

Śāntideva (Bodhicaryāvatāra)

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Introduction

Śāntideva is a Buddhist philosopher and teacher who lived in India around the beginning of the 8th century CE. The details of his life, which are for the most part legendary, are known through the biographies of three Tibetan historians and one Nepali manuscript. Modern scholars agree on the fact that Śāntideva is the author of two treatises, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, both dealing with the spiritual practice of the bodhisattva and its philosophical foundation. From the point of view of his doctrinal presuppositions, Śāntideva is considered to be a representative of the Madhyamaka school of Mahayana Buddhism, most probably its Prāsaṅgika branch. From the early beginning of modern Buddhist studies, Śāntideva's thoughts have attracted much attention among Western scholars. Numerous translations of his works, especially of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, have appeared since the early 20th century, and, more recently, analytical studies focusing on specific themes and issues related to his ideas have been published. In addition to scholarly works, Śāntideva's thoughts have generated new commentaries to support the spiritual endeavor of Buddhist practitioners. As such, Śāntideva's treatises are still very much part of a dynamic and evolving spiritual tradition as well as a privileged source of information for our understanding of the structure of the bodhisattva's path as a whole.

General Overviews

Information about Śāntideva and his ideas can be found in the various translations and monographs produced by scholars cited in this bibliography. One of the first attempts to systematize that information is found in [Pezzali 1968](#). One of the main features of the author's work is a comparative analysis of the accounts of Śāntideva's life produced by Tibetan traditional historians (Bu-ston, Tāranātha, Ye-śes dpal-'byor) and one found in a Nepali manuscript edited by Haraprasād Śāstri. A more recent attempt is [Lele 2009](#). Apart from [Lele 2009](#), other websites dedicated to the spread of Śāntideva's teachings may be used as sources of general information and further research links. Many of these sites also provide guidelines to support Buddhist practitioners. A good example of such a site is the [Rigpa Shedra Wiki](#).

- [Bodhicaryavatara](#). In Rigpa Shedra Wiki. 2011.

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This webpage provides general information regarding the function of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the context of Tibetan Buddhist practice. It includes an exhaustive list of important Tibetan commentators dating back as early as the 12th century.

[Bodhicaryavatara](#). In Rigpa Shedra Wiki. 2011.

Find this resource:

- Lele, Amod. “[Śāntideva](#).” In *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by James Fieser and Bradley Dowden. 2009.

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In addition to providing general information about the life and works of Śāntideva, this website presents Śāntideva’s main ideas related to meditative practices and ethical conduct. The various issues regarding the behavior of the bodhisattva are here summarized. For a more detailed account and discussion of these issues, one may refer to the author’s PhD dissertation ([Lele 2007](#), cited in [The Ethics of the Bodhisattva and Related Issues](#)).

Lele, Amod. “[Śāntideva](#).” In *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by James Fieser and Bradley Dowden. 2009.

Find this resource:

- Pezzali, Amalia. *Śāntideva, mystique bouddhiste des VIIe et VIIIe siècles*. Florence: Vallecchi Editore, 1968.

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Pezzali traces a portrait of Śāntideva that includes a discussion on whether he may be considered a tantric mystic. She also provides a comprehensive list of traditional and modern translations of Śāntideva’s works. [De Jong 1975](#) (cited in [Life of Śāntideva](#)) does, however, question the accuracy of the information provided in Pezzali’s work.

Pezzali, Amalia. *Śāntideva, mystique bouddhiste des VIIe et VIIIe siècles*. Florence: Vallecchi Editore, 1968.

Find this resource:

Reference Works

Included in this section are references that may be used for further research on Śāntideva and his treatises. [Indica et Buddhica](#), for example, provides a comprehensive collection of digital texts as well as dictionaries and glossaries to facilitate philological research of Śāntideva’s works. It also contains a bibliography of books and articles done in various languages (Eastern and Western), discussing key concepts used by Śāntideva and issues connected to his philosophy. [Contributions to a Bibliography on Bodhicaryavatara Studies](#) may be used for purposes of cross reference.

- Mahoney, Richard, ed. [Śāntideva](#). In Indica et Buddhica. 2007.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This website, free for registered users engaged in Indological and buddhological studies, is a digital archive related to the study of Nāgārjuna and Śāntideva. It also contains digital Chinese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan dictionaries and glossaries. Mahoney, Richard, ed. [Śāntideva](#). In Indica et Buddhica. 2007.

Find this resource:

- Temple, Erwan. [Contributions to a Bibliography on Bodhicaryavatara Studies](#). In Karma dgon Tibetan Bibliography Database. 2010.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is a comprehensive and recent bibliography of the translations and studies on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* that were produced in various languages.

Temple, Erwan. [Contributions to a Bibliography on Bodhicaryavatara Studies](#).

In Karma dgon Tibetan Bibliography Database. 2010.

Find this resource:

Life of Śāntideva

According to B. Bhattacharya (in [Pezzali 1968](#), cited in [General Overviews](#)), one can situate the period when Śāntideva lived around the beginning of the 8th century CE. One may also consult [de Jong 1975](#) for a discussion of the exact dates of Śāntideva's life. Accounts of his life supplied by the Tibetan historians are mixed with legends, so it is difficult to establish the historical facts about his life. Nonetheless, these traditional accounts seem to disagree on only a few details (see [Melis 2005](#) cited in [Translations in Modern Languages](#)). According to tradition, Śāntideva, whose childhood name was Śāntivarman, was born in the southwestern part of India as the son of a royal chieftain. He was encouraged by his mother, believed to be a reincarnation of the goddess Tārā, to become an ascetic. Śāntideva then met a teacher with whom, for twelve years, he studied the science of Mañjuśri. After a brief return to mundane life, he decided to join the monastic university of Nālandā, where he was ordained by Jayadeva and received the name Śāntideva because of his quietness. In Nālandā he was despised by his fellow monks because he appeared to do nothing but eat, sleep, and defecate. Following a custom in which monks were invited periodically to give a discourse to the monastic community, Śāntideva, when asked to recite something new, against all expectations, began to disclose the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, thus showing that he was a real master. Based on his doctrinal presuppositions, Śāntideva is usually considered a representative of the Madhyamaka school of Mahayana Buddhism, most probably its Prāsaṅgika branch (see [Ruegg 1981](#), cited in [Controversy about Works Attributed to Śāntideva](#)).

- de Jong, J. W. "La légende de Śāntideva." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 16.3 (1975): 161–182.

DOI: [10.1163/000000075791615441](https://doi.org/10.1163/000000075791615441) Save Citation » Export Citation » E-mail Citation »

This article is a critical analysis of the study in [Pezzali 1968](#) (cited in [General Overviews](#)) of the legend of Śāntideva, which is considered by de Jong to be inexact and incomplete. The author gives many examples of inaccuracies in Pezzali's translation and completes it with a new translation based on the Nepali version edited by Śāstri and the corresponding Tibetan translation from the Peking edition.

de Jong, J. W. "La légende de Śāntideva." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 16.3 (1975): 161–182.

Find this resource:

Works by Śāntideva

Two major treatises are usually attributed to Śāntideva, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. The *Bodhicaryāvatāra* attracted the attention of Western scholars from the beginning of the modern study of Buddhism. Even in the early 21st century, it remains the subject of critical analysis as well as devotional or inspirational literature. On the other hand, the study of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* was neglected for the major part of the 20th century, and only recently has it become a focus of attention, especially concerning its ethical implications for the practice of the bodhisattva.

Śikṣāsamuccaya

This text, written in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, has traditionally been considered as consisting mainly of quotations from predominantly Mahayana sutras, some of which have not been preserved elsewhere in the Sanskrit original. For that reason, modern scholars of Buddhism have long believed that Śāntideva's original contribution to the composition of this text was minimal. However, this assumption has recently been challenged ([Harrison 2007](#)). The only translation, based on Bendall's edition ([Śāntideva 1957](#)), made from the original Sanskrit text in a modern language is that of [Bendall and Rouse 1971](#). It is considered outdated and inaccurate by some scholars ([Conze 1954](#), [Hedinger 1984](#)). [Klaus 1997](#) gives suggestions as to how some passages in [Bendall and Rouse 1971](#) may be improved. Partial translations of the text were produced in English ([Conze 1954](#)), in German ([Winternitz 1930](#), [Hedinger 1984](#)), and in Japanese. A second edition of the Sanskrit text ([Śāntideva 1961](#)) was also produced, which, according to [Klaus 1997](#), improved little on the previous one. After the publication of [Bendall and Rouse 1971](#), the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* received little attention from modern scholars. The first systematic analysis of the text is [Hedinger 1984](#), an attempt to understand the meditative practices of the bodhisattva. More recent attempts have been produced ([Brassard 2000](#), cited in [The Ethics of the Bodhisattva and Related Issues](#), and [Mahoney 2002](#)). The text has also been of interest in understanding the ethical implications related to the path of the bodhisattva ([Clayton 2001](#), [Clayton 2006](#), [Mrozik 2007](#), [Lele 2007](#), all found in [The Ethics of the Bodhisattva and Related Issues](#)).

- Bendall, Cecil, and William Henry Denham Rouse, trans.
Śikṣāsamuccaya. Delhi: Motilal BanarsiDass, 1971.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

First English translation and only complete translation into a Western language of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. Started by Bendall and completed by Rouse with the help of La Vallée Poussin ([Klaus 1997](#)). Originally published in 1922.

Bendall, Cecil, and William Henry Denham Rouse, trans. *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. Delhi: Motilal BanarsiDass, 1971.

Find this resource:

- Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Texts through the Ages*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is a presentation of the main Buddhist ideas and practices, through a selection of extracts from Buddhist scriptures. Conze uses extracts from the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* to introduce such topics as the bodhisattva's compassion, the six perfections of the body, the perfection of meditation, the Tathāgata, emptiness, faith, and karma.

Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Texts through the Ages*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954.

Find this resource:

- Harrison, Paul. "The Case of the Vanishing Poet: New Light on Śāntideva and the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*." In *Indica et Tibetica: Festschrift für Michael Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag von Freunden und Schülern überreicht*. Edited by Konrad Klaus, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, and Michael Hahn, 215–248. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische studien, University of Vienna, 2007.

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In this article, Harrison challenges the assumption long held in Western scholarship that the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* consists almost exclusively of an

anthology of quotations, in which Śāntideva's contribution is minimal (3–5 percent of the whole text according to an estimate by Paul Griffiths). Harrison argues that many passages have been misidentified as quotations and not as Śāntideva's rewording and commentaries.

Harrison, Paul. "The Case of the Vanishing Poet: New Light on Śāntideva and the Śikṣāsamuccaya." In *Indica et Tibetica: Festschrift für Michael Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag von Freunden und Schülern überreicht*. Edited by Konrad Klaus, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, and Michael Hahn, 215–248. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische studien, University of Vienna, 2007.

Find this resource:

- Hedinger, Jürg. *Aspekte der Schulung in der Laufbahn eines Bodhisattva*. Wiesbaden, West Germany: Harrassowitz, 1984.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is a study of the path of the bodhisattva, based on an analysis of mainly chapters 11–14, which deal with the life in the forest and meditative practices. It contains an introduction to Śāntideva's life and works, his connection to the Mahayana Madhyamaka school, and a short summary in English.

Hedinger, Jürg. *Aspekte der Schulung in der Laufbahn eines Bodhisattva*. Wiesbaden, West Germany: Harrassowitz, 1984.

Find this resource:

- Klaus, Konrad. "Einige textkritische und exegetische Bemerkungen zu Śāntideva's Śikṣāsamuccaya (Kapitel XII und XIII)." In *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ: Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. Vol. 30. Edited by Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Jens-Uwe Hartmann, 397–406. Swisttal-Odendorf, Germany: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1997.

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This article provides details regarding the editions and translations of the Śikṣāsamuccaya, its relation to the Tibetan and Chinese versions of the text, and its connections with Prajñākaramati's commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra. It includes a reconstruction of passages from chapters 12 and 13 as examples of how Bendall's edition may be improved.

Klaus, Konrad. "Einige textkritische und exegetische Bemerkungen zu Śāntideva's Śikṣāsamuccaya (Kapitel XII und XIII)." In *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ: Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. Vol. 30. Edited by Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Jens-Uwe Hartmann, 397–406. Swisttal-Odendorf, Germany: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1997.

Find this resource:

- Mahoney, Richard. "Of the Progress of the Bodhisattva: The Bodhisattvamārga in the Śikṣāsamuccaya." MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 2002.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

Unpublished MA thesis available at the author's website ([Indica et Buddhica](#), cited in [Reference Works](#)).

Mahoney, Richard. "Of the Progress of the Bodhisattva: The Bodhisattvamārga in the Śikṣāsamuccaya." MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 2002.

Find this resource:

- Śāntideva. *Çikṣāsamuccaya: A Compendium of Buddhist Teaching Compiled by Çāntideva Chiefly from the Earlier Mahāyāna Sūtras*. Edited by Cecil Bendall. The Hague: Mouton, 1957.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is the first edition of the Sanskrit version of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, with references to the Tibetan translations. It is based on a manuscript from Nepal dating to around the 14th century CE. This manuscript appears to be the only Sanskrit version available for the complete text. Bendall's edition contains a short introduction on the general character and structure of the text, its author, and its relation to Buddhist literature.

Śāntideva. *Çikṣāsamuccaya: A Compendium of Buddhist Teaching Compiled by Çāntideva Chiefly from the Earlier Mahāyāna Sūtras*. Edited by Cecil Bendall. The Hague: Mouton, 1957.

Find this resource:

- Śāntideva. *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. 2d ed. Edited by P. L. Vaidya. Buddhist Sanskrit Texts 11. Darbhanga, India: Mithila Sanskrit Institute, 1961.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is a second edition of the Sanskrit manuscript of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. It is based on Bendall's edition ([Bendall and Rouse 1971](#)). However, it appears that it was corrected in an arbitrary way ([Klaus 1997](#)), and the entire critical apparatus available in Bendall's edition was omitted.

Śāntideva. *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. 2d ed. Edited by P. L. Vaidya. Buddhist Sanskrit Texts 11. Darbhanga, India: Mithila Sanskrit Institute, 1961.

Find this resource:

- Winternitz, Moriz. *Der Mahāyāna-Buddhismus nach Sanskrit und Prākrittexten*. Tübingen, Germany: J. C. B. Mohr, 1930.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is an introduction to Mahayana Buddhism according to Sanskrit and Prākrit texts. A large portion of the quoted texts are from the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, identified sometimes as from the text itself and sometimes as from other texts quoted in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*.

Winternitz, Moriz. *Der Mahāyāna-Buddhismus nach Sanskrit und Prākrittexten*. Tübingen, Germany: J. C. B. Mohr, 1930.

Find this resource:

Bodhicaryāvatāra

Judging from the number of translations and studies in Western languages, we may easily say that the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* has been one of the most popular texts among Buddhist scholars since the early 20th century. This text also generated an important body of inspirational literature from such prominent Tibetan Buddhist teachers as Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. As a text dealing with the practice of the bodhisattva and its underlying philosophical presuppositions, it is one of the rare treatises situated at the crossroads between modern scientific scholarship and a long commentarial tradition that is still influential for the spiritual development of modern Buddhist practitioners. As such, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* may serve both as an important document for a historical analysis of the evolution of Buddhist ideas and practices and as a basis for studies in the field of comparative religions. This section is broken down into four subsections: [Sanskrit Editions](#), [Translations and Commentaries in Traditional Buddhist Languages](#), [Translations in Modern Languages](#), and [Modern Commentators](#).

Sanskrit Editions

The standard Sanskrit version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* consists of 913 verses divided into 10 chapters. Based on [Saitō 1993](#) and [Saitō 2000](#), there were probably other recensions of this text. Most particularly, Saitō argued that a shorter version of the text in 9 chapters and 702.5 verses may have circulated. Moreover, it is usually assumed that the standard version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* followed the composition of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, but the discovery of this earlier version presupposes that major parts of the text were already extant. This would make the standard version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* an update of an earlier text, with the composition of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* interposed between the two (see [Harrison 2007](#), cited in [Śikṣāsamuccaya](#)). Of the standard version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, only one complete Sanskrit commentary is available, namely [Prajñākaramati 1960](#). The earliest edition of the Sanskrit text was published by Ivan Pavlovich Minayeff ([Minayeff 1894](#)). [La Vallée Poussin 1898](#) improved this first edition by producing an edition in roman characters of the chapter on the Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*). [Śāntideva 1960](#) is a bilingual edition in Sanskrit and Tibetan. Finally, the University of Oslo ([Śāntideva 2007–2010](#)) has made available a multilingual edition (Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian) with French and English translations. The standard version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is organized around two major themes: (1) *bodhicitta* (awakening mind) and (2) the *pāramitā* (perfections). Three chapters are devoted to the first theme, whereas six chapters, if one interprets chapter 10, titled *Pariṇamana* (Dedication), as the perfection of giving, deal with the practice of the six perfections of the bodhisattva. Chapter 2, *Pāpadeśana* (Confession of sins), appears to be added to the original text. However, Tibetan Buddhists, who use this text extensively as a source of spiritual inspiration, understand the second chapter as constituting an integral part of the text ([Gyatso 1987](#), cited in [Modern Commentators](#)). Finally, chapter 9, the Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*), may also stand as an independent treatise dealing with philosophical ideas and, as such, places the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the main stream of Madhyamaka thought ([Ruegg 1981](#), cited in [Controversy about Works Attributed to Śāntideva](#)).

- La Vallée Poussin, Louis de. *Bouddhisme: Études et matériaux*. London: Luzac, 1898.

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This is an edition of the chapter on the Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*) of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

La Vallée Poussin, Louis de. *Bouddhisme: Études et matériaux*. London: Luzac, 1898.

Find this resource:

- Minayeff, Ivan Pavlovich, ed. “Çāntideva: ‘Bodhicaryāvatāra.’” *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society* 2.1 (1894): 1–16.

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Continued in 2.2 (1894): 17–32. Originally published in *Zapiski Vostochnago Otdeleniya Imperatorskago Russkago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva* 4 (1889): 153–228. This is the first edition of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* made by a Western scholar. [Pezzali 1968](#) (cited in [General Overviews](#)) gives a list of the manuscripts used by Minayeff.

Minayeff, Ivan Pavlovich, ed. “Çāntideva: ‘Bodhicaryāvatāra.’” *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society* 2.1 (1894): 1–16.

Find this resource:

- Prajñākaramati. *Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva with the Commentary Pañjikā of Prajñākaramati*. Edited by P. L. Vaidya. Darbhanga, India: Mithila Sanskrit Institute, 1960.

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This edition was meant to be an improvement on the previous editions, and it is, therefore, not based on the discovery of new manuscripts of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. It includes, for example, an index of the Buddhist sutras quoted in Prajñākaramati's *Pañjikā*. This edition is probably the only one available on the market.

Prajñākaramati. *Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva with the Commentary Pañjikā of Prajñākaramati*. Edited by P. L. Vaidya. Darbhanga, India: Mithila Sanskrit Institute, 1960.

Find this resource:

- Saitō, Akira. "Akṣayamati's (= Śāntideva) Bodhicaryāvatāra as Found in the Tibetan Manuscripts from Tun-huang." Report on Project No. 02801005. University of Mie, Japan, 1993.

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This study is intended as a partial investigation of how and to what extent the early version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* differs from the standard version in their texts, contents, and philosophies. It includes a discussion on the history of the Tibetan translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* as well as on the question why the name "Blo gros myi zad pa" (Akṣayamati) was used to designate Śāntideva.

Saitō, Akira. "Akṣayamati's (= Śāntideva) Bodhicaryāvatāra as Found in the Tibetan Manuscripts from Tun-huang." Report on Project No. 02801005.

University of Mie, Japan, 1993.

Find this resource:

- Saitō, Akira. "A Study of the Dūn-huáng Recension of the 'Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra.' Report on Project No. 09610021. University of Mie, Japan, 2000.

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This is a continuation of Saitō's previous research project ([Saitō 1993](#)) on the Tun-huang recension of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. This research is important to understand the textual history of this text and its connection with the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*.

Saitō, Akira. "A Study of the Dūn-huáng Recension of the 'Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra.' Report on Project No. 09610021. University of Mie, Japan, 2000.

Find this resource:

- Śāntideva. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Edited by Vidhushekha Bhattacharya. Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1960.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is a bilingual edition of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (without Prajñākaramati's commentary), in which the text of the verses in Sanskrit and their Tibetan translation follow each other. This edition may be used as a textbook for learning Buddhist Sanskrit and Tibetan.

Śāntideva. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Edited by Vidhushekha Bhattacharya. Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1960.

Find this resource:

- Śāntideva. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. In *Thesaurus Literaturae Buddhicae*. University of Oslo, 2007–2010.

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It contains, in parallel columns, complete renditions of the Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian texts (taken from various sources), including La Vallée Poussin's French translation ([La Vallée Poussin 1907](#), cited in [French](#)) and an English translation.

Śāntideva. [Bodhicaryāvatāra](#). In Thesaurus Literaturae Buddhicae. University of Oslo, 2007–2010.

Find this resource:

[Translations and Commentaries in Traditional Buddhist Languages](#)

Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is usually rendered as *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa* in Tibetan, a direct translation of another variation of the title in Sanskrit, namely *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*. The first version can be translated as "entry (*avatāra*) into the path (*caryā*) leading to awakening (*bodhi*)," whereas the second makes it more explicit that this text is an introduction to the practice of the bodhisattva. In the history of the dissemination of Buddhism to Tibet, successive translations and revisions of the Sanskrit texts were made. A rich tradition of commentaries also exist among traditional Tibetan scholars, a sample of which is examined in [Williams 1998](#), concerning the notion of awareness. Most modern translators are now using the version translated by Sarvajñādeva and dPal brtsegs available in the Tibetan Derge (sDe dge) Tripitaka ([Śāntideva 1978](#)) as well as the Tibetan translation of Prajñākaramati's *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjika* ([Prajñākaramati 1978](#)). There are also Mongolian ([Rachewiltz 1996](#)) and Chinese versions of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* ([Tiān Xīzāi 1924–1934](#)). For an exhaustive list of the translations and commentaries in traditional Buddhist languages (Tibetan, Chinese, Mongolian), [Pezzali 1968](#) (cited in [General Overviews](#)) and the bibliography preceding the Derge edition of the Tibetan translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* ([Śāntideva 1978](#)) may be consulted.

- Prajñākaramati. *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i dka' 'grel*. No. 3872 La 41b-288a, sDe dge Tibetan Tripitaka bsTan 'gyur preserved in the Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo. Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kanko Kyokai, 1978.

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This is the Tibetan translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjika*, Prajñākaramati's commentary.

Prajñākaramati. *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i dka' 'grel*. No. 3872 La 41b-288a, sDe dge Tibetan Tripitaka bsTan 'gyur preserved in the Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo. Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kanko Kyokai, 1978. Find this resource:

- Rachewiltz, Igor de. *The Mongolian Tanjur Version of the Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1996.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This edition is based on a photo reproduction of the original text (1748) and includes an index of words.

Rachewiltz, Igor de. *The Mongolian Tanjur Version of the Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1996.

Find this resource:

- Śāntideva. *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa*. No. 3871 La 1b-40a, sDe dge Tibetan Tripitaka bsTan 'gyur preserved in the Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo. Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kanko Kyokai, 1978.

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The text in Tibetan is preceded by a short bibliography of modern translations and commentaries on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. It also contains a list of works related to the Mongolian version of the text (see [Rachewiltz 1996](#)).

Śāntideva. *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa*. No. 3871 La 1b-40a, sDe dge Tibetan Tripitaka bsTan 'gyur preserved in the Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo. Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kanko Kyokai, 1978.

Find this resource:

- Tiān Xīzāi 天息災. “Pútíxíng Jīng (菩提行經).” *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* 32.1662 (1924–1934): 543c18–562a16.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

A traditional Chinese translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. It is composed of eight chapters and has been wrongly ascribed to Nāgārjuna. The standardized edition was published in Tokyo between 1924 and 1934. This text has also been digitized by the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CBETA) and the [SAT Daizōkyō Text Database Committee](#).

Tiān Xīzāi 天息災. “Pútíxíng Jīng (菩提行經).” *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* 32.1662 (1924–1934): 543c18–562a16.

Find this resource:

- Williams, Paul. *The Reflexive Nature of Awareness: A Tibetan Madhyamaka Defence*. Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1998.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is the first book-length study of this issue, mainly presenting the opinions of Tsong kha pa (b.1357–d. 1419) and responses to those opinions by Mi pham (b. 1846–d. 1912). As such, it serves as a witness to the philosophical depth of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and the discussions and debates it generated in later Buddhist traditions.

Williams, Paul. *The Reflexive Nature of Awareness: A Tibetan Madhyamaka Defence*. Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1998.

Find this resource:

Translations in Modern Languages

The works cited here are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all translations available. This sample focuses on translations made from the original Sanskrit text of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and its traditional editions (Sanskrit and Tibetan). Regarding the development of the translations of this text in the West, [Melis 2005](#) is a short article in which the author argues that a shift occurred in the function of these translations. Indeed, early translations were, for the most part, academic studies, whereas later translations were done for the purpose of inspiring and supporting the spiritual practices of Buddhist practitioners. In this regard, [Melis 2005](#) corroborates the development of commentarial literature and research on Śāntideva and his treatises in the West. Further information related to the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* may be found in [Gómez 1999](#) and [Lindtner 1991](#). For a more comprehensive list of translations in languages not covered in this section, see also [Pezzali 1968](#) (in [General Overviews](#)), and [Indica et Buddhica](#) and [Contributions to a Bibliography on Bodhicaryavatara Studies](#) (both in [Reference Works](#)). This section also includes sources translated into [English](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Italian](#), and [Japanese](#).

- Gómez, L. O. “The Way of the Translators: Three Recent Translations of Śāntideva’s Bodhicaryāvatāra.” *Buddhist Literature* 1 (1999): 262–354.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

An article dealing with issues related to the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

Gómez, L. O. “The Way of the Translators: Three Recent Translations of Śāntideva’s Bodhicaryāvatāra.” *Buddhist Literature* 1 (1999): 262–354.

Find this resource:

- Lindtner, Christian. “Textcritical Notes on Sanskrit Texts: Bodhi(sattva)caryāvatāra.” In *Papers in Honour of Prof. Dr. Ji Xianlin on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday*. Vol. 2. Edited by Li Zheng and Jiang Zhongxin, 651–660. Beijing: Nanchang Shi 1991.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

An article dealing with issues related to the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

Lindtner, Christian. “Textcritical Notes on Sanskrit Texts: Bodhi(sattva)caryāvatāra.” In *Papers in Honour of Prof. Dr. Ji Xianlin on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday*. Vol. 2. Edited by Li Zheng and Jiang Zhongxin, 651–660. Beijing: Nanchang Shi 1991.

Find this resource:

- Melis, Nicole Martinez. “The Bodhicaryāvatāra: A Buddhist Treatise Translated into Western Languages.” In *Less Translated Languages*. Edited by Albert Branchadell and Lovell Margaret West, 207–224. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2005.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This article presents a descriptive analysis of some of the translations from Sanskrit and Tibetan and their sociocultural function. It includes a list in chronological order of the translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the major (not all) Western languages.

Melis, Nicole Martinez. “The Bodhicaryāvatāra: A Buddhist Treatise Translated into Western Languages.” In *Less Translated Languages*. Edited by Albert Branchadell and Lovell Margaret West, 207–224. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2005.

Find this resource:

English

Translations in Western languages are most numerous in English. The first English translation is [Barnett 1959](#) (originally published in 1909). It was not until 1970 that the second English translation, by Marion Matics, appeared ([Matics 1970](#)). In 1979 Stephen Batchelor produced a translation ([Batchelor 1979](#)) with the explicit purpose of inspiring readers with the ideals of the practice of the bodhisattva. With the same purpose in mind, another translation, [Padmakara Translation Group 2006](#), was published. [Sharma 1990](#) appears to follow, to some extent, the same trend. On the other hand, [Crosby and Skilton 1996](#) and [Wallace and Wallace 1997](#) try to be as close as possible to the original Sanskrit and Tibetan sources.

- Barnett, L. D. *The Path of Light*. London: John Murray, 1959.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is only a partial translation that contains an introduction on the main doctrines of Buddhism, and as an appendix, a translation of the introductory verses (*kārikā*) of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. Originally published in 1909.

Barnett, L. D. *The Path of Light*. London: John Murray, 1959.

Find this resource:

- Batchelor, Stephen. *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1979.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

Contains a short glossary of sixty-five Sanskrit terms, with translations in Tibetan and explanations in English. There is also an index of chapter 9.

Batchelor, Stephen. *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1979.

Find this resource:

- Crosby, Kate, and Andrew Skilton. *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This annotated translation is based on the Sanskrit text and its commentary. It includes a critical analysis of each chapter, along with cross-referencing to the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* and analysis of the two recensions of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* that were developed by Saitō. It also contains a general introduction by Paul Williams on Śāntideva and the significance of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in Buddhist history.

Crosby, Kate, and Andrew Skilton. *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Find this resource:

- Matics, Marion L. *Entering the Path of Enlightenment*. London: Macmillan, 1970.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

The work contains some comments on the nature of the practice of meditation, especially that of exchanging of selves.

Matics, Marion L. *Entering the Path of Enlightenment*. London: Macmillan, 1970.

Find this resource:

- Padmakara Translation Group. *The Way of the Bodhisattva: A Translation of the Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Boston: Shambhala, 2006.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

Contains a commentary and description of the life of Śāntideva by Khenpo Kunzang Pelden, a Tibetan monk born in 1862, who received his formal training in Shri Simha College at Dzogchen Monastery. The translation committee is made up of translators and proofreaders who are practicing Buddhists.

Padmakara Translation Group. *The Way of the Bodhisattva: A Translation of the Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Boston: Shambhala, 2006.

Find this resource:

- Sharma, Parmananda. *Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra*. 2vols. New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1990.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

Provided with the author's own commentary on the text.

Sharma, Parmananda. *Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra*. 2vols. New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1990.

Find this resource:

- Wallace, Vesna A., and B. Alan Wallace. *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This work is a translation primarily based on the Sanskrit version and Prajñākaramati's commentary, with references to the Tibetan translation and its commentaries.

Wallace, Vesna A., and B. Alan Wallace. *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

Find this resource:

French

French is second in importance in the number of translations into Western languages. The first complete translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was published in French ([La Vallée Poussin 1907](#)). It was followed by [Finot 1920](#), a translation that remained authoritative among subsequent French translators ([Comité de traduction Padmakara 1993](#) and [Driessens 1993](#)). In 1985 Anne Ansermet, a disciple of Geshe Rabten, credited to have been instrumental in bringing Buddhism to Europe, also published a translation ([Ansermet 1985](#)). Subsequently, the Comité de traduction Padmakara (the same Padmakara Translation Group cited under [English](#)) published a translation based on the teachings of the Dalai Lama ([Comité de traduction Padmakara 1993](#)). The purpose of this translation is explicitly to support the spiritual practice of Buddhist practitioners. The latest French translation is [Driessens 1993](#). It is a translation based on Tibetan sources, in particular the commentary by Togme Zangpo (b. 1295–d. 1369) titled *legs bshad rgya mtsho* (The ocean of eloquence).

- Ansermet, Anne. *Bodhicaryāvatāra: Une méthode pour s'engager dans les actes du Bodhisattva*. Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland: Tharpa Choeling, 1985.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This translation was made from Tibetan sources only.

Ansermet, Anne. *Bodhicaryāvatāra: Une méthode pour s'engager dans les actes du Bodhisattva*. Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland: Tharpa Choeling, 1985.

Find this resource:

- Comité de traduction Padmakara. *Comprendre la vacuité: Deux commentaires du chapitre IX de "La marche vers l'éveil" de Shāntideva*. Peyzac-le-Moustier, France: Éditions Padmakara, 1993.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This translation was made from Tibetan sources and Western translations from Sanskrit and Tibetan sources ([La Vallée Poussin 1907](#), [Finot 1920](#), and [Ansermet 1985](#); also, [Matics 1970](#) and [Batchelor 1979](#), both cited in [English](#)).

It includes a section comprising 125 notes, a glossary of 57 entries in French and Sanskrit, and a bibliography.

Comité de traduction Padmakara. *Comprendre la vacuité: Deux commentaires du chapitre IX de "La marche vers l'éveil" de Shāntideva*. Peyzac-le-Moustier, France: Éditions Padmakara, 1993.

Find this resource:

- Driessens, Georges. *Vivre en héros pour l'éveil*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1993.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This translation was made from Tibetan sources only. It includes a detailed description of Śāntideva's life based on traditional sources, a glossary of Buddhist concepts, and a short bibliography of translations in various Western languages.

Driessens, Georges. *Vivre en héros pour l'éveil*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1993.
Find this resource:

- Finot, Louis. *La marche à la lumière*. Les Classiques de l'Orient 2. Paris: Éditions Bossard, 1920.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is a translation from Sanskrit sources, with an introduction by the author. It was used as a basis for the translation in [Comité de traduction Padmakara 1993](#).

Finot, Louis. *La marche à la lumière*. Les Classiques de l'Orient 2. Paris: Éditions Bossard, 1920.

Find this resource:

- La Vallée Poussin, Louis de. *Introduction à la pratique des futurs Bouddhas, poème de Ćāntideva*. Paris: Bloud, 1907.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This translation, the first in a Western language, was preceded by two partial translations of the text published in 1892 (chapters 1–4 and 10) and 1896 (chapter 5).

La Vallée Poussin, Louis de. *Introduction à la pratique des futurs Bouddhas, poème de Ćāntideva*. Paris: Bloud, 1907.

Find this resource:

German

Four translations appear to have been produced in German. The first is [Schmidt 1923](#). It was followed by [Steinkellner 2005](#), a translation produced in 1981 and subsequently reedited. These two translations were made by Buddhist scholars. At least two other translations made by Buddhist practitioners ([Koss 2004](#) and [Hangartner 2005](#)) were later published.

- Hangartner, Diego. *Shantideva, Anleitungen auf dem Weg zur Glückseligkeit: Bodhicaryavatara*. Frankfurt: O. W. Barth Verlag, 2005.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

A translation made from Tibetan sources. It claims to be an original translation authorized by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Hangartner, Diego. *Shantideva, Anleitungen auf dem Weg zur Glückseligkeit: Bodhicaryavatara*. Frankfurt: O. W. Barth Verlag, 2005.

Find this resource:

- Koss, Jobst. *Shantideva, Die Lebensführung im Geiste der Erleuchtung: Das Bodhicaryavatara*. Berlin: Theseus, 2004.

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The author is a psychotherapist who studied Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan language for more than twenty-five years.

Koss, Jobst. *Shantideva, Die Lebensführung im Geiste der Erleuchtung: Das Bodhicaryavatara*. Berlin: Theseus, 2004.

Find this resource:

- Schmidt, Richard. *Der Eintritt in den Wandel in Erleuchtung von Śāntideva: Ein buddhistisches Lehrgedicht des VII. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* Paderborn, Germany: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1923.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is the first German translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

Schmidt, Richard. *Der Eintritt in den Wandel in Erleuchtung von Śāntideva: Ein buddhistisches Lehrgedicht des VII. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* Paderborn, Germany: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1923.

Find this resource:

- Steinkellner, Ernst. *Eintritt in das Leben zur Erleuchtung (Bodhicaryavatara): Lehrgedicht des Mahayana*. 3d ed. Düsseldorf: Diederichs, 2005.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is a recent German translation with an introduction by a Buddhist scholar, a professor emeritus of Buddhism and Tibetan studies at the University of Vienna, Austria. Originally published in 1981.

Steinkellner, Ernst. *Eintritt in das Leben zur Erleuchtung (Bodhicaryavatara): Lehrgedicht des Mahayana*. 3d ed. Düsseldorf: Diederichs, 2005.

Find this resource:

Italian

At least two translations have been produced in Italian. [Tucci 1925](#), which covers chapters 1 to 8, was compiled by the Italian scholar of oriental cultures, Giuseppe Tucci. It was followed by [Pezzali 1982](#).

- Pezzali, Amalia. *Śāntideva, il Bodhicaryāvatāra e le kārikā del Śikṣāsamuccaya*. Bologna, Italy: Missionaria Italiana, 1982.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

A translation made by the author of the study on Śāntideva ([Pezzali 1968](#), cited in [General Overviews](#)).

Pezzali, Amalia. *Śāntideva, il Bodhicaryāvatāra e le kārikā del Śikṣāsamuccaya*. Bologna, Italy: Missionaria Italiana, 1982.

Find this resource:

- Tucci, Giuseppe. *In cammino verso la luce: Traduzione del Bodhicaryāvatāra di Śāntideva*. Turin, Italy: G. B. Paravia, 1925.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is the first Italian translation made from Sanskrit sources. It is, however, incomplete—while it includes chapters 1–8, it omits chapters 9 and 10.

Tucci, Giuseppe. *In cammino verso la luce: Traduzione del Bodhicaryāvatāra di Śāntideva*. Turin, Italy: G. B. Paravia, 1925.

Find this resource:

Japanese

There appears to be only one complete translation in Japanese ([Kanakura 1965](#)), despite a growing interest among Japanese scholars and students in Śāntideva's works. [Saitō 1993](#) (cited in [Sanskrit Editions](#)) includes a Japanese translation of the chapter on the Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*).

- Kanakura, Yenshō. *Satori e no michi*. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1965.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This includes an account of the legendary life of Śāntideva and references to previous translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in Western languages (French, English, German, and Italian) and early editions of the Sanskrit text.

Kanakura, Yenshō. *Satori e no michi*. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1965.

Find this resource:

[Modern Commentators](#)

The following is just a sample of modern commentators, primarily from the Tibetan Buddhist traditions. For an exhaustive list, see the [Rigpa Shedra Wiki](#), cited in [General Overviews](#). It is meant to show the increasing popularity of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* among practicing Buddhists. In many of these commentaries, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is also presented as a relevant text to consider in the field of human development. For example, in *Transcendent Wisdom*, [Dalai Lama 1988](#) provides a commentary on the ninth chapter of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, in which such important Buddhist concepts and doctrines as emptiness, two truths, the nature and existence of the self, and others are explained. In *Healing Anger* ([Dalai Lama 1997](#)), the author devotes an entire book to the significance of the virtue of patience, or tolerance, one of the six virtues discussed by Śāntideva. Similarly, drawing from relevant passages from the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, [Gyatso 1997](#) describes the classical methods for developing the mind of enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), one of the central concepts of Śāntideva's spiritual philosophy. Finally, following a more conventional format, [Gyatso 1987](#), [Khenpo Kunpal 2004](#), and [Tobden 2005](#) offer a chapter-by-chapter commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

- Dalai Lama, H. H. *Transcendent Wisdom: A Commentary on the Ninth Chapter of Śāntideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1988.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This is based on the oral teachings of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, translated into English and edited by Alan Wallace, author of *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life* ([Wallace and Wallace 1997](#), cited in [English](#)).

Dalai Lama, H. H. *Transcendent Wisdom: A Commentary on the Ninth Chapter of Śāntideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1988.

Find this resource:

- Dalai Lama, H. H. *Healing Anger: The Power of Patience from a Buddhist Perspective*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

The work is based on the oral teachings of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama given in 1993 in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona. Geshe Thupten Jinpa served as interpreter during the teachings.

Dalai Lama, H. H. *Healing Anger: The Power of Patience from a Buddhist Perspective*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

Find this resource:

- Gyatso, Geshe Kelsang. *Meaningful to Behold: A Commentary to Śāntideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. London: Tharpa, 1987.

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Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, a meditation master and scholar from Tibet, is the author of many books on Buddhist thought and practice.

Gyatso, Geshe Kelsang. *Meaningful to Behold: A Commentary to Śāntideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. London: Tharpa, 1987.

Find this resource:

- Gyatso, Lobsang. *Bodhicitta: Cultivating the Compassionate Mind of Enlightenment*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

Lobsang Gyatso is a meditation master born in Kham, Tibet, in 1928. In 1973 he founded the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics in Dharamsala, India.

Gyatso, Lobsang. *Bodhicitta: Cultivating the Compassionate Mind of Enlightenment*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

Find this resource:

- Khenpo Kunpal. [Drops of Nectar: A Commentary on Shantideva's Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattva](#). Translated by Andreas Kretschmar. July 2004.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

Khenpo Kunpal (Khenpo Kunzang Palden) (b. c. 1872–d. 1943) was a scholar of the Nyingma tradition, holder of the Longchen Nyingtik lineage.

Khenpo Kunpal. [Drops of Nectar: A Commentary on Shantideva's Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattva](#). Translated by Andreas Kretschmar. July 2004.

Find this resource:

- Tobden, Geshe Yeshe. *The Way of Awakening: A Commentary on Shantideva's Bodhicaryavatara*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2005.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

Yeshe Tobden is a meditation master and a scholar from the Gelukpa tradition. Includes a foreword by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Tobden, Geshe Yeshe. *The Way of Awakening: A Commentary on Shantideva's Bodhicaryavatara*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2005.

Find this resource:

Specialized Studies on Śāntideva

As a guide for the practice of the path of the bodhisattva, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, together with the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, is an important source of information to understand its structure and its underlying presuppositions. In this regard, two different approaches present themselves to the student of the Buddhist path. As mentioned in [Modern Commentators](#), the first, which could be qualified as subjective, aims at supporting the practice of the practitioner. It is likely to be found in the discourse of the translators and commentators committed to the ideals of Buddhism. The second approach tries to analyze aspects of the Buddhist path in an objective manner, so that it may be situated within the overall Buddhist tradition and compared with other spiritual paths from various schools of thought. If the first approach comes closer to the tree to enjoy its fruits, the second moves away from it so that the forest can be seen. To complete the citations dealing with the first approach (see [Modern Commentators](#)), the sources in this section represent a short sample of themes and issues dealt with in a scientific and objective manner. This section is broken down into two subsections: [Controversy about Works Attributed to Śāntideva](#) and [The Ethics of the Bodhisattva and Related Issues](#).

[Controversy about Works Attributed to Śāntideva](#)

According to traditional accounts (Bu-ston, Ye-šes dpal-'byor, and the Nepalese manuscript edited by H. Śāstri), Śāntideva composed a third treatise titled *Sūtrasamuccaya*. This text is not extant in any language, and its attribution to Śāntideva has been challenged in [Ruegg 1981](#), [Pāsādika 1982](#), and [Saitō 2004](#). Saitō's discussion of this topic is summarized in [Harrison 2007](#) (cited in [Śiksāsamuccaya](#)). [De Jong 1975](#) (cited in [Life of Śāntideva](#)), in addition to giving a possible reason why Tibetan historians attributed the text to Śāntideva, completed the bibliography found in [Pezzali 1968](#) (cited in [General Overviews](#)) in citing articles by Japanese scholars regarding this controversy.

- Pāsādika, Bhikkhu. "Prolegomena to an English Translation of the *Sūtrasamuccaya*." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 5.2 (1982): 101–109.

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Based on the Chinese translations of the *Sūtrasamuccaya*, Bhikkhu Pāsādika is of the opinion that this text cannot be ascribed to Śāntideva. However, he does not explicitly identify Nāgārjuna as its author or compiler.

Pāsādika, Bhikkhu. "Prolegomena to an English Translation of the *Sūtrasamuccaya*." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 5.2 (1982): 101–109.

Find this resource:

- Ruegg, David Seyford. "The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India." In *A History of Indian Literature*. Vol. 7, *Buddhist and Jaina Literature*. Edited by David Seyford Ruegg and Jan Gonda, 1–146. Wiesbaden, West Germany: Harrassowitz, 1981.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

According to Ruegg, the attribution of a text titled *Sūtrasamuccaya* to Śāntideva based on verses 105–106 of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is erroneous, on account of the ambiguity of their meaning and the fact that "Nāgārjuna, the author of the well-known *Sūtrasamuccaya*, is also mentioned in it" (p. 84).

Ruegg, David Seyford. "The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India." In *A History of Indian Literature*. Vol. 7, *Buddhist and Jaina Literature*. Edited by David Seyford Ruegg and Jan Gonda, 1–146. Wiesbaden, West Germany: Harrassowitz, 1981.

Find this resource:

- Saitō, Akira. "Notes on the Interpretation of Bodhi(sattva)caryāvatāra V.104–106." In *Gedenkschrift J. W. de Jong*. Edited by H. W. Bodewitz and Minora Hara, 135–147. *Studia Philologica Buddhica*, Monograph Series 17. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2004.

[Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

In this article, Saitō investigates the way in which the content of the three verses responsible for the controversy over the authorship of the *Sūtrasamuccaya* changes from the shorter version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (in 702.5 verses) to the longer one (913 verses).

Saitō, Akira. "Notes on the Interpretation of Bodhi(sattva)caryāvatāra V.104–106." In *Gedenkschrift J. W. de Jong*. Edited by H. W. Bodewitz and Minora Hara, 135–147. *Studia Philologica Buddhica*, Monograph Series 17. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2004.

Find this resource:

[The Ethics of the Bodhisattva and Related Issues](#)

In part triggered by [Williams 1998](#), there has been a renewed interest in Śāntideva's two treatises, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, concerning Mahayana ethical thought in general and the ethics of the bodhisattva and their rational justifications in particular. More specifically, the claim made in [Williams 1998](#) that the idea of subjectless pain is meaningless and that because there can be no bodhisattva path without the notion of persons, Śāntideva has destroyed the bodhisattva path, has led [Clayton 2001](#) to argue that Williams failed to distinguish between facts and values, a point that has implications for how we approach the study of Buddhist ethics. Similarly, the long review of [Williams 1998](#) in [Siderits 2000](#) opens up a debate that seems to blur the distinction between objective critical analysis and apologetics, and as such may reveal new trends in Buddhist scholarship reflecting the development of Buddhism in Western culture. Moreover, this new trend in the studies of Śāntideva favors a multidisciplinary approach, focusing, for example, on Western moral theory ([Clayton 2006](#)), feminist hermeneutics ([Mrozik 2007](#)), phenomenology and cognitive psychology ([Brassard 2000](#)), and contemporary analytical philosophy ([Lele 2007](#)). Finally, Śāntideva's treatment of various aspects of the bodhisattva path has been examined in separate studies, for example the concept of *bodhicitta* ([Brassard 2000](#), [Wangchuk 2007](#)) and the doctrine of Two Truths ([Lindtner 1981](#)).

- Brassard, Francis. *The Concept of Bodhicitta in Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.

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This is a study primarily using the phenomenological approach to understand the significance of the concept of *bodhicitta*, in terms of its role in triggering and supporting a specific type of spiritual practice that may not be exclusive to Śāntideva, in particular, or even Mahayana Buddhism, in general.

Brassard, Francis. *The Concept of Bodhicitta in Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.

Find this resource:

- Clayton, Barbra. "Compassion as a Matter of Fact: The Argument from No-Self to Selflessness in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*." *Contemporary Buddhism* 2.1 (2001): 83–97.

DOI: [10.1080/14639940108573740](https://doi.org/10.1080/14639940108573740) [Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

This article is a direct response to [Williams 1998](#).

Clayton, Barbra. "Compassion as a Matter of Fact: The Argument from No-Self to Selflessness in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*." *Contemporary Buddhism* 2.1 (2001): 83–97.

Find this resource:

- Clayton, Barbra. *Moral Theory in Śāntideva's Śikṣāsamuccaya: Cultivating the Fruits of Virtue*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

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This book focuses mainly on Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya* as a primary source for understanding Mahayana Buddhist ethics. It is an attempt to situate Śāntideva's ethical presuppositions and moral reasoning within the context of the categories of Western moral theory.

Clayton, Barbra. *Moral Theory in Śāntideva's Śikṣāsamuccaya: Cultivating the Fruits of Virtue*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Find this resource:

- Lele, Amod. “Ethical Revaluation of the Thought of Śāntideva.” PhD diss., Harvard University, 2007.

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This dissertation examines the idea of ethical revaluation, arguing that Śāntideva’s thought on the matter is more coherent than it might otherwise appear. Śāntideva’s claims are also evaluated in the light of contemporary ethical thought. Available [online](#).

Lele, Amod. “Ethical Revaluation of the Thought of Śāntideva.” PhD diss., Harvard University, 2007.

Find this resource:

- Lindtner, Christian. “Atiśa’s Introduction to the Two Truths, and Its Sources.” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 9.2 (1981): 161–214.

DOI: [10.1007/BF00164036](https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00164036) [Save Citation](#) » [Export Citation](#) » [E-mail Citation](#) »

An essay related to the doctrine of Two Truths, including a full translation of Prajñākaramati’s commentary on Śāntideva’s verse 2 of chapter 9. According to the author, this is the most comprehensive account of the problem of Two Truths extant in Sanskrit.

Lindtner, Christian. “Atiśa’s Introduction to the Two Truths, and Its Sources.” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 9.2 (1981): 161–214.

Find this resource:

- Mrozik, Susanne. *Virtuous Bodies: The Physical Dimensions of Morality in Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

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This book investigates the diverse roles bodies play in the development of Buddhist ethics, taking Śāntideva’s *Śikṣāsamuccaya* as a case study.

Mrozik, Susanne. *Virtuous Bodies: The Physical Dimensions of Morality in Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Find this resource:

- Siderits, Mark. “The Reality of Altruism: Reconstructing Śāntideva.” *Philosophy East & West* 50.3 (July 2000): 412–459.

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The book review here (pp. 412–424) is a thorough analysis of Williams’s claims (in [Williams 1998](#)) concerning the relation between the practice of altruism and our understanding of the nature of persons. It is followed by a lengthy response by Williams himself (pp. 424–453) and another reply by Siderits (pp. 453–459). Siderits, Mark. “The Reality of Altruism: Reconstructing Śāntideva.” *Philosophy East & West* 50.3 (July 2000): 412–459.

Find this resource:

- Wangchuk, Dorji. *A Study of the Bodhicitta Concept in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*. Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series 22. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2007.

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This study is an attempt to trace the historical roots of *bodhicitta*, discussing its definitions, benefits, and functions, based on the most important textual sources of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism. Many references are made to Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣāsamuccaya*.

Wangchuk, Dorji. *A Study of the Bodhicitta Concept in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*. Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series 22. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2007.

Find this resource:

- Williams, Paul. *Altruism and Reality: Studies in the Philosophy of the Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1998.

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This book is a collection of previously published papers on Indian and Tibetan interpretations of selected verses of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, together with a new essay that triggered both the debate discussed in this section and new comprehensive studies in relation to the ethics of the bodhisattva and Madhyamaka ontology.

Williams, Paul. *Altruism and Reality: Studies in the Philosophy of the Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1998.

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