

THE JOURNAL
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
BUDDHIST STUDIES

CO-EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Gregory Schopen
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Roger Jackson
Fairfield University
Fairfield, Connecticut, USA

EDITORS

Peter N. Gregory
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA

Ernst Steinkellner
University of Vienna
Wien, Austria

Alexander W. Macdonald
Université de Paris X
Nanterre, France

Jikidō Takasaki
University of Tokyo
Tokyo, Japan

Steven Collins
Concordia University
Montréal, Canada

Robert Thurman
Amherst College
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

Volume 11

1988

Number 2

CONTENTS

I. ARTICLES

1. The Soteriological Purpose of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy:
A Study of Chapter Twenty-Three of the
Mūla-madhyamaka-kārikās, by William L. Ames 7
2. The Redactions of the *Adbhutadharmaparyāya*
from Gilgit, by Yael Bentor 21
3. Vacuité et corps actualisé: Le problème de la présence
des "Personnages Vénérés" dans leurs images
selon la tradition du bouddhisme japonais,
by Bernard Frank 51
4. Ch'an Commentaries on the *Heart Sūtra*: Preliminary
Inferences on the Permutation of Chinese
Buddhism, by John R. McRae 85

II. BOOK REVIEWS

1. *An Introduction to Buddhism*, by Jikido Takasaki
(Fernando Tola and Carmen Dragonetti) 115
2. *On Being Mindless: Buddhist Meditation and the Mind-Body
Problem*, by Paul J. Griffiths
(Frank Hoffman) 116
3. *The Twilight Language: Explorations in Buddhist
Meditation and Symbolism*, by Roderick S. Bucknell
and Martin Stuart-Fox
(Roger Jackson) 123

OBITUARY	131
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	136

IN MEMORIAM

Arthur Llewellyn Basham (1914–1986)

A.L. Basham was born 24 May, 1914, in Loughton (Essex) of Welsh stock. From his father, Edward Arthur Abraham Basham, a journalist who had served as a volunteer in the Indian Army during World War I and was posted at Kasauli, he got his first impressions of India. From his mother, Maria Jane, a writer of short stories and an Anglican Christian of deep conviction, he acquired a life-long interest in religions. From both of them, perhaps, he developed the love of literature which expressed itself in many ways to the end of his life: in the care which he took with his own writing and that of his students, in his many fine translations of passages from Sanskrit, Pali and Tamil literature, and in his passion for poetry and novels in several languages. His interest in literature seems to have had no bounds, and certainly ranged far beyond his professional identity as his generation's greatest historian of ancient India. He loved Bhartṛhari, and Rückert's Indian poems in German; but he was equally fond of Cervantes. He was abreast of the most recent novels, but one of his favorite works, for sheer beauty of language, was the rather obscure *Urne-Buriall* of Sir Thomas Browne, a seventeenth century English writer of endless vocabulary.

It is not surprising, therefore, that his first book was the proverbial slender volume of verse. Basham's *Proem* (1935) was the third and last in the series of The Sunday Referee Poets, each of which was a first volume of poetry brought out by Victor Neuburg's *Sunday Referee* as a prize for the best young poet of the year; the previous volumes were by Pamela Hansford Johnson and Dylan Thomas. This was followed by a novel of Indian immigrant life in East Anglia, *The Golden Furrow* (1939). Basham once said that with it he proved to himself that he could get published as a writer of fiction, and that he could not make a living at it. In the meantime he had won the Ouseley Memorial Scholarship in Oriental Languages at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London (1938), and pursued his love of literature, and of India, through Sanskrit, earning the B.A. Honours I degree in Indo-Aryan Studies in 1941.

During the Second World War Basham served, as a conscientious objector, with the Auxiliary Fire Service at Lowestoft. After the war he returned

to S.O.A.S. to study ancient Indian history under L.D. Barnett, earning the Ph.D. degree in 1951. The same year saw the appearance of his first indological book (essentially his doctoral thesis): *History and Doctrines of the Ājivikas, A Vanished Indian Religion*, published by Luzac. It was the first book-length study of the Ājivikas and remains the standard work to this day. Hired as a lecturer in the history of India at S.O.A.S. in 1948, he succeeded his mentor upon his retirement, becoming a reader in 1953 and professor in 1957. He continued there until 1965, when he accepted the position of professor and head of the Department of Asian Civilisations at the Australian National University, where he remained until his retirement in 1978.

Basham's second book was the one for which he is best known: *The Wonder that Was India* (1954). He blamed Edgar Allen Poe for the rather florid title, whose poem "To Helen" provided the line, "The glory that was Greece, and the grandeur that was Rome," from which Basham's publisher took the titles of the first two volumes of a series on the ancient civilizations, and the pattern for the rest. Organized topically, with chapters on prehistory, history, the state, society, everyday life, religion, art, language and literature, and the heritage of India, *The Wonder* is a veritable encyclopedia of ancient Indian civilization, and as such has served as a basic text for an entire generation of students of Indian history and culture. It is, as Kenneth Ballhatchet has said, a masterpiece of synthesis, and its special quality lies in the spirit of generous and intelligent appreciation towards Indian culture that animates it. Appearing as it did a few years after the independence of India and Pakistan from the British Empire, it offers a kind of scholarship appropriate for the postcolonial age, whose implicit basis is sympathy and mutual respect. Shortly after publication it was reprinted in the United States by Grove Press as the first volume in the series of large paperbacks it pioneered in this country, and showed up in college bookstores all over the country. It has gone into paperback editions in England and India as well, and has been translated into French, Polish, Tamil, Sinhalese and Hindi.

Basham's other writings cover a considerable range, many of them showing the interests in pedagogy, in synthesis and in the creation of a new style of indology to replace the colonial mode that are found in *The Wonder*. His contributions to Theodore De Bary's *Sources of Indian Tradition* are a fine example of the first; his editing of *The Civilizations of Monsoon Asia* of the second; and of the third, one could mention his revision of the ancient Indian matter in Vincent Smith's *Oxford History of India* (a particularly intractable case, since Smith's point of view is so quintessentially colonial) and his editing of *A Cultural History of India*, replacing Garret's *Legacy of India*. His more specialized writings include the editing of the *Papers on the Date of Kanīṣka*, growing out of a conference he organized in 1960 on the chronology of the Kuṣāṇas, and shorter pieces on ancient Indian political history, religion, literature, art and medicine. Lectures on "The Formation of Classical Hinduism" that he

gave at several universities under the sponsorship of the American Council of Learned Societies in 1984–85 are being edited for publication by Kenneth G. Zysk.

Readers of this journal have reason to know of Basham's services to Asian scholarship. The International Association of Buddhist Studies chose him as its first president in 1981. His international standing in the field was honored by his election to the presidency of the 28th International Congress of Orientalists, which was held in Canberra in 1971. He was the founding president of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Asian Medicine, and participated in the organization of its first conference in 1979. The Association has established an Arthur L. Basham Medal for "outstanding studies in the social and cultural history of traditional Asian medicine." He was a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, of which he was director in 1964–65, and of the Society of Antiquaries; Honorary Fellow of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta; Member of the Oriental Society of Australia; Honorary Fellow of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations; Foundation Fellow and Vice-President of the Australian Academy of the Humanities; Honorary President of the South Asian Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand; member of the Australian Committee for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO; Corresponding Member of the Indian Historical Records Commission; and Vice-President of the Asian Studies Association of Australia. Other honors came his way, from the University of London which conferred the degree of D.Lit. on him in 1965, and from India. In 1964 Kurukshetra University made him an honorary D.Lit. In 1975 he was awarded the Dr. B.C. Law Gold Medal for Indology by the Asiatic Society, and in 1977 he was made Vidyā-vāridhi by the Nava Nālanda Mahāvihāra. Vishvabharati University, Shantiniketan, gave him the Deshikottama Award in 1985. He was especially pleased to be made the first Swami Vivekananda Professor in Oriental Studies by the Asiatic Society, in the last year of his life.

The universalism that was so striking a feature of Basham's outlook made him something of an itinerant scholar. Up to his retirement from the Australian National University he had held visiting appointments at the University of Ceylon, the University of Wisconsin, El Colegio de Mexico, the University of Pennsylvania, Banaras Hindu University, Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, the Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, the University of Minnesota and Carleton College. After retiring he held a series of visitorships at the University of New Mexico, Minnesota and Carleton, the University of Toronto, Brown University and, finally, the Asiatic Society. When he served the society founded by his compatriot Sir William Jones two centuries previous, the wheel came full circle. He died on 27 January, 1986, and was buried in the Old Military Cemetery of All Saints Cathedral in Shillong.

Basham often said that the accomplishment that gave him the greatest satisfaction was the more than a hundred doctoral students he had directed,

who now occupy academic positions in universities all over India and elsewhere. Much of this success with students has to do with the deep love of India and of the Indian people which was so evident in his makeup, and which drew people to him. But there were other qualities as well. Those who have had the privilege to study under him remember him with great and unalloyed affection for his ever-cheerful presence, the way in which he lavished his time and attention on them outside the classroom to teach and counsel, his active concern for their personal problems and his running interference with higher authority for those whose academic standing was problematic. There wasn't a mean bone in his body, but he would side with his students against the world. Administrators thought him somewhat soft; students thought of him as an uncle, as well as a guru. Something of his qualities as an exceptional teacher, it seems to me, are a part of the magic of *The Wonder that Was India*—through which we have all become, in some measure, his students.

Leave-taking is always painful, and Basham's many friends must feel it especially so in his case, thinking as they do that here was one of the human race's finer representatives, the embodiment of a universal sympathy that the world is much in need of. Perhaps we should leave the last word to him, in a poem of his youth that evokes the passage of time, the succession of the generations, and of being part of a process that is larger than oneself.

CHANGE

Here in the swamp before the homestead
 was spawned from church and cottar's shed,
 herons the sunning adders hoisted,
 flies garlanded the auroch's head.
 Till feudal axes swept a clearing,
 pierced the forest and dyked the marsh,
 whereon the binders groan, declaring
 war on the manor, their voices harsh.

Uncertain centuries smite my garden,
 and villeins' swine impel the seed.
 Hammered thorns once oxen goading
 girder the grass, and apples feed
 on bones of mediaeval ganders.
 The slimy pavement of my pond
 is bedded with the woodman's grinders,
 immortal in the oaks beyond.

When thousand times higher alloy girders
 tackle the sky than grasses did,
 the farm forgotten by new recorders
 in sunlit depths from first sun hid,

I trust my fruit trees may be meted
to fresh flowers of inverted hues,
and these redundant bones, transmuted,
blow in their gardened avenues.

(A.L. Basham, from *Proem*, 1935)

Thomas R. Trautmann