

Bhikkhu Bodhi's tribute to Venerable Nyanaponika—A Hundred Years from Birth—is both informative and inspiring. Particularly interesting is the brief essay “Presence within Absence—Reflections Six Years after his Death.”

Buddhist publications Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka is an excellent source of informative and well prepared documents for the study of Buddhism.

– Ananda W.P. Guruge

A Compendium of Buddhist Personal Names: Heritage and Significance of Adoption

By G.K. Ananda Kumarasiri
Published by Sri Lanka Buddhist Temple, Siri Jayanti Association
‘Living’ Buddhism Series
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: 2000, 380 pp.
ISBN: 983-40364-0-2

This 380-page very impressive volume, distributed free by the author, is not merely a compendium of Buddhist Personal Names. It is basically a plea for Buddhist parents to give meaningful names to their children. Kumarasiri points out that the foisting of fanciful, meaningless personal names on a child by unthinking Buddhist parents can cause serious negative repercussions on a child, because the child is unable to spiritually, socially, emotionally and psychologically connect themselves with the name. He urges the adoption of positive, inspiring Buddhist personal names.

Chapter I is a concise presentation of the author's concept of ‘Living’ Buddhism and Chapter IV is a brief account of the birth and naming of Prince Siddhattha. The rest of the introductory 144 pages present with diverse arguments and illustrations the efficacy of the author's thesis that Buddhist children be appropriately named.

It is to assist parents that two comprehensive lists of names for boys and

girls are presented as the bulk of the volume. While the meaning of every name is explained, sometimes with etymological origins, some names are annotated. For example, Dharmapala includes a thumbnail sketch of the services of Anagarika Dharmapala and Sumedha a brief reference to the meeting with Buddha Dipankara.

It is significant that this same campaign was carried on by Anagarika Dharmapala over a century ago and its impact on Sri Lanka has been significant. It is hoped that Kumarasiri's effort brings similar results.

Copies of the book may be requested from Sri Lanka Buddhist Temple, Lot 85, Jalan Tujuh, Sentul Pasar, 51000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

– Ananda W.P. Guruge

Buddhism, Ethics and Society: The Conflicts and Dilemmas of Our Times

By Padmasiri de Silva
Published by Monash Asia Institute
Clayton, Australia: 2002, 240 pp.
ISBN: 1-876924-08X

The blurb on the book says, “With an emphasis on cross-cultural understanding, philosopher Padmasiri de Silva explains the Buddhist approach to contemporary ethical issues. He counsels compassion, emotional sensitivity and compromise in approaching issues as diverse as environmental degradation, racism, workplace relations, violence and suicide. Padmasiri de Silva's discussion of the Buddhist texts shows that the Buddhist approach is as relevant now as it has been for the last 2500 years. This volume is useful as a guide for students, and as a companion to the discourses of the Buddha. It is also a practical reader for those seeking a way of understanding the problems of the modern world.”

It is with a view to finding out whether the book meets these claims that I began to read it. Padmasiri de Silva began his lucid