

stated that the essence is inexpressible as precisely one or another. Precisely this procedure also /applies/ to phenomena and true nature, and for samsara and nirvana, limit and center, incidental and primordial, fabricated and natural, and husk and essence, the procedure is also precisely this. (p. 129)

The translator also provides a richly documented set of citations and quotations from Sanskrit and Tibetan texts and from the writings of modern Buddhologists by way of enriching his translations and interpretations of these most important texts.

This is a most informative and engaging work regarding the life and writings of a controversial and provocative 14th century Tibetan thinker, a man, who with considerable courage and insight, attempted to produce an acceptable reconciliation between the Madhya-mika and Cittamatra aspects of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. In achieving this goal, he has greatly enriched our understanding of both the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and of Buddhism as a whole.

– J. Bruce Long

Dāna — Giving and Getting in Pāli Buddhism

By Ellison Banks Findly
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The present work entitled, *Dāna - Giving and Getting in Pāli Buddhism*, is a research monograph published under 'Buddhist Tradition Series' as volume 52. The author, Prof. Ellison Banks Findly, has chosen a topic of extremely important for her research. The editor Alex Wayman has written a brief but valuable foreword for the book and mentions that the author demonstrates an ability to expose and develop properly this remarkable topic.

Dāna (giving) is one of the basic virtues in Buddhism and it is the first step of Buddhist path. In his preaching to non-renunciants Buddha usually started from talking about the importance of giving (*dāna kathā*), as the attachment is a very strong hindrance to spiritual development. This important virtue was then developed to a perfection (*Dānapāramitā*) which was subdivided into three in Theravada Buddhism depending on the nature of what was given, i.e. *Pāramī*, *Upapāramī* and *Paramattha Pāramī*. It became very much associated with the Bodhisatva path in Theravāda Buddhism. The practice of Dāna (giving) became extremely important for the survival of Saṅgha as well as the spiritual development of the lay community too.

The book has nine chapters which is the main research. In addition there is a preface as well as an introduction. In the Preface the author has emphasized the importance of giving (*dāna*) and its function of bridging two communities the renunciants (Saṅgha) and lay followers (the donors). Further the author has mentioned that this elementary teaching of giving has the power to make lay people and renunciants to understand their interdependence. A further elaboration of this point is found in the introduction. This is a kind of reciprocal relationship between renunciants and householders. The Saṅgha has to depend on lay community for basic requisites: food, clothing, shelter and medicine, and in return the lay community depends on the Saṅgha for their spiritual development. This is called *Dhammadāna* by Saṅgha to their supporters. In the introduction there is a useful discussion on the reciprocal ethics of the *Sigālovāda Sūtra* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. And also three important sub-topics: A Child and the Family, A Renunciant and the Saṅgha and A Donor and the Saṅgha have been dealt with.

Chapter one, *Buddhist Donation: A Religious Response to a Changing World*, begins with a short description of social, political and economic changes that took

place during the sixth century BCE and the emergence of grāma (village) and nigama (town) culture in central India. A short account is given by the author regarding newly emerging Buddhist renunciants, their lifestyle and the benefits of recluship. The author has traced the origin of the practice of dāna to the R̥gvedic period. In its early practice dāna involved giving gifts to priestly functionaries for the ritual services performed to bring blessings of long life, victory, prosperity, sons and so forth.

The second chapter, Redefining Relationships: The New Donor, begins with a description of the relationship between Buddhist renunciants and the householder (gahapati). A short note we find regarding the householder (gahapati) class from the Vedic time to the rise of Buddhism in the sixth century BCE. and the role they played as donors to Buddhist mendicants. The author has pointed out that the gahapati is no longer a just the Vedic householder who keeps the household stores but a figure of substantial social and economic importance as well. It has been pointed out that the Pāli texts have reversed the order of the first two castes to read as Khattiya, Brahmana. I think that this reflects the social change occurred during the sixth century BCE. Khattiya became the topmost caste in the hierarchy due to their political power and Brahmanas position was changed to a lower degree during this period. In this chapter the sub-topics like 'The Gahapati as Buddhist Lay', 'Hindrances of the Household Life', 'Women Donors on their Own' have been discussed too.

The third chapter, Resources to Requisites: Gifts to the Gone Forth, begins with a description of gifts and the Vedic patron. The author has pointed out that giving is an appropriate and expected Vedic activity; and the words, dāna and dakṣiṇā, are used in the Vedic texts in reference to gifts given to poets and priests participating in the ritual. From the Vedic position the author comes to the Buddhist tradition where we find a fairly

good description of the four requisites in the Buddhist Order. Such topics like: 'Three Ocher Robes', 'The Number of Robes', 'The Material and Color of Robes' and 'The Acquisition and Care of Robes' are discussed in detail. Under the second requisite, alms, there is a short description of the first meal offered to the Buddha by Tapussa and Bhallika after the Enlightenment and the practice of using alms-bowl. The source for this is the Mahāvagga Pāli of the Vinaya Piṭaka. And also useful topics like The Practice of Going Alms round, Acceptable Food, Acceptable Eating and Acceptable handling of Food have been discussed in this chapter according to Vinaya rules. Regarding the shelter and medicine used by the Saṅgha there is a fairly good description based on the Buddhist Vinaya.

The fourth chapter, Giving Gifts, is a lengthy examination of various aspects of dāna. The chapter starts with the dāna in Buddhist Ethics. The first principle of Buddhist ethics is dāna and the Buddha used to begin his preaching to average people with a good exposition of the importance of giving, as it was required by everybody to lessen greed in order to embark on the path. In this chapter there is a discussion on Dāna in Early Buddhist Ethics and Dāna Teachings in Pāli Texts. Money and Renunciants is a short description of how the Saṅgha refrained from handling money. And also the position of lay community regarding the wealth and the ethics that should be followed in acquiring wealth have been discussed under the topics like Wealth and Non-Renunciants, Acquiring Wealth, Using Wealth. The Confident Giver, Sappurisa and Saddha also have been examined in this chapter.

The fifth chapter, Receiving Gifts, is an examination of the worthiness of the recipient. In the discussion on 'The Worthy Recipient', the qualifications of the recipient is explained by quoting from Pāli Nikāya texts. There is a brief examination of the importance of the

concepts of *dānapatāni*, *dakkhiṇeyya* and *puññakhetta* in this chapter. Under Grades of Gift Worthiness, the author has given a list of worthy recipients in the order of rank according to *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sūtra* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Just after a short description of Good and Fertile Field of Merit Nuns and Gift Worthiness has been discussed. In this section reader's attention is drawn to a very controversial point regarding the application of the term Arahant to enlightened women in early Buddhist communities. The author is of the opinion that in the *Vinaya* and the four *Nikāyas* no evidence is found regarding the application of the term Arahant to women and it is only in later texts and commentaries. The next sub topic, The Role of Food in the Field of Merit, is explained in relation to the Buddhist analogy of farmers who plant seeds in fields from which fruit grow for eating. The donor acquires merit for his future benefit by giving gifts to renunciants. This indicates that both the recipient and the donor are benefited. Next, topics like, Food and Preta's Body, The Idea of Womb-Being, Feeding the Renunciants, Two Poverities and *Dāna* are worth mentioning. There is a short discussion of the early Buddhist concept of *Gandhabba* (the being to be born) in this section. The author has attempted to show how the *Gandhabba* conceives in the mother's womb driven by the mechanism of karma and supported by other conditions. In this respect the argument of Collins, that is, 'The *Gandhabba* spirit descends at the moment of rebirth as consciousness and, it is conditioned by consciousness as name and form. Further in reference to *Mahātaṇhāsankhaya Sūtra* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* it is stated that there should be three essential conditions for the conception, that is, the union of parents, mother's fertile period and the presence of *Gandhabba* seeking birth.

The sixth chapter is on Making, Using and Transferring Merit. At the beginning of this chapter the centrality of merit (*puñña*) is emphasized. *Puñña* is compared to extensive cash economy. The means of

exchange in the donation transaction is *puñña* or merit. This idea is not new as it is found in the *Sūtra* named *Nidhikaṇḍa* in the *Khuddakapāṭha*, the first book of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*. The analogy of this *Sūtra* is that the *puñña* is a kind of saving in the form of a hidden treasure for future life, as material things cannot be taken by us when departing. Therefore, the function of *puñña* is very similar to cash or exchange. The only difference between them is that the *puñña* is non-material and the exchange is material. Anthropologists call this aspect as *kammatic Buddhism*, the aim of which is not salvation or emancipation but to have a good and prosperous future existence in the human world or heavenly sphere. This function of *puñña* is elucidated in this section. There is a short discussion of karma in early Buddhism and its three aspects *kusala* (wholesome), *akusala* (unwholesome) and *avyākata* (neutral). The next sub topics, Merit-Making in the Context of *Dāna* and Using Merit is an explanation of merit acquired through the performance of the act of *dāna* and its functional efficacy in the life to come. The question of merit making and emancipation is discussed briefly in the next section. Author mentions that Spiro's radical distinction between 'kammatic' and 'nibbanic' Buddhism has been amended by Mc Dermott and Collins. Next the very popular practice of transferring merit has been discussed. The author has made a commendable attempt to show that it is wrong to say that the practice is a later addition to Buddhism. Some Pāli canonical evidence has been brought forth to show its antiquity. And also, a mention is made of the earlier Vedic funeral practice of transferring merit to departed ones by the living and its incorporation into Buddhism.

The seventh chapter is on extremely important topic i.e. the relationship between renunciant and property. At the very beginning of the chapter one can see some ideas regarding the ownership of property in the *Saṅgha* mentioned. The idea of ownership or common ownership does not arise in relation to the *Saṅgha* due

to the fact that renunciants do not own anything. The early practice was that the property (the monasteries and lands) was dedicated to the whole body of the Saṅgha (present and not present) for common use. Even though the Saṅgha used to live in these monasteries it did not mean that they were the owners of the monasteries collectively or individually. Later on, in the history of Buddhism this practice was changed to a monastic and land ownership. In this respect the author has quoted John Locke's idea of "the state of nature" which means that originally human beings used to hold the world in common. There was no concept of ownership at the beginning. This idea is found in the Aggañña Sūtra of the Dīgha Nikāya too. This is a lengthy discussion in which various aspects of property and the Saṅgha including four requisites have been dealt with according to Vinaya.

Chapter eight, *Monastic Strategies for Encouraging Dāna: Curbing Misbehavior and Generating Goodwill*, is an elucidation of how the Saṅgha should act according to the expectations of lay community who provides them with four requisites. The word strategies may be too strong in this context due to the fact that the Saṅgha never used strategies apart from their normative and institutional behavior. In the Vinaya we come across the policy that should be followed by the Saṅgha in this respect. Buddha very frequently reminded the order of monks to behave in the manner that makes non-believers believers and to increase the faith of those who are believers. Buddha was referring in this respect to the normative behavior of monks. In later monastic Buddhism this was clarified more in terms of giving a Dhamma gift to lay community in return by the Saṅgha. The Sinhala classic, *Pūjāvali*, emphasizes the importance of Dhammadāna in the following words: 'Show your gratitude by giving a Dhamma gift to the lay community who support you with material requisites'. In this chapter we find topics like, *Curbing Misbehavior*, *The Householder Complaints*, *The nature of Misbehavior*, discussed. The whole chapter

is devoted to the discussion of how the Saṅgha should be an example to the lay supporters who watch very closely the behavior and the spiritual advancement of the Saṅgha. The author has mentioned criticisms coming from the lay community against the Buddhist Saṅgha as found in the Vinaya Pitaka.

The Renunciant as Facilitator: The case of Ānanda is the ninth and the last chapter of the book. The entire chapter is devoted to the role played by Ānanda. The author mentions in this chapter that the most important thing Ānanda was able to do was to develop contact between householders and renunciants. The extremely valuable quality that Ānanda possessed was his enormous knowledge gathered from the close association with the teacher. The author has emphasized this point at the beginning of this chapter. Ānanda's role as the attendant to the Buddha, his career in the order, service to the Buddha as well as to the lay have been explained in this chapter. The author has not forgotten to write on Ānanda's relationship to Buddhist women. Ānanda's involvement in establishing the Bhikkhunī Order, his frequent visits to nuns in the capacity of Bhikkhunī Ovadaka, and nursing of sick Bhikkhunīs are explained in this chapter. There is a short description on Ānanda's Role in Dāna. The author is of the opinion that Ānanda played a kind of mediational role between donors and the Saṅgha and he facilitated dana in a number of ways. Ānanda was one of the very popular monks in the Saṅgha. His personal appearance was attractive and pleasant, and therefore, many liked him. One may tend to think, like the author, that because of his going out of the way to help others and too much attachment to the Buddha, his own spiritual development was at a stake. This issue is discussed under the heading 'Is There a Cost to Ānanda's Social Outreach'.

In conclusion I would like to say that the present research on Dāna is an excellent attempt to explore hitherto unexplored practice of giving in Buddhism. The book

has a very useful bibliography for the general reader as well as the researcher. Extremely valuable footnotes and the index are also worthy to be mentioned. One commendable thing is that the author has used the original source materials very closely, that is, Pali canonical as well as Sanskrit texts. There is no doubt that the present work is an invaluable addition to the vast field of Buddhist Studies.

– Kottegoda S. Warnasuriya

Humanistic Buddhism for Social Well-being: An Overview of Grand Master Hsing Yun's Interpretation in Theory and Practice

By Ananda W.P. Guruge

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In describing Buddhism we use such terms as 'hinayana' and 'mahayana' to refer to its main traditions or 'early' and 'later' to refer to its chronological developments. Often we do talk about Thai or Sri Lankan Buddhism referring to particular characteristics of Buddhism as practiced in different localities in the Buddhist world. The term 'humanistic Buddhism,' however, does not seem to connote any of this. It is neither a historical tradition of Buddhism; nor is it a chronological or a geographical development of it. The term sounds more like one referring to a particular orientation or an emphasis in understanding and practicing the teachings of the Buddha. In this sense the term seems new in Buddhist studies and the work being reviewed is meant to provide an overview of it as it is understood and practiced by one of its most prominent advocates of our times, Grand Master Hsing Yun of Taiwan.

The Grand Master is the founder of Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Order and the 48th Patriarch of the Linji Chan tradition. In the author's own words, he is 'the foremost Chinese scholar of our times' (p. 1). Fo Guang Shan founded by the Grand Master is, undoubtedly, one of the leading Buddhist Organizations in the world. Founded in Taiwan several decades ago, now, the Organization has spread far and wide in the world with thousands of followers comprising monks, nuns and lay men and women. A landmark in the services of the Organization is the Hsi Lai University, Los Angeles, California where the author of the work under review serves as the Dean of academic affairs. The author, Dr. Guruge is also the Director of the International Academy of Buddhism belonging to the University. In addition to being formerly an International Civil Servant at UNESCO and diplomat representing Sri Lanka Dr. Guruge is a Buddhist scholar of recognition who has 45 full length books and 150 research papers on various aspects of Buddhism, Buddhist and Indian history and education, for his credit.

In his latest book, Guruge sets himself upon the task of defining 'humanistic Buddhism' as practiced by the Grand Master. In doing this Guruge makes use of his deep knowledge in early Buddhism represented by the Pali Canon and attempts to show that this particular interpretation is nothing other than highlighting of what is already in the early teachings of the Sakyamuni Buddha.

In Grand Master's way of thinking there are two trends in Buddhism which incidentally are not unfamiliar to Buddhism in Sri Lanka, namely, (a) the need to arrive at what can be called core Buddhism by laying stress on similarities rather than on differences and (b) developing a deeper social consciousness among the Buddhists. One of the early people to lay emphasis on the first aspect was G.P. Malasekera, Founder President of World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB). In establishing this world body he was motivated by the conviction that there are