

decide to marry and through their progeny pass on this divine wisdom gained by a direct experience. All these stages—the start of chaste studies to marriage—are explicated with a natural thoroughness by Pandey.

One very important observation made in this book needs to be extrapolated: at the end of Chapter 3 Pandey speaks of a real crisis in Hindu faith. The language of Hindu rituals and chants are not accessible to the commoner and thus seem abstruse to the ordinary tech-savvy Hindu. It is here that Hindus as a faith community must adopt and learn from one of the greatest religions of the world, which teetered at the edge of obsolescence near the middle of the last century. The average Roman Catholic did not understand a word of the Latin Mass being said throughout the globe by their clergy. The Second Vatican Council took a radical decision—they had scholars and scholarly committees translate the whole liturgy into vernaculars, and these are still being translated by experts into various indigenous languages. Bible scholars have of course to learn at least four languages: Hebrew, Latin, the two forms of Greek, and Aramaic. Roman Catholics worldwide now read the *Jerusalem Bible*, for instance when they want to theologize as Catholics. Hence that religion adapted itself and is able to proselytize—for instance, throughout India after Holy Mass, the parish priest or the Catholic nuns, say ‘Jai Jishu’ to everyone in India’s Hindi heartlands. If Hindus as a faith community have to reach out to others who are in imminent danger of being alienated from the Sanatana Dharma, they need to have experts of the calibre of Pandey, the late Swami Gambhiranandaji of the Ramakrishna Order, and scholarly monks of this and other Orders to engage in serious works of translation and linguistic assimilation of all Hindu samskaras into English and vernacular languages. The larger world can then understand directly Sanatana Dharma. If they wait that future generations will learn Sanskrit and then access Hindu canonical scriptures, then Pandey’s efforts will be in vain. This scholarly book has been published by one of the best publishers within the field of Indian studies, but does that mean that this book will help the tired IT professional at Bengaluru explain her faith to

a foreigner who might want to know why there is feasting after a Hindu death. If this Hindu sister is unable to explain this at that very moment, Hindu faith will be ridiculed by the likes of Ilaiah. And Pandey gives the reasons for a feast after a Hindu death, at the end of his scholarly tome. The need of the times is that Hindus immediately create greater accessibility to these kinds of works among the general populace. Pandey deserves to be known beyond the closed Indology group. Such texts, as this one under reviews, needs to be made accessible to all those who quest for their identities, including those of the Semitic religions. This book fends off attacks against the barbarians at our doors.

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***Bodhisattvas of the Forest
and the Formation of
the Mahāyāna***

Daniel Boucher

Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2011.
xxiv + 288 pp. ₹ 595.

Doctrines are the results of experiments involving tremendous sacrifice and, many a times, tremendous restraint. All major religious traditions have witnessed, in their formative years, enormous asceticism and spiritual disciplines causing bodily privation. It is such asceticism that gives a solid foundation to the tradition. Once the religious tradition is fairly established, often physical austerity takes a backstage. For this very reason, sometimes the best way to trace the roots of any tradition is to trace the physical austerities of the early masters of that path. While this is true, it is equally true that in many religious traditions the careful upkeep of the body has been prescribed to take away the mind from the body. Mahayana also has a rich past of carefully maintaining the physical body. The wonderful integration of asceticism and glorification of body in this tradition is an interesting study. Boucher has quite

successfully attempted this in the present book, which is a study of the *Rashtrapalapariprichchha Sutra* and is located in a time in the history of Mahayana tradition when its adherents were losing sight of the vision behind the asceticism of the early masters. Lack of discipline and abstinence from opulence had led to resentment among some monks who believed that the early austerities had to be rediscovered. This sounds similar to the need for more austerities felt by St Francis of Assisi or St Teresa of Avila. As he points out in the introduction, it is very difficult to trace the early history of Mahayana Buddhism. The social standings of the followers of this tradition, both monastic and lay, remain a mystery due to dearth of information. The author makes it clear that the approach to this study of the formation of the Mahayana tradition is mainly from the social perspective and not so much from the philosophical standpoint. Boucher, however, promises not to miss out on the religious connotations of the text. He not only keeps his promise but brings out an extraordinary portrayal of the religious practices and beliefs by a careful analysis of the text.

Virtue and the virtuous are often shown to have corresponding physical manifestations of their goodness. Boucher shows examples of this in the Mahayana tradition. He also shows us how these portrayals have been interwoven into popular lore, like the *Jātaka*. While the physical body is considered a gift, it is nonetheless restrained to attain perfection. This practice of the early Mahayana is brought out through numerous narratives where ascetic practices of the Mahayana forest-dwellers are outlined. It is interesting to note that the author quotes a Belgian text too, showing his mastery over many languages. We are given an account, both from the mainstream and Mahayana literature, of the *dhutagunas*, qualities of purification, or 'the traditional set of ascetic disciplines in both Mainstream and Mahayana literature that came to characterize, or rather standardize, the rigorous life of the forest-dwelling monk' (43). The ascetic practices are contrasted with their opposition and we are also given a chapter with 'A Critique of Sedentary Monasticism' (64). Early

Mahayana monks were quite vocal in their belief that the mainstream monastics had fallen from their path: 'A householder is not as covetous with passion as these [corrupt monks] are after going forth. They would have wives, sons, and daughters just like a householder' (65). Boucher tries to find the quality of relations among the members of Mahayana monastic communities. Such analysis points to the assumption that 'a given *nikāya* could tolerate different vocations and that monks of different stripes could cohabit in the same monastery, presumably without conflict' (74).

A unique aspect of this book is that it ventures into an analysis of the extant translations of the *Rashtrapalapariprichchha Sutra*. Delineating the shortcomings of these translations, Boucher gives a new translation based on Sanskrit and Chinese texts of the sutra. We are reminded that translations differ not only because of the target language but also because of the milieu from which the translation is done. He explains the need for this new translation, as our understanding of the language of this early Mahayana text has been enriched a lot since the extant translations were published. Boucher devotes two chapters to the study of translations of early Mahayana texts in general, and the translation of the *Rashtrapalapariprichchha Sutra* in particular. He delves on the difficulties in translating such texts with reference to Indian and Chinese contexts. We are also given a detailed examination of the errors that could creep in, in the form of 'Mistranslations and Missed Translations' (101). This Boucher shows by comparing different translations and citing particular instances. All this analysis makes the book valuable not only to the student of Buddhism but also to anyone interested in translation studies.

The new annotated translation of the *Rashtrapalapariprichchha Sutra* is lucid and an easy read. Boucher deserves praise for retaining the original ethos in the English idiom. He clearly reserves his place among the rare breed of scholars, who are also masters of language. The text consists of the questions of *Rashtrapala* concerning various topics ranging from 'The Glorification of the Buddha' to 'The Degeneration of the True Dharma.'

The narrative is anecdotal and employs numerous similes and metaphors. The language is direct like everyday parlance. The behaviour of the illumined, the way of austerity, and the responses of the followers to the teachings of the Dharma, are some flowers of this garden of wisdom.

Almost a half of the book is devoted to copious notes and references. These notes help us locate the text and its various contexts. It is interesting to note that Chinese expressions are given in the original script, thus creating additional value for Chinese readers. The bibliography is exhaustive and could serve the purpose of an extensive reading list on early Mahayana Buddhism. A very important aspect of this work is that Boucher keeps drawing parallels to other religions and religious traditions. He refers to ascetic practices in the early history of various religious traditions. This volume is a marvellous sociological and historical analysis of the body of Rashtupalapariprichchha Sutra as a representative of the tradition of the recurring themes of the glorification of the body and asceticism in Buddhism.

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Eds. Dr V Kameswari,
Dr K S Balasubramanian, and
Dr TV Vasudeva

The Kuppaswami Sastri Research Institute, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004.
2011. viii + 190 pp. ₹ 250.

The *Journal of Oriental Research* was started in 1927 by Prof. S Kuppaswami Sastri, who was also the founder of the Kuppaswami Sastri Research Institute. Originally an annual journal, its regularity has been disturbed due to financial difficulties. The present issue comprises volumes eighty-three to eighty-four and has been funded by the Dr V Raghavan Memorial Endowment.

The first article is on 'Jainism and Anthologies', which critically analyses numerous anthologies with brevity and clarity. In 'Sanskrit as the Basis of World Languages' we are shown how Sanskrit has influenced all language families.

This is followed by a masterly exposition of some instances of love-symbolism in Tamil and Sanskrit devotional literature in 'The Cuṇaiyāṭal—Brahmānubhava Equation'. Then comes the paper on 'Māgha and Astrology', where the writings of Magha are shown to have insights into astrology. 'Yoga Darśana and Advaita' shows how exponents of both Yoga and Advaita Vedanta have respected the other philosophy and have also advocated a world view based on them. In 'Technical Methods and Metrical Modifications in *Vāṇībhūṣaṇa* of Dāmodara Miśra' the author gives a brief analysis of a work on *vrīttas*, metrics. One is baffled by the mathematical precision of the various metres in Sanskrit prosody.

The next article is 'An Introduction to the Pāṇinīya-Sūtroddāharaṇa-Kāvya', which includes an explanation. We get a glimpse of the astrological works of Parashara in 'Parāśara and His Works'. The text of *Govindashtaka* by Shankaracharya is analysed with reference to Advaita philosophy, with a translation of the gloss by Ānandagiri in 'Advaita Concepts as Gleaned from the Gloss of Ānandagiri on *Govindāṣṭaka*'. We also find a comparative study in 'Bhartṛhari and Bacon: A Comparative Study in Moral Philosophy'. A particular kind of Sanskrit play is analysed in 'Unmattarāghava of Virūpākṣa—A Prekṣaṇaka'. The nature of a class of ascetics is portrayed in 'A Note on Pṛṣṇis'. The culmination of yoga lies in the dissolution of the mind. The path to attain this is studied on the basis of a text by Gorakshanatha in 'Amanaskayoga—The Yoga Bereft of Mind'. The concepts of *paratattva* and *jiva* are discussed here. There is a section for book reviews at the end of the volume, of books of serious research on Indian philosophy and Sanskrit studies. There is also a section for obituaries, where the reader knows about some luminaries in Indian studies.

This journal proves once again that writings in Sanskrit need not necessarily be religious or philosophical. It is really a pity that the Institute is unable to bring this journal annually. Taking in the marvellous contents of the journal, the reader automatically prays for its immediate revival as an unbroken annual journal.

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