

JIABS

Journal of the International
Association of Buddhist Studies



Volume 30 Number 1-2 2007 (2009)

The *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* (ISSN 0193-600XX) is the organ of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Inc. As a peer-reviewed journal, it welcomes scholarly contributions pertaining to all facets of Buddhist Studies.

JIABS is published twice yearly.

Manuscripts should preferably be submitted as e-mail attachments to: *editors@iabsinfo.net* as one single file, complete with footnotes and references, in two different formats: in PDF-format, and in Rich-Text-Format (RTF) or Open-Document-Format (created e.g. by Open Office).

Address books for review to:

JIABS Editors, Institut für Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens, Prinz-Eugen-Strasse 8-10, A-1040 Wien, AUSTRIA

Address subscription orders and dues, changes of address, and business correspondence (including advertising orders) to:

Dr Jérôme Ducor, IABS Treasurer
Dept of Oriental Languages and Cultures
Anthropole
University of Lausanne
CH-1015 Lausanne, Switzerland
email: *iabs.treasurer@unil.ch*
Web: <http://www.iabsinfo.net>
Fax: +41 21 692 29 35

Subscriptions to JIABS are USD 40 per year for individuals and USD 70 per year for libraries and other institutions. For informations on membership in IABS, see back cover.

Cover: Cristina Scherrer-Schaub

Font: "Gandhari Unicode" designed by Andrew Glass (<http://andrewglass.org/fonts.php>)

© Copyright 2009 by the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Inc.

Print: Ferdinand Berger & Söhne
GesmbH, A-3580 Horn

EDITORIAL BOARD

KELLNER Birgit
KRASSER Helmut
Joint Editors

BUSWELL Robert
CHEN Jinhua
COLLINS Steven
COX Collet
GÓMEZ Luis O.
HARRISON Paul
VON HINÜBER Oskar
JACKSON Roger
JAINI Padmanabh S.
KATSURA Shōryū
KUO Li-ying
LOPEZ, Jr. Donald S.
MACDONALD Alexander
SCHERRER-SCHAUB Cristina
SEYFORT RUEGG David
SHARF Robert
STEINKELLNER Ernst
TILLEMANS Tom

JIABS

Journal of the International
Association of Buddhist Studies

Volume 30 Number 1–2 2007 (2009)

Obituaries

- Georges-Jean PINAULT
In memoriam, Colette Caillat (15 Jan. 1921 – 15 Jan. 2007) 3
- Hubert DURT
In memoriam, Nino Forte (6 Aug. 1940 – 22 July 2006) 13
- Erika FORTE
Antonino Forte – List of publications 17

Articles

- Tao JIN
*The formulation of introductory topics and the writing of
exegesis in Chinese Buddhism* 33
- Ryan Bongseok JOO
*The ritual of arhat invitation during the Song Dynasty: Why
did Mahāyānists venerate the arhat?* 81
- Chen-Kuo LIN
*Object of cognition in Dignāga's Ālambanaparīkṣāvṛtti: On
the controversial passages in Paramārtha's and Xuanzang's
translations* 117
- Eviatar SHULMAN
*Creative ignorance: Nāgārjuna on the ontological signifi-
cance of consciousness* 139
- Sam VAN SCHAİK and Lewis DONEY
*The prayer, the priest and the Tsenpo: An early Buddhist
narrative from Dunhuang* 175

Joseph WALSER

The origin of the term ‘Mahāyāna’ (The Great Vehicle) and its relationship to the Āgamas 219

Buddhist Studies in North America

Contributions to a panel at the XVth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Atlanta, 23–28 June 2008

Guest editor: Charles S. Prebish

Charles S. PREBISH

North American Buddhist Studies: A current survey of the field . . 253

José Ignacio CABEZÓN

The changing field of Buddhist Studies in North America 283

Oliver FREIBERGER

The disciplines of Buddhist Studies – Notes on religious commitment as boundary-marker 299

Luis O. GÓMEZ

Studying Buddhism as if it were not one more among the religions 319

•

Notes on contributors 345

THE CHANGING FIELD OF BUDDHIST
STUDIES IN NORTH AMERICA

JOSÉ IGNACIO CABEZÓN

This paper focuses on some of the changes that have taken place in the field of Buddhist Studies in North America¹ during the last three decades. After a brief overview of the past of the field to provide some context for these shifts, the discussion turns to some of the more salient intellectual and institutional changes that have taken place in Buddhist Studies – changes in what we study, and in how we study it, but also the institutional transformations taking place. While generally optimistic about the direction that Buddhist Studies is taking in the United States and Canada, this essay also points to some challenges that lie ahead.

I. The past of the field²

To understand the intellectual and institutional changes that have taken place in Buddhist Studies in North America, we need to rehearse something of the past of the field. As is by now well known, the founding figures of Buddhology were concerned almost exclusively with texts, and not with “texts” in the broad way we understand the term today, but with written documents. Early Buddhologists were interested in these documents not so much because of what they told us about the people or societies in which the texts were written, but because of the ideas (the doctrines and philosophy), contained within them. Classical Buddhology, therefore, was principally the study of the ideas found in classical Buddhist texts.

¹ While the focus of this paper is North America, some of the trends mentioned below will also be found in European scholarship, as will be attested to by some of the references found in the notes.

² This section of the paper draws on the essays that appeared in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1995), especially those by Gómez, Cabezón and Tillemans.

The method for accessing these ideas was, of course, philology. Classical Buddhology presupposed that its goal and method were relatively straightforward and unproblematic: to gain a sense of the earliest (and therefore the “purest”) form of Buddhism – a form of Buddhism unsullied by later “cultural developments” – through methods that, being modeled on the natural sciences, were seen as relatively objective. Just as the subjectivity of the scientist was irrelevant to the doing of science, so too the subjectivity of the Buddhologist was seen as more or less irrelevant to the study of Buddhism. The “science of philology” would provide the scholar access to the text as it had “left the hands either of its author, editor or translator.”³ Once the text had been “established,” its meaning – the author’s intention – could be gleaned. Throughout this process, the Buddhologist was (at least ideally) transparent, like a piece of glass, neither adding to nor subtracting anything from what was already present in the text itself.⁴

³ Christian Lindtner, “Editors and Readers,” in Lama Doboom Tulku, ed., *Buddhist Translations: Problems and Perspectives* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1995), p. 197; see also p. 194.

⁴ In Lindtner’s words: “A Buddhist philologist[’s]... highest authority ought to be reason and common sense. He is willing to go wherever these authorities intend to lead him. He wants to study these ideas and their development in a given context from a historical point of view. His personal beliefs about the value of these ideas is irrelevant to his professional work... It goes without saying that a Buddhist philologist would never even dream of reading feminist or other modern ideas into his text.” (“Editors and Readers,” pp. 193–94.) Although Lindtner recognizes that gleaning a text’s meaning involves an act of interpretation, he hastens to add: “When I speak of interpretation, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I do not mean that we should look upon the old texts through the dim and coloured glasses of, say, Marx, Freud, Adler, Jung, Wittgenstein, Adorno, Chomsky, Neils Bohr, Lévi-Strauss, or other neo-intellectuals whose rather peculiar way of thinking has had, in my opinion, a most obnoxious impact on modern academic life.” (“Editors and Readers,” p. 198.) Lindtner, of course, is a contemporary scholar, but his words reflect the earlier philological perspective I am attempting to characterize here.

Early Buddhology was concerned not with just *any* set of texts and ideas. It was concerned with *classical* texts largely because of the (often unspoken) presupposition, inherited from the European Renaissance, that ancient and classical culture was more pure and worthy of study, a highpoint in civilization, the pinnacle of human achievement from which point there had been a steady decline. To the extent that there was a concern with non-textual culture at all, there was a concern with elite institutions: with the culture of the writers of texts, which in the case of Buddhism were almost exclusively monks. Because of the preoccupation with origins, early Buddhology also tended to privilege Sanskrit and Pali Buddhist literature, with the study of Chinese Buddhist texts a close second. The study of Buddhism in other societies – societies in which Buddhism entered at a later date – tended to be neglected, or even when not, these subfields were seen at best as handmaidens of Buddhist Indology. Hence, Tibetan Buddhist Studies, to take one example, was not seen as an autonomous area of Buddhology, but was instead considered a supplement to the study of Indian Buddhism. As late as the 1970s we find David Seyfort Rugg arguing for the autonomy of Tibetan Buddhist Studies, indicating the persistence of this mindset up to recent times.⁵

For all its concerns with origins, classical Buddhology was largely ahistorical. Being focussed principally on texts and on the ideas found in them, early Buddhologists were usually concerned

⁵ David Seyfort Rugg, “The Study of Tibetan Philosophy and Its Indian Sources,” in Louis Ligeti, ed., *Proceedings of the Csoma de Kőrös Memorial Symposium Held at Mátrafüred, Hungary, 24–30 September, 1976* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1978), pp. 378–391. As Professor Seyfort Rugg (pp. 384–85) states, “it is a striking fact that even in a large number of institutions which pursue Asiatic studies that require or could benefit from its representation Tibetology, far from having acquired full *droit de cité*, has still to establish so much as a foothold... [a] rather circumscribed recognition... To make regular progress Tibetology must be adequately established as a subject of enquiry in its own right, rather than as a mere appendage of another subject.”

at most with dating the authors of these texts and with issues of relative chronology. They were not concerned with history in our sense of the word today. For example, very few scholars wrote on the social, political and economic *context* of the societies in which Buddhism flourished even in classical times, much less in the modern period.

Early Buddhologists were also usually armchair scholars who worked with texts that had been sent to Europe and North America by missionaries and colonial officers. Rarely did they go into the field. And rarely did they speak the languages that they read. All of this, of course, led to a strong dichotomy between scholars and the object of their study. Whether Buddhism and Buddhists were idealized or denigrated, one thing was clear: “we” were not “them.” There was little meeting ground for the twain.⁶

Finally – and this perhaps hardly needs saying, given the technology of the period in question – there was one medium for scholarship, the printed word; and one repository, the physical library.

The picture I have painted is of course simplified. There were always, among the early Buddhologists, exceptions to the rule.⁷ But

⁶ Hence, there was often a privileging of the textual sources and a disparagement of the interpretations of living representatives of the tradition – and this despite the words of one of the founding figures of Buddhist Studies, who believed that consulting “living oracles,” i.e., infomants, could on occasion be valuable: “Whatever may be the general intellectual inferiority of the orientals of our day, or the plastic facility of change peculiar to every form of polytheism, let him [the scholar] not suppose that the living followers of Buddha cannot be profitably interrogated touching the creed they live and die in.” Brian Houghton Hodgson, *Essays on the Languages, Literatures, and Religion of Nepal and Tibet* (New Delhi: Manjuśrī Publishing House, 1972, repr. of the 1841 ed.), p. 100.

⁷ One thinks here, for example, of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1784–1842), arguably the founder of modern Tibetan Studies, who not only lived his entire scholarly life in India and the Himalayas, but who also learned spoken Tibetan, working closely with native informants. Although he was one of the earliest writers on the Tibetan Buddhist canon, Csoma also wrote

although painted in broad strokes, the picture is not, I think, inaccurate.

II. Intellectual shifts in the field

How then has Buddhist Studies changed? The shifts that most concern me here are ones that have occurred principally in the last three decades, which is to say in our own lifetime. These changes have been quite profound. They are transformations in what we study, in how we study it, in the tools at our disposal, and in the media we use to disseminate our research.

First, *what we study*. The notion of “text” has exploded. This is *not* to say that we no longer study written doctrinal and philosophical texts. Certainly we do. Indeed, in just the past few years there has been something of a renaissance in doctrinal studies. But today we are as interested in the context as we are in the content of such texts.⁸ For example, we not only study what the great texts say, but how they were produced and used: the use of texts in educational institutions, the patterns of patronage, the historical evolution of book production, and so forth.⁹ And alongside doctrinal texts, we also now study narratives, poetry and plays.¹⁰ We still study the

on a variety of other subjects.

⁸ An attempt to provide such a multi-disciplinary context is to be found, e.g., in John Clifford Holt, *The Religious World of Kirti Sri: Buddhism, Art and Politics of Late Medieval Sri Lanka* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁹ See, for example, Anne Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Justin McDaniel, *Gathering Leaves and Lifting Words: Intertextuality and Buddhist Monastic Education in Laos and Northern Thailand* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009); and Kurtis R. Schaeffer, *The Culture of the Book in Tibet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

¹⁰ See Paula Richman, *Imagining a Place for Buddhism: Literary Culture and Religious Community in Tamil-Speaking South India* (Oxford: Oxford

works of elite monks, but increasingly we also study the oral and literary traditions of the Buddhist laity.¹¹ We not only study what Buddhists have written and what they think, but also what they *do* – from complex monastic rituals to popular practices.¹² We also now explore non-verbal “texts,” reading Buddhism through the lens of material culture.¹³ In short, realizing that our studies had yielded a very incomplete picture of Buddhism, one that excluded most of what Buddhists actually *did*, we have increasingly turned our attention as a corrective precisely to those areas that had previously been neglected.

University Press, 2001); and Sarah J. Horton, *Living Buddhist Statues in Early Medieval and Modern Japan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), which, *inter alia*, relies on popular tales and poetry as source materials.

¹¹ See, for example, Mark Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960–1279* (Harvard: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006).

¹² One thinks here of two volumes edited by Donald S. Lopez, *Buddhism in Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) and *Religions of Tibet In Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), but also of a variety of other works that emphasize ritual and practice in Buddhist Asia: e.g., Esben Andreasen, *Popular Buddhism in Japan: Buddhist Religion and Culture* (Surrey: RoutledgeCurzon, 1998); Rita Langer, *Buddhist Rituals of Death and Rebirth: Contemporary Sri Lankan Practice and Its Origins* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Donald K. Swearer, *Becoming Buddha: The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); and José Ignacio Cabezón, ed., *Tibetan Ritual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

¹³ See, for example, Kevin Trainor, *Relics, Ritual and Representation in Buddhism: Rematerialising the Sri Lankan Theravada Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Fabio Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007); and David Germano and Kevin Trainor, eds., *Embodying the Dharma: Buddhist Relic Veneration in Asia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007).

Classical Buddhology, as already mentioned, was largely textual and antiquarian, and its focus was on elite institutions. Buddhist Studies today, by contrast, is also concerned with non-elite institutions and practices that are in many instances hybrids of Buddhist and non-Buddhist religious elements.¹⁴ We continue to be interested in classical Buddhist institutions (for examples, monasteries) but also now in new religious movements, movements that are often non-monastic and that are considered (by elite Buddhists at least) to transgress the bounds of orthodoxy. From an almost exclusive concern with men and monks, we are now also interested in the religiosity of Buddhist women and nuns.¹⁵ And we are also interested in the way that Buddhism crosses national boundaries, including its particular manifestations in the West.¹⁶

If what we study has changed, so too has *how we study* it, which is to say that there has been a shift in our methods. Eschewing broad generalizations, our studies now deal with more specific periods, places, individuals and institutions. The relative ahistoricism of early Buddhology has also been replaced by a keen historical

¹⁴ See, for example, John C. Holt, *The Buddhist Viṣṇu: Religious Transformation, Politics and Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); and Robert DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha: Indian Popular Religions and the Formation of Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁵ See, for example, Paula Arai, *Women Living Zen: Japanese Soto Buddhist Nuns* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Kim Gutschow, *Being a Buddhist Nun: The Struggle for Enlightenment in the Himalayas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Janet Gyatso and Hanna Havnevik, *Women in Tibet: Past and Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); and Tessa J. Bartholomeusz, *Women Under the Bo Tree: Buddhist Nuns in Sri Lanka* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹⁶ See, for example, Charles S. Prebish, *Luminous Passage: The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Charles S. Prebish, *Westward Dharma: Buddhism Beyond Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Sally Mcara, *Land of Beautiful Vision: Making a Buddhist Sacred Place in New Zealand* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007); and a variety of articles in the *Journal of Global Buddhism* at <http://www.globalbuddhism.org>.

consciousness that seeks to contextualize Buddhist doctrines, practices and institutions within multiple contexts – social, political and economic. Moreover, scholars no longer sit in armchairs. They go into the field, and they often learn the spoken languages of the cultures they study. Methodologically, Buddhologists increasingly find themselves asking questions about rhetoric, power, material culture, the production of goods, and forms of exchange, thereby bringing the methods of literary theory, political science and economics to bear on their studies.

Finally, information technology has revolutionized the field in ways that we never could have imagined. Those of us who continue to work on classical texts now have at our disposal resources unimaginable when we were beginning our graduate work. In the subfield of Tibetan Buddhist Studies, to take the example with which I am most familiar, we now have available a wealth of texts and reference works that make our work easier and more efficient. These include catalogues and databases of huge textual corpuses, some of which had never even been previously catalogued. We are also just a click away from important collections of scanned books and journals, Buddhist texts in PDF format, and (perhaps most important) digitized searchable texts that make possible in a few moments the answer to questions that would have previously taken months if not years – for example, finding every instance of a single term throughout the entire canon.

Most of the Buddhist canonical collections in the major Buddhist languages – Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, Korean, and Tibetan – are either already available in digital form or else are in the process of being input, sometimes even in multiple languages side-by-side. Large bodies of *post*-canonical literature also exist as searchable text. While we are still a long way from seeing all available Buddhist literature as digital text, this is now at least imaginable.

The internet, moreover, has made possible the dissemination of a vast amount of *non*-textual material that was previously inac-

cessible to scholars: art,¹⁷ of course, but also important historical archives of photographs,¹⁸ films,¹⁹ and cartographical resources,²⁰ some of them even interactive. These digital tools are also radically transforming pedagogy. Searchable dictionaries and online video language-teaching tools are changing the nature of language instruction. Online multimedia resources provide students with the ability to hear and see what they are being exposed to in the medium of the written word. We now even have our own digital textbooks in Buddhist Studies.²¹

The next step, one which we have yet to take to any great extent, is to think more systematically about the dissemination of research in refereed digital publications. This is going to be a major issue in years to come. University presses are increasingly loathe to publish specialized academic monographs, and scholars are going to have to find alternative venues for their work. Or rather, we are going to have to create the infrastructure for new forms of academic publishing, like peer-reviewed journals and digital monograph series. The web is an ideal place for publishing specialized academic work, not only because of its relatively low cost, but also because of the possibility of incorporating multi-media resources (images,

¹⁷ See, for example, *Himalayan Art Resources* at <http://www.himalayanart.org>; and the *Huntington Archive of Buddhist and Related Art* at <http://kaladarshan.arts.ohio-state.edu/>.

¹⁸ See, for example, *The Tibet Album: British Photography in Central Tibet 1920–1950* at <http://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/index.php>.

¹⁹ The *Frederick Williamson Collection* of films about Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet is available at <http://www.digitalhimalaya.com/collections/williamson/williamsonfilms.php>.

²⁰ See, for example, an interactive map of the hermitages that surround Sera Monastery in Tibet: <http://www.thlib.org/places/monasteries/sera/hermitages/>. This is part of the author's Sera Project.

²¹ See, for example, Charles S. Prebish and Damien Keown, *Buddhism: The Ebook*, described at <http://www.jbeonlinebooks.org/Buddhism/index.htm>.

video, etc.) into scholarly publications. Some examples of this already exist,²² but we are going to have to be more intentional about moving this process forward – for example, by creating the apparatus for the peer-review of digital publications, the chief mechanism for quality-control within the field.

Broadly speaking, what the field has shifted *to* can perhaps be subsumed under the rubric of Culture Studies. There has been in Buddhist Studies, just as there has been in the Humanities generally, a “cultural turn.” But over and above the turn to culture broadly speaking, there has been a turn to Cultural Studies, a unique field (or perhaps better perspective) with a number of distinctive attributes. In Buddhist Cultural Studies we find, first, a flattening out of data hierarchies. Rather than privileging the classical and textual as data, we are now interested in Buddhist culture in *all* its manifestations, elite as well as kitschy, “pure” as well as hybrid, classical as well as modern, and not just in Asia, but everywhere that Buddhism is found. The Cultural Studies approach has also brought with it a certain amount of self-reflection and self-criticism, as we have turned our attention from the study of Buddhism to the study of the study of Buddhism (that is, to the study of the field), and from the study of Buddhists to the study of those who study Buddhists (namely, Buddhologists).²³

²² The *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* (<http://www.buddhistethics.org>), the *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* (<http://www.jiats.org>), and *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* (<http://www.digitalhimalaya.com/collections/journals/ret/>).

²³ Several works come to mind as representative of this approach: Donald S. Lopez, Jr., ed., *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), and Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Prisoners of Shangri-la: Tibetan Buddhism and the West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). But see also Thierry Dodin and Heinz Rärther, *Imagining Tibet: Realities, Projections and Fantasies* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001); Martin Brauen, *Dreamworld Tibet: Western Illusions* (Trumbull, CT: Weatherhill, 2004); and David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (New York: Oxford University press, 2008).

In addition to the transformation of the field already mentioned, we have also seen the emergence of unexpected new areas of study within the North American academy. Buddhist Theological Studies,²⁴ for example, includes a variety of subfields such as Feminist Studies, Ethics, Contemplative Studies, and Buddhist Ministerial Studies.

None of the shifts just described, including the digital and cultural turns, and perhaps especially Cultural Studies, are of course, without their problems. One sometimes wonders whether it is all for the good. Will the field become fragmented: those who specialize in texts and doctrines, those who focus on culture and practices, and those who specialize on the study of material artifacts? As we move into increasingly smaller and more specialized ghettos, will this lead to balkanization? Will the cultural turn lead to decreased mastery of the great texts? For all the tedium involved in searching for a quote or a term through hundreds of pages of texts, the fact remains that previous generations of scholars were forced to read those hundreds of pages. What are the implications of the point and click approach (as I call it in my more cynical moment) to textual studies? And what are the implications of what I have called the flattening out of data hierarchies? Will studies of the meaning of plastic squeaky buddhas replace the study of the Buddhist “great books”? Finally, will our present self-reflection on the field and on the Buddhologist degenerate into a kind of narcissism? There is no denying that these are all dangers, but in truth I do not see these dangers materializing, at least not yet. Instead, the various shifts mentioned, I believe, have been quite salutary for the field as a whole.

²⁴ See John Makransky and Roger R. Jackson, eds., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* (Surrey: Routledge-Curzon, 1999).

III. Changing institutional patterns

The field has changed intellectually, but it has also changed *institutionally*. Initially located almost exclusively within area studies departments, or in language and literature programs,²⁵ in North America graduate Buddhist Studies has increasingly moved in the direction of Religious Studies.²⁶ While most of the area-studies graduate programs are still active, we find graduate programs increasingly housed within religious studies department.²⁷ Some programs²⁸ straddle the area studies/religious studies divide, with one foot in each camp.

Not only have North American Buddhist Studies graduate programs moved into Religious Studies departments, the graduates of Buddhist Studies programs increasingly find employment in Religious Studies departments – often in small, liberal arts colleges. Whereas a generation ago it was rare to find Buddhologists in the religion departments of smaller colleges, this has today become the rule rather than the exception. Aside from simply providing employment opportunities for recent PhDs, I have elsewhere ar-

²⁵ One thinks here of the programs at Wisconsin, Michigan, Washington, Harvard, UCLA and UC Berkeley.

²⁶ Compare the situation in North America to what Max Deeg has to say about the institutional location of the field in parts of Europe, namely that it will be some time before “the professional study of Buddhism becomes integrated in the Religious Study programs of German-speaking universities, closing the gap between the pure historical study of Buddhism as a text-restricted tradition and the religious reality in Buddhist countries.” Max Deeg, “Buddhist Studies and its Impact on Buddhism in Western Societies: An Historical Sketch and Prospects,” online at http://www.chibs.edu.tw/exchange/CONFERENCE/4cicob/fulltext/Deeg.htm#_ftnref85, last accessed January, 2009.

²⁷ The Buddhist Studies programs at Virginia, Stanford, Columbia, Princeton, Santa Barbara, Yale, Toronto, McMaster and Emory are examples of those housed within Religious Studies departments.

²⁸ These include, most notably, those at Chicago and Harvard.

gued that the movement of the field in the direction of Religious Studies has been beneficial on intellectual grounds, broadening the agenda of Buddhist Studies, forcing us to think more comparatively, and pushing us to learn to speak to colleagues outside our own area of speciality. But the move into Religious Studies has also posed its own practical challenges. In terms of graduate training, it has meant that students have had to master an additional body of theoretical literature and to learn a new set of skills on top of the already weighty linguistic, historical, doctrinal and other requirements that have traditionally constituted a graduate education in Buddhist Studies. How individual programs balance these demands is an important question – at least it is at my own institution and in my own mind.

Let me conclude by mentioning what I see to be the newest and most interesting institutional shift within Buddhist Studies in North America. This has to do, on the one hand, with the emergence of accredited Buddhist institutions of higher learning, and on the other, with the relationships being created between Buddhist religious organizations and North American universities.

Degree-granting Buddhist institutions are nothing new in the United States: the Jodo Shinshu-affiliated Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley was founded in 1964 and joined the Graduate Theological Union in 1985. Naropa was founded a decade later in 1974 and was accredited in 1986. Since then, several Buddhist groups have founded new universities or institutes. Two of these, both in Los Angeles, have already received accreditation:

- Soka University, which was founded in 1987 and accredited in 2005,²⁹ and
- The University of the West (formerly Hsi Lai), founded in 1991, and affiliated with Fo Guang Shan (Taiwan).

²⁹ It should be noted that Soka University does not portray itself as a Buddhist institution but rather as a secular liberal arts college. Its students are mostly young people from Japan.

Three more specialized institutes are currently in the process of being accredited, or else have arrangements with other accredited institutions:

- Dharma Realm Buddhist University, founded in 1976
- The Won Institute of Graduate Studies, founded in 2000
- The Maitripa Institute, founded in 2006.

By my reckoning, there are already seven institutions of higher learning founded by Buddhist groups in the United States.³⁰ I expect this trend – the institutionalization of Buddhism into the fabric of North American higher education – to increase in the years to come. Several of the existing institutions have for some years now been a source of very qualified graduate students for the more well established North American Buddhist Studies graduate programs. These new Buddhist institutions are also beginning to absorb new PhDs from mainstream Buddhist Studies graduate programs. If the trend indeed continues, as I believe it will, we may one day see across the North American landscape something like a network of Buddhist universities and divinity schools not unlike those of other religious traditions. If this indeed comes to pass, it will have profound implications for Buddhist Studies, for Buddhist ministry, and indeed for Buddhists in North America.

There is one other way in which Buddhists, Buddhist “sympathizers,” and Buddhist organizations are affecting Buddhist Studies graduate education in North America – through the funding of professorships and curricular initiatives. One thinks here of the Numata Visiting Professorships, of the chairs funded by Barry Hershey at Harvard and by the Khyentse Foundation at Berkeley, and of the 2006 gift of \$4 million (Canadian dollars) by Mr. Robert Ho to the University of Toronto in support of Buddhist Studies. These initiatives are already having a profound effect on the character of Bud-

³⁰ Similar institutions are not unknown in Europe: for example, the Budapest Buddhist University, which offers both BA and MA degrees, was founded in 1991 and was accredited in 2001.

dhist Studies in North America, causing the field to take certain directions it might not have otherwise taken.

IV. Conclusions

Within our own lifetime we have seen the field of Buddhist Studies in North America undergo some fairly profound intellectual and institutional shifts. Many of these shifts – e.g., the cultural turn and the move to greater self-reflexivity – seem natural to us in hindsight, but as with all historical processes, it is far from clear that we could have predicted them while we were living in and through the earlier paradigm. Likewise, it is probably impossible to predict what Buddhist Studies will look like a generation from now. Are the intellectual shifts outlined in this essay a permanent part of the fabric of Buddhology, or, like a pendulum, will we see the field swing back and forth between different poles – for example, between the doctrinal/philosophical and the cultural/material – at times emphasizing one, and at other times the other? Even if Buddhist Studies ends up oscillating in this way, it seems clear that, like Foucault's pendulum, we never return to precisely the same point where we started, the new arc being influenced by all the forces that continue to operate unceasingly in and around the field. And, indeed, there is already evidence for something like this in the work of a new generation of doctrinal specialists who insist that doctrine cannot be understood apart from history, politics and context generally. As Buddhist Studies has moved back toward doctrine and philosophy, the endpoint of the new arc is a very different place from where the pendulum began its journey. Put another way, although it is futile to predict what the field will look like a generation from now, we can be certain of one thing: that it will never again be precisely what it was in the past.

And what of the *institutional* shifts outlined in this paper? What will be the upshot of the new Buddhist institutions of higher learning and of the partnerships between mainstream universities and Buddhist institutions? What new traditions of scholarship and what

new scholarly identities will result from this? It is not inconceivable that such institutional shifts will give rise both to new subfields and to new scholarly vocations – for example, to something like academic Buddhist theology, a field that, although situated within (a broader) mainstream Buddhology, is also responsible to a Buddhist constituency. Given the history of the institutionalization of other religions into the fabric of North American intellectual life, new modes of academic inquiry and new scholarly identities are to be expected. But only time will tell, of course, which of these “many possible worlds” will be instantiated. Amidst these many uncertainties, however, there is one other thing that we probably *can* be sure of: that our own work and concerns will one day seem as archaic to our scholarly heirs as the work of prior generations seem to us today.