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quotation. The third *mārga* scheme outlined in "Appendix 1" (there is only one appendix) could certainly have been made more specific and its origins identified (Hui-yüan?).

But despite these minor shortcomings Tanaka's study of what Hui-yüan had to say concerning the *Kuan ching* is a welcome breath of non-sectarian fresh air trailing through the stale confines of the inevitably pejorative interpretation of this great scholar at the hands of modern *shūgaku* scholars. And it is unlikely that another translation of this commentary will appear for a long, long time. Although one would have appreciated a more extensive bibliography, this work should be required reading for any student of Pure Land Buddhist thought. One only hopes that Tanaka's next project will be Hui-yüan's *Ta-ch'eng ta-i-chang*.

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BUDDHA NATURE. By Sallie B. King. State University of New York Press, Albany, New York, 1991. xi + 205 pp. with notes, glossary, and index. ISBN 0-7914-0427-7 (hardback), 0-7914-0428-5 (paperback).

Given the prominence of the concept of Buddha nature in East Asian Buddhism, it is perhaps surprising that there have not been more studies in Western languages dealing directly with this subject. The book under review is a philosophical/textual study of the *Buddha Nature Treatise* (BNT), an early and important work on the subject attributed to Vasubandhu and extant only in the Chinese translation (*Fo xing lun*) of Paramārtha.¹

Rather than the general pattern of academic works in Buddhology, which would involve heavy textual and conceptual discussions followed by a complete annotated translation, this book is instead a series of essays focussing on the *Buddha Nature Treatise* and the meaning and implications of the Buddha nature concept. Although a full translation of the text is not provided, references to the text are clearly identified with the Taishō page number, making it easy for those who wish (like the reviewer) to refer to the original Chinese. The book provides a solid introduction to the basic ideas involved in the Buddha nature concept, and good discussions of the philosophical prob-

¹ Sallie King also contributed an article on "Buddha Nature, Thought and Mysticism" to a recent collection of essays on the same subject, *Buddha Nature: A Festschrift in Honor of Minoru Kiyota*, Paul J. Griffiths and John P. Keenan, eds. Reno, Nevada: Buddhist Books International, 1991.

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lems and implications that such a concept entails.

Chapter One provides introductory material on the role of the Buddha nature concept, its relationship (at least in the BNT) to Yogācāra, basic background on the BNT text itself (especially the crucial role of Paramārtha), the importance of Buddha nature in Chinese Buddhist thought, and a list of basic themes the author intends to pursue.

Chapter Two begins with the opening question of the BNT: "Why did the Buddha speak of Buddha nature?" and proceeds to outline the interpretation of Buddha nature presented in this text. King is (rightly) concerned to show that the BNT takes pains to argue that Buddha nature should not be taken to mean a substantial self. In fact one of King's purposes in the book as a whole (as it must be in any work dealing with Buddha nature) is "to grapple with the common charge that the notion of Buddha nature (or *tathāgatagarbha*) introduces into Buddhism the non-Buddhist, crypto-Hindu element of *ātmavāda* (a view of an entitative, metaphysical self or soul) or idealistic monism" (p. 28). King concludes that the essence of Buddha nature is its "functions" or "actions": Buddha nature is not an "entity" but a promise to be realized through practice.

Chapters Three and Four build on the arguments of the previous chapter by discussing Buddha nature as the "practice" of Buddhism. The technical nature of the discussion, with its focus on *trikāya*, the "dereification of self and mind," *dharmakāya* and the Self, Pure Mind, and so forth, will strike the reader as being in stark contrast to the straightforward and easily understood similes, for example, of the *Tathāgatagarbha sūtra*, such as "the pure gold in the mud," or "the prince in the poor woman's womb." In fact this well illustrates the philosophical dilemma of Buddha nature concepts—on the one hand its upāyic simplicity that implies the existence of an "entity," and, on the other hand, the tortured explanations that seek to incorporate Buddha nature concepts in a sūnyatic orthodoxy. King succeeds in showing that the author of the BNT, at least, intends to show that Buddha nature is not an entity and can be described in terms not antithetical to basic Mahāyāna concepts such as *sūnyatā*. A further problem, however, is whether this understanding carried over into the wider discourse and understanding of Buddha nature by the broad majority of Buddhists in East Asia. Many have argued that such was not the case, and that in fact the Buddha nature concept opened the door for ideas antithetical to *sūnyatā* and *pralīya-samutpāda* to enter and dominate East Asian Buddhism.²

In the remaining chapters King takes up further themes associated with Buddha nature. In Chapter Five she discusses a common theme in Western literature on the subject: whether or not the "ontology" of Buddha nature can be categorized as "monism." The pioneering work of Obermiller, Taka-

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saki, Nagao, Ruegg, and others are succinctly presented with the conclusion that "the Buddha nature thought of the BNT should not be understood as monistic" (p. 115) but should be described as "non-dualism."

Chapter Six returns to the theme of Buddhist practice and "engaging in spiritual cultivation," and presents "faithful joy, *prajñā*, meditative concentration, and *mahākaruṇā*" as characteristic of the BNT's instructions on practice. Chapter Seven returns to the theme of the concept of person, and examines the meaning of individual personhood in terms of Buddha nature in the BNT.

The final Chapter Eight, "Retrospective and Prospective," summarizes King's conclusions concerning the BNT and Chinese Buddhist thought in terms of 1. the positive nature of realization, 2. the optimistic conception of human nature, 3. nondualism and thusness, 4. subject-object dualism, 5. a positive view of phenomenal reality, 6. enlightenment as a pivotal conversion, and 7. Buddha nature is Buddhist practice.

Some final comments on Buddha nature thought and Western Buddhism in this chapter point to themes and problems not adequately addressed in this book. Indeed it is ironic that the book has appeared just as the Buddha nature ethos is being radically questioned and accused of being at the root of many social problems by some major Japanese Buddhist scholars (see note 2 above). To her credit, King does raise the question by pointing out, "Why East Asian Buddhists have been moved to act as little as they have in the social arena is a vast and complex issue that cannot be treated here" (p. 170). Yet it seems that she perceives potential for good consequences in the Buddha nature idea for the modern (Western?) world and those involved in the movement of "Engaged Buddhism." Those familiar with the consequences of a naive acceptance of the Buddha nature ethos may be more inclined to warn of its dangers. Indeed, the investigation of the potential promise and implications of Buddha nature concepts for Western Buddhism, as well as critical and honest studies of the failure (or success) of this ethos in Asian Buddhist countries, are important areas for future research. King's book offers a good theoretical introduction to Buddha nature and an indispensable guide to the BNT that all Buddhist scholars should have on their shelves, but we shall have to turn elsewhere to in-

² See recent work by Hakamaya Noriaki (*Hongaku shisō hihan* [Critique of the thought of inherent enlightenment] and *Hihan bukkyō* [Critical Buddhism], both from Daizō Shuppan, 1989 and 1990) and Matsumoto Shirō (*Engi to kā* [*Pratītya-samutpāda* and *sūnyatā*], Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan, 1989), reviewed in the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17/1 (1990), 89-91. See also the essays in the Kiyota Festschrift mentioned above, and my "'Zen is not Buddhism': Recent Japanese Critiques of Buddha-nature" (forthcoming).

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investigate the concrete social and cultural implications of Buddha nature.

PAUL L. SWANSON

THE ORIGINS OF INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY. By N. Ross Reat. Asian Humanities Press, Berkeley, 1990. 356 pp. with bibliographical references, index. ISBN 0-89581-923-6 (cloth), 0-89581-924-4 (pbk).

Having met and become friends with the author several years ago on the old precincts of the *Eastern Buddhist*, I confess to being favorably disposed towards this book from the start. (Reat may be better known to others as the author of a semi-infamous article on "Insiders and Outsiders in the Study of Religious Traditions.") As it turns out, that predisposition was one of the few things that enabled me to make it through some of the less enthralling portions of this work.

Reat's approach is historical, which is as unremarkable to a Western audience as it is unexamined as a methodology. Still the continuity that he is able to discern beginning with Vedic materials and extending through the early Buddhist *suttas* gives him a coherent theme, and his analysis of the material is comprehensive and deeply rewarding. He spends almost the first half of the book on Vedic material exclusively, which to judge from the relative scarcity of relevant citations, indicates the thoroughness of his treatment. The next two sections examine the *Upaniṣads*, and the precise extent and manner in which they differ from their Vedic roots. The final section, entitled "The Fundamentals of Buddhist Psychology," is the most interesting, and could most likely stand on its own, though certain lines of the argument would be truncated. To give only one example, his discussion of the evolution and significance of the term *nama-rūpa* is a wonderfully clear illustration of how de-contextualization leads to interpretive distortion. The topic I found most intriguing was the similarity between early Buddhist ideas and what later developed as the Yogacara school of Mahayana philosophy. The evidence is strong, though one sometimes feels that Reat is constructing his argument on foundations that are not as solid as he takes them to be. The striking parallelism he uncovers suggests a re-evaluation of the development of Buddhist philosophy, and Indian philosophy in general, relegating both Abhidharma scholasticism and its countervailing Madhyamaka dialectic to the fringes, as aberrations in the great mainstream of Buddhist philosophy culminating in Yogacara, arguably the most successful form of Buddhist philosophy ever to emerge from India. His elucidation of similarities between *Upaniṣadic* teachings and the early