

# **Nyanatiloka Centenary Volume**

**On the occasion of the 100th Birth Anniversary  
of the Venerable**

**Nyanatiloka Maháthera**

**19th February 1978**

**Edited by  
Nyanaponika Thera**

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## **Foreword**

The Buddhist Publication Society has felt it its duty to pay homage to the memory of one of the greatest Western exponents of Theravada Buddhism, the late Venerable Nyanatiloka Maháthera. As a modest tribute to him this volume is issued on the occasion of the centenary of his birth (18.2.1878). Our Society had the privilege of having published new editions of several of the Maháthera's works, after his demise, and giving them a wide circulation. One of our Founders, the editor of this volume, is one of the late Maháthera's pupils. But in addition to these two circumstances, what forges in us a strong bond with that great monk, is that we share with him the conviction that the Buddha's teachings have a world-wide and vital significance today, at a time when the great Twin Virtues, of Compassion and Wisdom are direly needed everywhere, in both the East and the West.

The late Maháthera's contribution to Buddhist studies and to the dissemination of an undistorted Dhamma deserves the gratitude of all who have been benefited by it.

In conclusion, we express our sincere thanks to all contributors to the present volume who have thus helped us to honour the memory of the Venerable Nyanatiloka Maháthera.

**Buddhist Publication Society**

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# Nyanatiloka Maháthera

## His life and Work

In Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of his Birth (19.2.1878)

By

Nyanaponika Thera

*Rejoicing in Dhamma, gladdened by Dhamma,  
In Dhamma firm and skilled in Dhamma's scrutiny.*

*Sutta Nipáta, verse 327*

The first Buddhist monk from Germany and continental Europe, the Venerable Nyanatiloka Maháthera, founder and head of the Island Hermitage, Dodanduwa (Sri Lanka), passed away on May 28, 1957, aged 79. With him, another of the "mighty old trees" of Buddhist monkhood and Buddhist scholarship had succumbed to the law of impermanence. These pages are a modest tribute of gratitude to him by one of his pupils who felt that some facts from his life should be preserved, in addition to his work which will remain valuable and helpful as long as the teachings of Theravada Buddhism are studied and practised.

He was born as Anton Walter Florus Gueth, on February 19, 1878, at Wiesbaden, a famous and beautiful health resort in the heart of West Germany. His father was a Professor and later the Principal of the town's Boys College (Realgymnasium). Anton's parents were Roman Catholics, but not of strict observance. His father's love of solitude in natural surroundings nourished in young Gueth a romantic desire for monastic seclusion. In 1897 this even caused him to leave home surreptitiously, walking on snow-covered roads a long distance to a famous Benedictine Monastery. But its rigid reglementation was not to his liking and soon he returned home again. Having completed College in 1896, young Gueth took up wide-ranging musical studies, first by private tuition and in 1898 at a School of Music (Konservatorium) in Frankfort. Later, from 1900-1902, he studied composition in Paris, under a famous Maestro, Charles Marie Widor.

It was in Frankfort that, for the first time, he attended a lecture on "Buddhismus" at the local Theosophical Society. This lecture increased his enthusiastic interest in Buddhism, which had been kindled before by his study of Schopenhauer's philosophical works. These latter had been instrumental in opening for many of their German readers the way to the Buddha's teachings. It happened that a Professor of his, at the School of Music, was likewise interested in Buddhism and presented him with a copy of the *Buddhist Catechism* in German by Subhadra Bhikshu (pen-name for F. Zimmerman), which was the first book on Buddhism that young Gueth read. The Professor recommended to him also other literature and, half-jocularly, said, "But don't go mad and become a Buddhist monk!"

But just that became an increasingly strong urge in his mind. After his two years in Paris, he decided to go to India, believing that it was still a Buddhist country. He also had the wrong notion that a direct voyage to India would be much too-costly, and therefore thought that the only way open to him was to reach India in stages. So, in May 1902, he first accepted an engagement as a violinist in Saloniki and finally reached

Bombay in 1903. " In India he was told- that, to receive ordination as a Buddhist monk he would have to go to Ceylon.

This he did in July 1903. In Kandy he visited the famous Malvatte Vihara where its Librarian, "the Venerable Silananda Thera, expressed his willingness to ordain him. But meanwhile he had learned , that a Scottish monk, Bhikkhu Ánanda Metteyya, was living in Burma and he thought that under him, through the medium of English, his Dhamma studies would be easier than in Ceylon. He obtained Ánanda Metteyya's address from Proctor Richard Perera, the father of Dr. Cassius A. Perera (later Bhikkhu Kassapa) and then set out on his voyage to Burma. On arrival in Rangoon, he stayed for the first fortnight at the house of Mme. Hla Oung, who supported him generously. She was a prominent Buddhist lady of Burma and the wife of the Indian Treasurer, Mr. Hla Oung.

In September 1903, he received his Novice Ordination (Pabbajjá) from the Venerable U Asabha Thera at a monastery close to the Ngada Khi Pagoda, and for one month he lived together with the Venerable Ánanda Mertteyya in one room. He then moved to a quieter place, the, Kyundaw Kyaung monastery, not far from the Shwe Dagan Pagoda. There he received, in February 1904, the Bhikkhu Ordination (Upasampada) from the Venerable U Kumara Maháthera and was given the name Nyanatiloka.

He soon started the study of the Pali language. After six months, 'he was able to converse' with other monks, in that language and had also acquired a working knowledge of colloquial Burmese. Towards the end of 1904, he and the Indian monk Kosambi Dhammananda went to Upper Burma, to the famous meditation caves of Sagaing, for the practice of concentration and insight, meditation under the guidance of a monk reputed to be an Arahat.

In 1905, Bhikkhu Nyanatiloka returned to Ceylon, where he continued his thorough study of Pali and the canonical texts. At that time he began his German translation of the Aḍguttara Nikáya, of which the first part was published in Germany in 1907. In 1906, while in Ceylon, he met the Siamese Prince Prisdang Chomsey who, for political reasons, had to leave his country and had taken ordination in Ceylon under the name of Bhikkhu Jinavaravaísa. He was the incumbent of the well-known monastery Dipaduttarama at Kotahena, Colombo. With him, Bhikkhu Nyanatiloka lived on a little island in the sea off the shore, near Mátara. The island's name was Galgodiyana; but Jinavaravaísa called it Culla-Lanka, i.e. "Little Lanka." There they lived in simple huts made of woven palm-leaves: It was on that little island that, in 1906, the' young Bhikkhu's first pupils arrived, the Dutchman Bergendahl (Suñño), and soon after him, the German Fritz Stange (Sumino). Both were ordained at the town of Mátara. Sumano Sámaóera (Fritz Stange) was a monk of great earnestness and dedication, who, gave stirring expression to his thoughts in his little book *Pabbajja, Der Gang in die Heimatlosigkeit (1910)*, which, he wrote in German.<sup>1</sup> Very early in his life, he passed away in 1910, at Bandarawela, in Ceylon's hill country.

During a short visit to Burma in 1906, the Venerable Nyanatiloka gave Novice Ordination to a Scotsman, I. F. McKechnie, who later, under his; Bhikkhu name, Silácára, became an excellent and prolific writer on Buddhism. While a novice, by the name of Sásanavaísa, he translated from the German, Bhikkhu Nyanatiloka's: first literary work. "The Word of the Buddha" (first, English edition: Rangoon 1907). Shortly, after Sásanavaísa, a German, Walter Markgraf, was likewise given Novice Ordination, under the name of Dhammanusari. He soon returned, however, to Germany where he started a Buddhist publishing firm which issued, among other books, many of the Venerable Nyanatiloka's translations.

Taking up a proposal of Markgraf to establish a Buddhist monastery in southern Switzerland, Bhikkhu Nyanatiloka left for Europe. At Lugano, he met Enrico Bignani,

editor of the magazine "Coenobium," who found for him a beautifully situated Alpine cottage, at the foot of the Monteloma, near Novaggio, not far from Lugano. He spent there a severe winter, working on his German Pali Grammar and his translation of the Puggalapaññatti (a work of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka). Soon he was joined there by a German lay disciple, Ludwig Stolz, who later became a monk under the name of Vappo.

When the plans for a Swiss monastery failed, the search for other places led the Venerable Nyanatiloka first to Turino and then to North Africa (Tunis Gabes), and finally back to Switzerland. There he lived for some time in Lausanne, at a small Buddhist House, called "Charitas Vihara", built by a Swiss engineer, Mr. Bergier. At its front wall, Buddhist texts, in French translation, were engraved in red and gold, and were keenly-read by passers-by. At that place, the Venerable Nyanatiloka gave the first Buddhist novice ordination on European soil, to a German painter Bertel Bauer, who received the monastic name of Kondanno. He went on to Ceylon, and in 1911 the Venerable Nyanatiloka followed with Ludwig Stolz and two other lay Buddhists. In 1911, Stolz was ordained a novice at Galle (South Ceylon), under the name of Vappo. He received Bhikkhu ordination in Burma, in 1914, and passed away in Sri Lanka, in 1960, aged 86.

It was Kondañño who happened to find a little island in a lagoon near the village of Dodanduwa, which, by the name of Island Hermitage (in Sinhalese Polgasduva) became widely known as a centre for Western Buddhist monks. When the venerable Nyanatiloka, informed by Kondañño, saw the place, it appealed to him at once, and on 9th of July 1911, the Hermitage was formally established by the occupation of five simple wooden huts built by lay supporters. It was, however, only in 1914 that the Island Hermitage came into the legal possession of the Sangha, having been bought and donated to the Sangha by Mr. Bergier. Since then, though interrupted by two world wars, western monks have lived at this Hermitage, together with Sinhalese Bhikkhus. Quite close to the Island Hermitage, separated only by a narrow channel, there was another little island called Matiduva ("Clay Island"), which also served to accommodate the growing number of ordination candidates and monks. After the second world war, it was acquired from the owners and offered to the Sangha by a long-time supporter of the Mahāthera, Lady Evadne de Silva. In early 1914, the Venerable Nyanatiloka travelled to Sikkim, with Tibet as destination. But he and his companions could reach only Tumlong near the Tibetan border where they called on Mrs. Alexandra David-Neel. As the mountain passes were blocked by snow and funds were running short, the party had to turn back and returned to Ceylon. It was as a result of this trip that, in the same year, two young Tibetans, brothers of the scholar Kaji Sandup, arrived at the Island Hermitage. and took, Theravada ordination there. The "younger one stayed on in Sri Lanka and, under the name of Mahinda, became a famous poet in the Sinhalese language, with poems of his included in Sinhalese school books.

Likewise in 1914, a young Sinhalese, Rajasinghe, was ordained as a novice under the name of Nyanaloka. He grew up to become a monk. of true nobility of character and appearance. Ever helpful he was deeply devoted to his revered teacher, nursing him in times of illness, attending to all administrative tasks of the Island Hermitage and guiding the first steps into monkhood of young western entrants into the Order who called him their "Sangha mother." After his Venerable Teacher's demise, the Venerable, Nyanaloka Mahāthera was the Abbot of the Island Hermitage until his own death in 1976.

On the outbreak of the first World war, in 1914, the German monks were first permitted to stay on at the Island Hermitage, under surveillance. But after four months, they were taken into civil internment, first in Ceylon (Ragama and Diyatalawa) and later in Australia. The transport to and the stay in Australia brought many hardships. In 1916, the clergy members of all religions were released from interment. As no

permission was given to return to Ceylon or to enter any other country of the British Commonwealth, the Venerable Nyanatiloka went to China, and this, too, turned out to be a period of great hardship and illness. In going to China it was his intention, to reach, via Yunnaa, the Burmese monasteries at the border, but his attempts failed. When China, too, declared war against Germany, he had to experience another internment at the Police Jail in Hanchow. While there he, the indefatigable worker, continued with his German translation of the *Aḍguttara Nikáya*. Finally at the , beginning of 1919, he was compulsorily repatriated to Germany. This was his last visit to the country of his birth.

Even after the end of the war, Ceylon remained closed to German citizens for many more years. Yet, impelled by his strong wish to return, he and the Venerable Vappo started in 1920 on their voyage to Ceylon. Together with them went a German Buddhist lady, Else Buchholtz (born 1889), who in 1926 became a *Buddhist* nun in Ceylon under the name of *Uppalavanna*. Coming from a well-to-do family, she had supported the Venerable Nyanatiloka during his stay in Germany and defrayed now the travel expenses of all. But when In 1920, they arrived at the port of Colombo, they were unable to obtain landing permission inspite of all efforts made on their behalf by Singhalese friends. They now decided to go to Japan where the Venerable Nyanatiloka taught at high schools and universities for five years. At last, in 1926, after an absence of twelve years, he was able to return to Ceylon.

At the Island Hermitage he found most of the buildings in a dilapidated condition. But soon new huts were being built for newcomers who, after a short time, started to arrive again from many countries. So came, in 1928, E. L. Hoffmana (later Lama Anagarika Govinda), who lived for some time at the Island Hermitage, studying Pali. He later was a neighbour of the Maháthera, at a hill hermitage (Wariyagoda) in Ceylon's up-country, where, after the second world war, where Sister Uppalavanna also lived.

Of those monks who, in the period between the two wars, lived at the Island Hermitage, we shall mention here only a few: the German Bhikkhu Nyanadhara, a very dedicated monk who died in Burma in 1935; he was nursed on his sickbed by the Maháthera who, on the news of his grave illness, had hastened to Burma. Another earnestly striving monk was the German Bhikkhu Nyanasisi, who had received novice ordination in 1936 and Bhikkhu ordination in 1937, together with the present writer. He, passed away in 1950, shortly after the visit of his brother Georg Krauskopf, an able Buddhist writer. The venerable Nyanasatta of Czechoslovakia received Bhikkhu ordination in 1939. After a short stay at the Island Hermitage he moved to the hill country, to Bandarawela, where he still lives. Apart from English publications, he has to his credit several books and booklets on Buddhism in Esperanto.

Again, in the Second World War, the venerable Nyanatiloka and his German disciples had to exchange the peace of the Island Hermitage for life in Civil Internment Camps. After two years in a Camp in Sri Lanka, at Diyatalawa, all internees were transported to North India, to a Central Internment Camp at Dehra, Dun, near the foothills, of the Himalaya. There the Maháthera and the other German monks spent five years behind barbed wire until, in autumn 1946, they were allowed to return directly to Sri Lanka, thanks to the intercession of the then Prime Minister, D. S. Senanayake.

This time, on his return, he found the Island Hermitage in a well preserved and even improved condition, thanks to his devoted Sinhala pupil, the venerable Nyanaloka Maháthera, who had looked after the place well, despite the great difficulties he had to contend with during the long war years. For the Maháthera, this second period of internment proved much more favourable than his first. The treatment and living conditions in the Camps were better, allowing he Maháthera to engage in extensive literary and translation work. Many of his more recent works in German and English were, written during that time. He also did not

have to face such a long waiting period before he was able to return to Sri Lanka, and there were none of those long and exhausting peregrinations.

After such experiences during two wars, the venerable Nyanatiloka welcomed it when, in 1950, he received the citizenship of Sri Lanka; which, by then had gained independence. His home country of Germany also remembered him, and recognised his outstanding life work as a Buddhist scholar, when, in 1955, he was nominated an Honorary fellow of a prestigious academic society for oriental studies. the *Deutsche Morgenlandische Gesellschaft*. The scroll of his nomination was presented to him by the then Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Georg Ahrens.

With the true detachment of a "Homeless One," a "citizen of the world's four quarters" (catuddiso), he knew of no exclusive love for one single country. But temperamentally he had felt happiest among the friendly people of Sri Lanka, and the way of life that he had shaped for himself in this country suited him well.

He also, however, felt a strong inner kinship with, and admiration for, the great Buddhist nation of Burma, the land of his ordination. He visited Burma perhaps six or eight times. In 1951, he and a pupil of his (the present writer) were invited to Burma as state guests for consultation on certain projects in connection with the Sixth Buddhist Synod. (Chattha Sangayana). His last visit to Burma was in 1954, when he and the writer took part in the solemn opening session of that Synod. They were the only Western Bhikkhu members, of the Synod (apart from Observers) and perhaps the first ones in any of the Buddhist Synods (or Councils), unless there had been Greeks at the third. On account of a throat ailment the Maháthera was not able to deliver his message to the Council and it had to be read in his presence by his pupil the writer of this tribute (see photo).

Since 1952, the Maháthera spent most of his time at the Forest Hermitage near Kandy, a small, simple cottage situated on a wooded hill range above the town of Kandy. In his advancing years he found the cooler climate of the hill regions and the peace and quietude of the forest more agreeable. In the middle of 1954 he fell ill. After a longer stay and treatment at the Kandy hospital, he underwent a major operation in Colombo, in January 1955. On his return to Kandy, there followed a few months of improving health. But it was at that time that he told the present writer: "I shall not reach my 80th year." When towards the end of 1955 his strength began to decline, the Maháthera went to Colombo where nursing and medical attention were more easily obtainable than at the remote forest cottage. On the invitation of the "German Dhammaduta Society," he lived in the monks' quarters of the society's premises, where he was looked after with great solicitude. There he spent the last monastic "Rainy Season" (vassana) of his life. In spite of the best medical attention, his health continued to decline, and on the 28th May, 1957 he passed away peacefully, about three months after his 79th birthday.

The cremation took place on June 2, 1957, at the Independence Square, Colombo, as an official State Funeral given in tribute to a great monk and an eminent exponent of the Dhamma to the West. Vast crowds gathered for the occasion. Among the speakers were leading monks of the three monastic orders of Sri Lanka: the Venerable Nyanasatta Thera, representing the late Maháthera's pupils; and among lay speakers, Ceylon's Prime Minister, Mr. S. W. D. Bandaranaike; and finally the German Ambassador. On June 9, 1957, the ashes were brought to the Island Hermitage, Dodanduwa, and interred near the late Maháthera's hut. A monument was later erected, on which the famous stanza of Assaji which had brought the Venerable Sariputta, to the Dhamma, was engraved in four languages, Pali, Sinhala, German and English:

"Of things that proceed from a cause,  
Their cause the Tathagats proclaimed;  
And also their cessation.  
Thus taught the Great Sage."



## The Literary Work

Though the Maháthera's external life was quite varied due to the vicissitudes of the times, his personality expresses itself pre-eminently in his literary work and in the serene quietude and simplicity of his monk life. The mere quantity of his literary work in English and German commands respect and would have been remarkable even if it had been done in an entirely undisturbed and sheltered life, furnished with all the study aids which are now easily accessible. To appreciate fully the Maháthera's achievement, it must be remembered that a good part of his voluminous early work was done under very trying circumstances. He worked indefatigably under the primitive and noisy living conditions of his first internment and during the hardships, deprivations and frequent illnesses experienced after the first war, when he travelled, or was forcibly sent, from one country to another, before he could again reach the quiet haven of Sri Lanka. In the first years of his studies and when doing his first translations from the Pali, large dictionaries and well edited and printed Pali texts did not exist, or were not accessible to him. Often he had to use, with critical caution, Burmese and Singhalese palm-leaf manuscripts, which were sometimes full of errors and hard to read.

His first publication, appearing in 1906, was the German version of "The Word of the Buddha "(An Outline of the Teaching of the Buddha in the Words of the Pali Canon, with explanatory notes). This slender but substantial book was destined to become a classic of Buddhist literature and had, in the course of the years, a world-wide circulation in 13 languages. It cannot be estimated how many were introduced to the Buddha's Teaching or gained a clear understanding of it through that book. There were some who even learned it by heart. Its potential for spreading and clarifying the Buddha Word is by far not yet exhausted, and it would merit further effort to circulate it still more widely and methodically. In view of the importance of this book, some bibliographical details on it follow.

A first, shorter version of "The Word of the Buddha," compiled in German in 1905, was serialized in the very first German Buddhist journal "Der Buddhist" and appeared in the issues of 1905-1906, under the title "Die Lehre des Buddha oder Die vierheiligen Wahrheiten" ("The Teaching of the Buddha or The Four Noble Truths"). An enlarged and revised version of it - now with the title "Das Wort des Buddha" - was printed in book form in 1906 (Th. Grieben Verlag). After the first world war, an edition of 10,000 copies was issued by the German Buddhist publisher Oskar Schloss. The presently available German edition, published by Verlag Christiani, Konstanz, appeared in 1953.

The first English version of "The Word of the Buddha" was originally translated from the German by the Samanera Sasanavamsa (later Bhikkhu Silacara), and was published in Rangoon in 1907. Later on, the Maháthera's own English translation was used in all subsequent publications of the book. The 11th English edition was issued in Sri Lanka in 10,000 copies by a Buddhist ladies' society, Sasanadhara Kantha Samitiya, Colombo, which was (and still is) the lay organisation supporting the Island Hermitage. The book is now in its 15th English edition, of which the last three impressions have been issued by the Buddhist Publication Society. Three reprints appeared in the U.S.A., and one in the Philippines, issued by a Chinese Buddhist Temple in Manila. Translations have appeared in Bengali, Czech, Finnish, French, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Javanese, Polish, Russian, Singhalese and Thai. The original Pali of the texts selected in the book, was published in Singhalese script (*Sacca-Sangaha*; Colombo 1914), in Devanagari in India, and in Roman script in Sri Lanka (*Buddha-vucanam*; Kandy 1967, Buddhist Publication Society). The Russian translation of "The Word of the Buddha"

was published in 1907, sponsored by the Lamaist Temple in St. Petersburg. It was banned twice by the Russian authorities.

One copy of this Russian version had a remarkable history which was told in a letter to the present writer and is worth re-telling. This letter was written by a lady, a member and supporter of the Buddhist Publication Society, who was Russian on her father's side and a Mongolian Buddhist on her mother's side. When, in early 1933, as a young girl, she was sent to Berlin for her higher education, her, grandmother, a devout Buddhist, gave her a copy of the Russian "Word of the Buddha" as a farewell gift. When she was in the first year of her medical studies in Berlin, Russia became involved in the war and the girl was arrested and sent to various concentration camps. She had the book with her in all the camps and in two prisons, hiding it close to her body. In the first camps she was allowed to keep it, but when she was sent to Torgau (Elbe), "a camp matron started tearing it up. Precisely at that moment, the young adjutant of the Camp Commander passed by.

"I rushed towards him," so she tells, "begging him to let me keep my only possession, a prayer book. I fell at his feet—a gesture totally unknown to a Western male—and which confused him greatly. Being too young and unexperienced in handling such unusual situations, he picked me up, addressed me politely, stammering some meaningless words. Having finally composed himself, he ordered the matron to have the book mended and returned to me." When he learned that she had been a medical student, she was made a nursing attendant in the sick barrack and she retained this function until she was released at the end of the war. When she met her future husband at a Displaced Persons Camp, this very book helped her to introduce him to Buddhism, and as a result he finally became a greatly devoted and deeply understanding Buddhist. When, after marriage, she went with her husband to live in Canada, this book which had gone through such a strange and moving history, was placed in their shrine room. She says in her letter: "The marvel of all this is that all those people, without knowing it, had touched and set eyes upon the greatest treasure this world has to offer—the pure word of the Buddha. I am extremely happy, after having come with this treasure from so very far and undergone hardships and humiliation due to my bad Karma, to bring this glorious Word to my husband."

After this excursion into one book's adventures, we now resume our record of the Venerable Nyanatiloka's literary work.

As early as 1905 he started to translate into German the most voluminous of the four great Collections (Nikāya) of the Buddha's Discourses, the Aḍguttara Nikāya (*Gradual Sayings*; in German: *Angereichte Sammlung*): The first part, the Book of the Ones, appeared in 1907 (Walter Markgraf Verlag), and in the following years additional parts were translated up to the Book of the Fours. The first complete edition was published in 1922, in five volumes (Oskar Schloss Verlag). A new edition, revised by the present writer, appeared in 1969, likewise in five volumes (Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg, Koln).

In the years before the first world war the Ven. Nyanatiloka wrote and published, all in German: "Das Buch der Charaktere" (1910; translation of the Puggala-Pannatti of the Abhidhamma Pilaka); a Systematic Pali Grammar (1911); "Die Fragen des Koenigs Milindo" (Milinda-panha; Vol. I: 1913/14; Vol. I/II: 1924): .

In 1928 appeared, in German, *A Pali Anthology and Glossary*, and in 1931 the first volume of the *Visuddhi Magga* ("Der Weg zur Reinheit"). When he completed the German translation of this voluminous work, it was first cyclostyled, with the help of a pupil monk, during internment at Diyatalawa (*Sri Lanka*). It appeared in print first in 1952 (Verlag Christiani, Konstanz); a second, revised edition was published in 1976.

1938: *Guide through the Ahhidhamma Pitaka* (English); reprinted in 1957 and 1971 (BPS). A German version of this work, translated by the author, is unpublished. This applies also to his German translation of the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* (a compendium, of the Abhidhamma philosophy) and his German translation of the *Dhammapada*, with the explanatory sections of the ancient commentary:

1949: *Fundamentals of Buddhism*. Four Lectures (in English).

Two important works were published in English, in 1952:

(1) *Buddhist Dictionary*. A Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines (2nd Ed.: Colombo 1956; 3rd Ed., revised and enlarged by Nyanaponika: 1972): German version: 1953; 2nd Ed. 1976 (Verlag Christiani, Konstanz). A French version, translated by Suzanne Karpeles, was published by "Adyar," Paris, in 1961 (*Vocabulaire Bouddhique de Termes et Doctrines du Canon Pali*).

(2) *The Path to Deliverance*, in its Threefold Division and Seven Stages of Purity (Second revised ed. 1959). German version: 1956, Verlag Christiani). Indonesian translation: Second Edition, Surabaya 1970. This is again an annotated anthology, and may be regarded as an advanced supplement to "The Word of the Buddha." It is rich in instructive and inspiring texts.

Some shorter essays in English have been issued as reprints by the Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy:

*The Influence of Buddhism, on a People; Karma and Rebirth; The Significance of the Dependent Origination; Egolessness; with extracts from the Samyutta Nikáya* (in 'The Wheel' No., 202/204).

It is befitting to remember here those publishers - all Buddhists by conviction - who have served the literary work of the Maháthera in a dedicated way.

*In the German language:* Walter Markgraf, Oskar Schloss, Ferdinand Schwab; and since 1952, Verlag Christiani (Konstanz), which continues to issue reprints. The late Dr. Ing. Paul Christiani, himself a long-time Buddhist., had been a great admirer of the Maháthera.

*In the English language:* Bauddha Sahitiya Sabha- (Buddhist Literature Society), Colombo; "The Word of the Buddha" Publishing Committee of the Sasanadhara Kantha Samitiya, Colombo; and the Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy:

The Maháthera had shown a great sagacity in the choice of the subjects of his writings and translations, which were meant to give the greatest benefit to a serious study and correct understanding of the Buddhist doctrine. His books provide reliable guidance to the study of Theravada Buddhism. Many misinterpretations in modern writings and translations could have been avoided by consulting the Maháthera's "Buddhist Dictionary."

His way of writing mirrored his way of life and his character. His literary style, as befitting the Pali scriptures, was simple and dignified, and so was his life. He was no friend of embellishments and verbosity, be it in print or in talk. He cherished clarity of thought and language, and disliked vagueness and ambiguity. When meeting with books or people, he always insisted, "Define your terms!" - a wholesome intellectual discipline, which, as he gratefully remembered, he had inherited from his father. He was filled with a deep respect for the enlightened words of the Enlightened One, and in the genuine spirit of cautious scholarship, he was very wary with regard to facile attempts of "interpreting" the words of the Buddha, being distrustful of the excess of subjective opinion in the Buddhist literature of our time.

Similarly he refrained from "interpreting" or judging lightly other peoples' thoughts, words or actions, and he never indulged in sweeping condemnations. In the true and practical spirit of the doctrine of Not-self (Anatta), he used to say, "There are no bad

people, only bad qualities." - implying that any qualities of human beings are of an impermanent nature and can be changed. He was never harsh to people and he disliked argument or excessive criticism in writings or talk. He was more in favour of stating what was good and true, allowing it to yield its steady, though sometimes slow; influence on minds ripe for it. Therefore, the rare instances when he wielded a sharp critical pen against misinterpretations of two salient Buddhist doctrines, Anatta and Paticcasamuppada, carry a special emphasis and are deserving of the student's earnest consideration.

As much as he could, he avoided the "inner and outer noise" of modern life, and characteristic of his love of nature and stillness was the choice of his hermitages: on islands, hills and in forests. He shunned publicity and, gladly renounced the honours and burdens of public activities. He did not disparage them in the case of others, but he himself preferred to remain detached and -keep to his own simple way of life, congenial to him and to the ideals of Buddhist monkhood. He did so also from the additional motive of single-minded devotion to his work and the practice of the Dhamma. From that great quality of single-mindedness stem his outstanding achievements in the service of the Dhamma as well as the harmony and composure of his character. All these guidelines of his life and work have an important message for everyone, particularly vital in our turbulent times of not only violent but also wordy conflicts, silent and single-minded devotion to productive work of any kind that is beneficial to individual and society.

# Nyanatiloka And His Methods Of Teaching Dhamma

## C. Nyanasatta Thera

From the very beginning of the study of Buddhism in the West there were groups of admirers and students of the Dhamma centered around capable exponents of Buddhism. In Great Britain, for instance, they were inspired by the first British Bhikkhus Ánanda Metteyya and Silacara. On the Continent of Europe, the central figures among lay Buddhists who promoted the study of Pali Buddhism were Dr. Paul Dahlke and Dr. George Grimm of Germany, though they differed from each other in their interpretation of some fundamental Buddhist teachings. Among Bhikkhus, it was the Venerable Nyanatiloka whose first and most popular book, "The Word of the Buddha" (in German 1906, in English 1907) preceded even the writings of those aforementioned two lay authors. His exposition of the Dhamma was without any interpretative twists or subjective opinions. In his oral instructions as well as in his books, he always went to the very sources of the Buddhist tradition as handed down in the early Pali scriptures and taught in the Theravada lands of Burma, Siam and Ceylon.

My acquaintance with the Venerable Nyanatiloka's writings dates back to the beginning of my Dhamma studies in Europe. My informant who, in 1935, had sent me as a Christmas present a parcel of books and cyclostyled material on the Dhamma, wrote in a letter: "There is still one book which I want you to read soon, when I have gone through it. It is 'The Word of the Buddha'. I find it rather difficult now, for a wider range of information is required to take in all the aspects of Buddhism as taught in this book. The author is a famous monk in Ceylon, of the Island Hermitage, Dodanduwa, head of a monastery with many western Bhikkhu students. He must be a great scholar, judging from the style of his writing."

It was only after assimilating more of the material on Buddhism in several western tongues that I came into direct contact with this erudite scholar.

When, in early 1937, I wrote to him that I wished to be a bhikkhu in Ceylon, to study Pali, and Pali Buddhism under him and asking what is required of a candidate for ordination, prompt came his answer:

"If you are willing to be satisfied with the food that is given here, with the clothing to be worn here, with the lodging assigned to you, with the arrangement for your study here; if you want to study Pali and follow my instruction in the so important teaching of Anatta, you may prepare yourself to come with a valid passport and a return ticket and some money needed by you to procure the special clothes of a Candidate; and any other things before you become a monk. Once ordained, the Buddhist community will look to your needs and money will not be required ..."

My meeting with the first Buddhist monk took place on the 15th, of March 1938, on my arrival in Colombo. The Maháthera, then past 60, came to meet me on the ship to help me to get through the formalities. In fact, his presence was helpful as I had to answer such questions as to whether I had brought with me fire arms and cartridges - a strange question for one who was coming to Ceylon to be a Buddhist monk. After our meal we left by bus for Dodanduwa. I was seated beside the Maháthera, the Superior of the Island Hermitage, and while travelling he explained to me the important sights on our way. After arrival at the Hermitage and a look around the island, I was left alone in my new quarters. Only in the morning, after tea, I was taken to the Lodge of the abbot and had my first lesson in the Dhamma, not yet in Pali, but through, a translation. He read to me from the first Sutta of the Majjhima Nikáya, pointing out to me the inadequate translation by the first English and German translators. The learned Maháthera then gave, based on this text, the correct

interpretation of Anatta, the teaching on Egolessness, viz., that a bhikkhu well versed in the Dhamma, does not consider himself as any of the constituent elements of the Five Groups of Existence, neither does he see himself within, nor beyond them and all the elements of possible experience he views as not-self. I had no difficulty in accepting this explanation, for the other translators' rendering really made no sense of the textual passage concerned, considered by the Maháthera as a crucial aspect of the Dhamma.

After changing into the white Upasaka suit worn by a Candidate, I at once began my Pali lessons. After our midday meal, I went to the Venerable Teacher's Lodge that served also as Library and lecture room. I had special lessons for myself before I was fit to join the others in their class. I had brought with me the Mathathera's "Short Systematic. Pali Grammar" from Czechoslovakia where I had tried to learn the declensions, conjugations and the vocabulary, while pacing up and down in the quiet corners of parks. I also had a hand-written copy of an Elementary Pali Course of 12 lessons, which I had studied at home. The Maháthera's Pali Anthology with Glossary (Pali-German), together with his Grammar, were my first text books in Pali. The Maháthera read to me the lesson, pointing out the special grammatical features and indicating where to find the full explanation in Grammar and Glossary. After lessons I took from the library books of the Dhamma in translation, for reading the full text of which we studied portions in the Anthology.

Easy Játakas, texts from the questions of Milinda elucidating the teachings on Rebirth, Karma and Anatta; texts from the Khuddaka Patha containing some of the essentials to be mastered by a novice before ordination, verses from the Dhammapada and Sutta Nipata, portions of the Aðguttara Nikáya, Itivuttaka and Samyutta Nikáya, and finally selected Suttas from the Majjhima Nikáya -- these were our first readings. After two months I received ordination and by then new students had arrived to form a real class. Some of the newcomers had studied Pali for many, years and had now come for systematic instruction in the Dhamma to be imparted by the Venerable Maháthera.

After completing the whole Pali Anthology, we read very carefully the Satipallhana Sutta. Here the Maháthera's inter-linear German translation of this Sutta as appearing in his Pali Grammar, was very helpful, and we studied the Sutta very thoroughly. As remarked earlier, the Maháthera's exposition of the Dhamma gave much weight to a pupil's clear understanding of the Anatta doctrine and this emphasis was characteristic of his method of teaching. In explaining Anatta, he made use not only of the canonical texts, but also of the very instructive contributions of the Commentaries on that subject. Relevant portions from the Commentary to the Aðguttara Nikáya he had translated into German as early as 1904,<sup>1</sup> while in Burma and doing there research for his "Word of the Buddha." The teaching on the Two Truths, conventional and ultimate, which is of relevance in the context of Anatta, is indicated in the Suttas, but is more fully clarified in the commentaries.

The early interpreters of the Dhamma in the West, being not acquainted with the whole Theravada tradition, stressed the easier aspects of Theravada Buddhism and created the impression of its simplicity, thus confirming some Maháyana scholars in their wrong opinion that the Early Pali Buddhism was a "primitive Buddhism." But let anyone read the Venerable Nyanatiloka's expositions and translations and then, with his perceptivity sharpened, return to the Suttas, the Abhidhamma and the commentarial literature, he will be in a better position to appreciate the profundity of these teachings and see them as having the lucidity and depth of a mountain lake. He will then also understand that, when the Buddha refrained from engaging in speculative metaphysics,

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<sup>1</sup> "Uether das Problem des Ich: Aus Manoratha Purani (On the Problem of Ego)". "Buddhistischer Weltspiegel", 1, Jahrg. (1904), No. 2-3.

he was motivated by his strong critical sense with regard to views, opinions and conceptualisations.

Our Venerable Teacher, the Maháthera Nyanatiloka, was well -qualified for his mission to spread the knowledge and appreciation of Theravada Buddhism by promoting the study of its sources, the Pali literature, by his oral instruction as well as his books. Born just a hundred years ago, the son of an Educationist and Linguist, when, at the age of 25, he came to the Buddhist East, he had a good background in linguistics, facilitating his study of the Pali language. With German as his mother tongue and Greek and Latin as High School subjects, he early in life mastered French and Italian as well. Before he was 25, English must have been quite easy to him as a working language and medium of study and teaching. His knowledge of comparative philology showed in The Pali-German glossary to his Pali Anthology, where he often gave related words and roots in other languages. When, during our lessons, we came, for instance, to the word *nadi* (rivet), literally "the shouting one", he surprised me by quoting the Slavic words `Reka' and `Rieka', i.e., the speaking or praying one. He could have been a successful linguist or lexicographer, if not the Dhamma had taken such a firm hold on him. He also spoke Sinhala fluently and had a fair knowledge of Burmese and Sanskrit.

The Venerable Nyanatiloka expected from his pupils, and in fact he made it a condition of acceptance, that they should acquire a working knowledge of the Pali language, at least to an extent enabling them to read the Suttas in the original, with help of the dictionary. He, however, left it to them whether, beyond that, they wished to continue the study of Pali on their own, for acquiring greater proficiency in it. He stressed at least a basic acquaintance with Pali as he wanted his pupils to be in their Dhamma study independent of, often faulty, translations. With that purpose in view, he introduced at a very early stage of the lessons, easy canonical texts or Játakas as compiled in his Anthology. When the study of the latter was completed, he used to read with his students a few Suttas, chiefly from the Majjhima Nikáya, selecting such texts which were not difficult linguistically, but rich in Dhamma contents. These texts he then explained to his students thoroughly, from the grammatical as well as from the doctrinal angle.

The Maháthera himself was an accomplished Pali scholar, and it came easy to him to clarify knotty passages in the canonical texts or in the exegetical literature. In Abhidhamma, too, he had the same mastery of detail as native oriental scholars had.

But theoretical study alone did not satisfy him. Remote hermitages inviting to meditation and practical application of the Dhamma were not shunned by him. In Burma and Ceylon, he tried the austere hermit life for years, 'before dedicating himself to the scholarly pursuits of translating and writing. In Japan, too, while being a Professor at the Komazawa University, he could do much of his work in Pali as well. Also in the Internment Camps, during two wars, he did not discontinue his devoted literary labour, though sometimes under the most trying circumstances. In the Internment Camp at 'Diyatalawa (Ceylon), in 1939-1942, he completed his, German translation of the Visuddhi Magga and even cyclostyled this voluminous work, with the help of a German pupil-monk who was likewise interned. In the Camp at Debra-Dun in India (1942-1946) he produced his "Buddhist Dictionary" and prepared some of the German versions of those books which he had written in English.

After the war, on his return to the Island Hermitage, he revised for a printed edition the cyclostyled copy of the Visuddhi Magga and translated and compiled the book which, as he said, he liked best from all his works, the "Path to, Deliverance," which is an expansion of "The Word of the Buddha", but with different principles of arrangement combining the seven Stages of Purification with the three categories of the Eightfold Path, viz. Morality, Concentration and Wisdom. Hence it is a kind of epitome of the Visuddhi Magga, but on a

canonical basis: The section on Concentration gives detailed information on several meditations. This, book is a veritable mine of Dhamma instruction and inspiration, but with its two editions, it has not yet found the wide readership it deserves.

Personal instruction of pupils and the writing of books were, however, not the only Methods of Teaching used by the Maháthera. He made also use of simple daily events to illustrate ethical or philosophical teachings. Two instances of it spring to the mind. It was at the Island Hermitage in 1939. A supporter used to send regularly from Colombo a tin of condensed milk, fresh butter and good bread for the ageing Maháthera. Instead of using these extras alone, he shared all with his pupils. The milk tin was cut open in the morning and placed in a niche in the dining hall about 6 feet high from the ground. One day we had plain tea with our meal, as the cat had jumped up, brought the tin down and had drunk all the milk. Without grumbling, the Maháthera pointed to the empty niche and asked us to explain in Abhidhamma terms the relation between the milk and the cat who drank it. Some of us suggested it was the Object Condition (*arammana-paccaya*), others said it was a Presence Condition, and still others that it was a Root Condition. But the Maháthera said: "All these conditions, were not strong enough. It was a strong Inducement Condition (*upanissaya-paccaya*) that made the cat to jump so high for lapping up the milk."

In the monsoon rains, with strong winds and high waves on the lagoon, it once happened that the boat bringing our midday meal from the village, capsized. All food was lost and the men rowing the boat had difficulty in saving their lives. They had to bring back an empty boat and perhaps some of the empty containers floating on the surface of the lake. Seeing this from the high elevation of his hut, the Maháthera promptly sent a boy up a coconut tree to pluck a big cluster of the nuts. Each of us got one, cut open with a big knife, and eating the soft fleshy kernel and drinking the sweet water, we thus made our midday meal together with the Teacher, who reminded us that a monk must be contented with any food he gets. If on such days there was no sugar, he drank his tea in the Tibetan fashion with a little ghee if there was any. On a journey he would go by a bus or in the 3rd Class of a train, and without asking supporters for food parcels, he was satisfied with bread and a few plantains. When arrangements for the midday meal at the Island Hermitage failed, he and another senior Maháthera would cross over to the village in the forenoon and go on almsround, without suggesting to juniors to go pindapata (the alms round) for him and without expecting too much from supporters.

His last year he spent in Colombo at a new Buddhist Centre (the German Dhammaduta Society), not far from the Central Cemetery at Kanatta. Unobserved he would watch the numerous funeral processions approaching the cemetery, while practising Contemplation on Death and the inevitable end of human life. He had left the Island Hermitage built up by him in the last 45 years of his life, as, by his staying in Colombo, he wanted to make it easier for supporters to procure for him medical aid, which would have been so much more difficult on an island.

Only two months before his end, while I was, in Colombo for delivering a radio talk on the Dhamma, I paid my last respects to my Venerable Teacher. I saw a devoted elderly lady feeding him with a soup and toasted bread to relieve his indigestion. After feeding him, she read to him from his own exposition of the Dependent Origination. When she came to the passage saying that "Dependent on Birth arises Old Age", she discreetly omitted Death from the text. Promptly came from the Maháthera the clear word *Maranam*, "Death." He was well prepared for it.



# **A Teacher Of German Buddhists**

**Guido Auster**

**(Berlin)**

One may say without exaggeration that among the German Buddhists of the older generation there is none who was not influenced in some way by the work of the Venerable Nyanatiloka Maháthera. To a certain extent this also holds good for some younger followers of the Dhamma. Beginning with his entrance into the Sangha in Burma in 1903, up to his death in 1957, in Sri Lanka - that is more than the first half of this century - the Venerable Maháthera had a twofold influence on the spreading of the Dhamma in Germany.

Firstly it was through his personality and his life as a Bhikkhu which he lived so long and consistently as vouchsafed only to very few Bhikkhus of Western origin. Moreover, he had to live his monk life sometimes under the most difficult conditions as those in internment camps of the two world wars.

His second, and perhaps still stronger, impact on German Buddhism was through his translations from the Pali Tipitaka which were of fundamental importance. Here we have first to mention his monumental translation of the complete Aðguttara Nikáya, which was newly edited, with additional explanations, by his pupil Nyanaponika. The Maháthera's translations signified an enormous progress if compared with the pioneer work of Karl Eugen Neumann, who, by the way, did not translate the Aðguttara Nikáya. Through Nyanatiloka's translations, the German Buddhists and those interested in Buddhist studies were offered extensive source material from which they could gather reliable knowledge and genuine understanding of the Buddha's teachings. Nyanatiloka's translations derived benefit from his familiarity with the Theravada tradition and were born of living Buddhist experience. They were carried out with such a scholarly exactitude that also those not versed in the Pali language could obtain access to the very sources of the Teaching.

His first publication (1906), a short, systematic selection of sayings from the Sutta Pitaka, "The Word of the Buddha", must have been of significant help to most of the German Buddhists at some stage of their Dhamma studies. It is also not without deeper significance that in his "Short Systematic Pali Grammar" (in German), the author used as a text for the Pali student's practice an interlinear translation of the Satipalhana Sutta, a Discourse of the Buddha which, after the second world war served as the basic text for meditation courses among German Buddhists and thereby started a 'new period of Buddhist' practice. Of very great help to Dhamma students was, and still is, his "Buddhist Dictionary," giving lucid definitions of the doctrinal terminology of Buddhism. This work is, indeed, an indispensable guide to a correct understanding of the Dhamma.

Furthermore, the Maháthera made also accessible the ideas and interpretations of the great commentators of Ceylon's classical period, by translating into German Venerable Buddhaghosa's monumental work, the Visuddhi Magga ("The Path of Purification"). The impact of this work on the interpretation of Buddhism in Germany has not yet come to its end - in fact, it has hardly begun.

In addition to his literary and scholarly activity, the Venerable Nyanatiloka Maháthera also founded the well known Island Hermitage at Dodanduwa, as a centre of training not only for German Bhikkhus but also for other, chiefly Western, monks. At that

Hermitage, many had been his monastic pupils, for longer or shorter periods. But even those who did not continue in the Sangha, carried home lasting impressions and benefits.

Generally, the university circles in Germany had had a rather reticent attitude towards the literary and translation work of professed Buddhists - and mostly unjustifiably so. But the academic world could not quite ignore the scholarly work of the Venerable Nyanatiloka Maháthera. Hence he was nominated a Honorary Fellow of the prestigious "Deutsche Morgenlaendische Gesellschaft" (German Oriental Society), an honour rarely accorded to non-academic scholars.

A further, and gratifying, result of this great man's activity was the bridge of friendship he has helped to build between the people of Sri Lanka and his home country Germany.

# A Humble Tribute

Myanaung U Tin

It was in the last days of May 1954, there stood on the upper 'deck of the Rangoon harbour's ferry-boat an old European Buddhist monk, his eyes glistening with tears. He was gazing at the Shwedagon Pagoda, high on a hilltop, glittering most gorgeously in the rising sun, two miles away from the Rangoon river. The ferry was taking the passengers to a ship moored in the middle of the river, most of them being the British leaving Burma for good. The old monk became the cynosure of the neighbouring eyes. I proffered to him my clean white handkerchief. He turned to me and whispered; "Perhaps I shall never again see the Shwedagon Pagoda. I was born in Germany, and Rangoon is my birthplace as a Buddhist monk." The old monk was no other than our most revered teacher, the Venerable Nyanatiloka Maháthera. The scene here described occurred in 1954 when the Venerable Maháthera returned to Ceylon after attending the first session of the Sixth Buddhist Council (Chattha Sangayana).

A visit of his before that, had taken place in early February 1952. At that time, he and his pupil Nyanaponika Thera had been invited by 'the Government of Burma for consultation in connection with the preparations for the Sixth Buddhist Council. When the Maháthera was leaving Burma, he was seen off by me and my friend U Chan Htoon, Barrister-at-Law, Secretary General of the Buddha Sasana Council of Burma, who was then making arrangements for the holding of the Sixth Sangayana. The Maháthera's pupil Nyanaponika stayed, back in Rangoon for taking a period of Satipallhana meditation at the Thathana Yeiktha.

Sir U Thwin and the then Prime Minister U Nu were the founders of Thathana Yeiktha, the meditation centre which has now become well-known all over the world. The presiding monk is the Venerable Mahási Sayádaw, Agga Mahá Paóðita, the Pucchaka(i.e. Questioner) of the Sixth Sangayana. The Centre is under the management of the Buddha Sasananuggaha Organization, of which Sir U Thwin was the first President. Incidentally, I may be permitted to say that I was the third President and now that I too am an old man, I was made Patron thereof. At the Thathana Yeiktha I met the Ven. Nyanatiloka and the Ven. Nyanaponika for the first time on the 9th February, 1952. As a College student I had looked through *The Word of the Buddha* by Nyanatiloka, lent to me by a nephew of Sir U Thwin, a neighbour and a classmate. So I was quite thrilled to receive a copy of the same book from the hand of the learned author, with his autograph at that. As a matter of fact, I was also the fortunate recipient of several other books by the same author: *Guide through the Abhidhamma, Path to Deliverance, Fundamentals of Buddhism, Buddhist Dictionary, etc.* On return Ceylon, Nyanaponika Thera very kindly sent me an autographed copy of his *Abhidhamma Studies*, the very first of his books I have been receiving ever since. I am not ashamed to confess, that in those days, I could comprehend the Buddha-Dhamm2, and for that matter allied subjects as well, better by reading books in English. I must take this opportunity to acknowledge, in humility, the deep debt of gratitude I owe to the Ven. Nyanatiloka Maháthera and his pupil the Ven. Nyanaponika Maháthera.

In the second week of February, 1952, I took in my car the two Sayádaws to Kyundaw Kyaungdike, the monastery where the Ven. Nyanatiloka. was ordained in the year 1904. His preceptor was, of course, no more, and the then presiding monk was a contemporary of his. They recognized each other and remembered the names as well. I also drove them to various places of religious interest, such as the Shwedagon Pagoda,

the half finished man-made magnificent cave where the Sixth Sangayana was held in the years 1954-56, and the foundation ceremony of the World Peace Pagoda nearby. At the insistent invitation of the Kyundaw Kyaungdike Sayádaw, the Ven. Nyanatiloka Maháthera and the Ven. Nyanaponika Thera moved to that monastery from Thathana Yeiktha. It was, indeed, a great occasion for a very happy reunion. By a happy coincidence, my wife, her parents, grandparents and relations have had a close association with this monastery. Both the Ven. Nyanatiloka and Ven. Nyanaponika stayed there for a short time also on their subsequent visit in 1954.

The Ven. Nyanatiloka Maháthera passed away in 1957. The words he whispered into my ears on the deck of the ferry-boat were prophetic. He never saw again the Shweda gon Pagoda, but he is, as much here as in Sri Lanka, held in most revered memory.

I have been helping the Ven. Mahási Sayádaw in his foreign mission work for over twelve years. I must say with sincerity that but for the foundational knowledge I got from the books by the Ven. Nyanatiloka Maháthera and the Ven. Nyanaponika Maháthera I might not have been so useful as I am now. This is but a humble tribute of mine to the most revered memory of Sayádawji U Nyanatiloka.

# Pali Buddhist Studies In Thailand Today

Dr. H. Saddhatissa Maháthera

## London Buddhist Vihara

The revival of Pali and Buddhist studies and literature in Thailand may rightly be dated from the era of Phra Chom Klao (King Mongkut, 1804-68) who reigned as Rama IV from 1851 until his death.

Mongkut spent no less than twenty-seven years as a bhikkhu, under the title Phra Buddhavajiranana. He studied Pali and passed the oral examination so brilliantly that his elder half-brother, King Phra Nang Klao (Rama III, 1824-51), bestowed on him the title Phra Raja Khana and put him in charge of the Pali examinations for the Sangha. In 1833 Mongkut founded the Dhammayuttikanikaya as a section of the Sangha which distinguished itself for intensive practice of the Dhamma and conscientious adherence to the Vinaya. He insisted that his pupils both speak and write in Pali, although he did not radically amend the existing system of oral teaching. This was left to his successor, Chulalongkorn (see below), who introduced, written examinations in Thai, as opposed to in the archaic *kham* (khmer), script.

Whilst Mongkut was abbot, Wat Bovoranives in Bangkok became the main centre of religious studies in the Siamese kingdom. He raised the standards of scholarship and textual revision. In 1843, for example, he was instrumental in borrowing forty volumes of the Tipitaka from Ceylon in order to compare these with the Thai texts which were then corrected. A further thirty volumes were borrowed in the following year. During this period he engaged in (Pali) "Correspondence with the Sinhalese Sangha".<sup>2</sup>

In the field of Pali composition Mongkut made notable contributions even if these were confined, for the most part, to devotional stanzas. He composed gatha for use in the morning and evening liturgy in Dhammayuttikanikaya wat" as well as for general and special occasions on the religious calendar.<sup>4</sup> A further six devotional tracts, prefaced by his youngest son, Prince Damrong Rajanubhab (1864-1943), were also published in this century.<sup>5</sup>

The pioneer endeavours of Mongkut bore ample fruit when his eldest son, Chulalongkorn, succeeded him as Rama V (1868-1911) and a younger son, Manussanaga, eventually became the Sangharaja under the name, Vajirananavarorasa. Chulalongkorn<sup>6</sup> brought the Thai educational system more in line with Western patterns. Until 1884, for example, Pali was a compulsory subject for those seeking higher education beyond primary level. Under the influence of his half-brother; Vajirananavarorasa, he decreed that written Pali examinations should replace the unsatisfactory oral versions. The king also established higher education for bhikkhus on a firm footing with the establishment of the Mahádhatu Rajavidyalaya at Wat Mahádhatu in 1890. Six years later it changed its name to Maháchulalongkornrajavidyalaya and has remained the chief college for the Mahánikaya section of the Sangha ever since. (It was officially designated a Buddhist University in 1947.)

Prince Vajirananavarorasa (1859-1921) was, with the king, one of the first royal children to learn English under their father's tutor, Francis George Patterson. He entered the Sangha at 20 and continued the reforms of Mongkut. Under the prevailing system of Pali examinations, for example, equivalents to the B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees had been awarded to those bhikkhus who had proved their proficiency in the Sutta, Vinaya and Abhidhamma Pitakas respectively. He reconstituted the syllabus in Thai and Pali which was

divided into nine grades (*parien*) spread over so many years. The details of this system will be discussed later but, basically, it entailed a knowledge of the traditional Commentaries (*apbhakathá*) and indigenous treatises (especially the *Mangalattha-dipani*)

In 1893 he founded the Mahámakula-Rajavidyalaya at Wat Bovoranives, of which he was abbot (from 1892-1910). This second Buddhist University (recognised as such in 1945) was intended primarily for the higher education of bhikkhus belonging to the Dhammayuttikanikáya who only formed a separate fraternity as late as 1894. The text-books and courses prepared by this group were subsequently adopted as standard works by both nikayas. In 1910 he created Nak Dhamma (*Nagtham*) schools in three grades as distinct from the earlier Pali centres. (Equivalent classes for the laity -*Dhammasuksa* or "Dhamma education" - were established in 1929 with the omission of the Vinaya texts.)

A brilliant scholar and good organiser, Vajirananavarorasa was, appointed Sangharaja in 1910 under the full title of Somdech Phra Mahá Samana Chao Kromaphraya Vajiranana- varorasa. He was also a prodigious writer, composing original commentaries, and textbooks, preparing sermons and translating Pali texts into Thai. Several of his works have, in recent years, been translated into English and published by Mahá makuta University.'

As mentioned above, the bhikkhu's formal education was divided into nine grades, sub-divided into two sections —Dhamma and Pali - which have remained substantially unchanged since their inception under Prince Vajirananavaro-rasa. (A modern Pali course, for example, was introduced by the Sangha in 1964 which was intended to provide a general academic education in conjunction with practical training, allied to formal tuition in the Pali language. However, only a small number of institutions have in fact incorporated this schema into the existing curriculum.)

The Nak Dhamma schools, which currently total nearly 7,000, staffed by 14,500 bhikkhu-teachers and attended by 30,000 students, impart tuition in the three grades of Dhamma examinations. The three most important textbooks (all composed by Prince Vajirananavarorasa) prescribed for the final examination are: *Navakovadas* - a commentary on selected parts of the Vinaya Pitaka with special reference to the *Patimokkha*, with the second half of the book devoted to *sila*; *Buddhasanasubhasita*<sup>9</sup> - a book of 500 stanzas mainly from the *Khuddaka Nikáya* in Pali and Thai; and "Life of the Buddha" a biography of the Buddha based on canonical materials (the third part having been compiled by another Sangharaja, Pussadeva):

The Pali schools, which currently total 615, staffed by nearly 2,000 teachers and attended by 10,000 students, give instruction according to seven levels of Pali examination.

Each level is designated *parien* (from the Pali *parinna*, "penetrative knowledge") but very few candidates qualify in the final examination. The *Mangalathadipani*, *Dhammapadaatthakatha*, *Samantapasadika* and *Visuddhimagga* are constantly used as the main textbooks for studying the Vibaya, Dhamma, Abhidhamma, Buddhist history and Pali composition.

There are three main provincial monastic colleges: Chittabhawan Vidyalaya (Banglamung, Chonburi), Kamphangsaen Vidyalaya (Nakhon Pathom) and one in Chomthang District (near Chiangmai), but higher Buddhist education continues to be centred on the twin universities in the capital. Maháchulalongkorn (Rector: Phra Dhammavoranayok or Somboon Candako) is the larger of the two, incorporating a six-year Pali Demonstration School, two-year Pali Introductory School, two-year Pali Pre-University School and two-year Ecclesiastical Teacher Training College. Successful completion of the basic six-year course (four years as a student and two years of teaching practice) results in being awarded the *Buddhasastr Pandit* (or B.A. in Buddhist Studies).

There are three Faculties - of Buddhism (divided into Departments of Buddhism, *Pali*, Religion and Philosophy, and Indology), of Education, and of Humanities and Social Welfare (both of which include compulsory courses in Buddhism and Pali.) Apart from these, there also exist a Department of Research on Buddhism and a Tipitaka Revision and Publication Committee.

In the Department of Buddhism, the following courses are prescribed: "History of Buddhism in India," "... in Ceylon," "... in Thailand", "... in Southeast Asia", "Asoka and Buddhism, Buddhism in Northern Asia," "Maháyana Buddhism," "Yogacara and Madhyamika Philosophies," "Lamaism," "Zen Buddhism," "Buddhist Sects in Japan. and China," "Comparative Study of Theravada and Mahá-yana," "Selected Pali Suttas," "Visuddhimagga," "Buddhist path to Freedom" (a study of canonical texts classified into *sila*, *samadhi* and *panna*), "Maháyana Sutras," "Concentration and Insight Development," "Applied Buddhism," "Buddhism and `Society," "English Readings in Buddhism" (3) and "`Seminar in Buddhism."

In the Department of Pali, the following courses are , prescribed: "Advanced Pali Grammar" (4 - using the books of Kaccayana and Moggallana together with the *Saddaniti* and *Rupasiddhi*), "Pali Composition and Translation" (2 - using the *Milindapanha* and *Visuddhimagga*), "History of Pali Literature" (2), "Pali Rhetoric and Prosody" (2 - using the *Subodhalankara* and *Vuttodaya*), "Development of Pali Language," "Pali Linguistic Literature," (using the *Dhatumanjusu*, *Dhutupatha* and *Abhidhanappadipika*), "Selected Discourses from the Pali Suttanta Pitaka" (4 - divided into studies of all five Nikáyas, with detailed analysis, of the *Brahmajala* and *Maháparinibbana* Suttas), "Pali Monastic Discipline" (2), "Buddhist Teaching in the Abhidhamma Pitaki" (2 - using the *Dhammasangani*, *Patthana*, *Vibhanga* and *Abhidhammatthasangaha*), "Abhidhamma Literature," "Játaka Literature," "Pali Chronicle Literature" and "Great Non-Canonical Works."

The university library contains over 10,000 books in Thai and English, including the Burmese and Chinese editions of the Tipitaka.

Mahámakula (or "Mahámakut Buddhist University") used to include a one-year Elementary Course, two-year Pre-University Course and four-year University Course. After the basic seven-year course, the successful student was awarded the Sasanasastr Pandit (or B.A. in Buddhist Studies).

There were seven Departments of Philosophy, Psychology, Social Sciences, Linguistics, Pali and Sanskrit, Archaeology and History, and Education. The course on Buddhism included a study of suttas in all five Nikáyas of the Sutta Pitaka together with the Abhidhamma literature. In addition, there were extra-mural Programmes on Research and Text-books, Librarianship, Pali Studies, and Dhammaduta, with a "Special Department of Buddhism" geared to the needs of foreigners domiciled in Thailand.

Today, however, Mahámakuta would appear to offer just the basic four-year University Course conducted through four Departments of Liberal Arts, Religion and Philosophy, Social Sciences, and Education. Compulsory courses for all students comprise the following: First Year, "Buddhist Discipline (Vinaya)" (2), "Buddhist Suttas" (2), "History of Buddhism" (2), "Principles of Propagation and Rhetoric," "Meditation Practice," "Thai," "Elementary English" (2), "Elementary Sanskrit" (2), "Primary French" (2), "Introduction to Sociology," "...to Economics," "...to Philosophy," "...to Psychology," "General Science" and "Basic Statistics." Second Year, "Buddhist Suttas" (2), "Abhidhamma" (2), "Maháyana Buddhism," "Meditation Practice," "`Other Religions" (2), "English Reading and Comprehension" (2), "Listening and Conversation" (2), "Essay Writing" (2), "Sanskrit Reading and

Translation" (2), "Sanskrit Usage" (2), "French Reading and Comprehension," "French Expression," "General Law" and "Introduction to Logic." Third Year, "Buddhist Suttas" (2), "Dhamma in English," "Meditation Practice," together with assigned subjects according to the specific requirements of each Department (see below). Fourth Year, "Buddhist Suttas" (2), "Dhamma in English," "Meditation Practice," "Comparative Religion," together with a continuation of the specific courses in each Department.

Buddhist subjects, assigned during the third and fourth years of study, are allocated between the following Departments: Liberal Arts - "Pali, Sanskrit and Khmer in Thai," "Thai Literature related to Buddhism," "Pali Reading, and Translation," "Pali Advanced Grammar and Composition," "History of Pali Literature," "Pali Literature (Tipitaka) - (Commentary) - (Buddhaghosa period) - (Thai Writers)" "Pali Conversation," "Pali v. Sanskrit," "Sanskrit Reading and Translation" (2), "Sanskrit Advanced Grammar and Composition," "History of Sanskrit Literature" and "Sanskrit Literature" (4), Religion and Philosophy - "Sutta Commentary," "Abhidhamma Commentary," "*Visuddhimagga*," Buddhist Logic," "Buddhism v. Science," "Buddha's Eloquence," "Milinda's Conversation," "Buddhism in the Modern World" and "Buddhist Philosophy (Theravada / Maháyana)." Social Sciences - "Buddhism and Society," "History of Buddhist Arts," "Various Buddhist Arts in Thailand" and "History of Buddhist Shrines in Southeast Asia." Education - "Buddhism and Education," "Buddhist Psychology" and "Buddhist Essay Writing." 13(a)

Finally, only a brief mention need be made of those relevant courses at the secular universities:

Chiangmai - *courses on Buddhist history and thought in the Division of Religions, Department of Human Relations, Faculty of Humanities.*

Chulalongkorn (Bangkok) - *course on Buddhist philosophy, a related course 'on Indian philosophy in the , Philosophy Section of the Faculty of Arts; and a course - "Religion and Society" - in the Department of Social Studies, Faculty of Political Science.*

Thammasat (Bangkok) - *"Comparative Religion" course conducted in the Faculty of Liberal Arts.*

College of Education (Bangkok) - *a course on Thai literature related to Buddhism in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences.*

University library collections of Buddhist materials are meagre and cannot compare with those of other Asian Buddhist centres outside Thailand. That of Mahámakula is larger and better organised than that of its main rival and there are similar collections (which principally consist of Thai and English- language publications) in The Siam Society and the headquarters of the Buddhist Association of Thailand and the World Fellowship of Buddhists, with manuscripts in the National Museum and the Royal Institute. All these centres are situated in Bangkok.

The National Library of Thailand, also located in the capital, was established in 1905 on the basis of three existing institutions: the Mandira Dhamma Library (founded in 1783 in Wat Phra Keo), Vajiranana Library (founded in 1882 in memory of King Mongkut who bore this name whilst a bhikkhu) and Buddhasanasangaha Library (founded in 1900 by King Chulalongkorn in Wat Benchamabopit). For some years between the World Wars, the French epigraphist and sometime Director of the then-Hanoi based Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient, George Coedes (1886-1964), was Chief Librarian. It was probably due to his, pioneer efforts that the Library was fully developed."



As with all such libraries; there are two Departments of Manuscripts and Printed Books. From, the, outset the emphasis was laid on acquiring copies of all known Thai/Pali manuscripts (few of which had survived the total destruction of the city-state, of Ayodhya in 1767). The, majority of Pali MSS<sup>o</sup> found in Thailand are written in *khom* letters and only date from the foundation of the present capital in 1782. Very few are extant which were composed prior to that date, although the earliest known text - a commentary to the *Samyutta Nikáya* - is dated 1440.

Tradition ascribes the collection of the twenty-two *parittas* (protective discourses from the Sutta Pitaka) into a *bhanavara* to Revata Thera and his colleagues in Ceylon in 357 A.C. During the course of centuries, however, and following the export of the Sihalavamsa to mainland south-east Asia, introductory verses, forming a resume, were added to the canonical texts. Moreover, if time was limited, these same verses formed a substitute text for chanting purposes. Such summary' (*roem*) 'was, at least in Thailand, regarded as a *paritta* in its own right. The number of *parittas* subsequently increased in volume until two collections were formally codified at an unknown date. These are the *Cularajaparitta* - the older and more traditional collection which consists of seven *tamnam* (*lit.* "account," "tradition", "history,") for common use; and the *Mahárajaparitta* - which incorporates the seven *tamnan* (albeit in a different order) but enlarged with stanzas composed by Mongkut, Vajiranavarorasa, et al, which results in twelve *tamnan* and is reserved for royal and state ceremonies.

The "Royal Book of Chants" is, in effect, the main liturgical handbook and comprises Pali stanzas with Thai rubrics. Apart from the *parittas* it includes four other sections: the *Mahásatipatthana Sutta* (which is recited at funerals and memorial service); *Tharai Pon Phra* (six "offering blessings" used at morning worship in the *wat* and prior to consuming the *dana*); twenty *anumodana* (benedictory stanzas transferring merit) used at the completion of the *dana* or after receiving gifts from the laity; and *Suat Chaeng* - a dramatisation of the First Buddhist Council with three bhikkhus assuming the roles of Upali, Ánanda and Mahákassapa. In addition, there are eighty-nine other recitations, *jatakas*, stock sermons and miscellaneous devotional items in Thai (including apocryphal "suttas," such as the *Devorahana*, *Jambubodhi*, *Maleyya* or *Malaya*, *Nibbána* and *Unahisavijaya Suttas*).<sup>17</sup>

Public rehearsals of certain well-known Pali texts, particularly where royal patronage is in evidence, take place on monastic and state occasions, but normally only in a *wat* belonging to the Mahánikaya fraternity. One such ceremony is especially renowned, that of the *Thet Mahá Ch'at* or "Great Birth Exposition" (i.e. of the *Vessantara Játaka* and its commentary).

Concerned at the prophecy that the Dhamma (especially this *jataka*) would eventually disappear (vide *Anagatavamsa*), Phra Chao (i.e. King) Song Tham composed in 1627 an epic poem, *Mahá Ch'at Kham Luang*, which recounted the story of the last birth of the Bodhisatta (i.e. as Prince Vessantara) and which is regarded as one of the most accomplished examples of classical Thai literature. The 1,000 verses of the original *jutaka* alternate with an enlarged poetical version consisting of thirteen cantos (*kandas*). However, because the latter was originally "composed in a uniform metre and proved to be tedious at public recitals, it was subsequently superseded by more varied editions."<sup>18</sup>

The foregoing composition is subject to collective recitation (*Suet Vetsandon Ch'adok*) and takes place in the Royal Chapel in Bangkok for three consecutive days, each at the beginning, middle and end of the *vassa* retreat. Incidentally, such, public rehearsals were encouraged in the *Maleyya Sutta*.

Of modern indigenous Pali compositions, relatively little information has been published in English or indeed any other Western language. Hence, a brief summary will have to suffice on what data have become available.

Bhikkhu, Pannawongsa (1871-1956) composed in 1900 a text entitled. *Bhavana*. As its name suggests, it is a treatise primarily concerned with *samatha* meditation and represents a traditional method of instruction from northern Thailand. It was translated in 1974 by Donald K. Swearer.<sup>9</sup> The only other known compositions are the *Dasaparami Gatha* or "Stanzas on the Ten Perfections<sup>10</sup> and a *gatha* life of the Buddha, by Bunyen Limsawaddi.

Mom Chao Upalisan Jumbala (1899-1974) was the son of Prince Sanpasit and Mom Chiangkam. Although he devoted himself to service in the Royal household and sat on various business boards, he was able to find time to translate two anthologies from Pali: *The Solasapanha* (the sixteen pucchā or dialogues in the *Puruyanavagga* of the *Sutta Nipata*)<sup>1</sup> and *The Raft* (comprising the Sampasadaniya, Mahākamma-vibhanga, Dvedhavitakka, Dhatuvibhanga, Mahāpunnama, Mahātanhasankhaya, Veludvareyya, Dhammacakkappavattana, Khemaka, Simsapa, Kalama and Siha Suttas).<sup>22</sup>

Other translations, mainly by Thai laymen, include: *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*. Phra Dhammaviravichita (Bangkok 1963).

*Khuddakapatha*: "Short Buddhist Recitations." Bhadragaka (Mahāmakut, Bangkok 1953).

*Udana*: "80 Inspiring Words of the Buddha" (verses only). *Ibid.* (1954)

*Dhammapada*: "Collection of Verses on the Doctrine of the Buddha." Bhadragaka (published by Mrs. Chamras Ongcharit, Bangkok 1965).

Payasi, Mahāhatthipadopama and Jivaka Suttas included in *Buddhism in the Light of Modern Scientific Ideas*. Dr. Luang Suriyabongs (Mahāmakut, Bangkok 1954).

A *Buddhist Anthology* compiled by the same M.D. (Bangkok 1956). This contains extracts from the Vinaya and Sutta Pitakas arranged under the headings of "The Buddha," "The Dhamma," "The Sangha" and "The Lay-Disciple."

Prince Chandaburinarunath compiled a *Pali-Thai-Sanskrit-English Dictionary* in 1969.

The late Sangharaja, Prince Jinavarasirivaddhana, compiled *Samanerasikkha - The Novice's Training*.<sup>23</sup> This treatise comprises a biography, based on canonical sources, of the first samanera, Rahula, followed by rules of training in Pali and English. Phra Mahā Boowa Nanasampanno is the Abbot of Wat Pa-barn-tard, near Udorn, in north-east Thailand, and is one of the most highly respected meditation teachers today. Some of his talks, based on personal experience of the Dhamma, have been translated by his pre-eminent English disciple, Pannavaddho Mahāthera, and published as *Forest Dhamma*.<sup>24</sup>

His biography of his own teacher, Acariya Mun (Bhuridatto, 1871-1949), has also been translated and was serially published in the *WFB Review* (1974-76).

Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara was, until his promotion in the Sangha, widely known as Phra Sasana Sobhana (Suvaddhana), the Abbot of Wat Bovoranives and Director of Mahāmakula University. He contributed the lengthy introduction to the translation of *The Patimokkha's*, whilst two articles, "What did the Buddha Teach?" and "Sila," were reprinted in brochure form in 1975.<sup>1</sup> A series of nineteen talks Ahat he gave on the first *satipatthana*, illustrated by relevant texts from the Pali Canon, was published as *Contemplation of the Body*."

Phra Mahá Singhathon Narasabho was the first bhikkhu graduate of Maháchulalongkorn University to be awarded, in 1970, a Ph.D. at the Visvabharati University, Shantiniketan. His thesis dealt with *samudhi* and *vipassanit* and was subsequently published under the title, *Buddhism: A Guide to a Happy Life.*"

Prof. Sujib Punyanubhab, a lecturer in Buddhism and Comparative Religion at Mahámakula, has compiled "A Peoples' Tripitaka" (a Thai summary in five volumes) and written a general work dealing with *Some Prominent Characteristics of Buddhism.*" The English translation was rendered by Siri Buddhasukh, the Editor of the WFB *Review*, and Lecturer in English and Buddhism at Mahámakya.

Siddhi Butr-Indr, a lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities, Chiangmai University, obtained his doctorate from Utrecht University for his dissertation on *The Social Philosophy of Buddhism.*" This is one of the few original studies that discusses in some detail the nature of society and man's place in it as conceived in the Pali textual tradition.

Collections of *desana* (sermons) abound in Thai but these are usually based on Pali passages or *gatha*. *Forest Dhamma* (above) represents one of the very few translations but another collection that warrants mention is that of the late Chao Khau Upaligunupamacariya (or Chan Chandupamo). He was a contemporary and close friend of Acariya Mun. Normally resident in Wat Bovoranives, he was renowned for his knowledge and insight.

Chao Khun Buddhadasa is a controversial bhikkhu who resides at the hermitage of *Suan Mok* ("Garden of Liberation"), just outside Chaiya in southern Thailand. He is opposed to many of the popular manifestations of Buddhist practice and has even adopted non-Buddhist ideas and terminology to emphasise his radical interpretation of the Dhamma. Of his writings, those that accord more closely with the Pali canonical tradition include: "Life of the Buddha from his own lips" (in Thai), *Anapanasati* 32 and *Teaching Dhamma by Pictures*. 33 The last-named comprises forty-seven pictures 'illustrating various aspects of the Teaching which were reproduced from a mid-19th century manuscript found in Chaiya.

Prince Dhani Nivat has composed a volume on the *History of Buddhism in Siam,*" 34 Karuna Kusalasaya contributed a detailed paper on *Buddhism in Thailand,*35 M. L. Manich Jumsai (ex-Bhikkhu Kulamanito) has written on *Understanding Thai Buddhism,*36 whilst Rear Admiral (and formerly Surgeon General) Lek Sumitra wrote *Theravada Buddhism of Thailand.* 37

Mahámakuta University produced (c.1975) a special booklet for the benefit of Western enquirers: *Buddhism, the, Religion of Thailand.* This short work is entirely based on the Nikáyas.

In this final survey of Buddhist literature from Thailand, mention should be made of two compilations published by the Thai Embassy in London. The first was made up of two essays by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab ("Buddhism in Thailand") and Dr. Luang Suriyabongs ("The Three Gems of Buddhism"),38 whilst the second, *About Buddhism,* 39 comprises eleven essays, seven by Thai scholars (including Prince Damrong's paper - published anonymously - and M. C. M. Jumbala's translation of the Kalama Sutta).

## Notes

1. The main biographical works in English are: A. B. Griswold, *King Mongkut of Siam* (Asia Society, New York 1961); A. L. Moflat, *Mongkut, the King of Siam* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York 1961); Phra Sasana Sobhana (ed.), *King Rama the Fourth Mongkut* (Mahám akut, Bangkok 1968); John Blofeld, *King Mahá Mangkut of Siam* (Asia Pacific Press, Singapore 1972). ' 2. Published in Bangkok, 1925.
3. Vide: *Xing Rama the Fourth Mongkut*, op. cit., pp. 5-35; *Ordination, Procedure, Prince Vajirananavarorasa* (Mahá makut, 1963, pp. 72-89).
4. Vide: "Pali and Siamese stanzas recited during the Visakhapuja" (Bangkok 1919); *Suat Manta Chabab Luang* ("Royal Book of Chants" ed. Pussadeva, Bangkok 1928); "Buddhist Recitations for Various Occasions" (Mahámakut, 1968).
5. "Pali Gatha in Praise of the Holy Discipline" (1921), "Pali stanzas composed on the names of his children" (1924), "Pali stanzas based on the formula Itipiso Bhagava" (1924), *Gatha Dhammapariyaya* (1925) "Religious Instruction in Pali" (1925) and "Pali Gatha used in connection ' with the Bi ja Mangala Royal Ceremony" (1925).
6. The only detailed biography in English I can trace is *Chulalongkorn the Great*, ed. and tr. Prachoom Chomchai (East Asian Cultural Studies Series No. 8, Tokyo 1965). In addition, a separate chapter is devoted to him (as for all the kings of the Chakri dynasty) in *Lords of Life* by the late Prince Chula Chakrabongse (Alvin Redman, London 1960).
7. *Buddhasanasubhosita* - "Buddhist Proverbs": I - 1967 (33 chapters, 500 verses), II - 1958 (20 chapters, 201 verses), III - 1960 (17 chapters, 218 verses). Pali verses, mainly from the *Khuddaka Nikáya* with English translation by one bhikkhu and four laymen led by Phra Mahá Prayang Kittidharo.  
*Anubuddhapavatti* -- "Biographies of Some of the Noble Disciples": I - 1974, II - 1975 - life sketches of 17 bhikkhus and 1 bhikkhuni.  
*Atthasasana* - "The First and Second Steps of Advantage" (1963).  
*Dhammavicarana* - "Th' Third Step of Advantage" (1963). *Ordination Procedure* (1963, 1973)  
*Pancasilapailcadhamma* - "Five Precepts and Five Ennoblers" (1963)  
*Dhammavibhaga* - "Numerical Sayings of Dhamma": I- 1968, II - 1970. All these were translated into English by Siri Buddhasukh.  
*Vinayamukha* - "The Entrance to the Vinaya": I - 1969, II -,1973. Translated by Phra Khantipalo, Phra Mahá, Feun Thitayogo and Nai Suchin. Vol. III awaits translation. "Life of the Buddha" (1972). Translated by a team of 13 bhikkhus and 2 laymen, all lecturers at Mahámakula.
8. *Nawakowaad* (Mahámakut, Bangkok 1968)
9. *Phudthasaanasuphaasid* (ibid. 1969)
10. *Phudthaprawad* (ibid.)
11. For full details, vide *Maháchulalongkornra javidyalya* " Catalogue 1967-68, pp. 38-41.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-56
13. Vide *International Seminar on Higher Education in Buddhism*, WFB Books Series No. 17 (Bangkok 1968). 13 (a) Vide *Mahámakut Buddhist, University: A Brief History. Prospectus - Syllabus* (Bangkok 1975).
14. Vide his survey, ' *The Vajirasana National Library* (Bangkok 1924).
15. Vide *Montgomery Schuyler*, "Notes on the making of (corypha) palmleaf manuscripts in Siam" (1908).

16. *Vide Sasana. Sobhana, Suat Manta Plae and A Book of Recitations for the Order of Bhikkhus of Thailand, (Mahámakut, Bangkok 1957).* ,
17. *For this section I am indebted to Kenneth E. Wells' comprehensive manual, Thai Buddhism, its Rites and Activities (reprinted by Suriyalun Publishers, Church of Christ, Bangkok 1975). Vide the Appendix, "Notes on the Development of Buddhist Literature in Thailand".*
18. *Vide G. E. Gerini, , A Retrospective View and Account of the Origin of the Thet Mahá Ch'at Ceremony (Mahá Jati Desana) - Bangkok 1892; Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation, Bangkok 1976.*
19. *Buddhist Text Information, No. 1 (IASWR, New York, November 1974), announced that Prof. Swearpr was "utilizing this text in his current-study of Buddhist doctrine in northern Thailand, and plans to publish it separately as an article, perhaps in The Journal of the Siam Society. (Bangkok)".*
20. *Included in the anthology, The Wisdom Gone Beyond (Social Science Association Press, Bangkok 1966).*
21. *Mahámakut, Bangkok c. 1960.* 22. *Ibid., 1974.*
23. *Ibid.~ 1966. '*
24. *Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation, Bangkok 1973.*
25. *Mahámakut, 1966, 1969.*
26. *Public Relations Department, Bangkok.*
27. *Mahámakut, 1974.*
28. *Maháchulalongkorn, Bangkok 1971.*
29. *Mahámakut, 1964.*
30. *Published by Mahámakut in 1973.*
31. *Vide Donald K. Swearer, "Two Portraits of Thai Buddhism" in Buddhism in Transition (Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1970).*
32. *Mindfulness of Breathing, Vol. i. Tr. Nagasena (Sublime Life Mission, Bangkok 1971, 1976):*
33. *Social Science Association Press, Bangkok 1968.*
34. *The Siam Society, Bangkok 1965.*
35. *Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy 1965.*
36. *Bangkok 1971.*
37. *Buddhist Association of Thailand, Bangkok 1970.*
38. *Public Relations Attache Office, Royal Thai Embassy, London ,1963.*
39. *Information Service of Thailand, London 1975.*

# The Kiss And The Name

I. B. HORNER, M. A., D. Litt.

It is always salutary to think in one or more special ways of the Buddha Gotama. I wish here to think of him as the man, still bearing a physical body, not yet deified, who was the most impressive leader of the most impressive band of disciples in India at that time and, as such, commanding widespread respect - but to do so by pursuing no more than one small line of investigation. Yet small lines often meet to form a considerable focal point. So it is with *bhakti*, personal devotion, the emotional element in religion. There has been in Buddhism the worship of the bodily relics, the worship of stupas, of cetiyas, of Bo-trees, of books, even of the Buddha in spite of His fears that it would be so. And the beginnings may often be traced in the Pali Canon.

Here I want to present only what may appear as the outward and visible expression of a kind of inner ecstasy; although, as should be borne in mind, this may contain on the one hand a deeper and perhaps a more deeply buried significance than may be apparent at first sight and, on the other hand, something less than ecstasy, something no more than the very respectful salutation which, as various Pali contexts record, a monk; a king (on two occasions) and two brahmans rendered to the Lord either on seeing Him or as a tribute to His words or insight during the course of a conversation, with Him. These incidents follow an identical pattern; any small variation that there may be can otherwise be accounted for. We may therefore suppose that some strong tradition was at work.

In the '*Samyutta*, vol. i. p. 193) it is recorded that Anna-Kondaniia (who had been the first of the original band of five disciples to attain Dhamma-vision, *Vinaya*, i, p. 11) came to see the Lord after a long interval (twelve years according to the Commentary) and, "inclining his head at the Lord's feet (or, prostrating himself with his head at the Lord's feet), kissed the Lord's feet with his mouth and stroked them with his hands. And he made known his own name saying: 'I, Lord (*bhagava*), am Kondanna, I, Well-farer (*sugata*), am Kondanna.'" This is the essential-pattern to which every recorded incident of kissing the Lord's feet and pronouncing one's own name conforms. The two go together, but appear to do so only when it is the Lord that is evoking respect; to members of other sects only the name was now and again pronounced (e.g., at *Samyutta*, i. p. 78, *Udana*, p. 65), while the rest of the greeting was conveyed by the normal method of stretching forth the joined palms and never by kissing the feet.' (In the rest of this article I shall render the precision of the Pali: "kissed the feet all round with his mouth and stroked the feet all round with his hands" by the less precise: kissed the feet and stroked them; but each episode is recorded in the Pali in identical words).

In a most interesting cycle of four consecutive Discourses occurring among the Middle Fifty of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (Nos. 86-89), it is possible to trace a gradual growth in the faith and reliance that King Pasenadi of Kosala came to place in the Lord and His Dhamma. So that, by the time Discourse No. 89 is reached his faith and reliance, his respect and admiration appear to be developed almost to the full. He makes his way to the Lord, inclines his head to His feet, kisses them and strokes them and, addressing-Him as *bhante*, twice makes known his own name: "I, revered sir. am Pasenadi King of Kosala, I, revered sir am Pasenadi, King of Kosala." On the Lord asking him, why he pays such deep respect to "this body" and displays such tokens of friendship (thus indicating that this form of greeting was not in general use), Pasenadi gives a long and reasoned reply which, supported by seven deductions he has made from his own observation of life around him, expresses his great veneration for the

Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, in his eyes superior to anything relevant the world has to offer as well as to anything recluses and brahmins appear to derive from the sects they favour. In addition, Pasenadi speaks of a bond of a more personal nature: both he and the Lord are ksatriyas (nobles), both are Kosalans, and both are about eighty years of age. After he has left the Lord's presence, the Buddha succinctly summarises his eulogy as "testimonies to Dhamma", and exhorts the monks to learn, master and remember them, thus paying a signal compliment to the king.

*Aḍguttara vol. v, p. 65-66* records another occasion when Pasenadi greets the Lord in this same manner. But here, when the Lord asks him why he pays such deep respect to this body," he does not speak of the "testimonies to Dhamma"; instead he says it is to show his gratitude and thankfulness, and then enumerates ten reasons why he feels grateful and thankful.

Turning now to the two brahmins. In the *Brahmanasamyutta (Samyutta, vol. i. p. 177f.)* there is the record of a very proud brahmin called Manatthaddha, Pride-stiff, who used to show respect neither to his mother, father, teacher nor eldest brother. One day he thought he would approach "the recluse Gotama," engaged at the time in teaching Dhamma to a large concourse of people; and he further thought that if the recluse Gotama spoke to him or if he did not, then he would speak to him or not as the case might be. The Lord did not speak to him, and Manatthaddha thought: "This recluse Gotama knows nothing" ("in that he pays no attention to a high-bred person like me," as the Commentary says), and he wished to go away again. But on the Lord's reading his mind with His own and uttering some pertinent verses, Manatthaddha was so greatly overcome that he inclined his head to the Lord's feet, kissed them and stroked them, and pronounced his own name twice: "I, good Gotama (*bho Gotama*), am Manatthaddha, I, good Gotama, am Manatthaddha." He does not refer to himself as a brahmin.

The concourse that the Lord had been teaching marvelled that one who greeted neither mother nor father, teacher nor eldest brother, should show the deepest respect thus to the recluse Gotama. And the Lord asked the brahmin to rise up (or, stand up, *utthehi*) and sit down in his own place (although hitherto the brahmin had been standing, as far as the record goes) "where your mind was (first) pleased with me." Manatthaddha became an *upasaka*, a lay-devotee. This episode is another that shows this form of greeting to have been of special significance and not often made.

*Majjhima* Discourse No. 91 gives the story of another brahmin. This was the renowned Brahmayu; a hundred and twenty years of age, wealthy and with full mastery in the Vedas and allied branches of knowledge. Among various subjects with which brahmins were at the time pre-occupied was that of the Thirty-two Marks of a Great Man. As, a result of the reports he had received, a great veneration for "the recluse Gotama" or "the revered Gotama", as he also calls him, had grown up in the brahmin Brahmayu, and he went to some pains to discover whether He were in fact possessed of the Thirty-two Marks in full with none lacking. When he was convinced that the Lord had at any rate thirty of the Marks, he decided to visit Him, and the Lord then manifested to him even the two most difficult to detect. And He spoke some beautiful verses in reply to Brahmayu's questions: , Then Brahmayu, rising from his seat, inclined his head to the Lord's; feet, kissed them and stroked them, and pronounced his own name: "I, good Gotama (*bho Gotama*), am Brahmayu the Brahmin." The Lord then asked him, as He had asked Manatthaddha, to rise up and sit down in his own place "where your mind was (first) pleased with me." Brahmayu, like Manatthaddha, became an *upasaka*.

As far as the *Majjhima* text goes, Brahmayu pronounced his name only once, whereas Anna-Kondaina, Pasenadi (twice) and Manatthaddha are recorded each to have pronounced his own name twice. They all apostrophised the Lord in accordance with their own status—

but forms of address belong to another branch of the study of the Pali canon than that with which we are concerned here. So, apart from this small exception (which may be textual rather than actual) and apart from Manatthaddha not mentioning his own standing, the Pali tradition of kissing the Lord's feet and pronouncing one's own name appears to be based on a regularised pattern, and if it does not denote some unusual excitation of emotional feeling, it certainly signifies a highly reverential and seldom used form of greeting or acknowledgment, one that was not in common vogue.

In his Commentaries on the *Majjhima* and *Samyutta* Buddhaghosa has nothing to say about kissing the Lord's feet. But his exegesis on *nama*, name (which occurs only in the *Sarnyutta Commentary*, vol. i, p. 282), while not lacking in penetration, might however have done still fuller justice to the inner and vital significance of the name and the uttering of it than is the case. He says: "Some people recognise the Elder (viz. Anna-Kondanna) and others do not. The Elder thought: 'Those who do not recognise me will set their hearts at enmity, thinking: "Who is this old man who is making friends with the Teacher?" And in consequence they will become "fillers-up" (*puraka*) of the sorrowful ways. But those who, knowing me, will make their hearts calm and think: "This great disciple is well-known, like the Teacher, for his wisdom", will in consequence go to heaven.' So he makes known his name, thus closing for beings the path to the sorrowful ways and opening the path to heaven."

That is to say Buddhaghosa is more interested in the name than the kiss. The kiss, however, establishes a vital link, it is a "touch." Although primarily intended to denote a physical relationship, when regarded as a blessing or a salutation or a ceremonial greeting the kiss has a ritual aspect.

But the pronouncing of the name is, as Buddhaghosa perceives, one of the "keys to power." As the Rig Veda says (vi, 18, 7): "It is by his deathless name that Indra outlasts all generations of men." To pronounce one's name is to put oneself into the power of another being, to hand oneself over, as it were. Names were therefore sometimes kept secret, as for example Anathapindika's name, Sudatta, which was known only to himself and his family (*Vinaya*, ii, p. 156 and *Commentary*); and in parts of the East it is still to-day not altogether wise to ask after a child by name or to ask what its name is for fear of thus exposing it to malign powers and the threat of the evil eye. So that, voluntarily to state one's own name is, as much of the world's literature testifies, an express acknowledgment of the undeviating and unshakable faith and trust that one person unreservedly reposes in another.

This kiss and the pronouncement of the name are the physical and spiritual sides which together indicate a close bond of union, the prototype for which is the father-son relationship where, as some records of Indian thought show, over and above the physical paternity, a spiritual paternity is also evident: "On returning from a journey he should 'touch' ('kiss') his head, saying: 'You, my son, originated from my limbs, you are born of my heart, you are indeed as myself and he therewith takes hold of his son by name ... and says: by your name my son, I kiss (touch) your head.'" (*Kausitaki Upanishad*, II, 11).



# The Contemplation Of The Internal And The External In The Satipatthana Sutta

THE VENERABLE

MAHÁSI SAYÁDAW

AGGA-MAHAPAÓÐITA

(Rangoon)

In the Satipatthana Sutta, the Discourse of the Foundations of Mindfulness, both the internal and external (*ajjhatabhiddha*) contemplation are mentioned in all the sections: the Contemplation of the Body, the Contemplation of Feelings, the Contemplation of Mind and the Contemplation of Mind Objects. As a matter of fact, this dual contemplation is also mentioned elsewhere.

For instance, in respect of the Contemplation of the Body, after every exercise, these words are repeated: "Thus he dwells practising body-contemplation on the body internally, or externally, or both internally and externally." It means that he dwells contemplating the bodily processes in himself, or in others or both in himself and in others. This instruction needs clarification. For a beginner it, is obviously not easy to contemplate in this manner. For that matter, any disciple (*savaka*), except the most gifted, would find it difficult to practise all the three exercises either simultaneously or consecutively. In the development of insight meditation (*vipassana*) a knowledge by direct experience in oneself (*paccakkha-nana*) should first of all be cultivated. It means that one should concentrate on internal contemplation, that is on the bodily and mental processes observed in oneself.

Only when progress of insight has been attained in a marked degree, external contemplation may be taken up in conjunction with internal contemplation. Even then, external contemplation should be undertaken by way of general inference, that is, not in an individualized, specific manner. In this connection, a passage from the Sub-Commentary to the Majjhima Nikáya (Anupada Sutta) may be cited:

"Ekadesam evati saka-attabhava sankhare anavasesato  
pariggahetunca sammasitunca asakkonto attano abhinhara-  
samudagata-nanabalanurapam ekadesameva pariggahetva  
sammasanto ... tasma sasantanagate sabbadhamme parasantanagate  
ca tesam santanavibhagam akatva bahiddhabhava-samannato  
sammasanam; ayaria savakanarn sammasanacaro."

In this passage, it is already explained that the venerable Moggallana (to whom the Commentary refers), being unable to encompass fully all formations occurring in himself, contemplated only a portion thereof as far as his capacity permitted. Hence the contemplation of the external should proceed (not in a specific way, but, by inference,) in a general way, without differentiating between the (existential) continuity of one's own or of others. The passage concludes with the words, ayain savakanain sammasanacdro, "This is the contemplation-practice for disciples." It means that a disciple first contemplated the bodily and mental formations in himself and then externally by general inference, with no particular object outside him for individualized contemplation.

A disciple should not go into a detailed contemplation of, or reflection upon, specific external objects. If he chooses to deliberate upon external objects, such as

sights, sounds, etc., his mind is bound to wander, and because he cannot possibly be mindful of all these wanderings, his concentration, and still more so his insight, would not develop speedily. A fortnight or even a month would pass with no beneficial results whatever. In the same way, no knowledge by direct experience will come to anybody who reflects upon his theoretical or bookish knowledge. External objects, such as sight, sounds, etc., may be contemplated as they appear at one's sense-doors by themselves.

Furthermore, if a disciple were to contemplate on other persons or beings specifically, he would be confronted with the fact that there is no end of the multitude of beings. Hence he might always be in doubt: "On which persons should I contemplate and apply insight to them? On a few, or on those close-by, or on all? How many persons should be contemplated upon before the contemplation of the external can be regarded as perfected?" In that way, he could never come to a conclusion.

Hence effort should be made to contemplate internally, that is to concentrate" attention on the phenomena in oneself. By so doing, a sufficient range of mindfulness directed on mind-body (nama-rupa) is assured. This fact is borne out by the following, passage in the "Great Commentary" (Mahá-lika) on the Visuddhi Magga:

"Ajjhattam vi hi vipassanabhiniveso hotu bahiddha va ajjhattasiddhiyam pana lakkhanato sabbampi namarupam anavasesato pariggahitameva hoti." (Commenting on Kankhavitaranavisuddhi, Paccayapariggaha-katha).

This means that Vipassana (insight) contemplation may be made internally or externally. The important point is that one who has gained full direct knowledge by internal contemplation comprehends or understands fully the characteristics of the entire mind-and-body (nama-rupa).

# The Goal Of Asoka's Dharma

Prof. O. H. De A. WIJESEKERA

Although it is now universally accepted that Emperor Asoka embraced Buddhism at some time in his career, it has been a cause for surprise to many students of the subject that nowhere in his inscriptions is nibbana mentioned as the goal of his Dharma.

On this ground some early Western critics attempted to argue that Asoka was not a Buddhist in the orthodox sense. In this paper an attempt is made to define the true nature of Asoka's Dharma and its goal, and to see how far these are compatible with early Buddhist doctrine.

In his inscriptions Asoka has made several descriptive references to his conception of Dharma. In Rock Edict III Asoka defines his Dharma in the following terms: "Meritorious is obedience to father and mother. Meritorious is generosity (*dana*) to friends, acquaintances, relatives, brahmins and recluses. Meritorious is abstention from slaughter of animals. Meritorious is frugality and non-accumulation of possessions." In the Brahmagiri Edict II he says, "Father and mother must be served; respect for life should be strengthened; truth should be spoken; the teacher must be revered by the pupil; courtesy should be shown to relations in the family; this is the nature of the ancient Rule (*poraqa pakiti*), which is conducive to long life." In Pillar Edict II Asoka asks, "What constitutes Dharma?... It is the avoiding of sin, performance of many meritorious actions, compassion, liberality, truthfulness and purity." With this last quotation one cannot fail to compare the famous Dhammapada stanza:

"sabba-papassa akaranam  
kusalassa upasampada  
sa-citta pariyodapanam  
etam Buddhana-sasanam."

Going through the moral injunctions laid down by Asoka in his inscriptions one is struck by the close similarity of such moral precepts to those one finds throughout the ethical discourses of the Buddha. There are many other passages in his inscriptions indicating Asoka's great concern for the socio-moral uplift of his subjects and what is important is that he holds up the goal of heaven (*sagga*) or a happy life hereafter for those who practise the Dharma.

In several edicts Asoka emphasizes the fact that his Dharma or social morality is not merely intended for the material welfare of people here on earth but also to assure them of a happy life hereafter. In Rock Edict VI Asoka says: "There is no greater duty for me than accomplishing the welfare of all people. And why so? It is to see ... that I may make some happy here and they may hereafter gain heaven (*saga*)." In Rock Edict IX it is stated: "This *Dharmamangula* (auspicious rite of Piety) is of value at all times. Even if it does not bear fruit now, in this world, it produces infinite merit hereafter." In Rock Edict X he asserts clearly: "King Piyadassi, the beloved of the gods, does not consider worldly fame or renown as of great value hereafter." These statements make clear that the real goal of Asoka's Dharma is the attainment of heaven (*sagga*) after death.

Students of early Buddhism would not fail to see in the above discussion of Asoka's social ethics much that will remind them of the lay, ethics or the socio-morality as laid down in the Pali Canon. The Aḍguttara Nikāya (III. 41) specifies such socio-

morality as *gihi-dhamma* or the Norm for laymen and defines it as the Law of the good people (*satait dhammap*). From the point of view of practical religion it is designated *kusala* (Digha Nikáya, III. 71). This is the one *Dhamma*' praised in the Dhammapada (176). The practice of this *Dhamma* (*dhamma-cariya*) is indicated by the synonymous terms *kusala-kiriya* and *sama-cariya* (Sáiyutta Nikáya, I. 96). The good aimed at by the practice of this *Dhamma* is happiness in this life and a happy rebirth (*sugati*) in the next. Generally, this happy life hereafter is designated 'sagga' or *heaven* which may refer to any of the celestial spheres or a still higher Brahma-world. It is said that the ancient king Makhadeva by the observance of good conduct (*kalyaóavatta*), extending to the practice of the Four *Brahma-viháras*, reached the Brahma-world (Majjhima Nikáya, I,82). The goal of *dhammacariya* or the practice of the *Dhamma*, the socio-ethic meant for the lay people, is thus an improved existence in *saísára*, as distinct from, and relatively lower than, the goal of *Nibbána* which is the consummation of the higher spiritual life (*brahmacariya*). It is worth noting, as Dr. E. J. Thomas has said, that a Buddhist "knows that while he is living an ordinary life and enjoying the pleasures of the world he is not going to win the final goal; but he believes that if he leads a good life his next existence will be a happy one." It may be pointed out that in the popular parts of the Canon (e.g. *Játaka*, I. 256; VI. 2877) the practice of the *gihi-dhamma* is characteristically called 'the path to heaven' (*sagga-patha*) or 'the way to heaven' (*sagga-magga*).

From the above it should be clear now why there is no reference in the Asokan Edicts to *Nibbána*, while in most of them 'heaven' (*sagga*) is definitely held up as the goal of his Dharma. This was, of course, also the goal of the Buddhist social ethics, as outlined in the early suttas which all laymen whether kings or commoners were required to follow. Finally, it deserves to be mentioned that just as Asoka calls his Dharma 'porana pakiti' or the 'ancient Rule' as pointed out above, so in the *Játaka* (VI. 151) the *gihi-dhamma* is called *poraniya pakati* or 'good old rule.' Another striking terminological similarity is found in the use of *samu-cariy*g for the practice of the good life as given in the Buddhist texts as shown above and the occurrence of the term *sama-cariyam* in Rock Edict XIII with the same ethical significance. All these facts certainly confirm Professor Jules Bloch's view (*Les Inscriptions d' Asoka*, p. 30) that not only was Asoka converted to Buddhism after the Kalinga war but also became a conscious propagator of the Buddha-dhamma, although not so much in the *religious* sphere as the *ethical*, in other words, of the *gihi-dhamma* as laid down in the Pali Canon.

# World Peace Through Buddhism

by  
The Ven. SAYÁDAW U THITILA,  
Agga Mahá Paóðita

**In the world as a whole there is enough money and material commodities and there is no lack of intellect. Yet something is lacking. What is it? The answer is the spirit of fellowship. The lack of the spirit of fellowship is the major cause of war. Apart from-military conflicts there are many other conflicts, such as racial, political, economic and even religious: The chief cause of nearly all of them is the lack of the spirit of fellowship.**

In a conflict, each side has its own conceit, but to hide it, both parties have their own nicely-written labels, such as "New World Order," "Co-prosperity in East Asia," and "Civilising the Backward Peoples." In almost every conflict each side blames the other, both parties claiming that they are right. They use even the name of religion to justify their actions. They will try to persuade God to take their side, but they do not seem to make any attempt to be on God's side. They claim that there is only one God, but they forget that if there is only one God there must be only one family of men. They treat one another not only as strangers, but as enemies.

Taking all nations as one whole there is in the world today sufficient wealth and ability of brain and organisation to abolish poverty, unemployment, hardship and cruelty of any kind from all countries. It is possible for all men to do what work is necessary, if only they would learn to understand each other better by drawing closer. The world possesses all the wealth that it needs, and no one need be poor in a single country if it were only realised by the various countries that they are all one family.

The discovery of new sources of power and energy could be of great service to humanity if all the scientific workers were united in the fellowship of the commonwealth of science. The poets and artists of all countries could inspire men to noble conduct if only they come together. A powerful spiritual influence, helping all men to make the world a happier place, could be given by every religion, if all the various religions were to act together as members of one family.

Since the end of the first world war there have been many organisations called "international." Many authors have written on this subject of internationalism. Idealistic workers,, hoping for a better future, have started many international movements. As you know, we had the League of Nations, founded in 1920, but the League failed to maintain peace. Why? Because most of the nations have dealt with mere external and material adjustments. Too much attention has been paid to the material, and too little to the spiritual side -of life. Then came the second world war, which is unparalleled in history for destruction. The world is still in a state of chaos. There is no peace or happiness. Again idealistic' workers, lecturers and writers produce books and have re-started international organisations, such as U.N.O. Do-you think they will be successful in maintaining peace? You can predict whether they will be successful or not. They will be successful if the leaders and workers can carry through their plans in a spirit of world fellowship. Otherwise they can never be successful. There will be other wars - more wars - even worse than the last.

The peace which we all desire, peace in our hearts and in our minds, peace between neighbours and peace among nations — is not a miracle which it is God's task-

to perform. It can only come about as the result of a reconstruction of thought, feeling and action by means of the spirit of fellowship, and that is the duty of all mankind.

In attempting to discover a form of appeal on which to base morality, Buddhism does not appeal to any external authority, such as a Deity, but to the natural desire of the human heart. We know that certain actions, such as selfishness, violence and laziness tend to disorganise society and to cause unhappiness to its members. A man will try to avoid injuring others if he sees clearly that his interests are bound up with those of others.

Buddhism teaches that misery and suffering are 'not the result of the wrath of God or Gods, but are the consequences of man's ignorance of his own nature and of his surroundings. The chief defect of our economic system is the existence of useless luxury on one side and unnecessary burdens on the other. The problem is to devise some scheme of production and distribution which will make human life less burdened on one side and less full of useless luxury on the other. By this I do not mean the socialism that takes, but I do mean the socialism that gives. The socialism of love which it would only be possible to establish by the proclamation and realisation of World Fellowship.

The real spirit of fellowship which is lacking in the world today can be promoted through religion. Religion is an education of the heart with a view to refining our nature and elevating us in the scale of human beings. Religion is not merely theory, but practice. The heart, like the body, becomes healthy and strong by practical exercise. No doctrine merely held in the mind as an intellectual belief has any driving force. No doctrine is of any value unless and until it is applied.

The Buddha said: "A beautiful thought or word, which is not followed by a corresponding action, is like a bright flower that has no scent, that will bear no fruit." Practice of the moral life is the very core and essence of religion. It is action and not speculation; it is practice and not theory that counts in life. The will--to-do, followed by the doing, is the actual virtue. The will does not count much unless it is fulfilled. To put one's high ideas and concepts into practice is religion in the best sense. Religion is not confined to any one country or to any particular nation or race. It is universal. It is not nationalism which, in other words, is merely another form of caste system, founded on a wider basis.

The world has found itself as one body; yet the fact of physical unity and economic inter-dependence, though of very great value, is not by itself sufficient to create a united family. For this we require a human consciousness of community, a sense of personal inter-relationship among men, the spirit of world fellowship.

To have the spirit of fellowship, we must realise the oneness of the world and understand that we are one family. If we harm any person, we shall be paid back in the same coin. When we throw a stone, into a pond, the resultant movement reaches to the edge; around the spot where the stone hits the surface, a number of rings arise. They grow wider and wider until they dash against the edge of the pond, and then the water moves back till it reaches the stone which has disturbed it. In the same way, the effects of our actions come back to us, and if our actions are good we shall have good effects, likewise bad actions will produce their effects.

Life is a mighty wheel of perpetual motion. This great wheel contains within it numberless small wheels, corresponding to the lives of individual men, each of which has a pattern of its own. The great wheel and 'the smaller wheels, the whole world and individual men, are intimately and indissolubly linked. The whole human family is so closely knit together that every unit is dependent upon all others for its growth and development. ,

To bring out the goodness in us, each one of us has to try to reproduce in his own wheel of life that pattern which is in harmony with the pattern of the great universal wheel. For all the wheels to revolve in harmony the highest good in each must be developed. This is possible by the performance of daily duties with kindness, courtesy and truthfulness. The ideal that is placed before us is that of mutual service and practical brotherhood. In all our thoughts, our emotions, our words and our deeds, we act and react upon each other.

In a very real sense each one of us is responsible for the whole community. Men, being in need of each other, should learn to love each other and bear each other's burden.

Mutual service is a perpetual call on humanity, for we are bound alike by the bonds of humanity.

Science proves that the fundamental structure of the human mind is uniform in all races. What differences there are, are due to historical circumstances and stages of development. Without recognition of the oneness of the world of today in all its aspects, spiritual as well as social, economic as well as political, there will never be peace. The spirit of world fellowship is the only logical basis of all true and high civilisation, and real world peace.

# **The Great Twin Virtues**

Translated from the Pali by Nyanaponika Thera

## **I. Compassion and Wisdom (Karuna-Panna)**

**From the Commentary to the Visuddhimagga  
(Paramatthamanjusa Tika)**

*NOTE: The text translated here is a comment on the words "Endowed with Knowledge and Perfect Conduct" (vijju carana-sampanno), occurring in the Recollection of the Buddha (Buddhanussati: Iti pi so Bhagava...).*

"Endowment with Knowledge" (vijja-sampada) points to the Master's greatness of Wisdom; "Endowment with Perfect Conduct" (carana-sampada), to the greatness of his Compassion.

Through His Wisdom the Exalted One attained to the Kingdom of Truth (dhamma); through His Compassion He became the Bestower of Truth.

Wisdom led Him to turn away from the suffering in Samsara; Compassion induced Him to endure it. Through Wisdom He understood the suffering of other beings; through Compassion He endeavoured to remove it. His Wisdom turned Him towards Nibbána; through Compassion He attained it.

Through Wisdom He Himself crossed the Ocean of Samsara; through His Compassion He helped others to cross it.

Through Wisdom He accomplished Buddhahood; through Compassion He accomplished a Buddha's task.

His Compassion made Him face Samsara, when he was a Bodhisatta; through Wisdom He had no attachment to it.

His Compassion removed fear from others; through Wisdom He was fearless Himself.

It was through Compassion that through protecting others He protected Himself; and through Wisdom it was that through protecting Himself He protected others.

Through Compassion He did not torment others; through Wisdom. He did not torment Himself. Similarly he became the best of four types of people, i.e. the fourth type that lives both for his own and others' welfare. Through Wisdom he realised his own welfare, through Compassion he lived for the welfare of others.

Through Compassion He became the Lord of the World; through Wisdom He became His own master and Lord. Compassion made Him assume low positions (during His previous lives as a Bodhisatta); Wisdom led Him to His exalted state.

In His Compassion He shewed to all beings the kindness of a father; but through the Wisdom linked with it, His mind remained detached.

Just as the Compassion of the Blessed One was without attachment and grief, so was His Wisdom free from thoughts of "I" and "Mine."

## **II. Compassion and Equanimity (Karuna - Upekkha)**

**From the Sub-commentary to the Majjhima Nikáya**



*NOTE: Here the word "Wisdom" of the preceding text is replaced by "Equanimity", which in its highest sense as given to it in the Dhamma, is identical with Wisdom. With that alteration most of the sentences of the preceding text are repeated in the text from which the following translations are taken. The reader may likewise repeat them in that way, using them as a second part of his contemplation. When "Equanimity" is substituted the sentences will reveal to the contemplator other important aspects of their meaning. Here, 'however,' only those passages are given, which are not included in the first text.*

The Exalted One, indeed, pitied all beings with deepest Compassion, but in doing so he was not afflicted with the fault of attachment, as he also possessed highest Equanimity.

He was equanimous, and yet, owing to *His* Compassion, he was not indolent in working for the weal and happiness of others.

When, as a Bodhisatta, His mind was stirred by deep Compassion, and great zeal had arisen in Him, concerning the world's happiness, then, beginning from the time of His great Bodhisatta Vow and for the sake of fulfilling it, he underwent great suffering for an immeasurable time while acquiring all the requisites of wisdom and knowledge. Yet, through His Equanimity, He remained unshaken amidst all the suffering that befell Him.:

Through His Compassion He fulfilled the Resolve of Truthfulness and the Resolve of Renunciation; through His Equanimity he fulfilled the Resolve of acquiring Nibbána's Peace and the Resolve of acquiring Wisdom.

Applying Himself to His lofty purpose, He was moved by His great Compassion and only for the sake of the world's happiness, he entered into such fortunate ways of life as that of a king; and again, for the same high purpose, he left such happy ways of life behind, caring for them as little as for a blade of grass.

With such a pure-minded acceptance of happiness as well as renunciation of it, He, in His great Compassion and only for the sake of the world's happiness, relinquished His treasures and possessions by giving them away: and in doing so He did not expect any recompense for Himself, because of His Equanimity.

From the beginning of His career as a Bodhisatta this being of outstanding and Marvellous qualities underwent, for the sake of the world's happiness, extreme hardship and deprivation, moved by His great Compassion; and, in His Equanimity, He did not pay any heed to His body.

In His last existence, when seeing the three sights of the old, the sick and the corpse, he was deeply stirred in His great Compassion; and, having through His Equanimity no longing for enjoyments, he left His royal home for the Great Renunciation.

Thinking, in His great Compassion: 'Steeped in misery, indeed, is this world!' he started upon the practice of Insight, led to it just by His Compassion; having become a Buddha, he spent, by virtue of His Equanimity, seven weeks in the happiness of detachment.

Though, when considering the profundity of the Dhamma, He was first disinclined to preach it, yet, in His great Compassion, He consented to Mahá-Brahma's request. Later, when He was treated in an unbecoming manner by His five former companions and by others to be instructed, there was no change in His attitude, because of His Equanimity.

As by virtue of His great Compassion He had no resentment nor aversion, not a single unfriendly thought arose in Him. As by virtue of His Equanimity, He was

contented anywhere, He had no attachment nor familiarity (as to particular places, conditions, and people).

# **Translation of the Scroll of Nomination**

**The Deutsche Morgenlaendische Gesellschaft**  
**("Oriental Society of Germany")**  
has, on the 31st of July 1955, elected as *Honorary fellow*

**Mr. Anton Wwalter Florus Gueth**

**known, by his monastic name, as**  
**Nyanatiloka Mahathera**

In him the Society honours the highly meritorious scholar, proficient in the literature of Pali Buddhism, the translator of the Aḍguttara Nikāya, the Milinda Panha, the Visuddhi Magga, and of other canonical and scholastic texts, the author of numerous works, in the German and English language, which have acquainted the West with the teaching of the Theravadins and brought about a closer understanding of it. His joining the Buddhist Order in Ceylon, which took place half a century ago, has furnished him with a practical knowledge of the ethical precepts and the unbroken tradition of Hinayana literature, and by that his literary works, based on earnest philological labour, were benefited, in particular those on the Abhidbamma Pitaka. The consequences of the first world war, during which he was interned for many years, brought him to Japan, where he taught German and Pali at several universities. Having returned to Ceylon in 1926, he continued his literary work untiringly, and neither another internment in the second world war nor climate and illness were able to break his creative energy. His more popular books spread his reputation also to wide Buddhist circles of the East. By electing him its Honorary Fellow, the Society desires to put on record the close ties linking Eastern and Western scholars in the field of Buddhism, and it wishes to honour a man of rare gifts of mind and heart, who in his entire life has strived to develop and to strengthen the friendship between the people of Ceylon as well as other Hinayana lands and our own country.

**Mainz, the 1st of October 1955,**

**(Signed:)**

E. Waldschmidt, A. Falkenstein, H. Roems, H. Franke, F. Steiner

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