

## BOOK REVIEWS

*THIRTY YEARS OF BUDDHIST STUDIES.* By Edward Conze. The University of South Carolina Press: Columbia, S.C., 1968, 274 pp.

THIS is a selection of Dr. Conze's articles which have appeared in various periodicals during the past thirty years: "Recent Progress in Buddhist Studies," 1959-60; "Buddhist Saviours," 1963; "Mahayana Buddhism," 1959; "The Meditation on Death," 1955; "The Lotus of the Good Law," Chapter 5, 1962-3; "The Development of *Prajñā-pāramitā* Thought," 1960; "The *Prajñā-pāramitā-brdaya Sūtra*," 1948; "The Composition of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā*," 1952; "Hate, Love and Perfect Wisdom," 1954; "The Perfection of Wisdom in Seven Hundred Lines," 1963; "*Prajñā* and Sophia," 1948; "Buddhist Philosophy and its European Parallels," 1963; "Spurious Parallels to Buddhist Philosophy," 1963; "The Iconography of the *Prajñā-pāramitā*," 1949.

1. The cornerstone of Dr. Conze's interpretation of Buddhism is the conviction that it is essentially a doctrine of salvation, and that all its philosophical statements are subordinate to its soteriological purpose. "While I cannot imagine any scholar wishing to challenge this methodological postulate," he writes, "I am aware that, next to D. T. Suzuki, I am almost alone in having applied it consistently." (p. 213)

His next assumption in interpreting Buddhism is that "Any attempt actually to understand Buddhist thought involves an element of choice, in that one has to decide which one among the numerous presentations of the Buddha's doctrine should be regarded as the most authentic." (p. 213) Dr. Conze is quite right in these two assumptions.

2. As for Shin Buddhist faith, Dr. Conze seems to regard it as an "exclusive reliance on Amida's Vow." (p. 39) That is not satisfactory. Shinran's and his followers' faith tell that it involves a deep self-awareness, an awakening to one's own actual existence in the light of Amida's wisdom.

3. In reference to the affiliation of magic by religion, Dr. Conze admits that he

“prefers to regard it as a sign of vitality, and of a catholicity which tries to be all to all men.” (p. 83) I would like to agree with him, insofar as a religion succeeds in transforming magical beliefs and practices into new symbols and new instruments by which to convey its truth to people more effectively and thus becomes more and more productive. Otherwise the absorption of magic means mere compromise, and the weakening of the religious substance will be inevitable. Historically, as Dr. Conze points out, Buddhists generally were never without a belief in the occult, in magic, or in miracles. But we cannot forget the Shin school strictly rejected any form of magical practice, inviting fortunes, or warding off evils.

4. In connection with the problem of comparative philosophy, Dr. Conze admits that he does not believe in a clear-cut distinction between “Eastern” and “Western” mentality. He submits instead another antithesis; between “perennial philosophy” and “sciential philosophy.” (pp. 213—216)

The doctrinal traits which mark off the perennial philosophy are: (1) That as far as worth-while knowledge is concerned not all men are equal, but that there is a hierarchy of persons, some of whom, through what they are, can know much more than others. (2) That there is a hierarchy also of the levels of reality, some of which are more “real,” because more exalted than others. (3) That the wise men of old have found a “wisdom” which is true, although it has no “empirical” basis in observations which can be made by everyone and everybody; and that in fact there is a rare and unordinary faculty in some of us by which we can attain direct contact with actual reality—through the *prajñāpāramitā* of the Buddhists, the *logos* of Parmenides, the *sophia* of Aristotle and others, Spinoza’s *amor dei intellectualis*, Hegel’s *Vernunft*, and so on. (4) That true teaching is based on an authority which legitimizes itself by the exemplary life and charismatic quality of its exponents. (p. 241)

“Sciential” philosophy is an ideology which corresponds to a technological civilization. It has the following features: (1) Natural science, particularly that dealing with inorganic matter, has a cognitive value, tells us about the actual structure of the universe, and provides the other branches of knowledge with an ideal standard. (2) No being higher than man is known to science, and man’s power and convenience should be promoted at all costs. (3) The influence of spiritual and magical forces, as well as life after death, may safely be disregarded, because unproven by scientific methods. (4) In consequence, “life” means “man’s”

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life in this world, and the task is to ameliorate this life by a social "technique" in harmony with the "welfare" or "will" of "the people." (pp. 215-216)

These two categories will be meaningful for the future of comparative philosophy, even though a further examination might be needed of their characteristic doctrinal features.

After all, with its scholarly accuracy and deep insight into the philosophy and psychology of Buddhism, this book is generally recommendable not only to students of Buddhism but also to those who are interested in Buddhist thought—insofar as the interpretative contents are concerned. Honest critical comment given by Dr. Conze on books and articles referred to in the course of the book will also be a valuable help for readers.

SAKAMOTO HIROSHI

(A few further comments on the surveys and textual studies in this book.)

In two surveys, "Recent Progress in Buddhist Studies" (pp. 1-32), and "Mahayana Buddhism" (pp. 48-86), Dr. Conze critically examines and makes clear the methodology that leading Western scholars have applied to Buddhist studies. For this reason the above two studies will have special interest for students of Buddhism. No mention, however, is made of the indices of sutras and sastras, which are assumed to have great value. Besides, works by Japanese Buddhist scholars, published in Japanese and therefore of limited accessibility, are wholly excluded. In Japan, where Mahayana traditions are still alive, numbers of valuable works have been done, especially on Yogacarins, by the method of comparing Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese sources. This omission unfortunately limits somewhat the value of these surveys.

As to textual studies, the most valuable would seem to be the four which deal with the *prajñā-pāramitā*. In the *Prajñā-pāramitā-hṛdaya Sūtra* (p. 148) Dr. Conze submits a text of the *Hṛdaya* to a historical analysis of available sources, Nepalese manuscripts, Chinese sources, manuscripts found in Japan, and Chinese translations. He traces sections of the *Hṛdaya* and their background to the *pañcaviṃśati* and several other sutras, and finally succeeds in finding most of its parallel passages in the *Larger Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra*. He thus writes:

We can, I think, draw the conclusion that the *Hṛdaya* was originally intended as a restatement, for beginners, of the four holy Truths,

followed by a few remarks on the method of bearing this teaching in mind and on the spiritual advantages of following it.

This analysis permits us to see the *Hṛdaya* in its historical perspective. It is the *dbarṃa-cakra-pravartana-sūtra* of the new dispensation.

This is a very penetrating insight.

In this section, in connection with the texts concerned, Dr. Conze discusses the divergence between *cittāvaraṇa* and *cittālabhaṇa*, both of which are used to denote the "impeded mind." According to him, we may suppose that originally there was *cittārambaṇa*. Truly, in Nepalese Mss *āvaraṇa* is often changed into *ārambaṇa*, as Dr. Conze holds. Nevertheless, we cannot surmise its original form to be *ārambaṇa* merely on the basis of the Chinese translation and Nepalese Mss, for the Tibetan translation *sgrib-pa* is not *ārambaṇa* but *āvaraṇa*.

As is usual with Dr. Conze's work, the English translations are very good. This is especially the case with his translation of the *Saddharmapundarika*, Chapter 5, which, by referring to the Tibetan translation, is very much an improvement on the hitherto published versions.

NAGASAKI HŌJUN

*STUDIEN ZUM MAHĀPRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (UPADEŚA) ŚĀSTRA*,  
Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der Philosophischen Fakultät der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität zu München vorgelegt von Mitsuyoshi Saigusa in München 1962, Hokuseido Verlag Tokyo, 1969 239 pp.

ALTHOUGH many studies have been made on the Mādhyamika philosophy, most of them are based on the *Madhyamakakārikā* of Nāgārjuna with its commentaries by his followers, especially by Candrakīrti. Studies of another important Mādhyamika text, *Ta chib tu lun* 大智度論, are comparatively few, and insofar as those written in Western languages are concerned, there have been only two major works:

1. Lamotte, Étienne. *Le Traité de la grande vertu de sagesse*. Vol. I, 1944; Vol. II, 1949, Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon [A French translation of the first 18 Chüan of the *Ta chib tu lun*].

2. Ramanan, K. Venkata. *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as Presented in the Mabā-*