

Journal of Buddhist Ethics

ISSN 1076-9005

<http://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/>

Volume 31, 2024

Economic Justice in the Buddhist Tradition

Christopher Queen

Harvard University

Copyright Notice: Digital copies of this work may be made and distributed provided no change is made and no alteration is made to the content. Reproduction in any other format, with the exception of a single copy for private study, requires the written permission of the author. All enquiries to: vforte@albright.edu.

Economic Justice in the Buddhist Tradition

Christopher Queen¹

Abstract

Buddhism is widely associated today with progressive values and exemplary models of economic life. The idea of “Buddhist economics” was paired with the slogan “small is beautiful” by the economist E. F. Schumacher in 1973. Voluntary simplicity, renunciation, and a middle path between self-indulgence and self-denial are seen as keys to sustainable levels of acquisition and consumption. Buddhist kindness and compassion are thought to inspire charitable giving to the poor, and right livelihood to promote occupations of service to society. Yet the history of Buddhist economics does not always support these assumptions. Traditional beliefs in karma and merit-making do not align with modern ideas of justice. We examine the Buddhist record in areas of social equality, property, natural resources, products, wealth, income, jobs, and taxation. Each section surveys Buddhist economics in the Theravāda cultures of South and Southeast Asia; the Mahāyāna

¹ Division of Continuing Education, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University (retired). Email: csqueen@post.harvard.edu. This article appeared originally in Madsen and Sullivan 235-260.

cultures that flourished in India, China, Tibet, and East Asia; and the modern period, marked by the rise of Engaged Buddhism in Asia and the West. At each stage we find distinctive teachings and practices in the economic sphere.

Introduction

Buddhism is widely associated with progressive teachings and exemplary models of economic life. The idea of “Buddhist economics” was paired with the slogan “small is beautiful” by economist E. F. Schumacher in a book of that title in 1973. Voluntary simplicity and renunciation are salient themes in the legend of Gotama, a prince who exchanged his palace for homelessness and promoted monastic life as a direct road to happiness and liberation. The teaching of a middle path between self-indulgence and self-denial, the opening words of the Buddha’s first sermon, is offered as a key to sustainable levels of acquisition and consumption in modern times of increasing income inequality and consumerism. Right livelihood, another early teaching, denotes occupations that avoid harm to animals, workers, and the public. Schumacher concludes that these Buddhist teachings amount to an “economics as if people mattered” that may provide a basis for societies of opportunity and prosperity for all (53-75).

As Buddhism evolved over two millennia in Asia and the West, however, we see patterns of economic life that diverge from the simple picture of “wandering and intellectually schooled mendicant monks” that the sociologist Max Weber envisioned in his account of the earliest Buddhists (106). In the Buddhist communities that sprang up in Northeast India in the Fifth century B.C.E., and their successors in Southeast Asia, China, and Japan, we encounter a larger canvas that includes patronage by moneyed classes, hereditary nobility, and citizens of modest and moderate means, as religious giving became the central pillar of salvation for

the laity. Offering food, robes, and property to the monks, and building Buddhist shrines, stupas, *vihāras*, pagodas, wats, temples, gompas, and zendos earned the donors spiritual merit and favorable rebirths in the future. In return, the monks offered ritual blessings and religious instruction to members of society in search of comfort and direction. Chief among the lay supporters of the *saṅgha*, or religious order, was the king himself, who, in addition to spiritual merit, sought religious legitimation for the power of the state.

Underlying these relationships were four attitudes toward material prosperity. First, wealth is good, insofar as it provides for the satisfaction of material needs and opportunities for religious giving. Poverty is never praised in Buddhism. Second, wealth gained without greed or harm to others—through “right livelihood,” which avoids trade in arms, meat, alcohol, or living beings—is regarded as a sign of virtue. The virtuous wealthy are the most honored members of lay society. Third, the prestige of the wealthy is further measured by the ways in which they spend their wealth. Generosity (*dāna*), particularly toward the monastic community, earns the donor spiritual merit, a favorable rebirth, and opportunities to acquire more wealth. The more respected the recipient—a senior monk, for example—the greater the merit earned. Fourth, and most importantly, material wealth and poverty are regarded as ultimately inconsequential in the quest for salvation. For traditional Buddhists, both lay and ordained, the achievement of spiritual liberation, *nirvāṇa* (Pāli *nibbāna*), not worldly prosperity, is the ultimate goal of life. Material wealth is considered to be morally neutral compared to generosity, a spirit of nonattachment, and service to others. Personal virtue and contentment in life represent true wealth, the Buddha taught, differentiating those who are rich from those who are poor (Ornatowski 200-202).

In light of these principles, modern notions of equality, human rights, and distributive justice, particularly as they relate to economic

opportunity and prosperity, do not find direct parallels in early Buddhism. A just arrangement for the distribution of wealth “as if people mattered,” in Schumacher’s terms, was never the object of classical Buddhist teaching. Indeed, generosity toward the poor is rarely mentioned, except as a desirable policy of the state. The names of wealthy donors are recorded in early narratives and lithic inscriptions for their gifts to the *saṅgha*, not the lay community, however needy. Even gifts to the monks are discretionary and would not be expected to precede spending on oneself, family, friends, and employees (ideally one-quarter of one’s income); saving for contingencies in the future (one-quarter); and, most importantly, reinvesting in enterprises that produce more wealth (one-half) (*Sigālovāda Sutta*, *Dīgha Nikāya* III; Ornatowski 207). With the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the common era, voluntary giving by laypersons to the poor is praised as a way “to eliminate the causes of suffering and to increase blessings and virtues,” while giving to the *saṅgha* remains the surest way to a higher goal, “to repay kindness, to increase the causes of happiness, and to increase wisdom and forsake afflictions” (Harvey 192-195).

For ancient Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, and other traditionalists in South and East Asia, disparities of wealth and poverty, like differences of physical strength, mental health, and social status, are believed to be dictated by the operation of karma, literally “action,” as it is manifested in the laws of nature and moral conduct in the human sphere. The outcome or fruit (*phala*) of an action may appear immediately, or it may remain latent until it ripens later in this life or the next. Belief in the transmission of moral effects over many lifetimes, governed by the law of karma, shapes common attitudes toward social and economic justice. Thus, a person’s economic standing, whether rich or poor, reflects his or her ethical conduct in the past. A popular example is the story of King Vessantara, who demonstrates his virtue by giving away his riches, his throne, and even his children in acts of spontaneous generosity. Immediately upon making his final gift—his grief-stricken wife—his vast merit, earned by

making these gifts, results in the sudden restoration of his wealth, his kingdom, and his family. The accumulation of the king's karma, earned in this life and in countless previous and later lives, elevates Vessantara to the status of a bodhisattva, one who selflessly helps others. The cost to his family—the children were cruelly abused by their new master, for example—as well as the extremes of privilege and deprivation that form the backdrop of the story, are subordinated in the minds of hearers to the conviction that acts of generosity will eventually benefit the donor and those around him. The family lives happily thereafter and the king himself is later reborn as Shakyamuni Buddha (Strong 107-108).

As we survey the evolution of Buddhist economics and its implications for questions of equality, property, natural resources, products, wealth, income, jobs, and taxation, we encounter both continuity and transformation. The value of material comfort remains secondary to spiritual advancement, for example, at the same time that monastic institutions become increasingly rich as a result of lay benefaction. The relationship between *saṅgha* and state becomes both codependent and adversarial as philanthropy flows to the pagoda at the expense of the palace and is then confiscated in lieu of taxes by the government. In medieval China and Japan, the vast economic holdings of monastic institutions are buttressed by their rising political power, as Buddhist monks, armed and trained in traditional martial arts, engage in insurrections and internecine warfare. Finally, in the post-colonial period of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ideologies of popular dissent from elite power support the rise of Buddhist liberation movements committed to universal human rights, democratic institutions, and economic justice. Such “socially engaged” Buddhism combines elements of traditional teaching with new conceptions borrowed from a globalizing, transnational culture.

Core religious values of Buddhism—the *Dharma* in its widest sense—appear, evolve, and reappear throughout these epochs. They may

be grouped around the categories of Discipline, Virtue, Altruism, and Engagement for purposes of analysis (Queen *Engaged* 12-17). In the early scriptures, the ethics of Discipline, the avoidance of harm to oneself and others, is reflected in the Five Precepts (*pañcaśīla*) against injury, dishonesty, theft, sexual misconduct, and intoxication; and in the hundreds of restrictions of monastic conduct inscribed in the *Vinaya* codes for monks and nuns. Complementing these proscriptions in the earliest writings, an ethics of Virtue was introduced to include such lists as the Divine Abodes (*brahmavihāra*) of kindness, compassion, joy at the wellbeing of others, and impartiality; and the Perfections (*pāramitā*) of generosity, morality, courage, patience, mindfulness, and wisdom. The ethics of Altruism refers to the vocation of the bodhisattva, the hybrid hero of the Mahāyāna reforms, who may be ordained or lay, human or divine, male or female. Motivated by the thought of future enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) and great compassion for others (*mahākaruṇā*), the bodhisattva vows to save all sentient beings through tireless skillful means, deferring his or her own reward until all others are fully liberated. Finally, the ethics of Engagement, a complex of beliefs and practices that emerged in the modern period in Asia and the West, recognizes the collective, systemic, and institutional causes of human suffering—political oppression, corporate greed and exploitation, and ecological disturbances that disproportionately impact the most vulnerable populations—and formulates social strategies to combat them.

Each section that follows touches on features of Buddhist economics as they appear in (1) the Theravāda cultures of South and Southeast Asia, as reflected in the Pāli literatures associated with the Buddha's early teaching; (2) the Mahāyāna cultures that originated in India and flourished in China, Tibet, and East Asia, including Chan/Zen, Pure Land, Nichiren, and Vajrayāna traditions; and (3) the modern period, marked by the rise of Engaged Buddhism in Asia and the West. Each phase of this

evolution may be seen to point to distinctive practices and teachings in the economic sphere.

Equality

Buddhism first appeared in the Fifth century B.C.E., a time of rapid economic and social change in Northeast India. The development of iron technology made possible the clearing of forests, the expansion of agricultural lands, surplus food production, and growing populations. The traditional organization of society into tribal confederations was supplanted by the rise of monarchies and the consolidation of economic and political power. Cities and the occupations they supported—manufacture, trading, accounting, and financial services—became the setting for the career of the Buddha, who was raised in a royal household of wealth and privilege. The Buddha counted among his followers bankers, kings, women of financial means, and *gahapatis*, high-status agricultural entrepreneurs with large land holdings, workforces, and produce markets that extended along the teeming river- and land-based trade routes. Of the 1,009 passages in the Pāli records that name a place of the Buddha's activity, 83 percent (842) cite one of five cities: Sāvattṭhī, Rājagaha, Kapilavatthu, Vesālī, and Kosambi (Gokhale 7-22). As a result of generous land donations to the growing *saṅgha*, these references suggest that the congregation of monks frequently spent the rain-retreat season in the environs of these cities, and that the Buddha's message was directed to the social, economic, and spiritual challenges faced by rapidly growing urban populations.

These challenges differed from the concerns of the Brahmanical priesthood in traditional agricultural society. Rather than offering Sanskrit incantations for the ending of drought or the prosperity of newlyweds, the Buddha spoke of the ethical and psychological stresses created

by changing social relationships and marketplace politics. In his dialogues with petitioners from all walks of life, he insisted

that a person be judged by his individual virtue rather than his familial, class or social origins. This was precisely the demand of the new urban social classes who . . . were not much interested in speculative metaphysics, for their emphasis was on practical and everyday concerns of making good in this world and assuring one's welfare in the next. (Gokhale 19)

These concerns were met by the Buddha's warnings of the danger of harming others, lying, stealing, sexual abuse, and intoxication, which would damage relationship and reputation in business and social circles; and his affirmation of the values of friendliness, compassion, joy in the success of others, and impartiality, which foster harmony in the family and enhance professional connection and customer service in the workplace. In this way, the core ethical teachings of the Five Precepts and Divine Abodes resonated with a rising managerial class no longer attracted to Vedic ritualism, theology, and magic.

Social and economic equality were neither a reality nor an ideal in the Buddha's time. The division of society into four hereditary castes (*varṇa*) was first described in the *Puruṣa-Sūkta* of the Rig Veda, in which the Brahmin priesthood emerged from the mouth of the "cosmic man," the Kṣatriya nobility from his torso, the Vaiśya merchants from his hips, and the Śūdra laborers from his legs. This mythic picture was parodied in the Buddha's story of creation, the *Aggañña Sutta*, where the nobility is elevated to top-rank in a society, and where status is acquired by virtuous action, not social location. While acknowledging the existence of caste inequality in his time, the Buddha came to be known for disregarding these distinctions, ordaining aspirants from all backgrounds into the company of monks and nuns. In this respect, the primitive *saṅgha* was a

counterculture founded on a new vision of equality and opportunity. The goal was spiritual liberation, however, not social, economic, or political advancement. Devotion to the Buddha's Middle Path promised a better life in this world and the next (Tambiah *World* 9-18).

By the turn of the Common Era, the social patterns described in the earliest Buddhist records were supplemented and, in some cases, replaced by a new social vision embodied in the figure of the bodhisattva. Portrayed as a heroic devotee of the Buddha's way, the bodhisattva reflects a broadening definition of spiritual equality: bodhisattvas might be lay or ordained, divine or human, male or female. This Mahāyāna ("great vehicle") movement might also be expected to reflect a broadening of access to the practice of Buddhism for persons of all social and economic strata and a continuation of the Buddha's redefinition of eliteness along ethical lines. Yet bodhisattvas were not portrayed as poor or low caste. The wealthy merchant Vimalakīrti and the brilliant Queen Śrīmālā are representative of prominent lay figures in the early period in their commitment to the spread of the Dharma. Here we miss references to the figures of lowly background or personal tragedy we had met in tales of the Buddha's previous lives (*jātaka*), conversion stories of the monks and nuns (*Theragāthā*, *Therīgāthā*) and the Buddha's dialogues with the population at large (*Suttapiṭaka*). Śrīmālā teaches the universal presence of Buddha-nature (*tathāgatagarbha*) in all beings while at the same time appealing primarily to Indian royal patronesses and court ladies in China and Japan. Her story, and those of the other new savior-figures, is preserved in Sanskrit, the elite language of Brahmins and pandits (Paul 289-292).

The importation and adaptation of Buddhist teachings to China offered new opportunities to promote social and economic equality. Two examples will suggest the opening of new life-options for spiritual seekers. The biography of the Fourth-century nun, An-ling Hsu, reflects the transmission of sexual equality from India to East Asia via Buddhist

teachings. As a bookish girl in a middle-class family, An-ling resisted her parents' pressure to marry. Her father, a mid-level government official, consulted the Buddhist missionary, Fo-t'u-teng, who foretold An-ling's future eminence by conjuring a magic vision of her previous life as a śrāmaṇa or holy person in the midst of a large gathering, preaching the dharma . . . helping living creatures." By allowing An-ling to renounce marriage and family life, her father freed her to achieve success and to bring wealth and honor to his family. Hsu became a scholar and founder of nunneries for likeminded girls, as her father was promoted to the high office of prefect by his prince (Wright 69-72).

Perhaps the most-cited text in Chinese Buddhist history is the *Platform Sūtra* of the Sixth Patriarch, composed over several centuries and memorializing the teachings of Huineng, a humble employee in a large Chan (Zen) monastery. The paradox of the work is its attribution to an illiterate servant, who nevertheless defeated the erudite heir-apparent of the retiring abbot by dictating a teaching verse of great subtlety. This feat might be taken as evidence that medieval Chinese Buddhism honored the contributions of the culturally disadvantaged, yet the final versions of the *sūtra* comprise a compendium of commentaries on nine philosophical-devotional texts, unlikely to be comprehended by a single unlettered monk. The message is rather that the *Dharma*, like buddha-nature itself, is the birth-right of all sentient beings (McRae 122-139).

Among the socially engaged Buddhisms of the Twentieth century, none has placed equality of human dignity and opportunity higher on its agenda than the Buddhist conversion of India's "untouchables" (called *Dalits*, "oppressed," or *Bahujans*, "common-folk") in the decades following their initiation in 1956. Embracing the European slogans "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" and "Educate, Agitate, Organize," which the movement's leader, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, brought back from his graduate studies in New York and London, the "New Vehicle" (*Navayāna*) of Ambedkar Buddhists

have made the overthrow of the Indian caste system their primary objective. If the Buddha's teaching was directed to the relief of human suffering, and if membership in his order was offered freely to persons from all backgrounds of caste, class, and wealth, the Ambedkar Buddhists argue, then their own religious practice must focus every effort on the realization of equality—social, political, economic, and spiritual—for all members of society. Ambedkar Buddhists number in the millions in India today (Queen and King 45-72).

Property

Just as religions are embodied in ritual and morality, they are also grounded in sacred space and holy shrines. Religions “make homes and cross boundaries” at the same time, according to one theorist.² But they are not for that reason defined primarily by their acquisition of “property”—land, buildings, furnishings—which in most cases accumulate over time as a byproduct of their success. In India, religious seekers and devotees were known more for voluntary homelessness than for their construction of ornate temples. Called *sādhus* (holy men), *śrāmaṇas* (ascetics), *sannyāsīs* (renunciants), and *munis* (silent ones) in the Vedic tradition, Indian religious wanderers even came to the attention of Alexander the Great, who called them *gymnosophists*, naked philosophers. In this tradition, we have seen the ease with which King Vessantara renounced his kingdom to practice the moral purity of total generosity.

Prince Siddhārtha's renunciation of his royal palace and position in favor of the wandering life stands as the primary symbol of Buddhism's

² See Thomas Tweed's definition of religions as “confluences of organic-cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing on human and suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries” in *Crossing* 54ff.

material asceticism. His followers came to be called *bhikkhus*, mendicants, or *paribbājakas*, those who have gone forth. But life in the jungle and at the margins of settled society—the mark of the traditional *sādhu*—never caught on as the goal of the *Dhamma*. The reality of summer monsoons in South Asia quickly overtook any possibility of permanent wandering for the Buddha and his followers. Monks, like householders, need shelter during the inclement months, and increasing numbers of devotees of the Buddha’s teachings were eager to provide a nearby place for the *saṅgha* to settle and teach. Donations of property became an early mark of the popularity of the movement, particularly among the landed and moneyed classes. Among the most celebrated gifts of property were those of the banker Anāthapiṇḍika and the patroness Visākhā, who donated monasteries at opposite ends of the city of Sāvātthī. As the third rainy season approached, Anāthapiṇḍika requested permission to provide shelter for the monks, who had been staying in caves, ravines, and graveyards. With the Buddha’s consent, the banker built the Jetavana Monastery, eventually comprising sixty dormitories, with meeting halls for public lectures, rituals, and training. Some years later, Visākhā, renowned for her generous gifts of food and robes to the *saṅgha*, sold her jewelry and built a second monastery on prime land near the city gate, the Pubbārāma, or “Eastern Park.” Many of the Buddha’s recorded teachings are situated on these sumptuous grounds.

By the Fourth century C.E., the Buddhist monastic establishment in Sri Lanka had become the largest landholder on the island. Temples, paddy lands, and coconut gardens provided not only for the religious activities of *saṅghas* throughout the year, but also for their economic and political support.

On the one hand, land ensures the continuity of the monkhood, for as long as monks have land, they need not worry about their livelihood. And as long as the monkhood

survives, the *dhamma* survives. On the other hand, the king's protection of the *saṅgha*'s wealth and virtue demonstrates his right to rule. Landed wealth thus serves as the mediating vehicle by which the *saṅgha* and the state share political power and moral legitimacy. (Kemper 159)

A similar pattern of triangulation between wealthy donors, Buddhist capital accumulation, including landholding, and state oversight evolved in China, posing unprecedented challenges. The dominance of Confucian values, such as respect for traditional family and official authority, as we saw in the story of An-ling Hsu, was threatened by the growing wealth and political influence of Buddhist temples and monasteries. One expression of this tension was the invention of the “merit-cloister” during the Tang dynasty (618-906), whereby land was placed under monastic control as a tax shelter. The donor ceded ownership of the land while retaining management rights over its use. This and other features of a growing Buddhist commercial presence in China resulted in periodic retaliation by the state in the form of confiscation of monastic lands, the forceful laicization of monks, and the imposition of quotas on the establishment of new temples and monasteries. Major persecutions, as they came to be known, occurred in the years 446, 574, and 845 (Ornatowski 214-220).

In the *Aggañña Sutta*'s account of the evolution of society, boundaries for private property were first drawn when greedy neighbors began to hoard naturally growing rice. The division of land into private plots led to social strife and the election of the first king, who was charged with enforcing civil order and, along with holy men, setting standards of righteous conduct. Paradoxically, the holy men of the Buddhist order quickly assumed the role of property-holder and faced inevitable challenges associated with wealth and political power. Cases of what might be called “corporate Buddhism” in South Asia and China were replicated in medieval Korea, Japan, and Tibet. Not until the modern period do we see a

generalized rejection of these tendencies in the humanistic and socialist writings of Twentieth-century reformers such as the Chinese Taixu, the Thai Buddhadasa, the Japanese Daisaku Ikeda, and the Taiwanese Xingyun (Chandler 94-95).

Natural Resources

Just as the *Aggañña Sutta* pictured a primordial paradise where food grew freely for human consumption, many early records of the Buddhist movement suggest harmonious perspectives on man's relation to the natural environment. In the *jātaka* tales of the early Pāli literature, the future Buddha is personified as a wild animal who sacrifices himself for others: antelope, elephant, deer, yak, lion, rhinoceros, tiger, panther, bear, hyena, otter, and more. In addition to illustrating core Buddhist virtues, the literature celebrates forests, rivers, flowers, herbs, and landscapes that anticipate the magical "buddha-realms" in the *Sukhāvatī*, or "pure land," literature of the later Mahāyāna. The early tradition emphasizes the sacredness of trees in the legend of the Buddha, who was born and died under flowering shala trees (*Shorea robusta*) and enlightened under a giant fig tree (*Ficus religiosa*) that came to be called the *bodhi*, or "awakening," tree. The *Suttanipāta* has the Buddha say,

Know ye the grasses and the trees . . . Then know ye the worms and the moths, and the different sorts of ants . . . Know ye also the four-footed animals small and great, the serpents, the fish which range in the water, the birds that are borne along on wings and move through the air . . . Know ye the marks that constitute species are theirs, and their species are manifold. (Kabilsingh 8-9)

The *Vinaya* monastic code forbids the cutting of trees and the contamination of water with food or other waste. Monks are instructed to build toilets and wells to protect water-born creatures and to provide pure water for drinking and bathing. “Those who destroy or contaminate water resources do so at great karmic peril,” observes scholar Chatsumarn Kabil Singh. “This illustrates early awareness of the need to preserve natural resources” (11).

The Buddhist king Aśoka Maurya (circa 274-232 B.C.E.), a midlife convert to Buddhism, included among his rock and pillar edicts a record of policies designed to serve his subjects while protecting the natural environment.

Medicinal herbs, suitable for men and animals, have been imported and planted wherever they were not previously available. Where roots and fruits were lacking, they have been imported and planted. Wells have been dug and trees planted along the roads for the use of men and animals. (Nikam and McKeon 64-65)

Significantly, these measures are not enacted or announced to bring credit to the king or his government, but rather “in order that the people may follow the path of Dharma with faith and devotion” (Nikam and McKeon 65). The implication is that the path of the Buddha encompasses humans, plants, and animals in a holistic vision of wellbeing.

Buddhism’s record of environmental protection was never perfect, however. In the medieval Japanese ritual of *Hōjō-e*, for example, the annual release of animals to teach compassion for living creatures and moderation in the use of natural resources, large temples routinely discount the death of thousands of captive birds and fish in order to have sufficient stocks for an impressive public ceremony. For these prestigious Buddhist

institutions, “the release of animals . . . was more often a matter of displaying political power or appeasing various deities” (Williams 154).

In the Twentieth century, the rise of environmental movements on a global scale have provided a platform for the resurgence of Buddhist teachings on reverence for nature. Traditional notions of dependent origination, the non-harming of living beings, moderation in the consumption of natural resources, and humility, compassion, and mindfulness in interactions with other beings have all been applied to specific challenges of environmental protection. A flood of anthologies detailing the teachings of “Green Buddhism” and “Eco-Buddhism” have appeared in recent years and engaged Buddhist groups have mounted many forms of social activism to combat environmental degradation. The “ecology monks” of Thailand, who “ordain” trees to halt the cutting of forests, and the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, which committed civil disobedience to stop nuclear weapons testing at a U. S. Government test site in Nevada in 1993, are but two examples of the global response of engaged Buddhists to the environmental crisis (Kaza 159-183).

Products

What constitutes a product in Buddhism? Certainly, religious teachings may be considered cultural products or intellectual property. The activities of the *saṅgha*, such as the offering of teachings, advice, and counseling may likewise be considered educational and pastoral services, products of sorts. But from the earliest times, we also encounter what might be more narrowly considered economic products and services, as they grow out of and interact with the economic system. An example of the commodification of the Buddha is suggested by his death-bed instructions to his attendant Ananda that worship of his remains (*sarīra-pūjā*) should be left to nobles, Brahmins, and landowners so that the monks may focus on their

spiritual duties (*Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* V.10). By the First century C.E., the commercial value of this teaching was disclosed in donor inscriptions and physical portraits carved in the stone entrances to cave temples and reliquary monuments (*stūpas*), where the remains, or “relics,” (*sarīra*) of the Buddha or chief disciples are interred (Schopen 99ff.).

In Chinese Buddhism we find a wide range of products and services marketed by large temples, including grain milling, oil seed pressing, money lending, pawnshops, loans of grain to peasants (with interest), mutual financing associations, hotels and hostelries, and rental of temple lands to farmers in exchange for some percentage of the crop (Ornatowski 216). Some of these businesses were imported from India, in violation of regulations in the monastic code, but others appeared for the first time in China. These include the buying and selling of monk ordination certificates, formerly issued and sold by the state, but later manufactured and traded by monasteries as a source of income. The certificates could be used to obtain tax exemptions and collateral for lending at monastic rates, which the borrower regarded as a form of spiritual merit-making. The accumulation of “inexhaustible treasuries” of land, money, and goods acted as endowments to ensure future wealth and prosperity, while lay investment in monastic “merit cloisters” offered the donor a tax shelter while allowing continued profits from management of the donated land or goods. Ornatowski calls these financial products “the best examples of ‘capitalist’ innovations in China originating from Buddhist practices” (218-220).

By modern times, the cult of relics and amulets had been fully institutionalized in Thailand. Tambiah describes the annual Kathin, or robe-donation ceremony, in the remote mountain hermitage of a renowned forest monk, Acharn Čūan. Sponsored by the Bangkok Bank of Commerce, the ceremony provided the bank’s elite clients—aristocrats, royalists, politicians, high-end merchants, and Chinese financiers—an opportunity to

make merit while meeting and cultivating old and new business partners. In preparation for the three-day event in 1978, for example, the bank minted 40,000 bronze amulets depicting a meditating Acharn Čūan on one side and the seal of the bank and the inscription “Kathin, 1976, Wat Phūthaung, Čangwat Naungkhāi” on the other. During the rain retreat that preceded the ceremony, Acharn Čūan had ritually blessed each of the amulets with a traditional mantra. Four thousand amulets were donated to the monastery for sale—at about \$1 each—while the rest were retained by the bank as premium gifts to selected depositors. Following the ceremony, in which 175,000 *baht* (\$8,750) were donated, along with robes and other domestic articles, the distinguished supporters, who had been bused in from Bangkok and other cities, were invited to shop in the hermitage gift shop. Typical items at monastic gift shops in rural Thailand include a selection of amulets in common or precious metals, and lockets, rings, statuettes, and bumper stickers bearing the senior monk’s image and the branding of the secular sponsor (Tambiah *Buddhist* 272-389).

Wealth

The first major recorded donation to the Buddhist *saṅgha* was the pleasure garden of the Maghadan king Bimbisāra, which he provided for the itinerant monks to shelter during the rains and to meet with supporters, outside the hustle and bustle of the city. Unlike traditional donations of land to the Brahmin priesthood by the nobility, which were given to individual priests for agricultural cultivation and the staging of fee-based sacrifices, the gifts of parklands, residences, and temples to the Buddhist *saṅgha* were made to the *saṅgha* as a whole. Indeed, the *bhikkhu-saṅgha* has been called the first confederate institution in the history of religions, and the receipt and sharing of wealth by members of the Buddhist order may be considered a primitive form of economic socialism. Outside observers

remarked on the high degree of due-process and collective harmony instituted by the *Vinaya* monastic code, which was the first body of teachings committed to memory by the primitive community (Chakravarti 55-57; Queen “Buddhist”).

Lay supporters of the ancient *saṅgha* were given a virtual menu of opportunities to practice virtue and altruism in exchange for merit, prosperity, and the prospect of a better rebirth. These included the offering of daily food and drink to the monks, the annual provision of robes, medicines, bedding, lights, and vehicles, and the ultimate gifts of land, shelter, and reliquary monuments. One wealthy donor admitted to the Buddha, “Lord, I had these sixty dwelling-places built because I need merit, because I need heaven.” Commoners were observed to be overjoyed when first permitted to donate robes to the monks, proclaiming “now we will give *dāna*, now we will gain *puñña*.” The Buddha was quick to encourage these motivations, assuring donors that they would enjoy fame, beauty, confidence, happiness, honor, longevity, and a superior rebirth (Chakravarti 58-59).

In few of these contexts do the early records recommend free offering of material support to the poor. As Ornatowski observes,

There is little clear evidence in Theravāda Buddhism supporting redistribution of wealth, except for the idea of *dāna*, which implied redistribution of wealth to the *saṅgha* and not necessarily to the poor, and the idea of *karuṇā*, which implied more individually based acts of compassion toward one’s fellow sentient beings rather than an overall program for social change. (210)

Here again, “the law of *kamma* [karma], with its all-encompassing explanation of existing inequalities, tends to do away with Buddhist perplexity over the plight of the poor” (Sizemore and Swearer 58).

These Indian patterns of religious giving, wealth accumulation, and attitudes toward the rich, the poor, and the state, are carried with few changes to East Asia following the arrival of Buddhism in China in the early Common Era. A modern manifestation of these values may be seen today in Foguangshan (Buddha's Light Mountain), a Taiwanese Pure Land sect of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Its founder, Master Xingyun, "sees nothing wrong with making money or becoming rich, as long as one has done so in a moral way and shares the benefits of one's prosperity with others." This perspective is a fair distillation of the values that first appeared in the early Buddhist records: diligence, frugality, and morality; selfless giving to the *saṅgha*; a recognition that life is short and that self-cultivation, including the acquisition of wealth, is virtuous; and a conviction that inequalities of wealth and privilege in society manifest the karma of past behavior. Based on these conceptions, the Foguangshan Buddhists have achieved great wealth and global reach, which they have invested in a growing network of temples, hospitals, schools, universities, and social service projects throughout Taiwan and abroad (Chandler 95; Madsen).

While this prosperous Buddhism has been interpreted as an expression of the Confucian-inspired capitalism of the "four dragons" of East Asia—Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan—we must not presume that all contemporary Buddhism has hitched its fortunes to capitalism. Modern Asian Buddhist reformers have argued that the values of socialism and humanism, as defined and manifested in the West, may offer a better match for the traditional collectivism of the ancient Buddhist *saṅgha*. The Chinese modernist Taixu advocated a "democratic socialism" that would counter the predatory commercialism of the modern West, while the Thai reformer Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu proposed a "Dhammic socialism" to counter both the individualism and greed of modern capitalism and the violence and depersonalization of Marxism and Communism. Many other thinkers and movement leaders associated with Engaged Buddhism, including the Dalai Lama ("universal responsibility"), the Thai

activist Sulak Sivaraksa (“small-b Buddhism”), and Soka Gakkai International president and preceptor, Daisaku Ikeda (“humanistic socialism”), have identified the ways in which the traditional mental poisons of hatred, greed, and delusion are reflected in unbridled modern capitalism (Queen and King).

In the West, scores of Buddhist writers and movement leaders have written about the spiritual and material suffering caused by an economics of perpetual growth, which the advertising and marketing industries fuel by creating unquenchable thirst for new products and services. In these studies, we may see the aptness of the term “thirst” itself, which evolved from the ancient Buddhist term for the inexhaustible craving that causes spiritual disorientation and despair: *tṛṣṇā* (Sanskrit) and *taṇhā* (Pāli). Anthologies such as those edited by Allan Hunt-Badiner (*Mindfulness in the Marketplace: Compassionate Responses to Consumerism*) and Stephanie Kaza (*Hooked: Buddhist Writings on Greed, Desire, and the Urge to Consume*) serve as antidotes to the excesses of Buddhist wealth and commercialism in Asia and the West.

Income

Commentators on Buddhist economics have devoted considerable effort to refuting the claims of the German sociologist Max Weber that early Buddhism was limited to the other-worldly asceticism of the monastic community. The *saṅgha* and its supporters, according to Weber, lacked the “this-worldly asceticism” of diligence, thrift, and the sense of a religious vocation he found in early Protestant communities. Lacking these characteristics, the “religious technology of wandering and intellectually schooled mendicant monks” placed the Buddhist movement outside the economic life of society and robbed it of the proto-capitalistic potential he found in reformist Christianity. While critics have not attempted to

show that early Buddhism was attuned to Weber's "spirit of capitalism," they have noted the keen attention of the ancient records to the economic life of monks and laypersons. The salient place of right livelihood (*sammā-āḷīva*) among the core guidelines of the Eightfold Path, along with its elaboration in several discourses for lay practice, gives us an insight into the ways in which income was considered on the path to Buddhist liberation (Weber 206).

Buddhist ethics exemplify elements of discipline, virtue, altruism, and engagement, as we have noted. Right livelihood is described in the Buddha's discourses as the avoidance of occupations that harm others (discipline) and the pursuit of occupations that sustain and liberate others (virtue and altruism). Modern commentators have expanded these teachings to include an analysis of the collective harm or benefit caused by modern organizations and industries, and the means of subverting or supporting them (engagement). The classical summation of occupations to be avoided include trade in weapons, living beings (livestock farming), meat (hunter, fisherman, butcher, meat wholesaler), and intoxicants and poisons (alcoholic drinks). Such occupations, utterly forbidden to monks and discouraged for laypersons, will surely result in a lower rebirth, if not in immediate misfortune. Harvey cites modern writers who extrapolate the early warnings to present-day applications, such as scientific experimentation on animals, manufacturing pesticides, and "working in advertising, to the extent that this is seen as encouraging greed, hatred and delusion, or perverting the truth" (187-188).

Among contemporary Buddhist thinkers, Sulak Sivaraksa, the Thai dissident and founder of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, has reflected systematically on the sociological meaning of the Five Precepts (*pañcaśīla*), the Buddha's central ethical teaching. Each of them offers guidance in the matter of right livelihood. The first precept, "I vow to abstain from taking life" (*ahiṃsā*, or "non-harming," a universal teaching

in world religions), is considered in terms of vegetarianism, the logging industry, and the manufacture and global marketing of armaments and pesticides. The second precept, “I vow to abstain from stealing,” is interpreted affirmatively as the responsibility to create an economic system in which decent jobs are provided to all, where “decent” implies both the inherent morality of the work and the equity of its compensation. Poverty results when governments fail in their obligation to regulate the economy, and “stealing” by neighbors and corporations is the result. Sulak writes, “It is not enough to live a life of voluntary simplicity without also working to overturn the structures that force so many people to live in involuntary poverty” (73-75).

Sulak’s reading of the third precept, “I vow to abstain from sexual misconduct,” is directed to the universality of patriarchal domination of women in the family, industry, and the public sphere. (The multi-billion dollar industries of human trafficking, pornography, and prostitution—mainstays of the Thai tourist industry—are not mentioned in Sulak’s analysis but are surely worthy of inclusion.) The fourth precept, “I vow to abstain from false speech,” is focused on the role of mass media, education, and “patterns of information that condition our understanding of the world.” The rise of social media addiction and “false news,” as it has impacted mental health and the direction of national elections, for example, may be taken as pressing concerns of Buddhists, for whom “purify the mind” shares equal standing with “do good” and “avoid evil” in the traditional formula. Finally, Sulak sees the fifth precept, “I vow to abstain from intoxicants that cloud the mind,” as a window onto the global trade in heroin, coca, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol. “Equally serious” as the full-scale wars that have been fought by governments and drug cartels over markets and supply chains, according to Sulak, “is the economic violence of forcing peasants to plant export crops of coffee or tea and the unloading of surplus cigarette production onto Third World consumers through intensive advertising campaigns” (76-79).

Jobs

In contrast to the Buddhist aversion to “wrong livelihood,” as outlined above, we may turn to its approval of jobs and vocations that support social harmony and the path to liberation. Right livelihood encompasses a set of attitudes about how employees should be treated and how they should conduct themselves in return. According to the *Sigālovāda Sutta*, sometimes called the “lay *vinaya*” or social code, employers should respect workers and servants

by arranging their work according to their strengths, by supplying them with food and wages, by looking after them when they are ill, by sharing delicacies with them and by letting them off work at the right time. (Harvey 188)

They should avoid overworking employees or forcing them to do degrading work. In his Rock Edict XI, King Aśoka includes slaves and servants in a list of those who should be treated respectfully, along with parents, friends, acquaintances, relatives, priests, ascetics, and animals. Meanwhile, according to an early Mahāyāna text, employees should be trustworthy, hard-working, and mindful of their employer’s reputation (Harvey 188-189). These guidelines, which grew out of the urban work environments of iron-age society, may be thought of as an economics of virtue and altruism, supplementing the economics of discipline we encountered in the last section.

As Buddhism took root in China and East Asia, traditional restrictions on monastic labor dissolved and new forms of work appeared within growing temple complexes. Agricultural labor, commercial activities, and forms of banking and usury became commonplace. According to Ornatowski, this loosening of traditional *Vinaya* restrictions were justified “as long as it was for the benefit of the Three Treasures.”

[T]he practice of monk labor in many Zen monasteries led to the famous saying. . . “one day no work, one day no food.” [The Eighth century Ch’an monk] Huai-hai used the term *p’u-ch’ing*, meaning collective participation, to refer to monk labor, with the idea that this implied “all monks in the *saṅgha* would work together on a basis of equality to achieve a common goal.” (220)

These developments helped to dampen criticisms in China that the burgeoning Buddhist institutions were parasites on society, absorbing vast wealth in the form of pious lay donations, while contributing nothing to the economy.

In contemporary Buddhism, a virtual explosion of new occupations and corresponding attitudes toward labor and economic development have accompanied the rise of socially engaged Buddhism (Baumann; Whitmyer). Among the earliest innovators in this field was Dr. A. T. Ariyaratna, founder of the Sri Lankan village development organization, Sarvodaya Shramadana. Founded in the 1950s as a program of rural work-camps for urban students, Sarvodaya grew by the 1980s to a network of economic development activities in over 12,000 villages across the island. Students worked hand-in-hand with local monks, townspeople, and government officials to build and repair infrastructure—roads, bridges, wells, septic systems—and to found training camps and schools that teach Buddhist economics and social transformation. With international funding and tens of thousands of volunteers, Sarvodaya incorporated Theravāda Buddhist principles of collective liberation (*sarva-udāya* “social uplift”) with Gandhian principles of voluntary service (*shrama-dāna* “work-gift”).

In 1982, the Brooklyn-born Zen master Bernard Tetsugen Glassman Roshi, known to his followers simply as “Bernie,” opened the Greyston Bakery in New York City. After founding the Zen Community of New York on an estate donated by a wealthy businessman, Glassman sold

the property and moved the community to an impoverished neighborhood in Southwest Yonkers, north of the city. Here he offered employment opportunities to local residents regardless of education and training, work history, or past social barriers, such as incarceration, homelessness, or drug use. The business took off when Ben and Jerry's contracted with Greyston for the brownies for their chocolate fudge brownie ice cream. With the success of the bakery, Glassman rehabilitated decaying apartment buildings to offer affordable housing to his workers, and over the thirty years that followed, opened a childcare center, a medical clinic and hospice to serve employees and neighbors suffering from HIV/AIDs, and a workforce development center to provide skills training to hard-to-employ individuals. In his book, *Instructions to the Cook: A Zen Master's Lessons in Living a Life that Matters*, Glassman invites readers to cook "the supreme meal," that is, to transform the ingredients of their lives into forms of service that may be offered widely and lovingly to others. In terms of his business model, which was analyzed and praised in the *Wall Street Journal* and other national media, Bernie explained, "We don't hire people to bake brownies, we bake brownies to hire people" (Glassman and Fields).

Taxation

At the birth of Prince Siddhārtha, his father consulted wise men to predict the direction of the child's career. All agreed that the boy would be a great wheel-turner (*chakravartin*), but they disagreed on whether this ancient term meant a righteous king (*dhamma-rājā*) or a spiritual teacher (*sādhū*). As a young man troubled by the suffering of the commoners he met outside the palace, the prince abandoned his family and embarked on years of study and contemplation, finally awakening to the possibility of a state of being free from suffering. The newly Awakened One preached his first sermon, which came to be called the Turning of the Wheel of Law

(*dhamma-chakka-pavattana*). In the years that followed, the community of “world renouncers” founded by the Buddha on the spiritual dharma of morality and mindfulness, developed a complex relationship to the “world conquerors” who moved the levers of government, guided by the secular *Dharma* of public administration and politics. Modern scholars thus speak of the Two Wheels of *Dhamma* in appraising the relationship of the ancient Buddhist *saṅgha* to the emerging royal states of the time (Reynolds 6-30; Tambiah *World*).

As we have seen, the interaction of *saṅgha* and state has taken many forms, both complementary and adversarial, in the course of Buddhism’s evolution in South and East Asia. In the Theravāda lands of South and Southeast Asia, the cordial relationship between the Buddha Gotama and his royal patrons, King Bimbisāra of Magadha and King Pasenadi of Kosala, resonated through the centuries in countries like Sri Lanka, Burma, and Thailand, where the *saṅgha* operated free of taxation in exchange for its legitimation of the policies of the state. The lay supporters of the *saṅgha*—large landowners and bankers—were also the primary taxpayers and underwriters of state power (Chakravarti 70). And the *saṅgha* and state played complementary roles in creating a social safety net for less fortunate members of society. Kings like Aśoka and Udayi, the subject of Nāgārjuna’s “Garland of Royal Council,” are enjoined to protect “the blind, the sick, the lowly, the protectorless, the wretched and the crippled equally, to attain food and drink without interruption.” Meanwhile, religious giving to the *saṅgha* has sometimes had what Harvey calls a “redistributive effect,” as the monks redirect surplus donations to support those who seek refuge in the monasteries: the destitute, orphans, and lay students of the *Dhamma* (194-199).

These patterns of peaceful adjustment, accommodation, and amelioration between *saṅgha* and state continued in China and East Asia until such times as the *saṅgha* became bloated by the competitive donations of

a merit-seeking laity and the ballooning income from their own enterprises. The state lost tax revenues as increasing land came under monastic control, and draftees for military service and *corvée* labor for public works projects, as tens of thousands of peasants left the land to serve as monks. Monastic wealth was conspicuously lavished on religious festivals, feasts, and the construction of temples, reliquaries, and monuments. The results were disastrous:

Urged on by Confucians and Taoists who decried these trends as leading to the impoverishment of the empire, the state engaged in periodic persecutions of Buddhism by forced laicization of monks, seizure of monastery wealth (especially gold, silver, and copper) and placing limits on the number of monasteries and temples. (Ornatowski 217)

Similar dynamics of collaboration and competition for loyalties and material resources may be documented in the medieval histories of Korea, Japan, and Taiwan.

In the modern period, the tax-exempt status of Buddhist institutions continues throughout Asia and wherever traditional temples and monasteries have been transplanted and legally registered in the West. At the same time, the popularity of lay *saṅghas* and householder lifestyles in the West have supplanted the locus of authority and tradition held by the ordained *saṅgha* in Asia. Consequently, the role of Buddhists and their institutions vis-à-vis the state has changed, as unordained “Buddhist sympathizers” practice in rural retreat centers, urban storefronts, or private homes. The numbers are too small to threaten—or legitimate—the state, and the style of socially engaged Buddhism which originated in Asia with mass movements for the end of the Vietnam War, the autonomy of Tibet, or the human rights of the Untouchables, is filtered through non-government organizations such as the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in Berkeley, California, the Zen Peacemakers of Montague, Massachusetts, or the

International Network of Engaged Buddhists, headquartered in Thailand. In these times, taxation is a negligible matter compared to the idealistic and ambitious missions of these organizations—to oppose social violence and materialism and to relieve the sufferings of populations caught in institutional webs of hatred, greed, and delusion.

Conclusion

In our survey of the evolution of Buddhist economics and its implications for equality, property, natural resources, products, wealth, income, jobs, and taxation over two millennia, we encountered both continuity and transformation. The value of material comfort remained secondary to spiritual advancement, for example, at the same time that monastic institutions became increasingly rich as a result of lay benefaction. The relationship between *saṅgha* and state became both codependent and adversarial as wealth flowed to the pagoda at the expense of the palace and was then confiscated in lieu of taxes by the government. In medieval China and Japan, the vast economic holdings of monastic institutions were buttressed by their rising political power, as Buddhist monks, armed and trained in traditional martial arts, engaged in insurrections and internecine warfare.

Finally, in the post-colonial period of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ideologies of popular dissent from elite power supported the rise of Buddhist liberation movements committed to universal human rights, democratic institutions, and economic justice. Such “socially engaged” Buddhism combined elements of traditional teaching with new conceptions borrowed from a globalizing, transnational culture.

Works Cited

- Baumann, Martin. "Work as Dharma Practice: Right Livelihood Cooperatives of the FWBO." In *Engaged Buddhism in the West*, edited by Christopher S. Queen, Wisdom, 2000.
- Chakravarti, Uma. *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*. Munchiram Manoharlal, 1996.
- Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing A Pure Land on Earth: The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization*. University of Hawaii Press, 2004.
- Glassman, Bernard and Rick Fields. *Instructions to the Cook: A Zen Master's Lessons in Living a Life that Matters*. Bell Tower, 1996.
- Gokhale, Balkrishna Govind. "Early Buddhism and the Urban Revolution." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 5, No. 2, 1982, pp. 7-22.
- Harvey, Peter. *Introduction to Buddhist Ethics*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Hunt-Badiner, Allan, editor. *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology*. Parallax, 1990.
- _____, editor. *Mindfulness in the Marketplace: Compassionate Responses to Consumerism*. Parallax, 2002.
- Kabilsingh, Chatsumarn. "Early Buddhist Views on Nature." In *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology*, edited by Allan Hunt-Badiner, Parallax, 1990, pp. 8-13
- Kaza, Stephanie. "To Save all Beings: Buddhist Environmental Activism" In *Engaged Buddhism in the West*, edited by Christopher S. Queen, Wisdom, 2000, pp.159-183.

Kemper, Steven. "Wealth and Reformation in Sinhalese Buddhist Monasticism." In *Ethics, Wealth, and Salvation: A Study in Buddhist Social Ethics*, edited by Russell F. Sizemore and Donald K. Swearer, University of South Carolina Press, 1990.

Madsen, Richard. *Democracy's Dharma: Religious Renaissance and Political Development in Taiwan*. University of California Press, 2007.

Madsen, Richard and William M. Sullivan, editors, *Economic Inequality and Morality: Diverse Ethical Perspectives*. Brookings Institution Press, 2019.

McRae, John R. "The Story of Early Ch'an." In *Zen: Tradition and Transition*, edited by Kenneth Kraft, Grove Press, 1988, pp. 125-139.

Nikam, N. A. and Richard McKeon, editors and translators. *The Edicts of Asoka*. University of Chicago Press, 1959.

Ornatowski, Gregory K. "Continuity and Change in the Economic Ethics of Buddhism: Evidence from the History of Buddhism in India, China and Japan," *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, vol. 3, 1996, pp. 198-240.

Paul, Diana Y. *Women in Buddhism: Images of the Feminine in the Mahāyāna Tradition*. University of California Press, 1979.

Queen, Christopher S. and Sallie B. King, editors. *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia*. SUNY, 1996.

Queen, Christopher S. "Dr. Ambedkar and the Hermeneutics of Buddhist Liberation." In *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia*, edited by Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King, SUNY, 1996, pp. 45-72.

_____, editor. *Engaged Buddhism in the West*. Wisdom, 2000.

_____. "Buddhist Roots of Ambedkar's Judicial Philosophy." *CASTE: A Global Journal on Social Exclusion*, Vol. 5 No. 2, 2024, pp. 287-301.

Reynolds, Frank. "The Two Wheels of Dhamma: A Study of Early Buddhism." In *The Two Wheels of Dhamma: Essays on the Theravada Tradition in India and Ceylon*, edited by Gananath Obeyesekere. AAR Studies in Religion, 1972.

Schopen, Gregory. "Monks and the Relic Cult in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*." In *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*, edited by Gregory Schopen. University of Hawaii Press, 1997.

Schumacher, E. F. *Small is Beautiful*. Perennial, 1973.

Sivaraksa, Sulak. *Seeds of Peace: A Buddhist Vision for Renewing Society*. Parallax, 1992.

Sizemore, Russell F. and Donald K. Swearer, editors. *Ethics, Wealth, and Salvation: A Study in Buddhist Social Ethics*. University of South Carolina Press, 1990.

Strong, John S. "Rich Man, Poor Man, Bhikkhu, King: Quinquennial Festival and the Nature of Dāna." In *Ethics, Wealth, and Salvation: A Study in Buddhist Social Ethics*, edited by Russell F. Sizemore and Donald K. Swearer, University of South Carolina Press, 1990.

Tambiah, Stanley J. *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background*. Cambridge University Press, 1976.

_____. *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets*. Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Tweed, Thomas. *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*. Harvard University Press, 2006.

Weber, Max. *The Religion of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism*. The Free Press, 1958.

_____. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958.

Whitmyer, Claude, editor. *Mindfulness and Meaningful Work: Exploration in Right Livelihood*. Parallax, 1994.

Williams, Duncan Ryūken. "Animal Liberation, Death, and the State: Rites to Release Animals in Medieval Japan." In *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*, edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryūken Williams, Harvard University Press, 1997.

Wright, Arthur F. *Studies in Chinese Buddhism*. Yale University Press, 1990.