

BANJOB BANNARUJI : AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE EIGHTY GREAT DISCIPLES AND THEIR ENLIGHTENMENT. THESIS ADVISORS : ASSO. PROF. PRANEE BAPANICH, Ph.D., ASSO. PROF. THANIT CHAKARATAPONGSE. 175 pp.

It is the purpose of the present thesis to study the Buddha's Eighty Great Disciples, especially their background, the motives leading to their renunciation and finally their enlightenment, as far as they are recorded in the Buddhist texts. The data are collected from the Tripitaka, commentaries, subcommentaries and other relevant writings.

It is found from the research that the enlightenment of the Eighty Great Disciples was not due to their birth, nor their social status, nor their financial standing, but to the effort of the individual Disciples. They started their first engagement of the supreme perfections (Pāramitā) in one of their existence in the remote past, while being firm in the solemn aspiration toward the attainment of the enlightenment. Later, after they had met the present Buddha, they untiringly continued their complete control of their deeds (Sīla), the unswerving practice of the concentration of mind (Samādhi), and the cultivation of the true wisdom (Paññā), while maintaining the tranquility and serenity of mind (Samatha), and retrospection of their mental activity (Vipassanā). In addition, They had to eradicate Palibodhas, the hindrances to the concentration of mind, and had to acquire the guidance of a spiritual teacher who would conduct them along the assigned Kammaṭṭhāna appropriate to their specific temperamental nature (Upanissāya) and help them abolish wrong views and self conceit. They carried on these efforts in certain environmental atmosphere with necessary Sappāyas or facilities conducive to the spiritual progress toward the enlightenment.

The thesis finally makes a suggestion that the Female Disciples of the Buddha be studied.