

## **Buddhism and Globalization (May 9, 2008)**

### ***Buddhism and Globalization (Engaged Buddhism Talk)***

Last night I attended a talk at the Tushita Center given by Professor Anita Sharma of Delhi University. She spoke mostly about Engaged Buddhism. The talk description is: "Buddhism in a globalized world more and more emphasizes the rationalist elements in traditional Buddhist teachings and focuses on social reform. During the past few decades many Buddhist have been re-examining the teachings finding a basis for social action, like confronting war-mongering, racism, the destruction of the environment etc. Although "Engaged Buddhism" is a new movement, it is obviously rooted in the Buddha's teachings. It is a reinterpretation and application of traditional Buddhist doctrine, that cuts across the monastic / lay division and includes people from traditional Buddhist countries as well as Western practitioners."

What follows are my notes from the talk which may only be really discernable to me

Well-known examples: His Holiness, Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, Master Cheng Yen (Taiwan), Master Hsing Yun (Taiwan), Master Sheng Yen (Taiwan)

Taiwan is at the forefront when it comes to Engaged Buddhism

In Sri Lanka there is the Sarvodaya Shramdan (shared labor)

Sokka Gakkai in Japan

Buddhist Light International Association

Professor Sharma focused on the activities of Tzuchi (Master Cheng Yen) and Sarvodaya Shram Dam in Sri Lanka. The activities of these two organizations are very different. Tzuchi is actually registered as an NGO in Taiwan.

### **Tzuchi**

Non-traditional Buddhism, charity, international relief work, education (Tzuchi University), bone marrow transplants, preserving the environment (recycling and reusable chopsticks)

### **Sarvodaya Shram Dam**

Emphasis on Buddhist Economics, Local Economy, Gandhianism

We can preserve our culture, inner spiritual growth is what matters, wealth is fine as long as it is achieved in an ethical manner

People work for one goal but also partake in awakening themselves

Principle of “Right Livelihood” is key...training the mind...compassion, sympathy, empathy, tolerance

“Just do it”

Humanize society, extremism is bad