

SCHOLARLY BOOKS ON BUDDHIST ETHICS AND ETHICS-RELATED TOPICS
PUBLISHED IN THE 1990s

Batchelor, Martine and Brown, Kerry (eds.). *Buddhism and Ecology* (London: Cassell, 1992).

In this book Buddhists from Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Tibet and the West offer their approaches to ecology and tell of practical activities as well as Buddhist teachings and philosophy. Stories, pictures and poems add to the picture of Buddhism and ecology and the book finishes with a message from the Dalai Lama. A resource for group discussions and study in colleges and schools. [Description taken from the book cover]

Burford, Grace. *Desire, Death, and Goodness: The Conflict of Ultimate Value in Theravaada Buddhism* (New York: Peter Land, 1991).

This volume provides a careful analysis of the //A.t.thakavagga// sections of the ancient //Sutta-nipata//. She then utilizes two commentaries, the //Mahaaniddesa// and the //Paramatthajotikaa II//, comparing the three texts in question. She concludes that the //A.t.thakavagga// presents what she calls "a coherent normative value theory that assigns ultimate value to a life-affirming, immanent idea and describes a path of gradual self-improvement by which any person might attain this ideal" (p. 13). Burford also reconstructs, like others before her, an original Buddhism that is somewhat contradictory to the picture of Buddhism that emerges in the commentarial literature.

Fu, Charles Wei-Hsun and Wawrytko, Sandra (eds.). *Buddhist Ethics and Modern Society: A Symposium* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1991).

This volume presents twenty-nine papers collected from the first Chung-Hwa International Conference on Buddhism, held at Taipei's National Central Library in 1990. Predicated on the presumption that "purely academic discussion of Buddhism does not damage the dignity of Buddhist belief" (p. xiii), more than one hundred scholars, selected around the theme of the conference and irrespective of their personal religious commitment or academic background, participated in the conference. The papers were organized into Chinese, Japanese, and English language sections. The first section of the book is called "The Past: Traditional Roots" (nine papers). The second (and longest) section is called "The Present: Current Issues" (fifteen papers). The third and final section is called "The Future: Buddhist Ethics in a Pluralistic World" (five papers). The volume also includes a glossary, index, and biographical sketch of each editor and contributor.

Keown, Damien. *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics* (New York: St. Martin's Press; London: Macmillan, 1992).

This book examines data from //Theravaada// and //Mahaayaana// sources in order to provide a theoretical model in terms of which Buddhist ethics can be understood. Utilitarianism is considered and rejected, and Aristotelianism is offered as the closest Western parallel to Buddhism. It is suggested that Buddhism is best understood as a teleological virtue ethic in terms of which perfection (//nirvaa.na//) is the result of a cumulative process of self-transformation.

This transformation involves both the intellect and the emotions. corresponding to the traditional conception of enlightenment as the cultivation of both understanding (//praj~naa//) and moral concern (//karu.naa//).

Kraft, Kenneth (ed.). Inner Peace, World Peace: Essays on Buddhism and Nonviolence (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

Socially engaged Buddhism has become an extremely important topic for Buddhism in the 1990s. Fueled by the awarding of the Nobel peace Prize to the Dalai Lama, Kraft and others have begun to question whether the early interpretation of Buddhism as a religion that "often appears to promote personal transformation at the expense of social concern" (p. 3) presented at best a questionable explanation of Buddhist doctrine. Following Kraft's lively and anecdotal Introduction, the book includes eight essays, the first of which ("Prospects for a Socially Engaged Buddhism") is written by Kraft himself. Included in the volume are additional essays by Luis Gomez ("Nonviolence and the Self in Early Buddhism"), Christopher Chapple ("Nonviolence to Animals in Buddhism"), Donald Swearer ("Exemplars of Nonviolence in //Theravada// Buddhism"), Robert Thurman ("Tibet and the Monastic Army of Peace"), Cynthia Eller ("The Impact of Christianity on Buddhist Nonviolence in the West"), Gene Sharp ("Nonviolent Struggle: An Effective Alternative"), and Sulak Sivaraksa ("Buddhism and Contemporary International Trends").

LaFleur, William. Liquid Life: Abortion and Buddhism in Japan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

This book explores how Buddhist attitudes to abortion in Japan have been influenced by traditional Japanese beliefs about the nature of the fetus. Japan has a high abortion rate, which can be explained in part by the fact that contraception is not readily available. This is due in part to the fact that physicians earn large incomes from the lucrative abortion industry. Another explanation for the high abortion rate is the folk belief that the fetus occupies a position midway between human society and the world of the gods and spirits (//kami//). To terminate a pregnancy, accordingly, can be seen as morally less serious than the killing of a "full" human being. The book also examines the phenomenon of //mizuko kuyo//, the ritual which is performed after an abortion has taken place, which has become extremely important in recent years.

Nakasone, Ronald Y. Ethics of Enlightenment: Essays and Sermons in Search of a Buddhist Ethic (Freemont, Ca.: Dharma Cloud Publishers, 1990).

In addition to being a scholar, Ronald Nakasone is also a Pure Land priest (in the Hongwanji sect). As such, his ethical basis is the perspective of the //bodhisattva// Dharmaakara. The book explicates a number of themes currently being carefully considered in modern Pure Land communities, such as medical ethics in Buddhist perspective, suicide, the death of children, and similar issues. It considers the way in which these important ethical concerns are reflected in the conduct of the individual and the community.

Prebish, Charles (ed.). Buddhist Ethics: A Cross-Cultural Approach (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1992).

This book is an anthology of nine essays on the Buddhist ethical tradition. In collecting the essays on a cross-cultural and cross-traditional scope, the editor has presented a survey of the classical and modern Buddhist ethical landscapes, intended to meet the needs of both the scholarly and practicing Buddhist communities. It includes three essays on the //Theravaada// tradition (by Phra Raajavaramuni, David Little and Sumner Twiss, and Richard Gombrich), one essay on the Indian //Mahaayaana// tradition (by Lal Mani Joshi), one essay on the //bodhisattva// tradition in Tibetan Buddhism, one essay on ethical life in Chinese Buddhism (by Kenneth Ch'en), one essay on Zen ethics (by James Whitehill), one essay on ethics in North American Buddhism (by Charles Prebish), and an essay on socially engaged Buddhism (by Ken Jones).

Prebish, Charles S. _A Survey of //Vinaya// Literature_ (Taipei: Jin Luen Publishing House, 1994).

This volume, the first in the Dharma Lamp Series of books on Buddhism in South Asia, was completed during Professor Prebish's tenure as Numata Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Calgary in 1993, and continues his quarter-century long investigation of the Indian Buddhist monastic tradition and its governing literature. In this study, Prebish presents an extended explanation of the organizational structure of the system of monastic disciplinary literature, known as //Vinaya//, as well as a consideration of its application as an functional instrument designed to ensure the ethical propriety of the monks and nuns living in the monastic setting. In addition, Prebish develops a classification methodology by which it is possible to categorize all literature in this area by sect, text type, and primary language. He includes a survey of all primary texts in Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan, as well as Western language translations of these texts in English, French, German, Italian, and Japanese. The survey also identifies a majority of the secondary literature in this area. Following the body of the volume, author, article title, and book title indexes are provided, along with indexes for Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan text titles.

Schmithausen, Lambert. _Buddhism and Nature_. Volume VII of _Studia Philologica Buddhica Occasional Paper Series_ (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1991).

This volume is a thorough and extremely well documented discourse on Buddhism's attitude toward Nature. It is an expansion of a paper originally read on September 26, 1990. The first three (original) short chapters discuss "Programmatic and Theoretical Consideration," "The Buddhist Attitude Towards Nature," and "Postface: Practical Suggestions for the Present Situation." To the original, four more chapters are added on "Traditional Buddhist Ethics and Environmental Ethics: Some Problematic Aspects," "The Five Precepts in the Context of a Community of All Living Beings," "Specific Attitudes of //Mahaayaana// Ethics in Connection with the Attitude Towards Nature," and "Remarks on N. Hakamaya's View of the Problem of 'Buddhism and Nature.'" An extremely useful bibliography follows.

Schmithausen, Lambert. _The Problem of the Sentience of Plants in Earliest Buddhism_. Volume VI of _Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series_ (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1991).

Longer than his Buddhism and Nature, here Lambert Schmithausen provides a comprehensive study of Buddhism's attitude toward plants. Chapter I, "The Problem and Its Content," contextually locates the issue at hand. Chapter II, "General prohibition to Injure Seeds and Plants," examines the textual bases for the examination. Chapter III provides further //Vinaya// materials on plants, fruits, raw grain, and garlic, as well as a consideration of earth, water, and fire. Chapter IV provides, "Further //Suttapi.taka// Material," while the next three chapters consider "Evaluation of the Evidence," "Later Developments," and "Later Arguments Against Plant Sentience." The final chapter, "Postface," provides a very short conclusion. The book includes an index and an exhaustive bibliography. Extensive notes are also included.

Sizemore, Russell F. and Swearer, Donald K. (eds.). Ethics, Wealth, and Salvation: A Study in Buddhist Social Ethics (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1990).

This volume is a publication in the "Studies in Comparative Religion" series and emerged from a conference sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Henry Luce Foundation. The overall volume highlights the tension between salvation for individuals and the effort for social good in //Theravaada// Buddhism. The main text is organized into five parts: (1) Buddhism and Ethics, (2) Social Ethics and Salvation, (3) Wealth and Charity, (4) Contexts of Buddhist Moral and Religious Values, and (5) Buddhism and Beyond-The Universality of the Problem of Distributive Justice. Although an anthology of conference papers, the volume also includes a highly creative Introduction that addresses the six major themes running through the various parts of the book: (1) non-attachment in the context of the possession of material wealth, (2) ethical guidance in the context of instruction for salvation, (3) individual virtue in terms of social effect, (4) //daana// or religious giving, (5) the //Sangha// in its role as social power, and (6) universality, discussed in terms of equality, justice, and individualism. The volume also includes notes and bibliographic references for each paper, as well as a comprehensive Index.

Vyanjana, K. //Theravaada// Buddhist Ethics With Special Reference to Visuddhimagga (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1992).

[Author's Thesis]. The thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter is introductory and starts with the relationship between ethics and religion. . .The second chapter deals briefly with the origin and development of Buddhism. . .The third chapter deals with the concept of the ultimate goal in life, which is //Nirvaa.na//. The other tenets like //Pratiitya Samutpaada//, //Anaatmavaada// and //K.sa.nikavaada// have also been discussed in this context. The fourth chapter contains a description of the nature of moral conduct for monks and householders. The fifth chapter is concerned with the discussion of the meaning, importance and the place of //Visuddhimagga// in //Theravaada// Buddhist Ethics. . .The sixth and last chapter is a brief conclusion. [Description taken from the Preface]

Wayman, Alex. The Ethics of Tibet: //Bodhisattva// Section of Tsong-kha-pa's //Lam Rim Chen Mo// (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

This recent volume from Alex Wayman is a translation of the third of the five sections of Tsong-kha-pa's famous //Lam rim

chen mo//. The book begins with a short introduction that contextually places the volume in the mainstream of Mahaayaana ethics. The translation is presented in two chapters, followed by Notes to the Introduction, Notes to the Translation, and two appendices: Bibliography for the Sanskrit Passages, and Sanskrit Passages for the Citations in Their Order of Occurrence. An Index is also provided. Charles Hallisey, in his bibliographic essay on Buddhist ethics, in *Religious Studies Review*, 18, 4 (October 1992), refers to this as a "second-order, meta-ethical Buddhist text, one that gives somewhat more attention than the first-order works to systematically explaining why one should do certain action or refrain from others" (p. 277). Wayman makes quite clear in his Introduction that Tsong-kha-pa was interested not only in traditional //Vinaya// and //"siila//, but also in the development of //Vajrayana// ethics.

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