

## Cosmology, East and West

by Punnadhammo Bhikkhu

Pre-modern Europeans and Asians lived in two different universes. To the educated European the universe was a clockwork mechanism bounded in both time and space. In space the universe was a set of crystalline spheres enclosed within a definite limit. (I have read that compared to modern astronomy, the universe of Aristotle would fit inside the orbit of Jupiter.) The temporal limits became defined with the input of Judaic eschatology during the imperial period. The universe was created at a definite moment in the past and would progress through a historical evolution to a pre-determined end.

The Asian, or at least the Indian, universe was unbounded in both space and time. This world system of ours was seen as only one of an infinite number. In the time dimension there were also no limits. The universe was both beginningless and endless, cycling through immensely long eons of evolution and involution.

It is an interesting topic for speculation how living in each of these universes affected the lives and thoughts of the inhabitants. On a superficial level, it wouldn't have made much difference. People in all cultures go about their business of making love, war and money without much concern about cosmological questions. But what about the higher life of philosophy and spiritual development? Surely the cosmological background must have affected thought in subtle ways.

The limited universe of the west reinforced another important component of the European world-view; the cult of the individual inherited from classical Greece and refined by Christianity. Just as there was a clear boundary between the world and the outer void, so too there was a clear demarcation between self and other. The universe was peopled by clearly individualized selves, endowed with immortal souls, all the way from the Big Self of God in his heaven to all the little folk down below.

With the scientific revolution, from the end of the 17th century through the 19th, much of the old structure was dismantled. The heliocentric model, the discovery of galaxies, the understanding of geologic time and the evolution of species remade the entire universe. Of course, some refused to make the transition and clung to biblical certitudes, but for those who crossed over the new universe was a radically different one.

However, one thing was retained and even reinforced; the cult of the  
(cont'd on page 4)

## 淺談因果

梁啟妙

京駐美博史亦革  
北、學譽學學學。  
任長留名哲佛文動。  
歷院，個國對張運  
曾學位五中他主文  
士文職十是。又話  
博、等三又驅，白  
適授等得，先究倡  
胡教授曾位之研提  
學大，學作有，  
大美國士著很新，

出「莫以樣  
淺：，今怎  
入」我從先  
深果今；，  
以因成哀獲  
士「都更收  
博釋，莫麼  
適解種、怎  
胡筆種量想」  
的以前思，  
的以更新裁。

明很個貴遇外著理  
聰物個富不另享道  
有人是華才但的果  
而的不榮懷，時因  
奮西們受是生一這  
勤中他享些一重這  
上冠麼樣有倒名！  
世間學什一們潦是樂。  
智，為以他至卻福明  
才多都呢，一些世證

二世謂集「諦、不熾諦因  
十出所、諦苦病求陰集的  
諦與。諦「。、五。苦  
四間理苦。思老苦，果種  
的世道是諦意、離苦是種  
說明的即道的生別會苦受  
所指果：、變：愛憎，所  
經就因「諦不間恩怨等上  
佛，重諦滅實世，等以  
緣兩四、真指苦苦指  
因間「諦是是死得盛是

(cont'd on page 4)

# Wesak 1999

## Buddhist Celebration for Canada and World Peace at Nathan Phillips Square

by David Yeung and Teresa Tsui

The Buddhist Celebration for Canada and World Peace 1999 was held on June 5, 1999, at Nathan Phillips Square. The event, sponsored by the Sangha Council of Ontario Buddhist Ministry, was a showcase of the multicultural diversity of Buddhism in Canada. As in previous years, the programme consisted of a religious segment and a performing arts segment.

Ms. Christine Ng and Ms. Eileen Leung of the Buddhist Student Association were the MCs for the religious segment, and performing arts segment, respectively.

The religious segment began with a Call to Dharma given by Fo Guang Shan Temple, followed by an opening address by Ms. Christine Ng. Ven. K. Dhammawasa from the West End Buddhist Centre led homage to the Buddha and the Three Refuges. The welcome message was given by Most Ven. Hwasun Yangil Sunim, the Chairman of the Sangha Council.

Amongst the honoured guests were Most Ven. Ren De, the Supreme Patriarch of the Jiu Hwa Mountains in China (one of the four most renowned Chinese Buddhist pilgrimage sites since ancient times), Ven. A. Rathanasiri from the Toronto Mahavihara, Mr. Dae Won Park, Consulate General of the Republic of Korea, a representative of the Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto, and Ven. Chan Toan from the Pho Hien Buddhist Community Temple. The Chair of the United Church of Canada, Most Rev. Sang Chul Lee, and the Sri Lankan Ambassador to Canada, Mr. Ananda Gunasekare, sent their regrets for their absence.

This year's performing arts programme provided an opportunity for the multicultural communities to display their talents. Ven. Yin Hae of Dae Kak Sa (Nine Mountains Zen Gate) opened the performing arts segment with "O Canada". Next, representatives from Hue Lam Temple chanted an Incense Anthem.

Continuing the tradition of previous years, we saw various colourful cultural dances. The Three Drum Dance was performed by Kye Ja Park, Samuel Nori was performed by a Youth Group from Dae Kak Sa, a traditional Laotian dance was performed by Wat Lao, a Japanese dance was performed by the Odori Group from the Toronto Buddhist Church, a Burmese Folk Dance was performed by the Mahadhammika Temple, a Chinese lion Dance was performed by Fo Guang Shan Temple, a Khmer Folk Dance was performed by Wat Khmer, a Puja Offering Dance was performed by the Buddhist youth volunteers of the West End

Buddhist Centre, and Premila Williams from the Toronto Mahavihara performed the dance "Gajaba Vennam".

Buddhist music rebounded off the downtown skyscrapers. Members of the Cham Shan Temple sang two Chinese Buddhist songs to very popular tunes, and last on the performing arts programme, the memorable Tai-Go Japanese Drumming was performed by the Kiyoshi Nagata Taiko Ensemble from the Toronto Buddhist Church.

During the celebration, we accepted donations for the Daily Bread Food Bank, collecting a total of 700 lbs. of food and almost \$500 in donations.

The U of T Buddhist Community and Buddhist Student Association occupied two tables of the ten or so tables representing various GTA Buddhist communities. We displayed and distributed Buddhist literature, sold vegetarian sandwiches and handmade cards throughout the celebration. We took this chance to make our presence known as a subgroup within the Buddhist community of the GTA, sharing the goals of raising Buddhism awareness in the community and promoting world peace.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the originally scheduled parade was cancelled. However, that did not dampen our celebration spirit. Instead, all the Sangha, participating performers, and volunteers took part in a small procession around the periphery of Nathan Phillips Square.

The celebrations drew to a close amidst beautifully hot weather and smiles on people's faces. It was another successful Wesak celebration.

(photos: pages 3 and 4)

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## The Sutra of Forty-two Chapters 四十二章經

優婆塞盧榮章語譯於多倫多

In 68 A.D., two monks from Central India, Kasyapa Matanga and Gobharana, jointly translated the Sutra of Forty-two Chapters in the White Horse Temple (bai ma si) in Luo-yang, China. It was the first Buddhist sutra written in Chinese. They translated the key teachings from many sutras of both Mahayana and Hinayana origins, using simple and direct language. Earlier this year in Toronto, Upasaka Lo Wing Cheung has completed an elaborated rendering of this sutra into modern Chinese. "Wisdom" would like to share with you in the next few issues selected chapters from Upasaka Lo's translation. Its English version is translated by Shan Tong Wu.

### 第七章 惡還本身

佛說：有些人聽聞我日常生活，和世間道德標準不相遺背，而且常常用慈悲心，去幫助有需要幫助的人。他們的內心很煩惱，以為我的行為，是假情假義的，不過是一個偽君子。因此來到我面前，用嚴厲的措詞來責罵我；說我不忠不孝，不仁不義。我當時沒有對他們的責罵，解釋和辯護。直到他們壞話說盡，內心仍然憤恨，怒目看著我，等待我反應的時候；我向他們提出一個有趣的問題說：如果你們準備了許多禮品，送給別人，但遭遇到對方完全拒絕，甚至部分都不接受，那麼這許多禮品結果怎樣呢？

他們說：我們是會把它取回，因為這些禮物原來是屬於我們的。

我繼續誠懇的告訴他們說：你們這次來對我辱罵，都是不盡不實的，因此我不能夠接受。那麼，這許多惡毒言語的效果，未來還是發出這些言語的人，自己去承擔的。猶如有聲音，便有回響；有了身形，便有影子一樣，兩者的關係是連貫一起，不能分離的。所以我們開口說話，是不能夠不負責任。

### 第三十二章 忘我怖滅

佛說：很多人由於愛樂貪欲，不能捨離；終日在患得患失，不平衡的心態中，憂慮過生活，更嚴重的由憂慮影響健康，對死亡產生恐怖，如果將愛樂貪求心放下，沒有壓力；生活自然會輕鬆；身心亦會因此得到康復，對死亡便不會怖畏。

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### Chapter Seven: Evil returns to its origin

The Buddha said: "Some people heard that I was virtuous, compassionate and helpful towards others, they came to abuse me, accusing me of falsehood. I did not defend or explain myself until they were finished. Then I asked them, 'If you had presented many gifts for someone who refused them, what would happen to those gifts?' They replied, 'We would take them back as they were originally ours.'

Then I continued to instruct them, 'You have just abused me with false accusations which I do not accept. Therefore, the consequences of these words ultimately belong with you. Just like sounds have echoes, so does a body have a shadow; the two are linked, inseparable. Therefore a speaker is responsible for his speech.'

### Chapter Thirty-two: Fear would not come to one who understands the unreality of one's "self"

According to the Buddha, people indulge their desires; they become anxious about obtaining the desired objects and fearful of losing them. Their minds are thus unstable, their lives weary, their health suffers and fear of death arises in them. If they were to forego their desires for sensual enjoyment, they would have no concern for any gain or loss. They would naturally be happy and light-hearted, their health would improve and their fear of death would subside.



Members of the Sangha from across Ontario gathered to celebrate Canada and World Peace. See article on page 2.

(Photo on next page) A procession of monks and nuns.

(Cosmology - cont'd from page 1)  
individual. It was in the midst of this philosophical revolution that we saw the American and French revolutions with their ideologies of individual rights. With God dethroned, the supreme value was now the individual human ego.

The boundedness of the universe was undermined, but the human unit was still clearly bounded in both time and space. Associated with a physical body and having clear temporal boundaries of birth and death, outside which it did not exist at all, the human individual was as clearly demarcated an entity as Aristotle's spheres.

Into this mix we now see Buddhism coming from the east to add a new flavour to the thought of the west. It is probably no accident that the being who had the great realization emerged from the milieu of India. The Buddha's view of not-self fit comfortably into the unbounded Indian universe. Instead of a clearly defined self with fixed boundaries, the Buddha taught a series of discrete mind-moments, themselves void of substance, stretching in an infinite regress into the past and future, linked to each other by cause-and-effect but not by identity.

This view totally eradicates the western cult of the individual in both its eternalist and its annihilationist forms.

Is this the underlying reason why so many new western Buddhists either reject the teachings around karma and rebirth or misunderstand them so perversely? Is it because it threatens the comfortable cult of the individual, that core idea that wasn't touched by the revolutions of Copernicus, Darwin or Freud?

Ven. Punnadhammo is the resident bhikkhu at the Arrow River Community Centre, a Theravadin Buddhist monastery in Northern Ontario. He has been studying and practising Buddhism since 1979 and was ordained in Thailand in the forest tradition of Ajahn Chah in 1990. Between 1990 and 1995 he was based at Wat Pah Nanachat, Thailand. The Arrow River Community Center may be found on the web at < <http://www.baynet.net/~arcc/> >.

(We would like to thank Ven. Punnadhammo for permission to print this article.)

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(淺談因果 - cont'd from page 1)

。滅諦即是出世間得解脫的果。道諦即是  
修出世間得解脫的因。十、二、緣：無明、  
行、識、名色、老死等，都有著、兩重、愛、取、  
有、生、老死等，較深奧，故有其實相與的因果  
。因果，更甚的我們明白或不明，而到我們  
理：無論我們去支配，更直接影響到我們  
信，我們去支配，更直接影響到我們  
力，量去支配，更直接影響到我們  
、家庭。所以我們更要諸惡莫作，  
。免做惡因

