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Mādhyamika and Yogācāra: A Study of Mahāyāna Philosophies. By Gadjin M. Nagao. Edited, translated, and collated by Leslie S. Kawamura. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1991. xiv + 304 pp.

Nine of the sixteen essays collected here appeared in Japanese in Professor Nagao's *Chūkan to yuishiki* [*Mādhyamika and Yogācāra*] published in Tokyo in 1978. Almost all have appeared in English before, though in widely scattered journals, volumes of conference proceedings, and *fest-schriften*; but several of those earlier translations have been revised for this volume in an attempt to create a consistent style. Anglophone readers of Nagao's work should be delighted to have this useful collection to hand; and if what is offered here is combined with John P. Keenan's recent translation of *Chūkan tetsugaku no komponenteki tachiba* (as *The Foundational Standpoint of Mādhyamika Philosophy*), published by the same press in 1989, then it is fair to say that such readers now have access to a representative selection of Nagao's important work on Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy.

Nagao, Emeritus Professor of Buddhist Studies at Kyoto University, is one of the half-dozen or so most important and influential interpreters of Buddhist thought of his generation in Japan. While his textual work—for example his edition of the Sanskrit text of the *Madhyāntavibhāṅgabhāṣya* and his trilingual index to the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkārabhāṣya*—has been widely known and used in the West for almost thirty years, his creative attempts to offer a systematic religio-philosophical interpretation of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought have been much less so. These recent publications should begin to correct this.

The essays in this volume vary widely in their range and specificity, though there is a definite unity of interpretation. They are of four basic kinds. First, there are a number of specialized and detailed studies of the semantic range of particular terms—*saṃvṛti*, *āśraya*, *pariṇāmanā*, *upekṣā*, *śūnyatā*—as they occur in both *Mādhyamika* and *Yogācāra* texts (though with more emphasis on the latter). Second, there are a number of detailed and subtle pieces of exegesis in which particular texts are analyzed. Notable here is the comparative study of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24:18 and *Madhyāntavibhāṅga* 1:1–2. Third, there are more wide-ranging interpretive studies in which particular Buddhist concepts are used to offer a systematic view of the fundamental religio-philosophical purpose of these texts: important here are the essays on Buddha's silence, the "three-nature" (*trisvabhāva*) theory, and the "three body" (*trikāya*) theory. Fourth and finally, at the highest level of generality, there are Nagao's attempts to state the fundamentals of his own interpretive perspective. Of key importance here are the early essay on the "logic of convertibility"; that on the *bodhisattva's* return to the world; the presidential address

given to the sixth conference of the International Association of Buddhist Studies in 1983 on the theme of "ascent and descent"; and the recent (1986) attempt to offer a systematic reassessment of Yogācāra theory.

Nagao's goal is to offer an interpretation that will make sense of Mahāyāna Buddhist theory in its entirety, and to use the categories of Indian Yogācāra to do so. He is not afraid of offering a normative definition of Mahāyāna Buddhism—"when these two notions (sc. of ascent and descent) are found within a certain Buddhist system, the criterion for discerning whether that system is Mahāyāna or not is established" (xii)—nor of presenting Mādhyamika as an incomplete version of Buddhist thought, a version properly completed by the Yogācāra of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. There are many examples of this last move. In his discussion of subjectivity Nagao presents Nāgārjuna's denial of essences as incomplete precisely because it does not fully elucidate the meaning of human existence as Yogācāra does (12); he offers a Yogācāra interpretation of emptiness (51–60); and in the striking comments that conclude the volume he says that "...the Yogācāras can be said to have complemented the Mādhyamika's general tenets, and thereby brought the Mahāyāna thought to its full scope and completion" (225).

The essentials of Nagao's Yogācāra interpretation of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought are easy to state. Such thought has a dialectical structure. It begins with negation, the rejection of verbal and conceptual proliferation (*prapañca*) and of all improper cognitive and affective habits. Its heart or pivot is the idea of "convertibility" (*parāvṛtti/parivṛtti*), which involves "the meaning of conversion from being to non-being, and vice versa" (130). And it leads to affirmation, a renewed involvement with the world. The movement of ascent and descent, of which Nagao makes so much, both in this collection and in the *Fundamental Standpoint*, has to do precisely with this movement of disengagement from and re-engagement with the world, a movement which pivots around the idea of conversion. Buddhist thought is properly Buddhist, claims Nagao, when both sides of the dialectic are emphasized; undue emphasis on disengagement leads to quietism, an exaltation of wisdom (*prajñā*) at the expense of compassion (*karuṇā*), while undue emphasis on re-engagement leads to the opposite faults. The Yogācāra *trivabhāva* theory forms the ideal conceptual tool for grounding this view of Buddhism, for it is just here that the idea of convertibility (of *paratantra* from *parikalpita* into *pariṇiṣpanna*) is central.

I recommend this volume enthusiastically to all those concerned with Indian Buddhist philosophical thought. It is the mature work of a master in the field, philologically impeccable, textually well-grounded, and conceptually exciting. My only regret is that Professor Nagao was not better served by his editor and publisher, for the book's production

is marred by many careless errors, most especially in the notes and bibliographies. These are too many to list, but some examples will give an idea of their extent and nature. There are ten errors of omission and commission in the list of abbreviations alone (xii–xiv); the bibliography (263–272) averages five significant errors on each page, mostly involving mis-spellings of words in European languages other than English or errors in the transliteration of Sanskrit words; and a roughly similar proportion of errors occurs throughout the notes. In addition, the bibliography is radically incomplete, not listing a number of works mentioned elsewhere in the text. Most striking here is the fact that Nagao's own two-volume work on the *Mahāyānasangraha* (*Shōdaijōron: wayaku to chūkai* [Tokyo: Kodansha, 1982, 1987]), mentioned and (rightly) said to be "definitive" (2), does not appear in the bibliography. Errors of this kind, while numerous and troubling, do not compromise the value of the work, which I hope will be widely read and discussed.

Paul J. Griffiths