

Teaching Buddhism in Thai *Saṅgha* Universities*

*Phra Maha Paticcadham Guṇadhammo (Permpitayangkura)***

Introduction

The Buddha had spent four *Āsaṅkheyya* and eons of years perfecting the virtues before he became the Enlightened One and liberated humankind from suffering during his short span of 80 years on earth. Through his compassion, the world was fortunate to experience another *Sammāsambuddha*, albeit for only 45 years. The short span of time posed no problem in the dissemination of his teachings, for, like other Buddhas before him, he had arranged everything in its proper order. Instead, the problem has been how to best preserve this most valuable *Dhamma* and pass it on to future generations, ensuring its authenticity in essence and spirit, as mentioned in one of the Buddha's sayings:

O, Bikkhus, as long as the Buddha or his Vinaya remains in the world, they will bring benefit to a multitude of people, bring happiness to many people, and help the world, all for the good, benefit, and happiness for all celestial and human beings.

(Suttantapiṭaka [Translation], Vol. 35, 2009: 397)

* This article is a part of an MA thesis in Buddhist Studies entitled "Teaching Buddhism in Thai *Saṅgha* Universities", Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, 2010.

** *Dhamma* Scholar Advanced Level, Pali IV, B.A. (Philosophy, First-Class Honors), Sukhothai Thammathirat University, B.Ed. (Thai Language), Ramkhamhaeng University, M.A. (Buddhist Studies), Chulalongkorn University.

Learning and teaching have played a crucial role in passing the *Dhammavinaya* from generation to generation since the Buddha's time. Today, Buddhist studies have become more systematic. There are two Buddhist universities offering a variety of Buddhist courses and programs in Thailand. It does not come as a surprise, therefore, that whenever there is an issue or question related to Buddhism, Buddhist followers will turn to them for answers and opinions. When few – monks or laypersons – venture forth with satisfactory answers, one begins to wonder about the state of the affair. Why are so few experts of Buddhism ready to come forward? This is especially intriguing in view of a great number of graduates produced by both *Saṅgha* universities. One university offers the following explanation:

As the security of Buddhism is closely related to the quality of the four *Buddhaparisā*, it must be admitted that a lack of knowledge and understanding of Buddhism has led to a crisis in the *Saṅgha* and Buddhism as a whole. When a crisis occurs, it is difficult to find monk experts in the *Dhammavinaya* to resolve the issue. This surely reflects the shortage of experts in Buddhism both in number and in quality. The problem is also found in the shortage of teachers of Buddhism at the *Saṅgha* universities and in the dissemination of Buddhism to the general public as well as the shortage of Buddhist missionaries abroad.

(Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya
University, 2008: 12)

Such shortage of Buddhist experts does not benefit the *Saṅgha* or the religion itself, as the existence of true knowledge of Buddhism is crucial to its sustainability in the long term.

How important is Buddhist expertise?

The Buddha's enlightenment has brought much delight to the world in his lifetime. After his *Nibbāna*, his *Dhammavinaya* has remained and continued to benefit the world. The continued existence of the *Dhammavinaya* presupposes a continuation of conscientious and proper

studies, teaching and dissemination to all generations, past, present and to come, as well as a pool of expertise in the subject matter. Only thus can Buddhism continue, as the Buddha himself says:

O, Bhikkhus, how are these two principles of Dhamma, these two truths of Dhamma, here to stay firm, unadulterated, and unabandoned? For expressions well established and meanings well put, as well as the contents of the well-established expressions, will only bring about good things. O, Bhikkhus, for that reason these two principles of Dhamma are here to stay, untarnished and unabandoned.

(*Suttantapiṭaka* [Translation], Vol. 33, 2009: 303)

Bhikkhus in Dhamma will study the Sutta well studied, equipped with well established texts and expressions. The well-established meanings of the texts and expressions are good in intent ... are here to stay firm, unaltered, and unspoiled in their truths.

(*Suttantapiṭaka* [Translation], Vol. 36, 2009: 323)

The above two passages help us to better understand that the Buddha's Dhammavinaya, whether text, expression, or meaning, cannot be allowed to go astray, hence giving rise to the issue of the stability of Buddhism. For something to remain "firm, unaltered, and unspoiled", the presence of expertise seems to be required. One may therefore say that in asking about the existence or whereabouts of the experts, one is indirectly also concerning himself with the stability of Buddhism.

***Etadagga* and expertise in Buddhism**

When expertise is mentioned, we naturally think of *Etadagga*. The word signifies a person who is expert in some field. However, the two words are slightly different in meaning.

The word "*Etadagga*" derives from Pali *Etadaggaṃ* which in turns is formed from *Etaṃ* + *Aggaṃ*. "*Eta*" means this or that, while "*Agga*" means the beginning, the end, the best part. The word "*Etadagga*",

therefore, means the top or the best (from *Suttantapiṭaka*, Vol. 36, translated by Manorotpurani, 2009: 193).

Etadagga is a title bestowed by the Buddha on his disciples for their specialization in certain skills. According to Pali commentaries, when the Buddha appointed his *Buddhaparisā* as *Etadagga*, he would praise them for their most outstanding qualities based on the following four criteria:

1) Ability to handle incidents (*Atthapapati*): A person is praised for his/her outstanding ability to solve problems.

2) Accumulated virtues (*Āgamaṇa*): A person is praised for his/her accumulated virtues in the past lives and for his wish to attain the title.

3) Expertise (*Cinnavesī*): A person is praised for his/her expertise in certain matters.

4) Surpassing quality (*Guṇātireka*): A person is praised for his/her quality surpassing all others.

Based on the above four criteria and rationale, the consideration of an individual *Etadagga* is not merely a matter of expertise, but also includes other qualities. Expertise is only one of the criteria for a person to be awarded the title of *Etadagga*. There are very few persons on whom the Buddha awarded such title. According to *Manorathapūraṇī Aṭṭhakathā Aṅguttaranikāya*, they include 41 *Bhikkhu*, 13 *Bhikkhunī*, 10 *Upāsaka*, and 10 *Upāsikā*.

“Expert”, on the other hand, means “having specialized knowledge, being well-versed, being very skillful” (the Royal Institute, 2003: 372). In this sense, a Buddhist expert is a person with specialized knowledge of Buddhism, well-versed in Buddhism, or very skillful in Buddhist matters, e.g. an expert in the *Sutta*, *Vinaya*, or *Abhidhamma*. Comparing the two terms, one can see subtle but significant differences. *Etadagga* refers to a person specifically awarded the title by the Buddha as being foremost in a certain area based on one of the four criteria above, and there are a fixed number of *Etadagga*. Experts, on the other hand, refer to those well-versed in Buddhism and may be unlimited in number.

Thus, Buddhist experts do not refer only to *Etadagga* but also to non-*Etadagga* knowledgeable persons. For instance, the person most

skillful in *Vinaya* with the title of *Etadagga* is Ven. Upāli and nobody else, while there were other monks who were also very knowledgeable about the subject. In the modern time they would be called experts.

It would not be right, therefore, to equate experts with *Etadagga*, for that would only signify a handful of experts in the Buddha's time. There were a lot of monks well-versed in *Vinaya* but not conferred the title. So, experts and *Etadagga* are not quite the same.

Buddhist Studies in Thai *Saṅgha* Universities

As it is rather difficult to study the entire scene of Buddhist Studies in Thai *Saṅgha* universities comprehensively, this study wants to focus on aspects that have direct impacts on the quality of education. For ease of comparison with the modern education system, the researcher has adopted the CIPP Model as a basis for analysis within the following scope:

1) Context: The study deals with both the external and internal environments, including the objectives of the courses/programs, their structures, and contents.

2) Input: It analyzes the composition of primary factors, i.e. instructors, learners, and other components that lend support to education management.

3) Process: It looks at the functionality of the work process, including pedagogical management, assessment, and evaluation.

4) Product: It considers the characteristics of graduates from various programs of studies.

The study reveals the following findings:

1. Context

1.1) Course objectives

Both Thai *Saṅgha* universities focus on the students having an expert knowledge of Buddhism. Some programs even have clear specific objectives. For instance, the Bachelor's Degree Program at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University is designed with the following objective:

To produce graduates with Buddhist knowledge and abilities, competent enough to analyze, comment on, and conduct research in Buddhism intelligently.

(Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya, 2009: 54)

The Master's Degree Program at Mahamakut Buddhist University lists as its objective the following:

To produce masters in Buddhism with the knowledge and abilities in Pariyatti (theory) and Patipatti, able to carry out religious responsibilities for the advancement of Buddhism and the happiness of society at large.

(Mahamakut Buddhist University, 2009: 4)

Yet, some programs do not have such clear objectives. For example, the Bachelor's Degree Program of Mahamakut Buddhist University simply mentions the following:

To enable students to solve religious problems and correct misunderstandings in light of Buddhist principles.

(Mahamakut Buddhist University, 2008: 13-14)

Although some programs do not specify "expertise" in their objectives, a look at the context will indicate the intent for the learners to have expert knowledge of the *Dhammavinaya*.

Assistant Professor Suthep Phromloet, Faculty of Buddhist Studies Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, had this to say:

It is true that the objective of the program is to produce graduates with expert knowledge, but the learners do not have enough incentives, e.g. what would they do after graduation? Most do not expect to stay in monkhood for the rest of their lives. If there are jobs that require their expertise, they will be more motivated to study seriously, thus fulfilling the program's objective.

(Interview, 15 March 2011)

Phra Rajavaramuni, Dean of the Faculty of Buddhist Studies, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, commented thus:

Setting an objective for the learners to have an expert knowledge of the subject is the right and proper thing to do. The extent to which they are able to do so will depend on themselves and on other factors.

(Interview, 7 March, 2011)

This view corresponds to that of Phra Khru Siripanyamethi, Head of the Department of Buddhist Studies, Mahamakut Buddhist University, who said the following during the interview:

It is proper to set such an objective. To attain it will depend rather on how the process is carried out.

(Interview, 9 March, 2011)

The evidence gleaned from the Program documents and interviews indicates that each program intends to make the learners experts in the subject. There seems to be a common agreement, however, that in reality this cannot be achieved for a number of reasons to be addressed later.

1.2) Course structure

The Bachelor's Degree Program at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has two options: one in which students can choose to study Buddhism as a major or minor subject, the other only as a single major. Both programs require the total number of 140 credits of study, out of which 30 credits are in general studies, representing 21.42%. This leaves only 78.58% for the study of Buddhism.

At the Master's Degree level, there are three programs available: Plan A (1), Plan A (2), and Plan B:

a.) Plan A (1)

Students will focus on completing a thesis which accounts for 38 credits, while still being required to accumulate credits in other subjects. In this manner, the program largely depends on individual interests of the candidates.

b.) Plan A (2)

Students will take a variety of courses to fulfill the requirements of 38 credits – 8 for compulsory courses, 12 for major courses, not less than 6 units for electives, and 12 for the thesis.

c.) Plan B

Students are required to fulfill credit requirements by course work without having to write a thesis.

At the Doctoral level, there are four programs available: Type 1.1, Type 1.2, Type 2.1, and Type 2.2:

a.) Type 1.1 (English program)

This is an English Doctoral Program with thesis (54 credits). Students are required to take other necessary courses. In Type 1.1, the choice of a thesis title will depend on individual interest.

b.) Type 1.2

The program structure consists of 78 credits by thesis only.

c.) Type 2.1

The program consists of 54 credits: 6 from compulsory courses, 6 from major subjects, 6 from electives, and 36 for the thesis. There are no general courses.

d.) Type 2.2

The program consists of 78 credits: 9 from compulsory courses, 12 from major subjects, 9 from electives, and 48 for the thesis. There are no general courses.

As for Mahamakut Buddhist University, the Bachelor's Degree offers two programs: regular program and continuing education program. Mention will be made only about the regular program here. The entire program consists of 132 credits. No less than 30 credits are from general courses comprising four different subject groups: social sciences (6 credits), humanities (6 credits), languages (12 credits), and science and mathematics (6 credits). Students are also required to take no less than 96 credits in three specific areas comprising 30 credits from religious courses, 51 credits from major subjects, and 15 credits from minor subjects, as well as no less than 6 credits from free electives.

Students, therefore, are required to study general courses, representing 22.72% of the total program, leaving only 77.28% for Buddhist studies. If they choose other free electives that have nothing to do with Buddhism, the percentage will be down to 72.72%.

At the Master's Degree level, there are three types of programs: Plan A (1), Plan A (2), and Plan B:

a.) Plan A (1)

A thesis is required, accounting for 48 credits. Students are also required to take other necessary courses. In this plan, the choice of a thesis title will depend on individual interest.

b.) Plan A (2)

This is a program by coursework constituting 48 credits, including 24 credits from compulsory courses, 12 from electives, and 12 for the thesis. The focus is not as much on the thesis as in Plan A (1).

c.) Plan B

This is also a program by coursework constituting 48 credits, out of which 42 credits are taken from compulsory courses (27 credits) and from electives (15 credits). An independent study accounting for 6 credits is required instead of a full thesis.

At the Doctoral level, there are two programs: Type 1 and Type 2.

a.) Type 1

The program consists of 63 credits from four different subject groups: foundation courses, major subjects, electives, and a thesis. The students may be required to attend some non-credit foundation courses, in which case the weight of the credit requirements is given to the thesis.

The choice of a thesis title for this program will depend on individual interest.

b.) Type 2

The program consisting of 63 credits has the same structure as Type 1 above, except that all the courses taken are given credits together with the thesis. In this way, the students are obliged to pay attention to both the coursework and the thesis.

The information gleaned from the above programs may not be evident enough to decide how or in what ways the course structure has an impact on the expertise or mastery of the subject of the students. For this reason, a series of interviews were arranged with a number of faculty members. There are three issues under consideration.

Issue 1: Are general courses necessary?

There are arguments for and against general studies in sciences that have nothing to do with the Buddha's teachings or have no direct bearing on Buddhism. Some argue that the studies of these subjects adversely affect the students' mastery of Buddhism, for the time spent on them could have been devoted to their major interest. Besides, general studies tend to be broad-based and are more concerned with modern sciences, while the students have little or no basic understanding about them (Interview, Suthep Phromloet, cited above). Others argue that general studies will lay necessary foundations and preparations for students to pursue their majors. This will ensure that those without necessary basic knowledge will have no problem when they continue their studies elsewhere (Interview, Phra Rajavaramuni, cited above).

It is apparent that the arguments on both sides are reasonable and credible. However, when it comes to the issue of expertise or mastery, they are in agreement that general studies, despite their usefulness, do affect the students' mastery of Buddhism, as they take away a substantial portion of their study time.

Issue 2: Framework of the Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC)

This relates to the above issue. If all parties agree that general studies affect the students' mastery, there seems to be no reason to keep them in the curriculum. This, however, cannot be so easily achieved, because the course structure needs to follow the framework set by the Office of the Higher Education Commission. So, it is not possible to remove them from the program and concentrate only on Buddhism (Interview, Phra Rajavaramuni, cited above). To do so would mean that

Saṅgha universities as state institutions do not meet the assessment criteria set by the State (Interview, Phra Maha Somsak Yanaphotho, 9 March 2011).

Hence, if *Saṅgha* universities believe that this is a real cause for concern with enough evidence to reason with the Office about the issue and possible solution, they should come forward rather than maintain that they have to follow the framework of the OHEC. On the other hand, if they cannot independently come up with their own curricula because of the said framework, they could at least make the courses more intensive or find more dynamic instructors to teach them, thereby strengthening the intellectual capacity of the learners (Interview, Phra Thepwisutthikawi, 10 March 2011).

Issue 3: Lack of specialization in programs of studies

Again, this matter relates to Issues 1 and 2 above, contributing to the problem in that the programs of studies are not sufficiently specialized. Phra Suthithammanuwat, Dean of Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, commented that programs of studies must be really specialized to create expertise in students. The State must give the university a free hand in its management, while providing the same budgetary support, to make it possible for the institution to develop some kind of specialization. At present, the programs of studies cannot make learners experts or masters of the subject. Students learn mostly only to pass the examination (Interview, 8 March 2011).

The above comments reflect how courses tend to be broad-based without a specific focus due to time limitation. The programs are mostly designed to ensure that students reach the required standard without much concern for specialization. What they learn is, therefore, only a part of the expertise (Interview, Phra Khru Palat Samphiphatwiriyan, 7 March 2011).

This lack of specialization has to do with the general studies courses and the OHC framework which do not allow students to seek depth in any one particular area. Such a problem does not arise in *Abhidhamma*

studies programs (Interview, Phra Maha Somboon Wutthikaro, 5 March 2011), which are specialized programs recognized by *Saṅgha* universities.

1.3) Contents

An observation is made about the contents of each course that students are not expected to study in depth the Buddha's teachings, as the program is broad-based in its approach. For instance, the Bachelor's Degree Program in Buddhism at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University requires students to take 30 credits. The 30 credits are broken down into 6 for Pali language courses, consisting of Pali composition and translation, Pali literature, and Advanced Pali Grammar, and 24 for Buddhist Studies consisting of 17 courses. Of the 17 courses, 11 are directly related to the Buddha's teachings, i.e. *Tepiṭaka* Studies, *Vinayatepiṭaka*, *Suttantapiṭaka*, *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, and *Dhamma* in Practice 1-7. Each above course covers a lot of ground; for example, the contents in *Vinayatepiṭaka* are extensive. In the former time, it would be treated as an entity in its own right and studied in detail section by section, and it would take several years to complete. The same can be said for *Suttantapiṭaka* and *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, but here at the Buddhist universities each course lasts for only one semester.

According to the interviews, the course contents are designed merely to provide basic knowledge without going into any great depth (Interview, Suthep Phromloet, cited above). It is up to each student to pursue a more advanced study at a Master's or Doctoral level. Meanwhile, the fact that each course covers so much ground is admittedly part of the reason why the students cannot pursue the subject in greater depth, thus leading to the lack of expertise thereof (Interview, Phra Rajavaramuni, cited above). However, some may argue that the breadth of the subject matter is more suitable and desirable than a narrow approach as it gives the instructors a free hand to delve into certain areas of their choice and prevents them from teaching too little content (Interview, Phra Maha Somsak Yanaphotho, cited above). All agree that no matter how much ground is covered, time is always a constraining factor. It is, therefore, up to the instructors to decide what and how much to teach (Interview, Phra Khru Palat Samphiphatwiriyan, cited above).

The interviews reveal that the instructors and administrators all agree on the broad nature of the course. They can be divided in two groups:

One group views that the course needs to be broad to lay foundation knowledge for the learners, while admitting that it accounts for the students' inability to be expert in the subject and that the matter should be addressed.

The other group feels that the breadth of the course is the right approach, for it gives the instructors the freedom to teach whatever they think appropriate. It has nothing to do with the issue of expertise.

The arguments put forward by both sides can be summarized as follows: Nobody objects to the broad nature of the course. However, their views differ regarding whether or not it affects the expertise issue. Those that argue that it has no adverse effect insist that it is the duty of instructors to get the message across in a manner they think appropriate. Phra Thepwisutthikawi commented:

It is possible that the broad scope of the subject matter and time constraint can make it difficult for the learners to be experts in the subject. This would especially be so if they do not have enough potential and if the instructors are not expert enough to deliver the contents in a comprehensible manner (Interview, cited above).

Thus, it can be concluded that the broad nature of the course can affect the expertise issue. Meanwhile, the reference to the instructors can be treated as another variable to be considered further in the section “Input” below.

2. Input

2.1) Instructors

Instructors at *Saṅgha* universities consist of religious and lay persons, some being regular faculty members, others visiting or invited guest lecturers, as follows:

- a.) Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University:
At the Bachelor's Degree level:

Regular faculty members consist of religious persons (53.33%) and laypersons (46.66%). 93.33% have Pali-scholar level education, and 60% have general education in Buddhist studies, while 42.85% hold academic titles.

Visiting lecturers consist of religious persons (15.15%) and laypersons (84.85%). 66.66% have Pali-scholar level education, and 50% have general education in Buddhist studies, while 39.39% hold academic titles.

At the Graduate level:

Regular faculty members consist of religious persons (92.30%) and laypersons (7.70%). 61.53% hold academic titles, 100% have Pali-scholar level education, while 46.15% have general education in Buddhist studies.

Visiting lecturers consist of religious persons (6.25%) and laypersons (93.75%). 81.25% hold academic titles, 56.25% have Pali-scholar level education, while 6.25% have general education in Buddhist studies.

b.) Mahamakut Buddhist University:

At the Bachelor's Degree level:

Regular faculty members consist of religious persons (70%) and laypersons (30%). 90% have Pali-scholar level education, and 50% have general education in Buddhist studies, while 60% hold academic titles.

Visiting lecturers consist only of laypersons (100%). 16.66% have Pali-scholar level education, 0% with general education in Buddhist studies, while 66.66% hold academic titles.

At the Master's Degree level:

Regular faculty members consist of religious persons (53.84%) and laypersons (46.16%). 53.84% have Pali-scholar level education, and 38.46% have general education in Buddhist studies, while 46.15% hold academic titles.

Visiting lecturers consist of religious persons (18.18%) and laypersons (81.82%). 27.27% have Pali-scholar level education, and 18.18% have general education in Buddhist studies, while 45.45% hold academic titles.

At the Doctoral Degree level there are four categories of instructors: regular faculty members, visiting lecturers, qualified persons, and foreign guest instructors.

Regular faculty members consist of religious persons (66.66%) and laypersons (33.34%). 33.33% hold academic titles, 50% have Pali-scholar level education, while 50% have general education in Buddhist studies.

Visiting lecturers consist of religious persons (33.33%) and laypersons (66.67%). 58.33% hold academic titles, 41.66% have Pali-scholar level education, while 33.33% have general education in Buddhist studies.

93.75% of qualified persons hold academic titles, while 100% of foreign instructors have qualifications in Buddhist studies.

As a whole, instructors at both *Saṅgha* universities are well qualified according to the State standard. More importantly, most are Pali scholars with general education in religion and philosophy, while some are holders of academic titles that testify to their expertise in specific areas. Thus, it can be assumed that they are knowledgeable enough to make their students experts in the subject. Interviews with instructors and the administration throw an interesting light as follows:

Of all programs at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya, instructors in the Buddhist Studies programs seem to be the best qualified, most being graduates in Buddhist studies (Interview, Phra Maha Somboon Wutthikaro, cited above). This view is in line with Mahamakut Buddhist University in that there are more regular teaching members at the Faculty of Religion and Philosophy than other faculties, equipped with direct qualifications in Buddhist studies (Interview, Phra Khru Siripanyamethi, cited above). So, instructors have more direct qualifications than other faculties (Interview, Phra Maha Somsak Yanaphotho, cited above). In this light, there is no problem concerning the instructors' qualifications, as they fall under the State's framework (Interview, Phra Khru Palat Samphiphawatwiriyan, cited above). Rather, the problem may be related to their teaching techniques, methodologies or delivery styles.

There is some commonality in the above comments that despite the instructors' qualifications, they may not all have teaching expertise. This is partly due to the way they are recruited. Some are engaged through a patronage system, while real experts in the subject may be very expensive to recruit. As a result, the recruitment process consists of a combination of different engagements (Interview, Phra Rajavaramuni, cited above).

Hence, there are not enough expert instructors to turn students into experts in the subject (Interview, Phra Suthithammanuwat, cited above). Today, although instructors may be equipped with good qualifications, they are still lacking in some other qualities. Besides, it is difficult to find persons really adept at teaching. On the other hand, there are people who are real experts but lack the qualifications required. These are some of the problems arising from the regulations on quality assurance set by the Commission Office of the Higher Education (OHEC) and the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessments (ONESQA) (Interview, Phra Thepwisutthikawi, cited above).

According to the interviews, instructors of the Buddhist Studies programs are most suitable in terms of education qualifications compared with other programs of studies. Most are graduates of Buddhist studies and Pali scholars. On the other hand, the administrators feel that despite the fact that instructors have directly relevant qualifications, there is still a shortage of people with good teaching techniques and skills. In other words, there are not enough experts in teaching.

All these comments bring us back to the earlier statement that it is the duty of the instructors to deliver the subject content in a profound manner. In fact, it turns out that there are not enough instructors capable of such delivery, leading to the students' inability to master the subject.

2.2) Students

There is a large variety of applicants to both *Saṅgha* universities, in terms of education qualifications, age, and careers. Their knowledge background is different, although they all have to pass the same university admission criteria. These criteria, however, are different from those used by general universities. The latter have stricter and narrower requirements, and their students have similar characteristics, e.g. same age group. They can conduct their studies at more or less the same pace. The *Saṅgha* universities, on the other hand, aim at providing educational opportunities to disadvantaged people to begin with, thus the competition is not that high.

Here, the situation affects the ability to inculcate expertise in the students in two ways:

a.) Admission process

The *Saṅgha* universities have diverse admission requirements in terms of education qualifications (e.g. Pali scholars/secondary school graduates/monks without any education qualification) and age (no age limit). This can create a lot of education problems (Interview, Suthep Phromloet, cited above). Besides, they do not join the general entrance examination scheme, as they want to allow more disadvantaged people into the university educational system and admit all applicants to the programs. As a result, there are fewer students with promising caliber (Interview, Phra Rajavaramuni, cited above). The admission requirements have become increasingly less demanding. In the past, only those with Pali Studies level 5 were admitted to the university; today no such qualification is required. As a result, the quality of the students is lower (Interview, Phra Suthithammanuwat, cited above). The reason for doing away with such admission requirements is that there are fewer students applying for the Buddhist studies programs; hence those who are admitted tend to be smaller in number and less qualified (Interview, Phra Khru Siripanyamethi, cited above).

b.) Students

Students vary – some are more studious than others, each has their own reasons for attending university (Interview, Maechi Kraitsana Raksachom, 8 March 2011). Each has a different talent and inspiration. To become an expert in the subject is a matter of individual ability (Interview, Phra Maha Somboon Wutthikaro, cited above). There seems to be a common agreement that the number of students is getting smaller and they are less qualified. Worse yet, they are not interested in the pursuit of knowledge. They choose the course of studies, believing that it is easier to graduate in Buddhist Studies than in other subjects. Besides, the knowledge thereof will not be of much use in the secular world (Interview, Phra Khru Siripanyamethi, cited above). Despite the effort by the university and faculty to provide education grants for the entire program of Buddhist Studies, very few students apply, because they do not believe that there are job opportunities for them after graduation (Interview, Phra Maha Somsak Yanaphotho, cited above).

It can be inferred that because the *Saṅgha* universities have opened up educational opportunities to disadvantaged students, the admission process is rather easy-going. It is hoped that this will be an incentive for more students to join and expand this small program, for any strict admission requirements will deter them. In addition, the students' backgrounds are very different in terms of education qualification and age.

In the university administrators' view, besides all the above differences, the students' faith, determination and goals are also determining factors, for very few students actually want to attain *Nibbāna*. They merely seek an educational qualification as a passport to employment in the secular society. Expertise in the subject matter is not their ultimate goal. For them it is good enough to pass the degree requirements.

2.3) Other components that lend support to education management

Other components include educational material, texts, and other classroom facilities. Compared to the olden days, the two *Saṅgha* universities are much better equipped with regard to study and research facilities. Although they are not yet on the same par as other universities in general, they are good enough for students to master what they learn.

3. Process

3.1) Course management

Here mention will be made only about factors that do not facilitate the students' mastery of the subject matter at both *Saṅgha* universities. There are two aspects:

a.) Establishment and organization of the Department

As far as the establishment of the Department of Buddhist Studies is concerned, it is the researcher's observation that the scope of the study is too broad, compared to more intensive teaching of Buddhism in former times. Even in the Buddha's time, learning was divided into areas or sections, as can be testified from the following evidence:

Behold, Thera Dabba-Mallaputta, monks who are ordained will have their seating and sleeping quarters arranged in separate proper order. Bhikkus who are good at Suttas are grouped together, partly in order for them to practice the Suttas together. Bhikkus who are good at Vinaya are also grouped together, partly in order for them to examine the Vinaya together. Bhikkus who are good at Abhidhamma are grouped together, partly in order for them to converse about the Abhidhamma...

(*Vinayatepiṭaka* (Translation), Volume 3, 1999: 426)

Another statement of the Buddha mentions how the subject was divided into separate categories in his time:

There are Bhikkus who are Bahusutta, who have completed their study of the canons, Dhamma, Vinaya, and Mātikā, but are not interested to teach the Sutta to others. When they pass away, the Suttas have no ground to take root in or live on. This is the third Dhamma of truth that accounts for the loss of Saddhamma.

(*Suttantapiṭaka* (Translation), Vol. 35, 2009: 398)

All this goes to show that even in the distant past Buddhist studies were divided into *Sutta*, *Vinaya*, or *Abhidhamma*. Monks were divided into groups according to their lines of study, making it possible, in the researcher's view, to better attain expertise than the attempt to study the subject in its entirety at once. The latter approach does not make the students experts in the subject.

The interviews reveal that the division into *Vinaya* and *Sutta* is not commonly adopted for fear that students will not want to enroll to take the courses. The *Vinaya* course might attract only student monks. Besides, the objective of the *Vinaya* studies nowadays is different from that of the past when it was designed to promote dissemination of Buddhism. It was important then to divide the teachings into *Sutta*, *Vinaya*, and *Abhidhamma*. Today, the *Tepiṭaka* is in written form, and there is no

longer the need to follow the old method (Interview, Phra Maha Somboon Wutthikaro, cited above). The old practice does not accord with the university system which is based on a more holistic approach, aiming to ensure that students learn about Buddhism from a number of perspectives. The focus is rather on its application to society or organizations (Interview, Suwin Raksat, 7 March 2011). The division into separate courses, therefore, follows the central standard practice. If a large enough number of students make a special request for a specific subject, it is possible to open a new course. Of course, the number of students will still be small (Interview, Phra Khru Palat Samphiphawatwiryachan, cited above). If the universities want to offer specialized courses, say, in *Sutta*, *Vinaya*, or *Abhidhamma*, they will have to choose to focus on a specific sect just like in the past, but they also have to think about who will be their possible students. Very few will enroll due to the impression that there will be no demand for them and their skill in the job market after they graduate (Interview, Phra Thepwisutthikawi, cited above).

Thus, it may be observed that, in a way, the division of the subject matter into various general courses today is partly responsible for the lack of expertise among the students. The argument is that there is no need for specialized courses as in the past for the reasons cited above, such as little or no enrollment by the students, or no demand in the job market. Besides, such broad approach of study is in line with the central standard set by the Commission Office of Higher Education.

b.) Teaching methodology

The pedagogy of the *Saṅgha* universities, naturally, is different from the oral approach of the past. The use of texts, or the *Poṭṭhakaroṇa* method, as a basis for learning differs according to historical periods. Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses. For instance, the oral tradition helps the learner to memorize texts better than reading, while reading texts and listening to lectures are more convenient, faster, and easier to understand. In the Buddhist tradition, learning is meant to develop the Five Aggregates, one of which is *Saññā* or memory, a faculty that needs to be developed alongside others (Interview, Phra Thepwisutthikawi, cited above). Modern teaching, on the other hand, relies a lot on the application

of technology for greater efficiency. Yet, studying Buddhism still requires memorization, and this could pose a problem for many students who find it difficult (Interview, Phra Khru Siripanyamethi, cited above). Furthermore, despite the availability of the learning media, students do not learn as much as expected and are not eager to pursue the subject further. This is one of the reasons why students today are not able to master the subject as well as those in the past (Interview, Phra Rajavaramuni, cited above).

3.2) Measurement and assessment

Educational measurement and assessment by the *Saṅgha* universities follow the same standard criteria set for higher education, i.e. using grades and credits. In view of the students being monks, there is a tendency to overgrade in the students' favor, thus accounting for a large number of graduates with honors. This may be a weakness that needs to be redressed (Interview, Suthep Phromloet, cited above). Measurement and assessment are satisfactory to a certain extent, yet there is room for improvement. Ultimately, it is up to the discretion of the instructors (Interview, Phra Khru Palat Samphiphatwiriyan, cited above).

This reflects how the measurement and assessment of the *Saṅgha* universities, despite following the set standard, do not produce the desired effect. The instructors have important roles in student evaluation.

4. Product/Output

All of the above factors evidently affect the education system provided by the *Saṅgha* universities. This can be seen in the output of graduates who cannot be called experts in their subject. The *Saṅgha* universities cannot claim to produce graduate experts in *Dhammavinaya* to serve the Buddhist world as in the past.

The following consists of interviews with students on why it is difficult to be experts on the subject:

Phra Thanaphat Nitisakko:

At the Bachelor's Degree level, students cannot hope to become experts in the subject as set in the objective, because there is no in-depth study and little critical approach. The

effectiveness of the program depends partly on the instructors' dedication and partly on the students' level of interest.

There are too many general courses, leaving little time to more specialized subjects. Most students feel that these general education courses are not necessary, especially for those who major in Buddhist Studies. More time should be spent on *Tepiṭaka* studies so that they can become experts in the subject.

To reach such an objective, it is imperative to focus on *Tepiṭaka* studies alone without other subjects which can take up a lot of time in view of the assignments given. Courses should be narrower in scope with built-in continuity from Year 1 to Year 4. This will make it possible for the students to be experts in the subject matter.

The instructors are different from one another. Some have a lot of knowledge and teach with passion, others not as much. Sometimes they have other engagements or meetings to attend and do not turn up for the class. So, teaching and learning are interrupted. If learning is done on a more regular basis, things should be better. If the instructors are stricter with their rules and regulations, things will also be much improved. Some are too lenient, allowing absentee students to sit for the examination. This could be a problem.

Some students are not responsible. For example, they are late for class. A number of students are conscientious, like those who want to be *Pariyatti* teachers. They show more responsibility and attention. Unfortunately, this kind of system is not of much help, for too much depends on individual learners.

There are enough educational materials, e.g. books and texts, in the library for students to do research, including

canons of various kinds. So, it is all about how much they want to learn.

With regard to teaching methodologies, the instructors should encourage the students to do more research and present their findings. They should look for the strength of the students and encourage them to pursue further studies.

Evaluation and assessment are good and appropriate. However, to become experts, much will depend on individual willingness to study further (Interview, 8 March, 2011).

Chanatda Phasukrit:

From the set objective the students do not expect much. It is all up to the instructors to do what they want. At least, at the end of the course the learners feel that they know something more than they did at the beginning, but nobody expects to become an expert. The course structure touches on many areas and covers a lot of ground, so it is suitable for those without a background in Buddhism. This is how things are at the Bachelor's Degree level.

The courses provided so far are also rather general without specific details in Theravāda Buddhism. They are concerned with more general knowledge. If you want to be a specialist, you need to focus on *Tepiṭaka* studies, e.g. *Tepiṭaka* 1, *Tepiṭaka* 2, and *Tepiṭaka* 3. Some courses are not necessary and should be left out. General knowledge education is useful for those without a background in Buddhism. If the students can choose, they will rather study Theravāda Buddhism in great depth.

Regular instructors are knowledgeable and very kind to the students. They are always willing to give advice. So, it all depends on the students to approach them.

It is good to allow applicants from other fields to study the course, but the effects are soon felt by those with

no background knowledge. They will be unable to follow the contents at the same pace as those with a strong background. As a result, they would often find themselves lost and could not quite follow the course. It is not possible to expect them to have expert knowledge when they struggle to survive and merely try to get by.

To create Buddhist Studies as a separate department and allow students from other departments to register show the university's open-mindedness appropriate for the Bachelor's Degree level. For a Master's Degree program, however, Buddhist Studies should be more specific and studied in depth as far as the timeframe allows. The courses offered, therefore, should not be too general. Students also need to pay greater attention. Meanwhile, teaching methodology is in the hands of the instructors. They can use lectures, research assignments, and study visits to promote students' learning and expertise in the subject.

Evaluation and assessment for the most part rely on writing assignments. This method is better than the multiple-choice question approach but still is not as effective as the recital method by which the instructors ask the students to recite part or all of the texts. The latter method can be taxing, but it should push the students to pay more attention and become more knowledgeable in the process.

In my studies so far, I am confident that I can pass the examination. I can teach myself and give advice to others in some areas. I can give a basic explanation and advise others where and what to look for in the *Tepitaka* text, but I do not have expert knowledge. (Interview, 5 March 2011).

Phra Pariyattithada:

The course structure of the Doctoral program is not really conducive to the students gaining an expertise, as they come from different backgrounds in Buddhism, some even

have no background at all. They cannot be expected to get the same result. Those with strong background knowledge in Buddhism often rely on memory with little or no textual criticism, as the purpose of *Dhammavinaya* studies is to keep the scripture as pure as possible. It does not come as a surprise that those who have undergone the Pali scholar or Pali language systems are better at what they remember than at critical analysis. On the other hand, those from the secular background may be trained in analytical thinking but lack the desired memorized knowledge of *Dhammavinaya*. The university program is designed to integrate both components, thereby giving rise to a host of problems. Those with a memorization background cannot analyze, while those with analytical training do not know what to analyze. Their solution is to focus on a few manageable clusters of the knowledge. Therefore students know the subject in bits and pieces, whereas *Dhammavinaya* is supposed to be interconnected throughout the body of knowledge. The Buddha's teachings in some *Sutta* may not always have the same objectives. Therefore, this kind of partial approach to the program structure cannot lead to any profound knowledge.

The contents of the courses tend to be broad. Only a selected number of points receive special attention because of time constraint. It is up to each student to do what they like with what they learn.

Instructors for the Doctoral program are knowledgeable. They can advise the students in areas that need further studies. In Phra Pariyattithada's view, the university should set Pali scholar qualifications as part of the admission requirements to ensure that the applicants have adequate knowledge of Buddhism. Some even think that the Doctoral program is too broadly designed and cannot deliver what they want. This broad-based approach may in part account for the students' inability to specialize. If more specialized courses are made

available, e.g. *Sutta* studies, this will more likely pave the way for some kind of expertise. He is confident that there will be students who want to take specialized courses. In the past, the university was afraid that there would be no applicants, but today the admission is based on a more competitive examination system.

The program timeframe as set by the the university is good enough for students to learn about general principles of each course. It can be used as a roadmap for further expansion. Teaching methodology involves several forms, including lecture, discussion, and seminar. How effective each form is will depend on the teaching technique of individual instructors.

Evaluation and assessment at the Doctoral level largely depend on academic or research work of the students. They are appropriate.

If the graduates remain in the academic circle, they will likely develop their own expertise. Otherwise, their academic development may be stunted. Continuous improvement should enable the graduates to become experts in some form (Interview, 5 March 2011).

Phra Palat Chamnan Sophano:

It is possible to impart knowledge but it will be difficult to make students experts unless they are really interested and pursue further studies.

The course structure does not make it possible for the students to master the subject during the program. It only serves to spur their interests, although it can be of some help for students in choosing a subject area for their thesis. The help, however, is minimal.

The course contents do not provide in-depth knowledge. Topics are mentioned and taken up, with the instructors'

guidance. The courses only provide general guidelines for further pursuit and cannot be expected to lead to any expertise.

The teaching faculty is very helpful to the students, giving clarifications when students encounter certain problems. So, in a way, instructors can help students master the subjects.

Today students do not possess the same qualifications as those in the past when Pali studies qualifications were required. In view of fewer student enrollments, the university decided to lower the requirements, thus accounting for the lower quality of applicants.

With regard to teaching methodology, each instructor has to come up with their own style and technique to stimulate student interest. The use of lecture, Q & A sessions, and discussion, for example, is appropriate.

Presently, evaluation and assessment are just tools. They may not be the best, but they are of good standard. The graduates today are not experts in the subject for a number of reasons. For example, they have inadequate background knowledge; the study is not very intensive compared to the past; the courses are not specialized; and some students simply want to have a degree to further their current career. So, true expertise seems to be out of the question (Interview, 9 March 2011).

Phra Maha Wichai Dhammavijayo:

The objective of the program is quite clear, i.e. to promote expertise in the students. However, the courses are not intensive enough to make that happen.

The university's course structure today is not vigorous enough to enable any in-depth study. Most courses are taught following the general guidelines and do not allow students to do much further study.

The delivery of the course contents is constrained by time, thus making a comprehensive or in-depth exploration of the subject unlikely. Some courses cover a lot of ground and are rushed through to meet the time challenge. Consequently, the students do not learn much, and most instructors do not set additional assignments for further analysis. So, the students do not learn as much as they should.

The instructors are appropriate as far as their education qualifications are concerned. However, sometimes their teaching techniques and methodology leave much to be desired. For example, they do not usually assign the students to do research with a view to further discussion. Those who do so find that the time constraint and a large scope of study make it almost impossible for students to ask for clarification. Several students are frustrated with the situation. Besides, some courses are not interesting, and the students attend the class just to meet the course requirement. So, the situation does not warrant a true pursuit of knowledge. Most of the Doctoral students are professionals who attend the program to advance their careers. At the same time, there is not much interaction between students because of such factors as age difference, different work positions, and different religious and secular statuses. All this is not conducive to an exciting learning environment, for the comradery among students is lacking.

Course management is constrained by time and does not allow for in-depth research. Pedagogy relies, on the most part, on lecture, which is rather boring and not very useful. A better approach should be for the instructors to give individual students some research assignment and ask them to present the findings to the class. This will stimulate discussion and create a greater learning environment than listening to the lecture, thus encouraging the students to do research and move toward the goal of expertise.

The university's evaluation and assessment standards at the Doctoral level do not really reflect the desired goal set for the students. In other words, the standards are not high enough.

Most students do not hope to be experts in the field. They join the program for self-improvement purposes. Very few aspire to become experts. When they graduate and enter into a different field of work, the interest in pursuing further studies tends to disappear. So expertise seems to not be attainable (Interview, 10 March 2011).

Summary and recommendations

In the past, Thai *Saṅgha* universities were obliged to design programs of study in line with the secular practice, partly in order to provide opportunities for educationally disadvantaged monks and novices, and partly to ensure that their students can continue their studies elsewhere. Later, when they became public universities, they have to adhere to the Ministry of Education's framework. Today, more education institutes admit monks and novices to their programs of study, while their education fees are not much different from *Saṅgha* universities, e.g. Sukhothai Thammathirat University and Ramkhamhaeng University. The *Saṅgha* universities themselves today have seen a proliferation of faculties and departments offering non-Buddhist courses that the students find useful for their secular careers.

Therefore, Buddhist Studies need not worry about secular concerns like in the past for a number of reasons cited above. A change should be made in the program objectives, from producing graduates for the job market to producing them for the continuance of Buddhism, in line with the primary image of the *Saṅgha* universities. If Buddhist Studies programs can be made more specialized and intensive, if the focus is changed from the disadvantaged group to those who are qualified and truly seek to pursue and attain knowledge of Buddhism, the researcher believes that the number of students will not decline. Instead, there will be more

motivated students as they will be the ones truly driven by faith and the desire to learn.

Bibliography

- Chanatda Phasukrit. M.A. (Buddhist Studies) student, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, **Interview**, 5 March 2011.
- Chai Phothisita. **Mahawitthayalai Song nai Sangkhom Thai Kan Sueksa Botbat khong Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University**. Bangkok: Saha Pracha Phanit, 1979. (Published by Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the establishment of Mahathatu-Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya, 8-9 November 1979).
- Pha Khru Palatsamphiphatwiriyan. Dean, Graduate School, Mahamakut Buddhist University, **Interview**, 7 March 2011.
- Phra Khru Siripanyamethi. Head, Department of Buddhist Studies, Mahamakut Buddhist University, **Interview**, 9 March 2011.
- Phra Thepwisutthikawi. Vice Rector, Mahamakut Buddhist University. **Interview**, 10 March 2011.
- Phra Thanaphat Nitisakko. Fourth-year student in B.A. (Buddhist Studies). **Interview**, 8 March 2011.
- Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto). **Photchananukrom Phutthasat Chabap Pramuan Sap**. 10th ed. Bangkok: S.R. Mass Products, 2003.
- Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto). **Phra Traipidok Singthi Chao Phut Khuan Ru**. Bangkok: S.R. Mass Products, 2003.
- Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto). **Phra Phutthasatsana nai Asia**. Bangkok: Dhammasapha Press, 2000.
- Phra Pariyattithada. Ph.D. student, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, **Interview**, 5 March 2011.
- Phra Palat Chamnan Sophano. M.A. (Buddhist Studies) student, Mahamakut Buddhist University, **Interview**, 9 March 2011.
- Phra Maha Wichai Dhammavijayo. Ph.D. (Buddhist Studies) student, Mahamakut Buddhist University, **Interview**, 10 March 2011.
- Phra Maha Somboon Wuttikaro. Vice Dean and Lecturer, Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, **Interview**, 5 March 2011.

Phra Maha Somsak Yanaphotho. Vice Dean, Faculty of Religion and Philosophy, Mahamakut Buddhist University, **Interview**, 9 March 2011.

Phra Rajavaramuni. Dean, Faculty of Buddhist Studies, Mahachulalongkornrajvidyalaya University, **Interview**, 7 March 2011.

Phra Rajavaramuni. **Pratya Kansueksa Thai**. 3rd ed. Bangkok: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1985.

Phra Winaipidok plae lem thi 1 Samantapasathika Atthakatha Phra Winai. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.

Phra Suttantapidok plae lem thi 13 Thikha Nikai Maha Wak. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.

Phra Suttantapidok plae lem thi 13 Sumangkhawilasini Atthakatha Thikha Nikai Maha Wak. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.

Phra Suttantapidok plae lem thi 33 Manorot Purani Atthakatha Angkhuttara Nikai Ekanibat. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.

Phra Suttantapidok plae lem thi 33 Angkhuttara Nikai Thuka Nibat. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.

Phra Suttantapidok plae lem thi 35 Angkhuttara Nikai Chatukka Nibat. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.

Phra Suttantapidok plae lem thi 36 Angkhuttara Nikai Panchaka Nibat. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.

Phra Suthithammanuwat. Dean, Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajvidyalaya University, **Interview**, 8 March 2011.

Mahachulalongkornrajvidyalaya University, Faculty of Buddhist Studies. **Khumue Naenaao Kansueksa Pi Kansueksa 2552**. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajvidyalaya University Press, 2009.

Mahachulalongkornrajvidyalaya University, Graduate School. **Khumue Kansueksa Radap Parinya Ek Laksut Phutthasat Dutsadi Bandit 2552 (Laksut Prapprung Pho So 2551)**. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajvidyalaya University Press, 2008.

———. **Khumue Bandit Sueksa**. 5th ed. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajvidyalaya University Press, 2009.

- Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. **Khumue Nisit Radap Parinya Tri Pi Kansueksa 2552**. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2009.
- Mahamakut Buddhist University, Graduate School. **Khumue Kansueksa Radap Parinya Ek Laksut Satsanasat Dutsadi Bandit Sakha Wicha Phutthasatsana lae Pratyā**. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.
- Mahamakut Buddhist University. **Bukkkhalakon Pracham Khana Satsana lae Pratyā Maha Witthayalai Mahamakutrajavidyalaya**. (Mimeographed)
- Mahamakut Buddhist University. **Khumue Kansueksa Radap Bandit Sueksa**. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2009.
- Mahamakut Buddhist University. **Khumue Naksueksa Radap Parinyatri**. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2008.
- Mahamakut Buddhist University. **Prawat Mahamakutrajavidyalaya nai Phra Barom Rachupatham**. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 1978.
- Maechi Kritisana Raksachom, Director of M.A. in Buddhist Studies Programme and Lecturer, Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, **Interview**, 8 March 2011.
- Ministry of Education, Department of Religious Affairs. **Prawat Phra Phutthasatsana haeng Krung Rattanakosin 200 Pi Phak 2**. Bangkok: Kansatsana Press, 1983.
- The Royal Institute. **Photchananukrom Chabap Ratchabandittayasathan B.E. 2542**. Bangkok: Nanmi Books Publications, 2003.
- . **Photchananukrom Sap Satsana Sakon Angkrit-Thai Chabap Ratchabandittayasathan**. 2nd ed. with amendment. Bangkok: Arun Kanphim Press, 2005.
- Sanit Sisamdaeng. **Phra Phutthasatsana kap Kansueksa**. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2004.
- Somdet Phra Maha Samanachao Kromphraya Wachirayanwarorot. **Saranukrom Phra Phutthasatsana**. 2nd ed. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 1996.
- Suchip Punyanubhap. **Phra Traipidok Chabap Samrap Prachachon**. 17th ed. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, 2007.

Suthep Phromloet. Lecturer, Faculty of Buddhist Studies, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, **Interview**, 15 March 2011.

Suwin Raksat. Lecturer, Buddhist Studies Program, Graduate School, Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University, **Interview**, 7 March 2011.