NEWSLETTER | The American Philosophical Association

Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies

SPRING 2019

VOLUME 18 | NUMBER 2

ISSN 2155-9708

APA NEWSLETTER ON

Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies

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VOLUME 18 | NUMBER 2 | SPRING 2019

FROM THE GUEST EDITOR

Buddhist Philosophy Worldwide: Perspectives and Programs

Rafal Stepien
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This is the first of two special issues of the newsletter dedicated to Buddhist philosophy. My initial intention as guest editor was to prepare a single issue of the newsletter on the topic "Buddhist Philosophy Worldwide: Perspectives and Programs." The idea was to include descriptive and prescriptive/evaluative elements: On the one hand, scholars working on Buddhist philosophy throughout the world were invited to provide a descriptive snapshot of the state of the field in their geographical/disciplinary area; on the other, they could proffer an evaluative appraisal of how Buddhist philosophy has been carried out and/or a prescriptive program of how they feel it should be carried out. This dual remit played out in a foreseeable manner, such that some authors composed largely descriptive pieces, while others took a more methodologically oriented approach in which they outline a vision of what the practice of Buddhist philosophy could or should entail, and/or how it can or could contribute to the practice of academic philosophy *per se*.

Eventually, for both practical and programmatic reasons, the decision was taken to unweave these strands into two separate newsletter issues, with the current spring 2019 issue remaining devoted to "Buddhist Philosophy Worldwide: Perspectives and Programs," and the ensuing fall 2019 one to be on "Buddhist Philosophy Today: Theories and Forms." Practically, the total length of the articles submitted by the nineteen authors I was able to corral greatly exceeded that typical for a single issue of the newsletter, and the subsequent realization that roughly half of the authors had taken each of the two tracks I had laid led me and the APA to decide upon dividing the articles accordingly. More substantively, upon reading the final products it became clear to me that we were dealing here with two distinct and individually important sets of contributions to the study of Buddhist philosophy. On the one hand, given that the more descriptive articles preponderantly issued from non-Western cultural/national contexts underrepresented within the field at large, and given also that the descriptions provided by these authors were typically accompanied by healthy doses of interpretation, I consider these contributions to constitute a solid bloc of scholarship on the practice of Buddhist philosophy worldwide. On the other hand, those contributions whose authors took a more evaluative or prescriptive approach likewise taken together comprise a well-rounded collection of articles, in this case one theorizing contemporary Buddhist philosophical scholarship.

In preparing the collection as a whole, I was particularly resolute that contributions cover a greater geographical span than that encompassed by the major centers in Europe and North America. Interestingly, it so happens that in all but two cases scholars working in European and North American universities where the field's center of gravity lies chose to concentrate on theoretical elaborations of Buddhist philosophical practice; their contributions thus appear in the following issue. For the present survey of "Buddhist Philosophy Worldwide," my insistence on a broad geographical coverage was motivated on the one hand by a methodological impetus to ensure as comprehensive as possible a spectrum of perspectives be included, and on the other hand by the conviction that Buddhist philosophy, being a strikingly multi- and trans-cultural phenomenon itself, could and should be studied, carried out, and put into practice most fruitfully from the widest possible range of vantage points. As such, I actively sought out contributors from a variety of countries in Asia, where Buddhist philosophy has of course the longest of intellectual pedigrees, as well as Australasia, Africa, South America, and the Middle East in addition to Europe and North America. Unfortunately, I was unable to locate any scholars based anywhere in Africa, South America, or the Middle East outside of Israel willing to take part.

Nevertheless, the present volume includes what I believe is a hitherto unparalleled collection of texts detailing and appraising the state of the scholarly field of Buddhist philosophy around the world. It begins with an account of "Buddhist Philosophy in Australian Universities" by John Powers and Leesa S. Davis, which provides a comprehensive survey of the field both as it currently stands and as it has evolved throughout the shifting Australian academic context. Roy Tzohar's study of "Buddhist Philosophy, and Eastern Philosophy in General, in Israel and Palestine" details the historical permutations and present status of the field in the shadow of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the region's tumultuous political context. Karin Meyers's account of "Buddhist Philosophy in the Kathmandu Valley" is similarly exhaustive, with special focus on the Rangjung Yeshe Institute, the only educational institution in the area with accredited degree programs in Buddhist Studies specifically designed for international students. The following contributions on "Buddhist Philosophy in Poland:

Legacy and Prospects" by Jakub Zamorski and the "Study of Buddhist Philosophy in Sri Lanka" by Asanga Tilakaratne likewise examine the complex historical trajectories of the field in these varied contexts before discussing its present situation and future prospects. In his article on "Buddhist Philosophy in Two Japanese Cross-Philosophical Approaches," Shinya Moriyama introduces the work and evaluates the abiding influence of Hajime Nakamura (1912–1999) and Toshihiko Izutsu (1914–1993) on the field in Japan. Huanhuan He then provides a survey of "Sanskrit-based Buddhist Philosophy in China Today," a discipline she observes has changed quite dramatically during the last two decades. Zhihua Yao, meanwhile, draws on his direct experience "Teaching Buddhism as Philosophy" in Hong Kong to reflect on how to present Buddhism in a way that is easily accessible to general philosophical readers with the hope of making it better received by them. Joseph McClellan's article, "Preserving the Four Noble Truths at the Heart of Buddhist Pedagogy," similarly draws on the author's experience studying and teaching Buddhist philosophy, which in his case has taken place in contexts as varied as the United States, Nepal, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, and notably included culturally Buddhist Bhutanese as well as Ismaili Muslim Pakistani students, whose reactions to the academic study of Buddhist philosophy McClellan discusses. Finally, in "Sailing against the Current: The Buddha, Buddhism, and Methodology," Hari Shankar Prasad presents an account of academic and non-academic perspectives on the study of Buddhism in contemporary India, before turning to more explicitly methodological considerations regarding such study.

As may transpire from the foregoing account, I have structured this volume in a manner that self-consciously works against any easy compartmentalizations of academic Buddhist philosophy along geographical and/or cultural lines (e.g., Western/Eastern, Northern/Southern, etc.). Instead, and in accordance with the mandate of this special issue, I have foregrounded those pieces which provide detailed accounts of their respective contexts, before moving toward more deliberative pieces so as to segue as seamlessly as possible into the overtly theoretical articles comprising the ensuing volume. One abiding regret I have to do with the assembled pieces regards the gender representation of the authors, for only two of ten contributors to this issue and only one of eleven in the following are female. This imbalance I readily recognize as problematic, though I can assure the readership that it remains not for any lack of trying to avert or rectify it: In addition to those who did agree to contribute, I invited a further eight female scholars of Buddhism who for various reasons were unable to commit to this project. Had they been able to do so (and I am not trying to make anyone feel guilty!), a more-or-less equal representation of genders would have been ensured; one, it merits mentioning, well in excess of the stubbornly skewed levels of representation in the field (of Buddhist philosophy, to say nothing of philosophy itself) as a whole.

My thanks go first of all to the editor of the newsletter, Prasanta Bandyopadhyay, for inviting me to act as guest editor, to the chair of the Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies, Brian Bruya, for supporting my suggestion as to the topic, and to my blind peer-reviewer for not only agreeing to be involved but for producing such fine reviews at such a speedy rate. I also express my gratitude to the Berggruen Philosophy & Culture Center for funding that enabled initiation of this work while I was the Berggruen Research Fellow in Indian Philosophy at Wolfson College and the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Oxford, and likewise to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation for funding that enabled completion of this work while I was a Humboldt Research Fellow at the Karl Jaspers Centre for Advanced Transcultural Studies of Heidelberg University. At Oxford and Heidelberg, Richard Sorabji, Jan Westerhoff, and Michael Radich stand out as colleagues and mentors especially supportive of this and like projects in and of Buddhist philosophy. Of course, I reserve my most profound thanks to the contributors themselves, without whose energy and insight none of this could have come to fruition.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

GOAL OF THE *NEWSLETTER ON ASIAN AND ASIAN-AMERICAN PHILOSOPHERS*

The *APA Newsletter on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies* is sponsored by the APA Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies to report on the philosophical work of Asian and Asian-American philosophy, to report on new work in Asian philosophy, and to provide a forum for the discussion of topics of importance to Asian and Asian-American philosophers and those engaged with Asian and Asian-American philosophy. We encourage a diversity of views and topics within this broad rubric. None of the varied philosophical views provided by authors of newsletter articles necessarily represents the views of any or all the members of the Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies, including the editor(s) of the newsletter. The committee and the newsletter are committed to advancing Asian and Asian-American philosophical scholarships and bringing this work and this community to the attention of the larger philosophical community; we do not endorse any particular approach to Asian or Asian-American philosophy.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1) **Purpose**: The purpose of the newsletter is to publish information about the status of Asians and Asian Americans and their philosophy and to make the resources of Asians and Asian-American philosophy available to a larger philosophical community. The newsletter presents discussions of recent developments in Asians and Asian-American philosophy (including, for example, both modern and classical East-Asian philosophy, both modern and classical South Asian philosophy, and Asians and Asian Americans doing philosophy in its various forms), related work in other disciplines, literature overviews, reviews of the discipline as a whole, timely book reviews, and

suggestions for both spreading and improving the teaching of Asian philosophy in the current curriculum. It also informs the profession about the work of the APA Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies. One way the dissemination of knowledge of the relevant areas occurs is by holding highly visible, interactive sessions on Asian philosophy at the American Philosophical Association's three annual divisional meetings. Potential authors should follow the submission guidelines below:

i) Please submit essays electronically to the editor(s). Articles submitted to the newsletter should be limited to ten double-spaced pages and must follow the APA submission guidelines.

ii) All manuscripts should be prepared for anonymous review. Each submission shall be sent to two referees. Reports will be shared with authors. References should follow *The Chicago Manual Style*.

iii) If the paper is accepted, each author is required to sign a copyright transfer form, available on the APA website, prior to publication.

2) **Book reviews and reviewers**: If you have published a book that you consider appropriate for review in the newsletter, please ask your publisher to send the editor(s) a copy of your book. Each call for papers may also include a list of books for possible review. To volunteer to review books (or some specific book), kindly send the editor(s) a CV and letter of interest mentioning your areas of research and teaching.

3) **Where to send papers/reviews**: Please send all articles, comments, reviews, suggestions, books, and other communications to the editor: Prasanta Bandyopadhyay (psb@montana.edu).

4) **Submission deadlines**: Submissions for spring issues are due by the preceding November 1, and submissions for fall issues are due by the preceding February 1.

5) **Guest editorship:** It is possible that one or more members of the Committee on Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies could act as guest editors for one of the issues of the newsletter depending on their expertise in the field. To produce a high-quality newsletter, one of the co-editors could even come from outside the members of the committee depending on his/her area of research interest.

ARTICLES

Buddhist Philosophy in Australian Universities

John Powers
DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Leesa S. Davis
DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Overview. At present, there are roughly a dozen academics employed full-time in Australian universities who have a primary or significant professional commitment to Buddhist philosophy, who teach courses in the field and advise graduate students, and who have a track record of relevant publications. For the past several decades, three universities—Australian National University (ANU), Deakin University, and University of Tasmania (UTas)—have supported programs in Buddhist philosophy, although the field's actual fortunes in these institutions have risen or fallen as a result of restructurings or departures when people have moved or retired.[1]

Australian National University (Canberra, Australian Capital Territory) has a longstanding commitment to Buddhist Studies and to the Asia-Pacific—a principle that is enshrined in the University's Charter. During the 1960s–1980s, the main center focused on Buddhism was the Department of South Asian and Buddhist Studies in the Faculty of Asian Studies, headed by Jan Willem de Jong (1921–2000). His primary interest was philology and textual studies, but he also made notable contributions to Buddhist philosophy in his often lengthy and detailed book reviews and in publications relating to Buddhist philosophical literature (e.g., de Jong 1949, and 1978, and 1979). De Jong was a prolific scholar who published more than 820 articles in French, English, and Japanese.[2]

The program he headed produced a number of Ph.D.s who subsequently became leading figures in various subfields of Buddhist Studies, including Paul Harrison (Ph.D. 1980); Gregory Schopen (Ph.D. 1978) and John Jorgensen (Ph.D. 1990). De Jong was appointed Professor and Head of Department in 1965 and continued to lead the department until he retired in 1986.

Following de Jong's retirement, Buddhist studies at ANU entered a hiatus period until John Powers was hired as a Senior Lecturer in 1995. Powers was promoted to Reader in 2000 and to Professor in 2008, and in 2013 he was elected as a Fellow in the Australian Academy of Humanities. Together with the late Primoz Pacenko, a Visiting Fellow supported by a research grant from the Pali Text Society, Powers revived the Sanskrit program and also began advising graduate students working on texts in Sanskrit, Pāli, Tibetan, and Chinese. John Makeham's appointment in 2006 significantly augmented expertise in Buddhist philosophy and sinology, and ANU became Australia's leading center for Buddhist philosophy.

Several courses on Buddhist philosophy were taught by Powers and Makeham, and the program also produced a number of Ph.D.s who subsequently made significant contributions to the academic study of Buddhism, including (1) Christian Coseru (Ph.D. 2004), whose dissertation focused on perception in the thought of Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla (Coseru 2004).[3] Currently a Professor at College of Charleston, Coseru has become a leading figure internationally in cross-cultural philosophical studies; (2) Royce Wiles (Ph.D. 2000), who mainly specializes in Jaina literature but who has also published articles in Buddhist philosophy and who teaches courses on Buddhism at Nan Tien Institute (NTI) in Wollongong, New South Wales; (3) Ruth Gamble (Ph.D. 2013), whose thesis (Gamble 2013) focused on the life and literary works of the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje (Rang byung rdo rje, 1284–1339); a revised version has been published by Oxford University Press (Gamble 2018); and (4) Pamela Lyon (Ph.D. 2006), whose thesis on cognition (Lyon 2006a) won ANU's Crawford Medal, awarded for the best dissertation in a given year (Lyon 2006a). It began with an exploration of the conceptual implications of the "four seals" (*caturmudrā*) in Buddhism and evolved into a groundbreaking study in philosophy of biology. Since completing her graduate studies, she has expanded her research on cognition within the general discipline of philosophy of biology and has published nine articles in the field, including Lyon (2006b), Lyon (2007), and Lyon (in press).

The Faculty of Asian Studies was amalgamated into the College of Asia and the Pacific in 2010. Following a restructuring in 2016, Powers left ANU to take up an appointment as a Research Professor in the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation at Deakin University in Geelong, Victoria, and Makeham became Director of LaTrobe University's China Program, which is based at its campus in the Bundoora suburb of Melbourne. Their departure marked the end of Buddhist Studies in the College of Asia and the Pacific, and at present the College has no academics with expertise in the field nor does it offer courses in Buddhism.

ANU still retains the largest collection of Asia-related works in the Southern Hemisphere despite major cutbacks in staffing for Asian Studies. The combined Asia holdings of the National Library and ANU's libraries (predominantly the Menzies Library, which contains the bulk of ANU's Asia collection) are estimated to comprise 82 percent of the total for Asian Studies in Australia. The collection is particularly strong in Indic languages, Tibetan, Chinese, Pāli, and Japanese, and it also has large holdings in Burmese, Mongolian, Sinhala, and Thai.

The National Library of Australia is home to the Australian Buddhist Library's collection. The Buddhist Library was founded in 1984 by a grant from Cantonese businessman Eric Liao (d. 2004). It comprises more than three thousand works in a wide range of languages, including Mahāyāna and Theravāda canonical collections in Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan. The Buddhist Library's books were donated to the National Library in 1988, and they augmented already substantial Asia holdings. With the demise of Buddhist Studies in ANU's College of Asia and the Pacific, there were no academics employed by the university with the linguistic expertise to make use of Canberra's Buddhism holdings, but they remain the most substantial resource for researchers in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere.

The study of Buddhist philosophy at ANU continues today in the College of Arts and Social Sciences following the appointment of Bronwyn Finnigan and Koji Tanaka in 2012. Finnigan is a Senior Lecturer who specializes in Buddhist ethics, and she teaches seminars on Buddhist philosophy, ethics, and social and political philosophy. Finnigan's research also examines issues in epistemology and philosophy of mind as well as conceptual linkages between Asian and Western philosophical traditions. Tanaka holds a Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) from the Australian Research Council (ARC). This is mainly a research position, the focus of which is Buddhist logic in India and China. His research interests include philosophy of language, metaphysics, and philosophy of artificial intelligence.

Deakin University (Geelong and Burwood, Victoria) has maintained a program in Buddhist philosophy for decades, initially under the leadership of Max Charlesworth, who was Chair of Deakin's History of Ideas and Religious Studies Departments from 1974–1975; he was appointed Foundation Dean of the Humanities in 1975. Purushottama Bilimoria was hired as a Lecturer in 1980. He taught comparative courses on Buddhism and Vedānta. Bilimoria retains a position as Honorary Associate Professor of Philosophy at Deakin and is a Senior Fellow at the University of Melbourne, but currently he is mainly based at University of California, Berkeley, where he is a Visiting Professor. One of Bilimoria's most significant contributions to Buddhist philosophy internationally is his editorship of *Sophia*, one of the leading venues for cross-cultural philosophical research. The journal was founded by Max Charlesworth in 1962 with the aim of advancing discussion between the disciplines of philosophy and religious studies. Under Bilimoria's leadership, *Sophia* became the leading journal in Australia for cross-cultural philosophy. Bilimoria has also recently published a comprehensive edited collection of articles on the history of Indian philosophy by sixty-eight academics (Bilimoria 2018).

Peter Fenner, a specialist in Madhyamaka philosophy and a monk in the Gelukpa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, was a Senior Lecturer at Deakin from 1984 to 2005. Fenner taught courses on "Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti" and "Self and its Destiny in Buddhism." He also supervised doctoral candidates in Buddhist Philosophy, two of whom went on to make contributions to the academic study of Buddhism: (1) Peter Paul Kakol, who published several articles and a comparative study of Madhyamika and process philosophy (2009); and (2) Leesa Davis, who took up an appointment at Deakin as a Lecturer in Philosophy in 2012. Since his retirement from academia, Fenner has worked as a meditation facilitator whose courses focus on therapeutic applications of nondual Buddhist thought (http://wisdom.org/).

When John Powers was appointed as a Research Professor in 2016, he joined a cohort of colleagues who research

and teach on various aspects of Buddhism, including Leesa Davis (Buddhist philosophy, particularly Chan and Zen); Anna Halafoff (sociology of religion); and Gillian Tan (anthropology of Tibet). Since his arrival at Deakin, the School of Arts and Education has instituted a major in Religious Studies (ranked #45 internationally by QS in 2018) and a minor in Buddhist Studies.

Much of Powers's early work on Buddhist philosophy centered on Yogācāra. Powers (1995) was the first English translation of the *Discourse Explaining the Thought* (*Saṃdhinirmocana–sūtra*), the main scriptural source for the tradition. Powers (1993) explored the *sūtra*'s interpretation theory in cross-cultural philosophical perspective, and Powers (1992a) included translations and studies of two commentaries on the *sūtra* attributed to Asaṅga (fl. fourth century) and Jñānagarbha (c. eighth century). Powers has also published a study of various interpretations of the *sūtra*'s title in India, Tibet, and China (Powers 1992b); a comprehensive overview of the history of scholarship on the text and its commentaries (Powers 2015); and historical studies of Yogācāra thought in India and China (Powers 2011 and 2014).

Powers's appointment is research-only, but he also supervises Honors and PhD students and contributes guest lectures in colleagues' courses on topics relating to Buddhist thought and religion more generally. His work spans a broad range of topics, including Yogācāra, Madhyamaka, propaganda in theory and practice (e.g., Powers 2004), ethics (e.g., Prebish and Powers 2009, Powers 2017c), human rights (e.g., Powers 1998), environmental issues, gender in Buddhism (e.g., Powers 2009 and 2018), and the history of ideas in India, China, and Tibet (e.g., Powers 2017b). Since his appointment at Deakin, he has published a study of the conceptual underpinnings of the Chinese Communist Party's "regime of truth" in its Tibet propaganda (Powers 2017a), and he was the Chief Investigator for a project funded by the ARC, on Dignāga's (c. 480–580) *Investigation of the Percept* (*Ālambana-parīkṣā*) and its commentarial traditions in India, Tibet, and China ("Negotiating Modernity: Buddhism in Tibet and China": DP110102042). The main output was a monograph published by Oxford University Press (Powers 2017d), co-authored with Douglas Duckworth, Jay Garfield, Yeshes Thabkhas, Sonam Thakchöe, and Malcolm David Eckel.

Powers is currently the Chief Investigator for another ARC-funded Discovery Project (DP160100947: "A Buddhist Debate and Contemporary Relevance") that explores a philosophical dispute regarding how the two truths (conventional and ultimate) should be understood. The controversy was initiated by Daktsang Lotsawa's (sTag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen, 1405–1477) charge that Tsongkhapa (Tsong kha pa bLo bzang grags pa, 1357–1419) was guilty of "eighteen great burdens of contradiction" (*'gal khur chen po bco brgyad*) in his presentation of the Madhyamaka system. This project brings together an international team of researchers: Jay Garfield, Sonam Thakchöe, Yeshes Thabkhas, Douglas Duckworth, Khenpo Tashi Tsering, José Cabezón, Thomas Doctor, Jed Forman, and Lobsang Dorjee Rabling.

Leesa Davis is a Lecturer in Philosophy and Religious Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Education whose research interests include Zen, Madhyamaka, Buddhism in the West, and cross-cultural philosophy. Davis was instrumental in re-establishing a Religious Studies Major at Deakin and is the convener of the Buddhist Studies minor. She teaches an annual course on Buddhist philosophy as well as more general philosophy of religion and religious studies offerings that incorporate sections on Buddhist philosophy. She is also the Unit Chair of the Buddhist Studies in India study tour that, in partnership with the Five College Consortium in the USA led by Jay Garfield and the University of Tasmania led by Sonam Thakchöe, annually takes a group of Deakin students for a month-long immersive study of Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, India.

Davis has published a monograph on Advaita Vedānta and Zen Buddhism (2010) that examines the nondual philosophies of Advaita and Zen in the context of the phenomenology of their respective meditative practices. She has also published a number of articles on the connection between Buddhist philosophy and meditative practice and the nondual thought of Eihei Dōgen 永平道元 (1200–1253).

University of Tasmania (UTas) in Hobart, Tasmania, has the only program in an Australian university specifically focused on Buddhist philosophy. It has traditionally emphasized Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka and Yogācāra, as well as how Buddhist thought can contribute to global philosophical debates. The program was initiated by Jay Garfield, who was Professor and Head of the Philosophy Department from 1996 to 1998. One of his Ph.D. students, Sonam Thakchöe, now heads the Buddhist philosophy concentration within the department. While in Australia, Garfield was influential in bringing Asian thought into the mainstream of academia. This included working with colleagues in the US to create an Asian Philosophy stream within the American Philosophical Association. He also collaborated with Graham Priest (formerly Boyce Gibson Chair of Philosophy at Melbourne University and currently Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the City University of New York Graduate Center) on several publications relating to paradox and inconsistency in Buddhist and Western thought.[4] Since then, Garfield has continued to contribute to the field, both in Australia and the US. He has been a Partner Investigator (with John Powers and Sonam Thakchöe) on ARC Discovery projects on Dignāga's *Investigation of the Percept* (DP110102042) and on the philosophical implications of Daktsang Lotsawa's treatise *Freedom from Extremes Accomplished through Knowledge of All Philosophies*[5] and responses to it by Gelukpa, Sakyapa, and Kagyüpa thinkers (DP160100947).

Thakchöe is currently a Senior Lecturer in the UTas Philosophy department in the School of Humanities, where he teaches courses on Asian philosophy generally, along with several offerings on Buddhist thought that cover a wide spectrum of topics, including Abhidharma, Yogācāra, Madhyamaka, ethics, and philosophy of mind. Thakchöe coordinates the UTas Asian Philosophy Program, and he heads the Tasmanian Buddhist Studies in India Exchange

Program, which brings small groups of students from Australia and the US to the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, India, for seminars in Buddhist thought co-taught by Tibetan and Western academics. His main research interest is in Indian and Tibetan philosophy, and most of his publications relate to Madhyamaka ontology, epistemology, and ethics in cross-cultural perspective. He has published four books (three co-authored)[6] and twenty refereed articles. Thakchöe is unusual in Western academia because his background includes training in traditional Tibetan cultural settings and a Ph.D. from UTas (2003). He was a Buddhist monk in India for several years and studied the traditional Gelukpa philosophical curriculum before enrolling in the Central University of Tibetan Studies, where he received his M.A. in 1997. Thakchöe's collaborative work includes contributions to two books with the Cowherds, a shifting international collective of philosophers that has included Jay Garfield, Tom Tillemans, Georges Dreyfus, Bronwyn Finnigan, Guy Newland, Graham Priest, Mark Siderits, Koji Tanaka, and Jan Westerhoff.

LaTrobe University (Melbourne, Victoria) has recently established a small but productive program in Buddhist philosophy under the leadership of John Makeham, who is Chair and Director of the China Studies Research Centre in the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Commerce. Before joining LaTrobe, from 2008–2016 Makeham was Professor of Asian Studies at ANU's College of Asia and the Pacific, where he worked closely with John Powers in developing a program in Buddhist philosophy. From 2013 to 2016, Makeham held a Discovery Outstanding Research Award (DORA), and in 2005 received the Asian Studies Association's highest award for sinology, the Levenson Prize, in recognition of his groundbreaking research in Chinese intellectual history. Makeham was elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities in 2009, and in 2015 he was recognized with the Special Book Award of China. He served as President of the Australasian Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy from 1994 to 1996.

Makeham is an internationally renowned scholar of Confucianism and for the past two decades has expanded the scope of his research, which now includes significant contributions to the study of Buddhism in China. His publications include *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China* (Makeham 2014), a collection of articles by a team of international scholars that explore the previously understudied role of Yogācāra thought in the revival of Buddhism in early twentieth-century China. This was the main output of an ARC Discovery grant in which Makeham and John Powers were the Chief Investigators ("The Indian Roots of Modern Chinese Thought": DP110102042; 2011–2014). Makeham has also published extensively on the appropriation of Buddhist concepts by Chinese philosophers, including Makeham (2015), a study of a treatise by Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885–1968) that synthesizes concepts from Indian Yogācāra and Confucian philosophy.

Ruth Gamble joined LaTrobe as a David Myers Research Fellow in LaTrobe's College of Arts, Social Sciences and Commerce. Her primary interests are in the history, cultures, and religions of Tibet and the Himalayas, as well as current issues relating to the region's environment. Her groundbreaking study of the third Karmapa and the origins of the Tibetan Buddhist system of reincarnating lamas (*sprul sku*) rewrites the history of this institution and analyzes how his commitment to *mahāmudrā* thought influenced his perceptions of the places he visited and the people he met during extensive travels across Tibet and Central Asia (Gamble 2018; Gamble 2011). She argues that previous studies of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy have tended to privilege time over space. By paying attention to the Buddhist concept of abiding (*gnas*), Gamble's analysis combines a sense of time and space, and so develops a nuanced perspective on experienced reality.

Her work also explores how the Buddhist doctrine of interdependence (*rten 'brel*) allows for beliefs about the environment that incorporate not only a nondualistic relationship between humans and their world, but also a densely populated space in which various types of beings co-abide. Furthermore, her work focuses on ethical implications of these ideas—how this multiplicity of interconnected beings who share lived space behave ideally and in reality. This involves examining Buddhist ideals of environmental being and the various often-contradictory ethics of the exercise of power over the environment.

John Jorgensen, one of the world's leading experts on Chan thought in China, Japan, and Korea, is affiliated with the China Studies Research Centre as a Senior Research Associate supported by an ARC Discovery grant that focuses on the influence of the *Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* (大乘起信論 *Dasheng qixin lun*) on New Confucian Philosophy (DP160100671: The *Awakening of Faith* and New Confucian Philosophy).

Nan Tien Institute (NTI) in Wollongong, New South Wales, is an accredited tertiary institution founded in 2011 by the Taiwanese Buddhist organization Fo Guang Shan. It offers programs on Applied Buddhist Studies and Health and Social Wellbeing, as well as chaplaincy courses for Buddhist monastics. Three members of academic staff teach in the Applied Buddhist Studies M.A. course: Royce Wiles, Tamara Ditrich, and Ven. Jue Wei. Wiles specializes in Jaina Prakrit and Sanskrit literature. He teaches an "Introduction to Buddhism" course, which includes modules on philosophy, including Sarvāstivāda *abhidharma*, Madhyamaka, and Yogācāra. Ditrich's main focus is mindfulness and meditation in Sri Lanka and Myanmar, and her interests include ways to integrate Buddhist mindfulness theory into educational settings. She teaches courses that explore the philosophical and practical implications of Theravāda *abhidhamma* texts. Jue Wei is an ordained nun in the Fo Guang Shan lineage who is mainly concerned with "humanistic Buddhism" (人間佛教 *renjian fojiao*) and its implications for Buddhist practice.

Monash University in Melbourne, Victoria is the institutional home of Monima Chadha, a Senior Lecturer and currently Head of Philosophy and Graduate Coordinator of the Philosophy Program. Chadha joined Monash in 2000 as a Lecturer, and in 2007 was promoted to Senior Lecturer. Chadha works on the cross-cultural philosophy of mind; her

current research focuses on the evolution of the theory of mind in Buddhist philosophy, particularly in Abhidharma. Several of her publications deal with issues relating to self and no-self in Buddhism, and this is linked with insights from cognitive sciences. She teaches courses on classical Indian philosophy and contemporary Western philosophy of mind.

University of Western Australia (UWA) in Perth, Western Australia: Michael Levine was, until his retirement in early 2018, a Professor in the School of Humanities, and is now a Senior Honorary Research Fellow. He has published on topics relating to Buddhist philosophy, including a study of the concept of enlightenment (Levine 2003) and a chapter on various conceptions of self in India (Levine 2018). He has an eclectic range of interests that include war and conflict, terrorism, geography, militarization, and the environment. Miri Albahari teaches a Level 3 course entitled "Philosophy East and West" (PHIL 3006), which includes some discussion of Buddhist thought.

Conclusion. Buddhist philosophy in Australian universities has had a complex history of development, decline, and resurgence over the past few decades. At the University of Tasmania, Sonam Thakchöe teaches the only Buddhist Philosophy courses in Australia that are housed in a Philosophy department. The fact that most Buddhist philosophy courses are taught in Religious Studies or Area Studies faculties is indicative of the difficulties involved in situating Buddhist philosophy in mainstream philosophy departments and in teaching so-called "non-Western philosophies" as traditions and systems of philosophical inquiry. This is an issue that is not unique to Australia[7] but, in many ways, it limits the scope and status of Buddhist Philosophy courses in this country.

In the current shifting landscape of Australian academia, in which the humanities in general are threatened by budget cuts, there are some developments that point towards potential growth. The recent departures of John Makeham and John Powers from the Australian National University and the demise of Buddhist Studies at the College of Asia and the Pacific marked at least a temporary end to the field in that part of ANU, but the College of Arts and Social Sciences has instituted a program for the first time. The respective appointments of Makeham and Powers to LaTrobe and Deakin have helped these two Victorian universities to facilitate a resurgence of Buddhist philosophy courses, seminars, research projects, and the accompanying supervision of graduate students. Deakin already had a small but productive cohort of scholars with a diverse array of expertise in Buddhist philosophy, and during the past several years the program has expanded. This in turn has laid a foundation on which to build a more comprehensive and multifaceted Buddhist philosophy major.

NOTES

1. Purushottama Bilimoria (1995) has published a historical overview of the field of Asian and comparative philosophy in Australia.
2. A list of de Jong's publications can be found in *Hokke bunka kenkyü* #14 (1988): 1–63 and #25 (1999); the latter has an index of his published book reviews arranged by author. His complete writings were collected in Schopen (1979); and his collected papers on Tibetology and Central Asian Studies were reprinted in de Jong (1994). David Seyfort Ruegg (2000) published a memorial article on de Jong's life and work in the *Indo-Iranian Journal*, which was founded by de Jong in 1957, and to which he continued to contribute until his death.
3. A revised version was published by Oxford University Press (Coseru 2012).
4. E.g., Garfield and Priest (in press) and Garfield et al. (2015).
5. *Grub mtha' kun shes nas mtha' bral grub pa zhes bya ba'i bstan bcos rnam par bshad pa legs bshad kyi rgya mtsho*.
6. Including Thakchöe (2007) and Cowherds (2011 & 2015).
7. Jay Garfield and Bryan W. Van Norden (2016) address this issue in an opinion piece in "The Stone."

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Buddhist Philosophy, and Eastern Philosophy in General, in Israel and Palestine

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INTRODUCTION

What makes the case of Israel especially interesting for the discussion of Buddhist philosophy as an academic endeavor—apart from its life under the shadow of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the region's tumultuous political context, and apart from the field's overwhelming institutional presence relative to the size of the population—is the fact that from the early- to mid-sixties Eastern philosophy was taken up here not merely in Departments of Religion or Regional Studies, but in *Philosophy Departments* as well. The following is a brief survey of the history of the academic study of Buddhist philosophy in Israel and, as far as I was able to obtain the information, in Palestine (see separate section below). Far from comprehensive, this account attempts to provide a brief institutional history of the roads taken and not taken in the formation of the field, to provide a schematic description of its current state, and to offer some thoughts on its future sustainability.

A few more points about the parameters of this discussion: It refers only to academic research institutions, and only to those that either employ permanent faculty in the field of Buddhist philosophy or else offer more or less regular curricula in Buddhist philosophy or in Eastern philosophy. In other words, I will not touch here on the flourishing scene of non-academic dharma centers or mindfulness programs, nor on the various Engaged Buddhism organizations and groups (though these do sometimes offer courses in Buddhist philosophy, often taught by academics). Another point to consider is that, to date, there is no designated Buddhist Studies program in Israeli academia, and thus that scholars working in the field (often not exclusively but as part of a broader specialization in Indian or Chinese philosophy) come to it from diverse quarters: from Departments of Philosophy, but also from Regional Studies Departments and Religious Studies programs. Here, therefore, I refer to this full range of scholars, and not just to scholars who work exclusively on Buddhist philosophy within Departments of Philosophy; however, I will maintain a differentiation between work whose focus is philosophical (henceforth "Eastern philosophy") and work that stems from other disciplines (henceforth "Eastern thought").

GENERAL BACKGROUND

To date, six of Israel's eight research universities,[1] all of which are public,[2] offer programs and curricula of various scopes in South and East Asian thought. Of these six, however, only the largest two—Tel Aviv University and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem—employ tenured or tenure-track faculty whose specialty is in Asian philosophy (Buddhist philosophy included), and these two institutions will therefore be the main focus of my survey below. In addition, Israel has about thirty colleges (both public and

private) and nineteen teacher-training colleges.[3] Most of these colleges offer either a BA degree or a professional certificate, but several also offer MA degrees in a limited number of fields. Some of these colleges offer courses in Asian and Buddhist philosophy but not at the graduate level (the most prominent of these are listed below).

Some general remarks, for the sake of context, on the structure and character of the higher education system in Israel: The admission of students[4] into Israeli universities is based largely on their scores on high school matriculation exams and on a Psychometric Entrance Test (akin to the American SAT). At age eighteen, there is an obligatory military service for all Israeli citizens (three years for men, two years for women), with the exception of the Arab-Israeli minority and Ultraorthodox Jews (the latter can, however, volunteer for non-military national service), so that most students start their undergraduate degrees in their early twenties or even later. Tuition for public institutions is subsidized and there are stipends for graduate studies, but the majority of students work to support themselves during their studies. The structure of the academic programs follows the Continental European system in some respects (for instance, BA and MA degrees in the humanities are tightly structured in terms of course requirements and language training, PhDs are more inclined toward personal tutoring and independent research) and the American system in others. Another point to consider is that the main language of instruction in Israeli academia is Hebrew, whereas the readings are in English[5] (although in recent years, universities are offering more and more courses in English, catering mostly to international students). English is also the main language in which faculty research and publish their work. There are very few peer-reviewed academic venues in Hebrew and none in the field of Asian philosophy, and while local scholars may publish translation work in Hebrew, or Hebrew monographs for a broader readership, their professional publications are almost always in English-language academic venues abroad. This bilingual state of affairs naturally affects hiring and the profile of possible applicants (I return to this point below). While the number of both students and faculty members (permanent and adjuncts) who deal with Eastern thought is high relative to the size of the student body in Israel, there are few openings for tenure-track positions in these fields, and the competition is fierce. In terms of academic promotion and ranking structure, the universities are closer to the American system than to the Continental or British models, but with some idiosyncrasies.

SOME INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF THE FIELD AND THE MAIN CURRENT ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University receive special emphasis in this part of the survey, not only because they are the only institutions with tenured faculty specializing in Eastern philosophy, as I mentioned earlier, but also because of the special importance of their role in forming and shaping the field and in making sense retrospectively of the evolution of the study of Eastern philosophy in Israel.

The study of Eastern thought and philosophy was taken up informally in Israel in the late 1930s following the arrival of émigrés from among the European and mostly German Jewish intelligentsia. An exemplar of that kind of scholar is Moriz (Moshe) Spitzer (1900–1982),[6] an Indologist known mostly for his work on the so-called "Spitzer manuscript," one of the oldest surviving Sanskrit manuscripts ever found dealing with Buddhist philosophy (he is also known for his role, as editor-in-chief of the Schocken publishing house in Berlin, in publishing an anthology of Kafka's diary entries and short stories in 1934 and Kafka's novels in 1935). Spitzer immigrated to the then British-ruled Palestine in 1939, and while the Hebrew University (founded 1925) was by then well established, there was no academic home for the study of Eastern thought, as the Hebrew University's Oriental Institute focused only on the Middle East. Spitzer became the focal point of a group of scholars and intellectuals who studied and translated from Sanskrit, with classes held in cafés or at his house. There were some attempts during the mid-fifties to create a position for Spitzer of Chair in Sanskrit and Indian Thought at the Hebrew University (with the encouragement of then Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, who took a special interest in Buddhism), but they were unsuccessful.[7] Spitzer continued to work in publishing and became one of the most influential publishers of the new state of Israel.

It was only in the early sixties that Eastern philosophy, including Buddhist philosophy, received an institutionalized home in Israeli academia. Although this institutional embrace occurred at more or less the same time at both the more established Hebrew University and the newly founded Tel Aviv University, in each institution the field was born under a different star, so to speak, and the effects of this difference are felt to this day. Whereas at The Hebrew University Eastern philosophy was introduced within Regional and Religious Studies Departments, where it was approached with a strong philological emphasis (and never gained a foothold in the analytically leaning Philosophy Department), at Tel Aviv University, almost from day one, the focus was philosophical, and the topic was studied in the Department of Philosophy on equal terms with other contemporary philosophical traditions.

At The Hebrew University, in 1962, following the gradual introduction of language training and curricula in Chinese, Japanese, and Indian Studies, the university's School of Oriental Studies changed its name to the "Institute for Asian and African Studies."[8] Between the late sixties and mid-seventies, the return to Israel of several young graduates who had trained abroad, along with several foreign scholars whom the university had successfully attracted, enabled the founding of a number of new academic units, including the Department for Chinese and Japanese Studies, and the Department for Iranian and Armenian Studies (in which Indian Studies and languages were taken up), which were eventually joined together under the auspices of the Department of Asian Studies (dealing with China, Japan, Tibet, India, and Indonesia).

Currently, East and South Asian thought, Buddhist philosophy included, is taught at The Hebrew University in programs of the Department of Asian Studies and the

Department of Comparative Religion. The former now has some 250 undergraduate students and 25 graduate students, and the latter around 50 and 15, respectively. Between these programs, there are about 10 graduate students working in Buddhist and Indian philosophy at the MA and PhD level combined.[9]

The Hebrew University programs have a rich history in teaching Indian, Tibetan, and East Asian thought and culture, but their focus on philosophy has not been very strong (although this year, for the first time, a course is being offered in Indian Buddhist logic). Currently, the university has three faculty members (emeritus,[10] tenure track, post-doc) who deal with Buddhist philosophy and thought, and other permanent faculty (both tenured and emeriti) as well as adjuncts who offer courses—in all levels—in Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Indonesian thought and religion.[11] The Department of Asian Studies offers training in relevant Asian languages such as Sanskrit (11 students this year), classical Chinese (23 students), Japanese (only modern), Korean, Hindi (11), and Indonesian (22 students).[12]

At Tel Aviv University, by contrast, the study of Eastern thought began, as I described above, as a distinctively philosophical project. From its founding in 1957 to the present day, Tel Aviv University's Philosophy Department has offered courses in Chinese and Indian philosophy. Though many individuals have worked to develop and sustain this unique state of affairs through the years, it was initially made possible by the vision of one man, Ben-Ami Scharfstein, one of the founders and the first Chair of the Philosophy Department. Scharfstein, who celebrated his hundredth birthday this year and until a decade ago was still teaching, is a native of Brooklyn, New York, and received his philosophical training at Harvard and then Columbia. He immigrated to Israel in the late fifties after being called there to establish the Philosophy Department at the then newly founded Tel Aviv University, and from the outset he insisted on integrating European and Anglo-Saxon traditions of philosophical inquiry with what first appeared in the curricula as "comparative philosophy" but was later renamed "Eastern Philosophy." And so he writes in a letter from 1964 to the then Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, regarding new hiring in this emerging field:

> It is quite unnecessary to stress the past and contemporary importance of China and of her culture. Of equal importance is Indic culture, in the absence of the study of which, the university must remain incurably provincial. . . . If the department of philosophy will have, at the same time, capable specialists teaching the thought of India, China, Greece, Rome, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Modern Europe, it will perhaps be unique in the world.[13]

In accordance with this vision, carried forth (but not without struggles, within and without the university) by Scharfstein's students who later became department chairs and deans, Tel Aviv University's Philosophy Department embraced a highly pluralistic approach to the discipline (manifested also in a balance between the Anglo-Saxon and Continental traditions), and to this day offers curricula in Chinese and Indian philosophy taught by tenured faculty. During the first two decades or so of the department's life, training in the prerequisite languages (mostly classical Chinese and Sanskrit) was conducted in a rather ad-hoc manner either by resident faculty or temporary hires. The situation was stabilized in 1995 with the founding of the Department of East and South Asian Studies, which focuses on the study of China, Japan, Korea, and India through various disciplines (the Social Sciences, Anthropology, Religious Studies, History—both premodern and contemporary, with a strong emphasis on the history of science—Literary Studies, Art History, and Philosophy).

Currently, courses on Eastern philosophy (including Buddhist philosophy) are offered at Tel Aviv University in both the Philosophy Department and the East and South Asian Department (and sporadically in the graduate program in Religious Studies). Both departments are exceptionally large relative to other university departments in general and even more so relative to other departments in the Faculty of Humanities. The first currently has about 350 undergraduate students and 150 graduate students, and the second around 302 undergraduates and 55 graduates. In both departments combined, there are about 20 graduate students working exclusively on Eastern philosophy, MA- and PhD-level combined.[14]

Both departments employ faculty (permanent and adjunct) who specialize in Eastern philosophy, and there is a high degree of cooperation between them (some have joint appointments, and graduate supervision is often cross-departmental). All curricula on Eastern philosophy are offered to students of both departments (with some selectivity in more advanced courses) and, according to a rough estimate, in the 2017–2018 academic year some 250 students were enrolled in courses in Indian and Chinese philosophy. Training in the relevant Asian languages—Sanskrit, Hindi, Chinese (also classical), Japanese (also classical), and Tibetan (through personal tutorship)—is offered only by the Department of East and South Asian Studies, but is open to philosophy students and counts toward their graduate degree requirements. Enrollment in these language courses is usually high—this year, for instance, the study of Sanskrit boasts over twenty students, both undergraduate and graduate (in all years), and a similar number of students take classical Chinese or Japanese.

Currently, in both departments together there are four tenured faculty (two of whom are emeriti) and four adjuncts working on Buddhist thought and philosophy (but not all exclusively), as well as another four tenured faculty (one of whom is emeriti) and three adjuncts who specialize in non-Buddhist Chinese and Indian philosophy. Three additional tenured or tenure-track faculty members offer courses in Indian thought and religion without a philosophical emphasis.[15]

Apart from The Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University, the remaining four research universities offer either very little or no curricula in Eastern philosophy (though Haifa University in particular has a thriving Asian Studies Department).[16] In the colleges the picture is similar, though Tel Hai College, on the northern border, is noteworthy for

offering a BA in Asian Studies with courses on Chinese philosophy and thought and Japanese Zen.[17] Following the global trend, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and mindfulness are part of the curricula in mainstream academic institutions, mostly in Education Studies Colleges for the training of teachers and therapists, and these curricula are typically accompanied by some teachings on Buddhist thought.[18]

SUMMARY AND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE FIELD

The study of Eastern philosophy and Buddhist philosophy in particular has a significant representation in Israeli academic institutions and is quite well integrated—in the case of Tel Aviv University, uniquely so—into the discipline of philosophy at large (while maintaining productive relations with neighboring disciplines like the study of religion, Indology, Sinology, etc.). Yet its flourishing as an intellectual endeavor and its institutional presence do not vouch for its sustainability, which is a key measure of the health of the field. Among the indicators of such sustainability are student numbers, reliable graduate programs and language training, and, of course, the number of tenured faculty and prospects for the future hiring of tenure-track scholars.

While student numbers are still very high compared to other fields in the humanities, they are not unaffected by the general decrease in enrollment in the humanities: the past couple of years have witnessed a minor but steady decline in student enrollment in programs in Asian Studies. At the same time, local graduate programs produce more students than there are jobs available, and so top-tier MA and PhD students are encouraged to apply for PhD programs and postdoctoral fellowships abroad. In praxis, studying and researching at a top-ranking university in the US or Europe has more or less become a condition for entering a tenure-track position in Israel. Considering the rarity of philosophy departments offering programs in Eastern philosophy in the US or Europe, however, most of the students who earn their PhDs abroad will be graduates of either Religious Studies or Regional Studies Departments. Currently, there is a solid presence of Israeli graduate students studying Eastern thought in major universities in the US as well as in Europe (mostly in the UK and Germany), and many of them seek jobs outside of Israel—for professional, personal, and sometimes ideological reasons. Of those of us who chose and choose to return to Israel, for many the shadow of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the rising anti-democratic and racist tide loom large. The Humanities Faculties at Tel Aviv University and The Hebrew University, as well as in some other institutions, can still be described as strongholds of liberal left-wing thought, and many of their faculty members and students are involved in political protest and human rights activism, but the strongholds are in danger of becoming islands and indeed of sinking under the deluge of racist and anti-democratic legislation promoted by the current government. Cooperation with our Palestinian colleagues takes place largely in the context of political activism,[19] with academic cooperation still rather rare.

As for course offerings, while these remain rich and extensive, courses in the relevant research languages are always under the threat of being cut. Finally, regarding the question of sustainability with respect to faculty and future hiring in the field—while there is a large body of scholars whose expertise is in Eastern philosophy most are still in adjunct positions, and future hiring is uncertain, as is the replacement of retiree positions. For instance, in recent years two retiree positions in Indian and Chinese philosophy at Tel Aviv University's Department of East and South Asian Studies and the Philosophy Department, respectively, have to date not been replaced.

To a certain extent, in all these respects the field of Buddhist philosophy is just experiencing the same kind of strain affecting other fields in the humanities. Nonetheless, the possibilities that this field, as practiced in Israel, offers of engaging in Eastern philosophy within the discipline of philosophy itself is something still unique, both in the region and globally. As university policymakers at all levels, in Israel as well as in other countries, appear to embrace the fashionable motto that the twenty-first century is the "Asian Century," the Israeli case offers a reminder of the importance of engaging, on an equal footing with Anglo-Saxon and Continental philosophical traditions, also with Eastern philosophy, without which, as Scharfstein observed already in the early sixties, we are to remain incurably provincial.

THE STATE OF THE FIELD IN PALESTINE

Palestine—here referring to the territories under the control of the Palestinian National Authority, Gaza under the Hamas government, and the occupied territories under Israeli control, including East Jerusalem—has about seventeen universities and twenty university colleges, and about nineteen middle colleges, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees and various professional academic certifications.[20] Not all of these institutions offer curricula in the humanities, and none, as far as I have found, offer classes or employ faculty engaging in Asian or Buddhist philosophy.[21] The reasons for this lacuna are multiple and intricate, and doing them justice is beyond the scope of this brief survey; nevertheless, a major factor is plainly the chronic strain—political, economic, social, and personal—placed on Palestinian students and faculty by the fact of living under military occupation.

In conversations with several faculty members and students in Palestinian universities about what it means for them to operate academically under such conditions, recurring themes included the difficulty of maintaining continuity in academic work in these dire conditions and the eventual tendency towards choosing more "practical" fields of expertise. Few people are better placed to give a firsthand account of this topic than Sari Nusseibeh—a prominent Palestinian public intellectual, political activist, and a moderate involved in various peace negotiations and initiatives, also a former senior official of the Palestinian Authority, and primarily, in this context, a Professor of Philosophy (BA & MA Oxford, PhD Harvard, in Islamic philosophy), currently at Al Quds University and formerly the President of that university for over twenty years (until 2014). The following is his account of the effects of the

Palestinian predicament on the study of philosophy in Palestine. It was given in a personal correspondence from October 2018, and I leave it to conclude this article:

> Unfortunately, philosophy as a subject is not a popular field of study for incoming Palestinian undergraduates. The general sense—if any is articulated—is that it is an aimless set of discussions about issues that have no relevance to practical life; and that will not place one in a good position to apply for a job after graduation. If students enroll in one of the philosophy courses offered then this is most likely done to fill out university requirements, if time and class location seem convenient. Of course, there are exceptions (over the years I taught in Birzeit [University, located in the West Bank near Ramallah], and al-Quds [University, campuses located in East Jerusalem and the West Bank], for example, I've known some 20–30 students who took philosophy either as a minor or a major, and I've had a stream of some 20 students who joined an MA program in "philosophy in Islam" over the past five years).
>
> I think a major hurdle preventing undergraduates from choosing philosophy are the dire living conditions of the students, making them wish to use the university as a ladder to extricate themselves and their families from those conditions. What they look to get as a degree therefore is a ticket for a job. Especially these days, these are hard to find, even with professional degrees (like accounting or IT or medical professions). Often our students end up doing manual jobs in building sites, as porters, etc. This limited job market makes degrees in humanities (philosophy is a prime example) totally uncompetitive—a luxury for the well-to-do, or for another life, the chances to get a job with it almost nil.
>
> On the other hand, philosophy as "a means to expand the mind" runs up against the walls of the Palestinian predicament—that compressed political space where all people could think of is the oppression they live under. Little room is left for a universalist perspective, or mode of thinking. Little room is left for "free thinking." Political philosophy is thought of in terms of land confiscations, uprooting of trees, road-blocks, demolition of houses, permits to move around and to work, army raids, visiting times for family members in jails, and countless similar intrusions into daily lives. So pressing are these quotidian issues that they hardly leave room to theorize philosophically about them.
>
> And if—finally—students or grown-ups feel the need to encase their experiences with a world outlook, they have their religion as a ready back-up. This provides them with whatever spiritual comfort that disciplined philosophical rumination might have helped them with all along.
>
> One last point I think it may be useful to be aware of is that, in line with British Mandatory [i.e. the British rule of the region until 1948] educational heritage, philosophy is not taught at schools (unlike the situation in former French colonies, such as Lebanon or North African Arab countries). So, neither are students aware of the field on applying for a degree; nor, if they come to be aware, do they list it as one they might get a school teaching job in once they graduate.
>
> Nonetheless, having taught all kinds of intro courses in philosophy, I found that students could be "captured" by the field. I am still hopeful, therefore, that philosophy has a future here. Perhaps changed political and economic circumstances will help. Also, a commitment in general educational policy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Mr. Ofer Tzemach, Director of the Hebrew University archive, and Mr. Gdalya Zagov, Director of the Tel Aviv University archive, for allowing me to look into the files in their care. For their support of this undertaking I thank Professor Leo Corry, Dean of the Faculty of the Humanities at TAU and Professor Aviad Kleinberg, Head of the Yavetz School of Historical Studies at TAU. And foremost, my thanks go to Ms. Abigail Penn, for her invaluable help in collating the materials for this study.

NOTES

1. These are: Bar-Ilan University; Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; The Open University of Israel; Tel Aviv University; and The University of Haifa. This list excludes The Technion—Israel Institute of Technology; and The Weizmann Institute of Science, which do not offer degrees in the Humanities. As for Ariel University, which is located in the Israeli settlement of Ariel in the West Bank, regretfully, in 2018 the current Israeli right-wing government passed legislation placing the university (and two other colleges in the West Bank) under the direct authority of Israel's higher education establishment. Since Ariel University, however, operates in the occupied territories, which were never officially annexed to Israel and are currently under military rule—as reflected, for instance, in the fact that the university is not acknowledged by grant agencies such as the European Research Council (ERC) and the US-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF)—in this paper the university (which as it happens does not offer any curricula in Eastern thought) will be considered among higher education institutions in Palestine.
2. Recently, the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzeliya, a private college which however offers some graduate degrees in specialized (mostly professional) fields, received greater autonomy from the Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) in constructing and granting graduate degrees, and is perhaps on its way to become the first private university in Israel.
3. Data is based on the Israeli Council for Higher Education's website: https://che.org.il/ (accessed December 2, 2018). Here I have not included colleges—three in my counting—in the occupied territories.
4. According to the Israeli Council for Higher Education, in the academic year 2015–2016 there were 309,870 students in all academic degrees. See https://che.org.il/en/statistical-data/ (accessed October 2, 2018). In this paper, by "students" I refer to all students who are Israeli citizens, including Israeli Arabs, i.e., Palestinians who hold Israeli citizenship and live within the territories of the state of Israel. According to the data published by the Israeli Council of Higher education (see https://che.org.il/יברעה-הרבחל-ההובגה-הלכשהה-תשגנה-תכפהמ/), the percentage of Arab Israeli students in the entire body of students has doubled over the last decade, and stood at 17% of all undergraduates, 14% of MA students, and 6.7% of PhD students in Israel in the academic year 2017–2018. While the numbers are growing, the total number of Arab Israeli students (48,627) relative to their

portion of the overall population is still much lower than the percentage of non-Arab Israeli students.

5. In most programs, the completion of any graduate degree in the humanities requires, as a pre-requisite, proficiency in at least one European language and/or in other relevant research languages, in addition to English.

6. For an account of Spitzer's life and an appraisal of his work in the field of Buddhist Studies, see Eli Franco, *The Spitzer Manuscript: The Oldest Philosophical Manuscript in Sanskrit, Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens*; Nr. 043. (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004), vii–xii.

7. See personal correspondence and Diaries of David Ben-Gurion at the Ben-Gurion Archive (http://bg-idea.bgu.ac.il/ideaweb/idea.asp?lang=ENG&site=ideaalm), the Ben-Gurion Research Institute, Ben-Gurion University at the Negev, (26.5.1957, item id.130297); (May 1957 item id. 130308); (28.8.1960, item Id. 217557), etc.

8. Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Publications, 3, 16–19, 1963 (Archive of the Hebrew University, file no. 222); letter from Uriel Heyd, Head of the Oriental Institute to Joshua Prawer, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, May 3, 1962, (Archive of the Hebrew University, file no. 222).

9. Data is for the academic year of 2018–2019 as provided by the department of Asian Studies, The Hebrew University.

10. Emeriti who are mentioned here are active in teaching, supervision, and research.

11. Dr. Eviatar Shulman works on Madhyamaka and early Buddhist philosophical and meditative traditions. Shulman replaced Prof. Yael Bentor (emeritus), an expert in Tibetan Buddhism, mainly of Vajrayana traditions. Other permanent faculty members who offer courses in Indian thought and religion are Prof. David Shulman (emeritus), Prof. Yigal Bronner, and Dr. Yohanan Grinshpon (emeritus). Prof. Yuri Pines teaches Chinese intellectual history. Adjunct professors include Prof. Andrew H. Plaks, who is an expert in Chinese ancient thought and Chinese and Japanese literature, and Dr. Dimitry Shevchenko, who teaches Indian philosophy. Other BA-level courses in broader fields of Indian thought and religion are taught by a number of PhD and postdoctoral students.

12. Data is for the academic year of 2018–2019 as provided by the Department of Asian Studies, The Hebrew University.

13. Correspondence from Ben-Ami Scharfstein, Head of the Philosophy Department to Zvi Yavetz, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, August 23, 1964, (Archive of Tel Aviv University, 73.65-2/4).

14. If not otherwise indicated, all data is for the 2018–2019 academic year, as provided by the Department of South and East Asian Studies and the Department of Philosophy, Tel Aviv University.

15. Tenured faculty currently working on Buddhist thought (but not exclusively) within both departments include: Prof. Yaakov Raz (emeritus), who works on Japanese Zen; Prof. Shlomo Biderman (emeritus), who works on Buddhist and Brahmanical Indian philosophy; Prof. Meir Shahar, who works on Buddhist religion in China (but not with a philosophical focus); and myself, working on Yogācāra Buddhism and Indian philosophy. Adjunct professors in both departments who work specifically on Buddhist thought include: Dr. Keren Arbel (early Pāli Buddhism), Dr. Michal Astrog Barnea (early Buddhism and psychoanalytical theory), Dr. Eitan Bolokan (Japenese Zen), and Dr. Erez Joskovich (Chinese Chan and premodern Japanese Buddhism). Tenured faculty who specialize in non-Buddhist Indian and Chinese philosophy include: Prof. Yoav Ariel (emeritus), Prof. Galia Pat-Shamir, and Prof. Zhang Ping, who teach Confucianism and Daoism; and Prof. Daniel Raveh, who works on Indian Yoga and Vedānta and contemporary Indian philosophers. Adjunct professors who work in other areas of Eastern thought are: Dr. Tzakhi Freedman, who works on the Upaniṣads; Dr. Rafi Peled, on Vedic thought; Dr. Dmitry Shevchenko, who teaches contemporary Indian philosophy; and Mr. Dor Miller, working on contemporary Indian philosophy. Other tenured or tenure-track faculty members who offer courses in Indian thought and religion without a philosophical emphasis are: Dr. Ehud Halperin (contemporary Hinduism), Dr. Ronie Parciack (early modern and contemporary Indian Islam), and Dr. Ilanit Loewy Shacham (Telegu and Sanskrit literature). This list does not include language instructors and teaching assistants.

16. The main focus of Haifa University's Asian Studies Department is on modern and contemporary Asia, and apart from several courses on Indian religion, it offers no courses on the topic. Bar-Ilan University offers a cluster of courses on East and South Asia in its multidisciplinary program for undergraduates, and also Chinese, Japanese, and Korean languages (all taught by non-tenured faculty). The Philosophy Department at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev offers one course in Buddhist philosophy (taught by adjunct faculty). The Open University offers a few courses on Indian and Chinese pre-modern thought (taught by faculty from other universities), and plans to expand the curricula.

17. Apart from Tel-Hai College, Tzfat College offers courses in Indian philosophy taught by Dr. Itamar Theodor.

18. Noted for its rigorous engagement with the topic is the Sagol Center for Brain and Mind at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya, a neuroscience research center focusing on interventions such as mindfulness which employs scholars specializing in Buddhist thought and offers some courses in Buddhist philosophy.

19. This is done, for instance, by organizations and NGOs such as Ta'ayush (Arabic for "living together"), a grassroots joint movement of Palestinians and Israelis working toward Arab-Jewish partnership, in which many academics (but not just) take an active part. Noted among them is the Indologist David Shulman, an emeritus Professor of The Hebrew University and long-time and devoted activist, who in 2016 received the prestigious Israel Prize (for his research into languages and culture of South India) and donated the award money to Ta'ayush.

20. A full list of Palestinian institutions of higher education can be viewed (but only in Arabic) on the official website of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education of the Palestinian National Authority: https://www.mohe.pna.ps/Higher-Education/Institutions/Universities. The Ministry's higher-education strategy plan (as of 2010), can be viewed here: https://www.mohe.pna.ps/Resources/Docs/StrategyEn.pdf.

    Most Palestinian universities are public, some are governmental, like Al-Aqsa and Al-Quds Open University, and a few are private, like the American University of Jenin. In contrast to these institutions, which are under the management and governance of the Palestinians, Ariel University and two other colleges located in Jewish settlements in the West Bank are under the jurisdiction of either the Israeli Council for Higher Education or the military governor of the West Bank. None of these offer any curricula in Eastern thought.

21. That said, there is a growing presence of activist groups—of both Israelis and Palestinians—inspired by or engaging in Buddhist thought and practice.

Buddhist Philosophy in the Kathmandu Valley

Karin Meyers

KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES AT RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

The Kathmandu Valley has a long history as a thriving center and crossroads for the intercultural study of Buddhist texts and languages. In addition to its own Buddhist scholastic, literary, artistic, and architectural traditions, it served historically as a major destination for Tibetans seeking Buddhist wisdom and Indian Buddhist scholars seeking patronage and refuge. Today the valley is home to the only surviving tradition of South Asian Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhism (Newar Buddhism), a major revival of Theravāda Buddhism, and one of the largest concentrations of Tibetan Buddhist learning and culture anywhere in the world—to which the recent Tibetan diaspora and Nepal's historically Himalayan Buddhist cultures contribute. Kathmandu has also played a central role in the modern discovery

and preservation of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts (as well as manuscripts in other South Asian languages and Tibetan) critical to the modern academic study of Buddhist philosophy.[1]

There is much of interest in the greater Kathmandu area and Nepal for scholars of Buddhist philosophy (see Appendix), but the focus of this bulletin will be Kathmandu University Centre for Buddhist Studies at Rangjung Yeshe Institute (https://www.ryi.org), commonly referred to as "RYI." RYI, which celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 2017, is the only educational institution in the area with accredited degree programs in Buddhist Studies specifically designed for international students. It is also the institution with which I am most familiar, having taught there for seven years (2011–2018) and having served as director of its masters program in Buddhist Studies from 2013–2018.[2]

RYI is located on the grounds of Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery (KNSL) in the Kathmandu neighborhood of Boudhanath. The original inspiration for the institute was Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche's (abbot of KNSL) wish to offer an education in Buddhist philosophy to his international Dharma students. After a few years of non-degree courses, the Centre for Buddhist Studies was established in 2001 in partnership with Kathmandu University (http://www.ku.edu.np) as an accredited academic program offering a BA degree in "Buddhist Studies with Himalayan Language" under two areas of concentration: Buddhist Philosophy, History, and Culture; and Himalayan Language. Language offerings include classical and colloquial Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Nepali. Since 2006, RYI has also offered an MA degree in "Buddhist Studies," and a number of graduates from its BA and MA programs have continued their studies in graduate programs in the US and Europe (University of California at Berkeley, Emory University, Harvard University, University of Hamburg, and Charles University in Prague). In 2013, RYI also launched a research PhD program, and in 2014, a second MA program in "Translation, Textual Interpretation, and Philology."

In addition to its core academic programs, RYI regularly hosts study-abroad students. It has full-scale exchange programs with Boston College and Oregon State University, formal cooperation agreements with nine other universities in the US and Europe, and has had academic credits accepted at a dozen more. RYI also hosts graduate students engaged in research or language training (including Fulbright Scholars and FLAS recipients) and regularly welcomes international scholars as visiting professors or guest lecturers.[3] Formerly the institute shared classroom and office space with KNSL, but since fall of 2017 it has been housed in its own building on the monastery grounds. The newly built library houses the most extensive collection of English language works on Buddhist philosophy in Nepal, and has some electronic subscriptions to journals.[4]

RYI may be best known internationally for its language training, including its eight-week summer language intensives in colloquial and classical Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Nepali. In the summer of 2018 RYI launched a new summer language intensive, Advanced Classical Tibetan Reading, which is a graduate-level seminar (also open to BA students with sufficient language skills) focused on a specific Tibetan thinker or genre. The aim of the seminar is to foster connections between junior scholars and to provide them the opportunity to work with experts outside of their home universities. In 2018, Yaroslav Komarovski (University of Nebraska) taught a four-week seminar on the Tibetan thinker Shakya Choken; and Klaus Dieter-Mathes (University of Vienna) four-weeks on Saraha's *dohas* and their Tibetan commentaries. Other RYI summer courses include an introduction to Buddhism with sections taught by modern academic and Tibetan monastic scholars, and a two-week meditation retreat. In addition to its core degree and summer programs, RYI also offers a one-year certificate in Buddhist Studies for high school graduates; language and subject area preparation for prospective graduate students; and oral interpretation of Buddhist teachings transmitted in Tibetan.

Given its location, multicultural constitution, and conception, RYI provides a unique context for the study of Buddhist philosophy. The remainder of this article will focus on how this context informs study in the BA and MA degree programs in particular, although visiting students and scholars certainly benefit from this as well.

As indicated above, the Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery (KNSL) campus on which RYI is located is a few minutes' walk from the historic Boudhanath Stupa. The stupa is associated with the eighth-century Indian Siddha, Padmasambhava ("Guru Rinpoche"), the establishment of Vajrayāna Buddhism in Tibet, and the flourishing of Vajrayāna Buddhism in Nepal. Today it serves as a major focus of local and international Buddhist pilgrimage. The surrounding neighborhood is home to a great many Tibetan Buddhist temples and monasteries, ritual crafters and suppliers, Buddhist (Tibetan and English language) bookstores, and other Buddhist educational institutions (see the Appendix), as well as restaurants and guest-houses catering to pilgrims and tourists.

KNSL is rooted in Nyingma Tibetan Buddhist ritual cycles and monastic curriculum, but also has strong roots in the Karma Kagyu lineage.[5] Most of the monks hail from the Tibet-Burman speaking language communities of Nepal, with some (including KNSL leadership) from Tibetan refugee families resettled in Nepal. Under the aegis of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, teachings and ceremonies at KNLS also attract a variety of non-Tibetan local groups (especially Newari and Tamang) and international students. For many years Rinpoche has hosted "Saturday Dharma Talks" and a ten-day "Fall Seminar" on exoteric and esoteric teachings for international students.

The cultural diversity of Rinpoche's students is also reflected in RYI's student body. Students hail from the Americas, Eastern and Western Europe, South Asia, and East Asia as well as from Nepal, Bhutan, and Tibet—from thirty-five different countries in total this year. Most students are cultural or convert Buddhists. Most are lay, but there is a consistent presence of monastics as well—from Tibetan as well as from Theravāda and East Asian Mahāyāna traditions. There are also always a number of students who are not Buddhist but who are drawn to the study of Buddhism

or Himalayan languages, study in Nepal, or comparative theology.[6] Most of the students in the BA program are in their mid- to late twenties, but ages range from traditional college age to seventy years old. The friendships that develop between students from such diverse cultural backgrounds and life experience—combined with a constant flow (and occasional flood) of Buddhist teachings and activities at KNSL and in surrounding areas, as well as class field trips to local Buddhist pilgrimage sites and the site of the Buddha's enlightenment in Bodhgaya, India—create many informal opportunities to learn about and discuss Buddhist philosophy and practice from a variety of perspectives.

RYI's formal academic programs self-consciously explore and evaluate these perspectives. Students have a fair degree of autonomy in deciding which languages to study and to what level of expertise, and whether to concentrate on language, philosophy, or history and culture, but the basic curriculum for the BA program is divided into three areas: language study, courses taught by the monastic faculty, and courses taught by faculty trained in modern academic universities. Each of these areas informs the study of Buddhist philosophy at RYI and distinguishes it from study at other institutions.

In regard to language training, all students (except those who are already proficient) are required to take a semester of Nepali. They learn the Devanāgarī alphabet (shared with Sanskrit) and practical conversation. Although courses with the monastic faculty are taught in Tibetan and translated into English, most students also study both colloquial and classical Tibetan. Students with advanced language skills have the option to take courses taught exclusively in Tibetan, and may also petition to join the regular KNSL courses for monastics.[7] Some students, particularly those serious about the historical study of Buddhist philosophy, also take Sanskrit. RYI is fortunate to have a world-class, traditionally trained Sanskrit scholar (Kashinath Nyaupane) on its faculty as well as scholars trained in modern analytic approaches. Traditional modes of study place greater emphasis on oral recitation and memorization such that students gain a more intuitive feel for the language than with the modern analytic approach, while the latter is (arguably) more expedient in conveying grammatical structure. With both methods as their foundation, advanced students are able to take advantage of reading courses taught almost entirely in Sanskrit. However, even students who do not advance to such levels of proficiency in Tibetan or Sanskrit become immersed in the vocabulary, categories, and concepts of Buddhist philosophy in a way not possible in modern Western universities at the undergraduate level (or often at the graduate level). Although a good portion of this fluency comes from studying the history of Buddhist ideas (and comparing and contrasting this to the history of Western ideas) with faculty trained in Western universities, the lion's share comes from courses with the monastic faculty.

RYI's monastic-led courses are taught by graduates of KNSL ("*khenpos*" [*mkhan po*] and "*lopons*" [*slob dpon*], whose monastic degrees are roughly equivalent to a PhD and ABD, respectively), and based on the KNSL program of study (minus courses on the monastic rule and esoteric Buddhism, which require special religious precepts). The style of education at KNSL is similar to that at other Nyingma monasteries, which place a heavy emphasis on commentary.[8] Classical Indian treatises are introduced with oral exegesis by the *khenpo* or *lopon* based on a variety of Tibetan commentarial perspectives—with particular emphasis on the commentaries by Mipham (Jamyang Namgyal Gyamtso, 1846–1912), who is largely responsible for establishing the modern form and content of Nyingma scholasticism.[9] Oral commentary is often punctuated by discussion and debate—although this, together with choice of commentarial perspective, is generally left to the discretion of the *khenpo* or *lopon*. Mipham's views typically shape a foundational understanding, but monastic teachers emphasize a variety of commentarial perspectives and/or offer their own analysis and encourage students to do the same. In addition to classroom study, KNSL monks memorize large portions of primary texts, examine key philosophical topics in formalized debate, and are encouraged to engage in self-study of commentaries.

Because RYI students are taught by graduates of KNSL, they are immersed in this same style of education, but typically do not learn the specialized vocabulary required for formal debate, and are only required to memorize shorter portions of the primary texts. In addition to discussion and debate in class with the *khenpos* or *lopons*, they have discussion sections with assistant teacher-translators and write analytical and reflective essays. In their first year of study, BA students gain a foundation in Buddhist thought by studying Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (*Way of the Bodhisattva*), which provides an overview of the Mahāyāna path, inclusive of ethics, mental cultivation (meditation), and the view of emptiness. Subsequent courses are based on a rotation of texts from the KNSL curriculum, including three of the five Maitreya treatises (*Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* [*Distinguishing Phenomena from their Intrinsic Nature*], *Madhyāntavibhāga* [*Distinguishing the Middle From the Extremes*], and *Ratnagotravibhāga* or *Uttaratantra-śāstra* [*Treatise on Buddha Nature*]); Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* (*Verses on the Middle Way*) and *Suhṛllekha* (*Letter to a Friend*); and Candrakīrti's *Madhyāmakāvatāra* (*Entrance to the Middle Way*). Generally speaking, these courses elaborate on the view of emptiness from Yogācāra and Madhyamaka perspectives, while also speaking to the path elements of ethics and mental cultivation. There is also a course on the Abhidharma based on Mipham's *Gateway to Scholarship* (*Mkhas pa'i tshul la 'jug pa'i sgo*), which provides detailed analysis of the basic concepts and vocabulary of Buddhist thought.

BA students with advanced Tibetan skills also often opt to follow a class taught exclusively in Tibetan on Patrul Rinpoche's much beloved *Words of My Perfect Teacher* (*Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*), which focuses on principles of practice in the context of both exoteric and esoteric Buddhism. In addition to the above texts, MA students typically study philosophical works by Mipham Rinpoche such as the *Beacon of Certainty* (*Nges shes sgron me*), which concerns the Dzogchen view in light of Madhyamaka and Buddhist epistemology, and his *Commentary on the Wisdom Chapter of the Bodhisattva Way* (*Spyod 'jug sher 'grel ke ta ka*), which elaborates on the ninth chapter of

Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*; another Maitreya treatise, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* (*Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sūtras*); Śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamkālaṃkāra* (*Ornament of the Middle Way*); and Gampopa's *Jewel Ornament of Liberation: The Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Noble Teachings* (*Dam chos yid bshin gyi nor bu thar pa rin po che'i rgyan*), another path text. As in the BA program, the selection of texts for the MA program focuses primarily on refining philosophical understanding of the view of emptiness, while also elaborating on the larger context of practice in which that view is realized. In recent years, MA students have also studied Tibetan works concerning theories of mind and cognition (*blo rigs*) and Buddhist epistemology (*mtshad pa* or *pramāṇa*).

Readers familiar with categorizations of the schools of Indian Buddhist philosophy will note that this curriculum reflects a fairly strong emphasis on Yogācāra (and Buddha Nature)[10] texts in addition to Madhyamaka texts. Indeed, Mipham's thought can be understood as a synthesis of these schools that emphasizes their complementarity as well as their relation to his own esoteric Dzogchen perspective. Although Mipham agrees with most other Tibetan Buddhist scholars in taking Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka to represent the highest exoteric view, his synthetic hermeneutic provides a rather different perspective on the Indian materials than is found, for example, in the Gelug school. The Gelug school's interpretation of Madhyamaka and more exclusive focus on Candrakīrti's interpretation has been more widely studied in the West and, as a result, is often reflected in contemporary philosophical interpretations of the Indian materials. Arguably, one of RYI's central contributions to the study of Buddhist philosophy worldwide is precisely the synthetic spirit of Mipham's hermeneutic.[11] At an institutional level, this is not only reflected in the integration of Yogācāra and Buddha Nature materials into the curriculum as complementary to (rather than contentious with) Madhyamaka, but also in the framing of intellectual study and Buddhist practice in terms of course content and the institutional ethos, and in RYI's unique synthesis of traditional monastic and modern academic approaches to the study of Buddhist philosophy.

In regard to the relationship of intellectual study to Buddhist practice, study with the KNSL monastic faculty together with periodic teachings by Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche and other lamas affiliated with KNSL, as well as exposure to a variety of other Buddhist teachers,[12] provides RYI students with a deep understanding of what Buddhist philosophy looks like in a cultural context imbued with a Buddhist worldview and focused on ritual practice. For the RYI's monastic teachers and lamas, the texts that form the basis of the curriculum do not present one among several viable philosophical perspectives on how things are or how to live, or merely mark critical junctures in the historical study of ideas as core philosophical works might for a philosophy major in an American or European university. Instead, they form a world and recommend a way to live in it. Regardless of whether they share this worldview, RYI students are profoundly affected by exposure to it and inevitably called to examine their own core ontological, epistemological, and ethical commitments as a result. Given the existential stakes claimed by the Buddhist perspective, I think it is fair to say that RYI students are likely engaged in this questioning at a deeper and more transformative level than students who study philosophy (Buddhist or otherwise) in the more compartmentalized manner of a modern Western university.[13] From their immersion in the Tibetan tradition, RYI students graduate with a rich internal interlocutor in the voice of the tradition, broad (and often deep) knowledge of the Buddhist philosophical tradition, and facility with the conceptual and linguistic tools required for advanced study.

Although language training, immersion in Buddhist culture, and the monastic curriculum are the more obvious elements that distinguish study of Buddhist philosophy at RYI from study in other university programs, courses with faculty trained in modern academic methods of inquiry provide a critical framework for the organization and evaluation of knowledge and understanding. In their first year, alongside their study of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, BA students are required to take a year-long course in Buddhist history. This provides an overview of the history and traditions of Buddhism in Asia and introduces core academic skills. In the following year, they take "Fundamentals of Buddhist Philosophy," which complements the monastic-led curriculum by emphasizing the historical development of core Buddhist ideas (e.g., not-self, dependent origination, dharma theory, path theory) from the perspectives of non-Mahāyāna textual traditions and schools (e.g., Nikāyas/Āgamas, Theravāda and Sanskrit Abhidharma, and Pudgalavāda) as well as from a variety of contemporary methodological approaches (e.g., meditative praxis, historical-philological, and philosophical).[14] This introduces students to a variety of approaches to studying Buddhist philosophical texts and lays the foundations for elective upper-level courses in Mahāyāna philosophy (including Yogācāra, Madhyamaka, and Buddha Nature), Buddhist Ethics, Buddhist Epistemology, and Indian Philosophy. These courses employ a similar strategy of complementing the monastic curriculum by highlighting method and contemporary philosophical interpretations as well as the historical development of ideas.

Second-year BA students are also required to take "Methodology of Buddhist Studies," which introduces a variety of additional methodological perspectives deployed in the modern academic study of Buddhism (e.g., religious studies theory and method, historical, Buddhist modernist, feminist, anthropological, archeological), and involves a sustained examination of how the modern academic study of Buddhism compares to traditional Tibetan monastic study.[15] Although this course is not part of their core training in Buddhist philosophy, it provides students with conceptual tools to think critically about the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and the context in which they are studying, as well as about the assumptions and categories (e.g., "philosophy" and "religion") that inform modern academic study of Buddhism. Given that classes are typically composed of a combination of lay and monastic, culturally Buddhist, convert Buddhist, and non-Buddhist students, discussion tends to be thoughtful, lively, and even contentious at times, but always valuable. One of the consistent themes of this course (and, really, all courses at RYI) is how the historical-critical method and historical consciousness that informs modern academic

perspectives compares to the ways in which Buddhists view their own history.[16] Arguably, this course and others like it rooted in the historical and comparative cultural perspectives of religious studies afford RYI students a more critical and nuanced meta-philosophical perspective than in most university philosophy departments.[17] In addition to the philosophy courses described above and the required methodology course, BA students may choose from elective courses including Religions of Nepal, Anthropology of Nepalese Religions, Buddhist Meditation, Tibetan History, and special-topics courses based on the expertise and interests of permanent and visiting faculty (in the past these have included courses such as Buddhism and Development, Buddhism and Film, Comparative Religions, and Tibetan History). The MA curriculum reflects a similar synthesis of study in monastic-led courses and modern academic methods, with the addition of several courses focused on research methods and thesis writing.

Given the context and various perspectives outlined above, RYI students—both at the BA and MA level—cannot help but notice that Buddhists have not carved up the world in the same ways as we have in the West or in the modern academy. This often becomes a central point of inquiry for MA theses focused on topics in Buddhist philosophy. These theses are usually deeply embedded in Tibetan exegetical traditions but also examine these traditions in light of Buddhist soteriological concerns and/or critiques of previous academic studies informed by categories and concerns alien to Buddhist thought. Because I think this illustrates well something of the ethos of RYI and its contributions to the academic study of Buddhist philosophy worldwide, I close by mentioning a few themes explored in recent MA theses. These have included inquiry into the devotional and pedagogical context in which the view of emptiness is transmitted; how soteriology has remained at the heart of philosophical interpretations of dependent origination despite shifting understandings of what it entails; how distinctive conceptions of non-duality have informed Nyingma polemics and doxography; how yogic practice informs Buddhist epistemology and vice versa; how distinctively Buddhist conceptions of rationality and induction compare (and contrast) to Western ones; and how distinctively modern Western assumptions or methods inform the interpretation of Madhyamaka or the exclusion of Yogācāra from serious philosophical consideration.

APPENDIX

Although the Centre for Buddhist Studies at RYI is the only internationally recognized and accredited academic program in Buddhist Studies in Kathmandu, there are a number of other local institutions of interest to scholars and students of Buddhist philosophy. Foremost among these for scholars studying Tibetan Buddhist philosophy is the International Academy of Buddhist Studies (IBA) (http://internationalbuddhistacademy.org) just up the road from RYI in Tinchuli. Founded by the late Khenpo Appey Rinpoche and headed by Ngawang Jorden (PhD, Harvard University), IBA has ongoing courses in Buddhist philosophy and practice based primarily in the Sakya Tibetan Buddhist tradition.[18] IBA also supports international scholars conducting research on Sakya traditions and translations of Tibetan Buddhist philosophical works—in addition to its activities fostering monastic leadership and publication of Buddhist texts.

Other local educational centers relevant for English-speaking[19] scholars interested in Buddhist philosophy include (in rough order of geographic proximity to RYI) Shechen Monastery (http://shechen.org), which is dedicated to the preservation of the legacy of the great Nyingma scholar and mediation master Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche, offers occasional public teachings, and is home to Tsering Art School; Sowa Rigpa International College of Tibetan Medicine (https://sorigcollege.org), which opened in 2017; the School of International Training (https://studyabroad.sit.edu), which runs a program on Tibetan and Himalayan Peoples out of its Boudhanath center; The Tsadra Foundation (http://tsadra-wp.tsadra.org), which has a branch office in Boudhanath, supports translation, scholarship, and publication of Buddhist texts—including scholarships for Western Buddhists to study Buddhist philosophical literature in Tibetan (http://tsadra-wp.tsadra.org/scholarships/advanced-buddhist-studies/);[20] The Rigpe Dorje Institute at Pullahari Monastery, which offers philosophy and meditation courses based on Jamgön Kontrul Rinpoche's legacy and the Kagyu tradition; Kopan Monastery (http://kopanmonastery.com), which was founded by Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche in 1969, and is well known for its long-running study and meditation courses rooted in the Gelug Tibetan Buddhist tradition; FPMT (Foundation for the Preservation of Mahāyāna Tradition, https://fpmt.org), the larger umbrella organization founded by Lamas Yeshe and Zopa, which runs the Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Center in Thamel (http://fpmt-hbmc.org); Nepal Sanskrit University (https://nsu.edu.np), which has courses in Buddhist Sanskrit; Tribhuvan University (http://tribhuvan-university.edu.np), which has departments of Sanskrit and Buddhist Studies as its Kirtipur campus; Rigpa Shedra (http://www.rigpashedra.org) in Pharping, which has courses in Nyingma Tibetan Buddhist exoteric and esoteric philosophy taught by Khenpo Namdrol Rinpoche; Adzom Monstery in Dolu, which has courses for international students (including in Chinese); Tranghu Tashi Yangste Monastery, which is based in the Kagyu tradition and has courses for international students (http://namobuddha.org/vajra_vidya.html); Lumbini Buddhist University (https://www.lbu.edu.np), which is located in the birthplace of the Buddha and offers a broad curriculum in Buddhist Studies based primarily in Theravāda Buddhism.[21]

Scholars interested in Buddhist philosophical manuscripts will also want to know about the National Archives in Maiti Ghar. Over 180,000 of the manuscripts stored there were microfilmed by the Nepali-German Manuscript Preservation Project, and a descriptive catalogue is available online through the Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project in Hamburg (https://www.aai.uni-hamburg.de/en/forschung/ngmcp). Other manuscript resources to note are the Kaiser Library (http://www.klib.gov.np), which has a rare manuscripts collection; the Asa Archive Trust (http://www.asaarchives.org/about2.html), which works in collaboration with the National Archives; and the Lotus Research Center (http://lrcnepal.org.np/#), which is developing a multimedia digital archive of Newari Buddhism.

NOTES

1. For an overview of Rahul Sankrityayan's (1893–1963) critical activities in Nepal, see Alaka Atreya Chudal, "Rahul Sankrityayan and the Buddhism of Nepal," *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 46 (2015): 62–87. See the Appendix for information on resources for manuscript research.

2. I am no longer full-time at RYI, but continue to advise masters theses there.

3. In recent years this has included a number of scholars from American and European universities specializing in Buddhist Philosophy: Orna Almogi (University of Hamburg), Lara Braitstein* (McGill University), Jose Cabezon (University of California, Santa Barbara), Klaus Dieter-Mathes (University of Vienna), Douglas Duckworth* (Temple University), John Dunne* (University of Wisconsin–Madison), Jonardon Ganeri (New York University), David Higgins (University of Vienna), Connie Kassor* (Lawrence University), Yaroslav Komarovski* (University of Nebraska), Anne MacDonald (University of Vienna), John Makransky (Boston College), Jin Park (American University), Alexander Von Rospatt (University of California, Berkeley), Bill Waldron* (Middlebury College), Mattia Salvini (Mahidol University), and Dorji Wangchuk* (University of Hamburg). * = also taught a semester or summer course. Audio recordings of a number of past guest lectures (which include some by monastic scholars) can be found online: https://soundcloud.com/rangjung-yeshe-institute.

4. RYI is looking to expand its electronic subscriptions and holdings to better support advanced research. The library also has some Tibetan and Sanskrit holdings, although Tibetan and Sanskrit materials are relatively affordable and accessible through local bookstores and libraries.

5. The 16th Karmapa was instrumental in the founding of the monastery and appointed Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche as its abbot and his brother, Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche, as its ritual master. As a result, KNSL maintains critical ritual and educational ties to the Karma Kagyu lineage. On the history of the monastery, see the recently completed MA thesis by Robert Offner (which also discusses the demographics) and https://monksandnuns.org/ka-nying-ling-monastery/.

6. There have been several students with previous graduate degrees in Christian scriptures or theology, and a number with advanced degrees in other fields, including philosophy and psychology.

7. MA students can apply for a scholarship from the Tsadra Foundation (see Appendix) that supports two years of study in the MA program in Buddhist Studies and a third at KNSL.

8. Generally speaking, this emphasis on a broader range of commentarial perspectives and commentary in general distinguishes the Nyingma (as well as Sakya and Kagyu) style of education from the Gelug school, which emphasizes monastic textbooks and debate, but this should not be overstated, as all schools partake of these various methods to one degree or another. For an invaluable analysis of these methods, see Georges B. J. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: The Education of a Tibetan Monk* (Berkeley: University of California, 2003).

9. Other commentaries are typically Kagyu or Sakya. For example, the Uttaratantra is taught on the basis of the Kagyu scholar Jamgön Kongtrul's commentary, and Buddhist epistemology on Sakya Pandita's treatise on the subject.

10. The *Uttaratantra* is considered a Buddha Nature (or Tathāgatagarbha) text, and Mipham's hermeneutic is also informed by a Buddha Nature interpretation of the third turning of the wheel.

11. Mipham's hermeneutic is informed by Śāntarakṣita's Madhyamakālaṃkāra hierarchical syntheses of Yogācāra and Madhyamaka as well as by his principle of "dialectical unity" (zung 'jug). For more on the latter, see Karma Phuntsho, *Mipham's Dialectics and the Debates on Emptiness* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005) and Douglas Duckworth, *Mipam on Buddha Nature* (Albany: SUNY, 2008). For an overview of Mipham, see Douglas Duckworth, *Jamgön Mipam: His Life and Teachings* (Boston: Shambhala, 2011). For a perspective on the complementarity of Yogācāra and Madhyamaka informed by a variety of Tibetan perspectives, see Douglas Duckworth, *Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy of Mind and Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

12. Lamas from all Tibetan Buddhist traditions regularly hold public teachings in Kathmandu. In addition to lectures by monastic scholars, RYI also hosts guest lectures by Western scholar-practitioners. Frequent guests include: Ven. Dhammadipa (see fn.19 below), Lama Shenpen Hookham, and Tulku Sherdor.

13. I have no empirical data to support this. It is just a personal observation based on my experience having taught Asian and Buddhist philosophy in the US and Nepal.

14. For example, students might read the *Anatta-lakkhāna sutta* or "Discourse on the Not-self Characteristic" (SN 22.59) in light of Thānissaro Bhikkhu's Selves and Not Self, a series of talks given at a meditation retreat [available online at https://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/selvesnotself.html, accessed December 4, 2018]; Rupert Gethin's contextual and textual analysis in "The Five Khanhas: Their Treatment in the Nikāyas and Abhidhamma," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 14 (1986): 35–53; and Mark Siderits's analytic-style philosophical analysis of the argument in his *Buddhism As Philosophy: An Introduction* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). Students compare and contrast the interests, methods, and contexts of these perspectives, and consider how this affects interpretation of the sutta. Later in the course students study the basics of dharma theory (according to the Nikāyas and Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma), the Pudgalavādins or "Personnalists," and Vasubandhu's refutation of the latter. Because the materials (excepting Thānissaro and Siderits) discussing these topics are not easily accessible to most college-level students, they are provided with summaries of academic articles and study guides to accompany readings.

15. Students read Dreyfus's *Sound of Two Hands Clapping* (see above) in whole or part, and monastics from KNSL are invited when possible for lectures or question and answers on educational methods.

16. An excellent article for articulating this distinction is John Makransky, "Historical Consciousness as an Offering to the Trans-historical Buddha," *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*, ed. Roger R. Jackson and John J. Makransky (Surrey, England: Curzon Press, 2000), 111–35).

17. For an illustration of how these perspectives impact the study of Buddhist philosophy, see Karin Meyers, "False Friends: Dependent Origination and the Perils of Analogy in Cross-Cultural Philosophy," *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 25 (2018): 785–818; Rick Repetti, "It Wasn't Me: Reply to Karin Meyers," *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 25 (2018): 857–86; and Karin Meyers, "Talking Past Each Other: Reply to Rick Repetti," *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* (forthcoming).

18. Although most courses are based on the Sakya Tibetan Buddhist tradition, IBA also regularly hosts the Ven. Dhammadipa (based in the Czech Republic) who teaches meditation courses on calm abiding (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*). I mention this because Dhammadipa's scholarly expertise in the Pali, Sanskrit, and Chinese literature on meditation combined with his insights from deep practice is a real boon for scholars working on these textual traditions, especially the *Visuddhimagga* and *Yogācārabhūmi*. Recordings of his retreat talks can be found on the IBA online studies website along with several courses based on Indian philosophical texts and the Sakya commentarial tradition (http://www.ibastudiesonline.com/Home/Index).

19. I understand there are a number of centers that also have courses in Chinese, but at the time of writing I am only certain of courses at IBA and Adzom Monastery (both listed above).

20. In addition to supporting three years of study at RYI, the Tsadra Foundation has also supported study at Kopan Nunnery and Tranghu Tashi Yangste Monastery's Vajra Vidya Institute.

21. At the time of writing, I am unable to determine whether there is still a campus in Kathmandu and, if so, whether it offers courses in English or only Nepali.

Buddhist Philosophy in Poland: Legacy and Prospects

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Poland is one of those countries where questions about the present state of affairs are often met with a response about the past—not only events that actually happened, but also those that could or should have occurred if history had taken a more benevolent turn. While this penchant for historical reminiscence is not without its critics, an outline of Polish studies on Buddhist philosophy can hardly be bereft of a historical introduction. It would be difficult to describe and assess the present state of the field without prior explanation of the factors to which it owes its current shape. The complex trajectory of these developments, which spans almost a whole century, needs to be at least briefly recounted before discussing the present situation regarding the discipline and its future prospects.

Many scholars of Buddhist philosophy still associate Poland with the name of Stanisław Schayer (1899–1941), the founder (1932) and the first Head of the Oriental Institute (Instytut Orientalistyczny) at the University of Warsaw. Schayer remains one of the few scholars of his generation whose works continue to be referenced in fairly recent publications in his field. As a Buddhologist, Schayer combined the rigorous training of a scholar of Indian languages and literature (the discipline labeled in Polish as *filologia*) with an erudite interest in the history of religions, philosophy, and logic, for which he is perhaps best remembered. Schayer was deeply convinced that a study of pre-modern Indian texts, Buddhist texts in particular, was not merely a matter of academic curiosity, but rather something that warranted genuine intellectual involvement on the part of an educated public. In his view, the value of Indian philosophy lies in its potential to serve as a "true partner" for Western ethics, metaphysics, logic, or philosophy of religion.[1] On Schayer's account, Buddhist approaches to those issues present new problems as well as new solutions to old problems that may not have been sufficiently considered within the Western tradition. For this reason, a philologically grounded study of Buddhist philosophy can teach Westerners to reconsider the seemingly obvious assumptions attached to their own cultural heritage, to liberate their thinking from unintended one-sidedness and parochialism, and to enrich their "spiritual life" with new possibilities.[2]

Schayer's ambitious approach to Buddhist studies was emulated by younger academics who worked under his direction in the 1930s, notably Arnold Kunst (1903–1981) and Konstanty (Constantin) Regamey (1907–1982). This small cohort of scholars produced remarkable translations and studies of several Buddhist texts preserved in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese, executed with great attention to their philosophical and/or logical significance. Their dissertations and articles usually appeared in German, English, or French rather than Polish, and in many cases contributed to scholarship at an international level.[3] Regrettably, the promising, yet still fledgling, academic lineage initiated by Schayer was effectively obliterated in the turmoil inflicted by the Second World War. By the time Polish universities reopened in 1945, most academic resources related to Buddhist studies had been irretrievably lost and the precious few experts in the field had either passed away or left the country. For the next few decades, the major challenge facing Polish Buddhology was therefore to gradually recover from its decline, rather than develop in new directions. Moreover, the pace and scale of this recovery was somewhat limited by the political and economic conditions of post-war Poland, not the least by its relative isolation behind the "Iron Curtain" that ended only after 1989. On the other hand, the last decades of the socialist state witnessed an unprecedented surge in a more popular interest in Buddhism among Poles. This phenomenon was spearheaded by the first organized groups of local converts, who understood Buddhism as a form of spirituality, a way of life, or perhaps a religion, rather than a resource of philosophical insights.[4] At the same time, the emergence of such a "practical" alternative did not appear to undermine the traditional prestige of philologically based and philosophically orientated Buddhist studies. Generally speaking, the discipline maintained its strong connections with academic Indology, its emphasis on studying primary texts in original languages, and its sensitivity to philosophical issues, all advocated by Schayer before the war.

For the reasons explained above, most scholarly activities that fall under the purview of Buddhist studies (*Buddologia*) in the Polish context entail at least some degree of involvement with philosophical issues. A few examples will suffice to illustrate this point. Since the 1990s, the University of Warsaw has hosted several international seminars and conferences on Indian philosophy and logic. All these events were attended by the leading experts in the related fields of Buddhist studies, alongside internationally recognized local scholars.[5] These days, the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the University of Warsaw, the successor to Schayer's Oriental Institute, operates its own Research Centre of Buddhist Studies (Pracownia Studiów nad Buddyzmem, since 2008), headed by the Indologist and Tibetologist Marek Mejor. Whereas the Centre aims to provide seminars, lectures, and consultations on a wide range of topics related to Buddhism, its educational activities are clearly set in the Polish tradition of Buddhist studies, which emphasizes presentation of philosophically significant canonical doctrines (e.g., views on suffering, interdependent origination, etc.) on the basis of primary texts.[6] In the south of Poland, the Jagiellonian University in Kraków offers a regular undergraduate program in Buddhist studies (since 2011) and an MA program focused on contemporary Buddhism (since 2018), both run by the Centre for Comparative Studies of Civilizations (Katedra Porównawczych Studiów Cywilizacji) affiliated with the Faculty of Philosophy.[7] While the curricula of these programs encourage an interdisciplinary approach, they are rather well-suited to students with an interest in Buddhist philosophy. Course offerings include, for example, introductions to Buddhist ethics or Buddhist logic and epistemology, in addition to Sanskrit or Tibetan classes.

Several other universities throughout the country provide introductory courses to Buddhism or East Asian religions that routinely cover the basics of Buddhist philosophy. Such courses are usually offered by the departments of either East Asian studies or philosophy and in many cases are taught by scholars proficient in the canonical languages of Buddhism (a notable example is the Institute of Philosophy of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, whose roster includes three specialists in Indian and Buddhist philosophy).[8]

It may be worthwhile to mention that these days Polish students can digest the basic concepts and arguments of Buddhist thinkers in their own native language. Available teaching resources include at least article- or chapter-length introductions to all the major intellectual traditions of Indic and Indo-Tibetan Buddhism (Theravada, Madhyamaka, Yogācāra, Tāthagatagarbha thought, logic and epistemology), some facets of the Sino-Japanese tradition (historical and modernist forms of Zen, contemporary "critical Buddhism"), as well as a selection of primary texts translated from Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, Mongolian, or Japanese. In fact, studies on Buddhist philosophy still comprise the mainstream of Polish academic literature on Buddhism, both in terms of original works and translations from foreign languages. This is so even in the case of East Asian Buddhism, which has often been introduced to Polish students through assigned readings culled from the primers of Chinese or Japanese *philosophy*.[9] The dominance of philosophical perspectives on Buddhism can also be discerned in the academic activities of Polish scholars, including doctoral candidates and recent PhDs. For example, three out of four Poland-affiliated scholars participating in the last Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies in 2017 presented on topics that can be classified as philosophical or related to philosophy. The proportions are not much different at the biennial Polish symposia devoted to Buddhist "thought and culture" (usually attended by 15–20 participants from within Poland), whose agenda tends to be dominated by topics related to philosophy and meditation.[10] Not surprisingly, the annual meeting of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy held in 2018 at the Pedagogical University of Kraków was well-attended by local academics, at least six of whom presented on Buddhist or Buddhist-inspired thinkers, ranging from Nāgārjuna to Nishida Kitarō.[11]

The aforementioned focus on philosophical (or at least broadly intellectual) aspects of Buddhism is hardly surprising considering the historical factors discussed above. On the other hand, it may be pointed out that this tendency stands in a somewhat tenuous relationship with some of the more recent currents within Buddhist studies, which have called into question both the primacy of text-based research and the attention traditionally conferred on doctrinal issues. These well-known developments have led to a conspicuous shift towards previously neglected topics and methodologies: for example, studies on the social contexts and ramifications of Buddhist practices, visual or material cultures, methodological analyses regarding the production of academic discourse on Buddhism, etc. It would be decidedly unfair to say that Polish scholars and advanced students are not aware of these trends or that they are not receptive to the arguments behind them. However, so far few attempts have been made to address this change "from within" the Polish academic tradition.

It may be worthwhile to add that the rather deep-seated emphasis on Buddhist texts and doctrines illustrated above is not merely a question of allegiance to a certain academic lineage or historical authority. To a significant extent, it reflects the genuine expectations of Polish students, including potential future scholars. According to the author's own experience, even though Polish students appear fairly curious about ritualistic, devotional, or institutional aspects of Buddhism, many would still regard philosophical thought (or practice based in philosophical thought) as the most universal or personally relevant aspect of this tradition. It may be tempting to explain this preference by pointing towards Polish students' lack of personal familiarity with the living traditions of popular Buddhism practiced in Asian societies, or to the pervasive influence of modernist narratives about putative "real" Buddhism, routinely defined as "philosophy rather than religion." However, the reasons behind such attitudes appear to be somewhat more complex.

One factor that deserves special consideration is the impact of contemporary "culture wars" and their latent influence on academic discussions of philosophical and religious topics. The contours of such conflicts are perhaps even more pronounced in their distinctive Polish setting, defined by the long-standing monopoly of Catholic values on the one hand, and the rapidly secularizing attitudes of the younger generations on the other. Those students who profess some interest in Buddhism quite often claim that they are indifferent, suspicious, or, in some cases, even outright hostile with regard to "religious" beliefs and practices. Many of them find it easier to relate to Buddhist discussions on ethical or metaphysical issues. The major appeal of such topics lies in the "exotic" approaches of Buddhist authors, which come across as refreshingly removed from the cultural, ideological, or political entanglements of contemporary times. To quote one obvious example, Buddhist arguments against theism transcend the seemingly all-pervasive division between "religious" (Catholic) and "secular" viewpoints. Approached from this angle, even classroom discussions of Buddhist texts and doctrines appear to meet some of the expectations voiced by Schayer in the late 1920s; namely, they allow Polish students to relativize and rethink the whole gamut of values and beliefs ingrained in the culture in which they are submerged, and to acknowledge non-European intellectual traditions as valid partners in debating fundamental issues. In the author's opinion, in contemporary Poland these objectives remain as relevant as they were in Schayer's times.

One issue that perhaps merits more debate is the extent to which the aforementioned objectives can be achieved without discussing Buddhist "philosophy" in the orthodox sense, defined by the concerns of contemporary philosophers or historians of philosophy. This question may be especially pertinent in the case of East Asian Buddhism, which has been relatively underrepresented in the Polish tradition of Buddhist studies, especially in the

period after the Second World War. Whereas this tradition has its own share of "problems" and "solutions" related to metaphysics, ethics, religion, or even logic, these are not necessarily articulated in the form of what Western philosophers would typically take to be cogent arguments or systematic theoretical reflections. Quite often they need to be extracted from the rhetoric of exegetical polemics, confrontations between personal lineages, and various "culture wars" waged by Buddhist authors against Confucian, Daoist, Christian, or secular viewpoints. At the same time, according to the author's experience, it is still possible to read polemical treatises of East Asian Buddhists in a way that elicits some contemporary resonance (they include, for example, cases for adopting a vegetarian diet, and discussions about the interpretation of religious symbols). Needless to say, they are also situated in culturally distant intellectual settings; as such, they defy contemporary ideological divides and put necessary question marks alongside the self-sufficiency of Eurocentric (not to mention "Polonocentric") perspectives. It may therefore be worth asking whether the aforementioned humanistic and "spiritual" benefits of confrontation with Buddhist intellectual traditions indeed require the adoption of a "philosopher's" perspective, or whether they can be achieved by exploring alternative methodological options—for example, the approach of intellectual or cultural history. Regardless of how this question is answered, an earnest discussion of this problem would probably be of much interest to scholars of Buddhist philosophy both within and outside Poland.

NOTES

1. Mejor, "A Note on Buddhist Studies in Poland," 119; Schayer, "O istotnym znaczeniu studium filozofii staroindyjskiej," 73–79, "Indische Philosophie als Problem der Gegenwart," 373–82.
2. Ibid., 73, 78, 373, 381.
3. Mejor, "A Note on Buddhist Studies in Poland," 118–21; Mejor, "Contribution of Polish Scholars to the Study of Indian Logic," 2003.
4. Ablamowicz-Borri, "Buddhist 'Protestantism' in Poland," 38.
5. Cf. Bareja-Starzyńska and Mejor, *Aspects of Buddhism*; Balcerowicz, *Proceedings of the International Seminar 'Argument and Reason in Indian Logic' 20–24 June, 2001*; Balcerowicz, *Logic and Belief in Indian Philosophy*.
6. http://orient.uw.edu.pl/pracownia-studiow-nad-buddyzmem/ (in Polish).
7. http://www.psc.uj.edu.pl/en_GB/start-en
8. https://www.umcs.pl/pl/zaklad-religioznaw-i-filozofii-dawnej,15505.htm (in Polish).
9. Such as Blocker and Starling, *Japanese Philosophy*; or Liu, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*.
10. https://sites.google.com/site/konferencjabuddyjska/home (in Polish).
11. https://sites.google.com/site/50thsacpconferencekrakow2018/accepted_papers.

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Study of Buddhist Philosophy in Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka (SL) is traditionally a Theravada Buddhist country where this particular form of Buddhism has existed, both as a practicing religion of people and as an academic discipline, for more than twenty-three centuries. Among the traditional Theravada Buddhist countries (others being Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos) SL goes down in history as where the Theravada canon, which had been passed down through memory, was committed to writing in the first century BCE. Basically, all the commentaries and sub-commentaries and many other exegetical literatures for the Pali[1] canon were also compiled in this country. With occasional ups and downs, this tradition has continued till the present, passing the Colonial period (1505–1948) coming to the post-colonial period from 1948 onwards. From the pre-modern period to the beginning of the twentieth century, the study of Buddhism was almost exclusively in textual studies through which the knowledge of the Dhamma (doctrine of the Buddha) was obtained. It would not be out of place here to mention that T. W. Rhys Davids (1843–1922) studied Pali from the Buddhist monks of Sri Lanka when he was serving in the Ceylon Civil Service (1864–1872), and subsequently started the Pali Text Society in 1881, which still serves Buddhist studies worldwide.

The study of Buddhism away from traditional textual studies is a phenomenon starting with modern academic studies introduced to SL (then Ceylon) toward the end of the British colonial period with the founding of the University of Ceylon in 1942 (which is the successor to Ceylon University College, founded in 1921), where Pali

and Sanskrit were taught in the same manner as Latin and Greek were taught in Western universities. One person who studied Pali and Sanskrit at the college (1939–1943) was K. N. Jayatilleke (1920–1970) who later became the leading Buddhist philosopher of the country. At the University of Ceylon a separate department for Pali was started, and G. P. Malalasekera (1899–1973), another future leading Buddhist scholar of the country, was the first head of the department. In 1952 the university was shifted to Peradeniya, in the central hills of the country where it is currently located. It is there that the study of Buddhist civilization was added to the Pali department, which today has evolved to be the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies.

The reason for the mention of Pali is that it is with Pali studies that the present subject of Buddhist studies, within which Buddhist philosophical studies are done, was started. The only way to study Pali being through the Buddhist texts, in SL Pali marks an early stage of Buddhist philosophical studies in the modern academic sense. In the pre-colonial period and immediately after independence till the beginning of Sinhala-language universities (mentioned below), those who studied Pali were English-educated lay (non-monastic) students, very few of whom went into graduate studies and thence university academic positions, while the rest went into school-teaching and government administrative positions. A general degree at this time took three years with Pali as one of the subjects, or four years if it was a special degree with Pali as the main subject. Today, Pali is still taught as a subject in universities and a large majority of students are Buddhist monks. The subject has a Buddhist conceptual/philosophical aspect along with linguistic and literary aspects, making it directly relevant to Buddhist philosophical studies.

At this juncture, study of the Sanskrit language, which has been an important part of traditional local scholarship, should also be mentioned. In the universities, along with Pali, Sanskrit is taught from elementary to advanced levels, with very nearly all students being monastics. The significance of the presence of Sanskrit is that although Buddhist studies in the country are focused on Theravada, studies in Mahayana and other Buddhist schools with their literature in Sanskrit are not neglected.

Another aspect of Buddhist/Pali and Buddhist studies is Abhidhamma (Sanskrit: Abhidharma) or "higher doctrine," contained in the third section of the Pali canon. In the field of Buddhist studies, Abhidhamma is usually called philosophy in the sense that it deals with what is considered to be the ultimate reality that provides the basis for the experienced reality which in the Abhidhamma terminology equates to "constructed phenomena." Abhidhamma may also be described as philosophy in a sense which is closer to the modern sense of the term, for it has developed its own precise language and methods of analysis. Abhidhamma basically consists of the definition, analysis, classification, and categorization of the *dhamma*s, a broad term which includes not only the entirety of the teachings of the Buddha but also all constructed and unconstructed phenomena. Logical methods such as distribution and conversion of terms have been used in this literature. In Pali studies programs of the universities, there are several courses in Abhidhamma taught in varying depth. Compared, however, to the practice in a country like Myanmar where Abhidhamma occupies a central part of the curriculum and is memorized and studied in the traditional manner consulting commentaries and sub-commentaries, Sri Lanka university studies in Abhidhamma remain introductory. Unlike in Myanmar, Sri Lanka does not have a widespread tradition of monastic Abhidhamma studies either. At graduate level, however, Abhidhamma may be studied depending on the availability of relevant expertise among the academic staff of any particular department.

Another subject under which Buddhist philosophical studies were done is philosophy. The department of philosophy at the University of Ceylon was started in 1950, which (as mentioned) was shifted to Peradeniya in 1952. The first Head of the department was T. R. V. Murti, an Indian national and specialist in Buddhist, Vedanta, and Kantian philosophies who wrote the well-known work, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*,[2] a comparative study of the Madhyamaka system with Kantian philosophy. Murti left after two years, and K. N. Jayatilleke (mentioned above) became the head of the department in 1964 and continued till his untimely death in 1970.

Jayatilleke studied in Cambridge and had the privilege of being admitted to Wittgenstein's classes held in his private quarters in Whewell's Courts, Trinity College, Cambridge University during 1945–1947.[3] Jayatilleke's work, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (1963), hailed as a "masterpiece by any standard"[4] showed his orientation as an analytical philosopher who defended an empiricist interpretation of the early Buddhist (by which he meant Pali canonical) philosophy. Although Peradeniya is a department of philosophy, under the influence of Jayatilleke it became a center for Buddhist philosophical studies.

The particular character of the scholars produced under Jayatilleke's direction, influence, and guidance is that they typically had expertise in both Western and Buddhist philosophies. Scholars such as D. J. Kalupahana (1936–2014), who later moved to the University of Hawaii department of philosophy), R. D. Gunaratne (b. 1937), Padmasiri de Silva (b. 1933), Gunapala Dharmasiri (1940–2015), P. D. Premasiri (b. 1941), A. D. P. Kalansuriya (1937–2011), all of whom taught at Peradeniya, had this comparative expertise involving Buddhist and Western philosophies. This is a bygone era of Buddhist philosophy not only in Peradeniya but also in the whole country because the Buddhist philosophical orientation that Peradeniya had was missing from the other departments of philosophy in the country, which are of more recent origin.[5]

Currently, in addition to Peradeniya, there are departments of philosophy at the University of Kelaniya, University of Jaffna, and Eastern University. At all these departments, including Peradeniya, the orientation of the curriculum remains basically Western philosophical with elements in Indian and Buddhist philosophies. The undergraduate courses have one or two course units for Buddhist philosophy, which are taught mostly by junior scholars. This cannot be compared to Peradeniya during the '70s through '90s where the influence of philosophers like K.

N. Jayatilleke was still felt. One has only to remain hopeful that these undergraduate programs will produce young scholars who will ultimately do Buddhist studies with widened philosophical horizons. However, in order to see how Buddhist philosophical studies are done currently, we have to look elsewhere.

We will start, again, with some history. Buddhist studies became a key element of the university curriculum in SL with the upgrading in 1959 of the two leading traditional Buddhist monastic education centers of the country, Vidyodaya Pirivena[6] and Vidyalankara Pirivena, to university status, and thus with the founding of Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara Universities. In these universities, unlike the University of Ceylon (now University of Peradeniya) at its beginning, the medium of instruction was Sinhala, the local language of the majority Sinhala community, which allowed access to modern education for a larger non-English-speaking group. In the new universities, there were faculties for Buddhist studies where not only Pali language, Sanskrit language, and textual studies but also new subjects such as Buddhist culture were taught. Today, however, with the 1972 university reforms, these two universities have been renamed Sri Jayawardenepura and Kelaniya, respectively, and have developed into full-fledged secular universities.

There are two other universities, namely, the University of Ruhuna and University of Colombo, where Buddhist studies are taught. In the University of Colombo, as in other universities, Buddhist Studies is taught as a three-year general and four-year special degree course, and there are two streams for students to choose: Buddhist culture and Buddhist philosophy. In the latter, in addition to courses on Buddhist philosophy-related subjects such as Buddhist logic, epistemology, and ethics, two survey courses on Indian and Western philosophies are offered.

In addition to these universities that come under University Grants Commission, there are two universities coming under the Ministry of Higher Education reserved for the study of Buddhism: Bhiksu University of Sri Lanka (founded in 1969), open only to the Buddhist monastic community and located in the ancient city of Anuradhapura, and Buddhist and Pali University (founded in 1982) in the Homagama suburbs of Colombo. In all Sri Lankan universities, currently, the medium of instruction is Sinhala, except in the universities in the North and the East where it is Tamil. In addition, English-medium instruction is available in all universities where the subject of Buddhist studies is taught.

Graduate studies in Buddhism are conducted in both English and Sinhala in all departments and in the two Buddhist universities mentioned above. The Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies attached to University of Kelaniya but operating independently specializes in Buddhist studies, including Buddhist textual, cultural, and philosophical studies at graduate level. At this institute and all the other departments where the subject is taught, graduate studies are conducted at course-work Master's level of one or two years' duration as well as research-based MPhil and PhD levels. In these programs, non-research course-work Master's usually have course units covering themes relevant to Buddhist philosophy such as Sunyatavada (emptiness) of Nagarjuna and "mind-only" of Vijnanavada (idealism). There are not, however, courses covering Buddhist philosophical themes exclusively. This remains equally true for Master's in philosophy courses taught by departments of philosophy in which only one or two aspects of Buddhist philosophy are taught. At research level (MPhil/PhD), depending on the availability of supervisors and the preference of the students, philosophically related studies may be pursued. After completing such programs, the degree one gets from the Sri Lankan university system is MPhil or PhD in Buddhist Studies; there is no specific mention of Buddhist philosophy as this is understood to be included in Buddhist studies. The Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, mentioned above, with its separate department for Buddhist philosophy and well-qualified academic staff, is where much of the graduate studies in Buddhism in the country is currently conducted.

What this discussion should highlight is that in Sri Lanka, Buddhist philosophy as an exclusive subject matter outside of Pali or Buddhist studies is hard to find. The fact of the matter, however, is that Buddhist philosophical studies combining textual and conceptual aspects are done in all universities. Such studies may be strong in one aspect or other, textual or conceptual/doctrinal, and they may also be called philosophical insofar as they focus on the conceptual analysis of and the logicality, consistency, and coherence of what is studied.

A typical undergraduate student who chooses Buddhist studies is mostly a Buddhist monastic member or a male or female civilian student who studies Buddhism as one of his/her three first-year subjects. With their Buddhist religious background, students often seem to think that they can secure a better grade in Buddhist studies enabling them to move on to a subject they wish to specialize in. Those who opt for or get qualified to follow a four-year degree in Buddhist studies are relatively few, and even among those who are so qualified, usually a large majority is comprised of young members of the Buddhist Sangha. Those who study Pali (and Sanskrit) are almost all members of the Sangha. Those who complete the three-year degree are, mostly, absorbed as teachers into the government school system, where religion is a compulsory subject. A few among those who follow the four-year program in Buddhist studies, if they are lucky, have openings in the university system as lecturers.

The course-work Master's programs in Sinhala are very popular, again, mostly among the government school teachers who could use this qualification to be eligible for a career promotion. English-medium coursework Master's are popular among foreign students, in particular among students from Southeast Asian countries, and most especially Buddhist monastic students from Myanmar. In addition, there is a good group of mature local students coming from various professions and walks of life and various age groups who choose to study Buddhism not necessarily due to any professional requirements but for the sake of knowledge and/or religious sentiments. A good number of candidates in this category follow courses in English. Of all these students, the number that will

proceed to the research level is slim. An exception is the Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, where several dozen foreign students, again, mostly monastic members, pursue their higher research degrees along with a relatively lesser number of local students.

For the reason that Buddhist (philosophical) studies are centered mostly around the government universities and institutions mentioned here,[7] relevant career opportunities are limited and hence extremely competitive. Unlike in the last century, when all would-be Buddhist scholars ended up doing their graduate studies in the UK, and subsequently in the USA, Canada, or Australia [e.g., the "Peradeniya school"], those who are successful and hired today tend to go to neighboring India or China for their graduate studies. They choose India for both economic and academic reasons, and China mainly for the increasing financial support available there. Opportunities for graduate studies in Japan or Hong Kong or in any European country almost totally depend on financial assistance available from those countries.

During the last century, Sri Lankan Buddhist scholars had a reputation for comparative philosophical knowledge for the reason that they had their training in Western philosophical or religious departments. The fact that most of these scholars had their local undergraduate studies in English was helpful for them to study in these academic environs. Today, one cannot say the same about the English proficiency of would-be university teachers, which is another reason why they have to look for study opportunities in non-English speaking countries. Depending, however, on the potential change of location of study, one may expect future changes of areas of expertise and the modes of doing Buddhist philosophical studies in the country.

In sum, Buddhist philosophical studies in Sri Lanka, with its history associated with Theravada Buddhism for twenty-three centuries, features prominently in the arena of academic studies and has a justifiably earned international reputation as a center of Theravada Buddhist studies. It remains a challenge for the present Buddhist academics of Sri Lanka to continue to maintain this reputation, yet there is reason to be optimistic given the fact that there is a considerable number of young and energetic Buddhist academics active in the field. With five departments in state universities, a postgraduate institute, and two separate universities, all with specialists in Buddhist studies, the country may be described as providing many opportunities for seekers of Buddhist knowledge.

NOTES

A note on sources: General information regarding the Sri Lanka university system and the individual departments and institutes was obtained from the relevant websites. Special appreciation, however, is due to Samantha Illangakoon of Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka; Homagama, K. Kajavinthan of Department of Philosophy, University of Jaffna; Charitha Herath and Sumedha Weerawardhana of Department of Philosophy, University of Peradeniya; and Sumana Ratnayake of Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Peradeniya, for kindly providing information.

1. Pali, also called Magadhi [māgadhī], is the Middle Indo-Aryan language in which the Theravada canon and the exegetical literature exists.
2. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956).
3. Jayatilleke,*Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963), 10.
4. Attributed to Richard H. Robinson in M. W. P. De Silva, "Memorial Tribute to the Late Professor K. N. Jayatilleke," *Philosophy East and West* 21, no. 2 (1971): 211–39.
5. With reforms introduced to the university system of the country in 1972, universities that existed as campuses under the University of Sri Lanka were made considerably independent by bringing them under the University Grants Commission (UGC) for financial and broader policy matters. Currently, there are 15 universities coming under the UGC and largely determining their own curriculum. The two Buddhist universities come under the Ministry of Higher Education.
6. "Pirivena" in the Sinhala language means a monastic education center.
7. There are a few privately owned higher academic institutes specializing in Buddhist studies such as Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy (SIBA) in Pallekelle, Kandy, which are young in origin and have yet to establish themselves.

Buddhist Philosophy in Two Japanese Cross-Philosophical Approaches

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The aim of this paper is to introduce two Japanese representative figures of studies of comparative Eastern philosophy, Hajime Nakamura (1912–1999) and Toshihiko Izutsu (1914–1993), and to evaluate their results, particularly on the field of Buddhist studies.[1] While the former is known as a leading Japanese scholar of Buddhist studies and Indology, the latter's primary field is Islamic studies. In spite of this difference in their major fields, however, these two twentieth-century intellectuals hold a highly distinctive position within the history of modern Japanese studies of Eastern philosophy due to their wide-ranging views covering manifold philosophies Western and Eastern, including the Islamic, Indian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese. Yet I will argue that the most important impact of their studies lies not in the breadth of their knowledge of philosophy but in the methodology they adopt for studying Eastern philosophy in general apart from its specific, cultural-historical limitations.

Interestingly, in providing a comprehensive picture of Eastern philosophy, both scholars commonly focus on Buddhist philosophy as a knot connecting other Eastern systems of thought. For Nakamura it is Buddhist logic that each Asian culture has exemplified and expressed in diverse distinctive manners in the course of its transmission. On the other hand, Izutsu pays special attention to the idea of being free of essence or instrinsic nature (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) as the Buddhist counterpart to other Eastern philosophies that accept the existence of something like "essence" or "intrinsic nature" in each different system.

In what follows, I review these two scholars' great attempts at cross-philosophical studies, examine some problems therein, and provide a prospect for the future of Japanese studies of Buddhist philosophy, though admittedly this latter observation is limited in scope.

STANDING OUTSIDE BUDDHISM: NAKAMURA'S CONTRIBUTION TO STUDIES IN BUDDHIST LOGIC

The comparison between Buddhist and Western logic was already dealt with by several pioneering scholars in the Meiji period such as Kōyō Kira (1831–1910), a scholar monk of Shin Buddhism who contributed to the revival of East Asian Buddhist logic (*yinming*/*inmyō*; 因明); and Hajime Ōnishi (1864–1900), the author of the *Ronrigaku* [Logic] consisting of three parts: "Formal logic," "Summary of *inmyō* thought," and "Methods of induction." However, after the importation of Western-style philology for Buddhist studies, such comparative approaches to Buddhist logic slowly declined until the appearance of Hajime Nakamura's studies in the post-World War II period. With the manifesto statement "For the purpose of the achievement of the peace and welfare of human beings in general, mutual understanding among the peoples of the world ought to be furthered,"[2] Nakamura energetically promoted comparative philosophical studies by publishing several groundbreaking works, such as *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* (1960), *History of World Thought* (1975), and *Structure of Logic* (2000), as well as by establishing the Japanese Association for Comparative Philosophy in 1974.

On the method of comparative philosophy, Nakamura describes two directions: of particularization and of universalization.[3] He subdivides particularization into spatial-cultural and temporal-historical particularization. As an example of the former, in his *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* Nakamura tries to elucidate the particular defining characteristics of each of the peoples of India, China, Tibet, Korea, and Japan, especially focusing on their different attitudes to Buddhist thought and culture. As for temporal-historical particularization, in his *History of World Thought* Nakamura attempts to clarify the particular defining characteristics of each stage in the parallel development of the history of human ideas, without regard to the difference between East and West. In both manners of particularization, Nakamura commonly emphasizes the importance of understanding philosophy as related to its cultural-historical background. Since Nakamura started his study under the guidance of Hakuju Ui (1882–1963), a pioneer of modern Buddhist philology in Japan, it was probably evident to him that one needed to analyze each philosophical text rigorously in its sociocultural context. However, this standpoint is inevitably incompatible with the universalization of philosophy, whereby, according to Nakamura's own definition, each homogeneous way of thought is clarified in comparison to its heterogeneous thought systems, apart from any such cultural-historical particularization. Thus, in his last monumental work, *Structure of Logic* (2000), Nakamura originally intended to draw a universal picture of the most fundamental structure of logic in human thought, and to do so by relying on an enormous number of materials on logic from Aristotle, Dharmakīrti, Bertrand Russell, and so on. Yet here too he commented several times on the cultural-historical differences of the various systems of logic, and in this sense his last attempt at universalization remained incomplete. Nakamura dreamt of attaining a transcendent perspective high enough to encompass all kinds of human thoughts, even while standing outside his familiar field of Buddhist studies.[4] Whether or not his dream will ever come true depends on the continued efforts of later generations, including the present author.

Turning to the topic of Buddhist logic, it is remarkable that Nakamura's comparative-philosophical enterprise is based on his rigorous philological studies of Dharmakīrti's *Nyāyabindu* and Dharmottara's commentary thereon, and Kuiji's commentary on Xuanzang's Chinese translation of Śaṃkarasvāmin's *Nyāyapraveśaka*. On the first two Indian texts, Nakamura published their Japanese translations[5] and a glossary for Buddhist logical terminologies.[6] On Kuiji's work, the most influential text for the tradition of East Asian Buddhist logic, Nakamura's translation[7] had a great impact on both scholars of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism and Sino-Japanese Buddhism. Whereas for the former it was a new discovery of the value of the heritage of *yinming*/*inmyō* materials for studying Sanskrit texts and its development in different cultures, for the latter it was another discovery to see the importance of the knowledge of Indian philosophical background for understanding East Asian Buddhism based on Chinese textual materials. Unfortunately, however, Nakamura himself gave priority to the Indian Buddhist party (Dharmakīrti & Dharmottara), and underestimated the Chinese Buddhist party (Xuanzang & Kuiji) because of the latter's misunderstanding and ignorance of the basic ideas of Indian logic based on Sanskrit. In the introduction to his translation of Kuji's commentary, Nakamura pointed out, for instance, Xuanzang's misconception of the distinction between inference for oneself (*svārthānumāna*) and inference for the other (*parārthānumāna*) in his inference of consciousness-only (唯識比量), and Kuiji's misinterpretations of the second condition for the valid reason, "[the reason's] necessary presence in similar examples" (*sapakṣa eva sattvam*; 同品定有性), and the contradictory reason (*viruddhahetu*; 相違因). Although Nakamura's criticism is almost correct from the viewpoint of Dharmakīrti's logic, it should be asked whether such Chinese materials before Dharmakīrti are based on some variants of Dignāga's logic. Since we have few materials for the dark period between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the value of *yinming*/*inmyō* texts is not to be underestimated. Most recently, Shigeki Moro (2015) has published *Ronri to Rekishi* (*Logic and History*), where a new approach to Xuanzang's inference of consciousness-only and its related problems in East Asian Buddhism is clearly demonstrated.[8] In addition, at the XVIIIth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (IABS) in Toronto, a bipartite panel, "Transmission and Transformation of Buddhist Logic and Epistemology in East Asia" (conveners: Shinya Moriyama, Shigeki Moro, Motoi Ono, and Masatoshi Inami), was held at which several topics on the revival of *yinming*/*inmyō* studies were discussed as means for bridging the Indo-Tibetan and Sino-Japanese traditions of Buddhism, as originally expected by Nakamura.

BUDDHISM AS A META-PHILOSOPHY: IZUTSU'S ANALYSIS OF BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Nakamura's contemporary Toshihiko Izutsu is famous for composing the first Japanese translation of the Qur'an and numerous works on Islamic philosophy. After his return from

Iran in 1979 due to the Islamic Revolution, Izutsu started to write a series of essays in *Shiso*, a Japanese journal of philosophy, which were to form the core of his masterpiece *Ishiki to Honsitsu* (*Consciousness and Essence*, 1983). In this work, the primary concern of Izutsu consists in constructing a new philosophy from a meta-philosophical viewpoint extracted from various Eastern philosophical traditions, including Buddhism, Indian philosophy, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Islam, and so on. The key concept for understanding his meta-philosophical approach to Eastern philosophy is the "synchronic structuralization" (*kyōjiteki kōzōka*; 共時的構造化) whereby various traditions are first deconstructed into philosophical elements and then paradigmatically reconstructed by their patterns, apart from the cultural-historical restrictions of each. In short, what Izutsu planned to do was to remake Eastern philosophy as a new philosophy for today's globalized world. According to Izutsu's view, the position of the Japanese people today is unique because they are both familiar with the Western style of thinking and yet, in using the Japanese language, still live unconsciously in Eastern ideas. Thus, especially for Japanese people, it is an important task to subjectively reflect on Eastern philosophy through such synchronic structuralization and to thereby establish one's own Eastern philosophy. Given this, what position is held by Buddhist philosophy in Izutsu's conception of Eastern philosophy?

I shall start with overviewing the main argument of *Ishiki to Honshitu* and examine which point of Buddhist philosophy is here extracted as a source for the meta-philosophical element of Eastern thought.[9] First of all, Izutsu distinguishes between philosophies with acceptance of essence and those without acceptance of essence. After having introduced Islamic notions of two kinds of essences, namely, universal essence (*māhīyah*) and particular essence (*huwīyah*), he further classifies the philosophy with acceptance of essence into three types: 1) philosophy that accepts the universal essence in our deep consciousness, such as the Cheng-Zhu school's doctrine of exploring the principle (*li*; 理) in each thing; 2) philosophy that accepts the universal essence as the symbolic archetype, such as shamanism and mysticism; 3) philosophy that accepts the universal essence cognizable by rational thought not in the deep consciousness but in the superficial consciousness, such as the categorical thought of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school. On the other hand, the philosophy that does not accept essence is discussed in terms of Daoism and Mahāyāna Buddhism, specifically Zen Buddhism. Classifying the varieties of Eastern thinking on "essence" in this manner and mainly focusing on the positions that accept essence, Izutsu tries to explain the root of Eastern thoughts of "essence" in the depth of consciousness consisting of a multilayered structure. If one goes down from its surface on our daily life to its zero point, the unarticulated state of real entity, one will understand how everything emerges from the zero point of consciousness through the process of the so-called "semantic articulation" (*bunsetsuka*; 分節化). Izutsu explains this meta-philosophical model of Eastern philosophy in comparison with C. G. Jung's notion of the collective unconsciousness and Edmund Husserl's intuition of essence. Izutsu's "Eastern philosophy" stands almost like a magnificent cathedral with fine construction of details, an edifice made possible only by his genius, which probably explains why his ambition has not been successfully fulfilled by later generations. Nevertheless, it must at least be our task to verify his model from various angles and, if necessary, to modify the model even in its minute details.

In this regard, there are several issues in Buddhist philosophy that will contribute to the further development of Izutsu's new Eastern philosophy. One particular example is Dharmakīrti's concept of *svabhāva*. As we have seen, Islamic philosophy distinguishes between *māhīyah* and *huwīyah*, which influenced medieval debates over the problems of universals. Whereas *māhīyah* or "what-ness" relates to the conceptual realm where an entity is determined by its corresponding concept, *huwīyah* or "this-ness" relates to the particular itself that exists in front of us. Although Izutsu does not mention the name, this reminds us of Dharmakīrti, who struggled with the problem of essence or essential property as the core of our world of causation and linguistic behavior. The Sanskrit term *svabhāva* is difficult to translate in his system, but since Ernst Steinkellner's detailed study on the concept,[10] two senses of *svabhāva* have been distinguished by modern scholars.[11] Depending on context, the same term may indicate the nature of an entity (its *huwīyah*), or the properties of that entity (its *māhīyah*). By connecting two senses in the one term, *svabhāva*, Dharmakīrti constructs his system of logic based on the nexus-by-*svabhāva* (*svabhāvapratibandha*), which justifies the necessary connection between the reason and its consequence. As a Buddhist who follows the Mahāyāna doctrine of emptiness, on the other hand, he also teaches that everything is free of essence (*niḥsvabhāva*). Therefore, we face a conundrum in Dharmakīrti's philosophy as to how to reconcile his notion of two kinds of *svabhāva* and the doctrine of being free of essence.

On this, reference to Izutsu's model may provide us with a fresh perspective on Dharmakīrti's concept of *svabhāva*, namely, of *svabhāva* as something found in the depth of consciousness. In other words, *svabhāva* might be related to the nature of dependency (*paratantrasvabhāva*), a Yogācāra concept for the mode of existence of the store-consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*). In the same manner, Mokṣākaragupta's unique notion of two sorts of universals—namely, a vertical one (*ūrdhvatālakṣaṇaṃ sāmānyam*) for a continuum consisting of momentary entities, and a horizontal one (*tiryaglakṣaṇaṃ sāmānyam*) for a class distinguished from other classes[6]—is also comparable to Islamic notions of universals, and, consequently, to other Eastern thoughts on essence as well. Moreover, if one further analyzes the Buddhist notion of universals with its background, the linguistic theory of *apoha* or "exclusion," Izutsu's notion of "semantic articulation" may be newly interpreted in accordance with the Indian Buddhist theory of semantics, and it also links to another possibility of applying Buddhist *apoha* theory, outside of its own cultural-historical context, to the aesthetic theories of Haiku and poetry by Basho Matsuo (1644–1694) and Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926), both of whom are discussed in *Ishiki to Honshitu* (Chap. II). As said, this is merely one example within the field of Buddhist logic and epistemology. Once Izutsu's method of synchronic structuralization is more widely applied in various fields of Buddhist philosophy, then each element extracted from Buddhist philosophy

will be more freely linkable to other fields of philosophy regardless of the geographic, historical, or cultural distance between them.

CONCLUSION

I have introduced two leading Japanese scholars' cross-philosophical studies, studied their impacts, and proposed possibilities for future Japanese Buddhist studies, especially in the field of Buddhist logic and epistemology. In the middle and late twentieth century, Nakamura and Izutsu emphasized in common the necessity of having a wide-ranging view of Eastern philosophy, without remaining constrained within their specialized fields of Indian and Islamic philosophy, respectively. They certainly already foresaw today's world in need of cross-cultural understanding in complex conflicts between different peoples and nations. Under present circumstances, in which scholarly progress in both Western and Eastern philosophy is made almost exclusively within the narrow historical and geographical field of specialization of each individual scholar, their methods and ambitions for cross-philosophical studies are worthy of being re-evaluated, not least so as to integrate the study of Eastern philosophy into the contemporary world.

NOTES

1. For the comparative philosophical approaches of Nakamura and Izutsu, see Krummel, "Comparative Philosophy in Japan"; Fujita, *Nihon tetsugaku shi*, 466–71.
2. Nakamura,*Hikaku shisō ron*, 223.
3. Nakamura,*Gakumon no kaitaku*, 167–69.
4. Nakamura (*Hikaku shisō ron*, 232–34) refers to the attempt to examine several traditions in the history of human ideas as an integrated one (which project has not been carried out by anybody), and warns against the current over-specialization of philosophical studies.
5. Nakamura, "*Indo ronrigaku no rikai no tameni I*."
6. Nakamura, "*Indo ronrigaku no rikai no tameni II*."
7. Nakamura,*Inmyō nisshōri ron so*.
8. Before Moro's study, little attention had been paid to Nakamura's study on Xuanzang's inference on consciousness-only and the yinming/inmyō tradition, except Takemura, *Inmyōgaku: kigen to hensen*.
9. For the following summary of Izutsu,*Ishiki to honshitu*, see Sueki, "Zen kara Izutsu tetsugaku o kangaeru"; Saitō, *Tōyō tetsugaku no konpon mondai: Arui ha Izutsu Toshihiko*.
10. Steinkellner, "Wirklichkeit und Begriff bei Dharmakīrti."
11. For instance, see Dunne,*Foundation of Dharmakīrti's Philosophy*: 153–73.
12. For the two sorts of universals, see Kajiyama, *An Introduction to Buddhist Philosophy*, 58–59. For its similar usage in Ratnakīrti's work, see Moriyama, "Toward a Better Understanding of Ratnakīrti's Ontology."

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Sanskrit-based Buddhist Philosophy in China Today

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The expression *Fanwen fojiao yanjiu* 梵文佛教研究, "Sanskrit-Buddhist Studies," indicates that in contradistinction to those Chinese Buddhist scholars who only read classical Chinese Buddhist texts, others use Sanskrit materials as one of the main sources for doing research on Buddhism. The use of Sanskrit materials began in the nineteenth century in Europe and Japan and continues to the present time. Regardless of whether or not a given research topic should be traditionally classified as Chinese Buddhism, the use of Sanskrit is close to the methodology used by such great scholar-monks as Faxian (法显, ca. 340–ca. 420), Xuanzang (玄奘, 600/602–664), and Yijing (义净, 635–713).

Buddhist philosophy has been considered the core part of Buddhism from the beginning of its introduction into China in the first century CE. This is one of the principal reasons why Buddhist studies in general have been a part of departments of philosophy in Chinese universities,

rather than in departments of South Asian studies or in departments of Chinese (language and literature) and so on.

Throughout mainland China, the study of Buddhist philosophy has changed quite dramatically during the last two decades. On the one hand, many in society have gradually come to realize that Buddhism is not a base superstition. Rather, it is understood as an integral part of Chinese civilization, as well as a living object of religious belief. On the other, in universities and institutes, academic programs of Buddhist studies centering around the study of Buddhist philosophy have much improved both in terms of quantity and quality. Great scholars such as Professor Ji Xianlin (季羡林, 1911–2009), the doyen of Sanskrit studies in China, and his disciples have been instrumental in underscoring the importance of the study of Sanskrit for the study of Buddhism.

In 2006, when I was a graduate student in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies of Peking University, there were few students in the program of Buddhist philosophy. At the time, only one doctoral student and two master's students could be enrolled per year; while one professor taught Indian philosophy and Buddhism, two associate professors specialized in Chinese Buddhism, and one assistant professor was interested in Japanese Buddhism. Nonetheless, it was the largest and most influential graduate program of Buddhist philosophy in the country. On campus, however, if we were asked the topic of our research, we would always be looked at with suspicion and surprise: "Are you a student at Peking University? Can you eat pork? (comparing us with Muslims); Do you have to be a Buddhist nun after your PhD?" This is not to mention some of the more naïve questions my relatives who lived through the "Cultural Revolution" would ask me. They could never imagine that Buddhist philosophy could be studied at one of the top national universities.

Nowadays, my students rarely receive these kinds of awkward questions either on or off campus. In 2015, when I finally returned to my hometown, Hangzhou, where Zhejiang University is located, I was fortunate to initiate a new program for Sanskrit and Buddhist philosophy without any physical or ideological barriers; on the contrary, I received a great deal of support from the university.

It is true that when most domestic scholars talk about Buddhist philosophy, it is the understanding of and research in Buddhist texts in Chinese that are predominantly at issue. However, more and more scholars are beginning to realize that Sanskrit, and even Tibetan, are critical for the academic study of Buddhist philosophy, especially in the context of the international academic community of Buddhist Studies. The fact is that although China has a long history of Sanskrit learning and many texts were translated into Chinese, not much has been done in a serious way after the Tang dynasty for various reasons—of course, with the exception of a considerable number of Tibetan scholars who were exceptionally well versed in Sanskrit. Thus, it is a gratifying fact that at present China has a good number of young scholars who can read and work on Sanskrit texts in the history of Buddhism. And their number is growing, for more universities have begun to offer Sanskrit in their curricula.

There are five main universities in China that currently provide different levels of Sanskrit courses, namely, Peking University (北京大学) and Renmin University (中国人民大学) in Beijing, Fudan University (复旦大学) in Shanghai, Sichuan University (四川大学) in Chengdu, and Zhejiang University (浙江大学) in Hangzhou, as well as some research programs in two institutes in Beijing, the Center for Sanskrit Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (中国社会科学院梵文研究中心), and the China Tibetology Research Centre (中国藏学研究中心). Although much study of Buddhism in Chinese universities has historically taken place in philosophy departments, such work has typically focused on classical Chinese Buddhist texts. By contrast, few scholars like me working on Buddhist philosophy in Sanskrit-language texts belong to a *philosophy* department as a faculty member, as most Sanskrit-based scholars continue to be based in departments that are involved with foreign languages and historical studies. However, the main purpose of teaching Sanskrit at each institute is similar—that is, to provide an essential tool for students to do Buddhist studies in general.

Looking back at the past twenty years, I am quite optimistic about the future of the study of Buddhist philosophy in China. Foreseeing flourishing academic communities, I have the following four main reasons for my optimism:

1. An increase in the number of young scholars trained in philosophy and having a command of several languages.

2. An increase in financial support from national institutions and private Buddhist foundations.

3. An increase in study abroad coupled with international study experience and communications.

4. An increase in the scholarly study of unpublished Buddhist manuscripts from the Tibet and the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous regions.

However, I will not be unrealistically optimistic by daring to believe that, in the short term, departments of Buddhist studies in national universities like the ones at the University of Tokyo (東京大学) or Kyoto University (京都大学) can be set up in China. Nor, for that matter, do I dare to believe that over a short period of time professional Buddhist colleges modeled on the International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies (国際仏教学大学院大学) in Tokyo can be set up. Such colleges are quite different from the Buddhist academies (佛学院) in present-day China. Furthermore, the relationship between Buddhist academia (scholars, universities, and institutes) and Buddhist religious practice (monks, monasteries, and believers) has always been a challenge for the development of the academic study of Buddhist philosophy. But the gap between these may be slowly closing in China.

Last but not the least, while retaining and preserving what is good about the past and the tradition of the study of Chinese Buddhist philosophy, we now also need to be willing to learn things that are more cross-culturally oriented and on a par with the international community undertaking Buddhist studies. I do believe that the study of Sanskrit-based Buddhist philosophy will gradually be able to enter into the mainstream of the Chinese Buddhist academy. In this sense, scholars who specialize in Sanskrit Buddhist Studies are in fact working in the best time in the history of Buddhism in China, some fourteen hundred years after Xuanzang!

Teaching Buddhism as Philosophy

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Buddhist scholars often complain about being ignored by mainstream philosophers. The lack of courses and faculty members specializing in Asian philosophy in major American and European universities is a telling fact. Of course, this situation has complicated historical, cultural, and political aspects, which have been discussed by many others. Instead of blaming Eurocentrism, colonialism, or orientalism, I think it is more productive to reflect on how to present Buddhism in a way that is easily accessible to general philosophical readers with the hope of making it better received by them. As one of the few Buddhist scholars teaching in a philosophy department, I have experienced difficulties and joys in teaching Buddhism to philosophy major students. In my department, three courses on Buddhist philosophy are listed in the curriculum: Indian Buddhist Philosophy, Chinese Buddhist Philosophy, and Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy. Among them, "Indian Buddhist Philosophy" is most welcome by students and hence most frequently taught (probably because of my specialty in this area). So I will use this course as an example of my experience with teaching Buddhism as philosophy.

First of all, I divide the course into three units: (1) introduction and ethical issues; (2) metaphysical disputes; (3) epistemological issues. They correspond respectively to the three main sub-fields of philosophy: ethics (but topics such as reincarnation go beyond this scope), metaphysics, and epistemology. Philosophy students are generally familiar with this structure and feel comfortable when they are assigned to write a paper for each unit. Some may suspect that this design is cherry-picking and won't do justice to the actual history of Indian Buddhism, but I think these three units fit perfectly well with the historical development of Indian Buddhism. Unit one starts with foundational teachings of early Buddhism, then introduces the Theravāda-Pudgalavāda disputes. Unit two covers Sarvāstivāda, Madhyamaka, and Yogācāra. Unit three introduces the Buddhist epistemological school by focusing on Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, Śāntarakṣita, and Kamalaśīla. This third area is usually not apportioned its fair amount of space in many introductory books on Indian Buddhism. But for philosophy students, the epistemological turn of the early sixth century in India is one of the most attractive aspects of Buddhist philosophy. In fact, it was not only an epistemological turn, but also a turn to philosophy of logic and philosophy of language. Just imagine if Frege and Wittgenstein had been living at the time of Descartes how rich such three "turns" happening at the same time could be.

Although this structure of three units is consistent with the history of Indian Buddhism, I arrange the course content topic-wise. I discuss the four noble truths, reincarnation, *karma*, and *pudgala* in unit one; time, emptiness, the two truths, *ālayavijñāna*, and mind-only in unit two; perception, self-awareness, non-cognition, and *apoha* in unit three. These topics roughly reflect the historical development of Indian Buddhist schools, and by introducing these topics, I cover the whole span of Indian Buddhist philosophy. More importantly, as many of these topics were controversial among different Buddhist schools, I introduce at least two different views for each topic and focus on their disputes. I also frequently bring in contemporary discussions on relevant issues, which often arouse great interest among students as they learn that Buddhist philosophy is not "dead," but rather a living tradition that can still engage contemporary philosophical discourse.

For reading materials, I choose excerpts from the *Kathāvatthu*, Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and *Viṃśatikā*, Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, Bhāvevika's *Tarkajvālā*, Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, and the *Tattvasaṃgraha(pañjikā)* of Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. Most of these texts were composed in a style of dialogue or dispute between two parties; hence they are very philosophical in nature. Students often find it enjoyable to discuss these readings and to have debates on relevant topics in tutorial sessions.

My teaching experience shows that we should not simply blame mainstream philosophers for neglecting Buddhist philosophy. Instead, we Buddhist philosophers should work harder to reach out to them, providing them with easily accessible writings and having dialogues with them on issues of common philosophical concern. Once more Buddhist scholars are well-versed in both philology and philosophy, Buddhist philosophy will be a promising field.

Preserving the Four Noble Truths at the Heart of Buddhist Pedagogy

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Sitting in the back of a large auditorium for an "Introduction to Buddhism" class as a graduate-student teaching-assistant at a prominent Western university, I heard something that would impact the rest of my academic career. The professor, a fine and decorated scholar, broached the topic of the Four Noble Truths. He told the class that while many of them may have heard of this quaint set of teachings, they, in fact, amount to "baby Buddhism." "Real

Buddhism," he told them, occurred at the village level; real Buddhism is conveyed by ritual; real Buddhists have faith and emotion and little need for mnemonic doctrines. My jaw dropped. All the Buddhism I had learned to that point had not been real Buddhism. I had been taught to fit every word, practice, or historical fact into the framework of the Four Noble Truths. This is how I got interested in Buddhism and what sustained my interest. Was this not what I should share with others when my teaching career began? Since then, I have worked with students in the United States, Bangladesh (where I had students from sixteen different countries, many of them culturally Buddhist), and Myanmar. Everywhere, the Four Noble Truths have been the ultimate starting point and touchstone, just as they were in Sarnath when they were first uttered by the laconic prince, and both students and the Dharma benefit from their prioritization.

The professor was an unusually genial one, and he regularly took his small team of TAs out for coffee after his lectures. That day, I could not help myself, and as politely as possible I told him I had a hard time with what he said in class about the Four Noble Truths. We acknowledged our different backgrounds in different traditions (his East Asian and mine Indo-Tibetan) where different doctrines are given priority. I mentioned that in my ten-plus years of Buddhist study to that point, primarily with Tibetan teachers and other "insiders," the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths was constantly discussed, and when it was not being discussed explicitly, it was always implicitly understood as the framework within which any other teaching, whether doctrine or practice, was able to be understood, situated, and related to. When a room full of practicing Buddhists gets together, if any of them are asked why they are there to study and practice, they will most likely respond with an appeal to the Four Noble Truths: I hurt, I want to know why, I want it to stop, and I want to know how to make it stop.

To be fair to my professor, however, this would likely not be someone's response at the "village level" where he believes "real Buddhism" plays out. There, practitioners might reply that they hope to make merit and to acquire the causes for a better rebirth. The vocabularies are different—one sounds more systematic, and perhaps, therefore, more intellectual, while the other may sound simpler, more emotive, from the heart, the salt of the earth—but the goals are not so different. It all does fit within the Four Noble Truth's framework, and it harms nothing to preserve and propagate, at any level of discourse, the understanding facilitated by the Four Noble Truths.

This is beneficial on a number of levels. At the level of sociological analysis, the Four Noble Truths help us make sense of what seem to be arbitrary schisms. Why do Buddhists X, Y, and Z do such and such? Because they hurt, they want to know why, they want it to stop, and they want to know how to make it stop. From a historical perspective, focusing on the Four Noble Truths prevents Buddhism's fossilization. Why is there Buddhism and why are there Buddhists doing Buddhist things? Because our faces are wet with the tears of the first Noble Truth. At the level of social-ontology, emphasizing the Four Noble Truths militates against asinine ethnocentrism and cultural essentialism. If "real Buddhism" unfolds only or primarily in (presumably Asian) villages, then there is a great moat dug and filled keeping out aspiring Buddhists from other backgrounds. If ethnic practices, while fascinating for research, are presented as the ontological seat of Buddhism, then Buddhism is condemned to a tribalism unsupported by any of its dense scriptural foundations or historical precedents. Finally, at the level of daily relations, that is to say, personal life, the Four Noble Truths have been and continue to be common ground between Buddhists from the myriad of Buddhist traditions—a ground that extends out to new Buddhists as they approach. Devaluing the Four Noble Truths makes Buddhism mere culture, custom, and ritual. Grist for the academic mill, for sure, but the saddest consequence is that the fainter the Four Noble Truths become, young people born in the supposed ethnic cradle of "real Buddhism" increasingly turn elsewhere, anywhere else to explore their hurt, the reasons behind it, the promise of its end, and how to end it.

To drive my point home to my professor, I explained how two years earlier I had spent the year in a monastic college in Nepal where we studied Mipham's encyclopedic, multi-volume *Gateway to Knowledge*, in which one of the early sections opens with the lines:

> In order to become learned in what is true, four truths are taught in terms of what is to be abandoned: the truth of suffering, the truth of origin, the truth of cessation, and the truth of the path.
>
> The basis of the "truth of suffering" is everything that is a product of defiling states: the impure world and its inhabitants that are produced by the power of karmic actions and disturbing emotions.[1]

After presenting a long, detailed, and technical presentation of the Four Noble Truths and how they relate to the five paths and ten levels of a bodhisattva, Mipham closes the section with the simple statement, "In this way, the truth of the path should be understood as the true path, reasonable, accomplishing and delivering. . . . This completes the explanation of the four truths which have been taught in terms of what should be adopted or discarded."[2]

Between Mipham's opening lines and his concluding remarks, however, any teacher with reasonably rich knowledge of Buddhism could and should have much to say. Any student, moreover, who can coherently expound on this missing middle, can be said to have a reasonable knowledge of Buddhist doctrine, without which the rest of Buddhism's manifestations lose their context.

Academic teachers of Buddhism have the freedom to choose their own content and set their own standards for their students' knowledge. But it is fair to ask what these standards should be. As graduate students, we became accustomed to constant questioning about our field of research, and especially the perennial question, "So what? Why is that important?" Our own professors, if they were any good, hounded us like this. We should ask ourselves why we are teaching Buddhism and what we hope to accomplish by it. Our written "teaching philosophy" will likely allude

to post-colonial felicities and the scourge of Eurocentrism, but there is probably something more to the intellectual life we've committed ourselves to. Many, if not most, Buddhism professors I have known are agnostic, which is their business, for sure, but I do find their unwillingness to articulate the reasons for their agnosticism strange, and even intellectually parsimonious. Whether via discussion, interview, or personal essay, Buddhism professors very often reveal that they were initially attracted to the field precisely along the lines of the Four Noble Truths, but after some time they may have lost full confidence in the explanatory power of the first three Truths, or the therapeutic value of the fourth. Should a Buddhism professor be Buddhist? I'm not willing to make that claim publicly. Scholarly motives are infinite, and many scholars feel no obligation to fully reveal them. Erudite Catholic Buddhologists like Paul Williams and Paul Griffiths have advanced the field and produced more useful and interesting work from their peculiar positions than many of the most earnest practitioner-scholars. One thing that distinguishes the two scholars mentioned is that one gets the sense, even behind their technical philology and polemics, that they are *trying to work something out*. They have an actual problem, and they are inviting us on the journey to their own solution. It may be important to note that I have no idea how they teach or taught, but the centrality of *problems* in intellectual work can never be overstated, especially in the context of studying and teaching Buddhism, which every schismatic subtradition agrees began by dwelling on the problem of suffering. As teachers—as supposedly smart and soulful teachers of Buddhism—how much do we care about this problem? How much do we care if our students struggle and suffer? To what extent can they justifiably look to us—their teachers—for solutions?

In his memoir *Confessions of a Philosopher*, British philosopher Bryan Magee laments the moment he realized his Oxford professors did not approach philosophy in a way that spoke to his own existential questions:

> The greatest tragedy of academic philosophy in the twentieth century in the English speaking world is that it was developed as a profession largely by . . . people who did not themselves have philosophical problems. . . . A related tragedy lay in the fact that the most conspicuous alternative models of philosophy that were on offer during this period either contained religious elements or were in the oracular traditions stemming from Hegel and Nietzsche, which meant that many generations of serious students saw themselves as confronted with the subject in only these alternative forms. A consequence of this was that many of the ablest of them turned away from it altogether.[3]

He continues, "When I arrived on this scene . . . they seemed to me like non-music lovers who had sneaked into a concert without paying. . . .They did not themselves have philosophical problems, and never had them, or any idea what it was like to have them."[4]

We may or may not be able to relate to Magee's sense of personal disappointment, but his concern for thwarted incipient philosophers stands out. Teachers of academic Buddhism should not fail to ask themselves, "Who am I serving through the content I teach, and who might I be turning away?" At the graduate level, I suppose, let freedom reign and minutiae proliferate; graduate students usually know what they have got themselves into. But undergraduates often want some intimate exposure to the problem Buddhism is so hung up on, and how Buddhism's famous Path works. They are turned off and on within this problematic. (Of course, the odd student might be drawn in by some historical detail, sociological development, or ritual apparatus, but I think it is fair to wonder about where such students come from and how many like them are out there. I venture to say that a disproportionate number of them go on to become professors of Buddhism. . . .)

A persuasive argument can be made that Buddhism is not just philosophy. It houses a vast history rich in politics, sociology, linguistics, cultural syncretism, and so forth. Indeed, but that garland falls to bits without the thread of the man from Lumbini who taught the Four Noble Truths. We can easily dispense with the problematic term "philosophy" and take up a simpler one: doctrine, i.e., something that is taught and learned with special emphasis (from the Latin *doctrina:* "teaching, learning"). What is it that spread and flowered and morphed and found so many expressions? The doctrines. Doctrines about "philosophical problems," as Magee says, or existential problems, or whatever it is that Buddhism stubbornly hangs around in this world claiming to address. Without these doctrines that have something to say to our problems, really, so what?

I did not take Buddhism courses as an undergraduate, by my own choice. I studied with Tibetan lamas from the time I was fifteen, and the focus was always personal. Several of my elders who had studied Buddhism academically enjoined me not to bother. I don't believe it was great advice, but I don't resent them for it either. As a lover of all things Buddhist, I may have enjoyed the histories and doctrines of the traditions outside of my own Indo-Tibetan furrow, but I cannot be sure about that. As a graduate TA, most of the courses I served forced me to think, "If this were my first exposure to Buddhism, I'm not sure how impressed I'd be." The format of the survey course, for one thing, is troubling. What are we teaching here? A smattering of everything? Who are we teaching to? Is there no prioritized audience?

Let me concede that it may be too extreme to approach a class thinking, "I want to convert some of these students into Buddhists." Personally, I believe this motivation would fuel a livelier course than is usually on offer, but this is simply not most academics' priority, and it should be no requisite. A more modest proposal, and one that should be sympathetic even to agnostic academics, might be to imagine someone who grew up in Buddhism—in Buddhist culture, so-called "real Buddhism"—and who stands now in a relation of inurement to it, or apathy, or troubled confusion: How might the content of my course affect them? Is Buddhism a dance partner or a cadaver? Through the accidents of my peripatetic career, I have found myself facing students in this situation many times, and it has become a major pedagogical concern.

Another troubling moment I had as a graduate student was at a dinner following a regular "Comparative Philosophy" seminar for which I was the organizer. A couple of years into this job, I found the whole thing strange and inefficient. We flew people in from every quarter of the country to read a paper to an audience of about twenty, fewer than half of whom had much grounding in the topics. At this particular dinner I found myself with several tenured professors in Buddhist Studies and Philosophy. One of the professors proffered the provocative soundbite, "Did you ever think all this talk about 'enlightenment' has always just been a skillful means to get people to have hope and behave more ethically?" The question itself is fair enough, but it was not posed with much polemical spirit, or with much sense of appreciation of the vast literature and theory that speaks directly to that question. There were some real specialists at the table, and each of them might have contributed an interesting perspective, but the question did not seem to be serious, or to be taken seriously. The impression I came away with was one of several middle-aged white men talking about how delightful it was that they got paid to spend their time pondering curious people in cultures that believe in "enlightenment." My heart broke. What was I doing here? More than any other single experience, this dispiriting dinner contributed to the corrosion of my desire to build a career contingent on such cynical conversations and associations. As the grad student of the party, there was little I could get in edgewise, but I tried to bring up *doha* literature (songs of experience) and the stunningly subtle phenomenological writings of Longchen Rabjam and others who, in terms any modern reader of poetry would at least be able to sink their teeth into, describe exactly *how it feels* to be enlightened. But these professors did not get their tenure on such topics. Many among previous generations of Buddhist scholars wallow in the discourse of mysticism, which usually tries to disprove the possibility of a life lived after an epistemological overhaul brought about through contemplation. They suggest a kind of "as good as it gets" spirituality fathomed, expressed, and embodied by a few well-fed tenured professors communing over, say, pasta and breadsticks.

Given the opportunity, one scholar I might have invited to that dinner is B. Alan Wallace, who explains,

> The very possibility of genuine contemplative inquiry and insight has been called into question by modern scholars of mysticism and Buddhism. Steven Katz, for example, claims that religious images, beliefs, symbols, and rituals define, *in advance* the types of experiences a contemplative wants to have and does eventually have. . . . In a similar vein, Paul Griffiths states that the Buddhist cultivation of contemplative insight (Pāli: *vipassanā bhāvana*) consists of "repeated meditations upon standard items of Buddhist doctrine… until these are completely internalized by practitioners and their cognitive and perceptual habit-patterns operate only in terms of them. . . ." Thus, according to the above interpretations, mystical experience in general and the Buddhist cultivation of insight in particular entail no genuine, open-minded inquiry, but rather a self-imposed form of indoctrination.[5]

I imagine my Bhutanese or Myanmar students, on the fence about the value of the Buddhism they grew up surrounded by, in Katz's or Griffiths's office.

It used to be common in North American schools, in junior-high biology classes, to dissect owl-pellets, and much academic Buddhist research and teaching amounts to this: dead, but interesting, and originating in the guts of an exotic creature. That is Buddhism in too many classrooms. Daya Krishna, discussing Indian philosophy's treatment in the Academy, seems to agree:

> The dead, mummified picture of Indian philosophy will come alive only when it is seen to be a living stream of thinkers who have grappled with difficult problems that are, philosophically, as alive today as they were in the ancient past. Indian philosophy will become contemporarily relevant only when it is conceived as philosophy proper. Otherwise, it will remain merely a subject of antiquarian interest and research, which is what all the writers on Indian philosophy have made it out to be.[6]

Antiquarian, dead, and dissected is the preferred material for many a tweedy scholar, but how much rope should they get to hang students with? When a student is learning the basics of Buddhism, never mind the supposed goals of past Buddhists and how they employed their methods. What is at stake for the student at hand? No matter what their background, the best way for the student to kindle any interest is through the Four Noble Truths.

American undergraduates can barely buy their morning coffee without encountering magazine displays selling mindfulness, especially as a decontextualized, commodified, and vaguely Buddhist product. TED Talks and Google workshops vouch for the harmlessness of this basic Buddhist practice, but divorced from the framework of the Four Noble Truths, mindfulness can be a package for Buddhism's antithesis, doing everything to validate the habitual self and all its endeavors.[7] Chogyam Trungpa foresaw all of this in his 1973 book *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, which addresses so many of the ways a "seeker" will crawl after Buddhism as a source of spiritual liquor:

> As long as you see yourself or any part of experience as the "dream come true," then you are involved with self-deception. Self-deception seems always to depend upon the dream world, because you would like to see what you have not yet seen, rather than what you are now seeing.[8]

A great many Western undergraduates thus enter a course believing they will learn the kind of mindfulness that their favorite CEO practices or that they will acquire an antidote to basic anxiety and malaise, which they have been told are pathological. Basic meditation can be taught, conceivably, in small confined settings, but when carelessly juxtaposed with academic material, I have seen this go haywire and add to confusion. At any rate, it seems out of place in an academic setting except as a brief introduction; even monasteries do not mix study and meditation in this way.[9] What to offer, then?

One of my early adjunct teaching experiences was the impossibly broad "Introduction to Buddhism" for about one hundred students. In the interest of objectivity and to challenge myself as a true generalist, I tried to offer a bit of everything: history, doctrine, sociology, etc. Quite early, however, one student approached me to complain that I seemed to be giving more attention to the Mahayana (which was true because of my training) and another student complained that I had not included Vietnamese Buddhism on the syllabus at all. The survey format, for the students and for me, seemed like a no-win deal. Reflecting on my priorities, I knew my intended focus was doctrine because that is why I love Buddhism, that is why I studied it, and presumably, that was why I was there trying to teach it. It was no surprise to me, then, that as I started in on the Four Noble Truths, eyes widened, body language improved, and questions became more frequent and apropos. In order to emphasize that the Four Noble Truths is not some theory among many, I brought it into conversation with the Three Marks of Existence and its slightly mahayanic variation, the Four Seals of Dharma. For a couple of weeks we discussed the interrelations between these two sets of four—how each illuminated the other, and how there is a clear ideological coherence obtaining between them. For the midterm exam, the question was simply "Explain the Four Noble Truths in light of the Four Seals of Dharma."

The quality of the answers exceeded my expectations. In fact, I couldn't help but think that many long-term Buddhist practitioners I know could not answer this simple question with as much eloquence. Based on this result, the Four Noble Truths/Four Seals of Dharma relation has remained a fixture of my teaching for the last seven years or so. I believe that anyone who can expound for even a few minutes on this topic understands Buddhist doctrine reasonably well. On top of this, there is nothing sectarian about the question, as it is common to all major Buddhist traditions and does not depend on any specific sources. Although I am a Mahayanist, I am partial to Michael Carrithers's and Peter Harvey's Pali-based introductory works on the Four Noble Truths,[10] and I use Dongsar Khyentse Norbu's lucid and accessible *What Makes You Not a Buddhist*[11] for the Four Seals of Dharma.

This approach was validated for me recently in Myanmar, where I teach "World Philosophies" at a pre-collegiate prep school. Most of my students grew up in a Buddhist family surrounded by ritual practice. But not one of them is an enthusiastic Buddhist themselves. They do not evince the hostility commonly found in some American former-Christian students, they just compartmentalize Buddhism as a thing in their meta-life, but it's not a particularly interesting thing, especially not something to add any savor to their youth. It's something their grandparents are into, maybe their parents, and certainly the nation's ubiquitous and culturally magisterial monks, but their own relationship to Buddhism seemed resigned to a passive drift towards a future insight, perhaps when they have become parents themselves, contributing members of society who have learned to appreciate what Buddhism has always been to them in presentation: a combination of vague conservative values and guilt/anxiety complexes tied to the singular path of merit-making to be carried out in public ritual. For the truly ambitious, the path of *vipassanā* is sanctioned but heavily policed and shrouded in sanctimony and very little theoretical grounding.

One of my students told me that his devoutly Buddhist parents were initially intrigued that their son was in an eight-week course on Buddhist philosophy, for in their twenty years with him, he had never taken much interest in it. When they learned, however, that the teacher was a Mahayanist, and worse, a Vajrayanist (to them a Hindu), they were thoroughly upset and warned him not to listen too closely. They needn't have been overly concerned, however, since the course material was simply the Four Noble Truths in relation to the Four Seals of Dharma (or the Three Marks of Existence).

In the beginning I made it a point to ask my students in Myanmar how Buddhism had been presented to them all their life. Was there anything they liked about it, and what did they not like? It was clear that the negatives tipped the scale. As we proceeded, I continually reminded them to ask of anything they have encountered or will encounter in Buddhism, "What does this have to do with the Four Noble Truths?" And what does this have to do with me? Well, do I suffer, etc.? As they got used to thinking in this way, they began to make sense, largely on their own, of the tradition that had befuddled them their whole lives. Many questions came up about merit-making. Why do people do it? Well, first, because they are suffering; second, because the cause of suffering, craving (*taṇhā*), spins a toxic web of unsatisfactoriness to which we would like to apply an antidote. Therefore, the ten *pāramitā*s are practiced, and the easiest of these is generosity (*dāna*), which contributes to chipping away at the tense metaphysical rampart between self and other, and when clinging to self and other are resolved, there is cessation, the third Noble Truth. This cessation, moreover, defines *nīrvāna*, which they had always misunderstood as some vague objective heaven.

The reasonings were only minimally technical, but when the students thought their own way through them, especially as a cipher for their own culture from which they report their generation feels increasingly alienated, part of their world lit up. Soon they were comfortable thoughtfully analyzing their own habitual behaviors, adolescent foibles, and hopes and dreams. I believe this is the kind of engagement the Buddhist tradition solicits from its interlocutors. One day my colleague told me students were particularly mopey in her class, and when she asked them what was wrong, they replied, "suffering." And when she told them there was much to look forward to in the term, they replied, "but everything is impermanent."

If their engagement stopped there, I would have succeeded at nothing more than peddling Buddhism's stereotype as an unqualified pessimism. However, they were able to go much further. Knowing that they had quite a bit of indirect exposure to Pāli vocabulary, in addition to the Four Noble Truths/Four Seals of Dharma assignment, I assailed them with a midterm analyzing the Wheel of Life and the twelve links of dependent origination (the Buddhist creation story of sorts, or rather, its attempt to *describe* how all of this (life) came to be this way and persists). The Myanmar

students excelled at this, largely, I am convinced, because they took some pleasure in unpacking a teaching that had been presented to them before as something for rote memorization. Many of the words were familiar to them, but it made all the difference when they could recognize themselves as the blind man groping on the trail, bungling in his ignorance (*avidyā*); or when they recognized their active teenage minds and bodies in the house with six windows (representing the six senses); or when they realized the couple making love is their own accumulation of experiences (sense contact); or how their own choices and actions are like the potter spinning at his wheel, piling things up for this or that kind of life (*saṃskāra*s). In short, many students who had only ever encountered "real Buddhism" as ritual and culture, but for whom it was dead, saw it come alive before their eyes. Did they become gung-ho Buddhists? I don't think so. But I think most of them will now hesitate to confine it to the margins of recondite otherness.

My experience with Bhutanese students has been similar and reinforces my belief in what may be described somewhat tongue-in-cheek, but accurately, as a kind of "existentialist-fundamentalist" approach to Buddhist pedagogy. During my one and a half years teaching philosophy and religion at the Asian University for Women in Bangladesh, I had several dozen Bhutanese students in my classes. Although I only had the chance to teach one specifically Buddhist-related course ("Buddhism and Gender," more on that later), given my background, I cannot help but teach most of my classes from a comparative angle. For example, when teaching Cynic philosophy in my "Foundations of Philosophy" course, I was delighted to have at least a small audience of Bhutanese who could appreciate comparisons between Diogenes of Sinope and Drukpa Kunley, the "Divine Madman" of Bhutan. Mostly for my own amusement, and partly borne of their own curiosity, for a few months the Bhutanese and I formed a classical literary "Tibetan Language" group on Saturdays, since several of them had told me how their generation is not usually trained in classical Tibetan, which is Bhutan's literary *lingua franca* (they refer to it as "religious language"). I chose to read with them, line by line, one of the most accessible classical Tibetan texts, Gampopa's *Ornament of Precious Liberation*.

Like my Myanmar students, it was interesting to see how familiar they were with basic vocabulary, but how far that vocabulary was from their personal experience. Perhaps even more than young Myanmar students, young Bhutanese grow up in one of the most self-consciously Buddhist cultures in the world. There is an absolute ubiquity of Buddhist imagery and a thriving participatory lay population. It is perhaps not quite as "uncool" to be into Buddhism in Bhutan as it is in more cosmopolitan Yangon, but my Bhutanese friends have made essentially the same remarks as my Myanmar students: Buddhism was always perfunctorily presented as culture, faith, and ritual. It was always the vehicle for conservative, family-oriented codes of conduct, guilt-complexes, nationalism, etc. They were forced to memorize some classic texts when they were younger, but as soon as they moved on to higher studies, Buddhism was pushed to the margins of a strangeness they do not despise, but they are not eager to spend time getting to know. Certainly the temples are beautiful and everyone is aware of the existence of admirable masters, but the calling is not there. Many young Bhutanese do not fit this description and are sincerely engaged in Buddhist practice, but none of my dozens of young friends are, as far as I know.

The Bhutan-born Vajrayana teacher Dzongsar Khyentse Norbu Rinpoche has commented explicitly on this state of alienation. When asked what he thought of Bhutan's ban on tobacco products as a nationwide act of Buddhist virtue-ethics, he replied,

> Personally, I just don't want Buddhism to become a culture or a ritual. . . . As someone who is supposed to be a caretaker of Buddhism, one of my biggest fears is that Buddhism in Bhutan [or Myanmar] will end up becoming a ritual, or a culture, or some kind of a narrow code of conduct. If you do that, you are really, really. . . . You think you are servicing Buddhism... but in fact you are doing the opposite. Because Buddhism is much much much much grander than "No tobacco!" "No alcohol!" "No meat!" Buddhism is science. Buddhism is life. Buddhism is the study of life. Buddhism is the study of yourself. Buddhism is the study of illusion. So it should not be hijacked by some narrow issues. . . .[12]

But this is precisely how my friends tell me they were taught in their youth. When I read Gampopa with them, they could pronounce all the words (since Dzongkha uses the same alphabet), and they could even recognize most of the major nouns in a sentence, especially nouns with religious connotation (since they are adopted wholesale in Dzongkha). However, because of lack of training, they struggled to construct any coherence to the text. How did these words, which they were all vaguely familiar with, form chains of significance, and how, in the end, is this text teaching Buddhism? Why is this a Buddhist classic?

There is something amiss in Bhutan's primary and secondary education when young people do not even know the meaning of their own names, most of which are borrowed from classical Tibetan. This might be seen as a cultural and linguistic problem, but it is a more general problem for a country trying to preserve the message of Buddhism. If, as Dzongsar Khyentse Norbu Rinpoche claims, "real Buddhism" is "the study of yourself" and "the study of illusion," opportunities are lost when a young Bhutanese misses the chance to appreciate the Dharma through her own name, and when her main exposure to the Dharma has been to be scolded by her elders when she became sleepy during a long ritual she was forced to attend.

I had one particularly brilliant student with a long and profound name. I couldn't believe it when she asked me what it meant! There is enough contained in her name to discuss Buddhism for hours or more based on nothing more than some amateur philology. And all of it can be discussed in the framework of the Four Noble Truths. Take her name: *Ugyen Samdrup Lhamo*. Three nominal words;

only syntax gives it some structure. The first term, which would be taken as the primary name (the name she would go by), *Ugyen*, is, for one thing, one of the personal names of the eighth-century master Guru Rinpoche. He is called that because he hailed from *Ugyen*, which is the Tibetan transliteration of *Uḍḍiyāna*, the "land of the *ḍākiṇī*s" (female enlightened beings), associated with the Swat Valley in Pakistan. A history starts to unfold out of this word *Ugyen*, the history of Buddhism, which used to pervade Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Kashmir before making its way to Tibet, and then Bhutan. Guru Rinpoche's biography begs to be explored, as well as the biographies of his disciples, including the women Yeshe Tshogyal and Mandarāva. Tantric doctrine starts to sound interesting; the possibility of feminist enlightenment, which is alluded to in the third term, *Lhamo*, "goddess" or "divine lady," etc.

In the second name, *Samdrup*, *sam* is from the verbal root "to think" or "intend." Intend what? It could be one's basic wishes, but in the name's higher register, it would be *bodhicitta*, Mahayāna Buddhism's principle of compassion united with insight into emptiness, which is directly linked with the third Noble Truth of Cessation. The second part of the name, *drup*, comes from the verb "to accomplish." How is one's intention—*bodhicitta*—accomplished? Through the *pāramitā*s, the accumulation of merit and wisdom.

Thus, just as Myanmar students were able to learn about the significance of the cultural practice of merit-making that had never quite made sense to them, the simple occasion of someone's name can be an opportunity to present Buddhism as a system that addresses and never strays from the fundamental problems of the Four Noble Truths.

In personal correspondence with a Bhutanese student, they said that one of the most important moments in their understanding of Buddhism was in tenth grade when they heard about the Theravāda/Mahāyāna distinction. It was interesting for them to learn of the more august, and, in their words, less "idolatrous" Theravada tradition compared to Bhutan's native Vajrayana tradition. Learning of the Theravāda provided a window into the varieties of doctrines and practices that can be called Buddhist. Buddhism was not, after all, synonymous with Bhutanese culture and ritual, heavy on reverence to icons, prostrating, offering butterlamps and prayers to local spirits, etc. Although not spelled out to her, she got the sense that there was something deeper that all Buddhists shared.

Opportunities to relate to the teachings make all the difference. Throughout high school, respected lamas and scholars gave formal lectures at her school, but almost always delivered in classical Tibetan or a high-level Dzongkha very close to it. On one occasion, a young lama led a more informal discussion with the students in English, which all of them found much easier to relate to. This short session had the effect of preserving in her a faint interest in Buddhism. Thus, a back-to-basics doctrinal approach (a "Buddhist existentialist fundamentalism") goes a long way to stave off alienation of the youth from Buddhism.

Myanmar and Bhutanese students stand out because of the imperative to not drive people away from the Dharma through our teaching. But the approach benefits students from diverse backgrounds. At the Asian University for Women in Bangladesh, the first quarter of my "Buddhism and Gender" course was dedicated to the Four Noble Truths/Four Seals of Dharma relation. After their examination on that topic, students had no trouble understanding how Buddhism's metaphysical anti-essentialism could be used as a resource in feminist and transgender discourses. By keeping it simple and sticking to the fundamental doctrines, Buddhism lost its strangeness and became an intellectual framework as usable as any other. Never did we dwell on the tiresome question, "Is Buddhism a religion or a 'way of life'?" or the historical divisions between different sects or traditions. Sticking to the Four Noble Truths, I never perceived any discomfort from the side of my mostly Muslim students. The question was not the comparative merits of Buddhist doctrines *vis-à-vis* those of the religions of the Book. The question was what *are* the fundamental doctrines and how can they be applied in various contexts?

A significant group of Ismaili Pakistani students and a number of agnostic students from Muslim backgrounds, I observed, ultimately took a strong shine to Buddhism, attracted, I believe, by the tradition's poetic richness that reminded them of that same element of their own culture. A few of them took independent study courses with me on Buddhism, where, of course, I focused on the Four Noble Truths and the Four Seals of Dharma, usually adding more technical abhidharma doctrines such as the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination and the Five Aggregates. Some of these students enrolled in my upper-level "Phenomenology" course, which incorporated several more nuanced Buddhist texts and theories, all made comprehensible through previous study of the Four Noble Truths.

However unique our research or profound our interests, those of us who are able to teach Buddhism professionally are able to do so because of our comfort with the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths. We should not leave our students stranded without this fundamental raft. We should give them what they need to decide if the Dharma is worth dancing with or whether they should continue to keep it at an uneasy distance.

NOTES

1. 8.1-8.2; Mipham, *Gateway to Knowledge vol. II*, 91.
2. 12.99; Ibid., 158.
3. Magee,*Confessions of a Philosopher*, 43.
4. Ibid., 65.
5. Wallace, "The Dialectic Between Religious Belief and Contemplative Knowledge," 203.
6. Krishna,*Indian Philosophy*, 15.
7. See Wilson, *Mindful America*.
8. Trungpa,*Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, 49.
9. See Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*.
10. Carrithers, *The Buddha*; Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*.

11. Norbu, *What Makes You* Not *a Buddhist*.
12. Ibid.

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Sailing against the Current: The Buddha, Buddhism, and Methodology

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PREAMBLE

I appreciate the editor of the special issue of the American Philosophical Association's *Newsletter on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies* devoted to "Buddhist Philosophy Worldwide: Perspectives and Programs" for inviting Buddhist scholars from throughout Asia and the rest of the world to provide their perspectives on the study of Buddhist philosophy as an academic discipline in their countries. In my case, I am concerned with India, a part of South Asia, which is the land of the Buddha, where he became Awakened (Bodhagaya), taught and propagated his *dhamma*, and attained *nirvāṇa* (Kushinagar) . . . although he was born in Lumbini, situated on the Nepal side of the border with India. The issues I address here are actually about the meta-philosophy of Buddhism in India. These issues are:

- How do I perceive Buddhist philosophy in India?
- How is it studied or should be studied, understood, taught, promoted, and researched within Indian academe, be it as a traditional way of understanding the original texts or as using the modern Western analytic method and terminology to explain these texts?
- Is Western philosophy, particularly Anglophone analytical philosophy, focused just as the philosophies of Indian origin like Buddhism in the departments of philosophy? And how are the relations between the two different philosophical traditions and what are the consequences of these relations?

First, I would like to mention here that the title of this article is borrowed from my forthcoming book with the same title. Second, the presentation here is based on my experience of studying, teaching, and lecturing across the globe over forty-seven years as a student and teacher of Buddhist philosophy in different departments of philosophy where philosophy of both Western and Indian traditions is taught and research carried out.

The article is divided into two major sections:

(i) Section I: "Academic and Non-Academic Perspectives on the Study of Buddhism in Contemporary India" shows that Buddhist philosophy and other Indian philosophical systems are not actually treated only as sources of knowledge for the sake of knowledge in India. They are actually taken by Indians as different or alternative views and ways of life without mutual conflicts. Rather, there is a harmonious confluence among them so far as practice is concerned. In this sense, they have academic as well as non-academic aspects. This section also deals with the issues of the present status of the study, understanding, and teaching of Buddhism as a discipline of philosophy in Indian academe; its place in the Western world of philosophy; and its contribution to the Western perspectives of philosophy, which have their roots in the ancient Greek philosophical tradition.

(ii) Section II: "Buddhist Methodology" briefly explores the underlying variety of the methods adopted by the Buddha and subsequent Buddhist classical thinkers while explaining, commenting, and interpreting the Buddha's original teachings, orientation, and purpose in their chosen manner, in respect of addressing the problems and solutions of human suffering. However, they often vociferously disagree, criticize, and reject each other's understanding of the Buddha's seemingly conflicting intents in his discourses.

SECTION I: ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVES ON THE STUDY OF BUDDHISM IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

It would be appropriate here at the outset to mention my experience of learning Buddhism in the early days of my college and university life, which was utterly unsystematic. This I realized later when I returned to India after completing my PhD under Professor J. W. de Jong at

the Australian National University, Canberra, in 1982 and joined the Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, as Lecturer in 1983, and started teaching Buddhist philosophy at all levels—MA, M.Phil., and PhD. This way of teaching continues even today all over India in the departments of philosophy which offer courses in both Indian and Western philosophies. For example, my teachers started teaching Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakakārikā* with Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* without having the background knowledge of the Buddha's fundamental teachings preserved in the Nikāyas and Abhidharma scholasticism, which is vehemently criticized by Nāgārjuna throughout his *Kārikā*s comprising twenty-seven chapters. They did the same with Dharmakīrti, Yogācāra–Vijñānavāda, and Ratnakīrti's philosophy of language without discussing Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* and *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* along with Sthiramati's *Ṭīkā*, and Dignāga's theory of perception propounded in his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* with *svavṛtti* as a background. Besides, their entire teaching was based on old English translations and secondary sources without the support of original texts. These serious lacunae came to my notice during my study and teaching of Buddhism at Delhi University. Since then I corrected my ways of understanding Buddhism, which always helps me understand the Buddha's philosophical perspectives and programs preserved in the Nikāyas, and their interpretations by subsequent thinkers, and the development of various schools of thought within the history of Buddhist philosophy.

Secondly, my entire understanding, study, research, and perspective about Buddhism radically changed when I came across the word *paṭisotagāmī* (which means going against the current of the prevailing false beliefs) used by the Buddha about the nature of his Bodhi, around the year 2000 while writing my book *The Centrality of Ethics in Buddhism* (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2007). Thirdly, at the same time, I came to realize that the Buddha understands the concept of humanity in the form of "the community of sufferers," which lacks any metaphysical or religious connotation. These three developments in my life proved to be crucial in my thinking and writing in the area of Buddhism.

THE TASK OF PHILOSOPHY

For Indian philosophy in general, the task of philosophy is not only to form a rational and meaningful worldview, but also to critically examine the presuppositions, basic epistemological evidences, conceptual frameworks, justified reasons, consistent and coherent arguments and their development, knowledge and truth claims, purpose, meaningfulness, explanation and confirmation, application of various modes of methodology (such as *pramāṇa*s), and consequences of such worldviews involving metaphysical, epistemological, logical, ethical, axiological, socio-political, scientific, and spiritual perspectives.

Broadly speaking, the Indian philosophical tradition, keeping in view the very constitution of the human person, divides the world into two aspects—internal (soul and mind) and external (external senses and external objects), which are involved in any cognitive experience of an object, its impression (*saṃskāra*) on the mind, which receives the sensory data, organizes and structures them into one qualified form as an object loaded with an identity such as a tree or table, and passes this qualified cognition to the soul who is its possessor, who in turn evaluates it and as per its interest acts and directs the mind for further action. In this cognitive process, mind keeps enriching its stock of impressions generated both internally and externally, and evaluates human actions in the form of good or bad, right or wrong. This is an integrated biological-psychological-cognitive process and in a phenomenological sense is confined to first-person-singular experience, which involves the subject's subjectivity. For this reason, exploration of man's internal world becomes imperative for his spiritual growth and the welfare of the world (*lokakalyāṇa*). Indian philosophers, barring the materialist Cārvāka, are fond of exploring, knowing, and transforming the nature of mind or consciousness (*citta*) through the most effective method of meditational techniques. Contemporary scholars of Indian philosophy of mind/consciousness across the world find the Husserlian phenomenological method the best way of exploring and understanding the nature, function, and various modes of mind/consciousness, whether it be the Buddhist Yogācāra, Sāṃkhya–Yoga, or Advaita Vedāntin Śaṃkara's variety. This academic exercise is very much covered under the task of philosophy in India, which helps propound metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and spirituality of consciousness. This latter development is not the aim of the Husserlian phenomenology and its subsequent varieties.

Needless to say, the whole Indian intellectual tradition for millennia has always shown concern for the well-being (*loka-kalyāṇa*) and solidarity (*loka-saṃgraha*) of the world. Its excellence in every field—namely, (i) intellectual, spiritual, and ethical tradition, (ii) vast literature, (iii) holistic value system, (iv) harmonious and peace loving society and welfare polity, and (v) physical richness and beauty—have been found exotic by many foreign travelers like Albiruni; Christian missionaries like Robert Nobili, Father Sasseti, and J. F. Pons; and Europeans, particularly German, thinkers of the Romantic Era (Herder, Schlegel, Schelling, etc.), Indologists, and Orientalists. Despite all these positive characteristics and civilized natives, India has been described by certain colonizers like Charles Grant, a powerful official of the East India Company, and T. B. Macaulay, a British official, as primitive, barbarous, uncivilized, living in the dark ages, and so on. To know their cultural and political purpose and action, it is imperative that we know their European background and context.

Regarding philosophical method, it will not be inappropriate to say that there are as many philosophies as there are ways of doing philosophy. And also, it is true that everything is not philosophy, but everything can be a subject matter of philosophizing. Philosophy is known for innovations of a variety of methods as the context, purpose, orientation, and choice demand. However, in a general sense, philosophy is a reflective, rational, coherent, consistent, and meaningful thinking, which originates from one's transcendental insight or wisdom, which in turn also requires a systematic method. Our universe itself is a functional system. Hence we can say there is nothing in the world—from an atomic particle to the cosmos—which is without a functional system or pattern. A human being is a concatenation of multiple

complex factors. He is not only a biological being, but also a psychological, cognitive, rational, intellectual, reflective, value-desiring, power-seeking, truth-seeking, spiritual liberation-seeking, social, and creative being and so on and so forth. This complexity forbids him to understand his own system in entirety. He grows with cognitive experiences arising from external and internal interactions, stores their impressions in his memories, subjectively structures and learns to identify them through concepts and language, learns in the social environment, forms various types of beliefs, behaves accordingly, and so on. His mind is just like a cook, which cooks a variety of food of thought, some positive and some negative, some good and some bad, by using various kinds of rational and irrational ideas, and conceptual and presupposition-loaded ingredients and methods to produce a philosophic theory. In the Buddhist critical analysis, the whole fabricating and reifying activity of mind is exposed as empty of ontological content, on the basis of which the entire world of false beliefs is proved to be nothing but a mirage. This is truly a *paṭisotagāmī* way of doing philosophy by the Buddha and the Buddhist thinkers.

The rest of the article aims at developing this radical approach of the Buddha and his followers. It shows my way of understanding and teaching Indian Buddhism as a whole, whether it be Buddhist metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, philosophy of language, or philosophy of mind across the various schools of Buddhism—Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika, Mādhyamika, and Yogācāra–Vijñānavāda. *The Buddha's calling of his realization of truth as going against the current thinking (paṭisotagāmī) creates a conceptual framework within which everything in the name of Buddhism can be understood and explained in its right perspective*. This is my firm opinion. Further, initially he starts with the therapeutic method, but subsequently he and his followers apply a host of other methods, each of which contributes to the understanding and resolution of human suffering without compromising rational rigor, coherence, and consistency, which a Buddhist mode of philosophical thinking demands despite maintaining its *paṭisotagāmī* orientation. In this way Buddhism stands all alone facing the challenges of all other schools of thought in India, whether orthodox or heterodox. While I do not have the necessary space to discuss this issue in any complexity here, interested readers are referred to my forthcoming book.

Of course, it is important to realize that the aim of the study of Buddhism is not confined to rigorous *academic* pursuits only in departments of philosophy. Rather, its ultimate aim is to live a *non-academic* Buddhist life grounded in the Buddha's type of Awakening, which is, of course, the supreme mode of intuitive knowledge, but not for the sake of knowledge only as we find in modern Western philosophy. In this context, achieving the state of Awakening requires fulfilment of tough pre-conditions like overcoming of such defilements (*kleśa*) as the trinity of passion-hatred-delusion (*rāga-dveṣa-moha*), craving (*tṛṣṇā*, a perverted form of desire), clinging or grasping (*upādāna*) to narcissistic passions, etc. for the sake of freedom from suffering, peace of mind, happiness, engagement in bodhisattva kinds of ethical actions, *nirvāṇa*, and so on. Thus, neglecting the non-academic aspect of Buddhist philosophy will make philosophical knowledge not only hollow and meaningless, but also dangerously valueless. Therefore, the two—knowledge and moral value—must be treated as two inseparable sides of the same coin. In the *Dīghanikāya* (III.5.227), while discussing the nine characteristics of the Buddha's personage, it is said that he is endowed with both knowledge (*vijjā*, *vidyā*) of truth and perfect moral conduct (*caraṇa*)—i.e., he is *vijjācaraṇasampanna*. These two are the necessary conditions for being a good person.

In the same vein, Dharmakīrti says in the opening aphorism of his *Nyāyabindu* (I.1) that knowledge serves only as the condition for the accomplishment of human values. It means knowledge creates discriminatory power (*vivekabuddhi*) to distinguish between what is value and what is vice (*saṃyagjñānapūrvikāpurūṣārthasiddhiḥ . . . heya-upādeya. . .*). This means knowledge and human values must go together. This combination is missing in the study and teaching of Buddhism in modern Indian academia in general, just as we find in modern Western philosophy—i.e., "knowledge for the sake of knowledge," and "conceptual and linguistic clarification for the sake of clarification" without any moral commitment, which is the necessary condition of Buddhist spirituality. The same philosophical attitude prevails in contemporary India as well.

As an academic field, Buddhist texts are taught in every department of Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit. Besides, in modern Indian universities and colleges where philosophy is taught, Buddhism is also taught at all levels and research is carried out in both Hindi and English languages. So far as the creative writings, editing of the original text (Sanskrit), their translations, and interpretations are concerned, like any other academic area in India, Buddhist philosophy is solely dependent on Western (i.e., European and American) and Japanese scholarship. Pali Buddhism likewise owes its development to Sri Lankan and European scholars. It is worth noting that the Pali Text Society has done a tremendous job of translating Pali texts into English in the last one hundred fifty years. In India, only a few Indian Sanskrit pundits have published critical editions of Sanskrit texts, and very few have translated them into English or Hindi. Besides, quite a few Indians did pioneering philosophical work on various schools of Buddhism, all in the first three quarters of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, it is because of the efforts of Western scholars that Indian philosophy including Buddhist philosophy is slowly getting recognition in the Western world of philosophers as a mode of doing philosophy in their opinion, which is considered comparable to Greek-originated Western philosophy. That said, it is a matter of pride that in the twentieth century, India produced a number of highly competent Indian and Buddhist scholars who authored many pioneering works, made comparative studies with Western thinkers, and discovered, edited, translated, interpreted, and wrote histories of Indian philosophy mainly in English.

SECTION II: BUDDHIST METHODOLOGY

In the Indian history of philosophy, as in its Western counterpart, various conflicting perspectives have developed without any consensus on any issue of a metaphysical, epistemological, or linguistic nature. Even

then philosophers do not run away from such problems, rather they engage in them. Very often they will go for meta-level analysis of such conflicting views. On this approach, we can mention three Indian schools which make meta-level analyses to solve such conflicts: 1) Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka, which in a skeptical mood dialectically shows the emptiness of all views, which have false ontological commitments; 2) Jainism, which offers a synthesis on the ground that each view is partially true, meaning there is no absolute truth; and 3) the Advaita of Śaṃkara, which treats this conflict as a result of relative truth-claims and so rises to the highest level of transcendental truth, which is the Absolute Truth. Strangely, the philosophers involved do not ever stop with these solutions. All these efforts are not only intellectual exercises, but also three different approaches to universalize the ethical values of compassion, non-violence, and cosmic harmony, respectively.

Again, if there is a goal to achieve in one's life, one has to be methodologically systematic in one's approach. If one wants to pluck a mango fruit from a mango tree, one must be skilled in climbing the tree, pluck the desired mango, come down skillfully, systematically take its juice out, and prepare a drink. Another example may be one's wish to learn driving, which requires knowing the functioning of the necessary parts like clutch, break, accelerator, steering, etc. and their integrated functioning. Then good driving depends on the skillful management of the driver. It is like knowing the general rules of a cricket game, which is different from the application of technique by an individual player, depending on which he succeeds or fails.

What I want to say is that there may be as many methods as there are areas of enquiry, such as natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, religion, and spirituality. A researcher has to choose one right mode of enquiry—i.e., he has to follow a system of right steps to arrive at the goal he has aimed at, which may be philological, a priori, empirical, a priori-synthetic, comparative, or phenomenological, etc. But in every case one has to start with the "given" and follow the principles of reasoning to be consistent and coherent in order to develop the main theme and accomplish successfully the investigation into the nature of truth, which may be absolute, relative, one, many, progressive, empirical, transcendental, spiritual, and so on. It is to be noted here that there are multiple forms of rationality, which differs from one mode of enquiry or another.

Moreover, plurality of views, not to talk of things, is ubiquitous, and this creates unending disputes. Then there is plurality of attempts to resolve them. These attempts may be at the empirical level as well as at meta-levels. Then again follow disputes. Thus there is an ongoing process of dispute and resolution, which together shapes an ever developing intellectual tradition. In this process different methods also evolve in light of new problems and evidences. This is what happens in philosophical traditions as well. But above all, there are immediate practical concerns, which, of course, require theoretical clarity, but more importantly relevant practical solutions. The parable of the arrow narrated by the Buddha[1] is a strong message to avoid irrelevant and self-stultifying enquiry, and focus on immediate practical concerns. In this case, the victim himself is not bothered about his own welfare, for the reason that he is obsessed with irrelevant and insignificant social, cultural, and religious priorities, which distract him from his immediate concerns, at his own cost. The Buddha suggests the cleansing of the mind of such conditioning factors of the sufferer and awakening him to take an appropriate course of action to make him free from suffering. For the Buddha, the ultimate solution is the path of the *dhamma*. Note that the word *dhamma* has various meanings, such as quality (*guṇa*), cause or condition (*hetu*), non-substantiality (*nissata*), discourse or preaching (*desanā*), and text (*pariyatti*).[2]

BUDDHIST CANONS AND PHILOLOGY

It is a fact that the Buddha himself did not record his own discourses. They were compiled, categorized, and systematized by his disciples over a long period in the Pali language—i.e., the local dialect. Unto the present these are considered to be the original and most authentic Buddhist canons, most of which are now critically edited and translated by a dedicated team of the Pali Text Society. With the passage of time, a new set of Buddhist canons in Sanskrit were also produced. Various commentaries and subcommentaries were also written in order to elaborate and interpret the real intent of the Buddha's discourses as well as the independent writings of the Buddhist thinkers over the centuries after the *parinirvāṇa* of the Buddha. In this situation, it was not possible to identify the original texts or meaning of the contents of these texts. However, a rich and diversified Buddhist literature came into existence along with the multiple schools of thought, namely, Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda–Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Mādhyamika, and Yogācāra–Vijñānavāda. Many of them were translated into various foreign languages like Sinhalese, Burmese, Thai, Tibetan, Chinese, etc.

Now, if one is desirous of reading and understanding the meaning of the contents of a Buddhist text, for example, he must have its well-edited version by a competent philologist whose primary task is to check and correct its grammatical and semantic structures with variants of readings wherever required in order to maintain the consistent flow of the ideas and arguments. Sometimes it so happens that there are two opposite readings suggested in the same sentence. In such a situation, the philologist chooses the most appropriate one which fits in with that sentence so that an acceptable meaning is derived. I have one such example in the reading of Candrakīrti's commentary[3] on the second chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, wherein two opposite readings are available, namely, "no motion is possible" (*agamanam*, *vigamanam*) and "a double motion is possible" (*dvigamanam*). This can be resolved only through understanding of the appropriate meaning of the running argument.

A philologist is also a good translator and interpreter, who has a good grounding in the knowledge of the fundamental doctrines and is well aware of the conceptual and linguistic framework within which the text is written. It becomes more difficult when the text under consideration has not been written by the author himself as in the case of the Buddha. In the same vein, Norman highlights the difficulty for a philologist:

> There is, of course, the problem that if we set out to understand what the earliest texts say, i.e. those ascribed to the Buddha himself, or his followers during his lifetime, we have to consider the fact that the language which we find in such texts is not necessarily, and almost certainly is not, the language of the Buddha himself, i.e. the language has been changed both synchronically—it has been translated or transformed into other languages as the need arose, perhaps as Buddhism spread into neighbouring areas—and also diachronically, i.e. as the language of the readers or recensionists developed in the course of time, this had an effect upon the language of the texts. It is also possible and indeed probable that changes took place in what the Buddha is reported to have said and done, i.e. the tradition changed, unconsciously, the Buddha's views because, as certain words fell out of the use and were no longer understood, they were "brought up to date" and made more intelligible by having an interpretation inserted into the texts in their place. The account of what the Buddha said or did might also be changed consciously by having interpolations inserted, for various reasons. Sometimes it is because a passage seemed appropriate to the context. For example, when in the Mahāparinibbānasutta the Buddha has given eight reasons for an earthquake occurring, a number of other sets of eight phenomena are added. Sometimes an interpolation occurs because a person or a city or a sect wished to have some dogma or action authenticated, and a reference to the Buddha doing something or saying something was inserted into the text to give the authentication they desired.[4]

BUDDHIST HERMENEUTIC PRINCIPLES

Following Norman's preceding observations, Kalupahana comments that the Buddha talks of hermeneutic principles in the *Majjhimanikāya* [III.234ff] in a non-absolute sense, which denies the divine status of a holy scripture and emphasizes the changing character of word, language, and meaning, which together form the ever-flowing conventional tradition:

> When it is said: "One should not strictly adhere to the dialect of a country nor should one transgress ordinary parlance," in reference to what is it said? What, monks, is strict adherence to the dialect of a country and what is transgression of ordinary parlance? Herein, monks, the same thing (*tad eva*) is recognized in different countries as *pāti*, as *patta*, as *vittha*, as *sarāva*, as *dhāropa*, as *poṇa*, as *pisila* [these being dialectical variants for the word "bowl"]. When they recognize it as such and such in different countries, a person utilizes this convention, obstinately clinging to it and adhering to it, [saying]: "This alone is true; all else is falsehood." Thus, monks, is strict adherence to the dialect of a country and transgression of ordinary parlance. And what, monks, is the strict non-adherence to the dialect of a country and the non-transgression of ordinary parlance? In this case, monks, the same thing is recognized in different countries as *pāti*, as *patta*, as *vittha*, as *sarāva*, as *dhāropa*, as *poṇa*, as *pisila*. Thus they recognize it as such and such in different countries. "These venerable ones utilize it for this purpose," and thus saying he utilizes it without grasping. And thus, monks, is strict non-adherence to the dialect of a country and the non-transgression of recognized parlance.[5]

METHODICAL INTEGRATION OF DISCOURSES AND DISCIPLINE

A question occurs as to how to decide that a particular view or discourse quoted by some monk, or for that matter some Buddhist scholar, in the name of the Buddha is genuine. It is a known fact that the Buddha never declared himself as an authority or as possessing an absolute truth. He offered his own discourses to be critically examined and, if found true, he asked the person to follow them. He sets four hermeneutic principles as the criteria of the *dhamma*, which are the principles of integration of Awakening, Discourses, moral actions, and practice. The following passage from the *Majjhimanikāya* [II.55] elaborates them:

> Herein, monks, if a monk were to say: "I have heard such in the presence of the Fortunate One; I have received such in his presence: 'This is the doctrine (*dhamma*), this is the discipline (*vinaya*), this is the message of the teacher (*satthusāsana*).' "Monks, the statement of that monk should neither be enthusiastically approved nor completely condemned. Without either enthusiastically approving or completely condemning, and having carefully studied those words and signs, they should be integrated with the discourses (*sutta*) and instantiated by the discipline (*vinaya*). However, when they are being integrated with the discourses and instantiated by the discipline, if they do not integrate with the discourses and are not instantiated by the discipline, on that occasion one should come to the conclusion: "This indeed is not the word of the Fortunate One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One, instead, it is wrongly obtained by this monk." And so should you, monks, reject it. . . . However, when they are being integrated with the discourses and instantiated by the discipline, if they integrate with the discourses and are instantiated by the disciple, on that occasion one should come to the conclusion: "This indeed is the word of the Fortunate One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One, it is well-obtained by this monk." This, monks, is the first great indicator.[6]

THE GENERAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF BUDDHISM

The Buddha's realization of the universal, natural, and dynamic law of dependent arising (*paṭiccasamuppāda, pratītyasamutpāda*) became the foundation of Buddhism, whose principal aim is to address the issues of human suffering and find out its remedy. Another two foundational

views of the Buddha are impermanence (*aniccā*, *anityatā*) and non-substantialism (*anattā*, *anātmatā*), which pervasively cover all variety of phenomena/reality/existence—sentient and insentient. Thus an insentient pot or a sentient person is not only dependently arisen—i.e., an aggregate of multiple causes and conditions—but also ever-changing and non-substantial or essenceless. This proves the unity of pot as false. Contrary to it, the substantialists (*ātmavādī*) think that every thing or phenomenon has a permanent substance/essence, whose forms or qualities change but whose essence or substance or substratum (technically called *āttā* in Pali, *ātmā* in Sanskrit) always remains unchanged. For example, the clay of a pot is substance, and likewise consciousness or soul is the essence of man. In this way, the Buddha's trinity view of the principles of dependent arising, impermanence, and non-substantiality applies to all empirical entities. It rules out the existence of any non-empirical transcendental reality like God, personal souls, or substantial material things. Obviously, this *paṭisotagāmī*-orientation of the Buddha had to be controversial for all mutually competing substantialists, who found common purpose to challenge the Buddha and the subsequent Buddhists from every possible angle and with every possible method. The most aggressive and dismissive of them was Śaṃkara, who, for example, in the case of Mādhyamikas declared that these Buddhists do not even deserve the respect of being an opponent because they are a thoroughly nihilist, deconstructionist, and reject all forms of the sources of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). He also critiques and rejects other Buddhist schools of thought like Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika, and Yogācāra–Vijñānavāda.[7] Even politically Buddhists have suffered badly in many parts of the world, like China under Confucianism in Buddhism's early sojourn there,[8] and many Islamic countries; nevertheless, they have flourished in China and its neighbouring countries. Today it is one of the most radical and respected philosophies, religions, spiritual traditions, and peace movements in the world.

However, the Buddha's original view became the root of every school of Buddhist thought. With the passage of time after the Buddha and also during his lifetime, lots of hermeneutic and heuristic difficulties arose from his internally conflicting discourses, which were delivered according to the nature of issues, contexts, semantic levels, and the levels of the understanding of his audience. A vast number of neologisms of terminology, doctrines, arguments, conceptual frameworks, and methodologies were innovated, created, and applied with the passage of the developments of Buddhism within and outside the Indian subcontinent. But the Buddha's concerns of eliminating human suffering and achieving *nirvāṇa* have always remained the main targets.

CONCLUSION

To sum up the preceding discussion regarding the study of Buddhism in general, it is imperative that we first understand (i) the Buddha's "philosophy of life" and "way of life"; (ii) his diagnosis and realization of the nature and existence of life, whose very constitution is suffering-generating within the cause–effect framework in some or other way, visible or invisible; (iii) his attempt to conceptualize and philosophize the naturalistic issue of suffering; and (iv) and to explore its conditions and develop various methods to eliminate it. In this way, his main purpose is to liberate his fellow human beings from suffering. This is the ultimate soteriological goal of the Buddha and his followers. It is most important to note here that the whole philosophical and practical exercise is individual-centric; i.e., based on self-effort, as every individual is responsible for his own suffering and only he can overcome his suffering following the Buddha's path. This is the Buddha's philosophy of moral action (*karma*). For these reasons, it is necessary that he first awakens himself about his own life and existence, and the philosophical facts, issues, and solution. I do not think there is any other way of understanding and studying the Buddha's teaching and Buddhism. The present article makes a humble attempt to highlight and philosophize these issues, and shows the importance of their study to understand the Buddha and Buddhism in the right perspective.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am thankful to my friends Professor Ambika Datta Sharma, Dr. R.M. Singh, and Dr. Shruti Kapur (who has done her Ph.D. in the area of Vasubandhu's idealism and phenomenology) for encouraging me to write this article and subsequently a book on the same theme in the present manner.

NOTES

1. *Cūlamālūṅkyasutta*, *Majjhimanikāya*, I. 63, 426ff.
2. Cf. Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy*, 60.
3. *Prasannapadā*, i.e., *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāvṛtti*, p. 34, footnotes 1, 2, & 3, on *Kārikā* 3–5.
4. Norman,*A Philological Approach to Buddhism*, 3.
5. Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy*, 61; insertions original.
6. Ibid., 63.
7. Cf.*Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, II.ii.18–32.
8. Prasad,*The Centrality of Ethics in Buddhism*, Chapter 8.

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*All the references from the *Nikāyas* are from Pali Texts Society editions.