

training and maintaining the community of Sangha. This statement does not suggest that Nibbāna, the blissful state that one can achieve by eliminating mental attachment to worldly pleasure, is merely a technique to train the Sangha" (p.9)

I have read this book and found it extremely informative, stimulating and profitable. If I have raised any question it is in response of the Venerable author's challenging concept that the world-view of impermanence, suffering and selflessness, the four noble truths, the noble eightfold path, the dependent causation and the like was meant for ordained followers and not the laity.

I recommend it to all who wish to utilize the Buddhist wisdom and values to gain happiness and success here and now.

– Ananda W.P. Guruge

The Buddha's Discourse and Wittgenstein

By A. D. P. Kalansuriya
Compassion Buddhist
Institute, Sri Lanka, 2003.

Professor A. D. P. Kalansuriya of the Department of Philosophy, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka has reproduced his earlier book, **A Philosophical Analysis of Buddhist Notions**, under the new title, **The Buddha's Discourse and Wittgenstein**. It seems that, as the title indicates, the book is a comparative analysis of Buddhist philosophy and that of Wittgenstein. The book consists of ten chapters, a Preface to the second edition and an introduction by Prof. Ninian Smart.

In the Preface to the second edition it has been mentioned that the Dhamma, which is Buddha's discourse, deals with issues and solutions. The interpretations made by scholars have generated many complicated problems. The aim of the present work is to make a philosophical analysis of the

Dhammic concepts and criticism regarding Buddhist modernism.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) is considered as one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century. Born in Vienna, Austria, he became a British citizen and did his philosophical writings at Cambridge, England. In 1939 he became the Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge University after G. E. Moore.

Chapter one of the present work is the **Introduction** which is termed as **Buddha and Wittgenstein**. This chapter has been divided into three parts. Part one is **Reflections in Brief on Buddhism- the Dhamma**. Part II is a short introduction "Buddhist modernism" and the Part III is a briefing of the "objective of the study".

Part I, **Reflections in Brief on Buddhism – the Dhamm**, is a brief introduction to what the Buddhist scholars of East and West have done in the past. It has been mentioned that their interpretations and understanding of Buddhism have created many problems. Part II of the introduction is **Buddhist Modernism and Philosophy**. This section begins with a remark made by Stcherbatsky regarding the study of Buddhism by Western scholars. Even though much has been written on Buddhism over a period of one hundred years we are still in the dark about the fundamental teachings of this religion. In this section it has been pointed out that modern writers on Buddhism have not sufficiently clarified the conceptual structure of Buddhism. Various opinions as to whether Buddhism is scientific, empirical or philosophical have been presented in this section. It has been mentioned that even though K. N. Jayatilaka and Kalupahana, who attempted to explore central conceptions of Buddhism in terms of positivistic empiricism of Vienna circle thinkers and early-Wittgenstein, they have failed to identify the true position of the Dhamma.

Part III of the Introduction is **The Objective**. At the beginning it has been said that the objective of the present work

is not to compare Buddhist concepts with those of western philosophy and modern science. The present work is rather a conceptual study of analysis of the key concepts of the Dhamma, the discourses of the Buddha, a clarification of the conceptual structure and the nature of Buddhist modernism in comparison with the Dhamma.

The chapter two is **Category-habits and Category-disciplines: Wittgenstein**. Chapter begins with a quotation from Wittgenstein. The part one of this chapter is the introduction. Referring to Wittgenstein's book entitled **Philosophical Investigations** it has been mentioned that Wittgenstein makes use of simple patterns of linguistic activity of 'language-games.'

This chapter has been divided into six parts. Part one is the introduction in which allusions are made to techniques of language games as described by Wittgenstein. The title of part two is **Language-games and not "Language-game." A Wittgensteinian Technique**. It has been mentioned at the very outset of this part Wittgenstein's comparison of languages and parts of languages to a kind of games called language-games. According to Wittgenstein, system of communication is called language-games. This has been further elaborated by saying that language games is nothing but the primitive form of language or primitive language. Wittgenstein considered the speaking of language as a part of an activity or form of life. Part three of the chapter two is **Form of Life: A Wittgensteinian technique**. It is stated that human nature is reflected in human grammar. This has been considered a master technique. This is going to be applied in order to clarify the central Dhammic concepts. Part four '**Model**': **A Wittgensteinian Technique** is a clarification of models (pictures). It is expressed that the application of model can be used to clarify some key concepts of Dhamma. Part five is termed as **The technique of 'Machine Idling': A Wittgensteinian Technique**. In this section it has been mentioned that the philosophical

concepts are identical with linguistic concepts. Some examples are given, i.e. causality, man, relation, extinction, emancipation and so forth. It has been shown that by applying machine idling Wittgenstein attempted to explain various functions of a word and to destroy the theory that the function of words is only naming. Part six is **A Critique of Wittgenstein's Critics**. This section is a brief critique of criticisms and remarks made against Wittgenstein's philosophical techniques and analyses.

The title of the chapter three is **Towards a category-discipline: The Dhamma's Structure**. At the beginning of this chapter readers are reminded of the taste of freedom of the Dhamma by quoting from Anguttara Nikaya IV. 206. Part one of this chapter is **The Dhammic structure and the 'Truth'**. This chapter is devoted to answer two issues: the first is the nature of conceptual structure of the Dhamma and the second the key concepts ingrained therein. Various meanings of the word, Dhamma, have been clarified in this chapter.

By applying Wittgenstein's conception of language game an attempt is made to clarify and study Buddhist conceptions in this chapter. It has been pointed out that the truth discovered by the Buddha is Noble Truths (ariyasaccani). The language game has been taken up in this respect. Interpretation of the Pali word *Abhisambujjhati* by some scholars has been taken up for discussion in this chapter. Specially Kalupahana's translation of the word *abhisambujjhati* as *discovered* is taken up as an issue. But the Buddha himself clarified his position with regard to Dependent Origination in the Samyutta Nikaya by using the word *Puranam anjasam* (an old path). What he emphasized was that the Truth of Dependent Origination is always there in the world hidden and he discovered it during the process of insight meditation. In that context *abhisambujjhati* means a kind of discovery as the law of Dependent Origination was already there in the world. Referring to the Buddha's enlightenment and realization five kinds of special knowledge (*Abhinna*) has been mentioned. It seems that psychokinesis

(Iddhividha) the first one has not been mentioned.

Part II of the third chapter is the **Dhammic structure and causality-talk**. This is not a discussion or clarification of Buddhist theory of Dependent Origination. Only certain characteristics of Buddhist Dependent Origination have been mentioned. After this we come across **The Dhammic structure and nibbana-talk**. In this one find an attempt made to state something about Nibbana. By following what is briefly said about Nibbana in the Nikayas of early Buddhism, it has been pointed out that it is not empirical and beyond modern science-based technology.

Part IV of the third chapter is **The Dhammic structure and kamma**. At the beginning a kind of value judgment is given to Buddhist teaching of karma. It is stated that karma is against divine redemption and is soteriology-oriented. The famous and oft-recurrent statement of the Buddha regarding the definition of karma has been taken from Nikaya texts, that is to say, 'It is the volitional action that I call karma. Having willed one acts by body, speech and mind.' The question is raised regarding the karmic bondage and the method of getting out of that bondage. It has repeatedly been mentioned that by following the Noble Eightfold Path one can get out of this samsaric existence by realizing Nibbana. Even though, the difference between wholesome and unwholesome volitional actions is mentioned. But there is no attempt made to clarify the criteria used by the Buddha in giving a value judgment to actions (karmas).

Chapter four, **The Search for a Meaning Criterion: Verification?** is an interesting one. Three Pali phrases regarding Buddhist epistemology have been taken up for discussion in this section in order to verify the meaningfulness of the Dhamma. They are Ehipassika (to verify something for oneself), Attana'va janyeyyatha (verifiable by personal knowledge) and Samam yeva dhammam abhinnaya (verifiable by super-perceptual knowledge). The argument herein is that if the content of a statement or a

sentence cannot be verified that, it is considered meaningless (appatihirakatam bhasitam).

In the elucidation of 'ehi passika' some interpretations by oriental and western scholars have been quoted. It seems that the rendering given to the Pali phrase 'ehi passika' in the present work is appropriate when it is compared with the renderings given by other scholars. Part II of this chapter is Buddhist Modernism and Verification. This section begins with some statements made by modern positivistic scholars regarding the Dhamma. It is emphasized that the verification of Dhamma should be done by super perceptual knowledge. Through the fourth super or special knowledge, retrocognition (pubbenivasanusatti jnana), one can verify the history of his own past existence in the Samsara.

Part III of the chapter four is entitled **Verification and Positivism**. This section is a brief exposition of the central concept of verification in terms of positivism. With regard to this some observations made by such philosophers of positivistic tradition like Schlick, A. J. Ayer, Ron Carnap, Godel, Feigl have been quoted. Having considered briefly the positivistic position of these philosophers, propositions or meaningful statements are divided into two: the statements in mathematics and logic and the statements of fact (propositions) based on empirical investigations. According to this division, the statements or propositions which do not fall into these two categories are considered as meaningless.

Next in part VI of this chapter an attempt is made to analyze restraint of senses in terms of meaning-model adopted by positivists. Part V of the chapter four is the conclusion. It has been mentioned here that three concepts, ehi passika, attana va janyeyyatha and samam yeva dhammam abhinnaya have been dealt with by way of critique and analysis. It has been mentioned in the conclusion that verification is possible by way of personal knowledge, super per perceptual knowledge, according to the

advice of wise men, by seeing for ourselves and so forth.

Chapter five is regarding the truth. Truth is considered as the central concept in eastern as well as western philosophies. Buddha realized the truth in the process of the practice of meditation. This chapter has four parts. The whole chapter is on the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism.

Chapter six is on the central conception of Buddhism, that is to say, the theory of Dependent Origination. This chapter includes **Causality talks (Methodology Study), Human person and causality-talk, Causality-Talk and Logical Nature, Model** and its application.

Chapter seven is **Facts to Ethics (Methodology study 2)**. This chapter is an investigation of Perception, Perception and methodology, Methodology unfolds further. Chapter eight Knowledge and Super-Perceptual Knowledge: Language-Games. This chapter consists of Issue about knowledge, Knowledge as a state of mind, Sense perceptual models and saving knowledge. Chapter nine is Nibbana and the Language Game. It has been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that many traditional Buddhist do not accept Nibbana as a concept. In this chapter the canonical interpretations of Nibbana have been taken up for discussion. Quotations from Udana and Upasivamanavapucchā of the Suttanipata have been quoted and discussed.

The last chapter of the book is **The Dhamma: Its Family of Concepts**. This chapter begins with a quotation of Wittgenstein. This is the conclusion of the book. It is mentioned that the Dhammic concepts cannot be accommodated within a set of epistemological concepts. Emancipation as against the epistemological dialectic is the basic ideology in Buddhism.

In conclusion I would like to mention that the book is well written. Philosophical methodology has been applied throughout the book. At the end of each chapter valuable end notes are included. There is a useful bibliography at the end of the book. One deficiency is that book does not have an

index. This can be considered good contribution to Buddhist studies.

– Kottegoda S. Warnasuriya

I-kuan Tao

By Joseph J.F. Chen
Authorhouse, Bolomington, Indiana,
2005, 191 pp.
ISBN: 1418495166

I-kuan Tao is the name of an important lay movement founded in 1930. During the last seventy-six years, its stature and number of believers has rapidly increased all over the world. However, I-kuan Tao as a new religion is still not very well known to the general public. The book titled *I-kuan Tao* was written by Dr. Joseph J.F. Chen as his doctorate dissertation in the Religious Studies at University of the West. It is the only authoritative work available to English readers on one of the most recent and significant religious developments in recent decades.

Dr. Joseph J.F. Chen is currently the Vice President and Secretary General of World I-kuan Tao Headquarters in Los Angeles, California. For this book, he has collected all available, published and unpublished documentation, including oral information from elders in the organization. His research data not only increases the awareness of the history and development of the organization but also for the first time presents the system of beliefs, rites, and practices of I-kuan Tao.

This book is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the main aspects of I-kuan Tao as a new religion: the origin, consolidation between 1930 and 2002, founder, mission, fundamental beliefs and teachings, rituals and ethics of I-kuan Tao. The second part of the book outlines its institutional history.