



**The Journal
of
The Association of
Theravada
Buddhist Universities
(JATBU)
(2009)**



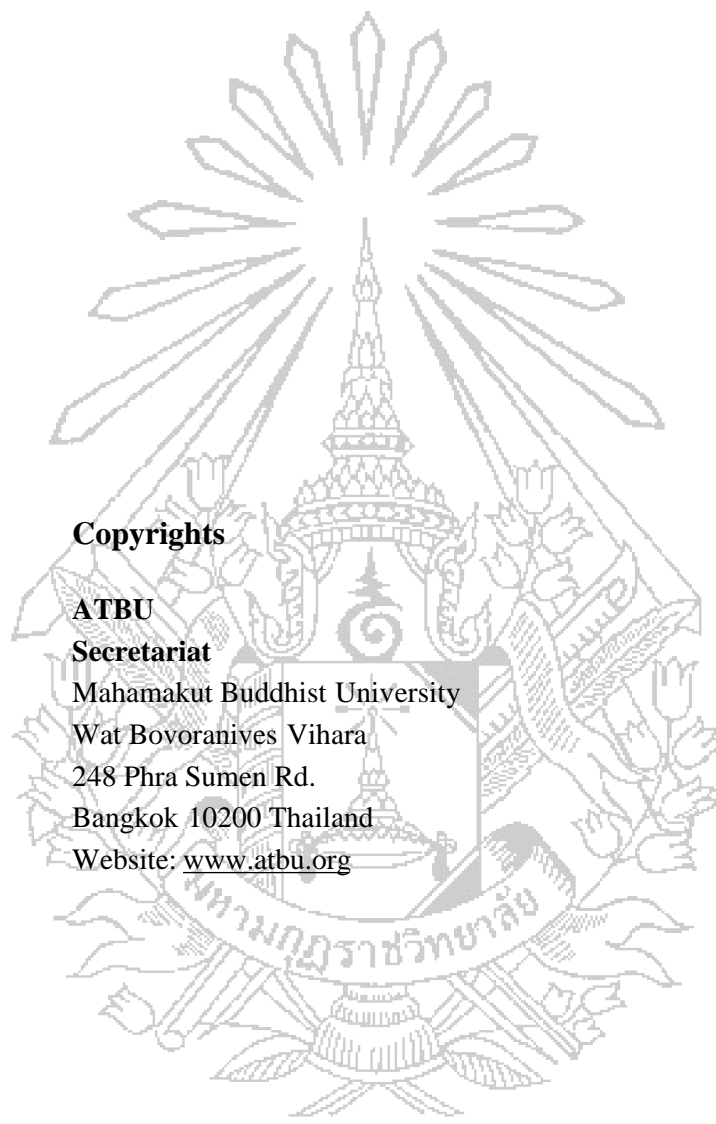
The Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities Journal

2009

Patrons: Venerable Samdech Nount Nget (Cambodia); Venerable Dr. Ashin Nyanissara (Myanmar); Venerable Prof. Dr. Nandamalabhivamsa (Myanmar); Venerable Phra Theppariyattiwimol (Thailand); Venerable Weiwu (Thailand/Malaysia); Venerable Dr. T. Seelakkhandha (Sri Lanka); Venerable Phra Achan Mahavet Mahasenai (Lao); Venerable Prof. Dr. Bhikshu Satyapala (India); Venerable Dhammavaso (Vietnam); Venerable Dr. P. Gnanarama (Singapore); Dr. Eko Legowo (Indonesia).

Editorial Committee: Venerable Prof. Dr. Panditavarabhivamsa (Myanmar); Venerable Dr. Anil Sakya Sugandho (MBU, Thailand); Ajahn Thanom Butra-Ruang (MBU, Thailand); Venerable Phrakhrupalad Suwatthana-wachirakhun (Sawai Chotiko) (MCU, Thailand); Dr. R. Panth (India); Venerable Dr. Candasiri (Myanmar); Venerable Dr. I. Indasara (Sri Lanka).

Chief-Editor: Venerable Dr. Khammai Dhammasami (Oxford)



Copyrights

ATBU
Secretariat
Mahamakut Buddhist University
Wat Bovoranives Vihara
248 Phra Sumen Rd.
Bangkok 10200 Thailand
Website: www.atbu.org

The Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities



Office of Chairman
Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy
Sugung Hills, Sugung, Myanmar
Tel: +95-93-73-22164-2 / 567
E-mail: secretary@atbu.org,
office@atbu.org

Executive
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
Wat Phnom Penh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
E-mail: atbu@atbu.org,
secretary@atbu.org,
office@atbu.org

Preface

Dhamma hi bhikkhunam dhajo
“The dhamma is the symbol of the bhikkhus”.

Whatever a bhikkhu or indeed a disciple of the Buddha does has to relate to the dhamma, a tool in overcoming problems and suffering. This is what the Sangha and the Buddhists in general have made efforts to achieve for more than the past two thousand half millenniums.

The Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities has this very aim and wish to focus its work primarily but not exclusively, at the university level. This year we hold the 2nd Conference of the ATBU. I am very pleased we are able to also issue the first Journal of the ATBU to coincide with the second ATBU conference.

Venerable Dr. Ashin Nyanissra, Ph.D., DLi.tt.
Aggamahapandita
Chairman of the ATBU &
Chancellor, Sitagu International Buddhist Academy



MAHAMAKUT BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY
Wat Bovoranives Vihara, Phra Sumen Rd.,
Phranakorn District, Bangkok 10200 THAILAND
Tel. (662) 282-8303, 281-6427 Fax. 281-0294

Foreword

The Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities is young but energetic and possesses so much potential. Within two years, the first Journal of the Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities is presented to you. This is to prove to ourselves as much as to others the aspiration of the ATBU members.

Mahamakut Buddhist University is a member-university and also where the ATBU Secretariat has its office. And, through the ATBU, the university looks forward to contribute even more to the promotion of the Buddhadhamma as taught in the Pali Canon.

I am grateful to all scholars from different countries who have contributed their learned articles to this volume. On behalf of the ATBU, I also wish to thank The Bank of Thailand and Venerable Phra Khruva Boonchum Nyanasamvaro (Maing Phong Sayadaw) and devotees for their generous financial support toward the publication of the first volume of the Journal of the ATBU. I am also grateful to all Executive Council members of the ATBU and staff from my own university for their hard work and dedication to the ATBU cause.

P. Phrathpepariyattivimol

Phrathpepariyattivimol
Vice Chairman, ATBU &
Rector, Mahamakut Buddhist University

Introduction

The Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities, ATBU, was formed in March 2007 at Mt. Popa Resort, near the ancient city of Bagan in central Myanmar by eighteen, mainly Theravada, colleges and universities from ten nations in South and South-east Asia. It was a historic gathering for both the host country and the overseas participants. It may be considered as one of the most important meetings of international Buddhist communities to have taken place in Myanmar since the Sixth Buddhist Council (1954-56). The participants from various institutions from South and South-east Asia also feel that although none had ever actually communicated their own thought with others before, they all have, for a long time, a similar idea to form such an academic grouping amongst the like-minded; and they are very pleased that their aspiration would now be achieved.

The founder-members set up the ATBU with the aim of making it "an inclusive global network" to "unite the people, knowledge and skills of every Higher Education Institution with a specific mission to educate students to understand and practice the Buddha's Dhamma as presented in the Pali Canon". The membership has since increased to twenty-one. The ATBU Secretariat is situated at Mahamakut Buddhist University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Most of the articles in this Journal are selected from the 2nd ATBU conference papers. They deal generally with the main theme of the conference: *Theravada Buddhism: Origin, Identity and Development*. In particular, two of them discuss the theme on a broad term: Professor Oliver Abeynayake's

paper is on the identity of Theravada. Having considered different opinions, both traditional or modern scholars, he argues that “Theravada is nothing but the continuation of original Buddhism with innovations necessitated by the historical and doctrinal circumstances”. Professor Bhikshu Satyapala’s paper is concerned with the language of the Buddha. Analyzing the textual evidence of the terms *Māgadhī-bhāsā* and *Pāli-bhāsā*, he attempts to survey the crucial assertions on the hypothesis of a possible language of the Buddha and argues that “the term Pali did not refer to the language in which the *Buddhavacana* had been compiled in the form of the *Tipiṭaka*. Neither the language used by the Buddha nor the same used in the composition of the *Piṭaka* was even designated as the *Māgadhī-bhāsā* by him”. So, strictly speaking, Prof. Bhikshu Satyapala concludes that the language of the Buddha is called neither *Māgadhī-bhāsā* nor *Pāli-bhāsā*.

Venerable Pategama Gnanarama focuses on the interpretation of one of the earliest and most important texts, *Suttanipīṭa*, from the Pali Canon. His chosen focus is a philosophy increasingly gaining ground amongst those who have become disenchanted with theistic beliefs, humanism. He contends that the foundations of humanism can be unmistakably found in the *Tipiṭaka*. Venerable Nandisena studies a respected Pali grammar, *Saddanīti*, written during the medieval period in Bagan, Myanmar; in fact, it is his teacher, the late Venerable Silanandhabhivamsa, who has made this important study and Venerable Nandisena takes it further, including making it available in Spanish.

Venerable Khammai Dhammasami writes on the two most respected personalities not just in monastic education but also in the national life of the two important Theravada Buddhist nations: Myanmar and Thailand. He looks at their life in the context of changing social situations in those countries. Bhante H. Gunaratana’s is about a most

contemporary topic: Theravada Buddhism in the West. It is how a Theravada, in fact any, Buddhist community has to navigate its way in order to bring the Buddha's Dhamma to the Western hemispheres. Although it centers on his own experiences in the USA, his statements can be generalized for all Buddhist monasteries, temples and centers in Europe and America. Reverend Nun Vimuttiya (Associate Professor Dr. Supaphan Na Bangchang) outlines Pali literature in Thailand in the post-nineteenth century. This proves that Thailand in the post-nineteenth century still preserve the tradition of writing Pali although there were not many as in the earlier period.

What is especial in this Journal is perhaps the papers written in Pali. Some of these articles have been edited by the Most Venerable Kumarabhivamsa, Pro-Rector for Academic Affairs at International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon. These Pali papers also address some aspects of the theme.

Senior Professor Sumanapala Galmangoda's beautiful Pali stanzas state the interpretation of the Theravada tradition as widely accepted within the tradition itself. Venerable Na-Uyana Ariyadhamma gives us an account of his *sangha*, a contemporary forest monastic tradition in Sri Lanka that trains its one thousand half fully ordained members both the Pali Canon and serious meditation practices. As its leader, the author is in a position to offer a description with an inside knowledge and truly represent the institution. The Sri Kalyānī Yogassama samsā araṇṇāvāsī, as it calls itself, follows Pha-Auk Sayadaw's meditation techniques which encompass both samatha and vipassana. The paper also describes briefly the *Tipiṭakadhara* curriculum of the tradition. An account of a well-known city-dweller teaching monastery is however given in the paper by Venerable **Gandhasārābhivamsa**. Wat Tamaoh in Lambang, northern Thailand preserves the best tradition of monastic learning of

Myanmar and Thailand. Venerable Dr. Phratheppariyattikavi writes on the Pali education system in Kingdom of Thailand.

The paper on meditation by Venerable Miriswaththe Wimalagnano reviews a section of the Visuddhimagga, the *Asubhakkamma* *Mhāna*, “meditation on the impurity of the body”. The author in his short but well-made presentation attempts to critically examine two points on one of the key meditation-subjects in the most important Theravada commentarial texts. Also on meditation is the paper by Venerable Jāgarābhivamsa, who learns more than half of the whole *Tipiṭaka* by heart; he offers a brief account of a meditation tradition taught by Ledi Sayadaw (1846–1923) of Myanmar. He actually deals mainly with the lineage rather than the meditation teaching itself. The lineage includes what are now internationally known U Ba Khin (1899-1971) and his direct pupil, S. N. Goenka (1924 -). Ledi Sayadaw was perhaps the first to have produced a tradition of lay meditation teachers in Myanmar, with his first disciple being Saya Thetgyi (1873-1945). The Most Venerable Phra Devavisuddhikaṃ (Kasem Sañṇamo) presents a glimpse of Pali Studies in Thailand.

On behalf of the ATBU and its Editorial Committee, I now wish to thank the authors for their contribution. Their efforts help the ATBU grow academically and as a community. Collectively they represent the vision of the ATBU bringing together traditional and modern approaches. Personally, I am indebted to Venerables Phrakhrupalad Suwatthana-wachirakhun (MCU), Dr. Anil Sakya Sugandha (MBU), Prof. Dr. Candasiri and Dr. Kittibala (SIBA), Sao Sobhita and Sao Khemacara in Colombo, Mr. Thanom Butruang (MBU) and Ms. Pyi Phyo Kyaw (Oxford) and Ms. Soe Yu Paing (ITBMU Research Centre) for their kind assistance. In particular, I am grateful to my personal assistant in Oxford Venerable Khamthon Nandasami for computerizing.

Last but not least, this journal would not come out if the ATBU did not get financial support from various donors. Specially, I would like to thank the Bank of Thailand, Venerable Khruva Boonchum Nyanasamvaro (Maing Phong Sayadaw) and his devotees for their financial contribution.

Venerable K. Dhammasami
ATBU Executive Secretary & Chief-Editor