

Book Reviews

Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation

by Carl Bielefeldt. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. viii + 259 pp.; paper, \$35

Today we see an emerging breed of scholars who are linguistically and philosophically prepared to begin a new cycle in our understanding of Zen, and of Buddhism in general. The pious reworkings over the past few decades of the splendid pioneering effort of Daisetz Suzuki (1870-1966), whose introduction of Zen to the West began at the turn of the century, are finally giving way to an appreciative but unblinking review of Buddhist theory and practice. Professor Bielefeldt stands prominently at the leading edge of this new movement, which is sufficiently prepared and confident to challenge not only traditional sectarian dogma, but often even the conclusions of contemporary Japanese scholarship.

Dōgen (1200-1253) is traditionally considered to have begun promulgating the Sōtō (Ts'ao-tung) methods of his mentor, Ju-ching (J., Nyojō, 1163-1228) in 1227, immediately upon his return from China, with the composition of a short statement on meditation practice known as the *Fukan zazen gi* (Universal Promotion of the Principles of Seated Meditation). However, the text widely known under this name (the *rufubon*, which Bielefeldt calls the "vulgate"), appears for the first time as part of the *Eihei kōroku* (Extensive Records of the Eihei [Master, Dōgen]), a compilation by his disciples, ca. 1242-46, and perhaps partly edited by Dōgen himself late in life. In any case, this standard version as we know it today, referred to as the *Kōroku Fukan zazen gi* and deriving from a further edited printing which appeared as late as 1673, is "vintage Dōgen" (p. 133), and not to be confused with his early stance.

In 1922 scholars discovered an autographed manuscript dated 1233 (Tempuku 1), significantly

different from the vulgate, and probably representative of Dōgen's early teachings. It may even be identical with the original Kōroku version presumed to have been written during that time period (1225-27) when Dōgen had just returned to Japan. Needless to say, we cannot arrive at definitive conclusions about Dōgen's views on meditation, especially as they may have changed over the following quarter century of his ministry, until we have a clear understanding of the origin of the texts on which we must rely to support our conclusions. Bielefeldt carefully leads us through the morass of contemporary speculation on the textual and theoretical issues to a sense of Dōgen's place in the historical continuum of Kamakura Buddhism. Then, in a separate section on "Documents" (pp. 174-205), he painstakingly illustrates the similarities and differences between the Kōroku vulgate, and the Tempuku version of the *Principles*, further comparing the texts to passages in Dōgen's *Bendō hō* (ca. 1245) and *Shōbō genzō zazen gi* (ca. 1243), as well as in the Tso-ch'an-i (J., *Zazengi*, "Principles of Seated Meditation," 1103) of the Sung Ch'an monk, Ch'ang-lu Tsung-tse (J., *Chōro Sōsaku*).

In spite of widespread interest in Zen in the West during the past several decades, few are likely to recognize Tsung-tse's name, even though his Tso-ch'an-i has the distinction of being first manual of Chinese Ch'an meditation practice in the sect which is preeminently the "meditation" sect. Chapters Three and Four of *Dōgen's Manuals* are a revised expansion of Bielefeldt's article, "Ch'ang-lu Tsung-tse's Tso-ch'an-i and the 'Secret' of Zen Meditation" (Peter Gregory, ed. *Traditions of Meditation in Chinese Buddhism*

[1986], 129-61), to which the reader is referred for further details. Here he takes us back to Dōgen's antecedents in China — not only to Tsung-tse's "Zazengi," but ultimately to the popular and long-influential Hsiao chih-kuan (*Shōshikan*, "Lesser Treatise on Cessation and Insight") by T'ient'ai's Chih-i (Chigi, 538-97).

For some, these will be the most fascinating chapters in the book because they provide detail and structure to our generally amorphous understanding of Chinese Buddhism and its meditation practices, an "understanding" engendered by centuries of disinterest and neglect by the Confucian academic establishment and its Western heirs. If I have one reservation about Professor Bielefeldt's book, it is that the title is much too narrow to do justice to its contents, and that *Dōgen's Manuals* may fail to attract some who may quickly assume that it is an arcane study of interest to a small coterie of Japanese Buddhologists. In fact, this is a landmark contribution not only to Dōgen studies, but to our understanding of differing postures toward meditation during periods of critical importance in the development of both Chinese and Japanese Buddhism. Moreover, Bielefeldt says what he has to say clearly, economically, and without a hint of the obfuscating jargon that all too often tempts academics of every age. His is a relatively short book, but every sentence is carefully weighed and not to be skimmed lightly. The text and appendix of "Documents" are supported by a Glossary of Chinese and Japanese Names and Terms (pp. 207-228), a rich bibliography (pp. 229-244), and a thorough index (pp. 245-259).

Readers might also note several other outstanding articles by our author which have been partly incorporated into his book, but which can be read with profit in their original form: "Recarving the Dragon: History and Dogma in the Study of Dōgen," *Dōgen Studies* (ed., LaFleur, 1985); and "Ennin's Treatise on Seated Zen," *Ten Directions* (Spring 1988). There is also a recent review of Professor Bielefeldt's book by Heinrich Dumoulin in *Monumenta Nipponica* (Autumn 1989), 377-

380. After decades of study into the history of Zen and its antecedents, Professor Dumoulin's appreciative evaluation of Bielefeldt's research deserves our attention as do few others.

Today we often find it convenient to characterize Rinzai and Sōtō meditation as the difference between practice employing the *kōan* and Dōgen's "just sitting" (*shikan taza*). But Bielefeldt points out that "... not only in his discussions of Ta-hui but throughout the ten fascicles of his recorded sayings and the entire corpus of more than one hundred works, we do not read any criticism of the popular technique of *kanna* (p. 154). ... His basic position no doubt simply makes explicit what was surely the actual assumption of almost all Ch'an and Zen teachers of whatever persuasion: that *kōan* study, whether by monk or layman, was to be carried out within the larger context of Buddhist spiritual life — a life that included contact with a master, moral cultivation, ritual observances, and some form of the mental discipline of meditation that Dōgen took to be the key to the religion. When thus integrated into the larger religious life, the *kōan* stories clearly had a central role to play in what Dōgen saw as the Patriarchal path (pp. 155-56)."

The question of meditation techniques and their underlying rationale is important not only for Buddhologists, but for those of us in related areas of Japanese studies. Professor Konishi Jinichi's early article (*Bungaku* 1952) on the influence of Tendai's *chih-kuan* meditation and the poetic practice of Fujiwara Shunzei (1114-1204) is well known by name. But students of literature have yet to come to terms with the ideological underpinnings of the aesthetics of the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, ca. 1206), and such central critical terms as *yūgen* ("mystery and depth"), also later prominent in the *Nō* theory of Zeami (ca. 1364 - ca. 1443), who practiced Sōtō meditation. Students of Japanese literature isolate such basic "literary" notions as *yūgen* from their ideological contexts at their own peril, especially when dealing with those who

consciously identified their literary with their religious practice (*kadō sunawachi butsudō*, "the Way of Poetry is the Way of Buddha.")

In spite of his obvious admiration for Dōgen, Bielefeldt does not gloss over those aspects of his character and teaching which some of us today find unappealing. One such issue is the exclusivity, sectarianism, and ultimately the intolerance which he shared with other Kamakura dissidents (pp. 164-69). In one way or another these attitudes arose either from the outright rejection, or the reinterpretation, of the doctrine of expedient/skillful means (*upāya*, *hōben*), which had characterized the Tendai philosophy against which the new movements defined themselves. For Nichiren and Shinran, *upāya* plus the doctrine of the Latter Days of the Law (*mappō*) led each to the conviction that there could be only one possible route to salvation — his own, of course. If a method actually worked for him, did it not follow that this must be the one and only possible method for everyone else? For the Kamakura dissidents, "their selection of the one practice was not merely a decision to specialize in a particular religious

exercise but a commitment to the highest vehicle alone and a rejection of all other teachings as incompatible with it (p. 166) When Dōgen summons us to slough off body and mind and just sit, he is, in effect, calling on us to abandon other readings of Buddhist tradition and commit ourselves to his (p. 169)." We all admire the passionate single-mindedness of the zealot — or is it perhaps no more than arrogant self-absorption?

Whatever our personal judgments about Dōgen may be, no one can doubt the far-reaching influence of his thought and character on Japanese Zen, as well as the respect which he continues to inspire among modern Japanese thinkers. Professor Bielefeldt has given us a first-rate, carefully reasoned analysis not only of Dōgen's views on Sōtō meditation, but an insightful overview of Buddhist meditation practice during its flowering in China and Japan. For students of Buddhism or classical Japanese literature, it is required reading.

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The Emptiness of Emptiness: An Introduction to Early Indian Mādhyamika

by C.W. Huntington, Jr., with Geshe Namgyal Wangchen. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989. xvi + 288 pp.; cloth, \$35.

Huntington has written the kind of book which will mark a watershed in the study of the Madhyamaka system of thought. It is an extremely important book, both in terms of its proposals and its data. Huntington has offered us a perspective on the Madhyamaka which will at once prove to be classic and, I believe, fraught with sufficient difficulties as to be very controversial. *The Emptiness of Emptiness* is in two separate parts: Part I is an extensive discussion of Huntington's understanding of the Madhyamaka system as a whole, while Part II translates the verse text of the extremely important *Madhyamakāvatāra* of Candrakīrti, the most influential Madhyamaka author after Nāgārjuna.

Turning first to the translation, the author has given us a fairly felicitous rendering of a very difficult work. Much of what we understand by the term "Madhyamaka" has come through the lense of Candrakīrti's corpus of materials, being the clearest exponent of the radical reductionistic (*prāsaṅgika*) school. Candrakīrti's personal statement in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* is often problematic and survives only in Tibetan translation. Geshe Namgyal Wangchen's contribution to the volume is primarily that he worked with Huntington on the translation, and the happy collaboration of the two has given us a readable text with copious notes explaining difficult points and drawing extensively from Candrakīrti's autocommentary, also available only in Tibetan. Huntington has not made the error of some recent translators, however, and has consulted Poussin's partial French translation to assist verification of the traditional Tibetan understanding. The result is an excellent mature rendering which will withstand scrutiny. The specialist's only wish might be that the

translation of the autocommentary be eventually completed, placed in context with the verses, and the notes be dedicated to elucidation of difficult points elaborated elsewhere in Madhyamaka literature.

Part I will prove to be far more controversial. Huntington has provided us with his assessment of current scholarly models of Buddhist studies and their difficulties in light of his reading of the texts. As far as I understand him, Huntington's major arguments are as follows:

1. Buddhist publications have primarily been either proselytic or historico-philological in nature. Few, if any, works discuss the philosophical import of the texts as valid philosophy, relegating Buddhist thought to an intellectual backwater through the insularity of the authors' methods.

2. Madhyamaka is valid philosophically because it anticipates modern deconstructionist ideas and applies them to all categories of experience so that metaphysical language will be abandoned. Commonly used language, as opposed to metaphysical language, is sufficient to describe those few operations that are essential to daily functioning.

3. Metaphysical language invariably is either produced by or in turn produces clinging and is unskillful in the soteriological context; the collapse of categories with the abandonment of such language deconstructs clinging and leads to nirvana.

My assessment of these basic propositions, as one who is not a specialist in the Madhyamaka, must reflect something of my perplexity to the system as a whole and Huntington's text in particular. With respect to the first proposition, it is clear from a careful reading of the work that

Huntington's text is an apologia for the Madhyamaka. Certainly there are clear parallels between Wittgenstein and Candrakīrti, but it is equally clear that deconstructionists have little sense of transcendence, a point Huntington freely admits. Not as obvious in the text, however, is the simple fact that, if philosophy is not religion, so too, religion can seldom be converted to philosophy. Candrakīrti is not a rigorous exponent of a philosophical perspective, and there are multiple contradictions within the Madhyamaka as a whole, as well as gaps and holes in the system, treated as philosophy or as religion.

Two examples will suffice to demonstrate this problem. Both Huntington and Candrakīrti agree that Nāgārjuna's basic proposition is that of not proposing anything outside of common parlance — such a radical nonproposition does not entail the necessary acceptance of a substratum of being or metaphysical entity (*cum* Kant) about which nothing can be said. However, Huntington has not discussed the difficult verse *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* 18.9:

Independent, peaceful, without intellectual or ontological differentiation, nonconceptual, devoid of multiplicity — *such is the character of reality* [emphasis mine].

Candrakīrti's comment on this verse in the *Prasānapadā* sidesteps the entire issue by quoting from the *Satyadvayāvatāra-sūtra*, a text which does not abide by the Madhyamaka dictum and freely discusses propositions concerning the nonarisen nature of all dharmas, although Candrakīrti obviously means the text to support his position.

Equally clear is that Candrakīrti wishes to tacitly accept specific presuppositions — such as the levels of the bodhisattva, the powers of the buddha, etc. — which are certainly metaphysical in nature and have little to do with common linguistic structures. Yet by the criteria developed in Huntington's argument, such structures would also develop from or lead to clinging and would be

unskillful. Clearly what has happened historically is that the Madhyamaka authors were forced to accept some of the soteriological technology and terminology developed by meditative traditions such as those of the Yogācāras, while wanting to distance themselves from other facets of these systems. Candrakīrti could do this precisely because he was not a rigorous philosopher, such individuals (*contra* Huntington) being little given to the acceptance of any system outside of the dialogue network established by their intellectual community. Thus Huntington has not pursued those areas in the Madhyamaka of Candrakīrti where either (a) intellectual rigor would see difficulties (contradictory statements, philosophical problems) or, alternatively, (b) the Buddhist presuppositions would provide answers to questions not yet raised by deconstructionists (the soteriological problem of the self, the maturation of prior ethical action).

Thus Huntington's laudable wish for Buddhist thought to be given thorough consideration on its own merits is hampered by the fact that Madhyamaka authors and deconstructionist philosophers speak to different communities, each with its different agenda, despite the similarity in many of their methods and concerns. Most modern philosophers will not consider religious thought of any variety as a valid challenge to their axioms, whether or not there are similarities in method or conclusions. Furthermore, even should Madhyamaka be accepted as deconstructionist in nature, it would stand in jeopardy of being abandoned along with the thrusts of its representative authors when the focus of philosophy moves on to an exciting new prospect, as it did from structuralism to deconstructionism some years ago.

Certainly, the nature of the polemic will have much to do with this process, since we may question that the claims made for either system — deconstructionist or Madhyamaka — are fulfilled in reality. As a historian, for example, I await the "new historical method" that postmodernist authors have been about to reveal for two decades.

History continues to speak of the ideas of authors, of data from sources, and must still be judged on the basis of accuracy and balance. As a historian of meditative systems and a dedicated user of meditation, I have some questions as to whether the simple abandonment of linguistic categories offered by Candrakīrti as the Madhyamaka technique can affect the psycho-physical system in as efficient and profound a manner as mainstream Buddhist technologies, all of which make use of "unskillful" language and many of which have withstood the test of time. No historical meditative tradition, in fact, has made simple linguistic/conceptual deconstruction the mainstay of its praxis (*bhāvanā*), despite its importance for initial perspective (*darśana*). The continual recurrence of emotionally charged cognition has led most meditative traditions to implement a variety of techniques, involving visualization, emotional manipulation, physical positions, as well as a variety of intellectual approaches. Certainly the sense of a self is ingrained deeply into the entire psycho-physical system and deconstruction is a necessary but not sufficient antidote to the problem.

Thus, the extraordinary importance of Huntington's work is that he has taken the most seemingly "modern" of the Buddhist authors (Candrakīrti), constructing around him an apologia for accepting Madhyamaka as a valid philosophical method *a la* deconstructionism. In his pursuit he clearly follows in the footsteps of Stcherbatskoi and Murti, among others, who have interpreted various facets of Buddhist thought as representing dimensions similar to philosophers such as Bergson, Kant, *etc.* The clarity with which Huntington pursues this allows us to see whether modern Buddhists wish to be seduced into accepting modern paradigms (philosophical, psychological, scientific, *etc.*) as guides for the comprehension of their traditions, or whether the traditions need to be apprehended in a religious subculture where both set and setting stand as primary guidelines.

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The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea — The Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra, A Buddhist Apocryphon

by Robert E. Buswell, Jr. Princeton Library of Asian Translations.
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989. xviii + 315 pp.; \$39.50.

Professor Buswell has seemingly done the impossible, providing us with a model of historical, textual, and doctrinal scholarship, all in one handy volume. Buswell's text is dedicated to the problems surrounding the genesis and dissemination of the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, a Buddhist scripture written outside of India and extraordinarily influential in the development of the meditative traditions of East Asia. The work is divided into two sections, Part One being a study of the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* in context and comprising four chapters — 1. "The *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* as an Apocryphal Scripture," 2. "The Hagiographies of the Korean Scholiast Wŏnhyo: The Dating and Provenance of the *Vajrasamādhi*," 3. "The Doctrinal Teachings of the *Vajrasamādhi*," and 4. "Ch'an Elements in the *Vajrasamādhi*: Evidence for the Authorship of the Sūtra." Part Two consists of the translation of the scripture into lucid English. The text is complemented by excellent bibliographies and a fine index.

Part One is the section where Buswell's fine scholarship truly shines. He attempts to put the *Vajrasamādhi* in its historical and religious setting by examining the provenance of its putative rescuing from the realm of the Dragons after its initial disappearance from the realm of humans. The examination of the origin of the *Vajrasamādhi* is made all the more difficult by the appearance in Tao-An's early Chinese canonical catalogue of an unrelated *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, which quickly passed out of circulation. When the *Vajrasamādhi* was actually composed, towards the end of the seventh century, the cataloguers naturally sup-

posed that it was the appearance of a long-lost work, rescued from the subterranean dragon world in the same manner that the *Perfection of Wisdom* scriptures had been by Nāgārjuna.

Buswell's treatment of the legendary career of the text draws from his extensive knowledge of the earliest commentator and a profound understanding of the Korean Zen (Sŏn) tradition during the sixth and seventh centuries. Buswell shows that the *Vajrasamādhi* quite clearly presupposes certain doctrinal and literary developments within China and Korea, synthesizing in a manner peculiar to the Korean church the attitudes towards such structures as the "embryo of the Tathāgata", "original enlightenment", and the "guarding the one" teachings of the "East Mountain School" of Chinese Ch'an. The *Vajrasamādhi* also presupposed the existence of the independent treatise ascribed to Bodhidharma, the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, a work which apparently has no direct Indic precedent.

These influences combine to make the first commentary, that of the Korean scholar and visionary, Wŏnhyo, all the more important for understanding the thrust of the Korean contribution to seventh century East Asian Buddhism, particularly since Wŏnhyo plays a part in the hagiographical narrative, being commanded by the Dragon King to comment on the scripture. Wŏnhyo is a figure fascinating to the non-specialist in Korean Buddhism, and makes the reader wish for a fuller account of his activities than space allows Buswell to present. Nonetheless, Buswell's account of Wŏnhyo's commentary clearly demon-

strates the importance of this figure to the intellectual community, as well as the syncretic nature of the *Vajrasamādhi's* doctrinal underpinnings.

Accordingly, Buswell provides a straightforward description of the East Asian contribution to Buddhist thought, particularly in the area of theories of the "embryo of the Tathāgata" (*tathāgatagarbha*). Perhaps the most radical suggestion of thinkers of the day was their identification of a description of *tathāgatagarbha* which incorporated the impulse to transcendence. Extant Indian documentation on *tathāgatagarbha* indicated that it was quite clearly considered immovable and wholly lacking of activity, being in fact the form of suchness enclosed in the defiled receptacle of sentient existence. As such, this East Asian development of the *tathāgatagarbha* theory includes overtones derived from the proposition on "stainless consciousness" (*amalavijñāna*), which is normally understood to have been Paramārtha's contribution to Buddhist gnoseology. Buswell's account is succinct and, in many ways to the point: none of these Mahayana based models of reality truly solve the central difficulty of theodicy, any more than wholly monistic or dualistic models of theism solve similar difficulties, *mutatis mutandis*. To divorce the activity of ignorance from suchness is merely to multiply entities gratuitously — a difficult proposition in the notoriously nondualistic atmosphere of the Mahayana. At some point the relationship between suchness and ignorance must be confronted, a confrontation Buddhist thinkers have been shy of ever since the authorship of the sutras. Propositions such as "we are all truly awakened but do not recognize our true nature" beg the question by being internally contradictory, the conditions of "awakened" and "non-recognition" being, presumably, mutually exclusive.

It is only in Chapter Three — Doctrinal Teachings — that I have certain reservations on Buswell's descriptions of his sources. His chart on p. 80 displaying the difference between the two Mahayana philosophies of mind is perhaps an

accurate description of the Sinic perception of the sources, but is not the testimony of the sources themselves, being more a reflection of Hsüan-tsang's reading of the Nālandā school of seventh century Magadhā. In particular, any exclusive definition of the underlying consciousness (*alayavijñāna*) as entirely impure and the source of defilement is faulty from an Indic perspective. The *Yogācārabhūmi* section known as the *Viniścaya-saṃgrahaṇī* discusses this topic in some detail with the basic assumption of the innate purity of all forms of consciousness, an idea based on the *Ekottara-Āgama's* statement concerning the basic purity of the root of mentality. Thus, Indic models of the underlying consciousness prior to the seventh century were polyvalent and not highly structured in the manner codified by either their Madhyamaka opponents or their scholastic apologists. Buswell's schematic therefore is not entirely in error, merely reductionistic, and is still useful as a heuristic device representing the East Asian view.

With respect to the translation, the felicity of expression is excellent for Buddhist scriptural translation, always a potential problem. Mahayana scriptures can try the patience of the reader, with their penchant for long-winded expression and endless sentences. Being composed in the Sinic intellectual framework clearly reduces this liability for the *Vajrasamādhi*, but it decidedly retains the diction of many of its source scriptures. Buswell has elected to give to some of the phraseology a voice emphasizing the Korean locus rather than the broader overtones of the Mahayana. Such decisions need to be made, and sometimes the reader wonders if some resonances are not lost because of it. A good example is Buswell's translation of [chiao] hua (孝化) with the English "proselyte" (transitive verb), "proselytism" (noun), and so forth. The context of the translation Buswell has made clear on p. 152:

... textual forgery may have been a common artifice for disseminating early Ch'an doctrine. Indeed, proselytization was one of the reasons

Tao-hsüan cited in his *Ta T'ang nei tien lu* (The Great T'ang Catalogue of Buddhist Scriptures) for the composition of apocryphal scriptures.

Thus, Buswell reads the sentences denoting the process of teaching as indicating the vociferous activity of the Ch'an exponent spreading the "good word" in the face of indifference and even hostility. The *Vajrasamādhi* possibly picked up the term from the well-known translation of the *Lankāvatāra-sūtra* completed in 51 A.D. by Bodhiruci. There, *chiao-hua* translates the Sanskrit *paripācana*, to mature or to bring to fruition. Consequently, the *Lankāvatāra* translation denotes the normative activity of the Indic master, interacting with a sympathetic audience in the monastic setting, not at all the context of proselytism as

evident in Korea. Translating terms such as these, which have changed their linguistic charge with the change of target audience, is perhaps the most challenging task of the translator of non-Indic materials. In this instance, the translation of "proselyte" is definitely a judgement call, but the informed reader may wonder if indeed the aggressive stance implied in the translation was truly the case in Wŏnhyo's Korea.

All in all, Buswell's work is excellent, well researched, and well written. His procedure represents a model to us all, and we may only hope for his next contribution to the rapidly growing corpus of material on Ch'an.

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Meditation as an Intervention in Stress Reactivity

by Amarjit S. Sethi. New York, NY: AMS Press, 1989. 137 pp. This book is number 12 in a series on Stress in Modern Society.

Mr. Sethi has undertaken an extensive review of stress factors in modern life, theories and research on stress responses, meditation practices from a variety of traditions, and research on the use of meditation as an intervention in stress reactivity. The work is ambitious for a small volume and succeeds in some but not all of its aims.

Of great value is the chapter on meditation research. Mr. Sethi has catalogued in a concise and useful way a multitude of research studies taking place from 1961 to 1986. This chapter is a valuable resource for those interested in controlled experiments related to meditation. Of primary interest is Mr. Sethi's distinction between studies which have demonstrated physiological changes as a result of meditation and more complex studies that look at immune system improvement, speed of recovery from anxiety-producing circumstances, Type A behavior, and work stress. Mr. Sethi's discussion of these studies and the state of contemporary research in meditation is comprehensive. We discover, for example, that meditators seem to have a more rapid recovery from anxiety-producing stimuli, although meditation is no more effective than several other strategies such as systematic desensitization or progressive relaxation. Although he points out that research has not demonstrated a direct link between meditation and the effects on the immune system, Mr. Sethi states:

The basic premise of psycho-neuro-immunology is that 'neither the brain nor the immune system can be excluded from any scheme that proposes to account for the onset and course of human disease' (Hall & Goldstein 1986: 40)*. In the future impact of psycho-neuro-immunology and in its evolution in disease prevention a number of behavioral therapies are recommended. In this broad

approach to manage stress, meditation can play a key role in studying the relationship between behavior and biochemistry of immunity. (p. 41)

In my opinion, Mr. Sethi down plays the possible physiologically related effects of meditation as a factor in stress reactivity. His primary descriptions of meditation point to the cognitive effects of meditation and its capacity to assist meditators to "notice things and events, and yet not be affected by them" (p. 28). Mr. Sethi points to the importance of looking at the cognitive factors in stress. What is perceived as a threat or unmanageable produces anxiety leading to potentially debilitating stress factors. In his discussion of meditation research, however, I did not find Mr. Sethi acknowledging that the positive benefits of meditation for stress intervention may be very directly, indeed primarily, linked to the well documented physiological changes, such as reduced metabolism rate. Such documented effects allow the body a deeper relaxation than can be achieved through sleep. This potential oversight does not diminish the general quality of this chapter. Of particular interest is his discovery of research that points to different brain wave functions associated with different meditation practices and to a certain pattern of total brain activity associated with higher states of meditative practice.

Mr. Sethi's purpose, of course, is not limited to a discussion of meditation research. He has also provided a thorough catalogue of meditation practices from a variety of religious traditions. His discussion of yoga is the most comprehensive. As a general overview, this chapter is interesting as an introduction. It will be of interest to individuals, who have not been exposed in any substantive way to meditation practices in a variety of traditions.

Yet, with the possible exception of the discussion on yoga, there is no new information here beyond what is discussed in somewhat more detail elsewhere, for example in Daniel Goleman's *The Meditative Mind*.

The most important criticism of the work for me is that I would have enjoyed a more thorough discussion of Mr. Sethi's primary contribution, his development of a non-sectarian mode of meditation that he calls Strategic Meditation (SM). It appears to be a beneficial way to enter into meditation, identifying and then letting go of physical awareness, emotional awareness, conceptual ruminations of past and future, and finally of goals and purposes. Each of these levels of awareness is accompanied by a number, counting backward from 4 to 0. At the zero level, Mr. Sethi recommends using a mantra of one's choice to assist in the release from concern over past or future or even meditational technique. I regretted that this practice was not given a more prominent place in the text and a more thorough discussion.

Mr. Sethi has pointed towards the importance of analysing internal and external stressors, both one's own thought habits as well as factors in one's work place or life circumstances that can receive active attention and be changed. What I did not find clearly stated was the method of working at both the external and internal stressors in an active way, and the connection between that kind of stress management and the stress management of Strategic Meditation. I think there is potentially a very powerful model in Mr. Sethi's book for such a synthesis of active attention to circumstances and attitudes that are stressful or anxiety producing and more passive forms of stress intervention such as meditation. Mr. Sethi discusses a variety of active approaches to stress management including Medi-

tation on Inner Power, Meditation on Problems, Meditation on Decisions, and Meditation on Self (pp. 91-21). However, he does not describe in any detail the actual practices he has in mind for such meditations. I would have thoroughly enjoyed such a discussion. Such active subjects for meditation would, I surmise, be used along with the Strategic Meditation that leads to a more formless subject. Mr. Sethi, I believe, seeks to lay these aims out in his section on "strategic choice," however, I did not find a clear enough step by step process for meditation on active subjects to grasp the full potential to which Mr. Sethi is pointing.

I did not find a final synthesis of these active meditation forms and Strategic Meditation as a method of stress intervention in Mr. Sethi's work. For example, it seems to me that he has the makings for a method of creative problem solving, for both short- and long-term circumstances, that would be very exciting to develop. The seeds of this are in a chart he has prepared that includes meditation among factors for strategic choice in stress (p. 100). While Mr. Sethi does discuss this material, as relevant both to individuals and organizations, I found it needing and very worthy of a more thorough discussion. I hope that he will now go on with that discussion in another book. It would be quite worthwhile.

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* N. R. Hall and A. L. Goldstein, "Thinking Well: the Chemical Links Between Emotions and Health," *The Sciences*, (1986, March/April), 34-41.

Fundamentals of Buddhist Ethics

by Gunapala Dharmasiri. Golden Leaves, 1989. 157 pp.

Paul and Hannah Tillich spent nine weeks in Japan in 1960. Writing about their encounters with Buddhist scholars, Hannah Tillich described a conversation about prayer that took place between her husband and Keiji Nishitani at Kyoto University. Both men agreed that according to St. Paul, when someone prays, God, as well as the person, is praying. "Who is praying, then?" Nishitani asked pointedly.

A peculiar silence arose after the question, and in this silence Paul Tillich bowed unexpectedly and in grand simplicity, placing the palms of his hands together and touching the tips of his fingers to his forehead, remaining for a short time concentrated in this gesture. ... Nishitani[']s face was lit from within a loving smile, which disappeared only when Paul Tillich, awakened from his absorption, nodded to Nishitani, who responded with an almost imperceptible nod ... *

This bow, Hannah Tillich suggested, united her husband with everything Zen represented. He "could not have answered the question in a more genuine way than by this silent, true testimony."

Paul Tillich automatically bowed. The *kōan* presented to him by Nishitani pushed his mind beyond conceptual thinking. He acted at once with respect, humility, gratitude and awe. He acted morally. More precisely, his very nature at that moment, was moral. At that moment, wisdom and morality were one in him.

In the West, we have come closest to this tradition of the union of mind, moral action and feeling in the 19th century philosophy of identity of Friedrich Schleiermacher, recognized today as the father of modern hermeneutical theory and the father of modern Protestant theology. Neverthe-

less, the core of his vision, as masterfully delineated in his *Dialektik*, has not been adequately understood.

The East has been more fortunate. The core of its vision of reality as interrelated, interdependent and beyond the grasp of all conceptual schematization, is at the heart of Buddhist teaching. This vision has been vividly set forth anew in the small volume, *Fundamentals of Buddhist Ethics*, by Gunapala Dharmasiri who is a professor in the Department of Philosophy at Peradeniya University in Sri Lanka.

In this work, which is based on his series of lectures given at Swarthmore and Haverford Colleges in 1981-2, Dharmasiri pushes to envision a "morality beyond morality." His lucid and loving explication of this vision, I believe, will make his readers bow in grateful testimony to its truth. Furthermore, Dharmasiri's skillful and multifaceted discussion of nirvana in the context of his delineation of Buddhist ethics, I suspect, will make this book a classic in the field.

Central to Dharmasiri's task in his book is the clarification of the two visions of reality formulated in Buddhist teaching. Two moralities, he tells us, stem from these two visions of reality. The first is conditioned, the second is unconditioned.

The first is the morality of the ordinary person. This person is moral through conditioning (*sīlavā hoti no ca sīlamayo*). This morality is based on a fundamental evolutionary principle embedded in all animals. The basic tenet of this morality is that the species must survive. Altruism, from within this context, is the "sacrifice" of the individual for the preservation of the other members of its community. Such a morality, Dharmasiri tells us, presupposes "personhood" and has meaning only for one who believes him/herself to be "a person."

Once one realizes that there is no person, this type of morality is gone beyond.

The other morality is that of an enlightened person, *i.e.*, one who has gone beyond ordinary moral values without abrogating these values. Such a person is not conditioned by morality (*śīlamayo*) but is moral by "nature" (*śilava*) because the nature of nirvana is moral perfection. When such a person "performs an action, only the action is there (*kiriya-matta*). The enlightened person is not motivated by an expectation of an end result (*i.e.*, a teleological ethic). Nor does such a person perform an action simply as a kind of Kantian duty for its own sake (*i.e.*, a deontological ethic). The enlightened person has gone beyond both ethical spheres. "A buddha," Dharmasiri tells us, "need not and does not practice charity. Charity is his very nature. His acts can be characterized only as spontaneous happenings."

The unconditioned act of this second morality is what Dharmasiri means by the morality beyond morality. This is the morality at the heart of Buddhist teaching. To understand why this is the case, Dharmasiri explores the Buddhist doctrine of No-Self (*anatta*). This doctrine is at the core of the Buddha's altruistic commitment to others and transcends the ordinary motivation of species preservation. Dharmasiri tells us that "it is the *anatta* doctrine that involves one in altruistic actions."

The doctrine of interdependence rules out the possibility of a separate soul, because nothing can be independent in a world where everything is interrelated. I cannot think of myself as separate from the rest of the universe Because my existence is dependent on the rest of the universe, I naturally owe a debt and an obligation to the rest of the universe. Therefore, my attitude to others and other objects should be one of respect and gratitude.

By itself, the above description of the doctrine of interdependence is merely a categorial

scheme useful in acquiring theoretical knowledge about Buddhist teachings. Missing from this explanation is the experiential component: nirvana, the experience of the extinction of the processes of conceptualization and of attachment. Dharmasiri's discussion of nirvana in this context extinguishes any tendency by the reader to leave the discussion at the level of mere ideas. Instead, Dharmasiri pushes us in a direction beyond the limits of our own carefully formulated views of morality.

Dharmasiri weaves together stories, analogies and scholarly discussions about nirvana from various Buddhist traditions in order to create a rich fabric of meaning for a proper understanding of ethical action. Of particular importance is his discussion of nirvana as the experience of voidness (*śūnyatā*). To clarify this experiential core of Buddhist ethics, Dharmasiri uses the implications inherent in some of the early Mahayana sutras which were explicitly drawn out and formulated by Nāgārjuna.

Akin to Kant's own theory of empirical knowledge, Dharmasiri affirms that our empirical world is constituted by our own mental activity. Concepts order and construct our world. These constructs are not a presentation of the world as it really is. Nirvana reveals the emptiness of these mental constructs. But unlike the Kantian paradigm, Buddhism does not posit "things-in-themselves" independent of our process of cognition. Rather, nirvana reveals an ontological backdrop of voidness. The mind is presented with neither existence nor non-existence, and thus, as Śāntideva notes, "through lack of any other possibility, that which is without support becomes tranquil." The mind is lucid and quiet.

"Ego-lessness" is this cessation of thinking. The unconscious mind has emerged out of its primeval cave. The conscious mind is now familiar with its unconscious side. There is no split within the mind between conscious and unconscious. The whole personality will at once totally accept what it sees or experiences and the mind can be directed to look at the world and see things as they really

are. This seeing leads to enlightenment. The full emptiness of the self is revealed.

Thinking, on the other hand, creates the ego. Thinking is the awareness that "I think." Here, "me" and "mine" are born. Clinging and craving arise. To expunge these desires, one must therefore strive to establish awareness without projecting thought. To clarify this point, Dharmasiri presents an analogy used in Buddhist texts:

Walking along on a hot day, a person sees a ripe mango fallen under a mango tree. He becomes excited and picks up the juicy fruit. As he is just about to bite into the mango with gusto, he sees a repellent worm in it and then drops the mango automatically. This is the

way one drops desires in Buddhism, and the way wisdom makes one automatically moral.

Paul Tillich spontaneously bowed in personal testimony to the truth of the Buddhist vision of reality. But only for a moment. Dharmasiri, on the other hand, gives us an extended vision of this reality. This is the gift of his book. In doing so, he presents both a lesson and a challenge to Western readers from which we should not turn away.

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* Hannah Tillich, *From Place to Place*.
Stein and Day, New York: 1976, pp. 119-120.

SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought

By Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota. Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center, 1989. 372 pp.; paper, \$16.90

SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought by Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota is an unusually well written, lucid, in-depth portrayal not only of the structure of Shinran's thought, but of the uniqueness of his interpretation and extension of Mahayana Pure Land Buddhism.

Yoshifumi Ueda, whose expertise is Indian Buddhism and whose personal commitment is Jodo Shinshu, has served for many years as chairman of the Hongwanji International Center Translation Committee. Rev. Dennis Hirota, a native Californian who has lived in Japan for many years, is a writer and Shin scholar of distinction, well known for his work as Chief Translator for the Hongwanji International Center's monumental project of publishing all of Shinran's works in modern English translations. In addition, Hirota's own two volumes *No Abode*, on Ippen, and *Plain Words on the Pure Land Way*, *Sayings of Wandering Monks of Medieval Japan* testify to the depth of his expertise in the Pure Land tradition.

The 1989 publication of *SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought* by the Hongwanji International Center in Kyoto offers a treasurehouse of insight and reference which should make it invaluable in library collections everywhere. The authors' linkage of specific points with specific passages from Shinran's writings is a plus both for readers familiar with and those new to Shinran's works. Passages are of course as translated in the Shin Buddhism Translation Series, which is nearing completion with the current project of translating Shinran's Wasan (Japanese hymns).

Of particular value to those who may wish to use this book as a classroom text in comparative religion or Buddhist studies is the authors' organi-

zation of their wealth of material. They have done far more than provide the introduction to Shinran's thought which the title implies. To inform those previously unacquainted with Shin Buddhism they begin with a chapter on Shinran's life and works.

One of the misimpressions many westerners have of Shinran's True Pure Land Way is cleanly and clearly corrected in the authors' statement that "Shinran's thought is often said to bear close resemblance to elements of certain Christian teachings: an emphasis on trust or faith, a concern with evil, and a concept of salvation as given through the compassionate activity of the Transcendent Other. Emphasis on such similarities can be misleading however, for Shinran's use of such general Mahayana terms as nirvana, dharma-body, suchness, wisdom and true reality reflect a clear awareness of basic Mahayana teachings as the foundation of the Pure Land path."

Yoshifumi Ueda's special background in early Indian Mahayana Buddhism and Dennis Hirota's expertise in Pure Land tradition are fused in Chapter Two, "The Mahayana Mode of Thought" and Chapter Three, "Emergence of the Pure Land Path." Like the first and fourth chapters on Shinran, these two middle chapters are virtually independent essays, complete in themselves. This is no accident. In their prefatory "Note to Readers," the authors express the hope that "each of the four chapters may be read independently."

In this reviewer's opinion, the most outstanding of the four chapters of Part I of *SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought* is chapter 4, "The Structure of Shinran's Thought." For ministers and lay people as well as students and scholars this particular chapter has the potential to

serve as an indispensable reference clarifying such uniquely Shin concepts as *shinjin*.

An index listing occurrences of major terms is rather short but the appendices are otherwise excellent, providing background and explanation of the major Pure Land sutras, the major Vows, and the Pure Land masters through whom Shinran derived his spiritual lineage. There is also a useful chronological list of Shinran's writings and a short bibliography of pertinent materials available in English.

The final forty pages are devoted to a reproduction of the Japanese text translated in Part Two, selected passages from Shinran's writings.

As a whole, the authors have given us a depth of insight and range of resources on Shinran's Pure Land teaching that has not previously been available to western readers.

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Jodo Shinshu: Shin Buddhism in Medieval Japan

by James C. Dobbins. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989. 242 pp.; \$35.00

Professor Dobbins in this work illuminates a vital but neglected period in Western studies of the post-Shinran Shin Buddhist development. While scholarly English publications on the founder Shinran (1173-1263) and Rennyo (1415-1499), the eighth patriarch and the 'Restorer' of the Honganji branch, have steadily increased in number, virtually no such treatment saw print on the approximately 150 year period between Shinran and Rennyo.

This book, however, treats in Chapters 5 and 6 the development of early Shinshū community and the role played by Kakunyo (1270-1351, third Shin patriarch) in the creation of the Honganji Temple. Particularly noteworthy is Kakunyo's strained relationship with his own son Zonkaku (1290-1373) who advocated a vision of Honganji Temple that embraced a more inclusive attitude toward other Buddhist schools and 'popular' beliefs than Kakunyo's. This tension, in my view, has existed throughout the Honganji history, erupting in violent doctrinal controversies of the Tokugawa Period, and resurfacing in the 1980's in the advocacy by some liberal Honganji clergy for a broader application of the teaching in response to a more secularized and pluralistic world.

The book in Chapter 8 makes another important contribution by bringing out into the open the vital role played by the 'other' Shinshū branches ("factions" in the book). Dwarfed today in size and influence by the Honganji branch, these other nine branches receive little attention. But as Dobbins clarifies, Bukkōji, Kinshokuji and Senjūji branches, for example, were in fact more influential than the Honganji among the Shinshū factions, and they continue to be major players and formidable competitors to the Honganji through the early 15th century.

Though not the first scholarly treatment in English on the subject, the discussion of Shinran's life and his teachings in Chapter Two provides a well-written synoptic view with updated information on the recent scholarly findings and debates. Particularly helpful in understanding Shinran's thought is a section devoted to his 'magnus opus', the *Kyōgyōshinshō* (Selected Passages Revealing the True Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment of Pure Land Buddhism), the most extensive exposition on his thought. Prof. Dobbins summarizes both the textual issues related to this work as well as the main import of each of the six chapters.

The book's focus on the question of heresy provides an innovative, insightful approach to our understanding of Shin doctrine and its historical evolution. The question of heresy constituted a major concern for Shin Buddhist leaders as expressed in, for example, *Tannishō* (Notes Lamenting Deviations) attributed to Shinran's disciple Yuienbō, Kakunyo's *Gaijashō* (Notes Rectifying Heresy), Zonkaku's *Hajakenshōshō* (Notes Assailing Heresy and Revealing Truth) and Rennyo's *Ofumi* or *Gobunshō* (Pastoral Letters).

Prof. Dobbins cites three major reasons for the extra-ordinary concern for heresy in early Shinshū history: 1) the elusiveness of Shinran's teachings that differed greatly from the dominant form of Buddhism of his day, 2) the illiteracy of the majority of the followers who because of their lack of access to Shinran's writings were dependent on their local leaders for religious instruction, and 3) the influx of adherents from other religious groups who brought with them doctrines that Shinshū rejected. The Shinshū preoccupation with heresy and orthodoxy, Prof. Dobbins maintains, "was not a premeditated effort to build up a school of Buddhism, but rather an attempt over successive

generations to explicate the inner logic of faith." (pp. 9-10)

The author's concluding chapter, entitled "Shin Buddhism: An Appraisal" offers some insightful observations about the distinctiveness of Shin Buddhism. Perhaps the most interesting point made is the assessment that Shin Buddhism ("as the most fully developed form of lay Buddhism in existence") challenges the traditional assumption that clerical or monastic practices are the true path which all Buddhists must eventually undertake in some lifetime or another. The following paragraph best captures the import of Prof. Dobbins' views:

Shin Buddhism is none other than one specific form of this general lay Buddhist outlook. Its specific aspects are its Buddha, Amida; its path to enlightenment, via Pure Land; its sacred story of how Amida established that path; and its practices, the nembutsu and otherwise. But if Shin is demythologized — that is, if its specific aspects are stripped away — then the religious sensibilities and practices remaining are not significantly different from those found in lay Buddhism throughout Asia. They are faith-oriented and devotional.

Shin has not created a new form of Buddhism, but rather idealizes the lay dimension of the religion. *What is unique about Shin is not the beliefs and practices its propounds but its advocacy of the lay path over the clerical one. It maintains that lay Buddhism is the only practicable form surviving today.* (p. 160) (emphasis added)

The book is well-written and should prove uncumberous reading for even the non-specialists. The English renderings of technical Shin terms, in many cases, are innovative and preferable than the hackneyed traditional English translations. The extensive glossary of technical terms are highly helpful, but it was unfortunate that close to a hundred glossary entries were inadvertently omitted during the printing process. The book, nevertheless, is destined to become a standard work in Shin studies, and is recommended particularly for those interested in Pure Land Buddhism, medieval Japanese religion, and the role of lay Buddhism and its implications for the modern world.

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The Dawn of Chinese Pure Land Buddhist Doctrine

— *Ching-ying Hui-yüan's Commentary on the Visualization Sutra*

by Kenneth K. Tanaka. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1990. 304 pp.; \$54.50 hardcover, \$17.95 paperback.

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce to the readers of *The Pacific World* a new and outstanding piece of Buddhist scholarship, the publication of Prof. Ken Tanaka's *The Dawn of Chinese Pure Land Buddhist Doctrine*.

Prof Tanaka's work is divided into two parts: a study of early, Chinese Pure Land Buddhism, and a full translation of the *Commentary* mentioned in the above title.

The importance of the *Commentary* lies in the fact that it was (and is) the earliest commentary written in China, — indeed composed anywhere — on the so-called Meditation Sutra, the *Kam-muryōjukyō* (*Kangyō*). This is one of the Three Pure Land Sutra, and is the scripture with the least claim to authenticity, that is, the scripture that was not composed in India (and hence the true word of the Buddha) but was perhaps composed in early China as a meditational device for Chinese Pure Land devotees. Therefore, Hui-yüan's *Commentary* determined that the *Kangyō* became part of the Chinese (and Japanese) Pure Land Canon, the so-called *Jōdo-sambukyō*.

It may well be the case that the average American Shinshu follower has never heard of the *Commentary* or of the figure of its author Hui-yüan. There were three Hui-yüan's in Chinese Buddhist history: an earlier figure by the name of Hui-yüan (Lushan Hui-yüan, in Japanese Rozan Eon, 334-416), who became known for establishing a group of Pure Land lay followers. Lu-shan is regarded as the first seat of Pure Land Buddhism in China, and this master Hui-yüan is frequently regarded as the

first Pure Land patriarch of China. The second Hui-yüan was the author of the *Commentary* and is the subject of this book. To distinguish him from the earlier Hui-yüan, he is called by the name of his monastery, the Ching-ying ssu monastery in the capital city of Ch'ang-an. Ching-ying Hui-yüan's dates are 523-592. Due to Hui-yüan's popularity for Pure Land study and dissemination, the Ching-ying ssu monastery became a popular devotional center, and two generations later yet another Hui-yüan appeared (597-647).

The importance of Hui-yüan and his *Commentary* lay in his disciples, and in especially one, the master Shan-tao (Zendo-daishi, 613-681), who was in his turn heavily influenced by the writings of Hui-yüan. Shan-tao adopts Hui-yüan's classification of the *Kangyō's* role in general Buddhism, that is, that it was a purely Mahayana work of the sudden teaching; he adopted his division into meditative and non-meditative good actions; the ranking of nine grades of rebirth (*kubon-jōbutsu*); and his classification of the different levels of Amitabha's Pure Land, their differences, their religious characteristics, etc. It should be noted that almost all of Hui-yüan's doctrinal thought was taken over by Shan-tao in his *Commentary* to the *Kuan-ching*.

Why has so little been heard of Ching-ying Hui-yüan? Modern Japanese Buddhist scholars (Yuki Reimon, Mochizuki Shinko, etc.) — who are the foremost scholars in Far Eastern Buddhism — have not ignored Hui-yüan, and indeed, have written excellent essays on him and his *Commen-*

tary, but as Professor Tanaka argues in his book (page xv), — and correctly so, I believe, — the orthodoxy of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism, either that of the Jōdoshū or the Shinshū, looked to Shan-tao as a great patriarchal master, thus overshadowing the life and work of Hui-yūan, even though Shan-tao's work can best be said to be almost a total copy of Hui-yūan's writings and thought (one is reluctant to say plagiarism). Orthodox Japanese

Pure Land thought, encased within Jōdo and Hon-ganji circles, have directed generations, if not centuries, of serious scholars away from an objective analysis of Chinese Buddhism, and into a mold that reflects a Japanese orthodoxy. Prof Tanaka's book is therefore a work of importance in correcting centuries of ignoring this most important of Chinese Pure Land thinkers.

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