

PALI AND BUDDHIST STUDIES*

D.J.Kalupahana

Scholars involved in the study of Buddhism speak of various forms such as Pali Buddhism, Sanskrit Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism and, more recently of Korean Buddhism. At a time when we are celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the Post-Graduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, it would be necessary for us to pose for a moment and reflect on the meaning and significance of the title: Pali and Buddhist Studies.

Regretfully, we are unable to examine the intentions of the founder of the Institute, the Ven. Dr. Havanpola Ratanasara, who is no more with us. As a close friend and a fellow student preparing for our doctorates at the University of London, I had many opportunities to discuss with him his ideas relating to Buddhism. I always found him to be a person with lots of innovative ideas, and he played a leading role in the planning of the Post-Graduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies. Yet I was never able to learn about the intentions behind the organization of the Institute, since I left Sri Lanka three years before it was founded. One of the Directors who succeeded Dr. Ratanasara is Professor J.D. Dheersekera, Venerable Dhammavihari, who always argued that one needs to examine the Buddha's teachings independent of the later accretions.

* The Keynote Address delivered at the 30th Anniversary Celebrations held at Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall, Colombo on 09th December 2005.