

# BUDDHA DHYĀNA DANA REVIEW

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Photo: A stupa in the Anuradhapura style replicated in snow.  
B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members arranged for Monks to visit the  
Mt. Donna Buang summit (in Victoria). One of the Sri Lankan  
Monks arranged the Stupa construction.

## EDITORIAL

"The Maha Bodhi" has completed its Centenary year 1890-1991 and in order to commemorate the occasion of such significance the Governing Body of the Maha Bodhi Society of India has decided to publish a Centenary volume of the Maha Bodhi for release by the middle of September 1992.

The Maha Bodhi Society of India was established in 1891 by the Sri Lankan Monk, Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala. Its journal was established in 1892.

The first President of the Society, Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee succeeded in 1908 in introducing the study of Pali to the University of Calcutta, thus bringing about revival of study in India of the canonical scriptures of Theravada Buddhism.

Professor Lynn White has been quoted as saying that future historians may well look back upon the pioneering work of the late D.T.Suzuki as a cultural watershed, as influential in its own way as the fourteenth-century translations of Aristotle. (B.S.Rev.9,1 p.65)

While this observation is praiseworthy, it is credible to acknowledge the Maha Bodhi Journal, also, was influential in that process.

It should be understood that D.K.Suzuki is not a "thinker" in the Western sense; but rather he is aware of "non-conceptual" thinking as practiced by Bodhisattvas. Suzuki notes that "When it (Zen) attempts to explain itself by means of a philosophical system .....it partakes of something which does not strictly belong to it." (Essays in Buddhism Third Series 1970 Edition p.20)

"Non-conceptual" thinking, for those practiced enough is a blessing which gives direct connectivity between Buddhists, past, present and future.

Those who learn this type of Buddhist meditation know for themselves the experience of the Dhamma's connectivity across space and time (*sanditthiko akaliko* properties of dhamma).

Ultimately, the main benefit of such mental training is a confidence that there must be a path

of the "knowing only", transcending mere learning as well-grounded practice.

By way of personal example, consider Mr K. T. Vimalasekara who had his seventy-fifth birthday in November 1971, at which time he arranged for one thousand prints of Buddha to be distributed.

When this editor met him in 1982 at Columbo, Sri Lanka, he was kind enough to provide me with the last of these prints. Mr. Vimalasekara, when young, met Anagarika Dharmapala. With startling vigour, grace and percipency, he described his meeting with Anagarika Dharmapala. Under such a discourse, it became possible to feel the presence of the Founder of the Maha Bodhi Society.

The cover of this Review shows a stupa in the Anuradhapura style replicated in snow. Our Members arranged for Monks to visit the Mt. Donna Buang summit (in Victoria). One of the Sri Lankan Monks arranged the Stupa construction. A connectivity over historical time can be felt. Thus, it may be said the "timeless" architecture of Buddhism is "outside" international time zones.

Buddhist lay people like to expound certain elements of their mental culture as making them more amicable, poised, and alert. Because anecdotal evidence of high achievers inspires persons and induces enterprise flair, it is suggested Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala could be an example of such a person. Among the things he rejected were egotism, indolence and inertness. By using the potent Anagarika model, these undesirable qualities can be attenuated.

It is desirable and appropriate for Buddhists to seek to use as role models "high achiever" Buddhists. Succinct biographies stressing how, when and where they developed one or more of their good qualities could be introduced into the folk law of industrial training at an international level.

The Centenary of the Maha Bodhi Society would be an opportune time for their Members to examine their chronicles and report as to the tactics they used in winning sympathy and support from English-speaking people in India and elsewhere in their early years. In addition, it would be interesting for them to list the tactics of how they obtained support from the Indian intelligentsia.

This information could help the many local and visiting Teachers who plan to visit Eastern European countries (which were formally the U.S.S.R.) to assist the Dhamma to reappear and flourish in suitable ancient Buddhist monasteries at various localities within such Countries.

John D. Hughes Editor

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Drawing: Heavenly Dhamma Garden with Chinese Calligraphy.

## UNDERSTANDING THE FOUR SEASONS: UNDERSTANDING CH'AN

Fully understanding the four seasons opens up a whole new world of perceptions: a world where a droplet of water is seen as it is; a droplet of water in Summer, a droplet of mist in Autumn, a droplet of ice in Winter and a droplet of dew in Spring.

When the four friends of Ch'an painting (Bamboo, Chrysanthemum, Orchid and Plum Blossom) are understood, and the four treasures of a Ch'an painter's studio (Brush, Ink, Inkstone and Paper) are understood as the treasures they are, one can fully know the four seasons. In another culture, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in 'Nature'; 'Not the sun or the Summer alone, but every hour and season yields its tribute of delight; for every hour and change corresponds to and authorises a different state of mind'. 1

Ch'an (Chinese) Son (Korean) or Zen (Japanese) is universal. It could not be more opposite to the popular view of Zen in the West today, seen as a bizarre idea, something to be played with, to be conceptualised, jargonised and complementary to good taste in interior decorating.

'What is its goal?' is an ego projection and a nonsense question. How could it be otherwise?

There is nothing wrong with appreciation of the aesthetics of the Zen Arts, of its paintings, beautiful paper, fragrant ink, excellence of design and harmonious gardens.

Indeed, the appreciation and study of the Ch'an or Zen Arts is a very effective way to learn to recognise the intrinsic wisdom (Sanskrit, prajna) of Ch'an, and give it due respect. Respect is essential to learn Ch'an. We can start in our own homes, in everyday life. We would have something of our grandparents and something of our parents in our home because we respect them. We accept people even if their taste is equal to, inferior to or superior to our own. To know that someone's taste is superior to our own is the ultimate in good taste; equal to, is democracy; inferior to is not fascism, but tolerance.

Its wisdom, compassion and energy come from Buddha Dhyana Teachings of the Dharma, and most important of all, so does its ACTIVE PRACTISE, with its base on the five Precepts and merit. Ch'an adepts know 'One day no work, one day no food'. This provides the essential merit. There are still a few rare Teachers today who Teach this.

The Dharma has been likened to a 'String of Pearls'. Ch'an aspirants especially must remember that a pearl begins its creation as a grain of sand irritating the soft flesh of the oyster which over time becomes a shining pearl. This analogy can be drawn to Ch'an irritating the ego, the persona, the 'I', the expectations and the discursive mind that thinks it knows Ch'an. The discursive mind retains its correct function, but the fallacy that it can understand Ch'an must be completely subdued.

Ch'an Academy Rules for Conduct are: 1. Remove shoes. 2. No idle chatter. 3. No smoking, eating or drinking in the Ch'an Academy. 4. Keep mind inside oneself and not out on fellow students, objects or Teachers. 5. Observe mindfulness. 6. Observe respect for Teachers. 7. Observe obedience to Teachers. 8. Cultivate quiet and peaceful mind. 9. Sweep thoughts aside continuously. 10. Observe the Five Precepts; no killing, no lying, no stealing, no sexual misconduct, no intoxicants that cloud the mind, and the sixth; no slander. 11. Cultivate happiness. 12. Cultivate lightness of mind. 13. Cultivate gratitude, and request to

be taught. 14. Maintain concentration. 15. Be aware of and respect the needs of fellow students. 16. Order and use correct care procedure for the 'four treasures' (Ink, inkstone, brush and paper). 17. Be responsible for the cleanliness of the Ch'an Hall. 18. Observe mindful actions in all duties. 19. Pay respect to Buddha, Kwan Yin, Ch'an Teachers, Protectors, and gods. 20. Do not waste energies on negativities. Do not waste time.

People who attend the Ch'an Academy know how hard this can be. This is why the parameters of the students' minds are encouraged to stretch and to perceive the beauty of Ch'an in nature within and without the Academy. Calligraphy of the Zen patriarch, the Venerable Seung Sahn, on the wall of the Ch'an Academy says; 'Perceive World Sound'.

Perceive the four treasures and see what they Teach you.

'Unfathomable were the waters of Tuan Chi  
And many went down there prospecting.  
An old man of the stream found a fine stone  
And spent a sleepless night dreaming of it  
Turning in his mind what a beautiful slab it would make.  
Where my dear friend, did you get this precious stone?  
Why give it to one so undeserving as I?  
Besides I have not enough calligraphy skill  
To produce strokes beautiful as silver hooks!  
Alas, all I can conjure from the Ink  
Are but old black crows.' 2.

The INKSTONE (earth element) comes from the labour of many beings. From this we learn friendliness and patience. It is born in mountain streams, the Winter floods wearing the coarse stones smooth for men to use. This is where the first friend, Bamboo, bends in the wind.

The INK (water element) teaches us compassion and generosity, and its fragrance teaches sweet speech and no slander. Its endurance comes from the old mountain pines of its origin and its energy from the sap rising in Spring. The second friend, Plum blossom, shows us the delicacies of Ink in the Spring blossoms and the strength of the Ink in the trunk.

Many Masters of the Ch'an Arts have elucidated the qualities of the Ink: 'One drop of Ink contains the whole world, an infinity of time, all manifest to the heart (Buddhist Scriptures) 3, 'and Zen Master Mang Gong picked up a flower one day, dipped its petals in Ink, and wrote in Chinese characters "The whole world is a Single Flower".' 4.

One beautiful piece of poetic Zen Calligraphy taught to the author by Master Shigyoku, which was a prize-winning entry in the NITTEN International calligraphy competition in Japan, reads thus: 'The water in the clouds of the vast blue sky is the same as the water in a bottle'. Everyone likes pure water and abhors polluted water. Pure speech is harder to get than pure water. Just as water evaporates and is gone without a trace, so pure speech evaporates. For this reason water is kept in bottles and pure speech is kept in the Sutras and commentaries. What is written in the Tripitika is only a fragment of what the Buddha speaks but it is enough. If you had some pure water in a bottle and tasted it just once, you could remember that pure water is obtainable. It

is not impossible to attain the sweet speech of the Buddha, because your Buddha speech is Dharma. If you attain Dharma mind, your speech will be pure. Just as you require great effort to attain pure water, you must make the effort to attain pure speech.

The BRUSH. Buddhists do not kill animals for their fur. Brushmaking is a skill sensitively attuned to the four seasons. The fur of animals is more luxuriant in Autumn, and when it is raining or misty, less water is needed on the Brush to paint. The energy of the brush in Ch'an is fire element, and fire is in the colour of the Autumn leaves. It teaches us not to cling to the bough. It liberates us and teaches us laughter and courage. The third friend, Chrysanthemum, fluffs up its petals for us and shrugs off cold winds.

PAPER is air element and Teaches us wisdom. It is the produce of Summer. Beautiful handmade paper begins its life along the banks of streams and dries in Summer fields. It also teaches us respect and flexibility. One paper is used for the flower and another is used for the land and sea. The fourth friend, the noble Orchid, celebrates Summer for us with its profusion of flowers and laden boughs.

Or, the other way round ..., these wisdoms are interchangeable. For example, the brush can be likened to a spring bud, or because its spine is bamboo, is it actually Winter, and so on? When one learns to observe the discursive mind and not to touch these thoughts, then Ch'an is practised.

'You ask what is Zen? I answer; Zen is that which makes you ask the question, because the answer is where the question arises'. 5. Just as a sustained addiction to drugs or alcohol and other harmful things is caused by such factors as availability, peer group pressure and curiosity of what effects they may have, so the discursive mind is continually addicted to what the ego produces. When you grab a phrase 'bon mot', how are you different from a parrot that repeats such phrases? The availability of content of modernity, of modish behaviour, of pop star cultism, is readily accessible from multi-media, but so is purity available from multi-media. Is it curiosity of what it sounds and feels like that has millions of teenagers apeing the 'in' pop stars? If with the same mind they aped the great Masters' mannerisms, would they obtain anything better? Is the will of a superior any less than that of a Samurai warrior? 'Will' equals one-pointedness, long hours, discipline and dedication. An example of this dedication and will is Xianq-Bong Kong, the pianist who won the 5th Sydney International Piano competition of Australia in 1992. Xiang-Bong Kong is a fine example to young persons. If one-ninth of the effort of such a performance had been put into Ch'an, the Maestro could have become a Master (pun intended). We must tell people Ch'an is relevant, attainable and pertinent to this decade heading towards the year 2000.

'There is a point in one where things are known. A still point where worldly posturing and duplicity go on around it, and is perceived by it, but it does not move from its point of "knowing".' 6.

The truth cannot be learnt through lies, so do not lie and so on. The most important precept for learning the truth is the sixth of NO SLANDER. Initial application is needed at first, and when this is finally relinquished, the fruits of Ch'an manifest in emotional maturity (caga), confidence (saddha), morality (sila) and friendliness (adosa). Venerable Hua Wan perceives: 'The quiet mind is the moon shining on the water', (7), and Ralph Waldo Emerson writes: 'The day is always his, who works in it with serenity and great aims'. 8.

I dedicate this article to my Teacher of fifteen years, one of the 'great ones', John D. Hughes, whom I perceive as the Dharmakaya, a Mahabodhisattva, a Ch'an Master, a Tantric Master and a great Buddhist Scholar.

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5. D.T. Suzuki What is Zen?
6. Melva Fitzallen A String of Pearls
7. Venerable Hua Wan Cool Purity
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M.F.

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Photo: Melva Fitzallen

### WHEN TO APPLY OR NOT APPLY *bhavana* A Map and a Compass to help access Buddhist Meditation

The simile of travelling across water to the distant shore is well known to describe attainment within the Buddhist sasana.

chieh ti chieh ti po lo chie ti  
po lo seng cheih ti p'u t'i sa p'o ho.(1)

*Ga-te ga-te, paragate, parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha.*

As translation, this author favours:  
Gone, gone, well gone to the furthest shore.

To extend the concept of this Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara Gatha metaphorically:

\* the first approach is to count the boats in the harbour to check they all get to the known and desired destination;

\* the second approach is for a boat to set sail for unknown and uncharted (but more desirable) waters with only feelings as a rudder, and the critical reference group's values for a compass and its interests for an engine!

When the boat gets there, THEN we can count the others when they follow suit.

We may bring along for reference the map of the old harbour to see whether the new coastline resembles it - but if we allow ourselves to stop at places which resemble it, we may not be open to finding something better (2).

One difficulty is that few persons in the Western World are able to grasp "*bhavana*" by any other word than "meditation".

There would be greater clarity if the suggestions of meaning of *bhavana* by Rhys Davids and Stede in their Pali-English Dictionary (3) were well known; viz. "producing, dwelling in something, putting one's thoughts to, application, developing by means of thought or meditation, cultivation of mind, culture".

Venerable Mahathera Piyadassi (1992) has posited that the use of the word "meditation" is so firmly entrenched in the English language, it is unlikely to be displaced by any other word (4).

The difficulty for many persons in the Western World is that they are over zealous to make a beginning and are likely to call any "meditation instruction" they incline to "Buddhist"; even if it bears no relation to *bhavana*.

The usual Western World advertisements and popular press usually herald some Buddhist Teacher or other by writing couched in terms of "So and so is a great Meditation Master".

The author has no intention to defame the intellect of advertising agents or other persons who prepare such copy.

The author suspects analogous tendencies may exist or be about to come into existence in other European languages.

It would be a worthy project to direct Buddhist scholars towards a multicultural study of how, in fact *bhavana* is being rendered in world languages.

Is it so unlikely that the present audiences would not attend "meditation" sessions if more stress was made of the truth of Buddhist Masters as:

"So and so (the Buddhist Teacher) is a great Morality Master ... (or) ... a great Generosity Master"?

By highlighting this labellings tendency as a failure by agents or programmers to understand, each for himself or herself, the need for a more comprehensive Buddhist map and compass to guide others to follow the straight way of "meditation" training.

In the Western World, the major task and most fundamental "map making task" is to develop approaches which make it clear how important and valuable it is for lay persons to set their bearings towards the need to practise *dana* (generosity) practice and maintain *sila* (morality) practice extensively.

The merit accumulated from these dual practices is the root cause of *bhavana* to coming to the correct view of "meditation".

Furthermore, extensive *dana* and *sila* practice affects a sentient being's "life chances" of meeting with mental nutrients sufficient to allow levels of true attainment when *bhavana* is

cultivated.

Mental nutrients are necessary provisions making a mental environment suitable for *samma samadhi* to "stay in place" or "stay in the heart".

In simplistic terms, good causes arise when one person is showing kindness (*adosa*) and decency in their relations and relativity towards other persons.

Two of the wholesome *cetasika*, loving kindness (*metta*) and compassion (*karuna*) are just as likely to arise in other religions and be praised by their gurus.

In this sense, it might be said no Buddhist should dispute with any other religion because they help to provide grounds for beings to hear reasonable "preliminary" *sila* instruction.

To assist causes for peace in future Buddhist activities and to create superior conditions for meditation, it is of little use to comment about others; although it might be said that all major religions teach various precepts as a basis for attainment of their purposes. It is not possible to force goodwill; it must always be by way of example.

Faced with the splendour of the growth in Buddhist places in the Western World, including the ever increasing attendance at Buddhist functions and the static or declining attendance to other religions: there has been a tendency for other religions to seek dialogue with Buddhists to issue documents showing how much they share in common.

These other religions are not seeking an agenda statement from Buddhists such that they could concede or give acceptance to some ground for Buddhists to make a claim that the Founders of their religions were aware of the nature of Buddha and Bodhisattva *Maitreya*.

It is likely to generate more heat than light in the present Dhamma-ending Age if Buddhists made this effort to make common ground by expounding the above notion too widely.

It is one thing to talk within a private family but such talk may be considered as a tactic of limited use outside the confines of Buddhists.

Their teachings are to avoid rebirth in miserable existences, such as one or other of the hell realms, and targeting causes for deva realm rebirth is their prime goal.

This author inclines to the view that it is better for certain Buddhist lay persons to act as if the remaining time available in their life is short. Perhaps they should spend a little more of their time for meditation purposes to actualise learning *samma samadhi* and be a little less desirous of spending their time in such interfaith discussions.

Until the meditator can achieve the appearances of an ordered procession of favourable wholesome states in an unstoppable sequence, there is little point in dialogue with others, otherwise the dialogue lacks true goodwill. It is one of the highest blessings to have done many wholesome things in the past.

There is a tendency for some kind persons to make claims that Buddhist "meditation" is suitable for all human beings.

This implies that all human beings are trainable in *bhavana* this life.

It is clear that the Buddha made no such claim.

In the *Anguttara Nikaya* text (5), Kesi the horse-trainer was asked by the Buddha what was done in training horses. He replied that horse training is done by way of mildness, harshness or both. When asked by Buddha what was done when the horse does not submit to any of these trainings, Kesi replied that the horse was destroyed.

The Buddha explained his training methods are similar. For the untrainable person, the Buddha destroys him (sic). The destruction is not by taking life but by the Tathagata and his Followers not admonishing him.

From this conversation with the horse trainer, it is clear that the Buddha trains those persons who are easy, moderately easy and difficult to train, but that there was a fourth type who are "untamable".

This fourth type of person is not taught Buddhism, hence not taught meditation.

If there are insufficient causes at the present time for a person to receive Buddhist instruction, it may be suggested they seek elsewhere. In this Dhamma-ending Age, Buddhist Organisations, out of great compassion for others, may consider it desirable to set up an auxiliary committee with the specific task of developing infrastructure in some cases to generate activities where these "destroyed" unfortunate persons can make more merit.

As a first option, if the available Buddhist resources cannot be stretched in that direction, to help those who should not be taught meditation, a friendly relationship may be forged with interfaith groupings (who do not practise meditation) to absorb such persons.

Possibly, it may be a blessing to them.

The Buddha's first and second viewings of the human condition after his attainment under the Bodhi tree were that no one was teachable, but fortunately for the World, his third examination showed there were a few beings "whose eye had little dust".

In the *Vinaya - Pitaka* Volume VI (*Pariivara*) at *Gathasamganika* (Collection Of Stanzas) (6) it is recorded that the Buddha in speaking to the Venerable Upali asked:

"Hoping for what, for what purpose are you come here?"

Ven. Upali replied by listing the rules of training.

The next question asked was: "... by which decidings are fallings away stopped?"

The listed reply includes the "eight defeats which are difficult to remedy".

They are compared to (resemble) "an uprooted palm tree" (being) ...

- \* "... like a withered leaf,
- \* "... like a flat stone,
- \* "... like a decapitated head, ... and so on.

The comment in the Text is made . . .

" These have no further growth".

What are the causes of these unfortunate mental conditions?

When the five precepts are examined, and the outcome of not maintaining them, it soon becomes clear that their causes can arise from not abstaining from intoxicants.

The extensive use of cannabinoids in the Western World is widespread (7). Other names for cannabis or its products include hashish, charas, bhang, ganga, dagga and marijuana. Oral doses produce effects on mood, memory, motor coordination, cognitive ability, sensorium, time sense and self-perception. Higher doses can produce frank hallucinations, delusions, and paranoid feelings. Anxiety reaching panic proportions may replace euphoria. With high enough doses the clinical picture includes loss of insight.

What can be done to help these persons?

Because meditation is consumptive of the mental nutrients, it is likely that forms of "meditation sickness" would appear by the former chemical dependent persons arriving at the *vipaka* (karmic return) that is analogous to them re-experiencing the dolorousness of such mental symptoms.

A second option was developed at our Upwey Centre and may be considered.

Our Centre's land, as a supporting factor, has been used in a quiet "Way of the Garden" manner to develop practical activities for those whose presently arising and falling minds are not yet suitable for meditation.

Of the hundreds of chemically dependent persons trained by the "Way of the Garden" at our Victorian Centre over many years, only two cases come to mind of "meditation sickness". In both cases, they were advised not to try meditation at that time, but chose to ignore the advice.

The main idea of the task is to help the Centre's present Meditators now to create causes for the helper's own meditation in future times. A less selfish and more subtle "global" position is arrived at in the process.

It is a truism to say the next decade should see more and more mass marketing of food, and more and more post industrial countries importing food from underdeveloped countries. Many Buddhists are poor farmers in this life.

Persons are encouraged to impact nature over the four seasons to experience impermanence for themselves. It might be as simple as cutting wood in winter to keep the fire burning.

They are encouraged to ask grounded (not abstract hypothetical) questions.

"Why am I doing this particular activity?" Ch'an method may say: "Cutting wood is cutting wood".

No killing or burning must be observed in the gardening processes if they are to make merit.

Our Buddhist contribution to rehabilitation of former drug users is to ensure that a person with a mind "like a dried leaf" is discouraged from attempting long meditation sessions when he or she wishes to begin to commence meditation practice.

In lieu, we offer or encourage suitable other "involvement" actions along a food or drink network or its transport, both directed towards our Centre's use and/or use by their own families. At least one of the five reflections on food is encouraged.

Preliminary efforts, either preparing food for others or something giving more physical exertion, such as gardening for others, does encourage his or her accumulation of *kusula kamma* (wholesome actions).

Connectivity between the food consuming Buddhists in a post industrial society and the food producing Buddhists who lead the hard life of primary producers is desirable this decade.

History shows when this understanding is lost, great suffering arises.

In Russia, after the first world war, the peasants had just about the amount of food they wanted for themselves. They would not part with any of it for the purchase of urban products. During the famine in the early thirties, the urban population was kept alive only by energetic use of armed force. In the famine, as a result of Government action millions of peasants died. If the Government had been neutral the town-dwellers would have died (8).

In general, Buddhists apart, it may be a peaceful thing for post industrial societies to be given a voluntary chance of appreciating the non-romantic agrarian microcosm when the prime causes of food are known to be the hard work of poor farmers.

May all beings be well and happy.

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J.D.H.

Please refer Graphical Image No: V2N3.?.1

Print of etching made by Printmaker June Young  
of The Nobbies, Victoria.

## WHY BUDDHISM

The first part of this talk given by Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda of Buddhist Missionary Society of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, was transcribed from a video tape and printed on the Buddha Dhyana Dana Review Vol 2. No. 2, June 1992. The second part is now presented.

Another method. Some people believe that by torturing their physical body; burning, cutting, starving, without sleeping, without eating, without taking medicines when they are sick; the more they torture their physical body, more easily they can get rid of the sins committed by them, then find out their salvation. This belief was very common at that time; even today in certain countries. Then the Buddha says; simply by torturing your physical body, you won't be able to get rid of the effect of the bad deeds or the bad karmas that you have committed, because your deeds are not done by the physical body. Mind is the culprit. Body cannot do anything if the body did not get the order from the mind. If you want to torture, punish, you must punish your mind, not the body.

Then how are you going to punish your mind. Mind is crazy, mind is jealous, mind is greedy, mind is stupid, mind is wicked; punish all those things then you can get it off the bad effects that you have committed. That means train your mind, purify your mind, cultivate more and more good deeds. Then you can overcome, you can avoid for the time being. Then you can develop very easily to find out your salvation, not by torturing your physical body.

Another group, they believe by taking holy bath in certain holy rivers and some other places, they can wash away all the sins committed by them. Here in this country also some people

come and take (?Mandesappa) in the temples to wash away their sins. Then what is the good of this? If you think you can wash away the sins committed by you by taking holy bath in a holy river, I think all those fishes and tortoises who are living in the water have no more sins, because every day they wash away their sins! And this is the way how the Buddha tried to ridicule these kinds of religious beliefs.

Again, Brahmins were regarded as high caste in the priests and all the others are belonging to low caste, even the Buddha who was born in Sakya caste, also lower according to them. Brahmins have written books against Buddhism. What they say? The Teaching of the Buddha is very good, but unfortunately we cannot take because he was not born in a Brahmin family. You see, it is like this. The Teaching of the Buddha is just like pure milk, but the container is just like dog skin so we cannot take this milk. See how they ridicule the Buddha's station because of the caste system.

The Buddha had a very big battle to wipe out, eradicate caste discrimination. The Buddha was criticised and condemned for giving due place, equal rights, to the labourers, coolies, low caste people. To practise their religion without any discrimination. Ordaining them as Monks, then allow kings and ministers to come and pay respect to reduce their pride. First time in the history a religious Teacher has done this.

Again, at that time poor ladies were not given freedom to practise any religion. Strictly prohibited to enter into any place of worship. They are not allowed to recite any holy books or any mantra in their religion. They say they are very impure. When this situation was going on, the Buddha, first time in the human history, gave full freedom for women to practise a religion, Buddhism, without any discrimination, and this freedom we still enjoy. In certain religions, when they attend to their religious services, men and women cannot sit down together. Must separate. Now here we are enjoying freedom. No discrimination. So when you study the historical background, you can understand what Buddhism has done to mankind before all these religions come into existence. Although they come and tell us that we are worshipping devils, when you study all those existing sixty-two religions in India at that time, you can see what sort of belief they had.

A religious Teacher who introduced his own Teachings had his own followers. He had recorded everything in his holy book, and followers were given advice not to do anything without referring to their holy book. Strictly observe the holy book. What happened? One day when the Teacher was crossing a river with his followers, a very narrow bridge, the Teacher fell into the river. And the followers were carrying their holy book. And the Teacher was shouting there; please save me, save me, but they were referring to their holy book to find out whether the Teacher had written in his holy book when he fell into the river to release him. It was not in the book, cannot do anything. This is the nature of religions at that time my dear friends. Even today, there are a few.

When scientists discover many things for the benefit of mankind to release their suffering, some religious groups say, 'oh we cannot accept because it is not in our holy book'. Very unfortunate. That is what the Buddha said. Don't become slaves to your holy book. Even Buddha's book. I'll tell you later Why Buddhism. Whether you can find this freedom in any other religion, he says, don't accept my Teaching, thinking the Buddha is a great man. He is an enlightened religious Teacher, wonderful wisdom. He can perform miracles, he can cure sickness, therefore we must follow him. He said do not accept my Teaching, thinking I am a great man. What will happen; you will depend on that person,

never understand the truth. That is the danger. You maintain belief and faith, never realise the Truth.

The second advice is: don't depend on your holy book. Always people say, oh, our holy book says like this, therefore we must accept.

The Buddha has given us four chances to understand the truth. Unfortunately, people don't use this. He says if you cannot understand any particular subject of the Dhamma, what do you have to do. Without listening the public because I know your nature. Always you say whenever you want to find out something in Buddhism, you say, people say like this, you know only that much. Never listen to the public. But how many Buddhists are there who can tell 'the Buddha says like this in Dhammapada, in Anguttara Nikaya, or in Sutta Pitaka, or in Vinaya Pitaka'. How many Buddhists are there? But others can say, 'Bible says like this, Koran says like this'. They can do that, but Buddhists say, 'people say like this'. After listening to all these cock-and-bull stories from old ladies and all the others, they come and say, 'People say we cannot do this'. That is your Buddhism. That is why the Buddha says don't accept anything in this world thinking the majority here in this world believe this. That system is good for democratic government to get vote, not for religion. Why? The Buddha says majority here in this world are fools. Very few people are intelligent. It is true. Then if you are going to listen to the majority, you also become fools. Think. Allow your minds, give a chance for your mind to think without depending on the Teacher, without depending on your holy book, without depending on the public.

But still I did not explain the four methods introduced by the Buddha. He said if you can understand, you must refer to your religious book. That means the basic Teaching. People have written all sorts of rubbish in the name of this religion. In different schools of Buddhism. Please don't depend on different schools of Buddhism; they have distorted, misinterpreted, misguided, misled people. Whether it is Theravada or Mahayana or whatever yana, or this yana or that yana, you can throw away all this rubbish! Try to find out what the Buddha taught.

Books are available. Alright. If after reading you find out it is difficult to understand, then what to do now. You cannot agree. Then the Buddha says there are books written as commentaries and sub-commentaries to explain the real meaning, the definition, the root, the significance of this particular issue. Take for instance now you want to know the real meaning of the Dhamma. What is Dhamma?, what is Dhamma?, you are not sure. Then you read a certain sutta. Still you cannot understand. Then you refer to the commentary.

In the commentary you can see the definition. What is the definition? ... Definition is this word. Beautiful interpretation. Meaning of Dhamma. The Buddha did not introduce a religion. When you define, analyse the meaning of this word religion, you can understand. Actually, it is not a religion, it is the Dhamma. When you realise the meaning of this word you know how to value it.

What is it? Four kinds of unfortunate states of existence where living beings suffer. In the hells, animal kingdom, ghosts or spirit world. Then various kinds of spirits - there are four groups; hell, animal kingdom, spirit world, ghosts. Four unfortunate states. The method that we practise to avoid, to escape from these four unfortunate states of existence without allowing us to fall down, get into any of these unfortunate states of existence after our death; the method introduced by the Buddha; is called Dhamma. See if it is meaningful or not.

So Dhamma does not mean praying and worshipping to Buddha, burning your sticks and burning papers, reciting mantra and suttas. Dhamma. A method for you to practise. If you don't like to suffer. Not only that ... to get rid of this wheel of existence, repeated birth and death. We come into existence, changes take place, then again start to decay; after decaying and decaying we collapse; after that disintegrate, disappear. That is what we are doing life after life.

So in between we are going on fighting and quarrelling and killing and bluffing and stealing and cheating, doing all the bad things; very seldom we get the chance to do a little bit of good. To get rid of all these unfortunate states of existence, unsatisfactoriness, suffering, physically and mentally, the method introduced by the Buddha is called Dhamma. This interpretation you can see in the commentary. Otherwise you do not know the meaning of Dhamma.

(To be continued)

DJW

### J.D. HUGHES' VISIT TO HELP APPEAL FOR BANGLADESH

John D. Hughes has been invited to celebrate his 62nd Birthday in Bangladesh and will be visiting Venerable Suddhananda Mahathero of the Dhammarajika Orphanage, from the 7.9.92 to 13.9.92.

John intends to guide Meditation practice while in Bangladesh and perform water offerings to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha to create causes for the availability of a good supply of pure, clean water which is needed for the health and well being of many.

Ven. Dr. Viriyananda Mahathera from the Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple in Box Hill, Melbourne, will visit the B.D.C. (U) Ltd on 9 September, 1992 and guide Meditation and conduct a Long Life Puja for the long life of John D. Hughes. By doing Buddhist Ceremonies in Bangladesh and Australia simultaneously, causes will be made to bring the two countries together with harmony in the future.

While in Bangladesh, John will distribute 330 special colour prints of one of his 'Nobbies' Ch'an paintings done at Phillip Island. These ancient rocks are the home of strong Deva Protectors and over many years offerings have been made to these Protectors. The distribution of the colour prints to those attending his birthday celebrations is to create a cause for providing Heavenly Naga Protectors for the people of Bangladesh.

The B.D.C.(U) Ltd has given support to the Dhammarajika Orphanage in Bangladesh over a number of years. If you would like to contribute to the running of this Orphanage, which provides help for many children who have no families and are homeless, please send your contribution in Bank Drafts in \$US made payable to Dhammarajika Orphanage, directly to Venerable Suddhananda Mahathero, Secretary General, Dhammarajika Orphanage, Dhammarajika Buddhist Monastery. Atisa Dipankar Sarak, Kamalapur, Dhaka, 1214, Bangladesh.

J.O'D. & D.J.W.

MEDITATION COURSES 1992 - 1993

Five day course 24 - 28 September 1992.  
Five day course 27 - 31 December 1992. (Ch'an Course)  
Five day course 9 - 13 April 1993.  
Five day course 11 - 15 June 1993.  
Five day course 10 - 14 September 1993.  
(The Prajna Paramita will be taught on the September 1993 course)  
Five day course 27 - 31 December 1993.

Courses run from 9 a.m.- 10 p.m. each day.  
At least five Precepts should be maintained.  
No charge.

#### CH'AN TRAINING WORKSHOPS

26 September 1992.  
31 October 1992.  
28 November 1992.  
30 January 1993.  
27 February 1993.  
27 March 1993.  
24 April 1993.

#### PRAJNA PARAMITA TEACHINGS

The Prajna Paramita in 100,000 lines is being taught on Monday evenings from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. This will be for a period of three years and three moons. Those who wish to learn the Prajna Paramita must make a commitment to attend each week.

#### WEEKLY MEDITATION CLASSES

Monday and Friday nights from 7.30 p.m.  
Teacher: John D. Hughes.

#### LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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