

BROAD, NOETICNESS AND OTHER GUENTHERIANA

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Writing about living masters is a perfectly respectable pursuit in contemporary anthropology. Levi Strauss has elicited much more literature about himself and his work in America and Britain than he has in France. No one seems to be able to be neutral about him—you are either a follower or an opponent, and the degrees of opposition to part of his work, or to the whole corpus, seems incommensurate at times with its place in European thought. Since anthropology is managerially more powerful than Buddhology, Levi-Strauss is of course 'more famous', all over, than Herbert Vighnāntaka Guenther. Not so for Tibetologists, Indologists, Buddhologists. For them, Guenther is as important, as Levi-Strauss is to the anthropological guild. And like Levi-Strauss, Guenther elicits attitudes of submission or of extreme opposition. In this article, I will try to come to grips with the gripes that surround his work. I am writing as an anthropologist who came from a literary Sanskritic scholarly background, but one who has thrown in his lot with the anthropologists, withdrawing his interest, hence his loyalty, from the bookish.

Guenther was my second Sanskrit mentor (my first was the late E. Frauwallner, also at Vienna); but he was my first serious teacher of Indian culture. Just after World War II, he taught me all I knew up until then about ancient and medieval Indian civilization, about Buddhism, and about classical Sanskrit. Before I met him, Guenther had been doing, and doing very well indeed, all the comprehensive things indologists did in those days—Vedic, grammar, comparative philology. His habilitation work was on Old Sinhalese Grammar, a thing which he modestly never again mentioned. But Professor J. Gair of Cornell, the top-man on Sinhalese in North America, often asks me how to obtain a copy of that seminal work of the young Guenther. I don't know how to get it.

Sometime in the mid-forties, Guenther got exposed to depth psychology, under the guidance of a well-known woman scientist in Vienna; I believe this phase left an indelible character upon his later thought. By the mid-forties, however, Guenther switched his total personal allegiance to Buddhism. He first took *sil* from a Sinhalese monk who visited Vienna in 1947-48, but even by that time it was quite evident that Guenther's real interest lay in Northern Buddhism; there just was no Tibetan or other Northern Buddhist around at that time to confer any degree of initiation upon him.

Guenther moved to India in 1951, to teach Russian at the University of Lucknow, then Indology, Tibetology, and Buddhism at the Government Sanskrit College in

Varanasi. It was at about that time that he developed a strong interest in certain forms of modern western philosophy—and if ex-post-facto rumination and my memory do not deceive me, I was in part instrumental to this incipient interest of his, since I taught philosophy at Banaras Hindu University at that time. Whether or not it was I who drew his attention to C. D. Broad I do not remember; but I do remember that Broad did impress me—and everyone else who did serious western philosophy *at that time*—as an important philosopher. I changed by my mind about him many years ago, and this will be part of what I am going to say further down. For a very short time, there might have been a toss-up in Guenther's interest between certain forms of existentialist thought and the general language oriented philosophy which was to establish itself—and had already done so in Britain—as the official professional philosophy in all English speaking countries. In a very general way, of course, Broad belonged to that wide realm of philosophical expansion, but only if we compare this realm with radically different typologies, like, say, existentialism, or the kind of neo-idealist stuff that is still taught at German universities, or Marxist philosophy as taught, not in the socialist countries, but in France, and Italy. Apart from that, Broad fell out of line—hence out of general favour, in a very short time. He was not sensitive to the importance of Wittgenstein, whom he regarded as a fad, and Wittgenstein's followers as faddists rather than as serious thinkers: some more about this later. Broad was the most prolific writer on any philosophical chair in Britain; Wittgenstein's own production does not exceed two-and-a half very slender volumes. Yet Wittgenstein's impact on whatever followed is, as we all know, enormous—whereas Broad is remembered only by historians of 20th century British philosophy. I share, quite consciously, the philosopher's neglect of Broad, and I shall say why.

In course of his class talks between 1946 and 1948, he rebuked scholars who were apologists for one or the other religious system; and he did so consistently. There was a change in the general thrust of his later productions whose number was to be legion. All the criticism, stated, unstated, implicit and explicit, by other orientalists who read and use his work, boil down, it seems to me, to this one stew: that Guenther had become an apologist for Tibetan Buddhism rather than an analyst of Buddhism, Tibetan and other. I cannot say that I disagree with this view, and I will try to elaborate.

I agree with Hugh Richardson, onetime Resident for the British (and then for a short time, for the Indian) Government at Lhasa, who said, "Guenther is a true fortress of Tibetan Buddhism—so large that it seems unassailable". If there are Guentherians as there are Wagnerians, then all of the criticism written about Guenther probably seems to them as so much nit-picking and sour grapes. It may well be, but, if it is, a more general analysis is needed, which I hope to supply in this chapter. I also know that there is not a single Westerner, or in fact any non-Tibetan, who knows Buddhist Tibetan, the language that is, anywhere closely as well as Guenther.

If a scholar had the time, the passion, and the compassion, he could probably attempt an analysis and a retranslation of hundreds of passages which Guenther offers for an explication of his Tibetan texts. It is precisely his vocable proliferation which made a colleague of his muse that a book should be written, captioned *Guenther Without Mystification*. One despairs of this hypertrophic display of terms which he created, and which bespeak what I would call polysemic vanity.

“The equation of noetic being with the magic working yogini is of particular significance. It indicates that however abstract noetic being may sound, when it is actualized and lived, it is far from being a cool abstraction that can be contemplated in detachment. Noetic being is linked with and permeated by aesthetic immediacy, vibrant with life, from which the intellect moves into a world of mere postulates and fictions.” (*Royal Song*, p. 52.)

Noetic being, whatever that may mean, continues sounding terribly abstract when Guenther writes about it. If *shes rab* is “appreciative discrimination”, it sounds not only like a “cool abstraction”, but to the English speaker it is not the least bit permeated with aesthetic immediacy. Wouldn’t a good old warehouse like “intuition” be more “vibrant” since it leaves a slot open for imagination, and for the aesthetic input to be supplied by the user? The trouble is that Guenther wants English speaking readers to agree to his particular idiolect in Buddhist technical diction. His procedure is not descriptive, but recommendatory, as Ch. Stevenson would have said. Also, by sheer anthropological hunch, based on more than sporadic contacts with Tibetan ranking clergy, I do not think that they feel about *shes rab*, as speakers of Tibetan, the way Guenther wants his readers to feel about “appreciative discrimination.” His translations of long passages from Tibetan works into sesquipedalian, recommendatory prose belong in the same niche: I simply refuse to believe that the Tibetan hierophant felt, as a speaker of Tibetan, that he bowed to “ultimate noeticness that never can be divided from the awareness which intuits the real”, (*Royal Song*, p. 84.) the way a learned English speaker or poet feels about “noeticness”,—a feeling which would be quite unrelated to the Tibetan’s feeling for the term Guenther translates by “noeticness” (Guenther doesn’t say here which term that is).

Guenther’s use of C. D. Broad and the persistent quotation from *Mind and Its Place in Nature* throughout his works is something of an embarrassment. First, an audience which may or may not be familiar with modern philosophy, must ask the question, “is that all there is to it?”; or the nastier among them, “is that all Guenther

ever reads on modern western philosophy?" Still, such overly simple charges can be rebutted by claiming—and I suppose this is what Guenther would do were he thus challenged directly—that this was indeed the most important book produced in British philosophy during the past seven decades, for an outside corroborative addendum to Buddhist studies. But, I think this is wrong, and Guenther does not improve Buddhism's chances as an intellectually acceptable corpus of ideas anymore than T. R. V. Murti did by bringing Hegel into his *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*¹ many years ago. For neither Hegel nor Broad, in any of their work, add anything to, or detract anything from Buddhism—nor is their support of any Asian originated doctrine needed. Most importantly, however, reference to them harms rather than aids the representation of Buddhism to western intellects.

It is not that the use of analogous themes in bygone thinkers is redundant. Regardless of whether for praise or blame, philosophers must keep referring to the greats, from the pre-Socratics to this day, much as modern anthropologists still have to quote Frazer, Weber, and Durkheim, and, presumably, historians of physics and even physicists themselves Newton and Galileo. But, the undusting of mediocre or unimportant thinkers is unwarranted, except in one single specialty of philosophical or historical writing, i. e., the history of ideas, such as represented in the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, now in its 18th year of publication.² Broad was, in his day, a well appointed philosopher. He held the Knightbridge Professorship of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge, a *non-plus-ultra* in British professional philosophical aspiration. He was not sensitive to the upcoming linguistic philosophy, and it seems to me that he simply missed out on it, for reasons I do not know. The most prolific writer among Cambridge philosophers of this century, Broad regarded the new trend as tangential and looked upon it with some scorn. This is probably one of the reasons why he has since been bypassed by the official philosophers of Oxbridge, as well as in the American dependencies. It is one thing to poke fun at Wittgenstein, but it is quite a different matter, and a serious offense, not to take cognizance of him in one's writings.

Crucial to Broad's own ideas as input into Guenther's work, was Broad's notion of physical and psychical substances, succinctly stated in his *Reply to Critics*:

"It (i. e., purely psychical substance) would be a substance which (a) has *some* dispositions which both need an experience to stimulate them, and when thus stimulated (b) has no dispositions which both need a physical event to stimulate them, and when thus stimulated, react (if at all) by producing

1 T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, London: Allen & Unwin 1955.

2 Now published from New York University, it had among its illustrious editors Hans Kohn, and Philipp Wiener.

a physical event. A purely physical substance could be defined *mutatis mutandis* in a similar way, viz. by substituting 'no' for 'some' in (a), and 'some' for 'no' in (b). It is evident from the definitions that no substances could be both 'purely physical' and 'purely psychical.'³

If this summarizes an etiology of Guenther's cathexis of Broad, we could leave it there. But, since Guenther co-opts Broad for the purpose of substantiating Buddhist doctrine, the shortcomings of Broad's thesis in modern philosophical and psychological perspective should be pointed out on this occasion. This kind of approach is no longer part of philosophical or psychological work. It is far too impressionistic for the hardcore language analyst, and it is entirely too speculative and unamenable to the kind of material psychologists seek out for testing. In other words, Broad's views are no hypotheses, which makes him irrelevant to psychologists; and they are not analytic in a linguistic sense. He talks about actual or possible entities, about possible functions and about possible concatenations of function stipulated by him. If you take J. L. Austin and all the people after him seriously, you cannot generate any patience with Broad's somewhat ponderous felicitous treatment of somewhat ponderous ideas. I feel that Guenther would have made a much more felicitous choice in support of Buddhism, had he turned to J. L. Austin, or to the lineage from Wittgenstein via Wisdom and Austin to the better among the official philosophers today. Guenther's proliferation of unparsimonious terms may have been partly due to Broad's influence. To make matters worse, *Mind and Its Place in Nature*, first published in 1924, was a reflection of the most highly eclectic phase of Broad's thinking, and hence not his best. If Broad has to be used at all as an external prop to aid Buddhism, it is the Broad of the Schilpp volume, with his own latest statement, the work of his critics, and his reply to the critics, that ought to be quoted and referred to.

It appears quite natural that of all the theories of philosophy since 1900 the sense data theory, of which Broad was some sort of a high priest, should appeal to a Buddhist scholar who, during the formative period of his career, scans the output of contemporary philosophy. Many years ago, in a letter to me, Guenther wrote, "you are, of course, quite right when you say that language philosophy, Wittgenstein, etc., are closer to Buddhism than is existentialism". This is significant. Guenther was never trapped by existentialism, as lesser orientalists might well have been, had they exposed themselves to contemporary philosophical writing in the west. Guenther used 'existential' and 'essential' as a chapter heading in one of his works (*The Royal Song*); fortunately, little if any Sartrean rhetoric attaches to these uses.

³ Paul A. Schilpp, ed. *The Philosophy of C. D. Broad*, New York: Open Court Publishers, 1955.

Had Guenther chosen Austin, a considerable segment in his translational corpus would have undoubtedly been improved. Substantivization of Tibetan and Indian words, as "The Nature of" the occurs just too often. Were an ordinary language philosopher seriously concerned with Buddhist primary languages, one of the first things he would notice with considerable glee was the fact that by intent, Buddhist writing defies substantivization, in line with the non-ontological thrust of Buddhism in its general party line diction. Guenther himself, in his earlier days, in his classroom lectures in Vienna in the mid-forties, constantly stressed that Buddhism was non-ontological. He may still hold it to be, but this does not seem to get through in his later writings which give the awkward impresson of unnecessary substantivization. One of my own emphases for which I am indebted to Guenther as my erstwhile mentor, has been precisely the clear stress on Buddhism as non-ontological as opposed to all other religiophilosophical systems in India. His animadversion to ontological language often feels to me like *Paradise Lost*; here we finally had a teaching that was radically non-ontological, truly nominalistic in cathartic contrast to all other teachings of India. It is not clear to me at all whether Guenther still holds that Buddhism is basically non-ontological, and that there are no ontological implications of the Buddhist experience. Unless I am missing something, I sense a virtual about-face to the ontological, from the *Naropa* book onward. Guenther's translational and expository style does not conduce to a non-ontological understanding of the text.

Broad's autobiographical statement on Buddhism in the Schilpp volume is rather disappointing; he says "the only one of the great religions which makes any appeal to me is Buddhism and that, as I understand it, is rather a philosophy of the world and a way of life for the elite founded upon it, than a religion in the ordinary sense of the word." This 'way of life' talk is one of the most annoying postures of modern Indian apologists for Indian religion in general, not much better than Mr. Nehru's speech to the assembled monks from all Buddhist countries in Delhi at the inauguration of the 2500th anniversary of Buddhism, where he said "Buddhism is good because it is good for peace." Unbeknown to himself, Broad was, of course, right in assuming that the Buddhism he knew about was indeed a thing for the elite, with little bearing in the grass roots of Buddhist societies, for in fact any Buddhism behaviorally seen as by Spiro, Obeyesekere, and other social scientists studying Buddhism as is, and not Buddhism as it should be, by the elitists' decree.

Was it Broad's compound theory of the mind-body relation that impressed Guenther, or was it Broad's parapsychological rambblings, or a combination of the two? ⁴ The psychogenic factor persisting in Broad's ideas is not on the level of professional philosophizing on a par with his other philosophical ideas including the ones propounded

4 C. D. Broad, *Mind and Its Place in Nature*, London, 1924/25.

in *Mind and Its Place in Nature*. It is more like Einstein's skills at the violin; it may have been very good, but it was not what professionals would call violin playing. Broad easily had the largest number of theorems of any modern philosopher at his fingertips. Since Guenther wants Buddhist talk etically corroborated, and since Goldenweiser's law of limited variations applies here as elsewhere, some of Broad's theorems seem eligible enough for such corroboration. To Guenther, the crux of Broad's work, however, seems to be the latter's treatment of the mind-body problem. Though Broad probably cherished the possibility that his theories were empirically testable, none of them ever made their way into experimental or indeed any professional psychology. The original subtitle of MIND was a "Journal of Philosophy and Psychology" and this kind of "psychology" might contain such notions as Broad's "psychogenic factor" and his mindbody analyses. But MIND 'psychology' never invaded anything or anyone on a psychology department's payroll. Broad obviously tried to generate a theory which could essentially qualify as a latter-day psychophysical parallelism in that the thought that brain events were *necessary* conditions of mental events. This would also permit the notion of mental events occurring in disembodied spirits. He thought that minds were agglomerates of two components; the nervous systems and his psychogenic factor which could be modified by experience and would in theory be capable of continuance after physical death. This, of course, can be made to tie in neatly with some degree of karmic theory, although Broad did not seem to be aware of or attracted to this possible nexus, his knowledge of Buddhism being far too rudimentary and inexplicit. Much of it, I believe, toed the Oxbridge line of "parson-skinning", so well stated by Russell—and by the time of Broad's suzerain rule, kind words about Buddhism and other colonial creeds vexed the parson more than a kind word about atheists and Marxists. It must be kept in mind that this phase of Broad's thought happened quite independently, though in temporal overlap with his sense-data theory, which his colleagues attacked with far greater passion than his mind-body doctrines in *Mind and Its Place in Nature*, which the avant-garde at both schools (in power there soon after and until today) regarded as *Infra-dignitatem*, with no comment except embarrassed silence.

Broad did not ascribe any additional properties to his psychogenic factor, and he did not speak of anything pertaining to his schema that could be interesting to neurologists. In the empirical sense, the factor remains unobservable in theory and in practice, a lacuna which Broad hoped to bridge by articulately distinguishing between a philosophical and a scientific, i. e., empirical approach, safeguarding himself by isolating them from each other. Just as his sense-data theory was not to be open to any kind of scientific inspection, but only to the individual's philosophical intuitions, his psychogenic factor was not open to any empirical investigation on principle, and was to be viewed as philosophically introspective *privatissimum* albeit one shared by

philosophers.

Far more serious for the philosophical and the linguistic critic of Guenther's work is his pervasive, freewheeling homology. This gives much of his writing a certain ponderous elegance sensed by sympathizers with Tibetan Buddhism, but it does not elucidate Buddhism in an etic, behavioral sense. Thus when he says "middle is a term for *śūnyatā*, the open dimension of being that becomes less open and vibrant with potentialities to the extent that the fictions and postulates of categorical thinking gain prominence,"⁵ we are asked to believe his intuition that 'middle' is indeed a synonym of *śūnyatā*, unless he quotes chapter and verse that do so say it. Since he doesn't, the anthropologist gets uncomfortable impression that he uses emics which he *wants* to sound like etics. Equivocating any focal terms, when needed, with any other focal term within the Tibetan Buddhist corpus, is permissible of course, for the Mahāyana ecclesiastic, exegete, *ācārya*; but is this really what Guenther has been wanting to do all the while? Does he want to be a western or cosmopolitan humanist who writes Tibetan Buddhism for learned Tibetan Buddhists or does he try to get across Tibetan Buddhism to an intelligent, sympathetic, scholarly non-Buddhist audience which is ideologically neutral about any particular system of thought? Is there such an audience? In an attractive diagram in the same article (p. 7) he at last coordinates his English technical terms with Tibetan originals. This particular student of Guenther would have been happier and less acerbous in his reviews of some of Guenther's books had Guenther proceeded in this manner in his earlier output. It is here that Tibetologists and Buddhists can decide whether his terms really match the Tibetan or Sanskrit original. If we are total, uncritical admirers of Guenther, Guentherians in the manner Wagnerians admire Wagner, we can let it stand as is, regardless of whether he produces or does not produce the original. But whether "*thabs gyi rgyud* lit." "the tantra of the *upāya* section (i. e., the topic of active compassion) as the (emically conceived) salvational effort *means* 'dynamic', as Guenther translates, or whether it *implies* 'dynamic' is a serious question which he does not answer. Do the English terms which Guenther has been generating and ad-libbing for twenty years or so represent *translations* of Tibetan and Sanskrit originals, or are they *recommendations* for use? This belongs to the contrastive set of talking *religion* and talking *about* religion. Talking eruditely does not mean talking about religion rather than talking religion regardless of whether one thus qualified thinks he is talking about religion rather than talking religion. I was never quite sure which of the two Guenther was trying to convey, or whether he felt that the borderline between these must be kept fuzzy, or even obliterated. What I find consistently vexing in Guenther's work of which I have read, on a cautious estimate, about 60%, is precisely that he defends Buddhism as an apologist, and that

5 "Mahāmudrā", in *Tibet Journal*, Vol. 1/1, Sept. 1975, New Delhi, p. 5, sqq.

his main concern seems to be that Buddhism is *right*—philosophically, psychologically, whatever. He sets about to do that by showing that it is *better* than occidental devices of a parallel kind, that western thinkers don't understand the reality about man, woman, the cosmos, as well as the Tibetan teachers did, and that western thought is good inasmuch as it corroborates Buddhism—especially C. D. Broad's *Mind and Its Place in Nature* which for Guenther epitomizes what is good in western thought. Rather than stating what the texts say, one gets the impression that Guenther states what they ought to say, and this, of course, is very much the way of the learned apologist, to whom corpora other than the one defended are available. It is for this reason, I think, that Guenther does not sit at the High Table of Buddhologists, say, with Etienne Lamotte, the late Richard Robinson, La Vallee Poussin, regardless of the fact that his scholarliness matches that of any of these: but rather, that he stands separate and secluded. He stands as a living *hapax legomenon*, an all-time unique figure, with his own High Table. The ire of some of his critics, like Alex Wayman's stems, I believe, from their assumption that Guenther writes as a Buddhologist, and not as a Buddhist.

Another bothersome charge is made by Buddhologists who are either not impressed by Guenther's hieratic status in the world of Buddhist scholars, and/or who see textual and translational clarity as the hallmark of Buddhist research, rather than erudite intuition which characterizes Guenther's work. In an excellent but hitherto somewhat inaccessible journal of recent origin,⁶ Alex Wayman somewhat over-acerbously seems to speak the heart of a much wider range of Guenther's critics:

"The present reviewer has been told on a number of occasions by Western students of Buddhism, including some members of university faculties, that Guenther's works are incomprehensible or useless to them. I know that this is a rather harsh judgment to repeat and prefer that a milder evaluation would be possible for the work under review which should be, and will be, judged on its merits. After all, Guenther in the present book takes up a subject which has been studied for centuries in Tibet—the four systems of Buddhist philosophy (the four *siddhānta*, Tib. *grub mthà*) which are the Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra (= Citta-mātra), and Mādhyamika." (339)

"... Guenther has displayed in print a rather virulent antipathy towards the scholarly approach in the scope of his interests." (*ibid.*)

⁶ *Kailash—A Journal of Himalayan Studies*, Vol. I/1, Kathmandu, 1973

Wayman challenges Guenther on the basis of Guenther's own statement that the title of his book does not conform to the content; that it is concerned with theory and not with practice. Wayman implies that Guenther writes as a sectarian with a perjorative view of Gelugpa, and that he does not give due to the Gelugpa, where they have generated identical ideas with those of the school, or schools, which Guenther espouses, by selectively ignoring those Gelugpa achievements. Wayman also suggests that Guenther's translations of some of the texts are ideologically biased, and linguistically faulty. Obviously, Wayman finds himself at loggerheads with Guenther's axiomatic strategy that the philological-orientalist approach is not, or not all that the material requires for proper representation, and that an informed inside philosophical rendition, based on non-discursive insights is needed. He says:

"I cite this one example to show how Guenther's penchant for such terms as 'wishfulness' and 'emotivity' is more important for him than is faithful translation of a passage. Even if we should give him the benefit of the doubt and allow that he may have understood the original Tibetan, it is even more serious that he should convert the well-written Tibetan into English sentences that continually fail to communicate the original sense of the Tibetan." (342)

And in conclusion:

"It is a pity that a fine class of Tibetan treatise, the *grub mthà* (*siddhānta*), should be introduced to Western readers in such a garbled fashion. I hope that some competent translator will accurately render the entire text of the *Jewel Garland* into a European language, with notes and introduction appropriate for this text." (*ibid.*)

There is, however, a more sympathetic and at least equally fruitful way of coming to grips with Guenther's productions. Those passages and terms which Guenther renders into Guentherian may be linguistically, philologically objectionable, but if Guenther translates *dharmakāya*, as "value being"⁷ *lhung* (*vāyu*) by 'motility' 'appreciative discrimination' for *shes rab* (*prajñā*) this is Guentherian idiolect; it is as said earlier, a recommendation, and the critics' chore would be to assess whether this recommendation is consistently acceptable on Guenther's own grounds, whether he uses it consistently, and if not, whether different renditions follow from Guenther's own stance of informed, highly intuitive erudite synopsis of the whole corpus of Tibetan tantrica, and whether Guenther's stance is at all acceptable for an in-depth statement about Tibetan Buddhism. Or, to phrase it anthropologically, can Guenther's

7 *The Tantric View of Life*, Berkeley * London: Shambala Pub., 1972, p. 57.

work be regarded as *emic* commentary on an *emic* corpus? As a Tibetan commentary in English, written about Tibetan work rather than as orientalist's translation? This would be perfectly respectable procedure in this writer's own workshop, since *emic* reports are acceptable, provided it is made clear that they are *emic*. The only caveat is that the *emic* and the *etic* must not be confused, and they certainly must not be mixed in one presentation, lest the result be what G. D. Berreman called *anemic and emetic*⁸.

The ideological complexity of Mahāyāna Buddhist key-terms makes it difficult to appreciate the systemic vagaries in translational attempts. Some attempts may be emically superior. Waddell's and Ekvall's 'phantom body' for *sprul sku* (*nirmāṇakāya*) is stupid on all counts, and the *emic-etic* clause could not even be applied here. But, 'value-body' for *chos gyi sku* (*dharmakāya*) is simply not good, emically or etically. If we ascribe an *emic* strategy to such translation, it does not wash, since 'value' language is not part of the Tibetan Buddhist corpus without any further elucidation; etically, it is inappropriate, because the kind of philosophy from which such terminology is borrowed is out-of-date and shares the criticisms I offered for C. D. Broad. While an *etic* strategy encourages borrowing models from any discipline, it goes without saying that the borrowed element must be accepted within that discipline at the time of borrowing. The Ramakrishna Mission Monks in America still talk about the 'steam engine' when they want to prove that Hindu thought is 'scientific': embarrassing, since the steam engine has long ceased to be a model in sophisticated, technological parlance. This has nothing to do with the age of the model: Aristotle and Kant are models good to borrow from. Broad isn't. Yet, without some such syncretistic generosity, the term 'value' in modern English language philosophy and in anthropology means something much less dignified and far more segmentary than *dharmā* could mean in any Buddhist context. Being a proponent of the 'new ethnography', I would like to extend the scope of ethnosemantics to all bordering fields including oriental studies and philology. Rather than seeking the translation of a term belonging to a corpus that is unrelated to any western tradition, the researcher should find things, persons, objects, etc., that fit *into* the indigenous *term*. This can best be done by an extensive glossary, or even by tabular surveys indicating the maximal and minimal denotations of each term. Thus, *chos gyi sku* (*dharmakāya*) should be listed under *ch* or *dh*, explained at some length in whatever manner the scholar decides, but then the Tibetan and/or Sanskrit term should be used exclusively throughout, as the reader interiorizes the glossary, a semantic gestalt is generated whenever the original term appears, which is an extension of Chomsky's 'linguistic competence'. This would also undercut and eclipse scholarly disagreement about the use of a single translational

⁸ G. D. Berreman, "Anemic and Emetic Analyses in Social Anthropology", in *American Anthropologist*, 68/ 346-65, 1966.

term or phrase—a glossary can be added to or deleted from; a translational term cannot. If Guenther had made a glossary on *dharmakāya*, he could, of course, have included ‘value-body’ as one of its possible semantic extensions. But, ‘value-body’, pure and simple, in the text, is just another red flag for critics.

Another thing that has been bothering me throughout reading Guenther’s works is his implicit assumption that the Tibetan ecclesiastics *invented* terms and ideas innovative to the Indian Mahāyāna body from which Tibetan Buddhism is unexceptionally derived. I don’t think Guenther thinks that the Tibetan language somehow holds better exegetic possibilities than Sanskrit; such a notion would be blatant nonsense, since the first freshman class in linguistics today drills this incontrovertible truth into the reluctant student’s brains, that everything can be said in every language; if it hasn’t been said, it is no fault of the language, but of the people who speak it. I don’t know whether he ever stated this verbatim, but his passionate predilection of the Tibetan over the Indian sphere might make him wish to believe that the Tibetans were innovators *in rebus Buddhicis*. No Tibetan ecclesiastic would have claimed, at any time, that his work was an improvement over the Indian source; in fact, any such suggestion would have caused him considerable concern and consternation. I observed a very saintly, senior lama touch and copy some totally irrelevant passages written in Devanāgarī, with such reverence and such a display of the numinous feeling, that it seems unlikely to me, and to any behavioral analyst of Buddhist societies, that any non-Indian practitioner would have dreamt of claiming that anything Buddhistically worthwhile was not first written in Sanskrit or Pali; so much so, that quite a few Chinese Buddhist *sutras* are established frauds—e. g., the *Śradhotopāda*, where the author claimed his work was a translation from Sanskrit. Now if Guenther does indeed think that something similar has happened in Tibet, i. e., that some Tibetan Buddhist scriptural writings are actually fraudulent in the sense that they are original, and not translations from Sanskrit, or another Indian speech form, he has to state this somewhere in the future (my apologies if he has already done it—I missed it in that case). Originality, if it means innovation outside the Indian corpus, is rejected by all non-Indian Buddhist teachers; far from being a matter of praise, the assignation of ‘originality’ would be construed as a severe criticism.

Yet another big question that has been on my mind for a while regarding Guenther’s work is, may a scholar build a part of his apparatus upon material which he owns, and which is not accessible to others for inspection? My grave doubts about Carlos Castañeda are due to the total inaccessibility of his source, Don Juan.

Those who believe (and I would guess Wayman counts among them) that Guenther cannot write and conduct research in a Buddhologically conservative fashion, are, however, very wrong. When Picasso became famous by becoming what he is known for, critics shook their heads bemused and bewildered at the changes his work had

undergone: here was a man who could paint good stuff, so why does he start painting bad stuff? Why did he switch to the unintelligible? The analogy is apropos, to a point. For while Picasso never reverted to his erstwhile representational style, Guenther showed in his very early, partly German works, and in a very recent publication, that he is indeed capable of the most orthodox, yet the most rigorous research and production. I am referring to his excellent *Philosophy and Psychology of the Abhidharma*, first published by the Buddha Vihara in Lucknow in 1957, and now republished by Shambala (1974), a house that has undertaken the worthy effort to republish most of Guenther's work in economic paperback editions, accessible to a growing North American audience; and to his entry 'Buddhist Mysticism' in the new *Encyclopedia Britannica III* (Chicago, 1974), not his only entry in this new edition, incidentally. The elaborate *Philosophy and Psychology* volume was based entirely on Indian texts, with hardly any reference to the Tibetan corpus; at that time Guenther had not yet switched his loyalty to trans-Himalayan Buddhism. By the mid-fifties, astonishingly little had been written about the Indian *abhidharma per se*, except for some pious pamphleting by Indian, Ceylonese, and Thai monks who wrote in English. Guenther's book, by no means easy reading even then, gives a fairly exhaustive, though not a critical overview of the *abhidharma* doctrine. In that work (as in his German *Seelenproblem in Aeltern Buddhismus*, abt. 1950) he carefully listed all original Pali and Sanskrit terms with his German and English renditions. The *Britannica* entry is a paragon of sober scholarliness. There is in it not the slightest trace of sectarian fervor or malice, not of any esotericizing, so agonizing in his purely Tibetan-corpus related work. The 'Buddhist Mysticism' entry is a model of succinctness and precision. There are no maeverikish inserts, and his love for psycho-speculative proliferation does not manifest itself. Here, *dharmakāya* is not rendered by a moodily insightful 'value-body', but by 'existence-body'—and no term could be less objectionable than this, since *dharma* (s) is (or are) indeed all that exist(s) in Buddhist emics. *Sambhogakāya* is rendered 'enjoyment body', '*nirmāṇa-kāya*' as 'transformation body'—both equally unobjectionable, since these are literal, and literally correct translations, perfectly intelligible to anyone who reads this entry (p. 417, Vol. III). *Nirmāṇakāya* (*sprul sku*) being the most difficult in the three-body scheme of Mahāyāna Buddhism, Guenther gave it the most complex and varying treatment in his many works; here at long last we find the nitty-gritty of whatever *nirmāṇakāya* did mean since it was invented. The ethnosemanticist's advice, here as elsewhere, is "present any term in any emic corpus with as little interpretation as possible, and let the analysts try out their own skills of further analysis strictly on the basis of such minimal presentation; do not suggest to them what the term *might* mean if you torture it long and hard enough." In his own inimitable way, Guenther had been hedging for a straight rendition of *nirmāṇakāya* throughout his writing before the *Britannica* entry; but this exonerates him. He says "*nirmāṇakāya* is a term for

genuine existence that itself becomes a stimulus for others to discover their own true being. It, therefore, may manifest itself in any guise." Good. This accommodates all living Tulkus in East and West and the bodhisattvas of all times, subsumable under Guenther's sotto voce clause 'in any guise'. But, and we might as well get used to it, Guenther makes no compromise with actual behavior and actual people—he remains strictly normativist. This may be an accident, but it seems to me that whenever he works with Indian terms, he uses straightforward, unexcited, philologically unobjectionable English paraphrase; but when he works with Tibetan material, he Guentherizes, giving the impression of having, or conveying privileged information, manhandling the English medium in an esoteric fashion. He does not use any Tibetan reference in this *Britannica* entry. Since, presumably, the editors of the *Britannica* pick the best man for each field and subfield, we have here a built-in countercheck for Guenther's supreme academic acceptability. Reading this recent entry, or this early *Philosophy and Psychology of the Adhidharma* side by side with, say, *Tibetan Buddhism without Mystification*, one might be disinclined to believe it was the same person writing, were the identical authorship unknown to the reader. But, there are two sides to Guenther—he sees them hierarchially arranged, I would presume, the Tibetan-esoteric surpassing the Sanskrit-Pali non-esoteric, descriptive, non-recommendatory. It was *Tibetan Buddhism without Mystification* that seemed to cause the greatest number of shrugs and frowns in the Buddhological community. I think reaction would have been less agitated, had he chosen a different title, of the *Studies in Tibetan Buddhism* sort. "Mahākala is the black lord of transcending awareness; compassion is achieved in goal attainment which is the communion of the cognitive, communicative and manifestation patterns realized in Buddhahood" (37). Psychology is bad enough in psychological writing, but intolerable in any other genre. Mixing jargon metaphors from various disciplines in this manner is aggravating; 'cognitive' goes with conative, affective, volitional, but it does not with 'communicative', since the communicative is part of the cognitive; and 'manifestation' is a religious-writing term and doesn't wash with any of these. One cannot go on listing terms which are popular and respectable in their specific genre, else the *Bengali Babu* comes to mind who, asking a day off from his boss to attend his mother's funeral stated "the hand that rocked the cradle has kicked the bucket". It is'nt even a good joke. Interpretation of any text, must be of one piece, with the one metaphor-type from any specific discipline for the interpretation : if we decide to handle a religious corpus as psychologists, we must use psychological jargon *only*, and not try to spice it with anthropological, sociological, literary, and religious study terms of equivalent power. On a lower power verbal level, of course, such mixing is innocuous, since that level is shared by all writers, scientific and other. I remember a very bright graduate student in the Religion Department of my University; he sat in on some seminar on modern urban Hinduism, and kept

referring to the ubiquitous swamis' output as 'idolatry'; I soon found out that that was a term coined by some famous Death of God Protestant theologian, in reference to all claims that God was not dead. Now this is OK within the parameter of that kind of writing and talking, but it becomes annoying nonsense when used quasi-etically in anthropology, or in any other science. Again, I don't think 'appreciative discrimination' describes an emic Buddhist term; it is a phrase that might be adequate, say, in modern analytic or aesthetic philosophy, literary criticism, etc., but it is not a Buddhist school term in translation or paraphrase. It simply doesn't fit. What is the meaning of 'unity-bliss with no-thingness'?⁹ Is there no simpler way of saying what Guenther is trying to say? Shadows of Heidegger, 'no-thing-ness.' Heidegger wrote in a pre-critical age, when people's enthusiasm kept their linguistic competence dormant. He once wrote a book *Der Satz von Grunde*, which, to any philosopher, means 'the law of sufficient reason' (in inductive logic). No such thing happens, and the philosopher reading it was kept on tenterhooks until, on the penultimate page, he found out that this whole bit is 'a leap from the ground', i. e., the *literal* meaning of the title—a diction never used in common parlance. How much extra work can you make language do for you, sincerely?

Let me try to speculate on Guenther's own intuitions, and his intentions with regard to his style and approach in his post-*Naropa* years. As I said earlier, there is no doubt in my mind that Guenther views his Tibetan-corpus based works as much more important than his Sanskrit based work of early and most recent vintage; and I have a hunch that he looks upon his non-Tibetan based work with some scorn. Guenther has obtained many initiations (*hlung*) from high Tibetan ecclesiastics, Nyingma and other—probably more than any non-Tibetan ever obtained. He is also a very learned man. Aware of his achievement in the world of oriental studies, Asian languages, and the most complex genres of the literatures involved, he has little patience with people who do not read these languages. In earlier days, he challenged some of the most senior and respected indologists proving to all who wanted to know, that these men had been translating from ponies all their lives.

As the years went by, Guenther converted himself into the most knowledgeable non-Tibetan Tibetan Buddhist, and the set of themes and events that followed esotericized his thoughts, and hence his person. Along with other Tibetan scholars (Tibetans, that is), he resented the general and the special way in which Indians treat, or don't treat, Tibetan culture and lore. At Varanasi, the one Brahmin scholar who, inspired by Guenther, turned his attention to Tibetica, was derided as 'Jaggai Lama' by his fellow pandits. The Varanasi lot, and the whole Brahmanical temper militates against Buddhism, but especially against Tibetan Buddhism—not because it is bad

⁹ H. V. Guenther, *Tibetan Buddhism without Mystification*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966, p. 145.

philosophy (the pandits know nothing about it, nor do they claim to) but because Tibetans, monks and lay, eat everything, sleep everywhere, and don't bathe too often also, because no Tibetan knows Sanskrit; also, because a large unnumber of Tibetan texts were translated from *bad* Sanskrit. When the late Franklin Edgerton taught for a year at Banaras Hindu University, the pandits angrily rejected his findings—his by then established theory that Buddhist Hybrid was a separate idiom, and *not* bad Sanskrit. With all these obsequious things stifling Guenther's enormous potential, he became a loner when he was in India, and he rejected India, his erstwhile scholastic target. And if the India that generated Buddhism, and kept it for awhile, is still a *phags yul* to him, as it is to other Tibetans, the India of today, with its scholars and politicians is anathema to him, as it is to other Tibetans.

If there were to be a succinct radical philosophical (but not Buddhist) and anthropological—etic, not emic—allover critique of Guenther's work, it would have to be formulated in this vein: there is no such thing as privileged information, to wit Wittgenstein *was sich sagen laesst, laesst sich klar sagen—was sich nicht klar sagen laesst, laesst sich ueberhaupt nicht sagen* (whatever can be said, can be said clearly; what cannot be said clearly, cannot be said at all). Now Guenther might think, or hope, that his writings do not claim any privileged information. But, this is not the impression they give to the non-Buddhist scholar, philologist or behavioral scientist. From the inception of Guenther's Tibetan phase (and I would assume that this will remain his consummatory phase) until today, his writings stipulate covertly, if not overtly, that there *is* such a thing as privileged information, i. e., information of the type that is not accessible by purely discursive means. His language of commentary is crypto-esoteric; his language of translation is esoteric and should be that, since the corpus he works with *is* esoteric and does postulate the possibility of privileged information, i. e., the information conferred by initiatory experiences and their individual follow-up by the practitioner. This, however, is a structural impediment, not one that can be corrected by Guenther if he is to remain Guenther. From a learned Buddhist's viewpoint, and emic viewpoint that is, he *must* write as he does, stipulating all the while that there *is* such a thing as privileged information, which can somehow be communicated by discursive language. Since Guenther is more learned than other Tibetologists, and since he is also a practicing Tibetan-school Buddhist, his writings must be 'unintelligible' as Wayman and some of his students suggest. The impossibility of Buddhist (or Hindu, or Scholastic, or any other religious) philosophy *qua* philosophy must be catalytically known to Guenther, but his commitment does not allow him to break loose and say that Buddhist thought cannot be philosophical in the academic discipline sense. All this is what makes the going and the reading tough, tough, tough. There is no way out of this polylemma and denying it is like taking or prescribing palliative rather than therapeutic medicine. Yet we appreciate the importance of palliatives.