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represents a model for Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Having given detailed and accurate descriptions of each tradition, the author impartially compares the major ideas of the two traditions with no attempt to advocate the superiority of his own tradition. The comparison of the two traditions is effective because it focuses upon one specific representative from each tradition. Too often in Buddhist-Christian dialogue the two traditions have been seen as monoliths rather than as cumulative traditions having multiple and varied perspectives. When interpreters have failed to recognize the pluralism within the tradition, they usually have ended up comparing sophisticated understandings of their own tradition with caricatures of the other tradition, while missing significant points of commonality in various schools or figures of the two traditions.

By taking Buddhaghosa and Wesley the author is able to compare both the overall intention of their religious systems and the specific elements within the systems. He finds some important similarities, for example, in the way they understood the human predicament and in their belief that the way to perfection represented the solution to the predicament. But he is also able to show that significant differences become manifest when we examine their understandings of concepts like faith and wisdom. So that in the end we must see that "The Ways of Perfection they offer seem to be two different Ways which lead to two different Goals."

This book would be important even if it were only an explanation of the Theravadin understanding of the *Visuddhimagga*. But because it is that as well as a solid comparison of the *Visuddhimagga*'s viewpoint with a major Christian viewpoint, it is doubly important. Readers with varying interests in Buddhist studies, as well as in Comparative Religions, will find this book useful.

George Bond

*An Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems*, tr. F.D. Lessing and A. Wayman. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978.

We have, with the recent republication of *Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, the second edition of a very worthwhile work at a much more affordable price. The original publication of the work by Mouton and Co. in 1960 was a welcome addition to the all-too-small corpus of literature in the field of the Buddhist Tantras, and this second edition, recently brought out by the Indological publishing firm of Motilal Banarsidass and Co., has all of the advantages of the original 1960 publication.

The translation of mKhas Grub rJe's *rGyud sDe sPyi'i rNam*, the main focus of the work, is found on the opposite page of an edited and transliterated version of the Tibetan text, a true asset to the Tibetologist. The translation having been completed by Drs. Lessing and Wayman in the 1950's, it was compiled and footnoted by Dr. Wayman after the untimely passing away of his co-author.

The present edition is identical in all respects to that previous one, with the exception of the addition of a new introduction. In it, Dr. Wayman sheds new light on several of the questions he left open in the earlier edition; tracing, for example, many of mKhas Grub rJe's sources to the works of Bu sTon Rin Po Che (b. 1290). He also briefly discusses some of the relationships between the Tantra and the Buddhist philosophical tenet schools. It is a great pleasure to see treatment of this point, too often overlooked or ignored in other discussions of this subject.

There is however one point on which I would beg to differ with Dr. Wayman. In his discussion of initiation (*abhiṣeka*), he states that Atiśa prohibits the Secret (*guhya*) and Wisdom (*prajñā*) Initiations to ordained monks, because they contain material which would bring complete loss of the vows (skt. *ji*, tib. *pham pa*).<sup>1</sup> Though this is certainly true, I would not concur with the reason given by Dr. Wayman, viz. that "only the pure life (a monk's life) is consistent with the Buddha's dharma, while these two initiations violate the pure life: and he adds that there is no fault in knowing the situation".<sup>2</sup> Now Atiśa, (and I would mention that Tsong-kha-pa is essentially in agreement on this point) considered concrete consort practise (the main violation incurred by receiving these two initiations) to be a *sine-qua-non* for enlightenment. If that is true, it would imply that such a practise is not only consistent with, but in fact is a necessary aspect of the Buddhist path. How can this be justified in light of the remarks of Dr. Wayman cited above? It appears that if we take the line "there is no fault in knowing the situation" in a different context, we can resolve the situation. This latter line seems to be an English rendering of the final line of the *Bodhipāthapradīpa*:

De nyid rig la nyes pa med<sup>4</sup>

If so, it might best be translated: "There is no fault when knowing thatness (*de nyid*)."<sup>3</sup> This reading is in fact confirmed by Atiśa himself in his autocommentary where he states:

As for the holy ones, whose eyes cognize all  
dharma as illusions, for these yogins who  
know the 'thatness' of these (dharma),  
no fault whatsoever will be incurred.

Dam pa la la'i zhal nas chos thams cad sgyu mar shes shing  
de'i de kho na nyid rig pa'i rnal 'byor pa las nyes par 'gyur pa  
gang yang med de.<sup>5</sup>

Thus we see in fact that consort practise is permissible, according to Atiśa, after the practitioner has obtained some realization of emptiness, that is, after the attainment of the state of an Aryan.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, while prohibiting such practices in the case of non-Aryan monks, and discouraging them among non-Aryan lay men and women, it is by no means meant to be an unqualified prohibition.

As for Dr. Wayman's work itself, it is fair to say that the translation, if difficult at points, only reflects problematic areas in the actual Tibetan text. It is on the whole very accurate and faithful to the original and it is for this very reason that the novice may find some difficulty in using this work to introduce himself or herself to the study of Tantric Buddhism. One should realize of course that even within the dGe-Lugs tradition, the text is considered rather concise and terse.

Be that as it may, it is clear that by any set of standards, the republication of this classic work must be heartily welcomed. It is, after all, one of the most valuable sourcebooks in an all-too-neglected area of study: the Buddhist Tantras.

José Cabezon

## NOTES

1. Viz. they involve breaking the vow of celibacy, which is a *parājika* offense.
2. Lessing, F.D. and Wayman, A., *An Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems*, p. 3, (my insertion).
3. In his famous *sNgag rim chen mo* Tsong-kha-pa says "The method (for attaining enlightenment) is a blissful binding" and that "binding is the bliss of the union of the two organs (which is limited to the Highest Yoga Tantra)" [Hopkins translation, pp. 119-121].
4. *Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma*, from a personal manuscript published in India, p. 76.
5. *Byang chub lam gyi sgron me dang de'i dka grel*. Council of Religious & Cultural Affairs, Dharmasala, India, 1969, p. 231.
6. Atiśa also brings up the point that others hold that such practices can begin as early as the "weak stage of patience". R.F. Sherburne, *A Study of Atiśa's Commentary on His Lamp of the Enlightenment Path*, 1976, p. 445.