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### III. BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

*Love and Sympathy in Theravāda Buddhism*, by Harvey B. Aronson. Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980. pp. viii + 127.

Western scholarly opinion on the topics of love and compassion in the Theravāda has often been ambivalent. On the one hand, the scholar of the Mahāyāna is inundated in a sea of scriptures which denigrate the attainments of the *śrāvaka* and *pratyekabuddha*. On the other hand, we find statements to the effect that the *arhant* is capable of generating great love (*mahāmaitri*) and great compassion (*mahākaruṇā*). Indeed, the Theravāda tradition itself has always stressed love (*mettā*) and sympathy (*anukampā*), and it is the great virtue of the work under review that it is a systematic exposition of these doctrines in the Theravāda.

In his six chapters (two on sympathy, two on love, one on the *brahmavihāras*, and one on equanimity), Prof. Aronson presents a very thorough treatment of these doctrines. In one very interesting discussion he elucidates which of these terms occur as technical terms in a meditative context (these being *mettā* and *karuṇā*) and which occur in more general circumstances (viz. *anukampā* and *anuddaya*). Thus, the work by Dr. Aronson is a great asset in that it very clearly sets out for the reader the terminology and the context in which it is found. There is however, at times a tendency to take this division into "technical" and "general" terminology to a bit of an extreme. This is the case, for example, when the author suggests (pp. 16, 17) that the Buddha restricted himself to using general, non-meditative terminology when he spoke to "monks and laymen with little or no meditative experience" because they "might have felt closed off from the religious life." The important thing to note here is that although terms such as *mettā* may not be used in *technical* contexts when a general audience is being addressed, this by no means implies that they do not occur with non-technical connotations. This is to say that when a term acquires a technical meaning, it does not lose its ordinary signification. Indeed, Prof. Aronson himself points out (p. 25, etc.) instances in which a meditative term such as *mettā* is used in very general discourse, though, granted, not in a technical sense. Thus, technical terms can (and do) appear in general sermons.

By and large, Prof. Aronson's translation and treatment of Pāli terminology is very adequate (he even includes an English-Pāli glossary). Though I prefer to refrain from commenting on the translation of nomenclature, I will do so here, since I very strongly object to the term

*paccekabuddha* being rendered “Non-enlightening Buddha” (p. 281). Lexically, the word *pacceka* has nothing to do with “non-enlightening” (assuming that by the latter we mean something associated to the root *budh*). But even as a gloss, this translation does not do justice to the term in question.

Dr. Aronson seems to be of the opinion that social interaction between *saṅgha* and laity is a necessary prerequisite for the former to “enlighten” the latter (see p. 2, for example). Since social interaction is missing in the case of the *paccekabuddha* (though even *this* is questionable), it seems that for Dr. Aronson he is a Buddha who does not enlighten. Now whether or not the first implicit assumption (concerning social interaction as a prerequisite) is correct, it seems to me that it is certainly not an assumption shared by the tradition. And it is of course the tradition which we must follow in the translation of terminology if we are to make claims to representing anything other than our own views. Personally, I would approach the translation of this term from a more etymological point of view, stressing the characteristics of “individuality” and “solitude” expressed by the term *pacceka*.

A considerable portion of the author’s final chapter is devoted to a criticism of W. King and M. Spiro for their bifurcation of Theravāda Buddhism into “kammatic” and “nibbanic” (the former being the striving after the attainment of rebirth as a human or god by accumulating virtuous *kamma*, while the latter is the search for Nibbana, the highest goal, which transcends the bondage of *kamma*). Now Dr. Aronson claims that this division is “doctrinally unfounded” (p. 79). Though these authors do seem to misinterpret *upekkhā* in their treatment of Nibbana, and though the names “kammatic” and “nibbanic” may be unfortunate choices, still the distinction being made here is not only valid but quite useful. To present detailed arguments at this point is beyond the scope of this review; suffice it to cite here a very eloquent statement of this position on the part of M. Etienne Lamotte.

The ideal followed by the upāsaka is inferior to that of the bhikṣu. The religious works toward Nirvāṇa. . . he actively works toward personal sanctification and toward his own deliverance, without worrying about his neighbor. As for the upāsaka, he aspires to paradise, to a good rebirth in the world of either gods or men. (*Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, p. 72, my translation.)

In his discussion of whether Theravāda Buddhism should be characterized as egocentrically motivated, altruistically motivated, or whether there exist both of these elements, Dr. Aronson sees “the ethical structure of Theravāda Buddhism as either altruism or hybrid (egocentrism/altruism)” (p. 91). He adds that “we can interpret the isolated instances of egocentric exhortations as being intended for flagging

practitioners who were not even capable of seeking their own welfare, let alone that of others” (p. 92). First of all, the cases of egocentric exhortations are *not* “isolated instances”: at least no more isolated than the instance (*Dīgha* ii, 119) on which the author bases the claim for altruism. What is more, there are here some problems of hermeneutics. Why consider altruism as the “actual” ethical stance of the Theravāda, while considering as *upāya* statements such as “one’s own goal should not be forsaken for another’s no matter how great” (*Dhammapāda*, v.166—*attadattham paratthena bahuna pi na hāpaye*). No convincing reason is given for believing this (and not the converse) to be the case.

Now the points raised thus far are for the most part controversial in their own right, and my raising them is in no way meant to depreciate Dr. Aronson’s extremely valuable work. It should be stressed that the strong point of the book is its general excellence as an expositive and philological work, not concerning itself with issues in the philosophy of love and compassion in any great detail. For those of us who (for better or for worse) have been bitten by the bug of *dialectica philosophica*, we can only hope that Dr. Aronson will one day honor us with a volume on the Buddhist *philosophy* of love, comparable in quality to the present, more descriptive work.

José Ignacio Cabezón

*Chūkan to Yuishiki (Mādhyamika and Vijñaptimātratā)* by Gadjin Nagao. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1978, pp. x + 606 + 45.

This volume is a collection of twenty-five articles that Professor Nagao has written over the last forty years. They are divided into two sections. The first contains essays of a more general nature, while the second contains those directed to more specific topics. Also included is a general index in Japanese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan, an index of titles of *sūtras* and *śāstras*, and a listing of modern works, both in Japanese and Western languages, which have been referred to in the articles.

Although these articles were written at different times and on different themes, they evince Professor Nagao’s overarching thesis of the organic relationship between Mādhyamika and Vijñaptimātratā. There has been the tendency to see Mādhyamika as the doctrine of emptiness over against Vijñaptimātratā as the teaching of being, and