

The Translation and Transmission of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the Western Countries

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Abstract: This article is an analysis of the translation and transmission of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the western countries, the author talks about both earlier and later translations of *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, the author further explores the translation and transmission of different versions including the two main English versions, two main French versions and two main Spanish versions, as well as their contributions to the Buddhist translation.

Key words: *Bodhicaryāvatāra*; Śāntideva; translation; transmission; western countries

1. Introduction

Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is one of the most translated Buddhist texts. This undertaking seeks to discuss in great detail the translation and transmission of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the English world. Śāntideva was a Buddhist monk in the seventh/eighth century. His text, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* focuses on the ways through which individuals can cultivate and enhance the state of mind of a bodhisattva. Essentially, this is the path to one becoming a Buddha. In the text, Śāntideva covers an array of aspects that include making offerings to Buddhas, the rules that monks should adhere to, meditation approaches, how to deal with anger and lethargy, and confession of misdeeds (Nelson, 2016). It is worth pointing out that the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* opened the doors for Western countries and brought forth a new dimension whereby the text is no longer a preserve for scholars. The translation has resulted in the text being carried out by Buddhist practitioners influenced by Tibetan schools of Buddhism. Markedly, scholars tend to focus on evaluating texts against specific criteria, which may either be stated or unstated. With the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, however, it transcends the scholarly point of view into a cultural point of view. This is in the sense that the text has a context in its target culture as well as its source culture, all of which emanate from the translator's motives of ensuring that the text reflects the changing attitudes towards Buddhism as well as its texts.

The main parts of this undertaking besides this introduction are the literature review and the conclusion. The literature review will be the bulk of this undertaking as it seeks to cover aspects that include the Buddhist translation ideas and the contribution of the translator and the text to Buddhist translation. Before delving in any further, it is imperative to understand who Śāntideva was. According to (Wallace & Wallace, 1997), Śāntideva was an eighth-century Indian Buddhist monk. While historical information about Śāntideva remains scanty, he is among the most renowned and esteemed figures in the history of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

2. The Main Contents of *Bodhicaryāvatāra*

The *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is regarded as one of the greatest literary and religious classics in so far as the tradition of Buddhism is concerned. According to (Wallace & Wallace, 1997), *Bodhicaryāvatāra*'s thematic structure is based on perfections of generosity, patience, zeal, ethical discipline, and wisdom. These six perfections essentially chart the path to enlightenment. The text starts by discussing the benefits of *Bodhicitta*, which can be termed the Spirit of Awakening and is the foundation of perfecting generosity. Subsequently, the text discusses the implementation of the Spirit of Awakening. The third section of the text discusses the perfection of aspects that include patience, zeal, and meditation. It is worth pointing out that the sections of the text mentioned above consist of multiple chapters. The third section is of particular relevance because it emphasises focuses on the approaches that can be used to tackle hatred. As posited by the author, hatred is the most significant impediment to the *Bodhisattva* way of life. The fourth section of the text builds on the foundation set by the third section. To this end, the fourth section focuses on how to perfect the sacred process of meditation. It further revolves around the cultivation of altruism and the Spirit of Awakening. The second last chapter centres on the perfection of wisdom, which is among the key expositions in so far as the Indian Buddhist tradition of Prasāngika Madhyamaka view is concerned.

In the last chapter, which is the tenth, Śāntideva concludes by offering prayers dedicating the merits of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* for the benefit of all sentient beings (Wallace & Wallace, 1997).

3. Translations of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in Different Stages

3.1 Early Translations of *Bodhicaryāvatāra*

The study that was conducted by Nelson (2016) on the translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* reveals that two subjects informed the translation. The first subject was for the text to be treated as a “living source of inspiration” as opposed to a historical object. Markedly, the context mentioned above did not accurately reflect or describe how Tibetan Buddhists used the text. As far as the English world is concerned, the second subject or context applies. Essentially, for the English world, the text is presented as a “feel good” work. This was until the text was translated from the Tibetan language by Tibetan Buddhists. As such, the text can be regarded as part of the tradition purely as a source of inspiration because it has clear ideas and instructions that can be followed. From the author’s point of view, none of the two approaches described above give an accurate cultural context into which the text was translated. Moreover, it is impossible to tie down the context of the text translation because there are very many translations, each with its specific motivation for translation. According to (Nelson, 2016; Melis, 2005), the common feature that united early translators of the text was the fact that they were not Buddhists themselves and they assumed that their audience was not Buddhist either. This is why the translations have specific introductory sections that expound basic Buddhist concepts. Interestingly, these translators exhibited some form of ambivalence towards Buddhism.

Essentially, these translations were premised on European superiority as they characterised Indians as lazy, pessimistic, and childish. By further analysing these early translations by La Vallée Poussin, Finot, and Barnett, the author noted that even though they described the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*’s worthwhile qualities as placeless and timeless, they had no consensus on the qualities that made Śāntideva admirable. The *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was originally written in Sanskrit before being translated to other languages. From a general perspective, the text focuses on aspects such as the cultivation and enhancement of *bodhicitta*. This is essentially the path to becoming a Buddha. Looking deeper into the text, one realises that it has different sections dedicated to specific aspects of spiritual awakening. These sections include making offerings to Buddha, confession of misdeeds, how to deal with anger and lethargy, and how to meditate (Nelson, 2016). The *Bodhicaryāvatāra*’s early translations were made from Sanskrit to Tibetan, Chinese, and Mongolian. Regarding the timeline for translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* to the languages listed above, they occurred in the eighth and eleventh centuries for Tibetan, tenth century for Chinese, and the fourteenth century for Mongolian.

3.2 Later Translations of *Bodhicaryāvatāra*

While the early translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* occurred between the eighth and the fourteenth centuries, the later translations occurred from the nineteenth century onwards. Since then, the text has been translated more than 25 times. Compared to the text’s translation into Asian languages, its translation in Western countries is characterised by an element of dynamism. In other words, the translation of the text to languages such as Tibetan, Chinese, and Mongolian did not see the text altered to meet the needs of the target audience. In the Western countries, however, the text’s translation has been characterised by an element of dynamism in the sense that there is a perception that attitudes towards Buddhism were changing. One of the key aspects that differentiate earlier and later translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is the character. Essentially, there was a shift from the focus on what could be termed as pure Buddhism. In addition, Matics took a different perspective of Śāntideva from that of La Vallée Poussin, Finot, and Barnett. More specifically, Matics regarded Śāntideva as an “important literary artist” and “one of the greatest Mahāyāna authors (Nelson, 2016). Thus, Matics chose to appreciate Śāntideva as opposed to critiquing him. Unlike many other translators, Matics perceived Śāntideva as a rather than a philosopher, which is one of the main points on which his translation is criticised by the likes of Gómez and Ruegg.

From a general perspective, the translators of Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* are as varied as the translators who translated them. While they seem to agree on certain aspects, their perspectives are equally varied. Taking both early and later translations of Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into consideration, the author notes that, on deeper analysis, all of them are wanting. For instance, it is difficult to determine aspects such as how translators understand the text from a historical perspective. In other words, the translated texts lack a historical context that can help in their understanding. It is imperative to understand the text’s historical context because it influences the accuracy of the translation (Nelson, 2016).

4. The Translation and Transmission of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in Western Countries

The main translated work in this undertaking is concerned is the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, which was written by Śāntideva. It has been translated by numerous translators. Along the way, some of its aspects have changed due to the different perspectives and motivations of translators. However, the core of the text, which entails the main Buddhist ideas, has largely remained the same. The aspect that has changed is how the intended target audience has been induced to translate it.

According to (Melis, 2005), there are at least seventeen translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into Western languages. The seventeen translations are the complete ones but these does not mean that there are no other translations. Among the first complete translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was done by Louis de La Vallee Poussin in 1907 in Paris. However, there are other translations that focused on specific chapters of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. As a matter of fact, there are other translations that focus on specific chapters of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. For instance, Louis de La Vallee Poussin attempted to translate chapters 1-4 and 10 of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in 1892. Later on, in 1896, he published his translation of chapter 5 of the text. Benjamin further posits that the majority of the translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* are in English, with a total of eight translations. Besides, there are five translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into French, two translations into Spanish, two translations into German, and one into Italian (Melis, 2005). However, more research needs to be done on other translations of the text that have been published independently in Copenhagen and Poland.

4.1 The Two Main Versions in English

4.1.1 Stephen Batchelor and *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*

Stephen Batchelor is one of the earliest translators of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into English. He published his translation into 1979 in Dharamsala, India. In his *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, Batchelor sets off by giving an overview of Śāntideva. He then proceeds to explain the essence of Bodhicitta with reference to the role that it plays in Buddhism, which is to reach liberation for the good of all beings. Batchelor's translation takes a different perspective from the translation that was done by Arhat. While Batchelor focused on the liberation of all beings, Arhat focused on the liberation of oneself. The key aspects that distinguish Batchelor's translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* from other translations include the fact that he signs it off with his adopted name after becoming a monk alongside his lay name. According to (Melis, 2005), this helps the readers of this translation understand the purpose he meant to serve with his translation as well as the religious spirit with which the translation was taken. Unlike many of the translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* that were published later on, Batchelor's translation was not meant for the scholarly world. Essentially, Batchelor aimed to inspire his target audience to adopt the ideals of the Bodhisattva and apply them in their day-to-day lives.

While looking at Batchelor's translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, it is imperative to look at the translation process. To this end, Batchelor took the advice of the Dalai Lama and published the text based on a Tibetan version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. However, the exact Tibetan version that Batchelor translated remains unclear. However, Batchelor goes to great length to ensure that his target audience understands the text. For instance, he adopts the original text's verse form, and adds parenthesis whenever necessary. Batchelor also adds commentary in brackets to further help the readers understand the text. Markedly, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* has some parts that may be challenging to follow due to its cryptic style and thus readers may need all the help they can get to fully understand it. This is the reason why Batchelor goes the extra mile of including commentary in brackets. Even though Batchelor's translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was not meant for the scholarly mind, he has other published works on Buddhism that transcend both philosophy and history.

4.1.2 Vesna A. Wallace and B. Alan Wallace and *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*

The translation by Vesna A. Wallace and B. Alan Wallace is the most recent translation of the text in the English world. *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* was published in 1997. A key feature of the translation is a prologue where the translators situate the text within the Buddhist tradition. In addition, the translators go a step further to specify the original texts and commentaries they used during the translation. The text by Vesna A. Wallace and B. Alan Wallace was dedicated to the memory of the Venerable Geshe Ngawang Dharguey (Melis, 2005). The translators start by introducing Śāntideva after which they proceed to discuss his works in different sections of their text. To this end, they start by discussing his editions in Sanskrit as well as his other texts such as the *Shikshasamuccaya* (Compendium of Instructions). In the second section, the translators discuss Śāntideva's works that have been translated into Eastern and Western languages such as *Sutrasamuccaya* (Compendium of Sutras). The third section of the text focuses on the commentaries and a summary of Śāntideva's works. The fourth section of the text focuses on two indices of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* while the fifth section is specifically dedicated to Śāntideva. Compared to other translations of the Śāntideva, this translation stands out due to a key feature.

Essentially, it is the only English translation based Sanskrit text and the Tibetan text. More specifically, the translators based the translation on two Sanskrit editions by Louis de La Vallee Poussin (1901) and P.L. Vaidya (1960). As for the Tibetan text that the translators used, it was the Derge edition, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by Sarvajvadeva and Kawa Paltsek. One element that the translators dealt with immaculately is the possibility of the two commentaries and the Tibetan text differing in context. In areas that the commentaries and the Tibetan texts do not differ, the translators based the text on the two commentaries. However, in instances where the commentaries and the Tibetan text differ, the translators provided footnotes where they give explanations to help

the readers understand the text. One thing that many would like to know is the difficulty of the translation process. From the accounts of Vesna A. Wallace and B. Alan Wallace, they pointed out that there were difficulties arising from the fact that many of the Sanskrit stanzas are concise and are encrypted using complex syntax. In the wake of these difficulties, the translators took certain liberties to help them provide an intelligible and accurate English version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

The intentions of Vesna A. Wallace and B. Alan Wallace was for their work to facilitate the understanding of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, make their target audience appreciate it, and inspire future studies into the text. Thus, by virtue of their work, the translators were able spread Buddhism across the world by enabling many people to understand the key doctrines of Buddhism by presenting it in a language they can understand.

4.2 The Two Main Versions in French

4.2.1 Comité de Traduction Padmakara's Version

This is a French translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* that was published in 1992. As per the team of translators from the Comité de Traduction Padmakara who did the translation, they explained that the translation was based on the teachings of the Dalai Lama in Dordogne, France, in 1991. Markedly, the Comité de Traduction Padmakara comprised of multinational translators and proofreaders who are practicing Buddhists, both religious and lay. The DL Lama's teachings were based on Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, implying that the translated text was based on the original text. From a broad perspective, one can argue that the translation focuses on the liberation of all beings because, in the preface, the authors urges the readers to pray for an end to aspects that ail humanity such as diseases, famine, and war. Unlike Batchelor's translation whose original text remains unclear, this French translation outrightly explains the specific texts on which the translation is based. To this end, the first original text on which this translation is based is the French version by Louis Finot from Sanskrit. The text was later revised with a Tibetan text even though there is no specification of the specific Tibetan text that was used. Additionally, the translators also referred to a raft of other Western translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* from Sanskrit and Tibetan, such as those by Louis de La Vallee Poussin, Stephen Batchelor, Marion L. Matics, and Anne Ansermet, among others.

During the translation process, the translators also consulted various Tibetan commentaries, which helped them overcome the difficulties they faced with certain chapters due to the original text's cryptic style.

4.2.2 Georges Driessens' Version

Just like the Comité de Traduction Padmakara, George Driessens translated Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into French and published it in 1993. Driessens starts by introducing Śāntideva within the Buddhist context followed by an explanation of his translation. Benjamin asserts that Driessens' translation was based on the edition that was published by Dharamsala even though he does not specify the date on which it was published. Driessens also consulted the translations from Sanskrit by both Louis de La Vallee Poussin and Louis Finot. He terms his translation complete version based on the commentary of Ngulchu Gyalse Thogme Zangpo. While Driessens acknowledges the quality of the translations by Louis de La Vallee Poussin and Louis Finot, he points out that they have quite a few inaccuracies that he addresses in his translation. As was the case with Batchelor, Driessens was also a Buddhist monk from the Tibetan tradition. One thing that stands out in so far as the translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the English world is concerned is that the text was that the translators faced difficulties trying to preserve the original verse form and the rhythm. Chapter 9 has emerged as one of the most challenging chapters of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* to translate, with some translators having had to consult Tibetan commentaries and add additional commentary in their texts to help the readers understand the text.

4.3 The Two Main Versions in Spanish

4.3.1 Dokusho Villalba's Version

Dokusho Villalba was a Zen Buddhist monk who translated the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into Spanish. His translation was published in 1993. It is worth pointing out that Villalba's work was the first translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into Spanish. However, it was not based on the original Sanskrit text or the Tibetan version. Villalba's translation was based on the works of Louis Finot's translation of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into French. A key aspect of Villalba's translation is that it keeps the religious context of the text. Dokusho proceeds to provide historical references about the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* after which he provides illustrative commentaries with elements from the Zen tradition.

4.3.2 Isidro Gordi's Version

Isidro Gordi is a Buddhist instructor who had translated quite a few books. Of relevance to this undertaking is the fact that Isidro Gordi translated the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into Spanish and published his

translation in 1995. The element that distinguishes it from the translation that was published by Dokusho Villalba is that, unlike Villalba's translation, Gordi's translation was the first translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* into Spanish that was based on the original text. The specific text on which Gordi's translation was based was the Tibetan text that had been revised by Sumatikirti and Loden Sherab. Gordi, however, does not jump right into the elements of Buddhism. Instead, he starts by explaining the stages of translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* from Sanskrit into Tibetan. In his introduction, Gordi introduces the concept of Buddhism and clarifies key Buddhist concepts to help his target audience understand the text. Some of the concepts that Gordi introduces include Buddhism, meditation, different forms of suffering, and the cycles of existence (Melis, 2005). After the introductory part, Gordi proceeds to introduce in great detail the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* on a chapter-by-chapter basis. Reading Gordi's translation thus helps the readers understand the concept of Buddhism and the necessary steps one should take to live in the ways of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

5. Contributions to the Buddhist Translation

The translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the English world has made a raft of contributions to the Buddhist translation as well as Buddhism as a whole. From a general perspective, the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* to the English world has seen the acceptability of *Bodhicaryāvatāra* as an expression of universal longings that are presumed to underlie spirituality or mysticism as argued by (Le Vallee). The translations to the English world have resulted in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* being regarded as an accurate or ideal account of Indian Mahayana practice. Thanks to the translations, audiences across the world can now understand the essence of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. For some, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is a practical manual for meditation. However, it is worth pointing out that the interpretation of the target audience and their subsequent use of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* may not be in total alignment with those of the translators. For instance, there is a section of scholars that regarded the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* as a philosophical text. One would argue that one of the contributions of the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* to the English world is that it brought forth a philosophical perspective of Buddhism. As far as the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is concerned, meditation is a crucial process in the path of cultivating *Bodhisattva*. It involves equalising of self and others. This is where, according to Ruegg, Śāntideva takes a more philosophical approach.

As per the proposition of Ruegg, philosophical thinking is a major component of Buddhism. Translators such as Ruegg contributed to the Buddhist translation by allowing the English audience to appreciate the complexity of Buddhism (Williams, 1994). One would argue that there is a tendency for individuals to downplay overly religious texts. As a matter of fact, overly religious texts tend to alienate people. Thus, by bringing a philosophical perspective, Ruegg not only increased the scope of reach of Buddhism but also demonstrates that Buddhism is more than just a religious sect. Śāntideva was a Buddhist monk so it would be understandable if the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was thought to be a text dedicated exclusively to the monks and ordained clerics. In particular, the English world would readily buy into this notion if it were not for the efforts of translators. Thus, the translators have enhanced the understanding of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* beyond what would have been the stereotypical threshold, which would limit the application of its principles to ordained clerics. The tireless work of the translators has resulted in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* being globally accepted as a classic (Gómez, 1999). Moreover, Śāntideva reiterated that intellect is relative and this manifests in the different interpretations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by different translators, which enables the principles in the text to be applicable beyond the Buddhist community.

From the time when the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was authored by Śāntideva to now, there have been a lot of changes in the way individuals live. As such, there is the possibility of the Śāntideva, in its original state, not being entirely relevant to modern society. This is where the translators have put in the work to ensure that the text is relevant to modern society and that it can make relevant contributions to the daily lives of individuals across the world (Liland, 2009). It is worth noting that the text has been translated by many translators, implying that there are many versions of it around the world. The translators themselves come from different backgrounds and thus understand how to make the text relevant to the lives of people where they come from. Thus, an argument can be lodged to the effect that one of the contributions of the translators to Buddhism is enhancing the element of multiculturalism by making the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* relevant beyond the Buddhist community. With English being one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* opened a whole new audience for the text while also encouraging others to translate it into other languages. Today, the text has been translated into French and German, among other languages hence allowing the global audience to implement Śāntideva's principles of spiritual development.

For some translators, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is a "source of inspiration" while for others it is a historical object. According to (Nelson, 2016), the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was presented as a "feel good" work to the English world. This was the case until Tibetan Buddhists started translating it from Tibetan. While the cultural contexts in which the translations were done have received little attention, it is worth pointing out that the translations

have played a key role in moving the engagement with the text from the preserve of scholars. Often, scholars have been keen to steer clear of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*'s religious values. However, thanks to the translation, the text is now being re-appropriated by Buddhists who now consist of Americans and Europeans. Early translators regarded the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* as a representation of an unknown tradition whereas recent translators have demonstrated what could be termed as the acceptability of traditions that the text advocates for. Most of the early translators were scholars who viewed the text from a position of superiority and judgment. La Vallée Poussin, for instance, specifically, translated the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* for a scholarly audience. The readers that accessed the early translated version of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* did not receive the element of motivation as was the case with those who accessed the later versions where the translation had departed from the judgmental scholars' route. This is because the scholarly versions of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* had no place for readers that were interested in Buddhist doctrine.

In other words, the earlier translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* were meant primarily to be used for doctrinal explication. All in all, the translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, both early and later translations to the English world have indoctrinated the Buddhist culture across the world. The English versions of the text have served as the sources that other translators have critiqued and even translated into other languages. They have collectively facilitated the appropriation of Buddhism. Translators of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* sought to enhance the understanding of the text by the general populace. As most of the translators acknowledged, the text is quite complex because it was encrypted using complex syntax. Through their translations, therefore, the translators have enabled more people to understand the original text. From another perspective, one can argue that the translators, especially the early translators, did heavy lifting as they had to consult Tibetan commentaries to help them convey the accurate context that Śāntideva sought to convey to the general populace. As a result, they made it easier for others to explore the original text and further spread its doctrines. Essentially, the translations made it possible for the English world to access the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in a language they understood. As a result, the English world was and continues to appreciate the text and adopt its doctrines in their daily lives.

From the translated texts that have been discussed above, one key aspect that stands out is the fact that the translators were practicing Buddhists. Some were monks while others were instructors. This implies that they took time to get to understand Buddhism before embarking on a journey to enlighten other people about Buddhism. Generally speaking, the translators can be regarded as ambassadors of Buddhism in the sense that they were not keen on providing the perspective of an outsider. On the contrary, they embarked on a deliberate course that enabled to get firsthand perspective of Buddhism by becoming Buddhists themselves. In addition, they consulted the works of other translators as well as Tibetan commentaries that help polish the accuracy of their translations. Thus, one can argue that translators have contributed to the spread of authentic Buddhism by trying as much as possible to convey accurate doctrines of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* so their target audience can easily follow. Essentially, they have made it easy for people across the world to not only understand Buddhism but also practice it. Without these translations, Buddhism would still be confined within the regions that understand the original text that was published in Sanskrit.

6. Conclusion

Following the in-depth discussion of the translation and transmission of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the English world above, the first deduction is that the text is a central component of the modern world. Originally published by Śāntideva, the text's doctrines and principles have now been embraced across the world. As far as the text's translation is concerned, the translators had different motivations for their translation, which effectively resulted in the translated versions of the text varying and even contradicting each other on certain aspects. However, as (Liland, 2009) points out, Buddhism as a religion has a liberal view of what is to be christened as the word of the Buddha. For this reason, all the translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* are sound in their own capacity. Besides the translation, this undertaking has also discussed some of the main ideas that are contained in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and hence its translated versions. The main point of the text is the pursuit of spiritual development. To this end, Śāntideva proposed approaches that can help individuals achieve spiritual development. Some of the approaches that he proposes include dealing with anger, which is the biggest impediment to spiritual development. Dealing with anger, as discussed in this undertaking, entails dealing with the root causes. This undertaking also discusses the way of Bodhisattva. In this discussion, some of the aspects that have been discussed include protecting and maintaining Bodhicitta, intensifying Bodhicitta, wisdom, and meditation.

All these aspects are covered in the different chapters of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Lastly, this undertaking delved into the discussion about the contribution of the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* in the English world. The general point of view that is presented in this undertaking is that the translations have enhanced the understanding of Buddhism. Additionally, the translations have encouraged other translators to further translate the text into other languages. Perhaps, more importantly, the translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* has led to the

realisation that the text was not meant for ordained clerics but the general populace and that it could be translated by a diverse group of individuals as opposed to scholars alone, as was the case initially.

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