

## Editorial

(CJBS 5, 2009)

It is with humble pleasure that we place this fifth issue of the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* in the hands of Buddhist scholars in Canada and overseas.

We begin the *Pariyatti* Division in the issue with another contribution by Bhikkhu Analayo, “The Vicissitudes of Memory and Early Buddhist Oral Transmission”, completing his ‘trilogy’. In it, he attempts to develop a new perspective on the dynamics behind oral transmission in early Buddhism, seeking to account for variation and similarity, within both a historical (Vedic) and a contemporary (psychological research) background.

In the second paper, “Vedhamissakena: Perils of the Transmission of the Buddhaddhamma”, Brian Levman takes on the thorny issue of translation, with an example that has baffled scholars for a century or more, beginning with Rhys Davids (1881). In his paper, taking the first phrase in the title, drawn from the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* in its Pali and Sanskrit renderings, he explores the different interpretations that have been proposed, showing the intricacies involved in arriving at the meaning as closest as possible to the Buddha’s intention.

Peter Timmerman’s “Uncaged: Buddhism, John Cage and the Freeing of the World” leads off the *Paṭipatti* section, in which he engages in the study of the American musician, perhaps best known for his piece ‘4’ 33”, premiered in Woodstock, New York in 1952. The author traces the Buddhist influence on the musician’s thinking and experimentation to renowned scholars such as Ananda K Coomaraswamy and D T Suzuki.

In the next article, “‘Against Belief’: Mindfulness Meditation (*satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā*) as Empirical Method”, Suwanda H J Sugunasiri takes a look at the Discourse to draw out the empirical methodology implicit in it. The point of interest, of course, is that while it is a methodology developed by the Buddha as the ‘Direct Path’ to Nibbana, it shares the features of methodology in the sciences. Exploring the issue with the opening segment, Mindfulness of Breathing, the concept of ‘psycheme’ comes to be introduced. The paper also proposes that Science and ‘Buddhianscience’ enter into a ‘Spiritual Interaction’.

The final piece in the section is a historical one - the famous test put to King Devanampiya-Tissa of Tambapanni (Sri Lanka as it was known then) by Arhant Mahinda, son of King Asoka, sent to introduce the Saddhamma to the island. Perhaps ‘the first Intelligence Quiz in the world’, it is excerpted, for this historical value, from the fifth c. ACE Sri Lankan Pali work *Mahavamsa* by Ven Mahanama. It is carried here as an example of

the *practical wisdom* of an Arhant, Arhants generally known only for their spiritual achievements, in cutting away the flows (*āsavakkhaya*).

Making up the *Paṭivedha* is the lonely piece, the *Cūlahatthipadopama-sutta* 'The Shorter Discourse on the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint'. As the very first Discourse delivered by Arahant Mahinda, following the questioning, it is, of course, of great historical import. But it is not included here, in this Insight section, for that reason, but for its value as a framework of an approach to Dhamma. As in the case of the Noble Eightfold Path, we find in the Discourse *sīla* '[self-]discipline' leading to *samādhi* 'concentration' and finally to *paññā* 'wisdom'. But what is of special importance is that it begins with *saddhā* 'faith'.

Under the **News & Views Roundup**, our Canadian Professors share with us developments in the area of Buddhist Studies in their own universities. Those featured are Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia and University of Victoria of British Columbia, McGill University of Quebec, and Brock University and University of Toronto in Ontario. Reading the Reports, one gets the distinct sense of an emerging vibrancy in Buddhist Studies across Canadian Universities, with a slew of young professors providing leadership. Then there is the Report on the Academic Conference held in association with the UN Day of Vesak 2552, Bangkok, Thailand, May 4-6, 2009.

Our expectation has always been to have the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* online. So it is with great pleasure that we announce that it is now a reality! As you will see when you to visit it (<http://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/cjbs/>), all issues, except the current and the previous year's, are available for free download. Our preference indeed is to make all issues available free online, once we are able to afford it. Can we then spread the word around? Equally importantly, you could help us by signing on as peer reviewers, book reviewers, copy editors, etc. This non-profit journal can also use your technical expertise. But we invite to show your expression of confidence as well by sending us your submissions. A glance through the past issues (see end of this issue, or Archives, online), along with the present, will give you a sense of the quality of the Journal. And we invite you to help maintain the same standards.

Thank you.

May you be happy, and live a healthy, long life!

*Sukhī hotu!*

Suwanda H J Sugunasiri

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