

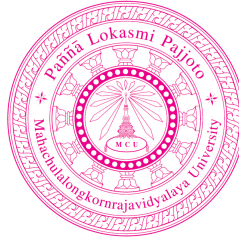


**THE ORGAN GIVING-AWAY IN MAHĀYĀNA  
BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE**

**BHIKKHUNĪ JING LIU**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
The Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate School  
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University  
C.E. 2017



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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has approved this thesis entitled “The Organ Giving Away In Mahāyāna Buddhist Perspective” in partial fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies.

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### **Abstract**

This thesis is a research on Organ Giving-Away after death in Mahāyāna Buddhist perspective. There are mainly three objectives in this thesis: (1) to study the definition, types and significance of Giving-Away (dāna) in Mahāyāna scriptures; (2) to study the definition, practice and significance of Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Buddhism; (3) to analyze Organ Giving-Away after death in Mahāyāna Buddhist Perspective.

There mainly exists two primary cruxes during the process of this research: (1) the first crux of Organ Giving-Away after death which involves with the problematic definitions for death; (2) the second crux of

Organ Giving-Away after death which involves with different comprehensions of death and how to take care of death.

As to the first crux, although the Tipiṭaka has given us the criteria about how to differentiate life from death, it's still not easy for us to be precise about the exact time of death. We can clearly observe rough changes such as pulse and breath of human's body, but not including some more subtle changes. No matter how carefully we observe and how sophisticated our medical instruments are, the issue of life and death would always be completely intangible to us mundane mortals. As it's all known to us, our whole body is classified to rupa. Sometimes people would mistake brain as the spirit and believe the human being would be dead when he's got a brain death. Actually the human being's spirit is formless but the human being's brain is material. It's the spirit what would stick together with the human being throughout his life, no matter the human being's present life, last life, or afterlife and obviously the spirit is by no means the material brain. The brain would decompose one day, which would never happen to the spirit. If today the scientists clone the very same another 'me' who has got the identical physical body and even the same genes, does that 'me' really is another me? Of course not. As Rene Descartes said: 'I think, therefore I am', and it can be adapted in another word: 'With consciousness and karma, therefore I am'.

As to the second crux, Master Cheng Yen and Venerable Hsing Yun are the most well-known Buddhist masters who advocate Organ Giving-Away after death. In their opinion, we don't need to be afraid of death when talking about Organ Giving-Away after death. They both are highly complimentary about the technique of organ-transplantation. When

referring to the technique of organ-transplantation, Master Cheng Yen enthusiastically praised it as one of the amazing advancements and accomplishments of modern medicine. Coincidentally, Venerable Hsing Yun also complimented the technique of organ-transplantation as a huge progress of modern medicine. With regard to Organ Giving-Away after death, they believe there's no need to be afraid of death as long as the practitioners have resolved their mind. On the contrary, there are some masters who oppose Organ Giving-Away after death and the most renowned ones are Master Yin Guang and Master Hong Yi. Master Yin Guang and Master Hong Yi regard human beings' last-moment thought as the crucial and determinate factor which would determine the outcome of dying people's afterlife. They stress the importance of the last stage of life and narrate in detail about how to take care of the dying people at their last stages of life in their works. In their opinion, we should by no means move the dying people's body in case extreme sufferings and hatred arisen to the dying people which would inevitably lead to their degradation. According to Master Yin Guang, the dead people can't be dressed or moved until three hours after the people end their life. According to Master Hong Yi, the dead people can't be dressed or moved until eight hours after the people end their life.

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for dedicating themselves to the improvement of our proficiency in Buddhism and for showing us the way to carry out Buddhist research work.

Bhikkhunī: Jing Liu

10 / Feb. / 2018



## Abbreviations

a	the a column
aka	also known as
Asst.	Assistant
b	the b column
B.C.	Before Christ
B.E.	Buddhist Era
c	the c column
CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association
DCDD	Donation after circulatory determination of death
DNDD	Donation after neurological determination of death
ed.	edited
e.g.	exempli gratia
etc.	et cetera
Ibid.	Ibidem
IBSC	International Buddhist Studies College
MCU	Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
no.	number
p	page
Prof.	Professor
T	Text
tr.	translated
USA	the United States of America
Ven.	Venerable
vs	versus
Vol.	Volume

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

Nowadays lots of countries are encouraging Organ Giving-Away after death<sup>1</sup> with the global organ shortage circumstance and the increasingly maturer organ-transplantation techniques. In the Buddhist circles, especially today's Buddhist circle in Taiwan, out of the faith of sacrifice, devoting and benevolence, some of the most Buddhist Reverends also keep pace with the times and have been sparing no effort to help motivate organ-donation. Among them, Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen<sup>2</sup> and the most Reverend Hsing Yun<sup>3</sup> are the most typical and the most representative Buddhist masters.

Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen from Taiwan who is well-known for her charity promotion is the founder of Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation. Master Cheng Yen believes among the birth suffering, the aging suffering, the illness suffering, and the death suffering, the illness

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<sup>1</sup> There are mainly two types of Organ Giving-Away after death: "Donation after cardiac death (Donation after circulatory determination of death—DCDD); Donation after brain death (Donation after neurologic determination of death—DNDD)" James F. Childress & Catharyn T. Liverman, **Organ Donation: Opportunities for Action**, (Washington: National Academies Press, 2006), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Taiwanese Buddhist nun. She is noted as the founder of the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation (commonly known as Tzu Chi). "On April 14, 1966, Dharma Master Cheng Yen founded the Tzu Chi Merits Society in Hualien with the support of thirty housewives..." **Tzu Chi USA Journal** #44, (Han Huang, 2015): 75.

<sup>3</sup> The First Patriarch of Fo Guang Shan Order and a famous proponent of Humanistic Buddhism. "Humanistic Buddhism as conceived and interpreted by Grand Master Hsing Yun, attempts to reconnect us with the original spirit and essence of truth that Sakyamuni Buddha brought into this world over 2500 years ago." Richard L. Kimball, Humanistic Buddhism as Conceived and Interpreted by Grand Master Hsing Yun of Fo Guang Shan, **Hsi Lai Journal of Humanistic Buddhism** Vol. 1, (Los Angeles: Hsi Lai Journal of Humanistic Buddhism, 2000): 45.

suffering is the root of all sufferings. On the basis of this belief, she has founded many Tzu Chi hospitals, including the Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, the Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital, the Kuanshan Tzu Chi Hospital, the Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital, the Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital, the Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital, the Douliou Tzu Chi Outpatient Department, the Suzhou Tzu Chi Outpatient Department etc. As a renowned philanthropic Buddhist master, Mater Cheng Yen has been promoting organ-donation vigorously for years by propagating her eleemosynary idea of “body donating & waste recycling & medicine promoting” and up until today she has achieved substantial achievements. Actually when she was asked about how to take care of the new-dead people, Master Cheng Yen remarked that we had better not move the new-dead people’s bodies within 24 hours in case extra physical sufferings inflicted to the new-dead people<sup>4</sup>. Nonetheless, possibly based on her belief that the illness suffering of the human beings is of most importance, while involving with the problem of organ-donation, Master Cheng Yen claims that there only exist the Seventh Consciousness<sup>5</sup> and the Eighth Consciousness for the new-dead people and thus there won’t be any physical pains arising to the new-dead people’s bodies ( because the preceding Six Consciousnesses have ceased working ) while the new-dead people are experiencing organ-harvesting.

Furthermore, another notable Buddhist master — the most Reverend Hsing Yun, who is the patriarch of Fo Guang Shan in Taiwan, on one hand he advocates hospice care and admits Pure Land Belief acting as a kind of atonement and sanctuary is playing the most important role in the hospice care, on the other hand he averts the most fundamental and very well-known theory of “Our consciousnesses won’t leave our

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<sup>4</sup> Bhikkuni Cheng Yen, **Pure Wisdom**, (Nanjing: Jiangsu People’s Press, 2009), p. 54.

<sup>5</sup> “Manas-vijñāna is the Seventh Consciousness. It serves as the ground for ego-attachment.” “Ālāya-vijñāna is the Eighth Consciousness. It stores dharma seeds and serves as the genesis for all dharma.” “Eye Consciousness, Ear Consciousness, Nose Consciousness, Tongue Consciousness and Body Consciousness are five kinds of sense consciousnesses, collectively they are called as the Five Sense-consciousnesses.” “Mano-vijñāna is the Sixth Consciousness. It’s centre for mental phenomena and activities.” Lingbo Yu, **Analects for Verses Delineating the Eight Consciousnesses**, (Buddha’s Education Foundation, 2009), p. 21.

bodies throughly until eight hours after death” which is believed as one of the most prominent features of Pure Land Belief by saying “You would bring light to the others when you donate your cornea, you would give the power of life to the others when you donate your heart, you would transfer your vitality of life to the others’ life when you donate your marrow.”<sup>6</sup> and thus Organ Giving-Away after death is preached as a supposed highly noble virtue of human beings by him.

There are also some other senior monks who disagree or even oppose to the Organ Giving-Away after death. Generally speaking, most of the Chinese Mainland Buddhist Masters are rather conservative about Organ Giving-Away after death. Their opinions can be summarized as follows:

Our consciousnesses are still with us after new death and it can not be taken as true death then. We are not really dead until our consciousnesses leave our bodies completely. Because the consciousnesses won’t leave instantly after just death and by when the bodies still can feel, if at that time the new-dead people are operated organ-harvesting, there would be huge pains arisen and in return intense hatred would be generated among the dead people’s last-moment-thought and finally this would lead to the new-dead people’s degeneration. The process of death is suffering itself and both the dying people and the new-dead people need to be taken good care of, rather than to be bothered or hurt. The last-moment thought is highly crucial for the dying people and it would determine where the dying people is going to be reborn in their afterlife. We need to chant the name of Amitāyus Buddha<sup>7</sup> for the dying people and the new-dead people for hours or days to help the dead human

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<sup>6</sup> Ven. Hsing Yun, **Buddhist Perspective for Euthanasia—Master Hsing Yun’s Dharma Talk in Singapore**, (Taiwan: Pu Men Xue Bao, 2003), p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> “The Buddha then said to Elder Śāriputra: ‘If you travel westward from here, passing a hundred thousand koṭis of buddha lands, you will come to the land called Utmost Bliss, where there is a buddha named Amitāyus. He is living there now, teaching the Dharma...’” Hisao Inagaki & Harold Stewart translated, **The Three Pure Land Sutras**, (Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2003), p. 91.

get far away from duggati and to be reborn in heaven or the Buddha's realms.

Apparently, the primary dispute on Organ Giving-Away after death is mainly involved with the problematic definitions for death and how to differentiate life or death. It's well-known that there are lots of different interpretations about death. Death is really mysterious and is a forever tricky problem. For millennia the human beings have kept on studying death and the religion believers have never stopped debating it. Nevertheless, up until today there's still much controversy about either the precise definition of death or the concrete process of death, let alone the world after death. Death is such an obscure and profound issue that it's just like what is described by the great Chinese educationalist Confucius<sup>8</sup> in his work *The Analects*<sup>9</sup>: 'If we don't know life, how can we know death?'<sup>10</sup>

The criteria for death have become more problematic with the advancement of modern medical technologies. In ancient China, people would tell life from death by touching pulses or feeling nose breath. Nowadays most of the countries are taking heartbeat-stopping or lung-respiration-stopping or brain death as the criteria for death. However, if we take heartbeat-stopping or lung-respiration-stopping as criteria of death, the problem is both the stopped heartbeat and the stopped respiration would sometimes restart. Some people may believe the brain death is irreversible and take brain death as the criteria for death. If we

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<sup>8</sup> 551 BC—479 BC. "Confucius is the earliest and the most influential thinker and educationalist in China. He has been regarded as a sage by Chinese people for over 2000 years." Confucius, **The Analects**, (Foreign Language Teaching and Studying, 1997), p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> "The Analects is a book recording conversations between Confucius and his disciples." Confucius, **The Analects**, (Foreign Language Teaching and Studying, 1997), p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> "Tzu-lu asked how one should serve ghosts and spirits. The Master said, Till you have learnt to serve men, how can you serve ghosts? Tzu-lu then ventured upon a question about the dead. The Master said, Till you know about the living, how are you to know about the dead?" Confucius, **The Analects**, (Foreign Language Teaching and Studying, 1997), p. 133.



take brain death as the criteria of death, the problem is: Is brain death the real death? <sup>11</sup>

In Buddhism, death was considered would not be done within an instant. It has a process.<sup>12</sup> Firstly you lose your respiration (wind), then you start to lose your temperature (heat). The temperature is lost inch by inch, and it may take hours until the temperature is gone completely. While the heat is dispersing, the consciousnesses are also ceasing to work little by little. Finally the body would totally get cold and that means our consciousnesses have already gone entirely. It's until then when you can be regarded as truly dead. In the history of China, there are many ancient notable Buddhist masters who were very careful and prudent for death, some of them even instructed their disciples to keep their bodies unmoved or enshrined for at least three or seven days after their deaths just in case they would get interrupted.

In the Buddhist Tipiṭaka, *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*<sup>13</sup> called death as *Marana-dukkha*<sup>14</sup> and *Abhidharmakosa-sastra*<sup>15</sup> describes the process of

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<sup>11</sup> “ In most human deaths, the loss of these neurological functions is accompanied by the traditional, familiar markers of death: the patient stops breathing, his or her heart stops beating, and the body starts to decay. In relatively rare cases, however, the irreversible loss of brain-dependent functions occurs while the body, with technological assistance, continues to circulate blood and to show other signs of life. In such cases, there is controversy and confusion about whether death has actually occurred.” **Controversies in the Determination of Death**, (A White Paper of the President’s Council on Bioethics, 2008), p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Master Yin Guang, **Master Yin Guang Wen Chao Jing Hua Lu**, ( Beijing: Religion Press, 2006), p. 61-66.

<sup>13</sup> Voluminous work of Yogācāra School. It’s a definitive encyclopedia on yogic practice. **Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra**, (CBETA, T30, no. 1579, p0279a08-p0882a14)

<sup>14</sup> “ What’s Marāṇa-dukkha? Marāṇa means all living beings would separate from their original world at the moment of death and finally they would pass away because of the deceased lifespan,heat and consciousness...During the process of death, living beings will suffer from both physical and mental dukkha and this kind of dukkha is called Marāṇa-dukkha.” **Abhidharma-dharmaskandha-sastra**, (CBETA, T26, no. 1537, p0480b)

<sup>15</sup> Verses on the Treasury of Abhidharma. A key work on Sarvāstivādin tenets written by Vasubandhu from Gandhāra in the 4th or 5th century. **Abhidharmakosa-sastra**, (CBETA, T29, no. 1558, p0001a10-p0159a14)

death as Marman-destruction-suffering<sup>16</sup>. *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* enumerates five aspects about Maraṇa-dukkha as follows: the giving-up of beloved treasures, the giving-up of beloved friends, the giving-up of beloved family, the giving-up of beloved oneself, and all kinds of extreme anxieties. According to *Abhidharmakosa-sastra*, during the process of death, the water, the wind and the heat in our body starts to decompose. Either of the water decomposition, the wind decomposition and the heat decomposition would stimulate and destruct Marmans in the body and acute prick pains would be stirred up to the human being during the destruction process of Marmans and finally the Marman-destruction<sup>17</sup> would lead to the human being's death.

Another dispute on Organ Giving-Away after death is involved with different interpretations about dāna. Undoubtedly, every Buddhist disciple should practice dāna. The thing is, what kind of dāna should we practice? The *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra* indicates there are two kinds of dāna for lay Bodhisattvas — dharma dāna and property dāna. There are four kinds of dāna for monastic Bodhisattvas — pen dāna, ink dāna, scripture dāna and dharma-preaching dāna. There are three kinds of dāna for Anutpattika-Dharma-Ksanti Bodhisattvas<sup>18</sup> — throne dāna, wife dāna and body dāna. Obviously the Organ Giving-Away and the Organ Giving-Away after death are originally classified to the dāna practice for Anutpattika-Dharma-Ksanti Bodhisattvas.

However nowadays some Buddhist masters have extended the Organ Giving-Away and Organ Giving-Away after death as one kind of dāna practice for every Buddhists. In the scriptures, there are some very

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<sup>16</sup> “Marmans are acupuncture points in our body which would lead to death by the slightest touch.” It's said there are hundreds of Marmans in our body. **Abhidharmakosa-sastra**, (CBETA, T29, no. 1558, p0056b23)

<sup>17</sup> “Either of the water decomposition, wind decomposition and heat decomposition would stimulate Marmans like a sharp edge and hence acute sufferings would be arisen...It's called Marman-destruction because death would come on the heels of that.” **Abhidharmakosa-sastra**, (CBETA, T29, no. 1558, p0056b24-p0056b26)

<sup>18</sup> “The Anutpattika-Dharma-Ksanti Bodhisattvas are totally enlightened on the truth of unproduced and undestroyed.” **Mahā ratnakūṭa sūtra**, (CBETA, T11, no.0310, p0145c15)

famous Organ Giving-Away Jātaka stories recorded, such as “Sacrifice the Body to Feed A Tiger”<sup>19</sup> and “Cut the Flesh to Feed A Hawk”<sup>20</sup>. Sacrifice The Body to Feed A Tiger & Cut The Flesh to Feed A Hawk are both about the Buddha Sakyamuni practicing body dāna in his past incarnations while he was still a Bodhisattva. These two stories are often taken as a strong rationale by Buddhists who claim Organ Giving-Away is a supposed merit for Buddhist practitioners. Those Buddhists believe that since our Lord Buddha never denied giving away his blood, eyes, head, marrow, even his whole body to the others and for that reason it’s naturally reasonable for us disciples to follow the Buddha’s path and give away our organs when we are needed.

In general, although the Bodhisattva’s Body Giving-Away practice is highly admirable, it’s still debatable whether the similar practice of Organ Giving-Away and Organ Giving-Away after death is suitable and worthy encouraging among the ordinary lay people and monastic monks and that’s the issue what we would study in this paper.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Research

1.2.1 To study the definition, types and significance of Giving-Away in Mahāyāna scriptures.

1.2.2 To study the definition, practice and significance of Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

1.2.3 To analyze Organ Giving-Away after death in Mahāyāna Buddhist perspective.

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<sup>19</sup>Suvarṇaprabhāsa-uttamarāja-sūtra, (CBETA, T16, no. 0665, p0450c18-p0454b25)

<sup>20</sup> Zhong Jing Zhuan Za Pi Yu 众经撰杂譬喻, (CBETA, T04, no. 0208, p0531b25-p0531c24)

### **1.3 Statement of the Problems Desired to Know**

1.3.1 What is the definition, types and significance of Giving-Away in Mahāyāna scriptures?

1.3.2 What is the definition, practice and significance of Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Buddhism?

1.3.3 What are the pros and cons about Organ Giving-Away after death based on Mahāyāna Buddhist perspective?

### **1.4 Scope of the Research**

The scope of the research is stipulated into the following three dimensions:

#### **1.4.1 Scope of Sources of Data**

The researcher focuses on studying the primitive teachings on both Giving-Away (dāna) and Organ Giving-Away which appeared in the primary source of Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures, by using both the English translations of Tipiṭaka and the Tipiṭaka of Chinese edition. As well as the secondary source of Buddhist textbooks, research works and journals respectively, together with the later interpretations from modern scholars, e.g. Damien Keown, James A. Benn, Phillip A. Lesco and Ven. Cheng Yen both in Chinese and English languages.

#### **1.4.2 Scope of Content**

This research focuses on the teachings on both Giving-Away (dāna) and Organ Giving-Away according to the following contents:

Firstly, the researcher will work mainly on the definition, types

and significance of Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Scriptures. Secondly, the researcher will focus on the study of Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Buddhism, including the definition, practice and significance of Organ Giving-Away in different Mahāyāna Scriptures.

Lastly, the researcher will focus on the analysis of Organ Giving-Away after death from two contrary opinion adherents. The pros and cons would be enumerated respectively.

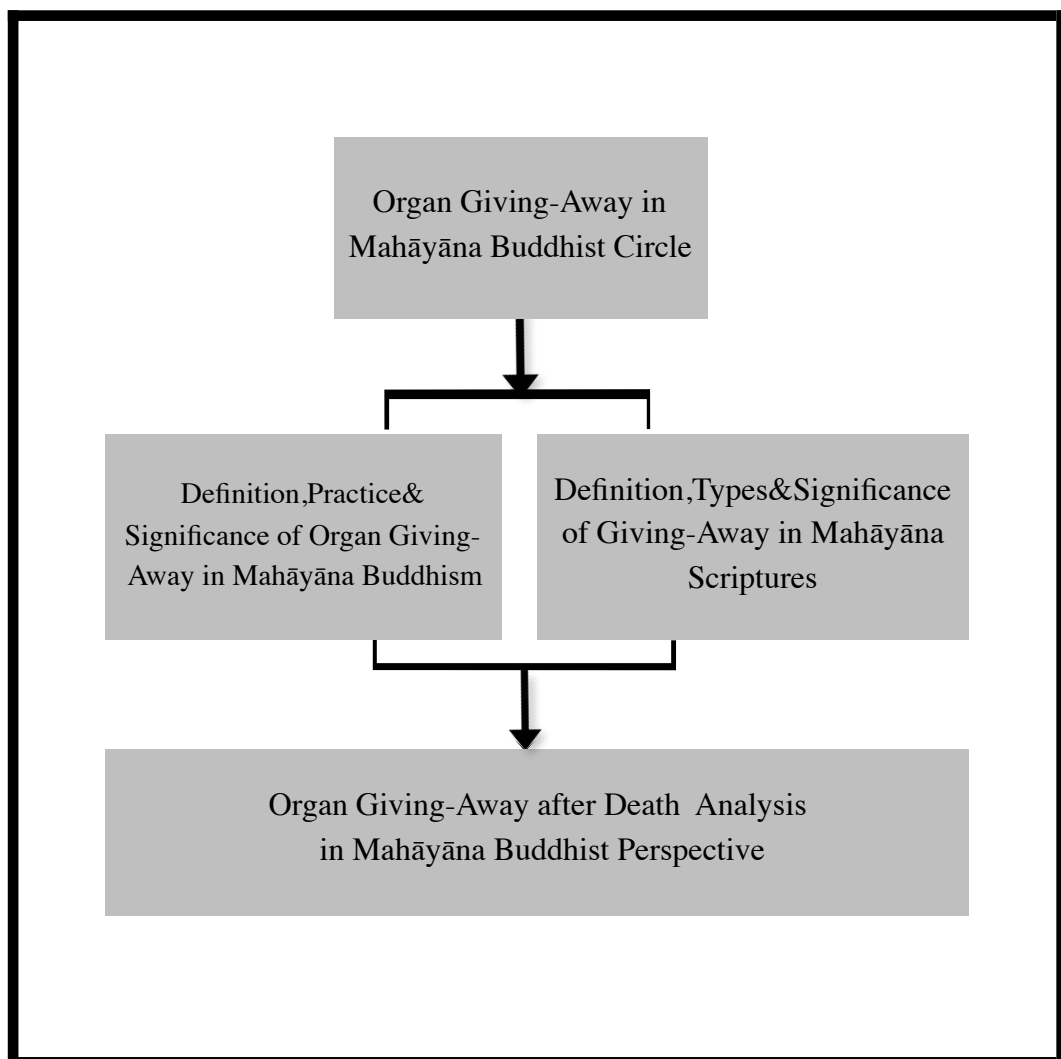
### **1.4.3 Scope of Timing**

The timing of this research has been set at 20 months. Starting from July 1st 2016 to Feb. 1st 2018.

## 1.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the research exhibits the significant research process in terms of input, process, and output as follows:

**Chart 1: Conceptual Framework**



## 1.6 Definition of the Terms Used in the Research

**1.6.1 Organ Giving-Away after death** aka Organ-Donation after death, consists of both Donation after circulatory termination of death-DCDD and Donation after neurologic termination of death-DNDD.

**1.6.2 Practice of Organ Giving-Away** means taking Organ Giving-Away as a kind of practice. It's classified to the Giving-Away (dāna) of body based on Mahāyāna Buddhism.

**1.6.3 Mahāyāna Perspective** means the perspective of understanding and analyzing on basis of Mahāyāna teaching.

**1.6.4 Brain Death** means the brain ceases to function. Brain Death has always been a conundrum for years. It's commonly taken as irreversible and the brain-dead patients have become the main sources of organ donors since the last couple of years. Meantime, Brain Death also has met lots of resistance because some people believe it's a premature pseudo death.

**1.6.5 Eight Consciousnesses** is a classification of the Yogācāra School. They are as follows: the Eye Consciousness for seeing, the Ear Consciousness for hearing, the Nose Consciousness for smelling, the Tongue Consciousness for tasting, the Body Consciousness for touching; the Mind Consciousness for perception, the Manas Consciousness for self-grasping, the Storehouse Consciousness for storing.

**1.6.6 Dāna** means the practice of charity or donation based on Mahāyāna Buddhism. It's regarded as one of the most important practices which can facilitate the offerings to purify their minds by the practice of unattached and unconditioned generosity.

## 1.7 Review of Related Literature and Research Works

The researcher has reviewed the literatures and information together with research works which related to the study as follows:

**1.7.1 Jan Bondeson** has explored folklore, history, medicine and literature especially in France and Germany in his book “Buried Alive: the Terrifying History of our Most Primal Fear”<sup>21</sup>

This book is filled with legends, fictions, medical journals and is focused on the problem of Premature Burial. In this book, the author quoted physician J.C. Quseley’s saying and claimed that there were about 800 to 2,700 people buried prematurely each year in England and Wales. According to this book, we know that the humans’ fear and uncertain about real death has been a historical problem which deserves human beings’ great concern.

**1.7.2 Damien Keown** explores different interpretations about death between Buddhism and modern medicine in his paper “Buddhism, Brain Death, and Organ Transplantation”, *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*<sup>22</sup>. In this paper, Damien Keown concerns mainly about if brain-dead patients are really dead and believes that brain death criterion is incompatible with Buddhist perspective.

In the paper, the author states that laymen’s comprehension of death may not be the same as that enshrined in protocols. As to employing the criterion of brain death, better public education is needed. There are much debate around the practical and theoretical difficulties in employing the criterion of brain death. For the organ donors and their

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<sup>21</sup> Jan Bondeson, **Buried Alive: The Terrifying History of our Most Primal Fear**, (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), p. 239.

<sup>22</sup> Damien Keown, **Buddhism, Brain Death and Organ Transplantation**, *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* (Journal of Buddhist Ethics, 2010): 24-26.



families, it should be made clearer about what the implications of a diagnosis of brain death really are.

**1.7.3 James A Benn** studies the self-immolation tradition in Chinese Buddhism in his book “Burning For The Buddha—Self-Immolation in Chinese Buddhism”<sup>23</sup>.

This book is James A Benn’s first monograph. In this book, the author points out that the early self-immolation tradition in Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhist history is basically established on the basis of Bodhisattva Medicine King’s conducts in the Lotus Sutra. James A Benn also believes self-immolation in Chinese Buddhist history is often related with politics and somatic tortures.

**1.7.4 Phillip A. Lecso** claims that Mahāyāna Buddhism firmly supports organ transplantation as benefiting both the donors and recipients in his paper “The Bodhisattva Ideal and Organ Transplantation”, *Journal of Religion and Health*<sup>24</sup> .

This paper examines the Buddhist attitudes towards organ transplantation from a Mahāyāna Buddhist perspective. In this paper, Phillip A. Lecso discusses Six Perfections for Bodhisattva practice and studies primarily on the relationship between the Perfection of Giving and organ transplantation.

**1.7.5 Noor Zurani Md Haris Robson, Azad Hassan Razack and Norman Dublin** explore the ethical issues and religious views towards organ transplantation in their book “Organ Transplants: Ethical,

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<sup>23</sup> James A Benn, **Burning For The Buddha — Self-Immolation in Chinese Buddhism**, (University of Hawaii Press, 2007), p. 33-42.

<sup>24</sup> Phillip A Lecso, The Bodhisattva Ideal and Organ Transplantation, **Journal of Religion and Health**, Vol 30, (Springer, 1991), p. 1, p. 35-41.

Social, and Religious Issues in a Multicultural Society” in 22(3) *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health* <sup>25</sup>.

In this paper, the authors all back up organ transplantation without efforts. In their opinions, organ transplant is a safe procedure and should be approached without hesitation. Herein the authors also radically claims that religious issues should not be barriers to organ transplant and all religious objections to organ transplant have to be suppressed.

**1.7.6 Master Yin Guang** stresses the importance of the last stage of life and narrates in detail about how to take care of the dying people at their last stages of life in the article “Dharma Talk on End-of-Life” from his work “Yin Guang Da Shi Wen Chao Jing Hua lu” <sup>26</sup>.

In this book, Master Yin Guang maintains that the last stage of humans’ life is of most importance and he also told us that the dying people’s bodies should by no means be touched or moved at the end of their life. Master Yin Guang believes that any slight touch or move of the dead bodies would generate extreme sufferings to the bodies and thus hatred might get arisen to the dead people’s mind, which would inevitably lead to the dead people’s degradation in their afterlife.

**1.7.7 Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen** claims that the sufferings generated at the last moment of the organ donors’ life would not bother them if only the organ donors have got the donating will in their minds. Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen encourages Organ Giving-Away and Organ Giving-Away after death vigorously in her book “Live or Death — Feel at Ease”<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Noor Zurani Md Haris Robson & Azad Hassan Razack & Norman Dublin, Organ Transplants: Ethical, Social, and Religious Issues in a Multicultural Society, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health*, 22(3), (Asia Pac J Public Health, 2010): 271-276.

<sup>26</sup> Master Yin Guang, Dharma Talk on End-of-Life, *Yin Guang Da Shi Wen Chao Jing Hua lu*, (Religion Press, 2006), p. 61-66.

<sup>27</sup> Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen, *Live or Death—Feel at Ease*, (Taipei: Tzu Chi Cultural Press, 2002), p. 28, p. 320.

In this book, when was asked about her opinion about the clone of humans with modern medical technique, Master Cheng Yen denounced it as an evil thing which would distort or even destroy our world. While when referring to the technique of organ-transplantation, Master Cheng Yen enthusiastically praised it as one of the most amazing advancements and accomplishments in the modern medicine.

**1.7.8 Lee Hsing-ling** studies the perspective for Organ Giving-Away according to the concept of inner-property-offering in “Offerings With Bodhisattva’s Pity-A Topical Subject of Organ Donation According to Offering Inner Properties of Huayanjing” in *Xuanzang Buddhist Studies*<sup>28</sup>.

In this paper, Lee Hsing-ling claims that it’s more like a Theravādin Buddhist act if the Mahāyāna Buddhist practitioners don’t support the Organ Giving-Away practicing. Herein the author doesn’t negate the living possibility for the brain-dead patients and asserts that whether live or not for a brain-dead patient doesn’t affect his practice of Organ Giving-Away. In the author’s opinion, since the Organ Giving-Away and the Organ Giving-Away after death both belong to Giving-Away and are also both of merits, we just need to focus on the practice of Giving-Away and don’t have to argue about whether the organ donor is alive or not.

From the above reviewing of related literature and information, it’s known to us that there is a discrepancy about the death definition between the Buddhist circle and the medical circle. The Buddhist masters who are supporting Organ Giving-Away after death definitely need a second thought, because the Buddhist dogma defines death differently with what we are told by the modern medical practice. Furthermore, the

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<sup>28</sup>Lee Hsing-ling, **Offerings With Bodhisattva’s Pity—A Topical Subject of Organ Donation According to Offering Inner Properties of Huayanjing**, (*Xuanzang Buddhist Studies*, 1994), p. 31-54.

Buddhism has got its own way to treat hospice and it's incompatible with the modern medical practice as well.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

This qualitative research work is a documentary research. The research methodology can be divided into five stages as follows:

### **1.8.1 Data collection**

Collecting data from the primary source of both English translations of Tipiṭaka and the Chinese version in order to explore the body of knowledge of Organ Giving-Away (Dāna) in Buddhist scriptures for accurate description. As well as the secondary source of Commentaries, Sub-commentaries, textbooks, research works, Buddhist journals, together with the new interpretation from modern Buddhist masters and scholars respectively both in Chinese and English languages. This is to survey the viewpoints from later literatures in detailed explanation for clearer comprehension.

### **1.8.2 Analysis and Synthesis**

Analysing and synthesizing the raw data as well as systematizing the collected data in order to give a clear picture of Giving-Away.

### **1.8.3 Outline Construction**

Constructing the overall outline of the work in all related dimensions corresponding to the objectives.

### **1.8.4 Problem Discussion**

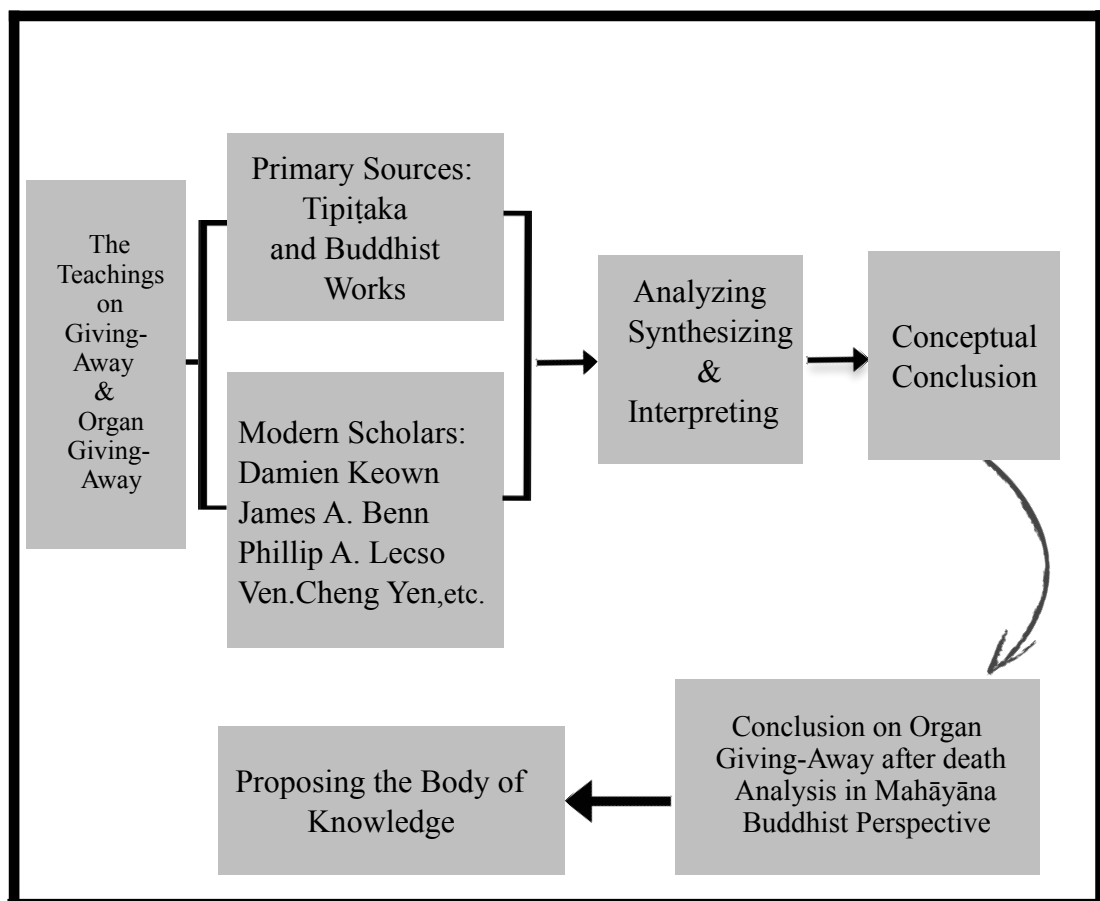
Discussing the problems encountered according to the significance of the studies.

### 1.8.5 Conclusion and Suggestion

Formulating the conclusions, identifying the significant research findings and suggesting useful information for a further research.

The research methodology can be shown in the form of the Research Process Chart as follows:

**Chart 2: The Research Process**



### 1.9 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research

This research paper contributes to the advantages as follows:

#### 1.9.1 Acquisition of Body of Knowledge about Giving-Away

(Dāna) in Mahāyāna Scriptures;

1.9.2 Acquisition of Body of knowledge about Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Buddhism;

1.9.3 Acquisition of Body of knowledge about Organ Giving-Away after death Analysis in Mahāyāna Buddhist Perspective.

## Chapter II

### The Belief of Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Buddhism

#### 2.1 Definition of Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Scriptures

Giving-Away (Pali: Dāna ) means giving charity or generosity. Briefly speaking, it connotes both the relinquishing of stinginess and the cultivating of generosity by a kind of benevolent giving of alms which aims at helping the receivers while expect nothing in return. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, Giving-Away Perfection, aka the Perfection of Generosity (dāna-pāramitā), invariably presents the first Perfection of Śaḍ-pāramitā.<sup>29</sup>

##### 2.1.1 In Essay on the Meaning of Mahayana

The Essay on the Meaning of Mahayana defines Giving-Away as follows:<sup>30</sup>

“ Speaking of Giving-Away, it means to give away one’s own property and belongings to the other people with the intended purpose of sacrificing oneself and benefiting the others.”

##### 2.1.2 In Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra

In the Chapter Thirty-three of Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra, the

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<sup>29</sup> “ ( Skt. ). The ‘Six Perfections’ which are practised and brought to perfection by Bodhisattvas in the course of their training. These are: the perfection of generosity (dāna-pāramitā), of morality (śīla-pāramitā), of patience (kṣānti-pāramitā), of effort (vīrya-pāramitā), of meditation (dhyāna-pāramitā), and of insight (prajñā-pāramitā).” Damien Keown, **A Dictionary of Buddhism**, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 242.

<sup>30</sup> **Essay on the Meaning of Mahayana**, (CBETA, T44, no. 1851, p0694b08-p0694b12)

definition of Giving-Away is elaborated as follows:<sup>31</sup>

“What is Giving-Away? If there is somebody who would give away his/her clothing, bedding, food, flowers, incenses, gems etc. to the others, thus this kind of practice is termed Giving-Away. Somebody asked: if the clothing, bedding, food etc. all belong to Giving, why bother to practice Giving-Away further? Replied: The clothing, bedding, food etc. aren't Giving. When the clothing, bedding, food etc. are being given away by the practitioners, the dharma of relinquishing will appear in the givers' mind. This dharma of relinquishing is against the givers' mind of stinginess. Thus it's called the merit of Giving-Away.”

“Giving-Away is comprised of all kinds of giving, including the Alms Giving, the Truth Giving, the Secular Giving and the Monastic Giving.”

### **2.1.3 In The Mahāyāna Sūtra of Mental Contemplation on Earlier Births**

In The Mahāyāna Sūtra of Mental Contemplation During Earlier Births, there is a famous Giving-Away Verse as follows:<sup>32</sup>

“The one who practices Giving, the recipient who receives the alms and the alms expected being given away ;

None of them are of real self-nature during all of the past time, present time and future time;

Now have attained the most superior enlightenment;

I shall make offerings to all Buddhas within Ten Directions.”

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<sup>31</sup> **Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra**, (CBETA, T25, no. 1509, p0304b16-p0305c14)

<sup>32</sup> **The Mahāyāna Sūtra of Mental Contemplation During Earlier Births** 大乘本生心地观经, (CBETA, T03, no. 0159, p0296b10-p0296b11)



## 2.2 Types of Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Scriptures

### 2.2.1 In Essay on the Meaning of Mahayana

There are four categories of Giving-Away enumerated in Essay on the Meaning of Mahayana as follows<sup>33</sup>:

#### (1) Alms Giving

The Bodhisattvas kindly give their treasures away to those materially impoverished sentient beings.

#### (2) Truth Giving

The Bodhisattvas kindly preach dharma to the sentient beings.

#### (3) Courage Giving

The Bodhisattvas kindly deliver the ignorant sentient beings from discomfort, distress, sufferings and all kinds of the other hardships.

#### (4) Repaying Giving

The Bodhisattvas kindly repay Alms Giving, Truth Giving and Courage Giving to those sentient beings who have ever helped them before.

### 2.2.2 In Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra

Categorized by the nature of Giving, Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra set forth two types of Giving-Away as follows<sup>34</sup>:

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<sup>33</sup> **Essay on the Meaning of Mahayana**, (CBETA, T44, no. 1851, p0694b29-p0694c7)

<sup>34</sup> **Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra**, (CBETA, T25, no. 1509, p0304b26-p0304c13)

### (1) Impure Giving

Impure Giving allows for nothing but Giving itself. The pure mental volition would be passed over by the practitioners while they are practicing Impure Giving. The practitioners may practice Impure Giving out of some reasons as follows: the fear of losing wealth, the fear of being accused of stinginess, the alms are of no value to them, attachment with recipients, the chase for fame, renown and power, the chase for prominence and superiority, death or emergency, jealousy, arrogance and conceit, hubris, blessing and merit, auspiciousness, companionship, scorn and contempt, disrespect etc. Impure Giving is practiced aiming at benefits of the present life and it's termed Impure Giving due to being against Pure Giving.

### (2) Pure Giving

Pure Giving gives prominence to the cultivation of pure mental volition. It's always practiced coupling with morality, concentration and wisdom. The practitioners aspire to attain more pliant mind and the debilitating of greed through the practicing of Pure Giving. Unlike Impure Giving, Pure Giving is practiced not only for the benefits of present life, but also for the benefits of afterlife and life to come. The ultimate purpose of Pure Giving Practicing is to free the mind from defilements and finally attain liberation and fully enlightenment.

### 2.2.3 In Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra

Categorized by different groups of practitioners, Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra<sup>35</sup> enumerates nine different types of Giving-Away. These nine different types of Giving-Away are respectively suitable for Lay Bodhisattvas, Ordained Bodhisattvas and Anutpattikadharmaksanti<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> CBETA, T11, no. 0310, p0515c02-p0515c08.

<sup>36</sup> “... to be enlightened with the truth that nothing really arises or perishes”  
**Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra**, (CBETA, T25, no. 1509, p0676a11-p0676a15)

Bodhisattvas. Among them, there are two types of Giving-Away for Lay Bodhisattvas, four types of Giving-Away for Ordained Bodhisattvas and three types of Giving-Away for Anutpattikadharmaksanti Bodhisattvas as follows:

(1) For Lay Bodhisattvas

There are two types of Giving-Away suitable for the Lay Bodhisattvas to practice: Truth Giving and Alms Giving.

(2) For Ordained Bodhisattvas

There are four types of Giving-Away suitable for the Ordained Bodhisattvas to practice: Pens Giving, Ink Giving, Scriptures Giving and Dharma Giving.

(3) For Anutpattikadharmaksanti Bodhisattvas

There are three types of Giving-Away suitable for the Anutpattikadharmaksanti Bodhisattvas to practice: Thrones Giving, Wives Giving and Organs Giving.

### 2.2.4 In Avataṃsaka Sūtra

In the Eighty-Chapters-Avataṃsaka Sūtra<sup>37</sup> which was translated from Sanskrit to Chinese by Śikṣānanda<sup>38</sup>, there are Tenfold Giving-Away for Bodhisattvas enumerated in Chapter Twenty-one. They are:

(1) The Giving of Material Things for the Benefit of All Sentient Beings

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<sup>37</sup> CBETA, T10, no. 0279, p0112c06-p0113c15.

<sup>38</sup> A prominent Buddhist translator in Tang Dynasty. “translated the Avataṃsaka Sūtra into eighty chapters.” (CBETA, T50, no. 2061, p0718c18-p0718c28)

The Bodhisattvas are innately benevolent. They tend to share and give away all their material things for the benefit of all sentient beings. Herein, to relinquish ones' mortal bodies by giving away all their material things is the Bodhisattvas' ultimate ideal.

#### (2)The Giving of Material Things Without Reservation

The Giving of Material Things Without Reservation connotes that the Bodhisattvas would like to give away all the material things they have which helps sustain their mortal bodies without any consideration about the chance of compromising or even ending their own lives for the benefit of all sentient beings.

#### (3)The Giving of Organs

The Giving of Organs presents the giving of limbs, flesh, heads, eyes, bone marrow etc. The Bodhisattvas have realized human bodies are mortal. They would rather give away their own organs for the benefit of all sentient beings without regret.

#### (4)The Giving of Wealth and Honor

The Bodhisattvas have realized that neither high position nor great wealth is reliable. They would rather give away their wealth and honor for the benefit of all sentient beings without regret.

#### (5)The Giving of Organs, Wealth and Honor

The Bodhisattvas have realized that their mortal bodies, wealth and honor are not reliable. They would rather give away their bodies, kingdoms, thrones and treasures etc. for the benefit of all sentient beings without any regret.

#### (6)The Giving of Everything

The Bodhisattvas have realized that nothing is permanent. Thus they would like to give away everything they have including kingdoms, wives, kindreds, limbs, flesh, heads, brains and bone marrow for the benefit of all sentient beings without any regret.

#### (7)The Giving of Detachment to Past Dhamma

The Bodhisattvas have totally realized that the merits of past Buddhas are just expedient measures for Dhamma teaching and they do not have real self-nature. Thus they keep themselves from being attached with all illusory past Dhamma.

#### (8)The Giving of Detachment to Future Dhamma

The Bodhisattvas have totally realized that the merits of future Buddhas are just expedient measures for Dhamma teaching and they do not have real self-nature. Thus they keep themselves from being attached with all illusory future Dhamma.

#### (9)The Giving of Detachment to Present Dhamma

The Bodhisattvas have fully realized that the merits of Sāvaka<sup>39</sup>, Paccekabuddha<sup>40</sup> and deities from Twenty-eight Heavens are just expedient measures for Dhamma teaching and they do not have a real self-nature. Thus they keep themselves from being attached with all illusory present Dhamma.

#### (10)The Giving of Complete Body-relinquishing

The Bodhisattvas have fully realized that their mortal bodies are

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<sup>39</sup> “Hearers who have attained one of the four stages of enlightenment by hearing dharma” **Śāriputrābhidharma-śāstra**, (CBETA, T28, no. 1548, p0585a21-p0585a24)

<sup>40</sup> “The Buddhas who enlightened themselves on their own.” **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra**, (CBETA, T25, no. 1509, p0191b06 )

extremely vulnerable and do not have a real self-nature. Thus they would rather attain enlightenment through both the relinquishing of their own mortal bodies and the teaching on mortal-bodies relinquishing to all sentient beings. Thus together with all sentient beings the Bodhisattvas would like to attain pure ultimate enlightenment.

## 2.3 Significance of Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Scriptures

### 2.3.1 Dāna-pāramitā

Dāna-pāramitā, aka the Perfection of Giving-Away, is always viewed as the first pāramitā<sup>41</sup> of Ṣaḍ-pāramitā (the Six Perfections). Briefly speaking, Dāna-pāramitā is a kind of necessary and essential practice suitable for the Bodhisattvas who aspire to enlighten themselves and attain Buddhahood. In the thirty-ninth volume of Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra, it expounds the Nine Features about Bodhisattvas' Dāna-pāramitā as follows<sup>42</sup>:

#### (1) Self-nature Giving

The Bodhisattvas have completely extinguished their attachment to stinginess and no longer cling to anything about their wealth. They are free to give away anything they've got according to different recipients' respective need.

#### (2) The-whole-lot Giving

The-whole-lot Giving comprises two categories: Internal Giving

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<sup>41</sup>“Pāramitā is a foreign language, it's translated as 'Perfection' or 'having reached the opposite shore'. ” **Essay on the Meaning of Mahayana**, (CBETA, T44, no. 1851, p0705b12-p0705b13)

<sup>42</sup> **Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra**, (CBETA, T30, no. 1579, p0505b02-p0510b25)

and External Giving. Internal Giving refers to when the Bodhisattvas give away their whole bodies or part of their bodies. External Giving refers to all the rest.

### (3) Demanding Giving

Demanding Giving is comprised of three categories. Firstly, although the Bodhisattvas may be living in a meagre and impoverished living condition themselves, they would still feel free to give away their limited possessions for the very benefit of those recipients. This kind of Giving belongs to the first category of the Bodhisattvas' Demanding Giving. Secondly, if those offerings are the Bodhisattvas' most valuable and cherished, or favorite, or very rare, or possessing great sentimental value, the Bodhisattvas would still feel free to give them away for the very benefit of those recipients. This kind of Giving belongs to the second category of the Bodhisattvas' Demanding Giving. Thirdly, if those offerings are obtained by the Bodhisattvas through a great deal of labour and efforts, the Bodhisattvas would still feel free to give away all of them for the very benefit of those recipients. This kind of Giving belongs to the third category of the Bodhisattvas' Demanding Giving.

### (4) All-inclusive Giving

All-inclusive Giving includes four dimensions. Firstly, the Bodhisattvas would like to give away possessions of themselves. Secondly, the Bodhisattvas would like to persuade the others to give away their possessions. Thirdly, the Bodhisattvas would like to give offerings to their relatives, parents, wives, slaves, employees, colleagues, dependants etc. Fourthly, the Bodhisattvas would like to give away at the request of those recipients who are in need.

### (5) Wholesome Giving

Wholesome Giving comprises five features: the practice of

Giving-Away with pure volition, the practice of Giving-Away with respectful mind, the practice of Giving-Away by one's own hands, the practice of Giving-Away knowingly being aware of the proper time, the practice of Giving-Away without inflicting afflictions upon any other people.

#### (6) Most-comprehensive Giving

Most-comprehensive Giving includes thirteen aspects: the practice of Giving-Away without being in response to reputation or admiration, the practice of Giving-Away with immenseness, the practice of Giving-Away with delight, the practice of Giving-Away with continuity, the practice of Giving-Away about fields and furniture, the practice of Giving-Away irrelevant to fields or furniture, the practice of Giving-Away about anything, the practice of Giving-Away in anywhere, the practice of Giving-Away at anytime, the practice of Giving-Away without unwholesomeness, the practice of Giving-Away about sentient beings, the practice of Giving-Away about territory and land, the practice of Giving-Away about treasures and grains.

#### (7) Requirement-gratified Giving

Requirement-gratified Giving includes eight dimensions as follows: The Bodhisattvas would like to give food away to the requestors who are deficient in food. The Bodhisattvas would like to give vehicles away to the requestors who are deficient in vehicles. The Bodhisattvas would like to give garments away to the requestors who are deficient in garments. The Bodhisattvas would like to give adornments away to the requestors who are deficient in adornments. The Bodhisattvas would like to give household appliances away to the requestors who are deficient in household appliances. The Bodhisattvas would like to give accessories and garlands away to the requestors who are deficient in accessories and garlands. The Bodhisattvas would like to give away accommodations to the requestors who are deficient in accommodations. The Bodhisattvas



would like to give away brightness to the requestors who are deficient in brightness.

#### (8) Contented Present-and-future Giving

Contented Present-and-future Giving is comprised of nine dimensions as follows: The Bodhisattvas would like to practice Giving-Away with purely fancy possessions to benefit their recipients. The Bodhisattvas would like to detract from their mind of stinginess by the practice of Giving-Away. The Bodhisattvas would like to detract from their attachments to sense objects by the practice of Giving-Away. The Bodhisattvas would like to dispel fear of lions, tigers, wolves and ghosts etc. by the practice of Giving-Away. The Bodhisattvas would like to dispel fear of gangsters, thieves and criminals by the practice of Giving-Away. The Bodhisattvas would like to dispel fear of floods and fire by the practice of Giving-Away. The Bodhisattvas would like to practice Truth-giving in the manner of methodical dharma-delivering. The Bodhisattvas would like to practice Truth-giving in the manner of consistent dharma-preaching. The Bodhisattvas would like to practice Truth-giving in the manner of merit-accumulating.

#### (9) Pure Giving

Pure Giving is comprised of nine dimensions as follows: The Bodhisattvas wouldn't practice Giving-Away with delay, nor out of heretical ideas, nor by accumulating. The Bodhisattvas wouldn't practice Giving-Away by extolling themselves and belittling the others, nor would they practice Giving-Away in response to reputation or admiration, nor would they practice with a subsequent regret. The Bodhisattvas wouldn't give away inferior offerings, nor would they give away with partiality. The Bodhisattvas wouldn't give away with expecting rewards, nor out of fruition.

### 2.3.2 In Samādhirāja Sūtra

In Samādhirāja Sūtra, Shakyamuni Buddha told Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī about the Tenfold Vipāka<sup>43</sup> for Giving-Away as follows:<sup>44</sup>

- (1) To get rid of the mind of jealousy;
- (2) To give away with pure mind;
- (3) To get treasure seized by nobody;
- (4) To pass away with supreme ease;
- (5) To be born in a rich and powerful family;
- (6) To be born in a place where Giving-Away is prevalent;
- (7) To be loved and esteemed by the Fourfold Assembly, i.e. Bhikkhus, Bhikkhunis, Lay Men and Lay Women;
- (8) To attain fearlessness and to feel fearless while preaching to the congregation;
- (9) To have supple hands and feet;
- (10) To learn from noble friends.

### 2.3.3 In Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra

Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra presents the Function of Giving-Away as

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<sup>43</sup> “ In Sanskrit and Pāli, lit ‘ripening’, thus ‘maturation’, ‘fruition’, or ‘result’ ; referring specifically to the ‘maturation’ of past deeds (KARMAN). ” Robert E. Buswell Jr. & Donald S. Lopez Jr. , **The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism**, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 977.

<sup>44</sup> **Samādhirāja Sūtra**, (CBETA, T15, no. 0640, p0620a12-p0620b05)

follows:<sup>45</sup>

(1) The practice of Giving-Away would help Bodhisattvas detach themselves from stinginess.

(2) The practice of Giving-Away would benefit both Bodhisattvas and their recipients. For the Bodhisattvas, the practice of Giving-Away would reap and accumulate Bodhi-wealth which would be served as an indispensable wealth on their paths to attain Buddhahood. For the recipients, the practice of Giving-Away would guide those fully-developed sentient beings on to the way of practicing.

(3) Before the practice of Giving-Away, the Bodhisattvas would feel cheerful. While the practice of Giving-Away is processing, the Bodhisattvas would feel pure-minded. After the practice of Giving-Away, the Bodhisattvas would feel no regret. The Bodhisattvas would keep incessantly soft bliss in their minds due to the virtue and merits gained through the practice of Giving-Away. The virtue and merits of Giving-Away would also help those recipients get rid of their various sufferings such as hunger, thirsty, miscellaneous illnesses, poverty, fear, anxiety etc.

(4) The practice of Giving-Away would grant the Bodhisattvas wealth and well-being, including longevity, immense treasures, distinguished friends, perfect families etc. which would accompany them all along throughout their lives and the lives next to come wherever they are.

## 2.4 Concluding Remark

Giving-Away means to give away one's own properties and belongings including food, clothing, bedding, flowers, incenses, gems, treasure, kingdoms, thrones, wealth, honor, wives, kindreds, pens, ink, scriptures, dharma, truth, courage, head, bones, limbs, eyes, brain,

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<sup>45</sup> *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*, (CBETA, T30, no. 1579, p0495a06-p0495a22)

marrow, blood, flesh, organs, mortal bodies etc. to the other people. It connotes both the relinquishing of stinginess and the cultivating of generosity. Giving-Away aims at helping the others while expect nothing in return. As the Buddhist practitioners, we should fully realize that nothing in the world is permanent or has a real self-nature and we should keep ourselves from being attached with all those illusory stuff. Although we haven't become Bodhisattvas who have enlightened themselves, we should manage to extinguish our attachment to stinginess and get ourselves ready to give away at any time. Bodhi-wealth is indispensable to fully enlightenment. In order to accumulate enough Bodhi-wealth on our way to Buddhahood, we should never stop practicing, perfecting and propagating the Perfection of Giving-Away throughout all our lives.

In brief, as the first Perfection of *Ṣaḍ-pāramitā*, Giving-Away is undoubtedly of great importance. According to the First Chapter of *Ṣaṭpāramitāsamgraha*<sup>46</sup>, the purpose for Giving-Away is “to have mercy on all sentient beings and to guard all sentient beings”; the scope for Giving-Away includes “the covering of the whole universe and the spreading of all oceans and seas”; the method for Giving-Away is “giving food to the starved sentient beings, giving drinks to the thirsty sentient beings, giving clothing away when it's cold, giving coolness away when it's hot, giving medicine away to sick people, and as well giving carts, horses, boats, sedans, all kinds of treasures, wives, kingdoms etc. which were begged by paupers without regret in any circumstance.”

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<sup>46</sup> Skt. Rendered into English as “**Sūtra on the Collection of the Six Perfections**” (CBETA, T03, no. 0152, p0001a03-p0001a20)

## Chapter III

### The Belief of Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Buddhism

#### 3.1 Definition of Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Scriptures

##### 3.1.1 In Life-Source of the Buddha Sutras

In Life-Source of the Buddha Sutras, the Buddha related three kinds of Giving-Away which the Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas should practice industriously. The three kinds of Giving-Away are as follows<sup>47</sup>:

External Giving which involves with clothing, food, treasures, thrones, kingdoms, wives etc. ; Internal Giving, namely Organ-Giving or Organ Giving-Away, which involves with bodies, flesh, heads, eyes, bone marrow, brains etc.; Dharma Giving, which involves with Cattāri Ariyasaccāni<sup>48</sup> and Dvādaśāṅga-buddha-vacana<sup>49</sup> delivering. In Life-Source of the Buddha Sutras, the Buddha reinforced the importance of the three kinds of Giving-Away and also clarified that the practice of the three kinds of Giving-Away would help the Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas perfectly enlighten themselves and finally attain Buddhahood. Herein among the three kinds of Giving-Away, Internal Giving is equivalent to Organ Giving-Away.

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<sup>47</sup> **Life-Source of the Buddha Sutra**, (CBETA, T03, no. 0154, p0107b24-p0107b29)

<sup>48</sup> The Four Noble Truths. “ The Noble Truth of Suffering, The Noble Truth of the Arising of Suffering, The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering, The Noble Truth of the Practice Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.” **Fo Ben Xing Ji Jing**, (CBETA, T03, no. 0190, p0811b05-p0811b08)

<sup>49</sup> “sūtra, geya, vyākaraṇa, gāthā, udāna, nidāna, avadāna, itivṛttaka, jātaka, vaipulya, adbhutadharmā, upadeśa ” **Samyuttāgama** , (CBETA, T02, no. 0099, p0300c05-p0300c08)

### 3.1.2 In Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra<sup>50</sup>

The Thirty-ninth Volume of Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra put forward The-whole-lot Giving as one of the Nine Features about Bodhisattvas' Dāna-pāramitā. Generally speaking, The-whole-lot Giving comprises two categories: Internal Giving and External Giving. Internal Giving, namely Organ-Giving or Organ Giving-Away, refers to when the Bodhisattvas give their whole bodies or part of their bodies away. Specifically, the whole-bodies Giving-Away of the Bodhisattvas relates to when the Bodhisattvas relinquish themselves to live a life of solitude and when they completely subject to someone else who claims themselves being in need. The part-bodies Giving-Away of the Bodhisattvas relates to when the Bodhisattvas give away their hands, feet, heads, eyes, limbs, blood, flesh, bones, bone marrow, brains, muscles etc. at respective requests of different receivers. The Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra herein clarifies that the Bodhisattvas would practice Organ Giving-Away with undefiled mind and are aiming at benefiting all sentient beings and meanwhile are aiming at a quicker perfection of Dāna-pāramitā and finally the Bodhisattvas would gain themselves a quicker attainment of Buddhahood by the practice of The-whole-lot Giving.

### 3.1.3 In Avataṃsaka Sūtra

The twenty-first volume of Avataṃsaka Sūtra has put forward tenfold dimensions of Bodhisattvas' Dāna-pāramitā as follows<sup>51</sup>: Altruistic Giving, The Whole-lot Giving, External Giving, Organ-External Giving, All-inclusive Giving, Detachment-to-Past-Dharma Giving, Detachment-to-Future-Dharma Giving, Detachment-to-Present-Dharma Giving, Ultimate Giving. Figuring as the second dimension of the tenfold dimensions of Bodhisattvas' Dāna-pāramitā, Organ Giving-Away is detailed as follows:

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<sup>50</sup> **Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra**, (CBETA, T30, no. 1579, p0505b02-p0510b25)

<sup>51</sup> CBETA, T10, no. 0279, p0112c06-p0113c15.

My disciples! What is termed as Bodhisattvas' Organ Giving-Away? When the Bodhisattvas are in their youth, they are beautiful and prepossessing with accessories like fragrant flowers and garments. At that time, being attended by Seven Miracle Treasures<sup>52</sup> and reigning upon the Four Great Continents, the Bodhisattvas have just ascended their throne and been crowned as the Cakkavatti-Raja<sup>53</sup>. Then, there may be some aged, indisposed, lonely, rejected and dying people coming to entreat the Bodhisattvas for hands, legs, blood, flesh, heads, eyes, bone marrow etc. These aged, indisposed, lonely, rejected and dying people would come and implore the Bodhisattvas to save them from dying by giving away the Bodhisattvas' own hands, legs, blood, flesh, heads, eyes, bone marrow etc. without any consideration, hesitation or regret. At that point, the Bodhisattvas would think to themselves: The mortal body is bound to decay and become totally useless. I'd better renounce the mortal body and help the other sentient beings as soon as possible. Having made their decisions, subsequently the Bodhisattvas then and there give away their hands, legs, blood, flesh, heads, eyes, bone marrow etc. to those requestors without any regret. This kind of Giving-Away is termed Bodhisattvas' Organ Giving-Away.

In the twenty-first volume of Avataṃsaka Sūtra, being analogous to Organ Giving-Away, Ultimate Giving is the last dimension of the tenfold dimension of Bodhisattvas' Dāna-pāramitā. Ultimate Giving herein, in a sense, can be regarded as another interpretation of Organ Giving-Away and it's detailed as follows:

My disciples! What is termed as Bodhisattvas' Ultimate Giving? For Bodhisattvas, if there were innumerable sentient beings with or without eyes, ears, noses, tongues and limbs etc. coming to them. At that

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<sup>52</sup> “a golden wheel, a white elephant, a prize horse, an unearthly bead, a jade maid, a treasure minister, a military commander” **Dirghāgama**, (CBETA, T01, no. 0001, p0021b15-p0022c20)

<sup>53</sup> The Wheel-turning King. “attended by Seven Miracle Treasures and rules over the Four Great Continents” Ibid.

time, if those innumerable debilitated and incapacitated sentient beings entreated the Bodhisattvas for hands, legs, blood, flesh, heads, eyes, bone marrow etc. to save themselves from defects. Having heard the innumerable sentient beings' beseeching plea for hands, legs, blood, flesh, heads, eyes, bone marrow etc., the Bodhisattvas would give away immediately at the sentient beings' respective requests without any thought of regret even if during the next aeons of time they might be born defected over and over. The Bodhisattvas would observe their mortal bodies as filthy since being fetuses to death. The Bodhisattvas would also be able to observe their mortal bodies as unreal and defiled. On account of these observations, the Bodhisattvas would contemplate thus: 'The body is fragile and impermanent. Why should I adhere to it so tightly? I shall renounce my body and give it away to the other sentient beings. By renouncing my body and giving it away to the other sentient beings, I wish all the sentient beings would be enlightened and would detach themselves from their mortal bodies and finally attain their fully deliverance.' This kind of Giving-Away is termed Bodhisattvas' Ultimate Giving.

## **3.2 Bodhisattvas' Organ Giving-Away Practice**

### **3.2.1 Sacrifice Body to Feed Tiger**

Sacrifice Body to Feed Tiger is a well-known Jātaka tale which is recounted in many Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures including: the tenth volume of *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-uttamarāja-sūtra*<sup>54</sup>, the first volume of *Xianyu Jing*<sup>55</sup>, the first volume of *Jātakamālā*<sup>56</sup>, the first volume of *Pusa Tōushen Yi E Hu Qi Ta Yinyuan Jing*<sup>57</sup>, the eightieth volume of

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<sup>54</sup> CBETA, T16, no. 0665, p0450c18-p0454b25

<sup>55</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0202, p0352b20-p0353b15

<sup>56</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0160, p0332b23-p0333b06

<sup>57</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0172, p0424b08-p0428a06



Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra<sup>58</sup>, the thirty-first volume of Jinglv-Yixiang<sup>59</sup>, the third volume of Pu Sa Ben Xing Jing<sup>60</sup>, the second volume of Puñya-vibhaṅga<sup>61</sup>. In addition, this Jātaka tale is also narrated in Pali Canons. According to Epitome of the Pali Canon, the tale is related as follows<sup>62</sup>:

“Prince Sattva was one of the previous incarnations of Gautama Buddha, according to a jataka story. The son of King Maharatha, he became an ascetic and gained a few disciples. On his walk with his closest disciple, he comes to the edge of a cliff, at the bottom of which is a starving tigress about to eat her newborn cubs in desperation. The bodhisattva tells his disciple to go look for food and he will stay and try to figure out a way to save her and her young. While his disciple is gone, the bodhisattva reflects that while his disciple very well may not find food, his body is just so much flesh (‘a sack of shit,’ literally, as the tradition states), and by giving it up, he can save the tigress' purity and her cubs' lives. He leaps off the cliff to his death, attracting the tigress' attention with his impact, and she eats his body. In this way, he comes closer to perfecting some of the ten Buddhist perfections, those of generosity, renunciation, morality, resolution and equanimity. His disciple returns, having not found food, and, upon discovering what the bodhisattva has done, rejoices in his good deed. He comes back with other disciples and they and the heavens shower the spot with lotus flowers.”

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<sup>58</sup> CBETA, T11, no. 0310, p0461b14-p0464a20

<sup>59</sup> CBETA, T53, no. 2121, p0162a22-p0162c24

<sup>60</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0155, p0119a26-p0119a27

<sup>61</sup> CBETA, T25, no. 1507, p0035a27-p0035b10

<sup>62</sup> Chroniker Press Book, **Epitome of the Pali Canon**, (United Kingdom: Lulu. com, 2012), p. 195.

### 3.2.2 Cut Flesh to Feed Hawk

Cut Flesh to Feed Hawk is another well-known Jātaka tale which is recounted in many Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures including: the first volume of Zhong Jing Zhuan Za Pi Yu<sup>63</sup>, the fourth volume of Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra<sup>64</sup>, the first volume of Jātakamālā<sup>65</sup>, the first volume of Xianyu Jing<sup>66</sup>, the twelfth volume of Māhayānasūtra-lamkāra-sāstra<sup>67</sup>, the third volume of Pu Sa Ben Xing Jing<sup>68</sup>, the tenth volume of Jinglv-Yixiang<sup>69</sup>, the first volume of Śaṭpāramitāsaṃgraha<sup>70</sup>. In addition, this Jātaka tale is also narrated in Pali Canons. According to Epitome of the Pali Canon, the tale is related as follows<sup>71</sup>:

“Sibi Jataka is one of the Jataka tales detailing episodes of the various incarnations of Buddha. Each Jataka tale illustrates the Buddhist ideals of Dharma and sacrifice in various forms. Tradition states that these tales were narrated by Buddha himself during his ministry in India to emphasize that by the constant practice of virtuous deeds one reaches the status of Nirvana or enlightenment.

#### The Story of King Sibi

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<sup>63</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0208, p0531b25-p0531c24

<sup>64</sup> CBETA, T25, no. 1509, p0087c27-p0088c26

<sup>65</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0160, p0333b11-p0334a11

<sup>66</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0202, p0351c05-p0352b11

<sup>67</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0201, p0321a26-p0323c02

<sup>68</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0155, p0119a26-p0119a27

<sup>69</sup> CBETA, T53, no. 2121, p0050c25-p0051a22

<sup>70</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0152, p0001b12-p0001c25

<sup>71</sup> Chroniker Press Book, **Epitome of the Pali Canon**, (United Kingdom: Lulu. com, 2012), p. 196.

King Shibi ruled over the kingdom of Shibi and was known for his philanthropy. One day, Indra and Agni came to test the limits of the king's generosity. The two gods disguised themselves as a hawk and a dove. The hawk started chasing the dove and the dove fell on King Sibi's lap trembling with fear. The hawk demanded the king to surrender the dove as its prey. The king refused saying that the dove had sought his protection.

After much argument the hawk agreed to leave the dove alone if the king would offer a piece of flesh from his own body which was equivalent to the weight of the dove. The king was more than happy to make such a sacrifice. Strangely, after endless slicing off his flesh and placing it on the scale, the king found that he could not equal the weight of the dove. The king threw his entire body on the scale and even then the scales tipped in favor of the dove. At this point the hawk and the dove revealed their true identity and praised the king for his unbounded charitable spirit.”

What should be noted about this Cut Flesh to Feed Hawk Jātaka is the Bodhisattva's title varies in different Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures. In Zhong Jing Zhuan Za Pi Yu, Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra, Jātakamālā, Xianyu Jing, Mahāyānasūtra-lamkāra -sāstra and Pu Sa Ben Xing Jing the Bodhisattva is named Sivi. However, the Bodhisattva is named Sarvadatta in Jinglv-Yixiang and Śaṭpāramitāsamgraha.

As to Bodhisattva Sivi, there is another popular jātika tale recounting how the Bodhisattva gave away his own eyes as a gift. According to Epitome of the Pali Canon, Chroniker believed that the two Sivi jātakas were just of different versions or variations as follows<sup>72</sup>:

“There are many versions of the Sibi Jataka and the one narrated above is also found in the Mahabharata. Another version of the story of Sibi is narrated as follows:

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

Indra came as a blind person to King Sibi and asked him to donate one of his eyes so that he could regain his sight partially. Sibi, however, offered both eyes for the complete restoration of the blind man's sight. The ready willingness of king Sibi to sacrifice both his eyes moved Indra into revealing his true form and blessing the king.

In the Chinese Buddhist tradition, the two versions of the story are attributed to two different kings. The king who sacrifices his eyes is called Kuai-mu Wang-the king with happy eyes.”

The Sivi-Jātaka recounting how the Bodhisattva gave his own eyes away as a gift figures as the No. 499 story of the Jātaka Tale and it's also narrated in the fourth volume of Avadānaśataka<sup>73</sup> etc. In The Jātaka<sup>74</sup> translated from Pāli by various hands under the editorship of Professor E.B. Cowell, the Sivi jātaka relating to eyes-giving is narrated as follows<sup>75</sup>:

“Once upon a time, when the mighty King Sivi reigned in the city of Ariṭṭhapura in the kingdom of Sivi, the Great Being was born as his son. They called his name Prince Sivi. When he grew up, he went to Takkasilā and studied there; then returning, he proved his knowledge to his father the king, and by him was made viceroy. At his father's death he became king himself, and, forsaking the ways of evil, he kept the Ten Royal Virtues and ruled in righteousness. He caused six alms-halls to be built, at the four gates, in the midst of the city, and at his own door. He was munificent in distributing each day six hundred thousand pieces of money. On the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days he never missed visiting the alms-halls to see the distribution made.

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<sup>73</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0200, p0218a23-p0218c13

<sup>74</sup> ed. E.B. Cowell, **The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births**, (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1901), p. 251-256.

<sup>75</sup> tr. W.H.D.Rouse, M.A.

Once on the day of the full moon, the state umbrella had been uplifted early in the morning, and he sat on the royal throne thinking over the gifts he had given. Thought he to himself, ‘Of all outside things there is nothing I have not given; but this kind of giving does not content me. I want to give something which is a part of myself. Well, this day when I go to the alms-hall, I vow that if any one ask not something outside me, but name what is part of myself,—if he should mention my very heart, I will cut open my breast with a spear, and as though I were drawing up a water-lily, stalk and all, from a calm lake, I will pull forth my heart dripping with blood-clots and give it him: if he should name the flesh of my body, I will cut the flesh off my body and give it, as though I were graving with a graving tool: let him name my blood, I will give him my blood, dropping it in his mouth or filling a bowl with it: or again, if one say, I can't get my household work done, come and do me a slave's part at home, then I will leave my royal dress and stand without, proclaiming myself a slave, and slave's work I will do: should any men demand my eyes, I will tear out my eyes and give them, as one might take out the pith of a palm-tree.’ Thus he thought within him:

‘If there be any human gift that I have never made,  
Be it my eyes, I'll give it now, all firm and unafraid.’

Then he bathed himself with sixteen pitchers of perfumed water, and adorned him in all his magnificence, and after a meal of choice food he mounted upon an elephant richly caparisoned and went to the alms-hall. Sakka, perceiving his resolution, thought, ‘King Sivi has determined to give his eyes to any chance comer who may ask. Will you be able to do it, or no?’ He determined to try him; and, in the form of a brahmin old and blind, he posted himself on a high place, and when the king came to his alms-hall he stretched out his hand and stood crying, ‘Long

live the king!' Then the king drove his elephant towards him, and said, 'What do you say, brahmin?' Sakka said to him, 'O great king! in all the inhabited world there is no spot where the fame of your munificent heart has not sounded. I am blind, and you have two eyes.' Then he repeated the first stanza, asking for an eye:

'To ask an eye the old man comes from far, for I have none:

O give me one of yours, I pray, then we shall each have one.'

When the Great Being heard this, thought he, 'Why that is just what I was thinking in my palace before I came! What a fine chance! My heart's desire will be fulfilled today; I shall give a gift which no man ever gave yet.' And he recited the second stanza:

'Who taught thee hitherward to wend thy way,

O mendicant, and for an eye to pray?

The chiefest portion of a man is this,

And hard for men to part with, so they say.'

(The succeeding stanzas are to be read two and two, as may easily be seen.)

'Sujampati among the gods, the same,

Here among men called Maghavā by name,

He taught me hitherward to wend my way,

Begging, and for an eye to urge my claim.

Tis the all-chiefest gift for which I pray.

Give me an eye! O do not say me nay!

Give me an eye, that chiefest gift of gifts,

So hard for men to part with, as they say!'

‘The wish that brought thee hitherward,  
 The wish that did arise,  
 Within thee, be that wish fulfilled.  
 Here, brahmin, take my eyes.’

‘One eye thou didst request of me:  
 Behold, I give thee two!  
 Go with good sight, in all the people's view;  
 So be thy wish fulfilled and now come true.’

So much the king said. But, thinking it not meet that he should root out his eyes and bestow them there and then, he brought the brahmin indoors with him, and sitting on the royal throne, sent for a surgeon named Sīvaka. ‘Take out my eye,’ he then said.

Now all the city rang with the news, that the king wished to tear out his eyes and give them to a brahmin. Then the commander-in-chief, and all the other officials, and those beloved of the king, gathered together from city and harem, and recited three stanzas, that they might turn the king from his purpose:

‘O do not give thine eye, my lord; desert us not, O king!  
 Give money, pearls and coral give, and many a precious  
 thing:

Give thoroughbreds caparisoned, forth be the chariots rolled,  
 O king, drive up the elephants all fine with cloth of gold:

These give, O king! that we may all preserve thee safe  
 and sound,  
 Thy faithful people, with our cars and chariots ranged  
 around.’

Hereupon the king recited three stanzas:

‘The soul which, having sworn to give, is then unfaithful  
found,  
Puts his own neck within a snare low hidden on the  
ground.

The soul which, having sworn to give, is then unfaithful  
found,  
More sinful is than sin, and he to Yama's house is bound.

Unasked give nothing; neither give the thing he asketh  
not,  
This therefore which the brahmin asks, I give it on the  
spot.’

Then the courtiers asked, ‘What do you desire in giving your  
eyes?’ repeating a stanza:

‘Life, beauty, joy, or strength—what is the prize,  
O king, which motive for your deed supplies?  
Why should the king of Sivi-land supreme  
For the next world's sake thus give up his eyes?’

The king answered them in a stanza:

‘In giving thus, not glory is my goal,  
Not sons, not wealth, or kingdoms to control:  
This is the good old way of holy men;  
Of giving gifts enamoured is my soul.’

To the Great Being's words the courtiers answered nothing; so the  
Great Being addressed Sīvaka the surgeon in a stanza:

‘A friend and comrade, Sīvaka, art thou:  
Do as I bid thee—thou hast skill enow—



Take out my eyes, for this is my desire,  
And in the beggar's hands bestow them now.'

But Sīvaka said, 'Bethink you, my lord! to give one's eyes is no light thing.' — 'Sīvaka, I have considered; don't delay, nor talk too much in my presence.' Then he thought, 'It is not fitting that a skillful surgeon like me should pierce a king's eyes with the lancet,' so he pounded a number of simples, rubbed a blue lotus with the powder, and brushed it over the right eye: round rolled the eye, and there was great pain. 'Reflect, my king, I can make it all right.' — 'Go on, friend, no delay, please.' Again he rubbed in the powder, and brushed it over the eye: the eye started from the socket, the pain was worse than before. 'Reflect, my king, I can still restore it.' — 'Be quick with the job!' A third time he smeared a sharper powder, and applied it: by the drug's power round went the eye, out it came from the socket, and hung dangling at the end of the tendon. 'Reflect, my king, I can yet restore it again.' — 'Be quick.' The pain was extreme, blood was trickling, the king's garments were stained with the blood. The king's women and the courtiers fell at his feet, crying, 'My lord, do not sacrifice your eyes!' loudly they wept and wailed. The king endured the pain, and said, 'My friend, be quick.' 'Very well, my lord,' said the physician; and with his left hand grasping the eyeball took a knife in his right, and severing the tendon, laid the eye in the Great Being's hand. He, gazing with his left eye at the right and enduring the pain, said, 'Brahmin, come here.' When the brahmin came near, he went on— 'The eye of omniscience is dearer than this eye a hundred fold, aye a thousand fold: there you have my reason for this action,' and he gave it to the brahmin, who raised it and placed it in his own eye socket. There it remained fixt by his power like a blue lotus in bloom. When the Great Being with his left eye saw that eye in his head, he cried— 'Ah, how good is this my gift of an eye!' and thrilled straightway with the joy that had arisen within him, he gave the other eye also. Sakka placed

this also in the place of his own eye, and departed from the king's palace, and then from the city, with the gaze of the multitude upon him, and went away to the world of gods.

The Master, explaining this, repeated a stanza and a half:

‘So Sivi spurred on Sīvaka, and he fulfilled his mind.  
He drew the king’s eyes out, and to the brahmin these  
consigned:  
And now the brahmin had the eyes, and now the king  
was blind.’

In a short while the king's eyes began to grow; as they grew, and before they reached the top of the holes, a lump of flesh rose up inside like a ball of wool, filling the cavity; they were like a doll's eyes, but the pain ceased. The Great Being remained in the palace a few days. Then he thought, ‘What has a blind man to do with ruling? I will hand over my kingdom to the courtiers, and go into my park, and become an ascetic, and live as a holy man.’ He summoned his courtiers, and told them what he intended to do. ‘One man,’ said he, ‘shall be with me, to wash my face, and so forth, and to do all that is proper, and you must fasten a cord to guide me to the retiring places.’ Then calling for his charioteer, he bade him prepare the chariot. But the courtiers would not allow him to go in the chariot; they brought him out in a golden litter, and set him down by the lake side, and then, guarding him all around, returned. The king sat in the litter thinking of his gift.

At that moment Sakka's throne became hot; and he pondering perceived the reason. ‘I will offer the king a boon,’ thought he, ‘and make his eye well again.’ So to that place he came; and not far off from the Great Being, he walked up and down, up and down.

To explain this the Master recited these stanzas:

‘A few days past; the eyes began to heal, and sound to appear:

The fostering king of Sivi then sent for his charioteer.

Prepare the chariot, charioteer; to me then make it known:

I go to park and wood and lake with lilies overgrown.

He sat him in a litter by the waterside, and here Sujampati, the king of gods, great Sakka, did appear.’

‘Who is that?’ cried the Great Being, when he heard the sound of the footsteps. Sakka repeated a stanza:

‘Sakka, the king of gods, am I; to visit thee I came:  
Choose thou a boon, O royal sage! whate’er thy wish  
may name.’

The king replied with another stanza:

‘Wealth, strength, and treasure without end, these I have  
left behind:

O Sakka, death and nothing more I want: for I am blind.’

Then Sakka said, ‘Do you ask death, King Sivi, because you wish to die, or because you are blind?’—‘Because I am blind, my lord.’—‘The gift is not everything in itself, your majesty, it is given with an eye to the future. Yet there is a motive relating to this visible world. Now you were asked for one eye, and gave two; make an Act of Truth about it.’ Then he began a stanza:

‘O warrior, lord of biped kind, declare the thing that's true:

If you the truth declare, your eye shall be restored to you.’

On hearing this, the Great Being replied, ‘If you wish to give me an eye, Sakka, do not try any other means, but let my eye be restored as a consequence of my gift.’ Sakka said, ‘Though they call me Sakka, king of the gods, your majesty, yet I cannot give an eye to any one else; but by the fruit of the gift by thee given, and by nothing else, your eye shall be restored to you.’ Then the other repeated a stanza, maintaining that his gift was well given:

‘Whatever sort, whatever kind of suitor shall draw near,  
Whoever comes to ask of me, he to my heart is dear:  
If these my solemn words be true, now let my eye  
appear!’

Even as he uttered the words, one of his eyes grew up in the socket. Then he repeated a couple of stanzas to restore the other:

‘A brahmin came to visit me, one of my eyes to crave:  
Unto that brahmin mendicant the pair of them I gave.

A greater joy and more delight that action did afford.  
If these my solemn words be true, be the other eye  
restored!’

On the instant appeared his second eye. But these eyes of his were neither natural nor divine. An eye given by Sakka as the brahmin, cannot be natural, we know; on the other hand, a divine eye cannot be produced in anything that is injured. But these eyes are called the eyes of Truth Absolute and Perfect. At the time when they came into existence, the whole royal retinue by

Sakka's power was assembled; and Sakka standing in the midst of the throng, uttered praise in a couple of stanzas:

‘O fostering King of Sivi land, these holy hymns of thine  
Have gained for thee as bounty free this pair of eyes  
divine.

Through rock and wall, o’er hill and dale, whatever bar  
may be,  
A hundred leagues on every side those eyes of thine shall  
see.’

Having uttered these stanzas, poised in the air before the multitude, with a last counsel to the Great Being that he should be vigilant, Sakka returned to the world of gods. And the Great Being, surrounded by his retinue, went back in great pomp to the city, and entered the palace called Candaka, the Peacock's Eye. The news that he had got his eyes again spread abroad all through the Kingdom of Sivi. All the people gathered together to see him, with gifts in their hands. ‘Now all this multitude is come together,’ thought the Great Being, ‘I shall praise my gift that I gave.’ He caused a great pavilion to be put up at the palace gate, where he seated himself upon the royal throne, with the white umbrella spread above him. Then the drum was sent beating about the city, to collect all the trade guilds. Then he said, ‘O people of Sivi! now you have beheld these divine eyes, never eat food without giving something away!’ and he repeated four stanzas, declaring the Law:

‘Who, if he's asked to give, would answer no,  
Although it be his best and choicest prize?  
People of Sivi thronged in concourse, ho!  
Come hither, see the gift of God, my eyes!

Through rock and wall, o'er hill and dale, whatever bar  
 may be,  
 A hundred leagues on every side these eyes of mine can  
 see.

Self-sacrifice in all men mortal living,  
 Of all things is most fine:  
 I sacrificed a mortal eye; and giving,  
 Received an eye divine.

See, people! see, give ere ye eat, let others have a share.  
 This done with your best will and care,  
 Blameless to heaven you shall repair.'

In these four verses he declared the Law; and after that, every fortnight, on the holy day, even every fifteenth day, he declared the Law in these same verses without cessation to a great gathering of people. Hearing which, the people gave alms and did good deeds, and went to swell the hosts of heaven.

When the Master had ended this discourse, he said, 'Thus Brethren, wise men of old gave to any chance comer, who was not content with outside gifts, even their own eyes, taken out of their head.' Then he identified the Birth: 'At that time Ānanda was Sīvaka the physician, Anaruddha was Sakka, the Buddha's followers were the people, and I myself was King Sivi.' "

### **3.2.3 Sasa Jātaka**

Sasa Jātaka figures as No.316 story in the Jātaka Tale. It narrated how the Hare Bodhisattva gave itself as an offering by plunging its body into the fire and is related in the fourth volume of Avadānaśataka<sup>76</sup>, the

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<sup>76</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0200, p0221b15-p0221c19

second volume of *The Sutra of Miscellaneous Jewels*<sup>77</sup>, the first volume of *Yi Qie Zhi Guang Ming Xian Ren Ci Xin Yin Yuan Bu Shi Rou Jing*<sup>78</sup>, the fourth volume of *Life-Source of the Buddha Sutra*<sup>79</sup> etc. In *The Jātaka* translated from Pāli by various hands under the editorship of Professor E.B. Cowell, the Sasa jātaka is narrated as follows<sup>80</sup>:

“Once upon a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as a young hare and lived in a wood. On one side of this wood was the foot of a mountain, on another side a river, and on the third side a border-village. The hare had three friends—a monkey, a jackal and an otter. These four wise creatures lived together and each of them got his food on his own hunting-ground, and in the evening they again came together. The hare in his wisdom by way of admonition preached the Truth to his three companions, teaching that alms are to be given, the moral law to be observed, and holy days to be kept. They accepted his admonition and went each to his own part of the jungle and dwelt there.

And so in the course of time the Bodhisatta one day observing the sky, and looking at the moon knew that the next day would be a fast-day, and addressing his three companions he said, ‘Tomorrow is a fast-day. Let all three of you take upon you the moral precepts, and observe the holy day. To one that stands fast in moral practice, almsgiving brings a great reward. Therefore feed any beggars that come to you by giving them food from your own table.’ They readily assented, and abode each in his own place of dwelling.

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<sup>77</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0203, p0454b13-p0454c11

<sup>78</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0183, p0457c19-p0459a18

<sup>79</sup> CBETA, T03, no. 0154, p0094b03-p0094c13

<sup>80</sup> ed. E.B. Cowell, tr. by H.T. Francis and R. A. Neil, **The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha’s Former Births, Volume III** (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1897), p. 35-37.

On the morrow quite early in the morning, the otter sallied forth to seek his prey and went down to the bank of the Ganges. Now it came to pass that a fisherman had landed seven red fish, and stringing them together on a withe, he had taken and buried them in the sand on the river's bank. And then he dropped down the stream, catching more fish. The otter scenting the buried fish, dug up the sand till he came upon them, and pulling them out cried aloud thrice, 'Does any one own these fish?' And not seeing any owner he took hold of the withe with his teeth and laid the fish in the jungle where he dwelt, intending to eat them at a fitting time. And then he lay down, thinking how virtuous he was! The jackal too sallied forth in quest of food and found in the hut of a field-watcher two spits, a lizard and a pot of milk curd. And after thrice crying aloud, "To whom do these belong?" and not finding an owner, he put on his neck the rope for lifting the pot, and grasping the spits and the lizard with his teeth, he brought and laid them in his own lair, thinking, 'In due season I will devour them,' and so lay down, reflecting how virtuous he had been.

The monkey also entered the clump of trees, and gathering a bunch of mangoes laid them up in his part of the jungle, meaning to eat them in due season, and then lay down, thinking how virtuous he was. But the Bodhisatta in due time came out, intending to browse on the kuça grass, and as he lay in the jungle, the thought occurred to him, 'It is impossible for me to offer grass to any beggars that may chance to appear, and I have no oil or rice and such like. If any beggar shall appeal to me, I shall have to give him my own flesh to eat.' At this splendid display of virtue, Sakka's white marble throne manifested signs of heat. Sakka on reflection discovered the cause and resolved to put this royal hare to the test. First of all he went and stood by the otter's dwelling-place, disguised as a brahmin, and being asked why he stood there, he replied, 'Wise Sir, if I could get something to eat, after keeping the fast, I would perform all my priestly duties.'



The otter replied, 'Very well, I will give you some food,' and as he conversed with him he repeated the first stanza:—

Seven red fish I safely brought to land from Ganges  
flood,  
O brahmin, eat thy fill, I pray, and stay within this wood.

The brahmin said, 'Let be till tomorrow. I will see to it by and bye.' Next he went to the jackal, and when asked by him why he stood there, he made the same answer. The jackal, too, readily promised him some food, and in talking with him repeated the second stanza:—

A lizard and a jar of curds, the keeper's evening meal,  
Two spits to roast the flesh withal I wrongfully did steal:  
Such as I have I give to thee: O brahmin, eat, I pray,  
If thou shouldst deign within this wood a while with us to  
stay.

Said the brahmin, 'Let be till tomorrow. I will see to it by and bye.' Then he went to the monkey, and when asked what he meant by standing there, he answered just as before. The monkey readily offered him some food, and in conversing with him gave utterance to the third stanza:—

An icy stream, a mango ripe, and pleasant greenwood  
shade,  
Tis thine to enjoy, if thou canst dwell content in forest  
glade.

Said the brahmin, 'Let be till tomorrow. I will see to it by and bye.' And he went to the wise bare, and on being asked by him why he stood there, he made the same reply. The Bodhisatta on hearing what he wanted was highly delighted, and said,

‘Brahmin, you have done well in coming to me for food. This day will I grant you a boon that I have never granted before, but you shall not break the moral law by taking animal life. Go, friend, and when you have piled together logs of wood, and kindled a fire, come and let me know, and I will sacrifice myself by falling into the midst of the flames, and when my body is roasted, you shall eat my flesh and fulfill all your priestly duties.’ And in thus addressing him the hare uttered the fourth stanza:—

Nor sesame, nor beans, nor rice have I as food to give,  
But roast with fire my flesh I yield, if thou with us  
wouldst live.

Sakka, on hearing what he said, by his miraculous power caused a heap of burning coals to appear, and came and told the Bodhisatta. Rising from his bed of kuça grass and coming to the place, he thrice shook himself that if there were any insects within his coat, they might escape death. Then offering his whole body as a free gift he sprang up, and like a royal swan, alighting on a cluster of lotuses, in an ecstasy of joy he fell on the heap of live coals. But the flame failed even to heat the pores of the hair on the body of the Bodhisatta, and it was as if he had entered a region of frost. Then he addressed Sakka in these words: ‘Brahmin, the fire you have kindled is icy-cold: it fails to heat even the pores of the hair on my body. What is the meaning of this?’ ‘Wise sir,’ he replied, ‘I am no brahmin. I am Sakka, and I have come to put your virtue to the test.’ The Bodhisatta said, ‘If not only thou, Sakka, but all the inhabitants of the world were to try me in this matter of almsgiving, they would not find in me any unwillingness to give,’ and with this the Bodhisatta uttered a cry of exultation like a lion roaring. Then said Sakka to the Bodhisatta, ‘O wise hare, he thy virtue known throughout a whole won.’ And squeezing the mountain, with the essence thus extracted, he daubed the sign of a hare on the orb of the moon.

And after depositing the hare on a bed of young kuṣa grass, in the same wooded part of the jungle, Sakka returned to his own place in heaven. And these four wise creatures dwelt happily and harmoniously together, fulfilling the moral law and observing holy days, till they departed to fare according to their deeds.

The Master, when he had ended his lesson, revealed the Truths and identified the Birth:—At the conclusion of the Truths the householder, who gave as a free-gift all the Buddhist requisites, attained fruition of the First Path:—‘At that time Ānanda was the otter, Moggallāna was the jackal, Sāriputta the monkey, and I myself was the wise hare.’”

Apart from Sacrifice Body to Feed Tiger, Cut Flesh to Feed Hawk and Sasa Jātaka, there are lots of other tales referring Gautama Buddhisattva practicing Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna scriptures, e.g., Being A Flesh Mountain to Rescue Sentient Beings<sup>81</sup> & Being A Titanic Fish to Reduce Hunger<sup>82</sup> in the eleventh volume of Jinglv-Yixiang, The Lotus King Incarnated As Ruby Fish in the fourth volume of Avadānaśataka<sup>83</sup>, The Wisdom Prince Donate Flesh to Ailing Bhikkhu<sup>84</sup> in the thirty-first volume of Jinglv-Yixiang, The Lotus Prince Donate Bone Marrow to The Invalid<sup>85</sup> in the tenth volume of Jinglv-Yixiang etc.

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<sup>81</sup> CBETA, T53, no. 2121, p0163b20-p0163c06

<sup>82</sup> CBETA, T53, no. 2121, p0060c15-p0061a10

<sup>83</sup> CBETA, T04, no. 0200, p0217a07-p0217c04

<sup>84</sup> CBETA, T53, no. 2121, p0057a02-p0057b08

<sup>85</sup> CBETA, T53, no. 2121, p0055b17-p0055b24

### 3.2.4 Bhaiṣajya-rāja Bodhisattva<sup>86</sup>

The Medicine King Bodhisattva and the Superior Physician Bodhisattva had ever been brothers during their past incarnations. Their merits and past karma are elaborated in the canon “Visualization of the Two Bodhisattvas, the King of Medicine and the Superior Physician”. According to “Visualization of the Two Bodhisattvas, the King of Medicine and the Superior Physician”, at the request of venerable Ānanda, the Buddha recounted both the Medicine King Bodhisattva’s and the Superior Physician Bodhisattva’s past karma as follows:

There were two brothers during the reign of Lazurite Tathāgata. The big brother is called Elder Constellation Light and the younger brother is called Elder Electricity Light. The two brothers were benevolent and practiced almsgiving including giving away effective medicines to the Sangha and by the merits of which they vowed to enlighten themselves and to attain the ultimate Buddhahood in the future. The Buddha told Venerable Ānanda that after Elder Constellation Light had given supreme medicine offerings to the Sangha, the supreme medicine offerings correspondingly benefited the whole Sangha a lot. Out of the effect of his supreme medicine, Elder Constellation Light cured the Sangha’s two kinds of diseases: firstly Disorder of the Four Elements, secondly Ignorance and Malice. In order to repay such a great boon, the Sangha decided to reward Elder Constellation Light with a title - King of Medicine, which was named in accordance with Elder Constellation Light’s practice. Meanwhile, the younger brother is titled Superior Physician in accordance with Elder Electricity Light’s practice. Herein, the Buddha made it clear that both the Medicine King Bodhisattva and the Superior Physician Bodhisattva had practiced since eons ago and they had already perfected their merits and fully enlightened themselves.

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<sup>86</sup> (Skt.), aka Bodhisattva Medicine King. “to cure two kinds of diseases: firstly Disorder of the Four Elements, secondly Ignorance and Malice... is named Bodhisattva Medicine King according to his practice.” **Visualization of the Two Bodhisattvas, the King of Medicine and the Superior Physician**, (T20, no. 1161, p0880c06-p0666a22)

Herein the Buddha told Maitreya<sup>87</sup> that the Medicine King Bodhisattva would attain Buddhahood earlier and would be titled Pure-eyes Tathāgata. The Superior Physician Bodhisattva would attain Buddhahood subsequently and would be titled Pure-garbha Tathāgata.

According to Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra<sup>88</sup>, the former incarnation of Medicine King Bodhisattva is named Loveliness Bodhisattva (Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing). In Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, the Star Constellation King Bodhisattva once put forward the question on how Medicine King Bodhisattva practiced Organ Giving-Away. According to The Threefold Lotus Sutra, the English edition of the story about how Bodhisattva Medicine King practiced Body Giving-Away is recorded as follows<sup>89</sup>:

At that time the Bodhisattva Star Constellation King Flower addressed the Buddha, saying: ‘World-honored One! Why does the Medicine King Bodhisattva wander in the saha-world? World-honored One! What hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis of nayutas of distresses the Bodhisattva Medicine King has to suffer! Excellent will it be, World-honored One, if you will be pleased to explain a little, so that the gods, dragon spirits, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahoragas, human and nonhuman beings, and the bodhisattvas who have come from other lands, as well as these shravakas, hearing it will all rejoice.’

Thereupon the Buddha addressed the Bodhisattva Star Constellation King Flower: ‘Of yore, in the past, kalpas ago incalculable as the sands of the Ganges River, there was a buddha

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<sup>87</sup> Successor to Lord Shakyamuni, who will be descending and realizing Buddhahood in the Saha World after Lord Shakyamuni’s retirement. **Maitreyavyākaraṇa**, (CBETA, T14, no. 0453, p0421a06-p0423b11)

<sup>88</sup> CBETA, T09, no. 0262, p0053a04-p0054a12

<sup>89</sup> Bunno Katotr anslated, **The Threefold Lotus Sutra**, (Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Company, 1993), p. 190-194.

entitled Sun Moon Brilliance Tathagata, Worshipful, All Wise, Perfectly Enlightened in Conduct, Well Departed, Understander of the World, Peerless Leader, Controller, Teacher of Gods and Men, Buddha, World-honored One. That buddha had eighty kotis of great bodhisattva-mahasattvas and a great assembly of shravakas numerous as the sands of seventy-two Ganges rivers. The lifetime of that buddha was forty-two thousand kalpas, and the lifetime of his bodhisattvas was the same. His domain had no women, no hells, no hungry ghosts, no animals, no asuras, and no disasters; its land was level as one's palm and made of lapis lazuli; it was adorned with jewel trees, covered with jewel curtains, hung with flags of jewel flowers, and jeweled vases and censers were seen everywhere in the country. Terraces were there of the precious seven, with trees for each terrace, the trees distant from it a full arrow's flight. Under all these jewel trees bodhisattvas and shravakas were seated. Above each of these platforms were a hundred kotis of gods performing celestial music and singing praises to the buddha in homage to him. Then that buddha preached the Law-Flower Sutra to the Bodhisattva Loveliness and all the bodhisattvas and host of shravakas. This Bodhisattva Loveliness had rejoiced to follow the course of suffering and in the Law of the Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance had made zealous progress, wandering about single-mindedly seeking the Buddha for fully twelve thousand years, after which he attained the contemplation of revelation of all forms. Having attained this contemplation he was very joyful and reflected thus, saying: 'My attainment of the contemplation of revelation of all forms is entirely due to the power resulting from hearing the Law-Flower Sutra. Let me now pay homage to the Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance and the Law-Flower Sutra.' No sooner did he enter into this contemplation than he rained from the sky mandarava flowers, maha- mandarava flowers, and fine dust of hard and black sandalwood, which filled the sky and descended like a cloud; he rained also incense of inner-sea-shore

sandalwood; six karshas of this incense are worth a saha-world. All this he did in homage to the Buddha.

Having made this offering, he arose from contemplation and reflected within himself, thus saying: 'Though I by my supernatural power have paid homage to the Buddha, it is not as good as offering my body.' Thereupon he partook of many kinds of incense--sandalwood, kunduruka, turushka, prikka, aloes, and resin incense--and drank the essential oil of campaka and other flowers. After fully twelve hundred years, he anointed his body with perfumed unguents, and in the presence of the Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance wrapped himself in a celestial precious garment, bathed in perfumed oil, and by his transcendent vow burned his own body. Its brightness universally illuminated worlds fully numerous as the sands of eighty kotis of Ganges rivers, whose buddhas simultaneously extolled him, saying: 'Good, good! Good son! This is true zeal. It is called the True Law Homage to the Tathagata. Offerings of flowers, scents, necklaces, incense, sandal powder, unguents, flags and canopies of celestial silk, and incense of inner-sea-shore sandalwood, offerings of such various things as these cannot match it, nor can the giving of alms, countries, cities, wives, and children match it. My good son! This is called the supreme gift, the most honored and sublime of gifts, because it is the Law homage to the tathagatas.' After making this statement they all became silent. His body continued burning for twelve hundred years, after which his body came to an end.

The Bodhisattva Loveliness, after making such a Law offering as this, on his death was again born in the domain of the Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance, being suddenly metamorphosed, sitting cross-legged in the house of King Pure Virtue, to whom as his father he forthwith spoke thus in verse:

Know, O great king!

Sojourning in that other abode,  
 I instantly attained the contemplation of  
 The revelation of all forms,  
 And devotedly performed a deed of great zeal  
 By sacrificing the body I loved.

After uttering this verse, he spoke to his father, saying: 'The Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance is still existing as of yore. Having first paid homage to that buddha, I obtained the dharani of interpreting the utterances of all the living, and moreover heard this Law-Flower Sutra in eight hundred thousand myriad kotis of nayutas, kankaras, bimbaras, akshobhyas of verse. Great King! I ought now to return and pay homage to that buddha.' Having said this, he thereupon took his seat on a tower of the precious seven, arose in the sky as high as seven tala trees, and on reaching that buddha, bowed down to his feet, and folding his ten fingers, extolled the buddha in verse:

Countenance most wonderful,  
 Radiance illuminating the universe:  
 Formerly I paid homage to thee,  
 Now again I return to behold.

Then the Bodhisattva Loveliness, having uttered this verse, spoke to that buddha, saying: 'World-honored One! The World-honored One is still present in the world.'

Thereupon the Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance addressed the Bodhisattva Loveliness : 'My good son! The time of my nirvana has come. The time of my extinction has arrived. You may arrange my bed. Tonight I shall enter parinirvana.' Again he commanded the Bodhisattva Loveliness: 'My good son! I commit the Buddha-law to you. And I deliver to you all my bodhisattvas and chief disciples, my Law of Perfect Enlightenment, also my



three-thousand-great-thousandfold world made of the precious seven, its jewel trees and jewel towers, and my celestial attendants. I also entrust to you whatever relics may remain after my extinction. Let them be distributed and paid homage to far and wide. Let some thousands of stupas be erected.' The Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance, having thus commanded the Bodhisattva Loveliness, in the last division of the night entered into nirvana.

Thereupon the Bodhisattva Loveliness, seeing the buddha was extinct, mourned, was deeply moved and distressed, and ardently longed for him. Then piling up a pyre of inner seashore sandalwood, he paid homage to the body of that buddha and burned it. After the fire died out he gathered the relics, made eighty-four thousand precious urns, and erected eighty-four thousand stupas high as a threefold world, adorned with banner towers, hung with flags and canopies and with many precious bells. Then the Bodhisattva Loveliness again reflected within himself, saying: 'Though I have paid this homage, my mind is not yet satisfied. Let me pay still further homage to the relics.' Thereupon he addressed the bodhisattvas and chief disciples, as well as gods, dragons, yakshas, and all the host, saying: 'Pay attention with all your mind, for I am now about to pay homage to the relics of the Buddha Sun Moon Brilliance.' Having said this, he thereupon before the eighty-four thousand stupas burned his arms, with their hundred felicitous signs, for seventy-two thousand years in homage to him, and led a numberless host of seekers after shravakaship and countless asamkhyeyas of people to set their mind on Perfect Enlightenment, causing them all to abide in the contemplation of revelation of all forms.

Then all those bodhisattvas, gods, men, asuras, and others, seeing him without arms, were sorrowful and distressed and lamented, saying: 'This Bodhisattva Loveliness is indeed our teacher and instructor, but now his arms are burned off and his body is

deformed.' Thereupon the Bodhisattva Loveliness in the great assembly made this vow, saying: 'Having given up both my arms, I shall yet assuredly obtain a buddha's golden body. If this assurance be true and not false, let both my arms be restored as they were before.' As soon as he had made this vow, his arms were of themselves restored, all brought to pass through the excellence of this bodhisattva's felicitous virtue and wisdom. At that moment the three-thousand-great-thousandfold world was shaken in the six ways, the sky rained various flowers, and gods and men all attained that which they had never before experienced.

The Buddha then addressed the Bodhisattva Star Constellation King Flower: 'In your opinion what say you, was the Bodhisattva Loveliness some other person? It was indeed the present Medicine King Bodhisattva. His self-sacrifice and gifts were of such countless hundred thousand myriad kotis of nayutas in number as these. Star Constellation King Flower! If anyone with his mind set on and aiming at Perfect Enlightenment is able to burn the fingers of his hand or even a toe of his foot in homage to a buddha's stupa he will surpass him who pays homage with domains, cities, wives, children, and his three-thousand-great-thousandfold land with its mountains, forests, rivers, pools, and all its precious things.'

### **3.3 Monks' Organ Giving-Away Practice in History**

In Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism, the foundation of monks' Organ Giving-Away practicing lies in the well-known story which is talking about how the Medicine King Bodhisattva burnt his own body off as an offering to the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon and to the Dharma Flower Sutra twice and this story is recorded in the 23rd chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra. According to the Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, if there is a person who has made his firm resolve to obtain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi would like to burn off a

finger or even a toe of his as an offering to a Buddha stupa, thus the virtue and merits of this person's offering would surpass the virtue and merits of all the other kinds of offerings including the virtue and merits of the offerings of kingdoms, cities, wives, children, the Three-thousand-great-thousand realms, mountains, forests, rivers, ponds, and all kinds of treasures and jewels. According to Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away is so surpassing and prodigious that lots of subsequent Chinese Mahāyāna monks tried similar Organ Giving-Away practice and burnt themselves off to pay homage to the Buddha or Dharma. Here is a brief study of those monks who are categorized by the periods they lived.

### 3.3.1 Biography of Eminent Monks<sup>90</sup>

The Biography of Eminent Monks records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from Eastern Han Dynasty to Period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties. Because the book's author Hui Jiao is from Liang Dynasty and so sometimes the book is also called as the Biography of Eminent Monks in Liang Dynasty. There's a Perishing Episode in the twelfth volume of the Biography of Eminent Monks in Liang Dynasty and it records altogether eleven monks who perished out of the reason of Body Giving-Away. These eleven monks are listed as follows:

#### (1) Sengqun Shi

In order to save an injured duck, he lost his life for a shortage of water.

#### (2) Tancheng Shi

In order to save villagers, he fed his own body to a tiger.

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<sup>90</sup> CBETA, T50, no. 2059, p0404a02-p0405c22

## (3)Fajin Shi

In order to save the refugees, he sliced his flesh to feed the starving people.

## (4)Sengfu Shi

In order to stop a mob bandits from tearing a kid's heart out, he cut open his own belly.

## (5)Fayu Shi

Looking up to the Medicine King Bodhisattva a lot, he followed the Medicine King Bodhisattva's way and burnt himself to death.

## (6)Huishao Shi

Chanting the twenty-third chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra, he followed the Medicine King Bodhisattva's way and burnt himself to death.

## (7)Sengyu Shi

Inspired by the Medicine King Bodhisattva and chanting the twenty-third chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra, he followed the Medicine King Bodhisattva's way and burnt himself to death.

## (8)Huiyi Shi

Inspired by the Medicine King Bodhisattva and chanting the twenty-third chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra, he followed the Medicine King Bodhisattva's way and burnt himself to death.

## (9)Sengqing Shi

At first he burned three fingers as an offering and then he burnt his whole body off at the age of twenty-three.

(10)Faguang Shi

He practiced asceticism and burnt himself to death at the age of forty-one.

(11)Tanhong Shi

He had burnt his body twice. Only in the second time did he succeed, while in the first time he was rescued by his disciples.

### **3.3.2 A Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks<sup>91</sup>**

The A Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from the beginning of Liang Dynasty to the middle of Tang Dynasty. Because the book's author Dao Xuan is from Tang Dynasty and so sometimes the book is also called as the Biography of Eminent Monks in Tang Dynasty. There's a Perishing Episode in the twenty-seventh volume of the Biography of Eminent Monks in Tang Dynasty and it records altogether twelve monks who practiced Body Giving-Away. These twelve monks are listed as follows:

(1)Faning Shi

Faning Shi burnt his body off in front of the Buddha image at the age of seventy. He burnt one finger first, the arm next and gradually he burnt off his whole body. The burning lasted for seven days and nights.

(2)Sengya Shi

He burnt five fingers first, left hand next, then right hand and

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<sup>91</sup> CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p0678a15-p0684b03

lastly he burnt his whole body off.

(3)Puyuan Shi

There was one villain who asked hand from Puyuan Shi and he just cut his elbow off and gave it to that villain without any hesitation.

(4)Puji Shi

In order to revive Buddhism, he made a decision to sacrifice himself as an offering and leapt off the cliff to death.

(5)Puan Shi

In order to save three pigs, he sliced his own flesh off.

(6)Dazhi Shi

He burnt his arm off and passed away at the age of forty-three.

(7)Zhiming Shi

He got himself decapitated without the slightest fear.

(8)Xuanlan Shi

He made a decision to practice asceticism and plunged himself into the water.

(9)Fakuang Shi

Being tired of the continuum of samsara, he committed suicide with a sword.

## (10)Huitong Shi

He followed the Medicine King Bodhisattva's way and burnt his body to death.

## (11)Shaosheli

He would like to give away his body to insects and birds. However, the insects and birds just wouldn't feed on him.

## (12)Daoxiu Shi

He practiced asceticism and lived a severely rigorous and austere life.

### 3.3.3 Biography of Eminent Monks in Song Dynasty<sup>92</sup>

The Biography of Eminent Monks in Song Dynasty records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from the middle of Tang Dynasty to Song Dynasty. Because the book's author Zan Ning is from Song Dynasty and so this book is called the Biography of Eminent Monks in Song Dynasty. There's a Perishing Episode in the twenty-third volume of the Biography of Eminent Monks in Song Dynasty and it records altogether seventeen monks who had ever practiced Body Giving-Away. These seventeen monks are listed as follows:

## (1)Sengzang Shi

In the hot summer, he would strip off his clothes and step into the weeds to feed mosquitoes with his flesh.

## (2)Wuran Shi

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<sup>92</sup> CBETA, T50, no. 2061, p0855a27-p0861c27

He would burn one of his fingers whenever the recipients of his alms-giving amounted to one million. He had burned off all of his ten fingers when the recipients of his alms-giving amounted to ten million. At last, from the top of head to the bottom of feet, Wuran Shi burnt his whole body off.

(3)Dinglan Shi

To memorialize his parents, he would climb onto the mountain nakedly and feed his flesh to mosquitoes. He also burnt off his arms, shoulder and even tore his ears and eyes away to feed hawks and at last he burnt his own body to death.

(4)Hongxiu Shi

In order to safeguard his temple, he got his head decapitated by the mobs without any fear.

(5)quanhuo Shi

He got himself killed by mobs without any fear.

(6)Yuanhui Shi

He burnt his left thumb while chanting the twenty-third chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra.

(7)Shucaao Shi

He practiced asceticism and burnt his whole body.

(8)Xingming Shi

Inspired by the Buddha's Jātaka story "Sacrifice the Body to Feed



A Tiger”, he fed his own body to tigers.

(9)Xichen Shi

While he was chanting Tipiṭaka, he burnt one of his fingers first. Afterward, he successively burnt another seven fingers and at last there’s only two fingers left in his hands.

(10)Daoyu Shi

He fed mosquitoes with his flesh for over forty years.

(11)Jingchao Shi

He burnt one of his fingers off as an offering to the Mahāvaipulya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra.

(12)Daozhao Shi

He burnt his left forearm off as an offering to the image of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva.

(13)Huiming Shi

Firstly he burnt one finger off , then he successively burnt three more fingers as an offering.

(14)Pujing Shi

He made a vow and burnt his own body in front of a stupa.

(15)Shouxian Shi

He fed his own body to the tigers.

## (16)Daoyu Shi

He vowed and burnt off his own body as an offering to all the Buddhas and Saints.

## (17)Huaide Shi

He burnt his own body as an offering to śarīra.

**3.3.4 An Additional Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks<sup>93</sup>**

The An Additional Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from Tang Dynasty to the end of Wanli reign in Ming Dynasty. The book's author Ming He is from Ming Dynasty. There's a Perishing Episode in the twentieth volume of the An Additional Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks and it records altogether five monks who had practiced Organ Giving-Away. These five monks are listed as follows:

## (1)Luoposeng

In the Hongwu reign of Ming Dynasty, the court would like to select some novices in the country and have them ordained. There were about three thousand novices participated in that tryout. Unexpectedly, lots of the three thousand novices were just tonsured for the welfare of being monastic monks and they were totally incompetent and didn't know anything about Tipiṭaka. The emperor got such furious about it that he ordered to exile those incompetent novices into the army. Luoposeng felt compassionate to those banished novices. In order to save them and to appease the emperor, he petitioned the emperor for the amnesty to those incompetent novices in a way of burning his own body off.

## (2)Shanxin Shi

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<sup>93</sup> CBETA, X77, no. 1524, p0506b19-p0509b08

He felt sick and burnt his own body off in a shrine.

(3)Ningyi Shi

He practiced asceticism and burnt himself on the pyre.

(4)Yetai Shi

He plunged himself into the sea and vowed to give offerings to the birds, fish and ants.

(5)Qiuyue Shi

Chanting the Buddha's name, he plunged his body into the sea.

### **3.3.5 A New Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks<sup>94</sup>**

The A New Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from Northern Song Dynasty to the beginning of Republic Era. The book's author Yu Qian is from Republic Era. There's a Perishing Episode in the thirty-ninth volume of the A New Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks and it records seven monks who perished out of the reason of Body Giving-Away. These seven monks are listed as follows:

(1)Dehui Shi

His temple was burnt down during the turbulence and he also got himself burnt off along with the temple.

(2)Miaopu Shi

Sitting in a basin, he sailed downward with the seawater to death.

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<sup>94</sup> CBETA, B27, no. 0151, p0301b14-p0306b25

## (3) Delin Shi

He practiced asceticism and burnt his own body off in a shrine.

## (4) Shanxin Shi

He bathed himself and then burnt his own body off in a shrine.

## (5) Mingxiu Shi

Chanting the Buddha's name, he burnt his own body off.

## (6) Kangzhai Shi

He asked for a bundle of firewood and burnt his own body off.

## (7) Langran Shi

He practiced reciting the Buddha's name incessantly for three years and then he burnt himself to death with the inner fire of his body.

### 3.4 Significance of Organ Giving-Away in Mahāyāna Scriptures

#### 3.4.1 In Brahmajāla-sūtra

Organ Giving-Away can be recognized as one piece of Mahāyāna precepts. In the second volume of Brahmajāla-sūtra<sup>95</sup>, Organ Giving-Away is specified as the Sixteenth-minor-precept as follows: Buddhist Bodhisattvas should enlighten themselves by studying and contemplating Mahāyāna Tipiṭaka. If there are any novice Bodhisattvas come to learn from them, the Buddhist Bodhisattvas should honestly teach those novice Bodhisattvas about all ascetic cultivations such as burning bodies, burning arms and burning fingers. The Bodhisattvas can not be named as

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<sup>95</sup> CBETA, T24, no. 1484, p1006a16-p1006a25

Monastic Bodhisattvas without making offerings to Buddhas by burning their bodies, arms or fingers. In addition, the Bodhisattvas should also make offerings to hungry tigers, wolves, lions and all hungry ghosts by renouncing their flesh and limbs. The Buddhist Bodhisattvas should systematically preach dharma to novice Bodhisattvas and make them enlightened. If the Buddhist Bodhisattvas can not accordingly preach dharma honestly and systematically by reason of their self-interests, they would commit minor precept.

### 3.4.2 In Śūraṅgama-sūtra

In the sixth volume of Śūraṅgama-sūtra<sup>96</sup>, the Buddha states the benefits of Organ Giving-Away as follows: After I pass away, if there are any Bhikkhus who would resolve to practice samādhi can burn one body-lamp or one finger-joint in front of the Buddha Figure, those Bhikkhus would collect boundless merits. Their unlimited sins would be eliminated and their innumerable ignorance would be exterminated. They have validated their commitments on dharma. If it's not on account of their practicing of Organ Giving-Away, those Bhikkhus would have to atone for sins of their previous incarnations, just as how the Buddha ingested horse fodder.

### 3.4.3 In Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra

In Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra<sup>97</sup>, the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away is stated as follows: If there are any Bodhisattvas who resolve to attain anuttara-samyak-sambodhi<sup>98</sup> can make offerings to stupas by burning their top of heads or toes etc., the virtue and merits of their Organ Giving-Away would far more surpass any other offerings such as the offerings of kingdoms, cities and wives, the offerings of three

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<sup>96</sup> CBETA, T19, no. 0945, p0132b14-p0132b20

<sup>97</sup> CBETA, T09, no. 0262, p0054a12-p0054a16

<sup>98</sup> "Buddha's wisdom." **Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra**, (CBETA, T25, no. 1509, p0654a19-p0654a20)

thousand territories, the offerings of mountains, forests, rivers and ponds, the offerings of all kinds of treasures. The Buddha emphasizes the significance of Organ Giving-Away in Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra. According to The Threefold Lotus Sutra, the Buddha states the benefits of Organ Giving-Away as follows<sup>99</sup>:

“Star Constellation King Flower! If anyone with his mind set on and aiming at Perfect Enlightenment is able to burn the fingers of his hand or even a toe of his foot in homage to a buddha's stupa he will surpass him who pays homage with domains, cities, wives, children, and his three-thousand-great-thousandfold land with its mountains, forests, rivers, pools, and all its precious things.”

### **3.5 Concluding Remark**

In Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism, referring to the rational behind monks' Organ Giving-Away practicing, it lies in the well-known story which is talking about how the Medicine King Bodhisattva burnt his own body and made an offering to the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon and to the Dharma Flower Sutra twice and this story is recorded in Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra. According to Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, the former incarnation of Medicine King Bodhisattva is named Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing. The Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing had ever burnt himself off as an offering to the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon and to the Dharma Flower Sutra twice. The first time was before the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon went to nirvana. The Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing burnt himself off for twelve hundred years in the presence of the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon and then he was reborn as the son of King Pure Virtue in the realm of Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon. The Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing's reincarnation was reborn by

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<sup>99</sup> Bunno Kato translated, **The Threefold Lotus Sutra**, ( Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Company, 1993 ), p. 192.

transformation and he decided to burn his own body off as an offering to the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon and to the Dharma Flower Sutra again the moment after his transformation. After the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon entered nirvana, the Bodhisattva All Beings Delight in Seeing burnt his body off again in the presence of the sharira of Buddha Virtue Pure an Bright Like the Sun and Moon. During the second time the burning lasted for seventy-two thousand years. In the 23rd chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra, the Buddha told Constellation-King-Flower about the merits of Organ Giving-Away practice. The Buddha compared the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away practice with the other kinds of offerings. According to the Buddha, if there is a person who has made his firm resolve to obtain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi<sup>100</sup> would like to burn off a finger or even a toe of his as an offering to a Buddha stupa, thus the virtue and merits of this person's offering would surpass the virtue and merits all the other kinds of offerings including the virtue and merits of the offerings of kingdoms, cities, wives, children, the Three-thousand-great-thousand realms, mountains, forests, rivers, ponds, and all kinds of treasures and jewels. According to Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra, the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away is so surpassing and prodigious that lots of subsequent Chinese Mahāyāna monks took Sad-dharma Puṇḍārīka Sūtra as the foundation of Organ Giving-Away practice and some of them even had experienced the similar Organ Giving-Away practices themselves. What we should notice about Organ Giving-Away practice is that the Medicine King Bodhisattva'd had undertaken myriads of eons of ascetic practices had obtained the samadhi of the manifestation of all physical forms by the time when the Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing burnt his own body off as an offering to the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon and to the Dharma Flower Sutra. Actually, herein the Buddha's original intension might not just simply to encourage the Buddhist practitioners to practice Organ Giving-Away. That's because in the following part of the paragraph which talks about

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<sup>100</sup> Supreme perfect enlightenment. " Only the Buddha's wisdom can be called as Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi " **Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra**, (CBETA, T25, no. 1509, p0656b05-p0656b13)

the virtue and merits of burning a finger or a toe as an offering, the Buddha is just propagating and emphasizing the virtue and merits and significance of receiving and upholding Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra. Maybe if there's a person who has made his firm resolve to obtain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi would like to burn off a finger or even a toe as an offering to a Buddha stupa, thus his offering would surpass all the other offerings including the offerings of kingdoms, cities, wives, children, the Three-thousand-great-thousand realms, mountains, forests, rivers, ponds, and all kinds of treasures and jewels. But what's more important and what we should really pay more attention to is the virtue and merits of burning a finger or a toe as an offering is not nearly equal to that of one who receives and upholds even a single four-line verse of the Dharma Flower Sutra, for the latter's blessings are much greater by far. The Buddha subsequently keeps telling Constellation-King-Flower about the Dharma Flower Sutra's superiority. According to Buddha, the Dharma Flower Sutra is the deepest, greatest, foremost, the most supreme and the most honored. It can disperse all the darkness of unwholesomeness and it's king of all sutras and father of all the worthy sages.



## **Chapter IV**

### **An Analysis of Organ Giving-Away After Death in Mahāyāna Buddhist Perspective**

#### **4.1 The Significance, Influence & Status of Organ Giving-Away after Death in Mahāyāna Buddhist Perspective**

##### **4.1.1 The Significance of Organ Giving-Away after Death**

Firstly, according to the second volume of Brahmajāla-sūtra, Organ Giving-Away is specified as Bodhisattva's Sixteenth-minor-precept as follows:

The Buddhist Bodhisattvas should get themselves enlightened through the studying and contemplating of Mahāyāna Tipiṭaka. If there are any novice Bodhisattvas coming to learn from them, the Buddhist Bodhisattvas should honestly teach those novice Bodhisattvas about all ascetic cultivations such as the burning of body, the burning of arms and the burning of fingers. The Bodhisattvas can not be named as Monastic Bodhisattvas without making offerings to Buddhas through the burning of their own body, arms or fingers. In addition, the Bodhisattvas should also make offerings to hungry tigers, wolves, lions and all hungry ghosts by renouncing their flesh and limbs. The Buddhist Bodhisattvas should systematically preach dharma to the novice Bodhisattvas and make them enlightened. If the Buddhist Bodhisattvas can not accordingly preach dharma honestly and systematically out of the reason of their self-interests, they would commit minor precept.

In the light of Bodhisattva's the Sixteenth-minor-precept above, Organ Giving-Away is an essential cultivation for Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practitioners, let alone the Organ Giving-Away after death.

Secondly, the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away after death are boundless and unimaginable. In the sixth volume of Śūraṅgama-sūtra, the Buddha states the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away after death as follows:

After I pass away, if there are any Bhikkhus who would like to resolve to practice samādhi can burn one body-lamp or one finger-joint in front of the Buddha Figure, those Bhikkhus would collect boundless merits. Their unlimited sins would be eliminated and their innumerable ignorance would be exterminated. They have validated their commitments on dharma. If it's not on account of their practicing of Organ Giving-Away, those Bhikkhus would have to atone for sins of their previous incarnations, just as how the Buddha ingested horse fodder.

In Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away after death is emphasized as follows:

If there are any Bodhisattvas who would like to resolve to attain anuttara-samyak-sambodhi can make offerings to stupas by burning their top of heads or toes etc., the virtue and merits of their Organ Giving-Away would far more surpass any other kinds of offerings such as the offerings of kingdoms, cities and wives, the offering of three thousand territories, the offerings of mountains, forests, rivers and ponds, the offerings of all kinds of treasures.

In The Threefold Lotus Sutra, the Buddha states the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away after death as follows:

Star Constellation King Flower! If anyone with his mind set on and aiming at Perfect Enlightenment is able to burn the fingers of his hand or even a toe of his foot in homage to a buddha's stupa he will surpass him who pays homage with domains, cities, wives, children, and his three-thousand-great-thousandfold land with its mountains, forests, rivers, pools, and all its precious things.

#### 4.1.2 The Influence of Organ Giving-Away after Death

Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism has two traditions associated with Organ Giving-Away. The first tradition is that the Chinese Mahāyāna Bhikkhu or Bhikkhunī would often burn incense scar on top of their heads, arms or backs. This tradition has been practiced by most of the Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhist practitioners and even until today it's still pretty common in the Chinese Buddhist society. The second tradition is that the Chinese Mahāyāna Bhikkhu or Bhikkhunī would sometimes give an offering to the Buddha or Dharma by burning their fingers or even the whole bodies. This tradition has been practiced by only a few of the Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhist practitioners.

As to the reason how the two traditions were developed in China, it's associated with the spirit of Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas' Organ Giving-Away. According to Brahmajāla-sūtra, Organ Giving-Away can be recognized as one piece of Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas' precepts. In China, the practice of Organ Giving-Away hasn't gotten prevalent until the Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra translated by Kumārajīva<sup>101</sup> from Eastern-Jin Dynasty became prevailing. In the twenty-third chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, it records a well-known story about Medicine King Bodhisattva. In the Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, the Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing is the former incarnation of Medicine King Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva All Beings Delight In Seeing had ever burnt his own body as an offering to the Buddha Virtue Pure and Bright Like the Sun and Moon and to the Dharma Flower Sutra twice. In the twenty-third chapter of Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, the Buddha told Constellation-King-Flower about the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away in a way of comparison. The Buddha compared the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away practice with the other kinds of offerings. According to the Buddha, if there is a person who has made his firm resolve to obtain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi would like to burn off a

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<sup>101</sup> A Buddhist monk, one of the famous Four Great Translators in Chinese Buddhism history. **Biography of Eminent Monks**, (CBETA, T50, no. 2059, p0330a11-p0333a13)

finger or even a toe of his as an offering to a Buddha stupa, thus the virtue and merits of this person's offering would surpass the virtue and merits all the other kinds of offerings including the virtue and merits of the offerings of kingdoms, cities, wives, children, the Three-thousand-great-thousand realms, mountains, forests, rivers, ponds, and all kinds of treasures and jewels.

According to Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra, the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away is so surpassing and prodigious that lots of the subsequent Chinese Mahāyāna monks took Sad-dharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra as the foundation of Organ Giving-Away practice and followed the Medicine King Bodhisattva's way to practice Organ Giving-Away themselves. Here is a brief summary of those monks who had ever practiced Body Giving-Away and it's categorized by authoritative biographies of monks.

(1) According to the Biography of Eminent Monks in Liang Dynasty

The Biography of Eminent Monks in Liang Dynasty records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from Easter Han Dynasty to Period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties. There's a Perishing Episode in the twelfth volume of the Biography of Eminent Monks in Liang Dynasty and it records altogether eleven monks who perished out of the reason of Body-Giving. These eleven monks are Sengqun Shi, Tancheng Shi, Fajin Shi, Sengfu Shi, Fayu Shi, Huishao Shi, Sengyu Shi, Huiyi Shi, Sengqing Shi, Faguang Shi and Tanhong Shi.

(2) According to the Biography of Eminent Monks in Tang Dynasty

The Biography of Eminent Monks in Tang Dynasty records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from the beginning of Liang Dynasty to the middle of Tang Dynasty. There's a Perishing

Episode in the twenty-seventh volume of the Biography of Eminent Monks in Tang Dynasty and it records altogether twelve monks who had ever practiced Body Giving-Away. These twelve monks are Faning Shi, Sengya Shi, Puyuan Shi, Puji Shi, Puan Shi, Dazhi Shi, Zhiming Shi, Xuanlan Shi, Fakuang Shi, Huitong Shi, Shaosheli and Daoxiu Shi.

(3) According to the Biography of Eminent Monks in Song Dynasty

The Biography of Eminent Monks in Song Dynasty records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from the middle of Tang Dynasty to Song Dynasty. There's a Perishing Episode in the twenty-third volume of the Biography of Eminent Monks in Song Dynasty and it records altogether seventeen monks who had ever practiced Body Giving-Away. These seventeen monks are Sengzang Shi, Wuran Shi, Dinglan Shi, Hongxiu Shi, quanhuo Shi, Yuanhui Shi, Shucaao Shi, Xingming Shi, Xichen Shi, Daoyu Shi, Jingchao Shi, Daozhao Shi, Huiming Shi, Pujing Shi, Shouxian Shi, Daoyu Shi and Huaide Shi.

(4) According to An Additional Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks

The An Additional Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks records the biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from Tang Dynasty to the end of Wanli reign in Ming Dynasty. There's a Perishing Episode in the twentieth volume of the An Additional Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks and it records altogether five monks who had ever practiced Organ Giving-Away. These five monks are Luoposeng, Shanxin Shi, Ningyi Shi, Yetai Shi and Qiuyue Shi.

(5) According to A New Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks

The A New Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks records the

biographies of ancient Chinese eminent monks from Northern Song Dynasty to the beginning of Republic Era. There's a Perishing Episode in the thirty-ninth volume of the A New Sequel to Biography of Eminent Monks and it records altogether seven monks who perished out of the reason of Body Giving-Away. These seven monks are Dehui Shi, Miaopu Shi, Delin Shi, Shanxin Shi, Mingxiu Shi, Kangzhai Shi and Langran Shi.

#### **4.1.3 The Status of Organ Giving-Away after Death**

Nowadays lots of countries are encouraging Organ Giving-Away after death with the global organ shortage circumstance and the increasingly mature organ-transplantation techniques. In the Buddhist circles, there have been some Bhikkhu and Bhikkhunī who have been keeping pace with the times and have been sparing no effort to advocate Organ Giving-Away. Among them, the most Reverend Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen and the most Reverend Master Hsing Yun are the most typical and the most representative Buddhist masters.

The most Reverend Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen is very well-known in Taiwan and she has been renowned for her charity promotion. Among the birth suffering, the aging suffering, the illness suffering, and the death suffering, the most Reverend Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen believes the illness suffering is the source of all sufferings. Based on this belief, the most Reverend Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen takes the mitigating or even exterminating of illness suffering as a top priority and calls on all her disciples to practice Organ Giving-Away after death for the sake of those patients who are desperately in need of an organ transplantation. By propagating the idea of “ body giving & waste recycling & medicine promoting ”, the most Reverend Bhikkhunī Cheng Yen has been advocating Organ Giving-Away vigorously for years and up until today she has achieved substantial achievements.

Another notable Taiwanese Buddhist master -- the most Reverend

Reverend Hsing Yun, who is the patriarch of Fo Guang Shan in Taiwan, also thinks highly of the virtue and merits of Organ Giving-Away by saying “You would bring light to others when you donate your cornea, you would give the power of life to others when you donate your heart, you would transfer your energy of life to others’ life when you donate your marrow.” and thus Organ Giving-Away after death is preached as a supposed highly noble virtue of human beings by him.

There are also some other senior monks who disagree with or even oppose to Organ Giving-Away after death. Generally speaking, most of the Chinese Mainland Buddhist Masters are rather conservative about Organ Giving-Away after death. However, perhaps because those who advocate Organ Giving-Away are occupying the moral high ground and they’re keeping pace with the times by answering the government’s call, most of the senior monks who disagree with or even oppose to Organ Giving-Away would normally keep their reservation at the Organ Giving-Away after Death problem.

## **4.2 The Pros and Cons of Organ Giving-Away after Death in Mahāyāna Buddhist Perspective**

### **4.2.1 The Pros of Organ Giving-Away after Death**

The pros of Organ Giving-Away after death can be categorized from four aspects as follows:

#### (1) According to Mahāyāna Bodhisattva precept

According to Brahmajāla-sūtra, Organ Giving-Away can be recognized as one piece of Mahāyāna Bodhisattva precepts. In the second volume of Brahmajāla-sūtra, Organ Giving-Away is specified as the Sixteenth-minor-precept as follows:

The Buddhist Bodhisattvas should get themselves enlightened

through the studying and contemplating of Mahāyāna Tipiṭaka. If there are any novice Bodhisattvas coming to learn from them, the Buddhist Bodhisattvas should honestly teach those novice Bodhisattvas about all ascetic cultivations such as the burning of body, the burning of arms and the burning of fingers. The Bodhisattvas can not be named as Monastic Bodhisattvas without making offerings to Buddhas through the burning of their own body, arms or fingers. In addition, the Bodhisattvas should also make offerings to hungry tigers, wolves, lions and all hungry ghosts by renouncing their flesh and limbs. The Buddhist Bodhisattvas should systematically preach dharma to the novice Bodhisattvas and make them enlightened. If the Buddhist Bodhisattvas can not accordingly preach dharma honestly and systematically out of the reason of their self-interests, they would commit minor precept.

In the light of Bodhisattva's Sixteenth-minor-precept above, Organ Giving-Away is an essential cultivation for Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practitioners, let alone the Organ Giving-Away after death.

## (2) According to Mahāyāna Yogācāra theory

According to Mahāyāna Yogācāra, there is a theory on Eight Consciousnesses. The Eight Consciousnesses is a classification of the Yogācāra School. They are the Eye -Consciousness for seeing, the Ear-Consciousness for hearing, the Nose-Consciousness for smelling, the Tongue-Consciousness for tasting, the Body-Consciousness for touching, the Mind-Consciousness for perception, the Manas Consciousness for self-grasping, the Storehouse Consciousness for storing. Although the eight consciousnesses have different appellations, however they're actually of one same entity. Their relationship is just as the water and waves which are neither identical nor different. They are named respectively according to different functions. Among them, the Storehouse Consciousness, aka Ālaya Vijñāna, acts as the receptacle for storing Bīja and it's called mind. The Manas Consciousness aka Manas Vijñāna, is arose from the Storehouse Consciousness, it acts as the self-



grasping consciousness and always revolves around and embraces the Storehouse Consciousness as its object, so the Manas Consciousness is called Thought. The former six consciousnesses are able to discriminate various objects and acts as the discriminating consciousness, so they're called consciousness. In the English edition of the Three Texts on Consciousness Only translated into English from Chinese by Francis H. Cook, there is the explanation of mind, thought and consciousness as follows<sup>102</sup>:

In many places in the scriptures, the Blessed One says that mind (citta), thought (manas) and consciousness (vijñāna) have three distinct meanings. That which accumulates [seeds] and generates [an apparent world] is called 'mind'. That which thinks and reasons is called 'thought'. That which discriminates is called 'consciousness'. These are the three distinct meanings.

Though these three meanings are used for all eight forms of consciousnesses, if we take into account the preeminent character of each, the eighth [consciousness] is called 'mind' because it accumulates the seeds of dharmas and produces all dharmas. The seventh consciousness is called thought because it takes the eighth consciousness, etc., as an object and constantly thinks about it as a self, etc. The remaining six [forms of consciousness] are called 'consciousness' because they evolve discriminating six different kinds of objects in a manner that is gross, unstable and intermittent.

In the Three Texts on Consciousness Only translated into English from Chinese by Francis H. Cook, among all the eight consciousnesses, the relationship between each other is stated as follows<sup>103</sup>:

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<sup>102</sup> Francis H. Cook, **Three Texts on Consciousness Only**, (Berkeley: Numata Centre for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1999), p. 144-145.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid p. 220-221.

The Treatise says that FUNDAMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS is ādāna-vijñāna, because all impure and pure consciousnesses are born from this root. SUPPORTED means that the first six evolving consciousnesses have fundamental consciousness as their common, proximate support. FIVE CONSCIOUSNESSES means that the first five evolving consciousnesses are spoken of in general, because they are similar as species. The words APPEAR IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONDITIONS show that they do not always appear. CONDITIONS are such conditions as attention, organs, objective realm, etc. That is, the five consciousnesses themselves can be present when supported internally by the fundamental consciousness and by conforming to a combination of various conditions such as attention, the five organs, objects [of perception] etc. Consequently, they appear EITHER TOGETHER OR NOT, because, when external conditions combine, they exist suddenly [together] or gradually. LIKE WATER AND WAVES, they are many or few, depending on conditions. The analogy of these dharmas [as water and waves] is extensively discussed in the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra.

As a result of the grossness and instability of the modes of activity of the [first] five evolving consciousnesses, sometimes many of the conditions on which they depend are incomplete, and therefore sometimes they appear infrequently and many times they do not appear. Even though the sixth, mental consciousness, is also gross and unstable, there is no time when the conditions upon which it depends are not complete, and [only] as a result of contrary conditions is there a time when it does not appear.

The modes of activity of the seventh and eighth consciousnesses are subtle, and the various conditions on which they depend are at all times present; therefore, there is no condition to block them and cause general inactivity. Also, the five consciousnesses themselves are unable to reflect, only evolving vis-à-vis the

external [realm]. Their appearance depends on many conditions, and therefore there are many times when they are interrupted and few times when they are actually active. The sixth consciousness itself is capable of reflection, evolving vis-à-vis the inner and outer [realms]. It does not depend on many conditions and is always able to appear, except in five states. Therefore there are few times when it is interrupted and many times when it appears. Consequently, [Vasubandhu's verses] do not say that it appears in accordance with conditions. What are the five states [when it is inoperative] ? Birth among the unconscious [celestials], etc.<sup>104</sup>"

Although the eight consciousnesses are of one same entity, they do not always appear. Except for the eighth consciousness and the seventh consciousness which always evolve simultaneously in all the sentient beings, the other six consciousnesses may appear in accordance with conditions. There are five inoperative states, namely Birth among the unconscious celestials, the two mindless samādhis, sloth and stupefaction. In 36. Samādhi of Cessation of Three Texts On Consciousness Only, the existence or cessation of all eight consciousnesses for someone who is in Samādhi is analysed as follows<sup>105</sup>:

A scripture says that the activities of body, speech and mind of someone in the Samādhi of cessation (nirodha-samapātti) are all extinguished; yet life does not end, heat does not leave the body, the sense organs do not deteriorate, and consciousness does not leave the body. Apart from this [eighth] consciousness, no consciousness that does not leave the body would exist in someone in this Samādhi. Forms of consciousness such as visual consciousness are gross and unstable in their activities and characteristics, and when they occur in relation to the objective

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<sup>104</sup> The five states [ when it is inoperative ] includes: Birth among the unconscious celestials, the two mindless samādhis, sloth and stupefaction. Francis H. Cook, **Three Texts on Consciousness Only**, (Berkeley: Numata Centre for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1999), p. 221-227.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid p. 220-221. p. 103-104.

realm, there is fatigue and anxiety, so one becomes disgusted with them and seeks to stop them for awhile, subduing them gradually to the point where they cease completely. The Samādhī of cessation results from this state; therefore, in this Samādhī, these forms of consciousness cease. If you do not admit the existence of a consciousness that is subtle, homogeneous, constant, and omnipresent and sustains life, [heat] etc, how can the scripture speak of a consciousness that does not desert the body ?

The former six consciousnesses might be intermittent sometimes. However, the eighth Storehouse Consciousness and the seventh Manas Consciousness would always keep being incessant as long as the human being is alive. According to The Rules of the Eighth Kinds of Consciousness written by Xuan sang, the Storehouse Consciousness would always be both the very first host and the very last host throughout a human being's life. When a human being is going to die, the human being's lifespan, warmth and consciousness would extinguish simultaneously. The human being's lifespan, warmth and consciousness are just like three sticks of reeds<sup>106</sup>. The three sticks of reeds lean on each other and support each other. Once one stick of reed fall down, the three sticks of reeds would consequently fall apart simultaneously. Likewise, a human being's lifespan, warmth and consciousness support each other and sustain the human being's life, once one of them stops to function, the other two would collapse simultaneously and consequently the human being's life would be extinct instantly. When a human being is going to die, he would have to abandon his mortal body and the dead mortal corpse lying in the ground would turn to be as inanimate as wood or stone.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> *Samyuttāgama*, (CBETA, T02, no.0099, p0081b03–p0081b08)

<sup>107</sup> Ibid p0150a17–p0150b13

(3) According to Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra<sup>108</sup>

In the eleventh volume of Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra, the Buddha clarifies that if there are Virtuous men and women who are able to refrain from evil physical karma, verbal karma and mental karma, when they are going to die, if their families would deal with their corpses by burning off, or by plunging the corpses into the water, or by casting the corpses into the graveyard and the corpses would then be devoured by foxes, jackals and beasts. However, those Virtuous men and women's minds, thoughts and consciousnesses would go to good paths. Nonetheless, the minds dharma is indeed neither whence nor whither. The state of consciousness is a continuous and uninterrupted consciousness flow and it's composed of continuous and uninterrupted successions of numerous momentary states of consciousnesses. The previous consciousness and its next consciousness are not intermittent and they're similar and continuous. In the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra translated into English by Kosho Yamamoto, it records as follows<sup>109</sup>:

O Kasyapa! It is as we have said up to now. There are good men and women who guard their body, mouth and mind well. When their life comes to an end, relatives come, take the corpse and burn it on the fire, or they may throw it into great water, throw it amongst tombs, and foxes, wolves and birds may come and eagerly devour it. Yet, the mind will find birth in a good realm. And the mind has no coming and going, and no place whither to go. The front and back resemble (each other) and continue, with no difference in outer appearances. Such is the undisclosed teaching of the Tathagata.

(4) According to Bie Yi Za A Han Jing

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<sup>108</sup> Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra, (CBETA, T12, no.0374, p0431b07–p0431b12)

<sup>109</sup> Kosho Yamamoto translated, edited, revised and copyright by Dr. Tony Page, **The Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra**, (London: Nirvana Publications, 1999-2000), p. 133.

In the eighth volume of *Bie Yi Za A Han Jing*<sup>110</sup>, the 155th text records as follows:

Thus have I heard. The Buddha was in the Nyagrodha Forest of Kapilavastu. At that time Śākya Mahānāma Kulika went to visit the Buddha. After paying homage to the Buddha's feet, he sat sideways and asked the Buddha: [Bhagavato, the people of Kapilavastu are prospering and at ease. I live with them together and sometimes this strange idea would occur to me: if there were mad elephant or rushing cart or uncontrollable horse or insane man who run into me, at that time I might can not keep myself mindful of the Buddha, or I might can not keep myself mindful of the Dhamma, or I might can not keep myself mindful of the Sangha. At that time I might think to myself—if one Bhikkhu could not keep himself to be mindful of the Triple Gems, when he was demised, where would he go, which gatiyo was he advancing, what kind of phala would he bear?] The Buddha answered his questions thus: [At that circumstance, you do not fear, then after you lose your life, you would go to good places, and you wouldn't degrade into the duggati. You wouldn't suffer from akusala kamma. That's just like a big tree. When the tree is young, it always grows to the east, if you cut it off when it's big, to what direction would it fall down? You need to know it's definitely to the east the tree would fall down. You are also like the tree and have accumulated lots of merits from practicing for a long time, if you degenerate into duggati and suffer from akusala kamma, that would never happen.] At that time Śākya Mahānāma Kulika, after hearing what the Buddha had said, paid homage to the Buddha's feet and went back to his place. All the other Bhikkhus heard what the Buddha had said, they all complied with joy.

#### **4.2.2 The Cons of Organ Giving-Away after Death**

The cons of Organ Giving-Away after death can be categorized

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<sup>110</sup> *Bie Yi Za A Han Jing*, (CBETA, T02, no.0100, p0432b14–p0432b27)

from four aspects as follows:

(1) According to Nan Hai Ji Gui Nei Fa Zhuan<sup>111</sup>

According to ‘Immolation Improper’ and ‘imitating Offence’ from the fourth volume of Nan Hai Ji Gui Nei Fa Zhuan written by Master Yi Jing from Dang dynasty, the lay people can burn their fingers off as an offering to the Buddha or Dharma. However the monastic monks can not burn off their fingers as an offering because it’s in contradiction to precepts. In the text, it says as follows:

The novice Buddhists are vigorous and energetic, they would practice diligently and assiduously. The novice Buddhists may haven’t comprehended canons, and they just admire the forebears. Burning the fingers or bodies off as an offering is only of worldly vogue. However, just because of some of the lay people who are partial to burning fingers or bodies off as an offering, the novice Buddhists would like to follow and imitate the forebears and take burning off their fingers or bodies as a kind of practice. They believe they would receive great virtue and merits from burning off their fingers as an offering. however, according to the sutras, the monastics monks should obey the precepts in order to comprehend the sutras. It’s difficult to be born as human beings and it’s difficult to learn dharma. The Buddhists shouldn’t take burning their bodies off as an offering because it’s just as committing suicide. The Buddhists should instead practice step by step until they finally attain Buddhahood. Sacrificing one’s own body to feed hungry tigers and cutting one’s own flesh off to save dove belong to Bodhisattva’s practice and they’re not suitable for ordinary Buddhist practitioners. The practitioners who would practice behaviors including staving oneself and jumping off from the tree etc. are all recognized as heretics by Buddha.

(2) According to Maraṇa-dukkha

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<sup>111</sup> CBETA, T54, no.2125, p0231a29–p0231c17

In Buddhist Tipiṭaka, *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*<sup>112</sup> called death as *Marana-dukkha*. *Marāṇa-dukkha* refers to the suffering of death. *Marāṇa* means death, *dukkha* means suffering. *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* enumerates five aspects about *Marāṇa-dukkha* as follows: the giving-up of beloved treasures, the giving-up of beloved friends, the giving-up of beloved family, the giving-up of beloved oneself, and all kinds of extreme anxieties.

According to the sixty-seventh volume of *Saddharmasmṛty-upasthāna sūtra*, there are four types of death at the end of human beings life and they are earth disorder, water disorder, fire disorder and air disorder. At the end of human beings' life, the Four Elements would disintegrate and collapse and huge agony would occur correspondingly. *Abhidharmakosa-sastra*<sup>113</sup> describes the process of death as *Marman-destruction-suffering*<sup>114</sup>. According to *Abhidharmakosa-sastra*, during the process of death, the water, the wind and the heat in our body starts to decompose. Either of the water decomposition, the wind decomposition and the heat decomposition would stimulate and destruct *Marmans* in the body and acute prick pains would be stirred up to the human in the destruction process of *Marmans* and finally the *Marman-destruction*<sup>115</sup> would lead to human's death. In the tenth volume of *Abhidharma-kośa*<sup>116</sup>, *Marāṇa-dukkha* is called as *Marman-dukkha*. According to *Abhidharma-kośa*, there are two different ways to end the human beings' life at the end

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<sup>112</sup> Voluminous work of Yogācāra School. It's a definitive encyclopedia on yogic practice. **Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra**, (CBETA, T30, no. 1579, p0279a08-p0882a14)

<sup>113</sup> Verses on the Treasury of Abhidharma. A key work on Sarvāstivādin tenets written by Vasubandhu from Gandhāra in the 4th or 5th century. **Abhidharmakosa-sastra**, (CBETA, T29, no. 1558, p0001a10-p0159a14)

<sup>114</sup> "Marmans are acupuncture points in our body which would lead to death by the slightest touch." It's said there are hundreds of Marmans in our body. **Abhidharmakosa-sastra**,(CBETA, T29, no. 1558, p0056b23)

<sup>115</sup> " Either of the water decomposition, wind decomposition and heat decomposition would stimulate Marmans like a sharp edge and hence acute sufferings would be arisen...It's called Marman-destruction because death would come on the heels of that." **Abhidharmakosa-sastra**,(CBETA, T29, no. 1558, p0056b24-p0056b26)

<sup>116</sup> CBETA, T29, no.1558, p0056a17-p0056c23



of their life. One way is named instant dead and the other way is named gradual dead. For those human beings who would suffer gradual dead would probably also have to suffer from Marman-dukkha. Marman is a Sanskrit terminology which means death-point of the body. Marman is extremely tiny and would induce agony and death under the slightest stimuli. The Four Elements, i.e. the earth, water, fire and air would increasingly get proliferated and degenerated while the human is dying and under the stimulation of the disintegrating Four Elements, there would appear Marman Destruction during the process of dying .

In Buddhism, death was considered would not be done within an instant. It has a process.<sup>117</sup> Firstly you lose your respiration (wind), then you start to lose your temperature (heat). The temperature is lost inch by inch, and it may take hours until the temperature is gone completely. While the heat is dispersing, the consciousness is also ceasing to work little by little. Finally our body is totally cold and that means our consciousness has already gone entirely. It's until then when you can be regarded as truly dead. In the history of China, there are many ancient notable masters who were very careful and prudent for death, some of them even instructed their disciples to keep their bodies unmoved for at least three or seven days after their deaths.

### (3) According to Last-moment Degradation

In the sutra *Zhong jing zhuan za pi yu*<sup>118</sup>, there is a tale about King Agnidatta who degraded into a serpent after death despite originally King Agnidatta should have been born into the celestial heaven on the facts of immeasurable virtue and merits he made by making offerings and erecting pagodas and temples when he was alive. What led to his degeneration as to be born as a serpent? In the sutra *Zhong jing zhuan za pi yu*, King Agnidatta explained the reason as follows:“ While my life

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<sup>117</sup> Master Yin Guang, *Master Yin Guang Wen Chao Jing Hua Lu*, (Beijing: Religion Press, 2006), p. 61-66.

<sup>118</sup> *Zhong jing zhuan za pi yu*, (CBETA, T04, no.0208, p0535b05–p0535b16)

was going to end, the fanning servant dropped the fan on my face by accident and hatred was stirred up in my mind. That's why now I degraded into this serpent body." According to King Agnidatta's degrading tale, we can see the importance of taking good care of the dying people's mind. In the *Zhong jing zhuan za pi yu*, the whole tale is recorded as follows:

There was once a *samaṇa* walking through the underbrush, suddenly one serpent uttered: 'Monk Mendicant!' The monk was frightened and looked around. The serpent said: 'Don't be afraid. Would you please preach dharma to me and help me sanctify my guilty body?' The serpent asked the monk: 'Mendicant, have you ever heard of King Agnidatta?' The monk answered: 'Yes, I have heard of King Agnidatta.' The serpent said: 'The King Agnidatta is me!' The monk asked King Agnidatta: 'The King Agnidatta has built buddhist stupas and temples and his merits and virtue are countless. In the light of his merits, the King Agnidatta should have be born in the celestial heaven, so now why are you being like this?' The serpent told him: 'When I was going to die, one retinue dropped the fan on my face and stirred up my hatred. So I suffered the serpent body because of the hatred.' The mendicant then preach dharma to the serpent, the serpent listened so gladly and attentively that it even didn't dine food for seven day and it directly was born in heaven after his death. Months later, the King Agnidatta scattered flowers above the Buddha. The disciples were surprised. Standing in the heaven, the King Agnidatta said: 'I am King Agnidatta. I am greatly indebted to the mendicant's favor. I was born in the heaven after hearing the mendicant's preaching. Now I've come to offer flowers as a tribute and gratitude to the Buddha!' So as to the dying people, the nursing people can not don't take good care of the dying people's mind.

The crucial significance of the last-moment thought of the dying people has also been recorded in *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra*<sup>119</sup>. The *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* quoted some text from the *Fen Bie Ye Jing* and

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<sup>119</sup> CBETA, T25, no.1509, p0238b15-p0238b27

clarified why the last-moment thought of the dying people is able to decide the final direction of our next life as follows:

Venerable Ānanda asked the Buddha why at the end of people's life the strength of a modicum of last-moment thought would surpass the strength of their whole life's practice. The Buddha told Venerable Ānanda that although the dying people's last-moment thought is no more than a single and momentary thought, it's sharp and of unmitigated strength. Just as the fire or the poison, which with limited quantity can create much effect, the dying people's last-moment thought is able to finally decide the dying people's afterlife. At the end of their life, the dying people would have to relinquish their mortal bodies and all the other possessions all of a sudden, it's just like the soldiers on the battlefield who would fight hard even at the cost of their lives. The last-moment thought is courageous and full of strength, it would surpass the strength of one-hundred-year's practice and can be called as Great Mind.

#### (4) According to Last-moment hospice

Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism regards the human beings' last-moment thought as the crucial and determinate factor which would determine the outcome of dying people's afterlife. Master Yin Guang stresses the importance of the last stage of life and narrates in detail about how to take care of the dying people at their last stages of life in the article "Dharma Talk on End-of-Life" from his work "Yin Guang Da Shi Wen Chao Jing Hua lu"<sup>120</sup>. In this book, Master Yin Guang relates the last stage of life as of most importance and maintains we should by no means move the dying people's body in case extreme sufferings and hatred arisen to the dying people which would inevitably lead to their degradation. In Dharma Talk on End-of-Life from Yin Guang Da Shi Wen Chao Jing Hua lu, Master Yin Guang writes as follows:

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<sup>120</sup> Master Yin Guang, Dharma Talk on End-of-Life, **Yin Guang Da Shi Wen Chao Jing Hua lu**, (Religion Press, 2006), p. 61-66.

The state of mind at the moment of people's death is of most importance. There are ignorant people who would just weep and cry sorrowfully at the moment of death of their families. Those ignorant people may also clean their dying families' body and get dressed for them. Those ignorant people just would like to earn themselves a good fame and they don't care if their behaviors would do harm to their deceased families. The practitioners who chant the Amitābha Buddha originally aspire to transmigrate to the Amitābha Buddha's Western Pure Land. If they have families who would just cry and weep sorrowfully at the end of their life, those practitioners who chant the Amitābha Buddha would get their right mind harmed and fail to attain their next births in the Amitābha Buddha's Western Pure Land. It's just like there is some incapable person who is ascending the mountain, the incapable person may be incompetent himself, however luckily he can get help from other people who would pull him from the front, push him from the back and support him from the left and right, and thus with those help the incapable person can attain the summit of the mountain. Likewise, at the end of their life, the Buddhist practitioners who chant the Amitābha Buddha would be able to attain their next births in the Amitābha Buddha's Western Pure Land with the help of other Buddhist practitioners who chant the Amitābha Buddha by chanting the Amitābha Buddha at the end of their life. At the end of the dying people's life, if the dying people are Buddhist practitioners who would chant the Amitābha Buddha in their daily life, or the dying people's offsprings are Buddhists, the dying people can benefit themselves extremely by asking lay Buddhists chant the Amitābha Buddha for them.

At the end of the dying people's life, their families can not weep or cry. The dying people can benefit themselves most by having their families chant the Amitābha Buddha. The dying people's last breath of heartbeat may only take a short time, however, it's best if their families can chant the Amitābha Buddha incessantly for over three hours. It's best if their families wouldn't weep or move their deceased body. The dying people's families should make sure to keep this in mind.

At the end of the dying people's life, if the dying people are able to get bathed and dressed themselves before they end their last moment of life, it would be very nice. If the dying people are not able to get bathed and dressed themselves before they end their last moment of life, their families mustn't get bathed and dressed for them in advance. If the dying people's families get bathed and dressed for them at the end of their life, the dying people would lose their right minds because of great aches and pains incurred from being got bathed and dressed by their families.

At the end of the dying people's life, the dying people would definitely be able to transmigrate to the Amitābha Buddha's Western Pure Land with the help of the other Buddhist practitioners' help by chanting the Amitābha Buddha. If the dying people can't get help from the other Buddhist practitioners who would like to chant the Amitābha Buddha for them, or the dying people's families would weep or cry sorrowfully, or the dying people's families would like to move their dying bodies, those dying people might have more attachment or hatred arisen in their minds and thus they would inevitably get themselves degenerated. This kind of state would be vitally dangerous.

In his another article Lin Zhong Zhou Ji from Yin Guang Da Shi Wen Chao Jing Hua lu, Master Yin Guang writes as follows:

Whenever there are patients facing the end time of their life, if at that moment their families would hastily get them dressed or moved, it would be violating the Buddhist principle enormously. Whenever there are dead people enshrined for only one or two days, if at that time their families would hastily get them cremated, it would be violating the Buddhist principle enormously. The Buddha said human beings have got eight consciousnesses. The former five consciousnesses are the Eye-Consciousness, the Ear-Consciousness, the Nose-Consciousness, the Tongue-Consciousness and the Body-Consciousness. The six consciousness is the Mind-Consciousness and the seventh consciousness is Manas Vijñāna, aka Transmitting Consciousness. The eighth

consciousness is Ālaya Vijñāna, aka Storehouse Consciousness. When people are new born, only the eighth consciousness would be the very first to be present. The other consciousnesses including the seventh consciousness, the sixth consciousness and the former five consciousnesses would be present after the eighth consciousness in sequence. When people are going to die, only the eighth consciousness would be the very last to be absent as well. The other consciousnesses including the former five consciousnesses, the sixth consciousness and the seventh consciousness would be absent before the eighth consciousness in sequence. The eighth consciousness acts as both the very first and the very last consciousness during people's whole life and it's human beings' spirit consciousness. This spirit consciousness is what's commonly called as soul-spirit. Since the eighth consciousness is the spirit consciousness, that's why the eighth consciousness would be the very first to be present when the human beings are firstly newborn in their maternal wombs. So the unborn fetuses have been living beings when they're still in their maternal wombs. When the human beings are going to end their lives, the eighth consciousness wouldn't leave their dead bodies instantly. The eighth consciousness would only leave the human beings' dead bodies until the human beings' whole dead bodies get totally cold. The human beings would get unconscious after their eighth consciousness totally leave their bodies. The eighth consciousness would still be present with the human beings' dead bodies even if there is only a whit of warmth in the human beings' bodies and at this time their dead bodies can still feel pains if their bodies get touched or moved. The dead people's families should keep in mind that the dead people's bodies mustn't be got dressed or moved at this moment. The dead people's bodies would feel enormously painful and extremely insufferable by the slightest touch. They just can not speak it out or make a move as they're too feeble. The sutra said: The human being's lifespan, warmth and consciousness would always stick together and never get apart. If only the human being's body still has warmth, the consciousness would be present. If only the consciousness is still present, the lifespan would not be ended. In the ancient times, there are lots of cases about dead people

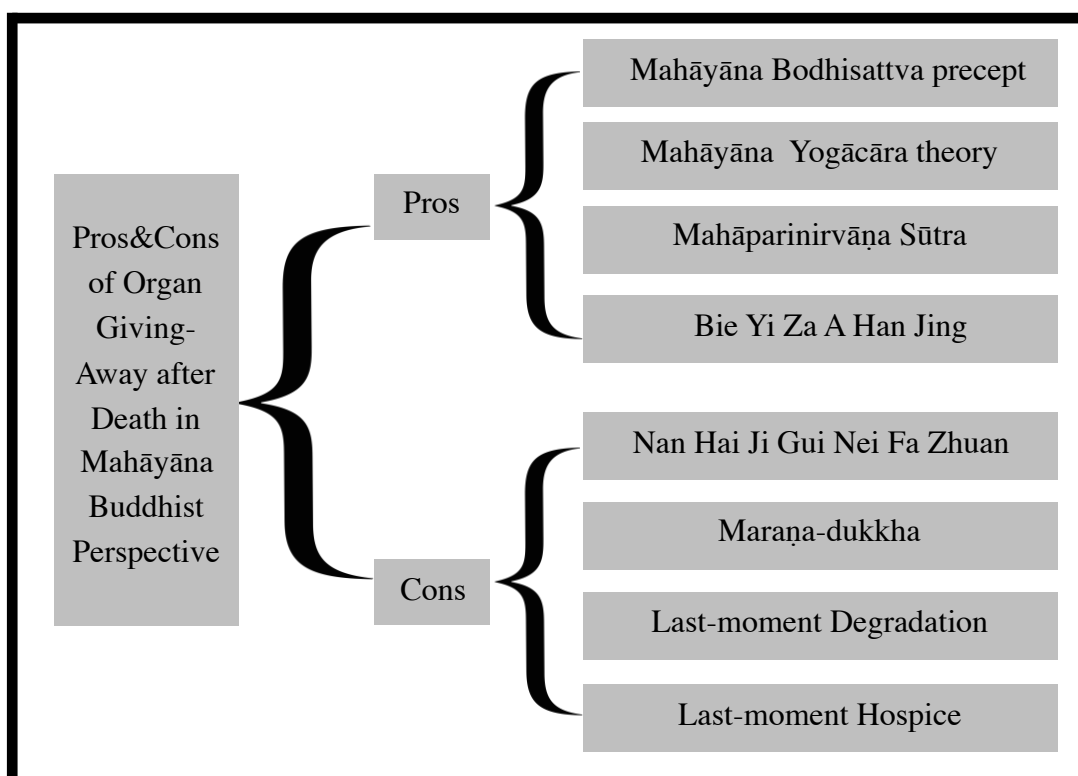
who have been dead for three to five days getting reborn. These cases are recorded in canons and we can research textual details minutely. The confucianism also advocates holding the encoffining ceremony three days after the people died. For the lay people, their beloved families would pray if the dead people should get reborn. For the monastic monks, although no one would pray for them if the dead monks should get reborn, the caregivers can never don't show empathy to the dead monks. It would be merciless of the caregivers if they don't care about the dead monks and just get their dead bodies moved hastily after their death. The caregivers should show sympathy for the dead monks. It's easy for the dead monks to degenerate due to their hatred mind stirred up by huge agony. It's known to us that we can not get the dead people's body dressed or moved or cremated while the dead people's consciousnesses are still present. That's because hatred might be stirred up in the dead people's mind under the stimulus of great sufferings and the dead people might get more degenerated. Wouldn't we be wreaking harm to the dead people maliciously and viciously by getting their body dressed or moved or even cremated while the dead people's consciousnesses are still present? The caregivers should think over to themselves that whether they have any feud or enmity against the dead people. If the answer is no and why should they wreak malevolent karma to the dead people although they originally act with good intentions. There might be some people believing that it's too obscure about death and the world after death. Actually both death and the world after death are recorded in canons and we should not entertain a suspicion about it. There is no more suffering thing in the world than that of birth and death. Birth is just like the living turtle shedding its tortoise shell. Death is just like the crab falling into the boiling water. May the caregivers who would like to take care of the patients be careful and cautious. The caregivers should not chat with the patients and get the patients distracted. The caregivers should not weep sorrowfully and make loud noises. They should persuade the patients to let go of everything and make the patients to aspire to transmigrate to the Amitābha Buddha's Western Pure Land by chanting the Amitābha Buddha. The caregivers should also chant the Amitābha

Buddha for the patients and help the patients chant and keep in mind the Amitābha Buddha with their chanting sound.

### 4.3 Concluding Remark

As one piece of Mahāyāna Bodhisattva precept, Organ Giving-Away is an essential cultivation for Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practitioners and it got boundless and unimaginable virtue and merits. Based on this reason, some people would believe Organ Giving-Away after death is a meaningful cultivation for Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practitioners as well. Generally speaking, in today's Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhist world, Organ Giving-Away after death are occupying the moral high ground and some Buddhist masters advocate it in the light of some theory basis recorded in the texts. In the meantime, some Buddhist masters oppose it in the light of some theory basis recorded in the texts as well. This contradiction can be shown in the chart as follows:

Chart 3: Pros & Cons





## Chapter V

### Conclusion & Suggestion

#### 5.1 Conclusion

The practice of giving figures as the basis in the teachings of both Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhism. In a sense, it can be regarded as a ingenious way to teach both lay people and the beginners. In *Dana—The Practice of Giving*<sup>121</sup>, Bhikkhu Bodhi writes as follows:

The practice of giving is universally recognized as one of the most basic human virtues, a quality that testifies to the depth of one's humanity and one's capacity for self-transcendence. In the teaching of the Buddha, too, the practice of giving claims a place of special eminence, one which singles it out as being in a sense the foundation and seed of spiritual development. In the Pali suttas we read time and again that "talk on giving" (dānakathā) was invariably the first topic to be discussed by the Buddha in his "graduated exposition" of the Dhamma. Whenever the Buddha delivered a discourse to an audience of people who had not yet come to regard him as their teacher, he would start by emphasizing the value of giving. Only after his audience had come to appreciate this virtue would he introduce other aspects of his teaching, such as morality, the law of kamma, and the benefits in renunciation, and only after all these principles had made their impact on the minds of his listeners would he expound to them that unique discovery of the Awakened Ones, the Four Noble Truths.

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<sup>121</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Dāna: The Practice of Giving, Selected Essays Edited by Bhikkhu Bodhi, The Wheel Publication* No. 367-9, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1990), p. 103-104.

Strictly speaking, giving does not appear in its own right among the factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, nor does it enter among the other requisites of enlightenment (bodhipakkhiyā dhammā). Most probably it has been excluded from these groupings because the practice of giving does not by its own nature conduce directly and immediately to the arising of insight and the realization of the Four Noble Truths. Giving functions in the Buddhist discipline in a different capacity. It does not come at the apex of the path, as a factor constituent of the process of awakening, but rather it serves as a basis and preparation which underlies and quietly supports the entire endeavor to free the mind from the defilements. Nevertheless, though giving is not counted directly among the factors of the path, its contribution to progress along the road to liberation should not be overlooked or underestimated. The prominence of this contribution is underscored by the place which the Buddha assigns to giving in various sets of practices he has laid down for his followers. Besides appearing as the first topic in the graduated exposition of the Dhamma, the practice of giving also figures as the first of the three bases of meritorious deeds (puññakiriyavatthu), as the first of the four means of benefiting others (sangahavatthu), and as the first of the ten pāramis or "perfections." The latter are the sublime virtues to be cultivated by all aspirants to enlightenment, and to the most exalted degree by those who follow the way of the Bodhisatta aimed at the supreme enlightenment of perfect Buddhahood.

Since Giving functions as such a basis and foundation during our way to the final enlightenment. Figuring as the Sixteenth-minor-precept of Mahāyāna Bodhisattva, Organ Giving-Away can be recognized as one fundamental cultivation of Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practitioners likewise. Based on this premise, some people would believe Organ Giving-Away after death is as meaningful as Organ Giving-Away and also got boundless and unimaginable virtue and merits. Nowadays, with the increasingly maturer organ-transplantation techniques and the global

organ shortage circumstance, lots of countries are encouraging Organ Giving-Away after death and the Organ Giving-Away after death has been getting more and more familiar to the public. Generally speaking, in today's Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhist world, Organ Giving-Away after death are occupying the moral high ground and some Buddhist masters advocate it in the light of some theory basis recorded in the texts. In the meantime, some Buddhist masters oppose it in the light of some theory basis recorded in the texts as well. Anyway, because death is so subtle and obscure itself and inevitably it would make Organ Giving-Away after death always be controversial. Although the Tipiṭaka has given us the criteria about how to differentiate life from death, it's still not easy for us to be precise about the exact time of death. It's known to us that the beat-stopping heart may resume and the ceased respiration may recover, even the irreversible-believed dead brain has very rare opportunity to resume. There are more and more cases about people who have experienced state of impending death. In "Buried Alive: the Terrifying History of our Most Primal Fear" by Bondeson, it writes as follows: "the physician J.C. Ouseley claimed that as many as 2,700 people were buried prematurely each year in England and Wales, although others estimated the figure to be closer to 800...". In the article "Brain Death Does Not Mean True Death— A View of Organs Donation In Buddhist Perception", the author Shuxian Yu commented on one case which was about one eight-year-old child who donated his kidney to his mother while his brain died but his heart is still beating, she wrote as follows: "...Definitely the consciousnesses will by no means leave our bodies in whatever conditions when our organs are working and we've still got life sign...it's just the operation which indeed led to true death of the child ". A very thought-provoking tip was put forward by the author in the meantime: "Organ Giving-Away after death needs a second thought, virtue or killing is only decided by your single thought."

## 5.2 Suggestion

There is a report titled *Nine-Year-Old Boy Revered Master Cheng Yen As His Idol and Donated Organs Which Benefited Over 60 People*. In this report, the little boy is named Guanpei Lv. There are some texts excerpted from the report as follows:“ Originally Guanpei Lv intended to donate all his organs, said his father,...unexpectedly his health deteriorated drastically on 23rd and we have to intubate him for another twelve hours if we wanted to harvest all his organs...” The little boy and his family chose to practice Organ Giving-Away after death. However, herein there might exist the most common problem in Buddhist circle—idolatry. Idolatry is also one problem concerned with Organ Giving-Away after death. In this regard, the Buddhist disciples should learn that it’s dharma what the Buddha indicated ought to be taken as our best teacher and it’s dharma what we should follow with heart and soul. It is dharma what serves as our last sanctuary and ultimate refuge.

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### **Biography**

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