greene, Goran Kardaš, Jowita Kramer, Chen-kuo Lin, Andrea Schlosser, Ingo Strauch, Weijen Teng and Yao-ming Tsai.

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## Abhidharma as Rational Inquiry (Bart Dessein)

Although discussion exists on the precise meaning of the word *Abhidhamma* / *Abhidharma*, the compounds *abhi* and *dhamma* / *dharma* suggest that *Abhidhamma* / *Abhidharma* is a historical development of the Buddha’s doctrine (*dhamma* / *dharma*). The word *Abhidhamma* / *Abhidharma* is used both to refer to the method in which the Buddhist doctrine is set forth, and to the genre of literature in which this is done. In what follows, focus will not primarily be on the creation of the so-called *Abhidhammapiṭaka* / *Abhidharmapiṭaka*, the third of the three collections (*Tipitaka* / *Tipitaka*) in which Buddhist literature is traditionally categorized (*Sutta*/*Sūtra*, *Vinaya*, *Abhidhamma*/*Abhidharma*), nor on the development of the textual format of the works of the *Abhidharma* genre, but on the *Abhidharma* as exegetical method.

Discussing *Abhidhamma* / *Abhidharma* as a specific exegetical method, this volume contains three parts. The first part, “*Mātikā* and *Abhidharma* Terminologies,” contains contributions on the development of the Buddhist argumentative technique and on the creation of lists of technical elements (*mātikā* / *mātikā*) that are the outcome of the Buddhist exegetical method and that are the argumentative material used in philosophical discussions. The second part, “Intellectual History,” investigates the importance of the Buddhist rational tradition for the development of Buddhist philosophy in the homeland of Buddhism, as well as for the peculiar developments that were the result of the contact of Buddhism with the philosophical traditions of Central and East Asia. The third part, “Philosophical Studies,” focuses on some peculiar doctrinal issues that resulted from rational *Abhidharmic* reflections.

For a tradition of rational inquiry to develop, thinkers have to accept the legitimacy of questions and critique, even if these are directed against convictions that are sanctioned by intuition, generally accepted truth, or revealed truth. Rather than accepting 'revealed truth,' rational inquiry is aimed at 'revealing truth'. It is through rational thinking and argumentation that this aim can be achieved. It is obvious that such a 'rational attitude' is stimulated when a thinker "seriously contemplates the pervasiveness of the possibility that he may be wrong, that he needs reasons and arguments to support the validity of his views," and that this situation especially occurs when confronted with an intellectual opponent. The question as to the reason why a tradition of rational inquiry – and of 'philosophy' for that matter – develops is therefore a contextual one, and can be rephrased as follows: Where and when were circumstances such that 'philosophers' were confronted with the possible fallibility of (their) traditional concepts, and / or with the need to convince others of the correctness of their views? It is, further, precisely because rational inquiry does not take convictions that are sanctioned by intuition, generally accepted truth, or revealed truth as granted, that systems of rational thinking have the possibility to cross the borders of the cultural context in which they originated and first developed. The latter is important with respect to the following: scholarly opinion differs on the number of scientific traditions, that is, traditions of rational inquiry as defined here, that have developed in the history of mankind. While the West Eurasian tradition (which includes the Greek and Islamic traditions) and the Indian cultural tradition are generally accepted to be characterized by an attitude of rational inquiry, the Chinese tradition would arguably be devoid of this attitude. Buddhism is then accepted to have considerably influenced the Chinese 'philosophical' tradition. These characteristics of rational inquiry – its aim to reveal truth through rational thinking and argumentation, and its possibility to cross cultural boundaries – are particularly important with respect to the present volume: Abhidharma as exegetical method and its importance for the development of Buddhist 'philosophy'.

Judging from early Buddhist texts in which especially the Jains are referred to, it appears that in the region of Magadha where the historical Buddha lived, the Jains (and sometimes also the Ājīvikas) were important religious competitors of the Buddhists. This competitive context gives Buddhism a peculiar position in the Indian religious/philosophical landscape, and is important for our understanding of the development of Abhidharma as exegetical method – above, we have claimed that the argumentative skills that religions/philosophies develop in a competitive context are important for them to become conversant and cross-cultural. Indeed, because texts of the Vedic oral/aural tradition were primarily aimed at delivering a message to the realm of the Vedic gods, who, by definition, did not need to be convinced of the truth revealed in the Vedic texts, these texts do not show a development of argumentative techniques. In contradistinction to the Vedic texts, the Brahmana prose texts – as do the Upanishads – explain the offers that are performed. This suggests that, with the development of Brahmanism, the religious audience were no longer the mere passive spectators they had been in the Vedic period, but became – at least passive – participators in a religious dialogue. It therefore may be the development of Brahmanism that, in the Indian context, laid the basis for what eventually would become a tradition of rational inquiry. This transformation should not be overstressed though, as the debates that are included in the Brahmanas and the Upanishads are not 'rational' in the sense that they want to convince someone of the Brahmanic or Upanisadic truth. Their explanations are for internal use.

While on the one hand pointing to the Indian oral/aural tradition in which Buddhism originated, the introductory formula to many Buddhist sūtras "eva me sūta" ("Thus have I heard") also alludes to it that, for the early Buddhists too, the word spoken by the Buddha primarily had the value of 'revealed truth' and was the guideline to be followed. The following passage included in the Mahāraṇirvāsūtra testifies of this: When Ānanda lamented that the doctrine would be without teacher after the Buddha had died – thus urging the Buddha to appoint a successor – the Buddha is reported to have replied that the doctrine and discipline he had taught them should also serve as

teacher after his demise. Also the following two viewpoints, attributed to the Mahāsāṅghikas in the Samayabhedoparacanacakra (Yibuzong lun lun) testify of this acceptance of the word of the Buddha as 'revealed truth': "Everything that has been preached by the World-honored One is in conformity with the truth (yathārtha)," and "The sūtras proclaimed by the Buddha are all perfect in themselves (nītārtha)". In his Yibuzong lun lun shuji ʼp his commentary to the Chinese version of the Samayabhedoparacanacakra, Kuiji (632–682) explains these claims as that nothing the Buddha has said is without benefit for living beings, and that, therefore, everything he has said should be considered as the turning of the wheel of the doctrine.

Mentioning of the Samayabhedoparacanacakra (Treatise on the Development of the Different Sects) brings us to one of the major peculiarities connected with Abhidharma as exegetical method: the formation of Buddhist (Abhidharma) sects. The territorial expansion of the Buddhist doctrine and the concomitant different living conditions for Buddhist monks and nuns, must have made it impossible for all monastics to live according to exactly the same set of rules (Vinaya), and the Buddha's choice not to appoint a successor must have invoked different interpretations of the precise meaning of his sermons. Debates with non-Buddhists must further have encroached on this tendency and must be responsible for it that non-Buddhist – particularly Vedic and Jain – concepts and elements were introduced in the Buddhist doctrine. All this eventually resulted in the formation of different schools and sects. It is especially in the Abhidhamma / Abhidharma literature that developed from the Sutta / Sūtra and the Vinaya literature that these developments can be discerned.

There is evidence that not only the formation of a corpus of sūtra texts, but that also the Abhidharma practice originated as part of an oral/aural tradition. It has hereby been suggested that it are the mnemotechnical skills of the Brahmins who joined the Buddhist order that made the memorization of the Buddhist texts possible. Although we may indeed assume that the oral/ aural tradition of the early Buddhist community with synods (saṅgīti) meant to recite the words of the Buddha, occurred in a context very similar to that of the Brahmanic tradition – early sangha members claimed that they had maintained in their memories the words as they had been spoken by the Buddha himself and had, generation after generation, been publicly recited – it is very likely that, contrary to general acceptance, Buddhism did not start as a reactionary movement against Vedic Brahmanism. There is evidence that Brahmanism only started to reach the northeastern domains of the Indian subcontinent during the Aśokan period. It are the territorial expansion and enhanced possibilities for adherents of all beliefs and faiths to freely travel the country that characterizes this period that must have brought Buddhists in contact with Brahmins. This claim is supported by the following: tradition connects king Aśoka with the so-called Buddhist 'synod' (saṅgīti) that resulted in the first schism in the Buddhist community – the one between the Mahāsāṅghikas and the Sthaviravādins.

Contrary to what was the case for Brahmanism, however, Buddhists, as adherents of a new faith, were quickly confronted with the fact that, for their religion to survive, non-Buddhists had to be convinced of the Buddhist truth – one may be born a Brahmin, however, one is not born a Buddhist. The necessity to convert non-Buddhists helps to explain why early Buddhists culled the most important elements of the Buddhist doctrine from the Buddha's sermons, and organized them in lists of technical elements, the so-called mātākās that are the fundament of all later Abhidharmic developments. These mātākās were doctrinally interpreted, and became the argumentative material used in philosophical discussions. Mnemotechnical skills were undoubtedly a major asset in remembering and expounding these lists. Also the questions-and-answers format – illustrative for a tradition of rational debate – that is frequently used in Abhidharma texts to explain the elements that make up a mātākā facilitates the memorization of such lists.<sup>28</sup> This questions-and-answers format echoes the dialogue form of most of the Pāli Nikāyas and Sanskrit (Chinese) Āgamas in which

not only the Buddha, but also his chief disciples had discussions with other monks and with non-Buddhists.

The famous *Milindapañha* (Questions of King Milinda) records a debate that allegedly took place between the Greek king Milinda / Menandros, member of the Hellenistic tradition, and the Buddhist monk Nāgasena. Although Édith Nolot (1995: 9) has argued that there has been a historical King Menandros who reigned in the northwest of India around the second century BCE, but that this historical figure is not the actual participant in the alleged discussion with Nāgasena who, moreover, might be a fictitious person as well, this does not diminish the importance of the fact that a text written in a language of northwestern India, records this debate and, thus, witnesses of the confrontation of Buddhists with members of the Oriental Hellenistic tradition that flourished in Central Asia starting from around 185 BCE. The date suggested by Édith Nolot (1995: 9) of the second century BCE for the earliest version of such a text might be too early – committing Buddhist texts to writing is likely to only have started in the second century BCE, it remains a fact that the *Milindapañha* testifies of an early philosophical debate. In its Chinese rendering, this work that is likely to be dated in the beginning of the common era, belongs to the Sarvāstivāda school of Buddhism that had Gandhāra as one of its strongholds. Gandhāra and Sri Lanka have become of particular importance for the two main Abhidhamma / Abhidharma traditions: the southern Theravāda tradition, and the northwestern Sarvāstivāda tradition.

The encounter of the Sarvāstivādins of Gandhāra with members of the Greek rational tradition of which the *Milindapañha* testifies, must have inspired the Sarvāstivādins to systematize the word of the Buddha into a sound philosophical system, as creating their peculiar system was to all likelihood seen as the only way to defend their faith against the well-developed Greek tradition of rational debate. These particular circumstances may explain why the development of a Buddhist rational tradition was especially prominent among the Sarvāstivādins, why this tradition may have started in Gandhāra, and why it are the Sarvāstivādins who have the most exhaustive collection of Abhidharma texts. It is to the development of Gandhāran Sarvāstivāda thinking in its confrontation with the Hellenistic world, as well as to the influence this development has had on other currents of thought in India – the grammarians, Jains, and Brahmins – that Johannes Bronkhorst devotes his attention in his contribution “Abhidharma and Indian Thinking”.

Also Ingo Strauch and Andrea Schlosser study Abhidharmic developments in the region of Gandhāra. In “Abhidharmic Elements in Gandhāran Mahāyāna Buddhism. Groups of Four and the abhedya-prasādas in the Bajaur Mahāyāna Sūtra,” they discuss the data contained in the so-called Bajaur Mahāyāna Sūtra, a text in Kharoḥḥi that was allegedly discovered in the ruins of a Buddhist monastery near the village of Mian Kili at the Dir-Bajaur border. The text belongs to one of three genres that can be considered as authentic products of a Gandhāran literary tradition: Avadāna texts, scholastic and commentarial texts, and early Mahāyāna sūtras. Investigation of this text that contains two levels – a dialogue between the Tathāgata and his disciple Śāriputra that is reminiscent of early Buddhist sūtras, and a ‘Mahāyānist’ description of the bodhisattva path – sheds light on the peculiar development of Mahāyāna notions (especially the character of dharmas and of sa<sup>h</sup>jñā) in the region of Gandhāra. The particular Abhidharmic developments in Kashmir, Gandhāra, and Bactria (together also referred to as ‘Greater Gandhāra’) can therefore be interpreted as the coming to full maturation of a tendency that was already present in early Buddhism.

In “Interpretations of the terms *ajjhata*<sup>h</sup> and *bahiddhā*: From the Pāli Nikāyas to the Abhidhamma,” Tamara Ditrich discusses the terms *ajjhata*<sup>h</sup> (internally), *bahiddhā* (externally) and *ajjhatabhiddhā* (internally and externally) as they are used in the *Satipa<sup>h</sup>hānasutta* (Sutta on the Applications of Mindfulness) of the Pāli canon, that is, as possible modes to practice application of mindfulness on



the body (kāyānupassanā), on feelings (vedanānupassanā), on the mind (cittānupassanā), and on mental objects (dhammānupassanā).

A study of the Theravāda Abhidhamma literature shows that Buddhaghosa's (fifth century CE) interpretation of this early māt^kā has, with some modification, been followed by most modern scholars and practitioners who appear to have developed a common understanding of the meaning of 'internally' and 'externally'. This, however, does not seem to be the case for the compound term ajjhattabahiddhā. Tamara Ditrich therefore suggests that diverging interpretations of the compound term may be due to the fact that the "Indian Buddhist oral transmission may have adopted the already established stylistic and linguistic patterns and markers (that is: patterns of the Vedic language), such as the usage of dvandva compounds, for indicating specific contexts such as the modes of contemplation, especially in relation to the four satipa^hānas". The connection of a māt^kā of three types of practice with a māt^kā of four applications of mindfulness illustrates how, already in an early period of Abhidharmic development, existing māt^kās were brought into an ever more intricate connection, with elements of one māt^kā used to explain the elements of one or another māt^kā. The list of four avetyaprasādas discussed in Ingo Strauch and Andrea Schlosser's contribution mentioned above, is further a fine illustration of it that these māt^kās as oldest fundament of the mature Abhidharma texts, are a common heritage of both the Theravāda and the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma traditions. While the authors prove that the term abhedya was first used in Gandhāra, and that there is good reason to believe that Sarvāstivāda circles were the first to refer to the 'four avetyaprasādas,' the Bajaur Mahāyāna Sūtra connects this concept with the intentional reflection on the positive qualities of Buddha, Dharma, Sa^gha and morality (sila). This reflection is qualified as to its either having originated internally (adhyātmāsamutthita), or having originated externally (bahidhāsamutthita), or having originated both internally and externally (adhyātmabahidhādamutthita). In this text, the well-known Śrāvakayāna concept of the āryaśrāvaka and his avetyaprasādas is thus linked with a Mahāyāna type of notions.

That Sarvāstivādin yogācāra masters inherited the Sarvāstivādin analysis of dharmas and contributed, together with a certain section of the Sautrāntikas, to the establishment of the Mahāyāna Yogācāra school is evident from the contribution by Jowita Kramer. In "Some Remarks on the Proofs of the 'Store Mind' (Ālayavijñāna) and the Development of the Concept of Manas," she discusses the change in interpretation of the māt^kā of five aggregates (skandha) under influence of the innovative Mahāyāna concept of the "store mind" (ālayavijñāna). This is, more precisely, done through an examination of Vasubandhu's Pañcaskandhaka and its commentaries. Illustrative for the process of debate and inquiry that characterizes later Abhidharma texts, it is shown how the authors of these works sometimes try to compromise on the varying teachings of Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośabhā^ya and Abhidharmic works of the Yogācāra tradition, and sometimes appear to develop their own interpretations.

It may be clear from the above that the Sarvāstivādins who lived in a different context than the one that existed in the region of Vidiṣā that was the stronghold of the Theravādins before they migrated to Sri Lanka, enjoyed a long period of philosophical development, and that their doctrines had an immense impact on the development of ^rāvakayāna and Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy and methodology. Moreover, the influence of the Sarvāstivādins was not restricted to India and Central Asia, but their method of rational inquiry also had an impact on the Chinese tradition. It is to the issue of philosophical influence that the second part of this volume, "Intellectual History," is devoted.

The mutual influence of different Buddhist traditions in India is addressed in Lance S. Cousins's contribution. In "Sanskrit Abhidharma Literature of the Mahāvihāravāsins," he examines the Sanskrit citations in the thirteenth century sanne to the Pāli Visuddhimagga. He argues that at least some of these citations prove that the seventh century Jotipāla, a major figure of the Mahāvihāravāsin



tradition who most likely came from the major center of non-Mahāyāna tradition in the Tamil country, wrote in Sanskrit as well as in Pāli. Confronted with the difficulty that they had to establish their legitimacy as a reform movement – Mahāyāna doctrine differing from the early doctrine in some essential points of theology – the early Mahāyānists of around the first century BCE were to all probability the first to turn to the use of script to expound and spread their views. It is then suggested that, in these circumstances, also the Theravādins started to write down their texts. The language in which this was done was Pāli. The use of Sanskrit in southern India is interesting because it to all probability is Brahmanism that introduced the use of Sanskrit in virtually the whole of South Asia and larger parts of Southeast Asia, a development that is likely to be related to the fact that Brahmanism had become a socio-political ideology, with Brahmins offering their services as advisor to the political elites. With respect to the question of philosophical interaction, the evidence provided in the *saṃne* to the *Visuddhimagga* thus opens a new perspective on the activities of the Brahmins, as well as of the Theriya in South Asia in the later part of the first millennium CE.

It is an important trait of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* that it criticizes *Vaibhāṅika* viewpoints as they are expounded in the so-called *vibhāṅg* compendia, the commentarial literature that was produced by the so-called *Vaibhāṅika* *Sarvāstivādins* of Gandhāra. According to the Chinese monk and translator Xuanzang <sup>^^</sup> (602–664), Sa'ghabhadra (ca. fifth century CE) determined to refute Vasubandhu's critique on the *Vaibhāṅikas*. Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti discusses the importance of Sa'ghabhadra in "Sa'ghabhadra's Contribution to our Understanding of Abhidharma". Kuiji, a disciple of Xuanzang, even records and identifies *Vaibhāṅika* theories as "neo-Sarvāstivāda". This makes Sa'ghabhadra, who is by Xuanzang's pupils taken to represent the correct *Vaibhāṅika* viewpoint, an important exponent of Abhidharma thinking. In this way, Sa'ghabhadra's doctrinal expositions allow us insight in at least that section of the *Dārṇāntika* *Sarvāstivādins* who developed into the *Sautrāntikas*. The work of Sa'ghabhadra is also important for the study of the doctrinal evolution of the Mahāyāna, as his importance was acknowledged by the *Yogācāra* masters (as also discussed in Jowita Kramer's contribution) who took him as representative of the true *Vaibhāṅika* viewpoint in their *Sarvāstivāda* studies.

It is through the intellectual context of Greater Gandhāra that both Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna Buddhism reached China around the beginning of the common era. While the Chinese Buddhist monastic code developed to be essentially the *Dharmaguptaka* code, the doctrinal school that had the largest impact in China was without any doubt the highly rationalistic *Sarvāstivāda* school that, in its *Vaibhāṅika* interpretation, flourished in the Ku<sup>ā</sup>a empire. After Emperor Ming (r. 58–75 CE) of the Han g dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) had sent Zhang Qian and Qin Jing as envoys to Central Asia to establish an alliance against the Xiongnu <sup>^^^</sup>, thus opening the road to Central Asia, Buddhist missionaries from the regions of Gandhāra, Parthia, Sogdiana, Khotan, and Kucā reached China.<sup>46</sup> After an initial period in which Buddhism mainly flourished among the immigrants and merchants who had settled in China, the second half of the second century CE saw the first translations of Abhidharma texts into Chinese. Especially the Parthian monk An Shigao (fl. 148–168) has to be mentioned here. It is to the translations of An Shigao and his followers that Eric M. Greene devotes his attention in "Pratītyasamutpāda in the Translations of An Shigao and the Writings of his Chinese Followers". This contribution shows how pre-Buddhist Chinese understandings of sense perception – and particularly the relationship between sense perception and desire – decisively influenced the early translations of Abhidharma texts into Chinese. It is, more precisely, shown how the notion of sense contact (*spārśa*) as a neutral process occurring prior to the arising of desire conflicted with the traditional Chinese understanding that desire is located in the sense organs themselves and seek out their desired objects independently from the will. This contribution thus allows us to see how key Buddhist ideas were (or were not) initially understood by the Chinese audience.

When Buddhism entered China, Confucianism had been elevated to official orthodoxy. It has already been said repeatedly by different scholars that the unification of the empire in the third century BCE and the subsequent victory of Confucianism as orthodoxy in the Han dynasty have had a devastating impact on the development of ‘rational inquiry’ as defined here. Scholarship had become highly institutionalized and bureaucratized, and the philosophical profession had become organized in ‘schools’ (jia V) of thought. In China, books came to be seen as texts that were accepted by and commented upon by a peculiar ‘school’ in accordance with that particular school’s interpretation of the words of old sages. Membership of a ‘school’ was the prerequisite to gain knowledge and understanding of this interpretation. Traditional Chinese philosophy was therefore not characterized as a “search for truth,” as the truth of the words of antiquity was considered to stand beyond doubt. Rather, traditional Chinese philosophy was aimed at engaging with the world, conceived as a holistic whole, the good order of which is dictated by the past, and consists in bringing a specific and transmitted interpretation of the words of the past into practice.

The fall of the Han dynasty in 220 CE was a major challenge for the Confucian scholar’s identity. This, on the one hand, as argued by Eric M. Greene resulted in it that Buddhist writings of the period posterior to the Han reflect an effort to find ways of talking about Buddhist theories that would be resonant with a more general Chinese audience. On the other hand, this period also witnesses a ‘conservative’ Confucian movement, with Confucians blaming a degenerate Confucianism for the fall of the Han dynasty. In “Abhidharma in China: Reflections on ‘Matching Meanings’ and Xuanxue,” Bart Dessein describes how, when the originally Abhidharmic exegetical technique of ‘geyi’ – explaining Buddhist māt^kās through matching them with traditional Chinese numerical lists – had proven unsuccessful to make clear the meaning of the Buddhist doctrine, the technique might have continued to be used by ‘conservative’ Confucians who tried to redefine Chinese culture in a context of a growing influence of Daoism and Buddhism. That the Abhidharma technique was thus reinvented as a technique to redefine Confucian orthodoxy shows the influence of the Abhidharmic rational debate on Chinese traditional philosophy. That is to say, a technique that was originally used in a Buddhist context was integrated in Confucian orthodoxy in so far as the social cohesion of the Chinese world view was maintained.

For the integration of Buddhist elements in Confucian doctrine also a development within Buddhism itself was important: The Mahāyāna Buddhist position that salvation can be reached in the sentient world did no longer confine Buddhist adepts to monasteries. This opened the road for Buddhist adherents to also become politically active – in this taking the path also the Brahmins had done earlier. While some Buddhist monks thus became increasingly involved in ‘Confucian’ politics, other monks continued to devote their time to Abhidharma studies. In this way, an Abhidharma School started to flourish in fourth century South China. This Abhidharma School became superseded by the Kośa School after Xuanzang and his translation team had translated the famous Abhidharmakośa in 653 CE. The importance of these Chinese Abhidharma and Kośa Schools as ‘conservative’ schools that tried to set Chinese understanding of Buddhism aright by reorienting it toward Indian Buddhist systems of thought – in this undoubtedly inspired by the direct contacts with the Indian world that existed in Tang ^ dynasty China (618–907), is discussed by Weijen Teng. His “Kuiji’s Abhidharmic Recontextualization” shows that Kuiji employs Abhidharma as an exegetical strategy to recontextualize Chinese Buddhism, that is, to prove that this methodology can offer a common and normative foundation for discussion and argument about Buddhist doctrines and concepts.

Dylan Esler’s “Traces of Abhidharma in the bSam-gtan mig-sgron (Tibet, Tenth Century),” outlines how the tenth century bSam-gtan mig-sgron, a treatise on the subject of meditation and the first indigenous Tibetan doxography is concerned with knowledge of the ultimate nature of reality and with the methods of spiritual realization. Although not an Abhidharma treatise per se, through its implicit and explicit references to the Abhidharmic framework, the text reveals that it is Abhidharma

that provides the metaphysical, cosmological and phenomenological backdrop against which any form of Buddhist meditative praxis takes place. Abhidharma therefore is not only the philosophical construct to explain the Buddhist doctrine and the framework within which philosophers interpreted internal developments and external influences, but also the context that informs and defines Buddhist meditative praxis.

In a period in which sectarian disagreements and discussions between different Buddhist groups had become prominent, the practice to sanction one specific interpretation of the meaning of the elements enumerated in a given *māt^kā* against another interpretation is likely to have gained importance. Sectarian disagreement and a transition from an oral/aural transmission of the word of the Buddha to a written transmission with new means to build up argumentation, also opened new perspectives for the development of the textual format of the texts in which 'philosophical' positions were outlined. Developed from simple *māt^kās* that had been culled from *sūtras* and *Vinaya* texts, Abhidharma texts increasingly became polemical, and became characterized by an increasing "attempt to cogently summarize salient doctrinal positions and yet also refute, point by point, positions thought to represent rival groups". In this process, the original *māt^kās* were not only adapted to suit doctrinal interpretations and developments, but they also became the force of doctrinal development themselves. New interpretations of the transmitted material were also included in commentarial texts on earlier Abhidharma texts, and sectarian self-identification also culminated in the creation of well-structured pedagogical manuals of Buddhist doctrine in which, through sophisticated methods of argument, the own position is established and the view of others is refuted. This development of peculiar philosophical positions is the subject of the third part of this volume: "Philosophical Studies".

Harivarman lived in the third-fourth century and is likely to have belonged to the *Bahuśrutīyas*, a sub-group of the *Mahāsā^ghikas*. He is credibly attested as being a pupil of *Kumāralāta* who, himself, was connected to the *Sautrāntika* development of the *Sarvāstivādin*s. By the time of Harivarman, the early Buddhist dharma theory – the *Sarvāstivādin* atomic world view that all that exists is composed of phenomena (*dharma*) that are themselves subject to constant change, and that therefore all that exists is devoid of intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) – had experienced a major reinterpretation. Rational inquiry could not but lead to the advanced opinion that when all that exists is composed of phenomena, it should necessarily be so that these phenomena (themselves *dharma*s too) should equally consist of further *dharma*s. The only logical outcome was that all that exists was taken to be empty (*śūnya*). It especially were the *Madhyamaka* philosophers, the most important of whom are the second-third century *Nāgārjuna* and his disciple *Āryadeva*, who took this thinking to its logical and methodological extreme. As masters of logic argumentation, they even dared to use logical argument to discuss the proper dogmas of Buddhism. "Madhyamaka in Abhidharma Śāstras: The Case of Harivarman's \**Tattvasiddhi*" is Goran Kardaš's investigation of the *Madhyamaka* viewpoints in Harivarman's \**Tattvasiddhiśāstra*. In this Abhidharma treatise that is one of the very few to refer to the *Mādhyamikas*, Harivarman is seen to put *Madhyamaka* argumentation – that most likely stems from *Āryadeva* – in favor of the non-existence of things in the mouth of his opponent who, through this, appears as a *Madhyamaka* adherent. This contribution thus witnesses of the third-fourth century intellectual debate between adherents of the *Srāvakayāna* and early *Mahāyānists*.

One of the consequences of the growing importance and popularity of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism in China was that Abhidharma studies rapidly started to decline after the eighth century. Although Abhidharma studies disappeared as a separate branch of Buddhist activity, the Abhidharmic methodology continued to live on in the Chinese *Mahāyāna* schools. In "Svalak^a^a (Particular) and Sāmānyalak^a^a (Universal) in Abhidharma and Chinese *Yogācāra* Buddhism," Chen-kuo Lin outlines how the seventh-eighth century Chinese *Yogācārin*s disagreed with the theory the *Ābhidhārmikas* *Kuīji* and *Huizhao* (632–682) proposed on whether liberation through meditation can be attained

when taking the universal characteristics of things as object or when taking the particular characteristics as object, and how they appropriated Abhidharma teachings in their Yogācāra theory of truth and liberation. In its focus on Yogācāra Buddhism's relation to the Sarvāstivāda, this chapter corroborates the importance of the latter for the former also Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti discerned, and its subject – the māt^kā of meditation leading to liberation – is also the subject matter discussed in the contributions by Tamara Ditrich and by Ingo Strauch and Andrea Schlosser.

Another pedagogical manual is the already mentioned Abhidharmakośa by Vasubandhu. In “Perspectives on the Person and the Self in Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośabhā^ya,” Yao-ming Tsai examines Vasubandhu's (ca. fourth-fifth century CE) approach to the nature and identity of the person and the self. It is, more precisely, shown how Vasubandhu's thesis of the selflessness of a person (pudgala-nairātmya) is a critique of the Pudgalavādins (those who accept the existence of a person) or the Tīrthikas (heretics). Discerning a development from an 'Abhidharmic' approach to a 'not-dharmic' approach, Yao-ming Tsai argues that the ninth chapter of the Abhidharmakośabhā^ya reveals the significance of the role played by soteriology in Buddhist intellectual thought. He makes clear that the issue of not-self is not about an existential differentiation, but about metaphysical identification: while it is conventional knowledge to speak of the five aggregates that constitute a person and that explain why there is no such thing as a 'self,' it is wise to state that these five aggregates are in reality not the five aggregates and are only designations of provisional naming without any substantial or ontological distinction per se. It may also be recalled here that Vasubandhu was a native of Puru^apura in Gandhāra, the region we characterized as having been important for the development of 'Buddhist philosophy' and for the maturation of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This development towards the metaphysical might have been stimulated by the development of the dharma theory outlined above, and by the fact that, as mentioned, the Brahmins had taken up a political role, a possibility that was unavailable to the adherents of Śrāvakayāna Buddhism that is overall characterized by a denunciation of mundane life. This lack might have made it possible that Buddhism became more oriented towards the metaphysical.

It is thus clear that Abhidharma studies, their long history and diverse contexts of development notwithstanding, continued to deliberate over the same fundamental Buddhological questions. Abhidharma was at once the philosophical construct to explain the Buddhist doctrine as the framework within which philosophers interpreted internal developments and external influences.

### Methodological Remarks (Weijen Teng)

Thus far, we have signified the very nature of the Abhidharma tradition as an enterprise of rational thinking, sketched its historical transmission and transformation across South and East Asia, and outlined the arrangement and the main points of the chapters. The following part of the introduction highlights the methodological significance of this edited volume as a whole, and teases out some of the methodological features reflected in the individual chapters.

The compilation of this volume, which covers cross-regional and longue durée studies of Abhidhamma / Abhidharma traditions, appears to encapsulate a methodological intuition – a demonstration of how the Abhidharma study, which is often envisioned as a lofty, hypertechnical, and relatively marginal subject within Buddhist Studies, could be approached in a way that could contribute to a broader inquiry into the Humanities. Given the intention of offering some new lights to the study of the Abhidharma tradition methodologically, this volume does not claim to offer a methodological 'paradigm shift'. As the three thematic divisions of this volume suggests, the authors have adopted the methods that are fundamental to the study of Abhidharma study, namely a meticulous textual criticism and historical philology, contextualized intellectual history, and doctrinal philosophy. Nonetheless, in their studies, these authors take up issues that go beyond the Abhidharma tradition itself and therefore reveal verily some methodological significances and

potentials. We will point out these methodological features shortly, but before that, we will try to signify some methodological advantage this volume as a whole encapsulates.

One methodological advantage of this volume apparently lies in its coverage of the birth, growth, and changes over time and space of this Buddhist scholastic enterprise we call 'the Abhidharma tradition'. This volume can be imagined as a satellite in space: in its surveying down the river system of the Abhidharma, an overall picture is produced that enables us to connect its remote sources with its ends, and to trace its turns and stops across regions. In this way, through Johannes Bronkhorst's delineating of the intellectual network of Gandhāran Abhidharma, we can connect the Hellenistic philosophical world not only to the South Asian world of the Brahmanical philosophies and to the Tamil country and Ceylon addressed in Lance S. Cousins's study, but also across East Asia, to the seventh century Abhidharmic recontextualization by Kuiji in Weijen Teng's study, and to the Chinese seventh-eighth century Chinese Yogācāra Buddhism that Chen-kuo Lin studied. We can even connect the Hellenistic philosophical methodology to the otherwise untraceable end of "geyi Confucianism" in which the Abhidharmic technique was adopted by Confucians to redefine their orthodoxy, a case studied in Bart Dessein's chapter. In Ditrich's trace of the genealogy of the Pāli syntagms *ajjhata*^, *bahiddhā* and *ajjhatabhiddhā*, a stylistic current that originated in the Vedic textual tradition flows into the Pāli Nikāyas through the oral practice of *mātikā*, and was later formulized and formalized by Buddhagosa in the later Theravāda Abhidhamma literature. Through the vintage point this volume stands upon, the complex nature of these intellectual connections, that has an enormous coverage in time and space, reveals, in a much fuller manner, the cross-cultural influence and confluence of the Abhidharma tradition in the intellectual history of the globe.

Another methodological feature this volume presents, is that many chapters offer potential contributions to the areas of studies that go beyond the subject of Abhidharma scholasticism itself. In general, the subject of Abhidharma is studied in its own right, whereby the origins of the Abhidharmic enterprise are sought, its philosophies and doctrines are interpreted, and its intellectual dynamics are revealed. This is surely a legitimate and necessary approach. However, the study of Abhidharma also has the potential to go beyond its own philosophical and religious significance. Through Johannes Bronkhorst's as well as Ingo Stauch and Andrea Schlosser's studies of the rational form of intellectual debate and its reception and development in "Greater Gandhāra," the cultural richness and complex intellectual network of this ancient region can be inferred. To some extent, Lance S. Cousins's study of the "Sanskrit Abhidharma Literature of the Mahāvihārāvāsins" likewise enhances our knowledge of the intellectual history of the Theriya school of Southern India and Ceylon. The materials these authors document and analyze constitute a cogent case for Randall Collins' "sociology of philosophies," and thus engage in the dialogue with the "global theory of intellectual change" that he proposed.

A varied methodological move of going beyond Abhidharma itself can be discerned in the history of East Asian Abhidharma. As demonstrated in this volume, Abhidharma is taken not only as a scholastic system of thought per se. It is also viewed as a peculiar genre of Buddhist literature as is the case in Eric M. Greene's chapter, as an exegetical technique by Bart Dessein, and as an exegetical strategy by Weijen Teng. Methodologically speaking, Eric M. Greene rightly takes the 'problematic' Chinese translations of Buddhist terms seriously, a methodological move that contrasts with the studies that simply dismiss such problematic Chinese translations as doctrinal deficiency, and thrive for the 'authentic' meanings of the Indic terms. In his seeking out semantic and/or cultural explanations for the "mistranslated" terms, Greene makes an interesting case for the study of "cultural translation," vis-à-vis literal rendering, and he hence offers an alternative approach to the study of Chinese translations of Buddhist texts.



Bart Dessein's and Weijen Teng's approaches to Abhidharma are similar in that they do not focus on any particular Abhidharma literature or theory. Instead, they approach Abhidharma as an exegetical technique or strategy employed by fourth-fifth century and seventh century Chinese intellectuals respectively, and they try to bring about the historical significance of this technique or strategy for the intellectual world of medieval China. Dessein's study is particularly interesting in that the Chinese Buddhist pedagogy in relation to Abhidharma, that is, *geyi*, unintendedly helped some 'conservative' Confucian literati to redefine the Confucian orthodoxy of the time. In the same vein, Teng's approach to Abhidharma looks into the methodological nature of Abhidharmic scholasticism, and shows how Kuiji attempted to construct a normative foundation for the Chinese Buddhist intellectual practice.

Rigorous philosophical and philological approaches to Abhidharma studies are not lacking from this volume. Due to their close investigations into important Abhidharma texts that have not received due attention from Abhidharma scholars, the discoveries and arguments advanced in these studies improve our knowledge of the Abhidhamma / Abhidharma tradition. In the case of Jowita Kramer, the primary text of the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṅgā* was recently edited and published by the same author. Her study of this text with a comparison primarily of the *Pañcaskandhaka*, the *Yogācārabhūmi*, and the *Mahāyānasaṅgraha*, enables us to trace the various lines of the development of the concepts of *kliṣṭa* and *ālayavijñāna* from early Buddhism to Mahāyāna via Abhidharma developments.

It is worth mentioning that the text Goran Kardaš studies, the *\*Tattvasiddhi*, is a Sanskrit text that has been reconstructed from its Chinese translation, the *Chengshi lun*. The *\*Tattvasiddhi* probably is the only extant Mahāsāghika Abhidharma text, whose importance in terms of the intellectual history of the Abhidharma tradition is evident. Methodologically speaking, Kardaš's choice and study of the Sanskrit reconstruction, instead of the 'original' Chinese translation, offers some interesting perspectives for textual criticism when the Sanskrit text is compared with its Chinese translation.

We have already seen that several papers in this volume work on Chinese materials. How Chinese materials can be important for more historically informed and philosophically engaged Abhidharma studies is made explicit in Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti's and Chen-kuo Lin's studies. They bring to our attention, though not for the first time in this field of studies, the Abhidharma literature persevered only in Chinese translation as well as the Abhidharmic discussions found in Chinese Buddhist commentaries. Through his close examination of the Chinese Abhidharma translations, in his chapter, the *\*Nyāyānusāra* (Shun zhengli lun QI<sup>CC</sup>\*) and the *\*Abhidharmasamayapradīpikā* (Apidamo xian-zong lun) of Saṅghabhadra, Dhammajoti demonstrates how Abhidharma scholars can be misled by relying solely on the Indic Abhidharma literature, for instance, the *Abhidharmakośa*, and by overlooking the vast corpus of Chinese translations of Abhidharma texts, in particular Xuanzang's translation of the gigantic *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṅgā*, a fundamental Abhidharma text of the Sarvāstivāda school.

In his philosophical study of the Chinese Yogācārins of the seventh-eighth century, Chen-kuo Lin introduces the scholastic and philosophical discussions found in the indigenous commentaries to the Abhidharma and Yogācāra texts. Lin's study cogently demonstrates the value of these Chinese commentaries to the extent that they do not only continue some core philosophical debates of the Abhidharma and Yogācāra traditions, but also offer new and plausible philosophical insights which might be informed by the Chinese world-view. In terms of the diversity of research material as a methodological gesture, we should also mention Dylan Esler's study of a tenth century Tibetan treatise, the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* composed by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. That also literature that does not necessarily possess an Abhidharmic outlook might contain useful references to the Abhidharma philosophy, is shown in his chapter.



The methodological remarks presented so far, fall into the categories of 'descriptive' or 'interpretative' (or explanatory). From a methodological perspective, Yao-ming Tsai's approach stands out uniquely. The main thesis in his study on the Person and the Self in the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya relates to an interesting methodological method less common in the field of religious studies. Tsai's study expresses an urge to re-orientate the perspective in the study of Buddhist philosophy from 'Abhidharmic' to 'non-Abhidharmic'. With his emphasis on 'firsthand' observation and his caution for an "Abhidharma orientation" which tends to "organize, classify, analyze and compare conceptual factors," Yao-ming Tsai takes side with the domain of the phenomenology of religion. His urge to side with a phenomenological approach for an appreciation of the Buddha-dharma seems to be less a philosophical interpretation or description than a 'normative' proposition. It will be quiet interesting to see how Yao-ming Tsai's approach could re-open a discussion on the problematics and the appropriateness of the 'normative discourse' in Buddhist studies as an academic discipline. <>

## **BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY AND THE EMBODIED MIND: A CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT** by Matthew MacKenzie [Critical Inquiries in Comparative Philosophy, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 9781538160121]

In the last 30 years, embodied, embedded, enactive, and extended (4E) accounts of mind and experience have flourished. A more cosmopolitan and pluralistic approach to the philosophy of mind has also emerged, drawing on analytic, phenomenological, pragmatist, and non-Western sources and traditions. This is the first book to fully engage the 4E approach and Buddhist philosophy, drawing on and integrating the intersection of enactivism and Buddhist thought.

This book deepens and extends the dialogue between Buddhist philosophy and 4E philosophy of mind and phenomenology. It engages with core issues in the philosophy of mind broadly construed in and through the dialogue between Buddhism and enactivism. Indian philosophers developed and defended philosophically sophisticated and phenomenologically rich accounts of mind, self, cognition, perception, embodiment, and more. As a work of cross-cultural philosophy, the book investigates the nature of mind and experience in dialogue with Indian and Western thinkers. On the basis of this cross-traditional dialogue, the book articulates and defends a dynamic, non-substantialist, and embodied account of experience, subjectivity, and self.

### **Review**

**BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY AND THE EMBODIED MIND** is focused, well-argued, scholarly, accessible, and worthy of discussion by others in the various fields in cognitive science, phenomenology, philosophy of mind, Buddhist studies, contemporary Indian philosophy. This material is very difficult to write about and it isn't easy to convey it to scholars or the public; yet, Mackenzie's writing style navigates the terrain in a powerful and inviting way. -- Anand Jayprakash Vaidya, San Jose State University

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This book offers a new way to look at the interconnected phenomena of consciousness, self, agency, and world. A central argument of the book is that an adequate understanding of these phenomena requires rejecting both substance metaphysics and strong reductionism or eliminativism. The alternative, developed in dialogue with Indian Buddhist thought and enactivist philosophy of mind, is based on a nonreductionist ontology of systems and process and a dynamic phenomenology of consciousness, embodiment, and self. Throughout, the book takes an unabashedly pluralistic, syncretic, and constructive approach to philosophy.

The book, then, has three main aims: (1) advancing the dialogue between Indian Buddhism and enactivism, (2) engaging central issues in philosophy of mind through that dialogue, and (3) developing a distinctive account of the embodied subject. Regarding the first aim, with the publication of *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* in 1991, Francisco Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch initiated a tentative conversation between proponents of embodied and enactive cognition and Buddhist philosophy (Varela et al. 2017). In the thirty years since its publication, embodied, embedded, enactive, and extended (4E) accounts of mind and experience have flourished. Moreover, during this time, there has emerged a more cosmopolitan and pluralistic approach to the philosophy of mind, drawing on analytic, phenomenological, pragmatist, and Asian sources and traditions. Throughout this book, I aim to deepen and extend the dialogue between Buddhist philosophy and enactivist philosophy of mind and phenomenology, in a philosophically and methodologically sophisticated way.

Regarding the second aim, Indian philosophers developed and defended philosophically sophisticated and phenomenologically rich accounts of mind, self, cognition, perception, embodiment, and more. As a work of comparative philosophy, the book aims to investigate the nature of mind and experience in dialogue with Indian and Western thinkers. An important implication of this approach is that the problem space and the conceptual resources available will be broadened and transformed. For example, a central theme of the book is the luminosity of consciousness. This metaphor of consciousness as light (*prakasa*) or luminosity (*prakasata*) is at the heart of Indian thinking about the nature of the mind going back at least as far as the early prose Upanisads. Like a light, consciousness has (or is) the capacity to shine forth (*prakasate*) and illuminate (*prakasyati*) its object. Throughout the book, I take this idea and the philosophical issues surrounding it as a guiding theme for understanding the nature of mind.

Regarding the third aim, the book articulates and defends a dynamic, non-substantialist, and embodied account of consciousness, self, agency, and inter-subjectivity. Indian Buddhist philosophy provides a deep and sustained critique of substantialism, and the views I develop here are strongly influenced by this aspect of Buddhist thought. However, many Buddhist philosophers embrace forms of reductionism, eliminativism, or antirealism that, in my view, do not do justice to the phenomena. Enactivism, with its emphasis on self-organizing systems dynamically coupled to their larger environments, provides an important alternative to both substantialism and reductionism. However, some articulations of enactivism entail a very strong form of antirealism that I think is unwarranted. Throughout the book, then, I deploy, first, a metaphysics based on processes and systems that is meant to be a middle way between substantialism and reductionism and, second, a form of pragmatic realism that is meant to be a middle way between metaphysical realism and strong antirealism.

Furthermore, the account of consciousness, subjectivity, and self developed here is grounded in the idea—found in both Indian philosophy and the phenomenological tradition—that phenomenal consciousness is self-luminous (*svaprakasa*). That is, phenomenal consciousness is reflexive or self-

presenting. Consciousness presents itself in the process of presenting its object. That it (typically) presents an object and the way that object is presented constitute the intentional character of consciousness. That it presents itself and the way it presents itself constitute the subjective character of consciousness. The reflexivity of consciousness itself constitutes the minimal subjectivity of consciousness. Moreover, I argue that this basic structure of consciousness is phenomenologically and developmentally prior to the sense of self. On these points, I am largely in agreement with such Buddhist thinkers as Dignaga and Dharmakirti. However, I depart significantly from these Buddhist reflexivists in that I defend the real existence of the self as an emergent structure of the biological and psychological life of some sentient beings (such as human beings).

### On Comparative Philosophy

This book is an exercise in comparative philosophy of mind, an attempt to do philosophy of mind in dialogue with multiple philosophical traditions and methods. As Arindam Chakrabarti and Ralph Weber remark, "Comparative philosophy is all about the erecting, detecting, smudging, and tearing down of borders, borders between philosophical traditions coming from different parts of the world, different time periods, different disciplinary affiliations, and even within a single period and pedigree, between opposite or at least distinguishable persuasions" (Chakrabarti and Weber 2015, 2). Yet, on their account, there have been three distinguishable, if overlapping, stages of comparative philosophy.

According to Chakrabarti and Weber, the first stage was universalist in aspiration. The idea, roughly, was to take some central debate or issue in Western philosophy, such as the mind-body problem, and find parallels in non-Western traditions. These parallels could then establish that philosophy in some plausible sense of the term exists outside the West and that many central Western philosophical issues, in some form, are discussed in other traditions, as well. This is true, of course, but this approach has the drawback of understanding and engaging these traditions within a resolutely Western frame. The effect, intentional or unintentional, is to take the Western philosophical landscape as universal, while the African, Chinese, or Mayan landscape is taken as local and particular. A further implication is that, if a tradition does not appear to have, for example, a recognizable version of the mind-body problem, then it is to that degree less philosophical.

The second stage was more localist in aspiration. The emphasis was on important differences between traditions in their basic presuppositions, concerns, and methods. A recognition of these differences was deemed essential to a proper understanding of a tradition and also had the (potentially salutary) effect of deflating Western pretensions to universalism. Again, this stage reflected important insights into the hermeneutic complexities of cross-cultural engagement. Moreover, by better understanding traditions in their own terms, this approach also allowed comparative philosophers to engage the Western tradition in a new way. For example, if, as some have argued (Wenzel and Marchal 2017), the problem of free will was hardly known in Chinese philosophy, then perhaps this reflects a philosophical strength rather than a weakness. However, in its more extreme form anyway, this approach tended toward a view that traditions are ultimately incommensurable (Wong 1989), thereby throwing into question the very possibility of genuine cross-cultural understanding.

The third and current stage, according to Chakrabarti and Weber, exists "at the critical juncture between universalism and localism" (2015, 20). The idea here is to understand and engage different traditions both on their own terms, in relation to other traditions, and with an eye to how they may contribute to contemporary philosophical discussions. A central aim of this approach, then, is to accelerate the globalizing of the contemporary philosophical conversation. One might, for example, deploy a broadly hermeneutical approach whereby one attempts to develop an understanding of the particular (a text, problem, argument, etc.) in its larger context while also developing an

understanding of the whole context in light of an understanding of the particular. Further, on this approach, one must recognize the inevitable situatedness of understanding while rejecting the idea that one's own background understanding is fixed. Rather, mutual understanding evolves through a more dialogical form of engagement. Alternatively, following Jonardon Ganeri (2016), one might deploy a form of epistemic pluralism inspired by the classical Jaina distinction between epistemic principles (pramanas) and epistemic stances (naya), both of which are parts of an epistemic culture. He writes, "A naya is not a proposition but a practical attitude, a strategy or policy which guides inquiry: it is an approach to the problem of producing knowledge, not a thesis about the sources of justification" (2016, 175). He goes on to articulate an inclusive approach to philosophy that is pluralistic about epistemic stances although not epistemic principles.

Chakrabarti and Weber affirm that this third stage includes "some of the best comparative philosophy written today" (2015, 20). However, they argue for the emergence and desirability of a fourth stage of comparative philosophy, which they call "borderless philosophy" (2015, 22). Here the idea is "just doing philosophy as one thinks fit for getting to the truth about an issue or set of issues, by appropriating elements from all philosophical views and traditions one knows" (2015, 22). On this approach, the qualifier comparative may become superfluous; one just does philosophy in a way that is mindful of the global nature and context of thinking. Likewise, Ganeri asserts that "comparative philosophy is not, I submit, a branch of philosophy nor it is a distinct philosophical method: it is an expedient heuristic introduced at a particular moment in world history as part of a global movement towards intellectual decolonization" (2016, 134-35).

Yet, on my view, even post-comparative philosophy must incorporate elements of the earlier stages of comparative inquiry. One must begin with the universalist assumption that human beings in many times and places have engaged in philosophical thinking and inquiry. In doing so, they are likely to have addressed at least some similar questions or issues, and we may benefit from coming to understand their attempted answers. As one engages in that form of inquiry, however, one immediately encounters difference and particularity. One must then engage in the hard hermeneutic (and ultimately metaphilosophical) work of building bridges between traditions and adding something of value to the ongoing global philosophical conversation of humanity. With moderate success, one may be able to do "good creative philosophy" in a global context. That is, Good creative philosophy in a globalized world should spontaneously straddle geographical areas and cultures, temperaments and time-periods (mixing classical, medieval, modern, and postmodern), styles and subdisciplines of philosophy, as well as mix methods, sprinkling phenomenology, and political economic analysis into analytic logico-linguistic or hermeneutic, or culture studies or literary or narrative methods—whatever comes handy. The result would be either very flaky mishmash or first-rate original work. (Chakrabarti and Weber 2015, 22)

In my view, we should strive to do good creative philosophy across cultures, traditions, and methods while avoiding the problems associated with earlier stages of comparative philosophy. That is the approach pursued in this book.

## Overview of the Chapters

Chapter 1 initiates a dialogue between enactivist and Indian Buddhist views of the self. While Buddhists and enactivists reject substantialist accounts of the self, Buddhist thinkers are further committed to a rejection of the reality of the self as such. Drawing insights from both traditions, I argue that sentient beings are best understood in terms of complex self-organizing processes, including processes of self-making. This view is contrasted with both eliminativism and substantialism about the self. In contrast to these, I argue for an enactive, emergent view of self as the embodied integration of subjectivity, ownership, agency, and valuation. Along the way, I distinguish between the basic condition of being a subject and the more sophisticated condition of being a self. On my view,

sentience and subjectivity are functionally interwoven and may have coevolved. However, sentience and minimal subjectivity are necessary but not sufficient for selfhood. Rather, I argue that the emergence of the self is linked to the emergence of a degree of psychological autonomy from the biological autonomy of living systems.

Chapter 2 takes up several related issues in the philosophy of consciousness: reflexivity, temporality, subjectivity, and embodiment. Beginning with a classical Buddhist definition of consciousness as luminosity, it develops an integrated account of the previous issues, drawing on the general model of consciousness developed by the pramanavadins, which I call "dual-aspect reflexivism." As mentioned earlier, on this view, consciousness is by nature self-luminous—that is, self-presenting or reflexive. Reflexive awareness (*svasamvedana*) here is the primitive, prereflective, direct acquaintance of consciousness with itself. Moreover, a typical moment of consciousness presents two aspects: the object aspect and the subject aspect. I argue that these aspects can be understood as distinct but intertwined phenomenal modes of presentation.

On the issue of temporality, inspired by the Tibetan philosopher Mipham, I explore the possibility of combining the earlier Yogacara idea of base consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) with reflexivism. The view that emerges takes base consciousness to be a form of embodied, global background consciousness that preserves a degree of diachronic continuity even as the local, foreground aspects of consciousness change. In the final section of the chapter, I draw together the various strands of discussion and sketch an integrated model of consciousness. On this model, the nature of consciousness is nondual reflexive awareness, the phenomenal space within which various contents are presented but that is prior to any particular contents. It is synchronically unified and diachronically continuous. It is rooted in and emerges from the living body and in its typical form involves both subjective and objective modes of presentation.

Chapter 3 engages with problems of agency and other minds. The nature of action is a central theme in Indian Buddhist philosophy. The Buddhist theory of karma (*karman*, "action") addresses the short- and long-term effects of moral or immoral actions for the agent of those actions and emphasizes the interdependence of action and character. I identify four basic commitments of the Buddhist view: (1) the reality of karma, (2) the connection between karma and intending or volition (*cetana*), (3) the efficacy of Buddhist practice to achieve liberation, and (4) the nonexistence of any substantial self or agent. Given these commitments, such Buddhist thinkers as Vasubandhu and Candrakīrti developed important accounts of agentless agency. These accounts are broadly conventionalist (in either reductionist or fictionalist ways) and show that there are powerful alternatives to the view that action requires a persisting substantial agent. However, I argue that these approaches still fall prey to the problem of the disappearing agent. In response, I examine an enactivist approach that grounds agency in the biology of cognitive systems. On this account, agency is viewed as a real, emergent capacity of certain biological systems and not merely a conventional reality. In this way, the enactive approach offers an alternative to both the substantialist agent-causal view and the reductionist (or fictionalist) view.

Turning to the issue of other minds, one of the most important insights of such Buddhist thinkers as Vasubandhu and Dharmakīrti is that the sense of self is co-constructed with the sense of independent objects and other selves. It is thus incumbent on these thinkers to specify the process or processes by which the (ultimately delusive) senses of self, objects, and other selves are constructed. And this gives rise, in the Buddhist context, to a version of the venerable problem of other minds. In this part of the chapter, I examine the approaches of Dharmakīrti and Ratnakīrti and whether they can avoid the problem of conceptual solipsism. The problem here is whether the model of the mind developed by these thinkers can account for the ability to conceive of others as self-conscious subjects (Ganeri 2012,



214). I argue that the conceptual problem of other minds is insurmountable as long as one maintains a view the mind as a self-enclosed interiority, as these Buddhist reflexivists arguably do. In contrast, I develop an account of the mind as reflexive but not self-enclosed. This requires a different approach to intentionality and embodiment, as well as seeing mentality as expressive and not merely causal. That is, as embodied subjects, our mentality is a multidimensional form of life in part constituted by and manifest in our bodily actions and expressions. On this view, the mental lives of others are not completely hidden, and our own mental lives are never fully transparent. And this is because our self-awareness and awareness of others share a basis in our nature as embodied subjects.

In Chapter 4, I argue that both Buddhists and enactivists are committed to the claim that not just ourselves but also our worlds are enacted: They are brought forth in and through action. But what could this mean? Is it simply a claim about how we perceive or conceptualize the world, or is it a strong metaphysical claim about reality? I argue that, properly understood, the idea that we enact our world (or worlds) points beyond reified forms of subjectivism and objectivism toward the deep, constitutive interdependence of mind, action, and world. The chapter begins with an examination of Buddhist and enactivist accounts of the dynamic coemergence of self and world and the denial of any metaphysical subject-object, self-world duality. I then discuss the Buddhist theory of karma as an account of the ongoing enaction of self and world and sketch an account of awakened agency.

Next, I take up the Madhyamaka claim that all things are empty in the context of debates over metaphysical realism. I examine both Madhyamaka and enactivist critiques of metaphysical realism as well as challenges to these views. In thinking through both the insights and the challenges of these critiques of metaphysical realism, I argue for the plausibility of a broadly pragmatist view with three main elements. The first is ontological parity: There is no ontologically privileged level of reality. The second is conceptual-explanatory pluralism: We use and need a plurality of conceptual and explanatory schemes. The third is epistemological pragmatism: An embrace of fallibilism and grounding warrant in successful practice.

I then turn to the rich view of the experiential dynamics found in the Yogacara theory of the three natures of phenomena. I distinguish two ways of interpreting this framework, which I call the "internalist-representationalist" and the "nondualist" views. The final section of the chapter brings together the various strands of argument and interpretation and sketches a phenomenological-pragmatic realism that has the potential to move our thinking about self and world beyond the reified categories of subjectivism and objectivism and representationalist accounts of cognition.

Chapter 5 focuses on Mahayana Buddhist ethics as a path of moral and spiritual development. Drawing on the accounts of subjectivity, agency, and empathy developed in the previous chapters, it engages the moral psychology and phenomenology of Sāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* or *Guide to the Awakened Life*. On my view, Buddhist ethics is fundamentally a transformative path concerned with the progressive dismantling of greed, aversion, and ignorance and the progressive cultivation of the nonattachment, compassion, and wisdom of an enlightened character. This final chapter of the book aims to unpack the cognitive, affective, perceptual, bodily, and intersubjective dimensions of this path in dialogue with the enactive approach.

Sāntideva characterizes the samsaric predicament of human beings as "Hoping to escape suffering, it is to suffering that they run. In the desire for happiness, out of delusion, they destroy their own happiness, like an enemy" (Santideva 2008, 7). I term this sorry state of affairs the samsaric framework. It is a mode of functioning wherein our attempts to attain happiness and avoid suffering are self-defeating because they are driven by the three poisons of greed, hatred, and delusion. I argue that Santideva's project in *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is to dismantle the samsaric framework and develop a more wholesome or awakened cognitive, affective, and motivational-behavioral framework. The basis of this awakened mode of life, for Santideva and his fellow Mahayanists, is



bodhicitta, the "awakening mind," which he calls the "seed of pure happiness in the world and the remedy of suffering in the world" (Santideva 2008, 26). It is, as Jay Garfield puts it, the "commitment to attain and to manifest full awakening for the benefit of others" (Garfield 2014, 299). I argue that the basis for the cultivation of bodhicitta is the fundamental empathy and intersubjectivity of human consciousness discussed in chapter 3. That is, the core human capacity of empathy is the root of bodhicitta, and the bodhisattva path involves both clearing away obstructions to empathic awareness as well as developing and extending the capacity toward all sentient beings. I then turn to a discussion of a system of meditative cultivation called the "four-point mind training": meditating on (1) the equality of self and other, (2) the limits of egocentrism or self-cherishing, (3) the benefits of altruism, and (4) the exchange of self and other. This system

of cognitive-affective training is designed to arouse and extend the altruistic concern of bodhicitta as well as the moral perception and responsiveness requisite for the path of the bodhisattva. Finally, I argue that the upshot of this training is to develop the ability to perceive the basic equality of self and other even across social and interpersonal difference, to perceive the emptiness and fluidity of the distinction between self and others, and to respond compassionately and effectively to others.

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## THE ESSENCE OF TSONGKHAPA'S TEACHINGS WITH THE DALAI LAMA ON THE THREE PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE PATH by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, translated by Ven. Lhakdor, Edited by Jeremy Russell [Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Wisdom Publications, 978-1614295693]

**Learn from the Dalai Lama how to put into practice your understanding of renunciation, the awakening mind, and emptiness.**

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's commentary on Tsongkhapa's **THREE PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE PATH** helps us integrate the full Buddhist path into our own practice. His Holiness offers a beautiful elucidation of the three aspects of the path: true renunciation and the wish for freedom, the altruistic awakening mind (*bodhichitta*), and the correct view of emptiness. These three aspects of the path are the foundation of all the sutric and tantric practices, and encapsulate Tsongkhapa's vision of the Buddhist path in its entirety.

Practitioners will find **THE THREE PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE PATH** invaluable as a manual for daily meditation. The universal and timeless insights of this text speak to contemporary spiritual aspirants, East and West. The root verses are presented in both Tibetan and fluid English translation to accompany these profound teachings.

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How to Generate the Determination to Be Free  
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About the Author

I am happy that Wisdom Publications is publishing His Holiness the Dalai Lama's commentary on *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*, by Jé Tsongkhapa, which I had the fortune to simultaneously translate during the teaching itself, and later prepare this written translation for the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA) with the help of my friend Jeremy Russell. Tsongkhapa taught this short text to Tsakho Onpo Ngawang Dakpa in a place called Gyamo Rong in eastern Tibet.

The three principal aspects of the path are the axis or lifeline of all the sutric and tantric practices that you undertake. In other words, it is important that your practice be influenced by the three aspects: renunciation or the determination to be free, bodhichitta or the mind of enlightenment, and right or correct view. For when your practice is influenced by renunciation it becomes a cause for achieving liberation (nirvana), when it is influenced by bodhichitta it becomes a cause for achieving omniscience (buddhahood), and when it is influenced by correct view it becomes an antidote to the cycle of existence (samsara). In the absence of these main aspects of the path, even if one is well versed in the five subjects of learning, even if one is able to remain in a meditative state for many eons, even if one possesses the five clair-voyances, and even if one has achieved the eight great accomplishments, one will not be able to go beyond this cycle of existence.

The three principal aspects of the path are the essence of all the scriptures of the Buddha. The meaning of the Buddha's teachings and the commentaries on them are included in the stages of the path of three types of individuals—the lowest, who is concerned with a higher rebirth; the medium, who is concerned with liberation or nirvana; and the highest-capacity individual, who is concerned with the bodhisattva motivation of becoming a buddha to benefit other beings. This is so because the purpose of all the scriptures containing the Buddha's teachings and their commentaries is really to help followers achieve buddhahood. To attain that state of omniscience, one should practice the twofold practice of skillful means and wisdom, within which the main practice is bodhichitta and correct view (wisdom understanding emptiness). In order to cultivate these two, one should have first of all cultivated a deep sense of disgust toward the superficial marvels of the cycle of existence, and should have developed genuine renunciation—the wish to come out of samsara. In the absence of this, it is impossible to develop the great compassion that aspires to liberate other sentient beings from the cycle of existence. Hence renunciation is a must.

Bodhichitta is the main practice of accumulation of merit for achieving the body of the Buddha (rupakaya), and correct view is the main practice for achieving the truth body (dharmakaya). Moreover, in the beginning, in order to convince one's mind to embrace Dharma, one needs renunciation. To ensure that the Dharma practice becomes a Mahayana path of practice, one needs bodhi-chitta, and to eliminate completely the two obscurations, correct view is a must. Thus these three are known as the three principal aspects of the path. This way of practicing all the essential points of the path by including them in these three principal aspects is a very special instruction that Manjushri gave directly to Tsongkhapa. <>

# **MAHĀMUDRĀ IN INDIA AND TIBET** edited by Roger R. Jackson, Klaus-Dieter Mathes [Brill's Tibetan Studies Library, Brill, 9789004410404]

**MAHĀMUDRĀ IN INDIA AND TIBET** presents cutting-edge research by European and North American scholars on the Indian origins and Tibetan interpretations of one of the most popular and influential of all Tibetan meditation traditions, Mahāmudrā, or the great seal. The contributions shed fresh light on important areas of Mahāmudrā studies, exploring the Great Seal's place in the Mahāyāna Samādhirājasūtra, the Indian tantric Seven Siddhi Texts, Dunhuang Yogatantra texts, Mar pa's Rngog lineage, and the Dgongs gcig literature of the 'Bri gung, as well as in the works of Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje, the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos grags ye shes, the Eighth Karma pa Mi-bskyod rdo rje, and various Dge lugs masters of the 17th–18th centuries.

Contributors are: Jacob Dalton, Martina Draszczyk, Cecile Ducher, David Higgins, Roger R. Jackson, Casey Kemp, Adam Krug, Klaus-Dieter Mathes, Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, and Paul Thomas.

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Mahāmudrā (the Great Seal; Tibetan phyags rgya chen po) is one of the most important terms of art in later Indian Buddhism and the Buddhism of the Tibetan cultural sphere. First appearing in the context of Indian tantric literature – where it denoted, among other things, a particular hand-gesture, the clear visualization of oneself as a buddha-deity, and a female consort employed in sexual yoga practices – it acquired, over the course of time, an increasingly complex range of meanings, including the ultimate nature of reality; a meditative process in which the mind directly recognizes its own empty, luminous, and blissful nature; and the enlightened buddhahood that awaits at the end of the tantric path. Although Mahāmudrā was known during the first diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet (snga dar; 650–850 CE), it was during the second diffusion of the teaching there (phyi dar; post-1000), that it became a central term in Buddhist discourse. It was and is the very heartbeat of the various Bka' brgyud lineages – especially those stemming from Sgam po pa (1079–1153) – but found

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a place of greater or lesser importance, too, in such traditions as the Rnying ma, Bka' gdams, Sa skya, Zhi byed, Jo nang, and Dge lugs. Wherever it spread, Mahāmudrā was a fertile concept, giving rise to historical analysis, lineage formation, oral and written pith instructions (man ngag), inspired poetry, detailed meditation manuals, nuanced scholastic exposition, and vigorous philosophical debate.

Among the key questions debated by Tibetan scholars were: Is Mahāmudrā solely a tantric concept and practice, or is there as well a Sūtra Mahāmudrā, or even an Essence Mahāmudrā? With which Indian Buddhist philosophical school – and turning of the Dharma-wheel – does Mahāmudrā most closely align? If Mahāmudrā is synonymous with emptiness, is that emptiness self-emptiness (rang stong) or other-emptiness (gzhan stong)? Does Mahāmudrā allow room for both sudden and gradual practices? Where, in Mahāmudrā meditation, is the line between calm abiding (śamatha; zhi gnas) and deep insight (vipaśyanā; lhag mthong)? Is there a place in Mahāmudrā for standard ethics, or rationality, or even language? Do the ideas and practices detailed within Mahāmudrā traditions amount to the same thing, or do they fundamentally differ?

Although Mahāmudrā long has enjoyed popularity in the Tibetan Buddhist cultural sphere (including Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, Bhutan, and Himalayan India) and has attracted increasing attention from Westerners drawn to Tibetan Buddhism, critical scholarship on the topic only has gained real momentum in the past three decades. Following on the pioneering work of Herbert Guenther, a number of scholars in the 1980s and 1990s – most notably Michael Broido and David Jackson – sought to subject Mahāmudrā to careful historical and doctrinal scrutiny. Since the 1990s, the amount and quality of critical scholarship on Mahāmudrā has increased significantly, especially through the efforts of researchers in Europe and North America. Approaching it from a variety of perspectives, such figures as Alexander Berzin, Lara Braitstein, Karl Brunnhölzl, Elizabeth Callahan, Daniel Brown, David Gray, Sarah Harding, Matthew Kapstein, Ulrich Kragh, Peter Alan Roberts, Alexander Schiller, Victoria Sujata, David Templeman, Janice Willis, and the contributors to this volume have given increased depth and breadth to our understanding of Mahāmudrā in the Indian and Tibetan worlds.

As Mahāmudrā has become the focus of increasing scholarly investigation, it has with increasing frequency been the subject of panels at international conferences, including the International Association of Buddhist Studies (IABS) and, most especially, the International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS). At the IATS seminar in Bonn, Germany in 2006, Lara Braitstein and Roger Jackson organized a panel entitled “Phyag rgya chen po: Perspectives, Debates, Traditions, and Transmissions,” which was informally aligned with a panel organized by Matthew Kapstein, entitled “For Karma Pakshi’s Octocentenary: Dialogue and Innovation in the Bka’-bryud Traditions.” Braitstein and Jackson also organized a Mahāmudrā panel at the IABS conference in Atlanta, in 2007. After a one-conference hiatus, Mahāmudrā appeared again as the topic of an IATS panel at the 2013 seminar in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia: Klaus-Dieter Mathes, David Higgins, and Martina Draszczyk organized a panel there entitled “Toward a History of Tibetan Mahāmudrā Traditions.” That a well-attended Mahāmudrā panel could be held at the very next IATS, in 2016 in Bergen, Norway – this time organized by Roger Jackson and Klaus-Dieter Mathes – attests to the continued growth of academic interest in Mahāmudrā and the increasing sophistication of various aspects of Mahāmudrā studies. It is the essays presented in Bergen (and two others not on the program there) that form the core of this volume.

The essays range from studies of Indian sources of Mahāmudrā by Paul Thomas (on the Sam^dhir^ja Sūtra) and Adam Krug (on the Grub pa sde bdun); to analyses of snga dar and early phyi dar materials by Jacob Dalton (on samayamudr^ and mah^mudr^ in Dunhuang documents), Cecile Ducher (on the Rngog lineage), Jan-Ulrich Sobisch (on the dgongs gcig literature), and Casey Kemp (on the tantric perspective of Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje); to careful studies of fifteenth- and

sixteenth-century Bka' brgyud sources by Martina Draszczyk (on the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos grags ye shes), David Higgins (on the Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje), and Klaus-Dieter Mathes (also on the Eighth Karma pa); to a discussion of the middle period of Dge lugs Mahāmudrā discourse in Tibet by Roger Jackson. In what follows, we will briefly summarize each of these essays, in the roughly chronological sequence just described.

At the outset, Paul Thomas contributes a highly reliable critical edition and translation of the first section (verses 1–118) of chapter 32 of the Samadhirsasūtra, which deals mainly with the emptiness of all phenomena in a manner reminiscent of the Prajñāparamitasūtras. As part of his Mahāmudrā pith instructions in his *\*Tattvadaśakataka*, Sahajavajra quotes several verses from this section (vv. 93, 94cd–98ab, 99, 102–103, and 106–107) to show that all phenomena or characteristic signs (nimittas) and related notions (sahjñas) must be realized as being unarisen and pure. These quoted verses further express the inconceivable nature of this purity in a way typical of Mahāmudrā instructions that do not depend on formal tantric practice. With his edition and translation, Thomas thus provides the context for one of the major Indian sources adduced in support of Sūtra Mahāmudrā.

Adam Krug's contribution examines the Grub pa sde bdun, or Seven Siddhi Texts, a corpus of works composed by seven Indian mahāsiddhas that was widely recognized in Tibet as one of the earliest Indian collections of treatises on Mahāmudrā. Krug begins by arguing for the correct interpretation of the compound Grub snying gi skor (and its various permutations) as a reference to the Grub pa sde bdun and its related corpora of Indian Mahāmudrā works. It then presents a number of variants in the configuration of the Grub pa sde bdun that appear in Tibetan literature. These variants indicate a certain degree of fluidity in Tibetan authors' conceptions of the corpus' content and scope, and demonstrate a pattern that is consistent with the notion of "practical canonicity." The chapter then turns to the Grub pa sde bdun's appearance in a number of passages from a raft of Sa skya and Bka' brgyud Mahāmudrā polemical works addressing Sa skya pamiita's argument that Mahāmudrā can only be conferred and fully realized within the context of the higher tantric consecrations of the "unsurpassed yogatantra" or bla na med pa'i rnal 'byor gyi rgyud. Authors on both sides of this debate are revealed as playing fast and loose with their sources by misrepresenting their content, ignoring any ambiguity in the form and function of the consecration rites recorded in the Grub pa sde bdun, and reading their own systems into the texts, even when there is little basis for doing so. Krug concludes by arguing that these tactics are not just a by-product of polemical writing – they are symptomatic of a broader rhetorical problem in the Tibetan conception of a singular, homogeneous "Indian tradition."

In "Mahāmudrā and Samayamudrā in the Dunhuang Documents and Beyond," Jacob Dalton documents the usage of the term mahāmudrā from the late seventh through ninth centuries. Unlike the familiar texts of such mahāsiddhas as Saraha, the tantric Nāgārjuna, Tilopa, Nāropa, and Maitripa (986–1063) and his disciples – namely, Mahāmudrā as the nature of mind in terms of bliss and emptiness and the final goal of the path – the Dunhuang texts examined by Dalton consistently take mahāmudrā to refer to the body of the Buddha. In this early material, the Buddha's speech and mind are related to the dharmamudrā and samayamudrā, respectively. In slightly later texts, such as a tenth-century scroll with a Mahāyoga sādhana, however, the original meaning of mahāmudrā is extended to include not just the body of a buddha (or a deity for that matter), but also the buddha's speech and mind. Dalton proposes that this reflects a development from the original meaning of mahāmudrā into the Mahāmudrā, with a capital M, known to later Indian and to Tibetan tradition.

In "A Neglected Bka' brgyud Lineage: The Rngog from Gzhung and the Rngog pa Bka' brgyud Transmission," Cecile Ducher brings to light for the first time the illustrious family lineage of the seat of Spre'u zhing, which goes back to the Tibetan Empire. It flourished until the end of the sixteenth century, after which the seat eventually became empty, the estate having been handed over to the



neighboring Gong dkar Monastery by the Fifth Dalai Lama. As the head of the Rngog Bka' brgyud pas, this family lineage was instrumental in spreading and preserving Mar pa Lo tsā ba's teachings. Key among these were one of Mar pa's main protector practices, that of Dud sol ma, and seven tantric cycles, whose mandalas came to be referred to as the Seven Mandalas of the Rngog. The material examined by Ducher contains tantric Mahāmudrā only, and none of what Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas characterized as Essence or Sūtra Mahāmudrā; by the same token, in the Rngog Bka' brgyud tradition there are no Mahāmudrā texts that start with calm abiding (śamatha) and deep insight (vipaśyanā) meditation practice.

Jan-Ulrich Sobisch's contribution is entitled "Jig rten gsum mgon's Dgongs gcig on the Relation between Mahāmudrā and the Six Yogas of Nāropa." While Spyān snga Bkra shis rnam rgyal (1513–1596?) claims that up to Mi la ras pa the accomplishment lineage mainly involved tantric yogas such as Fierce Heat (gtum mo) or Luminosity ('od gsal), which are also part of Nāropa's six yogas, Sgam po pa's personal pith instructions to Phag mo gru pa (1100–1170) shed a different light on this issue. Depending on the yogin's age, either Fierce Heat or Mahāmudrā instructions are given first. For young practitioners it is advisable to first obtain warmth through Fierce Heat practice. Elderly disciples, on the other hand, fare better by being first introduced to the Mahāmudrā of Inborn Union (lhan cig skyes 'byor phyag chen). In the material analysed by Sobisch, there is no clear determination as to whether or not Mahāmudrā can be realized without the six yogas. While Rdo rje shes rab, for example, explains in his Dgongs gcig commentary that the yogas are the only means to produce realization, the 'Bri gung speciality of the Fivefold Profound Path of Mahāmudrā (phyag chen lnga ldan) sets guru devotion in lieu of the six yogas, allowing a devoted practitioner to attain realization independent of, and thus not necessarily accompanied by, the path of means (i.e., Fierce Heat and the rest). Of interest also is that the more general teachings of the Fivefold Path prepare the necessary ground to ensure that one's practice of the channels and winds (i.e., Fierce Heat and so forth) is a Buddhist path.

Casey Kemp's essay, "The Definitive Meaning of Mahāmudrā According to the Kālacakra Tradition of Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje's Phyag chen gsal sgron," is a study of an eleventh-century text on mahāmudrā written by Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje (b. 1027), who came to be associated with the Jo nang lineage and is considered a proponent of a "tantric gzhan stong" view. His only surviving collection of works is The Four Cycles of Illuminating Lamps (Gsal sgron skor bzhi), which seeks to clarify misunderstandings about topics central to Vajrayāna: emptiness, mahāmudrā, luminosity, and union (zung 'jug). Of these four, The Lamp Illuminating Mahāmudrā (Phyag rgya chen po gsal sgron) focuses on addressing wrong views regarding the definitive meaning of Mahāmudrā by relying on "canonical" literature, ranging from Nāgārjuna to Saraha to the Paramādibuddhakālacakratānta, which is the most definitive source for Kālacakra practitioners. Kemp explores how Yu mo ba draws from Indian sources to refute wrong views, asserts that the only means to realize Mahāmudrā is through the tantric path, describes Mahāmudrā as the spontaneous appearance of emptiness, and states that one must renounce worldly life and be guided on the path of cultivation by someone who has realized Mahāmudrā. Yu mo ba refutes Prāsaṅgika, Svātantrika, and even Rdzogs chen views of Mahāmudrā, claiming that Mahāmudrā cannot be defined through emptiness without appearance. Yu mo ba asserts that from reliance on authoritative Buddhist literature, particularly from the Kālacakra tradition, it is clear that attaining Mahāmudrā must be a realization of nonduality as the unity of emptiness and appearance. Since according to Kālacakra sources this is described as the ultimate consort who manifests at the time of empowerment, Mahāmudrā can thus only be attained through tantric means. According to Yu mo ba, the Mahāmudrā consort is none other than Viśvamātā, Kālacakra's consort, herself. In tantric cultivation, the yogin ceases conceptualization through his desire for the Mahāmudrā consort, and she spontaneously manifests as the pure appearance of the mind's luminosity. This overview of Yu mo ba's understanding of Mahāmudrā thus gives insight into the various debates and strategies for interpreting the definitive meaning of the term Mahāmudrā

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during the eleventh century and how these may have affected later tantric as well as nontantric interpretations.

The next contribution, by Martina Draszczyk, is entitled “Mahāmudrā as Revelatory of the Key-Point of the Third Dharmacakra According to the Sixty Verses on Mahāmudrā by the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos grags ye shes.” The Fourth Zhwa dmar pa’s (1453–1524) Sixty Verses are an excellent test-case for the reception of Dwags po Mahāmudrā in the so-called post-classical period of Tibetan Buddhism. This was a period when doctrines transmitted through certain lineages were systematized, contextualized, and synthesized. Well-defined teaching systems were formed and set off against others, a development that also led to intense inter-sectarian debates. In his verses, Chos grags ye shes displays Dwags po Mahāmudrā in all its facets. The author highlights the pith instructions transmitted in the Bka’ bgyud lineage, and follows Sgam po pa (1079–1153) in emphasizing the importance of the teacher’s blessing for the development of the student. Moreover, in tune with Maitrīpa and his way of bridging sūtric and tantric teaching systems, Chos grags ye shes presents the Madhyamaka of Nonabiding in the sense of Unity (zung ’jug rab tu mi gnas pa’i dbu ma; yuganaddhāpratiṭṭhāna-madhyamaka) as the philosophical backbone for the practice of Mahāmudrā, while emphasizing a cataphatic approach that understands mind’s true nature not as mere emptiness but as coemergent wisdom imbued with qualities. The Zhwa dmar demarcates this from other Buddhist tenets that in one way or the other attribute various notions of existence or nonexistence to phenomena and the mind. He examines the required prerequisites from the side of both student and teacher and introduces the reader to Mahāmudrā practice. He also discusses and rejects criticism raised against this teaching system by Sa skya Paṇḍita, who was opposed to a Mahāmudrā practice that does not fully conform to the practice of the Unexcelled Yoga Tantras.

In “Mi bskyod rdo rje on the Question of What Remains (lhag ma; avaśiṣṭha),” David Higgins examines the combination of Apratiṭṭhāna Madhyamaka with Mahāmudrā from the angle of the old question of what remains in emptiness.

The topic is directly related to the discussion as to whether the acceptance of a remainder presupposes a distinction between two modes of emptiness, i.e., self-emptiness (rang stong) and other-emptiness (gzhan stong). Higgins further considers the related questions whether a buddha can be said to have knowledge (jñāna), what happens during states of cessation (nirodhasamāpatti), and whether goal-realization is best described by negative determinations (rnam bcad), positive determinations (yongs gcod), or no determinations or theses (dam bca’; pratijñā) at all. With this complex set of questions, Higgins examines how Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554) understood the remainder in emptiness and how he used it to reconcile the affirmative and negative strains of Buddhist thought and praxis. The essay shows in particular how Mi bskyod rdo rje sought to accommodate an affirmative account of what remains within his non-foundationalist Madhyamaka philosophical orientation. Higgins concludes that for the Karma pa, this affirmative yet non-foundational remainder is best described as a “groundless ground,” an enduring mode of being and awareness that is available to first-hand experience yet irreducible to postulates of existence and nonexistence and the related views of eternalism and nihilism.

In “Maitrīpa’s Amanasikāra-Based Mahāmudrā in the Works of the Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje,” Klaus-Dieter Mathes shows how Mi bskyod rdo rje’s position of combining the via negationis of analytic Madhyamaka with the via affirmativa of Mahāmudrā fully profits from Maitrīpa’s radical non-foundationalism, which still allows for ontologically unproblematic, positive descriptions of emptiness as luminosity or awareness. Following the tantric Nāgārjuna’s Caturmudrānvaya, Maitrīpa combines Mahāmudrā with the Madhyamaka view of “non-abiding” (apratīṭṭhāna), which aims at radically transcending any conceptual assessment of true reality. The related practice is amanasikāra, which is not only taken in terms of its normal meaning of mental non-engagement, but also as “luminous self-

empowerment.” The term lends its name to a cycle of texts by Maitrīpa, which played an important role in the writings of the Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje. Mi bskyod rdo rje thus combines Aprati<sup>h</sup>āna-Madhyamaka with the “Mahāmudrā of the nature of mind,” a term signifying that the uncontrived nature of mind manifests without effort in the absence of any dichotomizing reification. On the topic of Sūtra Mahāmudrā, Mi bskyod rdo rje comes to the defense of Sgam po pa against the critique of Sa skya Pa<sup>h</sup>ita, but follows a different approach than ‘Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481). While the latter argues with reference to the Tattvadaśaka, its commentary, and Jñānakīrti’s Tattvāvatāra that there is a Sūtra-, or rather Pāramitānaya-based Mahāmudrā, which works without the formal tantric practice of the creation and completion stages, Mi bskyod rdo rje warns that calm abiding and deep insight tend to be overstated as the exemplifying and actual wisdoms of tantric empowerment. Still, as Mi bskyod rdo rje points out, Maitrīpa teaches in his Kudahta inirghātana the attainment of buddhahood through the causal vehicle (i.e., Pāramitānaya). On a topic related to Sūtra Mahāmudrā, Mathes also shows how Mi bskyod rdo rje identifies in Maitrīpa’s description of the Vajrasattva-mahasla the possibility of an immediate access to the goal of buddhahood through pointing-out instructions (ngo sprod), as the deities are not cultivated as in the usual creation stage practice but directly pointed out.

Lastly comes Roger Jackson’s “Assimilating the Great Seal: The Dge lugs pa-ization of the dge ldan bka’ brgyud Tradition of Mahāmudrā,” which considers the question whether the Dge lugs pa Mahāmudrā tradition – traced back to Tsong kha pa (1357–1419) but first publicized by the First / Fourth Pat chen Lama, Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1570–1662) – was originally – as some, including the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, have claimed – a Dge lugs-Bka’ brgyud synthesis, which was stripped by subsequent interpreters of many of its Bka’ brgyud elements and brought into conformity with a hardening Dge lugs pa orthodoxy. Jackson focuses first on the Bka’ brgyud elements – especially text-quotations and meditation instructions – incorporated by the First Pa<sup>h</sup> chen into his Mahāmudrā root-verses (the Rgyal ba’i gzhung lam) and autocommentary (the Yang gsal sgron me), then examines the contrasting attitudes toward both the Bka’ brgyud and Mahāmudrā evinced by two of the Pat chen’s disciples, the great A mdo master, Skal ldan rgya mtsho (1607–1677), and the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682), after whom little was written on Mahāmudrā for almost a century. Jackson then turns to the eighteenth-century renewer of the tradition, Dka’ chen Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–1793), who wrote more on Dge lugs Mahāmudrā than any master before or since, and analyzes the ways in which his treatment of the practice tends to downplay Bka’ brgyud elements emphasized by the First Pa<sup>h</sup> chen, while stressing what by then were orthodox Dge lugs pa categories, practices, and views. Although focusing primarily on doctrinal issues, Jackson also considers the political context in which Dge lugs Mahāmudrā discourse originated and developed. He concludes that while over the course of the century between the First Pat chen and Ye shes rgyal mtshan, Bka’ brgyud aspects of the Dge lugs Mahāmudrā tradition were increasingly overshadowed by Dge lugs pa elements, it is not really appropriate to say that the tradition was “Dge lugs paized,” because in its essential features, and especially in its philosophical view, it had been Dge lugs pa all along. <>

## **KENOLOGISCHE VERSUCHE: DER JOHANNESPROLOG ZWISCHEN NAGARJUNA, VASUBANDHU UND MEISTER ECKHART** (Kenological Experiments: The Prologue of St. John between Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu and Meister Eckhart) by Fabian Muller (German Edition) [Aschendorff Verlag, ISBN 9783402249192]

Angesichts dieser Bestimmung der Kenologie als Form der Mystik und Theorie stellt sich die Frage, wie sich die interkulturelle Methode zu dieser Bestimmung verhält, bzw. ob sie eher eine Inkompatibilität manifestiert oder einen Anhaltspunkt bietet, um eine gemeinsame Finalität der betrachteten Systeme aufzufinden. Zu Anfang der Untersuchung wurde darauf hingewiesen, dass der interkulturelle Aspekt nicht im Vergleich von Texten aus verschiedenen Kulturkreisen zu suchen sein werde, sondern in der Systematik, auf der die Abfolge der begrifflichen Momente beruht. Die Rechtfertigung der Implikation des Buddhismus in der Deutung des Johannesprologs liegt damit nicht in einer mutmaßlichen textuellen oder weltanschaulichen Nähe, sondern darin, dass ein Systemelement ein anderes beleuchten kann, so dass am Ende eine Ordnung von Bausteinen vorliegt, die sich gegenseitig stützen und erklären.

Zuerst ist auf diese Frage zu antworten, dass die „kontemplative“ Bestimmung der Bewegung der einzelnen Momente der Untersuchung und die interkulturelle Perspektive insofern zusammenhängen, als letztendlich keiner Kultur, keinem Begriffssystem und keiner einzelnen Idee ein Vorrang eingeräumt wird. Jedem Systemelement kommt eine tragende Rolle zu und keines erscheint fundamentaler als irgendein anderes. Nāgārjunas Standpunkt der Leere wird dadurch gerechtfertigt, dass seine innere Spannung durch die Situierung im Denken eine Erklärung erfährt; Vasubandhus Idealismus ergibt sich aus dem Ansatz, die durch die Leere aufgeworfene Frage nach der Mitte zwischen Sein und Nichtsein zu beantworten; Meister Eckharts Behauptung, dass die Geistnatur eine absolute Begründung im Logos vollziehe, stützt sich auf den vorhergehenden Erweis der Inkonsistenz aller endlichen Wirklichkeit und der Notwendigkeit, für diese eine tiefer gelegene Grundlage anzunehmen. Es liegt damit ein Zusammenhang einheitlicher Gestalt vor.

Zweitens ist die für die interkulturelle Zielsetzung besonders bedeutende Möglichkeit hervorzuheben, dass der Zusammenhang des gesamten Systems von jedem seiner einzelnen Punkte aus und mit jedem anderen Punkt als Ziel nachvollzogen werden kann. Es bietet sich z.B. an, statt bei Nāgārjuna zu beginnen, Eckharts Metaphysik zuerst in den Blick zu nehmen, und zu zeigen, dass die Dynamik dieser Metaphysik auf das Nichts der Dinge hinausläuft, d.h. darauf, dass alles bestimmte Seiende an sich nichtig ist, dass es deswegen in die Leere übergeht, und dass es sich, als leeres Kontinuum, in der Gegebenheit des Geistes als höchste Abwesenheit des Selbstseins (paramārthanirvabhāvatā) auflöst. Als Einstiegspunkt könnte aber ebenso Vasubandhus Feststellung dienen, dass jede Form subjektiver und objektiver Erkenntnis den Geist als Grund voraussetzt; daran anschließend stellt sich der in diesem Geist gemachte Anfang des Gegenstandsraumes jener Erkenntnis als Begriff dar, und die durch den Begriff in ihrer Bestimmtheit ermöglichten Dinge gehen wiederum, aufgrund

In der vorliegenden Untersuchung wird der Versuch gemacht, den Johannesprolog anhand der Methode der interkulturellen Philosophie neu zu deuten. Die Spezifität der Methode besteht darin, dass auf philosophische Bausteine zurückgegriffen wird, die dem Prolog historisch fremd sind. Dieser Rückgriff hat zum Ziel, das "ungeloste Gesamtproblem" (Schnelle) des Johannesprologs auf philosophische Weise neu anzugehen. Im Zentrum der Deutung steht der Begriff "Logos". Dieser Begriff wird mithilfe der buddhistischen Denker Nagarjuna und Vasubandhu, sowie des

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mittelalterlichen Philosophen Meister Eckhart erörtert. Mit Nagarjuna zeigt sich, dass das Seiende aufgrund seiner Inkonsistenz an seinen eigenen Seinsansprüchen zugrunde geht. Bei Vasubandhu hebt sich diese Inkonsistenz in der Form eines Geistes auf, der kein Inneres oder Auaeres mehr hat, sondern reines Denken ist. In Eckharts erster Quaestio Parisiensis zeigt sich, dass gerade diese Leere jeder Seinsbestimmung den Geist - Gott - dazu befähigt, als Grund des Seins zu fungieren. Der Ausdruck und die ursprüngliche Instanziierung dieser Begründungsfunktion ist der Logos, wie er am Anfang des Johannesevangeliums beschrieben wird. Durch das Ineinandergreifen von buddhistischen und neuplatonisch-christlichen Themen wird eine neue Dimension in der interkulturellen Philosophie offenbar: die Dimension systematischer Zusammenhänge, die Philosophien über Kulturgrenzen hinaus, ohne Über- oder Unterordnungsverhältnis aufeinander bezieht.

[In the present study, an attempt is made to reinterpret the Prologue of John using the method of intercultural philosophy. The specificity of the method is that it draws on philosophical building blocks that are historically alien to the prologue. The aim of this work is to approach the "undivided overall problem" (Schnelle) of the Prologue of John in a philosophical way. At the center of the interpretation is the term "logos". This term is located with the help of the Buddhist thinkers Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu, as well as the medieval philosopher Meister Eckhart. Nagarjuna shows that the being perishes due to its inconsistency in its own claims to being. In Vasubandhu, this inconsistency is eliminated in the form of a mind that no longer has any interior or outside, but is pure thought. Eckhart's first Quaestio Parisiensis shows that it is precisely this emptiness of every purpose of being that enables the spirit - God - to function as the reason for being. The expression and original instantiation of this foundation function is the Logos as described at the beginning of John's Gospel. Through the intertwining of Buddhist and Neoplatonic-Christian themes, a new dimension in intercultural philosophy becomes apparent: the dimension of systematic connections that relate philosophies beyond cultural boundaries, without relationship of superiority or subordination.]

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ERSTER TEIL

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Es gibt in der christlichen Literatur der Antike einen Text, der an einer vielzitierten Stelle in zwei voneinander abweichenden Fassungen überliefert ist. Es handelt sich bei diesem Text um den Brief an die Magnesier des Kirchenvaters Ignatius von Antiochien (2. Jhd.). Ignatius gilt als Urheber einer Sammlung von literarisch zuhöchst unkonventionellen Briefen, die sich durch eine markante sprachliche Emphase, unerwartete gedankliche Hiatus und beträchtlich viele Stellen auszeichnen, deren Hintergrund für die Forschung noch dunkel ist. In diesen Briefen finden sich wichtige Zeugnisse über die theologischen Konzeptionen im Frühchristentum wieder, aber auch Schilderungen über die konkreten Probleme der ersten Christengemeinden.

An einer poetischen Stelle in dem zu dieser Sammlung gehörenden Magnesierbrief, an der von der Forschung jüdische und gnostische Anklänge identifiziert wurden, liefert Ignatius eine einprägsame Formulierung der christlichen Glaubensgrundsätze. Er ruft mit dieser Formulierung die Christengemeinde in Magnesia zum Bekenntnis auf, dass Gott sich in Christus offenbart hat, „der sein Wort ist, aus Schweigen hervorgekommen“. Diese Textgestalt ist in der armenischen Übersetzung und in einem syrischen Zitat von Severus von Antiochien überliefert. Sie wird, obgleich sie weniger bezeugt ist, mehrheitlich als die ursprünglichere Formulierung angesetzt. Die zweite Version spricht von Christus auf eine entgegengesetzte Weise: Nämlich als von dem, „der sein ewiges Wort ist, nicht aus Schweigen hervorgekommen“. Sie widerspricht der ersten Überlieferung also, was das Hervorkommen des Logos aus dem Schweigen betrifft, auf ganzer Linie.

Dieses merkwürdige Detail in der Überlieferung des Ignatius briefs kann, durch eine Abstraktion von seinem literarischen Kontext, auf einen anderen fundamentalen Text des antiken Christentums übertragen werden: das Johannesevangelium. Der Prolog dieses Evangeliums, in dessen Zentrum ebenfalls der Logos steht, wirft nämlich Fragen auf, die durch das Textproblem des „Schweigens“ auf überraschend passende Weise beschrieben werden können. Auf eine Weise kann nämlich gesagt

werden, dass der Logos, in seiner Einbettung im Prolog des Evangeliums, zu uns „aus Schweigen“ heraus spricht und dies aus philosophischen wie auch philologischen Gründen.

Aus einem philosophischen Blickwinkel ist ohne die Hinzunahme von hermeneutischen und ideengeschichtlichen Hilfsmitteln kaum ersichtlich, was durch die Aussage in Joh 1,1: „Am Anfang war das Wort“ ausgedrückt sein soll. Wenn zuerst das Wort war, bedeutet dies, dass das Denken nicht hinter diesen Anfang zurückgehen kann, bzw. dass jenseits des Wortes überhaupt nichts gibt und dass von Anfang an prinzipiell alles begrifflich strukturiert ist? Was war dieses ursprüngliche Wort und was hat es bezeichnet? Sagt der Johannesprolog durch diese Aussage möglicherweise etwas über sich selbst aus? Darauf gibt der Text insofern keine Antwort, als er über die in ihm vorkommenden Begriffe Anfang, Wort usw. - keine Erklärungen liefert. Der Prolog spricht sich zwar aus, jedoch aus einem Schweigen heraus, das jeder möglichen Deutung ihren Anspruch auf absolute Geltung nimmt.

Das Schweigen kann in einem anderen Sinn auch verstanden werden als die religions- und dogmengeschichtliche sowie philologische Dunkelheit, die die Nennung des Logos im Johannesprolog umgibt. Wir wissen, auch nach den „kanonisch“<sup>6</sup> gewordenen Versuchen Buhmanns' und neueren Ansätzen', sich dem Logos-Liedes auf dem Weg der Gnostik und anderer vorderorientalischer mythischer und religiöser Strömungen' zu nähern, noch nicht auf gesicherte Weise, ob eine solche einzelne Rückführung Sinn ergeben kann und den Prolog nicht eher mancher Aspekte seiner Komplexität beraubt. Es scheint also - sogar mehr als vor einem Jahrhundert -, dass alsbald noch kein Ende „des ungelösten Gesamtproblems des Johannesprologs“ in Sicht sein und dass sich das „Schweigen“ um die Quelle und die Geschichte des Prologs nicht dissipieren wird.

Zugleich findet sich aber, diesem geschichtlichen Schweigen auf so radikale Weise widersprechend wie die zweite Magnesier brief-Überlieferung der ersten, eine Menge an exegetischer und philologischer Literatur zum Johannesprolog vor, über die mittlerweile kein Überblick mehr möglich ist. Der Johannesprolog bildet, als Gipfel des antiken Christentums, den Anfangspunkt einer exegetischen Arbeit, die von den Kirchenvätern begonnen wurde und auf ununterbrochene Weise bis in die moderne Philosophie und Theologie hineinragt. Der Johanneskommentar bildet geradezu ein eigenständiges Genre, zu dem wichtige Werke namhaftester christlicher Autoren gehören: So haben Origenes, Johannes Chrysostomus, Kyrill von Alexandrien, Theodor von Mopsuestia, Augustinus, aber auch Eriugena, Albertus Magnus, Thomas von Aquin und Meister Eckhart das Evangelium mit besonderem Hinblick auf den Prolog kommentiert.

Und wie das Schweigen doppelt - nämlich philosophisch und textuell - interpretiert werden kann, weist auch das nicht-Schweigen einen philosophischen Aspekt auf: Wenn am Anfang nämlich das Wort war, dann kann dieses Anfangswort durch eine Unendlichkeit von Neuartikulierungen dargestellt und immer wieder in seiner ursprünglichen Funktion zum Ausdruck kommen. Die unüberschaubare Menge an Deutungsansätzen scheint auf die Natur des Johannesprologs selbst zurückgeführt werden zu können: Sie gleicht dem nicht Schweigen eines Textes, der sich immer wieder selbst erklärt.

Es liegt damit ein sich über Jahrtausende erstreckendes philosophisch philologisches „Sprechen“ über den Johannesprolog vor, in dessen Kontinuität gerade eben keine Spur von „Schweigen“ festzustellen ist. Der Logos spricht, wenn man jenes Sprechen in Betracht zieht, aus einer Masse von Lesarten und Erklärungen zu uns, die auf fast lärmartige Weise überpräsent wirken.

Die vorliegende Untersuchung ist einem neuen philosophischen Ansatz zur Interpretation des johanneischen Prologs gewidmet. Sie reiht sich damit notwendigerweise in das Spektrum der beiden anhand der Magnesierbrief-Stelle identifizierten Extreme ein. Sie zielt einerseits darauf ab, den Text aus sich sprechen und ihn somit in einer stillen Umgebung verständlich werden zu lassen.



Andererseits muss sie zu diesem Zweck auch die notwendigen Mittel der Erklärung anführen, und somit vom Schweigen absehen.

Das chic övrtö olyiN, das „nicht-Schweigen“, besteht in diesem Fall in einem Wagnis, da zur Erklärung des Johannesprologs in einem ersten Schritt auf einen philosophischen Stoff zurückgegriffen werden soll, der schlichtweg nichts mit diesem Text selbst, der christlichen Literatur oder insgesamt der europäischen oder semitischen Geisteswelt zu tun hat. Als das ovx erö atyil soll in diesem Fall die buddhistische „Doktrin der Leere“ (Śūnyavāda) des indischen Philosophen Nāgārjuna dienen.

Da mit diesem Rückgriff, der nicht mit dem Johannesprolog selbst begründet werden kann, ein ganzer Problemkomplex mitgegeben ist, müssen mehrere Erklärungen und Argumente für den Rückgriff vorausgeschickt werden. So muss 1) angesprochen werden, worin überhaupt aus rein sachexterner, d.h. nicht spezifisch auf das Johannesevangelium bezogener Sicht, die Rechtmäßigkeit einer solchen Einbeziehung bestehen kann; 2) es müssen Argumente genannt werden, die begründen, warum gerade die Einbeziehung der buddhistischen Leere für das Verständnis des Johannesprologs nützlich sein kann; 3) als wichtigste Frage: Es ist zu präzisieren, wie sich die vorliegende Untersuchung damit in das bereits etablierte Feld der interkulturellen, buddhistisch-christlichen Forschung einreicht.

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Am Anfang der vorliegenden Versuche stand ein Vergleich zwischen der Textüberlieferung der Ignatiu sepistel an die Magnesier und der Stellung des Logos im Deutungsrahmen der antiken Geisteswelt.

Es haben sich aus der Erörterung dieser Parallele zwei Möglichkeiten zur Betrachtung des Logos ergeben: Entweder lässt man den Logos aus seinem historischen Kontext heraus sprechen und bringt ihn so „nicht aus Schweigen“ zur Äußerung, sondern aus einer durch literarische und philosophische Beziehungen geprägten und dadurch im Nachhinein rekonstruierbaren Situation; oder aber man lässt ihn „aus Schweigen“ hervorkommen, d.h. man blendet die unendlichen Probleme seiner historischen Situation aus und lässt sich von der inneren Organik seiner Elemente leiten.

Mit der vorliegenden Untersuchung wurde der Vorsatz verfolgt, diese Möglichkeiten unter der Leitidee einer interkulturellen Perspektive neu zu betrachten. Dazu musste einerseits „schweigend“ an den Johannesprolog herangetreten werden, insofern nichts Historisches zu seiner Deutung herangezogen werden konnte; andererseits musste der mit Nāgārjuna und Vasubandhu abgeschrittene Weg aber auch als „Sprechen“ dienen, das, wenn es auch außerhalb des Umfelds des Johannesevangeliums liegt, doch als Hilfsmittel zum Verständnis diene.

An der nun erreichten Stelle eröffnet sich ein neuer Blick auf die Anordnung dieser Elemente. Statt einer bloßen Bestätigung des ursprünglichen Plans findet sich nun eine radikale Umkehrung vor. Nāgārjunas Kunstgriff, sein Traktat durch einen Aufbruch der üblichen zeitlich-logischen Ordnung beginnen zu lassen und so geflissentlich eine vollkommen „haltlose“ Position einzunehmen, hat es erlaubt, zuerst einen Begriff der Leere (śūnyatā) und sodann mit Vasubandhu einen Begriff des Geistes (im Modus der dharmatā und tathatā) bzw. des transzendenten Wissens (lokottarajñāna) zu erarbeiten, die von jedem objektiven Inhalt frei sind. Insofern sich der Logos im Raum dieser Unbestimmtheit mitteilt, kann von ihm gesagt werden, er spreche, mit Ignatius gesprochen, ärtö „aus Schweigen“ zu uns. Er spricht nicht durch oder in etwas Anderem, sondern er spricht sich in reiner, durch keine bestimmte Methode erschlossener Unbestimmtheit aus. Er bildet so den Anfang eines selbstreflexiven Zirkels, der von nichts getragen wird, durch nichts in seiner ursprünglichen Position reformuliert werden kann und eben nur „betrachtet“ (contemplari, nach Eckharts eigenem Ausdruck) werden kann.

Die sich daraus ergebende Neuordnung ist also diese, dass gerade durch den Rückgriff auf den Buddhismus, auf ein nicht-Schweigen, das vollkommene Schweigen erzielt werden konnte. Die negative Formulierung der Ignatiusstelle führt in diesem Sinne zur positiven hin: Der Versuch, den Logos aus einem buddhistischen Ansatz heraus zu verstehen (nicht aus Schweigen), hat dazu geführt, dass der Logos nun aus der Leere (aus Schweigen) verständlich wird.

Was die damit erreichte Form des Denkens betrifft, wurde festgehalten, dass die Betrachtung des Logos vor dem Hintergrund der Leere als Form der „Mystik“ gelten kann, insofern sie durch die Analyse der endlichen Bestimmtheit alles dessen, was den Anschein des Seienden, bhāva bzw. svabhāva an sich hat zur Überwindung dieser Bestimmtheit anleitet und so die rationale Methode der Metaphysik auf deren Ur-ratio zurückbezieht. Bei diesem Gegenstand handelt es sich wiederum nicht um ein Objekt im alltäglichen Sinn, sondern um eine Form der Transzendenz, die durch einen Sprung (bzw. mit Vasubandhus Ausdruck, durch eine „Umkehrung der Grundlage“, āsrayaparāvṛtti) erreicht werden kann, der nicht durch den philosophischen Diskurs eingeholt werden kann. Die Kenologie hat damit keine philosophische Endbestimmung, sondern den Sinn, mit der philosophischen Methode bis zu dem genannten Punkt des Absprungs zur Transzendenz hinzuführen.'

Da sich die Orientierung hin zu dieser Transzendenz auf einem absoluten Standpunkt hält (Nāgārjuna), sich auf keine Subjekt- oder Objektnatur bezieht (Vasubandhu) und auf „mystische“ Weise von allem Sein absieht (Meister Eckhart), hat sich zuletzt zu seiner Bestimmung derjenige Begriff am geeignetsten erwiesen, der die höchstrangige geistige Tätigkeit bezeichnet: der Begriff der Theorie bzw. Kontemplation. Es handelt sich bei der Kenologie demnach um eine Theorie im buchstäblichen und ursprünglichen Sinn - nicht um ein hypothetisch aufgestelltes Gedankengebäude, sondern um eine philosophisch ausgedrückte Anleitung zu einer Anschauung, die selbst nicht mehr philosophisch artikuliert werden kann, da sie, als das „Vorher“, einer solchen Artikulation immer entgehen muss.

Angesichts dieser Bestimmung der Kenologie als Form der Mystik und Theorie stellt sich die Frage, wie sich die interkulturelle Methode zu dieser Bestimmung verhält, bzw. ob sie eher eine Inkompatibilität manifestiert oder einen Anhaltspunkt bietet, um eine gemeinsame Finalität der betrachteten Systeme aufzufinden. Zu Anfang der Untersuchung wurde darauf hingewiesen, dass der interkulturelle Aspekt nicht im Vergleich von Texten aus verschiedenen Kulturkreisen zu suchen sein werde, sondern in der Systematik, auf der die Abfolge der begrifflichen Momente beruht. Die Rechtfertigung der Implikation des Buddhismus in der Deutung des Johannesprologs liegt damit nicht in einer mutmaßlichen textuellen oder weltanschaulichen Nähe, sondern darin, dass ein Systemelement ein anderes beleuchten kann, so dass am Ende eine Ordnung von Bausteinen vorliegt, die sich gegenseitig stützen und erklären.

Zuerst ist auf diese Frage zu antworten, dass die „kontemplative“ Bestimmung der Bewegung der einzelnen Momente der Untersuchung und die interkulturelle Perspektive insofern zusammenhängen, als letztendlich keiner Kultur, keinem Begriffssystem und keiner einzelnen Idee ein Vorrang eingeräumt wird. Jedem Systemelement kommt eine tragende Rolle zu und keines erscheint fundamentaler als irgendein anderes. Nāgārjunas Standpunkt der Leere wird dadurch gerechtfertigt, dass seine innere Spannung durch die Situierung im Denken eine Erklärung erfährt; Vasubandhus Idealismus ergibt sich aus dem Ansatz, die durch die Leere aufgeworfene Frage nach der Mitte zwischen Sein und Nichtsein zu beantworten; Meister Eckharts Behauptung, dass die Geistnatur eine absolute Begründung im Logos vollziehe, stützt sich auf den vorhergehenden Erweis der Inkonsistenz aller endlichen Wirklichkeit und der Notwendigkeit, für diese eine tiefer gelegene Grundlage anzunehmen. Es liegt damit ein Zusammenhang einheitlicher Gestalt vor.

Zweitens ist die für die interkulturelle Zielsetzung besonders bedeutende Möglichkeit hervorzuheben, dass der Zusammenhang des gesamten Systems von jedem seiner einzelnen Punkte

aus und mit jedem anderen Punkt als Ziel nachvollzogen werden kann. Es bietet sich z.B. an, statt bei Nāgārjuna zu beginnen, Eckharts Metaphysik zuerst in den Blick zu nehmen, und zu zeigen, dass die Dynamik dieser Metaphysik auf das Nichts der Dinge hinausläuft, d.h. darauf, dass alles bestimmte Seiende an sich nichtig ist, dass es deswegen in die Leere übergeht, und dass es sich, als leeres Kontinuum, in der Gegebenheit des Geistes als höchste Abwesenheit des Selbstseins (paramārthanirvāṇa) auflöst. Als Einstiegspunkt könnte aber ebenso Vasubandhus Feststellung dienen, dass jede Form subjektiver und objektiver Erkenntnis den Geist als Grund voraussetzt; daran anschließend stellt sich der in diesem Geist gemachte Anfang des Gegenstandsraumes jener Erkenntnis als Begriff dar, und die durch den Begriff in ihrer Bestimmtheit ermöglichten Dinge gehen wiederum, aufgrund dessen, dass sie eben nicht reiner Geist sind, in die Leere über. Im Kreisgefüge der Einzelmomente ist jedes dieser Momente zugleich Anfangs- und Endpunkt. Mit dem Logos ist in diesem Sinn nicht das letzte Wort gesprochen - aus kenologischer Sicht kann ebenso sehr die Doktrin der Leere oder der Yogācāra einen Endpunkt bilden.

Unabhängig vom kulturell artikulierten Anfangspunkt, der in Betracht genommen wird, bildet die kenologische Dynamik aufgrund des Verweises der Leere auf den Logos und des Logos auf die Leere also das Gegenteil eines linearen Verlaufs: Sie ist ein Kreis, in dem jedem Einzelmoment ein anderes Einzelmoment vorhergeht und in dem jedes andere Moment auch von einem anderen gefolgt wird. Die einfache Unmittelbarkeit der Leere geht in den Geist und in den Logos ein, aber vom Logos geht wiederum auch die endliche Welt aus, so dass mit jeder Erreichung des Logos auch wiederum ein Einstiegspunkt in die Leere gegeben ist. Oder, in einer theologischen Formulierung: Die Welt, die sich als leer erweist, verweist auf Gott als ihren Schöpfer; Gott wiederum erscheint als Ursprung der Bestimmtheit, die den Bereich der Welt bildet. Die Kenologie weist damit zwar mögliche Einstiegspunkte auf, jedoch keine Anfangs- und Endpunkte im strengen Sinn (entsprechend Nāgārjunas Widerlegung der Extreme des Früheren und Späteren, pūrvāparakoti, in MMK 11).

Mit diesen übergreifenden Bewertungen ist der Blick auf die in den vorliegenden Versuchen geleistete Ausführung der Kenologie freigegeben. Es handelt sich bei dieser Ausführung um eine theoretische Mystik, die, von ihrer Methode her, philosophisch und interkulturell verfährt; inhaltlich betrachtet, die Frage nach dem ersten Grund stellt; hinsichtlich ihrer Quelle, von der johanneischen Logosmetaphysik abhebt; von ihrer Finalität her, auf die Kontemplation des Logos in einem unergründlichen „Vorher“ (Barth) hinausläuft, das aber wiederum jenseits der philosophischen Methode liegt; was ihre Gestalt angeht, eine kreisartige Bewegung darstellt, die die Dynamik ihres Gegenstands widerspiegelt und zwischen den implizierten (an jeweils eine Kultur gebundenen) Momenten keinen Wertigkeitsunterschied setzt.

Die Frage nach dem philosophischen Sinn des Johannesprologs zählt nicht zu den Hauptfragen, die in der neueren Forschung gestellt werden. Die Fragen nach der Einheit, der Struktur, der Sprache und dem Autor des Evangeliums, dem Zusammenhang des johanneischen Berichts mit dem Leben des historischen Jesu, der Stellung des Evangelientextes gegenüber den synoptischen Evangelien, der Form des Prologs - ob es sich um einen frühchristlichen Hymnus, einen explikativen Text, eine Umarbeitung einer vorchristlichen Vorlage handelt -, den hermeneutischen Problemen, usw. haben eine klare Vorrangstellung und überschatten die philosophische Interpretation als den Versuch, den Text in seiner gegebenen Einheit zu lesen und philosophisch zu verstehen. Die vorliegende Untersuchung kann sich jedoch, trotz dieses Problems der Einordnung und Orientierung, auf Theo Kobuschs Idee berufen, das Johannesevangelium und insbesondere den Prolog als Grundtext einer „Metaphysik der christlichen Philosophie“ zu verstehen, d.h. als Text, aus dem sich erstens ein sinnvolles philosophisches Gesamtbild gewinnen lässt. Kobusch rechtfertigt diese Aussage anhand der zuerst von Origenes vorgebrachten Idee, die Philosophie selbst als Offenbarung Gottes an den Menschen zu verstehen, wodurch der Konflikt zwischen einer philosophischen und einer rein theologischen Exegese aufgelöst werden kann. Die in dieser Untersuchung vorgeschlagene Deutung

des Johannesprologs kann, dieser Tendenz der von Origenes repräsentierten alexandrinischen Schule folgend, im Bereich einer philosophischen Theologie angesiedelt werden (im Gegensatz zu einer rein theologischen Theologie), d.h. in einem Bereich, in dem sich Offenbarungscharakter und philosophische Systematik nicht widersprechen, sondern darin in Eins fallen, dass durch die philosophische Methode ein Punkt erreicht wird, an dem die Notwendigkeit der Unergründlichkeit des ersten Grundes (ganz im Sinne des buddhistischen Soseins, der tathatā) offenbar wird. Zur Bezeichnung der Überwindung dieses Zwiespalts erscheint der Begriff am angemessensten, den Kobusch selbst zur Betitelung von Origenes' Philosophie herangezogen hat: „métaphysique contemplative“. Es handelt sich um eine Metaphysik, die auf die reine, jede diskursive Struktur überwindende Betrachtung des Ur-Begründungsgeschehens abzielt und die dementsprechend als „kontemplativ“ gelten kann, da an ihrer Spitze die Betrachtung einer einfachen Gegebenheit - des Logos - steht.

Diese Orientierung am antiken Ideal einer „christlichen Philosophie“ und die Hinzunahme der interkulturellen Methode dürfen dabei aber nicht als Absage an die historische Methode verstanden werden. Die philologische Erschließung des Logos-Hymnus, des möglichen religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrundes seiner Komposition, des Verhältnisses des Johannesevangeliums zu den synoptischen Evangelien usw. kann nicht einfach durch die zu Anfang angekündigte systematische Lesart verdrängt werden. Der gegenwärtige Versuch bietet dementsprechend zwar einen Ansatz, die Kohärenz der traditionellen Exegese, die in der vorliegenden Untersuchung von Kyrill von Alexandre, Gregor von Nyssa, Basilius von Kappadokien usw. vertreten wurde, erneut hervorzuheben und interkulturell zu rechtfertigen, kann aber nur als eine mögliche Herangehensweise an die komplizierte Frage der Aufschlüsselung des Johannesevangeliums angesehen werden.

So eröffnen sich am Ende der vorliegenden Versuche einerseits ein Rückblick auf Nāgārjuna's prinzipienlosen und reinen Standpunkt der Leere, Vasubandhu's idealistische Geistmetaphysik, die die Welt als System einer ideellen Abstufung deutet, an dessen Spitze das reine geistige „Sosein“ steht, Eckhart's Bestimmung des Logos als unergründlichen Ursprungs der Welt im Geist; andererseits ein Ausblick auf den Johannesprolog, der, obgleich er als Schlüsselmoment der Erklärung am Ende der Untersuchung steht und dort die Einheit des abgeschrittenen Wegs manifestiert, doch von Anfang an dagewesen zu sein scheint. Der Weg hat zwar von der Leere zum Logos geführt, aber es steht nun fest, dass, da die Leere sich auf die endlichen Dinge bezieht und diese den Logos zum Grund haben, der Logos schon von Anfang an seine Begründungsfunktion vollzogen haben muss.

Letztendlich stellt sich heraus, dass es von Anfang an der Logos war, der die Gedankenentwicklung angeführt und sich selbst artikuliert hat; oder, mit Johannes selbst gesprochen: *Ex ET voS erl. planto* - „jener ist es, der ged hat“ (Joh 1,18). <>

## Translation

There is a text in the Christian literature of antiquity that has been handed down in two different versions at a much-quoted point. This text is the letter to the Magnesians of the church father Ignatius of Antioch (2nd century). Ignatius is regarded as the author of a collection of letters that are highly unconventional in literary terms, which are characterized by a striking linguistic emphasis, unexpected mental hiatus and a considerable number of passages whose background is still obscure for research. These letters contain important testimonies about the theological conceptions in early Christianity, but also descriptions of the concrete problems of the first Christian communities.

At a poetic passage in the Magnesian letter belonging to this collection, where Jewish and Gnostic echoes have been identified by research, Ignatius provides a memorable formulation of the Christian principles of faith. With this formulation he calls on the Christian community in Magnesia to confess that God has revealed himself in Christ, "who is his word, who came forth from silence". This

textual form is preserved in the Armenian translation and in a Syriac quotation by Severus of Antioch. Although it is less attested, it is mostly regarded as the more original formulation. The second version speaks of Christ in the opposite way: namely, as having not come forth from silence from him "who is his eternal word". It therefore completely contradicts the first tradition as far as the emergence of the *logos* from silence is concerned.

This curious detail in the tradition of the Epistle of Ignatius can, through an abstraction from its literary context, be transferred to another fundamental text of ancient Christianity: the Gospel of John. In fact, the prologue of this Gospel, at the centre of which is also the *Logos*, raises questions that can be described in a surprisingly apt way by the textual problem of "silence". In fact, it can be said that the *Logos*, embedded in the prologue of the Gospel, speaks to us "out of silence" for philosophical as well as philological reasons.

From a philosophical point of view, without the addition of hermeneutical and ideological aids, it is hardly clear what is to be expressed by the statement in John 1: 1: "In the beginning was the Word". If the word was first, does this mean that thinking cannot go back to this beginning, or that there is nothing at all beyond the word and that from the beginning everything is conceptually structured? What was this original word and what did it mean? Does the Prologue of John possibly say something about itself through this statement? The text does not provide an answer to this question insofar as it does not provide any explanations of the concepts of beginning, word, etc. which appear in it. The prologue expresses itself, but out of a silence that deprives every possible interpretation of its claim to absolute validity.

Silence can also be understood in a different sense than the darkness of religion, dogmatic history and philology that surrounds the naming of the *Logos* in the Prologue of John. Even after Buhmann's attempts to approach the *Logos* song on the path of Gnosticism and other Near Eastern mythical and religious currents, which have become "canonical"<sup>6</sup> and more recent approaches, we do not yet know in a certain way whether such a single return can make sense and does not rather rob the prologue of some aspects of its complexity. So it seems - even more than a century ago - that soon there will be no end in sight to "the unresolved overall problem of the Prologue of John" and that the "silence" about the source and history of the prologue will not dissipate.

At the same time, however, contradicting this historical silence in such a radical way as the second Magnesier letter tradition of the first, there is a great deal of exegetical and philological literature on the Prologue to John, about which it is no longer possible to keep an overview. The Prologue of John, as the pinnacle of ancient Christianity, is the starting point of an exegetical work begun by the Fathers of the Church and extending uninterruptedly into modern philosophy and theology. The commentary on John forms a genre in its own right, which includes important works by the most renowned Christian authors: Origen, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Augustine, but also Eriugena, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas and Meister Eckhart have commented on the Gospel with special regard to the prologue.

And just as silence can be interpreted twice - namely philosophically and textually - non-silence also has a philosophical aspect: if in the beginning there was the word, then this initial word can be represented by an infinity of new articulations and expressed again and again in its original function. The An unmanageable amount of interpretative approaches seems to be traced back to the nature of the Prologue of John itself: it does not resemble the silence of a text that repeatedly explains itself.

There is thus a philosophical philological "speaking" about the Prologue of John extending over millennia, in its continuity there is just no trace of "silence" to be detected. The *Logos*, considering this speaking, speaks to us from a mass of readings and explanations that seem over-present in an almost noisy way.



The present study is dedicated to a new philosophical approach to the interpretation of the Johannine prologue. It thus necessarily joins the spectrum of the two extremes identified on the basis of the Magnesierbrief passage. On the one hand, it aims to make the text speak out of itself and thus make it understandable in a quiet environment. On the other hand, for this purpose it must also cite the necessary means of declaration, and thus refrain from silence.

The *chic övrtö olyiN*, the "non-silence", consists in this case in a risk, since for the explanation of the Prologue of John in a first step a philosophical material is to be used, which simply has nothing to do with this text itself, the Christian literature or the European or Semitic intellectual world as a whole. In this case, the Buddhist "doctrine of emptiness" (*Sūnyavāda*) of the Indian philosopher Nāgārjuna is to serve as the *ovx erö atyil*.

Since this recourse, which cannot be justified by the Prologue of John itself, involves a whole complex of problems, several explanations and arguments for recourse must be sent in advance. Thus, 1) it must be addressed what the legality of such inclusion can consist of at all from a purely external point of view, i.e. not specifically related to the Gospel of John; 2) arguments must be given that justify why the inclusion of Buddhist emptiness can be useful for understanding the Prologue of John; 3) as the most important question: It is necessary to specify how the present study thus fits into the already established field of intercultural, Buddhist-Christian research.

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At the beginning of the present experiments was a comparison between the textual tradition of the Ignatius epistle to the Magnesians and the position of the Logos in the interpretive framework of the ancient intellectual world.

The discussion of this parallel has given rise to two possibilities for viewing the logos: either one allows the logos to speak from its historical context and thus expresses it "not out of silence", but from a situation shaped by literary and philosophical relationships and thus reconstructable in retrospect; or else one lets it emerge "from silence", i.e. one ignores the infinite problems of its historical situation and allows itself to be guided by the internal organics of its elements.

With the present study, the intention was to reconsider these possibilities under the guiding principle of an intercultural perspective. On the one hand, the Prologue of John had to be approached "silently", insofar as nothing historical could be used to interpret it; on the other hand, the path followed with Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu also had to serve as "speaking", which, although outside the context of John's Gospel, nevertheless served as an aid to understanding.

At the point now reached, a new view of the arrangement of these elements opens up. Instead of a mere confirmation of the original plan, there is now a radical reversal. Nāgārjuna's trick of beginning his treatise by breaking up the usual temporal-logical order and thus deliberately assuming a completely "baseless" position has made it possible first to elaborate a concept of emptiness (*sūnyatā*) and then with Vasubandhu a concept of the mind (in the mode of *dharmatā* and *tathatā*) or transcendent knowledge (*lokottarajñāna*), which are free from any objective content. Inasmuch as the Logos communicates itself in the space of this indeterminacy, it can be said of him, speaking with Ignatius, to speak of himself. "out of silence" to us. He does not speak through or into anything else, but he expresses himself in pure indeterminacy that cannot be deduced by any particular method. He thus forms the beginning of a self-reflexive circle that is supported by nothing, reformulated by nothing in its original position. and can only be "considered" (*contemplari*, according to Eckhart's own expression).

The resulting new order is therefore this, that it was precisely by resorting to Buddhism, to a non-silence, that complete silence could be achieved. The negative formulation of the Ignatius passage

leads in this sense to the positive: The attempt to understand the Logos from a Buddhist approach (not out of silence) has led to the Logos now becoming understandable from emptiness (out of silence).

As far as the form of thought thus achieved is concerned, it was stated that the contemplation of the Logos against the background of emptiness can be regarded as a form of "mysticism", insofar as it guides the overcoming of this certainty through the analysis of the finite certainty of everything that has the appearance of being, *bhāva* or *svabhāva* in itself, and thus relates the rational method of metaphysics back to its primordial ratio. This object, again, is not an object in the everyday sense, but a form of transcendence that can be achieved by a leap (or, in Vasubandhu's expression, by a "reversal of the foundation", *āśrayaparāvṛtti*) that cannot be caught up by philosophical discourse. Kenology thus has no philosophical final determination, but the sense of leading with the philosophical method to the point of the jump to transcendence.'

Since the orientation towards this transcendence is kept at an absolute standpoint (Nāgārjuna), does not refer to any subject or object nature (Vasubandhu) and "mystically" disregards all being (Meister Eckhart), the term that designates the highest spiritual activity has finally proven to be the most suitable for its determination: the concept of theory or contemplation. Kenology is therefore a theory in the literal and original sense - not a hypothetical structure of thought, but a philosophically expressed instruction to a view that itself can no longer be philosophically articulated, since, as the "before", it must always escape such articulation. of the fact that they are not pure spirit, pass into emptiness. In the circular structure of the individual moments, each of these moments is both the beginning and the end point. Logos is not the last word in this sense - from a cenological point of view, the doctrine of emptiness or the *Yogaecera* can also form an endpoint.

Thus, regardless of the culturally articulated starting point that is considered, the cenological dynamic, due to the reference of emptiness to the logos and the logos to emptiness, is the opposite of a linear course: it is a circle in which each single moment is preceded by another single moment and in which every other moment is also followed by another. The simple immediacy of emptiness enters the mind and the logos, but the logos also emanate the finite world, so that with each attainment of the logo there is also an entry point into emptiness. Or, in a theological formulation: the world, which proves to be empty, points to God as its Creator; God, in turn, appears as the origin of the certainty that forms the realm of the world. Kenology thus has possible entry points, but no beginning and end points in the strict sense (according to Nāgārjuna's refutation of the extremes of the earlier and later, *pūrvāparakoti*, in *MMK* 11).

With these overarching evaluations, the view of the execution of kenology carried out in the present experiments is released. This explanation is a theoretical mysticism which, by its method, proceeds philosophically and interculturally; from a substantive point of view, raises the question of the first reason; differs from the Johannine logos metaphysics in terms of its source; from its finality, amounts to the contemplation of the Logos in an unfathomable "before" (Barth), which again lies beyond the philosophical method; as far as its shape is concerned, represents a circular movement that reflects the dynamics of its object and makes no difference in value between the implied moments (each bound to a culture).

The question of the philosophical meaning of the Prologue of John is not one of the main questions posed in recent research. The questions about the unity, the structure, the language and the author of the Gospel, the connection of the Johannine account with the life of the historical Jesus, the position of the Gospel text vis-à-vis the Synoptic Gospels, the form of the prologue - whether it is an early Christian hymn, an explicative text, a reworking of a pre-Christian model -, the hermeneutical problems, etc., have a clear primacy and overshadow the philosophical interpretation as an attempt to read and philosophically understand the text in its given unity. However, despite

this problem of classification and orientation, the present study can refer to Theo Kobusch's idea of understanding the Gospel of John and in particular the prologue as the basic text of a "metaphysics of Christian philosophy", i.e. as a text from which, firstly, a meaningful philosophical overall picture can be obtained. Kobusch justifies this statement on the basis of the idea, first put forward by Origen, that philosophy itself should be understood as God's revelation to man, whereby the conflict between philosophical and purely theological exegesis can be resolved.<sup>4</sup> The interpretation of the Prologue of John proposed in this study can, following this tendency of the Alexandrian school represented by Origen, be located in the realm of a philosophical theology (in the In contrast to a purely theological theology), i.e. in an area in which the character of revelation and philosophical systematics do not contradict each other, but fall into one, that through the philosophical method a point is reached at which the necessity of the inscrutability of the first reason (in the sense of the Buddhist being, the tathatā) becomes apparent. To describe the overcoming of this dichotomy, the term that Kobusch himself used to title Origen's philosophy seems most appropriate: "métaphysique contemplative". It is a metaphysics that aims at the pure consideration of the primordial process of justification that transcends any discursive structure and can therefore be regarded as "contemplative", since at its top is the consideration of a simple fact - the logos.

However, this orientation towards the ancient ideal of a "Christian philosophy" and the addition of the intercultural method must not be understood as a rejection of the historical method. Philological indexing Fact - of the logo - stands.

However, this orientation towards the ancient ideal of a "Christian philosophy" and the addition of the intercultural method must not be understood as a rejection of the historical method. The philological development of the Logos hymn, the possible religious-historical background of his composition, the relationship of the Gospel of John to the Synoptic Gospels, etc., cannot simply be superseded by the systematic reading announced at the beginning. Accordingly, while the present attempt offers an approach to re-emphasise and interculturally justify the coherence of traditional exegesis advocated in the present study by Cyril of Alexandre, Gregory of Nyssa, Basilius of Cappadocia, etc., it can only be seen as a possible approach to the complicated question of the breakdown of the Gospel of John.

Thus, at the end of the present attempts, on the one hand, a review of Nāgārjuna's unprincipled and pure standpoint of emptiness, Vasubandhu's idealistic mental metaphysics, which interprets the world as a system of ideal gradation, at the top of which stands the pure spiritual "Sosein", Eckhart's determination of the Logos as the unfathomable origin of the world in the mind; on the other hand, an outlook on the Prologue of John, which, although it stands as a key moment of the explanation at the end of the investigation and manifests there the unity of the path taken, seems to have been there from the beginning. The path has indeed led from emptiness to logos, but it is now clear that since emptiness refers to finite things and these are based on logos, the logos must have performed its function of justification from the very beginning.

In the end, it turns out that from the beginning it was the Logos who led the thought development and articulated himself; or, in John's own words: *ExETvoS erl.planto* - "it is he who has spoken" (John 1:18). <>

## TEMPORALITY AND ETERNITY: TEN PERSPECTIVES ON GOD AND TIME by Marcus Schmücker, Michael Williams, Florian Fischer [De Gruyter, 9783110698008]

Is time a creation of God? How can God be considered eternal, if he is responsible for the existence of time? Is God temporal or is he timeless? The relationship between God and time has been an object of inquiry in philosophical and theological traditions around the world for centuries. This volume takes up these and other questions, presenting a range of answers not only as brought forth in European philosophical traditions and in early Christianity, Judaism and Islam, but also positions taken by mediaeval Indian theologians and in the influential traditions of early Buddhism. Traditionally, discussions have focused on questions such as whether time is a necessary concomitant of God's existence, or whether time should be identified with God. But there is a further question: did these traditions develop their own unrelated and independent view of God and time? Or are there similarities in their reflections? This volume, with contributions of scholars from various relevant fields, offers a novel approach to these inquiries. When taken as a whole, it provides new momentum to contemplation on an age-old enigma.

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There are few topics in religious thought as fascinating as the relationship between God and time - a relationship that challenges the seemingly insurmountable contrast between God's eternity and world's temporality.

The discourse in recent years on the concept of God as related to a philosophy of time has brought forth numerous publications, an indication of lively interest in this topic. What the current discussion has lacked, is an account of how non-European traditions deal with this topic. If this were demonstrated, it is likely that this interest would intensify. Thus, the inclusion of such traditions is not only desirable, it is essential.

On one hand, this is the aim of the present volume. On the other hand, however, its wider aim is not simply to juxtapose individual traditions and their different points of view, but to open cross references in order to bring widely divergent traditions into conversation with each other, doing this

not only across geographical distance, but also temporal. This is a new way to view the topic of God and time, one that until now has not been undertaken in this form.

Despite the diversity of religious traditions, it is astonishing how over centuries, indeed millennia, so many have focused on the topic of God and time. This is reflected in the remarkably long list of thinkers who, within their individual traditions, have dealt intensively with the problem of God and time. Indeed, we must admit that the subject is so wide-ranging that it can hardly be presented here in any form that might be considered comprehensive. Nonetheless, this presentation of nine perspectives can be seen as a first step.

What on first appearance may look like a miscellaneous collection of contributions about different places, epochs and religions in fact reveals that the question of how eternity and temporality relate to one another has been an unremitting problem in theological and philosophical traditions, whether in general or in relation to specific questions. In this volume, this is displayed most clearly in those contributions that examine thinkers who dealt with the example of creation. Without creation there would be no world. Moreover, without creation God would also become a meaningless concept. And yet the existence of a world origination as well as decay presupposes time. Thus, despite the obvious contradiction of God and time, there must be a relation between eternity and temporality - a relationship that must be discovered and reflected upon again and again.

The first two contributions, by Florian Fischer and Johannes Grossl, and by R.T. Mullins, introduce the reader to the philosophy of time in general, as well as to the most important interpretations of the difference between God and time. To open, Fischer and Grossl provide a philosophical background and present the terminology used in the philosophy of time. Here, the reader is introduced to the idea of various times: does only one time exist, or is there more than one? They first offer the solutions as found in various theories, including presentism, eternalism, growing blockers and moving spotlights. Next they outline the relevant discussions on change over time, with an overview given of positions such as persistence, perdurantism, exdurantism, and endurantism. They also discuss other views in this context, including indexicalism, copularism, and relationalism. Debates on persistence through time and the metaphysical status of the nature of time are of particular importance in this regard. The problem of whether one can assume change in God or not is dealt with against the background of discussions on views about God's mutability, referred to as divine temporalism, and about God's timelessness, that is, divine eternalism. To conclude, the two authors present a special account of the relationship between God and time: process ontology and process theology. As the most current position, this is an attempt to connect timeless God with temporal things. As an alternative to the aporetic discussion of whether God changes when he creates, offered here is the concept that God always creates. The authors mention not only the most important positions on this (Whitehead, Hartshorne, Bergson), but also discuss other positions such as social trinitarianism.

What was introduced as one position among many in the first chapter is discussed in more detail in the next, by R.T. Mullins. He considers the topic "God and time" to have been addressed incorrectly by several authors: the difficult question of what time actually is has led to a number of controversial answers. Mullins provides critical arguments against various views of God's creation of time, as well as the view that time is to be identified with God. A second important question in his chapter is whether God is responsible for the existence of time. Here, he discusses three options, providing different arguments against all of them, whereupon he develops the concept of time as an attribute of God. Mullins explains that a crucial point for creationists, who range from Augustine to William Lane Craig and Thomas Jay Oord, is their view that God creates time in the sense that God creates change. What can be criticized is the interrelation between change and time, which leads to the aporetic question that if God, when creating, causes change, how is it that he himself does not change when he creates? Mullins points out that in the creationist view, it is impossible to bridge the



gap between change and eternity/immutability. God cannot change before time changes, not even in the moment before creation. The creationist argument finds itself in a vicious circle, because change and time are identified with one another. But is there an alternative to the argument that time only exists if change exists? After briefly touching on the idea of concomitance, Mullins introduces a third option, the view of identification of time with God. This solution was offered by both Nicole Oresme and Thomas F. Torrance. Time can exist without change and it can be an attribute of God. But was there time before creation? Mullins offers the following view: If God has created a universe with uniform laws of nature and consistent change, God has not created time. Instead, God has created a succession of moments within a metrical form.

The chapter by Daniel Saudek also considers certain classical problems regarding the relationship between God and time, namely, the problem of divine foreknowledge and future contingents, and Kretzmann's dilemma of the incompatibility between the omniscience and immutability of God. These matters are examined in light of the theory of relativity. The author argues that the best way to think of time in the context of relativity theory is in terms of a local model of time, in which there is no global passage of time. To this end, he provides a derivation of temporal ordering ("before"), of the quantification of temporal duration, and of time's asymmetric, arrow-like structure, i.e. the difference between the fixed past and the open future. This derivation is based on the atemporal notion of the set of states of an object. Time is thus "attached" to objects, and is therefore local rather than global. Based on this model, the afore-mentioned problems become greatly simplified, and can even be considered to dissolve.

After these overviews of analytic and systematic approaches to the subject of God and time, we turn to historical approaches, first to the influential Jewish theologian Philo of Alexandria (first century CE). Also here the subject of God and time was a crucial one, whereby this thinker discussed the topic using his own terminology and offered various solutions.

Ze'ev Strauss presents the thoughts of Philo of Alexandria. This most prominent Jewish thinker of the first century CE, tried to reconcile Platonic and Stoic theories of time with biblical text by means of allegorical exegesis. His metaphysical conception of time plays a key role in his non-temporal understanding of the creation account and of Jewish tradition as a whole. What theory of time does he ultimately uphold? And which philosophical arguments does he put forward in favor of his view? In the present article, Strauss shows how Philo links God with time by drawing on anthropomorphic perceptions. He highlights the crucial influence of the conception of the transcendent absolute on his metaphysical treatment of time. Furthermore, he investigates Philo's application of the concept of the 'new' to God and the Jewish faith, thus identifying an intimate connection between the theme of God's asymmetric relation to time and His spirited discourse with mankind's rational souls.

Coming to the second monotheistic tradition in this historical overview, the next chapter by Jon Hoover deals with God and time as found in the Islamic theology of Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328). Before introducing Taymiyyah's views on God and time, Hoover prepares the theological background of the leading question: How can a God who, according to the vision of the Qur'an, is the ruler of the universe and beyond time be considered to create time without becoming temporal? Three relevant directions of kalam theology participated in this debate: Mu'tazili, As'ari and ʿAṭuridi kalam, plus the philosophers Ibn Sina and Ibn Rusd, who argued against the kalam view. Hoover reconstructs the relevant stages of the debates between these groups, following them to the discussions about how to define the world, a question much discussed but perhaps never solved. Is the world eternal or did it originate temporally? The main view is to connect temporal change with the eternal nature of God. The world depends on God, but probably not vice versa. At this point, Hoover introduces the view of Ibn Taymiyyah, who teaches that God would be imperfect if he did not unceasingly create. The main opponent of Ibn Taymiyyah in this question was ʿAs'ari kalam, defending ar-Razi's view that the world has an origin in time. In contrast, Ibn Taymiyyah defines God's creation as perpetual

(da'im). It is for this reason that nothing other than God himself is eternal. Timeless eternity would make God inactive. To create eternally means that from eternity, he has been creating one thing after another. It becomes apparent that the view of a timeless God who stops and starts to create cannot solve the contradiction between eternity and temporality. From these views, Hoover then arrives at Ibn Taymiyyah's next thesis: while God can do things in a personal sequence, he does not see the deeds of human beings before they are completed. Moreover, Hoover demonstrates that Ibn Taymiyyah introduces a distinction between God's continuous creativity and concrete created things. Nothing that God creates is eternal. Each created thing has a beginning in time, but God's creative activity has no beginning and no end. Temporality and eternity can be connected because God's creation is from eternity; in his creation God performs, by means of his will and power, successive voluntary acts. These do not relativize him, but subsist in his eternal essence.

If one looks at these two contributions once again under the aspect of the importance of time, one realizes that while reflecting on time as either different from or identical to the conception of God, an image of God develops. The next chapter also makes it clear that thinking about time played a role in the religious philosophical understanding of "historical eternity." In addition to the main question of how God's absoluteness can be preserved in the face of the temporality of time or the world, a further question is how a concept of God can survive in the face of inevitable temporality.

For Michael Schulz, the expression "historical eternity" seems to be a contradiction: something is either temporal-historical or eternal, but not both. It is exactly this expression, however, that must be explained in the religions of revelation such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam. All these traditions believe in an eternal God within time. Wolfhart Pannenberg and Hans Urs von Balthasar set themselves to the task of explaining this by resorting to the philosophy of Christianity of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. In a triologue between these three thinkers, Schulz compares their thinking and unfolds how they developed concepts of the relationality between eternity and history. For Hegel, eternity in time means God's self-recognition in time and otherness in human beings. But God remains absolute in his triadically self-determining subjectivity. While for Hegel eternity is present in time, for Pannenberg eternity is only present in the mode of anticipation as future eschatological verification. Paradoxically this implies that God depends more on time and history. Pannenberg thus adopts Hegel's concept of true infinity and combines it with the idea of God's self-determination: God can decide to have himself determined by otherness, namely, by the world and history. In this way, eternity can also be in history and God can reveal himself in human nature. For Pannenberg, God's relationship to the world must be based upon a difference within God. God's relationship to the world is a relation to a divine otherness, the Son. Only an inner divine difference and otherness explains the possibility of God's relating himself to other things. Although the other chapters of this volume have shown how time stands in opposition to God's eternity, Schulz points out that for Pannenberg, also an external Other can belong to God's self-determination.

The next theologian, Urs von Balthasar, asks what God gains from the world without God first becoming God through the world. The divine ruse of reason of which Hegel speaks, however, seems to say exactly this: God is not God without the world. Balthasar responds with a theology of the Trinity that allows us to accept characteristics of the finite, such as origin and future, to be a form of time, passivity and receptivity in God (*generatio passiva, spiratio passiva*). The eternal God, who can thus manifest himself in temporal eternity, could be understood as a consequence of divine inner gratuitousness, in which divine persons represent past, present and future. Inner divine difference is an expression of divine love aimed not at itself, but rather at the other for its own sake. Thus going beyond Hegel's contribution, Pannenberg and Balthasar conceive inner-divine difference as a relational event capable of temporality.

The last three chapters in this volume present this topic from the perspective of traditions in South Asia, with the next two chapters discussing the question of God and time as found in the works of

two medieval Indian theologians and the last examining an Indian Buddhist theory of time. The first chapter of this group, written by Marcus Schmucker, examines how the conception of God depended on the idea of the continuous flowing of time. At roughly the same time as Ibn Taymiyyah was writing, theologians from two theistic traditions of Vedanta in India were developing monotheistic systems. Madhya, the thirteenth-century founder of Dvaita Vedanta, and Venkatanatha, a thirteenth/ fourteenth century theologian who represented the Visistadvaita tradition of Vedanta, both discussed the relationship between God and time at length. Madhya and his commentator Jayatirtha applied a concept of God in which God is able, with his inconceivable potency (*acintyasakti*), to manifest temporal determinations in the eternal flow of time so that the special time of creation (*srstikala*) can start. Thereby the concept of will is strongly emphasized, which seems to eliminate the need for an explanation of God's reference to the present. Madhya and Jayatirtha are therefore two theologians who can certainly be regarded as representatives of a divine eternalism.

The second author, Venkatanatha, bases his thinking on a concept of substance (*dravya*). He considers God's knowledge in relation to time as the relationship between two substances. Considering God's knowledge to be a substance that can have temporal properties without being relativized in its eternal nature is the basic idea developed by Venkatanatha. This also guides his explanations of divine will, which on the one hand is eternal, but on the other hand carries temporal determinations. Therefore, it is obvious that he is a representative of a divine temporalism, albeit a differentiated one. However, Schmucker's contribution does not only pursue the difficult relation of eternity and temporality, but further seeks to answer the question of why Indian theologians arrived at the thesis that time, which originally had in India a destructive aspect, has to agree with a concept of God.

In the next chapter, Michael T. Williams follows the topic of God and time to India during the sixteenth century, which was a time of intense public debate and innovative discussion among India's various philosophical traditions. Williams' contribution explores the philosophy of time in this period through the works of three philosophers who wrote in Sanskrit: Mahadeva Bhatta, Raghunatha Siromani and Vyasa<sup>^</sup>tirtha. All three were realist philosophers who defended their ideas against anti-realist philosophers from the Advaita tradition of Vedanta, and yet they had very different ideas about time and its relationship to space and God. Mahadeva defended the classical Vaisesika theory of time, according to which time is one of nine distinct substances. Time, according to this theory, is a singular entity, although it appears to be divided into smaller units due to the motion of physical objects. Raghunatha, a more radical Bengali Navya-Naiyayika, rejected this classical picture and argued that space and time are simply identical with God. He also rejected the classical idea that time is calibrated by motion, instead arguing that we need to accept an entirely different category of being to explain how time appears to be divided into discrete units.

Williams contrasts both of these perspectives with the ideas of the theologian Vyasa<sup>^</sup>tirtha. Vyasa<sup>^</sup>tirtha belonged to the school of philosophy/theology in South India known as the "Madhya" school of Vedanta, whose founder Madhya was already mentioned in the preceding chapter. Vyasa<sup>^</sup>tirtha argues that space and time are distinct substances, but ones that nevertheless exist in a state of permanent dependence on God. One of Vyasa<sup>^</sup>tirtha's contributions to his school's thought about time lies in his attempt to use conceptual analysis to show that space and time must be infinite/unbounded substances.

Masamichi Sakai's contribution, which concludes the volume, goes historically back nearly another thousand years in the history of Indian philosophy to the medieval Indian Buddhist logician/epistemologist Dharmakirti (fl. c. sixth/ seventh century) and his successor Dharmottara. Not only were both significant regarding the concept of temporally interpreted change, but they also

challenged the concept of eternity and thus were opponents of the Indian theistic traditions' assertions of an eternally existing God.

While the first contribution of this volume by Fischer and Grossl introduced the most important positions of a philosophy of time, Sakai's chapter shows how these positions can be enriched but also disputed if confronted by thinkers such as Dharmakirti and Dharmottara. In his presentation and characterization of the Buddhist theory of momentariness as advocated by Dharmakirti, Sakai places the Buddhist theory of momentariness into the argumentative framework of contemporary metaphysics, methodologically giving this chapter an interdisciplinary character. In fact, the method the author uses to fulfill the aim of his chapter is well taken due to the fact that among contemporary metaphysicians, there are some who concur with early Buddhist philosophers in saying that ordinary objects exist only for an instant.

Sakai begins his discussion with the important question of how one and the same object can have two different properties that are contradictory. He discusses various attempts at solutions in analytical philosophy, the first being the assumption of time-indexed properties, the second, the theory of adverbialism or endurantism. A third option involves perdurantism and stage theory. Sakai presents the main features of these theories trying to explain that the same thing can have different and even opposing properties over time. According to Dharmakirti's view, having two different properties also implies two different things, with his criticism directed against the assumption of intrinsic properties. The concept of dependence is different from this. Finally, Sakai compares Buddhist momentariness to stage theory and perdurantism. In the Buddhist position, at any given moment there is a different object with different properties. In contrast to stage theory, which leaves open whether moments or stages have extensions, Sakai shows that the Buddhist position does not allow this. The goal of this position is not to explain how something continues in the transition from one moment to the next, but how things pass away.

Thus the volume concludes, having presented nine perspectives on temporality and eternity as this pertains to God and time. In retrospect, they can be summarized as follows: The presentation of this topic begins with two contributions from the perspective of analytical philosophy, continues with the example of the Jewish theologian Philo of Alexandria, and finally ends with the Muslim medieval theologian Ibn Taymiyyah. How Christian Protestant theology deals with this topic was explained using the example of Pannenberg's and Balthasar's reception of Hegel. Three contributions on the South Asian region, two on theistic traditions of Vedanta and one on the position of Buddhism, conclude the volume. But it is certain that the further afield one looks at this topic, with its copious facets in religious thought over the ages and around the world, the more questions will arise, and ideas and concepts on this topic will be offered. <>

## **MANI AND AUGUSTINE: COLLECTED ESSAYS ON MANI, MANICHAISM AND AUGUSTINE** by Johannes van Oort [Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies, Brill, 9789004416956]

**MANI AND AUGUSTINE: COLLECTED ESSAYS ON MANI, MANICHAISM AND AUGUSTINE** gathers in one volume contributions on Manichaean scholarship made by the internationally renowned scholar Johannes van Oort. The first part of the book focuses on the Babylonian prophet Mani (216-277) who styled himself an 'apostle of Jesus Christ', on Jewish elements in Manichaeism and on 'human semen eucharist', eschatology and imagery of Christ as 'God's Right Hand'. The second part of the book concentrates on the question

to what extent the former 'auditor' Augustine became acquainted with Mani's gnostic world religion and his canonical writings, and explores to what extent Manichaeism had a lasting impact on the most influential church father of the West.

## Review

Johannes van Oort zählt seit Jahrzehnten zu den weltweit bedeutendsten Erforschern der Gnosis und speziell des Manichäismus. Einen zweiten wissenschaftlichen Schwerpunkt legte der in den Niederlanden und in Südafrika Lehrende auf die Erschließung von Person und Werk des Augustinus von Hippo, des wohl namhaftesten christlichen Anhängers, schließlich aber vor allem Bekämpfers Manis, des Manichäismus und seiner Schriften. Neben einigen gewichtigen Monographien zu diesen beiden großen Themenfeldern und ihrer Schnittmenge publizierte van Oort eine beachtliche Anzahl an kleineren Beiträgen, verstreut in Periodika aus den Bereichen Religionswissenschaft, Theologie, Geschichtswissenschaft oder Altphilologie. Insofern diese Einzelveröffentlichungen bisweilen schwerer zugänglich sind, stellt die nun erschienene Sammlung ein wertvolles Instrument für die einschlägige Forschung bereit. Zu den wiederabgedruckten „Essays“, die durch zwei bislang noch nicht publizierte Aufsätze ergänzt werden, gesellt sich die Wiedergabe etlicher Rezensionen aus der Feder van Oorts – auch hier wieder gruppiert zu den zwei Bereichen „Manichaeism“ und „Augustine and Manichaeism“. Der renommierte Verfasser und der nicht minder renommierte Verlag Brill haben dafür gesorgt, dass der neue Sammelband sorgfältig verfasst, lektoriert und erschlossen – wir finden ausführliche Verzeichnisse und Register – sowie hochwertig produziert und gebunden wurde: zu Freude und Gewinn für jeden Lesenden und zu Nutzen und Zierde einer jeden geisteswissenschaftlichen Bibliothek. —Christof Müller, Würzburg

[Translation: For decades, Johannes van Oort has been one of the world's most important researchers of Gnosis and especially Manichaeism. The lecturer in the Netherlands and South Africa placed a second academic focus on the development of the person and work of Augustine of Hippo, probably the most well-known Christian devotee, but above all the fighter of Mani, Manichaeism and his writings. In addition to some weighty monographs on these two major subject areas and their overlap, van Oort published a considerable number of smaller contributions, scattered in periodicals from the fields of religious studies, theology, historical studies or classical philology. Insofar as these individual publications are sometimes difficult to access, the collection that has now been published provides a valuable tool for relevant research. The reprinted "essays", which are supplemented by two as yet unpublished articles, are joined by the reproduction of a number of reviews from van Oort's pen - again grouped into the two areas "Manichaeism" and "Augustine and Manichaeism". The renowned author and the no less renowned publishing house Brill have ensured that the new anthology was carefully written, edited and cataloged - we can find detailed directories and registers - as well as produced and bound to a high quality: for the joy and profit of every reader and for the benefit of and an ornament of every humanities library.— Christof Müller, Würzburg]

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#### Indices

Excerpt: This book collects most of my essays on Mani, Manichaeism and Augustine as they appeared during the past years in various scientific journals and congress collections. Supplemented by a number of relevant review articles and more or less extensive reviews, all studies have been divided into three parts. Part One 'Mani and Manichaeism' gives an overview of the origins of Mani's gnostic church and discusses a number of characteristic features of his world religion. Part Two 'Augustine and Manichaeism' comprises eighteen studies examining the significance Mani and his gnostic Christianity may have had for the church father Augustine. Since the ultimate purpose of my researches was and still is to find out to what extent the most important thinker of (Western) Christianity has been influenced by Mani and his followers, the main emphasis of this book is on these studies. They are based on my endeavours to understand the fascinating worldview of Mani and his many disciples. Over the years I have become increasingly convinced that Augustine was very well aware of Mani's teachings; it has also become increasingly my conviction that the lasting impact of Manichaeism on Augustine was considerable. I hope that the studies collected here provide convincing evidence of this, especially with regard to Augustine's distinctive Christian spirituality, his negative attitude to sexuality (and the role of sex in the transmission of original sin) and, for instance, his theories about memory, all being so very influential in our intellectual and cultural history. Part Three assembles topical reviews and review articles on the themes of 'Mani and Manichaeism' and 'Augustine and Manichaeism' respectively. Extensive indices have been added which, I assume, may help not only readers seeking for quick reference but also those researchers who aim at further study of so many an intriguing feature of both Mani's and Augustine's worldviews.

The essays collected here (I also enclosed two previously unpublished ones) have been written over the course of a good number of years. I have not removed all traces of the different times and places of origin, but supplemented new information where this seemed desirable. All essays have in principle retained their original 'complete' character and can therefore be read as independent studies. I hereby meet an increasingly common form of publication in which individual chapters of a book are also made available electronically to the interested student for download. The benevolent reader will understand that in this way repetition of essential information sometimes turned out to be inevitable.

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## Mani and Manichaeism

### The Discovery of Manichaeism

It was a long time before Manichaeism, the world religion that is named after Mani (216–276/7), became the object of serious historical and theological research. During the Middle Ages, the term 'Manichaeism' was in use in the West, but mainly as a false and horrifying designation of dissenting opinion. Both in the Church and the State the label 'Manichaeism' was rather lavishly attached, even if opinions had nothing in common with the religion in question. Thus dissenters from established social and theological opinions were silenced, as was particularly the case with the Cathars in Southern France and some regions of Northern Italy. As late as the sixteenth century the protestant Luther was accused of Manichaeism, and in this respect even an irenic scholar such as Erasmus could not restrain himself.

It was also for this reason that, first of all in protestant circles, Mani and his religion became the objects of study. An initial but still insecure attempt was made by the notorious dissident Gottfried Arnold in his *Unparteyische Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie* (1699/1700). Against all current opinions, this German Pietist tried to understand and even to justify the Manichaeans; and he particularly stressed the cruelties perpetrated by the Catholics against them. A more solid scientific foundation for all future research of Manichaeism was laid down by the Huguenot Isaac de Beausobre. His monumental and still consulted *Histoire critique de Manichée et du Manichéisme* was published in two substantial folio volumes in Amsterdam in 1734 and 1739. Although apologetics was also an important underlying motive in this case (De Beausobre tried to vindicate the Protestant Reformation, and in his efforts he sometimes even depicted Manichaeism as Protestantism *avant la lettre!*), subsequent studies could build upon several of his profound insights. The originality of De Beausobre's analyses can be detected in, for instance, his observations about the importance of the Gospel of Thomas to the Manichaeans and about their use of Jewish Enochic lore. Not until the discoveries at Nag Hammadi (1945) and Qumran (1946) could his remarkably prescient insights be properly evaluated.

In the long interval after De Beausobre, virtually no progress was made. Studies usually became entrenched in ordinary anti-Manichaean polemics. A fresh treatment of the subject had to wait until the theologian Ferdinand Christian Baur from Tübingen, who in 1831 published his *Das manichäische Religionssystem nach den Quellen neu untersucht und entwickelt*. Although Baur attached too much importance to Buddhism as a formative element in Mani's religion, his study is of lasting value because of its meticulous analysis of traditions preserved by the Church Fathers, Augustine in particular. After the groundbreaking work of Baur, the nineteenth century also saw the publication of new Oriental source material by scholars like G. Flügel (1862, 1871), E. Sachau (1878), K. Kessler (1889), and H. Pognon (1898). This new information, together with the material already known from Greek and Latin sources, provided a solid basis for subsequent studies.

Yet still material which had been collected from the Christian and Muslim opponents of Manichaeism was concerned. Genuine Manichaean texts were first discovered from the beginning of the twentieth century. During the years 1902–1914, Prussian archaeological expeditions, first led by A. Grünwedel and then by the more successful A. von Le Coq, brought back to Berlin several thousand fragments of Manichaean texts mainly originating from the sites of Turfan in Sinkiang (China) along the famous Silk Road. These texts were written in some seventeen (then partly unknown) languages and dialects such as Tokharian, Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Uighur (a kind of Old Turkish), 'Bactrian', New Persian and also in Chinese. The year 1905 brought the news of Sir Aurel Stein's discovery of a large hoard of Buddhist and Manichaean manuscripts in Tun-huang in Chinese Central Asia. Here, shortly afterwards, the French scholar Paul Pelliot was also successful, as were some Chinese expeditions which followed him. Among the documents discovered at Turfan were a Manichaean Confessional for the Hearers in Uighur (usually termed the *Xuastvanift*); among the documents from Tun-huang were a lengthy doctrinal tractate in Chinese (usually known as the *Traité*), the *Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light* (conserved in London; a supplementary part, known as the *Fragment Pelliot*, is in Paris), and the Chinese *Hymnscroll*. Subsequently, an important series of discoveries followed in the West. As early as 1918, a Manichaean manuscript in Latin was found near Tébessa in Algeria. In November 1929 a large collection of Coptic

Manichaean texts, the importance of which cannot easily be overestimated, was first made known to the Danish Egyptologist H.O. Lange and then, in 1930, to the Berlin scholar Carl Schmidt during a visit in Cairo. Eventually the greater part of these manuscripts went to Berlin; the other part was acquired by Sir Chester Beatty for his famous collection of classical and biblical manuscripts in London (now housed in Dublin). As is generally assumed, all these Coptic texts, although they were

found in Medinet Madi in the Egyptian Fayoum, did not originate there but probably in the region of Assiut (Lycopolis) in Upper Egypt. Now accessible in (facsimile) edition are the lion's share of the Kephalaia, the Psalm-Book, and the Homilies. Unfortunately, the bulk of three codices (among them a historical work that gave reports on Mani's death and the early history of his Church, and a collection of Letters of Mani) seem to have been mainly lost. An extraordinary surprise was the publication in 1970 of another document from Egypt, namely the now famous Greek Cologne Mani-Codex. The Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis (CMC) contains a unique biography of Mani's youth and first missionary journeys edited on the basis of the eye-witness accounts of his closest disciples. Since 1991, other new Manichaean texts have been discovered in Ismant el-Kharab (ancient Kellis) in the Egyptian Dakhleh-Oasis.

### Mani's Origin, Life, and Mission

In his compendium of heresies, the Church Father Augustine begins his description of Manichaeism as follows:

The Manichaeans sprang from a certain Persian called Manes, but when his mad doctrine began to be preached in Greece, his disciples chose to call him Manichaeus to avoid the word for 'madness'. For the same reason some of them, somewhat more learned and therefore more deceitful, called him Mannichaeus, doubling the letter 'n', as if he were one who pours out manna. —De haer. 46,1

In this passage, it is actually not so much Augustine's derision of Mani's name by suggesting a connection with madness (Greek: *Manía*) that is conspicuous. Such a pun was obvious and used by many. It is more characteristic that Augustine, previously an auditor of the sect for some ten years, as regards the person of Mani, confines himself to the statement: he was a Persian (*Persa quidem*). This profile matches the current view and even applies to Mani's electi: the words and doctrines of the master had to be considered important, but about his descent one was usually badly informed. Besides, in this passage the simple—and in fact misleading—designation of Mani as a Persian had a fatal effect to Roman ears because Persia was Rome's hereditary enemy. But highly noteworthy and very accurate is Augustine's record that Mani's name designates the one who pours out manna (Gr. *Mánna* + *chéo*, pour out). In the Cologne Mani-Codex we read that Mani styled himself the new Johannine Christ 'to scatter the bread on my people' (CMC 107,18–20). It is thanks to this Codex and several other authentic sources (particularly those from Turfan and Medinet Madi, apart from some remarkably accurate Arabic writers) that we have precise information about Mani's life and work.

Mani was born on 14 April 216 near the southern Mesopotamian town of Seleucia-Ctesiphon on the Tigris. His father's name was Pattig or Patteg (Greek: *Pattíkios*; Latin: *Patticius*; Arabic: *Futtuq*); the name of his mother was probably Maryam or Miryam. It may be questioned whether the mother had close ties with the then still ruling house of the Arsacids: more likely these and other claims of a noble birth are but pious legends. A now re-established fact, however, is the narrative already handed down by the tenth century Muslim writer Ibn al-Nadim that from his early youth onwards Mani grew up in a community of Baptists. The CMC (e.g. 94–97) demonstrates that the members of this sect were (a group within the) Elchasaites. These Jewish Christians practised daily ablutions of their bodies and food; referred to their religion as the Law; emphasized the keeping of the Sabbath; referred repeatedly to ancestral traditions; but also acknowledged Jesus as the Saviour. The bare fact of this descent from the Jewish-Christian milieu of the El/Alchasaites (those who were named by Ibn al-Nadim as the *Mughtasilah*, 'the ones who wash themselves') may explain Mani's connections with gnostic Christianity. Here, one can also find the initial sources for his strict asceticism and his eschatology that, to a far-reaching extent, was determined by Jewish-Christian and Encratite ideas. The concept attributed to Elchasaïos of the earth being 'the flesh and blood of my Lord' (CMC 97,9–10) can be treated as the basis of the Manichaean doctrine of Jesus as the one who suffers in the

whole cosmos (Jesus patibilis). Evidently, it was also the Jewish-Christian concept of the true prophet revealing himself anew in various periods of history that was accepted by Mani and his early disciples (cf. CMC 47,1–72,7). Besides, it seems to be most likely that already in this sect Mani had become acquainted with astrological speculations such as are particularly present in his cosmology.

Thanks to the Cologne Mani-Codex, we understand that Mani not only grew up among the Elchasaites, but also that, initially, he tried to be their prophetic reformer. From his earliest youth he received revelations. A special revelation by his Syzygos or heavenly Twin, was imparted to him at the beginning of his 25th year (CMC 17,8ff.; 73,5f.). Because of the fragmentary status of its first quires, it remains unclear whether or not the CMC mentions a major revelation at the completion of Mani's twelfth year. Both the Kephalaia (14,31) and the Arabic writer al-Biruni (†1048) explicitly mention such an event; it may remind one of Jewish bar mitzwa as well as Christian (cf. the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple) legacy. The traditions about such a revelation seem to reach back to accounts given by Mani himself in his Shabuhragan. It is also elsewhere than in the new Mani-Codex that a more plain identification of the Syzygos or Twin with the promised Paraclete can be found (see e.g. Kephalaia 14,32 ff. & 15,22f.). Such an identification may well have been derived from traditions in the Aramaic Christian Church of Mesopotamia that equated the Holy Spirit (which is given at baptism) with a person's guardian angel. By adopting the title of Paraclete for himself, Mani indicated that he would follow in Jesus' footsteps. As Augustine said: 'That is why in his letters he [Mani] styles himself the apostle of Jesus Christ, because Jesus Christ had promised that He would send him [the Paraclete] and had sent the Holy Spirit in him' (De haer. 46,16). Yet the Manichaeans not only identified Mani with the Paraclete, but also considered him to be the new Jesus (e.g. Psalm-Book 9,3–7; 12,28–32; etc.). Thus Mani would be, at the final judgment, both the Judge and the peace giving Paraclete (e.g. Psalm-Book 20,19 ff.). Apart from these and other appropriations of genuine Jewish and Jewish-Christian heritage, the CMC and several other sources testify to Mani's conscious imitation of the apostle Paul. The recurrent designation of Mani as 'apostle of Jesus Christ' is a clear manifestation of this imitatio Pauli (e.g. CMC 66,4–5), as is the emphatic mention of Paul in the series of those who received the true revelation (CMC 60–62). This concentration on a gnostic tailored Paul, a process in which Marcion and Bardesanes seem to have played their role, eventually led to Mani's break with the sect of his youth. In the CMC this parting of the ways is described in detail and with some dramatic effect. The trial that led up to Mani's rejection and departure reveals striking parallels with the legal procedures of the Jewish community at Qumran.

The Codex relates that, after his departure, Mani was followed by two members of the sect. They first travelled to Ctesiphon where Pattikios joined their company. Soon afterwards the first missionary journeys will have begun, probably along the Tigris in a northerly direction. The fragmentary status of the last portion of the CMC does not allow one to speak with certainty about these first itineraries, but the mention of the Medes and Gonzak (CMC 121) combined with some other data seems to provide trustworthy evidence. The sources do not record that in the city of Gonzak or Ganzak, one of the summer residences of the Sassanian kings, Mani would have tried to convert the then ruling Shahanshah Ardashir. During the last years of the reign of Ardashir, who was noted for being a devotee of Zoroastrianism, Mani went to India via the harbour of Pharat in southern Babylonia (cf. e.g. Keph. 15,24–27; 184,23–185,15, and CMC 140 ff.). A striking feature of these early missionary accounts is that nearly everywhere—and even in India—Mani could start his work in congregations of Jewish-Christian Baptists. Soon after the accession of Shapur I as the sole King of Kings, Mani returned. He probably delivered his only Middle Persian writing, the Shabuhragan, to the new Shahanshah on 9 April 243. His admittance into Shapur's entourage (comitatus) and the permission to propagate his new syncretistic religion accorded him unique opportunities. After Shapur's death, Mani also found a willing ear with Shapur's son and successor Hormizd (272–273). However, after Bahram I had received the royal diadem, this benevolent attitude soon disappeared. At the beginning of the second year of his reign, Karder, the Chief Mobed



of the Zoroastrians, began to persuade him to take action against the prophet from Babylon. Mani was summoned before Bahram, duly accused, put in chains, and tortured. After 26 days in prison he died on 26.2.277. In several Manichaean sources his death is described as a crucifixion.

During his lifetime, Mani dispatched several missions headed by his chief disciples: as far as Egypt came Adda(i) and others; as far as Chorasana and the Sogdiana came Mar Ammo. Even before 276, a wide-spread Church had grown up within and even outside the Persian Empire. In Graeco-Roman antiquity the Manichaean Church expanded into Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Asia Minor, the Balkans (in 1906 a unique tombstone of a Manichaean electa named Bassa was discovered at Salona, near modern Split, in Dalmatia), Roman Africa, Spain, Italy and Gaul. In the East, Manichaeism was made the State religion among the Uighurs of Turkestan by Bögü Khaghan in A.D. 762–763; in the centuries which followed, this highly syncretistic but in essence still gnostic religion spread as far as the Indian Ocean and the China Sea.

### Mani's Church and Canon

Mani failed to make his revelation the official religion of Iran; he succeeded, however, in what he really intended: the establishment of a new world religion. Due to the Manichaeans' missionary zeal, their new Church soon became a feared competitor of the official Christian Church both in the Roman Empire and elsewhere. Its firm organization guaranteed a strong unity. Thanks to its organization and a system of teachings that could easily be accommodated, Manichaeism was already within Graeco-Roman antiquity a success.

The interior organization of Mani's religion was a pyramidal one, headed by Mani's deputy (archegos) with his residence in Babylon until the beginning of the tenth century, when it was moved to Samarkand. The worldwide unity of the Church can be exemplified by the fact that, even in the eighth century, a North-African is said to have been its leader. Immediately following the archegos or princeps there were, in the order of three subsequent ranks, the 12 apostles or teachers, the 72 bishops, and the 360 presbyters. The fourth rank was constituted by the general electi, both men and women. Particularly amongst these elect, the many scribes, preachers and, for instance, Church musicians will have to be sought. An official fifth rank was constituted by the many male and female auditors (auditores, a term which in Syriac Christianity denoted the catechumens).

The numbers 12 and 72 seem to be rooted in the tradition of the Christian Church; the number 360 will stem from astrological lore which, as a rule, was highly valued in gnostic circles. Not only the number 12 reminds us of the example of Jesus who chose 12 apostles, but perhaps this also goes for the number 72. In a typically Jewish-Christian writing such as the Pseudo-Clementines, in the Acts of Thomas which were well known among the Manichaeans and also transmitted archaic Jewish-Christian traditions, and particularly in Tatian's Diatessaron it is said that Jesus sent out 72 (and not 70) missionaries. Mani knew the Diatessaron and this Gospel text seems to have suggested the election of 72 bishops.

Mani laid down his teaching in various books that were to gain canonical status throughout his Church. He himself took great pains to ensure that his teachings would be handed down in writing. This would prevent what had already happened to other founders of religions such as the Buddha, Zarathustra and Jesus: i.e. many disputes arose because they did not record their doctrines in writing. Apart from the Shabuhrgan (which seems not to have been an official part of his sevenfold Canon, although it was a widely read classic among the Manichaeans in Persia and Central Asia), Mani composed all his writings in his East Aramaic (Syriac) mother tongue and used a variant of the Palmyrene script. The names of these writings are usually given as follows: 1. The Living (or Great) Gospel; 2. The Treasure of Life; 3. The Pragmateia (or Treatise or Essay); 4. The Book of Mysteries (Secrets); 5. The Book of the Giants; 6. The Letters; 7. The Psalms and Prayers. All of them survive only in fragmentary form. The non-canonical literature included the Kephalaia (e.g. in Coptic), the

Homilies (Coptic) as well as several hymn collections (e.g. the Coptic Psalter) and the Image (Greek: Eikon; Persian/Parthian: Ardahang), a painted picture-book illustrating the more important aspects of the doctrine, probably as an appendix to, but different from the most important Living Gospel.

### The Manichaean Myth

Manichaeism should be considered a form of Gnosticism. The heart of this religion was Mani's own speculative version of the gnostic myth of cosmic exile and salvation. As a religious system, Manichaeism offered the promise of an a-cosmic salvation through the revealed knowledge (gnosis) of transcendent realities, including the divine nature of the soul, and what needs to be known about the way to eternal life.

All this is expressed in a detailed and very complicated myth. Any account of this myth inevitably tends towards an artificial synthesis. In several Manichaean and other sources we find important elements of Mani's doctrinal tenets, which turn out to be carefully adapted and tailored to the needs of those addressed. This is particularly the case in works like the Coptic Kephalaia, the Middle Persian Shabuhrgan, and in the Chinese *Traité*, *Compendium* and *Hymnscroll*. However, in documents such as the Cologne Mani-Codex, the Tebessa Codex and the substantial Coptic Manichaean Psalter, the mythical elements can only be detected as a kind of substratum underlying the present text. The same turns out to be case with the new Kellis finds. Thus more than once there appears to be little knowledge of or interest in the many gods and demons among the Manichaeans. Nor do we always find much interest in the intricacies of cosmogony and cosmology.

Mani and his followers taught a cosmogony of a definitely dualistic kind: evil is an eternal cosmic force, not the result of a fall. Two realms or kingdoms, the realm of light and the realm of darkness, good and evil, God and matter, oppose each other implacably. It should be noted that this is not the Hellenistic dualism of spirit and matter, but one of two substances: the divine light is a visible, spatial and quantifiable element, as is the evil substance of darkness, the active principle of lust, the 'thought of death'. In the kingdom of light the Father of Greatness rules, and this kingdom is in fact an extension of himself. It has four divine attributes (purity, light, power, and wisdom) and the Father resides in his five intellectual powers or limbs (reason, mind, intelligence, thought, and understanding, which are otherwise substantially detailed as the five elements of living air, light, wind, water, and fire). Surrounding the Father are the twelve aeons, equally distributed towards the four directions of heaven, and refracted also into myriads of 'aeons of the aeons'.

Opposed to this kingdom of light is the realm of the King of Darkness, a kingdom that is essentially the domain of evil matter. It is disorderly dominated by the 'Prince of Darkness', who is the product of (and even identified with) evil matter. This dark realm also consists of five areas or worlds (dark reason, dark mind, and so on), which are also referred to as the five dark elements of smoke, fire, wind, water(s), and darkness. In this area countless demons are actively present; they fight and devour each other. Because there was an accidental shift of these disorganized and senseless movements, the Prince of Darkness (in fact a collective personification of the five evil archons 'ruling' the five worlds of darkness), having once reached the upper limit of his territory, glimpses the radiance of light, desires to possess its life, and therefore attacks the kingdom of light.

In the ensuing struggle, the Father of Light brings forth the Mother of Life, who in turn evokes the First Man. This is the first series of emanations or creations. It may be remarked in passing that, with regard to the emergence of new gods and godly powers, the Manichaeans strictly avoid any suggestion of generation and thus of evil sexuality. Instead, they speak of 'calling out' or 'calling forth'. Accordingly the First Man, the 'first born' Son of God, is also 'called forth' and, being equipped with the five light powers that appear personified either as his 'sons' or as his 'arms', goes out into battle. But Primal Man is defeated, and his fivefold armour that constitutes the Living Soul or

Living Self is devoured by the powers of evil. To say it in Mani's own words as cited by the eighth century Nestorian bishop Theodore bar Koni:

Then the Primal Man gave himself and his five sons to be consumed by the five sons of darkness, like a man who has an enemy and mixes a deadly poison into a cake and gives it.  
—Lib. Schol. 11

This being the case, the divine Soul (also termed the Living Self that is suspended on the Cross of Light and particularly in the West personified as the suffering Jesus, *Jesus patibilis*) is mixed with the dark elements of matter and thus is in need of redemption. The First Man, being vanquished, lays unconscious in the depths. In order to redeem him, the Father of Light calls forth a second series of emanations: a new divine trinity. First, the Father sends forth the Beloved of the Lights; from him comes the Great Builder; and he in turn produces the Living Spirit who, like Primal Man, has five sons: the King of Splendour; the King of Honour; the Adamas of Light; the King of Glory; and Atlas. The Living Spirit (also termed the Father of Life) sends his Call from the lowest boundary of the world of light to the First Man lying in the depths. By this Call, the First Man is aroused from his unconscious state and he responds by an Answer. Then the Living Spirit, together with its five sons and the Mother of Life, descends to the First Man and leads him up to the world of light. To rescue the light still captured through the compound of the divine Soul with evil matter, the Living Spirit constructs with the help of its sons ten heavens and eight earths. It is noteworthy that this act of creation is performed by a light god: and not by an evil demiurge. Thus, in the gnosis of Manichaeism, the structure of the universe is divinely devised. In order to create the cosmos, however, use must be made of material of a mixed substance (light and darkness). The sun and the moon are vessels of pure light, being made from the particles of light completely unaffected by darkness. The planets and stars, however, are evil rulers; because they are created from material contaminated with darkness.

The world thus being constructed as a prison for the forces of Darkness as well as a place where the divine Soul is captured, the process of salvation can begin. To this end a third evocation of deities occurs. The Father of Greatness calls forth the Third Messenger (or Ambassador) who is charged to extract and purify the light still retained by the powers of darkness and contained in their bodies. By taking advantage of the innate lust of the male and female archons which are chained in the heavens, this *Tertius Legatus* and his female doublet the Virgin of Light (also represented as the Twelve Maidens, each corresponding to a sign of the Zodiac) make them relinquish the light they have devoured. It is concentrated, in particular, in their semen and in their wombs. The 'sins' of the male archons fall upon the earth when they see the beautiful Maiden(s); out of that part of their semen that dropped into water a monster arises; but this fearful beast is subjugated by the Adamas of Light. From the semen that has fallen on the dry ground, five trees spring up, and from them all other forms of plant-life originate. When the female archons—made pregnant by their own evil nature—see the naked form of the Third Messenger, they are agitated and their foetuses fall down upon the earth. These abortions not only survive their premature birth, but also devour the fruits of the trees that have grown out of the semen of the male archons. Driven by sexual lust, they unite with each other and give birth to the innumerable species of animals as we know them. The light that is not yet saved is thus transferred to the earth, where it is scattered and bound in plants and—to a lesser degree—in the bodies of animals.

This well-known episode in the Manichaean myth, since François Cumont called 'the seduction of the archons', is a pivotal one. Through later research (e.g. by John C. Reeves) it has become increasingly clear that, apart from its origins in a variety of earlier traditions, several details in this multifarious account are drawn from Jewish lore.

The next episodes of the Manichaean myth may be summarized as succinctly as possible. In order to continue the liberation of the light, the Third Messenger calls forth the Column of Glory (who is also referred to as the New or Perfect Man; cf. Ephesians 4:12–13) and sets in motion the work of 'the

ships of light' (i.e. sun and moon) in order to transport the light to the New Paradise which has been built by the Great Builder. This process frightens the powers of darkness and, in a desperate attempt to preserve some of the captive particles of light, they create the first human couple: Adam and Eve. Hence man is fabricated by the demons. He has been created, however, after the image of the Third Messenger (and so ultimately after the image of God!) which the demons had seen on high. Man is thus rooted in two worlds, but at first he is unconscious of his high descent: because the necessary gnosis is still missing. This explains why the work of light redemption must be concentrated on man. So Jesus the Luminous descends to Adam to bring him the saving knowledge. In Manichaeism, this revelation by Jesus the Luminous to Adam is the archetype of all future human redemption. Gradually this liberation will be achieved. In order to bring about the redemption of the light, Jesus evokes the Light Mind or Nous (Intelligence): this Nous, in turn, summons forth the Apostle of Light who becomes incarnate in the great religious leaders throughout world history such as the Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus the Messiah.

The final stage of world history is introduced by the Great War between the forces of good and evil. Through the practice of the laws of the true religion, light is liberated. When the Church of the righteous ones triumphs, all the souls will be judged, and those of the chosen will rise to heaven. After that, the world will be destroyed and purified by a fire lasting 1,468 years. All, or most, of the light particles will be saved; evil matter, in all its manifestations and with its victims (the damned), will be forever imprisoned in a globe (Greek and Coptic: *bolos*; Latin: *globus*) inside a gigantic pit covered with a huge stone. Then the separation of light and darkness will be accomplished for all eternity.

This is a necessarily brief and—inevitably—eclectic account of the very complicated myth. The most coherent description of Manichaean cosmogony can be found in Theodore bar Koni's already cited Book of Scholia, but his account ends with the creation of Adam and Eve. Many other cosmological and cosmogonic tenets have been preserved in the surviving works of the Manichaeans and in the writings of opponents such as Augustine. The latter also includes very interesting passages from Mani's Treasure of Life in Latin translation (cf. *Contra Felicem* 2,5 and *De natura boni* 44; this Thesaurus appears to have circulated in Gaul and Spain as well).

However complex and arcane the various ramifications of the Manichaean myth became in the course of its distribution through many countries and centuries, its essential elements remained the same from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It is Mani's doctrine that there are two principles (or roots, kingdoms, realms, cities) and three 'moments': the time before the commingling and the struggle, when the two kingdoms of light and darkness were still separated; the time of the commingling, being the present world time; and future time in which the two kingdoms will again be (but now definitively) separated. In essence this message of salvation is typically gnostic: the Nous (the heavenly revelation) rescues the Psyche (the divine spark of light in man) from Hyle (evil matter).

### The Manichaean Ethic and Cult

It would be difficult on the basis of its complicated myth to understand the success of Mani's religion. In fact, the elaborate myth was only of minor importance and sometimes even played down. What really interested both the hearers and the elect was the microcosmic significance of the macrocosmic drama. And indeed the long-term imprisonment of light by matter in the physical universe had important practical consequences for those who had been illuminated by the Nous. Their duty was to be instruments for the liberation of the divine light.

To carry out this liberation required both a conscious effort for virtue by the individual and the avoidance of any action which might harm the light or prolong its captivity. The Manichaean elect were expected to observe 'the five commandments' which were e.g. prescribed as 1. truthfulness, 2. non-injury, 3. chastity, 4. purity of the mouth, and 5. poverty. From Augustine and from Iranian and

Turkish sources as well, it is known that the Manichaean ethic which was binding upon the elect was more generally summarized as the 'three seals' (*tria signacula*): the seal of the mouth; the seal of the hands; and the seal of the bosom. For the auditors, there were ten commandments which have not been preserved uniformly, but which encompassed in any case the prohibition of killing; lying; false accusations; an unchaste life; stealing; and black magic.

From this it can be inferred that the catechumens were allowed to marry and to carry out normal daily activities. Their main obligation, however, was what is termed in Middle Persian *ruwanagan*, 'soul-service'. This service, by providing food, shelter and any other required sustenance for the elect, is the condition for the auditor's own redemption: he will be rescued and purified according to his works. Although in very exceptional cases the catechumen (like the elect) may be directly saved by his conduct, as a rule this will take place through a series of reincarnations in e.g. luminous fruits and, finally, in an elect. In the *Fragmenta Tebestina*, fragments of a Latin Manichaean text found in presentday Algeria, the vital place of the hearer in the Manichaean Church is illustrated by the New Testament story of Martha and Maria (Luke 10:38–42): like these two sisters, the two classes of elect and hearers both perform indispensable and complementary tasks in order to ensure the liberation of light.

The elect received the hearer's daily offerings of—in particular—fruit and bread at 'the table'. This sacred meal, in fact the only real sacrament in Manichaeism, was opened by the elect with 'an apology to the bread'. Of special importance was the yearly Bema festival to commemorate Mani's martyrdom. A judgement seat (*Bema*, tribunal, etc.) was raised in the middle of the worshipping congregation upon which stood an icon of Mani to celebrate his continuing presence in the community of the elect: and to symbolize his role as Jesus' representative until the last judgment. This feast of the Bema was preceded by a month of fasting. Other fast days were Sunday (for the hearers and the elect) and Monday (for the elect). Apart from these days, fasting was also practised at other times and periods, e.g. during the five nocturnal festivals (*pannychismoî*) each of which encompassed one day and night. Ritual prayer had its place within these fasts as well as in the daily services: together with hymns, scripture readings and, for instance, sermons and catechetical lessons.

The ritual greetings and blessings that Mani had initiated in his Church were seen as reenactments of divine archetypes: the 'peace' (the first greeting), the giving of the right hand, the kiss, the 'salutation' (*proskynesis*), and the laying on of hands (cf. e.g. *Kephalaia* 37–42).

### The Place of Manichaeism in the History of Religions

The origins of Manichaeism are still open to question. For centuries the religion was thought to be a Christian heresy. Augustine called Mani a 'Persian', and until recently it has been common in the history of religions to treat Manichaeism primarily as part of the religious history of Iran. This view seemed to be corroborated by the finds at Turfan and Tun-huang of the first original Manichaean texts. However, with the discovery of original Manichaean texts in Coptic, the scholarly consensus concerning the general character of Manichaeism has changed. Manichaeism seemed to have firm roots in a Gnostic type of Christendom. This view has been magnificently substantiated by the Cologne Mani-Codex. According to this Codex, some of the Jewish-Christian Elchasaites among whom the young Mani lived regarded him as a prophet, and some even said that the Living Word spoke through him (cf. CMC 86). There is reason for the assumption that at that time Mani shared their Jewish-Christian convictions and believed that he was the new incarnation of the true prophet.

In recent research, several other tenets of Manichaeism have been freshly interpreted against this Jewish and Jewish-Christian background. Indeed, any unprejudiced reader of the CMC will be struck by its Jewish and (Jewish-) Christian elements. This does not, however, exclude that Iranian or other religious and philosophical components may well have influenced both the origin and (certainly) subsequent developments of Mani's religious system. Iranian and perhaps even Zoroastrian elements



may be identified in its concept of history as the Three Times; in some particular traits of its mythology; in a term like 'the Great War'; in the Daena-concept; or in the designation of the highest God as tetraprosopos (the One with four faces). As regards the last two concepts, however, reference can be made to Christian and Jewish parallels as well. That Mani's concept of the Nous ought to be derived from the Iranian Vohu manah (so Geo Widengren) seems unlikely in view of its many essential equivalents in Hellenistic thinking. From Buddhism, Mani may have received impulses to the radical division of his Church into elect and auditors and to his doctrine of metempsychosis. Besides these possible 'sources', great influence has doubtlessly been exerted by the radical gnostic Marcion. Major formative elements of Mani's system, particularly of his cosmology, may well have been inspired by Bardesanes. If the latter is to be treated not so much as a gnostic, but in particular as a typical representative of pluralistic Syriac Christianity (so H.J.W. Drijvers), then this again indicates certain backgrounds of Mani in Edessene Christendom. Apart from these and other possible 'sources', however, Mani has to be evaluated first and foremost as the founder of an independent and unique world religion. <>

## TRANSCENDING TIME: AN EXPLANATION OF THE KĀLACAKRA SIX-SESSION GURU YOGA by Gen Lamrimpa, Translated by B. Alan Wallace [Wisdom Publications, 9780861711529]

Inspired by years of scholarly training and decades of solitary retreat, Tibetan monk Gen Lamrimpa offers a concise overview of all phases of the Kalachakra practice: the preliminaries, the initiation, and finally, the stages of generation and completion. With remarkable clarity, he makes the Six-Session Guruyoga practice accessible to all practitioners, and deepens our understanding and appreciation of this sublime teaching of the Buddha.

Gen Lamrimpa begins this eminently practical explanation by emphasizing the importance of a compassionate motivation for spiritual practice. He then explores the nature of suffering and the cycle of existence that traps all living beings, and concludes with a detailed account of the Six-Phase Yoga, which is meant to be recited and contemplated three times during the day and three times at night. Alan Wallace's introduction illuminates both Kalachakra's rich history and Gen Lamrimpa's unique contribution to our understanding.

This book provides a clear explanation of Kalachakra as set forth within the context of the Six-Session Guruyoga, a daily meditation practice for initiates. *Transcending Time* presents all phases of Kalachakra practice—the preliminaries, the initiation, and finally, the stages of generation and completion.

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The practice of Kalacakra belongs to the general category of Buddhist practice known as Vajrayana, or Buddhist tantra, which originated in India and further developed over the past twelve hundred years in Tibet. According to the Samputa Tantra, there are four classes of Buddhist tantra: action (Skt. *kriya*), performance (Skt. *carya*), yoga, and highest yoga (Skt. *anuttarayoga*). In the first three classes of tantras, one generates a coarse consciousness combining skillful means and wisdom, and then meditates on emptiness. Only in the highest yoga tantras are methods taught to bring forth subtle levels of consciousness arising from the union of skillful means and wisdom. To utilize such subtle consciousness, one must first subdue coarse levels of conceptualization, which may be done either by directing the vital energies within the body into the central channel, or by engaging in totally nonconceptual meditation, as is done in the practice of Dzogchen. Highest yoga tantras are further subdivided into the two categories of father and mother tantras. The former emphasizes the generation of an illusory body that is transmuted into a form body (Skt. *rupakaya*) of a buddha when one achieves spiritual awakening. The latter are principally concerned with bringing forth the subtle consciousness of clear light (Skt. *prabhasvara*) with which one realizes emptiness, and this subtle mind is ultimately transformed into the mind of a buddha (Skt. *dharmakaya*).

The Kalacakra Tantra belongs to the class of highest yoga mother tantras and, like other tantras of this class, it includes two stages of practice: the stage of generation and the stage of completion. This particular system of theory and practice includes three Kalacakras: the outer Kalacakra, the inner Kalacakra, and the other Kalacakra. The outer Kalacakra constitutes the elements of the external environment in which we live; the inner Kalacakra constitutes the psychophysical aggregates that make up an individual; and the other Kalacakra consists of the stages of generation and of completion, which purify the first two Kalacakras.

According to Buddhist tradition, the Kalacakra Mulatantra, or Root Tantra (also known as the Paramadibuddha), was taught by the Buddha Sakyamuni in his mystical manifestation as the deity Kalacakra to King Sucandra of Sambhala, who had traveled to India to request these teachings from him. From Sucandra, this lineage was passed down through a line of seven Great Kings and twenty-one Kalki Kings of Sambhala, beginning with ^asas Mafijusri, who composed the Kalacakra Laghutantra, or Condensed Tantra. His son Pundarika composed a great commentary to this father's

work, entitled the Vimalaprabha, or Stainless Light, which remains the primary commentary on Kalacakra to this day.

According to the legend of Sambhala, based on the Kalacakra Tantra, when ^asas Manjusri reincarnates as the twenty-fifth Kalki King, Sambhala and our world will unite and a time of great material and spiritual bounty will begin. In order that as many people as possible might receive karmic imprints related to this momentous event, the Kalacakra initiation was openly given in Tibet, and His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama has, in this same tradition, granted this initiation openly on many occasions throughout the world. Whether Sambhala is located on our planet but can

be experienced only by those whose minds and karmic propensities are pure, or whether it exists elsewhere is a question still debated by devout

Tibetan Buddhists. But it is certainly true that for almost a millennium Tibetan Buddhists have been praying to be reborn in Sambhala or in our world when the twenty-fifth Kalki King appears and the golden era of Sambhala begins.

According to Tibetan tradition, the Indian Buddhist yogin Cilupa, who lived probably in the eleventh century, learned of the existence of Sambhala and the Kalacakra Tantra and went in search of this fabled land and the teachings of Kalacakra. On his way there, he encountered a manifestation of Manjusri, who granted him the initiation, tantra commentaries, and oral transmissions of ^alcakra. As far as we know, the Kalacakras Mulatantra was never brought from Sambhala to India, but the Kalacakra Laghutantra and the Vimalaprabhd were, and they were later included in the Tibetan

Buddhist canon. An Indian lineage of this tradition thus arose and was passed down from one Indian guru to another, eventually being transmitted to the Nepali pandit Samanta Sribhadra. In the twelfth century, the Tibetan yogin Ra Chorab traveled to Nepal to study ^alcakra with Samanta Sribhadra, who later accompanied him back to Tibet, where they translated the main Kalacakra treatises into Tibetan. This lineage was passed on down to the great fourteenth-century Tibetan Buddhist scholar Buton (Tib. bu ston rin chef grub), who wrote extensive commentaries and annotations to the Kalacakra Laghutantra and the Vimalaprabha. This lineage has been preserved to the present, and the Fourteenth Dalai Lama received the initiations and oral transmissions of the stages of generation and completion from his senior tutor, Vajracarya Kyabje Ling Rinpoche.

With the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet and its genocidal assault on Tibetan Buddhism, the study of Kalacakra in Tibet has declined during the latter half of the twentieth century, though there are a few monasteries in eastern Tibet (in the present-day Chinese provinces of Qinghai and Sichuan) where it is actively studied and practiced to this day. The lineage of the complete oral transmission of the Kalacakra Laghutantra, the Vimalaprabha, and the Tibetan scholar Buton's sub-commentaries and annotations to these treatises were taken from Tibet to India by Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, who, at the request of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, passed it on to Gen Lamrimpa and a few other Tibetan monks in Dharamsala.

Over the past few decades, the Kalacakra Tantra has drawn increasing interest from scholars and practicing Buddhists throughout the world, largely as a result of the Dalai Lama granting this initiation many times in Asia, Europe, and North America. This has led to the publication of a number of popular and scholarly works in Western languages on the theory and practice of Kalacakra. Among the first of these is Geshe Ngawang I)hargyey's Kalacakra Tantra, consisting of his oral teachings on Kalacakra theory and practice, which I translated. This work is especially valuable for its detailed discussion of the vows and pledges pertaining to this practice. Í he Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra in Context by Geshe Lhundub Sopa, et. all., provides an excellent introduction to the history, the process of initiation, and the general practice of Kalacakra. The Kalachakra Tantra: Rite of Initiation by Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, and Jeffrey Hopkins presents the

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context for the practice of Kalacakra and gives a very detailed account of all the stages of the initiation, as well as the first English translation of the Kalacakra Six-Session Guru Yoga, which was formulated by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and versified by Kyabje Ling Binpoche. In his book *The Practice of Kalachakra*, Glenn Mullin offers an overview of Kalacakra within Tibetan Buddhism as a whole and presents translations of various short Tibetan treatises covering different aspects of this tradition. Barry Bryant offers an engaging account of the Kalacakra tradition in his visually stunning book *The Wheel of Time Sand Mandala: Visual Scripture of Tibetan Buddhism*. Most recently, Alexander Berzin has published two very helpful works entitled *Taking the Kalachakra Initiation and Kalachakra and Other Six-Session Yoga Texts*, which well complement the earlier literature in these fields. Recent works of a more scholarly nature include Gunter Gronbold's *The Yoga of Six Limbs: An Introduction to the History of Sadangayoga*, translated from the German by Robert L. Hutwohl; John R. Newman's unpublished dissertation entitled *The Outer Wheel of Time: Vajrayana Cosmology in the Kalacakra Tantra*; and Vesna A. Wallace's unpublished dissertation entitled *The Inner Kalacakratantra: A Buddhist Tantric View of the Individual*.

This present work by the Tibetan monk and contemplative Gen Lamrimpa (Lobsang Jampal Tenzin) provides an unprecedentedly detailed explanation of the Kalacakra Six-Session Guru Yoga. The motivation for presenting this material is to make the practice of Kalacakra accessible to sincere practitioners who have received the Kalacakra initiation but who do not have the time or ability to practice the elaborate Kalacakra sadhana, or means of actualization of the body, speech, and mind of Kalacakra, which may take many hours each day to complete. This six-session guru yoga, first translated into English by Jeffrey Hopkins and newly translated here, is based on a shorter and more generic six-session guru yoga composed by the First Panchen Lama (Tib. blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, 1567?-1662). The purpose of this type of yoga is to provide a concise matrix of highest yoga tantra practices that include the stages of generation and completion as well as all the specific tantric pledges (Skt. samaya) associated with the five families of buddhas, namely, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi, and Aksobhya. By properly practicing this yoga each day,

all those pledges are fulfilled. Thus, although the various kinds of six-session yogas are nowadays affiliated especially closely with the Gelug order, they are equally pertinent to all those who have taken highest yoga (or, in the Nyingma order, mahayoga and anuyoga) tantric initiations and their accompanying pledges.

In this eminently practical explanation of Kalacakra practice, inspired by years of scholarly training and decades of solitary contemplative retreat in Vajrayana practice, Gen Lamrimpa begins by emphasizing the importance of a compassionate motivation for spiritual practice. In Mahayana practice in general and Vajrayana practice in particular, compassion must be more than a mere appendage to one's spiritual practice to balance one's cultivation of contemplative insight. Rather, compassion is the very motivating force behind one's spiritual practice as a whole. By carefully examining the range of suffering to which all sentient beings are vulnerable, one becomes moved by a powerful urge to protect everyone from fear and suffering. With one's present, limited abilities, how can one do anything more than temporarily relieve the pains and sorrows of others, never truly protecting them from the underlying causes of misery? With faith in the power of the spiritual awakening of a buddha and in one's own buddha nature, which enables one to realize that state of enlightenment, in which one's deepest capacity for wisdom, love, and power is fully manifested, one brings forth the motivation of a bodhisattva: to achieve perfect spiritual awakening for the benefit of all beings. This is the spirit of awakening that lies at the core of the entire Mahayana tradition, including Vajrayana.

In order to fully ground this spirit of awakening in a deep understanding of the nature of sentient existence, Gen Lamrimpa delves into the nature of the cycle of existence in which all sentient beings

are trapped. While one may uncritically believe that all one's difficulties will naturally vanish at death, generations of Buddhist contemplatives attest to the truth of a continuity of individual consciousness that precedes this present life and carries on after death. Thus, this present human life is but one in an unimaginably long sequence of lives reaching into the unknown past and potentially extending indefinitely into the future. But this present life, he explains, is one of immeasurable value, for by applying one's human intelligence to effective spiritual practice, one may become forever healed from all mental afflictions, such as craving, hostility, and delusion, and their resultant miseries. By engaging in Maha^ana practice, one may set out on

the bodhisattva path of the six perfections, or the ^aramitayana, which

takes countless eons of dedicated practice before perfect awakening is achieved. However, by practicing the swift path of the Vajrayana, such as

the Kalacakra Tantra, one may achieve the enlightenment of a buddha in one short human life span. One's incentive for practicing Kalacakra should not be merely impatience at the thought of having to practice for eons, but rather an urgent sense of compassion, the wish to effectively serve the needs of sentient beings as soon as possible. No motivation other than a spirit of awakening is suitable for Vajrayana practice as a whole.

Gen Lamrimpa then proceeds to discuss the role of "pure vision" and "divine pride" in Kalacakra practice. According to Vajrayana Buddhism, the world does not inherently exist in the ways we perceive it and think of it; nor does our sense of our own identities and that of other beings reflect anyone's intrinsic existence. Rather, our experience of ourselves, others, and the world around us is a creation of our own conceptual frameworks and languages. We are literally "making up" ourselves and our environment based upon experiences that are themselves products of our own previous habitual propensities. This is not to say that no one else exists and there is no universe apart from our conceptual constructs, but that all that we experience and imagine is structured by our concepts: neither we nor our environment inherently exist apart from conceptual designation.

The habitual propensities that structure our ordinary sense of personal identity and our environment can, however, be overcome through the ingenious practice of pure vision, by which—inspired by our own faith in or intuition of the all-pervasive buddha nature—we imagine all appearances to be expressions of the Buddha's body, all sounds to be the Buddha's speech, and all mental events to be the mind of the Buddha. This practice is coupled with the cultivation of divine pride, in which we identify our Vajrayana guru, ourselves, our spiritual friends, and all other beings as emanations of the Buddha, in this case, Kalacakra. By so purifying our vision and identification of ourselves and others, the world increasingly arises to our experience as a pure manifestation of enlightened awareness, and our progress to spiritual awakening is enormously expedited.

In order to engage in such profound Vajrayana practice, in which the motivation of a spirit of awakening is thoroughly integrated with one's understanding of the lack of inherent existence of all phenomena, one must rely upon a qualified spiritual mentor and receive tantric initiation. Gen Lamrimpa therefore gives a detailed explanation of all the stages of the Kalacakra initiation, each of them designed to purify obscurations of one's body, speech, or mind and establish within one the potencies for actualizing the body, speech, and mind of Kalacakra. This explanation, which is closely based on the ancient commentary the Stainless Light, can be enormously helpful to those who receive this initiation from the Dalai Lama or any other qualified lama. For without such understanding, the complexities of this rite may simply leave one bewildered.

In his discussion of the stage of generation, Gen Lamrimpa explains how this phase of practice is related to the processes of taking birth, living, and dying, and how it transmutes each of these phases into spiritual awakening. This entails a presentation of the vital energies, channels, and drops (Skt.



bindu, Tib. thig le) that constitute the subtle body according to the Kalacakra system. Although none of these may have any direct correlation to human anatomy and physiology according to modern medicine, this does not necessarily mean that either system invalidates the other. Medical science is based on the objective observation of the human body, using a wide range of technological instruments that detect only those phenomena known to the physical sciences. No "vital energy" (vis vita or elan vital) has been, or perhaps can be, detected by such physical instruments. One can therefore conclude that if anything like the vital energies attested to in Tibetan Buddhism exist, they do not exist in the same manner as cells, electric currents, or electromagnetic fields. However, there are many known phenomena that also cannot be detected by the instruments of technology, the principle one, perhaps, being consciousness itself. Just as consciousness is known through first-hand experience, so do generations of Vajrayana yogis claim that the vital energies, channels, and drops described in this system can be experienced directly through such practice. Thus, this view of the subtle body may be regarded as complementary to, and not necessarily in conflict with, medical science's view of the human body.

Gen Lamrimpa concludes his explanation of this practice with a remarkable account of the six-phase yoga, including retraction, meditative stabilization, pranayama, retention, recollection, and samadhi. To the best of my knowledge no such detailed account of these secret practices has previously appeared in English, and it was only with the permission of His Holiness the Dalai Lama that we ventured to present them here. These are the unique practices of the Kalacakra stage of completion, and by bringing these practices to culmination, all the material components of one's body are said to be exhausted, and one achieves the empty form body, which is the primordial wisdom body of Kalacakra. In this process, all karmic energies are extinguished, all cognitive obscurations are abandoned, and with the realization of the empty form of Kalacakra with consort, one attains the immutable bliss of a buddha. From that point on, Gen Lamrimpa states, there is no moment in which one, as the Buddha Kalacakra, is not dedicated to the welfare of sentient beings, and one's enlightened body, speech, and mind pervade space.

With the motivation that all beings may achieve this state of spiritual awakening, these teachings are offered to all those who have received the Kalacakra initiation and wish to follow this profound path.

## **KALACHAKRA TANTRA: RITE OF INITIATION FOR THE STAGE OF GENERATION, A COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT OF KAY-DRUP GE-LEG-BEL-SANG-BO by Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, and the text itself edited, translated, and introduced by Jeffrey Hopkins, New enlarged edition with index [Wisdom Publications, 9780861711512]**

Associated with the promotion of world peace, the Kalachakra - or "Wheel of Time" - tantra is one of the most detailed and encompassing systems of theory and practice within Tibetan Buddhism. This book contains a complete translation of the Kalachakra initiation ritual as it was conferred by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Washington DC in July 2011, along with his commentary and a comprehensive introduction by Professor Jeffrey Hopkins that explores the Kalachakra's rich symbolism, meaning, and history. The book also includes the Six-Session Yoga.

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- 1 Notes to the Introduction

This book is concerned with a rite of initiation for the Kalachakra (Wheel of Time) Tantra, a Buddhist tantra of the Highest Yoga Tantra class. It presents the series of initiations authorizing practice of the first of two stages involved in the tantra, the stage of generation — the period of imaginative appearance as an ideal being. A system of daily practice required of those who have received initiation is also included. Discussed are the process of preparing the student for initiation and the actual stages of the seven initiations that authorize practice of visualization of a practitioner as a deity — or ideal, altruistically active being — in a mandate, an ideal environment.

This is the first time that a tantric initiation ritual has been explained in detail in a Western language. The initiation ritual is translated, interspersed with commentary from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, temporal and spiritual leader of Tibet, mainly from a ceremony conducted in Wisconsin in 1981. The Kalachakra initiation was offered for the first time in the West by His Holiness the Dalai Lama during July of 1981 (the year of the Iron Bird) at Deer Park, a small rural site outside of Madison, Wisconsin, that is the home of a Tibetan Buddhist monastery and temple. The initiation was organized and sponsored by the Deer Park Buddhist Center and friends, a Buddhist organization under the direction of the Venerable Geshe Soda, author of *Steps on the Path to Enlightenment*.

During the process of the initiation, the Dalai Lama, as is customary, gave copious commentary detailing the proper attitude and motivation of the recipient and the individual steps of visualization and of reflection on profound and subtle topics that are at the heart of the initiation, or authorization, process. His explanations offered during the ceremony, as well as others given privately to me in preparation for serving as his translator, bring the basic initiation ceremony to life, rich with meaning and contextualization. The special tantric techniques for transforming body, speech, and mind into completely altruistic expression are thereby made lucid and accessible to interested readers.

The Introduction first describes the general Great Vehicle view on purification into a state of altruistic service as well as the special tantric practice of deity yoga that is founded on compassion and realization of emptiness. Next, it describes the process of initiation for the stage of generation, outlining and explaining the many steps in the ritual. It also provides background on the history of the Kalachakra Tantra and introduces the authors and texts. <>

## **AN ATLAS OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU by Michael Farmer [Series: Brill's Tibetan Studies Library, Brill, 9789004462526]**

The Atlas shows for the first time the contemporary geography of the entire Tibetan Plateau, an area where major powers (China, India and Pakistan) meet in the highest landscape on earth, originally inhabited by the unique, ancient Buddhist civilization of Tibet.

Using extensive satellite imagery, the author has accurately positioned over two thousand religious locations, more than a third of which appear not to have not been previously recorded. Nearly two thousand settlements have also been accurately located and all locations are named in both Tibetan

and Chinese where possible. This ancient landscape is shown in contrast to the massive physical infrastructure which has been recently imposed on it as an attempt to “Open up the West” and carry forward the Chinese “Belt and Road Initiative”. With 120 maps in full colour.

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Accelerated social and environmental change in the Tibetan Plateau is sharpening the need for a modern Atlas of Tibet. The world outside China has little access to detailed information or maps of Tibet, even though the region plays an important geopolitical role. Three nuclear powers – China, India and Pakistan – face each other across Tibet’s contested, though formidable, western mountain borders. China is constructing enhanced road networks and many new airports in Tibet, ostensibly for peaceful purposes. but border tensions flared into open conflict in 2020 and 2021 between Indian and Chinese military forces.

China’s international ambitions, furthermore, require that it control a politically stable Tibet as it extends its sphere of influence westwards. Several major trade routes created as part of China’s “Belt and Road” initiative (Frankopan 2018) either pass close to Tibet, in the case of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, or directly across it. The projected rail and road routes under this initiative will connect Kathmandu firmly to Beijing (Ray 2018). As part of this control, China is putting pressure on the ancient culture of Tibet to follow a radically different political and social model. Tibet’s widespread network of monasteries, one of the foundations of its traditional society, is being persuaded to conform to the rigid model of society imposed by the Chinese Communist Party (*Tibet Watch* 2016). Xi Jinping himself has recently said:

It is necessary to actively guide Tibetan Buddhism to adapt to the socialist society and promote the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism. (*Apple Daily* 2020)

The increasing influence of tourism, which is mainly Chinese in origin, is applying a subtler form of stress on Tibetan culture, and may lead to its eventual destruction (*Tibet Watch* 2014; Sydenstricker 2014).

The geography of the Tibetan Plateau also draws the attention of the world’s climate scientists and glaciologists. It has been called the “Third Pole” for good reasons. Home to the vast Hindu Kush-Himalaya ice sheet, the plateau contains the world’s third largest amount of snow and ice after the Arctic and Antarctica. China’s glaciers, including those in Tibet, account for an estimated 14.5 percent of the global total (Vince 2019). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2019), in a special report, warned that up to two-thirds of the region’s remaining glaciers and a third of all its ice are on track to disappear by the end of the 21st century, even if countries adhere to the internationally agreed target of limiting global warming by 1.5 C above pre-industrial levels.

This Atlas, following on from Karl Ryavec’s ground-breaking *A Historical Atlas of Tibet* (2015), reflects the current state of the Tibetan Plateau and its culture. The Atlas will serve as a tool for research in social, political and environmental fields and may aid in the preservation of a threatened society and its ancient and fascinating culture.

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The mapping of Tibet presents major challenges. The complex linguistic politics, the lack of availability of accurate, current geographical base information and the dispersed nature of Tibetan settlement are some of the problems that are answered below. The first of these, population dispersal, is a result of the population being largely concentrated in high narrow valleys very widely separated by even higher uninhabited mountain ranges. The Atlas topographic maps use two scales to overcome this problem: 1:1,000,000 to provide general topography and a larger scale: 1:250,000, which magnifies the main areas of habitation. If locations cannot be found at the smaller scale, the larger scale should be checked. The topographical maps are augmented by thematic mapping and extensive larger scale satellite imagery to show distinctive elements of the Tibetan landscape at various scales.

Section 2 gives three definitions of the Plateau – the physical area, the climatic and the ethno-linguistics areas. There is further evidence of a fourth possible definition, genetic, as the Tibetan people have developed extraordinary adaptations to the extreme altitude, allowing them to live comparatively normal lives. The Atlas also maps the complex hierarchy of Chinese administrative areas covering the Plateau, and lists them in separate Tibetan and Chinese tables.

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Section 3 contains notes on the methodology used.

Section 4 deals with the linguistic strategy that was decided when showing Tibetan toponyms in the context of a Chinese speaking polity. Basically there is great difficulty representing Tibetan toponyms in the context of *putonghua* – the languages are phonemically dissimilar and have very different tonality. Tibetan place names are now being replaced with *putonghua* equivalents and Tibetans are starting to use them, in preference to their own names. The Atlas contains two separate major indexes – the first indexed with romanised Tibetan headwords and the second indexed with various types of pinyin.

The satellite images of urban and rural development, discussed in Section 5, show the imposition of Chinese city planning and several particularly harsh planning initiatives: “Environmental Migration”, “Comfortable Housing” and “Grid-style Social Management”. This section also discusses demographics and the developments resulting from the recent expansion of Tibetan monasteries.

The tremendous expansion of infrastructure on the Plateau is covered in Section 6.

The Atlas locates and describes Tibetan monasteries – referred to as “*gonpas*” – based on many different sources and positioned using satellite imagery. Section 7 provides imagery of a number of *gonpas*, showing how they have changed over time, and also provides examples of the many unidentified *gonpas* whose names and lineages have yet to be determined by ground verification. The section concludes with a brief discussion of the physical development of *gonpas* and the major differences between Chinese and Tibetan planning.

The maps show *gonpa* lineages, where known, in different colours. The indexes list sub-lineages where known. Section 7 also provides a glossary to cover the wide variety of *gonpa* building types.

Sections 8–12 contain detailed notes on the methodology used, satellite imagery, mapping materials and references. <>

## LOVE LETTERS FROM GOLOK: A TANTRIC COUPLE IN MODERN TIBET by Holly Gayley [Columbia University Press, 9780231180528]

**LOVE LETTERS FROM GOLOK** chronicles the courtship between two Buddhist tantric masters, Tare Lhamo (1938–2002) and Namtrul Rinpoche (1944–2011), and their passion for reinvigorating Buddhism in eastern Tibet during the post-Mao era. In fifty-six letters exchanged from 1978 to 1980, Tare Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche envisioned a shared destiny to heal the damage done to Buddhism during the years leading up to and including the Cultural Revolution. Holly Gayley retrieves the personal and prophetic dimensions of their courtship and its consummation in a twenty-year religious career that informs issues of gender and agency in Buddhism, cultural preservation among Tibetan communities, and alternative histories for minorities in China. The correspondence between Tare Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche is the first collection of love letters to come to light in Tibetan literature. Blending tantric imagery with poetic and folk song styles, their letters have a fresh vernacular tone comparable to the love songs of the Sixth Dalai Lama, but with an eastern Tibetan flavor. Gayley reads these letters against hagiographic writings about the couple, supplemented by field research, to illuminate representational strategies that serve to narrate cultural trauma in a redemptive key, quite unlike Chinese scar literature or the testimonials of exile Tibetans. With special attention to Tare Lhamo's role as a tantric heroine and her hagiographic fusion with Namtrul Rinpoche, Gayley vividly shows how Buddhist masters have adapted Tibetan literary genres to share private intimacies and address contemporary social concerns.

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/ph. 9195425719 /fax 91986916430

## Review

An extraordinary set of letters between a man and woman lie at the heart of this study of love, religious transcendence, and cultural trauma in post-Cultural Revolution Tibet. I know of no body of material that gives a more intricate picture of how Tibetan Tantric Buddhism could penetrate and transform worldly troubles and politics into the sublime aspirations of tantric vision. Gayley offers us an unparalleled view of twentieth-century Tibetan religion as it touched every aspect of human life. Plus an astonishing account of a female master whose romance with another master elevated them both into heroes for Eastern Tibet during most challenging times. -- Janet Gyatso, Hershey Professor of Buddhist Studies, Harvard University

Holly Gayley has that rarest of gifts, a scholar's eye and a story-teller's ear. Her book is filled with nuance and insight about the power of Tibetan cultural narratives of gendered spiritual prowess and the navigation of coded relationships. Never merely theoretical, Gayley grounds every observation in dynamic detail and a story-line compelling as any novel. -- Anne C. Klein, Rice University, cofounder of Dawn Mountain, author of *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, translator of *Khetsun Sangpo's Strand of Jewels*

Gayley weaves together life writing, ethnography, and letters in an unprecedented fashion, and it pays off: her treatment of difficult primary sources — translated here for the first time — is inviting and engaging. *Love Letters from Golok* addresses issues of real and abiding concern in contemporary China. -- Kurtis R. Schaeffer, University of Virginia

This tale of love and healing should be read by anyone in the fields of Tibetan Studies, gender studies, and religious studies, and is accessible to undergraduates as well as scholars of religion.

— *Reading Religion*

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## Journey to Golok

Excerpt: After introducing the couple and the gendered lens of the book as a whole, I narrate my own literary and ethnographic encounter with this Buddhist tantric couple to draw the reader into the Tibetan region of Golok, a nomadic area on the border of Qinghai and Sichuan Provinces, where Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche lived, traveled and taught. The Introduction asks how Tibetans

themselves have construed their own recent history and suggests that Buddhist hagiography is an important site for Tibetans today to narrate an alternative history, since classical genre conventions preclude overt political statements and allow for a symbolic retrieval of Tibetan agency. I introduce the literary sources to be analyzed in this book as a new archive through which to explore the issue of minority voices in China.

LET ME BEGIN with a tale of healing from the nomadic region of Golok, situated on the eastern reaches of the Tibetan plateau. It involves seven strands of hair, sent by a female tantric master to her ailing beloved. Reporting visions day and night of her “companion who has never been separate even for an instant,” she sent strands of her own hair alongside a tantric liturgy and protection circle—which she revealed through visionary means—as relics and a ritual to heal him. In the accompanying letter, she assured him that these items would dispel any obstacles to the two of them joining together as a couple, including the distance that separated them and his recurring bouts of illness.

Healing is a persistent theme in the correspondence between the eminent tantric couple Khandro Tāre Lhamo (1938–2002) and Namtrul Jigme Phuntsok (1944–2011), known locally as Namtrul Rinpoche (and not to be confused with Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, the monastic founder of Larung Buddhist Academy in Serta).<sup>3</sup> Through the fifty-six letters they exchanged between 1978 and 1980, while separated by province borders, the future couple asserted their inseparability across lifetimes and exchanged visionary recollections of their myriad past lives together in India and Tibet. On a personal level, they expressed their blossoming affection in folksy terms using the local song styles of ordinary nomads. And in a prophetic voice, they articulated their shared destiny to heal and restore Buddhist teachings, practices, and institutions in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76).



Rolling hills surrounding Drongri, a sacred mountain in the vicinity of Golok.

The healing power of union between tantric partners is a recurrent motif in Tibetan literature, but takes on new meaning in the context of modern Tibet under Chinese rule. Ordinarily, it is a youthful female who extends the longevity of an elder master, but in this case, Tāre Lhamo was already forty years old when she initiated a courtship and correspondence with Namtrul Rinpoche, a reincarnate lama six years her junior. Beyond that, her visionary talents and ritual prowess were harnessed in service of the larger mission of revitalizing Buddhism in the region of Golok—whether bestowing a long-life empowerment on the foremost Buddhist teachers who survived the Maoist period or revealing esoteric teachings and rituals with Namtrul Rinpoche during the 1980s and '90s. In one letter, Namtrul Rinpoche compares Tāre Lhamo to the moon exerting its influence on the tides, thereby causing the ocean of the Nyingma teachings of Tibetan Buddhism to swell.

What do moments like these in the lives and letters of a contemporary tantric couple convey about gender and agency within a Buddhist framework? How did Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche interweave the personal and prophetic dimensions of their courtship and correspondence? How did they understand their partnership to effect a healing process at a critical historical juncture in modern Tibetan history?

### A Buddhist Tantric Couple

Steeped in esoteric Buddhism from their youth, Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche formed part of a nexus of Nyingma leaders in Golok who survived the Maoist period and spearheaded the revitalization of Buddhism in the region from the 1980s forward. As economic and cultural liberalization got under way in China, the two forged a bond through an epistolary courtship that lasted more than a year and crisscrossed borders between her homeland of Padma County (Qinghai Province) and his in neighboring Serta (Sichuan Province).<sup>8</sup> Their correspondence led to a lasting partnership, teaching and traveling together as a couple for more than twenty years in Golok and neighboring regions. Video footage from the late 1990s shows a rare sight: a Buddhist tantric couple seated side by side on ceremonial thrones, conducting rituals for large assemblies of Buddhist monastics and Tibetan laity. As the first study of the lives and letters of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche, this book provides an intimate portrait of Tibetan lifeworlds and revitalization efforts by Buddhist leaders who remained in their homeland through the vagaries of Chinese Communist rule.

In many ways, Tāre Lhamo's life story is emblematic of her times. Born as the daughter of Apang Terchen (1895–1945), a prominent figure in the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism in Golok, she received instruction from many of the region's great masters of the twentieth century. Following the socialist transformation of Tibetan areas in the late 1950s, she suffered tremendous personal losses and spent her twenties and thirties consigned to manual labor. In the late 1950s, she lost her first husband, a scion of the prominent Dudjom line, and her three brothers, all reincarnate lamas who died in prison. Most likely, gender played a role in her averting imprisonment and surviving the period unscathed. Later, she lost her only son, who passed away before reaching the age of ten. During the years leading up to and including the Cultural Revolution, when the physical vestiges of Buddhism were dismantled and religious practice forbidden, Tāre Lhamo served as a local heroine to her community through tales of her miracles, providing a beacon of hope amid the devastation. From this tragedy, at once personal and collective in scale, she emerged at the age of forty remarkably poised for action.

At the end of the Maoist period, Tāre Lhamo initiated a courtship and correspondence with Namtrul Rinpoche, who would become her second husband. Namtrul Rinpoche was only a teenager in the late 1950s and thereby escaped the fate of her first husband and other prominent lamas. Enthroned in his youth as the Namkhai Nyingpo incarnation at Zhuchen Monastery in

Serta, Namtrul Rinpoche received a traditional monastic education and trained closely under the lamas and cleric-scholars at Zhuchen, including his main teacher, Zhuchen Kunzang Nyima. Based on his education, after the socialist transformations of Tibetan areas, he served as a secretary for his work unit and managed to sequester himself on retreat for periods of time. With monasteries forcibly closed and monastics defrocked, Namtrul Rinpoche also married and had a son, Laksam Namdak, who was recognized as the reincarnation of his own teacher and today serves as the lineage holder for the teachings that Namtrul Rinpoche and Tāre Lhamo revealed together.

Via secret messenger between 1978 and 1980, the couple exchanged an extended series of “love letters”—the first collection of its kind to come to light in Tibetan literature—combining personal expressions of affection with prophetic statements about their shared destiny. The letters contain avowals of their growing fondness and longing to be together, visionary recollections of their past lives as a couple, prophecies about their future revelatory activities, and references to sexuality in the context of tantric practice and the distinctively Tibetan process of treasure revelation. With a rich array of folk and poetic styles, the letters offer insight into the gendered exchanges of this Buddhist tantric couple as they negotiated the terms of their union and envisioned the historic role they would play in Golok and beyond. Based on the bond they forged in their correspondence, in 1980 Tāre Lhamo left her homeland, against the wishes of her relatives and in contravention of state restrictions on travel, to join Namtrul Rinpoche in Serta.

Given its historical context, this correspondence provides a rare window into the religious imagination out of which the revitalization of Buddhism in Tibetan areas of China was inaugurated during the 1980s. In prophetic terms, Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche conceived of their shared destiny as “healing the damage of degeneration times” (*snyigs dus kyi rgud pa gso*). The language of “healing” suggests the restorative work needed in the wake of collective trauma, given the “damage” or rupture in Tibetan social life, religious observances, cultural expression, and systems of meaning during the previous two decades—from the socialist transformation in the late 1950s through the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. With this language, Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche drew on well-established lore in the Nyingma tradition whereby periods of decline and strife call forth the revelation of esoteric teachings and ancient relics, referred to as “treasures” (*gter ma*), meant to restore Buddhism and, as a corollary, the welfare of Tibetans. The revelatory content of treasure texts is generally traced to teachings by Padmasambhava, the eighth-century Indian tantric master credited with a pivotal role in establishing Buddhism in Tibet during the imperial period (seventh to ninth century) when the Tibetan empire dominated vast tracts of central Asia. Sharing visionary recollections of their past lives, including as direct disciples of Padmasambhava—for her, Yeshe Tsogyal, and for him, Namkhai Nyingpo—Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche laid claim to a sense of continuity in their very personhood and in their prophetic revelations. Moreover, their persistent usage of the language of healing signals the heroic role that they envisioned for themselves in their religious vocation as *tertöns* or “treasure revealers” (*gter ston*).

This heroic conception of their historic role is important to my overall concern in this book with Buddhist conceptions of agency and healing cultural trauma among Tibetans as a minority in China. The life stories and letters of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche provide a rich body of literature within which to explore ideas of agency in Buddhist terms, because they afford the rare occasion to compare the third-person voice of their idealized hagiographic portraits with the more humanizing first-person voice of their letters to each other. These sources shed much light on gendered representations of agency in Tibetan literature as well as the visionary processes through which contemporary Buddhist masters retrieved sources of authority from the distant past in order to confront their historical moment. I analyze these sources as minority voices in China that provide an alternative history of recent decades, seeking to establish cultural continuity and thereby to heal the trauma from the turbulent decades of the Maoist period.





Image of Namtrul Rinpoche and Tāre Lhamo as found on a disciple's shrine.

As the culmination of their correspondence, Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche joined together into a lasting partnership and religious career, teaching and traveling during the 1980s and '90s while collaborating in the visionary process of revealing treasures. Following the inauguration of economic and cultural liberalization across China by Deng Xiaoping, which allowed for public religious expression after an almost twenty-year hiatus, Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche began their religious career as a couple. Along with a handful of surviving Nyingma masters in Golok and northern Kham, they formed part of what David Germano has called a “vibrant, multipronged Ter [treasure] movement that has emerged as one of the most powerful and vital strategies for the renewal of traditional Tibetan culture among Nyingma traditions in Tibet.” From the 1980s forward, based at Nyenlung Monastery, which they rebuilt in Serta, the couple traveled widely to discover and disseminate their treasures, while sponsoring construction projects and establishing ritual programs at numerous monasteries in and around Golok.

### Gendered Lens

The distinctive representation of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche as a tantric couple in Tibetan literary and audio-visual sources has motivated my focus on gender as a central rubric within my broader concern to recover the minority voices of Tibetans in post-Mao China. The couple's lives and writings are inextricably linked in the available Tibetan literary sources: their interwoven and jointly published life stories, their twelve-volume corpus of collaborative revelations, and their correspondence in fifty-six letters as collected and published in a single volume. In terms of audio-visual sources, Nyenlung Monastery has produced numerous photographs and posters of the couple,

cassette tapes featuring devotional songs by and about them, and VCDs (video compact discs) featuring short biographies and archival footage of the couple from the 1990s. Most recently, a towering memorial structure featuring their photographs behind glass has been constructed at Nyenlung Monastery, above the outdoor pavilion where they used to teach together at their annual dharma gathering (*chos tshogs*).

I foreground Tāre Lhamo in analyzing sources by and about this couple in order to call attention to gender in representing agency and to recover female contributions to revitalizing Buddhism in the post-Mao era. This is particularly important due to the tendency in Tibetan sources and Western scholarship to elide the contributions of Buddhist women to Tibetan history, with the exception of specific recovery projects, of which there are a small but growing number. Although Tibetan women have been active and vibrant in Nyingma communities as the consorts of prominent lamas and teachers in their own right, their names and religious roles are often mentioned only in passing in Tibetan sources. While Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche were partners in the revelatory process, as acknowledged in their published life stories and joint corpus of revelations, it would nonetheless be easy for her to fade from view under the assumption that she played a secondary and supportive role to his. This is particularly the case given that Namtrul Rinpoche outlived her by almost a decade and gained increased visibility through the sizeable number of Han Chinese followers with a keen interest in Tibetan Buddhism who made their way to Nyenlung Monastery.

As a female tantric master in her own right, Tāre Lhamo was prominent in Golok in her youth and a heroine to her local community during much of the Maoist period. Early on, she was recognized as an emanation of Yeshe Tsogyal and two prominent figures from the previous generation in Golok, one female and one male, namely Sera Khandro (1892–1940) and Tra Gelong Tsultrim Dargye (1866–1937). Later in life, she proved to be unusual among contemporary female religious figures in the extent to which she traveled and taught widely throughout Golok and beyond, side by side with Namtrul Rinpoche. While there are a handful of well-known female tantric masters, called *khandroma* (*mkha' 'gro ma*), in Tibetan regions of China today, few others have had such a wide-ranging public presence or literary legacy. Tāre Lhamo is one of the few to enter the literary record with a life story and significant corpus of writings and one of only three contemporary female tertöns known to Western audiences through scholarly sources on the treasure tradition available in English. Notably, in the early 1990s, Tāre Lhamo garnered international attention for recognizing one of the reincarnations of Dudjom Rinpoche Jigdral Yeshe Dorje, the former head of the Nyingma lineage in exile. In 2003, her life story appeared in a Tibetan journal issue dedicated to tantric women (*sngags ma*) published by the Ngakmang Research Institute, where Tāre Lhamo stands alongside the likes of Yeshe Tsogyal, Mingyur Paldrön, and Sera Khandro as one of the remarkable Nyingma women in Tibetan history. More recently, in 2013, Larung Buddhist Academy produced a sixteen-volume anthology of the lives of Buddhist women from India and Tibet, which contains the biographies of only a few contemporary Tibetan women serving as Buddhist teachers, including Tāre Lhamo.

My foregrounding of Tāre Lhamo in this study can also be justified on the grounds of her greater renown in the early phase of her teaching career with Namtrul Rinpoche, in large part because of her status as the daughter of the regionally celebrated tertön Apang Terchen. Indeed, the first large-scale teachings and rituals they conducted in the mid-1980s involved transmitting her father's revelations at Tsimda Gompa, the monastery he founded, to a gathering of lamas and monks from more than fifty newly reestablished monasteries in the region. This gave the couple immediate stature based on her birthright as her father's lineage heir. In a further indication of her regional prominence, Namtrul Rinpoche appropriated aspects of Tāre Lhamo's identity and integrated them into his own: his identification as the activity emanation of her father in publications from 2000 and

2001 and as a reincarnation of Drime Özer, the consort and teacher of Sera Khandro, in a VCD produced by Nyenlung Monastery circa 2003. Neither of these attributions appears in the couple's correspondence or is highlighted in the earliest version of their life stories; instead, they emerged publicly in close proximity to Tāre Lhamo's passing in 2002, suggesting a concern with lineage continuity.

There are three different versions of Tāre Lhamo's life, two of which interweave her story with that of Namtrul Rinpoche and one in which she is a stand-alone protagonist. The focus of this book, alongside their correspondence, is the earliest and authorized versions of the couple's life stories, *Spiraling Vine of Faith: The Liberation of the Supreme Khandro Tāre Lhamo* and *Jewel Garland: The Liberation of Namtrul Jigme Phuntsok*, composed by Pema Ösal Thaye and published together in 1997 in a single paperback book, *Cloud Offerings to Delight the Vidyādhara and Dākinīs*. I consider these "authorized" versions since they were commissioned by the couple, written with their input, and published with state sanction through the County Office of the Bureau for Cultural Research in Serta. Pema Ösal Thaye masterfully constructs their lives into a story of heroism with gendered idiosyncrasies, such as the way that Tāre Lhamo's youth is interwoven with the stories of her female antecedents, Yeshe Tsogyal and Sera Khandro, in *Spiraling Vine of Faith* and the distinctive narration of the post-Mao era with a tantric couple as the protagonist in *Jewel Garland*.

Using this as a basis, Abu Karlo produced an abbreviated and largely derivative work synthesizing their stories, *Jewel Lantern of Blessings: An Abridged Biography of the Tertön Couple, the Lord of Siddhas Zhuchen Namtrul and Khandro Tāre Dechen Lhamo*, published in 2001. It adds little new information but makes a decisive intervention by characterizing Tāre Lhamo as the "wisdom consort" (*shes rab kyi grogs*) to the "great tertön" (*gter chen*) Namtrul Rinpoche even as it describes the distinctive process of their collaboration in revealing treasures. This may be the result of a difference in the structure of this version of their intertwined lives, since here Abu Karlo integrates their activities together as a couple into her life story, and his characterization functions as a transition into that period. Whatever its function or rationale, Abu Karlo's intervention gives Namtrul Rinpoche primacy in their partnership and has been influential through its translation into Chinese and wide circulation among their Han Chinese disciples in multiple formats, including a glossy magazine-size book incorporating photographs.

As a counterbalance, in the newest version of her life story, still in progress and as yet unpublished, Tāre Lhamo is the central figure. Khenpo Rigdzin Dargye, a cleric-scholar from her homeland of Padma County, casts Tāre Lhamo as an emanation of the female bodhisattva Tārā and emphasizes her visionary and wonder-working abilities in youth. This version of her life, which Rigdzin Dargye generously shared with me in 2014 in draft form, highlights Tāre Lhamo's revelation of treasures with multiple collaborators, her ritual prowess at extending the lives of others, and her miraculous ability to heal the sick and aid the recently deceased. While my study focuses on the former, due to its distinctive and masterful way of narrating recent Tibetan history, I will make comparative references to the other two versions of Tāre Lhamo's life story along the way.

## Entering the Namthar

I first encountered Tāre Lhamo through her *namthar*, or story of "complete liberation" (*rnam thar*), in a Tibetan literature class at Harvard University with Janet Gyatso. This genre of Tibetan literature recounts the life story of an accomplished tantric master, one understood to be liberated either at the outset, as in the case of a reincarnate lama, or by the end of the story as its culmination. Our class read through the first portion of the text together, which turned out not to be about her at all. Instead, the first part of *Spiraling Vine of Faith*, recounts in abbreviated form the life stories of Yeshe Tsogyal and Sera Khandro, among the illustrious series of her past lives. Later, on my own, I

continued with the story of Tāre Lhamo's youth up to the age of forty, when she met Namtrul Rinpoche. Thereafter, the account of their travels and teachings together in the 1980s and '90s is found in his namthar, *Jewel Garland*, in which the couple are joint protagonists. Published together in the paperback book *Cloud Offerings to Delight the Vidyādhara and Dākinīs*, which totals 161 pages, their namthars are substantial but not exhaustive. The narrative style is episodic, structured as a series of short chronological vignettes, with no long passages describing people or places, nor a sense of the activities of everyday life. The condensed nature of each episode relies on culturally assumed knowledge of local figures, regional lore, and sacred sites. I realized early on that only by spending time in Golok and visiting the places where Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche traveled, revealed treasures, and conducted large-scale rituals could I become an informed reader of these texts.

This initial encounter drew me to the grasslands of Golok on numerous research trips over a ten-year period between 2004 and 2014. On the eastern edge of the Tibetan plateau, Golok is a nomadic region characterized by rolling grasslands, often treeless, unlike the arid high plateaus of central Tibet to the west or the forested ravines of Kham to the south. The terrain is punctuated by several major rivers—the Ser, Do, Mar, and Ma (which becomes the Yellow River)—and bookended by the sacred mountain ranges Amnye Machen to the northwest and Nyenpo Yutse to the southeast. Ecologically, it is considered to be “high pasturage” suitable for a life of nomadic pastoralism. Herding yaks and other livestock has been a mainstay occupation alongside trade and, more recently, the harvesting of medicinal herbs. Tāre Lhamo's homeland of Padma County is distinctive to the extent that it occupies the lush valley of the Mar River and is one of the main areas in Golok amenable to agriculture. For that reason, Padma County has a high population density and the greatest concentration of Buddhist monasteries in the region. These are primarily affiliated with the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, as are the monasteries in neighboring Serta County to the south. Because of the Nyingma predominance, Golok and neighboring areas of northern Kham have historically served as a hub for treasure revelation.

My impetus to travel to Golok and neighboring Serta was to fill in the missing gaps of Tāre Lhamo's life story. I also hoped to acquire a complete copy of the treasure corpus (*gter chos*) containing her joint revelations with Namtrul Rinpoche. With these tasks in mind and joined by a colleague, in 2004 I ventured for the first time to Nyenlung, the monastery in Serta County that Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche rebuilt and where they resided together from 1980 until her death in 2002. Much to my surprise and delight, in that meeting, Namtrul Rinpoche generously gave me their entire treasure corpus in twelve volumes as well as the treasure corpus of her father, the locally renowned Apang Terchen, in sixteen volumes. He also described the circumstances surrounding their correspondence and offered me a facsimile edition of the collected letters, which he and Tāre Lhamo exchanged during their courtship, in their entirety.

Of the twenty-nine volumes that I carried back to Chengdu that summer, I sensed immediately that the letters were special. Given prohibitions on travel and the province border separating the couple at that time, their correspondence provided the principal medium of their courtship. As Namtrul Rinpoche later told me, prior to 1980, when Tāre Lhamo joined him at Nyenlung, they had only met once for an extended visit he made to her homeland the previous year. Over the next several years, I worked through the variegated content and genres in the fifty-six letters and addenda, totaling 188 pages and almost entirely in verse. As I consulted with Tibetan lamas, scholars, poets, and singers, I realized the versatility and virtuosity in their use of folk and poetic styles as they crafted a shared destiny and conveyed a range of sentiments, erotic and amorous. As exchanges conveyed secretly across province borders, their letters provide a more intimate portrait of the couple than available in the idealized accounts found in their namthars, a perfect basis for comparison.



In that first meeting, Namtrul Rinpoche also invited my colleague and me to join him on pilgrimage. The following day, he planned to travel to Padma County and visit the monastery Tashi Gomang to lead a feast offering (*tshogs mchod*), a ritual performed in order to purify tantric commitments and accumulate merit, and a public empowerment (*khrom dbang*), a tantric initiation ceremony meant as a blessing for the general public. It was his first time traveling on a pilgrimage-cum-teaching tour since the death of Tāre Lhamo in 2002. Together with our driver, we joined the caravan of cars and trucks filled with disciples (both Tibetan and Chinese) making the journey from Serta County northward along a winding dirt road. We became part of the entourage, and Namtrul Rinpoche occasionally stopped the caravan to point out sacred sites to us along the way.

During this first visit and each of my subsequent trips to Golok, in some sense, I entered the *namthar*—witnessing the people, places, and events of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche's life story firsthand. In Golok, I inhabited the domain of prophecy and auspicious signs, blessings and meaningful connections, pilgrimage and aspiration prayers. Research questions to Namtrul Rinpoche sometimes generated the spontaneous composition of advice or rituals, and my own translation and research efforts were seen as a way to propagate their lineage abroad. In journeying to Golok and environs, I had entered not just a place but an entire worldview, where the actions of and environment around a Buddhist master are imbued with special meaning.



Procession to welcome Namtrul Rinpoche to Tashi Gomang.

Even on the sidelines, while observing rituals such as the feast offering and public empowerment at Tashi Gomang, I became a participant in the sphere of activity centered around the teacher, constituted among the faithful in the ongoing life story of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche.



### Ritual at Tashi Gomang

Outside of Tashi Gomang, a line of Tibetan monks formed in the open meadow. Dressed in ceremonial garb, they wore yellow cloaks draped over their maroon monastic robes and donned cone-shaped hats fringed with tassels. The yellow and maroon vividly contrasted with the lush hue of grasses covering the meadow and hillsides after the summer rains. The procession began, and the line of approximately fifty monks moved forward, curving snakelike along the dirt road leading to the monastery. The low drone of Tibetan horns filled the air, punctuated by the clang of cymbals and the whine of an oboe-like instrument (*rgya gling*). Escorted by this procession was Namtrul Rinpoche, seated in a land cruiser covered in white ceremonial silk scarves. It is traditional for the monks and laity to welcome visiting teachers by traveling partway along the route to greet them and escorting them into the monastery. The monks walked in order of ordination rank, with the youngest trailing behind. A throng of nomads and residents from the nearby county seat lined the road, some bowing in reverence, others with necks stretched out in order to catch a glimpse of him.

Having joined Namtrul Rinpoche on pilgrimage, my colleague and I stood at the sidelines, documenting the procession in photographs and on video. Some monks also had cameras and video equipment out, making us feel less intrusive. We found a spot by the side of the road, a bit ahead of the jostling crowd, to shoot as the procession passed. It was a typical scene in some regards—foreign researchers capturing an exotic moment in a distant land—a scene laden with a long legacy of power relations in which representation is not a neutral act of documentation, but instead presumes privileged access and affords interpretive control. At Tashi Gomang, I marveled at being able to witness a ritual that in the *namthar* would have been described in a single line. As foreigners, my colleague and I were invited to join the monks inside the assembly hall during the main ritual, while the bulk of the laity—more than a thousand locals—crowded into the courtyard outside. A speaker had been hooked up to the roof of the monastery so that they could listen to the prayers being recited. That day, it was as if I had lifted my eyes from the page back in Cambridge to find that suddenly the *namthar* had become a living world all around me.

That hypothetical single line in the *namthar* was suddenly a long afternoon spent chanting in a crowded assembly hall. Now I could see how the event was structured: who attended public rituals, where they sat, how they processed in and out, what happened during the ritual, the liturgies used for chanting, and the teachings given. I could witness how, although the laity was consigned to outside the monastery during the main ceremony, the food that had been offered and blessed during the feast was later distributed to them. Afterward, Namtrul Rinpoche's throne was set up on the steps to the assembly hall facing the courtyard for the public empowerment. The monks sat up front in a crescent with the laity behind them, spread out in the courtyard as before. At the end, the crowd swelled around his throne in order to receive blessings.

Since then, I have viewed comparable scenes recorded when Tāre Lhamo was still alive. A set of VCDs produced by Nyenlung introduces the monastery and provides a brief overview of their life stories, followed by devotional songs and footage of their teachings and travels going back to the late 1990s. The viewer joins the tantric couple on virtual pilgrimage, visiting some of the same sites that Namtrul Rinpoche did in 2004, as the couple gives empowerments to the young Dudjom reincarnation in the inner chamber of their residence, leads a procession to consecrate the large stūpa at the administrative seat of Padma County, conducts rituals in a tent at the base of the Nyenpo Yutse mountain range, and teaches in the assembly hall at Nyenlung, overflowing with Tibetan and Chinese disciples. In footage of their travels and teachings, the viewer witnesses the rare phenomenon of a tantric couple conferring empowerments together, side by side on ceremonial thrones, both reading the liturgy, performing the gestures, and blessing the assembly with ritual implements. At Tashi Gomang, there is even a glimpse of Tāre Lhamo standing alone in the field

outside the monastery, receiving white ceremonial scarves (*kha btags*) from a long line of disciples from her homeland, while Namtrul Rinpoche stands back to allow them to greet her.

Unbeknown to us that day, my colleague and I were also captured on video. When I returned to Padma County in 2006, a set of VCDs had been released chronicling Namtrul Rinpoche's 2004 pilgrimage. Featuring both Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche on the cover, the VCDs follow his pilgrimage with footage of each stop along the way, including his visit to Tashi Gomang. The video is accompanied by devotional songs, some written by Tāre Lhamo, emphasizing her continuing presence for their religious community and authorizing Namtrul Rinpoche as the steward of their teachings. One short clip features the foreign researchers, video recorder rolling and camera clicking away. In an ironic twist, it shows the monks capturing us in the process of capturing them. Rather than standing outside the frame as *observers*, "neutrally" recording the scene, in that VCD, we are located within the scene as *participants*, subsumed into the flow of activity centered around Namtrul Rinpoche. This ethnographic vignette raises the issue of representation, central to this book, and shows that one's interlocutors in research are by no means passive "objects of study" but have their own agendas and frames in which to place the researcher. By appearing in this video clip, my colleague and I were incorporated within a framework of meaning that positions Buddhist masters at the center of public activity and the apex of social values. We were constituted as part of the crowd of disciples and admirers, confirming Namtrul Rinpoche's stature and prestige and by extension Tāre Lhamo's own.

### Minority Voices

The ritual occasion at Tashi Gomang exemplifies the large-scale Buddhist gatherings that I encountered in the mid-2000s, including construction projects, consecration ceremonies, and other conspicuous signs of the revitalization of Tibetan culture. If unfamiliar with modern Tibetan history, a first-time visitor might not realize that most monasteries standing in Tibetan areas of China today have been rebuilt from the rubble left after the Maoist period. Nor would one necessarily realize that ordinary public religious observances that permeate Tibetan life—pilgrims circumambulating monasteries, the elderly spinning prayer wheels, monks gathered in large assembly halls reciting prayers, and large-scale rituals and festivals—were forbidden for almost two decades. Tibetans know this history all too well, and one lama chided me when I marveled at the many new buildings on his monastery's grounds, indicating that the scale of Buddhist institutions has yet to approach what once existed.

Apart from researchers and travelers who have ventured to the Tibetan plateau, many in the West have not heard much, if anything, about cultural revitalization efforts by Tibetans within China. In general, the Tibetan people are disparately represented in the media as either the victims of "cultural genocide" or the benefactors of "peaceful liberation" at the hands of the Communist state. In their discussion of these diametrically opposed viewpoints, Ashild Kolas and Monika Thowsen highlight that the realities on the ground are not so black and white. The Chinese Communist state's claim to protect and promote Tibetan culture effectively erases its culpability in the destruction of most visible signs of Tibetan culture during the Maoist period, culminating in the Cultural Revolution. However, the exile Tibetan counterclaim that Tibetan areas in China have been turned into a "cultural wasteland" makes the Cultural Revolution stand for more than sixty years of Communist rule, discounting the significant changes brought about by economic and cultural liberalization.<sup>8</sup> Both versions homogenize the role of the state in recent Tibetan history, despite major shifts in state policy toward minorities as well as the gap between policy and implementation that has led to local variations in how policy affects minority groups. More importantly, such representations narrowly focus on state policy, rendering invisible the substantial achievements by Tibetans within China in revitalizing their own culture since the 1980s.

Despite China's attempt to celebrate cultural revitalization as evidence that Tibetans are thriving under Communist rule, we need to ask how Tibetans themselves construe their own recent history. Where do we look for Tibetan voices and self-representations? For minorities in China, who do not have direct access to political discourse and for whom major media venues like television and newspapers are state-controlled, literature and the arts have become important sites for intellectual discourse and debate. In the last decade, scholars have begun to examine the revival of Tibetan arts and literature in order to retrieve minority voices, highlighting the complexity of self-representation, coded mechanisms for dissent, and debates about the very nature of Tibetan modernity. Although secular literature composed by Tibetan writers received attention in the anthology *Modern Tibetan Literature*, there has been no comparable study of religious literature to investigate how Buddhist masters are adapting Tibetan literary genres to address contemporary concerns.

This study seeks to recover minority voices within Buddhist literature recently published within China, and to highlight their representations of Tibetan agency. Here I follow Laura Ahearn's definition of "agency" as the "socioculturally mediated capacity to act," highlighting the ways human actors are situated in social and cultural systems that both constrain and provide resources for their endeavors. Representations in art and literature are culturally situated within specific notions of personhood and causation as well as conventions for ascribing agency according to literary genre and artistic style. In a Buddhist context, notions of karma and past lives feature prominently in conceptions of personhood, creating a relational and composite identity that complicates how we might ordinarily associate agency with autonomy. Meanwhile, certain genres of literature allow for the assertion of forms of agency beyond the boundaries of secular and state discourse, creating an alternative vantage point from which to narrate recent history. Overall, cultural conventions play a significant role in how Tibetans today invoke symbols, ideals, and authoritative paradigms in order to explain events, to conceive of possibilities, and to articulate and authorize a course of action. One of the tasks of this book, then, is to discern how specific examples of religious literature function to restore a sense of Tibetan agency in Buddhist terms.

In my focus on the lives and letters of an eminent tantric couple, I share a microhistorical approach with the contributors to the seminal volume *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet: Religious Revival and Cultural Identity*. Each focused on the role of a single monastery, ritual, or individual as exemplary of the constituent features of the Buddhist revival more broadly. Similarly, I re-create for the reader the rich tapestry in which the lives of this contemporary Buddhist tantric couple unfolded and show how the literary imagination—the shared vision and prophetic mission that Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche create in their correspondence—became actualized in the form of their prodigious religious activities and represented in the hagiographic portrait of their career together in the 1980s and '90s. Informed by field research during numerous visits to the region between 2004 and 2014, I focus on literary representations of their lives—their hagiographic portraits and their own voices in epistolary exchanges at a moment of tremendous historical uncertainty—as windows into how Tibetans have understood and represented the rupture and revival of Buddhism on the Tibetan plateau in the second half of the twentieth century.

In its capacity to reassert systems of meaning, hagiographic and epistolary literature can be considered an alternative source for memory work and reconstructing the past, not as a means of establishing facts, but as Tibetan self-representations that offer an alternative to the official account by the state. Perhaps these are best described as "subaltern pasts," in Chakrabarty's use of the term, pasts articulated by subordinated minority groups in terms outside the epistemological limits of the discipline of history. For Chakrabarty, "minority" refers to a marginal social position and relegation to inferior status vis-à-vis the dominant group, as well as the subordination of "life-worlds" that harbor "irrational" elements marginalized in the main-stream discourse of the secular state, such as religious premises. In China, religious discourse is potentially subversive because it offers the

possibility not only to assert an alternative version of events but also to construct a narrative rooted in an alternative episteme, or worldview, with its corresponding set of beliefs, values, and authority.

Although their purpose is not to narrate history per se, in the process of recounting the lives of contemporary Buddhist masters—who are subaltern vis-à-vis the state but elite in their local contexts—hagiographic accounts present the events of recent Tibetan history within a Buddhist framework. A striking example is the use of “collective karma” (*spyi mthun las*) to frame the turbulent decades of the Maoist period in *Spiraling Vine of Faith*. While it may seem odd for a Buddhist author to attribute the events of history to the collective deeds of the Tibetan people in an indeterminate past, this choice can be regarded as part of a literary strategy to reclaim agency on behalf of Tibetans. More importantly, as I argue in chapter 2, karma serves as a vital interpretive schema through which local historians and monastics like Pema Ösal Thaye make sense of collective trauma and encompass the devastating events of the Maoist period within Buddhist systems of meaning. In this way, karma serves as a narrative device, retrospectively asserting interpretive command over events otherwise outside of Tibetan control.

Broadly speaking, narrating trauma is an exercise in constructing meaning out of the shattered ruins of the past. According to trauma theorists, the ability to create a narrative is central to the healing process as a means to repair and adapt systems of meaning and encompass the memory of trauma within them. Unlike the dialogic format of psychoanalysis, in the case of collective trauma, this active process must be performed by a select group—cultural carriers such as artists, elders, intellectuals, or religious figures—on behalf of the society as a whole. In a colonial context or under other forms of interethnic domination, the restoration of meaning involves ascribing cultural significance to devastating historical events and thereby encompassing the damage caused thereby within a local episteme. What is crucial is a useable history that can serve as an alternative to the official state history and a rallying point for collective action. As the anthropologist Michael Jackson emphasizes, making meaning through storytelling generates not just an “intellectual grasp of events” but a “symbolic restructuring” of them. This becomes an important way to gain mastery over the events of history, whether personal or collective. For this reason, Jackson refers to storytelling as “a vital human strategy for sustaining a sense of agency in the face of disempowering circumstances.” In other words, narrating trauma provides a way to restore systems of meaning after an abrupt and overwhelming event or period of devastation. As such, it could be regarded as part and parcel of constructing subaltern pasts—in this case, by reasserting the centrality of Tibetans as actors in their own history.

This symbolic restructuring of events, a prominent feature in their hagiographic corpus, begins in their own voice in the letters that Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche exchanged at the cusp of the post-Mao era between 1978 and 1980. Therein they tacitly subsume the turbulent decades of the Maoist period within a Buddhist framework as “degenerate times” and announce their own revelatory activities as the means to “heal the damage” to Buddhist practice, teachings, and institutions in Tibetan areas. This serves as a potent narrative device allowing the couple to maintain an orientation toward the future, specifically toward their own visionary means to restore Buddhism through treasure revelation, recovering esoteric teachings and ancient relics from Tibet’s imperial past. The optimistic and heroic tenor of their letters, replete with images of regeneration, the language of healing, and declarations of victory over dark forces, is stunning given the historical devastation out of which they had just emerged. Their namthars, *Spiraling Vine of Faith* and *Jewel Garland*, follow suit in focusing on moments of heroism during the Maoist period and their revitalization efforts in the 1980s and ’90s, rather than detailing the extent or nature of the actual damage. Such epistolary and hagiographic works thereby create a vibrant alternative to “scar literature,” a literary trend among modern Chinese and Tibetan writers that emerged in the 1980s to recount the trauma associated with the Cultural Revolution in fictional and allegorical terms.

In exploring literary works by and about Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche, I provide poignant examples of how Tibetans represent their own recent history. These illustrate an alternative approach to narrating history and agency within a Buddhist framework, rooted in premodern notions of causation and personhood. The works offer not just a different story, but a story with *different premises* that positions Tibetans themselves, particularly Buddhist masters, as the principal agents in history. I highlight how Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche, as well as their hagiographer, Pema Ösal Thaye, draw on long-standing symbols, discourses, and practices within the tradition of treasure revelation in order to imagine, inspire, effect, and narrate the revitalization of Buddhism as part of a synergistic group of Nyingma masters in the region of Golok. Their voices and those of their followers provide a striking account of Tibetan agency.

### Recentering Tibetan Lives

Notably, in *Spiraling Vine of Faith* and *Jewel Garland*, the Chinese Communist state is rarely mentioned, apart from scant references to policies during the Maoist period and the colophon, which acknowledges a local government agency that enabled its publication. This is no doubt as much due to the religious nature of the genre as it is a product of self-censorship on the part of Pema Ösal Thaye, seeking to avoid politically sensitive content. Instead, the principal actors are Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche, who are portrayed with heightened agency as visionaries and ritual virtuosos engaged in recovering lineages of teachings through treasure revelation and reconstituting Tibetan community in ritual terms. In this way, hagiographic literature effectively decenters Beijing and recenters Buddhist masters as the principal agents in Tibetan society and history.

Charlene Makley has described the revitalization of Tibetan culture from the 1980s forward as a “mandalization process” in which recounting stories about the lives of Buddhist masters is a constituent feature. According to her definition, the mandalization process repositions the reincarnate lama, and by extension Buddhist institutions, at the apex of social value and the center of public life. (Note that a *maṇḍala* can be a two- or three-dimensional representation of the domain of a tantric deity; often the deity in union with a consort resides at the center, which is also the apex.) The work of namthar as a genre in the contemporary context, according to Makley, is to reposition the Tibetan people as the faithful beneficiaries of the moral authority and ritual prowess of Buddhist masters. Drawing out the implications of this assertion, one could suggest that hagiographic literature, with its leitmotif of engendering faith (*dad pa*), has played and continues to play a pivotal role in reconstituting Tibetan social worlds around Buddhist leaders, values, and institutions in the post-Mao period.

In promoting a mandalization process, hagiographic literature can thus be seen as a constitutive feature of cultural revitalization by Tibetans in China. As a literary genre, namthar is flourishing alongside audio-visual materials focused on Buddhist masters, such as poster images, devotional songs, and even music videos on monastery-produced VCDs showcasing their activities that proliferate in public spaces throughout Tibetan areas. Moreover, the publication of namthars is part of a broader movement to





Pema Ösal Thaye, a local historian and disciple of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche.

recover local history in Golok by Tibetans themselves since liberalization in the 1980s. Pema Ösal Thaye is an important contributor as a Buddhist monastic and government worker who is the publisher, author, and editor of numerous namthars, histories, and edited volumes dedicated to preserving Tibetan culture. On the county level in Serta in Sichuan Province, his effort is a smaller-scale version of the work of the poet Ju Kalzang at the prefecture level in Tawu, the capital of Golok Prefecture in Qinghai Province. Both endeavors share the common purpose of recovering local history and publishing works by religious figures from the region of Golok, which in its broadest sense includes neighboring Serta. As a compiler of local histories and the namthars of Buddhist masters, Pema Ösal Thaye has made a significant contribution to the mandalization process described by Makley.

While Makley emphasizes the role of mandalization in the reassertion of Tibetan masculinities, both lay and monastic, since the 1980s, the case of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche is a prominent exception to the rule. In Tāre Lhamo's namthar, *Spiraling Vine of Faith*, it is the khandroma at the

center of the action, and Pema Ösal Thaye crafts a type of agency explicitly identified with the *dākinī*, a category of female tantric deities. Moreover, in the telling of her life with Namtrul Rinpoche, as recounted in *Jewel Garland*, the reader finds not a solitary lama at the center of the maṇḍala but the iconographically more traditional *yab-yum*. Literally meaning “father” and “mother,” *yab-yum* refers to the tantric couple representing the union of “method and wisdom” (*thabs shes*) in Buddhist tantric symbolism. Although the *yab-yum* is prevalent in Buddhist tantric iconography, the consort of a male lama typically receives little mention in hagiographic literature. However, due to Tāre Lhamo’s stature as the daughter of Apang Terchen and as a khandroma in her own right, she and Namtrul Rinpoche traveled and taught together, revealing a significant corpus of ritual manuals and esoteric instructions, and this is reflected in their hagiographic representation as joint protagonists and acknowledged collaboration in their jointly attributed treasure revelations. In *Jewel Garland*, they are depicted as the charismatic centerpiece of large-scale public rituals in which they forge connections with the hundreds and thousands in attendance. These narrative accounts showcase the tantric prowess of the couple, transforming the natural and social world through acts of consecration and initiation.

What I am proposing is that we examine how agency is construed within a Buddhist framework in a way that recenters Tibetans, and specifically Buddhist masters, female and male, as agents of their own history. The assertion of Tibetan agency in Buddhist terms in the sources for this study can be read as a response to the specific challenges posed by a competing episteme embodied in state policy, Communist discourse, secular values, and market forces, all of which have tended to marginalize Tibetans within the larger Han-dominated Chinese nation. This response inscribes new meaning into the events of recent history and serves to heal the cultural trauma that Tibetans have undergone as a result of social upheaval and disruption of cultural and religious practices, particularly during the Maoist period. Examining these literary representations as sites for reasserting Buddhist interpretive schemas and systems of meaning, I link the processes of writing literature, making meaning, and taking action in the revitalization of Buddhism as effected by Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche, and through which recent Tibetan history has been narrated.

### Sources for This Book

The literary accounts central to this book narrate recent Tibetan history from several different temporal orientations, authorial voices, and literary genres. I start with an analysis of *Spiraling Vine of Faith: The Liberation of the Supreme Khandro Tāre Lhamo*, which is the namthar of Tāre Lhamo as narrated in the third-person voice of Pema Ösal Thaye. A retrospective account of her early life up through the turbulent decades of the Maoist period, *Spiraling Vine of Faith* creates an idealized hagiographic portrait of Tāre Lhamo in Buddhist terms as a local heroine. In chapter 1, I perform a gendered analysis of this work, asking how a cultural space is created for female religious authority in the otherwise male-dominated religious milieu in Golok. Specifically, I look at the use of authoritative female antecedents in the long prelude to her life story and place this within the social context in Golok, where her status as the daughter of Apang Terchen ensured her inclusion in esoteric Nyingma circles. In chapter 2, I show how historical events and hagiographic interventions are interwoven in miracle tales that provide a means of restoring a sense of Tibetan agency after a period of collective trauma. Scholars of trauma such as Judith Herman have argued for the importance of crafting a narrative in the healing process in order for individuals to regain a sense of mastery over overwhelming and devastating events, originally outside their own control. I build on her work and recent studies on collective trauma to theorize about the role of hagiography in healing cultural trauma.

I then introduce and translate selections from the correspondence between Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche, an invaluable counterpart to this idealized portrait, which provide a more

humanizing and multifaceted representation in which their own voices come to the fore. Their amorous and prophetic exchanges are composed almost entirely in verse and draw on a range of styles from ornate Indic-inspired poetry to Tibetan folk songs, and their choice of literary style in each letter influences the content and tone of the correspondence. For example, ornate poetry marks the formality of their initial exchanges, while bardic verse drawing on the Gesar epic (a pan-Tibetan epic of Arthurian proportions) is reserved for bold declarations of their certain victory over the dark and demonic forces of their times. In turn, prophetic passages allowed Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche to construct their identity as a couple, based on myriad past lives together, and to chart the locations of treasures awaiting revelation in the landscape of Golok and neighboring regions. Yet right alongside that, local song styles offer more folksy imagery, equating their destined union to the inseparability of a snow lion and its mountain perch, a juniper branch and its berries, and thunderclouds hovering over the grasslands. In her preference for oral folk genres, Tāre Lhamo gradually induces Namtrul Rinpoche to eschew the erudite poetics of his monastic training for the exuberance of folk songs. Because of this, much of their correspondence has a fresh, colloquial tone, akin to the love poems of the Sixth Dalai Lama but with a distinctively eastern Tibetan flavor.

As part and parcel of their religious vocation, they engaged in the “sport of attraction” in preparation for the tantric rite of sexual union that constitutes an integral part of treasure revelation. In chapter 3, I explore the dynamic interplay of love and destiny, arguing that the affection shared between Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche in their epistolary exchanges activated their visionary propensities in preparation for their collaborative revelatory activities and ultimately galvanized them into action. I pay special attention to gender in tracing how they negotiated the terms of their union and created a shared narrative as a tantric couple across lifetimes. In chapter 4, I turn to the historical contingencies and challenges that Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche faced and how they navigated those within a clearly articulated Buddhist rubric of causation, drawing on forces in the distant past to imagine realizing their vision for the future. I examine the language and metaphors they employ to foresee restoring Buddhist teachings and the welfare of Tibetans in the post-Mao period, including: “healing” (*gso ba*) the damage of degenerate times, in a prophetic key derived from the treasure tradition; “rescuing” (*skyob pa*) beings, assuming a heroic stance as bodhisattvas or buddhas-to-be; and achieving “victory” (*rgyal kha*) over demonic and barbaric forces in the performative language of bardic verse. In this way, the couple engaged in a creative dialogue, harnessing the terminology and imagery from various genres of Tibetan verse to conceive of the possibility of revitalizing Buddhism and script their own roles within it. As an extended and initially private exchange, their correspondence provides a distinctive perspective on the agency of Tibetans on the cusp of the post-Mao era.

Coming full circle, chapter 5 returns to the writing of namthar, showcasing the couple’s endeavors from the 1980s forward, after Tāre Lhamo left her homeland to join Namtrul Rinpoche in Serta. Specifically, I analyze *Jewel Garland: The Liberation of Namtrul Jigme Phuntsok*, in which the second half recounts their joint activities from 1980 to 1995. This last source is both retrospective, recounting their religious efforts up to its publication, and concurrent, as the writing of namthars is a project constitutive of cultural revitalization itself. Returning to the genre of namthar after an excursus into their letters shows how the shared vision and prophetic mission constructed in the correspondence were actualized in their prodigious religious activities and translated into an idealized hagiographic representation. In contrast to the intimate words exchanged in their letters, *Jewel Garland* portrays the public persona and heightened agency of a tantric couple whose visionary talents and ritual prowess form the basis of their many accomplishments promoting the revitalization of Buddhism in Golok. I highlight the recurring paradigm of forging “connections” (*'brel ba*), which draws attention to the ways that Buddhist masters are understood to reconstitute people and places as Tibetan through their teachings and ritual activities. This account of the 1980s and '90s illustrates, in

microhistorical terms, how the revitalization of Buddhism in the post-Mao period unfolded within a single region with its corresponding network of Buddhist teachers, monasteries, and ritual systems. The epilogue closes the book with a discussion of the couple's activities after 1995, when *Jewel Garland* was completed; their ongoing community after Tāre Lhamo passed away in 2002; and their legacy as a tantric couple since Namtrul Rinpoche's passing in 2011.

Through a close examination of these three main literary sources—in conjunction with other historical and biographical sources as well as interviews conducted between 2004 and 2014—I explore an eminent example of the religious imagination out of which the restoration of Buddhist institutions and practices was conceived and represented by Tibetans within China. While it is important to describe the achievements of Tibetans in reconstructing monasteries and other visible cultural forms, it has not been enough only to build buildings. What has also had to be restored are systems of meaning that came under attack during the Maoist period and have been undermined in intermittent reeducation campaigns in recent decades, intensifying in the wake of the March 2008 protests, despite claims by the state regarding freedom of religion. Nonetheless, it is also possible for subordinated groups to resist dominant systems of meaning. In the Tibetan case, one form that this resistance has taken is the assertion of a Buddhist worldview in the face of epistemological challenges posed by CCP rhetoric and state policy. In other words, Tibetan leaders have not only been rebuilding Buddhist institutions, they have also been reasserting a Buddhist episteme as a total worldview.

### A New Namthar?

Though my purpose here is not to compose a new namthar, this book does provide a chronological account while analyzing literary sources by and about Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche. In its chronology, it follows the arc of Tāre Lhamo's life, analyzing the principal textual sources associated with each phase in successive sections, and I integrate Namtrul Rinpoche into the narrative at the point at which they began to correspond. Because I arrived at Nyenlung in 2004, two years after Tāre Lhamo passed away, I traveled the length and breadth of Golok in order to gather stories about her—from her homeland in Padma County to monasteries throughout the region where she and Namtrul Rinpoche conducted large-scale rituals and provided financial aid for reconstruction. I was able to interview the people who knew her best: her husband, Namtrul Rinpoche; their hagiographer, Pema Ösal Thaye; her close disciple, Rigdzin Dargye, who is currently finishing a new namthar about her; and female relatives and friends in youth, like Adrön and Achung, who lived through the Maoist period with her. In addition, at Nyenlung Monastery and elsewhere, I had the opportunity to participate in the activities of the couple's ongoing religious community.





Elderly female relative of Tāre Lhamo at Tsimda Monastery in Padma County.

namthar about her; and female relatives and friends in youth, like Adrön and Achung, who lived through the Maoist period with her. In addition, at Nyenlung Monastery and elsewhere, I had the opportunity to participate in the activities of the couple's ongoing religious community.



This field research has allowed me to triangulate the first-person perspective of their correspondence and the third-person account in their hagiographies with the social context of lived religion in Golok, oral tales of Tāre Lhamo's life, and firsthand accounts that Namtrul Rinpoche shared with me. This ability to bridge text and context provides an invaluable touchstone throughout the book. It allows me not only to fill in gaps in information in the life stories of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche as found in published accounts, particularly for the turbulent decades of the Maoist period, but also to share insights into the selection process of crafting a literary representation of a tantric couple. The process of selectivity is all the more pronounced today due to self-censorship in publications resulting from the sensitive nature of the "Tibet question" in China. While in the field, my sense was that the more I understood about the world outside the text, the more I could learn about representational strategies within the namthars and correspondence.

That said, there are important ways that I intervene in the representation of Tāre Lhamo's life as intertwined with Namtrul Rinpoche's in these literary sources. First and foremost, I give more weight to the letters they exchanged at the cusp of the post-Mao era than does *Jewel Garland*. There, prophetic selections from the letters appear alongside prophecies by local religious figures in order to confirm their union and to introduce Tāre Lhamo into the narrative. By contrast, in this book, I examine both the prophetic and the personal dimensions of their correspondence in order to get a more rounded picture of this tantric couple, juxtaposing their own self-representation with the hagiographic portrait of their lives by Pema Ösal Thaye. My purpose is to explore the human side of their relationship and the creative negotiation of their received heritage: how their partnership developed, how they handled the contingencies of the historical moment, and how they appropriated and transformed the resources available to them from treasure lore, folk and literary genres, and tantric practices.

As an additional intervention, I invert the order of their life stories by following the chronology of Tāre Lhamo's life. In publication, *Cloud Offerings to Delight the Vidyādhara and Dākinīs* begins with Namtrul Rinpoche's namthar, *Jewel Garland*. After an account of his youth, it presents excerpts from their correspondence as a way to introduce Tāre Lhamo into the narrative and then focuses on the couple's activities together. Her own namthar, *Spiraling Vine of Faith*, follows. In a parallel but inverted structure, this study begins with Tāre Lhamo's life story, introduces Namtrul Rinpoche through an analysis of their correspondence, and finally examines their joint role in the revitalization of Buddhism. The crucial difference is that I am putting Tāre Lhamo first, as the primary object of this study. Namtrul Rinpoche and others whom I interviewed were fully aware that my primary interest lay in Tāre Lhamo's life story, and the importance of such a project was never questioned by anyone in their religious community. Ironically, the only person who questioned my motives was another khandroma, who objected to the idea that women should be privileged as a category of inquiry.

The ordering of their namthars—his first, hers second—reflects a gendered hierarchy within their religious community at Nyenlung, which sponsored the publication of *Cloud Offerings*. There Namtrul Rinpoche is considered the principal; he walked first in ceremonial processions, and though they conducted tantric initiations seated side by side, his throne in the main shrine hall remained just a few inches higher than hers. My own interest in Tāre Lhamo and positioning of her as the centerpiece of this study is grounded in a feminist impulse—and growing academic trend—to retrieve Tibetan women from the literary and historical record. This impulse launched the project in 2004 and remained at its core during field research, even as I gradually came to realize that a study of Tāre Lhamo's life and writings could not feasibly be separated from her long-standing collaboration and hagiographic fusion with Namtrul Rinpoche. This ordering also reflects a trajectory in their own careers, whereby Tāre Lhamo's own renown in Golok as the daughter of Apang

Terchen gave their teachings early visibility and a large following among Tibetans, while later Namtrul Rinpoche came to the fore with the growth of Nyenlung Monastery and a burgeoning community of Chinese disciples.

Rather than endeavoring to present a more complete account of their lives, my interest lies in understanding strategies of representation, specifically the difference between the idealized account of their hagiographic construction and the more complex and decidedly human terms of their correspondence in their own voices. In line with recent trends in the study of hagiography, I leave aside epistemological questions: separating fact from fiction, history from myth, and the natural from the supernatural. Instead, this book explores the production of meaning in texts by and about Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche. In other words, rather than ask questions about truth, I take up issues of meaning. How might the idealized account of Tāre Lhamo's miracles during the years leading up to and including the Cultural Revolution, as contained in *Spiraling Vine of Faith*, function as alternative history and serve to heal cultural trauma? How do Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche construct the distant past and envision future possibilities through their courtship and correspondence? How does the narration of their joint activities in *Jewel Garland* portray and participate in the revitalization of Buddhism in Golok?

That said, in presenting a study of the lives and letters of Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche, I do not seek to foreclose the possibility of its interpretation within a hagiographic frame. Early in my research, Namtrul Rinpoche cited a prophecy that the treasure teachings of this eminent couple will one day reach America. That my research offered a potential vehicle to help fulfill that prophecy no doubt helped motivate him to spend many patient hours answering my questions in interviews over the years. Certainly, this analysis of their lives and letters will introduce English-speaking audiences to Tāre Lhamo and Namtrul Rinpoche. The circulation and use of this book will ultimately decide how it is read. Likely one day it will journey back to Golok and serve as testimony to their significant legacy as a tantric couple, kept alive by his son, Tulku Laksam Namdak, and their ongoing religious community. <>

## **QARAKHANID ROADS TO CHINA: A HISTORY OF SINO-TURKIC RELATIONS** by Dilnoza Duturaeva [Handbook of Oriental Studies, Brill, 9789004508521]

**QARAKHANID ROADS TO CHINA** reconsiders the diplomacy, trade and geography of transcontinental networks between Central Asia and China from the 10th to the 12th centuries and challenges the concept of “the Silk Road crisis” in the period between the fall of the Tang Dynasty and the rise of the Mongols. Utilizing a broad range of Islamic and Chinese primary sources together with archaeological data, Dilnoza Duturaeva demonstrates the complexity of interaction along the Silk Roads and beyond that, revolutionizes our understanding of the Qarakhanid world and Song-era China's relations with neighboring regions.

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The publication of the book of Dilnoza Duturaeva is very good news for the ongoing elaboration of a *longue durée* history of trans-Asian trade. Many books have been written on earlier or later periods, but no one has dared to deal with the eleventh–twelfth centuries, which appear as a nadir in this history. Indeed the lack of sources is transforming the attempt in a Herculean task of collecting tiny bits of evidence, whose main characteristics are both dispersion and discontinuity. This book makes the most of these small pieces of texts or archaeological discoveries, Liao porcelains for instance. It opens new venues in research, especially in the relationship of the Qarakhanids with the Tibetan Tsongkha kingdom in Qinghai, or the diplomatic exchanges of the various Chinese dynasties with the West, Qarakhanids or Seljuks. But more importantly, it provides us with a chronology of East-West contacts – although mostly from a Chinese point of view due to the dearth of Qarakhanid written sources. And here, I would point that many if not most of the testimonies gathered by Dilnoza Duturaeva belong to a brief and powerful burst of contacts in the last quarter of the eleventh century. Before that, in the late Samanid and early Qarakhanid periods, there are very limited proofs of actual contacts, although the author most convincingly demonstrates that some links were kept alive. From this high point of the last quarter of the eleventh century, and although there was a decline in the first half of the twelfth century, trade would flow anew. This chronology is extremely interesting for the history of globalization, and the reasons presiding to its development. It is as if the mental map of the Asian world created during the previous centuries, especially during the Sogdian period of control of international trade in Central Asia, was still enshrined in the texts and mentalities of the administrators and traders, only ready to renew long-distance links beyond periods of low-level exchanges. The wire was still there, only to be reanimated by a new burst of current. Usually, the Mongol period was regarded as the period of renewal of East-West links. Dilnoza Duturaeva demonstrates that such was not the case and that trade restarted in a purely diplomatic and commercial setting in the end of the eleventh century well before and independently from the heavily military and political context of the Mongol conquest. In a way, it demonstrates the autonomy of economic history in Central Asia, quite different from the theory of embedment.

Étienne de la Vaissière

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By the end of the first millennium CE, a vast portion of Central Eurasia was controlled by nomadic powers: the Sinicized Khitans (907–1125), who were later replaced by the Jurchens (1115–1234) and the Tanguts (1038–1227) in North and Northwest China; and the Turko-Islamic dynasties such as the Qarakhanids (840–1212), the Ghaznavids (977–1163) and the Saljuqs (1037–1194, and 1077–1308), whose domains stretched from Northern India to Asia Minor. This was the beginning of “the age of transregional nomadic empires,” as Jerry Bentley named the period in world history from 1000 to 1500.<sup>2</sup> Nomadic peoples established powerful empires and sponsored direct trade relations

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and cultural interactions between distant places. The Mongol Empire era (1206–1368) is the age in which the nomads reached their height in terms of influence on world history, as no other nomad dynasty had succeeded in holding such a huge Eurasian landmass: at its peak, it stretched from Korea to Hungary. This situation brought the two ends of the Eurasian region into sustained cultural and commercial contact. The Mongol Empire has therefore attracted a great deal of scholarly attention over the past few decades. Significant research on the Mongol Empire, highlighting the extensive cultural exchange that took place under its rule, was done by Thomas T. Allsen, who used Islamic and Chinese sources equally.



Central Eurasia in the eleventh century

With direct access to the trade along the Silk Roads, however, the Qarakhanids shaped the largest nomadic polity before the Mongols, stretching their political and economic power from Western China to the north of Iran. Conversely, diplomacy, trade, and cultural exchange in the pre-Mongol era, especially the period of the Qarakhanids, is less well-documented, and for this reason, remains one of the least studied stages of Silk Road history. Moreover, studies of international relations in the pre-Mongol period often give the impression that overland trade roads between China and Central Asia declined and lost their previous splendor. This is mainly explained by citing political instability in Central and North Asia and the withdrawal of the Tang dynasty (618–907) from the Western Regions, which caused a switch from the traditional overland trade roads to the maritime roads during the period of the Song dynasty (960–1279) in China. The lack of sources also often caused a “jump” from the Turks and Sogdians in Sui-Tang China to the Mongol globalization in works related to the history of the Silk Roads and Chinese-Western relations, completely skipping the Qarakhanids or giving just a short overview of international relations in the tenth–twelfth centuries.

Indeed, both the lack of primary sources and the scarcity of literature make the Qarakhanid period a largely neglected field in the history of Central Asia and China. All researchers who have studied the Qarakhanids claim that their history is poorly documented and very fragmentary. The majority of sources were written outside of the Qarakhanid realm, and consist, for the most part, of



information on relations with their neighbors in the Islamic and Sinitic worlds. This also explains the variety of source languages, mainly Arabic, Persian, and Chinese. However, due to the traditional division of academic fields in English- and Russian-language academia, the Qarakhanid dynasty has always been mainly the purview of Turkologists. Therefore, Chinese primary and secondary sources have not usually been consulted. But the history of the Qarakhanid dynasty is included in the multi-volume publication *Zhongguo lishi* (History of China) published in Beijing. Moreover, Chinese historical records are usually consulted and well-known to historians working on ancient and early medieval Central Asia. For particular periods, Chinese texts are one of the most important – often the only – written sources related to pre-Islamic Central Asia.

Scholars on Islamic Central Asia seldom consult Chinese primary sources. This has restricted research not only on the Qarakhanids, but also on the Saljuqs, the Ghaznavids and other polities in Central Asia. Any research on Saljuq and/or Ghaznavid history is considered a subject for Iranists and mainly based on Islamic sources. The history of medieval Central Asia from the tenth to the twelfth centuries has usually been written without consulting Chinese primary or secondary sources. However, China was one of the Turks' closest neighbors and a source of luxury goods that were highly prized in the Islamic world. This book demonstrates that the Uyghur and Qarakhanid Khagans, as well as the Saljuq and Ghaznavid Sultans (although probably to a lesser extent), sought to establish direct economic contacts with China by sending official envoys. Chinese texts recorded data about official envoys from a vast swath of the Turko-Islamic world and provided information on diplomacy and trade with China that cannot be obtained from other sources. Furthermore, Chinese records give us an understanding of how the Turko-Islamic dynasties were viewed in the Sinitic world. The main accounts of these dynasties, as for any nomadic peoples, were written mainly by the settled people they conquered, who held an uncomprehending and often hostile view of these alien invaders. Chinese sources provide perceptions of the Turks outside their realm, which can be used to counteract these biased views. Paradoxically, these sources have remained largely overlooked until now and in particular cases, completely unknown in the contemporary scholarship of Qarakhanid Central Asia.

Qarakhanid studies have been developed in the pioneering works of Vasily Bartold and Omeljan Pritsak, and their works continue to be relevant in the field. Among later works, there are monographs in Turkish by Resat Genç, in Russian by Omurkul Karaev, and in Chinese by Wei Liangtao. Over the last few years certain aspects of the Qarakhanid history have been given a fresh look using Islamic sources on an equal footing with Chinese ones. In particular, Qarakhanid trade with China, specifically with the Liao dynasty, was examined by Valerie Hansen and Michal Biran. Biran's work on the Qara Khitai Empire based on Islamic and Chinese sources contains much information about the region in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Significant research on Song China's foreign relations, although not focused on the Qarakhanids, can be found in a volume edited by Morris Rossabi. Generally, these publications do not include the many numismatic and archaeological materials from the Qarakhanid period that have been recently discovered, or the Silk Road artifacts from Liao and Song tombs that mostly appear in Russian and Chinese archaeological publications.

Recent scholarly interests in Qarakhanid studies can be also observed in publication of two major works in English. The complete English translation of the *Tazkīrah-i Bughrā Khān* has been recently published in the book *Warrior Saints of the Silk Road: Legends of the Qarakhanids* by Jeff Eden. Richard McClary's *Medieval Monuments of Central Asia: Qarakhanid Architecture of the 11th and 12th Centuries* provides the first solid overview of the Qarakhanid monuments that demonstrate urban developments in Central Asia under their rule. Recent works from archaeological excavations in the Qarakhanid sites make equal mention of economic solidity and urban development in Central Asia during the tenth–twelfth centuries.<sup>18</sup> It would have been impossible without the economic

growth that resulted from Qarakhanid international trade and policy, including their commercial activities in the East.

This book provides a detailed study of Chinese records on the Qarakhanids and their allies in Islamic and non-Islamic Central Asia and includes relevant texts with translation and notes. It also incorporates relevant Muslim sources on China and Tibet. Additionally, it utilizes related archaeological discoveries in Central Asia and China that allow for deeper insight into the history of international relations in the tenth–twelfth centuries, supplementing information given in written sources. This book is, to my knowledge, the first detailed narrative history of the Silk Road during the Qarakhanid period written in any language. In this sense, it fills a gap in the research of the history of the Silk Roads and diplomatic relations of China and Central Asia in the pre-Mongol period. In addition, the book aims to prove that Qarakhanid international commerce and diplomacy not only maintained extant overland trade routes but also developed new networks.

The main sources for the current work are official histories and encyclopedias, scholarly treatises and artworks, and memoirs and travelogues compiled by officials and scholars who served at Chinese and Central Asian courts. Documentary sources, specifically on trade commodities and foreign images, are supplemented by archaeological records, which are mainly available in Russian and Chinese. Central Asian sources on the Qarakhanid history are well known due to the lack of this type of material. These include the famous and the only Turkic sources of the period: the Qarakhanid dictionary *Dīwān lughāt al-Turk* by Maʾmūd al-Kāshgharī (1008–1102), which includes the Qarakhanid world map including East Asia; and the Qarakhanid *Mirror for Princes* *Qutadghu Bylyg* by Yūsuf Khāṣṣ al-Jībī (d. 1077). Additionally, works compiled by historians and scholars who served in the neighboring dynasties, particularly at the Saljuq and the Ghaznavid courts, as well as general histories and geographies of other Muslim authors, are also incorporated into the book. Short introductions to the sources and their authors are given when it is essential to understand the information. It should be mentioned that Central Asian sources do not provide many materials on Qarakhanid relations with China. Moreover, descriptions of China available in Muslim sources are very fragmentary and give only a general understanding on existence of contacts between China and Central Asia during the Qarakhanid period. However, these materials are also essential to interpreting the data given in Chinese records.

Chinese sources that contain historical and geographical information on medieval Central Asia during the Qarakhanid period can be divided into several categories. These include a series of official histories of successive dynasties, the so-called zhengshy “Standard Histories.” This kind of history was compiled by the official office of a dynasty that was headed by a well-known scholar and established to write the history of its predecessors. The chief sources for this work, Song shi, Liao shi, and Jin shi, were compiled by a group of scholars led by the Yuan official Toqtoʻa (Chin. Tuotuo, 1314–1356). The imperial annals include sections devoted to foreign countries and peoples, their rulers, and their relations with China. Important countries are given sections of their own while lesser ones are grouped together. The Qarakhanids appeared in their own section in Song shi under the name “Khotan,” which can be divided into two parts. The first part is devoted to the history of the ancient Khotan kingdom up to the beginning of the eleventh century, and the second part deals with the Qarakhanid period from the eleventh to the twelfth century. Song shi furthermore provides separate sections on the Ganzhou Uyghurs and the Uyghur Idiquts in Turfan, known as the Xizhou Uyghurs during the Song period. These sections contain data on commodity exchanges with the Qarakhanids. There are also sections on Anatolia and India, which are essential in discussions on possible Saljuq and Ghaznavid envoys to Song China. Liao shi and Jin shi are less informative on the contacts with the Qarakhanids compared to Song shi, but contain useful information not found elsewhere.

The Chinese often shortened or omitted important information when compiling imperial histories. Therefore, the standard histories were used together with a type of source known as *biannianti*, “Chronological History,” compiled during the Song period, and texts called *huiyao*, “Collected Matters of Importance,” which is a compilation of imperial documents. In this term, the Song chronicle *Xu Zizhi tongzian changbian* by Li Tao (1115–1184) becomes increasingly important for this work. It covers the period of 960–1100 and contains essential information that is not found in other sources. For instance, Li Tao recorded a detailed interview between Emperor Shenzong of Song (1068–1085) and the Qarakhanid envoy that appears in a shortened version in *Song shi*. The Song-era document collection *Song huiyao* was partly extracted from the *Yongle Encyclopedia* of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) and compiled by the Qing official Xu Song (1781–1848) as *Song huiyao jigao*. This collection of Song imperial documents also includes edicts and memorials related to Qarakhanid trade in Song China. Other important Chinese sources used for this work are histories known as *zashi*, “Miscellaneous Histories,” which also include ethnographic works, travelogues, and diaries based on private observations.

The book attempts to demonstrate the complexity of interaction and exchange during the tenth–twelfth centuries and introduce Chinese records on this issue. The first four chapters are devoted to Qarakhanid diplomacy and trade in China, discussing Qarakhanid policy in the East in general, including their contacts with the Uyghurs and Tibetans. The fifth chapter deals with Chinese records on Qarakhanid allies in the Turko-Islamic world such as the Saljuqs, Ghaznavids, and Khwarazmshahs, including the role of the Qarakhanids as middlemen between China and the Islamic world. The last chapter describes Qarakhanid activity along the Silk Roads and beyond, including their activities in the international amber, frankincense and tea trades. Throughout the book, I focus on three interrelated themes: (1) each group’s image and knowledge of each other’s societies; (2) imperial encounters and emissary missions; and (3) trade-cultural transfer and exchange.

**(1) The Representation of Sinitic and Turko-Islamic Worlds.** This question seeks answers in works by medieval Chinese and Muslim historians, travelers, and geographers. The research shows that both Chinese and Muslim historians of the era documented the increase of knowledge in their societies about each other. Central Asia was a bridge between two worlds in this process and facilitated the rise of Chinese knowledge about the Islamic world. In the meantime, political and cultural contacts between Liao-Song China and Qarakhanid Central Asia transmitted knowledge about China to the Islamic world. Central Asian scholars of the eleventh century had access to more recent data on China. It should be noted that the Central Asian texts that we have at our disposal are not very informative; they contain general records on China. But in comparison with tenth-century geographical works that mostly utilized data collected during the Tang period, we can observe updates in political, commercial and cultural issues. For instance, al-Bīrūnī provided detailed information on commodities from the Khitan (Qitāy) realm and Song China (al-ʿĪn) that are not found in earlier sources. He served at the Ghaznavid court and personally met with foreign envoys and merchants to obtain relevant information about distant places, including China.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, Chinese texts of this period demonstrate that the term “Dashi,” which initially applied to the Arabs and Arabia, was mainly used to refer to the Qarakhanids in Khitan and Tangut sources and in Song China applied not only to the Arabs but also to non-Arab Islamic dynasties and apparently, to non-Muslims under their rule as well. This study will lead to an understanding of the role of China in pre-Mongol Islamic Central Asia, as well as what China knew about Islamic Central Asia. The understanding of the Qarakhanid image in China helps to identify different names applied to them by Chinese authors, which may introduce more new data about them. The most complicated part of utilizing Chinese sources is to identify terms applied to foreign peoples and ethnic groups. For this reason, a significant part of data in Chinese sources on various foreign regions and peoples remain unknown.



**(2) Imperial Encounters and Emissary Missions.** I focus on the Qarakhanid diplomacy in the East and specifically their relations with the Song dynasty and the Liao dynasty through the study of emissary exchange. Chinese records prove that the Qarakhanids sent more than forty delegations to the Song court, mainly using two roads via the Hexi Corridor and Tibet; the latter is also known as the Qinghai Road. The Qarakhanid emissary missions were mostly commercial and played a key role in promoting trade between Central Asia and China.



Qarakhanid roads to China

The true number of commercial envoys and caravans sent by the Qarakhanids may have been much higher than reported in Chinese official records. I also seek to illustrate that the Qarakhanids served as middlemen between the Sino-Tibetan and the Turko-Islamic worlds. For instance, the Qarakhanids accompanied foreign missions to Tibet and China or issued special documents that allowed foreign delegations to travel to the region and obtain access for trade. This study contributes to the field by providing detailed investigation and translation of some Qarakhanid written documents sent to Chinese emperors and Chinese imperial edicts on Qarakhanid trade. I also discuss official envoys from Anatolia and Northern India to Song China that may refer to the Saljuqs and the Ghaznavids.

**(3) Trade-Cultural Contacts and Exchange.** This topic combines studies of different kinds of sources: official and non-official histories, chronicles, travelogues, and scientific works, as well as archaeological data. It seeks to explore extant and new trade networks in the Qarakhanid world. I also investigated the question of how far the Qarakhanid trade reached. Trade and movement of commodities between Qarakhanid Central Asia and China offer unique opportunity to discover Qarakhanid activities beyond the Silk Roads, for instance, along the amber, frankincense, and tea-horse trade. Through a basic word search in the Scripta Sinica database, it can be observed that some commodities that were transported by the Qarakhanids, such as amber, flowed to China along the overland trade roads, especially during the Northern Song period. Trade commodities often brought cultural patterns and aesthetics connected with them to new territories and later could

become “local.” This research discusses some examples of cultural exchange through trade that are still visible. It will also lead to an understanding of how the Khitans, as non-Muslims, were later able to establish their authority in Islamic Central Asia and ruled the region for almost a century.

This book is not only about politics and trade but also about a history of mutual understanding, cultural bridges, and peace between the peoples of Central Asia and China.

In the tenth century, Turkic peoples started “the first civilizational divide in their history”<sup>106</sup> through conversion to Islam. Newcomers in the central Islamic lands via conversion quickly took leadership positions in military and administrative institutions. The mass Islamization process among the Turkic peoples in the Eurasian steppes brought about the creation of the first Turko-Islamic culture and the new image of the Turks spread through the Islamic world and China.

After the rise of the first Turko-Islamic empires, the Turks, who were represented as enemies of Islam in the early ^Abbasid period, began to be characterized by Arab and Persian writers as “pure Muslims” originating from the Iranian world. Muslim historians who served Turkic rulers argued that the Turks were the descendants of Afrasiyab, a legendary king of Turan in ancient Iranian mythology.<sup>107</sup> This contributed to the new positive image of the Turks in the Islamic world and reflected on their representation in China. The Turks rapidly began to be closely associated with Islamic culture in Chinese historiography.

By the eleventh century, the Qarakhanids incorporated the kingdoms of Khotan and Kucha into the Khaganate and obtained direct access to the main trade routes of the northern and southern Silk Roads. Their Islamic culture served as a tool to enter and become a part of the Muslim world. At the same time, the Qarakhanids preserved their Turko-nomadic traditions and heritage, which facilitated their commercial presence in the East. <>

## **UNDER THE SHADOW OF WHITE TARA: BURIAT BUDDHISTS IN IMPERIAL RUSSIA** by Nikolay Tsyrempilov [Eurasian Studies Library, Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, Brill, 9783506760487]

The book systematically explores the history of the Buddhist community in the Russian Empire. It offers an advanced overview of the relations that existed between the Buriat Buddhists and the Russian imperial authorities. Various institutions and actors represented Russian power: foreign and interior ministries, the Irkutsk general-governorship, the Orthodox Christian mission of East Siberia, local journalists and academic scholars. The book is focussing especially on the evolution of imperial legislation and specific administrative mechanisms aiming at the regulation of Buddhist affairs. The author demonstrates how these actors responded to conflicting situations and collisions of interests. Thus the history of relations between Russia and her Buddhist subjects is shown as a complex process with participation of a number of actors with their own interests and motivations.

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In August 2009, Dmitrii Medvedev, Russia's president at the time, came to Russia's largest Buddhist area, the Republic of Buriatia, on an official trip. Among the places the president planned to visit was Ivolga, or Ivolginskii datsan, the Buddhist monastery that since 1945 has been the residence of the Bandito Khambo Lama, the spiritual leader of the largest traditional community of Buddhists in Russia. Not long before the president arrived, the abbot of the datsan Dagba Ochirov announced that the monks were preparing to conduct a traditional worship ceremony to acknowledge the head of state as the embodiment of the enlightened Buddhist goddess, White Tara. Ochirov stated that "we Buddhists have always worshiped whomever ascended to the tsar's throne as the embodiment of White Tara." This announcement caused a notable stir in the Russian media, and as a result, the ceremony was cancelled to prevent putting the president in an awkward position. While the story spawned many a bitter joke, it also introduced many Russian citizens to the fact that their country was home to around a million traditional Buddhists and that some of them saw the ruler of Russia as a sacred figure.

In the 19th century, Buriats glorified the Russian emperors in hymns and songs of praise as the enlightened Buddhist Cakravartin ruler, comparing them to shining Vi^u and almighty Śiva, and

calling them the earthly embodiments of an enlightened divine being. While the sacralization of the ruling dynasty was standard practice historically for Buddhists, for Buriats, incorporating Russia and the Romanovs into sacred Buddhist geography was an attempt to reconcile their religious identity and their status as subjects of the empire they had become part of. They did this despite the fact Buddhists in Russia were openly declared idolators, their connections to their fellow believers in greater Buddhist world were blocked, the number of monks and datsans strictly limited, religious schools were forbidden, and religious writings had to be reviewed by censors. It would be completely inaccurate, however, to portray the history of the Buddhist community in the Russian Empire as one uninterrupted policy of discrimination. Yet there appears to be little basis for the Buddhist piety surrounding the Russian state and ruling dynasty, at least at first glance. A closer examination of the history of Buddhism in Russia reveals much more than asymmetrical relationships with the authorities and a dominant Orthodox Church. Buddhism was recognized in Russia as a religion to be tolerated, even when mosques in the Volga region were being destroyed en masse. Despite great pressure, the Russian authorities did not allow Orthodox missionaries to drive Buddhism out of Transbaikalia and even deliberately allowed its growth west of Lake Baikal in areas that the Irkutsk diocese rightfully considered its own. For a short period in the late 18th-early 19th centuries, the empire enabled the expansion of the network of monasteries and the Buddhist sangha beyond Transbaikalia. Buddhist lamas, at least some of them, were granted the same rights as the other members of the clergy estate, and the chief Buddhist priests were appointed to their ranks by the emperor's decree, independent of religious authorities in Mongolia and Tibet. And finally, the empire played a significant part in building the institutions of the Buddhist sangha, thus practically establishing the Buddhist church as an organized whole (which it had not been previously) and then incorporating it into the religious administrative structure of the empire.

This book focuses on how the Buddhist church was constructed in the Russian Empire, a complex process that unfolded over a century and a half. This process is unique historically, and no analogues exist in the histories of other colonial empires around the world. In contrast to British imperial endeavors in places like Ceylon and Burma, Russian authorities did not simply meddle in the affairs of the Buddhist sangha; they were involved in regulating almost every aspect of the religious life of laypeople and monks, from the color of monks' robes to datsan architecture. At the same time, unlike the Qing, the Orthodox Christian Romanov dynasty distanced itself from "lamaist idolators" and declared its protection of their faith in only the most vague, obscure terms. Thus, this book focuses on the interrelationship between the Russian government apparatus, represented by different institutions with very different interests, and the Buddhist sangha, by which we mean the entire interdependent, interconnected lay and monastic community. The key word is "interrelationship," as I have consciously refused to view the Buddhist sangha and Buddhists solely as passive subjects of political measures and administrative regulation. On the contrary, this book proves in a multitude of instances that Buddhists, from respected lamas to secular political activists, tried to influence imperial policy, with varying success, using a wide range of resources. This interaction shaped the formation of institutions like the administration of the head of the Buddhist church, the Bandido Khambo Lama, and the staff lamas, and in the development of laws governing the internal workings and relationships of the sangha to state authorities at the province, governorship, and ministry levels. For this reason, the book devotes a great deal of space to examining draft regulations in detail, how they were drafted, and their contents, as well as the reasons they failed or succeeded, in the case of the lone draft that was approved by Emperor Nicholas I in the mid-19th century. At the same time, I view these drafts as successive and closely tied to general trends in the development of religious policy in the empire, to the dynamics of imperial expansion, and to international political events that presented their challenges. The book also devotes significant attention to how this complex process was made even more complicated due to inter-ministerial battles, the tensions between liberal and conservative perspectives, the

pressure from Orthodox missionaries on local and metropole officials, and the less notable influence of academic circles.

Traditional followers of Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism have lived in Russia for three and a half centuries. Today they live in three of Russia's republics and a few provinces (Rus. oblast' and krai). Russian officials first learned about the "faith of the lamas," as Buddhists were customarily called at the time the term came into common usage in Russia, in the mid-17th century. In the reign of Aleksei Mikhailovich, Russia intensified its diplomatic relationships with the Mongol-speaking peoples along a vast stretch of the empire's frontiers. This included the Mongolian Altyn Khans, the Oirats of the Irtysh River basin, the Kalmyks along the Volga, and the bratskiie mungaly (the Buriat-Mongols) of the Baikal region, who were forced or willingly agreed to become Russian subjects in the late 17th century. (Materialy po istorii 1974) Lamas were present when Russian envoys were received at the courts of various taijis (noblemen) and khans. They served as translators and were sent on diplomatic missions to Moscow. During this period, their faith was seen merely as an interesting curiosity by Russian observers. Many years passed before Russian authorities had to deal with lamas as an internal phenomenon, a matter they lacked basic, thorough information about for some time.

Lamaism was viewed by officials and missionaries as the complete antithesis of Christianity, a frightening and dangerous movement. Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism differed too greatly from the Abrahamic faiths that Russia knew well. Officials were disturbed by how closely it was interwoven with local beliefs, by its strange and exotic rituals, and by its monastic institutions. Up until the mid-19th century, Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism was not considered "real" Buddhism, and the term "lamaist idolatry" was used in official documents and communication until 1905. Some sources and archives reveal grim hints that officials even weighed trying to root out the faith completely in Transbaikalia, but security concerns for the far periphery of the empire gave them pause and caused them to abandon the idea. There were reasons for this. First, the more enlightened officials and missionaries, who were few and far between, understood the powerful influence of Tibetan Buddhism on the politics of Central Eurasia. Blatant repression of the sangha could lead to the destabilization of the status quo and to a potential heightening of tensions with the Qing Empire. Notably, officials also thought that the sangha, even in its early chaotic formation, was nonetheless reasonably organized and tried to use lamas to undermine shamanism. All in all, Buddhism presented itself as a convenient and familiar hierarchical framework that embraced the majority of Buriats and some Evenkis. In the late 19th century, this notion came to incorporate interest in increasing Russia's influence in Mongolia and Tibet, and a growing curiosity about Buddhism as a religion and philosophy in Europe.

The discussions in this book come back in one way or another to the issue of mutual distrust and the ability to break through it, and how two different civilizations could cross the divide that separated them and create a unique hybrid. The dominant Orthodox Church played an important role in this process. Paradoxically, it was Orthodox missionaries who made desperate attempts to convince officials that Buddhism should not be set apart from other idol-worshipping superstitions, yet it was also Orthodox missionaries who first began to talk about Russian Buddhism as part of the greater Asian Buddhist tradition. Naturally, this begs the question of how Buddhism managed to deflect this colossal pressure and achieve impressive political results, for example, gaining permission to build a Buddhist temple in St Petersburg. How did Buddhists defend themselves from attacks on their religion? What resources did they draw on? Can we consider these efforts part of the anticolonial movement among the Buriats? What role did Orientalist scholars, Orientophiles, and foreign policy hawks play in these shifting relationships to Buddhism in the late Romanov empire?

To answer these questions, we need, on one hand, to view them through a certain lens, one that takes into account that the Buriat sangha always remained part of the Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhist

world, despite all the limitations and prohibitions. This world extended from the Kalmyk steppe to the kingdoms of the Himalayas, and in the early 20th century, it attempted to establish ties with Buddhists in South and Southeast Asia. Buriat Buddhists lived on the Russian frontier, and for this reason, issues of cross-border migration, pilgrimage, trade, and espionage were closely connected with the Buddhist question. In the chapters that follow, we will pay particular attention to these issues. On the other hand, a fully-fledged analysis would not be possible without taking the multi-confessional religious system in the Russian Empire into account. Buddhist matters were managed by the Department of Religious Affairs of Foreign Faiths of the interior ministry, which was also responsible for the majority of other non-Orthodox and non-Christian confessions. We should not overestimate the coordination between different sections of the Department but must also avoid underestimating it.

Lastly, any discussion of Buddhism and empire cannot completely avoid touching on the role Buddhism played in forming Buriat ethnic identity and nationalism. The later was a natural result of the confessional structure of the Russian Empire. Though a significant number of the Buriats west of Lake Baikal never converted to Buddhism and remained followers of local beliefs or were baptized as Christians, Buddhism still played a huge role in shaping Buriat self-perception. Leading Buriat intellectual and political activist Tsyben Zhamtsarano even called it “a refuge for the national spirit” and called for Buriats to build their nation on its foundation. This is unsurprising if we bear in mind that for the majority of Buriats, Buddhism functioned like a special diacritical mark, separating them from Russian Siberians (Rus. *starozhily*) and Stolypin-era new settlers. Just as Orthodoxy and Russian nationalism could intertwine at times during the late Romanov Empire, with baptism seen as directly connected to Russification policies, the Buriat question went hand in hand with the Buddhist question. For Buriat nationalists, the issue of the status of their religion was on the same footing as their right to land, representation in parliament, and access to schools.

Nonetheless, this book only touches on issues of Buriat political activism and ethnonationalism and their correlation with Buddhism periodically. These processes only became truly relevant after 1905. This book covers the period before the first Russian revolution, the public announcement of the manifesto on religious freedom, and the beginning of the dismantling of the confessional system in Russia. Chronologically, the book examines the period spanning the mid-17th century – the era of the emergence of an organized Buddhist sangha – to the beginning of the 20th century. This does not exclude a few excursions into earlier or later periods when it proves necessary to demonstrate the sources and repercussions of certain important processes. Geographically, this study is limited to the areas that would become Transbaikial Oblast’ and Irkutsk Guberniia by the early 20th century. I sometimes refer to the “Baikal Region,” by which I mean the vast geographical area surrounding Lake Baikal. From the mid-17th to the early 18th centuries, this area was under a wide variety of jurisdictions: the Nerchinsk voivodship of the Tobol’sk division of the Siberian Prikaz (administrative office or department); Selenginsk voivodship in Irkutsk Province of Siberian Guberniia; Irkutsk Guberniia; Transbaikial Oblast’ (from 1851) of Irkutsk general-governorship; and the Transbaikial Oblast’ of Amur general-governorship. Buddhist datsans were scattered across various administrative areas and formations and the term “Baikal Region” allows us to avoid frequent mention of these details. This study furthermore only addresses the Buriat or Buriat-Mongol sangha, while the community also included several Evenki groups. Importantly, though this Buddhist community was the most numerous in Russia, it was not the only community. The second largest in size was the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha. The Buriat and Kalmyk communities had few ties during the imperial period, a fact explained not only by the great distances separating them, but also by the administrative structures that divided them. Buriat and Kalmyk Buddhist began to connect furiously in the early 20th century, a time outside the period examined by this book. I offer a few comparisons between the positions of the two Buddhist communities when sources allow. Uriankhai Territory, the third Buddhist region, was only incorporated into the empire during its final days and

never became part of its confessional structures. For this reason, it falls outside the scope of this book.

This study is based on a large body of archival materials, primary sources, and published works. These works are primarily in Russian, the earliest of which date to the 18th century, when members of the Second Kamchatka Expedition visited Transbaikalia and described the Buriat-Mongol Buddhist community at an early stage in its development. Missionaries from the Irkutsk diocese and Russian officials made significant contributions to our knowledge of Buddhism in Eastern Siberia, especially the officials who worked directly on crafting regulations for Buddhist communities or who inspected *khuruls* and *datsans*. (See, for example, Bühler 1859; Nil 1858.) Among academic works dedicated to the history of the Buriat sangha, the earliest and most significant in terms of their factual material and analysis date from the 19th century and include articles by Osip Kovalevskii (1829) and Aleksei Pozdnev (1886). In the early 20th century, Buriat intellectuals took an interest in Buddhism, but the wave of anti-religious sentiment in the early Soviet period put an end to their investigations until interest revived in the 1950s. (Bogdanov 1926) It was then that an extremely important book came out, unprecedented in the volume of material it encompassed: Soviet historian K. M. Gerasimova's *Lamaism and the National-Colonial Policy of Tsarism in Transbaikalia in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (1957). Though imbued with the ideological biases of Soviet historiography, it gave the first substantive overview of various drafts of regulations governing the affairs of the Buriat Buddhist sangha, administrative practices, and the overall development of state religious policy vis-à-vis Buriat Buddhist imperial subjects. Gerasimova's conclusions long remained incontrovertible, even after the publication of valuable works by Robert Rupen (1964) and Charles Bawden (1985) in the West, which examined the relationship between Buddhist clergy and Orthodox missionaries and the Buriat nationalist movement.

For all the importance of these and other works regarding the history of the Buriat Buddhist community, my research was mostly influenced by several recent publications by Dittmar Schorkowitz, Paul Werth, Robert Crews, and David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye. Across various books and articles, Schorkowitz examines a broader spectrum of issues related to the Buddhist community in Russia, analyzing the history of both Buriats and Kalmyks in the process. (Schorkowitz 2001a; Schorkowitz 2001b) This allows the author to make important observations based on comparative analysis, including some related to the regulation of Buddhist communities in Russia. Schorkowitz's depth of analysis is based on an impressive body of archival material from the central and regional archives of Russian Federation. This broad base of sources<sup>3</sup> allowed him to trace the complexity of how religious policy evolved in the Russian Empire, to outline the inter-ministerial collisions around how to govern non-Russian ethnic groups, and to demonstrate how decisions were made regarding conversion policies among the Buriats and Kalmyks, as well as the interrelationship between faith and national identities of the Buddhist peoples of Russia.

Robert Crews' works inspired my own at a time when I was just contemplating writing this book. (Crews 2003; Crews 2006) Crews' idea that relations with the Russian Empire were not only shaped by power asymmetries and mistrust, but also by mutually accepted compromises and political loyalty is fully confirmed by the research presented here. One can even say that Crews' theory proves convincing and justified to an even greater extent in the Buddhist case, than when applied to the Islamic communities in Russia.

Paul Werth's works proved equally inspirational and influential. They analyze the general character and structure of the Russian Empire as a multiconfessional state, to use his terminology. His recent book, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths: Toleration and the Fate of Religious Freedom in Imperial Russia* (2016), is a profound, breakthrough study of the internal religious politics of Russia in the imperial period. The merit and value of Werth's research lie in his impressive ability to present the religious



diversity of the empire and the complexity of its multi-faith structure using a large number of examples. The resulting work paints a complex and dynamic picture of the bureaucratic management of diverse religious traditions via a complex imperial governmental apparatus. Werth masterfully demonstrates how the decisions made regarding one faith community impacted the policies toward another, or in other words how conflicts around one church influenced religious policy as a whole. In addition, Werth manages better than any other scholar to show the multidimensional nature of the Russian religious landscape, including issues of pilgrimage, ties to mother churches abroad, and the problems of religious education and clergy privilege in his analysis. Werth's works create the necessary context and conceptual framework for studying specific confessional groups within the empire, as I have done with this book. Werth's research also proved extremely important to this work as he actively and knowledgeably analyzes "Buddhist" material.

David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye's monograph *Towards the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan* (2006) also exerted a significant influence on this book. While Werth's works help guide my thinking regarding the policy of Russian authorities toward specific faiths in the greater context of the Romanovs' confessional policies, van der Oye helped deepen my understanding of how intellectuals' concept of Asia and Eastern cultures changed over the course of the 19th century in Russia. This book proved especially helpful in exploring the influence of "Orientalist" enthusiasts on the "Buddhist" policy of the Romanovs, an ideological current whose main driving force was social activist and politician Esper Ukhtomskii. Thanks to Ukhtomskii and his supporters' efforts in fin-de-siècle Russia, a profound reconsideration of policy toward the East took place, especially toward Mongolia, Tibet, and China, that had a definite impact on the status of the Buddhists in the country.

This study owes its emergence and form to these books and articles yet is far narrower in scope than these works. My aim was to conduct a deep, detailed analysis of the Buriat Buddhist community, which, while the largest of the traditional Buddhist communities in Russia, remained comparatively small in the sheer number of its members. I believe that this kind of highly specialized research, though it makes no pretense of presenting a broad comparative perspective, may still enable the further deepening of our understanding of the historical interactions between ethno-religious communities and imperial formations. In their structure and sequence, the chapters of this book combine chronological and issue-related narrative principles. In the first chapter, I give a historical analysis of the Tibeto-Mongolian tradition of Buddhism and its relationship to the Manchu Qing Dynasty. One of the main conclusions suggested by this part of the book is that by the time Buddhism was expanding out of northern Mongolia into the Baikal region, Buddhist lamas took with them the historical experience of interaction with the state, one which assumed the active involvement of secular authorities in the affairs of the faith community. Government authorities became sacred in this worldview, possessing rights as the main regulators of community order. I then give a brief overview of interaction of the Romanov Empire with the religious traditions of its subjects that were designated "foreign faiths." In the 18th century, as Transbaikalia was being gradually incorporated into the empire, the confessional structure of the empire was also undergoing a formative phase. Buddhist lamas faced the task of building their community under typical and at the same time highly unusual circumstances. Ready to embrace strict government control and even eager for it, they had to endure constant, deliberate marginalization and bear the stigma of cultural difference and alienation. The second chapter traces the history of the first contacts between Russian colonial power and the small number of scattered groups of Buddhist lamas. After recognizing the legal status of these communities in 1741, the authorities set a course for regulating their life and their activities among the Buriats. The material presented in this chapter demonstrates that the main obstacle hindering the development of a system of interrelationships between the state and the central Buddhist administration was the lack of a legislative basis for these relations. Both sides were interested in laying down hard and fast rules, and we can see the movement to meet in

the middle on this issue as early as the first decades of the 19th century. The third chapter grapples with the history of the development of a charter to govern the Buddhists of Eastern Siberia. Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the interior ministry, and the Irkutsk general-governorship took part in this endeavor. Some took the recommendations and suggestions of the lamas themselves into account. Buddhists eagerly embraced the authorities' proposals, even the most oppressive, including the complete dependence of religious posts on the opinion of clan leadership and secular officials; the bureaucratization of the community and the formalization of its relationship with the state; and the reduction in staff lama numbers in monasteries. However, authorities were not prepared to work with the community on these questions and preferred to issue decisions from on high. The fourth chapter analyzes the history of the approval process for and contents of the Provision for the Lamaist Clergy of 1853, showing its influence on Buriat Buddhist life in the second half of the 19th century. The provision established numerous limitations on the number of monks, the construction of monasteries, publishing activity, and cross-border ties. To defend their rights, Buddhists not only exploited the contradictions embedded in the administrative systems of a vast empire, but also sought out allies among liberal-minded officials, social activists, and academic circles. They saw the empire not as an enemy force, but as a field of opportunities and a sphere of symbolic interaction. The perceptions of Buddhism among the Russian public at the time were also varied and variable. The fifth chapter explores the specific character of Buriat Buddhist reception of the Russian Empire, as well as the evolution of the perceptions of Buddhism that dominated Russian society in the 19th century. In their desire for dialogue with Russian society, Buddhists invariably collided with irreconcilable opposition from the dominant Russian faith, yet in general prejudice against the "lamaist idolators" in Russian society changed by the early 20th century to interest in and sympathy with their subordinated status.

The collapse of the empire after the 1917 revolutions and the civil war that followed were not greeted with enthusiasm by Buriat lamas. However, their reaction to the fall of the Romanovs was hardly homogenous. While the majority of lamas longed for the restoration of the empire and worked with leaders of the White movement, some other lamas preferred to create their own state based on a synthesis of Buddhist theocratic ideas and republicanism. Another group focused on reforming the Buddhist faith community and attempted to collaborate with the new Soviet authorities. All these fragmented factions were in constant conflict but suffered the same profound disappointment. By the early 1940s, the entire higher echelons of Buriat Buddhist lamas were politically repressed. The majority of monks were forced back into secular life and the organized Buddhist religious community ceased to exist for several years in the USSR. It was only after World War II that Stalin allowed the reestablishment of the office of the Bandido Khambo Lama as part of a larger effort to reconcile with religion. Two datsans were allowed to reopen in Transbaikalia, which were strictly monitored by the KGB and party organizations for the entire Soviet era.

Buddhism in Russia today is undergoing a tumultuous renaissance. (Amogolonova 2008) Interest in this community is also growing among international scholars. However, the level of knowledge regarding the imperial phase of the history of the Buddhist sangha remains relatively low, especially in comparison to the serious breakthroughs researchers have made regarding other faith groups in imperial Russia. I hope that this book will contribute to this very promising trend of growing interest in this subject sparked by other researchers.

### From the Qing to Romanovs

The form of Buddhism that took root in Tibet and in the small Himalayan kingdoms of Ladakh, Bhutan, and Sikkim, which traditionally were under the political and cultural influence of Tibet, has a unique model for religious society and its relationship with the state. This model proved very stable and productive, and in later years expanded far beyond the heartland where it first appeared. In this model, the relationship between religious masters and their lay patrons was constructed around the

notion of what Tibetans call chöyön (Tib. Wylie mchod yon), which is translated simply as priest-patron. This term consists of two parts: chöné (Tib. Wylie mchod gnas) or object of veneration and yöndak (Tib. Wylie yon bdag) the giver of alms or donor. The first part is a respectful term for a lama or master who may be either a monk or a non-monastic religious leader. The second part refers to the lay supporter of said leader.

The interconnection defined by chöyön is clearly linked to the ancient Buddhist idea that there are two autonomous spheres, the religious and the secular (Tib. Wylie chos srid zung 'brel). Despite the explicitly stated independence of these two worlds (which in historical practice was almost always disrupted by the lay side), these two spheres were bound tightly to one another, and this connection was considered the basis for harmony within the Buddhist state. In the words of Seyfort Rugg, the Tibetan concept of chö yön was a notion that “derived (at several removes) from and ultimately resting on ancient Indian and Buddhist ideas of the Dharma King (chö gyel = dharmarāja) and the Cakravartin-Sovereign as Donor (Sanskrit dānapati) to a bhikshu or to a community of monks, rather than an ad hoc political-diplomatic fiction invented by the Tibetans.”

Another important concept governing religious-political ideas, which reinforced the tendency of the Tibetan religious community toward political dominance in Tibet, was the theory of reincarnation, or the rebirths of authoritative and charismatic Buddhist leaders (trülku). This original Tibetan interpretation of the idea of the Buddha's manifestation in time and space and the endless chain of births living beings experience in the world of phenomenal existence became the doctrinal basis for the institution of reincarnate lamas, charismatic figures who could purportedly choose the place, time, and conditions of their next birth in samsara (the beginningless cycle of existence) thanks to their past moral achievements and the perfection of their knowledge. This tradition became an important structural component in Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism, around which particular Inner Asian political and religious traditions formed.

At the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, an authoritative Buddhist preacher and teacher, formerly a follower of Tibetan Buddhist school sakya, Je Tsongkapa Losang Drakpa (1357-1419), founded a new Buddhist tradition in Tibet, the gelukpa, or Yellow Hat school. Gelukpa tradition took the principles of strict monastic discipline from kadampa, a lineage that had almost disappeared by that time. This approach had lost a great deal of its fundamental significance in that period. Je Tsongkapa presented his ideas as a restoration, a return to the classical forms of monastic life that flourished in India before the 12th-century Muslim invasions. In the early 15th century, Je Tsongkapa's new school gained support of the powerful Pakmodru clan, which controlled Central Tibet and the province of Ü. (see Wylie 1980) With this clan's support, Je Tsongkapa and his disciples built several major monasteries around Lhasa, which soon became vital centers of Buddhist scholarship in Tibet. Gelukpa proved successful due to effective use of the two “technologies of power” described above: the chöyön system, which allowed monks to establish tight mutual bonds with worldly political forces, and the institution of trülku, which proved to have endless political potential and attractiveness for both religious and lay powers. As a result, after a competitive battle with other Buddhist schools and reincarnation lineages, religious and secular power in 17th-century Tibet fell into the hands of two major Yellow Hat trülku lineages, those of Dalai and Panchen Lamas.

In 1653, after the Manchus successfully conquered Mongolia and a large part of China, the Qing emperor Shunzhi received the highest Inner Asian Buddhist authority in Peking, the Dalai Lama Ngawang Gyatso. For the Manchus, this visit was important for a variety of reasons, including as a declaration of their official tie to the gelukpa tradition. At the same time, representatives of the Buddhist hierarchy also expected much from the visit. First and foremost, they needed their relationship to the greatest power in Inner and East Asia at the time to be seen as official. Yet they also longed for religious power to be centralized in Lhasa and for other potential sources of religious

power in Tibet and Mongolia to be crushed. For this reason, as Martynov rightfully argues, the initiative for the meeting “belongs to either of the parties, or to both at once; indeed it is possible that each side resolved to take the first step without knowing of the analogous intentions of the other side.”

The emperor’s meeting with the Dalai Lama resulted in granting official status to the idea of Qing patronage of the gelukpa, the religious tradition that starting in the late 16th century was widely adopted among Mongols. The Qing empire and gelukpa-dominated Tibet had a great deal of common interests, and among the most important was the centralization of religious authority in Lhasa and destruction of Yellow Hats’ religious rivals.

Yellow Hats officially won the help of the Qing emperor in wiping out “unorthodox” forms of Buddhism, such as the one developed by Neiji toyin in eastern Mongolia. Though in the years to come, the relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Qing authorities would be far from harmonious, gelukpa and the Qing Empire remained interested in partnership. According to Elverskog, over time gelukpa historiography forged a new Mongol identity based on loyalty to the Qing and on belonging to the greater Qing Buddhist community: “... Buddhism became for the Mongols in the nineteenth century no longer an element of cultural production that signaled differentiation, but its opposite. The Dharma was now the element that undergirded the structural framework of transethnic unification within the Qing.”

However, as with any strong and centralized monarchy, the Qing Empire could not help but see the gelukpa hierarchy as an alternative, and thus competing, source of political influence. Thus, in the 18th century, Emperors Yongzheng and Qianlong devoted their efforts to establishing control over Tibeto-Mongolian religious institutions. Their concrete undertakings reveal much of the relationship between temporal and religious authority under the Qing.

In Tibet, which was poorly integrated into the empire, the Manchus created the post of amban, or imperial representative, whose main duty was controlling local Tibetan powers. From 1727 to 1910, 173 ambans served in Tibet. They were not always an effective means of imperial control, but they substantially limited Tibetan independence. In the late 18th century, the process of imperial involvement in the affairs of the Tibetan sangha had become so far reaching that the emperor issued a decree laying out the process of selecting candidates for trülku, including the Dalai and Panchen Lamas. The amban was supposed to take part in the selection ceremony of the Golden Urn, in which the names of the candidates were placed ahead of time. This direct participation of temporal power in the affairs of the religious community upset the gelukpa hierarchy, and in the years that followed they effectively ignored or worked around this rule. “In practice, that arrangement was rarely followed and when it was, the circumstances suggest that the Tibetans had taken care to ensure that the name on which they had already decided came first out of the vase.”

The Qing emperors proved more effective at controlling the institution of the Jetsundamba Khutukhtu, the highest authority among the Mongol trülku (Mon. khubilgan) who had his seat at the monastery of Da Khure (Urga). Thus, after the death of the second representative of this lineage of Outer Mongol reincarnations, Emperor Qianlong issued a decree that all the following reincarnations had to be selected in Tibet and be ethnic Tibetans. The Qing emperors apparently attempted in this way to avoid a concentration of temporal and religious power in certain aristocratic Mongolian families. In the early 18th century, all the Mongol khubilgans had to undergo confirmation in Peking, where a list of approved reincarnation lines was established, with 57 lines in Inner Mongolia and 19 in Outer Mongolia. Of course, a greater number of lineages existed (up to 44 in Inner Mongolia) that were not granted legitimacy by the imperial authorities. However, the acknowledgement of the Qing emperor increased khubilgans’ prestige. In addition, the Qing initiated

a special hierarchy for khubilgans denoted by aristocratic titles, with gegen and khutuktu being at the top.

Starting with Emperor Kangxi, the Qing emperors attempted to turn Peking and its environs into an alternate center of gravity for Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhists. Their efforts to found a line of Peking-based khutuktus were politically motivated, part of the Qing strategy to control the religious institutions of Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism. Thus, in Peking in the reign of Emperor Kangxi, the printing of Mongolian and Tibetan books increased, while under Yongzheng and Qianlong, Qing emperors stepped into the role of canonizing rulers by organizing the publication of Tibetan and Mongolian compendia of canonical Buddhist works. Although the Mongolian canon had been translated in full under earlier Mongol rulers, Altan Khan and Ligden Khan, these translations underwent revision and the colophons of these works were altered to fit Qing political ideas. By the late 18th century, Peking was flooded with Tibetan and Mongolian monks, for whom luxurious temples and monasteries were constructed. In Chengde and Dolonnor, the holy sites of the Potala and Tashi Lhunpo were reproduced, and by the late 18th-century Wutaishan could compete with Lhasa in its attractiveness to Buddhist believers.

The institution of Peking head priests (da guoshi) was created by the end of the 17th century under Emperor Kangxi, who invited a monk considered very authoritative at the time in Tibet and Mongolia to Peking. This prominent figure, Changkya Ngawang Losang Choden (1642-1715) came from the Kokonor Monguors (Tu), a Sinicized Mongolian speaking group that lived in Gansu and Qinghai. The Manchus deliberately showed favor to Buddhist monks from Amdo region, an area at the crossroads of Mongolian, Tibetan, and Chinese cultures. As one researcher put it: “[a]s for the Manchu emperors, both Kangxi and Qianlong favoured those men who were able to bring together diverse cultures; they valued such a resource and were confident it would serve them well.” The post of chief priest was supposed to preside as the highest religious authority for the Buddhists of Inner Mongolia and Peking, and possibly by extension Mongolia as a whole. At various times, this post was filled by notable reincarnations from Amdo like Changkya Khutuktu and Tugan Rinpoche. For the Qing emperors, loyal and easily controlled religious authorities with trülku status served as a useful tool for influencing the minds of their Buddhist subjects, especially the Mongols. However, the gelukpa clergy had their own interests at play, too: “The Manchus were not the only ones who saw the Changkya Khutuktu as a means for increasing their power. The khutuktus also used the emperors to expand their tradition. In this, one should not of course see some religious-political edict from Lhasa. It was more likely the initiative and calculation of the khutuktu who was able to intertwine cunningly the interests of church and state to create Inner Mongolian-Chinese religious unity.”

From the very beginning of the Qing Empire, matters concerning Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhists were administered by the Lifan Yuan (the Directorate for External Territories). Founded in 1636, the Lifan Yuan, called the Mongol ministry before 1638, was one of the first state institutions created by the Qing. Early Qing documents call this body “one of the ‘Eight Yamen’ or main government departments.” (Ning 1993: 61) As its first name implies, the Lifan Yuan was involved with integrating the Mongol khoshuud (banners) into the newly emerging empire. The importance of the Lifan Yuan can be explained by the Qing’s particular policies toward Inner Asia, which significantly differed and purposefully departed from Qing policy toward the Han Chinese majority. For this reason, “from the outset, the Lifan Yuan was the preserve of Manchu and Mongol administrators, and the only body in which ethnic Chinese were excluded from positions above the rank of clerk-translator.” Up to the late 18th century, the Lifan Yuan was exclusively headed by members of the imperial family. However by the early 19th century, as Inner Asian tensions subsided, the department’s significance declined. From the first conflicts with the Romanovs and Russia’s initial diplomatic missions to Peking, right up to 1861, the Lifan Yuan was charged with managing Russian-Qing relations. During



that same period, the attitude of the Qing court toward Tibet and Buddhists also came under the administrative aegis of this department. In 1761, a special division was established, just to oversee the affairs of khubilgans in Tibet and Mongolia.

From 1691 to 1724, Qing imperial policies vis-à-vis Mongols and Tibetans administered via the Lifan Yuan aimed to decentralize the Mongols. The Mongols were divided into administrative units (khoshuud), each subservient to the government in Peking. Mongols in Inner and Outer Mongolia were governed by different divisions within the Lifan Yuan, each with its own different set of regulations. This way, the Manchus eliminated the threat of Mongol unification and consolidated Mongol administration within the imperial bureaucracy. From 1725 to 1762, the Manchus initiated a process of centralizing their rule of Outer Mongolia, preferring military officials or jiangjun based in Uliasutai to the traditional Mongol aristocrats. Outer Mongolia under the Qing was a frontier territory, and thus centralizing the military administration was of vital importance to the empire. Later, the post of amban was created in Urga and Kobdo. In addition to military duties that included mustering soldiers in times of emergency and commanding the Manchu garrisons based in Mongolia, the ambans and jiangjuns oversaw trade with Russia at the border town Kiakhta. (Di Cosmo 1998: 297)

The network of Buddhist monasteries scattered throughout Mongolia, including the large residences of the khubilgans, were decentralized along the same lines as the patrimonies of the Mongol aristocracy. Each monastery was administered individually by the Lifan Yuan. Thus, the Jetsundamba, despite his prestige and authority among Mongolia's Buddhists, was merely *primus inter pares* among a multitude of khubilgans. (The Jebtsundamba 1961) The Jetsundamba's administration, furthermore, did not even have the right to remove someone distasteful to the khutuktu from his post. Just as with the Mongol aristocracy, this approach aimed to prevent a consolidation of religious power in the hands of the Jetsundamba. In Tibet, however, the Manchus never introduced a similar system, likely because it would have proven highly difficult to administer in a faraway, remote region poorly integrated into the empire. Nevertheless, major Tibetan reincarnate lamas, including the Dalai and Panchen Lama, were still made subjects of the emperor via special court rituals.

One of the main functions of the Lifan Yuan involved organizing the annual court rituals that Mongol, Uighur, and Tibetan lay and religious leaders were obliged to take part in. These rituals included pilgrimage to Peking (chaojin), participation in the imperial hunt (weilie), and offering of tribute (chaogong). All these rituals, despite their great cost to state coffers, had a crucial symbolic significance. They symbolized "the supremacy of the Manchu emperor over all people under his rule [...] and opened an alternative channel for the integration of China proper and Inner Asia." In her investigation of the Lifan Yuan's history, Chia Ning notes that despite the fact that Mongol and Tibetan religious leaders were not required to take part in the yearly pilgrimage to Peking or of course to hunt, they were required to bring tribute, if only via intermediaries. This tribute, however, was more symbolic in nature:

"The Tibetan tribute goods and those from the Mongolian religious leaders were hada (silk presentation-scarf – the Tibetan ritual symbol for respect and friendship), sheli (a bronze Buddha – the sacred icon of Buddhism), coral, amber, Tibetan spice, and so on. The gifts in return from the emperor to them had both symbolic and practical values: large and small or five-colored hada, gold-plated tea containers, silver clocks, satins of various colors, clothes and so on."

Yet in official histories, Buddhist and Chinese interpretations of tribute diverge. Buddhists saw tribute as a not quite equal exchange of gifts that allowed the emperor first and foremost to fulfill his role as the highest patron to the Buddhist sangha, represented by Tibetan and Mongol khubilgans. From the Manchu perspective, as reflected in Qing histories, bringing Buddhist leaders into the tribute system just like secular vassals aimed to reinforce control over all sources of power without

exception, be they secular or religious. Nonetheless, religious leaders' status remained relatively ambiguous, caught between two different value systems. Within the chöyön system, lamas had a deeper relationship to the Qing emperors than traditional Chinese court etiquette allowed. This how one such visit is described in a hagiography of the Second Jetsundamba:

In the fire-snake year called dMar-ser, the third year of Ch'ien-lung, in the fourteenth year of his age (1737), he made his entry into Peking in order to have audience of the Emperor, and the Emperor had ministers meet him outside the gate and conferred gifts on him. Further, within, he set up his yellow temple and entered the pavillion, and just at that very moment the Emperor approached in a sedan chair and His Serenity hurried to meet him and knelt down and the Emperor said: "Blessed One, do not kneel" and hastened to leave his sedan chair and enter."

James Hevia, the well-known scholar of Qing court etiquette, draws the following conclusion regarding the relationship between Qing rulers and Buddhist trülkus: "... Tibetan lamas and Mongol hierarchs sought at various times to assert a long-standing Buddhist view that placed the lamas as the intellectual/ spiritual superior of a lord of the mere 'earth'." He is echoed by Joanna Waley-Cohen, who argues that Qing policy was characterized by domination of religious institutions, monopolization of relationships with sources of religious charisma, and repression of religious movements with centers of gravity that fell outside of imperial power. This becomes apparent when comparing the relationship with Buddhist leaders to historical episodes when millenarian groups like the White Lotus and the Eight Trigrams were repressed; Kangxi's resistance to the insistence of the Pope on spiritual governance over Chinese Christians; or the fervor Manchu rulers exhibited toward the Muslims of Xinjiang or Gansu as sources of unmanaged religious power.

Seyfurd Ruegg takes a broader view of the contradictory interactions between Buddhist clergy and Qing rulers. Ruegg suggests that historically we should not examine relationships like chöyön through the prism of secular versus spiritual power, but need to consider that in practical terms, these relations varied greatly over time.

Be that as it may, there was yet another tool along with the mechanisms of ritual and symbolic submission and the administrative apparatus of compulsion and representation of authority: the legal frameworks that allowed Qing authorities to effectively control the Buddhist communities of Tibet and Mongolia. Scholars have often noted the Qing Empire's legal pluralism, which was a logical extension of its diverse administrative system for governing its multicultural subjects. The Manchus constantly sought to balance the imperial impulse to homogenize the degree of submission of its subjects around a single center with the specificities of these subjects' economic, cultural, and religious traditions and the precise role of these subject populations in the empire. Thus, efforts to ensure northern Mongol submission to Qing authority had to be weighed against the straightforward need to preserve their martial spirit and potential demanded by their position as people on the frontier, the first defense of the empire's northern territories. This in turn required a special set of laws for Outer Mongolia, which were developed by the Manchus based on Mongol common law back at the dawn of the empire in 1631. Over the next 200 years, however, these laws underwent significant changes. Starting in the reign of Emperor Shunzhi, the Lifan Yuan was charged with crafting laws for the Mongols. Under Qianlong, Jiaqing, and Daoguang, the law codex that governed the Mongols was redacted to bring it more in line with the laws of the rest of the empire.

As discussed above, the indirect administration of the Mongols in the 17th century and their autonomy in practice was replaced by a system of imperial overseers in the first half of the 17th century, increasing the state control over Mongol herders' lives. This tendency emerged as the Mongols became less of a threat to the dynasty and as Inner Asia lost its significance within the empire.

According to Dorothea Heuschert, “[b]y the nineteenth century, the legislation of the Mongols had become so blurred by the influence of Chinese law that the Qing emperors no longer saw the need to enact separate penal statutes for the Mongols.”

The legal system administered by the Lifan Yuan also applied to the Buddhist community of Mongolia. Thus, the loss of religious institutional autonomy affected monks and monasteries as well. Compared to the liberal and privileged status of the sangha in the pre-Qing and early Qing periods in Outer Mongolia, when, according to common law, Buddhist monasteries were completely autonomous institutions without major limits on their activities, the Lifan Yuan began to regulate Buddhist affairs very strictly starting from the early 18th century. The number of monks was limited at that time with quotas, regulated by special certificates that permitted a monk to take vows. Like many Asian monarchs before them, the Qing emperors saw that controlling who could become a monk was key to controlling their numbers. Parallel to the traditional hierarchy of posts and titles in Buddhist monasteries, the Manchus introduced their own system of religious titles that included the *zasak da lama* and *zasak lama*, which allowed them to negate the power of traditional *khambos* and *shiretus*. (Rawski 1998: 254-5) The title of *zasak lama* was the only honor that could be bestowed on both monks and laymen and was created to make judicial and administrative power more effective.

In this way, the specific interrelationships between the Buddhist sangha and Qing emperors became increasingly characterized by the imperial administration’s attempts to gradually strengthen control by bureaucratic means and via a scrupulously constructed hierarchy that placed the worldly sovereign at the top. This control was crucial to the Manchus’ efforts to effectively quash an independent source of power, the institutionalized religious administration of Tibet and Mongolia. Thus, through a whole set of measures, the Qing established highly effective oversight over the Buddhist religious institutions of Inner Asia. Measures included the important annual ritual of tribute; the introduction of certification of monks, the introduction of a lay administrative post into the monastic hierarchy, the slow usurpation of religious investiture, the increasing control over *trülku* (via the “Golden Urn” or by prohibiting the quest for new incarnations in certain regions), the creation of the post of “first priest” in Peking, and lastly the creation of a vertical power structure that dominated the Mongolian monasteries.

The Manchu emperors over the course of a century managed to gain significant control over the religious institutions of Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism. They attempted to ingrain certain principles of state control into the Buddhist sangha by regulating the number of monks and centralizing monastic communities, among other methods. By the mid-17th century, when Buddhism began expanding into the central reaches of the Selenga Valley (southern Transbaikalia), Buddhist monks had developed very particular perspectives on the state’s proper role in the life of the monastic sangha.

### Russia’s Many Faiths

The swift expansion of Russia’s borders in the 16th century brought a great number of diverse peoples under Russian rule, all with their own ways of life, cultures, and religious beliefs. However, at the time, the Russian Orthodox church dominated state affairs, a defining characteristic of the Russian government until the church was finally excluded from the state bureaucracy. Peter the Great founded a special organ, the Most Holy Governing Synod, in 1721 to replace the Patriarchate, a purely religious institution. A secular official appointed by the Russian tsar and holding the rank of ober-procurator acted as head of the main confession of the empire. The absence of any serious resistance to this direct interference by the state in church affairs made Richard Pipes remark that, “[n]o branch of Christianity has shown such callous indifference to social and political injustice.” (Pipes 1974: 221) Later scholars stepped away such stark portrayals of the Russian Orthodox church as mere “handmaiden of the state.” American religious studies scholar Gregory Freeze even proposed that losing its position in the government actually brought the church far more advantages

than losses. “[...] the church never became – in law, in practice, in spirit – a mere ministry of religious affairs. Not that the secular state, especially at various points in the nineteenth century, did not strive to achieve such integration and incorporation. But it was precisely these assaults that impelled the clergy – both bishops and parish clergy – to dissociate themselves from the existing order, to reaffirm ecclesiastical interests and needs vis-à-vis the state, and to press more firmly their own political and social ambitions.” (Freeze 1985: p. 84)

No matter what the case, the Orthodox church always emphasized its special status in Russia. It considered the protection and promotion of church interests the state’s primary duty, especially among newly conquered nonChristians. The government, for its part, could not refuse to acknowledge the rightfulness of the church’s demands and assumptions. From the days of Muscovy, the ruling family had always been Orthodox and membership in the community of Orthodox believers in Russia was “often a precondition for social mobility and financial exemptions and privileges.” The state took Orthodox interests into account in its categorical prohibition of conversion to a different faith or church (which was subject to punishment) and proselytizing among Orthodox believers. In the case of marriage to someone of a different faith, it required baptism of any children of that marriage into the Orthodox church.

The Orthodox clergy had an absolute monopoly among believers, especially in the church’s direct control of primary and secondary education. Clergy did not have to serve in the military or pay taxes. The reputation of the state church was protected by a direct prohibition on criticizing the church in the press. The church had its own censor that doggedly followed all public statements about religious matters. At the same time, it ran a wide array of newspapers and journals, materials used in this study. The special relationship between the government and the dominant religion also manifested itself in the closeness to the imperial family of certain notable Orthodox leaders. In practice, this closeness often meant support of missionary activity by Orthodox priests among nonChristians. These missionaries considered their mission of conversion part of the greater Russian civilizing effort.

However, despite all this, the relationship between the state and the Orthodox church did not always run smoothly, especially when it came to non-Christian subjects and sensitive issues like forced Christianization. State authorities learned quickly from the consequences of forced baptism and religious repression that occurred under Peter the Great and during the reign of his daughter Elizabeth. Such radical methods of religious homogenization of the populace led to the alienation of a great number of imperial subjects, created support for anti-government demonstrations and riots like the Razin and Pugachev uprisings, and threatened the success of Russia’s foreign policy. For this reason, despite the protests of the Orthodox clergy, starting in the second half of the 18th century, the authorities seriously reconsidered to what extent they could support the Orthodox church’s insistence on expanding the faith beyond the carefully outlined boundaries laid down by the state. Authorities began to restrain missionaries’ more passionate efforts at the periphery of the empire, where public outcry could lead to serious problems. The government was not able to cope with such unrest due to its weak military presence in these areas and the proximity of rival powers. This held equally true in Ukraine, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Siberia. Thus, General Kaufman repeatedly went to Alexander II with the request to cease missionary work in Turkestan, hoping this would put a stop to the metropole’s efforts to integrate the new colony into the empire.

Officials were not only concerned with the fate of newly conquered lands. They perceived, as many did in Russia starting in the 16th century, that an empire made up of many ethnicities and faiths was nothing out of the ordinary. Like other empires, Russia strived for unity and considered religious and cultural diversity as “a temporary, initial state in the universal process of expanding enlightenment.” That imperial subjects might have their own customs and beliefs was seen as a natural occurrence.

As Jane Burbank described it, “[...] the empire produced a series of regulations and decrees that asserted the particular rights and obligations of whole groups of people, defined by territory, confession, ethnicity, or work. This cumulative kind of legalism corresponded to real differences in social norms and legal practices throughout the empire. The multiplicity of legal regimes legitimated within the empire both asserted the superior authority of Russian rule and allowed populations to do a great deal of governance themselves.”

Imperial authorities thought in terms of religion first and foremost, and not in ethnic or other categories. Confession-based identity lay at the heart of the social order. All imperial subjects had to have a confession. Even after the democratic revolution of 1905, imperial subjects had to state their confession officially, for the empire was not willing to give up this centuries-long reliance on confession as identity. The state allowed conversion from one faith to another, but only in the case of conversion from non-Christian to Christian faith, or from non-Christian or non-Orthodox Christian to Orthodoxy. Another defining characteristic of Russia’s religious policy in the imperial period was the impulse to tie particular ethnic groups to a particular religion: “Orthodoxy was inextricably linked with the (Great) Russian nationality. Protestantism went together with Germans (though of course Finns, Swedes, and Latvians were also generally of that faith). Last but not the least, Catholicism in Russian Empire was always seen in the context of the Polish question.”

Russia’s subjects practiced all the major world religions. In western regions and in parts of the Caucasus lived Christians of nearly every church – Catholic, Protestant, and Armenian, including smaller movements like Stundists and Uniates. After the internal schism when some Orthodox Christians refused to accept the reforms of Patriarch Nikon in 1653, significant communities of Old Believers sprang up across Russia, some of which were forcibly relocated to remote regions of the empire, including Transbaikalia. From the conquest of the Kazan and Astrakhan Khanates, up to the incorporation of the North and South Caucasus, the Bukhara Emirate, and the Khoqand and Khiva Khanates, Russia began to absorb large numbers of Muslims (approximately 20 million people), both Sunni and Shi’a.

After incorporating Poland, Russia wound up with a significant diaspora of Ashkenazi Jews. Many of the peoples who became part of the empire because of conquest observed local animist beliefs, such as the indigenous people along the Volga and in the Ural Mountains, as well as the northern Finno-Ugric tribes. There were also Paleo-Asiatic, Turkic, and Mongolic peoples in the empire’s steppe region, in the Urals, in the Far North, in Siberia, and in the Far East. Russia had to interact with these various and varied religions and worship practices and develop policies that struck a balance between the desire for religious uniformity shared by the Orthodox Church, the pragmatic need to avoid conflict with its own subjects particularly in border territories, and the projection of an attractive image abroad.

To do this, imperial authorities determined which religions merited the rank of “confession” and which were doomed to extinction. This question never came up with Islam, and yet in the 17th to mid-18th centuries the faith faced cruel repressive measures. Though Islam was recognized as a confession and its monotheism, idea of mortal sins, and divine revelations placed it among the “developed” faiths, it was considered inferior to Christianity. Islam was generally viewed as alien and harmful. For this reason, under Peter and Elizabeth, the government pursued the course of forcibly replacing it with Christianity, a policy that, not surprisingly, failed.

Animist and shamanist beliefs were unequivocally considered “pagan idolworship,” which gave Orthodox missionaries a great degree of license to destroy them. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Russian authorities preferred to have this “paganism” destroyed by conversion to other, non-Christian or non-Orthodox faiths, such as Islam, Buddhism, or Protestantism (which explains why officials permitted an Anglican mission in Transbaikalia). However, in later periods, this strategy



was seen as misguided. When combatting religious practices that had no institutionalized form, authorities were forced to confront insurmountable obstacles. The very “unorganized” nature of these practices, the absence of any notion of clergy, hierarchy, or religious administration, made these faiths difficult to pin down to a certain extent. This undefined quality in turn ensured their stability in the face of repression. False conversion, when believers in local cults accepted baptism simply to get rid of missionaries or to gain access to financial or social advantage, became common and obvious. For example, after 1905, masses of nominally Orthodox believers abandoned the faith. In some cases, animist communities were able to organize themselves and reassert their beliefs. Paul Werth describes an incidence of this dynamic, writing about Mari attempts to rationalize the Kugu Sorta spiritual movement and contrast to both the “Russian faith” (Christianity) and the “Tatar faith” (Islam). However, these attempts to push for a new confession were ignored by Russian authorities and Kugu Sorta was never officially recognized. The most active believers of Kugu Sorta were exiled to Siberia.

In the minds of imperial bureaucrats, confessions were always closely connected to notions of order and morality, even if as interpreted by “primitive aboriginals.” Any religion, if it were to be recognized as such, had to have several universal characteristics capable of serving state interests after some modifications and adjustments. This perspective emerged under Catherine the Great due to the influence of the French Enlightenment and German Cameralism. This led, among other things, to the state getting directly involved in regulating the central aspects of the religious life of nearly every community. We should not underestimate the openness of Russian rulers to drawing on the experience of other European and non-European empires. These empires often patronized various religions practiced by the population of their colonies. For example, the British colonial administration in India in certain periods preferred to act as a patron of local shrines and mosques, to undertake scholarly studies, and to codify Hindu and Muslim legal traditions as a foundation for their own laws. As Robert Crews notes, in the case of Islam with its highly developed legal tradition, imperial authorities took on the task of defining the boundaries of how canonical shariah law was applied in everyday practice. This led authorities to legitimize official religious administrations and allow them to repress any religious movements they considered heretical or unorthodox. Religious middlemen between the state and the community made full use of this right and found in the minds of imperial bureaucrats, confessions were always closely connected to notions of order and morality, even if as interpreted by “primitive aboriginals.” Any religion, if it were to be recognized as such, had to have several universal characteristics capable of serving state interests after some modifications and adjustments. This perspective emerged under Catherine the Great due to the influence of the French Enlightenment and German Cameralism. This led, among other things, to the state getting directly involved in regulating the central aspects of the religious life of nearly every community. We should not underestimate the openness of Russian rulers to drawing on the experience of other European and non-European empires. These empires often patronized various religions practiced by the population of their colonies. For example, the British colonial administration in India in certain periods preferred to act as a patron of local shrines and mosques, to undertake scholarly studies, and to codify Hindu and Muslim legal traditions as a foundation for their own laws. As Robert Crews notes, in the case of Islam with its highly developed legal tradition, imperial authorities took on the task of defining the boundaries of how canonical shariah law was applied in everyday practice. This led authorities to legitimize official religious administrations and allow them to repress any religious movements they considered heretical or unorthodox. Religious middlemen between the state and the community made full use of this right and found themselves dependent on imperial authorities who granted them that power. This approach kept these religious minorities loyal to the empire and sometimes led to estrangement of religious communities from their fellow believers beyond the empire’s borders.

### Population of the Russian Empire by Religious Confession

Faith	Population	% of Total
Orthodox Christians	87,123,604	69,3
Muslims	13,906,972	11,1
Roman Catholics	11,506,809	9,2
Jews	5,215,805	4,2
Protestants	3,762,756	3,0
Old Believers	2,204,596	1,8
Armenians	1,179,266	0,9
Buddhists	433,863	<0,5
Karaites	12,894	<0,5
Other non-Christians	285,321	<0,5
Other Christians	8,135	<0,5

Religious administrations paid for imperial protection by accepting their subordinate position, maintained via the incorporation of these administrations into the imperial bureaucracy. In 1810, Alexander I created the Chief Directorate for Religious Affairs of Foreign Faiths, which administered state policy toward religious minorities via a hierarchical system constructed within their respective faith organizations. In 1817, it merged with the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and in 1832 became the Department of Religious Affairs of Foreign Faiths under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. However, the administration of religious minority affairs was not centralized in this institution alone.

At various times, various faiths were under the administrative auspices of the Most Holy Governing Synod, foreign policy-related bodies from the Ambassadorial Prikaz to the foreign Foreign ministry Ministry, the Ministry of State Domains, the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment, various other state committees, and finally, local provincial administrations, which saw themselves as operating on the frontlines of interaction with religious minorities.

This partly purposeful, partly necessary dispersion of administrative resources was a constant source of conflict, dictated by the diverse priorities and interests of these different government divisions. Foreign policy institutions saw the relationship between the empire and its non-Orthodox subjects through the lens of international interests. The Synod and the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment focused primarily on matters of Russification and Christianization, while the interior ministry and local authorities thought first and foremost of security issues, especially on the empire's periphery. At the same time, imperial rulers consciously divided up the affairs of various faiths among various institutions to reduce the opportunity for religious minorities to lobby for their own interests.

For instance, by concentrating the administration of Volga Muslims in the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly, the regime intentionally avoided putting them under the same jurisdiction as the Muslims of the Crimea, the North Caucasus, and Turkestan. This principle expressed itself in a similar fashion among Buddhists. Kalmyk religious life was mostly administered by the Ministry of State Domains, while the Buddhists of East Siberia fell under the auspices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This division likely had the goal of blocking any consolidation of Russia's Buddhists, even within imperial administrative organs. Attempts by Buriat and Kalmyk Buddhists to create a united front and pursue

issues important to both groups in the early 20th century were invariably met with resistance from authorities.

Laws also proved an important mechanism of incorporating religious communities into the state system and regulating their internal affairs. In general, the empire was forced to rely on the elites of the communities they wanted to govern, those leaders the community members selected and confirmed. In this regard, religious organizations differed little from other bodies dedicated to ethnic self-governance. The empire kept itself out of things it could not afford to get involved in, and for this reason delegated some of its authority and power to the religious bureaucracies it founded. However, these same bureaucracies had to remain completely controlled by the empire.

In the first half of the 19th century, imperial administrators engrossed themselves in the development of detailed laws for ruling the Muslims of Crimea (1831), Protestants (1832), Jews (1835), Armenian Christians (1836), and Karaites (1837). These laws were tailored to the specifics and needs of their respective faiths. To achieve this, the empire financed fact-finding expeditions led by specialized officials and actively employed their findings. Moreover, officials devoted particular attention to how neighboring empires governed their religious communities, as some of the administrators involved in religious efforts were former diplomats. Finally, the empire's history of administering the Orthodox Church served as a special source of ideas for crafting religious law. Thus, the hierarchies of various faiths transformed into state institutions and their members became civil servants.

In creating or restructuring faith institutions, imperial administrators were forced to cope with the various social functions religious leaders played in diverse faiths. These "clergy" issues were often solved mechanistically, by imposing the same set of duties and obligations on all religious leaders. One of the most important was recording births, registering marriages, and conducting funerals. Thus, after recognizing ulemas and mullahs as "Muslim clergy" in the late 18th century, the government required them to manage birth records in 1828 (for the Volga-Ural region) and 1832 (for Crimea). Catholic priests and Jewish rabbis had the same duties. In its notion of "clergy," the empire was guided by the experience it had gained in dealing with Orthodox priests and transferred priestly rank privileges to non-Orthodox priests. Thus, like their Orthodox counterparts, rabbis, ulemas, Catholic priests, and lamas were all freed from corporal and capital punishment.

To justify their special status, religious leaders and priests were obliged to serve as agents promoting imperial initiatives among believers. Imperial administrators required their support to push through unpopular reforms and relied on them for help. For example, early 19th-century statesman and reformer Mikhail Speranskii envisioned a special role for Buddhist lamas in spreading agriculture and settling the nomadic Buriat-Mongols: "Convince the lamas that they are bound in duty to broaden the practice of agriculture and that only by this they may earn the grace afforded them." The government also expected the active involvement of religious elites in endeavors serving the social good, like combatting epidemics, supporting hospitals and orphanages, running soup kitchens for the poor, and assisting the military at the front. (see *Dela o nagrazhdenii*) Non-Orthodox clergy were also required to act as judges: "Like Islamic courts, Jewish beth-din dealt with marriage, divorce, inheritance, commerce, and contracts. Such institutions administered oaths to soldiers, witnesses, and litigants, demonstrating that the Orthodox creed was not the only pledge of political loyalty recognized by the state."

No less important were the empire's attempts to extract all possible value from religious diversity. Its control of important religious institutions allowed it to influence populations in neighboring empires, giving it another diplomatic tool, as in the case of the Catholicos of Echmiadzin. This diplomatic policy in many ways evolved to address issues of religious migration: "Pilgrimage, for example, could often take believers beyond the borders of the Russian empire, whether to Mecca

(Muslims), Urga (Buddhists), Rome (Catholics), or Jerusalem (Orthodox). The requests of believers for permission to travel abroad on pilgrimage raised crucial issues about issuing passports and granting leaves of absence to mullahs and imams.”

Nonetheless, religious minorities clearly faced discrimination, right up to the 1905 Edict of Toleration and after, if perhaps to a lesser degree. Imperial religious tolerance in Russia was seen not as an acknowledgement of the right of imperial subjects to follow their conscience or even follow their traditions, but rather as a temporary restraint from forced conversion to the state religion required by geopolitical or other dynamics. The ultimate goal of bringing subjects (at least those of small ethno-religious groups) into the Orthodox Church always remained; its achievement was merely delayed, not abandoned. Missionary posts were financed by the state, and Christianization continued to be a government priority on par with conquering lands at the imperial periphery and resettling ethnic Russians from European areas into these territories. For many imperial subjects, baptism into Orthodoxy was a real way to improve their social and economic standing. Converting to the “faith of the tsar” was a conscious decision: “Rather than ignoring such episodes or treating them as cases of ‘collusion’ or even ‘betrayal,’ we should take them seriously as examples of the different ways non-Russians evaluated their prospects in the empire ...”

Thus, as Buddhist lamas came under Russian imperial control, they faced the task of creating a religious community under extremely complex conditions. Though willing to function under serious state oversight thanks to their history of dealings with the Qing authorities, they now had to survive under constant, purposeful marginalization, bearing the stigma of alien others.

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Since Buddhism appeared in southern Transbaikalia, Buddhist monks had their own ideas about what role empire should play in the life of their community. Russia, by the time it encountered the Buddhist civilization of Inner Asia, also had a consolidated tradition of how church and state should interact. This tradition assumed that even the dominant church had an inferior position to state institutions and that clergy occupied their own separate social category free from taxes, duties, and corporal punishment. It also held that the population was divided along confessional lines, but it strove to unify the principles shaping religious administration. Religious and ethnic differences were considered a standard part of political and social life.

The 18th-century set of initiatives from government agencies and the Buddhist community examined in this work demonstrate that imperial Russia, in its early dealings with the Buddhist community, tried first and foremost to establish oversight over the process of monastic ordination, much like the rulers of other countries in Buddhist Asia. And much as in other traditionally Buddhist areas, this task was addressed via centralization of power, via the reinforcement of a monopoly on monastic vow-taking through a community leader (initially the Tsongol taisha, then the head lama, and starting in 1764, the Bandido Khambo Lama); and via the introduction of the concept of official (staff) lamas with a limited quota of permitted monks. Another important task that stood before the Russian administration was reliably isolating Buriat Buddhists from their fellow believers abroad. The Baikal region was a frontier zone, and the Buddhist community naturally extended far beyond the borders of the state. Pilgrimage routes, monk involvement in transborder trade, Buriat Buddhists’ dependence on religious items and literature produced in Urga, Peking, Dolonnor, and Lhasa made this task nigh impossible.

Almost two centuries of fighting for a truly autocephalic and organized Buriat Buddhist community on the part of Russian authorities yielded two paradoxical results. First, by the late 19th century, the empire itself began to see Buddhists’ international religious ties not as a threat, but as an opportunity to expand Russian interests in Asia. Secondly, by this time, Buriat Buddhist administrators began to

assert their own interest in independence and in protecting their market for religious services from the intrusions of foreign lamas.

One of the conclusions that can be drawn from the research discussed here is the idea that by the early 19th century, both the Buddhist community and local and central authorities became convinced that establishing firm rules for their interaction was absolutely necessary. We have seen this in the actions of provincial authorities grappling with the challenges of real-life administrative practice, of imperial authorities striving to harmonize religious legislation, and of Buddhists themselves searching for solid ground in their relationships with officials.

In 1830-1850s, central government agencies debated several pieces of draft legislation to manage the religious affairs of Buriat Buddhists. They stemmed from either liberal or conservative points of view. The foreign ministry, allied with the Ministry of Finance, examined the “lama question” in the context of long land borders and complex international interests, including the cross-border trade with the Qing, which yielded a good amount of revenue for the treasury. In 1832, Schilling, a well-known Russian expert in Asian studies, proposed a draft law based on proposals from Buddhists themselves. According to the information available, this draft proposed a partial decentralization of the community and the active participation of laypeople in general (via the institution of *ubashis* and *zasak-lamas*) and of Buriat self-government in particular. The detailed regulation of monastic ranks and duties laid out in the charter reflects the ongoing bureaucratization and integration of Buddhist administration into the government apparatus. Schilling’s charter preserved the vertical of religious power, but at the same time gave broad opportunities for laypeople and ordinary monks to participate in monastery affairs, even if the circle of laypeople involved was mostly limited to clan heads and elders.

Analysis of archival materials reveals that provincial authorities had little enthusiasm for the first set of laws proposed to govern Buriat Buddhist affairs. Provincial officials tended to underestimate the risks of the frontier zone. It was the governor-general’s office, after all, that initiated a large-scale plan for Russian expansion in the Far East in the mid-19th century. Local authorities’ strict, restrictive approach to the “lama question” can also be explained by the closer relationships between local officials and Orthodox missionaries, who invariably connected the failure to convert Buriats to Christianity with the reinforcement of Buddhism’s position in the region. Regardless, the draft developed by the governor-general of East Siberia A. S. Lavinskii in the 1830s can be considered the harshest in the number and degree of restrictions it proposed. However, despite sympathies toward the project among agencies in the capital, it had no chance to be implemented.

The interior ministry took a position between the liberal stance of the foreign ministry and the prohibitive strategy of East Siberian authorities. The governor-general’s office reacted with skepticism to the concerns of the Asiatic Department of the foreign ministry that a tough approach to the “lama question” was capable of doing serious harm to Russian political interests in Asia. The interior ministry for its part did not trust the exclusively negative judgements by officials and missionaries of the role of lamas in Buriat society. The investigation undertaken by Levashev in Transbaikal confirmed that provincial authorities had clearly distorted the situation on the ground. In 1841, Levashev proposed his own draft charter that under detailed inspection proves to be a slightly altered version of Schilling’s proposal. Nonetheless, Levashev’s version compromised between the perspectives of foreign affairs agencies and the provincial administration. Despite this it was also rejected by the imperial authorities in the end.

In examining the formation process of state policy toward Buriat Buddhists, I was guided by the point of view that the object of this policy – the organized Buddhist sangha of Buriat-Mongols – should be seen as an agent in its own right interacting with the authorities. The documents in Tibetan and Mongolian languages I presented in this book demonstrate convincingly that lamas and



laypeople strove to have a constructive dialog with authorities. From 1830 on, the Selenga and Khori lamas and clan elders presented their own proposals for managing Buddhist affairs on several occasions. It is worth noting that these proposals did not in any way reject the notion of strict limits on the number of official monks or the active involvement of secular agencies in the internal affairs of the sangha, from the clan administration to the foreign ministry. They supported the bureaucratization and formalization of their relationship with authorities and agreed to the significant reduction in the numbers of monks. However, with the exception of Schilling, not a single official involved in addressing the “lama question” showed any interest in working with the Buddhists themselves. The government was accustomed to seeing religious minorities as the passive objects, not the active subjects of imperial policy.

In 1853, Emperor Nicholas I approved a legislation drafted by governor-general of East Siberia N. Murav’ev stipulating a set of regulations that governed the Buriat Buddhist community until the end of the 19th century. The Provision on the Lamaist Clergy of 1853 was an important stage in the history of Buddhism in the Russian Empire. Analysis of this document reveals that it was based on Levashev’s draft, which in turn was inspired by Schilling’s charter and thus was connected to the rules proposed by Buddhists themselves in 1830. Nonetheless, the 1853 Provision remained restrictive in spirit. This was true despite the interior ministry’s insistence that the first version’s harsher articles be removed, such as the introduction of corporal punishment for monks.

During the Provision’s drafting, Murav’ev also drew on the experience of the Qing Empire and its interactions with Buddhist Mongolia. The government felt compelled to approve the statute. Preparations to expand in the Far East demanded that authorities assert increased control in the frontier zone. Nonetheless, the Provision did not radically change the position of Buddhists in the region. Officials were still unable to solve the problems of cross-border migration and of the existence of a substantial number of unofficial monks. Under pressure from Orthodox missionaries and the Most Holy Governing Synod, Murav’ev’s Provision was subject to review almost immediately after its implementation. However, the interior ministry did everything it could to keep the laws unchanged it had worked so hard to develop.

In the second half of the 19th century, Orthodox missionaries played a substantially greater role in the “lama question.” The range of commentaries, reports, essays, and letters written by Orthodox missionaries analyzed in this work demonstrate that they linked questions of Christianization with the need to promote state interests when it came to Buddhists. In other words, the mission saw its goal not only as inculcating Christian values, but also as strengthening the principles and foundations of Russian statehood as an investment in the defense of its conquered territories. When missionaries managed to find common cause with provincial authorities and the support of the Synod, Buddhists felt the weight of their status as believers in a “tolerated superstition” more acutely.

In examining the diverse cases of conflict with the authorities in the 1860-70s and in the 1890s, the present research primarily focused on models of response, on the reactions of Buddhist circles to the challenges the state threw at them, usually represented by provincial authorities. I looked in depth at the remarkable failed 1859 elections of the Bandido Khambo Lama, which led the community to a crisis in its relations with the provincial administration. In this situation, Buddhist lamas proved willing to accept the appointment of an Orthodox missionary as the head of the sangha, something even the authorities found unexpected. In searching for a compromise with authorities, Buddhists invariably implemented a strategy of “skillful means” (*upāya*), which implied extreme flexibility and accommodation in dealings with authorities.

However, even this strategy had its limits. When the Buddhists butted heads with the authorities, they knew how to mount a consolidated and organized response. When a campaign heated up in 1872 to destroy religious sites sacred to the Khori and Selenga Buriats, various clan groupings that

had previously been competitors in religious issues united and responded, in fact achieving the resignation of the governor-general.

To do this, as archival materials and sources testify, they undertook a strategy of petitions and appeals to authorities at various levels. It is even possible that some lobbying attempts were made via diplomatic channels by involving the authority of the Qing Emperor. Naturally, the Buddhist religious community was aided by certain objective conditions, including a fear among officials of escalating conflict and of ruining the empire's international image. However, it is obvious that by the late 19th century, the Buriat Buddhist community began to prioritize centralizing tendencies, which became particularly clear in 1890 when Russian authorities attempted to chop up the sangha by removing datsans in Irkutsk Province from the Khambo Lama's jurisdiction. Russia's revolution of 1905 did not lead to fundamental change in imperial policy toward Buddhism, but as a result of the events of that year, Buddhism was no longer a faith without rights, whose continued existence depended wholly on the grace of the monarch.

The history of Buddhism in the Asian part of the Russian Empire extended for more than two centuries. These centuries were a time of mutual cultural enrichment and of difficult searches for models of coexistence, which were accompanied by mistakes and solutions, contradictions and compromises. As a whole, this yielded unprecedented experience. Without this experience, it is hard to imagine how the history of Buddhism in modern Russia would have unfolded. <>

## **PASSIONATE ENLIGHTENMENT: WOMEN IN TANTRIC BUDDHISM** by Miranda Shaw [Princeton Classics, Princeton University Press, 9780691235592]

The crowning cultural achievement of medieval India, Tantric Buddhism is known in the West primarily for the sexual practices of its adherents, who strive to transform erotic passion into spiritual ecstasy. Historians of religion have long held that the enlightenment thus attempted was for men only, and that women in the movement were at best marginal and subordinated and at worst degraded and exploited. Miranda Shaw argues to the contrary, presenting extensive new evidence of the outspoken and independent female founders of the Tantric movement and their creative role in shaping its distinctive vision of gender relations and sacred sexuality.

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The path that led to **PASSIONATE ENLIGHTENMENT** can be traced to an exhibition of Tibetan paintings I attended as a sophomore in college. I was captivated by images of boldly dancing and leaping females with billowing hair framing supple limbs, unclad bodies draped with delicate adornments fashioned from flowers and bone, and intense gazes seeming to penetrate the depths of reality. They conveyed freedom, mastery, and spiritual power. Their portrayal was unlike any female imagery I had encountered in Western art, and I felt compelled to find out about the women who inspired such potent images. When scholarly literature provided scant answers, my interest intensified into a quest that set the course of my academic journey through art history, language

study, Buddhist studies, and fieldwork in South Asia—the heartland of Buddhist Tantra, or Vajrayana, in the eighth through twelfth centuries CE and still host to the living tradition.

My research was part of an emerging (and ongoing) effort across disciplines and around the globe by feminist scholars of many cultures and ethnicities to restore women's stories, voices, and views to the historical record. In many cases, such as the present volume, the discoveries revise our understanding of the period, movement, or tradition in question.

I turned next to the female divinities of South Asian and Himalayan Buddhism. I traced the evolution of the pantheon through the twelfth century and had more scope to delve into the Vajrayana deities. Results of this research were published in *Buddhist Goddesses of India* (Princeton University Press, 2006). *Passionate Enlightenment* establishes the female-affirming orientation of the tradition as one that stipulates honor for women and requires reverential attitudes, behaviors, and rituals (such as *stri-puja*, ceremonial "worship of women") from male practitioners. The founding roles of female visionaries, gurus, and teachers evince esteem for the guiding wisdom of women. The principles and practices are embedded in the gynocentric metaphysical matrix of Vajrayana cosmology, ontology, epistemology, and soteriology. By the second century CE, Mahāyāna had recognized two metaphysical ultimates as feminine, namely, emptiness and wisdom. Emptiness (*sunyata*, a feminine noun) is the matrix of reality, the cosmic womb, the all-encompassing space wherein all phenomena arise and dissolve in endless stream. The maternal source of enlightenment is the liberating wisdom (*^rajna*, a feminine noun) that crowns the spiritual quest, personified as a glorious golden goddess installed at the apex of the pantheon as the eternal mother who gives birth to all Buddhas and the ever-flowing font of all that Buddhas teach.

Vajrayana enlarged the female pantheon and expanded the scope of female primacy to encompass a full range of generative, transformative, and liberative powers. For instance, the blue female Buddha Nairatmya personifies emptiness. Her bodily hue evokes sky and infinite space, representing the universal expanse of awareness freed from the bounds of separate selfhood. She is the root source of mantras, the essential element of all Vajrayana practice. Mantras activate the power of sound to transform consciousness and attune practitioners to the deities and sacred realities. In the esoteric yogic method of karmic purification at the subtle anatomical level, the transforming power is a feminine force, the inner heat or fire (*candali*) that is kindled in the navel chakra and spread through the body, incinerating karmic dross. The inner flame is personified by the fiery red goddess Candali, whose ferocity heralds that she can burn through any karmic obstacle in her path. Although primary source as female finds many expressions in the Vajrayana domain, Buddhism has never held that what is real and true is fully expressible or definable. The Vajrayana imaginaire is evocative rather than literally descriptive on grounds that all verbal and visual renderings are offered to inspire practitioners for whom they are meaningful and liberating.

An issue frequently raised since the book was published is whether Vajrayana is hetero-normative. The question arises because of the pervasive use of male-female pairing (of deities, doctrines, ritual components, and visual and symbolic motifs) throughout the system. Moreover, instructions for sexual yogic practices describe the differing anatomy and roles of male and female partners. To assess the import of the focus on male-female coupling, it is helpful to consider cultural perspectives on gender identity, sexual identity, and same-sex relations that were in place well before and during the centuries when Vajrayana emerged, as attested in scriptures, mythic narratives, erotic manuals, and religious arts. In the South Asian purview, there is no "gender identity" in the Western sense. Across the religious spectrum, personal traits are considered adventitious, fluctuating over a lifetime and across multiple lives, while identity resides in a deeper, enduring core, such as the soul (*atman*) in Hindu contexts and Buddha-nature (*tathagata-garbha*) in Buddhism.

Absent belief in stable gender identity, gender fluidity wends through the cultural terrain in many variations of gender changes, transvestism, and androgyny, both human and divine. Instances of all these phenomena in the stories and images of supreme deities provide divine exemplars and a hallowed template for the human realm. Nor was South

Asian thinking bound to a binary gender system. For at least two millennia, the Sanskrit vocabulary has included a third gender, "neither man nor woman" (napumsaka), a capacious category with no pejorative connotation. Myriad constellations of third gender persons and directions of sexual desire were recognized. Same-sex attractions, desires, and acts were included on the sexual spectrum as "male-male" and "female-female" without evaluative comment or placement in a distinct category. The concept of "sexual identity" would be misplaced in this setting and entered Western discourse only when "homosexual" came into the lexicon to designate a kind of person (rather than a behavior) in the late nineteenth century and "heterosexual" acquired its current meaning in the mid-twentieth century.

Considering the cultural landscape in which Vajrayana took root, we can better assess whether the focus on male-female coupling intentionally prescribes heterosexuality or prohibits or excludes homoerotic relations. There was no salient homophobia with which to contend and no controversy surrounding homoeroticism on which the founders of Vajrayana might be prompted to take a stand. Vajrayana did renounce the prevalent form of sexual discrimination, which was based on a hierarchy of social class (four main castes and their subdivisions) and strictures designed to safeguard the purity of members of the highest, priestly class from pollution by the lower classes. Close bodily contact and exchange of bodily fluids posed the greatest dangers. Therefore, sexual misconduct revolved around cross-caste relationships, which are minutely catalogued by combinations of castes and subcastes and considerations of which partner was male and female, the level of contact (from kissing to coition), whether it happened once or more, whether it was done knowingly, and the seriousness of each violation and attendant penalty. Cross-caste marriage and ensuing progeny are classified to a similar degree. Male-male and female-female relations find rare mention and do not in themselves constitute sexual misconduct. Vajrayana scriptures reject caste discrimination and pollution taboos, exhorting practitioners to refrain from making distinctions based on social categories and norms. When practitioners gather for a ritual, feast and drink together, or select Tantric partners, they are enjoined to give no thought to purity or impurity and who is highborn or low. Tantric partners are to be chosen on the basis of spiritual compatibility, such as commensurate advancement on the path or a karmic connection developed over lifetimes, regardless of suitability by social standards. From the standpoint of nondual wisdom, all conceptual and verbal constructs are context-specific and not ultimately applicable. The equality that reigns in Tantric circles and ceremonial life reflects the ontological view that reality is an indivisible whole and that all beings are enlightened in essence. The equality and sacredness of all living beings is revealed when seen truly, with the purified vision of enlightened awareness.

The central Tantric practice is deity yoga, a process of envisioning oneself as a deity in order to awaken the divine qualities and powers that are present but latent. Men and women can visualize themselves as a male or female deity, and there are many among which to choose, from luminously peaceful to blazingly ferocious. The gender of the deities is fluidic; they manifest different bodies to serve different persons, populations, and purposes. In a conversation that unfolded between a Buddha couple in sexual embrace, the male Buddha declared that he is woman, man, and "neither man nor woman" (napumsaka) and that the same is true of his female partner. A distinctive contribution of Tantra to the Buddhist historical stream was to integrate intimate relationships and erotic experience into practices on the path to enlightenment. Vajrayana was expanding the repertoire of spiritual disciplines to include sexuality, not foreclosing on what forms of sexuality are allowed or acceptable. The purpose of sexual yoga is to elevate the pleasures of erotic communion



to higher octaves of bliss, while meditative focus on lovemaking is a portal to nondual wisdom. According to Tantric embryology, a drop of pure bliss joins the egg and sperm at the moment of conception and settles in the heart, ready to be awakened. Therefore, the experience of bliss depends on having a body, not a body of a particular gender. If a Tantric scripture or treatise describing sexual yoga for same-sex partners has survived, it has not yet been discovered, but one may yet be written. Tantra is a tradition of ongoing revelation, allowing for adaptation to different settings and historical moments.

Even in the known texts and published materials, however, most of the methods to heighten pleasure, direct energy through the subtle yogic anatomy, and share energy to accelerate the process do not vary according to the gender(s) of the partners and can be applied in homoerotic context, as Tibetologist Jeffrey Hopkins has illustrated for male couples. (Jeffrey Hopkins, **SEX, ORGASM, AND THE MIND OF CLEAR LIGHT: THE SIXTY-FOUR ARTS OF GAY MALE LOVE** (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1998).) To do so is fully in the spirit, if not the letter, of Tantra. A necessary element of the practice is to relinquish ordinary perceptions and conceptions of one's partner as a separate "self" with definable traits in favor of seeing their sacred core. Relating to one another as divinities, the partners leave the illusions of conventional reality behind, merge in oneness, and reach a state of transcendent bliss and nondual awareness.

The male-female pairing is a metaphor, not a prescriptive or proscriptive view of sexual partnering. Buddhism has perennially recognized the myriad methods and teachings of the tradition as conventional. The goal of full awakening is singular, but ways to express and attain it are ever evolving and limitless. Any duality invoked in a visual or verbal teaching is intended to point beyond itself and serve as a means of transport to an experiential realization, like a raft that is abandoned on the shore once the river has been crossed. Therefore, the imagery of male and female is conventional, not descriptive in an ultimate or essentialist way. Dual pairs are provided to signal the differences and separations that dissolve in the nondual state of enlightened awareness. <>

## THE MONGOLS by Timothy May [Past Imperfect, Arc Humanities Press, 9781641890946]

The Mongols emerged from obscurity to establish the largest contiguous empire in history. Although they are now no longer viewed as simply an unbridled force of destruction, it remains unclear as to how they succeeded in ruling a empire that stretched from the Sea of Japan to the Black Sea. This book investigates how the Mongol adopted and adapted different ruling strategies from previous Inner Asian empires as well as Chinese and Islamic Empires to rule an empire in which they were a distinct minority, and also investigates the processes by which this empire fragmented into an increasing number of states, many of which lasted into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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It was a dark and stormy night when the Mongol fleets anchored off the coast of Japan at Hakata Bay and Imari Bay in 1281. With their fleet arranged as a floating fortress, the Mongols waited for a dawn that never came as a tsunami struck the Mongol fleet, destroying much of the fleet and scattering the remainder. The failure at Japan marked a tipping point for the Mongols. No longer did their armies march inexorably across Eurasia defeating all who opposed them, creating an empire that stretched from the shores of Korea to Bulgaria. Even after the dissolution of the empire in 1260, each of the successor states would be considered a superpower in modern terminology. Yet, the Mongols soon found themselves engaged in desultory civil wars rather than new conquests. How did it reach this point? Considering that the Mongols began their empire as a rather inconsequential power in the steppes of Mongolia, among a half dozen similar groups, another question comes to mind: Why were the Mongols successful in the first place?

Much of the Mongols' success had to do with the appearance of Temujin, the man who became Chinggis Khan. Before his appearance on the historical stage, the Mongols were but a minor tribe at a time when the Jin Empire (1125-1234) in northern China and Manchuria defeated an ascending Mongol khanate in the 1160s. Temujin's father, Yesugei died in 1171, poisoned by Tatars, rivals of the Mongols.' With the defeat of the Mongols, the Tatars dominated eastern Mongolia. The Tatars were a powerful confederation bordering the Jin Empire, providing better access to trade and wealth. In the past, confederations like the Tatars rose to regional dominance and sometimes even held sway over all of the Mongolian steppes. Yet, the Tatars were not the only powerful tribe in the Mongolian steppes.

In Central Mongolia, the Kereit held sway. Ruled by Toghril Khan, the Kereit had close ties with the Mongols. Toghril had been and or blood brother to Yesugei and became the suzerain of Temujin. The Kereit, however, controlled the Orkhon Valley, which historically conveyed legitimacy to previous steppe empires. Missionaries from the Church of the East, also known as Nestorians, exerted influence upon the Kereit. Although not all of the Kereit were Nestorians, many of the aristocracy converted. Their conversion to a world religion gave them entry to a wider network through connections along the Silk Road as well as relations with other tribes influenced by the Church of the East such as the Onggid to the south and the Naiman to the west. Additionally, the Kereit maintained ties with regional powers such as Xi Xia to the south and Qara Khitai to the west, as did the Naiman who were former subjects of Qara Khitai.

Further west and situated on both sides of the Altai Mountains were the Naiman, a Turkic confederation. Through their association with the empire of Qara Khitai, the Naiman also had access to other Nestorians in Central Asia, broadening their cultural vision. Indeed, the Naiman adopted literacy by using the script used by the Uighurs, who were also ruled by Qara Khitai. Unlike the Naiman, the Uighurs were predominantly Buddhists and tended to dwell in the oasis towns of modern Xinjiang. With literacy, contacts to other civilizations and trade routes, the Naiman were positioned to rise in importance. Other smaller tribes such as the Merkit and Onggid also played a role in the steppes, but the Naiman, Kereit, and Tatars were all better placed to influence history than the Mongols. Yet, larger and well-organized states also existed who were situated to prevent the rise of the Mongols.

Despite being what is today Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Qara Khitai still exerted influence in Mongolia. Established in 1125 by Khitan refugees from the Liao Empire (906-1125) in north China, Manchuria, and Mongolia, Qara Khitai was a steppe empire that ruled a population of pagans, Buddhists, Christians, and Muslims. Yel' Dashi (1087-1143), the first Gur-Khan of Qara Khitai, defeated the Seljuq Sultan, Sanjar (r. 1118-1157) in 1141 bringing his borders to the Amu Darya

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/ph. 9195425719 /fax 91986916430

River. The nascent Khwárazmian dynasty (1077-1231), situated south of the Aral Sea, also submitted but remained relatively autonomous. By the thirteenth century, the latter began to assert its own prowess. By not directly challenging the Khitans and using Qara Khitai to secure its northern borders, Khwárazm, ruled by Sultan Muhammad Khwárazmsháh II (1200-1220) expanded into Iran, absorbing Seljuq principalities. He also moved against his primary competition for Iran, the Ghúrid Empire (1186-1206) in Afghanistan. Muhammad even launched an attack against the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258) in Baghdad. Although it failed, it demonstrated his reach and that Muhammad would not tolerate a resurgent Caliphate in Iran.

East of Qara Khitai sat the Buddhist kingdom of Xi Xia (1038-1227), a poly-ethnic and polyglot realm of nomads, sedentary Turks, and Han Chinese, but ruled by the Buddhist Tangut, a Tibetan people. Dominating the Gansu corridor, a key artery of the Silk Road, Xi Xia was a wealthy realm that at times paid tribute or warred with the Song Empire to the southeast as well as the Jin Empire. Additionally, they forged relations with the polities in the steppes, the Kereit in particular. It was not unusual for Kereit princes who fell out of favour in the steppes to take refuge there.

The Jin Empire (1125-1234), the most powerful entity in East Asia, ruled an empire consisting of North China (extending south to the Huai River) as well as Manchuria, from which the ruling elite came. These were the Jurchen, a Manchurian people who deposed the Liao Empire in 1125. As their dynastic name (Jin) meant Gold, the steppe tribes referred to the Jin Emperor as the Altan Khan or Golden Ruler. While the Jin did not extend their rule into the steppes, as did the Liao, they did meddle in steppe affairs, favouring one tribe over another, creating a delicate balancing act to prevent one tribe from dominating and becoming a threat to the Jin. While steppe confederations had threatened northern China for centuries, it seems unlikely that the Jin were overly concerned—cautious, but not afraid. By the thirteenth century, they not only had a large experienced army, but also seventy-five years' experience in manipulating events in the steppes.

In the far western end of the steppes, the Kipchaks had not coalesced into a coherent body that threatened regional, much less global domination. The Kipchaks were Turkic nomads who arrived in the Pontic and Caspian steppes in the twelfth century, possibly as part of a chain reaction caused by the Liao domination of Mongolia. Known variously as Cumans, Polovtsy, Kipchaks, and Qangli (the eastern branch), they all spoke the same northern Turkic dialect. Rather than forming a single dominant state, they existed in four or five confederations. While sedentary societies such as the Rus' and Khwárazmians fought them, they also formed alliances with various tribes and even intermarried. While a medieval peasant might disagree, in the larger scheme of history, the Kipchaks were a nuisance but not a threat. They proved resilient and difficult for anyone to control over the long term.

Thus in the late-twelfth century and early thirteenth century, there was no obvious reason why the Mongols should become a global power with strong states hemming them in. While in hindsight, it is easy to identify their weaknesses, at the time, there was no reason to suspect that the Mongols would be the wildcard that toppled empires. Among the nomads, no single confederation had emerged from Mongolia in three hundred years to threaten the status quo, much less establish an empire. Even the Tatars and Kereit lacked the gravitas and unity to exert dominion over others.

So what made the Mongols successful? Recently, scientists have argued that wet and cool weather facilitated the rise of the Mongol Empire." The weather was perfect for the steppes, allowing the nomads of Mongolia to flourish. With ample grass, the flocks and herds of the Mongols thrived, permitting them to expand beyond Mongolia. This hypothesis, however, does not explain how the Mongols dominated Mongolia, as other nomads must have benefited from the lush pastures as well. Again, the Mongols were not a significant power at the time of Temujin's (the man who became

Chinggis Khan) birth. While the lush pastures may have aided their outward expansion, climatic reasons fail to explain their initial success.

There are a number of approaches to study the past. One that has fallen out of favour is the Great Man Theory. In this idea, which originated in the nineteenth century, history is explained through reference to the rise and fall of remarkable individuals who possessed sufficient charisma and ability to influence events in a significant and lasting manner. The counter-argument is that all people are shaped by their society; thus social conditions influence events. There is no denying this argument, first formally expressed by Herbert Spencer. Yet Spencer's Social Darwinism or "survival of the fittest" does not adequately explain Chinggis Khan's success.' Of course, Herbert Spencer, with his Victorian sensibilities, would not have viewed Chinggis Khan positively in his scheme of progress.' Nonetheless, the Great Man (or Woman) Theory still has application. It took a Great Man to propel the Mongols to the forefront of history. Chinggis Khan, however, was not alone in his actions; his generals and advisors were attracted by his personal charisma and seemingly divine favour. There were a number of individuals on the steppe who had similar opportunities to Chinggis Khan, but only he emerged to be remembered as the greatest conqueror in history and the father of Mongolia, while other steppe leaders are only known readily to scholars of the Mongol Empire. Yet we must also restrain our enthusiasm for the Great Man Theory. Menopausal explanations rarely explain anything. While the Great Man Theory helps explain the rise of Chinggis Khan and the early Mongol Empire, it does not necessarily explain the success of the Mongols after Chinggis Khan's death.

Undoubtedly, the military machine Chinggis Khan created assisted in the expansion of the Mongol Empire. Yet, while he initially organized the army as well as introducing new tactics, the military continued to evolve after his death. It is safe to say that the Mongol Empire could not have succeeded without the military. Numerous steppe empires existed prior to the Mongol, but none enjoyed the extent of conquests and the successes that the Mongol military did. While popularly conceived as a mob of horse-archers and sabre-wielding barbarians, the Mongol military was much more complex than this stereotyped

As many empires have learned, however, it is much easier to conquer than to rule. The fact that the Mongols provided stable rule over most of their territories indicates that their governmental style also contributed to their success. In the past, it was thought that the Mongols largely left the actual running of the government to personnel they recruited from their conquered territories, particularly Uighurs, Whitens, and Persians who had a long history of running empires and kingdoms. Recent scholarship, however, has demonstrated that this is not true and the Mongols took great interest in administration. Indeed, one could argue that the empire was not just an empire but also a family business of the altan urugh or the Golden Kin (the family of Chinggis Khan). Furthermore, the Mongols created a dual system of military and civil administration consisting of Mongol and non-Mongol personnel and techniques. This apparatus, staffed through a system of meritocracy, provided them with the flexibility required to run a transcontinental empire.

While bureaucracies are able to run without a particular idea other than to sustain itself as well as the government which it serves, government ultimately implement policies in order to effect change or to guide it. The Mongols were no different. As their goal was to rule the world as indicated in their ideology, the Mongols also implemented policies to assist in that effort which included creating stability and order to their empire. Two policies in particular helped this aim. The first was the Mongols' policy of religious tolerance.

In an era in which religious driven warfare and discrimination was common, the Mongols' approach was startling to outsiders. Indeed, most had difficulty believing that the Mongols did not prefer one religion over another and most faiths tried to sway them to their particular belief system. The Mongols however remained neutral and favoured none. The second policy that contributed to their

success was their promotion of commerce. As former American President Bill Clinton once famously said, "It's the economy, stupid." While the economy does not drive all aspects of a state, it plays an important role in any society. The Mongols instituted policies that assisted the expansion of trade not only within the Mongol Empire but ultimately had long lasting effects even after their demise. Due to their policies, some have given the Mongols credit for the first appearance of globalism. While it may be a stretch to apply a twenty-first century concept to a thirteenth-century empire, like all myths, there is some truth to it. The Mongol court's embracing of commerce helped fund their empire, yet it, along with their religious policy, also triggered other changes, which will be explored in detail later.

The factors listed above all contributed to the Mongol success, but to fully understand how the aspects of the empire contributed to the success of the Mongol Empire they must be examined separately. This examination is all the more important as all of the factors that contributed to their success also contributed to the demise of the empire. As with so many things, we must begin with the rise of Chinggis Khan. <>

## **THE MONGOLS' MIDDLE EAST: CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATION IN ILKHANID IRAN** edited by Bruno De Nicola and Charles Melville [Series: Islamic History and Civilization, Brill, ISBN: 9789004311992]

Editors:

**THE MONGOLS' MIDDLE EAST: CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATION IN ILKHANID IRAN** offers a collection of academic articles that investigate different aspects of Mongol rule in 13th- and 14th-century Iran. Sometimes treated only as part of the larger Mongol Empire, the volume focuses on the Ilkhanate (1258-1335) with particular reference to its relations with its immediate neighbours. It is divided into four parts, looking at the establishment, the internal and external dynamics of the realm, and its end. The different chapters, covering several topics that have received little attention before, aim to contribute to a better understanding of Mongol rule in the Middle East and its role in the broader medieval Eurasian world and its links with China.

With contributions by: Reuven Amitai, Michal Biran, Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog, Bruno De Nicola, Florence Hodous, Boris James, Aptin Khanbaghi, Judith Kolbas, George Lane, Timothy May, Charles Melville, Esther Ravalde, Karin Rührdanz

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The Mongol Empire, c. 1294.

The Ilkhanate is the name by which historians refer to the political entity that governed present-day Iran, Azerbaijan and Eastern Anatolia between 1260 and 1335, with a short afterlife until 1353. It is defined by the establishment of a dynasty of Mongol rulers descended from Chinggis Khan (d. 1227) by his son Tolui (d. 1232) and especially by the descendants of Hülegü (d. 1265). The origin and meaning of the term 'Ilkhan' (or il-Khān) has been subject of some academic discussion over time. The title Ilkhan had been used among the Great Seljuqs in the eleventh century and appeared in a Uyghur translation of a seventh-century Chinese biography of a Buddhist pilgrim. Although the particle 'il' originally meant 'country,' it seems that it became used as a term to refer to 'subservient' or 'submissive' in the Mongol period. This has raised discussions about the legitimacy of the establishment of the Ilkhanate as a separate ulus of the Mongol Empire, suggesting that the Mongols of Iran were seen as the guardians of the western lands of the Empire under the rule of the Great Khan living in China rather than a realm in its own right. Despite this, the term 'Ilkhan' seems to have been in use among the Mongols of Iran and the people they conquered since at least 1259, when numismatic evidence confirms the use of the term, but also finds earlier references in other Middle Eastern sources.

The arrival of the Mongols in the Middle East has been interpreted from very different angles by historians of the region since the early twentieth century. The initial approach was to see it as an example of a confrontation between Civilization and Barbarism, where the former was represented by the high culture of the 'Abbasid Caliphate and the latter by the infidel and predatory Mongols.

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This historiographical approach saw the Mongol-dominated Middle East merely as a dark period in Islamic history, which would gloriously revive with the rise of the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. This reading was based on the accounts of some Islamic (mostly Arabic) sources that saw the Mongol invasions as a divine punishment for the sins of the Muslims in the Middle East and as a purely destructive interlude. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, this idea lost ground and the period of Mongol domination of Iran and the Levant was re-examined in a new light that identified it as a remarkable period that offered unique opportunities for historical enquiry. It is in this context that new studies on the political history of the Mongols of Iran were followed by research on their economic impact, their religious transformation and gender relationships between conqueror and conquered people.

Studies in the second half of the twentieth century contributed to breaking the paradigm that viewed the Mongols as mere barbarians and prepared the field for a new understanding of the Mongol Empire as a period when East and West were connected and in which the Mongols were not only the military elite of this vast territory, but acted as cultural brokers, facilitating the exchange of goods, people and ideas from the Mediterranean to China. This approach drew attention onto the variety of political, economic, social and cultural processes that were unleashed in the Middle East by the specific circumstances created by the conquest and settlement of the Mongols. For example, the Iranian region was under a non-Muslim sovereign for the first time since the Arab conquest, offering a new religious scenario in the Middle East. Further, Iran's integration into the main overland trade networks from the Mediterranean to China, freshly stimulated by the Mongols' interest in trade, offered a new economic paradigm for the region. And finally, the interaction between nomadic rulers and sedentary subjects generated specific sociopolitical dynamics between conquerors and conquered that shaped institutions and traditions in the area. These special characteristics and many others have contributed to the expansion of the historical enquiry on the Mongols in the Middle East in the last few decades.

It is in this context that this book aims to contribute to the history of the period. It addresses various aspects of continuity and transformation in Mongol and local society in Iran in particular and the Middle East in general. The different contributions explore long- and short-term continuities and discontinuities in different layers of Iranian society. A previous attempt to explore these issues was made by A. K. S. Lambton more than a quarter of a century ago.<sup>8</sup> This pioneering work had a more comparative approach as it included sociopolitical developments in Persia during the pre-Mongol period. Lambton saw the Seljuq rulers as continuators of Islamic traditions and institutions while the Mongols represented in her view "a break with the past: the nomads [Mongols] were the state and political rule was in the hands of their leaders, who formed a kind of military aristocracy. They were hostile to settled life and exploited the townspeople and the peasants." Over 25 years since this observation, the research produced on the Mongol domination of the Middle East has shown that the Mongol invasions did not create such a clear-cut break with the past. Recent work by David Durand-Guédy, in particular, emphasizes ways in which Seljuq practice anticipated the Mongols. In fact, as much of the research presented here shows, continuity prevailed in some areas while in others transformations appear clearly. Further, the present works also look at elements of continuity and transformation not only among the Persian population or Islamic institutions but also among the Mongols who came from the Far East and settled in the Middle East. We hope that this dual approach will produce a more complex and coherent view of the Ilkhanid period.

This book is the result of a joint endeavour between a mentor and his disciple. It represents, to some extent, both a beginning and an end of an academic journey into the Mongol Empire for both editors of this volume. For one it represents the closure of a fascinating period of academic activity as a graduate student at the University of Cambridge and for the other, it is something of a valedictory engagement with the Mongols while he looks ahead to exploring more fully other

periods of Persian culture, history and the arts. The idea of this book began back in 2009 with the possibility of proposing a symposium on the Mongols' Middle East for the World Congress for Middle East Studies (WOCMES) in Barcelona in 2010. It took a good number of years to put together the original papers presented in the Conference and complement them with other contributions from colleagues and friends. But after an arduous strategy, maintaining the nomadic elements that characterize the Mongol campaigns of the thirteenth century into the fourteenth century.

The second part moves the centre of the analysis to the establishment of a Mongol-controlled Middle East with chapters dealing with politics, economy and religious issues in the Ilkhanate. In chapter 3, Esther Ravalde investigates the role of the famous Iranian vizier Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī (d. 1284) in the Mongol court. She explores the way in which the Ilkhanate was governed by looking at the role of patronage that the vizier used to establish his authority across the Mongol territories. Through patron-client relationships, Ravalde claims that Juwaynī managed to “collect taxes, strengthen Ilkhan rule in Anatolia, mediate between the ruler and the ruled, and develop alliances with the religious classes.” She suggests that although there is a continuity in the institution of the vizierate under the Mongols, the case of Juwaynī shows that this position had limitations if compared with previous dynasties that ruled the area. In this view, the Ilkhanid vizier was not as powerful as before and had to negotiate with Mongol elites and the Ilkhanid government to administer the realm. The transformation of a political institution such as the vizierate is followed by Bruno De Nicola's chapter on patterns of continuity and transformation in the economic status of Mongol women. He observes both continuity and transformation in the way women acquired and accumulated wealth. By exploring the different ways in which women received and used their resources, he traces the evolution of these practices as the Mongols moved into the Middle East. He suggests that the economic status of women mutated and adapted when they reached Iran to the point of expanding the areas of these women's economic activity as the resources at their disposal increased. However, he points out that faced with this economic success of Mongol women, change was triggered by Ghazan Khan, who identified the resources in female hands and appropriated them for his own political benefit. Finally in this section, Florence Horus deals with how religious beliefs affected the implementation of the death penalty in Mongol territory in the Middle East. By exploring different conceptions of capital punishment among the different religions that influenced the Mongols, she suggests that punishment and amnesties were connected to the different religions that coexisted in the Ilkhanate. This multi-faith environment, she argues, meant that the influence of one or another religion on the applicability of the death penalty prevailed, depending on the political context in which the Mongols of Iran found themselves at a given time.

The third section is dedicated to the continuity and transformation of artistic production under the Mongols in the Middle East. In the initial chapter of this section, Michal Biran explores the scarcely researched field of music in Ilkhanid Baghdad. The chapter uncovers the life of ʿAfi al-Dīn Urmawī (613–93/1216–94), who was the musician of the ʿAbbasid Caliph at the time of the Mongol invasion of Iraq. Providing first a translation of the musician's own account of the fall of Baghdad and then exploring the cultural life of the city after the Mongol conquest, Biran suggests that at least in the field of music, the Mongols did not provoke a rupture in the artistic production of the ʿAbbasid dynasty nor did they precipitate a decline in Islamic culture in Baghdad. In the following chapter, Judith Kolbas proposes to look at the Taʿrīkh-i Jahaṅgushaʿ, the historical work of ʿAtāʾ Malik Juwaynī (d. 1283), from a literary point of view rather than the usual historiographical approach. She advocates seeing the work as an epic prose text with clear motifs that would have helped Juwaynī to explain to a Persian audience the new political order brought by the Mongols. The final chapter in this section is dedicated to a different method of artistic representation that developed during the Mongol period. Karin Rührdanz explores the development in the illustration of manuscripts that occurred from the Mongol into the Timurid period. She notices that in the fifteenth century there



was an increasing preference for illustrating works that expressed mythical ideas in the form of poetry, but also a continuity with the Mongol period in the illustration of classical Persian works such as the *Shahname* and *Kalila wa Dimna*. However, the more popular genres that she discusses, depicting subjects still not entirely identified, seem to have fallen out of the repertoire after the Jalayirid period.

The fourth section contains chapters dedicated to the interaction of the Mongols' Middle East with its neighbours. The first chapter by Aptin Khanbaghi focuses mostly on Anatolia to explore the role played by the Mongols in 'changing the fate' of the Persian language. By looking back at the status of Persian in the pre-Mongol period and comparing it with the impact of the Mongol conquest, Khanbaghi suggests that the Mongols provided the umbrella under which a Persianized Turkish population that was already present in Iran could expand Persian language and literature to territories further afield such as Anatolia, southern Khurasan and India. Continuing with territories subject to the Mongols but with a certain degree of autonomy, Dashdondog Bayarsaikhan's contribution looks at the Mongol implementation of the military and administrative institution of the *darughachi* in Armenia. The institution served as a means to collect taxes and control the region newly conquered by the Mongols. Yet, in doing so, it not only fundamentally changed the status of Armenia in the Mongol Empire by directly incorporating the region into the Ilkhanate after its formation in the late 1250s but also helped the local rulers (in this case Armenians) to adapt to Mongol command. The establishment of the Ilkhanate had a clear impact on life and institutions of regions bordering Iran such as Armenia and Anatolia. However, less intuitive is the influence that Ilkhanid subjects had in areas far beyond the Ilkhanid borders such as Eastern China. The case discussed in the chapter by George Lane included in this section focuses our attention on the city of Hangzhou in the heart of Mongol China. Through the evidence provided mostly by inscriptions in steles and Chinese sources, the chapter explores the cultural, economic and religious activity of the Phoenix Mosque of Hangzhou, which played an important role as the place that brought together Iranian and Central Asian Muslims coming from the western parts of the Empire to China. Closing this section, the contribution of Boris James covers the relations between the Ilkhanate and the Mamluks by looking at the role that different Kurdish tribes played in the longstanding conflict pursued by the Mongols of Iran and the Mamluks of Egypt. James argues that these tribes acted as a buffer in the conflict, shifting sides and controlling bordering areas between the two major empires of the Middle East at the time.

Finally, the book ends with an epilogue containing the contribution of Charles Melville. This chapter offers a discussion of the end of the Ilkhanate as a political entity and explores the reasons for its collapse. Melville confronts modern views and contemporary accounts of the end of Ilkhanid rule and looks at the different reasons that have been suggested to explain the fall of the Ilkhans, such as acculturation, Islamization and the 'natural' limitations of nomadic rule. With all these elements, he suggests that the end of the Ilkhanate might have been due to a 'loss of identity' and an erosion of Chinggisid legitimacy in a realm that remained an obstinately Mongol regime caught in the "turbulence of acculturation," which provoked its collapse from within.

In sum, the contributions to this volume serve as a good example of the fertile ground that Ilkhanid rule in the Middle East provides for historians of the period. They also help us to understand different aspects of the evolution that occurred in institutions, economic conditions, military organization and civil society both among the Mongol conquerors and the native populations. The conclusion that seems to emerge from the research presented here is that patterns of both continuity and transformation can be observed depending on where we focus our attention. The interaction between the Mongols and the people of the Middle East was a dynamic and complex one which cannot be covered fully in this one volume. The editors hope, nonetheless, that these

contributions will contribute to maintaining interest in this fascinating period in the history of the Middle East and encourage further research into the history of the Ilkhanid dynasty of Iran. <>

## **KOREA AND THE FALL OF THE MONGOL EMPIRE: ALLIANCE, UPHEAVAL, AND THE RISE OF A NEW EAST ASIAN ORDER** by David M. Robinson [Cambridge University Press, 9781009098960]

**KOREA AND THE FALL OF THE MONGOL EMPIRE** explores the experiences of the enigmatic and controversial King Gongmin of Goryeo, Wang Gi, as he navigated the upheavals of the mid-fourteenth century, including the collapse of the Mongol Empire and the rise of its successors in West, Central, and East Asia. Drawing on a wealth of Korean and Chinese sources and integrating East Asian and Western scholarship on the topic, David Robinson considers the single greatest geopolitical transformation of the fourteenth century through the experiences of this one East Asian ruler. He focuses on the motives of Wang Gi, rather than the major contemporary powers, to understand the rise and fall of empire, offering a fresh perspective on this period of history. The result is a more nuanced and accessible appreciation of Korean, Mongolian, and Chinese history, which sharpens our understanding of alliances across Eurasia.

### **Review**

'With Korea and the Fall of the Mongol Empire, Robinson achieves something few can do—write an interesting, engaging, and illuminating study of the Koryŏ-Mongol relationship. The writer is one of a few scholars in any language working on broader issues of empire in premodern Northeast Asia through a transnational lens. His work is a major scholarly achievement.' George Kallander, Syracuse University

'The late 14th century in East Asia was a chaotic time. Korea and the Fall of the Mongol Empire brings this period into sharp focus better than any other work in English. By focusing on Korea's King Kongmin, Robinson adroitly weaves the upheavals of the age that witnessed the rise of the Ming, the collapse of the Yuan, and the changes in Korea. King Kongmin is controversial but through Robinson's skillful use of Chinese, Yuan, and Korean sources, both primary and secondary, this work emerges foundational in exploring this age.' Edward Shultz, University of Hawaii

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"Being so unruly and depraved, how could he have hoped to be spared his end?"

## Goryeo History

What went through the Goryeo king's mind on October 10, 1374, as his mangled body collapsed to the palace's smooth cool stone floor? Perhaps the forty-four-year-old Wang Gi pondered the cruel irony of dying at the hands of the same royal eunuch who cared for his intimate needs and members of his personal bodyguard who guaranteed his safety. Perhaps he wondered who had ordered his assassination and how they would explain his sudden death to subjects at home and allies abroad. If his life flashed before his eyes, he would have seen dizzying personal and political change, an unexpected rise to the throne, abortive coups, bloody purges, the fall of the mighty Mongols, and the rise of a new Eurasian order. Little could he have foreseen how government chroniclers would sum up the span of his existence. After praising his promising beginnings, they condemned his abdication of royal responsibilities and his rapid descent into drinking and depravity. The final line (noted above) of their account of Wang Gi's reign in Goryeo History, one of most important surviving sources for understanding the king and his times, was less question than judgment. But how do we assess his significance today?

From 1351 to 1374, Wang Gi, posthumously known as King Gongmin, ruled the kingdom of Goryeo (today's Korea). There are many ways to tell Wang Gi's tale. He was a devout Buddhist who generously patronized religious activities and enlisted learned monks as advisers. Confronting foreign incursions and a massive surge in coastal piracy — so potent that the capital itself was repeatedly put on high alert — he reformed Goryeo's military. He tried to implement structural change to his kingdom's socioeconomic foundations, including land tenure and human chattel. A man of refined sensibilities, he abhorred the hunt for its brutality but adored hunting raptors for their ferocity. His Mongolian queen's death in childbirth midway through his reign plunged him into prolonged depression. His identity as a homosexual or bisexual man has fascinated contemporary Korean audiences in recent decades. Religion, military reform, socioeconomic change, emotions, and sexual identity are all important and promising lenses through which to examine Wang Gi.

Although touching on all those issues, this book explores Wang Gi's life and times through a different prism, that of the single greatest geopolitical transformation of the fourteenth century and one of the most consequential developments of early modern Eurasia: the collapse of Mongol power and rise of its successors in West, Central, and East Asia. In 1330, Wang Gi was born a scion of the Goryeo dynasty, a family that had ruled the Korean peninsula since 918. In 1351, he took the throne with the full support of the Mongols, with whom his family had allied and intermarried for nearly a century. For the first eighteen years of his reign, he held investiture as King of Goryeo from the Mongol Great Khan, and Wang Gi understood himself as a privileged member of the Mongol empire's ruling elite. In 1368, Mongol control collapsed, the Great Khan abandoned his capital at today's Beijing for the relative safety of the steppe, and the newly founded Ming dynasty (1368-1644) in today's Nanjing claimed to be China's sole legitimate government. In 1369, Wang Gi abandoned his formal ties to the Great Khan, and in 1370 he accepted investiture as King of Goryeo from the Ming emperor. Seen in this light, Wang Gi's story seems complete and successful. He had deftly directed the perilous transition from the Mongol empire to its principal successor in eastern Eurasia, shifting his allegiance from the Great Khan to the Ming emperor and securing the place of the Goryeo dynasty (918-1392) in a new regional order dominated by the Ming dynasty, which would reign until the mid-seventeenth century.

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Reality was messier and more interesting than a simple one-and-done transfer of loyalty, swapping one regional superpower for another. Throughout his entire reign, Wang Gi's relations with the Great Khan, a descendant of Genghis (here spelled Chinggis) Khan named Toghan-Temur (1320-1370), were tumultuous. He sent troops to help Toghan-Temur crush spreading rebellion in China, later attacked the Great Khan's border outposts, and still later raised an army to prevent the Great Khan from dethroning him. Despite severing formal ties with the Great Khan and accepting investiture from the Ming throne, Wang Gi maintained informal links to the Mongols, while his relationship with the Ming founder, Zhu Yuanzhang (1328-1398) was deeply fraught, and the Ming emperor repeatedly accused him of betrayal and openly threatened to rain down destruction on the Goryeo dynasty. Following Wang Gi's murder in 1374, the Goryeo court quickly reversed course, restoring formal ties with the Great Khan, which prompted even more bellicose threats from Zhu Yuanzhang.

The drama of Wang Gi's life is best understood in a wider historical context. As the Mongol polity across Eurasia faced mounting challenges in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries — from floods, droughts, epidemics, and starvation to corruption, poor leadership, court intrigue, and insurrection — Wang Gi and other thoughtful observers throughout Eurasia began to reconsider, first, their place in the empire and, later, potential alternatives to the Mongol order. In contrast to Wang Gi, a Goryeo royal who married a Chinggisid noblewoman and who took the throne with Mongol backing, the Ming founding emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang, had clawed his way to power from the bottom of Chinese society. Born into a family of tenant farmers, Zhu Yuanzhang was orphaned as a teen, briefly became a mendicant monk, and as a young man joined a millenarian rebel movement, where his charisma, leadership, and brutality won him growing numbers of supporters. Both Wang Gi and Zhu Yuanzhang were products of the Mongol empire, which deeply shaped their understanding of the world, but — and this is a key point — they also saw that change was possible and that through skill and determination they might shape the future.

It is impossible to understand the Mongols without close attention to their allies. The Mongol empire was an extraordinarily complex composite, including four main branches of the Chinggisid family, dozens of smaller courts of Mongol aristocrats, and hundreds of allied houses, ranging from mid-sized dynasties such as Goryeo to smaller, local polities and individual leaders. The Mongols' story is as much about the formation and dissolution of those hundreds of alliances across Eurasia as it is about the rise and fall of Chinggis Khan and his descendants. To live in an age of a faltering Mongol empire was to confront rapid change, unexpected reversals, and uncertainty with incomplete knowledge and unreliable allies. All leaders — and no small number of local elites and even common people — scrambled to reassess their interests, their friends and allies, their rivals and foes. As they built new alliances, sometimes they drew from practices and expectations developed during the Mongol age, sometimes they invoked classical native precedents, and sometimes they hammered out relationships that differed significantly from the past.

This book explores the experiences of one East Asian ruler — Wang Gi, King of Goryeo — as he navigated the upheavals of the mid-fourteenth century. The details of his tale not only yield a more nuanced appreciation of Korean, Mongolian, and Chinese history, but also sharpen understanding of alliances across Eurasia. The Mongol empire was unprecedentedly large, and its deterioration directly touched most of Eurasia, from today's Eastern Europe, Turkey, Russia, Iran, and Iraq, across today's Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, China, Korea, and Vietnam, and indirectly exercised an even broader influence. For a generation and more, polities and peoples in West, Central, and East Asia created, with many false starts, much uncertainty, and repeated clashes, a series of new alliances in the wake of the Mongol empire's eclipse. The fortunes of the great powers — the Ming dynasty, Muscovite Russia, the Ottoman empire, among others — during that anarchic age have been recounted often and ably, but the fate of their smaller allies is much less known and far too

underappreciated. Here, for the first time ever in English is the story of Wang Gi and his struggle for allies in chaos.

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### Thinking about Mongol Decline

Historians offer a wide variety of explanations for the Mongol empire's fall. Effective control over vast and varied territory for an extended period of time poses daunting organizational challenges, and long-lived empires are the exception rather than the rule. The Mongols are regularly faulted for their failure to adapt effectively to local political institutions, such as routinized succession mechanisms and acceptance of bureaucratic administration, which would have ameliorated the disruptive potential of succession struggles. One historian draws attention to the Yuan state's debilitating size and costliness, with altogether too much time spent traveling between capitals with enormous entourages, translating paperwork across multiple languages, and satiating the demands of a privileged Inner Asian elite, while many have highlighted the Mongols' exploitative, disruptive tax collection policies. Others suggest that abandoning a shared nomadic warrior ethos in favor of more local traditions of rulership undermined the Mongol ruling stratum's unity and reduced the steppe to peripheral status. Similarly stressing structural issues, one study explains fragile political control as a result of Mongol nobles consuming alcohol and meat to excess, which led to short-lived rulers and rapid political turnover at the top, which in turn exacerbated instability. Some scholars fault the Mongols for their preferential treatment of fellow steppe people and close allies, which resulted in the alienation and resentment of highly qualified locals. This formed one element of a systemic pattern of racial or ethnic prejudice that fed resentment against an exploitative foreign ruling house, some historians suggest. The personal incompetence of individual Mongol rulers in the fourteenth century is often said to have hastened decline, while many scholars foreground epidemiological and environmental factors in the Mongols' fall, including the disastrous spread of the Black Death (and other epidemics), floods, droughts, and famine. All contributed to social instability, pervasive fear, and a broad desire for solace and support beyond the state. In search of protection in the present and salvation in the next life, people turned to religious communities that not only promised both but also actively worked to topple the Mongols.

We often speak of the collapse of the Mongol empire as a whole, but more important to people of the time was the deterioration of regional houses such as the Jochid/Golden Horde, the Ilkhanate, the Chaghadaid, and the Yuan dynasty. These individual houses, strongly associated with one or another of Chinggis Khan's prodigious progeny, grew out of the "dissolution" of a united empire under the undisputed rule of a single sovereign that occurred in the mid-thirteenth century. Perhaps even more relevant was that by the early fourteenth century (and sometimes earlier), each house had developed an identity that local populations found more comprehensible than when the Mongols first irrupted into their world. In some cases, this perception arose from Chinggisid ruling houses' apparent embrace of venerable local practices and beliefs. The Ilkhanate became a generous patron of Islam and Persian high culture, while the Yuan dynasty commissioned the publication of Confucian works and vernacular literature, patronized the Confucian cult, and periodically revived the civil service examinations, a hallowed institution in the eyes of Chinese elites. By the late thirteenth century, Persian and Chinese scholars and officials effusively praised the prosperous, stable rule of the Ilkhanate and Yuan ruling houses. Golden Horde rulers converted to Islam rather than to the majority population's Christianity, but they granted tax exemptions to the Orthodox Church and protected its local standing. No regional Mongol ruling house "went native" in the sense of rejecting its Chinggisid pedigree, and none severed ties to the Mongol imperial enterprise or completely abandoned Mongolian lifeways in favor of local customs. Tightly linked to regional houses' cultural support was their military and political patronage. As noted above, Rus princes depended on Golden Horde rulers for protection and confirmation. This was part of a wider pattern, and by the

fourteenth century, the power of Armenian princes, Kart rulers, Turkic kings, and elite Jurchen lineage heads were far more deeply rooted in their ties to regional Mongol houses than in the "Mongol empire" writ large.

Most people experienced Mongol rule's collapse as the fall of a regional Chinggisid house rather than of a continent-spanning empire. As a consequence, few elites, whether on the rise or in decline, whether Mongols, Russian, Persian, or Chinese, dreamt of restoring the Mongol empire in its entirety or reconstituting its alliances unchanged. Sometimes they might use such open-ended rhetoric, but their vision and goals were almost always more modest. They generally sought to restore the territory of the local Chinggisid house, whether in entirety or in part, and revive links to errant allies. In East Asia, Zhu Yuanzhang seized regions like Yunnan and Liaodong, which most past Chinese dynasties had not governed but had been under Mongol rule, but he did not make a serious effort to take control of the Mongolian steppe, Central Asian oasis cities like Hami, or the distant northeastern lands of the Jurchens. The Ming founder's plans for the Yuan throne's allies among Goryeo, Jurchen, Tibetan, and other leaders emerged only in the context of his interaction with those men in an uncertain age.

In a word, through a century or more of rule, regional Chinggisid houses had done much to create an initial set of expectations of what "should be," including the size of territory, the composition of peoples of the realm, the powers of the sovereign, and finally the identity and obligations of allies. Even in polities like the Ming dynasty that vociferously rejected failed Mongol leadership, emphasis was often on how later Yuan emperors had fallen short of the standards established by exemplary rulers like Qubilai. Chinggis Khan won praise, but it was Qubilai, whose historical memory was tied to China, who served as the standard. Their descendants forfeited their patrimony by abandoning their forefathers' virtues.

Finally, we often speak of the Mongol empire's collapse, but in fact, there was no single event or moment that marked "the end." "More similar to a long agony than to a sudden death" is how one scholar puts it. Well-intentioned historians later erected misleadingly clear signposts. The Great Yuan collapsed, we are told, in 1368 or 1388; the Ilkhanate drew to a close in 1335; and the Golden Horde ended in 1502. For contemporaries, however, deterioration lasted for decades, and there was little sense that it was inevitable or irreversible. Both Mongols and others expected partial or full revivals. Put in different terms, the decades of Mongol rule's deterioration were defined by uncertainty. Even if Mongol decline seemed obvious (through comparison with memories of past glories), no one knew how long the decline might last or what road it might take. In the same way, no one knew which — if any — of the new regimes would last for how long or in what form. Uncertainty and changeability, precisely the factors that alliance was meant to offset, meant that choosing and cultivating allies would be a daunting task with a high probability of misstep, even outright failure.

Uncertainty infused the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, and when men like Tamerlane (1336-1405) in Central Asia and Zhu Yuanzhang offered confident proclamations about their heroic achievements and audacious plans, they were making promises about the future rather than describing the present. With the passage of time, it is easy to confuse contemporary propaganda for historical truth. Our knowledge that the Ming dynasty lasted until 1644 obscures the precariousness of the regime's early decades. One consequence of this pervasive uncertainty was that most actors attempted to maintain a range of options as long as possible. The Goryeo's ruling stratum simultaneously cultivated ties not only with the new Ming regime in Nanjing and the Yuan court on the Mongolian steppe but also with Yuan commanders in both nearby Liaodong and distant Shaanxi for decades. Similarly, the Ming court negotiated with the Goryeo throne, the Yuan court, and a wide range of Mongol nobles from Liaodong to Central Asia. Post facto historical overwriting tends

to erase contemporary multiplicity; that is, the full range of actions taken in light of what seemed possible, even likely, in the eyes of men and women at the time. This overwriting has two major origins. First, chroniclers of the day or soon after, who were often dynastic historians, wanted to legitimate their rulers, and thus they told a story where their sovereign's rise was foreordained, the inevitable and correct outcome of past and future ruler's choices and policies. Second, to make a messy, even chaotic, past comprehensible, later historians — in fact, most historians most of the time — tend to push aside the byroads not taken and instead offer the reader a neat path leading to the present.

In sum, Mongol rule in Eurasia had established (a) modes of rulership, including its horizons, legitimation, and representation, and (b) a vast array of alliances from East Europe to East Asia. As Mongol power deteriorated, past expectations about what was proper or preferred came under close scrutiny. Practices and perceptions developed during the Chinggisid age, however, remained widely shared points of reference for contemporaries. Second, whether they were members of the Mongol establishment or outsiders, local leaders faced the common challenge of a rapidly changing political landscape. Old allegiances were called into question, and new vistas emerged with disorienting speed. The decline of Chinggisid power may have been obvious, but its end was not. "Fallen houses" remained important actors in regional politics for decades. Third, and finally, uncertainty shaped leaders' choices. In retrospect, the winners and losers might appear obvious and inevitable, but for contemporaries hedging bets seemed prudent. To that end, they pursued multiple allegiances, and they formed, broke, and reformed political ties.

### Organization of the Book

Wang Gi's experiences as ally to the Yuan and Ming thrones are presented chronologically, with individual chapters focusing on periods of time as long as a decade and as short as a single year. To convey a sense of the wider developments that did much to structure Wang Gi's life, descriptions are included of places that Wang Gi never visited and people he never met. No evidence suggests, for instance, that Wang Gi ever went to Suzhou, but as a major source of essential tax revenue for the Yuan dynasty and later as the base of a powerful warlord with whom he cultivated ties, the city was important for Wang Gi. Likewise, he likely never sailed China's eastern coast, but as a sea route for the delivery of grain to Daidu and as an integral part of the expansive maritime world that included both Goryeo and Japan, developments along that coast figured in Wang Gi's decisions about alliances. The details of Wang Gi's interior world — his thoughts, his emotions, his close personal relations with family, friends, and foes — are poorly recorded in surviving sources, and often we must extrapolate from what is known about the time, what was going on around him, to assess his likely perceptions and motivations.

Chapter 1 recounts key developments at the Goryeo court during Wang Gi's childhood, c. 1330–1341, and provides an overview of his family's diplomatic, military, and cultural ties with the Chinggisids. Chapters 2 and 3 explore the period from 1341 to 1351, the decade of Wang Gi's service in the Great Yuan's personal guard from two interrelated perspectives. Chapter 2 foregrounds events within the Yuan realm, including the Goryeo community in Daidu, while Chapter 3 turns to political developments at the Goryeo court up to the eve of Wang Gi's enthronement. Chapter 4 explores Wang Gi's first two years as King of Goryeo when he secured power as a fledgling ruler who had spent the previous decade far away at the Yuan court. Chapter 5 considers Wang Gi's decision in 1354 to contribute troops to a major Yuan campaign to suppress rebel insurgents in southeast China, an event that crystalized the gravity of the Great Khan's difficulties and inspired the king to envision a new Goryeo–Yuan relationship. Chapter 6 narrows to the summer of 1356, when, in an effort to redefine his alliance with the Great Khan, Wang Gi took dramatic action, executing the Yuan empress's brother, attacking Yuan border forts, and abolishing a key emblem of Yuan dynastic authority, the reign name of the current emperor. Chapter 7 pulls back



to consider 1357-1367, a decade that saw Chinese rebel armies invade Goryeo territory, Wang Gi lose his capital cities, the Yuan court try to depose Wang Gi, and finally Wang Gi rapidly expand ties to a wide variety of regional leaders as a way to hedge his bets with an increasingly beleaguered Great Khan. Chapter 8 shifts to Wang Gi's difficult decisions about alliance in the years 1368-1370. In the wake of the Mongols' withdrawal to the steppe in 1368, would Wang Gi recognize the abrasive and demanding Ming founder as his liege lord and what would be the fate of his family's century-long alliance with the Chinggisids? Chapter 9 examines Wang Gi's efforts to pursue his personal and dynastic interests as the form and substance of his alliances haltingly emerged during what turned out to be the last four years of his life, 1371-1374. The conclusion first turns to Wang Gi's murder and the Goryeo court's abrupt reversal of its allegiance, and then considers a few points of wider significance that emerge from the story of Wang Gi in an age of profound geopolitical transformation across Eurasia. <>

## **ZEN PATHWAYS: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE OF ZEN BUDDHISM by Bret W. Davis [Oxford University Press, 9780197573686]**

This book offers an in-depth introduction to the philosophy and practice of Zen Buddhism. Bret Davis explores the philosophical implications of Zen teachings and koans, comparing and contrasting these with other Asian as well as Western religions and philosophies. He relates traditional Zen teachings and practices to our twenty-first century lives.

In addition to being a scholarly and philosophical introduction to Zen, the book provides concrete instructions for beginning a practice of Zen meditation. Its twenty-four chapters treat such philosophical topics as the self, nature, art, morality, and language, as well as basic Buddhist teachings such as the middle way and karma. Davis introduces the Zen based philosophies of the Kyoto School and also engages in interreligious dialogue with Christianity and other religions, as well as with other schools of Buddhism. The concluding chapter reviews the path of Zen practice and enlightenment by way of commenting on the beloved Zen classic, *The Ten Oxherding Pictures*. The book can be read in its entirety as a coherently organized introduction to the philosophy and practice of Zen, or chapters can be read independently according to the reader's specific interests.

### **Review**

"In *Zen Pathways*, Bret W. Davis pours several decades of personal experience, cultivated expertise, and diverse teaching skills that reflect his astute enthusiasm into a fascinating investigation of many different aspects of Zen theory and practice that are covered in two dozen concise chapters. The topics range from providing instructions and guidelines for concrete behavior to philosophical reflections on wide-ranging metaphysical and ethical issues informed by traditional sources and applied to contemporary situations in Japan and the West. Davis consistently enhances discussions with references to other spiritual traditions as well as various relevant cultural and intellectual resources." -- Steven Heine, Professor of Asian Studies at Florida International University, author of *From Chinese Chan to Japanese Zen* and *Dogen: Japan's Original Zen Teacher*

"This refreshing book brings together authentic insight, reliable scholarship, and much-needed clarity about the teachings and practices of Zen Buddhism. Based on the decades-long engagement of a practicing philosopher and authorized meditation teacher, this work not only elucidates classical themes like koans and the ten oxherding pictures; it also shows what Zen has to teach—and how it

teaches about matters of ethics and art, individuality and social responsibility, and our everyday living and learning to die." -- John C. Maraldo, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at University of North Florida, author of *The Saga of Zen History and the Power of Legend*

"This is a comprehensive introduction to Zen teachings and practice by someone who is both an academic scholar of Zen and a long-term Zen practitioner. It is a personable and engaging overview of the tradition, and I'm pleased to recommend it highly." -- David Loy, Professor of Buddhist and comparative philosophy, Zen teacher, and author of *A New Buddhist Path and Ecodharma: Buddhist Teachings for the Ecological Crisis*

"Bret W. Davis combines a rare expertise in both the theory and practice of Zen Buddhism. He brings together the skillful wisdom of the Kyoto school with the best spiritual insights of both eastern and western philosophy and religion. The book is keenly intercultural in its scope and reads like a river of deep thought. Pensive, passionate and persuasive, it invites us to change not only our minds but our lives." -- Richard Kearney, Charles B. Seelig Chair in Philosophy at Boston College, author of *Anatheism: Returning to God After God* and *Reimagining the Sacred*

"This remarkable book succeeds in making Zen practice, Zen teaching, and Zen's vast cultural heritage accessible to audiences of diverse backgrounds today. But that's not all. It is no exaggeration to say that *Zen Pathways* marks a turn in comparative philosophy. With the nuance of a scholar-practitioner and the warmth of a good friend, Bret W. Davis makes the last hundred years of cross-cultural philosophy inside and outside of Japan relevant to our personal lives, our meditation practices, our spiritual striving and our public discourse." -- Leah Kalmanson, Associate Professor of Philosophy at University of North Texas, author of *Cross-Cultural Existentialism*

"Bret W. Davis has crafted a rich and engaging introduction to Zen. Drawing from his scholarly expertise and many years of Zen practice, Davis strikes, as he puts it, "a middle way between Orientalist fantasy and ruthless debunking." Students and practitioners have needed this book for a long time, and they will benefit from his skillful presentation of complex Zen teachings and his situating Zen within the larger Buddhist tradition and in conversation with Western philosophy." -- Christopher Ives, Professor of Religious Studies at Stonehill College, author of *Zen on the Trail* and *Imperial-Way Zen: Ichikawa Hakugen's Critique and Lingering Questions for Buddhist Ethics*

"Davis provides much more than a typical introductory work. Through a multifaceted treatment of theoretical and practical themes, he provides an overview of what a Zen life entails, drawing on the breadth of his historical understanding, depth of philosophical acumen, and rich personal experience. Davis brings to life the overall framework of Zen philosophy and a concrete sense of Buddhist practice in a manner that speaks to the engaged student in the West. He brings into relief what is invaluable yet often overlooked of Asian tradition, what can or needs to be adapted to the West, as well as innovations that continue to evolve the tradition. Highly recommended." -- Mark Unno, University of Oregon, author of *Shingon Refraction*

"Equally skilled as a teacher about Zen and a teacher of Zen, Bret W. Davis introduces readers to Zen and its Buddhist origins with artisanal thoroughness and disarming directness. Turning skillfully away from the admitted pleasures of spiritual tourism and academic archeology, *Zen Pathways* draws readers into sharing conversations of sincerely liberating intent, orchestrating topical encounters

with Zen exemplars—often in the company of Western philosophers and religious traditions—that reward readers with much more than a "glimpse" of Zen. Like the best intercultural cuisine, *Zen Pathways* offers a "taste" of Zen that brings out enlivening depths of flavor in the ever-evolving ordinariness of sentient presence." -- Peter Herschok, Director of the Asian Studies Development Program at the East-West Center, author of *Public Zen, Personal Zen* and *Buddhism and Intelligent Technology*

"A rarity among those who write on Zen, Bret Davis is qualified to authoritatively explain the practice and philosophy as well as the history and culture of Zen. His insights draw on his deep roots in both Zen practice and academic erudition, nourished by the rich soil of both the Japanese and Western heritage. Yet, he focuses steadily on our concerns in the here and now. Remarkably accessible and captivating, while remaining uncompromisingly accurate, *Zen Pathways* sets a 21st-century standard for what a serious introductory text on Zen should be." -- Thomas P. Kasulis, Ohio State University, author of *Zen Action/Zen Person* and *Engaging Japanese Philosophy*

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## Why Write or Read This Book?

Why write or read a book on Zen when it is claimed that Zen is "not based on words and letters"? Well, since there is no first word in Zen, there can be no last word. Precisely because, for Zen, it is not the case that in the beginning was the Word, there can be no book or collection of sayings that says it all. That is why every new Zen teacher leaves a record of his or her teachings. That is why every new encounter can become a new koan. Every new context calls for a new text, a text that

tries to leave some life in the printed words, to leave at least a vivid trace of the living words that areas Zen master Dogen puts it—"expressive attainments of the Way" (dotoku). The reader is invited to revive the verbiage.

For more than a century now, Zen Buddhism has been in the process of transmission from Japan and other parts of East Asia to the United States and other Western countries. The modern Western recontextualization of this age-old tradition has, appropriately, called forth many new texts—as did the eastward transmission of Buddhism from India to China in ancient times.

But do we really need yet another introduction to Zen? After all, there already exist many shelves of books on Zen, more than a few of which are written by authors who are—either as scholars or as teachers—more qualified than I am to write about Zen. Nevertheless, as a philosophy professor who studied with the contemporary representatives of the Kyoto School in Japan for many years, as a scholar who is fluent in Japanese and proficient in reading Classical Chinese, and most importantly as a longtime lay practitioner who has been authorized to teach Rinzai Zen, I hope that this book makes a unique contribution, one that will be welcomed especially by readers who are interested in both the philosophy and practice of Zen.

Toni Morrison famously said, "If there's a book you really want to read but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it." I hope that there are some students, scholars, lifelong learners, and philosophically minded Zen practitioners who will appreciate my attempt to write the book that I wish had been there for me to read more than thirty years ago, when I started down the parallel pathways of Zen and philosophy. Now, I wish someone else had written this book so that I could use it in my college courses on Asian and comparative philosophy and religion.

I should mention that my Zen training has for the most part been undertaken in Japan, where I resided for thirteen years, and where I continue to spend much time during sabbaticals as well as summer and winter breaks. Since I have not been affiliated with any of the Zen establishments in North America or Europe, I feel somewhat "outside the loop" when I read accounts—such as Rick Fields's *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*, Helen Tworok's *Zen in America: Five Teachers and the Search for an American Buddhism*, and James Ishmael Ford's *Zen Master Who? A Guide to the People and Stories of Zen*—of the incredible efforts that have been made over the last half century to transmit Zen to North America. When I read such books, or articles in such magazines as *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*, and when I visit the established Zen centers in the United States, I feel like I've arrived unfashionably late to a party that is already in full swing; perhaps a bit like a Japanese monk who returned to Japan after spending years in China learning Zen in the fourteenth century, only to find that a couple of earlier generations of Chinese and Japanese monks had already done the heavy lifting of transmitting Zen from China to Japan. In any case, I hope that my unusual mixture of academic and Zen training has enabled me to belatedly add a minor new voice to the booming cross-cultural chorus involved in the ongoing movement of Zen Buddhism around the world: in the past from India to China to Japan, and onward in the present to the United States, Europe, and elsewhere.

Allow me to introduce myself in just a little more detail, so that readers have a better sense of whose voice is speaking through the printed words of this book. While living in Japan for much of my twenties and thirties, and during numerous stays since returning to the United States in 2005 to begin my career as a philosophy professor, I have endeavored to follow in the giant footsteps of Kyoto School philosophers and lay Zen masters Nishitani Keiji and Ueda Shizuteru, who spent their lives commuting between the academic study of philosophy and religion at Kyoto University and the holistic practice of Zen at the nearby Rinzai Zen monastery of Shokokuji. After graduating from college in 1989, I spent half of the next seven years studying philosophy in a PhD program at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and half studying Japanese, practicing Zen and karate,

and teaching English mainly at a Buddhist university in the vicinity of Osaka, Japan. After going back to the States for a couple of years to finish my coursework at Vanderbilt, in 1996 I returned to Japan to live for eight and a half more years, this time in Kyoto. There, I studied Buddhism at Otani University for a couple of years, and then undertook doctoral studies and postdoctoral research in Japanese philosophy at Kyoto University. I also taught philosophy, religion, and ethics courses at universities in the area. All of this study and teaching was done entirely in Japanese, which is also the language I have spoken at home for the past three decades. Alongside my academic activities in Kyoto, I commuted

regularly to, and sometimes lived in, the monastery at Shokokuji in order to practice Zen. For a decade I worked on koans under the direction of Tanaka Joju Roshi, and after he passed away in 2008, I have continued this practice under the direction of Kobayashi Gentoku Roshi. In 2010, I was officially authorized by Kobayashi Roshi as a teacher (sensei) and director of a Zen center (dojocho). In fact, with Tanaka Roshi's permission and encouragement, in 2005 I founded, and since then have directed, The Heart of Zen Meditation Group, which meets in a remodeled "meditation chapel" at my home institution in Baltimore, Loyola University Maryland.

This book is the hybrid fruit of, on the one hand, more than three decades of practicing and more than a decade of teaching Zen, and, on the other hand, more than three decades of studying and two decades of teaching Western, Asian, and cross-cultural philosophy. The bridge builders between these two disciplines, in whose footsteps I have tried to follow—albeit starting from the Far West rather than from the Far East—are those Kyoto School philosophers who have both practiced and reflected on Zen. Especially important for me have been the central figures of the first three generations of the Kyoto School: Nishida Kitaro (1870-1945), Nishitani Keiji (1900-1990), and Ueda Shizuteru (1926-2019).

Nishida understood the essence of religion to be the direct self-awareness obtained through delving deeply into the basic fact of existence. And he understood the essence of philosophy to be an intellectual reflection on that self-awareness? Human beings, Nishida thought, need both.

Another prominent Kyoto School philosopher and influential lay Zen teacher, Hisamatsu Shinichi (1889-1980), expressed the relation between philosophy and religion as follows:

Philosophy seeks to know the ultimate; religion seeks to live it. Yet for the whole human being, the two must be nondualistically of one body, and cannot be divided. If religion is isolated from philosophy, it falls into ignorance, superstition, fanaticism, or dogmatics. If philosophy is alienated from religion, it loses nothing less than its life.... Religion without philosophy is blind; philosophy without religion is vacuous.

When Hisamatsu says "religion," he mainly means Zen practice and the experience of awakening to the "formless self." In fact, he was quite scathing in his critiques of Christianity, Pure Land Buddhism, and other religions that preach salvation based on faith in a higher power outside the self. By contrast, D. T. Suzuki (1870-1976), along with many Kyoto School philosophers—including Suzuki's lifelong friend Nishida, and also Nishitani, Ueda, and Hisamatsu's student Abe Masao were interested not only in pointing out various differences but also in pursuing parallels between Zen and the profoundest theological, buddhological, and mystical teachings of Christianity and Pure Land Buddhism.

Some readers may wish to think of Zen teachings and practices in terms of "spirituality" rather than "religion," insofar as "religion" connotes for them institutional establishments and dogmatic creeds more than liberating and enlightening personal experience. Yet if we think of "religion" etymologically as re-ligio, and if we understand this to imply a way of reuniting with the ground and source—or source-field—of our being, then perhaps they might feel more comfortable with the term. In any



case, the present book is less concerned with the history and sociology of Zen as an institutional religion and more concerned with elucidating and philosophically interpreting its most enlightening and liberating teachings and practices.

To be sure, a lot of mischief, hypocrisy, and abuse has also gone on in Zen institutions, as is sadly the case with other religious traditions. One can and should read books that investigate such matters. Although this book is written more for philosophically minded spiritual seekers than for critically minded sociologists and historians, I do make an effort to take the latter kind of research into consideration, and also to point out what I see as certain potential shortcomings and pitfalls of Zen practice and philosophy (such as those involving erroneous anti-intellectualism or harmful antinomianism) that must be heeded and avoided.

The word "spirituality" it should be remarked, has its own problems. It cannot be applied to Zen if it indicates a concern with the spirit as opposed to, or as separable from, the body and the material world. Yet if "spirit" is used—as it sometimes is—as a holistic word for what encompasses and pervades our whole body, heart, and mind, then Zen can indeed be understood in terms of spirituality. Zen practice is holistic. It engages the whole psychosomatic person, which, moreover, it does not dualistically separate from the whole universe.

Buddhism has always been an exceptionally philosophical religion. Indeed, it is for this reason that Zen masters have often felt the need to push back against what they saw as an overemphasis on intellectual reasoning and textual study in the Buddhist tradition. Their counterbalancing stress on embodied-spiritual practice over merely cerebral intellection remains an important lesson for many of us today. However, the counterbalancing pendulum has sometimes swung too far in the opposite direction, with some teachers and especially their epigones suggesting that philosophical thinking and scholarly studies are not only unnecessary but even antithetical to Zen. Especially in some of his early writings, the pioneer Zen spokesperson in the West, D. T. Suzuki—himself, ironically, an avid and prolific scholar—at times left readers with that impression. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 21, in his later work Suzuki increasingly stressed the need to articulate a "Zen thought" and even a "Zen logic" rather than resting content with only "Zen experience." It is important to bear in mind that those past Zen masters who tried to wean their students from an overreliance on the intellect were often themselves learned and sharp thinkers. The thirteenth-century Japanese Zen master Dogen, for example, was an ingenious philosopher and erudite scholar. At the same time, as will be discussed in Chapters 20 and 22, Dogen too stressed the importance of regularly putting aside texts, putting on hold intellectual reasoning, and wholeheartedly engaging in embodied-spiritual practices, especially the silent practice of seated meditation.

Those Kyoto School philosophers who were also dedicated Zen practitioners—Nishida, Hisamatsu, Nishitani, Abe, Ueda, and so on—have done the Zen tradition, and the world at large, an indelible service in reconnecting the embodied-spiritual practice of Zen with rigorous philosophical thinking, and also with pioneering a dialogue between Buddhist and Western philosophy and religion. That is why, as a student who was committed to philosophy yet not wholly satisfied with its exclusively intellectual approach, and who thus took up a parallel practice of Zen, I was drawn to follow in their footsteps and to commute between the university and the monastery. What I offer in this book is the fruit of that commute: an introduction to Zen that pays due attention to both its practical roots and its philosophical leaves. <>

## ZEN BUDDHIST RHETORIC IN CHINA, KOREA, AND JAPAN edited by Christoph Anderl [Conceptual History and Chinese Linguistics, Brill, 9789004206281]

One of the key factors for the success of the Chán/Sŏn/Zen schools in East Asia was the creativity of their adherents concerning the development of innovative literary genres and the skillful application of linguistic and rhetorical devices in their textual products. From the very beginning, Zen Buddhists used literature in order to attract the attention and support of influential lay Buddhists, such as literati, officials, and members of the aristocracy. Consequently, Zen Buddhist texts had a deep and lasting impact on the development of East Asian languages, literary genres, and rhetorical devices, and more generally, on East Asian culture.

In this volume, leading specialists in East Asian Buddhism and linguistics analyze the interplay of language and doctrine/ideology in Chinese Chán, Korean Sŏn, and Japanese Zen, as well as tracing developments triggered by changes in the respective sociopolitical and socio-religious contexts. As a special focus, Zen rhetoric will be related to pre-Chán Buddhist literary developments in India and China, in order to trace continuities and changes in the application of rhetorical strategies in the overall framework of Buddhist literary production.

Through this diachronic and comparative approach, the great complexity and the multifaceted features of Chán/Sŏn/Zen literature is revealed.

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#### INDEX

## What Kind of Rhetoric...and Why?

The division between 'China,' 'Korea,' and 'Japan' (expediently used in the very title of this publication) is to a certain degree artificial, and especially in the early stages of Chinese Chán ^ and Korean Son, these regional divisions only make limited sense. Korean monks, for example, took a very active part already during the formative period of Chán development (as far as in the distant area of nowadays Sichuan), and there was by no means a one-way transmission from China to Korea, but rather a constant exchange between regions. In the same way that there are no clear divisions along state borders in terms of the characteristics of Buddhist practices and doctrines, Chán is no unified phenomenon but there have been many kinds of Chán, Son, and Japanese Zen. Especially in the formative period of the Táng Dynasty (618-907), impulses and ideas were emerging from and pulsating between cultural and religious 'hubs,' for example in the form of important centers of Buddhist practice and culture, e.g., large cities such as Cháng'an , Luòyáng or regions at the periphery of or beyond the influence of Chinese control (e.g. Dunhuang , the region of nowadays Sichuan, and Southeast China), or in the form of Buddhist communities living in secluded monasteries. In accordance with sociopolitical, geographical, sectarian, and many other settings and conditions, ideas, practices, and doctrines would at times be contained within limited spatial borders, and during other periods they would spread with great speed throughout large areas. During their journey to other areas, ideas or sets of doctrines could undergo significant modifications (e.g., in the form of the selection of texts which were circulating, or by incorporating influences absorbed during their journey, or based on the personal preferences by the human agents transmitting these ideas). In addition, having spread to specific areas, these ideas, doctrines, or practices would undergo adjustments and modifications, and be adapted to local religious and cultural contexts. Although the study of the historical and doctrinal developments of early Chán has progressed immensely during the last decades, research of these important questions of regional variety is still in its initial phase.

This volume does not focus on theoretical discussions on rhetoric, or on the interpretation of Zen doctrines. Rather, it is an attempt to identify concrete linguistic and rhetorical devices and 'rhetorical modes' that have been used in Chán, Són, and Zen texts at specific times and occasions, and relate them to sociopolitical, doctrinal, and sectarian contexts; as well as pursuing questions concerning motives, continuities or changes of rhetorical strategies, and target-audiences.

It suffices to note that in China—as in the case of ancient Greece—the relationship between language/rhetoric and 'truth' was a question of ardent discussion among Buddhists, especially from the 6th century onwards. As will be discussed below—despite the predominant negative attitude towards words frequently expressed in Zen texts, stressing their incapability to express the ultimate truth—we find ample reference in late Táng and Sòng 5 (960-1279) sources, for example, that enlightenment was triggered/conditioned exactly by words. Linguistically, this is not indicated by constructions with coverbs/prepositions indicating 'cause' or 'dependence' (such as yin I or yi K), as we would expect, but it is idiomatically expressed by using an extended meaning of the relative place word xià ^ 'under' (typically, yán-xià dà wù , 'he was greatly enlightened based on these words'). To my knowledge this construction yán-xià is not current in other text-types, and seems to be specific 'Chán/Zen language' ('UNDER > AT THE OCCASION OF (?) > caused by, triggered by words'). Why was this unusual construction chosen? As will be demonstrated below, in 'Chán/Zen language' the semantics of common words are frequently manipulated or metaphorically extended, rare words are introduced or 'revived,' and even grammatical constructions are used in unusual ways. Thus we can speculate that xià in this usage is meant to indicate that the words that triggered the insight were not 'common' words, or words based on the canonical scriptures, 3 but rather the 'live words' (recorded in vernacular language in encounter dialogues) of the masters.

Posing the question concerning the relation of rhetoric vis-à-vis 'truth' in Western philosophy, it is probably more appropriate to focus on rhetoric and its relation to the Two Truths paradigm (i.e., a

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'relative' vs. an 'ultimate' truth) in the context of East Asian Buddhism. How did Chán adepts navigate between a feeling of deep distrust towards the capabilities of language concerning its capacity to express the ultimate truth on the one hand, and a huge literary output and great creativity concerning the invention of genres and the use of language on the other hand? The following factors seemed to have played an important role: the application of multilayered literary structures and heterogeneous genre features within single texts, the introduction of written representations of the colloquial language(s) (representing the 'live words' of the masters of old), an extensive use of metaphorical, non-referential and poetic language, as well as the inclusion of non-linguistic signs. These were creative strategies to solve the underlying paradox between the conviction concerning the limitations of linguistic expression, and the necessity of using language to express one's views and to spread the message of Chán, as well as attracting the attention of supporters and potential consumers of Chán/Zen/Son literature.

Concerning the topic of 'persuasion,' Dale Wright notes:

"Two basic features place this discursive practice in contrast to the rhetorical tradition of Western thought. First, we notice that the political or polis-oriented character of early Greek rhetoric and the forensic or legal context of Roman rhetoric shape this tradition toward a discourse of persuasion. Indeed, rhetoric comes to be defined and constituted as the 'art of persuasive communication' [...]. By contrast we have seen that the particular way in which Buddhist principles come to be manifest in medieval Chán practice renders persuasion, by rational or emotive means, irrelevant to their concern."

I think that there is still a very strong element of persuasion in many Chán records—based on their 'public' nature and the aim to attract the attention of the potential readers and supporters.<sup>5</sup> The element of 'persuasion' is, thus, frequently directed towards an external readership. However, the persuasion does not necessarily concern a doctrinal issue or specific argument (although these features are also present in Chán texts), but the persuasion—in the Recorded Sayings, for example, embedded in sequences of dialogues—is often of a more fundamental kind: it concerns the question of the general superiority of the Chán master and by extension the Chán faction or 'school' he is representing. This form of persuasion often creates a two-fold rhetorical structure in the text, 'persuading' or defeating the opponent, and at the same time hoping to persuade the reader, as well. The matter of right or wrong concerning a specific doctrinal issue often ends with a judgment on a specific person (the opponent being defined as 'ignorant' and incapable of formulating the truth). As is amply illustrated in this volume, this device reminds us of the procedures of a court trial. Although this approach predates the appearance of gongan(j. koan) literature, in the gongan genre of the Sòng this aspect of Chán rhetoric becomes prominent and embedded in specific literary structures. Even though this remains somewhat hypothetical at this point, it is tempting to reflect on the roots of this aspect of Chán literature in the broader context of Táng Buddhism and medieval Chinese culture.<sup>6</sup> Also on the level of 'popular' Buddhism, the procedures and power structures of the Chinese legal system had a profound impact. Most prominently, it is reflected in the depiction and description of 'legal' procedures which the deceased (the 'culprit') had to undergo in his meetings with the ten kings/judges (shíwáng, among them King Yama) of the underworld (directly mirroring the procedures of the secular legal system). The question of 'guilt' or 'innocence' and the subsequent judgment (for example, to rebirth in one of the hells, or to one of the other forms of existence within the Six Destinies, liùdao), is usually beyond the influence of the culprit and the power rests ultimately in the hands of the judges. Similarly, the status of the Chán master guarantees him the judgment on 'right' or 'wrong' regardless of the arguments brought forth by his opponent or disciples. He is empowered by his participation in the Chán lineage (in the same way as the judge or official is empowered by his appointment through the imperial court) and the 'superior wisdom' implied by this position.

I also think that Chán's silence concerning questions of ethics in a traditional Buddhist sense and the appearance of many 'short-cut' approaches to salvation or enlightenment that appeared in the context of medieval Chinese Buddhism indirectly played an important role in this development. These issues became very significant for the development of Buddhist traditions in East Asia. Traditional Buddhist ethics was firmly rooted in the assumption that unwholesome actions, speech acts, and thoughts would necessarily entail unfavorable results, and vice versa good actions, etc. would eventually lead (at least theoretically after countless life times of spiritual practice or the performance of good deeds) to liberation/ enlightenment. There was a definite theoretical 'logical' connection and chain of causation between the actions of an individual and the ensuing results. However, as can be evidenced by many (often non-canonical but very popular) texts of medieval Chinese Buddhism, the reality of Buddhist practice and ritual developed in a different direction.

### Internal vs. External Functions of Chán Texts

A special focus in this book will be on the 'internal' and 'external' aspects of Chán/Sŏn/Zen rhetoric, i.e., the question to what audience and readership Chán discourse was directed during specific periods and circumstances, and to what degree Chán texts constituted 'public documents' as opposed to texts primarily directed towards an internal readership of Chán monks and practitioners (or simultaneously to several target audiences). Of great interest is also the question how the Chán clergy reacted and adapted to sociopolitical changes, sectarian and doctrinal challenges and paradigmatic shifts in the relationship to supporters, target audiences or institutional settings. How did Chán/Zen/Sŏn react to these factors in terms of literary production, the invention or use of genres, as well as the range of linguistic and rhetorical means deployed in texts?

### Structure as Rhetorical Device

Many Chán texts have a heterogeneous structure and this 'multi-genre' approach serves several purposes. Chinese Chán scriptures often use layers of different language styles (e.g., Literary, Buddhist Hybrid, and colloquial Chinese), possibly as an attempt to implement the 'Two Truths'-model on the linguistic and literary level, trying to bridge the paradox that is implied in the claim of being independent of the scriptural teachings (since the ultimate truth is beyond the realm of linguistic signs) and the necessity of literary production. The implementing of the 'spoken word' in written form was maybe an attempt to solve this dilemma. Using the vernacular as means of expression tries to go beyond the 'teachings based on (written) words,' and the 'live words' of the master were meant to reflect an 'ultimate truth.'

Seeking new forms of literary expression was probably also motivated by the fierce sectarian competition between Buddhist factions during the time of the emergence of the Chán School. After intense discussions and adaptations concerning Buddhist doctrines and practices during the 6th and early 7th centuries, many aspects of doctrine, practice, and ritual had become more or less common ground for the majority of Buddhist factions. Since doctrinal aspects were often difficult to distinguish, the focus shifted partially away from these discussions to the question of how the religious message should be conveyed and by what means support from the public could be attracted.

### The Development of the Narrative and Chán Literature

One of the key events in the development of Chán Buddhist literature was the gradual adoption/adaptation of the narrative as means of transporting religious messages. Whereas many key texts of early Chán literature were written in the form of treatises using a language which occasionally is referred to as Buddhist Hybrid Chinese (i.e., a language based on literary Chinese intermixed with Buddhist terminology and syntactic constructions typically used in translation literature, in addition to a few vernacular elements), from the middle of the Táng Dynasty onwards the use of dialogues and 'story telling' became one of the prominent features of Chán texts. The first



peak of this new development was reached during the Five Dynasties period (907-960) and the early Sòng, and the typical Chán genres, such as the Transmission of the Lamp Texts (Transmission Texts) and Recorded Sayings literature, started to enjoy tremendous popularity well beyond the limits of a strictly Chán Buddhist context. The exact circumstances concerning the emergence of these genres centered around the historiographic narratives are still not quite clear, but it seems to be grounded in the broader context of Buddhist literary production (such as the highly colloquial Transformation Texts) and the gradual transformation of the vernacular language into a legitimate means of expression. However, the roots for this development seem to go back to pre-Táng times and are grounded in the increasing interest in texts in which Buddhist doctrines and ethical issues are wrapped in instructive and didactic stories.

In his contribution 'Thus Have I Heard' and Other Claims to Authenticity, Bart Dessein addresses the setting of canonical Buddhist texts within a literary context and tradition. As an important feature the scriptural tradition is rooted in the oral tradition of Indian literature. He points out that early Indian prose usually does not aim at convincing the listener/reader of a specific truth. With the appearance of Buddhist texts the situation changed drastically, aiming at converting the audience to the truth of Buddha's teachings. This shift also entailed the appearance of new rhetorical devices which Dessein labels 'inter-textual' and 'intra-textual.' The process of committing Buddhist texts to a written form probably started in the 1st century BC. Not being in the possession of a long tradition of oral transmission the adherents of Mahayana seem to have concentrated on the written tradition, an example which eventually was followed by the Theravadins. Writings began to serve the function of defining specific doctrinal standpoints in an increasingly sectarian environment. In addition, this entailed a dual form of transmission, one based on written texts, and the other one on oral versions, each employing different rhetorical devices. Dessein provides ample evidence of the development of this sectarian aspect within the Sarvastivada School, and illustrates the rhetorical strategies used to attract and convince an 'external' audience. By using the concepts of 'intra-' and 'inter-textual' devices, the gradual development of these strategies is shown.

Concerning the popularization of Buddhist messages in the form of entertaining and didactic stories, two of the most popular works in this respect are the One Hundred Parables Sutra (Biyàn jīng) and the Sutra of the Talented and the Stupid (Xiányǎn jīng).

As Christoph Harbsmeier points out in his contribution Reading the One Hundred Parables Sutra, it is all about "entering nirvāṇa with a smile." Narrative works like the Biyàn jīng avoid any sophisticated doctrinal and ethical discussions but rather illustrate Buddhist key issues in the form of witty and entertaining stories, which were understandable also for less educated people. Harbsmeier provides a detailed linguistic and rhetorical analysis of the preface to the text, illustrating in detail the typical mix of styles and linguistic devices, combining Literary Chinese with the lexical and syntactic items typical for the Chinese used in translation literature, as well as including vulgar expressions and colloquialisms. Harbsmeier shows that many linguistic and rhetorical features found later in Chán texts have their origin in this kind of Buddhist narrative literature. The analysis of such narrative texts also shows how much they have been adapted to a Chinese audience, rather than being directly translated from Sanskrit. Buddhists at that time were keenly aware of the fact that purely doctrinal texts had limitations for spreading the Buddhist message to a broader audience and rather 'packed' these messages into entertaining narratives, or 'playful sutras,' as Harbsmeier refers to them.

The Sutra of the Wise and the Stupid was so popular and widely read that many depictions of avadānas and jātakas (i.e., dramatic stories about Buddha's previous rebirths) were based on these texts, rather than on more canonical versions of the stories. This tendency is exemplified by the wall-paintings of the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang.

Curiously, one of the earliest references to the didactic stories in the Chan Buddhist context was precisely ‘avadāna’ (yūnyuan 1/4<sup>^</sup>), a term usually used for certain types of Buddhist narratives.<sup>14</sup> However, in the traditional avadāna accounts the seed and ‘cause’ for the future career as bodhisattva or Buddha is laid by extreme deeds of selflessness and virtue (typically, the virtues of giving, patience and perseverance, including the sacrifice of one’s body),<sup>15</sup> illustrated in the numerous jātaṅka stories which give an account of Buddha’s former lives. These accounts had on the one hand clearly didactic purposes; on the other hand they explained why Sakyamuni became a Buddha and how he created the foundation for his career as enlightened being and saviour. As the term yūnyuan suggests, there is a clear causal connection between his countless good deeds and his rebirth as Buddha. Jātaṅka stories enjoyed enormous popularity especially at the beginning of the Tang dynasty, and there was a revival of the genre at the end of the Tang and the early Song.

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### The Contextualization of Chan Literature

In recent scholarship, more comprehensive approaches have been pursued in order to study the emergence of specific Chan genres such as the Recorded Sayings and gongan literature. Traditionally, scholars concentrated on Buddhist literature and precedents, ignoring the fact that the emergence of these genres is as much a phenomenon within the field of literary studies and linguistics as it is in the context of East Asian religions. Recently, Albert Welter<sup>136</sup> has focused on the chuanqí (‘miraculous tales’) as possible influence, while Victor Sogen Hori has studied the possible influence of Chinese literary games on gongan literature. One of the future important tasks will be the study of these Chan genres in even a broader context (also including the Neo-Confucian and Daoist yulu, for example). It will be also necessary to contextualize Chan literature within the larger field of narrative traditions (primarily the immensely popular avadana literature, including their visual ‘transformations’;<sup>138</sup> see also the discussion on the term yinyuan above), and focus on performative presentations of the Buddhist teachings during the Tang Dynasty. Important for the study of the adaptation of the written vernacular in Chan literature is also what Victor Mair refers to as the ‘Second Vernacular Revolution,’ and the oral culture prevailing in the Buddhist context, especially from the mid-Tang onwards.

### Remarks on the Literary Structure of Gong'an/Koan Literature

“The kien—a brief, enigmatic anecdote or dialogue between two contesting parties—defines the heart of Zen Buddhism and is the single most distinctive feature in the thought and practice of the Zen sect.”

Many of the utterances of the masters developed into ‘cases of the masters of old,’ which were used again and again for pedagogical and rhetoric purposes, amassing multiple layers of commentaries in the course of time. During the Song, these ‘cases’ were often condensed into the famous ‘gongan’ (J. koan) collections, which are still among the most important primary texts in Japanese Zen Buddhism today.<sup>1</sup> From these and the Recorded Sayings collections ‘essential/key phrases’ (huatōu 1/2<sup>^</sup>) and ‘catch phrases’ (zhuóyǔ J. jakugo) were extracted, developing into important soteriological devices in the context of kánhua meditation.

Even more so than the Recorded Sayings, gongan literature is highly constructed and adapted to the literary taste of the educated reader. Below is a short analysis of the rhetorical structure of one of the cases of the famous collection Chanzong Wúmen guin (J. Zenshu Mumonkan), compiled by the monk Huikai n (1183-1260).

Preceptor Shoushan took up the bamboo staff and instructed the assembly, saying: “All you people, if you call [this] a bamboo staff then this is ‘attachment/clinging,’ [?] if you do not call this a bamboo staff then this is ‘turning against;’ [?] all you people, tell me: what do you call it?”

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{The cases in the Wúmén gūn are always introduced with the name of the main actor of the g<sup>ā</sup>ngàn, in this case Shóushan, a master in the Línjì lineage. In the first line, the central topic is introduced, the lifting of the bamboo-staff, a symbol of authority of the master, occasionally used to ‘punish’ the students or to encourage them to greater efforts.<sup>146</sup> The address of master Shóushan is formulated rhythmically, the 7-character couplets in the middle are arranged parallel to each other; in this couplet the main proposition of the case (in the form of an address to the disciples) is formulated. The direct speech is introduced by a second person pronoun (rú) affixed with the plural indicator ding ^ and a quantifying apposition ‘all you people’ (zhú rén). In order to preserve the 7-character phrase the second part of the couplet deletes the sentence initial ruò ^ ‘if.’ After the middle couplet, the audience is emphatically addressed again, this time including a small variation by dropping the plural suffix after second person pronoun rú. The address is formulated in the form of a request/mild imperative, indicated by the adverb qie j.. The last phrase features the colloquial question pronoun shènmó ^^ ‘what.’ At this point, the main case stops and no answer by the students is included—through this device the feeling of suspension is kept and the question is transferred from the disciples in the text (i.e., the ‘internal’ audience of disciples as part of the textual structure) to the reader (i.e., the ‘external’ audience). Another special feature typical for g<sup>ā</sup>ngàn is the inclusion of commonly used words, attaching a very specific ‘Zen meaning’ (frequently differing also from their common use in Buddhist texts) and unusual semantics to them. In this case, the common verbs chù ‘TOUCH > attach to, cling to (?)’, and bei ^ ‘TO TURN ONE’S BACK TOWARDS > oppose (?)’ are used. Note that the verbs are transitive but the object is consciously deleted (and not understood from the context!). By applying this rhetorical device, the riddle-like and enigmatic features of the phrases are preserved and the reader wonders about the reference of the deleted object. This ambiguity also leaves ample room for future commentaries on the passage.}

[Translation:]

Wúmén comments: “Calling it a bamboo staff then this is ‘attachment,’ not calling it a bamboo staff then this is ‘opposing.’ It is not allowed to use words, it is not allowed to be silent. Speak up quickly! Speak up quickly!”

{Wúmén starts his comment by repeating the central couplet of the main case; the initial particle ruò ‘if’ is deleted in the first phrase and the parallel construction (and repetition of Wúmén’s proposition) is rendered slightly off-balance; however, the comment continues with a strictly parallel (semantically and grammatically) and nearly identical couplet (only differentiated by the antonyms you ^ ‘have’ and wú ^ ‘not have,’ which are among the most important contrastive terms in Chán Buddhist texts). The comment ends with another couplet, a repeated imperative phrase, as such constituting an identical couplet. As in the main case, Wúmén’s commentary ends with a request, however, this time the reader is confronted with a straightforward imperative, the repetition of the phrase is adding to the sense of urgency: “Speak up quickly, speak up quickly!”}

[Translation:]

The verse says:

Lifting up the bamboo-staff  
 Executing the order of either killing or letting live (i.e., pardoning)  
 ‘Opposing’ and ‘attachment’ race with each other  
 The Buddhas and Patriarchs are begging for their lives

{The gongan concludes with a short stanza of 4x4 characters, the last character of the second line rhyming with the last character of the fourth line, /ling :/ /ming ©/. In the first line, the central topic of the gongan, the ‘lifting of the staff’ is repeated; followed by a phrase referring to legal procedures, i.e., dramatically and metaphorically comparing Shóushan to a judge deciding over the release of the accused or the execution of a ‘death’ sentence;<sup>148</sup> the dynamic and urgent mood is maintained in

the third phrase, resuming the two central verbs *chù* and *bei* (which indicate the possible reactions to Shoushan's raising the staff): the two (nominalized) abstract verbs are put in relation with a verb usually associated with concrete motion: they are actually racing with each other.<sup>149</sup> In the fourth line the link to the founders of the tradition/the authoritative lineage is established—and at the same time challenged: the tradition is actualized and revived by actions of the master.}

### On Some Rhetorical Moods and Modes Rhetoric of Urgency

The 'rhetoric of urgency,' the 'rhetoric of pending threats,' and the 'rhetoric of control' are often encountered in Chan historiographic works, including the accounts of immanent threats to the adherents of Chan, often by 'enemies' or rivals of the school. Note the following example of a rhetorically very terse passage from the LDFBJ, from the section on the first Patriarch Bodhidharma. In this short passage several central themes and rhetorical devices are compressed. It includes an account of the (fictive) poisoning attempts by the monk Bodhiruci (i.e., a polemical attack against somebody who is perceived as a rival of the Chan School). Bodhidharma is also described as possessing the powers of knowing the thoughts of others (i.e., the intentions of Bodhiruci) as well as knowledge of the past<sup>151</sup> (he knows the reason why he is poisoned, expressed by the statement *wó yuan ci dú*, and of predicting future events (i.e., the pending troubles for the Second Patriarch in *spe Huike* and the future line of transmission). In addition, the crucial topics of the patriarchal transmission (until the sixth generation, i.e., Huineng), the symbol of transmission in the form of the monk's robe (in many other Chan hagiographies also the monk's bowl is mentioned), and the relative understanding of his successors (i.e., until the Sixth Patriarch there can be only one main successor who carries on the lineage, in this case, Huike). The topic of transmission is further dramatized through metaphorical expressions, his disciples actually receiving parts of the body of Bodhidharma (an act of 'metaphorical cannibalism,' so to say, Huike receives the 'marrow' of Bodhidharma, i.e., the very essence of his teaching, thus qualifying him for the succession). As additional rhetorical elements, the notion of urgency and the great danger involved in transmitting the dharma are emphasized. Besides the description of the wicked attempts by Bodhiruci of poisoning Bodhidharma, it is also stressed that even these events are fundamentally caused by Bodhidharma himself, who, thus, remains in complete control of the situation.

Now it happened that in the Wèi the Trepitaka Bodhiruci and the Vinaya Master Guángtong put poison in some food which they offered [to Bodhidharma]. When the Great Master had finished eating he asked for a dish and vomited up a pint of snakes. Once again they offered him poisoned food. When the Great Master had taken the food and eaten it, he sat atop a massive boulder, and when the poison came out the boulder cracked. Altogether they tried to poison him six times. The Great Master informed his disciples, "I originally came in order to pass on the Dharma. Now that I've gotten someone, what's the good of lingering?" Then he transmitted the kasaya robe as a verification of the Dharma transmission. He said to Huike, "My destiny is this poison; you also will not escape these tribulations. Until the sixth generation, the life of the Dharma heir will be as a dangling thread." He finished speaking and immediately died of the poison. He himself used to say, "I am one hundred and fifty years old," but it was not known how old he actually was.

Note also another feature that is in contrast to the structure of traditional Buddhist historiographic/hagiographic writings: The section giving an account of his background, his teacher, his enlightenment and his activities as master (topics which would occupy ample room in more traditional historiographies such as the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* is actually compressed into one line!

Chan Master Bodhidharmatrāta was the third son of a South Indian king. He became a monk while still young, and as soon as he received instruction from his master he was immediately awakened. He preached in South India and greatly furthered Buddhism.

In contrast to this compressed section, the detailed sections of the entry consist of dramatized prose and dialogues. Here, we already see a distinct tendency away from the traditional historiographic/hagio-graphic style of writing and towards narratives including dramatic accounts and dialogues.

### Antinomian and Anti-authoritarian Rhetoric

Accounts of iconoclastic, antinomian, anti-authoritarian, and anti-traditionalist behaviour of Chan masters, as well as their rejection of the canonical texts and traditional Buddhist practices, are important topics in Chan/Zen scriptures, suggesting a nearly unlimited power and freedom of enlightened masters. These accounts are of course in startling contrast to the institutional and socio-political realities and restrictions (including the financial dependency on secular powers and laity, in addition to the fact that ordinations had to be authorized by secular officials) the clergy usually had to submit to.

“Rather, Sòng Chán monasteries were strictly governed, large institutions where students lived highly regulated lives, engaging in ritualized lectures and encounters with the master according to an established schedule.” (Schlütter 2008:16)

This kind of rhetoric often consists of emphasizing the superior wisdom of a Chan master as compared to secular authorities, typically expressed by the refusal to follow orders (e.g., of an imperial edict), or the mocking of persons of high status, or other eminent Buddhist monks, preferably lecture master. These stories have the function of stressing the special status of the Chan master even vis-a-vis the highest authorities. They are also great topics for adding suspense and drama to the hagiographies of famous masters. Already in the 8th century LDFBJ, the Fourth Patriarch Daoxin's (580-651) dialogical exchange with an envoy sent by the emperor actually occupies more than half of the biographic entry. After several futile attempts by the unlucky envoy to convince Daoxin to move to the capital the exchange ends in the following way:

The emperor again sent off the messenger, [this time] wearing a sword with which to get Chán Master Xin's head. He ordered him, “Do not harm the Venerable!” The messenger arrived at the Venerable's place and said, “The emperor orders me to get the Venerable's head. Will the Chán Master go or not?” The Venerable replied, “I absolutely will not go.” The messenger said, “The emperor orders that if the Chán Master will not come, I am to cut off his head and bring it.” Great Master Xin extended his head and said, “Chop it and take it.” The messenger turned the blade and bent [Dàoxin's] neck. Great Master Xin sang out, “Why don't you chop, how much longer must I wait?” The messenger replied, “The emperor ordered me not to harm the Venerable.” Chán Master Xin gave a great laugh and said, “I've taught you to recognize someone who stays put.” (LDFBJ, ed. Adamek 2007:31 (punctuation modified); tr. *ibid.*:318)

### Rhetoric of Persuasion, Defeat and Submission

As Jens Braarvig in his contribution *Rhetoric of Emptiness* points out, rhetoric aims at persuading the listener or reader to adopt a particular view, or—specifically in the Buddhist context—to bring about the realization of a particular truth. Ideally, this realization aims at achieving liberation from ignorance, the cycle of life and death, or any other goal in the context of the Buddhist *mārga*. However, especially in Mahayana Buddhism there is an inherent ambivalence towards the use of words in the pursuit of the truth. They are unavoidable in spreading the message of Buddhism, on the other hand they are by definition limited in their capacity to express the truth, since the ultimate truth is beyond any linguistic expression. As such they belong to the realm of expedient means, often used not to establish a proposition but rather to refute any particular view and demonstrate the insubstantiality of all material or mental phenomena.



By comparing Buddhist and Greek rhetorical practices, Braarvig demonstrates that this ambiguity exists for both traditions. In the Greek context, rhetoric was criticized of being a practice similar to magic since it intentionally projects certain opinions and views into the mind of the listener, at its worst it is used as a skillful tool by tyrants in the controlling of their subjects. However, whereas the Greek discussed rhetoric mostly in a political and juridical context, the Buddhists would refer to it concerning the realization of an ultimate truth or a truth enabling personal liberation. Eloquence has to serve a higher purpose of furthering progression towards the ultimate goal of Buddhahood. Otherwise, rhetoric will be empty words and the source of false views and discursive thinking. As such, rhetoric skills in the form of memory (*dharani*) and eloquence (*pratibhāna*) have to be part of the repertoire of skillful means, which the Bodhisattva ideally possesses. Braarvig also investigates the relationship of the frequently blurred borders between rhetoric and logic. He argues that a system of logic applied in the Mahayana context aims at refuting any view without establishing another view, and can therefore easily slide into the realm of rhetoric. Another important element in the rhetorical structure of certain Mahayana texts is the inclusion of lay persons who surpass even the direct students of Buddha in their realization of wisdom. Their superior insight is often described through their great abilities in using rhetorical devices, by ridiculing the religious specialist, the *srāvaka*. As Braarvig shows, as a crucial device the opponent is defined before he is able to define himself.

Another important aspect highlighted by Braarvig are specific features of many Mahayana scriptures, which place them in the vicinity of genres associated with fiction and fantasy, boundaries of time and place are constantly transcended and the mind of the reader is bombarded with the imagery of phenomena in infinite worlds at infinite times. However, this grandeur of style is often interrupted by repetitive and tedious enumerations of concepts. By analyzing aspects of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* and *Bodhisattva-caryānirdeśa* Braarvig illustrates another feature which is also of central importance for Chan genres, i.e., the dialectical and logical form of dialogues. Already in Mahayana scriptures, these dialogues often feature clearly ‘extra-doctrinal’ aspects, such as the humiliation of the opponent and the assignment of inferior views and modes of understanding to him.

This ability to defeat the opponent by displaying greater wits and superior eloquence is of course also important in the context of the interaction with the broader public and worldly supporters of the Buddhist clergy. The public humiliation of the opponent in front of large audiences (often including the ruler) is a popular topic in the religious literature of both India and China. It is the ultimate test of the spiritual insight and powers of a famous religious figure, and—maybe most importantly—his worthiness of receiving financial and institutional support by the secular powers.

For an example, see the rhetorically sophisticated passage on Chan master Huizhong and his interaction with the Chan guest from the South (probably hinting at his rival Shénhuì).<sup>157</sup> Huizhong does not persuade exclusively with arguments (although he uses semi-logical chains of persuasion, too), but by convincing the interlocutor that his spiritual attainment was inferior. Typically, the interlocutor will finally ritually signal his submission and defeat. Here, we clearly witness a shift from using convincing arguments or chains of (pseudo-) logical sequences of doctrinal statements towards the authority of the master generated by his alleged enlightenment. The Chan master may say A, B, or C, it does not matter, he always will be right based on his superior status derived from his ‘insight’ and The ‘protection of the state’ (*huguó* J. *gokoku*; K. *hoguk*) was an important concept in the evolution of the Chan/S/n/Zen schools, originally based on a number of stras and Chinese apocryphal texts which had been composed for the purpose of dealing with the relation between Buddhism and the state.

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Buddhist ideology in Japan: the Myh renga ky (Sutra of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma, better known simply as the Hokke ky, the Lotus Sutra), the Konkmy ky (Sutra of the Golden Light), and the Ninn gokoku hannya ky (the Prajñāpramitā Sutra Explaining how Benevolent Kings Protect Their Countries, or simply, the Ninn ky). These three scriptures became collectively known in Japan as the 'three sutras for the protection of the country' (chingo kokka no sambuky)." (Welter 2006: 68)

Eisai (1141-1215) played an important role in establishing Zen as an independent institution.<sup>162</sup> One of his major concerns was the relation between Zen and the Japanese state, as, for example, dealt with in his work *Kzen gokokuron* (The Promotion of Zen for the Protection of the Country). He based this relation on the above set of texts, most importantly the Ninn. In the 'protection of the state' (hugō J. gokoku; K. hoguk) was an important concept in the evolution of the Chan/Sŏn/Zen schools, originally based on a number of sutras and Chinese apocryphal texts which had been composed for the purpose of dealing with the relation between Buddhism and the state.

"The importance of Buddhism for affairs of state in Japan was reaffirmed in the Nara (710-794) and Heian periods (794-1185), when three Buddhist scriptures provided the cornerstones of state Buddhist ideology in Japan: the Myh renga ky (Sutra of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma, better known simply as the Hokke ky, the Lotus Sutra), the Konkmy ky (Sutra of the Golden Light), and the Ninn gokoku hannya ky (the Prajñāpramitā Sutra Explaining how Benevolent Kings Protect Their Countries, or simply, the Ninn ky). These three scriptures became collectively known in Japan as the 'three sutras for the protection of the country' (chingo kokka no sambuky)." (Welter 2006: 68)

Eisai -- (1141-1215) played an important role in establishing Zen as an independent institution. One of his major concerns was the relation between Zen and the Japanese state, as, for example, dealt with in his work *Kzen gokokuron* (The Promotion of Zen for the Protection of the Country). He based this relation on the above set of texts, most importantly the Ninn ky<sup>5^^</sup>. In the view of Eisai, Zen should play a prominent role in the protection of the state, and according to the *Ninno kyo* "the preservation of Buddhism is inextricably bound to the preservation of their own country." It is also interesting to note that according to this ideology the ruler has the main responsibility for protecting Buddhism, as opposed to the saṅgha.<sup>164</sup> As Welter points out, in contrast to China, medieval Buddhism in Japan was not regarded as 'foreign' and did not constantly justify its position among other religions and ideologies:

"As a result, ideological debates in Japan tended to be sectarian, that is, between different factions that shared a common vision, rather than cutting across fundamental ideological boundaries. [...] many Buddhist sectarian debates were politically inspired" (Welter 2006:73)

As in the case of Chan and Zen, the reaction of Korean Sŏn to unfavorable sociopolitical circumstances, and the interaction of Sŏn and Confucianism led to specific rhetorical responses. In this volume, three contributions are devoted to this aspect of Sŏn rhetoric:

In his article *Hyujong's Son'ga Kwigam and its Historical Setting and Soteriological Strategies*, Jongmyung Kim deals with Hyujong's Compendium dating from the 16th century, focusing on soteriological and rhetorical issues as response to historical and intellectual developments during his time, characterized by a dominating position of Confucianism. One of the important aspects of Hyujong's approach concerns the attempt to harmonize Sŏn and canonical Buddhism, as well as making Sŏn compatible with issues important for Confucian audiences. The structure and organization of Hyujong's work provides important information on his main interests: although it is divided into three sections ('ontology,' 'phenomenology,' and 'soteriology'), the last part is the most elaborate and clearly his main concern. In this part he focuses on persons of 'medium and lower spiritual capacity' and recommends practices usually not directly associated with Chán/Zen/Sŏn, namely the recitation of Buddha's name and the use of dhāraṇā. In addition, there is a strong concern with ethical issues, clearly a response to a discourse dominated by Confucian scholars.

Through this device of dividing the text into several sections dealing with practitioners of different capacities and practices suited for them, Hyujong manages to be faithful to traditional Zen tenets such as sudden awakening, as well as providing a useful response to the contemporary religious and sociopolitical framework, i.e., pleading for a harmony between the teachings as well as a 'moderate' approach to Buddhism suited for people of lower capacities.

In his contribution *From Apologetics to Subversion*, Jörg Plassen deals with Buddhist literary production when Son was increasingly suppressed by Neo-Confucian state ideology. Although Buddhism generally was marginalized between the 15th and the late 19th centuries, as compared to Neo-Confucian ideology, Plassen provides a more nuanced description of the relationship and interactions between Buddhist monks and the state authorities and the literati. Despite widespread anti-Buddhist sentiments many important printing projects of Buddhist literature were conducted during that period. As in the case of Song China, influential Chán/Son Buddhist monks were often recruited among the literati, resulting in a natural relationship between classical and Buddhist literary production. There is also a shift in the linguistic and stylistic features of Son works, a move towards literati-style writings and the spreading influence of the Chinese movement of *wenzi Chán* 文字禪 (Literary Chán or 'Letters' Chán), the Song colloquial style becoming frozen as a 'sacred' language of the Recorded Sayings. Plassen specifically analyzes the hermeneutical and 'subversive' rhetorical devices through which a synthesis between Son and Confucianism was achieved. In his *Chodong owi yohae*, the Son monk Solcham ultimately claims the identity between the two teachings. In his approach, Solcham uses one of the most important concepts of the Cáodòng tradition of Chán, the Five Positions (*wuwei*), weaving Buddhist and Confucian terminology together. In addition, these combinations are illustrated in the form of diagrams. Through these subtle rhetorical devices Solcham evokes in the reader the notion of the identity between the Two Teachings.

The adaptation of Buddhism and Son to changing sociopolitical environments can be also demonstrated in a more recent context, as shown by Vladimir Tikhonov's case study of Han Yongun:

In his contribution *Manhae Han Yongun's Attempt at Producing an All-inclusive Modern Buddhist Compendium: Pulgyo Taejon*, Vladimir Tikhonov deals with Han Yongun, an innovative Buddhist thinker of the early 20th century who tried to reform Buddhism and produce a modernist Buddhist discourse. He conducted his project during a time when the suppression of Buddhism by the Neo-Confucian state ideology had come to an end (although state control tightened again considerably from ca. 1910 onwards), and in competition with his Christian rivals. Han's ambition was directed towards producing a compendium of scriptural sources that would fit into the reemergence and modernization of Buddhism. Although his *Great Buddhist Compendium* consists of traditional sources it is rearranged and restructured in accordance with Han's intentions of picturing Buddhism as a universal religion, compatible with Confucian values as well as fitting into modern times. Linguistically, he slightly changed the original "Text-Bausteine" by inserting Korean vernacular grammatical particles. He also used words relating to state and society that were newly coined in the course of Japan's modernization and imported to Korea. As another rhetorical device, religious terms are related to and re-interpreted in terms of socio-political concepts and 'patriotic' ideas and the responsibilities of the individual vis-à-vis the state. In addition, he uses this structural arrangement for addressing traditional Confucian domains such as the relationship between different strata of society as well as the relationship between the sexes (listing 14 ways of how a wife should serve her husband, as well as the ideal of the 'slave-like wife'). Through the technique of restructuring and 'cross-interpretation' (transferring an interpretation from one domain to another) Han tries to address several key issues and at the same time attempts to adjust them for several strata of audiences, in addition to countering Confucian and Christian rivals.

## Sectarian Disputes: Confrontational Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of Accommodation

The ranking of teachings has a long tradition in Chinese Buddhism and was an important hermeneutical tool for linking specific doctrines and practices to stages on the path (*marga*) or adapting them to the capacities of the listeners. These sequential listings were often done in the form of hierarchical taxonomies and were essential in handling the diverse and often even contradictory teachings encountered in the numerous translations of Buddhist sūtras and treatises.

“For example, Buddhist schools often sought to associate particular stages along the *marga*, usually lower ones, with various of their sectarian rivals, while holding the higher stages to correspond to their own doctrinal positions. [...] The purpose of such rankings was not purely interpretive; it often had an implicit polemic thrust.”

Also in Chan Buddhism, this approach became an important hermeneutical tool, often having an important rhetorical and polemic dimension. Attacks on rivals usually prospered during periods when there were shifts in the sociopolitical and institutional settings, during struggles for material support or for the favours of the respective elites, and during times of pending crisis or persecution. Disputes often developed along well-known complementary and contrastive paradigms, typically the ‘sudden-gradual’ axis, teachings based on words, or the rejection of any Buddhist scriptures. Examples are the attacks by Shénhuì on the members of the ‘Northern School’ (initiated in the 730s), disputes concerning the right lineage or other sectarian issues, such as the competition between the Línjì and Caodong factions during the Song Dynasty. Morten Schlütter has shown that these rivalries were conducted on the level of disputes concerning different approaches to meditation (*mòzhào* chin ^ ^^ ‘Silent Illumination Chan’ and *kanhua* chin \*^^ ‘Introspection Chan,’ respectively); however, on a deeper level these attacks were also motivated by the competition for support from the lay patronage.

Besides these ‘factors’ in the form of competition or sectarian disputes, and confrontational rhetoric, there is also an ‘internal’ dimension in terms of the formulation of the self-identity of Chan factions (i.e., by defining the ‘other’ one is defining oneself). One frequent claim vis-a-vis other Buddhist factions is the one that Buddhism culminates in Chan and rhetorical devices are used to defend this position:

“Chán hermeneutics developed in direct response to pressures from polemics in the scholastic schools, and by examining the interaction between these rivals, we may adduce much about the ways in which the Chán school selectively employed sacred texts in order, first, to uphold its own sectarian position and, second, to counter aspersions cast on it by its rivals.”

Often, different hermeneutical and rhetorical devices are used for different stages of development of the student; as such rhetorical devices are distinctively used as expedient means. Buswell exemplifies this based on the concept of the ‘Three Mysterious Gates’ (K. *sanmyōn-mun*, Ch. *sanxun men*) teachings used by Chinese Chan masters, and later more systematically described by Chinul (1158-1210).<sup>171</sup>

In his contribution Pojo Chinul and Kanhwa Son, Robert E. Buswell Jr. examines the doctrinal and rhetorical context of the introduction of kanhwa practice to Korea. The interpretation of the sudden/gradual paradigm (K. *tono chomsu*) in relation to enlightenment and spiritual cultivation was of crucial significance in this process, thus interpreting it differently as compared to the Chinese Línjì (K. *Imje*) tradition. Buswell labels this approach ‘moderate subitism’ as compared to the ‘radical subitism’ propagated in the Chinese context, and analyzes how Chinul achieves his goal by balancing the moderate and inclusive language of Guifeng Zongmì with the radical iconoclastic rhetoric of the Recorded Sayings of Línjì. Chinul also presupposes a thorough knowledge of the canonical Buddhist

scriptures and develops his system based on Z ŋmì's. Central in his system is the term 'understanding-awakening' (K. haeo), an initial enlightenment experience which has to be cultivated subsequently, as contrasted to the more radical approach of sudden awakening/sudden cultivation. Rhetorically, the paradigms of sudden/gradual and sets of complementary and contrastive concepts are used to formulate and argue for Chinul's own position. In the Chinese context kànhuà was also referred to as a 'short-cut' approach to enlightenment and Chinul was not exposed to this subitist technique before late in his life. Buswell analyzes how this concept was eventually integrated into and synthesized with Chinul's soteriological system. Using the method of establishing a taxonomical system grading the capacity of practitioners, he differentiates two approaches to hwadu: Investigation of its meaning and investigation of the word (the culmination of this practice), in addition to applying a threefold hermeneutical system of the 'three mysterious gates,' a system progressing from a conceptual understanding of scriptures, to hwadu practice, and finally to an understanding free of all conceptualizations. This device allows Chinul to fully integrate the 'radical' subitism as represented by the kanhwa approach with his system of moderate subitism. This approach of a rhetoric of reconciliation and integration was short-lived, however, and Chinul's successors nearly exclusively favoured the radical kanhwa technique and an iconoclastic approach to language. <>

## **GARLAND OF VISIONS: COLOR, TANTRA, AND A MATERIAL HISTORY OF INDIAN PAINTING** by Jinah Kim [University of California Press, 9780520343214]

**GARLAND OF VISIONS** explores the generative relationships between artistic intelligence and tantric vision practices in the construction and circulation of visual knowledge in medieval South Asia. Shifting away from the traditional connoisseur approach, Jinah Kim instead focuses on the materiality of painting: its mediums, its visions, and especially its colors. She argues that the adoption of a special type of manuscript called pothi enabled the material translation of a private and internal experience of "seeing" into a portable device. These mobile and intimate objects then became important conveyors of many forms of knowledge—ritual, artistic, social, scientific, and religious—and spurred the spread of visual knowledge of Indic Buddhism to distant lands. By taking color as the material link between a vision and its artistic output, *Garland of Visions* presents a fresh approach to the history of Indian painting.

**About the Author:** Jinah Kim is George P. Bickford Professor of Indian and South Asian Art at Harvard University. She is the author of *Receptacle of the Sacred: Illustrated Manuscripts and the Buddhist Book Cult in South Asia*.

### **Reviews**

"I am in awe of this book. Jinah Kim controls a stunning range of information, both verbal and visual, that she uses as the basis for her brilliant insights. Elegantly written, entirely pioneering, and fully persuasive, this is a book of enormous importance."—Frederick M. Asher, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota

"This is a paradigm-changing work. By linking together a dizzying array of concerns in this exploration of visionary practice and color, Jinah Kim complicates long-held assumptions about religious imagery in India and produces remarkable insights. The book is sure to create new paths of scholarly inquiry in a wide range of fields."—Janice Leoshko, Associate Professor, University of Texas at Austin

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#### **Acknowledgments**

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/ph. 9195425719 /fax 91986916430



## Abbreviations

## Introduction

## PART ONE: MEDIUM

1. Painting and Its Medium
2. The Art of the Book in Medieval South Asia

## PART TWO: VISION

3. Visions on the Move
4. A Garland of Visions

## PART THREE: COLOR

5. Color as an Encoding Tool
6. Color to Matter: A Material History of Indian Painting

## Epilogue

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In the twelfth regnal year of Gopala (IV)—a Pāla king who ruled parts of India in what is now Bihar and West Bengal during the first half of the twelfth century—a lay woman named An.aghākā commissioned a sumptuously painted palm-leaf manuscript of an important Mahāyāna scripture, the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses (*Astasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, henceforth Perfection of Wisdom). The commission was intended to benefit her “priest, teacher, parents, and all sentient beings in attaining supreme knowledge.” Only six out of the 206 folios of the manuscript were subject to painting. In these six folios, the unnamed miniaturist executed every given space with dexterity and finesse. On each folio, surrounding the two pre-bored holes for binding, were placed decorative bands filled with swirling vegetal patterns emerging from a monster’s mouth: the dark green tendrils are accentuated with light yellow highlighting and shaded with deep blue against a vibrant red backdrop with yellow borders (figure 0.1). Each band measures about 2 cm in width, and it would have required a brush that was about 2/100 mm in diameter to execute the fine lines.



**FIGURE 1 DECORATIVE PATTERN ON THE BAND AROUND THE STRING HOLE. DETAIL OF FIGURE 2.**

The vibrancy of color is absolutely stunning nearly nine hundred years after its production. On the last folio of the manuscript, three painted panels contain a red goddess flanked by blue and yellow bodhisattvas (figure 2). Kurukullā, the red goddess in the center panel, is adorned with intricate jewelry and an ornate crown. She is seated within a golden yellow shrine-like frame decorated with a swirly motif and a hamsa (swan) on either end, supported by two vyālas (mythical lions). The large cushion behind her displays an intricate textile pattern in organic blue and red (most likely indigo and lac)—the same colors that would have dyed contemporary textiles. The lotus seat where she sits cross-legged, drawing a flower bow, is rendered with blue, red, and green petals with yellow outlines. This acme of color pops even more brilliantly against the light brown palm leaf whose veins and suppleness still retain their organic character. The Sanskrit text in black ink is written in an ornamental kutila (hooked) script, a calligraphic variety of the cosmopolitan siddhamatrka script. Its flamboyance supports the brilliance of the painting.



**FIGURE 2 FOLIO 206R, PERFECTION OF WISDOM MANUSCRIPT, DATE: CA. 1143 CE (TWELFTH REGNAL YEAR OF GOPĀLA [IV]), PATRON: LAYWOMAN ANAGHĀKĀ, WEST BENGAL. ORGANIC AND MINERAL PIGMENTS AND SOOT INK ON PALM LEAF, SIZE: 6.7 × 48.6 CM. PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART, 1987-52-14. PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART.**

Although this folio (along with a fragment of folio 101) was separated from the original manuscript, and now resides in a museum, it is worth remembering that it once belonged to location—from a store room to a pedestal, for instance—and at times change hands, sometimes over great distances. The geographic area explored in this study is extensive, connecting Silk Road sites like Khotan and Dunhuang with centers of manuscript production in the South Asian subcontinent. A southern limit to its scope is provided by the Narmada River, since most of the manuscripts I discuss hail from regions north of the traditional boundary between north and south India.<sup>4</sup> Its temporal field is the period between 1000 and 1500 CE—within a “medieval” time frame in global reckoning. A final caveat: although this study proposes alternative ways to approach the history of Indian painting, it is not an exhaustive survey of medieval Indian manuscript painting. Instead, it focuses on the many guises that pothi-format manuscripts assumed while functioning as archives, envoys, teachers, and translators of various forms of knowledge across time and space.

To answer the question of why primary colors dominated the palette of Indian miniature painting, we must turn to what Ananda K. Coomaraswamy—the first curator of Indian art in North America and its preeminent savant—called the “blank” period, a time in India when there was “no one great religious inspiration.” In the early decades of the twentieth century, when Coomaraswamy was active, the prevailing assessment of Indian tantric traditions was that they were degenerate and corrupt forms of religion; hence, the view that the religious landscape of medieval South Asia provided no great inspiration for artistic activity. As we will see, however, tantric communities made substantial contributions to the art of painting in at least two areas: color theory and material culture. By devising procedures for seeing transcendent objects in a specific set of colors, tantric visionary practice provided a color scheme, based on primary colors, that could be harnessed for artistic purposes, namely, the translation of visionary experience into paintings that would circulate beyond the immediate locus of their productions. In certain tantric communities, there also were seekers (siddhas) pursuing transmutation through alchemical tantras who experimented with the ritual use of cinnabar (mercuric sulfide), the mineral source of vermilion. Since the main ores for mineral cinnabar were outside the South Asian subcontinent, vermilion was an exceedingly precious commodity when it was introduced to artisanal practice in medieval South Asia.

The skills required to produce a miniature were intimately tied to the art of the book. Manuscripts in South Asia were traditionally prepared with birch bark and palm leaves cut to uniform size and strung together through one or two prebored holes. Wooden book covers were provided to protect the folios. A pothi-format manuscript was normally oblong, a shape determined by the source material, usually palm leaves measuring 5–6 cm in width (in the case of the so-called talipot palm, *Corypha umbraculifera*, the most common type of palm used in the material examined for this study). With this material, the maximum available space on a given page does not exceed 6 × 55 cm. Given the limited space available to painters, each painted panel on a folio typically measured around 5 × 5.5 cm.

A miniature painting on a page in a Buddhist manuscript, such as the goddess Kurukullā in figure 0.2, rarely finds mention in most narratives of the history of Indian painting, especially after the arrival of the Mughals. The nominally Buddhist subject matter might prompt us to look for more ready comparisons in Buddhist communities nearby. In fact, most early examples of manuscript painting from South Asia come from Buddhist circles, with some exceptional examples hailing from Nepal. We remember that Anaghākā's manuscript was taken to Bhaktapur in the Kathmandu valley, where it remained in ritual use, and the iconography of a four-armed red goddess holding a red lotus and drawing a flower bow finds a close parallel in a painting in another manuscript prepared in Nepal (dated 1071), now in the Asiatic Society, Kolkata (A15, folio 152v). The goddess Kurukullā also appears in a number of later Tibetan thangkas, suggesting that a Himalayan connection in the development of manuscript painting in South Asia might reward exploration. A sectarian

transregional model, however, provides little room to consider the legacy and the contributions of Buddhist manuscript painters in the later history of Indian painting. Here, let us consider an alternative transregional model.

### Transregional and Transtemporal Connections

As portable objects traveling across different regions, South Asian manuscripts have survived many centuries of use, opening windows to distant connections across time and space. The painting in figure 0.3 was prepared on a vertically oriented sheet of paper. The top register occupying about one-eighth of the page contains a vernacular text (most likely a form of Braj) written in black ink. In comparison to the Sanskrit script in figure 0.2, the scribing seems less controlled, even casual, coinciding with the conversational tone of the text. The text is a cajoling message from Kṛṣṇa that the sakhi (the go-between and confidante) delivers to Rādhā, telling her how Kṛṣṇa is love stricken and longing to see her and urging her “come, go and meet Kṛṣṇa struck by Kāma’s arrow!” Below this text the scene unfolds in three compartments: the top section shows Rādhā in her apartment being swarmed by bees and addressed by the sakhi, whose standing position and lowered left hand connect Rādhā’s space to the dense forest where Kṛṣṇa dejectedly longs for his lover; opposite Kṛṣṇa’s forest is an inverted U-shaped bower, in which a female figure seated on a fully opened lotus draws a flower bow with a lotus stem as an arrow. This figure is commonly taken to be Kāma, or his female consort, Ratī. The accompanying text tells us that Kṛṣṇa is struck by Kāma’s arrow. The comparison to Kurukullā’s bow and arrow is inevitable.

As the goddess of desire, Kurukullā was regarded in tantric Buddhist communities as a personal deity of some importance.<sup>9</sup> It is unlikely that Kṛṣṇa’s painter, identified as Sāhib Dīn (Sahib al-Dīn), a Muslim painter who served the Hindu Mewar court in seventeenth-century Rajasthan, would have been aware of any recondite Buddhist iconography. Yet images of Kurukullā continued to be made in central Tibet and remained popular from the sixteenth century on. Indrani Chatterjee suggests that through “monastic geographicity” the Himalayan and trans-Himalayan regions remained connected to the rest of the South Asian subcontinent from the thirteenth through nineteenth centuries. Tibetan tantric and Mahāyāna Buddhist lineages “occupied the same terrain” as “the Sufi, Vaishnava, and Śaiva lineages of the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries,” yet are forgotten in colonial and postcolonial scholarship.<sup>11</sup> The earliest surviving miniature painting of Kurukullā places her on the Kurukullā peak in present-day Gujarat, and the iconography of the goddess may in fact have had a non-Buddhist origin. A potential connection between this small detail in a seventeenth-century Rajput painting and earlier Buddhist exemplars may seem inconsequential, but it is worth keeping in mind when we consider the genesis of the Indic manuscript-painting tradition.

The vertical format of the painting is unlike the horizontal pothi-format of the manuscript, but the choice of yellow as a backdrop for the band of text at the top of the page invites us to remember the color of a seasoned palm-leaf folio, poeticized as golden. The yellow backdrop is commonly seen in other Rajput court paintings with accompanying texts, and it is close to the color of contemporary Nepalese paper manuscripts. As seen in figure 0.4, the yellow paper folios with text written in black ink in a vernacular, informal hand of a painted manuscript of the *Karandavyuha*, dated 1631, resemble the text band in Sahib Din’s painting. The materials are different: the Nepalese paper was probably prepared with pulp from the bark of certain bushes or shrubs (for example, *Daphne papyracea*),<sup>1</sup> and its color was produced by an application of arsenic (orpiment) to the surface of the page in the final stage of preparation before scribing. In the Rajput folios, in contrast, the color is the result of a pigment called Indian yellow, said to have been produced from the urine of cows that were only fed mango leaves. The Indian yellow pigment does not seem to have insect repelling properties, unlike the orpiment used on the Nepalese paper. In any case, formal affinities such as carefully produced color and the proportions of text pages do not necessitate direct contact between artistic traditions, and more historical research is needed before a hypothetical interaction



between the seventeenth-century courts of the Rajput rulers and the Malla rulers of the Kathmandu valley can be confirmed.

Recent studies of transregional movements agree that the colonial-era model of Himalayan insularity, which held that Nepal and other kingdoms across the Himalayan foothills were sealed off from the rest of the world, has long been overdue for serious revision. Transregional connections between the Indian plain and a number of Himalayan sites, together with those across the Himalayas, are presently being reconstrued in various fields, including architecture. As mobile objects, manuscripts may sometimes constitute the only traces of long-ago travels across a network of connectivity now lost to us. Can they be fruitfully engaged to expand our understanding of the premodern era? In one instance, we can see that a sixteenth-century Bengali scribe was employed, in the area of present-day Delhi, in writing out a fully illustrated paper manuscript of the *Aranyaka Parvan*. According to the colophon on folio 362r, the scribe (kaydstha) named Bhavanidasa, son of Lakhanasi of the Ganda lineage, wrote the manuscript in 1516 (samvat 1573) in Yoginipura (today's Delhi) during the reign of the Sultan Sikandar. Where in Gauda his family may have hailed from is difficult to ascertain, but the manuscript bears witness to a scribal family's migration from eastern India to Delhi in the fifteenth century.

## Overview of the Chapters

In three parts, this book is concerned with the manuscript as an artistic medium, vision, and color. Part 1 examines the development of the pothi-format manuscript as a painterly medium that uniquely encompasses textuality, visuality, and materiality. Chapter 1 challenges the common scholarly assumption that treats paintings in all mediums as if they belonged to a single artistic tradition—even despite evidence to the contrary. The adoption of the manuscript as a medium for painting is a relatively late phenomenon; and this chapter explains the circumstances that may have inspired such a move and discusses the subsequent impact of this development. It also highlights the importance of a trans-Himalayan manuscript culture where the practice of making painted manuscripts flourished.

Chapter 2 proposes that religious architecture was an inspiration and a potential model for the development of the art of the book. The regulated placement of painted panels containing images of deities within the three-dimensional space of a manuscript turned them into miniature temples that were not only portable but also potent cultic objects. The chapter concludes with a transsectarian comparison of images and textual sources documenting how the pothi-format manuscript became a fitting vehicle for the transmission of knowledge and authority in medieval South Asia.

Part 2 delves into the world of tantric vision, its associated practices, and the role of painted manuscripts in the dissemination of esoteric visual knowledge. Chapter 3 examines the process by which painted palm-leaf manuscripts became vessels for circulating images of visionary practice. Painted manuscripts, in particular, were embraced as an important medium for the transmission of esoteric visual knowledge. Passages relating to the art of the book in the *Vajravali* (lit. "garland of vajras") by Abhayakaragupta conclude the chapter by situating painted manuscripts within the world of Esoteric Buddhist rituals.

Chapter 4 identifies the *ma/a*, or garland, as a distinctly Indic model for the design of painted manuscripts. As a case study, it focuses on a late twelfth-century manuscript of the *Perfection of Wisdom*, now in the Varendra Research Museum (VRM), Rajshahi, Bangladesh, which demonstrates how the inherent seriality and spatial ordering of images accommodated by the pothi format can help record, compile, and circulate tantric visual knowledge tied to initiation lineages. It explores the iconographic structure of the VRM manuscript and explains in detail some of the unusual Esoteric Buddhist iconography in it.



Part 3 turns to one of the central questions of the study and explores why primary colors dominate the palette of Indian painting by examining how primary colors became prominent features of the art of painting in India during the second millennium. I seek answers to this question in patterns of historical change: the adoption of color as an encoding tool for systematization of esoteric visual knowledge by medieval tantric groups, especially in Buddhist circles, and increased interest in the potency of certain materials generated by tantric practitioners. This is especially evident among those seeking transmutations of matter, such as siddhas seeking mercury, which is deeply tied to vermilion, the pigment responsible for the brightest, most powerful color in many paintings. Chapter 5 examines the history of the five-color system developed in Indian Esoteric Buddhism as a tool for encoding visual knowledge. This investigation uncovers changing attitudes toward color and provides clues to why primary colors in high opacity became important in painting in medieval South Asia, a development that presaged the spread of painted manuscripts. This chapter also discusses color theory as articulated in medieval Indic religious traditions to explore the symbolic meaning and function of color in medieval South Asia.

Chapter 6 discusses the material evidence of color use in manuscript painting in addition to close readings of texts, including artistic treatises and ritual manuals like the *Natyasastra*, the *Citrāsūtra*, and the *Vajravālti* that can help explain the Indic theory of color. Through laboratory research conducted in Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts, we have new information on the material composition of pigments used in Indic manuscript paintings, especially in the period before 1500. Identifying these pigments in conjunction with a close study of contemporary treatises explaining Indic theories of color affords us a glimpse into the artists' intimate, embodied knowledge of each color's material properties.

The book ends with an epilogue that discusses the methodological and historiographic implication of the book's analytical focus on color. The question of why primary colors dominate Indian miniature painting is thus addressed by examining the centrality of color in tantric visionary practice that was intimately tied to the development of the art of manuscript painting in India. Through an art-historical reading of material analysis of colorants, we get a glimpse of the artistic intelligence that shaped the color experience in painting. <>

Thomé H. Fang, Tang Junyi and Huayan Thought: A Confucian Appropriation of Buddhist Ideas in Response to Scientism in Twentieth-Century China by King Pong Chiu [Series: Modern Chinese Philosophy, Brill, 9789004313873]

In Thomé H. Fang, Tang Junyi and Huayan Thought, King Pong Chiu discusses Thomé H. Fang and Tang Junyi, two of the most important Confucian thinkers in twentieth-century China, who appropriated aspects of the medieval Chinese Buddhist school of Huayan to develop a response to the challenges of 'scientism', the belief that quantitative natural science is the only valuable part of human learning and the only source of truth.

As Chiu argues, Fang's and Tang's selective appropriations of Huayan thought paid heed to the hermeneutical importance of studying ancient texts in order to be more responsive to modern issues, and helped confirm the values of Confucianism under the challenge of 'scientism', a topic widely ignored in academia.

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## Research Questions and Methodology

### Research Questions

This study discusses two modern Chinese thinkers, Thomé H. Fang (Fang Dongmei, 1899–1977) and Tang Junyi (1909–1978), who sought to appropriate aspects of the medieval Chinese Buddhist school of Huayan <sup>^^</sup> to develop a response to the challenges posed by ‘scientism’ (Chi. kexue zhuyi), an issue widely discussed in twentieth-century China. As the thinkers who are often categorised as the members of ‘Contemporary NeoConfucianism’ (Chi. dangdai xin rujia), their Confucian ideas have been the focus of studies about them. However, the contribution made to their thought by Huayan Buddhist ideas and methods has rarely been studied. In fact, Fang’s and Tang’s potential appropriations of Huayan thought help constitute a phenomenon found among many contemporary Chinese thinkers, which is to ‘go back to the origin and develop new elements’ (Chi. fanben kaixin). I shall address three related research questions in this study, helping critically to discuss this issue: first, why ‘scientism’ became a problem in twentieth-century China; second, why Chinese thinkers at that time inclined to go back to ancient Chinese thought to develop their ideas; and third, why Fang and Tang appropriated Huayan thought in particular to develop the response to ‘scientism’.

Although how modern Confucian thinkers appropriated Buddhist ideas to develop their thought has been well studied in recent years, the foci of study have been Liang Shuming (1893–1988), Xiong Shili (1885–1968) and Mou Zongsan (1909–1995). In a talk commemorating the first anniversary of Tang’s death, Lao Sze-kwang (Lao Siguang, 1927–2012) said that Tang’s philosophical method is actually Huayan’s idea of ‘All is One, One is All’, though Tang has commonly been considered a Hegelian idealist<sup>5</sup> and a loyal Confucian thinker. Since then, the view that Tang was influenced by Huayan thought appears to have been increasingly accepted in Chinese academia, although detailed studies on the topic are rarely seen. In 2009, Lao raised this issue again in a conference, recounting that once in a private conversation with Tang, he was asked by the latter whether it is possible to explain Confucianism using Huayan thought.<sup>8</sup> Lao’s recollection reminds us that Huayan thought may play an important role in Tang’s thought.

In fact, Tang’s probable appropriation of Huayan thought is not exceptional among thinkers in his time, as Thomé H. Fang also makes much of this Buddhist tradition. Regardless of the controversy over his identity as a ‘pure’ Confucian thinker,<sup>9</sup> the huge effort Fang paid in interpreting Huayan thought is unusual among his contemporaries, even compared with Ma Yifu (1883–1967), who is famous for using Huayan ideas to explain Confucian canons such as *Xiao jing* (Classic of Filial Piety). Together, Fang and Tang and the other above-mentioned Confucian thinkers helped create ‘one of the great moments in world intellectual history’, which was to use non-Confucian ideas to develop new theories to meet current needs, a principal characteristic of fanben kaixin. Buddhist ideas, among various non-Confucian traditions, play a particularly important role here.

Amongst the modern Chinese thinkers who employed Buddhist ideas to develop their theories, there are several reasons to study Fang and Tang in particular. First, serious studies about Fang and Tang are few compared with their contemporaries, despite the great reputation they enjoyed in the field of Chinese philosophy. As a thinker who consciously wrote in English, Fang enjoyed an international reputation as illustrated in the admiration of D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966), Friedrich Hayek (1899–1992), Charles Moore (1901–1967), Chan Wing-tsit (1901–1994) and Lewis E. Hahn (1908–2004).<sup>12</sup> His English book *Chinese Philosophy: Its Spirit and Its Development* is considered more philosophical than such classics as Chan Wing-tsit’s *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, Fung Yu-lan’s (*Feng Youlan*, 1895–1990) *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* and H. G. Greel’s (1905–

1994) Chinese Thought from Confucius to Mao Tsê-tung, that it would be a 'worthy addition to any philosophical library'. Probably the first person who taught Chinese philosophy in Hong Kong, where Chinese thought could be discussed freely in the midtwentieth century, Tang is even considered the most remarkable Confucian thinker since Zhu Xi (1130–1200) and Wang Yangming (1472–1529).

His *Shengming cunzai yu xinling jingjie* (The Existence of Life and Horizons of Mind) was viewed as comparable to Plato's *Republic*, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Heidegger's *Being and Time* and Whitehead's *Process and Reality*. Due to his contribution to contemporary Chinese thought, Tang was described by Mou Zongsan as a 'giant in the universe of cultural consciousness' (*Chi. wenhua yishi yuzhou de juren*), similar to Isaac Newton (1643–1727) and Albert Einstein (1879–1955) as giants in the field of science, and to Plato (424 BC–347 BC) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) as giants in the field of philosophy. As Li Runsheng (1936–), a student of Tang and a leading Buddhist scholar in the Chinese academy, notes, though Tang was widely considered a Confucian thinker, his scholarship in Buddhist thought is comparable to that of an expert in the field. Astonishingly, not only are Fang's and Tang's appropriations of Buddhist ideas rarely studied<sup>20</sup> but even their own theories are seldom critically discussed, a phenomenon certainly worthy of closer attention.

In fact, there is a close relationship between Thomé H. Fang and Tang Junyi, though this point is largely overlooked in academia. When Tang completed his undergraduate degree in the 1920s, Fang was one of his teachers and both of them seem to consider this teacher-student relationship lifetime. Once, chatting with an anonymous Western scholar in the 1960s, Tang said, in English, 'Fang is my teacher'. The scholar wondered if Tang had said, 'Fang was my teacher' but Tang emphasized that even though a long time may have passed, in the Chinese tradition, the relationship between a teacher and a student continues. Fang also appointed Tang as one of the people to manage his personal effects and unpublished manuscripts after his death. Instead of the relationship between Fang and Tang, however, it is the so-called teacher-student relationship between Xiong Shili and Tang Junyi that academia tends to discuss. Although I agree that Xiong cannot be neglected when discussing the thought of Tang, in my view, the relationship between Fang and Tang may be more important to our understanding of the thought of the latter. Since this study appears to be the first attempt in academia to put these two thinkers together, reviewing their appropriations of Huayan thought and the relationship between their own ideas, I argue that, in terms of both quantity and quality, this study helps deepen the research on Fang and Tang.

Second, both Fang's and Tang's appropriations of Huayan thought play an unusual role in Huayan studies in twentieth-century China and are valuable to modern Chinese Buddhist study. As a medieval Buddhist school which mainly prevailed in the Tang ^ Dynasty (618–907), the Huayan School has been inconsistently regarded in Chinese history. Although there was a 'Huayan University' established in Shanghai in the early 1910s by the monk Yuexia (1858–1917), its method of study was criticized as 'old-fashioned'. In other words, it has not 'contributed much to the philosophical current in contemporary Buddhism'. In fact, philological study alone cannot make Huayan thought live, a modern interpretation of the thought is required. In *Haichaoyin*, a famous

Buddhist journal primarily edited by the influential monk Taixu (1890–1947) in the early twentieth century, for example, modern issues such as 'scientism' have been discussed amongst many Chinese Buddhists. In my view, both Fang's and Tang's appropriations of Huayan thought are a modern interpretation of the thought that makes this Buddhist tradition more responsive to the issues of their times, similar to what their Buddhist counterparts as set out in *Haichaoyin* achieved during the same period. It explains why their appropriations of Huayan thought should not be ignored.

Third, 'scientism' has long been and still is a problem facing China and therefore, Fang's and Tang's responses to it are worth further consideration. As I will suggest in Chapter 2, many Chinese intellectuals in the last century considered 'scientism' a threat to Chinese traditions, as 'scientism'

appeared to negate the value of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. In fact, there was a 'polemic on science and metaphysics' (Chi. ke xuan dazhan) about 'scientism' in early twentieth-century China, discussing the relevance of science in many aspects of human life. Instead of coming to an end, debate about and problems indicated by 'scientism' continue in present-day China, as 'scientism' is a main characteristic of Marxism-Leninism, the leading ideology of the Chinese Government. In this sense, Fang's and Tang's thought can be regarded as a Chinese way of dealing with the issue of modernity.

Fourth, the cases of Fang and Tang inevitably raise a live issue in current Chinese philosophical study, which is the development of 'Chinese hermeneutics', an issue about interpreting ancient Chinese texts from a modern perspective. As the Huayan thought Fang and Tang discussed is restricted to that of the medieval period, there is a huge historical gap facing their modern appropriations of it. The ultimate concerns, approaches and even languages of Huayan's patriarchs and Fang and Tang are so different that it is important to stress that the latter certainly interpreted Huayan thought from their own perspectives. In this sense, I argue that Fang and Tang are significant to the discussion of 'Chinese hermeneutics', though very few studies pay attention to this.

To sum up, this study will contribute to the discussion of modern Chinese thought in general and to both Fang's and Tang's thought in particular. All such issues as the historical context facing Fang and Tang, the characteristics of 'scientism', the key concepts of classical Huayan thought, and the current discussion of 'Chinese hermeneutics' will be covered in Chapter 2. By now I turn to discuss the methodology I use in this study and how it helps shape my findings.

## Methodology

Throughout this study, I will mainly employ textual and conceptual analyses, which help construct the historical context in which Fang and Tang wrote and indicate the characteristics of their appropriations of Huayan thought. In my view, many misunderstandings of Fang and Tang are due to incomplete readings of their original works. On the one hand, some scholars focus on their theories and pay little attention to the historical context in which they were writing. As a result, the discussion tends to be purely theoretical but not responsive to their real-life situations. As I will discuss later, their appropriations of Huayan thought relate to their belief that this Buddhist tradition helped them solve the intellectual challenges they faced. To a large extent, their appropriations of Huayan thought have had impact on these issues. Since works in an autobiographical style usually reveal the intentions of the authors and the socio-cultural situations facing them,<sup>32</sup> I focus not only on their philosophical works but also on their autobiographical writings. All of these, together with other studies about the intellectual environment in early twentieth century China, constitute the historical context that I will discuss in Chapter 2. On the other hand, some scholars tend to discuss Fang's and Tang's lives but ignore the relationships between their lives and theories. These kinds of study miss the point that both their roles as thinkers make them significant in the field of Chinese philosophy. The stories related to their lives are only supplementary to our understanding of their thought but they cannot be regarded as a replacement for their theories. In consideration of the limitations of the studies as mentioned above, all Fang's and Tang's published works will be reviewed thoroughly in this study though some will be examined more critically in detail.

However, as this study is to examine the relationships of different forms of thought, conceptual analysis is necessary and it will therefore be employed throughout the study. By doing this I will be in a better position to assess the characteristics, strengths and limitations of Fang's and Tang's appropriations of Huayan thought. Furthermore, I shall show why it was that some aspects of Huayan thought were appropriated by them, whilst other aspects of it were ignored. In a sense, this helps explain why some intellectual traditions were not favoured in their own thought. In addition to employing conceptual analysis in reading Fang's and Tang's works, I also use the concepts of 'ti' and

'yong', two traditional Chinese terms which play essential roles in almost all of the modern Chinese thought, to discuss the historical context facing Fang and Tang, and the characteristics of their appropriations of Huayan thought. As I argue in the study, their tasks were to re-define the meaning of the 'ti' and 'yong' of Chinese culture, including that of Confucianism. Since the concepts are closely related to the content of Chapter 2, I will continue the discussion of them there.

In brief, while textual analysis helps provide the necessary foundation for this study, conceptual analysis is needed to probe deeply and provide evidence for the comments I make about their works. However, in consideration of the large corpus of texts relating to Fang and Tang, it is necessary to define the scope of the study in order to be able to have a sustained discussion.

Fang's and Tang's ideas are so extensive that many intellectual traditions of the West, China and even India are covered in their works. In this study, I will focus on their most important writings, though others will also be discussed when necessary. For Fang, his last work *Chinese Philosophy: Its Spirit and Its Development*<sup>34</sup> is important as it shows his general view on different Chinese intellectual traditions and reveals the characteristics of his idea of 'comprehensive harmony'. However, his ideas on Huayan are mainly found in the two volumes of *Huayanzong zhexue* (The Huayan Philosophy). All these works will be reviewed thoroughly in Chapter 3 where I will discuss Fang's interpretation of Huayan thought.

Tang stated explicitly that some of his books are representative of his thought, such as his early works *Rensheng zhi tian* (The Experience of Life), *Daode ziwo zhi jianli* (The Formation of Moral Self), *Xin wu yu rensheng* (Minds, Material and Life), *Renwen jingshen zhi chongjian* (The Reconstruction of Humanistic Spirit) and his final work *Shengming cunzai yu xinling jingjie*. In his own words, Tang considered that the early works mentioned above cover such vital topics as the characteristics of Mind (Chi. Xin) and the value of human beings, while his final work is a further response to these issues. Although *Shengming cunzai yu xinling jingjie* covers some of Tang's ideas on Buddhism, his comments on Huayan are mainly discussed in *Zhongguo zhexue yuanlun. Yuanxing pian* (The Original Discourse on Chinese Philosophy— Original Nature) and the third volume of *Zhongguo zhexue yuanlun. Yuandao pian* (The Original Discourse on Chinese Philosophy— Original Way). All these works will be further reviewed in Chapter 4 where I will discuss Tang's interpretation of Huayan.

Since this study is about Fang's and Tang's appropriations of Huayan thought but not a study of Huayan thought itself, the discussion of this Buddhist tradition will be mainly restricted to the scope of their interpretation of it. In consideration of this point, I will discuss the Huayan thought in the Tang Dynasty, as Fang and Tang only paid attention to the thought in this period.

All of the key concepts relevant to the thought of Fang, Tang and their use of Huayan will be discussed in the respective chapters below. However, two concepts need more clarification here, which are 'zhexue' or 'philosophy' and 'dangdai xin rujia' or 'Contemporary Neo-Confucianism'. As I will discuss in the following chapters, both Fang and Tang considered their thought 'philosophy' and this word will appear very often throughout this study. However, Lao Sze-kwang reminds us that the characteristic of 'philosophy' in the Chinese tradition is somewhat different from that in the West, as the former mainly aims at achieving 'self-transformation' and 'transformation of the world'. In his view, the meaning of 'philosophy' in China is closer to that of 'religion' in the West. Fang's and Tang's employments of the word obviously follow this suggestion of Lao.

The term 'Contemporary Neo-Confucianism' is crucial in almost all of the modern Chinese philosophical studies. The term 'xin rujia' or NeoConfucianism was probably first suggested in Fung Yu-lan's *Zhongguo zhexue shi* (A History of Chinese Philosophy) published in 1934, in which he used the term to refer to the Confucianism of the Song (960–1279) and Ming ^ (1368–1644) dynasties.



After Fung's book was translated from Chinese into English by Derk Bodde in 1937, the term 'Neo-Confucianism' became better known in academia.<sup>46</sup> In order to distinguish the thought of modern thinkers from those in the dynasties, 'Contemporary' is usually added to the former, signifying modern thought.<sup>47</sup> Most studies consider that the appearance of the thought of 'Contemporary Neo-Confucianism' is traced back to Liang Shuming and Xiong Shili. However, its development is mainly the contribution of Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan (1903–1982).<sup>48</sup>

In fact, although the Chinese Nationalist Party or Kuomintang ended the civil conflicts amongst warlords in China and established a central government in 1928, the political difficulties facing the country did not change much. Domestically, there was a serious disagreement between the Nationalist Government and the Chinese Communist Party. Externally, there was the threat of Japanese invasion. After the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945) and the Nationalist-Communist Civil War (1945–1949), the Chinese Nationalist Party retreated to Taiwan and the People's Republic of China ^^^^^^ run by the Communist Party was established in 1949, a turning point for the country both politically and culturally. In order to escape the Communist Party, many scholars fled from mainland China to Hong Kong and Taiwan from the late 1940s. Facing the Party's total denial of Chinese culture, many exiled scholars considered it a life-and-death moment for the Chinese tradition. Hong Kong and Taiwan were therefore regarded as the last places to preserve the tradition. In Hong Kong, Qian Mu (1895–1990), Tang Junyi and Zhang Pijie (1905–1970) established the New Asia College in 1949, arguing that it followed the private schooling tradition of the Song Dynasty. On the other hand, Xu Fuguan and Mou Zongsan taught Chinese philosophy in Tunghai University in Taiwan in the 1950s. Both New Asia College and Tunghai University are considered centres of 'Contemporary Neo-Confucianism' by some scholars.

Two events helped establish the identity of 'Contemporary NeoConfucianism'. First, in 1958, 'A Manifesto on [the] Reappraisal of Chinese Culture—Our Joint Understanding of the Sinological Study Relating to [the] World Cultural Outlook' (Chi. Zhongguo wenhua yu shijie: women dui Zhongguo xueshu yanjiu ji Zhongguo wenhua yu shijie wenhua qiantu zhi gongtong renshi, a declaration suggested by Carsun Chang 3R4-^fj (Zhang Junmai, 1887–

1969), drafted by Tang and jointly signed by Mou and Xu, was published. In the Manifesto, the four thinkers argued that 'Heart-Mind and Nature' (Chi. Xinxing) was the core spirit of Chinese thought and that Confucian orthodoxy was also based on it. These four thinkers, Tang, Mou and Xu in particular, are widely considered the representative figures in the camp of 'Contemporary Neo-Confucianism'. Second, after the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), the Chinese Government began to think of the relationship between modernization and traditional Chinese culture, which were observed to co-exist in some Chinese societies such as Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. A national project entitled 'The Investigation of Contemporary Neo-Confucianism and the Trend of Thought' (Chi. Xiandai xin rujia yu sichao yanjiu) was therefore established in 1986, aiming at examining the thought of ten twentieth-century pro-Confucianism thinkers: Liang Shuming, Xiong Shili, Carsun Chang, Fung Yu-lan, He Lin, Qian Mu, Thomé H. Fang, Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan.<sup>55</sup> Since then, the term 'Contemporary NeoConfucianism' has been dominant in Chinese academia.

Despite its prevalence, and unlike most other scholars, I will not use this term to describe the thought of Thomé H. Fang and Tang Junyi in this study because the term causes fierce controversy. First, even some thinkers listed as 'Contemporary Neo-Confucian' did not accept such identification. In fact, in the 1958 declaration, Qian Mu refused to sign since he argued that the declaration could lead to different 'factions' or 'sects' (Chi. menhu ^^) in academia, a phenomenon he deplored throughout his life. Although Thomé H. Fang gave his opinion as the document was drafted, he did not sign it. As Yu Yingshih argues in his famous article 'Qian Mu yu xin rujia (Qian Mu and Neo-

Confucianism), the meaning of the term 'Contemporary NeoConfucianism', on the one hand, is so broad that it tends to include all thinkers who show sympathy for Confucianism. In this sense, the term becomes meaningless. On the other hand, the meaning of it may be so narrow that it only refers to those who stress the study of 'Heart-Mind and Nature'. The term, therefore, appears exclusively to refer to Xiong, Tang, Mou and Xu. Other thinkers outside this academic line, including Yu himself, cannot be included within it.

Second, the approaches to and conclusions about the study of Confucianism in the figures as listed in the national project are so different that it is difficult, if not impossible, to classify them as part of the same group. Since there is little consensus about the definition of 'Contemporary Neo-Confucianism', the use of the term is seen as somewhat arbitrary. To some extent, the usage of the term becomes a political rather than an academic issue. Since the employment of the term is so controversial, I will avoid using it to describe the thought of Fang and Tang in this study.

In fact, there are two advantages to not using the term. The first is that Fang's and Tang's thought can be reviewed more objectively and comprehensively without any unnecessary preconceptions. Their interpretations and appropriations of other intellectual traditions, including Huayan thought, therefore, will not be simply considered from a Confucian perspective.

Second, because, for some scholars, the term 'Contemporary NeoConfucianism' means Xiong's academic line, it consolidates the image of the teacher-student relationship between Xiong and Tang but ignores the fact that Tang actually refused to be the private student of Xiong. As Tang himself admitted, he had established his own thought before meeting Xiong. In this sense, I argue that Xiong's influence on Tang may not be as great as many scholars think. In consideration of this, not using the term 'Contemporary Neo-Confucianism' is to be preferred.

In order to answer the research questions of this study, I will work according to the following plan. In Chapter 2, I will discuss the necessary elements constituting the historical context in which Fang and Tang appropriated Huayan thought, including i.) the ideas of 'ti' and 'yong', ii.) the Western challenge, 'scientism' in particular, and Chinese responses from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, iii.) examples of Chinese thinkers' appropriations of ideas other than Confucianism to develop their theories, and iv.) characteristics of classical Huayan thought. I will also discuss 'Chinese hermeneutics', so that the cases of Fang and Tang can be included in the discussion in current academia. In Chapters 3 and 4, Fang's and Tang's own theories and their respective interpretations of Huayan thought will be addressed. All these chapters together will thus help answer the research questions, which I will discuss in detail in Chapter 5. In short, I consider that Fang appropriated Huayan's idea of 'harmony' to support his own idea of 'comprehensive harmony' in response to the challenge of 'scientism', while Tang used the Huayan theory of doctrinal classification to address the issue, though their appropriations of Huayan thought cannot be simply explained in one or two sentences. <>

## **ZHIPAN'S ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN CHINA: VOLUME I: FOZU TONGJI, JUAN 34-38: FROM THE TIMES OF THE BUDDHA TO THE NANBEICHAO ERA translated by Thomas Jülch Brill, 9789004396203]**

The Fozu tongji by Zhipan (ca. 1220-1275) is a key text of Chinese Buddhist historiography. In the present volume Thomas Jülch presents his translation of the first five juan of the massive annalistic

part. Rich annotations clarify the backgrounds to the historiographic contents, presented by Zhipan in a highly essentialized style. For the historical traditions the sources Zhipan refers to are meticulously identified. In those cases where the accounts presented are inaccurate or imprecise, Jülch points out how the relevant matter is depicted in the sources Zhipan relies on. With this carefully annotated translation of *Fozu tongji*, juan 34-38, Thomas Jülch enables an indepth understanding of a key text of Chinese Buddhist historiography.

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The *Fozu tongji* 佛祖通記 (T 2035, Comprehensive History of the Buddhist Patriarchs) is a massive work of Buddhist historiography composed by the Southern Song monk Zhipan 智顗 (ca. 1220–1275). The present translation project, which is intended to have three volumes, refers to a part of the *Fozu tongji* entitled “Fayun tongsai zhi” 法運通塞志 (Monograph on Success and Obstructions in the Spread of the Dharma). The “Fayun tongsai zhi,” covering *Fozu tongji*, juan 34–48, is an annalistic chronicle of Buddhism in China. It goes through Chinese history dynasty by dynasty, ruler by ruler, and year by year, listing events following the chronological order. With the present project I intend to offer a complete translation of the “Fayun tongsai zhi.” In the present volume, I translate the first five juan (i.e. *Fozu tongji*, juan 34–38), which contain the annals referring to the history of Buddhism in China from the time of the birth of the Buddha in the 26th year of King Zhao of Zhou 周昭王 to the end of the Nanbeichao period. In the second volume I will translate the next four juan of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” (i.e. *Fozu tongji*, juan 39–42), which have previously been translated by Jan Yün-hua,<sup>1</sup> and refer to the history of Buddhism from the Sui dynasty to the end of the Wudai period. In the third volume I will translate the remaining six juan of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” (i.e. *Fozu tongji*, juan 43–48), which refer to the history of Buddhism in the Song dynasty



up to the year 1236, the third year of the duanping 端平 era of the Southern Song emperor Lizong 理宗 .

With regard to the overall textual structure of the “Fayun tong sai zhi,” it needs to be explained that apart from the main text, the work contains supplements, commentary passages, and annotations. Supplements are enhancements added to the main text in the end of some of the juan: In the end of juan 35 we find the supplements for juan 34 and 35. In the end of juan 36 there are supplements again. In the end of juan 37 there are no supplements. In the end of juan 38 there is a supplement, which is however excluded from the translation, as it repeats things that have previously already been said. Shi Daofa 施道法 has published a modern edition of the Fozu tongji, which integrates the supplements into the annalistic display fitting them in wherever they chronologically belong.<sup>2</sup> In the present translation project I do however not follow this approach. Instead I translate the text of the “Fayun tong sai zhi” as it appears in the Taishō. Commentary passages are designed to provide further information on a subject of an entry in the main text or also on a subject of an entry in a supplement. They therefore appear subsequent to the entry they refer to, and are in the present translation project presented as indented to the text of this entry. Annotations appear within the main text, within supplements and within commentary passages. They are of very different content. Those that carry important information are in the present translation project translated in footnotes to the relevant passage. It is however also seen that annotations run to great length pointing out the Chinese equivalents of certain Sanskrit terms and explaining their original meaning. Since today this sort of information is easily accessible, such annotations are excluded from the translation presented in the current translation project.

The main intention of the “Fayun tong sai zhi” is to present a positive image of Buddhism in China, and to demonstrate that the presence of Buddhism at all times brought blessings, created miracles, and was of advantage to the country. This intention was common to Chinese Buddhist historiography since its beginnings in Nanbeichao times. To the Chinese sangha, Buddhist historiographic writing was a means of making Buddhism prevail in the face of anti-Buddhist agitation. The charges brought up against Buddhism were manifold. Rather than listing them exhaustively, I would like to point to one essential charge, which in particular was

predestined for counters from Buddhist historiography. Confucian scholars claimed that in the Chinese antiquity the Confucian sages (shengren, 聖人) established the ideal state of “great peace” (taiping, 太平), which was regarded as the source of all teachings worth being studied. To Confucian scholars Buddhism, as a teaching from the lands of the “barbarians,” was not based on this ancient Chinese wisdom treasury and was therefore seen as an unwelcome defilement of the Chinese high culture. Reacting to this Confucian understanding, Chinese Buddhist historiographic literature seeks to introduce a counter-concept, allowing the presence of Buddhism in China to appear in a more favorable light. Part of the strategy Chinese Buddhist historiography employed in this context was to implant Buddhism into the Chinese antiquity, which made Buddhism appear as part of the wisdom treasury associated with that age. As an expression of this strategy, the history of Buddhism in China presented in the “Fayun tongsai zhi” begins right with the Buddha. According to a tradition deeply rooted in Chinese Buddhist historiography, birth and parinirvāṇa of the Buddha caused natural phenomena, which alarmed the contemporary kings of the Chinese antiquity. In this way, the birth of the Buddha alarmed King Zhao of Zhou 周 昭王, while the parinirvāṇa of the Buddha alarmed King Mu of Zhou 周 穆王. This tradition, which goes back to the Chinese Buddhist apocryphal scripture Zhoushu yiji 周書異記, allows to integrate birth and parinirvāṇa of the Buddha into the annalistic display shown in the “Fayun tongsai zhi.” As far as the case of King Mu is concerned, a reinterpretation of the Mu tianzi zhuan 穆天子傳 is implied. The Mu tianzi zhuan, a legendary account from ancient China, says that King Mu travelled to the West to see the Xiwangmu 西王母. The Buddhist historiographic tradition based on the Zhoushu yiji takes up the tradition of King Mu travelling to the West, but depicts the journey as motivated by the natural phenomena pointing to the parinirvāṇa of the Buddha in India. As the legend of King Mu’s journey to the West was publically perceived as an important event of the Chinese antiquity, being able to ascribe a Buddhist causation to King Mu’s journey meant to establish a prominent presence of Buddhism within the golden age of the sages.

The references to the birth and to the parinirvāṇa of the Buddha are part of a full biography of the Buddha, which is placed in the beginning of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” as a means of portraying the superior sanctity of Buddhism. This biography begins with parts referring to matters prior to the birth of the Buddha. They cannot be integrated into the annalistic display, which otherwise characterizes the “Fayun



tongsai zhi,” as they cannot be contextualized with corresponding events in Chinese history (such as natural phenomena). The first chapter of the biography of the Buddha in the beginning of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” is entitled “Understanding the origin and manifestation [of the Buddha]” 卷一, and explains that on an ultimate level the life of the Buddha is not confined to the Buddha’s historical life span as Śākyamuni, since the Buddha’s emanation as Śākyamuni was merely a worldly semblance of his true supernatural existence. Borrowing a term from Christian theology, Michael Radich has described this understanding as “docetistic” (derived from Greek “dokesis,” meaning semblance, appearance). In the second chapter, “The descent from the Tuṣita-heaven” 卷二, we are told how Śākyamuni descended from the heavenly realm where—as part of the docetistic display—he was prepared for his manifestation as the Buddha. The third chapter, “Entering the mother’s womb” 卷三, reveals how Śākyamuni having descended from the Tuṣita-heaven entered the womb of his mother Māyā. Only with the third chapter, “Manifestation in incarnation” 卷四, which explains how the Buddha was born from Maya’s womb, the annals of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” begin.

Apart from demonstrating the sanctity of the Buddha by means of presenting his biography, Buddhist historiography still has further means of opposing the Confucian understanding that the Buddha, as a barbarian deity, had to be inferior to the sages of the Chinese antiquity. One tradition frequently employed in this respect is represented in the “Fayun tongsai zhi” rather briefly, but enjoys great popularity throughout Chinese Buddhist historiography. It goes back to Liezi 卷四, juan 4. According to Erik Zürcher, the original text of the Liezi was lost early, while the present text of the Liezi “is at least partly a forgery of the third or early fourth century AD,” which appears to include components articulating Buddhist ideological positions. The famous passage seen in Liezi, juan 4, presents a conversation in which Confucius says that he would not know whether the Confucian sages are real sages, while the people of the West (i.e. the people of India) would however have a real sage. Tang Yongtong has argued that, owing to the Daoist background ascribed to the Liezi, this reference to the sage of the West might also be a statement of Daoist religiosity, thinking of the Buddha as Laozi having reincarnated in India as claimed in the “huahu” 卷四 legend. However Zürcher does not think so. He argues that, since in the Liezi statements of Buddhist ideology are also seen in other places, we should assume that also this famous passage was meant to be a statement in favor of Buddhism. Be that as it may, the intention with

which the passage is employed in Buddhist historiography and in the “Fayun tongsai zhi” is clear. The passage is quoted to demonstrate that Buddhism, not Confucianism, is based on the teachings of a true sage.

Again as part of the attempt to anchor Buddhism in the Chinese antiquity, Chinese Buddhist historiography also depicts the history of the spread of Buddhism in China as reaching back to the earliest times. The general conception of the early history of Buddhism in China follows a key pattern which Chinese Buddhist historiographic sources largely agree upon. I here need to confine myself to introducing this conception in a thoroughly succinct fashion: First Buddhism had been spread in the Chinese antiquity through various incidents, the most famous among which may be the spreading of the relics of the Buddha through messengers sent by the Indian King Aśoka (ayu wang, 阿育王). With the burning of books under Qin Shihuang 秦始皇, Buddhism however became extinct in China. Yet, even while Buddhism was extinct, there were certain incidents suggesting that it had not completely slipped into oblivion. E.g. Huo Qubing 霍去病, a general of Han Wudi 汉武帝, on one of his campaigns got hold of a “golden man” (i.e. a Buddha statue), which Han Wudi knew to worship as a deity. The period of Buddhism being extinct in China lasted until Han Mingdi 明帝, the second emperor of the Eastern Han dynasty, under whom Buddhism was officially reintroduced. According to a tradition originating from the Chinese Buddhist apocryphal scripture Han faben neizhuan 汉法本内传 (Inner Transmission of the Root of the Dharma in the Han Dynasty), Han Mingdi, having had a dream of a “golden man” (i.e. of the Buddha), sent messengers to India to find out about this appearance. The messengers came back with the two monk missionaries Kāśyapa Mātanga (shemoteng, 摄摩腾) and Zhu Falan 竺法兰, who on a white horse brought Buddhist sūtras, based on which the first Buddhist monastery in China was named White Horse Monastery (baima si, 白马寺). While this is the general pattern which the conception of the early history of Buddhism in China as seen in the “Fayun tongsai zhi” and in the diverse other texts of Chinese Buddhist historiography is based upon, traditions which are employed for enhancement and illustration vary from account to account.

In the further course the “Fayun tongsai zhi” continues to depict Buddhism as a teaching bringing blessings and positive influence to China by referring to exemplary monks and nuns. Zhipan widely quotes from biographies in the Gaoseng zhuan 高僧传 (T 2059) by Huijiao 慧皎 (497–554),<sup>10</sup> from biographies in the Xu gaoseng zhuan 续高僧传 (T 2060) by Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), and also from

biographies in the *Biqiuni zhuan* 比丘尼傳 (T 2063) by Baochang 包藏.<sup>12</sup> E.g. seeking to depict Buddhism as a teaching benefitting both the state and the ruler, Zhipan quotes the biographies of Kang Senghui 康僧暉 (Gaoseng zhuan, juan 1), Guṇavarman 閼風 閼風 (Gaoseng zhuan, juan 3), and Fotudeng 浮屠騰 (Gaoseng zhuan, juan 9), all of whom succeeded in changing rulers for the better by converting them to Buddhism. The conversion talks these monk missionaries held with the relevant rulers are reminiscent of the counselling activity of Confucius, who in the Spring- and Autumn-Period moved from court to court hoping to guide rulers to better policies. So the biographies quoted in this context do not only demonstrate that Buddhism helped to ease political turmoil in medieval China, but also imply that this was done in a way consistent with the Chinese tradition. Other monastics are commended for their engagement in translating the Buddhist scriptures into Chinese, or for their outstanding virtue.

Also accounts of Buddhist laypeople are included in the “Fayun tongsai zhi.” We find a broad coverage of the White Lotus Society (Bailian she, 白蓮社), a circle of Buddhist monks and laymen founded by Huiyuan 慧遠 (334–416). Many of the traditions the “Fayun tongsai zhi” quotes in this context can be traced back to Huiyuan’s biography in Gaoseng zhuan, juan 6. Other traditions, however, only originate from the Lushan ji 廬山記 (T 2095), a late work authored in the Song dynasty by Chen Shunyu 陳舜俞 (d. 1074). The “Fayun tongsai zhi” also includes references to Buddhist laypeople, who through their piety brought about all sorts of miracles. Such miracle accounts are frequently adopted from early medieval zhiguai 志怪 collections, such as the Youming lu 幽明錄,<sup>14</sup> and the Mingxiang ji 冥祥記.<sup>15</sup> Other traditions simply pointing to remarkable acts of Buddhist laypeople are frequently adopted from the official historiography (zhengshi, 正史). Based on the official historiography, too, the realm of politics of religion is covered. Rulers supporting the dharma, such as Liang Wudi 梁武帝, are portrayed as shining examples. Rulers responsible for persecutions of Buddhism, such as Beiwei Taiwu di 北魏太武帝, are depicted as tragically misled.

While the tales quoted from the sources named above primarily refer to sacred people, the “Fayuan tongsai zhi” also quotes miracle tales rather associated with sacred places. A rich source for such traditions is the Luoyang qielan ji 洛陽伽藍記 (Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Luoyang) by Yang Xuanzhi 楊炫之. While

Luoyang was capital of the Tuoba-Wei dynasty a multitude of Buddhist monasteries adorned the city. As after the end of the Tuoba-Wei dynasty Luoyang was in ruins, Yang Xuanzhi, a low-ranking official, in 547 sojourned in Luoyang, and on this basis composed the *Luoyang qielan ji* to remind of the city's former Buddhist culture. Since the *Luoyang qielan ji* mainly presents historical traditions referring to Tuoba-Wei times, the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*” preferably makes use of the work in the part concerning the Tuoba-Wei period, which is seen in *Fozu tongji*, juan 38. Here the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*” quotes the *Luoyang qielan ji* presenting accounts of miraculous events associated with particular monasteries.

Many of the traditions the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*” adopts from the above mentioned sources were widely employed also in the Buddhist apologetic treatises written up to the times of Wu Zetian. In those days a rich production of Buddhist apologetic literature was triggered by the following circumstances: (1) As a teaching coming from abroad, Buddhism had to demonstrate how it was relevant to the China society and how it could harmonize with Confucianism. (2) As a religious system, Buddhism in China stood in fierce rivalry with Daoism, and thus sought to demonstrate that Daoist thought was invalid, subversive, and based on debauchery and plagiarism. The list of Buddhist apologetic treatises arguing along those lines is long. Of particular importance are the *Mouzi lihuo lun* 牟子理惑論 (Treatise of Master Mou Removing Doubts), which is one of the earliest Chinese Buddhist apologetic treatises, the *Erjiao lun* 二教論 (Treatise of the Two Teachings)<sup>18</sup> and the *Xiaodao lun* 笑道論 (Treatise of Laughing at the Dao) from the Northern Zhou dynasty, the *Poxie lun* 破邪論 (T 2109, Treatise Destroying Evils) and the *Bianzheng lun* 辨正論 (T 2110, Treatise Discussing what is Correct) written by Falin 法琳 (572–640) in the early Tang dynasty,<sup>20</sup> and the *Zhenzheng lun* 真正論 (T 2112, Treatise Revealing the Correct) written by Xuanyi 玄奘 under Wu Zetian. On the one hand these apologetic works adopt content from monk biographies, miracle tales and so forth, while on the other hand in the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*” we find content also seen in previous apologetic writing. So it is clear that contents were exchanged between formats of apologetic and historiographic writing and vice versa. The presentation style in apologetic writing and historiographic writing is however different. While in an apologetic context content is employed in argumentative style serving the relevant apologetic objective, in a historiographic context the same content would simply be presented as an account of history, even though apologetic intent may also be involved. To make the difference understandable I will offer an example: The



Poxie lun is the earliest known work to present the text of the Han faben neizhuan, the original of which is lost. The text tells a story of Daoist priests seeking to demonstrate the superiority of Daoism to Buddhism, when Buddhism was officially introduced to China under Han Mingdi. As we are told, the Daoist demonstration fails, which in fact demonstrates the inferiority of Daoism to Buddhism. In the Poxie lun this story is quoted as part of an apologetic reply to an anti-Buddhist statement presented by the Daoist priest Fu Yi 房懿 (555–639). The “Fayun tongsai zhi” quotes the Han faben neizhuan at remarkable length (T 2035, p. 329, b17–p. 330, a9), simply presenting the story as part of the historical events under Han Mingdi. Certainly, if a text as polemic as the Han faben neizhuan is quoted this elaborately, apologetic interest is involved. But the presentation style in apologetic and historiographic treatises can still be differentiated clearly.

To fully understand the intention with which the “Fayun tongsai zhi” was written, we do however also need to appreciate the particular context of Buddhist historiography in the Song dynasty. While the history of Chinese Buddhist historiographic writing reaches back to Nanbeichao times, the Song dynasty saw an enormous increase in the production of Buddhist historiographic works. This increase is owed to the competition between the two dominant Buddhist schools of the Song dynasty: the Tiantai school and the Chan school. In the context of this competition, historical treatises were written to depict the history of Buddhism either in favor of the Tiantai school or in favor of the Chan school. In particular, both schools attempted to demonstrate that the own lineage of patriarchs went back right to the Buddha, while the patriarchal lineage of the competing school did not. Already in the Tang dynasty, Shenqing 沈清 (fl. 779–806) in his Beishan lu 北山錄 (T 2113, North Mountain Record) attacked the Chan genealogy. Later on the Tiantai historiographers praised and employed him,<sup>24</sup> while the Chan scholars, and among them especially Qisong 齊嵩 (1007–1072), criticized him severely. As a Tiantai scholar, Zhipan with the Fozu tongji composed the most complex among the works authored in the context of the competition between the Tiantai and the Chan schools.<sup>26</sup> The Fozu tongji in no way confines itself to arguing in terms of this controversy only. Rather than that it also refers to controversies within the Tiantai school, and supports the orthodox tradition of the “shanjia” 山家 (mountain house) against the dissenters referred to as “shanwai” 山外 (off the mountain). Furthermore the Fozu tongji also contains accounts of other Buddhist schools, such as especially the Jingtū 淨土 (Pure Land) school. Matching this wider approach, the



“Fayun tongsai zhi” is, as we have seen, designed to be a general history of Buddhism in China. Yet, despite this broad thematic setting, Zhipan’s main intention still was to state the case for the Tiantai school in its competition with Chan Buddhism. The Fozu tongji begins by presenting the Tiantai lineage as going back to the Buddha: juan 1–4 present the biography of the Buddha,<sup>27</sup> juan 5 presents the biographies of the Indian patriarchs, and juan 6–8 present the biographies of the Chinese patriarchs.<sup>28</sup> In the “Fayun tongsai zhi” the succession of the patriarchs from the Buddha on is again included into the general annalistic display. Even though the references to the patriarchs are kept brief here, their succession in favor of the Tiantai lineage is again shown.

Yet there are further aspects which give the “Fayun tongsai zhi” a particular Tiantai flavor. Firstly, in the biography of the Buddha, which stands at the beginning of the “Fayun tongsai zhi,” the sūtras preached by the Buddha are classified according to the Tiantai classification system, which depicts the Saddharma puṇḍarīka sūtra (Miaofa lianhua jing, 妙法蓮華經) and the Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra (Da ban niepan jing, 大般涅槃經) as the highest sūtras.<sup>29</sup> Secondly, the “Fayun tongsai zhi” contains many accounts of miracles resulting from recitations of the Saddharma puṇḍarīka sūtra. Thirdly, Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597), the founder of the Tiantai school, is covered particularly extensively. Even though the actual foundation of the Tiantai order in the Sui dynasty does not fall into the scope of what is translated from the “Fayun tongsai zhi” in the present first volume of the translation project, we observe the eye-catching generosity with which Zhiyi is covered already with regard to his actions in the preceding Chen dynasty. In connection with the broad coverage of Zhiyi, the historiographic works of Zhiyi’s main student, Guanding 灌頂 (561–632), i.e. the Guoqing bailu 國清百錄 (T 1934) and the Sui Tiantai Zhizhe dashi biezhuān 隋天台智者大師別傳 (T 2050), are employed. Fourthly, the “Fayun tongsai zhi” occasionally also includes explicit rejoinders to particular traditions of Chan historiography. In Fozu tongji, juan (T 2035, p. 352, c15–21), we find an attack on a tradition seen in the Jingde chuandeng lu 景德傳燈錄 (T 2076), an important historiographic work of the Chan school compiled in 1004. In Fozu tongji, juan (T 2035, p. 356, a22–29), we find a counter to the claim that Bodhidharma, the alleged founder of the Chan school, was after his death seen walking in a realized fashion by the Chinese traveler Song Yun 宋雲.

It is important to note that, apart from the Buddhist main content, the “Fayun tongsai zhi” also comprises passages referring to non-Buddhist matters. In the main



text we observe that space is given to important political developments as well. In particular acts of misled policy, such as the burning of books under Qin Shihuang, attacks on the public order, such as the Yellow Turban uprising, or the persecutions of Buddhism under Beiwei Taiwudi 北魏太武帝 and Zhou Wudi 周武帝 are covered and commented in thoroughly critical style. Apart from that, as the two most important native Chinese traditions of thought, also Confucianism and Daoism are covered. While they already play their role within the coverage of the political situation, Confucianism and Daoism are introduced in their own right in the supplements, which the author designed as the place for matters that do not fit into the main text. Even though, as we have seen, the “Fayun tongzai zhi” in its Buddhist content also opposes Confucian attempts of belittling Buddhism, those passages which introduce Confucianism and Daoism in their own right do so in friendly and respectful style. Written in the age of Neoconfucianism, the Fozu tongji does not have an interest in a confrontation between Buddhism and the native Chinese teachings, but rather seeks to offer a general perspective which does refute anti-Buddhist polemicism but otherwise seeks to present a view conducive to reconciliation.

The coverage of the political situation and the inclusion of Confucian and Daoist content makes the “Fayun tongzai zhi” a precursor to the Buddhist historiography of the Yuan dynasty, in which we find the history of Buddhism embedded in a broad perspective on Chinese history. As far as the competition between the Tiantai and the Chan schools is concerned, the Chan school was able to take the lead, and the dispute between the two schools of Chinese Buddhism gradually dissipated. With the Fozu lidai tongzai 佛祖历代通载 (T 2036, A Comprehensive Registry of the Successive Ages of the Buddha and the Patriarchs), completed in 1333 or 1334, the Chan monk Nianchang 念常 composed a history of Buddhism which formally still has the character of sectarian historiography, but gives less priority to the sectarian dispute and more priority to the new approach of integrating the history of Buddhism into a more general history of thought in China.

To conclude with, I would like to refer to several studies that can help the reader to gain a broader background to the text translated here. A general study of the Fozu tongji has been presented by Jan Yün-hua. Koichi Shinohara has published an article discussing the importance of the Fozu tongji to the construction of the Tiantai lineage of patriarchs. General studies of Song dynasty Buddhist historiography have



been presented by Jan Yün-hua and Cao Ganghua 曹 ganghua . For studies of the life of Zhiyi, see the monographs by Leon Hurvitz and Pan Guiming. <>

## **ZHIPAN'S ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN CHINA: VOLUME 2: FOUZU TONGJI, JUAN 39-42: FROM THE SUI DYNASTY TO THE WUDAI ERA** translated by Thomas Jülch [Brill, 9789004445918]

The Fozu tongji by Zhipan (ca. 1220-1275) is a key text of Chinese Buddhist historiography. The core of the work is formed by the “Fayun tongsai zhi,” an annalistic history of Buddhism in China, which extends through Fozu tongji, juan 34-48. Thomas Jülch now presents a translation of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” in three volumes. This second volume covers the annalistic display from the Sui dynasty to the end of the Wudai period. Offering elaborate annotations, Jülch succeeds in clarifying the backgrounds to the historiographic contents, which Zhipan presents in highly essentialized style. Jülch identifies the sources for the historical traditions Zhipan refers to, and when accounts presented by Zhipan are inaccurate or imprecise, he points out how the relevant matter is depicted in the sources Zhipan relies on. Consistently employing these means in reliable style Jülch defines a new standard for translations of medieval Chinese historiographic texts.

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With the present volume I present the second part of my translation from the Fozu tongji 法苑珠林 (T 2035, Comprehensive History of the Buddhist Patriarchs). The translation project aims at offering a complete translation of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” 法苑珠林 (Monograph on Success and Obstructions in the Spread of the Dharma), which covers Fozu tongji, juan 34–48. The “Fayun tongsai zhi” is an annalistic chronicle of Buddhism in China. In the first volume I presented a translation of Fozu tongji, juan 34–38, which refers to the period from the birth of the Buddha to the Nanbeichao era. With the present volume I add the translation of Fozu tongji, juan 39–42, which refers to the period from the Sui dynasty to the



Wudai era. In the third volume a translation of Fozu tongji, juan 43–48, which refers to the Song dynasty, shall follow.

With regard to the overall textual structure of the “Fayun tongsai zhi,” it needs to be explained that apart from the main text, the work contains supplements, commentary passages, and annotations. Supplements are enhancements that in the materials translated for the present volume are added to the main text in the end of juan 39, juan 40, and juan 42. Shi Daofa 石道法 has published a modern edition of the Fozu tongji, which integrates the supplements into the annalistic display fitting them in wherever they chronologically belong.<sup>1</sup> In the present translation project I do however not follow this approach. Instead I translate the text of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” as it appears in the Taishō. Commentary passages are designed to provide further information on a subject of an entry in the main text or also on a subject of an entry in a supplement. They therefore appear subsequent to the entry they refer to, and are in the present translation project presented as indented to the text of this entry. Annotations appear within the main text, within supplements and within commentary passages. They are of very different content. Those that carry important information are in the present translation project translated in footnotes to the relevant passage.

The materials translated for the present volume have partially already been translated by Jan Yün-hua.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately in Jan Yün-hua’s translation much of the text is omitted. Supplements, commentary passages, and annotations are generally excluded from the translation. When it comes to the paragraphs of the main text, the translation occasionally stops in the middle of a paragraph, and many of the paragraphs are missing completely. Jan Yün-hua does not include omission signs, and he does not indicate where the textual segments he chooses to translate appear in the text. This makes it rather laborious for the reader to identify which text portions Jan Yün-hua’s translation is referring to. One also wonders which criteria Jan Yün-hua’s choices of including or excluding textual segments depend on, as he does not offer an explanation concerning this matter. The quality of the translations we are offered seems questionable. Jan Yün-hua’s translation style is overly free and sometimes he appears to be retelling rather than translating the text. Jan Yün-hua does offer footnotes in which he critically compares the contents of the text with relevant references in other sources. His appreciation of intertextuality does however have its limitations. It appears to me that more should be done in identifying sources. Also in explaining historical backgrounds and contexts one

could be more elaborate. For these reasons I have decided to include this part, which was previously already subject to the work of Jan Yün-hua, into my translation of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” again.

Subsequently my introduction to Fozu tongji, juan 39–42, will fall into four parts. Firstly I will look at how the Buddhist-Confucian confrontation and the Buddhist-Daoist confrontation are represented in the text. Secondly I will contrast the representations of Tiantai-Buddhism and Chan-Buddhism against each other. Thirdly I will outline the context of Chinese Buddhist historiography discussing which place the Fozu tongji and the “Fayun tongsai zhi” occupy in it. Fourthly I will introduce sources of relevance to the translated text that have not yet been covered in the previous parts of the introduction.

### The Buddhist-Confucian Confrontation and the Buddhist-Daoist Confrontation in the “Fayun tongsai zhi”

During its early history in China, Buddhism as a religion coming from abroad needed to justify its emergence in Chinese society, which resulted in a rich production of Buddhist apologetic literature employing different strategies in stating the case for Buddhism both in reaction to Confucianism and in reaction to Daoism. This apologetic endeavor is also reflected in the annalistic records of the “Fayun tongsai zhi,” where we usually find brief references to the publication of relevant works as well as to other relevant events. The Buddhist-Daoist confrontation and the Buddhist-Confucian confrontation each play their role in both the materials translated for the first volume and in the materials translated for the present second volume of this Fozu tongji translation project. In what follows I will first refer to the representation of the Buddhist-Confucian confrontation, and subsequently to the representation of the Buddhist-Daoist confrontation.

First, with regard to the Buddhist-Confucian confrontation, we should be aware of different aspects. Generally speaking, state and society in medieval China were conditioned by Confucianism. Buddhism as a religion of Indian origin found itself in various conflicts with the Confucian norms. An eminent conflict standing symbolically for the entire struggle between the Buddhist saṃgha and the Confucian state system was the debate on whether or not Buddhist monks should bow to the emperor. In ancient India religion enjoyed a superior status, against the background of which it would have been unthinkable for a religious dignitary to bow to any worldly authority. Basing themselves on this tradition, Buddhist apologists in medieval China claimed that Buddhist monks should not be requested



to bow to worldly authorities, as such requirements would impair the status of Buddhism as a religion free of control from worldly authorities. In the Confucian state system, the emperor was however seen as the head of all religions practiced in the empire, so that no religion practiced in China could evade imperial control. In early Chinese Buddhism the main incident of protest against this Confucian understanding of the status of religion was the composition of the “Shamen bujing wangzhe lun” 沙門不敬王者論 by Huiyuan 慧遠 (334–416). Within the material translated in the present volume, further incidents of prominent protest find their representation. In Fozu tongji, juan 39, we find a reference to the controversy that during the Sui dynasty triggered the composition of the “Futian lun” 付天論 by Yancong 顏充 (557–610), which—after the “Shamen bujing wangzhe lun”—was the second prominent work in that segment of Buddhist apologetic literature. The debates on whether or not monks should bow to the emperor were closely related to yet another battlefield in the Buddhist-Confucian confrontation. The Confucian concept of filial piety required that anybody in the empire should pay homage to his parents. This, too, provoked the resistance of the Buddhist sangha, as in the Buddhist understanding becoming a monk meant to leave one’s family and to become member of the family of the Buddha. The Chinese Buddhist terminology expresses this claim in its very term for becoming a monk, which is ‘chu jia’ 出家, literally ‘leaving the family,’ but translated as ‘renouncing secular life’ in the present translation project. Also the Buddhist resentment against the Confucian commandment of paying homage to one’s parents led to several confrontations in medieval China. One particularly important example for such conflicts is rather briefly represented in Fozu tongji, juan 39 (T 2035, p. 367, a27–28). That the Buddhist protest against Confucian claims that monks should bow to the emperor, and the Buddhist protest against Confucian claims that monks should bow to their parents jointly form one important aspect of medieval Chinese Buddhist apologetic thought has its evidence in the fact that during the Tang dynasty, under the title of Ji shamen bu ying bai su deng shi 集沙門不迎拜所登時 (T 2108), a major collection of texts was compiled in which all the works relevant to this aspect of Buddhist apologetic literature are represented.

Another aspect of the Buddhist-Confucian confrontation in medieval China derives from the fact that in medieval China ordination certificates could be purchased, on the basis of which even people with little interest in Buddhism often became monks, simply in order to evade taxation and corvée labor. Through this



phenomenon, the Chinese state was to a significant extent deprived of financial income and work force. The state reacted by introducing examinations in which monks had to demonstrate their understanding of the sūtras. Monks who did not pass were returned to laity. Such measures provoked the protest of the Buddhist saṃgha, as they posed a potential threat to all monks. When we read about plans of introducing monks' examinations in Buddhist historiography the entry usually comes with the proud remark that the plans were dropped. In *Fozu tongji*, juan 42, we find a record of one prominent case, where the plans were dropped also due to the discredit of the initiator (T 2035, p. 385, b14–17). Since through such measures the state did not achieve to significantly reduce the numbers of monks, the rage in the face of growing losses of financial income and work force was the main cause triggering the third great persecution of the Buddhist saṃgha in Chinese history, which occurred during the Huichang era of Tang Wuzong. In commenting on Tang Wuzong's persecution policy, the "Fayun tongsai zhi" seeks to demonstrate that by harming the saṃgha Tang Wuzong accumulated an enormous amount of negative karma. Hence it is stressed that, as a karmic retribution, abscesses developed on his back,<sup>6</sup> and that after his death his soul was to be arrested with that of the Lord of the Western Sea (T 2035, p. 386, a29–b2).

A third aspect of the Buddhist-Confucian confrontation, which plays a significant role in the materials translated in the present second volume of the translation project, is the assessment of the anti-Buddhist polemicism of the Confucian scholar Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824). As Han Yu lived during the Tang dynasty, the main treatment of his activity is seen in the second volume, but already in the materials translated in the first volume Han Yu is quoted and referred to in several commentary passages. In those commentary passages the image of Han Yu is downright negative. Most notably, in the supplements appearing in the end of *Fozu tongji*, juan 35, we find a lengthy quotation of a text by Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1037–1101), which harshly opposes Han Yu for his slander of Buddhism (T 2035, p. 334, b3–24). When it comes to the materials of the "Fayun tongsai zhi" translated in the second volume, the assessment of Han Yu is however not generally negative. In *Fozu tongji*, juan 41, it is rather attempted to reinterpret the image of Han Yu calling his anti-Buddhist disposition into question. Zhipan goes to great length in presenting anecdotes testifying to the positive relationship between Han Yu and the Buddhist dharma master Dadian 達天 (T 2035, p. 382, a10–b12). Subsequently, in a commentary passage, Zhipan quotes yet another text of Su Dongpo regarding Han



Yu. It says that—in letters to Meng Jian 孟堅, an official in the rank of “jianyi dafu” 監議大夫 (or Grand Master of Remonstrance) responsible for the supplies for state sacrifices—Han Yu expressed his affection for Dadian (T 2035, p. 382, b13–14). Subsequent to the quotation of Su Dongpo, Zhipan adds that certain other texts ascribing anti-Buddhist statements to Han Yu were of dubious origin (T 2035, p. 382, b17–20).

When it comes to the Buddhist-Daoist confrontation, the conflict basically arises from the fact that both Buddhism and Daoism were in medieval China established as influential religious systems, which therefore found themselves in a state of natural competition and rivalry with each other. Many of the apologetic treatises authored by medieval Chinese Buddhist apologists were directed against Daoism. In early Chinese Buddhism, important apologetic treatises of that kind were the Erjiao lun 二教論 (Treatise of the Two Teachings) and the Xiaodao lun 笑道論 (Treatise of Laughing at the Dao). When it comes to the materials translated in the present volume, the matter of the Buddhist-Daoist confrontation is strongly represented in connection with the early Tang dynasty. The Tang dynasty based itself on Daoism in legitimizing its claim to power, and Daoist priests took advantage of the situation polemicalizing against Buddhism. This triggered the composition of complex apologetic works culminating in the treatises of Poxie lun 破邪論 (T 2109) and Bianzheng lun 辨正論 (T 2110) by Falin (572–640)<sup>9</sup> and the Zhenzheng lun 貞正論 (T 2112) by Xuanyi (fl. late 7th century).<sup>10</sup> After Xuanyi, up to the Yuan dynasty no major Buddhist apologetic works directed against Daoism were composed. However the tradition of Buddhist-Daoist court debates was taken further. When the Buddhist-Daoist confrontation reached its culmination point in the early Tang dynasty, the Buddhist historiographer Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) composed the Jigujin fodao lunheng 集古今佛道論衡 (T 2104, hereafter: Fodao lunheng), which sums up the contents of the major Buddhist-Daoist court debates conducted up to Daoxuan’s life times.<sup>11</sup> With regard to the remaining part of the Tang dynasty, for the Wudai period, and for the Song dynasty, we do not have source material as elaborate as that. However the annalistic records of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” allow us to take the list of Buddhist-Daoist court debates further. Unfortunately the Fozu tongji does not inform us about the content of the court debates, but usually confines itself to mentioning that at a certain date a court debate was conducted and to naming the main participants.



Another prominent representation of the Buddhist-Daoist confrontation within the contents of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” translated in the present volume is presented in different shape. While all of the above is introduced as part of the annalistic display in connection with a prominent event ascribed to a particular date, in Fozu tongji, juan 40, we find a lengthy commentary passage elaborately detailing on aspects of anti-Daoist propaganda as seen in Buddhist apologetic literature (T 2035, p. 371, c2–p. 372, b16). The commentary passage relates to a main text sequence referring to the historical incident that under Tang Zhongzong paintings of Laozi based on the Huahu jing 華胡經 were banned from Buddhist monasteries (T 2035, p. 371, b20–c1). In the commentary passage relating to this main text sequence the reference to the image of Laozi developed in the Huahu jing is taken as an occasion to go into great detail in presenting much of the Buddhist apologetic argumentation designed to refute the huahu 華胡 theory. An introduction to the Huahu jing, the huahu theory, and Buddhist counter strategies is seen in Erik Zürcher.

### The Representation of Chan- and Tiantai-Buddhism in the “Fayun tongsai zhi”

While the matter of Buddhist apologetic thought concerns Buddhism as a whole, the Fozu tongji is a historiographic scripture written with one particular sectarian preference. As already pointed out in the introduction to the first volume of the present translation project, the “Fayun tongsai zhi” is in the first place a general history of Buddhism in China, but since Zhipan, the author of the Fozu tongji, belonged to the Tiantai school, and since the Fozu tongji was written when during the Song dynasty Chan and Tiantai Buddhism stood in fierce competition with each other, the “Fayun tongsai zhi” in its annalistic display tends to represent the history of Tiantai Buddhism more generously than the history of Chan Buddhism. In the introduction to the previous volume, I gave the example of a comparison of the representations of Bodhidharma (late 4th to early 5th century), the alleged founder of Chan 禪 Buddhism, and Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597), the founder of Tiantai 天台 Buddhism. While Bodhidharma is represented in surprisingly scarce style, aspects of the biography of Zhiyi appear in a great multitude of annalistic entries. The representation of Zhiyi began in the treatment of the Chen dynasty, which is part of the material translated in the first volume, but most of the entries detailing on the biography of Zhiyi are seen in the treatment of the Sui dynasty, which is part of the present volume. Concerning the life of Zhiyi the most original sources are the Guoqing bailu 國清百錄 (T 1934, Hundred Documents of the Guoqing [Monastery]) and the Sui Tiantai Zhizhe dashi biezhuàn 隋天台智者大師別傳 (T 2050,



Alternative Biography of the Sui Dynasty Great Master Zhiyi from the Tiantai Mountains).<sup>13</sup> The references to the life of Zhiyi seen in the “Faynn tongsai zhi” go back to these texts. With regard to Zhiyi and his main disciple Guanding, the emphasis on the Tiantai tradition in the “Faynn tongsai zhi” can indeed be observed. However subsequent to Zhiyi and Guanding throughout the Tang and Wudai eras we find relatively few references to the Tiantai tradition and broad coverage of Chan Buddhism. The only reference to the legacy of another significant master of Tiantai Buddhism is the mention of Zhanran 智然, who is referred to as the Meditation Master of the Jing Brook 經 Brook.<sup>14</sup> Despite Zhipan’s inclination to Tiantai Buddhism, the lack of references to the Tiantai tradition should not surprise us. Zhiyi was importantly involved in the religious legitimation of the Sui dynasty, which is why with the rise of the Tang dynasty the Tiantai school largely fell into eclipse. With regard to the Tang dynasty the heavy emphasis on the Chan tradition simply has its explanation in the fact that through much of the Tang dynasty the Chan tradition was the most relevant of the Buddhist schools in China. The Song dynasty saw a great comeback of the Tiantai school, which is why the materials to be translated in the third volume of the present translation project have more to say about Tiantai Buddhism again.

Within the materials translated for the present volume we are however at least shown how, in the Tiantai Buddhist understanding, the teachings of the Tiantai school were transmitted after Zhiyi. One of the most important works of Zhiyi is the *Mohe zhiguan* 摩訶止觀 (T 1911, *The Great Calming and Contemplation*),<sup>15</sup> which is basically Zhiyi’s guide to meditation. The term ‘mohe’ is a transliteration of Skr. ‘mahā’ (= great); ‘zhi’ 止, translated here as ‘calming,’ stands for the Indian spiritual technique of *śamatha*; ‘guan’ 觀, translated here as ‘contemplation,’ stands for the Indian spiritual technique of *vipaśyanā*. Against this background, what is shared in the *Mohe zhiguan* is often referred to as the *zhiguan* teachings. According to the “Faynn tongsai zhi,” the *zhiguan* teachings were after Zhiyi passed on from master to master. This makes up for a transmission lineage, which allows Tiantai historiography to claim that even though after Zhiyi the Tiantai school was largely in eclipse there was still a functional lineage reaching back to Zhiyi. From Zhiyi the “teachings of calming and contemplation” were passed on to Guanding. And since Guanding the transmission went on as summed up below. As the “Faynn tongsai zhi” also tells us, Zhanran composed a commentary on the *Mohe zhiguan*.



In the materials translated for volume three we continue with the transmission from Xiji 西寂 to Yitong 一童, which is noted in Fozu tongji, juan 43 (T 2035, p. 395, a26–27).

As the “Fayun tongsai zhi” also covers the Chan tradition, we find many gong’an 公案 (public case) accounts. While gong’an is the Chinese pronunciation of the term, the Japanese pronunciation, which is more popular in the West, is kōan. The kōan tradition emerged in Chan Buddhism during the late Tang dynasty, and remained important also during the Song dynasty. A kōan account would present a situation in which a Chan master offers a peculiar and mysterious reaction supposed to inspire deep insight in his disciples. Reflection on kōans was a form of meditation, which formed an alternative to the zhiguan tradition of Tiantai Buddhism.<sup>17</sup> Kōans are usually preserved in texts known as Yulu 語錄 (recorded sayings). These are collections, in which notable sayings or reactions of important Chan masters are recorded. In the “Fayun tongsai zhi” much of the repertoire of notable Yulu collections is quoted. Collections of relevance include the Pang jushi yulu 龐居士語錄 (Recorded Sayings of Layman Pang, X69 // Z 2:25 // R 120),<sup>18</sup> the Fenyang Wude chanshi yulu 汾陽無德禪師語錄 (T 1992, Recorded Sayings of the Meditation Master Wude from Fenyang), the Mingjue chanshi yulu 明覺禪師語錄 (T 1996, Recorded Sayings of the Meditation Master Mingjue), the Biyan lu 碧岩錄 (T 2003, Blue Cliff Record),<sup>19</sup> and the Congrong an lu 從容庵錄 (T 2004, Congrong Hermitage Record). Kōans are however not only recorded in Yulu collections, but also in works of Chan historiography, the most important of which will be introduced in the subsequent chapter. Generally speaking, it needs to be said that—due to the mysterious character of kōans—the meaning of kōans can frequently not be revealed. In the present translation of the “Fayun tongsai zhi” kōans are therefore often presented without a fully enlightening explanation, or also completely without of an explanation.

### The Place of the Fozu tongji in Chinese Buddhist Historiography

During the Song dynasty, Tiantai and Chan Buddhism were the two main schools of Buddhism in China. In this bipolar situation a rivalry between Tiantai and Chan Buddhism developed, which on both sides triggered a massive production of historiographic works trying to demonstrate the legitimacy of the own school in the confrontation with the competing school. As the Fozu tongji was one of the historiographic works written in the context of this rivalry, I will here offer a brief account of how this historiographic confrontation developed, and I will outline the



place the Fozu tongji takes within the confrontation. The matter was already touched upon in the introduction to the first volume, but I will go into the matter more deeply here. As we have seen, the beginning of the history of the Tiantai school is treated in the materials translated in the present volume. I take this as an occasion also to discuss the matter of what the rivalry between Tiantai and Chan Buddhism meant to Chinese Buddhist historiography in greater depth.

Scholar monks of the Chan school already during the Tang dynasty started to write historiographic works designed to demonstrate that the Chan school was based on an authentic lineage of dharma transmission reaching back to the Buddha. In doing so, Chan scholarship counts twenty-eight Indian patriarchs from the Buddha to Bodhidharma, and six Chinese patriarchs from Bodhidharma to Huineng 慧能 (638–713).<sup>20</sup> The first work in which we see this concept articulated is the Baolin zhuan 寶林傳, which was composed in 801.<sup>21</sup> Later on, in referring to the transmission of the dharma from the Buddha to the Chinese Chan masters and within the Chan school, the metaphor of “transmitting the lamplight” (chuandeng, 傳燈) was coined. Hence in Chan historiography we would find the lamplight transmission histories, of which the Jingde chuandeng lu 景德傳燈錄 (T 2076, Record of the Transmission of the Lamplight [Compiled during the] Jingde Era) compiled by Daoyuan 道元 in 1004 was the first.<sup>22</sup> The work was followed by four further less prominent lamplight transmission histories, i.e. the Tiansheng guangdeng lu 天聖光燈錄 compiled by Li Zunxu 李遵勗, the Jiatai pudenglu 嘉泰普燈錄, compiled by Leian Zhengshou 樂ian Zhengshou, the Jianzhong jingguo xudeng lu 建中靖國續燈錄, compiled by Foguo Weibai Foguo Weibai, and the Zongmen liandeng huiyao 宗門連燈彙要, compiled by Huiweng Wuming 惠凝 無明. In 1253 Dachuan Puji 大藏普濟 (1179–1253) published the Wudeng huiyuan 五燈會元 (T 1565, Collected Essentials of the Five Lamplight Histories), in which he sums up the contents of the five afore-mentioned works.

The attempts of the Chan school to establish a lineage of patriarchs reaching back to the Buddha provoked disagreement since earliest times. The first author to oppose this concept was Shenqing 深清 (d. ca. 814), who with his Beishan lu 北山錄 (T 2113) wrote a work that voiced massive objections.<sup>23</sup> Shenqing was not officially a Tiantai scholar, and he did not develop a lineage of Tiantai patriarchs to offer an alternative to the Chan lineage. But when, centuries later, Tiantai historiographers presented their view of history, they followed the argumentation introduced by



Shenqing.<sup>24</sup> Only in the eleventh century Tiantai historiographers began to engage in this controversy with Chan Buddhism. After its composition, the Beishan lu first fell into oblivion. When it resurfaced in the eleventh century, it was the Chan scholar Qisong 齊頌 (1007–1072), who with his Chuanfa zhengzong ji 傳法正宗記 (T 2078, Record of the True Lineage of the Dharma Transmission) presented a strong rebuttal.<sup>26</sup> Written in the 1050s, the Chuanfa zhengzong ji is again a sequence of biographies designed to demonstrate the authenticity of the Chan transmission lineage in the style of the Jingde chuandeng lu.<sup>27</sup> In turning against this style of Chan historiography, the eleventh century Tiantai historiographers had to do more than calling the Chan transmission lineage into question. These arguments were not new anymore. So rather than simply repeating what Shenqing had already said, the Tiantai historiographers developed a new genre of Buddhist historiography, which was considered superior to simply producing sequences of biographies. The new genre was modeled on the jizhuan 紀傳 style known from worldly historiography. In worldly historiography the basic work written in jizhuan style is the Shiji 史記 by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145–90 BC). The only extant histories written in jizhuan style are the Shimen zhengtong 史門正統 (X 1513, On the Orthodox Transmission of Buddhism) and the Fozu tongji.<sup>29</sup> The Shimen zhengtong was composed around 1200 AD. The original composer was Wu Keji 吳克己 (1140–1214), a layman who only turned to Buddhism after a serious eye disease, and accepted the dharma name Kaian 可嚴. Wu Keji died before he was able to complete the work, and the work was completed by Zongjian 宗鑑. Zhipan took the Shimen zhengtong as his example in composing the Fozu tongji.

The structure of the Fozu tongji rather loosely corresponds to the structure of the Shiji. I cannot offer an in-depth analysis of the structural comparability here, but roughly speaking the comparability can be observed when considering the following features. In both works we find “basic annals” (benji, 本紀), which in the Shiji portray the reigns of the emperors, and in the Fozu tongji the lives of the Buddha and the patriarchs.<sup>32</sup> In both works we find the accounts of the “hereditary houses” (shijia, 世家), which in the Shiji refer to the princes, and in the Fozu tongji to branches of the Tiantai school.<sup>33</sup> In both works we find “monographs” (zhi, 志), which in both cases refer to specific themes. The “Fayun tongsai zhi” is one of the texts presented as monographs in the Fozu tongji.



The “Fayun tongsai zhi” is a lengthy text completely composed in annalistic style, which is in Chinese known as biannian 年表. The inclusion of a biannian text of such length within the monograph section is untypical for the jizhuan style. No comparable biannian text is seen in the monograph section of the Shiji. Basically the biannian style is a mode of historiographic composition, which is opposed to the jizhuan style. While the jizhuan style is based on the Shiji, the biannian style is based on the Chunqiu 春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals). While in worldly historiography all the dynastic histories followed the jizhuan style defined by the Shiji, the Song dynasty historiographer Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) with his Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror to Aid Government) composed the second major historiographic work in biannian style. So, as we see, jizhuan and biannian are two completely different historiographic traditions. Looking at their transfer into Tiantai Buddhist historiography, the Shimen zhengtong would appear to be a work purely composed in jizhuan style, while the Fozu tongji would have to be seen as work basically composed in jizhuan style but with a long biannian insertion.

In Buddhist historiography the biannian style was in the first place employed by the Chan school however. As the collections of patriarchal biographies turned out to be an inferior mode of historiographic display, Chan historiographers embraced the biannian style. The major works of Chan historiography composed in biannian style during the Song dynasty were the Longxing biannian tonglun 龍興年表通論 (X75, no. 1512, Annalistically Organized Comprehensive Discussion of Buddhism [compiled in the] Longxing [Era]) authored by Zuxiu 祖休 (foreword dated 1164), and the Shishi tongjian 十世通鑑 (T 1516, Comprehensive Mirror of the Śākya Clan), authored by Benjue 本覺 (foreword dated 1270). With the “Faynn tongsai zhi” the Fozu tongji, which was composed between 1258 and 1269,<sup>37</sup> includes the lengthy biannian section, which is subject to the current translation project. As the inclusion of such a massive biannian section is highly untypical for the jizhuan style the Fozu tongji is basically written in, it is safe to say that it was the ascendancy of the biannian style in Chan historiography that motivated Zhipan to include the “Faynn tongsai zhi” in the Fozu tongji. By employing the biannian style, Chan historiography defined a new historiographic fashion of the times. Since the composition of the Longxing biannian tonglun, the biannian style was seen as having the advantage over the jizhuan style. According to Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer the commitment of the Tiantai school to the jizhuan style was even partially



responsible for the eclipse of the Tiantai school after the Song dynasty<sup>38</sup> (while the Chan school remained at least modestly successful when during the Yuan dynasty Tibetan Buddhism became dominant in China). Against this background it becomes understandable why Zhipan with his “Fayun tongsai zhi” at least wanted to include a massive biannian section in his Fozu tongji.

### Sources the “Fayun tongsai zhi” Relies On

Above having contextualized the “Fayun tongsai zhi” with the wider context of Chinese Buddhist historiography, I will subsequently look at the sources the “Fayun tongsai zhi” relies on. Many of the works in which we find passages that reappear in the “Fayun tongsai zhi” have however already been introduced in the chapters above. Below I will introduce works of relevance that have not been covered yet.

Apart from the historiographic works written with motivations of sectarian struggle, there are also the general collections of monks’ biographies. In that regard we see a continuity between the materials translated for the first and the second volume of the present translation project. The three great Chinese collections of monks’ biographies are the Gaoseng zhuan 高僧傳 (T 2059, Biographies of Eminent Monks) by Huijiao 慧皎 (497–554), the Xu gaoseng zhuan 續高僧傳 (T 2060, Further Biographies of Eminent Monks) by Daoxuan, and the Song gaoseng zhuan 宋高僧傳 (T 2061, Biographies of Eminent Monks [Compiled] During the Song Dynasty) by Zanning 贊寧 (920–1001). While the materials translated for the first volume of the present translation project evaluate the Gaoseng zhuan and the first part of the Xu gaoseng zhuan, the materials translated for the second volume evaluate the second part of the Xu gaoseng zhuan and the first part of the Song gaoseng zhuan. Apart from the biographies in those collections, monks of outstanding prominence were additionally honored with independent biographies. Four of those independent biographies are relevant as sources to the materials translated in the second volume. These would be the biography of Falin entitled Tang hufa shamen Falin biezhuàn 唐法華聖僧法林別傳 卷之四 (T 2051);<sup>39</sup> the biography of Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664) entitled Da Tang Daciē si sanzang fashi zhuan 大唐慈恩寺三藏法師傳 卷之四 (T 2053); and the biography of Budai heshang 布袋和尚 (fl. 9th century) entitled Dingying dashi Budai heshang zhuan 定應大師布袋和尚傳 卷之四 (X86, no. 1597).

Another source of importance also related to the actions of monks is the Da Song seng shilüe 大宋僧史略 卷之四 (T 2126) by Zanning. It does not contain monks’ biographies, but rather accounts of various themes that generally characterize



everyday life in Chinese Buddhist monasteries. Individual monks and their actions are mentioned in those accounts where they are employed as examples. Even though in three juan the *Da Song seng shilüe* happens to be a comparatively short text, it is a compendium bringing together important key anecdotes of historical relevance. Unlike the monk biographies, the *Da Song seng shilüe* is usually not the earliest source on a given matter, but as it sums up many of the anecdotes that are considered historically important, it includes many issues that also come up in the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*.”

Also miracle accounts are often quoted in the materials translated for the present volume. As we have seen, in the first volume of this *Fozu tongji* translation project played their role, too. The intention behind miracle accounts is to demonstrate the sacrosanctity of Buddhism by presenting spectacular miracles it could bring about. With regard to the materials translated for the present volume, mostly other collections of miracle accounts would however be relevant than for the materials translated for the first volume. The only collection of miracle accounts relevant for the materials translated in both volumes would be the *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (Extensive Records of the Taiping [Xingguo] Era).<sup>41</sup> The work was compiled during the Taiping xingguo 太平興國 era (976–983) of Song Taizong 宋太宗 —hence the title. The *Taiping guangji* is a compilation of accounts that previously appeared in other accounts. Thus the content of the *Taiping guangji* refers to a long time span, which is why the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*” quotes it both in the materials translated for the first and for the present volume. Many of the original miracle account collections, whose content reappears in the *Taiping guangji*, are now lost. This makes the *Taiping guangji* an invaluable source in retrieving much of the content quoted in the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*.” The more original collections of miracle tales relevant for the materials translated in the present volume include the *Mingbao ji* 冥報記 (Records of Miraculous Retribution), compiled in the mid-seventh century by Tang Lin 林, a devout Buddhist layman, and the *Guangyi ji* 廣異記 (Record of Widespread Anomalies), a text that is not fully preserved, but must have been written by Dai Fu 戴孚 during the late Tang.

Finally, also works of worldly historiography play their role as important sources to the “*Fayun tongsai zhi*.” Of relevance here are especially the dynastic histories, i.e. the *Suishu* 隋書, the *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書, the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書, and the *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史. Occasionally we also see anecdotes that are known from the *Tang huiyao* 唐會要. <>

## **BUDDHIST HISTORIOGRAPHY IN CHINA** by John Kieschnick [The Sheng Yen Series in Chinese Buddhist Studies, Columbia University Press, 9780231205627]

Since the early days of Buddhism in China, monastics and laity alike have expressed a profound concern with the past. In voluminous historical works, they attempted to determine as precisely as possible the dates of events in the Buddha's life, seeking to iron out discrepancies in varying accounts and pinpoint when he delivered which sermons. Buddhist writers chronicled the history of the Dharma in China as well, compiling biographies of eminent monks and nuns and detailing the rise and decline in the religion's fortunes under various rulers. They searched for evidence of karma in the historical record and drew on prophecy to explain the past.

John Kieschnick provides an innovative, expansive account of how Chinese Buddhists have sought to understand their history through a Buddhist lens. Exploring a series of themes in mainstream Buddhist historiographical works from the fifth to the twentieth century, he looks not so much for what they reveal about the people and events they describe as for what they tell us about their compilers' understanding of history. Kieschnick examines how Buddhist doctrines influenced the search for the underlying principles driving history, the significance of genealogy in Buddhist writing, and the transformation of Buddhist historiography in the twentieth century. This book casts new light on the intellectual history of Chinese Buddhism and on Buddhists' understanding of the past.

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In 1954, Yinshun (1906-2003), perhaps the most respected and certainly the most prolific Chinese monastic of the twentieth century, completed a collection of essays titled *Researching Buddhism with Buddhism*. Born in the final years of the Qing dynasty and witness to political reform, modern warfare, industrialization, and revolution, Yinshun was a bridge from the traditional Buddhist background and concerns of the monks and laymen I discuss for most of this book to the scholars who research Buddhism today in the offices and libraries of modern international universities. Keenly aware that, like the politics and society that surrounded him, Buddhism too required rapid, radical reform, Yinshun rejected as antiquated many of the scholarly techniques and assumptions discussed here—recourse to prophecy, ready acceptance of the miraculous, the belief that sutras transmitted to China were all the word of the Buddha, the assertion that an unbroken genealogical chain of master and disciples transmitted Buddhist truths from ancient India to modern China, and so on. Nonetheless, in the preface to *Researching Buddhism with Buddhism*, rather than simply embracing the conventions of modern academic research, Yinshun instead attempted to lay out a modern but at the same time Buddhist approach to scholarship, and specifically to history.

This kind of deliberate, conscious effort to formulate a distinctively Buddhist historiography is rare, perhaps even unique. In Yinshun's case, it meant Buddhist analysis of causality, relentless attention to the impermanence of all things, and persistent reflection on the historian's own lack of an enduring self when reading, writing, and debating history. Few Buddhist historians have been so aware of their own methodologies (and I will return to Yinshun's ideas in more detail in the final chapter of this book).

Nevertheless, although we find few such overt statements of Buddhist scholarly principles in the study of history before the twentieth century, the premise of this book is that, in broad terms, there is such a thing as a Buddhist historiography, that Buddhist doctrines, literature, and institutions fostered a distinctive vision of the past. And nowhere is Buddhist historiography better represented, whether in the length of the tradition or in the sheer volume of material, than it is in China.

This book examines the historical writings of monks and Buddhist laymen. Its focus is not the modern academic study of Chinese Buddhist history, a tradition now long enough to warrant a study of its own that would examine why and how scholars working in universities in China and abroad have approached this history from the nineteenth century to the present? Instead, I focus here on writings by self-professed Chinese Buddhists—mostly monks, but a few laymen as well—who wrote about the past. Modern scholars of Chinese Buddhism have always been interested in its history, but relatively little attention has been given to Buddhist historical writings, not just as repositories of historical facts but as ways of thinking about the past. This is my concern here. As I outline below, there is a wealth of material for the study of the place of the past in Chinese Buddhism; dozens of large, elegant books from all periods written by well-known figures, mostly preserved in formal collections, are readily available.

But the fact that the topic of Chinese Buddhist historiography has attracted relatively little scholarly attention despite the considerable body of material available for such a study is not, on reflection, all that surprising. In the most general terms, Buddhist historiography in Tibet and East Asia is easily recognizable as history, though as we will see with many distinctive characteristics, while traditional Buddhist historical writings of South and Southeast Asia, rarely citing dates or engaging in source criticism, often require us to question our own assumptions about what history is. But even in China, with one of the richest historiographical traditions in world civilization, Buddhist doctrine and history are not the most natural of companions.

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## Four Ways to Read Buddhist History

Given my own linguistic limitations compounded by the vast quantity of material available, I have confined the following chapters to Chinese Buddhism, but first I propose some considerations for Buddhist history as a whole, centered on the question of what makes Buddhist historiography distinctive, a theme I circle back to repeatedly. In addressing a given historical work written from a Buddhist perspective—and in attempting to determine what, if anything is Buddhist about its approach—^ have found useful four themes: time, doctrine, agenda, and craft.

### Time

As we have seen, Buddhist writers had recourse to cosmological theories of cyclical time when attempting to make sense of the past. But they also paid attention to another common means for slipping back and forth in time: prophecy, including both prophecies already fulfilled and, more rarely, speculation based on prophecies in the past about what will happen in the author's future. In writing about prophecy, authors glide right and left along a time line, recounting the prediction and the events that followed, and then often returning to the prophecy to explain the hidden points that only became clear after the events it predicted took place. I devote a chapter below to prophecy in



Chinese Buddhist historiography, but prophecy runs throughout Buddhist historical writing from before the twentieth century. Consider the *Mahavamsa*, or Great Chronicle, one of the first sustained and self-consciously historical Buddhist works in South Asia. Composed in the fifth or sixth century, the *Mahavamsa* keeps to a roughly chronological frame but often plays with time, primarily for literary effect, shifting from the historical present to the time of the authors and back to the time of the Buddha, or even the previous buddhas, and occasionally relating events from past lives to explain the event under discussion. Linking past to present throughout the book are prophecies, frequently recounted and always fulfilled. In other words, the text often employs both *analepsis* (flashbacks) and *prolepsis* (foreshadowing). Prophecy is not unheard of in non-Buddhist historical writing and, at least in South Asia, combining prophecy and discussion of the previous lives of historical figures is not exclusively Buddhist. But certainly in East Asia the combination of rebirth and prophecy marked historical writing as Buddhist. In Buddhist historiography, flashbacks and foreshadowing are more than literary techniques intended to guide a reader through a story (though they did that as well); reflecting on past and future events was a way to explore and explain how people and events are connected through a Buddhist understanding of ethics, karma, and cosmology.

Aside from past lives and prophecies of future events, occasionally Buddhist historians reference liturgical time with a focus on when ceremonies should be carried out to mark remembrance of historical events such as the Buddha's birth, though this is an approach to dividing time that plays little role in formal Buddhist historiography of the sort I treat here. In East Asia, Buddhist history is most commonly structured on political time, with dynasties, emperors, and reign-era titles anchoring people and events to a recognizable time line. In this there is nothing distinctively Buddhist; in all sorts of historical writing, reference to dynasties and emperors is a convenient shorthand for locating a subject and provides context for the persistent power of the state to control the monastic community. Even for the modern historian, it is standard practice to narrate the history of Chinese Buddhism dynasty by dynasty.

From about the eleventh century, in China political time was joined with genealogy, in which "family trees" of masters and disciples were arranged such that a given monk was important often primarily as a link between his master and his disciple. At about the same time, Buddhist historians also played with the option of strict chronological history—arranging biographies and events according to a bare list of dates with little or no political or religious relevance. In China at least it was the genealogical approach that 'vas most distinctively Buddhist—and perhaps the only historiographical trend that spread in China from Buddhist to non-Buddhist historiography. Monks could be placed in the Tang dynasty or the Song, under this emperor or that, but what mattered for the genealogical history was the identity of their teacher and of their disciples as the lineage grew across time in an ever-expanding family tree.

## Doctrine

Formal doctrine appears in Buddhist historical works most commonly in moralizing commentary and in the context of causation. Before the modern absorption of Buddhist history into the newly established universities, in premodern times, while Buddhist historians make occasional reference to human agency (usually human frailty) as a driving force of history, gods and other nonhuman agents and, above all, merit are the primary causal factors behind the events and actions they recount. For instance, in his remarkable thirteenth-century history of Japan, the *Gukansho*, the Tendai monk Jien (1155-1225) explains (mostly political) events through recourse to the theory of natural patterns of rise and decline; as "fate" distinct from these patterns; as the result of the intervention of the Sun Goddess, vengeful ghosts, buddhas, demons, and other nonhuman agents; or as karmic retribution for previous acts. In this panoply of causes, perhaps the most distinctively Buddhist, at least in East Asia, is karma, to which I devote a chapter below. All Buddhist historians were steeped in karmic lore about events in past lives affecting future ones as well as scholastic speculation on the subtleties

of act, intent, and consequence that contribute to the karmic calculus that courses through the universe and undergirds historical development.

## Agenda

Alongside attention to time and causation, which often betray distinctively Buddhist proclivities, consideration of authorial agenda is essential not only to evaluate the accuracy of a given history but also to understand why a historical work takes the shape it does. In much Buddhist historiography, the description of events is so unreliable that assessing the agenda is hardly necessary to determine that a given account is not accurate, but this does not render authorial agenda unimportant since the historians themselves are, though admittedly small in number, a fecund and influential part of the elite Buddhist tradition.

Why, then, did Buddhists write history? Buddhist historians often relate history as a series of moral lessons. Events serve to illustrate the workings of karma, the power of Buddhist deities and relics, or the virtues of eminent monks. The authors of the *Mahāvamsa*, for instance, explicitly introduce moralizing comments toward the end of each chapter. These may encourage readers to reflect on impermanence or to "renounce the joys of life," but most often they enjoin the reader to do good deeds and avoid evil. "In this changing existence do beings indeed (only) by works of merit come to such rebirth as they desire; pondering thus the wise man will be ever filled with zeal in the heaping up of meritorious works.\* The moralizing tends to focus on the importance of accumulating merit ("In this way do the wise, doing many works of merit, gain with worthless riches that which is precious, but fools in their blindness, for the sake of pleasures, do much evil"). More specifically, the text often encourages readers to give alms ("The wise who consider how marvelously precious is the giving of alms, while the gathering together of treasures [for oneself] is worthless, give alms lavishly, with a mind freed from the fetters [of lust], mindful of the good of beings). This call for charity no doubt reflects the monastic composition of the text coupled with an intended audience of rulers and merchants. We will see many examples below of historical works motivated by a desire to promote or defend the monastic community from its detractors, a tendency found wherever monks wrote history. Almost as common is the tendency to employ history to promote or defend a particular monk, monastery, or lineage against competing monks, monasteries, or lineages. Even the most methodologically sophisticated Buddhist historical works are often at root primarily fashioned as weapons in internal Buddhist sectarian disputes.

## Craft

All of this is in keeping with the frequent assertion that the ideal of writing history to accurately reconstruct the past is a modern invention that would have seemed absurd to historians of previous times. If not for the sake of teaching a moral lesson, illustrating a doctrine like karma, or promoting a sectarian agenda, why would anyone want to simply arrange facts in a proper order? But somewhere between the lofty goals of moral instruction and the petty ones of victory over a sectarian rival, we do from time to time see precisely this tendency toward disinterested history in Buddhist historians' devotion to their craft. Of course, before the modern period, history was not an academic discipline with codified standards of objectivity and source analysis; authors, Buddhist or otherwise, did not even call themselves "historians." Nonetheless, historiographical rules of art and standards for practice did take shape, and most of the authors of Buddhist historical works on some level aspired to be good historians rather than simply moralists or entertainers.

Consider Tāranātha's (1577-1634) *History of Buddhism in India* (*Rgya gar Chos'byung*). Completed in 1608 in Tibet, Tāranātha's work covers some of the same ground as the *Mahāvamsa*, including, for instance, accounts of the three councils and the reign of Asoka. And despite the centuries that separated Tāranātha from so many of the people and events he describes, his work is to this day widely cited, alongside the *Mahāvamsa*, for reconstructing the early stages of Buddhism in

authoritative modern histories of Indian Buddhism like those of Akira Hirakawa and Etienne Lamotte, one scholar going so far as to praise Táránátha's work as "in many ways the most important history of Indian Buddhism to be written in any language."

Far from the subdued historiographical consciousness of the *Mahāvamsa*, often undistinguishable from epic, the *History of Buddhism in India* represents a distinct genre of writing that celebrates the marshaling and critical assessment of information. Táránátha sorts through his sources, weeding out those "not related to the history of the True Doctrine," and ostentatiously noting, "I have myself heard many Indian legends. These also I am not recording here". He relishes the opportunity to exercise his considerable analytical skills, triumphantly pointing out previous misreadings of particular words that led to misinterpretations by shoddy scholars, or miscalculations in clumsy accounts of prophecy. He reserves his most caustic criticism not for the moral failings of his subjects but for the blundering historians who attempted to recount their actions with arguments that are "irrational and groundless," "palpably wrong," "chronologically baseless," dependent on "fancy," and "empty babble."

Perhaps readers more sensitive to sectarian Buddhism of seventeenth-century Tibet may detect a subtle defense of Táránátha's Jo pang lineage (fiercely persecuted less than two decades after his death), but if he had such an agenda, it is hidden deep beneath the veneer of his devotion to solid history and contempt for sloppy scholarship. In contrast to the *Mahāvamsa*, links to the present (seventeenth-century Tibet) are few. Nor do we see in the *History of Buddhism in India* the sort of moralizing that ends every chapter of the *Mahāvamsa*. Instead, Táránátha's driving agenda seems to be a scholarly one—a commitment to careful, reliable history, an objective ideal. Just as the *Mahāvamsa* opens with a salutation followed by a brief critique of its predecessors, the *History of Buddhism in India* begins:

Even the learned (Tibetan) chroniclers and historians, when they come to discuss India, exhibit with their best efforts merely their poverty, like petty traders exhibiting their meagre stock. Some of the scholars, while trying to describe the origin of the Doctrine, are found to commit many a mistake. For the benefit of others, therefore, I am preparing this brief work with the mistakes eliminated.

At times this relentless enthusiasm for rooting out the errors of previous historians verges on scholarly showmanship, as when Táránátha notes that of seven sources for one incident, two are translated into Tibetan, but "I have seen the others in their Indian originals." Passages such as these, interrupting the narrative with erudite asides, suggest that this is a scholarly work written for other scholars, or at least for those who appreciate the finer points of the historian's craft. We will see these same tendencies throughout Chinese Buddhist historiography by looking out for rare moments when the historian introduces or intervenes in a story to explain why one source is more reliable than another, or to correct a date, name, or scribal error. Even more challenging is to detect if there is anything in these technical skills that betrays Buddhist sensibilities. In China in particular, the ideals and standards for writing proper, elite history were well established before the entrance of Buddhism. Nonetheless, there are moments when a historian invokes a Buddhist doctrine to explain a source discrepancy or draws on Buddhist principles to reflect on the reason the historical record is unclear.

## Summary of Chapters

All of the preceding caveats about shared tradition aside, Chinese Buddhist historiography was distinctive, in the context of Chinese historiography and in the context of Buddhist historiography. In chapter 1 I emphasize the importance of India's past for Buddhist historians in China. Unlike court historians, who expressed little interest in Indian history, Buddhist historians were forced to grapple with a tradition with very different historiographical practices, pushing them to develop creative techniques for dating events and mold unwieldy historical data to the needs of their Chinese audience.

Chapter 2 examines source criticism in Chinese Buddhist historiography. Like all Chinese history, most Buddhist histories are composite works that patch together previous accounts, copied wholesale, often without attribution. Nonetheless, as a part of their scholarly ethos, Buddhist historians were careful to note discrepancies in different accounts of the same person or event. And in the ways they deal with these differences, they disclose distinctively Buddhist beliefs.

Chapter 3 takes up the topic of karma, a fundamentally historical doctrine, a principle that takes effect over time. Chinese Buddhist historians, steeped in both karmic lore and scholastic writings on karma, were quick to realize its potential as a historiographical tool, a device that they believed set them apart from their counterparts at court, allowing them to see the underlying principles driving history.

Chapter 4 asks why, in works ostensibly devoted to the past, Buddhist historians spill so much ink discussing the future. At times Buddhist historians relate prophecies of what will happen after they are gone; more often, they tell stories of predictions in the past that by their own time had already been realized. One of the puzzles is that even in the stories, the prophecies are not initially understood and are only seen to have been accurate predictions of the future after the events they foretold have come to pass. Misunderstood or ignored, prophecies seldom do anyone any good, even in historical accounts that document their accuracy. Why, then, are they so pervasive?

Chapter 5 narrates the rise of genealogical history, both inspired and shaped by sectarian division. Structuring the past according to a monastic family tree raised the stakes for historical writing; it could connect the historian himself to a lineage of eminent masters extending all the way back to the Buddha, but it at the same time entailed exclusion—some branches of the tree were more central than others, and some were pruned off the tree entirely. The demands of the new genre and its consequences are the subject of this chapter.

In chapter 6 I trace the rapid turn from the tradition of Buddhist historiography that had taken shape over fifteen hundred years to new forms of scholarship, now taking place in the universities. Although monastics had always been at some remove from the more prestigious literati historians, in the twentieth century the gap grew even larger. In the first half of the twentieth century, Chinese academic historians learned foreign languages and studied abroad, keeping abreast of the latest developments in historiography in Germany, Britain, and the United States, and returned to teach in the newly founded universities in Peking, Shanghai, and Canton. Monks, while operating largely in isolation from this cosmopolitan world of the modern intellectual, nonetheless recognized the need for reform and so introduced a new style of Buddhist historiography. Examining this transformation is useful both for what it tells us about modern Buddhism in China and because it helps to clarify what came before.

My hope for the reader is that the materials I gather here will make the case for the value of incorporating Buddhist historical writings into the more developed field of Chinese historiography—every overview of Chinese historiography should take Buddhism into consideration. I also hope that this book will help to carve out a place of greater prominence for historical thought in the intellectual history of Chinese Buddhism, since working with history, aside from its own merits, is often a way of thinking through doctrine. Finally, and most ambitiously, I hope that the book will contribute more generally to a growing body of scholarship on the distinctive characteristics of religious historiography, past and present. <>



## DIFFERENTIATING THE PEARL FROM THE FISH-EYE: OUYANG JINGWU AND THE REVIVAL OF SCHOLASTIC BUDDHISM by Eyal Aviv [Series: East Asian Buddhist Philosophy, Brill, 9789004437906]

In **DIFFERENTIATING THE PEARL FROM THE FISH-EYE**, Eyal Aviv offers an account of Ouyang Jingwu (1871-1943), a leading intellectual who revived the Buddhist scholastic movement during the early Republican period in China.

Ouyang believed that authentic Indian Buddhism was an alternative to the prevalent Chinese Buddhist doctrines of his time. Aviv shows how Ouyang's rhetoric of authenticity won the movement well-known admirers but also influential critics. This debate shaped modern intellectual history in China and has lost none of its relevancy today.

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### Prelude

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Chinese Buddhism, like China in general, was at a crossroads. As the world order was changing, the entire country was undergoing a painful process of political, economic, and cultural adaptations. Chinese religious traditions were forced to fit into this new reality. Chinese Buddhists gave much thought to how to respond to these changes. To a large extent, the story of Buddhism in the modern period became the journeys of these different responses. This book is about a one of these responses, the man who inspired it, and how the movement he inspired rippled through the intellectual history of China during the Republican period. The man was Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 (1871–1943); a Buddhist layman, scholar, and educator. Unlike many others, Ouyang and his followers did not embrace the popular forms of Buddhism in China. They neither embraced Chan meditation nor Pure Land recitation. Unlike others, they did not seek out solutions to improve the quality of the Saṅgha, nor did they try to prove that Buddhism was compatible with science or even superior to it. Instead, they turned to the Indian roots of the tradition, especially the marginalized teachings of the Yogācāra school, and criticized the dominant Chinese Buddhist doctrines and practices of their time.

Commenting on the place of the revival of Indian Buddhist scholasticism by Ouyang and his followers within the history of Buddhism in the modern period, Wing-tsit Chan famously wrote in the early 1950s that: “The development of Buddhist thought in the twentieth century has been exclusively the story of Buddhist Idealism.”<sup>4</sup> While Chan may have exaggerated the “exclusive” role of Buddhist scholasticism’s revival, I do agree with the Buddhologist Chen Bing who wrote that this revival has been: “not only the most fascinating development in the whole Chinese Buddhist revival movement, but also a major event in modern Chinese intellectual and cultural history that cannot be ignored.”

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This seemingly peculiar choice to revive a long forgotten Indian Buddhist school of thought is one of the main puzzles of Ouyang's career. What was it that intellectuals such as Ouyang found in this teaching at that particular time period? Why would someone in the early part of the twentieth century resort to a 1,500-year-old philosophy and dedicate his life to propagating its teaching in the midst of the upheavals of early modern China? Why did others find it appealing? These are some of the questions that I address in this book.

To address these questions, I will focus on one central theme that is crucial to understanding Ouyang and his ideas. Ouyang's main motivation for reviving Yogācāra Buddhism was his belief that the unearthing of the authentic (真) teachings of Buddhism would be efficacious both on the individual existential level and as a spiritual solution for the new China. I would argue that it was this discourse of authenticity and teachings of this kind of Buddhism that galvanized Buddhist intellectuals and framed this disappointment with what they perceived as "superstitious" Buddhism. Ouyang generated excitement and curiosity among a new generation of Buddhist intellectuals who flocked to his Nanjing center, the China Buddhist Studies Institute (中国佛教研究所, hereafter Buddhist Studies Institute), to study Buddhist doctrine. A focus on his career will shed significant light on the formation of Buddhist scholasticism in modern China, the birth of academic studies of Buddhism, and how scholastic Buddhism served as the foundation for the influential New Confucian<sup>6</sup> movement in the second half of the twentieth century and today.

Ouyang's fame as a scholar and teacher spread across China during the Republican period. A popular adage summarizes his reputation: "in the South there is Ou[yang Jingwu] in the North there is Han [Qingjing]." While Han Qingjing 韩清静 (1884–1948) taught Buddhism in Beijing, it was Ouyang's charisma, erudition, and zeal that made him the center of the scholastic revival of Republican China. His reputation as a great scholar earned him the title "Great Master" (大师), an honor rarely given to a layperson. As much as he was appreciated, very few attracted criticism and passionate opposition like Ouyang Jingwu. His insistence of purifying Buddhism and teaching the authentic doctrine was one of the major causes for these reactions.

## The Structure of the Book

Chapter 1 presents Ouyang's early years and his traditional educational background. It outlines his philosophical transformation, as Ouyang explored different Confucian schools in search of a suitable guiding ideology for a time of crisis. While finding a new home in the Lu-Wang school of Confucianism, Ouyang was also influenced by Gui Bohua, a friend who eventually introduced him to his teacher, Yang Wenhui 杨文会 (1837–1911). Yang succeeded to convert Ouyang to Buddhism and Ouyang began his career as a student and later as a teacher. We will pay special attention to Ouyang's growing interest in Indian Buddhism as an alternative to the mainstream Buddhism in China as well as his focus on doctrinal authenticity. We then move to his attempt to bolster the status of Buddhism and reshape its internal debates and its relations with the state by forming the first Buddhist Association. Finally, we discuss the establishment of the Buddhist Studies Institute, the flagship institution of the scholastic movement, which contributed to the revolution in Buddhist education in China.

Ouyang's writings have a clear critical dimension as well as a more constructive dimension. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with Ouyang's critical scholarship while the fourth chapter addresses one of his signature contributions to Chinese Buddhist doctrine. Chapter 2 pays special attention to the analysis of Ouyang's critique of Chinese Buddhism as inauthentic. Ouyang's critique encompassed almost all major indigenous Chinese Buddhist schools. He determined that the Huayan and Tiantai schools, the schools that provided the doctrinal foundations for Chinese Buddhism, developed erroneous teachings based on the wrong foundations. He also criticized the Chan school for its dismissiveness of Buddhist doctrine, which, he argued, resulted in ignorance and a decline in the

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quality of Buddhism. Finally, I will discuss Ouyang's critique of a previous attempt to revive the Yogācāra teaching. Because it was entrenched in Chan, Tiantai, and Huayan philosophical frameworks, the resultant Yogācāra was, in his view, a distorted one.

Chapter 3 ties Ouyang's critique of Chinese Buddhism to one of the most important debates in modern Buddhism in China: the authenticity and provenance of the *Awakening of Faith* or *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論. We will see that the teachings of the *Awakening of Faith* underpin Ouyang's critique of the Huayan and Tiantai doctrines. Ouyang played a crucial role in the debate, arguing against the philosophical position of the text. I discuss his view and describe its later impact. The chapter contextualizes Ouyang's view in the broader range of views that animated the debate. This chapter also introduces Ouyang's critique of a prevalent analysis of the philosophical terms "essence" (體) and "function" (用), and his development of an alternative, which, he argued, represented the authentic Buddhist position he was concerned with.

Chapter 4 describes Ouyang's solution to the problems discussed in the second and third chapters. The years described in this chapter, between 1917 and 1927, were the most creative in Ouyang's career, and this is the period for which he is most known. The chapter focuses on his most controversial innovation. Using Abhidharma and especially Yogācāra Buddhism as his benchmarks, Ouyang developed an idiosyncratic view in the debate surrounding the correct meaning of the two terms most commonly used to translate "Yogācāra" into Chinese. He then offered a hermeneutically creative interpretation of these terms. With his new interpretation, Ouyang argued for a reconsideration of the foundational teachings that Buddhists in China considered "Hīnayānist" and which he considered necessary and authentic.

In Chapter 5 I discuss Ouyang's later thought, mostly his Buddhist teachings. Beginning in the mid-1920s, he began to explore the Madhyamaka school, and argued for compatibility between the Madhyamaka and Yogācāra philosophies. A more radical change came in the 1930s, following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, when he began to talk and write about Confucianism with great zeal, and argued for full compatibility between the two traditions. He began writing about Buddhist practice, and turned his attention to Buddhist teachings that he had previously avoided, or even associated with inauthentic Buddhism. This phase is often overlooked by his detractors and admirers alike, in part large due to the fact that as a result of the war, he had to move his school from Nanjing to a relatively remote part of Sichuan province. Nonetheless, an understanding of Ouyang as a thinker must include this shift in his later thought. I argue in this chapter that this shift seems to be related to Ouyang's personal crises, rather than to a rejection of his earlier critical phase or to the criticism he and his movement faced. Despite a more syncretic approach, Ouyang remained committed to the authenticity and integrity of the Buddhist teaching.

Chapter 6 discusses the legacy of Ouyang and the scholastic movement. The heyday of the scholastic movement in China did not last long. In the 1950s, Marxism was established in the mainland as a state ideology that overshadowed any intellectual alternative, especially any with religious underpinnings. Traditionally inclined intellectuals in Hong Kong and Taiwan advocated for modern interpretations of Confucian teachings. The revival of Confucianism and Maoism in the mainland led to a perception that the "Indian-ness" of scholastic Buddhism was inherently opposed to the state-driven narrative of "Chinese-ness" which had won the upper hand. Yet despite the loss of some of its momentum, the scholastic movement remained an important influence on mainstream views and an interlocutor for them. In order to demonstrate this, I highlight the careers of two of Ouyang's major disciples: one who became a pillar of Buddhist studies in China, Lü Cheng 呂澄 (1896–1989), and the other, Xiong Shili 熊希齡 (1885–1968), who is considered one of the founders of the New Confucian movement and a former disciple of Ouyang. I also describe how this movement was responsible for the birth of Buddhist studies in China and analyze its relations to later developments.

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Ouyang's discourse of authenticity animated and still animates debates about the intellectual and religious characteristics of Chinese thought and Buddhist thought in China. They have survived in the New Confucian movement which emerged from within the ranks of his students as a criticism of Ouyang's form of Buddhism as well as in debates on the nature of Chinese Buddhism. While the book focuses on Ouyang Jingwu, I hope that it will serve as a gateway to highlight the role of the scholastic movement in the formation of modern Buddhism in China and, in the broader sense, its role in the formation of modern Chinese intellectual history.

### The Problem of Authenticity

The drive to define the boundaries of authentic Buddhism was a key feature of Ouyang's methodology and was what made him critical of mainstream Buddhism in China. Ouyang was not alone; during the early twentieth century, other reformers shared similar concerns, but he took this criticism further than most other Buddhist reformers.

In their attempt to safeguard Buddhist authenticity, Ouyang and his followers advocated a "renewed" *Indian* Buddhism in China. This was a controversial proposition. In the early twentieth century and throughout the decades that followed, Chinese intellectuals grappled with the construction of a modern Chinese national identity. Ouyang's choice of *Indian* Buddhism over *Chinese* Buddhism touched a very sensitive nerve in the public discourse at that time, for what he deemed as "fake" doctrines were exactly those most Buddhists considered the essence of Buddhism in China. The stage was set for a movement which would challenge long-held assumptions and leave its mark on the trajectory of Buddhism in modern China.

There is a tradition of suspicion toward claims of authenticity in the study of religion. At the same time, both practitioners and most scholars find themselves, wittingly or not, returning to the question of what differentiates one tradition from another. We can find it among fundamentalist movements who follow the literal meaning of their canonical texts, or movements that wish to return to a "purer" phase of their history. This kind of sentiment was also common among the Western religious traditions that had an impact on Chinese religious and intellectual life, first the Jesuits and later Protestants and Victorian scholars. We can find it also among scholars when they assume a referent to the terms "Christianity," "Buddhist," and so forth. For many, such as Karen Armstrong in the case of Islam or Stephen Batchelor in the case of Buddhism, the answer is still what McCutcheon called "a form of mythmaking" based on "claims to such things as the 'deep meaning' of a text or even the supposedly essential, human nature all people are said to share." If not a text, the mythmaking of authenticity focuses on a founder or founders and their original intention. This mythmaking was also at the center of Ouyang's project.

Authenticity is often perceived as either the origin of a phenomenon or a phenomenon that accurately represents the original one. This "origin," in reality, quickly becomes a moving target. As we shall see, Ouyang's project, like any project that relies on claims of authenticity, was fraught with difficulties and was eventually challenged by competing claims of authenticity. As Georges Dreyfus aptly puts it, "I believe that the use of the rhetoric of authenticity should be viewed with great suspicion. It is more often than not an attempt to claim authority and disqualify other views within the tradition." Rather than thinking of discourses of authenticity in terms of right or wrong, it is more useful to view such claims as an imagined narrative of historical origins or a perceived "essence" of a tradition (religious, cultural, or political), the *sine qua non* that defines the core of a specific tradition. Complex traditions often form in a slow evolution. Their new "beginnings" are never without prior social and cultural causes. At the same time, their "coherency" is always a subject of internal debates and negotiation. As Charles Taylor (following Lionel Trilling) argued, authenticity in the modern context ought to be understood as the "contemporary ideal." Put it in a different way, as McCutcheon articulated: "The discourse on authenticity—whether found in ethnic,



nationalist, or hermeneutic traditions—is an all too common, socio-rhetorical technique used to construct a facade of homogenous group identity in the face of unpredictable, competing, and inevitably changeable historical situations and social interests.” This book highlights the “contemporary ideal” of Ouyang and why it resonated with his contemporaries and why eventually it faded away.

### The Problem of Authenticity in the Modern Period

Despite its long history, as Charles Taylor noted, “authenticity” emerged as a powerful discourse in the last century. He argued:

Everyone senses that something has changed [in the North Atlantic civilization]. Often this is experienced as a loss, break-up. A majority of Americans believe that communities are eroding, families, neighborhoods, even the polity; they sense that people are less willing to participate, to do their bit; and they are less trusting of others. Scholars don’t necessarily agree with this assessment, but the perception itself is an important fact about today’s society. No doubt there are analogous perceptions widespread in other Western societies.

I would like to suggest that this sense of “loss,” of “break-up,” is not limited only to Western societies; in fact it is a characteristic of “modern” societies in many parts of the world, including the Chinese society into which Ouyang was born. The sense of loss caused by the rupture with pre-modern traditional patterns was the result of the growing dominance of the European political-economic system, not just in Europe but in non-European cultures as well, including China.

In his book *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis*, Chang Hao paraphrases the words of Song Yuren, a Sichuanese scholar from the late nineteenth century who foresaw how the collision of traditional Chinese culture with the West would lead to the end of the world he grew up in: “Both Western sciences and Western religion brought in ideas and views at odds with traditional values and world views. The Copernican universe of Western science was bound to collide with traditional Chinese world view.” Further: “This conflict [i.e., of the two world view ...] would inevitably undermine the whole traditional hierarchical order.” Song Yuren, Chang Hao, and others<sup>19</sup> have rightly highlighted the sense of crisis that followed the rupture among the intellectuals of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This should not surprise us. In his article on the jargon of authenticity in the study of religion, McCutcheon paraphrases Bruce Lincoln’s definition of religion as “an ordinary form of human practice, as a socio-rhetorical technique used to create, contest, and re-create credible worlds and identities.” But I would like to follow Yuval Noah Harari’s broader definition of religions as “a system of human norms and values that is founded on a belief in a superhuman order.” Beyond the usual suspects of what we call religions—Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism—Harari includes what many prefer to call “ideologies,” such as communism, humanism, and fascism. Religion, in the broadest sense, is a necessary human condition to form a large functioning society. The binding power of religion is the shared stories (myths) that its adherents subscribe to as real. If the myths that form a religion are necessary as a social glue, then the breakdown of shared myths typical of the modern period explains both the anxiety and the nostalgia for an authentic essence that will, recalling McCutcheon, “create, contest, and re-create credible worlds and identities,” and, we should add, meaning.

It should be clear at this point that by locating Ouyang in this ubiquitous discourse I am not trying to defend his quest but understand the appeal of his project in that particular time in history and its contribution to modern Buddhism in China. To better comprehend the cultural background from which Ouyang emerges, let us consider how this discourse of authenticity is presented throughout the histories of the traditions that shaped Ouyang’s life and thought: the Confucian and the Buddhist.

## Searching for the Authentic Teaching of Confucius

All those who have considered themselves Confucians throughout history accept the authority of Confucius's teachings but disagree over how to interpret them. Yet most of them share the claim that their radically different interpretations of Confucius's teachings represent his authentic teaching. In 2007 the Confucian scholar Anping Chin articulated the desire for Confucius's authentic teachings in vivid words: "I wanted *him* to be within *my* reach. I wanted him to take me to his teachings. And so, for two decades, I wandered through early books and their commentaries, scouting for leads that might yield a little bit more of Confucius. As I was writing this book, the drive became a tighter search for an authentic Confucius."

The debate over the meaning of Confucius's true teachings found early expression in the debate between Mengzi and Xunzi over Confucius's view on human nature. Later it became a rhetorical focal point in the rise of the Neo-Confucian movement. The notion of *Daotong* 道統 or "Transmission of the Way" was used by Zhu Xi and later Neo-Confucians to establish the succession of the Confucian orthodoxy, accounting for the rupture between the Han dynasty Confucians and the Tang Neo-Confucians. At the same time, it was used to legitimize doctrinal innovations that the Neo-Confucians advocated and were not part of the Warring States and Han Confucianism.<sup>3</sup> As a student of Confucianism this was part of Ouyang's heritage, but it was the later development of Evidential Research (*Kaozheng xue* 考證學) of the Qing dynasty that likely inspired Ouyang's quest for authenticity.

The Evidential Research movement culminated during the eighteenth century and centered on principles such as "discover the truth through concrete facts" and "no belief without evidence." Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929), the prominent late Qing and early Republican thinker and, for a short time, a disciple of Ouyang, summarized the methods of the school:

1. Reliance on reliable evidence alone, speculations should be rejected.
2. When trying to determine textual evidence "the more ancient is preferred." In other words, the closer it is to the original, authentic text, the higher the chances are that the evidence is stronger.
3. A need for a careful consideration of evidence. If the evidence obtained is not strong enough, it should be accepted provisionally until stronger evidence becomes available. If contrary evidence is found, the original evidence should be rejected. An anti-dogmatic approach vis-à-vis the Song-Ming approach is implied here.
4. It is morally flawed to distort evidence to fit into one's preconceived biases or dogma.
5. One should attempt to categorize similar items in order to find an underlying law.
6. Proper citations are a must. Plagiarism is unethical.
7. In case of disagreements, a free debate is called for. The debate should be so free that "even students should not hesitate to criticize or reject their teachers, and the recipient [of criticism] is never offended by it."
8. Rejection of intolerance to other people's perspective. "An argument is limited to the problem at hand and the purport of its language must be solidly substantial and sincerely temperate."
9. It is better to specialize in a particular field than to be a kind of intellectual jack-of-all-trades.

A simple writing style is largely preferred over "superfluous phraseology."

Benjamin Elman echoes Liang's points in his five major characteristics of the Evidential Research scholars:

1. They "search for evidence" in order to retrieve the past, or, in other words, they seek historical or philological proof for the authentic teaching. They "stressed exacting research, rigorous analysis, and the collection of impartial evidence drawn from ancient artifacts and historical documents and texts." But evidence was also sought through linguistics, astronomy, mathematics, and geography, among others. This search for evidence is characteristic of Ouyang's methodology and was a part of his critique of Buddhists and traditional Chinese intellectuals who lacked rigorous research and analysis.
2. Qing Evidential Research scholars wished to "resume the interrupted conversation with antiquity." While Evidential Research scholars criticized the method, Neo-Confucians attempted to resume the transmission of the Confucian Dao; they too wished to retrieve the authentic teachings of Confucianism. These scholars argued that the tradition has departed from its original meaning and that the original "essence" of the tradition must be retrieved. Ouyang, who was shaped among others by the Evidential Scholars' aspirations and methodology, saw the retrieval of the Buddhist essence as a necessary step in moving forward, toward a modern nation and a meaningful existence in a modern age. This essence had to be retrieved from antiquity, from the Indian texts that preserved the origins of Buddhism.
3. Evidential Scholars advocated specialization rather than the Song-Ming ideal of a well-rounded "amateur ideal." This was also a characteristic of Ouyang's career, whose attention to details and complete dedication to a scholarly career were reflected in his study of Yogācāra thought.
4. Evidential Research revived the study of non-orthodox texts and thinkers. Similarly, Ouyang and the scholastic movement revived the study of Yogācāra teaching and the study of Buddhist logic, both of which were outside of the mainstream of Buddhist education in China. While Yogācāra was never a non-orthodox school, it was considered by many a less perfect teaching. One major difference is that unlike the scholars who advocated the critical assessment of non-Confucian sources, Ouyang's main critical work remained within the boundaries of the Buddhist tradition.
5. Finally, Evidential Research elevated teaching as a vocation and not just as a career of compromise for those who were unable to secure a position in the imperial bureaucracy. Ouyang was undoubtedly an heir to the ideal of teaching as a vocation. Throughout his career he showed an unusual commitment to teaching, sacrificing his own prospect of securing a more stable profession in order to teach and establish an institute to promote his vision of Buddhism.

Evidential Research scholars did not hesitate to confront dogmatism and orthodoxy and question traditional values. This spirit inspired in Ouyang a sense of openness and legitimacy to explore uncharted territories, even if it questioned foundational and long-held assumptions.

### The Late Qing Intellectuals' Rediscovery of Buddhism

With the decline of the Confucian orthodoxy, the renewed interest in non-canonical philosophers, and the spread of Western studies came an openness that led to a renewed interest in Buddhism as well. Liang Qichao commented: "With the introduction of Western philosophy, there naturally aroused a kindred interest in Indian philosophy." He later added: "Among the late Qing Scholars of 'New Learning,' there [was] none who did not have some connection with Buddhism and true



believers clustered about Yang Wenhui.” Among them were some of the greatest minds of the age: Kang Youwei 康有为 (1858–1927), Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1868–1936), Liang Qichao himself, and, to a lesser degree, the first president of Beijing University, Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868–1940).

The rediscovery of scholastic Buddhism began in the late Qing and lasted throughout the Republican period. Ouyang was shaped by it as a young man and later shaped it as a teacher and a scholar. He added rigor, professionalism, and appeal to the study of Buddhism in China for a new generation of intellectuals. The question of the relations between Chinese and Indian Buddhism was a thread that was woven throughout Ouyang’s career in teaching, research, and publication. It is also the major theme of the following chapters.

### Searching for the Authentic Buddha’s Words

Buddhists have grappled with the genuine teachings of the Buddha since very early on in the tradition. Without the Buddha’s living authority, conflicts and disagreements over what constitute the *saddharma*, or “correct teaching,” emerged. How would the tradition decide what is authentic and what should be considered a deviation? Can we hope to discern the authentic teachings of the Buddha? These questions are still debated among scholars of Buddhism. For many contemporary Buddhists, especially Theravāda Buddhists, the Pāli canon is often considered the true teaching of the Buddha. There is, however, no consensus among scholars that any significant portion of the Pāli canon represents the ideas and words of the historical Buddha. What could be legitimately called the words of the Buddha, or words uttered under the authority of the Buddha (*buddhavacana*) is and has been a contested question. Non-Mahāyāna Buddhist schools such as the Mahāsāṃghikas and the Mūlasarvāstivāda had their own canon to rely on. They argued that discourses uttered by Buddha’s disciples also ought to be considered “Buddha’s words.” In the Pāli canon we see discourses preached by Śāriputra (e.g., MN 5, MN 9, and MN 28) or by Maudgalyāyana (MN 15). Other schools added under the umbrella of authenticity additional, potentially verifiable teachers of the Dharma including, among others, sages (*ṛṣis*), the elders of the Saṅgha, and gods like Indra, as long as their utterances are in agreement with the *sūtras* and the *vinaya*.

This position was also adopted in the Mahāyāna where some *sūtras* feature *bodhisattvas* as the main speakers. In some cases, the Buddha is not present for part of the *sūtra*, whereas in others he is not present at all or is in a state of deep meditation, as in the case of the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra* (a.k.a. Heart Sūtra T 251) where the two participants are the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara and Śāriputra. For some Buddhist thinkers, like Atiśa for example, beings such as Avalokiteśvara can represent the *buddhavacana* even if the Buddha is not present because “[they] have attained the powers of clairaudience that are achieved with *ṛddhi* (magical power) and *abhijñā* (superknowledge), which allow them to hear the words of the Buddhas from extraordinary distances.”

While the *sūtras* and *vinaya* were considered by all Buddhist schools to be the words of the Buddha, the status of the subsequent Abhidharma was more problematic. In the first few verses of the *Abhidharmakośa* (法蘊藏論, Treasury of Higher Doctrine, T 1558), Vasubandhu (fourth to fifth century CE) already presents us with a controversy between the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas. The text reads: “Since there are no other means to pacify the defilements than the examination of *dharma*s, and since it is because of defilements that the world wanders in the sea of existence, for that reason this [treatise] was uttered, as they say (*kila*), [by the Buddha].” Bruce Hall adds in his translation of the first chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa* that the Sanskrit word *kila* is used by Vasubandhu to indicate a problematic position often held by the Vaibhāṣikas and the Theravādins. The Sautrāntikas, on the other hand, rejected the position that the Buddha uttered the Abhidharma, sidestepping the prior position of authenticity all together.



The growth of the Mahāyāna from a marginal movement to one of dominance in Indian Buddhism presented a new set of problems for the question of authenticity. Mahāyāna Buddhists who produced new *sūtras* seem to have felt obliged to defend their tradition and the authenticity of their texts as the Buddha's words. We can determine this from the fact that all Mahāyāna *sūtras*, like the Pāli ones, begin with the standard formula, "thus have I heard" [from the Buddha]. There are many clues in the early *sūtras* that suggest that it was not an easy sell and that outsiders did not quickly accept these new texts as authoritative. The reasons are obvious to a modern reader and were probably even more noticeable to an Indian Buddhist of the early first millennium CE.

Many of these texts noticeably departed in style, content, and language from pre-Mahāyāna *sūtras*. For example, they introduced a much larger array of participants; many *sūtras* featured *bodhisattvas* as the main speakers or different Buddhas among others. In response, the Mahāyāna *sūtras* used a variety of literary and rhetorical devices to argue for these innovations. One of the repeated early claims, for example, was that the Buddha taught the pre-Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings to his disciples, the *śrāvakas*, whose faculties were not sharp enough to understand the deeper teachings of the Buddha. The Mahāyāna teachings were then revealed only to other realms of beings, while humans were made to wait until a generation that could understand these teachings appeared. Another explanation which accounted for new doctrine was the emphasis on skillful means (*upāya kauśalya*). Skillful means was used to account for the inconsistencies and the many innovations introduced by the Mahāyāna text. The different Buddha's teachings, in the words of David McMahan, were strategically "given to particular disciples on various levels of spiritual attainment. In these scenarios, less spiritually developed people were given teachings of the Hīnayāna, while *bodhisattvas* and other nearly enlightened beings received the higher teachings of the Mahāyāna." Additionally, there were also debates within the Mahāyāna family of doctrines as to which doctrines better represented the Buddha's original intent, and different schools developed distinct views as to which doctrines were definite (*nītārtha*) and which were provisional (*neyārtha*).

Modern scholars of Buddhism are still divided over the authenticity of the canon. Some scholars argue that the canonical texts can be traced to the historical Buddha or at least that there is no reason to suspect that these texts do not represent the words of the Buddha himself or at least his immediate milieu. Richard Gombrich, for example, has argued that he has the "greatest difficulty in accepting that the main edifice [of the canon] is not the work of one genius" (i.e., the Buddha). He therefore recommended "that we should provisionally accept tradition till we have something to put in its place—all the while preserving modest awareness of our uncertainty." Others, such as Jan W. de Jong and A. K. Warder, have shared similar views.

Other scholars, like Étienne Lamotte, have argued that the texts, by their own admission, are not the words of the Buddha. This is because each *sūtra* opens with the formula *evaṃ mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye* or "thus have I heard, at one time," an indication admitting that this is a recounting of a sermon from Ānanda, the Buddha's cousin and attendant. Furthermore, Lamotte points out that a few canonical texts clearly indicate that they were written years after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*. Evidentiary debate such as this is enough, I believe, to suggest that the discourse of authenticity was problematic from the earliest stages of the tradition.

*Sūtras* which cross the linguistic and cultural boundaries of Indian Buddhism complicated the discussion even further. In China, confusion about inconsistencies within *sūtras* as well as different interpretations made the heuristic skillful means very important. The solution to the different voices within the tradition was resolved in China partially by a doctrinal classification system known as *panjiao* 判教, in which different Buddhist, and sometimes non-Buddhist, doctrines were evaluated on a scale of rudimentary to ultimate. I will elaborate on the *panjiao* system in Chapter 2 (see "One



Buddhism, Not Many") and illustrate how this traditional system to determine authenticity in China was criticized by Ouyang and his Inner Study circle.

Like many other Buddhist intellectuals before him, Ouyang also sought a Buddhist essence that would have a coherent message of liberation. But unlike pre-modern Buddhists, for Ouyang and his scholastic milieu, the discourse of authenticity served the purpose of legitimizing Buddhism itself as both a tradition worthy of modernity and a viable soteriological path, especially in times of change.

### Scholastic Buddhism and Yogācāra

Ouyang Jingwu is best known for his radical solution for the spiritual crisis of his age: It would be found neither in China's indigenous intellectual and religious traditions, nor in Western knowledge, but rather in the scholastic Indian Buddhist tradition of Yogācāra. For Ouyang, the teachings of the Yogācāra school were the essence of Buddhism, and so he tended to view the whole of Mahāyāna teaching from a Yogācāra angle. With this choice Ouyang broke from the typically nonsectarian tendencies among Chinese Buddhist leaders advocating a particular approach to Buddhism while criticizing others.

The Yogācāra tradition was one of the most important schools of Mahāyāna philosophy in India and later in other parts of the Buddhist world. It developed sophisticated metaphysics, as well as a unique psychology and epistemology. Yogācāra thought emerged in India in the fifth century. It is rooted in the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* (Discourse Explaining the Profound Thought [of Buddha] T 676) and a systematization of its teachings by the half-brothers Asaṅga (fourth century) and Vasubandhu. The gist of the school's philosophy appeared in short root texts such as Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikākārikā* (Twenty Verses [on Consciousness-Only]) and the *Triṃśikākārikā* (Thirty Verses [on Consciousness-Only]) as well as in the more comprehensive manual of Yogācāra by Asaṅga, the *Mahāyānasamgraha-śāstra* (Compendium of Mahāyāna). Larger texts such as the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* (Treatise on the Discrimination of Yogic Practice) and *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (Compendium of Abhidharma) also expounded the path from the Yogācāra perspective. Yogācāra continued to evolve and played an important role in India until the Buddhist decline in the subcontinent.

In China, however, it enjoyed a shorter but considerable influence until the eighth century. During the sixth century, the school rose to prominence, culminating with the scholarly career of Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664) in the seventh century. Later, Yogācāra was viewed as imperfect and rudimentary by Buddhist thinkers from indigenous schools such as Huayan, Tiantai, and Chan Buddhism, and lost its appeal as an independent school of thought, despite the fact that central Yogācāra doctrines and concepts continued to live through the indigenous schools of Chinese Buddhism.

### Ouyang and Authenticity

The modern Chinese quest for authentic Buddhism began when one of the leading Buddhists of the modern era, Yang Wenhui met with Max Müller, the well-known Oxford scholar of religion. Müller met Yang Wenhui, Ouyang's teacher, when he served as a consul at the Chinese embassy in London. Yang was introduced to Müller through Müller's student, the Japanese Buddhist scholar Nanjō Bunyū 南無 雲 (1849–1927), who was helping Müller with his Sacred Books of the East Project. Yang helped Nanjō catalogue the Chinese canon and, as a token of their friendship, Nanjō reciprocated by sending back to China hundreds of volumes that had been lost in China. Many of the scriptures were commentaries on Yogācāra texts. These commentaries enabled scholars for the first time in centuries to gain a deeper understanding of the Yogācāra teachings. These texts ignited the Yogācāra revival movement that came to define Ouyang's career.



Among the important texts were Kuiji's 空疏 (632–682) commentary on the *Cheng weishi lun* (Treatise on the Perfection of Consciousness-Only), which is considered the most authoritative commentary on the *Cheng weishi lun*, and a commentary by Dunlun 遁倫 (d.u.) on the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*, the *Yuqielun ji* 瑜伽論集. These were foundational commentaries on key texts that enabled late Qing and early Republican period intellectuals to understand and appreciate the systematic nature of Yogācāra thought. It proved to be very attractive indeed.

Recall that one of our questions was why would Chinese intellectuals generate an interest in medieval Indian philosophy during a large-scale crisis such as the transition from the Qing dynasty to the early Republic, when even its survival as a unified political and cultural entity was uncertain? Yogācāra offered both a highly sophisticated and systematic presentation of Buddhist theory as well as certain similarities with German idealism, a tradition that resonated in China during that time. These themes included questions about epistemology, the nature of the mind, how a deeper understanding of the human mind impacts ethical behavior, and the mind's relation to its subject as well as whether its object is internal or external. These themes also included a critique of the increasingly popular scientific materialism that resonated with intellectuals who felt dissatisfied with how science was venerated as the only way to establish truth. In addition, scholastic Buddhists considered the Yogācāra tradition, due to their rational and analytical standards, a better response to the questions and issues raised by Western philosophy. As Chen Bing puts it: “in the late Qing and early Republic the long-slumbering Yogācāra found a great opportunity for revival as a number of remarkable religious and academic figures chose it as a crown jewel of traditional civilization, and [as a tradition that was] able to respond to the challenge of Western culture. [They saw it as] the Dharma-gate best suited to the moment, and studied and spread it with great fervor.”

Mainstream Chinese Buddhism, Ouyang argued, was not up to offering philosophical and moral and also, later, a soteriological path through the changing times. This was the task he envisioned for Buddhism. The redemptive potential of the tradition was wasted if systematic and critical analyses were to be abandoned in favor of mere speculations and “superstitions.” For Ouyang the cultivation of a critical analysis and a soteriological path rooted in reason was the hallmark of the Indian Buddhist tradition, and it emerged in the Yogācāra tradition in the most exquisite form. Ouyang saw the Yogācāra tradition as the culmination of the entire Buddhist tradition in India; consequently its teachings became the perfect expression of the authentic teaching of the Buddha. Reintroducing Yogācāra to China would benefit China as a nation, benefit the suffering Chinese, and ensure the viability of Buddhism in times of unprecedented change. <>

## **BUDDHIST STATECRAFT IN EAST ASIA** edited by Stephanie Balkwill and James A. Benn [Series: Studies on East Asian Religions, Brill, 9789004509610] Open Access

**BUDDHIST STATECRAFT IN EAST ASIA** explores the long relationship between Buddhism and the state in premodern times and seeks to counter the modern, secularist notion that Buddhism, as a religion, is inherently apolitical. By revealing the methods by which members of Buddhist communities across premodern East Asia related to imperial rule, this volume offers case studies of how Buddhists, their texts, material culture, ideas, and institutions legitimated rulers and defended regimes across the region.

The volume also reveals a history of Buddhist writing, protest, and rebellion against the state.

Contributors are Stephanie Balkwill, James A. Benn, Megan Bryson, Gregory N. Evon, Geoffrey C. Goble, Richard D. McBride II, and Jacqueline I. Stone. See Less

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Perhaps the best way to approach this volume on Buddhist statecraft is with the following observation in mind: the proper functioning of the state is a Buddhist concern. Throughout the history of the tradition, Buddhists have engaged questions of statecraft in their creation and propagation of texts, doctrines, rituals, institutions, and visual cultures. Political actors have, in turn, employed these products both to support and contest political power and the means of governance. In creating these resources for "Buddhist Statecraft," Buddhists have acted both as members of religious communities and as agents of the state, often overtly. In this volume, we reject the idea that where Buddhists served as agents of the state they did so as politicians and not as religious actors, and we therefore seek to do away with the modern, secularist notion that politics and religion constitute different moral, ethical, and social spheres.<sup>1</sup> It is clear from the six case studies contained in this book that Buddhists have participated in statecraft as members of their own communities and that questions of authority, leadership, governance, and defense constituted a politics that was enacted through religion and not necessarily the other way around. This is not to say that Buddhist statecraft has never been employed cynically and within the context of *realpolitik*; rather, it is to foreground the inherently Buddhist nature of Buddhist statecraft and to argue that Buddhism has long been a strong partner in the governance of the state throughout East Asia.

Building on the initial assumption that Buddhist statecraft is inherently Buddhist, this volume aims to make an analytical intervention into the ways in which various forms of statecraft have been enacted in pre-modern East Asia. The studies in this volume all deal to some extent with the prominence of Sinitic forms of statecraft which were adopted and adapted across East Asia in pre-modern times. These Sinitic modalities of statecraft included within them a strong Buddhist component from the fifth century forward—the same historical era in which the non-Han Northern Dynasties as well as a variety of polities across modern-day Korea and Japan were beginning to employ the Chinese language, the Chinese calendar, and Chinese political and imperial policies and infrastructures. As such, this larger East Asian adoption of Sinitic statecraft included aspects of Sinitic Buddhist statecraft; however, the Sino-centric model of Buddhism's relationship with the state cannot explain the independent and manifold instantiations of Buddhist statecraft that we see throughout the region. Indeed, just as the wide variety of states and independent polities across East Asia had their own unique forms of Buddhism, so, too, did they have their own forms of Buddhist statecraft that were in relationship with Sinitic Buddhist statecraft but in no way a mere reproduction of it.



Teasing out the diverse strands of the tangled historical relationships between Buddhism and the state in pre-modern East Asia may seem like an unnecessarily complex task. After all, from the perspective of modernity it appears evident that the countries of East Asia have shared a nexus of Buddhist texts, ideas, and rituals that have aided in the creation and maintenance of the state. And yet, the apparent similarities conceal a wealth of differences. In the case of East Asia, the cultural and literary prominence of China—whatever shape that name took throughout history—has affected how we see the history of Buddhism by consistently rooting East Asian Buddhist developments in formative impulses on the Chinese mainland. This, in turn, has created a regional model of cultural transmission from the center to the periphery, and Buddhism has come along for the ride. But we know that this is not entirely true: many of the states on the borders of the Chinese empire and beyond adopted Buddhism independently from Chinese political culture and did so in historically and geographically unique ways. Buddhism, it seems, had its own life; undeniably part of the transmission of Sinitic culture across East Asia, Buddhism also existed independently from it. As the case studies contained in this volume show, in some cases Buddhism was itself a source for the spread of Chinese political culture (instead of the other way around), in some cases Buddhism provided a method by which to assert difference from China, and, in other cases still, Buddhism allowed for “China” to become a flexible historical placeholder for both the legitimation of and opposition to new and innovative means of statecraft throughout the region.

From the distinct perspective of Buddhist Studies, this volume not only explores the ways in which Buddhists have thought about, served, and sometimes opposed the state across East Asia, but it also raises the question of the ways in which Buddhism, *per se*, holds the region together. As a powerful source for state formation, governance, and international relations, we argue that Buddhism, as an analytical category, should be understood as a kinetic force of cultural change and adaptation across the region that allowed for complex articulations of the relationship between the diverse states and polities that have exercised power at different times in history. In doing so, we follow the lead of Jacqueline I. Stone, who, in her contribution to this volume cites Robert Campamy’s notion of “repertoire” in her definition of Buddhism and reminds us that, “The notion of Buddhism, not as a discrete, systematic entity, but as a fluid ‘repertoire’ of ideas, practices, values, symbols, and models for action, has proved useful in accounting for internal inconsistencies, tensions, even contradictions within the tradition, without postulating problematic distinctions between a ‘core essence’ and later accretions.” Additionally, building on the pioneering work of Tansen Sen and others, we position our study of Buddhist statecraft in East Asia within the context of pre-modern transnational Buddhism. As a transnational cultural force, the strength and the longevity of the Buddhist tradition across East Asia is not due to the prominence of imperial China and its structures, but is in fact due to how the tradition allows for unique expressions of a shared cultural heritage in the region. With this volume focused on statecraft, we argue that rulers across East Asia looked to the Buddhist tradition as a form of state management precisely because the tradition was transregional and not because it was distinctly Chinese. Highlighting the transregional character of the tradition as it applies to statecraft allows us to expose and analyze the transregional networks of peoples, objects, ideas, and policies that define the region in all of its complexity.

### What Is Buddhist Statecraft?

The typical narrative of the development of Buddhist interest in and means of governing the state begins with hagiographic legends from the tradition’s history in India. As sources tell us, the Buddha was born as a prince of the Śākya but one who came into the world with auspicious bodily markings that spoke of his ambivalent fate: either he would become a buddha or a universal monarch, a cakravartin. As these same sources tell us, he would go on to renounce palace life and become a buddha, returning only to ordain many members of his family—including his son—into his newly-formed monastic community. Although it is possible to read the Buddha’s life story as a rejection of kingship and of political involvement in general, the tradition has read it otherwise.

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Emphasizing the inherent connection between a buddha and a king in art, ritual, and literature, Buddhist traditions across Asia from historical times to the present have seen, in the Buddha's legend, the political idea that the buddha and the king are two sides of the same coin. Both the king and the Buddha are partners in the ruling of the state; whereas the Buddha has cosmic authority, the cakravartin king has the authority to enact the Buddha's law in this world.

These hagiographic legends that tell stories of the Buddha's last human life significantly postdate the conjectured life of the Buddha himself, having only been formalized in the early centuries of the Common Era alongside the legend of the prototypical Buddhist King, Aśoka (r. 268–232 BCE). Although Aśoka's own royal inscriptions show that he did not exclusively patronize Buddhism, later Buddhist legends of his life characterize him as the epitome of a *dharmarāja*, or Buddhist King. The question of what came first—the mythical identification of a buddha as a king or the life of the historical Buddhist King Aśoka—is difficult to answer. What we can say is that the formation of the tradition's early mythologies spanned multiple centuries and that, across this span of time, they developed a connection between the Buddha and the king as well as between the Buddhist institution and the state that has been replicated across the entirety of Asia.

These Indic legends from the tradition's early history have been important across East Asia and more will be said about them throughout this volume; however, we begin our defining discussion of Buddhist statecraft in East Asia with a different foundational source: *Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳: T no. 2059). The biographies contained in this Chinese collection from the Liang 梁 (502–557) dynasty speak to a relationship between Buddhists and the state from an explicitly Sinitic perspective and within the long-standing literary genre of biography. There are many biographies from the collection that would be instructive for a study of Buddhist statecraft—and indeed some of those stories are cited in this volume—but here we focus on the first biography in the collection, that of East Asia's first śramaṇa, the little-discussed Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga. The biography begins:

Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga was originally from Central India. In manner, he was [like] a beneficent breeze. He understood the sūtras of the Greater and Lesser Vehicles and was always preaching and converting, considering it his duty. In the past, he went to a small vassal state of India to preach the *Sūtra of Golden Light* and met with an enemy state invading the borders. Mātaṅga simply said: “The *Sūtra* says: ‘[If one is] able to speak the law of this sūtra, then they we will be protected by the god of the earth. Because of this, wherever they dwell will be peaceful and happy.’ Now all the bells and weapons [of war] have begun. How can this be beneficial?” Thereupon, vowing to forsake his body, he personally went forward with admonitions of peace. He succeeded [in establishing] cordial relations between the two countries. From this came his prestige.

This opening section of the biography tells us that not only was Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga an erudite scholar—one of the criteria for high prestige in Chinese biographies of all types—he was also a statesman and a Buddhist. In his missionary travels to spread the Buddha's law of both the Greater and Lesser Vehicles, he used the power of the teaching to protect the state, protect himself, and engage in international relations. In a way that resonates with Brian Victoria's study of Zen traditions in the Second World War, Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga supports the state through his own willingness to sacrifice his physical body—a notion that Victoria links to Buddhist understandings of the worthlessness of the physical body within a Buddhist eschatological scheme.

One of the foundational themes studied across this volume is the concept of “state-protection Buddhism.” State-protection Buddhism, variably enacted, is a type of Buddhist activity undertaken for the explicit purpose of safeguarding the state from enemies and from natural disasters. In this story of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga we see perhaps the earliest East Asian association between state-protection and

the *Golden Light Sūtra* (Skt. *Suvarṇa-prabhāṣottama-sūtra*; Ch. *Jin guangming jing* 金光明經: T no. 663), a connection that has been reinforced in many times and places across the region, most notably in the state-protection Buddhism of the semi-mythical Japanese prince, Shōtoku Taishi 聖德太子 (r. 593–622), who considered the sūtra essential for the divine protection of his polity. Furthermore, the apotropaic protection given to Kāśyapa-Mātāṅga by the sūtra resonates with ritual practices of state protection that were undertaken on a large scale across East Asia throughout the medieval period. Such rituals were sponsored by the court and included a significant presence of monastics. Much more will be said on the topic of state-protection Buddhism throughout this volume; however, for now, let us return to the biography in order to help further define Buddhist statecraft. The biography continues:

During the Yongping 永平 reign of the Han 漢 Dynasty (58–75), Emperor Ming 明 (r. 57–75) dreamt one night of a golden man who came flying through the sky to him. Subsequently there was great assembly of ministers who undertook to prognosticate on what the emperor had dreamt. The erudite Fu Yi 傅毅 respectfully answered: “Your servant has heard that there is a spirit in the Western Regions whose name is ‘Buddha.’ This must be what Your Majesty has dreamt of!” Considering this to be the case, the Emperor straightaway dispatched his Gentleman-in-Waiting 郎中 Cai Yin 蔡愔, the student of the Court Academy Qin Jing 秦景 and others, commanding that they go to India to seek out the law of the Buddha.

This section of the biography brings us to the second of our volume’s foundational themes: the relationship between monastics and the state as part of the larger interactions between pre-Buddhist notions of statecraft and the Buddhist tradition. In the story of Kāśyapa-Mātāṅga we encounter the well-known narrative of Han Emperor Ming’s dream of a golden man, whom his court advisers divined must have been the Buddha, or the “God of the Western Regions.” Records of this story in historical documents suggest that though the story was known in Buddhist materials as early as the second century, it was only in the fifth century that the story came to be told in court-produced materials of a political or secular nature: both the *Book of the Later Han* (*Hou Han shu* 後漢書) and the slightly later *Book of the Wei* (*Wei shu* 魏書) contain retellings of the story, as does the *Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Luoyang* (*Luoyang qielan ji* 洛陽伽藍記: T no. 2092). Court-produced historical sources from the later Han do not speak of Buddhism, and there is no evidence that Buddhism was commonly practiced in the Western Regions of China during the later Han; however, historical sources do attest to Han Emperor Ming being very active in the Western Regions. Ruling over a court that had made strategic alliances with steppe peoples and heading a military that, for a short time, controlled Khotan and, along with it, the Tarim Basin, Han Emperor Ming’s reign is synonymous with engagement with the Western Regions. By the fifth century when Fan Ye 范曄 (398–446) was compiling and creating the *Book of the Later Han*, the Western Regions were heavily Buddhist and they represented a sort of Buddhist vanguard between the dominant cultural centers of the Iranian, Indian, and Sinitic worlds. In his drive to compile an authoritative history of the period of Han rule under Emperor Ming—from a distance of more than 350 years—Fan Ye looked to Buddhist sources as his own sources. This constitutes a certain re-shaping of Chinese historiography from the perspective of the fifth century and points to the increasing importance of Buddhists and Buddhism in the governing structures of Fan Ye’s time.

What we see in the early medieval popularization of the story of the Han Emperor and China’s first śramaṇa, Kāśyapa-Mātāṅga, is the gradual development of a deep connection between Buddhism and the means of state governance that had reached maturity by the fifth century. That connection includes the meeting of the Buddhist tradition with what is often called Confucianism. The precise meaning of the term “Confucianism” is debated. For the purposes of this volume, the term “Confucian” is used to designate an elite stratum of literary men who served as courtiers and policy

advisors to the emperor and to the state at a variety of bureaucratic levels from the capital to the provinces, and whose education and status depended on their knowledge of both classical and court-produced literature and whose politics were largely authorized through ancient precedent. As a group, court Confucians constituted an orthodox, patriarchal, and traditionalist power bloc which characterized the emperor as the Son of Heaven (*Tianzi* 天子) and served the state through the staffing of court and governmental bureaucracy at all levels. By the time of the writing of the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* and the *Book of the Later Han*, these Confucian courtiers were in regular contact with Buddhists at court, effectively losing some of their own power bloc to make space for the arising Buddhist power bloc who characterized the emperor as a *dharmarāja*, and who sought a relationship of mutual benefit with the state and its ruler. As we will see throughout this volume, our theme of the meeting of Buddhist statecraft with pre-Buddhist modes of statecraft in China is articulated through a spectrum of ambivalence. From the full adoption of Buddhists as agents of the state to Buddhist/Confucian infighting and, finally, to the outright suppression of Buddhists and their means of statecraft, the relationship between the old Confucian elite at court and the new Buddhist contingent has long been fraught with tension and controversy, and sometimes, even, harmony.

Finally, this connection between Buddhism and governance in both China and the Western regions calls to mind a different telling of the dream of a golden man which is found in the *Book of the Jin* (*Jin shu* 晉書), a history that includes a chronicle of both the Jin 晉 Dynasty (266–420) and of the tumultuous period of the Sixteen Kingdoms (*shiliu guo* 十六國) (304–439) that coincided with the Jin. Compiled in the Tang 唐 (618–907) when the connection between Buddhism and the Western Regions was well known, the text's biography of Lü Guang 呂光 (r. 386–400)—the founding emperor of the Later Liang 後涼 (386–403), one of the Sixteen Kingdoms ruled over by non-Han peoples—recounts that Lü had also had a dream of a golden man who was the Buddha. When campaigning in the Western Regions as a general, Lü and his army were poised to take the famous Buddhist city of Kucha. Lü then dreamt of a golden figure fleeing the city at night by flying into the air and soaring past the city walls. Because of this dream, the biography tells us, Lü knew that the people of Kucha had been deserted by their god and could therefore be defeated. The abandonment of the state-protecting Buddha that we see in Lü's story, juxtaposed against the arrival of the Buddha that we see in the parallel dream of the Han emperor included in our biography of Kāśyapa-Mātāṅga as well as in Fan Ye's *Book of the Later Han*, works to position China as a protected and sacred land for the Buddha and for the spread of Buddhism. Both of these themes continue on in the biography below, which details how Han Emperor Ming's engagement with the Western Regions served to make space for the Buddhist tradition in his realm via his connection with (and suzerainty over) the Western Regions. The biography continues:

While over there [in India/Western Regions], Yin and the others had the opportunity to see Mātāṅga and thereupon beseeched him to come to the land of the Han. Mātāṅga declared his intention to spread [the Buddha's law] and did not fear weariness or suffering in his trek through the desert to arrive in Luoyang where Emperor Ming increased the prestige of his invitation by establishing [for him] a pure abode outside of the west gate of the city for him to dwell in. The land of the Han saw the commencement of its (lineage of) śramaṇas.

With this portion of the biography, we encounter the third of our volume's foundational themes: imperial sponsorship of Buddhists, their texts, institutions, and teachings by Buddhist rulers. The question of who can be a Buddhist ruler is particularly noteworthy in the context of the Sinitic model of state legitimation utilized across the region and traditionally supported by the Confucian bloc at court. Ideologically conceived of as the Son of Heaven, the Chinese ruler was normally male and Han Chinese. As we will see in this volume,



Buddhist rulers challenged the very notion of the Son of Heaven and therefore included both women and non-Han persons in their ranks.

This section of the biography of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga also gives us space to consider what we might usefully call this type of Buddhism that was practiced under the direct patronage of East Asian rulers and often aligned with the court and the capital city. Throughout the medieval period and across East Asia, the Buddhist monastic institution developed as an organization that was in tandem to the court itself, with members of both institutions constantly blurring the often-porous boundaries between the two. We suggest that this form of Buddhism might be helpfully called “metropolitan Buddhism” in the sense that the major monastic institutions that have interacted with the central court and its bureaucratic structures have been located within or adjacent to major metropolitan areas, as we see above in the story of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga. By the fifth century, a variety of courts had established a system of court/monastic ranks that allowed for imperial oversight of monastic institutions to be disseminated from the metropole to the provinces. Much like the role of the Metropolitan Bishop within episcopal Christian traditions, the rank of “Metropolitan Overseer” (*duweina* 都維那) was one such role that a monk with close ties to the court might hold in this form of Buddhism. The primary duty of the role was the dissemination of court policies out to monasteries within a specific region, and it appears that perhaps Buddhists themselves did not always view their court-appointed overseers in a positive light. Throughout this volume, metropolitan Buddhism is expressed in different ways. In some of the case studies below, the role of empire is stressed and the term “imperial Buddhism” seems a better fit, whereas in other studies the role of the Buddhist institution is stressed and “institutional Buddhism” works best. In all cases, however, the case studies in this volume point to a clear convergence of court and monastic institutions in metropolitan environments, which is anchored in the dynamic of imperial patronage of monastics and monastic support for state governance.

Moving on with our discussion of what constitutes Buddhist statecraft, we return to the biography of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga for the penultimate time. At this point in the biography, we learn of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga’s activities undertaken while under the patronage of the emperor. The text continues:

However, in this early phase of the teaching of the Great Law, there wasn’t yet anybody who embraced it and trusted in it. As a result, his accumulation of deep understanding was not recounted or written down. He died a short while later in Luoyang. The record said: “Mātaṅga translated the *Scripture in Forty-Two Sections* in one scroll. Originally, this was sealed up in the fourteenth bay of the stone chamber of the imperial library. The place where Mātaṅga had lived was the present-day White Cloud temple just outside of the western city gate of Luoyang.”

The fourth foundational theme to be considered in this introduction to Buddhist statecraft is the idea that Buddhism, itself, became a vector for the spread of Sinitic culture to the larger East Asian world. In the biography above we see a few hints as to how this happened when we understand that the story of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga’s struggle to spread the Buddha’s law in his new home is none other than the story of the making of China into East Asia’s Buddhist homeland.

On the cover of this book is a map. Produced in Korea around the year 1800, it is both a political map and a religious one. It maps physical geography on to Buddhist cosmology by re-organizing land through the structure of Mt. Meru—the mythical Buddhist mountain at the center of the world surrounded by concentric rings of land and sea. At the center of the map is China, surrounded by the Great Wall and the Yellow River and labelled “Central Plains” (*zhongyuan* 中原), a classical name for China, which, like its modern equivalent of “Middle Kingdom” (*zhongguo* 中國), suggests cultural and geographical centrality. There has been a long history of scholarship on the connection between these Chinese words for China and the Sanskrit word that designates the land where the Buddha was supposed to have lived and preached, *Madhyadeśa*, or, the “Middle Country.” This scholarship

emphasizes shifting notions of the center within a borderland complex that sees the Buddhist “center” shift from India to China during China’s medieval period. In our map, the merging of Indic and Sinitic notions of the center sees China become the center of the Buddhist world; surrounded by the famed five peaks supplemented by other mountain ranges connected with Buddhist practice and belief, China, here, is depicted at the apex of Mt. Meru and the center of the Buddhist world.

Kāśyapa-Mātāṅga’s biography is an example of Buddhist historiographical thinking in the medieval period which sought to highlight the passage of Buddhism to China and the emergence of China as a new center for Buddhism. The monk’s struggle to disseminate his new teaching in China goes hand-in-hand in the text with the building of a new Buddhist infrastructure in East Asia that includes early examples of Chinese Buddhist rock-cut caves, which were famed throughout the region, as well as the production of Buddhist literature written in Chinese and with only tenuous connections to any pieces of Indic or Central Asian literature. Furthermore, when the biography was written in the sixth century, China had become the main global producer of Buddhist teachings and artifacts, flooding the market in East Asia with texts and objects of a Chinese provenance and even sending samples of Sinitic Buddhism back to Central Asia and India. Canonical Buddhist texts across East Asia are, for the large majority, written in literary Chinese and not Sanskrit, and dominant sectarian traditions across the region maintain important connections to Chinese Buddhist teachers, exegetes, and patriarchs even if they ultimately trace their lineages to India. This is not to say that Sinitic Buddhism is the de facto Buddhism of East Asia—indeed, the case studies in this volume would argue otherwise—but only that the presence of China in East Asian Buddhism is undeniable and that Buddhism, itself, was a source for the spread of Sinitic culture which, in the vast regions it was inherited and adapted, took on a variety of disparate forms within the context of geographical and historical specificity, location, and intersectionality.

Finally, we can return to the biography of Kāśyapa-Mātāṅga to introduce our last foundational theme: the persecution of Buddhism as a form of statecraft. Of the persecution of Buddhism, the text says:

Traditionally, it is related that a king of a foreign land tried to destroy all of the temples and only the *Cāturdiśaḥ* (Four Directions) Temple was not destroyed and ruined. One night, there was a White Horse who circled the pagoda wailing sorrowfully. Straightaway, it was told to the king and the king immediately ceased the destruction of all of the temples. Because of this the name “*Cāturdiśaḥ*” was changed to “White Horse” and therefore many monasteries were named after it.

Though the particulars of the persecution of Buddhism that we read of in this story are undisclosed and left largely to the historical imagination, the truth is that by the time of the writing of the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* there had been aggressive persecutions of the tradition. The most well-known is the persecution of Buddhism under the non-Han dynasty of the Northern Wei 北魏 (386–534), which was ruled over by the Tuoba 拓拔 branch of the Xianbei 鮮卑, nomadic peoples from the steppe who spoke a para Mongolic language. Their leaders were definitely “foreign kings” from the perspective of the southern dynasties. Although the Northern Wei eventually emerged as a major contributor to Buddhism and Buddhist Statecraft in East Asia, in the earlier half of the dynasty the rulers violently oppressed the tradition and throughout the fifth century and early sixth centuries they continued to struggle with popular Buddhist rebellions in their polity. What we see in the Northern Wei struggle with Buddhism is something that is repeated throughout the region: the Buddhism of the court—the metropolitan Buddhism of the monastic and the imperial elite—formed a Buddhist orthodoxy that was policed by both the court and the monastic institution but did not necessarily align or agree with other forms of Buddhist teaching, infrastructure, and action undertaken across the realm. As such, although there have been persecutions of Buddhism by non-Buddhists, there have also been persecutions or purges of Buddhism by Buddhists who were part of

the apparatus of the state and its religious orthodoxy. In the case of our biography, the persecution of Buddhism is resolved by miraculous means: a wailing and peregrinating white horse at the eponymous foundational temple of metropolitan Buddhism mythically established by the Han Emperor was enough to stop the persecution of the tradition. Furthermore, from this story of persecution, do we also see an interrelated story of growth. The White Horse temple went on to become one of the most important centers of Buddhist practice in medieval China and housed famous monastic translators throughout the ages.

Finally, with this story of persecution and growth does the biography of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga come to an end. So, too, does this wide discussion of the characteristics of what we have here termed “Buddhist statecraft in East Asia.” In the above discussion we have laid out five themes of Buddhist statecraft that will be discussed throughout this volume. To summarize, they are:

1. State-protection Buddhism
2. The meeting of Buddhist statecraft with pre-Buddhist means of statecraft
3. Imperial sponsorship of Buddhism, often by Buddhist rulers
4. Buddhism as a source for the spread of Sinitic culture across East Asia
5. The persecution of Buddhism as a procedure of statecraft

In addition to identifying these five themes of Buddhist statecraft in East Asia, we have also suggested a potentially helpful term for how to conceptualize the strategic ways by which Buddhism and the court have existed as two arms of the state: metropolitan Buddhism. As we have seen in the biography of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga—and as we will see further throughout the case studies in this volume—rulers from a variety of states across East Asia funded a Buddhism that served the state and that was in close physical proximity to the state’s own centers of power and administration. And yet, this metropolitan Buddhism was not an unchallenged, top-down system to which all Buddhists across the polity adhered and agreed. Indeed, many of the case studies in this volume describe scenarios of intra-Buddhist disagreement as well as a certain governmental ambivalence toward the Buddhist tradition in various times and places.

### Beyond Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga: The Case Studies in This Volume

In the above section we introduced the foundational themes employed in our discussion of Buddhist statecraft in East Asia through the story of Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga and his arrival in China. However, this is not a book specifically about China or specifically about monks. Though both China and monks will feature heavily throughout the volume, the case studies contained below move us beyond both monastic and Sino-centric spheres by analyzing a broad spectrum of examples of Buddhist statecraft from across East Asia. The case studies also employ a diverse array of source materials that purposely refocus the conversation in Buddhist studies from canonical texts to historical texts. The authors utilize historical annals, dynastic histories, ritual texts, exegetical writings, entombed biography, and art-historical objects as primary sources alongside canonical texts in order to contextualize the historical and geographical specificity of Buddhist statecraft across the regions of East Asia. Similarly, to refocus the study of East Asian Buddhism away from the Chinese model of center and periphery, the case studies in this volume all point to what we might refer to as dynamic re-centering, wherein non-Han states within and on the borders of China, as well as states in modern-day Korea and Japan, constitute their own centers of cultural production and political power and have enacted their own forms of Buddhist statecraft therein. The chapters are arranged chronologically; however, they have been chosen to articulate the five themes laid out above. By way of an introduction, what follows is a brief outline of the case studies that highlights their related foundational themes, points to important conversations that take place between them, and helps to establish a chronology of Buddhist statecraft in East Asia that we hope is beneficial to the reader.

The first and earliest of the studies in the volume is Stephanie Balkwill's "Metropolitan Buddhism vis-à-vis Buddhism at the Metropolis: How to Understand the *Ling* in the Empress Dowager's Name." Balkwill tells four interrelated stories of Northern Wei Empress Dowager Ling 靈 (d. 528) which reveal intra-Buddhist and intra-court tensions that surrounded the dynamic, difficult, and dangerous female ruler who is famed for being both a murderess and a Buddhist. Balkwill's study advances our theme of imperial patronage by Buddhist rulers by revealing the ways in which the Empress Dowager's large-scale sponsorship of Buddhists and their projects aided in her own political rise while it simultaneously put her at odds with the old guard of Confucian courtiers at her non-Han court, many of whom had been brought on in order to aid the dynasty's policies of Sinification. The piece also explores another of our themes: the meeting of Buddhist statecraft with Confucian statecraft.

Richard D. McBride's, "King Chinhŭng Institutes State-Protection Buddhist Rituals" follows chronologically from Balkwill's study of Northern Wei Buddhism and, in fact, cites Northern Wei Buddhism as a potential source for Buddhism on the Korean peninsula. McBride's study introduces us to the first Buddhist monastic overseer in Silla 新羅 (trad. 57 BCE–935 CE), an emigré monk named Hyeryang 惠亮 (fl. 540–576) who aided King Chinhŭng 眞興 (r. 540–576) in his establishment of state-protection Buddhism. In analyzing the ways in which the Silla ruler sought to legitimize and enact his political power through his patronage of a form of Buddhism steeped in Sinitic imperial symbology, McBride provides an excellent example of this volume's theme of how, "Buddhism was an important vehicle by which Sinitic culture and mores were adopted and adapted by the peoples of the Korean peninsula." Furthermore, by exposing Chinhŭng's employment of large-scale ritual events for the protection of his polity, McBride also demonstrates the second of our foundational themes: state-protection Buddhism.

Establishing a chronological linkage with McBride's study, the third of our case studies, Geoffrey C. Goble's, "The Commissioner of Merit and Virtue: Buddhism and the Tang Central Government" is a detailed study of the important esoteric turn taken in state-protection Buddhism that was initially pursued by the Tang court in the 8th century. The study articulates our theme of state-protection Buddhism, while it also explores a secondary theme of the patronage of Buddhism by Buddhist rulers. In his study, Goble raises the important and little studied question of Buddhist warfare. Like McBride, who discusses the establishment of court/monastic bureaucratic positions through his study of the monk Hyeryang, here, Goble examines the position of the Commissioner of Merit and Virtue (*gongde shi* 功德使), "who personally administered institutional Buddhists according to commands issued to them directly by the emperor and who were, almost without exception, commanders of imperial troops." In this study of the Buddhist-military complex, Goble cites a rare source: the entombed biography (*muzhi* 墓誌) of one such Commissioner who was a patron of the esoteric master Amoghavajra (Bukong jin'gang 不空金剛) (704/5–774) while also being a leading military man of his day.

The esoteric turn in state-protection Buddhism that Goble highlights in his piece is taken up by the fourth of our case studies, Megan Bryson's "Images of Humane Kings: Rulers in the Dali-Kingdom *Painting of Buddhist Images*." Here, Bryson focuses on visual representations of Dali 大理 Kingdom (937–1253) rulers who were depicted as "humane kings" and who undertook esoteric rites for state protection associated with the *Prajñāpāramitā Scripture for Humane Kings to Protect Their States* (*Renwang huguo bore boluomiduo jing* 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經: T no. 246), a text which was re-edited and popularized in the Tang by Amoghavajra. Underscoring the cultural hybridity witnessed to in frontier spaces such as Dali, which sits between China, Tibet, and Southeast Asia, Bryson exposes how constellations of Buddhist rule in Dali served to express difference from the Chinese center. Ultimately, she argues that Dali's hybrid Buddhism did not exist as a mere copy of



the Tang's esoteric tradition but in fact constituted a dynamic reassertion of independence from China which allowed for the Dali ruler to be seen as the "Emperor" (*di* 帝) and the Song ruler to be seen as the "Barbarian King" (*manwang* 蠻王). Bryson's piece therefore powerfully illustrates our volume's theme of the patronage of Buddhism by Buddhist rulers by pressing the question of who has more authority between the Buddhist ruler or the Chinese ruler.

With our fifth case study, we move back to the Korean peninsula for Gregory N. Evon's, "Buddhism and Statecraft in Korea: The Long View." In this piece, Evon weighs in on our theme of the meeting of Buddhist statecraft with Confucian statecraft by offering a macro-perspective on Korea's history of ambivalent engagement with Buddhist means of legitimating and governing the state, particularly focused on the events leading to and immediately following the founding of the Chosŏn Dynasty 朝鮮 (1392–1910). Arguing that Korea's relationship with Buddhist statecraft has always been about statecraft and not as much about Buddhism, Evon exposes the vicissitudes of Korean imperial support for Buddhism and spotlights "impassioned attacks on Buddhism" prevalent among early Chosŏn courtiers even if the dynastic founder, King T'aejo 太祖 (r. 1392–1398), was himself a "a devout Buddhist and general in the Koryŏ army." With specific focus on the Korean predicament in East Asia, Evon traces a history of transregional engagement through Buddhism, Buddhist diplomacy, and the development of literacy through Buddhism; however, he ultimately argues that the ideology of Buddhism was secondary to the concerns of the state and, furthermore, that the ruling elite came to maintain an arms-length interest in the tradition as a means of pleasing their populace.

Our sixth and final case study is Jacqueline I. Stone's, "Refusing the Ruler's Offerings: Accommodation and Martyrdom in Early Modern Nichiren Buddhism." In her case study, Stone addresses the issue of Buddhist resistance to the state in the early sixteenth century when newly emerging political powers strove to divorce Japanese statecraft from Buddhist statecraft. She focuses on one particular instantiation of Buddhist resistance to state ideology in the time period: the "neither receiving nor giving" (*furu fuse* 不受不施) controversy within the Nichiren sect (Nichirenshū 日蓮宗). Exploring the doctrine of *furu fuse*, which insists that a Buddhist should not accept offerings from an unfaithful ruler, Stone reveals how Nichiren himself had characterized the Japanese ruler as "not equal even to a vassal of the wheel-turning monarchs who govern the four continents. He is just an island chief." As such, Stone's piece dovetails with our theme of the patronage of Buddhism by Buddhist rulers by showing that—at least in one case—Buddhists would not accept the patronage of non-Buddhist rulers. More importantly, Stone connects the *furu fuse* controversy to our theme of the persecution of Buddhism as a strategy of statecraft by showing how *furu fuse* adherents were forced to either shed their *furu fuse* status or face persecution that included arrest, exile, or execution. Finally, the piece also raises a new angle on the meeting of Buddhist statecraft with Confucian statecraft—another of our foundational themes—by showing how *furu fuse* adherents in Japan looked to Confucian exemplars from China in their refusal to follow an unvirtuous ruler.

Beyond the focus on our volume's foundational themes, there is another way to read this volume. The pieces also all cohere around a handful of places, texts, and topics that we would like to briefly index here. The topic of merging cultural forms in the enactment of Buddhist statecraft is dealt with by both Bryson and McBride who each discuss how such statecraft, in Dali and in Silla respectively, shows complex hybrid features suggesting difference from China and Sinitic Buddhism via the signalling of Indic Buddhism. Similarly, Balkwill and Bryson share a focus on the question of the ways in which Buddhist rule counters Confucian notions of the Son of Heaven by showing how women and non-Han persons, respectively, have utilized Buddhist ideals of rulership in the legitimation of their power. In discussions of diverse instantiations of shared objects, texts, and rituals, both Balkwill and McBride discuss the Eternal Peace Pagoda and Bryson and McBride hone in the popularity of

the *Scripture for Humane Kings*, a likely Chinese apocryphon that was popular in cults of state-protection Buddhism. Bryson and Goble follow this line of inquiry through the esoteric turn in the latter half of the medieval period. Evon and Stone both tackle the interrelated issues of Buddhism in conflict with the state while simultaneously serving as a conduit for the transmission of Sinitic culture and Evon also overviews Buddhist accord with the Korean state that ties his piece back to McBride's. Goble and McBride both spotlight individuals who held court-appointed roles for the administration of Buddhism at the level of the state while Balkwill and Stone highlight individuals at the centre of court ambivalence about Buddhism in a back and forth between state-sanctioned Buddhism and the Buddhism of those outside the court.

## Conclusion

The case studies in this volume all tell stories. Stories of individuals, institutions, texts, objects, and rituals, the case studies contained below have all been written to be approachable for the non-specialist yet densely researched for the specialist. It is our hope, therefore, that this volume will find utility in the classroom where it can contribute to conversations about the very nature of what it is that we call Buddhism and how we might study it. For the student, the case studies explicitly challenge popular depictions of Buddhism as an apolitical religious tradition, just as, for the scholar, the range of source materials cited within explores the richness of our primary sources in a wide breadth across time and space in East Asia. Moreover, by focusing on the relationship between the Buddhist tradition and the means of government across East Asia, we hope, with this volume, to enable further discussion of the history of the Buddhist tradition alongside that of our world's other great monastic religion long intertwined with statecraft in a vast region of the world: Christianity. Our promotion of the term "metropolitan Buddhism" suggests a useful, structural discussion of the meeting of religion and politics between the traditions of Buddhism and Christianity. In future work, this discussion could be fruitfully undertaken both in the classroom and in print, and we hope to have helped inspire it with this volume.

As a volume, it is the diversity of the case studies that holds them together. Showing that Buddhism, per se, was a transregional political force in East Asia from as early as the fifth century and through to the present day, the case studies contained below reveal how it was, in fact, the flexibility and adaptability of the Buddhist tradition that allowed for the continuity of Buddhist statecraft across the region. Salient features of this malleable meeting of religion and politics include the five foundational themes discussed above: state-protection Buddhism, the meeting of Buddhist statecraft with indigenous forms of statecraft, imperial sponsorship of Buddhism by an often Buddhist ruler, Buddhism as a source for Sinitic political culture, and the persecution of Buddhism as a procedure of statecraft. Although we introduced these themes through the story of China's meeting with Buddhism, none of these five foundational themes is bound to a specific time or place; on the contrary, the structural nature of these themes that we have explored reveals how Buddhist statecraft has successfully functioned across time and space in East Asia, and how it has done so in order to support divergent political, social, and cultural aims. In sum, this volume has taken a transregional approach to the study of Buddhist statecraft in order to demonstrate that the transregional character of the traditions is, in fact, among the most important historical arguments for seeing East Asia as a dynamic whole in premodern times. <>

# CRITICAL READINGS ON PURE LAND BUDDHISM IN JAPAN IN 3 VOLUMES

**CRITICAL READINGS ON PURE LAND BUDDHISM IN  
JAPAN, VOLUME 1** edited by Galen Amstutz [Brill,  
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**CRITICAL READINGS ON PURE LAND BUDDHISM IN  
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**CRITICAL READINGS ON PURE LAND BUDDHISM IN  
JAPAN, VOLUME 3** edited by Galen Amstutz [Brill,  
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Pure Land was one of the main fields of mythopoesis and discourse among the Asian Buddhist traditions, and in Japan of central cultural importance from the Heian period right up to the present. However, its range, inconsistency, variability, and complexity have tended to be misevaluated. The pieces reproduced in this set, organized both chronologically and thematically, have been chosen as linchpin works accentuating the diversity of what evolved under this heading of Buddhism. Special attention is given to the traps into which Western observers may fall, the role of the large True Pure Land (*jōdoshinshū*) school, and the richness of Tokugawa and twentieth-century developments. These selections of previously published articles will serve as an essential starting point for anyone interested in this perhaps underestimated area of Buddhist studies.

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The leading Pure Land scholar James Dobbins stated the following in a 2006 review of an innovative book which already at that time aimed to disrupt certain reified ideas of what was supposed to constitute the Pure Land aspect of Buddhist traditions:

In some cases it [Pure Land] has appeared as a clearly defined and distinct tradition with parallels to the Hōnen-Shinran model. In other cases Pure Land has operated as an amorphous and open-ended collection of themes without a cohesive center. It is as if the Pure Land discourse can function as an open semantic field in which a wide variety of beliefs, doctrines, and religious claims can plant their meaning. And yet, for all its definitional problems, we still seem to recognize Pure Land Buddhism when even a few of its symbols or motifs appear in proximity to each other.<sup>1</sup>

As Dobbins explicated, the latest scholarship has illuminated Pure Land traditions—best understood in the plural, like other aspects of Buddhism(s)—as a layered, convoluted arena of imaginaries and practices, a cloud of texts, languages, concepts, ideas, persons, and institutions, held together only by a number of floating signifiers. Pure Land is, in other words, a diffuse polyvocal semantic field, situated inside the similarly diffuse polyvocal semantic field which might be called the Buddhosphere. It is the dimension of variability and interpretive flexibility which the selections for this Brill series aim to accentuate.

Before overviewing the contents, several preliminary reminders might be helpful. Pure Land traditions were extremely important to people in many southern and eastern parts of premodern Asia for nearly two millennia. However, they have a history of being relatively poorly intelligible to non-Asians (especially “Westerners,” i.e. observers from the Euro-American traditions), because in addition to the general problems these non-Asians may have with appreciating Buddhist onto-epistemologies and psychologies, Pure Land lays traps for the unwary:

1. Appreciation of Pure Land challenges some problematic and unresolved conventions in modern Buddhist studies as a whole: limited attention to issues of semiotics, rhetoric, discourse, and sociological imaginaries, as well as aspects of recent psychology which do not line up with mindfulness theory; and in comparison, over-attention to approaches rooted in (Western) religious studies and analytical philosophy. Such preconceptions contribute to insufficient attention being given (with tantric studies as a partial exception) to the inconsistencies which appear almost anywhere under the conventional heading “Buddhism,” conflicts which were reflected in ancient controversies within the Buddhosphere itself about the extent to which it is unified. (A related net of issues occurs around *upāya*, the educative

forms of communication which mediate between the worlds of ordinary and enlightened consciousnesses.) The concept of the floating signifier is particularly useful: in the formulation of critical theorist Fredric Jameson, this refers to a term “susceptible to multiple and even contradictory interpretations,” lacking a specific meaning itself, but functioning “primarily as a vehicle for absorbing meanings that viewers want to impose upon it.”<sup>2</sup>

2. Pure Land, at least before the nineteenth century arrival of Christian missionizing in East Asia, had nothing to do with Near Eastern monotheisms at all. Although the notions of an “agency” in some kind of cosmic realm providing hope and help have a surface resemblance to Christianity or Islam, they were (at least for Buddhist elite thinkers) instead entirely rooted in Buddhist philosophical and imaginative fields and assimilated to Mahāyāna theories of knowledge concerning ultimate non-duality and non-discrimination.
3. Unfortunately, however, in the “gift” mode especially (see below), the structure of the Pure Land mythos has left it vulnerable to textbook caricature along the lines of “salvation in Amida’s Paradise” which can be misleading about the deeper meanings. In modern Western-language presentations, literal translationese such as “paradise,” “faith,” “salvation,” and so on has become widely routinized, often creating an impression that the mythopoetics and symbolics of Pure Land rhetoric were received by Asians quite literally. Consequently Pure Land has been brought confusingly into ongoing Christian-based debates about whether the term “faith” can effectively serve as a meaningful cross-traditional category among religions, whether “religion” is a Western construct or not, how far religions are actually comparable with each other, and so on. The selections chosen for these Brill volumes cannot escape these embedded conventions either, and so readers are encouraged to grit their teeth and to try hard to look past the normal English semantics of such terminology.
4. Superficial caricature about “birth in paradise” or even “Buddhahood in this body” also leads to under-appreciation of the complexity of the developments which come under the Pure Land heading. Certainly there is a corpus of relatively distinctive “purely doctrinal” material in this sphere of Buddhism, which draws in classical Buddhological disciplines such as philology. Above that, however, emerges a not-so-easily-coherent range of other themes, including institutional formations, power politics, socioeconomic evolution, historiographical prejudices, visual arts, multiple effects of modernization, and even “diasporic” Japanese Buddhism. The “bare” original mythos hints at only a fraction of how these phenomena evolved.
5. In Japan there is a vast amount of Pure Land material, composed in registers academic and popular, new and old, and both insider and outsider, and accumulated over the entire history of the country. Modern Japanese academic scholarship in Pure Land, as in other branches of its Buddhist studies, has been stimulated since the Meiji period by contact and challenge from Western research into traditions of several kinds, in areas ranging from the philology of the texts to institutional history to sociology. Thus, although less well recognized by the non-Japanese-language world public than other streams of Buddhism(s), the range and importance of Pure Land in Japan has made it the subject of a substantial body of academic literature in Western languages (especially English). At present, however, this material tends to be scattered and inadequately consolidated, in ways which limit an improved comprehension of Pure Land. Perception is also conditioned by embedded Japanese historiographical orientations, particularly the persistent modern cultural nationalist tendency to construct Japanese Culture in ways that over-unify or homogenize it and underrepresent its diversity. For such reasons Pure Land studies in the West have found themselves confined within a bit of an academic island (or ghetto) out of the mainstream. On

the Japanese side this has produced a thread of running complaints in the twentieth century about “Western” relative disinterest to Pure Land, constituting almost a genre in itself! Still, it seems accurate to note that one of the paradoxes of world Buddhism over the last century is that the aspect of Buddhism which modern Japanese themselves have continued to treat as probably the most vital and interesting—the Pure Land imaginary represented in the Shin school—has been found by non-Japanese to be the least important and interesting.

6. The special historical size and success of one particular phenomenon—the tradition(s) under the heading of Jōdoshinshū (for short known as Shinshū or Shin)—have long tended to overpower perceptions of the other aspects of what can be called Pure Land in Japan. These institutions had more members and influence, gathered more money, produced more literature and scholarship, interacted more heavily with government, and in the twentieth century even spread overseas more. This school has had a long tradition of distinctive self-consciousness (loosely “sectarianism”) and self-promotion, and a long-developed proprietary personality including a “guild”-like leadership class and a unique intellectual system replete with abstract thought and terminology whose relationship to the larger world of Buddhism(s) is not necessarily transparent.
7. This Shin dominance has contributed to a characteristic pattern of hermeneutical pressures in the presentation of Pure Land. In the purely academic realm, where Japanese scholarship (which is generally followed by Western scholarship) excels in historical research and “first order” description and rendition of material, the representation of Pure Land has had difficulties taking distancing critical steps. Apologist insiders have often not been their own best exponents, for their conventions of literal exposition of doctrinal language outside original contexts have a tendency to get caught up in textualism and scholastic detail, imposing an insider perspective even when addressing general audiences in non-Japanese languages. While no one would label Shin Buddhism a “cult,” it tends to be committed to a “proprietary universalism” based on its own sense of unique language which can be willing to minimize modern intellectual hybridization and larger (trans-Japanese) intellectual accessibility. As with the translationese problem, the selections chosen for these Brill volumes cannot escape these environments, implicit or explicit; readers are encouraged to keep them in mind.

## Introducing the Thematic Categories

While emphatically recognizing Dobbins’s comment about an “open” semantic field, still for heuristic purposes two loose primary clusters in Pure Land can be identified: one dealing with the sensibility of “gift” (either deferred or involuntary); and one in tantric-like mode typically proposing the possible “availability of Buddhahood in this very body.”

*Buddhist Transformation as a “Gift” (Especially of Deferral):* For millennia Buddhisms usually thought “enlightenment” (cognitive disentanglement) was hard—exceedingly hard, and extraordinarily rare. From a very early stage arose a sense that somehow gifts of help were needed: the present activity of some Buddhas. (For outsiders to the traditions, the symbol “Pure Land” in this context is itself somewhat of a misnomer, a misdirection pulling attention away from the core underlying issue of “gift.”) A widespread vision of obtaining this help emerged as an orientation to some “rebirth” (karmic transfer) over to a realm, other than this present Earth, where the influence of Buddhas would be available. The commonest version involved the concept of a Pure Land presided over by a Buddha named Amitābha, who had, according to the relevant mythos presented in three central Pure Land sutras, made a series of conditions relating to how the “persons” (karmic streams) of followers could be “born” (transferred) to a “place” in which the eventual achievement of full enlightenment under favorable circumstances was promised. One Sanskrit term for this hope



was *buddhānusmṛti* (recollection of the Buddha, thinking on the Buddha, keeping the Buddha in mind), a term rendered into Chinese as “*nienfo*” (念佛) which was eventually pronounced “*nembutsu*” or “*nenbutsu*” in Japanese. As this form of Buddhist imaginary developed, the sensibility regarding some kind of hopeful (or realized) “gift” along these lines remained broad, serving as only the beginning of discussion and controversy about technical detail and interpretation, lineages of authority, psychological nuances, and inner contradictions. There was a historical shift, especially in East Asia, toward simplification and popularization of practice (especially toward the notion of *nembutsu* as a mere vocal recitation of the Buddha Amitābha’s name), but the exact nature of best practice remained a source of debate. In terms of social history the Pure Land “gift” idea created openings for Buddhist practice that was relatively more open to householder nonmonastics, but in other cases could remain ritually engaged, contemplatively active, or even discipline-focused. For the intellectual elites, these ideas remained related to neither Christianity nor some kind of ontological reification, but concerned deferral, meditation, or involuntariness within purely Buddhist notions of conventional versus ultimate realities.

Western expectations have tended to resonate with a generalized authority claim—one which tends to be pervasive throughout non-Pure Land worlds of Buddhist discourses even in Asia—that the disentanglements with which elite Buddhisms are ideally concerned are matters which can be more or less controlled or directed by conscious or structured intention. Although the issues of control and authority embedded in this claim only simmer below the surface through most of the Buddhosphere, they explicitly rose above the surface in the “gift” sectors of Japanese Pure Land. Though it can be mentioned only in passing (it remains so far an undeveloped area of comparative study), skepticism regarding the extent of intentional authority over consciousness is congruent with sectors of modern cognitive psychology which offer perspectives alternative to mindfulness research.

It should be emphasized that partial agnosticism about the Pure Land mythos is widely characteristic of its interpretation in *modern* Japan under the influence of common-sense science. Since the twentieth century, it is one matter to take Buddhist philosophical issues seriously or to tangle with psychological conundrums about intentional control over the mind, but it is something different to continue to work with an *upāya* according to which the ultimate solution is karmic transfer to an imaginational realm inhabited by an Amida Buddha who will eventually show the way. Contemporary intellectuals in Japan, no less than non-Japanese would be, are aware that this tension must be dealt with by an agnosticism in which older visions of the Pure Land as an in some sense “real” transitional realm decline in significance, along with premodern classical notions of life-to-life karmic continuity.

*The Pure Land as a This-Worldly Possibility:* The other major cluster of interpretations, associated variously with T’ien-tai (Tendai) philosophy, or Chan or Zen “mind-only” teachings, or tantrism and esotericism, instead incorporated the Amitābha or Amida Buddha less as a figure from the three major Pure Land sutras than as another generalized or alternative representation of Mahāyāna Buddhist teaching. For these versions of the imaginary, the vision of some transformation into a Pure Land was typically situated in this present world. They had wide-ranging interaction with popular or folk modes of religion in Japan.

In any case, Japan was the locus of an at least to some extent distinctive historical evolution which appeared out of this pan-Asian aspect of Buddhism(s). For these volumes, the compiler has made choices about what can be seen as key foci, with some eye to identifying a few of the important writers and scholars, but recognizing that any single selection can only offer one more or less idiosyncratic, fragmentary tranche. Furthermore, some areas remain neglected in scholarship despite the expanding English literature, such as the Tokugawa period, or the Pure Land traditions outside the Shinshū, or the collaborations with the Japanese governing regime in the early half of the twentieth century. Other topics are shortchanged for reasons of space, such as a focus on original



Pure Land texts themselves or the influences of the Pure Land imaginary on medieval Japanese literature or on visual arts. Also, the inner complexities of the particularistic Shinshū doctrinal tradition have been mostly set aside here: while this plays a weighty role for a significant number of Japanese, as previously hinted it is also scholastic, easily opaque for outsiders, and full of persistent linguistic challenges involving language, text and translation. Users of these volumes will speedily find paths into that world if they so desire.

### Useful Overarching Perspectives

Although hardly in the mainstream of modern Western religious studies thought, a number of non-Japanese scholars have intensely engaged with Pure Land. The best of these have long recognized that Pure Land is a loose mythic family which is not a “simplification” of Buddhism. Instead, rather than being an analytical philosophy, it has been instead about narrativity and hope, described as a transfer of “merit” from the Buddha. (Item #1 Gómez) Within Buddhist traditions themselves, despite being diffuse as a “school,” Pure Land could be seen as a class of path (*mārga*) reflecting rich give and take regarding subitist (“sudden,” uncontrolled) versus gradualist (accumulative, discipline-oriented) versions of transformation towards awakening. Its developments in China, with their elements of inconsistency and contradiction, became the grist for thought afterwards in Japan. (Item #2 Blum)

### Early Presence in Japan

Pure Land in Japan had its origins as part of the mixed repertoire of practices and teachings that characterized the Chinese and Korean monasteries from which Japanese Buddhism was imported.

Both inside and outside the monastery, in the Heian period the notion of *mappō*—a conception of historical long-term decline in the quality of Buddhist tradition—had a major effect, in ways that became peculiar to Japan, in stimulating efforts to develop counter-solutions to overcome the alleged decline (Items #3 and #4 Marra) Scholars have excelled in historical and textual surveys of this period. (Item #5 Rhodes) From the standpoint of religious “imaginaries,” it is helpful to view Pure Land as a constructed discourse which was successful because it operated in varied registers or cognitive modes, including the logico-scientific and the narrative, the former including the famous *Ōjōyōshū* and the latter the biographies of individuals thought to have experienced Pure Land “rebirth.” (Item #6 Rhodes) The Pure Land orientations had a long history of special affiliation with death because of the belief that karmic rebirth could be shaped at the last moment. Out of that interest, Pure Land became part of a whole medieval culture of deathbed practices, containing significant diversity including assimilations to esotericism. (Item #7 Stone)

### Turn to the Nembutsu as the Sole Solution

Beginning in the Heian period certain lines of Pure Land started to break off from the conventional mixed programs of monastic-lay participation, producing interpretive shifts which made Japanese developments unique. In the modern period, and especially under the influence of the Shin school, Japanese historians trying to put a “progressive” spin on these developments in “transmission” have tried to view the changes through a populist teleological lens leading towards the later Shin position, but recent historians recognize that events were not so perfectly straightforward or linear. Each of the main characters—Genshin, Hōnen and Shinran—had complex and ambiguous relations with the doctrines which preceded them.

Hōnen (1133–1212) promoted the superiority of a vocal recitation of the Buddha Amida’s name (*nembutsu*) as a kind of solution in the age of *mappō*. However, the discontinuity with his predecessor Genshin (942–1017) was significant. In its details, Hōnen’s thought left numerous problematic, contradictory issues unresolved about the nature of the recitation he promoted. (Item #8 Andrews) Furthermore Hōnen’s thought synthesized not only influences from the larger

scriptural canon proper and the major Chinese Pure Land thinker Shantao, but also Buddhist popular piety as it was evolving inside Japan in the Heian period. (Item #9 Andrews) Regardless of doctrinal variations, historians have reached a consensus that the emergence and reception of Hōnen's thought reflected and then reinforced, albeit at first only very gradually, a kind of ground-bass authority-dispersing shift in the socio-economic environment of Japan. (Item #10 Repp)

### Shinran's More Radical Turn to the Enlightenment Gift as an Involuntary Emergent Property

The eventual success of the Shin tradition, which originated in the ideas of Shinran (1173–1262), has tended to overpower other representations of Pure Land Buddhism in Japan and garner the largest amount of attention, even though Shinran's inventive semantics can be viewed as idiosyncratic against the larger field of historical Buddhism(s). In an effort to establish a different balance, it has seemed justified to underplay the representation of Shinshū among these selections.

Shinran's innovative idea of *nembutsu* has been the linchpin of that tradition and is reviewed in virtually every discussion of the doctrines. Shinran seemed to follow Hōnen on the surface, but the former held that self-consciously intentional recitation was not the point, since the speaking-out by the practitioner needed to express a spontaneous, involuntary upwelling of changed consciousness due to the "working" of Amida Buddha. The writings of the American scholar Alfred Bloom (1926–2017) established one kind of language for the expression of Shin teaching in English which has been a standard hermeneutical marker. (Item #11 Bloom) What must be emphasized is that behind Shinran was a particularly creative relationship with preceding thought which eventually led to an extensive body of distinctive Shin scholasticism (Item #12 Nasu).

### Formation of a Major Institution: Honganji and Its Negotiations with Popular Consciousness

Shinran's biography and the formation of the Honganji institution based on him have been extensively presented in Japanese religious studies, as in the pioneering work of James Dobbins (Item #13 Dobbins). Spotlighted here is how even within the Honganji tradition(s), which developed into a relatively tight Japanese Buddhist lineage of ideas, negotiation with popular consciousness was necessary from an early stage. There was a significant degree of semantic floatiness below the level of the doctrinal elites despite a tendency in the twentieth century to make Whiggish representations which exaggerate the "modernity" of the earlier traditions. Despite Shinran's aversion, negotiation with the world of Shintō allowed the evolution of a number of accommodative attitudes towards kami among the early leadership. (Item #14 Rhodes) From the start, Shin memberships coexisted with, and often interacted with, popular cultic sites such as Zenkōji, thought to be the site of an actual living Amida Buddha mediating the Pure Land. (Item #15 Nasu) Shin Buddhism in practice depended economically on funeral ritual although the actual doctrinal status of death ritual was contradictory or situational. (Item #16 Blum) Below the elite levels, it has been often ambiguous what participants think concepts like the "Pure Land" really even mean. (Item #17 Amstutz) And it is similarly ambiguous what the doctrinal message to women, and their range of understandings, really was. (Item #18 Amstutz)

### The Alternative Field: Pure Land Striven for in This World

Although the gift/hope/deferral cluster of Pure Land semantics has tended to obscure the view, the Tendai/Zen/tantric cluster also had a major presence at least in premodern Japanese history. Various scholars have demonstrated that the twentieth century notion of "progressive" Reformation-like Kamakura Buddhist movements was an exaggerated retrojection of twentieth century interests which underestimated both the persistence of earlier monastic Buddhism and how elements of the Pure Land imaginary were infused polymorphically into other aspects of Japanese religions. From the

early days the monastic institutions had possessed a fringe element of itinerant Buddhist characters (*hijiri*) who performed various services for the population or for the monastic centers. Among the best known of these was Ippen (1234–1289), associated with a kind of popular dance and recitation which revealed the Pure Land as this very world. (Item #19 Foard) Pure Land elements were present in the Shingon sphere: explicitly tantric (*mikkyō*, *vajrayāna*) was a *goma* ritual formally classified as Shingon but devoted to the Buddha Amida/Amitābha (Item #20 Payne) Similarly there existed a hidden (*himitsu*) version of *nembutsu* teachings led by Shingon priests who appropriated Pure Land recitation to an immanentist, tantric practice monistically assimilating the Vairocana and Amida Buddhas to a vision of this world itself as the Pure Land (Item #21 Sanford) Thus it is easy to understand why in Hōnen's time, there were polemics against him from the monk Jōkei (1155–1213) who maintained that any hard oppositional rhetoric of self-power/easy practice (*tariki*, the gift/hope/deferral nexus) versus self-power/difficult practice (*jiriki*, intentional gradualism) was a dichotomizing oversimplification of the nuanced, blended thought which was actually cultivated in the older monastic schools. (Item #22 Ford)

In any case, diversity within this dimension of Buddhism was intrinsic and manifests fundamental internal contradictions: psychological discontinuities between the *tariki* and *jiriki* accounts, and qualitative gulfs between varying notions of the Pure Land. Yet one thing surely illustrated is a political principle: that whether a given Buddhist imaginary lives together with its contradictions in some kind of coexistence, or instead draws out, highlights, and expresses them via distinct institutions, depends on when participants historically come to feel that differences have to be shown in new forms of organization.

### Pure Land Fellowships in War and Peace

The influential Honganji's teachings on "gift" had a corollary: a "political" semantics involving a distinctive sense of equal followership (*dōbō*) and institutional esprit de corps within its communities. The well-studied explosive growth of the institution began with the later proselytizer, organizer and adapter Rennyo (1415–1499), who along with Shinran has been one of the major figures in Pure Land history in Japan, described here by a mainstream scholarly insider. (Item #23 Yasutomi)

The combination of Rennyo's ideas and socio-economic change led to a following century-long episode involving *ikkō-ikki* (fighting fellowships seeking local autonomy in an anarchic period of governmental transition). The strengthening of the headquarters institution under militarized conditions in this period led to new ambiguities and inconsistencies as the emphasis on Honganji power per se became layered on top of the more idealized goals of the teachings of Shinran, so that the notion of Pure Land acquired a yet additional semantics of corporate identity. (Item #24 Solomon) Although this sociopolitical history can seem only tangentially "religious," it was the strength of the original Pure Land imaginary in the background which held the membership networks and communities together.

Institutionally speaking, the Tokugawa period was the most important for all Buddhist lineages in Japan including the Pure Land ones because of that era's officialized consolidation and mandatory membership performed under a kind of delimited surveillance by the bakufu government. Yet although participation in and influence of Pure Land was historically highest at this stage, it has also been the least represented in scholarship because of lack of historiographical consensus on the validity or quality of the Buddhist life in the period. Nevertheless, the Tokugawa was a crucial era of energy and diversity, shaped less by top-down government control than by the society-wide pattern of partition into compartmentalized functional roles (the *mibun* or "status" system) which characterized the regime, combined with Buddhist localism. Multiple such issues come together in the ways *eta* or burakumin communities interacted with Shin Buddhism (Item #25 Amstutz) By the end of the seventeenth century, Pure Land of various lines had reached a position of majority among

the types of Buddhisms in Japan. Very importantly, a variety of non-Shin schools evolved post-Hōnen, including the Chinzei; these pursued various interpretations of *nembutsu* but unlike the Shinshū continued the organizational rule of monastic precepts. (Item #26 Dobbins) Meanwhile the Shinshū, which eventually enrolled about third of the entire population, developed a loose category of special exemplars who came to be known idiomatically as *myōkōnin* and who can be examined through the comparative religious and literary lenses of sacred biography (Item #27 Bathgate) In spite of Shin's relative tight official rhetoric, however, at the fringes its standard authority was challenged by secretive versions of Shinran's ideas which revealed the influence of the larger tantric Pure Land atmosphere which persisted despite being regarded as illegitimate by the Honganji. (Item #28 Chilson)

And diversity in the Pure Land imaginary in Japan actually increased during the Tokugawa period. Chinese Buddhism on the continent had long been characterized by co-existent practices of Chan (meditation) and Pure Land chanting ("devotional") routines. When this kind of program was brought to Japan by the late-arriving Ōbaku Zen school, it was criticized by the native Rinzaï and Sōtō lines. (Item #29 Baskind) Or, far divergent from any normal practice, a figure like Shuichi Munō could emerge, formally a member of a Jōdōshu organization, but given to an atypical range of extreme austerities in diet, chanting, proselytization and sexuality. (Item #30 Groner)

### Meiji and Modernity: Political Resettlement and Realignment, Moments of Intellectual Hybridization, Emigration, Collaboration, Postwar Progressivism, Lingering Conservatism

In the wake of the Meiji Restoration Japan underwent a huge, complex wave of political, economic and social changes to which all the Buddhist schools including the Pure Land ones had to react and adapt. Factors included a new governmental centralization, the rise to power of anti-Buddhist modernist Shintō ideologues, and the politicized invention of a conceptual category "religion" (*shūkyō*) which had not previously existed in Japan. These demanded that Buddhists find positions that suited the new configurations of power, especially decisions on new kinds of institutional activity (especially education) and collaboration with government. Additionally, Buddhist schools became aware, more or less acutely, of the fresh globalized intellectual fields dominated by "the West" which included Westernized Buddhological studies and general European philosophical traditions along with Christianity. This flood of modern concerns, far removed from the Heian, Kamakura or even Tokugawa periods, overturns any attempt to stereotype or caricature the stability of the Pure Land traditions. Intellectuals in the two large branches of Shinshū, Nishi (West) and Ōtani (East), into which Shin had been divided since the seventeenth century due to leadership conflict, reacted somewhat differently. The Ōtani side was conclusively changed by the thought of innovator Kiyozawa Manshi (1863–1903), who developed a kind of partial hybridization of Pure Land and Western language, arguably marking a new stage of diversity in Pure Land semantics under the label of "spirituality" (*seishinshugi*). (Item #31 Blum) On the Nishi side, the potential for accepting a new global imaginary for Mahāyāna Buddhism was tested by the scholar Murakami Senshō (1851–1929), with the eventual conclusion that the mainstream Shin institution could not accept that its teaching was fully identified with other Buddhist visions. (Item #32 Ward) Otherwise, from circa 1905 up to 1945, all Shin institutions (like other religions in Japan) engaged in heavy collaboration with the Japanese regime. (Item #33 Rogers)

Later twentieth-century scholarship in Japan developed a category known as Modern Buddhism which conceptually tended to fold the various traditions together. However, Pure Land remained distinguishable to a considerable extent, and in its relatively minimalist personal interiority, the most active version of "traditional" (i.e. non-New-Religion) Buddhism for the largest single bloc of the Japanese population has remained Shinshū.



Shinran's ideas, if not the Honganji headquarters institutions, have continued to have an influence on progressive thought, especially among postwar efforts to compensate for the era of collusion with the pre-World War II Japanese empire. (Item #34 Schepers)

By the early twenty-first century, the Shin institutions retained a large membership but amidst a shrinking population and socioeconomic processes of community disintegration which had been underway since the 1950s. To some extent in common with other traditional lines of Buddhism, the leadership was occupied by an internal sense of crisis, a bad public image connected to the funeral business, embedded conflicts over austere versus folkish visions, and the challenges of new existential discourses, all of which produced a wide range of responses ranging from conservatism to accommodation to renewal. (Item #35 Borup) It was in that very recent context that close anthropological observation of modern Pure Land life finally arrived on the scene, with studies such as the role of ministerial family life in maintaining tradition. (Item #36 Starling) Insiders have voiced the complex ways Shin thinkers continue to struggle with ongoing losses in orientation to their tradition ("secularization") and with how to adapt the inherited material to changing needs. (Item #37 Dake)

At the elite levels, modern Pure Land thinkers by the beginning of the twenty-first century had found ways to negotiate key concerns like "gift," hope, and personal transformation (always against a background Mahāyāna theory of knowledge) but many remained bedeviled by the historically unavoidable attachment to the mythopoesis of Amida and the Pure Land as rendered by Shinran. Contemporary followers may take these terms as "symbolic," not substantively literal, but the tension between these options goes far back in time, perhaps to the founder himself, and thus interpretation continues to be twisty, diverse, and influenced by religious studies ideas originating in the West (Item #38 Tanaka) In a related manner, historians have struggled with the tension between an objective Shinran of the historians and the apologetic urge to exaggerate his modern qualities. (Item #39 Dobbins)

Finally a nod needs to be given to Pure Land as a piece of Japanese Buddhism that along with Zen has had a significant international reach (especially formerly at the mid-twentieth century mark), but in its instance due to Japanese migration to the Western Hemisphere. (Item #40 Ama) This movement can be described as acculturation, but it has also created a historically unprecedented context in which are manifested newly emergent problems, concerns and meanings. In the American environment, disputes about the proper role of meditation have encouraged a reevaluation of historical ideas and practices ("contemplation," "devotion," "ritual," "nembutsu") while potentially re-emphasizing Shinran's radicalism. (Grumbach)

At the risk of repetition, it might be stressed again that the sophistication of what has taken place in Pure Land Buddhism in Japan—while specific in philosophical fundamentals and historical details, and attuned to Japanese conditions alone and thus not paralleled in any other country—should in its complexity be seen as approaching par with the adaptive histories of Near Eastern monotheisms. It has been a layered theater of great activity, in the long view just the latest manifestation of old processes of trying to make long-inherited imaginaries work for human beings in constantly altering circumstances. In any case, this Pure Land has been a far cry from what might be initially suggested to the naïve who encounter phrases like "salvation through Amida's Paradise" in an introductory textbook. <>

## **RITUALS OF INITIATION AND CONSECRATION IN PREMODERN JAPAN: POWER AND LEGITIMACY IN KINGSHIP, RELIGION, AND THE ARTS** edited by Or Porath and Fabio Rambelli [Religion and Society, De Gruyter, 9783110720143]

In premodern Japan, legitimization of power and knowledge in various contexts was sanctioned by consecration rituals (*kanjō*) of Buddhist origin. This is the first book to address in a comprehensive way the multiple forms and aspects of these rituals also in relation to other Asian contexts.

The multidisciplinary chapters in the book address the origins of these rituals in ancient Persia and India and their developments in China and Tibet, before discussing in depth their transformations in medieval Japan. In particular, *kanjō* rituals are examined from various perspectives: imperial ceremonies, Buddhist monastic rituals, vernacular religious forms (Shugendō mountain cults, Shinto lineages), rituals of bodily transformation involving sexual practice, and the performing arts: a history of these developments, descriptions of actual rituals, and reference to religious and intellectual arguments based on under-examined primary sources. No other book presents so many cases of *kanjō* in such depth and breadth.

This book is relevant to readers interested in Buddhist studies, Japanese religions, the history of Japanese culture, and in the intersections between religious doctrines, rituals, legitimization, and performance.

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This book is the outcome of the conference entitled “The World of Abhiṣeka: Consecration Rituals in the Buddhist Cultural Sphere,” which took place at the University of California, Santa Barbara in May 2018. It was co-organized by Fabio Rambelli and Or Porath in California and Abe Yasurō in Japan. Aware of the importance of kanjō rituals in premodern Japan, we decided to take a systematic approach and explore both their variety and complexity in Japan and their origins and ramifications in the Asian mainland. In other words, we aimed to overcome the typical insularity of Japanese studies and gesture towards a transnational perspective, but also to bring together discussions on disparate ritual programs that appeared to show shared epistemic frameworks. We were especially interested in the varied ways in which multiple consecration rituals bring together processes of knowledge production and transmission on the one hand and status elevation and legitimization on the other, through procedures that involve embodiment and bodily transformations – ontology, epistemology, and politics (and, in some cases, soteriology as well). The editors of this volume are glad to include a contribution by Matsumoto Ikuyo, who was unable to join us in Santa Barbara for the conference. This book gathers contributions by scholars from various disciplines in an attempt to address a broad range of Japanese consecration rituals from an inter-disciplinary and comparative perspective, beyond their standard confinement to Esoteric Buddhist liturgy. The book covers numerous approaches and subjects: from Indian and Chinese precedents and Tibetan developments, to various kinds of consecrations carried out in premodern Japan related to kingship, monastic ceremonies, religious articulations in multiple areas, and the transmission of knowledge and practices about the performing arts. Contributors focus variously on the ritual procedures, their doctrinal and narrative backgrounds, and the social contexts in which these rituals emerged and were carried out. This book not only enriches the understanding of specific practices typical of Esoteric/Tantric Buddhism in its transnational forms, but also shows how these liturgical practices came to constitute the template for a number of ritual actions through-out many fields and disciplines of premodern Japanese culture. One common thread is the shared transnational nature of abhiṣeka/kanjō rituals. Established in ancient India (possibly at the end of a process that began in prehistoric times) and later adopted by Buddhism, abhiṣeka rituals spread to other parts of Asia and for many centuries have been the template for a number of ceremonies. In the case of Japan, we also see traces (or echoes, parallels, or perhaps instances of synchronicity?) between some medieval developments and doctrinal and ritual

inventions elsewhere in Asia (most significantly, Tibet) at about the same time (as for instance, in *yugi kanjō*), despite the absence of any known direct connection. Another common thread, elaborated in the following chapters according to numerous variations, is the interplay between monastic consecration (*denbō kanjō*) and imperial enthronement consecration (*sokui kanjō*), which reflects one of the fundamental aspects of Buddhism, namely, the closely related and yet conflictual relation between monastic institutions and the state or, stated differently (by adapting Stanley Tambiah's felicitous expression), between world-renouncing and world-conquering. Later on in Japan, a disembodied, a-historical figure of the ruler (the "emperor") became a template for *shintō kanjō*; and a simplified and stereotypical image of Esoteric Buddhist monastic transmission became the template for performing arts consecrations (*biwa kanjō*, *waka kanjō*), in which knowledge was supposedly transmitted, in a mediated form, directly from a divine figure. In this way, a ritual that was closely related to the center of king-ships and monastic organizations came to be used to transmit secular forms of knowledge to commoners. The book is divided into four main parts. Part One, *Origins and Developments on the Asian Mainland*, begins with a chapter by David White on Indian consecration rituals that were originally performed to enthrone kings, with their vast web of significations. This is followed by chapters on later developments in Asia involving the Buddhist adoption of enthronement rituals to consecrate monks (especially in the Tantric/Esoteric tradition): Mori Masahide writes about various types of Buddhist *abhiṣeka* in India based on several sutras and ritual manuals; Dominic Steavu discusses Chinese variations of *abhiṣeka* (Ch. *guanding*) ceremonies in China at the intersection of Buddhist and pre-existing local (Daoist) practices; and Adam Krug traces *abhiṣeka* rituals in Tibet, especially the important *mahāmudrā* consecration. Part Two, *Imperial Consecration in Japan*, discusses the history of the adoption of Indian *abhiṣeka* in the enthronement ceremonies of Japanese emperors. Interestingly, it appears that these rituals came to be performed for Japanese emperors by adapting Esoteric Buddhist liturgies for the consecration of monks. In other words, in contrast with the Indian case, in which a kingship ritual was adopted by Buddhist institutions, in Japan it was a Buddhist monastic ritual (itself a transformation of the same Indian kingship ritual) that was applied to imperial rituals. Ryūichi Abé studies the first imperial *kanjō* in ninth century Japan and discusses its impact on both subsequent imperial ceremonies and developments in Esoteric Buddhist teachings. Susan Klein explores the connections between performing arts, religious rituals, and imperial ceremonies in medieval Japan in relation to the development of the Esoteric Buddhist enthronement consecration (*sokui kanjō*) for emperors. Matsumoto Ikuyo deals with a little-known topic, namely, the motivations behind failed Buddhist attempts to revive the imperial consecration in the modern period after its discontinuation in 1867. Next, Part Three, *Religious Developments of the Imperial Consecration*, explores a number of instances in medieval and early modern Japan in which monastic and imperial *kanjō* consecrations were modified and adapted to various religious developments. Abe Yasurō presents an overview of the field by outlining various lines of intersection between imperial ceremonies, monastic rituals, and the arts (performing arts and literature) that lie at the basis of such developments. Tomishima Yoshiyuki discusses an often overlooked but influential ritual, *kechien kanjō*, in which the officiant monk established a karmic connection between gods, past emperors, and the divinities in the mandalas of Esoteric Buddhism, which lay at the background of medieval Japanese cosmology. Paul Groner examines long lost secret rituals for the consecration to the monastic precepts, in which their recipients were freed from the obligation to actually observe the Buddhist monastic code. Lucia Dolce presents her work on an elusive but very influential Esoteric Buddhist scripture, *Yugi-kyō* (Ch. *Yuqi jing*), and the *kanjō* based on it. *Yugi kanjō* stands out as a ritual consecration that highlights exegetical innovations in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism and, at the same time, ritual shifts in the wider medieval world; in particular, this ritual does not use ritual implements but the body of the practitioner. Itō Satoshi presents *shintō kanjō* that were used in the medieval period to transmit



knowledge about the standard classical source of Japanese mythology, *Nihon shoki* (a ritual called *Nihongi kanjō* 日本神皇正統記), and the medieval interpretations of its myths, via a text entitled *Reikiki* (in a ritual called *Reiki kanjō* 霊忌). Or Porath continues the exploration of the ways in which *kanjō* consecrations came to sacralize the body of the participants by focusing on a set of rituals, known as *chigo kanjō*, that were used at some Buddhist temples to transform young acolytes (*chigo*) into embodiments of divinities while at the same time positing them as objects of sexual desire accessible to senior monks. Kawasaki Tsuyoshi and Andrea Castiglioni both work on *kanjō* in the *Shugendō* 修験道 tradition of mountain asceticism, a rarely explored dimension of ritual consecrations. Kawasaki discusses the origin of these rituals – an origin that, he argues, is mostly based on narrative accounts, rather than on actual practices; Castiglioni focuses on actual *kanjō* performed in the mountains in the late medieval and early modern periods and the emphasis they place on discursive practices involving secrecy. Finally, Part Four, *Developments in the Arts*, addresses another important aspect of the cultural impact of *kanjō* rituals, namely, the fact that they increasingly came to be used outside of the court and monastic contexts as ways to sanction and legitimize transmission and acquisition of specific competences associated with literature and the arts. Unno Keisuke discusses *kanjō* transmissions the art of *waka* poetry. Inose Chihiro analyzes the *kanjō* rituals for the transmission of specific music pieces and performing techniques for the *biwa* (a type of lute) used in *Gagaku*, in a phenomenon that lasted for about three centuries before being abandoned. Finally, Fabio Rambelli explores the secret transmission rituals for the music of the *shō*, the unique mouth organ used in *Gagaku* and *Bugaku* 舞楽 performances. *Shō kanjō* 正統記 emerged in the mid-fourteenth century, when the Ashikaga Shoguns and the emperors adopted this instrument as one of the regalia for their authority; the ritual was then abandoned in the late fifteenth century, together with its secret repertory and symbolism. This chapter also offers some general considerations about the nature of the secret knowledge transmitted in *kanjō* consecrations and possible reasons for the discontinuations of such rituals when social and epistemological conditions changed in the sixteenth century. <>

## THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF BUDDHIST PRACTICE by Kevin Trainor and Paula Arai [Oxford Handbooks, Oxford University Press, 978-0190632922]

Popular representations of Buddhism often depict it as spiritual, disembodied, and largely devoid of ritual. Yet embodiment, materiality, emotion, and gender shape the way most Buddhists engage with their traditions. The essays within **THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF BUDDHIST PRACTICE** push beyond traditional representations of Buddhism as divided into static schools and traditions, highlighting instead the contested and negotiated character of individual and group identities.

This volume will serve as a corrective to the common misconception that Buddhist practice is limited to seated meditation and that ritualized activities are not an integral dimension of authoritative Buddhist practice. Essays in this handbook explore the transformational aims of practices that require practitioners to move, gesture, and emote in prescribed ways, including the ways that scholars' own embodied practices are integral to their research methodology. Authors foreground the role of the body, examining how the senses, gender, specific emotions, and material engagements impact religious experience. They highlight, as well, the multiplicity of methods and theoretical perspectives that scholars of Buddhism use in their research and writing, including field-based, textual, and historical approaches. Given the fluidity and diversity of Buddhist practices, the question that animates this volume is: What makes a given practice Buddhist?

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## Introduction: Embodiment And Sense Experience by Paula Arai And Kevin Trainor

### Situating Practice in the Field of Buddhist Studies

Why a handbook of Buddhist practice? During the past half century, the academic study of religion in Europe and North America has undergone significant change. Well into the twentieth century, it was rooted in assumptions about human religiosity characteristic of the prevailing impulses in Western civilization, with a focus on textual, philosophical, and historical developments in the major monotheistic traditions. This orientation provided the broad framework within which all religious traditions were studied and understood, and indeed what counted as worthy of study. Toward the latter half of the twentieth century, however, the field expanded as more voices and orientations were included within the scope of scholarly inquiry. Approaches that highlight the methodological implications of human embodiment increasingly found their place alongside textual and philosophical representations associated with religious elites.

While the trajectory of scholarship on Buddhism broadly parallels the contours of the general field of religion, the field of Buddhist studies has expanded more tentatively beyond philological, philosophical, and "Protestant" modes of analysis. The field's criteria for authoritative scholarship have continued to reflect the scholarly priorities of nineteenth-century Buddhologists, whose academic inquiries gave relatively little attention to the implications of human embodiment and lived experience. Instead they looked to authoritative collections of texts, especially sources judged to provide insight into the historical origins of Buddhism, as they sought to construct a coherent representation of Buddhism that could be compared with the belief systems of the other major world religions. Mid-nineteenth-century efforts to differentiate Buddhism from Hinduism also reinforced the tendency to represent Buddhism as rational, philosophical, and anti-ritualistic.

The expansion of Buddhist studies from practices that privilege the editing, reading, and analysis of Buddhist texts to those centered on the observation and analysis of contemporary Buddhists engaged in embodied actions of varying degrees of formality have been accompanied by concerns about authenticity and authority. In fact, the relationship between text and practice in the pursuit of authentic knowledge has been central to the work of both Western academics and Buddhist practitioners. For example, debates about the relationship between *pariyatti*, a Pali term that refers to the study of Buddhist texts, and *pitapatt*, which denotes the practice of the Buddha's teachings, have concerned members of the Theravada Buddhist sangha at least since the compilation of the highly influential Pali commentaries in the fifth century CE. As George Bond has noted, debates about the proper relationship between text and practice emerged in the nineteenth century as a key feature of Buddhist modernism, as different communities of Sri Lankan Buddhists debated the place of *bhavanā*, mental cultivation or meditation, in the lives of lay and monastic Buddhists.

When examined from the standpoint of embodied practice, this contrast between textual study and meditation becomes more complicated than it might first appear. Because the earliest Indian Buddhist texts existed exclusively in oral forms and textual knowledge resided within the bodies of Buddhist monastics, early Buddhist textual practice was embodied and linked with living face-to-face forms of transmission quite different from later reading practices, which depended upon externalized written texts and their continued reinscription. Likewise, what counts as a form of practice has been complicated by nineteenth-century Euro-American scholars' tendency to sharply differentiate meditation, associated with individualized forms of rationality, from other kinds of embodied behavior linked with collective display and affective expression, such as forms of offering and veneration directed toward relics. Thus a focus on practice opens up a broader consideration of what constitutes a Buddhist text and the diversity of practices centered upon it, and turns our



attention to how particular forms of knowledge and their attendant practices are given authority by both scholars and practitioners, and scholar-practitioners.

The emergence of Buddhist practice as a category of scholarly inquiry has also brought into sharper focus the role of practice in defining and maintaining analytical boundaries. Attention to embodied practices within diverse communities of Buddhists works against efforts to clearly define and represent Buddhism as a singular coherent religion. The project of defining Buddhism was linked to the emergence of religion in the West as a key analytical category, a form of conceptualization largely absent from traditional Asian forms of knowledge construction. While nineteenth century scholars recognized to varying degrees the diversity of Buddhist histories, their studies were often organized around a master narrative that began with an original philosophical purity, associated with the Buddha and his early monastic followers and constructed through a selective reading of Pali canonical sources, that over time became corrupted (i.e., ritualized) under the influence of later generations of Buddhists whose affective needs transformed the Buddha into a god-like object of devotion. This narrative of pristine origins and decline was consonant with efforts to clearly differentiate the religions of Buddhism and Hinduism from one another, and resonated with accounts of the history of Christianity influenced by Protestant critiques of Catholic ritualism. As scholars turned to texts outside the Pali canon, which was for some time erroneously believed to represent the earliest forms of Buddhist tradition, a narrative of three distinct streams of Buddhist tradition came to dominate scholarly representations of Buddhism. Early Indian Buddhism was identified with the Hinayana/Theravada, followed by the emergence of the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions, each defined by their distinctive collections of Buddhist texts in different languages that formed the basis for scholars' efforts to delineate their distinctive systems of belief and practice.

In contrast, the increasing prominence of field-based studies of diverse communities of Buddhists over the past several decades has illuminated the porous and contested nature of the boundaries that define different groups of Buddhists. These studies have also highlighted the role of embodied performance in constituting and defending a range of modern social identities that intersect in complex ways with other markers of belonging, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and citizenship in modern nation-states. Such representations of Buddhism tend toward more localized and particularized frames of analysis, and they commonly foreground the ways in which Buddhist beliefs and practices are embedded in local sociocultural dynamics.

While the field of religious studies has historically tended to foreground the "Eastern" or "non-Western" character of Buddhism, both in terms of its origins and historical lineages, during the past several decades increasing attention has been drawn to the establishment of Buddhist traditions in Europe and North America, and to the emergence of globalized forms of Buddhism deeply shaped by modern forms of transnational capitalism and new communication technologies. Once again, debates about the authenticity and authority of specific practices continue to shape the analysis and representation of these traditions, just as they continue to inform the internal dynamics of new communities of Buddhist practitioners. Among the issues that have emerged are the following: the centrality of meditation as the foundation for the authentic practice of Buddhism, in contrast to forms of devotional ritual; discourses centered on "mindfulness" as a generic form of mental discipline grounded in secular scientific discourses and practices; debates about the importance of foundational Buddhist cosmological principles such as karma and rebirth for authentic practice in the West; and discussions about the proper place of renunciant traditions in the sangha and the role that social hierarchies should play in its internal organization. Such negotiations increasingly take place within globalized frameworks of discourse and practice, marked by flows of Buddhist teachers, practitioners, and scholars across geographical and cultural boundaries that, until the late nineteenth century, supported the characterization of Buddhism as an "Asian" religion.



### From Rite to Practice: Embodied Action and Formalization

What do we mean by practice, and how does it differ from ritual? There is a long history of scholarship on religious ritual, and as Catherine Bell has noted, Western scholars of religion have frequently employed a binary contrast between belief and ritual in their analyses. Paralleling this conceptual dichotomy are a number of other conceptual contrasts with which the belief/ritual dyad is implicitly or explicitly linked, including paired contrasts between mind and body, and reason and emotion. Bell also observes that these analytical binaries have often served discursively to evoke and reinforce social hierarchies, in particular, a contrast between the detached outside observer (the scholar), implicitly associated with mind and rational analysis, and religious practitioners, whose embodied participation in the powerful sensory engagements of ritual action are assumed to preclude the possibility of their understanding the ritual's true meaning within its sociocultural context. This contrast between belief and ritual is central to Durkheim's influential definition of religion, and it finds a classic expression in Geertz's analysis of religion as a cultural system, where he observes that outside observers can only aesthetically appreciate or scientifically dissect religious performances, in contrast to participants, for whom they are "enactments, materialization, realizations" of a particular religious perspective.

This dichotomous characterization of the relationship between belief and ritual on the one hand, and of the divergent perspectives of outside analysts and inside participants on the other, parallels a binary opposition that has structured an influential narrative of Buddhism's historical origins in ancient India. This account highlights the Buddha's rejection of brahmanic sacrifice, which construed karma as ritual action, in favor of an individualized and ethicized conception of karma, reconceived as an individual's intentional actions. The Buddhist reconfiguration of karma's significance, according to this narrative, is tied to the centrality of Buddhist meditation, which is understood to facilitate the individual's process of gaining analytical distance from the body and its sensory attachments. Once again, this tendency to privilege mind over body and detached rationality over somatically grounded sensation and emotion, linked with a powerful discourse of normative monastic renunciation and social disengagement, has contributed to problematic characterizations of Buddhism as anti-ritualistic, and has deflected attention from the centrality of embodied practices in Buddhist communities. It has, for example, tended to obscure the ways in which Buddhist meditation can be understood as a kind of embodied practice, and neglected forms of engagement with Buddhist texts that aren't focused on their semantic content.

We have chosen to organize this handbook around the category of Buddhist practice, rather than Buddhist ritual, because "practice" foregrounds the centrality of embodied action without necessarily implying that the action in question is highly formalized and repetitious. It points instead to the fluid and open-ended character of ritualization, which we regard as a wide-ranging behavioral dynamic marked by varying degrees of formalization and improvisation, a dynamic that is most fruitfully engaged when the observable actions of embodied individuals are explored in connection with the particular material and social environments that frame those actions. We thus seek to keep in continuous play the interactions of three analytically distinct registers: individuals' bodies, marked by complex internal systems of psycho-physical interaction; distinct material environments that afford those individuals a range of concrete possibilities for sensory engagement; and particular forms of social organization linked to power and authority that shape human interactions. In this sense, practice can be understood as fundamentally about kinds of strategic behavior, as the sometimes convergent and sometimes divergent aims of particular individuals and social groups play out through their embodied interactions. What marks a particular practice as "Buddhist" is itself a matter of strategic engagement, and this includes a given person's self-identification along the scholar-practitioner continuum, an identification that may change according to context.

### Continuum of Contexts

Our attention to embodied thought and action invites attention to the implications of positionality and context. Analytically highlighting the relationships among the three foci of individual person, material surround, and social interactions foregrounds the interactive and emergent properties of human practice, and points to the diversity of analytical standpoints that potentially come into play in the work of Buddhist scholars and practitioners. Consider, for example, the interactions of these three registers within the confines of a library, which is both an independent physical structure and a socially constituted site that shapes the interactions between the people who use it and the objects that it preserves and controls for particular purposes. Those granted access to it commonly embody a set of authoritative skills cultivated over many years (e.g., language mastery, paleography), skills finely calibrated to the effective use of the texts that it contains (e.g., reading, transcription, memorization, oral recitation), and that form the basis for other practices that extend beyond the library's walls (e.g., writing, teaching, publication, chanting, invocation). Thus while the library as physical structure and social institution represents a key location for understanding some formative "Buddhist" practices for both scholars and practitioners, the broader significance of those practices emerges only when they are viewed in relationship to additional practices that unfold outside its walls, practices around which various forms of authority and authenticity are constellated and performed. Moreover, how one understands a given library practice varies depending upon one's standpoint, whether framed by the experience of particular library users and their individual motivations, by the material characteristics of the library itself as it impinges upon those who enter and use it (or are excluded from its use), or viewed in relation to broader social dynamics that set the terms for how the texts preserved in the library can and should be used and how possible interpretations of their meaning are secured.

The human body is constituted of complex biologically conditioned features, including sexual organs, skin color, and a complex sensory apparatus, as well as socially constructed markers of identity and status such as gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity. Human orientations toward and engagements with surrounding materiality emerge interactively in accordance with the constraints and possibilities imposed by particular physical bodies, the impact of specific material features of their surrounding environments, and in relation to the particular behavioral and linguistic codes into which people have been socialized. Among the culturally inflected variables that influence these human orientations are foundational constructions of the relationship between the mind and body, between the self and others, and of the proper ordering of community, for example, by assumptions about inalienable individual rights and the justness of hierarchical power differentials.

Our focus on religious practice highlights the role of ritualized behavior in mediating the complex and ongoing sensory interactions of human bodies with their material surroundings. One particular sense may be foregrounded in a given practice, such as touch when holding prayer beads, mind when visualizing Avalokitesvara, or taste when sipping ceremonial tea. How these interactions affect the body and what the encounter might mean to a practitioner or scholarly observer is simultaneously constrained and open-ended. One person may be transported through an olfactory encounter with incense that intensifies attention to the present moment, while another may experience an allergic reaction and choose in the future to only practice in spaces that mandate unscented offerings. Participants in religious practice function simultaneously in all three registers, embedded in rich milieux with individual, material, and social dimensions. For example, an encounter with monastics in silk brocade robes chanting before a golden Buddha creates a sensorium of auditory, visual, and mental activity that may strengthen the monks' religious authority for one practitioner, provoke an anticlerical response in another, while inclining a scholarly observer to theorize about Buddhist cosmologies, social hierarchies, or the aesthetics of Buddhist practice. And the criteria for judging who has the privileged perspective on the significance of this encounter are likewise deeply linked to

diverse forms of practice that extend well beyond the confines of the temple in which the encounters take place.

Varying ontological and cosmological worldviews augment the range of sensory encounters with materiality. Some Buddhists, for example, hold that a rock can manifest Buddha-nature, while others, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, regard a rock as mere materiality lacking potential sentience. Buddhist practitioners who cohabit a world with living bodhisattvas may feel exaltation upon seeing His Holiness the Dalai Lama, an incarnation of the bodhisattva of compassion, or may feel protected by wearing a red cord he has blessed. Some would never let a text they consider sacred touch the floor, while others remain aloof as dust accumulates on a book that they devoted years of their lives to writing. Practices like pilgrimage follow the contours of a textually narrated Buddhist geography, marked out by stupas and images, even as the moving bodies of pilgrims bring those pathways to life. Predisposed as social beings to coordinate with others and sharing deep somatic capacities for synchronization through shared sensory stimulation, religious practices often engender powerful integrative experiences, even as they potentially sharpen the divide between insiders and outsiders and heighten conflict over territorial control.

Each person has a distinct experiential perspective influenced by physical differences and personal memories, yet each individual is also deeply socialized in ways that can be analyzed from a variety of theoretical perspectives. Attention to forms of embodied social interaction illuminates the ebbs and flows of inclusion and estrangement, the orchestration of unequal access to prestige, authority, and material resources, and broad dynamics of conflict and cooperation orchestrated by markers of difference and solidarity, such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and racialization. For example, in the history of conflict over women's ordination, one can observe how different sangha institutions, in some cases aligned with state-directed forms of political power, have acted in particular circumstances to support or suppress the struggles of Buddhist women to pursue their highest religious aspirations. And ordination itself is a powerful form of practice that significantly alters the lives of those who undertake it through transformations of their bodies (removing hair and donning robes), changes in their material surroundings (ranging from solitary forest dwellings to large urban monastic complexes), and, in many cases, significant status elevation closely keyed to restrictive behavioral codes and expectations of ritual proficiency.

### Viewing Buddhist Practice Through Lenses of Emotion, Embodiment, and Agency

As an exercise in conceptual cartography, this Handbook seeks to nurture the emergence of innovative and self-reflective Buddhist studies scholarship by providing some analytical landmarks for orienting readers to the rich diversity of practices that animate Buddhist lives and cultures. Facing this potentially overwhelming panoply of actions undertaken by countless Buddhists across a vast geographical, historical, and cultural expanse, it is reasonable to ask: What, if anything, do they have in common? One possible answer: these forms of practice share an orientation toward reducing suffering (*duhkha*). In keeping with this core concern, this volume explores a number of strategic practices that diverse communities of Buddhists have undertaken as they navigate the perils of *samsara* and pursue diverse liberatory ideals.

We have organized our mapping of the terrain of Buddhist practice through the heuristic lenses of three key dimensions of religious practice. Whatever else they might entail, Buddhist practices evoke and direct a wide range of emotions, are grounded in human embodiment, and support the agency of those who undertake them to realize particular goals. While it is a commonplace of modern scholarship to presume a clear division between the aims and methods of scholars of Buddhism on the one hand, and of "religious" or "spiritual" practitioners on the other, this volume seeks to explore what these distinctive forms of practice have in common, as well as what distinguishes them,

whether the goals articulated for undertaking them be the gaining of insight or tenure. The approaches and methods that scholars and practitioners undertake—whether discursively framed as first-person, second-person, or third-person—reflect the dynamics entailed by human emotion, embodiment, and agency. Issues of authenticity and authority likewise inform the actions that scholars and practitioners perform, even if the criteria for identifying and resolving those issues may vary greatly depending upon their respective contexts.

## Emotion

Emotion and religion have a long and tangled history in Western analytical traditions? Emotion or "feeling" has, at times, been identified as the essence of religion and, when linked with private forms of subjective experience, functioned as a bulwark against the deconstructive power of scientific rationality. There is also a long history of debate over the primary location of emotions: Are they best understood as sense-based mental disturbances, as somatically grounded instinctual responses linked to human evolution, or as fundamentally social phenomena with complex histories and a wide range of distinctive cultural forms? Where one locates emotions, whether as fundamentally biological and universal across the human species or as socially and culturally differentiated, has powerful analytical and epistemological consequences. Are emotions susceptible to rational inquiry? What is their relationship to cognitive processes? And what role do they or should they play in authoritative knowledge construction?

It is important to note at the outset that traditional Buddhist discourses lack any direct lexical equivalent to the term "emotion." A wide range of particular emotions have been clearly differentiated in various Buddhist analytical projects, often broadly evaluated as either "skillful" or "unskillful" (*kusala/akusala*) with respect to their role in one's advance or retreat along the path to ultimate liberation from suffering. Generalized discussions about the role of emotion in Buddhism are thus potentially misleading, since using the broad category of emotion tends to aggregate things that diverse Buddhist discourses have typically differentiated. And there is also the enduring legacy of nineteenth-century representations of Buddhism as a religion of systematic emotional detachment, programmatically devoid of sentiments of devotion, at least in its earliest and ostensibly more authentic forms. Thus one might be surprised, for example, that the practice of cultivating *upekṣā*, "equanimity" (one of the four *brahmāhāras*, or "divine abidings"), aims at developing a positive emotion, not extirpating emotion altogether.

As recent Buddhist studies scholarship has highlighted, Buddhist communities have, through their religious practices, cultivated and orchestrated a wide range of somatically grounded emotional responses. Examples include the powerful effects of drawing near the glorious bodies of buddhas and bodhisattvas (present in the flesh or materially mediated through relics, texts, and images), of setting forth on extended pilgrimages to access the powerful effects of localized forms of religious presence, and of accessing virtual worlds through the mediation of Buddhist web sites and smartphone apps.

The increasing prevalence of ethnographically based scholarship has contributed greatly to an appreciation of the disparate emotional valences of lived religion within a diversity of contemporary Buddhist communities, and ethnographic methodology has recognized the intersubjective and affective dimensions of ethnographic fieldwork. Text-based scriptural analyses, whether pursued in secular academic contexts or within communities of Dharma practice, have generally been less attuned to the positive role of emotion in Buddhist traditions, though creative engagements with different genres of Buddhist texts have also played a key role in foregrounding the capacity of narrative to evoke powerful feelings. Consider, for example, this seemingly disembodied aphorism in the *Dhammapadam* "No sons there are for protection, / Neither father nor even relations, / For one seized by the End-Maker; Among relations there is no protection. / Knowing this fact, The wise one, restrained by virtue, / Would make clear, right quickly, / The path leading to Nibbāna." Theravada



commentarial tradition links this verse to a story about patacára, who loses her husband, children, and parents on a single day, descends into a grief so profound that she walks about the city naked, and returns to sanity through an encounter with the Buddha's profound compassion. This narrative grants the verses an embodied emotional urgency, and opens up a social world marked by class and gender difference.

Attention to the emotional power of visual images and their behavioral force reveals an additional dimension of Buddhist practice. Consider these two visual representations of the patácará story in Sri Lanka, the first a version of the narrative painted in the 1990s at Bellanvila Temple near Colombo, the second a nineteenth-century depiction from Kataluva Temple in the south. The Bellanvila scene shown here depicts Patacara using her body to shelter her children from a torrential downpour, powerfully evoking the embodied force of her fierce love and self-sacrificing desire to protect them. The tragic limits of this maternal care and its cost in suffering soon become apparent when both of her children are swept to their deaths as they attempt to cross a stream engorged by the rains.

The depth of Patacard's suffering, brought to a climax when she learns that her mother, father, and brother have all perished from the collapse of their house during the storm, appears in the nineteenth-century painting from Kataluva; here Patacára is shown wandering about, deranged by her grief and oblivious to the loss of her clothing until she encounters the Buddha, whose compassion returns her to her senses, and she requests permission to go forth as a member of the women's monastic community. Subsequent scenes depict her life as a bhikkh<sup>ni</sup>, later known as "foremost in the mastery of the Vinaya" (a striking contrast to her earlier naked disorientation) and spiritual preceptor to a large community of Buddhist nuns. These depictions propel their viewers through a complex web of interdependent and emergent emotional forces linked to the visually mediated story of Patacara, as well as to the viewers' own diverse emotional histories. As a relatively distanced observer, I can easily catalog the distinct series of emotions evoked in patacára's story, from her socially disruptive love for the lower-class servant who became her husband, her continued longing to return to the family she disgraced, her maternal care to protect and nurture her children, her overpowering grief and disorientation elicited by the loss of all her loved ones, her return to equanimity through the Buddha's compassionate presence, and finally her own compassionate nurturing of the religious lives of the women in her community. What I cannot confidently assess is how these emotional potentials, embodied quite differently in these two distinct temple paintings, gain force and consequence in the emotional lives of the individuals who encounter them in real time, each shaped by unique individual stories as well as a diversity of social identities and roles. Even if one must acknowledge the relative analytical indeterminacy of these affective forces, their connection to Buddhist practice remains clear, particularly when we situate these paintings in the temple settings that frame them, which provide the immediate opportunity for merit-making offerings and acts of veneration.

## Embodiment

Bodies are primary sites of Buddhist practice. Buddhist discourses commonly investigate the body as a privileged location for observing and analyzing the dynamic, interactive forces that shape human perception, intentionality, and action. Embodiment as a heuristic lens highlights the interdependence of internal and external factors that shape individual experiences, which can be seen both as a manifestation of those factors, as well as the basis upon which subsequent perceptions and actions predictably unfold in time and space. Exploring Buddhist practice through the lens of embodiment illuminates a plethora of stark and subtle distinctions between people and reveals patterns rippling through a cross section of socio-historical milieux.

When viewing Buddhist practice through the lens of embodiment, two broad dynamics come into focus: body as problem and body as solution. These different notions of the body elucidate a range of practice strategies that are based upon varying understandings of the relationship of practice to awakening. Practices that observe the body as problem home in on impermanent, impure, and sensory distortions associated with the body. Practices to address these problems are diverse, ranging from meditating on a decomposing corpse to simply avoiding activities perceived as stimulating sensory desires and attachments. One could argue that the Buddhist monastic discipline codified in the Vinaya aims at addressing the body as problem.

In contrast, two major currents run through the body-as-solution orientation. One current delineates body as process and highlights transformation; here body is a primary medium for development and improvement. Practices that characterize this current include such practices as chanting, seated meditation, making offerings at an altar, and pilgrimage. The other current sees the body as the site of realization. Viewed from this perspective, the body is not a means to an end, but rather the locus of awakening. Practice is approached as a matter of acting in accord with the inherently enlightened nature of the body, fully present in the most mundane of activities, from eating to defecating. Looking through the lens of embodiment thus reveals how diverse Buddhist body-centered discourses construct a continuum of valorizations, from body as font of impurity and fountainhead of suffering to body as carriage of bliss and manifestation of buddha-nature.

The lens of embodiment also throws into relief how current communities and institutions of Buddhist practice and scholarship wrestle with a multiplicity of embodied identities. All bodies are subject to taxonomies of identity formation, including race/ ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and variations of bodily shape and ability. These differences, variably identified with individual bodies, are often indexed to hierarchies of social authority and authenticity. Such value-based differentiations define and police the boundaries of social groups by marking particular bodies as included or excluded. Examining the possibilities and limitations that forms of embodiment foster sheds light on how power, agency, and value are culturally and socially encoded and distributed. How one perceives a body and which social constructs are attended to has a wide range of potential effects for practitioners, whether they locate themselves within academic or Dharma-based communities.

Social constructions of embodiment can impose positive or negative valences on bodily features, according to context. Those recognized as belonging to the hegemonic norm display embodied markers that are assessed positively and are accorded authority and power. Those whose embodiment does not match dominant norms are prone to being devalued and marginalized. Under some circumstances, however, markers of marginality are positively assessed by the majority, such as when dominant members of the group pursue ideals of inclusion and diversity. In either case, imposed negative and positive identities have an impact on individuals and groups. While not all group members internalize the assumptions of the dominant value system, the conditions within which they must seek their own well-being create very different possibilities for flourishing, depending on their relative congruence with the ideological and institutional constraints imposed by the dominant group.

Discourses on non-self in Dharma community contexts illustrate the complexity of issues that come into play when attention is directed toward dynamics of embodiment. Recourse to the principle of non-self may direct attention away from the effects of embodied social differences, allowing members of the dominant community to ignore incidents of micro-aggression and conditions of structural injustice. Moreover, in emphasis on individual responsibility for one's life circumstances, reinforced by constructions of karmic agency and the primacy of individual perceptions, may blunt in awareness of the need for collective action to dismantle systematic oppression. Thus ^aking non-self

discourses may privilege the dominant group and reinforce marginalization. At the same time, practitioners outside the dominant group may find that cultivating an awareness of non-self heightens their insight into the conditioned and transient nature of the self and supports the deconstruction of harmful perceptions and attitudes, providing resources for resistance.

In academic contexts, scholarship that ignores the implications of embodiment, especially of marginalized bodies, deflects attention away from power differentials tied to embodied differences and reinforces a normativity that unconsciously supports the privileged majority. Problematic perceptions of scholars' bodies linked to assumptions about differentials of intelligence and authority may influence search committees, letters of recommendation, course evaluations, and performance reviews. Attention to embodied differences, for example, gender and race/ethnicity, opens up a critical understanding of how particular religious texts, commonly assumed to represent the shared perspectives of the members of a religious community, may in fact represent the views of a dominant minority whose authority those texts support. Analyses that are inattentive to the social force of embodied differences obscure the forms of practice, self-understanding, and agency of members of the community outside the dominant group. A focus on embodiment is thus vital to critical scholarship, for it highlights how unconscious assumptions about embodied differences potentially influence scholarly interpretations, and it directs attention to the lives of community members whose perspectives and practices may not be visible or accurately represented in the authorized representations of particular religious communities.

Recognizing the bodily conditions of scholarly practice can in turn illuminate how our own bodily particularities and those of the people with whom we engage might affect our selection of topics and authoritative sources, and predispose us to dismiss or favor certain methodological and theoretical approaches. Being conscious of our embodied particularity and its implications leads us to acknowledge the limitations and incompleteness of any analytical project, and encourages us to open our scholarship to a broader community of conversation partners.

Academic analysis informed by an understanding of the ways that scholarly practice is itself shaped by the scholar's own embodiment and particular forms of practice supports the production of qualitative knowledge that is richly contextualized, thus foregrounding the diversity of Buddhist communities and highlighting the dangers of static and essentialized generalizations about "Buddhist" ideas and ideals. In highlighting the particularities of embodied life, the dynamics of the tradition as practiced—whether in the present day or in historically distant communities—come more clearly into view, making palpable the local, somatic, and kinesthetic dimensions of lived religion. In this way, the emergent properties of practice are brought to the fore and, depending upon the scholar's analytical focus, a clearer understanding of their cognitive, social, psychological, aesthetic, political, or spiritual dimensions becomes available.

## Agency

In focusing on agency as a key dimension of practice, we take as a starting point the observation that practice has a strong strategic orientation. In other words, it is purposive behavior that is typically formalized in ways that set it apart from more random, spontaneous activities, and those who undertake it do so to pursue particular aims, shaped by individual and communal interests. In this respect, both Buddhist and academic practitioners engage in forms of practice that they perceive to be efficacious and empowering. But by what criteria are particular acts determined to be efficacious, and toward what ends? Whose authority and what material constraints set the conditions within which efficacy is experienced and assessed?

Central to notions of agency are basic assumptions about how individual agents are constituted. For example, do the kinds of relatively formalized behaviors that we identify as strategic presume a self-conscious agent performing actions directed toward realizing intentional ends that can be explicitly

articulated? Given the powerful role of sensory interactions in human behavior and their links to somatically grounded affects, is it perhaps apposite to consider the agency of human bodies that seek their own ends apart from and possibly contrary to conscious choice? In addition, how do particular foundational assumptions, for example Buddhist teachings of anatman (the absence of a stable and enduring self) or scientific models of material causation, enable or thwart particular forms of human agency?

Our focus on the dynamics of Buddhist practice, in keeping with the continuum of contexts identified previously (internal psycho-physical dynamics, sensory engagements with material environments, social dynamics), highlights the interactive and emergent character of human agency, and recognizes that agency takes on different appearances depending upon the viewer's location and the analytical frameworks they employ. Broadly speaking, scholars of Buddhist traditions located in Euro-American traditions of scholarship work within institutions that value objectivity and support practices aimed at intersubjective validation as a means of securing authoritative knowledge. Consequently, claims to knowledge grounded in private forms of experience and personal subjectivity are commonly met with professional skepticism, particularly in the natural and social sciences. Ideals and disciplines of scientific rigor and objective analysis are socially and materially supported through funding agencies, research laboratories, libraries, academic presses, and elaborate peer-review practices aimed at minimizing the distorting effects of personal bias. At the same time, ideals of individual creativity and ownership of the scholar's unique intellectual products are affirmed through formal citation practices and copyright laws devised to protect private property.

An alternative practice of intersubjective validation informs the increasing prominence of field-based research within contemporary Buddhist communities. Grounded in epistemologies that affirm the value of emotion and embodied experience for interpersonal understanding, these forms of scholarship commonly foreground the impact of a scholar's subject-position within a field of unequal power relationships and potentially heighten awareness of the ethical implications of scholarly representations in ways that text-based analyses of historically distant Buddhist communities have not perceived disjunction between those who work in academic institutions and those who participate in Dharma communities is heightened in the United States by constitutionally based prohibitions against public funding for religious groups. Many scholars of Buddhism working in state-supported religious studies departments take pains to sharply differentiate their "study" of religion from its "practice" by Buddhists. Emerging debates over "mindfulness" practices illuminate the fraught nature of this distinction. Whether mindfulness counts as "Buddhist" and "religious" depends upon the contexts in which it is practiced, as well as on the contested meanings of those categories and the forms of agency that they enable. Secularized forms of mindfulness are widely practiced in hospitals and in state-supported educational institutions, reflecting what Jeff Wilson has termed a process of "mystification" that obscures the practice's historical and cultural roots. Critics of the incorporation of these practices in public schools characterize them as forms of "stealth Buddhism," deeply embedded in a system of ethical values that they regard as religious. Collaborative research undertaken by scientists and practitioners of "contemplative wisdom" over the past three decades under the aegis of the Mind and Life Institute likewise points to an extensive framework of shared inquiry and practice that strategically blurs the boundaries between the domains of science and spirituality as these have been formulated within the context of Western modernity.

A focus on agency in the context of Buddhist practice directs scholarly attention away from static generalizations about what Buddhists believe and toward the enormous diversity of cultural and historical contexts within which Buddhists have taken up particular forms of action aimed at the alleviation of suffering. However multiform these practices, they have generally been framed within a worldview in which the effects of "skillful" and "unskillful" actions play out over multiple lifetimes, and



in which access to the Dharma and the sangha, linked to the compassionate activities of buddhas and bodhisattvas, provides essential guidance along the path to awakening.

While some authoritative Buddhist discourses frame action and its consequences primarily in terms of conscious intentionality and foreground individual agency as determinative for progressing along the path to awakening, others emphasize modes of interdependence. These include accounts of supportive relationships forged within Buddhist communities, both lay and monastic, and stories of the liberative force of embodied encounters with extraordinary human and nonhuman agents (buddhas, arhats, bodhisattvas, deities). Such accounts are often tied to privileged locations set apart through various formal ritual strategies (temples, domestic shrines, stupas, mountains) and are frequently linked to aesthetically powerful objects (relics and reliquaries, images, mandalas) that materially mediate the presence of those powerful agents of liberation.

These latter settings, which foreground interactive relationships between the bodies of individual agents and the material and social settings within which they are situated, figure prominently in the essays collected in this volume. While the idea of a handbook implies a certain comprehensiveness and hands-on practicality, we have organized this collection with a keen awareness that the dynamics of practice, embedded in individual bodies and particular locations, push against efforts to generalize and systematize. In place of comprehensiveness, we have sought to include a diversity of examples from various Buddhist traditions, cultural locations, and historical periods, organized around several interpretive settings useful for observing the dynamics of Buddhist practice. These include broad regional perspectives, formative examples of material mediation, physical bodies as sites of transformation and body-mind interaction, powerful sites of human and nonhuman interaction, relationships within and between lay and monastic communities, and several emergent forms of Buddhist practice shaped by conditions of modernity and the influence of globalization. By including essays written by scholars whose work is informed by a variety of critical methodologies (textual analysis, historical research, archaeology, field-based ethnography) and relationships to Dharma practice (hospital chaplain, Dharma teachers, ordained, lay, and non-practitioners), we have sought to showcase a wide range of potential approaches, and we are hopeful this volume will support an expanding dialogue as our readers make use of it, creating new conversations as they selectively engage the perspectives of individual contributors while pursuing their own areas of research. <>

## **THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF INDIAN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY** edited by William Edelglass, Pierre-Julien Harter, Sara McClintock [Routledge, 9781138492257]

**THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF INDIAN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY** is the first scholarly reference volume to highlight the diversity and individuality of a large number of the most influential philosophers to have contributed to the evolution of Buddhist thought in India. By placing the author at the center of inquiry, the volume highlights the often unrecognized innovation and multiplicity of India's Buddhist thinkers, whose unique contributions are commonly subsumed in more general doctrinal presentations of philosophical schools. Here, instead, the reader is invited to explore the works and ideas of India's most important Buddhist philosophers in a manner that takes seriously the weight of their philosophical thought.

The forty chapters by an international and interdisciplinary team of renowned contributors each seek to offer both a wide-ranging overview and a philosophically astute reading of the works of the most seminal Indian Buddhist authors from the earliest writings to the twentieth century. The volume thus also provides thorough coverage of all the main figures, texts, traditions, and debates

animating Indian Buddhist thought, and as such can serve as an in-depth introduction to Buddhist philosophy in India for those new to the field.

Essential reading for students and researchers in Asian and comparative philosophy, **THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF INDIAN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY** is also an excellent resource for specialists in Buddhist philosophy, as well as for contemporary philosophers interested in learning about the rigorous and rich traditions of Buddhist philosophy in India.

## Review

**'A splendid and comprehensive study of Buddhist philosophy in its country of origin. *The Routledge Handbook of Indian Buddhist Philosophy* is an important addition to the global philosophy movement.'** - Owen Flanagan, *Duke University, USA*

**'With an emphasis on the creative originality of key historical philosophers, and with a line-up of the finest scholars in Buddhist philosophy, this volume is sure to become an indispensable resource for teachers and scholars alike, and also serve as a magnificent introduction to the dynamism and potentiality of the field.'** - Jonardon Ganeri, *University of Toronto, Canada*

**'This carefully edited volume provides an understanding of Indian Buddhist philosophy through the study of the authorial figures that shaped its schools and doctrines. From the early discourses to the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, a picture emerges of an active intellectual enterprise devoted to the exploration of some of the most profound issues in philosophy.'** - Anita Avramides, *University of Oxford, UK*

**'An amazing resource for scholar and student alike, the chapters in this book, written by very best scholars in the field, masterfully introduce the life and thought of the major figures of Indian Buddhist philosophy in clear and readable prose. There is no book quite like it. The next time I teach a course on this subject, this book will be atop the reading list.'** - José Ignacio Cabezón, *University of California, Santa Barbara, USA*

**'This Handbook is a landmark contribution to the field, offering superb coverage of the principal Indian Buddhist philosophers and showcasing the breadth and depth of one of the world's richest philosophical traditions. It will be an essential reference work for scholars and students alike for years to come.'** - Evan Thompson, *University of British Columbia, Canada*

**'This is a great resource for all those who want to learn more about Indian Buddhism and its philosophical traditions. It explores in great depth many different aspects of these rich traditions and will be an invaluable resource for those interested in further exploring Indian Buddhist philosophy.'** - Georges Dreyfus, *Williams College, USA*

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The topic of this book, Indian Buddhist philosophy, is "vast and profound," to borrow a traditional Buddhist expression. Buddhists employ this phrase to refer both to the vastness of reality itself and to a buddha's profound and unerring realization and teaching of that reality. Ranging over approximately two and a half millennia, composed and preserved in diverse languages both in oral and written form, manifesting in myriad genres from lyric to scholastic, Buddhist philosophy in India is a field whose borders are yet to be found. Numberless manuscripts remain untranslated and even unedited, some located in India and some in monasteries, libraries, and private collections elsewhere in the world. Other works survive only in Chinese or Tibetan translations made centuries ago and are still mainly known to contemporary scholars through catalogs and by reputation. Other texts have nearly entirely disappeared and can only be glimpsed in fragmentary quotations or elusive references. No doubt, many others have vanished without a trace.

The expanse of Indian Buddhist philosophy is indeed vast. But it is also profound, as those who have explored Indian Buddhist philosophy very well know. Like the rest of Indian philosophy, Indian Buddhist philosophy touches on nearly every aspect of human experience, including the nature of suffering, reality, truth, goodness, compassion, love, freedom, death, the body, the self, matter, consciousness, and divinity. Furthermore, Indian Buddhist philosophy explores these aspects of human experience with a relentless ambition to get to the heart of the matter, interrogating everything from the instruments by which knowledge can be certified to the status of knowledge itself to the problems of language, perception, inference, argument, objectivity, properties, kinds, agency, causality, morality, transformation, illusion, and much more. As the chapters that follow demonstrate, Indian Buddhist philosophers have come to a variety of conclusions about these diverse areas of inquiry.

The present volume, with its forty chapters, is a window onto the vast and profound world of Indian Buddhist philosophy. It is a multifaceted stained-glass window with numerous panes, each offering a view of complex philosophical topics colored by the perspective of a particular Indian Buddhist philosopher as read and presented by a particular highly qualified contemporary scholar. Our decision to place the author at the center of inquiry represents a deliberate choice to highlight the philosophical creativity and innovation of diverse Indian Buddhist philosophers, who too often are seen as mere exegetes working in the service of pre-existing schools. But categorizing thinkers according to schools, as if every thinker associated with that school had agreed to a stable set of doctrinal commitments, obscures the reality that schools are themselves amorphous and ever-changing streams made up of the thought of many individuals over periods of time. Even as each author reflects and refracts the innovations and ideas of their predecessors and contemporaries, it is individual thinkers who make up the schools, both in terms of comprising them and, more literally, inventing them. While it is true that Indian Buddhist philosophers do generally understand themselves as working from within a tradition to which they unabashedly belong, this is not in itself anything out of the ordinary for philosophers more generally. Indeed, it is important to remember that Western philosophers, too, have undertaken their work within a series of inherited philosophical traditions, with all the resources and blinders that come along with being so situated. The tendency to see Indian philosophers — whether Buddhist or not — as so deeply enmeshed in



their particular schools as to be compromised in terms of their rational capacity is an Orientalist bias. The decision to prioritize authors over schools, then, is in part a decision to resist this bias. By presenting major figures who have contributed to the evolution of philosophical thought in Indian Buddhist traditions and in Indian philosophy more broadly, this volume thus implicitly makes a case for an enlarged conception of philosophy not restricted to its European embodiment.

To be clear, we are not suggesting that the study of Indian Buddhist philosophy can or should abandon reference to schools. It is important to recognize that doxographical classification, identification with a particular school, and refutation of opposing Buddhist and non-Buddhist schools were all key elements of Indian Buddhist philosophical practices, especially in later periods. Moreover, as these practices spread beyond India, so did the role of schools in providing philosophical frameworks, authority, and identity for Buddhist philosophers. In Tibetan Buddhist scholastic curricula, school affiliation is still central to the study of Indian Buddhist philosophy. Leaving schools out of the equation is therefore not an option, and the reader will find that nearly every contribution in this volume makes reference to the various schools and sub-schools of the rich Indian Buddhist doxographical tradition.

Organizing a study of Indian philosophers by schools is thus not without justification. Indeed, many scholars of Indian Buddhism, both traditional and modern, have chosen to do so for a variety of reasons. Jan Westerhoff, for example, partially chooses this route in *The Golden Age of Indian Buddhist Philosophy*, though he also acknowledges that much of the seemingly clear division between the different schools is an *ex post facto* arrangement, and that the individual thinkers concerned would have been unlikely to ascribe themselves to the specific schools they are supposed to have belonged to quite so readily.

(2018, io)

To make up for some of what is lost through an organization based on schools, Westerhoff introduces sections dedicated to individual philosophers, where he also notes some of the ways such thinkers transcend any easy identification with a single school. Amber D. Carpenter, in her book *Indian Buddhist Philosophy* (2014), also takes something of a hybrid approach. While the book narrates the progression of Indian Buddhist philosophical thought mainly through themes, important chapters are also dedicated to the Madhyamaka, Yogacara, and epistemological schools, especially as exemplified by their most iconic representatives: Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, and Dharmakirti.

Thus, even as we recognize that some reference to schools is necessary in the study of Indian Buddhist philosophy, we need to be clear about what we mean by the term "school: since the word can have several valences ranging from a concrete institutional reality to an abstract doxographical construct (see McClintock 2018). Many Indian Buddhist philosophers were engaged in the construction and reconstruction of schools as doxographical constructs, and some were no doubt interested in forming institutional structures to maintain particular philosophical views and lineages. But to structure our study of Indian Buddhist philosophy around these schools, however we understand them, risks giving the constructs more concrete reality than may be warranted. Doing so carries with it significant hermeneutic consequences, as it would obscure the dynamic philosophizing and original contributions of individual authors. Our focus on authors pushes back against the tendency to default to a history of reified schools — even as the individual authors themselves often make claims on behalf of a particular school affiliation.

An alternative way to structure this Handbook might have been through themes, with contributions organized in sections such as metaphysics, language, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of mind, political philosophy, argumentation, and so on. Organizing the volume according to these contemporary subfields of the academic discipline of philosophy would, perhaps, have made the

volume more accessible to academic philosophers, who are one of the primary audiences for this book. There are indeed advantages to this tactic, despite the challenge of figuring out which authors should be situated in which categories, as so many of the philosophers in this volume span multiple areas of philosophical thought. But those advantages would likely have a better chance at being realized had the scope of the inquiry been expanded to Buddhist philosophy beyond only India. Indeed, such a thematic approach is employed in *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy* (Emmanuel 2013), which treats philosophical topics across the whole development of Buddhism in Asia. Thus, while that book does contain some short contributions on regional schools (i.e., Theravada, Indian Mahayana, Tibetan Mahayana and Vajrayana, and East Asian Buddhism), the bulk of the volume consists of chapters that take up specific themes in one or more of these regions so that the audience can productively read them against one another. Our decision to organize this Handbook by authors resembles more closely the approach taken by Jonardon Ganeri in *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Philosophy* (2017), which also focuses on figures in an effort to better highlight both chronology and innovation and to make space for nonconformists whose role in the development of philosophical thinking should not be underestimated. While that work treats Indian philosophy more generally, this Handbook somewhat artificially and with more focus highlights just those Indian philosophers who identify as Buddhists. We do so not because we imagine that Indian Buddhist philosophy can be understood apart from the broader study of philosophy in India (it most emphatically cannot!). Rather, we want to make space for our readers to engage in a philosophically rich encounter with a greater variety of Indian Buddhist philosophers in a single volume than has been possible to date.

The decision to place the author at the center of inquiry in these contributions further raises the quite serious question: What is an author? While the notion of an author at first appears self-evident, closer examination reveals a complex and shifting ground. Foucault's proposal of an author function is instructive here, as it reminds us that an author's name is not the same as a proper name that points to an individual. Rather, an author's name performs a set of functions that serve to classify, define, authenticate, and establish relationships among diverse texts. By identifying a text as the product of a particular author, one also indicates something about how that text is to be read and received. Thus, in specifying that the contributions in the Handbook are to be organized by authors, we are pointing not only to individual historical figures but also to powerful authorial figures whose name and reputation have been associated with particular ideas, texts, practices, lineages, schools, and spiritual attainments. We believe that by attending to these authorial figures we gain a much richer understanding of the development and practice of Indian Buddhist intellectual traditions.

Having made the decision to organize this Handbook by authors, we were still confronted by how to choose and how to arrange the philosophers. Although we lack concrete dates for the majority of figures in this volume, there is general agreement about a relative chronology based on the ways prior texts and thinkers seem to be presupposed by a given author. We therefore decided to proceed chronologically when possible, with the understanding that each subsequent philosopher could be seen, in part, as responding to philosophers who had come before. At the same time, there are some authors who we believed needed to be placed into special groups based less on schools or time periods but more on the genres in which their philosophical material appears. The book opens with three parts organized by genre before moving on in the next five parts to a more strictly chronological approach employing a somewhat arbitrary periodization. Here again, however, we continue to prioritize the author as the central organizing principle.

We begin, perhaps somewhat unusually, with a part on buddhas as philosophers, based on our contention that buddhas should be considered philosophical author figures insofar as they may be credited with initially propounding - at least in our cosmic era - the foundational doctrines and ideas that serve as springboards for later Buddhist thinkers. This is true despite the fact that the various

buddhas may appear not to agree with each other (or, for that matter, with themselves, given the diversity of texts attributed to the same buddha) and may also appear not to be historical persons. The ideas of these buddha philosophers often emerge embedded in dialogical scriptures which typically have significant narrative elements. Thus, the first part of the book focuses on the genre of buddhavacana ("speech of the/a buddha") as a modality through which Buddhist authors - in this case, buddhas themselves - make known their philosophical ideas.

We next move on to another genre with a part on poet philosophers. Indian Buddhist philosophers composed their works in a wide variety of literary genres, with many of them employing poetry, narratives, and dialogues as well as treatises and commentaries. For some, the poetry, narrative, and dialogue do important philosophical work, as might also be said of the way that literary form has a philosophical function in Plato's dialogues, Montaigne's essays, and Nietzsche's aphorisms. In this part, we focus on poet philosophers whose philosophy can be said to be embodied in their chosen literary form and whose philosophically significant meaning would be lost if it were articulated in the more abstract language of a treatise.

The final part organized primarily on genre is concerned with abhidharma philosophers. Here we are often thwarted in highlighting the specific contributions of individual authors due to the fact that the texts themselves appear to have multiple authors. In this chapter, then, individual texts often take on the author function. But by resisting the urge to talk about Abhidharma" or "Abhidhamma" as a school and focusing instead on the individual texts or textual traditions, we come as close as we can to highlighting the contributions of particular authors even when we are lacking a name.

At this point, the parts shift and begin to focus more obviously on the iconic founding figures of Indian Buddhist philosophy. We start with a unit on philosophical founders, by which we mean philosophers whose names have become associated with the founding of a particular stream or school. The part begins with Nagarjuna and his student Aryadeva, and is filled out with chapters on the remaining four figures making up the "six ornaments" according to Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism: Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, and Dharmakirti.

Following these formative figures, we consider a host of commentator philosophers, by which we mean authors who in many cases literally and in other cases more figuratively position themselves as commentators on the thought of one or more of the authors treated earlier in the volume. Because there were a great number of these, we broke them into three major groups: early period, middle period, and late period commentators. In this way, we made room for thinkers from the fifth-twelfth centuries, bringing us close to the end of the flourishing of Buddhist philosophy in India. Throughout these chapters, we find authors who are bending, contesting, reformulating, and repudiating various doxographical labels while also promoting new ideas in the domains we mentioned earlier: metaphysics, language, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of mind, political philosophy, argumentation, and so on.

The volume ends with a short part that is something of an outlier in that it treats modern Indian Buddhist philosophers. Here we have just two figures, both of whom, however, have played an outsized role in revitalizing Buddhist philosophy in India and beyond. The first is B. R. Ambedkar, whose philosophical writings on Buddhism, religion, and politics have become influential among practicing Buddhists especially in India - and scholars alike. The second is His Holiness, Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet. While not an Indian by birth, the Dalai Lama has spent more than half a century living in exile in India, where he has consistently engaged with and emphasized the Indian heritage of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. He has also been a key figure in the promotion of what he calls "the Nalanda tradition," a style of doing philosophy with deep roots in the thought of many of the figures found in this volume.

The chapters that follow illustrate the broad diversity of Indian Buddhist philosophy. They also exemplify the many ways in which contemporary scholars are engaging with Indian Buddhist philosophers and their texts, for our contemporary authors are as diverse as the Indian Buddhist authors treated in the volume, and their chapters showcase a range of approaches, some more historical, some more philosophical, some more literary, some more technical, some more playful. Like the Indian Buddhist authors who are the subject of this volume, our contributors have also inherited intellectual practices and views that are manifest in their own writings. Still, despite their differences, each chapter can serve in its own way as a window onto the major philosophical innovations and ideas of the figures we have chosen for this volume as seen through the eyes of our particular contributors.

## BUDDHAS AS PHILOSOPHERS

The opening part of this Handbook proceeds on the premise that considering buddhas as philosophers is a worthy and interesting endeavor. This volume also argues that approaching Buddhist philosophy through authors yields insights not available through other approaches. Yet buddhas are often not recognized as authors in the usual sense of the term. Rather, they are teachers whose discourse survives through the recollections of their disciples as preserved in written and oral texts. These recollections, moreover, do not consist merely of the verbatim contents of the buddhas' teachings. Rather, they typically narrate a scene of instruction in which a buddha appears as one actor among several, responding to the questions and circumstances of various interlocutors. Thus, whatever philosophy a buddha has taught must be accessed indirectly, much as what we learn of Socrates comes through witnessing his conversations with sundry characters in the dialogues of Plato.

For this part, we have chosen buddhas who are primordial, of this age, or of a future age. Their status as authors might not be obvious. However, the word "author" is etymologically related to "authority" (they are both derived from *auctoritas*), and in Buddhist traditions, buddhas are precisely those who have the most authority. Such authority is grounded in their long moral training and profound wisdom, their collection of merit, and their vision of reality as it truly is. While they themselves are not authors composing texts, their speech is recorded by others who attest to its accuracy and authenticity on the basis of their authority and thus make the buddhas authors as sources of the teaching. The words of these buddhas are embedded in narrative and doctrinal tracts full of rich philosophical content. As such, these buddhas — both those for whom we have seeming historical evidence and those whose identities come into greater focus only in literary or ritual milieus — can be considered foundational authors whose works generate and are justified by philosophical thinking.

We start with Gotama Buddha, the buddha of the early discourses, oral texts that were eventually written down and that today form important root sources for the Theravada tradition. Bhikkhu Analayo, in his chapter, pieces together philological evidence from these discourses in Pali and their parallels preserved in other languages to paint a picture that, as he writes, "takes us as close as possible to the historical Buddha" while acknowledging that this picture depends not on historical facts but rather on representations of the teacher Gotama Buddha as found in the surviving texts. Philosophically, this buddha appears most interested in how to attain the "deathless," a term that for Gotama indicates not a state of eternal life but rather "a supreme condition of freedom of the mind such that even the terror of mortality has completely lost its sting." The picture painted here is of a philosopher of deep pragmatic concern, whose teachings therefore involve explicit instructions for undertaking the contemplative practices designed to lead one to this state of radical freedom.

Next, we move to Siddhartha Gautama, a figure who might be considered the same as Gotama Buddha but whose representations in the Sanskrit discourses associated with the Mahayana stream



of Indian Buddhism yield a rather different personage. Richard F. Nance tackles the vexed question of the authorship of these Sanskrit discourses through a sustained analysis of their understanding of what counts as buddhavaṇa, the "word of the/a buddha." In contrast to the previous chapter, which sought to bring us as close as possible to the historical buddha, this chapter urges us to look beyond the historical figure to recognize that buddhavaṇa may, in the end, have very little to do with the question of provenance and much more to do with the effects that such inspired speech may have on particular audiences. In a manner quite different from that of Bhikṣu Analayo, then, Nance arrives at a similar conclusion in urging us to read Siddhartha Gautama's philosophy more in terms of its enactment in embodied practice than as a set of philosophical doctrines.

The third buddha under consideration is the tantric Buddha, the quintessential "primordial buddha" (adibuddha) who appears in innumerable peaceful and wrathful forms and with a great plethora of names and attributes within the tantric streams of Indian Buddhism. Taking us still further away from "historical fact" toward something transcendent, Vesna A. Wallace explains in her chapter that the buddhas who author the texts known as tantras are traditionally understood as "nothing other than the ultimate truth" which reveals itself "in the conventional and at times symbolic terms that constitute a tantric text." The collapse of author and text is here complete, a situation that itself raises a complex of philosophical questions. Yet, these texts also contain explicitly philosophical passages, and Wallace helpfully guides us through some of them. The chapter reveals the tantric Buddha as engaging in philosophical disputation and offering arguments to refute non-Buddhists and Buddhists alike. Yet, it is also clear that this is but one small portion of a buddha's activity.

Finally, we turn to the future Buddha, Maitreya, whose role as an author is particularly complex due to his relationship with a human author, Asaṅga (who is also treated later in this volume). Although he is technically a bodhisattva, we include Maitreya in this first part due to his transcendent and celestial status. Maitreya is a figure of great optimism for many Buddhists, as it is foretold that he currently resides in a heavenly realm, Tuṣṭita ("Joyful"), waiting for the moment when all traces of the previous Buddha's teachings have disappeared from the earth. At that point, Maitreya will take birth in human form, attain nirvāṇa, as did Śakyamuni Buddha before him, and reintroduce the Dharma to the world. Meanwhile, though, it is possible for some advanced meditation practitioners to meet Maitreya — as we find in the case of Asaṅga. In his chapter, Klaus-Dieter Mathes relates how Asaṅga is said to have received oral texts from Maitreya and then written them down. These texts include analyses of buddha-nature and buddhahood, as well as the path of transformation from ordinary mind to insight into the true nature of phenomena. While they have sometimes been interpreted as consistent with Madhyamaka philosophy, they generally present what came to be identified as a Yogācāra Buddhist view. Mathes carefully examines one popular corpus of five Maitreya texts to conclude that there is sufficient evidence to hold that these works were all composed "by a single hand."

## POET PHILOSOPHERS

Texts taught in a typical, contemporary academic philosophy curriculum include a wide variety of genres. While philosophers today are primarily taught to write academic articles and monographs, philosophers have historically experimented with a much broader range of literary forms, including dialogues, aphorisms, personal essays, confessions, epistles, meditations, autobiographies, and commentaries, in addition to treatises. Some Western philosophers, perhaps most famously Lucretius and Boethius, expressed their philosophical thinking in poetic form. For many philosophers, their chosen literary form is not merely one among several possible ways of clothing their thinking, but is essential to their thought. Consider Plato's dialogues, Montaigne's essays, Kant's treatises, or Nietzsche's aphorisms: in each case, the philosophy is inherently connected to the literary form and would be different if embodied in another genre. A similar diversity of literary form

appears in Indian philosophical traditions, which have also included treatises, commentaries, dialogues, narratives, and poems. Much Indian Buddhist philosophy was written according to models of Sanskrit verse. Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, and Santideva, for example, and many other prominent Indian Buddhist philosophers, wrote some of their most important works following Sanskrit poetic forms and integrated elements of dialogue. Thus, in some sense, many Indian Buddhist authors can be considered "poet philosophers." The poet philosophers we consider in this part, however, are poetic in a stronger sense: their philosophy is not merely articulated in verse but embodied in song and narrative, and their poetic and literary forms do important philosophical work.

In his chapter on Asvaghosa, Vincent Eltschinger notes that this poet from the first century of the Common Era — known for Buddhist dramatic works and refined court poetry (*mahakavya*) — was the first Buddhist philosopher to articulate systematic and sophisticated critiques of other religious-philosophical systems. In *Life of the Buddha* (*Buddhacarita*), an epico-lyrical poem, Asvaghosa defends the rationality of the Buddhist path — in contrast to other formulations of the path to liberation, especially *Samkhya* and *Vaisesika* — and therefore its effectiveness. In this account, the Buddha is a philosopher who justifies Buddhist doctrine and practice on the basis of reason, and reason is necessary for morality and liberation. Asvaghosa's views anticipate ideas that are more fully developed by later thinkers associated with *Sautrantika* and *Yogacara*. Moreover, Eltschinger argues, Asvaghosa may be the first Buddhist philosopher we can identify who pursues a distinctive intellectual agenda along with an argumentative and literary style to achieve it.

The following chapter, by Sonam Kachru, is a literary and philosophical reading of the *Questions of Milinda* (*Milindapanha*), a text that presents a dialogue between the Buddhist monk Nagasena and the Bactrian King Menander ("Milinda" in Pali). Kachru is interested in reading this text as a work of literature that can help us understand what it might be like to think and feel as a Buddhist. He wants to explore how the *Questions of Milinda* might be encountered in ways that can change us as readers. He therefore focuses not only on the arguments, but also on aesthetic features such as the use of examples and the drama of the dialogue. Kachru reads the drama as an exploration of the role of thought in our lives, and the tragedy of living a life for which we can give no justification. Kachru also suggests that the text itself can teach us how to read well and how to reason wisely about our own lives.

In the next chapter, Anne E. Monius addresses philosophy in the work of the Tamil author Cattamar (ca. sixth—seventh century). Cattamar is said to be the author of *The Renunciation of Manimekalai* (*Manimekalai Turavu*), an extended poetic narrative that traces the path of Manimekalai from a youthful courtesan to her ordination as a Buddhist nun. It is the first extant Tamil text of formal philosophy and is representative of the ways in which many Tamil texts integrated philosophical reasoning into poetic narratives. Three of the chapters are explicitly philosophical: one critiques non-Buddhist views; the final two present a Buddhist account of inferential reasoning and interdependent origination. Manimekalai's understanding of inferential reasoning and especially interdependent origination as presented by her teacher, Aravanan, is what eventually leads her to commit to a life of renunciation. Like Manimekalai, the reader can look back and see how everything in her life was interdependently originated and what kinds of conditions can lead to freedom and renunciation of worldly life. As Monius argues, the beauty and rhetorical power of the narrative help the reader cultivate both an understanding and an emotional response intended to turn us toward renunciation and freedom.

In the final chapter of this part, Roger R. Jackson presents the late—first millennium Indian tantric poet, Saraha, as a philosopher. Saraha is informed by the metaphysical and ontological thought of *Madhyamaka*, *Yogacara*, and *Vajrayana*. Still, as Jackson argues, Saraha is a kind of philosophical anti-philosopher, as he is critical of philosophical study as a method to achieve awakening (just as he is

also critical of meditation, pilgrimage, and tantric ritual and practice — all of which different Buddhists have held to be necessary for liberation). It is only when we let go of our attachment to conventional forms of practice, Saraha insists, that we can open ourselves to the ultimate reality beyond language and thought. In his songs, while arguing that the ultimate is beyond the grasp of words, he still seeks to somehow gesture toward it. This gesturing is accomplished with many terms, including: the innate, stainless mind, inmost nature, the real, the great seal, nondual mind, emptiness, awakening, Buddha. According to Saraha's nondual philosophy, everything in our lives — even what we take to be polluting and polluted — is ultimately somehow part of the radiant, pure, primordial reality. Instead of employing sustained rational arguments, Saraha seeks a direct understanding of reality and poetically presents the human potential for awakening.

## ABHIDHARMA PHILOSOPHERS

The Sanskrit term "Abhidharma" ("Abhidhamma" in Pali) has multiple meanings. It often refers to a corpus of texts, one of the "three baskets" (tripitaka; tipitaka) of the Buddhist canon. In contrast to the discourses (Sutra, Sutta) and the monastic code (Vinaya) - the other two "baskets" of the canon - Abhidharma literature systematically analyzes forms of conscious experience and their objects in an explicitly Buddhist philosophical framework. One of the distinguishing features of the Abhidharma texts is the comprehensive account of mental and physical factors authors try to achieve, often in the form of lists. There are two complete canonical collections of Abhidharma texts extant today - one preserved in Pali claimed by the Theravada tradition, and one preserved in Chinese ascribed to the Sarvastivada tradition - but previously there were additional Abhidharma texts associated with other schools, some of which exist in fragments while others are completely lost. The term "Abhidharma" can also refer to commentaries on these canonical texts, as well as to other texts that are intended to provide a systematic analysis, metaphysics, phenomenology, and evaluation of the varieties of consciousness and its objects using the earlier Abhidharma categories. Abhidharma can thus be a way of characterizing a style and approach to doing philosophy in Buddhist traditions, one of the first manifestations of Buddhist scholasticism. What these diverse meanings of the term share is that Abhidharma takes up the teachings from Buddhist discourses and gives a more formal and methodical account of Buddhist doctrine. While Abhidharma developed in the early centuries of Buddhism in India, later thinkers, including those associated with the Mahayana traditions of Madhyamaka and Yogacara, were working within an Abhidharma philosophical context, and many of them wrote Abhidharma texts. This is why Abhidharma can be seen as the backbone of so much Buddhist philosophy in India and remains a constant reference for Buddhist philosophers.

In the first chapter of this part on Abhidharma philosophers, Maria Heim describes the Enumeration of Phenomena (Dhammasangani) and Analysis (Vibhanga), which constitute the first two books of the canonical Pali Abhidhamma. Most traditional Theravada commentators, as well as modern scholars, have interpreted the Pali Abhidhamma as an ontology of ultimate reals. Heim defends an alternative interpretation for which she finds evidence in the Abhidhamma as well as in some postcanonical commentary, particularly that of Buddhaghosa. According to this interpretation, the Abhidhamma is a method of unending phenomenological analysis, a practice of continually exploring and then transforming experience. Heim uses the canonical Abhidhamma texts to demonstrate how they invite practitioners into a therapeutic and soteriological process of transformation through the endless exploration of experience that demonstrates that there is no final ontology, no final account of ultimate reality.

The next chapter, by Rupert Gethin, focuses on Points of Discussion (Kathavatthu), the fifth of the seven Abhidhamma texts collected in the Pali Canon. The text is therefore regarded as "the word of the Buddha" (buddhavacana), even as it is also attributed to a particular figure, Moggaliputta Tissa, who is said to have lived in the third century BCE, because he is thought to be correctly explicating

the Buddha's teachings in the work. Through dialogues between one voice advocating the views of the text and another voice presenting the opponent's views, *Points of Discussion* addresses more than 200 points of contention in early Buddhist doctrine. The dialogues follow a structure of *reductio ad absurdum* arguments, in which the opponent comes to understand that their beliefs are wrong because they are inconsistent. We are thus able to gain an understanding of both what some Buddhists were arguing about and the methods of argumentation they were employing. Gethin discusses these methods and then focuses on several particular points of doctrine debated in the text.

As Buddhism entered new geographical locations in the Indian subcontinent in its early centuries, different groups formulated distinctive interpretations of the Buddha's teachings. Abhidharma texts were composed in part to articulate and distinguish the doctrinal positions of diverse monastic communities. In his chapter, Bart Dessein discusses *Katyayaniputra* (ca. first century CE) and his *Abhidharma Treatise in Eight Sections* (\**Abhidharmatagranthastra* or \**Abhidharmastaskandhasastra*), also known as the *Source of Knowledge* (*Jhanaprasthana*). *Katyayaniputra* is often regarded as the founder of the Sarvastivada school of Buddhism, and his text played a central role in the formation of the Sarvastivada identity with its own philosophy and an accompanying understanding of the Buddhist path. In the *Abhidharma Treatise*, he developed a comprehensive analysis of the material world and defended the role of reason and insight on the Buddhist path. Dessein presents some of *Katyayaniputra*'s original contributions to Buddhist philosophy and traces two distinct developments that emerged from his work: the pedagogical digests that articulate the essence of Sarvastivada views compiled in Bactria and Gandhara, and the commentaries on the *Abhidharma Treatise* composed by the Vaibhasikas of Kasmira.

In the final chapter in this part, Peter Skilling discusses what he terms the "Vatsiputriya/Sammitiya" complex of schools — including the Bhadrayaniya, Dharmottariya, Sannagarika, and Kaurukulla-Sammitiya — which are often referred to by their opponents as "Pudgalavadins." One of the many views these traditions held was that the person (*pudgala*) was neither different from nor the same as the constituent elements of sentient beings, a position that many other Buddhists critiqued as an abandonment of the traditional Buddhist understanding of "non-self." While the Vatsiputriyas/Sammitiyas probably did not think of this one idea as defining their tradition — the Sammitiya metaphysical texts surviving in the original language do not address the question of the *pudgala* — their opponents did. The Vatsiputriya/Sammitiya were absorbed by other traditions by the sixteenth century, and for many years they have been regarded as not genuinely Buddhist. In contrast, drawing on a variety of sources, Skilling argues that for well over a millennium the Vatsiputriya/Sammitiya schools were in fact a dominant form of mainstream Buddhism in South Asia. With this in mind, he makes the broader point that we should avoid thinking of one or another Buddhist school as somehow original, orthodox, or heterodox, and instead recognize the dynamic changes that have always marked the development of Buddhist thought.

## PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDERS

The great flowering of Buddhist philosophy that takes place in India has no founder. Even the Buddha himself is said to be just the most recent of those who have turned the wheel of the Dharma for the sake of the world; according to Buddhist traditions, other buddhas preceded him. But conventionally, it is nevertheless possible to identify developments that can, in retrospect, be recognized as new modalities in Indian Buddhist philosophical life. Of course, such beginnings are happening constantly, and this volume aims to show how a great number of individual philosophers leave their marks on how Buddhist philosophy gets done. Still, as in the West, the philosophical work of some figures affects subsequent thinkers in the tradition; in India, such figures have traditionally been identified as constituting new lineages of thought and practice.



We identify the thinkers in this part as "philosophical founders," taking our inspiration from the popular Tibetan schema of the "six ornaments and two supreme ones" (rgyan drug mchog gnyis). This group of eight luminaries, a popular subject for monastic scroll paintings, includes the six philosophers treated in this part - Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, and Dharmakirti - along with two masters of monastic discipline (vinaya), Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha. The six founders broadly also represent three significant streams in Mahayana philosophical thought, that of the Madhyamaka, Yogacara, and Pramana traditions, with two masters associated with each stream. We begin with\_ Nagarjuna, the founder of Madhyamaka, along with his chief immediate disciple, Aryadeva. Following this, we have Asanga, the founder (with Maitreya) of the Yogacara, along with his chief disciple and brother, Vasubandhu. And we finish with Dignaga, the founder of the Buddhist Pramana stream, along with his most influential disciple, Dharmakirti. Each of these six figures is treated in this part by authors who take distinct approaches. As they are all iconic for so many of the Buddhist thinkers who follow them, readers will find their names referenced repeatedly throughout the rest of the book.

Nagarjuna (second—third century CE) is widely regarded as one of the most influential philosophers in any Buddhist tradition. His Root Verses of the Middle Way (Malamadhyamakakarika), along with the other analytic treatises and devotional hymns that articulate his account of dependent origination and emptiness, became the basis of the Madhyamaka tradition of Mahayana Buddhism. Nagarjuna's notoriously terse verses led to a great diversity of interpretations by Buddhist intellectuals in India and in Central and East Asia, as well as among contemporary scholars. In her chapter, Amber D. Carpenter engages the most prominent interpretations of the Root Verses — as metaphysical, semantic, epistemological, and anti-rationalist — and offers a reading that emphasizes Nagarjuna's return to the Buddha's teachings on dependent arising (pratityasamutpada). Thus, according to Carpenter, Nagarjuna is a fundamentalist reformer, responding to the intellectual world of second-century Indian Buddhism by returning to what he believes is the true teaching of dependent arising and its rightful centrality in Buddhist thought. In contrast to the view of dependent arising as the way in which things arise or are in relation with each other, Nagarjuna's understanding of dependent arising functions to deconstruct metaphysical conceptions of individuation as such; according to Carpenter, for Nagarjuna, dependent arising means there are no things arising. By linking the original teaching of dependent arising with the Mahayana understanding of emptiness and the distinction between ultimate and conventional truth, Nagarjuna defends the Mahayana as the authentic embodiment of the Buddha's teachings. Carpenter sees in Nagarjuna's Precious Garland (Ratnavali) the implications for ethics of Nagarjuna's philosophy of dependent arising, emptiness, and the two truths. Reading Nagarjuna as embedded in communities of practice, she suggests that his ontology, epistemology, and philosophy of language do indeed inform the Buddhist practical-soteriological project.

Aryadeva (second—third century) is traditionally said to have been Nagarjuna's student and is credited as a cofounder of the Madhyamaka. While many Indian philosophers argue that possessing an essence or intrinsic nature is a condition for something to be real, Aryadeva believes that there is no entity that meets this condition. Like Nagarjuna, he employs a dialectical method to deconstruct any claim of intrinsic nature; he argues that there is no essence or identity that is somehow independent of causes and conditions. Phenomena are then precisely empty of the intrinsic natures that are attributed to them. Thus, we must abandon any philosophical views that presuppose real entities. Focusing on Aryadeva's most significant work, the Four Hundred Verses (Catuthsataka), Tom J. F. Tillemans gives an account of both Aryadeva's anti-realist metaphysics and ontology and his ethics, as well as how they may — or may not — relate to each other. Aryadeva's ethics are, as Tillemans argues, radically revisionist. That is, Aryadeva proposes a supererogatory morality that calls for a kind of moral sainthood. Tillemans suggests that there is a tension between Aryadeva's

descriptive ontology and revisionary ethics, as the former undermines any possible philosophical foundation for the later. Tillemans also explores Dharmapala's Yogacara interpretation of the Four Hundred Verses and what it might tell us about early Yogacara-Madhyamaka syntheses.

The writings attributed to Asanga (fourth—fifth century) are foundational to the development of the Yogacara tradition of Mahayana Buddhism. Indeed, Asanga's texts are some of the earliest systematic presentations of core Yogacara ideas. Jowita Kramer, in her chapter, focuses on Asanga's two most important texts: the Compendium of the Abhidharma (Abhidharmasamuccaya) and the Summary of the Mahayana (Mahayanasamgraha). The Compendium of the Abhidharma is a systematic work of what some scholars call Mainstream (i.e., not Mahayana) Abhidharma that integrates characteristically Yogacara ideas. In the Summary of the Mahayana, Asanga articulates the core ideas that distinguish Yogacara from other Buddhist schools. These include the idealist ontology of the three natures, and that there is nothing external to the mind — that there is nothing other than presentation to the mind (vijñaptimatra). He also presents the doctrine of the eight forms of mind, including the storehouse mind (alayavijñana), a form of mind beneath the other forms that is the store of karma. Kramer suggests that while it may not be the case that Asanga himself first articulated these ideas, he was likely the first author to develop them into one coherent philosophical system.

Perhaps no Indian Buddhist philosopher justifies a wariness about categorizing authors according to schools as much as Vasubandhu (fourth—fifth century), traditionally said to be Asanga's younger brother. Vasubandhu is widely regarded as one of the founding fathers of the Yogacara school. Yet he wrote a comprehensive account of the Sarvastivada Abhidharma, the Treasury of Abhidharma Verses (Abhidharmakosakarika). At the same time, in his own detailed and very influential Commentary on the Treasury of Abhidharma (Abhidharmakosabhasya) — the touchstone reference for Abhidharma in Tibetan scholasticism — he subjects the root verses to critique from multiple perspectives, especially from a view associated with the Sautrantika school. Some of Vasubandhu's other texts defending an idealist ontology and associated Yogacara ideas were also highly influential. Still, as Jonathan C. Gold notes, while Yogacara and Madhyamaka came to be regarded as rival schools, Vasubandhu never actually uses the term "Yogacara," and he does employ characteristically Nagarjunian arguments. According to Gold, then, Vasubandhu should be read not as sequentially representing one school after another, but rather as a philosopher who works within multiple inherited traditions. Focusing on questions of causality and language, Gold traces a common theme across the diversity of Vasubandhu's texts. In particular, Gold unpacks Vasubandhu's view that while concepts and words cannot actually capture reality, even false concepts, when used skillfully, can point to an ineffable reality beyond language.

Dignaga (late fifth—early sixth century) is credited with founding the influential Buddhist tradition of logic and epistemology known as Pramana. Of course, Dignaga inherited and was informed by a rich tradition of philosophical inquiry into perception, cognition, and reasoning. He was especially influenced by Vasubandhu's writings on argumentation. Still, Dignaga's work, culminating in the Compendium of the Means of Valid Cognition (Pramanasamuccaya) together with his autocommentary, constitutes a significant development in Indian logic and epistemology. In contrast to some other Indian philosophers who accept verbal testimony (sabda) as a distinct valid means of cognition (pramana), Dignaga understands it as a form of inference (anumana), one of only two valid means of cognition, along with perception (pratyaksa). He subdivides inference into inference-for-oneself and inference-for-others, which makes it possible to treat argumentation within the broader epistemological category of inference. As Kei Kataoka notes, this was part of Dignaga's project of bringing epistemology (theories of the means of valid cognition), dialectics (theories of argumentation), and semantics (theories of word-referents) into one unified field of study. Relevant to all three domains, and one of Dignaga's most original and important contributions, is the idea of

pervasion (vyapti), a form of invariable concomitance that can guarantee inferences. In addition to giving an overview of Dignaga's project in the Compendium, Kataoka focuses on some of Dignaga's most crucial concepts, including the exclusion of what is other (anyapoha), the three conditions of a proper reason (trairupyalinga), the self-awareness of cognitions (svasamvitti), and non-perception (anupalabdhi). Kataoka carefully traces what Dignaga drew from his predecessors, what constitutes his original contributions, and where his successors — the Nrunamsaka Kumarila and the Buddhist Dharmakirti — recognized the limitations of his system.

Developing the work of his predecessors, especially Vasubandhu and Dignaga, Dharmakirti (ca. sixth—seventh century) is regarded as a cofounder of the Buddhist school of logic and epistemology, and was for centuries seen as the main representative of Buddhist philosophy for non-Buddhist philosophers in India. His most important work, the Commentary on the Means of Knowledge (Pramanavarttika), explicates and refines the Compendium of the Means of Knowledge (Pramanasamuccaya), synthesizing Dignaga's epistemology, dialectics, and semantics with traditional Buddhist doctrines to give them a whole new significance. While Dharmakirti is generally associated with the fields of logic and epistemology, as John Taber points out, he is primarily interested in defending the rationality of core Buddhist doctrines as he understands them. Thus, in addition to addressing his original contributions to theories of perception, inference, universals, and exclusions, Taber devotes much of his chapter to Dharmakirti's apologetic concerns. These include Dharmakirti's defense of the Buddha as tantamount to a means of knowledge (pramana) and the authority of Buddhist scripture, his critique of physicalism and defense of antirealism and momentariness, and his disagreements with Brahmanical philosophers. Throughout, Taber makes clear, Dharmakirti is primarily interested in logic and epistemology not for their own sake, but insofar as they can provide a systematic and rational defense of the Buddhist soteriological project.

## EARLY-PERIOD COMMENTATORS

Indian Buddhist philosophers regarded as the founders of philosophical schools — such as the figures in the preceding part of this volume — often wrote texts that are terse and sometimes so obscure as to be incomprehensible without a commentary. Because the root texts were composed with the expectation of oral or written commentary to explain them, commentaries were not simply a supplement to an otherwise sufficient work; they were essential to the root text. This is why some Indian Buddhist philosophers wrote auto-commentaries on their own texts. In many instances, it would be reasonable to consider the root text and its commentary as together constituting a kind of hybrid text, and this is one way in which authorship is rendered complicated in Indian Buddhism. Yet, it was through these hybrid texts that different schools were constructed as distinct and coherent. It was through the commentarial literature that these schools developed and became more sophisticated as commentators drew on the resources of their traditions and the indeterminate meaning of the texts they were explaining to introduce novel interpretations and ideas in response to new philosophical challenges. By the sixth century, developments in logic and epistemology contributed to the rise of debates across Indian philosophical traditions. Commentators often understood their role to include not just defending their own view but also demonstrating the deficiency of other Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophical positions. As with other South Asian traditions, then, even as many Indian Buddhist philosophers were creative and original thinkers, they often presented their thought as explication and practiced philosophy through commentary on earlier works.

Buddhaghosa's commentaries on Buddhist scriptures and his formulation of a Buddhist life in the Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) played a significant role in the formation of what today is called the Theravada tradition. At the heart of Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad's chapter is what he terms Buddhaghosa's "hermeneutic of contextualization," which is especially attentive to the context in

which the Buddha offers his teaching. Applying the hermeneutic of contextualization to Buddhaghosa's own texts, Ram-Prasad argues, suggests that he is not primarily concerned with the ontological analysis of objects of experience. Rather, Buddhaghosa practices a phenomenological method aimed at transforming human experience. Drawing on Buddhaghosa's hermeneutics and phenomenological method, Ram-Prasad shows how his account of understanding in the Path of Purification is a form of phenomenological practice that prepares the practitioner for systematic, methodical, and morally informed meditation.

In the next chapter, Karl-Stephan Bouthillette shows how Bhaviveka (sixth century) drew on recent developments in epistemology and argumentation to interpret Nagarjuna's philosophy of the Middle Way. Bhaviveka's interpretation —using the three-part inference (anumana) developed by Dignaga and the epistemological framework of valid means of cognition or knowing (pramana) —became the dominant view of Nagarjuna in Indian Buddhist scholarship. Interpreting and defending Nagarjuna's philosophy with the fifth- and sixth-century methods of critical reasoning and debate firmly established it as a system that could compete with other Indian philosophical schools. Indeed, Bhaviveka devoted considerable resources to critiquing the views of other Indian philosophical traditions, setting up a doxographical hierarchy that became a model of much Buddhist philosophy. In this hierarchy, philosophy is paramount and wrong ideas need to be refuted because they are obstacles to liberation. Bhaviveka's work, then, emphasizes the importance of rational argument, and he himself was an original and rigorous thinker who was able to synthesize different philosophical approaches into a coherent Madhyamaka system.

Like Bhaviveka, Dharmapala (sixth century) employed Dignaga's logic and epistemology to interpret and defend views first articulated before the fifth- and sixth-century developments in argumentation and reasoning and to critique other Buddhist and non-Buddhist schools. In his chapter on Dharmapala, Ching Keng suggests that one of his opponents was in fact Bhaviveka and that the debate between the two thinkers is the beginning of the debates between Madhyamaka and Yogacara views that became important for many later Buddhist philosophers. While Dharmapala's commentaries are conservative, hewing closely to the root texts, works attributed to him also include original thinking on a variety of important Yogacara themes, especially meta-cognition. Keng



Knowledge is so terse, it requires additional commentary to make the arguments explicit. Indeed, Dharmakirti's text is not just philosophically obscure; the commentaries are often necessary even to make sense of the syntax and grammar. Given how thoroughly interdependent this particular root text and its earliest commentaries are, Yiannopoulos suggests that we should consider them as together constituting one "hybrid text"

Candrakirti (seventh century) is widely regarded as one of the most significant Madhyamaka philosophers. This is especially true in Tibet, where his commentaries on Nagarjuna's texts are often taken to be authoritative on Madhyamaka philosophy. Focusing on Candrakirti's understanding of the two truths, the importance of his approach to language, and his overall philosophy as a form of anti-essentialism, Mattia Salvini gives an overview of Candrakirti's writings and an analysis of his main ideas. In addition, Salvini emphasizes three aspects of Candrakirti's work that are often neglected in English language scholarship. The first is how Candrakirti's philosophical practice is grounded in traditions of Sanskrit grammar, which is key to

philosophical practice is grounded in traditions of Sanskrit grammar, which is key to understanding his anti-essentialist philosophy of language. Second, Salvini shows how Candrakirti is attentive to the ways in which Nagarjuna himself was working in an abhidharma philosophical context and how Candrakirti employs abhidharma analysis in his own works. The third aspect is Candrakirti's inclusive hermeneutics, as he finds arguments for emptiness in both Mahayana and non-Mahayana sources and presents his own ideas without relying exclusively on the authority of any one circumscribed set of Buddhist sutras.

## MIDDLE-PERIOD COMMENTATORS

Following the development and articulation of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as distinct and coherent philosophical schools, with thinkers from both traditions engaging Dignaga and Dharmakirti, in the eighth century, we see efforts to take stock of the diversity of philosophical positions. These efforts took different approaches, some critical and some syncretic, to address the hermeneutical and philosophical issues that such diverging orientations and interpretations posed to the coherence of the Buddhist tradition. At times, this meant presenting a path leading through a hierarchy of views from the lowest to the most liberating wisdom. At other times, it meant offering new interpretations that could bend the meaning of root texts in creative ways. It could also involve the creation of new conceptual and exegetical tools aimed at solving problems posed by Buddhist and non-Buddhist opponents.

We see one version of a philosophical synthesis together with the development of original philosophical positions in Subhagupta (eighth century), who draws on the atomic theories found in Vaibhasika and Sautrantika traditions even as he is firmly rooted in the logic and epistemology of Dignaga and Dharmakirti. Serena Saccone explores how Subhagupta, while mostly interpreting and elaborating on Dharmakirti's thinking, develops his own ontological and epistemological views. This is especially true in his Verses on the Demonstration of External Objects (\*Bahyarthasiddhikarika), in which he defends a form of externalism in contrast to the ontological idealism of Dignaga and Dharmakirti even as he employs their methods of argument. In the same text, Subhagupta argues against both the Sautrantikas and the idealists and defends the view that sense cognitions are not shaped by the image of their objects.

Subhagupta's student, Dharmottara (eighth century), wrote his own independent treatises, but he is primarily known for his commentaries on Dharmakirti's writings on epistemology. David Nowakowski, in his chapter, focuses on Dharmottara's commentary on Dharmakirti's Epitome of Reason (Nyayabindu). While Dharmottara presents himself as faithfully interpreting Dharmakirti's thought, in resolving tensions and constructing a more coherent and systematic account,

Dharmottara nonetheless introduces novel ideas. In particular, Nowakowski spotlights how Dharmottara's epistemology and philosophy of mind blur Dharmakirti's clear distinction between perception, inferential reason, and inference-for-others. While he draws on Dharmakirti's resources, Dharmottara's epistemology is much more cognizer relative, as he emphasizes the ways in which both perception and inference are themselves dependent on the particular conditions of individual cognitive agents. This rejection of Dharmakirti's more impersonal account of cognitive processes proved influential for some later Buddhist philosophers.

Ryusei Keira, in his chapter, discusses Jnanagarbha (eighth century), author of the *Commentary on the Distinction Between the Two Truths* (*Satyadvavibhangavrtti*). Following Bhaviveka and informed by Dharmakirti's epistemology, Jnanagarbha is perhaps the first Indian Buddhist philosopher to explicitly integrate Yogacara views into a Madhyamaka framework. For example, Jnanagarbha employs the idea of "mind-only" (*cittamatra*) to argue for the selflessness of external objects. Keira argues that this moment of Yogacara thought illustrates Jnanagarbha's gradualism, as it is only one stage in what will ultimately be a Madhyamaka account that shows the selflessness of mind. Keira is particularly interested in Jnanagarbha's account of the two truths, how it is different from the account of the two truths found in other prominent Madhyamaka thinkers, and the diverse Tibetan interpretations of Jnanagarbha's distinction between the conventional and the ultimate.

Santaraksita (ca. 725-788) is said to have been Jnanagarbha's student and wrote a subcommentary (*panjika*) on his teacher's *Commentary*. He also employs Dignaga and Dharmakirti's logic and epistemology and is the first prominent Madhyamika philosopher to produce a commentary on a text by Dharmakirti. Allison Aitken, in her chapter on Santarakita, traces his syncretic method that was to become influential for much Indian and Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. This syncretic method employs and then rejects one view after another, culminating in the Madhyamaka relinquishing of all views. For example, in his *Ornament of the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakalamkara*), Santaraksita rejects the direct realist theory of perception associated with Vaibhasikas by using arguments from the Sautrantika representationalist theory of perception. But then he adopts the Yogacara idealist ontology — which, together with the Yogacara understanding of cognition as reflexively aware, he believes to be conventionally true — to critique that same Sautrantika representationalism. In the end, while the Yogacara position may be helpful for freeing us from misguided views of the reality of external objects, Santaraksita employs it instrumentally and leaves it behind with his famous articulation of the neither-one-nor-many argument for the Madhyamaka ultimate truth of the emptiness of intrinsic nature, including the emptiness of the Yogacara concept of mind.

Continuing this lineage, Santaraksita's prolific student Kamalasila (ca. 740-795) shows even greater enthusiasm for integrating Yogacara and Madhyamaka thought, often bolstered by elaborate arguments rooted in Dharmakirti's epistemological theories. In the following chapter, Sara McClintock presents an overview of Kamalasila's oeuvre, showcasing his range from philosophical treatises to sutra commentaries to meditation and monastic training manuals to epistles. Like his teacher Santaraksita, Kamalasila is unusual in this volume in that we have historical records testifying to his existence as the result of his sojourn in Tibet, where he traveled at the invitation of the king and where he engaged in teaching and debate. Some of his works appear to have been written in Tibet and may also therefore represent his attempt to transmit the full range of scholastic knowledge of Nalanda, the famed monastic university in North India with which he is associated. Throughout his many writings, however, a consistent theme is the importance of understanding the conventional realities that allow reason to function. McClintock argues that Kamalasila sees even wisdom as a "necessary illusion" which the bodhisattva must embrace if they are to be of help to the world.

Another of Santaraksita's students, Haribhadra (eighth century), also draws on diverse Buddhist philosophical traditions in a syncretic fashion. Pierre-Julien Harter, in his chapter, focuses on Haribhadra's engagement with the Perfect Wisdom (Prajnaparamita) tradition. Haribhadra exemplifies those commentators who want both to appear subservient to texts and to manifest a creativity that opens new philosophical horizons. According to Harter, we see this in the alliance Haribhadra forges between the sutras of Perfect Wisdom and the Ornament of Realizations (Abhisamayalankara), of which he became a champion. This exegetical innovation is at the same time a philosophical innovation since it updates the Perfect Wisdom by giving it what Harter calls a "voice" and by giving to the Buddhist path a treatise (sastra) and a place within philosophical debates.

Santideva (eighth century) is the Indian Buddhist author whose work is most widely read by contemporary scholars as a contribution to moral philosophy. Both of Santideva's surviving texts — the Introduction to the Practice of Awakening (Bodhicaryavatara) and the Compendium of Trainings (Sikṣasamuccaya) — make significant contributions to understanding the moral dimensions of mindfulness, concentration, virtue, well-being, and the relation between metaphysics and ethics. Stephen Harris, in his chapter, is particularly interested in Santideva's analysis of the virtues of generosity, patience, and wisdom and its role in the cultivation of the other virtues of a bodhisattva. He also focuses on bodhicitta, or "the mind dedicated to full awakening" and the vow to become a bodhisattva. Harris emphasizes the ways in which, throughout Santideva's account of cultivating the virtues of a bodhisattva, we see the convergence of altruism and self-interest, that attending to the good of the other is simultaneously to attend to our own most fundamental good.

In the final chapter in this section, Shinya Moriyama turns to another commentator on Dharmakīrti, Prajñakaragupta (eighth—ninth century). Moriyama focuses on the most distinctive elements of Prajñakaragupta's thought in ontology, epistemology, and philosophy of religion. He begins with Prajñakaragupta's theory of "backward causation," according to which future entities function as causes of present entities. Moriyama then discusses Prajñakaragupta's ontological idealism, which equates existence with being perceived and which informs his epistemology. Then Moriyama turns to Prajñakaragupta's expansive account of the Buddha's omniscience, including the knowledge of all past and future entities. He ends with a discussion of Prajñakaragupta's doctrine of nonduality, the culmination of the Buddhist path of wisdom.

## LATE-PERIOD COMMENTATORS

The tenth through twelfth centuries represent the start of the waning of the classical period of Buddhist philosophy in India. Yet this period is also marked by tremendous creativity, often in ways that modern scholars are only beginning to appreciate and understand, with Buddhist philosophers propounding new types of syntheses both in the debate halls of the great monastic universities of North India and in scholarly treatises. Tantric practice and thought are increasingly influential, while the epistemological theories of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti continue to hold considerable sway. Madhyamaka and Yogācāra continue to vie for dominance, even as thinkers like Ratnakarasanti attempt to knit them together, sometimes with the aid of tantric or Buddha-nature theories. Scholars like Jñānasrimitra and Ratnakīrti continue to argue with non-Buddhist thinkers, extending conversations on topics including philosophy of language and the warrants for knowledge (pramāṇas) such as perception and inference, even as practitioners like Saraha (see Part 2) offer an alternative path rejecting such scholastic approaches. Some philosophers travel outside of India, bringing new ideas to other regions and greatly influencing the course of Buddhist thought, as with Atiśa's promotion of Candrakīrti in Central Tibet. In turn, Tibetans and others visit the monastic universities, seeking knowledge to bring back to their homelands, where Buddhist philosophy would continue to develop long past the time of its demise in India.

According to Tibetan sources, Jitāri (tenth century) was associated with tantric traditions and clearly defended Madhyamaka in his doxographical writings. However, as Junjie Chu shows in his chapter, two recently discovered manuscripts of a treatise attributed to Jitāri, *Topics of Debate*, complicate our understanding of Jitāri's own philosophical position. *Topics of Debate* makes possible a more comprehensive understanding of Jitāri's philosophy than previously available texts because of the breadth of its scope: in seventeen chapters, he focuses on seventeen significant topics of debate among Buddhist, Brahmanical, and Jain philosophers. These chapters typically begin with an argument for Jitāri's own position followed by refutations of objections and other positions. Chu gives an overview of each of these chapters and concludes that while Jitāri may have been influenced by Madhyamaka thought, he is better understood as a Yogacara thinker in the tradition of Dharmakīrti.

Jñānasrimitra (tenth century) belongs to a group of scholars from the great Buddhist university of Vikramasīla. He also wrote from within the logical and epistemological tradition derived from Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. Jñānasrimitra analyzes cognitions into "appearance" (*pratibhasa*) and "determination" (*adhyavasaya*). Any conceptual or nonconceptual awareness, according to Jñānasrimitra, involves the appearance of an image in consciousness. "Determination" is the process whereby a phenomenal image is given as presenting something other than itself; this is, Jñānasrimitra argues, conceptual awareness. But we are mistaken in taking a cognition that includes an image of something beyond itself as actually giving us an external object. Rather, as Lawrence McCrea makes clear in his chapter, for Jñānasrimitra, appearances in consciousness are just that — appearances in consciousness — for there is nothing that exists outside of consciousness. Jñānasrimitra defends an idealist position that there is only one undifferentiated mental image, what he calls "variegated nonduality" (*citra-advaita*). He deploys the distinction between appearance and determination to offer creative solutions to a variety of problems in ontology and metaphysics, philosophy of language, epistemology, logic, and philosophy of religion, even as he grounds himself as an exegete of the Dharmakīrtian tradition.

Jñānasrimitra's work was influential for much Buddhist philosophy in India and was also engaged by prominent non-Buddhist Indian philosophers for centuries. Ratnakīrti (eleventh century), his student from Vikramasīla, concisely summarizes, defends, and elaborates on the views of his teacher. Like Jñānasrimitra, Ratnakīrti works within the broader Dharmakīrtian tradition of logic and epistemology and addresses a range of issues in Buddhist philosophy. In his chapter, Patrick McAllister explores Ratnakīrti's ontology with a particular focus on two themes. The first is Ratnakīrti's position that for anything to be real, it must be momentary, because if something were not momentary, it could not be a cause. The second is Ratnakīrti's ontological idealism that nothing exists outside of the mind. As McAllister shows, Ratnakīrti devoted considerable attention to making sense of cognition and the Buddhist path from a perspective in which our everyday experience of enduring and external objects is thoroughly erroneous.

The Mahayana view that ordinary persons perceive conventional reality and take it to be ultimately real, while a buddha does not perceive conventional reality, raises the problem of how a buddha can communicate with and help ordinary persons. According to Ratnakarasanti (eleventh century), grasping subjects and the objects they grasp are both imagined. They are representational forms that arise in the consciousness of an ordinary person, but a buddha is precisely free from these erroneous representations and perceives reality as it ultimately is. As Gregory Max Seton shows, Ratnakarasanti makes the controversial argument that, motivated by compassion, a buddha purposefully retains a degree of cognitive error, which enables perception of the external objects and the grasping subject even as a buddha simultaneously knows these representational forms are erroneous. Seton focuses on the account of consciousness and the theory of error Ratnakarasanti employs as he attempts to develop an ontology and representationalist epistemology that would constitute the correct interpretation of both Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka and Asaṅga's Yogacara.



We can see another kind of syncretic project in the work of Atisa (982-1050, who integrates Candrakirti's and Bhaviveka's methodological approaches to Nagarjuna's Middle Way philosophy, as well as teachings on the bodhisattva path and esoteric tantric practices. While Atisa primarily follows Candrakirti's *reductio ad absurdum* method of demonstrating contradictions in the views of others, like Bhaviveka, he employs reasoning as an aid to cultivate insight, even as he eschews the approach to valid means of cognition (*pramana*) developed by Dignaga and Dharmakirti. The result, as James B. Apple suggests, is a form of nominalism, according to which cognitions and objects are mere appearances and not ultimately real because they are mental imputations. Even the mind, itself dependently originated, is also a nominal designation, an appearance that cannot be established as inherently existing. Atisa calls his approach the "Great Middle Way: integrating a multiplicity of teachings and practices to support progress on the path to a nondual awakening, ultimately letting go of even nonconceptual wisdom.

## MODERN PHILOSOPHERS

Indian Buddhist philosophy is typically associated with early figures such as Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, and their premodern commentators. But in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a number of Indian scholars and social reformers took up Buddhist thought in new and intellectually creative ways. Using the language of "Buddhist Revival" — and thus emphasizing what they described as India's glorious Buddhist past — they reformulated Buddhism as a modern way of life appropriate for democratic, egalitarian societies. Figures such as Iyotsee Thass, Rahula Sankrityayana, Dharmananda Damodar Kosambi, P. Lakshmi Narasu, and B. R. Ambedkar found in Buddhist traditions a universal religion, characterized by reason and morality, that they simultaneously proposed as a national religion for India. Responding to the pressing issues of the time — such as colonialism and independence; the formation of a new republic; and religious, class, and political conflicts — they sought resources and inspiration in Buddhist traditions for developing a non-sectarian morality; advocating for freedom of thought; and critically rethinking and reconstructing society to be more equal in terms of caste, gender, economics, and politics. The philosophers whose work is explored in this section thus display two of the many ways in which Buddhist philosophy has been adapted to address the challenges of modernity.

In the first chapter of this section, William Edelglass focuses on three intertwined threads of the philosophy of religion, Buddhism as a socially engaged practice, and Buddhist political philosophy in the writings of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956), the most prominent of the modern Indian Buddhist figures. Ambedkar was born into an outcaste community, the Mahars, and went on to earn multiple graduate degrees at both Columbia and the London School of Economics, eventually becoming the first minister of law in the newly independent India and chair of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution: While he is primarily known as the chief architect of the constitution, Ambedkar was also a prolific author who worked in disciplines across the social sciences and humanities, including philosophy. According to Ambedkar's analysis, the inequality that permeated Indian society was due in part to the dominant forms of Indian religion; he argued for the annihilation of caste, as well as the abandonment of the religious framework that justified caste hierarchy. However, Ambedkar believed religion was still important, as it could provide the basis for a sacred morality and responsibility to others that would bind social groups together in a democratic society. Ambedkar devoted the last decade of his life to developing a Buddhist philosophy and practice that would explicitly center the experience of marginalized communities and lead to a more free, just, and equitable society.

Jay Garfield, in the final chapter, presents an overview of the philosophy of the Dalai Lama XIV (the Ven. Tenzin Gyatso, 1935) Characterizing the Dalai Lama XIV as a modern Indian philosopher may not be an obvious choice. However, the Dalai Lama XIV has lived his entire adult life in India, his

own philosophical work is rooted in Indian Buddhist traditions as taken up in Tibet, and for decades he has been in dialogue with Indian philosophical and religious thinkers. The Dalai Lama XIV's philosophical writings include commentaries on Indian Buddhist texts, treatises in moral philosophy seeking to develop a universal ethic, reflections on science and Buddhist metaphysics, philosophy of religion and interfaith dialogues, and works devoted to nonviolence and political thought. As Garfield shows, these texts offer a distinctive synthesis of classical Indian and Tibetan Buddhist philosophy with contemporary Indian and Western thought and make the Dalai Lama XIV one of the most significant and influential contemporary Indian philosophers. <>

## **STAGES OF THE PATH AND THE ORAL TRANSMISSION: SELECTED TEACHINGS OF THE GELUK SCHOOL** edited and translated by Thupten Jinpa, Rosemary Patton, Dagpo Rinpoché [Library of Tibetan Classics, Wisdom Publications, 9780861714452]

A major contribution to the literature on Buddhist practice according to the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism from its foremost interpreter.

Although it was the last major school to emerge in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the Geluk school has left an indelible mark on Buddhist thought and practice. The intellectual and spiritual brilliance of its founder, the great Tsongkhapa (1357–1419), has inspired generations of scholars and tantric yogis to place him at the heart of their daily meditative practice. The Geluk tradition's close ties to the Dalai Lamas have also afforded it an outsized influence in all aspects of Tibetan life for centuries. At its peak its combined monasteries boasted a population in the tens of thousands, and its sway encompassed the religious landscape of Mongolia and much of Central Asia.

This widespread religious activity fostered a rich literary tradition, and fifteen seminal works are featured here representing four genres of that tradition. They include works on the stages of the path, or lamrim, the genre for which the Geluk is most renowned; works on guru yoga, centered around the core Geluk ritual Offering to the Guru (Lama Chöpa); teachings from the unique oral transmission of Geluk mahamudra, meditation on the nature of mind; and instructions on the three essential points—what to practice in life, at death, and in the bardo.

Your guide to these riches, Thupten Jinpa, maps out their historical context and spiritual significance in his extensive introduction.

### **Review**

“Because so many of its doctrinal works have been translated into English, it is often assumed that the Geluk tradition is concerned above all with scholastic philosophy. However, like all Tibetan traditions, the Geluk has a rich canon of devotional works, meditation manuals, and practical instructions for the vision of reality. The most famous of those works are collected in this remarkable volume, works composed by some of the greatest masters and saints of the Land of Snows.” —**Donald Lopez**, Arthur E. Link Distinguished University Professor of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies, University of Michigan

“Expertly curated and lucidly translated, *Stages of the Path and the Oral Transmission* is a magnificent collection of practice-oriented texts from the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism. The meditation manuals, oral instructions, and rituals found in this book are practiced to this day in Geluk institutions in the whole of the Tibetan plateau, and increasingly in hundreds of Dharma centers

throughout the world. With more than a dozen expertly executed translations of the most beautiful and moving works ever written in the Tibetan language, this latest volume of *The Library of Tibetan Classics* is a wonderful gift to scholars and practitioners alike.” —**José Ignacio Cabezón**, Dalai Lama Professor of Tibetan Buddhism and Cultural Studies, University of California Santa Barbara

“We only need to look at the table of contents of *Stages of the Path and the Oral Transmission: Selected Teachings of the Geluk School* to know that this book is a treasure chest of vital instructions

According to the Precious Geden Lineage by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen

10. Prayer to the Lineage Gurus of Geden Mahamudra by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen  
11. A Lamp So Bright: An Extensive Explanation of the Root Text of Mahamudra of the Tradition of the Precious Geden Lineage by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen

12. An Experiential Guide to Mahamudra of the Sacred Geden Lineage by Shar Kalden Gyatso

13. Source of All Higher Attainments: A Very Secret Short Work Revealing Key Points of the View by Yongzin Yeshe Gyaltsen

#### PART 4: THE THREE ESSENTIAL POINTS

14. Sacred Words of the Great Siddha: A Condensed Practice of the Three Essential Points by Ngulchu Dharmabhadra

5. A Mirror Reflecting the Mahasiddha's Sacred Words: Notes on the Three Essential Points by Ngulchu Dharmabhadra

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About the Contributors

It is a profound source of joy for me to be able to offer in English this special anthology of teachings of the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism, founded near Lhasa by the celebrated master Tsongkhapa in the early fifteenth century. This volume, number 6 in The Library of Tibetan Classics, contains fifteen texts on four key areas of practice: (1) the lamrim, or stages of the path, based on instructions of the masters Atha and Tsongkhapa, (2) guru yoga based on Tsongkhapa's oral transmissions, (3) *mahamudra* and *guide to the view*, drawn on and inspired by Tsongkhapa's oral teachings, and (4) the three essential points, stemming from a unique instruction of the Indian mystic Mitrayogi.

Beginning with two short works in verse by Tsongkhapa himself, the texts in this volume enjoy deep affection by members of this Tibetan tradition, and some of them are published here for the first time in English translation. These texts serve as important guides for fundamental spiritual transformation, from the initial stage of turning one's mind to the Dharma up to the liberating stage of gaining insight into the ultimate nature of reality. Whether it is cultivating deep appreciation of the transient nature of life, overcoming attachment to objects of senses, experiencing deep devotional fusion of one's mind with that of the guru and meditation deity, developing universal compassion and the altruistic mind intent on enlightenment for the benefit of all beings, cultivating stillness of mind in the form of tranquil abiding, generating insight into no-self and emptiness, or actualizing mind's essential nature in the form of pure luminosity, this volume offers a truly rich resource. Most Geluk practitioners today use the two guru-yoga texts featured in



this volume, Dulnakpa's *Hundreds of Gods of Tusita* and Panchen Losang Chogyen's *Offering to the Guru*, as essential parts of their daily practice. Panchen's text in particular is used by many, myself included, as an all-encompassing daily meditation manual covering the entire domain of Dharma practice, including even a daily dose of mind training, or lojong. <>

## **BUDDHISM AND ITS RELIGIOUS OTHERS: HISTORICAL ENCOUNTERS AND REPRESENTATIONS** edited by C.V. Jones [Proceedings of the British Academy published by Oxford University Press, 9780197266991]

Throughout its history, Buddhism has developed alongside other traditions of religious belief and practice. Forms of Buddhism have in every era, region, and culture been confronted by rival systems that challenged its teachings about the world, how to behave in it, and liberation from it. This volume collects studies of Buddhist literature and art that represent the religious other to their audiences. Contributing authors examine how Buddhists in India, China, and elsewhere across Asia have understood their place in shared religious landscapes, and how they have responded to the presence and influence in the world of traditions other to their own. The studies in this volume consider a variety of 'others' that Buddhists of different times and situations have encountered, and the variety of mechanisms that Buddhists have employed to make sense of them. Chapters of this volume explore the range of attitudes that Buddhists have expressed with respect to other religions, how they have either accommodated the other within their worldview or pronounced the redundancy of their ideas and activities. These chapters illuminate how over the centuries Buddhists have used and reused stories, symbols, and other strategies to explain religious others and their value, in which every representation of the other is always also a comment on the character and status of Buddhism itself.

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## Buddhism among Religions

By the middle of the first millennium of the Common Era, Buddhism had spread from its homeland in North India to touch virtually every corner of South, Central and East Asia, across which proponents of different traditions of Buddhist teaching engaged with a wide and fluctuating variety of religious cohabiters. The majority of our sources for these encounters are literary or artistic products by Buddhists, who reflected upon the presence of Buddhist teaching (Dharma) and its institutional basis in the world (the Sangha, or community of Buddhist monastics and their supporters). These sources acknowledge that both the Dharma and Sangha were opposed and sometimes genuinely threatened by the influence of other religions. Buddhist texts and art provide only murky windows onto the social-historical contexts which historians and scholars of religion may seek to investigate, but through them we nonetheless glimpse the opinions of Buddhists about the content and value of non-Buddhist ideas and behaviours, as well as insights regarding the status of Buddhism — its founder, his teachings and those who preserve them — in shared, heterogeneous religious landscapes.

The present volume has its origins in a workshop hosted in Oxford in 2018 (entitled 'Buddhism and the Religious Other'), and concerns how forms of Buddhism conceptualised their rivals and neighbours as it competed for prestige, patronage and popular approval across different pre-modern Asian situations. The chapters in this collection investigate how creative Buddhist individuals or communities across Asia made sense of what they took to be, in the language of current scholarship, religious others: persons committed to traditions of thought and practice — whether systematised, or more nebulous, purportedly universal, or exclusive to some group — that Buddhists took to be different to their own.

Contributions to this volume follow a broadly historical trajectory, beginning with Buddhism's formation in the late-Vedic period of India, through its institutional diversification and the gradual success of Mahayana Buddhism, and on to different socio-religious climates that Buddhists navigated in South East Asia, China and Japan. The primary sources on which these chapters focus preserve traces of Buddhist thinking about the nature, status, or value of one (or more) other religion and, crucially, Buddhism in relation to it. In some examples, the religious other is projected back into the history of Buddhism's emergence in the world; elsewhere it appears more vividly in the form of contemporaneous interlocutors. Only rarely is the religious other given a voice that might have any authentic relation to any historical non-Buddhist. The sources investigated in this volume do not aim to facilitate dialogue or promote anything like a religious pluralism, but on a more immediate level make some statement about the fact that the words and deeds of Buddhists did not exist in the world unchallenged. Our starting point is that in spite of a common Buddhist heritage, modes of Buddhism across Asia and throughout the centuries repeatedly rethought how to make sense of religious others, and hence there is no single approach that Buddhism has to the fact that it shares the world with other systems of belief and practice.

Buddhists had different perspectives on their tradition relative to others, which is in no small part because their challengers themselves changed over centuries and across borders. In India, representatives of Brahmanism, or the tradition of ritual practice centred around the Vedas, came to call Buddhists 'nay-sayers' (nastikas) with respect to the importance of the gods and sacrifices to them.' While opposing the value of Vedic ritual and the institution of Brahmanical heredity, early

Buddhists presented themselves as '(true) Brahmins', whose purity was assured through progress in Buddhist instruction.' Buddhists otherwise situated themselves in opposition to rival traditions of renunciation, primarily Jainism and Ajivikas, to say nothing of the many other renunciant orders that may lurk behind vague and usually disparaging Buddhist references to 'other ascetics' (tirthika, nirgrantha, p4anda...).<sup>5</sup> As exponents of the Buddha's teaching about the world and how to behave in it, and advocates of the Sangha as the institution that preserves these teachings, Indian Buddhists considered their tradition to be superior to like-kind systems of thought and practice that they encountered.' In East Asia, Buddhism was one of a number of traditions that offered different responses to human questions and needs, at times supported or condemned by fluctuations in Chinese state politics. Chinese authors came to acknowledge different 'ways' (dao or lineages of 'teachings' (jiao rt) associated with the Buddha, Laozi, Confucius, or otherwise, which evinces that Chinese authors acknowledged the existence of alternative personal and social commitments, not necessarily mutually exclusive, that were available to both rulers and their subjects.'

Well aware of the range of terminology that Buddhists have used to address their interlocutors, our work presumes the general applicability of the category 'religious other', and thus implicitly that Buddhism and other traditions with which it interacted are usefully described as 'religions'. We need not take a firm stance on the age or provenance of the concept of religion's to recognise that traditions of devotion and of ritual, of reflection upon beliefs and practices as well as institutionalised investment in their preservation, upon which we might pragmatically hang the label 'religions' are themselves not modern inventions, nor reducible to creations of the Western academy.'

Conceptualising Buddhism as one religion among many is at least pragmatically valid, as this language communicates something of the competing commitments exhibited by pre-modern Asian sources regarding matters of human identity, responsibility and the pursuit of intrinsically valuable ends, such as liberation or union with a supreme divinity.

'Religious' matters under dispute between authors representative of Buddhism and its interlocutors or opponents shifted over the centuries, as chapters in this volume demonstrate. Arguments preserved in early Buddhist literature focus on which code of practice in the world — ritual, ascetical, or otherwise — led to purity and/or liberation from rebirth. But by the middle of the first millennium, Indian literature points to greater interest in the matter of to which deity or higher power (such as a buddha) one should devote one's attention, and why.' Apologists in the later centuries of the first millennium became focused on which tradition offered the most persuasive account of knowledge and its acquisition, and whose religious adepts boasted the most valuable ritual initiations or programmes of self-empowerment (in broad terms, 'yoga'). When describing these disputes, Buddhist authors from across Asia retold stories of how notable Indian Buddhist masters defeated non-Buddhist philosophers and devotees, often casting them as cynical or corrupt figures, in sometimes public, high-stakes debate. Although the historicity of any of these legendary encounters is far from certain, the consistent importance to Buddhists of debate with non-Buddhists is not. The Chinese pilgrim Yijing (635-713), while a student at the great Buddhist monastery Wanda in the late seventh century, reports that a central aim of a monk's education was training to defeat non-Buddhists in philosophical debate." The monastic vinaya literature of more than one Buddhist order permits that Buddhist monks study non-Buddhist teachings for just this purpose. The present volume explores how Buddhists in different contexts, in India and beyond, understood those religious others that they took to be worthy of scrutiny, and whose very presence in the world called for some response.

## Representation and Identity

Previous studies of how Buddhists have responded to religious diversity have sometimes focused on what Buddhist teaching has to say about interactions with dissenting voices, whereas others have

sought to mine socio-historical data about how Buddhists in particular eras and climates navigated and responded to the existence of other religions. Important collections of articles devoted to these themes include those edited by Perry Schmidt-Leukel, one of which — attending to Chinese religion specifically — was edited in collaboration with Joachim Gentz. A further, very impressive collection of studies, focused on Indo-Tibetan contexts and the product of just a single author, is that by David Seyfort Ruegg. Ruegg's focus on how Buddhist authors presented the Dharma as the authority on matters 'supramundane' (lokottara), against which other beliefs and practices are merely 'worldly' (laukika), identifies and explores a productive means by which Buddhists positioned themselves in relation to other religious phenomena in a number of settings. Further to Ruegg's treatment of 'local cults' in South and Central Asia are contributions to a volume edited by Henk Blezer and Mark Teeuwen, which attend to Buddhist interactions with and attitudes towards 'nativist' religion in (foremost) Japan and Tibet." The Japanese context, with special attention to the concept of 'original forms' (that are supramundane/Buddhist) and 'local traces' (that are worldly, and on face value perhaps 'not Buddhist') (honji suijaku), by which Buddhist authors affirmed superiority over local religious practices, is the focus of a collection of articles edited by Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli." Monograph-length studies of Buddhism and its interactions with specific religions across premodern Central and East Asia include those by Johan Elverskog (concerning Islam) and Christine Mollier (concerning Daoism)."

Given the varieties of Buddhism that the world has known, and the wealth of relevant literature and art in South, Central, or East Asian languages that is yet to receive scholarly attention, the scope for further study of how Buddhism has made sense of religious others remains broad. The present volume focuses on individual case studies of Buddhist sources that clarify the status and value of what they presume to be 'other' to Buddhism. Crucially, our contributions are less interested in influences between Buddhism and its religious cohabitants in different settings, and more concerned with how Buddhists imagined and represented to some audience the religious other and the relationship of Buddhism to it. To highlight this distinction, we might first consider a good account of how early Buddhist literature presents a variety of responses to the simple fact of the religious other's existence. Elizabeth Harris identifies in the Pali Suttapitaka five different modes of response to religious interlocutors: i) respectful debate; ii) teaching ideas to advocates of other traditions (proselytisation); iii) ridicule of the religious other; iv) subordination of the other, and v) appropriation of ideas or symbols from the other. Harris accounts for all of this with references to aptly chosen passages from the Pali Canon. The Buddha is reported to have taught calmly in the face of his detractors, yet advanced ideas that were clearly at odds to their own (for example, contra ritualism, or teaching about human identity between the conceptual poles of 'eternalism' and 'annihilationism'); only rarely does the Buddha remembered in this literature actively chasten Brahmins or other renunciants (śramanas), and he instead challenges the reasoning by which they consider themselves either ritually 'pure', or on course for liberation from rebirth. The Buddha otherwise presents his teaching as a route to that which other religious adepts in India considered to be important, most famously in the Tevijjasutta (DN 13), in which the Buddha expresses the superiority of his knowledge over the learning of ritualist Brahmins. It has been well-established that Buddhist literature appropriates and clarifies language drawn from the Vedic ritual world; for example, Buddhism inverts the importance of sacrificial fires, so integral to the practices of a Vedic ritualist, by presenting the problem of the human condition as a state in which all of one's being is 'afire' and in need of quenching.

However, not all of these aspects of Buddhism's relation to other traditions in ancient India entail clear reference to the religious other directly, nor tell us much about how Buddhists understood their place in one or more cultural setting. The Buddha is reported to have taught things that carefully distinguish him from others in his intellectual climate, but this is not in itself a response to



the status of other ideas, practices, or their exponents. Similarly, appropriation of concepts or vocabulary from a rival tradition is not the same as explaining how what is similar in another tradition relates to what is taught by the Buddha. A primary concern of the present volume is how Buddhist sources understood Buddhist Dharma in relation to the challenges represented by religious others. Whence comes the religious other, especially if the Buddha's influence in the world is supposedly so great? Are they simply misguided, or deviant? Does the non-Buddhist arrive at a view about the world, or some practice in it, solely by their own imagination, or through some miscomprehension of Buddhist truth; or even having been led there, for some enigmatic purpose, by the Buddha himself? In light of the externality of the religious other, to what degree does the non-Buddhist require correction, conversion, or condemnation? To these kinds of questions Buddhist authors, down the centuries and across Asia, provided different answers, which often must be teased out of works that concern other matters. A key finding of studies in this volume is that while the expressed interest of Buddhist literature is often commitment to teaching and, in principle, liberating other beings, Buddhist authors did not shy away from confronting the threat posed by opposition to its authority in the world, either by undermining forces that necessitated critical engagement, or by, at the very least, offering clarity about their status relative to the Buddha and his activities.

Wherever and whenever we encounter Buddhism, it is three authorities — the Buddha, his Dharma and the Sangha — that constitute the three jewels or treasures (*triratna*) that are expressly relied upon, promoted and defended by its exponents. Reminding ourselves of these three authorities is important, as it is shared commitment to their value in and to the world that unites otherwise disparate expressions of what Western scholarship came to call Buddhism, whether these were local to Bactria or Japan, Mongolia or Java, or very much alive in any corner of the world today. Buddhists across Asia appealed to the same authorities to define their identity in relation to others: the Buddha Sakyamuni, associated with the Indian subcontinent; his teachings preserved in discourses attributed to him; and a monastic lineage which, for all of its divisions, understood itself to have a common founder in the Buddha himself. Questions worth asking are whether or not there are discernible trends in the history of Buddhism's approaches to other religions, and whether or not these can be associated with particular currents in Buddhist thought and practice that flow from the Indian subcontinent and influence its expressions across Asia. Although attending to over two thousand years of history, and a range of very different regions and cultures, the papers collected in this volume showcase what we find to be recurring strategies that Buddhists used in relation to other religions.

### South Asian Encounters in Context/s

Informed reflection on Buddhist approaches to religious others depends upon close, critical attention to individual works, traditions, eras and contexts. A key aim of our chapters is to consider the specificity of Buddhism's dealing with religious others in different historical periods and regions. It serves us to situate these chapters and their findings in a loose narrative about the emergence, development and transmission of Buddhism in India and across pre-modern Asia, together with the history of its frontiers with other religious traditions. Buddhism emerged in India in the middle of the first millennium BCE as one among several, institutions focused on renunciation from domestic and social bonds, into an environment occupied already by competing traditions of asceticism and mendicancy (including what comes to be known as Jainism), sacrificial ritualism (Brahmanism) and the veneration of innumerable spirits (*yaksas*), the last of which remains little understood."

Perhaps the greatest quantity of ink spilt in this area has concerned Buddhism's early relation to Brahmanism, a tradition which itself should not be considered either monolithic or static." As an enduring interlocutor of Buddhism, Brahmanism wore many faces over the centuries: the

philosophical systems of Samkhya and Vaisheshika, the ritual and exegetical traditions of Mimamsa and Vedanta, and the no less diverse forms of devotional religion that had as their foci deities such as Visnu and Siva. References to Samkhya and Vaisheshika occur in Buddhist commentarial works from roughly the fourth century onwards, although awareness of their ideas can be seen in Buddhist literature produced closer to the dawn of the Common Era. Our earliest mention of Vedanta by a Buddhist author is likely in the work of Bhaviveka (sixth century), although the scriptural basis of that tradition, the Brahmanical Upanisads, were likely a foil to Buddhist teaching since its beginning. It is only a few centuries into the Common Era that Buddhist sources confront by name veneration of Visnu and Siva as supreme, creator deities, although there are older Buddhist rejections of Indian theism (*isvaravada*) that do not so clearly identify the cults or theologies of which our authors were aware."

At its foundations, Brahmanism commits to the preservation of ritual prescriptions and stories surrounding them: the content of the Vedic Samhitas, Brahmanic arms and other literature, by which its adherents elevated themselves and their practices over local customs or political structures. Early Buddhist literature, for example the content of discourses attributed to the Buddha in the Pali Canon, reports with great frequency the Buddha's interactions with proponents of a Vedic ritual order, who considered themselves to be rightly privileged in Indian society by virtue of their ancestry and their access to rituals that secured a level of ritual purity above others.' Early Buddhist discourses know the Buddha as a critic of persons who call themselves 'Brahman' (*brahman/brahmana*) by virtue of their birth or their adherence to traditions of ritual purification. Buddhism imagined itself apart from and in opposition to the authority of these Brahmins, whose defining characteristics, as far as early Buddhist compositions tell us, was their sense of self-importance and a reliance on sacrificial activity. Some scholarship, notably work by Johannes Bronkhorst, has challenged the dominant nineteenth- and twentieth-century perspective that couched Buddhism, at its origins, as a response to Brahmanism, and instead stresses the common provenance of Buddhism and other traditions of renunciation (foremost Jainism and Ajivikism) in 'Greater Magadha'. It is nonetheless a well-known feature of early Buddhist and Jain literature that they contested over what kind of renunciant most deserved the title Brahman, at times lauding the memory of sages from bygone eras as 'Brahmins' due to their supposed commitment to mendicancy and an authentic desire for knowledge rather than social prestige.

Recent re-evaluation of the late-Vedic religious climate is that by Nathan McGovern (2019), who contends that Buddhism's opposition to Brahmanism evolved alongside and was entangled with the maturation of Brahmanism itself. McGovern sees in the literature of the late-Vedic period a 'raucous' environment of competing claims to 'Brahmanhood', in which different teachers and communities of their followers vied for recognition, at the expense of their detractors, as exponents of true Brahmanical purity. McGovern's re-imagining of late-Vedic India invites different perspectives on the stories that authors, both Buddhist and Brahmanical, have told to impose what are perhaps only retrospectively clear distinctions on a plausibly much more complex, but essentially shared heritage in the middle of the first millennium BCE. McGovern's focus in the present volume is Samkhya: a development in Brahmanical thinking with perhaps very ancient roots, but which only reaches maturity, and its classical articulation in the *Samkhyakarika*, closer to the fifth century CE. As a case study in how Buddhist authors represented religious others back into the accepted history of their own tradition, McGovern looks at the work of the poet Asvaghosa, perhaps writing in the second century CE, who imagines the Samkhya of his own day back into the story of the bodhisattva Gautama's early career as a renunciant. In so doing, Asvaghosa reinforces the sense that Brahmanical philosophy of the poet's own period had been surpassed already, the Buddha having known and exceeded the most sophisticated picture of the world that Brahmanical metaphysics had to offer.

Although McGovern is right to question the antiquity of the opposition 'brahmana and sramana' in late-Vedic India, we nonetheless witness early Buddhist literature address on the one hand the value and status of ritualists, who invested importance in sacrifices and their hereditary right to perform them, and apart from them renunciants whose defining characteristic is their having abandoned domestic and wider social obligations." Indian Buddhist sources offer a wide range of vocabulary to describe ascetics, mendicants, or exponents of traditions of renunciation that rival the Buddhist Sangha. (caraka, parivrajaka, nirgrantha, etc.). These individuals and their communities clearly posed an enduring challenge to the status of Buddhism in the world, competing for the same householder devotees while exhibiting an undeniable similarity to Buddhists." It is for this explicit reason that Buddhist vinaya literature instructs the adoption of particular clothing for its monks and the avoidance of others (including nakedness), to distinguish followers of the Buddha from other, ostensibly similar renunciants."

Drawing upon analyses of religious otherness and othering in the broader study of religion/s, Claire Maes has attended to the means by which early Buddhist authors distinguished themselves from their 'proximate others'.<sup>38</sup> In the present volume, Maes explores the degree to which terminology that Buddhists used to refer to their others finds its origins in language and imagery common to both Buddhism and Jainism. These terms and tropes likely stem from the wider renunciant milieu in which these two traditions first took shape. Very often, Buddhist authors refer to other traditions of renunciation under the general label *tirthya/ tirthikas* (Pan *titthiyas*), often shorthand for (e.g.) *anyatirthyas* (*annatitthiyas*), or 'adherents to some religious groups that are other [to Buddhism]'. This being the case, talk of 'crossing' out of liberation — and so of 'fords' (Pali *tittha*) and 'forders' (*titthiyas*) related to this — was not anathema to Buddhism, but part of a shared terminology to describe the human predicament and the possibility of its end. Maes explores the imagery of 'crossing' the turbulent waters of rebirth as it appears in both early Buddhist and Jain sources, and considers the formative period in which Buddhists had yet to polemically distance themselves from the notion that their ford was one among many accounts, albeit the only reliable one, of how to 'pass over' from suffering.

Although sources for reliably constructing a social history of this period are sparse, it appears that the centuries either side of the Common Era were particularly kind to the Sangha. The edicts of Asoka bear witness to imperial support for it, although this was extended to other religious groups (*pasandas*) also.<sup>°</sup> The reigns of the Indo-Scythians (*Sakas*) and then Kusanas up until the middle of the third century coincided with the Sangha becoming increasingly landed through the support of merchants and guilds. A primary concern of Buddhist authors in this era, particularly among the scholastics of the Sarvastivada tradition, was reflection on *abhidharma*, or otherwise the finer points of doctrine that came to distinguish what was taught by different orders of the Buddhist Sangha (*nikayas*). Vincent Eltschinger's chapter looks at literature likely produced between the second and third centuries, and proper to the (Mula)Sarvastivadins, that provide some of our earliest known Buddhist attempts at something like doxography. Whereas earlier Buddhist works, for example the *Brahmajālasutta* (DN 1), present lists of erroneous views without context or attribution to particular orders or schools, in this period Buddhist authors situate the Buddha in a climate of diverse teachers, traditions and lineages who appear in other Buddhist sources. In these literary settings, the Buddha is cast as a triumphant liberator, who enters the world to quash different teachings (*paravadas*: 'allodoxies') that are projected back into the history of the Buddha's life and activities. Imagined opponents attempt to best the Buddha in displays of power, but they cannot; they are desperate, conniving and ultimately no match for Buddhist authority at the time of its most recent appearance in the world. Eltschinger examines how Buddhist authors used narrative creations to present non-Buddhist philosophers as deceptive, sophistic and even illogical; righteous audiences

see through their schemes, and side with the Buddha as a figure superior in both magical power and in philosophical erudition.

Still more creative (re)imaginings of the Buddha's work in the world occur in discourses (sutras) proper to Mahayana Buddhism, which were produced throughout the early centuries of the Common Era. Foremost among their concerns is the superiority of the path of the bodhisattva, or how to achieve the fully-awakened status of a buddha for the benefit of all sentient beings, over the goal of the Buddhist *śrāvaka*: the 'disciple' of mainstream Buddhism, who strives for an end only to their own transmigration.<sup>42</sup> Some important works of the Mahayanist imagination, a famous example of which is the *Saddharmapundarika* or Lotus Sutra, also reflect on the myriad kinds of influence that bodhisattvas can have on the world, and with this idea to hand developed novel approaches to the status and value of non-Buddhist beliefs in

Bodhisattvas who are advanced in their progress, described across mainstream and Mahayana Buddhism, are said to take on many forms across their immeasurably long careers. It is noteworthy that among the many Indian Buddhist accounts of bodhisattvas taking on this or that form it is unusual to find them having adopted the guise of non-Buddhists teachers or adepts (*tīrthikas*). My contribution to this volume addresses how Mahayanist discourses relate the ideal of the bodhisattva, who is supposed to work for the benefit of all sentient beings, to the reality that Buddhism was one among many religious traditions in the world. What I label the bodhisattva-*tīrthika* is the logical endpoint of the central Mahayanist belief that bodhisattvas work in mysterious ways for all kinds of audiences, whether these audiences know themselves to be witnesses to Buddhist Dharma or not. On the one hand, this suggests a certain tolerance that Mahayana Buddhism has for the religious other, who is never beyond the pale and remains included in the compassionate activities of bodhisattvas. On the other hand, inclusion of the religious other within the parameters of the Mahayana remained a device for announcing the power and dexterity of bodhisattvas, and the Mahayana specifically as the definitive form of the Buddha's teaching.

By the sixth century of the Common Era, by and large the most influential authors in Indian Buddhism known to us were all adherents to the Mahayana. This period marks a shift in the interests of Buddhist writing in general, as notable philosophers such as Dignaga and Dharmakīrti turned their attention to the matter of defending and advancing the Buddhist view of the world against outside opposition." In this literature, we find a dramatic increase in reference to non-Buddhists, often more specifically as rival 'philosophers' (*tāṇhikas*), as well as previously uncommon nomenclature used reflexively to refer to Buddhism itself: its adherents are 'of the Buddha/Sugata (*bauddha/śaṅgata*)', or '(sons) of the Sakyas (*śākya[putriya]*). Buddhist authors of this era sought to undermine the foundations of Brahmanical enquiry, attacking the epistemological basis of both its realist worldview and the scriptural reliability of the Vedas. The era in question is one in which Buddhism's religious (or philosophical) others could not be simply admonished, but had to be dealt with through systematic disputation.

Buddhist authors prepared their students for debates with a range of non-Buddhist opponents, not simply defenders of Vedic ritual (*Mīmāṃsā*) but also systems of Brahmanical metaphysics (*Sāṅkhya* and *Vaiśeṣika*), and beyond these — still a force on the Indian religious scene — Jainism.<sup>4</sup> In our fifth chapter, Marie-Hélène Gorisse guides us through the kinds of exchanges that we imagine taking place in the debating halls of early medieval India, and the kinds of arguments in which Buddhists and their sectarian opponents rehearsed and engaged. Gorisse's attention is focused on the complexities of how two Buddhist philosophers, Dharmakīrti and Santaraksita (eighth century), went about refuting the positions of non-Buddhist adversaries. Gorisse's chapter highlights some of the methods by which Buddhist authors responded to their religio-philosophical opponents in their writings: by either citing them directly, or creating what we find to be polemical strawmen. In this environment,



it was all the more important that Buddhists buttress the fundamentals of their teaching, such as the transience or illusionary nature of all phenomena, against the persuasive realism of Brahmanical philosophy and the slipperiness of Jain teachings (such as that of 'non-one-sidedness': *anekantavada*).

It is a curious fact of early medieval Indian history that this increased interest in apologetics and the arguments of other religions coincided with the burgeoning of esoteric ritual, or tantra, and literature concerned with it." Formative Buddhist tantric works from around the seventh century, such as the *Manjusriyamulakalpa* and *Vairocanaḥisarnbodhi*, confront the concern that what they teach — the practice of esoteric initiation (*abhiseka*), use of ritual diagrams (*mandalas*) and fire-sacrifices (*homās*) — might be better known in association with deities such as Siva and Visnu rather than as authentically Buddhist activities.' Scholarship diverges over how interactions between tantric traditions — which undoubtedly exhibit striking intertextuality, common ritual-philosophical presuppositions and iconography — might best be understood. Perhaps features of this ritualism shared by multiple traditions drew upon some shared substratum of medieval religious beliefs and motifs;" alternatively, they might be better thought of as the innovations one system (foremost Saivism) that were adapted by others (most productively Buddhism). Although there is little doubt that exponents of Buddhist and Saiva tantrism saw one another as rivals, scholars such as Verardi (2011) have advanced the thesis that what underlies Buddhist-Saiva tantric production was persistent mutual antagonism. This imagines that iconographical representation of Buddhist deities (*Trailokyavijaya*, *Samvara*, etc.) trampling on Saiva deities (*Mahavara*, *Uma*, etc.) are symbolic representations of very real hostilities that played out between the exponents of each group as they vied for patronage from rulers such as those of the Pala dynasty (8th-12th centuries).

Aleksandra Wenta's chapter attends first to this symbolism: the representation of Saivism in Buddhist tantra through the mythic demonisation, conquest and conversion of the deity Siva-Mahesvara, crushed underfoot by one or other embodiment of Buddhist Dharma." This same motif repeats in Buddhist tantric rites that intend harm upon a given target (*abhicāras*), commonly aimed at malevolent spirits or demons (or, at their head, the deities Siva or Ganapati), but also at worldly opponents to the authority of the Dharma. Wenta hypothesises, against the strongly antagonistic interpretation of Buddhist-Saiva relations, that the primary targets of rituals such as these were any groups or individuals considered to be morally 'wicked' (*dusta*). This 'weaponisation' of the Dharma was not for the purpose of suppressing non-Buddhists per se, but rather any trace of depravity that could be discerned inside or outside of the parameters of the Dharma, among whom Saivas were just one noteworthy category. In such a setting, Wenta argues, both Buddhism and Saivism may have drawn upon Indian legal thought for the language that they employed to condemn any number of felonious agents that they perceived to be active in the world.

## Dynamics Beyond the Subcontinent

The greatest portion of information that we have concerning Buddhism's premodern interactions with cultures outside of South Asia comes from China, where in the early centuries of the first millennium Buddhism received fluctuating approval from various courts. Buddhism was at times condemned by a native ideology centred on ritualism and social obligation that revered a divinely legitimised imperial figurehead: what came to be known as Confucianism. It was also in tension with systems of meditative focus, alchemy, divination and philosophy that in time coalesced into what becomes known as Daoism. Both Confucianism and Daoism built upon cosmological presuppositions very different to those woven into the fabric of earlier Buddhist teaching, yet both Chinese traditions drew upon and defined themselves in opposition to the Dharma and its content." Further east, in Japan, Buddhism assimilated local customs and traditions while itself being absorbed into those islands' own distinctive culture, centuries before the formalisation of Japanese ritualism under the label Shinto (more anciently *jindo*). In South East Asia, Buddhists again had to make sense of

local forms of belief and practice, but also to wrestle once more with patronage offered to South Asian deities, all before the region was introduced to European Christianity — the first of Buddhism's objectors to knowingly define itself as a 'religion' as popularly understood today. For all of its success across Asia, Buddhism has seldom had a monopoly on religious truth or activity, and in each climate Buddhists shaped their identity and that of their tradition in response to the challenges presented by different religious others.

Associations between the religious other encountered in the world and malevolent or 'demonic' forces that affect it in a more insidious manner did not begin with Buddhism's tantric developments, nor were they confined to South Asia. The archetypal adversary in Buddhist tradition, known as far back as material in the Pali Nikayas and in Indian reliefs produced before the turn of the Common Era, is the deity or demon Mara. With the notable exception of a recent monograph by Nichols (2018), most scholarly attention to the role played by Mara in especially Indian Buddhism has focused on precisely his 'demonic' character, and his symbolic value as an embodiment of evil or the problem of recurring death (hence indeed his name, from the Indic 'mr: 'to die')." Originally presented as an obstacle to the Buddha's activities in his own right, evidence in Indian art and literature communicates that Mara became increasingly associated with the presence and influence of non-Buddhist forces in the world, both religious and political. Perry Schmidt-Leukel's contribution to the current volume examines Mara's role in Buddhist representations of other religious traditions, in instances where Mara as mythic opponent to Buddhist authority is associated with, and in iconographic contexts accompanied by, depictions of various kinds of real-world opposition to Buddhism. Schmidt-Leukel demonstrates that outside of India, the trope of the Buddha's victory over Mara has been employed as something like a call to arms, for protectors of the Dharma to come to its defence against a variety of 'demonised' aggressors. Where rivals to the Buddha's authority are cast as Mara, his followers, or offspring, there is little ambiguity about how those others are being imagined: as worldly manifestations of forces that have always sought to suppress the Dharma, who must be resisted if not, more decisively, removed.

In India and South East Asia, Buddhism faced comparable kinds of opposition, in evolving forms of Brahmanism and what would come to be called Hindu theism. Very different dynamics played out in East Asia, into which Buddhism was transmitted in the first couple of centuries of the Common Era, or the final centuries of the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE). Buddhist texts and teachers entered the west of the empire from Central Asia, and in China met an already developed literary culture focused on the study of 'classics' that were the foundations of what came to be known as Confucianism. During the course of the long and tumultuous era of Six Dynasties (220-589CE), modes of Buddhist thought and practice had great success and flourished under one or other regional administration, while still attracting opposition from members of one or other political court." These dynamics become more complicated during the late fifth century, around which time traditions of Chinese ritual, alchemy and social organisation took clearer shape as what came to be called Daoism. Whereas it would take longer for Confucianism to model itself into anything of like-kind to Buddhism, Daoism was China's first indigenous 'religion' that would model its texts, teachings and most importantly institutions (monasteries) on what Buddhism had brought from 'the West', and competed with the Sangha for the attention of rulers and courts.

Much has been written about the borrowing of ideas between Chinese Buddhist and Daoist authors during formative periods for both. However, there is more to be explored with respect to how Buddhists and Daoists referred to one another in different periods or regions, especially as their statuses as discrete religious identities came into sharper focus." Buddhist sources suggest that between the fourth and sixth centuries the growing influence of Buddhism across China faced little opposition, and that the Sangha acquired a firm footing across both the Northern and Southern territories of a divided empire. Literature of this period seems relatively quiet with respect to what

obstacles it did face, but an invaluable source is the *Hongming ji*, compiled by Seng You (445-518), which collects myriad Chinese Buddhist perspectives on how their ideas and practices were distinct from others in China, and should be promoted over them. In his chapter, Stephen Bokenkamp focuses on an exchange preserved in the *Hongmingji* between Zhang Rong (444-97) and Zhou Yong (d. 493?), in which we witness how Buddhists were aware of the dangers of the argument advanced by Daoists that two accounts of what is true, the Dao and the Dharma, were one in origin: a move which threatened to subsume Buddhism into native Chinese religious structures. One major takeaway of Bokenkamp's chapter is that Daoists were not without intellectual resources in their dealings with Buddhist polemicists, and that in engagement with one another, fifth-century Buddhist and Daoist authors were developing a clearer sense of their own beliefs, affiliations and differences.

In the context of China's divided empire, Daoist identity took shape through equal parts emulation of and distinction from Buddhism. Different dynamics played out further east, in Japan, which in this same period may have received its earliest meaningful encounters with Buddhist teachings from the Asian mainland. Japanese Buddhist commentators worked with Indian teachings refracted through a Chinese lens. Most significantly, and informed by the Chinese Tiantai tradition (later Japanese Tendai), Japanese Buddhism claimed to be able to account for the 'original ground' (*honji*) of which innumerable localised gods and their cults were only derivative 'traces' (*suijaku*). As in China, Japanese Buddhists presented the truths to which the Dharma provided privileged access as the common ground to which other religions could only gesture.

This productive model of how some religious phenomena can be subordinated to others framed Japanese debate over whether Buddhist or non-Buddhist articulations of religious truth more fully account for what lies beyond the visible world. In her chapter, Benedetta Lomi explores the manner in which Buddhist authors of the Heian period (794-1185) accounted for the otherness of Daoist, Confucian and other streams of thought by accommodating them as either misremembered or strictly provisional expressions of Buddhist teaching. Notable Buddhist authors from this era argued that there is nothing that is totally other to the Dharma, including anything that is proper to 'other paths' of religious practice (*gedo* as these are all still refractions of Buddhist power (specifically, they can be thought of as products by the Buddha Vairocana [*Dainichi*], at the centre of the Shingon tradition). And yet, as Lomi explores, a paradigm in which there is nothing truly oppositional to the Buddha and his bodhisattvas facilitates the incorporation of non-Buddhist elements, such as deities and rituals, into the tradition. This still requires avenues to condemn what is unacceptable, such as the practice of 'outside arts' (*gejutsu*), or what we might call magic. What is then alien to Buddhism can be cast as miscomprehension of Buddhist truth, or misuse of what is ultimately Buddhist power: an accusation that Buddhist authors could use not only against true outsiders to institutional Buddhism, but also to belittle the deities and associated rituals of rival Buddhist sects and lineages.

Later disputes in East Asian Buddhism, which traverse the Chinese and Japanese cultural spheres, sustain arguments over how Buddhism and what is not Buddhism might be indebted to one another, thereby subordinating one to the other. Some of these debates concern the third of China's 'three teachings' (*sanjiao*) together with Buddhism and Daoism, namely Confucianism, forms of which have also played significant roles in the religious history of Korea and Japan. In China, early critiques of Buddhism and its intrusion into the life of Chinese populations (and, more outrageously, the life of the imperial court) are associated with Confucianism and the veneration of a social order supposedly inherited from a bygone era, outlined in classics traditionally ascribed to the sage Confucius. A notable development beginning in the Song period (960-1279) are efforts to reform Confucian tradition, influenced by the work of Tang dynasty figures such as Han Yu (c. 768-824) and Li Ao (c. 773-836), such that it was better equipped to respond to Buddhist teachings regarding human nature, cosmology and their relation to ethics. Returning to a focus of some of his earlier work, T.H. Barrett's chapter traces the history, from tenth-century China to present-day Japan, of Li Ao being

remembered not simply as a Confucian scholar but also as a student of Chan Buddhism, and hence from the Japanese perspective part of the extended heritage of Japan's own Zen tradition.<sup>9</sup> A late but influential source for this myth, the work of the nineteenth-century Zen author Imakita Kosen (1816-92), posits that it was only through the involvement of Chan teachers in the lives of Tang-Song Confucian masters that the true import of Confucius could be recovered, understood and then expounded; the intent of Confucius is knowable only if illuminated by Chan/Zen Buddhist insight. Barrett shows that the background to this polemic is Imakita's disagreements with Confucians not of Tang-Song-era China, who could be couched as students of Buddhist Dharma, but with the Japanese Confucian scholars closer to his own day. By perpetuating a creative reimagining of his own intellectual heritage and that of his rivals, another Buddhist author creatively subordinates the value of a rival tradition to Buddhist Dharma, employing a strategy that is as old as any other in Buddhism's repertoire of responses to religious others.

### Religious Others, and What to Make of Them

The preceding sketch of different Buddhist encounters with and representations of other religions across Asia is far from complete, but it aids our reflection on some of the approaches that Buddhists used and reused in different settings. One thing that is clear is that the reputation for religious tolerance commonly attributed to Buddhism, which undoubtedly has a solid basis in very foundational aspects of Buddhist ethics, must also acknowledge Buddhism's robust responses to competition or opposition in the world. Throughout the chapters that follow we see the use of martial metaphors and imagery to confront religious others as combatants or enemies that must be defeated. Sometimes it is the Buddha himself who is imagined to have quashed opposition to the Dharma (Eltzschinger), and in other cases it is tantric deities in ferocious service to it (Wenta); in the Theravadin world, where it is to this day Mara who symbolises all that opposes the Buddha's influence, it is Buddhists themselves who are instructed to step up and take action (Schmidt-Leukel).

Although the terms of engagement were quite different, the world of formalised debate in India that is the context of Gorisse's investigation of Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophers was no less confrontational. In India and in East Asia, Buddhists entered into formal debate with their detractors, often to demonstrate Buddhism's superiority and greater claim to patronage.<sup>9</sup> In such contests, it must have been quite obvious to any audience who was and who was not Buddhist, or at least who was speaking as a representative of Buddhism as a discrete heritage of ideas and practices. But in other contexts competing identities were likely not so clear-cut. As explored in Maes' chapter, Buddhism in its early life shared common ideas, practices and metaphors with their religious others, and early Buddhist authors had to underline important distinctions between their kind of renunciation and that of rival traditions. The need to navigate the blurriness of Buddhist and non-Buddhist identity was not restricted to its early life in India, and as Bokenkamp shows the boundaries of the Buddhist and the Daoist were not always so clear in China. Sometimes a task for Buddhist authors was to shore up what distinguished one religious identity from another, the boundaries of which may have been clearer to some parties (renunciants and other adepts) than to others (devotees, who might offer support to some religious specialists, but not others).

A particularly productive response to religious others, which we encounter in several settings, both acknowledges these boundaries and yet, simultaneously, abolishes them. Associated foremost with expressions of Mahayana Buddhism, we see in several contexts the polemical inclusion or accommodation of what is ostensibly not Buddhist within the parameters of the Buddha's influence (Jones, Bokenkamp, Lomi and Barrett). Although not observable in all sources for Mahayana Buddhism, a general feature of its thinking is the sense that the content of the Dharma is not simply the correct account of the nature of experience, but the underlying truth to any utterance or activity that has any soteriological merit to it. Religions do not espouse different dharmas', so to



speak, but all gesture to one Dharma, the real truth of things, with differing degrees of accuracy. All manner of persons, teachings and institutions can then be re-imagined as traces or expressions of specifically Buddhist influence, or examples of what is often couched as 'skill-in-means' (upayakausalya; fangbien) by buddhas or bodhisattvas whose words and actions come from beyond the world as it is apparent to us. Within this framework, Buddhism could deride as 'worldly' any phenomenon, including the appearance and expositions of different religions, while acknowledging a single 'supramundane' basis to them all, known only through Buddhist teachings." That this conception of Buddhism and its relation to others has worked across a number of interreligious frontiers is testament to its versatility. It should however be stressed that admitting a 'common ground' to religious teachings is not evidence of religious tolerance, so much as condescension that neutralises the validity of another tradition, and awards to Buddhism a privileged voice with respect to any number of contested matters."

Even when it lays claim to account for the wider religious world, Buddhist teaching is still presumed to be one thing among many; assertions and behaviours advanced by it are correct, and alternative answers to concerns about human nature, action and liberation that are voiced by rival traditions are left wanting. The Buddha too is one teacher among many, even if — unlike other teachers in the world — his age-long pursuit of awakening elevated him to a special status above and beyond that which is enjoyed by any sage or deity who teaches differently to him. In various contexts, our chapters show how Buddhist authors project other religions back into formative periods in the history of Buddhism, and sometimes into the pivotal era of the Buddha's appearance in the world. The Bodhisattva (Sakyamuni) might be (re)imagined as having learnt from and surpassed what our authors see as rivals (McGovern), or the Buddha might be presented as the victor over wrong-minded, 'worldly' thinking in broader terms (Eltschinger). Then again, retrospection might attend to a different era, to demonstrate, for example, that a Confucian master was more a student of Zen all along (Barrett). Sometimes these matters are contested in what is clearly mythic time; such is the case where the tensions between Buddhists and Saivas are played out between gods, Buddhas, bodhisattvas and their divine retinues (Wenta). Whenever these dynamics are imagined, art and literature provide creative spaces through which to express the purported dominance of one religious heritage over another, imagined either as the subjugation of demonic forces or the humiliation of rival contemplatives and philosophers.

It is worth underlining that these explorations of Buddhism's relation to its religious others would not, in most cases, have had much weight for adherents to other traditions. Sources addressed in this volume exhibit little evidence of our authors trying to appeal to the other, and so were likely produced by Buddhists, for Buddhists. At most, they are for the benefit of audiences undecided as to whether Buddhist Dharma was worthy of personal investment. We might consider again how early Indian Buddhism situates the Buddha among his rivals, and in relation to an audience that might be undecided or fluid in its allegiances. The Pali Samannaphalasutta (DN 2) presents Buddhism in late-Vedic India as just one of many accounts of human action and its relation to suffering. King Ajatasattu (Skt. Ajatasattu) remembers his visits to a number of other teachers (the oft-called 'six heretical teachers'), and enquired of each about the fruits of renunciation. So too might a householder or aspiring renunciant, in India, China or elsewhere, ponder the merits of Buddhist teaching next to those of its rivals. The victor, for one day at least, would be whichever religion most persuasively spoke to the interests but also the imagination of their audience. This might have entailed some display of philosophical acumen on the part of the advocate for Buddhism, but just as persuasive might have been the delivery of grand narratives about Buddhism's place in the world and its relation to myriad non-Buddhist ideas and practices found in it. Buddhism as a religious commitment, for those not tied to an ordained community or monastery, may have been less about mutually exclusive affiliation, and

more about attention, or weighing up what were the most compelling stories or images in a diverse and competitive religious marketplace.

What can be said about Buddhist identity, and its relation to other religious affiliations, across its many forms around pre-modern Asia? To this question there is no single response. The sense of Buddhist identity to a renunciant in late-Vedic India would have been quite different to that of a scholastic monk a thousand years later, and different again to a householder in either India or China at that time, or in later centuries, or yet again elsewhere in the world. The limits and boundaries of what is meant by the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha have been re-imagined time and again in Buddhist history. What the studies collected in this volume go some way to showing is that awareness of the religious other has been a ubiquitous factor in these dynamics, albeit not always the stated focus of Buddhist literary or artistic creativity. In every context that these chapters address, Buddhist authors understood themselves to be adherents to one tradition among many, but as Buddhism expanded its repertoire of ideas, stories, icons and practices so too did what was not Buddhist, and so how the religious other was represented to audiences has been revisited time and again. These studies draw attention to just some of the creative endeavours that Buddhists have made to express the character and value of their tradition in shared religious landscapes, which may continue to be revisited by Buddhist communities as they continue to occupy and make sense of a world that they share with what is not, at least to the naked eye, the work of the Buddha. <>

## **THE LAMP FOR THE EYE OF CONTEMPLATION: THE SAMTEN MIGDRON BY NUBCHEN SANGYE YESHE, A 10TH-CENTURY TIBETAN BUDDHIST TEXT ON MEDITATION** edited and translated by Dylan Esler [Oxford University Press, 9780197609903]

This book presents an English translation of the *Samten Migdron* (*Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*) by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, a seminal 10th-century Tibetan Buddhist work on contemplation. This treatise is one of the most important sources for the study of the various meditative currents that were transmitted to Tibet from India and China during the early dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet. Written from the vantage point of the Great Completeness (Dzogchen) and its vehicle of effortless spontaneity, it discusses, in the manner of a doxography, both sutra-based-including Chan-and tantric approaches to meditation.

The unabridged, annotated English translation of this Tibetan treatise is preceded by a general introduction situating the author-a pivotal figure in what would become the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism-and their work in historical and doctrinal context. The detailed annotations provide elucidating comments as well as crucial references to the numerous texts quoted by the Tibetan author. This book makes this groundbreaking Tibetan work on meditation accessible in English and opens fascinating windows on early forms of contemplative practice in Tibet.

- Includes the first complete translation of the Samten Migdron, the seminal Tibetan text on the subject of meditation, to be published in English-or in any other European language
- Provides a corrective understanding of early Tibetan Buddhism concerning the role of Chan in Tibet
- Features one of the earliest systematic presentations of Dzogchen, the vehicle of effortless spontaneity

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According to Buddhist doctrine, all compounded phenomena originate in the interdependence of causes and conditions; this is aptly summarized in the first part of the famous

Pratītyasamutpādaḥ<sup>daya</sup>: “Those phenomena that originate from a cause, the Thus-gone One has declared their cause, and so has the Great Mendicant spoken of their cessation.” Hence, a work of this kind is itself the outcome of various causes and conditions and would be impossible without the kind help of many.

In the 1970s, Chhimes Rigdzin Rinpoche (1922–2002; otherwise known as Prof. C.R. Lama of Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan) published the first modern edition of the bSam-gtan mig-sgron from a copy he discovered in Calcutta. Without his foresight in publishing this text, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron would most likely have remained unknown to the scholarly world. Moreover, his deathless vision and blessings have been the inspiration behind my work.

Two years after Chhimes Rigdzin Rinpoche's passing, it was Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin Rinpoche (former Lecturer and Head of Department, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath; Director, Ogyan Chokhor Ling) who encouraged me, Dylan Esler, to prepare a translation of this important text of early rNying-ma doctrine and practice. During his 2004–2005 visit to the United Kingdom, he took the time to grant me the full scriptural authorization (lung) of the text. Moreover, there are many ways in which his profound knowledge of and devotion to the rNying-ma tradition have nourished this study. Throughout the many years it has taken me to complete this project, his invaluable clarifications, instructions, and encouragement have been the sustaining force in my work on this fascinating but difficult text. I will never forget his incredible kindness and generosity as we worked on this and other texts at his home in Sarnath.

The translation was first presented as part of my PhD thesis, which was defended at the Université catholique de Louvain in June 2018. At the Institut Orientaliste de Louvain, it is a pleasure to thank

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It was a great boon to have Dr. Jean-Luc Achard (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris) as the co-supervisor of my PhD. His answers to my questions on various points of the translation as well as his pertinent remarks have greatly benefited my work. It has been an honor to conduct this research under the expert direction of this scholar whose profound insights into and encyclopedic knowledge of rDzogs-chen in both the rNying-ma and Bon traditions are breathtaking...

The text presented here, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron (Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation) by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, is a treatise on contemplation (Skt. *dhyāna*) that is of considerable interest for the study of the various meditative approaches current in 9th- and 10th- century Tibet; in fact, in this regard it is second only to the Dunhuang manuscripts. It is written from the perspective of the Great Completeness (rDzogs-chen). However, as pointed out by Achard, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron is a doxographical treatise (grub-mtha'; Skt. *siddhānta*) rather than a rDzogs-chen text per se; in fact, it is among the first indigenous Tibetan doxographies. Its author expounds a classification of four vehicles that can lead to enlightenment, hierarchically arranged as follows: the gradual approach of the Mahāyāna sūtras; the simultaneous approach of the sūtras, otherwise known as Chan; the tantric approach of Mahāyoga (which also includes Anuyoga); and finally the Great Completeness, also called Atiyoga. In this regard, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron is one of the first texts to treat the Great Completeness as an independent vehicle (theg-pa; Skt. *yāna*) rather than as a style (tshul) of practice,<sup>4</sup> as witnessed in Padmasambhava's Man-ngag Ita-ba'i phreng-ba. The latter, like gNyan dPal-dbyangs' rDo-rje sems-dpa'i zhus-lan, treats the Great Completeness not as an autonomous textual category but merely as a manner of practicing deity yoga.

In the Tibetan context, where later authors almost invariably considered the simultaneous approach (cig-car 'jug-pa; Skt. *yugapat*) as inferior to the gradual one (rim-gyis 'jug-pa; Skt. *kramavātyā*), the very fact that gNubs-chen does the contrary is of no small significance. Indeed, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron is one of the rare Tibetan texts to give an extensive exposition of Chan. Rather than depreciating this tradition as is common in most later works, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron treats it with a certain impartiality, seeking to understand it in its own right.

In order to clarify his positions, the author of the bSam-gtan mig-sgron makes use of a procedure called "disputation" (brgal; Skt. *vāda*), where an imagined opponent poses questions, which are answered and refuted in the course of the text. In such cases, it should be understood that the opponent in no way needs to stand for an actual person or school and can in fact be long defunct or even fictitious. The views reproduced are reported second-or even third-hand and have the function of a rhetorical device enabling the author to clarify objections that could be raised to particular points of his exposition. gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' method is first to expound a given approach on its own terms, before criticizing it from the perspective of the approach above it: the gradualist from the simultaneist's viewpoint, the latter from the Mahāyoga perspective, and Mahāyoga from the view of rDzogs-chen. This method becomes especially clear at the end of the four main chapters (i.e., Chapters 4–7), where the distinction with the vehicle(s) below is explained.

What transpires through gNubs-chen's work is a tireless concern to organize the teachings he had received and to present them in such a way that the distinctions between the various meditative currents of his time would not be lost sight of. This may well be in reaction to various syncretistic movements of his time that sought to blend rDzogs-chen, Mahāyoga, and Chan. In this respect, his

task is facilitated by the parallel arrangement of the four main chapters, each of which discusses a particular contemplative approach in terms of its view, meditation, conduct, and fruition. The fact that these four chapters mirror each other in their structure enables the author to present each of the four doctrines independently according to a coherent framework, while at once making comparison of individual elements relatively straightforward.

The bSam-gtan mig-sgron is known under a variety of names: rDzogs-chen-gyi man-ngag bSam-gtan mig-sgron (Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation, Pith Instruction of the Great Completeness), rNal-'byor mig-gi bsam-gtan (Contemplation That Is the Eye of Yoga), and sGom- gyi gnad gsal-bar phye-ba bSam-gtan mig-sgron (Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation That Clearly Distinguishes the Crucial Points of Meditation).

### The author: Nubchen Sangye Yeshe

The author of our text signs gNubs-ban, meaning “the venerable (Skt. vāndya) of gNubs,” and also Ban- chung, meaning “small venerable.” This is none other than gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, an important figure of the rNying-ma tradition, known as a bodhisattva of the fourth stage and counted among Padmasambhava’s twenty-five main disciples. Indeed, Rig- 'dzin Padma 'phrinlas (1640–1718) recounts that Sangs-rgyas ye-shes attained the fourth bodhisattva stage while practicing in a charnel ground in India, whereby he had a vision of the protectress Ekajāṭī and gained the realization of wisdom arising in phenomena’s open dimension (Skt. dharmadhātu). Already in Nyang-ral nyi-ma 'od-zer’s (1124–1192) Chos-'byung me-togsnying-po, gNubs- chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is listed as one of the twenty-five disciples to have been initiated by Padmasambhava into the eight injunctions (bka'-brgyad). He is mentioned at the beginning of the list, after King Khri-srong lde'u-btsan, Vairocana, and gNubs Nam-mkha'i snying-po. Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is also renowned as an eminent translator of both sūtras and tantras. Concerning gNubs- chen's importance for the rNying-ma tradition, Dudjom Rinpoche (1904–1987) cites a saying according to which the Vajrayāna of the rNying-ma-pas “fell first to gNyags, fell to gNubs during the intermediate period, and fell to Zur in the end.”

### Reception of the bSam-gtan mig-sgron in Tibet

Despite its historical and philosophical importance, in Tibet itself the bSam-gtan mig-sgron has certainly not received the attention it deserves, even within the rNying-ma school of Tibetan Buddhism, to the literature of which it belongs. It was transmitted until the 13th century, after which it almost disappeared. Apart from a few disparate mentions or quotations over the centuries—mainly of an antiquarian character—it remained virtually unknown, and it would probably have languished in obscurity if in 1974 Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche (alias Prof. C.R. Lama, 1922–2002) of Visva- Bharati University, Santiniketan, had not published an edition of the text, thus bringing it to the attention of the scholarly world. Later, in the 1990s, mKhan-po Mun-sel (1916–1994) published a revised edition as part of the fifty-two supplementary volumes to Dudjom Rinpoche’s bKa'-ma rgyas-pa. More recently, a few other editions were published, but these either derive from one of the above pioneering editions or attempt to compare them.

A possible explanation for this lack of popular esteem is that contrary to what became the normative standpoint in Tibet, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron upholds the simultaneous approach as superior to the gradual one. Moreover, its statement that the simultaneous approach continued until Glang-dar-ma’s religious persecution, which contradicts the assumption popular among most Tibetan scholars that it disappeared as soon as it was banned during the bSam-yas debates (792–794), may explain this state of affairs.

Perhaps because of his informed and detailed treatment of Chan, gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes was later accused by 'Bri- gung dpal- 'dzin (14th century) of mixing up the contents of Padmasambhava’s Man-ngag lta-ba'i phreng-ba with Chan. Nevertheless, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron

demonstrates that this criticism is quite baseless. On the contrary, gNubs-chen's concern at explaining the differences between the various meditative approaches of his time is evident. In fact, he is very critical of a syncretistic outlook presumably popular at his time, claiming that people who mix Chan and rDzogs-chen neither understand the view of the one nor of the other.

However, this is not to say that the bSam-gtan mig-sgron was completely unknown in Tibet: it is mentioned in an official decree (bka'-shog) of Pho-'brang zhi-ba-'od (11th century). Furthermore, as pointed out by Karmay, extracts from the bSam-gtan mig-sgron appear in O-rgyan gling-pa's (1323–ca. 1379) treasure the Blon-po bka'-thang. Tanaka and Robertson have demonstrated in some detail that Chapters 12, 13, and 14 of the Blon-po bka'-thang are in fact a somewhat patchwork rearrangement of verbatim sections of the bSam-gtan mig-sgron. Matter that in the bSam-gtan mig-sgron occurs in a natural order is rearranged quite artificially in the Blon-po bka'-thang. Moreover, O-rgyan glingpa does not distinguish between the main text and quotations as differentiated in the bSam-gtan mig-sgron. Finally, the text of the Blon-po bka'-thang presents the material in such a way that it appears to be a debate between only the gradual and simultaneous approaches, whereas the bSam-gtan mig-sgron has a vaster scope since it also covers Mahāyoga and rDzogs-chen. O-rgyan gling-pa's motivation would appear to be to defend the rNying-ma school against the polemicists who claim that rDzogs-chen and Chan are identical. However, rather than simply disavowing a doctrinal identity between both traditions (which would have been perhaps more straightforward since this is very much one of the intentions behind the composition of the bSam-gtan mig-sgron), the author of the Blon-po bka'-thang sets about to prove the superiority of Chan to the gradual approach. In this he can base himself on the bSam-gtan mig-sgron, but he seems to bypass the distinction that this text then goes on to draw between Chan on the one hand and rDzogs-chen on the other.

As noted by Karmay, a bSam-gtan mig-gi sgron-ma is also mentioned by 'Gos Lotsāwa gZhon-nu dpal (1392–1481) as belonging to the Rong system of the Great Completeness. However, this probably refers to another work: indeed, a bSam-gtan mig-gi sgron-me is also mentioned by Klong-chen-pa among the texts received by his own master, Kumarāja, from Slob-dpon sGom-pa, himself a descendant of lCe-sgom nag-po. However, the text in question is not by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas yeshe but, rather, by Vimalamitra.

As is clear from the colophon to our text, the bSam-gtan mig-sgron was known to Tāranātha (1575–1634) and to sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī (1654–1718) since Tāranātha's manuscript was apparently the source of sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī's copy. Furthermore, Ka<sup>^</sup>-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu (1698–1755) quotes the bSam-gtan mig-sgron in his history of Chan in Tibet. In more recent times, a copy of the bSam-gtan mig-sgron (in all likelihood <sup>^</sup>) was discovered by Ka<sup>^</sup>-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho (1880–1925), probably at the library of the bKra-shis lhun-po monastery in Central Tibet.<sup>170</sup> Following this discovery, Ze-chen mKhan-chen Padma nram-rgyal (1871–1926), who was at once Ka<sup>^</sup>-thog Si-tu's teacher and student, wished to have a xylographic edition of this rare text produced. This task was undertaken by his disciple, 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse chos-kyi blo-gros, who prepared a block print edition from sMin-gling Lo-chen Dharmaśrī's manuscript copy. These block prints (<sup>^</sup>) are the basis for the first modern edition of the bSam-gtan mig-sgron (C) and, via the latter, of its subsequent revised edition (M).

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## Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's colophon Chapter Summary

### Chapter I

First are the defects and qualities of the place, the making of a commitment, and the undertaking of the [preliminary] activities. In undertaking the preliminary activities, there are requirements and the



relinquishing of psychic attachment to one's wealth and friends. [When one is weary of the sanctuary, one thinks of the defect consisting in the frivolity of towns. By recalling the meaning of natural solitude and the sanctuary's qualities, one purges oneself [of weariness].

### Chapter 2

When approaching absolute meaningfulness, one should obtain the means and great means. Then there are the [four] compatible reliances, the repelling of [contrary] conditions, and the requisites. Because one's body is a ship, one should implement extensive [physical] treatments yet not become attached thereto. Then come the defects of not meditating. Those with ample knowledge of the qualities [of meditation] should rest in equanimity [rather than implementing] righteousness.

### Chapter 3

He who has accordingly come to a resolution with regard to absolute meaningfulness and comprehended its nature is like the king of predators. Abiding on being as it is, because he knows that thinking is an abyss, there is the non-imaging of the Tsen-min and of the sTon-mun, the thusness of inner non-discursiveness, and the non-discursiveness of spontaneous completeness [atiyoga]; these distinctions should be assimilated as being like [the rungs of] a ladder.

### Chapter 4

The Sautrāntika [Madhyamaka] meditating on emptiness indeed first meditates on the four immeasurables. He views and posits relative truth as illusory and posits that absolute truth is non-imaging. Some will generate insight after having meditatively familiarized themselves with calm abiding. Focusing their referential imaging, they rectify defects and pacify them, thereby integrating [calm abiding and insight]. Gradually traversing [the stages], they cleanse their obscurations and accrue the accumulations.

### Chapter 5

The sTon-mun come to a resolution [concerning absolute meaningfulness] in the manner of [a person who] sees everything when he has gone to the peak of the king of mountains. Even as this approach [concerns] simultaneous integration, which is idle, unborn, and intrinsically clear, in the state of absolute truth, one does not relinquish whatever defects are produced; it is maintained that the latter are self-originated and self-appeased. Hence, there is no [gradual] traversing [of stages]. Without [gradually] training, one treads [the stages] like the great garuda.

### Chapter 6

As regards the inner [Vajrayāna], there is referential imaging, coming to a resolution [through the view], and meditating. Furthermore, there is mental rectification, which pertains to the gradual approach; in the simultaneous approach, rectification is a flaw. Then there occur the indications and signs of experience. One should not become attached to them; whatever omens occur in one's dreams, one should not be attached to them. Without each of the accumulations [having been accrued individually], they are accomplished as one, like an alchemical tincture [a drop of which suffices to transform all kinds of iron into gold]. [The fruition of Mahāyoga] is self-arising, like the sun.

### Chapter 7

When one actually assimilates the state of the Great Completeness, there is nothing to posit; great absolute meaningfulness is intrinsically clear. Without there being anything to evaluate, great realization is free from involvement and is without meditation. Whatever defects occur, one's three doors are without rectification. To hold on to rectifying one's intrinsic mode is the dagger of obscurations. Since [suchness] is free from pauses, one neither wavers from nor emerges from it. Since this great state is the seminal nucleus, there is no conduct that discretely emerges from and

enters into it; everything is the behavior of the Bliss- gone One. Being inherently free from anything to relinquish or accept, in relative truth mere recollection is not inhibited, yet there is no recollection. Being free from hope and misgiving, whatever omens in dreams or indications arise as [signs of] the warmth of experience, one is without any attachment toward them. Since they are just like the signs appearing in the sky, the nature of spontaneous presence is like space.

## Chapter 8

Once in this borderland empire  
 The great vehicle was propagated; by the strength of these conditions,  
 There are many who abide in sanctuaries.  
 By the force of propagating these injunctions of mine,  
 May all abandon the four nets and,  
 Gaining the eye [of contemplation], attain the supreme stage!  
 May they be guides for infinite sentient beings!  
 May the teachings be compelling for all time!  
 To those who are arrogant, of evil character, and sectarian,  
 Who are eloquent, unaffectionate, and egotistical,  
 Who are free from a [good] bone lineage, have great attachment, and are crafty,  
 Who look toward human principles and do not listen to the injunctions,  
 Who are surrounded by wives, sons, and evil ruffians,  
 Who speak out their desires and are without pledges—  
 To these this should never be taught,  
 Even if one be thrust from the empire, be repelled, or have one's heart removed.  
 Sangs-rgyas, the small venerable of gNubs,  
 Gladdened the oral lineage of the scholars of India, Nepal, Tibet, Gilgit, etc.  
 He opened the door of the panditas' awakened mind  
 And obtained the pith instructions of the authoritative scriptures of the pinnacle.  
 The empowerment was conferred on me by the gods and ogres;  
 Hence, I wrote down the meditative familiarization of my own experience.  
 O sons, you supreme persons holding the bone lineage of the Victorious Ones,  
 It is by meditating perpetually and by relinquishing frivolity  
 That you must practice, O heirs of your father!  
 O sons, entrust this [text] only to those who are successors of the family!  
 If it is given to the many, you will be born in the adamant hell.  
 May this heart pledge of the emanated small venerable  
 Be held in the ears of one or two disciples!  
 It is complete. Let there be virtue! Auspiciousness! Felicity!

<>

## BUDDHISM AND WHITENESS: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

edited by George Yancy, Emily McRae [Philosophy of Race,  
 Lexington Books, 9781498581028]

The motivation behind this important volume is to weave together two distinct, but we think complementary, traditions – the philosophical engagement with race/whiteness and Buddhist philosophy – in order to explore the ways in which these traditions can inform, correct, and improve each other. This exciting and critically informed volume will be the first of its kind to bring together essays that explicitly connect these two traditions and will mark a major step both in understanding race and whiteness (with the help of Buddhist philosophy) and in understanding Buddhist philosophy (with the help of philosophy of race and theorizations of whiteness). We

expand upon a small, but growing, body of work that applies Buddhist philosophical analyses to whiteness and racial injustice in contemporary U.S. culture. Buddhist philosophy has much to contribute to furthering our understanding of whiteness and racial identity, the mechanisms that create and maintain white supremacy, and the possibility of dismantling white supremacy. We are interested both in the possible insights that Buddhist metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical analyses can bring to understanding race and whiteness, as well as the potential limitations of such Buddhist-inspired approaches.

In their chapters, contributors draw on Buddhist philosophical and contemplative traditions to offer fresh, insightful, and powerful perspectives on issues regarding racial identity and whiteness, including such themes as cultural appropriation, mechanisms of racial injustice and racial justice, phenomenology of racial oppression, epistemologies of racial ignorance, liberatory practices with regard to racism, Womanism, and the intersections of gender-based, raced-based, and sexuality-based oppressions. Authors make use of both contemporary and ancient Buddhist philosophical and contemplative traditions. These include various Asian traditions, including Theravada, Mahayana, Tantra, and Zen, as well as comparatively new American Buddhist traditions.

## Review

With essays from more than 15 thinkers, including Tricycle contributing editor Charles Johnson, this book offers new scholarly ideas on Buddhism's equal access to liberation in the context of the persistent racism experienced in America and beyond. The editors write in the introduction that "racism or white supremacy is like the water in which we all swim"—though only some of us notice that we're submerged. Contributors from across traditions, who also draw on feminist and cultural studies in addition to race theory, ask whether we can use Buddhist philosophy to put an end to racism and white supremacy just as we apply teachings to cut through our sense of "self." — *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*

Buddhism and Whiteness is highly recommended to anyone interested in modern Buddhism, as well as an interesting alternative lens for those studying the development of racism in North America and Europe. — *H-Net: Humanities and Social Science Reviews Online*

Part of the importance of this collection of essays lies in its multipronged approach to both naming the white supremacist bedrock of whiteness and describing Buddhist models for understanding how it arises. . . . Authors in this volume bring to light a number of attitudes that help the reader "see" white ignorance in action. . . . Relinquishing the privilege of being the authority on what constitutes "real" Buddhism, who is a "real" American, and what counts as "real" practice involves giving something up. That act, and all the myriad ways whites can practice giving away unearned privilege, can itself become a powerful method of merit-making, of dana as a form of moral development in the pursuit of benefiting others. In this respect and others, Buddhism and Whiteness offers gifts of insight that constitute a wise and compassionate act of merit. — *Buddhadharma*

It is high time for a book like this. For too long the story of the transmission of Buddhism to the West has been told without attention to the ways that transmission is inflected by race and racism. This carefully curated collection of essays opens that question, and offers a rich set of perspectives on the complex interaction of Buddhist transmission, ideology, and practice with race and racism in the West. A must read for anyone interested in contemporary global Buddhism. -- Jay Garfield, Smith College

It is impossible to read Buddhism and Whiteness and not experience an itch for action. This

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/ph. 9195425719 /fax 91986916430

timely—and indeed, “futurely”—volume challenges all of us to reflect creatively and imaginatively about how we can best make a politics of the possible a constitutive contour of our religious lives, our efforts to learn about and from Buddhism, and especially our everyday lives, even as all of these are deeply conditioned and distorted by structural racism together with other oppressive and exclusionary structures. -- Charles Hallisey, Harvard Divinity School

Buddhism and Whiteness instructs with the spirit of Thich Naht Hanh—“Freedom is not given to us by anyone, we have to cultivate it.” Composting ignorance and violence, this volume seeds peace for local and global care from US to Rohingya and Yemen communities. -- Joy James, author of *Seeking the Beloved Community*

This volume opens with a foreword by noted scholar of religion Jan Willis in which she observes that although there is only one race, *Homo sapiens*, racism still thrives. The collection documents views from the peripheries that reveal that LGBTQ people and people of color are challenged in white US Buddhist communities as if they have no place. Often they are not seen at all. The way forward, Laurie Cassidy writes, is to listen deeply and take responsibility for the shared reality of all people. In his essay Bryce Huebner argues that “races are not biologically real” and “race is a conceptual fiction.” This book is about modifying practices as well as changing minds. This reviewer was impressed by the program—recommended by Jessica Locke (following Patricia Devine)—of implicit bias intervention. Metta (“lovingkindness”) meditation to develop a competing and positive narrative to the racist one about blackness is also effective. This important book offers ideas and values that could change how meditation works. In an afterword Charles Johnson writes that what is new here “is the effort to find common ground between ancient Buddhist ideas and principles with feminist theory, existential phenomenology, and Critical Race Theory, and Critical Whiteness Studies.”

Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers. — *Choice Reviews*

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The chapters in this book represent some of the newest and most creative ways of conceptualizing race and racism and their possible Buddhist solutions. Their authors are young scholars and writers, all working at the intersections of race theory, philosophy of race, feminist and cultural studies, and Buddhist philosophy.

That there is only one race of human beings      homo sapiens—extant today

should go without question; to hold otherwise is like holding the ancient and equally erroneous view that the world is flat. The sciences of biology and genetics have long since shattered the notion that there is more than a single race of human beings on earth.

Yet, racism still lives and thrives among us, though it is but an illusion, a mere social construct, a non-inherently existent and nonindependent phenomenon. (This notion, I believe, is what PBS intended to convey with the title of its 2005 documentary series, "Race: The Power of an Illusion.") In this so-called post-racial era of twenty-first-century America, we are supposed to know, and be, better.

But there is nothing "post" about the racism we see playing out every day in America and other regions of the world. Indeed, in America, the afterlife of the color-based slavery that existed here for centuries means that racism continues as a mighty, if "invisible," presence in social, political, economic, and other spheres today, granting advantages to one group (whites) while disadvantaging all others (blacks and other people of color). It continues to be the cause of much suffering and great harm—both physical and psychological—to those who are "disadvantaged" by it.

To speak of racism as being a systemic construct which, of course, it is, may actually give it too much weight, too much concreteness. (We point to signs saying "white" and "colored" above drinking fountains and say, "That's racism!" even though we know that they are just signs.) Perhaps it would be better to say that racism or white supremacy is like the water in which we all swim: some of us are aware of it, others do not notice it or are in denial of its existence. We are all fish swimming in white supremacy. Here I am reminded of two powerful lines in James Baldwin's "My Dungeon Shook: Letter to my Nephew": "But it is not permissible that the authors of devastation should also be innocent. It is the innocence which constitutes the crime." This water in which we swim, this sea, must be recognized, acknowledged, understood, experienced, and called out. Only such seeing, such insight, can free us of it.

Those of us who study Buddhism are familiar with the notion that a noninherently existent phenomenon or fiction—say, the "I"—is capable of wielding tremendous power in our lives. Indeed, according to Buddhism, it is our misunderstanding of the nature of reality that causes us to experience suffering: grasping onto the conceit of "I" (and its unspoken corollary, I am better than others), we think that the world should be as we want it to be.

All things are impermanent, however, and that means that our wish that things be otherwise than they are almost always leaves us frustrated, dissatisfied, and longing for some other state or

condition or thing—hence our continual craving. This is Buddhism's key teaching: that erroneously grasping after and believing in a permanent, unchanging, inherently existent "I," separate from (and better than) others, sets us up for suffering. And, conversely: the wisdom that sees our error, that sees through the illusion of a permanent, independent, and separate "I," is the only wisdom that can and will free us from the suffering that we have caused for ourselves. In the Dhammapada, we are told in verses 153 and 154 that the Buddha, just as he was on the cusp of full enlightenment, declared the following two statements:

I, who have been seeking the builder of this house (body), failing to attain Enlightenment which would enable me to find him, have wandered through innumerable births in samsara. To be born again and again is, indeed, suffering (dukkha)!

Oh, house-builder! You are [now] seen, you shall build no house (for me) again. All your rafters are broken, your roof-tree is destroyed. My mind has reached the unconditioned, Nibbana; the end of craving has been attained.

The house-builder here is aham-kara, the "I-maker." As Buddhists, we are encouraged to find, see directly, and thereby completely destroy the illusory notion of the erroneously grasped-after "I" in order to wake up, put an end to craving, and reach freedom. Can we do the same for "racism"? For "whiteness"?

The chapters in this book seek to answer such urgent queries. Can we, through intensely investigating the erroneous constructs of racism and

whiteness, confront their power to harm and their illusoriness, and free ourselves of their ignorance?

Of course, we must first see both constructs clearly. Then, we need to investigate what causes them. We must interrogate not only their origins, but their end. These steps are reminiscent of Buddhism's Four Noble Truths. We might say: there is racism, there is a cause, there is an end to it, and a path to that end.

Just as the Buddha saw that grasping at a nonexistent "I" was the cause of pain and suffering for the human condition generally, what if we could, after clearly perceiving racism's *raison d'être*, be courageous enough to destroy it? I am again reminded of Baldwin. In his final challenge to white America as voiced in Raoul Peck's film, *I Am Not Your Negro*, he said, "I know who I am. But you have created this 'N . . .' . And it's up to you to figure out why you needed it."

All the chapters here are in one way or another concerned with the liberative prize of "seeing" itself and (at least implicitly) challenge us to take action once we have seen the truth. These endeavors, it seems to me, are distinctly Buddhist at their core.

Seeing, in Buddhism, is of paramount concern. In the Buddha's very First Discourse (Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta, "Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Law"), this formula is repeated again and again to characterize the Buddha's newly found wisdom: "It gives vision, insight, wisdom, leads to nibbana, enlightenment." Indeed, before he could deliver his first teachings to his first five followers, the Buddha had to instruct and transform them with the words *ehi passika*, or "Come and see (for yourself)." Seeing is believing in Buddhism and experiencing the truth is the only way to know it, thus replacing mere faith with conviction.

It is always worth recalling that "Buddha" itself is a title—not a name—for one who has "woken up." The man born Siddhartha Gautama woke up while he was awake: he saw in a new and different way; he saw, finally, what was real and true. So, one repeatedly finds throughout these chapters the trope or meme of interrogating, of seeing correctly, and waking up from our ordinary "epistemologies of ignorance."

Thich Nhat Hanh is said to have remarked, "Once one sees, one must act." Yes. But not everyone agrees. Some argue that Buddhist Dharma and activism do not belong together. They point to the Buddhist "two-truths theory" and proclaim that though difference prevails from the point of "relative truth," from the absolute point of view (their own, perchance?), no distinctions pertain. Thereby they ignore historical fact: namely, that the Buddha was quite the revolutionary activist himself.

In sixth-century BCE India, in spite of all the strict societal structures and social norms of Aryan society, the Buddha allowed followers from all castes, and even women (after some convincing), to join his new community. Such allowances were quite radical for their time. Clearly, his Dharma did not preclude actual activism and change. It did not exclude certain people with certain bodies from its community. Still, there are those today who argue that the Dharma and activism must be kept separate, that Buddhism focuses on individual, inner revolution, not outward activism or change.

Such a view would favor the titular model of Laurie Cassidy's provocative chapter, "The Tranquil Meditator." The essay explores "how American capitalism hijacks spiritual practices, such as Buddhist meditation, thereby subverting their liberative human potential." Moreover, Cassidy tells us, "I intentionally use the word hijack because it refers to how a vehicle for transport is seized and forced to a destination other than was originally intended." For Cassidy, American capitalism itself intends to subvert the possibility of change, and she employs a cultural and feminist lens to look closely at the virtual and structural venues of Buddhist propagation in America.

Carolyn M. Jones Medine's exploration of "the Confluence of Black and Engaged Buddhism in the Vietnam War" uses memoir and other literary and historical sources to shed light on precisely why Thich Nhat Hanh and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. became brothers in struggle.

Joy Cecile Brennan's full-throated philosophical inquiry powerfully interrogates "A Buddhist Phenomenology of the White Mind" by deftly employing Yogacaric principles to show how the "epistemological ignorance of 'whiteness'" originates, and why it ought not be trusted. Her opening comments are powerful:

It has been amply demonstrated that whiteness is a construct that is socially, emotionally, psychologically, and somatically reproduced in the class of people who thereby come to be known as—and to know ourselves as—white. The general question is then: what can Buddhist thought tell us about how this construct functions? And what therapy can Buddhist traditions of practice recommend as a method of stripping the power from this construct, of exposing it for what it is, of de-constructing it?

More particularly, I should like to examine the social epistemology of ignorance that shapes the perceptions and conceptions of whites. Following Charles Mills' work on racialized epistemologies, this chapter looks at the epistemic asymmetry between whites and blacks, and the phenomenology of the white mind that manifests the white side of this asymmetry.

Bryce Huebner's chapter, "The Interdependence and Emptiness of Whiteness," likewise draws on Yogacara philosophy but focuses primarily on Dharmakirti's work to describe how our minds categorize and label reality, and beings, on the basis of our own *vasanas* (previous karmic imprints).

It goes further to incorporate historical examples which highlight precisely how we Americans have "conjured whiteness into existence."

A number of the chapters here speak to the embodied experience of Blackness, in general, and within Buddhist sanghas in particular, bringing feminist and cultural studies' critiques to bear. Thus, Sharon A. Suh speaks of "Buddhist killjoys" and of the experiences of hypervisibility in her chapter, "'We Interrupt Your Regularly Scheduled Programming to Bring You This Very Important Public Service Announcement . . .': aka Buddhism as Usual in the Academy." And Rima Veseley-Flad's "Racism and Anatta: Black Buddhists, Embodiment, and Interpretations of Non-Self" discusses the memoirs of three African American women Buddhist teachers (Reverend angel Kyodo Williams, Zenju Earthlyn Manuel, and myself) as she explores this embodied experience. Lastly, at least one of the chapters (Rhonda V. Magee's "Taking and Making Refuge in Racial [Whiteness] Awareness and Racial Justice Work") speaks explicitly about the need for social justice activism and how that might take ritual form.

My remarks here have focused on only a few of the many constructive ideas and philosophical strategies adopted in the fifteen thought-provoking chapters contained here. I hope that they have whetted your appetite to read further, I invite you now to take a calm and deep breath, wade into the individual pieces, and to see for yourself.

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*Emily McRae:* My interest in this project began with two events. The first was listening to a talk by George Yancy for my Philosophy Department's colloquia series. Although I had read George's work before, I had never heard him speak. His talk was a brilliant analysis of whiteness that performed the dual function of explaining and exposing whiteness and, by doing so, destabilizing, deconstructing, and—as he puts it—"un-suturing" whiteness for (at least some of the) white members of the audience, including me. I was moved and challenged. George advised white people to tarry in the uncomfortable space of trying to understand what our claims to whiteness really amount to, to resist the hasty conclusions of whiteness, and to notice when our whiteness "ambushes" us.

This excellent advice immediately reminded me of the Buddhist concept of equanimity, the ability to abide in an unpleasant (or pleasant) experience without getting high-jacked by our knee-jerk reactions of hostility and ego-preservation. Buddhist philosophy, I thought, may have something very useful to contribute to understanding contemporary racial injustice in the United States. Charles Johnson's Buddhist-inspired response to the police brutality and murder of Black men and boys in the United States ("Every 28 Hours") further strengthened my sense of the importance of Buddhist ethical and philosophical perspectives for understanding racism and white supremacy.

Not long after this encounter, I went on a seven-day meditation retreat with an esteemed Tibetan Dzogchen master. The pinnacle of this retreat was receiving "pointing-out" instructions in which a qualified master "points out" to the practitioner the nature of her own mind. This is considered a rare and precious opportunity, and one that practitioners prepare for through preliminary meditation practices. Ideally, the teacher points out the nature of the disciple's mind in an intimate one-on-one encounter. This was not the case in this retreat, however. There were over 100 people in attendance. Still, great effort was made to maintain the sacred and precious environment for the teaching by, for example, asking people to remain in their seats for the entirety of the teaching so as not to disturb the transmission of the instructions. We had also taken a vow of silence for several days.

I give this background in order to better contextualize what happened next. During these precious teachings, the Dzogchen master made a "joke" about white people having better karma than Black people, which explains their/ our white privilege. Some people laughed, some people seemed embarrassed. But one person left. She was one of (as I recall) two Black practitioners in the sangha of over 100 people, the vast majority of whom were white. That she left during the pointing-out



instruction was significant and noticed by nearly everyone, including, it turned out, the master himself.

An emergency discussion session was quickly scheduled to talk about the incident (we all had to be temporarily "released" from our vow of silence). During this session various opinions were expressed: a few expressed disappointment with the teacher, but many others defended him by explaining that US racial politics are difficult to understand for people who are not from the United States (the teacher was Tibetan). Some pointed out that the teacher was not white, and implied that he therefore should not be implicated in pathologies of whiteness. Still others considered the incident to be an overreaction to a bad joke. My own contribution was to point out, in a shaky voice unused to speaking for several days, the whiteness of the sangha and to ask what mechanisms were in place to maintain such a white sangha. I was surprised to find that my fairly tepid and hardly insightful remarks were met with hostile defensiveness. The sangha was diverse, I was told, because there were (white) Americans, (white) Europeans, (white) Russians, (white) Argentinians. You get the point. This experience tempered my enthusiasm for Buddhism's potential to speak meaningfully in our (US) critical conversation about race and racism. How, I wondered, could a community that is so white—and so defensively white—possibly contribute to dismantling white supremacy?

Of course, not all US sanghas are so white. There are sanghas that are majority Asian-American, as well as a few that are actively committed to racial diversity and achieving racial justice, some of which are mentioned in the chapters that follow. Even in/my own sangha some progress was made. The Tibetan teacher spoke privately with the Black practitioner who had left the teachings (it turned out that she did not leave the retreat altogether). After this private conversation, the teacher publically apologized to the sangha, an action that I had never seen a prominent Buddhist teacher do before. Still, clearly, much work needs to be done.

It was with these conflicting experiences in mind that I eagerly agreed to George's suggestion to coedit a volume on Buddhism and whiteness.

This volume is the first of its kind to offer a collection of philosophical analyses of whiteness, race, and racism using Buddhist conceptual frameworks. It operates with the assumption that we can learn from Buddhist philosophical traditions about the nature of race and racism, the mechanisms for racial injustice, and the potential for dismantling such injustice. At the same time, the chapters in this volume recognize, and criticize, the ways in which white supremacy (as well as capitalism and patriarchy) are operative in Western Buddhism and the academic study of Buddhism in the West.

The chapters in this volume are diverse, drawing not only from different Buddhist traditions and schools, but also employing different disciplinary methodologies. This, I think, is appropriate, since it underscores the fundamentally interdisciplinary nature of both Buddhist Philosophy and Critical Philosophy of Race. The topics covered in this volume include a Dharmakirtian analyses of the construct of whiteness; a Yogacaran account of white subjectivity; an inquiry into white avidya (ignorance); several explorations into the intersections of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy in Western cultural and academic discourse on Buddhism as well as within Buddhist sanghas; a description of the resonance and connections between the philosophies of Dr. King and Thich Nhat Hanh; a presentation of an embodied practice of liberation from whiteness; and a Tibetan chod-inspired practice to uproot white supremacy, to name just a few. Although diverse along several axes, these chapters raise questions and arguments that speak to core philosophical issues, including the nature of cognition and subjectivity, the limits of knowledge and ignorance, and the ethical demands that arise from the fact of human and sentient suffering.

All of the chapters in this volume integrate two philosophical traditions—Critical Philosophy of Race and Buddhist Philosophy—that are rarely in dialogue, in academia or outside it. The volume is, I

think, a testament to the fruitfulness of this integration. It is my hope that this volume will provide a source of inspiration for scholars and practitioners who seek to understand the benefits and dangers of Buddhist models of social justice.

*George Yancy:* Sharing stories about one's life, one's identity, is a constructive affair. After all, memories lapse, discourse can reveal and conceal, courage and embarrassment mediate what is or is not said, and the imagination fills lacuna. With that in mind, though, I have been "haunted"—from the moment that I can really recall when I became conscious of the world (or conscious of myself as being-in-the-world with any seriousness)—with a feeling of existential melancholy paradoxically linked to a wonderful feeling of existential joy and ecstasy. So, there was (and is) this sense of being awed by the fact that I am, that we are; the dread and the beauty are mixed together. By "haunted," I mean the sense of being frequented by a sense of overwhelming desire to know why I exist, why there is something rather than nothing. This can clearly be described as a profound sense of wonder, but, for me, it is linked, and has always been linked, to a sense of suffering; it is the weight of finding that one has awakened in medias res where there is no satisfying and epistemologically certain preamble and no sure end that makes sense with any certainty. Death makes no sense to me, even if it is a biological necessity. So, I carry the weight of this. It arises at different times with various affective intensities. There are times when my body literally shakes. But why begin here with a book titled, *Buddhism and Whiteness: Critical Reflections*?

My interest in Buddhism, and Eastern thought more generally, is linked to that existential and paradoxical sense of suffering and joy, of seeking a meaning to the whole that isn't at all obvious. At about twenty years old, I read obsessively, but didn't understand much of what I read. But I was driven. The suffering was too weighty. I read J. Krishnamurti, Aldous Huxley, Tarthang Tulku, Peter D. Ouspensky, Alan Watts, G. I. Gurdjieff, Khalil Gibran, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, and others. I bought and read parts of the Bhagavad-Gita, the I Ching, the Upanishads, and other religious texts. Of course, by this time, I was majoring in philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh, having committed myself to philosophy at seventeen years old, but my hunger for meaning wasn't driven simply by philosophical wonder, but by a deep hunger for something more, something spiritually transcendent. That hunger formed who I was. The hunger was encouraged when I was introduced, while an undergraduate, to prominent Hindu spiritual leader Swami Bhashyananda who, after answering a question that I raised, said to me, "You will someday become a very wise man." At nineteen years old, hearing that meant the world to me, confirmed what felt like my "destiny." This search or hunger for the transcendent is why, I'm sure, I've always had a penchant for Plato's theory of Forms.

Reading Krishnamurti, introduced to me by my father and his close friend, George Williams, made me soar and yet travel inward. They introduced me to his books, and later I bought his records and actually had the pleasure to meet him, and to shake his hand when I went to Ojai, California, to hear him speak. And while Krishnamurti didn't offer "the way," in fact was critical of any such discourse, I was enthralled by his emphasis upon mindfulness, having the capacity to possess a silent mind. Around this time, I became aware of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who spoke of the practice and art of dying to the self, the ego. At the time I was unaware of the controversy surrounding him or his followers. Later, I was fascinated and transfixed by the transformative narrative of Siddhartha Gautama. The idea of remaining completely still despite the outward distractions is still incredibly fascinating to me. I even envisioned myself as a mold\ quiet, enlightened, and enveloped in divine reality. As you can see, my conceptual understanding, of all of this was being

driven by various spiritual orientations, but I was seeking with a passion. Devotees within the Hare Krishna movement wanted me to join them. People of the Unification Church (founded by its controversial leader Sun Myung Moon) tried desperately to recruit me. I didn't join. I was still

seeking. There were times when I thought that it wasn't philosophy with its analytic style that moved me, but something similar to mysticism, something that resulted in a profound and unutterable experience.

So, when I initially began to think about how Buddhism might speak critically to whiteness, I'm pretty sure that it was the work of Krishnamurti that was in the back of my mind. While not a Buddhist practitioner, Krishnamurti offered a way of challenging what I had much later come to refer to as the opacity of whiteness, the ways in which white people fail or refuse to look at their own whiteness, or even the ways in which whiteness, structurally, obfuscates its own self-interrogation, burying itself deeper into the white psyche such that white people may not even possibly know the depths of their own racism. Buddhism offered (and offers) a language and a practice that suggests strong conceptual family resemblances to concepts that I later brought to bear on thinking about whiteness—for example, the concept of un-suturing, vigilance, ambush, tarrying, and kenosis or emptying. Each of these concepts resonant with Buddhist practices of mindfulness, of remaining still, watching, opening the self to the unknown, experiencing the pain and the horror of embedded and opaque forms of whiteness, and the process of emptying, letting go.

Of course, none of this has to do with navel gazing. As Krishnamurti says, "Meditation is not an escape from the world; it is not an isolating self-enclosing activity, but rather the comprehension of the world and its ways." Given this understanding, meditation is not ahistorical or trapped within some ethereal domain of solipsistic self-enlightenment removed from the world. Within this concrete quotidian context, the removal of masks, giving thanks to moments when one is ambushed by one's whiteness, is about a certain quality of death. And if whiteness lives through a parasitic relationship to people of color, then whiteness (not white people) must atrophy—undergo a form of death of white narcissism, white hegemony, white colonial expansionism, white domination, white desire, white consumption, white privilege, white epistemic totalization, white illusions of safety and superiority. It is a form of atrophy or death in the name of love. As Mary E. Hobgood's writes, "For whites to construct an identity outside the racist construct, we would need to give up our socially constructed white selves and embrace the rejected parts of our humanity that require scapegoats." The concept of scapegoating points to forms of poisonous white self-rejection, not accepting loving compassion. James Baldwin writes, "White people in this country will have quite enough to do in learning how to accept and love themselves and each other, and when they have achieved this—which will not be tomorrow and may very well be never—the Negro problem will no longer exist, for it will no longer be needed."

There is a relationship between a lack of white self-loving compassion, which is not about being selfish, and white people's hatred of, disregard for, or alienation from people of color. There are forms of self-compassion that are not egocentric and that actually expand one's consciousness. If whiteness is a covered-over wound, then one must un-suture as an act of loving kindness and touch that wound. Indeed, mindfully, one must embrace that wound. Although he did not have in mind the interior structure of whiteness, through a beautiful and moving meditative practice and imaging that is applicable to my point here, Zen Buddhist Thich Nhat Hanh says, "Breathing in, I see myself as a 5-year-old child. Breathing out, I hold that 5-year-old child in me with tenderness. Breathing in, I see the 5-year-old child in me as fragile, vulnerable, easily wounded. Breathing out I feel the wound of that little child in me and use the energy of compassion to hold tenderly the wound of that child." Think of this in terms of Baldwin's idea of white people "learning how to accept and love themselves." What is clear to me is that whiteness, as a site of brokenness, which reinforces itself through repetitive acts of distancing, stereotyping, hating, and alienating people of color, must be undone, shattered, through a mindful tarrying of its always already brokenness. And while there is so much more that Buddhism has to offer in terms of dismantling the poisonous reality of whiteness, which is precisely the motivation for this text, it is because of that powerful sense of mindfulness as

a site of temporal disruption vis-a-vis the sedimented and habitual practices of whiteness that I eagerly asked my colleague and friend, Emily McRae, to join me in producing this unprecedented and collective meditation on whiteness. <>

## **HANDBOOK OF EAST ASIAN NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS** edited by Lukas Pokorny and Franz Winter [Brill Handbooks on Contemporary Religion, Brill, 9789004362055]

This Handbook has won the ICAS Edited Volume Accolade 2019. Brill warmly congratulates editors Lukas Pokorny and Franz Winter and their authors with this award.

A vibrant cauldron of new religious developments, East Asia (China/Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam) presents a fascinating arena of related research for scholars across disciplines. Edited by Lukas Pokorny and Franz Winter, the Handbook of East Asian New Religious Movements provides the first comprehensive and reliable guide to explore the vast East Asian new religious panorama. Penned by leading scholars in the field, the assembled contributions render the Handbook an invaluable resource for those interested in the crucial new religious actors and trajectories of the region.

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in defining East Asia is naturally taking centre stage in the Humanities and specifically within Religious Studies. In this respect, East Asia is held tantamount to the Chinese cultural sphere, the 'Sinic zone' (Fairbank 1968: 2) and 'Sinic world' (Reischauer 1974), or the 'Sinosphere' (Fogel 2009: 4-5)—all referring to the region culturally engrained by the Hànn Chinese discursive archive, politically (via tributary relations) and economically clustering in an historical perspective. Regional cohesion is seen to be given most notably through both the dissemination of the Chinese script and a distinctive portfolio of religious and ethical patterns crystallising in the recognition of the importance of self-cultivation and social harmony. For the proponents of a shared East Asian cultural heritage, it is mainly the Confucian nomenclature of reality and its practical application by behavioural patterns that lies at the core of the Sinic religious reservoir (e.g., Shin 2012; Rozman 1991; Tu 1989); the Chinese cultural sphere as essentially a 'Confucian cultural area' (Nakajima 1994: 114-115). By bracketing East Asia in this way, territorial lines are reshuffled—Mongolia is left out, whereas Singapore is added to the core bloc of China/Taiwan, the Korean peninsula, Japan, and Vietnam (cf. Holcombe 2017: 5; Prescott 2015: 5-6). The shift happening at the level of nation-states also takes place in the domestic context, where certain enclaves may presently (let alone historically) effectively be relocated either inside (e.g., concentrated Chinese diasporic settlements in Indonesia and Malaysia) or outside (e.g., Tibet and broad areas of Xīnjiāng) this culturally contoured enclosure. The constellation over a culturally connected East Asia is likewise not unanimously agreed upon, with Singapore and Vietnam being the movable elements. As for the latter, for instance, the level of 'Confucianisation' as to justify the inclusion into the assumed Confucian cultural area is contested by some scholars (Acharya 2013: 96 n. 37).

The definition of East Asia employed in this Handbook draws on the assumption of cultural, and specifically religious, commonalities of the countries included; that is to say, the discursive aspects shared by the majority of those contributing to the vast nationally confined cultural repository. A determining factor to the East Asian cultural storehouse has been the process of sinicisation, fleshing out most saliently via a shared vocabulary as well as the ideological and material heritage of the 'Three Teachings' (Chinese: sānjiào; Japanese: sankyō; Korean: samgyo; Vietnamese: tam giáo): Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism (cf. Pye 2004). The Three Teachings were adding significantly to the religious environment of East Asia, mutually influencing each other as well as existing and newly arriving religious systems (e.g., Christianity). The ethical dimension of the Three Teachings, most resonantly voiced by the Confucian tradition in days past, supplied a widely recognised standard of mores deemed conducive across the region for the establishment/maintenance of social well-being. This became so deeply ingrained that it still remains, at least latently, a socio-cultural substratum. The discursive universe of the Three Teachings, in varying diachronic and local configurations concerning the magnitude of influence of each single 'tradition,' keeps serving as the

matrix or the syncretising agent of newly emerging and transmigrated religious currents, given the accelerating religious globalisation.

East Asia according to this Handbook denotes the part of Asia whose sociocultural anatomy is conspicuously characterised by these discursive aspects inscribed through a millennia-long unfolding process in substantial parts of today's nation-states of China and Taiwan, Japan, South and North Korea, and Vietnam.

### New Religious Movements

Religions have always been in motion. In addition to the transformations within existing religions, the emergence of new movements is a constant factor in history. Some of them grow and may become an essential aspect of the religious panorama domestically or even internationally. Most of them, however, remain small or eventually disappear. Taken from this angle, the term 'new religious movement' is a relative term. Designating religions as NRMs or 'new religions' is a convention, which came into use due to the lack of a more suitable terminology with respect to recently emerged religious communities. At its heart, the term is defined by a temporal dimension considering the time of institutional formation qua discernible community based on a novel religious provider (founding figure) and consumers (adherents or practitioners). Accordingly, most scholars, taking the temporal aspect as definient for NRM, mark the beginning of 'new religiosity' after 1800, or, alternatively, from the middle of the nineteenth century. This rather broad definition of NRM is occasionally juxtaposed by an approach to the concept that limits its range to the mid-twentieth century by associating the origin of NRMs with the aftermath of the 1960s counter culture or, alternatively, with the end of World War II (see, for example, Arweck 2002: 264; Melton 2007: 30-33). This contraction, however, is Western-centric, for it is linked to the emergence of a striking number of groups particularly in the United States and, by extension, Western Europe, while ignoring other areas of the world. Moreover, this definition is further compromised since many of the movements that were first encountered in the West at the time can be traced back in history well before this apparent caesura. The general lack of a clear definition entails that the term 'NRM' is limited in its temporal and, especially, its regional usage. There is, for instance, no penchant to use this category in respect to recent developments taking place in the Islamic world, although one could easily think of a plethora of suitable groups, such as the Ahmadiyya, established in the closing of the nineteenth century.

From the perspective of Religious Studies, a proper definition of 'NRM' should be broad enough to be employed in regionally and temporally diverse contexts. This is most plainly done by adhering to one sole criterion with a flexible lower end, namely 'time.' This lower end is variously anchored throughout nineteenth century religious history in conjunction with industrialisation, colonialism, and incipient 'glocalisation.' At the intersection of socio-cultural, political, and economic shifts that were notably taking shape in all areas of the world during the nineteenth century, novel religious programmes were devised inhaling a transformative spirit moulded by the surrounding discourse and the new paradigm of (unfolding) modernity. 'New religiosity,' whenever conceived in the history of religions, is a concerted attempt to introduce change (Beckford 1986: x) but with a temporally more recent and thus contextually demarcated anatomy.

One of the major concerns with the label 'NRM' is that this category's history is often depicted as a completely separate chapter. Such approach ignores that NRM s are indeed born and bred in a specific religious milieu, and, more often than not, brought forth by and may manoeuvre within a single 'parent tradition.' Hence, the expression 'NRM' should not be regarded a new branding of religion along the lines of Buddhism, Christianity, or Islam, but merely as an umbrella notion encompassing 'more recent' institutional manifestations. This approach challenges the nomenclature often applied to religious history, where NRM s are understood as a separate segment next to

‘world religions.’ NRM s are so multi-faceted as to defy any overall classification not grounded in a temporal definition.

In this Handbook NRM is used in preference to the more senior term ‘new religion.’ The latter is a direct rendering of *shinshūkyō*, which has become the standard designation in Japanese academe. Closely following Japanese terminology, Korean scholars likewise adopted, as the first choice, this term as a calque—*sinjonggyo*. The rationale behind using NRM is its more inclusive semantics. The term ‘movement’ provides a broader spectrum of ‘institutions,’ ranging from legally incorporated bodies and hierarchically structured organisations to loosely based communities and religious networks in statu nascendi. In addition, the term allows embracing the dynamic character of new religious developments. The younger and smaller circumscribed institutions are, the more their visibility increases given how lived religion is always in a constant state of reshaping. Cowan and Bromley (2015: 197-198) accordingly introduced the descriptor ‘experimental faiths.’ In particular, it better depicts the subtle dynamics within the early period of formation, which is often characterised by a slow process of emancipation with various stages of community building and separation. NRMs scholarship and adjacent disciplines have introduced a panoply of alternative terms, many of which explicitly or implicitly convey negative associations, or are bound to very particular circumstances concerning their usage. Most coinages are animated by a basal dichotomy, as is also incidentally the case with ‘NRM’ or ‘new religion’ (here: ‘traditional’ or ‘established’ versus ‘new’). These include, among others: peripheral, marginal, or fringe religion; minority religion/faith; non-mainstream religion; sectarian religion or group; controversial or unconventional religion; alternative religion; and emergent religion. Expressions such as ‘new religious organisation’ and ‘new religious current’ are chiefly used in a distinct setting narrowing the semantics of NRM. These designations implicate a dichotomy by generally taking as a defining reference a religious ‘mainstream’ towards which they appear as an alternative. Such understanding of new religiosity as a non-mainline religious arena is not only relative, that is, depending on the regional and temporal context, but to some extent echoes inferiority vis-à-vis a mainstream ideal. Specific neologisms have spawned in many languages, mostly stimulated by the ‘anti-cult’ discourse. In this respect, blatantly derogatory labels such as ‘cult’ and ‘sect’ are being avoided, unless they are arranged within a specific sociological explanatory framework, which has its own problems of wider applicability, especially with a view to East Asian NRMs.

### East Asian New Religious Movements

There is no universally agreed definition for the term ‘NRM’ (or alternative expressions), yet it is generally perceived as a very useful label—particularly when dealing with the history of East Asia from the nineteenth century—for it stresses a new mode of ‘institutionalised’ religious expression. The emergence and growth of new religious developments is an important aspect in any description of the religious context of the countries concerned. This is perhaps one of the major differences to the situation in ‘Western’ countries, where the existence of NRMs is evident as well, but more often than not they lack a substantial followership and thus remain marginalised. This difference exists to a large degree due to the general religious history of the East Asian countries that is characterised by a greater variety in the religious realm, specifically the dynamic presence of the Three Teachings throughout millennia, rather than the dominance of just one specific religious system over several centuries (such as with Christianity or Islam). In other words, East Asia comprises a much more colourful religious scenery in time and space.

The tendency to use the term NRM in this context must also be evaluated against the background of the history of the last two centuries. Doubtlessly, this period constitutes the most crucial phase in the history of the region. Key societal and political changes have their beginning in the nineteenth century, rapidly transforming the lifeworld of the people. The period witnessed the end of the Chinese emperor system ranging back to the third century BCE and— following social upheavals and

a civil war—the establishment of a Communist state in mainland China and a separate one on the island of Taiwan. In Japan, the Meiji Restoration (Meiji ishin) put an end to the isolationist Edo {Ya period (1603-1868) by introducing a centralist state focused on (and narrowed down to) the pre-eminence of the Japanese Emperor, which eventually resulted in problematic developments in the first half of the twentieth century culminating in the country's disastrous involvement in World War II. On the Korean peninsula, Japanese 'colonial rule' (Ilje kangjônggi, 1910-1945) concluded the Chosôn dynasty (1392-1910), paving the way for the entanglements with the post-war geopolitical situation that eventually divided the country into a communist North and a capitalist South following a bloody fratricidal war (1950-1953). Vietnam became object of French colonial interests in the nineteenth century and had to struggle its way to freedom during the twentieth century, parting the country while being plagued by an atrocious war (1955-1975).

Fuelling further transformation also in the light of advancing industrialisation, technologisation, and globalisation, these developments deeply impregnated the religious history of the region and thus are also pivotal for the new religious domain. The underlying impetus of these massive shifts across East Asian societies was the imperialist encounter with the West, 'glocalising' East Asia. For the religious field, this encounter meant a rapid expansion of offerings due to transmigration of ideas and their accommodation on the one hand, and a self-adapting generative momentum as a response to foreign impact on the other.

The Vietnamese Phat Giao Htta Hao (Cao Đài) is a most well-known example of a movement accommodating both European, 'Western' features (most conspicuously from Catholicism and from Kardecian Spiritism) and Asian elements in the course of the formation into a new comprehensive religious system. A more recent example concerns the new manifestations impacted by the Euro-American so-called 'New Age' in East Asia in the second half of the twentieth century. Groups manoeuvring in this 'new spirituality' segment either embraced concepts to widen their religious portfolio or are a direct outflow of this reception process. Several of these actors, navigating noticeably on the trajectory of the New Age current, have now grown into seminal suppliers in the global 'spiritual market.'

The formation of 'new religiosity' in East Asia at large is mainly based on an impulse brought forth by accelerated crisis. Whereas 'crisis' is certainly no universally applicable instrument for explaining the emergence of novel movements, it nevertheless serves well the East Asian context as a tool for understanding the specifics of its new religious developments. 'Crisis' is a defining factor of the human condition, a biographical disruption triggered by perceived deprivation. The deprivation felt may have numerous causes—social inadequacies, illness, identificatory disorientation, etc.—that are engendered or at least energised by the dynamics of one's life environment. The aspect of crisis is well articulated in the East Asian new religious cosmos, manifesting in an all-pervading elaborate spectrum of millenarian expression that aims at closure of collective deprivation. The rugged transformation process of the East Asian region continuously nourished the potential for crisis and thus occasionally gave rise to a social response in the form of NRMs. Conducive for this religious crystallisation is the pluralist religio-cultural East Asian heritage, offering a wide array of new avenues to spell out novel social programmes. It is this vast crucible of traditions old and new, native and nativised, soaked through by the Three Teachings and socially grammaticalised especially by Confucianism that distinctively circumscribe the East Asian religious context. Born and bred in this specific socio-cultural milieu, East Asian NRMs take on the traits of the wider religious framework, shaping the very category this Handbook attempts to explore. The millenarian aspect is one vital feature encountered in the East Asian new religious domain, more often than not coming to life in a saliently ethnocentric narrative. Other typological elements often listed as new religious attributes in the main—particularly a hierarchical structure centering on a founding figure or leader, and a



generally this-worldly outlook—are likewise to be found among many East Asian NRMs, yet none of these may be taken as a truly universal feature. <>

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