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preposterous, I hope Professor Macdonald will continue to proclaim the truism as loudly and as often as he can. The task may be boring but there is the reward of making conversions.

By the way, a French translation of my book is underway. And the publisher has not given me the gratuitous advice that Professor Macdonald allows himself to give.

S. J. Tambiah

*Comparative Ethics in Hindu and Buddhist Traditions* by Roderick Hindery, Delhi-Varanasi-Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978. Pp. xvi-308.

The author of this volume must be commended for both his exploration of Hindu ethical systems and his sensitive treatment of the intricate philosophical, historical and linguistic problems encountered when examining these traditions. Professor Hindery provides an extensive synopsis of ethics in the *Rgveda*, *Upaniṣads*, *Laws of Manu*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Bhagavad-Gītā*, as well as in popular Indian classics like the *Pañcalantra* and Kālidāsa's *Abhijñāna-Śākuntala*. The purview of this trans-cultural inquiry culminates in an excellent discussion of the ethical systems engendered by ancient and contemporary philosophers and reformers, including Śaṅkara, M. K. Gandhi, and Rabindranath Tagore. Especially valuable are the two Appendices—the first elaborating on critical oral and textual matters (dating, authorship, etc.) in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, the second providing a table of parallel topics in the texts surveyed. The Selected Bibliography contains a variety of English translations, together with sources encompassing many specialized fields, including ethics, religion, philosophy, literature, and international law. Despite the inclusion of "Buddhist" traditions in the title, the reader will discover only a single chapter dedicated to the exposition of ethical thought in Mahāyāna Buddhist texts. The author intended this chapter as an introductory essay, pending the future publication of three additional volumes on comparative ethics in other religious and philosophical traditions, the subsequent volume to begin with a more comprehensive treatment of Buddhist ethics.

Professor Hindery's concern is not with how Hindu ethical systems or models of conduct may have served as normalizing influences on people. Instead, he applies a descriptive approach in his analysis of what moral prescriptions people have alleged through their literature and social institutions. For purposes of this study, the author equates "morality," meaning a person's reflections upon and practice of normative social values, to "ethics," which refers to the justifications of and meanings associated with social conduct. The focus of this inquiry is twofold: what warrants and emotive factors are present for people to decide on normative ethical ideals; and, more importantly, what beyond inner convictions do they claim motivates them to perform ac-

tions intended to promote the general welfare? Five guidelines, addressing moral assertions in textual and oral traditions, are specified: (1) Confronted with cultural mores, Hindery asks what reasons are given for being moral—that is, whether or not the grounds for other-regarding decisions are based on self-compensation. In addition, he asks whether morality is claimed to be realized through either knowledge (*vidyā*) or a “minimum of free volition” independent of social influences such as laws and customs (p. 3). (2) The author suggests that ethical behavior may be motivated (but not necessarily normalized) by one or more models of moral conduct. Three such models are discussed in this volume—a model of “social cooperation” similar to that which Max Weber attributed to the Vedic period; an “altruistic” model based on intuitional judgments and self-sacrifices; and a “mystical/religious” model based on mystical insight, divine revelation, or the belief therein. (3) Whether or not ethical behavior is validated by worldviews (*Weltanschauungs*) or models of conduct, Hindery points out that it may also be justified by common-sense reasoning based on the consequences of actions, by trust in collective experiences which are partially encapsulated in legal statutes and surviving customs (*sadācāra*), or by various aesthetic and emotive human capacities, e.g. creating and loving. The author discusses the Rāmāyaṇic heroine, Sītā, and the Buddhist bodhisattva as altruistic models with which people have identified themselves and their actions. The mystical/religious model is exemplified by the Upaniṣadic appeal to a personal experience of the “oneness” and “inseparability” of the individual self (*ātman*) and the ultimate self (*Brahman* or *Ātman*). (4) The author examines his sources with an eye for the ethos or ethoses—values and virtues which assume motivational priority in decisions and actions. (5) Finally, this inquiry explores what attitudes develop from relationships between individuals and institutions (agents which enforce the adherence to social conventions). Hindery is especially concerned with the “populist” and “elitist” movements within the evolution of Hindu religious and philosophical traditions. He considers the masses and elite groups as mutually responsive—competing with and complementing each other throughout Indian history, with this interaction gradually contributing to a rich Hindu ethical pluralism (pp. 202-203). The author is conscientious about delivering the pros and cons at each stage of his analysis.

Discussion of these issues is exemplified in the chapter on the *Rgveda*. The author compares his view, that the Vedas display moral ethoses representative of the people during that period, with the views of such eminent scholars as Max Weber, who regard the Vedas as expounding sets of amorally-grounded elitist sanctions. The Weberian position points to the Vedic absence of liberation from this-worldly suffering (*mokṣa*) and moral notions like karmic retribution. This position is supported by the predominance of pragmatic civil codes, social conventions, and the affirmation of this-worldly concerns as found in the *Rgveda*’s “Hymn to Dawn” (*RV*.I.113.1-20) and in the Atharvaveda’s lists of civil crimes, including theft, indebtedness, and incest. Further support lies in the observation that “misfortune,” “human incapacity,” or “social evil” have often been misconstrued by scholars as “sin” (*āgas*; *enas*; *pāpa*). Hindery, however, regards the Vedic use of *dāna* (giving/sharing) as an aesthetic ideal and not merely related to self-compensation. He cites several

songs in the *Rgveda* (*Rv.*I.125, 126.1-5; V.61) which express love as the reservoir of giving. The author also points out that the *Rgveda* mentions guilt (*enas*) as the product of not giving to those in need (*Rv.*VII.89.5; X.117). Here, he follows the P. V. Kane and A. A. Macdonnell translations of *enas* as "guilt." *Dāna* is also related to *satya*, or "truth" (*Rv.*X.10.4), and to *ṛta* (*Rv.*I.75.5) where the latter term is personified as one of the gods. The author contends that Weber's observations serve as evidence for a life-affirming ethos in the form of the *tri-varga*: wealth (*artha*), pleasure (*kāma*), and order (*ṛta*). Here, we are to read *ṛta* etymologically as "natural" and "ritual" order, as well as the order of proper human conduct. On the basis of this discussion, Hindery suggests that the Vedas display "at least a *partly* moral outlook" for the people of that period (p. 52).

Acknowledging, with the author, the problem of historical layering in Vedic texts, the reviewer is inclined to agree with his position, but finds supportive historical evidence regrettably sparse in this chapter and elsewhere. A broader discussion of social milieux would have benefitted the reader, without the necessity of drawing from outside the bibliography of this volume. For example, the use of *dāna* in the *Rgveda* (*Rv.*X.117.2) appears to be more strongly related to common sense and self-compensation: "The man with food in store who, when the needy comes in miserable case begging for bread to eat, hardens his heart against him—even when of old he did him service—finds not one to comfort him" (p. 45). With due respect to Professor Hindery's valuable insights and discussions, the reader would have profited by stronger evidence demonstrating either the degree to which the featured ethical systems (Vedic, Upaniṣadic, etc.) were socially normative or what cultural groups were represented by the texts discussed in this volume. The author's exposition of early Indian philosophical contributions to relatively contemporary ethical concepts and systems is more successfully corroborated.

The introductory essay on Buddhist ethics deserves comment here. There is a brief description of Theravāda ethics (about 7 pages) focusing on the Five Precepts (*pañca-sīla*) and the Four Illimitables (*brahmavihāras*). The remainder (33 pages) of this chapter is devoted to Mahāyāna ethics. The Bodhisattva ideal serves as the central topic around which the discussion is organized. The author has selected his sources with a definite predisposition toward Japanese forms of Buddhism, including the *Diamond Sūtra*, *Lotus Sūtra*, Shinran's *Letters*, and Japanese *Nō* plays in his analysis. Indian, Tibetan, and Chinese sources, however, are almost completely absent from this analysis—the author considers them to be less pervasive and less viable representations of Mahāyāna traditions present today (p. 238).

In summary, the author's opening discussion of ethical terms and concepts leaves too many questions unresolved, which is regrettable, since any exposition of ethical systems hinges on a clear understanding of such terms as "ethics" and "morality." His categorization of the Bodhisattva ideal solely as a model of ethical altruism is unconvincing—the bodhisattva is first and foremost a soteriological symbol and could just as easily satisfy the requirements of the other two models. Professor Hindery covers a wide range of material on ethics in Indian traditions, incorporating a variety of opinions

held by scholars from different disciplines. He avoids drawing parallels too quickly between Indian and non-Indian ethical concepts. Also, he has presented a valuable discussion on the incorporation of early Indian thought into contemporary ethical systems. This edition is a useful study if used in concert with other texts. Though it is too difficult for the novice, *Comparative Ethics* should prove a valuable reference for those interested in the social and political sciences.

Michael B. Bement

*Mahāyāna Buddhist Meditation: Theory and Practice*, edited by Minoru Kiyota, assisted by Elvin W. Jones. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1978. Pp. 313.

This volume is dedicated to the memory of Richard H. Robinson (1926-70), who was instrumental in establishing a Buddhist Studies program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he taught Indian philosophy, Indian civilization and Buddhism. It was his life-long conviction that the truths of Buddhism "were not premises for a deductive system but enunciations of *gnōsis* ('saving knowledge') to be meditated upon until the hearer 'catches on' and breaks through to another plane of being." (*The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, 1970, p. 29.) It is most appropriate, therefore, that this commemorative volume deals with Mahāyāna Buddhist meditation.

In his introduction the editor defends the volume's emphasis on the "theories" of Mahāyāna on the ground that in Buddhist tradition the actual nature of the object to be meditated upon is first noetic, regarding a correct analysis of the phenomenal thing. Then this noetic object is brought within the limits of direct perception through the power of repeated meditative practice. Basically, "the core of Buddhist teaching is simply the demonstration of *anātma*, and of the paths and final results which arise from meditating upon that view" (p. xv). Following this premise, nine scholars contributed articles dealing with philosophical and doctrinal theories that underlie meditative practices in various schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Inasmuch as space does not permit any elaborate review, let me present the main motifs of each article.

In the first article, "Buddhist Theories of Existents: The Systems of Two Truths," Edwin W. Jones discusses different theories of the phenomenological and ultimate truths by examining how two Hīnayāna (the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika) and two Mahāyāna (the Yogācāra and Mādhyamika) schools developed their respective philosophical structures in explicating the meaning of the *anātma* doctrine. In the second article, Geshe Sopa deals more directly with meditation as such by analyzing the two principles involved, namely *śamatha* (mental stabilization) and *vipaśyanā* (higher vision), and explicates how the perfect union of these two principles