



A Short Introduction to the Philosophy of Santaraksita

Marie Louise Friquegnon

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This is a significant contribution to the study of Shantarakshita, the foremost thinker of Tibetan Buddhism. A Short Introduction to the Philosophy of Shantarakshita succeeds in demonstrating that Shantarakshita “is truly a philosopher for all seasons.” Shantarakshita's conception of what his philosophy consisted in is what makes his philosophy relevant to all times: To believe what is in accordance with reason, and to reject what is not in accordance with reason. The book is an excellent introduction not only to Tibetan Buddhism, but also a philosophically stimulating text on many of the fundamental topics from ethics, aesthetics, and epistemology (as viewed by Madhyamikas). In a non-technical vocabulary Friquegnon explains philosophical ideas clearly. The conversational style of the book will be engaging to students and general readers who are new to the topic. Also of interest to students and scholars of comparative philosophy this book presents unifying themes from the introduction to the conclusion. One major theme of the book is the parallel between Shantarakshita and Kant. The chapter on Shankara and the problem of nihilism is particular of interest to the study of Hinduism and Buddhism. There are insightful analogies between Shantarakshita and philosophers ranging from Kant to Wittgenstein. Discussion of Shantarakshita's conception of language in relation to Wittgenstein is particularly noteworthy. The concluding chapter provides a succinct summary of the central theses of Buddhism, the elimination of suffering through letting go of attachment and craving.”
— Hyun Hochsmann Chair, Department of Philosophy, New Jersey City University

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