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*A Lamp for the Path and Commentary*, by Atīśa, translated and annotated by Richard Sherburne, S.J. London and Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1983. Foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Introduction, Translation of Root Text, Translation of Commentary, Appendices, Glossary, Bibliography, Index xiii + 226 pages.

Dr. Sherburne's translation of Atīśa's famous *Bodhipathapradīpa* (*BPP*) and its autocommentary is certainly a welcome addition to the field of Buddhist studies in general, and to the study of Tibet's *lam rim* literature in particular.

It is obvious from Atīśa's own remarks that even by his time the extent and complexity of Mahāyāna exegesis was becoming too vast for the ordinary monk or lay practitioner. That there was a great need for a short synthetic work like the *BPP* is evident from its immediate popularity (both in Tibet and in India). Its success came from the fact that it presented in a systematic and concise way the most important and relevant points of Mahāyāna doctrine, in a format suitable for practice. At the same time, it avoided the kind of extensive dialectics that were all too popular at the time. In fact, Atīśa mentions repeatedly that the time has come to concentrate, not on logic, but on the guru's advice:

So throw away your texts on argumentation  
Which make inference supreme  
And cultivate the (Guru-) tradition's counsel (p. 145)

Hence, the work can be seen as a practical guide to the Mahāyāna, and the fact that it was held in very high esteem is attested by the hundreds of texts for which it served as a model and inspiration. The *BPP* spawned one of the largest and most pervasive genres of native Tibetan literature, the *lam rim* (*Stages of the Path*). It is in fact the inspiration for Tsong kha pa's *Lam rim chen mo* (*The Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path*), an amazing synthetic work which is itself the source and inspiration of hundreds of other smaller works, even to this day. Hence, the appearance of the *BPP* with its *Commentary* in Dr. Sherburne's English translation is a truly important and key step toward the understanding of the *lam rim* literature as a whole.

Dr. Sherburne's translation is on the whole quite accurate and very readable. There are a few points however with which I take exception. His translation in verse 5 of the lines:

*Rang rgyud gtogs pa'i sdug bsngal gyis  
gang zhig gzhan gyi sdug bsngal kun  
yang dag zad par kun nas 'dod*

reads:

One who wholly seeks a complete end  
To the suffering of others because  
Their suffering belongs to his own (conscious) stream.

The last line of the translation can be misleading. It is not that the being of highest scope (being described here) actually takes the suffering of others into his own mind-stream, but that he empathizes with their suffering (and desires its elimination) "because of the suffering which he himself experiences," which is to say that realizing that all beings suffer as he/she does, the bodhisattva seeks an end to all suffering in a way that disregards the boundary of self and other.

The terminology in the translation might also be more standardized. For example, on pp. 27–28 we see use of both the words "worship *of*" ("worship of body-offerings," "worship of faith," "worship of praise") and the words "worship *with*" ("worship with ordinary things," "worship with pleasing objects"). But it must be remembered that the particle *gyi* has more usages than merely "possession." In this particular case, the translation "worship *of*" is misleading; after all it is not body offerings, faith or praise that are being worshipped. Instead, it is the Buddha who is being worshipped *with* these. It seems that Dr. Sherburne in fact realizes this point (he uses *with* in a number of cases, as stated above). One might have wished that the translation consistently read "worship *with*," however.

Dr. Sherburne's annotations do an excellent job of identifying almost all of the works and passages cited. They however are almost exclusively just that, providing little elucidation of sometimes obscure passages. Since even the *Commentary* is quite terse, however, this might easily have made the annotations more extensive than the text. Hence, Dr. Sherburne's approach is understandable.

Finally, let me bring up a few doctrinal points on whose interpretation I must disagree. Dr. Sherburne states that the tathāgatagarbha ("Buddha-nature") "would be rejected by strict Mādhyamika as holding to a position of reality" (p. 81). Granted that the Mādhyamikas do not accept a Cittamātra interpretation

of the theory of "Buddha-nature." Nonetheless, both Prāsaṅgikas and Svātantrikas have a very developed and extensive literature expounding their own theory of the tathāgatagarbha. In fact, one of the main Indian works on the subject, Asaṅga's commentary to the *Uttaratantra*, is held by many scholars to be a Prāsaṅgika work.

Dr. Sherburne devotes extensive notes to the subject of Nirvāṇa (p. 156 and p. 198) but his explanations do not correlate with any that I have seen in my own study of the Tibetan commentaries of the *Abhisamyālankāra* and *Sputārtha* (where the topic of Nirvāṇa is discussed at the very outset). For example, Dr. Sherburne seems to indicate that "Nirvāṇa with remainder" belongs to the śrāvaka, that "Nirvāṇa without remainder" belongs to the pratyekabuddha and that "Non-abiding Nirvāṇa" (or, in his terminology, "deferred Nirvāṇa") belongs to the bodhisattva. Instead, texts like Tsong kha pa's *gSer phreng* and Rong ston pa's *Ṭikā* are quite clear: "Nirvāṇa with remainder" and "Nirvāṇa without remainder" can both belong either to śrāvakas or to pratyekabuddhas. In the former, the Arhant still possesses his five skandhas, which remain because of karma accumulated previous to his attainment of Arhantship. In the latter, the Arhant has exhausted this karma, his body has died. "Non-abiding Nirvāṇa," they state, exclusively refers to Buddhahood itself.

Be that as it may, since these doctrinal points do not directly bear on the text, they do not detract from Dr. Sherburne's chief task, the translation of this very important work. All in all, supplemented with two very useful appendices on the system of initiations, and an excellent glossary and bibliography, Dr. Sherburne's translation must be recognized both as a scholarly rigorous work and, as was the original in eleventh century Tibet, a superb introduction to the Mahāyāna for the novice.

José I. Cabezón

*Religious Festivals in South India and Sri Lanka* (Studies on Religion in South India and Sri Lanka, Vol. 1) Edited and prefaced by Guy R. Welbon and Glenn E. Yocum. New Delhi: Manohar 1982, pp. xi-341, including Index.

Some readers will be disappointed in the treatment given Hindu festivals by the 12 authors whose papers are contained in