.Bangladesh Update Is Forthcoming

As you read this, BPF emissary Michael Roche is entering Bangladesh to visit friends and assess the present state of affairs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The news since our last report (Vol. 2, No. 2) redoubles the urgency of his mission to gather and publicize the facts about the

Hill Tracts situation and to appeal for a solution which would bring peace and justice for the area's tribal residents.

Apparently reacting to past criticism of its conduct in the Tract, in December the government brought to Parliament a bill that would legitimatize the brutal operations of its "security forces". The Disturbed Areas Act of 1980 proposes sweeping powers in disturbed areas for Army officers and all police personnel above the rank of sub-inspector—including powers to conduct searches without warrants and to shoot to kill.

Government forces would, under the Act, be free to exercise these powers in response to a variety of ill-defined dangers. Even a written statement judged "prejudicial ... to the maintenance of public order" would suffice legally to occasion a lethal reaction from the Army or police.

Fortunately, opposition parties in Parliament rose in an unprecedented unified effort to block this draconian legislation from passing into law. Though opposition power is extremely limited, outcry over the Act brought enough media attention to embarrass the government and to force it to steer the Act into committee. At least one senior cabinet minister predicted that the bill would never reappear. (See The Far Eastern Economic Review, December 19-26, p. 20.)

Yet this is a grim victory, indeed. The administration's decision even to introduce such legislation serves notice of its intention to pursue its aims in the Hill Tracts more brazenly than

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ever before—despite risks of alienating public opinion overseas.

Furthermore, recent reports of a December massacre (box) indicate that government forces are hardly holding fire until parliamentary approval is received. The fact that it took over three months for word of this slaughter to reach the foreign press darkly underscores the repressive nature of government acts in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

We cannot estimate Mike's chances of lifting the veil on these sinister conditions, but it is important that he try. And it is important that we support his efforts. Mike's appeal for funds in the December Newsletter went largely unanswered, while costs of his trip have mounted.

Those who would like to contribute may send checks to BPF at the Berkeley office. All such checks should be earmarked "CHT Fund". Those made payable to Fellowship of Reconciliation will be tax deductible.

Massacre of 8000 reported

Celebrations of Bangladesh's 10th anniversary of independence March 27 were tempered by reports in the foreign press that the army had annihilated a dozen aboriginal villages in eastern Bangladesh, killing as many as 8000 non-Bengalis.

The massacre reportedly took place in the Harina and Bara Harina Valleys near the Indian border in mid-December. The valleys are inhabited by Buddhists who have long been the victims of the expansion of the Muslim Bengalis, who make up 98% of Bangladesh's population.

The reported massacre coincided with the introduction of a bill in the Bangladesh parliament which would give the army unlimited power to confiscate property, arrest without warrant and shoot to kill at will. Under the bill, members of the armed forces would be exempt from prosecution for any such acts. The measure is still under consideration.

— Guardian (4-8-81)

khmer council's view of "the kampuchea problem"

Buddhist activists here and abroad have taken innovative and encouraging steps lately toward ending the misery of the Khmer people and creating a peaceful future for their country, Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia). Most heartening of the recent developments is the rallying of displaced Khmer around stablishing at the United Nations an Office for Buddhism and Peace in Kampuchea.

Impetus for the recent initiatives has come predominantly from Thailand, where Khmer Buddhist and cultural activities in refugee holding centers have engendered a popular movement for a free, nonviolent, and neutral Kampuchea.

This refugee-founded movement has won enthusiastic support from various religious bodies in Thailand and around the world. Most American support has been offered by the U.S. branch of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) and the Jefferson Foundation.

In many respects, the new hope in Khmer affairs stems from the work of a single Buddhist monk, the Venerable Phra Maha Ghosananda. At the beckoning of the Thai Committee for Refugees, Bhikkhu Ghosananda first entered Sa Kaeo holding center in November, 1979, and very rapidly catalyzed interest there both in Buddhist practice and in reconciling dialogue among Khmer factions.

Travel to other camps and backing from widening circles within and without soon brought a temple into being at each holding center. The impromptu temples became community centers with programs in dance, drama, crafts, and music as well as dhamma instruction sometimes attracting as many as 10,000 people.

The reconciliation effort also grew quickly. By February, 1980, a Khmer Council on Religion for Peace was organized, representing the major holding centers and the religious traditions of their re-

sidents. Urging "peace, reconciliation, and unity", the Council called for a U.N. supervised disarmament of Kampuchea and conducted two days of international prayer and meditation for peace. These, held



in April and June, attracted messages of hope and pledges of support from the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mother Teresa, the World Council of Churches, the Dalai Lama, and numerous

other world Buddhist leaders.

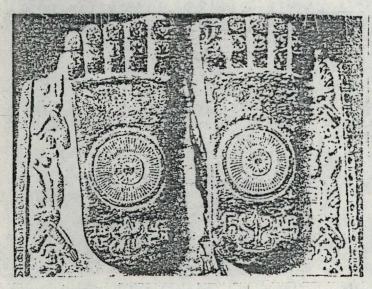
Events of last summer, particularly instances of forcible repatriation of refugees, prompted new steps such as developing the proposal for a U.N. office. Last year, Bhikkhu Ghosananda immigrated to the United States under WCRP sponsorship and at the behest of the Khmer Council. Since then, he has devoted his time to mustering support from Khmer expatriates and to establishing the U.N. office.

These efforts, too, have been remarkably successful. The office embarked this spring on the process of defining its functions and its programs, raising funds to meet its \$123,000 budget, and selecting staff. Thus it should be equipped to set forth an independent Khmer view of "the Kampuchea problem" during U.N. debate next fall.

Meanwhile the fundamental lines of that perspective are emerging strongly in the set of principles on which the office is founded. By consensus, leaders from the Thai camps and from emigre groups have enumerated seven principles, as

KAMPUCHEA (continued)

follows: "(1) Cambodia has a distinctive culture, religion, and heritage that is worthy of preservation; (2) the Khmer people must have the basic human right of selfdetermination; (3) nonviolence is the first precept of the historical culture and religion of Cambodia; (4) the Khmer people overwhelmingly desire nonviolence, disarmament, and neutrality that would best be supervised under United Nations protectorship; (5) all Khmer people who subscribe to these principles are invited to join together to discuss the means [to implement them]; (6) the reconciling and universal spirit of Buddhism offers a point of departure; and (7) the way of the Eightfold Path will bring peace."



HAWAII BUDDHISTS SEND SCHOOL SUPPLIES TO AILING KAMPUCHEA

The Hawaii Buddhist Council, which represents the 50th State's Japanese Buddhist population, sponsored a drive last winter to gather school supplies for use in beleaguered Kampuchea. Undertaken as a student-to-student project, the HBC drive enlisted support from mission schools throughout the state to produce 90 pounds of pencils and notebooks plus cash contributions to cover shipping costs.

Aside from furnishing these much-needed supplies to a school system demolished during the four years of Khmer Rouge rule, the drive succeeded in raising awareness of Kampuchea's hardships among Hawaii Buddhists.

HBC president Yoshiaki Fujitani, bishop of Hawaii Honpa Hongwanji Mission, commented also in a news report at the drive's conclusion, "It's a lesson for the kids in the practice of dana (giving)."

The HBC drive was launched in cooperation with the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker-supported organization with a long history of service to warravaged peoples.

PUT BUDDHISM IN PRISON

Inmates at Auburn Correctional Facility filed suit recently in the New York State courts to establish their right to convene Buddhist services at the prison. Denied such services by the Auburn administration, the inmates have appealed for support from fellow Buddhists and other concerned with criminal justice issues.

Acting for the BPF board, Bob Aitken dispatched letters to the Court last month, urging a prompt, favorable decision on the case. With Christian and Muslim worship allowed at Auburn, the letters noted, the administration cannot

justly refuse equal privileges to Buddhists.

Lawyers representing the inmates report that the Department of Corrections seems eager now to avoid court action on the suit, Evidently the initial denial sprang from prison officials' unfamiliarity with Buddhism and skepticism about the inmates' interest in practicing it.

The inmates' subsequent efforts to secure their rights seem to have impressed the Auburn administration. Support from friends beyond the walls may also be having salutary effect.

According to Eddie Pacheco, a principal in the case, "Letters from all around the world are being received by the courts." Aside from the impact this mail could have on the outcome of the case, Eddie writes, "It really shows many inmates that there are a lot of people who care about the next human being. And it teaches us

that with love and peace the world can be rebuilt for a new understanding of all people . . . "

More letters are needed. Each should bear reference to PACHECO ET AL. VS. NESSY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS and be addressed either to the Hon. Edward M. Conan, U.S. Magistrate (100 So. Clinte Street, Syracuse, NY 13202) or the Hon. Edmund Port, Sr., U.S. District Judge (Northern District of New York, Utica, NY 13503). Copies should go to Mr. Pacheco (75-A-796) at 135 State Street, Auburn, NY 13021.

Contributions toward legal fees may be sent to David Radin of Beech Hill Pond Meditation Center, 312 Auburn Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Any funds left after litigation will go to outfit a prison meditation room.

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a peace pagoda for the west

Late last September, about one hundred kilometers northwest of London, thousands of British Buddhists joined members of the Japan Buddha Sangha, foreign dignitaries, religious leaders, and peace organizers in dedicating the first "peace pagoda" in the western hemisphere. Shortly thereafter, the twenty Japan Buddha Sangha monks and nuns who had built

the pagoda divided into four teams and set out by different routes to carry around the world their message of peace through disarmament.

Some seven months, ten nations, and countless presentations later, the team which toured the Americas met in Honolulu to deliver its message once again. But this final night of their pilgrimage, one monk noted, was unlike any other: for the first time since leaving England they found fellow Buddhists working for disarmament. That discovery, plus the presence of three atomic bomb survivors and perhaps the emotion of pilgrimage's end, produced a charged and moving dialogue.

The peace pagoda at Milton Keynes takes its place among many others constructed during the last 63 years in Sri Lanka, China, India, and Japan. Like the others, it was built at the instigation and with the inspiration of the Venerable Nichidatsu Fujii, 96-year-old founder of the Japan Buddha Sangha. This remarkable gentleman—known fondly as "Guruji", a title bestowed on him by Gandhi—spoke at the Milton Keynes ceremonies, asking that the new pagoda serve as a symbol of life and that dedication to peace make manifest "the sacred unity and oneness of all humanity and all life."

Known at home as the Nipponzan Myohoji line of the Nichiren Sect, the Japan Buddha Sangha has distinguished itself in the United States by participation in peace and disarmament actions dating back to 1968.

PEACE PAGODA (continued)

Its hand drums and resolute intonation of the Odaimoku, "Na-Mu Myo Ho-Ren-Ge-Kyo", set the tone for the 1976 Continental Walk, the 1978 U.N. Special Session on Disarmament, and AIM's 1978 "Longest Walk", among other events.

An information distributed on the most recent walk explained, "Since war and the use of nuclear

weapons are first conceived in our minds, we walk and chant a repeated prayer for peace, that our minds may fundamentally turn from violence towards peace and respect for life."



The pilgrimage team touring the Americas made stops not only in Canada and the United States but also in several South and Central American nations. (The monks expressed deep regret at failing, despite considerable efforts, to visit Cuba and El Salvador.) The other three teams trekked through (1) Scandinavia, Germany, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union; (2) the Middle East and Asia; and (3) France, Southern Europe, and Africa.

The four teams converged on Tokyo in late April, there to participate in the World Assembly of Religious Workers for Total Nuclear and General Disarmament. Convened at Guruji's suggestion, this forum developed with wide backing from Japanese Buddhist and Christian organizations and has drawn a bevy of religious luminaries, including Daniel Berrigan, Shelley Douglass, Joseph Abileah, and Nobel Peace Prize recipients Adolfo Perez, Esquivel, Sean MacBride, and Mairead Corregan.

While many prominent Asian Bud-

dhists joined the conference, no U.S. Buddhists were invited. As one of the monks visiting Honolulu put it, "Unfortunately Buddhism is not an important religion in the United States."

An April conference titled "Securing Our Future: Nuclear War and Its Prevention", brought BPF member Joanna Rogers Macy to the podium for a keynote presentation. Affiliated with the International Association for Buddhist Studies in Washington, DC, Dr. Macy has made methods of coping with despair the focus of her work and drew on her expertise to address the topic, "Psychological Effects of Nuclear War and Preparation for Nuclear War". Dr. Macy also conducted a workshop on "Despair and Empowerment" at the Denver confab.

HELP! Buddhist C.O. Flyer

A BPF pamphlet on Buddhism and conscientious objection to the draft is still struggling to be born. Project volunteer Jim Osgood reports progress and sends thanks for letters of support he has received. But he needs some special help.

The pamphlet cannot be completed, Jim writes, unless he gets assistance in the form of specific citations of scripture or commentary that sets forth the nonviolent imperative or defends it against critics who would rationalize violence in hard times. Jim laments a lack of familiarity with the corpus of Buddhist texts, particularly those of the Southern School, and notes that ahimsa's very centrality to the dharma makes it often elusive—more implicit than explicit in many texts.

Anyone willing and equipped to lend a hand, please contact Jim at 1426 W. Argyle Street, Chicago, IL 60640. IMPORTANT! As Mr. Reagan slides quickly from anti-draft platform to pro-draft policy, we owe it to Buddhist youths to complete this project as soon as possible.

FEATURE SECTION / Exemplars of Engaged Buddhism

Introduction

The following articles may be considered first steps towards our goal of creating a literature of 'engaged Buddhism' in English. While the response to our request for articles wasn't voluminous, a significant number did appear, and perhaps where a few nuggets are found, a motherlode is close at hand. This initial stage of our search was mainly confined to published literature, while the vast oral and written traditions of each Buddhist culture remain largely untapped. To obtain more imformation about our 'engaged' predecessors, these richer sources of experience must be investigated. We hope that readers will continue to send articles on various exemplars that the Newsletter can occasionally publish. Perhaps, if enough articles are collected, the BPF can someday publish a booklet or book on the subject.

Many persons contributed to this issue, including: Bob Brown, Alfred Bloom, Gillian Coote, Fred Eppsteiner, Eliot Fintushel, Audrey Fernandez, Morgan Gibson, Richard Lifrak, Rafe Martin, Susan Murcott and Noelle Oxenhandler. Unfortunately not all the articles submitted could be included in this first selection. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to submit an article for this feature.

-- Fred Eppsteiner, guest editor

JATAKA TALES-The Buddha's Past Lives as a Bodhisattva

The impulse to selflessly work for others, to extend oneself beyond one's 'normal' limits for others, to sacrifice one's own needs compassionately for the sake of others, is the mystery which unfolds in practice as the Bodhisattva Path--the path which is simultaneously wisdom and compassion. The Buddha himself stopped wars and converted murderers. Bodhisattvas built roads and bridges with their bare hands to help endangered beings walk in safety.

In the records of the Buddha's previous lives (Jatakas), we find that:

as a young prince, the Buddha offered his own body to a starving tigress so that she and her cubs might live;

as a selfless hare, he jumped into flames to save a starving hermit;

as a king deer, he offered his life for that of a pregnant doe;

as a king monkey, he used his own body as a bridge so that his subjects might reach freedom from danger;

as a brave war horse he captured the enemy, then, dying of his wounds, pleaded for their forgiveness lest compassion be lost in wars, bloody darkness;

as a king, he offered portions of his own flesh to save a terrified dove from a vengeful hawk;

as a prince, he offered all his wealth and even his own body to help his subjects.

as a bear, he nursed to life the hunter

who has sought to kill him;

as a tortoise, he carried on his own broad back five hundred merchants whose ship was sinking under the blows of a storm at sea, then offered his own flesh to sustain their lives;

as the king Parmaka he saved his starving people by becoming a giant red fish like a mountain of flesh:

for the sake of a world sliding into the pit of egotism, he pierced his own veins and broke open his own bones;

for the sake of others he leapt into the

fanged mouth of the yaksha demon;

through hundreds of thousands of lives, always he thought, how can I be of service to all beings,

and always he strove to live in the light of this deep, selfless desire.

Fu Daishi, or Fu Ta-shih, comes to us as such a giant in Buddhism, and from such a remote point in history, that he takes on almost mythic proportions. A layman, he lived in 6th century China, which was a period beset by severe troubles. When he first heard of Buddhism from a foreign monk, he immediately devoted all of his energies to realizing the Dharma.

Fu Daishi came to have many followers and was honored by the Imperial Court. Yet, he preferred to live neither at the court nor in a monastery, spending his days instead among the common people he knew best. By day, he and his wife worked in the fields, and by night they discussed the Buddha Dharma with anyone who cared to listen.

Once, when famine came upon his village, Fu Daishi sold his property in order to buy food for the hungry. He even persuaded some others to sell themselves into slavery so that more food could be bought for everyone. When famine came again, Fu Daishi once more gave everything he had to the poor, and with his followers, foraged for all kinds of edible nuts and herbs. These he likewise distributed to the starving.

At another time there was great trouble and hardship in the country because of military defeats. To mitigate this condition, he prepared to immolate himself and return the merit of his act to all beings. He was dissuaded by his followers, who offered to carry out (as many actually did) their own extreme acts of atonement. Even in better times he conducted services and undertook severe ascetic practices in order to ease the suffering, not only of hiw own district, but of all beings.

TETSUGEN

For ten years Tetsugen, a Japanese Zen Buddhist, laboriously traveled in order, bit by bit, to collect money for a mass publication of the sutras. Just when he had accumulated enough money for the undertaking, the Uji River overflowed; in order to save victims of the ensuing famine, Tetsugen spent the funds on food and relief efforts.

A second attempt to complete his work was interrupted by a great epidemic. Again, Tetsugen gave away the money to help his people.

After twenty years more, the publication was finally done, and the original printing blocks are still on display in the Obaku monastery in Kyoto.

"The Japanese tell their children that Tetsugen made three sets of sutras, and that the first two invisible sets surpass even the last."

> --Cf. Zen Flesh, Zen Bones by Paul Reps

PRINCE SHOTOKU: Faith in Action

Along with King Asoka in India, Prince Shotoku(572-621) in Japan displays Buddhist attitudes and perspectives in personal and socia. life. In legend he is portrayed as a compassionate person giving food to a starving man by the However, apart from legends, he appears in history as an individual with penetrating spiritual insight. He is famous for the statement: " All the world is false only the Buddha is true." In this simple statement, Shotoku moved beyond ancient Japanese naive acceptance of this world in

PRINCE SHOTOKU (continued)

recognition of a deeper reality beyond the ordinary perceptions.

The impact of his religious insight appears in several areas. As Prince Regent to Empress Suiko, he played a significant role in composing commentaries on the Queen Srimala Sutra, the Vimalakirti Sutra, and the Lotus Sutra. These texts stress the role of spiritually keen lay people and the mission of Bodhisattvas (as lay people) in this world. reflect a concern for alleviating suffering and pursuing justice. When he assumed power, Prince Shotoku also called for the foundation of a large Buddhist institution composed of a temple, asylum, and hospital.

Shotoku's greatest fame, however, rests with the seventeen point constitution attributed to his inspiration and authorship. its second clause, he advocates reverence for the three treasures of Buddhism as the foundation of society. He recognizes that moral commitment and social welfare are spiritual issues and not merely matters of compulsion and conformity. He displays a sensitivity to issues of justice in his counsel against bribery. He declares that the complaints of the rich are like stones thrown into water, while the complaints of the poor are like water thrown into a stone. Though Confucian morality permeates the constitution, the appeals to inner self awareness as the basis of conduct and humaneness reflect a Buddhist orientation.

The guidelines of good government outined in the text, and the commentaries are significant social documents. Their ideals remain relevant today as resources for reflection for leaders, as well as ordinary people.

HAN SHAN: Great Zen Master of 16th Century China

Han Shan, a Zen Master of 16th century China, was also one of the most energetic social and religious reformers in Chinese Buddhist historyand possibly the most politically embroiled. His story is certainly one of the most colorful and exciting that has come down to us.

From childhood, his deepest wish was to become a monk. And soon he did so, wandering through China, seeking out teachers, solitude, and experience During his extensive travels he became aware of the social and political situation in the disintegrating Ming Dynasty, and he saw, too, that Buddhism, which had been in decline for about 700 years, was spiritually and materially in need of revitalization. It was out of his strong desire to effect this renewal that his political involvement came, for it brought him into close association with Empress Dowager Li. From their association flowed most of his power as a reformer, but this power had serious political repercussions.

The Empress supported Buddhism, and through her political and financial assistance, Han Shan managed to restore Buddhist monasteries and scriptures, as well as to distribute funds to the needy of all faiths, including prisoners and orphans.

Unfortunately, Han Shan's falling under the favorable eye of the Empress placed him in disfavor with the young Emperor, her son, who was struggling for both personal and political freedom from his mother's influence, and was backing Taoism. Although Han Shan had no political ambitions himself, and although he worked for a mutual understanding and cooperation among Buddhists, Taoists, and Confucianists, he had enemies in almost every camp, the most formidable of whom was, of course, the Emperor himself.

HAN SHAN (Continued)

The net result was Han Shan's embroilment in a power struggle that culminated in his torture, imprisonment, removal from the monkhood, and exile to southern China. His formal exile lasted ten years, but he was not officially pardoned for another ten. During this whole time (and for a few years afterwards) he assumed the appearance of a lay person, with clothes, long hair, and beard. Yet, he always lived as a monk.

After his release, he decided to change his name and leep a low profile with respect to the Ming Court. He was still active, however, and involved himself in famine relief, land conservation, fund raising for various reconstruction projects, and other social welfare efforts. In Canton he singelhandedly quelled a riot against the local government, soley by his force of persuasion.

When the Empress Dowager died, both his greatest wordly aid and his greatest wordly danger disappeared. He then shaved his head and once again put on his robes. Han Shan spent his last years wandering freely, lecturing and teaching--widely honored by Buddhists, Taoists, and Confucianists alike.

LING TSUNG

Ling Tsung, of the late 4th century in China, turned to the religious life after displaying admirable courage and cleverness in escaping invading armies and bandit gangs. She studied the sutras with equal fortitude and penetrated their meaning, earning widespread acclaim.

During a time of illness and destitution when many people suffered, she unstintingly begged arms from those who could help and gave the proceeds to the multitudes. She faced every obstacle and was not deterred by long distances. Ultimately, privation took its toll and her health was impaired. Nevertheless, she survived until her seventy fifth year and died peacefully.

SENG MENG

The nun Seng Meng lived during the latter half of the 5th century. After entering the Order, she studied the sutras day and night and developed great understanding and tranquility. Dozens of people lived with her over a period of thirty years and none ever saw her hateful or angry. Her convent was known as a place of profound peace.

Seng Meng often gave her own food to the hungry and took off her own robes to clothe those who were cold. One day, a hunter approached her convent, driving his prey ahead of him. The birds and animals rushed to Meng for refuge, followed by falcons and dogs. When the pursuers were a few feet away, she blocked them with her own body, sustaining many injuries but saving the frightened quarry.

Cf. Pi-ch'iu-ni chuan (Biographies of Famous Chinese Nuns from 317-516C.E.) trans. by Kathryn Cissell. (Ann Arbor: Univ. Microfilms, 1972). SHOWING THE BOWL: The Asoka Buddhist Nuns

At the Asoka Buddhist Center in Thailand are nuns and monks who have continued the Buddhist tradition of alsmround: carrying their bowls to town to collect food, and to teach the Dharma.

This practice is always done in the morning, but on October 5, 1976, the nuns and monks of Asoka carried their bowls in the afternoon. They "showed the bowl" on that day at a student rally to demand the expulsion from Thailand of the military dictator Thanon Kittikachorn. The demonstration began peacefully, but

a mock lynching of the Crown Prince had been sufficient provocation to bring out police and riot squads that left 30 students dead and 100 injured. The nuns and monks of Asoka walked together between the lines of students and police in an effort to stop the killing.

One of the nun's letters offers a glimpse into their life:

"Our activities are concerned with social change. In a developing country like Thailand, though the government tries hard to improve the economic conditions, we still have many problems like pverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, drug addiction and prostitution. The gap between rich and poor grows wider and wider. Our program concentrates not on machinery or the physical problems, but on the mental."

"Humankind can be together without killing; every life ends with death fina' ly. There is no need to kill, no matter what reason one comes up with. Our Lord Buddha's first discipline is: "Don't kill at all."

"The nuns here are 'Sikamatas', who live as renunciates, eat one meal a day, do almsround, and live without money. They follow the disciplines previousl practiced only by monks. They are braze women who see through the world thoroughly. The real life is not difficult to follow and does not depend on the convenience of outside materials. It means that you own less property. Your life then can easily be devoted to serving others."

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