

“Śāntideva: Utilitarian or eudaimonist?”

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Quotes from Charles Goodman’s work regarding utilitarianism

“Some prominent writers in the utilitarian tradition, such as Unger and Singer, hold that we are morally required to contribute almost all of our income, wealth, and time to the relief of the suffering of the global poor. Śāntideva seems to teach a similar view, repeatedly citing sūtras that advise practitioners to give away all their possessions to the poor or to the religious community, to cultivate a state of few desires, to live by begging, and to travel to the wilderness to practice for the benefit of others.” (ŚS translation, xli)

Goodman, Charles. 2016. “The philosophy of the *Training Anthology*.” Introduction to *The Training Anthology of Śāntideva: A Translation of the Śikṣā-samuccaya* (ed. and trans. Charles Goodman). Oxford: Oxford University Press. xxxv-lviii.

“Buddhists would not say that the Bodhisattva has a moral obligation to give up his life; they would not say this because, so far as I can tell, they do not have any concept that closely corresponds to the Western philosophical concept of moral obligation. Pali texts often talk about what we *should* do, expressing their recommendations in the form of gerundives or optatives. But they seem not to have a way of talking about what we are *obligated* or *morally required* to do.” (*Consequences* 52, emphasis in original)

Goodman, Charles. 2009. *Consequences of Compassion: An Interpretation and Defense of Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Giving, external goods, and the mind in Bodhicaryāvatāra V

For “all fears and immeasurable sufferings are from the mind alone” is spoken by the knower of the truth. (BCA V.6)

*yasmād bhayāni sarvāṇi
duḥkhāny apramītāni ca |
cittād eva bhavantīti
kathitaṃ tattvavādinā || 6*

If the virtue of giving were about making the world non-poor, how is the world of the previous Protectors still poor?

*adaridraṃ jagatkṛtvā
dānapāramitā yadi |
jagaddaridramadyāpi
sā kathaṃ pūrvatāyinām || 9
phalena saha sarvasva-
tyāgacittājjane ’khile |
dānapāramitā proktā
tasmāt sā cittameva tu || 10*

The virtue of giving is said to come from a mind that completely renounces oneself, together with one’s fruits, toward the whole population. But therefore it is the mind alone. (BCA V.9-10)

Where will there be leather to cover the whole world? The earth is covered by shoe leather alone. Likewise, I cannot control external phenomena; I will control my own mind. What’s it to me whether other things are controlled? (BCA V.13-14)

*bhūmiṃ chādayituṃ sarvāṃ
kutaścarma bhaviṣyati |
upānaccarmamātreṇa
channā bhavati medinī || 13
bāhyā bhāvā mayā tadvac
chakyā vārayituṃ na hi |
svacittaṃ vārayiṣyāmi
kiṃ mamānyair nivāritaiḥ || 14*

Giving in the Śīkṣā Samuccaya

What is given must no longer be guarded; what is at home must be guarded. What is given is cause for the reduction of craving; what is at home is the increase of craving. What is given is nonattachment; what is at home is with attachment. What is given is safe; what is at home is dangerous. What is given is cause for supporting the path of awakening; what is at home is cause for supporting Māra. What is given is imperishable; what is at home is perishable. From what is given comes happiness; having obtained what is at home, suffering. What is given is cause for the abandoning of the afflictions; what is at home is the increase of the afflictions. What is given is cause for great enjoyment. What is at home is not cause for great enjoyment. What is given is the action of a good person. What is at home is the action of a bad person. What is given is cause for grasping the mind of a good person. What is at home is cause for grasping the mind of a bad person. What is given is praised by all the Buddhas. What is at home is praised by foolish people. (ŚS 19)

*yad dattaṃ tan na bhūyo rakṣitavyaṃ |
yad gr̥he tad rakṣitavyaṃ | yad dattaṃ
tat tṛṣṇākṣayāya | yad gr̥he tad
tṛṣṇavarddhanam | yad dattaṃ tad
aparigrahaṃ | yad gr̥he tat
saparigrahaṃ | yad dattaṃ tad
abhayaṃ | yad gr̥he tat sabhayaṃ | yad
dattaṃ tad bodhimārgôpastambhāya |
yad gr̥he tan mārôpastambhāya | yad
dattaṃ tad akṣayam | yad gr̥he tat kṣayi
| yad dattaṃ tataḥ sukham yad gr̥he
tadārabhya duṣkham | yad dattaṃ tat
kleśôtsargāya | yad gr̥he tat
kleśavarddhanam | yad dattaṃ tan
mahābhogatāyai | yad gr̥he na tan
mahābhogatāyai | yad dattaṃ tat
satpuruṣakarma | yad gr̥he tat
kāpuruṣakarma | yad dattaṃ tat
satpuruṣacittagrahaṇāya | yad gr̥he tat
kāpuruṣacittagrahaṇāya | yad dattaṃ
tat sarvabuddhapraśastam | yad gr̥he
tad bālajanapraśastam*

Having baited the iron hook of desire with your own body and with the pleasures you no longer want, you pull others out and save them as well. (ŚS 34)

*tena cātmabhāvâdinā vaḍiṣāmiṣenêva
svayam anabhiḡatôpabhogenâpy âkr̥ṣya
parān api tārāyati ||*

They intentionally become prostitutes in order to attract men, and, enticing them with the hook of sexual attraction, they establish them in the pristine awareness of the Buddhas. (ŚS 326)

*saṃcintya gaṇikāṃ bhonti puṃsām
âkarṣaṇāya te | rāgâṅku saṃlobhya
buddhajñāne sthāpayanti te ||*

“I will give alcoholic drink even to alcohol drinkers; I will cause them to obtain mindfulness and introspection...”
The meaning is: When a bodhisattva has caused the frustration of hope, the [resulting] anger is more serious even than alcoholic drink. Therefore there is a loss of the attraction of beings; alcohol may be given in the absence of other means of peacefully pleasing them. (ŚS 271)

*madyapebhyâiva madyapānaṃ dāsyāmi
| tām̐s tān smṛtisamprajānye
samādāpayiṣyāmīti ... madyapānād api
nairāśyakṛte bodhisatve pratigho
garīyān | satvasaṃgrahahānīś cāto
'nyaprasādanôpāyâsaṃbhāve madyaṃ
deyam ity abhiprāyaḥ |*

Or [the bodhisattvas] give jeweled chariots covered by nets of various gems, equipped with well-bred elephants and other draught animals...
Or they give away kingdoms, or cities, or royal palaces decorated with all ornaments... (ŚS 26-7)

*tathâtrâiva deṣitaṃ maṇirathān vā
dadānaḥ sarvaratnajālasaṃchannān
âjāneyahastyupetān... upādādāno rājyaṃ
vā parityajan paṭabhedakaṃ vā
nagararājadhānīm̐
sarvâlaṃkārabhūṣitām̐...*

Texts fruitless and to be avoided include materialist texts, texts about law and politics... (ŚS 192)

*apârthakāni parivarjayitavyāni | tad
yathā | lokâyataśāstrāṇi
daṇḍanītiśāstrāṇi....*

Eudaimonism: quotes from Charles Goodman's work

"[Aristotle advocates] a view called eudaimonism. According to this view, there is an extremely close connection between the morally praiseworthy status of an agent's actions and character traits and that agent's eudaimonia [well-being]..." (*Consequences* 38)

"To advocate eudaemonism is to assert a very tight connection between virtuous action, on the one hand, and the well-being of the agent, on the other." ("Modern" 136)

"'Whatever suffering is in store for the world, may it all ripen in me. May the world find happiness through the pure deeds of the Bodhisattvas.' (10.56) I do not think the prospects of a eudaimonist interpretation of this verse are very good." (*Consequences* 92)

"Aristotle defends the view called eudaimonism, which postulates a very close connection between virtuous actions and the agent's own well-being. Universalist consequentialists hold a very different view. According to consequentialists, one of my actions can be right even though it is harmful to my flourishing, so long as its consequences are sufficiently beneficial to others, including others who are in no important way related to me." (*Consequences* 42)

Goodman, Charles. 2009. *Consequences of Compassion: An Interpretation and Defense of Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goodman, Charles. 2017. "Modern and traditional understandings of karma." In Davis, Jake H. (ed.) *A Mirror is for Reflection: Understanding Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 131-45.

Śāntideva's eudaimonism&altruism

Whatever suffering is in store for the world, may it all ripen in me. May the world find happiness through the pure deeds of the Bodhisattvas. (BCA X.56)

Said in the story of the Brahmin priest Jyotis, who had practiced celibacy for forty-two thousand years: He was seven steps away when compassion arose in him. He thought, "If I break my spiritual discipline, I may go to hell. But I can experience and patiently endure the pain of hell. May this woman not die, but be happy." Noble sir, the Brahmin youth turned around, and holding that woman with his right hand, he said, "Rise sister, I shall do whatever you want."... Noble sire, because I aroused a thought of great compassion, even though lowly and having to do with sensual desires, {my time in cyclic existence} was reduced by ten thousand aeons. Noble sir, take note: what would lead other sentient beings to hell can lead a bodhisattva who is skilled in means to rebirth in the world of Brahmā. (ŚS 167)

"All who are suffering in the world are so because of desire for their own happiness. All who are happy in the world are so because of desire for others' happiness." (BCA VIII.129)

*yatkimcijjagato duḥkhaṃ
tat sarvaṃ mayi pacyatām |
bodhisattvaśubhaiḥ sarvair
jagat sukhitamastu ca ||*

*jyotirmāṇavakaṃ dvācatvāriṃśadvārṣa-
sahasrabrahmacāriṇam adhikṛtya
saptame pade sthitasya kāruṇyam
utpadyeta | kiṃ cāpy aham idaṃ
vratam khaṇḍayitvā nirayaparāyaṇaḥ
syāṃ | tathāpy utsahe 'haṃ nairayikaṃ
duḥkhaṃ prativedayitum atha cēyaṃ strī
sukhitā bhavatu | mā kālaṃ karotu | iti
hi kulaputra jyotirmāṇavakaḥ
paścānmukho nivartya tāṃ striyaṃ
dakṣiṇena pāṇinā gṛhītvâivam āha |
uttiṣṭha bhagini yathākāmakaraṇīyas te
bhavāmīti || pe || so 'haṃ kulaputra
mahākāruṇyacittôtpādenêtvareṇa
kāmoḥpasamhitena daśakalpasahasrāṇi
paścānmukham akārṣam | paśya
kulaputra yad anyeṣāṃ
nirayasamvartanīyaṃ karma | tad
upāyakuśalasya bodhisatvasya
brahmalokôpapattisaṃvartanīyam iti ||*

*ye kecid duḥkhitā loke
sarve te svasukhecchayā |
ye kecit sukhitā loke
sarve te 'nyasukhecchayā ||*

Additional references: Amod Lele

Lele, Amod. 2007. “Ethical Revaluation in the Thought of Śāntideva.” Dissertation, Harvard University. <https://loveofallwisdom.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/lele-dissertation.pdf>

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