

BMMVdigest

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For Non-Muslims only

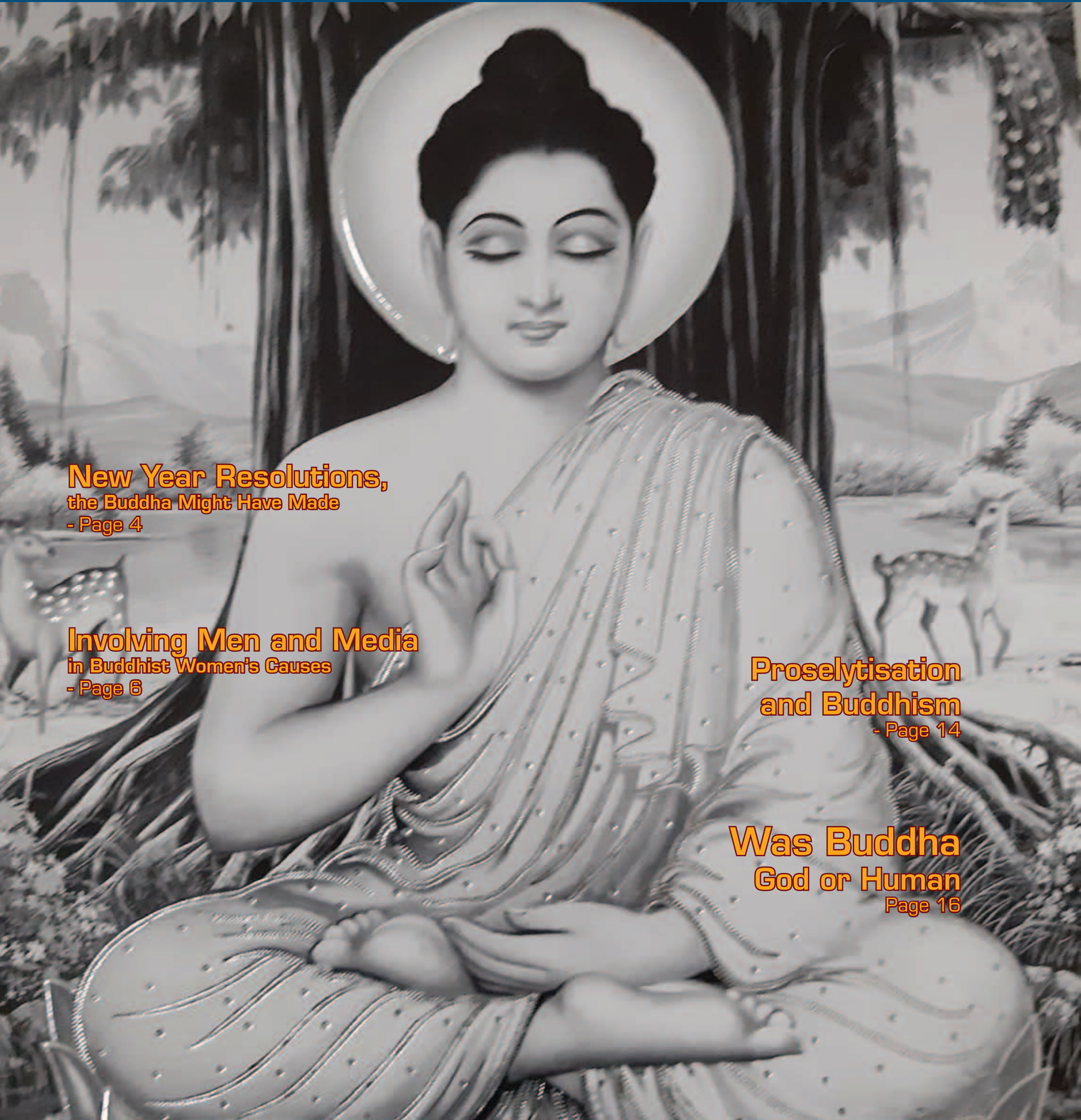
Sabbadānam Dhammadānam Jināti ~ The Gift of Dhamma excels all other Gifts

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Editor's Note

Happy New Year!!

BMV Digest ended the last decade with 2019 dedicated to Bhikkhunis and Women. There were some months where the Digest increased from the usual 16 pages to 20 pages as there were so many interesting and thought provoking articles to share especially on Bhikkhuni leaders under the “Women of Buddhism, Women of Wisdom” series. Throughout the year, prominent Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis were invited to Buddhist Maha Vihara to speak on the subject of women and the important roles they played in our community.

The Vihara Management is much grateful to the women of the past and the present who have contributed and played a big role in supporting the Buddhist Maha Vihara. We appreciate their interest, support and enthusiasm in coming forward to volunteer their services at Friends of the Vihara (FOV) activities; Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS); helping out at the breakfast and lunch dana for the Maha Sangha; coming in large numbers to listen to the Dhamma, participate in Retreats, observe the 8-Precept programmes and their generous donations in cash and kind towards the upkeep of the temple and its premises. A big Sadhu to all.

What’s in store for the Digest in 2020? After much thought and observation, a decision was made to issue the Digest once every 2 months starting with this issue, Jan-Feb 2020. It is envisioned that with this new time line, members and devotees will be able to read the Digest at their leisure time before the next bi-monthly issue comes out. Look out for some diverse and controversial topics in the coming issues. Buddhist Art is also an area we want to explore and we hope to source some knowledgeable and insightful write-ups on this.

May the year 2020 be a peaceful, happy and successful year for you and May the Noble Triple Gem bless and protect you and your family always.

I will leave you with a note from Ajahn Jayasaro to ponder over...

“Practising the Dhamma isn’t easy. We have to go against a lot of old habits, some of which have accumulated over many lifetimes. The resistance we feel to this process can seem very solid, the doubts so reasonable and intelligent.

But ask yourself this: if this work needs to be done – if there can be no hope of true happiness without removing the inner causes of suffering – then why not now? Who knows what the future holds? How long will these favourable supporting conditions remain?

You have a precious human body and mind, access to the Lord Buddha’s teachings and teachers who deeply care for your welfare. What more do you need?”

Sukhihotu.
Pamela Jayawardena



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New Year Messages

Venerable Chief's Message

"Dveme, bhikkhave, puggalā dullabhā lokasmim. katame dve? yo ca pubbakārī, yo ca kataññū katavedī. ime kho, bhikkhave, dve puggalā dullabhā lokasmin "ti.

"These two people are hard to find in the world. Which two? The one who is first to do a kindness, and the one who is grateful and thankful for a kindness done." — AN 2:118

Sukihontu

What is the meaning of gratitude? According to Google it is "the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness".

Often we're told to remember to be grateful for blessings or good fortune. But Buddhism teaches us to be grateful, period. Gratitude is to be cultivated as a habit or attitude of mind not dependent on conditions.

"The Blessed One said, 'Now what is the level of a person of no integrity? A person of no integrity is ungrateful and unthankful. This ingratitude, this lack of thankfulness, is advocated by rude people. It is entirely on the level of people of no integrity. A person of integrity is grateful and thankful. This gratitude, this thankfulness, is advocated by civil people. It is entirely on the level of people of integrity'."

We have much to be thankful for the many dhamma talks and retreats held in 2019 by prominent and world renowned monks locally and from USA, Sri Lanka, Singapore as well for our very own distinguished lay dhamma speakers from various Buddhist Centres in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

As we look forward towards 2020, BMV Management is trying their best to bring in good local and international monks and lay speakers for the benefit of our devotees but all these cost money especially the transport

fare to fly them here. We look forward to your generous monetary support in assisting the Society in allaying these costs. After all the Buddha did say that 'The Gift of Dhamma excels all other Gifts' – *Sabbadānam Dhammadānam Jināti*.

Personally, I wish to thank all members of the Maha Sangha at BMV, the Management Committee, BMV office staff and all Vihara volunteers, BISDS teachers, staff and volunteers, K Sri Dhammananda Institute lecturers, staff and volunteers, FOV leaders and volunteers and last but not least our cherished Donors and Sponsors for their precious time, effort and contributions whether monetary or in kind, towards making Buddhist Maha Vihara a leading Buddhist centre in the Klang Valley and Malaysia.

May the Noble Triple Gem continue to guide and bless you and your family for a peaceful, healthy, successful and happy New Year.

Ven. Datuk K. Sri Dhammaratana
Nayaka Maha Thera

Chief Incumbent Bhikkhu
Buddhist Maha Vihara /pj



President's Message

Dear Friends,

One year has come to an end and we start the new year 2020 with renewed vigour to serve the community. We had a fast moving year in terms of the number of talks and retreats that we organised at the Vihara. The recently concluded 44th Novitiate Program saw monastics (including a Bhikkhuni) from Sri Lanka and Canada breathe freshness into the program. The success of it is not just due to the monastics but also good participation by samaneras and upasikas. We hope the experiences gained are carried by word of mouth by them for the benefit of potential candidates.

We must acknowledge and recognise the contributions of lay persons like the past President, the late Mr Sarath W. Surendre. We as a community, acknowledge his long and wide contribution to various Buddhist and inter religious organisations. We hope there will arise such individuals of commitment in the future.

The BMV Digest, numerous publications, the YouTube uploads of talks and the social media postings are an ever increasing communication effort by BMV. Should we improve further? Yes, but we need manpower resources with the right skills. We are on the lookout and welcome any volunteers. We need to embrace technology to get our message across and we also need new ideas.

We have a strong commitment to counselling services but lack coordinators. Most resources are available in terms of space, counsellors, trainers and communication facilities. Are there any takers for the task?

We recently committed a permanent space for the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and are now able to have weekly clinics.

We have planned a year-long series of talks and retreats and invite you to stay tuned. We hope you benefit from these efforts. It does give us joy and satisfaction. We note that we do reach out well to a senior audience but are not as successful with the younger group. We hope to correct this by the impetus provided by the BISDS, the Friends of the Vihara (FOV) and the Blooming Lotus (for toddlers) These are our out-reach avenues. Come and see what we do. If you want to, you can join in.

We have a vision to have BMV open 24/7. Come help us make this a reality.

Theruwana Saranai

Sirisena Perera

President

Buddhist Maha Vihara



Feature Article



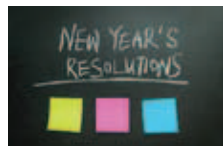
New Year's Resolutions, the Buddha Might Have Made

by Toni Bernhard J.D.



The Buddha's teachings were transmitted from generation to generation orally for about five centuries. They were then written down in what are referred to as the Buddha's discourses. In presenting these New Year's resolutions, I've taken the liberty of putting some of his words into the first person and adjusting the language in a few places so the text reads as resolutions. The content is true to his discourses.

The Buddha's resolutions:



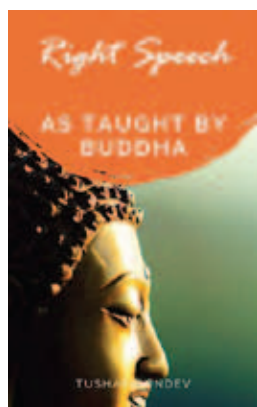
1. I will not believe in anything simply because I've heard it and it is rumored by many. I will not believe in anything simply on the authority of my teachers and elders. But after observation and analysis, when I know for myself that something, if undertaken and practiced, will lead to the welfare and happiness of one and all, I will accept it and live up to it.

This is a shortened passage from a well-known discourse called the Kalama Sutta. The Buddha is telling us to take responsibility for our own lives—to check everything out for ourselves (including his own teaching), and if we decide that undertaking and practicing something will benefit all beings, live up to it!

2. Before speaking, I will reflect on whether what I'm about to say is true, kind, and helpful.

These three are distilled from the guidelines given by the Buddha on Wise Speech.

It's a tall order to make all our speech true, kind, and helpful, but we can set the intention to keep those three qualities in mind before we open our mouths...I've found that it's often easy to meet two of the criteria, but not all three. For example, it may be true that a friend hasn't been in touch for a month, but would it be helpful to confront the friend about it? Before sending



a "Why haven't you been in touch?" email, if we replace the intention to confront with the intention to inquire ("How are you doing?"), the communication might just become kind and helpful. We may discover that the friend hasn't been in touch because he or she is having work or family problems, which gives us the opportunity to respond with compassion and support rather than self-interest.

3. Hatred never ceases through hatred; hatred ceases through non-hatred. This is an ancient truth. I will not engage in hatred.

"Hatred never ceases through hatred; hatred ceases through non-hatred" is a well-known passage from The Dhammapada. We may find it easy to agree with the first assertion, but find the second one to be more problematic. Yet, think of Nelson Mandela who spent 27 years in prison and emerged, not bitter or angry, but with an open heart that allowed him to do so much to heal the wounds in South Africa and to inspire people around the world to pursue a path of peace.

4. Whatever I keep pursuing with my thinking and pondering becomes the inclination of my awareness, so I will watch my thoughts and their ways with care.

Here, the Buddha is asking us to be mindful of our thinking because thoughts can have consequences. We may not be able to control the thoughts that pop into our minds, but we can learn not to act on them if the result would make matters worse for ourselves or others. For example, if someone else gets something that we want, envy may pop right into our minds; but with practice, we can learn to just observe it rather than "pursuing" it—pursuing it by spinning stress-filled stories about it, like "she doesn't deserve that thing; I do!" This just intensifies the envy until it becomes "the inclination of our awareness" and we, in effect, become an envious person which only leads to suffering and unhappiness.

5. I will not consider the faults of others or what they have or have not done. Rather, I will consider what I myself have done or have not done.

This resolution speaks for itself.

6. As a solid rock is not moved by the wind, I will not be moved by praise or blame.

Some of the Buddha's followers had harassed a monk because he was short. When the Buddha heard that the monk showed no resentment, he noted that the monk had remained unmoved in praise and blame, like a rock.

In another discourse, the Buddha said that there will always be praise and blame in this world, so I interpret the rock metaphor to mean that what matters to our well-being is our response to praise and blame when they're aimed at us. Will we be thrown about by the wind they create, or will we be still and know they are not what matter to our peace and well-being in this life?

7. I will develop and cultivate my mind.

The Buddha said, "Just as, of all trees, the balsam is the most soft and pliant, in the same way, I don't envision a single thing that, when developed and cultivated, is as soft and pliant as the mind." This is great news! It means that even when we can't alleviate our physical suffering, we can develop and cultivate our minds to alleviate mental suffering.

Neuroscientists often refer to the brain's plasticity. This is the same thing the Buddha meant by "soft and pliant." Because the mind is so amazingly pliant, we can learn not to feed negative thoughts and emotions so that they don't grow strong and turn into speech or action that might harm ourselves or others. We can also learn to cultivate gentle and healing thoughts and emotions, such as compassion and kindness.

As human beings, we have the unique ability to develop and cultivate our minds. I, for one, resolve in the new year not to squander this precious opportunity.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/turning-straw-gold/201112/new-year-s-resolutions-the-buddha-might-have-made>

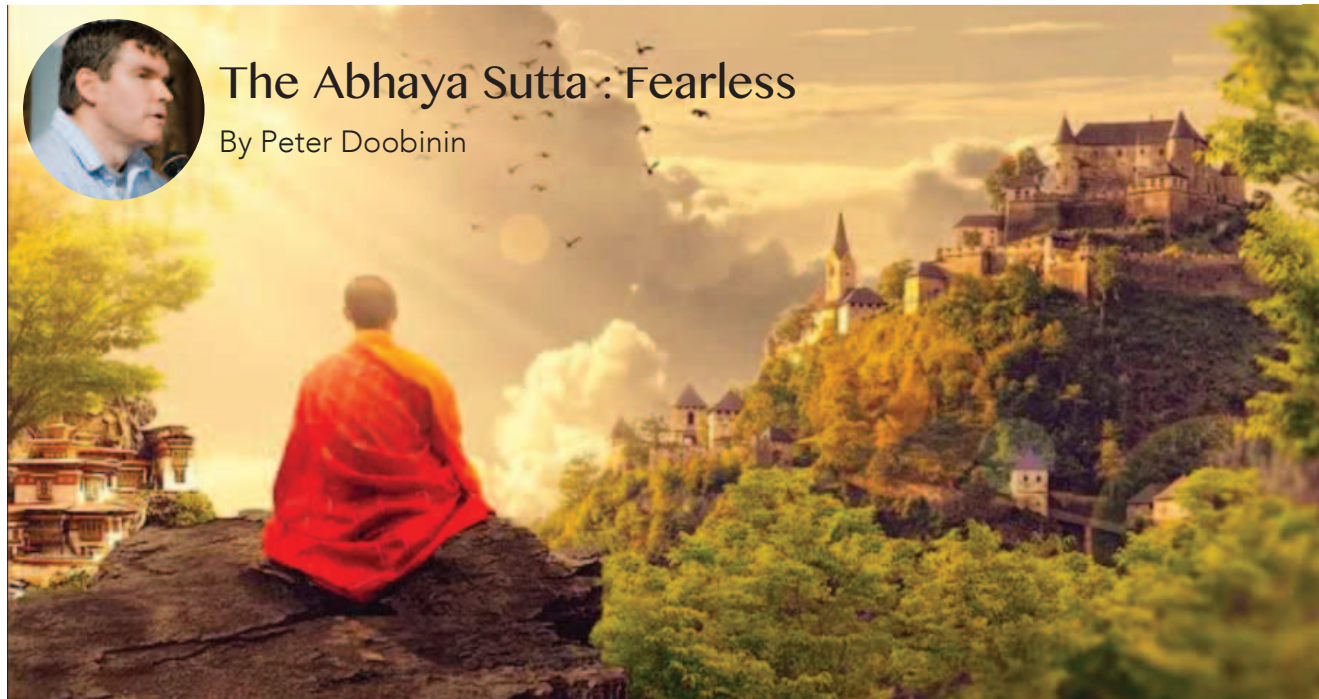
About the Writer: Toni Bernhard J.D. is the author of 3 other books *How to Live Well with Chronic Pain and Illness: A Mindful Guide* (2015); *How to Wake Up: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide to Navigating Joy and Sorrow* (2013); *How to be Sick A Buddhist Inspired Guide for the chronically ill and their Caregivers* (2010) and writes for *Psychology Today*.

Teachings and Practice



The Abhaya Sutta : Fearless

By Peter Doobinin



"The Abhaya Sutta explores our fear of death and asks how we can face impermanence with joy."

In the Abhaya Sutta (Fearless Sutta), the Buddha explains how we transcend the fear of death. When we fear death, we're likely to suffer in this human life. On the other hand, when we're able to move beyond the fear of death, we're greatly served in our efforts to know happiness in life.

At the sutta's outset, the Buddha is visited by a brahman by the name of Janussoni. Janussoni tells the Buddha that it's his opinion that everybody is afraid of death. The Buddha disagrees. Some people are, indeed, afraid of death, the Buddha says. Others, he says, are not.

The Buddha describes four types of people who will, invariably, be afflicted by the fear of death. First is the person "who has not abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever, & craving for sensuality." When the Buddha speaks about sensuality, he's referring to the composite of actions, thinking, narratives, and self-identification that is involved in grasping after the pleasures of the world. When we spend our lives seeking sense pleasure—food, sex, entertainment, the instant gratification that technology offers—then we're bound to grow fearful as we approach death, realizing that we'll no longer be able to indulge in these worldly affairs.

Second, the person "who has not abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever, & craving for the body" will fear death. The attachment to the body is something that most of us suffer to a rather large extent. We're dependent on the body—how it feels, how it functions, what it looks like—for our happiness. We identify with the body; we believe that the body is "ours" to own or that it is who we are. So when death approaches, those of us who cling to the body are apt to experience the terror of losing it.

The third person who fears death "has not done what is good, has not done what is skillful, has not given protection to those in fear, and instead has done what is evil, savage, & cruel." The Buddha calls actions unskillful when they cause harm to others and ourselves. Unskillful actions are imbued with desire and aversion and bring about suffering. So the person who hasn't

acted skillfully becomes fearful as he considers the unpleasant "destination" he'll go to after he dies. We also may be stricken with remorse or fear that we haven't made the most of our human life. We may become anxious about leaving behind an unfortunate legacy.

Lastly, the Buddha speaks about the person "in doubt & perplexity, who has not arrived at certainty with regard to the True Dhamma." Having failed to practice the dharma and discern the truths of the Buddha's path, this person is likely to experience the fear of death in the face of the unknown.



In the next part of the sutta, the Buddha describes the four kinds of people who do not fear death. First, there's the person "who has abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever, & craving for sensuality." The dharma student learns to relinquish her "craving for sensuality" by seeing the drawbacks in her craving, seeing that looking for happiness in sense pleasure brings about suffering. She learns to see that all the pleasures of the world—the lovely sunsets, the ice cream, the images on the computer screen, the streaming movies—are decidedly impermanent. When we see their inconsequential and ephemeral nature, we lose interest in them. Having developed this wisdom, we're no longer afraid of losing these pleasurable things.

Likewise, the second type of fearless person learns to become disenchanted with the body. The dharma student investigates the body and comes to understand that it is impermanent, or inconstant. She realizes that she does not own the body and that it is, in large part, beyond her control. By conducting an ongoing study of the body, she cultivates this insight, lets go of her attachment to the body and is freed from her fear of losing it.

In laying out the third case, the Buddha suggests that person who has lived a skillful life is not afraid when death approaches. Having refrained from taking harmful actions, the dharma student isn't afraid of ending up, after death, in an unfavorable "destination." She doesn't suffer

the remorse and compunction of having lived in an unskillful manner informed by desire and aversion. She knows that, when it's time to leave this earthly plane, she will have left behind beneficial gifts. Simply put, she has lived well, so when death comes her heart is filled with love, compassion, joy, and peace.

The last case is the person "who has no doubt or perplexity, who has arrived at certainty with regard to the True Dhamma." When we understand the dharma and comprehend the truth, we're able to transcend the fear of death. As dharma students develop virtue, concentration, and insight, we come to see that all conditioned experience is impermanent. It's not-self. It's not ours. The various sense pleasures, the body, thoughts, and emotions—including fear itself—are conditioned things and are subject to birth and death. Knowing this, truly, in the heart, we no longer attempt to hold on to these facets of human experience because we know they can't be held onto. And we stop expecting to find true happiness in things that, by their nature, come and go.

Wisdom manifests, ultimately, in understanding that which is not impermanent, an ever-present truth (akaliko) that doesn't die because it transcends time and space. This deathless quality is called nibbana (nirvana). The deathless isn't only an object of faith; the dharma student is asked to know it as the third noble truth, the realization of cessation.

Mindfulness of death is one of the most important practices we can engage in to know the deathless. As the Buddha says, "Mindfulness of death—when developed & pursued—is of great fruit & great benefit. It gains a footing in the Deathless, has the Deathless as its final end." (AN 6.20) At first, we may glimpse moments of the deathless. As Insight teacher Joseph Goldstein says, "small moments, many times."

The Buddha rarely described this experience specifically, but it can be understood as a consciousness that doesn't land on any objects, a "consciousness without feature." (DN 11) And when we finally know this truth that transcends death, we can fully abandon our fear, because we know that there is a true unconditional happiness: nibbana—a happiness that doesn't die.



Source: <https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/abhaya-sutta-study/>

About the Writer : Peter Doobinin was the guiding teacher of Downtown Meditation in New York City for 16 years and now teaches insight meditation in Berlin. He was also a co-founder of New York Insight and is the author of *The Skill of Living*.

Feature Article

Involving Men and Media in Buddhist Women's Causes

by Raymond Lam



As I begin this contribution for a women's blog, I have to first acknowledge my background and privilege. I am constructed as a man and all men in a patriarchal society possess male privilege. Initially, I thought a publication tailored for women's experiences didn't need yet another man's intrusion. Yet maleness need not be a disqualification. Men have an essential role in the Buddhist women's movement and they can bring tangible benefits. When I began editing Buddhistdoor International, I allied the publication with Sakyadhita to learn more about Buddhist women's progress and struggles on the ground. Over half of Buddhistdoor's columns and opinion now belong to female voices, lay and monastic. The gender imbalance is intentional. Furthermore, in less than a year this blog has become one of the best resources for reading the stories of Buddhist women.

I fulfil a mere courtier's role to Buddhist women's causes. It sounds obvious, but men who support women's causes need to assist women leaders, not assume leadership. Without this mindfulness, men won't sufficiently empathize with the vision of meritocracy that many Buddhist nuns and laywomen work towards. Privilege is not always about economic inheritance; it also means visibility and reach, ease of access to a voice in the media, and influence over the powerful—opportunities most women in history have been denied.

When considering the disadvantages Buddhist women still suffer, two setbacks stand out: lack of visibility and exposure in media, and lack of recognition by men. The rise of female leaders has helped to push back against the lack of visibility. The Internet and social media have also allowed more platforms to be built for female-friendly media. Yet I could direct you to Sandy Boucher's excellent article and its observations still stand accurate:

"With the exception of Pema Chodron . . . the public face of Buddhism is very much male. Robert Thurman, the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, various handsome, fresh-faced Tibetan monks—these are the folks who appear over and over on the magazine covers of our own Buddhist magazines, as well as in general publications like Time and Newsweek to represent Buddhism» ("From Our History to Our Future").

Male indifference or hostility to female prominence and authority may explain why this has occurred. Yet, even though patriarchy in religion has sidelined women, sincere and good men still have a critical role to play in fostering a better environment for female leaders. Look at the brave Theravada monks who have argued for the legality of ordaining women: Ven. Analayo's point in his recent groundbreaking essay about women's ordination is that it is legal and necessary for monks to ordain nuns in the Theravada Vinaya if all other possibilities are exhausted. In this respect, men have played a critical role in the revival of the Theravada nuns' lineage from the outset.

My sisters' urgent task is to co-opt more males to their cause, and my brothers must rise to their challenge. We must convince males that this is not a revolution against the old order but an improvement of it. Ven. Karma Lekshe Tsomo said once, "As an ancient tradition struggling

to survive under very different social conditions and faced by intensive conversion attempts in many countries, Buddhism needs to utilize all of its human resources, especially women." In this single sentence, Ven. Lekshe captured the basic argument. The Buddhist women's movement should co-opt the entire Fourth Estate, for it can serve as the broadcasting branch of women's causes. Inviting commentators, pundits, cultural critics, and columnists will help female monastics to disseminate their message. The power of the press is to be able to meet the challenge of the problems that Ven. Lekshe identifies: drastically different social conditions and intense conversion attempts. There is a place for Buddhist media and Buddhist journalism and one of its potential beneficiaries is Buddhist women.

The benefits of unleashing women's potential are evident in Chinese Buddhism. In the West, Chinese civilization is seen as patriarchal but the story is a bit more complex. Led by Master Daoxuan (596–667 CE), the Vinaya School played a critical part in establishing the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya as the clerical law throughout China. By this historical accident, the living Dharmaguptaka Vinaya allowed for full female ordination in not only China but in also all other Mahayana-dominated cultures near its orbit (Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and Taiwan). Taiwanese nuns, in particular, lead trailblazing initiatives such as establishing the global humanitarian group Tzu Chi, by being among the first to perform marriage ceremonies for lesbian couples, and by participating proactively in the sustainability movement.

I have no intention to disown this millennia-old inheritance and the tradition I serve. Rather, I prefer to understand my situation as a moral calling to join with Theravada sisters and brothers in the journey to make women and men (as well as transgender and intersex individuals) equal in the Theravada and Dharmaguptaka codes.

We have come full circle. Just as Chinese civilization, a culture based on patriarchy, became a mighty stronghold of a Vinaya permitting full bhikkhuni ordination, men (and even journalism) can also become facilitators of Dharma equality.

Source: <http://awakeningbuddhistwomen.blogspot.com/2013/12/involving-men-and-media-in-buddhist.html>

About the Writer: Raymond Lam, Journalist and Editor, received lay ordination as an upasaka (attendant) of the Chinese Vinaya tradition and is a practitioner of Mahayana Pure Land Buddhism. A journalist of religion by trade, he is the editor of the Buddhistdoor International website. He is also an archivist of the Awakening Buddhist Women Resource Library and a member of the International Ch'an Buddhism Institute and the Hong Kong Journalists' Association. His major interests are Silk Road studies, history, comparative theology, and Huayan Buddhism.



BMV News & Events

1. Upcoming Events for January and February 2020

A. Dhamma Sharing – Dhamma Dana Series for January

Bhante Minuwangoda Gnanawasa

Bhante Gnanawasa is a University lecturer for Education Science at the Bhiksu University of Sri Lanka. He has completed his Bachelor of Ed. degree in Education Science from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. He is currently pursuing his MA in the same University. Bhante Gnanawasa is a known buddhist missionary in Sri Lanka and preaches on several national T.V channels and Radio stations.



The following is Bhante's Dhamma-sharing Programme for January 2020

Friday, 3rd Jan @ 8pm

Topic – The Human Mind and its Nature

Sunday, 5th Jan @ 10am

Topic – Buddhist Solutions for Life's Problems

Monday 6th Jan @ 8pm

Topic - Rahulawada Sutta

Thursday 9th Jan @ 7.30pm

Topic - Chunda Sutta

Friday 10th Jan @ 8pm

Topic – True Loving Kindness

Sunday 12th Jan @ 10am

Topic – Meritorious Deeds for all Time (Vanaropa Sutta)

Monday 13th Jan @ 8pm

Topic – Sariputta Seehanada Sutta

Friday 17th Jan @ 8pm

Topic – Is Buddhism Pessimistic

B. Dhamma Sharing – Dhamma Dana Series for February

Dr Vijitha Kumara

Dr Vijitha is the Senior Lecturer at the Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Colombo. Dr Vijitha is also the Coordinator of PhD/MPhil Programmes, Department of Buddhist Studies.

Dr Vijitha is also currently a Visiting Lecturer at:

1) University of Kelaniya, MA programme, (Buddhist Literary Criticism)

2) University of Sri Jayewardenepura (Buddhist Epistemology)



Sunday 2nd Feb @ 10am

Topic – Anger Management – the Buddhist Way

Monday 3rd Feb @ 8pm

Topic – Dhaniya Sutta of the Suttanipāta

Friday 7th Feb @ 8pm

Topic – Strategies for a well balanced Life – An analysis of Saddā and Paññā

Sunday 9th Feb @ 10am

Topic - Nibbāna is an Experience in this Life – Anupādisesapariniḥbāna, Anupādāpariniḥbāna and Appaccayapariniḥbāna

Monday 10th Feb @ 8pm

Topic - Cetokhila Sutta of the Majjhima- nikāya

Friday 14th Feb @8pm

Topic – Is everything due to Kamma?

BMV News & Events

2. Past Events in October, November and December 2019

A. DHAMMA SHARING

a) Ven Dr Omalpe Sobhita Maha Thera

Fri 4th Oct -

Real Meaning of Love (Metta Sutta)

Sun 6th Oct

- Understanding of Life (Samma Ditthi)



b) Professor Dr Bhante Seevali Maha Thera

Fri 11th Oct

- Joy of a Fulfilling Lay Life



c) Bro James Ong

Sun 13th Oct

- The 5 Aggregates of Attachment and the Way of Detachment



d) Bro Ananda Fong

Fri 18th Oct

- The True Significance of the Maha Sangha



e) Bro Tan Siang Chye

Fri 25th Oct

- Achieving A Real Higher Happiness



f) Bro A K Nelson

Fri 1st Nov

- Buddhism and World Religions



g) Ajahn Brahm

Sat 2nd Nov

- Hard Times



h) Bhante Kovida

Sun 3rd Nov

- 3 Qualities of the Buddha and our Mental Defilements

Fri 8th Nov

- Benefits of Mindfulness and the Freedom of Non-Duality

Sun 10th Nov

- 3 Characteristics of Existence and the Reason for Impermanence & Change

Fri 15th Nov

- The Age Old Question – What happens to me when I die



Sun 17th Nov

- The Buddha's Cure for Birth, Sickness, Ageing and Death

Fri 22nd Nov

- Understanding the Nature of Fear and Insecurity

BMV News & Events

i) **Ayya K Dhammadinna** (2 pix)

Sun 24th Nov

– Metta Sutta and Introduction to Metta Meditation Techniques

Sun 1st Dec

– How to Develop Inner Qualities for the Noble Path

Fri 6th Dec

– Eradication of Craving According to the Buddha



j) **Bhante Kotawaye Suseela**

Sun 8th Dec

– Mindfulness for Stress Relieve



k) **Ajahn Kaizhao**

16th Dec to 19th Dec from 7.30pm to 9.30pm

- 4 Day Dhamma Course in Mandarin



B. MEDITATION RETREATS AND INTERACTIVE SESSION

A) **Ajahn Brahm**

Half Day Interactive Session – 2nd Nov from 2pm to 5 pm

Topic - Opening the Door of your Heart

- The Buddhist Approach to Upheavals, Frustration and Anger



BMV News & Events

B) Bhante Kovida

i) Meditation Retreat for Beginners

Sat 9th Nov from 9.00am to 6.00pm

ii) Meditation Retreat for Intermediate Level

Sat 14th Nov from 9.00am to 6.00pm

iii) Meditation Retreat for Advanced Level

Sat 23rd Nov from 9.00am to 6.00pm



iv) Meditation at Outdoor Park (Lake Gardens)

Half Day from 9.00am to 1.00pm



C) Dana for 100 monks

– 26th October



One Hundred Monks arrived from Sri Lanka on a tour of the country for a few days. Their first stop was for dana at BMV on 26th October. The group of monks paid homage at the Vihara shrine room and pagoda and were given a tour of the Vihara before dana commenced. Volunteers came in full force to help serve the monks which was a sight to behold. Many dana groups and individual devotees came forward to offer pirikera to the monks.



BMV News & Events

D) Buddhist Forum

– 29th November

Speakers – Bhante Kovida from Canada and Bhikkhuni Dhammadina from Sri Lanka

Moderator – Bro Vijaya Samarawickrama

Topic - Why Meditation? What is Buddhist Meditation?

Time – 8.00pm to 10.00pm



E) 44th Annual Buddhist Novitiate Programme

– 6th Dec to 15th Dec 2019 5 pix

The Shaving Ceremony was held on Fri 6th Dec and the Ordination Ceremony was held on Sat 7th Dec followed by the Pindapata to end the Programme on 15th December. In between there were meditation sessions and Dhamma talks for the 25 participants conducted by Programme Director Ven Prof R Padmasiri Maha Thera, Bhante Kovida, Bhante Kotawaye Suseela and Ayya K Dhammadinna.



Ordination Ceremony



Pindapata



Meditation session



Walking meditation at the Wisma Dharma Cakra Isipatana Meditation Pavilion 1st Floor

Dhamma Sharing for the public were held at night at 8.00pm as follows:-

Sat 7th Dec – Significance of Renunciation by Bhante Kovida

Sun 8th Dec – 6th to 10th Precept by Bhante R Padmasiri

Mon 9th Dec – The Noble Eightfold Path by Bhante Kovida

Tues 10th Dec – Women in Buddhism with special emphasis on Arahant Sanghamitta by Ayya K Dhammadinna

Wed 11th Dec – The Benefits of Meditation by Ayya K Dhammadinna

Thurs 12th Dec – Anicca, Dukkha, Anatta by Bhante R Padmasiri

Fri 13th Dec – Parabhava Sutta

BMV News & Events

F) Sanghamitta Full Moon Day

– 10th December

The December full moon of Unduvap is a special anniversary in Buddhism that honours the arrival of the Arahant Bhikkhuni Sanghamitta on the shores of Sri Lanka. She brought a sapling of the sacred Bo-tree from Bodhgaya, and the lineage of full ordination for women in Buddhism. An Observance of 8 Precepts Programme was held from 7am to 7 pm. The programme was conducted by Ayya K Dhammadinna from Ayya Khema Meditation Centre of Sri Lanka. A total of 23 Upasikas and Upasakas participated.

At 7.30pm, a special procession within the Vihara grounds was held honouring the Bhikkhuni Order and the sapling Bodhi tree led by Ayya Dhammadinna, Novitiate programme Samaneras, Upasikas and devotees carrying Puja trays for the 28-Buddhas puja. The Buddha puja ended with a Dhamma sermon by Bhikkhuni Dhammadinna on the significance of the full moon, the Bhikkuni order and Sanghamitta.



Ayya Dhammadinna leading the Sanghamitta day procession with the sapling of the bodhi tree



8 Precepts Programme



28 Buddhas Puja



Upasikas and Upasakas of the 8 Precepts programme

2C Other BMV Activities

a) Publications

Distribution of hundreds of Buddhist material produced by BMV at Chennai, India in cooperation with Buddha Light International Association (BLIA). CDs of Pali chanting with tamil translation, Tamil Buddhist Hymns and Tamil books – Dhammapada, What is Religion, How to Overcome your Difficulties, Let Peace Prevail on Earth, Do you Believe in Rebirth, etc.



BLIA Cordinator for South Asia, Ven. Chuehmen handing the Tamil Buddhist Hymns CD to Upasaka Goutamadoss

b) Health Check

– 15th December

A few health screening tests were conducted for the benefit of BMV devotees at Dewan Asoka from 9am to 1pm. Available were vision tests (refractor meter to check vision and Tonometer to check glaucoma) and blood sugar tests. Organ donation and blood donation booths were also set up to encourage devotees to a noble cause.

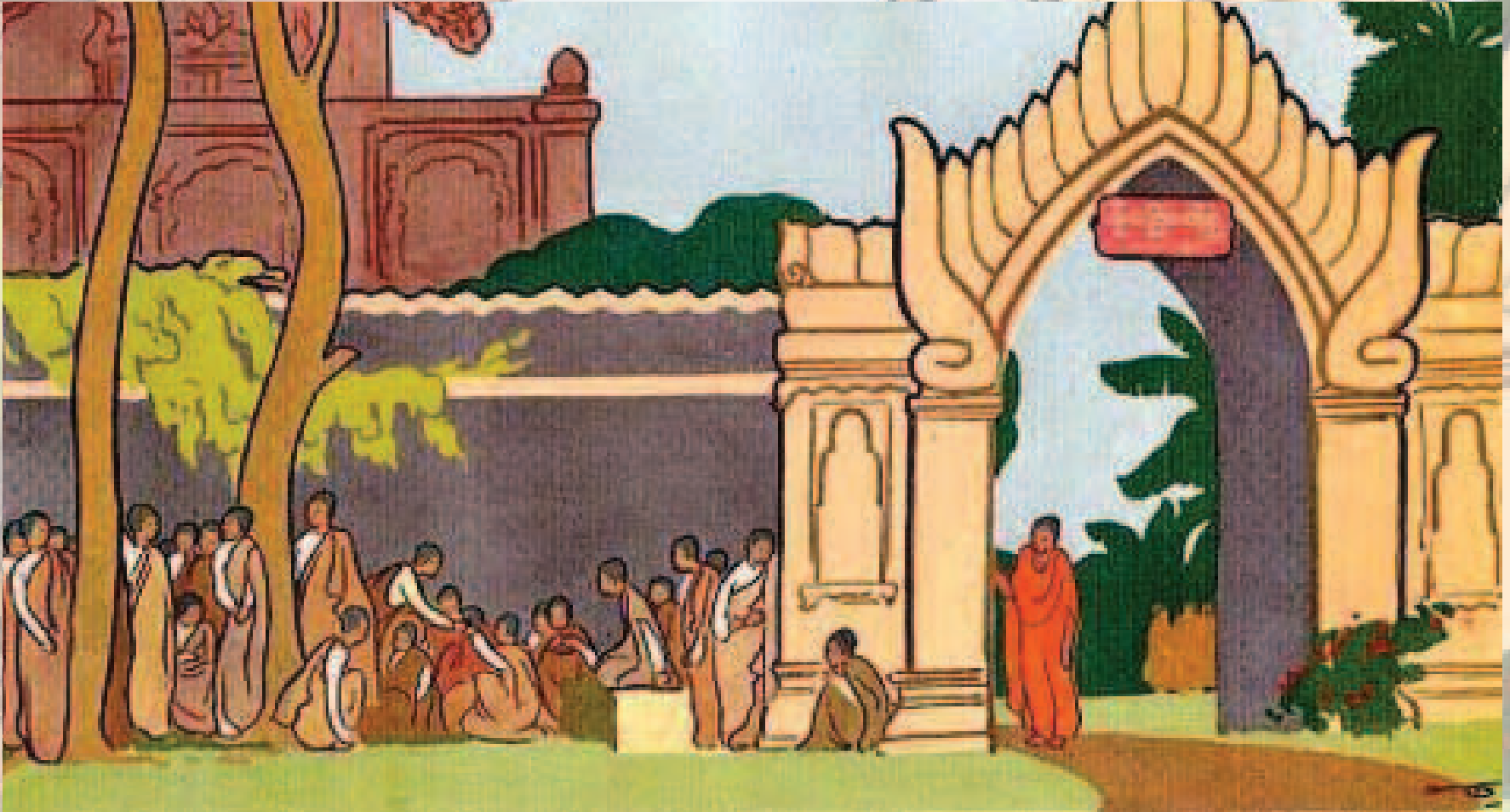
Blood sugar test



Blood donation drive



Pen Portraits



Nandaka Maha Thera inviting the Bhikkhunis for the sermon

Portraits of 93 Eminent Disciples of the Buddha

The theme is to pay tribute to the 80 Maha Arahants and the 13 Maha Theri Arahants who had by their efforts won emancipation of a rare distinction. They belonged to the innermost circles in the life of the Gautama Buddha. The Buddha and the Maha Arahants were together at all times. Their lives portray heroic endeavor.

No 36. Nandaka ~ He was most proficient in expounding the Law to the Nuns

A householder of Savatthi. The Apadāna (ii.499) says he belonged to a rich clan of merchants and that he entered the Order at the ceremony of dedication of Jetavana and was ordained as Nandaka Thera.

Having entered the Order after hearing a sermon of the Buddha, he developed insight and soon attained Arahantship. The Maha Arahant became proficient in preaching to the Order of the Nuns who loved to hear him. A born orator, he became a successful preacher.

It was at this time, Sakya and Koliya were ready to go to war over a dispute about the distribution of water in the river passing through their realms. After the Buddha had successfully preached to the tribes, he took it upon himself the task of strengthening the faith of 500 Sakya Nobles and gradually had them brought to the fold of Arahantship. Their 500 wives also entered the Noble Order through Maha Prajapati Gotami and it was the custom that a monk should each in turn instruct them.

When Nandaka's turn came, he was shy to preach for these wives once comprised his harem in a previous life when he was King. He knew that some of the Maha Arahants would discover the fact by their own superior knowledge, so he sent a deputy instead. The Nuns expected his arrival and the Buddha too, attracted by his preaching, was present. The Buddha intervened.

Nandaka Maha Thera did preach with such a good effect that every one of the 500 Nuns entered the stream of Arahantship and became Sotapanna. This fact was brought to the notice of Buddha by the Nuns themselves. Buddha knew that they would progress further to Arahantship if Nandaka Thera continued to preach. So Buddha directed the Nuns to Venerable Nandaka who was able to preach with such clarity that they, one and all became Arahants. The Buddha compared the first sermon of the Venerable to the crescent moon and the second sermon to the full moon. The sermon he preached is known as the Nandakovada Sutta.

From that time, the Buddha addressing the Noble Order of monks and the laity, declared Venerable Nandaka, foremost among exhorters of the nuns and he had no peer in the Order for preaching unto the Order of Nuns. The sermon he preached is known as the Nandakovada Sutta.

His aspiration after eminence was formed in the time of Padumuttara Buddha, when he heard a disciple of that Buddha declared foremost among exhorters of nuns. He offered the Buddha a very costly robe and illuminated his bodhi tree. In the time of Kakusandha Buddha he was a karavika bird and delighted the Buddha with his song. Later, he was a peacock, and sang three times daily at the door of a Pacceka Buddha's cell.

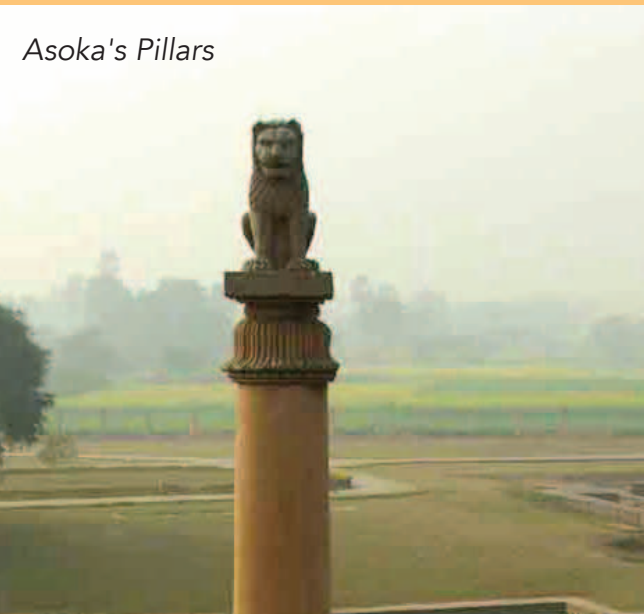
He saw the weakness and strength

Of ladies and was their shield,

He spoke to them at length,

What a power he did wield

Feature Article



Asoka's Pillars

Proselytization and Buddhism

By Barbara O'Brien



Why I Don't Ask Strangers If They've Found Buddha

The historical Buddha openly disagreed with many of the teachings of the Brahmins, Jains, and other religious people of his day. Nevertheless, he taught his disciples to respect clergy and followers of other religions.

Further, in most schools of Buddhism aggressive proselytizing is discouraged. Proselytizing is defined by dictionaries as attempting to convert someone from one religion or belief to another, or arguing that your position as the only correct one. I want to make it clear proselytizing is not the same as simply sharing one's religious beliefs or practices without trying to "push" them or force them on others.

I'm sure you're aware that some religious traditions insist on proselytizing. But going back to the time of the historical Buddha, our tradition has been for a Buddhist not to speak of the Buddha dharma until asked. Some schools require being asked three times.

The Pali Vinaya-pitaka, rules for the monastic orders, forbids monks and nuns from preaching to people who seem disinterested or disrespectful. It's also against the Vinaya rules to teach people who are in vehicles, or walking, or who are sitting while the monastic is standing.

In brief, in most schools it's bad form to go about accosting strangers on the street and asking if they've found Buddha.

I've been in conversations with Christians who are completely baffled by the Buddhist reluctance to proselytize. They see doing whatever it takes to convert people as an act of charity. A Christian said to me recently that if Buddhists

don't want to share their religion with everyone they possibly can, then obviously Christianity is the better religion.

Ironically, many of us (me included) take vows to bring all beings to enlightenment. And we very much want to share the wisdom of the dharma with everyone. From the time of the Buddha, Buddhists have gone from place to place making the Buddha's teaching available to all who seek it.

What we -- most of us, anyway -- don't do is attempt to convert people from other religions, and we don't try to «sell» Buddhism to people who are not otherwise interested. But why not?

The Buddha's Reluctance to Teach

A text in the Pali Sutta-pitaka called the Ayacana Sutta (Samyutta Nikaya 6) tells us that the Buddha himself was reluctant to teach after his enlightenment, although he chose to teach anyway.

"This dharma is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, peaceful, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, reachable even to the wise only through experience," he said to himself. And he realized people would not understand him; to "see" the wisdom of the dharma, one must practice and experience discernment for themselves.

In other words, preaching the dharma is not just a matter of handing people a list of doctrines to believe. It is setting people on the path to realizing dharma for themselves. And walking that path takes commitment and determination. People won't do it unless they feel personally motivated, no matter how hard you "sell" it. It's better simply to make the teachings available to people who are interested and whose karma has already turned them toward the path.

Corrupting the Dharma

It's also the case that proselytizing is not exactly conducive to inner serenity. It can lead to agitation and anger to be constantly butting heads with people who disagree with your cherished beliefs.

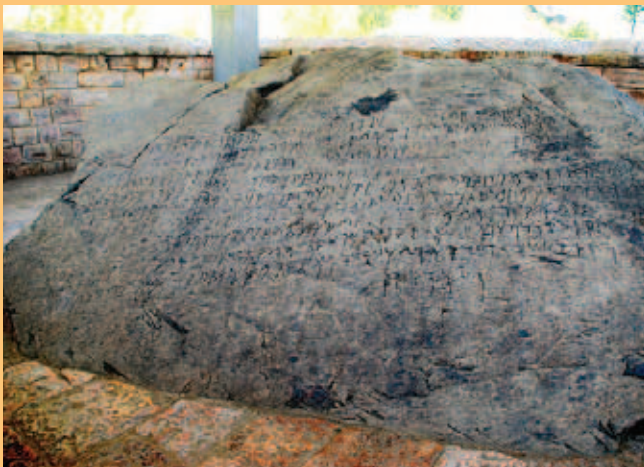
And if it becomes important to you to prove to the world that your beliefs are the only correct beliefs, and it's up to you to lead everyone else out of their erroneous ways, what does that say about you?

First, it says you've got a big, honking attachment to your beliefs. If you are Buddhist, that means you're getting it wrong. Remember, Buddhism is a path to wisdom. It's a process. And part of that process is always remaining open to new understanding. As Thich Nhat Hanh taught in his Precepts of Engaged Buddhism,

"Do not think the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth. Avoid being narrow minded and bound to present views. Learn and practice non-attachment from views in order to be open to receive others' viewpoints. Truth is found in life and not merely in conceptual knowledge. Be ready to learn throughout your entire life and to observe reality in yourself and in the world at all times."

If you're marching around certain that you are right and everybody else is wrong, you are not being open to new understanding. If you're marching around trying to prove that other religions are wrong, you are creating hate and antagonism in your own mind (and in others). You are corrupting your own practice.

It's said that the doctrines of Buddhism should not be grasped tightly and fanatically, but held in an open hand, so that understanding is always growing.



Asoka's rock edicts

Edicts of Ashoka

The Emperor Ashoka, who governed India and Gandhara from 269 to 232 BCE, was a devout Buddhist and benevolent ruler. His edicts were inscribed on pillars that were erected throughout his empire.

Ashoka sent Buddhist missionaries to spread the dharma throughout Asia and beyond (see "The Third Buddhist Council: Pataliputra II"). "One benefits in this world and gains great merit in the next by giving the gift of the dharma," Ashoka declared. But he also said,

"Growth in essentials can be done in different ways, but all of them have as their root restraint in speech, that is, not praising one's own religion, or condemning the religion of others without good cause. And if there is cause for criticism, it should be done in a mild way. But it is better to honour other religions for this reason. By so doing, one's own religion benefits, and so do other religions, while doing otherwise harms one's own religion and the religions of others. Whoever praises his own religion, due to excessive devotion, and condemns others with the thought "Let me glorify my own religion," only harms his own religion. Therefore contact (between religions) is good. One should listen to and respect the doctrines professed by others." [translation by the Venerable S. Dhammika]

Religion-pushers ought to consider that for every one person they "save," they are likely turning off several more.

This also goes back to how proselytizing can corrupt one's own practice. Objectifying people is not loving kindness.

The Big Picture

Even though the teachings of the many religions are very different from each other and often in opposition to each other, many of us see all

Friends of the Vihara (FOV)

1. Orang Asli Grocery Bag Project

Total of 48 volunteers and 14 vehicles participated in this project. Volunteers came as early 6am to load items on to the vehicles. After loading, the volunteers regrouped at the Vihara canteen for breakfast. While waiting for breakfast to be delivered, Sis Vanessa briefed the volunteer groups and assigned tasks to each group. This was followed by Bro Ng who briefed all drivers on the route to take to the orang asli village. After breakfast, volunteers proceeded to the Shrine hall where Bhante Siridhamma gave blessings. All vehicles with volunteers departed from vihara around 8.30am.

The journey to Kg Gerachi Jaya near Kuala Kubu Baru took almost 2 hours. Upon arriving, volunteers immediately unloaded all items from vehicles and arranged them into 84 stations. While stations were being setup, registration team were busy checking identification and giving numbers to families for grocery bag collection. The children were overjoyed to receive toys, bread rolls and varieties of snacks.

Each of them had their hands full of goodies. We finished distribution before 12 noon. A total of 84 families received grocery bags of 22 items each. They were smiling bright with joy to receive so many items at one time.

On our journey back to KL, we stopped to have delicious lunch at Batang Kali. All arrived safely back around 3pm. A big thank you to all for giving your time in bringing joy to the 84 families in Kg Gerachi Jaya today. Appreciation also goes to all the donors & sponsors. Special thanks to Lion Club of KL City for their involvement in this project.

Report by FOV team



religions as different interfaces to (possibly) the same reality. The problem is that people mistake the interface with the reality. As we say in Zen, the hand pointing to the moon is not the moon.

But as I wrote in an essay awhile back, sometimes even God-belief can become an upaya, a skillful means to realizing wisdom. Many doctrines other than Buddhist doctrines can function as vehicles for spiritual exploration and inner reflection. This is another reason why Buddhists aren't necessarily distressed by other religions' teachings.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama sometimes advises people to not convert to Buddhism, at least not without considerable study and reflection first. He also said,

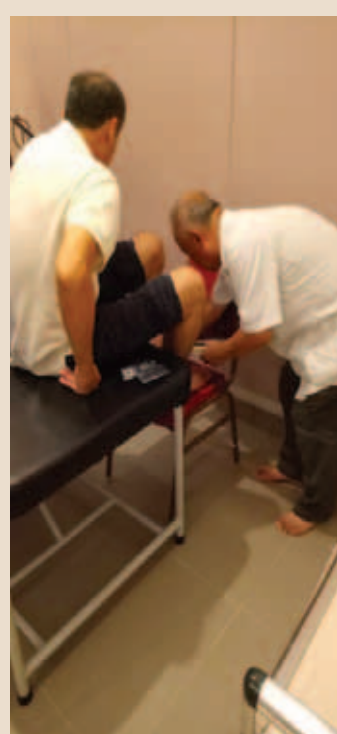
"If you do adopt Buddhism as your religion, however, you must still maintain an appreciation for the other major religious traditions. Even if they no longer work for you, millions of other people have received immense benefit from them in the past and continue to do so. Therefore, it is important for you to respect them."

Source: <https://www.learnreligions.com/proselytization-and-buddhism-449625>

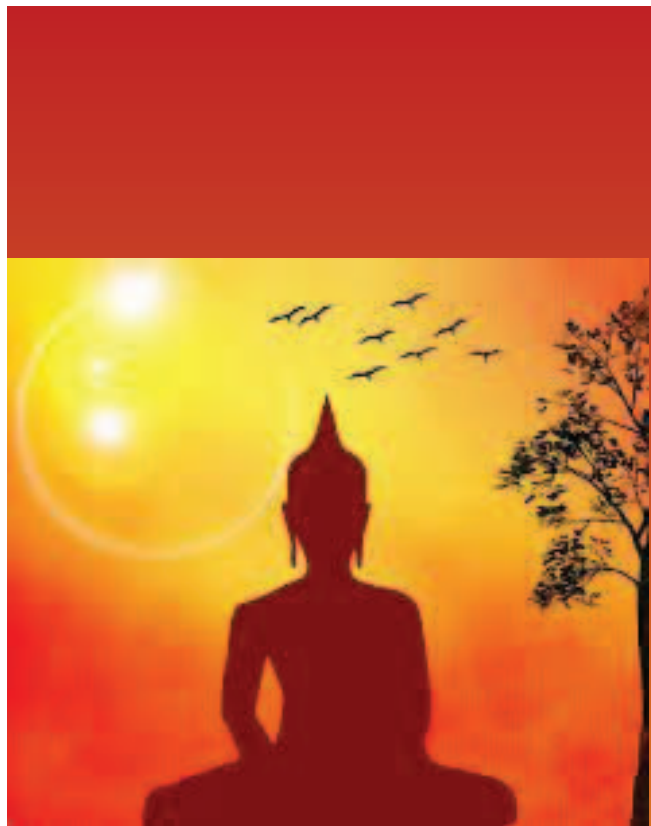
About the Writer: Barbara O'Brien is a Zen Buddhist practitioner who studied at Zen Mountain Monastery. She is the author of "Rethinking Religion" and has covered religion for The Guardian, Tricycle.Org and other outlets

2. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Clinic

The TCM clinic at Buddhist Maha Vihara was started on 19th January 2014. The idea for this clinic was that of the late Ven Dhammadinna Thera. He saw the need for this service at the Vihara to cater to the many devotees who seek TCM treatment for their ailments. The clinic opens every Sunday from 10am to 2pm. The clinic is closed on public holidays and on the 5th Sunday of the month. Consultation fee of RM10 is charged which is inclusive of acupuncture, general illness and medication. The clinic is run by qualified, well respected and experienced Chinese physicians and FOV volunteers who are led by Sis Grace Ong.



The clinic opens every Sunday from 10am to 2pm
closed on public holidays and on the 5th Sunday of the month



Was Buddha God or Human?

By
Robert E. Buswell Jr
and
Donald S Lopez Jr



While Buddhism has a place for gods, the Buddha wasn't exactly one of them.

Buddhism is famous in the West as an "atheistic religion," in the sense that, unlike the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, it does not recognize a single creator deity. However, one should not assume from this that Buddhism has no gods. It has not one, but many.

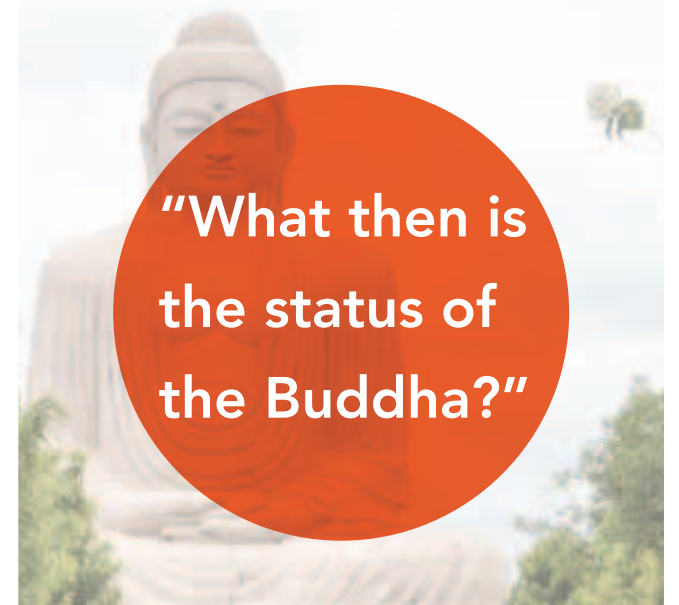
In traditional Buddhist cosmology, the gods—or deva in Sanskrit, a cognate of "divinity"—are distributed among 27 heavens (svarga): six are located in the sensuous realm (kamadhatu) along the slopes, at the summit, and in the air above Mount Sumeru, the mountain at the center of the world; 17 in the meditation heavens of the realm of subtle materiality (rupadhatu); and four are in the immaterial realm (arupyadhatu), where there is no form, only consciousness. Because each of these heavens is located within samsara, the realm of rebirth, none of these heavens is a permanent abode of the gods who live there, and none of the gods is eternal.

Rebirth as a god is based on virtuous actions performed in a previous life, and when the god's lifespan is over, the being is reborn some place else. Thus, no god in Buddhism has the omniscience, the omnipotence, or the omnipresence of God in the Abrahamic religions. This does not mean, however, that gods have no powers. They have powers far beyond those of humans. And over the long history of Buddhism, Buddhists, including monks and nuns, have propitiated various gods for blessings and boons. A substantial part of tantric practice, for example, is devoted to inviting gods into one's presence, making offerings to them, and then requesting the bestowal of various powers (siddhi).

What then is the status of the Buddha? Technically, he is a human, among the five other rebirth destinies (sagati) in samsara: gods, demigods, animals, ghosts, and denizens of hell. But he is unlike any other human, both in his relation to the gods and in his physical and mental qualities.

In his penultimate lifetime, the Buddha-to-be was a god, abiding, where all future buddhas abide, in the Tushita heaven. It was from there that he surveyed the world, and chose the place of his final birth, his caste, his clan, and his parents. After his enlightenment, the Buddha spent 49 days in contemplation in the vicinity of the Bodhi Tree, concluding, the story goes, that what he had understood was too profound for others to understand, and thus futile to try to teach to anyone.

The most powerful of the gods, Brahma, descended from his heaven to implore the Buddha to teach, arguing that although many might not be able to understand, there were some with "little dust in their eyes" who would. This is an important moment because it makes clear that the Buddha knew something that the gods did not, and that the gods had been waiting for a new buddha to appear in the world to teach them the path to freedom from rebirth, even from rebirth in heaven. For this reason, one



"What then is the status of the Buddha?"

of the epithets of the Buddha is devatideva—"god above the gods."

Although a human, the Buddha has a body unlike any other. It is adorned with the 32 marks of a superman (mahapurusalaksana), such as images of wheels on the palms of his hands and soles of his feet, a bump on the top of his head, 40 teeth, and a circle of hair between his eyes that emits beams of light. Some of the marks are characteristics found in animals rather than humans: webbed fingers and toes like a duck's, arms that extend below the knees like an ape's, and a penis that retracts into body like a horse's. His mind knows all of his past lives and the past lives of all beings in the universe. In fact, he is omniscient (although the various Buddhist schools have different ideas about exactly what this means).

Even in the early tradition, it is said that he can live for an eon or until the end of the eon, if he is asked to do so. And in the Lotus Sutra it says that his lifespan is immeasurable. He can go anywhere in the universe. He can perform all manner of miracles.

Did he create the universe? No. Is he omniscient? Yes. Is he omnipotent? It depends on what you mean. Is he eternal? Sort of. Is he God? You decide.

Source: <https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/buddha-god-human/>

About the Writers:

Robert E. Buswell, Jr. holds the Irving and Jean Stone Endowed Chair in Humanities at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he is also Distinguished Professor of Buddhist Studies and founding director of the Center for Buddhist Studies

Donald S. Lopez Jr. is Professor of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies in the Department of Asian Languages at the University of Michigan.

Buddhist Symbolism and Art



Scene of the Birth of the Buddha. Gandara Kushan Dynasty late 2nd to early 3rd century. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Inst Washington DC

The Tree in Buddhist Symbolism and Art

By Meher McArthur



For millennia, trees have occupied an important symbolic place in many of the world's religious traditions, often representing the essence of life or a link between the human realm and that of the sacred. In the Buddhist tradition, a number of different trees play a critical role in the life of the historical Buddha, most notably at the moments of his birth, his enlightenment, and his death. In particular, the site of the tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment, a pipal tree in Bodh Gaya, India, is still revered today as the locus of his spiritual awakening. Because of its powerful spiritual symbolism, the tree also figures prominently in Buddhist imagery. Unlike many other aspects of Buddhist art and iconography, trees are not depicted using specific rules and can vary greatly in their representation according to the regional styles employed; however, their symbolism as a bridge unifying the material and the spiritual is unchanging.

According to Buddhist legend, Queen Maha Maya, the mother of the Prince Siddhartha (who would later become the Buddha), gave birth to him in a miraculous manner in a grove of trees in Lumbini. When she knew that her time was due, she grasped a teak tree with her right hand, and the baby emerged from her right side. This tree is represented in both painted and sculpted scenes of the life of the Buddha, as in a fine Gandharan panel in the collection of the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. In this carving, Queen Maya is depicted in the very sensual and elegant Indian triple-bend (Skt. tribhanga), or S-shaped, pose, and is surrounded by ladies-in-waiting on her left and male attendants on her right. Her arm is shown reaching up and grasping one of the curvaceous leaves of the tree above her, and from her right side emerges a miniature, fully formed figure of the Prince. Since the scene represents a legendary moment, its symbolism is far more important than a sense of realism. The leaves of this tree more closely resemble the acanthus leaves of Greco-Roman sculpture than the simple oval leaves of a teak tree.

The young Prince Siddhartha grew up in a life of luxury, but around the age of 30 left his palace life behind to discover the truth about life and suffering, a journey that again led him to a tree. According to Buddhist tradition, although he studied for years under various spiritual teachers, he was unable to attain the spiritual enlightenment he sought until he arrived in

the place now known as Bodh Gaya, where a pipal tree (L. *Ficus religiosa*) had (supposedly) sprouted on the day of his birth. Somehow he recognized the tree, and sat down beneath it to meditate until he attained spiritual release. He is believed to have remained under the tree in a state of deep meditation for several days before achieving nirvana and becoming the Buddha. Thus the tree also became known as the Bodhi tree, or the tree of enlightenment. The moment of the Buddha's awakening under this tree is portrayed in painting, sculpture, and manuscripts, particularly in Southeast Asia. A Thai Buddhist sculpture from the Mon-Dvaravati period (7th–9th century) shows the Buddha seated peacefully in full lotus position beneath the generous canopy of the tree. As in most depictions of the Bodhi tree, the leaves have the highly distinctive, heart-shaped leaves of the real pipal tree.

The final moments of the Buddha's life are also represented under trees. When the Buddha was aged 80 or 81, he is believed to have suffered from food poisoning and retreated to a grove of sal or sala trees (L. *Shorea rubusta*) in Kushinagara in modern Bihar. He advised his closest disciple Ananda to position him with his head to the north between two of the trees. There, lying on a bed and surrounded by his faithful disciples, he passed away and entered the state of final enlightenment, or parinirvana. In many sculptures depicting the Buddha's passing the trees are not represented, but in paintings of this scene, which are popular in Japanese Buddhist iconography, his deathbed is surrounded by tall, slender sal trees with gold or yellow leaves.

Trees appear in other aspects of Buddhist art as well, including scenes of the Buddhist



Death scene of the Buddha. Japan, Edo period (1600-1868), hand coloured woodblock print on paper. Image courtesy of Sam Fogg, London

The Buddha seated under the Bodhi Tree. Thailan Mon-Dvaravati period (7th - 9th century) terracota. The Metropolitan Museum of Art



paradises, in which they are depicted laden with jewels, representing the spiritual wealth of those progressing towards enlightenment. There is also a tree, the Rose-Apple Tree, on the summit of Mount Meru at the very center of the Buddhist cosmos. This tree serves as a cosmic pillar connecting Heaven and Earth. Considering the central role of the tree in the Buddhist cosmos, it is not surprising that trees are central in the life and legends of the Buddha and his enlightenment and that they connect his material existence to his spiritual one. When the Buddha was born, he assumed his human, material form; when he attained enlightenment, he achieved a higher spiritual level; when he died, he shed his physical form and fully entered the spiritual realm. A tree was present at each of these moments, serving as an arboreal bridge between our material realm and enlightenment.

Source: <https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/the-tree-in-buddhist-symbolism-and-art>

About the Writer: Meher McArthur is an independent Asian art curator, author, and educator, who specializes in the art of Japan. She worked for nine years as Curator of East Asian Art at Pacific Asia Museum, where she curated 15 exhibitions and several permanent galleries. She lectures regularly at Southern California museums and is Creative Director for the Storrier Stearns Japanese Garden in Pasadena. She is a regular contributor to KCET's Artbound and the Buddhist website buddhistdoor.com, and writes for *Artillery*, *Fabrik*, and other arts and culture magazines. She has written several books about Asian art and culture.



In Memoriam

Aniccā vata saṅkhārā



Venerable Dhammavuddho Mahā Thera, also known as Bhante Hye was a Malaysian of Chinese descent and the founder and abbot of Vihara Buddha Gotama at Temoh, Perak. As a layman he graduated from the University Malaya in 1971, and worked as an Electrical Engineer with the Public Works Department for 12 years before renouncing the home life. His interest in religion led him to study the world's major religions for a few years before meeting the Buddha's teachings in 1976.

In 1983, he went forth into the homeless life in the Mahayana tradition. Three years later, he was reordained in the Theravada tradition (Mahanikaya) in Thailand on April 1986. His Preceptor is Phra Khru Watchara Thamvirot, Abbot of Wat Thamroo, Tambon Banlat, Amper Banlat, Phetburi. Thereafter, he spent about 10 years living the solitary lifestyle in quiet places.

He has written numerous booklets on Buddhism, e.g. Message of the Buddha, Buddhist Monk's Precepts, Liberation: Relevance of Sutta-Vinaya, Only We Can Help Ourselves, etc. His talks in English, Hokkien/Fujian, Cantonese, span the years 1988 until the present. The English talks on the 5 Nikayas, and Hokkien talks on the Angguttara Nikaya, Samyutta Nikaya, Majjhima Nikaya, as well as other talks have been recorded in audio and video.

In 1998, through donations collected by Venerable's supporters, a 15-acre piece of land outside Temoh, in Perak, was purchased to establish the Vihara Buddha Gotama.

Buddhist Maha Vihara is saddened by his passing and extends deepest condolences to his disciples, students and family members. May Venerable Dhammavuddho attain the bliss of Nibbana.

Luangpor Dhammavuddho Mahā Thera

1947 – 2019

Chief Abbot of Vihara Buddha Gotama



Bro Sarath W. Surendre, AMN

1st September 1954

to

4th December 2019

Bro Sarath has been an active contributor to the Buddhist cause in Malaysia in addition to being actively involved in the community, Malaysian Red Crescent Society, Boys Brigade, in FOMSO which is the Federation of Sri Lankan organizations in Malaysia and inter-faith work as well in the last 45 years. He is:

- the present President of the Malaysian Sinhalese Association (MSA),
- one of the present Vice Presidents of Buddhist Missionary Society Malaysia (BMSM) and a past Committee member as well

- the present Hon. Secretary of Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism & Taoism (MCCBCHST), Selangor and past Hon Treasurer and Committee member of the MCCBCHST National Body. This is an important umbrella body uniting the non- Muslim faiths in Malaysia in their engagement with the Federal and State governments

- the present Hon. Treasurer of Siri Jayanti Association (SJA), which manages the Sri Lanka Buddhist Temple Sentul
- the present Hon Treasurer of the Joint Wesak Celebration Committee (JWCC), which comprises of the about 60 Buddhist temples and organizations in the Klang Valley
- past Vice President and present Hon. Secretary of Malaysian Buddhist Consultative Council (MBCC), which is an umbrella body of the Federation of various Buddhist traditions in Malaysia
- Assistant Registrar of Marriages at the Sri Lanka Buddhist Temple Sentul
- past Assistant Hon. Secretary-General of Theravada Buddhist Council of Malaysia (TBCM) which comprises of about 50 Buddhist temples and Societies throughout Malaysia
- past President, Vice President and Hon Secretary of the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society (SAWS) which manages the Buddhist Maha Vihara Brickfields

Bro Sarath passed away peacefully on the morning of December 4th at the age of 65 after succumbing to his illness. May his journey in Samsara be short. May he realise Nibbana soonest.

Bro K Don Premasiri

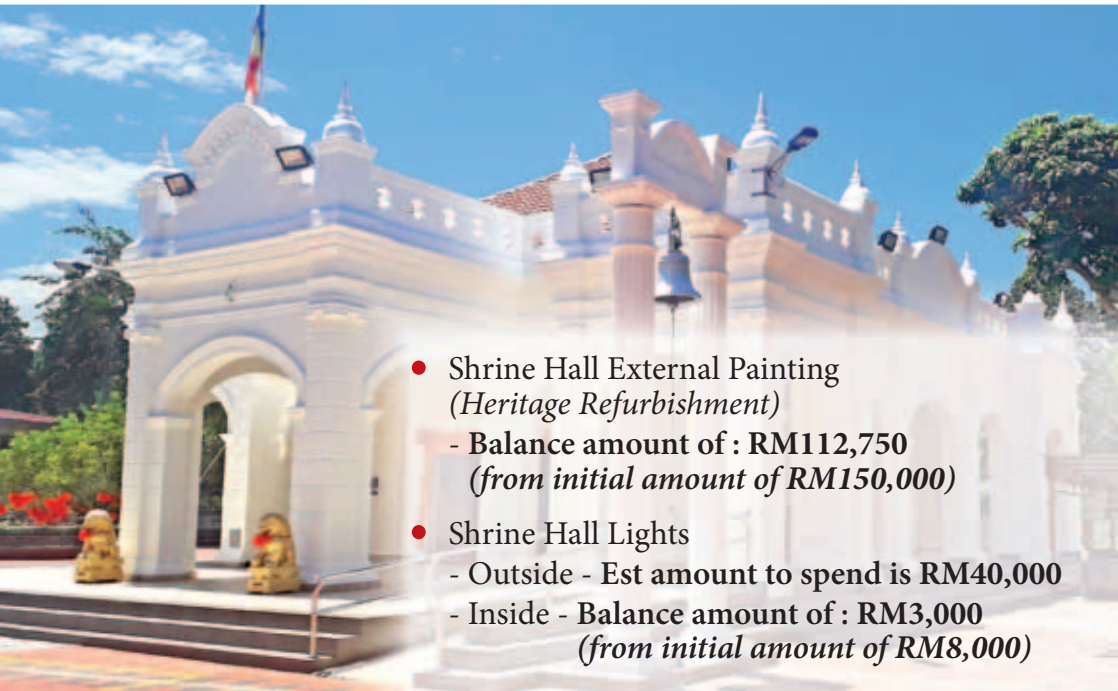
Vice President

Buddhist Maha Vihara

Projects

LEND A HAND

The Buddhist Maha Vihara “Lend A Hand” programme is to support the undertaking of a number of crucial projects that are needed for continuous maintenance and upgrading for the benefit of all devotees. We appeal to your kind generosity to help us realize the following:



- Shrine Hall External Painting (Heritage Refurbishment)
 - Balance amount of : RM112,750 (from initial amount of RM150,000)
- Shrine Hall Lights
 - Outside - Est amount to spend is RM40,000
 - Inside - Balance amount of : RM3,000 (from initial amount of RM8,000)



- Vehicle for Transport
 - Est : RM80,000

- Replacing the 56 Buddha Statues’ Huts with stainless steel panels/ tampered glass.
 - Balance amount of : RM22,080 (from initial amount of RM24,800)



BUDDHA FRIEZE FOR SPONSORSHIP AT MEDITATION PAVILION



- Seated Buddha Frieze
 - RM18,000 each
 - 39 statues left to be sponsored



- Standing Buddha Frieze
 - RM38,000 each
 - 5 statues left to be sponsored

Partial Sponsorship

Shrine Hall External Painting
Nora Tan Siew May
Amount RM1,000

Shrine Hall Lights (Inside)
Tang Lee Lee
Amount RM500

With the merits accrued by your generous donations, May you and your family be blessed and protected by the Noble Triple Gem
Sadhu.....Sadhu.....Sadhu



- 25 Lotus Pillars
 - A total of 25 Lotus Pillars named after the Buddha’s core teachings are available for sponsorship at the Wisma Dharma Cakra building at RM25,000 each. Names of the Sponsors will be placed on the pillar.
 - *Ground Floor – 2 pillars
 - *Mezzanine Floor – 18 pillars
 - *First Floor – 5 pillars
- Supply and Install Visual System at 1st Floor, Puja Hall
Estimate Cost:- RM 25,850.00
- Meditation Cushion with Cushion
 - Big 2ft x 2ft @ RM65 x 66 nos = RM4290
 - Small 10 x 14 x 46mm @ RM55 x 106 nos = RM5830
 - Total Estimate Cost :- RM10,120
- Wireless Head Set Microphone
Estimate Cost :- RM 3,300
- Tabletop Gooseneck Microphone system
Estimate Cost :- RM4,800.00
- Mobile Stage with Skirting and staircase
Estimate Cost :- RM7,700
- 10-seater Round Tables
 - Quantity – 50
 - Estimate Cost :- RM9,000
- Skirting for Banquet table
 - Quantity – 100 tables (6ft x 2ft)
 - Estimate Cost :- RM9,500
- Dharmacakra Wheel at Wisma Dharma Cakra Building
 - The exclusively designed Dharmacakra Wheel has been completed and installed at the tower of the Wisma Dharma Cakra. Made in concrete, the total cost came up to RM300,000. A single donor has generously given RM100,000 and now BMV would be most appreciative if more Donors can come forward to off-set the remaining RM200,000. The Dharmacakra Wheel symbolises the name of the building, Wisma Dharma Cakra.



A brief history of the 126 year old Buddhist Maha Vihara, Brickfields

The Buddhist Maha Vihara was founded in 1894 by the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society (SAWS), the oldest registered Buddhist Society in the Klang Valley.

From its very inception, the Vihara has been managed by the Sinhala Buddhist community but was financially supported by the Chinese and Indian communities as well. The first structure of the Vihara was the Main Shrine Room, with its ceremonial laying of the foundation-stone taking place on 25th August 1894 and the simple rectangular shaped building completed sometime during the first decade of the 20th century. The donors for the Shrine room, as recorded in the Selangor Government Gazette 1896, pg 408 were clearly Chinese and Indian communities and among the main donors were:

Kapitan Yeap Quang Seng, Towkay Loke Yew, K. Tambusamy Pillay, R. Doraisamy Pillay, Loke Chow Kit, San Peng and Son, Lim Tua Taw, etc...

The Vihara was always the focal point to mobilise the Buddhist community. The large gathering to protest and stop the screening of the then controversial film "Light of Asia" in 1927 in Malaysia was also held at the Vihara, and so was the mass gathering and signature campaign in the 1950s to lobby the government to declare Wesak as a national holiday.

During the Emergency period of 1948-1960, monks from the Vihara made a massive impact reaching out to calm and educate the psychologically disoriented

Chinese New Villagers who were evicted from their traditional lands and placed in new settlements by the Governments which was fighting a communist insurgency.

Since the 1940s, the Vihara commenced a free Dhamma publications programme as a Dhammadutta outreach to the masses which by the year 2012 was made available in 28 languages, with millions of copies of books and CDs produced. The Vihara's Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS), founded in 1929, is the oldest Sunday School in the country with an enrolment of more than 1200 students and continues to produce systematic books on Buddhist studies for children.

The Wesak procession organised by the Vihara since the 1890s is the oldest and largest religious procession in the country. The 3-day Wesak celebrations at the Vihara attracts about 100,000 people.

Many students or devotees who have studied and benefited from the BISDS, the Vihara's Free Publications, Dhamma programmes, classes, talks, etc have gone on to set up new Buddhist societies and centers which help to spread Buddhism in the country far and wide.

The SAWS is also one of the founding members of the Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) formed in 1983, a Council which constructively engages the Government on

matters effecting non-muslims in the country. The MCCBCHST Administrative office is based at the Vihara.

In 2004, the Vihara was a major focal point in the country to collect relief aid to assist the South Asian Tsunami that killed almost 280,000 people. Several forty foot containers equivalent of relief aid were dispatched by the Vihara to Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Myanmar and Thailand by air, sea and land.

Buddhists remain the country's largest organ donors, thanks to Cornea and Organ Donation Campaigns carried out by the Vihara. The Vihara continues to operate to deliver its obligation to the Buddhist community till this day and is governed and directed by its Vision, 4 Missions, 6 Strategic Objectives and 4 Ennoblers in tribute and gratitude to all our past and current Sangha, volunteers, donors, friends, etc. We would be failing in our duty if we fail to mention the name of the foremost amongst them, our late Venerable Chief, that is Venerable. Dr. Kirinde Sri Dhammananda Nayaka Maha Thero.



DAILY ACTIVITIES

Mon - Sun

- 6.30am - 7.30am
- 11.30am - 12.00noon
- 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Daily Morning Buddha Puja
Daily Noon Buddha Puja
Daily Evening Buddha Puja

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Mon, Wed, Thurs

- 8.00pm - 10.00pm

Tues

- 10.30am - 12.00noon
- 8.30pm - 10.00pm

Thurs

- 7.30pm - 9.00pm

Fri

- 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- 8.00pm - 9.30pm

Sat

- 8.30am - 10.30am
- 10.30am - 11.30am
- 2.00pm - 7.00pm
- 7.30pm - 8.30pm
- 8.30am - 9.30am
- 9.30am - 11.00am
- 9.30am - 12.00noon
- 10.00am - 11.30am
- 10.00am - 2.00pm

Sun

- 11.00am - 12.30pm
- 1.30pm - 5.00pm

- 2.00pm - 7.00pm
- 3.00pm - 4.30pm
- 5.00pm

Meditation Class

Senior Club Yoga for Beginners

Qigong Practise

Senior Club Yoga for Intermediate

Afternoon Puja & Talk

Dhamma Talk

Qigong Practise

Tai Chi Practise

Degree & Master's in Buddhism Classes

Bojjhanga Puja

Morning Puja

Abhidamma Class

Sunday Dhamma School for Children & for Adults

Dhamma Talk

Traditional Chinese Medicine (Every Sunday except Public Holiday)

Pali / Sutta Class

Sinhala Language Classes

Sinhala Cultural Dance Classes

Diploma & Degree in Buddhism Classes

Dhamma for the Deaf (fortnightly)

Feeding the Needy and Homeless

You can donate towards our many projects :

- Dhammadutta
- Free Buddhist Publications
- Welfare Activities
- Monks Dana
- Sunday Dhamma School
- Maintenance of Shrine Hall
- K Sri Dhammananda Library
- Temple Lighting
- BISDS Building Fund

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE BY :

- Cash (at the BMV Counter)
- Cheque (made payable to "BISDS Building Fund")
- ATM Transfer / Direct Bank-in (Bank Acct : BISDS Building Fund, A/C No : CIMB 86-0011008-6. Please send the bank-in slip to info@buddhistmahavihara.org)

Payments can be made via :

BMV Office Counter : Cash, cheques & credit cards

Postage : Make cheques payable to "Buddhist Maha Vihara" & write your name & contact telephone at back of the cheque.

Direct Debit : Hong Leong Bank Brickfields
Acct : 292-00-01161-8

BMV Statement of Accounts :

Buddhist Maha Vihara's Monthly Statement of Accounts is displayed on the Notice Board at the Reception area for public viewing. Please address all queries to the Hon. Secretary in writing.

We accept VISA and MASTERCARD for donations. Thank You.

Donations to Buddhist Maha Vihara operations are tax exempt.

Any donor who wants a tax exemption for computation of personal or corporate tax can request for a tax exempt receipt.

PLEASE BEWARE OF UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS SOLICITING DONATIONS.

KINDLY ENSURE THAT ALL DONATIONS ARE ISSUED WITH A NUMBERED BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA OFFICIAL RECEIPT.

BMV OFFICE HOURS

MON - SAT : 9.00 am - 9.00 pm

SUN & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS : 9.00 am - 5.00 pm



BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA

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Email: info@buddhistmahavihara.org

Website: www.buddhistmahavihara.org