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II. BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Books of Kiu-Te or the Tibetan Buddhist Tantras: A Preliminary Analysis, by David Reigle. San Diego: Wizards Bookshelf, 1983. 68 p.

Dzog Chen and Zen, by Namkhai Norbu. Edited with a Preface and Notes by Kennard Lipman. Oakland, CA: Zhang Zhung Editions, 1984, 40 p.

The two books under review are really but "pamphlets" issued by small publishing houses, but they are worthy of notice, for each presents information of interest to students of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

David Reigle's *The Books of Kiu-Te* is based on a peculiar (to Buddhologists, at any rate) concern: to demonstrate that H.P. Blavatsky's references to the "Books of Kiu-Te" in her theosophical magnum opus, *The Secret Doctrine*, were not merely figments of her imagination, but, in fact, were a phonetic rendering of the Tibetan *rgyud sde*, the "tantra class" of Buddhist literature that is contrasted with the *mdo sde*, or sūtra class. Primarily, it seems, for the edification of Theosophists, Reigle then proceeds to outline these most advanced of esoteric teachings, discussing the basic division between sūtra and tantra, and the major divisions and subdivisions of tantra. He clearly has read the secondary material available on tantra carefully, and refers occasionally, too, to primary sources. He includes a number of useful charts, among them a breakdown of the numbers of volumes devoted to sūtra and tantra in each of the six major available Kanjurs; a list of the divisions of the tantra section of the Tanjur, with Co-ne volume numbers and Tohoku catalogue numbers; Bu-ston's classification of Anuttarayoga tantras in the Kanjur, cross-referenced for the Tohoku catalogue, the Peking edition, and Tanjur commentary locations; and the curriculum of the tantric college of Tashi Lhunpo, one of the highest "Gelugpa mystery schools."

Reigle also includes lengthy notes on the available editions of the Kanjur, the correlation of the number of Tripiṭaka volumes said to be available by Madame Blavatsky with the actual number available, available editions and translations of the "Five Books of Maitreya," the Theosophical term Dzyan (which seems to be a corruption either of *dhyaṇa* or *jñāna*), and the Jo nang pas (with

whom Reigle is concerned because of their—especially Dol po pa's—connection with the Kālacakra tradition).

Most useful, perhaps, is an annotated bibliography of works on Buddhist tantra, especially those related to the Gelugpa tradition (that with which Madame Blavatsky apparently had contact). Reigle's listing is fairly complete, including most available reference materials, Sanskrit editions and English translations, general works, microfilm sources and sound recordings. Omissions worth noting are H.V. Guenther's *Treasures on the Tibetan Middle Way* (Berkeley: Shambhala, 1976), which includes translations of a number of short texts that deal in part or wholly with tantra; Geshe Kesang Gyatso's *Clear Light of Bliss* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1982), which describes the Gelugpa *mahāmudrā* tradition in considerable detail; and such pamphlets from the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (Dharamsala, India) as *The Great Seal of Voidness* and *The Steps of Visualization for the Three Essential Moments*. Of course, literature on the tantras is being brought out constantly nowadays, so Reigle's list will slowly grow outdated, but it provides an excellent foundation for anyone wishing to begin a study of tantric texts, especially in translation.

The only point raised by Reigle on which I wish to take issue (I cannot comment on the Theosophical aspects of the work) is his contention that *all* sexual references in the tantras are intended as *purely* symbolic. Granted, one *may* attain enlightenment (after death) if one relies only on a visualized consort (*jñānamudrā*), but even the "puritanical" Gelugpa tradition makes it quite clear that practices involving an actual consort are appropriate on some occasions and for some practitioners.

Namkhai Norbu's *Dzog Chen and Zen* is a small, useful introduction to the hermeneutical structures employed by the *rdzogs chen* (*mahā ati*) meditative tradition of the Nyingmapas. Prof. Norbu's essay (a transcribed lecture translated from Italian), combined with Kennard Lipman's fine preface and careful notes, discuss the well-known Nyingmapa division of the path into nine *yānas*, then discusses some less well-known aspects of these divisions, e.g., into ways of renunciation (the *śrāvaka*, *pratyekabuddha* and *bodhisattva yānas*), purification (*Kriyā*, *Caryā* and *Yoga tantras*) and transformation (*Mahāyoga*, *Anuyoga* and *Atiyoga tantras*). *rDzog chen pas*, however, claim that their tradition (= *Atiyoga*) actually is beyond even the *yānas* of transformation, and, rather, represents a final, "spontaneously perfect" (*lhun grub*) way that encompasses the ways of renuncia-

tion, purification, and transformation, and itself entails an effortless practice of one's own primordial perfection that bypasses the gradual and conventional practices of the other *yānas*. Basing his remarks in part on the *bSam glan mig gdon* (a *rdzogs chen* text from Tun Huang), Prof. Norbu points out that, from the rDzogs chen pa perspective, although Zen (or Ch'an) is, like *rdzogs chen*, "a way to find yourself in the absolute condition," it nevertheless arises in a bodhisattvayāna context, and lacks the tantric background or specific concept of "the manifestation of the energy of the primordial state of the individual himself," which is at the heart of *rdzogs chen*. Thus, although there are common elements shared by *rdzogs chen* and Zen, we must speak of the former "as the way of self-liberation and the other as the path of renunciation. From the beginning. . . these two methods are very different" (p. 26).

Other topics touched upon by Prof. Norbu include the relation of *rdzogs chen* to Bon, the introduction of the tradition to Tibet by Vairocana, and the importance of *gter-mas*. Appended to the book is a brief biography of Prof. Norbu, a reincarnate lama who now teaches at the University of Naples, in Italy; included, too, is a guide to pronunciation of the Tibetan transliteration system devised by Prof. Norbu based on the pinyin system of transliterating Chinese.

Overall, Prof. Norbu's approach is a somewhat traditional one, but Dr. Lipman's preface and notes flesh out the historical issues raised by the main essay, and make this little book a good introduction to certain aspects of the *rdzogs chen* tradition, and a welcome addition to the growing literature that discusses the relationship among the various Chinese and Indian traditions that contended or cooperated during the early years of Buddhism in Tibet.

Roger Jackson

Nagarjuniana. Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nāgārjuna by Chr. Lindtner. Akademisk Forlag: Copenhagen, 1982, pp. 327 (Indiske Studier IV).

Professor Lindtner's *Nagarjuniana* is a most valuable book. Professor Lindtner has given scholars interested in Nāgārjuna a most useful instrument of research.