

Review Articles and Reviews

Kambala's *Āloka*māla and the Perils of Philology

Recently, the most welcome reprint of the Christian Lindtner's 1985 edition and translation of Kambala's *Āloka*māla was issued by the Asian Humanities Press – an imprint of the Jain Publishing Company (www.jainpub.com) under the title *A Garland of Light*.¹ The out-of-print original had appeared in 1985 as part of *Miscellanea Buddhica* (pp. 109–221) edited by Lindtner himself (*Indiske Studier*, V, Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag), together with valuable contributions by J.W. de Jong ('Le *Gaṇḍavyūha* et la loi de la naissance et de la mort'), M. David Eckel ('Bhāvaviveka's Critique of Yogācāra Philosophy in Chapter XXV of the *Prajñāpradīpa*'), and V.V. Gokhale/S.S. Bahulkar ('*Madhyamakahrdayakārikā Tarkajvālā*, Chapter I'), all of which would be worth reprinting, too.

The *Āloka*māla edition and translation (pp. 1–114) is accompanied by the reprint of an important recent article by Lindtner on the historical development of *cittamātra*, pp. 115–62 ('*Cittamātra* in Indian Mahāyāna until Kamalaśīla', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* [WZKS] 41 (1997), pp. 159–206). The volume is introduced in a foreword by Karl Potter (v–vii) and a short preface by the author (ix–x). The reproduction, about 95% clearly readable, of the sole Sanskrit manuscript of the *Aloka*māla (Tōkyō University Library) follows as an appendix and adds greatly to the high scholarly and bibliophile value of this nicely produced hardcover. On the slightly disappointing side, the volume comes with the idiosyncrasies to be expected from a photomechanical reprint without any index.²

The reprint was already reviewed by Klaus Mylius in *Acta Orientalia* 64 (2003), pp. 273–7; Mylius concentrated on the Lindtner's contribution towards the philosophical interpretation and critical appraisal of this little known Yogācāra work. Hence, our discussion of that matter can be very brief: Lindtner first drew attention to the 5th-/6th-century CE Yogācāra philosopher Kambala³ in 1982, in a still valuable article entitled 'Adversaria Buddhica' (WZKS 26, pp. 167–94; pp. 191–4). His rediscovery for Buddhist Studies proves highly relevant since it greatly broadens our historical understanding of the development of Yogācāra philosophy; moreover, given the overwhelming corpus of Yogācāra texts only extant in Tibetan and/or Chinese translations, this edition provides us with another rare testimony in the original Sanskrit.

Kambala holds a special place in the history of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Writing shortly before the well-known Svātantrika-Mādhyamika critiques on Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, his work shows intimate knowledge of Bhartṛhari and Dignāga; a considerable number of quotations / intertextual references in later texts by philosophers such as Bhavya, Dharmakīrti

1. Christian Lindtner: *A Garland of Light: Kambala's Āloka*māla. Translated with Appendix on *cittamātra* (Fremont, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 2003), pp. x, 162 [+ 25pp. plates], \$50, ISBN 0-89581-911-2.
2. In the light of the painful lack of an index, minor idiosyncrasies such as a reference to Eckel's contributions to the original *Miscellanea Buddhica* (p. 5 n. 9) as 'supra' or the lack of square references to the pagination of the original publications can be overlooked.
3. Lindtner (p. 7) convincingly dates Kambala as active between 450–525.

and Śāntarākṣita prove both the wide influence and the popularity of the *Ālokaṃāla*. Although lacking in concise philosophical structure, Kambala's *Ālokaṃāla* clearly strives to assimilate Madhyamaka – especially the theory of the two truths (*satya-dvaya*) – to Yogācāra and its system of *tri-svabhāva* (rather, than vice versa as later done especially by Śāntarākṣita).

The *Ālokaṃāla* is a didactic poem about *cittamātra*, containing 282 verses in its extant Tibetan versions, which is represented by different editions of the translation (T [see below for abbreviations]) by Kumārakalaśa and Sh'a kya 'od and their Tibetan rendition of the Sanskrit *Ālokaṃālaṭīka* (Comm.) composed by Kambala's near contemporary *Asvabhāva (Ngo bo nyid med pa); a unique Sanskrit manuscript (Tōkyō, M) has 279 numbered verses, omitting four (232, 234, 262 and 282 T) and incorporating as its verse 187 the beginning verse of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. The Sanskrit text consists of *anuṣṭubhs* with some interspersions of longer metres, occurring more frequently in the last quarter of the *Lehrgedicht* (didactic poem).

The explicit aim of Lindtner's edition is to establish the Sanskrit recension of *Asvabhāva's commentary (p. 1). Lindtner generally excels in a both intelligent and philologically accurate edition accompanied by a good English rendition, which provides the reader with just enough philological and philosophical guidance. Lindtner's word choice when translating specific Indian terms is generally fortunate, though not always (e.g. *muni* [Tibetan *thob pa*] as 'ascetic' 202a). The reprint of Lindtner's 1997 *cittamātra* article just about fills the gap of contextual philosophical analysis, which should ideally have accompanied the translation in the form of a commentary.

At some points, Lindtner shows himself biased in an amusing but thoroughly unjustified way. For instances, in his 2003 preface, he speaks of 'abstruse doctrines of Mahāyāna philosophy' (p. ix); in the 1982 introduction, he polemically devalues tantric literature in general (p. 6). In passing, it may also be mentioned, that e.g. Lindtner's 1997 observations – following Eliade *et al.* – on Indian yoga as autosuggestion or hallucination (pp. 158) display an entertaining, blissful unawareness of the methodologies employed in (post)modern psychology, anthropology and ethnography of religion. However, this does not at all diminish Lindtner's essential and highly valuable contributions to our understanding of Mahāyāna philosophy.

Leaving aside a more detailed appraisal of his remarkable, intellectual grasp of the historical-philosophical development of Buddhist thought, I would like to concentrate in the following on the philological aspects of Lindtner's edition, or what I want to call the 'perils of philology'. Of course, we must respect his choice of attempting a reconstruction of the Sanskrit recension. Still, in the case of a single Sanskrit *testimonium*, a diplomatic copy edition of the manuscript or a moderate base model edition would have been the more obvious choice of editorial technique. In my following discussion, I want to point out the perils of Lindtner's reconstructive editing and what I call his 'impatient philology'. There is the general editorial nonchalance and a certain unwillingness to cater for a more general public, which unfortunately characterises many of Lindtner's 'impatient' editions. Certainly, at least a General Index would have been useful for any reader, and specialists would have been grateful for a *pāda*-index, and Sanskrit and Tibetan Word indices; none of that is attempted.

Even more disappointing is Lindtner's failure to provide a list of the secondary *testimonia* for the *Ālokaṃāla* by contenting himself to refer to his abovementioned 1982 article (pp. 191–2), giving two additional references (p. 4 n. 8). Already, for this reason alone, the reprint of this article, too, in the present volume would have been very helpful. In his edi-

tion, Lindtner then uses the unexplained abbreviation Q which obviously refers to the *testimonia*. Accurate information should have been more easily accessible and presented for the user of his edition. (By the way, Lindtner uses ‘quote’ here in a broad – inexact – sense instead of literary-critically correct terms such as ‘allusion’ or ‘intertextual evidence’ and the textual-critical correct term *testimonium*).

Among the deplorable notorious editorial omissions observable in many of Lindtner’s writings, is the lack of tables for abbreviations, which an author can provide without much effort and which would make his work more accessible for a wider Buddhist Studies readership. As service to the reader, I have compiled these tables of *testimonia* and abbreviations for Lindtner’s *Ālokamāla* edition:

<i>Kambala, Ālokamāla</i>	Testimonia
6–7	<i>Dohakośapañjikā</i> ed. Bagchi, p. 126; <i>Subhāṣitasamgraha</i> ed. Bendall, fol. 55
10cd–11ab	Yasovijaya, commenting on Haribhadra, <i>Śāstravārtāsamuccaya</i> vi, 57
12–14	<i>Pradīpoddyyotanavyākhyāṭikā</i> , bsTan ‘gyur Peking 2659, Ki 216b
18	<i>Bodhicaryāvātārapañjikā</i> ed. La Vallée Poussin, p. 352
40	<i>Caryāgīti</i> ed. Kvaerne, p. 144
117–188	<i>Subhāṣitasamgraha</i> ed. Bendall, fol. 91
189	<i>Pradīpoddyyotanavyākhyāṭikā</i> , bsTan ‘gyur Peking 2659, Ki 183a
206	<i>Subhāṣitasamgraha</i> ed. Bendall, fol. 91
235	<i>Sekoddeśaṭikā</i> ed. Carelli, p. 48
252	<i>Sekoddeśaṭikā</i> ed. Carelli, p. 48, <i>Caryāgīti</i> ed. Kvaerne, p. 139
277	<i>Kāvyalakṣana-Ratnaśrī</i> ed. Thakur & Jha, p. 63.

Table 1: Testimonia

A	Tibetan translation of Comm., Peking edition P (3869)
ĀM	Kambala, <i>Ālokamāla</i>
C	Tibetan version of ĀM, Cone edition (Ha 50b–62a)
Comm.	Sanskrit original of the Tibetan version (A and H) of the commentary to ĀM by *Asvabhāva (Ngo bo nyid med pa)
D	Tibetan version of ĀM, Derge edition (3895)
H	Tibetan translation of Comm., Derge edition D (3896)
M	Unique Sanskrit manuscript of ĀM from Tōkyō (S.Matsunami, <i>A Catalogue of the Sanskrit manuscripts in the Tokyo University Library</i> , Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1965, p. 26)
N	Tibetan version of ĀM, Narthang edition (3858)
P	Tibetan version of ĀM, Peking edition (5866)
Q	<i>Testimonia</i> (‘Quotes’ of ĀM in texts not further identified in the <i>apparatus</i> ; see Table 1)
S	Sanskrit archetype of ĀM
T	<i>snang ba’i phreng ba</i> ; Tibetan archetype of the ĀM known through N, P, D, C and Comm.

Table 2: Abbreviations

Even more serious are editorial errors and inconsistencies, which should have been purged for a re-edition.⁴ First of all, Lindtner in his edition refers to the palm leaves of the unique manuscript with a numbering that is different from the pagination on the palm leaves themselves (at the mid-margin *recto*). Lindtner numbers the title page as 1a and 1b, although the manuscript starts pagination with 1 at the folio following the title page. So 2a L. refers to 1 r[ecto], 2b to 1 v[erso]. The reproduction of the manuscript omits the title page altogether.

Although a diplomatic edition of the Sanskrit manuscript is not intended, it is good custom to provide in the critical-reconstructive edition the manuscript readings to a certain degree of consistency, especially in case of a sole textual witness. At least a short codicological and paleographical discussion of the unique source should have been attempted; the sole reference (p.1 n. 1) to Matsunami's catalogue entry⁵ is utterly unsatisfactory. Also some introductory observations about scribal errors, conventions, and orthography, as well as the conventions employed by Lindtner for the standardised writing of the Sanskrit in his critical edition, would have been appropriate.

The following remarks aim to fill that gap at least partly. As Matsunami lists, the 26 palm leaves (10 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ inch) comprise 5 lines *recto* and *verso*, in Nepalese characters. The Nepalese hook script employed here is quite similar to the 11th-century Lotus *Sūtra* manuscript in the collection of the China Ethnic Library.⁶ The palm leaf manuscript ascribes the work to Prajñamitra.

The manuscript regularly shows the scribal convention of *geminatio*⁷ of 't' after 'r' (*vartate* etc.: 102d, 111d, 144a, 154c, 168d, 169d, 245 [=246 L.]d. More noteworthy scribal conventions and licenses include:

- (i) Haplography⁸ of 't' before 'v' (*satva* etc., 209 [208 L.] b, 219 [218] b),
- (ii) palatal gemination in external sandhi (207 [206 L.] c *apītaṃ cchinatty*),
- (iii) external sandhi -t s- → -cch- (218 [217 L.] b),
- (iv) the inconsistent treatment of internal nasal before consonant, which places as the general rule *m̐* before guttural and labial (but: 231 [230 L.] a d *stambhitaḥ*; 232 [231 L.] c *ālambyā*), but has *ñ* before palatal and *n* before dental (but: 219 [218 L.] d *hamtavyaṃ*; 221 (220 L.) a *ciṃta*; 225 [224 L.] c *atyamtaṃ*).
- (v) final *m* in pausa is written inconsistently, but generally as *anusvāra* on consonant level, sometimes as *anusvāra* above the line, or even *ma-kāra* with *virāma*, the c-d *caesura* is treated once like that (209 [208 L.] c-d *bauddham ādau Ms bauddham ādau*).
- (vi) unusual cerebralisation occurs in 60d *rasāyaṇam* and 150b *aṇirupīta*.

On the side of scribal errors, *s/ś* confusion occurs (153d *śabdasaṃskāraśaṃkate* 197 [196 L.] c *suddho*, 211 [210 L.] d *nāśāgre*, 216 [215 L.] c *andhatāmiśre*) as does occasionally, also due to scribal inner dictate,⁹ *y/j* confusion (97 a *tirjañcaḥ* and in the verse after the dedication, see below). Omitted *akṣaras* – in one case on 5 *verso* a whole verse (54) – are often written below or above the line. *La-akṣaras* are omitted twice in 4 *verso* (46a and 48c).

4. These are the more surprising since Lindtner confidently states, that after repeatedly re-checking the manuscript, neither he nor Prof. Ejima found any errors in his recension of the Sanskrit text (Preface, p. x).

5. See Table 2.

6. <http://sfl.pku.edu.cn/sanskrit/pale.htm> (accessed November 2006).

7. Doubling.

8. Double letter written as a single one.

9. A scribe writes something down he hears inwardly, instead of from reading.

For a critical edition, the editorial purging of scribal inconsistencies and conventions is of course justifiable. As a general rule, but not consistently, Lindtner's apparatus omits to mention obvious orthographical mistakes such as *pratiḥ* (7d), *karmavāsvā* (61d), *nāstikyārthānupātānī* (142d, instead of *-pātīnī*), *praśānta* (196 [195 L.] d without *visārga*), *nīrvāṇo* (202 [201 L.] c), and *bhinanti* 247 [248 L.] c. This category of omissions includes the wrong or simply conventional manuscript spellings *vṛtasthaḥ* (207 [206 L.] a) and *svapnavṛtyā* (231 [230 L.] a). In the hypometrical verse 169d of the manuscript, Lindtner tacitly supplies the additional *aḥsara* (*vinivartate: nivarttate* M). And although 208 [207 L.] c *puṇyan* is clearly a dittographical mistake (cp. b *puṇyasambhāra-*) for *paśyan* (Tibetan *blta*), the variant reading should at least have been noted.

Unfortunately, Lindtner sometimes fails to note variant readings even where they may be of some interest. In 51d, the manuscript reads an unattested *parasmaipada* form (*vyavatiṣṭhati*, instead of the regular *ātmanepada* *vyavatiṣṭhathe*); in 189 [188 L.] c, the manuscript has the not totally impossible *samsṛtya* (instead of Lindtner's *samsrjya*, cp. Tibetan *tshogs*).

In 265 [267 L.] d, instead of Lindtner's *citrabhedasadrśam jagatrayam* ['To them] "the triple world" ... resembles various pictures', p. 103), one should read the manuscript as *citrabhittiśadrśam jagatrayam* ('... resembles a picture-panel/a painted scenery'), *pace* the Tibetan *bye brag* = *viśeṣa*, *bheda*; it should be noted anyway, that *bheda* points not to variety (Lindtner) but to 'part, peculiarity, specifics, detail'.

In 153a, the conjectural reading *bhāveṣu* instead of *dharmeṣu* M is very questionable; the Tibetan *chos rnam*s can easily represent both, and internal reasons for rejecting *dharmeṣu* are not obvious.

Where Lindtner's apparatus indicates variant readings, the information is not always reported accurately:

Vers	Reading in Lindtner's apparatus (M)	Actual reading of the manuscript
17 b	<i>Vijñāntānāsya</i>	<i>Vijñāntānāsya</i>
65 d	<i>Vitapatmanām</i>	<i>Vitapātmanā</i>
179 a	<i>Apapaśyan</i>	<i>ap</i> [16r, l. 3] <i>apaśyan</i>
179 b	<i>Vatamani</i>	<i>Vatamini</i>
190 [189 L.] a	<i>Vāsanam</i>	<i>Vāsanām</i>
225 [244 L.] c	<i>atyamtaṃ</i>	<i>atyamtaṃ</i>
232 [231 L.] c	<i>Tathatāyantasyā</i>	<i>Tathatāyantasyā</i>

Table 3: Variant readings

Little editorial infelicities include the misattribution of *apparatus tac ca* : *tatva* at 258 a, instead of 259 c, and the occasional omission of the manuscript abbreviation M. At two passages, Lindtner also gives an orthographically incorrect text, even though the manuscript reads the correct forms. In 161c, Lindtner writes *-upadeśeṇa* instead of correct *upadeśeṇa*, and in 265 d [= 263 in the manuscript], he writes a wrong external sandhi *bhaved t-* instead of *bhaved t-*.

Incomprehensibly, Lindtner even misreports the verses added to the manuscript after the colophon (p. 113). He omits one, and gives a substantially different version for the other.

After the colophon, the manuscript contains a well attested *subhāṣita* stanza:¹⁰

10. *subhāṣita saṃgraha*, collected by Kedar Naphade, na-vargā 1, 15; accessible through http://sanskrit-documents.org/doc_z_misc_subhaashita/, and – with variant reading – *Garuḍa Purāṇa* 1, 114, 51.

namanti phalino vṛkṣā namanti guṇino janāḥ |
śuṣkakāṣṭhāni mūrkhāśca na namanti kadācana ||
 Trees full of fruits bend down, virtuous people bend down (=are modest) |
 Dry wood and fools never bend down ||

c *śuṣkakāṣṭhāni samgraha svaskāṣṭhā M śuṣkavṛkṣāśca Garuḍa Purāṇa.*

The following *subhāṣita* stanza, Lindtner quotes not in the form it actually occurs in the manuscript, but in the form it is quoted by Yaśovijaya, *Śāstravārtāsamuccaya* 5:

dharmasya phalam icchanti dharmam necchanti mānavāḥ |
phalam necchanti pāpasya pāpam kurvanti sādārāḥ ||

However, the manuscript clearly reads

puṇyasya phalam icchanti puṇyam necchanti mānavāḥ |
na pāpaphalam icchanti +pāpam yatnena kurvanti+ ||
 People desire the result of merit, but not the merit(-generating action) itself |
 They don't desire the result of wrong, but (still) they commit wrong with eagerness ||

d *+pāpam yatnena kurvanti+ contra metrum perparam scr.¹¹ M; pāpam kurvanti yatnataḥ*
*fortasse leg.;*¹² *pāpam yatnena : pāpañjatnena M, cf. above 97a tiryāṇcaḥ : tirjañcaḥ M.*

Being a useful example of 'impatient' philology and its perils, Lindtner's work is not diminished in its value by these infelicities. The *Garland of Light* is still an important and most welcome contribution to Mahāyāna philosophy and Buddhist literature by one of the most competent Sanskritists alive.

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Index to the Majjhima-nikāya, by M. Yamazaki & Y. Ousaka (eds)
 (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2006), pp. xi + 473, £35.50.
 ISBN 0 86013 421 0 (EAN 978 086013 421)

To add to their indexes of the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, *Dīgha-nikāya*, *Jātaka* and *Visuddhimagga*, all of which have been noted in earlier numbers of this journal (BSR 14, 2, 1997, 188-89; 15, 2, 1998, 224-25; 21, 1, 2004, 87-89; 21, 2, 2004, 242-43), Professors Yamazaki and Ousaka have now produced a computer-generated index to the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

A computer-generated index is only as good as the text it is based upon. Volume I of the PTS edition was produced by V. Tenckner, and Volumes II and III by R. Chalmers. The two editors did not always agree in the conventions which they adopted, and in fact they did not always agree with themselves, being sometimes quite inconsistent in the way in which they divided the particle *ti* from the preceding word, or in the use of *m̐* or *ṛi* before

11. Corrupt, against the metrum.

12. Maybe to be read.

gh. This means that there may be more than one entry for certain words, as is pointed out in the Introduction to this Index.

The proof-reading of Chalmers' volumes, in particular, seems to have left a lot to be desired, and when Volume II was reprinted in 2004 an attempt was made to eradicate as many errors as possible, although at least one new error was introduced, as this Index points out, s.v. *ārame*. In the preparation of this reprint the decorative lines which both editors had inserted as dividers between *suttas*, and which the computer counted as lines, were omitted. Readers who are using the original version of Volume II will therefore find that on such pages the line numbers in the Index will differ from those in their texts.

This index also includes a list of corrections for all three volumes of the Pali Text Society's edition of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, where a comparison with the Burmese and Sinhalese printed editions shows that the PTS readings are errors, rather than genuine variant readings.

Despite its shortcomings, this volume will prove to be a more than adequate replacement for the earlier index (published as Vol. IV of the PTS edition of the *Majjhima-nikāya*) which, as Mrs Rhys Davids acknowledged in the Introduction to that volume, was anything but complete and was, in fact, 'a very inadequate index'.

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The Notion of Diṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism: The Point of View, Paul Fuller
(London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), pp. xiv + 257, £65.00 (Cloth).
ISBN 0 415-34293-7

According to Paul Fuller, the concept of view (*diṭṭhi*) as an obstacle to 'seeing the way things actually are' is central to the Theravāda *Nikāyas*. Scholars have argued that these Buddhist texts contain two conflicting understandings of views. First, there is the 'opposition understanding' according to which right-views (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) are propositions stating, for example, the four truths, that oppose and *correct* wrong propositions about how things really are. Second, there is a 'no-views understanding', evident mainly in the *Aṭṭhakkavagga* and *Pārāyanavagga* of the *Sutta-nipāta* that rejects all views, even right-views, as a hindrance to the goal of complete non-attachment. However, Fuller's central thesis is that both these interpretations of the *Nikāyas* are misguided. Contrary to the opposition understanding, right-view is not a belief in a correct proposition but a 'detached order of seeing' that transforms one's behaviour. Right-view is realised when one acts without attachment. Fuller wishes to emphasise that the person who genuinely has right-view is affectively changed. Contrary to the no-views interpretation, the *Aṭṭhakkavagga* and *Pārāyanavagga* do not literally reject all views but advise the elimination of all craving for and attachment to views. Nowhere in the *Nikāyas* is it claimed that all views are false.

Chapter 1 provides an account of the various types of wrong-view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) explained in the *Nikāyas*. Chapter 2 does the same for right-views. Fuller identifies two broad categories of wrong-views: views that deny *kamma* and views about the self. He argues that, according to the *Nikāyas*, 'a view is not right which states that there is no self. This is as much a form of greed and attachment as one that states there is a self'. To deny the existence of the self is to fall into the extreme of annihilationism whereas the eternalist extreme view posits the existence of a self. Conversely, in Chapter 2 Fuller explains that right view includes various views that affirm that actions have consequences as well as views that entail an understanding of the four truths and dependent origination. Although Fuller does not say so, it seems to follow that the ontological

middle way between the extremes of annihilationalism and eternalism is the position that there is a self, but one that is dependently originating, changing and impermanent. Fuller claims that the 'is-ought' dichotomy is a modern phenomenon, and that right-views are therefore an expression of both fact and value. Right-views are 'soteriologically transformative', engendering wholesome actions. By contrast, wrong-views see things as they are not and lead to the continuation of suffering. Fuller contends that, in formulae such as the ten wholesome courses of action (*dasa kusala-kamma-pathā*), the *Nikāyas* recognise the reciprocal, mutually assisting nature of thought and action: 'The way we think affects our actions, and the way we act affects the way we think'. Right view 'admits of differences of degree' and its cultivation 'begins with the purification of body, speech and mind', leading to progressive levels of insight that 'cannot be separated from the transformation of action'.

Chapters 3 and 4 look at the way wrong-views and right-views function respectively. Fuller thinks that the tendency of views to become objects of craving is highly significant. Holding to a correct proposition with attachment would, according to Fuller, still be wrong-view. By contrast, right-view 'knows how to know how things are', that is, it is knowledge coupled with a detached, calm attitude. Fuller argues that the stream-attainer is described as accomplished in view (*ditṭhi-sampanna*) but there is a purification (*visuddhi*) of this insight with the progressive eradication of subtle forms of attachment that occurs on the higher paths of the Once-returner, Never-returner and *Arahant*. Only at the stage of the *Arahant* does right-view fully eradicate conceit (*māna*).

In Chapters 5 and 6, Fuller argues that right-view is not simply the assent to a proposition; it is 'a knowledge of the four truths and dependent origination without attachment', causing one to see and behave in the world in a radically different manner. Right-view is the 'transcendence of all views', in the sense that it goes beyond all attachment to propositions, correct or incorrect.

Fuller's position that the opposition understanding and no views understandings are both incorrect, and that the *Nikāyas* present a unified epistemology, is well argued and plausible, though not conclusive. An alternative reading still seems possible according to which, in disagreement with most of the Pāli Canon, the *Aṭṭhakavagga* presents a radical rejection of *all* views, a perspective that arguably re-emerges in the thinking of Nāgārjuna and is perhaps akin to classical Greek and Roman scepticism.

Fuller is surely right to emphasise the connection between right-views and non-attachment, the cognitive and the affective. Furthermore, as the raft analogy indicates, the *Dhamma* itself should not be made an object of attachment. Aggressively and proudly asserting any view, even one that one knows or believes to be correct, causes quarrels and vexation. Wrong-views are 'the grasping, attached, obstinate side of the cognitive process'. However, his focus on this theme does become a little repetitive, as it is reiterated in each chapter. Moreover, he occasionally overstates his case, appearing to neglect or downplay that right-view must have a propositional content. Usually, however, his analysis seems more balanced, and the point appears to be that right-view includes the realisation of truths that can be expressed propositionally, but also has essential non-cognitive aspects.

Fuller is also correct to point out that fact and value are not distinguished in the Theravāda texts. However, are these Buddhist sources right not to distinguish an 'ought' from an 'is'? Is non-attachment necessarily the correct moral response to an impermanent and unsatisfactory world? And is the Buddhist understanding of reality convincing? The *Nikāyas* express a vision of how things really are, inextricably linked to a view about how one ought to act, but it seems legitimate to question both their ontology and ethics.

Fuller does not address these concerns and, to be fair, it is not his intention to provide an assessment of his sources' philosophical assumptions.

This review cannot do justice to the wealth of textual analysis that Fuller provides to support his argument. He gives much detailed evidence from the *Nikāyas* and from the later *Abhidhamma* literature. He also refers extensively to previous academic discussions about *ditṭhi* in the works of Anderson, Gomez, Gethin, Hamilton, Jayatilke and others. As a work of careful and intelligent exegesis, Fuller's book is a welcome and valuable contribution to Buddhist Studies.

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Mipham's Dialectics and the Debates on Emptiness: To Be, Not to Be or Neither,
Karma Phuntsho (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 304 pp. £65.00 (Hb).
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Karma Phuntsho is a Bhutanese scholar who is already well known in the Tibetan monastic colleges of India, Nepal and Bhutan as a teacher and also as the author of some widely used and well respected text books. It was only after completing his training and graduating with the highest degree of *Khanpo* (*mkhan po*) from Namdrol Ling, the leading rNying ma pa monastic college in India, that Karma Phuntsho began his second academic career as a graduate student at Oxford. This book is the outcome of his DPhil thesis written there, under the supervision of Professor David Seyfort Ruegg, the leading Western academic scholar of Madhyamaka. This book therefore combines the intellectual influences of the very best of contemporary rNying ma pa monastic learning, from Namdrol Ling, with the very best of Western academic scholarship on Madhyamaka, from Professor Ruegg.

The outcome is a book of outstanding authority and clarity that seamlessly bridges East and West while maintaining a consistently high level of intellectual sophistication in both traditions. In particular, it shows a remarkable mastery of the technical terms of both traditions. In fact, Karma Phuntsho's grasp and skilful usage of Western philosophical technical language certainly exceeds that of most Western authors on Madhyamaka, who too often seem to retain one foot in the culture of the Dharma Centre. Above all, as his authorship of popular Tibetan-language scholastic textbooks would suggest, Karma Phuntsho is a gifted communicator who can convey complex philosophical ideas, in both Western and Tibetan idiom, with a deceptively easy clarity and simplicity. In fact, if one looks at other volumes on the subject of Madhyamaka, one can see that such simplicity and clarity is not at all easy to achieve, so we must count this volume as an unusually valuable contribution to the understanding of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy in the West. Its particular strong point, then, is its clarity and reliability of presentation: while Karma Phuntsho makes no attempt to produce an entirely original or previously unheard of contribution to philosophy on his own account, nor any radical new reinterpretation of Mipham, he does achieve a remarkably mature, subtle, contextualised and well-balanced synthesis of his difficult subject matter. This is not as simple as it might seem, since Mipham's Madhyamaka thought is scattered over several of his works, which Karma Phuntsho has therefore had to draw together. In fact, it might even be that Mipham's various writings specifically on Madhyamaka have never before been brought together

and presented as a single systematic whole in this way in any language, in which case, it might be a good idea to translate the book into Tibetan.

The focus of the book is the Madhyamaka interpretation of Ju Mipham Namgyal Gyatsho (1846-1912). Mipham was a towering intellect and polymath from East Tibet who completely revolutionised rNying ma pa scholasticism in the late 19th century, raising its status after many centuries as a comparative intellectual backwater, to arguably the most dynamic and expansive of philosophical traditions in all of Tibetan Buddhism, with an influence and impact far beyond the rNying ma pa themselves. Despite Mipham's astonishingly broad range of interests, it is his writings on Madhyamaka, Karma Phuntsho believes, that will make the deepest long-term impact on Buddhist thought. Since almost all presentation of Madhyamaka in the west has until now been mainly dGe lugs pa in orientation, and since only two previous full length works on Mipham have so far been published in English, the publication of this book is a most welcome event.

The first fifty-four pages of the book contextualise Mipham's Madhyamaka thought by introducing the necessary philosophical and historical background in a very well-rounded way. Hence we are first introduced to a whirlwind tour of the many philosophical and soteriological implications of emptiness within the entire sweep of Buddhist thought, before narrowing the focus on to emptiness in specifically Mahāyāna Indian philosophy, with special emphasis on Nāgārjuna. Next, emptiness in Tibetan philosophy is reviewed, including a concise discussion of the entire panoply of Tibetan debates on the nature of emptiness, through which Mipham's immediate context and circumstances are introduced.

From page fifty-five onwards, the book begins to narrow the focus on to Mipham's specific contribution, presented in three long sections on delimitation of the Mādhyamika negandum, on the theory of the ultimate reality, and on knowability and effability. With these, the main body of the book, are introduced numerous highly complex and technical analyses that can not be adequately dealt with in a short review such as this one, presented as it is by a non-specialist in Buddhist philosophy and Madhyamaka. A longer and more philosophically detailed review by a specialist such as Matthew Kapstein would be welcome.

Mipham's particular views are first introduced through a lucid analysis of the delimitation of the negandum of the ultimate analysis – what exactly is it that the famous Madhyamaka analysis negates? – since here lay the core issue of debate in Tibetan Madhyamaka. Mipham's views differ from those of the dGe lugs pa school, even if, like the dGelugs pa but unlike the Jo nang pa and some of the bKa' brgyud pa, he certainly does not in any straightforward way espouse the absolutist *gzhan stong* view, and clearly retains the mainstream Madhyamaka apophatic understanding of the ultimate as the absence of a negandum achieved by negative logical analysis.

The dGe lugs pa had, according to their critics, differed even from their Indian hero Candrakīrti in narrowing the negandum in Madhyamaka down to the mere absence of hypostatic existence within objects, while leaving conventional phenomena intact. Mipham feels this innovation entailed a form of conceptual clinging which should also be given up, since such an absence of hypostatic existence is itself still logically dependent on the entity that was negated; Mipham believed Candrakīrti, for example, had himself negated much more. In contrast with Tsongkhapa, Mipham favours a more complete letting go of all concepts and elaboration (Skt. *prapañca*) whatsoever, which he terms the true Great Madhyamaka – a view the dGe lugs pa found nihilistic and subversive of philosophical reasoning. Nevertheless, Mipham retains a very strong emphasis on rationality, which he sees as supported by the two truths doctrine and by his affirmation of the classic Madhyamaka belief that emptiness is entailed by dependent origination: thus even if all concepts are

abandoned ultimately, cause and effect and hence rationality still prevail at the transactional level, permitting and empowering philosophical analysis and much else.

Mipham's Madhyamaka appears to constitute a return towards the more classic Madhyamaka doctrines (*snga rabs pa*) that remain closer to the *Prajñāpāramitā* and which had prevailed in Tibet prior to Tsongkhapa's radical transformation of Madhyamaka after the 15th century. Seen in historical perspective, this book tentatively seems to imply that by inserting a qualifier to the Madhyamaka negandum and thus limiting its reach to hypostatic existence only, Tsongkhapa had transformed Madhyamaka to make it suitable for his very particular soteriological revolution, which had envisaged logical debate between monks in the monastery courtyard as the primary soteriological exercise (no other Buddhist order, not even the scholarship-oriented Sa skya pa, had given intellectual debate such a high soteriological value, to the extent that it largely displaced meditation). Thus Tsongkhapa needed to reinforce the status of conceptuality within Madhyamaka, in order to validate ordinary conceptual processes to an extent that would philosophically justify a lifetime spent in debate, rather than one that culminated in meditation.

By contrast, Mipham's Madhyamaka view of abandoning all conceptual elaboration (*prapañca*) whatsoever powerfully reaffirms the classic *Prajñāpāramitā* congruent pre-Tsongkhapa view of Madhyamaka shared by most Sa skya pa, rNying ma pa, and many bKa' brgyud pa orders, and returns Madhyamaka to a system that harmonises better with those schools' final soteriology of contemplation. For those orders, debate is a branch of study, important to stabilise understanding and develop doctrinal certainty, but as such, still a prolegomenon to meditation, which is where direct experience of reality finally arises. Historically speaking then, one gets the impression from this book that Mipham represents a returning of some strands within Tibetan Madhyamaka towards its more classic form, after approximately two hundred years in which infatuation with and domination by debate had prevailed, extending roughly from the beginning of the 18th century dGe lugs pa political hegemony, until Mipham's time.

Next, the theory of ultimate reality is examined; although some of this has already been presented by John Pettit,¹ Karma Phuntsho also employs many additional sources that Pettit did not use. In brief, since Mipham differed from the dGe lugs pa in establishing the negandum, his view of the ultimate is also necessarily different. Mipham's view of the ultimate is coalescence, or, quite simply, that emptiness is form, and form is emptiness (*snang stong zung 'jug*), inseparably and not merely as the juxtaposition of two separate things. This harmonises perfectly not only with *Prajñāpāramitā*, but also with the rNying ma pa's *Mahāyoga* and *rDzogs chen* meditation (it probably also suits the equivalent bKa' brgyud pa and Sa skya pa systems pretty well). Thus Mipham's ultimate is not merely an absence of hypostatic existence, but also an ultimate reality that transcends all conceptual extremes, in its completeness perceivable only through the non-dual gnosis of the Buddhas; in this way, he retains a powerful mystical dimension as a correlate to his emphatic rationality. Notable aspects of Mipham's ultimate is a binary theory of the two truths, and his important schema of four stages of approach to realising the ultimate, which he describes as a 'very important and sacred quintessence of instruction'. As in previous chapters, Karma Phuntsho at all points throughout makes clear and very detailed comparisons between Mipham's views and those of other philosophers.

1. *Mipham's Beacon of Certainty: Illuminating the View of Dzogchen, the Great Perfection* (London: Wisdom, 1999).

The third and final section is on whether ultimate emptiness is knowable and effable. Since the dGe lugs pa and Mipham are discussing a different ultimate emptiness, they unavoidably end up with different conclusions. The dGe lugs pa delineate an ultimate emptiness that is a mere absence of hypostatic existence, and hence an existent phenomenon that is epistemologically knowable and expressible in language. Mipham's ultimate is far more radical, a complete freedom from all conceptual constructs; from the point of view of ultimate truth it is beyond the reach of ordinary language, even if within the reach of the enlightened being's intuitive gnosis; nevertheless, from the perspective of relative truth, it can still be approached through language and logical analysis. Hence while the dGe lugs pa tend towards eliminating the mystical and paradoxical statements of the Mahāyāna *sūtras* and *śāstras* altogether, by interpreting them as merely figurative and then strictly subordinating them to logical propositions, Mipham happily accommodates them as expressive of higher modes of perception and discourse, that exist alongside the conventional language analytic philosophical approaches of the relative truth. Thus Mipham seeks to strike an even balance between his twin loves of scholastic rationality and rDzogs chen mysticism.

The book ends with some concluding remarks that draw together the various themes, and which reiterate Mipham's Ris med background, and his irenic attempts to harmonise dissenting views as partially expressed truths rather than falsehoods.

There are also appendices, containing translations of some of Mipham's letters made in reply to his critics.

Perhaps the only true negative about this book is its price: since it will be an indispensable possession for any serious student of Tibetan Madhyamaka, in an ideal world, it would cost less than it does. Yet academic publishing being what it is, there is probably no viable alternative for RoutledgeCurzon.

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Letters of the Nun Eshinni: Images of Pure Land Buddhism in Medieval Japan,
James C. Dobbins (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004),
259 pp. \$25.00 (Pb). ISBN 0824826671 (Hb); 0824828704 (Pb)

Consider a study of post-sixteenth-century German religious reform opening this way:

Behind the modern Luther stands the medieval Luther, and by not paying fully serious attention, now in the twenty-first century, to Luther's personal encounters with the Devil and to his inequalitarian language about women, German Christian modernists are one-sidedly misrepresenting Luther's teachings and perhaps even the whole Reformation.

This would be a rough analogue to the message of James Dobbins's provocative study based especially on the earliest stage of Shin Buddhism.

Eshinni (1182–1268?) was the somewhat obscure wife of the Japanese Kamakura Buddhist thinker Shinran (1173–1262). She is best known in Japan for a set of her letters discovered in 1921, which served as confirming evidence for the actual historical existence of Shinran and became important sources of information for his modern biographical study. In this text Dobbins treats several topics which are related to Eshinni, who has not

been viewed in herself as a very important figure in past appreciations of Shin Buddhist history, but whom Dobbins tries to put in a position of greater stature.

The first topic is the sketchy historical evidence about Eshinni herself. This includes a partly speculative narrative reconstruction of her life (Chapter 1) for which the main source is the letters themselves, and then an annotated English translation of the letters (Chapter 2).

The author's driving interest, though, is in three broader themes, which use Eshinni as a springboard. The first of these is how Eshinni serves as a guide to recovering the archaic, medieval qualities of Buddhism in Shinran's time (Chapter 3). After a summary of Eshinni's likely context in agrarian life and the social stratification and stagnation of production of the era, Dobbins argues that modern presentations of Shin have stood too much under the influence of elite philosophical interpretations. Instead, in medieval times Pure Land teachings, including Shinran's, appealed to people much more simplistically and accessibly because of their representation of a transcendental Pure Land paradise. Thus they succeeded historically for reasons that were out of tune with Shinran's sophisticated, official nondualist message. An example pertaining to Eshinni is that although the distinctive Shinranesque elite interpretation was that the 'Pure Land' referred to a formless realm of absolute enlightenment, and strictly speaking neither 'women' nor 'men' could karmically exist after 'entrance' there, the letters of Eshinni suggest that she imagined she would be reborn in the Pure Land while literally retaining the form of a woman.

Second, Eshinni serves as a way of exploring women and Buddhism generally in medieval Japan (Chapter 4). After a survey of women in medieval life, Dobbins argues that few women *religiosi* in medieval Japan were cloistered away from the world, but that most were rather active in it like Eshinni. She and Shinran were part of a world that was family-centered and not much interested in classical concepts of Buddhist monasticism. Presumably Eshinni was a partner to Shinran in the reconfiguration of Buddhist teachings, which famously wiped away the convention of monastic celibacy and the categorical distinction between monk and lay. In this chapter Dobbins nicely summarizes the strong social role of women in early Shinshū. In premodern Asian Buddhist history, Shin was probably the mildest offender against women.

Third, Eshinni serves as an entry point for Dobbins's argument about modernist distortion or expurgation in depicting the medieval world of Eshinni and Shinran. In the interests of an edificationist twentieth century presentation of Shinran, that world's premodern features – dreams, miracles, supernormal beings, cultic sites – have been suppressed in order to present an inaccurately timeless mythic Shinran who accords with a twentieth-century scientific worldview. In the original medieval context, for example, Eshinni probably thought her husband was a manifestation of Kannon – not the way Shinran is usually presented today.

Dobbins's study is an important contribution and will become a common reference in English for certain issues relating to Pure Land. Most impressively concentrating a great deal of detailed information, the text is a patiently worked-out puzzle put together from the (as usual) widely scattered Japanese sources, conveyed in lucid style. The author provides excellent summaries of numerous issues in social history drawn from leading authorities, such as how private letters were written in the Kamakura period or the multiple meanings of 'nuns' during the period.

However, readers should be thoroughly aware that the author is overtly aiming to be provocative rather than balanced. During his career as a scholar, Dobbins has been immersed in contemporary Shin sectarian scholarship, and this book seems to be a counter

reaction which is governed by the observation that contemporary Shin tradition has over-represented its sources, especially the figure of Shinran, as modern. At a certain level of explication, this is of course demonstrably true. However, the contrary structure of the author's particular treatment must be grasped with care.

Dobbins sets up a crude temporal dichotomization: a one pole a medieval version of Shin (apparently the *entire* five-hundred year premodern period) which was concrete and popular, versus at the other pole his so-called modernist (post-Meiji) idea of Shin, which is philosophically subtle but recent and elitist. This temporally tensioned paradigm subordinates continuities and ignores the conventional understanding that popular and elite interpretations subtly coexisted during the long course of the tradition – as would the normal case in religious histories, and a point important to grasp from a Mahāyāna epistemological perspective. This mirrors Dobbins's dichotomy between a superhuman Shinran of the past and a perfectly human Shinran of today.

Dobbins wants to goad the standard interpretation by actively privileging wherever possible any conceivable available evidence about the folk historical side of Shin. In spite of a caveat on page 151 (medieval Shin 'is neither truer nor more significant' than modern Shin), the book tends to communicate a sense that the 'original' popular medieval Shin reception is somehow more 'authentic' than the elite version. Thus Chapter 3 defends a dualistic understanding of the Pure Land against the more sophisticated nondualistic view, although the latter is taken in orthodox interpretation as the interesting characteristic of Shinran's thought. In this argument, Dobbins is confident that any relatively sophisticated idea of Buddhism was out of reach of the great majority of past Shin members, an ambitious claim that is difficult to prove either way.

On women, although Dobbins's opinion of Shinshū is mostly positive, it also reflects an unproblematized feminist critique of Buddhism, which has developed among Western scholars based on essentialist assumptions about maleness, and femaleness, which were not present in Buddhist Asia in the same way. In a couple of places, Shinran's texts retained language concerning the idea that women would have to be transformed into men in order to be reborn in the Pure Land. Dobbins offers a thin critique of this apparently discriminative language which disregards standard Shin explanation. (Shin explanation is that women were not born into the Pure Land for the same reason that slaves were not born there, because female karmic status and slavery were objectively bad situations, and thus to be awarded male karmic status was a sympathetic gift of freedom. Current 'merely-philosophical' scholarship also holds that Shinran quite seriously maintained no significant fundamental interest in male-female distinction). The book's treatment of women seems contradictory on a methodological level because, while it criticizes the selective anachronism of his so-called Shin modernists (anachronism which flatters the philosophical interests of modern Japanese Buddhists), Dobbins combines this with the selective anachronism about women (which flatters interests such as feminism which are equally modernist in character).

Overall Dobbins portrays his folk-oriented historical critique of modern edificationist Shin writers on Shinran as a swing of the pendulum (p. 151) from one set of interests back to another. However, as the author himself expresses briefly (p. 108), the purposes of these two kinds of perspectives are not the same: contemporary Shin writers have been concerned with the derivation of contemporaneously applicable religious thought, and of course, practical interpretive selectivity is endemic to all traditions of ideas. Yet despite a few disclaimers by the author, the book renders a suggestion of illegitimacy in modernist Shin interpretation. Dobbins finds that there is a 'medieval Shinran standing

behind the modern one' (p. 151). Suppose in a discussion of modern Roman Catholicism the statement was highlighted that there is a 'medieval Thomas Aquinas standing behind the modern one'. To what extent, and of what, is this a critique? Does it imply that modern Catholic theologians who overlook Aquina's angels are somehow out to pasteurize Catholic thought? If *nāga* serpents are located protecting Sākyamuni Buddha, are modern apologetic renditions of Buddhist teachings compromised or falsified?

Ultimately, overcoming his own caveats, Dobbins's contrarian approach conveys that little of a modernly interesting nature is present in the 'real' long-term Shin tradition, with the possible exception of Shin's relatively gender-neutral male-female relations (and only at the earliest stage). With some of its major classical emphases sidelined by this viewpoint, such as the teaching of Shinran's textuality, the tradition mostly turns into little more than another variant of Japanese folk Buddhism. A notable problem with the presentation is the target audience. In Japanese, this book would be an intelligible part of a rich, ongoing scholarly give and take and its contribution would be understood against a deep mainstream background context. But it would be completely disingenuous not to recognize that the English-language reception will be quite different. In spite of the fact that Shin is still the largest traditional Buddhist institution in Japan, and by some accounts the most traditionally reformist of Asian Buddhist traditions, a majority of Western academics seem to avoid Shin, and it remains understudied in view of its actual weight. Dobbins's polemical account is dropped into a non-neutral international scholarly environment in which very few people have a prior balanced idea of the normal Shin institution is. For this reason, only a fraction of his probable audience will have an adequate conception of what an even-handed discourse about Dobbins's topics would sound like.

In fairness, in his afterward, reflecting on his own work, Dobbins himself suggests the narrowness of focusing on the mythically-contested Shinran as a methodology for understanding Shin tradition (p. 152). Certainly over time a more valid historical view will emerge describing Shin Buddhism as a dynamic, multidimensional tradition, like other religions in short, and thus a tradition with a long, complex development based in Shinran and his medieval experiences but not quite identical to them. Dobbins's study will surely be a prime stimulus to the further expansion of English-language scholarship in that direction.

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