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### III. BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

*Śāntideva: Mystique bouddhiste des VIIe et VIIIe siècles*, by Amalia Pezzali. Firenze: Vallecchi Editore, 1968. xviii + 161 p. \$7.80.

*Śāntideva*, by Amalia Pezzali, presents us with quite an exhaustive account of the life and works of this great Indian Buddhist saint, at the same time providing the reader with a good general summary of his thought.

Ms. Pezzali organizes the book into three sections of approximately equal length. The first, entitled "La vie" (The Life), presents the accounts of three major Tibetan historians as well as the only known Sanskrit version of Śāntideva's biography. Though most of the translations of historical and textual passages given in this work have previously appeared in Western languages, it is convenient to have the major biographical accounts (by Bu-ston, Tāranātha, Sum-pa mKhan-po and an anonymous Nepali manuscript) presented side by side in the original languages for easy reference. In addition to the translations, the author discusses the differences among the four accounts, and finally summarizes the data in tabular form.

Yet for the tremendous work that was obviously done in editing and translating the biographical sources, one would have expected more discussion of a text-critical sort, especially with regard to redaction criticism. With the wealth of textual material examined, it seems logical to expect a substantial body of conclusions as regards the sources used by the above historians. Yet Ms. Pezzali concludes only that Tāranātha and Sum-pa must have used Bu-ston (p. 21), and that Sum-pa must also have had before him a copy of Tāranātha (p. 26). Given the dates of these scholars, the result can be hardly surprising.

It seems to me that other conclusions are evident. For one, Tāranātha must have drawn on a source *other* than Bu-ston (viz. the gazelle episode, which is found in the former but not in the latter). Also, Sum-pa must have drawn on a source different from both Bu-ston and Tāranātha (viz. his mention of Kalinga which is missing in the other two historians' accounts – p. 26). But statements of this sort are left implicit in Ms. Pezzali's analysis and never brought to light. I must, however, point out that the amount of data presented by the author does make it possible for the interested scholar to pursue such questions individually. The translations, I might add, are generally of a superior quality, reflecting Ms. Pezzali's obvious expertise in Tibetan and Sanskrit.

The second section of the work entitled "Les œuvres" (The

Works) is for the most part bibliographical in character. In it the author lists and discusses the various Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣāsamuccaya* as well as their translation into both European and Asian languages. She also gives a very good summary of the debate as to whether Śāntideva was the author of a *Sūtrasamuccaya*, and she comes, it seems to me, to a very reasonable conclusion when she states:

...one can conclude that Nāgārjuna surely did write a *Sūtrasamuccaya*. . . (and) I believe that one cannot exclude with absolute certainty there having been a *Sūtrasamuccaya* of Śāntideva. . . (p. 86 – my translation)

As for the third section on “La pensée” (The Thought) of Śāntideva, it is a good overview of Mahāyāna doctrine in general, and of the Mādhyamika in particular. There are, however, some points to which I take exception.

First of all, I must object to the author's claim that it is “only with the Mahāyāna” that the actual *religion* of the Buddha begins (p. 95). Moreover, it is clear that in Ms. Pezzali's view it is only a “théologie veritable” that establishes the seal of “religion” upon a philosophical system. Yet this description of religion seems far too restrictive, for to deprive the Hīnayāna of the title simply because it lacks the doctrine of the *trikāya* is to make too large a distinction over too small a difference. What is more, it seems to me altogether too misleading to identify the doctrine of the *trikāya* with any sort of “true theology” in view of the extensive refutations that the notion of God receives at the hands of Mahāyāna Buddhist logicians such as Dharmakīrti (*Pramāṇavarttikam* chapter II).

There are also certain points to be raised about Ms. Pezzali's exposition of emptiness.

(1) When she claims that emptiness is “a truth which is not intellectual but more meditative” (p. 95) and also that it is impossible to “understand the absolute (*paramārtha*) by reason” (p. 103); or again when she states that “he who eliminates all forms of thought can have insight into the truth” (p. 102), that “it is just there where thought is extinguished” (p. 103), it seems as though Ms. Pezzali falls into the same quietist and anti-rationalist position of which Hwa-shang Mahāyāna was accused of during the famous bSam-yas debates. Granted that mere intellectual understanding of *śūnyatā* is insufficient for the attainment of Buddhahood, but what must be remembered is that it is a prerequisite for the latter. In the traditional three steps to realization, consisting of hearing (*thos-pa*), thinking (*bsam-pa*), and meditation (*sgom-pa*), it is at the second stage that this intellectual and discursive analysis takes place; its indispensibility is continuously stressed in the Buddhist tradition.

(2) Though Buddhist scholars usually assert that the Mahāyāna

schools demean the Hīnayāna Arhant for cognizing only *puḍgalanairātmya* and not *dharmā-nairātmya* (pp. 98, 99 and 103 in Ms. Pezzali's work), it should perhaps be made clear that not all Mahāyāna tenet schools (*siddhānta*) do so. For example, the Prāsaṅgika school, to which Śāntideva belongs, asserts that Arhantship can only be attained if both of these are realized. They thus make no distinction between the actual nature of these two kinds of "selflessness," although they would of course grant that the referent objects ("self" or "phenomena") are different.

(3) As for Nāgārjuna's critique of *pramāṇas*, it must be understood as a critique of *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* having *absolute* power to prove a logical syllogism. He is by no means rejecting the conventional validity of logic, as seems to be suggested by Ms. Pezzali (p. 104).

Yet apart from these few technical points (some of which are controversial in their own right) the author does give a rather good overview of Mādhyamika thought in general, and particularly of Śāntideva's place within it. The text of Ms. Pezzali, which gives us such a long-sought-after compilation of the life, works and thought of this great Buddhist saint is most certainly a welcome sight to the Buddhist Studies community.

José Cabezon

*On Knowing Reality: The Tattvārtha Chapter of Asaṅga's Bodhisattvabhūmi*, by Janice Dean Willis. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979. 202 p. \$20.00.

Most people view Yogācāra as a philosophy of idealism. While there have been exceptions, some scholars pointing out that such a characterization may not be applicable to all Yogācārins, this view seems fairly entrenched. Speaking for myself, it is the view I was first taught. I didn't realize that it might be subject to modification until I began to study the subject with some Gelugpa teachers who held differently. Janice Willis, in her welcome book, joins the ranks of those who take exception, and argues a good case.

Asaṅga, a prolific author, wrote the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* as one division of a much larger work, the *Yogācārabhūmi*. Nearly all of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* is practice oriented. Only one chapter actually takes doctrine as its principal subject, so that chapter is important for understanding Asaṅga's views on reality. This is the *Tattvārtha* chapter, which Dr. Willis has ably translated.

The odd thing about the *Tattvārtha* chapter, as Dr. Willis points out,