

Social ministry in Buddhism: analysis of relevant concepts

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This article tries to answer the question, whether the concept of «social ministry» is applicable in the case of Buddhism. The article analyzes some examples of the consideration of «gift/giving» and «social ministry» in the Buddhist canonical and post-canonical texts, and draws a comparison of the ideas of social ministry in Buddhism and Christianity is made. Since the basic doctrinal points of Buddhism radically different from the Christian, the Christian concept of social ministry and comparable Buddhist concepts differ considerably. Thus, the social ministry in Buddhism is not understood as a service to God. However, the social service in the sense of charity and works of mercy has always been present in Buddhism. Conceptually, the Buddhist «social ministry» can be seen as a doctrine of gift/giving and the ministry of an exemplary Buddhist ruler. These concepts are considered on the basis of Buddhist canonical and post-canonical texts, namely the sutta «Lion's roar of the world-holder» from the Pali Canon and Vasubandhu's treatise «Encyclopedia of the Abhidharma» («Abhidharmakosha», 4-5th centuries). The Mahayana ideal of the Bodhisattva and the concept of great compassion (mahakaruna) also had a significant impact on charity and mercy in the countries of the spread of Buddhism. Between Buddhism and Christianity, if we consider them in the aspect of social ministry and charity, there are also similarities. First and foremost is the idea of compassion and mercy towards those who suffer. Both the Christian and Buddhist texts say about the value of such actions and the reward for them.



Key words: [social ministry](#), [Buddhism](#), [Christianity](#), [gift](#), [giving](#), [model of society](#), [Dharma](#), [chakravartin](#), [Mahayana](#), [great compassion \(mahakaruna\)](#)

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