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IV. NOTES AND NEWS

Presidential Address by Professor Gadjin M. Nagao

In his presidential address delivered at the American Oriental Society's annual meeting in 1951, Walter E. Clark of Harvard University discussed the prospective development of Indian Studies in four major fields. They were:

1. The comparative study of Pāli, Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese Buddhist Texts in the effort to reconstruct the history of Buddhist thought,
2. A more detailed study of Hinduism,
3. The study of Indian history through archeology, and
4. The systematic collection of material dealing with the practical affairs of life in medieval India.

These four areas of study anticipated by our very learned scholar have in the succeeding years been developed even more extensively than he might have anticipated.

Confining ourselves today to the first of the four topics, we find that during the one generation since the time Professor Clark made his observation, many Buddhist scholars have achieved scholastic proficiency that is very impressive, to say the least. Let me cite a few examples. There are:

1. John Brough's *Gāndhārīdharmapada*,
2. *Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden*, published under the supervision of E. Waldschmidt,

3. Franklin Edgerton's *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*,

4. Copious text-editions and translations of Mahāyānistic and Abhidharmic texts by such scholars as E. Lamotte, G. Tucci, V.V. Gokhale, and many others,

5. The rise of the study of Buddhist epistemological and logical texts, led by E. Frauwallner, and

6. The recent interest in the study of Buddhist Tantric texts pursued by many scholars, both on this continent and in Europe and other countries.

The work accomplished by such scholars has been a landmark, but their effort has not exhausted the field. There are still more texts to be studied and still more difficulties to be overcome by ourselves and the younger generation to follow us. In what direction has the research done by former scholars been converging or diverging? What are the desiderata of Buddhist studies today? The present seems to be an opportune time to review the developments in Buddhist studies and to prepare the way for the generation to come.

In view of the fact that Buddhist studies have now gained recognition as an independent field in the humanities, this session of the International Association for Buddhist Studies is a very significant historical event. The independent status that Buddhist studies have gained requires that the manner in which we continue our research include at least the following two complementary methods:

1. *Analysis*, which is utilized in the comparative study of Pāli, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese Buddhist texts, and

2. *Synthesis*, which is utilized in the effort to reconstruct the history of Buddhist thought.

By means of analysis, we will be able to establish as facts the information gleaned from the data—be they textual, archeological, or in any other form—transmitted to us by our forerunners. The Buddhist texts, which have come down to us through various traditions and which have been found in various areas, must be ever more critically and thoroughly analyzed, so that we can gain the information hidden deep therein. I would even go

so far as to say that the best-known and best-studied texts still await further investigation. I shall now give three examples to illustrate this.

First, the *Suttanipāta*, which contains perhaps the oldest *suttas* of Buddhism, deserves to be re-examined in order to clarify the earliest stages of Buddhism in relationship to the common ascetic background that may have been present before Jainism and Buddhism developed their respective systems. Such an examination will shed light on the Buddhist scriptural developments that followed as well. I believe that the outcome of such an analytical study will take the form of fresh translations with extensive and detailed philological commentaries in the manner in which Professor K. R. Norman presented the *Thera-* and *Therīgāthā*.

Second, you may be aware that in Japan, the gigantic project of publishing the "Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Saddharmapundarīka*, collected in Nepal, Kashmir and Central Asia," is being undertaken by a team of scholars. This project is attempting to present, for the first time, almost all of the available manuscripts (33 in number) of this most widely disseminated Mahāyāna sūtra. The fruit of this project will not be a single critical edition of the sūtra, but will probably be a series of editions based upon an investigation of a variety of recensions in accordance with the lineage of each manuscript's tradition. The project will probably extend itself into a comparative study between those recensions and the Chinese and Tibetan translations. These scholars are attempting to answer with the philological thoroughness that H. Luders exemplified in his analysis of a few Central Asian fragments of the *Saddharmapundarīka* manuscripts fundamental questions such as: In what languages and under what circumstances were the Mahayana sutras composed? and How did their Sanskritization take place?

Third, in my opinion, Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasamgraha* is one of the highest achievements attained by the Yogācāras. In this text, Asaṅga has attempted to systematize all of the elements of Buddhist philosophy, Abhidharmic as well as Mahāyānistic. His text is *the* text that expounds Buddhist philosophy, if ever there is to be such a text. Professor E. Lamotte's research on this text is so well known that there is no need for me to go into the details of his work. In spite of the fact that Professor Lamotte's research has shown signs of thoroughness and completeness, that should

not discourage us from re-examining the text. On the contrary, Professor Lamotte's work should encourage us to look deeper into the text so that we will gain a deeper understanding of the Buddhist philosophy systematized therein. A close examination of all the Chinese and Tibetan translations of this text and a comparison of them with the Chinese and Tibetan commentaries, whose Sanskrit originals have not yet been uncovered, disclose many discrepancies among the various renditions. These discrepancies may be overcome by reconstructing a hypothetical Sanskrit text. We are still in the dark as far as the historical development of the Yogācāra-vijñānavāda texts are concerned, and therefore we must continue our study, by producing new translations of the text from the hypothetical Sanskrit recension, if we are to come to an understanding of how Yogācāra trends developed around the 4th to 5th centuries.

The three examples that I have cited above will suffice to remind us that Buddhist studies in the future will have to be based upon a more critical and thorough-going philological analysis of the Buddhist texts that have been transmitted to us through several different traditions. In the present state of Buddhist studies, I feel that philology must precede philosophy or history, but what is even more important is the fact that the former must not nullify the latter.

This, then, brings us to the second method of research. The method of synthesis is necessary to bring together the facts that we have accumulated through analysis and to reconstruct, as far as possible, the history of Buddhist thought. This second method of research must be emphasized because it seems to be unduly neglected and almost disregarded at present. Some of you may take exception to what I have just stated, and may argue that since we have not yet progressed far enough in our analytical studies of Buddhist texts, it is much too early to proceed to this second synthetic method. That is, some of you may think that it is still too early to attempt to reconstruct the history of Buddhist thought. I must admit that I do not share such a view. Those who use analytical tools without synthetic visions are just as blind as those who possess synthetic visions but lack analytical tools.

How, then, should the history of Buddhist thought be reconstructed in the present state of Buddhist studies? I do not think that it will be a simple task, nor do I think that a mere ap-

plication of analysis will solve the problem. I will suggest six areas, the study of which can give us some insight into how one might reconstruct the history of Buddhist thought. The six areas represent six gaps. The process of bridging the gaps will result in combining analytical tools with synthetic visions.

1. The gap between the Jain and the Buddhist traditions must be bridged, because towards the end of the Vedic period, there arose ascetic movements that intensified the meditative tendencies found in the older Upanisads and that became the common background for the Jains and the Buddhists in developing their respective doctrinal systems. The common elements, not only of verses and phrases, but also of vocabulary (e.g. *āsrava*, *bhava*, *karman*, etc.) found in the oldest strata of the two traditions must be collected and studied anew. This, I believe, will elucidate the earlier stages of both religions and define what those fundamental concepts meant originally, as the late Professor L. Alsdorf proposed in his *Études jaina, état présent et tâches futures*.

2. The gap between the Theravāda tradition and the Sarvāstivāda and other traditions must be bridged, because as F. Weller observed long ago and Professor J. Brough has reiterated, "Arbeiten mit dem Palikanon allein sind unfruchtbar und zwecklos (studies with the Pāli canon alone are fruitless and purposeless)." We now have important publications such as the *Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden* in addition to the Chinese and Tibetan translations at our disposal. The philological comparisons between the corresponding texts of different traditions as well as within a respective tradition will undoubtedly unravel the formative process of pre-sectarian Buddhist doctrines such as the *dvādaśāṅgapratītyasamutpāda*, the *pañcaskandha*, the *caturdhyāna*, the *caturārūpyasamāpatti*, etc. By filling in this gap, the precise meanings of those almost impossible philosophical terms will become clearer.

3. The gap between the Mādhyamika and the Vijñānavāda traditions must be bridged, because the Mādhyamikas and the Vijñānavādins were not, from the beginning, two antithetical schools, as is usually assumed. They seem to have belonged to the same Yogācāra movement that endeavored to incorporate into its yogic system the Mahāyānistic *bodhisattvacaryās* praised in such sutras as the *Prajñāpāramitās* and others like the *Daśabhūmika*. In this way, the Yogācāra movement established the practical system of the *bodhisattvamārga*. It is quite possible that the form of

Indian Buddhism that was imported into China through Chinese translations that were done contemporaneously to the Buddhist developments in India reflected the transitional development from the earlier Mādhyamikas to the later Vijñānavādins. At any rate, those contemporaneous Chinese translations must be exploited with a critical eye, as they reflect the historical situation of Indian Buddhism, which tended to be silent concerning anything concrete.

4. The gap between the Buddhist logical tradition and the later Mahāyānistic and Tantric traditions must be bridged, because the great masters of Buddhist logic are often exponents of some form of later Mahāyānistic or Tantric philosophy. The continued efforts of scholars, based on the unified image of Buddhist activities as a whole, are now beginning to disclose the general climate of Buddhist thought after the Gupta period.

5. The gap between Indian Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism must be bridged, because the contemporaneous Chinese translations can assist in documenting the historical developments of Indian Buddhism. Also, the developments that took place in China must be understood in relationship to what was taking place in India at that time. The importance of understanding the function that Chinese records can play in determining the developmental conditions in both India and China cannot be overly emphasized.

6. The gap between Indian Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism must be bridged because it is now impossible to make a thorough study of Indian Buddhism without consulting the Tibetan translations, whether or not the Sanskrit originals are extant. We must now study the enormous amount of Indian Buddhist texts that the Tibetans have preserved in translations and also investigate the manner in which the Tibetan translators understood these texts. Moreover, an investigation into how the Tibetans developed their own indigenous Tibetan Lamaism through fusion with their native religious tradition must be made. The flood of Tibetan religious texts, both canonical and extra-canonical, published in India and other countries, will facilitate in clarifying the basic historical events that took place in the development of Tibetan Buddhism and in distinguishing Indian elements from those Tibetan elements that constitute Tibetan Lamaism.

In conclusion, one of the directions that Buddhist studies as an independent area of the humanities might take in the future is to bridge the gaps that I have outlined above. Those topics

were selected because we scholars should not uncritically accept views of Buddhist history that are based on misconceptions, such as the view that the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna are two antagonistic movements, the former being inferior to the latter, and that the Mādhyamikas and Vijñānavādins are two antithetical schools, the one propounding "non-being" and the other "being." By emphasizing the importance of philological studies, I am not deploring the scarcity of philologically reliable works being done in our discipline. On the contrary, I welcome the recent trends that show an increasing number of Buddhist scholars publishing very reliable philological works, both in the West and in the East.

Report on the Proceedings of the First Conference of the I.A.B.S., Columbia University, New York, September 15-17, 1978

I. The International Association of Buddhist Studies, founded in August, 1976 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and duly incorporated in 1977, met for its First Conference at the Columbia University in New York from September 15th to the 17th, 1978. The organizing committee consisted of Professor Alex Wayman (Coordinator), Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee on Buddhist Studies, Columbia University; Professor Theodore Riccardi, Jr., Director, NDEA Center for South Asia Studies, Columbia University; and Professor A.K. Narain, Professor of History and South Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison and the General Secretary of the I.A.B.S.. The conference was held on the 15th floor in the School of International Affairs Building, at the Columbia University. Attendance at the panels varied between 70 and 125 persons. The business meeting on the 16th of September was attended by 48 members. Many of the participants were housed in the New York Student Center of the Hotel Empire (across from the Lincoln Center), and some made private arrangements elsewhere and with friends. Necessary local expenses for the organiza-