


Reflect

THE OXFORD CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES
ANNUAL REVIEW 2019

The Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies promotes the study of Buddhist texts, societies, theories and practices. It is a Recognised Independent Centre (RIC) of the University of Oxford and was established in 2004.



WE NEED YOU
to help secure the future
of scholarly interaction
with Buddhism.

Director's message



In my message in the previous Annual Review, I wrote about how we are creating a resurgence in Pali teaching. This has acquired a momentum beyond my expectations. As further explained below, Dr Alexander Wynne and Dr Alex Wrona have now launched a Pali Online Course even more accessible than its two predecessors.

But our promotion of Pali scholarship is by no means confined to pedagogy. Urged on by one of our Trustees, the publisher Tony Morris, I last year wrote a short book entitled *Buddhism and Pali*, which came out shortly before Christmas. Theravādin tradition holds that Pali is the language in which the Buddha preached and the Canon was originally created, but many modern scholars have argued that this is not true. Now my book demonstrates, I believe, that the tradition's conclusion is correct, even if some of the reasoning with which that conclusion has been supported is oversimplified. This proof that the Pali Canon represents the earliest record of the Buddha's teaching has massive consequences for the early history of Buddhism. My discovery (not in that book) that the very word "Pali" means "text for recitation" may also solve a longstanding controversy.

Besides writing the text of the new Pali Online Course, Dr Wynne has joined me as Editor of the *Journal*, and he is contributing fundamental research articles to our study of early Buddhism. In vol.16 he publishes a formidable corrective to the currently fashionable view that there is no good reason to believe that there was any such person as the Buddha.

Thus we continue to offer discoveries about the history of Buddhism and to express them in language accessible to any interested reader. Similarly, the scope of our Pali teaching continues to be global. The Marathi translation of our course is coming into use at the University of Bombay, while the pupils, including many members of the Sangha, who enrol both for the introductory and the advanced courses are coming from most of the countries between Britain and New Zealand. We hope that in due course we shall be able to do for other areas of Buddhism what we are currently doing for its earliest period.

PROFESSOR RICHARD GOMBRICH
DIRECTOR, OXFORD CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES
richard.gombrich@balliol.ox.ac.uk

DID YOU KNOW?

The Centre provides one to one support in reading texts with students from all over the world.

Highlights of the past year



Archive

The Centre has been intensively involved in digitizing the entire archive of Professor Gombrich's articles and book reviews. As this goes to print, the uploading to our website is about to start!



Lectures/visitors

The Centre continues to host scholars from around the world, and to provide a venue for lectures. A recent five lecture series by Dr. Alex Wynne on Early Buddhist Meditation was very well attended.



Journal

Our Journal is entering its 8th year. Contributions continue apace, and many prominent universities around the world subscribe.



So-wide visitorship

The So-wide visitorship continues, bringing a scholar monk/nun from a Buddhist country for a term to Oxford every year for fruitful interactions with students. Recent visits have proved very well received by students and staff alike.



Podcasts

The Centre continues to upload audio documents of lectures which it has arranged.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our library is open to anyone who lives in the Oxford area, with the catalogue listed online.



Teaching Pali...

Last summer, two energetic and resourceful young scholars approached the OCBS with an exciting new venture – to move the signature Pali Online School to an online on-demand format. This would mean that rather than needing to put aside three weeks to study intensively according to a fixed timetable, students would now be able to study online at their own pace.

In July 2018, Level 1 of the Pali Online Course was launched. By February 2019, Levels 2 and 3 had been launched, creating a full Introduction to Pali course. Students from all over the world who have internet access now can study Pali to a level that allows them to translate texts on their own.

This is further enhanced by our provision of the Pali Reading Club – a regular online meeting to read

through a text. Besides, we hope to publish a Level 4, dealing with verse and commentaries, later this year.

Add to this the Pali Advanced Reading Course (delivered in Oxford once a year), and the Pali Hub (an online initiative providing a bibliography listing Pali scholarship worldwide), and it is clear that the OCBS is spearheading a renaissance in Pali and Early Buddhist Studies in the West.



DID YOU KNOW?

Pali Level 1 sold 26 courses in its first month.

... in the future

The OCBS is well on its way to its goal of becoming a centre of excellence in this area of Buddhist Studies, which tends to be neglected in the West. The uptake on our courses so far suggests that there is a big appetite for this provision. The Centre has plans to build on this success by developing other online courses on aspects of Early Buddhism. Its goal is to provide access to Early Buddhism scholarship for a worldwide audience at an affordable cost.

It is uniquely placed to deliver this thanks to the legacy of Prof. Gombrich's lifelong and tireless dedication to the subject. As the years progress, he has begun to consider his retirement. In order to provide for this the Centre is focusing its fundraising efforts on sourcing the means to secure, and pay for, a successor with his dedication and his vision. For more details on this please contact the Centre directly.

An investment in the Centre is an investment in the future of the teaching of Pali and other Early Buddhist subjects, maintaining the level of excellence that has already been established.



“The OCBS provides me with invaluable support and is an important part of developing the field of Buddhist Studies at the University of Oxford.”

PROFESSOR ZACCHETTI
NUMATA CHAIR OF
BUDDHIST STUDIES

Financial statement

year ending 31 March 2018

The OCBS completed the financial year ending March 2018 with **£166,261** in reserves, an increase of **£3,074** on 2016/17. With annual expenditures of **£78,187**, the reserves represent approximately two years of running costs, although this will change with the retirement of Prof Gombrich. The Charity has carefully invested some of its reserves. Its focus remains on securing an endowment for the future of the Centre.

Income Statement	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31/3/18 Total funds £	31/3/17 Total funds £
Income and Endowments from				
Donations and legacies	13,521	–	13,521	160,752
<i>Charitable activities</i>				
Charitable activities	29,595	25,000	54,595	26,347
Investment income	–	–	–	100
Other income	13,145	–	13,145	3,558
Total	56,261	25,000	81,261	190,757
Expenditure on				
Raising funds	20,337	–	20,337	14,578
Charitable activities	53,602	–	53,602	49,755
Other	4,248	–	4,248	1,465
Total	78,187	–	78,187	65,798
Net Income/(Expenditure)	(21,926)	25,000	3,074	124,959
Reconciliation of Funds				
Total funds brought forward	163,187	–	163,187	38,228
Total funds carried forward	141,261	25,000	166,261	163,187
Balance Statement	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31/3/18 Total funds £	31/3/17 Total funds £
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Assets	293	–	293	443
Current Assets				
Debtors	14,973	–	14,973	67,461
Investments	48,827	–	48,827	–
Cash at bank	79,849	25,000	104,849	106,397
Total	143,649	25,000	168,649	173,858
Creditors (within 1 year)	(2,681)	–	(2,681)	(11,114)
Net Current Assets	140,968	25,000	165,968	162,744
Total Assets less current liabilities	141,261	25,000	166,261	163,187
Net Assets	141,261	25,000	166,261	163,187
Funds				
Unrestricted funds	–	–	141,261	163,187
Restricted funds	–	–	25,000	–
Total Funds			166,261	163,187

Financial realities of the OCBS

£2 million
endows the
Centre's core
running costs
for perpetuity.

£40,000
pays for the
Academic Director
for one year.

£60,000
covers core costs
for one year.

The Centre wishes to thank Dr. Thet Thet Nwe, The Institute of Oriental Philosophy, Dhammachai International Research Institute and the 60th Dhammachai Education Foundation, Christine Tong, Sanjukta Gombrich, The Oxford Buddha Vihara, The Doris Field Charitable Trust and The Pye Charitable Settlement for their generous support.

DID YOU KNOW?
The OCBS provided
scholarships for several
students on its last
Advanced Reading
Course.

The Oxford Centre
for Buddhist Studies (OCBS)
Wolfson College,
Linton Road,
Oxford, OX2 6UD,
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)1865 274 098

Email: info@ocbs.org

www.ocbs.org

