

Book Review

"COMMON BUDDHIST TEXT REVIEW, GUIDANCE AND INSIGHT FROM THE BUDDHA"

By **Most Venerable Phra Brahmavandit**. Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya:
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Introduction

There are many of several Buddhist texts that give a great picture and general theory of Buddhism and you may familiar with some aspects but this book will offer a quite new to you. The Cannon Buddhist Text: Guidance and Insight from Buddhism its serve as significant example of Buddhist view which collected from three main Buddhist Schools.

Background and Contribution

The International Council of Vesak aims to increases understanding among nun-Buddhist and Buddhist of values and principle of Buddhism. In working through this book, many Buddhist institutions help to form this project. Historically, The Cannon Buddhist Text: Guidance and Insight from Buddhism is the result of historical collaborations between Buddhist scholars from around the world who have undertaken the project for seven years in planning and preparing this book.

A Guide to read

This book organized into 3 main parts. They are : 1) the Buddha; a chapter talks about background of Buddha 2) Dhamma or Dharma, this chapter focus on principle based on Buddhism 3) Sangha ,this chapter introduces to know about life in monastic community and exemplary disciples. Every passage has acronym which appears in line to show what tradition it comes from.

L : life of Buddha; this letter will appear only in the first

chatter.

GI : General Introduction

SI : Introduction to the Sangha

ThI: refers to Theravada

MI : refers to Mahayana Buddhism

VI: Vajrayana Buddhism

For instants, this book contains teaching of three main Buddhist Schools. It particularly gives briefly summaries and meaning of Buddha's teaching.

Note that it differs from dictionary in its function and even though this book is translated from three Buddhist traditional terms which have many different technical terms and proper names of Pali and Sanskrit origins but owing to authors' point as to make widely to distribute this book. They avoid using tactical terms so that they borrow or represent Buddhist terms; Pali and Sanskrit to English. Here are some general observations;

1. Direct borrowing in English: Several Buddhist terms have been used by English speakers in such case, we can be found in this book; nirvana, sutra, tripitaka, respectively.

2. Anglicization: Some of terms have been Anglicized in morphology as well, we find Buddhism, Buddhist and Buddhahood (from Pali and Sanskrit buddha + -ism, -ist, -hood)

A Briefly insight the book

I: the Buddha

This part is divided into 2 chapters. For the chapter I, we will study the life of Buddha on the other hand, in this text focus on the important events in his life. It begins from birth and early life, how the Buddha eats or sleeps until the last months of Blessed One.

For chapter II, we will explore the difference perspectives on the Buddha. This book shows us some of fundamental difference between Buddhist Nikayas. The text focuses upon the questions the nature of Buddha or status of the Buddha beyond his dead and the concept of three bodies of Mahayana and Vajrayana.

These issues are not only taking us to the heart of Buddha's teachings but also reveal divergence of Buddhist understanding. However this

book is not argued to oppose to the perspective but the purpose of authors rather to clarify the different in Buddhist's views.

II: Dhamma / Dharma

After the death of Buddha, a schismatic tendency is beginning slowly and according to the tried old scripture says even in Buddha's lifetime there was a tendency to schism among his followers but he was able to deal with it.

Later various new Buddhist schools developed in India and have been continued to influential spread to China, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand so on.

All chapters are giving the key ideas of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana by dividing into 8 chapters within a selected common description from the cannons such as the Samadhi –nirmocana, Vimarakirati-nirdesa.

We'll be learned that some Buddhist Chinese Cannon on the agamas are similar to nikayas of Theravada Pali Cannon. Moreover other texts are found in Theravada as Sigalovada Sutta or Saṃyukta Āgama corresponds to the Saṃyutta Nikāya of the Theravada.

This section composed of recently issues on our social its comprehensive covers characteristic of the Buddha's teaching, Dhamma on society, human life, Buddhist paths and meditation.

III: The Sangha or Spiritual Community

This part is divided into 2 chapters; in chapter 11 talks about monastic and lay disciples and noble persons. By beginning, this chapter mentioned to Maha – parinibbana Sutta: Digha-Nigakaya that says lay people and monastics are supporter to another on the path to Nivarana.

The chapter also answers many questions in issues of Buddhism; Does lay people can be Arhant? , the way to live in monastic life; in Mahayana many monks and lay follow the five qualities but in Tibetan they follow ten basic monastic precepts and monk must practice on the four rules which included in Pratimoksa Sutra. It is the Sutra of Mula-Saravativadins.

Following chapter 12, this chapter is giving exemplary lives of the great Arhant disciples in Buddhism at the time of Buddha. Maha – mogallana , Sariputta and Ananda these three monks is the kind of quality monk found in Theravada. The chapter also tells how the Buddha allowed women to ordain as nuns; Khema and Uppalavanna are nuns who ordained at the time of Buddha.

At this point we can see the difference concept of Buddhist between Theravada and Mahayana namely according to Theravada after the Buddha passed way he did not appoint successor but in Mahayana confirmed that Kasyapa was the successor of the Buddha because he able to understand the wordless teaching of Buddha so the Blessed One entrust this to him.

If we talked about Mahayana, Huineng, a great master who is the most priority to known. After he expressed his verse he was choose as sixth patriarch of Chan/Zen, one of the sects in Mahayana. In the section of Vajarayanna this book introduced the life of Guru Laksminkara who is a princess and a sister of king Indrabhuti who ruled Sambholangara.

Summary and Discussion

Having worked with this book, I have known that it difficult to collect Buddha's teaching into all one. We ought to say congratulations to honor on this co-project of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and the partnerships. They work hard by hand in hand to complete the project as we have seen the part of them because the Common Buddhist Text will be translated into other languages as to the Most Ven.Phrabrambudit has announced on the Vesak Celebration Day, 2017 in Sri Lanka.

If the project were done, world peace could possible to dream for certainty. When everybody knows Dhamma, they understand themselves, so they can understand another one too. This is the road to Santi or peaceful way. In order to create a better future of world, this book is innovation of peace building for humanity.