

BUDDHA DHYĀNA DANA REVIEW

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Photo: Buddhist Monks chanting in the B.D.C.(U) Ltd
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"The gift of Dhamma excels all other gifts

EDITORIAL

The planning associated with the change of name of the Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd and the Ch'an Academy Newsletters being incorporated into one channel has now been completed with the decision to adopt the name Buddha Dhyana Dana Review. I am indebted to Professor Dipak Kumar Barua M.A., P.R.S., Dip.Lib., D. Phil.

Recently, Professor D.K. Barua has been nominated National Lecturer by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi, to deliver lectures on Pali and Buddhism in some Universities of India. He provided inspired guidance for the International Seminar on Buddha's Law of Dependent Origination held at the Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Calcutta, India, from 26 - 28 November, 1989.

Members of the international community have helped me form the Editorial style of this Centre's newsletters which now amalgamate into this new publication.

During February and March 1991, many Directors and committee members of the B.D.C.

are currently undertaking a pilgrimage through Thailand, India and Nepal. I have requested these Members, while visiting these countries, to pay my respects to as many Monks, Scholars and Buddhist Leaders as possible and to thank them for their many kindnesses.

The outcome experiences of these Members will be greater appreciation of Pan Buddhism in these countries resulting in a maturation of this Centre's future directions.

This Centre was appointed a Regional Centre of the World Fellowship of Buddhists at their meeting held in Seoul, South Korea, last year.

To achieve these areas of growth, a slight re-adjustment has been made to our Sub-committee structure, and details of the names and Convenors of our new Sub-committees are included in this issue. I would like to personally thank all Convenors for their past and continuing efforts.

This issue contains a translation of a key portion of the Ekottaragama which was translated to the French language from the Chinese version by Thich Huyen-Vi and published in several parts in Buddhist Studies Review 1985 - 1987. This French translation was rendered into the English language by Rosemary Long at my request and provides invaluable instruction for Buddhist practice. It gives me great delight to be involved in this exercise in multiculturalism which enhances access to a wider audience.

At a more parochial level, Thich Quang Ba, Director of Sakyamuni Buddhist Centre and Abbot of Van Hanh Monastery, located at 32 Archibald Street, Lyneham, Canberra North, ACT, Australia, has suggested that Australian Buddhists lobby the Federal Government to have Buddha Day declared a holiday for Buddhist people in Australia and the day referred to is, of course, Vesak (Wesak, Wisakha). I am very pleased to promote this concept in the first issue of this review.

The pantheon of Buddhist Festivals is important to the many nationalities resident in Australia and some give and take must be made to select a particular festival which overrides any particular preference, without disparaging any tradition. For this reason I personally support the concept of the full moon in May, Vesak.

This Centre successfully printed and distributed the John D. Hughes 60th Birthday Accolade during 1990. It is a goal this year to produce a publication reprinting key articles from our earlier Newsletters, for free distribution.

I wish to thank the many persons involved in the production of these publications over the years and especially Dorothy Sadler and Maree Miller whose patience with this author's desire for precision, which at times, of a necessity, alas, requires much rehashing of copy.

May the merit made by me allow this Centre to endure.

John D. Hughes, Dip. App. Chem. T.T.T.C., A.A.L.A.

BLESSINGS BY THE VICTORIAN BUDDHIST COMMUNITY
FOR PEACE AND HARMONY IN 1991.

SUNDAY 30TH DECEMBER 1990.

On Sunday 30th December 1990 the Vice President of the Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd. Mr Roger M. Armitage and eight members of the Centre attended a multinational Buddhist Ceremony.

The Ceremony which was held at the Springvale Community Centre, was jointly organized by members of the Melbourne Sri Lankan Buddhist Vihara and representatives of several other Buddhist Centres including The Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple Incorporated, The Buddhist Society of Victoria, Wat Lao Melbourne, The Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd, Buddhist Sri Lankan Association of Victoria Inc, and the Sri Lanka Cultural Foundation.

The purpose of the Ceremony was to provide an opportunity for lay Buddhists from many ethnic groups to generate strong causes for peace and harmony through their active association in the planning and participation of events prior to and on the day. The Abbot of the Melbourne Sri Lanka Buddhist Vihara Venerable Gangodawilla Soma Thera presided over the Ceremony. He was accompanied by fourteen senior Buddhist Monks many of whom are Abbots of other Melbourne Buddhist Centre's. About seven hundred Lay Buddhists attended.

The central theme of the Ceremony was 'Blessings by the Victorian Buddhist Community for Peace and Harmony in 1991'.

The Ceremony began at 9.15 am with offerings of light and fragrance by the Monks and Invited Guests and the Chanting of Jayamangala Gatha by children of the Sri Lankan and Thai Buddhist communities. This was followed by the opening address, delivered in English by Venerable Gangodawilla Soma Thera and speeches by honoured guests representing Victorian and local government.

Venerable Dr. Viriyananda Bikkhu, Abbot of the Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple Incorporated then led the assembly in chanting Homage To The Buddha, Three Refuges and Five Precepts after which the Monks chanted Sutta's and Paritta's in the Pali Language.

Lunch was then offered to the Monks.

R.A.

BLESSINGS BY THE VICTORIAN BUDDHIST COMMUNITY FOR
PEACE AND HARMONY IN 1991.

DECEMBER 30TH. 1990
SPRINGVALE COMMUNITY CENTRE.
SPEECH BY VENERABLE GANGODAWILLA SOMA.

As Abbot of the Melbourne Sri Lanka Buddhist Vihara and in my capacity as convenor of the organizing committee for this event, I welcome you all here most sincerely. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the Buddhist Centres whose members have given so freely of their time, energy and resources to assist in the preparation of today's special confirmation of Buddhist good heart.

Buddhism has been in existence for over 2500 years. Over the years many scholars and authors have argued whether Buddhism is a religion, a philosophy, or a way of life. Irrespective of these arguments, to millions of people the world over, Buddhism is a religion and statistically it is the fourth largest religion in the world. In Australia Buddhism is the third largest after Christianity and Islam.

Buddhism is a unique religion; what makes Buddhism unique? In Buddhism there is no divine ruler or supernatural being who can provide one's liberation. Our Lord Buddha was born in India 2616 years ago into a royal family. His name was prince Sidhartha. Having realised the superficial and transient nature of the pleasures and privileges of his royal life, the prince left the palace and his family in search of the "Truth".

After many years of learning, research and practice, Prince Sidhartha attained Enlightenment; the Enlightened one is referred to as the Buddha. The word Buddha stands for the Awakened State, waking up to the Truth. As I explained earlier, the Buddha is not a God and nor can the Buddha grant liberation. What the Buddha taught is a complete set of instructions which if followed can guide the individual to complete Enlightenment.

Also, Buddhism is a harmless religion. No one is forced to follow Buddhism. There is no anger or curse directed to the person who chooses not follow the teachings of the Buddha. Respect of other people's faiths beliefs, trusts and values takes a prominent place in Buddhist Teaching. Buddhism means no harm even to the smallest of insects. Buddhism accepts that as much as we humans cherish our lives, even the smallest insect strives for protection against dangers that threaten life.

The minimum that is expected of a lay Buddhist is to observe the Five Precepts. What are the five precepts?

1. To refrain from causing injury to other living beings.
2. To refrain from taking that which is not freely given.
3. To refrain from sexual misconduct.
4. To refrain from false or malicious speech.
5. To refrain from intoxicating drink and drugs.

If one develops an understanding of these Precepts, it becomes clear that they are based on the principal of loving kindness both to others and to oneself.

No reasonable person can find fault with requesting people to observe these Precepts. If all of us observe these Precepts there will be loving kindness, as well as peace and harmony.

In our approach to life, be it practical, artistic, half hearted, even lazy, a basic fact that confronts us all unmistakably is the desire for peace, security and happiness in our family life, work life and within our communities. All other beings desire the same peace, comfort and security irrespective of whether they belong to the higher groups such as humans or to the lower groups such as animals.

The faculty of reasoning, the ability to think and the power of expression distinguish humans as being superior to our mute friends in other realms. In the quest for peace, comfort and security, people become radically opposed to one another. Too frequently the solutions

which many people adopt to solve their needs for self comfort are cruel and even revolting. Such actions bring suffering to oneself as well as to others. Having been born as human beings, is vitally important for us to practice benevolence and perform meritorious deeds for ourselves and others in this life and in lives to come.

Many of us are in Melbourne, among other things, because we think that it is a peaceful and harmless place to live. Geographical, cultural and physical differences are superficial. Even the differences of faith and ideology are to be transcended when we think of ourselves as human beings sharing common needs and desires. For, in the final analysis, all of us basically have the same hopes and aspirations and all of us belong to the same human family.

But Buddhists must not become too high minded about their practice. Buddhism is one of the many religions that teach us to be less selfish and more compassionate, while it teaches us to be humane, altruistic and to think of others in the same way we think of ourselves.

In an ever changing world there are two important things that Buddhists should keep in mind. The first is self examination. We should constantly check ourselves to see that we are practicing properly. Before pointing our finger at others we should point it towards ourselves. Secondly we must admit to our faults, our mistakes, and then correct our thoughts, speech and actions.

As I have already stated, there is no divine ruler that we can turn to for our salvation, peace and harmony. We must strive to achieve peace and harmony through our superior ability to reason. All of us have gathered here to receive Blessings from these Most Venerable Monks for Peace and Harmony in 1991. Just because the Monks bless us, this does not mean that there will be peace and harmony. It is up to all of us to try and achieve peace and harmony within our own lives. The Monks will perform the Blessing that all of us gathered here will have the strength required to achieve peace and harmony in 1991 and beyond.

May all of you attain Nirvana.

Ref: "Universal Responsibility And Good Heart" Tenzin Gyatso.

Venerable Gangodawilla Soma Thera : a brief biography.

Venerable Gangodawilla Thera is the chief resident Buddhist Monk at the Melbourne Sri Lankan Buddhist Vihara which is situated at 66 Regent Avenue, Springvale, Victoria 3171.

From the time of the Venerable's first visit to Australia in May 1986, he has become well known and respected by many Buddhists here both of Sri Lankan extraction and Australian born. Currently the Melbourne Sri Lankan Buddhist Vihara provides welfare and Buddhist religious services for its members which number well over 300 families.

Venerable Soma was born on the 24th April 1948, to a Buddhist family of the name Somaratne, in Colombo, Sri Lanka. His parents were deeply involved in the Buddhist way of life and sent Venerable Soma to a Buddhist Sunday School at an early age.

Venerable Soma was educated in Colombo at Greenlands College through both primary and secondary levels until the age of 18. During this time, in addition to the normal study requirements of the college, he trained in meditation under the guidance of Venerable Rahula Thera, a leading Sri Lankan Meditation Master at the International Meditation Centre' in

Candy.

At the age of 18 years Venerable Soma left Greenlands College and entered into the retail grocery business, firstly in partnership with a friend and then at the age of 20 as a sole proprietor.

In addition to his business commitments he continued his meditation training under Venerable Rahula Thera until the age of 26 when he was ordained as a Buddhist Monk. Venerable Soma has as his preceptor Venerable Pannaseeha Mahathera, the chief Buddhist Monk of Sri Lanka.

After receiving ordination Venerable Soma entered the famous Siri Vijiranana Temple (Bhikku Training Centre) in Maha Ragama, Colombo where he lived for ten years. During this time Venerable Soma mastered the Pali and English languages, trained in Meditation and studied the Buddhist Texts.

In addition to his studies and with the permission of his preceptor Venerable Pannaseeha Maha Thera, Venerable Soma engaged in social welfare activities for the local communities travelling from village to village officiating at every kind of Buddhist Ceremony, providing counselling services and establishing youth training groups.

These youth groups, which still operate today, encourage training in Buddhist Morality and Meditation and provide a support network for thousands of young adults.

Venerable Soma first came to Australia in May 1986. His first place of residence was Buddha House which is the registered address of The Buddhist Society of Victoria situated at 226 Mary Street, Richmond, Victoria 3121.

Members of the Melbourne Sri Lankan community formed The Buddhist Sri Lankan Society of Victoria Incorporated in 1987. On 17 November 1989 they purchased the current premises at 66 Regent Street, Springvale 3171. The Temple is maintained entirely on voluntary donations.

NEW YEAR FESTIVAL - VICTORIA -16 FEBRUARY 1991.

The Tibetan Buddhist Society Ltd celebrated the New Year by conducting the Tibetan New Year Festival on Saturday 16 February 1992 at their 'Peaceful Land of Joy Meditation Centre' in Victoria (1).

The festival was opened by Venerable Geshe Acharya Thubten Loden, the Spiritual Head of the Tibetan Buddhist Society Ltd. Honoured guests at the festival were Venerable Traleg Kyabgen Rinpoche, the Spiritual Head of the Tibetan Buddhist Kagyu Centre in Melbourne (2); Venerable Geshe Doga, the resident Teacher of Tara Institute in Melbourne (3); Geshe Doga's translator, Thupten Donyo, who is a Tibetan Monk; and Geshe Doga's attendant, Sandup Tzering.

Frank Carter B.Ec., President of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd, and several B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members, were fortunate to participate in the celebration and attend some of the Buddhist Teachings given as part of the program of events.

The opening ceremony included the reading of a "Great Prayer for World Peace" compiled by Venerable Geshe Acharya Thubten Lodon. An extract from this prayer is reprinted below with the kind permission of Venerable Geshe Thubten Lodon.

May all living beings be adorned with love,
Compassion, joy and equanimity.
May they possess generosity, ethics,
Patience, effort, concentration and wisdom.

Thus by the virtue collected
Through all that I have done,
May the pain of every living being
Be completely cleared away.

May the poor find wealth
Those weak with sorrow find joy
May the forlorn find new hope,
Comfort, happiness and prosperity.

As long as any sentient being anywhere
Has not been liberated,
May I remain in the world for his sake,
Even though I have attained Enlightenment.

May all worldly beings
Never experience war, fighting or conflict,
And forever remain without bad conditions,
Such as earthquakes, disease or drought.

May peace pervade the hearts of all
That they ever abide in joy and abundance.

The Buddhist Teachings given on the day included a lecture by Venerable Traleg Rinpoche on the "Essence of Buddhist practice: love and compassion". A summary of this talk is reprinted below.

Buddhist Practice begins with becoming aware of our present condition. We find on examination that our life is full of many experiences of discontentment or dissatisfaction. Even the pleasures we know eventually lead to further discontentment as circumstances change and the source of our enjoyment leaves us or no longer occurs. There is a sense of loss and frustration with the transient nature of our life. This situation is described as Dukkha.

Our normal view has been to replace one apparent source of suffering with something else in the attempt to create happiness for ourselves. We may change jobs or look for a new wife and so on. However, this attention to external needs never leads to lasting fulfillment.

The Buddha taught that the real source of dissatisfaction is within our own minds; that through lack of understanding we are not able to understand what is beneficial or what is harmful. We need to understand that our normal reactive responses of attraction to the things

we want and aversion to the things we don't want scatter the mind and create loss of focus. In this distracted state the mind is completely deluded and is egocentric. There is a sense of uninvolvedness with people and a lack of interest in people.

This is why love and compassion are important. There needs to also be the practice of Meditation in order to develop wisdom. The two methods of cultivation needed are:

- (1) Accumulation of merit. This is related to the practice of love and compassion and is active.
- (2) Accumulation of wisdom. The practice of Meditation is to gain insight and is passive.

In order that we can become more tolerant, more kind and more understanding, we must practice the four immeasurables: Love, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity.

In the cultivation of these four, wisdom is needed to avoid various distortions which can arise.

- (1) We need to differentiate love from attachment.
- (2) We need to avoid associating love and compassion with pain or sadness. Feeling sad about someone else's misfortune is not a manifestation of love or compassion. In Buddhism love and compassion give rise to joy and peace.
- (3) Joy can be mixed up with a sense of our own relation. Undistorted joy is to rejoice at others' good fortune.
- (4) Equanimity can be distorted and manifest as indifference. Authentic equanimity is a balanced mind with regard to the eight worldly conditions, such as, for example, gain and loss.

The final point Rinpoche discussed was that Buddhism is not a process of rejecting the world or withdrawal, but rather, it is to stay in the world with a better view. It is to do with how we live in the world; how we relate to others. Our capacity to be in the world needs to be enhanced. We can do this by moving from a self-centred mode to less self-centredness and by finding clearer vision and understanding.

The Members of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd thank Venerable Geshe Loden, Venerable Traleg Rinpoche, Venerable Toby Gillies and the Tibetan Buddhist Society Ltd Directors and Members for providing this valuable opportunity for students to learn and practice the Mahayana Teachings.

- (1) Peaceful Land of Joy Meditation Centre, 1925 Mickleham Road, Yuroke, Victoria, 3063.
- (2) Tibetan Buddhist Kagyu Centre, 695 Lygon Street, Carlton, Victoria, 3053
- (3) Tara Institute, 3 Mavis Ave., East Brighton, Victoria, 3187.

F.T.C.

BUDDHIST DISCUSSION CENTRE (UPWEY) LTD MEDITATION COURSE
27 - 31 DECEMBER 1990

A five day Meditation Course was held at the Centre from 27 - 31 December 1990. The Teacher was John D. Hughes, Past President of B.D.C. (U) Ltd.

Object of Course

To remove from the mind unwise trusts, beliefs and values which by nature produce unwholesome body, speech and mind actions. Conventionally, such actions could be described as reactive behaviour rather than pro-active behaviour, or habitual unwholesome dispositions.

Method

To examine the arising mind and cognate that all trusts, beliefs and values the mind holds as real or substantial are only kept empowered by our mind's conviction that they are substantial or "self".

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Tibetan Woodblock Print

To view the trusts, beliefs and values clearly, the Meditators were taught to calm the mind by the eradication of discursiveness or mental chatter. The particular text used was "The Buddha and His Teaching" by Narada Maha Thera (1). This text lists the means by which worry and flurry can be eradicated. These means are:

- (1) Erudition or learning (learn something very well).
- (2) Questioning or discussing.
- (3) Understanding the nature of the Vinaya discipline.
- (4) Association with senior Monks.
- (5) Good friendship.
- (6) Profitable talk.

When viewed clearly the wholesome or unwholesome nature of the beliefs, trusts and values is seen and the personal identification with these values is removed (not self). At this time, the mind seeing unwholesome beliefs, trusts and values ceases to have any notion or view that they are of benefit. However the wholesome beliefs, trusts and values are recognised as the generators of all good karmic causes made by the practitioner in the past.

Result

Prior to this meditation the mind had two types of behavioural goals. The first types are ones we have consciously or volitionally developed or written ourselves during this life. (They may be either wholesome or unwholesome.) The second types are unconscious or unseen and are produced from beliefs, trusts and values which have been adopted or learnt in

previous lives or often when we were children in this life.

The goals we are not aware of produce many of the agendas we follow within our daily ritual behaviour. By looking at our trusts, beliefs and values directly the Meditator can see the origin of his or her behavioural goals and conditional responses.

After completing this Meditation successfully, a greater number of the mind's agendas are recognised as they arise and these agendas are known to be either beneficial to ourself and/or others or harmful to ourself and/or others. An unwholesome belief, trust or value which is seen clearly once is less likely to dupe the Meditator at some later time. The power of the unwholesome beliefs, trusts and values is diminished and the possibility of wholesome action is increased.

Conclusion

Harmful or unbeneficial behaviour arises due to clinging to the underlying beliefs, trusts and values which are themselves unwise. Clinging arises through not having seen the mental objects as they are (impermanent, unsatisfactory and not-self).

On the fourth day of the Meditation Course, Venerable Viriyananda (Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple), Venerable Soma (Sri Lankan Buddhist Vihara), Venerable Chalain Pinvises and Venerable Anek Chuamvan (staying at the Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple) visited the Centre and gave Blessings to the Meditators. Venerable Soma gave Dhamma Teachings on the removal of Hate, Greed and Ignorance. The Members offered Dana to the Monks and invited them to walk in the Centre's Dhamma Garden before their departure.

(1) The Buddha and His Teachings, by Narada Maha Thera, pub. Buddhist Missionary Society (Bo Mos), Malaysia, Chapter 37, Nivarana or Hindrances, p. 542, Eradication of Worry and Flurry.

F.T.C.

CHAN ACADEMY SEMINARS

Seminars in Ch'an painting conducted by Ch'an Masters Melva Fitzallen and John D. Hughes will be held at the Ch'an Academy on the following dates:

- (1) Saturday 2 March
- (2) Saturday 27 April
- (3) Saturday 25 May
- (4) Saturday 22 June
- (5) Saturday 3 August
- (6) Saturday 31 August
- (7) Saturday 26 October
- (8) Saturday 23 November

Sumi e Master Andre Sollier will also conduct Seminars at the Ch'an Academy on the following dates:

- (1) Saturday 6 April
- (2) Saturday 13 July

EKOTTARAGAMA

Translated from the Chinese version by Thich Huyen-Vi

Ananda then added: "Having had the good fortune to faithfully follow the Teaching of the Tathagata, I have been able to observe that, according to circumstances, he had to adapt himself to his audience to explain certain passages which sometimes makes them contradictory. If I expound them in the same way, I am afraid that in the future, disciples will have doubts (1). I, therefore, judge it necessary to precede each of my accounts (exposes) with the phrase: 'Thus have I heard' (2) This will be the bond of my memory and good faith.

The most remarkable events of the time spent by the Tathagata in our world go back to his first discourse at Benares which set the Dharma Wheel in motion for the first time. Then came the conversion in Magadha (a kingdom) of the three great Kasyapa (3) sages. Numerous discourses were expounded at Kapilavastu, Kausambi, Kasi, Campa, Vaisali and Kusinagari. They were followed fervently not only by humans, but also by devas, the dragon kings, the asuras, the gandharvas, etc.

Having had the great good fortune of always remaining at his side, I remember reverently the two cities, Kusinagari and Sravasti; Sravasti in particular, where the number of his disciples reached two thousand. The offer of the garden of Jetavana, made by the generous Sudatta (4), was a remarkable event in the history of the propagation of Buddhism.

It was at Jetavana that the Tathagata advised his Sangha (the Community) to take refuge in the one Dharma (Doctrine) with one faith.

To facilitate this contemplation he recommended the practice of the ten commemorations (anusmrti) being, respectively, that of the Buddha, the Sangha, morality (sila), giving (tyaga) without consideration of the subject or the object, the devas (devata), halting the breath (5), breathing (anapananusmrti), the body (kayagatanusmrti) and death (marananusmrti).

The first disciple of the Tathagata was Kaundinya and the last was Subhadra, whom he had admitted a short time before his entry into Parinirvana.

"The Teachings which I have faithfully remembered constitute a coherent and logical whole: the first Teaching makes one body with the second and third Teachings. The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh Teachings deal with subjects at higher levels. The eighth, ninth and tenth Teachings finish off the cycle and it is all completed by the eleventh Teaching which recapitulates and reiterates the very essence of the Doctrine.

For this reason the body of the Sutra which I am about to communicate to you is of profound significance. In particular, I urge you to reflect on the choice of the numbers and their order to grasp their extraordinary character. This collection of Teachings will be called the Ekottaragama or Ten Plus One Agama.

In his Teaching, the Tathagata conferred a rank and role of the utmost importance on the Bhiksu whom he compared to a skilled potter who shapes vases with confidence. He will Teach the Dharma of the Three Vehicles (6) to the assembly without error.

The Dharma contains a very profound spiritual meaning. Its objective is the suppression of evil. To this end one has to successfully acquire the three perfect eyes (7), which allow eradication of the three passions (8) inherent in the human condition. This is the one fundamental principle. If you apply it with perseverance and sincerity, your mind-body will no longer be troubled by the passions and your penetrating insight will be perfect. You will then discover the Treasure of the Tathagata (9).

In the future, if an adept of the Doctrine recopies this collection and venerates it and makes offerings of flowers and incense, he will receive immeasurable merit, comparable with an exceedingly rare (10) meeting with the Dharma."

When Ananda had finished speaking, the whole earth shook. The devas made precious flowers and incense fall from the sky upon the Council, and showed their approval by proclaiming: "The Teaching of the Bhagavan contains the Ultimate Truth. From now on, we will take support in the Three Baskets (Tripitaka): The Sutras (11), The Vinaya (12), and the Abhidharma (13), which are completed by the Samyukta (14). These 'three baskets' constitute the precious Teaching of the Great Vehicle. If you follow the Buddha's Teaching, the principle of causality will no longer exist."

The future Buddha Maitreya, the Heavenly Kings and all the Bodhisattvas approved these words and offered the Tathagata a necklace of flowers as a token of their joy and their confidence in Ananda, the learned sage, worthy of keeping the torch of the Doctrine alight.

The Very Venerable Ananda then opened the assembly in the presence of the following devas who were accompanied (by other beings) by Brahmakayika, Nirmaharati, Paranirmitavasavartin, Tusita, Yama, Sakradevendra, Caturmaharajakayika (that is) Dhrtarastra, Vaisravana, Virudhaka and (Kuvera), Gandharva, Vetala, Naga, Yaksa and Rakasa.

The future Buddha Maitreya then invited the Bodhisattvas of the age of sages (15) to counsel all the faithful of their regions, to venerate the Ekottara Teaching and to take part in propagating it in order that all, from devas to human beings, may understand its meaning and put it into practice.

At these words, the Heavenly Kings, humans as well as living beings, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas, Mahoragas, etc. cried out: "We vow to eternally protect all the faithful who venerate the Ekottaragama and who assist in fostering its propagation".

Then the Very Venerable Ananda said to Bhiksu Uttara: "From this moment I entrust you with this collection of Ekottaragama. Endeavour to practise it and to ensure its preservation forever. Why? Because in these Sutras lies the quintessence of the Dharma which allows access to the Awakened, the Buddha state. He who is lacking in respect for this collection will fall into the path of profanity (16) (prithagjana) with no hope of escape. Why?

Because this collection of Sutras shows us the 37 means for obtaining Enlightenment (17).

All other Teachings of the Doctrine have their source in this collection".

The Great Kasyapa then asked Ananda: "What do you mean by that?" Ananda replied.

"Exactly that, O Great Kasyapa! The Ekottaragama shows the 37 means for realising Enlightenment; and all the other Teachings of the Doctrine have their source in this collection. What is even more remarkable is that in each gatha of the Ekottaragama we rediscover the origin of the 37 wonderful means in question, (commi) and that of all other Teachings".

"What part of the collection would be the origin of the 37 wonderful means and that of all the other Teachings?" Kasyapa then asked. Ananda replied with this gatha:

"Avoid doing evil
Persevere in the doing of good.
Keep your heart pure,
Such is the Teaching of all the Buddhas" (18)

What is the measuring of this gatha?

"Well, to abstain from doing evil is the source of all the dharmas giving birth to good. The appearance of good thoughts causes purity and serenity of the minds to be born.

For this reason, all those who are awakened are wonderfully pure and serene of body, word and thought".

Kasyapa asked: "Why does the Ekottaragama alone have the power to produce this? Does this mean that the other four collections of Agama possess none at all?"

"O Great Kasyapa! Each gatha of each of the collections of Agama contains the quintessence of the Teachings of the Tathagata, as do the Pratyeka Buddha and Sravaka doctrines. Why so?

Because 'to abstain from doing evil' encompasses all rules of morality and all good conduct. 'To persevere in doing good and maintaining purity of heart' is the infallible remedy against temptation and the passions. This is the usual Teaching of all the Buddhas. To abandon any thoughts rising out of illusion implies observance of religious rules of conduct and assures purity of body which, in turn, fosters serenity of heart. This abstention and perseverance protects our thoughts from all disturbance. The absence of disturbance ensures the (dissipation) dispersion of ignorance and illusion. The thirty-seven means towards perfection have then succeeded and allow access to Awakening. Thus, here is the very quintessence of all of the Teachings". Kasyapa then asked: "Why is the Ekottaragama entrusted to Uttara (19) and not to another Bhiksu?"

Ananda replied: "The Ekottaragama is the whole of the Teachings, The whole of the Teachings is the Ekottaragama."

Kasyapa repeated the same question: "Why do you entrust it to Uttara and not to another Bhiksu?"

Ananda replied: "You will understand, O Kasyapa! In the very distant past, 91 kalpas ago, when the Tathagata Vipasyin appeared in the world of humans, the Bhiksu Uttara was called Sivi-Uttara. The Tathagata Vipasyin entrusted it to him to venerate it. Thirty-one kalpas after that time, the Tathagata Sikhin appeared in his turn in the world of humans. At that same time there lived a Monk called Mukti Uttara, who was none other than Uttara in a new incarnation. The Buddha Sikhin also entrusted the Ekottaragama to Mukti-Uttara with the same mission, to venerate it. Thirty-one kalpas after that second period, the Tathagata Visvabhu appeared on the earth. He also entrusted the Ekottaragama to Bhiksu Nage-Uttara, another incarnation of Uttara, with the same goal. Know as well, O Kasyapa, during that age of sages (15) (fortunate period), the Tathagata Krakucchanda also entrusted the Ekottaragama to Bhiksu Garjita-Uttara, who was none other than Uttara, for its veneration and propagation. The same process took place between the Buddha Kanakamuni and the Bhiksu Deva-Uttara, the Buddha Kasyapa and the Bhiksu Brahma-Uttara.

Know now that it is the turn of our Father and Master, the Tathagata Sakyamuni, to entrust the Ekottaragama to the Bhiksu Uttara who is his disciple. The Tathagata has entered Parinirvana but I, Ananda, have been appointed to perpetuate his Teachings. I must..., in the name of the Tathagatha, entrust this collection of Ekottaragama to our brother Uttara. Why so? Because it is necessary to study all these basic elements to know the real nature of facts before transmitting the Dharma.

Let us go back to the past, to the Bhadra Kalpa where the Buddha Krakucchanda appeared in the world of humans. He bore the following appellations; Tatha, Arhant, Samyaksambuddha, Vidyacaranasampanyanam, Buddha and Bhagavan (20). At the same time there lived a being called Mahadeva, a very good ruler, who applied the Dharma to govern. He had never committed a single injustice (during his entire reign). His people were very happy. His entire life bore the stamp of friendliness.

So, for 84 000 years, he had a pure body. On becoming heir to the throne, for another 84 000 he gave the example of moral perfection, and during all of his reign, which also lasted 84 000, he used his authority solely to further the application of the Doctrine of goodness and compassion.

One day, O Kasyapa, I was at the side of the Tathagata in the Jetavana park. In the course of his usual walk after the daily meal and, before his discourse, I noticed that the Tathagata began to smile. From his mouth there flashed a dazzling light in the five colours.

I prostrated myself and asked: "Oh Bhagavan, never do you smile without an important reason. Your smile always has an extra worldly meaning. May we know the reasons for it?"

The Tathagata said to me: "In the very distant past the Tathagata Krakucchanda came to this city where we are at the moment to preach the Dharma to his disciples and the faithful. In this same kalpa, the Tathagata Kanaka as well as the Tathagata Kasyapa were carrying out the same mission for the good of all living beings."

I knelt before the Tathagata and said to him: "Oh Bhagavan, we wish you to continue to make the wonderful Dharma known to men. In this place, there are four diamond thrones, that is four Tathagatas following one after the other to teach the Dharma without interruption."

Oh Kasyapa, the Tathagata Sakyamuni seated on his throne said to me: "Know Ananda, that in the past there was a king called Mahadeva. During his reign which lasted 89,000 years, he applied the Dharma to govern his people. One day he said to Kapila, one of his dignitaries: "If you see white hairs appearing on my head, tell me immediately". The dignitary bowed, accepting this charge. One day, he said to the king Mahadeva: "Sire, I have seen some white hairs on your head." The king said to him: "Remove them with these gold tweezers and place them on my hand." Kapila removed the hairs with the gold tweezers and presented them to the king.

Then the king Mahadeva pronounced this gatha:

"Today, white hairs have appeared on my head; Impermanence will not take long to emerge; It is time for me to leave the family and take orders." And he added; "I enjoyed the results of my past merits in the world of men. I don't count on continuing in the universe of deities. I am going to take orders. I shall cut off my hair and my beard, I shall wear the three religious habits and shall devote myself to study of the Dharma in order to liberate myself from passions and sufferings."

References

1. Certain of the Buddha's Teachings expounded by Ananda are too difficult for ordinary believers.
2. Evam maya (sanskrit), evam me sadam (Pali), set phrase at the beginning of the Sutras meaning that Ananda is faithfully reporting what he heard.
3. The three Vasyapa Brothers. These were Uruvulva-Kasyapa, Gaya- Kasyapa and Nadi-Kasyapa, all three Brahmans reputed for their knowledge.
4. Also known by the name Anathapindada, in Pali, Anathapindika. The richest and most generous of the notables is Kosala. He helped the sick, the poor and the lonely.
5. In Pali - differently: Upasamanussati, commemoration of stillness (calm).
6. Triyana, the Three Vehicles: Those who hear (Sravaka) the Pratyekabuddha and the Bodhisattvas.
7. The three eyes: that of the Buddha, that of the Dharma and that of the Prajna.
8. Three passions: the three passions concealing the real nature of awakening which exists deep within every human being; the three passions are desire, anger and illusion.
9. Tathagatagarbha: The treasure which is the above- mentioned awakening: i.e.. the Buddha nature.
10. Rare Treasure: the Doctrine taught by the Buddhas who appear on earth only once every several thousands of years.
11. Sutra-Pitaka: the first collection of the three baskets, that of the teachings reconstructed by Ananda and accepted by all without dispute.

12. Vinaya-Pitaka: the second collection, that of Discipline, presided over by Upali after the Buddha entered Parinirvana.
13. Abhidharma-Pitaka: collection of metaphysics analysing good and evil.
14. Samyakta-Pitaka: complementary mixed collection. It is a compilation of the canonical and post-canonical collection of sutras, discipline and metaphysics.
15. Era, age of sages: Bhadrakalpa (lit. fortunate period) designating the present or actual era or age when numerous sages appear on earth.
16. World of the sacrilegious: condition of men who have not encountered morality nor faith, living under the control of their passions.
17. See E Lamotte, "The Teaching of Vimalakirti (Lowrain 1962) pp 117,139,144,201-2,216,378." "the 37 auxiliaries of enlightenment (sapta-trimsad Bodhipaksika Dharmah)"
18. See Dhp 183.
19. Uttara: the name of a monk who had accumulated merits through many existences.
20. See E. Lamotte.....p.375, note 12

PHASES OF THE MOON 1991

NEW MOON			FIRST QUARTER			FULL MOON			THIRD QUARTER		
D	H	M	D	H	M	D	H	M	D	H	M
						Jan 1	04	35	Jan 8	04	35
Jan 16	09	49	Jan 24	00	21	Jan 30	16	03	Feb 6	23	52
Feb 15	03	31	Feb 22	08	58	Mar 1	04	24	Mar 8	20	31
Mar 16	18	10	Mar 23	16	02	Mar 30	17	17	Apr 7	16	45
Apr 15	05	37	Apr 21	22	38	Apr 29	06	58	May 7	10	46
May 14	14	36	May 21	05	45	May 28	21	36	June 6	01	30
June 12	22	06	June 19	14	19	June 27	12	58	Jul 5	12	50
Jul 12	05	06	Jul 19	01	10	Jul 27	04	24	Aug 3	21	25
Aug 10	12	27	Aug 17	15	00	Aug 25	19	07	Sep 2	04	16
Sep 8	21	00	Sep 16	08	01	Sep 24	08	39	Oct 1	10	29
Oct 8	07	38	Oct 16	03	32	Oct 23	21	08	Oct 30	17	10
Nov 6	21	11	Nov 15	00	01	Nov 22	08	56	Nov 29	01	21
Dec 6	13	56	Dec 14	19	31	Dec 21	20	23	Dec 28	11	55

The above information is published by the Planetarium, Museum of Victoria, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne, 3000

The DAY (D) HOUR (H) Minute (M) of each phase of the Moon is given in Eastern Standard Time.

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CH'AN ACADEMY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

A television documentary program was filmed at the B.D.C.(U.) Ltd. on February 5, 1991

to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Ch'an Academy.

Mr. Peter Scott of Eastern Regional Access Television filmed a demonstration of Ch'an painting by resident Ch'an Teacher, Melva Fitzallen, to illustrate, on film, the grace and rarity of the Ch'an path.

June Young B.A. provided an accompanying narrative description of the 'four treasures' of Ch'an painting which are; bamboo, chrysanthemum, plum blossom and orchid and the 'four friends'; ink, water, brush and paper.

Although esoteric in nature, the visual impact of Ch'an (Chinese) Zen (Japanese) Son (Korean) on paper is an inspiring introduction to new students of the Ch'an Academy's Teaching program for 1991 entitled 'The Way of the Brush.' (Please refer to the timetable of events printed on page 13 of this newsletter).

After the demonstration of Ch'an painting ERA T.V. filmed the President of the B.D.C.(U.) Ltd., Mr. Frank Carter B.Ec., as he spoke about the Buddhist practices of Generosity, Morality and Wisdom, and the Past President of the B.D.C.(U.) Ltd., Mr. John D. Hughes Dip. App. Chem., T.T.T.C., A.A.L.A., who explained the relevance of self-help groups in the context of lending a helping hand to many members in the community at large and to the Buddhist Community in particular. Buddhism has found a multicultural base within the Australia felix.

We thank Mr. Peter Scott and his assistant for this opportunity to display and promote our activities through the television media and for his efforts and expertise in producing this worthwhile access program.

Mr. Scott can be contacted at the following address:
ERA T.V. P.O. Box 186
Belgrave. Victoria. 3160.
phone 754 4397

F.T.C.
M.F.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V1N1.?.1

Ch'an Painting by Melva Fitzallen

Please refer Graphical Images Nos: V1N1.?.2 to
V1N1.?.9.

Photos: B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members visit to Thailand, India
& Nepal.